

# Commonwealth Comments

A newsletter for the residents of The Commonwealth:  
Bridgewater, Commonwealth Estates, Commonwealth Park, Oxford, Sutton Forest, Sutton Park and Sweetwater XII

September/October, 2008

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

A huge thank you to all of the volunteers who helped make our rainy day July 4th celebration a big success! Your assistance was greatly appreciated.

Same time, next year!!!!



## What's Happening in Sugar Land?

Have you ever wondered what goes on at City Hall? Do you know our City Council representatives or how they make decisions? What's the latest in District 4? Find out by attending the upcoming District Town Hall meeting to be held from 6:30-8:30 p.m. at Sugar Land City Hall on September 4.

The District Town Hall meetings offer Council members and residents a chance to meet and talk in person about what's happening in their respective districts. During "Open Mike" residents can ask questions, express concerns or provide input on various topics. Key staff members will be on hand to answer questions and provide information specific to the district. Sugar Land is divided into four districts, with a Council member elected to represent each area. District 4 by Michael Schiff. We are also represented by two At-Large Councilmembers: Tom Abraham and Jacquie Chaumette

Please plan to attend and bring your neighbors.



*Sugar Land Officer Foster oversees installation of Neighborhood Watch Signs in Sutton Park.*

**We did not have a community volunteer step forward this summer to organize our Annual Commonwealth Garage Sale, therefore, a sale supported and underwritten by the Commonwealth Homeowners Association will not take place this fall. If a willing resident contacts the Association in the future, we will notify our residents by way of this newsletter.**

**REMEMBER - Garage Sales are permitted in our community, however, garage sale SIGNS are NOT allowed (per the deed restrictions) and can be removed by any resident upon discovery.**

**You will notice that new signs have been placed in our parks and along our waterways. These areas are reserved for Commonwealth residents and their guests. Police cannot enforce our no trespassing policy unless we have signs in place. While they are visible from the street, we have tried to make the signs as unobtrusive as possible!**

## Commonwealth Civic Association Board of Directors

Steve O'Hara  
President  
281-265-4485

Mark Thompson  
Vice President  
281-313-4337

Virginia Mack  
Secretary  
281-207-5200

Tom Wooley  
Director

OPEN  
Director

*Board Meetings are held on the fourth Thursday of each month at 6 p.m. in the Clubhouse.*

### *Your Association Information*



**Modifications & Deed  
Restrictions Committee**  
*meets the third Tuesday of each month  
- 7:30 p.m. at the Clubhouse*

*Applications must be received in the Crest Management office on or before the 2nd Tuesday of each month to be considered at the monthly meeting. For more information contact Crest Management Service at 281-579-0761.*



**Landscape Committee**  
*meets once a month.  
Contact Steve O'Hara at 281-265-4485  
for the next meeting date and time.*

**Tennis Committee**  
Conrith Davis  
832-326-6202



### **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.



**Welcome Committee**  
Gwen Dahlin  
713-304-1048

**Pool Rentals**  
Greater Houston Pool Management  
713-771-POOL

**L.I.D. Representative**  
Ron Frerich  
281-265-0137



**Clubhouse Rentals**  
Cindy O'Hara  
281-265-4485

### **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 (Centrepont)	713-207-2222
Newsletter	281-265-4556
Police & Fire Emergency	9-1-1

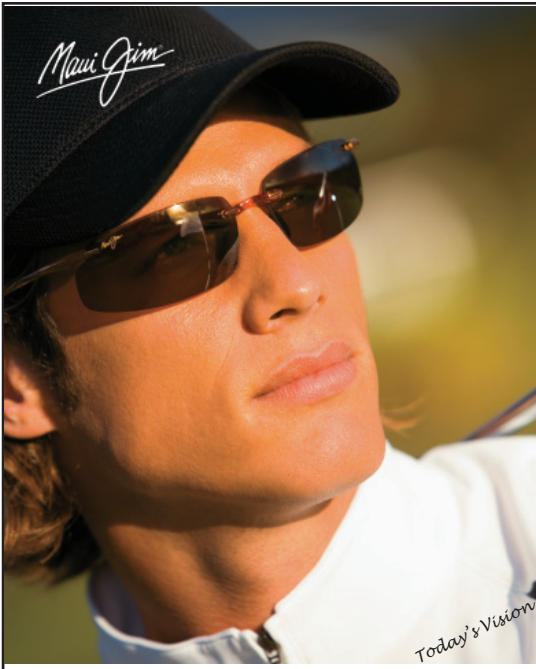
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### **Attention Advertisers!!!**

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. 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)



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**Landscape Tips** by *NATIVE Land Design*  
*Commonwealth's Landscape Maintenance Company*

## Chinch Bugs in St. Augustine Lawns

### IDENTIFYING CINCH BUGS

Expanding, irregular patches of dead or stunted grass surrounded by a halo of yellowing, dying grass often provides the first clue to the presence of chinch bugs. These islands of dying grass tend to increase in size and merge as insect numbers increase. Damage can develop rapidly, especially in sunny locations during hot, dry weather.



