

Commonwealth Comments

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

January/February, 2009

www.commonwealthcivic.com

Out With A Bang!!!!

Despite the fact that many are still recovering from IKE, the economy is in turmoil and the weather had been playing havoc with our lives, Commonwealth's Holiday Party was a GREAT success! Over 100 residents, old and young alike, stopped by to share some holiday cheer at the Clubhouse on December 16.



*Thanks to
Virginia Mack
for all of her efforts in
organizing this event!!!!*



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 281-265-1734	OPEN Director
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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

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

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

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.

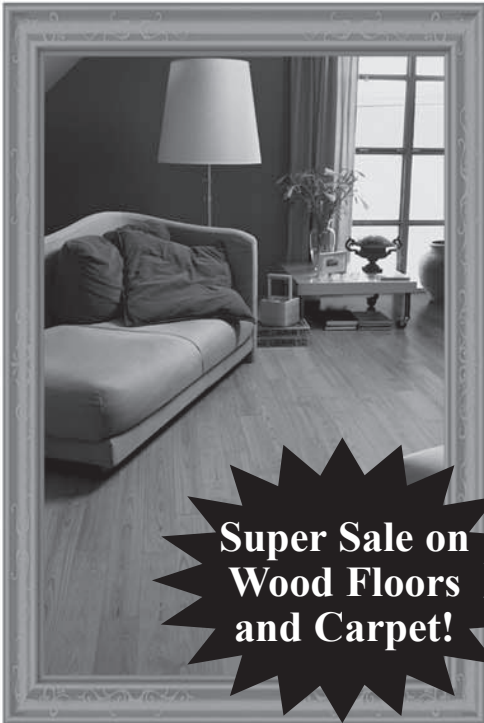
If you have any questions, call Sue at 281-265-4556.

Newsletter email address: newsletter@commonwealthcivic.com

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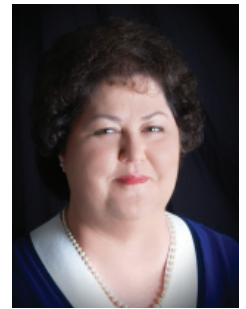
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Moira Holden
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mholden@garygreene.com

Cecilia Padilla
832-492-1906
cpadilla@garygreene.com



Dues are Due

The annual Commonwealth Homeowners Association membership dues were due in the office of Crest Management Service by January 1, 2009. Dues are considered late if they are not received by January 31 and interest will begin to accrue.

Association membership dues are used to maintain and improve our community. The greatest expense for the Association is the landscaping of our common areas.

These beautifully landscaped areas are a big bonus for our community. We require water to keep our green areas green and we pay for the electricity to run our street lights. Well-lit streets provide a measure of security for our residents.

Administrative expenses include the expense of our management service, including office supplies, insurance, the newsletter and legal expenses.

Our Management Company handles the day-to-day operations of the Association. This includes, but is not limited to, receiving and returning phone calls from residents, oversight and solicitation of vendors, payment of invoices, attending board meetings, and locating and advising

residents of deed restriction violations.

Dues are also used to maintain and repair our two swimming pools, tennis courts, and playgrounds. Our Board of Directors annually discusses pool usage and determines which hours the pools should be open (based on the previous year's usage) to minimize expenses and maximize availability to residents.

Additionally, a portion of our dues are placed in a reserve account for future replacement of physical assets such as the clubhouse, pools, and tennis courts.

Rest assured that The Commonwealth Civic Association Board of Directors takes their responsibility for oversight very seriously. Residents are encouraged to attend the annual meeting held each May where an overview is given and discussion is held regarding future needs for the Association.

If you have any questions about the annual dues, contact Crest Management Service at 281-579-0761.





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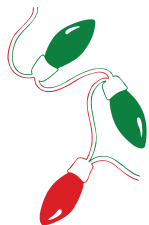
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281-242-2020



A HUGE thank you to
Melanie Carroll for decorating the
monuments, the marquee and
the clubhouse.
Great job Melanie!
We looked good!

When you begin your Spring Cleaning,
please keep in mind that the
Friends of First Colony Library
would be thrilled to receive your books for
their monthly fundraising sale(s).
Drop by the library for more information.

