

# VOICE



## VillageFest

To Go →



### VillageFest planned as drive-through event for 2020

The Prairie Village VillageFest Committee is inviting residents to participate in VillageFest To Go from 9 a.m. to 11 a.m. July 4.

In the interest of public health during the COVID-19 pandemic, Prairie Village cannot host its traditional Independence Day event, which draws thousands of people to the municipal campus each year.

VillageFest To Go will be a drive-through event. Residents are invited to decorate their car and parade through the municipal campus. Each child over the age of two will receive a bag of goodies.

In addition to the drive through portion of the event, several contests will

be held on social media, including a sidewalk art contest, a photo contest, and Prairie Village trivia.

Those who would like to participate in the sidewalk chalk contest are invited to decorate their sidewalk or driveway and email a photo to [mbuum@pvkansas.com](mailto:mbuum@pvkansas.com).

For the photo contest, residents are invited to submit their photo that best captures the spirit of Prairie Village and email it to the same email address.

Photos will be posted on the City's Facebook page where residents can vote for their favorites. For more information see page 5 of this newsletter.

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# A Message from the Mayor

## Elected Officials

### MAYOR

Eric Mikkelson  
913-385-4600 • [mayor@pvkansas.com](mailto:mayor@pvkansas.com)

### WARD I

Chad Herring  
913-383-8752 • [cherring@pvkansas.com](mailto:cherring@pvkansas.com)

Jori Nelson  
913-522-7497 • [jnelson@pvkansas.com](mailto:jnelson@pvkansas.com)

### WARD II

Ron Nelson  
913-602-9003 • [rnelson@pvkansas.com](mailto:rnelson@pvkansas.com)

Inga Selders  
913-648-5804 • [iselders@pvkansas.com](mailto:iselders@pvkansas.com)

### WARD III

Bonnie Limbird  
913-214-6127 • [blimbird@pvkansas.com](mailto:blimbird@pvkansas.com)

Tucker Poling  
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### WARD IV

Sheila Myers  
913-645-8093 • [smyers@pvkansas.com](mailto:smyers@pvkansas.com)

Piper Reimer  
816-510-8573 • [preimer@pvkansas.com](mailto:preimer@pvkansas.com)

### WARD V

Courtney McFadden  
913-381-8089 • [cmcfadden@pvkansas.com](mailto:cmcfadden@pvkansas.com)

Dan Runion  
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### WARD VI

Terrence Gallagher  
913-642-4163 • [tgallagher@pvkansas.com](mailto:tgallagher@pvkansas.com)

Ian Graves  
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Unsure which ward you live in?  
Visit [www.pvkansas.com/wardmap](http://www.pvkansas.com/wardmap).



Dear friends and neighbors,

We've always known that Prairie Village is a remarkable, resilient city. But never before has our civic character been tested like this.

Our community has not been immune to the global damage suffered during this pandemic. Our beloved neighbors and relatives endured a COVID-19 outbreak with too many premature deaths at Brighton Gardens, tragically similar to long-term senior care facilities across the country. Other local businesses, and those who work there, incurred significant economic damage from the closures. Our City finances are taking a hit. And, as if a pandemic were not enough, we've recently seen civil unrest in the region.

Yet this crisis pulled us together in unprecedented ways. Thanks to your cooperation with stay-at-home measures, we flattened the initial curve. Doing so saved Prairie Village lives. Outside of long-term care facilities, Prairie Village has a relatively low infection rate. With proactive intervention by health authorities, government, and business, including heroes at Brighton Gardens, trends have been moving in the right direction.

Our businesses are standing up again, cautiously and responsibly, and we even have several outstanding new business openings to celebrate. We tightened the municipal fiscal belt and are doing relatively well compared to our city peers. Local government here, including policing and politics, remains largely civil, functional, fair and effective.

We were early movers to implement proactive emergency health measures in regional cooperation. As promised in my last Village Voice letter to you, essential City services continued seamlessly throughout this crisis. Our police, public works and other staff worked long, stressful hours, sometimes in dangerous conditions, to make it so.

We've recommitted to celebrate and encourage diversity, racial and otherwise. Our unwavering resolve to insist on fair, colorblind justice has never been stronger.

