



LEADERSHIP
VESTAVIA HILLS

Leadership Vestavia Hills Newsletter

Winter 2017

Leadership
Vestavia Hills

P.O. Box 660591
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leadershipvestaviiahills.com

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2016-2017

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**COMMUNITY
LEADERSHIP AWARDS
BANQUET**

March 2, 2017

6:00 p.m. Reception

6:45 p.m. Dinner

Vestavia Country Club

The 27th Community Leadership Award Banquet (formerly Citizen of the Year) will be held March 2, 2017 at the Vestavia Country Club with the reception at 6:00 p.m. and dinner at 6:45 p.m. This program recognizes and celebrates exceptional members of our community who have invested substantial efforts to improve the quality of life for those throughout our community and beyond.

**Advisory Committee Chair
Rebecca Olsen**

For Edits or Information to
include in future Alumni
Newsletters
Please contact
Donna Byrd at:
dbyrd@waldinglaw.com



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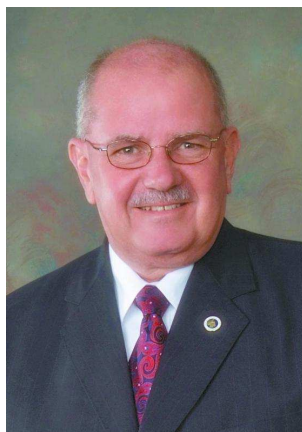


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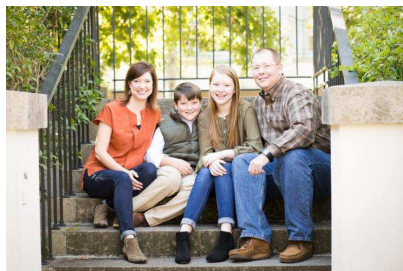
Lifetime Achievement Award - Alberto C. "Butch" Zaragoza



Alberto C. "Butch" Zaragoza (Class of 2006) will be recognized with the Lifetime Achievement Award for his longtime dedication to Vestavia Hills. He has served the City of Vestavia Hills for almost five decades, including a 39-year tenure with the Fire Department and two terms as Mayor. He has also served as Chairman of the Jefferson County Emergency Management Agency, Chairman of the Board of the Alabama Fire College and Personnel Standards Commission, President of the Central Alabama Fire Chiefs, President of the Alabama Fire Chiefs Association, President of the Southeastern Association of Fire Chiefs, President of the International Association of Fire

Chiefs and President of the Jefferson County Mayors Association. During his tenure as Mayor, he was actively involved in the expansion of municipal facilities and programs, including a new LEED gold-certified library, a new sports complex, sidewalks, and other major improvements.

Distinguished Citizen Award - Andy and Jan Thrower



Jan and Andy Thrower Family
Photo Credit: So Filled With
Love Photography

Husband and wife team Andy and Jan Thrower, founders of the nonprofit organization aTeam Ministries, will be honored with the Distinguished Citizen Award. aTeam Ministries is a 501(c)(3) organization founded in Vestavia Hills in 2009 with the mission to offer spiritual, financial and emotional support through a variety of programs to children and their families within the pediatric cancer

community. It has helped families in different ways, including offering extended-stay housing near hospitals, paying families' mortgages and financing experimental therapy. The Throwers founded aTeam Ministries after their own first-hand experiences with pediatric oncology during their son Anderson's fight against Acute Lymphoblastic Leukemia. He is now a third grader at West and his sister is a sixth grader at Pizitz. The Banquet is open to the public and will be held on March 2 at 6 p.m. at Vestavia Country Club. Tickets are \$50 and must be purchased in advance at the Vestavia Hills Chamber of Commerce office or online at <http://leadershipvestaviiahills.com>. For information about sponsoring the event, please contact Penny Lewallyn at Lewallyn@aol.com.

Nominations for LVH Class of 2018

Leadership Vestavia Hills (LVH) is presently accepting nominations for the Class of 2018. They can be submitted at the LVH website at <http://leadershipvestaviiahills.com> under the Join tab. The Application for next year's class will be available for interested candidates to complete between March 1 until March 31, 2017. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Pauline Parker, President of LVH, at paulineparker@bellsouth.net or Shera Grant, Recruitment/Selection Committee Chairman, at shera.grant@alacourt.gov.

Derek Waltchack

MEMBER PROFILE



Derek Waltchack (Class of 2013) is a founding partner of Shannon Waltchack, a commercial real estate firm. This firm's mission is to transform and enrich lives through their love of real estate. Derek and his team at Shannon Waltchack have created this firm through integrity, faith, creativity, high performance and trust.

