# COMMUNITYNEWS

News & Events for the City of Vestavia Hills • June/July 2019

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

# COMMUNITY CALENDAR

June 2019

- **6** Design Review Board Executive Conference Room, 6 p.m.
- 10 City Council Meeting Council Chamber, 6 p.m.
- 11 Chamber Luncheon Vestavia Country Club, 11:30 a.m.
- 13 Planning & Zoning Commission Council Chamber, 6 p.m.
- 17 Council Work Session Executive Conference Room, 5 p.m.
- **20** Board of Zoning Adjustment Council Chamber, 6 p.m.
- **24** City Council Meeting Council Chamber, 6 p.m.
- **26** Library Board Meeting Library in the Forest, 4 p.m.
- 27 I Love America Night Vestavia Hills High School, 6 p.m.

#### July 2019

- 4 Municipal Offices Closed in observance of Independence Day Trash will be picked up the following day.
- 8 City Council Meeting Council Chamber, 6 p.m.
- 11 Planning & Zoning Commission Council Chamber, 6 p.m.
- 15 Council Work Session Executive Conference Room, 5 p.m.
- **16** Parks & Recreation Board Executive Conference Room, 7 a.m.
- 18 Board of Zoning Adjustment Council Chamber, 6 p.m.
- **22** City Council Meeting Council Chamber, 6 p.m.
- 24 Library Board of Trustees Library in the Forest, 4 p.m.



# MAYOR'S MESSAGE

Ashley C. Curry, Vestavia Hills Mayor

How many of you have ever remodeled a house? Do you remember seeing the old

fixtures, walls or flooring being torn out and wondering what the new remodeled house will look like? At the end of the process, I suspect you were relieved to have it completed so that you could start living in the space again.

Well "remodeling" is exactly what the City is doing through our Infrastructure and Community Spaces Plan – remodeling of our parks, making improvements to some of our infrastructure and remodeling the community building adjacent to City Hall.

If you drive by Wald Park on Highway 31, you can see the new park taking shape. There are also renderings of the design plans available on the City website at https://vhal.org/community/city-projects/#community-spaces. If you visit the "Activity Updates" section, you can view the presentation City Manager Jeff Downes made at the March 12, 2019 Chamber of Commerce luncheon. We will continue to share updates as projects progress, so be sure to check this web page often.

The "I Love America" event will be held on the evening of June 27 at Vestavia Hills High School. (Please note that the location has changed due to the construction at Wald Park.) Come join us as we celebrate the founding of our country, as well as the 200th anniversary of our state.

The Mayor's Prayer Breakfast was held on April 23. Many of the attendees have told me that this was one of the best prayer breakfasts that they have attended. Micah McElveen, CEO of Vapor Ministries, was the guest speaker. His presentation was both inspirational and motivational as it reminded us that our lives are just a "vapor" (Psalms 39). We never know how much time we have; hence we need to do all the good we can while we can. I invite you to read his incredible story at our local Vapor Thrift Store.

In August of 1971, VHHS football coaches Thomas Harold Ward, Robert Cooper Ray and Phillip M. Puccio were killed in an automobile accident. Every year, the VHHS Athletic Department selects deserving athletes to receive

- Mayor's Message continued on page 2



# **CITY MANAGER'S REPORT**

Jeff Downes, Vestavia Hills City Manager

As I write this month's report, I am attending the Alabama League of Municipalities Annual

Conference. It leads me to reflect on the importance of local government in the lives of those in our community as well as the entire state of Alabama. Local government is the government closest to the people and, as such, people can experience the positives and negatives of governmental activity most acutely at the local level. Speaking with many elected officials and other public servants at the conference, it is

very clear that these officials work hard to put themselves in a position to make the solid decisions in the best interests of their community. In most cases, you will find local government making their communities proud.

