

COMMUNITY NEWS

News & Events for the City of Vestavia Hills • May 2022

A joint publication of the City of Vestavia Hills, Vestavia Hills City Schools & Vestavia Hills Chamber of Commerce



Jeff Downes,
City Manager
City of
Vestavia Hills

CITY MANAGER'S REPORT

In 2002, the Knight Foundation, in collaboration with the Gallup organization, conducted a survey known as the “Soul of the Community Survey.” One of the survey goals was to objectively determine why people live where they live and the ramifications of those decisions. They made several observations after reviewing the data:

- Most “attached” communities have higher GDP growth
- When cities make themselves easier to connect with emotionally, they invite the human heart to become a driver of community, economic and social development
- However, it is rare to find that special love

So, if “attached” communities receive the greatest public dividends and it is hard to find a large number of such communities, what can be learned from communities that have greater emotional connection? It was concluded that the greatest drivers for these communities were a sense of openness, greater social offerings and superior aesthetics. This is not surprising when considering our own personal relationships. A good relationship often starts out with a recognition of the other’s beauty, followed by a courtship where shared social activities are frequent, and there is an ultimate acceptance of the other regardless of human differences. The end result is “love.” Following suit, the “attachment and love” for a community is not driven by functional factors but are enhanced by the aforementioned openness, social offerings and aesthetics. A high achieving city will strive to provide all three of these drivers IN ADDITION TO the basic functional building blocks of the city experience.

If you subscribe to this theory as I do, the question for me, as City Manager, then becomes how does the City partner with community stakeholders to make headway in creating this emotional connection. While not perfect in any way, the collective Vestavia Hills community has made frequent, solid movement in this direction in the recent months. As such, I would like to highlight several very notable actions that I shared when I spoke at last month’s Chamber of Commerce luncheon.

Private leadership, from the eastern to the western end of the City, has committed to creating opportunity for social offerings that foster the emotional connection. This can be seen at the Vestavia City Center where a newly created gathering area serves as a magnet for our residents to share time together. This can be seen in the recently approved “Great Lawn” that is planned for The Bray development in Liberty Park. Last but not least, the frequent Cahaba Heights merchant-led celebrations are becoming a monthly expectation. From the public perspective, the addition of public parks and green space at Wald Park, along with the planned enhancements at Altadena Valley Park, have become the envy of many communities. View these actions as metaphorical love notes to those that engage with our city. They are just a few examples of the means to creating a love affair with your city. My commitment is to find many different ways to act on this both directly and indirectly. I hope you, our resident, can also find ways to further the emotional connectivity with your city. It can start as simply as sharing a wonderful Vestavia Hills experience with someone that might not be aware of what we have to offer. I hope the concept of connecting with your city speaks to you in a powerful way. And I hope you enjoy your spring and summer in Vestavia Hills!

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

The events and dates below are subject to change. Please refer to the calendar on the City of Vestavia Hills website for the most up-to-date event information.

- 1 Splash Pad Opens**, Sicard Hollow Athletic Complex, 9 a.m.
- 5 Design Review Board**, Executive Conference Room, 6 p.m.
- 8 Mother’s Day**
- 9 Senior Citizens Luncheon**, Dogwood Room, 11:30 a.m.
- 9 City Council Meeting**, Council Chamber, 6 p.m.
- 10 Chamber Luncheon**, Vestavia Country Club, 11:30 a.m.
- 12 Planning and Zoning Commission**, Council Chamber, 6 p.m.
- 14 Hazardous Waste Collection Day**, Sicard Hollow Athletic Complex, 8am-noon
- 16 Council Work Session**, Council Chamber, 5 p.m.
- 17 Parks and Recreation Board**, Executive Conference Room, 7 a.m.
- 19 Board of Zoning Adjustment**, Council Chamber, 6 p.m.
- 20 Concert Series: Ashten Akins**, Wald Park Grand Lawn, 8 p.m.
- 21 Cahaba Heights 20th Anniversary Celebration**, Heights Village, 6 p.m.
- 23 City Council Meeting**, Council Chamber, 6 p.m.
- 28 Aquatic Complex Opens**
- 30 Municipal Offices Closed** in observance of Memorial Day
Sanitation holiday; All routes will run on a one-day delay for the remainder of the week.