As urban revitalization thrives in Birmingham, Derek's leadership stands out as prominent force. He put his initial stamp on downtown Birmingham in 2010 with commercial development near the city's new Railroad Park, spearheading a \$4.5 million renovation that transformed a 100-year-old warehouse into a cutting-edge business center known as Railroad Square. In May of 2013, Shannon Waltchack launched yet another progressive move, Birmingham's first crowd-sourced development. By popular vote, the development is now known as The Stockyard @ Railroad Park and includes commercial space using shipping containers, another first in Birmingham. A recent article in The New York Times lauded the progress in downtown Birmingham, featuring Derek as a key player.

In 1998, Derek was recognized as a Top Producer among all commercial agents in the city, achieving a level of \$20 million in transactions, the youngest agent ever to have received this award. In 2001, he was honored as the number one commercial sales

associate in closed gross commissions in the state of Alabama for Coldwell Banker Commercial Eyster Properties. He is a Life Member of the Birmingham Association of Realtors' Commercial Million Dollar Sales Club and has been Top Producer in the Development Division in 2003 and 2012. He was also a Top Producer in the Investment Division in 2012. In 2013, Derek was named the Commercial Member of the Year for Alabama by the National Association of Realtors (NAR).

In addition to Derek's success in the real estate area, he is engaged as a board member for many organizations. These include:

- Shades Valley YMCA
- Samford University Brock School of Business
- Chestnut Growers of America

The Waltchack's own Alpine Farms located in Alpine, Alabama. They grow pumpkins, chestnut trees and truffles. You won't want to miss Alpine Farm's annual pumpkin sale held at the Boy Scout lot on Highway 31 in Vestavia Hills. The sale raises money for local folks who are in the process of adopting. Last year's sale raised \$27,000 for 3 families.

Derek is a native of Franklin, Tennessee, and has lived in Vestavia Hills for 8 years. He and his wife, Rushton, have 5 children ranging in ages from four to eleven. Derek graduated from Samford University with a degree in accounting and he and his family attend Covenant Presbyterian Church.

Greenspaces Survey closes on February 28!

One of the LVH Class of 2017 project groups has developed a survey available to all Vestavia Hills residents allowing residents the chance to give input on how city green spaces could be expanded and improved. The survey closes on February 28. The LVH Class of 2017 will analyze survey results and draft a report and deliver it to the city for consideration.

The survey consists of 30 questions that address wants and needs in city recreational areas and it takes about 5 minutes to complete.

The survey is available on the LVH website leadershipvestaviiahills.com or you can access it directly at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/7HSMS6Z>.

History of Vestavia Hills Video Project

As many of our founding and influential residents age, it is important to document the rich and dynamic history of our city. And we are thrilled to have the opportunity to do just that ... but we need your help!

Your tax deductible contribution will do so much to document the history of Vestavia Hills!

This video is aimed at providing a clear and concise image of our community and its leadership – past, present and future – and we hope you will help us make history!

Please consider making a contribution today at:

<http://tinyurl.com/hdrf9n>

or by mail to:

Penny Lewallyn; Leadership Vestavia Hills;
P. O. Box 660591; Birmingham, AL 35266

All sponsors will be listed in the video credits and sponsorships are available at the following levels:

Friend: \$1 - \$249
Supporter: \$250 - \$499
Investor: \$500 - \$999
Partner: \$1,000 - \$3,499
Champion Sponsor: \$3,500+

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact us:
HistoryofVestaviaHills@gmail.com



THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT!

LVH History Video Team Members:

Deana Goodwine; Lauren Helmer; Cinnamon McCulley; Helen Rand; and Suzanne Scott-Trammell



LEADERSHIP IN ACTION

Submitted by Kym Prewitt

YL VH Leadership Class Teacher

"A community's well-being simply has to do with the quality of the relationships, the cohesion that exists among its citizens."

~Peter Block, author of *Community: The Structure of Belonging*

The quote above opened the Possible Project, written and presented by the YLVH Leadership class at VHHS. On January 20th, two months of research, discussions, brainstorming, and writing culminated with a formal presentation held in the Media Center in front of a very distinguished audience. In attendance were the city manager, the school system's superintendent, assistant superintendent, and Board of Education president and vice president, the high school principal along with all four assistant principals, the Chamber's executive director, three representatives from Leadership Vestavia Hills, and a several other teachers and YLVH community leaders.

The guests had been invited to see the results of a project that sprang from a class discussion in early November about unity and school spirit. The result incorporated several concepts the class had studied during the semester including public speaking, team work, and problem-solving. The first step as a class was to agree upon the guiding questions and belief statements what would drive the rest of the project. Below are those important foundational pieces:

GUIDING QUESTIONS

What history/traditions do we want to maintain/honor?

What is the future we want to create?

What is the end we have in mind before we begin?

How can we create a win-win situation?

