

Frogtown Fare

NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH GROUP NEWSLETTER



August, 2010

Come Join Us For Our First
**Frogtown Fare Neighborhood Watch Group
Meeting**

Thursday, August 19th, 7:00pm

in the

McDonald's Dining Room

(corner of Marion and University-It's air conditioned, large drinks \$1.00 with free refills!)

**Jody Larsen & Dan Mack of the police GRID Unit will be there along with
our Council Ward Member, Melvin Carter III, and his wife Alecia.**

This is a great time to share your concerns and address problems in our neighborhood. Police and community coming together. The GRID Unit is super and here to help us. They have been doing a spectacular job and we want to help them keep it up. A big part of our St Paul City Council Member's, Melvin Carter III, mission is to maintain safe neighborhoods. He has been the catalyst for attaining many of the monies for cleaning up our neighborhood. He and his wife not only live in our neighborhood, they want to be a part of our fight against crime, stay informed, and help in any way they can. If you have concerns and can't attend, contact me and I can collect your information address it and get back to you.

What a watch group IS:

- * Becoming acquainted with your neighbors.
- * Working together to identify and solve problems in your neighborhood.
- * Helping the police by being aware of and reporting any unusual activities as they occur. You know best what is "normal" activity in your neighborhood.
- * Implementing crime prevention techniques to enhance your home security such as effective outdoor lighting, timers on indoor lights, labeling your property, etc.
- * Putting "neighbors" back in neighborhoods!

What a watch group IS NOT:

- * A citizen vigilante force.
- * Designed for residents to take personal risks to prevent crime.
- * Limited to homeowners. The concept of neighborhood watching out for neighbors is just as important for renters, apartment dwellers and business owners as it is for homeowners.
- * A guarantee that crime will never occur in your neighborhood.

Cassandra Berg

Neighborhood Block Liaison

Frogtown Fare Neighborhood Watch Group

259 Sherburne Avenue ~ St Paul, MN 55103

612-353-8262 ~ thebergclan@comcast.net



National Night Out a Big Success!

The heat didn't keep everyone away! Water fights and a huge canopy helped everyone tolerate the heat. Over 18 actual residents, and too many kids to count, enjoyed the event. We were able to visit with local law enforcement officers including the Assistant Chief of Police Kathy Wuorinen, and Jody Larsen and Dan Mack of the GRID Unit, along with a patrol officer and his squad, too! The kids had fun exploring the police squad car from the inside and laughed while asking officers to "cuff 'em"... the officers all declined but scored a lot of points with the kids when they handed out 'junior policeman' badge stickers and baseball cards featuring all our local Twins favorites! House District 65A DFL primary contender, Rena Moran made a personal visit and had time to speak with everyone regarding their concerns, this lady has it going on! Tait Danielson Costillo, executive director of the Frogtown Neighborhood Association stopped by to visit and shared the cities ash tree map and their plan to take care of diseased trees. The kids had fun exploring the police squad car from the inside and laughed while asking officers to "cuff 'em"... the officers all declined but scored a lot of points with the kids when they handed out 'junior policeman' badge stickers and baseball cards featuring all our local Twins favorites! The Home Energy Squad brought with them great savings coupons and information for local residents-see their full page in this newsletter for more information. House 18 firemen arrived with the hook and ladder truck, kids were gifted with 'junior firefighter' chief hats and sticker badges and were able to check out the firetruck first hand! Shoua Lee, the light rail community outreach coordinator came by with light rail information and sheets for everyone. Although he didn't make a personal appearance, some representatives for House District 65 DFL primary contender, Jeremiah Ellis came by and handed out leaflets.

Everyone enjoyed hot dogs, chips and fresh veggies. Dawn Methany and Ashley Lusk of Tiny Diva Princess Party graciously donated their time to do henna art and face painting. We also had face painting by Caity Law and animal balloons and squirt guns thanks to Tori Vatne.

