



Silver Lake Improvement Association Tackles Problems of Crime and Grime on Vendome

Has Vendome gone out of control? Many might say yes. Neighborhood gangs, and not the residents, control it. Graffiti flourishes. Drug deals are common. Street punks have demanded payoff from the homeowners - or else.

Over the past sixty days, the Silver Lake Improvement Association has said "enough is enough" and has selected the Vendome area as one of its chief targets for community improvement.

The Association has developed a plan of patrols and community clean-up to turn the street around. Slowly, progress is being made.

Targeted Clean-Ups

One apartment complex has been an on-going sore spot. Its yard is trashy. Drug-dealing occurs on its premises.

The Association arranged a meeting between the building owner and street residents. The landlord has agreed to hire someone to carry away the trash. He has also agreed to cooperate in evicting any tenants engaged in drug dealing or other crimes.

The Association also has met with police, including Tom Jones of the CRASH (Community Resource Against Street Hoodlums) unit. Since then several arrests have occurred at this location.

Neighborhood Involvement

The Association first became involved with Vendome in March when the street was one of the prime targets for Marathon community cleanup the day before the Los Angeles Marathon.

But the clean-up event helped show how much more was needed. So, on Sunday, April 9, the Association sponsored a neighborhood picnic in a small park on Vendome. Over 100 people showed up.

This picnic was one of the first times many of the street residents had talked to one another. As they talked and shared their anger, it became clear that more needed to be done.

Patrols

The next step was patrols.

"We decided that we needed to have our own presence on the street," said Barbara Dakin, founder of the Association, "and so we formed a group of neighbors from throughout Silver Lake who were willing to walk and patrol the street as a group."

The first patrol was held on Friday, May 19. Over 20 people appeared.

The patrol was quiet and non-confrontive. Its purpose was to be seen, to let others on the street know that the residents are united.

Since that date, additional patrols have been held. In addition, one homeowner on the street has offered her home as a temporary headquarters for the Los Angeles City Protectors, a newly-formed group dedicated to neighborhood safety.

As was shown in previous patrol areas, such as the Council Street area, neighbors sticking together do make a difference.

The problems are far from solved. We need everyone's help to make it truly safe for the children of Vendome to grow up in a crime-free and gang-free environment.

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If you want to help . . .

On-going paint-outs and trash pick-ups are continuing. The street is looking better and is quieting down.

Patrols will be continuing in the Vendome street area. If you want to help, additional patrollers are always welcomed. Please call 413-4221 to schedule a time to join the group. □

When You Need Help: A Resource Directory, cont.

In our last issue, we provided you with a number of useful phone numbers. This month we provide additional ones, with a focus on crime-related activities.

To report life-threatening emergencies, call:
911

To contact your local police station, call:
485-4064 (Rampart)
485-2563 (Northeast)

To obtain information about Neighborhood Watch or the Explorer program, call:
485-4080 (Rampart)
485-2548 (Northeast)

To report gang-related incidents or contact CRASH, call:
485-6580
237-1617 (Rampart)
485-2566 (Northeast)

To report narcotics activity in your neighborhood, call:
1-800-662-BUST

To report drug activity and request undercover agents, call:
485-8065

To provide tips on crimes, call:
1-800-78-CRIME

To report incidents involving illegally parked cars and traffic hazards, call:
485-4041

To make a telephone report, obtain information, or request response to take a burglary report, call:
485-7227 (Rampart)

To inquire about employment as a police officer, call:
485-LAPD

EN ESPAÑOL

Este numero conecta la llamada con un hispano parlante:
485-4333

ASSOCIATIONS JOIN RESOURCES TO OBTAIN ANTI-GRAFFITI FUNDS

Recently, the Silver Lake Improvement Association joined forces with the Central City Action Committee (an Echo Park-based group) and the Bresee Foundation (working in the Westlake and mid-Wilshire area). Together, they generated a graffiti-fighting proposal.

The three organizations expect to be awarded funding by the City of Los Angeles Board of Public Works to develop a program using court referrals (individuals who are assigned community work instead of a fine or prison sentence) to paint out graffiti in our area.

The grant which will cover a six-month trial program includes funds to purchase a sandblaster that will be dedicated to fighting graffiti in our communities. Also included is funding for a paid coordinator/manager, a hot-line for reporting graffiti, paint and other supplies needed by the program.

"We're very optimistic," said Barbara Betlem, one of the writers of the proposal, "that this grant will allow us to make a real difference in decreasing the amount of graffiti in our Silver Lake area." It is expected that the grant will begin on July 1. If the program is successful, additional funding may be available in the future.

Special thanks go out to Barbara Betlem, Lisa Sarno, Jackie Ung, Dennis Frahmann, and Barbara Dakin who worked on preparing an excellent proposal and supported follow-up meetings with the city. We'll update you on the kickoff of the program in our next newsletter. □

Special Thanks . . .

On April 9, the Silver Lake Improvement Association sponsored a neighborhood picnic on Vendome Street. Many local merchants and friends donated food and services to make this a special event. Thanks go out to:

- Bemba's Market
- Corina's Restaurant
- Tim and Joy Hirunpolkul
- Hughes Market
- Ron Medico
- Paul's Market
- Peerless Hardware
- Silver Lake Liquor
- Tom's Burgers
- Tropical Ice Cream Parlor and Bakery □

AWARDS GO OUT

Since its founding, the Silver Lake Improvement Association has awarded four special certificates of recognition.

In April, we awarded three special Graffiti-Busters of the Month Award. These were awarded to:

- Paul Grey
- Rose Garcia
- The children at the Mace-Kingsley school

In May, we presented a special award to Lisa Sarno for her hard work not only in fighting drug dealing but also in serving as the interim president of the Association for six weeks.

If you would like to nominate someone for a special award, please contact Barbara Dakin, 413-4221. □