

# We are St. Louis Hills

by Steve & Judith Doss



A sense of pride is what I feel when I think of our neighborhood. No, it isn't perfect but it is our home. Never did that hit Judith and I as hard as after 9/11. The Run For the Hills was scheduled for 9/16. The

world was on hold. Nothing was going forward. Except, the committee which ran the event knew what was needed. The Run took place 5 days after the terrorists attempted to ruin our lives. Some felt that it was wrong to proceed. But the neighbors needed to see each other, laugh, share donuts and the air of freedom. Everyone came out. The park was packed for hours. All food and drink were gone, but the memory of that camaraderie will always be felt by those of

us in attendance. When Carol Wilson and Mike Banahan started the Run for the Hills over 30 years ago, I'm sure that they never thought that it would be such a memorable event.

Judith and I moved into 6217 Rhodes in April 1976. The home was built by the Berkeley family and we purchased it from Tom and Dorothy Staples, friends of my parents. Only three families have lived in this home. We were married only two years and were living at 5501a Holly Hills when the Staples decided to sell.

I was raised at 6560 Winnebago. My parents lived there for over 60 years. Attending both Nottingham and Busch Schools, as a child I roamed the streets and the bowels of Francis Park with Nick Zotos, John Percy, Janet Eto, Sydney Johnston and scores of others.

■ Cont'd on page 4

by Nan Vordtriede



Life as I knew it began at 6761 Plainview Avenue, until the age of three, we then moved to 6000 Highfield Road. Most would say that Plainview Ave is not part of St. Louis Hills, however proven by Cyrus Crane Willmore's maps, they would be incorrect.

In 1962, when I was born, (the third Vordtriede child) my dad was serving as Secretary on the St. Louis Homeowner's Association Board. It was not until after my dad passed, through a fellow history

committee member and going through boxes, did I discover my dad was one of the key committee persons instrumental in keeping Highway 44 out of St. Louis Hills. Wow! What a find for me.

Many fond memories remain for me at 6000 Highfield Road, from the front porch with the white railing my dad was constantly painting, to the apple tree we climbed in the back yard, to the large vegetable garden bordered by favorite

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Tom Byrne  
Joni Ott  
Wayne Myrick

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Kevin Kozminski

## Vordtriede (Cont'd from Page 1)

cobblestones (which got bigger every year). Then there was the patio of many BBQs, to the most ultimate swing set that ever existed (with our names engraved), to a house that always had practicing of several musical instruments happening either in the living room, upstairs or downstairs, and later piano/organ lessons given to neighborhood kids. I can still hear my mom from the kitchen yelling, "That was a sharp or a flat, not a..." The house was competitively decorated at Christmas and what seemed like thousands of kids telling jokes, dancing, or sharing poems and songs at Halloween.

In the street and down on the island, there was football, softball, four square, and of course the regular fall leaf raking and acorn fights! When I drive by today, I still chuckle when I think of the days Mom threw Ginger (the bad cat) out the front door. Ginger would then climb the tree by the garage, and the boys let her back inside upstairs! Like typical Electrical Engineers there was not a thing my dad did not create, fix, or have something for and one such item was a train board that extended from one side of the basement to his work area on the other side of the basement and not just one layer, but several. Trains and more trains! Most of the neighborhood was Catholic and we were Presbyterian, however it never stopped us from running down to St. Raphael's on Christmas Eve and placing candles in the brown sandbags!

I have always been intrigued with what I felt were famous people who lived on the street or in our neighborhood. Examples include: Howard and Irma Ohlendorf across the street at 6005, who had a revolving front door – there were so many kids, why even lock it? Do you remember the history of the Highlands amusement park fire in 1963? Howard C. Ohlendorf purchased the St. Louis Carousel in 1965, renovated it, and donated it to Faust Park. As a child I dreamed of becoming a concert pianist and performing in their living room. It was exceptionally huge with large glass pane windows, enough for an audience. Other well-known business or sports persons included the owners of Spencer Auto Glass. Who did not get their windshields replaced from Spencer? Of course, the Musial, Gaertner, Schoendienst, Koenig, and the Elz ("Johnny Rabbitt") families. And who can forget the Webbes and the Giordanos? Of course, we were encouraged to stay away from their houses, but that did not keep us from sneaking up to see the new pool, or from guessing who was in the unmarked cars.

My Grandparents moved into a home at 6017 Southland Ave. It is fun running through family pictures of the house just built and the froggy swamp land still behind them, which is now known as Helm and Hilgard. My Grandfather, Harry Vordtriede was a lead salesperson for Globe Drug on Gravois which eventually burned down and is now known as Jimmy Johns, so when it came time to break ground on Broadway he was in the paper



**Vordtriede** (Cont'd from Page 2)

with the golden shovel and had an opportunity to hold the reins of the Clydesdales. This was big back then.

Since we are Presbyterian, St. Andrew Presbyterian was the church we grew up in – at the time a large church presence with VBS and other church activities. Nottingham Elementary was our school, with fond memories of teachers, music programs, school picnic parades around Francis Park, art class on the Donovan side of Francis Park, and serving as a crossing guard... and yes running up to Venker's on Chippewa for penny candy or gum. Grau Pastries was a favorite on Chippewa across from Ted Drewes. Every child received a free butter star cookie upon entry from the Grau family. Lammert's furniture at Jamieson and Chippewa, and Hampton Village Bettendorf's for grocery shopping. Get your paper, there was always a paper boy too!

