

# COMMUNITY NEWS

News & Events for the City of Vestavia Hills • August 2018

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

## COMMUNITY CALENDAR

*August 2018*

- 2 Design Review Board  
Executive Conference Room, 6 p.m.
- 7 Crimes Against the Elderly  
Informational Seminar  
Vestavia Hills United Methodist  
Church, 1:30 p.m.
- 9 Vestavia Hills City Schools begin
- 9 Planning & Zoning Commission  
Council Chamber, 6 p.m.
- 10 Back 2 School in the Hills  
Cahaba Heights Elementary  
Fox Field, 6:30 p.m.
- 13 City Council Meeting  
Council Chamber, 6 p.m.
- 14 Chamber Luncheon  
Vestavia Country Club, 11:30 a.m.
- 16 Board of Zoning Adjustment  
Council Chamber, 6 p.m.
- 20 Council Work Session  
Executive Conference Room, 6 p.m.
- 21 6th Annual National Senior Citizen  
Day Celebration, Vestavia Hills City  
Hall, 4:00 p.m.
- 23 Friends of the Library  
Library in the Forest, 10 a.m.
- 27 City Council Meeting  
Council Chamber, 6 p.m.
- 28 Library Board Meeting  
Library in the Forest, 4 p.m.

### City Hall

1032 Montgomery Highway, 35216  
205.978.0100 • vhal.org

### Chamber of Commerce

1975 Merryvale Road, 35216  
205.823.5011 • vestavi hills.org

### Board of Education

1204 Montgomery Highway, 35216  
205.402.5100 • vestavia.k12.al.us

### Action Center

bit.ly/VHActionCenter



## MAYOR'S MESSAGE

*Ashley C. Curry, Vestavia Hills Mayor*

This August we are hosting several events that will be of interest to our senior citizens. First and foremost is our “Crimes against the Elderly” informational seminar. This free seminar will be held Tuesday, August 7 at 1:30 p.m. at Vestavia Hills United Methodist Church and will address financial crimes that are being perpetrated against our elderly citizens. Some of the more popular scams to be discussed are the “relative in distress” scam, the “romantic” website scams, the “IRS debt” scam, and scams to facilitate identity theft. Participating agencies include the Vestavia Hills Police Department, the Alabama Securities Commission, the Alabama Department of Senior Services and the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

Unfortunately, there have been numerous elderly victims within our own city and there are many incidents that are unreported because

the victims are embarrassed by having fallen for the scam. This threat to our seniors is growing as the number of seniors increases. “Baby Boomers” are now the largest segment of our population, both nationally and in Vestavia Hills. Targeting techniques not only include traditional telephone calls and mass mailings but online scams such as “phishing” and e-mail “spamming.”

This seminar will benefit our senior citizens but would also be of interest to any persons serving as caregivers for an elderly person. Early detection of such scams greatly reduces the risk of being victimized.

The next event for our senior citizens is “Senior Citizens Day.” This national event, established by President Ronald Reagan in 1988, is held each year on August 21 and was created as a day to support, honor and show appreciation to our seniors and to recognize

– Mayor’s Message continued on page 3



## CITY MANAGER'S REPORT

*Jeff Downes, Vestavia Hills City Manager*

Across the country and regionally, one will often hear the cry of city officials – “Please Shop Local!” This has been seen recently in our area most intently in cities extremely reliant upon sales taxes as their number one source of revenue. They are reinforcing the need to keep dollars circulating in one’s own home town so as to provide support for the local businesses and provide needed revenue to meet the governmental service needs of your own community. Vestavia Hills leaders will echo this refrain, but we are blessed to have had a recent history of sales tax collections that have shown a healthy increase to sustain current operations while supporting a modest growth in services. I am writing this month to provide insight on how Vestavia Hills has been able to avoid the financial challenges being experienced by other cities in the greater Birmingham market.

Sales taxes are generated by sales that take place in the corporate limits of a particular municipality. There are many details associated with a city realizing the revenue from a particular transaction. Furthermore, the advent of online purchases further strained the ability to collect sales taxes for some municipalities. This eroded many cities’ revenues and correspondingly the ability to accomplish the needs of its residents due to the sales tax reliance. Vestavia Hills has been somewhat immune from this recent erosion of revenues due to a slightly higher reliance on ad valorem taxes and less of a reliance on the sales tax. Our City’s recent sales tax increase was dedicated to our City’s capital needs and not operational needs. The ability to have incremental, sustainable growth in Vestavia Hills’ historical revenues is based upon the inelasticity of our ad valorem tax (lacking

– Manager’s Report continued on page 3

## BOARD OF EDUCATION



### FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT

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

August is a season of new beginnings in Vestavia Hills City Schools. Students start a new grade with different teachers. Some will start at a new school and make new friends. We welcome a number of new staff members to our team. In this exciting time, I want to wish our students and families the best for a wonderful year of learning and growing!

