

Woodlake Property Owners Association Neighborhood Watch Newsletter Independence Day Edition

The publication of this newsletter is unofficial and does not reflect any opinion, directive, or policy of the Woodlake Property Owners Association members or Board of Directors.

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The Editor and Staff wish you all a safe a happy Independence Day... and watch-out for careless use or fireworks!

1. Bell County Sheriff Tip Line: Wanted

<http://www.bellcountytexas.com/cscd/cscdwanted.htm>

There is no change to the suspects wanted in the last issue.

If you have any information regarding those individuals, please call the Bell County Sheriff's Office at 254-933-5400, your local law enforcement, or **CRIMESTOPPERS AT 1-800-729-TIPS** (Local 526-TIPS). **ALL CALLS WILL BE KEPT STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL.**



Austin – Sean Michael Price, 27, a Texas 10 Most Wanted Sex Offender, has been captured by the Texas Department of Public Safety (DPS) in Tyler. Price was originally convicted of Rape of a Child in the state of Washington in 2001. Since no tip from the public was involved, no reward will be paid. To view Price's captured bulletin, visit: <http://www.dps.texas.gov/texas10mostwanted/>.

This year DPS and other agencies have arrested 17 Texas 10 Most Wanted Fugitives and Sex Offenders, including 11 gang members. Texas Crime Stoppers, funded by the Governor's Criminal Justice Division, has paid a total of \$40,500 in rewards for tips that have led to an arrest in 2012.

2. Crime Update -

Killeen – Following a pursuit, 25-year old Roel Reando Brown, accused of sexual assault, was arrested near the Hallmark on the 800 block Monday evening. During the chase one officer suffered injuries from being hit by an SUV and another was bitten by a police K-9; the suspect had to be "tazed" into submission.

Police and SWAT were called to what was alleged to be, a hostage situation in a local auto parts store in the vicinity of W.S. Young and HW 190. The armed suspect entered the store demanding money. When the police arrived most of the employees had escaped. Police had barricaded W.S. Young, A.J. Hall, and Grandon Drive to control traffic while negotiating took place. After an hour they breached the building only to find the robber had also escaped with an undisclosed amount of cash. The suspect is described as a 6'3" male, weighing about 250 pounds. His face was covered during the robbery, but he was wearing a light blue or gray hooded sweatshirt at the time.

Killeen Police also need your help to apprehend two suspects involved in a robbery on Sunday, 9PM at the Star Mart on the 800 block of Atlas Ave. The suspects are also believed to have been involved in an armed robbery at the Killeen "Game X Change" last Monday evening.

The suspects were described as: #1: Hispanic or light skinned black male, 5' - 5'4" tall, teens - early 20's, light brown eyes wearing a blue knit hat with white stripes, blue and white plaid zip-up jacket, black pants and black sneakers with white soles, armed with a handgun.

Ashley Rae Ortega was booked into the Bell County Jail on Tuesday under charges of sexual assault on a minor. The incident was determined

to be isolated and no force was involved. No outcry was made by the victim, but the boy's parents were suspicious and called Killeen PD. Ortega was an acquaintance of the victim's family.

Temple - Police are investigating a robbery that occurred early Wednesday morning at a local convenience store. Police were called to the 1400 block of West Avenue M to a "GK Mart" at 12:10 a.m. They arrived and were advised that two men had entered the store with their faces covered; one had displayed a handgun, and had stolen an undisclosed amount of money before fleeing on foot in an unknown direction. Anyone with information about this case is asked to contact the Temple Police Department at 254-298-5500.

Police were dispatched to Scott and White on the May 17th to speak with a domestic violence victim. The victim had been choked by Antonio Martez Watson at a residence in the 600 block of John Paul Jones Drive. Watson was picked up by police on Wednesday and charged with Assault on a Family Member.

3. *"The breaking point for a community may be one fire or it may be one hundred".* (National Fire Protection Agency & USAonWatch.org)

Arson is a serious problem in the United States. It is the number one cause of all fires, and it annually kills hundreds of Americans, injures thousands more, and causes over \$3 billion in damage to property. In each of the past ten years there have been over 500,000 arson fires.

During 1994, the most recent year for which information is available, the total number of arson fires in the U.S. was estimated at 548,500. Over 107,000 of these fires occurred in structures, both residential and non-residential. In 1994 arson fires accounted for an estimated 560 fire deaths, 3,440 fire injuries, and \$3.6 billion in property damage.

For many years the general populace has perceived arson as primarily an insurance concern -- an invisible "paper loss" crime with limited impact on anyone other than insurers. But for the firefighters who have been injured or killed responding to set fires and the hundreds of civilians killed each year in incendiary or suspicious building fires, arson looms as a significant issue that is anything but invisible or limited. The time has come to correct the public's perception so that arson is understood for what it is -- a violent crime that terrorizes, kills, and injures.

Investigators increasingly report that fire is chosen as a weapon by jilted lovers, delinquent youths, rival gang members, and drug pushers. Investigators are also becoming more aware of Molotov cocktails and pipe bombs being used as incendiary devices. Fires caused by explosives or motivated by spite and revenge tend to be more deadly because they often target residential structures, in keeping with the desire to inflict personal harm. As arson increasingly becomes a crime against persons, it becomes critical to have sufficient research and resources available to adequately address the magnitude of the arson problem in the U.S.

