

East Lawrence News

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

www.eastlawrence.com

March 2023
& April 2023



ELNA

General Meeting

March 13th 7- 9 pm

April 10th 7- 9 pm

IN PERSON AT THE DEPOT!

7th & New Jersey Streets

And Online via Zoom

Agenda & Zoom Link

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

www.eastlawrence.com/meetings

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ELNA Contacts

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From the President

Barry Shalinsky

Happy Spring time East Lawrence! This could mean warmth and sunshine, cold and rain, a late blizzard, or most likely, all of the above. This is Kansas, after all, so hopefully it also means some championship basketball. Some of you will want to borrow our ELNA mower and tiller in the coming weeks and months. What we know for sure is that rain or shine, East Lawrence Neighborhood Association will host our annual Yart Sale on Saturday, March 25 at New York School. Take a good look in your closets, basements, attics and garages for unused treasures that need a new home! Please come to the Yart Sale prepared to take some treasures home with you. We will be more than happy to receive any money that is burning a hole in your pocket. In large denominations or small, it all adds up, and ELNA always appreciates your generosity.

ELNA will continue hosting our monthly membership meetings in hybrid fashion at 7:00 pm on the second Monday evening of every month. We meet in person at the Amtrak Depot at Seventh and New Jersey, and online via Zoom. We now have yard signs, produced right here in East Lawrence by LFK Press, to remind people about our meetings. Look for the signs during the week leading up to the monthly meeting as your reminder.

We have special guest speakers for the March and April ELNA meetings. Film maker Marlo Angell will come to our March meeting to share information about "Finding La Yarda," an immersive multimedia art experience she is working to create. The April meeting will feature Melissa Sieben, head of Lawrence's Department of Municipal Services and Operations. If you have questions or concerns about water, stormwater, waste management, streets, sidewalks or a host of other topics, you will want to attend this meeting. Thanks to Douglas County DA Suzanne Valdez for speaking at our February meeting.

I am happy to report that I had an excellent meeting with our Lawrence City Manager Craig Owens in early February. We met for nearly an hour and a half about a wide range of topics. Even on the small number of topics where we disagreed, I appreciate that Mr. Owens is an engaged listener who genuinely cares about the city, its neighborhoods, our neighborhood and our perspectives. When I became a neighborhood activist and community organizer in East Lawrence four decades ago, the attitude from City Hall toward our neighborhood ranged from benign neglect to outright hostility and contempt. It is refreshing to live in a time when East Lawrence is appreciated for its uniqueness and seen as an asset to Lawrence. Those many years of activism are paying off.

For decades, ELNA has partnered with and supported New York Elementary and Liberty Memorial Central Middle Schools. We have successfully fought off several attempted school closures. Last year, New York was saved from the chopping block by being transitioned to a Montessori learning model. At its February 27 meeting, the School Board signaled its support for "repurposing" Liberty Memorial into a magnet Middle School as an alternative to closure. ELNA sent a letter to the school district thanking them for taking an innovative approach to Liberty Memorial and supporting the consideration of a magnet theme or themes that are compatible with Montessori so that New York students can transition seamlessly to Liberty Memorial, just as they have done for generations.

Finally, we are saddened by the recent deaths of two long-time friends of East Lawrence, Virginia Romero and Frank Janzen. Please read more inside this newsletter about what they meant to us.

YART Sale Saturday March 25 more info pg 4

Board Interviews

At our annual meeting each Fall the members of the East Lawrence Neighborhood Association select some neighbors to represent them as a Board of Directors for the association. According to our bylaws, the Board must have a minimum of four officer members – President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer – and at least one at large member. We can have up to an additional nine at large members for a total of fourteen ELNA Board members. We currently have nine ELNA Board members.

