



NWCP Catches Up With:

Mayor Stephanie Rawlings-Blake

NWCP: Mayor Rawlings-Blake, you come from a political family. Can you say a few words about your relationship with your father and what inspired you to a career in politics?

SRB: From a very early age I got to see both of my parents using their skills and talents to improve our community. My dad did so through elected office and I got to see him solve problems with people who were dealing with discrimination, who were looking for opportunities, looking for someone to be their advocate in government. I got to see from a very early age that one person could make a difference and that inspired me.

NWCP: Your mother was a doctor?

SRB: Yes, my mother was a pediatrician.

NWCP: So you had civil service, service to the community, on the part of both parents.

SRB: Absolutely!

NWCP: I remember when you were elected you were saying that you wanted to be Mayor of Baltimore since you were a little girl.

SRB: My mom is convinced that it was my dream. I remember specifically just wanting to be in elected office. When I was a very young child, I wanted to be a U.S. senator. As I grew older, I was looking for any opportunity to serve. And it's never been about the position for the position's sake, but rather what I've been able to do with that position



to make the city better.

NWCP: What were your primary goals when you took office? Do you feel you've achieved those goals? Which are you most proud of?

SRB: My primary goal was a promise to myself to leave the city in better condition than I found it. I've very proud of many things. We have the country's first long-term fiscal plan to deal with a budget

deficit. I've cut the structural deficit by more than half. I've done more pension reform than any mayor in the country. I've been the lead advocate to bring more than \$1B in school construction to the city, and I am very glad to say that Baltimore is growing as a result of my administration. We're finally dealing with vacant, blighted properties in a comprehensive way. If you look at the number of cranes we have all throughout the city, it's very clear

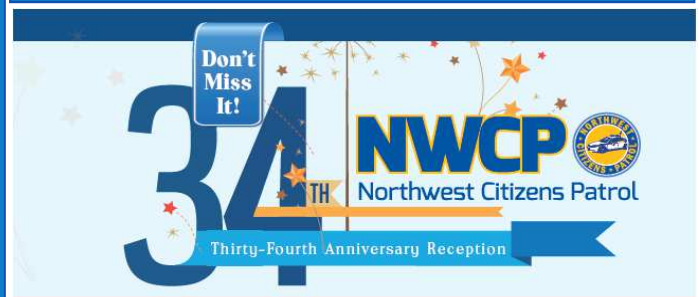
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Spotlight on NWCP: Police Officer Sam Bennet

Dear Friends,

As many of you are aware by now, I have been away from my duties as NWCP liaison for the last five months. My absence was due to a life-threatening issue I had with my heart. The good news is that, thanks to modern medicine and the help of G-d, my cardiologist seems to have successfully addressed my heart issues for the foreseeable future. I have really missed everyone and am happy to report that I am back to work as of

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Please Join us for an Enjoyable Evening of Friendship and Support for the Police Department, City Officials and the NWCP

In Special Tribute to Councilwoman

Rikki Spector

For her 39 Years of Devoted Service to Baltimore City and Our Community

Meet-Greet with

Mayor Elect

Catherine Pugh

and

Councilman Elect

Yitzy Schleifer

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December 3, 2016 • 8:00pm

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WHAT DOES THE NWCP DO?

Auto Theft Protection

It's no fun waking up in the morning and finding your car windows smashed. It's even worse not finding your car at all. A deterrent such as a steering wheel club can prevent both scenarios. An unsecured vehicle is a beacon for the bad guys. Don't be a victim. Purchase a vehicle safety device, and never worry about your car being stolen. Order yours today by calling our office: 410-664-6927. Each club is available for the subsidized price of \$39.



Watch Lieutenant David Folderauer, Baltimore County Police Department, speak about auto theft protection at the NWCP Home and Safety seminar. <http://nwcp.info/cartheft/>

Walking Safety Tips

By: Jonathan Libber

Standard time begins on Sunday, November 6th, which means that more of our activities will occur in the dark, because sunset will be in the late afternoon: school dismissals, return from work, after school activities, etc. In addition, many of us will be out in the mornings before sunrise. Therefore, this is a good time to review some of the precautions we can take to make walking in the dark a safer experience.

Walking in Areas without Sidewalks

There are still some areas in our neighborhoods that do not have sidewalks. This significantly increases the risk of getting hit by a car while walking, particularly after sundown or before sunrise. It is bad enough if there are no sidewalks where you or your children are walking, but three factors substantially increase the risk. First, distracted driving is a continuing problem. Drivers are still using hand-held cell phones and texting while driving, despite this being against the law. Even hands-free cell phone

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that we're seeing a renaissance in our city.

NWCP: Right. The Vacants-to-Value initiative was yours. That's a big deal. So it sounds like you did achieve your goal of leaving Baltimore better than you found it.

SRB: In more ways than one, I have achieved that goal.

