

NECOP article, page 3

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Tuesday, April 20, 2010

Dear Citizen:

Two weeks ago, the Waverly neighborhood was shaken by a pair of violent incidents. On April 8th, 72-year-old man was picking up dinner at a neighborhood carry-out restaurant when he was shot during a robbery. Just two days later, a young man was shot on the street just blocks from a busy farmer's market. The rash of recent crime in the Waverly community has prompted city police to increase patrols, and Mayor Stephanie Rawlings-Blake joined City Council colleagues, City officials and area residents in a show of solidarity as they walked together down Greenmount Avenue. Since the recent violence, additional police have been patrolling the area, and Waverly residents are taking a stand against crime.



So this week's edition of The Neighborhood News is focused on community crimefighting, and how you can help prevent crime in your neighborhood. A key ingredient of strong, healthy neighborhoods is residents' determination to reclaim their authority over the streets where they live. In today's Neighborhood Spotlight below, we highlight several neighborhood groups with strong crime prevention strategies in collaboration with Baltimore City Police. We hope that your community gets ideas and draws inspiration from their experiences, so that all Baltimore neighborhoods can be Better, Safer and Stronger.

## FOCUS ON...Community Crimefighting

### Citizens on Patrol Program

Citizens on Patrol, or C.O.P., are groups of citizens organized to patrol their neighborhoods. They are an additional set of "eyes and ears" for the local police. C.O.P. programs are an effective tool for crime prevention. Patrols send a message to both residents and potential criminals that the community is a strong and cohesive unit.

Communities have different needs and the structure of the C.O.P. program will vary from neighborhood to neighborhood. Most C.O.P. groups once a month and vary their schedule, so criminals are unable to identify if there is a routine. However, some C.O.P. groups patrol as often as 2-4 days a week if they have a strong enough volunteer base. Patrols can be done on foot or by vehicle.

C.O.P. participants are observers ONLY. They report criminal and suspicious activity to the police and should not attempt to get involved. Police support is also provided in different ways based on community needs.

### Operation Crime Watch

Operation Crime Watch is designed to prevent and reduce crime in Baltimore by creating and supporting neighborhood-based block watch and citizen patrol programs through a partnership between the citizens of Baltimore, the Mayor's Office on Criminal Justice, the Baltimore City Police Department and the Washington / Baltimore High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area (HIDTA). Citizens and police officers will support each other in preventing and reducing crime through more effective communication and by creating problem-solving relationships appropriate to each community.

For more information about Citizens on Patrol or Operation Crime Watch please contact: James Timpson, Liaison 443-984-2371 or james.timpson@baltimorecity.gov

### **Block Watch**

Operation Crime Watch's Block Watch Program has three operating principles:

**Citizens provide additional sets of eyes and ears for the police.** You shift your attention to be more aware of others and your environment. You alert the police to a problem in your community by calling 9-1-1, 3-1-1 or (410) 666-DRUG (3784). You provide information to the police by attending monthly Community Council meetings for your police district.

**Citizens stay safe at all times.** By using your confidential Crime Watch number, you can report crime and remain anonymous to the police. While you are on patrol, you do not assume the role of the police, but move away neighborhood trouble while you are on patrol.

**Citizens form neighborhood networks to unite against crime.** You look out for your neighbors and they look out for you. Ordinary activities like dog-walking, taking out the trash and neighborhood strolls turn into neighborhood watch activities. Operation Crime Watch's Block Watch Program is designed to stop or discourage the criminal by decreasing the opportunity for crime.

## **CALL TO ACTION: Sign up for Crime Watch Numbers**

### **What is a Crime Watch number?**

A Crime Watch number, also known as a "Block Watch" number, is a unique, seven-digit number issued to you by the Baltimore Police Department. It is a confidential identification number that you give to the 9-1-1 Operator after dialing "9-1-1" to make sure that the police officer responding to your call does not come to your door. Once you give your Crime Watch number to the 9-1-1 Operator, your name, phone number and address will not be given to the police, and the police officer in the responding patrol car will not know who made the 9-1-1 call or the phone number or address that it came from.

### **How do I get a Crime Watch Number?**

You can get a Crime Watch Number in a number of ways.