The role of an ELNA Board member is to do whatever work is required to fulfill our mission. Our mission is, also

Barry Shalinsky,
elnaprez@yahoo.com,
Winthrop (Seventh) & Connecticut Streets



How long have you lived in the neighborhood? About 25 years cumulative

How long have you served on the ELNA Board? About 15 years cumulative

What is your biggest concern/project for this year of service? My biggest concern is to see our neighborhood schools, New York and Liberty Memorial Central remain open and vibrant. I hope to continue helping the East Lawrence Neighborhood Plan and Lawrence brick infrastructure policies move forward. As ELNA President, I want to continue improving neighborhood engagement and continue to position ELNA to be an independent and sustainable voice for East Lawrence well into the future.

What do you want neighbors to know about you? One of my smartest decisions ever was to buy two historic homes in East Lawrence in the early 1980's, before most people realized what a gem this neighborhood is. I enjoyed my life as a neighborhood resident and community activist. I left the area for work in 1999, thinking it would be for just a few months, but that few months somehow turned into twenty years. I returned with a spouse and two sons, and an appreciation for how good life can be in East Lawrence. We got our home listed on the National Register of historic places and are working to bring it into good repair for generations to come.

Lane Eisenbart, ELNA Coordinator,
eastlawrence@yahoo.com,
1200 block of Delaware



I've lived in East Lawrence since the fall of 2005, and in Lawrence since 2003. Last January was my 20th year in Lawrence! I had my first legal drink in an Applebees in West Lawrence with my baby and my mama. I've lived here longer than anywhere else, half my life, and nearly all of my adult life. Can I call myself a townie now?

I am not a member of the ELNA Board, but it's only employee. I work for ELNA only about 10 hours a week, so I, like, have a lot of other jobs. Most of what I do for ELNA involves technical assistance (website, email, social media, newsletter, etc) and planning our events. I also try to sell the merch any chance I get. I've worked for ELNA since 2011. I really treasure the history, uniqueness, and support system of East Lawrence.

as stated in the bylaws: to promote neighborhood empowerment, civic engagement and communications in East Lawrence; understanding with the City of Lawrence and Douglas County; to maintain and enhance living conditions in our neighborhood; and to foster community spirit, collaboration and good relations among resident neighbors, businesses and organizations within our area.

In order for you to get to know your board a little better, we asked them a few questions.



Aaron Paden,
aaronpaden@gmail.com,
1200 block of Delaware

How long have you lived in the neighborhood? 17 years

How long have you served on the ELNA Board? 15?

What is your biggest concern/project for this year of service? Continue helping with ELNA activities. I'm worried about our school system and how families on the East side will get to schools as we look at more school closures.

What do you want neighbors to know about you? I love the neighborhood events. This spring donate and come to ELNA's YART Sale @ New York School - live music, local art, baked goods, and the best Yard Sale deals in town on March 25th. I organize ELNA's concessions stand at the KVKL Kickball games. I invite you to come on out to Hobbs Park on Sunday nights during the summer and enjoy something from the ELNA grill and watch the KVKL Kickball Game of the Week. Probably the best sporting event in the area. Donations help ELNA pay for newsletters and outreach and special projects.

Krista Gentry,
Leekris@hotmail.com,
1100 block New Jersey



My hubby and I moved to the neighborhood and our current home in June 2016

This is my second year on the board.

I have a few concerns for our neighborhood. Some are more on a micro level such as issues that affect my block and surrounding blocks and some are more macro. The biggest macro issue I think at the moment is potential school closures and how that will affect our neighborhood and my own family. I have a daughter planning to enter NY Elementary in August.

We enjoy the outdoor amenities East Lawrence has to offer and that is another area of interest to me. I want to make sure they stay free of trash, available for recreation, and in good condition for years to come.

Hmm...Between my career and trying to be a mom and wife I'm just trying to keep my head above water like everyone else!

Julianna Patterson,
pattajul000@gmail.com,
700 block of Connecticut

How long have you lived in the neighborhood? 22 years

How long have you served on the ELNA Board? This is my second year on the board.

