

Commonwealth Comments

New Web Address - www.commonwealthcivic.com

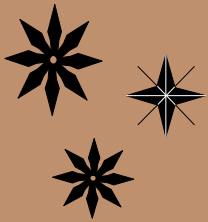
Inside This Issue



Next Teen Band Night
Page two

Fort Bend ISD Bond Referendum
Page three

Women's Club Social
Page seven



The Commonwealth Civic Association wishes you a Happy, Healthy, Prosperous New Year!



Commonwealth Comments,
3909 St. Michaels Ct.
Sugar Land, Texas 77479
Tel: 281-265-4556
email:
newsletter@commonwealth-civic.com

The Commonwealth was alive with lights for the holiday season.

Decorations abound in all colors, shapes and sizes.

We couldn't find a street that didn't celebrate the season!

The 11th Annual Holiday Decorating Contest was held in December and the winners are:

Most Original

4627 St. Michaels Ct.
Greg, Donna, Meredith
and Matthew Meece



Best Theme

Andover Court

Kids' Favorite

5102 Cambridge
Don and Ann Westbrook

Congratulations to all and thank you for participating!

Did you make it to the Annual Holiday Party?

If you were unable to attend, you really missed out. There was plenty of fun and good cheer and a special appearance by the man of the hour. Don't miss out next year. Make sure to mark your calendar as soon as the date is announced!

A \$100.00 gift certificate was presented to the home decorating contest winners.

See photos inside this issue of Commonwealth Comments (pages five and eight).



Griffin Head Contest Winners

We are very pleased to announce the winners of our newsletter/web site Griffin Head hidden graphics contest. The first three residents to locate the hidden graphics were:



Each of these residents received a \$25.00 gift certificate to the AMC movie theater.

Our thanks to everyone who responded and we hope to be able to sponsor another contest later this spring!

Dues are due!

Don't forget that Civic Association dues are considered overdue if not received in the office of Crest Management by January 31, 2003. Interest begins to accrue on February 1, 2003.

Budget information is available in this newsletter.

Commonwealth Civic Association dues were lowered to \$625.00!!!!

Community Awareness Corner

Mary Westbrook has chosen March for the second **Commonwealth Teen Band Night**. If you are interested in helping Mary make arrangements for an evening of entertainment for Commonwealth teens, please give her a call at 281-980-3511.

Last fall's band night was an overwhelming success and the kids are really looking forward to a repeat. There was plenty of food and drink and the music of two local bands. A great wholesome evening for the kids.

Mary can't do this without the assistance of other residents. The more help she has, the more successful our Teen Band Night will be. Let's not disappoint our teens!



The Landscape Company reports that there is a problem with people throwing trash and debris over fences on to the Levee and common areas. This practice is costly to the association and hazardous not only to our neighbors who may be walking in these areas, but also to the landscape workers themselves. Some of the debris being tossed over fences can damage the mowers used in the community. The expense of repairing this machinery is then borne by the community.

Please dispose of your trash and refuse in the usual way... DO NOT throw it on to association property.



A new bike rack was recently installed at the Knightsbridge tennis courts. Please use it!



If you have not yet removed your Christmas decorations, please do so immediately.

You will soon be in violation of the deed restrictions.



In an effort to be proactive in keeping our residents abreast of events that directly impact our community, The Commonwealth Civic Association maintains a web page, updated by residents Paula and Charles Stansell, and overseen by the Association. (You can visit the web page at www.commonwealth-civic.com) .In order to be even more effective, the Association has initiated a Commonwealth *e-mail Alert* available to all residents who wish to sign up.

It is important to note that the Association will **NOT** be sharing these email addresses with any commercial ventures and **NO ADVERTISING** (or jokes!!!) will be forwarded. This email network is **STRICTLY** for alerting/providing information for our residents regarding matters that the Association feels is important to the daily lives of Commonwealth residents.

If you are interested in being added to this list, please send an email to: commonwealth@Stansellweb.com

We have recently experienced a few problems with our website. The Association is aware of the problems and is currently researching alternate servers.

This may result in a web address change for us.

Please watch for the new address in our March/April newsletter

Members of The Commonwealth Civic Association Board of Directors have attended several meetings with the developer of the Riverstone community being built behind our neighborhood. It is the opinion of this board that Riverstone will be a quality development and that the developer is working very hard to keep us up to date on how Riverstone's plans affect us and our neighborhood. We will continue to monitor Riverstone's plans and will keep the community advised.

