

**MIDTOWN PONCE SECURITY ALLIANCE**  
**EYE ON MIDTOWN - Week 02 / 2009**

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*Midtown, 1/08/2009*

**THIS WEEK:**

- ***Our monthly safety meeting will feature a raffle for a free security system (p. 1)***
- ***Crime incidents in the neighborhood (1-2)***
- ***MPSA Patrol activity for December (2-3)***
- ***Creative Loafing article about intown crime (3)***
- ***Appeal for funding (4)***
- ***MPSA Mailbag - sociopathic vagrants, robberies, thieves, prostitution (4-6)***

**JANUARY SAFETY MEETING**

At this month's public safety meeting Lt. McGee will introduce Officer Esquilin, APD's Midtown Liaison. Officer Esquilin's crime suppression tasks include patrolling selected areas with patterns of criminal and nuisance activity. He also assists area shopping centers combating long-standing issues such as aggressive panhandling and loitering. Having a Midtown Liaison officer greatly assists our efforts toward a safer and more orderly neighborhood, and we look forward to having our neighborhood patrol working with him.

We are also hoping to have the victim of a recent carjacking share her story. Sgt. Cooper will brief us on recent patrol activities and trends on the streets. Other public officials will give their respective updates. The furlough issue will inevitably arise during the meeting. We encourage everybody to come early to enjoy a great dinner and socialize with your fellow Midtowners!

***Security system raffle*** - One of our sponsors, Brinks Home Security, will bring a handout on safety, child ID kits, coloring books, and general information on Brinks. They will also raffle off two FREE Installation of a Standard System to one of the attendees of the safety meeting. The free Standard System - a \$199 value - includes 2 door contacts, a keypad, a motion detector, the control panel, a siren, a yard sign and decals.

- ***Monday January 12th, 7pm, at Mary Mac's***

**CRIME INCIDENTS IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD**

For the last six years we have worked so hard to make our streets safer but bad situations continue to happen at an alarming rate. Meanwhile, more police officers are leaving APD and the furlough is taking more officers off of the streets. Now we are entering our low revenue producing months. As we put together this Eye on Midtown, new reports kept coming in and share them below.

## **EYE ON MIDTOWN - Week 02 / 2009**

A man was shot four times in the leg at Ponce & Boulevard around 10:30pm on Saturday evening. The shooter then fled in a car, and wrecked a short time later on Parkway Drive. We do not know if the shooting victim survived. The MPSA officer was first on the scene and dealt with this incident.

A short time later, someone was robbed on the sidewalk on Penn Avenue. Ironically, the MPSA officer had just been in that area to do a vacation check. Later on, two thugs carjacked a woman on Myrtle Street. As she was getting into her car, two black males with handguns robbed her of her car.

In the last week, Monroe Circle experienced a rash of car thefts. Two cars were stolen from the same driveway just a few days apart. Police believe a trio of black males to be responsible for this rash of car thefts.

Around 9pm on Tuesday evening (1/06), a couple was robbed as they were walking their dog along 5th Street. Two armed thugs approached them and demanded their valuables. The lady gave them her cell phone. The subjects then fled in a car, and the other victim managed to note the tag number. One of the suspects fired his gun back at the victims, but no one was hurt. The police responded immediately to the 911 call, and the tag number turned out to be that of a stolen car.

This may be a sign of things to come as a result of Mayor Franklin's executive order to curtail police protection in order to balance the budget. We have shared a few reports from the community in our Mailbag section below. Criminals will inevitably take advantage of new opportunities to get away with crime sprees. Media reports and feedback from the neighborhood signal that a bad situation seems to be unfolding.

### **MPSA PATROL ACTIVITY – December 2008**

In looking at the patrol logs, it is becoming apparent to us that the day laborer problem is growing. E-mails from the neighborhood also reflect this trend. Until recent months, the patrol handled few calls directly related to the day laborers loitering on Ponce and spilling into Old Midtown.