Overall, the number of fires occurring each year in the U.S. has fallen 19 percent over the past ten years. However, NFPA data reveal that the number of total arson fires is falling relatively slower than the number of all fires. While the trend has been inconsistent, between 1985 and 1994 the number of arson fires declined by 11%.

Within the category of all arson fires there are three major occupancy types: structures, vehicles, and outdoor and other areas.

The most noteworthy decline has been the drop in the number of arsons in structures, which have fallen over 25% over ten years. The declines in vehicle fires and outdoor and other fires have been more modest, falling 11% and five percent respectively.

While the number of residential deaths due to arson each year can vary substantially, over the past ten years the overall trend has been a decline of about 17% in the number of residential arson fire deaths. This is a

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significantly slower rate of decline than the 32% decline in the overall number of residential fire deaths over the same period. As with arson fires, the slower rate of decline in arson fire deaths means that these deaths represent an increasing proportion of all fire deaths. An encouraging sign, however, is that the number of deaths occurring in residential structures arson fires in 1994 was 502, a ten year low.



A neighborhood's arson problem can range from youngsters setting nuisance to a full blown crisis with a serial arsonist. The scope of the problem may differ but the solution – an arson prevention program is identical.

There is no cookie cutter approach for a community to use when setting up a Community Arson Watch Program or any local coalition. Following the successful Neighborhood Watch five-step program model provides an effective groundwork.

The first step is to analyze the specific local problem and collect related data. Strategies that address the problems in a given area must be mapped out. From the outset, it is essential that neighbors work together. This effort provides an opportunity for neighbors to meet and get to know each other, something that has become less common lately. It is crucial to include neighborhood involvement for the process to be successful.

In addition to not being familiar with your neighbors, the dilemma is compounded by the fact that many adults in these neighborhoods work multiple jobs frequently with odd hours, making it extraordinarily difficult to schedule meetings and organize events. This environment also makes it challenging for neighbors to get to know and care about one in a way that would encourage them to watch out for each another.

Once the neighbors have a connection, the second step involves building a partnership between fire and emergency services, the police and other law enforcement agencies and the residents. This is often the most difficult step to hurdle because there is usually angst between the residents and the law enforcement for the existing crime problem that exists in their community. Both fire service and law enforcement officials must understand the importance of it is essential that officers understand the needs of a neighborhood of working as role models for the neighborhood watch program to be successful.

The third step is to assess the needs of a given neighborhood and in the case of arson, how the fire and police departments can work with the residents. Neighbor Watch states, "In many cases, law enforcement and community members do not have the same focus. For instance, law enforcement may be focusing their attention on a problem that the neighborhood is not concerned about, such as attempting to address major crimes throughout the city. On the other hand, community

members may be more concerned about crimes such as bicycle thefts or graffiti, which are considered minor from a police standpoint." An effective Neighborhood Arson Watch program will combine the needs of the fire and police departments with those of the neighborhood on which problems to focus on and the methods used to address them.

The penultimate step in setting up a Neighborhood Watch program is choosing and training a dynamic group of volunteers that are led by organized and motivated leaders is critical. If the group leaders are devoid of motivation and organization, the volunteers may be uninspired to participate and quickly quit out of disappointment and frustration.

The fifth and final step is to develop meaningful projects specific to the identified problem. Often, after a Neighborhood Watch has addressed its original issue, members lose interest. It is important for leaders to remain passionate. One way to accomplish this is to design new projects so that there is always a goal towards which the team of volunteers is aspiring.

Arson prevention projects should focus on identifying and removing what could burn or materials that an arsonist could use to start a fire: Cleaning up the neighborhood by removing all garbage, materials and excess vegetation that are capable of being ignited.

Remove all possible sources of ignition such as flammable liquids and unused gas containers.

Remove abandoned vehicles. According to the USFA National Fire Incident Reporting System (NFIRS) data and the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA), there is an annual estimated average of 25,328 intentional fires involving vehicles. Most car fires are started to cover up other criminal activity or simply as an act of vandalism. An abandoned car is a target for arson.

Secure abandoned and vacant homes which are potential arson targets. Communicate with the owner that authorities are concerned about the vacant home and explain why. Encourage the fire department to conduct frequent fire code inspections. Secure the vacant buildings to prohibit access. Contact public works to disconnect all utilities at the street. This includes natural gas, water and electricity. If there are LPG tanks, they should be disconnected and removed. Secure the building to prevent entry. This may be comprised of additional locks or the boarding up of broken windows or other openings with plywood.

Encourage Neighborhood Watch members to patrol these areas and write down descriptions, license plates of suspicious vehicles and potential suspect descriptions.

4. On The Horizon – Next Issue: How to cope with and possibly prevent those pesky, annoying, often expensive and usually disastrous home catastrophes.

My hope is to consult with the Neighborhood POCs for their input on this year's Neighborhood Night Out, tentatively scheduled for October. This year's event we will try to focus on Crime Prevention, Child Protection, Home Security, Defense Against Terrorism, etc.

The dreaded Oak wilt can devastate entire forests and has taken its toll on some of our communities most stately of the deciduous genus. Some of the oldest trees in the neighborhood have succumbed to the disease which poses, not only a threat of contagion to other trees, but a growing safety hazard as well.

The infected trees have been addressed by the BOD but what we can do a group to lessen the impact is an item of discussion. Once the disease has taken hold the only remedy is to reduce the hazard by removing the infected tree(s).

Have a Safe and Happy Independence Day!