In light of these thoughts, I want to take a look at how our local government affects our lives during a routine day in the life of a Vestavia Hills resident. Let's start as fictional resident Joe awakens to a cup of coffee one Friday morning in May. As Joe turns on the morning news,

- Manager's Report continued on page 2

# **BOARD OF EDUCATION**



FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT

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

#### On Mission: Learning Without Limits

Vestavia Hills City Schools has completed another exciting chapter in its rich tradition. The aspiration for high performance has been evident from the birth of our school system in 1970 and continues today. While revising the goals in our strategic plan this spring, we reflected on the defining moments of our system that were integral to its success. A look back at the history of our school system is to see one that grew through many changes and maintained its stellar reputation.

Two of those defining moments involved the annexations of one historic and another burgeoning community. Today, Vestavia Hills traverses from the Sybil Temple, through Cahaba Heights, and to the farthest reaches of Liberty Park. As unique as each part of our city is, there is something special that unites us.

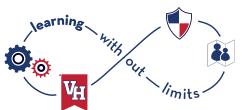
For the past year, our central office leadership team has been studying organizations that are perpetually high performers in their respective fields. Each has its own distinct strategy based on what their customers want. All of them, however, share the common ingredient of having a vibrant and healthy culture. Employees love to be a part of this type of organization, and their customers know it.

The confluence of strategy and culture is the recipe for long-term success in any organization. Management guru Peter Drucker distinguished between the two, however, when he said, "Culture eats strategy for breakfast." He recognized that both were essential to success, but the results of a good strategy are short-lived if the culture is unhealthy.

After having spent a full year as superintendent in this wonderful system, it is obvious to me that the binding agent in our community is the culture of excellence in each of our schools. No matter which classroom or school I visit, the pleasing aroma of this culture is unmistakable. I have experienced it by observing the commitment of our employees and have seen it through the unyielding dedication of parents and the community.

Ours is a culture that seeks to provide every child we serve the opportunity to learn without limits. It is a culture that will not give up until this mission is achieved. And it is a culture that embraces

a rich tradition and the desire to reach even greater heights. That is something we can all celebrate together!



# Mayor's Message continued from page 1

an award in their honor. I am proud to have attended and participated in this year's VHHS Awards Day on April 29. I find it fitting that Coach Buddy Anderson presents these awards, as he represents the character and leadership attributes that these three coaches instilled in our student athletes. Thank you, Coach Anderson. Congratulations to this year's award recipients and to the entire VHHS graduating class. I am always amazed with the quality of our students and both the academic and athletic success that they achieve.

It has come to my attention that the frequency of drivers illegally parking in spaces designated for handicapped parking has increased. We have always enforced these parking violations, but it appears that we will have to increase enforcement in order to curb this trend. Being "good citizens" improves the quality of life that we enjoy in Vestavia Hills. Let's all be good citizens by being mindful and not parking in spaces designated for handicapped parking.

I hope you all have a safe and enjoyable summer.

# Manager's Message continued from page 1

the heroic efforts of the Vestavia Hills Fire Department are noted by the newscaster regarding a house fire in Cahaba Heights. A bad situation was made better as a family persevered in the face of tragedy with the assistance of local government. Shortly thereafter, the squeaky brakes of a big truck can be heard as the morning trash is emptied by the City's sanitation contractor. This is a sign that Joe is late getting his daughter to school. They quickly get to the carpool line where a City school resource officer waives them safely to the front of the school for drop off. Seeing the police officer, it reminds Joe of the newspaper article heralding the efforts of the VHPD in the capture of an out-of-state criminal enterprise that was breaking and entering cars at the gym.

As Joe enters the highway, he hits a bump in the road. "Darn pot hole," he says. When he gets to work, he logs into the City Action Center to request that the City repair the pot hole. His phone rings. It is his wife who reminds him of the playoff game at SHAC and the book that is on hold for her at the Library in the Forest. Both entities being quality of life initiatives operated by local government.

In the course of the first two hours of Joe's day, he is inundated with the services of local government. This is common in many people's lives. We strive for these interactions to be positive. When we fall short, we work hard as local government officials to recover and do better the next time. I hope you can respect and feel this desire to execute in the highest possible manner by our local government public servants and those all throughout the state. There is a sincere desire to get it right and make you proud to be served by these individuals. Local government IS the government that is closest to you. As the leader of the City staff, I take that responsibility very seriously. If I can ever be of direct assistance to you, please reach out to me. I want your experience to be positive.

