



# NEWS



WINTER 2024

from The Native Sons and Daughters of Greater Kansas City

*Dedicated to the recognition, preservation and restoration of Greater Kansas City's unique heritage.*



## NSDKC OUTSTANDING KANSAS CITIAN GALA HELD NOVEMBER 8

### CONTENTS

2023 OKC Gala .....	1
President's Message .....	2
2023 OKC Gala .....	3-4
Past Presidents Luncheon .....	5-6
NSDKC Holiday Brunch .....	7

### MEMORIALS

**Richard Berkley**  
1974 OKC Honoree

**Our 2023 Outstanding Kansas Citian Dr. Matthew Naylor, (2nd from left) joined by his Staff members from the World War 1 Museum.**

Our 2023 Outstanding Kansas Citian GALA was a very successful and enjoyable event attended by our NSDKC members and guests. The GALA was held again at the extremely wonderful Carriage Club at 5301 State Line Road in Kansas City, MO.

Our 2023 OKC Honoree is **Dr. Matthew Naylor, Ph.D.**, above, who is President and CEO of the National WW1 Museum & Memorial in Kansas City and has served there for ten years. He was joined by five of his Staff members as shown above (l-r) **Karis Erwin, Reagan Dixon, Mark Gunter, Susann Ogg** and **Ted Place**.

*Continued on page 3 ➡*





## Dear Members:

Greetings for this Holiday Season and we send best wishes to all our members, past members, and their families. May you have a safe and peaceful year in 2024. This being my last notes in the newsletter, I again want to thank your Board of Directors for the confidence in electing me as president for the year 2023. The organization has been very special to me for over 15 years and I have observed the many good and interesting things that have been accomplished. We have placed many markers, honored several special Outstanding Kansas Citians, and it has been my honor to work with some very special people who are members and directors of this fine organization.



**Ray Elder**  
**2023 President**

As we move forward into 2024, I ask that each of you think of someone in your family or friends that should be members of NSDKC. Please go on line for an application form ([nsdkc.org](http://nsdkc.org)) and we will be very happy to have you and your talents to continue to preserve history in the Greater Kansas City area and work together to better our projects and events. My special thanks to those members of the Board of Directors who work every month to bring interesting information and events to our members and involve everyone as much as they can.

Our new president, **Ms. Christy Chester**, is bringing very good experience in other organizations to us and we look forward to her year. I pledge my assistance as she needs it.

Also, to the other Board members, it has been a great year for all of us. We have had some fun and done some very important things.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year. We wish good health and safety and we are here for you if any needs arise.

 **Ray Elder**  
**2023 President**



## OFFICERS & STAFF

Christy Chester  
*President*

Michael Gerken  
*Vice President*

Nancy Elder  
*Treasurer*

Paul Christiansen II  
*Secretary*

Linda F. Mills  
*Event/Programs Chair*

*A list of all committees and  
committee chairs is available at  
[NSDKC.org](http://NSDKC.org)*

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## MISSION

The Native Sons and Daughters of Greater Kansas City, Inc. is dedicated to the historic preservation of the unique and rich heritage of the greater Kansas City metropolitan area, both in Missouri and Kansas, through advocacy, education and restoration. It also seeks to preserve and maintain archives of historical interest relating to the development of the Kansas City region and to recognize individuals who have resided therein and contributed to such development.







# OUTSTANDING KANSAS CITIAN GALA



⇒ Continued from page 1

Above is the main meeting room displaying about half of the 130 attendees. At the Podium is our **Master of Ceremonies Frank Boal** who opened our **51st Annual Outstanding Kansas Citian Award Banquet** and greeted everyone at about 7:00 p.m.

**Frank** then welcomed our **OKC Honoree Matthew Naylor** and his wife **Tere**. He then welcomed all of our NSDKC Past Presidents and asked for them to stand and be recognized.

**Frank** then asked for all NSDKC Officers and Board Members to stand and be recognized with special recognition and appreciation for our **2024 President-Elect Christy Chester**, who is serving as Chair of the OKC Committee again this year!

