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Lack of cold storage space forces the Coop to debate extensive remodeling or moving to a new location. In the midst of all the chaos, Nan keeps right on baking. See the COOP NEWS beginning on page 12.

The elections are over. Voters chose three pro-business candidates for the Commission and voted NO to retain the present form of government. For an analysis of what happened, see page 18.

PUBLIC NOTICE offers readers one heck of a deal on subscriptions. Have the P.N. delivered right to your door step. See the back page for details.

Ready to cut the cord to your utility company? Try the wind for a change. The how-tos appear on page 8.

An epidemic of Spring fever has hit Lawrence. For a few poetic reflections on Spring, see the People's pages beginning on page 2.

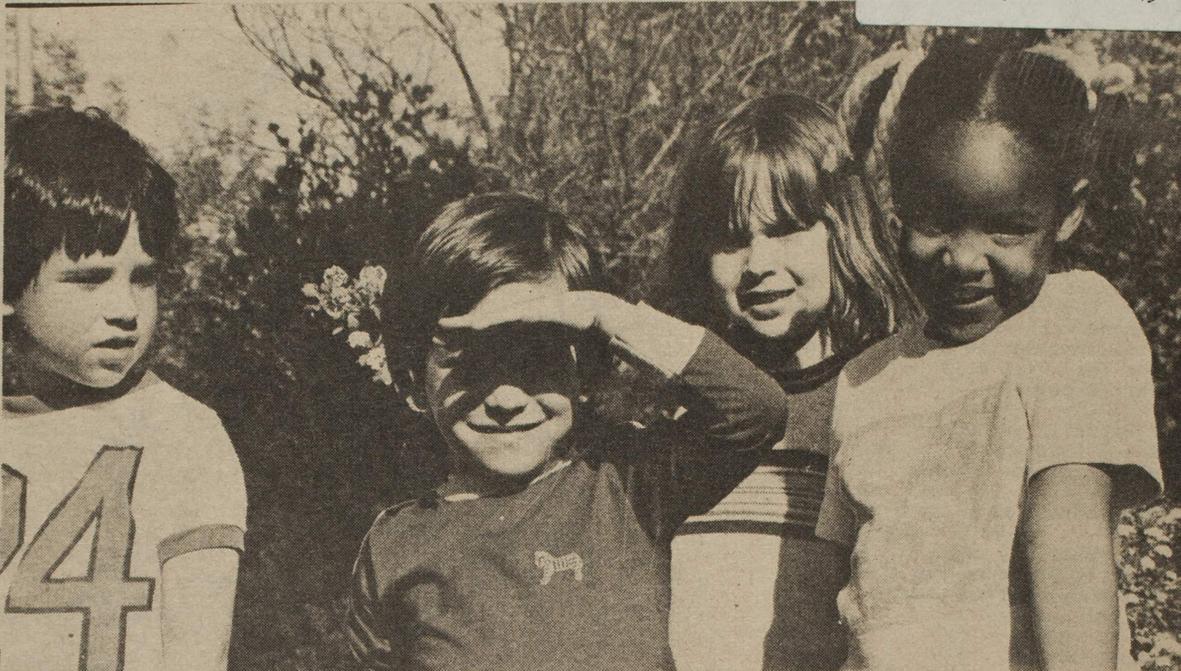


photo susie hanna

Nuclear Power In Kansas?!

BY JIM MASON

Wolf Creek, a small Flint Hill stream which flows through north central Coffey County, has the dubious distinction of being the namesake of a nuclear power plant which may be built near Burlington, about 60 miles southwest of Lawrence; the creek empties into the Neosho River below Burlington. As if that distinction weren't enough, Wolf Creek will be dammed and used to cool water for the nuclear plant's reactor.

The people who live nearby did not have any say in the project. That decision was made long ago by two of the largest private corporations in this area, Kansas Gas and Electric Co. (KG&E) and the Kansas City Power & Light Co. (KCPL)

These mammoth electric utilities, serving all of Wichita, most of Kansas City and most of Southeast Kansas, were seeing a five to seven percent annual growth rate in

the early 1970's. In order to meet the demands of electricity, the utilities felt more power plants were needed.