The Association wishes to recognize the efforts of
Paula and Charles Stansell.
The Stansells maintain the Commonwealth website
and the email alert list.
If you haven't been by the website recently,
make it a point to drop in.
Paula has redesigned and organized the site.
It's a wealth of information.
www.commonwealthcivic.com

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

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Happy New Year!!!!





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*Thank you for helping me have a successful 2008. Please let me know if, I can help you or a friend in 2009. Call Virginia at 281-207-5200.
Happy New Year from the Virginia Mack team.
Hope you all have a healthy, happy and prosperous New Year!*

Virginia Mack, ABR, CBR, CRS, GRI

NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH

Benefits of a Neighborhood Watch program are increased community spirit and increased security. All it takes for a successful program is an area coordinator and some block captains willing to spend a small amount of time.

The Commonwealth Civic Association and the Sugar Land Police department will provide most of the resources, as well as CASH, for the program. For the Neighborhood Watch Program, the Commonwealth will be divided into the following areas:

- Sweetwater Section 12
- Commonwealth Park
- Commonwealth Estates
 - Oxford
 - Sutton Park
 - Sutton Forest
- Bridgewater 1,2,3, and 4

Each area will operate independently of the other areas. Each area will need an Area Coordinator and a Block Captain for every 10 to 12 homes. Leigh Mattson has graciously accepted the position for Sutton Park and Sue Hauenstein is the co-ordinator for Commonwealth Park.

Additional benefits of the program are free safety and crime prevention training by the Sugar Land Police Department. Also the Commonwealth Civic Association has agreed to give your area \$10 per year for each home that is registered with the Neighborhood Watch Program in your area. Each area will determine how the money will be spent. If your area has 200 homes and 100 are registered with the Program, then your area will be entitled to spend \$1000 per year on block parties or other activities.

Please consider becoming an Area Coordinator.
E-mail Tom Wooley at tom.wooley@fluor.com for additional information.

We were very happy with the response to our November/December article, from residents in Commonwealth Park volunteering to become involved in the program. We still have a long way to go before we have a Block Captain for every block. If you would like more information about being a block captain in Commonwealth Park, please contact Sue Hauenstein at 281-265-4556.

Commonwealth Budget for 2009

Assessment = \$795.00

INCOME

Maintenance Fees	\$ 900, 735
Commercial Assessment	1,568
Assessment Interest	1,500
Interest Earned	12,000
Clubhouse Rental Income	4,200
Pool Rental Income	300
Tennis Key Purchase	500
Street Light Contribution	9,300
Miscellaneous Income	800
Newsletter Income	4,200
LID Mowing Contribution	78,000
Total Income	1,013,103
Uncollected 2008 Fees	(17,000)
 AVAILABLE INCOME	 996,103

ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES

Administrative Contract	37,200
Office Supplies	1,200
Copies`	4,750
Postage	4,500
Insurance	27,500
Community Mailouts	1,100
Bank Charges - Lock Box	25
Newsletter	14,500
D/R Demand/Photos/Nets	1,000
Late Notices/Cert Letters	4,200
Miscellaneous	100
Clubhouse Bookings	-0-
TOTAL ADMINISTRATIVE	96,075

LEGAL/ACCOUNTING

Legal - Corporate	\$ 3,000
Legal - Collections	40,000
Legal - Deed Restrictions	5,000
Tax Preparation/Audit	3,500
TOTAL LEGAL/ACCOUNTING	51,500

GROUNDS MAINTENANCE

Landscape Contract	\$ 350,000
Additional Work/Replacement	25,000
Tree Removal/Pruning/Fertilize	25,000
Irrigation Repairs	30,000
Deed Restriction/Mowing	1,000
Pest Control	500
TOTAL GROUNDS MAINTENANCE	431,500

MAINTENANCE/REPAIRS

Park/Pool/Common	10,000
Playground	12,000
Clubhouse	6,000
Clubhouse Rental Monitor	2,000
Tennis Courts	10,000
Fountain & Lake Maintenance	5,000
Electrical - Street Lights	15,000
Vandalism	300
TOTAL MAINTENANCE/REPAIRS	63,000

