

JULY 2020

The Occasional

A SOCIAL MAGAZINE FOR THE RESIDENTS OF THE
SWISS AVENUE HISTORIC DISTRICT.

Remembering *Virginia McAlester*

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This Could Be You!



publisher's note

SHARING YOUR STORIES



Pictures – WE LOVE PICTURES!

Parties, graduations, family events, kids playing, holiday gatherings ... One of the best parts of your new magazine is the involvement of our neighbors. Pictures are an easy way to help support the look of the newsletter as well as bring smiles to your fellow neighbors. Digital photographs with high-quality capability are the way to go here — the more pixels, the better! Simply send an attachment of the pictures in an email to Occasional@n2pub.com or text to Kirsten at 504-296-8664.

Residents,

July is the month for fireworks and letting freedom ring! I hope you had an enjoyable July 4 celebration! I hope that things have normalized a little more for you and that we all experience a fun-filled summer. The summer months are great to take a dip in the pool to cool off from sweltering days, enjoy a cookout and hopefully reunite with friends and family as we also get back to our great family vacations.

This month is another great one for *The Occasional*. I am continually grateful to all of you who have reached out with story ideas and nominations of fellow neighbors for features. I have enjoyed meeting so many of you over the past several weeks. **The neighborhood is filled with great stories to tell, and we enjoy sharing them with you and your neighbors.** They are Your Stories. Your Photos. Your Life.

As we celebrate our independence and freedom in our great country, I would like to thank all our business partners who make this publication possible each month. During the uncertain times we have experienced over the past several months, our local businesses have been markedly impacted by the COVID-19 outbreak and its lingering effects. It is my hope that you will consider including our sponsors in your decision-making when purchasing products or services.



It's our joy to share your stories, and we look forward to many more together.

Have a great July!

Kirsten

Kirsten G. Swanson
Area Director and Publisher of *The Occasional*
504-296-8664 (cell)
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Letter from the *president*

Greetings friends!

I hope you are enjoying the new look and feel of *The Occasional*. A special shout out and thanks to Christine Reagan Loh for this significant make-over and professionalization of our (previously random) newsletter. I think it is an amazing and lasting tribute to this great historic district and neighborhood.

Speaking of thanks, I would also like to extend my personal thanks and our collective appreciation to our volunteer officers. You likely recognize the fruits of their labor but may not know who those individuals are that make our neighborhood such a special place. Thank you...

- **Bob Bracken**, I believe one of our longest-serving vice president ever!
- **Tyler Bexley**, our treasurer who's done a heck of a job keeping our expenses down and helping us navigate a very unusual year.
- **Jean Dean**, our amazing and long-standing secretary and for whom nothing would happen if not for her organization.
- **Peter Loh**, our past president, and current parliamentarian who provides a great deal of continuity and advice.
- **Tonya Kuesel** and **Nancy Johnson** for all of their efforts to make Home Tour a really spectacular event... for next year. Because of their efforts and foresight, next year's home tour is all but ready to go. Furthermore, they spent almost no district money leading up to the cancelation of this year's event, saving the district tens of thousands.
- **Jerry Baus** and **Laura Duty** for keeping our district beautiful and well maintained. Furthermore, after years of Jerry's hard work and negotiations, we signed an agreement with the city to improve their maintenance of the medians and the park spaces. We also secured the free usage of Savage Park for Home Tour for as long as the agreement is in place.

- **Amar Vallurupalli** as our Alliance Against Crime chair has done terrific work to on-board a new ENP lead officer, increasing the hours they spend in the district, reaching out to and coordinating with our neighboring districts, creating a comprehensive security plan, and securing a long-term free trial of the neighborhood App PunchAlert. Incredible work!
- **Risa Weinberger**, our very organized outreach chairman, met with her committee immediately following the election, got approval for the outreach budget, and was able to secure one of the largest grants to our neighborhood schools in the district's history.
- **Bryan and Carrie Davis** who have done a terrific job coordinating children's events. Despite busy travel schedules and two little ones, they pulled off every event as though they'd been doing it for years.

