As Spring prepares to tease us with its warmer sun and longer days, signs of new beginnings are aplenty throughout our neighborhoods. Outdoor community events are already being announced as excited children (and parents) mark their calendars for those time honored customs that constitute the Rites of Spring. A new beginning at PGPD's District 1 is also underway with the publication of this very first edition of The District 1 Connect. The title of this bi-weekly newsletter came to us rather easily. After all, what is it that we've really been trying hard to accomplish over the last couple of years with our energized police-community partnership? Our connection with each other isn’t a luxury. It’s a necessity that, since realized, has jettisoned Prince George's County to the top of the metropolitan region with our crime reductions and innovative strategies.

Each issue, we'll highlight recent events and profile some folks who are VIPs to both our police department and community. We'll also offer tips that will better prepare our residents to be equal partners with our police department in our crime fighting endeavors. The District 1 Connect, in other words, will in short order serve to inspire an even greater sense of responsibility in us all. Our inaugural edition has been realized thanks to the efforts of its editor, Corporal Lori McCann. This newsletter will ultimately succeed, and improve, with your participation. Please electronically forward it to your friends and neighbors. Hard copies in black & white will be available as well. Just send Corporal McCann an email at ldmccann@co.pg.md.us, and we'll deliver a supply to you.

Finally, I’d like to encourage each and every one of you to attend a District 1 Town Hall meeting on Saturday, March 15 from 10:00 a.m. until noon at William Wirt Middle School in Riverdale Heights. This community forum will feature Chief of Police Melvin C. High and others as we gather to discuss crime and quality of life issues that are in need of our very best efforts in the days to come. Please bring a friend or neighbor for what I'm certain will be a productive exchange of ideas and concerns. Enjoy this very first edition of The District 1 Connect!

Ms. Laverne Williams, born Gladys Laverne Peterson on March 25, 1926, is the eldest of 13 children. She grew up in a small town in Ohio, and moved to Washington, DC during WWII where she gained employment at Howard University. Ms. Williams served as the secretary to the school president for 15 years. During the civil rights movement, she was the first African-American to work at the Department of Justice's Attorney General’s office. The Attorney General at that time was none other than Robert F. Kennedy. Ms. Williams later worked for a federal judge in the United State's Circuit Court. She has two daughters, one granddaughter, and one great-granddaughter. Her eldest child, a son, passed away at the tender age of five.

Ms. Williams is currently the president of the Lewisdale Citizens' Association. She has resided in Lewisdale for 18 years. As president, she organizes and conducts monthly community meetings, stays current with county laws, and is instrumental in working with other residents to suppress criminal activity in her community. Ms. Williams quickly notifies the appropriate agency when something is amiss. She has received numerous accolades for her community service, to include a Certificate of Merit for Crime Prevention from Governor Paris Glendening and an Honorary Police Officer badge from Major Davis. The badge is beautifully encased in glass so, as Ms. Williams chuckles, “I won't go out and flash it at people!” Ms. Williams is a true gem to Lewisdale and its residents. We are fortunate and honored to have her in this great District 1 community!
Community Response Team: Making a Difference!

The Community Response Team (CRT) recently concluded its first 2008 anti-graffiti outing. Under the leadership of Captain Hector Velez, the CRT assisted neighborhoods recently targeted by vandals. Over 3,500 square feet of graffiti were removed from more than one dozen sites. Working with community leaders like Ms. Marty Newman of Riverdale Heights, our Gang Unit identified and arrested three juveniles responsible for much of the graffiti in the Riverdale and New Carrollton communities.

The District 1 Anti-Graffiti initiative began in 2006 when Major Davis and County Councilman Will Campos partnered to address this issue that detracts from our quality of life. County Councilmen Dernoga, Harrington, and Hendershot all contributed to this innovative endeavor. U-haul of Metro D.C. also demonstrated similar support by donating a trailer to facilitate transportation of the anti-graffiti equipment. The CRT continues to enjoy support from local businesses, Neighborhood Watch groups, and community associations with their generous paint donations.

