

# WATCHWORD

TAMPA NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH NEWSLETTER 🏠 JUNE 2006

## The Tampa Police Department's Special Operations Division

### 20th ANNUAL GOVERNOR'S HURRICANE CONFERENCE

*By: Officer Veronica Hills*

Members of the Tampa Police Department's Special Incident Management Unit, (S.I.M.U.), District-III and the Police Department's Fiscal Bureau recently attended the 20th Annual Governor's Hurricane Conference, held in Fort Lauderdale, Florida. Governor Jeb Bush's message to attendee focused on fostering a "culture preparedness" in the state of Florida. Governor Bush addressed attendees of the conference on May 10, 2006 at which time he stressed the importance of preparedness and team effort in the planning and preparation for this upcoming hurricane season.

The conference provided a forum for emergency management stakeholders to share lessons and foster relationships that are important in times of need. Governor Bush expressed that the conference is an example of the daily commitment of the state and local

governments, businesses, voluntary agencies and the private sector that has made Florida's response system second to none.

The important information gleaned from this years Governor's Hurricane Conference can be summed up in one word "PREPAREDNESS". The Tampa Police Department is committed to hurricane readiness. Planning on a logistical and practical level have been vital components in this years overall hurricane readiness efforts. Preparedness is the key!

Important information will follow in upcoming articles of the Watchword Newsletter that will assist you in your hurricane planning needs. Should you have any questions please contact one of our emergency planners at 276-3715.

stronger community - and a stronger America. By making sure they are better prepared at home, in their schools, in their places of worships, and in their businesses and factories, citizens can do much to minimize loss of life and ensure that their community survives a natural disaster or a terrorist attack.

Natural disasters can frequently be predicted so that people have some time to prepare. But criminals and terrorists strike without warning, making it essential to have in place well-planned responses to such events.

#### Tips

- Develop a communications plan for your family. Choose someone who does not live with you (preferably an out-of-town relative or friend) whom you and other family members can contact to check on each other in the event that you are separated during a disaster. Carry that person's contact information in your purse or wallet.
- Make sure children know their last name, phone number, address, and number for the out-of-town contact person.
- Make sure every member of your family knows an alternate route home.
- If family members can't get home, designate a meeting place.
- Know your community's emergency evacuation route.
- Learn how to shut off utilities such as gas, electricity, and water.
- Assemble an emergency preparedness kit that will allow your family to camp out for three days. Assume you'll be without electricity and running water.
- Store your emergency supplies in sealed containers such as plastic tubs - taped shut.

## PREPAREDNESS

*By: MPO M. Fleita*

The attacks of September 11, 2001 and the more recent loss of life and property in Hurricanes Rita and Katrina have renewed the public's focus on the need for disaster preparedness. While the debate rages about the role of government - at all levels - in preparedness for and recovery from tragedies such as these,

it's the citizens and communities most directly affected whose role is pivotal.

Therefore, preparedness must be a part of citizens' daily lives and, as such, can be something that will improve their neighborhoods and communities in the process. Together, they can unite for a

*continued on next page*

## PREPAREDNESS *continued*

- Keep cash on hand; automated teller machines won't be working if the power is out.
- Learn CPR and first aid to help with medical emergencies.
- Learn about emergency plans for your children's school or daycare center.
- If you're a teen, find out whether your school has a group of student volunteers to help out in emergency situations. If not, offer to help start such a group. Or start a School Crime Watch.
- Learn about your company's emergency plan. Practice the plan. Learn exit routes.
- Work with your Neighborhood Watch or civic association to create a disaster preparedness plan.

## MESSAGE FROM MARYANNE



**Maryanne Hunsberger**

I have some very exciting information from the City of Tampa's Neighborhood Relations Office to share with our Crime Watch groups. It is in reference to the 2006 City of Tampa Neighborhood & Hurricane Expo on June 17, 2006 from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. at Raymond James Stadium. This event is going to be FUN, FREE and INFORMATIVE.

There will be free parking available across the street from Gate D on Tampa Bay Boulevard (Tom McEwen Boulevard) between Himes and Dale Mabry. Gate D is the entrance to the fair/expo.

The purpose and goal of the neighborhood fair is to bring city government to the people. Attendees learn about city services with their families in a relaxed and enjoyable atmosphere.

