

N E I G H B O R H O O D   W A T C H   T A L K   # 2

F H Ernst Jr., M.D.  
Area Coordinator

North Sutter Street Neighborhood Watch

May 14, 1988

**Neighborhood WATCH PROGRAM SUCCESS:** At the rate drugs have been clearing up in our own area, AND assuming some of it could be from the Watch Programs: **VALLEJO NEIGHBORHOOD WATCHES COULD HAVE DRUGS OFF THE CITY'S STREETS BY THE END OF 1988.** HINDRANCES WILL COME FROM POLITICAL SOURCES AND HOMES WHERE THESE POLITICALS HAVE INFLUENCE AGAINST CONSTRUCTIVE **ATTITUDES.** "They just move to other areas" is mostly to condition us to feel helpless, to drug the non-user, dishearten the Watcher AND Vallejo.

**WHAT HAS HAPPENED?** It is difficult to account for our success when I am equally sure that many another local Vallejo Watch has these same ingredients of careful fearlessness and personal dedication. For over a year there had been at least 3, often 10 druggies, at every alley and street intersection on Sutter north from Tennessee. Dec '87-Jan '88, **after the new City Administration** came into power, there were **ROUTINELY 50 TO 100** IN THE 3 BLOCK STRETCH; spread to four corners of all intersections, both sides of private fences, congesting sidewalks, under private houses, blocking the streets. Coming and going: Mercedes, Porsches, Alpha Romeos, fur-wearing, all the signs of money, buyers AND distributors.

**POLITICAL:** **Ed Meese**, US Attorney General, Dept of Justice, all in one day about end of February "**busted**" **about 150 major dealers** across the nation and seized **\$3 BILLION** in drugs. Biggest drug bust ever in the history of the world. **Overnight, within 12 hours**, the newspapers and the TV "newsies", including our own Vallejo-Times Herald began frying him for some nonexistent trumped-up charges, like not having his shoelaces tied right. Many of our liberals in Congress began to climb on the "Kill Meese" bandwagon. **POLITICAL?**

**CITY MANAGER PERFORMANCE AND ATTITUDE:** The "performance" of the CITY MANAGER is evaluated by CITY COUNCIL twice a year, June (at Budget Hearing time for his raise) and December. Regardless of the bluster parades and fast shuffles from City Council chairs, the **CITY POLICY is set by City Council.** VPD operates on basis of regulations. Those of their regulations which are based on POLICY come from the CITY MANAGER'S office. The only access the people of Vallejo have to those policy decisions is through City Council. That access occurs by making written and/or verbal comments to City Council members. City Manager is fairly sensitive to **City Council balance of power.** He has to be. His job depends on it. The just **previous City Manager** forgot that just

once. That was the time he put up the dike on the north side of Highway 37 after 2 major very damaging floods, one right after another of the trailer parks and businesses there. He was fired inside a few months. That dike was not in the "Policies and Goals" of the administration he was serving. **CITY POLITICS IS CITY POLICY.** City services may come next.

The **NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH PROGRAM** uses 3 skills you used in high school:

1. **Learning who belongs** (near your home) and who does not.
2. **Reading the behavior** of those who belong and those who come into your "personal space" (neighborhood) with the view of your **personal safety**.
3. **Deciding what to do with what you read**: Keep it to yourself, tell family, a friend &/or an authority?

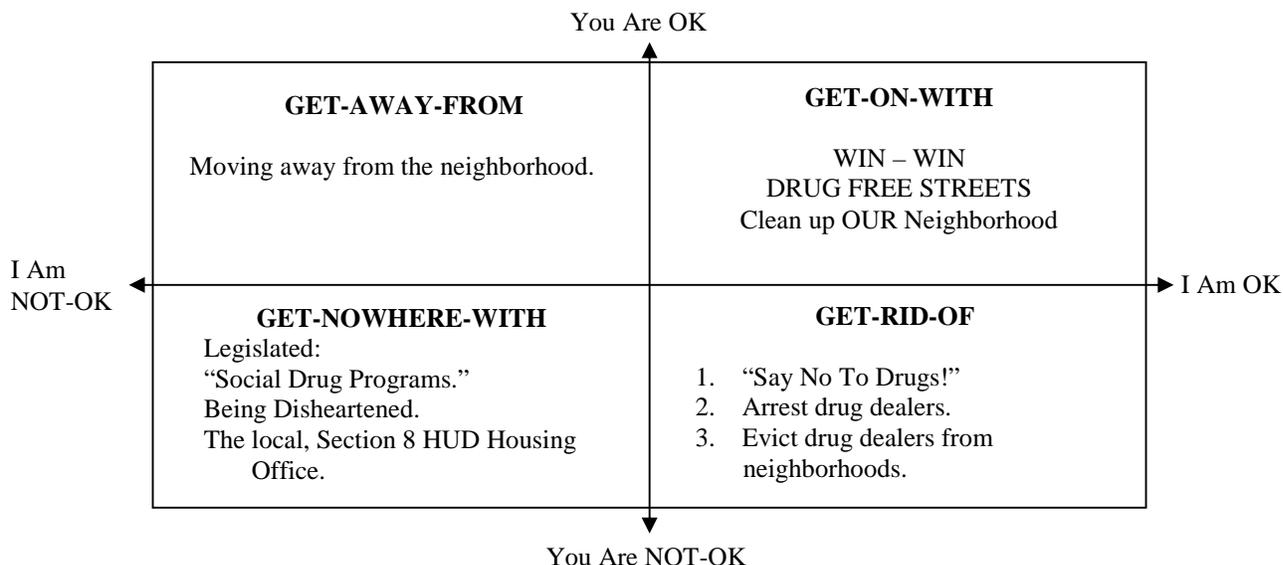
**LOCAL**: In our immediate neighborhood there is continued improvement on the streets. Neighbors now are beginning to get a WHOLE NIGHT of sleep and until their alarms go off. While sporadic nighttime "attacks" by druggies still occur, the after dark shootings, blood on the sidewalks and all-night drug related noisy behavior by the "neighbors" has gone way down. One man, under siege in his home for four years now reports the siege has been broken. He is our Davey Crockett.

