

NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH INTEREST MEETING THURSDAY, JULY 16²³

NEIGHBORHOOD
WATCH
BY NEIGHBORS
WHO CARE

NEIGHBOR TO NEIGHBOR

Neighborhood Watch patrols are down, police "calls for service" are down, but crime is up in City Park Homes. It's time to take back our community and take a proactive stand against crime in our neighborhood. Vandalism, graffiti, theft from autos, home burglaries and suspected gang activities are all on the rise while our patrollers have been asked to put in more and more of their time since so many have dropped out of our program. **WE NEED YOUR HELP!**

I realize that all of you are busy people, but isn't the safety of our community worth 2 hours of your time? There are 530+ homes in City Park Homes. If each household volunteered to patrol, no one in City Park would have to patrol more than twice a year and our community could be patrolled twice a day! The time commitment required for your participation now is 2 hours per month and the scheduling is very flexible. Can't patrol? Find out about the Window Watch program. You can be part of this vital program without even leaving your home!

There will be a brief meeting at 7:30 p.m. on July 16²³th, on the Kincaid Avenue Circle to discuss the Neighborhood Watch Program, crime prevention strategies, how to patrol and how to participate in Neighborhood Watch, even if you can't patrol! After this meeting I will arrange an in community training session as soon as possible.

OUR BIGGEST CRIME PROBLEMS OCCUR MAINLY DURING THE SUMMER

Who is eligible to participate in Neighborhood Watch? Anyone over the age of 18 who has an interest in preventing crime in our neighborhood. Patrolling in teams of 2 is recommended, but single patrols will be allowed, at least until our program is fully re-established.

Why should I do this? Isn't this the job of the Police Department? With budget cuts and staffing, the police are only able to respond to calls. Neighborhood Watch provides an eyes and ears service to the police department. We know what is out of place in our neighborhood and what needs to be done about it.

Please make every effort to join us or to renew your commitment to the safety of this community. For more information, please call Pam deWolfe at 703/241-0573.

Attention Senior Citizens, the Mason District Community Advisory Committee has invited you and all interested residents of City Park Homes to their next meeting, July 14, 7:30pm, where their guest speaker will be addressing **Scams and Frauds**. Find out how these scams are being perpetrated and how to avoid becoming a victim of these types of crimes. This meeting will be held at the Mason District Government Center, 6507 Columbia Pike. Carpooling can be arranged if needed (call 241-0573).

KEEP IN TOUCH! Over the past year, I have written several newsletters, but have not been able to distribute them due to lack of manpower, illness, weather or frankly, a lack of money. City Park Homes Neighborhood Watch does not receive any funding. To help keep costs down, we are going to distribute **NEIGHBOR TO NEIGHBOR** electronically whenever possible.

If you would like to stay informed of the latest crime trends in and around the community, receive "lookouts" from the crime prevention officers, let me know of problems, or just want to say hello, we can do this via **e-mail**. Just yesterday I forwarded information of an assault and suspect description to others in City Park Homes. You can reach me at **nwatch@rocketmail.com**.

Also, Ed and I are working on our **website**, where I'll post our newsletter, the coordinator's newsletters, along with lots of other interesting NW info. Visit **www.dewolfhome.ml.org** after July 15. (FYI, we can also tell you about free e-mail services, some of which do not require Internet access, just a computer and a modem.)

Not computer savvy? Not a problem! A special distribution list is being prepared for anyone who is interested but can't patrol or e-mail. We will cut down on costs and waste by delivering to homes where information is requested and will publish community wide newsletters whenever possible.

Patrollers are automatically kept informed, via the Watch Box or hand delivered issues created just for them.

As always, you can reach me by phone at 241-0573 or US Mail, PO Box 2034, Falls Church VA 22042.

BFI ANNOUNCES TRUE BLUE PROGRAM

Earlier this month, I was asked to represent Fairfax County Neighborhood Watch during a presentation at Supervisor Gerry Connolly's office. BFI, the company that is responsible for our household recycling program, has pledged their full corporate support to Neighborhood Watch in our crime and fire prevention efforts. Each BFI driver will receive NW training and will radio "emergency situation" information (accidents, fires,

hazardous road conditions and any suspicious activities) to their dispatchers. This program is already working! This week, a driver called in a serious traffic accident, even before they received the training. We welcome BFI and applaud their crime and fire prevention efforts! It will be wonderful to have daytime patrols in every neighborhood, throughout Northern Virginia. More information is available, please call.

DID YOU KNOW??? Summer is the season for scams and frauds. Gypsy crimes are often home improvement scams. Another gypsy favorite, while you work in your yard, one distracts you while another enters your house. Home burglaries happen most often on Mondays, between 10 & 2. Most burglars enter their victims home through unlocked doors and windows. Glove compartments are typically searched for credit card receipts and cash. An aggressive anti-graffiti campaign is about to begin; report, record, remove it in hours. Fairfax County is the most densely populated county in the Washington Metro area, with the most active Neighborhood Watches and the biggest decrease in crime!



Do you know what this symbol means?

Several residents have asked if they could express their appreciation to the patrollers by offering them a cup of coffee and a snack while they are on patrol. If you would like to put your name on the list and display this sign in your window for the patrollers to recognize, please let us know. This would be a great way to say thank you, get to know other residents and possibly have the patrollers check in on those in need. Call for more information!