Ashley Curry,
Mayor
City of
Vestavia Hills

MAYOR'S MESSAGE

May is a month of remembrance in which we pay tribute to our veterans, our mothers and our peace officers.

The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs estimates that over one million veterans have died in combat from the time our nation was founded until our present day “War on Terror,” including the Afghanistan

War. On May 30, we will celebrate Memorial Day and pay tribute to all the military veterans that sacrificed their lives serving our nation. While Memorial Day and Veterans Day are both patriotic holidays honoring the military, there is a significant difference between: Memorial Day, which falls on the last Monday in May, honors the men and women who died while serving in the military. This solemn occasion is a time to reflect on these American patriots who made the ultimate sacrifice while protecting and defending the country they deeply loved. Veterans Day, observed every November 11, recognizes all who have served in the Armed Forces.

We should never forget the ultimate sacrifice that our service men and women have made preserving our way of life. Take a moment this month and remember the ultimate sacrifice that these veterans made in order for us to enjoy the freedoms that we have. Our freedom proves that they did not die in vain.

May is also a time for us to remember our mothers. Mother’s Day is a celebration honoring the mother of our families, as well as motherhood, maternal bonds and the influence of mothers in society.

Mother’s Day will be celebrated this year on Sunday, May 8. I have always liked the quote, author unknown, “Mothers hold their children’s hands for a short while but hold their hearts forever.” Please remember to recognize your mother on this special day. There was an old Coach Bear Bryant commercial for the telephone company wherein Coach Bryant said, “Be sure and call your mother, I sure wish I could call mine.” I can relate to that commercial and sure wish I could call my mother. Do something special for your mother this month.

We are truly blessed to live in one of the safest cities in Alabama, as well as the United States. For the third time in a row, our city has been designated as the safest city in Alabama for cities with populations over 25,000 citizens. Please join me in paying tribute to our law enforcement officers, both locally and throughout our nation. In 1962, President Kennedy proclaimed May 15 as National Peace Officers Memorial Day and the calendar week in which May 15 falls is delegated as National Police Week. During this week we pay tribute to those law enforcement officers who lost their lives in the line of duty for the safety and protection of others.

Last, but not least, we celebrate the graduation of our Vestavia Hills High School senior class on May 24. I always look forward to the opportunity to address the graduating seniors and challenge them to pursue their dreams while remembering to serve others along the way. We wish these students continued success as they begin a new chapter in each of their lives.



City of Vestavia Hills HAZARDOUS WASTE COLLECTION DAY

Saturday, May 14, 2022
8am-Noon
Sicard Hollow Athletic Complex

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35th ANNIVERSARY



**Todd Freeman, Ed.D.,
Superintendent**
Vestavia Hills
City Schools

SUPERINTENDENT'S MESSAGE

*School Days, school days, dear old Golden Rule days
Readin' and 'ritin' and 'rithmetic...*

Much about what students learn and do in school has changed since those lyrics were penned more than a century ago. And while the foundation of education is still letters, words and numbers, our students are more

engaged than ever in experiences that make literacy and numeracy come to life. Envision a chair seat as the product of learning supported by legs that include academics, arts, extracurricular activities and athletics. Each of the legs plays an important role in establishing a sturdy foundation of knowledge and skills.

Throughout the school year, the Board of Education receives reports from various programs that support our mission. In our April meeting, we featured the arts. VHHS dance instructor, Mrs. Faith Lenhart, says, "An arts education is vital to the education of the whole child. Arts classes offer students the opportunity to individually and collaboratively problem-solve to create original works of art. The arts provide alternative opportunities to reward students who learn differently. The time management and social skills that students learn in a visual or performing arts class will serve them throughout life."

