

# Verona Views



FALL/WINTER 2023 • VERONA HILLS HOMES ASSOCIATION

## A Letter from the President...

Happy holiday season neighbors! It was a pleasure seeing so many neighbors for our Verona Hills Fall Fest in October and our Annual Meeting in December. While we are at it, we have tentatively scheduled our Winter Social in 2024 for February 3<sup>rd</sup> with more details to follow by email, Facebook and Nextdoor.

At the Fall Fest, we had food and cotton candy to feed an army! Many families joined us to take advantage of the exciting outdoor activities we had planned at Migliazzo Park. At the Annual Meeting, the star of the show was Owen Buckley, Principal at Lane4 Properties and owner of the Red Bridge Shopping Center. Owen provided an update on the center and specifically the new Red Bridge Farm Fresh Market project, the details of which excited all in attendance.

The other good news from the Annual Meeting is that the Board recommended we remain at our current dues assessment of \$150 per year. We also introduced and approved our new slate of directors: Maggie Thomas (Vice President), Merylene Dampier (Events), Jenny McKenzie (Public Works), and Becca Allen (Migliazzo Park). Thanks to all of you for your willingness to step up to support our great neighborhood! We also want to say thank you to those who they have replaced: Katie Scurlock, Jimmy Nickle, Richard Hudson, and Steve Lampone - all who served their three-year commitment and beyond. Other topics at the meeting included updates on several projects, including our camera initiative, refreshing our website, continued common area improvements, and a few other fun engagement activities like our holiday decoration competition mentioned later in this newsletter.

It is important to continue to bring new perspectives and fresh energy to the Board. Great candidates have come forward or been identified over the past several years, yet we want to make sure we give everyone who is interested an opportunity to get involved. If you would like to learn more about the Board or other neighborhood engagement opportunities, please feel free to call me at (816) 500-9558 or email [info@veronahills.org](mailto:info@veronahills.org).

Thank you again for all you do to make Verona Hills a safe, beautiful, and enjoyable place to live. Have a safe and wonderful holiday season and winter!

Sincerely,  
Kevin Fallon, Board President

## Board of Directors

<b>Kevin Fallon</b> President 816-500-9558	<b>Maggie Thomas</b> Vice President 816-668-9474
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<b>Laurie Minx</b> Communications 816-721-3934	<b>Jenny McKenzie</b> Public Works 816-804-8491
<b>Becca Allen</b> Migliazzo Park 816-729-0447	<b>Open Position</b> Common Areas TBD
<b>Chris Gaughan</b> Compliance 816-786-4439	<b>David Bednarczyk</b> Security <a href="mailto:dave.bman@icloud.com">dave.bman@icloud.com</a>

**Merylene Dampier**  
Events  
480-710-3220

**EMAIL US:**  
[info@veronahills.org](mailto:info@veronahills.org)





## 2023 EVENTS: End-of-Year Recap

The following events took place since our last newsletter in June:

- **July 1, 2023: Patriotic Bike Parade.** Thanks to those who decorated their bikes in red, white and blue for a few laps around Migliazzo Park in honor of Independence Day. Kids enjoyed frozen treats afterwards.
- **September 23 & 24, 2023: The Verona Hills Annual Garage Sale.** We provided pre-sale advertising and sale signs around the neighborhood for those who chose to participate.
- **October 8, 2023: Neighborhood Fall Festival.** This family-friendly event was held at Migliazzo Park to enjoy the fall weather. Highlights included delicious food, a bounce house, laser tag, karaoke, ice cream and more!
- **December 4, 2023: Annual Verona Hills HOA Meeting.** We gathered at Avila to listen to a guest speaker and provide an overview of the year. Many updates are summarized in this newsletter for your convenience.