# HOME SECURITY STARTS AT THE DOOR

*By: CPP Maryanne Hunsberger*

Burglars are basically lazy and will most likely attempt the doors and windows first. To prevent a break-in, we want to make it as hard for them as we possibly can. Let's start with the door. All exterior doors should be of heavy gauge metal or solid 1-3/4 "hardwood. Doors should fit tightly in their frames, with hinge pins on the inside (so the door opens to the inside). All entry doors should have a peephole or wide-angle viewer. Recently, some home invasion robberies that painfully illustrate the fact that a person should never open the door to anyone they don't know. Every external door should have a sturdy, well-installed deadbolt lock. Do not be tempted to rely on the knob-set for security purposes. Doorknobs should only be considered as a useful way to open and close the door-not to keep intruders out. The strongest deadbolt locks have a minimum one-inch throw bolt containing a hardened, saw-resistant steel insert. Make sure the cylinder of the lock has a steel guard A-ring around the key section. The

cylinder guard should be tapered, or it should rotate around the key section to prevent wrenching.

The best deadbolt in the world is virtually worthless if the strike plate on the doorframe is not properly secured. The strike plate should be installed with screws that are a minimum length of three inches. This allows the strike plate to be secured to the structural frame of the door, making it almost impossible to kick the door in when the deadbolt is activated.

Your Crime Prevention Teams have more suggestions and tips for securing your home, be sure to call and make an appointment for a home security survey of your home. Now that we have reviewed safety tips in reference to external doors perhaps you have some "homework" to do. In the meantime, remember to use the locks that you have and remind all members of your household to do the same.

Participants from the city include the Mayor, City Council, Chief of Police, Chief of Fire, administrators, department heads, firemen, police officers along with many of the talented, hardworking city employees who every day strive to make a positive difference in Tampa.

Each City of Tampa department will have an information booth. There will also be musical entertainment by Radio Disney, reading with the Mayor, football with police and firemen, arts & crafts, games, Tampa Police Department will be fingerprinting, LOTS of big city trucks, police helicopter and prizes raffled off throughout the day.

At the Hurricane Expo, Hillsborough County is partnering with the City of Tampa to help provide the attendees with valuable hurricane preparedness information. In addition, Tampa Fire Chief Dennis Jones is having his team

set up Tampa Fire Rescue's hurricane wind simulation machines. The Tampa Sports Authority graciously granted the Neighborhood & Community Relations Office permission to use the entire stadium. But for supervision and safety reasons, the fair will be limited to the service level of Raymond James Stadium which includes the player's locker room, Coach Gruden's office, the tunnel the Tampa bay Buccaneers run out and the entire football field.

The first 5,000 visitors receive a free "Tampa is My Home" black canvas tote bag filled with valuable information including coupons from event sponsors! Be sure to visit the webpage for this exciting event at: [www.tampagov.net/fair](http://www.tampagov.net/fair) be sure to share this information with your neighbors feel free to post this important information on your community web page.

# GRANT INFORMATION/ NEIGHBORHOOD RECOGNITION

*By: CPP Maryanne Hunsberger*

**Help us recognize those who are making a difference  
in your community.**

## Neighborhood Excellence Initiative

If you know someone making a difference in your community, let us know. Bank of America is looking for a few good neighbors. Through our Neighborhood Excellence Initiative, we will recognize and reward winners in the following three categories:

**Neighborhood Builders - Provides \$200,000 in general operating support and provides leadership training over two years to two nonprofit organizations working to create vibrant neighborhoods.**

Funding for operational support is \$100,000 annually over two years.

Recipients will be invited to send a senior executive and one emerging leaders to participate in specially designed leadership development program:

- Senior executives will gather for two 3-day workshops. Topics include: strategic thinking, business planning, leadership development and succession planning, long-term business growth and building a diverse funding base.

- Emerging leaders will gather for three 3-day workshops. Topics include: developing organizational management skills, managing strategic opportunities, forging alliances and building communities.

**Local Heroes - Recognizes five community heroes allowing recipients to direct a \$5,000 contribution to a qualified nonprofit of their choice.**

Outstanding community leaders selected as Local Heroes will be recognized at a public ceremony.

**Student Leaders - Recognizes five exemplary students who are committed to making a difference with a paid summer internship with a local community nonprofit and participation in a leadership program with local Bank of America Executives.**

For more information you can go to their website at: <http://www.bankofamerica.com/foundation>

The deadline for the Neighborhood Excellence Initiative applications is June 30, 2006.

## MORE GRANT INFORMATION

**The Angel Soft Angels in Action Awards Program** invites teachers, parents, guardians and friends to submit nominations to honor children, ages 8-18, who are doing extraordinary things to benefit their communities. One outstanding child or teen will be awarded \$15,000 for "Program of the Year." Two grand-prize winners from each age category will receive \$10,000 and ten finalists will receive \$1,000. The deadline is October 1.

