

Verona Views



SUMMER/FALL 2020 • VERONA HILLS HOMES ASSOCIATION

A Letter from the President...

In the midst of a pandemic that has kept us closer to home, I have found myself appreciating how beautiful and safe our neighborhood is. I'm especially thankful for how friendly and generous our neighbors are! Despite this silver lining, I look forward to future events and a return to some sense of normalcy.

At the onset of the pandemic, when the stay-at-home order was passed, we had several neighbors reach out to us with concern for our elderly or health challenged neighbors. One neighbor, Prudence Rexroat, put her concern to action by spearheading an effort to organize our neighbors to offer support. That initiative, called Neighbors Helping Neighbors, was set up to connect neighbors with basic needs (like grocery shopping, yard clean up, or moving a heavy item) with neighborhood volunteers willing and able to lend a helping hand. If this is something that interests you, either in providing support or if you have a need, please feel free to reach out to VeronaHillsN2N@gmail.com or call/text 816-535-0644. Thank you to everyone who has volunteered so far!

I also want to share news about a couple of exciting developments at the park. As was mentioned in the spring newsletter, we will be getting speed bumps on Pennsylvania between Minor and Santa Fe Trail, likely by next spring. As that street doubles as the parking lot for Migliazzo Park, we hope this will slow people down for the safety of those enjoying the park, especially the little ones.

In addition, we are excited to inform you we have been awarded over \$262,000 in Public Improvements Advisory Committee funds for park improvements! Representatives from the parks department have begun the design and bid process for new or additional playground equipment, welcoming input from our HOA. We look forward to seeing the smiles on our children's faces with these upgrades and are very appreciative of the support of Sixth District Councilman and Mayor Pro Tem Kevin McManus and his office, who have championed both of these initiatives for us.

COVID-19 is having a significant impact on all our lives, and our neighborhood events are no exception. Large gatherings are suspended for the time being, so we will not be able to have our annual meeting in November. We are working on coming up with a virtual option and hope to have details available soon.

(Continued on next page...)

Board of Directors

Kevin Fallon President 816-500-9558	Katie Scurlock Vice President 913-244-7117
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Jeremy Bauer Treasurer 816-863-5126	Joe Lewellen Secretary 816-721-7190
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Laurie Minx Communications 816-721-3934	Phil Paschang Common Areas 816-809-6053
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Steve Lampone Migliazzo Park 816-352-6809	Richard Hudson Public Works 913-634-4629
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Chris Gaughan Compliance 816-786-4439	Brian Wellington Security bjw92684@yahoo.com
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Jimmy Nickle Events 816-914-2863	EMAIL US: info@veronahills.org
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Although we could have held our document and electronics shredding event safely by having residents remain in their cars, unfortunately our vendor is booked so we will have to push this event until next spring. In the meantime, there is a shredding and recycling event nearby at St. Thomas More, details of which are in the events section. And, after much consideration, including that of the feedback and concerns raised from our recent survey, we decided to forgo sponsoring the neighborhood garage sale this year. One bright spot is that our new events director and resident barbeque master, Jimmy Nickle, has come up with a great way to engage our community while at the same time promoting our safety! See the events section with details on the Neighborhood-que.

Speaking of the survey, thank you to more than 200 of you who responded to the recent questionnaire we emailed to residents. For those who did not see the survey, we attempted to gauge interest in the following: 1) a curbside glass recycling service picking up on trash day every other week and paid for by residents who opt in to participate with a bulk pricing discount made available by our promotion; 2) curbside bagless leaf removal for \$42.50 per residence on November 23rd -24th and \$57.50 on December 21st – 22nd, or \$90 for both, again paid by interested residents but at a bulk pricing discount; 3) purchase and install of a limited number of security cameras to be positioned on participating homeowners' properties with footage stored in the cloud to aid law enforcement in the event of a crime.