Lastly, **Frank** asked for everyone to rise and join in the Pledge of Allegiance. **Past-President John Hess, Jr.** came to the Podium and led our invocation.

**M/C Frank Boal** then returned to the podium and announced that our

wonderful Dinner was being served!

At 8:15 **Frank** returned to the Podium and thanked the Carriage Club for our Dinner and began the agenda for our Awards Program.

His first action was to introduce **Past-President Ross Marshall** who presented the history of **Native Sons and Daughters of Greater Kansas City**, as follows.

Beginning in 1932 as *The Native Sons of Kansas City*, our organization evolved as *The Native Sons of Greater Kansas City*, and then in 2005 to *The Native Sons and Daughters of Greater Kansas City*.

One of the earliest projects was the restoration of Union Cemetery, and another was the reconstruction of Fort Osage overlooking the Missouri River in eastern Jackson County...now a historical site operated by Jackson County, Missouri.

Our vast collection of records and materials are archived with the State Historical Society of Missouri to further our mission to record and

assure that our local history is preserved for future generations.

Over the decades, NSDKC has created and installed over 70 plaques and post-mounted markers detailing the rich historical heritage of our greater Kansas City region.

Again, our organization is in its 91st year of serving our community. If you are not already a member, we hope you will join us. No, you do not have to be born here to be a member...just simply have an interest in preserving our past...as did those civic leaders who came together nine decades ago to preserve our history for future generations.

Since 1973, we have honored 59 men and women with our distinctive Outstanding Kansas Citian Award. Tonight, we add the name of **Dr. Matthew Naylor** to that list. Thank you for being part of that recognition!

**M/C Frank Boal** then returned to the Podium and introduced our **2022 OKC Honoree Mark McHenry**.

Continued on page 4 ⇒



# 2023 OUTSTANDING KANSAS CITIAN GALA

⇒ Continued from page 3

After **Mark's** remarks, he introduced our **OKC Honoree Dr. Matthew Naylor**, who very warmly accepted the 2023 Outstanding Kansas Citian Award.

**Frank** then returned to the Podium and invited prior OKC recipients who were present to stand at their table. Several did and were soundly applauded!

**NSDKC President-Elect Christy Chester** came to the Podium and invited our **2022 OKC Awardee Mark McHenry** to come and present the special OKC Award Medallion to our **2023 OKC Awardee Dr. Matthew Naylor**.

**M/C Frank Bohl** stepped back to the Podium and congratulated everyone and invited to the Podium 2014 President and NSDKC's Historical Markers Committee Chair **Ross Marshall** to briefly describe NSDKC's Historical Markers Program.

The Native Sons and Daughters of Greater Kansas City have a total of 60 Historical Markers in place now.

17 plaques of various sizes are mostly on walls or buildings with text.

43 are large upright markers on posts, with text on both sides. Our first one was in 1964. These include the ones we have dedicated in recent years in honor of our Outstanding Kansas Citian Awardees.

We have a public Dedication Ceremony for each marker and many of you have attended those events. We are expecting to have at least two in the coming year. We will publicize the date as usual and invite you all to come!

This year, in honor of our **2023 Outstanding Kansas Citian Dr. Matthew Naylor**, we are working on a Historical Marker that explains the History and Heritage of the fabulous **NATIONAL WWI MUSEUM** and **MEMORIAL** as a tribute to the Museum and **Dr. Naylor**. The text has not completely been finished and agreed upon by all parties, so we had a text poster that essentially displays the text as shown above!

We will soon order the marker to be manufactured and delivered to us. We hopefully will have



**Dr. Matthew Naylor and the marker poster**

a Dedication of this marker sometime next spring and invite you all to come!

Auction items have been a large part of our Gala for many years and they yield a significant amount of proceeds which help to pay for the event. Special thanks to those that donated the items and to **Event/Programs Chair Linn Mills and Marsha Daley** for their many hours of work to make possible this important segment of our Gala event!





