

East Lawrence News

East Lawrence Neighborhood Association
P.O. Box 442393 Lawrence, Kansas - eastlawrence@yahoo.com
www.eastlawrence.com

Jan Feb 2026



ELNA

General Meeting

January 12th 7- 9 pm

February 9th 7- 9 pm

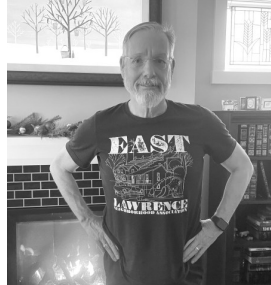
IN PERSON AT NEW YORK SCHOOL
936 NY St

And Online via Zoom

Agenda & Zoom Link

always available at [http://](http://www.eastlawrence.com/meetings)

www.eastlawrence.com/meetings



From the President

Darrel Proffitt

Happy New Year! As the new President of the ELNA, I cannot begin my term without a huge thank you to Barry Shalinsky, the outgoing President. Barry's leadership benefited us all in so many different ways and personally his understanding of the history of East Lawrence generally and ELNA specifically, has been invaluable.

Barry has often attended meetings of the various boards and agencies of Lawrence, keeping us all apprised of issues facing us. His leadership, thankfully, will continue as he remains on the Board. I plan on leaning into him regularly to keep me focused on issues and proposals that will affect us all. I join my voice with all of the Board to thank Barry for his continued presence and wisdom.

During a recent Board retreat, goals for the coming year were established. The hope of the Board is to continue building community in East Lawrence, reach out to those in need and seek ways to fund projects. As we proceed through the year, I will keep you apprised of ways in which this will happen. None of the goals are new to us but focusing on them will help us develop ways for neighbors to participate and join together, building on the great work of the past. I recently retired from active work, serving since 1991 as an Episcopal Priest in several different parishes. I look forward to focusing my energy and focus on East Lawrence and look forward to meeting more people and working with the Board and others to continue to make ELNA an effective voice throughout our city and in our neighborhood.

I can be reached directly by email at darrelproffitt@yahoo.com or by phone at 785/260-7973. As a reminder, you are always welcome to attend the ELNA Board meetings on the 2nd Monday of each month. We will be meeting at New York Elementary School located at 936 New York. Meetings begin at 7 PM and you can attend by Zoom if needed.

Let's make the coming year a stunning one for East Lawrence!

ELNA Meeting Dates 2026

ELNA meets on the second Monday of each month, from 7-9pm in person and on zoom. In this new year, we'll meet in the New York School library at 936 NY St. Mark your calendars with these meeting dates:
Jan 12th, Feb 9th, Mar 9th, Apr 13th, May 11th, June 8th, July 13th, Aug 10th, Sept 14th, Oct 12th, Nov 9th, Dec 14th.

Board Contacts

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Aaron Paden, Treasurer,

aaronpaden@gmail.com

Phil Collison, Secretary,

phil@pcollision.com

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Barry Shalinsky, Past President

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ELNA Contacts

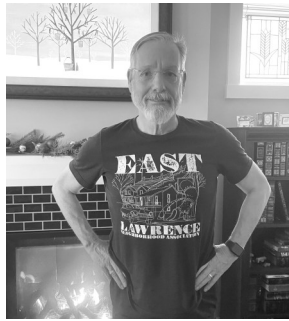
Lane Eisenbart, Coordinator
eastlawrence@yahoo.com

ELNA Board Members

Darrel Proffitt, President

He/him

darrelproffitt@yahoo.com
1200 block New Jersey St.



I was elected President of the East Lawrence Neighborhood Association this past December. The former President, Barry Shalinsky, provided leadership and guidance over the last few years. His leadership continued the role of ELNA as an effective voice in both the neighborhood and the city. I am honored to serve, and hope my time will continue the influence our neighborhood association has had in supporting the historic role of East Lawrence in the life of our city. Having served as a member of the board for the last couple of years enables me to focus on continuing to build that legacy.

