

# Commonwealth Comments

A NEWSLETTER FOR THE RESIDENTS OF THE COMMONWEALTH

November/December, 2006

[www.commonwealthcivic.com](http://www.commonwealthcivic.com)



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*It's that time of year when we give Thanks for  
our blessings!*

*The Commonwealth Civic Association would like  
to thank our wonderful advertisers for their con-  
tinued support and wish our residents a happy,  
healthy Holiday Season full of health, wealth,  
love and peace.*

## Commonwealth Holiday Party

Celebrate this holiday season with family, friends and neighbors  
at

**The Commonwealth Clubhouse**

**Monday, December 11**

**6:30 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.**

**Always a success!  
Always a great time!  
For the whole family!**



**Bring your camera  
just in case a special  
someone drops in!**

**Please note that there will be no  
Commonwealth Homeowner Association Home Decorating Contest  
this holiday season!**

Visit [www.commonwealthcivic.com](http://www.commonwealthcivic.com) for more current information.

Association  
Board of Directors

Tom Wooley  
President  
281-265-1734

Steve O'Hara  
Director  
281-265-4485

Virginia Mack  
Director  
281-207-5200

Open Position

Open Position

## Commonwealth Women's Club

It's never too late to join!

*The September Champagne Social was a huge success.  
Members visited with old friends and made new ones!  
Don't miss out on our next event!*



## December 14 Ornament Exchange

15 Leigh Ct.

7 p.m.



Don't be shy -- drop in for the evening or for just a few minutes.

For more information/details call 281-265-3157

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*'Tis The Season To Be Jolly!*

As the holiday season sets in, the criminal element gets active. Be sure to take the necessary precautions to protect yourself and your family.

**Don't invite trouble!**

- Be sure to predetermine your route so you have a good idea where you're headed when you go shopping in unfamiliar areas.
- Be careful not to flash your cash!
- Be sure that you retrieve your credit card and your receipt before leaving the store.
- Take your packages out to your car as you shop so that you don't get "overloaded" with shopping bags.
- Always put your purchases in the trunk or in a place where they cannot be seen by passersby.
- Do not leave wrapped gifts in plain sight of windows - even in your home.

*And.....always keep a close eye on your children as you shop!*

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**Association Committees**

- Clubhouse Rentals  
*Cindy O'Hara* 281-265-4485
- Pool Rentals  
*Crest Management* 281-579-0761
- Welcome Committee  
*Gwen Dahlin* 713-304-1048
- Landscape Committee  
*Steve O'Hara* 281-265-4485
- Modifications & Deed Restrictions  
*Dan Lumpkin* 281-265-6709
- Tennis Committee  
*Conrith Davis* 713-443-9069
- L.I.D. Representative  
*Mike Homeyer* 281-980-3794

**Commonwealth Alert**

Be sure to sign up for our Email Alert system.

This is a service of The Commonwealth Civic Association in conjunction with residents Paula and Charles Stansell, who oversee the Association's web page:  
[www.commonwealthcivic.com](http://www.commonwealthcivic.com).

**NOTE:** The Association will **NOT** be sharing these email addresses with any commercial venture and **NO ADVERTISING** (or jokes!) will be forwarded to residents. This email network is **STRICTLY** for alerting/providing information regarding timely matters that the Association feels are important to our residents.

You may sign up by sending an email to: [commonwealth@stansellweb.com](mailto:commonwealth@stansellweb.com) please include your name and contact information.

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## **Modification And Deed Restrictions**

### Survey Required For Modification Application

Wonder why a copy of your survey is required when making application for improvements to your home? Ever think that the Modifications Committee is just making it difficult to apply? There are several answers. The short answer: The submission of the survey is required in the “Covenants, Conditions and Restrictions for the Commonwealth” (a.k.a., Deed Restrictions). More importantly, it can help you to identify restrictions that affect your property, and to convey to the Modifications Committee your intention concerning the placement of improvements.

