



The Rockhill Times

President's Letter

Summer 2023

Good Neighbors and Good Neighborhoods

If you came to our RHA Annual Meeting in May, you heard me open it by saying that “Good neighbors build good neighborhoods, and good neighborhoods build good cities.” I strongly believe these two statements to be true, but what is a good neighbor or a good neighborhood for that matter?

First then, let us ask what is a good neighbor? Is it telling that the quality of neighbors has often been associated with the quality of the fences separating them? We've all heard, and Robert Frost quoted in *Mending Wall*, that “Good fences make good neighbors.” George Herbert, the 17th century poet priest, referenced this same notion when he wrote, “Love your neighbour, yet pull not down your hedge.” Even Robert Browning got into the act, writing “Call in law when a neighbor breaks your fence.” But are good fences really so beneficial in making good neighbors?

Inasmuch as a good neighbor is often judged largely on what they don't do, namely offend any of their neighbor's five senses, a good fence provides only limited protection. Fences are ignored by the most common offensive irritants, usually sight and sound, but occasionally smell. Personally, I'm more of a sound-annoyed person, as I am more capable of closing my eyes than my ears. A more evolved perspective on judging a neighbor as being good grants credit, not just for things they don't do, but for the sensitive and generous things that they may actually do, such as inquiring about your and your family's well-

being, especially by name; volunteering to perform small acts of kindness, such as keeping an eye on your house while you are away; walking your mail to your house when it is again misdelivered; warning you in advance when hosting an event with potential noise or parking issues; and many more gestures of sensitivity and concern.

The good news for all of us is that in the end, if “Love thy neighbour as thyself.” (*Leviticus*) proves to be too challenging a bar to reach in trying to be a good neighbor, then simply pondering the very question of what makes a good neighbor goes a long, long way toward being one!

The next question is, of course, what is a good neighborhood? To acknowledge the advice of our forebears, who seem to have had rather low expectations, we must consider the quality of its fences. The best fences should be sturdy, perhaps made of stacked rock, and should be low enough that neighbors can see each other as they visit over them. It might be noted, however, that our residents on Pierce Street make the strong argument that no fences make the best neighborhood fences of all!

What other factors contribute to making a good neighborhood? From reading on this question, the residents' pride in ownership comes up often, with upkeep of house and garden being evident. A sense of history in the neighborhood is also cited as desirable – the sense of stepping back in time. More practical considerations considered are ease of access to medical care, proximity to

public transportation (streetcars anyone?), and nearby shopping, restaurants, entertainment and night life. Walkability of the neighborhood is also deemed important, especially if one encounters neighbors while doing so; however, one doesn't want to be too crowded, but instead living in what is termed a gentle density of population. Finally, low rates of crime are desirable. Based on all of these important criteria, Rockhill is clearly a good neighborhood. When you add in having two major museums, three parks, a nature center, and a large university all within easy walking distance, we do indeed live in a very good neighborhood!

Gerry Carlson
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New and Improved Rockhill Website

Tom Winter

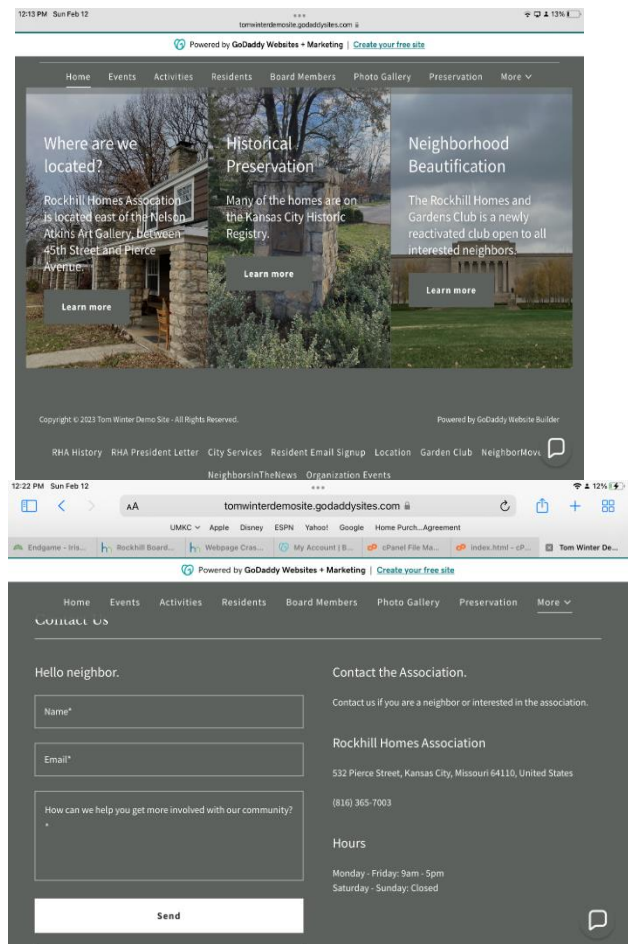
Rockhill Times Article for the Revised Web Site: RockhillKC.org. The web site for the Rockhill Homes Association has been remodeled; however, the site maintains the friendly same address: RockhillKC.org. The site works on your computer, ipad, or phone. The goals of the redesign are to provide residents with:

