

KansasFest for Newcomers

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PART 1: GENERAL INFO

[Adapted by Steve Weyhrich, assisted by Martin Haye and the KFest community, from “The Accidental Tourist at KansasFest 1998”, copyright 1996, 1997, 1998 by Douglas Cuff, as published in *GENieLamp A2* and *The Lamp!*]

[Note: This document has a useful but hidden outline. If it’s not currently displayed at the left, go to Google Docs’ “View” menu and select “Document outline”.]

Okay, you’re either someone who has heard about KansasFest for years, or you’ve just discovered it. In either case, you’ve made the decision to come to the event. But committing to spending a week’s vacation and travel is daunting, and you would like to know how to plan for it and get a better idea of what to expect.

Back in the mid 1990s, when KansasFest was getting off the ground after its original sponsor folded, the main ways of communicating between Apple II users were the dial-up online services GENie, Delphi, CompuServe, and America Online. And the premier online news source of those years was the monthly newsletter, *GENieLamp A2*, which later became *The Lamp!*. Starting in 1996, *GENieLamp A2* editor Doug Cuff wrote an article that he updated twice, outlining what to expect at KansasFest, and how to plan for it. This document is adapted from his writings of twenty years ago, and will hopefully provide the same useful information, updated for the modern era.

Cuff introduced his articles with this paragraph, quoted here:

The Accidental Tourist travel guides were described by Anne Tyler in her 1985 novel of the same name (later a movie starring William Hurt, Kathleen Turner, and Geena Davis). The Accidental Tourist guides were designed for the business traveller whose reactions to travel were feelings of anxiety and defenseless. The guides were meant to soothe and comfort the non-adventurous traveller.

If you have never attended KansasFest, hopefully this guide will soothe you in the same way. If you *have* previously spent the week with all of these Apple II enthusiasts, it may provide you with some helpful reminders.

WHAT IS KANSASFEST?

KansasFest began in 1989 as the A2-Central Developer Conference, and by its third year the attendees were unofficially referring to it as KansasFest (adapted from the AppleFest computer shows that had appeared in the early 1980s). KansasFest takes place in Kansas City, Missouri. (Not Kansas City, Kansas, though that is pretty close. And MissouriFest is too many syllables, anyway.)

Resource Central, the company that started the original conference, went out of business in the beginning of 1995. Undaunted, previous attendees who were connected on GEnie decided that the event was too important to let it die, and they quickly arranged to hold it again that year. Every year since then, KansasFest has been held in July, and 2018 will be the 30th time the event has been held.

WHAT IS KANSASFEST, INC?

In 2015, the committee that organized and held this annual event decided to create KansasFest, Inc, a corporation dedicated solely to that purpose. There are four board members for the corporation, and currently four other working committee members that assist them. None of the board members take any compensation for their work, and all of them pay to attend the event, the same as everybody else. Any profits from the event are put back into the event, focused on improving the experience each year. The committee is working on ultimately making it a non-profit corporation.

The board members do not have specific positions (president, treasurer, etc.) at this time, but each work together to get everything done. The board members are (in alphabetical order):

Sean Fahey, of Paola, KS
Andy Molloy of Syracuse, NY
Peter Neubauer of Bend, OR
Steve Weyhrich of Omaha, NE

Working closely with the board is our working committee, which consists of:

Dagen Brock of Kansas City, MO
Martin Haye of Santa Cruz, CA
James Littlejohn of Chelsea, OK
Kirk Mitchell of Morill, NE

WHAT ABOUT THE ABBREVIATION "KFEST"?

I mentioned above that MissouriFest was too many syllables, and KansasFest apparently is also too many. It didn't take long for the event to be referred to with just two syllables, "KFest". However, there are many other venues around the United States that also use that name for themselves (including a Kielbasa Fest in Springfield, Massachusetts, a music festival in Wappingers Falls, New York sponsored by K104 FM, and a music and arts festival in Kilorglen, Ireland), so if you want to Google for *this* event, you will get the most accurate results by searching for KansasFest. However, with all of the videos that have been posted on YouTube from KansasFest that mention KFest, we are doing our best to drown out all of the other competition.

WHO GOES TO KANSASFEST?



The original event was focused on Apple II software and hardware developers. However, after a couple of years they found that people other than developers were attending and enjoying the event, and its name was changed to the A2-Central Summer Conference. By the time the volunteer group took over the event, it had become a fairly even mix of developers and enthusiasts.

Want to meet some of the attendees and find out why they go? See video profiles of The Programmer, The Old Timer, The Gamer, The Podcaster, and many more here:

https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL_8ByM2n4E2vBabtZTnbaRIZSa4OFy_I8

That mix continues in the current day. If you simply remember the Apple II with fondness from the days you used it in your home or school, you will probably find something going on at KansasFest that grabs your interest. If you have been writing software or creating hardware for the Apple II, why aren't you already attending??

You might wonder about diversity and whether you can fit in. Are there atheists? Deeply religious people? Republicans and Democrats? Straight, gay, lesbian, and transgender attendees? Smokers and nonsmokers? Elderly? Kids? Yes, yes, yes, yes, yes, yes, yes, yes, yes, yes, yes and yes. There's an intentional focus on fun, and away from discussions of politics and religion. Check out the official Code of Conduct here: <https://www.kansasfest.org/conduct/>

KansasFest is a great chance to learn more about your Apple II, mingle with other users, and see what software and hardware other people are working on. It is *the* Apple II event of the year.

