



NEWS

WINTER 2021

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 2020 President Dick Retrum passes away



We are very sad to report that Dick Retrum, our 2020 President, passed away on October 27, 2020. Dick had served The Native Sons and Daughters of Greater Kansas City as an officer and Board Member for several years.

Dick was a Native Kansas Citian, having been born on June 29, 1947 in Kansas City. He served for many years on several boards and committees of Kansas City organizations, including many years with Rotary Club 13 of Kansas City. He also recently served as President of the Mayor's Prayer Breakfast.

Dick was a well-liked and faithful leader and will be sorely missed by all, including by his wife Carol and other family members.

NSDKC Firefighters marker to be dedicated Sunday, March 14, 2021



As a result of several years of dedicated work by Ray Elder, assisted by wife Nancy, we were able to recently order a new historical marker. That marker will be mounted near 5th and Wyandotte, which is the approximate original location of the first pump tests on March 14, 1868 by the new Kansas City, MO Fire Department.

Ray has been a career firefighter and this marker has been a dream of his for many years!

The above picture is looking east at the intersection of 5th and Wyandotte. The small stake in the picture is where the marker will be placed on 2:00 p.m. Sunday, March 14, 2021 which is the 153rd anniversary of the first pump tests.

Please mark your calendar and plan to attend this dedication ceremony. More details will be distributed to NSDKC members soon.



2021 President's Message

Dear members:

How many chapters of life have you experienced? How many times have you heard or made the statement, "when one door closes, another door will open"?

My first chapter began many years ago in the Northeast area of Kansas City. Our Italian neighbors accepted my German family with open arms. Thus my first history lesson was the wonderful stories my Italian friends shared with my family about their ancestors from the old country and their dreams of building a new life in the Kansas City area.

Today, I enjoy spending my free time to review two books, *Business and the Making of Kansas City* and *Italian Gardens: A History of Kansas City Through its Favorite Restaurant*.

The second chapter of life took place when my family moved to the Kansas City North area. I graduated from Park Hill High School and completed my first year of college at Central Missouri State. Fortunately, I did not finish my education at CMS. I met an outstanding handsome young Army Officer and married within six months of saying hello. Thus, I completed my education in Heidelberg, Germany and started chapter three of my life.

I have two children, a son and a daughter, who are both successful in their way. My son Joe graduated from Texas Tech and is a successful architect. My daughter Candice graduated from East Carolina University and followed in my footsteps by earning a degree in Communications.

Chapter four of my life found me growing my career and working for a major national publishing company. I was responsible for five monthly publications and a team of 30 employees. I believe in listening more and speaking less. My team knew their opinions mattered and their voices were essential in making major marketing decisions. Oh yes, did I mention that I was the only female on this team?

2017 opened chapter five of my life. My mother and my husband passed away in 2017. I decided to take early retirement and returned to Kansas City to handle my mother's personal affairs. My routine was a morning run in the Parkville area. One day, I stopped in my tracks and took the time to enjoy Park College's scene and the view of the Missouri River. I found my heart swelling with pride, knowing that I was part of this surrounding history. That was the moment I decided to come home.

I joined the Kansas City Downtown Rotary Club 13 and met my mother's high school friend Carl J. DiCapo. At that time, Chuck Eddy was Club 13 President. Typical me, jumped in with both feet to volunteer whenever possible. Within three years, I found myself as the secretary to Rotary District Governor Mark Horner. Carl and Chuck knew my passion relating to Kansas City and the love of the Metro Area history.

I agreed to join The Native Sons and Daughters of Greater Kansas City and accept the Second Vice President position. This past year has been tough with the passing of our President Dick Retrum. Filling his shoes will be a challenge.

I'm honored to be President of NSDKC and join the many outstanding leaders of this group who are so dedicated to the history and preservation of the Kansas City Metro Area. Thank you to our Board Members and Directors for doing an outstanding job on their various committees.

Please plan to join us for the upcoming marker dedications and the next OKC Gala scheduled for November, 2021. Details will be forthcoming in our quarterly newsletters and email blasts.

