

Vermont Commons Civic Association Newsletter

June 2011

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

Citizen Patrol

he Houston Police Department is concerned about crime in the I neighborhoods and communities throughout the city. In response, the Citizen Patrol program was established in an effort to bring the citizens and the police department together for a common goal, and that is to improve the quality of life by eliminating crime. The Citizen Patrol program is designed to provide a means for citizens to organize into patroller groups for the purpose of reducing crime in their community. Citizen Patrollers are the additional eyes and ears the police can count on to make Houston a safe place in which to live and work.

Cathryn Gabor is leading the VCCA effort to create a Citizen's Patrol in our area. Many neighbors have already volunteered, but there's always room for more. If you're interested, you must complete an application, which at http://www.houstontx.gov/police/vip/ be found online vip citzpatrol.htm. Get a brochure at http://www.houstontx.gov/police/pdfs/ vip cp brochure 2010.pdf. Then be sure to contact Cathryn at ccgabor@comcast.net to let her know you want to participate.

Taking Back The Streets of Vermont Commons

Tearly 30 residents of Vermont north on Driscoll, armed only with Thursday, May 19th to protest the dogs and engaged in lots of lively recent increase in crime in the conversation. Along the way, neighborhood, and to make a state- neighbors stepped out on their ment about solidarity in the commu- porches or looked through their win-

VCCA member Nancy Higgs was recently a victim of crime, and that are a big part of safety in Vermont motivated her to organize a "Take Commons, and getting to know each Back The Streets" march to show our other can be a tremendous help in neighbors and anyone watching that watching for "unusual activity". Re-Vermont Commons residents are cently a neighbor's call to police after watching out for each other.

their march, FOX News reporter Kristin Kane did a live report from the ing hoodies, virtually saved everyscene. She had earlier interviewed some of the crime victims, including Higgs (Driscoll St), Todd Creger goods in another yard as they ran to (Brun St) and Karen Forlenza (Huldy avoid capture by the police. A nearly 4-minute story appeared on the 9:00 PM newscast. Vermont Commons or in other areas. See it on the Fox website at http:// www.myfoxhouston.com/dpp/news/ local/110519-vermont-commonsresidents-fighting-back.

A Houston police patrol car es- site. corted the group as they headed

Pearly 30 residents of vermon moral on prices, Commons took to the streets on flashlights. The group included pet dows and encouraged the walkers.

Remember that your neighbors noticing lights going on throughout Just before the neighbors began the house next door and seeing unknown people inside the house wearthing being stolen from the house. The thieves dropped the stolen

> To find out more about crime in go to Spotcrime.com or HPD Crime (http://www.houstontx.gov/ police/cs/stats2.htm). You can also report crimes on the Spotcrime web

Vermont Commons Civic Association Newsletter

Published Monthly September thru June Vermont Commons Civic Association PO Box 130891, Houston, TX 77219 Issue No. 15

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

Join us at 7:00 PM June 8th

Mockingbird Bistro 1985 Welch @ McDuffie.

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



Citizen Patrol Training

itizen Patrol training will be held immediately after the June 8th meeting. at about 7:30 PM. HPD Officer Pate will do the training. It should take about 1 1/2 hours. Be sure to have your completed application to give to Officer Pate at the meeting. He emphasized that the application has to be filled out entirely or he will not be able to take it.

Holiday Garbage Collection

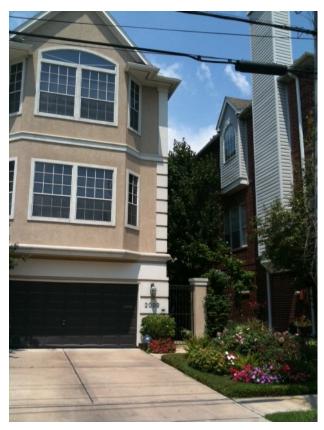
There will be no garbage collection services on Independence Day, Monday, July 4th. On Tuesday, July 5th, Monday's garbage, yard waste, & curbside recycling will be collected.