Special thanks to
Target and Minnehaha Fall's Hardware
for their donations to our free raffle
and to
Tiny Diva Princess Party for donating their services and time:
<http://www.tinydivaprincessparty.com/> or call 952-913-1176

Thanks to everyone who attended!
YOU are what makes the
Frogtown
Neighborhood
Watch Group
all that it can be!





The GRID Unit

A St. Paul police program takes the old-school approach in the neighborhood.

**Excerpts taken from: PIONEER PRESS, ST. PAUL, MINN. | MARA H. GOTTFRIED*



Drinking in public, panhandling and prostitution might not be a city's biggest crimes, but police say these quality-of-life crimes affect how people feel about their neighborhood. The theory: Tackling the small problems can prevent more serious crime. Solutions include a Facebook page where apartment managers can share information on potential trouble, a Police Athletic League program to divert kids from spraying graffiti and repainting crosswalks to encourage foot traffic and slow vehicles.

A St. Paul police program, GRID, that focuses on working with the community to combat nuisance crimes and chronic offenders in the Rice Street area, has been around for a few years and evolves to deal with new problems. The department has similar programs in other neighborhoods, and new St. Paul Police Chief Thomas Smith said he plans to expand them. "They're kind of a holistic way to look at solving issues in our different neighborhoods," he said. **"GRID, which stands for Getting Residents Involved Daily,"** doesn't have a cookie-cutter approach to combating crime," said Sgt. Jeff Parsons, who oversees the four-officer team. At times, they take a traditional enforcement role -- they write citations or give people warnings -- but not always.

Officers see their work as "long-term problem-solving," Parsons said. A main priority is making connections in the neighborhood, and they meet regularly with local businesses and managers of apartment buildings. They want people to know them by their first names and have their cell-phone numbers handy, Parsons said. "The more the police department can allow officers to stay in one place, getting to know the people in those places, the better off we are," said Tait Danielson-Castillo, District 7 Planning Council (Frogtown Neighborhood Association) executive director. Police and people involved in GRID say the program has reduced crime in the neighborhood. A look at statistics for the most serious types of crime in the five GRID areas shows crime down 2 percent between 2009 and 2008, compared with a 1 percent decline for the city as a whole. The grids were selected because they were the busiest for police in the Central District -- they had the most calls for service and citizen complaints, Parsons said.

In the beginning, GRID "was more reactive," he said. "We'd see a problem in the stats and then address it." Police still work on "hot spots," Parsons said, but "it's evolved to being more proactive, with us going out and making contacts with people." One strategy is focusing on crimes that might seem like small problems but appear to get under people's skin, he said. When GRID started, police sent surveys to residents, and "a lot of what we got back was about quality-of-life crimes," Parsons said. There's also a bigger reason to focus on these nuisance crimes, police say. "When they don't get addressed, it starts escalating," said GRID officer Jody Larsen. "People think they'll never get caught."

INPUT FOR BUSINESSES, APARTMENTS

Residents of Wheelock Parkway Apartments tell manager Ronna Woolery they feel safer these days. "With GRID, we've been working to resolve things before they become problems," she said. More than 25 apartment properties are in Grid 10, bounded by Larpenteur and Western avenues and Arlington Avenue and Rice Street," Larsen said. Woolery said she worked with GRID officers to start monthly meetings with apartment building owners and managers who didn't really know each other.

"Representatives from eight properties started meeting about a year ago, but the meetings really have taken off in the past three months," Woolery said. She's trying to get more properties involved. They've set up a Facebook page for apartment managers and GRID officers. It's not public, so they can interact without worrying about other people seeing it. "Before, people could move from one building to another without anyone knowing what was going on," Larsen said. At the urging of apartment managers, the St. Paul Police Athletic League is working with the GRID team to get kids who live in Grid 10 buildings to programming at McDonough Recreation Center. Larsen arranged for a PAL van to pick up kids and take them to McDonough four times a week. At the beginning of the summer, eight children were participating; a recent count had it up to 36, Woolery said. Last summer, there was graffiti, gang activity, vandalism and loitering in the area, Larsen said. This summer, it's "remarkably decreased," she said. She said that she knew them on a first-name basis and vice versa.