We've got rough seas still ahead of us, including expected additional waves. Please continue to heed the recommendations of health authorities. These include social distancing and masks where appropriate. In these pages and our website you can find specific guidance, updated frequently, for how to continue to do your part. Staff, Council, health experts, local business, the community and I are collaborating on enhanced messaging and mitigation as this situation evolves. Your ongoing engagement keeps it working well.

This turmoil has been tough on all of us. You've shown why this is such a special place even during the hardest times. Heart-warming acts of neighborly, inclusive kindness confirm daily that the Star of Kansas' unique "Prairie Village Way" shines brightest amidst adversity.

We are on the path to thrive again. If there is a silver lining here, it is that we are using these hard lessons to improve.

The best Prairie Village yet lies ahead of us.

Stay healthy,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "EM", written over a white background.

-Eric



## Pool complex to remain closed for 2020 season

The Prairie Village Pool Complex will not open this summer due to safety concerns for pool employees and area residents. The decision to keep the pool closed was made by the City Council based on recommendations from City staff in light of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

“We know this is a disappointing decision,” said Assistant City Administrator Meghan Buum, who oversees the City’s recreation programs. “It will be a tough summer for our community. We considered several alternatives to accommodate the Reopen Kansas Plan and CDC guidelines, but what it ultimately comes down to is the safety of our community and pool staff, most of whom are under the age of 18.”

The inability to properly train more than 50 lifeguards while maintaining distance was another factor that played into the pool’s closure.

“While we heard suggestions on how to enforce social distance among patrons, one problem we kept coming up against was how to provide required lifeguard certification training while maintaining six feet of separation between guards,” Buum said. “For example, it typically takes three guards in close proximity to perform a spinal rescue.”

After lengthy discussion at its May 4 meeting, the City Council ultimately voted 10-2 to close the pool. The timing of the decision was in part to allow seasonal staff to seek other employment opportunities.

## Upcoming Events

Date	Event	Time	Location
7/4	VillageFest To Go	9-11 a.m.	Municipal Campus
7/6	Council Meeting	6 p.m.	Online
7/7	Planning Commission	7 p.m.	Online
7/20	Council Meeting	6 p.m.	Online
8/3	Council Meeting	6 p.m.	TBD
8/4	Planning Commission	7 p.m.	TBD
8/17	Council Meeting	6 p.m.	TBD

As of June 15, City meetings are still taking place via online video conference due to the COVID-19 pandemic. When in-person meetings resume, they will be in the Council Chambers. For a more comprehensive list of upcoming meetings and events as well as their locations, visit [www.pvkansas.com](http://www.pvkansas.com).

## Prairie Village co-sponsors native plant sale

Prairie Village co-sponsored a successful native plant sale in June with a local environmental organization called Deep Roots KC.

Deep Roots is a collective impact organization of multi-sector partners that works to increase native plant landscapes. Its mission is “to encourage the appreciation, conservation, and use of native plants in the heartland through educating, collaborating, and facilitating the planting of regenerative native landscapes that are essential for a healthy planet.”

The Deep Roots website, available at [deeprootskc.org](http://deeprootskc.org), offers a plethora of information about the importance of planting native plants, offers webinars on how to begin, and ongoing educational programs. Deep Roots can help residents choose plants for sun and shady areas of a yard, provide information on native gardening basics, and how to create a rain garden. What you choose to plant in your yard is important and matters for our local and global environment.



Visit us online for 2020 JazzFest information



NEW WEBSITE  
COMING SOON

[WWW.PVKANSAS.COM](http://WWW.PVKANSAS.COM)



## Prairie Village Foundation assisting area residents in need

The Prairie Village Foundation held its annual spring board meeting in May. Thanks to community donations received late last year, the Foundation was able to distribute funds in the amount of \$4,600 to eight area organizations. Each organization directly helps Prairie Village or Johnson County residents in need. As you know, at this time of uncertainty, many community members need extra assistance.

In this COVID-19 crisis, the

Foundation asks for continued support. Donations can be made to: The Prairie Village Foundation, Attn: Meghan Buom 7700 Mission Road, Prairie Village, KS 66208.

If you are an organization directly assisting Prairie Village residents and would like to request monetary support, contact Meghan at 913-381-6464. The continued goal of The Prairie Village Foundation is to support our community through care and compassion.

## Johnson County Wastewater begins infrastructure improvements

Johnson County Wastewater (JCW) in partnership with the cities of Leawood and Prairie Village is performing infrastructure improvements to the Mission Road corridor between 83rd Street and 93rd Street over the next two years.