*Please stay tuned for future updates and more details about our upcoming events in 2024 via e-mail blasts, our website, Nextdoor, and our Facebook page.*



## HOME AWARDS: Positive Recognition

Nominate neighbors for these exciting new award opportunities:

- **Holiday Home Awards:** Verona Hills is filled with the sights and sounds of the holiday season! As shared via email, we are introducing the Holiday Home Awards this year to recognize neighbors who go above and beyond to bring holiday cheer to the neighborhood. Categories include "Best Light Display," "Best Musical Display," and "Best Inflatable Display." Winners should be announced electronically by December 17<sup>th</sup>. Thank you to everyone who submitted nominees!
- **Home of the Month Awards:** Have you always admired your neighbor's landscaping? Did they repaint their house this year? Do you watch your neighbor spend hours outside making their home the best-looking house on the block? We need your help! This spring, we will be recognizing a "Verona Hills Home of the Month" each month – and we need your nominations. Please submit your neighbor's name and address for "Home of the Month" to Maggie Thomas at [mcschanemm@gmail.com](mailto:mcschanemm@gmail.com). Each month's winner will be able to display a "Home of the Month" sign in their yard and will receive a small token of our appreciation for making Verona Hills a beautiful place to live!

## REAL ESTATE RECAP:

The following statistics reflect the 2023 market activity for Verona Hills as of 12/04/23:

4 Active listings  
19 Sold homes  
Average sale price: \$458,000  
Average days on market: 26

## STAYING CONNECTED:

Be sure to check out our website at [veronahills.org](http://veronahills.org).

Directories were delivered previously. Please let us know if you did not receive one.

If you have requests or updates to your contact information, email us at [info@veronahills.org](mailto:info@veronahills.org).

Note: If you have NOT received emails from us about upcoming brush pick-ups and more, please reach out and let us know. We may need to update our records. If you would rather receive phone blasts, simply request to be added to our automated call list. (We only add those who opt-in due to a small service fee.)

Have you joined Nextdoor yet? The website lets you select your neighborhood and is full of good information. Go to the following link, enter your email address and select your neighborhood (VH): <https://nextdoor.com/>

## SCRAPBOOK: Highlights from Bike Parade & Fall Fest at the Park



On July 1<sup>st</sup>, neighbors gathered at Migliazzo Park starting at 9 a.m. for a fun bicycle ride around the path. Children of all ages decorated their tricycles, bikes and scooters in red, white and blue. Adults walked or rode alongside them, soaked up the sunshine, and grooved along to the upbeat music. Afterwards, the kids enjoyed frozen treats before continuing their fun on the nearby playground. Special thanks to all those who made this fun event possible!

On October 14<sup>th</sup>, we hosted another Fall Fest featuring lots of outdoor activities that were fun for the whole family. Residents enjoyed a barbecue meal and music while the kids stayed busy with bounce houses, face painters, video games, and more. Thanks to all who participated!



## MIGLIAZZO PARK: Relishing the Playground Renovations



We love seeing our residents and children enjoy the recently completed park improvements. As you know, Carl Migliazzo Park is a Kansas City public park, but its location in the heart of our neighborhood makes us proud! Significant improvements were completed within the last year or so with the help of PIAC funding. If there are additional projects that would add value to our residents, we can let the City know through future applications requesting an allocation of PIAC funds. So, if you have any ideas for improvements you would like to see at the park, please reach out to the Board with those great ideas. We will see if it makes sense to apply for those funds on behalf of the neighborhood.



## ANNUAL MEETING: Residents Connect and Enjoy Guest Speaker

As many longtime residents already know, neighbors and Board members of Verona Hills typically enjoy a gathering at the end of each year to look back on what has been accomplished and what is yet to come. The Annual Meeting is open to all neighbors. Residents receive post cards, emails and online posts notifying them about the event.

During the pandemic, we connected virtually via Zoom. In 2023, we were pleased to be back in person inside the Whitfield Center at Avila University! Free appetizers and drinks were provided on December 4th, along with an exciting guest speaker.



