



NEWS

SPRING 2025

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 Board Meeting January 15, 2025

The meeting was called to order at 12:20 p.m. by **President Christy Chester**. 13 members attended.

Starting clockwise with the lady in the green shirt is **Linn Mills**, **Mike Gerkin**, **Bryan Flannigan**, **Gary Hicks**, **Christy Chester**, **Tom Platt**, **Steve Platt**, **Joanne Collins**, **Bob Denzel**, **Paul Christianson**, **Marsha Daley** and **Steve Noll**. **Ross Marshall** took the picture.

Treasurer & Administrator **Nancy Elder** reported Bank Balances at 12/31/2024: Main checking account was \$3,803.78 and the OKC account was \$20,078.13.



- **Historical Markers Committee: Ross Marshall** – The Heritage of Jackson County Marker will be placed at 3218 Gladstone Blvd at the Kansas City Museum property subject to approval by the Museum Board and Kansas City Parks and Recreation. The Liberty Memorial Marker text has not been finalized yet but we are ready to submit for manufacture and we are confident that we will have an installation and dedication later this year. Our anticipation is that we will have 2 markers installed later this year. Ross noted that the current cost per marker is about \$4,400.
- **Investment Committee: Bryan Flanagan** – The Midwest Trust account as of 1/10/25 was \$605,935.02.
- **Membership Committee: John Hess, Jr.** – 2025 Memberships – 60 paid through 1/11/2025.
- **Memorial Committee: John Hess, Jr.** – Funeral services for past president Norman Besheer were scheduled for 1/18/2025 at Keystone United Methodist Church.
- **Outstanding Kansas Citian Committee: Bob Denzel** reported that we have to set a date for the 2025 event and we are accepting nominations for the event.
- **Member Experience: Linn Mills** reported – We talked about the importance of today's history. At this time there are events taking place in the Kansas City metro area and sports in the downtown area that in 5, 10 or 15 years from now

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Dear Members:

It is time again to let you know what has been going on. Thanks to the weather we had to cancel some of our meetings. However, we do have one planned for April 23. I am sure you can think of someone you could bring as a guest and maybe would like to become a member. If anyone of you has an idea for an NSDKC Event, please let us know.

We need someone to become our Communications Committee Chair. It is not a hard job and please give me a call at 816-223-7118 if you are interested.

We are working to update our Website.
Hope to see everyone at our next event.
Thanks for being a member of NSDKC.



Christy Chester
2024 President

 **Christy Chester**
2024 President

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CALENDAR

Meeting at Piropos Restaurant

4141 N. Mulberry Drive
Kansas City, MO 64116

Wednesday April 23
6:00 p.m.



OFFICERS & STAFF

Christy Chester
President

Michael Gerken
Vice President

Nancy Elder
Treasurer

Paul Christiansen II
Secretary

Linn Mills
Event/Programs Chair

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

Newsletter Production

Ross Marshall
Editor

Administrative Staff

Nancy Elder
Administrator

Contact Information

Phone: 816-278-8929

Email: admin@NSDKC.org

NSDKC.org

Mailing address:

PO Box 25513
Kansas City MO 64119-0813

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.

NSDKC Board Meeting

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will be history and we want to make sure we support those places and those businesses as well. We will be meeting again next month. The committee meets the First Friday of every month.

- Elmwood Cemetery: **Nancy Elder** – The Charles Helzberg challenge of \$25,000 was met with funds raised in excess. Capital projects will be prioritized for use of some of these funds.
- Westport Historical Society: **Tom Platt** – The Harris-Kearney House is closed and there are some repairs being done but we anticipate opening the house in the first week of March.
- 2025 Budget for NSDKC: **Mike Gerken** – An Executive Committee Meeting was held on Monday January 13, 2025. The meeting centered on the budget and some changes that will be occurring in how funds are to be disbursed. We are proposing a number of changes regarding the manner in which we will fund a number of items such as the OKC event, the donations that are made to community outreach organizations (The Lumi Experience) and the cost of the Markers.

