

December 2023/January 2024

THE ROELAND PARKER

Official Newsletter of the City of Roeland Park

Welcome to the New RPCC



The new Skyline Patio outside the renovated Buena Vista Room

City officials and staff, along with Johnson County Parks & Rec leadership, held a ribbon cutting and Trunk or Treat on October 21st to mark the completion of major renovations at the Roeland Park Community Center. Improvements include new flooring and paint throughout the facility, new lighting, new doors and interior finishes, and a new patio outside of the Buena Vista Room. This completes phase 1 of renovations for the community center. Phase 2 which is planned

for construction in 2025 includes renovations to the JCPRD offices, daycare space, workout area, and kitchen improvements. Checkout pg. 6 for more photos of the renovated space.



Hard working City & JCPRD Community Center Staff

This issue:

Page 2:

Letter from the Mayor
City Events/Art Calendar
Holiday Family Adoption

Page 3:

RPCC News

Page 4:

Meet the Building Inspector
Trash Assessment
Resident Profile

Page 5:

Eating Local
Workforce & Project RISE

Page 6:

Community Center Photos

Page 7:

Join the DEI Committee
Storytelling Opportunity
City Contacts

Page 8:

Citizen's Academy
Job Openings

Dec/Jan City Events & Holidays

Holiday Tree Lighting - Wed, Dec 6th, 6p, RPCC

Holiday Family Adoption - Fri, Dec 15th, Last day to drop gifts/food at City Hall

Christmas Eve Observed - Fri, Dec 22nd, *City Offices Closed*

Christmas Day - Mon, Dec 25th, *City Offices Closed*

New Year's Day - Mon, Jan 1st, *City Offices Closed*

Martin Luther King Jr. Day - Mon, Jan 15th, *City Offices Closed*

George R. Schlegel Gallery News

Come check out our current artist installation by Ellen Sweeny, Donna Yeager & Jill Tichnor, now through January 5th in the Gallery. A reception is planned for Dec. 3rd. from 3-5p. Below is a list of upcoming artists you can look forward to in 2024!

JAN/
FEB

David Brown, photo exhibition

FEB/
MARCH

JCDS Emerging Artist Program

APRIL/
MAY

Senior Arts Council Spring Exhibit

JUNE-
AUG

KCKCC Faculty Exhibit

SEPT/
OCT

Buena Vista Studio Artists Group Exhibit

NOV/
DEC

Roeland Park Artists Invitational

Letter from the Mayor

Hey, RP –

This holiday season I'd like to express my gratitude for the sense of community and service that defines Roeland Park. Our strength lies in collaboration and your commitment to making our city the best place to live, work, and thrive. As we prepare to ring in 2024, I encourage you to consider a New Year's resolution that exemplifies this spirit of service.

Throughout the year, the city relies on the generosity of volunteers who help serve our community. Below are just a few of the ways you can get involved (or more involved) in 2024. What better way to give back than by playing a role in shaping policies and initiatives that will shape the future of Roeland Park?

Volunteer on a Community Advisory Committee. Roeland Park has several resident-led committees that provide valuable insights, feedback, and recommendations so that city policies and programs are guided by a robust understanding of our community. We have spots on all of our committees:

- Arts Advisory
- Diversity, Equity, & Incl.
- Parks & Trees
- Board of Zoning Appeals
- Sustainability
- Planning Commission



Level-Up Your Civic Engagement on City Council. Ward 4 Residents: If you're seeking a deeper level of community involvement consider stepping-up your civic engagement game and apply to fill the vacant Ward 4 seat on City Council. Due to unforeseen circumstances, one of the two Ward 4 representatives made the difficult decision to step down mid-term. We are currently accepting applications from interested Ward 4 residents, and anticipate welcoming a new councilmember by the end of January.

Learn more about all available service opportunities and how to apply at [RoelandPark.org](https://roelandpark.org), or by calling City Hall at 913-722-2600.

All the best,

Mayor Michael Poppa

Roeland Park Holiday Family Adoption

The City of Roeland Park partners with the City of Mission to help provide a wonderful Holiday season to local families in need. This year we are adopting five families from Roesland Elementary. We are looking for compassionate residents to help purchase gifts from the family wish lists and donate food for holiday dinners. If you are interested in assisting, please contact Kelley Nielsen at knielsen@roelandpark.org to obtain the wish list and requested non-perishable food items. All donations are due to City Hall by Dec. 15th. Thank you for your kindness and support Roeland Park!