Our team has been working hard all summer preparing facilities, sharpening skills and finalizing staffing. We are ready to challenge and engage our students toward their most successful year yet. The planning has not been solely for this school year, however. We have been working on preparations for the 2019-20 school year that have included finalizing new elementary attendance zones and beginning construction projects for our newest facilities.

I want to express my appreciation to the many parents, community members, and other stakeholders of Vestavia Hills for the input you gave throughout the elementary attendance zoning process. It was a privilege to meet many of you and hear your passion and enthusiasm for the importance of an exceptional education for our future generations. The tradition of success in Vestavia Hills City Schools is in large part because of the strength of family and community engagement.

Many of you posed legitimate questions and concerns about the effects of the new attendance zone lines and grade configuration. Comments included questions on the comparability of staff, resources and academic programs at each school; traffic congestion and transportation to different schools; start and end times for schools; condition and readiness of facilities; plans for future growth; and long-range capital plans to address population increases. Throughout the course of the upcoming school year, our administrative team will be implementing various parts of our plan that addresses these and other items so that our schools are ready for operation in August 2019.

The focus to provide every student opportunities to learn without limits is the guidepost we will continue to follow this year and in to the future. It is this common mission that will propel our school system to its greatest heights.



### VHEE TEACHER COMPETING FOR GRAMMY EDUCATORS' AWARD

Deanna Bell, music teacher at Vestavia Hills Elementary East, is a quarterfinalist for the 2019 Music Educator Award presented by the Recording Academy and the Grammy Museum. Just 188 teachers on the K-12 and collegiate level were named quarterfinalists. Bell is one of two quarterfinalists in Alabama. The award recipient will be recognized in February in the lead-up to the 2019 Grammy Awards. Teachers who advance to the semifinalist and finalist rounds will receive cash grants for themselves and their schools.

### JUST SINGIN' TO PERFORM NATIONALLY

Just Singin', the Vestavia Hills High School a cappella student vocal group, has been invited to perform during the American Choral Directors' Association (ACDA) national conference in February 2019. The conference will take place in Kansas City, Missouri. The group was chosen to perform from a pool of 225 auditioning choirs from around the world, according to a release from ACDA. It is the first time a public school choir from Alabama has been invited to sing at the conference.



### VHEC ROBOTICS TEAM EXCELS

Central's Robotics Team triumphed at the University of Alabama's Robotics Competition on Saturday, April 7. All three of

Central's teams placed in the top 5 with one of those teams taking home the first place prize. First place prizes were awarded to Caleb Boylan, Sriram Birur, Tate Sparks, Ivan Riley and Maddie Crawford. 4th place prizes were awarded to James Junkin, Jake McNiel, Wrenn Smith and Nifemi Makwimi. The 2017-18 team was sponsored by Michelle Coxwell, Kim Jaggard and Maggie Blaising. Students practiced weekly to learn how to program Lego Mindstorm EV3 robots and competed in a friendly competition with the Cahaba Heights and Hoover robotics teams.

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## Mayor's Message *continued from page 1*

their achievements. Their valuable contributions to our community make Vestavia Hills a better place to live.

You may recall that Governor Ivey participated in last year's event. This year will feature Vestavia Hills resident, Eli Gold. Mr. Gold has a distinguished career in sports broadcasting including NASCAR events, professional hockey and, more recently, the voice of the University of Alabama football. He once told an interviewer that he was thrilled that a "Jewish kid from Brooklyn with zero athletic talent would make it into the Alabama Sports Hall of Fame."

This event will be held at City Hall on Tuesday, August 21 starting at 4:00 p.m. If you plan to attend, please contact Julie Harper, our Civic Activities Coordinator, at 205.978.0169.

Lastly, during August, the Community Spaces Plan will begin in earnest after many years of planning. Some of the infrastructure improvements (i.e. sidewalks and roads) will be the first things that you will see. Behind the scenes, there will be multiple professional services contracts for design work, surveying, etc. Over the next few years, you will see many of the projects come to fruition. The much-needed community center/civic center will be the centerpiece of the newly renovated Wald Park area.

Hopefully you are having a fun summer and are making memories with friends and family. Remember, "The tans will fade but the memories will last forever."