HOW MANY PEOPLE WILL BE AT KANSASFEST?

In the first decade of the new millennium, attendance one year was down to just 28. Every year since then, however, that number has been climbing. In 2016 we had 82 who spent the week together. In 2017 we placed a limit of 100 attendees, and had exactly that number who attended. The limit for 2018 has been raised to 120, and if we hit that number it will be the largest Apple II gathering since 1994.

WHERE IS KANSASFEST HELD?

The first A2-Central Developers Conference in 1989 was held in Kansas City because the sponsor, Resource Central, was based in Overland Park, Kansas, and it made sense to hold the event locally. They arranged for space at Avila College, and many attendees stayed in a dormitory there (though some stayed in nearby hotels), with presentations done at a nearby conference center. With smaller numbers of attendees in subsequent years, it made more sense to hold presentations on campus.

In 2005, Avila was unavailable, and the committee located another similarly sized small university in Kansas City that could hold the event. Since 2005, KansasFest has been held at Rockhurst University, located in the center of Kansas City. Here's the address:

Rockhurst University
1100 Rockhurst Road
Kansas City, MO 64110
Phone (816) 501-4100

Rockhurst University is small, with just over 2200 students enrolled, which means you can walk anywhere on campus in five minutes. Use of a car is therefore optional, assuming you fly to Kansas City. You may need (and we can provide) transportation to and from the airport, and to off-site events; that will be discussed below.

WHY IN A COLLEGE DORMITORY?

The short answer is “tradition”, but the longer explanation is that the dorm experience makes KansasFest something that no other retrocomputing event can offer. You get several days to interact with other people who are interested in the Apple II and other old computers, you can visit with people who are working on projects, or work on your own if you want. Trust us, it works and it's great!

At KansasFest there's a tradition of “wandering the halls”. The basic rule is you are invited to drop in on anybody if their dorm room door is open and ask about whatever it is they're playing with / hacking on / soldering / etc. The resulting conversations are wide ranging, multi-day explosions of creativity and camaraderie.

If we held KansasFest at a hotel conference center, it would have the advantage of nicer rooms and facilities, but at a significantly higher cost and lacking the highly interactive (many might say “loud”) atmosphere that is the hallmark of KansasFest.

WHEN IS KANSASFEST HELD?

For 2018, KansasFest is scheduled for Tuesday July 17th through Sunday July 22nd.

- (Mon - courtesy lodging option for super-early arrivals; KFest committee sets up)
- Tues - general arrival and check in, evening group meal at restaurant
- Wed - Kookout lunch, Garage Giveaway, Keynote, and sessions begin
- Thu - scheduled sessions
- Fri - scheduled sessions and game night
- Sat - concluding sessions, vendor faire, swap meet, and equipment display, judging of contests, and off-campus movie/arcade night
- Sun - check out and farewell

Check in starts in the afternoon on Monday, and checkout is 9 AM to 1 PM Sunday.

ALMOST AN ENTIRE WEEK?? WHY SO LONG?

Other retrocomputing events, such as the various Vintage Computer Festivals held in other parts of the country, are held over a Friday, Saturday, and/or Sunday. Those events also include speakers and sessions, demos, and swap meets. But nearly everyone who has attended KansasFest would agree that the longer time and additional sessions make for an amazing experience and is well worth the time spent. In fact, some who attend year after year have been campaigning to add Monday to the event, making it one day *longer*. In 2017, we granted that wish.

HOW MUCH DOES KANSASFEST COST?

Rates are officially announced when registration opens each year, typically in February or March.

There are two sets of registration rates, one for those registering early, and a higher rate for those registering closer to the event. The base registration rate covers Tuesday through Saturday.

Also, there are three different levels. “Shared” refers to sharing a room with another attendee, “Private” means a room all to yourself, and “Spouse” refers to someone who will be staying with you and having meals, but will not be participating in the conference.

Rates for 2018 are as follows:

	Shared	Private	Spouse
Early registration:	\$385	\$455	\$280
Late registration:	\$440	\$510	\$350

Because of the larger number, in 2018 we are also offering a \$10 discount for those who are willing to stay on the third floor (sorry, no elevators).

Also, due to the request for a Monday arrival, we are offering lodging at the dorm on that day for an additional \$35, but no meals on campus are included for that early day.

Pillows, linens and towels are not included in this price, so you can either bring your own, or we will purchase them for you for \$30, and after the event you can keep them or leave them for us to donate to a local non-profit shelter.

Some people *really* want to come to KansasFest but cannot afford the time to be there the full week. For those people, there are partial week rates available. To attend Thursday and/or Friday only is \$77 per day for early registration, \$88 per day for late registration. Attendance for Wednesday (which include the Keynote and Garage Giveaway) is open only to those registering for the full week. Saturday's vendor faire is open to the public.

For those who do not care for the dorm experience, despite our assurances that it is superior, you are welcome to obtain lodging in a local hotel. Those who chose to stay off campus will have to arrange their own transportation to and from Rockhurst. If your travels require you to stay near the airport before or after KansasFest, we recommend the [Sleep Inn Airport](#). If you choose not to stay at Rockhurst University during KansasFest and wish to stay somewhere near campus, we suggest the [Hampton Inn & Suites](#).

HOW DO I REGISTER?