The survey is a single document that shows several important pieces of information about your property. It will show the location of your building lines and easements that affect your property, as well as identifying and showing the location and type of fences that surround your property. You should have received a copy of your survey when you closed on your home.

There are a number of requirements that are common for all properties. However, some things can vary by neighborhood within the Commonwealth (e.g., Bridgewater, Sutton Park, Estates). These differences can be found in supplemental Amendment to the Covenants, but would also be shown on a survey. For example, the location of side and rear building lines can vary between areas but can easily be found on the survey.

A number of potential modifications have specific requirements in relation to building lines and property lines. Use of the survey allows a review of dimensions and relative distances. As an example, the survey would be indispensable if you wish to construct an extension to your garage. Your survey will show the existing garage structure in relation to the building lines on your lot. If a garage sits 10 feet from the building line, you will not be able to add a 20' extension. In this example, the survey will help you to understand quickly what can and what cannot be done, and, would be the starting point for review by the Modifications Committee.

Another example of the use of the survey would be in planning a pool in your back yard. Many homes have utility easements at the rear or side of the property. Since you cannot encroach upon a utility easement, knowing the location of the easements can help you to determine a suitable placement for the pool while avoiding the easement.

Instead of being a part of a complicated application, think of the survey as a helpful document that contains a significant amount of information that would otherwise be very difficult or time-consuming to obtain.

*This article submitted by Dan Lumpkin,  
Chairman of the Modifications and Deed  
Restrictions Committee.*



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*Thank you for your years of  
support. Have a wonderful  
holiday season!*

*The Virginia Mack Team*



The Virginia Mack Team

**Virginia Mack,** ABR, CBR, CRS, GRI

The Commonwealth newsletter is published six times per year by  
The Commonwealth Civic Association. It is distributed to over 1100 homes and other interested parties.

Ads are available at very reasonable rates.

If you would like information on advertising in this newsletter, contact Sue at:

[newsletter@commonwealthcivic.com](mailto:newsletter@commonwealthcivic.com)

or call 281-265-6681.

## Dress Up Your Eyes for the Holidays



Planning a new look for the holiday season? Don't forget your eyes.

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## Commonwealth L.I.D. Update

The new fiscal year for the First Colony Levee Improvement District #2 (F.C.L.I.D. #2) begins October 1st. The Board of Directors has just enacted a new tax rate to meet the budget requirements for next year. The new tax rate will be \$ 0.315 per \$100 valuation. This is a \$ 0.06 decrease from last year's rate of \$ 0.375 per \$100 valuation. The overall tax rate of \$ 0.315 is made up of \$ 0.10 for maintenance and operations and \$ 0.215 for debt service.

The Board was able to reduce the tax rate for several reasons. One of the most important is the completion of the bulkhead project on our community waterways. This was an annual \$200,000.00 expense that is no longer required. Also, the property valuations for The Commonwealth have increased to over \$ 346,000,000.00 this year. The property value 10 years ago was at \$ 239,000,000.00. Additionally, the tax collection rate for the Commonwealth is over 99.6% which is far and above what most other levee districts are able to collect

The bond debt for our Levee District is scheduled to be paid off over the next eight years. Because of the financial strength of our community and, therefore, the LID, we have had annual reductions in the debt service tax rate. The Board was able to again reduce the debt service rate for next year to \$ 0.215; down a penny from this year.

The F.C.L.I.D. #2 is working with The Commonwealth Civic Association to improve the overall appearance of our common areas and functionality of our flood control and drainage systems. Plans are in the works to improve the appearance of our pump station next year and perform some thorough maintenance and clean-up. Currently, we are working on repairs to the concrete drainage structures that lead from the Commonwealth to the Brazos River. This work should be completed shortly.