## City Manager's Report *continued from page 1*

volatility) and the mitigation of the elasticity of the sales tax when compared to other jurisdictions. The top sales taxpayers in Vestavia Hills represent staples of our household budgets rather than impulse or discretionary spending items that are more often sold online or in traditional mall settings. The "Top Business Classifications" chart indicates that the top category of sales tax revenue in Vestavia Hills comes from grocery stores. Furthermore, the second highest growth in sales are generated from grocery stores as well. This does not mean that we, as a community, should not remember to "Shop Local," but does help explain why you do not see our city experiencing such dire effects from untaxed online sales. Thankfully, we are protected against some of the more volatile economic pressures of our neighboring communities. When you consciously think about a retail sales choice, the focus on a Vestavia Hills business will be returned to you in a tangible way through governmental services that may not be "front of mind" – police and fire protection, recreational amenities and improved transportation networks to name a few.

While no one likes taxes, the ability to manage the City's taxing policies for sustainable operations with its historic levels of taxation and approach the recent additional tax as a means to accomplish long sought after improvements to our quality of life will help us compete as one of the most aspirational and sought after communities in Alabama. I like to view this as investing with an anticipated return on such investment. The return on investment comes from those seeking a place to raise their family, work or do business. If a city does not make calculated and planned long term investments in itself, it will not compete in the larger marketplace. I hope that you agree and see this as a logical strategy designed for the successful characteristics Vestavia



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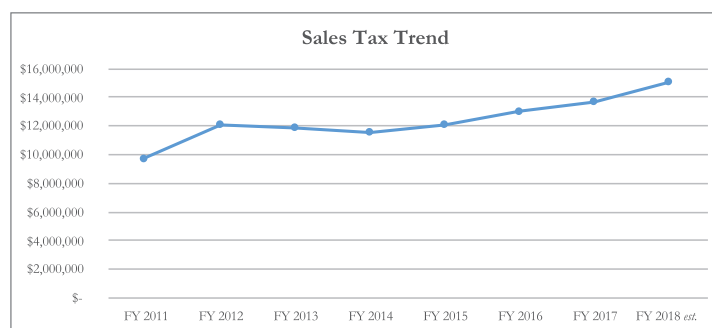
Hills needs to remain strong for the long haul. Thank you for allowing me to serve you and make our City a place for continued success.

### Top Business Classifications

Rank	Previous Rank	NAIC Description	NAIC Code
1	1	Supermarkets & other grocery (except convenience) stores	445110
2	3	Full-service restaurants	722511
3	2	Limited-service restaurants	722513

### Top Business Classifications Showing Most Growth in Taxes

Rank	NAIC Description	NAIC Code
1	Other building material dealers	444190
2	Supermarkets & other grocery (except convenience) stores	445110
3	Other commercial & industrial machinery & equipment rental & leasing	532490
4	Offices of Certified Public Accountants	541211
5	Full-service restaurants	722511



## PARKS & RECREATION

### TIME FOR FALL SPORTS!

For information or to register for the youth fall sports offered through Parks & Recreation, call 205.978.0166 or visit the website for each sport: softball, [www.vhgsa.com](http://www.vhgsa.com); baseball, [www.vhyb.com](http://www.vhyb.com); soccer, [www.vestaviasoccer.com](http://www.vestaviasoccer.com); lacrosse, [www.gbyla.org](http://www.gbyla.org). For information on registration for any youth sport, visit [www.vhal.org](http://www.vhal.org).

We have many classes and activities in the Civic Center including Jazzercise, Chinese school, Chinese dance class, Young Rembrandts, Hindi class, Senior Bridge club, English as a second language (ESL), tumbling class, art classes, and ballet. If you are interested in starting your own unique class, let us know.

Our New Merkel House in Cahaba Heights also offers many opportunities for our senior population. We eat, play games, socialize and just have a pleasant time.

There are many options available to rent space for an event in Wald Park, including the outdoor pavilion, Dogwood Room, Vestavian Room and the Lodge.

### NEW MERKEL SENIOR CENTER

**Monthly programs, events and guest speakers;  
Games EVERYDAY!**

**Monday-Friday:** Fun, Fellowship & Lunch  
(Lunch is served at 11:45 a.m.)

**Monday & Wednesday:** Exercise & Table Games. 10:30 a.m.

**Wednesday & Friday:** Bingo. 11:00 a.m.

**Thursday:** Tech Talk Thursdays

**August 8:** Art with Tina Chaffin

**August 10:** Guest Speaker, Alacare

**August 15:** "Beat the Heat" indoor picnic reminiscent of favorite family picnics!

More information, including the **full calendar of Senior Programming activities**, can be found on the City website at <http://bit.ly/SeniorProgramming>.



**Fairhaven Drive & Poe Drive at Overton Village**

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## CHAMBER NEWS

*Karen J. Odle, Vestavia Hills Chamber of Commerce President*

I am not sure where the summer went ... the first week in August finds teachers back at school working to get ready for students the next week!

We have many things planned for August as well as the rest of 2018. I hope you will mark your calendar and join us at all events possible.