Our initial thought process is to spend no more than 4% of the money in the Trust Account every year in this regard. The discussion revolved around the idea of using 4% during a good year and maybe holding off in a down market. A suggestion was made that this subject be addressed annually based on that year's proposed budget. A motion was made to accept the budget, seconded and approved.

- Responsibilities and Opportunities: presented by **Mike Gerken**. Discussion revolved around the changes being considered regarding individual committee responsibilities and the re-naming and realignment of committees to move our organization forward. These proposed changes would necessitate a need to adjust the Bylaws in October. There was quite a bit of discussion that proceeded.

Mike emphasized the need to create an atmosphere of everything that we do as “an experience” so we can move our organization forward. A motion was made to accept these changes. The motion passed.

Christy Chester emphasized to everyone that we need more participation by the members on committees going forward and as committee chairs. Discussions and ideas for new events continued to circulate until the end of the Meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:06 p.m.

March 19, 2025

NSD Board Meeting

at The Carriage Club

The meeting was called to order by President **Christy Chester** with 17 in attendance. Administrator and Treasurer **Nancy Elder** gave a report on the February 27, 2025 Executive Committee Meeting. She also gave a financial report:

Bank Balances:

Main Account: \$3,762.98

OKC: \$20,078.13

Midwest Trust Balance for March 6, 2025 was \$586,583.37.

Christy Chester gave the Executive Committee report. She also had talked to **David McCaughey** to consider taking over the website and transferring the work to his Company.

She reported \$4,200.00 in LUMI Contributions has been donated for The Italian Gardens Sign.

Linn Mills reported that no winter event is being planned, so the first event will be on April 23 at Piropos Restaurant in Briarcliff Shopping Center. This will be a wine tasting. There is parking on the upper level. An email will be sent out to the members.

Bob Denzel said no report yet concerning the 2025 OKC Event.

Gary Hicks asked his committee member **Ross Marshall** to report on the Jackson County Marker status. **Ross** reported no new changes as of yet. The Jackson County Marker is still in the works and there have been some challenges in this regard. **Gary** and **Ross** met some time ago with **Anna Marie Tutera** at the Kansas City Museum but a site selection is still not decided upon and no report has come forth.

John Hess Jr. reported that we have 82 paid members. Last year there was 114 at this time. The two-page application is to be found on the website.

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NSD Board Meeting at The Carriage Club

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John emphasized bringing someone to the events. **Nancy** suggested that we need to have definite dates for events so that they are posted on the website well in advance so that members are able to plan their schedules better.

Nancy reported on Elmwood Cemetery. The new bathroom has been totally completed in the Chapel. They also had a lovely wedding in December. The trio that did a Christmas program will also perform again. The Cemetery is now recognized as an Arboretum by the Missouri Department of Conservation.

Dan Sturdevant said there is new leadership at Fort Osage. **Sarah Sprinkles** is new and she is very good. The Lewis and Clark Trail Alliance is meeting there in Kansas City on September 14-17 with perhaps 180 attendees for their annual convention. **Dan** said we will be going to Fort Osage in the near future. He stated that the rebuilding of Fort Osage is important and was instrumental in the building of our organization. And it's time that we really start supporting them again. He expects to make a request for a sizable investment going forward in Fort Osage.

Nancy Elder reported on Union Cemetery and said they had a request to bring honey bees to Union Cemetery and in March they had a fundraiser. They are \$350 dollars away from installing six bee hives in the Cemetery this spring through local non-profit Bee KC which will help them to reach the goal. A motion was made by **Marsha Daley** and

seconded to send a donation of \$350 to Union Cemetery for the Bring Back the Bees project. The motion carried.

Tom Platt reported that Westport Historical Society has benefitted by the Harris-Kearney House which opened on February 28 to the new exhibit The Priest to Palace which dates back to the 1870's. It's kind of a Greek Mythology and Mardi Gras theme. At the house, **Tom** said they have many of the artifacts in this regard and quite a nice exhibit. Westport hosted the St. Patrick's Day Event which was a big success.

