

**vccahouston.org**

PO Box 130891

Houston, TX 77219-0891



**December 2018**

## CIVIC ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

*Newsletter Published Monthly September — June  
Vermont Commons Civic Association  
PO Box 130891, Houston, TX 77219  
Issue No. 90*

### VCCA Happy Hour

The Holiday Party takes place instead of the monthly Happy Hour in December. On January 14th, monthly gatherings resume with a special update from the City of Houston Public Works Department about the progress and challenges associated with the Avalon Place Reconstruction Project. Join your neighbors to learn more information and provide feedback regarding your experience of this project and its impact on our city and neighborhood.

### VCCA Book Club



The VCCA Book Club is open to members of VCCA and Park Civic. We meet year-round on the 3rd Wednesday of each month at Cafe Express 2-3:30 p.m. In addition, once or twice each year, we choose a book from the MFAH Book Club and take docent led tours of art related to the book at the Museum. If you are a book lover, please consider joining us. We would love to have you. Please contact Carole Dodson at [VCCA.Bookclub@gmail.com](mailto:VCCA.Bookclub@gmail.com).

### MONTHLY COFFEE

Put on your holiday cheer and attire to meet at La Madeleine and share coffee with your neighbors on the first Wednesday of the month at 10:00am. VCCA/Park Civic at La Madeleine French Bakery, 2047 West Gray. Hope to see you there on December 5th!

## Most Wonderful Time — VCCA Annual Holiday Party

**Date:** Monday, December 3rd, 6:30pm

**Location:** Churrasco's, 2055 Westheimer,  
Shepherd Square Shopping Center

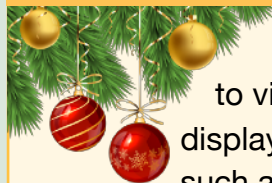
Join us for some warm festive cheer at the annual **VCCA Holiday Party!**

Our fun gathering will begin at **6:30pm on Monday, December 3**, at Churrasco's.

Please pay your VCCA dues before or at the party. Plenty of hot and cold appetizers will be served. Ample parking available. Party-goers will be able to purchase their own drinks at the cash bar. Come and join in the fete, share your plans for the new year, and meet your friends and neighbors. To offset the cost of the party, we request that the attendees donate \$10.00 at the door.



### Christmas Lights & Decorations Contest



Volunteers will walk the neighborhood to view your beautiful house and yard displays, and vote on the best in categories such as townhouse, cottage, single family home and others. Because voting will take place after December 20th, it will be too late to list selections in the January newsletter, so look on the web page ([vccahouston.org](http://vccahouston.org)) for the winners!



## Houston Street Name Origins - Shepherd Drive: Green Pastures in the VCCA By Michael F. Forlenza

(This is Part 2. Find Part 1 in the December 2015 issue at [vccahouston.org](http://vccahouston.org))



Benjamin A. Shepherd

Sheep may have once grazed in sylvan meadows where the VCCA neighborhood now stands, but the name Shepherd Drive is not an homage to the watchful tender of the flock but to Benjamin Armistead Shepherd and his family. Shepherd was born in Fluvanna, Virginia in May 1814, the next to youngest of 14 children. His Anglo-

Saxon ancestors had been given large land grants by the Crown before the Revolutionary War, but the land was poor and the family's fortunes had diminished.

Seeking opportunity, Shepherd first moved to Tennessee in 1833 and then to New Orleans in 1837. There he worked for a large wholesale commission house as the chief bookkeeper and credit advisor. He moved again to Galveston in 1839. While in Galveston, he met and married Mary K. Hobson in October 1840, later having five children together.

Next, he moved to Houston in 1841 at the age of 27, attracted by opportunities in the new capital of the Republic of Texas. Houston was very much a frontier town when Sam Houston moved the capital of the fledgling republic here in 1837 after the Allen brothers had established the city at the confluence of Buffalo and White Oak Bayous in 1836. Shepherd became a friend of Sam Houston and one of the founding fathers of the new town.

Shepherd established the mercantile firm Shepherd and Burke. The firm did a considerable credit business with interior merchants and planters who paid their accounts by sending cotton to be sold on commission. Shepherd realized that a bank was desperately needed. In 1847, his Commercial and Agricultural Bank became the first chartered bank in Texas. Consequently, in 1854, Shepherd sold his interest in the mercantile firm and went into the banking business.

An active entrepreneur, Shepherd was the president of a steamboat line that ran between Houston and Galveston prior to the development of the railroads. He later promoted the Houston and Texas Central Railway and served on the board. He organized the City Cotton Mills and was its first president.

He formed a company to clear and construct a plank road on Washington Avenue.

During the Civil War, he advised his customers to withdraw their deposits and he retired from the banking business for the duration of the conflict. Despite urging from others, he declined to engage his steamboats in Union blockade running.

