



President's Letter

Spring 2025

A friend of mine, and long-time owner of an art gallery, was fond of saying, "You never really *own* a piece of art. You are simply the current caretaker for the next generation." I suppose that is how many of us feel about Rockhill.

Nestled into the urban core amongst the most culturally relevant areas of our metropolis, surrounded by parks, art, gardens, and important historical markers, our unique dot on the map has stood the test of time and emerged as a neighborhood quite unlike any other in Kansas City. I like to say that there is a "frequency" to Rockhill that's hard to explain, but it can be felt.

Along the way, each of you has become a caretaker of your respective property, and through your tireless efforts to preserve and protect Rockhill, we are preparing to celebrate the 50- year anniversary as the first neighborhood in Kansas City to be listed on the National Registry of Historic Places. Cheers to all of you!

While we honor the achievements of the past, we also look at what lies ahead for our neighborhood. During my very short tenure as the President of the association, I have seen how those who came before me have fought so valiantly to maintain the aesthetic of Rockhill against the backdrop of a growing city that's in a constant state of new development.

Today, we're watching:

- The expansion of new bike lanes
- Significant additions to the Nelson Art Gallery
- A renewed effort to revitalize The Plaza
- A long-awaited light rail system, and more...

These are just a few of the movements afoot with the potential for positive change. Yet each of these developments brings unique challenges for our neighborhood when it comes to traffic and livability. Therefore, at the top of the agenda for your board is the unified effort to improve the traffic patterns and the overall safety for you, your family, and your four- legged loved ones. We will be working with the city to explore solutions on how we can keep Rockhill a neighborhood, and not a drive through, and I'm excited about the possibilities.

There is much more to share, but for now, I'd like to say that Sonya and I are so grateful to call Rockhill home. There is something special about a neighborhood with very low turnover, where families plant roots and stay for decades, and where friendships can become layered and meaningful. All of you have been so welcoming, so I extend my hand of friendship to each of you. Please reach out if there is anything I can do to better serve you or Rockhill.

Lance Harshbarger (rockhillpresident@gmail.com)

Rockhillians Receive Statewide Recognition

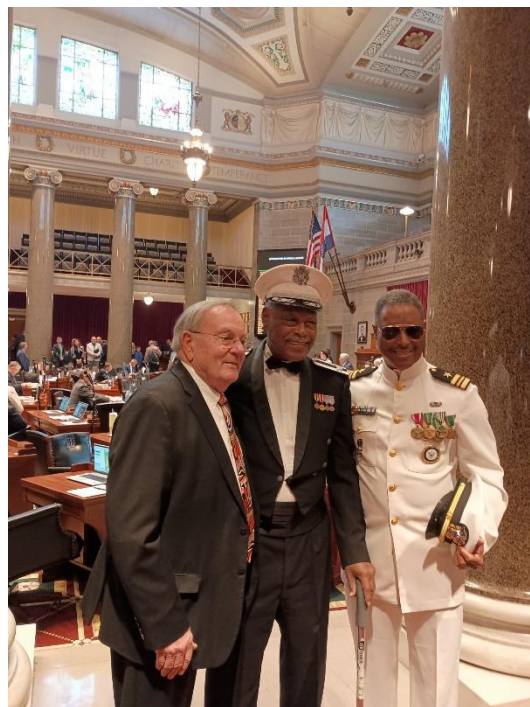


Reggie and Regina Bassa were surprised by a recent call from the Missouri State Capitol. Along with Reggie's Dad (Colonel Reginald Bassa Sr., Retired United States Air Force); they were invited to lunch with the Governor and First Lady, introductions in both Chambers of the Legislature and participation in the Missouri Black Caucus'

Black History Program. The invitations were made primarily to honor Colonel Reginald Bassa Sr., a Tuskegee Airman Pilot. Reggie's Dad had a distinguished 30-year career in the United States Airforce serving all over the world. His military career culminated with his promotion to (full) Colonel at Richards Gebaur AFB in Belton, Missouri, where he served as Deputy Wing Commander in the 442nd Tactical Airlift Wing



Reggie Bassa was also recognized at the State Capitol for following in his father's footsteps. Reggie graduated from United States Military Academy at West Point and while on active duty had a career focusing on Worldwide Counter-terrorism and Criminal Investigations. Reggie was later recruited by the United States Navy after joining UMKC's Faculty and Staff to act as their Liaison for a five-state region. Reggie retired from the Navy as a Lieutenant Commander.



The Bassa Family has a strong legacy of military service extending back four generations. Reggie's Grandfather served in WWII in the Pacific Theater as part of the all Black Quartermasters Service. Reggie's Great Grandfather served in WWI in the 92nd Infantry (better known as the Buffalo Soldiers).

The Fulfillment of a Garden Journey

by Pat Session

There is something magical about nurturing plants, watching them grow, and creating a space that reflects my personality and passions. I wanted to design a garden that harmonized with the style of our home, and a moon garden seemed like the perfect choice for what I envisioned.

Ideally, a moon garden is enjoyed most in the evening hours, featuring plants that bloom and emit fragrance at night. The idea of cultivating a space that thrives under the glow of moonlight was incredibly appealing though I was challenged by having a rather small area to work with, poor soil and many existing trees, shrubs and perennials.

Choosing the right plants for my moon garden also required careful attention to the movement of sun and shade within the boundaries of the garden. To meet the primary purpose of my moon garden, I chose perennials in shades of white, silver and pink, such as Astilbe, Gaura, Artemisia, White Candytuft and Whitecap Asters all of which reflect the moonlight beautifully. A variety of white rose bushes were incorporated to bring both the fragrance and the elegant feel I was looking for. Other plantings brought different textures and heights for visual interest and depth. Creating the combination of sight and scent in this style of garden is incredibly soothing and uplifting to me.