For additional information, visit Angel Soft's website at: <http://www.angelsoft.com/angelsinaction/>.

**The Do Something Brick Award** will honor six outstanding leaders age 18 and under and three outstanding leaders age 19 to 25 who use their talents to strengthen their local communities in the areas of community building, health or the environment. Each of the "18 and under" winners will be awarded a \$5,000 higher education scholarship and a \$5,000 community grant to be directed by the award winner to the not-for-profit organization of his or her choice. Winners in the "19 to 25" category will each receive a \$10,000 community grant. The application deadline is October 25.

For more information, visit Do Something's web site at: <http://www.dosomething.org/>.

### 2006 TAMPA NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH ASSOCIATION BOARD MEMBERS

PRESIDENT:	SECRETARY:
Samuel Mobley	Thelma Davis

VICE PRESIDENT:	TREASURER:
Norbert Holz	Wayne Schnars

BOARD MEMBERS:  
Betty Dowd  
Flo Dickerson  
Kathy Otis

# 2007 NEIGHBORHOOD MINI-GRANT PROGRAM ORIENTATION BEGINS

*By: CPP Maryanne Hunsberger*

Neighborhood Mini-Grant Orientation classes are scheduled throughout the county in June for those who would like to become familiar with the mini-grant process. The mini-grant orientation class will review the application, grant criteria, projects that qualify for the mini-grant and answer any questions you have regarding the mini-grant. Here are three optional Orientation Meetings for applicants.

**Tuesday, June 13, 2006 - 6:30 p.m.**  
**Brandon Community Center**  
**502 East Sadie Street, Brandon**

**Thursday, June 15, 2006 - 6:30 p.m.**  
**Bloomingdale Regional Library**  
**1906 Bloomingdale Ave, Valrico**

**Tuesday, June 20, 2006 - 6:30 p.m.**  
**County Center, 601 East Kennedy**  
**26th floor, Conference Room A**  
**Downtown Tampa**

Neighborhood Mini-Grant Applications are available on the Office of Neighborhood Relations web page at: [www.hillsboroughcounty.org/onr](http://www.hillsboroughcounty.org/onr). The entire Neighborhood Mini-Grant was also mailed in last month issue of the Watchword. Completed applications are due on Friday, July 21, 2006.

If you have any questions, please contact Nancy Rubin at 272-5882 or email [rubinn@hillsboroughcounty.org](mailto:rubinn@hillsboroughcounty.org) or Shelley Blood at: [bloods@hillsboroughcounty.org](mailto:bloods@hillsboroughcounty.org).



## CODE ENFORCEMENT EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM

*By: Susan Wanrick*

The mission of the City of Tampa Code Enforcement Department is to provide a service that protects the city and citizens from unscrupulous practices and hazardous situations while empowering the overall Tampa community to maintain a quality of life, which is extraordinarily positive, both ethically and professionally.

### What is the Department of Code Enforcement?

Code Enforcement is a City of Tampa Department responsible for enforcing the following city codes: property maintenance/structural standards, zoning and signs.

### What do you mean by “property maintenance/structural standards”?

This means all property must be cleaned, mowed and trimmed. There cannot be any trash, junk, debris or inoperative vehicles.

Every commercial and residential building (businesses, houses or apartments) must be kept in a good state of repair. They must meet the minimum standard guidelines regarding structural maintenance and all plumbing & electrical facilities. Code Enforcement inspects each building and/or property to ensure they are being maintained according to city code.

### What is “zoning”?

Zoning is what regulates the use of land. Each parcel of land is identified by a type of zoning. Each type of zoning has different rules of what that land can be used for. Code Enforcement ensures that people are using their parcel of land according to the rules of zoning.

### What about “signs”?

The City of Tampa regulates the size, placement and quantity of all signs. Code Enforcement inspects existing signs on private property to make sure they were installed correctly. If the sign is not on private property, and is illegally in the City’s right of way, it is subject to immediate removal.

**St. Petersburg College's  
Florida Regional Community Policing Institute**

*presents*

**PLANNING A WIN FOR THE GOOD GUYS:  
Crime Prevention/Crime Displacement  
and Environmental Design (CPTED)**

This innovative 16-hour course is designed for law enforcement professionals, business/property owners, government officials, and citizens. In this course, participants will learn how community-based policing enables law enforcement professionals to combine their efforts with city planners, architects, traffic engineers, lighting technicians, landscape designers, and human behavioral experts to better understand opportunistic criminals while "designing out" the factors that attract them. Program goal topics will include: what it means to "naturally control" opportunistic behavior, along with three basic principles and their application (Access Control, Territorial Reinforcement, and Surveillance); CPTED applications in different environments - neighborhoods, shopping centers, schools, corporate (retrofitting CPTED into the existing environment); and traffic-related issues; i.e., traffic "calming," street closures, cut-through traffic, etc.