ROELAND PARK COMMUNITY CENTER

Youth and Family Programming

Preschool: Holly Jolly Storytime (Ages 2-5 with adult)

Dec. 15, 10:00am, 1 - 1 hour event
\$8 per child / \$9 nonresidents

Join staff at Roeland Park for a jolly good story while decorating a tasty treat!

Preschool: Winter Wonderland Party (Ages 2-5 with adult)

Jan. 12, 10:30am, 1 - 1 hour event
\$9 per child / \$10 nonresidents

NEW! Your little snow enthusiasts will be beaming with delight during this party filled with cheerful music, snowy decorations, and exciting activities tailored for preschoolers. Let the giggles and laughter fill the air as they meet new friends and enjoy the winter-themed treats we have in store!

Family Fun: Family Bingo - Holiday B-I-N-G-O-HO-HO (all ages)

Dec. 15, 5:30pm, 1 - 1.5 hour event
\$12 / \$13 nonresidents; per person - 20% discount on 3rd family member and any family member registered after that.

Looking for a fun, family event? Let's play everybody's favorite game, B-I-N-G-O, with a holiday twist! We'll be singing and laughing all the way! Pizza dinner served at 5:30pm, bingo to follow.

**Newly renovated spaces are now available to rent!
Call (913) 826-3160 for more information.**

Program Registration and Front Desk: (913) 826-3160

Sports Dome: (913) 362-8700
Please call for open gym and court rental availability.

Community Center Office and Fitness Room Hours

Monday - Thursday: 7am - 8pm
Friday: 7am - 5pm
Saturday 8am - 1pm
Sunday: CLOSED

50 Plus Event

Holiday Event: Ring in the New Year

Dec. 29, 12:00pm, 1 - 2.5 hour event
\$17 / \$19 nonresidents

Let's celebrate the New Year! Enjoy six games of bingo, plus fun games and activities and a catered lunch. Cost of admission covers food and staff time to administer the bingo program. No additional charge for bingo.



Visit us at JCPRD.COM/ACTIVITIES to register.
WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/ROELANDPARKCOMMUNITYCENTER

Roads getting icy? Is RPCC open?

Visit JCPRD.com/weather or call *913.686.6030 for our rainout information.

*Those calling from a landline phone must dial 1 when calling this number.

50 Plus Program Weekly Schedule

50 Plus programs with an * must register in advance

| Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday |
|---|-----------------------|------------------|---|--------------------|
| NEW! LOTERIA 1pm HATHA YOGA 4pm | KNITTING GROUP 1pm | TAI CHI* 10am | MAH JONGG 12pm HATHA YOGA 4pm TAI CHI * 5pm | HOBBY GROUP 1pm |

Meet Wade Holtkamp

City Building Inspector



Wade was recently promoted to Building inspector after being the City's Code Enforcement Officer for six years. Wade has been filling in as interim building inspector since April 2023. We thought now would be a great time to reintroduce you to Wade and learn a little more about your friendly neighborhood inspector.

Q: What do you like most about working in Roeland Park?

A: I find so many similarities between Roeland Park and the small town in Iowa where I grew up: neighbors helping each other and a sense of community, which I really value. I also enjoy working with City Staff and our residents.

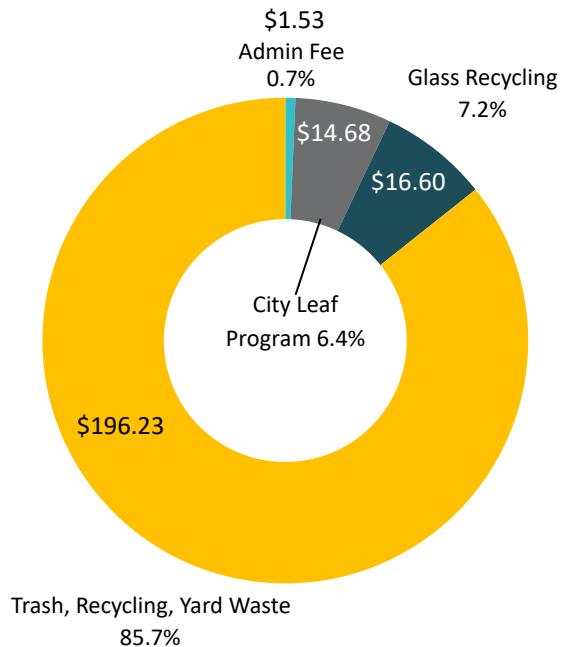
Q: What's the best part of being the building inspector so far?

