

MIDTOWN PONCE SECURITY ALLIANCE
Midtown Public Safety Report – February 2007

PUBLIC SAFETY MEETING ON FEBRUARY 2007

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IN ATTENDANCE:

- Peggy Denby – Moderator
- Sgt. Cooper – APD & MPSA Patrol
- Officers Hale and Molnar – APD Zone 5 & MPSA Patrol
- Sgt. Anderson – MARTA Police
- Sharla Jackson – Community prosecutor for the DA's Office
- Allison Ashe – Atlanta Police Foundation

SPECIAL GUEST: ALLISON ASHE OF THE ATLANTA POLICE FOUNDATION

Ms. Ashe is the Director of Development and Communication for the APF.

About the Atlanta Police Foundation:

The mission of the Foundation is to support the Mayor, the Chief of Police, and the Atlanta Police Department in the shared commitment to make Atlanta the safest and most inviting city for all its residents, workers, and visitors.

Ongoing APF projects:

Recruitment - Increased visibility of Atlanta police officers is critical to preventing crime in Atlanta. In order to attract and train 2000 officers by 2009, the Foundation is providing support for a high-profile recruitment campaign.

The Mounted Patrol - Mounted patrol units are a critical component of police visibility and are the best method of crowd control for festivals, parks and major sporting events. The Atlanta Police Foundation has restored the mounted units to Atlanta by providing start-up costs, including the purchase of horses. The APF is looking for sponsors of horses!

Housing for Police Officers - The housing program assists officers in finding afford-able housing within the city limits of Atlanta, thereby increasing police presence in city neighborhoods. When an officer lives in your neighborhood, the neighborhood is safer.

Crime Stoppers - Crime Stoppers, an anonymous tip line for concerned citizens, is a national model that has an impressive conviction rate of 98%. Prior to 2007, Atlanta was the only major U.S. city without a Crime Stoppers program, and Foundation funding has brought Crime Stoppers to Atlanta. To make an anonymous tip dial 404-577-TIPS (404-577-8477). To learn more or to make a tip online visit us at crimestoppersatlanta.org.

Scholarships and Training - The Atlanta Police Foundation provides a variety of training opportunities to ensure APD officers are prepared for emergencies and better able to pre-vent crimes before they happen, The Atlanta Police Foundation also provides scholarships to officers

who wish to further their education, making APD more competitive with suburban departments and directly benefiting the city with more highly qualified officers.

The Atlanta Security Council - Established by the APF, this roundtable of corporate security executives, government officials, and community representatives works closely with the APD and other law enforcement agencies to solve common safety and security concerns.

For more information about this wonderful organization: atlantapolicefoundation.org

FULTON COUNTY JAIL STATS

The MPSA receive by E-mail a sample of the daily inmate count at the Fulton County jail. During the morning count on February 12th the inmate population of 2661 inmates was broken down as follows:

- 1,879 housed at the main facility
- 336 held in satellite facilities
- 446 inmates held in outsourced locations.

On a detailed count sheet taken another part of the same day and with a different totally 2617 inmates it was

- 2649 beds
- 1746, or 66%, were occupied

Yet of the 2614 of the total inmates in their custody at the moment of count, 489, or 18%, were outsourced to other counties (particularly in South Georgia).

We are quite perplexed as to how the jail is considered overcrowded when entire cellblocks are unoccupied at times...

ACERT

Michael Floyd will coordinate the registration for the ACERT training for Midtown residents. We need volunteers to participate. Projected launch date is sometime in May. ***If you are interested in participating please let us know as soon as possible.***

The ACERT (Atlanta Citizens Emergency Response Team) training program will prepare thousands of Atlanta residents and workers to take care of themselves for up to 72 hours following a natural disaster or catastrophic event. As a team member, you will learn to apply basic skills to help sustain and save lives until help arrives.

The training requires a minimum participation of 15 people and a maximum of 25 people per team. If more than 25 are interested we would have to add teams accordingly. The teams will stay together and receive updates and refreshment training for years to come..

The ACERT training consists of modules on the following topics: disaster preparedness and response, fire safety, handling emergency medical issues and conducting triage until help can adequately take charge, search and rescue, team organization, and disaster Psychology.

