



castro community on patrol

www.castropatrol.org

The Patroller

“Creating a Visible Safety Presence”

Nov. 2008

November was BUSY!



Special thanks to founder Carlton Paul for letting us invade his home for 1½ years.

The Patrol reflected on its past, explained its present and prepared for its future during the first two weeks in November. It celebrated its second anniversary, sponsored a community safety forum, and then trained 8 new Patrollers.

The pictures of some of the 60+ volunteers that make up Castro Patrol help tell the story. More social functions will be coming soon.



Service awards for Alexander Hamilton American Legion: Mario Benfield (L), John Forrett (4th) and Patrick Dillane (not pictured).



Trainer Ken Craig receives thanks for providing 12 sessions of excellent training.



Carlton and vice-chair Scott Wiener remember the early days of the Patrol.



The heroes had time to meet each other while enjoying refreshments.



CUAV, SF-Safe and Patrol Special are part of the fabric of community safety.



Moderator Scott Wiener listens as representatives of eight different organizations explained their services and then fielded questions from the audience.



Eight new volunteers are encouraged to think as a team in various scenarios.



Collingwood park provides a background for practical simulations.



The new Patrollers get a feel for what they may encounter at Castro and 18th Street.

I've Been Thinking...

Gregory Carey, CCOP Chair



The aftermath of the Proposition 8 election has indeed proven interesting. Between religious groups who continue to send "prayer teams" to 18th and Castro, and the "No on 8" protests, the Castro has become a new focus for civil disobedience. The Board prepared guidelines for the Patrol's responses to protests. If you want a copy, please send an e-mail request to: info@castropatrol.org

Thefts on the Rise

As the economy worsens, crime in the Castro is increasing. October was the worst month since we began tracking statistics in May 2007*. The 130 crimes are 64% higher than the monthly average of 79.2 (or 73 a year ago) as the result of larcenies and burglaries. A larceny is a theft of personal property that does not involve breaking into a building (which would make it a burglary). We separate car break-ins from other larcenies. The remaining are things like shoplifting, pick-pockets, stolen bicycles, or thefts from unlocked garages.

Community Safety Forum

by Damian Ochoa

Scott Wiener moderated the Community Safety Forum at the Eureka Valley Recreation Center (EVRC) on November 6. There were over 30 residents and merchants in the audience. Here are the messages from the panel members.

Captain Tacchini SFPD, Mission Station:

There is a need to conduct a community assessment to prevent crime. He encouraged residents to report disorderly conduct by calling SFPD's non-emergency number @ 415.553.0123 or city services at 311. Non-emergencies are any suspicious activity. He reported that there has been an increase in car break-ins and some recent burglaries on Noe Street.

Lt. Gordon SFPD Park Station: Their officers spend much time dealing with issues in the Haight. He reminded attendees that the police cannot be everywhere and that it is important to know one's neighbor. Response is sometimes slowed because officers are busy with gang and weapons issues on Divisadero and Haight Streets. He stated that large apartments with parking ports are high crime areas with many thefts including computers, laptops, bikes and cars.

October had a record of 43 thefts from autos (compared to an average of 20.3 and 14 the previous year) and 37 general larcenies (compared to 17.5 average). Burglaries are also up, with 14 compared to 9.8 average and 7 in October 2007.

Response to Car Break-Ins

We plan to again print safety flyers to place on cars through the holiday shopping season to remind drivers to keep everything out of sight. At the same time, Patrollers should watch for suspicious activities, and report them to the non-emergency number unless a crime is in progress. Things to watch for include:

- ◆ 1 or 2 people who are walking slowly along the curb.
- ◆ Another person nearby with a bicycle to carry away the stolen property.
- ◆ Or, a car with the engine running near an intersection for escape.

Record license plates of suspicious cars.

*Monthly metrics are taken from the SFPD Website, covering the area ½ mile from the intersection of 18th and Castro Streets.

Lt. Gordon explained that the boundaries between police districts are "blurred" and officers straddle boundary lines. He stated, "If boundaries don't exist for criminals, they shouldn't exist for us."

Ken Craig Triangle Martial Arts Association (TMAA):

TMAA was created in response to Matthew Shepard's brutal murder over 10 years ago. TMAA offers free seminars to help the community work cohesively. The focus is to help people recognize and avoid problems, and how to deescalate problems.

Greg Carey Chair, Castro Community on Patrol (CCOP):

CCOP was created two years ago in response to sexual assaults in the Castro District. CCOP analyzes crime statistics and tries to schedule patrols at times of highest crime. Greg also discussed **Neighborhood Emergency Response Team (NERT)** which assists the SF Fire Department during emergencies such as earthquakes. A NERT volunteer goes through 20 hours of training and is then certified to help.

Steve Adams President, Merchants of Upper Market and Castro (MUMC): The main concerns are drug activities, petty

theft and car break-ins. He reported that he values the relationship with the SFPD and that the new beat officer Kate Joshua is catching on very quickly. He reported that a bank robber was recently caught because of help from an eyewitness. Recently, bar owner Greg Bronstein started a phone tree to inform other bars if some one has been 86-ed from a bar to prevent them from causing problems at other bars. Steve feels there has been an increase in aggressive panhandling since summer as folks come from the Haight to cause trouble in the Castro.

Tina D'Elia, Community United Against Violence (CUAV):

CUAV fights hate crimes, domestic violence, sexual assault and abuse. CUAV will celebrate 30 years in March of 2009. They have a 24 hour crisis line @ 415.333.HELP. CUAV shares resources and information with the community while collaborating with other agencies. She further discussed resources in anger management, advocacy, support for domestic violence survivors, queer domestic violence trainings, queer youth employment trainings and building allies in the community.

Oona Gilles-Weill Program Director, SF SAFE (Safety Awareness For Everyone):

SF SAFE has also been in existence for over 30 years and takes a comprehensive approach to safety. She discussed the importance of knowing one's neighbors and building neighborhood watch groups. The Hartford Neighborhood Watch Group is very active as well as others in Corbett Heights. SF SAFE holds quarterly Block Captain parties for networking.

Jane Warner, San Francisco Patrol

Special: Over 300 Castro merchants began paying the private Patrol Special in 1993. SF Patrol Special is community policing in its truest fashion, and believe arrests only take place as a last resort when other attempts have been exhausted. The officers work closely with SFPD. She stated many quality of life issues are better handled by social workers and not the police.

Donating to CCOP

Private donations are encouraged. You can make tax-deductible donations through our parent organization SF SAFE: http://www.sfsafe.org/4ych_donate.htm

Click the "Donate" link and enter "CCOP" in the description field.