

Community Policing Day wows city



Photo: Turi Thomas

A CLEAN SWEEP: These volunteers celebrated community policing day by picking up garbage throughout Hastings-Sunrise.

This past September, Vancouver celebrated its first official Community Policing Day, with celebrations and activities simultaneously run out of each of Vancouver's 9 Community Policing Centres. The September 27 celebration marked a milestone for community policing in Vancouver, first introduced to the city in 1992.

Although the roots of community policing can be traced back as far as Robert Peel's original London police force, which was partly based on the principle that citizens were much more likely to report crime to a familiar neighbourhood-based police officer rather than a stranger, the idea of community policing as it exists today really took shape during the 1960s when civil rights and

BY RACHEL GARRICK

anti-war protests in America strained the public's relations with police officers.

Finding themselves in a public relations nightmare after cracking down on black activists practicing civil disobedience to protest racial inequality and white middle-class university students protesting the Vietnam war, many American police departments formed community-relations branches which eventually evolved into community policing detachments based on crime prevention.

These units took many forms in the 1970s and 80s, from simple crime prevention and education units to more highly visible neighbourhood patrols. In most North American cities, community policing centres are still run by the local police department; in Van-

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That's how we roll: the bike patrol

BY RON COLDHAM

Alright, let's be honest. You'd like to volunteer more, but you just don't have the time. Between work, school, family, and everything else going on, it's getting harder and harder to squeeze some altruistic hours out of the month.

Might I suggest multi-tasking?

Why not combine a little exercise with your volunteering? No, I am not talk-

ing about running on a treadmill while working a front office shift or wearing ankle weights while participating in a community clean-up. I am talking about taking part in the HSCPC's bike patrol.

Like its sister programs – the foot patrol and pooch patrol – the bike patrol consists of highly-visible, trained volunteers (15 members at present) who patrol the streets of the Hasting Sunrise neighbourhood to serve as a deterrent to crime and a

comforting presence, reporting any suspicious or criminal activity they encounter to the Vancouver Police Department (VPD).

"Bike patrols are very effective," says HSCPC Program Leader Dave Ao. "They enable the CPC to cover a greater area and patrol the far reaches of our territory."

The only special skills required to participate are a keen eye and, well, the ability to ride a bike. But one does not need to be a Tour de France class cyclist to qualify. In

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Photo: Danielle Grant



BY CHESTER GRANT

How much is a safe community worth?
If this were an advertising campaign, you might say "Priceless!"

But there is a price to everything – even an organization like the Hastings Sunrise CPC which relies heavily on volunteered labour. Competent staff must be paid adequately to train and supervise the volunteers. Rent and utilities must be paid, supplies bought. The list goes on.

All nine CPCs get basic funding each year from the City of Vancouver. Other grants are sought and received from the provincial government's gaming branch. The Hastings North Business Improvement Association, with whom we share a streetfront office, contributes an annual grant.

These funds put us within sight of our target: Enough to fully staff and operate your CPC at its most effective and efficient level. We are gradually making up the difference with fundraising events and a continual search for donors and grant-givers. But there is still a gap.

A common response from citizens is: "Don't the police pay for it?"

The answer is no – because we are not operated by the Vancouver Police Department. Like most Vancouver CPCs, we are a community organization, formed under the Societies Act and then operated in a partnership with the VPD.

It is a ground-breaking arrangement, unique to Vancouver. In every other jurisdiction in North America, including all of Vancouver's suburbs, CPCs are opened and run by police. Only here are "the people" in charge. That lets your CPC act according to what is in the best interests of the community. Our programs meet with police approval, because they are all designed to help public order and safety. But they respond directly to community needs. We volunteer to help our neighbour, not to simply work for police.

The Vancouver Police Department does help us by seeking civic funds on our behalf, but we are not on the VPD payroll. That's the way we like it: we answer primarily to you, and to one another.

That is why it is rewarding to see the community support its CPC with money as well as volunteer time. Most recently we staged a successful fundraising event, Community Day at Hastings Racecourse. Ticket sales and a silent auction augmented a grant from the track. Thanks to all who donated auction items (see list below).

If you don't yet have time to volunteer, or donation funds to spare, you can still get involved with the Hastings Sunrise CPC by taking out a membership for \$10 a year. For the price of a few coffees, you can vote at our AGM in February and know that you are helping to keep your community clean, safe and informed.

The best contribution is still that of volunteer time – and it works both ways. In my four years on the board, the last three as president, I have learned more about Hastings Sunrise than in the previous 25 years as a resident. It has been a richly rewarding time.

I have learned that each of us can make a difference, whether it's by joining a weekend litter cleanup, painting out graffiti before it becomes an epidemic, going on patrol or helping staff get the resources they need to get the best out of every volunteer.

Our constitution requires directors to leave the board after a maximum of two two-year terms, so my time will be up in February, 2009. Words cannot express how impressed I am with the energy, dedication and skill that are poured into Hastings Sunrise daily by the HSCPC staff (Clair MacGougan, Dave Ao and Karine Lavoie) and volunteers of all ages.

They deserve the support of all of us. After all, we have theirs, every day.