"I think it builds a trust factor," she said.

GRID officers also meet regularly with businesses in the lower Rice Street area. The GRID team helped establish a business association, and some 15 businesses have been getting together monthly. Business owners identified small matters to work on first, including having crosswalks repainted and getting more trash cans on the street -- both of which the city did with prodding from the GRID team, District 7 and the businesses.*

The GRID Unit has made a remarkable difference in our neighborhood. But they need our input to keep up the great work they have been doing. They want to know about drinking and urination in public, prostitution, littering, disturbing the peace, panhandling, drug dealing, etc. Attend our neighborhood block meetings and give your input, get to meet our GRID Unit officers, Jody Larsen and Dan Mack.



Home Energy Squads Save Customers \$192 Every Year

Join Your Neighbors and Make an Appointment Today!

Energy bills too high? Hot air (or chilly wind) coming in that leaky front door? Good news! The Home Energy Squads are working in Frogtown to help you lower those bills and to make your home more comfortable. Home Energy Squads have already served 1,700 Saint Paul customers, saving participants an average of \$192 annually on their utility bills.

The Home Energy Squad is a program brought to you by Xcel Energy and the Saint Paul based nonprofit Neighborhood Energy Connection (NEC). Two to three skilled professionals visit your home for about 90 minutes, installing energy-saving measures that start lowering your energy bills immediately. The Squads will weather strip or air seal your exterior doors. They install water heater blankets, energy-efficient compact fluorescent light bulbs (CFLS), and water-saving showerheads and aerators for your faucets. The Home Energy Squads can even install a programmable thermostat and tailor it to your schedule and comfort level.

By attending a Home Energy Workshop (see below), you can participate in the Home Energy Squad program for as little as \$30. That's a one-time fee for all labor and materials—there are no additional costs. Making home energy improvements is a smart decision. Thanks to Xcel Energy and the Neighborhood Energy Connection, it's never been easier or more affordable. Call us today and let the Squads do the work!

For more information about the NEC or Home Energy Squads, please see www.thenec.org. To set an appointment, call (651) 328-6220.

Hablamos español

Peb hais lus Hmoob



(651) 328-6220

www.TheNEC.org

Upcoming Saint Paul Home Energy Workshops

August 19, 6:30 PM - **Payne Phalen**, Arlington Hills Church, Jessamine Ave. & Greenbrier Street

August 26, 6:30 PM - **West Side**, WSCO, 127 Winifred Street West

September 21, 6:30 PM - **Dayton's Bluff**, Dayton's Bluff Community Council, 798 East 7th Street

September 29, 6:30 PM - **Highland Park**, 1978 Ford Parkway

Want to learn about other great home energy opportunities, tailored to your needs? Visit www.energysmartspay.com for a free, private, personalized online recommendation.

This project was made possible by a grant from the US Department of Energy and the Minnesota Department of Commerce through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA).

Resident Alert

PROSTITUTION-Unfortunately, it is still an issue. However, things have quieted down immensely. They seem to come out real late at night, 11pm on. If you see someone exhibiting the signs of prostituting (hailing down vehicles, approaching vehicles, getting in vehicles and returning shortly after, etc) call 911. Give them a description of the person, if you can get plate numbers of the cars of the johns-great. Also let 911 know where they are hanging around. Let's keep up the effort.

CURFEW VIOLATION-We have quite a few minors out past curfew. Many have been littering, damaging residential property, obstructing street traffic, and creating a lot of noise. Curfews are set to help protect our children and keep them out of trouble. Please refer to the information below and call 911 if you see children out past curfew. Parents, guardians and others having charge over children, please accompany or have your children in by the times listed below.

