

York County township lays groundwork for 'Crime Watch' program

BY JOYCE BUPP
Staff Correspondent

KRALLTOWN — A raping of one woman and the assault and abduction of a second spurred residents of Washington Township to turn out in force last Thursday evening for a meeting to lay the groundwork for a rural "Crime Watch" program.

Concern over the increase in petty crime, vandalism and the recent violent episodes brought nearly 200 residents to the Kralltown Elementary School for an initial anti-crime meeting. Before they left, many had signed up to help become the "eyes" and "ears" of this relatively sparsely-populated, 28-square mile township in northwestern York County placed with the 81 miles of rural roads.

Trooper Bob Scutta, crime prevention officer from the York barracks of the Pennsylvania State Police, outlined recommendations on how residents can become more alert to potential crime incidents, including writing down license numbers of unfamiliar vehicles.

"Don't go out patrolling in your pickup with your buddy and your squirrel guns, though," he warned. "That creates more problems than it solves."

Ironically, police statistics show Washington Township to be one of the "low crime" areas of the county. Through 1983, only 35 incidents were reported, representing 2.17 percent of all York County crime. And, for the first quarter of 1984, only three incidents were reported, or .76, less than one percent of the county's total crime.

"Reported" seems to be the key issue of difference between residents concerns and police statistics.

A show of hands among the audience indicated that about three-fourths of those attending the meeting had been victims of some sort of crime during the last decade. Most hands again went up in answer to a follow-up question about how many had reported the incidents.

Still, Trooper Scutta suggested that perhaps too few acts of van-

dalism, and petty thefts are reported to police. That often occurs, he acknowledged, because victims feel it's not worth the bother, or the incident will remain unsolved anyway.

"We may not solve your problem," he added, "but it could help us solve another one somewhere. If you do report it, there's always a chance of solving it; if you don't report it, the chance of catching the lawbreaker is zero. By not reporting, you're hurting yourself."

In response to residents' criticism that there are too few state police patrols in the township, Scutta again urged crime victims to report incidents, citing the traditional "squeaky wheel gets the grease" theory.

After a 39-year-old rural woman was raped several weeks ago in her home, residents became alarmed. When a 16-year-old young woman was abducted ten days later after her car was run off the road, and she was then taken across the county line to Adams County, and raped there, Washington Township residents decided it was time to begin fighting back against the criminal element.

While Trooper Scutta enthusiastically supported the Crime Watch idea, based on neighbors looking out for one another, he vehemently discouraged vigilante-techniques or citizens trying to apprehend lawbreakers on their own.

District Justice Paul Walters of Franklinton, a former York state trooper, echoed many of Scutta's suggestions and emphasized that crime prevention and solving takes three-fold cooperation between citizens, the police and the district justices who pass sentencing.

Walters issued a plea for people who spend a good portion of their time on or near roads, such as highway workers or farmers, to keep alert for strangers or unfamiliar vehicles.

While only three crimes were officially reported during the first quarter of the year, residents comparing notes after the meeting agreed that actual crime numbers



Farms scattered along the 81 miles of rural roads through Washington Township, York County, are a prime target for increasing incidents of theft and vandalism.

reflect a different story.

Known incidents of recent crime include the thefts of a farm tractor, a houseful of furniture, oil and hydraulic jacks and an air compressor, all stolen in different occurrences.

Danger to youngsters, partially due to the isolated, rural nature of the township, is also a concern to many parents, especially after an incident of a driver of a car trying to pick up school-age youngsters.

Philip Grim, a student at Dover High School, shares a bus stop with two younger girls, one of elementary school age and the other a middle-school student. Their stop is a quarter-mile from the nearest home.