1. Accurate information about the Association and its actions, for example, Board communications or home renovation procedures,
2. Timely information about our neighborhood activities and general news, for example, new home purchasers or city development affecting us,
3. Helpful information on city statutes and issues affecting our neighborhood, for example, trash pickup times and municipal elections notices,
4. A means to converse with: the Association, other specific activity leads, and other residents, for example, contact form for the garden club and other functions represented,

5. And branding communication for the neighborhood for non residents.

Some other content available includes: lists of upcoming events in our neighborhood, our parks, and our surrounding organizations; past versions of the Rockhill Times, neighborhood history, a homes' tour and other interesting stuff. However, no attempt to describe the features of the site substitutes for just taking it for a spin and seeing what you can find useful or informative there.

The site will be managed by a committee that will be overseen by the Board. However, if you have an idea for content, for example, an event you would like to tell others about, there is a contact page to make it easy to communicate with site staff. Site staff would very much like for you, the residents, to think of the site as your means to enhance your life here.



Poem by Georgette Stanley Page

This lovely poem tells the tale of life in Rockhill starting in 1924. The author lived in Kansas City until her death in November 2022. We are grateful to Patricia Miller for bringing it to our attention.

Rockhill Memories

In 1924, the Stanleys bought the big house
615 East 47th Street, across the street from
The Elliots, Millers, and Kerns
I was born in 1925
Sister Sallie was 2 years old –
Our life in Rockhill came alive.
Playing grownup was our mission,
Sallie and I both married Jimmy Miller
Without his permission!
1929 brought the economic crash that was
unforeseen
It forced our move to 47th Street at 618
Our crazy Nelson home of stone!
Our neighborhood gang was made complete
When the Cunninghams moved in up the street!
Our neighbors, The Irwins – Libby and Jim
The Crowses, Joannie and John welcomed
Jack, Bob, Anne and Sue into our stew.
We couldn't get away with a thing!
There was always a parent to give another one
a ring!
But what fun we had!
Vacant lots for baseball and kick the can
Red light run and hide and seek
I was tied up in a closet one week!
Troost avenue only a block away
Rockhill movies, the Dime Store, Grocery Store
Drug Store, Bicycle and Beauty Shops
And don't forget Sledding down Charlotte's
Grandmother's Suicide Hill!
We have wonderful memories still!
Now, we applaud Patricia, Todi and Libby*
Whose life and fighting spirit in
The Rockhill Neighborhood
Have made it an historic force for good!
God Bless You All!

*Patricia Cleary Miller, Todi Hughes,
Libby Irwin

KCPD Crime Prevention Meeting

Jim Sager, RHA Security

Major Hernandez, Commander of the Central Patrol Division, spoke to a group of ~110 citizens on June 8, 2023. Two KCPD supervisors were also present: Andy Hamil and Charmainnes Sanders. Citizens mention their complaints and concerns. Even though Central Patrol is a large division divided into 4 sectors, the issues were remarkable consistent across the sectors. Criminal activity included gunshots, drag racing, suspicious people congregating in large groups and disappointing assistance from 911 calls.