NWCP: By the same token, as is well known, your tenure has been marked by tumult, particularly the death of Freddie Gray in police custody and the ensuing unrest and the trials of the officers, drawing the eyes of the nation and probably of the world on Baltimore. How do you feel these events have changed Baltimore?

SRB: I think history will tell that story about how it's changed. I know the commitment I've had to police reform was very clear prior to the tragic death of Freddie Gray. I had done work internally, had hired a police commissioner for the primary focus of reforming the police department, worked with that police commissioner to bring changes to the police department, disbanding the unit in the police that was mainly responsible for the majority of the complaints about excessive force and in-custody deaths. When we felt we had exhausted the internal work we could do, we asked for outside help from the Department of Justice, with a collaborative review. We had undertaken that work when the city experienced the death of Freddie Gray and the unrest. When it was clear that we needed to do more, I asked the Department of Justice for a civil rights investigation, and I've been very committed to making sure that we put in place meaningful and enforceable reforms. I also want to note that before the tragic death of Freddie Gray, I was advocating changes to hold officers more accountable by fighting for reforms and the Law Enforcement Officers' Bill of Rights and I was unsuccessful. It was a very unpopular thing to do prior to the death of Freddie Gray. After the death of Freddie Gray, everybody was trying to say that they were on board with those reforms, but I told people very clearly that the status quo was not going to stand and we needed to work hard to bring more accountability and consequences to officers who had been found guilty of wrongdoing. I'm glad that that track record that I have for fighting for reform is very clear.

NWCP: Are you glad you took the job?

SRB: I've been extremely fulfilled by the opportunity to serve the city for more than 20 years, including my time as Mayor.

NWCP: How do you see the future of Baltimore?

SRB: It's up to the city to determine its future. I'm very optimistic. When I think about the momentum I've created in the city, I get excited. Millennials are

flocking to the city in record numbers; we have the fourth-fastest growing millennial population in the country, which speaks volumes about this next generation's belief, not of where Baltimore is now, but where we're headed in the future.

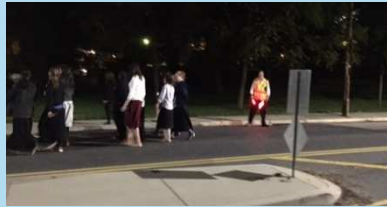
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The NWCP provided traffic control support for Rabbi Frand's annual Teshuva Drasha (lecture), as part of our continued

commitment to the safety of our community. Over 1,500 people attended this event, which was held at Congregation Shomrei Emunah on October 6. While Shomrei Emunah has a sizeable parking lot, it could only accommodate a small percentage of those attending. Thus, NWCP volunteers were needed to both direct traffic and ensure that those walking to the Drasha from their homes and parked cars all around the neighborhood arrived safely. This important service has been provided by the NWCP for over 20 years.



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So I'm very optimistic, but that optimism will not determine the future of the city. What will determine the future of the city is the level of engagement of people of all walks of life making up their mind that they want to be part of the solution of the city.

NWCP: Are you planning to keep your hand in politics, or are you returning to the private sector? Do you know yet what your plans will be?

SRB: A little bit of both.

NWCP: Our organization is the premier citizen's patrol in the country. Would you say a few words about your relationship, or that of the city, with NWCP and their role in keeping Baltimore neighborhoods safe?

SRB: NWCP is one of the strongest citizen's patrols at least on the east coast if not in the country. The work that has been done on such a consistent basis is a model for community engagement throughout our city. I've been a very proud supporter of NWCP and have been very grateful for the support that NWCP has shown me throughout my time serving as a City Councilwoman for that community, as well as my role as City Council President and Mayor.

NWCP: We greatly appreciate your time and want you to know how grateful we are for your leaving Baltimore a better place than you found it, through your hard work, initiative, and forward thinking. Thanks for speaking with us.



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conversations can distract a driver, particularly when the conversation involves some emotional issue. Second, a disturbing number of people drive while under the influence of alcohol or drugs. Third, dark clothing makes seeing someone difficult and adults and teenagers in our community (especially males) tend to wear dark clothing: black suits, dark coats, and dark raincoats. These can make a person invisible at night. The Yated Ne'eman reported that about 50 Orthodox Jewish men and teenagers are struck by cars every year in the United States.

If you must walk where there are no sidewalks, here are a few safety suggestions:

- Wear reflective clothing. In the past, the Chesed Fund has handed out belts to be worn around the waist to help motorists see you. Even better are the bands that go over your shoulder and around your waist. But by far the best are the fully reflective vests highway crews wear.

- Walk facing the traffic. This advice is as old as the hills, but it makes a difference. The last thing you want to do is walk with your back to traffic while wearing dark clothing.

Even when walking on sidewalks after dark, it is still a good idea to wear reflective clothing, given all the drivers who are distracted or under the influence. In addition, even where there are sidewalks, you still sometimes need to cross streets and need to be as visible as possible to traffic, particularly to turning vehicles.