A: I really enjoy being able to work directly with residents and help them on their home projects. It's very rewarding to be part of this process and witness the improvements made in our wonderful city!

Q: What do you like to do in your free time?

A: I live nearby in Prairie Village with my wife and two young daughters. We stay busy with soccer, basketball, and elementary school activities. I enjoy spending time with my friends watching Chiefs/KU games. I also like movies, collecting retro video games, and working on my 1948 home.

TALKIN' TRASH...ASSESSMENT



Each single family/duplex property in Roeland Park is assessed \$229.05 per year for weekly trash, recycling, leaf collection, and curbside glass collection in 2024. While the \$229.05 fee shows up on resident's property tax bills every year, the City's actual annual cost is \$250.04 per property. To the left is a breakdown of those fees by program.



"Local Celeb" Ardie Davis Receives National Honors for Barbecue Prowess

Roeland Park resident Ardie Davis, aka Remus Powers, recently received a Lifetime Achievement Award at the Jack Daniels World Championship Invitational Barbecue Awards for 33 years of service to the Jack Daniels Barbecue competition. Ardie is no stranger to receiving national acclaim. In fact, he is the founder of the American Royal International BBQ Sauce, Rub and Baste Contest. He was also inducted into the Barbecue Hall of Fame in 2016 and has authored 11 books on grilling and smoking meat. Of course, in Roeland Park, he and his wife Gretchen are known for their contributions to making R Park the destination that it is today. In fact, the City named the Pavilion the Gretchen & Ardie Davis Community Pavilion in their honor.

Congratulations Ardie for this incredible achievement!

THE BENEFITS OF EATING LOCAL

By Melissa Castillo, Sustainability Committee

We've all heard of eating local, but what does it mean and why is it important? Put simply, it means purchasing food that was produced and harvested nearby, eliminating long-distance transportation and cutting out retail intermediaries. There are many benefits to eating locally produced food. Transporting food from producer to retailer to consumer burns fossil fuels, which releases CO2 into the atmosphere, contributing to the heating of the planet. Transporting food long distances requires more preservation, which can mean the addition of chemicals to your food. Moreover, local foods can be harvested at the peak of their ripeness, whereas foods that need to be transported great distances must be harvested early so as to not spoil before consumption. Ripe fruits and vegetables are more nutritious. Less handling from the farm to your table



means less opportunity for bacterial or viral contamination. Local farmers are also more likely to use organic and humane methods. You can even verify that by visiting the farm and meeting the farmers! Locally produced food is healthier, fresher, and tastes better. Purchasing local food is also an investment in your community. Shopping locally keeps your money in the local economy, sustaining your local farms, and creating more local jobs.

Where can you find local food in Kansas City? There are numerous farmers markets in the metro. CultivateKC has a good listing on their website at www.cultivatekc.org. You may also join a Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) program run by a local farm. That typically involves paying a yearly fee for a weekly box of fresh produce during the growing season. Urbavore Urban Farm (www.urbavorefarm.com) has a CSA program, but also takes orders on its website each week for local pick up on Thursday evenings at the farm, just seven miles east of Roeland Park. Urbavore also serves as a hub for other area farmers, so consumers can purchase a variety of foods (including meat, cheese, mushrooms,



fermented foods, tortillas, and more) from Urbavore's website and pick them up at Urbavore. It's a convenient option, particularly for those with schedule conflicts on Saturday mornings, when most farmers markets operate. Urbavore also runs

the local composting business, Compost Collective KC. You can drop your food scraps off at the farm when you go to pick up your food. For locally and ethically raised beef, pork, and lamb, check out Good Oak (www.agoodoak.com) and David's Pasture (www.davidspasture.com). For beef, Kansas Beef (www.kansasbeef.org) has a listing of farms by county and how to order. Sometimes it can feel impossible to make a positive impact as a consumer. Purchasing food from local farmers makes a huge impact for you, for them, and for our community.