The scheduled work will be completed in multiple phases with JCW's pipe project occurring first, beginning in the summer of 2020 through spring 2021. The second phase for utility relocation, street light-

ing, and sidewalks will begin in the fall of 2020 and run through the summer of 2021. The last phase, addressing pavement maintenance, will occur in the summer/fall of 2021.

The construction of these improvements will impact property owners and traffic through temporary sidewalk and lane closures along Mission Road. Two lanes of traffic, one in each direction, will be maintained throughout the projects.

## Construction projects impact local streets

Construction season is in full swing in Prairie Village. Two of the community's busiest local streets are impacted by City road work. Work is underway on Tomahawk from 71st Street to Roe and Belinder from 73rd Street to 75th Street. Both are part of the residential street repair program.

For the latest information on these and other construction projects throughout Prairie Village, please visit [www.pvkansas.com/construction](http://www.pvkansas.com/construction).



## Cartographer Gavin Jeter recognized as 2020 Arbor Day Honoree



The Prairie Village Tree Board has announced the 2020 Arbor Day Honoree is Gavin Jeter.

Each year, the City of Prairie Village and the Tree Board celebrate Arbor Day by planting a tree in honor of the Prairie Vil-

lage Arbor Day Honoree. While the ceremony that usually accompanies the tree planting was canceled this year due to the COVID-19 Pandemic, the Prairie Village Public Works Department planted an American elm tree in Bennett Park in Jeter's honor.

In 2019 Jeter, a cartographer and former Prairie Village Tree Board member, used Google Maps to create an online map of all the trees in Prairie Village parks and all the Kansas State Champion Trees located throughout Prairie Village. To do this, Jeter and another Tree Board member walked all the parks to inventory and identi-

fy each tree. The map can be found on the City's website in the "maps" section of the "Discover Prairie Village" tab or at [pvkansas.com/treemap](http://pvkansas.com/treemap). Visitors can click on any tree icon for pictures and information about the individual trees. The online map has had over 2000 hits since it was first posted last year.

Jeter and his wife, Kelly, are currently living in New Zealand, where he is on a business assignment. The Prairie Village Tree board hopes to reschedule the Arbor Day ceremony for later this year.

Also new to Bennett Park is signage in the playground area

where a massive American elm tree once stood. The tree died in 2018 and had to be cut down, but the six-foot-wide stump with a circumference of over 20 feet remains. Arborists estimate that the tree began growing in that spot in the early 1880s, during the area's pioneering days. It was one of the largest elms in Kansas at one time.

If you would like to nominate someone who has had a positive impact on Prairie Village as an Arbor Day 2020 honoree, please submit a nomination form found at [www.pvkansas.com/tree-board](http://www.pvkansas.com/tree-board).

# PHOTO CONTEST

Submit a photo that represents the spirit of Prairie Village!



Email your photo to: [mbuum@pvkansas.com](mailto:mbuum@pvkansas.com)  
(If emailing from your phone: select 'actual size' or 'large,' and only send one at a time.)  
Include: photographer's name & age  
Please only submit one photo per photographer.  
Deadline: submit your photo by noon July 1 then head to Facebook to vote for your favorite photos before noon July 4!

# SIDEWALK ART CONTEST

Decorate your sidewalk or driveway and send us a photo!



Email your photo to: [mbuum@pvkansas.com](mailto:mbuum@pvkansas.com)  
(If emailing from your phone: select 'actual size' or 'large,' and only send one at a time.)  
Include: Artist's name & age  
Please only submit one photo per artist.  
Deadline: submit your photo by noon July 1 then head to Facebook to vote for your favorite photos before noon July 4!

# DRIVE-THROUGH EVENT

Decorate your car and parade through the municipal campus. Receive a bag of goodies for each child in the vehicle over the age of 2. Remain in your vehicle.



Visit the municipal campus, 7700 Mission Road, from 9 a.m. to 11 a.m. on July 4 to view emergency vehicles and public works vehicles, and to receive a bag of goodies (while supplies last).

# TRIVIA

Visit us on Facebook July 4 for Prairie Village Trivia!



Check out our Facebook page July 4 for Prairie Village-related trivia. Prizes will be awarded to trivia winners.

