



MIDTOWN PONCE SECURITY ALLIANCE

Public Safety Report 05 / 2008

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AND BUSINESS MEMBERS!!!**

IN ATTENDANCE AT SAFETY MEETING:

- Moderator Peggy Denby - MPSA President and MNA Safety Chairperson
- Sgt. S. Hale - APD (Midtown Mini-precinct)
- Officer Chafee - MPSA (filling in for Sgt. Cooper).
- 20 or so additional Midtown residents

MIDTOWN MINI PRECINCT

In the month leading up to the May safety meeting the Midtown Mini-Precinct answered 728 calls for service, made 71 arrests, issued 27 traffic citations, and conducted 17 day and evening road blocks. These all occurred in the Midtown, Home Park, and Atlantic Station - the coverage area of the Midtown Mini-Precinct. These figures are in addition to the regular mobile unit, which does the bulk of the APD work in our area.

A recent vice operation in Midtown netted several arrests for prostitution and idling/loitering for the purpose of prostitution.

GPS devices are triggering the most car break-ins right now. Many people just take the device with them or hide it in the car, leaving the holder or the cord for the device visible. If the holder or the cord is

visible, street criminals will break in looking for the device itself. Even if they do not find the device, glass companies will appreciate your business (this can be more expensive than MPSA annual membership).

911 COMMUNICATIONS CENTER

At the safety meeting we had Sharon Latners as our special guest. She serves the City of Atlanta as the Communications Officer for the Atlanta Police Department. The discussion focused on making 911 calls effectively and efficiently. The 911 call is the first and most critical step in receiving emergency assistance in response to a potential life-threatening situation.

Several years ago we wrote a special report on 911 calls, which goes into when to call 911, how best to present the information, and how 911 calls are prioritized. You can download this at <http://www.midtownponce.org/news/info/911CALLS.pdf>.

BASICS OF CALLING 911

When calling 911 it is important to maintain composure and speak clearly. *As much as possible, spend a few seconds planning your 911 call.* When people call in panic or do not present the information clearly it makes the job of the 911 operator more difficult and may have an adverse effect on an effective response. Take a deep breath if necessary.

Generally follow this formula when calling 911:

- **WHO** you are - succinctly identify yourself and the location of incident or activity. While it is not absolutely necessary to identify yourself, it can help the police respond more effectively.
- **WHAT** you are reporting - so the 911 Operator can determine whether the call will be directed to Police, Fire Department, and/or Ambulance Service.
- **WHERE** the situation has happened/is happening. Be sure to mention city quadrant of the address - Most of Midtown lies in the northeast quadrant.
- **DESCRIPTION** - as applicable, state how many suspects are involved, physical descriptions, etc. Note as many things as possible about the suspects - clothing, height, build, demeanor, state of mind, etc. and if the subject appears to be staying in one location or moving about the neighborhood (and which direction).
- **WAIT** for additional questions by the 911 operator. The operator will likely ask about suspect description, the condition of an injured person, and more details about the location.

There are some items we will add to this report though:

1. The communication center records and archives all 911 calls for future reference. These prove not only necessary for investigations and court cases, but also to review how a situation could have been handled better.
2. If you have to call 911 again to update the situation (i.e. the suspect is now at a location very different from what was reported in the original 911 call), you can reference the first call by the location given. The operator can add a notation to that call about any necessary updates. Without a reference to the original call, the information would essentially have to be given over again.
3. The 911 center is very short of help, and they are currently working 12-hour shifts. This is a very hard job requiring lots of patience - this is clearly not for everybody. Their budget was not cut, but it was frozen for now.
4. While Atlanta does not have the 311 system found in many other cities, we do have a non-emergency number: 404-658-6666.
5. It is very critical to keep the line open after calling 911. Police and/or dispatchers may need to contact you for additional information. As much as possible, call from a

landline number, as that will automatically pull up the address from which you are calling.

UPDATE FROM SGT: SCHIERBAUM

Sgt. Schierbaum, the burglary investigator for Zone 5, spoke at length to the attendees at the safety meeting. We recently reported a rash of burglaries via the second floor of the target homes - Atlanta Police believe they have a suspect in these cases in jail. Since this person's arrest, the burglary of that modus operandi seem to have ceased.

Sgt. Schierbaum also spoke about the importance of monitoring and attending court cases for serious and chronic criminals in our area. Police work hard in taking serious and chronic offenders out of our neighborhood, only to see many of them right back on the streets from which they were removed. In many cases, residents attending court cases can make a difference in whether a criminal resumes roaming the community.

Sgt. Schierbaum also stressed the importance of community vigilance. If something about an individual does not seem right, call 911! Police would rather check out a suspicious person only to find nothing, rather than taking a burglary or other incident report later.

SGT. COOPER'S CORNER

Please continue to check your properties for signs of vagrant activity and deposits of stolen goods.

Police officers need good intown housing. If anyone wants to rent to a police officer, possibly at a good rate, please let us know. Sgt. Cooper will recruit good officers. This is an excellent way to bring cops into our neighborhood!

