This year, The Rosedalians back panel will feature a new, “Good Neighbor” column to highlight residents who are giving back to their community in a volunteer capacity. The title is inspired by the Good Neighbor Training that Livable Neighborhoods holds along with a light dinner on the fourth Monday of each month from 5:30-7:30 p.m. at the Neighborhood Resource Center at 4953 State Ave.

This month’s column honors the local leaders who organized their families, neighbors, and schools into teams to help with last year’s All-Rosedale Cleanup. The largest overall team had three families for a total of 13 members and called themselves “Mike Nichols for Judge” and organized the largest Rosedale-based team; not only did his team help clean up debris, Reggie also volunteered his truck to speed up the process and afterwards helped with the cookout.

Now RDA is inviting Rosedalians and their fans to save the date for 2019’s All-Rosedale Cleanup on Saturday morning, April 13. Like last year, participants may register as individuals or with a neighborhood, school, church, or organizational team. The team with the most volunteers will win a park party at the Rosedale park of their choosing. Participants should meet at Fisher Park at 8 a.m. for orientation. Gloves, water, and trash bags will be provided before teams split up to focus on different parts of the neighborhood. Afterwards, everyone is invited to reconnect at 12 p.m. in Fisher Park for music and a celebratory cookout. Spread the word and help get the community cleaned up just in time for spring!

Be like Reggie and help RDA recruit more volunteers in 2019 than last year.

To volunteer, contact Kimberly at 913-677-5097 or kimberly@rosedale.org to participate in the fun community-oriented tournament.
Each year to celebrate MILK’s birthday, Reading Inspirational Stories to Empower (RISE) helps Rosedale youth become change agents. This January, RDA focused on inspirational youth from past and present and the importance of speaking up for what one believes is right, even if it is an unpopular opinion.

On January 15, volunteers gathered with a group of RDA personnel and watched a video about the 1963 Children’s March in Birmingham, Alabama. The march focused on the Civil Rights Movement and how youth stood against segregation and changed America. After the video, participants discussed the books they would be reading the following week in Rosedale schools. Each book highlights kids using their voices to speak up against things they saw as being unjust in their communities.

MEMORY LANE: My love affair with all things Rosedale

By Elizabeth Johnston

In 2003, my universe altered after moving from Boulder, Colorado to planet Rosedale. It was a shock, quite honestly, but I came to realize it was the best move I ever made. Lonely and isolated, my friend Kelly Jander encouraged me to reach out to Wendy Wilson, executive director of RDA. I hoped to find an opportunity to meet new people and get involved in my neighborhood. When this powerhouse of a woman walked in to greet me, she looked me up and down and said, “What an image!” Wendy too was an artist and, apparently, she liked my “Western/hippy/art- istic look.” I instantly fell in love with RDA and its delightful leader. Volunteering was in my DNA — I donated my design skills helping women’s health causes, women in politics, families in need, and several other nonprofits in Colorado. No donation. So, I found RDA! I knew what needed to be done. I started by designing RDA’s logo, then tackled the newsletter — its main communication tool. I became aware of the good things happening in Rosedale thanks to RDA. From policies and planning to business and advocating for the community, RDA was making a huge impact on our southeast corner of Wyandotte County.

One-hundred and seventy-nine Rosedaleians later, I still love designing each one, hoping to make a small difference in my community. Over the years, my neck of the woods has grown from bustling homes and chained up dogs to a diverse neighborhood of proud homeowners, neighbors talking and helping each other, and gardens sprouting everywhere. By working together, our community has become much stronger. (And the dogs are much happier too.) Through selfless volunteers, community engagement, compassionate AmeriCorps members, and RDA’s dedicated staff, Rosedale is a much better place. I have had the pleasure of working with three visionary executive directors during my tenure with RDA: Wendy Wilson, Heidi Holford, and now Erin Stryka. Their leadership has inspired their staff, the community, businesses, partners, and friends to prioritize the health and well-being of Rosedale now and in the future. Do I miss Boulder? Not really. Rosedale is my home.

To share a memory, contact Kimberly Hunter at 913-677-5097. 

By Nicole Fitzgerald

Whether one enjoys relaxing yoga or hitting it hard, Rosedale has great 2019 options for winter wellness. Exercise in a group can be motivating and helpful for meeting new people. Below are three neighborhood locations with fitness classes for all levels.

Southwest Boulevard Family Fitness at 300 Southwest Blvd. offers an array of group classes and welcomes people of all ages and fitness abilities.

• For those 60 or above, the Landon Center on Aging at 3599 Rainbow Blvd. also boasts numerous group options. Deanna Wardlaw says, “I am thankful we have free classes right here in Rosedale, led by credentialed health professionals in a relaxing setting with soothing music. No special shoes, clothing, or yoga mat needed.”
• CrossFit Matters at 735 Southwest Blvd. is an affordable option. It has a free introductory class Saturdays at 10:30 a.m. The instructor guides participants through the structure of a day-to-day CrossFit class.

Visit one of these three locations, and kick off 2019 right by joining a group fitness class in Rosedale to stay warm and well this winter!

To learn more, contact Nicole at 913-677-5097 or nicole@rosedale.org.

By Patricia A. Vlahovic

Selma, Alabama for African-Americans’ right to vote. Finally, RDA introduced a new, optional advocacy component to RISE this year. To ensure each youth understood their voice mattered, after each reading, volunteers invited scholars to write a postcard to an elected government official about a concern or a change they want to see in their community. One elementary student wrote to Kansas House Representative Louis Ruiz, saying, “Similar to a recent law proposal of higher income homes paying higher taxes, I suggest something along the lines of richer schools will pay small amounts of money monthly or yearly to smaller, poorer schools, so they can afford equipment and better lunches for the students who attend.” RISE helped many scholars brainstorm similarly creative solutions to today’s complex problems.

To learn more about RISE, contact Je’Taine at 913-677-5097 or je’taine@rosedale.org.