

# Verona Views



WINTER/SPRING 2017 • VERONA HILLS HOMES ASSOCIATION

## Words from our President...

Calendar year 2016 was a wonderful time for our neighborhood. Many new residents moved into our community and participation in the numerous Verona Hills events was at a high level. From the Easter Egg Hunt in the Spring to the Annual Meeting in the Fall, attendance at these events continues to trend upward each year. I extend my thanks to our residents for your participation in these events and the volunteers who planned and implemented these successful events. A special thanks for Board Directors for their professionalism in organizing these events.

I am pleased to announce a new VHHA sponsored event: Shredding Event on Saturday, March 25, 10:00am – 1:00pm, in the parking lot of John Knox Kirk. This event is a cooperative venture between Verona Hills, Timber Trace, Glen Arbor Estates and Bridlespur. There is no charge to shred your documents but we request that each homeowner limit their shredding amount to a total of five boxes or grocery sacks. No plastic bags can be shredded and staples do not need to be removed from documents. If you have more than five bags, we ask that you return to the shredder at 12:30 pm to see if there is any room left on the truck.

While we continue to receive requests for sidewalk improvements within Verona Hills, you will have a chance to vote on a bond proposal on April 4th to help with this. Question 1 will have the most immediate and direct impact on Verona Hills. We know that many of the sidewalks in Verona Hills are in dire need of repair or replacement. If Question 1 passes, our neighborhood will benefit. New sidewalks in Verona Hills will increase the safety and beauty of our neighborhood. With every benefit or improvement there is a cost. Property taxes on our home and cars will increase. In the first year of the bond package if question 1 passes, homeowners can expect a \$12 increase in their property tax for a \$280,000 house. Property taxes on houses will increase very gradually over the 20 year bond life. Your Verona Hills Board of Directors encourages you to study the issue and make an informed decision that is in the best interest of your family and your community. Detailed information on the bond issue can be found at <http://kcmo.gov/news/2017/infrastructure-repair-plan-approved-by-city-council-residents-will-vote-on-april-4-2017/>.

## Board of Directors

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**Ben Lizak** Public Works  
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**Beth Sullivan** Common Areas  
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**Steve Lampone**  
Migliazzo Park  
352-6809

## Public Works And More

### New Snow Removal & Ice Treatment Contractor

As you may know, the Homes Associations supplements snow removal and ice treatment services provided by the City via a private contractor. Supplementing the city-provided services ensures our streets are made safer sooner, since the City obviously gives priority to major roads and thoroughfares.

Effective this winter season, the Homes Association has selected a new contractor to perform snow removal and ice treatment services for the neighborhood. The new contractor's rates represent a significant savings over our historical spend for these services.

Moreover, during bigger snowstorms resulting in continued accumulation of snow over several hours, the new contractor will come back through the neighborhood to do another push at no additional charge.

Due to the reduction in cost, we expect we'll be able to increase the frequency by which we utilize these services and/or allocate some budget to other areas. If you have questions about this service, please contact Ben Lizak at [ben.lizak@gmail.com](mailto:ben.lizak@gmail.com).

### Movie Night at the Park to return in 2017!

Last Summer, the Homes Association brought back Movie Night at the Park with a screening of the 2016 animated hit "Zootopia" at Migliazzo Park. We estimate 200+ people were in attendance, which was a pleasant surprise! Popcorn and snow cones were provided by the Homes Association, along with a limited number of animal print glow necklaces for the kids.

This event will return in 2017 with some improvements. We'll be pushing the event until sometime in September so we can have an earlier show time and we, also, hope to improve sound quality, now that we have a better gauge on expected attendance. Look for a save-the-date with more information as we get closer to the event.

### SLOW DOWN – THE WEATHER IS NICE!!!



### IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD:

Following is market information provided by Tina Gaughan (thank you, Tina!):

#### **Verona Hills Comparative Market Analysis 2016**

Median sold price: \$299,950  
 Average sold price: 298,610  
 Active listing average: \$336,250  
 Pending listing average: \$298,808  
 Sold price range: \$169,900-\$400,000

### STAYING IN TOUCH –

Don't forget to check out our website: [veronahills.org](http://veronahills.org). If there is anything you'd like to see that isn't already there, please email [info@veronahills.org](mailto:info@veronahills.org).

