### Kansas Sesquicentennial 2011

**Joseph W. Kennedy 1916-1957**
- Received masters degree in chemistry from the University of Kansas in 1937.
- In 1941 he, along with colleagues Glenn Seaborg, Edwin McMillan and Arthur Wahl, co-discovered the chemical element plutonium.
- In 1943, not yet 27 years old, he was one of the first recruits to Project Y, the effort to develop an atomic bomb.
- Today plutonium is used at nuclear power plants to produce electricity for homes. It is also used to provide power on the Cassini, Voyager and New Horizons space probes.

**EXTRA COOL:** Awarded Medal of Merit by President Harry Truman in 1948. A lecture series is named in his honor at Washington University in St. Louis where he taught for many years.

**Karma MASON current**
- Attended Price Elementary, Coleman Jr. High and Southeast High in Wichita.
- Earned geology degree from Wichita State University.
- Uses naturally-occurring microbes (good bacteria) to clean harmful chemicals or other materials from groundwater, surface water and soils.
- Appointed by the governor to the Kansas Water Authority, a panel which advises on the best use of Kansas water resources.
- Owns and is president of iSi Environmental Services.

**EXTRA COOL:** Inherited a rock collection from her father and has added rocks from all over the world including Saudi Arabia, Aruba and Uruguay.

**Otis Ray McIntire 1918-1996**
- Born in Gardner.
- Graduated from the University of Kansas in 1940 and went to work as a research engineer for Dow Chemical.
- During WW II, when rubber was in short supply, he focused on developing a rubber-like substance that could be used as a flexible insulator.
- Combined styrene with isobutylene and created styrofoam—a solid yet flexible material 30 times lighter and more flexible than solid polystyrene.
- Styrofoam is used for everything from cups, to insulation to packing peanuts.

**EXTRA COOL:** McIntire was inducted into the National Inventors Hall of Fame in 2008.

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**Fred C. Koch 1900-1967**
- Joined a Wichita engineering firm in 1925. It was renamed Winkler-Koch Engineering Company. In 1927 he developed an improved method to turn heavy oil into gasoline. He designed and helped build refineries in Kansas including Wichita, McPherson and Eldorado.
- Larger oil companies, afraid of competition from this new process, forced him out of business in the U.S. for several years. Ever resilient, Koch built units in other countries.
- By the 1940s, Koch co-owned his own refining company in the U.S. and established Koch Engineering in Wichita in 1945.
- Today Koch Industries includes refining, chemicals, chemical processing equipment, consumer and building products, polymers and fibers, fertilizers, ranching and other businesses.

**EXTRA COOL:** The headquarters for Koch Industries is in Wichita. The company has a presence in nearly 60 countries.