

Spring 2009

Special points of interest:

- Check out police reports in your neighborhood. Go to <http://imaps.indy.gov.org/cvc>
- Watch IMPD unsolved crime on YOUTUBE at <http://www.youtube.com/user/IndyUnsolved>
- Miss the last informer? Go to <http://www.indy.gov/eGov/IMPD/Enforcement/Districts/Pages/North.aspx>

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# Community Informer



## IMPD Welcomes a New Chief

There have been many changes around the department since the last edition of the Informer. IMPD North District congratulates and welcomes the new Chief of the Indianapolis Metropolitan Police Department, Paul Ciesielski. Chief Ciesielski is 23 year veteran of the department and most recently served as the Commander of the Northwest District. Chief Ciesielski has served as a Patrol Officer, Field Training Officer, Field Sergeant, Public Information Office, and Special Services Commander. He is the past Commander of the Honor Guard and is a graduate of the FBI National Academy. Chief Ciesielski is a forward thinking innovator who has already brought many positive changes to the department. Under his leadership, we can all look forward to further developing the police and community partnership and the department enhancing its position as a leader in law enforcement.



## North District Launches Facebook Page

IMPD has maintained a presence on the social networking site Facebook for quite sometime now. North District has launched its own Facebook page to help build a network with North District residents. The page will be used to communicate crime prevention information, community events, and crime updates. You can find the page by searching within Facebook for “IMPD North District.” This is an exciting way to enhance the communication between the district and its residents beyond community meetings and newsletters. It is a busy world and Facebook will help to connect us to the public we serve.



## North District Community Day



North District will be hosting its annual community day in Broad Ripple Park on **June 24, 2010 from 11am until 2pm**. Community day is not just a police event. It is a day for the community hosted by the department. There will be many different agencies and businesses present. There will be tables from the American Red Cross, Adult Protective Services, the Mayor's Office, Marion County Prosecutor's Office, Marion County Sheriff, and many others. It is a great day for both kids and adults. The SWAT team, Police Athletic League, horse patrol, motorcycle and many other specialists from around the department will be there to meet and greet children of all ages. There will be bounce houses, free food, drinks, snow cones, music and raffles. Come out and join us!

## "Old Man Mask" Robber Caught

During the beginning part of this year, a bank robber kept popping up around the city wearing a distinctive Halloween mask. He was dubbed the "old man mask" robber. This gentleman's luck finally ran out when he robbed at gunpoint a bank on East 71st street. On a rainy day in March, two alert officers, Officer Dennis Burtner and Sergeant Paul Wilson quickly responded to the area and spotted a car matching the description. Although it was raining the windows were down which raised the officers' suspicions. The suspect fled into a wooded residential neighborhood. The two officers kept him pinned down until more officers could arrive. As the gauntlet around him tightened, the suspect attempted to run and was apprehended by a K9 officer. After the apprehension, the weapon was located in the vehicle along with quite a bit of dye from a dye pack that had detonated on the suspect. Thanks to these two alert officers, the "old man mask" robber is out of business!

## FREE Safety Training for the Public!

The price is definitely right and this valuable training can pay many dividends in the future by enhancing your safety and that of your family. On **May 13th, 2010 from 6:30p to 8:30p at Conseco Fieldhouse**, "A Night of Protective Thinking" will be presented by An Escape Plan Assault Prevention Training which will be a valuable opportunity to learn a Protective Thinking mindset along with some proactive techniques. Attendees will gain practical training in the area of proactive self-defense that is easy to learn and simple to apply. You will also gain confidence knowing that you have choices if confronted by an attacker. This event is free but you need to register for it online at <http://anescapeplan.info>.