This year, Owen Buckley served as our keynote speaker from the community. He is the Founder and President of LANE4 Property Group that owns Red Bridge Shopping Center. He provided exciting updates on the Red Bridge Farm Fresh Market and more. Local businesses need our support, and he encouraged all residents of Verona Hills to keep shopping and providing constructive feedback to ensure the strength of these great restaurants and retailers that we are lucky to have right in our backyard!

After allowing time for questions and answers, we provided an overview of the year and discussed current HOA projects, as well as a few initiatives on the horizon. One of the most important topics for 2024 is whether to invest neighborhood funds into the replacement of existing cluster boxes that are in disrepair. More details can be found in this newsletter, and we certainly welcome your feedback. Please be advised, the Board recommends the annual assessment remain unchanged at \$150 annually. As always, we welcome your input to improve our neighborhood.

## MAILBOXES: Input Requested to Replace Worn Cluster Boxes



Verona Hills has 29 cluster mailboxes, which serve roughly half of our residents. If you have one, you've likely noticed that they are in various stages of deterioration. Many have become an eyesore.

Therefore, we have a bid to replace the existing cluster boxes with new, sturdier units that are more decorative and more secure. Although this project would not directly affect all our residents, our existing cluster boxes are a visual representation of our neighborhood. They offer a nice aesthetic to the areas that have them, which is consistent with our goal of continuing to beautify and provide safety to our neighborhood.

The cost is expensive, but we currently have reserves beyond what is needed for a neighborhood like ours. We are confident that adequate reserves would remain after this project without the need for any kind of increase in dues.

Although the Board has been empowered to operate the neighborhood and act as a fiduciary in the best interest of residents, we feel it is important to get feedback before undertaking this project since it is a large expense and does not directly impact every household. (If you receive your mail through a single box near your porch or curb, your mailbox will not change.) A poll taken at the Annual Meeting in December was supportive of this initiative. We plan to email a survey for those who were unable to attend, or you can send feedback to [kf.veronahoa@gmail.com](mailto:kf.veronahoa@gmail.com).

## COMMON AREAS: Maintaining Our Landscaping & Monuments

Our maintenance contractor, SES Landscaping, recently planted bushes to replace much of what had died and been pulled earlier in the year. If you live close by a common area and you notice any of our plants looking thirsty, a periodic watering would be greatly appreciated to supplement what our contractor is able to do.

In addition, we recently had all our monuments power washed and resealed to preserve them and make them shine. A big thank you to the builder of many of those monuments and protector of them all, VH resident and owner of Kansas City Stone and Masonry, Dan Sullivan!

## COMPOST CONNECTION: Leaf and Brush Pick-Ups in 2024



- |                               |                                |
|-------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| • January 12                  | July 19                        |
| • February 16                 | August 16                      |
| • March 15                    | September 13                   |
| • April – City Collection TBD | October 18                     |
| • May 17                      | November – City Collection TBD |
| • June 14                     | December – City Collection TBD |

\* Please have no more than 20 paper bags or bundles at the curb by 7:00 a.m. with only natural yard waste.

## PUBLIC WORKS: Streets Resurfaced and More

As promised, many of the streets in Verona Hills have been milled and resurfaced by the City during the months of October and November. We have been advised by Bill Rash, a representative of JM Fahey Construction Company, that the work is complete. Speed bumps were reinstalled on Summit Street during the month of November. This is a welcomed improvement as we head into the winter months!

The Homes Association will continue to use our snow removal contractor that has been used in the past. As always, things can continue to be improved in our neighborhood. Please report any street, sidewalk or pothole issues to the City at 311 or at (816) 513-1313. You can also visit [kcmo.gov/311](https://kcmo.gov/311).

## COMPLIANCE CORNER: What To Do with Old Recycling Bins

Most of our neighborhood has now received the City's new recycling carts. But what are you supposed to do with all those old recycling bins?

According to the City, residents can either keep their old recycling bins for other household uses, or the City will collect any unwanted bins and barrels. If you'd like the City to dispose of an old recycling bin, leave it out with your trash and include a note on it that says, "Take with Trash".