After the war, he re-established his bank in 1866 and, in partnership with others, formed the First National Bank of Houston, located at the corner of Main Street and Franklin Avenue. To many Houstonians, the bank was often colloquially referred to as "Shepherd's Bank." Becoming its president, Shepherd managed the bank with an iron hand for the next 25 years. He was one of the incorporators of the Buffalo Bayou and Brazos and Colorado Railroad, as well as one of the founders of the Cotton Exchange and Board of Trade in 1874. The town of Shepherd in San Jacinto County was named for him following the laying out of the route of the Houston, East and West Texas Railroad in 1875.

Benjamin Armistead Shepherd died at the age of 77 in 1891 and is interred in Houston's historic Glenwood Cemetery. He had established a trust fund which was distributed to Houston's needy after his death. The family, including cousin Daniel. P. Shepherd, donated land to the city of Houston for the construction of Shepherd Drive. D. P. Shepherd built a dam on Buffalo Bayou where Shepherd Drive now crosses the bayou. The dam was intended to power a saw mill and grist mill that were never completed. The Shepherd family has now been in Houston for six generations.

B. A. Shepherd's granddaughter Sallie Shepherd Perkins learned her love of music from her grandfather. Sallie memorialized her grandfather with a gift to Rice University (then Rice Institute) in 1950, and additional gifts later, for the teaching and study of music. These gifts founded the Shepherd School of Music.

The next time you are stuck in rush hour traffic on Shepherd Drive, reflect on the energetic young man whose efforts helped to shape his adopted city and the farsighted gifts of the family that has enriched generations.

### VCCA OFFICERS 2018-2019

**Directors:** Jeanette Hix, Stephanie Taylor, Nina Westerfeld, Janet Meyer, BR Simon, Lillian Skogsberg, Ann Green Terrel

**Secretary:** Chuck Randall

**VP Deed Restrictions:** Andy Tallin

**Newsletter:** Natalia Podosinnikova



### VCCA Events 2018-2019

- December 3 — Holiday Party
- December 5 — Coffee
- January 2 — Coffee
- January 14 — Happy Hour/  
Speaker: City of Houston update  
on Fairview reconstruction

VCCA Yard of the Month



2321 Huldy St.

Send news, notices, photos, editorials, advertising requests to [nat.podo@gmail.com](mailto:nat.podo@gmail.com). Submissions are due the 15th of the month preceding the newsletter.  
*Natalia Podosinnikova, Editor*



## Goodbye Mockingbird...Hello Eugene's

There is some good news for those of us who are still mourning the loss of our favorite neighborhood bistro! Danton's Gulf Coast Seafood restaurant is moving into the old Mockingbird location, rechristened as Eugene's Gulf Coast Cuisine. Kyle Teas, owner and manager, sees the move as an opportunity to make other changes, including the name, paying tribute to his late father, Eugene. New dishes will be added to their current menu of Cajun-style seafood dishes and steaks, including a hamburger and prime rib, plus daily specials.

Luckily, some things won't change, including the Oyster Bar happy hour and menu offered Monday through Friday 4 – 7, with expanded hours on Saturday. Danton Nix, their chef of 10 years, will continue at the new location, as will most of their support and wait staff. Danton's will serve their last meal at Chelsea Market on New Year's Eve. The projected opening of Eugene's at 1983 Welch Street is January 10<sup>th</sup>, but is contingent on receiving permits to proceed with the build-out.

Let's welcome and support this new addition to the neighborhood!

### CITIZEN PATROL

In November, Citizen Patrol volunteers completed a total of 196 hours of walking and driving patrol. That's over 6 hours of patrolling per day!

Thank you to all 11 volunteers, and especially **Bob Costantini**, who returned from an injury with 51 hours, and newly trained **Robin Greene Fuller**, who sure started strong with 28 hours. If you'd like to learn more about Citizen Patrol, or to become a volunteer, please contact David Hoyer at [davidhoyer@sbcglobal.net](mailto:davidhoyer@sbcglobal.net).

## Vermont Commons

A Great Place to Live.



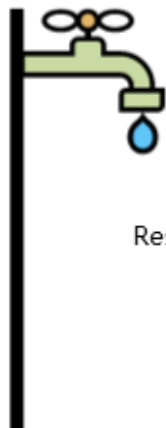
**Janet Meyer, Realtor®**  
713.854.0756  
[janetmeyer@kw.com](mailto:janetmeyer@kw.com)

**KW METROPOLITAN**  
KELLERWILLIAMS REALTY



## RIVER OAKS GYM

Bring in this ad and receive a one-week pass and complimentary personal training session.  
[riveroaksgym.com](http://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](http://davidhicksplumbing.com)

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

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



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](http://Nextdoor.com)

Stay connected @  
[vccahouston.org](http://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](mailto:Jay.Monroe@Sothebyshomes.com)

Martha  
Turner

**Sotheby's**  
INTERNATIONAL REALTY