## NORTH DISTRICT TASK FORCE

The next North District Task Force meeting will be held on **May 6th, 2010 at 3:00pm at the 42nd St/College library branch.**

**IMPD Chief of Police Paul Ciesielski will be the featured speaker.**

**BURGLARY: When to call and how to protect your home**

When a crime is violent it can have a devastating impact on everyone it touches. Fortunately, serious violent crimes will not impact most who read this. Burglary is a crime that will affect a much larger number of people in Marion County in a no less personal way. Anyone who has been the victim of a burglary can tell you how it has impacted them and their loved ones. Although a property crime, it is a very serious violation of the one place in the world where people feel safest, their home. When that feeling of safety and security is shattered by a burglar it can have a tremendous impact. Not only do victims worry about leaving their home and belongings again but they fear simply being in their homes. They worry about leaving their loved ones alone. "What if I had been here?" "What could have happened to me or my family then?" are questions reverberating within their minds. Burglary is a serious crime and has potential to escalate into other crimes.

Citizens themselves hold many of the keys to combating burglary. Officers patrol their areas but cannot be everywhere at once and who knows better what is normal or out of place in an area than the residents who actually live there? Anytime something looks suspicious to you, you should call the police. Officers would much rather look into something and find that there is no crime being committed than to not be called when something truly was occurring. There is no harm in looking out for your neighbors and calling when something looks suspicious. Things that help when you do call: the location of the suspicious activity, vehicle description or license plate, descriptions of suspects, and direction of travel if they leave. Stay on the phone and provide updates until officers arrive.

What is suspicious? A majority of burglaries occur during the daytime when most people are at work. Some do occur at night but most occur during the daytime. Many times a burglar will walk up to a home and knock or ring the doorbell to determine if anyone is home. If they believe nobody is home, they proceed to make their entry. Many times this involves kicking or prying the front or back door. Typical items taken are flat screen TV's, video gaming systems, laptops, cash and jewelry. These items are quick to locate and remove while having high value. It varies, but many burglars will pull a car right up into the driveway of the home they are burglarizing often backing it in (loading is easier and it hides the plates). Burglars without a car may hide stolen items nearby for retrieval later.

If you live in an area that does not have burglaries should you worry? ABSOLUTELY! If you were a burglar, where would you go? Would you hit an area where the residents have their guard down? Or where everyone is watching for burglars?

What can you do? Know your neighbors and watch out for each other. Call to report suspicious people. It only takes the police a minute to check out someone who may be a burglar. Inspect your house from a burglar's point of view. How would you break in? Where are the weak points. Keep your doors and windows locked, even the upstairs windows. Alarms are a great deterrent. Even if you don't pay an alarm company to monitor it, a screeching alarm alerts your neighbors that something is going on. It may scare off or limit the amount of time a burglar spends in your house. Reinforce your door, locks, and frame. There are simple steps that you can take to make your doors more difficult to kick in. This is the most common method of entry. Sliding doors can be lifted with a screwdriver from the outside. Put a screw inside the top of your track that will prevent this. It can easily be removed should you need to remove your door. Keep your valuables hidden from view. Look at your house from the outside. Will a potential burglar see your large flat screen TV from the street? Think of the risk/benefit of breaking into your home? Would a burglar see it as high risk/low benefit or low risk/high benefit? Working together we can impact this serious crime.

Will your car windows still be there when you get back? That would seem like a simple question, but in a lot of ways that depends upon you. We have all seen the signs in parking garages that say something to the effect of “management is not responsible...” or “do not leave valuables...” Would it surprise you to know that in a recent study of one month of

thefts from vehicles that occurred on IMPD’s North District that 96% of those cases involved valuables in plain view as seen from the outside? 72% of these crimes happen in a commercial area where a lot of cars are parked. How long would you estimate that it takes to shatter a car window? Pry open a locked glove box? The answer is not very long. It can take only seconds. Simply having a car alarm will not stop a thief. Some alarms will sound if there is a significant impact to the car but many will only trigger if a door



**IMPD NEEDS YOU....  
To help prevent thefts from  
vehicles**



or the trunk is opened. You may not be protected from a smashed window. The best defense is prevention. There are criminals who walk parking lots looking for cars to break into. Some sit in crowded lots watching for people who secure items in the trunk trying to hide them. Officers on surveillance have seen these criminals in action walking parking lots trying door handles hoping for an unlocked door or peering inside looking for valuables.

