

# Woodlake Neighborhood Watch Newsletter

## SUMMER'S GONE AND SO ARE THE LONG WARM DAYS; BUT FIRE PREVENTION IS STILL A DAILY NECESSITY:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5BqR4WNd3IA&feature=youtu.be>

The practice of fire prevention and safety around the home and workplace is a daily occurrence. If something looks wrong, it probably is. So, before an accident happens, a fire starts or someone is injured, take the appropriate measures to correct the error before a mistake turns into a mishap.

### COUNTY SHERIFF TIP LINE: WANTED AS OF JANUARY 15<sup>th</sup>, 2016

[http://71.6.170.26/revize/bellcounty/departments/cscd\(adult\\_probation/most\\_wanted.php](http://71.6.170.26/revize/bellcounty/departments/cscd(adult_probation/most_wanted.php) , and/or; <http://bellcountycrimestoppers.com>;



**Staff Basnight Jr.**, from Killeen, is wanted for: Burglary of a Habitation. Basnight is 33 y/o B/M with Brown Eyes and Brown Hair that stands 6'3" tall and weighs 180 lbs.

### FROM AUSTIN: "Dozens" of Texas 10 Most Wanted Fugitives Captured in 2015

On January 21<sup>st</sup>, the Texas Department of Public Safety (DPS) announced that 29 fugitives sought through the 10 Most Wanted Program – including a record-breaking 20 sex offenders – were arrested in 2015 by DPS and other agencies. In addition, \$79,000 in rewards was paid for anonymous tips that resulted in arrests last year.

The success of this program depends on tip information from the vigilance of the citizens who continue to take a stand against criminals and sexual predators in their communities.

The 20 apprehended sex offenders are the most ever apprehended in a year for the 10 Most Wanted Program, exceeding the previous record of 19 set in 2013. Other notable accomplishments in 2015 include:

- The \$79,000 paid in rewards is the second-highest total payout in a year.
- Arrests in 16 of the 29 total apprehensions were the result of tip information provided by anonymous tipsters.
- Three of the fugitives apprehended were sexually violent predators who were currently

part of the state's Civil Commitment Program. (A fourth absconded sexually violent offender committed suicide before being apprehended.)

- Of the 29 fugitives apprehended, two sex offenders were extradited from Mexico, and three fugitives and four sex offenders were extradited from other states.
- Six of the fugitives apprehended were gang members from the following gangs: Texas Mexican Mafia, Crips, Bloods, Raza Unida and Texas Chicano Brotherhood.

For more information on the fugitives captured in 2015, see the captured fugitive archive at: <http://www.dps.texas.gov/Texas10MostWanted/captured.aspx>

Texas Gov. Greg Abbott has declared January as Crime Stoppers Month in Texas. Crime Stoppers programs enable citizens to anonymously report information about crimes for cash rewards, helping put criminals behind bars and assisting in crime reduction efforts. See the entire proclamation at: <http://gov.texas.gov/files/pressoffice/CrimeStoppersMonth012016.pdf>.

All tips are guaranteed to be anonymous.

## AS A WITNESS, HOW INVOLVED SHOULD YOU BECOME?

Having spent a great deal of ink and digital space discussing the particular crimes-of-opportunity and prevention, and/or the psychology of the criminal, little if any effort has been expended to probe the psyche of the witness.

Beyond calling "9-1-1", even the available source materials are short on empirical standards and long on opinion, interview and unqualified conjecture.

No two situations are identical; thus, your own opinions, your personal experience, background and circumstances (socially, publically and personally) will affect your perceptions and conclusions of how you would react when witnessing a crime in progress.

Likewise, except for the one basic - "**If you see something, say something**" - it would be folly trying to assert definitive rules for every situation however; there are some basic guidelines that you should follow if you witness a crime or activity that seems unusual:

- Call 9-1-1. Police need and want your help so this should be your first instinct to call for help. Unfortunately, many people don't follow their instincts out of fear of getting involved, sounding silly, appearing overly suspicious or being identified.

- When placing the call - Let the operator control the conversation. He or she will know the questions to ask and may likely be filling out a report that will help dispatch the police as quickly as possible.
- Stay on the line until the police arrive or until the operator tells you to hang up.
- Stay calm and concentrate on relating important details that will be most helpful to police. Be sure to include the following information: Type of crime (automobile theft, assault, etc.); Location of the crime (street address and cross streets.); Description of suspects (height; build; color of eyes, hair and skin; clothing and disguises; special marks or unusual features such as scars and tattoos; and weapons, tools or vehicles used); Description of property or person(s) being subjected to criminal activity.

Try to get police assistance to the victim as soon as possible while keeping yourself safe from harm.

"Staying calm" cannot be over emphasized. To intervene to stop a crime is purely a personal decision that has to be made logically, responsibly and prudently - but in the "heat-of-the-moment", there is rarely enough time to fully process the event.

