

**MIDTOWN PONCE SECURITY ALLIANCE**  
**EYE ON MIDTOWN - Week 09 / 2009**

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*Midtown, 2/26/2009*

***This week: Murder at Aqua, Block watch in action, Safety Tips for showing your home, Court Watch training, Sponsors***

### **MURDER AT AQUA**

We wish to thank the Atlanta Police Department for their fast response and apprehension of Shamal Thompson. Media reports pointed out that he has an extensive criminal history, and our research turned up a jail mugshot in which he proudly smiled like the Cheshire Cat. It appears that he became cockier with every crime he committed, and that he was treated more lightly with every arrest – thanks to broken court systems. He also smiled boldly in his mugshot for the murder case. WSB TV reported over the weekend that he may be the Midtown Mugging, though they have not finished that story to our knowledge.

### **BLOCK WATCH IN ACTION**

2008 was a very difficult and dangerous year for the folks living in the 7th & Mentelle block unit area. During those 12 months, they experienced two carjackings at gunpoint, five home burglaries, and countless car break-ins. Street captain and MPSA Board member Randall Cobb felt helpless that he could only warn his neighbors to stay alert, keep their cars empty, use their home security systems, and so forth.

Randall noticed that they needed more street lighting, so he contacted the city the next day. They told him that the city did not have any more lights to install. Mayor Franklin put a moratorium on street lighting and other services badly needed in the city.

After discussing the issue with the MNA board members, he learned that the MNA has some funding for additional street lights. He then sent an e-mail to his neighbors promoting the "Adopt A Light" program and asking for additional funds. Several neighbors pitched in to enhance street lighting in that area. It may sound like a small thing, but everything we can do helps us take back our streets.

### **SAFETY TIPS FOR SHOWING YOUR HOME**

Thom Abbott sent us some safety tips for showing your home or condo.

If you choose to sell your home on your own (For Sale By Owner or FSBO) or manage renting your home or condominium, you place yourself, and your property at risk. In light of recent events in Midtown, we've prepared a list of a few tips for you to remember to protect your safety and your property.

- Don't just post your address on any Internet posting. Wait to give out the address when you have spoken to a person to schedule a viewing of your home or condo. This way, you have some control on who knows where you are.
- When scheduling a viewing, don't do it alone. If you are hosting your own Open House, have a friend or family member with you. Alert a neighbor, or two, about what you are doing so they can keep an eye open.
- Have visitors show you a picture identification, to make sure they are at least the same person. Anyone resisting this should be suspect. If you live in a multi-family building, meet the visitor in the lobby (if you have one.) Ask that they leave their driver's license with the

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Concierge or Security Officer before taking them to your home. (Not just signing a sign in sheet - leave the physical license).

- When showing your home, never walk into a room first. Follow behind the individual and point out the features. "To your left is the master bedroom. And through it is the bath."
- Don't allow people to separate in your home or condo. Keep them together. One could be the distraction to see what valuables they can steal now, or later.
- Put away simple things - laptops, jump drives, personal information like bills, bank statements, jewelry. Remember, a thief with a jump drive can steal files off your computer in a matter of a few moments if it's not password protected.
- Always know your escape routes. Have doors or windows unlocked so you can quickly exit.
- Always have your cell phone and car keys on your person. Have your cell phone programmed to easily call 911.
- If you simply MUST host an Open House by yourself, have a "buddy call system" with a friend that they call you every 30 minutes. If they call you and you don't answer, have them call 911.
- If you feel threatened in anyway, get out, and call 911.

***The Thom And Ray Team | Thom Abbott & Ray Benitez, Associate Brokers | 800 Peachtree Street, Suite E | Atlanta, GA 30308 | 770-713-1505 | ThomAndRayTeam.com***

### **CITIZENS' COURT WATCH TRAINING**

Learn how to advocate for your community! Citizens' Court Watch, Sponsored by the Fulton County District Attorney's Community Prosecution Program is a program that helps community members actively participate in the criminal justice system. Join us for our next training session!

- ***Saturday March 7, 2009 / 9am - 12pm / Justice Center Tower (185 Central Ave, SW)***

For more information contact Janet Martin at 404-699-5297 or [courtwatch@fultoncountyga.gov](mailto:courtwatch@fultoncountyga.gov)

**BE SAFE AND STAY VIGILANT! HAPPY NEW YEAR!**

***- 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***

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