



WEST PLAZA

NEIGHBORHOOD • ASSOCIATION

KANSAS CITY, MISSOURI

Mark Your Calendar ☒

West Plaza Neighborhood Meeting

A bi-monthly meeting for
West Plaza residents and businesses

Tuesday, November 18, 7:00-8:00 p.m.
Social half-hour begins at 6:30 p.m.

Immanuel Lutheran Church
1701 Westport Road, KC MO 64111

or via Zoom @ <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82850878576>

~ Log on Early to Check Connection ~

At this meeting we will take nominations for 2026 Board members. If you want to get more involved in the neighborhood and help guide our programs and events, this is an excellent way to do it. You can self-nominate or nominate one of your neighbors.

Additional programming for this meeting has not yet been confirmed. Please visit our website, westplaza.org, for more details about the meeting.

This is the last general meeting in 2025, so don't miss this opportunity to stay connected and engaged with the neighborhood.

As always, light refreshments will be provided, and we will close with a raffle. Bring a neighbor with you who hasn't joined WPNA yet and get an extra ticket for the drawing! ■

Inside:

President's View -----	2
Season of Giving -----	2
Forks & Rakes-----	3
Membership Minute -----	4
Business Member Spotlight -----	4
Outsmarting a Sociopath -----	5
Preparing for End of Life -----	6
West Plaza Home of the Month -----	7
Membership Form -----	8
New/Renewed Business Members-----	8

2025-26 SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

West Plaza Neighborhood Meetings
Immanuel Lutheran Church
1701 Westport Road

Also via Zoom

Third Tuesday of odd-numbered months:
~ November 18 ~ January 20, 2026

BOARD MEETINGS

First Tuesday of each month
~ December 2 ~ January 6, 2026

NEWSLETTER SUBMISSION DEADLINES

Monday following board meetings of even-numbered months

EVENTS

November 29: Holiday Open House, 47th Street Corridor (Saturday)

2026 event dates will be announced after the new year begins.

HOLIDAY OPEN HOUSE

November 29, 11-4 p.m.

Small Business Saturday

Featuring local vendors for holiday shopping, fire for roasting, ornament making for kids of all ages, and fellowship.

Location TBA on our social media. Stay tuned!

The full version of the newsletter is available in newsletter parking boxes on the streets and in some of our WPNA business members' establishments. A full list of locations can be found on the website at westplaza.org. Scan this QR code or visit westplaza.org to read the full WPNA newsletter online.



President's View—Farewell, Friend

by Ken Williams

My good friend Len Jurden passed away on September, 27, 2025. He was a great man and friend.

Len was a Kansas City native. We served together on the West Plaza Neighborhood Association board of directors (Len was VP), and he was passionate about doing service work and giving back to the community. He was involved with the Neighborhood Watch program, Public Improvements Advisory Committee (PIAC), KCMO Community Improvement Districts (CID), public safety efforts, and much, much more.

Len was also an attorney and was very successful and highly regarded in the legal, finance, real estate, and tax fields. He was deeply involved for 10 years with Cultivate Kansas City, a locally-owned, non-profit working to grow food, farms, and communities for a healthy local food system. Additionally, Len had been a Principal for the past four years at Purpose Driven Development, LLC to help non-profits realize their mission to provide housing to those less fortunate.

Len earned a BA in Accounting from Southern Methodist University, an MS in Entrepreneurial Real Estate from UMKC, and JD Law from the University of Kansas School of Law.

Len Jurden was a brilliant, kind, passionate, and sharp-witted gentleman and a true asset to the community and the Kansas City area. He gave much more than he ever took. A Kansas City Legend. Gone too soon. We lost one of the best ones, folks.

RIP, brother. I'll see you on the other side.

<https://www.muehlebachchapel.com/obituaries/leonard-jurden>

<https://www.legacy.com/us/obituaries/kansascity/name/leonard-jurden-obituary?id=59651020> ■



Waiting for Dawn

Knowing that the holiday season can be especially difficult for those who have suffered loss, anxiety, or sorrow, Immanuel Lutheran Church (1700 Westport Road) will offer a service of prayer, music, scripture, and a candle lighting ritual on Tuesday, December 2nd, at 6 p.m.

