

**Neighborhood Watch Coordinator's Meeting
Indian River Sheriff's Administration Building
September 30, 2009**

The meeting was attended by over 35 NW Coordinators and representatives from the Indian River Sheriff's Office. They included: Deryl Loar, Sheriff; Sergeant Ric Vidiri and Deputy Roberta Barker both from Crime Prevention and Neighborhood Watch Program; and Ken Wilson from the Treasure Coast Crime Stoppers.

The meeting was opened with the "Pledge of Allegiance" followed by a "Moment of Silence" for all who protect us including the Armed Forces; Crime Prevention Officers and Firefighters.

Sheriff Loar reviewed the progress and plans for the Sheriff's Office. He was pleased to announce that they received a recent grant for \$ 200,000 to purchase a "Mobile Crime Scene Bus" which should greatly improve the investigation process.

He also emphasized that the Indian River County area has been hit very hard this summer by "Car Hoppers" and the perpetrators found many easy marks in unlocked vehicles. The area hit the hardest is between 4th Street SW and 12th Street on the north and south and between 27th Avenue and 43rd Avenue on the east and west.

Sergeant Ric Vidiri reviewed the importance of marking all valuables with some identification or having photos of these important valuables. A recent incident occurred at Indian River Estates when some valuable jewelry was stolen from a resident. In their investigation the IRCISO's Deputies were happy to find that the victim had photos of all her jewelry and most pieces were marked with identification. Since all Pawn Shops are required to report property purchased to the IRCISO they were able to identify some of the stolen pieces. Through continuing investigation they identified the perpetrator and arrested her. She was a temporary caregiver to the victim. The ironic part of the incident is that the victim had to pay the Pawn Shop to get her property back according to Florida Law. Her only recourse is to try to get her money back from the perpetrator, (slim chance of that).

Ken Wilson, a representative from Crime Stoppers of the Treasure Coast discussed his organization's role in solving crimes.

TCCS is a non-profit organization that collects information on crimes and provides these tips to the investigating organizations. As he mentioned, many eye witnesses are reluctant to get involved for fear of retaliation. The Crime Stopper program is set up to keep the tipster or informant completely anonymous. No records are kept of informant's name and/or telephone number, instead you are given a code number to follow up for reward purposes. Another method of reporting is by using the TCCS Web Site and all the personal information the tipster provides is encrypted and impossible to decipher.

The participation in this program is growing every month since the tipster is confident that their identity is kept secret and a monetary reward of up to \$1,000 could be forthcoming. All investigation is tied to the assigned tip number and names; addresses; phone numbers; or e-mail addresses are never used. Arrangements to collect awards are made through Banks or Pharmacies and are always awarded using only the tip number.

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The overall Florida Crime Stopper Program has resulted in many successful investigations and solving of crimes with no identification of the tipster. The program has paid out over \$ 2 million dollars in rewards. Most local newspapers include information on the Treasure Coast Crime Stoppers Program. Anyone that witnesses a crime that call in a tip anonymously to 1-800-273-8477 or submit your tip online at the TCCS Web Site (www.tcwatch.org).

**Guy Bacci
Arbor Trace
Neighborhood Watch Coordinator**