SWIMMING POOL

Pool Contract	74,000
Extra Services	1,000
Equipment Repairs	10,000
Equipment/Furniture	3,000
Supplies/Pool Tags	2,000
TOTAL SWIMMING POOL	90,000

UTILITIES/SERVICES

Water & Sewer	74,500
Electronic - Entry/Rec/Irrig/Deco	57,500
Telephone	1,900
Janitorial Services/Supplies	5,750
TOTAL UTILITIES/SERVICES	139,650

TAXES

Federal Income Tax	20,000
Property Tax	600
TOTAL TAXES	20, 600

-Summary continues on page 10-

CW Womens Club Update

Whether you are new to the community or have been here for years, come let down your hair with other Commonwealth women. Make some new friends and enjoy another way to share news and ideas in a social setting six times each year.

The meeting calendar is set months in advance. We try to honor these dates, however, we must be considerate of any unexpected changes that our hostesses might have. Meetings are generally held on the second Thursday of the month, however, the date tends to be flexible floating somewhat due to school and social activities.

Please call to verify date, time & location.

In December we celebrated the holidays with a party at the home of Nancy Benevides. In January the ladies met for dinner at Berryhill.

Wine & Chocolate - February 11

The Commonwealth Women's Club provides an opportunity for women with various interests to meet and share ideas in a social setting.

*Contact Louise at 281-980-0081
for more information.*

Hundreds of people die each year in the United State from unintentional Carbon Monoxide (CO) poisoning. Often called a silent killer, CO is an invisible, odorless, colorless gas created when fuels, such as gasoline, wood, coal, natural gas, propane, oil and methane burn incompletely. CO enters the body through breathing. CO poisoning can be confused with flu symptoms, food poisoning and other illnesses. Some symptoms include shortness of breath, nausea, dizziness, light headedness or headaches. Everyone is at risk for CO poisoning, but infants, pregnant women and people with physical conditions that limit their ability to use oxygen, such as emphysema, asthma or heart disease, can be more severely affected by low concentrations of CO than healthy adults. High levels of CO can be fatal for anyone, causing death within minutes. The goal of the Sugar Land Fire Department is to reduce the number of carbon monoxide incidents and to discourage anyone from using the range or oven to heat their home. Install CO alarms inside your home to provide early warning of accumulating CO. Have your heating equipment inspected by a professional every year before cold weather sets in.

- CO alarms are not substitutes for smoke alarms. Know the difference between the sound of smoke alarms and CO alarms.
- Test CO alarms at least once a month.

Make sure your home has carbon monoxide alarms.

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Happy New Year!



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CLEMENTS HIGH SCHOOL PROGRAD 2009 TALENT AND STYLE SHOW FEBRUARY 14TH

The Clements High School Class of 2009 will host a Student Talent and Style Show on Saturday, February 14, at 7:00 pm, in the Clements Commons. The fundraiser, organized each year by the senior class to benefit their ProGrad event, will include desserts from around the world, a raffle, and a Live Auction. Reserved tables will be sold to senior parents only at the January 5th ProGrad meeting.

Tickets for the event may be purchased for \$15.00 by contacting Lisa Vernon by email at vgirls3@aol.com. To learn more about the annual Clements ProGrad 2009 Talent and Style Show, please visit the web site at: www.clementsprogradonline.com.



Fort Bend Cares

Need a Vacation? Then Mark Your Calendar for March 11, 2008!

Don't we all want to take a quick week-end get away? Well, here's your chance and you don't have to leave Fort Bend County!

Fort Bend Cares will host its 4th annual ROAD TRIP & DINNER PARTY, March 7th. This year's event is a Road Trip Through Louisiana! Guests will experience all of the sights and sounds of our neighboring state. Enjoy the flavor of the French Quarter, Mardi Gras and cajun food at its best. Of course, no meal is complete without a bit of our own local cuisine. The Fluor Complex will be transformed Louisiana style and doors will open at 6:30 PM. Zydeco music will fill the air along with special performances by Breinna James, a 16 year old local rising star, and 9 year old Brendon Mak as seen on America's Got Talent. Strange Days Band will anchor the main stage. Richmond Bone and Joint Clinic will once again serve as presenting sponsor.

