

COMMUNITY NEWS

News & Events for the City of Vestavia Hills • November 2022

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

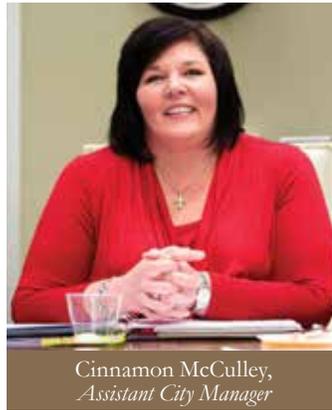


Jeff Downes,
City Manager
City of
Vestavia Hills

CITY MANAGER'S REPORT

As we enter the new fiscal year and celebrate the new ideas and programs that the City will bring forward for its residents, I want to highlight a particular move that will pay dividends for years to come. Longtime resident and employee, Cinnamon McCulley, began her new role as Assistant City Manager on October 1.

Cinnamon is a very talented individual. She has embraced a lengthy career in marketing and



Cinnamon McCulley,
Assistant City Manager

communications and has shown a wonderful skill set in navigating and managing a wide variety of municipal issues both internally and externally. In promoting her to this newly created position, the City will be able to continue leaning on her communications background, but we will also broaden her role and value to the City by introducing economic development and organizational development components to her job description.

If you were attentive to the efforts to rebrand and reposition the annual Dogwood Festival last year, that was Cinnamon and her team's handiwork. Furthermore, it became quite obvious in strategic planning conversations over the last year, the ability to team an Assistant City Manager position with the efforts of the Chamber of Commerce, in growing opportunities for our existing business community, would be extremely beneficial. As Cinnamon has begun her efforts in the economic development realm, the leadership team of the Chamber, along with Cinnamon and other stakeholders, have collaborated through the written work of Peter Kageyama in *For the Love of Cities*. The hope is that the commitment to a theoretical mindset found in this inspiring book will help establish a framework for growing the fortunes of our local business community.

Cinnamon and the team are now using words like love, playful, meaningful and interesting as key concepts in all the wonderful collaborative ideas that are being generated. Our Assistant City Manager is stepping into a new role, and I am confident that she will sustain her wonderful past successes and grow the opportunity to become the "chairman of fun" for the City of Vestavia Hills. Welcome aboard, Cinnamon! I am confident that this great City will continue to be the envy of the region as we evolve and adjust with a committed team of leaders.

**BOARD
VACANCY**

• APPLY NOW •

There are many volunteer opportunities for Vestavia Hills residents to get involved in the community. Volunteering is a rewarding way to serve your city, meet new people, discover new interests, have fun and learn something new. **Applications are being accepted NOW for vacancies on the Parks and Recreation Board and the Library Board of Trustees.** We hope you will invest in your community by volunteering your time and talents!

For more information or to apply, visit <https://vhal.org/community/get-involved>.

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Events and dates subject to change. Please refer to the City of Vestavia Hills website for the most up-to-date event information.

November 2022

- 3 Design Review Board,**
Executive Conference Room, 6 p.m.
- 8 Chamber Luncheon,**
Vestavia Country Club, 11:30 a.m.
- 10 Salute to Veterans Celebration,**
Civic Center, 2 p.m.
- 10 Planning and Zoning Commission,**
Council Chamber, 6 p.m.
- 11 Municipal Offices Closed,**
Veterans Day
- 14 Senior Citizens Association Luncheon,** Civic Center, 11:30 a.m.
- 14 City Council Meeting,**
Council Chamber, 6 p.m.
- 15 Parks and Recreation Board,**
Executive Conference Room, 7:30 a.m.
- 16 Annexation Committee,**
Executive Conference Room, 3 p.m.
- 17 Board of Zoning Adjustment,**
Council Chamber, 6 p.m.
- 21 Council Work Session,**
Executive Conference Room, 6 p.m.
- 24 & 25 Municipal Offices Closed,**
Thanksgiving*
- 28 City Council Meeting,**
Council Chamber, 6 p.m.
- 29 Tree Lighting Festival,**
City Hall, 6 p.m.

