



Vermont Commons Civic Association Newsletter

November
2010

vccahouston.org
PO Box 130891 Houston, TX 77219-0891

HOLIDAY PARTY

VCCA's Annual Holiday Party will be held on Wednesday, December 8th at 6:30 PM at the Mockingbird Bistro. We'll have hors d'oeuvres and there will be a Cash Bar for all beverages. The holidays are a great time to visit with your neighbors, so drop by and say hello and stay for dinner with a group of your new friends.

NAME THAT NEWSLETTER!

Remember that the deadline for submitting your suggestions for the name of the VCCA Newsletter is November 30th. The winner will be announced at the Holiday Party, so that's another reason to head over to Mockingbird Bistro in December. You may submit as many suggestions for names as you like. Submit them to hix@rmi.net.

NATIONAL NIGHT OUT / FALL PICNIC

David and Terrie Irvin hosted the very successful National Night Out on October 5th. Neighbors walked over and were treated to soft drinks, wine and beer and some tasty hot dogs. Speaking of dogs, several dogs accompanied their owners to the event and all were well behaved. Many residents were heard commenting on how nice it was to meet their neighbors or see friendly faces. There was even an Art Car in the middle of the driveway – a handy spot for the condiments for the hot dogs. Randall's supplied the food, so remember to thank them when you're shopping.

RECOGNIZING A STROKE

Strokes are more common than we may think. Sometimes, symptoms of a stroke are difficult to identify. Unfortunately, the lack of awareness may be disastrous. The stroke victim may suffer severe brain damage if people nearby fail to recognize the symptoms and take action. Neurologists say that if they can treat a stroke victim within **THREE** hours, the effects of the stroke can be **TOTALLY** reversed.

Do you know how to recognize the symptoms of a stroke? A bystander can recognize a stroke by asking the following four simple questions:

- S** Ask the individual to **SMILE**.
- T** Ask the person to **TALK** and speak a simple sentence (Coherently)
- R** Ask him or her to **RAISE** both arms.
- O** Ask the person to Stick **OUT** his or her tongue. If the tongue is "crooked", or if it goes to one side or the other, that is also an indication of a stroke.

If he or she has trouble with **ANY ONE** of these tasks, call the 911 emergency number immediately and describe the symptoms to the dispatcher.

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VCCA meetings are held every 2nd
Wednesday of the month.

Join us at 7 PM Nov 10th
Mockingbird Bistro
1985 Welch @ McDuffie.

Meet friends & neighbors &
stay for the social hour
afterward.



NOVEMBER SPEAKER

You Be the Judge!

The speaker for November will be 127th Civil District Court Judge Ravi Sandill. He will be speaking about what happens in civil courts and how that affects you, the private citizen. When Judge Sandill was with a law firm, his areas of practice included labor and employment law and commercial and appellate litigation.

Join us on November 10th and learn about what really goes on at the courthouse. You never know when a courtroom decision might have an impact on your life.

2010 Vermont Commons Civic Association Officers

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November Yard of the Month

Harriett & Leo Borrell
2214 Driscoll

The Borrells have lived in their current home for 9 years and actually own a little cottage in Vermont Commons, as well. They love the neighborhood and want to be involved in keeping it safe and pretty.



Happy Thanksgiving



Tips from HPD Officer Wayne Pate

Officer Wayne Pate of the Houston Police department offers this piece of surprising information: Beware of the hour of day when you drop mail into a postal collection box. A postal inspector told him that they have had suspects take a solid item, like a block of wood, wrap tape around it, and then put a strong, sticky adhesive and a strong piece of cord or string around it. They put the block of wood down the chute of the mail box and are able to pull up mail and even packages from the bottom, when the adhesive sticks to the items! Officer Pate says it's best to put your mail in a collection box during working hours, when you know that there is still a pick-up time to be completed that day from the box.

Remember also that criminals do not like to be in places that are lighted, so leave your lights on. You know, its just when you think you've heard it all. There is always something new that criminals will try to swindle someone out of money.

Helpful Information

Garbage & Yard Trimmings: Mondays

Recycling: Mondays Nov 1, Nov 15, Nov 29, Dec 13, & Tuesday Dec 28

Heavy Trash Collection:

Tree Waste: 1st Tuesday in Nov, Jan, Mar, May & Jul, & Sep

Junk Waste: 1st Tuesday in Dec, Feb, Apr, Jun, Aug, & Oct

Environmental Service Center for the disposal of hazardous waste, 11500 South Post Oak, (713) 551-7355, open Tue - Wed, 9:00 AM - 3:00 PM & the 2nd Sat of each month 9:00 AM - 1:00 PM. Paint, pesticides, batteries, smoke alarms, computers, televisions, most anything you shouldn't throw into the landfill can be brought here.

VOLUNTEER NEWS

A big "thank you" to our new block captains, Betsy Banks and Kit Muire. Their contact information is below. If you're interested in becoming a block captain, contact Jeanette Hix.