First of all, you should subscribe to the KansasFest mailing list. It can be accessed at the KansasFest web site:

[KansasFest.org/list/](https://kansasfest.org/list/)

Alternatively, you can join the KansasFest Facebook event:

<https://kansasfest.org/facebook>

And why not do both?

Once you are on the mailing list, keep an eye out for an announcement starting somewhere in February or March that states that registration is open. That will direct you to the registration form on the KansasFest web site. That page will explain all of the details specific to that year's event.

ROCKHURST IS A SHARED FACILITY

KansasFest is just one of several possible groups that Rockhurst may be hosting during the week we will be there, so don't be surprised if the cafeteria has soccer-camp kids running all around.

HOW DO I KEEP TRACK OF ALL OF THIS??

We will provide several ways of following the schedule for KansasFest. There will be a printed program schedule (summary only) included with your registration materials when you arrive. Also, we have made use of a smartphone app, Guidebook (<https://guidebook.com>). This will have a schedule that will be dynamically updated to include add-ons, substitutions, and changes, and is the most accurate ongoing list to follow.

PART 2: BEFORE THE EVENT

PREPARING FOR THE CONFERENCE

Before you go, you will need to arrange the following:

- Register for the conference at KansasFest.org.
- (if needed: Arrange accommodations - recognize that if you will not be leaving until the Monday after KansasFest is over, you will also need a hotel room starting Sunday evening.)
- Meals - as mentioned above, these are included, aside from the Tuesday and Saturday outings; meals before Wednesday morning and after Sunday morning are on your own.
- Transportation to and from Kansas City; transportation between Kansas City International Airport and Rockhurst may be arranged when you register or soon after (see Peikop Endropov below)

If you are coming to KansasFest from outside of the United States, you will also have to make sure you have the following:

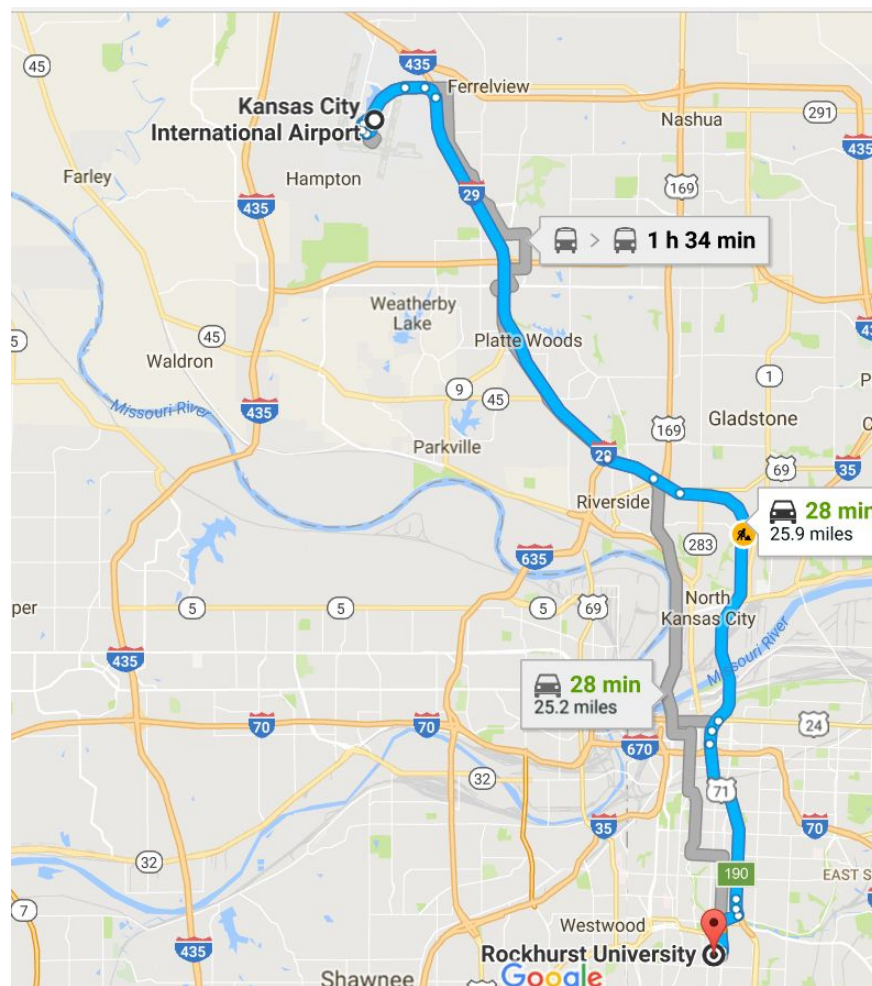
- Passport / visa
- Medical insurance
- US currency/traveler's checks/electronic payment that will work in the US

TRANSPORTATION / PARKING (“Peikop Endropov”)

For many years now, long-time attendee Carl Knoblock has coordinated scheduling for the informal “Peikop Endropov” service to move people from Kansas City International airport to Rockhurst at the start of the conference, and from Rockhurst back to the airport at the end.

<https://www.kansasfest.org/peikop-endropov/>

This means that Carl himself or a volunteer will be the one to move you between the airport and the campus. This not a taxi, not an Uber, but please help pay for fuel for the person who gives you a ride, as it is just over 25 miles, and will take 30-60 minutes, depending on time of day and traffic for a one-way ride.



