

# COMMUNITY NEWS

News & Events for the City of Vestavia Hills • August 2021

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



Jeff Downes,  
City Manager  
City of  
Vestavia Hills

## CITY MANAGER'S REPORT

There is a steady drum beat in many cities that the key to economic success is to shop local. The thought process is that when you shop local, tax dollars remain in your community and serve as an investment in the “community chest” for the common good of the particular city. I don’t disagree with this general concept. In fact, shopping local also keeps the brick and mortar businesses strong. In many cases, these are the same businesses that support our community in so many different ways – they sponsor our special events, schools and sports teams.

I will take this concept one step further. Not only should dutiful residents consciously choose to spend their dollars locally, but community strategies should also encourage and facilitate the creation of businesses that make it convenient to shop local. When a resident shops locally because it’s where they really want to go rather out of a sense of obligation, we have achieved a truly economically sustainable future.

Being a man of data, I recently compared sales tax receipts over the last six months to the same six-month period in 2020. The goal of comparing the early pandemic period to the conclusion of the pandemic period is to evaluate the health of the various business sectors. Some of my findings are included below:

<u>Business Sector</u>	<u>Increase in Sales 2021 vs. 2020</u>
Grocery Stores & Supermarkets	46%
Limited Service Restaurants	32%
Full Service Restaurants	28%
<b>Total Sales Tax Receipts (Year to Date)</b>	<b>18%</b>

Analysis of this data (along with other data that is too cumbersome to share in this short article) convinces me that our City’s strategy to work with private sector partners to provide quality, convenient grocery store opportunities is paying a healthy dividend when looking at the increase in sales taxes generated from that sector. Furthermore, most of our small businesses are rebounding in a healthy manner. A couple such examples are expressed in the restaurant sectors. While these are just a small subset of local businesses, the overall sales growth rate from a very healthy 2020 is an incredible 18%.

These facts reinforce my thoughts that Vestavia Hills residents are not only dutifully shopping local, but our local businesses are providing locations and items that are in high demand within our city. These businesses are remaining nimble and using good strategies to remain strong. While many variables can affect this positive trajectory, the signs are good that the economically sustainable future desired by so many communities exists here in Vestavia Hills. Thank you to our businesses for hanging in through the pandemic doom and gloom, and thank you to the many partners who support the local economy. It takes all of us pulling in the same direction to reach these heights of success!

## COMMUNITY CALENDAR

### August 2021

- 5 Design Review Board**, Executive Conference Room, 6 p.m.
- 9 City Council Meeting**, Council Chamber, 6 p.m.
- 10 Vestavia Hills City Schools begin**
- 10 Chamber Luncheon**, Vestavia Country Club, 11:30 a.m.
- 12 Planning and Zoning Commission**, Council Chamber, 6 p.m.
- 16 Council Work Session**, Executive Conference Room, 6 p.m.
- 17 Parks and Recreation Board**, Executive Conference Room, 5:30 p.m.
- 19 Board of Zoning Adjustment**, Council Chamber, 6 p.m.
- 23 City Council Meeting**, Council Chamber, 6 p.m.
- 24 Mayor’s Prayer Breakfast\***, Vestavia Country Club, 7:00 a.m.  
*\*Ticket required*
- 24 National Senior Citizens Day Celebration**, Recreation Center, 4:00 p.m.



## KEEP AN EXTINGUISHER CLOSE BY!

Fire is divided into five classes (A, B, C, D and K). These classes are primarily based on the fuel that is burning. This classification system helps to determine the most effective type of extinguishing agent:

**Class A** fires involve common combustibles such as wood, paper, cloth, rubber, trash and plastics.

**Class B** fires involve flammable liquids, solvents, oil, gasoline, paints, lacquers and other oil-based products.

**Class C** fires involve energized electrical equipment such as wiring, controls, motors, machinery or appliances.

**Class D** Fires involve combustible metals such as magnesium, lithium and titanium.

**Class K** Fires involve combustible cooking media such as oils and grease commonly found in commercial kitchens.

Most household fires are Classes A, B or C and can be put out by a trained adult using a hand-held, multi-purpose fire extinguisher (also called an ABC extinguisher). Fire extinguishers have a long history in the fire service and continue to be used to this day in emergency situations.

**The Vestavia Hills Fire Department recommends keeping a multi-purpose extinguisher in your home for use on small fires.**

**When using a fire extinguisher, remember to PASS:**

**P**ull the pin.

**A**im the nozzle at the base of the fire.

**S**queeze the lever.

**S**weep from side to side.

Be sure to become familiar with the extinguisher soon after purchasing it and place it where it is easily accessible. Most importantly, know when to get out of the house! If the fire grows and spreads rapidly, life safety becomes the #1 priority. Enact your escape plan, close the door behind you and get to a safe place.

