



# INDEPENDENCE POLICE

October 2009

## NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH FUNDRAISER

Over the past year, the Independence Neighborhood Watch Program has seen an unprecedented amount of growth. This growth has included the addition of both new events, and new educational programs.

In response to this growth, additional funds were required to keep these activities and programs free to the general public.

In light of this need, several neighborhood watch groups stepped up to help raise funds to continue to assist with the growth and expansion of neighborhood watch programs.

Taking the lead for this event were Maywood Watchdogs, Frank Kithcart and Peggy Ault as well as Susquehanna Block 6 Captain J.B. Vickers.

In all over 400 tickets were sold to the fundraising dinner/cooking contest. During the course of the event seats were scarce, as the tables were constantly full. In all, the event raised over \$2,300 for these programs!

As always, an event of this magnitude could not have been successful without an immense amount of support from a small army of volunteers. I wish to personally thank the following volunteers for their hours of service towards this event:

|                          |                           |
|--------------------------|---------------------------|
| <b>Frank Kithcart</b>    | <b>Denise Butler</b>      |
| <b>Peggy Ault</b>        | <b>Lisa Renshaw</b>       |
| <b>Doug Ault</b>         | <b>David Renshaw Jr.</b>  |
| <b>Bob Spradling</b>     | <b>Janet Castle</b>       |
| <b>Leah Burton</b>       | <b>Cliff Cloyd</b>        |
| <b>Pat Massey</b>        | <b>Monica Conner</b>      |
| <b>Becky Meadows</b>     | <b>Kaitlynn Conner</b>    |
| <b>Aileen Kithcart</b>   | <b>Alice Brinck</b>       |
| <b>Pat Renshaw</b>       | <b>Nicholas Tarwaters</b> |
| <b>Dave Renshaw</b>      | <b>Nathan Ruiz</b>        |
| <b>Elisa Breitenbach</b> | <b>PJ Ruiz</b>            |
| <b>Virginia Mashburn</b> |                           |

In addition to the volunteers, a multitude of businesses donated services, funds, as well as time to assist the neighborhood watch program. Again my gratitude goes out to these businesses. These businesses recognize the importance of community based organizations:

|  |                                      |
|--|--------------------------------------|
| <b>Aruba Sun Tanning</b>               | <b>McDonalds-Susquehanna</b>         |
| <b>The Auto Shop</b>                   | <b>Minsky's Pizza</b>                |
| <b>Back Center</b>                     | <b>Mongolian BBQ</b>                 |
| <b>Bed, Bath and Beyond</b>            | <b>On the Border</b>                 |
| <b>Brian Yarbrough, Edward Jones</b>   | <b>Padgitt Chimney and Fireplace</b> |
| <b>Cable Dahmer</b>                    | <b>Pizza Hut</b>                     |
| <b>Celsius Tannery</b>                 | <b>Plaza Mart</b>                    |
| <b>Classic Car Wash</b>                | <b>Price Chopper</b>                 |
| <b>Commerce Bank</b>                   | <b>Restaurant Depot</b>              |
| <b>Corner Café</b>                     | <b>Rib Crib</b>                      |
| <b>Costco</b>                          | <b>Sladeck Hardware</b>              |
| <b>Curt's Market</b>                   | <b>Sonic</b>                         |
| <b>Drenon Jewelry</b>                  | <b>Susquehanna Auto Clinic</b>       |
| <b>Figgy Pudding Designs</b>           | <b>Tan-Talizer</b>                   |
| <b>Firestone Auto Care</b>             | <b>Tastee Freeze</b>                 |
| <b>Gary Noble State Farm Insurance</b> | <b>Wal-Mart</b>                      |
| <b>Hooters</b>                         | <b>Wynbrick Event Center</b>         |
| <b>Hy-Vee</b>                          | <b>Tomas Ruiz and Family</b>         |
| <b>I-Hop</b>                           | <b>Ophelia's</b>                     |
| <b>Independence Auto Electric</b>      | <b>B-Vogue</b>                       |
| <b>Little Bits</b>                     | <b>Puppetry Art's Institute</b>      |
| <b>Long's Shotokan Karate</b>          | <b>Tiki Tanz</b>                     |
| <b>Los Compas Mexican Restaurant</b>   |                                      |

For more information about the event, including pictures and results of the cooking contests, go to:

