Next steps for the new county courthouse

Human services in Johnson County
Residents to see significant progress across the county in 2017

Many exciting changes are in store for Johnson County residents in 2017. A number of projects that we’ve been discussing for several years will take shape, including new libraries, new parks, expanded transit and a new courthouse and coroner facility approved by voters in November.

We are grateful for our residents’ support for the public safety sales tax ballot initiative that will fund a new courthouse and coroner facility. The need for the courthouse has been a concern for the past 15 years and the passing of the public safety sales tax allows the county to address many issues including the safety of residents and numerous inefficiencies in the current facility. Detailed design work on the new courthouse will soon be underway and construction is set to begin in 2018 — with expected completion in 2021. Design of the county’s coroner facility will start later this year.

Groundbreaking for the new Monticello library in Shawnee, at K-7 and Shawnee Mission Parkway, takes place this spring with the facility opening in 2018. In addition, a new county library in Lenexa at City Center is under development with its groundbreaking also expected in 2018. This location will eventually replace the existing Lackman branch and will be in the heart of a vibrant new development near 87th Street Parkway and Renner Road, west of I-435.

Two new large county parks are slated to open in 2017 including Big Bull Creek Park, a 2,000-acre park in the southeastern area of the county, between Gardner and Edgerton. Also, Lexington Lake Park, previously referred to as Rieke Lake, consists of 465 acres located west of De Soto and north of K-10; its first phase is set to open this year. Meanwhile, we’ve seen significant progress in transforming the former Meadowbrook Country Club and Golf Course into an approximately 80-acre park and activity center in Prairie Village with development including townhomes, luxury apartments, single-family homes, senior living and an inn. It will open in 2018.

Johnson County worked in 2016 to expand transit service. RideKC now has bus routes to additional neighborhoods, activity centers and employment locations in Overland Park, Shawnee, Merriam, Prairie Village and Leawood. Service doubled along 75th Street, 95th Street has a new route, and along Metcalf Avenue, a new route adds several new destinations. An extended route added this January takes riders to 87th Street and Renner Road with a stop at Oak Park Mall, essentially reaching more than 2,300 households and 5,500 jobs within one-quarter mile of the route west of Quivira Road.

Finally, we eagerly anticipate the May 2017 opening of the Johnson County Arts and Heritage Center, the former King Louie facility at 8788 Metcalf Avenue in Overland Park. The facility will house the county museum with a permanent exhibit of its history. The county moved the 1950s All-Electric House into the building last year; extensive conservation work is being performed now that is in a protected environment. The facility will also offer recreation classes, a black box theater serving The Theatre in the Park and a community event space.

Our many new projects incorporate significant input from our residents through community surveys and public input meetings. We want to thank you for helping make our county a great place to live, work and raise a family. Happy New Year!

Ed Eilert
Chairman
Board of County Commissioners

Hannes Zacharias
County Manager
Image above: On Friday, Nov. 11, 2016, hundreds gathered at Olathe Veterans Memorial Park to honor veterans of all wars along with Gold Star families. This was Johnson County’s 30th annual veterans observance that featured music from Central Elementary School and the Olathe Northwest Band, a rifle salute by the Olathe American Legion Post 153, wreath presentations and speeches by Chairman Ed Eilert, Colonel Peter Jaramillo and Gold Star Mother Debbie Austin.
In short

**Johnson County Arts and Heritage Center set for Spring 2017 opening**

The Johnson County Arts and Heritage Center, 8788 Metcalf in Overland Park, will open in May 2017, providing a new home for the Johnson County Museum. A permanent exhibit called “Becoming Johnson County” will highlight the history of the county and feature the 1950s All-Electric House as its centerpiece. The facility, which was home to the King Louie bowling alley and ice skating rink for many years, will also offer a year-round location for Theatre in the Park productions with a 350-seat black box theater. Community event space will also be available. A portion of the facility opened to the public in October and November for advanced voting.

The design for the facility was competed by SFS Architecture and the contractor for the project is McCownGordon Construction. Currently, the contractors are in the final stages of completing work on the building’s exterior along with the mechanical, electrical and plumbing for the building. The interior work will be the focus of the project over the next few months. A public art project approved by the Board of County Commissioners in December will also soon get underway. Go online for more information at jocogov.org/jcahc.

**Let the county help you prepare your taxes**

Johnson County K-State Research and Extension is partnering with Next Step KC, formerly known as KC Cash, and El Centro to host a Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) site at the extension office building, 11811 S. Sunset Dr. in Olathe. VITA sites provide safe, accessible locations for taxpayers to gain assistance in preparing their state and federal income tax returns. There is no charge to have returns completed and electronically filed. The maximum household income for eligibility is $54,000. VITA runs Feb. 1 to April 15, 2017. Call 913-715-7000 for more information.

**RideKC transit service extends to Lenexa development**

In January RideKC expanded transit service to Lenexa from Oak Park Mall, completing a new regional bus route linking Missouri and Kansas. On Jan. 3, the 495 95th Street route started running four miles west to Lenexa’s City Center development at 87th Street and Renner Road. The new route will reach more than 2,300 households and more than 5,500 jobs within a quarter-mile of the route west of Quivira Road. Visit ridekc.org for route schedules and updates.

**quotable**

“I think 2017 is going to be a wild year for the parks with all the stuff that is going on.”

— County Commissioner Steve Klika in a recent Kansas City Star article on new trails, playgrounds and other lifestyle amenities being developed by Johnson County Park and Recreation District.
Passage of public safety sales tax creates timeline for projects

By LORI SAND

Johnson County will have a new county courthouse and coroner facility. In November, county voters passed the proposed public safety sales tax with 53 percent approval. Now, the real work begins.

“Because courthouses are designed and built to last for decades, this is a once-in-a-generation type of project. It is one of the most significant facility projects that a county can undertake,” said Brad Reinhardt, director of county facilities. “Many people put in a lot of work over the past 15 years — tremendous effort and collaboration — to get to this point.”

On Dec. 9, the Johnson County Board of County Commissioners adopted a resolution to levy the additional quarter-cent sales tax countywide for 10 years, beginning on April 1, 2017.

The preliminary timeline identifies numerous actions to be taken before groundbreaking occurs. The BOCC will amend the county’s capital improvement program to include the courthouse and coroner facility projects and authorize the projects. Following that action, the Public Building Commission can approve the projects and sell bonds.

The Johnson County Facilities Management Department will begin by issuing two requests for proposals (RFPs) for professional services to start the project work. First, an RFP will be posted for the engagement of an owner’s representative, to represent the county and manage all aspects of the courthouse project. An early responsibility for the owner’s rep is to establish a master project schedule. In addition, the representative will conduct a risk assessment to identify potential risks to the project which may include such factors as the environment, inflation, rising interest rates, labor costs, cost of construction materials, energy costs and labor shortages. The rep will also assess the impact on the project should any of these risks occur and develop a mitigation plan for each scenario to minimize its impact.

Next, an RFP will go out for a criteria consultant, a team of architects and engineers hired to develop performance criteria documentation for the new courthouse. This team will produce items to be used for the design-build RFP. The county’s Facilities Management department plans to hire both consulting firms on board in early 2017.

Design-build is the project delivery method selected for the new courthouse. This method combines both design and construction, and puts the project in the hands of one entity with single point of responsibility for quality, cost and schedule. Selection of the design-build team is planned for the second half of 2017.