2011 Vermont Commons Civic Association Officers

President: Jeanette Hix (713) 521-3337 hix@rmi.net Vice Pres: Nancy Higgs (512) 422-3317 nkmh54@aol.com Lance Hack Secretary:

lhack02@hotmail.com Treasurer: Andy Tallin atallin01@yahoo.com

Newsletter: Jeanenne Hagerman Cay Dickson



June Yard of the Month

Janie and John Ellis 2008 McDuffie

Helpful Information

Garbage & Yard Trimmings: Mondays

Recycling: Mondays Jun 6th & Jun 20th, Tue Jul 5th, Mon Jul 18th

Heavy Trash Collection:

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

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

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.

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

HPD Officer Wayne Pate: wpate43@yahoo.com

Daily Crime Report: http://spotcrime.com

Houston Police non-emergency phone no: (713) 884-3131

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

THANKS to Volunteers

What a great month for volunteers stepping forward to help!

- To Betsy Banks for coordinating the Block Captains.
- To Nancy Higgs for organizing the "Take Back the Night Walk."
- To Chalon Dilber for writing the new "Safety Corner" column.
- To Betsy Banks for hosting the May newsletter folding in her
- To newsletter folders Jeanenne Hagerman, Lillian Skogsberg, and Audrey Crawford.
- To Karen Kane for organizing the Fox News coverage for the "Take Back the Night" walk.
- To new block captain volunteers: Stephen and Katie Baehl, Cathryn Gabor, Carrie Aldrich, Kit Muire (all of Indiana St), Karen Kane, Katie Sherborne, Margaret Immel (additional part of Haddon), and Brenda Rojas.
- To Chalon Dilber for being the VCCA representative to Near Town Civic Association.

Sound Off!

E-mails received:

Alert folks who put recyclables in their neighbor's bins (because one assumes there is more room) to make sure that items are prepared correctly, which means boxes should be flattened and bottles etc. washed and drained etc. It keeps happening to me, and I am all for as much recycling as possible, but flattening someone else's boxes at 6 AM is a pain.

You might pass the message on that I've seen at least one guy walking down the street after midnight, just testing car doors to see if they're locked.

On our morning walk, a neighbor I did not know had no problem telling us they were leaving for Italy next week. Unless you have someone staying in your home or looking after your property while away, don't tell strangers about your travel plans!

While walking with my granddaughter, who is a Vermont Commons resident, we approached the corner of Indiana and Brun and she said, "Watch out Grandma, this is poop alley!! It is always all over the side walk." Is this how we want our young children to think about their neighborhood? Please pick up your dog's poop!

Block Captains Needed

ooking for your block cap- HAZARD St tain? Check the web page at VCCAHouston.org for a com- DRISCOLL St plete listing. Don't receive updates throughout the month from your block captain? Let your block captain know your email address. Is no one repre- HADDON St senting your block? Perhaps you could be that block captain! **BLOCK CAPTAIN OPENINGS**

BRUN St Haddon to Vermont

> Welch to Indiana Fairview to Westheimer

MCDUFFIE St

Peden to Haddon Haddon to Vermont Vermont to Welch

Welch to Indiana

Peden to Haddon Haddon to Vermont

Welch to Indiana Fairview to Westheimer

Brun to Hazard

WELCH St

Huldy to Driscoll **FAIRVIEW St**

Huldy to Hazard

To volunteer as a block captain for the streets listed above, or if you have questions about the program, please contact Betsy Banks at 713 993-6365 or betsybanks1@gmail.com.

Living Wild in Vermont Commons

By Roxanna Brom and Andrew Goldberg, Wildlife Rehab & Education (WR&E) volunteers for over 10 years and 2006 Vermont homeowners.