[www.indepmo.org/neighborhoodwatch](http://www.indepmo.org/neighborhoodwatch)

### CALENDAR OF EVENTS

**October 16, 17**  
Enchanted Forest  
7:00-9:00 PM  
George Owens Nature Park

**October 23, 24**  
Enchanted Forest  
7:00-9:00 PM  
George Owens Nature Park

**October 24**  
Mystic Pumpkin Festival  
2:00-9:00 PM  
Englewood District  
Winner Rd, Harris to Appleton

**November 3, 2009**  
Block Captain Meeting  
Truman High School  
Room 240  
7:00 PM

### Bulletin!!!

Our new website is up and running! Please don't forget to go by [www.indepmo.org/neighborhoodwatch](http://www.indepmo.org/neighborhoodwatch)

Check us out, and view photos of our fundraiser!

## 2010 CENSUS FROM THE BETTER BUSINESS BUREAU HOMEPAGE

Kansas City, MO - For years, Better Business Bureau has educated consumers about not giving out personal information over the telephone or to anyone who shows up at their front door. With the U.S. Census process beginning, BBB advises people to be cooperative, but cautious, so as not to become a victim of fraud or identity theft.

The first phase of the 2010 U.S. Census is under way as workers have begun verifying the addresses of households across the country. Eventually, more than 140,000 U.S. Census workers will count every person in the United States and will gather information about every person living at each address including name, age, gender, race and other relevant data.

“Most people are rightfully cautious and won’t give out personal information to unsolicited phone callers or visitors, however the Census is an exception to the rule,” said David Buckley, BBB spokesperson. “Unfortunately, scammers know that the public is more willing to share personal data when taking part in the Census and they have an opportunity to ply their trade by posing as a government employee and soliciting sensitive financial information.”

The Census data will be used to allocate more than \$300 billion in federal funds every year, as well as determine a State’s number of Congressional representatives. Households are actually required by law to respond to the Census Bureau’s request for information.

During the U.S. Census, households will be contacted by mail, telephone or visited by a U.S. Census worker who will inquire about the number of people living in the house. Unfortunately, people may also be contacted by scammers, who impersonate Census workers to get access to banking and financial information. Law enforcement in several states have issued warnings that scammers are already posing as Census Bureau employees and knocking on doors asking for donations and Social Security numbers.

The big question is - how do you tell the difference be-

tween a U.S. Census worker and a con artist? BBB offers the following advice:

- If a U.S. Census worker knocks on your door, they will have a badge, a handheld device, a Census Bureau canvas bag and a confidentiality notice. Ask to see their identification and their badge before answering their questions. However, you should never invite anyone you don’t know into your home.
- Census workers are currently only knocking on doors to verify address information. Do not give your Social Security number, credit card or banking information to anyone, even if they claim they need it for the U.S. Census. Census workers will not ask for banking and financial information nor will they solicit donations.

- Eventually, Census workers may contact you by telephone, mail or in person at home. However, they will not contact you by e-mail, so be on the look out for e-mail scams impersonating the Census. Never click on a link or open any attachments in an e-mail that are supposedly from the U.S. Census Bureau.

### A NOTE FROM ROB...

This article first caught my eye as an e-mail from Robyn Mun, of the South Main Watch Group. I was able to go to the Better Business Bureau Homepage, to recover the article. If you should come across an article you think would be good for a newsletter, please send it to me.

For more advice on avoiding identity theft and fraud, visit [www.bbb.org](http://www.bbb.org) or contact your BBB at [www.kansascity.bbb.org](http://www.kansascity.bbb.org).



**WHAT IS YOUR ADDRESS—BY: CHARLES ROBINSON, HYATTSVILLE, MD**

It is the middle of the night and you are suddenly awakened by a noise downstairs. You lay still and listen. Just when you are about to dismiss the sound as a dream, the noise is heard again.

There was no mistaking it. Someone wants in! You pick up the telephone to call police, but the line is dead. You now recall something that you learned in a previous crime prevention meeting about charging your cell phone in the bedroom at night in the event that you need it.

You call police and give them your address. While listening intently and waiting for instructions, there is a crash and glass breaking downstairs.

The kitchen door was kicked in. The criminal is now moments away. You are trapped upstairs, alone and with no escape.

