



Summer 2018

President's letter

Dear Neighbors,

Even though I have big shoes to fill following Galen Mussman and Jim Wanser before Galen, I am excited to be the new President of the Rockhill Home's Association. There is no way to appropriately thank Galen and Jim enough for all that they have done for Rockhill. We are so fortunate to have had them as our representatives. They left me with an easy job. In addition to coming in with few issues to tackle, the following explains the other reasons I am excited about taking on this new role.

We moved into Rockhill 24 years ago on June 14th, and we have been so grateful ever since. Like most of you, we loved the beauty, location and ambiance of Rockhill but had no idea that the best feature was the people. How lucky were we to stumble on a house we loved in "The Best Neighborhood in Kansas City". Yes, I have said that so many times to those who look for houses in Rockhill and to those who buy houses here. People tend to look at me with "yeah, right" or "we'll see" in their eyes. But not long after, they know I was speaking the truth.

Actually, my love affair with Rockhill started when I was a little girl. It is much like the book, *The Secret*, about *The Law of Attraction*. My family lived in Raytown so in order to go to the Plaza or Gillham Park at Christmas time, we drove by Rockhill. Sitting in the back seat, I wondered about the people that lived in that glorious neighborhood. I imagined how wonderful it would be to live there.

Many years later Don, our two young daughters, and I moved back to Kansas City from NW Arkansas. Towards the end of the first day of looking at houses and feeling discouraged by what we saw, I asked our Realtor about the neighborhood by the Nelson. She said she had a house listed there but it was over the price range we had given her. But we asked to see it anyway, and the owner was very accommodating for the short notice showing. We went back to our hotel

and I told Don, "I really want that house"! On Sunday, we wrote the offer and it was accepted! I really felt and still do that it was truly meant to be.

There is a lot of family history in Rockhill. Of course, I'm like a baby sister to those who have been here much longer than me, but there is a special "Rockhillian" bond we all share.

We have real jewels in Rockhill. Libby Gordon just turned 90 and has lived in Rockhill 85 years except for a short stint in Atlanta and Boston. Her grandparents first owned her house, then her parents and now she is the steward of the family home. Imagine the stories she has to share. Libby lived with her parents on Pierce Street before her current home. In fact, several current neighbors have lived in more than one home in Rockhill. Todi Hughes has lived in Rockhill 62 years. She also lived in the big pink house owned by the Maulik's. Jimmie Miller, Patricia's late husband, lived in their house on Cleaver, for 90 years. He grew up and then raised his own family in the same house. Patricia grew up in the yellow house on the corner of Rockhill and Emanuel before marrying Jimmie.

What does all this say about Rockhill? That it truly is *The Best Neighborhood in Kansas City!* Please reach out to me with any questions, concerns or ideas.

All My Best, Jamie

Congratulations to...

Sue Carlson – Awarded University Distinguished Professor at the University of Kansas Medical Center.

John Ezell – Established a permanent exhibit of his stage set models at the Contemporary Graphic Art collection in Olin Library at Washington University in St. Louis

Patricia Miller – Awarded the Rashford-Lyon Award for Leadership and Ethics by Rockhurst University.



Preservation Award for Rockhill, Southmoreland and Nelson-Atkins

On March 21, Historic Kansas City awarded the “Nelsonhood” with the **Richard Nadeau Award for Organizational Achievement** - This award recognizes outstanding achievement in preservation activities for a significant project or for a lengthy period of dedication to preservation activities by a group, business, municipality, neighborhood or other organization. Richard Nadeau was a long-term resident of Rockhill and a strong advocate for historic preservation in Kansas City. As described at the awards ceremony:

Nelsonhood – Rockhill & Southmoreland Neighborhoods

After a decade of tension between historic neighborhoods and the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, preservation efforts served as a pivotal consideration for a successful resolution in the Spring of 2017.

Over time, the Nelson-Atkins had acquired five residential properties in the Rockhill neighborhood, four of which are adjacent to the Southmoreland neighborhood. With the need for additional museum space, the museum shared their plans to use the homes for institution offices, with the long-term intent of demolition of the properties.

With strong leadership from the neighborhoods, the support of Councilwoman Katheryn Shield and Barb Pahl from the National Trust, the buildings will be preserved to support the historical character of the neighborhood. The agreement, which is outlined in the Master Plan District and MOU for the Nelson-Atkins, calls for full preservation of the facades and interiors of all five properties and the sale of the Kirkwood home to be restored for residential use. Throughout this ten-year process, it was the

importance of strong leadership and historic preservation that were the keys to resolution.

