



# THE NATIVE SONS AND DAUGHTERS OF GREATER KANSAS CITY

February 2012

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

## 2011 Holiday Brunch

On December 10, 140 Native Sons and Daughters and their guests enjoyed the annual Holiday Brunch at the Indian Hills Country Club. The meal was wonderful and the rekindled friendships and conversations were warm and welcomed. Awards were presented and the new officers introduced.

President Norman Besheer exchanged the leadership gravel with our new President Dot Benner. Past President Gary Hicks presented Norman with his Past President's medallion. We were very fortunate to enjoy entertainment provided by Dr. Bruce Prince Joseph, Dan Sturdevant, and vocalist Tiffany Miller. It was a great kickoff to the holiday season. *Photos courtesy of Louise Hicks.*



From left, Carl DiCapo, John Hess, Sr., Joe Crawford, Jr., and Larry McMullen



Presentation of the President's plaque to outgoing President Norm Besheer by incoming President Dot Benner.



From left, Kathryn Pickering, Gary Hicks, Lee I. Pickering Award recipient; Louise Hicks



Shirley and Ross Marshall

# President's Letter

Greetings to my fellow members of The Native Sons and Daughters of Greater Kansas City!

A signature event occurred eighty years ago, by our founding fathers who organized in 1932 The Native Sons of Greater Kansas City. Their desire, under the leadership of President Ralston Spalding, was to acquire, possess, preserve, and maintain archives of historical interest, relating to the development of Kansas City and the surrounding territory. Their focus centered on preservation, charity, educational, and scientific endeavors. Jackson, Clay, Platte, Cass, Ray, and Lafayette counties in Missouri and Wyandotte, Johnson, Leavenworth, and Miami counties in Kansas were considered a part of metropolitan Kansas City.

Since then, the organization has continued to adhere to the primary purpose of those who envisioned the interest of future generations. One major change took place a few years ago, in renaming the corporation The Native Sons and Daughters of Greater Kansas City.

As your President in 2012, it is my hope that all Officers, Directors, Chairpersons, and Members-at-Large will envision this year as one to continue the foresight of the past and move forward in our programs with zeal and implementation. May we all set goals for success that are not only attainable, but also worthy of this great organization!

It is my pleasure to announce that the Program Committee, chaired by Charles 'Chuck' Page, has planned four exciting tours in the coming months: the Titanic Exhibit at Union Station, Fort Leavenworth, Weston, and Ag Hall of Fame. Unexpected surprises and treats await.

Our Meet and Greet programs, chaired by John Hess, Jr., and John Hess, Sr., are informative and fun to attend. New potential members are always welcome and encouraged to attend.

Please visit [www.nsdkc.org](http://www.nsdkc.org) to keep informed of all activities and current newsletters. Another important tool is The Native Sons and Daughters of Greater Kansas City Roster, which allows you to become acquainted with all of our wonderful members.

Yours in NSDKC,

*Dorothy 'Dot' Benner, President*

## May 5th Tour to Fort Leavenworth

Ross Marshall leads a bus tour of historic Fort Leavenworth on Saturday, May 5th. The tour leaves at 8:30 a.m. from the public parking area at 7th and Pennsylvania in Kansas City, Missouri, and returns at 5:00 p.m.

Ross will guide the group through the history of the Indian Territory, Kansas Territory, the establishment of Fort Leavenworth and the town of Leavenworth. The tour includes following the Frontier Military Road from Grinter House in Kansas City, Kansas, a tour of historic Leavenworth, a stop at Leavenworth Landing, and a tour of the Fort. The tour of the Fort includes the Fort Museum, parade grounds, memorial chapel, Missouri River landing and swale, and the Buffalo Soldier Monument. Additional sites on the tour include the Eight-Mile House and the Oregon and California Trail routes from the Fort, as well as Buffalo Bill's boyhood home.

Lunch, maps, handouts, and water are included in the \$50 tour, along with Ross Marshall's commentary. Reservation details will be sent soon.

## Awards Committee

Awards Committee members Chuck Eddy, Chair, Gary Hicks, Norman Besheer, Jeannine Hicks, Ross Marshall, and Kathryn Pickering met in late fall to recommend the awards for 2011 at the Holiday Luncheon. The guidelines for awards were established last year and a guideline was set that the candidates will be members in good standing for five consecutive years. The committee will select only one recipient for each award per year. The awards will be given at the Holiday meeting in December. If there is not a candidate that meets the award criteria, the award will not be presented that year.

### Lee I. Pickering Award of Excellence

This award recognizes a member demonstrating excellence in performance of their duties. These qualities include commitment to a project, extraordinary quality in the delivery of the project, and information required to complete the project, as well as assisted and mentored others in the completion of the project.

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# Meet & Greet Features Streetcar Tunnel



Photo courtesy of John Hess, Jr.

