

vccahouston.org

PO Box 130891
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February 2018

CIVIC ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER



*Happy
Valentine's
Day*

Newsletter Published Monthly September thru June
Vermont Commons Civic Association
PO Box 130891, Houston, TX 77219
Issue No. 82

February VCCA Happy Hour

VCCA monthly happy hours are the 2nd Monday, September through June, at Fuzzy's Taco Shop, 2015 W Gray St, Suite J, (right behind La Madeleine, east along Peden Street).
Join us February 12th at 6:30pm.



VCCA Happy Hour & Speaker — Stephen Costello February 12th at 6:30 PM

Date: Monday, February 12th, 2018, 6:30pm

Location: Fuzzy's Taco Shop, 2015 W Gray St, Suite J, (right behind La Madeleine, east along Peden Street).



The speaker for the February happy hour will be VCCA resident Stephen C. Costello. Mr. Costello is the City of Houston's Chief Resilience Officer in the Mayor's Office. He has the responsibility of developing and implementing strategies that will improve drainage and reduce the risk of flooding. Mr. Costello will discuss flooding in Houston and what the city is doing to address the issue.

Stephen Costello is an engineer with a background in flood control and drainage, which began with his first job out of school with the Corps of Engineers in Galveston. He co-founded Costello, Inc. in 1991 and served as Houston City Council Member At Large for 6 years from January 2010 to December 2015. Mr. Costello ran for Mayor of Houston in 2015.

In May 2016, Mayor Turner appointed Mr. Costello as the city's Chief Resilience Officer. His initial task is to focus on the flooding and drainage issues facing the city, which is why he's been labeled the "Flood Czar." He is currently an active board member of Family Houston and SER Jobs for Progress, and Marathon Kids. He also served for many years as a member of the board of the Memorial Park Conservancy. Mr. Costello is a longtime runner and triathlete. He and his wife Debbie raised two sons in Houston and are now proud grandparents to two granddaughters.

Contact: stephen.costello@houstontx.gov

Phone: 832.393.0811

Or contact: sallie.alcorn@houstontx.gov

Phone: 832.393.1123



VCCA Christmas Lights and Decoration Contest

Thanks to all Vermont Commons residents who bring joy to our neighborhood with their beautiful decorations!

This year's winners:

Best Decorated Bungalow

- ◆ 1912 McDuffie, Darelle Robins (1st floor), Rebeca & Rachael Wright (2nd floor)

Best Decorated Multi-family Homes

- ◆ 1706 – 1708 McDuffie

Best Decorated Townhouse

- ◆ 1963 Haddon

Best Uniquely Decorated Home

- ◆ 2032 Vermont, Steve Granda, Kristin Kott & children, (see Petra & her green dragon below)

Best Decorated Single Family Home

- ◆ 1710 Driscoll



END OF WINTER CELEBRATION

SAVE THE DATE

March 24th at 3:00pm at the intersection of Brun and Haddon. Watch for details in the March newsletter.

20-YEAR THROW BACK

This quiz appeared in the VCCA newsletter 20 year ago. How many old timers know the answers to these questions? John Doody was President and he still lives on Brun Street. Thanks to Margaret Lamb who saved all the old newsletters. **Please send answers to the questions to Jeanette Hix to hix@rmi.net and the answers will be printed in next month's newsletter**



1. Long before Tony Mandola's opened in the River Oaks Shopping Center, there was another great seafood spot nearby. What was it?
2. In 1975, where was the closest place you could pick up a donut at a drive-through window?
3. What business was once parked at the site of Shepherd Square?
4. What former inner-VCCA restaurant was named for a character in the Hunchback of Notre Dame?
5. What brand of bread was once baked at the corner of Woodhead and West Gray?
6. Where was the original 77019 post office?
7. For years there was a funny business at the southwest corner of Shepherd and San Felipe/Vermont. What was it?
8. Name the only business displaced by new development that relocated across the street from its earlier location?
9. You have to know your alphabet for this one. What store once occupied the site now being redeveloped at the corner of Shepherd and Indiana?
10. (A no-brainer if you have been to Diedrich's) What brand of gas was once sold at the corner of Hazard and Westheimer?

Safety Tips from The Houston Fire Department - Space Heaters

Houstonians can react to cold nights by reaching for a space heater. The Houston Fire Department would like to take this time to remind everyone of some simple safety tips if using space heaters to keep warm:

- 1) Always have a working smoke alarm!
- 2) Give space heaters space! Keep them at least 3 feet away from anything that can catch fire (clothes, drapes, rugs, etc.)
- 3) Don't leave children unattended around space heaters when in use or even when plugged in and off (kids can accidentally turn them on).
- 4) Avoid extension cords and make sure you don't overload your electrical outlets with multiple space heaters (we've already seen fires due to this).

For additional safety tips, please visit www.houstonfire.org

VCCA COFFEE

Monthly VCCA/Park Civic COFFEE at La Madeleine French Bakery and Café at 2047 West Gray, on February 7th (the first Wednesday each month) at 10:00am.



