

Verona Hills Newsletter – Summer 2005 Edition

Letter From the President

Another hot Summer is in full swing in Verona Hills, sprinklers are working overtime and all are searching for the nearest pool! Summer for me is always a time of reflection as the pace of life and all its activities tend to slow down a bit. Recently I was thinking about our neighborhood, and what it was 15 short years ago that attracted me to our south Kansas City oasis. There were actually many things – but one of the things that really struck me was the sense of community I felt as I looked at homes throughout the neighborhood. Everywhere I looked there was a friendly wave, groups of neighbors gathered in driveways chatting and a noticeable feeling of camaraderie between young, old and in between in the way everyone talked about the neighborhood they lived in.

We have been through many things as a neighborhood since our first home was built over 35 years ago, and I still feel a great sense of community, actually stronger than ever, as we move into the next stage of our neighborhood's life.

Many thanks to all of you in your support for the Board, as we move into an era of improvement for the many things that make Verona Hills unique. Check out the articles inside that will update our progress on the construction of the entrance monuments, the new tree plantings and the improving condition of Migliazzo Park. Also check out the articles on upcoming events – there is something for everyone we hope!

As we enjoy the lazy days of Summer, realize that the start of school for the kid's is just around the corner and look ahead to the cooler days of Fall, we are reminded how quickly time passes. Don't let it pass you by without getting involved in your neighborhood. You can do something as simple as taking time to meet a new neighbor or attending the annual meeting, or as involved as helping organize one of our many community events. As the Nike guys put – Just Do It!

*Very truly yours,
Cindy Sullivan*

List of Board of Directors

President – Cindy Sullivan

Vice-President – Tim Hatfield

Common Area & Island Improvements – Sue Fahey

Treasurer – Jim McDowell

Security/Snow Removal/Entrance Monuments Construction - Kent Williams

Neighborhood Events/TAN – Nancy Rusch

Migliazzo Park/Common Areas/Islands Maintenance – Matt Ungaschick

KCMO City Liaison – Greg Baker

Neighborhood Compliance – Jennifer Koenig

Board Advisors

Directory – Paula Tarwater

New VH Board Members

Three recent additions to the Verona Hills Board of Directors are making lives much easier for the rest of us.

Paula Tarwater has joined the VH Board as an advisor to take on the daunting task of updating the Directory. We came to the realization last year it had fallen into a bit of disrepair with incorrect names and missing phone numbers, so we are looking forward to getting it cleaned up.

Nancy Rusch has also joined the board for another stint as the Events Director. Many of you will remember Nancy's overachieving ways from her previous service on the Board, so we are all looking forward to what she can cook up this time around!

Jennifer Koenig has also joined the VH Board serving in the capacity of neighborhood issues manager. Jennifer will be the go to person when you have concerns about something that just doesn't look quite right in the neighborhood.

Recruiting New Board Members

As the three year terms of several of our Board Members come to end this Fall, we are looking for new recruits to replace them. If you are interested in helping to maintain Verona Hills as the great place it is to live and raise our kids, please contact Jim McDowell to discuss the Board openings and commitment needed.

Jim can be reached at 816-942-0584 or by email at jmcdowell3@kc.rr.com.

Verona Hills Finances

As of the end of June, the Verona Hills Homes Association reported total assets of \$209,693, and liabilities (accounts payable) of \$7,555. We believe that this is an all-time high for the association, while acknowledging at the same time that a large portion of this money, as well as future income, over the next 5 years is allocated for the entrance monument project we have undertaken.

All in all, it has been a very successful year for Verona Hills, and the neighborhood is looking great! We should all be proud of the progress of our homes association to maintain Verona Hills as the destination target for homebuyers in south KC.

New Monument Construction Update

I am sure many of you have noticed the construction going on at Wornall and Minor on two new Verona Hills entrance monuments. What a historic day for our neighborhood as we begin much needed improvements to our infrastructure. The replacement monuments should be completed by late August, and the landscaping will begin in the September timeframe. If all goes as planned, we will be replacing the entrance monument at State Line and Minor next, as well as a couple of the smaller monuments we will be using at the other neighborhood entrances. A very special thank-you to VH Board member Kent Williams for his many hours of service putting all the pieces of the puzzle together to get this project going. As always, please feel free to contact Kent Williams or Cindy Sullivan with any questions or concerns as we move forward with the entrance monument projects.

