

The Greensboro Children's Museum. Me and the Kids

By Jonathan Smith

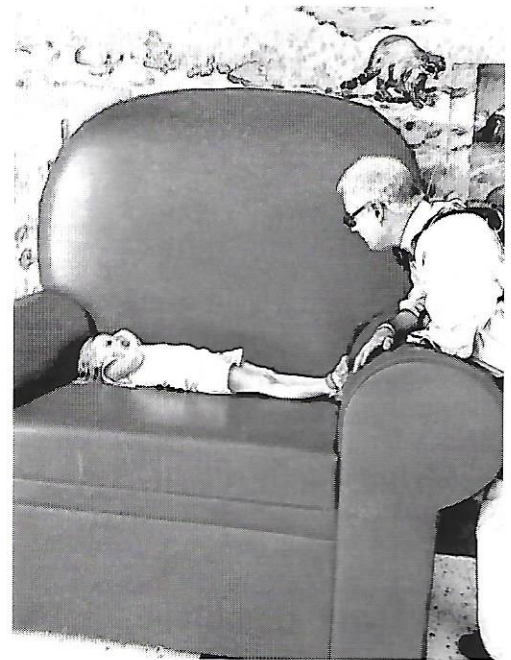
When Anne and I stumbled into the **Greensboro Children's Museum (GCM)** six years ago we did cartwheels. Five grandchildren, between ages one and eight, make it their priority that we stay tuned in to how young people think, grow and develop. When our kids were little, we thought we did things right, but life moved so fast, in those kid raising years, that wondering about our kids' growth and development wasn't an option. Besides, by the time GCM opened its doors, our kids were headed to college. Fast forward a few years later, as grandparents, we get to see "eureka" moments first-hand. Kids, their families and their teachers step into the hands-on play space that encourages imagination, role play, pick up and touch interaction with actionable, relevant exhibits, and even an outside Edible Schoolyard, filled with living, breathing plants, rabbits and chickens. Long before each grandchild of ours had vocabulary, squeals of joy from the child-seated passenger let us know we reached our destination.

So when the GCM asked me to serve on its board three years ago I said yes. Imagine my joy, when at my board orientation, I discovered I'd joined forces with twenty three passionate board persons and eighteen focused, dedicated staff members, each of whom lives and breathes GCM's mission and vision. I also discovered I'd be following in the footsteps of two other Sunset Hills residents, Beth Mayer and Joe Brower, who serve the GCM.

With only 2,000 days between when a baby is born and when that child starts kindergarten, we know that the experiences, for good or for bad, during these 2,000 days have a lasting impact on later learning, health and success. After serving my first year, I was pleased to learn that the GCM had welcomed 116,000 visitors through its door and extended its reach to include YWCA Teen Moms, Outreach and the Glenwood after-school program. My personal goal for GCM is that every child within a 30 minute drive of the GCM has an opportunity to experience it twice each year through each child's 2nd grade. This might not happen in my lifetime, but you can bet it will by the time all these GCM "seeds" start sprouting in the lives of our grandchildren. Visit us at 220 N. Church Street or on the web at www.gcmuseum.com; follow us on Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube, Pinterest, and The Edible Schoolyard blog. Join us for the community events such as the incrEDIBLE plant sales.

New Sunset Hills Neighborhood Association members

Sarah Davis & Ryan Blankenship	Joseph & Katharine Brower
Julie Brown	Emma Keys
Rick & Carol Diehl	Beth Hoadley & Aldo Hubert
Tom Fitzgerald	Robert & Mary Jacke
Neil & Margaret Huffman	Irene Jones
Kimber Johnson	David & Laurie Joslin
Paul & Janet Kershaw	Christopher & Michele Reisdorf
Randal & Kimberly Romie	Thomas & Wendy Sibley
Margaret Schmidt	Parker & Meredith Warren
Patrick & Eileen Shannon	Sidonna Black
Mark & Elizabeth Stauffer	Rachel Richardson & David Roderick
Carter & Monica Clendenin	Leannette Aversa
Eric & Greysosn Kuhn	Jim & Helen Farson
Carolyn Lasek	Kristy Jackson & Bobby Kelly
Rick Stanford	Mad Hatter
Mac & Linda Stroupe	Mosquito Authority
Craig & Lyn Taylor	Henry & Donna Robinson
Bryan & Billie Toney	B.L. & Audrey Baldwin
William & Jennifer Weathersby	Lee & Betsy Brodeur
Chris Winfree	Jane Dempsey
Conrad & Diane Alexander	Michael Kendro



J. Smith and granddaughter in the lobby of the Greensboro Children's Museum.