I bring to my new role many years of nonprofit leadership, having served as an Episcopal Priest since 1991. I served churches in the Diocese of Chicago for seven years, and the Diocese of Texas for eleven. I also spent nearly nine years at Saint Margaret's in West Lawrence. My wife Julie and I just returned to Lawrence in August following an 18-month interim ministry in Omaha. In 2022 we sold our house in West Lawrence and built a house in the East Lawrence neighborhood. We modeled our house after a 1920-30s Craftsman Bungalow and are proud of the way it fits with the historic appearance of our neighborhood. With our two dogs barking wildly at squirrels, we often sit in the front or at the back of the house, enjoying the vibrant life of our world in East Lawrence. We recognize the historic value of the neighborhood and are impressed with the Board's commitment to continue supporting that history. We hope to do all we can to further that commitment.

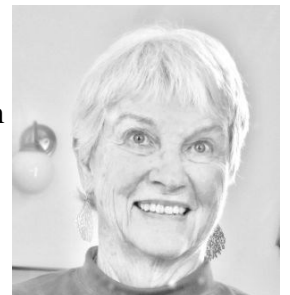
Just this past week I led a retreat to help clarify who it is that we are as a Board and where it is we are going (and growing). I left the retreat more committed to working with all of you in our neighborhood so that we not only preserve the uniqueness of East Lawrence, but also build on the great work that has been accomplished in past years. It is the hope of the Board to continue building a sense of community, to seek resources to assist in those efforts, and to assure that all recognize that the greater Lawrence

community benefits from a strong and vibrant East Lawrence. We will be building on the success of the past, while seeking new ways to involve more people, and by building on the pride that is part of living in East Lawrence.

My wife Julie and I were married in Lawrence and have lived here, off and on, since 1979. We are the parents of three children and are the delighted grandparents of three grandchildren. We spend a lot of time either driving around or walking our dogs in the neighborhood in order to gain a greater appreciation of what it means to be part of this historic and vibrant community. We are proud of it all - from Hobbs Park to houses that have been here for over a hundred years, and to others, like ours, that are more recent additions to the neighborhood. I hope to have the opportunity to meet more people this year, and to invite feedback any of you have about what we are doing, planning or proposing. I invite you to be part of the East Lawrence Neighborhood Association, and to join with your neighbors in continuing to make our neighborhood the envy of our larger community.

Sacie Lambertson, Board Member

sacie.lambertson@gmail.com
700 Block of New York
Street



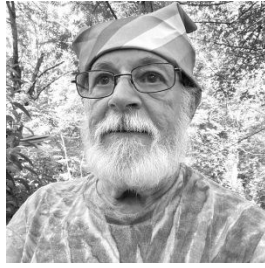
Lived in town for eight years
but in the Lawrence area for
about 30 years

We're retired; were in the US diplomatic service before retirement; lived mostly in Asia, but also in both Paris and London, a wonderful life. That said, we LOVE living in this city and particularly in wonderfully diverse East Lawrence on a street with super neighbors. We both play pickleball and love that too. We are both super busy. David does an excellent bi-weekly newspaper that offers a great alternative to Trump nonsense. I do the layout.

My major issue with the city is their lack of real/honest attention to neighborhoods, particularly those closest to downtown (not incl West Lawrence). They, ie the Commission, pay lip service but little more. Ditto the city employees as well.

**Barry Shalinsky,
Past President**

He/him
bshalinsky@hotmail.com
7th and Connecticut



I have lived in East Lawrence since the late 1970's, with a 20-year break from 1999 to 2019. I left town with a dog and cat, and returned with a spouse and two kids. We love living in our 125 year-old National Register historic house, and are slowly making repairs to help keep it viable for its next 125 years. I am semi-retired.

Do you make new year's resolutions and do you have any to share with everyone? I do not formally make new year's resolutions, but I have started focusing more on my health. I recommend the free exercise facilities at the Community Building for as long as it stays open.