Perhaps the most important project that the Levee District is working on is the Recertification of our Levee by FEMA. This year FEMA determined that the entire Brazos River and Oyster Creek flood plain needed to be reviewed. As a result, new hydrology studies were performed and new requirements and standards were enacted by FEMA. To maintain our flood protection

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certification, the F.C.L.I.D. #2 is in the process of retrieving a large number of historical documents and we are performing some civil engineering surveys on the levees. These historical documents and engineering reports will then be forwarded on to FEMA. The F.C.L.I.D. #2 Board does not anticipate any problems recertifying our Levee. The standards used in the original construction design were in excess of the minimum standards and the initial indication from FEMA is that the previous flood plain design levels that our levee was built to will not be changed significantly, if at all.

*Article submitted by L.I.D. Director  
Ron Frerich*



## Holiday in the Plaza: Celebrating Cultural Diversity

**Presented by the Fort Bend Education Foundation**

**December 2, 2006  
3:00 PM - 6:00 PM**

This community event will celebrate the tremendous diversity of culture in Fort Bend ISD. Come out to the Town Square Plaza to enjoy a wide variety of entertainment by the students and learn how different cultures celebrate their special holidays and traditions.

Pictured on the right are the members of the planning committee.

**Thomas P. Arnold, O.D.**  
**Melissa C. Moeller, O.D.**  
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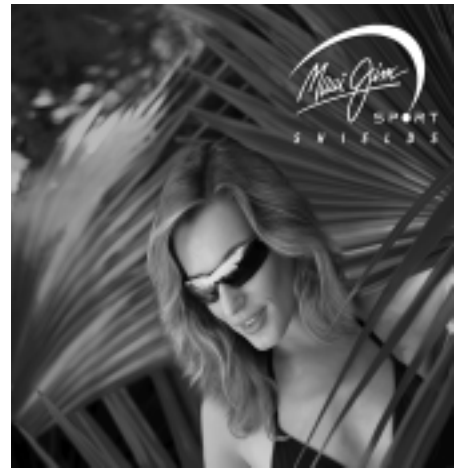
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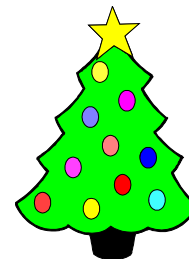
*The Holiday in the Plaza Planning Committee includes several Commonwealth residents. Members of the committee are: Front Row L to R Lina Sabouni, Ke Chen, Yoshiko Brotherton, Sweeny Kwan, Sonal Bhuchar; Event Chair, Lillian Poats FBEF Board President, Abla Amin, and Daniel Nwadel. Middle Row: Ritsuko Teran, Roberta Owen, Shefali Jhaveri, Nomita Bajwa, Claudine Kwan. Back Row, Lucy Gayon, Hillary Goldstein, Jill Curtis, Doris Puig, and Sue Hauenstein.*

**City of Sugar Land Christmas  
Tree Lighting**

**November 30, 2006**

**5:00 PM - 8:00 PM**

This is the event of the holiday season. Come out to Town Square for entertainment, a winter wonderland for the children, a visit from Santa Claus, and the lighting of the Christmas Tree!



**If there is a street light out on your street, please contact CenterPoint Energy at 713-207-2222. You will need to provide the six digit number that is visible on the light pole. CenterPoint will send a crew out to repair the light as soon as possible.**

## Back To School Coffee

The annual 'Back To School - I Survived the Summer Coffee' held in September was very successful. We visited with long-time friends and met some new residents as well.

Thanks to the following for supporting our special events:



**The Commonwealth Civic Association  
Virginia Mack - RE/MAX Southwest  
Cynthia Liska - Cynthia Liska Properties  
Cindy O'Hara  
Sue Hauenstein**

## Fall Lawn Care

Things to do this time of year !

**This is a good time to apply a winterizer type fertilizer to your lawn to keep it green and healthy until the first frost and dormancy.** St. Augustine lawns really do not stop growing in our climate. The top growth does go dormant but the roots will continue to grow and store nutrients for next spring.

