



On Call



A community news publication of the Arlington, Texas Police Department

30 Years of Compassion and Support for Crime Victims

When his only child was murdered in 2014, Michael found support from the Arlington Police Department's Victim Services Unit.

Counselors did more than provide him with packets of grief support materials.

"They called me every week, talked with me and helped me get through the hard times," he said during a recent interview.

This month, the Victim Services Unit is being recognized for three decades of helping victims like Michael get through the short and long term effects of being traumatized by crime.

On Aug. 8, they will receive a proclamation from the Mayor and Arlington City Council at City Hall.

The unit started in August 1987 with two volunteers, a typewriter, telephone and fax machine.

Much has changed in 30 years, said Victim Services Unit Supervisor Nikki Rosenboom who joined the team in 2002. Over the years, the unit has expanded its resources while garnering state and national awards for the work being done to advance victim rights.

Today, there's a staff of 11, which includes ten counselors who hold master's degrees and provide crisis intervention and assist with protective orders. They help victims and their families apply for compensation to assist with funeral and medical expenses and make home visits to check on the welfare of repeat victims of domestic violence.



Counselors on a home visit.

Counselors say helping to ease trauma has many benefits. For example, crisis intervention can help a victim more easily recall important details about a crime.



Congratulations! The Victim Services Unit turns 30 years old. Click [here](#) to watch a special Inside APD.

"We work with victims to ensure they are aware of and understand the full range of services that can help them through a crisis and assist them in rebuilding their lives," Rosenboom said.



Providing support at a crime scene.

Michael is on a path to rebuilding his life, thanks to the Victim Services Unit and he's helping others who are coping with loss. He is one of six members of the department's first Traumatic Grief Support Group.

Started in April 2017, this program is eight weeks of grief support for families who have lost a loved one to a traumatic crime such as murder or a fatality auto crash.

Arlington Police Chief Will Johnson said the compassion and support being provided to victims by this unit are essential to the department's mission and core values. Click [here](#) to read more.

WHAT WE DO ...

10,500
Crime victims served annually

4,500
Domestic violence victims assisted annually

6,250
Hours of outreach per year

30
Years of providing crisis intervention, counseling and support to victims of crime

Let's Start a Neighborhood Watch!

The first in a two-part series that follows Arlington neighborhoods as they prepare for National Night Out on Tuesday, Oct. 3.

Barrie Page Hill didn't know where to start, so she sent an email to the Arlington Police Department.

The UT Arlington academic advisor lives and works in a quaint, tree-lined neighborhood that borders the College Park area between Mesquite Street and Nedderman Drive. A 66-acre city park opened here in June with a pavilion and hike and bike trails.

"Many of us have concerns about increasing crime in the area," Barrie wrote in her email. "I would like to start a Neighborhood Watch. We're hoping to participate in National Night Out as well."



Signing in at the first Neighborhood Watch meeting.

Crime Prevention Officer Kimberly Fretwell responded. She explained how a Neighborhood Watch works and how to start one.

It was enough information for Barrie to set into motion a plan to get her neighbors on board.

At her computer, she designed a flyer inviting neighbors to an Ice Cream Social in the park. She went door to door, introducing herself, posting flyers and gauging citizen interest in a Neighborhood Watch.

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JULY CRIME PREVENTION SPOTLIGHT SOUTH POLICE DISTRICT

Enhancing Police/Community Relations Over Coffee and Conversation

This summer, the Arlington Police Department South Police District partnered with Chick-fil-A for our very first Coffee With A Cop. On a busy Saturday morning, close to 180 customers entered the South Cooper Street location for breakfast, hot coffee and a chance to interact with Arlington officers.



Store owner and operator Wayne Hassler said it was important for his restaurant to be a part of this program.

"I think one of the biggest problems we have in our society is a lack of communication," he said. "Sometimes, we don't communicate well with one another."

"Anything we can do to help facilitate healthy dialogue and promote positive police and community relations, we are proud to do it," he said.

The two-hour program included Deputy Chief Jim Lowery, south district patrol officers and supervisors.

There were plenty of photographs with children and a look inside a patrol car to learn more about police work.

South Police District Coordinator Sharon Jones assisted in the planning.

"It was such a success that we're planning to do this again and host quarterly events at other locations in south district," she said.

The department will use social media and other traditional forms of communication to get the word out.

Thank you, Chick-fil-A, for partnering with us.



Coffee With A Cop is part of a national program that brings police officers and community members together to discuss issues and learn more about each other.



The main goal is to open lines of communication in a casual atmosphere over coffee.

Officer Timothy Hayden is a Crime Prevention Officer in the South Police District. He can be reached at 817-459-6468 or Timothy.Hayden@Arlingtontx.gov. Looking for more crime prevention highlights from police districts? Visit us on the web at www.ArlingtonPD.org.

Inside Their First Neighborhood Watch Meeting



6:30 P.M. SUNDAY, JUNE 28

Neighbors began leaving their homes, walking to the Julia Burgen Linear Park. Barrie and her husband were overjoyed as they waited underneath the pavilion. They worried if there would be enough ice cream bars. "The response is amazing," Barrie told the group. "The goal of a Neighborhood Watch is a safer neighborhood, but a side benefit is a more vibrant community where we talk with one another and lend a helping hand when someone is in need."

Following introductions, a clipboard was passed around and everyone was asked to sign in and provide contact information.

APD Crime Prevention Specialist Michelle Benjamin stepped forward as a speaker.

"Neighborhood Watch is one of the oldest and most effective crime prevention programs in the country," she said. "We count on people just like you to organize and work with their local law enforcement

to keep a trained eye and ear on their communities."

Neighbors were also eager to know more about National Night Out, which is Tuesday, Oct. 3.

"It's a big celebration of police and community partnerships," Michelle said. "People gather outdoors to connect with their neighbors for a united stand against crime in their neighborhoods."

There are block parties, gatherings on front lawns, at churches, apartment complexes and in parks.

All in attendance said, "yes to National Night Out!"



Neighbors discuss safety concerns.

6:30 P.M. THURSDAY, JULY 13

A second meeting was held at the same location in the park. A police sergeant along with Officer Fretwell were present to talk about crime and address concerns such as speeding, noise and safety in the park at night.

"After only two meetings, it's great to see how the residents are coming together to make their neighborhood a terrific place to live," Michelle said.

The neighbors also decided on a name. They are the Julia Burgen/College Oaks Neighborhood Watch.



Neighborhood Watch Organizer Barrie Page Hill

WHAT'S NEXT?

"Our next step is to join Nextdoor and enhance our level of communication with one another," Barrie said.

Future plans could include a merger with the neighboring South of Border Neighborhood Watch to welcome more homeowners, businesses and apartments.

"We are also getting ready for our first National Night Out," she said this week.

Neighbors have decided on a pot luck under the pavilion. They registered their gathering on the APD website.

"If we can do it, anyone can," Barrie said. "We don't have to do it all, but each of us working together can do a little."

Click [here](#) for more behind the scene highlights. NEXT MONTH: On Call introduces the the Emerald Parks Neighborhood Watch.



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Send story ideas and comments to the Editor:

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www.ArlingtonPD.org