1. Contact the Community Relations officers of your [local police district](#).
2. Contact the Mayor's Office of Criminal Justice at (443) 984-2371 or (443) 984-2372 extension # 2372.
3. Apply online by visiting the [Crime Watch Number Application Page](#)
4. You can also [download an Operation Crime Watch application](#), fill out and send to Brandon Scott at brandon.scott@baltimorecity.gov or via US Mail to Mayor's Office of Neighborhoods, 250 City Hall, Baltimore, Maryland 21202.

## **NEIGHBORHOOD SPOTLIGHT**

In this issue we highlight several groups who are working conscientiously with Baltimore City Police to keep their neighborhoods safe. Although their tactics may differ slightly, they all are geared toward maximizing community involvement in preventing crime in Baltimore's neighborhoods.

### NorthEast Citizens Patrol

Since January 2000 the NorthEast Citizens Patrol (NECOP) has been preventing crime in Northeast Baltimore. It is a partnership of the HARBEL Community Organization, the Northeast Police District, and the communities of Northeast Baltimore. Now in its 10th year of operation, it has reduced violent crime in Northeast Baltimore by 26 percent and property crime by 24 percent. It has been a significant component of the crime prevention plan of seven different commanders of the Northeast Police District. It covers over 30 communities in this area of the city.



The North Harford Road community has consistently participated in the NECOP since its inception. When this community's crime is compared with others in Northeast Baltimore of similar demographics, this community's crime is 50 percent to 75 percent less than communities who have not participated in the Patrol. Participation in the NECOP can also have an immediate impact on a community's safety. Several years ago, the Ednor Gardens -Lakeside community was suffering from a spike in street robberies. They became consistent participants in the NECOP. The robberies stopped, and the community was stabilized. Its crime rates have remained low ever since.

This has all been accomplished by citizens patrolling their neighborhoods every Thursday and Friday night, and every other Saturday night from 7:30 PM to 11:00 PM. They are in contact by radio with a Baltimore Police Officer dedicated to the Patrol. As they see suspicious activity, they report it to the officer, who immediately responds and abates the issue.

[NECOP Northeast Citizens on Patrol website](#)

### Shomrim

In 2005, in response to an increase in break-ins and muggings in Northwest Baltimore, a group of concerned citizens founded Shomrim of Baltimore, Inc. as a 501(c)3 non-profit community organization to improve public safety and security. Shomrim (Hebrew for "guardians") volunteers use radio communication to respond to their community's public safety needs 24/7.



Currently, Shomrim has 45 volunteer incident responders who provide security and safety assistance in Northwest Baltimore neighborhoods in parts of Baltimore City and Baltimore County. They work very closely with both police departments by assisting them in deterring crime, acting as additional "eyes and ears" in their neighborhoods, helping police make more arrests and improve the overall quality of life in Northwest Baltimore.

[Video on Shomrim from Baltimore Sun 11/30/09](#)  
[Shomrim website](#)

### Southern District Police and Community Relations Council

The Southern District Police and Community Relations Council is a group of volunteer citizens who are dedicated to the improvement of relations between Southern District police and the communities they serve. The Council assists in crime prevention by training residents how to report crimes in a safe way using Operation Crime Watch numbers. They also assist in the prevention of



juvenile delinquency by supporting and providing funds for the Southern District Police Explorers program.

In 2005 The Council's Citizens on Patrol (COP) program was invited to England to help establish a similar program in Middlesbrough, a town of 135,000 located near the Scottish border. Although several police districts in Baltimore have COP groups, the Southern District uses a different approach: instead of driving patrols, the group walks the area and the police actively participate. This method encourages interaction with area residents, increases visibility and allows the group to enter narrow alleys and other areas inaccessible by cars. Another benefit to walking is the police presence. Volunteers and police patrol together, sharing ideas and information on how to make a community safer. Walking also gives the police the opportunity to approach residents in a positive environment and demonstrate a proactive approach to crime prevention.

[Southern District Police and Community Relations Council website](#)

### **Northwest Citizens Patrol**

The Northwest Citizens Patrol (NWCP) is an organization of over 500 volunteers who patrol the neighborhoods of Northwest Baltimore. The NWCP has a wide range of services available to assist the public.

