

Block Watcher

A Newsletter for Block Watch Captains

June 2007
Issue



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“This above all, to refuse to be a victim.”

-Margaret Atwood

Questions or comments?
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Crime Prevention Information Fair

The third annual Crime Prevention information Fair will be held on Saturday, July 21st. This year, we have moved the venue to Lowe’s Home Improvement located at 1050 E Sunset Dr. We will be on site from 9 am until 2 pm.

The Fair is jointly sponsored by the Bellingham Police Department and the Whatcom County Sheriff’s Office.

There will be several law enforcement and fire department displays, safety information on hand, along with other prevention related vendors, an on-site shred truck (this was a huge success when we hosted one in April), and a bike safety rodeo sponsored by our local Kiwanis Club.

The CPIF is our kick-off event for National Night

Out Against Crime. KAFE will be doing a live broadcast to promote the event as well.

If you are hosting a NNO event in your neighborhood, come down and see me at the Crime Prevention fair to pick up your goodie bag and complimentary BBQ apron to the first 50 people who register.

The crime prevention philosophy is one that encourages people to work together to make their neighborhoods a safe and connected place to live. Crime prevention begins with you! We hope to have all of the 23 neighborhoods represented at both events and truly extend the reach of safe neighborhoods to all active neighborhood organizations.

So, if you missed the Shred-A-Thon in April, bring your



Officer Ortega demonstrates the skills of our Hazardous Devices Disposal robot, “Wilson”.

file boxes (up to two per person) and grocery bags (three per person) full of personal information to be shredded on site by Sound Shredding and Recycling...and pick up some free stuff while you are there!

Vehicle Prowls: Update and Reminder!

As of May 22nd when I ran the numbers, we have had 126 vehicle prowls reported within the city limits for the month of May. 170 prowls were reported in April.

The numbers always increase as the weather warms, so some of this is fairly predictable. What I did find of con-

cern when reviewing these reports was that several victims stated they had left their cars unlocked.

An unlocked car is an opportunity for crime. When the car is entered, even if nothing of value is discovered, it is a success for the criminal. Oftentimes it emboldens them

to take the next step and force a door or break a window on the next car, which could be yours or that of your neighbor.

Please remember to be proactive and not give car prowlers a reason to return to your neighborhood. Lock it up!



Disaster Preparedness: Neighborhood Mapping Block By Block

On May 22nd members of the Mayor's Neighborhood Advisory Committee met as the Neighborhood Disaster Preparedness subcommittee. This committee has organized to address the topic of Neighborhood mapping as presented by the City's Office of Emergency Management.

Why is this a critical issue? An emergency and a disaster are two different things. In an emergency, public safety officers will be able to respond to help citizens. In the event of a disaster (ie. Earthquake) it is quite possible that large portions of resources will be unavailable and citizens will need to be prepared to respond to their immediate needs, the needs of their family and **the needs of their neighbors.**

Neighborhood mapping is a simple, no nonsense way to ensure that everyone in your neighborhood is prepared to respond to this type of incident. This program is easy to understand and provides everyone in the neighborhood with a resource pamphlet that contains step by step instructions on what to do when faced with a disaster.

Hopefully, by working through the Neighborhood Associations and smaller neighborhood areas (Block Watch groups, Condo Associations, etc) we will be able to help prepare residents for this type of incident. This is a natural continuation of the block watch philosophy of "neighborhood awareness". As such, I have chosen this as the educational theme of National Night Out Against Crime. See below for details.

EARN MORE ABOUT NATIONAL NIGHT OUT



National Night Out Against Crime

It always seems like I start talking about National Night Out *really* early, but it is only a few months away! This event is a great opportunity for you to breathe some life into your Block Watch or just get together with neighbors and celebrate neighborhood safety.

This is the 7th year that the City of Bellingham has been involved in National Night Out Against Crime. I encourage you to work with your neighborhood associations to promote the idea of safe

neighborhood at a larger level as well. What a great opportunity to get more folks on board by asking them to host an event in their block.

Our local theme this year will be addressing the task of neighborhood mapping to assist residents in disaster preparedness. I think this is a timely necessity.

Please get your event registrations turned in early so that I can accommodate those of you who wish to have a special guest at your event. Include any special requests for topics you might like to discuss and I will try to provide a "specialist"

to meet your needs.

Last year we had neighborhood guests from the Bellingham Police and Fire Depts, Whatcom Dispute Resolution, Whatcom Humane Society, Bellingham City Council and more.

It is always great to see how each different neighborhood puts their own personal touch on the evening, no two events are the same.

Remember that the first 50 people to register an event with me will receive a complimentary NNO barbeque apron!