But nothing was more memorable than Arlan's, the messiest store in town, which existed where Target is now and then there was Marlin's, which was a small sports store, they shoved everything possible into what is now a part of the Salvage Yard Bar and Grill. One could get lost in that store and never be found again. And who can forget Tomboy, Binders (now LeGrand's) and White Castles too! Which changed to Fox Photo sadly. Oh, and do not forget Dairy Queen at Nottingham and Hampton, at that time it was a walk-up store. Southwest High School was the local public high and Fontbonne my choice of university. And yes, we took the bus and walked home every day.

I moved to Creve Coeur, then Afton for a stint. I soon discovered there was nothing more exciting than neighbors that were friendly and that was back in the city. My Grandparents had passed so I moved to Southland Ave,

eventually got married and divorced at this address. As life would have it my folks grew older, needed professional care, and eventually passed too. Selling reluctantly and realizing too, it would be genuinely nice to see new growth in these former homes from other loving families, I purchased on Hilgard in between them. We call it the house between. Imagine the mail person's confusion!

My volunteer work and interest with the St. Louis Hills Neighborhood Association began in 1995. I had gone to a couple of meetings and decided if I am going to complain about our current Block Captain, I best put my foot into action and help. Of course, I soon realized once you get involved you are there for a long time as a volunteer!

First as a Block Captain desiring to improve the process on our block, then to Co-Block Captain Chair. This included helping with the newsletter. Other committee involvements included Holiday, Lighting and Lawn and Garden Awards, Art in the Park, Streets and Property, History, Marketing/Newsletter. I had the opportunity to serve as treasurer for 4 years and of course now as president of the SLHNA. (I am very humbled by this and the volunteers who serve). Lastly, Friends of Francis Park and coordinating volunteers for the Run for the Hills.

Although I have seen changes in 60 years, one thing remains a constant in St. Louis Hills. Our residents' love and appreciation for the neighborhood, parks, businesses, and the desire to keep the community strong. All our volunteers are so appreciated! And it is amazing who you meet and what fun you have when you become involved! Share your story! What is your "I am St. Louis Hills" story? And if you are a business what is your "I am a St. Louis Hills business" story?

# Interested in being our president?

by Nan Vordtriede

I am more than pleased to be serving my second term as president of the St. Louis Hills Neighborhood Association. A normal term for the president is three years. This term I requested to be two years. My belief is an organization must continue to grow with a taste of past ideas and an out of the box full brush stroke of new fresh ideas! I cannot believe how time flies. In December we will be halfway through.

Finding a president is not always an easy task and some would like to know just what they are getting themselves

into, then there is the time needed to think about the decision. So, I am reaching out to the St. Louis Hills Neighborhood now. If you have served on committees or volunteered or would like to find out what we do, with the possibility of going through the nomination process towards the end of 2023.

Please reach out to [president@stlhills.com](mailto:president@stlhills.com) and let us pique your interest further! The best way to find out is to visit our Board and Committee Meetings.

Since I lived north of Chippewa, I always had to be careful to cross Chippewa at the light by the Donut Shop. I was often told in jest when I left sooner than the others to return home, “You live on the wrong side of Chippewa”. Usually I stopped at the Ice House at Chippewa and Watson for ice chips on the way home. While I always cut grass, my first jobs were bussing tables at Saro’s Sunny Italy and the IHOP on the north side of Chippewa (now Commerce Bank). Both locations gave me the opportunity to work with the public at the ripe age of 14.

I opened my headhunting business in 1980 in the back of Standard Travel, 5865 Hampton. My daughter Sara started her education at St Raphael in 1985. Our family’s life basically encompassed a 10 block area. Like a blind milk horse I could not get off of my run. Judith and I jumped in with both feet at St Raphael: coaching, cookie chair, both Boy and Girl Scouts, room mother, PTA officers, auction chairs, etc. We had 11 great years of involvement at the school supporting Sara and our son Craig.

We have been active with the neighborhood association for years. With Tom Gilmore and then Alderman Jim Shrewsbury, our team worked on raising the funds and building the first neighborhood marker in front of the Fire Station. Later with Alderwoman Baringer, we completed the marker in front of St Raphael. Some new residents think that they have always been there!

With the Queen of St Louis Hills Rosemary Spitler, Judith and I helped with the first Christmas tree lighting. We thought that 50 people would attend. It turned out to be 500. Now it is in the 1000’s. The tradition of cleaning up the park, started by Rosemary, continues to this day.

Judith has been the leader of our block since we moved here. An import from Indiana, she started the first Block Party 40 years ago. We would crown a couple as our king and queen. Frank and Marge Monahan were our first royal couple. Bob and Adele Burns followed. We even had a band, the Grand Fuzz, which was a police PR organization. Judith is also the block captain. She lets everyone know when to move their cars for street sweeping, posts the birthday sign and delivers food to many who are sick. Currently, she is helping with the lily pond maintenance in Francis Park. Basically she is the monitor of our block.

Our son’s Eagle Project hangs on the tennis court fence on Eichelberger. He and his troop with the help of Marcus Jacquot surveyed the park. After our son’s death, the neighborhood honored him with a memorial area by the



The Doss family has lived at 6217 Rhodes since 1976. Photo by Steve Doss.

handball courts. The area is called Craig’s Cove. You can see Judith and me maintaining the area often. The cove is a wonderful tribute to our son.