DUES ARE DUE!!!!

Don't forget your honey -
Valentines Day - February 14



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Henry Delclos, D.D.S.

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Fort Bend ISD News

Bond Referendum

The Fort Bend ISD Board of Trustees recently voted to approve a **\$399.4 million** bond referendum to be held on Saturday, February 1, 2003. The scope of the bond referendum was determined by a large committee of parents and community members that spent about six months carefully studying data and district recommendations.

There are three major components to the bond. \$ 201.8 million of the bond money is designated for new facilities to relieve overcrowding and address the tremendous growth of the district. There are four elementary schools, two middle schools and a high school included in the bond package. These bonds will be paid back over a 25 year period.

\$140.6 million of the bond money will be used to rebuild, remodel, and update our aging facilities. Campuses targeted for rebuilding are E. A. Jones Elementary, Quail Valley Elementary and Missouri City Middle Schools. This portion of the bond issue will also be repaid over 25 years.

The final \$57 million will be used for instructional technology infrastructure, school buses, and library upgrades district-wide. The bonds sold for school buses will be paid back over a 10 year period. The bonds for technical instructional infrastructure will be paid back over 5 years.

The public is invited to a Town Hall meeting scheduled for Thursday, January 16, 7 p.m. at Dulles High School. The evening's topic is the bond referendum.

If you have questions on the bond referendum, you may contact the Community Relations Department or the Superintendent's Office at 281-634-1000.

Early voting on the proposal will take place January 15 - January 28. The early voting site closest to The Commonwealth is at the FBISD administration building on the corner of Austin Parkway and Lexington Blvd. (behind the mall). **On February 1, Commonwealth voters will vote at Fort Settlement Middle School.**

Complete information on the bond may be accessed on the school district's web site at: www.fortbendisd.com or by way of: www.commonwealth-civic.com.

School Traffic Congestion



As you have noticed, the traffic congestion at Commonwealth Elementary is a real challenge for everyone involved. Neither the school, nor the Association, has control over the streets in our community, so please follow the school's directive for pick up and drop off of children. The school

administration has given much thought to the safest way for children to enter and exit the building. Practice patience and please try to work out a carpool with friends and neighbors- it will help tremendously if we can cut the number of vehicles at the school.



- Fort Bend ISD news
continued on page five -

Association Nuts & Bolts

Deed Restrictions/Modifications/Architectural
Changes corner

It is the responsibility of the homeowner who intends to make an exterior modification to first submit a modification application and have it approved before the work begins. This protects the homeowner from potential expensive re-work to meet the civic association guidelines. In addition, the homeowner is required to apply for, and meet, all city building requirements. Modification Application forms are available from Crest Management or from our web page, www.commonwealth-civic.com.

Considering having a pool installed?

If you are considering having a pool installed, please CUT AND SAVE the following information. The MDR committee has put together this information to assist anyone submitting an application for a pool.. This is provided in an effort to reduce the number of applications that are returned for lack of information. **Please note changes and additions.**

1. Obtain application from Crest Management (or www.commonwealth-civic.com)
2. Fill out application **completely** and return to Crest Management.
3. Attach a copy of your plan with the pool and deck location and dimensions indicated.
4. Indicate on plat: site access and all drain lines as well as location of all pool equipment.
5. Backwash and drain lines must drain to the street.
6. Blueprint of pool must indicate schedule 40 PVC used for all drain lines.
7. Pool and deck must be at least 5 feet from side and rear lot lines and should not encroach on any easements.
8. Pool and deck must be within building setback lines.
9. See 9.0 in your Architectural Control Guidelines for more details.

A deposit, if needed, must be received by Crest Management before authorization for building can be given.



Happy New Year!!!



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- FBISD News cont'd from page three -

School Finance Legislation

While the legislature is scheduled to begin caucusing right after the New Year, the education community believes that no serious discussion will be given to revamping the Robin Hood method of school finance until the next biennium. The state share of funding education is at its lowest level ever (41%).

At this time, school districts across the state are facing serious financial challenges as they begin their budgeting processes. To meet rising costs and increasing standards, districts have accessed more and more of their available fiscal capacity, by raising local tax rates.

