

Mayor Lawrence P. LeFebre Papers, 1849-2005

Basic Information

Repository: Lawrence History Center

Accession Number: 2006.076

Creator: Lawrence P. LeFebre

Quantity: 6 Bankers Boxes, Two Nonstandard Flat Boxes

Processed By: Jennifer Williams

Access: Open for research. Some of the audiovisual materials have not been reformatted.

Related Material

The Lawrence History Center also holds the papers of Mayor Daniel P. Kiley, Jr. (2007.002) and Mayor John J. Buckley (2007.005).

Provenance

This collection was created by Lawrence P. LeFebre throughout his life, including his years as mayor of Lawrence. He donated it to the Lawrence History Center on August 29, 2006.

Biographical Note

Lawrence Peter LeFebre was born on January 28, 1944 to Rene and Lorraine (Robert) LeFebre in their home at 80 Melvin Street, apartment 1416. This was part of the Federal Housing Development known as the Merrimack Courts. Mayor LeFebre was the fourth oldest of seven children, his siblings being named Lorraine, Robert, Eva, Patricia, Georgianna, and Pauline. Soon after Mayor LeFebre's birth the family moved to the Tower Hill section of Lawrence. He attended the Lowell Street School, the Essex Street School, and graduated from the Bruce School. He then attended Lawrence High School, where he was extremely active on both the baseball and football teams. He was also class president during his sophomore, junior, and senior years. During this time he worked for textile mills, shoe mills, and the Lawrence Public Works Department.

Mayor LeFebre graduated from high school in 1963 and then attended Ithaca College in Ithaca, N.Y., where he earned a degree in physical education. During his time there he was also very active on the football, baseball, and lacrosse teams. While in school he worked as a firefighter. After graduating from Ithaca College Mayor LeFebre taught history and coached football at a high school in New York, and then returned to Massachusetts and taught in Billerica. Mayor LeFebre's first foray into politics came in the mid-1970s when he unsuccessfully ran for the office of Alderman of Health and Charities. In 1977 he ran for the office of mayor, and was successful in defeating incumbent John J. Buckley. He held the office for three terms, from 1978 to 1983. During the campaign for his third term in office he ran unopposed, only the second mayor to do so.

During his six years in office Mayor LeFebre developed multiple projects. Indeed, he was very involved in rehabilitating the infrastructure in Lawrence. He obtained federal and state money to conduct such activities as install a new water tower and water lines as well as renovate the historic water tower, renovate the downtown area, and establish a Design Review Board to ensure that all rules in the historic district were observed. He also initiated the process of having five Lawrence neighborhoods included on the National Historic Register and established programs to rehabilitate and

preserve historic homes. Mayor LeFebre oversaw the creation of five elderly housing complexes (Essex Twin Towers, St. Alfio's Complex, Valebrook Apartments, Arlington Apartments, and Diamond Springs Garden), the relocation of the Senior Citizen Center to a larger complex on Haverhill Street, and the building of both the Frost Middle School and the current Arlington Street School. Mayor LeFebre also oversaw the renovating of the high school, which caused some controversy in 1978 when some residents who wanted to build a new high school sought to unseat him. They were unsuccessful, and the mayor continued with his plans.

Mayor LeFebre also attempted to increase economic development and tourism. He was able to obtain funding to open the Lawrence Heritage State Park and Visitors Center, restore the Common, and build the Pemberton Park. He also helped to plan the city-wide celebration of Leonard Bernstein's 60th birthday, which Bernstein actually attended, and at which the Bernstein Stage was dedicated on the Common. Mayor LeFebre was chairman of the Merrimack Valley Regional Transportation Authority, and in that capacity helped to bring the commuter rail to Lawrence, reestablish public transportation to Salisbury Beach, and provide shuttle service to the downtown area. He also founded the Lawrence Community Boating program in South Lawrence.

In 1978 Mayor LeFebre founded GOAL/QPC (Growth Opportunity Alliance of Greater Lawrence/Quality, Productivity, Competitiveness), which was a city-wide labor management committee with the mission of providing total quality management services, described as “educational and consultation services for improving productivity through statistical quality control and employee involvement programs.”¹ The committee brought together businesses, labor groups, and local/regional governments to address the economic decline of Lawrence. It organized the Arlington Neighborhood Clean-up, obtained grant money to create the Lawrence Energy Office, and lobbied for regional energy facilities. In December of 1979 it was incorporated as nonprofit organization.

