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CITY MANAGERS OFFICE
LAWRENCE, KS

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April 20, 2007*

*Mike Amyx, Mayor
P.O. Box 708
Lawrence, Kansas 66044*

Dear Mayor Amyx:

On October 16, 2006, I contacted your office and discussed my idea of renaming a street in Lawrence, Kansas with Johnathan Douglas at the Lawrence City Hall. He advised me to write a proposal for renaming the street therefore, I would like offer the following proposal:

Please accept this letter as a formal request for a change in the name of the street known for many years as West 5th Street in Lawrence, Kansas.

Albert and Lulu Belle Salisbury were my grandparents who lived at 1508 W. 5th Street until their deaths. Our family feels that the history of the Salisbury family is worthy of consideration for an honorary memorialization that would consist of the erection of an honorary street name sign designated as "Salisbury Drive" on the corner of West 5th Street and Florida to West 5th and Wisconsin.

By formally renaming West 5th Street in honor of the Salisbury family this will be a fitting and honorable tribute for the self-sacrificing accomplishments made by members of our family during a time when African Americans struggled severely on a daily basis with racial intolerance in America. This tribute will carry on the history of a family who stood for respecting all people, regardless of their station in life and will enable not only our family but the Lawrence community to continue to strive for peaceful race relations.

I have attempted to research the history and accomplishments of the Salisbury family documented on the following pages from 1865 to the present.

Thank you in advance and I hope that you will consider our family's request.

Respectfully submitted,


Anita Cochran

cc: Dolph Simons, Jr., Lawrence Journal-World

The Salisbury Legacy

George W. L. Salisbury (Albert Salisbury's father) was my great grandfather and was the first African American migrant family to move to West Lawrence. The history of George Salisbury extends back to the time of slavery, river boats and Lawrence settlers. The release of slavery paper dated 1865 for George W. L. Salisbury is a keepsake of our family.

The release paper reads:

"Know all men by these present that I, Lucius Salisbury, of the County of Chariton, and the State of Missouri do hereby forever release George from service to me, or to my heirs, and do set him Free to trade, work or act for himself, and I shall have no claim in any way to his service without pay from this date. Given under my hand this the 1st day of January A.D. 1865. Signed, Lucius Salisbury".

After George's release he purchased and paid for land in 1867 and 1868 in the town of Salisbury, Missouri (copy of deeds are recorded in Chariton County, State of Missouri and family copies are available).

George married Mary Ford of Keytesville, Missouri and had seven children, Bettie, Lewis, Fanny, Charles, Albert, Susan and Rebecca. George and Mary decided to make their home in Lawrence, Kansas and at that time, Albert, who was my grandfather, was three years old.

In 1880 coming by horse and wagon, their first home was in the 1300 block on New Jersey Street and George Salisbury was the first African American to homestead on what was known as Pinckney Street, now called West 6th Street. They later had seven more children: Adam, Arthur, Willie, Roland, Watson, Edgar, and Annie.

George purchased land from California Street to Colorado Street, owned a rock quarry, orchard, and vegetable garden. He was the Custodian of Lawrence Jr. High School which at one time graced the corner of 9th and Kentucky Streets.

My grandfather, Albert, was his father's helper. He herded cattle, worked in the rock quarry and cut ice to be stored in J.D. Bowersocks Ice House. Albert married Lulubelle Delaney of St. Joseph, Missouri and being a lover of music, he joined the orchestra that furnished music for the Pleasure Boat on the Missouri River along the coast of St. Louis. After the death of his father, Albert became the Custodian of Lawrence Jr. High School where his father had worked. Albert was employed for years before being transferred to Central Junior High and then to Woodlawn in North Lawrence and then to Lincoln School where he retired on July 1, 1956, as an employee of the Lawrence Board of Education after 46 years.

Albert and Lulubelle Salisbury had five children, Albert Delaney Jr., Edward, Clarence, Josephine, and Catherine (my mother); 10 grandchildren and 4 great grand children. The couple lived at 1508 West 5th Street and celebrated their 65th wedding anniversary in 1963. Lulubelle Salisbury was socially active in the Lawrence community and belonged to the Sierra Leone Club and various other clubs where she entertained guests on a regular basis. Lulubelle Salisbury died April 30, 1964 at age 84 and Albert died February 9, 1973 at age 96 (two days before his birthday).