We received positive feedback on glass recycling and curbside bagless leaf pickup and therefore plan to move forward with both. To sign up for Glass Bandit, visit www.glassbandit.com/veronahills or call Jamie at 913.721.6970. You can sign up for curbside bagless leaf pick by visiting their website online at <https://envisionlawnandtree.com/verona-hills> or by calling Envision Lawn and Tree at 816-788-0808. This is completely optional, and no long-term contract is required for either service. We also received an overwhelmingly positive response on the security camera initiative and therefore plan to move forward with bidding and site selection. See the Security section for more information.

If you do not currently receive emails from the neighborhood and would like to do so, please email info@veronahills.org to get added to our email distribution list. If you do not use email but would like a family member or friend to keep you informed, please have them email so we can put them on the distribution list on your behalf. If you would rather receive phone blasts with periodic reminders like leaf and brush pick up dates, you can request to be added to our automated call list by contacting Laurie at 816-721-3934 or info@veronahills.org. (We only add those who opt-in due to a small cost per phone number.)

As always, we are looking for great ideas and great people! Our goal is to continue to provide worthwhile services and activities and be good stewards of our assessment funds. If you have suggestions or feedback, please contact us. We welcome your involvement!

REAL ESTATE RECAP:

The following is Verona Hills' Comparative Market Analysis for 2020 so far from Katie Scurlock:

Number of homes sold: 26
Homes currently listed: 0
Homes currently pending: 8
Average list price: \$340,471
Average sale price: \$338,610
Average days on market: 29

Source: Heartland MLS data from 1/1/20 to 9/16/20

STAYING CONNECTED:

Be sure to check out our website at veronahills.org.

If you have suggestions, requests, or updates to your contact information, email us at info@veronahills.org.

The directory will be coming! Since this is only published every three-four years, please make sure we have your current info. If you have not received emails from us about upcoming brush pick-ups and more, reach out and let us know. We may need to update our records.

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



EVENTS: Social Distancing Neighbor-Que in September

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 26th, 2020: Verona Hills Social Distancing “Neighbor-Que”

Neighbors are encouraged to fire up those grills and smokers for the day on Saturday, September 26th, for our Verona Hills Social Distancing Neighbor-Que! Be sure to take pictures of what you are cooking and share them to the Verona Hills Association Facebook page. You can also email them to info@veronahills.org.

Take a walk down your street, enjoy the wonderful smells of grilling and smoking meat, and wave to your neighbors out on their back patios or driveways. As a reminder, please follow CDC guidelines for social distancing and mask wearing. After all, we can't get together – but we can cook together!

We have partnered with Euston's Hardware and Sunfresh for this event, so remember to support them locally when purchasing your BBQ or grilling supplies! These stores have generously donated some gift cards for prize basket giveaways. Euston's will also be offering 20% off select BBQ items for Verona Hills residents. See our website and Facebook page for more details.

SATURDAY, October 3rd, 2020: Shredding and Recycling Event from 9 a.m. – 12 p.m. at St. Thomas More

Bring confidential documents, financial records, old televisions and computer equipment. There is a \$40 fee for televisions and \$25 fee for computer monitors. You can pay by check or cash. Checks are to be payable to ProShred. STM will also be accepting freewill donations that will be used by the parish in their efforts to reduce energy costs and waste. Sponsored by the Green Team. For more information, contact David Butel at the parish office at dbutel@stmkc.com or 816-942-2492 x210.

MIGLIAZZO PARK: Funds Awarded for Equipment Improvements

The Parks and Recreation Department has been busy maintaining Migliazzo Park this spring and summer. It has agreed to upgrade the turf in the right-of-way along Pennsylvania by aerating, seeding and fertilizing the turf this fall. Mowing in the park has generally occurred on a biweekly basis.

However, keeping the lake clean has been a challenge. A tremendous amount of debris accumulates in the lake, particularly in the southeast corner. A significant portion of the debris comes from the upstream section near the wooded area at the north end of the park.

