

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



December
2011

Civic Association Newsletter

VCCA GOALS for 2011

At the beginning of 2011, VCCA set these goals for the year. VCCA is proud that almost all the goals were accomplished, thanks to the hard work of numerous volunteers.

- 1. Complete the sign topper project.** The sign toppers are installed at every intersection of Vermont Commons.
- 2. Investigate increasing the size of the newsletter, including more advertisers to pay for extra cost.** There are twice as many advertisers.
- 3. Investigate the possibility of Park Civic joining VCCA.** The investigation continues.
- 4. Find chairpersons for committees with no leadership.**
Block Captains: yes
Speakers: Each meeting has a chairperson.
Near Town representative: VCCA had a representative for most of the year.
- 5. Find more members for these committees: Newsletter, Deed Restriction, Crime.** There are many new volunteers on all three of these committees.
- 6. Investigate starting a Citizens Patrol.** Not only was it investigated, but there are almost 40 volunteers.
- 7. Find Block Captains for all VCCA streets.** All blocks in Vermont Commons currently have Block Captains.
- 8. Increase number of paid members in VCCA.** There is an increase, but it would be great to have more members.

VCCA Logo

Check out the new logo on the newsletter! It is now the same as the one on the sign toppers throughout the community.



VCCA Holiday Party

Plan to attend the Vermont Commons Civic Association Holiday Party on Monday, December 12th! The fun begins at 7:00 PM at the Mockingbird Bistro at 1985 Welch St. VCCA will provide the treats, and each resident will be responsible for their own drinks. Last year nearly 100 residents enjoyed the night's festivities. Hope to see all of you there.

VCCA Elections

Vermont Commons Civic Association elected officers for 2012 at the November meeting. The Officers from 2011 were elected to serve another year. Thanks and congratulations to Jeanette Hix, President; Nancy Higgs, Vice President; Lance Hack, Secretary, and Andy Tallin, Treasurer for accepting the duties of these volunteer positions again.

Vermont Commons Civic Association
Newsletter
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Vermont Commons Civic Association
PO Box 130891, Houston, TX 77219
Issue No. 19

VCCA Holiday Party

Join us at 7:00 PM
December 12th
Mockingbird Bistro
1985 Welch @ McDuffie.



Newsletter Delivery

If you have not been receiving your VCCA newsletter before the VCCA meeting, look on the web page for directions to access your postal route number. You can then contact the post office to complain about your route carrier or let the newsletter staff know and we will contact the post office. All newsletters are mailed on the same day. Some residents receive them in a few days and some not until much later.

2012 Vermont Commons Civic Association Officers

President: Jeanette Hix
(713) 521-3337
hix@rmi.net
Vice Pres: Nancy Higgs
(512) 422-3317
nkmh54@aol.com
Secretary: Lance Hack
lhack02@hotmail.com
Treasurer: Andy Tallin
atallin01@yahoo.com
Newsletter: Jeanenne Hagerman
Cay Dickson

Home Safety and Protection

One of your most valuable possessions is your home. Here are some hints to make sure that it is safe and in tip-top condition:

- Heating and Air Conditioning: Change your filters each month. The Pleated filters are more efficient in trapping debris. While fiberglass filters are less expensive, they are also less efficient and allow more debris to access the coils.
- To prevent grease build up and reduce the risk of fire, clean the range filter hood monthly.
- Ensure that your refrigerator is running efficiently by cleaning the coils.
- Degrease and freshen your garbage disposal using vinegar ice cubes. Pour one cup of vinegar into an empty ice tray. Fill the balance of the tray with water and freeze solid. Drop ice cubes into garbage disposal. This process also sharpens the blades.
- Clean under your washer, dryer and refrigerator on a regular basis. The lint that collects under these appliances is a fire hazard.
- Inspect all water supply lines and connections at the washing machine, faucets, dishwasher and toilets. Look for deterioration and bubbling around the fittings where the rubber hose meets the metal.
- Check water heater fittings on top of the water heater. Look for corrosion and pin hole leaks.
- Pea traps prevent gases from escaping from plumbing pipes. Run water into all sinks and showers that have not been used for a long period of time to ensure that the gasses cannot escape.

THANKS to Volunteers

- To November Newsletter folders: Hosted by Jane Crowder Schmitt; Folders: Nancy Higgs, Betsy Banks, Mara Webster, Lillian Skogsberg, Tom Page, Dorothy Simons.
- To Catherine Gabor and Delia Cuellar for tallying the Citizens Patrol information.
- To Wayne Ticac and Delia Cuellar for adding all the articles to the web page.
- To Kelly McKenzie for attending the PIP meetings on behalf of VCCA.
- To all the new newsletter folders.
- To new Deed Restriction Committee members: Bob Costantini, Del Fulen, John Muire, Richard Adler and Tom Mysz.

Helpful Information

Garbage & Yard Trimmings: Mondays

Recycling: Mondays Dec 5th, & Dec 19th

Heavy Trash Collection:

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

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.

Holiday Lights Decorating Contest

It's time again for the Annual VCCA Holiday Lights Decorating Contest! Winners will be announced at the Holiday Party on December 12th at Mockingbird Bistro.

