

Commonwealth Comments

November/December, 2001

www.commonwealth-civic.com

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

COMMONWEALTH ACTION TEAM

In an effort to increase community involvement and enable neighborhood concerns and challenges to be voiced, the Directors of The Commonwealth Civic Association are forming a committee to provide community input to the Civic Association (CCA) Board.

New!

General guidelines of the Commonwealth Action Team (CAT) have been formulated:

The team will consist of the current Board of Directors and up to three residents from each of the following areas:

Bridgewater	Commonwealth Estates
Commonwealth Park	Oxford
Sutton Park/Sutton Forest	

The CAT will participate in reviewing the following, as well as any additional areas deemed appropriate:

- Policy changes
- Community improvements
- Community problems, concerns, challenges

The CAT will assist in planning community activities.

Residents interested in becoming a member of CAT will need to submit their name by E-mail to Commonwealth@stansellweb.com by January 24, 2002.

Residents selected to serve on the Action Team will be notified by January 31, 2002.

Each resident will serve a one year term.

To be a member of CAT, residents must be in good standing with the Civic Association and be able to communicate by E-mail.

If more than three residents from an area submit their name, a drawing will be held to determine who is selected to the Team. Residents not selected will be considered as alternates if a selected resident is unable to complete the team.

Meetings will be held at 7:00 p.m. at the Commonwealth Clubhouse on the third Thursday of February, March, June, October and November.

For up-do-date Civic Association information:

www.commonwealth-civic.com

Community Awareness Corner

Commonwealth Alert

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 p.m. at the Clubhouse

Board Meeting

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

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 are 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

Also, keep in mind that due to publication deadlines, we are often unable to include time sensitive information in the newsletter. Be sure to check out our web page on a regular basis for breaking/important updates.

www.commonwealth-civic.com

Repair Work

Bridge and Brick Repairs Are to Begin Soon!

The directors have located matching brick and the community will soon see repairs to bridges and other brick structures in The Commonwealth. A big thanks to Jim McGregor and Zelma Loeb for tracking down this hard to match brick!

Commonwealth Proud!

We would like to acknowledge our appreciation to Mr. Victor Harris and his boy scout troop #294 for responding to President Bush's request that Americans display their flags after the terrorist attack in September. In appreciation of the support received from Commonwealth residents, Mr. Harris and his scouts distributed the flags to homeowners who are on their annual subscription list and left the flags in place for 30 days.

Mr. Harris advises that they are continuing to add residents to their list. The scouts deliver in the morning, set up and recover the flags the same evening, on five major holidays throughout the year. Residents will awaken on those mornings to see the flag flying proudly in front yards throughout the neighborhood. If you are interested in participating, you may contact the scout troop at 281-494-9216 or download the application form at www.commonwealth-civic.com

The Commonwealth Civic Association is considering changing Commonwealth Comments from a bi-monthly newsletter to a quarterly newsletter.

The newsletter would then be published in January, April, July, and October as opposed to January, March, May, July, September and November.

If you have an opinion on this (*in favor, or against*) please email your comments as soon as possible to newsletter@stansellweb.com or contact Sue at 281-265-4556



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In wake of the heinous events that took place in New York City and Washington, D.C. on September 11, we pray that all who have have lost family or friends may find peace.



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Dealer's Choice



Get Out Those Reading Glasses!!!!

It's about that time again!! Residents will notice an increase in political campaign literature over the next 12 months. There will be many positions up for election (re-election) next year. A primary election will be held in March (for the November election) and it's back to the polls in May. **These people represent us.....**be sure to read their literature in order to be able to make an informed decision! We fully expect that Commonwealth residents will vote at Commonwealth elementary school. Watch the newsletter and the web page for updates.

While we are more than willing to sponsor a public forum for our community, it is expected that with so many positions up for grabs, there will be several large Candidate Forums that will be open to the general public. If we receive notice of these forums in time for publication, we will include them in a newsletter early next year.