Standing (l-r) Ross Marshall (2014), John Dillingham (2003), Linn Mills (2021), John Dunnewind (2022), Christy Chester (V.P. and incoming 2024 President), Diane Boos Pickman (2017), Nancy Elder (2019), Ray Elder (2023), Gary Hicks (2010). Seated (l-r) Norm Besheer (2011), John Hess, Jr. (2016), John Hess, Sr. (2002), Steve Noll (2018), Whitney Kerr and Joe H. Vaughan, Jr. (1998).

## Annual Past Presidents Luncheon welcomes

# 2024 NSDKC President Christy Chester



**A**s has been our custom for many years, NSDKC Past Presidents gathered to extend a warm welcome, support and encouragement to our incoming President. This year it is **2024 NSDKC President Christy Chester**, who was our 2023 Vice-President. We met on Monday,

*Continued on page 6 ➡*



# Annual Past Presidents Luncheon

⇒ Continued from page 5

November 13 for our Presidents Luncheon at the River Club in downtown Kansas City which overlooks the Missouri River. We have met there for many years for this Luncheon. Our longtime member **Whitney Kerr**, who is also a member of the River Club, again hosted the event.

As has been our custom for many years, all of us gathered in front of the spectacular Thomas Hart Benton painting “Trading At Westport Landing” as shown on the previous page.

Westport Landing is very close to the River Club, just down the hill on Main Street at the edge of the Missouri River. The Landing is where Kansas City started in 1838 with the name of “Kansas”, the name of the Tribal Territory just to our west.

After the group picture was taken, we gathered for lunch in the usual room just down the hall.

**Administrator Nancy Elder** addressed the group and reviewed some of the accomplishments of the past year. She then asked for each one at each table to mention a few ideas or annual objectives or plans for next year.

When lunch was completed, suggestions were encouraged from everyone for our incoming **2024 President Christy Chester**.

After everyone had taken their turn, **Nancy** called on **2022 President Dunnewind** to make a few comments and share some of the thoughts he has for 2024. A lot of responses and discussions resulted regarding the challenges and opportunities for 2024 and many of the responders offered their help, all in a positive and supportive way.

As usual, this meeting was very enjoyable and beneficial. It was the usual teamwork atmosphere among our officers and board as we enter 2024!



(l-r) Outgoing President Ray Elder, 2024 President Christy Chester, Administer and Treasurer Nancy Elder and 2022 President John Dunnewind





# NSDKC Holiday Brunch at the Carriage Club



**A**bove is about 32 of our NSDKC members sitting around four lunch tables at the Carriage Club at 5301 State Line Road (on the Missouri side) for our Annual Holiday Brunch. It was a wonderful setting near the Christmas Tree at left.

The group began to assemble at 11:00 a.m. and enjoyed visiting with each other (with the aid of an open cash bar!). At about 11:45, **President Ray Elder** with the aid of **Administrator Nancy Elder** welcomed the attendees sitting at their tables. **Events and Program Chair Linn Mills** also greeted everyone and gave the invocation.

Then everyone passed by the service table and helped themselves to a plate of food.

At about 12:30, **Nancy** called the meeting to order and introduced the 2023 Officers, Board of Directors, Committee Chairs and Staff.

**Nancy** told everyone of the recent death of former Kansas City Mayor **Richard Berkley** who was our NSDKC OKC Honoree in 1974. As directed by the family, NSDKC will make a donation in his name.

The **Awards Committee Chair Joanne Collins** presented two awards:

- ◆ James Anderson Historic Preservation Award to **Peggy Van Witt**.
- ◆ Lee I. Pickering Award of Excellence to **John Dunnewind**

Guidelines for these awards are shown on the NSDKC website at [nsdkc.org](http://nsdkc.org)

**2022 President John Dunnewind** presented the **2023 President Award** to **Raymond Elder**.

**2024 President-Elect Christy Chester** was not feeling well and could not make any remarks.

New board members and committee chairs are shown elsewhere in this newsletter.

**Nancy** thanked everyone, wished everyone a Merry Christmas and safe Happy New, and adjourned the meeting at about 1:00 p.m. The wonderful 2023 Holiday Brunch was very enjoyable as usual!



**Peggy Van Witt (at right)** who received our James Anderson Historic Preservation Award. At left is her husband **Emil Van Witt**.