

# The ROCKSPIRIAN

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## SUSTAINABLE HEALTHY LIFESTYLES

As a “*Living Laboratory for Sustainable Lifestyles*”, Rockspire is committed to promoting a healthy lifestyle, an important part in supporting a sustainable lifestyle. For example, at our monthly forums, we feature speakers with thought-provoking insights into a healthy lifestyle.

[OzarkLifestyleMedicine.org](http://OzarkLifestyleMedicine.org)



[KarenGros.com](http://KarenGros.com)

Dr. Cynthia Morgan and Karen Gros enlightened us at the February Rockspire Forum on the benefits of a plant-based diet<sup>1</sup> with their talk, “*Lifestyle Medicine and the Power of Plant-Based Eating*”.

Notable insights from their discussion:

1. Lifestyle Medicine is the use of a whole food<sup>2</sup>, plant-predominant dietary lifestyle, regular physical activity, restorative sleep, stress management, avoidance of risky substances, and positive social connection as a primary therapeutic modality for treatment and reversal of chronic disease.
2. Diet is the leading cause of chronic disease and disability.
3. The most important dietary risks in the United States are diets low in fruits, low in nuts and seeds, high in sodium, high in processed meats, low in vegetables, and high in trans fats. These risks are the leading cause of chronic disease, not other common culprits.

And in a 2022 webinar sponsored by the University of Texas at Dallas - Center for Brain Health, Dr. Deepak Chopra cited the advances in research of 5 basic tenets to improving our overall well-being:

1. Brain health benefits of good sleep habits.
2. Brain health benefits of meditation in reducing stress and countering inflammation that leads to brain disease.
3. The relationship between brain health and the microbiome in the gut; related to that is the importance of moving toward a plant-based diet discussed at the February Rockspire Forum.
4. The mental and physical benefits of regular moderate exercise.
5. Epigenetics and the possible behavioral and environmental choices we make that can alter our DNA for good or bad outcomes.

“*We have long known what behaviors promote health and prevent disease. Lifestyle medicine embodies this idea of true ‘health’ care. Rather than pills and procedures, the focus is on the lifestyle choices we make every day that ultimately bring us closer to, or further from, the health and happiness we all deserve.*” Dr. Johnathan Bonnet

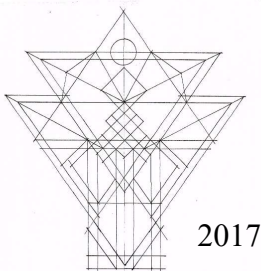
1. **Plant-based** describes food that comes from plants, and does not include ingredients originating from animals, such as meat, chicken, fish, dairy products, or eggs.
2. **Whole food** describes whole, unrefined, minimally- processed foods without extracted ingredients, such as sugar, oil or salt that could compromise the body’s endothelium (the inner lining of the arteries).



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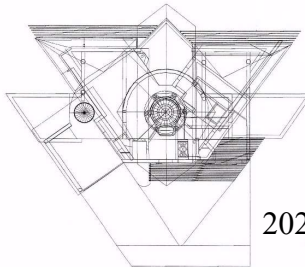
**E**VOLVING DESIGN – architects often change the design of homes as cost, materials, and client preferences change during planning and construction. Rockspire’s homes are no exception. In addition to the usual factors dictating changes to the original design are improvements in environmental technologies that help mitigate unhealthy environmental conditions. Case in point is a home design that has evolved with the development of new aids in fresh air intake, filtration, and harmful element control. This evolution in technology permits home design to make health a continual, sustainable process in the design and maintenance of homes.

Evolution of a design  
Myers’ Residence now under construction at Rockspire



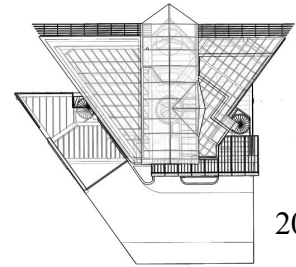
2017

Conceptual Design



2020

Design Development



2023

Final Design

We inhale, ingest, and encounter many toxic chemicals in our daily lives, even inside the refuge of our homes. But by making informed decisions about home building materials and operations, we can reduce our exposure to toxic chemicals and avoid the negative impacts.

In our home environment, studies have shown that indoor dust can contain these hazards in startling concentrations. To limit harmful dust exposure, use a vacuum with a HEPA filter and change it frequently. Also, installing a HEPA filtration system at Rockspire’s community building in 2020 helped us continue to have small events indoors during the pandemic. Concrete floor surfaces are regularly vacuumed and wet-mopped to reduce dust/germ/pollen accumulation.

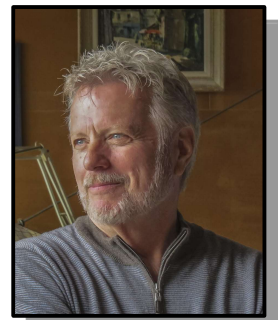
Studies have also shown that forced-air HVAC system’s ductwork in our homes can be hazardous to a healthy living environment unless steps are taken to clean ductwork and change air filters regularly. Rockspire homes now under construction are installing ductless mini-split systems with the introduction of fresh air, HEPA filtration, and dehumidification systems.

Also important, a healthy living environment must include spending as much time as possible in natural outdoor settings. We’re lucky at Rockspire to have the beautiful Ozarks of Northwest Arkansas right in our backyard. Communing with nature, whether in the woods, the gardens, or the rivers and lakes and eating the natural plant-based foods found there will help us attain and sustain a sustainable, healthy lifestyle.



Mike Johnson

**R**OCKSPIRE’S FOUNDERS, Mike Johnson and George Myers are celebrating 50 years of friendship and business associations. It all started when both were employed at a Dallas architecture firm in 1974. With adjoining drafting stations, they created a bond centered around architecture and other business interests. Their first foray into a business partnership began in 1976 with *Touring Carriages, LTD of Dallas* and in 1997, after many other collaborations, both domestic and international, they decided to create the “Living Laboratory for Sustainable Lifestyles” called **Rockspire**.



George Myers