You can also keep your recycling bin for excess recycling and put it out with your cart when needed. There is no limit on recycling collection. The City simply asks that you place extra recyclables in your old recycling bin, or in cardboard boxes, paper bags, or a storage tote that is clearly labeled as recycling.

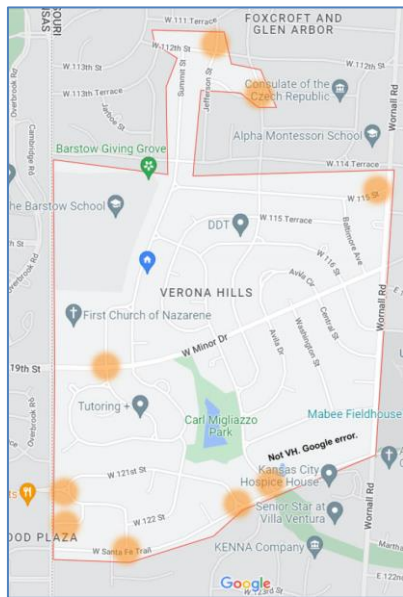
One other issue related to our new recycling carts is that the carts are assigned to your address, not you personally. If you move, the City requires that you leave your recycling cart behind. Each cart has a serial number on it that is tied to that specific address, and you will use the cart assigned to the address of any new home you are purchasing.

For more information about the City's new recycling program, visit <https://www.kcmo.gov/city-hall/trash/recycling>.

## SECURITY UPDATE: Crime Prevention and Camera Initiative

Since our last newsletter earlier in the year, REPORTED crimes have stayed level. While we've had several personal calls and concerns about suspicious folks in the area, we please ask that if you feel in danger, call 911 immediately. If you just want to report a nuisance individual and don't need immediate attention, it's best to call the South Patrol non-emergency number at 816-234-5550, option 4. The best way to prevent criminal activity is to reduce opportunities by keeping garage doors closed, doggie doors protected, your home well-lit, and your vehicles and home securely locked. By FAR, most reported crimes are ones of opportunity and folks letting their guard down – open garage or unlocked car.

If you need to request additional patrols in a specific area, you can request that online at [www.kcpd.org](http://www.kcpd.org). Crime stats also can be found there or at [cityprotect.com](http://cityprotect.com). It's a great resource to monitor how we are doing relative to surrounding communities. We will also stay in touch with the South Patrol on a regular basis for future updates.



## TREASURER'S REPORT: Annual Dues and Online Resources



As a friendly reminder, our fiscal year runs from June 1 through May 31, with the annual assessment of \$150 due by June 30 each year. Our assessments have not been raised for many years, and they are meant to be affordable for all our residents. Please make sure to pay your assessments on time. They allow us to enjoy many of the core services you have come to expect and are highlighted in this newsletter, as well as continue to evaluate other services and events for the benefit of our neighborhood.

Did you know you can pay your dues online? Go to our website at [www.veronahills.org](http://www.veronahills.org), and our online payment portal is front and center! You will be able to make a one-time payment or set it up on auto debit going forward. You will only need your account number, which can be found on your dues statement or by calling our management company Homes Associations of Kansas City at 913-385-2440.

As you may know, we have a collection policy in place that includes filing liens on properties once they become due for a third year on their assessments. Once a lien is filed, individuals are invoiced for past due assessments – plus 8% interest on the balance and any legal expenses incurred by the Association. Once an assessment is more than four years past due, we are obligated by our Homes Association Declaration to file suit to collect the delinquent assessments. This action increases expenses, including legal, filing fees and court costs, which are added to the delinquent assessment amount. The cost to file a lien is approximately \$100, and the average expense if an account goes to trial is over \$1,000. A filed lien or judgment may have negative consequences on your credit rating.