Additionally, we have to watch for Brown Patch Fungus activity. It normally is active from Mid August until April. Water only as needed this time of year because over watering lawns causes the fungus to spread. If needed, there are fungicides labeled for this disease. Brown Patch causes brown circular patterns in the lawn. If the outer edges of the circle are orange in color, the fungus is active and spreading. It does not kill the roots of the grass plant but it does cause the grass blades to dye off. The lawn will recover but, depending on the amount of damage, it may take until mid summer to fill back in. Fungicide applications will reduce the spreading of the disease but have to be applied several times at 30 day intervals to minimize the damage.

**The Fall is also a good time to apply Fire Ant controls.** Lawn care companies have products that can be applied now that will give a 12 month guarantee to control Fire Ants.

**TREE AND SHRUB CARE:** This is the best time of year to **apply dormant oil to our trees and shrubs to control any over-wintering insects.** Check hollies and hawthorns for white spots and black sooty mold on the leaves, this is caused by an insect named Scale. Also check azaleas for Lace Bugs under the leaves. The dormant oil will help control this pest. If there are Leaf Spot Fungal problems on hawthorn or Red Tip Photinias it is a good time to apply a fungicide. Insecticides can be used to control any reoccurring insect problems.

Fertilize trees and shrubs in the fall to promote health during winter stresses and to provide nutrients for next spring's early growth and burst of color for your flowering trees and shrubs. This is also the best time of year to plant any new shrubs and perennials. Fall and Winter color, such as pansies, snap dragons, dianthus, and kale, should be installed now. Plant trees in January and February. Mulch all landscape now, with hardwood mulch, to retain moisture and minimize weeds in beds.

Always follow label instructions to make sure you are applying the correct product to accomplish the task at hand. Make sure it is labeled for the insect, disease, weed or other pest that you are trying to control and that it is labeled to be used on the plant you are concerned about.

*Article submitted by Fred Purswell,  
Commercial Manager, Trugreen  
Chemlawn*

**HOA  
MEETING  
INFORMATION**

**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

**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

**Have a safe  
and happy  
Holiday  
Season**

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

**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 (Centerpoint)	713-207-2222
Newsletter	281-265-4556
<b>Police &amp; Fire Emergency</b>	<b>9-1-1</b>

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**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 Mail to **Commonwealth Comments, 3909 St. Michaels Ct., Sugar Land, Texas 77479** and include a check for full payment. Ad rates begin at \$65.00 per issue.

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

Newsletter email address:  
[newsletter@commonwealthcivic.com](mailto:newsletter@commonwealthcivic.com)



Sue Hauenstein  
**the write idea**  
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 Valinda at 281-265-3157.

**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: Debbie Glasscock (Commonwealth Elementary) at 281-980-4118; Kim Newby (Fort Settlement Middle School) at 281-778-9218; Kathy Waldheim (Clements High School) at 281-565-2739; or Jo-Lynn Gill (Elkins High School) at 281-565-3823.

**If information about your group is incorrect or outdated, please advise Sue at 281-265-4556 or [newsletter@commonwealthcivic.com](mailto:newsletter@commonwealthcivic.com).**

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

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

## Crest Management Service

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One Man's Trash is Another Man's Treasure

# Commonwealth Community Garage Sale Saturday, November 18

8 a.m. - noon

Community Garage Sale in the privacy of your own driveway!

Register, by email, today if you wish to be included on the map of participating homes distributed to Garage Sale shoppers at the Clubhouse on the morning of the Garage Sale.

Send your name and address to:

**[ldooley@sugarlandtx.gov](mailto:ldooley@sugarlandtx.gov)**

*There is no cost to Commonwealth residents. Advertising and printing costs are underwritten by  
The Commonwealth Civic Association.*

A huge thank you to Commonwealth resident **Lisa Dooley** who has volunteered to be the point man on our Community Garage Sale! Lisa will ensure that the garage sale is advertised in the Houston Chronicle and the local papers. She will also be sure that, if you contact her before **November 15**, you will be included on the map that is given to interested shoppers.