



Crimefighter

A Newsletter for Springfield's Neighborhood Watch Groups

January 2007

Special points of interest:

- *ID Theft and Tax Time Tips - pg 3*
- *Applications now being accepted for the next Citizen Police Academy scheduled for Spring 2007 - pg 4*

Inside this issue:

- Message from Police Chief Jerry Smith **2**
- I.D. Theft and Tax Time Tips **3**
- Neighborhood Watch Parade Entry **4**
- Citizen Police Academy Accepting Applications **4**
- Safety at the Airport **5**
- 2006 Calendars Available for Pickup **5**
- Winter time and animals **6**
- Manuals Available **7**
- Elevator Safety **7**
- Board Contact info **8**



Don Hale
Neighborhood Watch
Board President

Vickie Hale
Neighborhood Watch
Board Vice-President

Message from Neighborhood Watch Board President and Vice-President

Neighborhood Watch groups are made up of people like you and me. We are not law enforcement officers and must not be called upon to act as such. We recently had our front room window shot out with a bb gun in the middle of the night. If crimes happen and involve weapons, call 911 not Neighborhood Watch. We would like to remind all of you that a community is not safe just because a few of us stand up in taking responsibility and are willing to help our neighbors. Safety is found in the vigilance of every community member. If you do not know someone or if they don't look familiar, ask them. Please talk to your neighbors, watch for strange vehicles, and those driving dangerously. The best way to protect yourself and your community from costly vandalism, or worse, is to be involved. Get to know your neighbors, volunteer, and be a part of this wonderful community. If anything is happening in your block let us know, call 746-3757 and we will put it in the newsletter.

See you next letter, Don and Vickie

Message from Past President - Wil Hoff



Wil Hoff had to resign this past July as NW Board President because of his and his wife's health. He and his wife Rachel moved to Elkhart, Indiana to be near their son. Wil called the other day to say that he and Rachel were doing very well. Their health has improved tremendously since the move. They have found great doctors who have implemented innovative treatments - Wil reports that he is even off of his cane. - Wil, we miss you!

Message from Police Chief Jerry Smith



Police Chief, Jerry Smith

As we reflect on the holiday season we have much to be thankful for and certainly with a spirited optimism for a new year ahead that presents us with challenges and opportunities. Growth in the Gateway area continues to blossom and with that growth bring the accompanying challenges of transportation and crime issues. The multi lane roundabout at Harlow and the Parkway seems to have been accepted well with minimal problems in negotiating this device. Peace Health construction has moved forward and will bring to the community other opportunities and challenges. The hospital and ancillary business and services will bring jobs into the City of Springfield. Planning for Glenwood development has brought outside interest to the area.

Downtown Springfield has undergone some change with the addition of the A-3 High School, complementing the Gateways High School at 7th and Main. The Wildish Theater opened and is a magnificent facility. The impact will be that we have a significant increase in the number of young people in the downtown area during the week which will alter the complexion to some extent.

McKenzie Willamette is continuing its path to construct a new hospital and I'm sure you all have heard of the transportation problems with constructing the new facility at the

Delta site. I have had the pleasure of working with staff at McKenzie Willamette for over thirty six years and have had the benefit of their health care. I am much like many of you in my bias for McKenzie Willamette remaining in Springfield and we can only await the outcome of the project. Departure of the hospital has other challenges in the Mohawk District since it will leave a void until such time as a determination is made concerning the use of the building and what that brings to the community.

The effectiveness of your police department is directly related to the quality of citizens within the community and their willingness to get involved. Neighborhood watch is but one example where individual citizens come together to help each other to make their neighborhoods safer and more enjoyable. Springfield is a great community to live, work and play as a product of the quality of citizens such as you and I am very proud to be a part of that community.

Identity theft, property crimes and illegal drug use continue to be the significantly high demands for police services. These three categories are the principal elements leading to other associated crimes such as domestic violence, child abuse, vandalism and assaults. I want to assure you that your police department will continue to arrest offenders of all crimes. While the District Attorney and the Circuit Court are the venue for felony offenses, the Springfield Municipal Court has jurisdiction of all misdemeanor crimes (either Municipal or State) and will continue to aggressively prosecute offenders.