When the David R. Francis Committee started their journey, they asked me to get involved again. It was a thrill working with the committee and raising the 180k required to create a true monument to Francis who donated 60 acres of his Francis Farm for the park. The first person I called for a donation was Margaret Houlihan. She has lived in the neighborhood for 85 years and resides in her childhood home with her husband on Itaska. For years she was the principal at Nottingham School after a career in nursing. Margaret listened and stepped forward immediately as a major sponsor. However, she did not want recognition. She gave me a list of old neighbors which she wanted memorialized in the brick area surrounding the statue. The memories of her neighbors were secured.

The “neighbor” in the word neighborhood is the key to why we love the community so much. Some people love to complain about this neighbor or that one. There is always someone who doesn’t take care of their property but there always will be. My approach is to cut it myself! The Elz family have lived next door 45 years, 2 doors away Jacquot family over 25, Harts for 35 and now Ridgley’s 8 on the other side of us. We have all rejoiced in births, christenings, graduations and weddings. Crying together at deaths is also a part of a true neighborhood experience. These events bond us together and help to secure our faith in people. Tradition, caring for others, pride in community are St Louis Hills trademarks. I swore years ago when I went off to college that I would never live in south St Louis. I guess that I will die here, a contented and happy man.

When you drive by our house, wave. We are always on the porch and I make a great Manhattan.



# Run for the Hills

**September 17, 2022**  
**5K Run/1M Walk/1M Youth Run**

## 31 Years Running

**2019  
 Winner  
 Big River Running  
 Community  
 Support  
 Award**

Start training today for one of the best races in StL! Run the 5k, walk the 1 miler, watch your kids compete in the 1 mile race or sign up to show your support and get an awesome commemorative t-shirt. This year marks our 31st consecutive year and 100% of the money raised from the Run for the Hills is spent directly on improvements in our beloved neighborhood Francis Park. Please sign up to support your park and neighborhood and encourage your neighbors and friends to join you!

- Best race food in StL including Ted Drewes, StL Bread Co, Edibles and Essentials, Pretzel Boys, LeGrands, Schnucks and Dierbergs
- Super cool blended t-shirt
- Awards for the top runners
- Cheer on your favorite runners along the route
- Choose from: 5K Run through beautiful St Louis Hills (\$25 in person or virtual runner with submitted time\*)  
 1 mile walk around Francis Park (\$20)  
 1 mile timed youth race around Francis Park (\$20)  
 Don't want to run or walk? Be a neighborhood supporter and sign up for the shirt (\$25)

### Easy to Register online

<https://runsignup.com/rfth> OR use QR code



Register by September 1 to be guaranteed a t-shirt.  
 Prices increase after September 15, 2022 11:59 pm CDT.  
 \*See registration for guidelines for submitting virtual race times.

**Questions:** Call (314) 749-8661.



**September 17, 2022**

# art in the Park

St. Louis Hills

Sunday • September 25  
Francis Park  
10AM-5PM  
FREE • [artintheparkstl.com](http://artintheparkstl.com)

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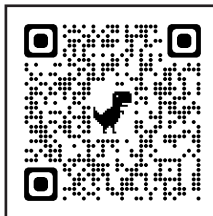
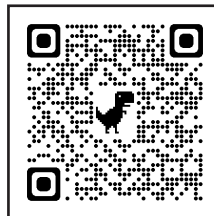


## Volunteers needed!

by Janice Starbuck

Art in the Park St. Louis Hills is on Sunday, September 25th, 10 a.m. – 5 p.m. That's just around the corner, so sign up now to volunteer to work at the event. It takes an army to put on this event and we're counting on you to fill the ranks. Volunteer positions vary greatly, so there is sure to be something that matches your abilities. Please check out our online volunteer sign up form at [artintheparkstl.com/volunteer](http://artintheparkstl.com/volunteer). (Beer booth sign up is included here this year!)

Also, please support our sponsors. Many of them have been with us for years and have stayed with us despite our absence. We gratefully welcome our new sponsors. Without sponsors, this event can't happen!



Left to right: Scan these QR codes with your phone camera to learn more about volunteering for Art in the Park, registering for the Gateway Cup, or qualifying for the annual scholarship.



**jj twig's**  
PIZZA & PUB  
SOUTH HAMPTON

**DINE IN OR CARRY OUT**

TUE-THURS 12PM-9PM • FRI-SAT 12PM-10PM • SUN 12PM-9PM  
5600 HAMPTON AVE. ST. LOUIS, MO 63109  
314.833.6700 JJTWIGSSOUTHAMPTON.COM

**Representative Donna Baringer**  
Proudly serving the 82nd District

Reach out and connect at the following:

State Capitol, Room 109-I

201 W. Capitol Avenue

Jefferson City, Missouri 65101

(573) 751-4220

[Donna.Baringer@house.mo.gov](mailto:Donna.Baringer@house.mo.gov)



<http://facebook.com/DonnaBforSTL>



@STLDonnaB





# Gateway Cup returns this September

by Gary Wells

Once again, we will have hundreds of athletes from around the nation coming to St. Louis around Labor Day weekend to compete in feats of speed and endurance! We're talking of course about the Gateway Cup Bicycle Races. There are four days of competition throughout the City, with one race set around our own neighborhood gem – the Tour De Francis Park.

The streets around the park will be closed off to all traffic early in the morning of Saturday, September 3rd. The first hour of racing – from 9:15 to 10:15 – the race track will be open for the Ride to Unite. This is a time for bicycle riders of all ages and abilities to enjoy the track. You will be joined by participants from many local organizations that assist challenged cyclists. Then, starting at 10:20, there will be a full day of races set for amateur and then professional bicyclists who are competing in official racing competitions

as the final stage of the American Criterium Cup, the top professional series in the US.

