

## Fontana Neighborhood Watch (NHW) Meeting

My apologies for taking so long to get this out. The Albemarle County Police held their Neighborhood Watch (NHW) meeting last Wednesday night and residents from Fontana, Avemore, Franklin, Key West and Wilton Farm attended. Diana Edwards, the County's Community Relations Coordinator, described the NHW program, how a NHW is organized and becomes official, the functions of its members and communications with the County Police. Diana also made a pitch for us to participate in the National Night Out, a NHW nation-wide awareness-raising activity on Tuesday, 1 August. Do you wish to participate in this?

Diana's training to conduct environmental design surveys called Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design. This means she'll be qualified to come over to our homes and show us how to make our homes less attractive targets for criminals.

Officer Darrell Byers, a police officer whose role is Neighbor Resource Unit Coordinator, recounted the 911 calls from Fontana over the past two years (see accompanying attachment). Ofr. Byers stated emphatically we should not hesitate to report incidents via 911 as the police can only act on what is reported and a lack of reporting creates a false sense of security the police can neither act on nor plan for. Bottomline: *When you note a crime, report it to the county police by calling 911 and submit a report.*

Ofr. Byers is also the County Police liaison to area apartments that have a similar NHW program called the Crime-Free Multi-Unit Housing Program. He's also the County's pointman on gang activity. He spoke at length about Wilton Farms and gang activity in C'ville. There is some gang activity in the county, but according to him there is no gang-related activity happening at Wilton Farms. Ofr. Byers has a good rapport with the manager of Wilton Farms, Tianna Cooper (who was at the meeting); he visits there frequently and is keeping an eye out for this as a potential problem.

*Why the apparent crime wave?* The combination of school getting out and construction happening all around us probably explains a lot of what's been happening lately.

Because so many have already stepped forward to serve as Block Captains, the Fontana NHW is well on the way to having an organized NHW, with three notable exceptions: we still need Block Captains for Aviano Way, Olympia and Via Florence.

We'll have our first meeting upstairs at the Club House at 6 p.m. on Saturday August 5 to explain the functions of NHW members and confirm our calling tree. I expect this meeting will last no more than an hour.

Jim McClain, Fontana Neighborhood Watch Coordinator

All,

Here's a list of reported incidents in Fontana from 1/1/2005 thru 06/22/06

Capri Way:     1 Alarm Malfuntion  
                  1 theft from vehicle

Treviso Ln     0 reports

Montalcino     1 theft from vehicle

Aviano Way     1 vandalism  
                  1 alarm malf  
                  1 suspicious circumstance

Via Florance   1 stolen auto

Verona         2 alarm malf

Olympia        4 alarm malf  
                  1 suspicious circumstance  
                  3 citizen assistance welfare/mental

Appian Way     1 vandalism  
                  1 fraud – false pretense/swindle  
                  1 susp. Circumstance  
                  2 alarm malf

Merano         1 susp. Circumstance

Fontana        2 assault – intimidation  
                  6 alarm malf  
                  1 suspicious circumstance  
                  2 theft from vehicle  
                  1 theft – other  
                  1 Breaking and entering

If you know of something that wasn't reported is isn't accounted for here, let me know.

Thanks,

Jim McClain  
Fontana Neighborhood Watch Coordinator

Watchout for your neighbors and your neighbors will watch out for you!