Adult southern chinch bugs are small and slender, 1/6 to 1/5 of an inch long. They have black bodies with white wings. Each wing bears a distinctive, triangular black mark. Normally, some of the adults at any given site will have full-sized, functional wings, whereas other individuals will be short-winged and incapable of flight.

In Texas, adult chinch bugs are inactive during the winter. Reproduction begins after the appearance of warm weather in the spring. Under optimal conditions, each female can deposit up to 300 eggs, which hatch in about 2 weeks. The nymphal stage lasts about 30 days (less during hot weather), while the entire life cycle lasts 7 to 8 weeks. This speed of development allows time for three to five chinch bug generations each year. However, as the season progresses generations tend to overlap heavily, with the result that all stages normally are found together.

### PREVENTING CINCH BUGS

Control of chinch bugs starts with proper lawn care. Lawn aeration, proper watering, top-dressing and proper fertilization will reduce the risk of lawn infestation.

St. Augustine grass lawns should be watched closely during the summer for signs of drought stress. The lawn should be watered immediately when edges of grass blades begin to curl, grass fails to spring back quickly when walked on, or the turf takes on a dull bluish-gray color. Due to the variety of soil types and depths in Texas, the amount of water needed will vary. Whenever possible, apply enough water to wet the soil profile to a depth of approximately 6 inches and let it dry out between irrigations. Frequent watering promotes shallow root systems in St. Augustine-grass, making it more susceptible to injury by chinch bugs.

### CONTROLLING CINCH BUGS

There are many products out in the market that can help control the Chinch Bugs for example: Products containing diazinon, chlorpyrifos (Dursban®), or acephate (Orthene®) are suggested for homeowner applications.

### SAFETY PRECAUTIONS

Always wear appropriate clothing when applying pesticides. Read the label to see what protective equipment should be worn. Always check the label for information concerning safe re-entry times.



If you are on our Commonwealth Email Alert List, you are acutely aware of the attempted break in that took place in Commonwealth Estates last month. While this is not the first burglary in our neighborhood, this was a brazen daylight violation of our community. The Commonwealth Civic Association has had a Crime Watch Program for over 15 years, but, because we are a very safe neighborhood, we have grown somewhat complacent.

**Congratulations to Sutton Park residents (under the leadership of Leigh Mattson assisted by Namitha Asthana and Virginia Mack) for showing us how Community Watch should be done!!!!**  
(see related articles below)

## LOOKING FOR A SIGN?

Looking for Neighborhood Crime Watch signs is exactly what Sutton Park residents are doing!

Congratulations to Sutton Park residents, you are officially a Neighborhood Crime Watch Neighborhood!!

Sutton Park has passed the goal of having a minimum of 50% of its homes registered to participate in the Neighborhood Crime Watch Program, thus there will be 4 signs placed at entrances to Sutton Park.

Responsibilities of a good Crime Watch neighbor are:

To be a good neighbor by watching out for one another's property and by reporting suspicious activity to the police. (YOU need to have a heightened awareness for your neighbor's welfare and you should be more than willing to report suspicious activity to the police.) Citizens can be assured that when they report suspicious activity, their name will be held in strictest confidence.

Monthly Crime Prevention and Home Safety meetings will be held on the first Thursday evening of each month at the Knightsbridge Club house at 6:15pm. Our speaker will start at 6:30pm. The meetings are open to all Commonwealth residents.