Exciting improvements are on the way, so stay tuned! We are pleased to announce that our neighborhood association has been allocated \$262,000 to make improvements to the playground from the City Council. This money is from sales tax revenue.

We recently met with Chad Hollingworth, a designer with parks and rec, at our September Board meeting to discuss options. If you have ideas for playground improvements, or any special needs for your children, contact board member Steve Lampone at mizzzoutigers123@yahoo.com. Migliazzo Park is truly a gem in our neighborhood.

COMMON AREAS: Trimming Trees and Illuminating Monuments



The fine folks on 115th Street and members of the board spent three days trimming trees between Summit and Glen Arbor earlier this summer. It was great getting to know so many people, many of whom came out just to say thanks. It was a perfect example of neighbors helping neighbors, along with financial assistance from our home's association.

It cost approximately \$1,500 to have the limbs removed. We saved many times that amount by rolling up our sleeves and doing much of the work ourselves. As temperatures allow, we hope to have at least one more trimming project.

Another successful project was the illumination of the monument at Central and Wornall. Thanks to Chris, Sarah and Doug at NiteLights for making this possible. If you live adjacent to one of the monuments and are interested in illuminating the structure at night, please let us know.

There are limited resources, so projects must be prioritized accordingly. Please contact Phil Paschang on the board if you see an opportunity to improve the common areas of Verona Hills. He can be reached at 816-809-6053 or ppaschang1@gmail.com. Together we can ensure that our neighborhood remains a very beautiful place to live!

FREE TREES: Sign Up Information and Reminder to Water

In our spring newsletter, we shared information about how residents can be eligible to receive a free tree planted in the public right of way, next to your property. This is a program offered through KCMO Parks and Recreation partnering with the Heartland Tree Alliance, available to any resident of KCMO. Trees are planted by volunteers during workdays throughout the year, and more than 100 are estimated to be added to our neighborhood this year!

If you agreed to receive a free tree, remember part of the agreement is to keep it watered. Many are distressed, and some have expired. The next planting day will be on September 24th. You can sign up by calling 816-944-2548, emailing trees@bridgingthegap.org, or completing their [online form](#). Visit treesformycity.org to learn more.

COMPLIANCE CORNER: Codes for Constructing Fences

One of the most frequently asked questions from our neighbors is whether our HOA has restrictions for installing fences in our neighborhood. The short answer is no, but the City of Kansas City has its own ordinances that govern residential fences. Those ordinances can be found in Chapter 27 of the "Code of Ordinances, Kansas City, Missouri", and are available online at www.kcmo.gov.

The City ordinances regarding residential fences are fairly straightforward. They apply to almost any type of enclosure, regardless of the materials used, if it encloses or divides land. So odds are, if you are installing any type of fence, the City ordinances will apply.

Under our City ordinances, the maximum height for a residential fence is six feet. However, fences and walls in the front yard may be no taller than four feet. Also, if you live on a corner lot, fences on side yards are limited to four feet, as well.

In addition to following the legal requirements for fences, we recommend that fences be installed with a sense of neighborliness. It's always a good idea to communicate your plans to your neighbors prior to installing your fence. This helps avoid any disputes over property lines, and of course, your neighbor is going to have to mow and weed on their side of your fence.

TREASURER'S REPORT: News About Dues



Our assessments have not been raised for many years, and they are meant to be affordable for all our residents. Please be sure to pay your assessments on time. They allow us to enjoy many of the core services you have come to expect that are highlighted in this newsletter, as well as to evaluate other services and events for the benefit of our neighborhood.

As you may or may not know, we have a collection policy in place that includes filing liens on properties once they become due for a third year on their assessments. Once a lien is filed, 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 over 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. In addition, a filed lien or judgment may have negative consequences on your credit rating.

Overall, your Board of Directors would rather spend our volunteer time (and your hard-earned money!) providing services and improving the neighborhood, rather than exhaust the time and money collecting delinquent accounts. Further, it is not fair to the homeowners who pay when the assessments are due. As a reminder, there's a link on our website homepage to pay online directly to ha-kc.org.

