

Bryanston East Community Forum



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Newsletter

Nov/Dec 2008



Dear residents of our area

That time of year is upon us where we look back and try to work out what we have achieved over the past 12 months, and BECF is no exception. In some ways it feels like it has been a very unproductive year but when we look at the facts it has actually been a good year.

BECF was set up with two primary aims, to improve the security in our area and to improve the environment in which we live. When we look at these two issues we can report the following: Sector 2 in Sandton (SAPS speak for our area) is still the safest place to live in Sandton. Relative to the start of BECF, crime is consistently down by 50% in our area. It is still unacceptably high and there are still horrific incidents but the partnership between the SAPS, PROTEA COIN and the residents is working well. BECF has paid out over R20 000 in rewards to guards and domestics in our area for 70 successful arrests. The ongoing domestic watch program has strengthened the relationship between SAPS and the domestics and we intend growing this strongly in the year ahead.

With regards to the environment our cleaners have cleaned the streets, parks and rivers in our area every week of the year. The statistics are quite impressive with an average of 50 to 60 bags of refuse collected every day. Our relationship with City Parks is also working well and we have seen their on-going work in maintaining and cutting of grass in the parks and rivers.

Our office team has also increased and we now have Elfrieda and Ilse in the office. Ilse has become the contact person for the community with regards to blocked pipes, potholes etc. and in fact reports about 5 problems every day. Again our relationship with City Parks, City Power, JRA and Jhb Water has paid off and we consistently manage to get the issues resolved (sometimes with a bit of pushing and shoving but, it does get done).

We have some large new projects on the horizon, some of which are covered in more detail elsewhere in this news letter. These will certainly keep our team busy in the new year.

So, looking back it has been a productive year. To all the members of BECF, thank you for your support. We urge residents, who are not yet members of BECF, to please join the community forum, for a donation of R100 per month.

May you all have a safe and peaceful holiday.

Russell Kleyn



MERRY CHRISTMAS



Well done Robbery Task Team!

Members of the Robbery Task Team have arrested two members of the "Torch Gang". These men have been terrorizing residents of Lonehill, Paulshof and Petervale for months. At night, they would break into homes with a torch and a weapon (usually a screwdriver).

Towards the end of October a police vehicle, patrolling the streets near Paulshof, spotted three suspects late one night. When confronted, the suspects started shooting at the police who returned fire and seriously wounded one of the men. The others escaped, but another suspect was arrested after further investigation. Some stolen items were also seized. The investigation is ongoing and the police are optimistic that the last suspect will be arrested soon.

In mid November the Bryanston East Community Forum organized a braai to thank the Robbery Task Team for their commitment to combating crime in the Sandton area. We feel, as a community forum in the area, that the SAPS personnel deserve special mention and praise for their efforts to reduce crime in our area.

Well done guys! Keep up the good work!



IMPORTANT NUMBERS

- Metro Emergencies, Ambulances, Accidents - 011 375 5911
- Police - 10111
- Fire - 10177
- Sandton Police Station - 011 722 4200/4355
- Victim Support - 082 774 7564
- Inspector Lee Ramdiyal - 083 775 4674
- Joburg Connect - 011 375 5555
(City Council, parks, water & electricity)
- Electricity Eskom - 086 003 7566
- Water (24 hour helpline) - 011 688 1500
- Coin Control Room - 086 180 7000
- Coin Vehicle N12 - 082 053 3547
- Coin Vehicle N17 - 082 825 3763
- Coin Vehicle N18 - 082 461 5054
- Coin Vehicle N19 - 076 629 0902
- Chris van Zyl - 073 145 3600
(Dedicated Coin Sales Consultant)



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COIN Update

Crime in the Bryanston East area has stabilized in September and October 2008, but we are expecting it to peak in the period prior to Christmas especially house break ins and robberies.

We are utilizing the mounted unit on a regular basis targeting vagrants in the river areas. The number of vagrants in the river area has decreased since we started utilizing the mounted unit.

The mutual cooperation between the security companies and the SAPS will be more prevalent with weekly operations being planned for the next two months. The SAPS do not have the available resources to launch on going crime prevention operations and thus, they rely heavily on the support of the security companies. Protea Coin personnel will be increasing their involvement in these joint operations in the Bryanston area.

We would like to thank all our clients for their continued support and wish everyone a safe Holiday.