Some of the local positions to be voted on in **2002** are:

	<u>Current Office Holder</u>
State Sen. District 17	Sen. Buster Brown - <u>has announced he is not running</u>
State Rep., District 26	Charlie Howard
240th District Judge	Thomas Culver
268th District Judge	Brady Elliott
328th Family Judge	Tom Stansbury
County Judge	Jim Adolphus
Criminal District Attorney	John Healey
County Court Judges 1	Larry Wagenback
2	Walter McMeans
3	Susan Lowery
District Clerk	Dianne Wilson
County Treasurer	Kathy Hynson - <u>is retiring</u>
County Commissioner Pct.4	James Patterson
Justice of the Peace, Pct. 4	Jim Richards
Hide Inspector	Jeffrey McMeans
Mayor of Sugar Land	Dean Hrbacek
City Council Member	James Thompson
City Council Member	Karyn Dean
FBISD School Board	Jane Clarke
FBISD School Board	Cynthia Knox
FBISD School Board	Arthur Pace

**Election Season
Is Upon Us**

Get Involved!!!!

Vote

Remember.....If you're not part of the solution, you're part of the problem!!!!

Nuts & Bolts

The Commonwealth is a beautiful community due **primarily** to the many residents who do such a **wonderful** job maintaining their homes. We want the Commonwealth to continue to look great. However, there are some concerns with the number of decorative appurtenances that are being placed in the front yard of many homes. According to our covenants, decorative appurtenances are generally not allowed, as specified below:

On front lawns of lots and on any portion of the lot visible from the street, there shall be no decorative appurtenances placed, such as sculptures, birdbaths, birdhouses, permanently affixed flag poles, fountains, or other decorative embellishments. Holiday decorations of a temporary nature are an exception. Holiday decorations must be removed within four (4) weeks after the date of the holiday.

A single bench may be placed in the front of the house. The bench may be no longer than five feet in length. It must be constructed of wood or metal. The color of the bench must be black, white, or the color of the house trim. A bench may be left with a natural wood finish if the wood is sealed with a varnish or lacquer to prevent weathering.

The bench must be located so that it is placed no more than (10') feet in front of the existing building line.

Your cooperation will be appreciated in helping to control decorative appurtenances. If you have an **ornamental yard accessory that** does not meet the above guidelines, please move it to your backyard or to another area not visible from the street.

Residents doing roof replacements need to make an application through the modifications committee

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 potentially expensive rework 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.

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City Highlights

provided this month by Councilmember Karyn Dean

Keeping Motorists Mobile

Sugar Land has recently implemented several proactive measures to keep motorists on the move:

- The Texas Department of Transportation plans to have the Sweetwater Boulevard overpass at U.S. Highway 59 re-striped to accommodate four lanes by Thanksgiving 2001. In addition, the overpass will be designated a “no trucks” zone by the Texas Department of Transportation.
- New developments must dedicate additional right-of-way at major intersections, accommodating exclusive right-turn lanes.
- New commercial development must construct left-turn lanes at mid-block median openings to serve their private driveways.
- Joint use commercial driveways are utilized wherever possible to minimize the number of commercial driveways on public streets.
- The Traffic Management Center will ultimately be able to remotely control all traffic signals.
- A policy is being drafted to minimize the impact that new development has on public streets.
- Capital improvement projects recently completed or in the planning stages:
 1. Right- and left-turn lanes at Dulles and Lexington completed
 2. Right-turn lane on Dulles at Highway 6 completed
 3. Right-turn lane on Lexington at Highway 6 completed
 4. Re-striping Sweetwater Boulevard/First Colony overpass at Highway 59 to four lanes by Thanksgiving 2001
 5. Right-turn lane on Sweetwater at Lexington to begin next year
 6. Median improvements to Lexington between Austin Parkway and Highway 6 to be constructed next year

- continued on following page -

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A black and white photograph of William and Deborah Treadway, a man and a woman, smiling and standing together.

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City Highlights continued

Tax Payment Options for Over age 65

In addition to having one of the lowest municipal tax rates in Texas, Sugar Land offers an over age 65 exemption of \$40,000 and a homestead exemption of \$5,000. After these exemptions, residents over age 65 pay the second lowest tax bills among Texas cities the size of Sugar Land. For seniors over the age of 65 with payment problems, the City offers two options.

- A quarterly payment plan allows homeowners over the age of 65 to pay City taxes in installments without penalty or interest.
- The City's deferment plan allows homeowners over the age of 65 to postpone payments of delinquent residential property taxes for as long as they own or live in their homes. A senior citizen must file a tax deferral affidavit with the appraisal district; if the senior moves, sells the home or passes away, past taxes and interest at a rate of 8 percent per year are due no later than 91 days after the change.

For more information, call (281) 275-2750.