Around 4:10 p.m. (depending on the duration of previous races) get your Big Wheels and favorite Schwinn speedsters ready, as the short track will be open to children around the neighborhood to speed down the street in groups sorted by age. There may be a surprise in the way the track is set up this year, so be sure to check it out!

Throughout the day, there will be refreshments available at stalls along the route. There are also Gateway Cup sponsors who will have merch to sell, with a big shoutout going to Big Shark Bicycle Company, who works with the SLHNA to get this set up every year.

For more information, whether to register as a rider or to see the schedule, go to <https://gatewaycup.com/>.

## Annual scholarship winners announced

by Michelle Cheli

Membership in the St. Louis Hills Neighborhood Association is an excellent way to meet your neighbors and contribute to the success and beauty of our neighborhood. Another great benefit of membership in the SLHNA is the Annual Scholarship competition. The eighth-grade children of parents who are members of the SLHNA may enter the competition to be awarded a one-time \$600 scholarship to the high school of their choice.

This year the three scholarships were awarded to the following students: Marina Cornett from St. Gabriel the Archangel who will attend Cor Jesu Academy, Timothy Roeder from St. Gabriel the Archangel who will attend Bishop DuBourg High School, and Gus Stromberg from St. Gabriel the Archangel who will attend Chaminade College Preparatory School. We congratulate these students on their scholarship, leadership, and service in school, church, and community. They are very deserving of the award.

A history of membership is required for application consideration, so if you have students in 4th or 5th grade, now would be a great time to join the association or make sure your membership is up to date.



Left to right: Marina Cornett, Timothy Roeder and Gus Stromberg, all students at St. Gabriel the Archangel, were winners of the St. Louis Hills Neighborhood Association's annual scholarship. Photos provided by Michelle Cheli.

### Scholarship Committee chair needed!

The St. Louis Hills Neighborhood Association is currently seeking an individual (or two) to chair the Scholarship Committee.

Responsibilities include updating the application with the current year, posting notices in the neighborhood church bulletins and school newsletters, reviewing submitted applications with the neighborhood scholarship volunteers, and notifying the selected applicants and their respective high schools.

For more information, please contact the St. Louis Hills Neighborhood Association President Nancy Vordtriede at [president@stlhills.com](mailto:president@stlhills.com).

# Finding the unexpected

by Chip Kastner

On one of those unusually hot spring days we had in St. Louis this year, my one-and-a-half year old daughter was clamoring to get out of the house. Preferring to take her somewhere with air conditioning, I drove up to Buder Library to spend some time in their kids' play area. She had fun, but keeping a toddler contained – and quiet – in a library takes constant vigilance. After I had my fill of keeping toys out of her mouth and ensuring she didn't pull all the books off the shelves, we headed home.

As I was thinking of other wholesome ways to keep my daughter entertained, we drove past Little Readers Bookstore at 5017 Hampton. On a whim, I decided to pull over and check it out. Expecting to spend about five minutes inside to look for books, I was surprised to see the space filled with little tables covered in different children's activities. My daughter, of course, made a beeline for the tables and started to color one of the tabletops with chalk. I hastily apologized, assuming this was reserved for some sort of paid activity, but was assured that the activities were for all to enjoy – they even got out a few extra activities for my daughter to play with.

We certainly spent more than five minutes inside, and I left with three board books and a complementary tie-dyed reusable bag.

"Our bookstore is for kids, and we want to let kids be kids inside," says Joice Carrawell, who co-owns Little Readers with her husband Sir. "If they want to run ragged and scream, they can do that. It's not a quiet place; if you want that, it would be the library. We don't want kids to stay away because they can't be themselves. Our seating is all for children, and encourages parents to get down on their knees and interact with their kids and be invested in them."

Joice was inspired to open a children's bookstore after seeing firsthand the difference that an interest in reading can have in a child's life. Sir owns the Elite Blendz Barber Shop on Chippewa across from Hampton Village, so he and Joice were familiar with the neighborhood and its family-friendly environment. Noting that there weren't any bookstores in the area, the Carrawells opened Little Readers on Hampton last August and have been thrilled with the level of support from the community.

Little Readers has been active in nearby events, hosting story time at Macklind Days and at the Macklind Holiday

Walk, collaborating with the Charm me Sweet candy store, and hosting a back-to-school drive with Elite Blendz. At Halloween, they handed out books and candy to the crowds of children who trick-or-treat in St. Louis Hills, and are looking forward to participating again this year. They also host book parties for children interested in reserving the space, and a book club focused on discussing children's books at a level that kids are interested in.

The Carrawells are currently working on creating a "Maker Space" in the back of the bookstore, in  [Cont'd on page 11](#)



Little Readers Bookstore on Hampton provides a catalog of diverse children's books as well as fun activities for kids. Photo provided by Joice Carrawell.



# along Hampton Avenue

by Kyle Blondé

Tucked away between two of the most happening spots on Hampton, the '09 Pub and La Catrina, is a small shop that initially looks unassuming. The sunny yellow flowers in the front bricked bed bloom on prickly pear cacti rare to find so happily growing in our climate, but they are a hint. The extraordinary flowers are a glimpse of what you'll find inside, one of St. Louis' most unexpected and delightful boutiques. Arte Rojo is a sea of color when you step inside, from the embroidered dresses on the rack to the brightly painted alebrije animals on the back wall.