- It's hot out there! Wildlife need water this time of year than ever. more Consider setting up a bird bath and/or water bowl and change the water frequently to avoid mosquitoes.
- WHAT TO DO if vou discover an injured or baby animal on the ground: The most important thing to do if you find a baby wild animal is to make sure it truly is an orphan!! Wild animals are tremely good parents

and many times well-meaning rescuers pick up and whisk away healthy youngsters while the parents watch. This is especially true of fawn, baby rabbit and fledgling birds. Unless the baby is wet, cold, injured, covered with ants, fly eggs, maggots, in danger from nearby cats, dogs or traffic or is very weak, simply observe it at a distance for an hour or so to determine if it can fly/flee on its own or if its parent come back to take care of it. If a young animal is truly orphaned or injured, it needs prompt attention. Place it in a box or animal carrier that is just large enough for it to stand up and move around a little (e.g. for a baby squirrel, a shoebox with a few paper towels in the bottom) and bring it to the WR&E Wildlife Center as soon as possible. DO NOT FEED OR WATER THE ANIMAL! Great harm can come to an animal that is fed the wrong food, at the wrong time or in the wrong way. Call WR&E if you have any questions or need further instructions.

• WHAT TO DO if you discover a wild animal in an unwanted area (e.g. your attic!): The most effective methods to manage wildlife are habitat modification and exclusion. In the case of unwanted wildlife, it is best to speak to someone with WR&E before intervention. WR&E staff can provide solutions that don't require separating babies from their mother or trapping animals for relocation. Or, visit the WR&E website for the many ways to peacefully coexist with and enjoy wildlife.

Safety Corner by Chalon Dilber

Three Free and Simple Steps to Improve Home Security

- 1. Clean Up! A clean, well kept yard and home exterior deliver a strong message to potential burglars and ne'er-do-wells! We're here, We're alert, We're Active! Move on to easier pickings!
- 2. Lighten Up! Well-lit entrances and driveways are the burglar's kryptonite. In addition to checking and maintaining your outdoor bulbs regularly, consider adding motion-activated lighting to dark corridors outside, such as driveways and carports.
- 3. Sign Up! Anecdotes suggest an alarm monitoring sign in the yard is as good, if not better, than actually purchasing an alarm system. True or not, judicious use of signage can indeed reinforce the sense of active involvement with the home, family, neighbors and community. 'Signage' can take many forms, ranging from holiday decorations and election year signs to the prestigious yard of the month sign or even a simple snowman in the front yard.

Ask A Burglar: How to pick a neighborhood? Target these areas:

- Middle class neighborhoods, where both adults are out of the home and working.
- Neighborhoods where most people are gone during the
- New neighborhoods where neighbors don't know each
- Nice neighborhoods which have the most money.
- The WR&E Wildlife Center is located at 7007 Katy Road, just inside the 610 Loop off of I-10 and in front of the Houston SPCA. The Wildlife Center is staffed by experienced state and federally permitted wildlife rehabilitators, on-site veterinarians, veterinary technicians and knowledgeable volunteers. WR&E can be reached by phone at 713-861-WILD (9453). Current Wildlife Center spring/ summer hours are Monday through Friday 9:00 AM - 6:00 PM and weekends 9:00 AM - 4:00 PM. The phone is monitored 24 hours a day, but sometimes hands are full, so please leave a message and someone will get back to you as soon as possible. Please visit the WR&E website, wrande.org, for the above and more information!

Summer Break for Newsletter

he VCCA Newsletter crew is taking off during the letter in September. Thanks to all of you for your input and helpful hints! Jeanenne and Cay

Just a Note From Jeanette

day May 19th. The WALK, check out the article, was organ- web page for your block captain and let the ized after the last newsletter. Many of you have expressed block captains know your contact information. your disappointment that you did not know about the Walk. VCCA has a great basis for notifying each VCCA has a great web page and information that is not other - let's all use it. Have a great summer! available at the time of the mailing of the newsletters is

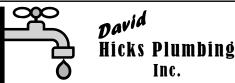
 \sqrt{I} hat a delightful evening as about 30 residents of Ver- $\,$ posted on that web page. $\,$ VCCA also sent info to all the mont Commons walked the neighborhood on Thurs- existing block captains FOR DISTRIBUTION. Check the

Your Pres., Jeanette Hix



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