Our cash flow statement and balance sheet for the fiscal year that ended May 31st, 2020, is on our website. We remain in strong financial standing, with reserves to address unforeseen problems and consider projects to improve our neighborhood. If you would like to discuss this financial information, please email us at info@veronahills.org. A member of our Board will contact you. If you'd like to speak to someone other than a Board member, please call our third-party property management and accounting firm, Homes Associations of Kansas City, at (913) 385-2440.

PUBLIC WORKS: Pet Owner Responsibilities and Snow Plowing

Please remember to clean up after your pets and keep them on leashes when walking through the neighborhood. This means bagging any droppings – and taking the bags with you for proper disposal. Plus, keeping dogs on leashes is a City ordinance and applies even when walking through Migliazzo Park or the open field next to the New Santa Fe Cemetery, which is private property belonging to the nearby church. Thanks in advance for your cooperation!

As we gear up for winter, snow eventually will be in the forecast. We intend to partner with Crossroads Construction for snow plowing services once again. This will be their fourth winter working with us. There were a couple glitches with some missed areas in the past, so a site map of the designated streets has been revisited to confirm all areas to be plowed. However, if you feel your street is ever missed after a snowfall, please don't hesitate to email us or call board member Rich Hudson directly at 913-634-4629.

SECURITY UPDATE: Surveillance Survey Results & Safety Tips



In August, the board sent out an email with a survey monkey link to request feedback regarding the purchasing of video surveillance cameras to place throughout the neighborhood. These cameras are strictly for the purposes of aiding law enforcement in the apprehension of suspects. The results of the survey show the majority of neighbors are in favor of cameras. The board is still working on this project, but we appear to be moving in the right direction.

Still, the best way to prevent criminal activity in our neighborhood is to reduce opportunities by keeping garage doors closed, doggie doors protected, your home well-lit and your vehicles and home securely locked. Most thefts that occur in our neighborhood are from unlocked cars or open garages. Please lock your cars, don't leave items of value in plain site within your vehicle, and close your garage doors and windows. These simple steps will prevent many crimes of opportunity.

Plus, with the changing of the seasons, it is worth mentioning that some thieves look for vehicles that are on and unattended. Please realize the risk when warming your car. It is better to be with your vehicle when it is running.

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.

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, night or day. 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 that with the help 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 or by calling the non-emergency number at 816-234-5111. If you are aware of an ongoing issue, please contact the Board at info@veronahills.org, and we will strive to seek a remedy.

WatchKC

is a proactive and innovative approach to deterring and investigating crime. If your home is equipped with a surveillance camera, you can partner with KCPD and be part of the solution to crime in our city. Simply sign up to play a key role in the identification of suspects and evidence. Register at www.kcpd.org/get-involved/watchkc.

#9PMRoutine Crime Prevention Tool

Every night at 9 p.m., KCPD wants you to adopt a new habit by:

- (1) Removing valuables from your vehicle (purses, wallets, bags, garage door openers, etc.)
- (2) Ensure your car doors are locked and windows rolled up.
- (3) Check your mail.
- (4) Make sure your garage door, all exterior doors and windows are closed and locked.
- (5) Turn on exterior lights. Thieves hate lights!

Follow KCPD on Facebook and Twitter for #9PMRoutine weekly crime tips!

NEW SANTA FE: Cemetery Improvements



In August, a number of improvements were made to the historic New Santa Fe Cemetery. Brush growth along the fencing was removed and the entrance gate was repaired. In addition, the iron fence was power washed and painted. All the hard work and effort has transformed the property with beautiful results!

The next time you are on a walk, stop by and admire our neighborhood treasure. The cemetery is located on Santa Fe Trail near State Line Road. It was recognized as a tour stop along the 3 Trails national historic route.