The owner is as charming and fascinating as her wares. Martha Leticia Seitz has lived in St. Louis for more than 20 years. Originally from

Mexico City, her childhood had a bit of an "Indiana Jones" flavor to it. She grew up at her father's side as he worked for the National Museum of Anthropology. She fell in love with the combination of history and art after spending time in the museum learning from the experts around her father about the Aztec Calendar, commonly known as the "Sun Stone," a sacred piece of indigenous history, but also a masterful piece of art.

After the 1985 earthquake devastated Mexico City, they moved around to different sites where her father worked closely with anthropologists and archeologists in small villages. Her passion for traditional Mexican folk art grew as she realized the artifacts she saw on digs were the roots of what modern artisans were creating.

Eventually she settled in another St. Louis, San Luis Potosi, and trained for two years to be a certified historical tour guide. Her connection to the Lou started on a museum tour, after meeting a St. Louisan who eventually became her husband.

While raising her son in South City, she felt a need to stay connected to her Mexican roots. She was fearful about losing her ties to the musical language and vibrant art and culture she loved so much and realized she was uniquely positioned to help the growing population of newer immigrants in the community. She founded Conectando Raices Online Radio and Latinos en Axion STL as community building organizations which were initially centered on

helping with citizenship, language, and work-safety issues. During the pandemic she became a critical lifeline of information on vaccines, closures, masking regulations, and rumor control for the growing Spanish-speaking population of St. Louis, even going live on Facebook to get her own vaccine. She takes particular care of the isolated elders of the community ensuring they have access to food delivery and health services.

Her boutique is the realization of a lifelong dream, to bring her passion for Mexican folk arts here to St. Louis. It got off to a rocky start when her grand opening date coincided with the day the pandemic closed everything in the city, but is now thriving. Every piece in her store has a story. She buys directly from artisans she befriended back home and has even begun involving artisans who live in St. Louis, hand-painting hats, shawls, and scarves. Each visit she has something new and unique to show you including her own elaborate necklaces that incorporate beads, Oaxacan pottery, and on one, even tiny traditionally dressed dolls. The elaborately embroidered dresses and blouses she has are chic, wearable art that have connections to pre-Columbian tradition.

While her store is steeped in Mexican tradition, there is a warm welcome for all who enter. Whether you're a Mexican-American looking for a piece of your heritage or have no ties to Mexico but love unique treasures and art or just enjoy a great conversation about the ties that bind culture and history, there is something for all at Arte Rojo.



Martha Leticia Seitz, who has lived in St. Louis for over 20 years, opened Arte Rojo on Hampton in 2020. Photo provided by Kyle Blondé.

# Bill to tackle vacant properties signed into law

by Donna Baringer, State Representative, Missouri District 82



On June 29, Rep. Michael O'Donnell and I stood with the Governor as he signed House Bill 1606. Now, the City of St. Louis can officially begin the new vacant abandoned property process.

Our legislative process can be confusing, so I want to provide a full picture of how we made this happen. The original bill we championed, House Bill 2218, passed out of the House chamber in February with no issues. However, it stalled in the Senate, because they would not take up any other bills because of infighting between members of the majority party. We spent the last three weeks of session desperately looking for another bill we could amend our legislation to, and we found one with HB 1606!

I have written in detail about the vacant property bill since we began to work on it in 2021. For the 2022 regular legislative session it became House Bill 2218 that you can read in its entirety at [www.house.mo.gov](http://www.house.mo.gov). This bill was the result of a consortium of nonprofits, lawyers, and city agencies that came together and made the needed changes to our antiquated process in the City of St. Louis to address vacant and abandoned privately-owned property. During committee hearings and on floor

debate, it was essential that I explained why this legislation had to come before the state legislature in Jefferson City.

Most are not aware that some of our city offices were created as county offices within the City of St. Louis; examples are the Collector of Revenue, Sheriff's Office and the City of St. Louis Circuit Court among others. These entities are under state statute and any needed changes in their process and procedure are required to be passed by state law, not city charter. From that point, I needed everyone to visualize that these are properties where the owner cannot be found, have been so neglected that trees may be growing

out of the rooftop, are structurally unsound and now are a public safety hazard. The proliferation of abandoned property in the City of St. Louis did not happen overnight. Years of neglect along with lack of funding resources to address the problem exacerbated a problem that we should have solved years ago.

But it's a new day and with the governor's signature on HB 1606 and well over \$500 million dollars in federal funds in our city budget, I look forward to seeing the redevelopment of properties and the rebirth of these communities.



Gov. Mike Parson (right) signs into law a bill co-sponsored by Rep. Donna Baringer (second from right) to tackle vacant properties. Photo provided by Donna Baringer.



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# Congratulations lawn & garden award winners!

by Sarah Seger

Congratulations to all of the 2022 Lawn & Garden award winners and a big thank you to our judges who volunteered their time this summer canvassing the neighborhood to nominate 97 different lawns & gardens. There were many fantastic design elements throughout the neighborhood and it was lovely to see such wonderful choices. We are excited to announce the award winners below.

If you have a love for gardening and would like to join the committee for 2023, please feel free to reach out to Sarah Seger at sarahseger15@gmail.com.