Meetings are scheduled for:  
September 4, October 2, & November 6, 2008

If you have questions or would like more information about these meetings, please contact Leigh at:  
[Leigh@mattsonrealtor.com](mailto:Leigh@mattsonrealtor.com)

**Crime Prevention/Home Safety  
Meetings - 6:15 p.m.**

**September 4 - Home Safety**  
**Have your home inspected for free and reduce your home insurance up to 20% (alarms, locks, etc.)**

**Sign up to schedule your FREE home inspection.**

**October 2 - Child Safety  
Stranger Danger/Home Alone**

*And don't miss the November 6 meeting -  
**Holiday Safety**  
(how to keep your ID safe while shopping, preventative home thefts.)*

## Crenshaw Landscapes

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Susan M. Delclos, DMD, MDS, PA  
ORTHODONTIST

281-261-2504

2869 Dulles Avenue  
(at Cartwright)

281-265-4177

**Henry Delclos, D.D.S.**  
PEDIATRIC DENTIST

2225 Williams Trace Blvd. Ste. 106

## VANDALISM Report

There have been some reports of petty vandalism in The Commonwealth this summer. Hardly a day goes by when joggers don't see fast food trash, broken beer bottles or 24 packs along the streets. Vandalism in the Yorkshire/Cambridge area has been reported to the police.

We don't know definitively, but do suspect, that this is the doing of local teens, and believe that these events will be curtailed with the start of the school year.

While much vandalism is merely a nuisance, it can be an expensive nuisance for the homeowner's association when property damage is involved.

Please be on the lookout for suspicious, malicious behavior when driving through our community. Take a moment and call the Sugar Land Police Department at 281-275-2500. Your neighbors thank you.

**If you are interested in organizing YOUR neighborhood's Crime Watch participation (Bridgewater, Commonwealth Estates, Commonwealth Park, Oxford, or Sweetwater XII), please touch base with Leigh. She will be happy to assist you in your efforts.**

**Leigh@mattsonrealtor.com**



## Sugar Land Fire Department's Second Annual Open House

Saturday, October 11

10 a.m. - 2 p.m.



The Sugar Land Fire Department's Open House on Saturday, October 11 is an opportunity for citizens to meet their firefighters, talk to SLFD leaders and get a look at the equipment used to keep the City safe.

From 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., the public is encouraged to join SLFD firefighters at the Sugar Land Community Center, 226 Matlage Way, where plenty of activities are planned for people of all ages. And best of all, the event is absolutely free.

"There will be lots of cool door prizes, snacks and most importantly, we plan to have fun," said SLFD Capt. Michael McLemore, of the Community Preparedness Office. "We will have firefighters coming by throughout the event to show off our fire trucks, so remember to bring a camera and take your photo with a professional firefighter or Pluggie, the robot fire hydrant."

Activities planned include:

- Kids Coloring Contest: All children that participate in the coloring contest will win a prize!
- Fire & Life Safety Demonstrations: These will include cooking fire demonstrations, 9-1-1 simulator, portable fire extinguisher demonstration & a dramatic outdoor rescue tool demonstration by our professional firefighters.
- Tours: Guided fire station tours are planned next door at Fire Station #1.
- Informational booths: Learn about the Citizen Fire Academy, the CFA Alumni Organization, the Home Safety Inspection program, the Smoke Alarm Program and the Sugar Land Citizen Emergency Response Team.
- Kids Play & Learn: regularly scheduled play and learn activities for kids between the ages of 4 & 9 years old will be held throughout the day.

SLFD's first Open House last year was a great success! This event is sponsored by the Sugar Land Citizens Fire Academy Alumni Association. Call the SLFD Community Preparedness Office at (281) 275-2859 for more information.

**In addition to new signs around the neighborhood, we have added additional lighting in our parks for security purposes.**

**There is NO OVERNIGHT PARKING in our pool/tennis court parking lots -- violators will find that their vehicles have been removed.**

**Please do not leave vehicles unattended overnight.**



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**Commonwealth Resident/  
Commonwealth Specialist**

**CURRENT LISTINGS**

**4815 Burbury St.  
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4506 Heatherwilde Street  
4503 Heatherwilde St.  
(in 7 days - at full price)**



Call Virginia today! Virginia knows how to sell Commonwealth.

Commonwealth is having an amazing 2008.

If you're planning to sell, now's the time to put your home on the market! Despite all the reports from the national news, Houston & our Commonwealth area is still strong.

It's definitely a sellers market! **Call me at 281-207-5200 to get things started.**

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

## Computer Safety Reminders

The kids are back in school and we all heave a sigh of relief. Summers have been a welcome change to take a break from our hectic routines. Some of us got so used to the change of pace that getting back on track often a slow process. Here are some simple reminders that are often overlooked related to computers and laptops:

Desktops are sturdier than laptops and therefore can remain powered up for longer periods. While in use the laptops can stay plugged to the outlet for long periods but need frequent rest periods to cool down and reset their temporary memory.