The NWCP runs a highly successful program for victims of crime called Project Recourse. Whenever a serious crime occurs in the NWCP area, the victim is automatically contacted. Experienced advisors help the victim deal with the police, prosecutors and the courts. Project Recourse pursues criminals through the justice system, and has been very effective in removing criminals from the neighborhood by keeping them in jail.



NWCP Patrol cars guard neighborhood events and escort pedestrians safely to their destinations. Patrols also give special attention to homes whose owners are out of town or on vacation. The NWCP helps prevent auto theft by offering advice on car locks and alarms. Use of these devices has greatly reduced auto theft, the number one crime in the NWCP area.

[Northwest Citizens Patrol website](#)

### **Southwestern District Police Community Relations Council**

Baltimore City Police know that the Southwestern District has strong community involvement, which has been invaluable to their crime fighting efforts over the years. The Community Relations Council, led by Steve Herlth, has one of the more active Citizens on Patrol groups in the city.

## **Crime Tips**

### **Mark Your Property**

- Mark your valuables with your driver's license number followed by the letters "MD."
- Create a log of items most likely to be stolen including make, model and serial number for each item.
- Display the BlockWatch sticker to discourage thieves.

### **Secure Your Home**

- Perform a residential security survey of your house.

- Make changes to your doors, locks, landscaping and lighting to decrease the opportunities for crime.
- Take measures to make your car or truck a less attractive target: The next time you leave your car, leave it empty .

### **Neighborhood Action**

- Over time, recruit a network of block watch block captains to be the working core of your public safety committee, mapping the location of your volunteers and crime so that eventually the entire neighborhood is covered.
- Block captains organize block meetings so that each volunteer receives a Block Watch packet, has a personal Neighborhood Network Map and a Crime Watch number and takes part in Operation Identification.
- Identify naturally-occurring social activities and elevate them to block watch activities. Everyday activities like dog-walking, staying-at-home and taking out the trash become organizing tools for increasing the number of eyes and ears on the alert.
- Recruit your block watch volunteers to become involved with your neighborhood Citizens on Patrol.
- Work with local officials to install Block Watch and Citizens on Patrol signs at the gateways to your neighborhood.
- Celebrate your neighborhood through block parties, neighborhood socials and involvement in city-wide events..

### **More Resources**

[Baltimore Police Safety Tips](#)  
[Northeast Citizens on Patrol Safety Tips](#)  
[Crimefighting Directory](#)  
[Mayor's Office of Criminal Justice](#)  
[Baltimore City Police](#)

## **Baltimore City Government Public Meetings: Get Involved**

The true citizen is much more than a mere taxpayer. To truly feel a sense of ownership in your community, you should stay informed about and become directly involved in shaping government policy decisions affecting your community. Many of the City's decisions on issues impacting your neighborhood—land use, zoning, public health and safety—are made in a collaborative process in public meetings. We encourage you to take advantage of this opportunity to make your voice heard. Citizen involvement is crucial to helping City officials and departments determine the best course of action.

Below is a list of Baltimore City Government public meetings that you can attend to stay engaged and involved in matters affecting you and your neighborhood.

### **City Council Legislative Calendar**

The City Council is the City of Baltimore's legislative body . City Council meetings are held 1-4 times per month on Monday nights at 5:00 pm in the City Council Chamber on the 4th floor of City Hall. The public is encouraged to attend City Council meetings, but they may not testify at meetings. Public testimony is permitted at committee hearings, which are held on a regular basis in Council Chamber or in one of the 4th floor conference rooms.

### **Planning Commission Meeting Schedule**

The Planning Commission prepares and updates plans showing the physical development of the City. The Commission reviews all proposals for the subdivision of land within the City and all proposed amendments to the City's Zoning Ordinance. The Planning Commission is a nine-

member board composed of: six citizens appointed by the Mayor, the Director of Public Works or his designee, a member of the City Council, and the Mayor or her representative. The Commission meets regularly throughout the year, and its meetings are held in the Phoebe B. Stanton Boardroom, 417 East Fayette Street, 8th floor.

#### **Zoning and Appeals Board Docket**

The Municipal Zoning and Appeals Board hears and determines all zoning appeals, basing its decisions on what will promote the health, security, morals, and general welfare of the community. Zoning and Appeals Board hearings are held on Tuesdays at 1:00 pm in City Hall, Room 215.

