



MIDTOWN PONCE SECURITY ALLIANCE

Public Safety Report 04 / 2008

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**AND OF COURSE THE MANY RESIDENT
AND BUSINESS MEMBERS!!!**

ATTENDANCE AT SAFETY MEETING

The April meeting, moderated by Peggy Denby, was lightly attended but we had an interesting discussion. Attendance included:

- Sharla Jackson of the Fulton County DA's Office
- Lt. McGee of the APD Midtown Mini-Precinct
- Sgt. Cooper of MPSA Patrol

CHRONIC/REPEAT OFFENDERS

We selected this topic because we have a number of problematic individuals chronically causing trouble in the neighborhood. Many of the petty criminals have long criminal histories, and are sometimes violent and dangerous.

Zone 5, the APD precinct serving Midtown, has a *Repeat Offender Officer* on its staff. This officer monitors the arrests made in the precinct, and notifies probation officers and the Community Prosecutor of new arrests if the subject is on active probation. Unfortunately, probation officers typically have very high caseloads, and they therefore cannot take action on every repeat offender. They have no choice but to prioritize repeat and chronic offenders accordingly.

“RED LIST”

At the safety meeting, we submitted a “red list” of several chronic prostitutes posing a serious ongoing nuisance to the MPSA service area, and have generated the most complaints and reports from residents. One of these individuals in particular not only generates complaints about flagging cars down, but also prowls and urinates on private property regularly. The objective is to have police more attentive to the presence of these individuals in our neighborhood, due to the number of complaints and observations from area residents. While we see much fewer prostitutes in the service area than before, the few that come around are highly visible to the

residents affected by their illicit activity. *It takes just a handful of individuals to wreak havoc on a community.*

We want a situation where johns consistently find nothing to see when they cruise through our area. We also want to make it clear to these individuals and those in line for the next dirty half dozen, that the residents in the area resent their illicit activity outside their living room windows. We are especially willing to court watch these individuals if we are notified fast enough. We sense that we are within a year or two of eradicating prostitution from our service area, but the few but persistent remaining prostitutes need to be documented, reported, and monitored just as persistently.

POLICE ACTIVITY

According to Lt. McGee, the Midtown Mini-Precinct made 62 arrests, issued 45 traffic citations, conducted 23 roadblocks (mostly in the Midtown area), and responded to 746 calls for service during the last month. These numbers are in addition to the Zone 5 mobile unit, which handles the bulk of calls for service.

Red Dog and Vice Unit recently conducted a joint operation on North Avenue. This netted 5 arrests during a 2-hour period. Another such operation is planned for later this month.

Road blocks - one resident told that he was delayed in a recent road block because his insurance carrier did not issue a card. While Georgia now has electronic reporting of vehicle insurance, having a card handy is still required by law. A copy of this card will also speed up clearance during a road block. Those without an insurance card are subject to a delay because the officer has to pull that vehicle to the side, and manually radio in the vehicle information. Those wearing seatbelts and have papers and driver license handy will generally be cleared through the road safety check in 30 seconds or less. *These roadblocks also enhance police visibility in our neighborhood.*

OTHER ISSUES RAISED BY ATTENDEES

Juveniles prowling through private property - a resident in the neighborhood reported regularly seeing teenagers in and out of private property during the day. These should be reported to 911 as a suspicious person or prowler, but calls are prioritized appropriately (a response may not be immediate). A truancy officer works in Zone 5 during school hours.

Frequent crime reports - One attendee wondered if the negative MPSA reports would ever stop. It is important to understand two things:

1. Security issues are intrinsically negative, yet we have to acknowledge and define the scope of the serious public security issues affecting our service area. Our role is more of a garbage man role than that of a candy man, although events like *National Night Out* lighten things up a little bit. We also work to educate the membership about the challenges we deal with. This is the first step in developing an effective neighborhood response. This is still a revitalizing neighborhood after decades of neglect. As we often say, we fixed up the house and landscaped the garden - now we

are working on the neighborhood too. It goes without saying that a few things still need to be fixed. And yes, wonderful things are also happening in Midtown...

2. Things have improved significantly in most categories. During the first 50 days after patrol launch, the patrol made 77 arrests. By comparison, the 14 arrests made by the patrol constitute a busy month under today's conditions on the streets of Midtown. We are planning a special report about the first five years of patrol operations in the near future. We need the ongoing support of residents, businesses, and community sponsors to maintain this momentum.

