

vccahouston.org

PO Box 130891
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January 2018

CIVIC ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

HAPPY NEW YEAR

Newsletter Published Monthly September thru June
Vermont Commons Civic Association
PO Box 130891, Houston, TX 77219
Issue No. 81

January 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 January 8th at 6:30pm.



VCCA Happy Hour — January 8th at 6:30 PM

Date: Monday, January 8th, 2018

Time: 6:30 pm. **Location:** Fuzzy's Taco Shop, 2015 W Gray St, Suite J, (right behind La Madeleine, east along Peden Street).

The speaker from the City of Houston, Public Works & Engineering that was planned for the January VCCA meeting had to re-schedule for a later date. However, the regular monthly VCCA happy hour will convene on our regular schedule on January 8th. Come ring in the new year with your friends and neighbors.



VCCA Christmas Lights and Decoration Contest

Residents in Vermont Commons enjoy their yards and gardens and many take special efforts to make them look festive for the Christmas season by adding colorful displays of lights and decorations. VCCA volunteers walked the neighborhood to view the wonderful displays and voted on the best in several categories as indicted below.

The selection took place after December 20th and

winners to be listed in the January newsletter so look on the web to see

who was selected. (The selection was too late for the win-page (vccahouston.org))



VCCA Holiday Party

Sixty joyous residents of VCCA and Park Civic attended the Holiday Party at Churrasco's. The food was delicious, the room was full of laughter and all had a great time. If you were unable to attend this year, hope you will make plans to be there in 2018.



Tess Says:

*Be sure to pick up after your dog. It is the neighborly thing to do and it is the law.
Wag more, bark less !*

VCCA COFFEE

Monthly VCCA/Park Civic COFFEE at La Madeleine French Bakery and Café at 2047 West Gray, on January 3rd (the first Wednesday each month) at 10:00am.



Street Awareness and Safety from Officer Pate

You MUST be aware of your surroundings at all times.

- Observe vehicles: colors, makes, models, damages, stickers, plates.
- Make note of people: race, size, weight, height, hat, shirt, pants, shoes, cap, walk, accent. Make mental notes.

You have to pay attention and make it a HABIT. Because if you don't, you may become a statistic. If you are walking your dog, or just walking, don't be afraid to cross the street if someone is walking towards you. Don't feel bad, you may be the nicest person and don't want to hurt their feelings by crossing the street. You are just taking precautions to protect yourself. Don't feel bad. Your safety is first.

Think about the "what ifs" and what would you do. You first see somebody from a distance, they are walking to-

wards you. You are thinking, "they may ask for money, directions, or something." Think and be prepared on what your going to say or do, before they get to you. They may not even ask you anything, they may be just walking by, but you are still prepared for the what ifs. The first words out of their mouth, you could say, "DON'T BOTHER ME" and keep walking. Don't let him talk and you listen and you fall into a scam. Be prepared. If you walk with ear phones or the phone to your ear, you are surely not paying attention to you surroundings. DON'T BE A VICTIM.

This information I'm giving you is to help you be aware. It can't stop a criminal from making you a victim. You have to be aware of everything around you. Take these tips and use them. Think of the WHAT IFs. I think that is very important in being prepared for what to do in certain circumstances. Be Prepared. IT'S A MUST!

Constable Patrol Report

The Constable Patrol Committee will have the required annual membership meeting on February 6th at the Multi-Purpose Center on West Grey. There will be an election of all new board members.

Board positions available:

- President
- Security liaison
- Treasury
- Membership



Without new leaders stepping up the program will not continue after May 2018.

An email will be sent the first of the year to all present members asking for nominations for the above mentioned positions. The nominations will be presented for vote at the annual meeting.

The Constable Patrol Committee anticipates a small increase from the present \$350 a year to \$375 a year. This fee increase covers the percentage increase from the county on next year's contracts. It also includes the additional cost of the two full time deputies patrolling our neighborhoods.

The program is very beneficial to the neighborhood. Please volunteer and do your part to support the organization.

Editorial. There are over 2,000 residents in the combined neighborhoods of Vermont Commons, Lewisdale, and Park Civic. There are only 366 households who are members of the Constable Patrol. The existence of the Constable Patrol has caused a decrease in the amount of crime in the neighborhood. Now that there are two full-time deputies for our neighborhood, response time is much quicker. Please consider joining. The membership fee decreases as more residents join. And, more deputies can be hired. It would be great to have a deputy in the neighborhood 24 hours a day. Go to www.vcpatrol.com for more information and to join.

