

SEPTEMBER NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH NEWSLETTER

by Ruth Werfel

COMMUNICATION SYMPOSIUM: The goal of the August 17th Symposium was to communicate more effectively with residents by: Reaching as many residents as possible, Being timely, Being pertinent, Being clear and concise, and Effectively Using volunteers' time.

Executive Director Ken Sheehan opened the meeting by welcoming the participants and introducing the Board members and the members of the Advisory and Support groups. He then turned the meeting over to George Blind who, with Elaine Small, chaired the committee that was responsible for such an effective and informative program. George outlined the goal of communicating more effectively with residents by Reaching as many residents as possible, Being timely, Being pertinent, Being clear and concise and Using volunteers' time effectively.

Secretary Pauline Watson introduced dialmycalls.com, a new, free telephone service to enable Mail Box Captains to reach those residents who do not have computers. A tutorial on the website explains the procedure for setting up the system. Briefly, one sets up a list of telephone numbers, a maximum of 25, and then that person can send a 30-second message to those numbers listed, thereby getting information to residents by phone instead of by computer.

Following Pauline's presentation Corporal Matt Alves of the Lincoln Police Department explained a twofold program, W.A.R.N/Guardian. *W.A.R.N* (Wide Area Rapid Notification) is a system by which the police, who have the phone numbers of all residents, can send out information on emergencies immediately and keep people aware of unfolding events. No one need sign up for this program. The second program called *Guardian Call*, is that one has to sign on to as this is a voluntary program which requests the police to call a person every day at a time appointed by the person to be sure that he or she is all right. The enrollee lists not only his own number but also two other alternate numbers so that, in the event of some unforeseen event, another person will be notified and can check on the person. Register for this program online or call Jill Thompson of the City of Lincoln at 434-2400.

The latter part of the program was devoted to group discussions about the dissemination of information and alerts: what is working and what isn't, and means of improving the process of keeping everyone up to date on what is going on. For the results of the discussions, contact your Mailbox Captain or your Village Coordinator.

SNIPPETS AND SNAPS FROM NATIONAL NIGHT OUT

As you can tell by the following, we had another big turnout this year for National Night Out, 78 in all. Many villages combined for even bigger bashes, but the biggest, we think was Village 30 A/B/C, about which you will read later in the article.

Villages 5A/B combined resources to produce a table laden with tempting appetizers and desserts, as you can see. Some 40-50 people gathered to feast and to enjoy a brief question and answer session with Mayor Tom Cosgrove. He was accompanied by a police officer and a volunteer security officer, both of whom circulated among the crowd and spoke individually with the folks there. Their visitation culminated in the presentation of a Certificate of Appreciation to Village Coordinator Paula Alloro.

These folks blocked off a short street between Daylily and Snapdragon to set up three barbecues and an ice cream station to serve the 60 to 70 villagers who dined on everything from salads to steaks. So plentiful were the hors d'oeuvres and salads that not everyone took advantage of the barbecues, saving room for the ice cream – seven flavors, courtesy of Keith and Palah Massey. Chief of Police Joe Neves visited, along with Councilman Short, a representative from the District Attorney's office and a member of the Citizens on Patrol.

Several Team Captains in this village of 143 homes hosted NNO events. One of the most unusual, however, took place at the home of Al and Carol Witten, where some of the guests gathered in the backyard for a star-gazing party and were rewarded with spectacular views of planets Venus, Mars and Saturn. Among the guests was the Bovenberg family, visiting from Holland, and brought by Ann Meyer. What a nice feature of Sun City living for them to experience! The visiting dignitaries were Police Sergeant Brian Fritsch, Civilians on Patrol volunteer Moe Bloom, Police Officer Paul Tyler and Council Member Paul Joiner, each of whom explained his particular duties, took questions from the group and then, before leaving, presented a certificate to the Wittens in appreciation of their work in the community.

Village 34A celebrated with 30-40 people gathered at Village Coordinator Gus Alegado's house on the corner of Pheasant Lane and Blue Heron. They look happy!

And the biggest party of them all was held at the Sports Pavilion. Village 30C Coordinator Pam Bulger joined her group with 30A/B, which had no coordinators, and some 250 people gathered for a pot luck, a no-host bar, and the Lincoln Highway Band, whose members just happen to belong to Village 30.