Where There Are Sidewalks, Use Them

While those walking for exercise often prefer the street to the sidewalk, this greatly increases the risk of an accident. Similarly, it is common to see people walking home from shul Friday night in the street instead of on the sidewalk. Not only does this greatly increase the risk of getting hit by a car, but it also causes friction between walkers and drivers. Keep in mind that legally, unless walkers in the street are within (or very close to) a crosswalk, mishaps will be the fault of the walker, not the driver. This means that not only will the injured walker not be able to collect from the driver's insurance, but the driver is perfectly within his rights to sue the walker for damage to his or her car.

Conclusion

As winter draws closer and the dark hours increase, let's remember to use these common-sense safety tips to keep ourselves and our children safe.

We urge everyone to join the ranks of the NWCP. Especially in these times we need every pair of eyes patrolling our neighborhoods to keep our streets safe. Call 410-664-6927 TODAY!



President's Corner

We have just finished a month of Jewish holidays which were beautiful and meaningful for our community. We thank the Baltimore Police Department for the extra security over the holidays. During a pre-holiday meeting with the police and community leaders, we were assured that we would have more police presence than usual. It was evident and visible for all to see that they kept to their word and we are happy to report that crime was down during the holidays.

However, as a community we need to make more of a concerted effort to keep ourselves and our belongings secure. A commander of the local precinct mentioned to me that recently some juveniles were arrested for breaking into cars. During the interrogation, one of the juveniles said that the word on the street among the criminal element is that in Northwest Baltimore, the car doors are left unlocked, and bicycles and other belongings are left unsecured. The commander asks that we get the message out: We need to change our habits. We need to lock our house doors, secure our windows, lock our car doors and secure our belongings so that criminals will not consider us an easy target.

Our annual NWCP Dinner will take place on Saturday night, December 3. We will be honoring Councilperson Rikki Spector for her 39 years of service to the city and our community. We hope you will join us for this very special evening.

Contact 410-664-6927, ext. 8 or rsvp@nwcp.info

Neil

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Officer Bennet, continued from page 1...



Thursday, October 27th. I'm not quite all the way back to full duty, but I will be around most nights to see everyone before patrol. I am looking forward to seeing you all again soon.

I did want to share with all of you what many people would say was a "lucky break." I, however, would call it providence. I was leaving for work on Thursday, May

27th, and when I walked out of my house, there was a dead deer in my driveway! My neighbor, who was outside cutting his grass, said he saw a car strike the deer and saw it run into my yard, where it died just minutes before I came out. The deer was positioned in a way that my wife would have been unable to park her car in the driveway. In addition, it would have been a horrible thing for her to come home to. So there I was, in my uniform, dragging this deer down my yard so Baltimore County could pick it up.

The deer weighed about 200 lbs. I used to hunt deer, so it really should not have been much of a problem for me to move the deer. However, by the time I moved it 30 feet or so to the sidewalk, I was sweating all over and was as winded as if I had just run a mile. Then I started to feel tightness in my chest. I think part of me knew that it was my heart, but the other part of me was in denial. So, I went inside my house, sat down, and drank some water. In a little while, I was feeling pretty good, so I went to work. I told the guys who were on patrol that night the story of how I had a dead deer in my driveway (not a common thing in my experience) and went home as I always do.

I was talking to my wife when I got home about moving the deer, and I did mention to her that I got very winded and had some chest pain when I moved the deer. (This had to have been that other part of me I ignored earlier in the day.) My wife got more than a little concerned about my just ignoring it and going to work. In the prior two months, I had had two or three episodes of what I considered very mild chest pain, and my stamina was not what it had been. After the deer incident, my wife would not let me ignore it anymore. So, Friday morning, while I was still sleeping, she made a doctor's appointment for me and came home early to make sure I went to it.

At this appointment, my general practitioner made a phone call to a colleague in the same professional park, and I was able to get a stress test right away. I failed it badly. Within 48 hours, I was at Union Memorial's Cardiac Catheterization lab to have a stent installed in my artery. They told me I was "lucky" to be alive. My left anterior descending (LAD) coronary artery was 90% blocked. This artery has earned the harsh nickname, the "Widow Maker." This could easily have resulted in a fatal heart attack. One thing we can all take away from this near disaster is not to ignore symptoms like I experienced. None of us likes to admit that we might be seriously ill, but ignoring the symptoms will not solve the problem. If you or a loved one has such symptoms, seek medical help immediately.

It seems that G-d sent that hapless deer onto my driveway to wake me up before it was too late (although I also needed the direct intervention of my wife of 27 years to get me to the doctor). Even though people refer to this as a lucky break, I do not believe in luck. This is all part of divine providence. Now I have to figure out how best to use my new lease on life.

Thanks for taking a moment to read this, and thank you all for the prayers and well wishes I received while I was recovering. It has been a truly humbling experience.

Officer Sam Bennett



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