
Willard Neighborhood Association Newsletter January 15, 2008

Items appearing in the WNA E-Newsletter are deemed to be of general interest to neighbors but do not necessarily reflect the views of Willard Neighborhood Association (WNA) or its Steering Committee. This newsletter is edited by Vincent Casalaina, President, WNA.

Summary of Items in This E-Newsletter

Full articles appear further down in the body of this E-Newsletter.

1. What can Willard neighborhood do about crime?

Community Policing

SF Supervisor, Ross Mirkarimi proposes a much more structured approach to Community Policing. The direction is one that we should look at for Berkeley.

In Case of Emergency Cell Phone guide

Here are some ideas about how to program your cell phone to get the most out of it in an emergency situation.

Local Crime of note

Here are two crimes that exemplify what the North end of the Willard neighborhood is facing.

Other Items of Interest (located at end of email)

A. Willard Neighborhood Association General Meeting

Wednesday, Feb. 20th, Willard Middle School, 7pm

Put this date on your calendar. The central feature of the meeting will be a panel discussion on specific proposals to fight crime in our neighborhood. We have commitments from both D7 & D8 Councilmembers and from both the Berkeley and UC Police Department Chiefs.

In addition we will be electing the Steering Committee for 2008 and presenting By Laws changes for your approval.

Contact information of City of Berkeley and Willard NA (located at the end of this email)

President's Introductory Note:

This is a short newsletter, neighborhood news is often less over the holidays. I know my focus was more on family and friends. I have been working on next month's newsletter and it will be longer, as I already have commitments from a number of writers on a variety of subjects. It will also come in a different format – a .pdf file.

Once again the main topic of this month's newsletter is about crime in the neighborhood. That's also the main element at annual Willard Neighborhood Assoc. General Meeting coming up February 20th. There will be quite a bit of time devoted to Question and Answer, so bring your suggestions and your questions for the Police and elected officials.

In the first article below, Ross Mirkarimi, San Francisco District 5 Supervisor, writes about how to work well, community policing needs to be well defined and have some specific goals to achieve. It offers some good advice about how to effectively implement community policing.

A number of Willard Neighborhood Association members have written to me expressing an interest to become active on the Steering Committee. At the General Meeting, you'll get a chance to meet them and hopefully vote them onto the Steering Committee. I trust that the new ideas and enthusiasm I've heard so far translates into new energy and activity in the neighborhood.

As always, we'd like to offer an invitation to come to our Steering Committee meetings. The next meeting will be this Thursday, January 17th. If you'd like to come see what we do each month, email me and I'll send you the agenda and where to come for the meeting.

For those of you who feel WNA is helping make our neighborhood a better place to live I'm asking that you step up and contribute \$10 per household in voluntary dues. You can find the form at the very bottom of this email, and on our neighborhood link website.

<http://www.neighborhoodlink.com/pdf/nhextra/734472517/782299266/505369471.pdf>

If you can donate you will help us cover our costs for events like our spring and fall workdays in the neighborhood, the Xeroxing that let's us flyer for the events like the Block Party and the ability to support good works in the community with seed money. Whether you donate or not, you are still a member of Willard Neighborhood Association and entitled to all the rights and privileges that go along with that.

Thanks -- Vincent Casalaina <ProBerk@aol.com>

Willard Neighborhood Association Wish List

From time to time we will ask for things that would make our job easier.

Willard Neighborhood Association Items in This E-Newsletter

1. What can the Willard neighborhood do about crime?

Community Policing – Targeted Violence Protection

By Ross Mirkarimi, San Francisco Supervisor Dist. 5

He also is a graduate of the San Francisco Police Academy.

San Francisco suffered 98 homicides in 2007. This is a 10-year high. Some city officials want us to believe that our trouble is connected to a national trend. In reality, it's not.