Join us for Waiting for Dawn: A Service of Comfort and Light. A soup supper will follow. All are welcome.

Season of Giving: Supporting Our Kansas City Neighbors in Need

by Kevin Garner
Board Member

As we move into the season of gratitude and celebration, it's also a time to remember those in our Kansas City community who may be struggling. The fall and winter months can be especially difficult for families facing food insecurity, housing challenges, or financial hardship—but even small acts of kindness can make a big difference.

Here are a few ways West Plaza residents can help this season:

- Support **reStart Inc.**, a local nonprofit providing shelter, meals, and services to those experiencing homelessness. They're accepting donations of winter coats, gloves, and blankets. Visit restartinc.org for their current needs and drop-off information.
- Support **Harvesters** by contributing canned goods or making a donation to help provide holiday meals across the metro.
- Volunteer with **Meals on Wheels** or a local food pantry—just a few hours of your time can brighten someone's entire week.
- Shop local and give back! Many Midtown KC shops often partner with nonprofits this season.

Let's come together as a community to share warmth, generosity, and hope. ■



FORKS & RAKES by Stephanie Murrell

Caramel Apple Cheesecake Dip

Caramel Apple Cheesecake Dip is guaranteed to be the star of your next party—with only 3 simple prep ingredients. Serve with sliced apples.

Equipment:

8 x 8 baking dish

Ingredients:

24.3 oz. ready-made cheesecake (refrigerated)

13.5 oz. caramel apple dip

½ cup Heath English toffee bits

Serve with:

Apple slices, strawberries, pretzels, vanilla wafers, or graham crackers

Instructions:

Spread cheesecake onto a platter or baking sheet.

Microwave caramel apple dip for 10 seconds and stir. Return to the microwave and repeat these 5 additional times, microwaving for 10 seconds and stirring after each time for a total of 1 minute.

Pour and spread the caramel apple dip onto the top of the cheesecake.

Top with toffee bits and serve immediately with sliced apples, or cover and refrigerate until ready to serve.

Notes:

The toffee bits will soften if you make this a day ahead. If you want crunchy, which I recommend, sprinkle the cheesecake with toffee just before serving. ■



November Home Maintenance Tasks to Tackle Before Winter

As the temperatures drop, November is the perfect time to prepare your home for winter. A few simple maintenance tasks now can help protect your home, save energy, and avoid cold-weather headaches later.

Keep Critters Out

When the weather turns chilly, animals look for warm places to shelter. Check vents, crawl-spaces, and any exterior openings to ensure they're sealed or covered with sturdy metal mesh. This helps prevent squirrels, raccoons, mice, and birds from moving in for the winter.

Test Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Alarms

Since we spend more time indoors during the colder months, make sure your smoke and carbon monoxide detectors are working properly. Replace batteries if needed and test each unit. With heaters, candles, and closed windows, the risk of fire or CO buildup increases—so a quick safety check is time well spent.

Add Weatherproofing

Inspect doors and windows for drafts or worn weatherstripping. Replacing old seals or using plastic window insulation kits can make your home more comfortable and reduce heating costs. Even small gaps can make a big difference in how efficiently your home stays warm.

Get Winter Supplies Ready

Before the first snow or ice arrives, stock up on essentials like ice melt, shovels, and de-icer. Check that your snow blower, scrapers, and brushes are in good condition. Having everything ready will save you stress when bad weather hits.

Clean Kitchen Appliances

With holiday cooking on the horizon, take a few minutes to clean ovens, toasters, and other appliances that collect crumbs or grease. Built-up debris can easily become a fire hazard once things heat up.

A little preparation this month goes a long way toward keeping your home safe, warm, and comfortable all winter long. ■

CityWise

Kansas City will host six matches at Arrowhead Stadium during the record-breaking 48-team 2026 FIFA World Cup. Follow the countdown and event updates at kansascityfwc26.com.

Membership Minute

by Julie Jennings, Membership Director

Hello, Neighbors.

As we head into the fall and the holidays, we are also heading into preparation for WPNA's next year of service.

