

COOK BOOK for BLOCK CAPTAINS (Version 1)

for
The Neighborhood Safety Watch Program

Objective of Neighborhood Safety Watch program

Why Neighborhood Watch Program? Neighborhood Watch Program is considered one of the most effective and least costly ways to prevent crime and reduce fear in our neighborhood. Neighborhood Watch Programs forges bonds among area residents, helps reduce burglaries and robberies, and improves relations between police and the communities they serve. There have been a string of burglaries in our neighborhood in the last year. Neighborhood Watch Program in place is absolutely needed.

After a few break-ins that occurred in our neighborhood in the summer of 2004, many of our neighbors started thinking of a Safety Watch program. Our objective with this initiative is to get this neighborhood organized and result into a Neighborhood Watch sign.

History of activities – Current Status

From ease and manageability standpoint, we divided up our neighborhood in 11 different zones, with a Block Captain for each of the zones. There are between 7 and 10 homes in each of these zones. Jim Cardenas of the Saratoga Community Emergency Response Team for the city of Saratoga, walked us through the Neighborhood Safety program via a short presentation. As a result of these activities, the Neighborhood Safety Watch sign was put up back in the month of July 2006 (at the two entrances of our neighborhood).



Block Captain – Roles and Responsibilities

Please refer to Neighborhood Safety WatchSENT2BLOCKCAP.ppt uploaded into the Yahoo group. The role of the Block Captain is quite simple and is NOT a major time commitment.

Here are the salient features

- Compile a zone directory (explained below) and distribute it to neighbors within that zone.
- Work with neighbors within their zone and derive an informal structure to watch out for each other's property (example - setup an email alias, provide the email list to the other neighbors)
- Inform the zone (via phone or email) about law breaking activities that have occurred in the neighborhood.
- Be cognizant of your zone neighbors away on vacation. (Neighbors to inform the block captain of upcoming vacations by phone /email).

- Identify a backup
- Attend neighborhood-safety meetings (if needed- we have not scheduled one yet :-)

Objective of zone directory

We are compiling a zone directory which includes Name, Address, Phone #, Email information etc. for our neighbors of each zone. We do plan to check with our neighbors if this info is shareable across other neighbors in the zone - considering we may possibly have rotation of the Block Captains, and this information could be distributed to others in the neighborhood.

A template is uploaded in the Yahoo group [BlockCaptainTree.doc](#)

Participation in this is voluntary, and if folks are uncomfortable in sharing information, they don't need to - just that they will not be part of the Neighborhood Safety Watch Program - much as we want to include everyone, we have no intentions of forcing anyone into this.

Similarly, if we are not able to identify a block captain for any zone, that zone will be excluded from our neighborhood Safety Watch program. Our intention is not to exclude anyone from this.

Steps in enabling each zone

Here are some of the details in enabling your zone for the neighborhood safety watch program. Please download this document [BlockCaptain tree doc](#) <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/SaratogaCox/> from the folders section of the yahoo group. You will need a few copies – depending on # of homes in your zone. Print them out and hand deliver / drop off by attaching to the outside of the mailbox etc – to each of the homes of your zone. You can download this document from <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/SaratogaCox/> . You will need to know your zone # - please look at the folders in the yahoo group to get a copy of the zone map. Our zone lines are flexible based on input, feedback etc. One of the criteria we used was to ensure visibility of most of the particular zone homes - for the people of that zone.

Once you have received back these updated forms (from people who want to participate in the neighborhood safety program), you will need to compile the information in a summary excel spreadsheet **ZoneDirectoryTemplate.xls** that can be downloaded from the file section of our yahoo group.

Zone captains will need to distribute this summary spreadsheet to the neighbors of their zone (who participated). Since any neighbor of the zone can be a block captain, this information has to be shareable between the neighbors of the particular zone. Block captains can also setup a phone tree within their zone – or use email to communicate.

Neighborhood Safety coordinators (Clark Miller and Rishi Kumar) will maintain a master copy of this summary information received from all the block captains. This information compiled for all zones 1 - 11 will not be shared with our other neighbors. In case of an emergency, this summary information (zones 1-11) will be shareable to law enforcement

We are keeping the emergency planning outside of the neighborhood safety for now. Block captains can start discussing and strategizing within your zone about emergency planning situations.

IMPORTANT LINKS

<http://geocities.com/saratogacox> - Our website

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/SaratogaCox/> - Our Yahoo group