



July 10, 2009

9th Ward E-News

From Minneapolis Council Member Gary Schiff

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Register now for National Night Out



Minneapolis firefighters participated at the 2008 block event from the 3500 block of 15th Avenue South.

Over fifty thousand Minneapolis residents are expected to participate in more than one thousand National Night Out block events on Tuesday, August 4, 2009. Street closure applications received by July 21 are free. Applications received between July 22 and August 2 will be charged \$100. There is a single [online process to register](#) your NNO event and apply to close your street.

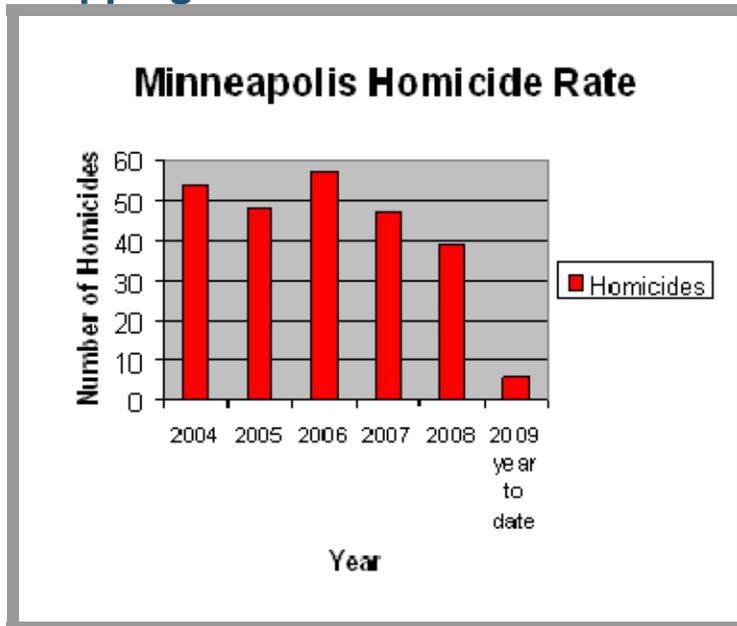
The names and addresses of 75% of the neighbors who approve the street closure must be submitted with the application. Signatures are not needed.

Many block clubs are held in vacant lots, yards and parking lots where street closures aren't necessary. Nevertheless, registering early will also get block clubs Minnesota Twins tickets and Mystery Point Passes for Nickelodeon Universe at the Mall of America. All events registered by July 14 will be entered into a drawing for a wide array of door prizes donated by Minneapolis businesses. When registering, blocks can also request that a police officer drops by the event. In addition fire truck visits and the MPD Canine Unit can also be requested by calling 311.

"National Night Out is a great way to get to know your

neighbors, and build relationships that help solve problems and build great communities,” said Ninth Ward Council Member Gary Schiff. “Minneapolis consistently ranks as one of the largest celebrants of National Night Out, and the event grows every year, rain or shine.”

Breakfast with Gary: Why is crime dropping?



This month's *Breakfast with Gary* will look at the recent [drop in crime](#) in Minneapolis. Despite the economic downturn, violent crime has dropped more than 25 percent since 2007 and almost 18 percent in the last year. Property crimes have fallen 11 percent since last year, and 23 percent since 2007. Minneapolis has seen a drastic decrease in the number of homicides. In 2007, within the first 110 days of the year, Minneapolis witnessed 18 homicides, compared with only three during that same period this year.

The city has helped to [reduce juvenile crime](#) by reducing the use of the juvenile detention center. Improvements to the juvenile system means the number of people detained at the Hennepin County juvenile detention center has declined 33 percent over the last three years and juvenile crime has dropped 29 percent since 2006.

Panelists will include Lieutenant Mike Sullivan from the Minneapolis Police Department Juvenile Division, Hennepin County District Court [Judge Tanya Bransford](#), and Dallas Drake from the [Center for Homicide Research](#). Police Chief Tim Dolan has also been invited to attend. Breakfast with Gary is a monthly meeting for 9th Ward residents held from 7:30 to 9:00am the final Friday of the month at the [Mercado Central](#),

1515 East Lake Street. \$5 buys breakfast.

Midtown Greenway starts citizen patrol



Minneapolis bikers can help improve safety along the Midtown Greenway by becoming a volunteer trail watcher.