In 1980 GOAL/QPC worked with the Malden Mills Textile Company to start an Employee Involvement Program. It was very successful and GOAL/QPC, especially Co-chairman Robert King, soon became involved in many more such programs throughout Massachusetts. In 1981 Mayor LeFebre and GOAL/QPC brought Dr. W. Edwards Deming to Lawrence to discuss his quality and productivity improvement theories, which had been very successful in Japan. He taught a four-day course on his theories, which was attended by over 180 company representatives. This sparked a collaboration between William Conway of Nashua Corporation and Robert King that resulted in a successful implementation of Dr. Deming's theories in the Merrimack Valley. GOAL/QPC was so successful that it received recognition in such publications as *Business Week* and *The Boston Globe*.

During his terms in office Mayor LeFebre worked at both the state and federal level. He attended events in Washington, D.C., including the visit of Pope John Paul II and parties held by President James Carter and Vice President Walter Mondale. While in Washington, D.C. in 1979, he also attended a meeting with the President concerning the Strategic Arms Limitation agreement. At the state level he worked with Governors Michael Dukakis and Edward King. In 1983 Mayor LeFebre lost the preliminary race to Mary Claire Kennedy. He ran again for the same office in 1993, but lost in the general election to Mary Claire Kennedy by fifteen votes.

After leaving office at the end of his third term Mr. LeFebre worked full-time for GOAL/QPC as the Director of Business & Industry Services. In this capacity he worked to obtain private and government

1 Growth Opportunity Alliance of Greater Lawrence, “GOAL” (Lawrence: Growth Opportunity Alliance of Greater Lawrence, undated), 1.

funding, ran the day-to-day operations of the organization, and was responsible for the creation and marketing of publications and conferences. In doing all of this he developed the research arm of GOAL/QPC. He was responsible for the research and development of publications concerning workplace improvement, including videos, articles, and a memory jogger. As part of his work in the research department, he oversaw the translation of Japanese publications that were the basis for much of the work done in the field. He worked with the Lawrence Police Department, among other governmental organizations, to help them implement programs based on these new publications. In the 1990s he was appointed by the Massachusetts Council for Quality, Inc. as a senior examiner on the Board of Examiners of the Massachusetts Quality Award. Mayor LeFebre stayed in this position at GOAL/QPC until his retirement, when he moved to Florida.

Mayor LeFebre married Eileen Crowley in the 1980s, and the couple divorced in the mid-2000s. He then married Cindy Spurling of Ipswich, whose father was a clam box owner. They met at a state retirement board conference in Hyannis, MA. Although Mayor LeFebre has no children, his current wife has one son from a previous relationship.

Scope and Content Note

This collection is composed of many different types of materials, most of which cover LeFebre's career as a public official in Lawrence and Director of Business & Industry Services for GOAL/QPC. There are over one-thousand images and numerous newspaper clippings documenting events that occurred while LeFebre was campaigning for, and serving as, mayor as well as those of a more personal nature, including his sports activities and years in school. There are also several scrapbooks which focus on sports in Lawrence, events and activities taking place during Mayor LeFebre's campaigns for, and terms as, mayor in Lawrence, and events in Lowell, MA. Administrative records in the collection include letters, awards, stationary, business cards, memoranda, newsletters, and reports. They focus on Mayor LeFebre's political campaigns, years as mayor, sports activities, involvement in GOAL/QPC, and school years.

The collection also contains books and magazines on a variety of subjects, including sports, politics, total quality management, and history. Included among them are class books from Lawrence High School dating from 1962 to 1983. There are also many different types of objects in this collection, including campaign buttons, footballs, plaques, and mugs. They focus mostly on LeFebre's years as mayor in Lawrence, but also cover his sports activities and participation in GOAL/QPC. Audiovisual materials can also be found in the collection, composed of VHS tapes, audio cassettes, CDs, and film. They include campaign advertisements, sports games, and television coverage of elections. Finally, the collection contains printed material, including posters and prototypes for posters. Most of these materials focus on Mayor LeFebre's political campaigns.

Arrangement

- Series I. Photographs, Postcards, and Drawings, 1952?-1999
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 - Subseries II. Miscellaneous, 1923-1980?
 - Subseries III. Personal, 1952?-1982
 - Subseries IV. Political Career, 1978-1999
 - Subseries V. Yearly, 1977-1983
- Series II. Newspapers, 1952?-1996

- Series III. Scrapbooks, 1962-1983
- Series IV. Administrative Records, 1849-2005
 - Subseries I. Career, 1849-2003?
 - Subseries II. Personal, 1936-2005
- Series V. Publications, 1962-2004
 - Subseries I. Magazines and Pamphlets, 1988-2004
 - Subseries II. Lawrence High School Class Books, 1962-1983
 - Subseries III. Books, 1970-2005
- Series VI. Objects, 1957-1995?
 - Subseries I. Campaign Buttons, Pins, and Match Books, 1961?-1995?
 - Subseries II. Plaques and Plates, 1961-1983?
 - Subseries III. Miscellaneous, 1957-1985?
- Series VII. Audiovisual Materials, 1954-2003
- Series VIII. Printed Materials, 1961?-1996