This is but a handful of our amazing neighbors and volunteers who dedicate their time, treasure, and passions to the district. When you see these folks around, please be sure to say thanks. This group has done a great job under extraordinary circumstances.

If you are interested in getting more involved or holding an office, I would love to hear from you. We can work together to identify opportunities that fit best.

Thank you for letting me serve you,

Brian

Brian Shultz
Swiss Avenue Historic District Neighborhood
Association President
www.SADH.org

The mission of the Swiss Avenue Historic District is to promote the benefits of historic preservation, to encourage citizen involvement, and to improve the quality of life within and around the community.



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meet your neighbors



Memorial flowers left by the historic marker in front of Virginia's Swiss Ave home.



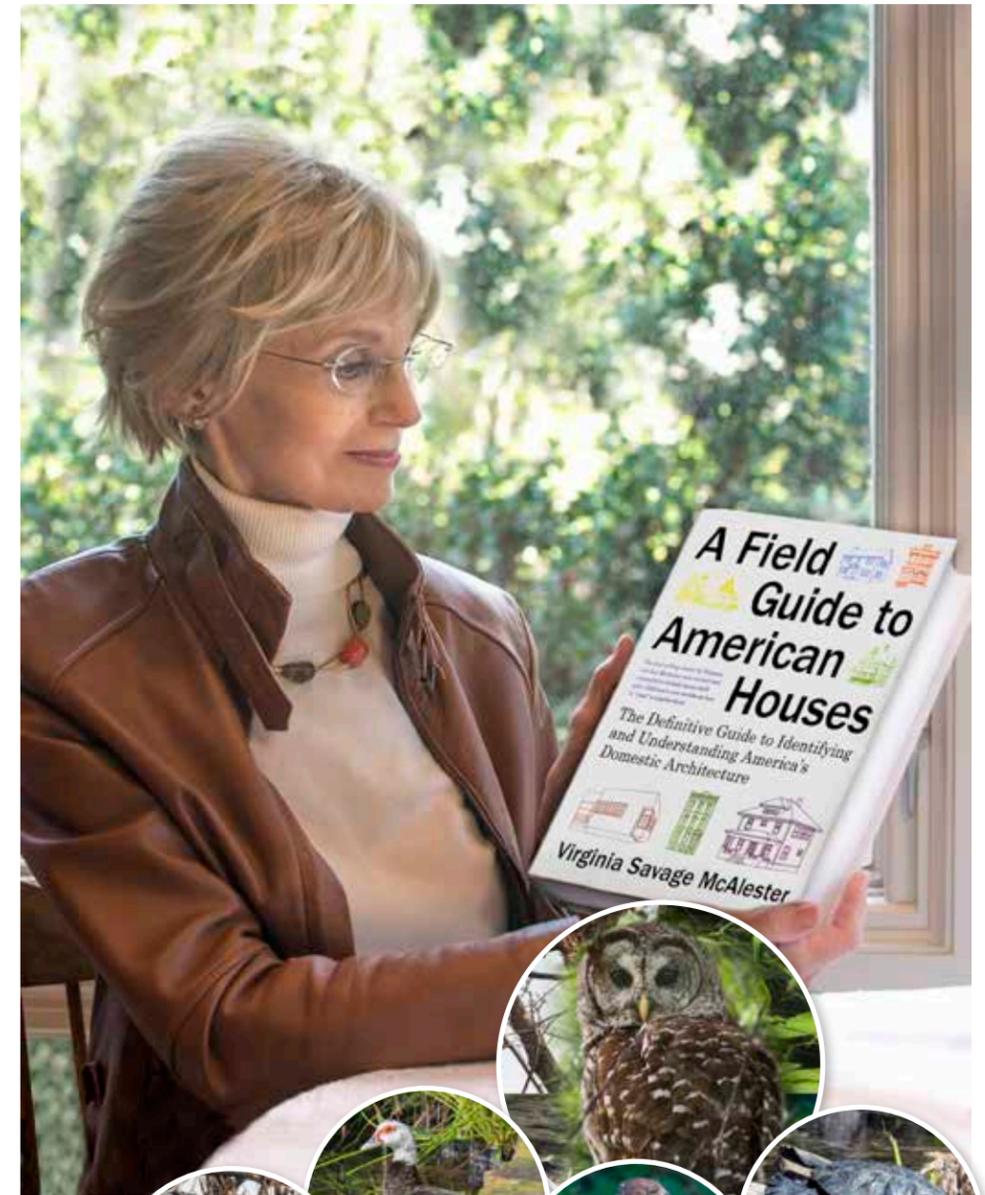
Virginia shooting video of her granddaughters playing in the backyard pond.