U.S. 59: Two Years Down, One to Go

On the Horizon

- Thanksgiving 2001: Traffic switched to new pavement in the median for the U.S. 59 main lanes
- Early 2002: Reconstruction of State Highway 6 at U.S. 59 completed
- 2002: U.S. 59 main lanes over U.S. Highway 90A completed
- 2002: U.S. 59 main lanes and frontage roads from Sugar Creek Boulevard to Highway 6 completed
- 2003: Frontage roads between Kirkwood Drive and Sugar Creek Boulevard, including U.S. 90A main lanes and the railroad crossing completed



The Sugar Land Police Department encourages ALL citizens to comply with Texas law requiring dogs and cats to be vaccinated annually against rabies. Additionally the City of Sugar Land's animal ordinance requires cats and dogs to be restrained or confined on the owners' property.



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Where: Fort Settlement Middle School
5440 Elkins Road

281-634-6440

For more information, please contact
Dr. Vicki Johnston (281) 634-6445 or
Roberta Rosen (281) 565-9578

Lest We Forget.....

Please take a few minutes to familiarize yourself with the proposed amendments to the Texas Constitution that will appear on the November 6, 2001 ballot. 19 amendments will appear on the ballot. Information on these amendments can be found at:

www.sos.state.tx.us/elections/voter/constitutionalamendments.shtml

The Fort Bend County website is a wealth of helpful/interesting information. You may access them at: www.co.fort-bend.tx.us/county

You may not vote if you have not registered to vote in Fort Bend County!!!

The next elections will be held in March, 2002. You may contact the elections office for a registration card, or stop in at the Fort Bend Chamber of Commerce office.

Every attempt is made to have this newsletter delivered by the first of the month, however, sometimes the post office and the printer have other ideas! Hopefully you will receive this issue in time to prepare for the November 6, 2001 Texas State Constitutional Election.

A child's first and most important teacher is the parent

Reminder

If you host a get together at one of our parks/playgrounds, you are expected to remove your own trash.

Our trash containers are large enough to handle ordinary daily use, but parties tend to tax them into overflow status and a mess is created.

Ads in Commonwealth Comments are available at very reasonable rates. If you would like to advertise, call Sue at 281-265-4556.

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Please direct inquiries for advertising in this newsletter to Sue Hauenstein at 281-265-4556

Commonwealth Women's Club

The Champagne Social held in September was a wonderful success. If you missed out on all the fun, don't despair, the annual **Holiday Party and White Elephant Ornament Exchange** will be held on Thursday, December 13 at 7 p.m.

All Commonwealth women are invited to participate. Membership is only \$25.00 per year.

To RSVP for this get-together and the location or any other details, contact Susan at 281-980-3290.



Special Interest Groups

The Commonwealth Babysitting Co-op

The Commonwealth Babysitting Co-op is open to all Commonwealth residents. We meet monthly, swap babysitting time, organize social activities throughout the year, and are currently organizing a Saturday night sitting swap. We are recruiting new members, so please call Brenda at 281-980-3150 or Cornelia at 281-491-4595 if you are interested.

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: Louisa Chiasson (Commonwealth Elementary School/Lake Olympia Middle School) at 281-565-6849, Cathy Graves (Clements High School) at 281-265-7940, Mary Marwil (Elkins High School) at 281-265-0877 or Kathie Waldheim (Fort Settlement Middle School) at 281-565-2739.

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Annual Commonwealth Holiday Party

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Monday, December 17
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Bring your camera and take photos
with our special visitor
Winners of the Annual Home Decorating Contest will be announced



Annual Home Holiday Decorating Contest

Judging will take place Friday, December 7th and/or Saturday, December 8th.
Be sure to have your home illuminated during both of these evenings.

Prizes will be awarded in three categories: **Most Original** **Best Theme** **Kid's Favorite**
Winners will receive a \$100.00 gift certificate.



Dues are Due
Civic Association dues are considered
overdue if not received in the office of Crest
Management by January 31, 2002. Interest
begins to accrue on
February 1, 2002

Crest Management Service

16360 Park Ten Place,
Suite 310,
Houston, Texas 77084

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



Newsletter email address:

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**Association
Board of
Directors**

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281-265-1734
President

Zelma Loeb
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Vice President

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Jim McGregor
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Neighborhood Watch
Nancy Castellvi 281-265-2769

Welcome Committee
Maura Ritchie 281-980-6347
Roseann Pisano

Landscape Committee
Steve O'Hara 281-265-4485

Modifications & Deed Restrictions
Faye Becker 281-980-3551

Tennis Committee
Cindy Facker

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

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
Commonwealth
Comments ~
December 1, 2001**