The New Santa Fe Cemetery Association is a nonprofit Missouri corporation whose sole purpose is the management and preservation of the cemetery property. The cemetery is not actively used. The Association itself has no regular source of income, so neighborhood residents and relatives of persons buried in the cemetery generously provide funds for maintenance. Verona Hills HOA provides an annual contribution, as well.

For information about the cemetery, please visit www.newsantafe.org/cemetery.php. You can make a contribution toward its upkeep by contacting Leroy Eddy at 12220 Belleview Ave., Kansas City, Missouri 64145. His email address is leroyeddy@kc.rr.com. Thanks for your support!

BLOG: Historic Watson Place Inn Gets the Perfect New Owner

By Diane Euston, who writes a blog on the history of our area. For more stories, go to newsantafetrailer.blogspot.com.



Sometimes historic houses just call out from the shadows to people. This was the case for the old Watson Place Inn, tucked away out of view in between Verona Hills and Timber Trace at 12311 Belleview Ave. The stately brick home, painted white, has stood incognito in the valley for as long as people can remember. Locals called it the “49’ers tavern” or “the inn.”

What we do know is that hidden underneath this home at its very foundation is evidence of a very old construction of timbers, and due to its location just off the Santa Fe Trail in the now -erased town of New Santa Fe, the location is certainly special. The property was once owned by the first mayor of Kansas City, William S. Gregory and was later sold to his father-in-law, Samuel Wade. After Wade was killed in 1861, the property made its way to New Santa Fe’s town doctor, Dr. John E. Watson (1834-1889). His family held onto the property until it was sold in the 1920s.

I grew up across from this old home tucked next to the creek, its barn (now demolished) being visible from my bedroom window. My love of history came from the fascination of this home, and the stories surrounding it had me doing research before the age of ten of what its true story was. Until recently, the True family occupied the home.

In 2018, a man came forward and said he wanted to buy the property. Just like me, this man had a longtime love of this historic home and wanted to ensure it was protected.

That’s when Chris O’Hare, son of Verona Hills residents D.J. and Ann, took the leap into historic home ownership.

(Continued from article on previous page...)



As an eleven-year-old child who lived just off Santa Fe Trail in Verona Hills, Chris felt a connection to the old Watson Place Inn; through its trees and spooky surroundings on just shy of five acres, Chris would sneak a peek at the home and wonder about its history. "I had a metal detector and the house invited me to search for treasure," Chris laughed. "I never found any."

Chris O'Hare went to St. Thomas More and graduated from Rockhurst High School in 1978. A bit of a loner (admittedly so) yet academically gifted, Chris found himself at Harvard and then went to film school in the United Kingdom where he would live for the next 35 years. "After college, I got a bit lost figuring out how I wanted to live my life."

Regardless of feeling a bit lost, Chris found his way as a producer of cartoons (including Dr. Seuss and Denis the Menace) that "kids all over the world enjoyed." There were good times and bad throughout his journey – times where he would eat well and other times go a bit hungry. All-in-all, Chris O'Hare did quite well for himself; however, he wanted (as always) to do more.

After sponsoring a child in an aid orphan school in Nairobi, Kenya, Chris decided to jump on a plane and see it for himself. There was a stark need for helping these children get a job, and Chris felt he had the ability to fix the situation. Chris was right. He started an online mentoring program to help kids in Africa on how to get a job. He regularly visits in order to keep the program functioning. "Africa takes me seriously out of my comfort zone, and that's a good thing," Chris explained.

Endearingly quirky, personable, and full of energy, Chris knew that his heart was calling him home. While visiting his parents, D.J. and Ann at Christmastime, he found out that the old historic Watson Place Inn was on the market and had been for a while. After a visit to the property, Chris knew that he was destined to be the next proud owner.

Chris said the house just talked to him when he walked inside of it. Its worn hardwood floors and unusual floor plan was a dream come true. He purchased the home in 2018 and hasn't looked back.

"I'm now 60, and I always wanted to come back to Kansas City," Chris commented. "The house is a short five minute walk down the hill to my parents' place where I can annoy them and see what's in the fridge."