VHCS believes and invests in the importance of the fine arts. Because of the unparalleled support of our community, we employ 30 arts teachers across the system to provide these wonderful experiences for students. All students in grades K-5 take music and art classes. Middle school students can experience learning through art, band and choir classes. When they become freshmen, dance and theatre are added to their options. More than half of students in grades 6-12 participate in an arts program or class. In the Class of 2022, 102 seniors earned the Arts Achievement Seal.

This year, the tradition of excellence in the arts continues. VHHS students have been named as state champions in theatre competitions; choral and band programs have received superior ratings in competitions; and our JV and Varsity Rebelettes were state champions and placed first and second, respectively, in national competition. Finally, the multiple performances from our students in grades K-12 this year have been wonderfully impressive.

Our arts staff continues to challenge the process of what we are doing to find ways to make it better. Take an opportunity to listen to *The Intentional Pursuit* podcast on our website to learn more about what they are doing. We have designed great ideas for the future that can elevate our program to a new pinnacle of success. I look forward to sharing more about this vision with you in the fall.



**VESTAVIA ATHLETICS IS IN THE
MIDDLE OF A FUNDRAISING
CAMPAIGN TO ENHANCE
ATHLETIC FACILITIES.
INCLUDING, FOOTBALL MEETING
SPACE AND BASKETBALL AND
VOLLEYBALL FLOOR
RENOVATIONS. WE WOULD LOVE
YOUR HELP IN REACHING OUR \$1
MILLION GOAL.**

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MYRA MILES**
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REBEL

#ALLTHINGSNEWIN22



**Karen Odle,
President**

Vestavia Hills
Chamber of Commerce

CHAMBER NEWS

This is a bittersweet moment – writing my last *Community News* article, as I will be retiring the end of May and concluding an almost 20-year career at the Vestavia Hills Chamber of Commerce. I have loved my job and have immensely enjoyed meeting so many people all over our City that I may not have met otherwise. As you read this letter,

I hope you will take time to reflect on how blessed we are to live in a city with such remarkable people, amazing businesses, an incredible school system, wonderful civic organizations, many great houses of worship and great leadership in all facets of our community. I pray that we don't take what we have for granted, that we see the best in our friends and neighbors, and we reflect often on the beauty of what is Vestavia Hills.

Our City didn't just 'happen.' It has taken many, many folks along the way to lay the path to make Vestavia Hills what it is today. We have grown in both population and land, but I would like to think that the founders and past leaders were here today, they would say "Well done! You have made us proud."

However, we can never rest on our successes and be satisfied with the status quo. If that were the case, we wouldn't have a nationally recognized school system with all of the academic successes, clubs and organizations that have made us so proud. We wouldn't have the many new developments and re-developments in the process. We wouldn't have grown to include Rocky Ridge, Liberty Park and Cahaba Heights, all of which make our city an infinitely better place for everyone.

So when you see the tagline "A Life Above," remember the challenge that was meant when this was adopted – we want to continue to grow, give back, strive to be better friends, neighbors and citizens and always, always endeavor to be better today than you were yesterday. We must continue to make our community a better place for our children, a place that they will want to move back to and raise their family. We CAN do this and that is my challenge to each of you as well as myself, in all things be grateful and, as I have often reminded my children, remember who you are and try to leave everything you touch better than before. After all, we are blessed beyond what we any deserve.


Save the Date

40th Annual
**I LOVE
America
NIGHT**

June 23, 2022 ★ 6:00 pm ★ Wald Park

Featuring kids' activities, sponsor booths,
live music and FIREWORKS!

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Vestavia Hills Chamber of Commerce &
the City of Vestavia Hills



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SUMMER FUN IN VESTAVIA HILLS!