Virginia received an Honorary Doctor of Arts from SMU in 2019. Top L-R Keven McAlester, stepson & Amy Talkington, daughter. Lower L-R Virginia Adams & Clementine Adams, granddaughters.



Virginia at the April 2015 dedication of her Swiss Ave house as a TX landmark. She waited the required 10 years after her father's death so he could be referenced in the landmark's recognition.



REMEMBERING Virginia McAlester QUEEN OF DALLAS PRESERVATION

Thank you to neighbors **Steve Clicque** and **Haryette Ehrhardt**, along with **Amy Talkington** for contributing to this article
Photos Sent in by neighbor **Steve Clicque**.

The Swiss Avenue Historic District today is a staple of the city of Dallas and we all love living in this beautiful area full of trees, unique architecture, and history. However, in the 1960s and '70s, the city of Dallas had a much different vision of what East Dallas, and Swiss Avenue, should look like.

Today, we all owe our homes, our community, and our historic district protection to Virginia Savage McAlester and a group of determined neighbors. As many neighbors might know, Virginia started her love of community engagement when she was a little girl with her parents, Wallace and Dorothy Savage. Her father was a lawyer who became the mayor of Dallas and her mother

was a preservationist from the beginning, buying up abandoned properties along Swiss Avenue to protect them from being bulldozed – the city had earmarked Swiss Avenue for high-rise apartments and condos.

Virginia watched her parents find solutions, including spending their own money, to buy and save the historic houses that have been around since the early 1900s from the vision of Robert S. Munger, to be the first subdivision in Dallas that ensured the front views of the homes wouldn't be blocked by utility poles. As she grew up, she appreciated the importance of the homes and their architectural significance, leading her to study at Harvard University, graduating in 1965 with a degree in architectural sciences.

She moved back to Dallas after graduation and got right to work. She took her parents' ideas of saving homes to the next level and joined with a band of determined neighbors that were ultimately responsible for the creation of the Swiss Avenue Historic District. Moving on, they created a fund to buy and renovate other threatened houses in the area that became a national model. We spoke with neighbor **Harryette Ehrhardt** who was friends with Wallace and Dorothy and watched Virginia grow up before becoming involved with the cause to save Swiss Avenue. "I have known Virginia for over 50 years, her family changed the course of my life to politics. I remember Virginia's ability to 'round the troops!' One time we had a meeting to unite all of the East Dallas neighborhoods. While we were in the meeting a few blocks

from the gates of Swiss, Virginia received a phone call about a bulldozer about to tear down a house on Bryan Parkway. We all stopped what we were doing and went straight there. I remember calling my husband to make arrangements in case we were put in jail. I remember telling him I would be using our car to block the bulldozer and saying, 'it will all be fine, but you might have to bail me out of jail.' When you knew Virginia, that was just a normal conversation, she was the one who got us to think like that."

Virginia was a driven inspiration for the city of Dallas and beyond, but just as her parents influenced her to get involved, she was the same with her own children. Her daughter, **Amy Talkington**, remembers spending time helping her mom with ●●●



Driving neighborhoods in a routine photo survey she did throughout the U.S. North Reading, MA, north of Boston.



A short presentation on background and style of a Swiss Home on the 2017 Mother's Day Home Tour.



Virginia and long-time partner Steve Clicque at a 2014 Preservation Dallas tribute to Virginia in the Texas Hall of State.