Certainly you are free to rent a car if you prefer. If you drive, there is parking on the street in front of Corcoran Hall (the dorm in which we stay) though this is mainly for loading and unloading; there is also a gated parking area behind the dorm, and a covered parking garage

near the dorm. You will not be able to access those non-street facilities until after you have checked in and gotten your room key.

NEW FOR 2018:

Rockhurst is remodeling the campus townhouses to the east of the Corcoran dorm, where we stay. Some of renovation will include the parking lot, which is also being used to store construction materials, equipment, etc.

Our campus liaison doesn't feel these projects will be completed in time for our arrival, so that means we can't park inside the gated lot. We are allowed to park along the south side of Rockhurst Road (where spaces allow), and we are also welcome to park in the parking garage at the corner of Troost Ave. and Rockhurst Road. Security patrols the area constantly, and there are security cameras galore in the garage.

We can still use the access gate on the west side of Corcoran for loading/unloading during moving days. Please work with your fellow Kampers to fairly use that space as it can get crowded quickly. Loading/unloading also goes a lot quicker if you request help (we're a helpful bunch and work cheap). This is especially important because it will likely be hot. You can also use the front door to the lobby to move in or out -- just have someone help with the door.

PREPARING FOR THE TRIP

In 1998, Doug Cuff said at this point, "Get plenty of sleep before you go, because you're not likely to get much sleep at KansasFest. KansasFest days are 18 hours long, unless they're 20 or 24 hours long. There's too much going on to waste time in sleep!"

Depending on your age and energy level, your tolerance for long hours without sleep will vary. Be aware of your limitations so you can get the most out of the event.

With regard to clothing, you will be in Kansas City in July, when it is very hot and humid. Bring light colors and light clothes. The air conditioning has worked very well in Corcoran Hall nearly every year we have stayed there, but it will still be necessary to walk to meals. If you do not do well with walking or with heat, arrange for a ride in the KFest Kart (see "What About Meals?", below).



Walking to Meals

- **Beds:** They are adequate mattresses for a dorm, but they are very basic.
- **Toiletries:** Unlike hotels, shampoo and soap will not be provided, so bring your own.
- **Linens:** There are three options (updated 2017):
 - a. Order linens from KansasFest (cost \$30). We will provide you with the following items which we order from WalMart. You can keep them at the end, or leave them and we'll donate to a local nonprofit shelter:
 - flat top sheet
 - fitted bottom sheet
 - pillow case
 - pillow
 - blanket
 - two towels
 - hand towel
 - wash cloth
 - b. Or, order just a pillow from Kansasfest (cost \$5) and bring the rest of the linens yourself or buy them in Kansas City;
 - c. Or, bring/buy your own (no cost). You'll get a bare mattress and that's it.
- **Laundry:** There are laundry facilities in the dorm basement. As of 2017, use of the equipment was free, but you will need detergent. Sometimes, attendees share a box/bottle of detergent for the duration of the conference. If you bring fewer clothes and do laundry midweek, you can fit more Apple II stuff in your luggage :). But clothes also make good packing material. What to do <shrug>...

WHAT SHOULD I BRING?

Some of this has been dealt with in the previous section (toiletries, linens, towels, pillows). For the other type of software (the computer kind) and computer equipment, you can bring as little or as much equipment with you to KansasFest as you wish. Some bring their Apple II (or III or I)

computers along to work on projects, and some work with their favorite emulators on modern Macs or PCs.

There's an extensive list that'll give you good ideas here: <https://www.kansasfest.org/prep/>

Obviously, extension cords and power strips will be needed for any powered equipment you have. As for Internet, the Ethernet connections in the dorm rooms are no longer functional (as of 2017), but the WiFi at Corcoran has gotten steadily more robust each year, such that in 2016 one attendee was live-streaming the talks to Facebook using his smartphone, and no one noticed any lag.

If you want to make it known where you reside in the dorm, bring along something to make a sign for your door. Be creative enough, and you might win the annual door contest! Note: only use blue painters' masking tape to attach things to the doors; anything else might peel the paint off.

Those who want their particular brand of water, soda, tea, or coffee will want to bring their own supply, though there is usually coffee supplied in the lobby. There are no coffee houses in walking distance. It is also not uncommon to have a cooler in your room with ice to keep beverages cold.

WHAT IF I CANNOT FLY WITH ALL I WANT TO BRING?

A commonly used solution is to have items shipped to Rockhurst, so you don't have to check them on the plane (if you are flying). Use the following address for shipping:

Rockhurst University Conference Services
Attn: KansasFest – [YOUR NAME HERE]
1100 Rockhurst Road
Kansas City, MO 64110-2561

Make sure your package says "KansasFest" along with your name. Also, ship items to arrive just before you'll arrive to reduce the chance of loss.

PART 3: AT THE EVENT

WHAT ARE THE ROOMS LIKE?



Take a look at photos here: <https://www.kansasfest.org/rockhurst/>

First of all, the dorm is air-conditioned, and while we have been at Rockhurst this has worked well.