Inevitably, your instincts will kick-in (to stand and Fight or Flee); either way, depending on the circumstances, by staying safe and providing as much information to the police as possible may be your best option.

Testimony from witnesses who did engage the criminals during the execution of a crime illustrate that, a majority of the time, our primal urges take over and we're likely to respond without thinking about our own wellbeing.

One Good Samaritan explained, "Yes, (I would intervene) but probably not if I thought about it. Provided I survived to the thinking stage, I'd need to assess the size of the criminal or the number of the criminals, since one must not declare hostilities unless there is a reasonable hope of victory. This would have to be followed by a calculation of 'reasonable force', knowing that any bruising, scratching or contusing would expose me to a charge of assault".

You must also consider that the criminal may be armed. The first question should be: is the threat to life or to property? There's no reward for confronting an alleged felon "tagging" or vandalizing property and you'd certainly be in the wrong if you assaulted a person of minority or yourself getting seriously injured.

*The publication of this newsletter is unofficial and does not express any opinion, directive, or policy of the Woodlake Property Owners Association members or Board of Directors. The primary purpose of the newsletter is to convey information designed to assist us to reduce or prevent crime in our community. The information presented is available through various public access sources, personal interview, or observation. Your comments as to how we can improve this effort are welcome.*

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Witnesses have said they might intervene by shouting and yelling or be more motivated within a large group to break up a fight or confront an assailant.

Little research into the subject exists, but three researchers from Penn State looked at a study of violence in bars in Toronto and concluded that the more intense the fight, the more likely bystanders are to intervene. Their study also concluded that violence between a man and a woman is least likely to be broken up by a third party.

The decision to become a Good Samaritan is more influenced by whether someone is in a hurry rather than if they're a good person.

A consensus among law enforcement professionals is that a person without self-defense training should think twice before intervening in a violent situation. Still, people should be encouraged to intervene and should have the confidence to know they are unlikely to be prosecuted and have the right to defend themselves, their family and their property.

Good Samaritan laws vary from state to state however; most are there to protect first responders from litigation if they hurt someone they're trying to save. It's the criminal code that specifically absolves people who intervene in any breach of the peace trying to protect someone in a fight or a robbery.

Oft times the problems arise when the police arrive on the scene when armed citizens intervene. An exposed gun is more of a liability than an asset if the police don't know who is who.

Whether or not you are licensed to carry and

are armed, introduces an entirely different set of parameters, this commentary is not intended or prepared to delve into. CHL holders are trained and are deemed responsible to know when it's appropriate to draw and use their gun.

Just be advised that when making that 9-1-1 call, make sure to give dispatchers a good description of yourself and that you're armed so that they can relay that information to responding officers.

## C.E.R.T. PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT; "A MARATHON, NOT A DASH, IS THE PROCESS."

It should come to no surprise to anyone that collecting and interpreting data, researching and compiling reference and source materials, then arranging all that into the format "Crawl, Walk, Run" protocol that is accessible, understandable and beneficial to the user (Woodlake Residence), is a long drawn-out process.

The concept is centered on the immediate, near future and long-term needs of the community. All this is predicated on the growth of our and surrounding neighborhoods that share limited resources and an aging infrastructure, increasing the need for a trained Emergency Response Team (CERT) to augment First-Responders.

As not to waste anyone's time and for economy of execution, some measure of control has to be employed to manage the overall process. The course employs references provided by the American Red Cross, Ready.Gov, and F.E.M.A. in the form of

vignettes and videos, and self-paced instructional slides and end-of-block/packet/phase examinations.

Phase I, "Crawl" is for everyone - to improve the knowledge or educate adult and responsible teens the basic emergency response procedures oriented on the household. Not everyone who completes phase I will be capable or willing to advance to phase II, "Walk".

Phase II is still under primary development and isn't projected to be available until mid-summer, however, the goal is to provide adequate training of willing participants with the confidence and knowledge to be prepared for the unthinkable, and to be ready to react rationally before, during and after a disaster to lend emergency medical, light search and rescue, and assist first responders.

Certification is achieved by participants of phase II to be formally trained by EMS and/or other agencies designated by LEPC.

Graduates of phase II "Walk" will qualify for phase III "Run" and the opportunity, as cadre, to train and qualify additional C.E.R.T. members.

To date, with the exception of determining how best to dispose of this portion, the "Crawl", Phase, 1<sup>st</sup> Draft has been completed. Hopefully, those documents in .PPT application will have been distributed as "Beta Version" for review and comment. Phase I first edition, is tentatively scheduled for general distribution (Version 1.2+) by the end of March 2016.

Thank you,

Woodlake Neighborhood Watch Coordinator

*Vol 6, Issue 3*



*January 31, 2016*

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