INCIDENTS OF SELECTED CRIME TYPES REPORTED TO APD - March 2008

ROBBERY - DATE | LOCATION | OFFENSE | REPORT

- 3/07/2008 | 180 PONCE DE LEON AVE | ROBBERY-STREET-OTHER WEAPON | 080670291
- 3/08/2008 | 700's DURANT PL | ROBBERY -STREET-GUN | 080681235
- 3/19/2008 | PONCE & BVD | ROBBERY -STREET-STRONGARM | 080790496
- 3/23/2008 | 800's JUNIPER ST | ROBBERY -STREET-GUN | 080831550
- 3/26/2008 | 900's MONROE DR | ROBBERY -BUSINESS-KNIFE | 080861254

BURGLARY - DATE | LOCATION | OFFENSE | REPORT

- 3/05/2008 | 100's PONCE | BURGLARY-FORCED ENTRY-RESIDENC | 080652108
- 3/08/2008 | 700's ARGONNE AVE | BURG-NO FORCD ENTRY-RESID | 080680623
- 3/17/2008 | 400's 7TH ST | BURG-NO FORCD ENTRY-RESID | 080770601
- 3/22/2008 | 900's MYRTLE ST | BURG-NO FORCD ENTRY-RESID | 080820525

AUTO THEFT - DATE | LOCATION | OFFENSE | REPORT

- 3/02/2008 | 100's 4TH ST | AUTOTHEFT | 080621680
- 3/02/2008 | 400's 10TH ST | AUTOTHEFT | 080621408
- 3/03/2008 | 600's KENNESAW AVE | AUTOTHEFT | 080630035
- 3/11/2008 | PONCE & BVD | AUTOTHEFT | 080710565
- 3/19/2008 | 500 10TH ST | THEFT OF OTHER VEHICLE | 080790668
- 3/22/2008 | 400's 10TH ST | THEFT OF TRUCK/VAN/BUS | 080821639
- 3/24/2008 | 700's ARGONNE AVE | AUTOTHEFT | 080840454
- 3/25/2008 | 800's PENN AVE | AUTOTHEFT | 080852213
- 3/27/2008 | 800's PENN AVE | THEFT OF TRUCK/VAN/BUS | 080870999

MPSA PATROL ACTIVITY

Patrol Logs:

- 3/10 - Criminal trespassing arrest at area business
- 3/14 - Shoplifting at business on Ponce
- 3/19 - Public indecency arrest of prostitute and john in residential area
- 3/20 - Subject in a vehicle found to have neither a vehicle tag, insurance, nor a driver license. This individual was arrested, and eventually sentenced to serve 20 days in jail.
- 3/20 - Prowler arrested
- 3/20 - Kenneth Lamb intercepted and arrested on a warrant on Monroe Drive
- 3/21 - Suspicious person in a vehicle reported by a business turned out to have no driver license and with an open alcoholic beverage, and was arrested.
- 3/22 - Subject arrested for possession of crack cocaine
- 3/25 - Vagrant arrested for criminal trespassing for the second time by the MPSA Patrol.
- 3/25 - Prostitute arrested for soliciting a ride near Ponce and Boulevard

- 3/25 - arrest for urinating in public at convenience store
- 4/02 - Prostitute arrested for violation of pedestrian duties on Juniper Street
- 4/03 - Car approaching MPSA Patrol without headlights in operation turned out to be stolen. The subject was also charged with carrying a weapon during the commission of a felony. This subject remains in the Fulton County Jail.
- 4/08 - Criminal trespass arrest at member business

Shopping carts - The patrol confiscated and returned numerous shopping carts belonging to area businesses. If you see a vagrant pushing a shopping cart please call the patrol. Whenever the patrol discovers a subject pushing a grocery buggy bearing the logo of area businesses, the subject will be ordered to immediately unload the contents so the cart can be returned to the business that owns it (usually a grocery store). Over time this will cut down on the number of vagrants wandering through our service area.

Unattended Blankets and discarded clothing - The patrol discovered that an area business was leaving freight truck blankets unattended overnight on their loading dock. Vagrants steal these to build campsites. The patrol then met with the manager of this business, who promised to keep them secured inside for the freight truck driver to pick up on next trip. We are also working to have clothing donation bins removed from our area, as most of the contents end up scattered around the service area. Residents should avoid discarding clothing and blankets until very close to the weekly pick-up time. Vagrants scavenge through herbie-curbies on garbage night, and these items generate additional litter for the monthly neighborhood clean-up.

LATEST PROSTITUTION ARREST

The MPSA Patrol arrested Maurice Barnes for an offense known as *pedestrian in the roadway* while working in the early morning hours of Monday, April 21, 2008. This particular individual has been a serious nuisance as a (transvestite) prostitute in the SW corner of the service area for quite some time. This defendant is on our "red list" of prostitutes who generate the most reports and documentation by residents in the MPSA service area.