Albert Delaney married Wauneta Helen Johnson and had three children, Eloise, Phyllis, and Janice. Albert Delaney worked for 44 years in The University of Kansas Chemistry Department and was highly active in various Lawrence Masonic groups (Biography and Guide to the Albert D. Salisbury, Jr. Collection of papers date from 1921 to 1988 and can be found at the University of Kansas Libraries-Kenneth Spencer Research Library). Wauneta Salisbury was a member of the Order of the Eastern Star. Wauneta Salisbury passed away on November 17, 1985 and Albert Delaney died on October 11, 1998 at age 98.

Edward married Blanche Smith and had one stepdaughter, Cleo Woody. Edward worked for 45 years at Ober's Clothing store at 821 Massachusetts, one of Lawrence's upscale men's store that catered to the university trade, until it went out of business in 1973. Both brothers, Albert and Edward, were well known in Lawrence and worked at Lawrence social functions where they served as bartenders and waiters where they were always dressed in jackets and neckties. Blanche passed away in February, 1994, and Edward died on September 6, 2001 at age 95.

Albert and Lulubelle's daughter Josephine and son Clarence passed away at an early age. Josephine married Kingdom Grandison and had four children, Kingdom Jr. (deceased) Eddie, David and Donald.

The other daughter of Albert and Lulubelle was Catherine. Catherine received her bachelor's degree from Kansas University and was an active member of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority. After receiving her degree she moved to Chicago, Illinois and married William C. Gordon and had three children, Carole, Anita, and William A. (Billy). Catherine taught elementary education in the Chicago Public Schools for over 30 years and received a Letter of Proclamation on her 90th birthday from the Mayor of Chicago in recognition of her outstanding accomplishments for her work in the Chicago Public Schools for affecting an enormous impact on the lives and education of children. Catherine passed away on May 17, 2006 at age 94.

George's son Adam, and his first wife, Nellie Figgins Salisbury, had a son, George Franklin Salisbury, born February 26, 1918 and died on May 16, 1986 at the age of 68. George was a native of Lawrence and moved to Kansas City in 1936. He was one of Kansas City's great and beloved jazz musicians. He taught classical and jazz piano at the University of Missouri-Kansas City Conservatory of Music (UMKC) for more than 25 years. During the 1940's and 50's, George worked with a seemingly endless list of musical artists, many now recognized as jazz legends, such as Charlie Parker, Coleman Hawkins, Billie Holliday, Stuff Smith, Sonny Stitt, Miles Davis and Jay McShann. UMKC sponsors an annual Cabaret Concert memorial series in honor of George Salisbury which benefits the George Salisbury Memorial Scholarship created to financially assist minority students to study music at UMKC.

Adam and Nellie also had a daughter, Helen Bernice (deceased) who was the first African American to work in a clerical position with the U.S. Army at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas.

Adam and his second wife Emma Roffle Salisbury had a son, Donald Hughes Salisbury, born in 1928 in Lawrence, Kansas. Although his parents were Baptist he joined the Catholic Church at age 20 while serving in the U.S. Air Force. Donald graduated from the University of San Francisco with a B.S. in Business in 1957. In August 1961 he joined the Western Dominican Order in Oakland, California. After completing his priestly studies, he was ordained a priest in Oakland, California, on June 16, 1967, becoming the first African American priest to serve in the Diocese of Jefferson City, Missouri in 1979. Father Salisbury is 78 years old and currently serving at Holy Rosary Catholic Church in Portland, Oregon.

Adam and Emma also had another son, Adam Arthur, who attended the University of Kansas and later worked for the U.S. Postal Service in Kansas City, Missouri. Adam currently resides in Los Angeles, California.

One of George's daughters, Bettie, married Reverend Emmett Cohron who became the first Pastor of New Hope Baptist Church in Denver, Colorado in 1922 where he moved his wife and 4 of their 10 children, Lois, Kathryn, Ruby, and George Emmett. President Franklin D. Roosevelt appointed their oldest son George Emmett as the first African American Manager of the Department of Social Security where he served in this capacity with the New York District Office for 25 years. George Emmett was born in Lawrence, Kansas July 16, 1892 and passed away on July 9, 1983.

8.

Contributing family members and friends:

Anita Gordon Cochran

Eloise Salisbury Caldwell

Carole Gordon Adkins

Phyllis Salisbury Traylor

William A. Gordon

Janice Salisbury James

Donald Salisbury

Anthony Stofer

Adam Salisbury

Michael Adkins

Donald Grandison

Cleo Woody

David Grandison

Wesley Walker

Eddie Grandison

GEORGE W.L. & MARY SALISBURY