Seniors 55+

- Join us for **fun, fellowship and lunch** at New Merkel House in Cahaba Heights every Monday-Friday. Lunch is served daily at 11:45am.
- New Merkel House will also host a **Strawberry Day Celebration**, with a special presentation on stroke awareness, on Wednesday, May 4 at 12:30pm. Strawberries, of course, will be served!
- Our last **Senior Luncheon** before we take a summer hiatus will be on Monday, May 9, at 11:30am in the Dogwood Room at the Civic Center. For reservations, call Ms. Ruby at 205.822.8788. The Senior Luncheon programs will return in September and cost \$10. We can't wait to see you!
- **Lunch Bunch** will be on Thursday, May 19, and we will go to the Original Hamburger Heaven in Irondale. Yum! Meet at the Vestavia Hills Aquatic Complex at 10:45am.
- We've got you covered if you want to get out of the house and see the sites! Join us at a **Baron's Baseball Game** on Wednesday, May 18 at 11am. Transportation will be provided; meet at the Vestavia Hills Aquatic Complex at 10am and we will return at 3pm.

- We will hit the road on Wednesday, May 25 for a road trip to see **"The Marvelous Wonderettes"** at the Shakespeare Festival! The bus will leave the Civic Center at 9am and is scheduled to return at 6pm. Tickets are \$25 and reservations are required (call Melinda Burnett at 205.978.0153). Transportation is provided, but lunch is at your own discretion.

Summer Camps & the Aquatic Complex

Even though our sports programs are winding down, there is still much to do in Vestavia Hills. **The summer swim season at the Aquatic Complex opens Memorial Day Weekend!** For more information or to purchase your membership today, visit the new Parks and Recreation website at <https://vhparksandrec.com/aquatics-2/aquatic-complex-information>.

We have so many exciting summer camp options for you this summer in Vestavia Hills! There's something for everybody, from a robotics camp to a World Games-themed camp! Let's start making memories that will last a lifetime! For more information or to register, visit <https://vhparksandrec.com/programs-camps>!

We work tirelessly to help kids get well because Hugh has a long list of stuff he wants to do.

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MAY

events

Children (Birth-Gr. 1) | Tweens (Gr. 2-6) | Teens (Gr. 6-12) | Adults (Ages 18+)
 Tech (Ages 18+) | Makerspace (All ages, unless noted)



- 2 **National Wildflower Week: Bloomin' Bags Giveaway**
- 3 **Toddler-a-Go-Go**, 9:30am, Community Room
Toddler-a-Go-Go, 10:30am, Community Room
Teardown Tuesday, 4:30pm, Makerspace
- 4 **Story Friends**, 10:30am, Children's Program Room
Handmade with Holly: Coaster Creations, 11am, Community Room
Picking Up STEAM: Make Your Own Planets, 3:30pm, Children's Program Room
Advanced Excel: Pivot Tables & Dashboards, 4pm, Electronic Classroom
Writing Group, 4pm, Historical Room
- 5 **Open Maker Lab**, 2-6pm, Makerspace
Chess Club, 4:30pm, Historical Room
Read & Feed Book Group: The Reading List, 6pm, Historical Room
- 6 **Open Gaming**, 4pm, Community Room
- 7 **Ms. Courtney's Library Stop!**, 10:30am, Community Room
Dungeons & Dragons: The Journey Continues, 10am, Historical Room
- 8 **Mother's Day**
- 9 **Intro to 3D Printing**, 4:30pm, Makerspace
Basic Microsoft Excel, 5pm, Electronic Classroom
"Downton Abbey" Movie & Bingo, 6pm, Community Room
- 10 **Toddler-a-Go-Go**, 9:30am, Community Room
Toddler-a-Go-Go, 10:30am, Community Room
- 11 **Story Friends**, 10:30am, Children's Program Room
Picking Up STEAM: Major Constellations, 3:30pm, Children's Program Room
Art Group, 4pm, Treehouse
- 12 **Open Maker Lab**, 2-6pm, Makerspace
- 13 **Open Gaming**, 4pm, Community Room
Craft*Lab: Book Page Jewelry, 7pm, Community Room
- 17 **Toddler-a-Go-Go**, 9:30am, Community Room
Toddler-a-Go-Go, 10:30am, Community Room
- 18 **Story Friends**, 10:30am, Children's Program Room
Picking Up STEAM: Lego Challenge, 3:30pm, Children's Program Room
Among Us, 4pm, Discord