## Best Lawn & Gardens:

6215 Itaska - Brooke & Kurt Richards  
 6525 Itaska - Jim & Maria Pftzinger  
 6546 Itaska - Cathy & Wayne Myrick  
 6001 Bishops Pl. - Fred & Michele Kratky  
 6056 Landsdowne - Jill Farace  
 5850 Walsh - Pat & Lauren Meier  
 5844 Neosho - Nancy & Sam Patti  
 6305 Devonshire - Jane Beato  
 6446 Eichelberger - John & Patricia Talley  
 6223 Delor - Amanda & Michael Eilerman

## Best Backyard:

5924 Childress - Sandie Hea  
 6201 Delor - Michael & Patti Reda

## Best Multi-family:

6250 Sunshine Dr. - Carol & Sal Easterly  
 6233 Loran - Douglas & Julie Hurst



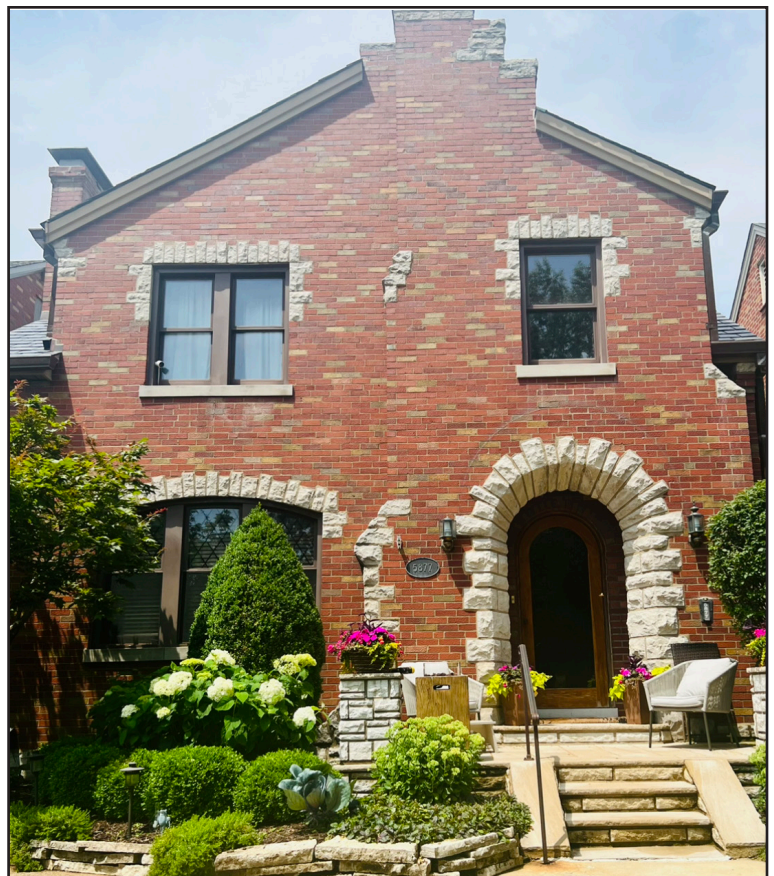
## Little Readers (Cont'd from Page 8)

which kids can come in and design anything they want, using Legos, paint and other materials. It will be open whenever the store is open (currently 3-6 p.m. Wednesday-Friday and 12-6 p.m. Saturday) and will host a combination of free and paid events. They hope to have the space open for their one-year anniversary in August. They are also evaluating opening an event and activity center, contingent on being able to secure adjacent space for the plans.

Of course, any discussion of a bookstore would be incomplete without a discussion of the books.

“Most of our books are for a diverse audience, so kids can picture themselves in the books,” Joice says. “We do keep popular ones on our shelves pretty regularly, but we have books by French authors, Asian-Americans and Hispanic authors. Even if we don’t carry a book that a reader wants, you can always order it with us, and we will deliver it free of charge in the area.”

You can learn more about Little Readers on their website at <https://www.littlereaders-stl.com/> or on their Facebook page.



Two of this year's winners of the annual St. Louis Hills Lawn & Garden Awards. Photos provided by Sarah Seger.



# Easter Egg Hunt returns after two-year hiatus

by Angie LeGrand


After a 2 year hiatus the Easter Egg Hunt was back, bigger, and better than ever this year! The live bunnies and fun prizes were a big hit. Our \$25 golden egg finders were 15 year old Jaden Patten of Windsor, 11 year old Kyle Fletchall, 10 year old Molly Cochran, and 9 year old Ryann Fletchall all of St. Gabriel. Local mom Kristen Jones, was the winner of our fabulous gift basket donated by Abigail's Gift Boutique. Many thanks to the outgoing chair, Kristen Miller, for walking me through running the hunt and answering my many questions! Big thanks to Ted Drewes Frozen Custard and LeGrand's Market for donating gift certificates for prizes.

Thank you for all the positive feedback and suggestions. We're already thinking about improvements for next year's hunt. We're aware of the need for improved audio equipment and more eggs. If anyone has a band that wants to volunteer to play some music and/ or loan their audio equipment, please reach out to me at [EasterEggHunt@stlhills.org](mailto:EasterEggHunt@stlhills.org). I was heartbroken to hear that some children did not find any eggs due to the volume of participants.



A huge crowd descends upon the Easter eggs laid out through Francis Park. Photo by Chip Kastner.

We couldn't anticipate the number of attendees since we don't require registration. Next year we'll have more eggs, as many as budget permits. Thank you for your support of the neighborhood association. Your dues support this and many other great events! Please contact Angie LeGrand at [EasterEggHunt@stlhills.org](mailto:EasterEggHunt@stlhills.org) if you're interested in being a sponsor or volunteer for next year's event.

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# St. Louis Hills, “Time and Again”

by Ron “Johnny Rabbitt” Elz, KMOX Radio

Once upon time when he headed our St. Louis Public Library, Dr. Glen Holt gave me a book he thought, he knew, I'd go for. And, he was so right. And I now take this opportunity to suggest it to you. It's 'Time and Again' by Jack Finney which was published in 1970. I'll just bet you could borrow a copy through our Buder Branch library. The subject of the novel is time travel and that's what we'll do in this first of a series of St. Louis Hills time travel tales.