#### **Liquor Board Hearing Schedule**

The Board of Liquor License Commissioners is an agency of the State responsible for regulating the sale, storage, and distribution of retail alcoholic beverages in Baltimore City. Liquor Board hearings are on Thursdays at 1:00 pm in City Hall, Room 215.

#### **Board of Estimates Hearing Schedule**

The Board of Estimates formulates and executes the fiscal policy of the City. The Board of Estimates conducts formal hearings in regard to operating and capital budget requests by City agencies; prepares a proposed Ordinance of Estimates to be submitted to the City Council and is the entity responsible for awarding contracts and supervising all purchasing by the City. Meetings of the Board are held in on Wednesday mornings at 9:00 am in City Hall, Room 215.

## **COMMUNITY CALENDAR**

For a complete listing of community events, please see our [online events calendar](#).

### **Friday is the deadline for nominating Baltimore's Top Neighborhood Moms!**

For the fourth straight year, Mayor Stephanie Rawlings-Blake is in search of Baltimore's "Top Neighborhood Moms." The contest honors those dedicated women who have given selflessly to make Baltimore's neighborhoods Better, Safer and Stronger.

[Print nomination form](#)

Nomination forms may be e-mailed to [marva.williams@baltimorecity.gov](mailto:marva.williams@baltimorecity.gov) or faxed to 410-783-5385. Each contest winner and a guest will be invited to join Mayor Stephanie Rawlings-Blake at a special luncheon at the Rawlings-Fulton Clubhouse at Forest Park Golf Course on Thursday, May 6, 2010. For more information: Contact Marva Williams by telephone at (410) 545-7983 or via e-mail at [marva.williams@baltimorecity.gov](mailto:marva.williams@baltimorecity.gov)

### **Baltimore Retail Week - April 16 -25**

<http://www.baltimoreretailweek.com>

### **Baltimore Green Week: April 17 -24**

<http://baltimoregreenworks.com/events/baltimore-green-week/>

### **How to Start your Own Neighborhood Green Project**

Thursday, April 22, 6pm-8:30pm, The Door, 219 Chester St .  
Consult with a professional landscape architect for free!

### **DIY Weatherization and Energy Saving Techniques for the Baltimore Rowhome**

Saturday, April 24 10am-noon The Door, 219 Chester St .  
Learn how to properly install weatherstripping, caulk, low-flow showerheads, water heater blankets and more!

### **Main Street Market and Music – Brooklyn**

Saturday, April 24 noon-6pm, Park and Ride lot between S. Hanover and Potee Streets

Live music, arts/crafts, food and BayBrook Spring Pansy Fundraiser to support local green initiatives. [www.TogetherBrooklyn.org](http://www.TogetherBrooklyn.org)

### **The Friends of Daisy Field Health Fair**

Saturday, April 24, 10:00 am - 3:00pm

Daisy Field, N. Hilton St. and Monastery Ave

Participating agencies include Alzheimer's Association, American Red Cross, Mass Transit Administration, Baltimore City Fire Department, Meals on Wheels, Baltimore City Police Department, House of Ruth, Smoke Free Bus, and more. Music by WSMJ 104.3 and Heaven 600. More information: 410-336-3663.

### **Johns Hopkins University Spring Fair**

April 23-25 Friday, 12 to 7 pm; Saturday, 10 am to 7 pm; Sunday, 10 am to 6 pm

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

### **The Foreclosure Crisis and Our Neighborhoods**

Thursday, April 29, 7:00-9:00 pm

Senator Theatre, 5904 York Road

Are you a community leader or advocate concerned with the impact of foreclosures in our neighborhoods? Join Citizens Planning and Housing Association to learn how communities, nonprofits, CPHA, and other partners have been addressing this issue. Resource packets will be distributed to all community leaders. Pre-registration is recommended and appreciated. For details, list of panelists, and registration visit [www.cphabaltimore.org](http://www.cphabaltimore.org) or call 410-539-1369.

The Neighborhood NEWS is **your** newsletter. We would like this to be two-way communication. If you have neighborhood events you'd like to submit for our calendar, or suggestions for a topic to feature, you may reply to this e-mail or submit them to us at [NeighborhoodNews@baltimorecity.gov](mailto:NeighborhoodNews@baltimorecity.gov).

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