“We intend to bring this project in as quickly as possible in order to minimize costs in light of projected interest rate increases over the next four years,” Reinhardt said. “We believe the design-build process will result in both time and cost savings.”

The county intends to manage the coroner project with existing facility planning, design and construction staff.

“The coroner facility project lends itself well to the project delivery process of construction manager as constructor (CMc), and our staff is very accomplished in managing these types of projects,” Reinhardt said. “By mid-2017, we intend to hire the architect and engineering design team and a CMc to work collaboratively on the design of this facility.”

Public engagement regarding the design of both projects is planned early in the design phase in early 2018.

Construction of both projects is planned to begin during the first half of 2018, with the completion of courthouse expected in 2021 and the coroner facility in 2020.

“We are very excited about these projects. While our plan is to work expeditiously, we will also work intelligently,” said county manager Hannes Zacharias.

The new courthouse will be located on the northeast corner of Santa Fe and Kansas Avenue, across the street from the current location. It will have 28 courtrooms with the ability to expand to 32 and will directly address some issues of concern for local residents, such as:

- Safety and security — separating inmates and criminal defendants from victims, witnesses, jurors and others in courthouse corridors.
- An aging, overcrowded courthouse — creating a more suitable building that will be fully accessible/ADA compliant.

The new courthouse positions Johnson County to meet its judicial needs for the next 75 years, as the county expects to add about 10,000 residents each year.

Currently, Johnson County does not have its own coroner facility. Autopsies are conducted at a pay-for-use facility in Kansas City, Kansas. A new coroner facility will provide an increased capacity for conducting autopsies; the ability to control prioritization of autopsy work for the county; on-site toxicology and real-time data reporting for epidemics and crime; and meeting anticipated accreditation legislation and resulting requirements for facilities.
The ‘maker’ is in

By CHRISTOPHER LEITCH

The maker movement enjoys widespread popularity that shows no signs of slowing.

Since the first so-called “Maker Faire” was held just 10 years ago in San Mateo, California, makers and their allies have created a strong and well-defined presence at Johnson County Library’s MakerSpace. The library launched the “Maker in Residence” program in 2016 to expand the reach and influence of makers in our county and the program is poised for a strong 2017.

Maker culture emphasizes learning-through-doing, or active learning, in a social environment. Maker spaces and activities are characterized by informal and shared experiences, motivated by fun and self-fulfillment. Makers frequently encourage unconventional use of technologies, but it’s safe to say that the Maker movement is a social phenomenon with an artisan spirit. Community-facing places like public libraries quickly embraced this new public service model.

**MakerSpace here at home**

Johnson County Library opened its MakerSpace at Central Resource Library in 2013 and the demand for its array of tools and software quickly outpaced availability. When the library was renovated in 2015, the space was enlarged. Now, its 1,700 square feet area serves as the library’s expanded studio for experimental learning-by-doing.

Patrons can find a media recording and editing suite, 3-D printing, advanced modeling software, workshops and classes and more. Upon reopening, the space was named the Black & Veatch MakerSpace in recognition of its key sponsor’s support.

Use of this library service will likely continue to grow. A June 2014 report from the federal Institute of Museum and Library Services observed that “MakerSpaces are part of a growing movement of hands-on, mentor-led learning environments to make and remake the physical and digital worlds. They foster experimentation, invention, creation and exploration through design thinking and project-based learning.”

The library has been nimbly trying to keep up with patron demand. One innovative step in this direction: launching the Maker-in-Residence (MiR) program. A four-month residency is awarded to a local Maker through a competitive application process. The Maker receives a stipend and a modest materials budget for his or her work during the residency. After a brief orientation of the library, each MiR maintains a weekly schedule to interact with patrons.

**Community support**

The effort is supported by a grant from local engineering and tech powerhouse Black & Veatch. The goal is simple: connect library patrons with accomplished makers, and then step back to see what happens. In the open, encouraging and curiosity-welcoming

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“MakerSpace demonstrates the exciting ways STEM — Science, Technology, Engineering and Math — education can reach young people by giving them hands-on experience through fun and exciting projects.”

— Becky Schieber
Senior manager of charitable programs
Black & Veatch
The ‘maker’ is in environment of the Black & Veatch MakerSpace, makers and library users alike are introduced to new ideas, learn new skills and meaningfully engage with each other.

“Most of our processes are pretty lengthy,” says MakerSpace reference librarian Meredith Nelson, “so our users tend to spend a lot of time here. We get to know people. So it’s nice when our residents bring in new audiences, with new questions, to refresh our perspectives.”

Johnson County Library and Black & Veatch are eager for the residency to be a time of rich exploration for the makers as well as patrons. Makers are encouraged to pursue their own projects to serve as a launching point for interactions with library users. Community engagement is a key outcome for the program and takes the form of public programs, projects, events and demonstrations related to the maker’s area of expertise. Patrons can bring current projects for MiR consultation or launch their own investigations right in the space.

“MakerSpace demonstrates the exciting ways STEM education can reach young people by giving them hands-on experience through fun and exciting projects,” said Becky Schieber, senior manager, charitable programs at Black & Veatch. “Helping Johnson County Library fulfill its vision of an enhanced MakerSpace also enables us to nurture the next wave of problem solvers who will tackle the energy, water and communications problems of the future.”

In addition to the Maker-in-Residence Program, the Black & Veatch MakerSpace hosts opportunities for skilled and novice makers to learn about the space and its technological and human resources. Check out the library’s web site (jocolibrary.org) for a current schedule of MakerSpace activities such as Maker Meet-Up or MakerSpace Beginner’s Night.

Johnson County Library’s Makers-in-Residence

Summer 2016 Maker-in-Residence
Jeff Newhook · Tech wiz
The premier Maker-in-Residence is a multidisciplinary maker with a background in electronic engineering technology. He’s been a dedicated MakerSpace volunteer offering tutorials, project support and hands-on workshops to kids, teens and adults. During his residency, his hope was “to spark an interest in others to learn new skills and create design solutions using the amazing resources here at Johnson County Library.”

Fall 2016 Maker-in-Residence
Kate E. Burke · Textile artist
This artist and designer’s maker work finds inspiration in the natural world that she focuses on textile design patterns. She layers and mixes screen-printed and dyed designs to create bold fashion and accessories. She maintains her studio in the Crossroads Arts District in Kansas City, Missouri.

Spring 2017 Maker-in-Residence
Sarah Xeno · Metal sculptor
The current MiR is a jeweler and goldsmith from Overland Park with a background in painting and sculpture. Her residency is focusing on metal — sawing, piercing, stamping, engraving and fold forming — with cold connections like rivets and tabs. She also plans to explore 3D design modeling that can creatively expand into wearable art made with vinyl and plastics.

Fall 2017 Maker-in-Residence
Dave Cedillo · Musician
Cedillo is an accomplished musician and songwriter with a knack for melody and strangely humorous lyrics. For anyone interested in the intersection of pop music, science and vegetables, not to mention RiffTrax videos, Dave Cedillo’s multimedia extravaganza is crazy entertaining.
Health Watch: Spinal Stenosis

Living with chronic pain caused by stenosis of the spine affects every part of your life.