•••

her campaigns, spending time at City Hall, helping to stuff packets, meetings at their home, and more. "My mother was someone who got things done. It always impressed me how she could get so many people invested. I remember her on the phone explaining why this was so important. She also always took the time to listen and her responses were down to earth and understanding, and she never gave up. She imprinted on me the importance of showing up for the causes I believe in, to follow with courage, total passion, and convictions, whatever they might be," says Amy.

Those convictions and passions of saving the historic homes of Swiss came to a beautiful reality when the then called the Historic Preservation League, was officially formed in 1973. Preservation Dallas has helped designate more than 4,000 local landmarks and created the Friends of Fair Park, which has raised \$200 million to protect the 277 acres and restore the Art Deco buildings. For her continuous work, Virginia was awarded the key to the city in 2014.

While we all might know Virginia from the creation of the Historic Preservation League, her name first became a staple in the architectural and preservationist community with her book, "A Field Guide to American Houses," published in 1984 and revised in 2013. Her long time partner, **Steve Clicque**, remembers the first time he met Virginia, he was working on restoring a home in the lower part of Swiss that was a Queen Anne style. He was using her book as a guide for putting the home back together when neighbor Jim Anderson suggested he walk down the street and just ask the author herself. Steve did so and little did he know where that conversation would end up leading. Just a few weeks after their first meeting, Virginia had convinced Steve into standing in front of a lot where they were trying to build an Albertsons with a sign that said NO while the planning commissioners were touring the area, "I remember thinking to myself what in the world am I doing here," says Steve, "You couldn't say no to Virginia."

Many people agreed with Steve's statement, Virginia had a way about her. Many times on vacation, Virginia and Steve would hire guides to take them around to see the neighborhoods of the cities

they were in. Virginia believed in seeing things with her own eyes, especially when researching for her books. One memory Steve recalled was a trip they took to Liverpool and were unable to find a driver. They decided to take a Beatles Tour, where the driver would take them around to see all of the prominent Beatles spots, but Virginia had other plans. "The poor tour guide was trying to show us Penny Lane and Virginia kept asking him about the local neighborhoods in the area and if we could drive through them as a lot of the homes she was writing about (craftsman style and earlier period homes) followed the British architecture. Finally, the guide gave in and we took long routes through the neighborhoods to each Beatles spot."

All in all, Virginia would live in five homes in the Swiss Avenue Historic District throughout her life. In her last home, she transformed her backyard and home to showcase her other passion, nature, and native gardening. She loved to be surrounded by nature so she planted tons of native species of plants to attract butterflies and other animals. She also flipped the kitchen so the view would be of the backyard, "that was mom's favorite room of the house. She decided as well to turn the swimming pool into a pond. I remember when we filmed 'The Night of the White Pants' at the home, the bullfrogs were so loud in the backyard we had to have an assigned assistant waving their hands to keep the frogs quiet," says Amy.

This past April, the "Queen of Dallas Preservation" passed away due to complications of a stem cell transplant in 2013 to treat her myelofibrosis, a chronic form of leukemia. Although she is no longer physically here, Virginia continues to be an inspiration and force in our communities. Virginia is the definition of a role model, 'a person looked to by others as an example to be imitated.' She worked hard for what she believed in, used her voice to make a change, and united neighbors and communities to continue to become better. We are proud to have had Virginia as a neighbor and we know her story will continue to inspire our communities to unite and be stronger as one.



Nominate your family or a neighbor to be a Meet Your Neighbor spotlight! Email nominations to Kirsten.Swanson@n2pub.com.

save the date S.A.H.D. Social Events

July: Craft Beer Cellar - July 30 - 6 to 8 PM
August: Matts Rancho Martinez - August 27 - 6 to 8 PM
September: Stoney's Wine Lounge - September 22 - 6 to 8 PM

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Can You Invest for Education and Retirement at the Same Time?

financial fitness

By: **Jhubin Moghaddamfar**,
Vice President Frost Private Banking

Caught in the middle. That's how many people feel each year as they watch their children grow closer to college and themselves move nearer to retirement. If you're trying to juggle investing for college and investing for retirement, the feeling is probably familiar.

