



MSM Bellringer

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NEWSLETTER OF THE MCCORMICK SCHOOL MUSEUM

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Operations and Renovations and Expenses! Oh My!

When supporters donate to McCormick School Museum (MSM), some may wonder where their donations go and how their dollars are spent. What do we mean when we say operational expenses? What is included in the category of building renovation expenses? How do we determine the difference between an operational expense, building expense, and building renovation expense? These are good questions to ask when giving a gift to a 501©3 non-profit organization such as MSM. This article is an attempt to provide some clarity when we answer such questions. We can separate the explanations into three broad groups:

Operational Expenses, Building Expenses, and Building Renovation Expenses. And so, for the explanation, please read on.

Operational Expenses:

Most of us accrue monthly bills for such utilities as water for washing and drinking, gas to heat our homes in the winter, and electricity to run our appliances. We also enjoy many amenities that require subscriptions and fees, such as for magazines and newspapers, internet services, and insurance. MSM has many of these same bills: water, gas, electricity, subscriptions, and internet service, to name a few. The expenses for these services and amenities occur monthly, yearly, or otherwise on a regular basis and can be budgeted into the household, or in the case of MSM, the museum operating budget. These types of operating expenses fall into the operational expense category and are being paid for by the incoming funds designated for operational expenses.

Building Expenses:

Running a museum campus of multiple buildings and the surrounding grounds also means there are those usual maintenance expenses to keep the place operating at a smooth pace, such as keeping up with the plumbing, painting the chipped and peeling woodwork, cleaning and oiling wooden floors, and more. These routine utility and maintenance costs fall into the category of building expenses. Again, the expenses are mostly expected, occur routinely, and can be planned and budgeted. Occasionally, just like a home, a museum can have those unexpected expenses that pop up that need to be dealt with and resolved successfully to keep the buildings and campus running smoothly and looking sharp. Right now, for example, we are looking into resolving a couple of slow-draining sinks in the 1930s building which require consulting and possibly hiring a plumber to resolve

the issue. Once the problem is identified and the cost of a successful resolution is determined, the MSM Advisory Council will present the information to the MSM Board which will, after a discussion, vote to approve or decline the resolution and cost. At this time, the MSM Operations Manager will hire the plumber to perform the approved work, the invoice is paid, and the museum has normally draining sinks again! This process takes time, research, careful consideration, and multiple consultations prior to a successful resolution. We work with many local businesses and want to take this time to thank them for their expertise and energetic time and resources that they provide to MSM.



Supporters enjoy a bowl of delicious chili at a recent chili feed. Donations for this type of project go towards Operational Expenses. Photographer: Cynthia Rhodes

Building Renovation Expenses:

The MSM complex consists of buildings of various ages (1890, 1910, 1930, 1951) with multiple adaptations and repairs incorporated as the functions of the buildings changed over time. These buildings at present, built to last and tolerate the certain wear and tear normal for a school, are in various stages of maintenance and repair. For example, in 2003, when USD259 still owned the school, a Kansas Heritage Trust Fund matching grant was received to dig around the building foundations with repairs instituted to ensure proper water and moisture drainage away from the structure. Continuing this work to prevent the ingress of water and moisture into the buildings, this spring we completed repairs to the guttering and cornice-work

on the roof of the 1890s limestone building. This project successfully stopped the ingress of rainwater into the attic, thus protecting the interior walls and exhibits. The money for this type of larger, longer-lasting building project is budgeted as a Building Renovation expense. It took over a year to identify the source of the rainwater ingress and then determine several solution possibilities

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The Newsletter of the McCormick School Museum, Inc. is published six times per year to inform constituents of the Wichita Public Schools and other interested patrons of activities and events taking place at the museum. Contributions help us to produce this publication.

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Art Director: Brian L. Martin

and costs. A building renovation expense of this type can be in tens or even hundreds of thousands of dollars, and the time involved can be many months of consultation, planning, and construction work. Building Renovation Expenses are paid for by funds which are specifically designated for that purpose and are kept in accounts separate from the operational and building expense accounts. When we complete our current list of large building renovation projects, we will turn our attention to other projects on our waiting list for which we have already started the research and budgeting groundwork. These projects include repairing the bell tower, restoring the 1930s building windows, and air-conditioning the multipurpose room. We would like to sincerely thank those donors who see us through these larger building renovation projects. We also wish to acknowledge the enormous wisdom and patience of our main building contractor, Reconstruction Services, LLC, who has been with us from the start.

