

Fells Point Citizens on Patrol^{INC}

A newsletter by and for the people who live, work, and own businesses within the Fells Point area.

December 2003

Volume 5 Number 11

City Calls for a Broader COP with Operation Crime Watch

Several hundred Baltimore residents attended an all-day Saturday session in mid-November at Frederick Douglass High School to learn about Operation Crime Watch, a new city initiative designed to reduce crime and increase the effectiveness of the police and other city services. On hand to show their support were Mayor Martin O'Malley, City Council President Sheila Dixon and Police Commissioner Kevin Clark. The program is run by the mayor's Office of Neighborhoods and is modeled on an initiative in Philadelphia. The program has three aspects:

1. Block Watch

Volunteers will be given a Block Watch number and training to bring about more effective and more numerous calls to 911. In response to the Dawson family tragedy, in which a block watcher and her family died in a fire bombing, a key part of this program is an ANONYMOUS (emphasis by the program) crime watch initiative—where residents can sign up for a Block Watch number. When they then see suspicious activity and call 911, they can give their number instead of their name and address. While the phone number of the caller will appear on the operator's screen, only the Block Watch number will be made available to the police dispatcher and responding officers. Participants are free to give their name and address, if preferred. Otherwise, the responding officers won't know from whom or where the call came.

2. Block Watch Captains

Where appropriate, Block Watch programs will include captains to streamline the reporting process by receiving information, often by email, from the trained watchers and forwarding it on a regular basis to designated officers in police districts. If there were less serious crimes and nuisances occurring in a neighborhood, individuals normally would report these to the police via 311. But instead they could tell their Block Watch captain, who would compile the complaints and funnel them to the police or other city offices.

Elizabeth Weiblen, the liaison for the mayor's office with the Southeast District, said Police Major Scott Williams has to sort through 150 daily email complaints and requests, which he then has to hand off to the appropriate person or office. If he or a designated officer could receive status reports from the Block Watch captains, processing could be speeded up.

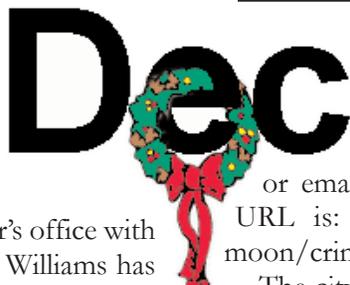
3. Citizen Patrols

Trained block watchers will participate in regular patrols of designated areas. These patrols may be on foot or in cars and usually will be in radio contact with an assigned police car to respond as needed.



Wet Point: Fells Pointers who survived September's flood looked out Dec. 5 to find wet snow almost as deep. Traffic was little affected this time, though, with neither canoes nor toboggans to contend with.

The ruler, a gift of the city to attendees at last month's Crime Watch session, shows 6^{1/2} inches. A long-time resident admonished that it could be a long winter, and each household is responsible for a clear walk - it's the law. The site here is 1906 Fleet Street.



The FPCOP will be working with the police and city in support of these initiatives. If you want to be a part of this, please contact us at the addresses herein, or the city at 443.984.2371, or email: OCW@baltimorecity.gov. The Crime Watch URL is: <http://www.ci.baltimore.md.us/government/moon/crimewatch.html>.

The city hopes this program will be a catalyst for grass-roots activism. A great deal of networking went on among community associations at the event. The conference was not intended to be a one-time event, and there appears to be impetus from the top down to follow up.

Home for Christmas

On December 24 at 11 PM, the town crier, Pastor Jack Trautwein, will lead a Candlelight Carol Service at Vagabond Theater, 806 South Broadway. On December 25, beginning at 11 AM, the Crier will lead his Christmas Day walk from the Square through Fells Point. This issue is too late for notice of the annual Community Party, which was held December 9 at Crabby Dick's. A good time was had by all.

The Fells Point Citizens on Patrol Newsletter is published monthly by FPCOP Inc. Your questions, input, and participation regarding patrols and this newsletter are welcome.

Please contact us by:

Phone 410.327.7446
410.342.7354 leave message
New E-mail! fpcop@verizon.net
Write to P.O. Box 6137
Baltimore, MD 21231

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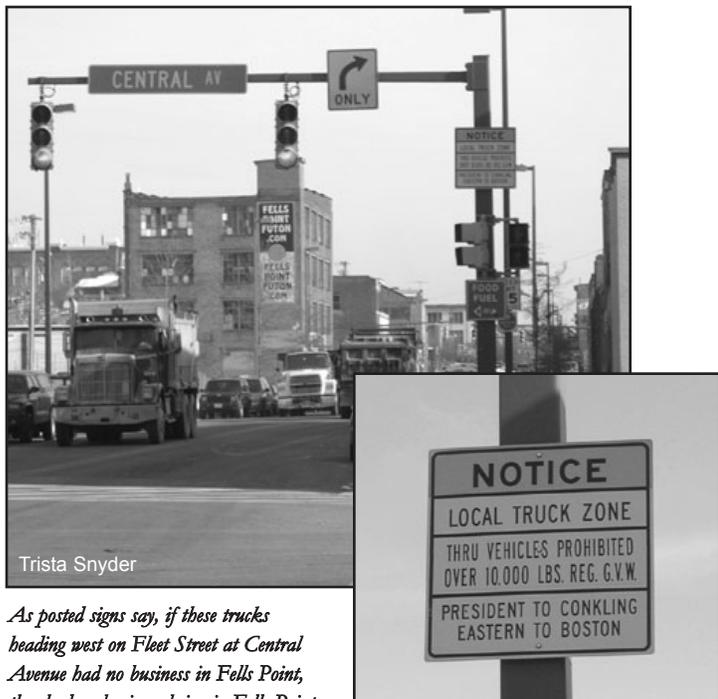
Trash and Recycling Schedule

Trash should be placed outside in metal trash cans. After 6 AM on collection day, it is okay to use plastic bags. Trash collection days are usually Monday and Thursday.

