



OFFICER OF THE MONTH

Each month the Citizen Advisory Committee recognizes an officer for his or her outstanding performance and dedication. This month we would like to recognize Officers Kim Wright and Brian Lawton.

On the morning of December 28, 2004, Officers Wright and Lawton responded to a local video store to handle a burglary report. The property manager called police after noticing a broken window at the business. Upon arrival the officers checked the area and contacted the owner of the business in an attempt to find out what had been stolen. They also had another officer respond to help them process the crime scene. Evidence was collected, photographs were taken and a diagram of the crime scene was drawn. Further investigation revealed that a suspicious person had been in the store a few days earlier. Officers Wright and Lawton notified Detective Desantis who would be handling the follow up on this case and advised him that they were familiar with the possible suspect.

On December 29, 2004, Officers Wright and Lawton came in on their day off to assist Detective Desantis in this case. They went to the address of the suspect to interview him. The suspect refused to speak with Detective Desantis, but was willing to speak with Officers Wright and Lawton because of his prior contact with them. The suspect admitted his involvement with the burglary and also provided the name of another suspect involved in the case. The suspect also admitted to having a large portion of the stolen items in his residence.

Officers Wright and Lawton should be commended for their dedication and commitment in handling this case. They could have easily let Detective Desantis handle the follow up investigation, but instead decided to give up their day off in order to work on this case. If it were not for their involvement, Detective Desantis might have been unable to close this case.

QUOTE OF THE MONTH

Weird, isn't it? Somehow in the dead of winter when its 40 below, so cold your words just freeze in the air, you think you'll never hear a robin's song again or see a blossom on a cherry tree, when one day you wake up and bingo, light coming through the mini blinds is softened with a tick of rose and the cold morning air has lost its bite. It's spring once again, the streets are paved with mud and the hills are alive with the sound of mosquitoes.

~Diane Frolov and Andrew Schneider, *Northern Exposure, Mud and Blood*, 1993

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Dates to remember:

- March 16—CAC Meeting
- March 17—Saint Patrick's Day
- March 20—First day of Spring
- March 27—Easter

RECENT CRIME TRENDS

Commercial Burglaries:

There have been two businesses burglarized recently within the district.

Construction Site Larcenies:

Houses under construction at two separate construction sites have been entered and appliances and building material have been stolen.

Gang Graffiti:

MS13 and SSL graffiti is still showing up throughout the district on fences, buildings, etc.

TRANSIENT CRIME GROUPS

Over the years every spring, this region has been visited by traveling criminals that we generically call “Transient Workers”. Although their history is interesting, this article is about the crimes that they commit in our community and how you as residents can protect yourselves.

The first rule is, if it sounds too good to be true, it probably is. If someone is offering you a get-rich-quick scheme or an unbelievable deal on a service or product, then you should be suspicious. Why would a total stranger be so generous to you?

A common tactic used to defraud citizens in our community is driveway resurfacing, or the “Paving Scam”. This occurs when a scout drives around in a small pickup truck and looks for senior citizens working in their yards. The man in the pickup truck will say he has a crew nearby and that they ordered too much sealant for a job. He will then ask if they can seal the homeowner’s driveway at a great price. They may also use intimidation to get the homeowner to hire them for a job. The homeowner would be told that the product they use is \$28.00 per gallon. It is actually \$12.00 for a five gallon bucket. The crew will also dilute the product with old motor oil or diesel fuel. Once the job is done they will demand an exorbitant amount of money for the shoddy work. A lower price may be given for payment with cash instead of a check. If a check is written, they immediately cash it at your bank to keep you from stopping it. While the crew works, they might also distract you while one of the crew members enters your home to steal your money, jewelry or valuables. There are many variations of this scam, so just use your imagination, because they do.

Do not limit your suspicions to pavers. The same people use the ruse of roof repair, auto body repair, engine steam-cleaning or that they just need a glass of water. It is not just men involved in these scams, but also women and children.

