Rosendale Church of the Month: Rainbow Mennonite Church

Rosendale is now home to Kansas City's oldest pipe organ
By Debra Sapp-Yarwood, Special to the Rosedalant

Built in Boston in 1869, the instrument known as the EGo Hook Organs Company, Opus 488, rode its way from Troy, N.Y., to 1444 South- west Blvd. in Rosendale this year with the help of the Rainbow Mennonite Church organ committee, as well as other donors and volunteers.

On Nov. 9, the congregation heard the organ for the first time in a worship service at its new home. Music Coordinator Roseanne (Ros) Penner Kaufman decided that the first music of KC's oldest organ should be played by the congregation's regular musicians, but before they were allowed to touch it, the children sat on empty boxes that had held the pipes during transport and heard the story of the organ's journey. Kaufman and Carol Buller, also of the RMC organ committee, first visited the organ in New York in 2004. The once-vibrant church that had commissioned the building of the organ after the Civil War had recently closed, and the organ sat unplayed for two years. Inside the organ were repairs made with string and paperclips. The church's former pastor turned on the organ and Buller played a hymn, which made the pastor weep. The women agreed that the instrument showed an irresistible potential, and the Rainbow congregation then adopted it, raised the money to buy, transport, install and restore it—sos paperclips.

Rainbow engaged the Quirzky Organ Company of Warrensburg, Mo. to oversee the transport and restoration, and Quirzky contracted with organ builder Richard Hurst of Connecticut to serve as project director. Hurst has more than 40 years experience in restoration and maintenance of historic organs. He says Rosendale has an instrument to be proud of.

"Hook organs have this wonderful silvery quality to their tone, and each set of pipes has its own distinctive color and when it's all put together as an ensemble it all blends together cohesively...That's a characteristic that sets (Hook organs) apart from many of the comparable builders of the same period, the 19th century."

He says Hooks are also famous for their reed stops. An electric blower has replaced the original bellows system, but other than that, the action remains entirely mechanical.

While all the pipes play, the organ still needs some minor work and fine-tuning before it's community debut.

Rainbow Mennonite Church warmly invites the Rosendale community to attend the organ's dedicated recital on Sunday, Feb. 8 at 4:00 p.m., featuring organist Roseanne Penner Kaufman. If you cannot attend that event, then the following week, on Feb. 16, the local American Guild of Organists will present Bruce Stevens in concert. And, of course, Rainbow welcomes visitors at all Sunday services, which begin at 9:30 a.m.

As I See It
By Steven Reynolds, outgoing Chair of the RDA Board

Now here is an idea worth having. Political analyst David Brooks wrote a column with advice for President-elect Obama from Michael Porter, a Harvard business guru. Porter's advice was not to do anything in the short term that doesn't serve a long-term goal.

Brooks ended with an idea of his own: use tax dollars to create social entrepreneurship investment banks. The banks would invest their funds in the best local community organizations. The organizations would use the money for existing programs as well as to expand operations.

In the event this idea sticks, let's go on record to be in the pilot program as soon as the money is appropriated!

As a board member and president, I have first-hand knowledge of why RDA is a solid investment.

Programs and policies are guided by the people who live and work in Rosendale. All major initiatives such as Mission Cliff and the master plan for the Rainbow corridor began and ended with input and feedback from the community.

RDA practices sound financial management—living within its means, maintaining accountability for funds and reducing costs when feasible.

The board and staff plan, cope with change and manage challenge through innovation.

A partnership with the KU School of Social Welfare places graduate students in Rosendale to work with youth, families and populations with unique needs, a summer work program provides teens with skills training and jobs with area businesses and a large pool of volunteers carry out a number of signature programs such as Christmas in October. RDA has big plans in store for the community.

On the wish list: creating a wireless hot spot, a brand new research lab, an annual music festival and building a campus for businesses to join together to plan and problem-solve.

In the meantime, RDA will continue to be the "go-to-source" for Rosendale— to find out about stray dogs, to reserve the event room, to take part in leadership training, to pick up recycling containers, to take part in youth activities, to volunteer, and to catch up on news.

In these uncertain times, RDA is an investment worth making for the long-term.
What's up with the 42nd St. Mural Project?