Extinguishers should be disposed of after 10 years. To dispose of properly, discharge the contents outdoors then put the fully discharged extinguisher in your household trash. VHFDF does NOT accept old extinguishers.



Ashley Curry,  
Mayor  
City of  
Vestavia Hills

## MAYOR'S MESSAGE

Thank goodness that the pandemic is tapering off and we are returning to some "normalcy." It certainly felt good to be outside with many of you at "I Love America Night" at Wald Park – nearly 5,000 residents attended this year's event! I received many favorable comments about the Wald Park facilities and the event itself. It felt great to socially interact after more than a year of isolation and cancelled City events.

I am optimistic that the City will be able to resume several very important programs that were scaled back during the pandemic:

The **Phoenix Program** became operational in July 2019 with the purpose of assisting individuals struggling with addiction. In Greek mythology, the phoenix was a long-lived bird that cyclically regenerated. Associated with the Sun, a phoenix obtained new life by arising from the ashes of its predecessor. This intervention program provides an opportunity for individuals that realize their addiction to seek counseling or recovery assistance through our Vestavia Hills police and fire departments, and thereby "rise from the ashes."

We will be revamping our efforts to raise awareness about opioid abuse and drug overdose deaths through our **Freedom from Addiction Coalition (FFAC)**. The FFAC was started in 2017 and several awareness breakfast meetings were held prior to the pandemic limiting our ability to meet. Our FFAC Advisory Board recently met to discuss the next steps in raising awareness by the most effective means. You will hear more about this in the near future.

We will initiate some **training opportunities for our senior citizens** regarding the many prevalent scams perpetrated against our seniors. These training sessions were well received but had to be discontinued due to the pandemic. Our Parks and Recreation senior programming staff is partnering with senior services resource agencies to develop these opportunities as we speak.

Another program that needs our attention is **elder abuse prevention**. By some estimations, over 75,000 cases of elder abuse happen every year in Alabama alone. As the 65+ population is the fastest growing age group and now comprises over 40 million people, cases of abuse are also more likely to occur. Unbelievably, the majority of elder abuse cases are committed by family members or caregivers.

So, as you can see, we have many things to do now that COVID-19 pandemic restrictions are subsiding. As an American writer said, "Summer has flown by and we are ready for August, the grand finale of summer. Because once it is gone, fall and all the big holidays are right around the corner."

I hope you have had an enjoyable summer to date and have an equally enjoyable August. As our students gear up for school and we prepare for "big holidays," please remember to shop locally. Our small businesses need your continued support.

# UPCOMING events

## AUGUST 2021

**Children** (Birth-Gr. 1) | **Tweens** (Gr. 2-6) | **Teens** (Gr. 6-12) | **Adults** (Ages 18+)  
**Tech** (Ages 18+) | **Makerspace** (All ages, unless noted)