While my moon garden remains a proverbial “work in progress” for me, it has already rewarded me with joy from the hours and days of planning and planting. As many who garden know, it’s the evolution from an idea to a living, breathing space that makes gardening so enjoyable.

You can tour my Moon Garden at the upcoming Gardens and Architecture Tour of Historic Rockhill on May 17, 2025. I hope you will come and enjoy my garden as much as I do.

RHA Annual Meeting -May 13

by Galen Mussman

Please plan to attend the annual meeting of homeowners, which will be on May 13 at 7PM in Epperson Hall at the Kansas City Art Institute. For those who haven’t attended before, Epperson Hall is inside the Vanderslice House just east of the cafeteria on the Art Institute campus. If you have new neighbors, or neighbors you haven’t seen attend in the past, please invite them to come with you. We want everyone to feel welcome and to be engaged.

RHA Board meetings are held on the second Tuesday of each month, except the day before the annual meeting when the Board meets on Monday. The next two meetings are scheduled April 8 and May 12. Issues may be brought before the Board by contacting either me (mussmang@gmail.com) or our President, Lance Harshbarger (lhars77@gmail.com).

Tour the Gardens and Architecture of Historic Rockhill – May 17 – 10am-4pm

By Pat Session and Sonya Harshbarger

The Rockhill Home and Garden Club has been working hard to create a festive atmosphere for our Gardens and Architecture Tour. Don't lose any time before checking out our website and sharing the link (rhgctour.com) with your friends so they can purchase tickets and join us in celebrating 50 years as the first nationally designated historic neighborhood in Kansas City. This is a rare opportunity so please don't miss it – the last RHA garden tour was in 2005, to celebrate our Centennial year as a neighborhood. We could still use a few more volunteers. Please contact Susan Carlson (scarlson@kumc.edu) if you would like to volunteer.

Welcoming Spring

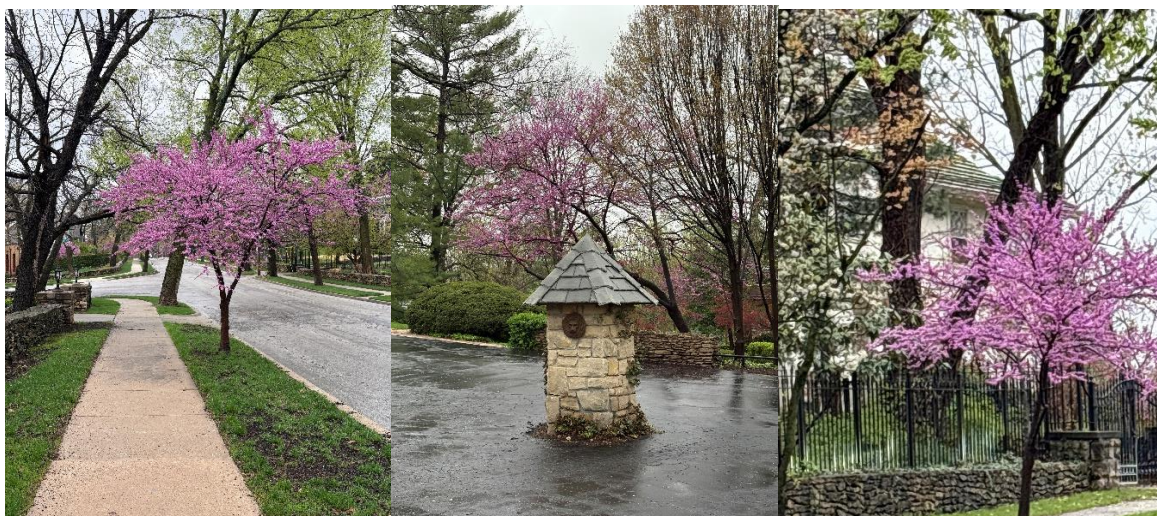
By Rockhill Garden Club

Trees are always on the agenda for the Rockhill Home and Garden Club. Thanks to \$30,000 of PIAC funding secured by Tom Winter, our neighborhood and surrounds are getting another 42 trees in April. Perhaps the best part is that they will be planted and most of them watered by Heartland Tree Alliance for the next several years. The exception is that neighbors who have trees planted in front of their home are expected to water regularly for the next 2 years.

The neighborhood is abuzz with activity right now – multiple homes are being painted, rock walls being restacked and upkeep of all sorts ongoing. It may not be a coincidence that we've let everyone know their property will have lots of eyes on it come May 17.

Given the number of workers in the neighborhood, it is a good time to remind everyone to please ask their workers to wear headphones if they wish to listen to music while they work. Unfortunately, we don't have an easy solution for the motor bikers who disturb the neighborhood peace.

Speaking of trees, the redbuds this year have been a delight!



If you are a new neighbor and are interested in joining the Home and Garden Club, we'd love to have you. Just contact scarlson@kumc.edu.

Next Coffee Club, May 31 @ 10:30 am

By Jeffie Mussman and Karen Moninger

The coffee club is a great way to catch up with neighbors and meet new ones! You're invited to the home of Reggie and Regina Bassa, 4470 Rockhill Terrace to enjoy coffee and conversation with the neighbors you know and the ones you've yet to meet!

RSVP to Regina (text: 816-674-9146) or Reggie (email: bassar007@gmail.com) to let them know you will come.

If you are interested in hosting future gatherings, please contact Jeffie Mussman at Jeffiemussman@gmail.com or Karen Moninger at kmoninger@gmail.com



The Summer edition of the Rockhill Times will be distributed July 1. If you have information to share, or notices of recognition or events, please send them to scarlson@kumc.edu Previous issues of the Times can be found at www.rockhillkc.org/archives.html.