Betsy Banks
1904 Hazard St
betsybanks1@gmail.com
713 993-6365

Kit Muire
Indiana between Huld and Brun
kitmuire@mac.com

Newsletter Folders

Karrie Aldrich has joined the team of folks who have fun folding the VCCA Newsletter.

Candidates Night Speakers

Thank you to Lillian Skogsberg for arranging for the Candidate Night at the October VCCA meeting.

Helpful Phone and e-mail Numbers

Our New Website: vccahouston.org

City Council Member Dist D:

Wanda Adams: (832) 393-3001

e-mail: districtd@cityofhouston.net

City Council Member at Large, Pos.1 Stephen Costello

e-mail: atlarge1@cityofhouston.net

Go to vccahouston.org for more helpful info, phone numbers & links to city services.

SOUND OFF!

What's All The Noise About?

VCCA President Jeanette Hix recently received an e-mail from a neighbor who has a valid complaint about the noise made when the Taco Bell trash is picked up.

Here's the complaint: "Their trash pick-up happens between 3:30 AM and 5:30 AM. The trucks are there for 5 or so minutes with the diesel engines racing and the trucks slamming the containers against the side of the truck to empty them. If they waited until 7:00 AM or later it wouldn't

be a nuisance."

Officer Wayne Pate suggested that he or the neighbor who complained speak to the supervisor of the trash removal company.

There is a City of Houston Noise Ordinance and you can see it on the Web at:

<http://www.nonoise.org/lawlib/cities/houston.htm>

BE AWARE, BE VERY AWARE!

Crime Report



Burglaries have increased all over Houston, including our area. As the economy goes down, burglaries go up, so it pays to be aware, especially as we approach the holidays.

Here are some things a burglar won't tell you, as gathered from convicted burglars in North Carolina, Oregon, California, and Kentucky:

1. Yes, I do look for newspapers piled up on the driveway. I may leave a pizza flyer in your front door to see how long it takes you to remove it.
2. If decorative glass is part of your front entrance, don't let your alarm company install the control pad where I can see if it's set. That makes it too easy.
3. I always knock first. If you answer, I'll ask for directions somewhere or offer to clean your gutters. (Don't take me up on it.)
4. Do you really think I won't look in your sock drawer? I always check dresser drawers, the bedside table, and the medicine cabinet.
5. You're right - I won't have enough time to break into your safe, but I will take it.
6. A loud TV or radio can be a better deterrent than the best alarm sys-

tem. If you're reluctant to leave your TV on while you're out of town, you can buy a \$35 device that works on a timer and simulates the flickering glow of a real television. (Find it at faketv.com.)

7. Sometimes, I carry a clipboard. I do my best to never, ever look like a crook.
8. The two things I hate most: loud dogs and nosy neighbors.
9. I'll break a window to get in. If your neighbor hears one loud sound, he'll stop what he's doing and wait to hear it again. If he doesn't hear it again, he'll just go back to what he was doing. It's human nature.
10. I love looking in your windows. I'm looking for signs that you're home, and for flat screen TVs or gaming systems I'd like. I'll drive or walk through your neighborhood at night, before you close the blinds, just to pick my targets.

Other, more sophisticated methods include:

1. "Phishing" is an e-mail from a supposedly trustworthy source, such as your bank or PayPal, claiming a problem with your account and asking for your user name and

password. When you respond, your information is stolen and your account is siphoned.

2. "Smishing" is the latest twist on that scam - instead of getting an e-mail, you get a text message. You're told to call a toll-free number, which is answered by a bogus interactive voice-response system that tries to fool you into giving up valuable information. Thieves can use random-dialing telemarketing services to hit on your number. If you belong to a credit union, be especially wary - members are targets because often the callback number has a local area code, not an 800 number, which makes victims less likely to suspect a hoax.
3. Very small charges on your credit card - they test to see if you spot it on your statement; if not, they make larger charges.
4. Skimmers are devices that thieves attach to ATMs or gas pumps to steal your debit account number and password.

Read more details at <http://shopping.yahoo.com/articles/shoppingarticles/448/the-sneakiest-new-shopping-scams/>.

Just a Note From Jeanette

Vermont Commons continues to grow in membership and those who attend the meetings. As the membership grows, meaning more dues are paid, VCCA will be able to offer more activities. There were over 40 residents who attended the October meeting, and about 75 who attended the National Night Out. I am so excited to see all the residents take an interest in their community. The Holiday Party in December at the Mockingbird will be an opportunity to meet your neighbors and enjoy the holiday season. It has snowed during several of VCCA Holiday Parties. Hope to see you there!

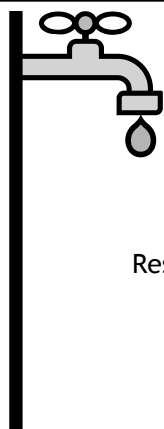
Jeanette Hix, President VCCA



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SATURDAY
NOV. 6
5-9pm

DRUMMING
EVENT: 9pm



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