



# The Rockhill Times

President's Letter

Fall 2021

Dear Neighbors,

First of all, I have to say how wonderful the picnic was this year! They are always great but this one seemed special. We were thrilled to see so many of you and missed those who could not attend. We were so happy two long time neighbors were there—dear Libby and Todi! I wondered how many Rockhill picnics they have been to. Don and I have been to about 27 and we have enjoyed them all.

Ed Straley with the help of Joy Payne organized and worked very hard to make the picnic a success. The tables and chairs were a great idea and having a social hour before sitting down to eat helped us have enough time to talk to everyone. We cannot thank everyone who helped enough.

Since I don't have other news, I wanted to share two themes that stand out for me this autumn season.

The first is that after finally seeing the trees in our neighborhood changing colors, I feel blessed with so much diversity in our Rockhill neighborhood. Not only do we have neighbors with diverse backgrounds, but we also have so many neighbors with such a variety of gifts and talents that have helped make our neighborhood strong and stand out as a gem in Kansas City.

The second theme that autumn brings to me is one that is practiced by many faith communities in November: Remembrance. With the long history that our neighborhood enjoys, we have many people, past and present, that we are so grateful for. From our

founder, William Rockhill Nelson to current neighbors that have but forth so much effort to sustain and make our neighborhood great, I am extremely grateful. May we never forget those neighbors that have transitioned to other places or to another life.

My Thanksgiving prayer is that we will continue to build upon these two themes by welcoming new neighbors with an outstretched arms and work to build many great memories with those with who we share this treasured part of our great city!

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## Change is in the Air

Home ownership in our historic neighborhood presents a unique opportunity to serve as good stewards to preserve our homes and surrounding property, keep them well maintained, and properly cared for. It seems that, especially in the pandemic, many of us are finding time to focus on the

care these old homes require. Making any changes to the exterior of a historic home, other than minor maintenance or repair requires an approval process which serves to further protect the historic nature of the neighborhood. The following is a summary of that process along with resources to help make the process go smoothly.

In brief, the steps are to first get the approval of each homeowner within view of the proposed change, then the approval of our homes association (RHA), and lastly of the Kansas City Historic Preservation Commission (AKA Landmarks) which is part of Long Range Planning at city hall. You can email or speak with your neighbors to ask for their approval and use their electronic responses or written responses as documentation to submit with your application for a Certificate of Appropriateness. The RHA board will want you to attend one of its monthly meetings to present your project. If the board approves, the president sends a letter of support to the Commission. You will want to provide photos and documentation of the changes you propose, including materials, paint samples, and blueprints, where possible. The more information you can provide up front, the fewer questions you'll need to answer as you go through the process.

Once you've obtained the approval of neighbors and the board, send an email to Bradley Wolf at [bradley.wolf@kcmo.org](mailto:bradley.wolf@kcmo.org), City Historic Preservation Officer to inform him of your project. He will guide you through the final stages of the process which are to submit an application for a Certificate of Appropriateness to the Historic Preservation office. The online application is found at the Compass KC portal (<http://compasskc.kcmo.org>). Choose **Apply** then scroll down to **Historic Preservation, Commission Review** and follow the prompts to register an account and complete an application. At that time you will be allowed to submit your photos, letters and project plans. You can also pay the \$41 application fee on the same website. The Commission meets monthly and they will notify you

when your project is on their calendar. Currently those meetings are being held by Zoom. It's wise that you attend because the Commission may have questions and you will be allowed to add information if necessary. (opponents of your project, if there are any, are also allowed to participate)

If you are uncertain about whether your project needs to complete this process, contact an officer of our Homes Association. They can answer your questions or find someone who can.