Our unique neighborhood reminds me of the 1978 Gloria Gaynor disco hit 'I Will Survive,' as the area now named St. Louis Hills has survived and thrived since 1839 when it was part of a Spanish land grant to Madame Anne Camp and Antoine Reihle. In 1843 the land was sold to George C. Clark and its first sub-division was between Clark and his sons.

The dividing line was named Clark Road, now Eichelberger Street. It seems the major problem in those days was the frequent flooding of River des Peres. Sounds familiar. This land was open and wild with few trees, but with sinkholes and a lake. There was a little farming and cattle raising, and it was considered to be a good hunting ground, but the City population was far away and roads were few and far between. The troubles of the times, such as the Civil War, left this area unscathed; and there were but a few skirmishes in St. Louis or near here on the Mississippi.

A pivotal landmark in time of our St. Louis Hills to be, came in 1884 when a sizeable section of the tract was purchased by the forward thinking 34 year old businessman and politician David Rowland Francis. He was an 1870 Wash U grad who 10 years hence was a founding member of The St. Louis Mining and Stock Exchange. 1 year after he bought the land that we live in

Francis was elected Mayor of St. Louis, and 4 years after that he was Governor of Missouri. When the idea for the World's Columbian Exposition of 1893 was espoused he with others worked to have it in St. Louis, but the U. S. Congress awarded it to Chicago. Francis and friends were down but not out as they pinned their hopes and bucks on a World's Fair to honor the Louisiana Purchase in a 1904 exposition that Francis hoped could be located in what's now St. Louis Hills. Carondelet Park and Fairground Park were also contenders, but we know where it ended up. Not that it made them all happy, but those backing other venues finally came to the realization that Forest Park was the better location.

Well, Francis was far from finished with his land holdings to the southwest as he saw the area as being ripe for future opportunities in residential real-estate development. He followed the scheme that became a proven success which began in 1872 when Hiram Leffingwell, a real-estate developer presented his original concept of creating a park west of Kingshighway at Olive (now Lindell). So in 1916 Francis made the wise decision to donate 60 acres of his land to the city for a park. Good for the city, good for him. But the best is yet to come even through troubled times of which there were more than a few. We'll offer reports on what would come to be in upcoming issues.

From the inception of St. Louis Hills to the St. Louis Hills of now, reminds me of what Scottish author Neil Munro wrote at about the time St. Louis Hills was being formulated: "And, yet, this new road will some day be the old road too."

To get a good examination of the neighborhood I suggest Ann Zanaboni's book from 2008 'St. Louis Hills' for which I penned the foreward. It's of course at the Buder library. And there's the 2001 tome by Harper Barnes called 'Standing on a Volcano: The Life & Times of David Rowland Francis.

*Ron Elz is a member of the board of directors of the Mercantile Library and Art Museum, a member of the Society of Architectural Historians, retired trustee of the Field House Museum, former member of the St. Louis Public Library Foundation Board, etc. He's a lecturer for OASIS, the St. Charles City-County Library, and the Missouri Historical Society. He can be heard on KMOX Radio.*



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# Doing your part to protect our community

by Pat Talley, Crime and Safety Education

## #9PMROUTINE

The distinctive red and yellow signs are everywhere in Lindenwood Heights, Princeton Heights and St. Louis Hills. The cost for the #9PMROUTINE signs and mailers is being shared by the three neighborhood associations. #9PMROUTINE is a crime-fighting tool sponsored by police departments and communities nationwide. The initiative encourages people to remove firearms and valuables from vehicles, lock vehicle doors, garage doors, exterior house doors, and turn on exterior lights all by 9:00 p.m. every night. Make it your daily routine.

## MAKE THE CALL

As of this writing there is talk of reallocating police resources from District 2 to other districts where violent crime is more pervasive. While there is little question that District 2 does not have the same types of crime there is still plenty of activity requiring police attention. Car clouting, car theft, catalytic converter theft, garage thefts, burglaries, and carjackings are all present and seem to be on the rise. By concentrating crime fighting resources elsewhere it will likely shift crime to more lightly protected area. The decision to make changes is based on statistics of criminal activity in the different police districts. It's more important now than ever to call EVERY TIME you see something going on that doesn't look right. This will give the SLMPD a more accurate picture of all criminal activity in St. Louis Hills. Call 911 in the moment or report later at

314-231-1212.

## AWARENET

[www.awarenet.us](http://www.awarenet.us)

Thanks to the programming wizardry of Safety Committee Chairperson, Tom Scheifler, we have the potential to protect our neighborhood virtually: "AwareNet is designed to automatically consolidate real-time alerts from outdoor, resident-owned security cameras throughout your neighborhood and automatically notify designated persons (e.g. a professional security guard) to review the event information and take action as appropriate." More volunteers willing to purchase and install the designated cameras are still needed. Our goal is to have one camera on each block. We currently have almost 50 blocks covered. Please visit the AwareNet link at the beginning of this paragraph.

We love our homes and our community. Let's do everything possible to protect them.

Due to new committee formation, the SLHNA is in need of a **Senior Liaison and a Young Professionals Liaison**.

You must be a member of the SLHNA to participate as Chair.

If you are interested in finding out more please contact Nan Vordtriede at [president@stlhills.com](mailto:president@stlhills.com).