Annual Dues Collection Update

To date we have collected 90% of our fiscal year end 2006 annual dues. Hooray! We will re-notify the remaining 10% and work towards our 100% collection goal this year. Just a note, our collection rate for fiscal year 2005 was right at 97%, which we have been told is awesome, and pays tribute to the investment our homeowners are willing to continually put back into their neighborhood.

In our efforts to reach 100% collectibility we have turned some of our homeowner accounts over to a collection agency, as well as put liens for the amount due against their properties. As of July, 2005, 18 of our 759 households, that have not paid their annual dues for two years or more, have been turned over to collection. We feel obligated as a Board that it is our fiduciary duty to collect all monies owed to the neighborhood. It happened to work out nicely that our umbrella homes association HACCD was able to provide a cost effective collection agency service for our use. Please note that all costs associated with collecting the past due balances, as well as interest and the lien filing costs, are added into the total amount due from delinquent homeowners. Please contact Jim McDowell or Cindy Sullivan if you have any questions in this regard.

Haunted Park

Details are in the works for a Halloween Haunted Park this year in Migliazzo Park. The date for this event is scheduled for Saturday, October 29. This would be for children 10 and under. Anyone who has any ideas or wants to help put this event together should call **Nancy Rusch at (816) 942-7659.**

Annual Garage Sale

Mark your calendars now for the Annual Verona Hills Garage Sale on Friday and Saturday **September 23rd and 24th**. This annual event has become quite the opportunity to clean out your closets, earn some money and even make a donation to an organization who helps those in need by taking your unsold sale and any other items you may wish to donate to a special drop-off point near Migliazzo Park after the sale. Watch your mailbox for a flyer on how to sign up to participate in the sale! A special shout out to Suzanne Morehouse as she once again takes on the dubious task of organizing all of us to make this sale a highly participated in and successful event. If you have questions about the sale, Suzanne is your contact at (816) 822-4063.

BBQ Fest

Back by popular demand, is the Verona Hills Bar-B-Que in Migliazzo Park. The date for this event is Saturday, October 1, so mark your calendars now to attend! This is a great way to get out and meet your neighbors and see some of the great work we are doing in the Park to make it a great gathering spot. We will be sending you a flier soon with all the details and we are expecting a large turnout – so make your reservations early!!

Movies in the Park

A 'Movies in the Park' event has been a real community builder in several Kansas City neighborhoods and we would like to bring it to our neighborhood as we have one of the best Parks (and neighborhoods) in the entire City. We need your help though in pulling the event together. We are looking for planners and "technical" specialist to make this one of the must attend events of the summer. If you are interested in lending a hand, please contact Nancy Rusch at (816) 942-7659.

Verona Hills Annual Meeting

If you haven't attended a Verona Hills annual meeting lately wow have you been missing something! Last years annual meeting, held at Blue Hills Country Club, was well attended by over 125 of your friends and neighbors. We are aiming to double that number this year. The annual meeting is the perfect time for you to catch up on changes occurring in the neighborhood as well as to socialize with old friends while making new friends. Invitations will be sent to all homeowners in the October timeframe for this meeting, which has tentatively been scheduled for Thursday, November 3rd at Blue Hills country Club.

Easter Egg Hunt a Huge Success Once Again

As many of you already know, the Annual Easter Egg Hunt in the Spring was once again a rousing success. Participation continues to grow for this event and the Easter Bunny couldn't be happier. I would like to take a minute to thank our sponsors: UMB Bank for the \$1 bills in the eggs, Hy-vee for the coffee and donuts, Baskin & Robbins Ice Cream in Red Bridge for the free ice cream cone coupons, and McDonalds for the Happy Meal prizes. We could not have achieved such great success for this event without our wonderful head Easter bunny, Kathleen Purcell, and her many helpers including Tina Cotton and a gaggle of school age helpers who did all the stuffing and planting of the eggs. When you see any of these folks take a minute to stop and tell them "thanks" for all their hard work and dedication. Most of all make sure to mark your calendar for the weekend before Easter so that you can be sure and attend next year's hunt!

Directory Updates

Remember – the Verona Hills Directory is only as good as the information you give us to keep it updated. Paula Tarwater will be taking a shot at the 2006 Directory, so help her out if she comes a calling!

