



Volunteer

Nomination Contact Information

Name of Person or Group Being Nominated

Name / Agency / Business Name: TAMI SPYKER

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Nominated By

Name: CHIEF MICHAEL RADZILOWSKI

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Bradenton Police Department

BRADENTON, FLORIDA
MICHAEL RADZILOWSKI
CHIEF OF POLICE

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August 12, 2013

Florida Crime Prevention Association
C/O Ms. Laura Passanesi
800 S.E. Monterey Road
Stuart, FL 34994

Dear Award Committee Member(s):

I would like nominate Ms. Tami Spyker, who serves as the Neighborhood Watch Liaison to the Bradenton Police Department. Ms. Spyker has earned the moniker "The Hawk," due to her keen eye on reporting suspicious persons, and never-ending efforts to reduce crime in our city.

Ms. Spyker has served as the Neighborhood Watch Liaison since May 24, 2011, but has been a volunteer for the City of Bradenton Police Department since 2009. Ms. Spyker's responsibilities include, but are not limited to:

1. Recruiting residents for the Neighborhood Watch program by way of walking through targeted neighborhoods, safety fairs, and community events.
2. Training residents for the Neighborhood Watch program, including personal safety/residential security practices.
3. Supervising over 3,500 members, forming (77) seventy-seven neighborhood watch groups (as of July 24, 2013) including linking all groups through a telephone chain system, retraining of groups on bi-monthly basis, linking all Neighborhood Watch groups with E-mail alerts, and coordinating efforts between the watch members and the Bradenton Police Department.
4. Averaging a remarkable 200 hours of volunteer service to the Neighborhood Watch program per month, and has volunteered over 9,000 hours to the Neighborhood Watch program.
5. Developed and publishes a monthly newsletter regarding the Neighborhood Watch. This newsletter includes safety tips, information about recent scams, fraud alerts and information disseminated from the Bradenton Police Department. The Newsletter also includes Neighborhood Watch meeting reminders, and a cooking recipe to share with everyone.
6. Ms. Spyker makes herself available 24/7 to answer calls, and e-mails from residents in order to initiate telephone chain alerts.



Ms. Spyker has been given the following designations:

1. In April of 2012, Ms. Spyker was awarded the National Crime Prevention Specialist Designation (NCPS) by the National Crime Prevention Council – one (1) of thirty-one (31) individuals in the United States with this designation.
2. In September of 2011, Ms. Spyker was awarded the Florida Crime Prevention Practitioner's Designation (FCPP) from the Florida Attorney General's Office. Training included sixty-four (64) hours of Basic and Advanced Crime Prevention through Environmental Design.
3. In July of 2011, Ms. Spyker took it upon herself attend a one hundred-twenty (120) hours of Basic Crime Prevention, Residential and Commercial Applications training class that was presented by the Florida Attorney General's office.

Ms. Spyker has received the following Awards:

1. In June of 2013, Ms. Spyker was the co-recipient of the Florida Police Chiefs Association's (FPCA) "Rocky Pomerance Award for Law Enforcement Excellence" in partnership with the Bradenton Police Department for the Liaison Communication Project that was spearheaded by Ms. Spyker.
2. In October of 2012, Ms. Spyker was the co-recipient of the International Association of Chiefs of Police's "Finalist Award in Community Policing" in partnership with the Bradenton Police Department for the Liaison Communication Project.

How the City of Bradenton has reduced crime over the past four years with the assistance of the Neighborhood Watch Program.

Many citizens did not know their closest neighbor, felt helpless to change their neighborhoods, felt disconnected with their community, and had minimal contact with the City of Bradenton Police Department. They had developed an apathetic attitude toward their community and the police in general. They questioned responses to calls for service from the Bradenton Police Department. Residents were afraid of burglary, theft and crime against persons. The root of the problem was the lack of communication between the citizens and the Bradenton Police Department. The mission statement of the Bradenton Police Department is to eliminate crime and the fear of crime, to enhance the quality of life for our stakeholders, and to hold ourselves to the highest professional standards of performance and ethics. The Bradenton Police Department is a professional driven organization that will partner with the community to make the City of Bradenton a better place to live, work, visit, and conduct business.

The Liaison Communication Program was initiated by a citizen volunteer by the name of Ms. Tami Spyker. Ms. Spyker's goal was to improve the effectiveness of the community/police relationship through the coordination of efforts; and the continual-circular flow of information. The Liaison program targeted the core of the situation by developing an outlet for the community and the police department to voice their concerns and collectively develop solutions. Bradenton Police Officers are consistently assigned to one geographic zone and held accountable for their own community service requests. Ms. Spyker has trained thousands of residents in crime prevention practices, and how to report suspicious incidences to law enforcement, so the Bradenton Police Department can be alerted about potentially dangerous situations on a more immediate basis, thereby allowing for an increase in the potential apprehension of criminals. This has resulted in a number of calls and informational communications being exchanged by these citizens and the Bradenton Police Department on a daily basis.