The current pandemic is forcing many organizations such as NSDKC to move

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Linn Mills
2021 President



OFFICERS & STAFF

Linda F. Mills
President

John Dunnewind
1st Vice President

Marsha Daley
2nd Vice President

Nancy Elder
Treasurer

Paul Christiansen II
Secretary

Ray Elder
Historian

Dick Retrum (*in Memoriam*)
Immediate Past President

*A list of all committees and
committee chairs is available at
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.



Marker dedication honors 2019 Outstanding Kansas Citian George Guastello



As shown above, about twenty-two people attended the chilly morning dedication on Wednesday, October 28 at 10:30 a.m. on the east side of Union Station. The ceremony was opened by NSDKC Past President and Markers Chair Ross Marshall.

The opening speaker at the podium on the right above was our Vice President Linn Mills, who was followed by Nancy Elder, NSDKC Past President and Administrator.

The next speaker was NSDKC Past President Carl DiCapo, right photo, who has been a Kansas City leader and supporter of Union Station for many years.

He was followed by George Guastello, who reviewed the many accomplishments under his leadership since the Grand Re-opening of Union Station in 1999. He also discussed the future plans of Union Station, which was built in 1914.

Behind Carl and George, upper right photo, is the marker (front side), which was presented to George at our 2019 Gala last November at the Kay Barnes Grand Ballroom.

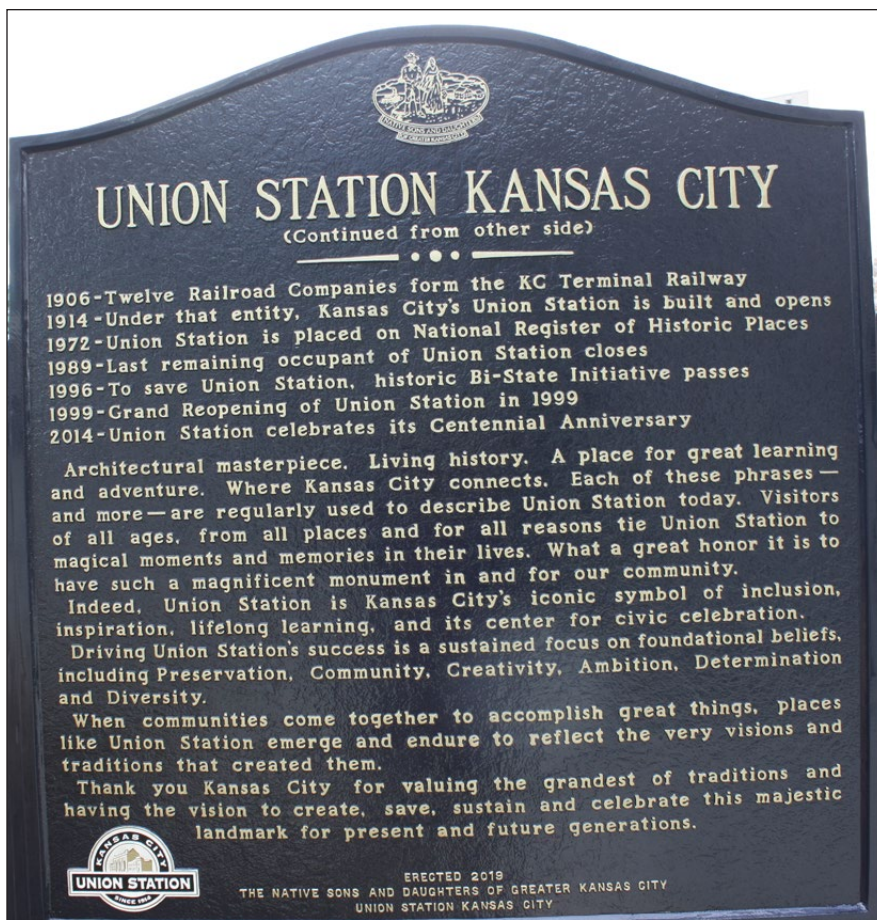


Carl DiCapo (left) and George Guastello in front of the marker now on the east side of Union Station.



At left (looking west) is Union Station with our marker in the foreground, taken after the Ceremony concluded.

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The backside of the marker shows the history of the Union Station and also expresses the future dreams of this great Kansas City iconic living history site and architectural masterpiece.