Overall, your Board of Directors would rather spend our volunteer time (and your hard-earned money!) providing services and improving the neighborhood, rather than exhaust that time and money collecting delinquent accounts. Further, it is not fair to the homeowners who pay when the assessments are due. Thankfully, the vast majority of our residents pay like clockwork. However, for the small disappointing minority that don't, our policy to file liens and lawsuits works in the long run.

Our cash flow statement for the fiscal year that ended May 31, 2023, is on our website. As a Board, we can confidently say our neighborhood remains in strong financial standing with ample reserves to position us to address any unforeseen problems, continue to keep our streets safe from inclement weather, and further invest in our neighborhood. If, after review, you would like to discuss this financial information, please send a message to [info@veronahills.org](mailto:info@veronahills.org), and a member of our Board will contact you. Or, if you would like to speak to someone other than a Board member, please call our third-party management and accounting firm, Homes Associations of Kansas City, at 913-385-2440.

## HISTORICAL VIEWS: Riding the Santa Fe Trail by Diane Euston

You're probably sitting comfortably in your Verona Hills home reading this in hopes of catching up on neighborhood news. You've most likely worked very hard for your home and are proud of it. When people put effort into something, they have a sense of accomplishment.

*(Continued...)*

You've purchased a patch of land and are building memories where you reside. Most of us take pride in developing a legacy. The land your house rests atop has a history and a legacy, too. Lucky you!

Verona Hills has a pretty exciting story to tell. It's hard for us to imagine an area such as Verona Hills before J.C. Nichols purchased the land to build the foundations of a suburban community. Before the late 1960s, the area that encompasses most of what is now Verona Hills subdivision was still farmland. When the community was being built, there were still remnants of a time long past.

This area was the center of some pretty fascinating frontier tales. Although now we can only see the trailside markers and a few remaining ruts from the frontier wagon trains that crossed the prairie, at one time this area was inundated with men with vision.

One such man, Dabney Lipscomb, capitalized on the location of his farm (which encompassed the land you now live on) and formed a town at the southwest corner of his land. In 1851, he named it "New Santa Fe." Blacksmiths, shopkeepers, school teachers, dentists, doctors and capitalists all at one time called New Santa Fe their home. Current Santa Fe Trail at the corner of State Line was named "Main Street." Many pioneers that had ventured west saw the potential in the town's location nestled upon the invisible line between Missouri and the territory of Kansas. When wagon trains packed full of all the earthly possessions of a pioneer family took the Santa Fe Trail west from the Blue River across current Minor Park Golf Course, their last civilized stop on the trail was on the very land we pass daily. Some of you even live on a small number of the old platted lots from 1851.

There was Marcus Gill, a Kentuckian who purchased the land that is now Verona Hills from Dabney Lipscomb's family, a man that enslaved people, boarded William Quantrill and whose son was the future mayor of Kansas City. Or, Samuel B. Wade, a southern sympathizer who helped organize election frauds in Kansas Territory in the hopes it would be admitted as a slave state. And John E. Watson, the town doctor whose daughter inspired a nationally known song from the late 1800s called "In the Baggage Coach Ahead."

The Border Wars of the 1850s, the Civil War and the construction of the railroad led to the destruction of New Santa Fe. The town was never the same and held on as long as it could.

Although it's hard to imagine what was once part of this land, there are some really interesting places you can visit and learn more about the area:

1. **Town of New Santa Fe and the Cemetery** - At the corner of Belleview Avenue and Santa Fe Trail, the cemetery is all that is left of what was once the town of New Santa Fe. Inside the cemetery, there are still visible trail ruts as the Santa Fe Trail once passed through the center of the cemetery. Founder of New Santa Fe, Dabney Lipscomb, is buried here.
2. **Minor Park Swales** – Look for these at Red Bridge Road, east of Holmes. The brown signs marking the National Historic Trails will lead you to some of the country's best preserved trail ruts. Prior to the building of the first Red Bridge in 1859, wagons leaving Independence had to ford the Blue River - and this was a dangerous feat. The weight of these wagon trains permanently indented the earth and created the ruts we can see today. Be sure to walk south of where you park to see up close these wagon ruts!
3. **Watts Mill** – This area is located at 103rd Street, east of State Line on Indian Creek (park near Marco Polo's). As a pioneer, having access to a saw and grist mill was very important. In 1832, the Fitzhugh brothers established a mill here, and 20 years later, the property was purchased by Anthony Watts. Anthony's son, Stubbins (the "Fiddling Miller of Dallas"), famously ran the mill up until his death in 1922. The mill was



demolished in 1949, but the mill stone is still present on site. The area was recently redone and features panels that explain the history of the area.