Together, as the all-volunteer staff, exhibit workers, and board members of McCormick School Museum look back over the past several years at where we started and what we have accomplished so far, we agree that we have grown immensely! And we know there is more to come as we continue to accomplish our short-term operations and building goals and working through the important building renovation work. If you are interested in becoming involved at McCormick School Museum, we invite you to call or stop by to find out how to join the MSM Advisory Council or to become a museum board member. We are also most appreciative of monetary donations that support this community treasure. The museum is located at 855 S. Martinson in Wichita. Museum hours of operation and contact information can be found in this *Bellringer Newsletter*.

Museum Happenings

The 2026 “Keep Our Bell Ringing” fundraising campaign will be open from July 1 through December 31, 2026. A goal of \$30,000 has been set, and the money raised will be used to pay for 2027 museum operational and building expenses. Note KOBR on your gift to designate these funding accounts. We truly appreciate each of our donors and supporters! Thank you, thank you, thank you!

Former McCormick Elementary School student, Francisco Avila, and his children, Isabella and Maverick, visited on June 10 to tour the museum and ring the school bell. His children enjoyed hearing about his elementary school memories as he found his picture in the 1992 Centennial photograph displayed in the Furniture Exhibit room.

“The History of McCormick School” was the topic of a luncheon presentation given by Curator, Paul Oberg to twenty-four members of the Randolph Loving Chapter of the DAR at the Wichita Country Club on April 24. Photographs and documents from the museum archives highlighted some of the many changes and events over the last century that have made McCormick School Museum the community treasure it is today.

Using the newly installed projector and sound system equipment in the multipurpose room, films from USD259’s former driver education curriculum and a historical documentary about the famous U.S. Route 66 Highway were shown as part of the 2026 16mm Film Fest which was held on June 6. Twenty-six film enthusiasts enjoyed freshly popped popcorn and ice-cold lemonade served by the Tornado Alley Young Marines. The event raised \$265 for the museum general fund. Thank you all for your support!

We are always on the lookout for enthusiastic volunteers who want to help us with our McCormick School Museum mission. If interested, contact a staff member for more information, meet new friends, and get involved. Better yet, come by and see what we are working on! The museum is located at 855 S. Martinson in Wichita. Museum hours of operation and contact information can be found in this *Bellringer Newsletter*.

EVENTS & MUSEUM HOURS

The McCormick School Museum is open Wednesday from 9:00 am to noon and Sunday from 2:00 to 5:00 pm. Park to the north of the building; enter through door #4 (closest entrance to the parking lot). Ring the doorbell if needed. You may call 316-708-0676 to confirm museum hours before your visit or to schedule tours outside regular hours.

Currently, the stairway to the multipurpose room is handicap-accessible for events. Admission is by donation; your support is always appreciated.

SAVE THE DATE

JULY 5

McCormick Elementary School Alumni Reunion:
3:30 to 5:00 pm

You are invited to join McCormick School Alumni students, teachers, and staff for this reunion homecoming afternoon. The school will be open (2 to 5 pm) for research and browsing, and staff will be on hand to answer questions. McCormick

merch will be available on-site during the event. Relive the past with those who were there; see what is planned for McCormick’s future. For more information contact Rachel Vogt, reunion host, at Rachel Smith Vogt on Facebook, or Cynthia Davie, MSM Operations Manager, at 316-708-0676.

To reserve a room for your meeting or event, contact the museum office for reservation information and availability.

For more information and to contact the museum:

Bldg. Address: 855 S. Martinson, Wichita

Postal Mail: P.O. Box 12881, Wichita, KS 67277

Website: www.mccormickschoolmuseuminc.com

Donations: www.savemccormick.com

Facebook: McCormick School Museum

Gmail: mccormickschoolmuseum@gmail.com

Telephone: 316-708-0676 (call or text)

MSM Office: 316-558-5804 (leave a message)