

MPNA News

The Melrose Park Neighbors Association

Volume 2 – Number 63

From MPNA President – Andy Rudin

Sunday, March 01, 2009

Help with our email list

A virus hit my computer and zapped the MPNA mailing list. I have been able to restore it somewhat. I never sent out the list of people who receive this email newsletter. The newsletter is sent blind to the recipients, so I too have no record of the recipients in the sent mail file. You can be of great help in reconstructing our network, even making it better, if you could tell your neighbors that they are welcome on this list. Just have them email me.

MPNA

EarthDay is April 18

EarthDay is coming up on Saturday, April 18. Are there any particular projects that you would like to see all of us accomplish on that day? In the past, we have done maintenance on the plantings near the Melrose Park SEPTA station, cleaned the rubbish out of Mill Run (the stream that flows along Coventry Avenue to New Second Street), picked up rubbish along our streets (the maximum so far was 50 garbage bags... wanna top that?). What do you think we should do this EarthDay?

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Community Supported Agriculture

From Ruth Loew/Bob Tabak “ We've belonged to a CSA (Community Supported Agriculture) group for 6 or 7 years now. Several other MPNA members also belong. The subscription forms for summer '09 just came out.

”They deliver at the apartments/condos right next to the MP train station. Deliveries are on Tuesday evenings, June through October. The charge is \$560 for the season, payable in installments. Of course households can share a subscription. It comes out to \$25.45/week. You don't get a choice of what produce you receive; it's whatever is ready for harvest that week. The family that owns the farm is into sustainable and organic farming practices.

”I know there are a number of other CSAs out there. We've found this one (Herrcastle Farm in Lancaster, owned by Ed & Judy Herrmann) to be excellent. Every week there's a surprise bag brimming with ultra-fresh fruits, veggies, and herbs. Sometimes there are little extras -- cider in the fall, eggs if the crop pickings are slim that day, flowers, recipes. And the Herrmanns are wonderful folks.

If you're interested in joining, email haeusa19@epix.net. Or ask us for a copy of the membership form.

The more of us join, the more likely the Herrmanns are to keep a Melrose Park dropoff point on their itinerary. So share this info with your friends and neighbors.

MPNA

Lowering Your Carbon Footprint

How and Why Your Home's Energy Performance Matters

Emma Raymont, Cheltenham resident, engineer and green building consultant with MaGrann Associates will speak on:

- How your home fits into the big energy picture
- What really works to save energy at home
- How efficiency and comfort can work together
- What's happening in Pennsylvania to support greening our homes

DATE: Wednesday, March 4, 2009

TIME: 6:45pm to 8:45pm

LOCATION: Elkins Park Library (563 Church Rd, Elkins Park)

Space is limited. PLEASE RSVP BY MARCH 2nd TO: Lorna Rosenberg at

LSrosenberg28@gmail.com or 215-779-1953

Neighborhood watches are on the front lines in bad economy

Reprint of a CNN article suggested by [Christos Christou](#)

Tuesday, February 24, 2009

By Lisa Respers France CNN Tuesday, February 24, 2009

(CNN) -- In times past, Jerry Borbon would not have thought twice about the backpack-wearing young man he spotted strolling down a street in his Miami, Florida, community. But times have changed. Now he's learning to trust his suspicions more.

A neighbor saw the man trying to break into a house and called police. "There was nobody at home at the house," Borbon said. "[The alleged thief] didn't know that a neighbor was watching from her window." Borbon is a Citizens' Crime Watch volunteer for his Westchester neighborhood in south Miami, where residents have been trained to be alert to suspicious behavior and report it promptly to police.

With the [economic](#) downturn, neighborhood watch groups are proving to be a first line of defense in battling property crimes. The Police Executive Research Forum, a Washington, D.C.-based independent research organization made up of local and state police officials, released a survey in January showing that 44 percent of police departments reported increases in crimes they believed could be attributed to the economic crisis.

Of the departments surveyed, 39 percent reported an increase in [robberies](#), and 32 percent said they had seen a rise in burglaries. Those surveyed also reported a 40 percent increase in thefts, including those of GPS devices from cars and other "opportunistic" crimes. The survey also revealed that while quality-of-life crimes are rising, budget money is falling. Of the 233 responding police agencies, 63 percent said they expected their total funding for the next fiscal year to be slashed.

And as police departments grapple with budget cuts and hiring freezes, neighbors are stepping up and battling back against [burglary](#), theft and vandalism. Police Chief Dean Esserman of Providence, Rhode Island, said that for a time, his department saw a dramatic increase in copper thefts resulting from empty, foreclosed homes and the increased value of copper on the commodities market.

Things have gotten much better in Providence, Esserman said, but other communities haven't been as fortunate. "Most cities are having a tough time," said Esserman, who added that his department is dedicated to community policing and has a strong partnership with neighborhood watch groups. "In the last year or two, the economics have been really rough."

Borbon said his community has definitely noticed more criminal activity. "We've never had so many problems before," he said. "Nowadays, you have so many people just walking around pretending, leaving fliers, doing marketing surveys or some such baloney. But what they really are doing is looking for opportunities, watching to see who is or isn't in their homes."

Matt Peskin is executive director of the National Association of Town Watch, a nonprofit crime prevention organization that works with law enforcement and crime watch groups around the country.