Destiny brought Chris to this home that meant so much to him as a kid looking for treasure in 1971. He doesn't see himself as the owner; rather, he calls himself the "keeper." It's his turn to be the home's vigilant caretaker.

Since moving into the home, Chris has discovered more pioneer secrets hidden under a concrete patio. After removing the thick concrete, Chris and his father found an old stone well that he hopes to make a showpiece of the grounds. Buried in the area around it were old nails, horseshoes and various period objects that would've had Chris's metal detector beeping (and his heart racing) in the 1970s.

He still can't believe that he was able to purchase a home that meant so much to him as a child. "The Watson Place called me by name," Chris said.

Historians such as myself are relieved that the property rests in the hands of someone like Chris O'Hare who wishes for it to be preserved for generations. "I can't believe no one got to the house before I did," Chris proclaimed. "And, wow, what a lucky man am I!"

NEW NEIGHBORS: Welcome Home



Verona Hills continues to be a very desirable area in Kansas City in which to live. Thanks to all who take the time to care for your property – and your neighbors!

Please extend a warm welcome to our newest additions, since our last newsletter, listed below for your convenience. If you don't see your information here and are new to the neighborhood as of last fall, please send your contact information to info@veronahills.org.

Matt & Angie Vesey	316 Avila
Carolyn Ray Williams	11627 Glen Arbor Terrace
Jill Hathaway	11312 Jefferson
Gregory & Michelle Smedley	11324 Summit
Louis & Gabrielle Accurso	1105 West 121st Terrace
Mike & Teresa York	11524 Summit
Dustin & Katherine Dernier	724 West 121st Street
Nicholas & Megan Timmons	11914 Summit
Durrel & Krista Harper	100 West 119th Street
James McCausland	11400 Summit
Carl & Danielle Specking	808 West 121st Street
James & Rita Tiehen	11306 Summit
Monty Koehn & Beth White & Brett Koehn	1109 West 120th Terrace
KC	916 West 120th Terrace
Charles & Jessica Monaco	11905 Jarboe Street
Joyce & Joesph Evoli	11913 Washington
Blake & Kelly Chevalier	322 West 119th Terrace
Merylène Dampier	1013 West 120th Terrace
Micah & Katie Schmidt	11720 Madison Avenue
Kathryn & Mark McGilley	12121 Summit
Heather & Dayton Isbell	11708 Glen Arbor Terrace
Abraham & Sarah Papabathini	11730 Wyandotte
Clayton Melrose	11916 Jarboe Street
Maggie Miller & Joseph Tulipana	508 West 115th Terrace
Noah & Natalya Sparks	101 West 119th Street
Nancy & Peter Sickle	200 West 119th Terrace

Community Bank

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913 319 9318

Call or text

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Verona Hills references available

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State Line Real Estate

Tina Gaughan
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Leawood, KS 66211
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A PC Consultant mentors clients of all
ages to enjoy their PC experience!

ADVERTISING: Feature Your Business in Our Next Issue

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

We accept most business card size ads at a very reasonable rate (\$50 per issue). Revenue is used solely to subsidize the printing and hard copy distribution of the newsletter to all residents. Please contact info@veronahills.org to inquire about advertising space in our next issue!

FEEDBACK: Tell Us What You Think and Get Involved

We always like to hear from our neighbors! Send us your feedback, suggestions and questions anytime at info@veronahills.org. Volunteer board members make every effort to respond in a timely way.

More information about the Verona Hills Homes Association, as well as an archive of past newsletters, can be found online at www.veronahills.org. If you are interested in getting more involved in neighborhood activities, please reach out and let us know. We welcome your involvement!



Verona Hills Homes Association

4200 Somerset Drive, Suite 216, Prairie Village, KS 66208

(913) 385-2440; Fax (913) 385-2441

Website: www.veronahills.org

Summer/Fall 2020 Newsletter