*Waste closed Thursday ONLY;
all Thursday and Friday routes will
be serviced on a one-day delay.



Ashley Curry,
Mayor
City of
Vestavia Hills

MAYOR'S MESSAGE

Last month I presented the “State of the City Address” at the Vestavia Hills Chamber of Commerce monthly luncheon. There are two very notable things about our city that were addressed. The first was the quality of life that we enjoy in our city. We continue to be rated as one of the most “livable” cities in Alabama. Also, of note is the economic strength of our city. Under the leadership of

the City Council and the City Manager we are very fiscally responsible and, as I pointed out in the address, we are very efficient and “do more with less” compared to other cities.

Also, last month we held our Community Night Out. This annual event is an opportunity to enhance the relationships between our citizens and our first responders while building a sense of community. Furthermore, it provides a great opportunity to bring first responders together under positive circumstances.

This month we celebrate two big events: Veterans Day and Thanksgiving.

It would be safe to say that if it were not for our veterans, we probably would have nothing to celebrate. Without the freedoms that they fought for, we would not be able to live in a country that allows the quality of life that we enjoy. We must honor and remember the service of our men and women in the military presently as well as those who served previously. The sacrifices made by our veterans should never be forgotten.

In Vestavia Hills, we will honor our veterans with two separate events. The first celebration will be held on Wednesday, November 9 at the New Merkel House in Cahaba Heights and the second will take place at the new Vestavia Hills Civic Center on Thursday, November 10. All are invited to attend these events.

Thanksgiving is most assuredly a time to be grateful. Susan Rhodes, a Licensed Clinical Social Worker, says “Gratitude is more than just the feeling of thankfulness. Being thankful is the first step, and we have to have that initial feeling to build upon. We build upon it by redirecting our focus into making gratefulness an intrinsic part of our lives.” She suggests that we show gratitude to all the people that have added value, love, or friendship in our lives.

What are you thankful for this Thanksgiving? I suspect many of your responses will include family, friends and good health. But there is so much more for which to be thankful. I am also grateful for all our employees, our civic clubs, our churches, our citizen volunteers and all of our citizens that contribute so much to our city.

I will be thankful and grateful for the completion of the new Civic Center. Projected to open in November, it will have increased space for recreation, numerous meeting rooms and even a large banquet space. Our Parks and Leisure Services staff is busy planning events, programs and recreational activities for our new facility and we can hardly wait to welcome the public into this beautiful space.

Be sure to mark your calendars for the annual Tree Lighting Festival at City Hall on November 29. Hope to see you there!

VESTAVIA HILLS

Salute to Veterans

Honoring Those Who Served

Mayor Ashley Curry and the City of Vestavia Hills are honored to present “Salute to Veterans” on Thursday, November 10, 2022 at 2pm at the new Vestavia Hills Civic Center (1090 Montgomery Highway). This annual Veterans Day celebration features patriotic-themed entertainment followed by a reception honoring all branches of service. This year’s keynote speaker is Rear Admiral W. Kent Davis, USN, (Retired). Mr. Davis is an accomplished leader with more than 30 years of senior communication, management, legal and military experience, retiring in 2016 as Vice Chief of Information for the Navy at the rank of Rear Admiral (Lower Half). He currently serves as the State Commissioner of the Alabama Department of Veterans Affairs.

Send us your photos!

We would love to include veteran photos of you or a family member in our event video. Please email a scanned photo of yourself, family members or friends who have served or are currently serving in any branch of the military to cmcculley@vhal.org. Please include: (1) service member’s first & last name; (2) military rank; (3) branch of service; (4) military conflict/theater of operation; and (5) dates of military service (if available). If you previously submitted a photo, no need to resubmit.



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

SUPERINTENDENT'S MESSAGE

From August to May, children spend about a third of the normal work week on a school campus. My expectation, like any parent, is that the school buildings they attend be safe and nurturing places — a home away from home. In Vestavia Hills City Schools, maintaining just such a place is a pillar of our mission to provide every student the opportunity to learn without limits. And it

is also a priority in the vision of our *1Rebel 1Future* plan.