Series I. Photographs, Postcards, and Drawings, 1952?-1999

Subseries I. Events, 1978-1994

Photocopies Box 1, Originals Removed

This subseries is composed mostly of photographs of events relating to Mayor LeFebre's terms in office. The events covered include the ceremonial signing for the Lawrence Heritage State Park, the Arlington Neighborhood Clean-up, the Elder Housing Project, the development of the Lawrence Community Boating Program, the groundbreaking ceremony for the hydroelectric plant, Lawrence High School renovations, building dedications, Leonard Bernstein's 60th birthday celebration, Mayor LeFebre's visits to other places, and visits of politicians and other people to Lawrence. Aside from Mayor LeFebre, some of the people pictured are Richard Passeri, Kevin Sullivan, Walter Griffin, Leonard Bernstein, John Griffin, Barry Flynn, Philip Laverriere, Lorraine LeFebre, Dr. W. Edwards Deming, James (Chip) Carter, Senator Edward Kennedy, and Vice President Walter Mondale.

Subseries II. Miscellaneous, 1923-1980?

Photocopies in Box 1, Originals Removed

This subseries contains images from a variety of events and on a number of topics. Some are reproductions of images found elsewhere in the collection. Events shown include a ceremony inducting Lawrence High School alumni into the Sports Hall of Fame, inaugural ceremonies, Mayor LeFebre's visit to Washington, D.C. with his mother, the visit of James (Chip) Carter to Lawrence, the Hibernian Hall Dedication, opening day at the John F. Kennedy Library, and Mayor LeFebre's visit to the Dominican Republic. Aside from Mayor LeFebre, some of the people pictured are David Burke, Lorraine LeFebre, and former Congressman Thomas Lane.

Subseries III. Personal, 1952?-1982

Photocopies in Box 1, Originals Removed

The images in this subseries are personal in nature, focusing on Mayor LeFebre's high school years and his participation in sports between 1961 and 1975. There are photographs of Mayor LeFebre's high school friends with notes to LeFebre on the back, photographs of his high school reunion, photographs of sports teams of which Mayor LeFebre was a member, photographs of LeFebre with his date to the prom, and photographs of his wife. Aside from Mayor LeFebre, some of the people depicted are Eileen LeFebre, Eva Graf, Georgianna LeFebre, Lorraine

LeFebre, Robert LeFebre, Pauline LeFebre, and Patricia LeFebre.

Subseries IV. Political Career, 1978-1999

Photocopies in Box 1, Originals Removed

The images in this subseries focus on Mayor LeFebre's political career, mostly dating between 1977 and 1983. There are images of the dedication of the Tower Hill water tower, Mayor LeFebre in his office with various people, Chamber of Commerce meetings, city functions, Mayor LeFebre's visit to the Dominican Republic (including photographs of a party at the U.S. Embassy at which there were important Dominican Republic and United States officials), the Lawrence School committee (of which Mayor LeFebre was a member), Mayor LeFebre's political campaigns, and his inaugurations into office. There are also political cartoons and drawings of Mayor LeFebre. Some of the people depicted are Mayor John Buckley, Mayor Walter Griffin, Mayor Kevin Sullivan, Mayor Daniel Kiley Jr., John Bradshaw, Joseph Markey, Robert Moynihan, Jose Zaiter, Mayor Buddy Chianci, Ambassador Ellsworth Bunker, and Governor Edward King.

Subseries V. Yearly, 1977-1983

Photocopies in Box 1, Originals Removed

This subseries is composed of images on various subjects which have been organized by year. Subjects include Mayor LeFebre's political campaigns, city functions, Mayor LeFebre's visit to the White House, opening day at the John F. Kennedy Library, sports games and banquets, parades, and inaugurations. Some of the people depicted are Governor Edward King, Dr. W. Edwards Deming, John F. Burke, Congressman Thomas Lane, Barbara Young, Joseph Markey, Barbara Dooley, Kevin Clement, Joseph Lannon, Charles Nyhan, Terrance Schiavone, and Richard D'Agistino.

Series II. Newspapers, 1952?-1996

Boxes 1 & 8

This series is composed of whole newspapers as well as newspaper clippings, most of which date between 1975 and 1983. The subjects of these newspapers vary greatly, but include Mayor LeFebre's political campaigns as well as his activities while in office, the Chamber of Commerce and City Council, the God & Country Parade of 1962, the Lawrence Police Department, taxes in Lawrence, and Lawrence High School sports. Lorraine LeFebre's obituary from 1994 is also included.