Skilled Workforce and Project RISE

According to a recent report from the US Small Business Administration between March 2021 and March 2022, 10,533 Kansas establishments opened and 8,004 closed, for a net increase of 2,529. Employment expanded at 20,215 establishments and contracted at 17,302. Small businesses accounted for 9,686 openings and for 7,462 closings. At the same time, there was a net increase of 34,758 jobs in Kansas. Small businesses contributed a net increase of 23,371 jobs, or 67.2 percent of that total. Attracting and retaining a skilled workforce is crucial for the success of any organization. A skilled workforce ensures that your business can operate efficiently, effectively and adapt to changing market demands. Project RISE is dedicated to providing you with the resources you need to build and maintain a skilled workforce. Workforce Partnership (workforcepartnership.com)

is committed to building a workforce development system that meets the needs of both job seekers and employers throughout the Kansas City area.

One example is the **Mature Workers Program** which helps connect job seekers aged 55+ to job readiness resources, training and networking to help with their next career move. This and additional resources for those looking to start or grow a business in Roeland Park can be found on the Project RISE website at projectrisenejc.com/skilled-workforce. You can also reach out to Project Lead Rebecca Galati at projectRISE@nejcchamber.com for help build your business in Roeland Park.



THE NEW ROELAND PARK COMUNITY CENTER

Below are some illustrations of some of the improvements made at RPCC. The space is available for rent. Check it out today!



Join The DEI Committee

The Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee is completing its strategic planning process and identifying its goals for 2024. If you are interested in making Roeland Park as welcoming to diverse residents and businesses as possible, we need your help! The committee meets for 1-2 hours on the 4th Tuesday of the month at 7 p.m. Come and meet new neighbors and friends and help us to further our pursuits to continually advance diversity, equity and inclusion in our community.



Tell us your Story!

Interested in sharing your Roeland Park story? The Roeland Park **Ad-Hoc Historical Committee** would love to hear about your life in our community as part of our oral history project. If you have a story to share, please email your contact information (Name, Phone # and Email) to Council Member Kate Raglow, kraglow@roelandpark.org and we will reach out to you with more details! You can also nominate another person with rich experiences here in RP. All are welcome!!



City Contacts



 Search

City Administrator - Keith Moody
kmoody@roelandpark.org

Finance Director/Asst. City Administrator -
Jennifer Jones-Lacy
jjones-lacy@roelandpark.org

City Clerk- Kelley Nielsen
knielsen@roelandpark.org

Chief of Police- John Morris
emorris@roelandpark.org

Director of Public Works - Donnie Scharff
dscharff@roelandpark.org

Mayor - Michael Poppa
mpoppa@roelandpark.org
(913) 722-2600

Ward 1 - Jan Faidley
jfaidley@roelandpark.org
(913) 709-6812

Ward 1 - Tom Madigan
tomrpk@gmail.com
(913) 526-6997

Ward 2 - Jen Hill
jhill@roelandpark.org
(913) 722-2600

Ward 2 - Benjamin Dickens
bdickens@roelandpark.org
(913) 544-1259

Ward 3 - Emily Hage
ehage@roelandpark.org
(913) 722-2600

Ward 3 - Kate Raglow
kraglow@roelandpark.org
(913) 722-2600

Ward 4 - VACANT

Ward 4 - Matt Lero
mlero@roelandpark.org
(913) 722-2600





Join us for the next Citizen's Academy!

The City of Roeland Park is excited to announce it has opened up applications for its Citizens' Academy Program which is set to be held in-person over nine weeks beginning in April 2023.

The Academy is designed to give Roeland Park citizens a behind-the-scenes look at the inner workings of the City. Class participants will have the opportunity to learn about how the City budget is developed, tour the police station, receive a look at the Public Works building and more.

The Roeland Park Citizens' Academy is a free program open to any Roeland Park resident 16 and up. You can find more information on the Academy on the City's website, roelandpark.org. If you are a Roeland Park resident interested in applying, please complete an application online. The deadline to apply is February 23, 2024 and space is limited.

Come Work with us!

The City is hiring for several positions including:

- Public Works Administrative Assistant, part-time - pay \$21 - \$31.49/hr.
- Police Officer, full-time - pay \$28.29 - \$42.43/hr.
- Community Center Facility Attendant, part-time - pay \$17.14 - \$25.71/hr.
- Lifeguard, seasonal - pay \$16-\$18/hr.

Visit www.roelandpark.org for more information.

Interested in Serving on Council?

If you live in Ward 4 and would like to serve your city as a councilmember, we have a vacancy. Interested residents can apply by completing a volunteer application online at <https://bit.ly/RP-volunteer>.