We celebrate the successful resolution between the neighborhoods and the Nelson-Atkins and look forward to a strong collaborative working relationship for our shared interests in the future.

---Submitted by Jim Wanser

Meet the Neighbors

Becky and Jason Showmaker moved into Rockhill just one month ago from Columbia, MO, along with their children Paris (7), Michael (6), Autumn (4) and their dog, Scout. This energetic family fills the house at the corner of Brush Creek and Campbell. Jason works as an ENT. They enjoy hiking, exploring parks and trails, and, for Jason, woodworking. Their three favorite things about Rockhill, so far, are the location, the friendly neighbors, and the beautiful homes. Please welcome the Showmakers!



Did You Know?
 The Nickell’s house was once the home of Henry Haskell, Pulitzer Prize winning editor of the Kansas City Star. In addition, Nathan Stark, E. Grey Diamond and Representative Richard Bolling hatched the idea for the UMKC Medical center while sitting on the back porch!

“Wait . . . just a couple of things before I go”



First, thank you. For the last five years or so I've had the honor of serving as president of the Rockhill Homes Association. During that time I've gotten acquainted with many of the neighbors in this wonderful neighborhood and I'm the better for the experiences.

Second, after talking on the phone, exchanging emails, attending meetings, and working with so many of you, I appreciate the Rockhill neighborhood more than ever.

I know I'm a cheerleader, so don't just take my word for it. Go online. Look at articles or so-called scholarly journals and see what elements they say make a great urban neighborhood. The ones I read mention things like: proximity to public transportation, shopping, and medical care. Favorable crime statistics. Houses well maintained. Good neighborhood organizations. Neighbors who interact and get along. People who go out walking and spend time talking to each other in driveways and on sidewalks.

Isn't that a pretty good description of Rockhill?

Additionally, we've been blessed with an influx of new neighbors recently. If you have been living in Rockhill a while and want to have your spirits lifted, go out of your way to get acquainted with our new neighbors. They have LOTS of good reasons why they moved to Rockhill and they're happy to tell you about them.

Finally, a request. Four years ago in a “President's Column” I mentioned what a tremendous community building asset we have in many Rockhill homes: porches. Professional community builders talk about yesteryear and how people would sit on the front porch instead of in the backyard because they could see people coming and going, say hello to their neighbors and have short conversations. These brief interactions were how the bonds of community used to be formed. How about if we start doing this again? When I'm out walking the dog in the evening, I see a few neighbors out on their porches almost every night

and they always seem happy, engaged, having fun. Let's join them.

Whether or not we get on the porch, think about this. We're surrounded by architects, dentists, doctors, medical researchers, environmental experts, lawyers, artists, administrators, hair stylists, entrepreneurs, professors and teachers, physical therapists and on and on. Invite somebody to stop by and ask a few questions. Who knows what you'll learn and what kind of relationships you'll create.

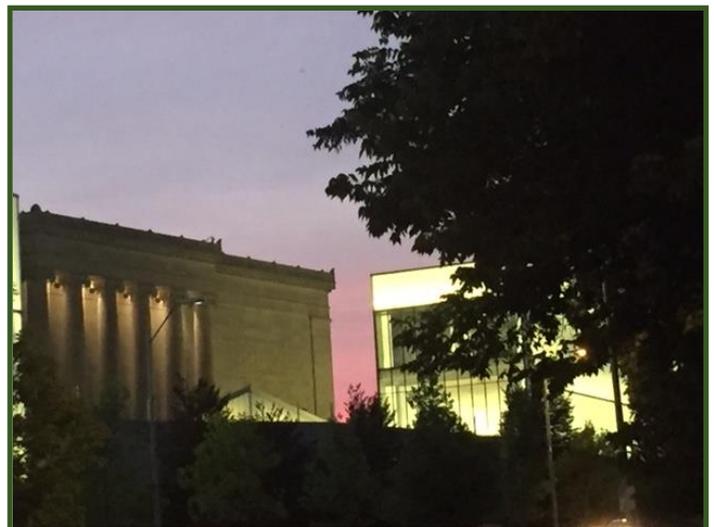
Best wishes to everybody, especially to Jamie Closson, our new homes association president.

– Galen Mussman



Itching for a rockin' Rockhill baseball cap for only \$15?? Contact Linda Tabory at Ltabory@gmail.com.

If you need an extra copy of the Rockhill Homes Association 2018 directory, contact Jeffie Mussman at jeffiemussman@gmail.com. \$5 each.



The Fall Rockhill Newsletter will be distributed in early September. If you have information to share, or notices of recognition or events, please send them to kmoninger@gmail.com