Take the few extra seconds to make sure, before you put your laptop into its carrying bag, that it has completely shut down. There is no air circulation when enclosed in a notebook bag.

Computers often find themselves exposed to airborne debris. Make it a point to inspect and clean the air vents. Without pushing anything directly into the air vents, canned air dust-ers can be used from a safe distance to dislodge the debris and keep the vents clear.

Overheating problems can be caused by the cooling fan not working properly. Check the manufacturer's online support and your warranty information for repair. It may be possible to download software to test your laptop fan. If you aren't comfortable testing and updating any changes, have someone in your IT dept. or have an outside Computer Technician do it for you. The location of the machines should preferably be in raised and cool platforms. Leaving the desktop tower under the desk, pushed against a wall gives them little to no ventilation. A pillow or a similar soft surface can further block out the airflow and increases the potential of overheating.

Most computers are equipped with systems that have some ways to update your computer automatically to keep them running as smooth as possible. With that said, the number of viruses is going up every year - an estimated 10,000. Despite all safety measures, we may not even know we have a virus in the computer. Some common signs of infection are slow connections, slow booting up, memory loss, and computer functions may not work the way they are supposed to. When downloading something, always check the size of the download, if it is abnormally big, then it may contain a virus.

Make sure you have a good firewall, good anti-spyware software, and good anti-virus protection. These lines of

defense might not make you invincible, but they will help.

The phrase computer safety has come to be recognized often as a term describing the act of protecting oneself from online threats with malicious intent, but your computer needs to be safe in the physical world as well. In the real world things happen, however an accident is often an act of negligence. When your car is shut with your laptop inside, the temperature can go up to 115° inside. Sometimes this results in melting of smaller and fragile parts.

Keep your computer safe from liquid spills and far from magnets. Magnets contain a certain property that confuses and paralyzes the computer’s hard drive, and can erase all data from the computer. There is a chance of severe discoloration and disorientation of your display screen if it came in contact with a strong magnet. This vulnerability actually applies to anything with a microchip—even your television.

Another danger can be in how you carry your laptop. The proper way to carry a laptop is closed, but when it is open, on should always carry it by the base only. If the laptop is held by the monitor section, the joint can loosen and snap off.

*Namita Asthana, a resident of Commonwealth, is the owner of Verum Solutions, a provider of IT services small businesses and home PC users. For questions related to this article, or to ask about Verum’s IT and PC services, Namita can be reached at namita@verumsolutions.com or at 281-242-4186.*

### **Commonwealth Park Neighborhood Watch Organizational Meeting**

**The Commonwealth Homeowner’s Association is encouraging our residents to participate in the Neighborhood Watch program.**

**Help us help keep residents safer!**



**Join us to learn about the program and how it will benefit your family and this community.**

**Tuesday, September 29  
7:00 - 8:00 p.m.  
in the Commonwealth Clubhouse**

**All residents of Commonwealth Park are invited to attend this important meeting.**

**Questions? - Call Sue @ 281-265-4556.**

## **PLAY BALL!**

### **In the DIDYAKNOW? Department**

The addition of Town Square to the city of Sugar Land was a huge benefit to Fort Bend county residents. The square offers not only a much needed gathering place for fun-seekers, but presents opportunities for young AND old alike. Whether it’s dancing under the stars, a band concert or movies on the big screen, there is always something going on at Town Square! Missouri City is also building a Town Square. With our proximity to the city, their Town Square offerings are bound to be appreciated by residents of The Commonwealth.

Sugar Land is quickly approaching build out. The 1000 acres that is adjacent to Greatwood, Telfair and the University of Houston campus has been a topic of discussion for several years. The city decided that, while we have many parks and recreation areas and have (or will have) miles of hike and bike trails, something was lacking.

A Visioning Task Force was formed and after much research and soul searching, the city determined that what residents were most interested in having access to is a concert hall, a cultural arts center, an athletic venue, a hotel and conference center and a festival area.

*The Visioning Task Force envisions an all encompassing entertainment and cultural center but it was very important to the committee that **PROPERTY TAXES NOT BE RAISED** to fund these venues!!!!*

It has been determined that, first things first, the city will seek a partner for a minor league ballpark. There are many decisions that must be made before any of these ideas come to fruition.

