



castro community on patrol

www.castropatrol.org

The Patroller

“Creating a Visible Safety Presence”

June 2008

Security for Pink Saturday Party

The Patrol will again assist the Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence to provide security for the Pink Saturday party on June 28. There will be 4 teams of 3 (or more) people to work the perimeter of the party. Security within the main event will be left to San Francisco Police.

This is one of the Patrol’s most visible projects of the year while bringing much needed safety for the tens of thousands of revilers.

Patrollers will meet at the Eureka Valley Rec Center at 8:30 to begin patrolling at 9:00. The patrols will end at midnight, which is also when the party ends. We will be using walkie-talkies to communicate with the headquarters at the rec center.

The Sisters will provide a contribution to the Patrol for each volunteer. Volunteers need to register twice: 1) With Damian as usual for patrols, and 2) On the Sisters’ Website. This second step is required so the Patrol can be properly compensated for the time of each patroller.

Addressing Car Break-Ins

As covered in the May issue, the number of car break-ins in the Castro has reached the highest level in a year. The Patrol is taking a new approach to try to change this trend. Starting in June, new safety flyers are being placed on vehicles in the areas showing the highest rate of break-ins. In addition to addressing car break-ins, the flyers also provide information about assault, robberies, and providing descriptions for the police. The flyers will also be made available through Castro area merchants. US Bank and Magnet are the first two locations providing the flyers.

Most vehicle crimes take place on 18th Street between Eureka and Noe, in the parking lot behind Walgreens, and on the streets surrounding Collingwood Park. Some leaflets will also be distributed on Castro Street.



Passers-by in the Castro were heard to ask, “Why do they have flashlights on such a sunny day?” as the latest crew of new patrollers received training on 14-JUN-08. The next training will be Tuesday 19-SEP-08 at 7:00 PM.

Crowd Management While Patrolling

One of the tips from Pride Parade Wheel Monitor training has to do with managing on-lookers if a citizen has for some reason found themselves on the ground. As we come upon an incident, we do not know why the person is down. It may be because of a fall, an assault, too much to drink, excessive drug use, or a medical condition. But in any case, the last thing the victim wants is to find themselves on YouTube after leaving the emergency room.

If your team finds someone on the ground, call 911. Then one team member should attend to the victim, while the others face away to keep the public a reasonable distance. If anyone has a camera phone, try to get your body between it and the victim. Say something to the effect of: “He’s having a bad day and does not want to be photographed.” Do not elaborate on the cause. Then ask the person to step back to give the paramedics room to work.

Similar crowd management may be needed when the police or paramedics respond to any incident. The attention of the professionals is usually focused on the incident, with the expectation that the on-looking public will maintain some type of working distance. However, the public may be causing additional problems by crowding too close to the professionals or blocking access for additional responders.

When this happens, it is appropriate for the Patrol Team Leader to ask one of the officers or the paramedics if they would like assistance with crowd management. If they give an affirmative answer, encourage the onlookers to move back to a safe distance. When doing so, try to not come into bodily contact with the public unless absolutely necessary and then without using any force. Use sweeping motions with the light of your flashlight and/or short blasts on your whistle if needed to get the attention of the gawkers. They will usually respond to reasonable requests and respect the authority of the orange uniform.



I've Been Thinking...

Gregory Carey, CCOP Chair



An SFSU student recently completed a research paper comparing CCOP to published studies of other community-policing groups. Many of them fell apart after a relatively short time. The paper gives a warning that we are at a critical juncture as we move from being reactive to proactive. We were brought together around several violent crimes in 2006. Luckily, they have not repeated, so our purpose has changed from creating a safer neighborhood to one of keeping the neighborhood safe.

First, let me thank each of you for your various contributions to the success of the Patrol. The fact that we have involvement 18 months into this experiment of a "walking neighborhood watch" has already set us apart from many of our predecessors.

Second, let me tell you a little about myself. My "real job" is being a program manager for a Fortune 500 (more like a Fortune 10) company in Silicon Valley. This means, I get paid to come up with creative solutions to tricky problems, and that I have to be relatively patient for ideas and solutions to work themselves through various bureaucratic and political mazes. That said, I am thankful that (so far) Damian's head has not exploded during our first few meetings. I see a LOT of things that can be improved, but I do NOT expect them to happen all at once. It's the "not all at once" part that takes planning and participation.