It keeps you from enjoying the good things in life—time with kids and grandkids, playing golf, even working in the yard. It would be nice to get out of bed—just one morning—without pain.

Every time you try and push through the pain, like standing or walking for a long period of time, you pay for it over the next 2-3 days with even more pain.

The good news is that there are now safe and effective treatments that address the cause of pain stemming from spinal stenosis without medication or surgery.

What is Stenosis of the Spine?

Spinal stenosis is a narrowing of the spinal canal or open space within your spine, which can put pressure on your spinal cord and the nerves that travel through the spine. Spinal stenosis occurs most often in the neck and lower back.

Pain occurs when the narrowing affects your nerves. If a nerve is squeezed, pain occurs in the back, legs, neck, arms and hands, all depending on the location of the narrowing. You may even experience numbness or tingling in the legs and feet.

In order to fix this, you have to reverse the stenosis by opening these spaces within your spine. If you can stop the narrowing and begin widening these spaces again, your pain will be significantly reduced or even eliminated.

This is why many other treatments may not have worked for you. Medications, injections, and even surgery don’t correct the fundamental issues occurring in your spine.

The Single Most Important Solution For Spinal Stenosis

At Renuva Back & Pain Centers, we use a unique treatment protocol that has been tried and proven with thousands of patients around the country to significantly reduce and even eliminate pain.

This protocol is a combination of leading edge, FDA cleared technologies and treatment methods that treat the cause of pain and help to heal nerve damage to stop the pain, burning, numbness, and tingling. Results vary from patient to patient, but the overall results have been remarkable.

With this leading edge treatment program you could soon be doing the things you enjoy most again.

Here is what some of our patients are saying:

“Just when I thought I was going to need back surgery, I found out about Renuva. After working in nursing for 40 years, I tried pain injections for a year and it did an OK job masking the pain. Renuva found the cause of my pain. This is by far the best thing that has happened to me to relieve pain without surgery.”

—Debra D.

“I was getting ready to call my doctor and get scheduled for surgery when my friend told me about Renuva and had me call for an appointment. I was hesitant at first but as soon as I left from my first appointment I could feel relief. I can honestly say that a month after finishing my treatments I feel like I could run a mile. I have recommended Renuva to a lot of people. The doctor is wonderful and you can see that the staff truly care about you. If anyone is suffering from any kind of pain, I recommend giving Renuva a chance!”

—Joseph J.

Find Out if Renuva Can Help You.

We understand how difficult it can be to choose a doctor and a treatment program that is right for you. For a few days only, we’re offering our new patient evaluation for only $39 (normally $257).

You will meet with Dr. Catherine Dowd, D.C. to discuss your medical history and talk about your symptoms. You will also have time to ask questions about your condition and any concerns you may have.

This evaluation includes a thorough exam including a full MyoVision scan and digital x-rays (if needed) to pinpoint the cause of your pain, along with two treatments to see how your body responds and whether our therapy might work for your condition.

Here’s What To Do Now

Call by January 31st and receive everything for only $39 (normally $257). Call our office today at 913-884-1152 between the hours of 8 am and 5 pm, Monday through Friday.

Our office address is: 10787 Nall Ave., Suite 110
Overland Park, KS 66211

Our office is located on the northeast corner of I-435 and Nall in the Corporate Medical Plaza. Right across 107th from the new Top Golf facility.

Way suffer with years of misery? Don’t live in pain when we may have the solution you’ve been looking for all along.
The Zika virus made headlines last spring after becoming linked to birth defects in Brazil. Although the news about Zika has faded, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention urge pregnant women to avoid travel to areas with ongoing Zika virus transmission and recommends that travelers wear insect repellant when traveling in areas where Zika is widespread.

Johnson County residents who contract the virus while traveling in areas with Zika virus could potentially transmit the disease locally if bitten by an Aedes mosquito. As of press time, eight cases of Zika virus have been confirmed in Johnson County residents who traveled to areas with ongoing Zika transmission.

Maps released by the CDC in early 2016 indicate that the two species of mosquitoes that can carry and transmit the Zika virus (Aedes aegypti and Aedes albopictus) were believed to be present in the Kansas City metropolitan area. Johnson County Department of Health and Environment sought to better understand the local prevalence of these species to characterize the potential for transmission. Johnson County Department of Health and Environment (JCDHE) contracted with the Kansas Biological Survey in spring 2016 to trap mosquitoes in four locations: south Overland Park, central Overland Park, Lenexa and Lake Quivira. Traps were set every other week from mid-June through mid-October.

The chart shows the numbers of Aedes genus mosquitoes detected over the course of summer. At all four locations, Aedes albopictus was present to varying degrees, but no specimen of Aedes aegypti was found. This is good news because Aedes albopictus feeds on both human and animal blood, and consequently it is less likely to be an agent of human-to-human transmission. The spike in numbers at the end of July followed a period of precipitation that created opportunities for mosquitoes to breed.

What conclusions can be drawn?
First, the presence of Aedes albopictus indicates that while there is a potential for local transmission of the Zika virus, the potential is very low. Any local transmission would have to originate from a person who has recently returned from an area where Zika is present and who has become infected with the virus. There is no evidence that Aedes mosquitoes can pass the Zika virus on to their offspring.

Because the Kansas City region experiences freezing temperatures in the winter, the entire adult population of mosquitoes dies off every year. This means that even if local transmission of Zika were to occur in a given year, the mosquitoes born the following spring would not carry the virus. Despite the relatively low risk, continued surveillance efforts are needed to monitor any changes that may occur in local mosquito populations. JCDHE is currently coordinating with the Kansas Department of Health and Environment to coordinate a mosquito monitoring plan for 2017.

More information about this effort will be posted at jocogov.org/jcdhe as it becomes available.
Learning Mental Health First Aid
Skills make a difference to assist vulnerable members of our community

By SHANA BURGESS and JAMIE KATZ

Gardner-Edgerton School District integrates Mental Health First Aid as a strategy to address mental health. Mental health challenges can be a hurdle in the classroom. Teachers and staff are in a unique position to notice mood and behavior changes in students. Additionally, many staff can build rapport with their students who may often seek support from them.

Gardner-Edgerton School District partnered with Johnson County Mental Health Center to offer Mental Health First Aid to staff across the district. More than 300 staff from the high school, middle schools and elementary schools have become certified Mental Health First Aiders.

Gardner-Edgerton School District is equipping staff with the skills to intervene during crisis and non-crisis mental health challenges. They are also teaching skills on reaching out, listening non-judgmentally, and referring students to services that they may need from the community. As a result, staff is more skilled at recognizing and responding to mental health concerns and feeling more confident in helping students and families experiencing a mental health crisis.

**Someone you know**

You may have a friend, family member, coworker or neighbor who has experienced a mental health challenge. Mental health disorders such as depression, anxiety, psychosis and substance use are common in the U.S. According to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, approximately one in five American adults will have a mental health problem in any given year. Throughout a person’s life, it is likely that they may develop a mental health problem or have close contact with someone who has.

Many people are not informed to recognize mental health problems, providing support, or what treatments or resources are available. Likewise, many people feel too ashamed to admit that they might have a mental health challenge, do not know about available resources or might not even realize that they need help. You can make a difference in someone’s life and play an important role by encouraging a friend, family member, coworker or neighbor to get professional help or use self-help strategies.