I am thrilled to announce that the spring Meet & Greet is scheduled for Thursday, April 26th from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. We will get a unique opportunity to view the 8th Street Tunnel that connected Kansas City, and the West Bottoms.

The abandoned street car tunnel has been preserved by DST and will be one of the most exciting Meet and Greets yet. This event is cohosted with the Historic Kansas City Foundation.

Advance registration is *required*. Be watching for more details soon. I look forward to seeing you there.

*John Hess, Jr., Membership Co-chair*

## March 24 Tour of Titanic Exhibition

The Native Sons and Daughters of Greater Kansas City will tour the exhibit on March 24th, 1:30 p.m. with an optional lunch at 11:30 at Harvey's in Union Station. Reservation notices will be sent in February. Guests are welcome, and you may pay online at [www.nsdkc.org](http://www.nsdkc.org). The reservation deadline is March 5.

This exhibition is larger than the original tour over 10 years ago, and coincides with the sinking in April, 1912. Please join us!

## Executive Board Celebration

On January 11, the Executive Board celebrated the 80th anniversary of The Native Sons and Daughters of Greater Kansas City. Past President and Advisory Committee member Dan Sturdevant led members in song, with appropriate lyrics to the tune of Happy Birthday. A standing ovation honored those who founded this great organization.

Following the business session, President Dot Benner presented a cake, accompanied by the Golden Ox Restaurant's chocolate sundae.



*Seated, from left, Norm Besheer, Joe Vaughan; standing, front row, from left, Ray Elder, Ross Marshall, Dot Benner, Chuck Eddy, Dave Baumgartner; standing, from left, back row, Gary Hicks, Chris Sizemore, John Hess, Jr., Henry Leonard, John Hess, Sr.*

## Welcome Our New Members

Tom Beal, Linda Beal, John D. Hickock, Jr., Lisa Hickock, Emil Konrath, Irene Konrath, Shirley Marshall, Jerry Nolte, Alicia Nolte, Stephen Platt and Anne Sizemore.

# Upcoming Events

Titanic Exhibition tour, March 24, pay online at [www.nsdkc.org](http://www.nsdkc.org)

Meet and Greet, 8th Street Streetcar Tunnel Tour, April 26

May 5 guided bus tour to Fort Leavenworth

August 18 tour to Weston

Ag Hall of Fame tour, date to be announced

## Please pay your dues by March 1st

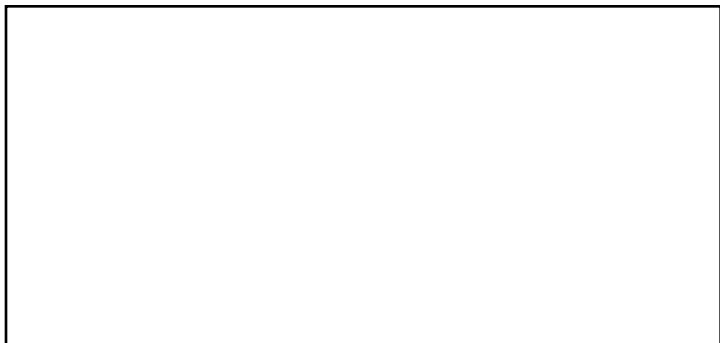
Please pay your dues by March 1st. Doing so will assure that you are included in this year's roster. Members whose annual dues are not paid by April 1 will be removed from the membership of the Corporation. Please check to see if you have mailed your dues. Thank you!

## Bequests

Including the Native Sons and Daughters of Greater Kansas City, Inc., a 501(c)(3) tax exempt Missouri corporation, offers members the opportunity to make a gift which will support our efforts to preserve and promote local history for years to come. A legacy may be granted to a Native Sons and Daughters projects as designated for use in future projects to be established and approved by the board of directors.

For more information, please contact Dot Benner, 2012 President at [president@nsdkc.org](mailto:president@nsdkc.org)

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## Awards Committee *continued from page 2*

This year's award was presented at the 2011 Holiday Brunch in recognition of Gary L. Hicks for his excellent performance and assistance to our organization. His commitment to our projects has been invaluable. He assisted and mentored others in the completion of their duties through the conclusion of the projects. He provided information needed for the membership to understand the importance of the issues. Gary worked diligently throughout his presidency, but most importantly continued his dedication and service to the NSDKC as our immediate past president.

### George E. Hicks Award for Perseverance

This award recognizes a member demonstrating commitment to a project when all others have given up. They were able to bear the difficulties calmly and without complaint. They demonstrated hard work, patience, and endurance. They try again and again until the project is completed. The committee did not have a candidate meeting the requirements of the George E. Hicks Award for 2011.

### Special Recognition Award

With the recommendation of the committee and approval of the President, a special recognition award may be presented. This year's award was presented at the Holiday Brunch to recognize the work of James H. Bernard, Jr. This past year alone, Jim has reviewed and rendered legal opinions on our by-laws, numerous contracts, and documents for our organization's protection. He gave of his time and knowledge to the benefit the future of the Native Sons and Daughters of Greater Kansas City.

