RECAP OF CHIEF WOOLERY'S PRESENTION AT THE ANNUAL MEETING
JANUARY 17, 2012

The Board wants to thank Chief Woolery for attending the annual meeting and offering input related to the criminal activity that took place in Hidden Valley on January 10.

Even though the activities were certainly unsettling, he wanted to point out that sadly this type of thing isn't unique to Hidden Valley. That evening there were a number of incidents that took place in areas in addition to Hidden Valley--north of 70th and west of Hardwood. A truck was stolen north of 70th Street. It was later recovered near Oakwood Park. Stolen items were found in and around the truck and also in the Hidden Valley area. As of Tuesday, they had no leads, but sometimes leads are generated when thieves attempt to sell stolen property. He said that often times it is groups of people who come into areas like ours who live in other parts of the city. They are usually looking for purses that might contain items that can be used in identity theft schemes.

Last year there were 84 police calls to the Hidden Valley area from a total of 22,000 calls. He indicated that Hidden Valley does not represent a problem area in terms of police calls over all. When asked what we could do to secure ourselves, he indicated: locked doors, alarm systems, pets, neighbors watching out for each other, and to be wary of solicitors. Solicitors need to display a permit and everyone should ask to see that permit. There have been problems with solicitors coming only to case things out and look for future opportunities to come back and rob. And as he noted earlier, do not leave garage door openers in cars that may be parked outside.

A resident asked about extra patrols and Chief Woolery said that extra patrols have been assigned to our area. In fact, that night four officers had been assigned.

In August, we will be able to access crime statistics through a new GIS based system on the Washington County website. We would just click on our location of interest and information related to police calls and such will be displayed.

ABOVE ALL, Chief Woolery told us to call the police. Never feel hesitant because you feel what you might be witnessing or have experienced isn't important enough to report.

He said one very important thing we could do would be to start Neighborhood Crime Watch blocks. Blocks of 13-16 residents form a group. The police department will train a Block Captain from that group in ways to improve home security, enhance personal safety and immediately report suspicious activity to the police. The "blocks" can then meet to exchange ideas and formulate plans for securing their part of the neighborhood. What a great idea to not only enhance security, but to get to know your neighbors better. If anyone is interested in forming a block, the Board is ready to help in any way they can.

Please fill out the Contact Form on the website if you would have an interest in taking part and I will start plotting that interest on a map. That might be an easy way to organize areas. Currently there are 68 active Neighborhood Watch Blocks.

Another thing Chief Woolery encourages is to sign up for the CodeRED system. Briefly, the CodeRED system is an emergency notification system which allows the city to alert citizens to drinking water contamination, utility outages, evacuation notices, missing persons, fires, floods, bomb threats, hostage situations, chemical spills, gas leaks and other emergency incidents where rapid and accurate notification is essential for life safety. More information can be found by going to www.cottage-grove.org and clicking on the What Is CodeRED link under the CodeRED icon on the left side of the home page. Click on the following link in order to register online: https://cne.coderedweb.com/Default.aspx?groupid=PSvx49ONBSaFgDcRA58v%2bA%3d%3d

If I see areas forming where setting up Crime Watch Blocks appears to be of interest, I will try to help connect people. Please remember to reply if you are interested in being part of a block.

Sue Stoner
HVHA Administrative Assistant