# **HOSTING A BLOCK PARTY OR COMMUNITY EVENT?**

Thinking about organizing a community event? Let the City staff help make your event welcoming and safe. Start by contacting the City Manager's office or by logging into the Vestavia Hills Action Center and clicking on the "Block Parties and Community Events" request type. This will initiate a review by various City departments, including Police, Fire, Public Services and others as needed. The City may be able to provide barricades and cones, as well as adding your event to the community calendar. Our experienced staff can also make recommendations and help facilitate approvals for temporary sign permits, food truck permits, etc. There is no cost to get a block party/community event waiver.

Be sure to allow enough time to properly prepare for your event. If you anticipate spiffing up your property to prepare for guests, allow two weeks for waste collection to pick up debris, as multiple trips may be needed. If your event is situated where there is an HOA or if a commercial property is affected, allow enough time for those parties to respond to your requests. If you will need to block an intersection, communicate that at least a week ahead so that our Police and Fire departments can advise and plan alternate routes. If you want to have food trucks or other vendors, provide the information to both the City and the vendors a couple of weeks in advance so that vendors

can obtain a mobile food vendor permit and inspection (both free) if needed.

Although the noise ordinance allows for activities between 7 a.m. and 10 p.m., it does not allow for noise at nuisance levels that reach certain distances from the event location. (See Ordinance 2310.) A waiver is required for loud



activity outside of the permitted hours but please be considerate of neighbors, regardless of having a waiver. Roads may not be blocked by vehicles or other objects that would be difficult to move in case of emergency. If you have requested permission to borrow space in the parking lot of a business, church or school, please provide the City with documentation that permission has been obtained. This can be as informal as an email with contact information.

Community is a wonderful thing, especially when there is much to celebrate. We at the City look forward to assisting you to have a great event!



## **CLEANED YOUR DRYER VENT LATELY?**

When is the last time your dryer vent was cleaned? Between 2010 and 2014 the Vestavia Hills Fire Department, along with fire departments across the United States, responded to nearly



16,000 home fires involving clothes dryers or washing machines. These fires resulted in 13 fatalities and over \$238 million in property damage. Dryer fires are often preventable and leading cause of clothes dryer fires is the failure to properly clean the appliance. VHFD and the National Fire Protection Association recommend:

- Turn the dryer off when you leave home or go to bed.
- Make sure the air exhaust vent pipe is not restricted and the vent flap will open when the dryer is running. Once per year, or more often if is taking a long time to dry clothes, clean lint out of the dryer or hire a contractor to do this.
- Be sure to clean the lint filter before drying a load of laundry.
- Never overload the dryer.



September 14, 2019 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. at City Hall

Items available to be recycled include electronics, paper and household hazardous waste.\* In addition, VHPD officers will be on-site to collect unneeded and/or expired medications for disposal. (Needles will NOT be accepted.)

\*Proof of Vestavia Hills residency required for hazardous waste disposal.

For additional information, including the full list of items being accepted for recycling and any applicable charges, visit https://vhal.org/event/helping-hands-in-the-hills-recycle-day/?instance\_id=4014.

Special thanks to: PROTEC Recycling, Republic Services and Gone for Good (a program of United Ability)





Vestavia Hills now has over 100 restaurants within our city limits! To celebrate this fact, the Vestavia Hills Chamber of Commerce is sponsoring Savor the Summer to encourage people to visit as many of these eateries as possible to enjoy what Vestavia Hills has to offer. And better yet, an opportunity to win some great prizes! The person who collects the most receipts (quantity, <u>not</u> dollar amount) will win a \$500 Visa Gift Card, 2nd place will win a \$300 Visa Gift Card, and 3rd place will win a \$200 Visa Gift Card.