Specifically, area residents routinely observe this defendant:

- Flagging down cars
- Running out into the street when cars approach
- Prowling on private property and in alleyways
- Urinating on private property and along alleyways

This individual is also arrested frequently in the Midtown area - by both APD and MPSA Patrol - for various petty offenses, especially those related to prostitution. Because this individual chronically contributes detrimentally to the quality of life in the neighborhood, we decided to court watch this individual on this case,

Six residents went to the Atlanta Municipal court on the morning of the 22nd, only to find that the case had already been disposed of during the 8am session (we were told the case would be heard at 10AM). From what officers tell us regularly, there is poor communication and coordination between arresting officers and those who set the court dockets at the Atlanta Municipal court. Officers often come to the court house,

only to find that the case has been rescheduled or disposed of. This results in a breakdown in officer productivity.

Luckily for the Midtown community, the prosecutor handling the case quickly realized that Mr. Barnes is becoming a fixture in that court room, and made this issue known to the judge. The prosecutor also took the time to brief the officer and three of the attending residents on the details of the case. Instead of the usual "time served," the defendant not only received 10 days in jail (counting from time of booking on the 21st, not from the time of conviction on the 22nd), but was also put on notice that the sentence will double every time he appears in that court room. Next time he appears it will be 20 days to serve, then 40, etc.

The residents most affected by neighborhood prostitution can rejoice that this obnoxious and repulsive individual has gotten some time out. ***It is our intention that this individual (and his fellow street prostitutes) will take our determination to implement a Midtown experience completely free of street prostitution and other illicit activity very seriously, and avoid our service area accordingly.***

LATEST BURGLARY - suspect apprehended!

A resident on Greenwood Avenue was burglarized on Monday, April 21st, at 2:30PM. They took the mail and sorted it in the back yard. Then they pried the back door open (broke the lock and jammed the sliding glass door). The burglar ransacked every room, and filled two suitcases with a laptop computer, digital camera, all jewelry and cash in the house, and (tragically) heirlooms with great sentimental value. Their daughter, who was robbed at gunpoint just two months ago (previously reported in our e-blast), walked in on the burglars. She immediately fled the house upon hearing noises in the kitchen and called her father at work. Her father then came home immediately and called the police, who then took the report and extracted fingerprints.

Because of two traumatic events in a two-month span this family is very shaken.

Then slowly but surely good news starts rolling in. A neighbor on St. Charles Avenue noticed someone lugging two suitcases up the street. The witness described this individual as a scrawny and shirtless white male wearing a cowboy hat and blue jeans. The victim then contacted the APD Detective handling the case, who had an idea who the suspect might be.

Then the next day the victim gets a call from the Dekalb police department. They arrested a burglar in the act, who was found to have their cell phone and stolen jewelry in his pockets. Hopefully they will find more of the stolen items as they investigate this guy. As we understand it, he was booked into the Dekalb county jail, but will have a detainer from the City of Atlanta jail. He will be a high-priority court watch case for us.

MONITORED COURT CASES

We pulled the report for the April 8th car break-in at Myrtle and 3rd. The subject, Rodney Luther S., was booked into the Fulton County Jail for entering an automobile. Upon closer investigation we found that the same subject has been in and out of the prison system for burglary, theft by taking, and similar offences. He remains in the Fulton county jail.

The victim sustained \$1674 in damages because the crook completely busted the door, and chipped the body of the car in multiple places all around the door. This offender is now on our revised court watch list.

Kenneth Lamb aka “barefooted panhandler”- *he's baack!* Kenneth pleaded guilty to the charge of *Failure to Register as a Sex Offender*. As this was his first failure to register, he was sentenced to 10 years probation with the requirement that he abide by all of the conditions as outlined in the sex offender statute, along with the other probation requirements. If he is convicted of a second violation, he is subject to life sentence. Because of his violent history we have a special alert sheet at <http://www.midtownponce.org/news/KennethLamb.pdf>.

We have revised the court watch list - you can view this at:

- <http://www.midtownponce.org/news/CourtWatch20080420.pdf>.

We like to keep a network of court watch volunteers - please let us know if you can attend court hearings every once in a while.

MPSA MAILBAG

Robbery - There was an armed robbery at 432 Ponce De Leon Ave. at 2:30PM. Two young Black Males entered the Barber Shop and pretended they wanted a hair cut. Then one of them pulled a gun and forced all the barbers and customers into the back of the store. After robbing everyone they forced the owner to open the cash register. Then the culprits fled down Charles Allen Dr. on foot. **MPSA NOTE:** It helps to have the police report number. Sgt. Cooper visits victims of recent crime incidents to follow up.

STAY SAFE! Please encourage your fellow Midtowners to join the MPSA!

- Your Neighbors at the Midtown Ponce Security Alliance

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