How do you strike a balance between each goal without short-changing one or both? That's a question that financial advisors hear frequently.

Start with a plan

The answer really begins with financial planning. Without unlimited dollars for investing, you probably can't fund both goals fully, but a good financial plan will help you determine what is most important to you. It will also help identify your resources, time



horizon and needs for the future so you can decide how to best allocate your investments today.

Everyone has his or her own view of the future. Some people have always dreamed of a college education for their children and are committed to paying for it. Others see a comfortable retirement as a more pressing priority and are willing to ask their children to pay some or all of their own college expenses.

Make retirement a priority

It is possible to save for both at the same time—especially if you start early. But if you are behind the eight ball on retirement savings, it may be a better idea to allocate more resources to retirement than to college. Why?

When you retire, whatever you have saved is it. But there are many resources for college—scholarships, grants, work-study programs, loans—that aren't available for retirement.

With the help of a financial plan and a planner, even late starters can find options that make the most of the money they have. For education, possible choices include a 529 plan, a Coverdell Education Savings Account, even a regular savings or investment account. Or look into Federal Pell Grants, Stafford loans, or Parent PLUS loans. For retirement, a workplace 401(k) plan, if it's available, or a traditional or Roth IRA may be useful. But, the bottom line is always good planning.

A financial plan is like having a road map. You wouldn't take a cross-country trip without using a map. So, why not plan in the same way for college or retirement?

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Photograph: Vicky Wasik

Now that Texas is well on its way to being completely "open" again, and most other states are following suit, we're collectively presented with the prospect of being able to go to our favorite restaurants again for dinner or drinks. But, many have understandably expressed concerns about going out to eat again while the Coronavirus remains active. Are you worried about whether restaurants can/will take COVID-related precautions? Are you just not sure what to expect? Well, we're here to help. We've been to dozens of restaurants all around Dallas since they were allowed to reopen for dine-in service, and can suggest a few places that should make you feel safe.

First, a few words on safety: while most restaurants do not require you to wear a mask for entry any longer, you're certainly welcome to do so if it makes you feel more comfortable. Some restaurants will still ask screening questions before you enter and/or take your temperature via a laser forehead thermometer. All restaurants we've been to have hand sanitizer at the entryway and many have several sanitizing stations for your convenience. Most restaurants are also utilizing paperless menus accessed via your smartphone, something we hope sticks around as it cuts down on environmental waste. All servers we've encountered are religious about wearing masks. The tables are appropriately spaced and thoroughly cleaned. All-in-all, restaurants we've been to are taking the pandemic very seriously.

Outdoor Dining Options

Even though the weather has gotten decidedly warmer the past few weeks (as we approach summer), outdoor dining still offers the greatest safety for you. Fantastic local options include Mi Cocina, Blue Goose, Barcelona Wine Bar, La Calle Doce, Cafe Madrid, and Truck Yard. We've been to all of these multiple times, and have had great experiences.



resident recipe

By: **Cameron & Natalie Kinvig**,
Resident Contributors

Dining

IN THE TIME OF

COVID

Indoor Dining Options

If the weather is just a bit too warm for you to sit outside comfortably, there are plenty of other tasty and safe options to try for indoor dining. We've enjoyed meals at Cafe Urbano (plus it's BYOB), Toulouse, Sixty Vines, Taverna, Pluckers, Scalini's Pizza and Pasta, Blue Fish Sushi, Waffle House (yes, we love Waffle House), Wabi House, and St. Martin's Bistro.

Pick-Up and Delivery Options

If you're just not ready to take the plunge for dine-in yet, there are still great pick-up and delivery options available throughout our neighborhood. We're always a fan of Louie's pizza (pandemic or not), Jimmy's Food Store sandwiches (which come pre-packaged for your safety), Petra and the Beast, Khao Noodle Bar, Da Lat Vietnamese, Za Lat Pizza, El Come Taco, and Tacos Y Mas.

If you're just not ready to do the whole restaurant scene yet, the least we can do is suggest a tasty cocktail you can make for yourself at home. So, for July, our cocktail of the month is a Dark and Stormy, in honor of our recent trip to Rhode Island.