**When/Where:** July 6-7, 2006  
St. Petersburg College's Allstate Center, 3200 34th Street, South, St. Petersburg, FL

**Time:** 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. (Promptness is appreciated.)  
Proper attire is required. Parking and building entrance are on the East Side.

**Instructors:** Mr. Dan Bates, Training and Curriculum Specialist, Florida RCPI. Mr. Bates was formerly with the St. Petersburg Police Department for over 26 years and worked as the department's Environmental Design and Business Crime Prevention Practitioner.

**Lodging Reimbursement:** Not available for this class.

**Fee:** There is no charge for this course or class materials.

If you have any questions regarding this class, please call Barb Kieta, RCPI Training Facilitator at: (727) 341-4432.

Please register for the above class by completing the registration form below and faxing it to (727) 341-4524. If you do not have access to a fax, please contact Vonceil Smith either via e-mail at: [smithv@spcollege.edu](mailto:smithv@spcollege.edu), or phone (727) 341-4587.

NAME/RANK	DEPT./AGENCY	E-MAIL ADDRESS	PHONE
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**You may also register on line by visiting the RCPI web site at: <http://cop.spcollege.edu/cop>**

St. Petersburg College is dedicated to the concept of equal opportunity. The college will not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, age, national origin or marital status, or against any qualified individual with disabilities, in its employment practices or in the admission and treatment of students. Recognizing that sexual harassment constitutes discrimination on the basis of sex and violates this rule, the college will not tolerate such conduct. Should you experience such behavior, please contact the director of EA/EO at (727) 341-3257 or (727) 341-3261 or by mail at P.O. Box 13489, St. Petersburg, FL 33733-3489.

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# AAA ADVOCATES HELMETS FOR ALL KIDS ON BIKES

By: Sojeila Orengo

Nearly half of the children ages 14 and under hospitalized for bicycle-related injuries are diagnosed with a traumatic brain injury. Those children who do survive often spend the rest of their lives dealing with paralysis, speech problems, depression, anxiety, and the loss of motor skills. This is a fate that is avoidable. May was National Bike Safety Month - and always - children, and adults, should wear a helmet while bike riding for safety.

**A helmet can reduce the risk of brain injury by as much as 88 percent,** according to data gathered by the National SAFE KIDS Campaign. The American Medical Association calls a bike helmet the single most cost-effective safety device ever made.

Yet, fewer than half (41 percent) of kids ages 5 to 14 wear helmets when participating in wheeled activities, and more than a third (35 percent) of children who use helmets wear them improperly, according to a national field study released by the National SAFE KIDS Campaign.

Many accidents are unavoidable and more damaging than children and parents may realize. A fall from as little as two feet can result in a traumatic brain injury. AAA encourages parents to make bike helmets a part of their child's game plan.

"Sports like football, hockey, and even racecar driving also require protective uniforms, and a helmet is part of that uniform," said Sojeila Orengo, manager of traffic safety programs for AAA Auto Club South. "Bicycles and helmets go together. It's that simple!"

Studies show that parents who lead by example make a measurable difference in helmet use by their children. "Parents

who sport helmets when they ride may be the most important factor in their kids' choice to wear a helmet," said Orengo.

## How to Choose the Best Bike Helmet

Look inside of the bike helmets you are considering to find the label. Choose one that meets safety standards developed by the American National Standards Institute (ANSI), the Snell Memorial Foundation, or the American Society for Testing and Materials (ASTM).

Worn properly, the helmet should sit on the head so that the front rim is just above the eyebrows. Before buckling the chinstrap, have your child shake his head from side to side. If the helmet moves too much, it's too big and won't protect his head no matter how tight you pull the chinstrap. Adjust the size with foam inserts supplied by the manufacturer. The helmet should be comfortable and snug, but not too tight. When the chinstrap is buckled, your child should be able to open his mouth and feel the helmet press firmly against the top of his or her head.

