

THE VILLAGE VOICE

Rocky Mountain Village Estates • December 2021

Meet Joan Mickelson

Hailing from Minnesota, Joan Mickelson describes her hometown as the neighborhood in Minneapolis where rioting took place over the Black Lives Matter movement in May of 2020.

“Minneapolis was a good place to live,” she reflects. She grew up in “a big old house – a foursquare with three stories” just two blocks from Lake Calhoun, the largest of the city’s chain of lakes. “We swam a lot on a daily basis.”

Prior to moving into Rocky Mountain Village just a month ago, Joan had lived in Evergreen for 11 years, which offered reasonable proximity to family members in Aurora. She’d become acquainted with Rocky Mountain Village through writing classes with resident Carolyn Campbell and classes at Center for the Arts Evergreen and had been keeping an eye out for a unit to become available, finding one in Bergen.

She was into making distinctive jewelry and participated in the co-op in Downtown Evergreen known as Shadow Mountain Gallery. “It was a nice way to meet people and become involved.” When Evergreen was making a bid to become recognized as a Creative District, Joan wrote the initial proposal.

Art has been a significant influence in her life. “Mother was a commercial artist for Young Quinlan in Minneapolis,” she says, explaining that she’d been the first artist the distinctive women’s clothing store hired soon after it opened in 1926. Her parents met

in art school, giving birth to a daughter who had within her a need to ‘make art.’

“Most of my life I’ve made things,” Joan says, leading up to describing the process of finding a way to make a living off what she loved to do. She’d begun making puppets and performing puppet shows at libraries while her daughter was 10 or 12, touring the entire metro area for 10 or more years. “I even spent three weeks [with her puppets] at the Smithsonian in Washington, DC.”



She was invited to create a show and perform at the American Swedish Institute, a museum and cultural education center located in the center of Minneapolis. The ballroom and stage on the third floor of the historic mansion made for the perfect venue for three weekends.

Her interest in folk tales and folklore coupled nicely with her interest in puppetry when she became an artist-in-residence in the schools and teaching at the science museum.

Her start at a puppet play based on her dreams – presented as a “work in progress” – garnered an invitation to do a longer version for a theatre in Minneapolis. She also performed a play by Leslie Mohn in San Francisco for three weeks. This ancient, life-like form of puppetry was performed Japanese style – “Bunraku” – dressing in black to become invisible behind the half-life-size puppets that chant out the narrative. It typically takes three puppeteers working in unison to manipulate a single elaborately outfitted puppet with a series of rods and strings.

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It's not happiness that brings us gratitude.
It's gratitude that brings us happiness.

Memo from the Manager

Carts, carts, carts ... Please do not leave the King Soopers grocery carts in your units, in the hallways, or in your parking spaces. They are kind enough to let you bring them here. Please be kind enough to treat them as their property, not yours. Leaving items in the hallway other than decorations does not present a good look for RMVE.

Shut the door! For those of you in the habit of leaving the front door open when you are not in the immediate vicinity, please STOP doing that. Thanks!

Windchimes can be soothing and beautiful. When the Colorado winds blow at night, they can be just plain loud and keep folks awake. Please bring yours in at night or when the wind is blowing so as not to disturb your neighbors. Thanks!

There are two openings for the Board. If you'd like to apply, please provide a letter of interest with your qualifications to the office by Wednesday, December 15th so your information can go out in the annual meeting packet to all owners.

The budget approval meeting will be held via Zoom on Tuesday, December 7 at 2 p.m. If you do not already receive Zoom invitations and would like one, send a request with your preferred email address to Kathy at rmve2@comcast.net.

Happy Holidays to each of you. I'm thankful to know you.

-- Kathy

Joan Mickelson continued

Off-stage Joan used her talents as a massage therapist for 15 years, having created a program that studied alternative medicine. That's when she got into writing. And when it was time to retire, she turned to writing for enjoyment. In addition to writing "healing stories," she's published a book (with two more on the way).

"I'm moved to write everyday," she says with a smile enveloping her face. "I even love the revising of writings." She starts writing about 10 am each day and writes again after a walk. Recently she spent a day rewriting the story of Medusa as a narrative.

Drawing on another ancient form of creativity, Joan practices shamanism — only for herself, not for other people. While shamanism might be defined as interacting with the spirit world, Joan describes it as "being in that dream state but while awake — like going into another world." She accomplishes this dream state by creating a monotonous rhythm to awaken her sense of creativity.

Joan looks forward to getting better acquainted at Rocky Mountain Village and hopes to be invited back to Center for the Arts to teach another class with Carolyn Campbell.

Profile and photo by Linda Kirkpatrick

The new crosswalk

The crosswalk is in!

Initially, the plan for the new crosswalk across County Road 65 in front of Center for the Arts had been to include signalized flashing lights. But new guidelines by Jefferson County say they need to gather statistics on usage before installing signals such as these.

To justify signals, a camera has been installed to document usage. The more the crosswalk is used, the greater the likelihood of having flashing lights installed.