Peskin, who estimates that there are about 20,000 neighborhood watch groups nationwide, said there has been an increase in requests for information on starting groups from all over the country including urban, suburban and rural communities. "In a lot of cases, there are so many communities out there that already have groups that when you start to get new ones, you know that something's up," he said. "It does seem to be somewhat tied to the economy."

Martin Floss, a professor and director of the Institute for Law and Justice at Hilbert College in Hamburg, New York, said that for the past 15 years, crime rates across the board have dropped to historically low levels. Floss, a former [crime](#) prevention coordinator for a neighborhood in Buffalo, New York, said that as the economy worsens, property crimes tend to increase. Well-trained neighborhood watch groups can be great assets to local law enforcement, Floss said. "If you can get them to organize, to look out for each other and to work closely with the police, that is only going to do good things," he said.

A spate of vandalism and petty theft in his Las Vegas, Nevada, neighborhood prompted Doug Puppel to organize a neighborhood watch program in his area. Like Florida, Nevada has been hard hit by the crumbling economy and housing market crisis. Puppel said residents in such areas are motivated by concern for their families and community. "What's going on is not unique to Las Vegas, but what's unique that I'm seeing is that people are pulling together," he said. "It's probably easier for a person to start a neighborhood watch today than it would have been if times were better."

Crystal Zohner lives in a gated community in Las Vegas and said her neighbors are rallying to send a clear message that they are united against crime. "It seems like now, since the economy has changed, [thieves] are getting a little bit more sophisticated and a little more brazen," she said. "It's time to get back to simpler times, when we did look out for each other."

Robert Thompson, neighborhood captain for a watch group in Roswell, New Mexico, said that with police so busy and resources stretched so thin, members know they have to be vigilant when they patrol their neighborhood. But they also know that they are not the police, he said. "They are not going to confront anybody, but they are the eyes and ears," Thompson said. "I feel a sense of satisfaction because I am trying to make a difference in my community."

The key to reducing crime in communities may be found in history books. University of Arizona economist Price Fishback has studied urban crime rates during the Great Depression and said there was a correlation between getting people back to work and decreasing crime. "If you are worried about crime, training programs and things that take people's time up help to reduce crime rates during a period when things are getting worse," he said. "For a 1 percent increase in employment, you found about a 1 percent reduction in the crime rate."

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Community Trend newspapers all over the place

Community Trend is a tabloid weekly that used to be distributed by the US Postal Service. A month or two ago, the publisher apparently made a decision to hire someone to pack the *Trend* in a thin plastic wrapper and then to flip it out of a car window onto our porches, front steps, lawn, curb, whatever. In our area of the neighborhood near Oak Avenue, Crest Avenue and Valley Road, past issues of the *Trend* are lying all over the place. Apparently the aim of the *Trend* flipper is not very accurate. So, the publication, in my view has turned into a case of littering. I would like to know if any of you have the same feeling about this. If so, I will contact the *Trend* editor about this. Let me know.

MPNA

USED ELECTRONICS DRIVE –

Ethical Recycling

DATE: Saturday & Sunday, March 28 & 29 (rain or shine) TIME: 11am 3pm

PLACE: Cedarbrook Middle School, 300 Longfellow Road, Wyncote, PA

COST: \$1.00 per pound (ethical recycling fee)

CONTACT: sarah@ttfwatershed.org, 215.208.1613

They will accept:

Televisions
Computers
Monitors
Keyboards
Drives
Cables
Cords
Peripherals
Fax Machines
Scanners
Laptops
Stereo Equipment

Speakers
CD & DVD Players
Telephones
Remote Controls
VCR's
Projectors
Digital Cameras
PDAs
Speakers
Radios
Answering Machines
Camcorders

Electric Typewriters
Video Game Systems
Pagers
Microwaves
Toasters
USB Media
Magnetic Media
Zip Disks
Audio Tapes
Floppy Diskettes
Ink Cartridges

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Donations Needed for Used Book Sales at the EP Library

Pickup Available – Just call 215-635-5000.

WANTED - CD's Video Tapes, Audio Tapes, Vintage Magazines, Comic Books, Software, LP Phonograph Records & ALL KINDS OF BOOKS.

NOT WANTED - Reader's Digest Condensed Books, Old Textbooks & Law Books, Scratched Phonograph Records, Older Encyclopedias, Underlined or Highlighted Books, Partial Sets of Reference Books, Moldy, Water-damaged Books.

All donations of books, videos & CDs are tax-deductible. The dates for the coming book sales are:
March 21-22, April 18-19 and May 16-17, 2009 MPNA

This Newsletter

If you have any suggestions for items for this newsletter, feel free to email them to me at andrewrudin@earthlink.net MPNA

MPNA memberships

Membership in MPNA helps pay for plantings, signage, and many other things. Annual dues are \$10 per individual, \$20 per household. Send your contribution to MPNA Board member Jim Muldoon, 106 Parkview Road, Cheltenham, PA 19012. The membership cycle is the calendar year. MPNA

MPNA Board

Members of the MPNA Board are Andrew Rudin, Phil Kates, Michael Shectman, Jim Muldoon and Albert Fried-Cassorla. If you are interested in helping out with MPNA, please email me at andrewrudin@earthlink.net. This newsletter is available or will be soon on our website – www.melroseparkneighbors.org MPNA

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