The officers provided information about "Shot Spotter" technology that is capable of detecting the caliber, number of shots, and direction. Citizens were encouraged to call 911 if they hear gunshots. If enough citizens call in, they can triangulate the location of the gunshots. Crime prevention tips included familiar advice on exterior lighting, not leaving valuables in your care, and making sure all doors are locked on your vehicles, tools, toys etc. put away. The police encouraged people to call 911 for any suspected criminal behavior so the department can collect data about types of criminal activity by location.

Be safe everybody and don't be shy about calling 911, or the non-emergency number.

Evergy Free Home Energy Assessment

Lance Harshbarger

There are countless reasons to own an older home, and Rockhillians know this better than most. Unfortunately, energy efficiency is not high on the list. Many of the homes in Rockhill are weathering all four seasons with hundred-year-old windows, which obviously puts a strain on heating and cooling throughout the year. However, we are fortunate to have a friend in our local utility company, Evergy.

Currently, Evergy, in partnership with Spire, is offering a free home assessment to evaluate the efficiency of your home. Here's how it works: Schedule a home assessment

online or call 855-907-6930. Energy Savings Kit (evergy.com). A representative will walk through your home with you to identify various ways to save energy and money. The assessment is extremely thorough, and you are likely to learn things about your home that you may not have known.

In addition, they will provide energy-saving products at no cost to you, and you will receive a customized report with recommended steps on ideas you may want to consider implementing.

As summer approaches, it may be worth your time to schedule your no-cost assessment.

July Garden Club Article

We have had a beautiful spring in our Rockhill neighborhood with color abounding everywhere as the trees bloomed and the flower beds came to life with tulips and other colorful annuals.

Now that we are in the summer season, lawns and landscaping can be more difficult to maintain as the heat increases and Mother Nature provides less natural moisture. Here are a few tips that will keep your lawn looking beautiful this summer.

One of the more noticeable changes is with the grass on your lawn. Sometimes brown patches will appear and although this may be due to blue grass going dormant from the high heat, this problem may also develop if there is excessive nitrogen, too much moisture, poor soil damage, too much thatch, or compacted soil. If you are consistently watering your lawn, then brown patches may also be due to fungus or grubs in the lawn.

If you have an irrigation system, once the temperature reaches the 80's usually watering every other day with longer watering times is sufficient. When temps are above 90 degrees every day then you may need to water every day to keep the grass green.

Even though some products such as Scotts Turf Builder SummerGuard help feed and strengthen your lawn against heat and

drought as well as protect against a variety of insects, this product will not protect against grubs that attack the roots of your grass. To prevent and eradicate grubs, products such as Scotts GrubEx are recommended.

Another problem that occurs with lawns in the summer, especially as we water to keep them green, is the infiltration of crabgrass (also referred to as water grass) and nutsedge grass. Crabgrass initially grows in a confined bunch and then starts to spread out whereas nutsedge is identified by its lighter green color and rapid growth in height of its singular blades of grass. Nutsedge also will start to spread out from its initial location and often is seen in patches in the lawn.

If you applied a crabgrass preventer in the early spring as suggested in our previous RHA Lawn and Garden article this spring, then hopefully you will have no crabgrass in your lawn. However, if you have a lawn mowing service, then crabgrass seeds can stick to the underneath side of the mowing equipment and be transferred to your lawn.

If you see a few individual clumps of crabgrass in your lawn the best way to eliminate them is to pull them up by hand. Spray on weed killers can be effective but when the temperatures are above 90 degrees this method should be avoided as it can kill the surrounding grass.

Nutsedge grass can be difficult to prevent. Once it starts to grow in your lawn, there are weed killers especially formulated to kill this type of grass. Often they are slow acting and initially turn the nutsedge yellow for several weeks before it completely dies. Pulling nutsedge will eliminate it but this will be a temporary solution as the roots are rhizome in nature, meaning they have a network established under the soil that enable the nutsedge grass to regrow in the same area within a few weeks or in the following summer season.

Ryan and TruGreen lawn care services have programs that can help with all of these lawn problems if you do not have the time or motivation to do it yourself.