More information is available at the following sources:

- The ACERT website - www.acertga.org
- The MPSA Public Safety Report (January 2007) - <http://midtownponce.org/news/SafetyReport200701.pdf>

MPSA PATROL

Patrol Schedule - The MPSA Patrol schedule recently expanded daytime coverage to better address daytime problems. In the coming weeks you will see the patrol vehicle more often in the neighborhood. Members received the patrol schedule in a recent mailing.

Arrest activity included:

- Begging – at 10th and Piedmont
- Disorderly conduct – at 724 Monroe
- Urinating in public
- 3 separate DUI's
- Drinking in public

Traffic citations included

- 18 Speeding tickets
- 3 Driver license violations (suspended/revoke/no)
- 2 Failure to insure vehicle
- 3 invalid tags
- 2 red light violations

MAGAZINE SCAMS

Neighbors have seen and reported the magazine guy quite a bit lately. One evening not too long ago he knocked on doors on Vedado Way and Charles Allen Drive. Neighbors followed him as they reported him to the police. The responding officer warned him that he would be arrested next time he solicited without a permit from the city.

We have an unconfirmed report that he was arrested the very morning somewhere near Monroe and St. Charles. Then we have a confirmed report that was arrested near 8th and Charles Allen Drive for solicitation without a permit. He had \$300 worth of checks, which the police have confiscated for evidence purposes.

We believe this to be a scam since he is claiming to be selling for some student group at Georgia Tech, where no known efforts are currently taking place. If anyone has purchased magazine subscriptions from this subject we would like to know whether you have actually received a subscription.

While this report was under construction the New York Times ran an article about door-to-door magazine scams (*For Youths, a Grim Tour on Magazine Crews*, NYT 2/21/2007). Young people were recruited to go door-to-door selling magazine subscriptions, and in the process defraud people by stealing from their homes and casing their homes for a later burglary.

We do not have concrete information that the neighborhood magazine guy is part of such a scheme, but bear in mind two points:

- Georgia Tech has no magazine sales campaigns going
- Magazine clearing houses do not condone aggressive or high-pressure tactics

POST PARKSIDE CARJACKING

Atlanta Police and the Fulton County DA's office are pursuing the suspects in a carjacking at Post Parkside.

The narrative from the police report (edited for flow):

On Thursday, January 25th Atlanta Police responded to a carjacking at 250 Tenth Street and were met by the victim who stated that his vehicle had been taken at gunpoint. This occurred around 8:30pm. The victim had parked his car on the second level of the parking deck and had exited his vehicle when he was approached by four black males; two of the subject pulled out handguns and demanded money. The victim stated that he had no money, so the subjects then demand his car keys. The victim gave the subjects his car key and two of the subjects entered his vehicle and left the parking garage. The victim stated that the other two subjects walked down the stairs and out of sight. The four suspects were described as black males wearing dark-colored jackets with fur around the hoods. All four suspects appeared to be juveniles. One suspect was armed with a black small-caliber tape of handgun. The victim could not give any further description. A detective

from the Zone 5 Criminal Investigation Division came to the scene and put an alert into the GCIC [Georgia Crime Information Center] system.

COURT WATCH – STATUS REPORT

- **Jermaine Moss** is charged with several car break-ins in the Midtown area in late August 2006. This is the “striped car” guy. He has been **convicted**. The judge handed down a 10-year sentence, of which 18 months is to be served. He will serve the remainder on probation, which includes a strict condition not to ever enter the area bound by North Avenue, the future Beltline, the Connector, and 17th Street (roughly the entire MNA area, not just the MPSA sub-area)
- **Ricky Love** is accused of assaulting a female on Peachtree Street on August 23, 2006. He remains in jail. Judge Schwall issued an order that the neighborhood have ample opportunity to comment in any decisions related to this case. The defendant is still under mental evaluation and is confirmed still in jail.
- **Damon Foson** is charged with a vicious attack on a young woman on West Peachtree Street. This victim attended a safety meeting in recent months to express her gratitude for community concern. She is still recovering from her injuries. The defendant is still under mental evaluation and is confirmed still in jail.
- **Cecil Washington** has been **convicted** and sentenced to 3 years incarceration (6 months probated for time served). This relates to the home invasion at the Dakota.