And, here's your constant (and begging) reminder: if you'd like to receive neighborhood phone blasts or email blasts, please make sure we have your current contact info. Folks are dropping their landlines (and who would blame them?) but we don't have a crystal ball... so, let us know how to reach you!

Joined Nextdoor yet? The website lets you select only 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/>



## All About Events 🏠

VHHA EASTER EGG HUNT: Easter is just around the corner! Our annual Easter Egg Hunt is scheduled for Saturday, April 1, 2017. The hunt is open to all Verona Hills' children and grandchildren, ages 10 years and younger, and begins at 10:00 a.m. in Migliazzo Park. Stop by for refreshments, participate in giveaways and visit with friends and neighbors. Remind your "hunters" to bring their own baskets. We could use volunteers to help out the morning of the event. Please call Loraine Wilson at (816) 943-0401, if you'd like to help in any way with this fun-filled event (or any others!).

\*Alternate date in case of inclement weather will be Saturday, April 8th and will be announced via telephone blast or e-mail alert.

VHHA GARAGE SALE: The annual Verona Hills Garage Sale will be held Friday and Saturday, September 15 & 16. An e-mail invite will be sent out asking for an RSVP for any neighbors who would like to host a sale. We will provide advance advertising, but will need a headcount to make sure we have enough yard signs. **Provided we can get enough volunteers** to help load items, a Goodwill truck will be scheduled for Sunday morning, September 17, on Pennsylvania at Migliazzo Park. A request for volunteers for this convenient pick-up of donated items will be included with the e-mail asking for RSVPs. As always, we welcome your feedback as we look forward to building on this event in years to come!

## Meet Your New Neighbors!

Take a minute to welcome the new homeowners and their families who've joined us since the last Newsletter (or we missed receiving the information to share with you). If anyone receiving this Newsletter hasn't been listed in the last few Newsletters and you are new to our neighborhood, please send us your info [info@veronahills.org](mailto:info@veronahills.org)!

And, to the new residents, we are made up of an all-volunteer Board. If you have the time or interest, contact a Board member in an area that you think you might want to get involved with!

Carla Moore & Marquita Leverette	1005 West 120th Terrace
Jeffrey Viott & Michelle Harmon	11938 Pennsylvania Avenue
DreamBuilders Group LLC	400 West 115th Terrace
Patrick & Kimberly Valdivia	11700 Jefferson
Richard & Margaret Thomas	11706 Jefferson
Eric & Rachel Gray	11901 Washington
Kevin Lenihan	12125 Jarboe Street
Sarah Duff & Jeffrey Clayton	400 Avila Circle
Lucas & Natasha Parker	11501 Baltimore
Robert & Yola McFarlin	512 West 116th Street
Katherine Murphy	901 West 121st Terrace
Sol & Julie Kaplan	11522 Wornall Road
Betty Dousza	111 West 119th Street
Sandra Eubank	618 West 116th Street
Ryan & Karolyn McCarty	713 West 114th Terrace



## Our Secure Neighborhood

Every year, it is the goal of your Board to prevent criminal activity in our neighborhood. 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. Most of the thefts that occur in our neighborhood are from unlocked cars or open garages. Please lock your car doors and close your garage doors. This will prevent many of the opportunity crimes that occur and will minimize the opportunity for unsavory folks to commit a crime in our neighborhood.

Increased surveillance by the KC Police Department combined with Verona Hills' privately hired security, Titan Protection and Consulting, has kept our neighborhood safe. All Titan employees are clearly identified by the Titan vehicle and Titan uniforms. They have random, but multiple, daily patrols throughout our neighborhood. The Titan Officers are armed with a gun, as well as a baton and pepper spray. They will check houses to resolve problems and promptly notify a homeowner.