Disclaimer: Any photo you submit must be your personal work or that of someone for whom you are an agent, must be in .jpg, .png, or .gif format, may not exceed 10 megabytes in size, must not contain copyrighted material (except as owned by you, the photographer), and must not contain malicious code. You retain ownership and copyright of your photo. You grant the City of Prairie Village permission to use and display your photo including on the website and social media. If you want your photo removed from the City of Prairie Village website or social media, you must send a request to [info@pvkansas.com](mailto:info@pvkansas.com) and allow five business days for its removal.

# Back to School!



## with a Firefighter

### PV Foundation assists local kids

Each year, the Prairie Village Foundation teams up with Johnson County Consolidated Fire District #2 and area school principals for the “Back to School with a Firefighter” event.

The event lends a helping hand to children who need extra assistance getting ready for the first day of school. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the school year may look different than in past years. However, children will still need supplies for online or in-class learning.

In the past, the fire department has taken children to Target in Mission to shop for school supplies and returned to the fire station for pizza and ice cream. If this option is not safe this year, the Foundation will opt for other ways to assist these children. The Prairie Village Foundation believes every child deserves new school supplies and a new start for the upcoming school year. If you would like to donate to this cause monetarily, please contact Meghan Buum at City Hall at 913-381-6464.

## Crime prevention tips

As the community begins to reopen, everyone is excited to return to some form of normalcy, but so are burglars. When out in public, remember these tips to avoid being a victim of crime.

1. Never leave a purse or wallet in plain view in your car
2. Take your keys with you
3. Lock your car door
4. Move shopping bags to the trunk out of view
5. When you get home, take your bags inside immediately

Next, once you get home, remember to #9PMRoutine

1. When you get home, take your bags inside immediately and remove all valuables
2. Again, lock your car door- activate car alarm
3. Close garage door (at night and during the day)
4. Turn on exterior lights before bed
5. Activate video doorbell (then sign up for the Village Video Cooperative!)

**#9PMROUTINE**

*Remember to....*

LOCK CAR DOOR	CLOSE GARAGE DOOR	REMOVE VALUABLES FROM VEHICLE
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## Dog safety advice from animal control

Whether a dog is known or unknown to you there are plenty of ways to stay safe around dogs. Even a ‘friendly’ dog can bite. It is important to remember to respect a dog’s personal space and attitude. Be mindful that reaching to pet a dog or grabbing their collar can be scary for them. Excited or quick movements may also frighten them. A dog who feels scared or threatened can lead to an unsafe situation. The best way to introduce yourself to a dog is to allow the dog to approach you while you remain calm and still while they sniff you. Of course, this should only be done with the consent of the owner. Part of being a responsible dog owner is maintaining a safe environment for other people and your dog.

### How to stay safe

- Always walk your dog on a leash
- Give other people and dogs space
- Ask before approaching a dog or allowing your dog to approach someone
- Pay attention- to your dog, the environment, and others
- Take precautions to ensure your dog doesn't run loose
- Dog waste transmits disease, please clean up after your pet
- Stay calm and enjoy time with your pet

# Staff Spotlight



## How to avoid aggressive driving

Summertime is here, which means increasingly hot weather and sometimes dealing with aggressive drivers on our roadways. We have all been there -- you are running late for work, the kids are late for baseball practice, and you feel the urge to rush home to make dinner.

The Prairie Village Police Department wants to help you arrive at all your destinations safely. What is aggressive driving? According to the National Highway Safety Administration (NHTSA), aggressive driving is when “an individual commits a combination of moving traffic offenses to endanger other persons or property.” Do you ever drive aggressively? Here are some tips to avoid being a part of the problem.

### How to Avoid Aggressive Drivers

- Get out of their way and steer clear of them on the road.
- Stay relaxed. Remember that reaching your destination safely and calmly is your goal.
- Do not challenge them. Avoid eye contact. Ignore rude gestures and refuse to return them.
- Give them the benefit of the doubt. Not all aggressive driving behavior is directed at you.
- Do not block the passing lane, especially if you are driving slower than most of the traffic. Move to the right lane.