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314-378-2977 | [gbomber@swbell.net](mailto:gbomber@swbell.net)  
or Julie Headrick  
314-258-2169 | [hea102@sbcglobal.net](mailto:hea102@sbcglobal.net)





# The important link between community and mental health

by Gary Wells

Doesn't it feel good when you have a quick, friendly little conversation with people in the neighborhood? Sometimes even a wave and a smile can make a person feel included in the community. Those little moments help generate a sense of connectivity which is good for the mind and soul. And they may serve a greater purpose

This year the national media has exploded several times over tragic stories involving groups of innocent people and a single person with a sad agenda. Although you may have the instinct to turn away from such news, it is important to acknowledge that what happened "there" could happen "here". And so, we need to talk about it.

Like everyone else, the SLHNA does not have an easy, fool-proof plan to always keep people safe for every contingency or situation. What we can offer though, is a reminder of just how important it is to engage your neighbors in a sociable way. The individuals who create such trauma are often cited as people who have found themselves outside of civil society. For whatever reason, they have reached the conclusion that inflicting misery on others is an acceptable means of dealing with what they see as the problems of the world, or the turmoil within their own lives.

This is one of the reasons that we put so much emphasis on being a good neighbor. Some people prefer their own company, and that's alright. Some folks work odd hours or have unusual occupations, and that in and of itself is not a cause for concern. Many people are facing struggles in their personal lives that they can't share

with casual acquaintances, and we shouldn't pry.

However, when troubled individuals become isolated and insulated within their own feelings and thoughts, bad things may fester and grow—like mold or an undetected illness. To prevent this, we can all add a little sunshine or a healing salve to others around us by inviting neighbors to local events or asking a generic "How are you doing today?"

We're not trying to suggest that talking about the latest Cards game or just an occasional smile is going to stop someone from lashing out from deep areas of darkness within themselves. But an ounce of kindness once in a while may be all it takes to tip the scales for someone's mental health. To let them know that we are all here together – a community of persons who care and who need to feel cared about.

If you find yourself or someone in your household struggling with dark or harmful thoughts, we encourage you to seek help. We want everyone to have a happy, healthy life—because you deserve it! The National Suicide Prevention Lifeline is 800-273-8255. For harmful thoughts, you can text "Hello" or "GO" to 741741 to reach a trained crisis counselor. YouthLine is available for teens at 877-968-8491 or text "teen2teen" to 839863. Perhaps it's time to contact the Domestic Violence Hotline at 800-799-7233. Of course, we also have several church communities around us as well, and you may find the guidance you need by reaching out to one of them. The world is a better place when there are more connections and less isolation.

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## Important Neighborhood Contact Information

**St. Louis Police (SLMPD) Non-Emergency Number:** 314-231-1212

**Commander, 2nd District SLMPD:**  
Captain Christi Marks, 314-444-0100  
cmmarks@slmpd.org

**Police Officer Liaison, 2nd District SLMPD:**  
Officer Vince Stehlin, 314-444-0100  
vstehlin@slmpd.org

**Community Outreach/Business Liaison:**  
Don Veile, 314-444-0168, dlveile@slmpd.org

**Problem Properties Officers:**  
Anna Biondolillo, ambiondolillo@slmpd.org  
Dave Krapf, dekrapf@slmpd.org

**Crimestoppers:** 866-371-TIPS

**City Fraud Hotline:** 314-641-8600

**Citizens Service Bureau:** 314-622-4800

**Refuse Division:** 314-353-8900

**Neighborhood Improvement Specialist, Ward 16:**

Kathy Savage, 314-657-1362  
SavageK@stlouis-mo.gov

**President, St. Louis Hills Neighborhood Association (SLHNA):**

Nancy (Nan) Vordtriede, 314-616-6468  
president@stlhills.com

**SLHNA Website:** [www.stlhills.com](http://www.stlhills.com)

**SLHNA Facebook:** <https://www.facebook.com/stlhills/>

**SLHNA Membership:** [membership@stlhills.com](mailto:membership@stlhills.com)

**16th Ward Alderman:**

Tom Oldenburg, 314-896-0204  
oldenburgt@stlouis-mo.gov.com

**82nd State Representative:**

Donna Baringer, 573-751-4220  
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St. Louis Hills  
News and Views



Publication of the  
St. Louis Hills  
Neighborhood Association

newsletter@stlhills.com  
PO Box 190314  
St. Louis, MO 63119-6314

Editor and Layout  
**Chip Kastner**

Advertisements  
**Gary Wells**

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Please notify us of any errors in your address (other than "Or Current Resident") at [membership@stlhills.com](mailto:membership@stlhills.com).



We mail three issues of this newsletter per year to all St. Louis Neighborhood Association members, and a fourth issue to all neighborhood residents. Membership dues help support Francis Park cleanups and mowing, neighborhood safety initiatives, our annual scholarship, and events such as the Easter Egg Hunt and Christmas Tree Lighting. Never forget to renew your membership again by visiting [stlhills.com/membership-benefits/slhna-membership/](http://stlhills.com/membership-benefits/slhna-membership/) and choosing a recurring membership... or scan the QR code to the left with your phone's camera.

## Upcoming Events

**August 13:** Grub & Groove @ Francis Park

**September 3, 9 a.m.:** Tour de Francis Park

**September 17:** Run for the Hills

**September 25, 10 a.m. - 5 p.m.:** Art in the Park @ Francis Park

**October 8, 1 p.m. - 5 p.m.:** Brew in the Lou @ Francis Park

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