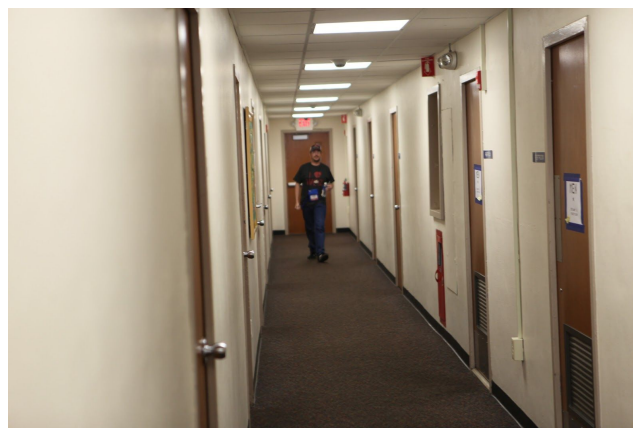
Remember, these are dorm rooms and are all identical, and whether you register for shared or private they are all furnished the same, with two single beds (sheet size “twin”), two desks with chairs, two sets of drawers, and two wardrobes suitable for hanging clothes. The beds are easy to slide around, and the rest of the furniture is on wheels so can be adjusted to your liking.

Please do not move the furniture *out* of the room or between rooms, and when you check in, it is a good idea to look for any existing damage. I would suggest you take a picture of anything you see before the conference, so we have documentation that it was not *you* who caused the damage.



There is a restroom in each wing and floor of the dorm, in typical dorm style with multiple sinks, toilets, and showers. Note that each shower stall is individual, with a curtain that closes it off, so it provides some degree of privacy.

Each restroom is assigned a gender, the proportion matching (as close as feasible) the number and gender of attendees. Also, at least one lockable, gender-neutral restroom will be available. We ask for your understanding if you have to walk up/down stairs or across to the other wing to get to your restroom; the committee is doing the best it can with the existing facilities. Suggestions are always welcome.



We have also typically set one set of rooms as “active”, meaning that people may be working, talking, laughing, playing music, etc. late into the night, and another set of rooms designated as “quiet”, meaning that people will be going to bed earlier and prefer it to not be noisy.

WHAT ABOUT MEALS?



Breakfast, noon, and evening meals are available at the Rockhurst cafeteria, which is a five minute walk from the dorm. The cost of these meals is part of the registration fee for the conference.



If you have physical ailments that make it difficult to walk that distance, we now have the KFest Kart (lovingly restored and detailed by James Littlejohn), a golf cart that we can offer to provide you transportation. Note: you ride, we drive.



There are a few exceptions to the cafeteria meal times, and these are not part of the registration fee:

- Tuesday evening - an outing to a local restaurant to dine together. We have usually gone to Jack Stack (barbecue) or Lydia's (Italian dining), but some choose vegetarian/vegan or other smaller venues.
- Saturday evening - an outing to a different restaurant, choices in recent years being a local Greek restaurant, or a barcade with arcade games. Some choose to go to a group movie outing after the meal.

CAN I TAKE PICTURES? WILL I BE PHOTOGRAPHED?

Expect cameras, both still and video, and various people operating them. Cameras are used to record the presentations, or people meeting. If you are camera shy, make sure you ask for one of the red lanyards, and photographers will do their best to keep you out of the picture.

Do you like taking photos? We do too and we love it when people post KFest pictures! But please be very mindful and avoid including anyone with a red lanyard in your picture, even if they are facing away.

HOW DO I REMEMBER EVERYBODY'S NAME?

There will be an online photo roster, organized by Martin Hays, that evolves throughout the week. A link will be posted to the KansasFest email list just prior to the event. You'll be able to consult the roster to remind yourself when you meet somebody and immediately forget their name. Also, you may just find yourself perusing it after the event and sighing over what a good time you had with these amazing people.

DORM CULTURE - WANDERING THE HALLS

An important aspect of KansasFest's culture is the practice of "wandering the halls". This can occur at any time, day or night (even late night in the designated "loud" areas). The basics are very simple:

- Leave your door open - as long as you don't mind sharing whatever you're doing. (But if you want to focus on code or change your clothes, close your door.)
- Walk through open doors - if you see that a door is wide open, just (politely) walk in, see what's happening and ask about it or join in.
- Wander often, including outside your local hallway to see all the other cool projects and conversations in progress. There is no bad time to wander the halls, even during presentations; not everybody is into every presentation.



DORM CULTURE -][LOUD

There are two areas of dorm rooms - "Active" and "Quiet".

In the active areas, expect lots of noise in the day and evening, less in the late night. But noise is tolerated at any hour. You may hear someone shout something that sounds like "2 Loud!" You need to ascertain whether they meant "**Two** Loud", meaning hell yeah!!, or "**Too** Loud" meaning "please be a bit quieter". Either way, do respect their wishes if it's at all reasonable.

In the quiet areas, talking and chatter and music are fine during the day and early evening, but should not be carried on past 10 pm. Generally the quiet areas are indeed quiet.

DORM CULTURE - SHOWERS AND BATHROOMS

Each dorm floor wing has one (multi-stall, multi-shower) bathroom. That's two bathrooms per floor since there are two wings. We have to designate each bathroom as either Men or Women; due to the number of attendees, fewer bathrooms are assigned to women. It's the best we can do in this situation, so we ask for your understanding if you have to walk up/downstairs or to the other side of the dorm to get to your bathroom.

Shower stalls are pretty basic but do have curtains to give you a small private space. If the showers in your hall are full at a given moment, you can try a different floor if you're in a hurry, or queue up, or try back at a less popular time.

