

## German Village Society

Neighborhood Safety Forum & Police Luncheon meeting June 14, 2017

Dan Glasener welcomed everyone. Two police officers, 14 civilians in attendance. (Police had another event in competition.) We always welcome more volunteers.

### **NEIGHBORHOOD SAFETY**

Our Community Liaison Officer, Officer Robin Medley. Sergeant Max Streng was also in attendance. Officer Medley passed out the biweekly statistics sheet and a map of the cruiser districts in our 11<sup>th</sup> Precinct. He noted that the statistics are compared to the same time period a year ago.

Burglary means that something was stolen but no one was confronted in person by the thief. Robbery means a personal threat or use of force was involved. Aggravated Assault means serious physical harm was caused, such as physical disfigurement or caused pain for 48 hours or longer.

Crimes are less on Saturdays and Sundays because people are usually at home. Likewise on holidays. One of our most common crimes in German Village is theft from motor vehicles. A lot of that is motivated by heroin addiction. Don't leave things sitting out in view. Most of the thieves are opportunists, not professionals.

German Village is a target-rich environment. This biweekly statistics information is available on [raidsonline.com](http://raidsonline.com). It's also used by other jurisdictions in our area.

You need to file police reports. If you don't file a report, we don't know, which basically means it didn't happen.

Question from the audience: Is it true that a lot of the stolen items are sold at the flea market on South Parsons? Answer: not usually because addicts want quick cash. They don't plan ahead such as setting up a table at the flea market. This area is unique because of the scrap metal and auto recycling facilities farther south, which offer opportunists another disposition place as they pass through

Thieves are looking for easy to carry or hide, not larger property items like TVs. For example, credit card info is valuable – not the card itself. they'll photograph the front and back of your card with their cell phone camera. If they get stopped, they have nothing on them if searched. Jewelry is at risk because it's easier to sell without going through a pawn shop, which requires a photo ID and logs all entries. If they do take some larger property item, search around your neighborhood for it because the thief may put it near a dumpster or other location nearby so that

if he's stopped, he can confidently say he's got nothing on him, and then he'll come back later to pick up the item.

The number one area burglars go to in a home is the bathroom, looking for medicines they can use or sell. The second area they go to is the bedroom, where jewelry, wallet or purse are likely to be found. Hide your things differently.

Overwhelming majority of summertime daytime burglaries are by juveniles. Often they are agile enough to get in open second-floor windows. They'll do "knock and checks" – knock to see if there's a dog on the premises or anyone at home, or whether any neighbors notice their presence.

Detached garages are a more inviting target than attached garages because attached garage are an occupied dwelling, and burglary from an occupied building is a higher-level crime. Theft from a detached building is merely a misdemeanor.

Question: What about people who ask you for money? Answer: Please don't give money to them, especially those standing on streetcorners. Most of them are homeless, and there are places for them to go but they won't be admitted if they have drugs or drug paraphernalia.

Question: What about the reported robbery of a woman at knifepoint on Mohawk Street? Answer: We investigated that and concluded it was not a real or honest report. The alleged victim didn't want to do anything about it, and would not cooperate. The alleged victim was in a car, but who opens their window in such circumstances instead of just driving away quickly? My own suspicion is that it was a drug deal that went bad.

Question: There's a homeless guy sitting and soliciting near the Book Loft on Third Street; should we call the police? Answer: Yes, call it in. It is illegal to solicit without a permit. We're not going to browbeat them. I even offer them rides to a shelter if they want it. The city can enforce anything from the sidewalk out to the road. Beyond the sidewalk, though, that's private property.

Question: Is there a greater propensity for violence from a drug addict? Answer: That depends on the person's own propensity toward violence. Women addicts will more likely turn to prostitution. Male addicts usually turn to theft. Unfortunately, we live in a generally more violent society today.

Lighting deters criminal activity. The better lit your home and your driveway are, the better your chances for avoiding a criminal event. Your lights should ideally be out of reach so a thief can't reach up and unscrew the bulbs. Keep your windows closed, too. It's tempting to have them open in mild weather, but it's easy for a thief to reach in, or cut through the screen, and grab a purse or

whatever.