Dark and Stormy Cocktail

- Fill a tall glass with ice
- Add 3 ounces of ginger beer
- Add 1/2 ounce of lime juice
- Stir both together
- Float 2 ounces of dark rum on top (it will give you a beautiful dark "storm cloud" layer)
- Stir thoroughly before drinking
- Garnish with a lime wedge



Have a great recipe you'd like to share? Send it over to **Occasional@n2pub.com** to share it with our neighbors.

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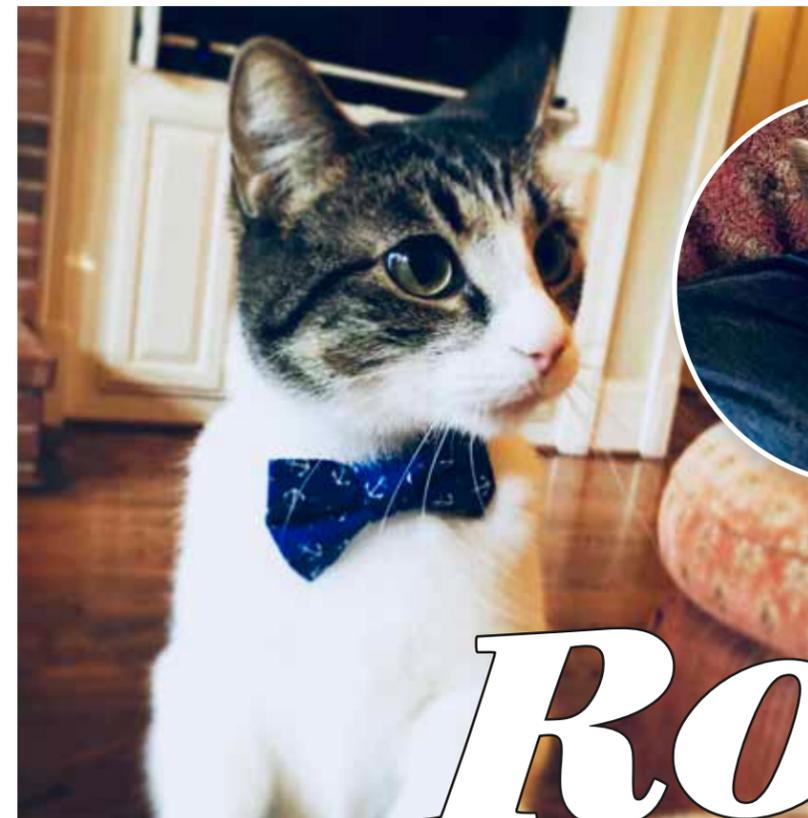
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S.A.H.D. Avenue Resident



Rocky Today!



Rocky Day 1.



precious pets

By: **The Hulses**, Resident Contributors

Rocky

The Hulses are not "pet people," or at least they weren't until one rainy August afternoon when a small, shaking, squeaking lump moved into their backyard. Snuggled up against the kitchen window was a three-week-old kitten, seemingly abandoned to fend for himself, his little eyes drawn closed as he trembled with each clap of thunder. It only took two hours of chasing (imagine cartoon dog catchers ankle-deep in mud and azalea bushes), one makeshift cat carrier made from a cardboard box, and a vet visit to suddenly become fervent "pet people."

They named him Rocky (or as he is known in the upper echelons of society, Lord Rockwell, Duke of Bollinger). Within an hour, he had fully embraced his new life as the Lord of 5001 Swiss. But all was not as it seemed. After a few days in his new home, Rocky started losing large patches of fur. Late one Friday night after another large hunk fell out, he was rushed to the emergency vet where he tested positive for FIV, Feline Immunodeficiency Virus, and the worst case of ringworm the clinic has ever seen. The Hulses were told it was possible that Rocky had FIV antibodies from his mother, and with proper nutrition and supportive care, he might be able to clear them from his system. They wouldn't know if it was successful until he was six-months-old.