The lack of capacity to hold offenders at the Lane County Jail is critically compromising the other system components and is costing millions of dollars annually to us as taxpayers with no outcome changes. I have commented on numerous occasions that your officers are repeatedly dealing with offenders who have failed to appear, only to find them released from custody. This translates into unnecessary costs to law enforcement, the prosecutors and the courts. This is an important element to creating a safer community as well as holding offenders accountable for their behavior.

Springfield voters approved the construction of a new Justice Center that included a municipal jail. Construction is scheduled to begin in March of 2007 and this, in my judgment will go far to mitigating the capacity issues affecting Springfield and which has crippled the criminal justice system in all of Lane County as it relates to misdemeanor offenders. Let me also add that a misdemeanor offender today may have been a felon yesterday or tomorrow. I am convinced that once operational, our community will experience a drop in crime and have a positive impact on the need to continually increase police and related staff to deal with the explosion of crime committed by a small percentage of the population. I would be enthusiastic about discussing this issue, the impact of a municipal jail on Springfield with anyone interested.

We will be offering the 2007 Citizens Police Academy this spring and I would encourage anyone with an interest in learning more about your police department, the criminal justice system, crime lab services, etc. to consider applying. While we do not intend to create cops out of citizens, it is a good learning experience and I have yet to hear anyone disappointed in taking advantage of this opportunity.

There are a number of exciting things occurring in the police department that we will discuss in upcoming issues. I would like to recommend the department's web site to view for information about your police department and the specialized units as well as the latest annual report (www.ci.springfield.or.us/police/home.html).

Thank you for the work you all do in making our community a better place to live and raise families. Please do not hesitate to contact me (726-3729) or the Community Services Unit should you have any questions, suggestions or issues.

Jerry D. Smith
Chief of Police

IDENTITY THEFT AND TAX TIME TIPS

Tax season is here. According to the Identity Theft Resource Center, tax time means added opportunities for identity thieves to steal your identity.

The documents taxpayers send and receive this time of year contain all the information identity thieves look for. Your name, address, bank and credit account information and, most importantly, your Social Security number. For the identity thief, tax time provides a treasure chest of opportunity.

The Identity Theft Resource Center wants to remind businesses and consumers to be especially careful handling tax-related documents.

Here's how to minimize the chances of identity theft:

- **Paper security** - Keep tax paperwork in a safe, locked location. Financial documents don't belong in a briefcase that can be lost or stolen or left unguarded in your car for even a few minutes.
- **Document Disposal** – Put papers you no longer need through a cross-cut shredder. Receipts, papers with credit card account and Social Security numbers (such as health benefit payment and income reporting forms), and loan documents, all contain information a thief can convert into a new account in your name. Even a seven-year old receipt can be used by a thief.
- **Computer Security** – If your computer is linked to the internet, make sure to have updated firewall software to protect you from invasion. Since many taxpayers now file online, or store financial information on their computers, it is vitally important to install updated security programs.
- **Mail Theft Prevention** – When mailing your tax documents, always try to take them directly to the Post Office, dropping them in a box inside the building. If you use an outside Post Office box, it's best to drop your mail before the last pick-up of the day. Leaving mail overnight gives a thief more opportunity to steal mail. Don't leave tax mail in an outgoing box at work, or in an unlocked box for pickup. Unguarded mail is a theft waiting to happen.
- **Tax Preparers and Personal Privacy** – Be selective about who works on your taxes. Check out companies with the Better Business Bureau, especially new or seasonal offices. Ask how your information will be stored, what computer security software is used, and if the person working on your taxes has undergone a thorough background screening. Trust your impressions. Do you see personal papers displayed on desks? If you feel uncomfortable or doubt the firm's commitment to protecting your privacy, take your business elsewhere.

Avoid doing financial business in supermarket concession booths, where others may hear or see your transaction. Those mini-offices are not soundproof – and criminals have been observed watching transactions with telescopic lenses. Go elsewhere.