Maintaining a healthy indoor environment is paramount when considering safety inside school buildings. Heating, ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC) systems that properly circulate and ventilate are critical to indoor air quality. It's a reasonable expectation that students and staff be cool when it's hot outside and warm when it's cold.

These are essential characteristics of a comfortable environment where students can fully focus on their learning.

VHCS has more than 770 HVAC units on 9 campuses. Our maintenance team strives to make sure each unit operates effectively despite its age or condition. That can be a challenge when considering that 38% of our HVAC systems are more than 15 years old, and many are approaching 30 years of age. As part of the *1Rebel 1Future* plan,

we will replace those aging systems with modern, high-efficiency units that promote healthier classroom environments.

Good lighting is another important component of a nurturing space for learning. VHCS maintains over 17,000 light fixtures. Two-thirds of those are older fixtures that do not provide optimal classroom lighting. Currently, Vestavia Hills High School and Louis Pizitz Middle School are the only campuses complete with modern LED light fixtures that provide the best visibility for children and teachers. The *1Rebel 1Future* vision will add this LED lighting in all of our schools.

This year, we expect to spend approximately \$3.2 million in utility costs — electricity, gas and water. VHCS has partnered with Schneider Electric to develop a comprehensive energy management plan that includes upgrades of HVAC systems, lighting and various roof replacements. These upgrades will be part of the *1Rebel 1Future* plan and will reduce our utility costs by an estimated \$1 million per year. That savings could be reinvested in our strategic plan goals: providing profound learning experiences for our children and supporting them through their academic and life challenges.

You can learn more about *1Rebel 1Future* and our vision for a safe and nurturing environment by watching the October Board of Education meeting at www.vhcs.us.

We work tirelessly to help kids get well because the world needs to see what Natalie dreams up.

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BECAUSE CHILDREN HAVE DREAMS.



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PARKS & RECREATION

ACTIVE ADULTS (55+)

- Join us for fun, fellowship and lunch at New Merkel House in Cahaba Heights every Monday-Friday. Lunch is served daily at 11:45am.
- New Merkel House offers **stretching classes** on Mondays at 10:30am, **Tai Chi** on Tuesdays at 12:30pm and **chair yoga** on Thursdays at 10:30am.
- On Thursday, November 3, we will hit the road to visit **Wind Creek Casino in Wetumpka, AL!** The bus will depart the Vestavia Hills Aquatic Complex at 7:30am and is scheduled to return at 5pm. Reservations are required; call 205.978.0166. Transportation is provided, but lunch is at your discretion.
- Join us on Monday, November 14, at 11:30am at the new Civic Center for a **delicious lunch and special guest, James Spann!** Please note that the admission price of our senior luncheon has increased to \$8. Call 205.978.0166 to make your reservation by October 6. *Sponsored by Right at Home.*
- **Lunch Bunch** will be on Thursday, November 17, at the new Davenport's Pizza at the Vestavia Hills City Center! Meet at Vestavia Hills Aquatic Complex at 10:45am for free transportation. Lunch is at your discretion; reserve your spot by calling 205.978.0166!
- On Friday, November 18, we will visit the **Magical Marketplace** at Vestavia Hills United Methodist Church. It is the perfect time to finish your holiday shopping! There will be a bus leaving from New Merkel House at 8:45am and, if you live near Montgomery Highway, we ask that you meet us at the church at 9am! Call 205.978.0166 for more details.
- Join us at New Merkel House on Wednesday, November 30, where we will play **Bingo!** There will be prizes and friendly competition! *Sponsored by Home Instead and Maust & Leone Medicare Advisors.* For more information, call 205.967.5977!
- **Important Holiday Closures:** Vestavia Hills Parks and Leisure Services and New Merkel House will be closed on November 11, 24 and 25.

