

BROOK HIGHLAND

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BROOK HIGHLAND RESIDENTIAL ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

Fall/Winter 2008

The Brook Highland Neighborhood Watch

Ask anyone whose home has been burglarized ... the shock and helpless anger accompanying the discovery that an intruder has entered one's home will not easily be forgotten.

The damage may be minimal or major, the losses slight or catastrophic. The incident may or may not have involved injury to a family member—yet one hard fact remains: another statistic has been added to the ever-growing list of burglarized homes. The burglar won again—and has no doubt vanished, leaving no real clue to lead to his arrest.

Is Brook Highland Ready to Resist Crime?

Or Is It A Target For Burglars?

It's Up To Us!!

Brook Highland has already been the victim of burglaries. We are missing one vital prevention tool is missing: an active NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH group. This community-based organization of citizens working together with law enforcement has become the key to preventing burglary and crime nationwide.

On Thursday, Oct 17, several residents of Brook Highland met with Deputy Martin Bailey of the Shelby County Sheriff's Office to learn about forming a Neighborhood Watch program. Thirty residents signed up to form the program and 14 volunteered to be block captains. There are 62 blocks in total in Brook Highland. A block is a grouping of houses ranging in number from 8 to 18 houses depending on the location and layout of houses. If you want to join this watch program, call Joe Sarver at 980-8328 or email him at

Joe.Sarver@joesarver.us.

What Do Block Captains Have to Do?

In conjunction with the Coordinator, Block Captains make up the "core team" that makes the Neighborhood Watch function. Block Captains support the Coordinator by communicating with residents in their immediate area. The number of Block Captains that a Watch has is determined by the size of the Watch. Block Captains' primary duties are to share information with Watch members and to assist the Coordinator with events and meetings.

What Do Watch Members Have to Do?

The fundamental purpose of Neighborhood Watch is to prevent crime by increasing members' awareness. Members are expected to pay attention to what goes on in their neighborhood, to recognize suspicious activity, and to report it to the police. Additionally, members may work with Block Captains and the Coordinator to solve neighborhood problems or participate in organized events.

The National Sheriffs' Association created the National NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH Program in 1972, with financial assistance from the Law Enforcement Assistance Administration, to unite law enforcement agencies, private organizations, and individual citizens in a massive effort to reduce residential crime. A work plan emerged for use by sheriffs, police, and citizens for putting together local neighborhood-based programs. Since its establishment, NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH has developed thousands of such local residential crime prevention programs in which individual citizens work to 1) make their own homes and families less inviting targets for crime, and 2) cooperate with law enforcement through block and neighborhood groups to control crime throughout the community.

Neighborhood Crime Prevention:

A Joint Responsibility

The prevention of crime—particularly crime involving residential neighborhoods—is a responsibility that must be shared equally by law enforcement and private citizens. The fact is, the impact on crime prevention by law enforcement alone is minimal when compared with the power of private citizens working with law enforcement and with each other. NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH is based on this concept of cooperation, and nationwide statistics prove that it works. When citizens take positive steps to secure their own property and neighbors learn how to report suspicious activity around their homes, burglary and related offenses decrease dramatically.

Areas Show Crime Drop

Throughout the United States, dramatic decreases in burglary and related offenses are reported by law enforcement professionals in communities with active NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH programs. Statistics show that when a concerned citizenry does its part, the possibilities are endless...and the results positive. NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH is now the most successful anticrime initiative in the country and the most effective and least expensive tool for restoring the safe, pleasant environment we all want for our families! This is homeowners' insurance that works!

Taking Positive Steps

Victim responses to a home burglary generally follow a similar pattern: Initial fear and anger give way to an obsession with seeing the intruder caught and making sure the home is never targeted by criminals again. In the past, many frightened victims sat back and simply hoped their homes would be spared a repeat performance. They, as well as their neighbors, worried and wondered about what they could do to protect their property. Since the establishment of NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH, however, thousands of homeowners who want to take intelligently planned action to decrease crime statistics in their areas have discovered that they have a ready, willing and highly qualified partner in their local law enforcement agency. These homeowners now know that their agency would rather work with citizens to prevent crime than spend time and manpower investigating it after it occurs. The Growing Need for NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH

It is a fact of life that relationships in many of today's communities have become less personal than they were years ago. Families are more transient, children have more activities that take them and their parents away from home, and there are more families with both parents working. The once-familiar sight of families visiting with each other on front porches while keeping a watchful eye on children and activities in the neighborhood is a rarity in most communities today. This trend away from personal contact in the neighborhood and the decrease in time families spend at home are two of the essential ingredients that make communities ripe for crimes of opportunity, such as burglary.

NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH

Burglary, the unlawful entry of a structure to commit a felony or theft, is the crime that is targeted particularly by the National NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH Program. While it is one of the most 3 practice to keep doors locked whether anyone is at home or not;

- Asking neighbors to watch for suspicious activity when the house is vacant;
- Marking valuable property with an identifying number (Operation I.D.) to discourage theft and help law enforcement agencies identify and return lost or stolen property;
- Encouraging home builders to use effective door and window locks and to provide outside lighting for all new home and apartment construction;
- Organizing block parent and block WATCH groups to assist children, the elderly, and other especially vulnerable persons if they appear to be distressed, in danger, or lost;
- Meeting in neighborhood groups with trained crime prevention officers to discuss needs and crime prevention strategies;
- Developing neighborhood "fan" or telephone tree systems for quickly alerting each other about criminal activity in the area;
- Encouraging the development of signals for use in adjacent residences when someone needs help;
- Arranging for ongoing programs where crime prevention experts can present home and neighborhood security tips at regularly scheduled meetings.
- Obtaining and studying informative materials from the National Sheriffs' Association, the National Crime Prevention Council, and local agencies;
- Identifying the area's participation with decals and metal road signs warning, "NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH – our neighbors are watching to report suspicious activity to our law enforcement agency."

You've heard about the benefits of NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH participation. You suspect—or know—that there is a crime problem in your area. This neighborhood watch is not something that we can let someone else do. It depends on alert and involved neighbors. **Alert!**

COMMUNITY REMINDERS

- 1) Grass Clippings: Please do not throw grass clippings in the concrete flumes. This costs the association money for cleanup costs and can bring a fine from the Birmingham Water Works to the offender.
- 2) Lake Fishing: Easement rights for the purposes of launching a boat on the lake are given only to lake lot owners. Also, please remember to pick up any trash or leftover fishing tackle before leaving the area.
- 3) In accordance with the covenants, please remember to store your trashcan where it is not visible from the street on days other than garbage/trash pick up days.

COMMUNITY WEBSITE

Our website is up and running at www.brookhighland.org. We hope you enjoy visiting it and will do our best to keep you informed of upcoming events and the latest news in the community. To enter the resident login which contains the community directory, please email or call Neighborhood Management to obtain the user name and a pass code. You will then need to type in your home address to enter the site. The membership directory lists only those residents who have signed a release allowing their information to be printed. If you would like your name, address and phone number added, please email grant@neighborhoodmanagement.org. All future newsletters will be downloaded to the website rather than mailed to each resident. If you do not have access to the internet and would like the newsletter mailed to you, please call Neighborhood Management at 877-9480.

BROOK HIGHLAND HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION

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BROOK HIGHLAND WOMEN'S CLUB NEWS

The Brook Highland Women's Club strives every year to bring the community together in order that new residents can meet their fellow residents in a relaxing and fun atmosphere. Also, the club can band together women from diverse backgrounds to enjoy rewarding fellowship and forge new friendships. Along with these incentives to joining the group, the women's club can also be a great reference tool to find info on local businesses and news. Below is a list of our remaining dates. We hope to see you there!!

November 11th – Silpada Jewelry presentation and Get to know your neighbor. 7:00 pm at the home of Heather Mahaffey 4236 Ashington Drive.

December 9th – Christmas ornament exchange. More details to come.

Upcoming Brook Highland Women's Club Luminary Event:
Saturday, December 13 at 5:30 p.m. Rain Date: Sunday, December 14.

KNOW YOUR COVENANTS

The protective covenants were adopted for the protection and benefit of all Brook Highland property owners. The Brook Highland Architectural Review Committee is charged with the responsibility of reviewing all submitted improvements and/or additions to your property. All residents are encouraged to keep a copy of the Brook Highland Protective Covenants and Restrictions. You may download a copy of these covenants at brookhighland.org. If you have specific questions regarding the covenants, please call Neighborhood Management at 205-877-9480. Neighborhood Management receives many calls from residents concerned about lack of covenant adherence by their neighbors. Several recurring problems exist in our neighborhood that we would like to address. The first problem is yard maintenance. All residents are required to keep their yards free of weeds and debris. All lawns should be mowed and edged on a regular basis. The second area of concern is loose dogs. Loose dogs threaten adults and children who are afraid of them and can be a nuisance to those who do not want dogs in their yard. Also, when walking dogs please respect the landscaping efforts of your neighbors by picking up behind your pet. Another area of concern is mailboxes that are unsightly. Please keep your mailboxes in painted and in good repair. All lettering is uniform and can be ordered by calling Custom Signs at 942-7446. For information on purchasing a mailbox call Neighborhood Management at 877-9480.

KEEP OUR STREETS SAFE FOR OUR CHILDREN- PLEASE DON'T SPEED!

Many calls have been received from upset residents regarding speeding in the community. Most of the complaints are directed at Brook Highland Drive. The posted speed limit on all streets in Brook Highland is 25 mph. The safety of our residents, especially our children should be a concern to all. Please encourage your guest to take their time and enjoy their visit to the community. Please remember that it is not worth getting to a destination a few minutes quicker if in doing so we risk the safety of others.