Third, my passion for our work sometimes makes me come off as dictatorial, but I am really very collaborative. My ideas are not always the best ones, my plans are not always complete, and you have ideas I never even considered. So please throw your thoughts into the conversation when we are brainstorming. There comes a point where brainstorming stops and implementation starts. At that point it helps when we work as a team toward the same objectives.

All of this has to do with the Strategic Planning Session scheduled for July 20. Please mark that date on your calendar now. Damian will send details about location and time when the details are worked out. Please come. Please bring your ideas or concerns. And above all, please be ready to have a lively conversation as we move from brainstorming to new ways to keep the Patrol fun and successful.

The Weddings

The legalization of same-sex weddings in California will create a very interesting time between now and the November election—and probably beyond. The Patrol needs to be ready for many unknowns, starting with backlash from the fundies, then to copy-cats from the gangs and bullies who love to beat up sissies, and possibly to long-term harassment.

We must avoid the temptation to become vigilantes as we defend our turf from those who are verbally or physically aggressive. We must be careful to not turn from a "community watch" to "The Castro Gang". We also have to be careful to separate what appear to be a *conspiracy* from an unfortunate *coincidence*. The spelling of the two words is often the only difference between them.

There will be more to say later, but for now, let's leave it at: "**June 2008 will be very interesting.**"

*Happy Gay-Day
Greggy*

Donating to CCOP

The Patrol operating expenses include the costs of uniforms, flashlights, radios, printed literature and a part-time staff person. An updated Website, including on-line scheduling and newsletter archives, will be introduced in July. Plans are also under way for new publicity in the form of posters and other information.

A large part of last year's operating budget was covered by a grant from the City of San Francisco. We have applied for a renewal of the city grant, but will not know if it is approved until the City finishes its budgeting later this summer.

Private donations also help. CCOP funding is managed by the non-profit SF-SAFE organization run by the office of the Mayor. Tax-deductible donations may be made by check or on-line through their Website. Be sure to indicate CCOP as your intended recipient when making your donation.

Mail checks to:

San Francisco SAFE, Inc.
850 Bryant Street, Rm. 135
San Francisco, CA 94103

To donate on-line:

Go to the SF-SAFE Web-page:

http://www.sfsafe.org/4ych_donate.htm

Click the "Just Give" link near the center of the page and fill in the information on the form that launches. Be sure to include CCOP in the "Designate my Donation" box.

Please note that SAFE receives a 15% sponsorship fee from CCOP in order to help create safer neighborhoods citywide.

MUMC Presentation

Incoming Castro Patrol Chair Gregory (Greggy) Carey provided a brief presentation at the June 5 MUMC (Merchants of Upper Market and Castro) meeting. He reviewed recent crime statistics, explained the plan to begin leafleting cars to try to reduce car break-ins and the plans to assist with security for Pink Saturday. The crime metrics show a reduction in the number of monthly assaults in the Castro business district that coincide with the addition of weeknight patrols. The assault figures in May show a continuation of these trends.

He shared that the Patrol board has begun studying the feasibility of mailing the newsletter to the MUMC members in order to keep the merchants informed about Patrol activities. However, budgeting must first be worked out. It will cost about \$300 per month to mail to the MUMC paid members, or about \$600 per month to mail to all of the businesses in the MUMC business district.

As an interim, we have agreed to add any merchant to the e-mail subscription list to receive the monthly newsletter electronically, free of charge. E-mail addresses for about 20 of the merchants were collected at the MUMC meeting. About 20 more addresses were collected by new patrollers following the June training.

Newsletter e-Mail Subscription

Anyone else who wishes to be added to the list may do so by sending an e-mail to: subscribe@castropatrol.org

Please include the name(s) of the person requesting the subscription as well as the company or association with which they are affiliated. More than one e-mail address may be included in a single request. This list will only be used for the newsletter mailings. Instructions for removal from the list will be included in the e-mail "cover letter" each month if people wish to be removed from the mailings.