What is one major issue in our neighborhood or City that you'd like to see improvement on this year?

There isn't one issue; there are several that relate to East Lawrence and either its bright future as an affordable, culturally diverse, quirky historic neighborhood, or the wholesale destruction of the character-defining elements that are critical to our neighborhood's soul. We need a resolute ELNA to advocate for the former, with adequate resources to do the job effectively. I hope to see us make tangible progress in saving Municipal Stadium and other neighborhood landmarks for future generations.

**Max Wilcox,
Board Member**

They/them
wilcoxmax27@gmail.com
East 12th



In East Lawrence since
May 2024

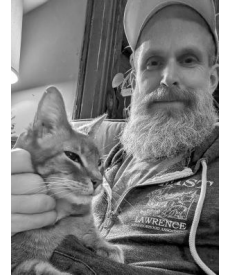
Professionally, State
Transportation Safety Planner

Hmmm... I am passionate about creating safe spaces in our community for all who need it. Something like that.

I resolve I am going to learn one new type of plant every time I go on a walk!

Aaron Paden, Board Member
He/Him

aaronpaden@gmail.com (preferred)
Phone: (785) 840-6400
1200 block of Delaware



How long have you lived in the neighborhood, what do you do for a living, and what do you want folks to know about you?

I've lived in East Lawrence for almost 20 years and have served on the neighborhood board for about 18 of those years, currently as treasurer. I work at the University of Kansas at CReSIS as a Research Technician building radar systems, and I also run a small photo studio where I document artwork and other projects. What I want folks to know is that I genuinely love this neighborhood—especially the way events, workdays, and small acts of cooperation bring people together. Even after all these years, I'm still meeting new neighbors. If that's you—hello, and welcome to one of the best neighborhoods on earth.

Do you make New Year's resolutions and do you have any to share with everyone?

I don't usually make formal resolutions, but I like to learn to cook a few new things every year. A good home-cooked meal is a simple pleasure, and this year I'm hoping to expand my Indian-inspired dishes. I also hope to serve tacos at some of the KVKL Sunday night kickball games this summer.

What is one major issue in our neighborhood or City that you'd like to see improvement on this year?

I'd really like to see the City and other institutions make it easier—not harder—for neighborhoods and residents to gather, organize, and build community. Strong neighborhoods don't happen by accident; they're built through access to shared spaces, support for local groups, and policies that recognize how important community connections are to a healthy city. The current City Commission has chosen to make it harder to access community buildings by charging residents entrance fees. This has almost no impact on the City budget but a huge impact on how welcoming Lawrence feels. The City should be looking for ways to make it easier for people to gather—not harder. We subsidize out-of-town developers, but charge our senior citizens to play pickleball together. I hope Lawrence citizens continue to speak up and advocate for shared community spaces.

Phil Collison, Board Member, He/Him

phil@pcollison.com and 843-8098
900 block of Pennsylvania

How long have you lived in the neighborhood? 22 years here.

Do you make new year's resolutions and do you have any to share with everyone? I'm hoping for a let up of all the anxieties that recent times have brought on.

What is one major issue in our neighborhood or City that you'd like to see improvement on this year? More coordination with the City's infrastructure improvements.



Krista Gentry, Board Member, She/Her
Leekris@hotmail.com
1100 Block of New Jersey

I think I've been in East Lawrence around 9 years. I work for the federal government and when I'm not at work, I like to volunteer in a variety of areas including ELNA, New York PTA, Lawrence Humane Society, my workplace union, and Girl Scouts.

Do you make new year's resolutions and do you have any to share with everyone? Not really. I guess maybe lose my bat wings?

What is one major issue in our neighborhood or City that you'd like to see improvement on this year? I'm really sad about the loss of brick sidewalks in our neighborhood. Would like to find a way to prevent that moving forward. I would like to see the addition of more housing for families in our neighborhood (3+ bedrooms). I would also like to see less demolition of older homes.