*Chuck Eddy, Awards Committee chair*

## 2012 Programs

The program committee is pleased to announce a series of exciting programs for 2012.

In addition to the Titanic exhibition tour on March 24 and the Fort Leavenworth tour on May 5, we have two other tours planned for 2012.

On August 18, we'll have a bus tour to Weston, Missouri, and in the fall, a visit to the National Agricultural Hall of Fame.

Watch for more details on these tours in upcoming newsletters. Dates, times, and reservation information will be sent closer to the tour dates.

*Chuck Page, Programs Committee Chair*

## A Tale of Two Crooks...

In the days when Westport was the true, jumping-off place, where you headed west like that newspaper feller suggested, there were a couple of residents who we wouldn't care to have as NSDKC members. One was a German-Swiss emigrant who abandoned his family, lied about his military service, came to Westport in 1837, and couldn't even make a go of trading trinkets to the Indians. He took advantage of young Indian girls, too.

Wasn't too long before he had piled up substantial debts and decided that Greeley's advice was indeed meant for him. He left town one evening and never returned. His name was John A. Suter; later, in California, he added a "t" to Suter. Helped him hide out, they say.

About the same time, there was a feller trying to make a go of a farm along the South Platte River. You know, the river that old-timers say was, "too wet to plow and too muddy to drink." Well, if it wasn't a flood, it was locusts; if it was plowing time, the mule died; if harvest time, critters ate the produce. Poor James Marshall just couldn't make a go of it. Debts piled up and he decided he was a better carpenter than farmer. So he, too, headed west to California. Walking away from debts was not smiled upon by tough, pioneer society.

It was along the banks of the American River near present day Sacramento where this pair of hard luck and ethically challenged cases became acquainted. In 1846 or '47, Sutter, having ballyhooed himself into a reasonably successful, though still quite dishonest, businessman, *continued on page 6*

## 2012 Dues Requested by March 1

Please pay your dues by March 1st. Doing so will assure that you are included in this year's roster with correct information.

You will receive a second notice in February.

Members whose annual dues are not paid by April 1 will be removed from the membership of the Corporation.

Please check to see if you have mailed your dues. We appreciate your attention to this, as your support is important. Thank you!



Photo courtesy of Louise Hicks

# Dr. Bruce Prince-Joseph Performs at St. Therese

Native Sons and Daughters member Dr. Bruce Prince-Joseph resumed his concert series November 27th. The audience included 20 Native Sons and Daughters members. The concert featured Dr. Bruce on the organ and the Rev. Jeffrey Hon singing. The concert was held at the Shrine and Church of St. Therese located at 58th and Euclid in Kansas City, Missouri.

It was exciting to see Dr. Bruce and Jeffrey perform both traditional songs and new pieces to highlight the Christmas season. This year a new tradition began as one of the church choirs and bands also participated. A reception hosted by the church followed the concert. If you missed the concert, please plan to attend next year.

## A Tale of Two Crooks...

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hired Marshall to build a saw mill for him using the flowing water of the river for power. It was there that Marshall spotted a few bright yellow flakes of gold in a niche in the river and the rest is history. Just how many people heading to the gold fields in '49 came through Westport to buy shovels and gold pans, food, and liquid courage from Boone and Bernard will never be known, but fate caught up with both Sutter and Marshall as neither of them ever got a dime from the gold they discovered.

*Dave Baumgartner, Speakers Bureau chair*

## Grant Writing Experience?

We're looking for members with grant writing experience. We see grants being made available, and we'd like to take advantage of the opportunities to support our work.

Please email Dot Benner, President, at [president@nsdkc.org](mailto:president@nsdkc.org), for more information.  
[www.nsdkc.org](http://www.nsdkc.org)

## Wornall-Majors Work Continues

At its December meeting, the NSDKC Board officially renamed the Alexander Majors House Community Service Committee to the Wornall-Majors House Museums Community Service Committee. The revised name corresponds to the adopted name of Wornall-Majors House Museums, Inc., now overseeing the operations of the John Wornall House and the Alexander Majors House.

Our committee is a partner with the Wornall-Majors Board, serving in an advisory capacity. In addition, the committee is completing a report on its assessment on the safety issue of exiting the Majors site parking lot onto State Line Road. Also, research continues by McKay Anderson and Bill Bell on historical background about Alexander Majors.

Finally, compliments to Dave Baumgartner for being elected to the Wornall-Majors Board of Directors.

*Gary Hicks, Wornall-Majors House Museums Community Service Committee Chair*



January 5th Advisory Committee dinner. From left, Mary Lee Sturdevant, Pat Besheer, Norm Besheer, Earl Benner, Dot Benner, Louise Hicks, and Gary Hicks.  
Photo courtesy of Dan Sturdevant