By Angel Dow

A year ago today, the corner of 42nd and Mission Rd sat empty, stilled with trash, the wall borie white and yellow paint, and a deep frost spout by what Matt Winter covered the cracked asphault.

Once again, Old Matt Winter has officially arrived, but the 42nd Street Mural Project is far from completing.

The spring and summer months brought sweet change to the empty lot. White primer covered the cracking paint, tree limbs were pulled out and thrown away, and a garden was created with the help of a local church, several local neighborhoods and a small grant from the Historical Preservation for Lutherans.

But the aesthetic enhancement, alone, was not enough.

Our original plan was to create, during the summer months, a large-scale, youth-inspired mural with the help of Joe Pausa, a local artist. Our funding had turned, however, too short to seem good. So in mid-summer, when City Vision Ministries, a non-profit community development corporation that has sponsored several murals in downtown KCK, decided to provide financial backing to a portion of the project, we knew we had to shift our original plans a bit.

With limited time and funds, Mikey was able to secure the help of a local artist by the name of Holly Swann. She was a friend of Joe's and agreed to do two focus groups with youth from Rosedale and in turn take their ideas and create a collaborative "art frame" for the site.

This endeavor would indeed leave a large portion of the wall white, yet we believed the creativity displayed would hold a hopeful approach to the future of the lot.

Holly's efforts have done just that. After meeting with half a dozen Rosedale Middle School students during the two focus group sessions, Holly was able to pluck the group's ideas into a collaborative art piece.

By the end of August, at last, there was color on the walls of 42nd and Mission Road.

The work, however, isn't done... for there is still a plethora of white space on the walls. Holly's frame, though, has become the catalyst to an idea born RDA staff member Mikey Fletcher likes to call "the revolving mural."

Editor's Note: Each semester, a different student art class at Rosedale Middle will be responsible for designing the next open section along the mural, so as to create a dynamic, ever-changing piece of work. Look for the next phase of the mural to be painted next year, after warm weather returns.

Rosedale Briefs

Learn about Turkey Creek flood control project:

Plans for environmental enhancements along Turkey Creek, including such bea-tiful parks, trails, and recreational areas, are now available on the Unified Government website. You can also read about the history of the Turkey Creek flood control project and the proposal to close the Mill St. bridge over the creek. Visit: www.usg.ks.us/DOE/0617-0423ammon-15284.

Grain elevators behind Strasser's torn down:

Thanks to the efforts of RDA, the U.G. and the BNSF railroad, the abandoned grain elevators behind Strasser's hardware store have been demolished and the debris has been removed. The elevator had become an eyesore, attracting graffiti and becoming unsafe. The BNSF, although not the owners of the elevator, owns the land and so agreed to pay for the demolition. RDA commends the BNSF for its efforts.

Congratulations to the Johnson family:

...for receiving the "Good Neighbor Award," presented by the St. Paul A.M.E. Zion Church, 400 S Minnie St. Rodney and Michelle Johnson, along with their children, were recognized for the beautiful landscaping on their property, which is located across the street from the church, and for helping to improve the quality of life in the neighborhood. The Johnsons were honored during the church's Annual Homecoming Day and Suite on Nov. 9.

Rosedale Obituary

Leora Kallans, longtime Rosedale and resident of the Aukins St. apartments, passed away on Oct. 29, 2006, from complications related to colon surgery and pneumonia. Leora worked for nearly four decades at the U.S. Department of Agriculture and was also a regular RDA volunteer in recent years. She told and label The Rosedalean in preparation for an article coming out. She was one of the recipients of RDA's Volunteer of the Year Award in 2007.

Crime Alert

While the holiday season is one of joy for many people, it is also typically a time for increased burglaries and thefts. The current poor economic situation may also contribute to a rise in these types of crimes. Please be vigilant aware of your surroundings, and take care to watch you're neighbors' properties in addition to your own. If you observe suspicious behavior or something that just doesn't look right, call the police immediately: 911 or nonemergency: 1-913-560-3000.

Membership Application

Annual business dues: $100 Annual household dues: $15

Name of business or name of household

Address

City State Zip code

Contact person

Day phone

Evening phone

Fax

Email address

Please mail application, along with check made payable to Rosedale Development Association: 4601 Southbourne Blvd. Kansas City, KS 66103