Other cities - New York, Chicago, Los Angeles and Boston – are experiencing a steady decline of murders per capita and higher arrest and prosecution rates for those who perpetrate violent crime. They attribute their progress, in part, to something that San Francisco does not practice - accountable forms of community policing with targeted violence prevention programming.

Community policing can be a broad and hollow term means many things to many people - where it is more defined and held accountable, it is effective, as demonstrated in cities where crime has dropped. Community policing is a comprehensive, neighborhood - based violence prevention and intervention practice that is carried out by law enforcement, city departments and community organizations. Coordinated resources are aimed citywide, but in high crime areas in particular. Foot patrol is only a small feature of community policing.

During the last four years, while murder and gun violence have soared in San Francisco, we've heard routine excuses that don't jibe with the experience of other cities where violent crime has dropped.

When crime rates are up, San Francisco officials lament a distressed police department that is understaffed and resource-thin. That may be true, but another fact is that our SFPD has one of the largest budgets per capita of any police department in the country. According to the U.S. Department of Justice, the Census Bureau and the respective budget office of each city, while we are the 14th most populous city in the United States, San Francisco's 2007-08 budget for the SFPD of \$406,970,908 translates into approximately \$495 per San Franciscan. Compare that with New York (\$470), Chicago (\$375), Boston (\$385) and Los Angeles (\$315).

When progress is touted, the mayor or police chief like to highlight that "black-on-black" crime is down. While this benchmark sounds critical, it is reckless and misleading. Consistently, the majority of homicide victims are African American. Over the last four years, approximately 50 percent of total murder cases and violent crimes have gone unsolved or unresolved - meaning there is insufficient information to know who (in terms of race) committed the violent act. If this anecdote is meant to pacify concerns about crime, then it demands more than just media spin.

Unchallenged excuses breed bad habits. Worse, they distract from a much deeper problem: the stark poverty and social disarray that tears away the affluent mask of San Francisco. Crime is symptomatic of these conditions. Instead of just throwing money at the problem with scatter-shot results, we need to demand better outcomes.

Proven strategies will help. Among them:

-- Implement Community Policing: Institute a comprehensive Department General Order (the DGO is the SFPD bible) that lays out a community policing infrastructure citywide, yet tailored to each district station, that withstands politics and holds up to public scrutiny. Anything less is rhetoric. The dividend of this system is realized in greater deterrence and cooperation between law enforcement and neighborhoods - in time, this will yield improved arrest and prosecution rates.

-- Retool Violence Prevention/Intervention Programs: There are serious shortcomings in the city's vast network of existing violence prevention programs. We're flirting with a decentralized strategy by funding nonprofit organizations with neither adequate resources nor oversight. They often lack the political clout or bureaucratic wherewithal to realize their overall role in reducing violence or the conditions that induce it. Tailored crime reduction strategies require accountability, but those measurements don't exist aside from a body count. The city and the near-dozen departments that fund violence prevention must tackle this.

-- Demand Results-oriented Leadership: It's myopic to think that law enforcement alone will reduce violent crime. Currently, the method deployed by city departments that administer violence prevention dollars is not strategic - reflective of needs and challenges, neighborhood roundtable discussions need to be devised that include community and all relevant agencies, e.g, the housing authority, redevelopment agency, public school district, adult/juvenile probation, law enforcement, the Mayor's Offices of Community Development, Economic Development, Criminal Justice, Department of Children, Youth and Family, and others, need to be at the table.

With vigilance, there is reason to be hopeful. In some neighborhoods the ongoing collaboration between city and community shows promise. San Francisco is the most beautiful city in the country. Let's make it the safest, too.

ICE "In Case of Emergency" 911 Cell Phone Plan

When traveling on highways or when out of your home area you should always dial "911" in case of an emergency.

HOWEVER, if you are in Berkeley, on the UC Campus or in Oakland there are other numbers that you should program in your cell phone to get a quicker response. (Likewise, if you live or work in other towns you should add their cell phone police dispatch number.)