## Bike Safety Basics

To help reduce the risk of injury when riding a bike, AAA suggests a few basic safety rules:

- Be sure to wear a properly fitting helmet on every trip and highly visible safety gear to alert motorists to your attention.
- Communicate your intentions to other road users by using appropriate hand signals.
- Always slow down and yield to pedestrians. Stay alert and remember that drivers or pedestrians may not see you.
- Cross at marked crosswalks and follow pedestrian crosswalk lights where available.
- Watch for turning and parked motor vehicles. Many crashes occur when motorists open their car door or make turns onto side streets.
- Keep your bike as close to the right edge of the road as possible so traffic

can safely move around you. Ride with the flow of traffic and obey all traffic laws. Remember - Your bike is your first vehicle. Follow the rules of the road.

## Sharing the Road - How We All Can Make a Difference

More than a half-million collisions between motor vehicles and bicycles occur in the United States each year as children take to the streets on their first vehicle. Many of these incidents are the result of the motorists' failure to properly yield to bicyclists.

Motorists need to increase their awareness of bicyclists when making turns and remember to look for bicyclists going straight. Also, check for bicyclists along the edge of the traffic lane before opening car doors so you do not cause a collision when exiting your vehicle.

Bicyclists also should utilize bike paths whenever possible and always watch for turning and parked motor vehicles. Bicyclists should be encouraged to clearly communicate their intentions to motorists by using proper turning signals. Wearing helmets, visible clothing and using bike paths when available are key factors to ensuring a safe, pleasurable biking adventure.

AAA Auto Club South is the fourth largest affiliate within the AAA federation with 69 branches serving nearly 4 million members in Florida, Georgia, the western two-thirds of Tennessee and Puerto Rico. Since its founding in 1938, AAA Auto Club South has worked to protect and advance freedom of mobility and improve travel safety.

If you have any questions or concerns please contact: Sojeila Orengo, Manager, Traffic Safety Programs, (813)288-7294 office, or Gregg Laskoski, Managing Director Public&Gov'Relations, (813)289-1320 office, (813)992-0867 cell.

# HELP PREVENT AUTO THEFT

## *“Lock Your Car, Take Your Keys”*

*By: Sergeant David C. Puig*



We have all heard the phrase, “lock your car and take your keys”. That saying has been true in the past and it is still true today. The Tampa Police Department has received nearly 75 reports since the beginning of this year where citizens have left their keys in their car “for just a minute”, only to return and find that their vehicle stolen. These are a few of the most common scenarios and excuses:

- At a convenience store, the citizen went inside “for only minutes” to get something to drink...or something to eat...or a pack of cigarettes...or to go inside to pay for gas.
- At home, the citizen forgot something inside and “ran back inside for just a minute”.
- “I didn’t leave the keys in the ignition. I left them on the seat...on the floor...in the ashtray...in the center console”.
- “I left the car running because I

wanted to leave the heater on” or “the air conditioner on”.

- “I went jogging and I didn’t want to carry my keys so I hid them on the tire.”
- “I have a combination lock entry and I don’t like the way keys look in my pocket, so I left them in the car.”

Each of these scenarios has occurred many times during this year, resulting in the unnecessary and preventable theft of many vehicles. In many instances, there have been several vehicles that were only burglarized in parking lots by person(s) searching for valuables. When those suspect(s) found the keys in the vehicle, not only was the vehicle burglarized but it was now also missing-stolen. When someone leaves their engine running or leaves their keys in their car it makes the crime of Auto Theft all that much easier. When the keys are made available, it only takes “seconds” to steal the vehicle.

When keys are left in the vehicle, there are many consequences that befall the vehicle owner/operator. In one case, a woman came out of a store after paying for her gas only to see her vehicle being driven away with the suspect laughing at her. But frustration, inconvenience, and anger are some of the least of the consequences.

The following are some of the most serious consequences that can occur:

- You may be sued. If your vehicle is stolen due to your negligence of leaving the keys available, you are open to civil liability if your vehicle is used in the commission of other crimes, especially if someone gets hurt.
- Your vehicle will probably be damaged when it is recovered. Oftentimes, stolen vehicles are crashed and/or vandalized when recovered.
- Your insurance may not cover your loss. Some policies will not cover you if you leave your keys in the vehicle.
- Suspect(s) caught may not be prosecuted. Oftentimes, stolen vehicles are passed around among criminals. The State Attorney’s Office will not prosecute if it cannot be proven that the driver knew that the vehicle was stolen. If the keys are used, that proof may be difficult to establish.

The Tampa Police Department wants to prevent the crime of Auto Theft, but your help is very much needed. By simply following the old adage of “lock your car and take your keys”, it will go a long way to preventing this crime and making our lives in Tampa much safer and better.

# OPERATION HELPING HAND BEGINS THIRD YEAR

By: Robert F. Sawallesh  
USA, Retired  
(813) 654-3900



Operation Helping Hand (OP HH) Committee members and friends of OP HH at a recent dinner for the families of the wounded and injured at the James A. Haley Veterans' Hospital.

