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***This issue: Take back the Streets this THURSDAY | Beware of Scammer | Special Thanks to Midtown Tire | Campaign For Atlanta | Vagrant Activity | Mini-Riot in Midtown | Another Burglar Gone Bye-Bye | Bedford Pine Update | Mailbag / Sponsors***

***Call to action: Let your city council representatives and especially the Mayor know that we want the furloughs to end quickly. We will have the equivalent of 140 additional officers per day on the streets of Atlanta as soon as the furloughs end....***

### **TAKE BACK THE STREETS INITIATIVE**

We are working to get as many people on the streets during the 8pm hour so they are no longer fearful about walking in their own neighborhood. We also seek to let the criminals and undesirables know that they are not welcome on our streets. We hope to have media attention...

Therefore, we are asking all Block Captains to organize a group walk on Thursday evening (5/21) from their area, and to arrive at Richard's Grocery store at the corner of 6th and Argonne in time for 8pm. We will have a short meeting (just a few minutes) with Sgt. Cooper, our patrol coordinator, and someone from APD. From there we will all disperse back to our areas. The larger the crowd, the more attention we will achieve for this important initiative.

We will send a list of embarkation points with a reminder on Wednesday. Alternately, walkers can go straight to Richard's on their way home from the park, etc., and then walk back with their block groups. Those who do not have a block group can grab a neighbor or two, and head to Richard's in time for an 8pm meeting.

Get your neighbors to come out, for we hope to see many folks out on the streets Thursday evening.

### **BEWARE OF SCAMMER**

An old scam has been making new rounds around town lately, involving the disabling of the victim's vehicle by disconnecting the gas line going into the fuel pump on vehicles with electric fuel pumps. This has been reported at Ansley Mall, Krispy Kreme, Publix on Ponce, & Whole Foods/Home Depot on Ponce. One woman had her three kids with her when he struck, and gave him \$60 bucks.

One victim, who was hit while shopping at Whole Foods, wrote that an African American man, around 6 feet tall, mid-50s in age, slender build, wearing a blue baseball cap, grey pants and a white t-shirt, walked up to what the victim thought to be the subject's pickup truck next nearby, with his keys in hand. The subject (apparently spontaneously) asks if the victim is having car trouble. The victim further described the subject having a Caribbean-like accent. For \$20, he "fixed" the vehicle.

APD has been notified and are on the lookout for the guy. MPSA Patrol is also familiar with the reports. Please let us know if you run into this guy. ***If this happens in the service area during business hours, Midtown Tire will come out and reconnect the terminal at no charge.***

### **SPECIAL THANKS TO MIDTOWN TIRE**

Midtown Tire recently overhauled the patrol vehicle at no cost to us, thereby saving us a huge sum! We are very grateful for their ongoing sponsorship, and urge you to go to them whenever you need new tires or minor repairs.

- **Website:** [www.midtowntire.com](http://www.midtowntire.com)

### **CAMPAIGN FOR ATLANTA**

The Campaign for Atlanta is a grassroots citizens' group looking to raise the level of discussion among the Mayoral Candidates, with a focus on financial solvency, good governance, police and fire safety. These commitments seem basic, but they are now lacking. Say that you care! Please sign a petition in support of these basic commitments for Atlanta and its citizens. We need signatures of support to show that Atlantans are serious about better government. This group will also conduct a series of unique mayoral forums to be videoed and available on the website, ***but the group will not endorse a candidate.***

Read more about Campaign for Atlanta at the website linked below, and then sign the petition. Enter your name, neighborhood, etc. and then click on "Add Voice." The group is seeking 8,000 signatures. That's serious.

- [www.campaignforatlanta.com](http://www.campaignforatlanta.com)

### **VAGRANT ACTIVITY**

The patrol continues to deal with vagrant activity in the area, as a result, we seem to be having fewer problems overall. The problems we have tend to be serious however. For example, vagrants have taken over the vacant house at 795 Monroe Drive. We notified Code Enforcement, and they placarded the house. Please continue to tell us about vacant houses - they are at high risk for vagrant encampments. Just yesterday, a new vagrant nest was discovered when a mattress caught fire on the Beltline. This underscores the danger of letting vagrant camping go unchecked - this is at least the second fire in our service area in as many years attributed to urban camping (the other being the apartment building at 9th & Argonne in July 2007).

### **MINI-RIOT IN MIDTOWN**

We were alerted to a major disturbance occurring on 10th Street near the Post Parkside entrance to the park last Monday (May 11th). A gang of increasingly unruly vagrants that regularly hangs around that small area of 10th Street was engaging in their usual loud and obnoxious conduct.

The situation came to a head last Monday, when some residents in the apartment building nearby complained and asked them to take their obnoxious conduct elsewhere. The troublemakers responded by throwing beer bottles at the window, and ended up also hitting the window of an APD officer living in the building. He called for APD backup,

and after a scuffle with police, several were arrested. One belligerent individual went to the hospital after eliciting the deployment of pepper spray by the officers.

