



New Options for Recertification

Now that the Patrol has passed its second anniversary, it is time to remind volunteers that recertification is required at least every 2 years. This is needed to satisfy legal requirements related to our insurance, and city funding that comes to us through SF-SAFE. It is also a “best practice” to ensure that all volunteers are up to date on any changes since the last formal training. Recertification includes signing the current version of the waiver, which now includes verification of identity via driver license, passport, or other government issued ID.

The easiest way to recertify is to assist in a new-volunteer training session. We always need help with the training events, and plan one each 2 months.

Continuing Education

As an alternative, you may participate in at least 6 patrols in the preceding 12 months, plus at least one Continuing Education (CE) opportunity. We will look at adding additional CE options during 2009. There are currently 5 different CE options:

- a. 09-01/CE – **NERT Basic Training:** Neighborhood Emergency Response Team training provided by SFFD
- b. 09-02/CE – **First Aid/CPR:** Basic First Aid and Cardio Respiratory Resuscitation training provided by Bay Area Red Cross which TMAA can facilitate through our own annual FA/CPR certification training.
- c. 09-03/CE – **Volunteer Basic Defensive Training:** Specific training and concepts for CCOP volunteers provided by Triangle Martial Arts Association.
- d. 09-04/CE – **CCOP SFPD Ride Along:** An opportunity for CCOP volunteers to ride along with SFPD during one of their patrols to view their function and operations. (Limited opportunities for this)
- e. 09-05/CE – **TMAA Self-Defense Training:** General training and concepts for safety and self-defense provided by Triangle Martial Arts Association. (The next event is Feb. 6th from 7pm-9:30pm at the Eureka Valley Rec Center, 100 Collingwood Street in San Francisco.)

Castro Theatre Parking Lot Lights Repaired and Trouble Spots Posted

One of the two patrols on duty 22-DEC-08 discovered that the parking lot next to the Castro Theatre was completely dark. One of the young street people hanging out at the front of the former All American Boy store at 463 Castro street reported that they had actually been out for at a least a week before that. A 311 call was made, and a service number generated.

Since this lot has been the scene of numerous car break-ins and other illegal activities, even when lit, the Patrol provided extra coverage of the lot, and SFPD had patrol cars inspect the lot more frequently than usual.

It took several e-mails between the Patrol, Supervisor Bevan Dufty and various city departments, to finally correct the problem. The city workers reported that the lights worked, yet the area was pitch dark each night. Finally on 6-JAN-09, the parking lot supervisor inspected the lot herself and discovered that the timer was set in-

correctly. She adjusted the timer and the lights have worked since. The locking hardware on the box was loose, so she also secured it to prevent tampering.

It is not clear whether the original issue was caused by an honest mistake or by vandalism. The Patrol will continue to keep extra watch on the lot and the timing mechanism to prevent future issues.

No Trespassing

With the assistance of MUMC and Supervisor Dufty, “No Trespassing” signs have been posted at both the All American Boy location and at the LGBT Historical Society. The Patrol can use these signs to ask people to move along or to bring in the police if necessary. In addition, the parking supervisor explained that the city-owned parking lots at the Castro Theatre and behind Walgreens are both posted, and police can be called to either lot as needed for people loitering or causing trouble.

Holiday Flyer Project

We noted an alarming spike in the number of car burglaries in October. Last year’s peak was in November and December, so we did not want the October numbers to build through the shopping season.

The Patrol produced a new safety flyer aimed at educating holiday shoppers about car safety, shoplifting, purse snatching and pick pocketing. More than 2800 flyers were placed on car windshields, made available through several retail outlets, and handed directly to shoppers. Two versions of the flyer artwork were also made available to merchants who wanted to print their own copies.

When analyzing SFPD metrics, we manually break out thefts from autos from total larcenies because we feel we can have some impact on them through educating the public and other Patrol activity. There were 43 car break-ins in October. The December number dropped to 22. While the Patrol does claim full credit for the improved numbers, helping educate the public is bound to help.

Unfortunately, the 21 stolen vehicles in December was the highest number in the twenty months we’ve tracked Castro crime. (The average is 12.2)



I've Been Thinking...

Gregory Carey, CCOP Chair



First, let me apologize for not getting a December newsletter put together. December had a lot of extra Patrol activities in addition to the usual holiday craziness.

We had several extra patrols in December, thanks to our fantastic volunteers. These included a Saturday afternoon patrol the week before Christmas, and several evenings where we could run double patrols. When we have enough people for 2 patrols, we will try to have one early and one late shift to provide extra hours of coverage. The early shift runs from 6:30 to 9:30, and the late one in usual 9:15 to midnight slot. The overlap from 9:15 to 9:30 lets the early group update the second shift of any issues as well as get the keys transferred.