Membership dues renew on January 1, 2026, no matter when you joined (unless you are one of the many who took advantage of our prorated offer and you are already renewed through 2026). Dues have remained the same for over 11 years at \$15 per household and \$25 for businesses. There are many benefits of membership, so if you live (own or rent) or have a business in West Plaza, please join or renew. It can be done on-line at the website, www.westplaza.org. Just hit the Become a Member button, and fill out or update your contact and household information and volunteer interests. There are all kinds of ways to pay via PayPal, and we also have a Venmo account. I can send you the code any time. You can also renew at any WPNA event or gathering or by mailing in the form on page 8 of this newsletter.

Stephanie Murrell, Ken Williams, and I just returned from the funeral service of our fellow board member, Lenny Jurden. We lost him in late September, and he will be missed dearly by us and all who knew him. His wife, Julie, and his children and grandchildren will miss him the most. My takeaway from Julie's eulogy was live your best life; take care of something, and it will last. Len gave of himself, and I for one am very grateful. On his first year on the board, I was setting up for Art in the Park. I looked up and there he was, asking what he could do to help. It was unexpected, and his showing up was just what I needed at that particular moment.

In honor of Len, we are not filling his spot for the remainder of 2025, and the WPNA has donated in his name to the two charities his family requested.

At our November 18 meeting we will be taking nominations for the board. If you want to get involved in our award-winning neighborhood efforts, please come to the meeting. If you want to get to know your neighbors, bring them along. Perhaps you can join the board together or chair an initiative or effort with them. Nominations are now open, and self-nomination is welcome.

Please let us know of your interest or your nomination of a neighbor.

Our Holiday Open House on November 29 (Small Business Saturday, the day after Black Friday) will feature local vendors for holiday shopping, fire for roasting, ornament making for kids of all ages, and fellowship. Location and details will be announced on our social media.

As we look ahead to 2026, we're excited to welcome fresh energy and ideas to our board and upcoming events. With your help, we'll gather a fantastic team of volunteers who care deeply about our neighborhood. Together, we'll nurture it, celebrate it, and ensure it thrives for years to come. Let's make 2026 unforgettable!

See you soon. Love one another! ■

BUSINESS MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

Alice Ballew ~ Signature Properties

Buying or selling a home doesn't have to be overwhelming—especially when you have the right guidance from the very start. I'm passionate about helping my neighbors feel confident and informed every step of the way, whether you're preparing to list your current home or starting your journey toward owning one.

If you've been thinking about buying, don't be intimidated by the idea of getting pre-approved. A pre-approval isn't a commitment—it's a smart first step that helps you understand your budget and shows sellers you're serious when the right home comes along. I can connect you with trusted local lenders who can walk you through the process in a stress-free way.

If you're considering selling, now is a great time to start planning ahead. Small steps—like a pre-listing consultation—can make a big difference in how quickly your home sells and for how much.

Whether you're curious about your home's value, exploring your buying options, or just want to learn more about today's market, I offer free, custom consultations for both buyers and sellers.

Let's chat and put a personalized plan together for your next move. Reach out to me any time at 816-287-0651 or aliceballew@kw.com to schedule your free home buyer or pre-listing consultation—I'd love to help you get started with confidence. ■

Outsmarting a Sociopath

by Martha Childers, EdSpec, LPC, LCPC

In the classic film "Tombstone," Wyatt Earp asks why Ringo behaves the way he does. Doc Holliday responds, "A man like Ringo had a great empty hole right through the middle of him. He can never kill enough, steal enough, or inflict enough pain to ever fill it." Ringo was a sociopath.

A sociopath flatters the victim, speaks highly of himself, tries to appear kind and helpful, is seductive, lies, convinces others to take out-of-character risks, and blames, intimidates, and betrays others. They LOVE nice people, especially credulous ones.

It is best to stay away from sociopaths, but sometimes it is not possible. In her book, *Outsmarting the Sociopath Next Door*, Martha Stout suggests these steps.

- 1) Avoid revealing your emotions, because the sociopath likes to see you suffer. They like to play with their victims like a cat tormenting a mouse.
- 2) Decide if you can leave. This will determine your next steps.
- 3) In any case, keep detailed and careful records of the sociopath's behaviors. Even if you must stay, it will be cathartic to write down these incidents. It's best to write longhand. Include the time and place that it occurred, who was involved, and the date and time that you are writing.
- 4) If the person is at your workplace and you can manage the risk of leaving, you may be able to confront the issue with upper management. Stout recommends presenting to upper management (not Human Resources nor the sociopath's immediate supervisor) the financial costs of retaining the sociopath. Do not present as a victim. Use terms like, "Lies, undercuts, insults, tricks, manipulates, steals," etc. If upper management pursues the situation, you may have been successful. If they do not communicate with you about the situation again, that may be a signal for you to leave.
- 6) Legal action may be an option, depending on your situation. Read Stout's books for more information.