**OUR NEIGHBORHOOD POLICY IS DRUG FREE STREETS. OUR GOAL IS A WIN-WIN:**

About 15 to 20 years ago some of us here in Vallejo became concerned about the **ANNUAL RIOTS at Vallejo Senior High School**. These were sponsored in part by some of the Bay Area TV station "news" crews. We did something. An eight session instructional program of 1-1/2 hours each was given to 20 High School teachers to teach in their classrooms. It resulted in cessation of the riots. **It did what it said it was for.** One bonus reported by those teachers was **a major cutback in classroom drug usage**. One of the tools learned for self-regulation of personal behavior on campus was the **"OK Corral: Grid for What's Happening."**

This **"OK Corral: Grid For What's Happening"** is a tool for reading behavior. It was part of that **school's pro-education, anti-riot, pro-self-restraint, anti-drug program**. That program did not require any \$100,000 federal grant. IT WORKED NOW. Those **students did learn how to read behavior** better. No mysterious psychology, counseling or testing.

**OK CORRAL: GRID FOR WHAT'S HAPPENING**



Out of the four choices shown in the "OK Corral", our **WIN-WIN Goal** is seen to be a **GET-ON-WITH Goal**. So also is our **POLICY!**

**LEGAL EVICTION AIDS** for those serious about unloading your near-by drug dealers, for those who have repeatedly watched trafficking in & out of a nearby house and owners/realtors who will not budge for your calls.

**Most landlords** and real estate firms eventually were responsive to our requests. This was especially after the City Police & Fire Marshall, County Public Health and Welfare Child Protective Services had been called a few times. Then with a few personal calls to the owner by the variety of our different voices, most felt the heat enough to do something besides "trying". We concentrated on one house, then another.

**HARDENED CASES:** We had among ourselves watched dozens of drug transactions take place at a particularly resistant pair of houses. To our calls, those owners were always "trying" to persuade the dealers to leave. These owners **BECAME UNBEARABLE**. While these owners kept on being trying to us, **we kept on** writing down AND saving our records of exact times and locations and physical descriptions of the pairs, trios in their dealings and license plates when seen. We continued calling the police with reasonable complaints and information **AND kept a record of our VPD calls & their response times**. With this collection in our own records we then wrote the following letter to the owners of those 2 houses with the signatures of four of us from the Watch. We recommend at least two "Watchers" sign the letter, more believable, more impact. We sent these by US Registered Mail, return receipt requested.

**LETTER:**

To: Names of all owners listed  
at the Assessor's Office  
Address(to which tax  
statement was sent)

From: Members  
North Sutter Street  
Neighborhood Watch

Date:\_\_\_\_\_

Sirs:

1. You have been identified by the Solano County Assessor as owners of Parcel Number XX-XXX-XX, located at (street address) in Vallejo.
2. This is to notify you that the inhabitants of your property have been repeatedly observed dealing in drugs and selling to people passing by and to occupants of identified automobiles. These events have been reported to Vallejo Police Department on numerous occasions.
3. There have been repeated nights when those living near your property could not sleep, reported to the Vallejo Police Department, because of people from your property disturbing the peace.
4. Those occupying your property have for several months been creating conditions hazardous to the health, welfare and safety of others living in this neighborhood.
5. You are hereby requested to take those actions needed to abate the neighborhood nuisance and hazard posed by those occupying your property.
6. As you are aware, you as the owners of this property are both civilly and criminally liable for the events at and on this property.
7. It is hoped that you will heed our request and help us improve the living conditions of our neighborhood in which your property also lies.

