

AHWATUKEE-FOOTHILLS Crime Prevention Taskforce Community Update

Volume VII Issue 1

Summer 2002

Water Safety Message from District 6 City Councilman Greg Stanton

Summer Water Safety— Let's Make It A Priority

The hot summer weather has arrived and many of us are seeking refuge from the heat in our swimming pools.

The Phoenix Fire Department works hard year-round to remind us of the dangers of not just swimming pools, but of all bodies of water. Every year, too many children are seriously injured or killed by falling into swimming pools, buckets of water, toilets, and even the bath tub. Just last year the department responded to 104 calls where children had found their way into these perilous situations. It's a frightening reminder that we all need to be diligent when children are around water.

Assistant Phoenix Fire Chief Bob Khan said, "Parents just don't see water—bathtubs and swimming pools as a hazard. So the phone rings while Junior is in the tub. Mom answers the phone, or goes to get a drink of water. She comes back two minutes later to find her baby not breathing just inches below the surface. It happens too often."

The tragedy is that these sad incidents are completely preventable. Here are some tips to help keep your child safe: do not leave your child alone in the bathtub—even for 30 seconds; if you have a swimming pool, do not leave your child alone, not even for 30 seconds; lock doors and gates leading to swimming pools; restrict any access to yards where swimming pools are located, regardless of whether the pool is fenced, don't leave buckets of water alone near babies and toddlers.

It's an old message, but it saves lives: Watch your kids around water. Don't ever leave them alone, not even for a few seconds.

For more information about drowning prevention, please contact the Phoenix Fire Public Information Department at 602-534-0953.

Councilman Stanton can be reached at 602-262-7491. ♦



Councilman Greg Stanton

Ahwatukee-Foothills Gains with G.A.I.N. 2002

This year's G.A.I.N. event (Getting Arizonans Involved Night) event is set to take place on Saturday, October 19th. Community Action Officer Barney Barnhart encourages all neighborhoods to show their unity to their residents by holding some type of recognition that crime will not be tolerated on their blocks. A block party is a good way to bring the neighborhood together and have a social event. Some examples of block parties are: a barbeque, a pot luck, chili cook-off contest, an ice cream social, progressive dinner, etc. The Police will support anyone having a G.A.I.N. event. The beat officer for the area, the Neighborhood Enforcement Team officers, or the Community Action Officer will stop by any Block Watch's G.A.I.N. event this year.

If a large event is not in your plans, simply contact your neighbors and ask them to turn on their porch light, hang their flag out, and if possible take a stroll through the neighborhood. G.A.I.N. is Arizona's version of National Night Out, and the goal is for neighbors to know neighbors and watch out for each other. Even if the city placed a police officer on every block, crime would still occur—it's up to neighbors to take on the responsibility of watching out for one another. If you see suspicious persons hanging around your neighbor's home, or if you see your neighbor's garage door open at 2 a.m., there's a good chance they don't know. Call them! They'd much rather be awakened by your phone call than an intruder.

It's up to each one of us to take on the task of watching out for our neighbors and for them to reciprocate. Only then can we truly "Take A BITE Out Of Crime." ♦

News You Can Use

Phoenix Neighborhood Patrol

Guest Writer, PNP member Ron Tweedy

Have you noticed an increase in suspicious activity in your neighborhood? Do suspicious vehicles and individuals stop for short periods of time at various times of the day at the same home or location? It is probably time for you to become more involved in your neighborhood. The Phoenix Police Department welcomes all reports of suspicious activity.

The Phoenix Police Department offers two outstanding neighborhood crime prevention programs.

One of the most successful is the Block Watch Program. The Block Watch program is basically a passive program tailored to reporting all suspicious behavior. A key ingredient is knowing who your neighbors are and how to contact them. Knowing your neighbors will help you identify any suspicious vehicles and persons in your neighborhood. Concerned neighborhood residents usually join together and request a Phoenix Police Department presentation. Crime prevention tips are given and literature is passed around. Block Watch window signs are passed out identifying which homes are a safe haven for school age children walking to and from their school bus stops.

After a few years of successful Block Watch, a need was seen to more proactively reduce neighborhood crime by organizing citizen patrols. That organization was originally called Block Watchers on Patrol and has been reorganized and renamed as the Phoenix Neighborhood Patrol. The Phoenix Neighborhood Patrol is a joint partnership between the residents of Phoenix and the Phoenix Police Department.