Referrals Welcome. For more tips on living, visit: <http://www.childerscounselingservice.com/> ■

Help Keep West Plaza Safe

See Something, Say Something: If you observe suspicious activity, don't hesitate to report it to the KCMO Police:

911 Emergencies

816-234-5111 Non-emergency Number

816-474-8477 Anonymous Tip Line

You can also call City Services at 311.

Looking for an easy way to help WPNA?

You can help people get to our meetings.

We have meeting reminder signs you can put in your yard the Friday before the Tuesday General Meeting (third Tuesday of odd-numbered months) and then bring it back inside after the meeting.

Next meeting: Tuesday, November 18

To claim your sign, call Julie Jennings, 816-215-1388 or email wpnageneral@gmail.com

Newsletter edited and formatted by:

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West Plaza Neighborhood Association Newsletter
Edited by Julie A. Tenenbaum
Phone: 816-931-2276
Email: jatkc@aol.com

Submit suggestions for newsletter articles to Julie Tenenbaum at the email address above. You must include your name and your contact information for your suggestion to be considered. Articles may be edited for length, accuracy, and grammar.

Display Advertising Rates (WPNA members only):

Business card	\$35
Quarter page	\$50

End of Life Preparation

by Martha Childers, EdSpec, LPC, LCPC

Most of us do not want to face preparing for the end of our life. It is a grueling task, and many of us just leave it to others to manage. That is an option. However, if you are like me, you do not want to dump all this responsibility onto loved ones, or worse, the State. When someone dies or is incapacitated, emotions run high. Adding the complexities of wrapping up a life of assets, debts, and material goods can be overwhelming. Following is a list of things you might consider doing if you want to help your loved ones.

- Obtain a safety deposit box at your bank. Make sure that your executors know where it is and how to get into it. If possible, have their names on the box so they can access it. Otherwise, legal requirements will need to be satisfied before the box can be drilled open.
- Ask your executors to keep your information in an easy-to-access location.
- Get an outside security box and install it near your house. Keep a copy of important keys, such as to the house and safety deposit box, in it. Make sure your executor has access to it and photos of its location.

Items to Put in Your Safety Deposit Box

- A list of updated beneficiaries.
- A list of financial institutions holding assets, debts (e.g., mortgage, credit cards), and retirement accounts (e.g., Social Security, 401K, etc.). I have mine in an Excel file with the name of the company or bank and end of life instructions. Each item has a list of the beneficiaries, addresses, and other pertinent information. At the end of each year, I note the amount of assets and debts on December 31. For retirement funds, I note the monthly income.
- Your will or trust. Put the original in the safety deposit box and perhaps a copy in a location that is easier to access. Tell your executors where copies are located. If you engage an attorney to draw up the will or trust, they will keep a copy. Give your executors your attorney's contact information. To avoid conflict, I would suggest keeping the terms of your will private. You might want to change your mind at some point.
- A Medical Power of Attorney. In my case, close family lives far away. Two trusted friends are listed to make immediate deci-

sions, and two relatives are listed to make more serious decisions. You can complete this yourself without an attorney. Have it notarized. Give a copy to everyone listed and to your doctor.