ALCOHOL ON CAMPUS

Generally, alcohol use is kept to a minimum at KFest. People are having so much fun just being together and geeking out on Apple IIs that it seems superfluous. In prior years alcohol wasn't allowed on campus at all.

Recent campus policy allows responsible alcohol use in the private spaces (e.g. dorm rooms) but not in the public spaces. So, please don't drink alcohol in the lobby or halls.

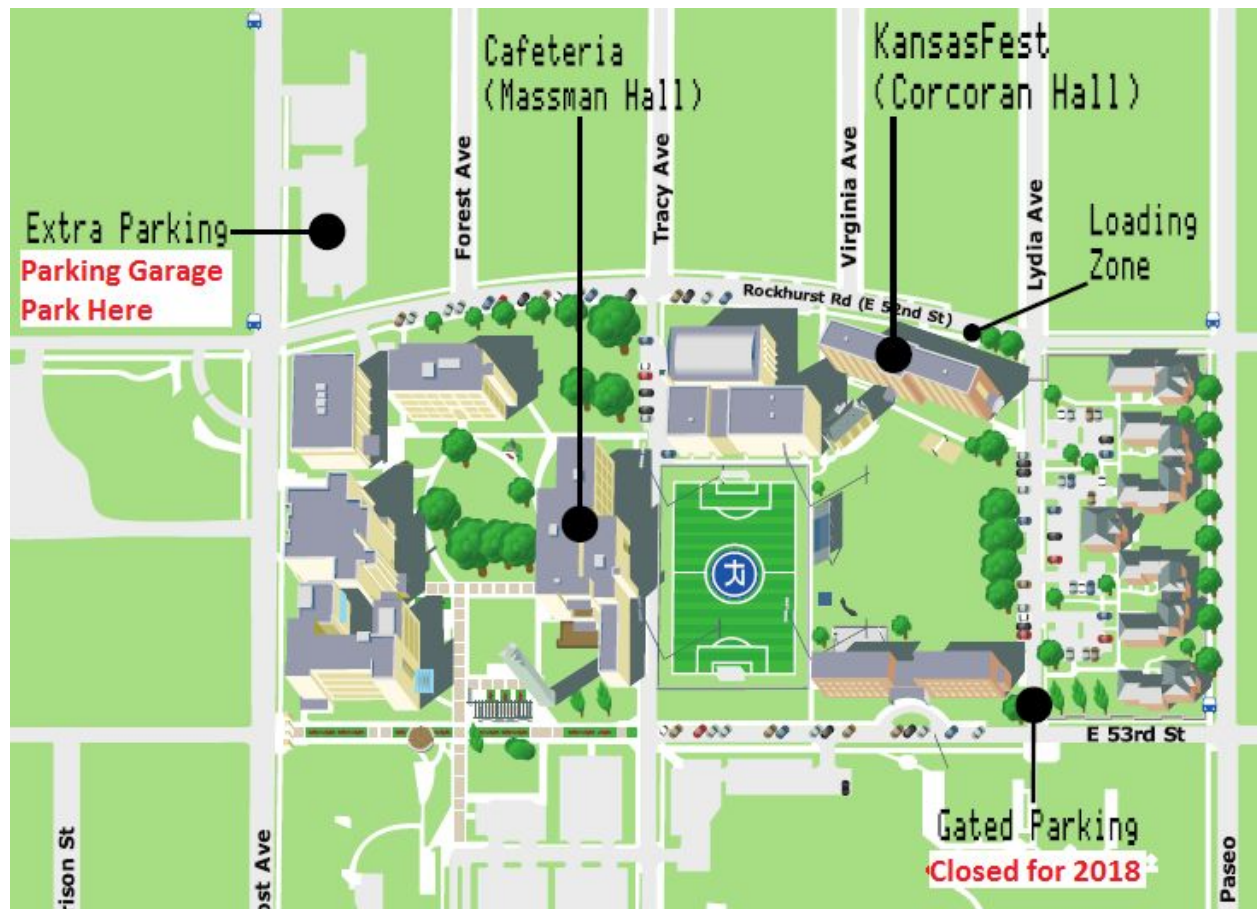
But naturally, using isopropyl alcohol to clean circuit board contacts is totally cool!

HOW DO I ACCESS THE WIFI NETWORK?

The program schedule will include this year's username and password for the WiFi network.

WHERE DO I FIND THINGS AT ROCKHURST?

Look at the map of the campus below and get your bearings:



There are two important places that you need to be aware of. One is Massman Hall, where the cafeteria can be found and which also hosts the Ms. Pac-Man/Galaga coin-op (set to free play). You will have several meals here, in the company of your fellow KansasFest compatriots. Also in Massman is the campus Mail Room (ground floor): 7am - 6pm, Monday through Friday. You may want to bring your own Priority boxes because they usually don't have any.

The other important location is Corcoran Hall, which is the dorm in which the majority of the event takes place, with presentations in the basement.

To get into Massman sometimes requires use of the key card, and Corcoran will always require the card to re-enter the building. When you first arrive you will have to knock on the door to get someone to let you in.

If you enter Corcoran from the street (Rockhurst Road), the first room you will see is a lounge area with a pool table in the center. Walk forward, up four steps, and in front of you is a second lounge with chairs. That is where you should find a table set up for registration.

Keep going a little further and you'll see the dorm desk on the right with a friendly Resident Assistant sitting at its window. Give them your name and get your room key and electronic building card. The card grants you access to the dorm from outside, as well as to the basement and to each wing of the dorm. Please keep track of both items; there is a \$100 fee if the room key is lost.