Undercover police are not routinely on duty here right now, but with the recent increase in garage break-ins we may ask for more undercover resources again.

Question: Are car break-ins more common at night than in the daytime? Answer: No, car break-ins are crimes of opportunity and occur both day and night.

Question: If we see someone trying car doors, should we call that in? Answer: Yes. Even if they're gone when we get there the presence of a cruiser acts as a further deterrence. Calling also makes it a matter of record.

## **OUTDOOR LIGHTING SURVEY**

Dan Glasener: One of the things we took on as a committee was public lighting, areas that weren't well lit and offered hiding places. We started a volunteer survey of lighting. Bill Boys was one of those volunteers, and he produced a report that we hope he can just comment about. (Three copies were on hand and were passed around. Extra copies are available from Bill, or from Mark Weiss in the GVS offices.)

Bill Boys: I surveyed Mohawk Street, from Livingston Avenue down to Reinhard Avenue. I used Google Earth to get detailed maps of all the blocks along Mohawk Street. We did a daylight trip to get the house-numbers for each address. A few did not have house numbers evidently, but the vast majority did. Then we went back at night to see how effective the street lighting was, as well as peoples' porch lights, yard lights, floodlights, etc. We overlaid symbols for the various kinds of lighting, and used light or dark bars to indicate how well lit the sidewalks were after dark.

We were surprised to find out how much more important the street lights are for illuminating the sidewalks than porch lights and the others. To estimate whether a sidewalk was well lit or not, we used a rule of thumb based on the fact that my wife uses a cane to walk. If she couldn't see uneven bricks or broken pavement or other tripping hazards, we marked it as a dark sidewalk. We were surprised to find out how little the house lighting illuminated the sidewalk, usually. We should still use such lights as they do offer protection for the house, but generally they didn't illuminate the sidewalks. In a few cases, trees blocked the street lights, which also made for dark sidewalks. We also noticed that where street lights did a good job of illuminating sidewalks, many people tended not to turn on their porch lights, etc.

Question/comment: At one time we did have a lot of street lights out along Mohawk. We called it in and the next day the city got them all working.

Question: What time did you go out? Answer: Basically from late dusk to no later than 11:30

p.m.

Question: Do the lighting symbols apply to the street as well as the sidewalk? Answer: No, we didn't try to gauge the lighting level in the street itself. We figured anyway, as Officer Medley said, if you're in a car you're not as easy a target as a pedestrian would be.

Dan Glasener: Officer Medley also got a map from the city lighting department showing where all the street lights in German Village are.

Dan Glasener: I walked the northern part of City Park Avenue and found a number of homes that did not have their porch lights on, or maybe they weren't working.

### **GVS LONG RANGE PLANNING**

Long-Range Planning is really looking at how to incorporate safety in all the number of events that German Village is involved with year-round. As most of us are involved with other activities, we can be a voice for safety.

### **WRAP-UP**

Thanks for taking the time to be here for this meeting. There are a number of helpful links printed on the agenda:

raidsonline.com – to view criminal activity statistics in our precinct.

Reportit.leadsonline.com – you can record inventory of your property and whether it has ID numbers or ultraviolet markings, in case it is stolen and might be recoverable that way.

Npc.org – National Crime Prevention Council.

Dan Glasener's contact info: Office: 614-586-1953 x 5; mobile: 740-260-6994; email: [glasent@nationwide.com](mailto:glasent@nationwide.com).

Tim Myers: email: [gvcommwatch@gmail.com](mailto:gvcommwatch@gmail.com).

Officer Medley: Office: 614-543-1411; email: [rmedley@columbuspolice.org](mailto:rmedley@columbuspolice.org).

Columbus Police non-emergency calls: 614-645-4545. Non-police issues: 311 or 614-645-3111.

Future meetings:

September 13 12:30 p.m. Police luncheon, GVS Meeting Haus.

November 8 6:30 p.m. Evening meeting, GVS Meeting Haus.

December 6 or 13 12:30 p.m. St. Mary Christmas Program with Police, St. Mary Catholic School gymnasium.