

vccahouston.org

PO Box 130891
Houston, TX 77219-0891



June 2018

CIVIC ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

SUMMERTIME



Newsletter Published Monthly September thru June
Vermont Commons Civic Association
PO Box 130891, Houston, TX 77219
Issue No. 86

June VCCA Happy Hour

VCCA monthly happy hours are the 2nd Monday, September through June at Churrasco's, 2055 Westheimer, Shepherd Square Shopping Center (in front of Randall's). Join us June 11th at 6:30pm.

Election of VCCA Officers

Election of VCCA nine officers for the 2018-2019 year will be conducted at the June Happy Hour. This past year, VCCA elected six directors to fill the role of the president. The VCCA will continue with six directors. The following candidates have agreed to stand for election:

Directors: Jeanette Hix, Lillian Skogsberg, B R Simon, Janet Meyer, Ann Green-Terrell, Nina Westerfeld

Treasurer: Chuck Randall

Deed Restrictions: Andy Tallin

Newsletter: New volunteer Natalia Podosinnikova

Additional nominations can come from the floor at the June Happy Hour.

New Newsletter Editor

VCCA resident Natalia Podosinnikova has agreed to be the Editor for the VCCA Newsletter. She has previously volunteered in several VCCA activities as well as working with the updating of the VCCA web page. She was also part of a group of VCCA residents who set up the *vcpatrol* web page. She is a very talented person and we are excited to have her join our volunteer team of volunteer officers. Michael will assist Natalia with the transition.

VCCA Happy Hour

Date: Monday, June 11th, 2018, 6:30pm Happy Hour

Location: Churrasco's, 2055 Westheimer, Shepherd Square Shopping Center (in front of Randall's)

Join the Vermont Commons Civic Association for the last Happy Hour of the 2017- 2018 season on June 11th at 6:30 p.m. VCCA will not be hosting a speaker this month. This is an opportunity to thank all the officers, committee chairs and other worker bees for all their hard work during the year. Without their assistance, the VCCA would not exist. It takes many man/woman hours to make it work. Bring some ideas for fall activities and ask how you can get involved. VCCA will return in September for an exciting 2018 –2019 season.

*It's summertime Frankie.
Lets go to the Vermont
Commons beach !*

*Annette, there is no
beach in Vermont
Commons.*

*Then we can still be cool by
heading over to the June
VCCA Happy Hour. Be
there or be a square !*



VCCA Membership

Did you know that only about 108 households out of more than 1,200 households in Vermont Commons are paid members of the VCCA? In your September 2018 VCCA newsletter, you will receive a notice about joining the VCCA and paying dues. September is the month you are encouraged to join. It is only \$40 a year.

This past year only one-tenth of households joined. Most of the activities, Happy Hour with great speakers, Picnic, End of Winter celebration, Holiday Party, National Night out, are attended by almost 75 residents and many close to 100. Attending all these wonderful activities is how most residents met neighbors, made friends and found the real bond in the neighborhood. Please consider joining the organization and watch for your notice in the September newsletter.

September Happy Hour

The VCCA will return on September 10th with a presentation by Houston Police Officer Stephen Dard. Many of you attended his presentation to the VCCA called Active Shooter several years ago and it was an inspirational and eye opening presentation for everyone. He is an intense speaker, with a fast-talking delivery with loads of information about being safe. Even if you have already heard his presentation, being reminded about safety when an active shooter is present is important. If you have not attended, mark your calendar.

**No VCCA Meetings in July and August!!
We are off for summer break.**

Composting is the natural recycling of organic matter into useful garden materials. The many benefits of composting include the reduction of waste disposal and the production of beneficial, nutrient-rich, garden amendments for free. Any household can compost and any garden can benefit from the resulting *humus*.

Reducing Waste ("Don't Bag it!"): Today, solid waste management is one of the most prominent environmental issues facing municipalities with landfills are filling up at an alarming rate. Organic landscape materials (leaves, grass, woody trimmings, pine needles) contribute significantly to solid waste. During the fall leafdrop, organic materials may account for as much as 50% of the incoming landfill volume. Re-using these materials saves transportation costs and landfill disposal space.

Benefits of Compost in the Garden: The natural product of the composting process is a dark brown material called *humus*, that some gardeners refer to as "black gold." Mixing *humus* in your garden soil adds valuable nutrients back to the environment, improves the condition of our heavy clay soils, increases fertility, helps insulate the soil from temperature extremes, and helps plants survive dry periods by holding moisture.