For year 2002, new patrollers are trained and certified every other month. Training classes require between 10-12 hours of training, and involve instruction in Patrol Procedures, Observation Skills, the 9-1-1 System, Reporting Techniques, Confrontation Avoidance, Safety Practices, and Block Grants. Certified Patrollers are provided with ID cards, authorized to use PNP automobile door placards, and carry cellular phones to conduct crime prevention activities in their neighborhood. Patrollers may schedule patrols within their neighborhood any time of the day. The South Mountain Police Precinct has successfully allowed group patrols where patrollers from one neighborhood will assist another neighborhood.

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Gone in 30 seconds...
Reduce your chances of being a victim

- ★ Keep your windows and doors secured
- ★ Keep your garage door closed when not in sight
- ★ Watch your children
- ★ Keep valuables out of sight in vehicles
- ★ Secure your vehicle. (doors & windows)
- ★ Support your neighborhood blockwatch

This is a cooperative effort between the Ahwatukee Foothills Crime Prevention Taskforce and the Phoenix Police Department. The Phoenix Police Department offers a variety of prevention programs. Contact Officer Barnhart for more information today (602) 634-2892.

Pay Attention...or someone else will

Local Leadership

John McComish: Why I Am Running



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Editor's Note:

John has been an active member of our group for the past seven years. He has worked with the Taskforce in his capacity as President of the Ahwatukee Foothills Chamber of Commerce to strengthen police resources throughout our community. Peggy and I support John in his run for office. Regardless of whether you choose to vote for John or another candidate in the Fall, the most important point is to make sure to VOTE.

As many of you know by now, I will be on the primary ballot September 10 as a Republican candidate for the State House of Representatives. Considering the sacrifice that it takes to run as a candidate, and to hopefully serve as your State Representative, this was a decision that my family and I had to ponder very seriously.

Many factors were considered. A few of the most important follow:

- ▲ Ahwatukee Foothills deserves its own State Representative. For some time now there has been no one from our community representing our residents in the state legislature. With the new redistricting in place, we now have a chance to elect one of our own. The new District 20 includes Ahwatukee Foothills (45%), South Tempe (15%), and West Chandler (40%). For the past ten years Ahwatukee Foothills was divided into two different districts. Now we are united with the clout to elect one of our own.
- ▲ The state budget process is in a shambles. After a decade of incredible prosperity, the legislature found itself facing a billion dollar deficit. Rather than making the difficult decisions of evaluating departments and programs and setting priorities, they instead borrowed, postponed, raided other funds, employed one-time accounting tricks; and basically put off the problem for next year's legislature to solve. Based on my experience as a corporate executive, small business owner, and association president, I know there is a better way.

That is why I advocate a system of zero-based budgeting.

- ▲ The status of public education in Arizona is deplorable. We are at or near the bottom in performance and investment per pupil, and at the top in number of dropouts. Those few who offer solutions want to get us off the bottom and moved to somewhere near the middle. I say we should strive for excellence rather than mediocrity! Let's determine what is necessary in terms of investment (and accountability) to be number one, and start working towards that goal. Sure it will take some time, but why not start now with a ten-year plan for excellence?
- ▲ There is a disconnect with the state legislature and the people. Proof of this is that very few people even know who their representatives are. The State House of Representative spent \$400,000 on new furniture last fall, at the same time they were meeting in special session on emergency budget issues. This spring they wasted time debating whether or not Arizona should be a "Golden Rule State". We now have a state butterfly after considerable discussion by the legislature. And the total bill is yet to be paid for the Alt-fuels fiasco. I promise to provide common sense leadership and speak out when the legislators are wasting our time and your money.

If you agree with me that our new District needs a new voice there are several ways that you can help. One is to place a campaign sign in your yard. If you would like to invite friends and neighbors to your house for a dessert some evening, I would love to attend and talk about my

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Neighborhood Notes

Phoenix Dedicates it's New Ahwatukee-Foothills Police Substation

On Saturday, May 11th, the City of Phoenix dedicated the new Ahwatukee-Foothills Police Substation at 4053 E. Mountain Sky Avenue, just north of Chandler Boulevard. Officers of the new station barbequed hot dogs and served them with chips and cold drinks as the community celebrated the new (albeit temporary) home of the A-F Police. Tours were given, city officials were in attendance, and our new Lieutenant Michael Cecchini was introduced.

One touching moment was the raising of the American flag by the police honor guards in full splendid uniform. The flag pole was donated by Joe Cisero. Others acknowledged for their generous contributions were the Centennial Women's Club, that donated a VCR and TV, and Mary Conant, who donated office furnishings.