Due to his compromised immune system, he would have a hard time clearing up his ringworm. He was so small that they didn't have a medication he could safely take. He immediately went into quarantine in a downstairs bathroom to stop the risk of reinfection. Rocky only left the bathroom for it to be disinfected once a day with bleach from top to bottom and to go to the vet weekly to

be fully submerged in a malodorous tonic of sulfur and lime. His white fur turned yellow, and he smelled like rotten eggs. But he was loved. And he was happy.

After four long months of dips and disinfecting, he finally tested negative for ringworm and was released from his privy prison. Two short months later came the big test to see if he had cleared the FIV from his body; despite the long odds, he officially tested negative! Three years later and Rocky is the most spoiled, adored cat this side of 75 (There is a series of photos from his heavily-attended first birthday party to attest to this; he had an Amazon wish list.)

Not all feral cats are so lucky. Uncared for, many feral cats face the harsh realities of living in an urban environment. I am sure you have seen the many stray cats that wander through your yard, lie on your patio furniture, and sun themselves on your front porch. As new construction and teardowns of abandoned properties continue in our area, more and more displaced feral cat colonies will move into our neighborhood. Luckily, there are things being done to help. The next time you see a feral cat, notice if the tip of its left ear is missing. If yes, you can thank your local volunteers that participate in "Trap, Neuter, and Release" programs aimed at minimizing local feral cat populations. This allows cats to live out their lives without stressing the resources of an already overwhelmed animal shelter system. If you are interested, there are many ways to lend a hand through donations, trapping, or fostering. Although if you are really lucky, a little lump will move into your yard and squeak his way into your heart.



Lynn Powell

YOUR NEIGHBOR, FRIEND, AND LOCAL REAL ESTATE AGENT!

Our local REALTORS® are, simply put, trusted pillars within our community; expert advisors. This month, we have the pleasure of introducing you to Swiss Avenue Historic Districts' neighborhood Agent—Lynn Powell!

When it comes to making a move, Lynn knows a thing or two. She and her family have lived in 11 homes in Dallas, Atlanta, and Houston. **“Those experiences alone have helped me empathize with my clients,”** she tells us. Dallas, though, has always felt like ‘home’ to the Powell family. So, when Lynn’s youngest went off to college two years ago, Lynn moved her family moved back to Dallas—and chose Swiss!

A Swiss Avenue Historic District neighbor, Lynn is also a residential REALTOR® with Alliebeth Allman & Associates (ABA), the leader in Dallas/Ft Worth in luxury real estate sales and a wholly-owned Berkshire Hathaway affiliate. **“I have always been driven towards real estate,”** Lynn tells us. **“I am passionate about buying and renovating homes, as well as taking care of my community.”**

Lynn has two wonderful business partners—Santina Kornajcik and Nancy Dietrich of the DK Group who brings 20+ years of experience in the Dallas market. **“Our team approach allows us to yield exceptional service and collaboration at all times,”** Lynn explains. Together, the team brings a combination of talents from sales knowledge, to marketing, finance, contractions, and negotiations to closings.

Given the recent shelter-in-place orders, Lynn expresses, **“We now have a better understanding of our family’s needs and more**



The Powell Kids & Rocky



Rocky the west highland terrier

intimate knowledge of the strengths and weaknesses of our homes. As such, some of us are looking to downsize, trade-in, or upsize our home. Our homes have become more important than ever as a safe haven. There are currently many buyers in the market looking to purchase a home.”

ABA will not let the pandemic set them back, Lynn tells us. **“Our strength lies in our unmatched**