Union Station is truly a location where Kansas City connects and also our bi-state values and traditions are sustained.

NEW MEMBERS

Lila Aamodt
Mark & Leslie Alford
Matthew Dowd

MEMORIALS:

Dick Retrum
Henry Leonard
Francis Franke
Dr. Ronald Riley

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forward by stepping out of the box and finding creative ways to keep our membership united and growing. I welcome your ideas, so please feel free to contact me at any time with your suggestions.

I started chapter six of my life with a Christmas present from me to me. *The Definitive Journals of Lewis & Clark* by Gary E. Moulton . . . this chapter is going to be fun!

Happy New Year, and I pray that you will stay safe and healthy!

Linn Mills
NSDKC President

CALENDAR

March 14, 2:00 p.m.
Firefighters Marker Dedication
5th & Wyandotte, KCMO

April 21, 5:30 p.m.
Johnson County Heritage Marker
Dedication & Reception,
8788 Metcalf, O.P, KS

Please renew your NSDKC membership AND add a donation

Annual dues are due January 1, 2021. Dues are delinquent on March 1, 2021.

Each of you recently received our email blast about dues renewal for 2021. **We have not raised dues for many years and have declined to do so this year.** Membership dues remain at \$35 per year for individuals and \$50 per year for couples.

But at the request of several members, we have included a second payment option that allows you to **make an additional donation to the NSDKC organization when paying your annual dues.**

Membership dues and donations may be made online or by check. Instructions are provided at https://nsdkc.org/membership_renewals.

This year, we ask that you also take the time to update your membership contact information for our private member database and the optional online roster.

Please consider The Native Sons and Daughters of Greater Kansas City for a year-end tax-deductible donation and in your estate planning.

You may also wish to take this opportunity to add your family inscription to our NSDKC Monument at Ilus Davis Park. You can find additional information on this opportunity at https://nsdkc.org/nsdkc_monument.

We look forward to receiving your membership renewals, updated membership information and donations at https://nsdkc.org/membership_renewals.

If you have any questions, please contact Nancy Elder by phone or email (816) 453-4347 or nancyelder9@aol.com

Heritage of Johnson County, Kansas marker installed

The installation of the marker at right was accomplished on October 14 by Gary Hicks and Ross Marshall with the help of a digger from Johnson County. Also in attendance was Johnson County Arts and Heritage Center Director Mary MacMurray, assisted by Susan Mong, Superintendent of Culture for Johnson County Parks and Recreation.

It is located in front of the Arts and Heritage Center at 8788 Metcalf, its permanent location.

We planned to have the marker dedication last fall and Mary MacMurray, the Director, wanted to have a nice reception inside the Center immediately after the dedication. Mary requested, on advice from County officials, that we postpone the dedication and reception until next spring, tentatively set for Wednesday, April 21 at 5:30 p.m.

Rather than have the marker stay in storage for another six months, we



decided to install the marker so that it is visible to the public for education and inspiration.

At the 2021 OKC Gala, which will be held at the Overland Park Convention Center on November 9, 2021, the marker will be presented to

our honorees, Mr. Eilert and General Myers. When the Gala is over, the marker will be re-installed on the same post at the Arts & Heritage Center.

We will confirm the date of the marker dedication and reception before next April.

Annual Past Presidents Luncheon welcomes 2021 NSDKC President Linn Mills

As has been our custom for many years, NSDKC Past Presidents gathered and extended a warm welcome, support and encouragement to our incoming President Linn Mills on November 16, 2020 at the River Club in downtown Kansas City overlooking the Missouri River.

The group picture was taken in front of the spectacular Thomas Hart Benton painting *Trading at Westport Landing*. Westport Landing is located very close to the River Club, just north down the hill. It is where Kansas City started in 1838, then called the town of Kansas.

Standing (left to right) are John Hess, Jr. (2016), Nancy Elder (2019), incoming 2021 President Linn Mills, Joe Vaughan (1998) and Gary Hicks (2010). Seated clockwise from left are host Whitney



Kerr, Steve Noll (2018), Norm Besheer (2011), Carl DiCapo (2015) and Ross Marshall (2014). We usually have several more in attendance, but this was the COVID-19 year!