Community Day Auction Sponsors:

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UP AND COMING:

ANNOUNCEMENTS & EVENTS

* **UNDER ONE UMBRELLA**

The Grandview Woodlands Drug and Alcohol Coalition will hold its second "Under One Umbrella" service fair for homeless people Saturday Jan. 17 from 10 am to 3pm at the Maritime Labour Centre, 1880 Triumph. The fair brings together a range of services, information and activities for people who are homeless, under-housed, street-involved or living in poverty. The event includes food, entertainment and a venue for recording people's personal stories. The first fair in 2007 drew 500 participants and 22 service providers. Phone 604-215-3907

* **HSCPC AGM**

The Hastings Sunrise Community Policing Centre's annual general meeting will be held Wednesday evening Feb. 18, 2009, location to be announced. Refreshments are provided from 6:30pm, meeting starts at 7pm. All Hastings Sunrise residents are invited to become members, for an annual fee of \$10 payable at the HSCPC office. Membership is an investment in the security and wellbeing of your neighbourhood, and entitles you to vote at the AGM. Phone 604-717-3584 for details.0

New volunteer award announced: the 1516

All volunteers are valuable – but when they rack up 1516 hours of freely-given time they

BY CHESTER GRANT

become extraordinary. Those were the hours contributed cheerfully to the Hastings Sunrise CPC over his last five years of volunteering by the late Pat McElgunn, a former director, Speed Watch regular and jack of all trades. In his memory, the CPC created the Pat McElgunn Achievement Award, to be given to volunteers who have achieved 1516 hours of service to the organization.

Fittingly, the first recipient of the award was Pat's widow, Susan McElgunn, who worked side-by-side with Pat throughout the years. The surprise presentation was made by co-ordinator Clair MacGougan at a Volunteer Appreciation BBQ held in early September. "Susan's a tremendous volunteer who's not only given an enormous amount of her time to the CPC but epitomizes what it means to be a caring community member," says co-ordinator MacGougan.

The event is held annually to show appreciation to the scores of volunteers who give their time and energy to help make Hastings Sunrise a safer and better place for all of us to live, work and play, through their involvement with the many programs of the HSCPC. Thanks to Toby Barazzuol and Nelson Borges of Eclipse Awards International for their donation of the award plaque. It will have a place of honour in the HSCPC offices.



Photo: Turi Thomas

AND THE AWARD GOES TO: Holly, Clair, Susa, and Dave show off the 1516 award, named in honour of the late Pat McElgunn.

Community policing continues to grow

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cover, community policing centres are operated by neighbourhood based non-profit societies which take on a variety of roles from reporting and tracking crime and suspicious activity to organizing neighbourhood patrols and other crime prevention initiatives.

Learn more at www.hastings-sunrisepc.com/ or call 604-717-3584.

QUICK FACTS:

- 9 – The number of Community Policing Centres (CPCs) in Vancouver.
- 1992 – The year CPCs were first established in Vancouver. Vancouver's first CPC was located in Chinatown.
- 1 – The number of Neighbourhood Police Officers (NPO) assigned by the Vancouver Police Department to each CPC.
- 100,914 – The number of hours volunteers contributed through CPCs in 2004.
- \$1.51 million – The salary equivalent of hours worked by CPC volunteers in 2004.

Bike patrol reduces crime, keeps members fit



Photo : Dave Ao

MAKING A WHEEL DIFFERENCE:
The bike patrol gets ready for a spin around the neighbourhood.

Bike patrol continued from page 1...

fact, all bike patrol volunteers, regardless of their level, undergo training from a certified Canadian Cycling Association CanBike instructor. This comprehensive, nationally-recognized training program (one day for the beginner course – all that's required to start participating in patrols – and three days for the advanced) encompasses road safety skills and general repair, and is the same level of training required of VPD bike squad officers.

And while there can be little doubt the HSCPC bike patrol is beneficial to the community, there may be those of you out there who still question just how beneficial it would be to your health. Allow me to address those cynics with one simple question: Have you ever seen a fat bike cop?

I rest my case.

If you are interested in the bike patrol program, contact the CPC at 604-717-3584.

Thanks to our volunteers and staff for another great Sunrise Summer Kickoff

Contributors

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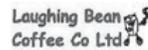
Mondays: 11 am – 6 pm
Tuesdays: 9:30 am – 8 pm
Wednesday to Friday:
9:30 am – 4:30 pm
Saturdays: 10 am – 4 pm

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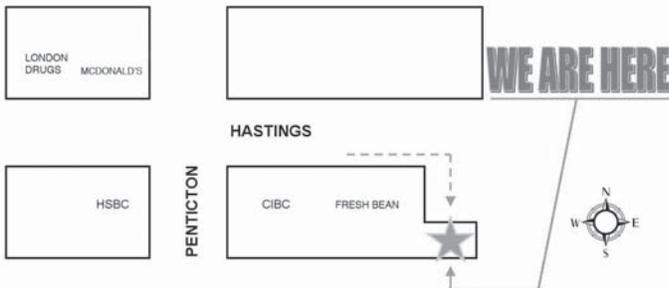


Photos: Rachel Garrick

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