Series III. Scrapbooks, 1962-1983

Boxes 1 & 7

This series includes four scrapbooks on various subjects. The first is dedicated to newspaper clippings related to happenings in the city of Lowell, MA in 1978. The articles contained within it cover various topics, including the naming of important landmarks in the city as "historic" by the U.S. Department of Interior, the building of a new high school, the development and funding of the Lowell National Historic Park, garbage disposal, the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act, and community development. The second scrapbook focuses on local, state, and federal politics during 1980 and 1981. Containing mostly newspaper clippings, there are many advertisements for the (re)election of various officials, including Congressman James Shannon and first-time Massachusetts Senate candidate Patricia McGovern. There are also newspaper articles related to LeFebre's political activities in Lawrence.

The third scrapbook has been taken apart for preservation purposes (with the exception of the newspaper clippings, which have been glued into place). However, a high quality photocopy has been

created so that researchers can see how it originally looked. The scrapbook was given to the Mayor by the Arlington Athletic & Social Club in 1978, with a sticker on the front page that says "Best Wishes For A Successful Administration." The materials were then placed in it by Mayor LeFebre. The first few pages contain newspaper clippings related the Mayor's participation in sports during his high school years, as well as other events that took place during that time. There are also newspaper clippings dealing with Mayor LeFebre's years in office. The rest of the scrapbook contains photographs, mostly of the celebration of Leonard Bernstein's 60th birthday. The other photographs are of unknown events, although some appear to be related to his participation in GOAL/QPC. The fourth scrapbook is the largest, and loose materials have been removed for preservation purposes. It contains newspaper clippings dating between 1962 and 1983. They include political advertisements, the goings-on in Lawrence, Mayor LeFebre's participation in sports during his high school years, his political campaigns and activities while in office, and his participation in GOAL/QPC.

Series IV. Administrative Records, 1849-2005

Subseries I. Career Records, 1849-2003?

Boxes 2 & 7

This subseries contains records pertaining to Mayor LeFebre's career, focusing mostly on his years as mayor. However, there are also materials concerning his post-mayoral years at GOAL/QPC. The records include awards, business cards, letterhead, lists of voters by ward, letters, memoranda, reports, political advertisements, pamphlets, and newsletters. The subjects contained within the records include the police department, Mayor LeFebre's visit to Washington, D.C., his political campaigns, the work of W. Edwards Deming, local businesses, city functions, the city budget, attempts to revitalize the city, and total quality management.

Subseries II. Personal Records, 1936-2005

Box 2

This series focuses on Mayor LeFebre's personal life. Records include letters, jury duty notifications, newspaper editorials by Mayor LeFebre, photocopies of articles, newsletters, pamphlets, and awards. There are also programs for events and sports games, as well as a line-a-day diary from 1936. The author of the diary is unknown, but it contains payments made and received, meetings with various people, and unknown lists of numbers. Some of the subjects of the subseries are: Mayor LeFebre's participation in sports as a child, teenager, and college student; his induction into the Lawrence High School Athletic Hall of Fame; his graduations from high school and college; class reunions; and politics.

Series V. Publications, 1962-2005

Subseries I. Magazines and Pamphlets, 1988-2004

Box 2

This subseries is composed of six magazines and pamphlets focusing on baseball. They include the *World Series Souvenir Scorebook* from 1991; a promotional pamphlet with ticket information for the Red Sox's 1990 season; a commemorative magazine for the 2004 World Series Championship entitled *Keep the Faith*; and three programs from the Boston Chapter of the Baseball Writers Association of America's Annual Awards Dinners in 1988, 1990, and 1991. These materials include information on individual baseball players, winning teams, season overviews, milestones in professional baseball, the history of baseball, board members of the Boston Chapter of the Baseball Writers Association of America, and awards received by both players and coaches.

Subseries II. Lawrence High School Class Books, 1962-1983

Box 3

This subseries contains eight senior class books from Lawrence High School. Two of the books date to when Mayor LeFebre was in high school, 1962 and 1963, and the rest date between 1978 and 1983. In the latter class books Mayor LeFebre is pictured as part of the School Committee, and the 1981 book has "Lawrence P. LeFebre, Mayor" printed on the cover in silver lettering. The 1962 class book has written messages in the front and back to someone named Mary, while the 1963 book does not have any writing in it. However, the 1963 class book has pictures of Mayor LeFebre as a member of the senior class, several of the sports teams, and senior class officers. All of the class books have information on students, teachers, faculty, clubs, and sports teams.