But the most critical part of this arrangement to residents is the funding mechanism! Much of the funding will probably come from taxes paid by those who attend events in the entertainment area (ticket taxes, hotel taxes, parking taxes, etc.). The public, however, will be voting on whether or not to expand use of the 4A tax revenue. **NOTE: This is NOT a NEW tax. The tax will remain the same, voters will be asked to expand the use of these taxes.** Exact ballot wording had not been decided at the time of this printing, however, should be decided before the end of August. Residents will be asked to vote on this issue in November.

Please watch for more detailed information on this ballot item in local papers and circulars.

*Sue Hauenstein*

## Nancy Benevides Sells Commonwealth

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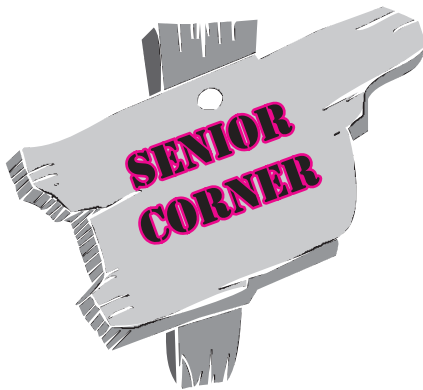
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## Commonwealth Women's Club

Over 10 years and going strong!  
The Women's Club meets once a  
month for social and networking  
purposes.

Join us for the annual  
Champagne Kick-Off  
in September....  
Watch the marquee in front of the  
Knightsbridge Clubhouse  
for date and details.



**Grandparents Day**  
Sunday, September 7

**Crime Scene Investigation**  
Tuesday, September 23  
1 p.m

*Saturday, October 4*  
*Crime Prevention Fair*  
*10-2 at Town Square*

Various Leisure Classes offered **DAILY**  
at the Sugar Land Senior Center  
Yoga, Computer, Line Dancing,  
Mah Jong, Jazzercise, Art  
and much more!

S L Fire Department  
2nd Annual Open House  
Saturday, October 11  
10 - 2 SL Community Center

Flu, Pneumonia and Shingles Vaccine given Wednesday, October 22  
You **MUST** sign up in advance-call the Senior Center

**Murder Mystery**  
Wednesday, October 29  
11 - 2

*Pot Luck Dinner*  
Wednesday, November 12  
11:30

**Monster Mash**  
Friday, October 31  
5-8 at the Community Center

### LOTS OF SENIOR ADVENTURES:

Houston Museum of Natural Science

Old Town Spring

Gulf Greyhound Park

Wurstfest (includes Wine Tour and Tasting)

Movies, Parties & More

The Senior Center is located right next to the Sugar Land Community Center at  
200 Matlage Way and can be reached at 281-275-2893. Call for more details.

Visit [www.sugarlandtx.gov](http://www.sugarlandtx.gov) and click on Parks and Recreation Department.

## Time to trim or remove your trees?

If the limbs are large or cannot safely be reached....  
If pruning involves using power equipment, or  
If pruning is needed near power lines....

It's time to call an arborist.

## Considerations Hiring an Arborist

Membership in professional organizations  
Certification through the ISA Certified Arborist  
program

Proof of insurance and  
A list of references



Your Area Real Estate Expert

**Leigh Mattson**

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Commonwealth  
Resident

- . How much is your house worth?
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**Welcome Back To School!**

*Thank you for your referrals!*



## Leigh's Tips for Preparing Your House For Sale

The following steps will help sell your home faster and at the best possible price:

### ***Disassociate Yourself From Your Home.***

Make the decision to "let go" of your emotions.  
Focus on the fact that the house will no longer be yours.

### ***Check Curb Appeal.***

If a buyer doesn't like the exterior of your home, you'll never get her inside. Keep the lawn mowed and trim your bushes and trees, Make sure visitors can clearly read your house number. Plant flowers to brighten the outside up.  
Go outside, open your front door. Look at every detail. Will it show well? Ask a neighbor or your Realtor to look and make suggestions.

### ***Rearrange and 'De-Clutter'***

It's amazing how much junk is collected through the years. If you haven't used it in over a year, you probably don't need it. Think of this process as a head-start on the packing you will need to do anyway. Buyers WILL open closets and cabinet's to LOOK. Tidy up closets & cabinets. Neatly stack dishes & towels. Remove extra leaves from your dining room table to make the room appear larger.

### ***Repair/Replace***

Walk through your entire home and note everything that needs attention. Investing in cleanup and repair could generate more dollars at the end of the sale! Fix doors that don't close properly and kitchen drawers that jam.  
Replace rotten wood. If needed, hire a contractor or handy man to help look for small items in need of repair.