What is your biggest concern/project for this year of service? Increasing youth and community member engagement in our growing and changing East Lawrence neighborhoods! With all of the new businesses located in East Lawrence or moving into the community, in addition to the new amenities, it's important that East Lawrence residents feel welcome in these new spaces and have a voice in facilitating the changes taking place to reflect their needs while preserving the history and acknowledging the diversity within the East Lawrence community. Additionally, I think it is critical for East Lawrence to have a community severe weather shelter accessible to all in the area, especially with our rapidly changing climate to further strengthen preparedness and resiliency within our community.

What do you want neighbors to know about you? I love to dance, travel, and thrift. The Antique Mall is my favorite place to go in Lawrence! Also, I hope to see you all at kickball and other East Lawrence community events this summer - looking forward to supporting our East Lawrence community for another impactful year!



Phil Collison, phil@pcollison.com,
785-843-8098,
900 block Pennsylvania St

How long have you lived in the neighborhood? I have been in Pennsylvania for 19 years.

How long have you served on the ELNA Board? I have been on the board since about 2004. I am currently the Secretary. I take notes, now. I have been a past President, too. And I rent out a mower and a tiller.

What is your biggest concern/project for this year of service? My biggest concern these days is how our neighborhood will change in response to the revamp of zoning codes throughout our neighborhood. I hope the City recognizes we are in a real estate speculation zone and put some controls in place to favor owner occupied housing. I hope there will be plans for how neighbors will increase density without being driven out by top-down real estate speculation.

What do you want neighbors to know about you? I like to get outside and enjoy all kinds of weather.



Sacie Lambertson,
sacie.lambertson@gmail.com,
700 block of New York St

How long have you lived in the neighborhood? Five years

How long have you served on the ELNA Board? ??? One year plus??? (frankly I don't remember)

What is your biggest concern/project for this year of service? Via the traffic committee, I am concerned with developing good/safe walking throughout our area. Am interested in all board discussions about maintaining/retaining the quirkiness of E. Lawrence. I do not want to see developers change our area, as has been tried along the north end of Penn St. and on the empty lots on New Hampshire before 11th St. I am very leery of projects that propose 'affordable' housing that isn't.

What do you want neighbors to know about you? After twenty years living 20 miles north of Lawrence in the country, we thoroughly enjoy living within easy walking distance of all that is good about our downtown. And we love our eclectic area, particularly our block, and want to keep it that way (except for the street itself, which is the worst in the entire neighborhood and ought to be taken back to it's original brick). Furthermore we hate to see the cost of housing escalate as it has in Lawrence, but especially in East Lawrence. Let the large look-alike houses remain waaay west of us. And no more bars downtown either!



KT Walsh



Brenda Nunez



Pam Blackburn

Additional Board Member Info

Also giving their time to the ELNA Board are KT Walsh, Brenda Nunez, and Pam Blackburn. KT Walsh serves as Vice President, has lived in east Lawrence for something around 40 years and has served on the ELNA Board since the early 2000s. KT lives in the 700 block of Rhode Island where she walks her dog and makes art a lot. Brenda Nunez is our neighbor in the 800 block of New Jersey Street. Brenda has lived in and around East Lawrence the entirety of her 80+ years and has served on the ELNA Board on and off for almost that long. We're very thankful for her presence. Pam Blackburn lives in the 700 block of Connecticut with her family and her dogs. She's served on the ELNA board for as long as she's lived here, which is, at nearest estimation, approximately 10 years. Thank you, ELNA Board!

It wouldn't be spring time without the

YART Sale!

Mark your calendars now for Saturday, March 25th, from 8am to 1pm, at the New York Elementary gymnasium, at 936 New York St.

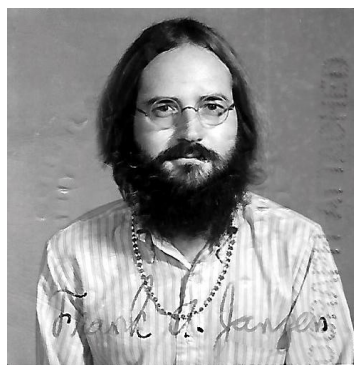
DONATIONS: We want your stuff! Please bring your unique and useful gently used items to donate to our sale. We'll set up for the sale on Friday evening, that's Friday March 24th, from 5-9pm. You can bring whatever you have to donate then. We'll take just about anything – clothes, kitchenware, books, toys, housewares, small furniture, etc. No toilets. Can't do much with a toilet, though we did sell a bathtub one time.

