

# MAINSTREET NEWS

Mainstreet News



## Topeka City Department Wins Award

The City of Topeka's Department of Housing and Neighborhood Development has been selected as a recipient for an award from the Environmental Protection Agency and the Department of Housing and Urban Development.

During a March 31 ceremony in Washington, D.C., those agencies will recognize the Topeka department for receiving a 2009 Energy Star Award for excellence in energy-efficient affordable housing. The award is being given in recognition of the department's efforts to provide energy-efficient housing for low-income residents.

## Bridge Designation Recognizes Veterans

On March 19, 2009, Governor Kathleen Sebelius signed a bill that honors the State's veterans by memorializing a highway bridge in Labette County near the City of Chetopa. The law renames bridge Number 85 on United States Highway 166 as the Veterans Memorial Bridge.

Governor Sebelius said, "The designation of this memorial bridge will remind travelers of the courage and dedication of our veterans." She added that, "The State of Kansas is thankful for their service."

## Arkansas City Adopts NLC Drug Card Program

Because of the effort of Arkansas City Commissioner Patrick McDonald, Arkansas City residents can save a little bit more on their prescription drug purchases. McDonald said he learned about the program because of a National League of Cities (NLC) newsletter. He commented that, "I went to their website and got more information." He added that, "Then I went to the city manager and asked that they look into it more." The City of Arkansas City is a member of the NLC.

The prescription drug discount card program helps residents save an average of 20% on prescribed medications under the program and costs nothing. In fact, for some medications, savings can reach 50%.

The cards have been available at City Hall since March 1 and are available for all residents of Arkansas City. To learn more about the program: <http://www2.caremark.com/nlc/how.htm>.

## Solar Panel Going on an Ambulance

Soon paramedics will be tapping into the sun's energy on ambulances. Lawrence Douglas County Fire Medical received its first solar panel on a medic unit on Wednesday, March 4.

City crews at the city garage will take the first step in launching a program designed to offset use of combustible engine energy to power lights and radio equipment. Using a rooftop solar panel, the ambulance will operate equipment during training exercises or when the vehicle is parked but the lights are being used to alert traffic to its presence.

The solar panel cost approximately \$700. The fleet manager anticipates recovering the costs in fuel savings in 24 months.

Solar panel technology is currently in use in Shawnee, Kansas. The City of Lawrence plans future installations on two fire trucks and another medical unit.

## Olathe, Kansas, Approves Agreement For Railway Quiet Zone

The Kansas City Star (3/25, Weinstein) reports that Olathe, KS, approved a Kansas Department of Transportation agreement to upgrade track and crossings to comply with federal regulations in order to adopt a quiet zone for trains passing through the city. The upgrades include medians, gate systems and closed crossings, after which the Federal Railroad Administration will declare the quiet zone which will end the use of train whistles in the area.

## Sedgwick County's Finance Staff Honored

Sedgwick County is the only government in Kansas to win the Government Finance Officers Association's Award for Outstanding Achievement in Popular Annual Financial Reporting. About 160 governments nationwide won the award in 2006.

Not everyone has a master's degree in accounting, Sedgwick County's chief financial officer pointed out this week when lauding his staff for developing an easy-to-understand finance report for public consumption that has landed an award.

The county's 2007 report was the first time the county prepared a public-focused financial scorecard. Chief financial officer Chris Chronis praised county employees Sara Jantz, Brandi Bailey, and Pam Kelly for their work.

The county's regular, more detail-oriented financial report also won an award from the group, the 27th consecutive time. Chronis commended county employees Troy Bruun and Anne Smarsh for their report.