CURFEW

UNACCOMPANIED MINORS UNDER THE AGE OF 15:

10:00pm to 4:00am Daily-no loitering or playing on or in public places

UNACCOMPANIED MINORS AGES 15 to 17:

12:01am to 4:00am Daily-restricted from public areas daily

It is unlawful for parents, guardians or other adults having charge over a minor to allow or permit that minor to violate curfew.

Public Safety & Community Notifications



The Saint Paul Police Department has launched a new Community Information Service designed to deliver important, relevant, and timely information to residents using the latest technology. This service, Nixle, delivers important neighborhood-level public safety and community event notifications that are instantly sent to you by cell phone text message, email, and the web. There is NO advertising or Spam. Nixle is free (standard cell provider text message rates apply for those who chose to receive text alerts). The service is simple to use, reliable, and the information Nixle delivers comes directly from the Saint Paul Police Department. Go to: <http://local.nixle.com/register/> to register.



911

Don't hesitate to call 911.

If you think you should call, CALL! Don't wait.

911 and the police want your calls, that's what they are there for.

Stay calm and give them all the info they request.

Tell the operator if you wish to remain anonymous.



Events to Make Note Of

Frogtown Fare Neighborhood Watch Group Meeting

When: Thursday, August 19th
Where: McDonald's Dining Room
(on the corner of Marion and University)
Time: 6:30pm

This is a meeting to to bring neighbors together, meet our police GRID Unit, and to discuss any neighborhood issues we have. Our City Council Ward Member, Melvin Carter III, and his wife Alecia, also residents of our area, will be there.

Frogtown Neighborhood Association/District 7 Planning Council

Community Concerns Gathering
When: 4th Tuesday of every month
Where: West Minnehaha Rec Center
685 West Minnehaha Avenue
St. Paul, MN 55104
651-789-7407 Tait Danielson
Time: 6:30-8:00pm (usually runs longer)

District 7 Planning Council strives to conserve, foster and restore the well being of our neighborhoods: East Midway, Frogtown, Capitol Heights, and Mt. Airy. The efforts are focused on civic engagement and resident empowerment. It functions as a neighborhood-level point of contact regarding various city processes, as well as for addressing issues identified by community residents and/or businesses.

St Paul Police Department's Central District Community Meeting

When: 2nd Tuesday of every month
Where: Rice Street Recreation Center
1021 Marion
Saint Paul, MN
Time: 6:30pm

Each month the Saint Paul Police Department's Central District hosts a community meeting at which residents can meet with police commanders to learn about and discuss issues of public safety importance.

OPEN HOUSE-St Paul Police Department Headquarter's/Central District

When: Tuesday, September 14th, 2010
Where: Central District Headquarters
367 Grove Street
Time: 5:00 - 7:00pm

Take a tour of your police department and learn about the hisotry of the St Paul Police. Meet the Senior Commander, John Volmastic and officers for your area. Check out a squad car, learn more about the police reserves and the Explorer's (a police program for children interested in law enforcement), and soooooo much more!



1-800-222-TIPS
CRIME STOPPERS OF MINNESOTA
"Crime doesn't pay...we do!"

TEXT TIPS

Now you can send a tip
anonymously from
your cell phone.

Text TIP674
to 274637(CRIMES)



The Achievement Gap

by Stephanie Burgos

One of Our Frogtown Fare Neighborhood Watch Residents

Many people may not be aware of what the achievement gap is. The achievement gap is something that affects all of us. The achievement gap refers to the observed difference on a number of educational measures between the performance of groups of students, especially groups defined by gender, race/ethnicity, ability, and socioeconomic status. It is a basic fact that some of our students either aren't getting the help they need before it's too late or society ignores the great big issue over education in Minnesota. Minnesota is one of the top five states in the nation for the best education; however, it is also at the top of the list for the worst education for our children in poverty and certain minority groups. These minority groups include Latino and African American. As a Latina myself and a student teacher, I was very angered by these facts. I like many others, have decided to step up and do something. I am not on a mission to change the world; I just have so much love for children. It is a shame that other states who have more people of color are doing a lot better in regards to educating their children. I encourage all people, regardless of ethnic background, to continue on with education. It is the main tool that can be the great weapon when attacking socially relevant issues like: equitable education, jobs, and self-fulfillment, and reduction of crime.

