



Vermont Commons Civic Association Newsletter

June
2011

vccahouston.org

PO Box 130891 Houston, TX 77219-0891

Citizen Patrol

The Houston Police Department is concerned about crime in the 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 can be found online at http://www.houstontx.gov/police/vip/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 ccgab@comcast.net to let her know you want to participate.

Taking Back The Streets of Vermont Commons

Nearly 30 residents of Vermont Commons took to the streets on Thursday, May 19th to protest the recent increase in crime in the neighborhood, and to make a statement about solidarity in the community.

VCCA member Nancy Higgs was recently a victim of crime, and that motivated her to organize a "Take Back The Streets" march to show our neighbors and anyone watching that Vermont Commons residents are watching out for each other.

Just before the neighbors began their march, FOX News reporter Kristin Kane did a live report from the scene. She had earlier interviewed some of the crime victims, including Higgs (Driscoll St), Todd Creger (Brun St) and Karen Forlenza (Huldy St). A nearly 4-minute story appeared on the 9:00 PM newscast. See it on the Fox website at <http://www.myfoxhouston.com/dpp/news/local/110519-vermont-commons-residents-fighting-back>.

A Houston police patrol car escorted the group as they headed

north on Driscoll, armed only with flashlights. The group included pet dogs and engaged in lots of lively conversation. Along the way, neighbors stepped out on their porches or looked through their windows and encouraged the walkers.

Remember that your neighbors are a big part of safety in Vermont Commons, and getting to know each other can be a tremendous help in watching for "unusual activity". Recently a neighbor's call to police after noticing lights going on throughout the house next door and seeing unknown people inside the house wearing hoodies, virtually saved everything being stolen from the house. The thieves dropped the stolen goods in another yard as they ran to avoid capture by the police.

To find out more about crime in Vermont Commons or in other areas, go to Spotcrime.com or HPD Crime Stats (<http://www.houstontx.gov/police/cs/stats2.htm>). You can also report crimes on the Spotcrime website.

Vermont Commons Civic Association
Newsletter

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Vermont Commons Civic Association
PO Box 130891, Houston, TX 77219
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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

Citizen 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

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Treasurer: Andy Tallin
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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
& May

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 home.
- 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

Looking for your block captain? Check the web page at VCCAHouston.org for a complete listing. Don't receive updates throughout the month from your block captain? Let your block captain know your e-mail address. Is no one representing 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

HAZARD St

Welch to Indiana

DRISCOLL St

Peden to Haddon

Haddon to Vermont

Welch to Indiana

Fairview to Westheimer

HADDON St

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 more than ever. Consider setting up a bird bath and/or water bowl and change the water frequently to avoid mosquitoes.

- WHAT TO DO if you 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 extremely 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 day.
- New neighborhoods where neighbors don't know each other.
- 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

The VCCA Newsletter crew is taking off during the months of July and August. Look for your next newsletter in September. Thanks to all of you for your input and helpful hints!
Jeanenne and Cay

Just a Note From Jeanette

What a delightful evening as about 30 residents of Vermont Commons walked the neighborhood on Thursday May 19th. The WALK, check out the article, was organized after the last newsletter. Many of you have expressed your disappointment that you did not know about the Walk. VCCA has a great web page and information that is not available at the time of the mailing of the newsletters is

posted on that web page. VCCA also sent info to all the existing block captains FOR DISTRIBUTION. Check the web page for your block captain and let the block captains know your contact information. VCCA has a great basis for notifying each other - let's all use it. Have a great summer!

Your Pres., Jeanette Hix



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