Ms. Spyker began the Liaison Communication Project during neighborhood watch meetings. The residents were encouraged to attend meetings, so they could be trained to notice suspicious activity/persons, how to effectively report such activities to the Bradenton Police Department, and how to safely secure their person and homes. The meetings also provide the residents the outlet to voice their concerns regarding their neighborhoods. The community remains in constant contact with the Bradenton Police Department either through service calls, E-mail alerts or contact via Ms. Spyker. The continual, sometimes daily feedback provided to the citizens via Ms. Spyker has facilitated meaningful partnerships between the Bradenton Police Department and the residents. By acting as the "eyes and ears" of the beat officer, the community enhances the potential for safer neighborhoods and decreasing fears of those elderly residents who may be vulnerable. Encouraging the community to take part in the planning process also allows the citizens and the Bradenton Police Department to take on a mutual responsibility for the safety of the neighborhoods, and allows for the continual flow of information to get at the root of the problem and eliminate the fear of crime.

Ms. Spyker provides the residents with the crime statistics and mapping on a monthly basis in order to increase the knowledge of the residents in regard to what may be occurring in their neighborhood or adjoining zone. Ms. Spyker provides valuable feedback to citizens' concerns in the form of E-mail alerts, telephone chain call alerts, public website, and/or direct contact with the resident, which allows the resident to know that their efforts have been successful or that they need to re-examine the potential solution. This direct contact accounts for the increase in community participation desired at all levels of the Bradenton Police Department. The community/police rapport that has developed as a result of Ms. Spyker's efforts has increased the positive responses by the stakeholders, thus increasing the desire of the residents to continue their participation in solving problems alongside the officers.

Ms. Spyker provides the coordination of information between the Bradenton Police Department, Code Enforcement, City Council, businesses and the residents. The residents notify Ms. Spyker of all alerts initiated by the group in order for Ms. Spyker to alert nearby Neighborhood Watch groups to begin their telephone chain alert system. Ms. Spyker takes it upon herself to initiate emergency telephone chain alerts, which are entered by the Bradenton Police Department or a citizen, in order to increase the safety of the residents, as well as the residents being able to assist in providing information on the location of the suspicious persons from the safety of their homes. The first community-wide telephone chain alert took place on May 26, 2010, due to a missing child, which was located within 15 minutes. Since then, this system has been successful in locating numerous missing elderly residents, hospital patients and children. Since the implementation, the crime rate has decreased by 50% where a neighborhood watch group is active.

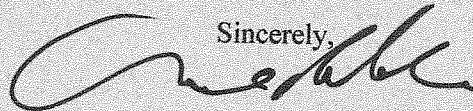
Ms. Spyker recruits, trains, and coordinates all watch groups in two separate zones within the city limits of Bradenton. Additionally, Ms. Spyker maintains open lines of communication with the Bradenton Police Department's Crime Analyst who provides up-to-date crime reports, which in turn Ms. Spyker keeps the residents informed on crime and its location. Ms. Spyker also keeps track of all neighborhood watch meetings and coordinates with the Bradenton Police Department to have an officer present at each meeting.

Ms. Spyker with the assistance of Bradenton Police Department has dramatically increased the enforcement of Bradenton City Ordinances 54.3 and 54.4, which prohibits handbill placement on private property. The neighborhood watch members routinely contact Ms. Spyker when the handbills are found on their property. Ms. Spyker then contacts the owner of the business, and informs them of the potential ordinance violation(s). Ms. Spyker is responsible for tracking the response of the company and after the third contact; the Bradenton Code Enforcement Officer will issue a monetary fine to the business. Coincidentally, this teamwork has decreased Burglaries by 18% within Zone 6.

Results:

1. The Neighborhood Watch Liaison program started with one group in October 2009 with 40 members, and has grown to presently 77 groups with 3,500 members; and established groups are still increasing their membership. Ms. Spyker is also still establishing new groups in other zones within the City of Bradenton.
2. Lastly, City of Bradenton's Neighborhood Watch Liaison program is an exceptional example of citizens uniting to fight crime and apprehend suspects, with zero physical confrontations. Members activate telephone chains to alert neighbors to look out their windows, turn on their lights at night and report suspicious activity. The number of people who can be on the lookout quickly multiplies as the telephone chain progresses. Some 700 volunteers operate the telephone chain, a commendable number of crime fighting civilians working in collaboration with the Bradenton Police Department. Bradenton's Neighborhood Watch Liaison program serves as a model for other communities to emulate.

Sincerely,



Michael Radzilowski
Chief of Police