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NEWS Highlights

City Edition

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Bogan CAPS Meeting Looks At Burglaries

By TASHA L. CLOPTON STUBBS

Beat 834 in the Chicago Lawn (8th) District held its monthly Community Alternative Policing Strategy (CAPS) meeting Monday at Bogan High School, 3939 W. 79th St.

Police Sgt Chuck Maida reminded those in attendance that the economy has had a direct effect on the rash of burglaries, not just in the 8th District, but in the city overall. He advised that residents call police, no matter what.

His sentiments were echoed by Barb Ziegler, a court advocate and representative from Ald. Frank Olivo's 13th Ward office.

"It's very important that people make those phone calls," she said. "If someone doesn't belong in your neighborhood, you'd better be making that phone call."

Ziegler posed questions to those in attendance,

"How many people here have a problem house on their block? Do you know the address? Is that where the people are hanging out? Are they hanging out on the corner? Are they coming from that house? There you go."

Tips for callers presented at the meeting were:

- Remember that you can tell a 9-1-1 call taker that you wish to remain anonymous.
- Use key terms when reporting loitering or suspicious activity. Say that they're gang members. Say that they're using gang signs and say they don't live on the block if they don't.
- If they do live on the block, use their addresses.

In addition, Ziegler promoted court advocacy.

Advocates do not speak in court, but rather are there to support crime victims.

This is a show of support that Ziegler says sends "a message to the judges, to the state's attorney, and, most importantly, to the criminals, that we are not going to put up with this kind of activity in our neighborhoods. We want to make sure that the most stern judgements against these people can be placed."

When complainants don't show for court, cases are usually dismissed, voiding the arresting officer's work to get the case to court.

"The officers appreciate us being there," Ziegler noted.

Believing that any fear of being a court advocate is unfounded, Ziegler reiterated her sentiments from an earlier beat meeting.

"I have never, never had an incident (of retaliation)," she said.

However, being sensitive to those concerns, she offered an

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alternative to going to court cases that originate in a person's neighborhood. Residents, she said, may go to court cases for residents in other neighborhoods. Those residents would in turn go to their court cases.

Beat 834's boundaries, roughly, are from Cicero to Kedzie avenues, between 79th and 87th streets.

CAPS meetings are held monthly at Bogan. The next one is scheduled for 7 p.m. Monday, Nov. 9.

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