New Business – The Shawnee Indian Mission has been in the news. A number of tribes have been fighting to secure the rights to the Mission. Transferring ownership and management to the Tribes has been put to rest by a negative vote in the Kansas Legislature.

In other new business, we are still working through changes that will affect our Bylaws. The Mission Statement is another thing that is subject to change going forward. Board Meetings at a historic site is also another consideration for future meetings. Another idea was for people to attend Board Meetings by Zoom. The meeting was adjourned at 1:11 p.m.

Future Board Meeting Dates are May 21, July 16 and Sept 17. Our Annual Meeting is 10/15/25. The OKC date and Recognition (Holiday) Event are to be determined later.

Travis Boley Speaks at KC Central Library January 2



Travis Boley lives locally and has been the Association Manager of the Oregon-California Trails Association since 2003. Previously, he was Executive Director of the Pony Express Museum in St. Joseph, MO. He has been a frequent speaker about the National Historic Trails locally and nationally. And he has been a good friend and helper with many of us about our trails for many years.

The following are some of his topics and remarks about local Kansas City's role in westward migration that **Travis** made for the above large attending crowd.

The first settlement in Jackson County was Fort Osage in 1808. The government bought a tract of land six miles square and established a fort and factory for trade with Indian tribes in the western part of Missouri Territory. Missouri was made a State in 1821.

Independence, MO was founded in 1827 to serve as the westernmost port

of the fur trade on the Missouri River. Independence later served as a place for traders and western-bound emigrants to assemble wagon trains to outfit and organize those that came south from Wayne City Landing (known as Upper Independence Landing) on the Missouri River.

Westport traces its history back to December 28, 1831, when the Baptist missionary **Isaac McCoy** arrived to work with the Shawnee Indians who had been displaced by Missouri's Indian Removal Act of 1830. This Act was passed to open up the State of Missouri by **John Calvin McCoy** to white emigrants.

Westport, Missouri was incorporated as a town in 1833 by **McCoy**. Westport's name came from the fact that many viewed it as "gateway to the west" at this time.

There was always two routes for Santa Fe, Oregon and California wagon trains. The earliest was from Independence which went south and along Blue Ridge Boulevard, crossing the Blue River at today's Red Bridge.

It went west-southwest from there to Gardner Junction where the Oregon and California travelers broke off and went west-northwest. The Santa Fe emigrants went south.

Lone Elm Park is located at 21151 W. 167th St., four miles south of Olathe, KS on Cedar Creek. From the 1840s to the 1880s, this was a much-used campsite for wagon trains. It had a good water source and a lot of trees for wood and fires.

It was first known as Round Grove. After a few years, most of the trees had been cut down and used and it became known as 'Lone Elm Park'. That park still exists today and is a nice camping and party site.

The Westport Route from the 1840s went south from the Town of Kansas Landing on the Missouri River to Main Street in downtown Kansas City. The route went south to Westport and west-southwest into Kansas and on southwest to Lone Elm Park. They then went southwest to Gardner Junction where the three routes separated as mentioned above.



NSDKC Executive Committee Meeting at Kansas City Public Library – Riverside Mo. Branch

February 27, 2025 at 5:30 p.m.

The meeting was called to order by President Christy Chester.

I. TREASURER AND ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

– Nancy Elder

Bank Balances at 2/28/2024:

Main Account \$3391.94

OKC Account \$20,078.13

Balance in the Midwest Trust Company investment account at 2/27/2025 is \$605,729.25.

Members paid so far are 75. This includes some of the unpaid from previous years.

II. NSDKC WEBSITE DISCUSSION

Discussion on what to do and how to handle the website and IT work when **Frank McMillian** is no longer available – September 30, 2025.

