

vccahouston.org
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December
2013

CIVIC ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

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Vermont Commons Civic Association
PO Box 130891, Houston, TX 77219
Issue No. 39



December VCCA Holiday Party

HOLIDAY PARTY

Put on your holiday cheer!! Vermont Commons Civic Association is once

again hosting a Holiday Party. Residents from Vermont Commons and Park Civic are welcome to attend. The event will take place at Churrascos in the Randall's shopping center (2055 Westheimer). The fun begins at **7:00 P. M., Monday, December 9th**. To offset the cost of the party, all who attend are asked to donate \$5.00 at the door. Appetizers will be served. Each attendee will be responsible for their own drinks. Come and join in the fun and meet your neighbors.

Churrascos

PARKING ON THE STREET

Vermont Commons and Park Civic are asking all residents to evaluate how and where they park their vehicles. Anyone who lives in the Vermont Commons/Park Civic area is aware of the lack of street parking. It is understandable that some residents do not have any choice but to park on the street. However, many residents chose to park on the street because it is just more convenient. Please consider parking your vehicle in your garage or driveway.

If it is necessary for you to park your vehicle on the street, please be cognizant of how you park so your vehicle does not park in the middle of two parking places.



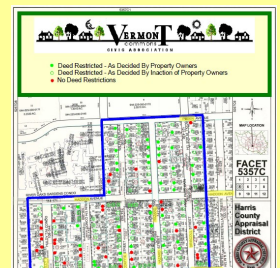
We are a small community with limited parking, so let's work together to make parking more convenient for all.

DEED RESTRICTIONS

Things you may not know about Deed Restrictions in Vermont Commons:

- Not all properties are deed restricted. Check the map on the web page (VCCAHouston.org) to see if your property is deed restricted.
- If your property is deed restricted, it is necessary to follow the restrictions. The deed restrictions can be located on the web page.
- If the property is deed restricted, you cannot run a business out of your home if the business is the primary reason for owning or renting the home.

If your property is not deed restricted, VCCA would appreciate builders and home owners following the deed restriction to protect the integrity of our area.



 **Nextdoor**

Nextdoor.com is a free, private social networking site available to Vermont Commons and Park Civic residents. Simply go to www.nextdoor.com, sign up and invite your neighbors to do the same. VCCA Residents have used the site to find plumbers, electricians, yard people, pet sitters, to pass on information about suspected criminals, created a trick or treating street for the little ones in the neighborhood and much more from their neighbors. Exchange ideas, connect with your neighbors, foster a sense of community and meet your neighbors— Nextdoor makes it easy.

HOLIDAY CRIME PREVENTION TIPS

By Nina Otazo

With the holidays fast approaching, many in our neighborhood may be traveling for short or long periods of time. Here are some tips that may help give you some peace of mind while you are away. Having the house look pretty much the same while you are gone as when you are home might help. Here are some dead giveaways that let people know you are probably out-of-town along with a better option to consider.

Some dead giveaways are:

1. Always closing the drapes **ONLY** when you're not going to be home. **Instead**, maybe vary your routine or leave them closed all the time.
2. Having no garbage cans out on collection day, or an empty can sitting at the curb for more than a day or two. **Instead**, maybe ask a friend or neighbor to put out the can and then pull up the can next to your house.
3. Closing up the house as tight as a drum without the air-conditioner or heat set to come on. **Instead**, depending on the season, maybe set the A/C to run at a higher temp like 78 degrees or the heat at a lower temp so it still kicks on but just not as often.
4. Turning on a certain light or two while every other room is in total darkness for days at a time. **Instead**, maybe use some timers so that lights come on at designated times while you are gone.
5. Newspapers and/or packages at your front door or in your driveway. **Instead**, call your paper to request a vacation hold, or have a friend or neighbor hold them for you.
6. Having all of your front outside lights turned off because you don't want them on 24/7 while you are away. **Instead**, consider getting outdoor LED light bulbs and leaving them on 24/7 even while you are home because they use very little electricity and will save you money, even if you never shut them off.

Little things can make a difference. Our neighborhood is known for looking out for one another. It can often make a big difference when we are off enjoying the holidays with family and friends.

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Helping Stray Cats

By Carolyn Levy

We had another trapping success story this week. A black cat had been seen on our block for the past couple of months. He was distinctive because he was running on 3 legs, dragging his back right foot. Obviously we were concerned about him, but he was not showing up anywhere on a regular basis so we didn't know how we were going to trap him.

Finally he started eating on a neighbor's porch, coming by every evening. We set up our drop trap and were able to catch him within a few minutes. The next morning we took him to SNAP. In addition to neutering him and giving him a rabies vaccine, SNAP checked out his foot and gave him a shot of long acting antibiotic. Since we released him back on our block he has been walking on all four legs!!

I think we should all feel proud that we live in Vermont Commons and have a Civic Association that strives to make our neighborhood a more pleasant place to live.

If you need assistance getting neighborhood cats fixed, we can help and it's FREE!