The police dispatcher tells you that the officers are on your block, but they can't find your address! The numbers on the homes are either missing, painted over, obscured by shrubbery or the numbers are one inch high. No one has a porch light on and the streetlights are spaced on every other pole. To make matters worse, there is a thick morning fog that is hampering visibility.

Now you understand the importance of house numbers. It could mean the difference between life and death for you and your family in an emergency when every second counts. The police arrive only to discover the criminal escaped. The spotlights, engine noise, and walkie-talkies frightened him away.

To examine this problem further, police selected several random neighborhoods and viewed 134 homes from the roadway under "normal" daylight conditions. This survey revealed that 84% of the house numbers were visible during daylight hours, while 16% of the homes either had obscured, one inch high, or no address numbers at all. During the nighttime hours, police and fire officials have a 10% to 20% visibility of numbers that are not always posted in the same locations on homes. One neighborhood inspected revealed only 5 homes out of 15 had porch lights on at night.

The following are 10 suggestions that may help emergency personnel better locate your home:

1. House numbers should be at least four inches high on the front of your house, near the front door where a "lit" porch light makes them visible from the street.

2. Numbers "could" be located on your porch roof support next to your steps. If this method is used, keep trees and shrubs trimmed from hiding your numbers.

3. Numbers "should not" be located on curbs or step risers. Snow, leaves or vehicles could obscure the numbers.

4. One inch high numbers are not recommended because they are hard to see at a distance under adverse conditions. These are good for roadside mailboxes.

5. Homeowners with trees and shrubs may want to place two sets of numbers on their property.

6. Homeowners that have alleys to the rear of their property may want to consider numbers on a fence or garage. The police may find it necessary to approach your home from the alley in an emergency.

7. Never paint over your house numbers – it camouflages them. This was found on several homes during the survey.

8. A porch light costs pennies per night to operate, and it illuminates your address numbers. It may even keep burglars and thieves away.

9. Put your address numbers on your trash cans. It adds to marking your home for emergency personnel. Every little bit helps.

When calling for emergency assistance, give a brief description of your home, i.e. a blue house with black shutters, green Chevy in the driveway. Make sure you repeat your address back to make sure the operator knows you live at 1234 Somewhere Road, not one block over on 1234 Somewhere Place.

**A NOTE FROM ROB...**

Remember, curbside painted numbers are no substitute for well marked house numbers. Curbside numbers are easily concealed by falling leaves, inclement weather, parked cars, and normal wear and tear. In 8 years of responding to calls, I do not recall a single time that I used a curbside address!

**E-mail us your articles**

**rromey@indepmo.org**

**INDEPENDENCE  
NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH**

**10920 E. Winner Rd  
Independence, MO 64052**

**Phone: 816-325-7643**

**Fax: 816-325-7647**

**E-mail: rromey@indepmo.org**

**Return Service Requested**

**HELPING TO KEEP OUR  
NEIGHBORHOODS SAFE.**

**FEATURED BLOCK WATCH "SUSQUEHANNA NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH"**

This month's featured blockwatch group is the Susquehanna Neighborhood Watch. Organized for just 2 years, this watch area is an exception to the rule of starting small.

As most watch groups start with a single street, Susquehanna started with a whole sub-division, then divided it into 12 separate block areas, each between 28-40 homes.

Above the 12 block captains, is one contact captain, which is an elected position within the Susquehanna Homeowners Association.

The current contact captain for the group is Regina Kephpe.

Regina attributes the success of the watch group to having an active homeowners association which aids in keeping people connected. The association has a bi-monthly newsletter, which also addresses issues within the neighborhood watch program.

Regina also points out that her groups remain active within the neighborhood. Individual blocks have ice cream socials, as well as other gatherings. On top of

that there are also large functions for all of the individual groups to get together and network with each other. These larger events include pot-luck dinners, a yearly meeting directed by Officer Romey, as well as a bi-annual garage sale.

Including the events in the neighborhood, Susquehanna is also very active in supporting the needs of the larger block watch program. Several members handed out flyers for National Night Out, as well as sold tickets for the fundraiser.

When asked about

what advice to give to new groups, Regina stated, "Persistence, Keep inviting neighbors to your events." She also points out the importance of keeping connected to them in as many ways as possible, such as phone, e-mail, or website. "The more you can help them feel connected and secure in the neighborhood the more willing they are to reach out and participate," Regina states.

For their persistence, hardwork and dedication to continuing the neighborhood watch program, Susquehanna is our October watch group of the month.