- A Financial Power of Attorney. It is important to have the people in charge of your Medical Power of Attorney in charge of this document, as well.
- A copy of a completed "Caring Conversations" form published by the Center for Bioethics. The form is available free online: <https://www.practicalbioethics.org/featured-resources/caring-conversations/>. Paper copies are available from the Center at a nominal cost. Give a copy of the completed form to those responsible for the Medical Power of Attorney and to your doctor.
- If you own your home, put copies of all the invoices for home repairs and remodeling with the deed in the box. These expenditures can be deducted from the sale price on your tax filing, which can make a significant difference when it is time to sell your home.
- A copy of instructions for your memorial service, if you want one. Remember, memorial services are for the living and are an important part of the grieving process. It is not about you—it is about those you leave behind. Give a copy to your executor.
- An obituary that you have written. Give a copy to your executors as well.
- A "to do list" for your executor. They will need passwords, contacts (attorney names, neighbors) and various other information (e.g., cremation society) to wrap up your affairs. Email them a copy as well.
- If you have made arrangements for a headstone, put the name of the monument company in the safety deposit box so the executor can arrange for the death date to be inscribed when the time comes.
- If you have a business, arrange with a trusted professional friend to manage your business if you pass suddenly. Be sure your executors and trusted friends have each other's contact information.
- Review the documents from time to time to bring them up to date and replace the old ones in the box.

Each step of this process is time consuming, but when you're done, it will be a relief for you and for those you love. ■



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West Plaza Home of the Month

The Home of the Month program is going great. This year's Home of the Month winners are displayed on our website, westplaza.org, under the Home of the Month tab.

For the upcoming awards, let us know if you would like to nominate a house that fits the themes listed below.

November – Ready for Winter
December – Home for the Holidays

West Plaza Home of the Month
is sponsored by
Veronica Jaster & Zachary Kelly
of ReeceNichols Plaza Office



Conveniently located on the Country Club Plaza

Martha Childers
Licensed Professional Counselor

www.ChildersCounselingService.com
Martha@ChildersCounselingService.com
816-892-0803

Stay in Touch with WPNA

Website: www.westplaza.org



Email: wpnageneral@gmail.com



Instagram: [west_plaza_kcmo](https://www.instagram.com/west_plaza_kcmo)



YouTube: WPNA KCMO



Facebook:
[@West Plaza Neighborhood
Association-Discussion Group](https://www.facebook.com/WestPlazaNeighborhoodAssociationDiscussionGroup)
[@West Plaza Watch](https://www.facebook.com/WestPlazaWatch)
[@West Plaza Buy/Sell/Trade](https://www.facebook.com/WestPlazaBuySellTrade)

U.S. Mail: P. O. Box 32826
Kansas City, MO 64171-7826

Join Your Neighbors in the WPNA!

Join the WPNA online via our website, www.westplaza.org, or if you would like to mail in a check, fill out this form and mail it with payment to P O Box 32826, KCMO 64171-7826. Membership runs January through December each year and is prorated after July.

Household (\$15): New [] OR Renewal [] Member Name/s: _____ _____ Kids: _____ Pets: _____ Address: _____ Zip: _____ Phone: _____ Email/s: _____ _____	Business (\$25): New [] OR Renewal [] Business Name: _____ Contact Name: _____ West Plaza Address: _____ Mailing Address: _____ _____ Zip _____ Phone: _____ Email/s: _____ Website: _____
TOTAL ENCLOSED: Dues _____ + Donation _____ = \$ _____	

Volunteer Area(s) of Interest (use numbered list below):

- | | |
|---|--------------------------------------|
| 1. Block Parties | 8. Neighborhood Cleanup |
| 2. Codes & Zoning | 9. Neighborhood Improvement Projects |
| 3. Kids Club – Moms & Dads Club | 10. Neighborhood Watch |
| 4. Meeting Refreshments | 11. Newsletter Distribution |
| 5. Membership Activities – Events – Happy Hours | 12. Pet Group |
| 6. Membership Initiatives – Survey | 13. Senior Outreach |
| | 14. Yard Sales |

- WPNA is a 501c3 organization. Donations over and above membership dues are tax deductible.
- Bi-monthly newsletters are emailed to members via Mail Chimp. In addition, notifications are sent periodically to announce neighborhood meetings and events.
- We will not share your contact information with any other individual or entity. Check here if you DO NOT wish to receive notifications via email. ☐

November-December 2025

New/Renewed Business Members 2025

Support the businesses that support our neighborhood!
A complete listing of business members is at westplaza.org

Santa's Enchanted Workshop

4449 Jarboe
Kansas City, MO 64111
913-335-4271
santasinbox@icloud.com
santasenchantedworkshop.com

Signature Properties by Alice Ballew

<https://signatureproperties.kw.com>
816-287-0651
aliceballew@kw.com