During registration times, a KansasFest committee member will staff the reg table and hand you your registration materials. These will include:

- Event schedule
- Lanyard and name tag - note that there are three lanyard colors; blue for most attendees, red for attendees who prefer to not be photographed, and black for committee members. We understand that it feels odd to wear your name so prominently on your person, but we strongly encourage all attendees to wear them, to make it easier to learn names.
- Information from various vendors who want to let you know about their products.
- A pin for the year to attach to the lanyard. If you have pins from other events, feel free to bring them along to add to the "bling" you have to display
- T-shirt (if you ordered one)
- Linens and towels (if you ordered them)
- Pillow (if you ordered one)

That dorm desk is also where items that you shipped to Rockhurst will be waiting for you, so let the person at that desk know if something was sent ahead.

The Resident Assistants are available after hours (in emergencies) - their contact info will be posted at the dorm desk.

WHAT IS HACKFEST?

A tradition begun in 1998 by Eric Shepherd and offered as an option and challenge to interested attendees, HackFest is an opportunity to challenge yourself to create a program from start to finish between Wednesday and Saturday morning. Your results will be judged by a panel of three, including one non-programmer. The rules are detailed at the bottom of the page at Kansasfest.org/hackfest/, but in brief:

- You have to do all of the coding for your project while at KansasFest, starting no earlier than 7 am Wednesday, and finishing before the judging (around 3 pm Saturday).

- You can use any tools that have been available to the general public for at least three months before KansasFest
- The final product has to be runnable on a real Apple-1, Apple II, or Apple III (that is, it should not require features found in an emulator but not on the real thing). Or at least, this has been the rule in the past. Judges have leeway to allow bending the rules a bit, if your entry is extra-super-cool.

Programs are judged on completeness, cleverness, and how “cool” they are. They don’t have to be “useful”, and they should be finished enough to demonstrate, even if all of the bells and whistles aren’t completed.

MISCELLANEOUS



As mentioned above, the sessions are mostly held in the basement of Corcoran Hall, the dorm where we stay. Occasionally some sessions are held outside; we’ve had Apple II-controlled water rocket launchers, and sessions demonstrating how to Retrobrite your vintage computer (which need full sunlight to properly work). You will need your key card to get into the basement (and back into the building if you leave), so carry it with you at all times.

We have been gradually working at improving our video recording of sessions, and most should be available to watch again on YouTube and the Internet Archive after the event. (How long after the event depends on available time - like you, we all have real jobs outside of KansasFest that make demands on our time and our lives.)

Be aware that outside of the formal sessions on the schedule, there have also been informal sessions that take place in dorm rooms, in the lobby, or other places. Walk around and see who is doing what where, and you might be able to take part!

PART 4: WHAT TO EXPECT EACH DAY

MONDAY

This is the “early early arrival” day, a new option for attendees in 2017 who have been clamoring for *even more KansasFest*. There are no official scheduled activities on Monday, and there are no cafeteria meals. People will be setting up their dorm rooms, hanging out, and driving out to acquire fast food. KansasFest staff will be setting up the basement meeting room, registration table, and whatnot. Offer to help if you can.

TUESDAY

This day is when most attendees to KansasFest will show up, any time from banging on the doors at 8 am (because they arrived on Monday night and stayed in a hotel) to as late as 5 pm or after. Drive up on Rockhurst Road, park in front of the dorm, and go inside to get your key and key card. Then you can unload your stuff and park in a better location (the parking garage on the northwest of the campus, or the gated parking area to the east and south of Corcoran). Get moved in, register (if the table is open) and get your conference swag, and introduce yourself to others who have also arrived. If you are new, feel free to take a walk around the campus, or inside the dorm, including the basement area where the talks will be happening. (see *Wandering the Halls*, above)

By 4:00 to 4:30 pm we will begin congregating in the front lobby to arrange rides to the restaurants. In recent years we have been going to Jack Stack (barbecue) and Lydia’s (Italian) down at 101 W 22nd Street in Kansas City. For those with a bent towards vegetarian/vegan there will be a group heading to [Café Gratitude](#). Have a good evening getting to know those at your table!

One other important event that will be happening in the evening will be unloading the items for the Garage Giveaway. All hands that can assist with this are appreciated, and after it is brought in from outside, it still requires sorting, testing, and arranging.

WEDNESDAY

This is the first official day of the event, but that does not mean you have to get up early. If you want breakfast in the cafeteria at Massman Hall, you will have to get there before 8:30 am.

The rest of the morning is for registration for those arriving late. Some will be starting on their Hackfest projects, which officially begin at 7 am (as mentioned above). Many will be sitting in the lobby to visit or check their email.

There are three major events on Wednesday; the Kookout, the Keynote, and the Garage Giveaway. The sequence of events changes somewhat from year to year, but it's commonly as listed below. Don't freak out if things occur in different order; it will all happen, and your program schedule will let you know what to expect.

– GREAT KFEST KOOKOUT



At noon is the Great KFest Kookout. Historically this was barbecued just outside the dorm in a small grill, but with increased attendance this is now brought to our dorm by the Rockhurst cafeteria staff, which makes it easier and faster to get something to eat than it was in the past. Again, if you have a vegetarian/vegan inclination, there will be options for you.