Signed, (Our four names and addresses).

Members of North Sutter Street Neighborhood Watch

CC: Vallejo City Attorney  
Vallejo City Police Department  
Vallejo City Mayor And City Council  
Vallejo Office, Sect 8 Housing  
Solano County Assessor's Office  
Solano County Clerk's Office  
Solano County District Attorney  
Solano Co Board of Supervisors  
US Dept Housing and Urban Affairs  
US Attorney General's Office

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**RESULTS:** To date in 2 cases where this action was taken, owners have become more effective in cleaning up their properties. Our goal is to clean up hazards to health and safety in the area and to persuade non-resident owners to participate with us in this goal.

**POLITICAL:** Sure, Mare Island was (still is) a lucrative market. AND the radical powers behind the powers that supervise the drug traffic in our town are most interested in getting our nuclear deterrent submarine base closed down. By infecting the personnel there with drugs (and AIDs?) they are but one step closer.

**POLITICAL:** Saturday, 01/23, the day after our area's 1st meeting with the Mayor, **Harry Ernst** talked to **US Attorney Gen, Joseph Russoniello**, about our street drug problems. Mr. Russoniello sent Harry a copy of the letter he wrote to David Levi, Sacramento office of the US Attorney General. SURE! **Drugs are political!** Some of you will recall, Harry was your other candidate running for Congress against Boxer in 1986. AND he's running again. For those who are dedicated Boxer and/or Democratic fans: Which is more important? An effective, for-real Drug Abatement District AND Program FOR VALLEJO AND VALLEJOANS OR being a DEMOCRAT? **What counts? Political Party OR results with drugs?** After all, for you personally too, how much is it GET RID OF THE DRUGS IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD and how much of it is political? YOU GETS WHAT YOU VOTES FOR!

**AFTER** Russoniello was contacted by Harry Ernst, **THEN** David Levi, US AG of Dist 97, Sacramento was invited to the Exchange Club for April 8th.

**WHAT'S HAPPENING?** It's a bit weird to see it, but the supervisory drug dealers themselves seem to be some of those patrolling the 7/Eleven at 601 Tennessee St, keeping it swept clean of the retailing druggies. There are periodic sudden dealing flurries that take place, eg Friday 01:10 AM 05/06/88. Then they just as suddenly scatter, 80% up past 1614 Sutter into the Washington Park area. Safe?

On 05/05/88, for the first time in years I saw a mother out with her 4 small ones, for a daytime stroll on the 600 block of Tennessee Street.

**Meanwhile**, 5 blocks from us, in **Vallejo City Park**, **WATCHERS and neighborhood cry out in anguish, bleed on the streets.** Resident at 432 Louisiana severely beaten behind his house in Packard Alley by soldiers of the Drug Warlords (9:00 PM Tues 05/10/88). Arrests? We do not know. Our newspaper is silent on the matter. What political judge will be hearing that case, if there are arrests? **City Park** area is flooded by dealers, mostly from Washington Park Neighborhood Association's area. **POLITICAL GOAL?** "It is not until the Crest itself is free of drug dealers that any neighborhood can feel sure they have cured their own drug problem. When the druggers are forced out of one place they go to another and then back into Country Club Crest as their final refuge (LM, 04/12/88)." **We need not tolerate drugs anywhere in Vallejo.**

**HEALTH AND SAFETY HAZARDS FROM ADJACENT AREAS**: Since our area has improved, we have become more acutely aware of how "non-Watch" neighborhoods infest and infect adjoining areas. For the past 12 weeks, 80% of the daily druggies hitting the 7/Eleven at Sutter & Tenn St have been coming out of the Washington Park Neighborhood Association area. They are routinely coming and going past 1614 Sutter St just before the shopping center. We do not see any Neighborhood Watch signs in the windows of that area's residents, - 700 plus individual residences, Florida to Tennessee, between Broadway and Sonoma. Maybe for them it is not yet unbearable. Anyone traveling Louisiana east from Sonoma up thru late April had no problem identifying where the drug dens were: 710, 712, 730, 732, 734; typical dealer-looking personnel draped all over the stairs and front yards. Local manager of WACO finally realized these jungles had to be cleaned out. On 04/18/88 & 04/19/88 he evicted them. Our heartfelt thanks to Jim Kuykendall. Too bad it was raining that day.

**Community Resources**:

Vallejo Police Dept 648-4321. Mayor 648-4377.

**Maryjane Szalan**, Naborhood Watch Program, VPD, 648-4397, 648-4399.

City Manager 648-4575.

County Assessor 429-6281.

{ Verify the telephone numbers }

Signed, F H Ernst Jr., M.D., PO Box 3009, 94590; 643-6611.