Mental health disorders are common. They cut across social economic status and race, and can happen at any time during a person’s life. In Johnson County, approximately 113,711 individuals (out of 580,159) have experienced a mental health problem within the last year.

**Mental Health First Aid**

Johnson County Mental Health Center embraces the philosophy and teachings of Mental Health First Aid and offers frequently teaches mental health courses throughout the community. Since 2011, more than 2,000 community members have been certified in Mental Health First Aid.

“I am proud that the Mental Health Center is a leader that offers Mental Health First Aid to our community,” says Tim DeWeese, Director, Johnson County Mental Health Center. “Providing citizens with the tools necessary to identify, understand and respond to signs of mental illnesses and substance use disorders only strengthens our community and makes the county a great place to live, work and raise a family.”

Johnson County Mental Health has partnered with Johnson County Department of Corrections to train more than 75 staff members, including corrections officers, probation officers and case managers. Similar to the training for Gardner-Edgerton School District, corrections staff is provided a toolkit of skills to allow them to better understand mental illnesses, including substance use disorders, to help them respond to mental health related incidents appropriately without compromising safety.

“As we see more and more clients who experience mental illness, Mental Health First Aid provided education and tangible ways for staff to support clients,” said Rachel Mestad, Training Coordinator, Johnson County Department of Corrections.

Mental Health First Aid suitable learning for all people and organizations that make up the fabric of — National Council for Behavioral Health

1/2 of lifetime cases of mental disorders begin by age 14.

3/4 begin by age 24.

Local jails in the U.S. serve about 2 million people with serious mental illnesses each year.

Three out of four incarcerated persons also suffer from a substance use disorder.
Just as CPR helps you assist an individual having a heart attack, Mental Health First Aid helps you assist someone experiencing a mental health or substance use-related crisis. Mental Health First Aid is an eight-hour course that teaches you how to identify, understand and respond to signs of mental illnesses and substance use disorders. It gives you the skills needed to reach out and provide initial assistance and support to someone who may be developing a mental health or substance use problem or experiencing a crisis.

Mental Health First Aid takes the fear and hesitation out of opening conversations about mental health and substance use problems by improving understanding and providing an action plan to teach people to safely and responsibly identify and address a potential mental illness or substance use disorder.

When people are equipped with the tools needed to start a dialogue, more people can get to the help they may need. Mental Health First Aid can save lives.

our community. The course is beneficial to anyone interested in learning more about mental health problems, including depression, anxiety, psychosis and substance abuse. Participants gain useful skills and valuable insight regarding mental illness that can be used in a personal or professional way.

**Sign up for training**

Anyone can provide Mental Health First Aid — first responders, business leaders, health care workers, educators, faith community leaders and caring neighbors.

Upcoming Mental Health First Aid training is available with a cost of $50 per person:

- **Saturday, Jan. 21**, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. at the Johnson County Northeast Offices, 6000 Lamar Ave., Mission.
- **Friday, March 3**, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. at the Johnson County Sunset Building, 11811 S. Sunset Dr., Olathe
- **Tuesday, May 9**, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. at the Johnson County Northeast Offices, 6000 Lamar Ave., Mission

Registration and more information is available by contacting 913-715-7880 or jrodriguez@jocogov.org.

If you or someone you know is experiencing a mental health crisis, there is help available.

The county maintains professional clinical staff on duty 24 hours a day to provide mental health emergency services. The crisis line is always available by calling 913-268-0156. The National Suicide Prevention Lifeline is available at 800-273-TALK (8255) or by text at 741-741.

Learn more about local services, resources and supports visit jocogov.org/mentalhealth.
Human services in Johnson County
Creating value in a diverse community

Johnson County Government provides services to enrich the human experience for all residents. In this issue, we take a closer look at seven county service areas — Human Services, Mental Health, Corrections, Developmental Supports, Health and Environment, Emergency Medical Services and Emergency Management and Communications.

Health and Environment

Health and Environment aims to protect public health and environment, prevent disease and promote wellness for all county residents.

The Nurse-Family Partnership is an evidence-based program that serves low-income women who are pregnant with their first child. The program brings together new mothers with registered nurses and offers ongoing nurse home visits until the child is 2 years old.

Developmental Supports

Johnson County Developmental Supports is an agency that facilitates career and personal guidance for residents with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

In December, JCDS and Friends of JCDS unveiled their twelfth group home in Gardner. This will be the new home for five people who have an intellectual or developmental disability and are also experiencing dementia or Alzheimer’s disease.

Human Services

Human Services supports the dignity, independence, and self-sufficiency of all residents. Our programs and activities primarily target older adults, people with disabilities, low-income families and other residents who may require assistance.

During the 2016 holiday season, Human Services partnered with Lee Jeans and area fire and police officers to deliver 175 stockings to county residents in need.

Key: $ Departmental budget  Percent of county budget  Number of full-time employees

Health and Environment

$15.4 million  2.07%  138.75

Developmental Supports

$22.9 million  3.08%  291

Human Services

$28.8 million  3.88%  124.25
Mental Health

Mental Health Center offers a range of mental wellness and substance abuse services to residents and serves as a safety net for individuals with the most severe forms of mental illness.

Mental Health collaborates with area law enforcement through the co-responder program, which pairs mental health professionals with police officers on calls that involve potential mental health issues. Thirteen cities in Johnson County now participate in the co-responder program.

Department of Corrections

Department of Corrections supervises juvenile and adult clients through progressive, effective and sound correction, rehabilitation and recidivism reduction programs.

In Dec. 2016, six clients of the Adult Residential Center graduated from a pilot culinary cornerstones program. Participants went through a 15-week curriculum to develop basic cooking skills.

Emergency Medical Services (MED-ACT)

MED-ACT is the emergency medical services department that responds to all county 9-1-1 emergency calls. The department serves more than 580,000 citizens.

MED-ACT looks to improve survival of pre-hospital cardiac arrest through its resident and other first responders. As a result, the county’s survival rate of 57 percent for patients who experience a cardiac arrest and are found in a shockable heart rhythm is higher than the national average of 33 percent.

Emergency Management and Communications

Emergency Management and Communications serves as the county’s designated public safety answering point and disaster and emergency management response agency.

The Emergency Communications Center receives and processes 911 calls that need fire and emergency medical services. In 2016, ECC dispatchers handled more than 58,000 calls — nearly 79 percent medical emergencies.
The Johnson County delegation of the Kansas Silver Haired Legislature (KSHL) has submitted a to-do list of recommendations for consideration by the Kansas Legislature during its 2017 session. The KSHL is a unicameral legislature made up of 125 representatives from across the state of Kansas. The local delegation is composed of up to six representatives elected at-large. All are 60 or older.

Johnson County delegates are Roy White, Olathe, chairman and Jerry Ireland, Olathe, vice chairman, along with members Max Atwell, De Soto; Katy Hoffman and Alfie Thompson, both of Gardner; and Gary Scott, Olathe.

According to the delegates, many of whom have served as the Johnson County representatives for years, membership in the KSHL provides invaluable experience in the political process and the opportunity to advocate for legislative issues important to seniors.

Each October, 125 KSHL delegates from across the state meet in Topeka for a three-day session when they debate and vote on measures passed by various committees. Bills that pass the full house are presented to the state of Kansas Legislature and the governor as recommendations for state policy.