### **ANOTHER BURGLAR GONE BYE-BYE**

In April 2008, William Jeffrey Reese burglarized a home on Greenwood Avenue. The very next day, DeKalb Police arrested him in the act as he burglarized a home in the Brookhaven area. He was found to be in possession of jewelry and a cell phone from the Greenwood burglary. He was booked into the DeKalb, and was never released on bond. Last month, DeKalb County Superior Court sentenced him to serve ten years in prison.

He has been a criminal all of his adult life, as reflected by many jail bookings and several prison stints. This incorrigible criminal initially refused a plea bargain of only ten years, thereby risking up to 30 years imprisonment. Once the victims and detectives testified, he resorted to the plea bargain.

He is also suspected of several other Midtown and Virginia Highland burglaries. It is unknown at this point whether Fulton County will pursue charges from over here and tack on some more needed time-out for this career criminal.

We are very impressed with the work of DeKalb authorities in bringing this criminal where he belongs...

- **Profile Sheet with photos:**  
[http://www.midtownponce.org/news/Profile062\\_REESE.pdf](http://www.midtownponce.org/news/Profile062_REESE.pdf)

### **BEDFORD PINE**

It appears that Bedford Pine wants to amplify the status quo in that area, which leads to a massive open-air drug market driving a significant portion of the crime in our area. Apparently Bedford Pine is eligible for some Federal funding as a result of the stimulus package, but they need to have their plan in by this week. This requires input from the City (which in turns requires a loop through the NPU system, hence the meeting summarized below). They are not seeking to redevelop the area, but to replace existing buildings with larger ones. Their plans do not clearly call for a reduced percentage of subsidized units. The Atlanta Housing Authority recommends a configuration of 70% market-rate and 30% subsidized units (We would like to see more like 80/20 or 90/10).

### **John Wolfinger, our safety contact in Virginia Highland, gave us the following report.**

*I went to the Fourth Ward Alliance meeting in order to hear a presentation about Bedford Pine Village specifically concerning a proposed new building project on Parkway Drive. Why should I be concerned about this housing area many blocks from Virginia Highland? The open drug trade on the streets of Bedford Pine very directly affects our general quality of life and most certainly our public safety. I would hazard a guess that a significant portion of the money that changes hands on these streets comes from the sale of articles stolen from our streets on the north side of PDL Avenue and east of the Beltline tracks.*

*First of all - some interesting facts about this huge Section 8 housing area that I learned this evening. This is the single largest concentration of Section 8 housing in the Southeast comprised of 689 housing units. It is managed by Wingate Properties [a*

subsidiary of Continental Wingate based in Needham, Massachusetts]. The two smooth-talking representatives of Wingate in attendance talked in generalities about the fact that it is time for the entire complex of buildings to be redone, with some buildings to be torn down and some "classic" buildings to be completely rehabbed. The last time they were rehabbed was 40 years ago, and these two reps talked in glowing terms as to how they want to work with Fourth Ward folks to come up with a master redevelopment plan.

The project that was proposed this evening involved the demolition of three buildings on Parkway Drive between PDL and North Avenues that currently contain 42 housing units, and to be replaced with a five story building (with underground parking) to contain 87 housing units. Federal Fair Housing laws dictate that the occupants of the 42 razed units will have first choice in returning to the new building. They talked in generalities about devoting a certain amount of the units over and above the 42 units to be dedicated to senior citizen housing. Yet I would personally wonder how many senior citizens would feel safe living next door to some of the folks I see hanging out in front of those buildings now.

Wingate also pressured Fourth Ward for an approval vote to be taken tonight since they claim they face a May 21st deadline to apply for current funds for tax credits from some of the stimulus monies. They also resisted any talk of making a certain percentage of these proposed 87 units to be rented at market rates to dilute the amount of Section 8 folks crowded together on this one block. The Fourth Ward folks were not impressed and the motion to approve the new building was handily defeated.

**We will watch this critical issue affecting public safety and quality of life in our community.**

**NEWSWIRE & BLOG WATCH**

- **SUNDAY PAPER:** *Badges, Bullets, and Broken Promises*

**BE SAFE AND STAY VIGILANT! And remember, your car + your valuables = loot for a thief! If you don't get those things out of your car, a thief will do it for you...**

**- Your Neighbors at the Midtown Ponce Security Alliance**

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**A VERY SPECIAL THANKS TO OUR COMMUNITY SPONSORS WHO PROVIDE A MAJOR ENHANCEMENT TO YOUR PATROL'S EFFECTIVENESS:**

***Midtown Neighbors Association***

***The Sembler Company | Post Parkside***

***Midtown Tire, Inc.***

***AND THE MANY RESIDENTS AND BUSINESS MEMBERS OF THE MPSA***