How to Get Started: There are many commercially-available composting devices available on the market to help you. But anyone can get started at no cost by simply piling organic material in an out-of-the-way location and letting nature work. Some method of containing the materials is useful to keep the area orderly. The containment can be a few bricks or cinder blocks. A bit of wire fencing shaped into a circle or a "U" shape makes a good containment. Composting materials will reduce in volume by about 80% as the microorganisms do their work over several weeks.

The compost will slightly heat up as the microorganisms digest. The compost pile should be kept slightly moist (like a wrung out sponge) during dry periods by adding a bit of water. The microor-



Composting: What? Why? How?

By Michael F. Forlenza

ganisms use oxygen to help break down the compost, so some turning or mixing will be needed to aerate the pile and give all of the materials a bit of time near the center of the pile and to accelerate the decomposition process. You will notice some worms and insects in the pile. That is good.

The compost pile will have a slight 'rich earthy' odor as the organic material decays. Any 'off' or offensive odors indicate that the pile is not getting enough oxygen and should be turned.

Materials to compost: leaves, grass clippings, landscape clippings, twigs and sticks (broken up into small pieces), kitchen vegetable scraps, tea bags, coffee grounds (with the filter), egg shells. Even shredded paper/newspaper can be added; however, recycling these materials in curbside green bids is likely a better alternative for most VCCA households.

Materials to avoid placing in compost: meats, fish, poultry, food sauces, fats, grease, oils, pet feces, treated wood, non-organic materials (plastics, metals, glass)

As concerned citizens and good stewards of the environment, VCCA residents can act and stop throwing out materials that can be recycled and reused for beneficial purposes. Don't look at organic material as a waste, but rather as a resource that can be used as nature intended to renew the environment through natural processes.

Useful websites:

- <https://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/earthkind/landscape/dont-bag-it/>
- <http://www.houstontx.gov/solidwaste/compost.html>
- <http://takecareoftexas.org/hot-wire/dos-and-donts-of-composting>
- <https://agrilifeextension.tamu.edu/browse/featured-solutions/gardening-landscaping/composting/>
- <https://www.tceq.texas.gov/p2/composting.html>
- <https://harris.agrilife.org/program-areas/anr/useful-anr-links/composting-links/>
- <https://www.epa.gov/recycle/composting-home>



Fly Your Flag - June 14th

In the United States, Flag Day is celebrated on June 14th commemorating the adoption of the flag, which happened on that day in 1777 by resolution of the Second Continental Congress. In 1916, President Wilson issued a proclamation that officially established June 14th as Flag Day. In August 1949, National Flag Day was established by an Act of Congress.



VCCA Treasurer's Report - May 2018

	Beginning Balance (A)	\$	6,106.09
Income			
Advertising	\$400.00		
Dues	\$40.00		
Randall's Good Neighbor Program	\$0.00		
Total Revenue (B)	\$440.00		
Sub Total A + B		\$	6,546.09
Expenses			
Sub Total (C)	\$0.00		0.00
Balance = A+B-C		\$	6,546.09
Pending Payments (May Newsletter)	-\$601.00		
Subtotal	-\$601.00		
Net Funds Available		\$	5,945.09

VCCA COFFEE

Monthly VCCA/Park Civic COFFEE at La Madeleine French Bakery and Café at 2047 West Gray, on June 6th (the first Wednesday each month) at 10:00am.



VCCA Citizen Patrol. The Citizen Patrol had twelve patrollers that did a total of 272.5 hours of driving and walking patrol in April! Bob Costantini lead the way with 119 hours followed by Sankar Muhuri with 23 hours and Rob Fuller, Tom Hix, and Elizabeth McKenzie with 20 hours each.

Anyone interested in being a patroller just send me (davidhoyer@sbcglobal.net) or Officer Pate (wpate43@yahoo.com) an email.