Inspector Lee Ramdiyil advises: safety in your car

How to avoid a hijacking situation

Take precautions:

- Be familiar with your environment. Be constantly on the look-out for suspicious looking characters or vehicles and do not hesitate to report to the police.
- Know your destination and the directions to it, and be alert if you get lost.
- Ensure that your vehicle is always in good running condition with good tyres and adequate amount of fuel for your planned trip. Ensure that your spare tyre is inflated.
- Lock all your doors and shut all your windows before driving off.
- Don't talk on the cellphone while driving, as this will distract your attention.
- If your car is bumped from behind and you do not feel comfortable with the individual/s involved in the situation, drive to the nearest police station for help.
- Never leave keys in the ignition when climbing out of the car to open gates.
- Always walk around your car and inspect it if you have parked somewhere other than at your home. Look for sign of tampering or break-in.
- NEVER pick up hitchhikers.
- Don't fall prey to someone driving by or standing at the stop street, traffic light or roadside pointing out that there is something wrong with your car, as this may be a trap to get you to stop or roll down your window and allow easy access to you or your belongings. If possible, drive to a filling station or police station.
- Always alternate your routes and travel schedules to and from work.
- Hijackers are professionals and they plan their attacks carefully.
- Whenever possible, don't travel alone after dark.
- When dropping off a passenger, make sure he or she is safely in his or her own vehicle or house before departing.

When parking your vehicle

- Check the rear-view mirror to ensure that you are not being followed.
- Be on the look-out for suspicious vehicles or persons.
- When returning home after dark, ensure that there is an outside light on, or have someone meet you at the gate or door.
- When exiting your vehicle, be cautious and aware of surrounding obstructions and bushes which may conceal a hijacker.
- Never sit in your parked car without being fully conscious of your surroundings. Sleeping in a stationary vehicle is dangerous.

If confronted by hijackers

The aim is to survive the crime. Accept that you are going to lose a valuable possession, your vehicle.

- Do exactly as told by the hijackers. Surrender your vehicle and move away.
- Don't reach for your purse or valuables. This may threaten the hijackers and you may get hurt. Leave everything in the vehicle. Remember - the hijackers will be as nervous, if not more so, than you.
- Answer any questions truthfully, especially with regard to firearms. If the hijackers find out or suspect that you have lied to him, he is more likely to turn violent and unleash his frustrations on you physically.
- Even in your shocked and terrified state, try to listen to and understand exactly what the hijackers want from you.
- Try to remain calm at all times and do not show signs of aggression. Keep your hands still and visible to the hijacker, to give him/her the assurance that you do not intend fighting back.
- Gather as much information as possible without posing a threat. How many hijackers are there, what they are wearing, their ages and any facial and physical features. This does not mean staring at your attackers, making it obvious you are looking at ways of identifying them.
- If you have a baby sleeping in the back seat, which they may not have noticed, tell the attackers. Do the same if you have a pet in the car.
- Phone the police immediately after the hijackers have left the scene.
- Immediately proceed to stop all bank accounts that may be accessed through the loss of any personal belongings, blacklist your cellphone, report your ID stolen and change the locks to any door keys that have been taken.

LOOKING AHEAD AT 2009

We, at the Bryanston East Community Forum are preparing for a busy 2009. We currently run a few projects but next year we would like to grow some of these and also add a few new ones.

PROTEA COIN Mounted Unit

The PROTEA COIN Mounted Unit recently started patrolling alongside the river. We would like to continue with this project in 2009 and if all goes well you will see the Mounted Unit patrolling alongside the river, from Friday to Sunday, at least every 3 weeks.

Domestic Watch

Domestic Watch is one of our older projects which has grown from strength to strength. Please support this initiative, by allowing your domestics to attend the meetings. In 2009 we are planning to grow this project to include more regular meetings as well as more "speakers". At the moment Inspector Lee Ramdiyil discusses various crime issues with the domestics and gardeners but from next year other speakers will attend these meetings to discuss important topics like first aid in the home, medical subjects like HIV AIDS, Diabetes and so on.

Open Days at the Bird Sanctuary and River Clean Ups

Open Days at the Bird Sanctuary and River Clean Ups have been around for a while but in 2009 we would like to make a few changes. Next year Open Days at the Bird Sanctuary will be scheduled monthly (the last Sunday of every month) and we would like to get the schools in the area involved with projects like planting trees on Arbor Day. Another mission would be to add some furniture like tables and chairs for those who would like to have a picnic whilst visiting the Bird Sanctuary. We would also like to get the schools involved in River Clean Ups.

Community Centre

Our largest project for 2009 is building a Community Centre. We are currently in the process of acquiring a piece of land in the area and hope to start development of the Community Hall and offices for the community forum during 2009. The only way for a project of this magnitude to be a success is if residents in the area get involved. Your comments, advice, ideas and suggestions are welcome. Please send them to admin@becf.co.za.

I am excited about our projects planned for 2009 and look forward to working together with the community to ensure success.

Elfrieda Loubser

HAPPY NEW YEAR