Subseries III. Books, 1970-2005

Removed to Lawrence History Center Library

This subseries contains nine books covering varying subjects. There are two books written by Paul Tsongas, one discussing his personal life and the other focusing on politics. There are also four books that focus on historical topics, including presidential inaugural speeches, the Bread & Roses Strike of 1912, the history of industrialization and water power, and the history of Robert Frost's family. There is also a city directory from the year 1980. The three other books focus on W. Edwards Deming's total quality management methods, parliamentary law, meeting management, and statistical data concerning issues of local government management.

Series VI. Objects, 1957-1995?

Subseries I. Small Objects, 1961?-1995?

Box 6

This subseries includes buttons, pins, matchbooks, keys, and containers. Most of the materials are campaign souvenirs. The campaign materials include matchbooks and buttons promoting the candidacy of such politicians as Mayor Lawrence LeFebre, Senator Edward Kennedy, Governor Edward King, Lieutenant Governor Thomas O'Neill, President James Carter, Presidential Candidate Malcolm Stevenson Forbes, Governor Michael Dukakis, and Massachusetts Senator/Massachusetts Secretary of Energy Sharon Pollard. There are also pins and buttons promoting such organizations as the Elks Lodge, Ithaca College, the Masons, and several unions. The subseries also contains more ornamental objects, such as pins in the shapes of frogs and doves. Finally, there are small keys for unknown locks, and several cases covered in fabric that originally held the buttons and pins.

Subseries II. Plaques and Plates, 1961-1983?

Boxes 4 & 5

This series is composed of eleven plaques and one plate. The plaques are mostly awards given to Mayor LeFebre for his service to Lawrence. The plaques are from such organizations as the Lawrence Musicians Union (Local 372), Arlington District Neighborhood Association, Massachusetts Association of School Committees, Lawrence Rental Association, Lawrence Intown, and the New York Times. There are also two plaques commemorating Mayor LeFebre's participation in sports. One is from the Mayor LeFebre's induction into the Lawrence High School Sports Hall of Fame, and the other has photographs of Mayor LeFebre and other players on the Lawrence High School football team. There is also a plaque signed by President James Carter thanking Mayor LeFebre for his participation in the discussion of the Strategic Arms Limitation agreement. Finally, there is one silver plate with a picture of the Ayer Mill clock

tower on it. Around it are the words "Ayer Mill Tower and Clock, Erected 1909, Lawrence, Massachusetts."

Subseries III. Miscellaneous Objects, 1957-1985?

Boxes 3 & 5

This series contains both large and small objects dating from Mayor LeFebre's high school to post-mayoral years. Some of the objects focus on Mayor LeFebre's participation in sports, including Ithaca College varsity letters, a football signed by the members of the Lawrence High School football team, and baseball trophies from his participation in the South Lawrence West Little League. There are also materials that are from his political campaigns and years in office, such as name stands, souvenir campaign mugs, pen stands, and awards. The subseries also contains other miscellaneous materials, including a flag that was flown in Washington, D.C. in honor of the city of Lawrence in 1977 at the request of Paul Tsongas, a gavel, a souvenir mug naming Mayor LeFebre as an Examiner for the 1992 Massachusetts Quality Award, and a souvenir pin from Phillip's Academy in Andover.

Series VII. Audiovisual Materials, 1952-2003

Box 6

This series contains multiple VHS tapes, 16mm film, audio cassettes, as well as one CD. The film depicts several different sports games in which Mayor LeFebre was involved during 1961 and 1962. He played for Lawrence High School against Central Catholic High School, Haverhill High School, and Manchester Central High School. The VHS tapes and audio cassettes focus on his political campaigns, especially when he ran for the office of mayor in 1993. They include live clips from election night as well as advertisements. There are also video tapes of Senator William Wall's funeral, news segments about crime in Lawrence, the dedication of Lawrence High School in 1982, Grieco Brothers, and news segments of Mayor LeFebre's terms in office. The audio cassettes include political campaign advertisements, the 1982 city inauguration ceremony, and information about the police department. The CD contains promotional materials for a house development called *The Villages* in Florida, which the cover says is "Florida's Friendliest Hometown." It was produced in 2003.

Series VIII. Printed Materials, 1961?-1996

Box 8

This series contains mostly prototype posters relating to Mayor LeFebre's campaigns for political office. There are also posters promoting the Lawrence Heritage State Park, the life of Charles S. Storrow, events in Lawrence, the activities of the Lawrence Development and Industrial Commission, and the revitalization of the city. There are also large newspaper reproductions and poster prototype components that have fallen off their posters.