By law, the maintenance and operation portion of the tax levy is capped at \$1.50. The M & O portion of the tax rate is the portion which pays for all district operational expenses. It is expected that over 40% of all school districts in the state are, or very soon will be, at that cap. This presents a tremendous challenge for school districts. When districts reach the maximum, they must cut programs and lay off personnel to continue to meet rising costs, such as higher teacher salaries, health care benefits and the multitude of state mandates. Many districts in Texas will be forced to cut all but core courses (i.e. athletics, fine arts, etc.) Fort Bend ISD is **NOT** expected to be at that point at this time.

It is not too late to fix the problem. The Texas Association of School Boards has mounted a campaign to lobby legislators for increased funding to offset the high cost of the escalating number of mandates from the state. School board members across the state are participating in this effort.

FBISD is just entering its' budgeting process. Recommendations regarding which cuts to make will be presented to the board of trustees beginning this spring. Budget workshops are open to the public.

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The Commonwealth Thanks Taylor Woodrow Communities (developer of Avalon) for their coordination of the improvements to the landscaping at Fort Settlement Middle School last fall. Our children are fortunate to be able to attend schools where the community is so Caring!



2002 Holiday Party goes

Below: Surprise Guest Mayor David Wallace with Civic Association Board President Tom Woolley and Vice President, Zelma Loeb





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Ken Rainey



The City of Sugar Land last month celebrated the opening of three new softball fields, and a concession/restroom/press box building at Imperial Park located at Matlage Way and U.S. Highway 90A in "old" Sugar Land. The park was formerly referred to as the girls' softball complex. The facility is 44 acres with newly added parking and enhanced landscaping. The park also includes picnic tables and a playground. Imperial Park will ultimately include 11 softball fields and a jogging trail.

Design and construction of the new Sugar Land City Hall is expected to take 25 months. It will be an integral part of the new Town Center development at Highway 6 and Highway 59.

Eight lanes of Highway 59 from Highway 6 into southwest Houston, are expected to be operational by the spring of 2003! Eventually the eight lanes will reach south to the Grand Parkway.

The Sugar Land Police Department, in conjunction with the Sugar Land Chapter of the AARP, sponsors a driving course for motorists 50 years old and older. This is an 8 hour course and consists of classroom instruction from 9:00 a.m. until 1:00 p.m. on two consecutive mornings. One class will be offered January 13-14 and another will be offered May 12-13. You may enroll in the course by contacting Bill Gallagher at 281-980-0211 or via the Sugar Land Police Traffic Unit at 281-275-2523. Enrollment is \$10.00 per person. Graduates are eligible for insurance premium reduction.

(This course is NOT certified for traffic ticket dismissal)

If it didn't occur to you when we changed the clocks back in the fall, please take a moment to check your smoke alarm batteries today!
The life you save may be your own.



The Literacy League of Fort Bend County is once again extending an invitation to all book lovers to attend the third annual Book and Author Dinner on Sunday, January 19 at Sweetwater Country Club. Numerous Texas authors have been invited to participate. All will sell and sign copies of their latest books and will be available to talk with fans.

Tickets are \$50 each. For more information, please call 281-240-8181.
Proceeds from this event will be used to further services to functionally illiterate adults.



The Commonwealth Civic Association does not investigate, qualify, or certify this newsletter's advertisers. The business of each advertiser is independent of the Association.



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Commonwealth Women's Club
invites all Commonwealth women to join in

Thursday, February 27
7:00 p.m.
for a
Pajama Party

For more information on the Women's club
or the Pajama Party, contact Susan at
281-980-3290 or Donna at 281-265-7108.



*Whodunnit? - Murder Mystery suspects at the
October Women's Club social*

Due to problems experienced over the past few
months, the Association has chosen to move to a
new web address.

Please be sure to bookmark The
Commonwealth's new web page

www.commonwealthcivic.com

Alligator Sighting

In November, the Association was made aware of an alligator sighting around Avondale. The staff at Commonwealth Elementary School reported the sighting to the Fort Bend ISD police department.

The animal control officer of Sugar Land shared the following information. "Alligators are known to inhabit almost every waterway in Sugar Land. Alligators will spend the majority of their time in the water, however they do regularly wander out of their habitat in search of food, or to sun themselves, or for nesting purposes." If you spot an alligator, the animal control officer suggests that you notify the Sugar Land Police Department at 281-275-2552.

The police department will dispatch animal control personnel, and a police officer to the location of the alligator sighting. Residents should NEVER attempt to capture the alligator (or any wild animal) and are advised to leave the area until the police and animal control personnel arrive.

