

"We Have Tomorrow – Bright Before Us, Like A Flame." *Langston Hughes*



MARDI GRAS IN LAWRENCE

Have you ever joined in the annual Mardi Gras parade through Downtown Lawrence? It's a group of fun-loving folks who walk and play instruments along the length of Massachusetts St. Definitely more fun than the average Tuesday! This year, Mardi Gras is celebrated on Tuesday, Feb. 13.

OUR MISSION

We create a
community where
all enjoy life and
feel at home.

City information is available
at lawrenceks.org and on
cable Channel 25.

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Lifelong Recreation offers new opportunities

However you choose to fill your time, recreation keeps you interested in life and interesting to others! With Lifelong Recreation classes, we're focused on programs that are exciting for our residents age 50 and older.

Through our Parks and Recreation department, the City of Lawrence offers a Lifelong Recreation program that is designed for residents 50 years old and older who wish to maintain an active lifestyle.

Whether you're looking to keep an active mind, an active body – or both! – classes in Lifelong Recreation cover a variety of subject areas and vary in activity level, including both fitness and creative classes.

Several classes starting this spring would be perfect for a Lawrence community member looking to try something new. Below are some of the upcoming creative classes:

- **Fundamentals of Creative Writing** meets Tuesdays from March 19 – April 23. The class is a hands-on, participatory exploration of writing techniques.
- **Beginning Ukelele** meets Wednesdays

from April 3–24. The course covers tuning, basic chords and beginning strum patterns. Students brand new to ukelele are encouraged to join!

- **Moving for Life** meets Mondays from March 18 – May 20. The fun and EASY dance class uses a modern dance warm up and focuses on building a dance phrase over six weeks.

Our team is always open to ideas for new programming for our lifelong recreation participants. If you have suggestions for programs – whether it's something you've always wanted to do or something unusual, challenging or just more fun with a group – please share your ideas.

The course catalog with more information is online: lawrenceks.org/lprd/lifelongrecreation.

Pictured: Participants in one of the ukelele classes offered through Lifelong Recreation.

HAVE YOU HEARD ABOUT COMMON GROUND?

We're seeking new gardeners this year!

Interested in joining a community garden?

Common Ground, the community gardening and urban agriculture program, is seeking new gardeners for the 2024 growing season. The program provides 9.5 acres of land for community food production across 11 sites, all located in Lawrence:

- Garden Incubator at John Taylor Park — 7th & Walnut Street
- PermaCommons — 1304 Pennsylvania Street
- Penn. St. Community Garden — 1313 Pennsylvania Street
- Pearl Clark Community Garden — 639 Illinois Street
- Little Prairie Community & Donation Garden — Peterson Road & N. Iowa Street
- Just Food Community Garden — 817 Oak Street
- The Lawrence Community Orchard — 830 Garfield Street
- Oread Friends Garden — 1146 Oregon Street

- Incubator Farm — Highway 24/40
- Growing Together Community Garden — 3rd & Alabama Street
- Broken Arrow Community Garden — 31st & Louisiana Street

Applications for individual plots will be accepted on a rolling basis but will be first come, first served. Please contact the Common Ground Program Manager Umut Bayramoglu at 785-312-2347 or ubayramoglu@douglascountyks.org for the most up-to-date list of gardens accepting new gardener applications.

In addition, several garden sites have communal gardening areas that are open to the public. Our newest community garden at Broken Arrow Park offers full ADA accessibility, with a designated parking space, garden path and two raised beds. Common Ground welcomes individuals and groups interested in volunteering for garden work days, held regularly from March through October.

More information about Common Ground is available online: douglascountyks.org/administration/sustainability/common-ground.



Compost Facility opens for season March 2

The City Compost Facility reopens for the 2024 season on Saturday, March 2. The facility, located at 1420 E. 11th St., will be open from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. on Saturdays until the end of the 2024 season. The hours are subject to change without notice due to weather or other unrelated issues (notice will be given when possible).

The compost facility offers an important service to our community members as it

allows you both to drop off yard waste and purchase compost or woodchips for use in your own yard. Lawrence Community Compost is made from the yard trimmings and small woody debris collected curbside as well as grass clippings, leaves, and woody debris from commercial lawn care providers.

More information, including up-to-date news on operations, is on our website: lawrenceks.org/swm/compost-facility

Severe Weather Awareness Week 2024

Spring is coming and that can mean dangerous weather in Kansas. If you've been here a while, you know about it. But if it's your first severe weather season in Kansas, pay attention.

We can get strong winds, big hail, floods, and even tornadoes in Lawrence — all of which are risky for people and businesses.

We all need to know what to do to stay safe when bad weather happens. That's why Douglas County Emergency Management wants you to be part of Severe Weather Awareness Week from March 4-8, 2024.

It's important to know how to get weather alerts and where to go to stay safe. You can sign up for free alerts through the Northeast Regional Notification System online at: douglascountyks.org/emergency-management. You could also purchase a weather radio from the Douglas County Emergency Management office, 111 East 11th St. (inside the Judicial and Law Enforcement Center), to keep you updated.

Now is the time to either create or review your plan for what to do during severe weather. Practice it at home, school, work, or wherever you like to frequently spend your time. It's not just for people — businesses should also update their emergency plans and talk about them with their staff.

Want to see if your plan works? On Wednesday, March 6, at 11 a.m., there will be a Statewide Tornado Drill. Use this opportunity to practice your plan by going to the safe place you've chosen. Douglas County will be testing the outdoor warning sirens and posting on social media ahead of the drill. You may also see the alert on your TV and hear it on the radio.

Whether you've seen a lot of bad weather or you're new here, everyone needs to be ready. Join us all week to either learn or remember what to do before the severe storms hit!

Severe Weather Night

Do you have questions about severe weather? Are you unsure what to do when severe weather strikes?

Douglas County Emergency Management can help!

Join their team and the Topeka National Weather Service for Severe Weather Night at 7 p.m. on Monday, March 18, at the Lawrence Public Library.

They'll be talking about severe thunderstorms and how to recognize important storm features as well as giving tips on how to be prepared. You don't want to miss this event!