Since the Global War on Terrorism began over 18,000 US military have been wounded. Some of the most seriously active duty wounded and injured have been treated at the James A. Haley VA Hospital in Tampa. These wounds and injuries include brain and spinal cord injuries, blindness, blast injuries, amputations and burns.

As the active duty wounded and injured patients begin to arrive at the VA Hospital, it was realized that their families needed assistance during their stay in Tampa. The patients and family members arrive in Tampa from Walter Reed Army Hospital or the National Naval Medical Center in Bethesda, Maryland. Many family members have never been in Tampa and they arrive with their wounded or injured dad, son or daughter and whatever baggage they can carry on very short notice.

Two years ago, the Tampa Chapter of the Military Officers Association of America, in conjunction with the Tampa VA Hospital, formed Operation Helping Hand to help the families of the active duty wounded and injured. In the past two years over \$39,000 in cash has been provided to the families. Many of the

wounded and injured are junior enlisted. Also, over \$75,000 in goods and services, such as cell phones, amusement park and movie tickets, restaurant coupons, flower bouquets and airline tickets have been provided to the families.

Restaurants and senior living communities have donated food for the monthly dinners for the active duty patients and their families, which is held at the VA hospital. Many of the families of the active duty service members are very thankful for the efforts of Operation Helping Hand.

This letter is from the father of an Army Staff Sergeant: "When a soldier is wounded in action, the whole family is wounded. Operation Helping Hand has helped us keep our sanity by allowing other families to come together at your monthly dinners and share Hope, Strength and a bit of levity so it takes the edge off the raw nerves. Thank you for MOAA and their dedication to this great family service."

If you would like to contribute to Operation Helping Hand, donations may be sent to: MOAA Operation Helping Hand, PO Box 6383, MacDill AFB, FL 33608-0383. The Chairman of Operation Helping Hand is Captain Bob Silah, USN, Retired, 813-963-1854 The Vice Chairman is Lieutenant Colonel Bob Sawallesh, USA, Retired, 813-654-3900.

## DISTRICT ONE CRIME PREVENTION TEAM

### What do all 67 Florida counties have in common?

Alligators! Between May 1 and May 16, 2006 there were three fatal alligator attacks. "It's the first time in recorded Florida history that alligators have killed three people in the same month. Gators haven't killed more than three people in any one year."\*\*

You always hear that you shouldn't feed alligators, but many people don't know why. Well, the number one reason is because it is illegal. Reason number two, is that as alligators which are fed by humans begin to associate humans with food.

### Safety Tips

- Do not allow small children or pets to play near water alone.
- Be extra careful around fresh or brackish water.
- If you see an alligator over 4 feet long call 1-866-392-4286.  
<http://myfwc.com/gators/nuisance.htm>
- **Do not discard scrap food or fish near water.**

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***It is especially important to be extra precautionous the next few months, since it is alligator mating season and so many children and adults will be camping, fishing, and swimming during the summer vacation.***

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Have a good summer, and be safe!!

\*\*St. Petersburg Times, May 16, 2006,  
"A dangerous relationship."



## DISTRICT TWO CRIME PREVENTION TEAM

*By: Lieutenant Alphonso Sams*

### East Tampa Native Promoted to Lieutenant

Dear Residents,

I would like to introduce myself to the readers of The Neighborhood Watch Newsletter. My name is Alphonso Sams and Chief Stephen Hogue promoted me to the position of Lieutenant in December 2005. I'm currently assigned to Uniform District II, "B" cycle midnight shift. I have been employed by the City of Tampa Police Department for the past twenty-four years.

I'm a native son of Tampa and was born at Clara Frye Hospital. I did some research on this hospital and found out that it was named after an African American nurse. The hospital was opened in 1923 and closed in 1967, due to poor and unsanitary conditions.

I grew up in Belmont Heights, which is in East Tampa and a couple of blocks south of College Hill Homes. My father and mother had ten children. I'm the seventh child. While growing up in East Tampa my friends and I sold the Florida Sentinel Bulletin newspaper on Tuesday and Friday. As I drive along the same streets, it is humbling to see kids as I was some thirty years ago doing the same thing.

I graduated from Chamberlain High School in 1978 and later went into the United States Air force. In the Air force I was trained to be a Crew Chief taking care of a T38 jet fighter. I was taught how to prepare this plane before a flight and repair the plane after the flight if anything was broken or damaged.