And, if that is not enough, the Fort Bend Cares Annual Golf Tournament will be held the following Monday, March 9th at Sweetwater Country Club.

In 2008, Fort Bend Cares gave out \$135,000 in grants to local Fort Bend Charities serving youth. This organization is completely volunteer run and all money raised goes to help local needs.

If you would like to get involved, want sponsorship or ticket information, or know of a need in the community, please contact us at www.fortbendcares.org. 2009 grant applications are available on line.

Sugar Land Enhances Animal Services

There is a new ordinance intended to enhance animal services in Sugar Land. Several changes included in the ordinance address citizen feedback, changes in state law, recommendations from the Animal Service Advisory Board and best-practices across the country:

Dangerous Dogs: Animal Services may consider a dog dangerous if it makes an unprovoked attack in a place other than an enclosure in which the dog is being kept and the animal causes bodily injury or causes a person to reasonably believe the dog will attack and cause bodily injury.

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Commonwealth
Resident

Thank you for your referrals!

Owners of dogs considered dangerous must pay a \$100 annual registration fee and obtain \$100,000 in liability insurance. The animal must be restrained at all times and wear a dangerous dog collar.

In addition, owners must post signage on their property warning of the dangerous dog.

Animal Waste Disposal: To increase responsible pet ownership, citizens are now required to pick up their pets' waste if dropped in neighbors' yards or other private property. Pet owners who fail to remove feces on private property could face a City fine. Non-human waste represents a significant source of bacterial contamination in urban watersheds; it washes down our storm sewers and ends up contaminating our creeks and streams. Although dogs aren't the only source of animal waste, the new ordinance gives pet owners an extra incentive to clean up after their pets.

Other major additions in the new ordinance include enhanced adoption services and rules for restraining unattended pets.

Enhanced Adoption Services: Prior to adopting pets, Animal Services will perform heartworm testing in dogs, Feline Leukemia testing in cats and ensure all vaccinations are complete. In addition, pets will be de-wormed, treated for fleas, spayed or neutered and micro-chipped. To cover the cost of these enhanced services, a modest adoption fee will be charged -- \$100 for dogs and \$85 for cats.

**www.sugarlandtx.gov or call
(281) 275-ADOG (2364).**

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- Budget Summary Continued -

BAD DEBT

Bad Debts	\$ 15,000
TOTAL BAD DEBT	15,000

COMMITTEES

Special Events Committees	10,000
TOTAL COMMITTEES	10,000

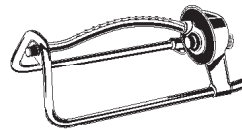
OTHER EXPENSES

Miscellaneous	
Non-Capital Reserve Fund	53,778
Capital Reserve Fund	25,000
TOTAL OTHER EXPENSES	78,778

TOTAL EXPENSES	\$ 996,103
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Landscape Tips for January

Irrigation- Plants and turf need less water in the winter, so if you haven't already, reduce the time on your irrigation controller. We normally water once a week during the winter months, less if it rains. If you can, it is a good idea



to simply turn the controller to the 'off' position, watch the plants and turf, and if we get a dry period of two to three weeks, just run the system through a manual cycle. Then turn it back off and wait for the next dry period. We really don't have a problem with freeze in Houston, so it usually isn't necessary to turn the water off going to the irrigation system.

Weeds- Early spring is a good time to apply a pre-emergent herbicide to the turf areas. This will help prevent the germination of weed seeds that are present in the soil. Late February or early March is a good time, if you start to see some winter weeds germinating earlier, apply the pre-emergent then. It won't kill the existing weeds but it will help with control of any future weeds. The herbicide only lasts for about 60 to 90 days, so it will only control winter weeds like dandelions.



Mulch- Take some time in January to re-apply mulch in your beds. Remember to use a good quality hardwood mulch that is finely ground and partially composted. A depth of 2" is sufficient to help retain moisture and retard weed growth. If you use mulch around your trees, don't let it get too high around the trunk of the tree.



Commonwealth Women's Club Calendar 2009

January 14- Dinner at Berryhill Restaurant

February 11- Wine and Chocolate (Valentine's)

March 11- Spring Fling

April 8- Pasta Night

May 13 -

End of Year Fajita Dinner Poolside

For more details, contact Louise at 281-980-0081

Storm damage from Hurricane Ike is expected to have been addressed by December 31.