CHILD SAFETY CONCERNS

Over the last few months there have been several cases throughout the metropolitan area where children have been at risk. Here are some general child safety tips that you should try to use whenever possible:

- ♦ Over 70% of sexual abuse cases are committed by someone the child knows, a family member or friend.
- ♦ About 80% of actual abductions of children that are done by a stranger is accomplished by gaining the trust of a child.

WHAT & WHO IS A STRANGER :

- ♦ Start off by telling your children that strangers are people that you don't know.
- ♦ Then ask them who a stranger is. You might get some wild answers. They will almost always say that a stranger is a bad guy, but have no idea what they look like.
- ♦ You need to point out that anyone you do not know, you stay away from. If they want to ask a question they should say no and walk away. Remember if a possible molester can start talking to a child then the trust starts to begin. Best to say no at the beginning.
- ♦ How well do you know your baby sitters, daycare workers, etc.?
- ♦ Keep in mind that the majority of sexual abuse cases are done by someone the child knows.

IT IS VERY IMPORTANT FOR CHILDREN TO KNOW:

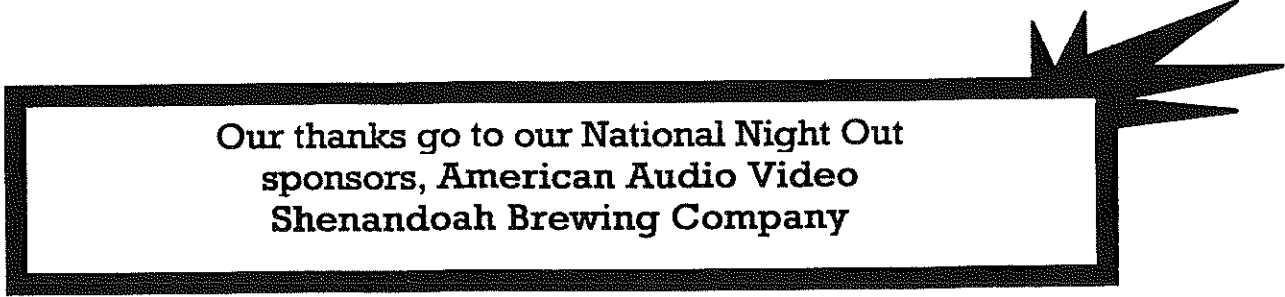
- ♦ Their name, address and phone number. A child is literally helpless if they cannot express themselves. They can have more control and confidence if they can help themselves.
- ♦ How to use 911. It is very important for them to learn this.
- ♦ Explain to your children who to look to for help when they need it; police officer, nurse, fireman, people in uniform. Also employees of retail stores, or people who wear name tags are usually people they can ask for help.

THE PARENTS THEMSELVES SHOULD:

- ♦ Have current pictures, videos, etc. of their children.
- ♦ Be able to sit with their children and speak about your bodies, every part of your body. You should not feel uncomfortable in speaking frankly to your children. If the parents don't want to talk about this then the children won't. If something has happened to them then they are less likely to talk about it.
- ♦ Explain the difference between good touch and bad touch.
- ♦ Don't send mixed messages to your kids. Do not force a child to hug or kiss someone if they don't want to. Doing this will make them think that forcing yourself on them is ok. We do not want this.
- ♦ We want to teach kids respect, but they should be given the right to say no when they feel something is wrong.

OTHER FACTORS PARENTS SHOULD CONSIDER:

- ♦ Do not place names on anything they may wear or carry. Name plates on bikes, anything that might give someone the advantage with a child.
- ♦ Try to dress your child the same as other children. If they stand out, such as coming off a bus wearing a tie this makes that child different. This could catch the eye of the bad guy.
- ♦ Safety in numbers. The more children together doing things together, the safer they are.
- ♦ Anyone below the age of eight should never be left alone at home for any reason.
- ♦ Explaining to children the importance of no shortcuts: such as alleyways, through the woods, in between houses, etc. Stay in public view.
- ♦ Explain to your children that they should trust their instincts. When they find themselves in an uncomfortable situation, make sure they know they can say no. If a child feels threatened, explain for them to yell, scream, run to where other people are, for help.



Our thanks go to our National Night Out
sponsors, American Audio Video
Shenandoah Brewing Company

*National Night Out
August 4 7-10pm
Kincaid Avenue Circle**

*City Park Homes Bake Off
Bring your favorite dessert to share,
Win prizes!*

*A 'Drive-In' movie, courtesy of
American Audio Video*

*plus, Uncle Eddies Rain Room, Kids Activities and Games,
Home and Personal Safety Information, and more!*

**if the 'Circle', located in the 6900 block of Kincaid Ave is under road construction, watch for
signs throughout the community announcing alternate location.*

NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH BOOK SALE

Neighborhood Watch will purchase space in the CPCA Yard Sale on September 12 as a fundraiser for new NW magnetic signs, future newsletters, supplies, National Night Out and other community activities. If you have books that you can donate, please call. Now is the time to clean off those shelves and prepare to stock up again for fall and winter reading! I hope to see you at the Yard Sale!

Patrollers specials...

Wine and Cheese Social, August 15, 6:30p.m.

We would like to say thank you to those who give such support to City Park's crime prevention efforts. All patrollers and their families are invited. Hors d'ourves and non-alcoholic beverages will also be served.

This month's patrol activities...Best Lawn/Garden/Home Improvement Awards
Next month, a crime prevention scavenger hunt! Check the Watch box and Patrollers newsletter (due to arrive soon) for more information.