PAROLE WATCH

Many of you may remember a dramatic arrest of a major Midtown car thief in 2003. **Mark Avery Husbands** was convicted of 21 counts of car theft, mostly from his nearby neighbors. Husbands, who lived with his partner at 911 Monroe Circle, would order keys for his neighbors' cars and place sale ads in newspapers for them. When he had a buy he would then steal a neighbor's car and sell it with forged / fake South Carolina titles.

Police sources at the time told us he was suspected of many more instances of car theft in this manner in a battery of jurisdictions. He was sentenced to 15 years, 10 to serve.

It has come to our attention that he has been placed at the Atlanta Transitional Center, which the halfway house on Ponce de Leon Avenue. In other words, the Corrections Department has brought him back to the scene of the crime. Inmates at the Transitional Center are allowed out of the facility for work release, meaning that he is spending some time out in the neighborhood.

He has a “tentative parole date” of August 2008. While we suspect he will not be paroled until then, a Department of Corrections report says inmates in transitional centers are typically released or paroled in 9 to 12 months, if they pose “no unacceptable risk” to the community. This means a potential that he would be living in the neighborhood once again sometime this year. We strongly believe that he would return to Midtown because his partner, who according to public records has petitioned for his parole on several occasions, still resides on Monroe Circle.

We want reassurances that both the Parole Board and the Corrections Department understand the risks to our neighborhood in their decisions relating to this inmate. We have written to the State Parole Board about this case and have to date received no reply. Sharla Jackson of the Fulton County DA's office personally inquired about his status – we were advised to collect letters from people in the neighborhood and submit them together. ***If you were a victim of this criminal please contact us immediately so you can be notified of any upcoming parole hearings.***

We still need to assess whether his next parole is a short-term issue or an issue we can postpone until a later date. We wish to ensure that the neighborhood has an opportunity for input during these processes.

Depending on feedback from members of the community and other factors, our stance is likely to be one of the following:

1. Strong opposition to his release before having served 10 years
2. If he is to be released this year or next.

We will keep you posted as we find out more.

THE LINDER REPORT

Sgt. Cooper drew attention to the special report entitled *Fragile Momentum – Plan of Action for Rebuilding the Atlanta Police Department*, also referred to as “The Linder Report.” This 232-page report by John Linder and a group of consultants hired by the Atlanta Police Foundation examined in great depth the inner workings of the Atlanta Police Department.

This report identifies strengths and weaknesses of the Atlanta Police Department. During the study going into this report rank-and-file officers were interviewed about their experience with the Atlanta Police Department. Finally the study outlines how to improve the police department.

The Linder Report cost almost \$900K. The Atlanta Police Foundation paid for all of it through private donations. Interestingly enough, 3 years after the introduction of the Linder Report, there are still many viable suggestions in the report that would help the APD, but the powers that be in the City of Atlanta still do not seem to be listening.

We feel this is very worthwhile reading for those interested in Atlanta’s public safety issues. The reported can be found at http://www.theapf.org/Media/Downloads/APD_Plan_of_Action.PDF

AREA TRAFFIC ISSUES

There have been reports of pizza delivery people driving way too fast through the neighborhood. Police are watching the neighborhood during the daytime for this. If anyone catches a tag number and a description of such a vehicle please send that information to us. Any business known to have employees who drive dangerously or otherwise compromise public safety will hear from the MPESA. Furthermore the Midtown community will be CC’d on any such communication depending on the seriousness of the situation and the reliability of the information.

Residents in the condo building at Peachtree and Ponce de Leon reported that people typically drive very fast around the curve. This creates a very dangerous situation for pedestrians, as drivers cannot see ahead of that curve. Unfortunately this is primarily an urban design issue, and that the long-range solution would be to have the city engineering departments re-design that intersection.

AGGRESSIVE PANHANDLERS

In recent months aggressive panhandlers working in teams have targeted area shopping centers. Sgt. Miller has made arrests in 5 incidents so far. In one such group the kingpin drives a white van and has juveniles work the parking lot. This group has been seen in various areas ranging from Midtown to Cumberland Mall.