Sarah Norman, Board Member

sarahenorm@gmail.com
700 block Rhode Island

I moved into my house on May 5th, 2011- Cinco de Mayo! I was born and raised in New Mexico, but landed in Kansas for a swimming scholarship. After graduating with my undergraduate degree, I returned to New Mexico for a few years before coming back to Kansas to go to grad school. I am currently a Social Worker for the Veterans Administration, but have previously worked in nursing homes, provided case management to older adults, and did hospice work. I have two children and lots of pets (the more the merrier!). During my free time, I am usually working out, crocheting or knitting.



Also serving on our board are Brenda Nunez, KT Walsh, Courtney Shipley, and Jan Butin. Brenda has lived in East Lawrence most of her life and she's served on the ELNA Board as long as it has existed. KT Walsh has lived in East Lawrence over forty years! And she's served on the ELNA Board nearly that long, lol. Courtney recently moved to East Lawrence proper and this is her first year on our board. Jan is a long time resident of East Lawrence and just new to board serving. We thank everyone for their service!

Pam Blackburn, Board Member

pamblackburn55@gmail.com
800 block of Connecticut

I have lived in East Lawrence 13 years

I work at KU with AAI (we develop and administrate a variety of assessment testing programs.

I don't make new years resolutions per say, but am trying to eat healthier and maybe exercise? I would like sidewalks to improve without losing the historic brick.



Lane Eisenbart, Coordinator

She/Her

eastlawrence@yahoo.com

1200 Block of Delaware



How long have you lived in the neighborhood, what do you do for a living, and what do you want folks to know about you?

I've lived in East Lawrence for 20 years this last fall! My youngest daughter will turn 20 in February and she was born in a house on New York St. It's a pretty significant milestone for me. I've moved around the 1200 blocks a bit, but I think I'll stay here. It's where all my stuff is. I have several jobs. You'll see me at Positive Bright Start (a small private non profit at 1900 Delaware) where I do administrative stuff, make school lunch, and substitute teach in the preschool classroom. I bartend, model, and teach (hopefully if everyone signs up for my Burlesque Crafts class!) at the Arts Center. I do this East Lawrence coordinator thing. I also play some music and dance with friends sometimes. Why? You got a new gig for me?

Do you make new year's resolutions and do you have any to share with everyone?

This year, I want dress up more, perform more, and make more cool stuff. I would like fewer headaches, fewer asthma symptoms, and less existential dread.

What is one major issue in our neighborhood or City that you'd like to see improvement on this year?

I am really exhausted by the apparent disinterest City officials have in what citizens think and want. It's like, everyone says we hate an idea, and we communicate that, and then they just do it anyway? (*cough* parks and rec centers fees.) I am hopeful 2026 will show me differently.



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OUTGOING PRESIDENT'S OBSERVATIONS

— Barry Shalinsky

Happy 2026! Sometimes, what is old is new again!

Starting in January 2026, ELNA's monthly meetings are returning to New York School. In October, ELNA was formally uninvited by City Parks & Rec from continuing a post-pandemic run of holding our monthly meetings at the Amtrak/BNSF Depot. It will be nice to return to our roots. ELNA will always ♥ New York!

Something (someone) old is not new again. ELNA has a new president, and it is not me! I have spent eight years as ELNA President, three in the 1980's and five in the 2020's. That is over one-tenth of my life, and way past my shelf life. I am grateful to all of the board members and volunteers I have served with over the years, and grateful to Darrel Proffitt for stepping forward to take on the task of leading the neighborhood association. I will continue to serve on the ELNA Board and have no plans to go away quietly. I can and will speak out, with less self-restraint than I have exercised in the past.