If you notice any issues in our neighborhood, your first call should be to the police department. If there are ongoing issues and concerns you are experiencing, you may forward those to me or any other Board member and we will direct Titan to investigate, monitor or follow up on the issue. If we do not know that crime is occurring, then we cannot combat it.

Overall, we believe with the help of all of our alert and caring neighbors, along with the KCPD and Titan, Verona Hills is a very safe place to live. You are encouraged to report any unusual occurrence or suspicious activity to 9-1-1. If you are aware of an ongoing issue, please contact the Board at [info@veronahills.org](mailto:info@veronahills.org) and we will strive to seek a remedy.

### KANSAS CITY, MISSOURI POLICE DEPARTMENT

For more information on theft from vehicles, theft of motor vehicles, improving security at home, identity theft, or improving neighborhood safety, please contact your Community Interaction Officer:

Central Patrol Division	816-759-6313
Metro Patrol Division	816-349-6428
East Patrol Division	816-482-8506
South Patrol Division	816-672-2828
North Patrol Division	816-437-6230
Shoal Creek Patrol Division	816-413-3440

## Compliance, compliance, compliance!

The Board of Directors of the Verona Hills Homes Association continues to receive frequent inquiries from members regarding matters such as improperly parked cars, poorly maintained property, dead trees, curbs and sidewalks, and similar matters. Most of these issues are actually governed by the Kansas City Nuisance Code or Property Maintenance Code, rather than the Homes Association Covenants and Restrictions.



Information about City Code violations is available on Kansas City's web site: [www.kcmo.gov](http://www.kcmo.gov), and specifically regarding nuisance and property maintenance code matters at: [www.kcmo.gov/neighborhoods/neighborhood-preservation](http://www.kcmo.gov/neighborhoods/neighborhood-preservation). Our suggestion for dealing with such issues is to contact the KCMO 3-1-1 Call Center by calling 311 or 816-513-1313 or emailing [3-1-1.Call.Center@kcmo.org](mailto:3-1-1.Call.Center@kcmo.org) or going on line to [www.kcmo.gov/311](http://www.kcmo.gov/311). If you do not get the results you expect, let us know. While the authority of the HOA in many of these matters is limited, perhaps our follow-up or input can help yield positive results.

A reminder that the City of Kansas City does have an Ordinance, section 14-33, preventing dogs from roaming free in public areas. Dogs are permitted to be leash-less in their own yards, provided they are confined by a fence or electronic collar of some sort. This is another reminder for everyone's safety and being a responsible neighbor.

And, speaking of being a responsible neighbor, no one wants your dog's "droppings" left in their yards or the common areas - please clean up after your dogs (bag & trash it)! Besides being considerate, it will help prevent the waste from getting into our wastewater treatment systems (which are not designed to filter dog waste).

## Ah, Our Beautiful Common Areas...

Our 44 common areas continue to beautify our neighborhood. Monarch Lawn and Landscape did quality work maintaining these areas during calendar year 2016 and was awarded the maintenance contract for 2017. There were major landscape upgrades to the monument at Wornall Road and Minor Road and State Line Road and Minor Road. It is the goal in 2017 to continue with additional plantings. A small but dedicated group of volunteers planted new perennial grasses and shrubs at these and other common areas. A special thanks is extended to Loraine Wilson, Steve Stoecker, Kelly Fritzen and Katie McGonigle for volunteering their time and expertise in this gardening endeavor. Thanks, also, goes out to Joe Davidson for spraying the weeds in the mulched areas of common area beds. If you have a common area near your home and desire an upgrade, please contact Beth Sullivan (816) 547-5541. The biggest obstacle to new plantings is watering the new plants. If you are willing to water the new plants through the growing season, we will definitely consider making improvements in your common area.