Fences, roof and other damage must be repaired if you have not taken care of the damage, you may expect a letter from the Association.

Home Security

Windows -

Use a do-it-yourself nail or bolt window stop instead of crescent or "butterfly" latches to secure double-hung windows, which can be pried open easily with a knife. Drill the hole for the stop at a slight downward angle to prevent a burglar from jiggling the pin out of the hole under pressure.

Windows that are never used -- unless they are a means of escape during a fire -- should be fastened permanently shut.

Outside -

Trim hedges short so would-be burglars have nowhere to hide. Make it difficult for an intruder to find a place to hide.

Be sure to remove items that would allow easy access to second floor windows.

Motion-detection lights can help make your home less inviting to burglars.

Never hide your house key outside. If a family member habitually loses or forgets his or her key, develop a better strategy -- perhaps giving a set of keys to a trustworthy neighbor, hanging the key on a long chain that a teen can wear around the neck.

Lower the volume of your telephone's ring so it can't be heard outside your house. (An unanswered phone tells a burglar casing your house that no one's home.)

If it appears that someone has entered your home while you were away, do not enter the house. Call the police from a cell phone or neighbor's house.

Alarm Systems

According to the FBI, homes equipped with centrally monitored alarm systems are 15 times less likely to be targets of break-ins. Before investing in an alarm system -

evaluate your security needs.

The purpose of a residential security system is to detect an intruder as early as possible, alert the home's occupants to his presence, and scare him away before he does any harm.

For most of us a system that protects windows and exterior doors as a point-of-entry protection is sufficient.

An interior siren will scare off the burglar and alert you or your monitoring company to the situation. You may want to add an exterior siren so that the neighbors know when your alarm is activated. Also, consider whether you want the system monitored by a central station.

Types of alarm systems -

A basic alarm system is a low-voltage electrical circuit with sensors installed on doors and windows. When the flow of electricity through a sensor is interrupted because the door or window is opened, a siren sounds or a light flashes. Many systems also include motion sensors. When something moves within the sensor's range, an alarm sounds. Some systems are monitored systems, meaning they send a signal to a central station where operators, in turn, notify police. Electronic alarm systems come in two basic types:

- Wired systems require running low-voltage electrical wires from a master control panel to doors and windows, motion detectors, keypads, and sirens. The wires are usually concealed inside walls and in crawlspaces. Professional installers can hide the wires.
- Wireless systems use miniature radio transmitters instead of wires, so very little drilling and no special tools are required for installation. You can take a wireless system with you when you move. A wireless system is a better do-it-yourself choice.

Both wired and wireless systems can be enhanced with a variety of options -- from motion detectors that aren't tripped by pets to remote access that allows you to check the system by phone.

Compare prices -

Get bids from two or three reputable security companies. Compare not only the installation charges but also annual inspection costs and monthly fees (for monitored systems). Also, check with your insurance agent to see if you'll receive a discount for installing a certain type of system.

This information collected on the internet.

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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DUES ARE DUE

Any organization the size of the Commonwealth Civic Association requires the assistance of a multitude of volunteers. As you know from your involvement with other volunteer organizations from PTA to Rotary to non-profits there are many, many levels of involvement.

Yes, you can limit your participation to paying your dues, or you can dive in and help make the organization a huge success.

As with all groups, it always seems to be the same folks who are willing to take leadership roles. It takes commitment to take on the responsibility of organizing events of any size.

We have been fortunate in the past to have had dozens of residents help with our various community events. Unfortunately, over the past few years, the number of volunteers has dwindled.

We are still able to offer the July 4th parade and picnic, and our annual end of year holiday party, but it is our sincere desire to bring our residents together more regularly and offer various activities for the entire community.

Activities that have fallen to the wayside are:

The Spring Fling

The Pool Season Kick-off Party

The Annual Garage Sale

Back To School Party

Band Night

Help us bring back these (or other) community events. Volunteer opportunities range from planning & organizing, to working a few hours, being an adult presence, donating food & drinks or other.....

VOLUNTEER