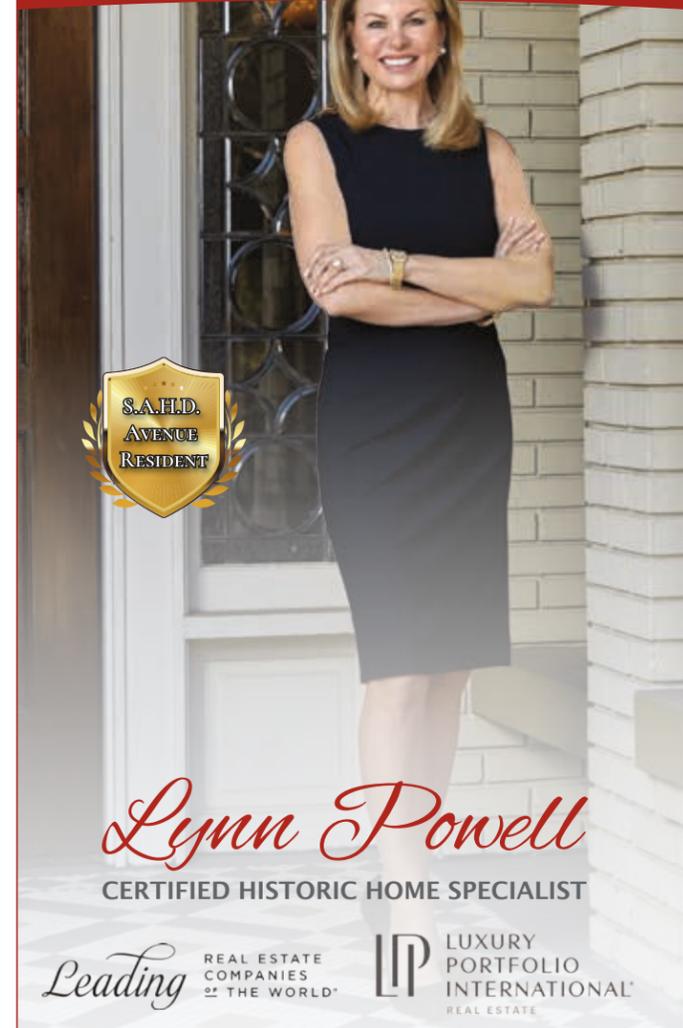
local leadership, national resources, and our family of brokerage, mortgage, title, and insurance homeownership services—all of which is backed by Berkshire Hathaway and its cultural pillars of trust, integrity, stability, and longevity.”

Lynn and her husband, Ken, have four children together—Kate, Blake, Jack, and Will...and we can’t forget their beloved pup, Rocky, a west highland terrier. Ken is a Senior Executive at Oracle Corp. Kate lives on Catalina Island and is an Assistant program director for the Catalina Island Marine Institute. Blake graduates from Texas A&M in August and Jack graduated in May from the University of Texas. Will is a student at the University of South Carolina.

If you, or a neighbor are looking for a local SAHD real estate agent that knows the ins and outs of our neighborhood, don’t hesitate to give Lynn a call! After all, she is your neighbor first, who just happens to be an incredible real estate agent.

Lynn Powell
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5015 Tracy Street
Dallas, Texas 75205

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Miriam Camp

Age: 8

School: Lipscomb Elementary

Siblings: Eli age 10 and Andy age 5

Sports I play: Swimming

Musical instruments: piano

Something Unique About

Me: Miriam joined the volunteer effort with the SPCA and SAHD to help control our feral cat population. She went out with the team to set and check humane traps, and she is now fostering two kittens until they are old enough to be adopted from the SPCA! She says "If you are looking for a cat to adopt, maybe consider the SPCA or an animal rescue because they have cats that have been through a lot and need a very good home."

When I Grow Up:

Veterinarian or Zookeeper

FAVORITES

Favorite things to do?

Play with my pets and sew

If you could be any animal what would you be?

A horse, guinea pig, or a dog

Favorite animal? Guinea pig

Favorite color? Hot pink because it is very bright and pretty

Favorite things to Watch?

Secrets of the Zoo on Disney Plus

Favorite food?

Mac and Cheese or Pot Pie

Favorite place to go?

Any places that have animals

Favorite sports teams?

Texas Rangers or Astros

Favorite school subject?

Science or animals

Summertime Activity:

Fostering kittens



Are you a kid that rocks?

Nominate yourself or a neighbor at
Occasional@n2pub.com!

kids that rock

By: Miriam Camp,
Junior Resident Contributor



Donnell Toler

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