How can we, as student leaders, affect POSITIVE CHANGE?

BELIEF STATEMENTS

We believe that school spirit springs from a sense of unity and belonging.

We believe that students hold the power to change the school climate.

We believe that positive change happens through positive actions.

We believe that every student has equal value and worth.

Next, students were divided into three working groups: one focusing on the history of VHHS, one concentrating on the present, and one exploring the future for students. Each group determined their own methods of research and conducted that work over the next several weeks. The history group explored where we have been as a school system and a high school. They collected data on demographics from the Board of Education for an

objective perspective and surveyed the many VHHS teachers who are also alumni concerning their favorite traditions from the past for a more subjective view.

The group that focused on the present state of the school conducted a survey of more than 500 YLVH sophomores, juniors and seniors using Survey Monkey via Remind 101. The survey included one quantitative question as well as three open-ended ones; over 270 students responded to the survey. After collectively defining what "tradition" means to them, they also conducted an inventory which resulted in a list of more than 70 current VHHS traditions, actions that students repeatedly do year after year that reflect or create pride in being a VHHS student.

Finally, the group that considered the future was driven by the concept that in order to move the community forward, they needed to focus not on the problem but on the possible, thus the title of the presentation. After an open discussion with the class, the group chose to focus on new activities that would make the school feel more welcoming to all students, encourage student engagement, and create a sense of unity from which school spirit would naturally grow. The results included 15 ideas, mostly new ones but some revamped old or updated current activities. They created a chart that included each idea, who would be impacted, what would be the estimated cost in dollars and manpower, and who would be responsible for seeing the idea to fruition. The ideas were roughly grouped into three categories: communication, class unity, and events.

The class is currently learning the importance of follow-through. They have scheduled meetings with Dr. Burgess and Dr. Phillips about what the next steps should be and how to be a part of the process moving forward. The project also created a great sense of pride among the students and a better understanding of the concepts they had studied as they actually experienced leadership in action.

LVH Calendar

February 23

LVH Board Meeting

VH Chamber of Commerce Board Room

7:45 a.m.

March 2

Community Leadership Awards Banquet

Vestavia Country Club

6:00 p.m. Reception

6:45 p.m. Dinner

April 3

LVH Class of 2017 Graduation

City Hall

2:00 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.

Alumni in the News



Martha Reeves Cook (Class of 2015) opened her own law and mediation practice in September 2016. Her new contact information is:

Martha Reeves Cook, LLC

The Kress Building

301 19th Street North

Suite 520

Birmingham, AL 35203

205-458-1250

mrc@mrcattorney.com

www.mrcattorney.com

In Memoriam

Carolyn Bedford (Class of 2013)

Leadership Vestavia Hills alumna Carolyn Bedford passed away on January 4, 2017. Bedford was passionate about the Vestavia Hills community and was actively involved through her home renovation and property development company, Construction Property Group LLC, and as

the mother of two young children within our school district. As a Leadership Vestavia Hills alumna, she was the Sponsorship Chair for the Community Leadership Awards Celebration held at Vestavia Country Club and was also the emcee last year.

"Words fall short of expressing the sorrow for the loss of one of our most dedicated members," said Leadership Vestavia Hills President Pauline Parker. "Carolyn loved this community, enjoyed making others happy, and worked in various capacities to highlight her love for Vestavia Hills. She exuded the warmest smile, the most gracious heart, and enduring kindness to all, which will be forever noted."

LVH 2016 - 2017 Class Schedule

Ann Hamiter and Shannon Stewart, Class Coordinators

Sam Duffey, Class Facilitator

September 1, 2016

Introduction to LVH and History Day

8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

Vestavia Hills Baptist Church

Sponsor: Judge Shanta Owens / Judge Shera Grant

October 6, 2016

Leadership Boot Camp

8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

VH Board of Education Bldg. 2nd Floor

Sponsor: First Partners Bank

November 3, 2016

Team Building Day

8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

VH Board of Education Bldg. 2nd Floor

Sponsor: Bomar Law Firm, LLC

December 1, 2016

Government Day

8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

VH Board of Education Bldg. 2nd Floor

Sponsor: Alagasco

January 5, 2017

Economic Development Day

8:00 a.m. - 5 p.m.

VH City Hall, Council Chamber Room

Sponsor: Gordan, Dana & Gilmore, LLC

February 2, 2017

Quality of Life Day

8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

VH Board of Education Bldg. 2nd Floor

Sponsor: Vestavia Hills Parks and Recreation Foundation

March 2, 2017

Education Day

8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

VH Board of Education Bldg. 2nd Floor

Sponsor: John Henley - State Farm Agent

April 3, 2017

Graduation Day

2:00 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.

Vestavia Hills City Hall

Sponsor: The Elliott Firm, LLC