Confiscation of shopping carts bearing the name of area businesses has become a daily routine for the MPSA Patrol. Those found pushing shopping carts through the neighborhood are told to empty them out immediately so that they can be loaded onto the patrol vehicle and returned to the business that they were stolen from. .

Now that summer is here Sgt. Cooper will be on his motorcycle more rather than in the patrol vehicle. He can move around better, and gain a better view of what is going on in and around cars.

PONCE AND BOULEVARD

We are continuing to monitor this more closely. We wrote to the corporate headquarters of Domino's Pizza and Ace Check Cashing regarding the nonstop drug activity, loitering, and camping outside their stores.

The franchiser of the Ponce Domino's contacted us to say that he is as frustrated as we are with the problem. He feels that he has little support from the property owner, the other businesses, and the police in addressing this problem. The owner told him that a Domino's Pizza outlet will normally do about 25% of its business in carry outs, with the rest being in deliveries. The Ponce store does only about 3% carry-out because potential customers are intimidated by the presence of the drug gang on that block. We will contact the owner of the property about the issue.

Sgt. Cooper recently discovered 5 rats on the property of Chico and Chang's (447 Ponce de Leon Avenue). They also found mattresses and bedding in the rear of that property. Drug and prostitution transactions often take place in the darkened rear parking area at that location. Photos and a report were sent to the Fulton County Health Department. The wall around the dumpster at 682 Boulevard (the newer check cashing place at the corner of Ponce and Boulevard) conceals a lot of drug activity.

We are also attempting to contact the right parties at Wachovia regarding their recently closed branch at Ponce & Boulevard - the conditions at that location are beginning to deteriorate into a community nuisance. We would like a membership from them, but we need at least a letter of agency for trespassing issues, since the Wachovia property could increase area problems exponentially if this is not brought securely under control. Vagrants are already storing things behind the bushes on that property.

FROM THE MPSA PATROL LOGS

4/16 - Officer arrested two prostitutes for violation of pedestrian duties during the morning hours. Both of these took place in the southwest quadrant of the service area.

4/17 - One arrest for drinking in public, and later on another for an active warrant.

4/19 - A drunk male was terrorizing a woman in the 600 block of Ponce de Leon Avenue. The subject was arrested for disorderly conduct.

4/21 - a prostitute arrested for violation of pedestrian duties. The next day several Midtown residents went to the municipal court, only to find the case had been disposed of. This individual has not been seen any more in our area.

4/24 - another prostitute arrested for violation of pedestrian duties.

4/25 - a subject was arrested for drinking in public in the 500 block of Ponce de Leon Avenue

4/25 - a subject arrested for prowling near 8th Street and Glendale Terrace. The subject has been sentenced in Fulton County, and was subsequently turned over to Newton County who already had a warrant on the individual. The subject remains in the Newton County jail.

4/26 - a subject arrested for counterfeit money at a member business.

4/28 - the MPSA officer observed a prostitute approaching cars in the southwest portion of our service area. As the officer proceeded to arrest the subject for pedestrian in the roadway, the subject fled. With the help of APD backup the subject was apprehended on North Avenue. Because the officers had to deploy pepper spray, the subject was booked on felony obstruction charges, and remains in the Fulton County jail.

5/02 - MPSA officer arrested an individual for criminal trespassing at a member business. The business had documentation that the subject had been warned previously not to return to that location.

5/04 - MPSA Patrol officer assisted regular APD operations with a disorderly individual.

5/06 - A subject was arrested for shooting heroin.

5/06 - Sgt. Cooper assisted Georgia Tech Police with a chase. They captured the individual responsible for a robbery at the Publix on Howell Mill Rd and the Papa John's Pizza on 10th Street. The arrest was made at Burger King on North Avenue. The subject was looking for money to buy heroin.

5/08 - the MPSA officer noticed a suspicious individual on Charles Allen Drive. The individual worked his way to Myrtle Street, casing houses during that time. The officer arrested the subject for violation of pedestrian duties on Myrtle Street. Our research on this individual shows that he has been convicted for burglary several times, along with drug and assault offenses.

5/08 - two Mexican vagrants arrested for drinking in public and littering at Ponce & Penn Avenue. [MPSA Note: the day laborer problem is bringing more drunk disorderly Mexican vagrants into the area, which compounds an already obnoxious situation of loitering, swarming cars, and urinating in public on nearby residential streets. We suspect some of them could be illegal aliens]

5/12 - a subject well-known to the MPSA Patrol was arrested for violation of pedestrian duties, and knife ordinance.

5/14 - a noted prostitute on Ponce was arrested near Boulevard for violation of pedestrian duties. This individual is frequently seen soliciting for rides and loitering. We have come to find out that this individual has been arrested many times often giving the name of another specific individual.

5/19 - Patrol dealt with several small vagrant campsites around the area, mostly on the Beltline affecting local businesses. For the third time the same kind of banquet linen was used as bedding. Upon closer investigation it turns out that a nearby establishment hosting special events was leaving soiled banquet linen at the loading dock for the linen service. They were grateful to get these back, as they have to pay for missing cloths and napkins. They were also advised not to leave them at the loading dock, as vagrants are very resourceful in finding things to use for bedding and campsites.

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

- Your Neighbors at the Midtown Ponce Security Alliance

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