Lieutenant John Decker, the senior lieutenant on the PGPD with his 35 years of service, and POFC George Merkel continue to volunteer their off-duty time to remove graffiti from affected District 1 communities. Their leadership has been instrumental in the success of this initiative. In fact, they’ve just recently trained our entire CRT on the unexpected nuances associated with the removal of graffiti (hint: it’s messy and the gasoline powered equipment is often very sensitive!). The CRT has assumed primary responsibility for the District 1 Anti-Graffiti initiative, and will be very active across District 1 as the weather warms.

In the meantime, residents are urged to report graffiti to our hotline at (301) 699-2980, or by sending an email to Police_GraffitiRemoval@co.pg.md.us.

Patrol Squads: On the Beat in Your Neighborhood!

The backbone of every police force is its uniformed patrol officers driving in marked patrol cars. Our patrol officers are known as beat officers. They wear this title because they are assigned a geographic area known as a patrol beat.

We’ve recently taken the beat officer concept to the next level with the establishment of roll call beat books. These beat books are a source of information that the beat officers and detectives populate with reports, photographs, and notes specific to activity occurring in their beats. These roll call beat books are checked daily for updates by beat officers and detectives.

To facilitate the timely flow of information to and amongst our beat officers and detectives, Corporal Kristine Currie (our crime analyst) provides a daily crime snapshot via email to beat officers and detectives that is geographically specific.

Beat meetings are also held with our beat officers and detectives on a rotating and periodic basis. Information is shared amongst beat officers and detectives in an environment that promotes a dynamic exchange of information, ideas, and solutions for problem solving. As patrol officers and detectives get to know each other better, their service to our neighborhoods and businesses continues to improve.

We will soon be inviting community leaders to our beat meetings. This will promote an even greater relationship between District 1 and our residents.

Captain Dan Lipsey is the steady force that continues to drive the success of our beat book program. While its premise is as old as policing itself, our success with this traditional policing tool rests squarely with the now established formality of interactions and conversations that must occur for our communities to benefit from our collaborative and dynamic efforts.

District 1 Traffic Stop Productivity: ’04-’07

![District 1 Traffic Stop Productivity: ’04-’07](image)
Lieutenant John Decker: Like a Rock!

John S. Decker was born in Pennsylvania in 1950. His family later moved to Landover Hills. During the summer of 1968, John had a brief conversation with a Prince George's County police officer, and immediately aspired to join the PGPD. Following a tour in the U.S. Marine Corp, John joined the PGPD in 1973 and was assigned to District 1. As he walked into roll call for the first time, he was reunited with the police officer who inspired his career choice, Sergeant Jack Letzkus. They quickly became best friends.

Lieutenant Decker's career with the department has taken him from District 1 to District 2 (Bowie), District 5 (Clinton), and District 6 (Beltsville). In 1984, he and Sergeant Clyde Montgomery began what is now the Repeat Offenders Unit. He was a member of the District 6 ACTION Team, a highly decorated unit. Lieutenant Decker was promoted to lieutenant in 1994, and returned to District 1 in 2003. When asked to describe the best part of his career, Lieutenant Decker says it has been his membership of an "...elite brotherhood."

Lieutenant Decker was instrumental in assisting Major Davis with erecting the Memorial for Fallen District 1 Police Officers in 2006. Major Davis is among many others who describe Lieutenant Decker as a PGPD legend. "I consider it one of the greatest highlights and honors of my career to have worked with the likes of John Decker."

Identity Theft: Protect Your Greatest Assets-YOU!

In recent years, Identity Theft has become the fastest growing crime in the United States. Over 10 million individuals become victims each year, with losses totaling over $50 billion. Identity theft occurs when someone uses your personal information - name, social security number, birthdate, etc. without your knowledge, to commit fraud or other crimes. With this information, credit lines are established, loans are obtained, even new lives are established! Imagine getting your credit report and discovering that someone purchased a home in Arizona using your credentials? It has happened! You can protect yourself and your assets. First, obtain a copy of your credit report. If you discover any discrepancies, contact the Equifax credit bureau at 800-525-6285, to have a fraud alert placed on your SSN. All credit bureaus will be updated. Memorize your SSN, don’t carry it with you. Review your credit report and monthly statements and bills. If you find discrepancies, notify those agencies. Take all transaction receipts with you. Collect your mail daily. Shred all financial information, including old bills. Don’t carry PIN numbers or passwords with you. And if you find that you have been victimized, contact your local police department to file a police report. Remember, only YOU can truly protect your assets!