Finally, I would like to recognize an unsung hero of East Lawrence, John "JT" Thornburg. I reached out to JT and asked him to consider running for the ELNA Board this year. He politely, but firmly declined. Little did I realize at the time that JT had terminal cancer and would be deceased within three months. JT was a zealous advocate for safe bicycle transportation, and especially secure and accessible bicycle parking and storage at public facilities. JT immersed himself in local public policy, and regularly attended meetings of various municipal boards, commissions and task forces. At our monthly ELNA meetings, we have an agenda item I call "alphabet soup," brief reports from and about entities titled by their acronyms, and JT usually had something interesting to report. When you received your ELNA newsletter in the mail or at your door, it was because JT helped manage newsletter distribution. JT was passionate about neighborhood history and loaned out his copy of *Embattled Lawrence* to anyone who would read it. He was a great friend and neighbor to his fellow residents of Poehler Lofts. We are grateful that JT's family asked people to honor his memory with contributions to ELNA.

East Lawrence Past and Future

– Max Wilcox (they/them)

Go anywhere in East Lawrence, and a relic of the past might wink up at you. Maybe the red in a brick street or sidewalk catches your eye while you meander downtown; passing bent, shotgun, four-by-four houses, and everything in between. But how did such a built environment come to be? In the coming issues, Max plans to explore East Lawrence's historical past so we can better understand how to protect East Lawrence and its residents in the future.

Unfortunately, the written story of East Lawrence begins with erasure. Until 1854, the entire state was a reservation for native peoples in "Indian Country" or "Nebraska Territory" until the Kansas-Nebraska Bill, which opened the state to white settlers. The only acknowledgement that I found of former inhabitation, at least in the "Embattled Lawrence" series, was in its forward, noting that we "stand on the land that at various times was home to the Kaw/Kansa, Wazhazhe (original tribal name, Ni-U-Ko'n-Ska)/Osage, and Shawano/Shawnee peoples," and that "Lawrence and Douglas County have hosted other Native American nations as well, including the Lenape/Delaware, Wanda/Wyandot, and Kiwigapawa/Kickapoo."

So, what we know today to be East Lawrence started in the "Settlement Period" from 1854 to 1863, which started after the New England Emigrant Aid Company, an abolitionist group from Massachusetts, settled a dispute over the area with John Baldwin, a Missourian. According to Dale Nimz's synthesis "Workers' Housing, Workers' Neighborhood: Historic East Lawrence" (2024), during this time, in addition to New Englanders, Lawrence was settled by people from Missouri, Illinois, Ohio, Indiana, and other north central states. The end of this period was marked by the slaughter of Quantrill's Raid in 1863 (more on that to come next time).

Since the footprint of the native peoples were erased, our neighborhood's oldest houses were built during that time of settlement. 50 years after the raid, Gurdon Grovenor prepared a list of extant pre-Quantrill houses in Lawrence and found that in 1913, there were eleven still standing in East Lawrence. Today, only three remain: 938 Rhode Island, 941 Rhode Island, and 945 Rhode Island (Lawrence Historic Resources Commission, 1995).

But what happened to the eight other houses that survived Quantrill's raid but are no longer with us? Were they demolished? Even so, why should we care?

While old homes are often nice or fun to look at, many of us often live our most vulnerable or private lives in these walls, even taking our first and last breaths within them. These homes and neighborhoods show the history that makes a place. Shady porches show us how people tried to stay cool before air conditioning and other ways of living.

They are filled with the good and the bad, including both the history of perpetuating violence by taking the land as well as a history of surviving the violence of Quantrill's Raid.

If you would like to share the story of a house in East Lawrence or a story that took place inside a house, or know what happened to one of the eight "missing" houses, please email me at wilcoxmax27@gmail.com.

Domer, Denis. 2025. "Embattled Lawrence, Kansas." 2nd Ed. Watkins Museum of History.

Lawrence Historic Resources Commission. 1995. "East Lawrence Historic Resources Reconnaissance Survey: Survey Summary Report." <https://assets.lawrenceks.org/pds/planning/documents/East-Lawrence-Historic-Resources-Reconnaissance-Survey.pdf>

Adopt a Family Thanks

Congrats on another successful Adopt a Family project! We did things a little differently this year, but it worked out just fine. I met with the family parent on a Monday morning and handed off the enormous pile of presents. She was so excited! I had all the presents sorted into bags for each person, and the bibles were on top of several of the bags. She was especially excited about those and said her kids were really interested in going to church right now, and she wanted to encourage that instead of bad behavior. I hear that. It was a little rushed on my part, as it was in the middle of several regular work day things I was supposed to be doing, and I didn't get a picture of the back of my car. I had to put the seats down! It was so full!