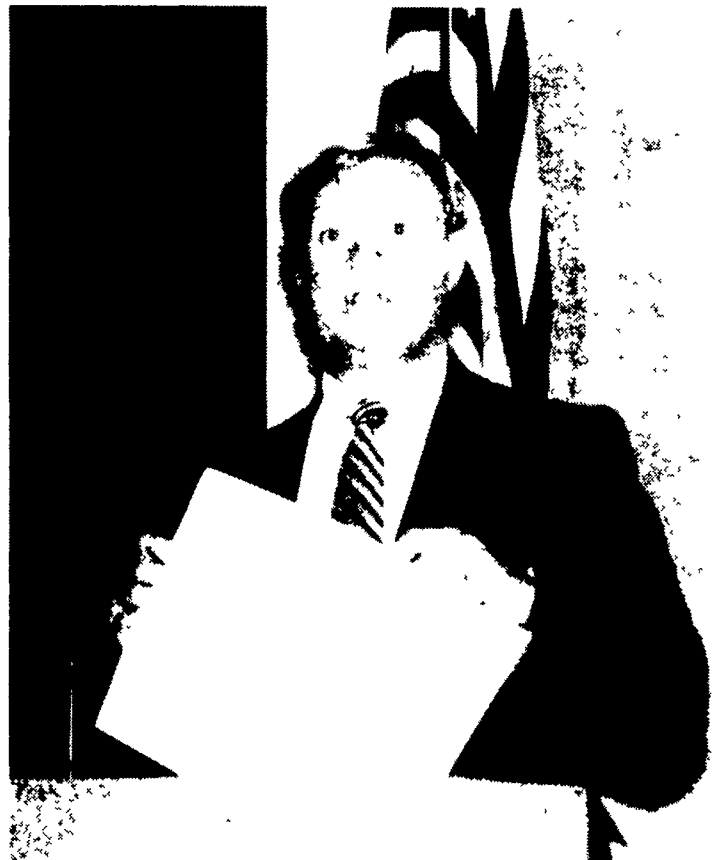
He expresses concern for these younger children since no one is home when they arrive there, and no adult is even close to the stop.

"A lot of these things we're talking about happen out of sight," he said.

Among the proposals of a possible crime watch program could be a sort of "block-parent" provision. Block parents are adults who are usually home when the children arrive from school and would be available to aid youngsters who feel lonely or threatened.

Residents who helped brainstorm the initial crime-watch idea and organize the meeting include Stan Olson, Jim Hoffman and dairy farmer Ralph McGregor, all of R1 East Berlin.

Using the sign-up list of residents willing to help be "eyes and "ears" against crime, organizers now anticipate dividing the township into five areas, possibly appointing block captains and working up



Report it. Write it down. Know your neighbors. These three guidelines are among the crime prevention advice given Kralltown area residents by Trooper Bob Scutta of the Pa. State Police.

telephone calling grids for rapid alert when a problem arises.

Organizers see an even more far-reaching effect to the neighborhood watch program going beyond crime prevention to a community support concept, to band together with help for families struck by sickness, ac-

cident, fire or other disaster.

Jim Hoffman sums up the feeling of people-helping-people that has excited many of the 1200 residents of this rural municipality.

"It doesn't matter who the victims were. It's time to start doing something about it."

Family's fourth horse shot

(Editor's note: State Police investigating the shootings of four horses on the Daniel Schrum, Farm, R2 Felton, said they charged Wednesday night 23-year-old Carl Kling, R2 Felton, with three of the shooting. Kling, the Schrum's son-in-law, has been charged with three counts of cruelty to animals and is in York County Prison in lieu of \$15,000 bail, police said.)

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NEW BRIDGEVILLE — Late Monday afternoon, for the fourth time in less than a year, a horse in the pasture of the Daniel Schrum farm, R2 Felton, took a bullet.

Shady, a 4-year-old purebred paint mare, was luckier than her three predecessors.

The .22 caliber shell pierced her

soft white hide, apparently grazed a rib and then veered forward and lodged in the flesh near her rib cage.

With a few days of recuperation, and a little more luck, Shady may be strong enough to withstand the surgery involved in having the shell removed.

Shady is owned by Darlene Kling, the Schrum's daughter, who lives on the farm with her husband Carl and their 2-year-old daughter.

This was the third horse owned by Mrs. Kling to be shot by an apparent sniper leveling bullets toward the pasture, less than 50 yards from the two families' homes.

The fourth horse was shot last Friday, June 22, when a bullet killed Daniel Schrum's 14-year-old Quarter Horse and Paint Cross.

Her body was discovered in the small pasture at a spot about 30 yards from the Schrum house. An autopsy on that animal turned up a .22 caliber bullet.

Mrs. Kling's 12-year-old, seventh-registered Arabian gelding became the victim on May 23, found dead just behind the small barn, also located near the Schrum house. Although the families were not initially certain that the death was a result of a shooting, a bullet hole was later discovered in the horse's body. Although an autopsy was performed, no shell was found.

The horse-shooting nightmare began for the two families midday last September 24, when Mrs. Kling found her purebred Appaloosa lying in a field, suffering in

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Concerned residents line up after the crime watch meeting to volunteer as "eyes" and "ears" in the municipality-wide drive to halt threats to property and persons.