Councilman Greg Stanton saluted our officers and recruited the youngsters in the audience to stand and thank the nearest officer for working hard to protect them. The warm and caring words of the children was enough to put a lump in the throats of all the men and women in uniform, not to mention the rest of us regular folks standing nearby.



The Flag Raising Ceremony



Councilman Stanton speaking to attendees during the dedication ceremony.

The new station is home to the 35 patrol officers who work in our area.

Alice Reynolds, the newly hired desk aide, is available Tuesday through Friday, 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. to assist citizens with questions. Please feel free to stop by and say "Hi."

Station Phone Number: 602-495-5087

E-mail: police.ahwatukee@phoenix.gov

Location: On East Mountain Sky, east of 40th St. and north of Chandler Blvd.

Future plans for a permanent home for the police in our community are still in the works. Funding from the recent Phoenix bond election will become available within 3 years to fund the design and completion of a permanent police facility. It will most likely be built within the new Pecos Park at Pecos Road and 48th Street. ❖



Police Briefs



Hot dogs and refreshments were served to the event attendees.



Officer Barney Barnhart (a.k.a. the Grillmaster) serving up another perfect hot dog...

New Area Manager Takes the Lead



The Ahwatukee-Foothills Crime Prevention Taskforce has been kind enough to let me introduce myself to you on their newsletter. I am Lt. Michael Cecchini your new Area Manager for the Ahwatukee Foothills Police Satellite Station.

I have over 15 years experience in law enforcement with the Phoenix Police Department. If I were to break down my career, the bulk of my experience is in the Patrol Division. I spent almost ten years in patrol as a beat officer and patrol sergeant. The last 5 ½ years I worked administrative assignments in the Planning and Research Bureau, Professional Standards Bureau, and the Office of the Police Chief. All my assignments have given me valuable insight into how to effectively lead the men and woman of the Ahwatukee Foothills Satellite Station.

I can assure you that the officers in your Ahwatukee Foothills Substation are some of the finest on the Phoenix Police Department. They are dedicated in providing quality police service to each member of our community. I have seen them on more than one occasion go the extra mile for people who have ask for police services to ensure that the person needing help is taken care of.

I plan on working closely with the Ahwatukee-Foothills Crime Prevention Taskforce and other community groups to address crime and traffic enforcement issues in our community. Some of the projects we are working on include: Burglary and Theft Prevention, Curfew Enforcement, Auto Theft Prevention and Prevention of Fraud Schemes Against the Elderly. This fall staffing will be increased because we are reconfiguring our patrol area to include two extra beats. With the addition of two beats, each patrol squad should get two additional officers, which would beef up our staffing by twelve officers.

I am very pleased to have this assignment and plan on staying here for several years. The Ahwatukee-Foothills Community has what I consider to be strong small town values and you always been very supportive of your public servants. If the service you have received does not meet your expectations feel free to call me at 602-534-1603. I or someone on my staff will look into your particular incident and try to resolve the issue. ♦

False Alarms...

**A Million
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Problem**



Did You Know?

- ✓ False alarm calls consume approximately 40% of a police officer's time.
- ✓ Approximately 99.8% of the alarm calls are false.
- ✓ 94% of these false alarms could be PREVENTED. 2 highest causes: Human error & Equipment malfunction.
- ✓ Only you can make a difference. Help the Phoenix Police Department provide better service.
- ✓ The Phoenix Police Department offers a FREE Alarm System Inspection. Contact your local Community Action Officer to set up your visit today, (602) 534-2892.

This is a cooperative effort between the Ahwatukee Foothills Crime Prevention Taskforce and the Phoenix Police Department.



City of Phoenix

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- ▲ Wells Fargo Bank
Checking Account
- ▲ Ahwatukee Recreation Center
Meeting Location Sponsor

Community Events

John McComish...

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ideas. We also need people to volunteer for envelope stuffing, phone calls, etc.

If you need information about the primary on September 10 or the general election on November 5, please visit our website at johnmccomish.org. We also have the forms for early "vote by mail" balloting. You can reach me during the day at 480-753-7676 or in the evening at 480-496-6943, or email jpmccomish@aol.com. ♦

John McComish is President of the Ahwatukee Foothills Chamber of Commerce, and currently serves as Chair of the Ahwatukee Foothills Village Planning Committee. From 1989-1996 he was owner of the Little Professor Book Store at 48th & Elliot in Ahwatukee. After graduating from Colgate University he spent 24 years with corporations such as Procter & Gamble, Johnson & Johnson (National Sales Manager, Baby Products) and Becton Dickinson (Vice President of Sales, Consumer Products).

Neighborhood Patrol...