- 2 Belly Dance with Bethany, 6pm, Library's Community Room** Get your shimmy on! Learn the basic moves of this beautiful dance form. Wear comfy clothes and shoes. Registration required – call 205.978.4678 or email [terri.leslie@vestavialibrary.org](mailto:terri.leslie@vestavialibrary.org).
- 4 Writing Group, 4pm, Historical Room** Join our writing group and build writing skills while providing feedback to one another.
- 5 Online Chess Club, 4pm, Zoom** One of your peers, a decorated chess champion, will introduce you to the game or to compete against you! Grade 6-12 (no adults).
- Read & Feed Book Group, 6pm, Library's Historical Room** Join us for a discussion of *The House in the Cerulean Sea* by TJ Klune. Snacks served.
- 6 Open Gaming, 4pm, Community Room** Enjoy awesome board games and the latest consoles with fellow teens. Snacks served.
- 10 Smash Bits!, 4pm, YouTube** We've combined our teens' best Smash Bros plays together into one hard-punching reel! Want to make our next highlights? Join us at Open Gaming every Friday at 4pm!
- Teardown Tuesday, 4:30pm, Makerspace** Ever wonder what the innards of a radio look like or an alarm clock? Join us in the "Breaker Space" where we tear down small appliances and electronic devices to see what makes them tick, learn about their components and harvest parts. Ages 10+.
- 11 ABCs of Medicare, 12pm, Library's Community Room** An independent benefits advisor leads this monthly seminar to provide simple answers to your Medicare questions – navigating the process, how benefits are computed, filing claims and more.
- Level Up Your Locker, 4pm, Treehouse** Use your creativity to design new magnetic organization and decorations for your locker! Snacks served.
- 12 Handcrafted with Holly, 3pm, Library's Community Room** Join us each month for a fun afternoon of crafting! All materials supplied. Registration required – email [holly.parker@vestavialibrary.org](mailto:holly.parker@vestavialibrary.org).
- Basic Microsoft Word, 4pm, Electronic Classroom** Copy and paste, format text, insert page numbers, use spell check and more. Register online at [vestavialibrary.org](http://vestavialibrary.org) or call 205.978.4679.
- 13 Open Gaming, 4pm, Community Room** Enjoy awesome board games and the latest consoles with fellow teens. Snacks served.
- 16 Belly Dance with Bethany, 6pm, Library's Community Room** Get your shimmy on! Learn the basic moves of this beautiful dance form. Wear comfy clothes and shoes. Registration required – call 205.978.4678 or email [terri.leslie@vestavialibrary.org](mailto:terri.leslie@vestavialibrary.org).
- 17 Paper People, 4pm, Treehouse** Design and create your own unique papercraft figurines from cardstock. Snacks served.
- 18 Among Us, 4pm, Discord** Join us on Discord (<https://discord.gg/UsyUTC2>) and see if you can either discover who the impostor is or fool all of your friends.
- 20 Open Gaming, 4pm, Community Room** Enjoy awesome board games and the latest consoles with fellow teens. Snacks served.
- 24 Anime Night, 4pm, Community Room** Meet with other teens and watch the anime of choice. Japanese treats served.
- 25 Art Group, 4pm, Historical Room** Enjoy drawing, sketching or simply doodling? Come make and share your work while celebrating your artistic talents with other teens! Snacks served.
- 26 Basic Microsoft Excel, 4pm, Electronic Classroom** Format cells, use formulas, insert functions and perform other basic tasks to design Excel spreadsheets. Register online at [vestavialibrary.org](http://vestavialibrary.org) or call 205.978.4679.
- Intro to 3D Printing, 4:30pm, Makerspace** Curious about 3D printing? This class is the perfect introduction. Learn how the Makerspace printers work as well as the basics of finding and preparing models to print.
- 27 Super Smash Bros Tournament, 4pm, Community Room** Who will reign supreme in this epic battle royale? Dominate the competition and fight to win an Amazon gift card! Snacks served.
- Craft\*Lab, 6:30pm, Library's Community Room** A favorite for years and we're so excited to bring this monthly crafting program back! Our first project is a fabulous paint pour technique that creates stunning patterns on canvas. All materials provided along with snacks and prizes. Registration required – call 205.978.4678 or email [terri.leslie@vestavialibrary.org](mailto:terri.leslie@vestavialibrary.org).
- 30 Belly Dance with Bethany, 6pm, Library's Community Room** Get your shimmy on! Learn the basic moves of this beautiful dance form. Wear comfy clothes and shoes. Registration required – call 205.978.4678 or email [terri.leslie@vestavialibrary.org](mailto:terri.leslie@vestavialibrary.org).

\*CHILDREN & TWEEN programming will resume Tuesday, September 1, 2021.\*



LIBRARY IN THE FOREST

For more information, visit [vestavialibrary.org](http://vestavialibrary.org) or call 205.978.0155.



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

## **SUPERINTENDENT'S MESSAGE**

August 10 is the first day of school in Vestavia Hills and the beginning of the next 50 years in our system. For half a century, VHCS has been distinguished by strength of tradition, perseverance through challenging moments, persistence in its quest for excellence and unparalleled support

from its community. These values form the strong foundation for our strategic plan mission and goals.

The VHCS mission is to provide every student the opportunity to learn without limits through a system distinguished by a safe and nurturing environment, the courage to be creative, unparalleled community support, appreciation of diversity and multiple paths to a bold future. Learning is our driving force. Overcoming limits is our motivation.

The three goals of our plan are intentionally broad so we can be agile and stay on mission. Our primary goal is for students to learn and demonstrate knowledge in a profound way. Our second goal is that we confront the problems and challenges that impact our system, families, and students. The last goal is to have effective leadership, management and staffing systems in place that best support our students and employees.

As we enter the next 50 years, we must have a compelling vision with a clear focus on the future. Author and pastor Andy Stanley says, "Vision often begins with the inability to accept things the way they are ... vision always stands in contrast to the world as it is." A perpetually successful organization does not allow inertia to stifle future possibilities. Instead, it draws energy from its values and uses them to spark innovation and improvement.