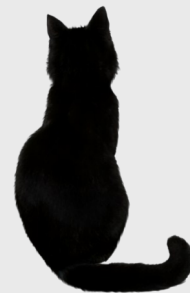
Carolyn Levy houstoncatlover@gmail.com

Jane Crowder Schmitt jlc2728@gmail.com

Lisa Rainey brainey2@sbcglobal.net

If you'd like to make a tax deductible donation to help pay for getting Vermont Commons' neighborhood cats spayed/neutered, please send your check made out to Rescue Bank (with Vermont Commons on the note line at the bottom) to:

Ms. Elizabeth Asher, Executive Director
Rescue Bank
6363 Woodway, Suite 975
Houston, TX 77057



Deed Restriction Committee

The street name is the street that they are responsible for concerning Deed Restrictions. Please contact if you have any concerns.

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2nd VP: Robin Green rbogreene@gmail.com

Secretary: Lisa McDavid

Treasurer: Andy Tallin atallin01@yahoo.com

Newsletter: Michael Forlenza & Karen Kane
vcca.newsletter@gmail.com



Yard of the Month

December Yard of the Month

The Yard of the Month for December goes to Carolyn Kevillin's townhouse at 2120 McDuffie. Carolyn came to our neighborhood ~1-1/2 years ago from Dallas. She enjoys gardening and loves living in the VCCA area because she has such terrific neighbors. Get to meet her at our VCCA monthly meetings or at our monthly coffees.

Did you forget to pay your VCCA dues?
An envelope was provided in the October newsletter or pay online at VCCAHouston.org. Please consider paying.

Letter to the Editor — Coyotes

On Wednesday, November 6th, I came across the remains of my cat, Caesar on my neighbor's lawn. It was a horrific sight. I emailed the details to my vet. She told me my cat had most likely been eaten by a coyote, that there had been sightings in my neighborhood. I was flabbergasted. I had not heard anything about coyotes in Montrose.

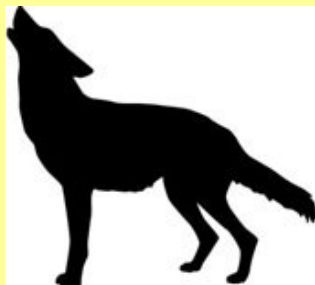
A neighbor researched this. The only mention of coyotes in Montrose came from a Houston Press Blog from 2010. Someone living on Morse, between Westheimer and Fairview, witnessed a coyote running off with her cat. She later found its remains two blocks away.

The next day I was at our neighborhood Petco, I asked an employee if he had heard of pets disappearing. He said no, but that a coyote was injured by a car there, back in July. Another cat of mine disappeared in July. I have no proof, but strongly suspect she fell prey to coyotes also.

This past Saturday I spoke to a woman walking her small dogs. I wanted to warn her. She told me that she came across a mutilated cat in October by Elmen and Vermont. She was still horrified by what she found.

My cats are former ferals that were trapped and slowly tamed. By making the choice to allow them access to the outdoors I made peace with the fact that their lives could be shortened by disease, cars, dogs, etc.

Had I been informed that they were also at risk of being eaten by coyotes, I would have kept them indoors. Because I did not know about the presence of coyotes, I was not able to make an informed decision.



My neighbors and I are working on a flyer, warning pet owners about coyotes here who have developed a taste for cats. I very much hope that you can put some sort of warning in the VCCA newsletter. I am very angry that no one, save my vet, has been informed that there are coyotes that have been preying on cats in this neighborhood.

- Erika Lawson (residing on Elmen near Indiana)

From the VCCA President....

Erika, your story will help save the lives of other pets. In addition to publishing this letter, VCCA will continue to inform neighbors of important issues, such as this, through announcements at monthly meetings and through the block captain email network. In addition, Nextdoor.com is another effective communication tool that many residents are using.



HOLIDAY LIGHTS CONTEST

Don't forget to decorate early and surprise us with your creativity! Your Yard of the Month elves will be checking out this year's winners to be announced at the January 2014 meeting. Prizes for Top WINNERS.

Monthly Meetings

VCCA Meetings are the 2nd Monday of each month (Sept. thru June) at 7:00 p.m.

Got News?

We welcome your news, photos, and editorials, but reserve the right to edit for clarity, style, and length. Send questions and contributions to vcca.newsletter@gmail.com. Articles and ads do not necessarily reflect the views of the Vermont Commons Civic Association, nor is the VCCA responsible for errors that may be expressed by writers or advertisers. Submissions are due the 15th of the month preceding the newsletter.

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MIKE SPEAR

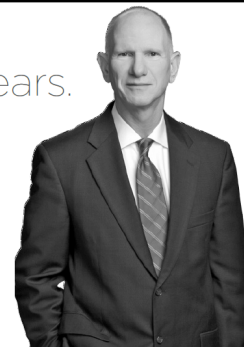
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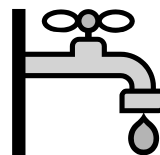
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