I had the pleasure of being able to assist with the security for the AIDS Emergency Fund (AEF) community banquet on Christmas eve. We got the request a bit late to get more of the Patrollers involved, but next year will start planning early enough to get 3 to 6 to help. It was a very fulfilling day. They served in excess of 1400 meals to a wide range of participants. Off-duty SFPD officers managed the main security, and we were able to make some good connections for possible future training projects for the Patrol.

City Grant Approved

Our major expenses (uniforms, whistles, printed literature, website, etc.) have been covered by a grant from the City for the past 2 years. Our funds got kicked off a bit late this year due to some restructuring in city departments. This delay, and a learning curve on some new city accounting software, caused the holiday flyer project to start a few weeks later than planned (see separate article). It has also caused a delay in replenishing safety whistles. Once the funds became available, we learned that our previous whistle vendor has gone out of business. Jason from SF-SAFE is working with 3 potential new vendors, and we should have whistles soon.

Our purchasing records show that we have already passed out over 8,000 whistles. The number is probably more like 10,000 since the first batch was donated by Titan video, and not counted in our records. It always surprises me how many people have never heard of safety whistles when we place one in their hand. Most thank us for helping increase their personal safety.

A goal in this year's grant is to bring our volunteer rank to 100 by September. We will ask everyone to requalify so we have an official count (see article on page 1). Our goal will then be to add 40 to 50 new volunteers. We need your help. Hitting this target will let us expand our patrols and help in getting funds again next year.

On-Line Scheduler Delivered

After much dedicated work by Marcelo, our Webmaster, and Damian our staff person, the on-line scheduling tool is live. Be sure to thank them when you can.

You can look at the calendar, see where there are openings and just "click" to add yourself to a team. Damian can still add you manually. If you want to set up a regular team, let him know the dates and who makes up your team so he can block out the date.

Managing Street Crime

Let me first be clear that neither the Patrol nor myself have an agenda against homeless people. However, some panhandling is aggressive or threatening and some street people are openly committing crimes. December saw an influx in the number of aggressive street people who were new to the neighborhood.

There were three groups that were particularly worrisome. The first group was 4 to 6 younger people hanging out in front of the abandoned "All American Boy" store. This was at its peak during the time that the parking lot lights were out. While they seemed fun loving, there was a noticeable increase in the drug paraphernalia left in the parking lot. The second group was 3-4 "toughs" hanging out in the the GLBT Historic Society doorway. These guys often made threatening comments to the Patrol as we passed. We turned a "deaf ear" and walked past, but did keep an extra eye on their activity. The third group consisted of 4 people in their 30's sitting on the sidewalk in front of Walgreens door on Castro. This group had a pit bull that was usually not on a leash and was often engaged in loud arguments with other street people or the public.

The first two groups dissipated after the posting of "No Trespassing" signs at both gathering points. The third group has been much less visible after two situations involving the police. The first took place on 2-JAN-09 about 10 PM, when an African-American woman and child exited

their car parked on Castro at 18th and entered the store. I heard one of the men say to the lady: "You ought to be required to keep that kid on a rope". His point had something to do with the fact that he had been told to keep his dog on a leash. I stepped between him and the family so they could safely enter the store. I then located a Patrol Special officer inside the store. He stepped outside and asked them to leave. They left but returned on 3-JAN-09. That afternoon, an SFPD patrol car stopped, inspected their identification and again asked them to move on.

On Saturday, 17-JAN-09, the Patrol came upon a major fight at the Castro Muni station at 11:15 PM. About 20 young people were loudly fighting in front of the Diesel store. The patrol called the emergency number to summon 3 patrol cars. A paramedic had identified one male in the crowd as being instrumental and the arriving police placed that suspect into handcuffs. Three young women explained to the police that they had been assaulted on the underground train, which then caused the two groups of people to begin the fight. Once the police were on site, the Patrol checked the surrounding area to confirm there were not secondary issues.



Mark Your Calendar:

29-JAN-09 7:00 PM–9:00 PM Volunteer Training, Coldwell Banker, 2355 Market Street

6-FEB-09 7:00 PM–9:30 PM TMAA Self-Defense Training, EVRC, 100 Collingwood Street

18-FEB-09 8:00 PM–9:30 PM Board Meeting, Bank of America Community Room

14-MAR-09 2:00 PM–4:00 PM Volunteer Training, Bank of America Community Room

Donating to CCOP

You can make tax-deductible donations through our parent organization at: http://www.sfsafe.org/4ych_donate.htm Click the "Donate" link and include "CCOP" in the description field.