To [improve safety for bikers](#), the Midtown Greenway Coalition has started a [trail watch](#) for volunteers to report illegal or suspicious activity and unsafe conditions. A series of attacks on cyclists last year motivated volunteers to form the patrols.

“We’re pleased to report that there has been nothing like the series of incidents that happened in the fall of 2008, but we need to work hard to prevent it from happening again. In addition to our trail watch rides, we continue to encourage bicyclists to buddy up with one another after dark,” Tim Springer, Executive Director of the Midtown Greenway Coalition said.

Volunteers can participate during set times, or as an as-you-go trail watcher whenever they happen to be using the Greenway. Scheduled trail watchers will attend a brief training, take a short test, and bike in groups. Volunteers will not intervene in any incidents they come across, but will report any observed criminal or intimidating behaviors to the police by calling 911. Contact nate@midtowngreenway.org to get involved.

Human trafficking gets top bill from lawmakers

As this year's legislative session came to an end, advocates against human trafficking and prostitution went away with some major victories that many hope will knock Minneapolis



Minnesota is among fifteen states with the highest instances of human and sex trafficking.

out of the top 15 states with the highest instances of human and sex trafficking. In his May 25th article called, [Helping those hurt by human trafficking](#), Charley Shaw writes about the new legislation at the capitol as well as a \$100,000 federal grant to help fight human trafficking.

The [main piece of legislation](#) passed this session was a bill authored by Senator Patricia Torres Ray and Representative Melissa Hortman. The bill adds steam rooms, saunas, massage parlors, shopping malls and other public shopping areas to the list of "public places." This will ease arrest and successful prosecution of prostitution in these locations. Loop holes were closed for repeat offenses so that second offenses are enhanced and the charges more serious. Also, arrest notations in driving record where previously not accessible to law enforcement now will be accessible. In addition, on the second offense, this arrest data will public information on an offender's driving record. In addition to the Torres Ray/Hortman legislation, the legislature also approved the continued funding for the Minnesota Human Trafficking Crisis and Tip Line, operated by [Civil Society](#)

In March, the Minneapolis City Attorney's office changed its prosecution standards to get tougher on people who solicit sex. The City Attorney's office will now seek convictions on all those who solicit prostitutes in Minneapolis, including first time offenders. First time offenders will be required to complete a restorative justice program, but will also have a conviction included in their criminal record. In the past, first time offenders would be receive probation and would not have a conviction appear on their record if they completed a restorative justice program.

"This is the first year that the City has had an explicit lobbying agenda at the Capital to help fight human trafficking," said Council Member Gary Schiff. "We are very happy with the progress we made and we will return to the Capitol next year

to ensure that law enforcement has the tools they need to keep women and children safe.”

There are many ways that residents can help fight prostitution in the community. If prostitution activity is witnessed, please call 911. Callers can request to be anonymous. Organizing a block club is also a good way to get neighbors involved to monitor suspicious activity and report to the police when crimes are happening. For more information on organizing a block club, contact Karen Notsch at 612-673-2856.

Picturing life in Powderhorn



Powderhorn365.com is documenting life in the Powderhorn neighborhood. Photo by Craig Bares.

Seven photographers living in the Powderhorn neighborhood have teamed up to document life in their community by taking one picture every day

during 2009. The project, [Powderhorn365](#), also includes images from a number of guest photographers, capturing a broad range of life in the neighborhood. The project aims to record the history of the neighborhood and see their neighbors in a new way. “When someone looks in our neighborhood, sometimes they see a flower, sometimes they see a person. It’s completely a community vision at this point”, said Amy Wurdock, [Powderhorn365](#) photographer.

The project was inspired by a similar effort documenting life in Hamilton, Ontario in 2008. Photographers include David Gels, Amy Wurdock, Christi Williams, Joanne Jongsma, Corey Needleman, and Rachel Greenwald.

Photographers also post pictures to the [project's group on Flickr](#), a photo sharing website. Anyone who has photos to share can post on [Flickr](#), although the Powderhorn365 website is limited to images photographers and guest photographers. Anyone interested in having their picture taken or filling in as a guest photographer can [contact Powderhorn365](#).