### How to Avoid Being an Aggressive Driver

- Allow more travel time to get to your destination. It reduces stress dramatically.
- Come to a full stop at red lights and stop signs. Never run yellow lights.
- Let other drivers merge with you.
- Obey posted speed limits.
- Never follow other drivers too closely.
- Resist temptation to teach someone “a lesson.”
- Concentrate on driving, not on cell phones, stereo, passengers or other distractions.
- Remember you cannot control traffic, but you can control yourself, your driving, and your emotions.

Name: **Meghan Boom**  
Position: **Assistant City Administrator**  
Years with the City: **6**



Responsibilities: **I work with my colleagues to implement the policies and goals set by the City Council and Mayor. I oversee parks and recreation programming, community events, and the city clerk department.**

Favorite thing about working for Prairie Village: **As a resident and a city employee, I love being able to work to improve, solve problems, and advocate for my own community. I'm proud of the work I get to do with my coworkers and the governing body to make PV a great place to live. And the four minute commute isn't bad either!**

Name: **James Carney**  
Position: **Field Superintendent**  
Years with the City: **25**



Responsibilities: **I work closely with four crew leaders to budget and plan the maintenance and operation activities necessary for City infrastructure and light construction projects. Together we collaborate with seventeen crew members to ensure the timely execution of these plans.**

Favorite thing about working for Prairie Village: **I have always enjoyed that while Prairie Village is situated in the middle of a major metropolitan area, it is still small enough to easily recognize the impact of our efforts on a weekly basis. Sometimes these are reminders of jobs well done. Other times it is noticing an area where we could have put forth a little more effort.**

Name: **Jennifer Wright**  
Position: **Police Executive Assistant**  
Years with the City: **21**



Responsibilities: **I perform support duties, assisting the Chief of Police and other department personnel in planning and coordinating the administrative aspects of the department's operations.**

Favorite thing about working for Prairie Village: **I get to work with some of the most amazingly talented people who I am proud to call my friends.**

Prairie Village Municipal Office  
7700 Mission Road  
Prairie Village, KS 66208

Reader Feedback  
Please send your comments to:  
info@pvkansas.com  
913-385-4674

## Final farewell to longtime city administrator



Barbara Vernon, who served as City Administrator of Prairie Village for 30 years, passed away in May. Her contributions to Prairie Village were innumerable.

Vernon was one of the first female city administrators/city managers in the United States. She mentored several younger women in the field and lectured on Women in Management at Avila College and on Public Administration at UMKC.

Along with Mayor Sid Powell of Mission, she organized the North East Johnson County Economic Development Council which became the North East Johnson County Chamber of Commerce, served on its board for many years, and was named Ambassador of the year in 2001.

At Prairie Village, she instituted an award-winning annual budget and financial

statement as well as long-range planning for budgets and city finances. She also served as interim public works director, riding snow plows at 2 a.m. She helped select several police chiefs, helped develop and manage several parks and the pool complex and negotiated with the developer of Claridge Court.

Vernon participated in the Leadership Kansas program, was a member of many professional associations and organizations, represented the City with the National League of Cities, The Kansas League of Cities, the Kansas Legislature, and received many professional awards, including

the 2007 L.P. Cookingham Award For Outstanding Public Service from the Greater K.C. Chapter of the Association of Public Administration. She also served on the Greater Kansas City United Way review board.

Following retirement in 2007, she served on the Prairie Village Foundation Board, raising money for residents in need, organized the mayor's annual holiday tree project and the ginger bread house decorating event. She was named the City's Volunteer of the Year in 2015. Upon retirement, the Foundation placed a statue, 'The Spirit of Prairie Village,' in the Municipal Campus's garden in her honor.

## City Contact Information

### CITY HALL AND MUNICIPAL COURT

7700 Mission Road

Wes Jordan, City Administrator  
Jamie Robichaud, Deputy City Administrator  
Meghan Buum, Assistant City Administrator  
Adam Geffert, City Clerk  
Lisa Santa Maria, Finance Director

### POLICE DEPARTMENT

7710 Mission Road

Tim Schwartzkopf, Chief of Police

### PUBLIC WORKS

7720 Mission Road

Keith Bredehoeft, Public Works Director

### EVERYONE MAY PARTICIPATE

If anyone requires an accommodation to participate in public meetings, contact the City Clerk's office at 913-381-6464 (TDD 800-766-2777) at least 48 hours prior to the scheduled meeting time, if possible, to make arrangements.

913-381-6464 ■ info@pvkansas.com ■ www.pvkansas.com