- **Tax Time Scams** – If you receive an email asking for your SSN or bank information, delete it or send it to the FTC at spam@uce.gov for investigation. The IRS does not send emails stating you are being electronically audited. They also don't contact you by email about refunds which require you to provide bank information. If you have any questions about an email you received from the IRS or a letter that sounds suspicious immediately call the IRS Taxpayers Advocates at 877-777-4778.
- **Employment Identity Theft** – Identity theft goes beyond the well-known forms of financial fraud. Sometimes identity thieves use your identity to get a job. They may be employed and using your social security number – or even your child's SSN. In these situations, the IRS may send a notice indicating that more than one person is using a SSN. If this happens, immediately contact the IRS Taxpayer Advocates or the Identity Theft Resource Center for assistance. While no one wants to learn they are an identity theft victim, this form of identity theft is sometimes easier to correct than other identity related crimes.

WHERE TO GO FOR MORE INFORMATION OR HELP:

IDENTITY THEFT RESOURCE CENTER: www.idtheftcenter.org

IRS Taxpayer Advocates: 1-877-777-4778

Federal Trade Commission: www.consumer.gov/idtheft

McGruff Speaks!



The day was crispy cold and my puppy toes and my crime fighting nose were freezing. Sure it was cold, but the excitement of the season kept me warm in my heart. Another year and here we are again preparing for the oldest and coldest Springfield Christmas Parade. The Neighborhood Watch float was ready to roll. The tree was decked in garland and glittering glass balls and in my opinion we looked more than cool.

I settled in my rocker and was surrounded by a group of playful kids on the float. Their cheeks were bright pink from the cold, eyes were smiley and shiny and they were in a happy holiday mood. They were laughing and calling greetings to the crowds on the street. "Merry Christmas and Felize Navidad" were echoing in the air. Once I overheard a child yell "McGruff you are my hero." Now I must admit that produced a swelling in my doggy heart.

For those of you who are wondering, we placed 3rd place in our category. Well there is always next year. In all honesty there were some great entries and we were lucky at that. Here is my wish for the coming year - - - If I had my druthers - - - I'd wish everyone would care for others!

Happy New Year from McGruff.

Citizen Police Academy—Spring 2007 - Now accepting Applications

The Springfield Police Department is inviting applicants to attend its Citizen Police Academy. Applicants must be 18 years or older. Preference will be given to Springfield residents and people doing business in Springfield. The academy course is designed for citizens from all backgrounds or occupations.

The Springfield Citizen Police Academy is a long established and important police/community relations program. It is designed to provide citizens with a better understanding of the nature of police work and to interact with department members in a non-emergency setting. It is also an opportunity for citizens to provide input on police policy, practice and procedure.

The 33-hour training program consists of classroom and "hands-on" instruction. Topics covered include the officer selection and training process, the job of the uniformed patrol officer, investigation skills, tactical operation, the canine unit, use of firearms, vice and narcotics, communications, crime scene search, and crime prevention. Students will be actively involved in many interesting activities, such as touring police facilities, using police equipment, and firing the department-issued weapons.

Graduates of this course will not be police officers, but will be better-informed citizens. The graduates will be in a position to relate their experiences to friends, and co-workers.

The course is free. Each applicant must answer each question on the application form. To graduate, each student must attend at least nine of the eleven classes. Therefore, prior to applying, applicants must determine whether or not they can attend the minimum number of classes for graduation.

Classes will generally be held weekly on Tuesday evenings from 7:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. with some exceptions. (listed on schedule with application) The first class will be held April 3, and will continue through June 12.

If you are interested in attending the academy, please obtain an application at the Springfield Police Department, 344 "A" Street or the police department web-site at www.ci.springfield.or.us/police/home.html or call 726-3731 to have an application sent to you. **The application deadline is March 9, 2007.** If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact the Community Services Unit at **726-3731**, Monday through Friday, 8:30 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

SAFETY AT THE AIRPORT...BEWARE OF THE WELL DRESSED CROOK

Submitted by Ray Cavagnaro

Believe it or not, instead of being the safest areas at an airport, security checkpoints are hot spots for crime. Thieves working in pairs or small groups are stealing passenger's belongings and purses (full of travel cash) near metal detectors and from x-ray conveyor belts.