A vision for VHCS that is future-focused means expanding learning experiences that empower students with knowledge and skills to be competent professionals, effective leaders, and engaged citizens. It broadens our resources to best confront challenges — known and unknown. And it bolsters our capacity to support the work of exceptional teachers and staff in first-class learning spaces.

Since the inception of our strategic plan two years ago, several teams of stakeholders have met to envision the future of our school system. These teams focused on STEM education, mental health supports, safety and security, arts, athletics, capital planning and finance. Each team was charged with designing ideas for a future without limits in mind. I look forward to sharing more with you throughout this school year about the work completed by each of these teams.

The enthusiasm brought about by a new school year is exciting. Having a compelling vision for the future of VHCS in the next 50 is invigorating!

Ask a child what he dreams of doing in the future. His answer brings everything into focus for us.

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BECAUSE CHILDREN HAVE DREAMS.



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(205) 978-3200



## **MAYOR'S PRAYER BREAKFAST VESTAVIA HILLS**

**August 24, 2021**

7:00 a.m. Buffet Opens • 7:30 a.m. Program Begins

**Vestavia Country Club**

400 Beaumont Drive • Vestavia Hills, AL

This year's speaker is **Brodie Croyle**,  
Executive Director of Big Oak Ranch.

**Tickets are \$20 each** and may be purchased  
online at [www.vestaviahills.org](http://www.vestaviahills.org) or by calling  
the Chamber of Commerce at 205.823.5011.



**Karen Odle,  
President**

Vestavia Hills  
Chamber of Commerce

## CHAMBER NEWS

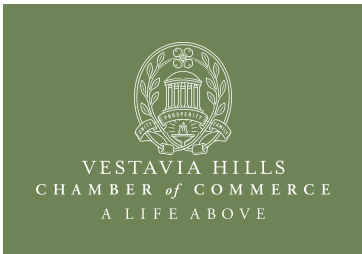
Thank you to everyone that joined us for I Love America Night – our first big event at the newly renovated Wald Park. We were thrilled to have great weather, a great crowd AND a beautiful new park to celebrate!

A huge shout-out and thank you to our major sponsors that underwrote the cost

of the fireworks: Title Sponsor was McDonald's/Black Family Restaurants; Presenting Sponsors were Progress Bank; Royal Automotive; Shades Mountain Baptist Church and Standard Heating, Cooling and Plumbing. We had rave reviews on the firework show and these sponsors made it possible. We had our largest number of sponsors ever and they each talked about how much they enjoyed meeting residents and getting to know you better. For a list of our 85 event sponsors, please visit the Chamber website at [vestaviahills.org](http://vestaviahills.org). Please be sure to thank them (better yet, use their services) when you have the opportunity.

We have celebrated Grand Openings and Ribbon Cuttings with several businesses this summer so be sure to stop by and welcome them to Vestavia Hills. These include Unless U (Highway 31 business district); SouthPoint Bank (Liberty Park); Love Desserts (Cahaba Heights); The Smocking Bird (Cahaba Heights); Summit Smiles Pediatric Dentistry (Cahaba Heights); and Crumbl Cookies (Vestavia City Center). Our residents have been fantastic in continuing to support our businesses in their efforts to remain open and viable after a very stressful pandemic year and it has made a difference as we are seeing it in the tax revenue collected each month.

Mark your calendar for our annual Shredding/e-Recycle/Hazardous Waste/Medication Take-back on September 11 from 9:00 a.m. until 1:00 p.m. It's a great way to dispose of items you weren't sure how to handle. Be sure to check out the event information below, including the list of included/excluded items. If you have questions, feel free to contact us at 205.823.5011.



## HELPING HANDS IN THE HILLS RECYCLE DAY

**September 11, 2021 • 9 a.m. - 1 p.m.**

**Vestavia Hills City Hall • 1032 Montgomery Highway, 35216**

**The Vestavia Hills Chamber of Commerce Helping Hands in the Hills Recycle Day is planned for Saturday, September 11, 2021. Drop off will be in the parking lot at Vestavia Hills City Hall. Items will be collected from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. (or until capacity is reached).**

Items available to be collected include electronics and household hazardous waste. (Proof of Vestavia Hills residency is required for hazardous waste disposal.) Paper shredding services will also be available and Vestavia Hills police officers will be on-site to collect unneeded or expired medications for disposal. (Needles will NOT be accepted.)