VCCA OFFICERS 2017-2018

Directors (replacing 1 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

HURRICANE HARVEY

Harris County has Never Seen a Storm Like Harvey

The occurrence of Hurricane Harvey and the devastating flooding that resulted have inspired discussion and concern regarding our county's drainage infrastructure, as well as our collective ability to withstand such a severe flooding event. Simply put, we have never seen a storm like Harvey.

It should be noted that a total of 1 trillion gallons of water fell across Harris County over a 4-day period. This amount of water would cover Harris County's 1,800 square miles with an average of 33 inches of water. More than two dozen rainfall gages registered seven-day readings topping 40 inches, with a maximum rainfall of 47.4 inches near Clear Creek at Interstate 45. (Keep in mind that Harris County generally receives an annual rainfall of about 50 inches per year, and our county received this much rainfall in just a few days.) This unprecedented storm event impacted the residents of each of Harris County's 22 watersheds, and it is estimated that more than 120,000 structures were flooded in Harris County, alone.

The breadth and depth of rainfall associated with Harvey simply has not been seen or experienced by Harris County before, and the Harris County Flood Control District is diligently working alongside its many partners, including Harris County Engineering Department, the City of Houston, the Federal Emergency Management Agency, and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, among others to proactively address the needs of our region.



Drinking Water Taste and Smell

CITY OF HOUSTON

Why has the Drinking Water's Taste and Smell Changed?

The change in the taste and smell of Houston's drinking water is caused by by-products of a naturally occurring algae bloom in our lakes called geosmin and MIB (2-methyl isoborneol). Houston's main drinking water system receives 85% of its water from the San Jacinto River (Lake Conroe and Lake Houston) and the Trinity River (Lake Livingston). Lakes often see an increase in algae blooms when there is warmth and direct sunlight.

What is Geosmin and MIB?

Geosmin and MIB are naturally-occurring compounds and are not harmful, but can give the water a musty, earthy, or fishy taste and smell.

Is the Water Quality Affected?

The City's drinking water continues to meet or exceed ALL Federal and State standards and is SAFE. Water experts will continue to monitor and test the water.

How Long will the Taste and Odor Last?

The algae bloom is a seasonal event. Since geosmin and MIB are naturally-occurring, they will diminish in the water supply with time and weather changes.

Can the Taste and Smell be Reduced at Home?

To make the water taste better, try chilling it, adding ice cubes, a slice of lemon, or a few drops of lemon juice. Additionally, home water filtration systems that contain carbon may help.

If you have concerns about the quality of your water, please call 311.



City of Houston Selected a New Recycling Contractor — Will Accept Glass & Plastic Bags

January 10, 2018 -- Mayor Sylvester Turner hailed the City Council's resounding approval today of a 15-year contract with FCC SA for processing Houston residents' recyclable materials – a deal that will save taxpayers millions of dollars and accept glass and filmy plastic bags.

"After considering proposals from competing recycling companies, we got the best deal for the city of Houston," Mayor Turner said. "The contract with FCC saves the taxpayers millions of dollars in recycling costs to the city. It expands the kinds of materials our Solid Waste Department will collect from curbsides once a week. It provides state-of-the-art technology that will be updated as we go along."

"It's a win for Houstonians and the environment," the mayor added.

With a five-year extension option that would stretch the contract to 20 years, the city will pay FCC SA (Fomento de Construcciones Y Contratas, Inc.) up to \$36.8 million assuming the price for which the company can sell recyclables does not climb steeply. If the value of recyclables on

Houston Recycling: Big Changes Coming



global markets shoots up, thus increasing FCC SA's profits, the city will pay less for the contract. The city already saved \$11 million when FCC SA lowered its price in a second "best and final offer" bidding round and will save more because the city's contract costs per ton of recyclables are capped. The city has been operating without a cost cap in its current contract with Waste Management.

FCC SA will take over the city's recycling processing in about 14 months, when it completes construction of a \$23 million processing plant that will employ 100 to 140 people in northeast Houston. Upon completion FCC SA will give the plant to the city.

The city will then start accepting glass in its green curbside collection containers as well as plastic bags of the kind used in supermarkets and drug stores. Current recyclables are aluminum and tin cans; plastic containers #1 - 5 and #7; cardboard boxes and cartons from items such as milk, juice, soup, crackers, cream, beans, water, broth and wine; and paper products such as newspaper, catalogs, magazines, office paper and phone books.

FCC SA, which handles recycling in Dallas and other Texas cities, will move its corporate headquarters to Houston from The Woodlands.



FOMENTO DE CONSTRUCCIONES Y CONTRATAS, S.A.



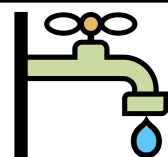
VCCA Citizens Patrol Citizen Patrol had eight patrollers that did 162 hours of walking and driving patrol in December! Bob Costantini led the way with 89 hours, followed by Brenda Rojas with 16 and Tom Hix with 15.5. Thank you all for your service, - David Hoyer, CP Coordinator
PS: Anyone wanting to be a patroller, send me a email at davidhoyer@sbcglobal.net

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



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