Here is how the scheme works: One thief creates a distraction by dropping something, asking a passenger a question or deliberately setting off the metal detector. The partner or team member pilfers or steals the purse or bag. The thieves quickly escape detection because they look like passengers and all eyes are focused on the commotion that has been created.


Traveling with caution is the best protection against theft.

Here are some air travel tips to remember so that your holiday will not be blighted:


- Dress to avoid setting off metal-detector alarms, which will distract you from watching your belongings.
- Pack as compactly as possible so there are fewer bags to keep track of as you go through security.
- Keep paper currency in an inside pocket instead of in your purse, which must be put on the conveyor. Stuff a scarf or pair of socks into the top of your purse so no one can reach in and grab your wallet and other valuables.
- If using a luggage carrier, fasten bags securely to it, particularly small ones that could be pulled out. Keep the carrier in front of you while waiting in line.
- Try not to put bags on the conveyor until you can walk through the metal detector; don't step through until your bags are inside the X-ray device. Then move swiftly, keeping track of your possessions even if a security person pulls you aside for a "wand" screening.
- Be on the alert for noisy encounters, demanding questions or someone pushing in line; they may be a setup.
- When waiting in line, look directly at the people in front of and behind you as if registering their features.

Security agents will all testify that travelers, in their excitement and rush will frequently pick up their carry-on and leave the purse, or vice versa. An alert security guard will retrieve it and page the name on the ID tag, but it is on record that many come back for their bag, and the quick eye of the thief has the bag. To be cautious and alert is the best advice when traveling through airports.

Springfield Police Department 2007



Above: Schematic of Springfield Justice Center (artist's conceptual rendering) - Scheduled to break ground March 2007 and to open late 2008



Picture to the Right: Current Springfield Police Building - Built in 1949
Picture taken in 1971

The Springfield Police Department strives to work with citizens to promote a sense of personal safety and security through rapid response to emergency calls for services, enforcement of state and local laws, and providing prevention and education programs in support of citizens' efforts to promote conditions, attitudes, and behaviors that will result in a safer community.

Jerry D. Smith, Chief of Police

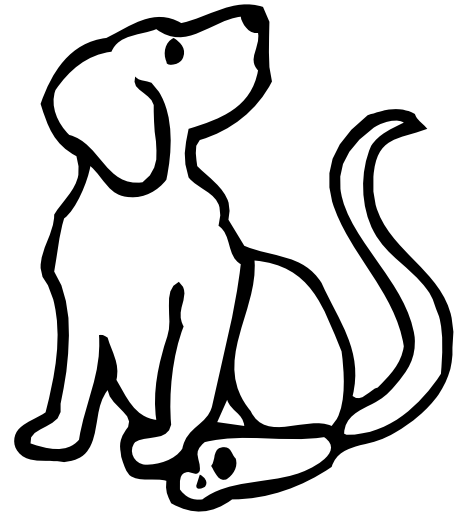
Police Department Calendars Available

Coordinators - Please pick up calendars for your members. Contact Tana at 726-3731 to order calendars for your members. The calendar contains information about the police department as well as the inside front cover contains important resource phone numbers. The inside back cover contains crime prevention resource web-sites.

Members - If you do not receive a calendar, contact your coordinator or pick one up from the Police Department or the Library.

Winter Time and Your Pets

Submitted by Animal Control Officer, Tracy Sparks



As winter is now upon on us, we need to remember the animals in our lives. Please be sure to provide food, water and appropriate shelter for your animals. If you have indoor animals that's great but some of us have animals we keep outside and that is fine too. Any animal should have proper shelter for them to escape the elements. They must be able to get out of the rain, cold, snow, etc. If you have a dog house for your dog be sure that it has bedding inside the house and that if the house is made of wood that you place some type of brick or foundation under it to keep the house from becoming wet. Plastic houses will not become wet on the bottom and should be fine. Also be sure that the water that is kept outside is cleaned daily, when the temperature goes below 32 degrees be sure to check for frozen water. You can buy heated bowls at most pet supplies stores if you would like to be sure the water does not freeze. When feeding your animals outside be sure the food is out of the way of the elements. Also be aware if you leave the food out that other animals may decide to come for a little snack so keep an eye on your pet's weight. All dogs should be licensed if you live with in city limits of Springfield. It always helps to have an extra id tag with the animal's name, address and phone number. Cats are not required to be licensed but it helps other citizens be aware that the cat is owned by someone if it also has owner identification on it. There are break away collars so that the animal can wear it safely.