After leaving the United States Airforce, I returned to Tampa and became a Police Officer. I have attended Hillsborough Community College, St. Leo College. I am currently enrolled University of South Florida. I'm married and have

two kids. My daughter just completed her first year at the University of Central Florida and my son will be going to high school next year.

I just wanted to take this moment to let you know who I am. It is important to me that the communities I serve feel comfortable in coming to me with any concerns or issues. I look forward to hearing from you and for us to work together to make a better quality of life for all citizens that reside in Uniform District II in the City Of Tampa.

## DISTRICT THREE CRIME PREVENTION TEAM

*By: Major Bob Guidara*

### Moving forward in District 3

As all of you know by now, Major George McNamara was reassigned to the Criminal Investigation Division in December 2005. I know that Major McNamara worked closely with many of you in the community! I can assure you that the District 3 staff has been working diligently to offer the quality service that you are accustomed to.

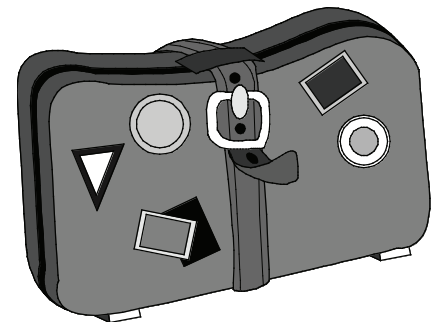
With that said, I want to assure you that we won't skip a beat here at D-3 as we continue our efforts to reduce crime and improve quality of life. Noteworthy, is the excellent relationship that our officers and support personnel share with all of you. We thank you for the commitment that you have demonstrated while working with us. We value your contributions and partnership and stand ready to serve you in any way possible. While Community Oriented Policing (COP) provides much of the philosophical foundation for our crime reduction and education efforts; we strongly believe that an aggressive enforcement posture is the key to protecting our community! The timely identification and arrest of criminal offenders is critical to maintaining the momentum that we are currently experiencing with a double-

digit crime reduction of 15.5% year to date within the district. The less opportunity that the criminal element has to prey upon the community, the safer our community will be!

I hope that transferring responsibility for coordinating Neighborhood Watch to the district level has resulted in an improved level of service and that your concerns are being addressed in a more timely and comprehensive manner!

Just a preview: our district summer crime reduction campaign will focus on our youth. Summer crimes are often crimes of opportunity for our young people. Please help us in reducing Summer Crime by minimizing opportunity. We look forward to working with you as we continue moving forward in pursuit of a safer Tampa!

## TRAVEL SAFELY THIS SUMMER SEASON



**Pack your bags!** It's travel time and no matter which way you choose to travel or where you go, your summer vacation should be enjoyable and relaxing. Here are some things to remember when you are away from home so that you can keep your 'peace of mind' while on your vacation.

Tampa Police Department has a program called "Vacation Watch". This program lets us watch your home while you are on vacation. If something were to occur at your residence while you are out, then your emergency contact

person is notified of the incident. There is a "Vacation Watch" form in this issue of 'WatchWord', or you can go to [www.tampagov.net](http://www.tampagov.net) keyword "Vacation Watch" and you can download and print the form. Be sure to mail the form back to your respective District.

Some other reminders include:

- Notify the postal service and the newspaper courier to stop your deliveries for the time you are going to be gone or have someone pick it up regularly.
- Arrange for lawn care if you are going to be gone for more than a week.
- Ask a trusted neighbor or local friend to put out your trashcans on pick-up day.
- Lock up or remove all your valuables, including your jewelry, computers, televisions, etc. Don't forget to participate in our Operation Inventory program. This program assist in providing all the pertinent information in the event any of your items are stolen, and it's also valuable for insurance purposes.
- Make sure all of you windows and doors are secured and locked.
- Put lights and/or radio or television on timers, so that it gives the appearance someone is home.
- Don't leave a message on your answering machine stating your are gone.
- Have motion sensor lights outside of your home, do not give potential thieves darkness to hide in.

Family Travel Safety Tips above were provided by Main Street Safety, LLC. For more tips, log on to their web site at <http://www.mytravelsafety.com>.

Remember the police department does offer **FREE** security surveys. We come out and inspect your home inside and out and provide ideas to better secure your home from being burglarized.

*Have a safe and wonderful trip!*

# TAKING IT TO THE STREETS

By: CPP Lisa Timmer



*Ann Diller, left, and Lisa Timmer.*

Wanting to get the word out about home security, I asked Ann Diller, who is the Neighborhood Watch Coordinator of Mayfair in Tampa Palms, to accompany me with the distribution of flyers. As we walked door to door covering 92 homes, and taking 6,182 steps (I know this because my pedometer) I soon realized how much this leader knew about a large majority of her neighbors. She knew many names and the occupations they held. She knew who was on vacation and who was out of town on business. She knew which homes were owned and which homes were rentals or for sale.