On August 10, we will have the 5th Annual "Back 2 School" event in Cahaba Heights. Please mark your calendar and be sure to join us as we celebrate the start of school. We will have inflatables for the entire family, a DJ, a business expo with our incredible sponsors that make this event a reality, and at dusk will have a family movie. Check [www.vestaviiahills.org](http://www.vestaviiahills.org) for the name of the movie as well as other updates for the event.

The Chamber has partnered with the University of Alabama for a series of seminars beginning August 22. Our first one will be "Leadership Today." We would love to have you join us for any or all of these seminars. Also, CE credits will be available for professionals so this will be a convenient way to get some of these accomplished right here in Vestavia Hills. Most of the series will be hosted at Vestavia Hills City Hall and SmoothRock Conference Center in

Liberty Park. Please check out our website listed above for details and registration about this series. We would love to see you there!

I hope by now you have received your 2018 Vestavia Hills Living. Our covers are always difficult to decide who to feature but this year we were delighted to feature 4 generations of Vestavians, including Joanne Mote whose husband's family was one of the original settlers in the early 1900's way before Vestavia Hills became a city and now her grandson and great-grandson continue to call Vestavia Hills home. We are so blessed to have people that want to be part of the city and continue to return here to raise their family. Drop by their businesses, Hollywood Pools and American Pest Control and thank them for being part of our thriving business community too.

We have had tremendous feedback from our residents on the magazine, so I hope you enjoyed your copy. If you missed receiving your issue, please stop by the Chamber office and pick one up. We strive with each issue to provide information about different areas of our city. Please support the advertisers in this magazine as we would not be able to mail this to every resident without their support. Remember, Shop, Dine, Play local! Our local businesses support our community and our schools. So, let's keep them vibrant as we all strive for "A Life Above"!

**Back 2 School in the Hills**  
Friday, August 10 6:30 pm  
Fox Field at  
Cahaba Heights Elementary

Rain Date:  
August 17

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## NEW AIR PACKS FOR VHFD

In early July, the Vestavia Hills Fire Department (VHFD) took delivery of new Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus (SCBA) for its entire fleet. The SCBA, or “air pack,” is the backbone of safety for VHFD personnel as it provides respiratory protection to members as they operate in hazardous environments. The department’s new equipment is lighter in weight and has many features that will improve operations and safety on the fire ground that were not available a decade ago when the existing equipment was purchased. Enhancements such as Bluetooth technology will allow personnel to pair their face piece with portable radios for improved communication on the fire ground. Additionally, the incident commander will be able to monitor air usage and movement of all personnel from a computer in the command vehicle which provides another level of safety for our staff. The new units meet the most recent National Fire Protection Association standard on SCBA and will provide our first responders a safer working environment for the next 10 years. After a few weeks of training, VHFD will add the new equipment to its fleet.



## VESTAVIA HILLS

A LIFE ABOVE

### Please join us for the 6TH ANNUAL NATIONAL SENIOR CITIZEN DAY CELEBRATION

*“An Evening with Eli Gold”*

Tuesday, August 21, 2018  
4:00-6:00 p.m. at  
Vestavia Hills City Hall  
1032 Montgomery Highway  
Vestavia Hills, Alabama

4:00-5:00 p.m. Reception with wine, refreshments  
and light hors d'oeuvres

5:00-6:00 p.m. Keynote speaker, Eli Gold

Please RSVP by August 17, 2018 to Julie Harper  
at 205.978.0169 or [jharper@vhal.org](mailto:jharper@vhal.org)

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## 2018 PROJECT REQUEST

The Vestavia Hills Chamber of Commerce and the City of Vestavia Hills are planning the 4th 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 homes. This fun community service day will be Saturday, September 8, 2018. 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@vestavi hills.org](mailto:dianez@vestavi hills.org).

**DEADLINE FOR PROJECT REQUEST SUBMISSION: AUGUST 3, 2018**

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? \_\_\_\_\_

Special equipment/tools needed \_\_\_\_\_

Special instructions \_\_\_\_\_

*\*Required information*



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## Informational Seminar

**August 7 • 1:30–3:00 p.m.**

*presented by*



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A LIFE ABOVE



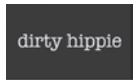
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### EVENING SERVICE

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## Fall Events at VHUMC

**Children:** Wed. Music & Arts and Bible Studies

**Students:** Sun. & Wed. Programming (AM & PM)

**Boomers:** Trips, Work Days, Studies, & Lunches

**Seniors:** Monthly Lunches & Trips

**Families & Individuals:** Sunday School & Worship,

Wed. Night Dinner & Programming,

Back to School Bash (Date TBA)

Please check our website for dates & details: [www.vhumc.org](http://www.vhumc.org)