Savor the Summer runs **May 23rd-August 5th**. You can use your own envelope to keep your receipts in, or pick one up from the Chamber Office, City Hall, Library or New Merkle House. Receipt envelopes must be turned in to the Chamber of Commerce Office (1975 Merryvale Rd.) **by 5:00 pm on August 5**. The winners will be announced at Back 2 School in the Hills on August 9.

The following rules will apply:

- · Open to both residents and non-residents
- · Limit 1 entry per household
- · Original or printed copy receipts are accepted
- 1 household receipt per restaurant per mealtime; multiple receipts from a restaurant is only allowed if it is for different dates or times (examples: one from a restaurant for breakfast and another from the same restaurant for dinner on the same day is accepted. One from a restaurant for lunch on Monday and one from the same restaurant for lunch on Tuesday is accepted. Paying separately for each member of the family for breakfast on the same visit to get multiple receipts is not accepted).



#### CHAMBER NEWS

Karen J. Odle, Vestavia Hills Chamber of Commerce President

#### Vestavia or Vestavia Hills? Is there a difference?

"Vestavia Hills" was the name developer Charles Byrd chose in 1947 for his dream community on

the crest of Shades Mountain. The name prompted instant recognition and nostalgia for bygone days of a temple home and gardens of great beauty and teaching. Former Birmingham mayor, George Ward, designed his home after the temple of the goddess Vesta and named it "Vestavia." Almost a decade after his death "Vestavia" was still empty and deteriorating, but the memories of his open hospitality to the public for two decades and the regaling of his Roman-themed parties and entertainment lived on.

Even developer Byrd was amazed at the rapid growth of his remote community, selling homes as fast as he could blast the surface rock and build. By 1950, residents recognized the need to incorporate and on November 8, 607 residents living in the area likewise adopted the name Vestavia Hills for their new town.

Early residents were zealous about the name of their town/city. One late comer in 1956 shared with the first class of Leadership Vestavia Hills that when referencing the city as "Vestavia" there was immediate correction that "the name of the city is Vestavia Hills; 'Vestavia' was a temple home."

Over two decades ago, when postal authorities converted to a new computerized system, they shortened the city's name to "Vestavia." Mayor Butch Zaragoza was seeking to avoid sales taxes belonging to Vestavia Hills going to the City of Birmingham when residents used Birmingham in lieu of Vestavia Hills as part of their address. He approached the post office about updating their records to not only show Vestavia Hills with the designated zip codes but to change their records to add "Hills" since it had been inadvertently omitted at their conversion in years past. At that time, the post office stated they were unable to make the change globally to their system. The explanation for dropping "Hills" was never fully determined but was attributed to a computer programming error that the post office was unable (per the post office) to correct!

Now for the good news – last year the post office joined the rest of the world in the 21st century and found they could update our name globally to the correct "legal" name for our city – VESTAVIA HILLS! Mail can now be processed as Vestavia Hills, AL! Now you know the "rest of the story"! Welcome back – you live in Vestavia Hills!!

Author's note: Information provided in conjunction with Mayor's Sara Wuska and Butch Zaragoza.



#### 2019 PROJECT REQUEST

The Vestavia Hills Chamber of Commerce and City of Vestavia Hills are planning the 5th annual Helping Hands in the Hills, a day of service in the city to assist our residents (senior citizens, disabled, etc.) who need a helping hand with minor projects around their home. This fun community service day will be Saturday, September 14, 2019. To submit a project for consideration, complete the form below and submit it to the Chamber of Commerce at 1975 Merryvale Road, Vestavia Hills, AL 35216. For more information or to volunteer, contact the Chamber of Commerce at 205.823.5011 or email dianez@vestaviahills.org.

# DEADLINE FOR PROJECT REQUEST SUBMISSION: AUGUST 14, 2019

Your name*	
Phone number*	E-mail*
Contact name* (Name of person in need, if different from above)	
Project address*	
Project description*	
Number of hours required for 6-8 people to complete?	
Homeowners must provide needed tools and supplies to ostraw/mulch. Requests for pressure washing projects will	complete project request, i.e. rakes, mower, trimmers, wheelbarrow, pine NOT be considered.
Special instructions	
*Required information	

# **PARKS & RECREATION NEWS**

#### **New Merkel Senior Center**

Monthly programs, events and guest speakers and games EVERYDAY!