Frank McMillian was invited to this meeting to answer questions and give some insight in how NSDKC might change or update the website. He provided a handout explaining the relations of Go Daddy (the service company), Websites 5 (the platform on which the website is stored) and I Contact (the company we use for emailing notices of events, renewals, etc.). He further explained the master database (maintained by **Nancy & Frank**), has additional pages in this document for past members (2018 through 2023), plus OKC honorees and archived former members. He showed how our Websites 5 platform closely coordinates the website information, applications for membership, plus permission to include members' information in a listing provided to the Board and available to existing members with personal log-in and password.

Frank stressed that any changes in the website (i.e. setting up a new one with a different company) must be careful that all the information for membership be transferable to a new system. It will take 12-24 months to be sure exactly what is wanted in the website and how the set up will hopefully attract new members. The editor for material on the website must be aware of and comply with copyright laws and be sure there is no infringement of same.

Questions asked: **Christy** asked who owns the website - answer: we supply the information for it. Go Daddy is the vehicle on the internet, Websites 5 is the platform on which we have our events, markers and members' information to send out notices of events and I Contact is the emailing company. A webmaster (**Frank** is currently serving as such) makes the changes in the database. **Nancy** makes changes in the database when dues and donations are received. Connections with PayPal for payments are incorporated into reservations for events and dues.



In attendance were (l-r) Nancy Elder, Christy Chester, Mike Gerken, Ray Elder, Paul Christiansen, plus guest Frank McMillian who took the picture.

III. OTHER MATTERS DISCUSSED

- A. Outstanding Kansas Citian Event – A date has not been decided. **Bob Denzel** is working on this subject and will be contacting Board Members for information on any new ideas or proposals.
- B. By-Laws Questions – **Mike** handed out some information to be considered on some of the wording. **Mike** and **Christy** had contacted all Board Members asking about their thoughts on general subjects: meetings, location, what do we need to do for the organization to grow, how to update the Mission Statement and get more people interested in becoming members.
- C. NSDKC Records & Resources – **Frank** has reviewed and organized all files from 2018 through 2024 on the website in advance of providing them to Missouri State Historical Society. **Nancy** has the records from 2017 forward which include the paper copies of Save the Date mailings, OKC programs and any other information from events. She will be working to get these organized as well to send to MSHS.
- D. CLIO – This is a website where a professor from UMKC has set up information from various organizations to show areas of interest to anyone wanting to travel around the Greater Kansas City area. **Mike** is suggesting the professor come to a board meeting and explain what he has and how NSKDC might want to include things such as our markers listings. These individual listings on the website also include a picture and description of where the marker is located.
- E. Board Meeting Dates available at each meeting. **Mike** asked if these dates for the balance of the year could be included in each Agenda.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:00 p.m.

Nancy Elder, Administrator

Replacement Waysides at Gardner Junction have become a Reality

After a year of planning and work from the Santa Fe Trails Association and their Missouri Outfitters Chapter, the four replacement wayside signs for the historic Gardner Junction Park are now installed.

The Gardner Parks Department and their teams installed the waysides the day after they arrived from the producer, Pannier. The graphic design for the new updated panels was completed by the National Park Service under the leadership of their **Carol Clark**.

In addition to the replacement waysides, the Gardner Parks Department has completed a major restoration project in the park. The kiosk has been repainted along with the metal wayside stands. The area has been completely cleared of old growth and new grasses and wildflowers will be sewn over the winter and will be ready for a beautiful display this next spring.

Gardner Junction Park is one of the most significant historic sites along our Santa Fe, Oregon, and California National Historic Trails because it is where the Santa Fe Trail headed southwest and the Oregon and California trails departed to the west-northwest.

The four replacement waysides were installed by the Gardner Parks Department in early December. Several of the narratives on the panels have been updated to more clearly relate the story of the Santa Fe, Oregon and California National Historic Trails which separated at this site after departing from Independence and Westport in Missouri.

In addition to the four panels, the Gardner Parks Department did work on the landscaping, repainted existing stands, performed rock work on retaining walls and repainted the kiosk. New native grasses and wildflowers were planted on the park grounds.

MRO will hold an event this spring to commemorate the replacement waysides.