They perceived two possibilities for fuel--coal and uranium--and completely disregarded the effects of conservation for more efficient electrical use. Natural gas and oil were becoming scarce, and an enlightened Federal energy policy prohibiting their use for boiler fuel was on the horizon. (KG&E was in bad shape in that regard anyway, because over 80 percent of its electricity was made by burning natural gas.) Therefore, the utilities chose both coal and nuclear power.

Wolf Creek would be, by necessity, a joint venture of KG&E and KCPL. With a construction price tag of about \$1 billion, it was bigger than the net worth of KG&E & KCPL put together. Thus, financing such a venture would be a formidable problem. With such a high initial cost, why did the utilities

decide to build a nuke when constructing a coal plant would be at least 30 percent cheaper? The utilities would answer as follows:
1. Nuclear electricity is projected to be cheaper than that of coal;
2. A mixture of nuclear and coal would be healthier than either alone;
3. Nuclear power is pollution free. All of these reasons are highly questionable.

There are at least as many studies which show coal as being cheaper in the future as there are studies which give nukes the edge. In either case, the difference isn't much and, seeing as how such projections are more art than science, it's really a toss-up.

The rationale for the second reason, that a mixture would be healthier, gets closer to the heart of the matter. The idea behind it is that if the utilities were 100 percent coal, they would be vulnerable to strikes by coal miners or by the railroads. This is not to

say that the reactor fuel industry is not highly unionized, but the Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers Union doesn't have the history of strikes that the others do. Besides a reactor is refueled only once a year while a coal plant gets deliveries almost every day. These are deceptive excuses because utilities keep large stockpiles of coal on hand to allow for short-term emergencies, and because the government never would allow a utility to run out of fuel. It either would order the workers back on the job or send in the National Guard.

Lastly, everyone should know by now that nuclear power is not pollution free. Nukes don't produce the detectable air pollution that coal plants do, but they do emit radioactivity into the air and into the water that circulates thru the plant. In addition, radioactivity is released all through the nuclear cycle from the uranium



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UPWARDLY MOBILE HOMES

BY CHIP JONES

Entering Gaslight Village, 3020 Iowa, a panorama of multi-colored rectangles spreads out before you like a cubist's nightmare.

Each cube is framed by a chain-link fence, and each fence is fronted by a wooden carport with an orange plastic bonnet on top.

Life in a mobile-home park involves sacrificing outer space for inner space.

You drive on dizzied by the line of mailboxes hanging on the carports like a clothesline stretching into infinity. An occasional tool shed, a random bush, an old lady in a light blue frock hugging herself in the cold as she talks to a neighbor, all these provide immediate footholds in an otherwise drifting environment.

Although these chunks of matter bear the name "mobile," most people like to buy theirs and settle down.



photo barry mcMurphy

"We just rent spaces," says Duke McCune, park manager for Gaslight Village. "Costs them \$58 a month for that. We only have a small percentage of people who rent mobile homes."

Gaslight Village spreads over 67 acres in the area south of Indian Hills and north of K-Mart. Opened in 1967, Gaslight Village now has 387 mobile homes and 34 empty lots.

Molly McLaughlin and Joanne Smutney, KU students, live in one of those homes. Their 12 x 65 foot home has two bedrooms and is gas-heated. Their choice of mobile home life was mainly pragmatic.

"We both wanted a house," says Molly, "but we got back in town too late to get a good deal. And the price of apartments is terrible."

But isn't your \$180 per month rent just as steep as an apartment?

"Yeah, maybe," Molly concedes. "But we have more freedom."

Joanne pipes up, "One bad thing about this trailer is that it gets unbearably hot in the summer."

"It's like a tin box," Molly says. "And that's why we might not stay here this summer. All our plants would be killed. We would be killed."

Red carpets and draperies dominate the color-scheme of their living room. Airplane-plants and other hanging foliage cover the laminated-wood walls. There's a padded bar, and in the kitchen, plastic cabinets.

How's all this plastic affect you?

"It's just kind of funny," smiles Molly.



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