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 – come to the set up time on Friday night and stake out your space. Bring a table or whatever display stuff you use. We will be able to provide chairs. Then, the sale starts at 8am on Saturday, and ends at 1pm. You don't have to stay the whole time if that doesn't work for you. Just at the end of your time there, donate 10% of your sales to ELNA. That's it. Very low pressure. Please email Lane at eastlawrence@yahoo.com if you think you'd like to sell, so we can promote your stuff!

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!

MUSICIANS: Do you play music? Wanna play for your neighbors while they shop? That'd be cool. 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 cards as well.



Frank, 1970

Frank Janzen

ELNA mourns the recent death of our long-time life-time member, Frank Janzen. Frank, 79, died in February at an area hospice facility after a lengthy cancer battle.

Frank was a man of adventure. He was multi-lingual, speaking about a half dozen different languages, and was an avid world traveler. His idea of travel was not that of tourist, but that of servant. He had stints in the Peace Corps, and taught English in his foreign travels. He sought out people and places in need and always found ways to be of help.

Amid his many adventures, Frank always returned to Lawrence, which he considered to be “home,” and most often that was in East Lawrence. He was a “lifetime member” of ELNA, which means officially that he donated \$100 to our organization, but in reality, he donated multiples of that hundred dollars during his lifetime. Much more important than his money, Frank gave generously of himself. He was a faithful attendee of monthly membership meetings, delivered neighborhood newsletters door to door off and on from the 1980's to the 2020's, registered voters, solicited door prizes for the annual block party and so much more.

Frank loved to share stories of his travels, and we published some of them in this newsletter and on our website. He was an avid letter writer, even after the advent of the internet, and it was always a treat to receive a letter from Frank, stuffed with interesting news clippings or artifacts. His most recent was a real Frank prank, a post card purporting to be from Kansas wildlife officials informing me that buffalo were being delivered for sanctuary in my yard.

Frank will be missed. He left his mark on this little piece of our planet, as well as so many other places, near and far.

By Barry Shalinsky

Sunrise Plant Sales!

Mark your calendars now for Saturday April 22nd and Saturday April 29th 10am to 2pm

PLANTS!!! Purchase organic transplants & native flowers and support Sunrise programs. At the sales, plants will be \$5/each and buy 10 plants, get one free.

Here's what we will have: pepper varieties (mixture of hot & sweet!), tomato varieties, chard, collards, cucumbers, eggplants, kale, melons, herbs, nasturtium. Plus native plants: Blue giant hyssop, White sage, Swamp milkweed, Whorled milkweed, Bush's Poppy mallow, Prairie Coreopsis, Star Tickseed, Yellow Coneflower, Broad leaf Purple coneflower, Blue Phlox, Rose Verbena, Blue Flag Iris, Wild Mint, Stiff Goldenrod

We accept checks, credit cards and cash!

Virginia Romero

Our neighbor Judy's mother, Virginia, passed away in January. You might remember Virginia, not just as Judy's mom, but also as a long-time resident of East Lawrence and (seemingly) perpetual poll worker. Mass, Rosary, and Visitation for Virginia were all held at the end of January. You can read Virginia's official obituary in the Lawrence Journal World archive from January 10th.

Just recently, though, Lane and Judy sat down for a few minutes to chat about Virginia's life and legacy.

Virginia Romero would have been 97 years old this May! She was born in 1926 in Rossville, Kansas, northwest of Topeka, to Jose and Maria Leños. Before Virginia was three years old, her mother passed away from pneumonia. Jose then returned to Mexico in search of a new wife. He died there, in Mexico, leaving Virginia and her siblings orphaned still up in Kansas. All seven Leños children went out on their own or to separate foster homes. Virginia was adopted by the Jimenez family and later moved to Lawrence. The Jimenez family, with Virginia, lived for many years on New Jersey St. Virginia was one of four foster children in the family, and being the oldest, it was her job to make fresh tortillas each week. Fresh and flavorful tortillas were a life-long cornerstone of Virginia's excellent traditional Mexican cooking. Though, Judy says, Virginia would probably have just as likely cooked fried chicken or a roast, but Mexican was what her family preferred, so that's what she made. At the end of her life, Judy suspects Virginia enjoyed not cooking for herself and being served instead.

