



Summer 2017

**President's letter**

**A Good Man, A New Beginning,  
A Good Meeting**

**A GOOD MAN**

Rockhill has lots of neighbors who have lived here many years. Their personalities, talents and contributions - as well as those who have gone before and recently become part of the neighborhood - are what make Rockhill the great neighborhood it is.

If you want proof that this matters to these proud long time "Rockhillians", I offer as Exhibit "A", the first sentence in the obituary of a truly good man, a good friend, who was also a good husband, good father, and good physician, among many other things.

"Joseph 'Ralph' Payne, MD, a resident of the Rockhill neighborhood for 43 years, died May 24, 2017."

Amazingly, for Ralph and his dear wife, Joy, the neighborhood they love is mentioned ahead of everything else.

Ralph was one of the very first people I met in Rockhill. Just a few days after Jeffie and I moved in, Joy and Ralph hosted a Sunday evening reception "for a few other neighbors". That turned out to be about 20 or so who welcomed Jeffie and me. After that evening two weeks

into Rockhill, we got acquainted with more Rockhill neighbors than we had met in our Overland Park neighborhood in 20 years.

Ralph ran the tightest Rockhill Homes Association meetings on record. He spent his own time and money and organized volunteers to do improvements to the Rockhill Club when money got tight. He made it very simple to communicate with him because you never had to guess where he stood on anything. But he always shared his thoughts in a way so that you knew he wanted to know what you thought too. The last two sentences of his obituary beautifully capture the essence:

"The hole in our hearts is immense yet it's being filled by the loving sentiments coming in from those who knew and loved him. His grand stature only eclipsed by his large laugh, big hugs and huge heart."

In the Bloch Gallery there is a painting by Paul Cezanne, very fittingly entitled in this setting "Man with a Pipe". The label by the painting says Cezanne admired people who were "steadfast, unchanging and monumental", and quotes Cezanne, "I love above all else the appearance of people who have grown old without breaking with old customs." Cezanne would have loved Ralph Payne.

### **A NEW BEGINNING**

Many, many times during the years I have been part of the Rockhill Homes Association board I have heard from neighbors that it was time to "just move on" with respect to the relationship between our neighborhood and the Nelson-Atkins Museum. That sounded like a great idea to all the people interacting with the Museum. The problem, as we saw it, was that to "just move on" meant that we would be moving on with all the mistrust, misunderstandings, and suspicions that had built up prior to whenever it was that we "just moved on". That suggested even if we "moved on", it likely wouldn't be long before there was something else to work through.

The agreement reached among the Southmoreland Neighborhood Association, The Nelson-Atkins Museum, and Rockhill provides a framework for regular conversations in a constructive setting. The immediate issues raised in the Museum's application for a Master Plan Development District were the culmination of long-standing issues involving the Museum's ability to plan for the future, historic preservation, certainty about the ultimate use of the former Rockhill Club (a.k.a. "Kirkwood Property") and the Museum's houses on 45th. With this agreement, all those issues have been addressed.

In the process of addressing those issues and creating the framework for future communications, the various representatives were put in a setting where misunderstandings were cleared up. Motives were explained. Eventually, friendships developed. Trust too.

On June 6th, at 9:00 AM, the City Plan Commission will rule on the Museum's amended MPD application. If you have time, consider attending the hearing to thank the CPC for putting the neighborhoods and the Museum in a position where we had to work through this. It was a long time coming.

Now we can "just move on".

### **A GOOD MEETING**

On May 31st representatives of the City Aviation Department hosted a "listening session" to provide information about and receive feedback on the proposed changes at Kansas City International. In my opinion, it was a very informative meeting. It must have been a busy Wednesday evening because only eight people from Rockhill attended.

It is clear not everybody in the City, or even all the eight neighbors who were there, is in favor of a new single terminal. So with that in mind, I offer this only as information that I hadn't noticed tracking the issue in the "Star" and other media, not as an advocate.

Why does renovation cost as much as a new terminal? Geometry. The three separate terminals are built in a horse-shoe configuration. Roughly half of the space is devoted to the concourse. The airlines need more gates, larger holding areas to accommodate more passengers getting onto larger planes, and improved baggage handling equipment, among other things. There is no room to do that efficiently with the current configuration. It's cheaper and more efficient to start over.

What happens at KCI if and when a new terminal is built? Life goes on more or less as is. The new terminal would be built where the now empty Terminal A is. Traffic would no doubt be affected, but all the gates currently available would remain available during construction.

Won't it be less convenient with longer distances to gates and longer waits for security with a single terminal? Not necessarily. The time to gate may actually be less and the security clearance time shouldn't change either. Right now there is no way to put a "people mover" in at KCI because those require straight lines which are hard to come by at KCI. The new tentative design contemplates about a third of the gates only a few steps from security with the rest configured near a "people mover" that would connect the two gate areas. Reconfiguring drop-off and pick-up areas would simplify traffic near the gates while keeping much of the nearby parking.

Will KCI still be competitive with higher costs to the airlines for improvements passed on to flyers? The cost per passenger will be about \$2.00 more per flight. Added to the current "enplanement" cost, KCI would still be in the lower 50 percentile of peer airports. Less than half the enplanement cost of St. Louis and about a third the cost for Cleveland and Pittsburgh. Time will tell how this works out. All the above was news to me.

I hope everyone has a great summer.

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Joy Payne and family invite you to join them in celebrating the life of  
Ralph Payne  
July 8  
5:00-7:00 pm  
823 West 55<sup>th</sup> Street,  
Kansas City, MO

If you are unable to attend please raise a glass in his honor at 6:00 pm.



"A very special and heartfelt thank you is due to Bill Berkley, Marshall Miller, Galen Mussman and Jim Wanser for their work with the Nelson. Many feel the successful collaboration between our neighborhood and the Nelson was nothing short of a miracle.

These four men spent countless hours in talks and meetings and gave so much of their time and expertise. The outcome was monumental and better than we could have dreamed. What they accomplished with the Nelson should serve as a model for other neighborhoods and institutions around the country.

With Much Gratitude from Current Rockhillians and those who are yet to be!"

## New Trees in Rockhill

Here are some photographs from the Tree Alliance coordinator, Matt Vander Molen, who led the team of 25 volunteers who planted about 40 trees in Rockhill on Saturday, May 8th. It was a perfect day for planting and the group did a terrific job. The trees are all beautifully planted and scattered throughout the neighborhood.

Residents of the homes where trees are planted have agreed to tend to them as they get established. Following is a link explaining how to care for them.

<http://www.ourcityforest.org/blog/2015/2/26/the-ultimate-watering-guide>

Don't forget to check out the Rockhill web site at <http://Rockhillkc.org>



*The Fall Rockhill Newsletter will be distributed in September. If you have information to share, or notices of recognition or events, please send them to [kostnerlinda@gmail.com](mailto:kostnerlinda@gmail.com)*