Did you know it's illegal to park

- ✗ ...Blocking a sidewalk



VCCA Treasurer's Report - December 2017

Beginning Balance (A)		\$ 5,478.12
Income		
Advertising	\$400.00	
Dues Received in November	\$2,670.00	
Randall's Good Neighbor Program	\$31.73	
Total Revenue (B)	\$3,101.73	
Sub Total A + B		\$ 8,579.85
Expenses		
November Newsletter	\$566.00	
National Night Out Signs	\$222.56	
Holiday Party Signs	\$222.56	
Holiday Party Deposit	\$400.00	
Sub Total (C)	\$1,411.12	\$ 1,411.12
Balance = A+B-C		\$ 7,168.73
Pending Payments (Dec Newsletter)	-\$566.00	
Holiday Party	-\$1,392.21	
Subtotal	-\$1,958.21	
Deposit - Holiday Party Door Fees	\$570.00	
Net Funds Available		\$5,780.52

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

Test Your Parking Knowledge

1. If a vehicle is parked in your driveway, it's legal to block the sidewalk.

- A. Yes, because my garage is full
- B. Yes, we have more than two cars
- C. No, this is a safety hazard

2. How far are you required to park from a fire hydrant?

- A. 5 feet
- B. 10 feet
- C. 15 feet

3. There is an intersection ahead; how far from it should you park?

- A. 10 feet
- B. 20 feet
- C. A car length

4. A car is parked 10 feet from a stop sign. Is it legally parked?

- A. Yes
- B. No

5. If a car is parked within 18 in. of the curb, it does not matter which direction it is facing.

- A. True
- B. False

6. If the car can still get out, you can park at the curve or apron part of a driveway.

- A. True
- B. False

Check you answers at:
www.houstontx.gov/parking/solving-the-parking-puzzle.pdf

Native Coral Honeysuckle (*Lonicera sempervirens*) is not aggressive like its cousin the exotic Japanese honeysuckle that smothers everything in its path. Reddish green stems anchor the dark green leaves to form a shrub-like appearance. The leaves clasp the stem. Coral Honeysuckle decorates fences and arbors with elongated red trumpet-shaped flowers with yellow centers. The flowers bloom throughout the year and attract hummingbirds, especially in the winter months. Birds eat the clusters of red or orange berries that appear in September through October. Birds have also been known to nest inside the vine thicket. Coral Honeysuckle can take any kind of soil: sand, loam or clay, even poor drainage. It likes morning sun and afternoon shade. If it gets full sun be sure to shade the roots with plants or rocks.

Passionflower vine (*Passiflora incarnata*) has three-inch lavender blooms that are beautiful and, intricate. The flower has numerous wavy filaments that spread out like a lacy parasol. The bloom period is April to September. The medium to dark green leaves are deeply three lobed and are the larval host plant for the colorful (orange with small silver spots) Gulf Fritillary butterfly. The deciduous passionflower will get 10 to 20 feet tall. The fruit looks like a small melon, about four inches, and is yellow-orange when ripe. The fruit can be eaten raw or made into a drink or jelly.

Yellow Passionflower vine (*Passiflora lutea*) has similar flowers: 1 inch cream yellow to greenish yellow. The bloom period is May through September. Yellow Passionflower is a much more delicate vine, reaching a height of about 10 feet with soft, pale green leaves, barely three lobed and wider than long. The fruit is a blue-black berry.

Best Native Vines for the Houston Area

Trumpet Creeper (*Campsis radicans*) is a vigorous and woody vine, able to climb tall trees and cover fences. Often called trumpet vine or hummingbird vine, it produces orange-red trumpet flowers all summer. Hummingbirds flock to the blooms. The dark green composite leaves, orange flowers, and long seed pods add different textures to the landscape.

Trumpet creeper grows in a variety of moist soils, in partial shade to full sun conditions. A variety of cultivars have been developed from the native species and are less aggressive.

Carolina Jessamine (*Gelsium sempervirens*) is an evergreen, high climbing vine with long narrow leaves. Carolina Jessamine is spectacular in winter, featuring bright yellow trumpet blooms with a spicy fragrance that last throughout February and March. It can grow in sand, loam or clay with poor drainage.

Crossvine (*Bignonia capreolata*) is another hummingbird attractor. The spring trumpet blooms are brick-red on the outside and yellow inside. It can grow in shade or sun.

Texas Native Grapevines (*Vitis species*) are great food and habitat sources for birds. Grape vines, which are attractive additions to the landscape, are also useful for providing shade. Common Texas grapes vines include the Mustang Grape, the Muscadine Grape, the Riverbank Grape and the Graybark Grape. Fifteen grape species are native to Texas.

Information provided by the Native Plant Society of Texas - Houston Chapter. If you would like more information on Texas natives, we offer monthly speaker/slide programs, field trips, a newsletter, and books to purchase. Meetings the third Thursday of most months. Check the website for more information: www.npsot.org/houston

VCCA Citizens Patrol Citizen Patrol had nine patrollers do 122 hours of driving and walking in November. Top patrollers were Lillian and Jim Skogsberg, each with 31 hours and Rob Fuller with 16 hours. We did have an incident which may serve to educate. A passing stranger tried to take advantage of my wife as she parked her car in our garage. She faced him but slowly backed up screaming, "I need you to get back," repeatedly, which scared him off. Happy Holidays to all, - David Hoyer

Send news, notices, photos, and editorials, to vcca.newsletter@gmail.com. Submissions are due the 15th of the month preceding the newsletter.

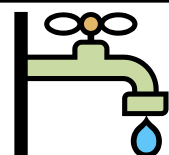
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