4. **Oxford Schoolhouse** – Located at 14701 Mission Road, The Oxford School is one of the oldest schools in the state of Kansas, serving as a schoolhouse from 1877 to 1955. Until 1920, the school was the only one in Oxford Township, providing education for 1<sup>st</sup>- 8th graders living in the eastern portion of Johnson County near the State Line. The school originally sat at the corner of 135th and Mission Road but was moved to Ironwoods Park in 2003.

Buried below the ground you now stand upon could be more remnants of the men who tilled the land before your time - men who visited these locations we now have honored with markers. Broken pottery pieces, horseshoes, arrowheads, and nails sometimes sit undiscovered in Verona Hills and are uncovered when simply digging into the earth. These pieces of the past should remind us of the pioneers to the west. Continue to be proud of the land you own and embrace the splendid stories of the times long ago!

*Diane Euston is the author of the blog "The Santa Fe Trailer," devoted to the rich history of the area. To learn more about these exciting pioneers, visit [www.newsantafetrailer.blogspot.com](http://www.newsantafetrailer.blogspot.com).*

## NEW NEIGHBORS: Welcome Home



Please join us in extending a warm welcome to Verona Hills' newest additions who have moved since our last newsletter was published in the summer!

If you are new to the neighborhood as of June 1, 2023, and do not see your name below, please send your contact information to [info@veronahills.org](mailto:info@veronahills.org). We're glad you're here!

Wanda Barber	11618 Glen Arbor Terrace
Trent & Chandra Burks	9 West 115th Street
James Dreiling and Allison Gillilan	401 West 115th Terrace
Kevin & Taylor Jantsch	1001 West 121st Street
David & Karen Redlich	11712 Madison Avenue
Sarah Valdivia and Parker Janssen	11514 Wornall Road
Jonas & Ashleigh Baughman	11904 Madison Avenue
Michael Sharkey and Derek King	824 West 121st Street
Andrew Schwarzenberger and Julia Mount	11801 Glen Arbor Terrace
Robert Sullivan and Makenzie Alderette	11704 Jefferson
Barbara Knauf and Phillip Flusche	11815 Washington
Michael & Heather Brisk	901 West 121st Street
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Daniel & Sandi Harkins	11905 Avila Drive
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## ADVERTISING: Featuring Your Business in Our Next Issue

Our bi-annual newsletter is mailed to approximately 750 households. It is also shared in electronic format to our email distribution list. Advertisers need not be a resident of Verona Hills.

We accept most business card size ads. The rate is very reasonable at only \$50 per issue! Revenue is used solely to subsidize the printing and hard copy distribution of the newsletter to all residents.

Please contact [info@veronahills.org](mailto:info@veronahills.org) at any point to inquire about available advertising space.

## FEEDBACK: Staying in Touch and Getting Involved

We enjoy hearing from our neighbors and knowing how you'd like to help! Send us your feedback, suggestions and questions anytime. Volunteer Board members make every effort to respond in a timely way.

Our Board is currently recruiting to fill several officer positions due to existing members completing their terms. You are welcome to contact Kevin Fallon, HOA President, at 816-500-9558 if you would like to learn more. There are lots of ways to get involved! More information about the Verona Hills Homes Association, as well as an [archive](#) of past newsletters, can be found online at [www.veronahills.org](http://www.veronahills.org).



**Verona Hills Homes Association**

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## Fall/Winter 2023 Newsletter