Migliazzo Park Update

If you haven't visited Migliazzo Park in the last several months you should definitely make plans to take a walk or get on your bicycle and check it out. The additional funding we have provided to the City as a neighborhood has allowed for more grass mowing in the park as well as weed control and fertilization to help get the grass looking good. We have plans under way to deal with the crumbling island in the middle of the lake, as well as a request for dredging of the lake due to the heavy silting on the north end. If you have any questions, concerns or general comments about the Park, please give VH Board member Matt Ungaschick a call.

Common Sense Tips on How to be a Good Neighbor

- Keep your house painted and in good repair at all times. Maintain the sidewalks and curbs around your home.
- Keep your lawn well-trimmed and all shrubbery neat. Lawn cuttings and other trimmings should be disposed of properly. Disposal of lawn clippings and other debris in the Park or other common ways is strictly prohibited.
- Do not allow accumulation of debris to collect in your yard and do not leave tools and equipment outside.
- Trash containers should not be conspicuous except on trash collection days.
- Don't put trash at curbside prior to late the evening before pickup. Putting it out on Sunday morning does not make the trash collection trucks come any sooner.

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- Keep exterior lighting pointed away from your neighbors' homes to avoid creating an annoyance when your neighbors are trying to sleep at night.
- Before making any changes in your property (additions, fences, etc.), make sure to obtain required approvals at City and County levels as well as a call to the Home's Association to make sure improvements comply with the codes and restrictions.
- Do not allow pets to run free day or night, and please be considerate and cleanup after them.
- Keep your cars in the garage overnight, not in the street.

Speaking of Neighbors.....

As the neighborhood homes and common areas continue to age, it is time now more than ever to rally as a community and work together to improve our neighborhood. Many times the Board will get phone calls or anonymous letters requesting that we call a property owner regarding something that has fallen into disrepair. As a Board we would ask that before contacting us regarding a property that you take a moment to reach out to talk with the person you are reporting to see if they are even aware their property has some less than desirable conditions affecting it. You may be surprised to find out that the home owner didn't know they had an issue, or that there are other circumstances causing the lapse in upkeep (i.e. a death or illness in the family, loss of job, age preventing certain tasks to be done that had always been done before etc.). It could be a great opportunity, if you choose, to help someone in need.

As always the Board is willing and ready to step in and work with homeowners who have issues, but please give a try to communicating with your neighbors and working through issues as a neighbor or friend.

WELCOME our New Neighbors....

12-23-04 to 8-5-05

Aaron & Laura Anderson
912 West 121st Terrace
Gwendolyn Baker & Aunna Peoples
904 West 120th Terrace
Vincent McEvoy
308 West 115th Street
Matthew Dameron & Jennifer Kopp
11518 Wornall Road
Jeremy & Teresa Bonchert
905 West 119th Terrace
John & Cary Crawford
11821 Pennsylvania
Judy Rush
817 Santa Fe Trail
Anthony & Madeleine Cardarella
509 West 119th Terrace
Madeline Romious
11318 Jefferson
John R. O'Malley
209 West 115th Terrace
Liam & Anne Cahill
808 West 121st Street
Stephen & Stephanie Waldren
735 Santa Fe Trail
John Humphrey
11617 Jefferson
Maxine Sandman
401 West 115th Street
Thomas & Marilyn Fennessy
623 Santa Fe Trail
Manny & Patricia Vasquez
706 Santa Fe Trail
Cory Helms
806 West 120th Terrace
Nettie Jones
11536 Baltimore
Christopher & Stacey Young
11611 Glen Arbor Terrace
Kelsi & Kevin Coehn
824 Santa Fe Trail
Phillip & Christy Paschang
11801 Summit
Mark & Sharon Russo
11807 Washington
Greg Redmond
11801 Glen Arbor Terrace
Damian & Tiffany Garcia
11704 Jefferson
Shane Bisson & Janelle Botts
724 West 121st Street
Mary Graham
323 West 119th Terrace

Common Area Improvements

As parts of our neighborhood have passed the ripe old age of 40, it has become evident some of the common areas and islands just aren't as attractive as they once were. As part of our neighborhood improvement plan, we would like to re-invigorate some of the existing islands and common areas in the original sections of the neighborhood, as well as extend the look and feel of the original sections of the neighborhood into the areas of the neighborhood built later. As we improve and upgrade these areas, we hope to be able to rely on neighbors surrounding the improvement to help with some simple care and maintenance of these areas to help them survive and look great. With the numerous amounts of common areas and islands in our neighborhood, we are also looking for your input on which ones are in most desperate need of improvement. If you have an area that is close to you, that you feel could use some improvement, please clip and mail the form below to Sue Fahey so that we can start prioritizing the work that needs to be done.

