

## Neighborhood Watch Crime Bulletin # 61 To All Our Neighborhood Watch Personnel:



Our Latest and Greatest Crime Bulletin

It has been awhile since our last Bulletin, so this Bulletin covers most of our summer months.

- **First Degree Burglary Arrests**

In two separate cases, police located suspects and recovered some stolen property. In one case police recovered nearly \$4,000 in stolen furniture in Delaware. In the second case, police identified a suspected heroin addict who burglarized his neighbor's home, and recovered \$500 in stolen property.

- **Barricade Incident**

Police responded to an incident where a man with a mental disorder was threatening to kill himself at his residence. In a previous incident at that residence, the suspect had fired a shotgun inside the residence and was known to possess numerous long guns. The Ocean City Police SWAT unit and police negotiators were called in to assist in the resolution of this incident. The suspect surrendered after a period of telephone negotiation and was transported for a mental evaluation at a local hospital. No shots were fired.

- **Internet Scam (Follow-up)**

A 96-year-old resident was scammed out of \$40,000 in two separate internet transactions. The scammer alleged that victim had won over \$950,000 and needed to pay to complete the transaction. Most of these scammers live overseas and are beyond the range of prosecution. In this particular case, police are conducting an active investigation and hope to make an arrest. The suspect has been located in Ohio, and we are coordinating our investigation with local and federal agencies.

Once again, this crime points out the "something for nothing" philosophy that criminals use to entice victims into giving into their scams. Almost ALL telephone and internet transactions initiated by the CALLER are scams. The only internet and telephone transactions that are secure are those initiated by the **resident** to a secure, legitimate website.

- **Drunk Driving Arrests**

Since our last Crime Bulletin, police arrested 20 suspected drunk drivers during the summer months. One arrest was a result of a hit-and-run traffic accident at our North Gate Bridge in which the driver was over three times the legal limit for intoxication and flipped her vehicle upside down onto the bridge. Summer traffic always results in an increase in the number of suspected drunk drivers on our roads. With

the local availability of taxi service as well as the use of designated drivers, there really is no excuse for driving under the influence of alcohol.

- **Domestic Violence Arrests**

Police arrested five individuals in five separate incidents for domestic assault. One case involved a first-degree assault for choking the victim, and another incident involved a 14-year-old girl who threatened her guardians with a knife. Two other incidents involved second-degree assaults with domestic partners.

- **Heroin Overdose Death**

No community is immune from this abuse, as a small packet of heroin can sell for as little as \$10-\$15. As a purely residential community, we are particularly vulnerable to this drug abuse. Addicts often resort to property crime to feed their habit. During the summer months we had nine reported heroin-related overdoses, one of which resulted in a fatality. All Ocean Pines police officers have been trained in the administration of naloxone, which is an emergency drug designed to quickly revive an addict who is overdosing. In one case, an OPPD officer administered the drug to save the life of an addict.

- **Mental Health Incidents**

Police are often called to assist in family mental health incidents when the family requests it or if the behavior of the patient brings it to the attention of the police. In severe cases, police take the patient into custody and transport them for an emergency psychological evaluation at an area hospital. There were eight such incidents during the summer months.

In two of the mental health incidents, drugs were an active catalyst. A female ingested suspected LSD and ran screaming down the parkway, jumping on the hood of a motorist, trying to attack her. Police intervened and took her for an emergency medical and psychological evaluation. In the other drug-related mental health incident, police responded to a residence where the husband was overdosing on PCP (animal tranquilizer).

- **Drug Distribution Arrest**

There is no such thing as a “routine” traffic stop for police. Sometimes the stop for a minor traffic violation leads to a criminal arrest. One of our officers stopped a vehicle on a minor traffic charge, leading to a drug distribution arrest for a large amount of suspected marijuana. Although the State of Maryland has de-criminalized minor amounts of marijuana in certain locations, distribution of the drug is still a criminal felony.

- **Concealed Weapon Arrest**

Another traffic stop for a vehicular violation led to the arrest of a man for a concealed weapon charge. A loaded pistol was observed under the driver’s seat. In Maryland, a weapon must be unloaded and secured in a case before transportation in a vehicle.

- **Traffic Control**

As the number of special events sponsored by Ocean Pines increases, police are called upon to assist and oversee traffic control to allow for the free flow of traffic in our community. In this, we are often assisted by our Neighborhood Watch volunteers. Special event traffic control includes such events as the 4<sup>th</sup> of July fireworks detail, craft shows, Classic Car Show and Parade and various other community events. Our goal is to make it easy for our residents to attend and leave these events safely.

- **Community Awards**

The above incidents are indicative of what happens in the largest year-round community in Worcester County. With nearly 12,000 year-round residents and an influx of seasonal and weekend visitors, it is unrealistic to expect no crime or disorder. We handle nearly 11,000 calls for service each year. What is important to remember is the fact that Ocean Pines is the **SAFEST community, per capita**, of all the communities in Worcester County. Our police department works very hard, 24 hours a day, 365 days of the year, to keep it this way. We are assisted, when necessary, by our Worcester County Sheriff's Office, and the Maryland State Police under our Police Mutual Aid Agreement.

The **SafeWise** community website (<http://www.safewise.com/blog/safest-cities-maryland/>) rates various communities across our nation for safety. They rate both the property crime and violent crime rates of a community based on FBI crime statistics. I am happy to report that Ocean Pines is not only the safest community per capita in Worcester County, but is the **sixth safest community in the State of Maryland**. It takes citizens, government and the police to achieve this goal, and it is what makes Ocean Pines a wonderful community to live and work in!

**Chief David C. Massey, Ed.D.**

**Ocean Pines Police Department**