

## Neighborhood Watch Crime Bulletin # 57 To All Our Neighborhood Watch Personnel:



Our Latest and Greatest Crime Bulletin

### **Heroin Addiction:**

As you have probably read or heard, the problem of heroin addiction is a national problem. Every community now faces the consequences of cheap heroin, and the resulting pain and suffering caused by this most serious and dangerous addiction. Police and emergency medical workers are now responding to overdose cases, which all too often result in accidental death. We in Ocean Pines are **not** immune to this problem as recent overdose deaths in our community reflect.

Governor Larry Hogan convened a **Heroin and Opioid Emergency Task Force**, to examine the problem of accidental overdose deaths in Maryland. In 2014 there were 578 heroin overdose deaths versus 421 homicides and 511 motor vehicle deaths in Maryland. During only the first six months of 2015 (January through June) there were 599 drug and alcohol related deaths, almost double the number of deaths that occurred in the same period in 2010. So far this year, heroin deaths are on a pace to significantly exceed last year's total.

This year, we have had five (5) heroin-related deaths in Ocean Pines. There have also been an even greater number of near-deaths. In two cases, Police Officers administered life-saving Naloxone that aided in saving the lives of addicts. As the largest year-round community in Worcester County, we reflect the national heroin epidemic.

There are other criminal consequences of this addiction. Addicts, in desperation, often resort to criminal activity to raise money for a fix. They may break into a residence to steal jewelry or other goods to sell. In Ocean Pines, most burglaries and a large number of thefts are directly related to criminal activity committed by addicts. While Ocean Pines **continues to be the safest community**, per capita, in Worcester County, we must be vigilant and **proactive** in our efforts to keep it safe.

The Ocean Pines Police Department has placed a budget request in next year's budget for the funding of an additional police officer position, which shall enable us to place an officer in the county-wide Criminal Enforcement Team (CET). This unit, under the direction of our Sheriff, is specifically addressing narcotics trafficking. We currently work closely with this unit, but having our own officer in the unit will provide an additional level of enforcement in Ocean Pines. Having a member in this task force will also allow the department to share in asset seizure of funds taken from drug dealers. A significant percentage of the cost of an additional Officer may be recovered, long term, from drug asset seizures.

This request is being made after the unsuccessful attempt at funding the position in a federal grant. Only **19 percent** of federal grant requests this year were funded, due to budget reductions at the federal level. The department has not asked for an additional officer position in the last **10 years**.

We also need the help of our residents in reporting suspicious activity in Ocean Pines. Please call OPPD if you suspect drug-related activity. Information can be relayed to the police department anonymously.

#### **Domestic Violence Arrests:**

Police arrested six (6) different suspects for domestic violence-related 2<sup>nd</sup> Degree Assaults.

#### **Burglary Arrests:**

Four separate burglaries were solved by arrest of five (5) individuals, related to heroin addictions. Typically, these suspects break into a residence during the DAYLIGHT hours. Residents often believe most burglaries occur during evening hours, but that is often not the case. Suspects often knock on doors to see if anyone is home. If someone comes to the door they ask for a fictitious person and leave for the next residence. Please call us if you encounter a suspicious person at your door.

#### **Thefts from Autos:**

Eleven (11) vehicles have recently been entered and items taken from the vehicles. While police have solved most of the thefts, it is significant that ALL of the vehicles were unlocked. Thieves try door handles, and if your vehicle is LOCKED, they move on to the next vehicle, which is often unlocked.

#### **Drug Possession Arrests:**

Three individuals were arrested on drug possession charges which included suspected marijuana and/or heroin.

#### **Hindering a Police Officer Arrest:**

During the course of the service of a search and seizure warrant for suspected drug activity an individual was charged with hindering and obstructing an officer in the performance of his/her duties.

#### **Drunk Driving Arrests:**

Police arrested six (6) individuals for driving while intoxicated.

#### **Holiday Driving/Crime Prevention**

With state grant money, police will provide **extra patrols** during the holiday season to detect drunk drivers. Please take a cab or have a designated driver should you choose to consume alcohol to excess. When shopping, please park as close to the store as possible, and under a light, if possible. While most local shopping is safe, basic security measures ensure your safety. Place gifts in the trunk of your car.

**Traffic Control at Special Events:**

The police department and Neighborhood Watch often assist in traffic control at special events. the local Craft Fair, car show, and the Veteran's Day Celebration at the Veteran's Memorial are examples of recent events that we assisted.

**Have a Happy Holiday! And a Wonderful 2016!!**

**Take a Bite Out of Crime: Join Neighborhood Watch!**

**Chief David C. Massey**

**Ocean Pines Police Department**