Location of Common Area or Island:

Current condition of the Common Area or Island:

What would be some things we could do to improve the area:

Could we count on you to water any new plantings we might add to this area?

Your name and phone number so we can contact you with questions:

**Send this form to:
Sue Fahey
901 WEST 120TH STREET
Kansas City, MO 64145**

City Sponsored Tree Planting

The City ended up with some extra dollars in their pockets this year and made the decision to spend it on replanting neighborhood trees that had been destroyed and never replaced. Those homeowners lucky enough to get a flyer on their door letting them know a tree would be planted should now be the proud owner of a new addition to their property. **Please remember to keep these young saplings well watered through the hot summer months.** If your new planting has already taken a turn for the worse due to the heat over the past several weeks, please contact the KCMO City Action Center at 816-513-1312 so that the City Forestry Department can be notified and take appropriate action.

Parkway Tree Trimming

The VH Board has received several calls about parkway trees not being trimmed enough to allow walkers and runners safe passage on sidewalks. Please take a moment to assess your parkway trees to see if you could comfortably walk on the sidewalk and not bump your head or get tangled in leaves.

If your parkway trees need trimming attention you can either give them a trimming yourself or call the KCMO Action Center at 816-513-1312 to arrange for the City to trim them. Please be patient when requesting the trimming through City services as it may take up to a month or so to get the trimming done. Also be aware that the City is only responsible for trimming the parkway trees, if the trees are on your property and not in the City easement, the City will not trim them.

Santa Fe Road Improvements

Improvements are targeted for Santa Fe Road in conjunction with the construction of the new KC Hospice Facility at Santa Fe and Wornall Road. These improvements include widening of the street between Wornall and Pennsylvania, as well as two calming circles along Santa Fe Road to slow down the traffic on that street. We have asked that our City Councilman Chuck Eddy and the KCMO Traffic Engineering Department hold an information session for all interested Verona Hills homeowners to understand the detailed plan for the improvements. **Mark your calendar to attend this meeting on Thursday August 18th,** and watch your mailbox for an invitation and more information. It is very important to attend this informational session if you have any concerns whatsoever about how the changes may impact the traffic on your street. In the mean time, if you have any questions about the improvements, please contact Councilman Eddy's office at 816-513-1615.

Speed Traps in the Surrounding Area

Please keep in mind the speed limits when you are driving in Verona Hills and the surrounding neighborhoods. I have recently heard from several association presidents in our vicinity that they have requested speed control radar in our general area.

The KCMO Action Center

The KCMO Action Center is your central point of contact for City Services. If you 1) need information or have questions about City issues 2) need to request a City service 3) need to report a problem with City services, contact the Action Center at 816-513-1313 or 816-513-1312, or email the center at: actioncenter@kcmo.org. Here is the information you will need to provide when contacting the Action Center:

- The exact address or location of the issue you are calling about.
- Length of time the current situation or condition has existed.
- As many details about the situation or condition as possible (example: an abandoned vehicle's make, model, year, color, license plate number). Be as specific as possible.
- Your name and address if you would like to receive follow-up information on your request

Jennifer Koenig on the Verona Hills Board is also available to answer your questions when property issues arise.

KC Hospice Update

As many of have probably noticed, construction for the Kansas City Hospice facility has begun at Santa Fe and Wornall. The old buildings have been demolished and while permitting and site preparation has taken a bit longer than had been hoped for, the project is still on track for a spring, 2006 opening. A ground breaking ceremony was held on April 7 with many in attendance from Verona Hills. To that end, Kansas City Hospice would like to extend it's thanks to Annunciation Greek Orthodox Church for allowing the guests to use their parking lot. Elaine McIntosh, President and CEO of Kansas City Hospice, welcomes all questions or concerns regarding the construction of the Hospice facility. Please feel free to phone her at (816)276-2610 or email her at emcintosh@kchospice.org.