- 12/05 - Subject arrested after harassing patrons in the 200 block of 10th Street.
- 12/07 - MPSA member called about suspicious person on St. Charles Avenue
- 12/08 - Belligerent vagrant harassing people on sidewalk just outside the safety meeting
- 12/11 - Same belligerent vagrant locked up on 12/08 panhandled in same place - patrol told him to move on.
- 12/12 - Patrol assisted with a high volume of 911 calls in the neighborhood

### *EYE ON MIDTOWN - Week 02 / 2009*

- 12/14 - Patrol intercepted a burglary in progress, and locked up the subject. For unknown reasons, the charge was later reduced to battery (subject fought with police).
- 12/15 - Suspicious person reported to patrol hotline on St. Charles Avenue. No individual found matching description of report.
- 12/16 - Subject arrested for being disorderly under the influence and giving false name to police. Individual speaks little English and is believed to be a day laborer chronically loitering across from City Hall East.
- 12/17 - More drunk and disorderly day laborers locked up.
- 12/17 - Security officers at member shopping center called about a church group from Lawrenceville handing out food to street people from the parking lot. At the request of the security officers and shopping center management, the patrol issued a criminal trespass warning to the group, and urged them to coordinate with the Gateway Center on that kind of activity.
- 12/19 - Individual locked up for urinating blatantly in public.
- 12/24 - 911 call on 9th Street about suspicious person - turned out to be a neighborhood feeding cats while owner was away.
- 12/24 - Vagrant found camping behind 883 Penn Avenue (vacant house, abandoned construction site).
- 12/25 - Suspicious person snooping around in residential area investigated. Subject spoke little English and is believed to be a day laborer.
- 12/31 - Patrol investigated vagrants generating complaints on 10th Street.

#### **MEDIA COVERAGE: INTOWN CRIME**

Creative Loafing ran an article about crime trends around intown neighborhoods. The article highlights a gentleman who was robbed at gunpoint at North Avenue & Boulevard. A friend of his shared his story on our Yahoo Group (linked below). The article points out a discrepancy between what city officials say, and what intowners perceive and observe. The article discusses the furlough situation, and quotes the police union president urging citizens to be more vigilant. Interesting reader comments follow the story.

- **Creative Loafing:** Intowners claim crime has grown more brazen  
[http://atlanta.creativeloafing.com/gyrobase/intowners\\_claim\\_crime\\_has\\_grown\\_more\\_brazen/Content?oid=669176](http://atlanta.creativeloafing.com/gyrobase/intowners_claim_crime_has_grown_more_brazen/Content?oid=669176)
- **MPSA Yahoo Group:** This is the story of my friend's mugging  
<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/MidtownPonce/message/50>

### SPECIAL APPEAL FOR FUNDING

On Thursday, we sent out a special appeal to the membership for assistance. Crime is up, the furlough reduces police protection, and we are entering our low season financially. There are a couple things you can do to help our public safety efforts:

- Get your neighbors to join, and/or
- Send an extra donation to MPSA, PO Box 7038, Atlanta 30357 or using PayPal via our website.

Help is not on the way! Our patrol program is currently the most workable and realistic short and medium range strategy available to enhance public safety in the neighborhood.

### MPSA MAILBAG:

**Sociopathic street people (12/31/2008)** - *This city needs to do something about all these sociopathic dregs taking over the city. I used to think nothing of it, but now they are becoming more aggressive. I have lived in town for ten years, and I have never seen the homeless problem so bad.*

*Two days ago when I went shopping at Ansley Mall, an aggressive panhandler approached me and my five year old niece asking for money. When I politely refused, he became angry but walked away. As he walked away he started yelling obscenities, causing my niece to start crying. I got her to calm down, and I thought everything would be fine.*

*Yesterday I had to go to Green's on Ponce to get some Champagne for this evening. I left my niece in the car to go get the Champagne only to come back and find another homeless man at the window of my car. He was making faces, showing his hideous teeth, and threatening gestures at my niece, slapping on the window, and scaring my niece to death. My niece was crying hysterically and this vagrant was laughing. I gave the bum a piece of my mind and he just laughed and walked away. My niece cried hysterically, and had nightmares last night.*

*Today, I thought my niece was better but then she looked out the window and saw a vagrant urinating on the side of my house. I went outside to tell him to leave, and he became angry. And he stank to high hell! Again she starting crying hysterically and even two hours later she is still shaken. My mom will come get her this evening, but she wants to go now.*

*Enough is enough! It is high time to get rid of the sociopathic vagrants! The vagrants used to be down and out, but now they are serial rapists and psychopaths. I used to be in favor of gun*

control, but now I am about to buy a gun because I do not know how long it will be before one comes crashing into my house. Nobody feels safe any more anywhere.