Another scam that is commonly perpetrated against residents in our community is called a “Pigeon Drop”. The following example describes how this scam is executed. You are coming out of a grocery store and you are approached by a person, male or female, young or old. The person then asks you if you have lost a small handbag or gym bag with \$300.00 cash in it. Remember the “too good to be true rule”. You are honest and tell them no. They say that they know how to invest this money but that they need \$1000 first and, if they call their brother in-law who has great connections in the stock market, he can get a return of \$10,000 in one week. He puts \$200 of his own money into the bag, and says he only needs \$500 more. You go to an ATM machine and withdraw \$500.00. He suggests that you hold onto the bag with all of the cash while he calls his brother in-law. He goes to a payphone around the corner while you are holding \$1000.00 cash in the bag. He doesn’t return and after a few minutes you look at the cash. This is when you find out that he switched bags on you. He has now doubled his investment and knows that a large percentage of people are too embarrassed to report the crime.

These examples are just some of the ways these scams play out. Remember that most individuals and groups who solicit door to door in Fairfax County must have a Fairfax County solicitors license. The license displays a photograph of the person, his or her name, and the name of the employer. Be aware of these tactics as the weather warms up and report any suspicious people or activities, such as these, occurring in your community, so that you or one of your fellow residents do not fall victim to these types of crimes.

VICTIM SERVICES SECTION

Franconia District Station welcomes Saly Fayez, a Victim Specialist with the Victim Services Section (VSS). Although the VSS has been a part of the police department since 1986, it is not until recently that a Victim Specialist has been assigned directly to a district station. The VSS provides support and assistance to those who are emotionally, financially and physically affected as the result of a crime. The unit operates within the Criminal Investigations Bureau of the Fairfax County Police Department to ensure immediate and direct help to victims and witnesses of violent crime. The VSS consists of a multi-lingual staff and when needed, they can arrange for interpreters. The VSS not only serves citizens of Fairfax County, but also Fairfax City and the towns of Herndon and Vienna.

HELP IS AVAILABLE FOR VICTIMS OF

- Homicide
- Aggravated Assault
- Involuntary Manslaughter
- Malicious Wounding
- Adult Sexual Assault
- Domestic Violence
- Adults Molested as Children
- Stalking
- Child Sexual and Physical Abuse
- Burglary
- Elder Abuse
- Bias Crimes
- Robbery
- Financial Crimes/Fraud

HOW VSS CAN HELP CRIME VICTIMS

- Crisis Intervention
- Victim Impact Statements
- 24-hour Victim Assistance
- Crime Victim Compensation
- Counseling Referrals
- Educational Programs for Schools and
Community Groups
- Telephone Outreach
- Community Resources
- Support Group
- 24-Hour Safe Haven for Victims of
Domestic Violence
- Court Advocacy and Escort
- Witness Preparation

If you have any questions or you need assistance regarding victim rights and services, please call Ms. Fayez at (703) 922-0889 or visit the VSS website at www.co.fairfax.va.us/ps/police.

CITIZENS POLICE ACADEMY

The Citizens Police Academy (CPA) is still seeking participants to attend the 7th CPA session this spring. The CPA is a 30-hour program designed to provide members of the public a better understanding of the operation of the police department and the daily challenges faced by our officers. Students will be afforded the opportunity to learn about Department resources, programs and most importantly the men and women who comprise an organization nationally recognized as a leader in the law enforcement community.

The next academy will begin March 31, 2005, at the Fairfax County Criminal Justice Academy and will run until June 4, 2005. Nine of the ten classes will be held on Thursday evenings from 6:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. The final class will be held on a Saturday from 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Class locations will rotate to various police facilities throughout the county.

Applicants are required to live or work in Fairfax County and be at least 18 years of age and able to provide their own transportation to and from training. Acceptance into the course is subject to review of the applicant's criminal record and police contact history. Only two class absences are permitted. For more information, or to register for the class, please call Donna Spiewak at (703) 280-0524 or email her at Donna.Spiewak@fairfaxcounty.gov.