Thank you all for helping Vermont Commons to be safer, - David Hoyer, CP Coordinator

Send news, notices, photos, editorials, advertising requests to vcca.newsletter@gmail.com. Submissions are due the 15th of the month preceding the newsletter. *Michael Forlenza, Editor*

VCCA OFFICERS 2017-2018

Directors (replacing one President)

- Lillian Skogsberg
- Janet Meyer
- Nina Westerfeld
- Ann Green-Terrell
- BR Simon
- Jeanette Hix

Treasurer:

Chuck Randall

Vice President -

Deed Restrictions:

Andy Tallin

Newsletter:

Michael F. Forlenza



Water Meter Covers

Does your water meter near the curb have a cover on it? Many of the covers floated away with the flood waters of Harvey. It is almost 9 months since Harvey and some of the meters are still not covered. A resident of Vermont Commons, walked all the streets of Vermont Commons and made a list of missing meter lids. Unfortunately, the city would not take the list from her. The City said that each individual had to call in. The good news is, the new lids have a latch on them so they will not float away again. If your water meter is still uncovered and a possible danger to walkers, call 311 and report it to get a replacement.

Did you know there are 115,000 storm drains in Houston? The City is truly grateful for residents who help to prevent future flooding, save taxpayers dollars, and keep our neighborhood storm drains clean and litter free. Go to *Adopt A Drain Houston* to adopt one or more drains. Commit to:

Adopt a Drain and Name Your Drain

- Clean 10 ft on both sides of the drain at least 4 times/yr at each location (especially before it rains)
- Compost or place leaves in lawn bag or compostable bag (City of Houston trash)
- Place any trash in your garbage bin

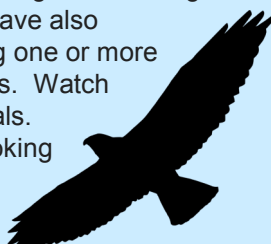
The City knows that engaged citizens are anxious to put on work shoes, head outside, and show your drain some love by keeping it clear of leaves and trash & debris. But before you head out, review the safety tips and frequently asked questions on the City of Houston website (cohegis.houstontx.gov/cohgisweb/adopta/).

Share your photos and video on social using #ClaimYourDrain. We would also love for your friends, family and neighbors to claim a drain, too! Thanks from your friends at the City of Houston & Keep Houston Beautiful.

Protect Your Pets



Have you been observing all the wildlife in our neighborhood? Not only have neighbors sighted many migrating song birds and butterflies, but a nesting hawk has been spotted in the Brun Street area. The hawk's call are heard throughout the neighborhood. A few residents have also recently reported seeing one or more coyotes in on our streets. Watch out for your small animals. These predators are looking For food for themselves and for their young.



City Fees for Replacement of Trash/Recycling Bins

Houston residents who ask the city for more than one replacement trash or recycling container per decade now will have to pay for their new black or green bins.



City Council passed **the new policy** unanimously in April 2018, trying to recoup the more than \$1 million the city spends replacing thousands of the 96-gallon cans each year.

Residents will pay \$74 to get a new container and \$40 to have a container cleaned, services for which the city currently does not charge. The city will continue to provide replacements for free when containers are "damaged beyond use" by city trucks, or when, for example, a bin floats away during a flood. The council also approved an amendment from Councilman Robert Gallegos that will let those older than 65 and those enrolled in a city pickup program for disabled residents pay only the \$24 delivery fee and not the replacement cost of the container when they need a second replacement can within a decade.

Vermont Commons

A Great Place to Live.



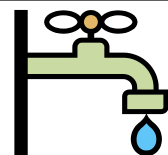
Janet Meyer, Realtor®
713.854.0756
janetmeyer@kw.com

KW METROPOLITAN
KELLER WILLIAMS REALTY



RIVER OAKS GYM

Bring in this ad and receive a one-week pass and complimentary personal training session.
riveroaksgym.com
1937 W. Gray, Suite 200



David Hicks Plumbing Inc.

"Since 1952"

Complete Plumbing Services
Residential • Commercial • Repairs
Remodeling • Gas Inspections
Tankless Water Heaters

713 / 528.0141
davidhicksplumbing.com



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

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



Vermont Commons Civic Association
PO Box 130891
Houston, TX 77219-0891

Non-Profit Organization
U.S. Postage
Paid
Houston, TX
Permit 9079

Connect and communicate with
your neighbors in Vermont
Commons - join Nextdoor.com

Stay Connected @
vccahouston.org



Circle of Excellence, Hall of Fame, 2015 - #1 Top Producer

**WE
ARE**

#1 IN SALES \$250K AND UP,
\$500K AND UP AND
\$1M AND UP.

NO FINE PRINT.

“It’s not about selling one house;

it’s about building relationships.”

Contact me with all your Real Estate needs.

Jay Monroe

BROKER ASSOCIATE

713.504.6936

Jay.Monroe@Sothebyshomes.com

Martha
Turner

Sotheby's
INTERNATIONAL REALTY