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SHOE STATION Grand Opening

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GIVEAWAYS*

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 18: 9AM - 9PM
SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 19: 9AM - 9PM
SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 20: 11AM - 7PM



For more information on Grand Opening Weekend visit ShoeStation.com/Vestavia

*Must be at least 16 years of age to receive. Giveaways end 30 minutes after start time. Must be present to win. One winner per giveaway. Subject to change. Only available 11/18/22-11/20/22.

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Michelle Hawkins,
President
Vestavia Hills
Chamber of Commerce

CHAMBER NEWS

Happy November! I hope everyone has taken the opportunity to savor the gorgeous fall weather and sunshine. What a fantastic time of year filled with an abundance of fun activities and holiday celebrations with family and friends. Thanksgiving is a special time to reflect and give thanks for all our many blessings.

We are tremendously blessed with an incredible community and live in an amazing city. I encourage each of us to stop and take a moment each day in November to share the love in personally thanking someone. Whether it be your neighbor, the young person working at the hardware store, the kind clerk at the grocery store or your server at the local restaurant. Give a big happy smile and say “thank you” to let them know how much they are appreciated.

Remember to extend your thanks to those who work each day to make Vestavia Hills a wonderful place to live – our City staff, including police and fire, parks and leisure services, public works and the library; our elected officials; and the City Schools staff and members of our Board of Education. What a phenomenal city we have and sharing the love of thanksgiving is a beautiful thing.

As you begin your holiday shopping, be sure to remember the incredible businesses we have, right here in Vestavia Hills.

In Vestavia Hills, we celebrate Small Business November as a part of the Shop Small initiative. We encourage you to patronize local brick and mortar businesses, especially during the holiday season. These businesses are the lifeblood of our community so please support our local businesses to show (and tell) them how much we value them. **Your support makes a huge difference!**



New businesses are coming to our city and the Chamber has the privilege to meet and celebrate with ribbon cuttings. We celebrated six ribbon cuttings in October and have more scheduled this month! Be sure to stop by and give these new businesses a warm Vestavia Hills Welcome! They have a choice where to locate their business and we are so grateful that these businesses have chosen Vestavia Hills: Grandview Primary Care; Tributary Rise; Waldo’s Chicken & Beer; Tanology Spray Tan & Beauty Bar; Cajun Steamer; Davenport’s Pizza; Lux Studio; Animal Hospital of the Hills; Shoe Station. Visit vestaviiahills.org for the schedule of new ribbon cuttings and all the fun upcoming events planned throughout the community during the holiday season.

On behalf of the Vestavia Hills Chamber of Commerce, we wish you and your family a joyful and happy Thanksgiving holiday.

Deck the Heights
November 12, 2:00-7:00 pm
Cahaba Heights
Join the merchants of Cahaba Heights for family fun, entertainment & holiday cheer!

All is Bright
November 17, 6:00-8:00 pm
Vestavia City Center
Get in the Holiday spirit with the annual tree lighting at the Vestavia City Center!

Tree Lighting Festival
November 29, 6:00 pm
Vestavia Hills City Hall
Enjoy entertainment, merchant give-aways, a visit with Santa & the lighting of the tree!

Breakfast with Santa
December 10, 7:30-10:00 am
New Vestavia Hills Civic Center
Bring the whole family for a pancake breakfast with Santa! Free to attend.

Vestavia Hills Christmas Parade
December 11, 2:00 pm
Liberty Park
Enjoy the City's Christmas Parade & Celebration
Be in the parade! Registration form at vestaviiahills.org

Menorah Lighting
December 20, 6:00 pm
Vestavia Hills City Hall
See the lighting of the Menorah and enjoy refreshments and activities!



DON'T INVITE VHFD TO DINNER!

With the holidays fast approaching, attention will soon turn to families and food. How many people are coming for dinner? How many sweet potatoes do I need? How many gallons of gravy will Uncle Marvin put on his turkey? And most importantly ... How can I safely fry my turkey and enjoy a “fire free” Thanksgiving holiday?