Here are some tips on how you can help your child/children:

1. Have higher expectations!!!
2. Children need encouragement- tell them they are capable and smart once in awhile "You can do this" goes super far when it's from Mom, Dad, or other authoritative figure.
3. Seek out resources to help your child learn.
4. Embrace your ethnicity in positive ways (Don't think it's a handicap, it's 2010 already)
5. If you have spare time, volunteer at either your child's/children's school or any school (SCHOOLS NEED YOU MORE THAN YOU THINK!!!!)

Here is a list of resources that could help your child/children reach their educational goals:

Wilder Foundation Amherst H: Child Development Center

Operating innovative, successful programs that help more than 3,500 at-risk students each year overcome barriers to school success.

911 West Lafond Avenue
(651) 642-4090

Head Start Center

A national program that promotes school readiness by enhancing the social and cognitive development of children through the provision of educational, health, nutritional, social and other services to enrolled children and families.

450 Syndicate St N # 5
(651) 645-6445

Neighborhood House

A multi-cultural, multi-lingual center with programs in basic needs, education and youth leadership.

179 Robie Street
651-789-2500

Midway Family YMCA

Building stronger kids, families and communities.

1761 University Ave W
Phone 651-646-4557

St Paul Recreation Centers:

A place in the neighborhood to learn and create.

Scheffer Recreation Center

237 West Thomas Avenue
(651) 298-5820

St Paul Recreation Center

237 West Thomas Avenue
(651) 298-5770

Catholic Charities of St Paul

Regardless of faith, helping children and families in need.

215 Old 6th Street West
St Paul, MN 55102-1052
(651) 222-3001

King Family Child Development Center

Providing early education while developing cultural & community awareness to help children flourish within and outside their context.

376 Western Avenue
St. Paul, MN 55103
(651) 635-8553

IMPORTANT INFORMATION AND NUMBERS

EMERGENCY..... 911

POLICE NON-EMERGENCY.....651-291-1111

ST PAUL POLICE DEPT WEBSITE: <http://www.stpaul.gov/index.aspx?NID=461>

(Great site for so much information, including level 3 sex offender information)

CITY OF ST PAUL GENERAL INFORMATION.....651-266-8989

Website: <http://www.stpaul.gov/index.aspx>

NEIGHBORHOOD BLOCK LIAISON

Cassandra Berg

259 Sherburne Avenue.....612-353-8262

E-Mail: thebergclan@comcast.net

FROGTOWN NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION (DISTRICT 7 PLANNING COUNCIL)

Tait Danielson Castillo.....651-789-7480

E-Mail: district7pc@yahoo.com

CITY COUNCIL, WARD 1- COUNCIL MEMBER

Melvin Carter III.....651-266-8610

E-Mail: ward1@ci.stpaul.mn.us

ANIMAL CONTROL.....651-266-1100

PUBLIC WORKS (24 HR HOTLINE).....651-292-6600

(This number will direct you to just about anything...sewer, streets, lights, parking, permits, sidewalks, etc)

SAFETY & INSPECTIONS.....651-266-8989

SNOW PLOWING INFORMATION.....651-266-7569

LIGHT RAIL COMMUNITY OUTREACH COORDINATOR

Shoua Lee.....651-602-1014

E-Mail: shoua.lee@metc.state.mn.us

CURFEW

UNACCOMPANIED MINORS UNDER THE AGE OF 15:

10:00pm to 4:00am Daily-no loitering or playing on or in public places

UNACCOMPANIED MINORS AGES 15 to 17:

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a minor to allow or permit that minor to violate curfew.**