Ms. June Prettyman: Our Unsung Hero!

June Prettyman is Major Davis' administrative aide. She has been assigned to District 1 for 14 years of her 25 years with the PGPD. Ms. Prettyman began her career with the PGPD on Halloween day in 1982. She was initially assigned to District 6 (Beltsville), and then transferred to District 1, where she remained for 10 years. Following a promotion, Ms. Prettyman worked in Planning, our Firearms Examination Unit, Management Services, and then returned to District 1 in 2003.

Ms. Prettyman is a true asset to District 1, and credits her longevity with District 1 to “…the wonderful people I get to work with every day!” Ms. Prettyman is an avid traveler, visiting such places as Hawaii and France (7 times!). She hopes to add Alaska to the list. She is also quite the chef, and loves to prepare French cuisines such as coq au vin. Ms. Prettyman adores her two cats, Wolfie and Emme! “June’s steadfast dedication inspires me each day,” proclaimed Major Davis.
Book ‘em! District 1 Ends Asian Courier Robbery String

The District I Robbery Suppression Team (RST) successfully closed a series of Asian food delivery driver robberies during February, 2008. This troubling robbery string included offenses in Washington, DC, Montgomery County, Takoma Park, and Prince George’s County.

Our RST supervisor, Sergeant Brian Reilly, recognized a pattern used by the suspects to complete the robberies and also noticed similar offenses in neighboring jurisdictions. The suspects placed bogus calls to carryouts, and directed the driver to an unoccupied residence close to the business. Once the driver would arrive, the suspects committed the robbery, and each time made good their escape in a waiting vehicle.

Sergeant Reilly coordinated the effort to identify and track the robberies, notified and solicited cooperation from other affected law enforcement agencies, and provided the Asian carryouts in District I with preventive measures to safeguard their drivers. PGPD orchestrated several collaborative crime briefings that included detectives from District 1, PGPD’s Criminal Investigation Division, the Metropolitan Police Department - Fourth District, the Montgomery County Police Department, and the United States Marshal’s Service.

This collaboration of law enforcement professionals resulted in a successful operation in Lewisdale that included the arrests of the serial robbers responsible for this crime spree. A job well done!

Investigative Section: Let’s Double-Team Property Crime!

Commanded by Lieutenant Bernard Snowden, our Investigative Section is responsible for the investigation of all property crimes. Burglaries, thefts, and stolen cars are all preventable crimes with effective police-community partnerships. Simple, low cost techniques can be utilized to safeguard valuable electronic devices, prevent automobile theft, and deter residential & commercial burglaries. During the next several issues, we will highlight a criminal offense and offer some tips that YOU can undertake immediately.

Automobile theft is one such issue. Park your vehicle in a well lit and populated area. Roll up windows, lock doors, and take your keys. Use anti-theft devices such as steering wheel locks, alarms, and LOJACK. Enroll your vehicle in the Watch Your Car Program that authorizes police officers to stop your vehicle between the hours of 1 and 5 am. When leaving your vehicle for repairs or at an attended parking facility, only leave the ignition key. Finally, never leave your vehicle’s engine running unattended for any reason. It’s better to have a cold car than no car!

Municipal Chief Profile: Chief Doug Holland of Hyattsville City

Chief Holland is in his 36th year of law enforcement and has been the Chief of the Hyattsville City Police Department for nine years. Prior to coming to Hyattsville City, Chief Holland served with the PGPD for 25 years and retired as a Major while commanding the Training & Personnel Services Division.

Chief Holland has earned a BA Degree in Law Enforcement at the University of Maryland, and is a graduate of the Johns Hopkins University Police Executive Leadership Program where he earned a Master of Science Degree in Management. Chief Holland is a member of the International Association of Chiefs of Police and the Police Executive Research Forum. He has served as President of the Maryland Chiefs of Police Association and the Police Chiefs Association of Prince George’s County. Chief Holland is the Chairman of the law Enforcement Torch Run to benefit Special Olympics Maryland, and also serves on the Board of Directors for the Community Crisis Services, Inc.

Chief Holland, his wife Susan, and their daughter Desiree have resided in the City of Hyattsville for 26 years.