Heading into the new legislative session, the top issues by the KSHL to be addressed by state lawmakers in 2017 include:

- **Resolution 3301**: Fully fund all Kansas Public Employees Retirement System obligations (KPERS), including interest on the bonds passed this past legislative session.
- **Resolution 3307**: Provide a cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) for each retiree who is entitled to receive a retirement benefit from KPERS. This has not happened since 1998.
- **Resolution 3302**: Repeal the non-wage business income tax exemption, passed by the Kansas Legislature and signed by the governor in 2012. Replace it with a tax policy fair to all Kansans, with shared responsibility for contributing by all Kansans.
- **Resolution 3303**: Continue to support and fund public transportation, vitally needed by Kansas senior citizens, especially in rural areas of the state.
- **Resolution 3304**: Roll back the 38 percent cut to the Senior Care Act program, which allows a qualifying senior to stay in his or her own home with just minimal assistance, averaging approximately $200 per month. This is a substantial savings when compared with an alternative of nursing home expenses, which can easily average around $6,000 per month.
- **Resolution 3305**: Support the expansion of Medicaid (KanCare) in Kansas. Currently, about 150,000 (of which around 16,000 are Kansas seniors between the age of 60 – 65 years old) Kansans fall into the “coverage gap.” These Kansans make too much money to qualify for the base KanCare program, yet do not make enough money to afford private medical insurance. The Kansas Hospital Association and the Alliance for Health Kansas are both in full support of this resolution.

The Silver Haired Legislature was created by an act of Congress in 1969. KSHL was formed in 1982. Any registered voter from Kansas, aged 60 or older, can file for candidacy. Since KSHL’s inception, the legislators have helped enact legislation such as:

- A Silver Alert Plan to provide public notice of an elderly missing person.
- Workforce training for every qualified older Kansan.
- Grandparent and stepparent visitation rights.
- The Grandparents as Caregivers Act.
- Amended fishing license fees for seniors.

Elections for the Johnson County Silver Haired Legislature are scheduled for Tuesday, March 14 from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Sunset Drive Office Building (11811 S. Sunset Drive in Olathe). Six at-large legislators represent Johnson County in the KSHL. Elections will be held if more than six candidates apply. If less than six apply, additional representatives will be appointed.

County residents age 60 and over who are registered voters may vote for the candidate of their choice. Eligible voters unable to travel to the election sites on March 14 may request an absentee ballot on or before Monday, Feb. 20. Candidate information will be available at the election site and posted online at jocogov.org/hsd prior to the election. Candidates may file for election to KSHL by Feb. 7.

Johnson County residents who are at least 60 years old on or before March 14, 2017 (and registered voters) may file to be a candidate for election to the Johnson County delegation of the KSHL. A nomination is secured with an intent form and a $25 filing fee made out to “KSHL,” or an intent form and a petition signed by 50 county residents age 60 or older.

Please call the Area Agency on Aging office at 913-715-8860 for a candidate registration packet, an absentee ballot or if you have questions about the KSHL. Petitions or filing fees must be received by the end of business day on Tuesday, Feb. 7, 2017.
Save a life with just your hands

Johnson County MED-ACT working to teach hands-only CPR

By CHRIS DEPUSOIR

If you see someone collapse, and he or she doesn’t respond, do you know what to do?

Johnson County MED-ACT, the county’s emergency medical services department, has a plan to educate the county’s residents on how to perform life-saving actions through hands-only CPR. The intent of CPR (Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation) is to continue blood flow to vital organs in a person who has lost consciousness — at least until trained medical personnel arrive at an emergency. Some CPR is better than no CPR.

Under the direction of the Johnson County Emergency Medical Services (EMS) System Medical Director program, Dr. Ryan C. Jacobsen set a priority for the county to increase the survivability of pre-hospital cardiac arrest. For the past several years, CPR training has been a key focus area for county MED-ACT staff. They have identified a goal to train all county employees and school districts in Johnson County. The overarching goal is to increase the pool of people who are able to perform this life-saving procedure when it’s needed.

Since June 2014 more than 41,000 people in Johnson County have received hands-only CPR training, including — at last count — 42,182 people trained in 2016.

The performance of CPR on an unconscious person can increase the survival rate by 200 to 300 percent. The hands-only CPR method focuses on hard and quick chest compressions about two inches deep without the pairing of breaths, or mouth-to-mouth resuscitation. The ideal rhythm is 100 to 120 compressions per minute — you can download an app on your phone that plays this rhythm and tempo on your phone. This is about the same beat as the BeeGee’s song “Stayin’ Alive.” It should be noted the full CPR with breaths is still recommended for babies and children.

In a coordinated effort with county emergency services, Emergency Communication Center dispatch operators can guide callers in administering hands-only CPR and provide an audible beat to pace compressions over an emergency phone call.

Why you need to know hands-only CPR

It is currently snow removal season, which is a peak cardiac arrest time when people may tend to overexert themselves shoveling snow. Knowing CPR in advance could pay off when it’s really needed.

Most cardiac arrest episodes happen at home. That means, if trained, you could save family, friends or loved ones. Learning hands-only CPR can prepare you to help in an emergency situation.

You don’t have to do mouth-to-mouth resuscitation to help in an emergency — effective compressions can provide life-saving circulation. In addition, state Good Samaritan laws provide general legal protection for someone who assists a person who is injured or in danger.

Don’t forget your AED

An automated external defibrillator, or AED, is another life-saving device that you can deploy using your hands. AEDs are not what we’ve all seen on TV — they are safe to operate and don’t propel a victim off the floor with a charge of electricity, as is often depicted on TV shows. An AED is a portable medical device that can produce a shock through electrodes and return a heart to its normal rhythm, also called defibrillation.

When a person’s heart stops beating, his or her chance of survival decreases by seven to 10 percent for each minute that passes without restoration of a heartbeat. This means that the chances of survival can decrease quickly. Training is not required to use an AED. Easy-to-follow instructions are part of the device and some models will actually give audible step-by-step directions for usage.

It is important to know if an AED is nearby, so pay attention to where they are located in buildings you visit, such as your workplace, church, school or fitness center.

Next steps

You should get training if you haven’t already learned CPR or AED procedures.

If you are part of a community group that could benefit from training, contact MED-ACT’s community education specialist at 913-715-1981. Training is also available through Johnson County HeartSafe, a coalition of public safety, law enforcement and health partners (including Johnson County MED-ACT) that offers CPR and AED training. Visit jocoheartsafe.org for training and class information.
Volunteerism is a key component of the mission statement at Heartstrings Community Foundation® which assists adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities in living meaningful, independent and productive lives through interactions in the community through:

- Respectful, person-centered planning.
- Vocational training at Heartstrings’ businesses.
- Vocational placement in the community with appropriate support.
- Interactive recreational activities and volunteer opportunities.

That’s right. The adults who work at Heartstrings also have the opportunity to volunteer in the community. Two of their service opportunities have direct ties to Johnson County Human Services Department — Meals on Wheels and Catch a Ride programs. The partnership began in 2002 with Meals on Wheels.

“We normally look for volunteer opportunities where we’re doing our occupational duties, but this seemed to be such a good fit,” said Rosanne Thiry, assistant executive director.

