

The West End

By and for the
West End Neighborhood

October 1992

WHAT'S SO GREAT ABOUT

CRIME PREVENTION ?

Well, the topic brought more than one hundred people from all over our neighborhood together on a Tuesday evening in October. They came to learn how to Do the Right Thing in the Right Way. And they left with a renewed commitment to look out for each other. So, if it is apathy that kills a community, then the West End is alive and well.

As you are probably already aware, recently there has been an increase in the amount of crimes against persons and property taking place in our neighborhood. What is particularly alarming are the two sexual offenses committed against women living in this community. As its initial response to these intolerable acts, the West End Association quietly retained the services of a part-time roving security patrol to supplement the work of the Winston-Salem Police Department. Next, your Association tabled its regular monthly meeting and, instead, with the energetic assistance of Alderman Nancy Pleasants, devoted 10/6/92 to a presentation by Officer Steve Perkins of the WSPD Crime Prevention Bureau. The event was well-attended, and it even received coverage in the Winston-Salem Journal and on WXII's Channel 12 News.

Ms. Pleasants and Assistant City Manager Al Beatty attended, along with several police officials, including Assistant Chief Yokley, Captains Pouncey and Petree, and Sergeants George and Snider. Perkins pointed out that there are only 422 police officers to cover a city of more than 160,000. Last year more than 3,100 housebreakings were reported in Winston-Salem; in more than 1,200, there was no forced entry. Since the typical criminal is an amateur looking for the easy opportunity, Perkins offered several crime prevention tips: In your home, lock your doors and don't open them to strangers. Secure your windows with adequate locks, keep shrubbery trimmed away from windows and doorways, and make your house or apartment look "lived in" at all times. Thieves don't want people to be home, so automatic timers for lamps and radios can be a useful ruse.

In your car, again, lock your doors. Keep valuables out of sight, keep the car mechanically sound and gassed up. In a breakdown, it's often better to put your hood up, get back in the car, turn on the flashers and wait for help. If what looks like a Good Samaritan shows up, be cautious; slip him the phone number of a wrecker service and a quarter to make the call. When out walking or jogging, go with a friend, if you can; at least have a friend know where you're headed. Stay in well-lit areas, in the middle of the sidewalk, away from thick hedges. Especially, don't go out alone late at night.

Most of the evening was given over to informative Q&A. We learned that, while crime in the West End is not nearly as serious a problem as in

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CRIME PREVENTION -- CONTINUED

many other city neighborhoods, the police have increased patrols in here. Assignments are made on the basis of the number and type of crimes reported and calls for service. Foot patrols, alas, are a limited option, since the city is so large. Residents of the West End can assist the police by keeping our eyes and ears open and by reporting suspicious behavior to the authorities. When asked how we can respond properly without appearing racist, snobbish or paranoid, Sgt. George stressed that persons are "suspicious" not because of what they look like, but because of what they do.

Several people urged the Association to get more actively involved in crime prevention, and many of them volunteered to help re-institute a formal Neighborhood Watch program. It is rather evident that the essence of all this is, first, getting to know one another, and, then, learning to care actively for one another. This process is just as important for folks living in apartment buildings as it is for those living in clusters of single-family houses. Let's all do it!

HITHER AND YON --

a Potpourri of Gentle Reminders:

1. Vote for the candidates of your choice -- especially if they are the candidates of my choice. If you refuse to vote, then maintain silence for the next four years.

2. The December House Tour: (a) say yes to Missie Vaughan and her henchpersons when they ask you to help with the Tour; (b) buy several tickets to the Tour for yourself and your friends; (c) when you go see the houses, be civil to visitors and try to behave yourself.

3. Whenever your friendly Block Captain shows up at your door house or apartment: (a) sign up to (re-)join the West End Association as a dues-paying member; (b) express your support for the Local Historic District designation; (c) agree to recycle; and/or (d) tactfully dissent from one or more of the above, if that's what it takes for you to maintain your personal integrity.

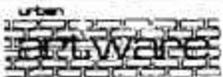
Remember, last month we said we'd run some LETTERS this month. Well, we ran out of space, instead. It will happen. You can trust me. I have sound judgment and exemplary character. My values are familial. My heart is pure. Vote for me. I will make you perfectly happy.

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Notice: Remember, the next board meeting will take place at Billye Keith Jones's house on West End Boulevard, on Tuesday evening, November 3rd (Election Day!), at 7:30. The December meeting will be on Tuesday the 7th, at a location yet to be determined.

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SOME GOOD NEWS ABOUT FIRST

Did you notice in the Journal that our next-door neighbor, the Holly Avenue Association, has reached agreement with FIRST's announced plan to establish a residence on North Spring Street? People from the two groups have smoothed over many of the concerns about on-site over-crowding, zoning variances, landscaping, licensing, and lack of community dialogue. Most West Enders applaud these achievements, and we look forward to seeing the project fulfill the legitimate goals of both community improvement and individual rehabilitation.

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The West End Association, P.O. Box 10055 Salem Station, Winston-Salem, N.C. 27108