The following categories will be judged:

- Best Traditional
- Best Contemporary
- Best Animation
- Best Block

If you have questions, please email them directly to Nancy Higgs at nkmh54@aol.com.

Citizens Patrol

Congratulations! We collectively walked 256 hours this month. A great 5th month. Thank you for keeping our neighborhood safe.

The following is a list of our walkers for October:

Cathryn Gabor: Coordinator (713) 808-9240

Katie Baehl

Stephen Baehl

Bill Banks

Adriana Breidenstein

Debra Cody

Julie Cornelison

Bob Costantini

Delia Cuellar

Rob Fuller

Tom Hix

Paula Holton

David Hoyer

Sharon Israel

Karen Kane

Russell Kane

Michael Link

Kelly McKinzie

Beverly Newman

Mark Newman

Maria C. Rodriguez

Brenda Rojas

Lisa Stephens

Andy Tallin

Stephanie Taylor

Gaylor Ticac

Wayne Ticac

Invitation from HPD Officer Wayne Pate

Please don't forget this date - December 6th at 7:00 PM for our Central PIP Holiday Get Together at 1600 State St. I have been doing some BIG TIME talking to vendors and getting some nice food for us, and I don't want to have left-overs. So that means that you will have to come on an empty stomach and eat.

Last year, we had some lamb over rice from Alladins, stuffed cabbage rolls from Niko Nikos, Greek Pizza, sandwiches from Barry Katz's, pasta from Michaelangelos and Sorrentos, and that's not all!

Officer Mark Leija and I are looking to have a nice turn out of our citizens. We both try real hard to do the best that we can for Districts 1 and 2. And this is our way of saying *Thank You* to all of you. So you better be there!

Helpful Phone and e-mail Numbers

Our 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

John Focke, Architect of VCCA Deed Restrictions

John and Catherine Focke have lived at 2113 Brun since 1974. Many changes have happened in Vermont Commons, but many have *not* happened, thanks to John's help.

In 1992, the year VCCA was founded, an effort was



begun to create and implement deed restrictions. Research to determine property owners within the boundaries was begun and in 1994, with the help of John Focke and Margaret Lam, a draft of the deed restrictions was created. Focke, a now-retired architect, was instrumental in developing the document that was intended to enable the pattern of townhouse building that had begun to continue, with the limitation of square footage on inside and corner lots and to protect the neighborhood from commercial encroachment.

As Focke recalled, "We were obliged to show the County that there was at least a 51% approval of the proposed restrictions before we could proceed. To do that, we formed teams that went door to door every weekend to explain the deed restrictions and what the purpose was and to get their signature of support." During that time, the City of Houston held a referendum vote on a "zoning ordi-

nance," which would accomplish many of the goals of the deed restrictions. VCCA's efforts were put on hold for nearly a year, until the referendum failed.

Efforts to contact residents continued every week through January, 1996, exceeding the required percentage. Over 600 certified notices were sent to property owners. "At that point we filed the deed restrictions with the County. We then had to send out a second certified notice advising the property owners that the restrictions had been filed and if they wanted to "opt-out," it was their responsibility to notify the County, not Vermont Commons Civic Association," Focke continued.

Following the one-year period for property owners to exclude their properties, the deed restrictions became final for all properties that were not specifically excluded.

From the beginning of the effort in 1992 to the completion in 1996 had taken nearly four years of hard work by early VCCA members like John Focke and his wife, Catherine.

And what *didn't* happen, thanks to Focke? The KFC on the corner of Shepherd and Fairview wasn't allowed to tear down two homes on Huldly to make a huge parking lot and drive-through. After representatives of KFC presented their case for buying and tearing down the homes, Focke, who was then President of VCCA, calmly and confidently said, "There's nothing we can do. Both of the homes opted-in on our deed restrictions." Today, there are four lovely townhomes on that land.

Holiday Garbage Collection

There will be no garbage collection services on Monday, Dec 26th and Monday, Jan 2nd. Service will be delayed until the following Tuesday.

Sound Off!

Resident's Comments:

- If you see someone dumping trash or if there's an overflowing dumpster, call 3-1-1 to report them.
- As more multi-unit townhomes are built, parking space on the streets is at a premium. Help out by asking visitors to park in front of the residence they're visiting and to be mindful of blocking sidewalks and driveways.

Just a Note From Jeanette

Happy Holidays to all the residents of Vermont Commons. The holidays are a great time. I always look forward to the home decorations. Our neighborhood always looks so festive during the season.

The Vermont Commons Civic Association met its goals for 2011 and is now looking for goals for 2012. Several residents have suggested an "Enhancement Committee" to evaluate if and what could be accomplished to improve Vermont Commons. If you have ideas for improving Vermont Commons or for goals for 2012, please let me know.

Your Pres.,
Jeanette Hix



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Rebecca M. Harvey, D.D.S., P.A.

drharvey@dentisthouston.com
2025 Fairview Houston, TX 77019
Phone (713) 528-4054
Fax (713) 528-1443

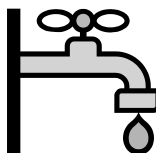


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