### ***Remove Items***

Almost every home shows better with less furniture. Pack up personal items and family heirlooms. Buyers are often distracted by or can't see past personal artifacts. If necessary, rent a storage unit. Remove items that won't stay with the house. If the chandelier in the dining room once belonged to your great grandmother, replace it. If a buyer never sees it, they can't want it.

### ***Clean, and make the House Sparkle!***

Hire a professional cleaner to "really clean"! Wash windows inside and out. Clean baseboards and top of ceiling fan blades, don't forget to clean the refrigerator too.  
Pressure wash and spray down sidewalks and exterior. Get rid of any pet odor! A fragrant candle is a nice touch.

Even if you're not ready to sell, consider the above items to make your home look the best!

Leigh Mattson, Realtor



# Hamre's

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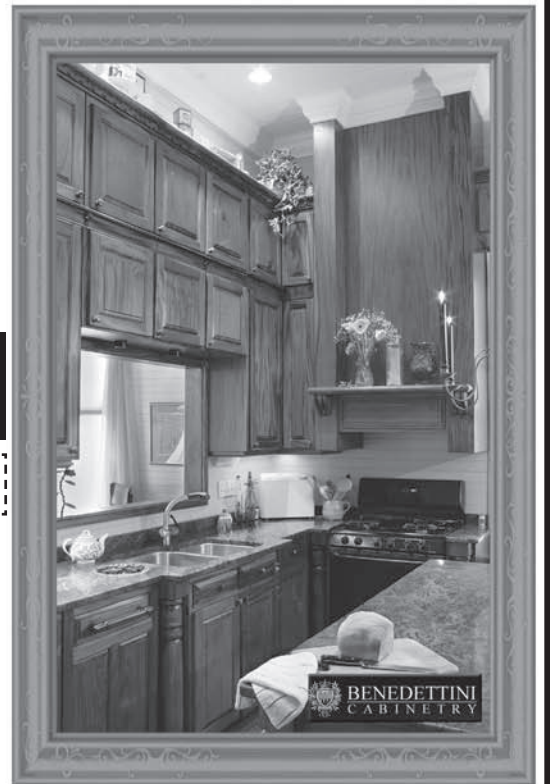
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Do you remember those horrid HOT humid National Night Out get-togethers?

Well, Congratulations Texas!  
We've finally come to our senses and changed the date.

Crime prevention experts expect cooler temperatures during October to increase participation in this annual event.

## Texans Against Crime

will take place on

### Tuesday, October 14

Sugar Land residents are encouraged to turn on the outside lights and spend the evening getting to know the neighbors AND public safety officials.

If you wish to host the get together on your block, you can register on the city's web site:  
[www.sugarlandtx.gov](http://www.sugarlandtx.gov)  
click on 'Texans Against Crime', complete the form and "send".



## We're **SETTING RECORDS** in The Commonwealth

*If you're considering buying or selling your home this year,  
please compare our **RESULTS** before you decide!!!  
Call us to find out more.*

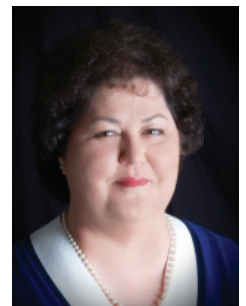
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mholden@garygreene.com

Cecilia Padilla  
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cpadilla@garygreene.com



Crest Management Service  
P.O. Box 219320  
Houston, TX 77218-9320

Carolyn Bonds, Senior Mgr.  
281-579-0761  
281-579-7062 (fax)

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## INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Sugar Land Town Hall Meeting  
Chinch Bugs - Yuck!

Texans Against Crime - Night Out

Sutton Park Crime Watch Success  
Sugar Land Plays Ball



## Commonwealth ANNUAL I Survived the Summer Back-To-School Coffee

at the Commonwealth Clubhouse

10:00 a.m. - noon - Friday, September 19



No Agenda!  
Mindless chatter, or discuss the  
latest book you've read.  
Tell us what you did this summer!

See some old friends.  
Make some new ones!  
Bring a neighbor

Mark your calendar today!



If you have any questions, please email Sue at: [newsletter@commonwealthcivic.com](mailto:newsletter@commonwealthcivic.com).

Did you just move in? Please join us - we can recommend doctors, dentists, restaurants, shops,  
volunteer organizations, and more!