After one year of service, our contract with Compost Connection was renewed for 2017. The feedback from residents was overwhelmingly favorable. While there were a few isolated issues with pickups, I feel the program was a huge success. As you may recall, this additional service was provided with no increase in your annual assessment. The dates for the remaining 7 pickups in 2017 are:

- March 31, 2017 (20 paper bags/bundles)
- May 26, 2017 (10 paper bags/bundles)
- July 28, 2017 (10 paper bags/bundles)
- September 22, 2017 (10 paper bags/bundles)
- October 20, 2017 (10 paper bags/bundles)
- November 10, 2017 (20 paper bags/bundles)
- December 15, 2017 (20 paper bags/bundles)



This information is, also, posted on the [Verona Hills website](#). A reminder for those homeowners who already have service with Compost Connection (or would like to purchase additional service through them), CC will reduce the price for their standard program from \$141.00 to \$99.00 to all Verona Hills. Their standard program includes three items per week (April – October) and 6 items per week (November – March).

## Where Do Our Dollars Go?

Our Homes Association is staffed by volunteers that oversee services funded by our Homes Association assessments. The “benefits” from the assessments include, but are not limited to: snow removal, common area maintenance, private security, extra mowing of Migliazzo Park, capital improvements of common areas, common area sidewalk repair, website maintenance, newsletter publication, directories and call notifications. Your Board added yard waste pickup to the list of services last year without increasing assessments. In addition, in December we hosted a 50th Anniversary celebration and holiday social for comradery among our neighbors. Our funds also pay for the Fall Service Day, which has provided tree trimming in the neighborhood. Our friends and neighbors volunteer for this duty in an effort to reduce expenses. Our assessments finance the annual meeting, the Easter Egg Hunt in the Spring, and the Fall Festival and Garage Sale. All of these activities serve to improve our neighborhood, and enhance the feeling of community in Verona Hills. The addition of the document shredding event coming this Spring is also being financed at no additional cost to you!

Our assessments have not been raised for many years, and they are meant to be affordable for all of our residents. Please make sure to pay your assessments on time. A friendly reminder is in order. We have a collection policy in place that includes filing liens on properties that are two years or more past due on their assessments. Once a lien is filed, not only are individuals being invoiced for past due assessments, but also interest is added at 8% on the balance, and legal expenses incurred by the Association are included. Once an assessment is four years past due, the association is 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. Your Board of Directors would rather spend our volunteer time (and money) providing services and improving the neighborhood than collecting delinquent accounts. Further, it is not fair to the homeowners who pay when the assessments are due. Through January 31, 2017, 41 homeowners were past due, with a total balance including fees and interest of nearly \$25,000. For reference, there are approximately 750 homes in Verona Hills.

As of 5-31-2016, liens have been filed on the following properties: 400 Avila Circle; 11805 Central; 701 West Santa Fe Trail; 800 West Santa Fe Trail; 11814 Washington; 301 West 115th Street; 317 West 116th Street; 117 West 119th Street; 315 West 119th Terrace; 916 West 120th Terrace; 721 West 121st Street; and, 1109 West 121st Terrace.

Our cash flow statement for the fiscal year ended May 31st, 2016 is on our website. 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'd like to speak to someone other than a Board member, please call Homes Associations of Kansas City at (913)385-2440.

## Migliazzo Park News...

The concrete walkway across the lake was either repaired or replaced where deteriorated. The surface was also improved to ensure compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) standards. A non-slip coating was applied to the entire walkway and black, anodized aluminum railing was installed on both sides of the elevated surface. In addition, five new ornamental trash receptacles and two new recycling containers were installed along the trail and in the park.

With the assistance of supplemental funding from the Verona Hills Homes Association, the mowing contractor was able to mow the grass 20 times throughout the 2016 growing season. The same contractor will be used in 2017.

Parks and Recreation has committed to more closely monitoring and addressing the goose waste problem in the park. They will, from time to time, waterblast the walks in the park. Additionally, Parks will also try to increase attention to the debris that collects in the southeast corner of the lake.

## Verona Hills, Quantrill And The Lost History Of Your Land

*By Diane Euston, historian*

Have you ever wondered what the view of Verona Hills looked like before the subdivision engulfed the landscape? As a historian of the area once known as “New Santa Fe” (a town of over 500 strong in 1860), I oftentimes drive the winding streets of Verona Hills searching for clues of what was left behind. With enough imagination, one can envision a life before large trees, lots and lavish homes. Close your eyes and imagine it- Quantrill saddled up on his horse, riding through the farmlands- farmlands that now make up your neighborhood!