**Electronic items to be accepted include:** PCs and laptops; servers; cell phones and tablets; satellite and cable boxes; gaming systems and components; stereos and radios; switches and firewalls; printers and fax machines; VCRs and DVD players; remote controls; MP3 players;

A/C adapters and other cables; LCD monitors; CRT monitors\*; ink and toner cartridges; rechargeable batteries; hard drives, including external drives\*; speakers; cameras; modems and routers; CD players; small kitchen appliances; consumer electronics; battery backups; keyboards and mice; stand-alone copiers\*; and TVs\*

\* Fee required for the disposal of these items: hard drive and CRT monitors: \$10 each; televisions: \$20 each

**Not accepted:** large appliances or wooden console TVs

**Household hazardous waste items to be accepted include:** paint; batteries (household and automotive); light bulbs; and pesticides. Paint and pesticides MUST be in their original containers or they will NOT be accepted. **Proof of Vestavia Hills residency required for hazardous waste disposal.**

*Special thanks to:* PROTEC Recycling; Amwaste; and Gone for Good (a program of United Ability)

**AQUATIC COMPLEX**

The Aquatic Complex has been a huge hit this summer and there is still time to join ... Membership is HALF-PRICE for the remainder of the 2021 swim season! Purchase your resident pass today at <http://bit.ly/VH-poolpass>.

**Check Us Out for Your Next Event!**

Host your next event at the Aquatic Complex! For reservation times, prices, etc. visit [www.vhal.org/parks-facilities](http://www.vhal.org/parks-facilities) or contact William Laatsch ([wlaatsch@vhal.org](mailto:wlaatsch@vhal.org)).

**Swim Lessons**

Swim lessons for Vestavia Hills residents are being offered at the Aquatic Complex through a partnership with Trident Aquatics for only \$60 per student! Visit <https://tridentaquatics.org/swim-school> and scroll to “Register Now – Click Here” to register online. If you have questions or need additional information, contact Leah Turner with Trident Aquatics at [lturner@tridentaquatics.org](mailto:lturner@tridentaquatics.org).

**RECREATION CENTER**

**Daytime Jazzercise and pickleball return to the former VH Elementary – Central campus effective August 9, 2021**

**Jazzercise**

Monday-Friday ..... 8:30-9:30am

**Pickleball**

Monday, Wednesday & Friday ..... 10am-12:30pm

**Walking Track**

Monday-Friday ..... 7am-9pm

Saturday ..... 8am-8pm

Sunday ..... 1-8pm

**Open Gym**

Monday-Friday ..... 2:30-9pm

Saturday ..... 8am-8pm

Sunday ..... 1-8pm

**Don't forget ... Rec Center membership is FREE for all Vestavia Hills residents!**

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205.822.9631 – [WWW.VHUMC.ORG](http://WWW.VHUMC.ORG) – @VHUMC

## SENIOR ADULT ACTIVITIES

### National Senior Citizens Day

This year's National Senior Citizens Day Celebration will be held Tuesday, August 24, 2021 from 4-7pm at the Rec Center. RSVP by Wednesday, August 18 to Sandi Wilson (swilson@vhal.org). We hope to see you there!

### Senior Luncheons

Senior Luncheons resume in September! Bring your friends or meet someone new to enjoy an afternoon of fun and entertainment! Contact Ruby Denson (205.822.8788) or Sandi Wilson (swilson@vhal.org) to make your reservation.

### New Merkel House

Now serving hot meals Monday through Friday at New Merkel House! Coffee & Conversations start at 10am and lunch is served daily.

### Join us for daily activities!

Mondays . . . . . chair & stretching exercises  
 Tuesdays . . . . . Tai Chi  
 Fridays . . . . . Bingo & guest speakers  
 Games are played every day!

### Hours of Operation

Monday-Friday . . . . . 10am-2pm  
 Saturday & Sunday . . . . . Closed

For more information about New Merkel House, contact Melanie Perry (205.967.5977; mperry@vhal.org).

## FOLLOW PARKS & REC

Stay tuned to Parks and Recreation online for the latest information, including Open Gym schedules and events! Enjoying all the great amenities in Vestavia Hills? Tag us in your posts, tweets and photos!



**Facebook:** @VestaviaHillsParksandRecreation  
**Instagram:** @vestaviahillsparksandrec  
**Twitter:** @VHParks\_Rec  
**Website:** <https://vhal.org/parks-recreation>  
**Field/Facility Status:** <https://statusme.com/fs-alabama>



# Royal

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**GMC**

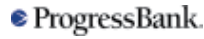


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