MARTA POLICE

MARTA Police recently conducted undercover operations to target people, usually vagrants, selling tokens. MARTA now uses the Breeze Card system and therefore no longer uses tokens. These people selling the old tokens sometimes act aggressively and menacingly toward people refusing to give them money. Those using MARTA should report criminal and suspicious activity to MARTA Police either with the phones in transit stations or by calling 404-848-4911. As with making a 911 call, always give the best description possible. Also, avoid confrontations and arguments with these people.

RECAP OF FEEDBACK REQUESTS

- The MPSA requests the following feedback:
- You are interested in participation in the ACERT training
- If you have bought magazine subscriptions from the magazine guy – we want to know whether you actually received a subscription
- If you had a car stolen by Mark Avery Husbands
- If you can volunteer for our next neighborhood clean-up
- Contact us at info@midtownponce.org

The Midtown Public Safety Meeting is held at 7pm on the second Monday of the month, at Mary Mac's Tearoom.

A very special thanks to our Corporate and Community Sponsors who provide a major enhancement to your patrol's effectiveness:

Westminster Commons

The Sembler Company

Post Parkside

Midtown Neighbors Association

Midtown Tire, Inc.

Ackerman & Company

Grace United Methodist Church

***TLC Rents* - National Night Out sponsor**

SUPPLEMENT: INCIDENTS REPORTED TO POLICE (MPSA sub-area only)

ROBBERIES

Incident #	Street	Offense	Report Date	Location
70090723	4 TH ST	ROB-RESIDENCE-STRONGARM	1/09/2007	near Durant
70231894	CHARLES ALLEN DR	ROB-MISC-STRONGARM	1/23/2007	near 8 th
70251891	10 TH ST	ROBBERY-BUSINESS-GUN	1/25/2007	near Piedmont
70291603	10 TH ST	ROB-STREET-STRONGARM	1/29/2007	near Monroe

BURGLARY

Incident #	Street	Offense	Report Date	Location
70310872	ARGONNE AVE	BURGLARY-FORCED ENTRY-RESIDENC	1/31/2007	near 8 th

AUTO THEFT (i.e. theft of vehicle itself)

Incident #	Street	Offense	Report Date	Location
70070176	6TH ST	THEFT OF TRUCK/VAN/BUS	1/07/2007	near Piedmont
70120203	TAFT AVE	AUTOTHEFT	1/12/2007	at 10th
70221250	MONROE DR	AUTOTHEFT	1/22/2007	931 Monroe

TALLIES FOR MPSA AREA – 2004 to 2006

	ROBBERY				BURGLARY				AUTO THEFT		
	2006	2005	2004		2006	2005	2004		2006	2005	2004
JAN	3	3	4	JAN	0	3	6	JAN	9	3	11
FEB	1	5	4	FEB	6	6	1	FEB	2	4	5
MAR	4	3	4	MAR	3	3	2	MAR	6	3	3
APR	11	4	7	APR	2	2	1	APR	7	5	4
MAY	5	5	6	MAY	1	5	1	MAY	6	12	4
JUN	7	8	7	JUN	7	2	9	JUN	14	4	7
JUL	6	4	7	JUL	9	1	6	JUL	16	10	15
AUG	4	5	2	AUG	2	4	11	AUG	10	6	9
SEP	5	4	3	SEP	5	10	6	SEP	8	3	6
OCT	3	2	10	OCT	8	4	10	OCT	6	3	6
NOV	3	5	5	NOV	0	3	10	NOV	8	5	3
DEC	1	8	1	DEC	4	11	6	DEC	5	2	10
TOTAL →	53	56	60	TOTAL →	47	54	69	TOTAL →	97	60	83
Month AVE →	4.42	4.66	5.00	Month AVE →	3.92	4.50	5.75	Month AVE →	8.08	5.00	6.91

IMPORTANT NOTES: Source: Crime Mapping feature at the Atlanta Police Department website. While this is not official Atlanta Department stats, we feel the crime mapping feature gives a good overall feel for what is actually reported in the MPSA service area.