For information on animal control services, you may call 281-275-2597.



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Upcoming Meetings

Landscape Committee Meeting

Meets once a month. Call Steve O'Hara at 281-265-4485 for the next meeting date and time.

Modifications Committee Meeting

Third Tuesday of each month - 7:30 p.m. at the Clubhouse

Modifications to be considered at the monthly meeting must be received by Crest on or before the 2nd Monday of each month.

Board Meeting

Fourth Thursday of each month - 6 p.m. at the Clubhouse

CAT Meeting

Third Thursday of February, March, June, October & November
7:00 p.m.
at the Clubhouse

Upcoming Events:

FBISD Bond Referendum Election - February 1
Happy Valentines Day!
Teen Band Night - in March



*Please patronize our advertisers!
They offset the cost of this newsletter*

One of the lesser known assets of The Commonwealth is a lady by the name of Maura Ritchie who has done an outstanding job chairing the **Welcome Committee** for the past several years. The Welcome Committee regularly receives a list of new Commonwealth residents and delivers a little bag of goodies to them. The bag holds a wealth of information on Commonwealth and the surroundings. It also holds business "give aways" with helpful information such as important phone numbers and dates, etc. Maura has been assisted by Roseann Pisano but the two ladies are looking for additional committee members to join the fun.

If you enjoy meeting new people, consider calling Maura at 281-980-6347 for more information on this volunteer opportunity.

If you are an advertiser interested in contributing to the bags, give Maura a call!

Attention Advertisers!!!

This newsletter is published in January, March, May, July, September and November. The deadline for each issue is the first day of the previous month. Ads and payment must be received by that date. All Ads must be mailed to **Commonwealth Comments, 3909 St. Michaels Ct., Sugar Land, Texas 77479** and must include a check for full payment. Ad rates begin at \$50.00 per issue.

If you have any questions, call Sue at 281-265-4556.

Special Interest Groups

The Commonwealth Women's Club

The Commonwealth Women's Club is open to all women residing in The Commonwealth. The club's purpose is to stimulate civic, philanthropic, educational, and cultural interest in the community, as well as foster a cordial welcome to new residents. Volunteer outreach is available to those who are interested. If you are interested in this group, or would like more information, please contact Susan at 281-980-3290 or Donna at 281-265-7108.

Hispanic Club

If you speak Spanish and are interested in joining this informal group, contact Lucy at 281-265-2610, for information, date and location.

Moms in Touch

Moms in Touch is a group of mothers who meet for one hour each week to pray for their children and the school they attend. If you are interested in joining us, please contact: Kathy Galvan (Commonwealth Elementary) 281-565-7696; Louisa Chiasson (Clements High School) 281-565-6849; Mary Marwil (Elkins High School) at 281-265-0877 or Kathie Waldheim (Fort Settlement Middle School) at 281-265-2739.

If information about your group is incorrect or outdated, please advise Sue at 281-265-4556

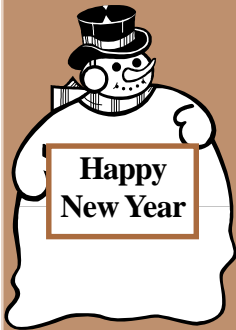
If you are interested in publicizing a Commonwealth-based special interest group, give us a call.

www.commonwealthcivic.com

Crest Management Service

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Association Information

Clubhouse & Pool Rentals
Crest Management 281-579-0761

Neighborhood Watch
Nancy Castellvi 281-265-2769

Welcome Committee
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Roseann Pisano

Landscape Committee
Steve O'Hara 281-265-4485

Modifications & Deed Restrictions
Dan Lumpkin 281-265-6709

Tennis Committee
Cindy Facker 281-207-5129

L.I.D. Representative
Mike Homeyer 281-980-3794

Newsletter email address:
newsletter@commonwealth-civic.com

Important Phone Numbers

Crest Management	281-579-0761
Police (Non-Emergency)	281-275-2500
Animal Control	281-275-2596
Fire Department	281-491-0852
Water & Street	281-275-2750
Trash Collection	281-275-2772
Recycling Coordinator	281-275-2770
Street Lights (HL& P)	281-342-5441
Newsletter	281-265-4556
Police & Fire Emergency	9-1-1

Deadline for next
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February 1, 2003

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