Changes to Verona Hills Homeowner Covenants Not Needed

In recent months there has been some press about the deed restrictions adopted and attached to properties in the 1920's and 30's that prohibited sales to racial and/or ethnic minorities. Although these restrictive covenants were ruled unenforceable in the 1940's and illegal in the 1960's, removing the language from the deed documents is complex and costly. The majority of the covenants can be amended only at the expiration of a 20 to 25 year renewal cycle, and require 5 years advance notice with a nearly impossible to achieve unanimous vote of all property owners in the association. Therefore the language, although meaningless, unenforceable and illegal, remained in the documents and became the focus of several KC Star articles.

Several Missouri legislators, with the support of many HACCD association leaders, drafted legislation to simplify the process for removing the offensive language from the covenants. On July 12, 2005, Governor Matt Blunt signed the legislation into law. The new law allows for the offensive covenants to be voted out of existence by a simple majority vote of the association's board of directors. The language is then removed from the covenants upon the filing of certain legal documents with the county. **You will be glad to know that since Verona Hills was created after 1948, our covenants DO NOT include any of the restrictive language referred to above.**

It is helpful however when considering this issue to keep both sides of the story in mind. On one hand the covenants were discriminatory to certain groups of individuals, which is never acceptable. On the other hand it is due to the diligence of the J.C. Nichols Company in drafting such iron-clad covenants, that we continue to enjoy the strong network of homes associations that even today protect the residential character and charm of our neighborhoods.

Verona Hills Neighborhood Watch Area

Remember, Verona Hills is a Neighborhood Watch Area. Anytime you observe a crime or suspicious action:

- **Call 9-1-1 immediately.**
- State the nature of the emergency.
- Stay on the line until you are told to hang up.

Have this information ready to give to police:

- Your address and name.
- Direction and mode of travel of the suspect or suspects (east-west-north-south, on what street, on foot or automobile).
- Give a complete vehicle description including year, make, body style and license number.
- Physical description of the suspect (race, sex, age, height, weight).
- Clothing description.
- Description of weapon if applicable.
- Description of property taken.

Go the Extra Mile to Protect Your Property in the Summer Months

- Close garage doors at all times...even when you are working in your yard.
- Remember, even a slightly cracked garage door can be opened by thieves.
- Make sure trees or shrubs are trimmed away from doors and windows. A trellis that can support a person's weight can be used to climb the side of a house.
- Is your house number visible from the street? This will greatly assist emergency personnel.
- When traveling, ask neighbors to pick up newspapers and packages.
- Property that is well-lit is less appealing to thieves.

**Accurate and timely
9-1-1 calls from
YOU prevent and solve
crimes!**

ICE ICE Baby – In Case of Emergency

With so many people carrying mobile phones these days, a campaign is currently under way to encourage everyone to enter an emergency contact number in their mobile phone's memory under the heading ICE (In Case of Emergency). It only takes a few seconds to set-up, and it could easily help save your life. Simply select a new contact in your phone book, enter the word 'ICE' and the number of the person you would wish to be contacted in an emergency situation.

Originally established as a nation-wide campaign in the UK, ICE allows paramedics or police to be able to contact a designated relative or next-of-kin in an emergency situation.

The idea is the brainchild of a 13 year veteran Ambulance Service Paramedic named Bob Brotchie who said: "I was reflecting on some of the calls I've attended at the roadside where I had to look through the mobile phone contacts struggling for information on a shocked or injured person. Almost everyone carries a mobile phone now, and with ICE we'd know immediately who to contact and what number to ring. The person we contact may even know the injured person's medical history."

By adopting the ICE advice, your mobile phone could help rescue services quickly contact a friend or relative - which could be vital in a life or death situation. Why not take a moment and put ICE in your phone now?

Sexual Predator Websites

It's nobody's favorite topic, but neither is it something to ignore. Recent legislation, nationally and locally, requires that convicted sex offenders (those who plead or were found guilty) register periodically with local authorities who then make that information available to the public via the internet.

Following are official websites you can search to ensure you are a little more informed about those living around you:

Missouri:

<http://www.mshp.dps.missouri.gov/MSHPWeb/PatrolDivisions/CRID/SOR/SORPage.html>. You will be able to search the records by name, county or zip code.

Kansas :

www.accesskansas.org/kbi and click on "Offender Reg." on the top tool bar. You will be able to search by name, city, county or zip code.

Trash Day Reminder

Please remember to have your trash out to the curb by 7:00 AM on Monday morning to avoid having your trash left behind. With the hot weather we have been experiencing it is not untypical for the waste collection crews to start earlier than usual in the morning to get their job done before the heat of the day hits.