**Monday-Friday:** Fun, fellowship & lunch (served at 11:45 a.m.)

Tuesday: Tai Chi & Table Games, 12:30 p.m.

Wednesday & Friday: Bingo & Table Games, 11:00 a.m.

Thursday: Tech Talk Thursdays

June 3: Closed

June 7: Presentation: Bingo by Brandi, Somerby Senior Living

June 11: Art with Tina Chaffin

June 14: Flag Day History

June 17: Honoring Our Fathers: Pictures & Memories

July 4 & 5: Closed

July 9: Art with Tina Chaffin

July 19: Guest Speaker: Elizabeth Milar, Bluffs at Greystone

**July 26:** Picnic Fun Indoors (National Picnic Month)

More information, including the **full calendar of Senior Programming activities**, can be found on the City website at https://vhal.org/community/senior-living/ or by contacting Melanie Perry at 205.967.5977.

#### **Pool Programming at the Community Building**

**Ai Chi.** 6-6:30 p.m. Tuesday & Thursday 8 sessions for \$35 or \$5 per session.

**Aqua Fitness.** 6:35-7:15 p.m. Tuesday & Thursday 8 sessions for \$35 or \$5 per session.

**Stroke Development.** 6:35-7:15 p.m. Monday & Wednesday 8 sessions for \$35 or \$5 per session.

**Swim Lessons, Group.** Group lessons are open to Level 2, 3 and 4 students only. A Level 2 student must be able to swim 5 or more yards, float and hold breath under water. Students must be able to touch in 3 ft. 6 in. of water with their head above water. A group is made up of a minimum of 4 students and no more than 5 per group. Vestavia residents, \$60; Non-residents, \$75. To register or for more information, text 205.910.9092.

Swim Lessons, Private & Semi Private – Saturday. 10-10:30 a.m. For more information, text 205.910.9092.

Swim Lessons, Private & Semi Private – Saturday. 10:30-11 a.m. For more information, text 205.910.9092



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# LIBRARY IN THE FOREST

## WHAT'S HAPPENING IN JUNE AT THE LIBRARY?

Full descriptions, including location and online registration, are available on the redesigned Library website at www.vestavialibrary.org.

# CHILDREN: 205.978.0158 (Preschool-Grade 5)

- Mon. Toddler A-Go-Go. 9:30 a.m. & 10:30 a.m.
- Tues. Book Babies. 10 a.m.
- Tues. P.J. Storytime. 6:30 p.m.
- Wed. Story Friends. 10:30 a.m.
- Fri. Movie Madness. 10:30 a.m.
  - 1 Ms. Casey's Marvelous Music & Movement. 10:30 a.m.
  - 4 Tween Time: Beach Party! 2 p.m.
  - 6 Magician Arthur Atsma. 10:30 a.m. Community Room & 3:30 p.m. Liberty Park Elementary.
- 11 Tween Time: Photographer Glenn Willis. 2 p.m.
- 13 Didgeridoo Down Under. 10:30 a.m. and 3:30 p.m.
- 15 Dad & Daughter Tea. 11 a.m.
- 18 Tween Time: U.S. Space & Rocket Center. 2 p.m.
- 20 Barry Mitchell's Smilemakers Show. 10:30 a.m. & 3:30 p.m.
- 22 Artist Michael Albert. 11 a.m.
- 25 Tween Time: U.S.S. Battleship. 2 p.m.
- 26 Tom Mason, The Blue Buccaneer. 3:30 p.m.
- 27 Skin & Bones Animal Show. 10:30 a.m. & 3:30 p.m.
- 29 Movie Marathon. 10 a.m.-5 p.m.