You can save your windows by doing a few simple things BEFORE getting to your destination. Hide any valuables and anything that looks like it might contain a valuable from sight. If you are going to put a bag, laptop, etc into your trunk, pull off before getting to your destination and move it. Any bag left in the open will look like it may have something valuable inside. In the recent North District study, electronics (i.e. GPS/laptop/IPOD) were taken in 62% of car break-ins. Purses or briefcases were taken 24% of the time.

As most people would never consider smashing someone’s window and stealing from their car, put yourself in a thief’s shoes. If you find a car door open and climb into the car, will you look like a thief to an observer or simply the cars’ owner? If you opt to smash a window what would you need? Surprisingly, car windows are not very difficult to stress to the point of shattering, hammers, pry tools, even a knife can be used. GPS units are valuable, common place and do not require a subscription service in many cases. If you were a thief and saw a GPS bracket on a windshield and no unit in it, would you bet that it is in the glove box, center console or under a car seat? How much longer would it take you to search those areas?

As you can see, this is a quick crime of opportunity. A few simple steps can make your car and valuables an unlikely target. Denying the opportunity to commit the crime is much easier than replacing shattered windows, stolen items and catching them after the fact.

### **North District Public Safety Community Walk**

Please join Public Safety Director Dr. Frank Straub, IMPD Chief Paul Ciesielski, IFD Chief Brian Sanford, Administrator of Homeland Security & Preparedness Gary Coons, Administrator of Indianapolis Animal Care and Control Teri Kendrick and North District Commander Bob Holt along with members of their respective departments and North side community members in the first "Public Safety Walk" to be held on the North District.

Police Officers, Firefighters, Animal Control Officers and Emergency Management personnel along with a host of volunteers will hit the streets on Saturday, June 5th, 2010. Participants in the walk will meet at 9:30am at 4209 N. College Avenue which houses the Police Athletic League and the IMPD Canine Unit. Participants will start their walk at 10:00am, concentrating their efforts in the area of Winthrop Ave. to Broadway St./38th St. to 42nd St meeting back at the starting point at 1:00pm.

Representatives of each agency will be on hand to answer questions from the community. Using a door to door approach, they will offer tips on crime prevention, fire safety, animal care and homeland security, just to name a few. We encourage the North side community to come out and meet their local public safety professionals and join in this walk. Community members working alongside our public safety officials as a team, fosters a strong partnership in fighting crime in our communities enhancing our day to day quality of life.

Public safety officials partnering with the community we serve is now more than ever a need and a priority. Keeping the streets safe from the issues that affect all of us is a team effort and can only be accomplished through the effective coordination of resources. It is our goal to be accessible to those who need information or help. We are here to serve and do it each and every day without fail. Please join us in our Public Safety Walk on June 5th at 10:00am.

### **Alert Officer Captures Carjacking Suspects**

A recent carjacking provides a fine example of some heads up police work. One evening at approximately 11pm, a citizen was driving into a construction zone where three of the orange barrels had been moved out of their original positions to block the roadway. When the citizen stopped his car due to the obstruction, he was approached by an individual armed with a handgun who subsequently stole his vehicle. Nearly nine hours later, Officer Michael Darst had just started his shift and was patrolling his beat. He remembered the information from about the carjacking that had occurred during late shift. Officer Michael Darst saw three people run out of a gas station and jump into a car similar to the one taken in the carjacking. Although nine hours had passed and the carjacked car could be anywhere, Officer Darst thought he had it. He immediately turned his vehicle around to investigate further. The suspects turned off into a residential neighborhood before he was able to get behind them. Officer Darst scoured the neighborhood and located the suspects' car again. Upon seeing the officer, the suspects hit the gas and took off with Officer Darst in hot pursuit. After a short car chase the suspects stopped and fled on foot through a creek bed and into an area of thick woods and underbrush. Officer Darst gave chase while quickly instructing other officers on where they were needed to set up a perimeter. The suspects were spotted several times running through the perimeter and were eventually apprehended. Officer Darst and the day shift did an exceptional job in the identification, pursuit and capture of these dangerous armed criminals.