Special thanks to Aaron Paden for hosting the Gift Gathering and making chili. I did have a few last minute monetary contributions that I wasn't able to get to our family, but I did use those funds to purchase Dillons gift cards, which I'll give to Ms Kuczka at New York for the school free pantry. (An ongoing need you can contribute to Any Time!)

Thank you, friends, for helping me and ELNA to give our community the caring it needs.

YART SALE YART SALE YART SALE

It wouldn't be spring time without the Yart Sale!

Mark your calendars now for Saturday March 28th, from 8am to 1pm, at the New York Elementary gymnasium, at 936 New York St.

DONATIONS: We want your stuff! Please bring your unique and useful gently used items to donate to our sale. We'll set up for the sale on Friday evening, that's Friday March 27th, from 6-9pm. You can bring whatever you have to donate then. We'll take just about anything – clothes, kitchenware, books, toys, housewares, small furniture, etc.

ARTISTS: Do you make stuff? Do you sell the stuff you make? We'd love to have you be a vendor at our sale. You're the Art part of Yart! Here's how that works – first, please email Lane at eastlawrence@yahoo.com if you think you'd like to sell, so we can promote your stuff! Then, come to the set up time on Friday night and stake out your space. Bring a table or whatever display you use. We will be able to provide chairs. Then, the sale starts at 8am on Saturday, and ends at 1pm. Just at the end of your time there, donate 10% of your sales to ELNA. That's it. Very low pressure.

VOLUNTEERS: We'll need help setting up on Friday. And we'll need help personing the check out table, and cleaning up and loading up trucks to haul stuff away on Saturday. Aaron Truck Crew King may need some more muscles and trucks for that last task. If you'd like to volunteer, email us!

SHOPPERS: Absolutely the most important part is shoppers! Please plan to come and shop the sale. We'll have yard sale items donated and any number of things from local artists – photographs, post cards, yarn crafts, tie dye, jewelry, ceramics, etc. We'll bring our ELNA merch for sale also. Cash is preferred, but we can take card and venmo. PLUS! There will be live music! And, if we're lucky, some New York kids will be on hand to sell you some baked goods and breakfast items. See you soon!

New York School Pantry

Our little New York School has a free pantry in the entryway. Anyone is free to enter the front area of the school during school hours to use or contribute to the pantry. Any student can pick things up that they need and of course any of our families as they come and go from the school. We keep paper bags right with the food so they are able to shop more easily. The Food Pantry is available on every day of school from 7:45 AM (when school begins) until about 6:00 PM, when BGC closes.

I cannot tell you how fast our food goes out of our little Food Pantry! The need is increasing in a very noticeable way in our neighborhood. So if you'd like to contribute food to the pantry, here's a list of favorite items:

Boxes of cereal (all kinds), Shelf stable milk (no refrigeration), Dry spaghetti noodles, Macaroni and cheese, Canned chicken Pancake and waffle mix, Syrup, Jelly (we get peanut butter), Rice-a-roni/Pasta Roni type meals, Classroom Snacks (classrooms are 20 to 28 students per class), Canned chili, spaghettios, other canned pasta meals, Spaghetti sauce, Rice, Canned Fruits, Ramen noodle packages, And anything people think would be a good meal for their own families!

If you have any other questions email lkucza@usd497.org.

Come join us on Sunday mornings!

- 9:00 a.m. - American Sign Language Class
- 9:30 a.m. - In-person and Livestream Worship
- 10:30 a.m. - Sunday School and Adult Forum



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Livestream

East Lawrence Neighborhood Association
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Lawrence Kansas 66044-2393

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