## **KCMO REDISTRICTING and ROCKHILL**

*by Jim Wanser*

As mandated by the Kansas City Charter, every ten years the composition of our voting districts is adjusted to reflect population growth and shifts. Using data generated by the census the year prior (2020), a redistricting commission that is appointed by the mayor is tasked with submitting a proposed map to reflect changes in key demographics of our city. The current commission has been working for several months and will present a recommended map to the mayor and city council on December 1<sup>st</sup>. They have narrowed their scope of possible scenarios down to three maps at this time and have presented them to the public for comment. The three maps can be reviewed at <https://www.kcmo.gov/redistrict>.

The population of Kansas City MO is at an all time high at 508,000. Every district in the City has grown, with the 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> (our district) reflecting the greatest amount of growth. To get a relatively equal number (84,000) of voters in each district, the boundaries have to change. The 4<sup>th</sup> district is the most densely populated part of the City and will need to shrink in order to help balance the 6 districts.

All three maps that have been distributed for comment recommend that the southern part of the 4<sup>th</sup> District, almost all areas south of 43<sup>rd</sup> St, (Stateline to Troost) to 59<sup>th</sup> St. be incorporated into the 6<sup>th</sup> District. Rockhill,

the Plaza, Brookside, etc. would be added to the district which extends beyond Martin City. We would no longer be in the district that includes Southmoreland, Hyde Park, Westport, Downtown, the Westside and historic Northeast and everything in between. The implications are many. New relationships would need to be formed to represent our interest as a great historic midtown neighborhood.

The process is moving quickly and you are encouraged to share your thoughts on the feedback form of the KCMO redistricting website: <https://www.kcmo.gov/redistrict>

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## Meet the Neighbors



At the corner of Charlotte and Brush Creek Blvd are Lynn Adkins and Linda Lighton Adkins who have lived in Rockhill some 35 years. Now retired, Lynn has had many careers. He was in the military, in intelligence in Vietnam. Then he became a teacher and then a child psychologist. He oversaw 3 school districts in Idaho where they lived on his farm in Deary, Idaho in Northern Idaho. In KC he worked at Woolf Brothers, did commercial real estate and ran

a bail bonding company. He also had several apartment buildings which he managed.

Lynn has worked as an artist, primarily in ceramics, her entire adult life. Her work has taken her to many countries including China, Germany, Hungary, Japan, Korea, Latvia, Lithuania, Spain, and Turkey. She has shown her work around the globe and closer to home at the Daum Museum in Sedalia, and at the Kemper, Nelson Atkins, and Nerman Museums in the KC metro.

Linda has received the Lifetime Achievement Award from the National Council for the Education of the Ceramic Arts, Award for Excellence in the Visual Arts and Education from the Kansas city Art Institute, Distinguished Alumni Award at Pembroke Schools, and State of Missouri Artist Award. She currently serves on the David Parsons Dance Board in New York City.

Linda founded the Lighton International Artist Exchange Program. The Program sends U.S. artists to work in foreign countries and brings international artists the U.S. to work. In 21 years, the program has sent 178 artists to 62 countries, all the continents and the Arctic Circle. Go to [LIAEP.org](http://LIAEP.org) for more information.

When they bought their house, which was designed by the Van Brunt Brothers, the yard was so overgrown that you could not see the house. The yard had not been mowed in over 7 years and many of the windows, including the front door glass was broken!

Their hobbies are sailing, skiing, traveling, looking at art, cooking, gardening, canning and entertaining. Lynn and Linda love Rockhill and are happy to be in this place. They love the parks all around, the trees, the walkability, UMKC, Art Institute, The Nelson Museum and the Kemper. They feel it is a great privilege to live in this beautiful historic neighborhood.



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*Note from the Editor:* Thank you for all the cards and flowers, food and kind words these past several weeks. I am forever grateful to you Rockhillians who have supported me with such kindness and compassion during this hard time.

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*The Winter edition of the Rockhill Times will be distributed in January. If you have information to share, or notices of recognition or events, please send them to [kmoninger@gmail.com](mailto:kmoninger@gmail.com). Previous issues of the Times can be found at [www.rockhillkc.org/archives.html](http://www.rockhillkc.org/archives.html).*