And oddly enough, Johnson County has a vocational tie with the foundation, although it’s not what you might think. The adults who go to work with Heartstrings are actually referred to the foundation by Johnson County Developmental Supports, the government agency that facilitates career and personal development for county residents with intellectual and developmental disabilities. That tie puts them in the unique position of being able to give back to the community. Heartstrings is one of more than 90 Johnson County vocational providers.

Other volunteer opportunities include playing games with nursing home residents and assisting at local animal shelters.

“These occasions help our employees gain social skills, providing them with an orientation to the community and an awareness of what’s around them,” Thiry said.

“At the beginning, the participants are typically pretty quiet, they do get to know the people,” said Gene Holland, director of employment services. “The staff may change, but our employees and those we assist know each other by name.”

So, every Tuesday and Wednesday, three to five of the foundation’s participants and its drivers will make from six and eight meal deliveries each day.

“They get to know the people,” Holland said. “They know who lives where and who gets what.”

Catch a Ride volunteers usually make one to three trips per week.

“We have our regulars,” Holland said. “A few of our volunteers and staff have bonded with some of the riders, so now they ask for us to give them their ride.”

It’s apparent that the volunteers enjoy their activities. “They really do look forward to seeing the people,” Holland said. “One individual has befriended people he has met and will spend time on the weekend visiting them.”

They don’t call it “Heartstrings” for nothing. ☺
The Olathe Naval Air Station
Rich military history anchored right in Johnson County

By GERALD HAY

Seventy-five years ago, farmland north of Gardner became a military base with the beginning of World War II. Now, the land is the New Century AirCenter, but for 27 years it was the Olathe Naval Air Station (NAS) that trained and sent pilots to two different wars.

During its heyday, the military base, dubbed the Prairie Navy, was a beehive of activity after it was carved out of Johnson County farmland that was purchased for $72,343 in January 1942.

The complex, commissioned to house approximately 2,000 enlisted men and 100 officers, began training pilots by mid-1942. Stearman two-seater biplanes used in the training, were painted yellow. The planes were nicknamed “yellow perils” by the training pilots.

The military base eventually spanned about 2,000 acres with three runways, 14 secondary fields and, eventually, 44 buildings.

From July 1942, when the first cadets completed their training, to September 1944, the Olathe Naval Air Station trained nearly 4,550 cadets with a toll of 25 training fatalities.

The late John Glenn, future astronaut and U.S. senator, was in the first class to be trained at the base, making his first solo flight in a military plane. According to him the airport was “a sea of mud and we made our way from building to building on wooden duck boards.”

World War II hero, then-captain, later vice admiral, James H. Flatley, Jr., commanded the Olathe base for about a year. The base was renamed NAS Olathe (Flatley Field) for him in 1962.

Another notable Navy pilot trained at the base was former TV game show host Bob Barker. In addition, one emblem for the NAS was designed by Walt Disney, who grew up in Kansas City.

Following the end of World War II, the mission of the base shifted to support Naval and Marine Air Reserve training programs in the Kansas City region. In 1946, the station became responsible for the Naval Air Technical Training Unit to train reservists, air traffic controllers and ground approach operators.

During the Korean conflict, three squadrons of Navy Reservists were called to active duty from NAS. Scores of other military personnel were trained at the base. A plaque at the Navy Park honors five men killed in that war along with three who remain missing in action.

From 1950 to 1955, the Air Force Reserve’s 442d Troop Carrier Wing was temporarily based at the Olathe base prior relocating to Grandview Airport, Missouri, later renamed Richards-Gebaur Air Force Base.

This base played an integral part in Johnson County’s social life, including dances to Big Band music at Kinnick Hall that housed the first Olympic-sized pool west of the Mississippi, along with numerous attractions, aerial demonstrations and public air shows.

An air show and carnival in 1954 featured both the Navy’s Blue Angels and the Air Force’s Thunderbirds.

In 1969, the U.S. Navy announced the closure of the Olathe Naval Air Station to reduce military spending. The base was officially decommissioned in 1970.

The Johnson County Airport Commission acquired the site of the closed military base from the Navy in 1973 with the stipulation that the land be used as a public airport; it named the complex the Johnson County Industrial Airport. New Century AirCenter became its name in 1995.

The AirCenter is now home to more than 65 companies and organizations, employing approximately 5,000 workers. They include firms in the fields of telecommunications, printing, food processing, manufacturing and avionics.

The runway, which once trained pilots for war, is still quite busy. Annually, it has more than 50,000 flights, mostly involving civilian and corporate aircraft. There is still a Stearman based on the field by virtue of the Commemorative Air Force’s efforts to restore and fly old warbirds. The group’s airshow/fundraiser takes place each September.

The complex houses several Johnson County facilities, including the Adult Detention Center of the sheriff’s office; the Adult Residential Center of the corrections department; and the New Century Fieldhouse of the county’s park and recreation district.

The U.S. Army Reserve’s Bravo Company, 7th Battalion, 158th Aviation Regiment, flying the CH-47 Chinook helicopter, also is located at the AirCenter. In 2011, the unit lost 30 U.S. servicemen when its Chinook was shot down in Afghanistan.

In the end, the Army has landed to continue the history of a military presence at the bygone Olathe Naval Air Station.
Prepare for winter weather

By TRENT PITTMAN

With winter upon us, Johnson County Emergency Management hopes you’ll review how to prepare for winter elements — at home and in your vehicle.

Prepare your home
When preparing your home for winter, it’s a good idea to start before the snow is in the forecast. An easy preparation goal to set is to plan for up to 72 hours at home. This means that you should have food, water and supplies on hand for each member of your household to live at home for three days. Having a minimum of one gallon of water per person, per day is essential. If you have a family of four, you should have 12 gallons of water on hand. You can buy gallon jugs or bottled water at the store. When stocking up on food, you should remember that if the food requires preparation (such as boiling or microwaving), you will also need a way to prepare it.

Prepare your vehicle
Building a winter emergency kit for your vehicle is a quick and easy way you can be better prepared for seasonal weather incidents. When building your kit, you should start with some basics that you can leave all winter, including items such as a cell phone charger, warm blankets, a flashlight with fresh batteries and an ice scraper. If you notice that snow or adverse weather is in the forecast, add a small snow shovel and kitty litter to your kit. If you plan to hit the road for an extended road trip or to a remote location, you can add healthy snacks, a paper map and water to your kit. Finally, and most importantly, if you plan to travel this winter, simply let a loved one know when and where you are going and let them know when you arrive.

WEB EXTRA
Learn what items to include in your car’s emergency kit at jocogov.com/jocomag

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Crave that spring green?

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Johnson County residents, get a FREE soil test

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Funding provided by the Johnson County Stormwater Management Program. Limit one per Johnson County household.

Know your winter terminology

Winter Weather Advisory
A winter weather advisory for snow means periods of snow will primarily cause travel difficulties. Be prepared for snow-covered roads and limited visibilities and use caution while driving.

Winter Storm Warning
A winter storm warning means significant amounts of snow, sleet and ice are expected or occurring. This will make travel very hazardous or impossible.

Blizzard Warning
A blizzard warning means severe winter weather conditions are expected or occurring. Falling and blowing snow with strong winds and poor visibility are likely. This will lead to white-out conditions, making travel extremely dangerous. DO NOT TRAVEL.