New Santa Fe once housed the earliest post office in Washington Township (est.1853) and would have served pioneers far and wide. This post office existed before Hickman Mills, Grandview, Martin City - and even Raytown. The town, incorporated in May of 1851, was founded by Dabney Lipscomb, a 45 year-old Kentuckian transplant who died only three short years later. Dabney was one of the Washington Township’s pioneers, arriving in 1839. That’s over 175 years ago!

People were coming and going during this pre-Civil War time, and Dabney’s farm was quickly snatched up by Bath County, Kentucky resident Marcus Gill, who, for \$25 an acre, purchased this land that spread across the horizon. Marcus, born in 1814, left the comfort of his homeland in March of 1854. He constructed a flat boat with covered decks. All his household items, his children and his 20+ slaves steered their way to a new life on the border between Missouri and Kansas. With his possessions intact, Marcus landed in Independence and pursued the best land for his money. As fate would have it, he purchased over 300 acres of land at what is today known as Verona Hills.

His farm butted up to the town of New Santa Fe to the south, following the curves of the Santa Fe Trail, 114th Street to the north, bordered Kansas to the west, and stretched to Wornall Road to the east. He inhabited the log home left by the Lipscomb family and had at least two slave cabins for his chattel. The home sat near what is currently 119th and Summit. Several farm buildings dotted the land as well.

To accommodate his ever-growing family, Marcus Gill added onto his once-quiet log cabin. Marcus’ life was less than boring; he was very involved in politics and would do almost anything to preserve the biggest financial asset he

had - slaves. Mountains of books, documentaries and high school history classes tell us that this comfort Marcus relied upon was quickly coming to an end.

By the winter of 1860, Marcus was introduced by a fellow church member at Bethlehem Church of Christ in Hickman's Mill to a confident, charismatic school teacher named William Clarke Quantrill. Quantrill stayed at the Gill farm, where he became a "great favorite of the family."

Marcus developed a trusting relationship before Quantrill became THE Quantrill that caused so much havoc in history. This was well before he sacked Lawrence, murdered countless abolitionists and formed the Quantrill Raiders. For more on this, please visit [my blog post from January!](#)

When the war was imminent and the Border Wars had destroyed much of the land surrounding New Santa Fe, men like Marcus Gill knew it was time to travel to a safer location with his slaves in tow. He hired none other than Quantrill to take his family to Texas. In April 1861, Marcus packed up his family, his slaves and all of his valuables and traveled south to safer lands. He didn't return until the Civil War ended in 1865, only to find his large home vandalized, the fences destroyed and pastures left untended. Marcus Gill wasn't going to give up on his beloved farm; instead, he held onto his land until his death in Plattsburg, Mo. in 1886, where the land was divided among his children. And the story will continue about Marcus Gill's legacy among the rolling "Verona Hills." In the next newsletter, find out what happened to Marcus Gill's home!



Col. Marcus Gill

\*Diane Euston is a historian who writes a blog about New Santa Fe. For more on the history of Quantrill and other fascinating stories of this area, go to visit [www.newsantafetrailer.blogspot.com](http://www.newsantafetrailer.blogspot.com).

## It's Your Newsletter!

If you have something you'd like featured or have any history about Verona Hills (or anyone who is a resident, like our one feature of a famous resident, hint...hint), please let us know.

## Advertise Your Company or Services in Upcoming Issues

As promised, here are the folks who elected to advertise in the newsletter (see website for future opportunities):

WILLS & TRUSTS | PROBATE | ELDER LAW

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Website: [www.veronahills.org](http://www.veronahills.org)

## Winter/Spring 2017 Newsletter

### *What Else Is Happening In Our Neighborhood...*

*If you haven't been to an Annual Meeting yet (date to be announced), make sure to come this year! Each year, the turnout has grown but we love to see new residents come and provide feedback.*



(Annual Meeting, 2016)