## **TEENS:** 205.978.3683 (Grades 6-12)

- 3 Coding Workshop: Google CS First. 2 p.m.
- 4 A Universe of Suspects. 5:30 p.m.
- 5 Skycraft. 4 p.m.
- 6 Track Lab. 2 p.m.
- 6 Chinese Language Workshop. 6 p.m.
- 7 Open Gaming. 4 p.m.
- 10 Coding Workshop: Google CS First. 2 p.m.
- 11 Chopped: Teen Edition. 5:30 p.m.
- 12 Writing Group. 4 p.m.
- 13 Track Lab. 2 p.m.
- 13 Chinese Language Workshop. 6 p.m.
- 14 Open Gaming. 4 p.m.
- 17 Coding Workshop: Google CS First. 2 p.m.
- 18 Acrylic Academy. 5:30 p.m.
- 19 Teen Art Group. 4 p.m.
- 20 Track Lab. 2 p.m.
- 20 Chinese Language Workshop. 6 p.m.
- 21 Open Gaming. 4 p.m.
- 24 Coding Workshop: Google CS First. 2 p.m.
- 25 Harry Potter: Wizards of Azkaban. 5:30 p.m.
- 26 Writing Group. 4 p.m.
- 27 Track Lab. 2 p.m.
- 27 Chinese Language Workshop. 6 p.m.
- 28 Super Smash Bros. Ultimate Tournament. 4 p.m.
- 29 Teenspeak: Public Speaking Workshop. 10 a.m.

#### **ADULTS:** 205.978.4678 (Ages 18+)

- 1 Trail Fit in the Forest Weekly Workout. 9:30 a.m. Library's Trail
- 3 Knit Night in the Forest. 6 p.m. Treehouse
- 5 Makerspace for Adults: Button Bracelets. 6:30 p.m.
- 6 Read & Feed Book Group at Taziki's Liberty Park. 6:30 p.m.
- 7 First Friday Fiber Arts. 10 a.m.
- 7 Upcycle City: Lichtenstein Pop Art. 7 p.m.
- 8 Trail Fit in the Forest Weekly Workout. 9:30 a.m. Library's Trail
- 10 Tai Chi: Beginners. 6 p.m.
- 11 Ms. Olivia's Evening Reads Book Group. 6 p.m.
- 12 ABCs of Medicare. 1 p.m.
- 12 BuJo! Bullet Journals for Beginners. 6:30 p.m.
- 13 Tai Chi. 2 p.m.
- 13 Rock & Roll Bingo: Totally Tubular 80s. 6 p.m.
- 15 Trail Fit in the Forest Weekly Workout. 9:30 a.m. Library's Trail
- 22 Trail Fit in the Forest Weekly Workout. 9:30 a.m. Library's Trail
- 24 Tai Chi: Beginners. 6 p.m.
- 27 Tai Chi. 2 p.m.
- 27 Rock & Roll Bingo: We Love the 90s. 6 p.m.
- 29 Trail Fit in the Forest Weekly Workout. 9:30 a.m. Library's Trail

#### **TECHNOLOGY: 205.978.4679**

- 4 LinkedIn. 10 a.m.
- 5 Basic Microsoft Word. 2 p.m.
- 11 Apple Mobile Devices with Connect It. 2 p.m.
- 13 Microsoft Publisher. 4 p.m.
- 17 Advanced Microsoft Excel: Pivot Tables & Dashboards. 6 p.m.



- 1 Open Maker Lab. 1 p.m.
- 3 Open Maker Lab. 10 a.m.
- 5 Beginning Zentangle. 12 p.m.
- 6 Intro to 3D Printing. 5:30 p.m.
- 10 Open Maker Lab. 10 a.m.
- 11 Tear-Down Tuesday. 4 p.m.
- 12 Renaissance Style Zentangle. 12 p.m.
- 14 Comics Cauldron w/ Chris Garrison. 4 p.m.
- 17 Open Maker Lab. 10 a.m.
- 19 Zentangle in the Round. 12 p.m.
- 20 **Vinyl Cutting 101.** 5:30 p.m.
- 22 Open Maker Lab. 1 p.m.
- 24 Open Maker Lab. 10 a.m.
- 25 FIY: Fix It Yourself. 4 p.m.
- 29 Open Maker Lab. 1 p.m.



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