Check with the National Weather Service at weather.gov/kc or your trusted local news source for the latest weather warnings.

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Learn what items to include in your car’s emergency kit at jocogov.com/jocomag

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Check with the National Weather Service at weather.gov/kc or your trusted local news source for the latest weather warnings.
Supporting adults with age-related illnesses
A new group home in Gardner and more

By JODY HANSON

“I’ve never seen him move so fast!”

That was Johnson County Developmental Supports residential services director Sarah Schlitter’s observation as she watched Mark Smith hurry down the hall of a newly renovated ranch house in Gardner last month. Not only was Mark seeing his new home for the first time, but he had just learned that he had first choice of a bedroom.

The remodeled Gardner house replaces a home owned by Johnson County where Mark and four other individuals served by JCDS live. These individuals all have intellectual and developmental disabilities and are also experiencing Alzheimer’s or dementia. This is the 12th home purchased and renovated by Friends of JCDS, a nonprofit that raises money to support JCDS clients. It’s the first home specifically renovated for JCDS clients who are experiencing an age-related illness.

Developing expertise to meet a need

Factors such as better access to health care and improved technologies have led to increased life expectancies for people with an intellectual or developmental disability.

“Many people that we serve have Down syndrome. Because of the way they tend to age, there is a high propensity to develop some form of dementia,” said Schlitter. “Symptoms in this population can sometimes start surfacing by the time they are 40 years old.”

More than five years ago Schlitter reached out to the Alzheimer’s Association to seek advice on supporting clients who also have dementia. Through this collaboration, Schlitter and JCDS residential team leader Heather Brown have become local experts on serving this specific population.

“Stacy Geyer, a JCDS coworker, and I have become certified through the National Task Group on Intellectual Disabilities and Dementia Practices for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities,” said Brown. “Now we can train our direct care staff and others so they are better equipped to support our clients who are experiencing age-related illnesses.”

Making life more comfortable for clients with dementia or Alzheimer’s disease

Schlitter and Brown apply their expertise on age-related illness to the remodeling and design of Friends of JCDS houses for this population. They worked closely with Janel Bowers, Friends of JCDS development director, on the Gardner house project.

“Sarah and Heather partnered with us on everything from widening doorways and installing ceiling tracks for lifts to wall colors and flooring selections,” said Bowers. “Their expertise was crucial and will make the surroundings much more functional for the folks who will live in this house.”

JCDS’s Retirement Services is another area that has benefited from expanded knowledge in age-related illnesses. This program area that serves I/DD clients 55 and over introduced a Dementia Day Program in July 2014. This program offers therapeutic music, gardening, baking and memory recall activities.

Other ways Johnson County supports residents as they age

Johnson County’s Human Services department serves as the county’s Area Agency on Aging and can connect people with Alzheimer’s disease or dementia and their loved ones with resources they need.

“There is so much to consider when someone is diagnosed with an age-related illness, such as addressing home and environmental safety issues, meeting transportation needs and identifying respite care for caregivers,” says Ed Schulte, aging information specialist with Johnson County’s Human Services department. “It can be overwhelming, but we’re here to help with those issues and many more.”

The Johnson County Mental Health Center has two full-time aging specialists who provide psychotherapy services to older adults. In addition, the Johnson County Department of Health and Environment employs skilled registered nurses who provide physical and social assessments, education and counseling on senior needs to older adults in their homes.

To learn more about Johnson County’s senior services, visit jocogov.org/health/senior-services.
Meet your
Board of County Commissioners

The legislative powers of Johnson County Government are vested in a seven-member Board of County Commissioners that exercises its authority to ensure the general health, safety and welfare of the public. The board has been given exclusive powers to enact, amend and repeal local legislation, to levy taxes and to make appropriations, to adopt budgets, and to make appointments to certain offices, boards and commissions. The board is composed of an at-large chairman and one representative from each of the six districts within Johnson County.

Ronald “Ron” Shaffer
First district
Office: 715-0431

James “Jim” P. Allen
Second district
Office: 715-0432

Steven “Steve” C. Klika
Vice chair and third district
Office: 715-0433

Jason Osterhaus
Fourth district
Office: 715-0434

Michael Ashcraft
Fifth district
Office: 715-0435

Michael “Mike” Brown
Sixth district
Office: 715-0436

Eilert completes term as JCERT chairman
Oversaw significant progress for Johnson County

Commission chairman Ed Eilert is stepping down as chairman of the Johnson County Education Research Triangle Authority after successfully serving two four-year terms and overseeing numerous JCERT accomplishments. Funding for JCERT comes from a 1/8-cent sales tax, approved by voters, to advance academic research and business endeavors at its partner organizations, the University of Kansas Edwards Campus, K-State Olathe and the University of Kansas Clinical Research Center.

“When Johnson County citizens approved funding for JCERT, they confirmed their commitment to investing in a higher education strategy that would ensure the availability of skilled workers in life sciences, animal health and food safety,” Eilert said. “JCERT helps solidify the county’s role in the regional life sciences economy. It supports new academic degrees that contribute to meeting employers’ workforce needs and helps local and regional businesses attract and retain talent.”

Based on results to date, JCERT is on track to achieve more than $1.4 billion of economic impact in its first two decades. The JCERT tax generates more than $15 million annually, which is divided equally among the three academic partner organizations. Learn more about JCERT at jocotriange.com.

The celebration of a lifetime begins here.

We welcome our new affinity partnership with the Johnson County Government & the City of Olathe.

Chairman Eilert helped affect economic impact through JCERT, including on the KU Edwards campus, pictured above.

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> DignityKansasCity.com <
Meet Cal Hayden.
There’s a new sheriff in town.

By AMANDA KELLER

It begins like a scene straight out of “The Dukes of Hazzard.”
Around 1970, a robin’s egg blue Johnson County Sheriff’s Office patrol car came speeding down a street in De Soto with sirens blaring. A deputy parked the car, emerged and asked a man sitting in the middle of the street to move.

When he refused, the deputy arrested him. He then turned to the troublemaker’s friends, who were causing a disturbance, and asked “Who’s next?” The troublemakers scattered. Two junior high kids watched the scene unfold in amazement and said, “We’re going to do that!” And they did.

The two awestruck adolescents were lifelong friends Cal Hayden and Scott Atwell. Both men have retired in recent years after serving long, impressive careers with the Johnson County Sheriff’s Office.

A career of public service
Born in Gardner and raised in De Soto, Hayden graduated from De Soto High School in 1975. His law enforcement career began with the Summit County Sheriff’s Office in Colorado in 1979.

Less than two years later, Hayden decided he’d had his fill of mountain living and he returned home to work as a Johnson County Sheriff’s Office deputy assigned to detention.

During his nearly 28-year career with the Johnson County Sheriff’s Office, Hayden worked his way up the ranks from deputy to sergeant to lieutenant, the rank at which he retired in June 2008. Hayden served a wide variety of roles during his career — uniformed patrol officer, dispatcher, undercover officer, firearms instructor and armorer.

Shortly after retiring from the sheriff’s office, Hayden decided to try a different public service role. In January 2009, he became a county commissioner for Johnson County’s sixth district and served one four-year term in office.

In the August 2016 primary election, county voters elected Cal Hayden to serve as the next sheriff, succeeding Sheriff Frank Denning who retired earlier this month.