Even though Ann knew so much about Mayfair, she never struck me as a "busy body", which is a reputation some people may get from knowing so much about their area. Instead I got the feeling she was more like a "Guardian Angel" for the folks of Mayfair.

We also walked her dogs during this venture one at a time mind you because they are very large, strong pit bulls (Brindle & Brandy). I did not confess to Ann, but I was very frightened of them initially. It was a very warm day and when we were lucky, a breeze would blow and a cloud gave us shade for a moment. We were walking around 9:00 a.m. to around 11:30 a.m., and a handful of vehicles were coming and going

in and out of the subdivision. Most everyone who drove by waved at Ann and I, or stopped and talked to Ann. It was obvious that Ann is a very popular person in this area and one person affectionately referred to her as the "Queen of Mayfair".

As I placed flyers on doorknobs, she suggested that I remove old "solicitations" so passerby's would not get the idea that no one was home. We rang doorbells on homes that Ann thought the person might be home. She either knew them and wanted to say a quick hello or she did not meet them yet, and wanted to introduce herself. We did meet a new neighbor. Ann introduced us gave her a "Welcome Packet". I soon discovered that this welcome packet is put together by Ann and a couple of neighbors who help assemble them. The only reimbursement she gets is for the ink and paper. It is a folder full of useful information that she gives to all new residents. The contents in this folder are a welcome letter encouraging residents to join Mayfair's email tree directory. She provides information about Neighborhood Watch, important city phone numbers, and a Neighborhood Directory. With her methodology, I guessed that she had been a long time Neighborhood Watch leader, however, I was surprised to discover she had only been at this for 2 years!

She shyly confessed to me that several of her neighbors contacted her when they are going out of town so she can keep an eye on their property, which I found to be a testament of trust, which in this day and age, is difficult to achieve.

Another thing I found refreshing about Ann, although she knew many people in the community, she never once mentioned anything negative about anyone. A lot of people in her position sometimes fall prey to the "gossip" sessions. But I did not sense that with Ann. I could not see one mean bone in her body.

While on a cul-de-sac, Ann pointed out to me a place where foot traffic comes into her neighborhood. A place where she believes people who do not live in her subdivision gain access and may have been involved in a rash of auto burglaries in the past. Also, on Abbey Park St. where there has been illegal parking, but since police have been patrolling, it has stopped.

Despite medical set backs, that would render many people immobile, physically and mentally, Ann plunges forward with wholehearted enthusiasm and love. I asked Ann what prompted her to become involved in such an endeavor and she stated that since September 11th, a day none of us will ever forget, she realized that she needed to get off her rear, and do something. She said that life is too short, and we need to look out for one another.

We concluded our Crime Prevention walk about, and grabbed a quick bite at KFC. We also both discovered that we have a similar sense of humor and our husbands are way too serious! (or maybe we're just too un-serious).

It was very interesting trying to get a picture of us together on the camera using that timer do flingy, but after a little mishap, Ann decided to get a neighbor to help. (Don't worry Ann, it's our little secret)!

I had a wonderful day with Ann, and I could not help but think...I wish she was MY NEIGHBOR.

*Ann...you can move to Lutz any day!*



# TAMPA POLICE DEPARTMENT

## Vacation Watch

### Emergency Notification Form

Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

#### Emergency Contact Persons(s)

1. \_\_\_\_\_ Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Work Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_ Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Work Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Alarm Company: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Pets? YES / NO If yes, What kind? \_\_\_\_\_

Left on Premises? YES / NO What Area? \_\_\_\_\_

Cared for by: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Authorized Person(s) on Property? YES / NO

If yes, who? \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Date / Time of Departure: \_\_\_\_\_

Date / Time of Return: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact number where you will be: \_\_\_\_\_  
(including area code)

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# *On Duty* with the *Tampa Police Department*



*is now available anytime  
at your local library!*



You can now watch Police Chief Steve Hogue as he hosts "On Duty with Tampa the Police Department" anytime that fits your schedule! You can check out a DVD from any Hillsborough County library. The public safety program showcases special operations in Tampa's neighborhoods. The 15-minute segment will take you on patrol with the men and women of TPD.

**Tune in:**  
**Sundays at 8 p.m.**  
**Tuesdays at 5 p.m.**  
**Thursdays at 1:30 p.m.**



It also airs on CTTV  
channel 15.