Virginia spent her young adult life in Lawrence, living with her adoptive family. She made tortillas, cared for her siblings, went to school and took on the odd job. At around eighteen years old, in 1944 or so, Virginia and some of her girl friends took jobs at the Sunflower Ammunition plant in DeSoto. There was a bus, Judy says, that would come to Lawrence and pick up all the workers, mostly young women, and take them to work at the plant. Then it would bring them back in the evening. Virginia thought it was important to contribute to the war effort (being a good citizen was always important to her), it was fun to work, and the bus ride was almost like a party with all her friends. But working at an ammunition plant was a lot less fun when some girls died, blown up by mishandled explosive material. One day, Virginia and her gals just didn't get on the bus.

Virginia married Ramon Romero when she was 20 years old. They had five children together, three boys and two girls, including Judy. Family was a big deal to both Virginia and Ramon. That's just the kind of person Ramon was, Judy says, but for Virginia, it probably had something to do with being an orphan. "If you were their friends, you were their family. Virginia and Ramon were everybody's parents," she says. When they got married, Ramon tracked down all of Virginia's long lost siblings. She had had no contact with



Virginia Romero, left, with Juanita Romero Hernandez. Juanita passed away in 2018.

any of them since she was very small. And since this was the early 1950s, finding them all was no easy task! But he did find them, some passed away but with family remaining, and Ramon took Virginia to visit as far as Washington state and El Paso, Texas.

According to Judy it was a good marriage between Virginia and Ramon. They enjoyed doing things together, like getting dressed up and going to the Mexican dances, here in Lawrence and in Topeka. Maybe they got along fine too because Virginia always worked outside the home. Virginia worked in restaurants and shops around Lawrence. At one job, waitressing at a restaurant near campus, Virginia showed her spirit. The story goes something like – it was a busy night at the restaurant and a Mexican couple came in. They were seated not in Virginia's section, but in her boss's service section. Time passed and Virginia was busy serving her tables, but she noticed that her boss had not taken an order for the couple. A long time passed and the couple eventually just left. Later, Virginia asked her boss what had happened, and why he hadn't served them. The boss said something along the lines of, "because they aren't my kind." Virginia contemplated this comment as she took off her apron, placed it on the table in front of him, and said, "well, I guess I'm not your kind either" and left. She never went back. That boss/job aside, Virginia still liked working. She took a job working for a couple who owned a liquor store. Of course, Virginia adopted the older couple. She brought them meals and cleaned for them, ran errands for them, etc. And when they retired, Virginia bought the liquor store. It became Romero's Liquor and was open until 1995. Finally Virginia was the boss! And she was so kind, she even let Ramon help around the shop, even though he didn't always card the young ladies like he should.

continued on next page

Monthly Internet Service Discount and Device Benefit for Low Income Persons

A neighbor recently shared information with us about the Affordable Connectivity Program, and asked us to pass it on. Here are the details:

If you qualify, your household can receive a monthly Affordable Connectivity Program benefit of up to \$30 to cover the cost of your internet service. Through the program, your internet company may also offer a one-time internet connected device benefit of up to \$100 for a computer, tablet, or laptop with a copayment of more than \$10 but less than \$50.

Your household cannot get the ACP benefit from more than one company. You are only allowed to get one ACP benefit per household, not per person.

The Affordable Connectivity Program is separate from the FCC's Lifeline Program. If your household qualifies for both programs, you can apply for and receive both benefits. Note: Internet companies must also meet certain criteria to participate in the ACP. Check with your company to determine if it participates.