Who is Cal Hayden?
When people meet Cal Hayden for the first time, they are often struck by his unassuming, humble nature. People close to him describe Hayden as an honest, committed person with a healthy sense of humor — characteristics that he considers central to who he is.

“Beyond the fact that he’s just a very positive, approachable and passionate person, I think Cal Hayden will serve the Johnson County community well for several reasons,” says county manager Hannes Zacharias. “He’s a lifelong resident of the county and not only did he work for the Johnson County Sheriff’s Office for nearly 28 years, but he has also served as a county commissioner, so he understands how the sheriff’s office operates within the larger context of Johnson County Government as a whole.”

When not working, Hayden delights in spending time with his wife of 18 years, Kelly, who works for Johnson County District Courts, and their family. They have five adult children and three grandchildren. He also enjoys restoring classic cars and tending to the cattle that he raises on his 33-acre plot in Gardner.

Cal Hayden was sworn in as Johnson County Sheriff on Jan. 9, 2017. He previously served as a sheriff’s office deputy for 28 years.

Becoming sheriff
The motivation to run for sheriff was born from Hayden’s deep desire to serve the citizens of Johnson County. He credits his mentor, former Sheriff Fred Allenbrand, for first inspiring him.

“I had the honor of working for Fred Allenbrand and when you work for someone of that caliber, he has a tremendous impact on your life. He was one of the top three men I’ve ever met in my life,” says Hayden.

Priorities for 2017
Sworn in as sheriff on Jan. 9, Hayden has only begun his new role. The absolute first thing he believes needs to happen is assessing the administrative side of the agency. He intends to perform an audit of the sheriff’s office to make sure things are being done the best way possible.

While Hayden has existing relationships with many employees, he feels it’s critically important that he build relationships throughout the agency — no small task given that the sheriff’s office currently employs approximately 450 law enforcement officers and 100 civilians.

The agency’s top priority for 2017 is recruiting.
“‘We’re 58 positions short,” Hayden said, “and we are going to pull out all the stops to get those positions filled.’ He says they will be using some new human resources tactics and allocating additional resources to bolster the agency’s recruiting efforts.

While many challenges lay ahead, Hayden is ready and willing to meet them head on.
Michael Aldridge was named director of the Department of Technology and Innovation in August. He spent more than two decades developing an expertise in health care information technology and operations before joining the county.

**What is your favorite aspect of working for Johnson County Government?**
Having spent more than 20 years in health care, I am very motivated to help others. Now at Johnson County, I appreciate the clear commitment to making our community a better place for everyone.

**What is your approach to management and leadership?**
Experience has taught me that teams are at their best when everyone is engaged and able to contribute. I strive to create an environment where expectations are clear, people feel safe to speak up, and we understand how our work has an impact. I feel strongly that better outcomes are realized through collaboration. I like to have fun at work, and appreciate that humor is mentioned in the Johnson County values and apparent in the many meetings I attend.

**If you could “carpool karaoke” with any celebrity, who would it be and why?**
Since we are playing hypotheticals, I’m going to say Jim Morrison. (Yes. I realize he’s dead.) I was a big Doors fan back in high school and college, and spent a good many hours singing karaoke.

Susan Pekarek was named general manager of Johnson County Wastewater in September. She spent 15 years in JCW before her new leadership position.

**What is your favorite aspect of working for Johnson County Government?**
My favorite aspect is the people with whom I work at Johnson County Wastewater and across the county as well as the people in the community we serve.

**What is your approach to management and leadership?**
As a leader, I strive to lead by example. I encourage inclusion and collaboration across the JCW group, the county and the region. Individually, we are good; but together, we are great.

**If you could “carpool karaoke” with any celebrity, who would it be and why?**
I would ride with The Eagles. Their music is great for any occasion. They are leaders in their industry and they have inspired many musicians and music listeners over the years.

In March 2016, 19-year county veteran Ellen Wernicke was named director of Emergency Management and Communications after serving as interim director since October 2015.

**What is your favorite aspect of working for Johnson County Government?**
It’s exciting to work for a progressive, forward-thinking organization that others across the country look to as a model. I am in my 19 year with Johnson County and I continue to find so much pride and satisfaction serving those who live, work and visit the county.

**What is your approach to management and leadership?**
I believe in recognizing the skills and creativity of each individual and empowering them to use their talents to positively contribute to the organization. Meeting our goals is a collective effort, and we accomplish those goals with input from every member of the team. I encourage participation and collaboration at every level of our department.

**If you could “carpool karaoke” with any celebrity, who would it be and why?**
Jimmy Kimmel. I enjoy his humor and think he would be so much fun!
Can I recycle this? The ‘yes’ and ‘no’ of curbside recycling

**1. Receipt paper**

**NO.** Receipt paper can’t be recycled. Because of the presence of BPA and the low paper quality, thermal printed receipts belong in the trash. We encourage you to ask for an electronic receipt when available.

**2. Plastic bags**

**NO.** Plastic grocery bags, plastic produce and bread bags and plastic films are recyclable but are not accepted in your curbside recycle bin. These items get wrapped in machinery at the material recovery facility where recyclables are processed. Many local stores take plastic bags and films for recycling. You can check online at plasticfilmrecycling.org or a store near you.

**3. Pizza boxes**

**YES.** You can remove greasy spots, cheese and other food contaminants first. If your pizza box is clean and doesn’t contain a large amount of grease, it can be recycled in your curbside bin. If it’s too greasy, simply tear off the top for recycling and trash the rest.

**4. Plasticware and paper plates**

**NO.** Contrary to popular belief, plastic silverware and paper plates are not recyclable, even when clean. They are not suitable for recycling because of the odd shape of plasticware and the low quality of plastic and paper materials. Reduce waste at your next event by using durable, reusable plates and silverware instead.

**5. Paper milk and juice cartons**

**YES.** Because of recent advances in the recycling industry, juice, milk and soup cartons are now accepted for recycling in your curbside recycle bin. Simply rinse them out when you’re done and throw them in your recycle bin.

**6. Styrofoam**

**NO.** Styrofoam is the misfit of the recycling world since it’s made from polystyrene. Unlike most other number six plastics, Styrofoam is not accepted in your curbside recycle bin because it can break into thousands of tiny pieces and contaminate other recyclables. The best thing is to avoid plastic foam altogether and find a more durable or recyclable option.

**7. Shampoo bottles**

**YES.** These recyclable items are often missed by even the keenest recyclers. When you’re done, rinse out the bottle and throw it into your recycle bin. You can even include the lid. This only applies to non-aerosol products and plastic containers.

**8. Red Solo cups**

**YES.** These recyclable items are often missed by even the keenest recyclers. When you’re done, rinse out the bottle and throw it into your recycle bin. You can even include the lid. This only applies to non-aerosol products and plastic containers.

**9. K-Cups**

**NO.** K-Cups and other single-serve coffees are growing in popularity. While K-Cups are convenient and come in many flavors, because of their size and material components, they should not be recycled. K-Cups belong in the trash.

**10. Aluminum foil**

**NO.** It has aluminum in the name but don’t confuse it with a soda can. While aluminum foil is recyclable it is not accepted in your curbside recycle bin. The best option is to take it to a community recycling center that accepts aluminum foil. Visit recycl espot.org for locations near you.

Follow JoCoRecycles: