



HOLLY HILLS IMPROVEMENT ASSOCIATION (HHIA)
Grand to Morganford and Bates to Loughborough

Caroling For a Cause in Holly Hills

Did you happen to hear angelic voices throughout our neighborhood over the holiday season? Please take a moment to read an inspiring story from our wonderful neighbors, the McGraths, and how they chose to honor a loved one, raise money and awareness for Epilepsy research, and spread holiday cheer.

Read all about it on page 11 of our newsletter.



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FROM THE DESK OF HHIA:

I am really looking forward to this year 2020 and a new decade! I sincerely hope everyone had great holidays. Even though I work retail (and it was crazy busy with the increased hours and customers) I love Christmas. Christmas to me is all about family and friends! It's a time to celebrate the birth of baby Jesus, but it is also a time to be with family and celebrate with friends. I was able to take the time and celebrate Christmas Day with close friends. Even after the holiday, I was able to spend time with some dear friends and celebrated "Girls Christmas" (15th year) at my home on January 5th. We all love to share great food, great time together and play rob your neighbor.

Getting down to Holly Hills business. Unfortunately, the weather kept most neighbors and friends away on Sunday, December 15th. However, we shared the hot chocolate and homemade cookies with the YMCA staff members and a few folks that ventured out at the Carondelet Rec Plex. Thanks to Lisa and Michele for donating some delicious homemade cookies. Looks like we will be serving Hot Chocolate at our January HHIA meeting! Unfortunately, all of the homemade cookies were consumed by the "cookie monsters". I also would like to point out that Katie was the winner of the attendance prize donated by HHIA.

Don't forget it is time to renew your membership and help support your community!

Anna Baldwin, President HHIA

The Holly Hills Improvement Association (HHIA) was formed on September 10, 1927. Since its inception, HHIA has worked to promote the well being of Holly Hills and its residents.

HHIA BOARD MEMBERS & COMMITTEE CHAIRS

Anna Baldwin, President & Membership Secretary

president@hollyhills.info

Mike Dauphin, Vice President

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Kent Orrick, Member-at-Large

Michele Bildner, Member-at-Large

Hannah Ehrlich,

Community Garden Manager

garden@hollyhills.info

IMPORTANT CONTACT INFORMATION

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First District Police	444-0100
Holly Hills Police Liaison, Officer Steve Wilson	444-0176
Citizens' Service Bureau	622-4800
Problem Properties, Officer Ginger Kavanaugh	444-0171
Anonymous Drug, Gang, Homicide Police Line	241-COPS
Alderman Sarah Wood Martin 11th Ward	622-3287
Kathryn Woodard—Ward 11 NIS	657-1364
Alderman Beth Murphy 13th Ward	589-6836
Kathryn Woodard (interim)—Ward 13 NIS	657-1368
State Rep. Steve Butz 81st District	573-751-0438
State Senator Karla May 4th District	573-751-3599
State Senator Jamilah Nasheed 5th District	573-751-4415
Humane Society	647-8800
Lost Pets	stllostpets.org

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 4256 Bates \$89,900 (UC)
 4180 Burgen \$129,900
 3935 Burgen (UC) \$145,000
 3820 Burgen \$145,000
 5660 Arendes (UC) \$149,900
 4168 Federer \$150,000 (UC)
 4106 Burgen \$160,000
 4022 Bates (MF) \$174,900
 4107 Alma (UC) (MF) \$225,000
 3656 Bates (MF) \$479,900
 4022 Wilmington (UC) (MF) \$729,999
 3836 Wilmington (MF) \$950,000
 4107 Holly Hills \$299,000 (UC)
 4002 Wilmington \$729,999 (MF)
 3836 Wilmington \$995,000 (MF)

6169 Adkins (MF) \$101,000
 6000 Leona \$155,000
 3629 Wilmington (MF) \$167,000
 3656 Wilmington (MF) \$179,900
 4096 Fillmore \$185,000
 3931 Dover \$192,500
 4073 Toenges \$193,500
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Are you thinking of a move? Know someone who is?

Minutes from the November 29 HHIA Meeting

7:05m Anna Baldwin, HHIA President, called the meeting to order

HHIA Board members present: Anna Baldwin, Beth Murphy, Michelle Bildner, Michael Dauphin, Tara Ohler/Jenney, Kent and Julie Orrick, and James Sahaida

Also in attendance: Scouts from Troop 104 working on their Citizenship and Community badge.

1st Speaker: April Angela Walker, Recruiter for the 2020 Census

April stated she has been a census recruiter since 1990 and her position became permanent in 1992. Every household will receive a 2020 census notice. A citizen's response can be to mail it in, respond online, or call a response in. In the past only 50% of citizens were contacted.

The 2020 census will have 10 questions. The 1st five questions have just basic demographic questions and the other 5 questions are being finalized. A household will only be contacted if there is no response to the questionnaire. Typically ½ of households do respond. In 2010 73% of households got counted. Census numbers are important as \$675 billion dollars are distributed by the Feds based on the census count. The plan is to hire 4,500 people for the City and 5,900 for the County. The past starting pay for census workers was \$19.50 per hour but due to the challenge of recruiting census workers the starting pay now is \$23.50 per hour with 58c per mile as mileage reimbursement. There are no benefits with the job. Employment is from April to October 2020. Qualifications are to be at least 18 years of age and a citizen. Noncitizens can be hired as translators. Office workers work from 7am to 4:30pm. The majority of the census positions are for field workers who go to homes where a response has not been received.

If a household does not respond to a census notice 3 reminders are sent and the third one states a census worker will be making a contact. Census workers will have a badge, a bag that says 2020 census, and an I-pad. A background check is required of census applicants and the census pays for it. Census counts homeless, prisoners, and those in retirement facilities. Babies in hospitals (newborns) are to be counted and they are the most undercounted. Everyone needs to be counted.

Census field workers are typically assigned to work the area where they live. A lot of the work involves evenings and weekends. Workers are paid every week. There are three days of paid training. The minimum number of hours to work is 20 hrs. and a worker can work up to 40 hours per week.

Trying to get a response requires attempting to make a visit at least six times. After six tries the field worker can ask a neighbor for the information.

St. Louis lost a Congressional seat in 2010 because of a lower census count. A low census count has a cost in lost funding as well.

Speaker 2: Brendan Kirby, co-owner, Seed Sprout and Spoon Catering.

The former Grace UCC Church and more recently the US Marine Center on Leona St. is under renovation by Mr. Kirby and his partner. It will be a rental hall for weddings and other events and also a rental company. The plan is to call it the "Leona". Asbestos is now being removed from the building. A question arose about parking when a big event is held. Brendan said for those occasions a plan is underway for a valet service using the Woerner School parking lot. For more information Brendan Kirby can be contacted by phone at 314-606-0165 or by email at Brendan@seedsproutspoon.com

Speaker 3: Steve Butz, 81st district State Representative

Mr. Butz recognized a scout from Troop 51 – Our Lady of Sorrows

Steve stated for the Mo. Legislature this is off season. The Legislature is back in session in January.

Steve had minutes available from a community meeting he organized and led at Woerner School. He stated his priorities are: Public Safety, Affordable Housing, Economic Development, and Education. Steve spoke about the St. Joseph initiative whereby older homes are rehabbed and made available to home purchasers who qualify and commit to living in the home for five years. He also cited Habitat for Humanity housing development. Steve said 343 households support Cops Walking the Beat. He stated the number of supports has some decline due to persons moving or seniors moving to retirement facilities. There is always a need to recruit more supporters. For Cops Walking the Beat there are 4 shifts a week, 4 hours a shift. Steve spoke about the need for residents to get a real id by January. Without one or a passport one would not be able to use an airline for travel. Steve will be proposing a 2c a gallon tax increase to support needed infrastructure needs. 1996 was the last time there was a gas tax increase.

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Send an email to newsletter@hollyhills.info with the subject line **HHIA Goes Green** and we will make the update. You will even get your copy before the snail mail folks so you will be the first to know all the exciting neighborhood updates!



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Seed Sprout Spoon Coming to Holly Hills

After buying the building and business from Local Harvest Café and Catering, Erin Wiles and Brendan Kirby have purchased the former Marine Hall (St. Louis Banquet Center) at 5700 Leona Avenue, Renovations are underway with a goal to start hosting events by April of 2020.

The building will go by its new name, "The Leona" and will have the capacity to host 120 guests in its chapel and around 220 in the auditorium.

To learn more about this amazing project and welcomed addition to our neighborhood, read all about it at St. Louis Magazine.

<https://www.stlmag.com/dining/seed-sprout-spoon-branches-out-into-new-holly-hills-venue>



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Minutes from the November 29 HHIA Meeting (cont.)

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Speaker 4: Beth Murphy, 13th ward Alderwoman

Beth said the traffic light at Grand and Bates is going to be moved further back. Bates St. will be repaved but first Spire needs to complete work they are doing. Dead trees are being cut and the stumps will be removed when they can be got to. Michael Dauphin, the City Assessor, said that 2,400 trees are being removed and 2,600 trees will be planted. The City had to contract with a company to cut the trees because there are not enough City workers who can do the job. Doing this work is a skill and not enough persons have the skill or desire to do it.

In Carondelet Park the sunken area around horseshoe lake will be fixed. The Parks Dept. has been notified.

Beth talked about the St. Joseph's Housing initiative and said we are getting good publicity about it.

Speaker 5: Sara Martin, 11th Ward Alderwoman

Sara said the traffic roundabout project was supposed to start the Fall. This has been delayed. Sara spoke about a problem with City government where there is no financial penalty when contractors don't meet time deadlines.

Sara said Santa Claus would be at the Carondelet Rec Center on December 14 at 9am. and pancakes will be served. The Carondelet Y has been in existence for 100 years.

The Lutheran Church at Vermont and Koeln in the 11th Ward does a lot of charitable work. Sara said she wanted to give a plug to Pipefitters Union 562 that has donated \$80,000.00 worth of material and labor to the church.

Sara has a bill in the Board of Alderman to pay a prevailing wage.

She said work is going forward at the old Lyons School at Koeln and Vermont. It will have 32 new apartments. Also, the old Carondelet School has a contract signed for retail and commercial use.

Anna Baldwin announced on December 15th from 1-4pm there will be a Christmas social put on by the Holly Hills Improvement Association.

The next HHIA meeting is January 27th at 7pm The guest speaker Tisaura Jones, the St. Louis Treasurer
The meeting was adjourned at 8:20pm

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Caroling For a Cause in Holly Hills

...continued from page 1

My husband, Dan, and I have lived in Holly Hills for 30 years. For the past 25 years a large group of friends and family have gone Christmas caroling in the Holly Hills neighborhood as a way to remember my cousin Karen, who had epilepsy and tragically passed away after having a seizure at the young age of 29 on December 12, 1987. Karen's boys were ages 2 & 3 when she died. As a way to keep her memory alive, as well as bring epilepsy awareness to others, we decided to go Christmas caroling and collect money for the Epilepsy Foundation of Missouri and Kansas.

The first night we did this, in 1995, we had about 25 close friends and family gather in our home for a hot chili dinner. Then we headed out with song sheets in hand, not a shred of singing experience and knocked hopefully on doors. We collected \$150.00 and were super pleased with the success of the night. Not to mention how much fun we had just being together.

It was so much fun we decided to make it an annual event. Every year the group of friends and family multiplied and so did the donations. My neighbors opened their doors and gladly handed us checks instead of the change on their dresser. Once we got back to our house, we would pass around the bucket and all of our guests joyfully gave. Each year the party grew. And grew. Up until this year, our peak year was 2006 - we had over 125 people in our house! The size of the party gave us reason to change locations and we moved the party to St. Stephen Protomartyr for a few years. Ultimately, though, we moved it back to our house, because people love coming to our cozy Holly Hills home even though it is very crowded.

Everyone who comes to our party absolutely loves our neighborhood. The homes are beautiful year round, but during the holidays, they are even more gorgeous with festive lights and decorations. In the "early years" we would carol for almost 3 hours - walking up Holly Hills Blvd from one end of the park to Livingston, up and down Federer and Bowen, then down Arenades back to our house on Holly Hills. It was often so cold that we would have a "pit stop" at my brother's house at the corner of Bowen and Arenades to take a break and warm up with some hot cocoa. Eventually, we decided to cut back on the length of time we sing so that people would have more time to visit at the party. We currently carol on the 3800 blocks of Holly Hills and Federer and on Arenades from Federer to Holly Hills.

The success and fun of our caroling party inspired others in our group to put together additional events throughout the year to support the Epilepsy Foundation in Karen's

name. These additional events include Halloween Parties, Trivia Nights, Pub Crawls and Washer Tournaments. In addition, back in 2010, a complete stranger, who is a karaoke DJ at River City Pub in south St. Louis, heard about our annual event through some mutual friends and he decided to donate all of his Wednesday night tips to the Epilepsy Foundation to support our cause. He started coming to the caroling party in 2011. Every year he brings with him an envelope full of a year's worth of donations. Over the past 10 years he has donated \$9,654.00 of his own money to a cause remembering someone he never knew. He and his wife are amazing people and, of course, they are no longer strangers!

Our "25th Annual Christmas Caroling Party in Memory of Karen" was Saturday, December 14, 2019. It was our biggest party yet – with over 140 people in attendance and approximately 75 people singing Christmas carols door to door. Donations that night hit a record high of \$6,000 – with \$815 of that coming from our awesome neighbors! We are so grateful for our neighbors who continue to open their doors, listen to our mediocre singing and give generously to our cause!

Over the past 25 years, our group of family and friends, along with our Holly Hills neighbors, have collected over \$53,000 from the caroling party alone. When we add in the additional fundraisers spread throughout the years, we have raised over \$120,000 to benefit the Epilepsy Foundation of Missouri and Kansas - all out of love for my cousin Karen.

We are honored that our story was shared on KSDK for Mike Bush's "Making a Difference" segment, which aired on December 22, 2019. We are very blessed to live in such a wonderful neighborhood and have so many great neighbors, friends and family members that donate to this cause.

~ Tina McGrath

If you have any questions about the story or how to get involved, please reach out to Tina McGrath at tina.mcgrath@sbcglobal.net.



**HOLLY HILLS
IMPROVEMENT
ASSOCIATION**

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