- Follow the manufacturer’s guidelines for your fryer
- Make sure the fryer is level and in an open area away from all structures, trees and shrubbery.
- Keep the fryer off of wooden decks and out of garages.
- Make sure the turkey is thawed out and completely dry. Mixing water and hot oil will make for a bad day and possibly a trip to the hospital.
- Wear protective gear (goggles, gloves and apron) in case the oil splatters.
- Don’t overfill the pot with oil.
- Don’t leave the turkey unattended while cooking.
- Keep an ABC extinguisher close by in case of a fire.
Never try to extinguish an oil fire with water.

Other safety tips while cooking this holiday season:

- Always stay in the kitchen when frying, broiling, grilling or boiling food. If you leave the kitchen for any reason, turn the stove off.
- When simmering, baking or roasting food, use a timer as a reminder to check the food regularly.
- Keep all flammable materials away from your stove. This includes oven mitts, towels, food packaging, etc.
- Do not cook when sleepy. Many kitchen fires start when people start cooking and then fall asleep (while planning to “rest for a few minutes”).

If you do have a small fire on a stove, cover the pan with a lid and turn off the burner. **DO NOT put water on a grease fire.** This will spread the fire and possibly injure you. If you have a small fire in the oven, turn the oven off and leave the door closed. If all else fails, get out of the house, close the door behind you and call 911 from outside! We would rather you call us and not need us, than not call and do need us. Have a Happy Thanksgiving!

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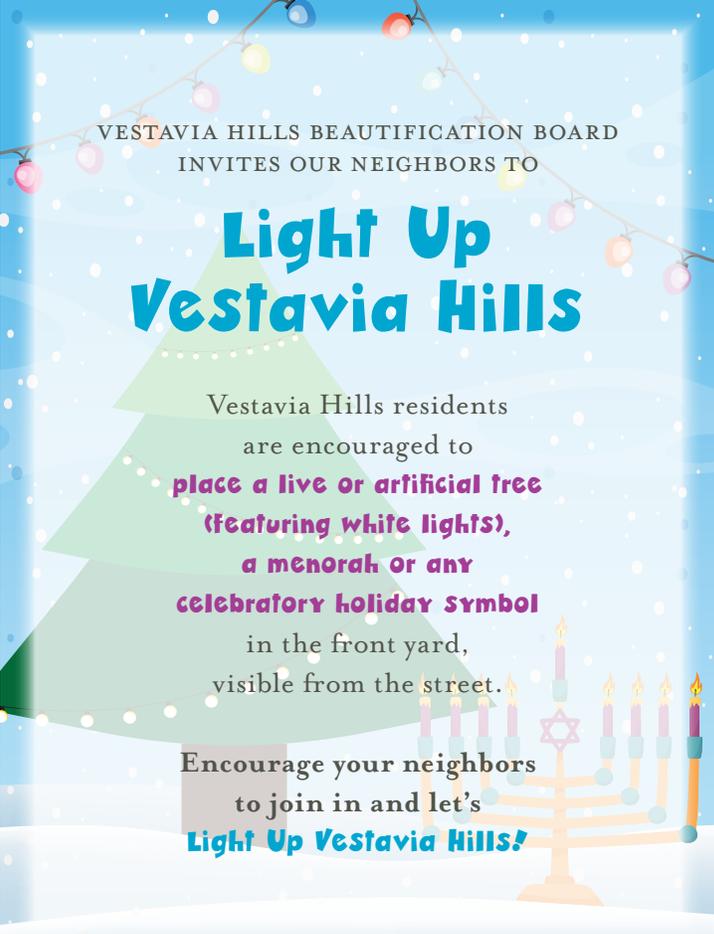
Light Up Vestavia Hills

Vestavia Hills residents
are encouraged to

place a live or artificial tree
(featuring white lights),
a menorah or any
celebratory holiday symbol

in the front yard,
visible from the street.

Encourage your neighbors
to join in and let's
Light Up Vestavia Hills!