JOB OPPORTUNITY-CROSSING GUARDS

The Franconia District Station still has position vacancies for two crossing guards. The starting salary is \$11.25-\$14.99 per hour. If you are interested, or would like more information regarding this position, please call (703) 922-0889.

2004-05 FRANCONIA CAC BOARD MEMBERS

Chair:	Sue Hotto	(703) 354-1988	email (sue.hotto@gallaudet.edu)
1st Vice Chair:	Jose Saul Rubio	(703) 541-1026	
2nd Vice Chair:	Dave Thompson	(703) 922-5062	
Secretary:	Elizabeth Rodriguez	(703) 339-4718	
Treasurer:	Glenn Bilger	(703) 960-2956	
Past Chairs:	Beverly Cherkis	(703) 971-2326	
Chief's Council:	Woody Betts	(703) 971-0520	
	Norm Cherkis	(703) 971-2326	

POLICE DEPARTMENT PROGRAMS

MATURE OPERATOR'S DRIVER IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (MODIP)

The Fairfax County Police Department offers residents 55 years of age and older enrollment in the Mature Operator's Driver Improvement Program (MODIP). This eight-hour course, which provides safe driving information, is sanctioned by the American Automobile Association (AAA) and is presented by certified Fairfax County Auxiliary Police Officers. Upon completion of this course, drivers are eligible for the Virginia state-mandated insurance premium reduction (check with individual insurance carriers for the amount). The classes are held the second Saturday of each month at the Franconia Police Station located at 6121 Franconia Road. The next MODIP class will be held on Saturday, March 12, 2005, from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Subsequent classes are scheduled for April 9, 2005, and May 14, 2005. Registration is required and can be done by contacting the MODIP reservation line at (703) 924-6588 or (703) 280-0621. The fee for this course is \$10.00 per person for books and materials.

SEXUAL ASSAULT FREE AND EMPOWERED (SAFE)

In the United States a woman is assaulted every six minutes. Three out of four women will experience at least one violent crime in their lifetimes. Could you effectively defend yourself if attacked? SAFE is a woman's self-defense program that teaches realistic self-defense tactics and techniques. The program begins with awareness, prevention, risk reduction and avoidance. It then progresses to the basics of hands-on defense training. To learn more about SAFE or to register for the course, please call (703) 246-7806.

FRANCONIA POLICE STATION SERVICES

Please contact the crime prevention office at (703) 922-8263 or e-mail us at fracpo@fairfaxcounty.gov for more information on the following services:

Franconia Focus Newsletter and Weekly Crime Report: If you are interested in being on our e-mail / mailing list for the monthly "Focus on Franconia" Newsletter or on the e-mail list for the Weekly Crime Report, please contact us to sign up.

Home/Business Security Assessments: Are you concerned about the safety and security of your home or business? If so, call us to schedule a free security assessment. We will make recommendations and offer suggestions on how you can better safeguard your home or business.

Neighborhood Watch Training: We will not be scheduling any more monthly training sessions at the station due to the low turnout of people. If your community is interested in receiving Neighborhood Watch training, please call us and we will schedule a time to come to your community and give the training.

VIN Etching: The vehicle identification number is etched into the windows of your car to help reduce the risk of vehicle theft. Please contact us to schedule an appointment.

Franconia District Police Station
6121 Franconia Road
Alexandria, Virginia 22310
Main Phone: (703) 922-0889
Fax : (703)719-6436

Captain Maggie DeBoard
Station Commander

Lieutenant Lloyd B. Gamble
Assistant Commander

Email: fracapt@fairfaxcounty.gov

IMPORTANT PHONE NUMBERS

Child Safety Seat Inspection Hotline
(703) 280-0559

Citizen Reporting Unit
(703) 922-2230

For reports not requiring an officer
Allow 24-72 hour call back time
OR

On-line Reporting

www.fairfaxcounty.gov, public safety-police

Fairfax County Crime Solvers
(703) 691-8888 or 1(866) 411-TIPS

Fairfax County Police
Emergency: 911
Non-Emergency: (703) 691-2131