Recycling material should go out by 7 AM on collection day. Recycle paper in paper bags, in a cardboard box, or tied with string; glass, metal, and plastic should be in blue plastic bags.

Monday, December 22	glass, metal, plastic
Friday, December 26	paper
Friday, January 9	paper
Saturday, January 10	Christmas trees
Monday, January 12	glass, metal, plastic





Trista Snyder

As posted signs say, if these trucks heading west on Fleet Street at Central Avenue had no business in Fells Point, they had no business being in Fells Point.

Trucks Passing through Pulled Over along Fells Point’s Narrow Streets

Residents of Eastern Avenue, Fleet and Aliceanna Streets lately have shuddered over plaster-cracking evidence that drivers of heavy rigs are disdaining risk of tickets and cutting through Fells Point on their way across the city. The Midpoint Community Association took up the task of re-focusing the police and reports that tickets resulted. The Fells Point Homeowners Association followed up with a complaint to the mayor.

Another related neighborhood, along Dundalk Avenue, encouraged a joint city-state crackdown in September on trucks violating safety ordinances. Of 120 checked during two weeks, 38 were ordered off the street immediately for multiple violations, said the group’s newsletter.

The Fells Point exclusion of large trucks—except those on local delivery—is posted on streets entering the neighborhood and is the result of concerted community efforts several years ago. The upsurge of violators lately is attributed partly to an increase in tunnel tolls that make end runs, especially with overloads, a temptation. A COP leader who lives along their way noted that big city buses flying down Wolfe Street also shake his house.

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Curtain Call—You on the Aisle

Visitors to Fells Point often are astonished to learn it has two active theater groups, and indeed many residents seem equally surprised. Maestro Philip Feiffer of the Corner Theater at 251 South Ann Street hosted an artful play, “Art” by Yasmina Reza, that crowded the house for a month through December 7, but the Fells Point resident lamented that it is rare for him to see a neighbor in the crowd.

The Newsletter has thought to help bridge this costume-community division by noting show times, but its experience with the other theater group, the Vagabonds, suggests that all parties need to pay some mutual attention. Repeated efforts failed to obtain the playbill for the venerable theater on South Broadway. Maybe next month!

Corner Theater’s seasonal favorite, “My Uncle Scrooge,” is now playing Fridays and Saturdays at 8 PM, Saturday matinees at 3 PM and Sundays at 7 PM, through December 22. Tickets \$12. 410.276.7837. “Black Snow” opens January 16.

Cityscape Skating on Home Ice

Suddenly Fells Point has an ice rink. By the account of its benefactor, C. William Struever, an enthusiast of the blades and one of the developers of Harbor Point, the site “is the most romantic place in the world to skate, better than Rockefeller Center.”

When he learned that the city’s Rash Field rink was too broken down to open this year, Struever and the city teamed up to bring in a portable one that temporarily is located beside the Honeywell office building on the ex-Allied site. Skating is daily through February, 3-9 PM weekdays for \$4; 11 AM-9 PM Fridays and Saturdays and 11 AM-7 PM Sundays, for \$5. Rental skates \$3. Free parking. Sacha of Charles Street, a resident of Fells Point, offers “the best hot chocolate in the world.”

Simultaneously, Struever is meeting with Fells Pointers to seek their thoughts on how to develop permanently the 11.3 acres of the 27-acre Harbor Point that are designated for public use.

Tables and Chairs for EBLO

The flood filled the lower floor of the ex-Pratt Library, swamping the Education-Based Latino Outreach that occupies the building and ruining the tables and chairs it used for educational and cultural programs. Donated replacements are welcome at 6606 South Ann Street, 410.563.0097. The used furniture will facilitate classes in English as a second language, which are to restart at the end of January. EBLO’s newly donated training computers were undamaged.

‘Point’s Ultimate Tax Credit

Maryland businesses contributing \$500 or more to the Preservation Society of Federal Hill and Fells Point before year’s end receive a tax credit of 50 percent of that amount, plus the usual state and federal tax deductions, with minimal paper work. Reach the Society at 410.675.6750 or email bcromwell@perservationsociety.com.

Thanks!

FPCOP would like to gratefully and belatedly thank the Preservation Society for their donation of booth space at this years Fells Point Fun Festival.

Neighborhood Association Meeting Schedules

- Fells Point Citizens on Patrol:** (Third Monday of every other month) January 19, 7 PM at Bertha’s 2nd Floor Studio.
- Fells Point Antique Dealers Association:** (meetings as needed) Call 410.675.4776 for more information.
- Fells Point Business Association:** (Third Tuesday of every month) 9 AM at EBLO, 606 South Ann Street.
- Fells Point Community Organization:** (Second Monday of every month) 7 PM at the Fells Point Visitor Center, 410.276.5471.
- Fells Point Homeowners Association:** (First Wednesday of every month) 7:30 PM at Bertha’s 2nd Floor Studio.
- Fells Point Marketing Group:** (First Monday of every month) 6:30 PM at Kooper’s, 410.276.1410.
- Mid-Point Community Association:** (First Tuesday of every month) 7:30 PM at EBLO, 606 South Ann Street.
- Society for the Preservation of Fells Point and Federal Hill:** Call 410.675.6750 for more information.
- Eastern, Dallas, Bond Streets Association:** (Every other month, second Monday of the month) 7:30-8:30 PM at 1637 Eastern Avenue.