**Vagrant sleeping in car** - [Background info: a resident in one of the condo buildings found a vagrant sleeping in the back seat of her car. The subject took advantage of a malfunctioning gate] Closer inspection proved sickening. My car needed a biohazard scrub down to clean out what this apparently-ill person left behind -- \$99.00 for a full disinfecting and fumigation. I could have rented him a room at the W for that. I had to trash my best umbrella and other possessions that were contaminated with crud you step over on a sidewalk. Sorry for too much information, but that's the raw reality of dealing with even a small incident like this. Be sure to LOCK YOUR CAR!

**Surge in crime incidents near Chas Allen & 5th** - I just wanted to let you know of an increase in problems at the intersection of Charles Allen Drive and 4th street . Last Friday (January 2) I witnessed a prowler in my next door neighbor's back yard as he was crawling around and acting extremely suspicious and trying to hide from me. I screamed and yelled at him and scared him off as well as called 911. Last night, I was witness to a man stealing someone's bicycle and then the bicycle owner pulling up in a car and then a subsequent fistfight and loud yelling in the middle of the street.

I have lived at this corner for almost 5 years now and am seeing the number of problems and sketchy foot-traffic dramatically increase lately and the above 2 examples are only from the last 5 days. It seems that most of the problems are coming from the housing units next door to Taco Bell [MPSA NOTE: Bedford Pine buildings at PDL & Parkway Drive] at the intersection of Ponce and also extending up to. If there is any way to convince the APD that this area is truly in DESPRETE need of enforcement please send me your thoughts. I would love to help out as much as possible since I feel that am in more and more danger every single day.

**Bike stolen from front porch** - Sometime last night [into 1/07], my husband's bike was stolen from our front porch (upper Myrtle Street). The lock was cut with a hacksaw or cable cutters. It's a men's black Trek mountain bike, about 14 years old, with a worn black seat, and a brace on the back (used for a toddler seat). It was a \$400-600 bike way back when. They either lifted it over the railing, or they walked it down the porch to the front steps and down the front steps. Let me know if you find an abandoned bike anywhere. It was still a great bike, so we'd love to get it back.

Prostitution activity at 3rd & Piedmont - I feel this is one of the worse crime areas in south Midtown, and the activities which occur at night deter me from frequenting Midtown restaurants and bars as I am concerned for my safety walking home. (and I'm sure if they are deterring me,

**EYE ON MIDTOWN - Week 02 / 2009**

they are for others too). I've made several calls to the Atlanta Police Department about the prostitution and paraphernalia frequently found on this block but I haven't seen any improvement.

One recent example of the severity happened this past weekend. Around 1 AM I was taking out my dog when I witnessed 3 separate prostitutes step into cars cruising on 3rd Street within 5 minutes! I also witnessed a street fight occurring on the Piedmont side, and found drugs lying in the gutter. As well, over the past month I have noticed a substantial increase in the amount of drug paraphernalia, such as crack pipes, and used condoms lying in the street. I am concerned that this is health risk, as these items often remain lying there for days. As well, I have noticed a male circling the block at night and watching women. The past two nights I have seen him trying to hide behind objects while I walked into my building. This was at approximately 9:45 PM when I came home from Georgia State. These are only a fraction of the incidents which happen on a regular basis.

If we could get anyone to drive down the 3rd street block between Juniper and Piedmont periodically that would be great! If not, if you have any ideas on how to increase the safety of this area, they would be much appreciated.

**BE SAFE AND STAY VIGILANT! And remember, your car + your valuables = loot for a thief!**

**- 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. | Ackerman & Company**

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

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