You can find the application online at <https://www.fcc.gov/acp>. On the application you'll fill in details of your identity, your address, what government programs you already qualify for, your household size and income, etc. They may be able to verify your info through other government databases and get you your benefits within days!

Virginia Romero continued

Even as Virginia ran her liquor store, she always found time to serve as a poll worker for elections. According to her obituary, Virginia worked every election from 1952 to 2016, missing only one election day due to heart surgery in 2005. When Judy and her siblings decided Virginia's health was not good enough to sit a poll station all day, they told her she'd have to stay home. "Mom was so mad! She didn't like anyone telling her what to do."

After Virginia's husband passed away in 2009, Judy and her local siblings lived with and cared for their mother round the clock. Virginia had never lived alone, her entire 96 years. When she passed away in January, Virginia had outlived all her siblings. Virginia had five children, 6 grandchildren, and 9 great grandchildren. "She really loved her grand and great grandkids. She'd play card games, like concentration, with them. She was content to play with the kids while we made them something to eat."

They don't make many like Virginia Romero. She was special. May she rest in peace.

Mower and Tiller for Rent

It'll soon be yard work time again! When your grass is green and growing, you can rent a mower from ELNA for \$10 per half day. When you're ready to get those gardens in, you can also rent a tiller for just \$20 per half day. Please be prepared to provide your own transportation. Contact Phil by call or text 785-843-8098 or email to phil@pcollison.com.



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Find me on Instagram
[@Lawrencemodern](https://www.instagram.com/Lawrencemodern)



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 |



1245 New Hampshire St
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p. 785.843.4150
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Livestream

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SUNDAY, APRIL 9

COMMUNITY EASTER SERVICES

9:30 A.M. - TRADITIONAL*, SANCTUARY

11:00 A.M. - TRADITIONAL*, SANCTUARY

*NURSERY CARE PROVIDED



3RD ANNUAL COMMUNITY EASTER SUNRISE

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7:00 A.M.

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1245 New Hampshire St.

Frank's Botswana

Over the years, Frank shared some of his writings with us, highlights of his world travels. Here's one. If you're a fan of Alexander McCall Smith's No 1 Ladies' Detective Agency books or tv show, Frank's reflection on his travels in Botswana will sound familiar. How fortunate Frank was to have experienced in person the Jewel of Africa.

Botswana

By Frank Janzen

In July 1973 I traveled from Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe) and crossed the border to Francistown, the second largest city in Botswana, a landlocked country in Southern Africa. (Botswana was formerly Bechuanaland until it gained independence from the United Kingdom in 1966; it is a member of The Commonwealth of Nations.) Seventy percent of its territory is the Kalahari Desert.

I was a 30-year-old traveler having come overland from Nairobi, Kenya.


I took the train south to the capital, Gaborone. (Pronounced "ha-bar-RO-ne", the Setswana pronunciation of the majority Tswana people.) On the train I got up onto the luggage rack along the side above the seats and windows to stretch out and sleep. Africans also did this. It was a night-time journey and I covered my eyes to keep out the light in the passenger car.

We arrived in Gaborone when it was still dark. There was light in the east as the day was beginning. I got off the


train with my backpack and sleeping bag and I heard donkeys braying and roosters crowing, a nice cacophony of rural African sounds. A month earlier in my travels I had met a US Peace Corps Volunteer who was based in Botswana. He had invited me to visit him in Mochudi, a town a few miles north of Gaborone. I traveled to Mochudi where my friend lived in a small house. He had a slow-cooking crock pot that he prepared in the morning that was ready for dinner when he got home. We went out to his site half a mile away. It was a stucco building and I spent the night there. This was in a desert region, so it was very hot in the daytime, but very cold at night. I had my sleeping bag and there was a fire in the fireplace, so it wasn't bad. After two days it was time to move on. I crossed the border into apartheid South Africa at Mafeking (now Mafikeng), on July 20, 1973. It was 11 years since Nelson Mandela had been imprisoned on Robben Island and it would be 17 years before his release.

East Lawrence Neighborhood Association
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