ICE BPD 981-5911 (cell), 981-5900 (reg non-emergency)
ICE UC 642-3333 (cell),
ICE Oak 777-3211 (cell), 777-3333 (reg non-emergency)
(note: San Francisco has an automatic 911 transfer to SFPD)

Another way to make your cell phone more useful in an emergency is to program other personal numbers under "ICE" such as Home (if someone is usually home during the day) or Friend, Parents, etc. This way if you become ill or are involved in an accident, emergency personnel can check your phone for such contacts. i.e. Friend/work 1-415-000-0000, Friend/home 1-510-000-0000, Parents/home 1-510-000-0000.

"To its owner, the cell phone is an indispensable lifeline at times of crisis, reuniting loved ones separated by unforeseen events at the touch of a button. But for members of the emergency services making life-and-death decisions, the cell poses a conundrum: Which of the numbers stored in its directory should be called first? Obviously, YOU should make this choice and list them in that order." (Adding a number after the word ICE will set up such a list.)

To help ensure that others know that you have programmed your cell phone you might want to add a label to the outside (or near the dial) reading "ICE" perhaps with your name or other ID.

Local Crimes of Note

Event #1

On Friday, December 21, 2007 at 2:11 a.m. BPD received a report of an armed robbery which had just occurred at the intersection of Dwight Way and Hillegass Avenue. BPD has advised that the victims were a male and female in their early 20s. The victims were not injured during the encounter.

The suspects were described as:

Suspect #1 – A Black male in his mid-twenties, with a medium build, wearing a black beanie and all black clothing, carrying a black semi-automatic handgun.

Suspect #2 & #3 – Black males, no other description available

If you have any information about this crime, please contact:

Berkeley Police Department
(510) 981-5900 / 24 Hours

Event #2

On Thursday, December 20, 2007 at 1:30am an empty liquor bottle was thrown through the second floor window of an apartment Benvenue between Parker and Derby. No one was injured in the incident. By the time the tenant made his way to the window, the perpetrators had left the scene.

The tenant called the Berkeley Police Department. The police were unable to locate any suspects in the area.

Other Items of Interest

A. Willard Neighborhood Association General Meeting – Wednesday, February 20th at 7pm

All Willard neighbors, and other local neighbors, are invited to attend our General Meeting next month. The central element will be a discussion of crime in the neighborhood and specific ways that reducing that crime can be addressed.

We'll also be electing the Steering Committee for 2008 and presenting some by laws changes for approval. Only Willard neighbors will be able to vote on these items. We'll be asking people to sign in when they arrive – doors open approximately 6:30.

This is subject to change, but here is the draft agenda for the meeting:

7:00 Welcome & Introduction

7:15 By Laws changes

7:30 Election of Steering Committee

7:50 Panel on Crime (30 min – Intro + 5 min. each)

Chief Doug Hambleton	BPD
Chief Victoria Harrison	UCPD
Kriss Worthington	Councilman D7
Gordon Wozniak	Councilman D8

8:20 Q&A from audience

9:05 Announce results of election

9:10 Other business

9:20 adjourn / clean up

*** * * * * City of Berkeley: Useful Contact Information * * * * ***

Police

Police Emergency Number: 911 (from landline);
981-5911 (from cell; preprogram with this
number)

Police Non-emergency Number: 981-5900

Link to beat maps and a list of beat officers:

<http://www.ci.berkeley.ca.us/police/departments/beatinfo/beatlineup.html>

In Willard neighborhood, North of Derby is Beat 7, South of Derby is Beat 9.