NOVEMBER events

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



Seasonal Portrait Studio, by appointment
November 28 through December 22

- 1-30 Scratch-Off Fall Leaf Art**,
Adult Services Desk
- 1 Toddler-a-Go-Go**, 9:30am, Community Room
Toddler-a-Go-Go, 10:30am, Community Room
After-School Adventures: Bookbag Bling,
3:30pm, Children's Program Room
- 2 Story Friends**, 10:30am, Children's Program Room
Handmade with Holly: Cozy Mug Creations,
11am, Community Room
Twelve Below: Clay Creations, 3:30pm,
Children's Program Room
Writing Group, 4pm, Historical Room
- 3 Book Babies**, 10am, Treehouse
Open Maker Lab, 2-6pm, Makerspace
Online Safety, 4pm, Electronic Classroom
Chess Club, 4:30pm, Historical Room
Read & Feed Book Group: "The Lies I Tell,"
6pm, Community Room
- 4 Open Gaming**, 4pm, Community Room
- 5 Courtney's Library Stop**, 10:30am,
Community Room
- 7-11 Picture Your Self(ie) with a Veteran**
- 7 Intro to 3D Printing**, 4:30pm, Makerspace
- 8 Toddler-a-Go-Go**, 9:30am, Community Room
Toddler-a-Go-Go, 10:30am, Community Room
After-School Adventures: Candy Corn Catapult,
3:30pm, Children's Program Room
Tabletop Gaming Group, 4pm, Community Room
Teardown Tuesday, 4:30pm, Makerspace
Family Night with Juggler Ron Anglin, Dinner
at 6pm; show at 6:30pm, Community Room
- 9 Story Friends**, 10:30am, Children's Program Room
Twelve Below: Fall-themed Games, 3:30pm,
Children's Program Room
Art Group, 4pm, Makerspace
Organizing Computer Files, 4pm,
Electronic Classroom

- 10 Book Babies**, 10am, Treehouse
**Afternoon at the Movies: "Where the
Crawdads Sing,"** 2pm, Community Room
Open Maker Lab, 2-6pm, Makerspace
- 11 Open Gaming**, 4pm, Community Room
Craft*Lab: Squeeze Painting, 7pm,
Community Room
- 12 Dungeons & Dragons One-Shot**, 2pm,
Historical Room
- 15 Toddler-a-Go-Go**, 9:30am, Community Room
Toddler-a-Go-Go, 10:30am, Community Room
After-School Adventures: Fall Origami,
3:30pm, Children's Program Room
Collage Barrage: Custom Clipboards,
4pm, Treehouse
Intermediate Microsoft Excel Part II,
4pm, Electronic Classroom
- 16 Story Friends**, 10:30am, Children's Program Room
**Twelve Below: Nailed It/Failed It Food Decorating
Challenge**, 3:30pm, Children's Program Room
Among Us, 4pm, Discord
- 17 Book Babies**, 10am, Treehouse
Friends of the Library: Unless U & Post Place,
10am, Community Room
Progress in Alzheimer's Diagnosis & Treatment,
6pm, Community Room
- 18 Super Smash Bros. Tournament**, 4pm,
Community Room
- 19 Courtney's Library Stop**, 10:30am,
Community Room
- 22 Toddler-a-Go-Go**, 9:30am, Community Room
Toddler-a-Go-Go, 10:30am, Community Room
T-shirt Painting, 4pm, Amphitheater
- 23 Story Friends**, 10:30am, Children's Program Room
- 24-25 CLOSED, Thanksgiving**
- 29 Toddler-a-Go-Go**, 9:30am, Community Room
Toddler-a-Go-Go, 10:30am, Community Room
After-School Adventures: Watercolor Salt Art,
3:30pm, Children's Program Room
Microsoft PowerPoint, 4pm, Electronic Classroom

- 30 ACA Author Visit & Candle
Lighting Ceremony**,
9am, Community Room
Story Friends, 10:30am,
Children's Program Room
Twelve Below: 12 Straw Challenge,
3:30pm, Children's Program Room
Anime Club, 4pm, Historical Room



**HOLIDAY
Portrait Studio
Nov 29 - Dec 22**

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