If your pet is missing please call either Springfield Animal Control or the non-emergency Police line 726-3714. Some one may find your animal and call us looking to report they found them and would like to return home to you and your family.

If you have any questions please feel free to call me Monday thru Friday 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. except designated holidays.

Thanks and Happy New Year to all!
Officer Tracy Sparks
Springfield Animal Control

Springfield Neighborhood Watch



Your Area Coordinator:

Name _____

Phone _____

Your Block Captain:

Name _____

Phone _____

Crime Prevention Unit:
(541) 726-3731

Email: tsteers@ci.springfield.or.us

Springfield Police Department
344 "A" Street
Springfield, OR 97477

Non-Emergency Police:
(541) 726-3714

Emergency Dial:
9-1-1



New Neighborhood Watch Manuals Now Available

The Neighborhood Watch manual was rewritten last year and distributed to most members. We have just received the second printing of the new manual. If you have not received a new manual contact your coordinator or Tana Steers at the Police Department at 726-3731.

The manual is also available on the Police Department's web-site at: www.ci.springfield.or.us/police/home.html.

The manual now looks very professional and will hopefully help people start and maintain their Neighborhood Watch programs more efficiently.

As you use the manual, please let us know if there is any thing we could include or change to make the manual more useful.

EVER THINK ABOUT ELEVATOR SAFETY Submitted by Ray Cavagnaro

As the area businesses grow, the buildings get taller usually. This means more elevators in use. Surely you travel to larger cities where elevator use is a necessity. Maybe you have already experienced riding in one, and an ominous creature joins you. Here are some things to keep in mind next time you are in an elevator:

- Take a minute to study the button panel. Most elevators have a large, protruding STOP button, an ALARM button (these two are sometimes the same button) and several floor buttons. Each can play a part if you're attacked, says Chicago detective and safety expert J.J. Bittenbinder.
- In case of trouble, your first impulse may be to push STOP. **Don't!** "The worst thing to do is immobilize the elevator car and give privacy to someone trying to hurt you," says Bittenbinder. If an attacker pushes STOP, pull it out.
- Floor buttons are your means of escape. Always stand by the button panel when you're alone with someone. Push the button for the next floor and quickly exit if you sense danger. If you're suddenly attacked, push as many floor buttons as possible. This provides multiple opportunities to get off the elevator or at least to be seen and heard by anyone waiting to get on. Once depressed, floor buttons generally can't be disengaged, so your attacker can't prevent the doors from opening on any floor.
- As soon as you hit the floor buttons, push ALARM (if it's separate from STOP) to alert the elevator dispatcher or lobby personnel of trouble. many elevators are intercom equipped, allowing the dispatcher to both hear you and talk to you.

Springfield Neighborhood Watch
344 "A" Street
Springfield, OR 97477

Non Profit Org.
U.S. Postage PAID
Eugene, Oregon
Permit No. 518

CONTACT INFORMATION

Springfield Neighborhood Watch Board of Directors 2006-2007

Board:				Term ends
President:	Don Hale	746-3757	kellyblvd@comcast.net	3/07
Vice-Pres:	Vickie Hale	746-3757	kellyblvd@comcast.net	3/07
Secretary:	Ray Cavagnaro	744-9161		(Honorary)
Treasurer:	Charlene Miller	726-6412	ccjmillier@comcast.net	3/07
Board Members:				
	Lori Bacon	747-3969	blbacon@msn.com	3/07
	Ed Chaney	746-5163		3/09
	Ronald Snow	747-9160	snowr3@comcast.net	3/08
	Faye Brabham	746-8760	fayebrab@gmail.com	3/09
Police Liaison:	Tana Steers	726-3731	tsteers@ci.springfield.or.us	

Lock Out Crime Project: 726-2323

Non-Emerg. Complaints/Records: 726-3714