Area Coordinator -- Steve Burccham 981-5778

Other City Departments:

Neighborhood Services Liaison Jim Hynes <jhynes@ci.berkeley.ca.us> 981-2493

Public Works Customer Service: 644-6620 (trash pick up, streets, sidewalks, graffiti, sewers, storm drains, street lights) pwworks@ci.berkeley.ca.us / publicworks@ci.berkeley.ca.us

Tree Trimming/Planting (Forestry): 644-6566 trees@ci.berkeley.ca.us

Written Communication with City Council:

To comment to City Council, cut and paste the following email addresses:

City Clerk <clerk@ci.berkeley.ca.us> ,

Mayor Tom Bates <Mayor@ci.berkeley.ca.us> ,

Councilmember Linda Maio <LMaio@ci.berkeley.ca.us> ,

Councilmember Darryl Moore <DMoore@ci.berkeley.ca.us> ,

Councilmember Max Anderson <MAnderson@ci.berkeley.ca.us> ,

Councilmember Dona Spring <DSpring@ci.berkeley.ca.us> ,

Councilmember Laurie Capitelli <LCapitelli@ci.berkeley.ca.us> ,

Councilmember Betty Olds <BOlds@ci.berkeley.ca.us> ,

Councilmember Kriss Worthington <KWorthington@ci.berkeley.ca.us> ,

Councilmember Gordon Wozniak <GWozniak@ci.berkeley.ca.us>

Representatives for Our Neighborhood:

Councilmember Kriss Worthington (District 7) 981-7170
All except Eastern edge of neighborhood

Councilmember Gordon Wozniak (District 8) 981-7180
Eastern edge of neighborhood

Mayor Tom Bates 981-7100

Zoning Adjustments Board:

To comment to the Zoning Adjustments Board regarding projects on their calendar, email: Zoning Adjustments Board <zab@ci.berkeley.ca.us>

Best to submit your comments 10 days prior to meeting for inclusion in the advance packet to board members, but late submissions will be distributed the evening of the meeting

* * * * *

Dues Contribution Form

Name: _____

Address: _____ Zip: _____

Email: _____@_____

Phone: (_____) _____-- _____

Interests: _____

Suggested Dues: \$10/household Amount Donated: \$_____

We appreciate your contribution and will use your money to support activities that benefit the Willard neighborhood. Whether you donate or not, you are still a member of Willard Neighborhood Association and entitled to all the rights and privileges that go along with that.

Make checks payable to: Willard Neighborhood Association

Send to: Willard Neighborhood Association
2619 Benvenue Ave. Apt. A
Berkeley, CA 94704

Willard Neighborhood Association Newsletter: The WNA Newsletter covers items of general interest to neighbors in the Ashby/Telegraph/Dwight/College area of south Berkeley, including announcements about community-building events, greening projects and work parties around the neighborhood.

If you're receiving this email, you probably either signed up at a neighborhood event or a neighbor forwarded it to you. Please note that to prevent spam, WNA always uses bcc and does not share your email address with third parties. Feel free to pass the WNA Newsletter on to other neighbors you think might be interested.

To submit items for the newsletter: Email content or links you'd like to see included in the Newsletter to Vincent Casalaina <ProBerk@aol.com>. Please note that due to the volunteer nature of the endeavor, the Newsletter does not typically include "letters to the editor" or "commentary" type articles. The Berkeley Daily Planet has a large section devoted to opinion.

WNA Yahoo Group: If you would like to receive messages (and participate in discussions) on the WNA Yahoo Group, please sign up on the website indicating your interest, and you will receive a confirmation of your membership.

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/willardna/>

WNA Neighborhood Links site: If you would like to see the agendas and background information that the Steering Committee gets each month, you can find it here at this site. Also here are archived copies of the Newsletter and some additional contact information.

<http://www.neighborhoodlink.com/berkeley/willard/>

Willard Park Blog:

After a five and a half year tour of duty in the San Francisco Bay Area, Christine and Mark Celsor have moved back to Cincinnati.

We will miss the energy that both Mark and Christine have shown in their public service to the neighborhood. Mark's neighborhood blog will go away soon – so say goodbye before it comes down.

<http://www.willardpark.com/>

If you would like to be removed from this mailing list, please reply to this email with the subject line of "un-subscribe" and I'll remove your email address.