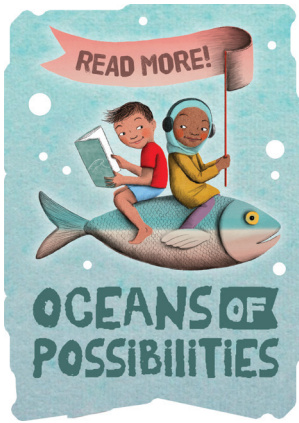
- 19 **Basic Microsoft Word**, 10:30am, Electronic Classroom
Open Maker Lab, 2-6pm, Makerspace
"Stranger Things" Trivia Tournament, 6pm, Community Room
- 20 **Open Gaming**, 4pm, Community Room
- 23 **Extended Library Hours** til 9pm & **Exam Study Breaks**, 3,5 & 7pm, Historical Room
- 24 **Extended Library Hours** til 9pm & **Exam Study Breaks**, 3,5 & 7pm, Historical Room
Q&A: Facebook, 4pm, Electronic Classroom
3D Modeling with Tinkercad, 4:30pm, Makerspace
- 26 **Open Maker Lab**, 2-6pm, Makerspace
- 27 **Mario Kart 8 Tournament**, 4pm, Community Room
- 28 **Summer Reading Kickoff: Oceans of Possibilities**, 11am, Wald Park
- 29 & 30 **Memorial Day**, Library Closed
- 31 **Anime Club**, 4pm, Historical Room



PICTURE
Yourselfie
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#pictureyourselfieVH

Share your fun on social!
 Don't forget to tag us
 in your event pics!
#pictureyourselfieVH





AN OCEAN OF POSSIBILITIES AT THE LIBRARY

Picture yourself exploring an ocean of possibilities and indulge your love of reading at the Library in the Forest this summer! The library will be teeming with fun, memorable activities, and experiences for the whole family. Don't forget to snap a photo and tag us on social media using #pictureyourselfieVH. We can't wait to see you loving your library this summer!

Summer starts with a bang, beginning Memorial Day weekend when we kick off our summer reading extravaganza with the Children's Department at Wald Park! There will be a balloon artist, prizes, goody bags, Kona Ice, and a favorite returning performer, Roger Day! It's an exciting start to the best summer ever!

During June and July, we will have special programs planned for tweens on Tuesday afternoons with performances by the Science Lady of Dynamic Education Adventures, who will bring her liquid lab, Joe Wos, a cartoonist that will teach you how to draw your own

zany characters, and so many more. On Thursdays, we host programs geared toward the littles in your life, with engaging storytimes and silly music for dancing! Every Thursday, join us at the splash pad at Sicard Hollow Athletic Complex in Liberty Park to enjoy storytimes.

We didn't forget about the teens! Every Tuesday night, the Teen Department has something cool planned, from the return of Pancake Painting to a Harry Potter-themed program and an exciting painting class! Of course, we can't forget the World Games-themed Teen Kick-Off, where you will test your skills against other teens to see if you can take home the Gold!

Our adult patrons can shake off the pandemic isolation and join us to mix, mingle, party and read all summer long! Darla, our Zentangle presenter, will share an art series guiding participants in the art of bookmaking. There will also be fitness programming, a plethora of crafting opportunities, bingo and another "Cozy Night In." The Adult Department will also have weekly prize drawings for those who participate in Adult Summer Reading!

Registration opens May 27 at <https://vestavialibrary.readsquared.com>. Dive in and let the Vestavia Hills Library in the Forest be your guide to a fantastic summer!



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