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Block Watch and PNP may be formed into individual or joint associations. Associations may then register with the City of Phoenix Neighborhood Service Department to become eligible for Prop. 301 grants. Prop 301 grants can fund a variety of items such as: additional neighborhood lighting, speed bumps, Patroller shirts, additional automobile door signs, cell phone service, two-way radios, funds for newsletters, etc.

An outstanding association in Ahwatukee has been the Desert Foothills Association. Desert Foothills is an apartment complex located near 48th Street and Elliott Road. They have been the recipient of Block Grants for the past few years. Members have assisted in group patrols in both Ahwatukee and South Phoenix. ♦

For more information contact PNP Program Coordinator, Officer Melissa Rider at (602) 534-3564 (melissa.rider@phoenix.gov) or contact Ahwatukee Community Action Officer Robert "Barney" Barnhart at (602) 534-2892.

Easter Parade Recap

There were smiles and cheers all around for Officer Barney Barnhart as he drove his patrol car in the Annual Ahwatukee-Foothills Easter Parade on Saturday, March 30th. Officer Barney pulled the new radar trailer available specifically for Ahwatukee-Foothills residents to use in their neighborhoods to alert drivers of their speed.

Suzie Michaud accompanied McGruff (portrayed by her daughter, Stacey Michaud) along the parade route, and with fellow PNP (Phoenix Neighborhood Patrol) member, Alice Wells. They gave out Taskforce pencils promoting Block Watch to the hundreds of children that came to see the spectacular parade. Taskforce member, Peggy Schaefer, had the honor of riding along with Officer Barney, helping him wave to his many fans. ♦



Taskforce Committees Forming

We need YOU!

Two Taskforce committees are to be formed for the following issues:

- 1) The "Permanent" Police Station committee—to oversee the plans with regard to the location, the building, getting information from the city staff that are making the behind-the-scene decisions, etc. This is the station that we fought so hard to get—let's be a part of the planning process!
- 2) The Taskforce New Directions committee—now that our permanent station is looking like a reality, the Taskforce would like input from its members as to what direction it should head in. Sure the Taskforce is based on Block Watch, but how can we be more effective in promoting it? What other issues should the Taskforce be a part of?

We need *new* ideas from our members. There are so many options available today than when the Taskforce began, most specifically the Internet. We're not asking for a huge commitment, but would like others to step up and take an active part in this organization.

Interested parties are asked to email Peggy at peggy@afinfo.org. ♦

Be Alert!

It seems like summer just got here, but school will be starting up before we know it.



School Zones

School zones are *always* 15 MPH while the signs are out. The 15 MPH starts at the first sign you approach. There is also no passing in a school zone. Passing is different in a school zone than on a regular street. If your bumper goes beyond the bumper of the vehicle next to you in a school zone, you have passed the vehicle. The slowest vehicle in the school zone sets the pace (unfortunately.) The reason for this is driver visibility to the left and right and nobody wants you to miss a child coming off of the sidewalk.

If the crosswalk is occupied by anybody, you must stop and remain stopped until the pedestrian reaches the opposite sidewalk. Once your vehicle goes beyond the crosswalk, you may resume your speed – you don't have to wait until you get near the sign for the traffic in the opposite direction.

School Buses

When a school bus is stopped with the "STOP" sign extended (with or without the flashing lights on the Stop sign) and flashing red lights on top, all traffic IN BOTH DIRECTIONS must stop until the sign is retracted. This includes traffic on a roadway with a planted median. ♦

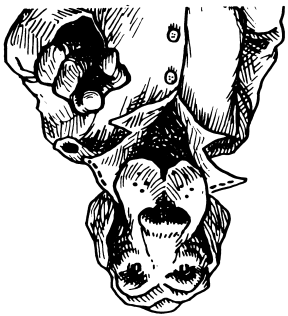
Updates for E-mail

Get in touch, stay in touch, keep informed. Send your email address to Peggy Schaefer at peggy@afinfo.org. Also let Peggy know of crime information and concerns taking place in your neighborhood that you would like others to be aware of (such as scams, break-ins, suspicious vehicles in the area, etc.) We'll pass the info around to other on-line taskforce members. ♦



Website Under Construction in August

Check us out at www.afinfo.org. Right now that link takes you to the police department website. In time, it will take you directly to the Taskforce website. Take a look at the links... ♦



In Partnership with the Phoenix Police Department

Reminder:
Quarterly Block
Watch Leader
Meeting
7-9 p.m., Tuesday
October 8, 2002
Plan on attending the
next one!

Ahwatukee-Foothills
Crime Prevention Taskforce

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