



Skywalk Memorial Foundation, Inc.
2600 Grand Blvd., Suite 1100
Kansas City, MO 64108

News Conference:

Thursday July 16, 4pm
Hospital Hill Park
22nd & Gillham
See parking info below

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SKYWALK MEMORIAL FOUNDATION MARKS 28TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE HYATT REGENCY WALKWAYS COLLAPSE

Update on conceptual drawings and donations will be announced during news conference

Kansas City, MO (**July 16, 2009**)-The Skywalk Memorial Foundation, Inc. invites you as we remember and reflect on the 28th anniversary of the collapse of the walkways at the Hyatt Regency Hotel. We will mark the anniversary **one day early this year** at 4:00 p.m. on July 16 to accommodate people who are traveling to Kansas City to attend. The ceremony will take place at the location where the memorial will be built.

Background

On July 17, 1981, the walkways collapsed during a tea dance at the Hyatt Regency Hotel. It remains the deadliest negligently caused structural collapse in U.S. history, killing 114 people and injuring 216 more. Countless lives were changed forever by the unprecedented disaster.

After three years of efforts by the Skywalk Memorial Foundation, on May 26, 2009, The Kansas City, Missouri Parks and Recreation Commission gave approval for a memorial to be built at Hospital Hill, 22nd & Gillham. The Skywalk Memorial Foundation, in conjunction with many others, is moving forward with plans to fund and build the permanent memorial.

Ceremony Agenda

“We have gathered a distinguished group of individuals to mark this historic day in Kansas City, the 28th anniversary of the collapse,” said Skywalk Memorial Foundation President Frank Freeman. “We have made so many strides toward the goal of building a memorial and we truly believe it will be a reality in Kansas City in the very near future.”

Speakers at the news conference will include members of the Skywalk Memorial Foundation and:

- Reverend Karla Woodward- (Her mother died in the collapse)
- City Councilwoman Jan Marcason-4th District
- Kansas City, Missouri Parks and Recreation Commission President John Fierro
- Lorie Bowman, AIA, Bowman Bowman & Novick Architects
- Sol Koenigsberg, a survivor who was critically injured that night. An AP photographer won an award for a photo that was carried worldwide of Koenigsberg and his wife holding hands while both lying on stretchers.

Memorial Concept

The Skywalk Memorial will be located in Hospital Hill park, the remainder of which is being developed and improved by Children's Mercy Hospital. Based on initial concepts, visitors to the Skywalk Memorial will find a 36 foot plaza area illuminated by pinpoints of light. The pinpoints of lights will symbolize the victims, rescuers and the ripple effect the tragedy has had on the community. The memorial will include a seating area surrounded by appropriate landscaping features.

The Skywalk Memorial Foundation has hired Bowman Bowman Novick, a well-known Kansas City area architectural firm, with experience in designing some of Kansas City's best known landmarks. They include the Loose Park Fountain, KC Zoo Gardens Entrance, Fairway City Park and the landscape architecture for the Stowers Institute.

The Skywalk Memorial Foundation's goal is singular and simple: to plan, design and build a one-of-a kind memorial that will respectfully pay tribute to the victims and emergency workers including medical, police, firefighters, public servants and others who responded to the disaster. We plan to do so in a professional and caring manner that permanently respects and honors the memories of all affected by this tragic event.

About the Skywalk Memorial Foundation:

The Skywalk Memorial Foundation is a non-profit corporation consisting of a board of directors and numerous others who have volunteered their time and resources to this worthy and much needed cause. The current five board members were all personally affected by the skywalk tragedy. John Sullivan and Brent Wright lost their mothers; Frank Freeman was injured and lost his significant other; David Chavez lost his aunt, a member of the all female mariachi band there to perform; and Vincent Ortega was the first police officer who responded that fateful evening.

For information on how to get involved, to contact us, or to share your thoughts on this important project, please go to the Skywalk Memorial Foundation's website at:

www.skywalkmemorial.org

You may also e-mail us at info@skywalkmemorial.org or leave a voice message at (877) 527-5992 (toll free).

The local respected law firm of Polsinelli Shughart PC is serving as the Foundation's local legal counsel.

Parking for the news conference is available along the south side of 22nd Street, and the north side of 23rd Street.