– GARAGE GIVEAWAY

KansasFest board member Sean Fahey lives in the Kansas City area. For years, he has become a focal point for those parting with their collections, or with schools or other organizations who find they have a lot of old Apple II computers, peripherals, software, books and magazines they no longer need. For many years, Sean has made a distribution of what he has taken in over the previous year available free of charge to those attending KansasFest, asking for a donation to help pay for storage costs.



Sean used to keep these items in his garage, and invited attendees there to pick what they wanted (thus the name, “Garage Giveaway”). However, this got to be too small to store what was given to him, and so he now pays for a local storage unit for everything.

People are free to look over the items before the Giveaway officially begins, but there are a couple of ground rules to remember.

- Don’t move or re-organize items for your own easier picking when it starts. There may be others besides you who have an eye on that particular item.
- Do not pick or remove any items before it starts. That’s just not fair to others. For a humorous look at this, check out this video:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v6LThKNqFUl>

When the flag is dropped and the free-for-all begins, there are a couple of other rules:

- Don’t fight over stuff! Let’s be adults here. If two people are interested in the same item, find a civil way to resolve the conflict (flip a coin or something).
- Don’t pick up an item just to flip it on eBay or Craig’s list. That’s just not classy. Take what you want, but use what you take. If you don’t need an item, leave it for someone else who does.
- Make a donation to help pay for Sean’s storage and transportation costs.

– KEYNOTE

At some time after the Garage Giveaway will be the Keynote by an Apple II luminary (or luminaries). Come down to the basement conference room and get a good seat!

– AFTERWARDS

Depending on timing, some sessions will be held later in the day. The evening may involve a workshop. See the schedule for details.

THURSDAY



Breakfast, lunch, and dinner will happen the same times as before. But today is when the bulk of the various presentations begin, with a full schedule in the morning and afternoon (all held in the basement conference room). Again, a special workshop may be held in the evening.

– RYAN SUENAGA MEMORIAL KRISPY KREME NIGHT

A resident of Hawaii and an early KansasFest promoter and participant, Ryan discovered Krispy Kreme here in Kansas City, and loved to get them and share them with others. Come and eat donuts, drink milk, and contribute to the memorial scholarship fund created in memory of Ryan.

FRIDAY

Similar to Thursday, another day of cafeteria meals, amazing Apple II presentations, and talking with other retrocomputing enthusiasts.

– JUICED.GS PIZZA NIGHT

Instead of cafeteria fare for the evening meal, *Juiced.GS* magazine (the Apple II's longest continuously published magazine, and its last print publication) sponsors a pizza meal, including soda, salad and fruit. Vegetarian and gluten free options provided of course.

– AWARDS AND CONTESTS

After the meal, we take some time to present awards to appropriate recipients, and judge some of our ongoing contests, typically the door sign contest and a crazy tie contest, and possibly others.

- Door sign contest

You can go pretty wild decorating the door of your dorm room, or you can go easy and tame. Hint: Easy and tame won't win the contest! These aren't "normal" door signs; KansasFest door signs are often interactive, exhibit unique memorabilia, and involve extensive planning. Besides showing off your creativity, resourcefulness, and interests, the best signs win fabulous prizes.

Here are nice galleries of door signs from past years:

<https://www.kansasfest.org/2016/07/door-signs-2015/>

<https://www.kansasfest.org/2017/07/door-signs-2016/>

Here's a video of an incredible stop-motion sign from 2009:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ua8X6f28i5Q>

- "Tie one on" contest

Put something crazy around your neck and call it a tie. Or basically do anything smacking of formalwear (you can win with a dress!

<https://i.ytimg.com/vi/MGrpz-Bf9FM/maxresdefault.jpg>). This is generally a low-stakes, quick and fun contest.

– KANSASFEST GROUP PHOTO

We want to remember who all was here for this year's event, so we will gather outside for a group picture. Smile big!

– GAMES, TOURNAMENTS, AND MORE

Friday evening typically involves games of various types, and in recent years we've had a video link with Apple II enthusiasts down under in Australia.

SATURDAY

The week is winding down, but the activity continues full tilt! After breakfast there is another morning of presentations by the most talented Apple II users on the planet, lasting into the early afternoon.

– NEW PRODUCT ANNOUNCEMENTS

Though it's been forty years since the Apple II first became available, there are still new hardware and software products being created for it. Here is the time to find out what the best and brightest have come up with to make your old computer work even better!

– APPLE II EXHIBITION HALL / SWAP MEET / VENDOR FAIR



This part of KansasFest is open to anyone, registered attendees or not. If you have something cool to display, something to sell, even something to give away, here is the place to earn or spend some of your hard earned retro dollars.

– HACKFEST AWARDS

Judging of HackFest entries will have been going on during the vendor fair. Here is where that hard work over the past three and a half days will be shown to the world.

– EVENING ACTIVITIES

Typically, there are two or more restaurant trips planned for the group. Afterwards, a video arcade and/or group movie outing is likely to happen.

SUNDAY

Breakfast will be available as on all other days, but it's time to pack it up and prepare for the trip home. *Don't forget* to turn in your room key and key card, to avoid large monetary penalties that KansasFest Inc. will incur!

Say a sad goodbye to all the new friends you've made and head home. Remember, when the post-KFest depression hits - you are not alone! Reach out to give and receive support. It can help to focus on your next big project for next year's KansasFest. Be kind to yourself.

