

Brooklyn Center Police Department

# S.A.R.A.

DATE	06/01/07	START	06/01/07	END	09/01/07
Assigning Supervisor	Sgt. Boie	Type/Location of Problem Liberian Parties			
Officer Assigned:	Valleau	TIMES - To & From			
<b>Summary of Problem:</b>					
<p>During the last couple years the Brooklyn Center Police Department has responded to several large parties held within the Liberian Community. These parties are often held at the same single family houses and cause a repeated disturbance to their neighbors. The parties are time consuming and frustrating for patrol who have limited options to deal with the problem.</p>					

**SCAN:** Over the last two summers officers have been called to numerous parties hosted by a member of the Liberian community. These parties often are held at homes in residential neighborhoods. These parties have hundreds of people attending and have resulted in complaints from neighbors regarding parking, loud music, and large fights. Officers responding to these calls are vastly outnumbered and have had to call for help from neighboring agencies on several occasions.

**Analyze:** In reviewing party calls officers have responded to the same addresses repeatedly for Liberian parties. These addresses present an ongoing nuisance to their neighbors. The parties at these houses tend to grow larger each time they are held. Often time's cars line both sides of the street for blocks causing significant congestion which complicates police response and would make adequate fire response almost impossible. There is also a significant fire danger, as hundreds of people are packed into dwellings with little room to move around. Combined with large amounts of alcohol these parties frequently result in fights some of which have led to serious assaults.

Officers responding to these parties have limited options to fix the problem. At a minimum, the entire shift is tied up while trying to address the party. Officers have the option of a verbal warning or dispersing the party. Often times the person in charge of the party has lost control due to the large number of people and we invariably end up getting called back and need to evict the partygoers. Many people are intoxicated and cause a disturbance leaving the party. Many partygoers ignore officer's warnings which can lead to arrests for obstruction of justice and disorderly conduct. Physically detaining these violators presents a

successful in reducing the total number of calls we are dispatched for Liberian parties.

**ASSESSMENT:** In tracking our large party complaints over the summer months I can articulate success in certain areas of the project. I am limited in providing empirical evidence because of a lack of specific statistics at the beginning of the project.

I asked Officers to provide me with contact information anytime they responded to a large Liberian party. The homeowners and people responsible for the party were informed they would be contacted within a few days by the Cultural Liaison Officer Monique Drier to discuss their violations. The following locations were identified by patrol and targeted by our project;

- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]

Monique Drier contacted the people responsible for the above parties and explained we wanted to meet to discuss solutions to avoid future problems. With the exception of the [REDACTED] address residents were not able or willing to set up a meeting. Although the response was disappointing, Monique was able to provide ideas over the phone to address the problems and encourage the homeowners to take steps to control their functions. None of these addresses had return calls for loud parties after their contact with Monique Drier.

A significant amount of time was spent addressing problems at [REDACTED]. Officers have responded to loud parties and fights at this house for two years. Several of these calls resulted in Officers fighting with people at the house. During the course of the summer Monique and I met with the homeowner three times. He was initially cited for noise abatement in the beginning of summer. We met with him the next week and he promised to take steps to control his parties. The very next week Officers responded to another large party and had to fight with several party guests.

Monique and I followed up the next week with a visit to the homeowner at [REDACTED]. He was holding a meeting with about 50 members of the Liberian community to discuss their problems with police and large parties. We spoke and took questions from the group for about 45 minutes. Many of the people from the group were homeowners from other problem addresses in the city.

Near the end of June we received another loud party complaint from the neighbors around [REDACTED]. I cited the homeowner again for noise abatement. I invited him to the police department the next week. Monique and I were present

significant risk to officer safety and these violations are often ignored. Since we deal with the same people at many of these parties they become more difficult to manage as they are aware we will likely not take enforcement action.

The only enforcement action usually taken by officers consists of issuing a citation for noise abatement to the homeowner or person in charge of the party. Numerous community members will often take responsibility for each party, which makes it difficult to establish a pattern for criminal activity for prosecution purposes.

**Response:** A significant consideration when responding to this problem is understanding the perception of the Liberian culture. I recommend officers responding to these large parties continue to take the appropriate enforcement action. I would like officers to forward the address of the party to me with contact information of the homeowner and person responsible for the party. I recommend a visit from Monique Drier with a member of the Liberian community as soon as possible in the days following the party. I will also attend this meeting as scheduling permits. This meeting would be educational in nature and would include materials on our local nuisance ordinances. I would also like to include information on drunk driving and the liability of providing alcohol to people who are driving. I would also like to include a letter from the fire department illustrating the dangers of having so many people in such a small place. The visit will encourage the homeowner to take responsible steps to control the size of their party or to eliminate them altogether. The visit will warn the homeowner that additional citations or arrest will be likely if they fail to control their parties.

In addition to the visit to the party house, I will send a letter to the homeowners in the neighborhood of the problem house. This letter would educate neighbors on the Liberian culture and provide insight on the problem which may lead to greater tolerance. The letter will also assure residents we are actively working on the problem.

I will contact the city attorney to determine what additional statutes can be charged if a homeowner refuses to work with the department and continues to throw parties they can not control.

One of the goals of the project is to create a positive contact with the Liberian community instead of leaving them with the likely negative contact of a citation.

The primary goal of the project is to reduce the extremely large parties in the Liberian culture from occurring in the same small residential homes. These parties are difficult to effectively trace as they are coded under different complaints. I believe an adequate assessment can be made by September 1, 2007 - as each party over the summer will be reported to me. I will review the calls and determine if we are being successful in preventing the repeat calls to the same addresses. I will also be able to assess whether or not we are being

for the meeting along with a leader of the Liberian community and some of the homeowner's family. During this meeting the homeowner agreed to no longer have parties at his house. He was warned any future violations would likely result in his arrest. Since that meeting there have not been any other calls for large parties at his house. Neighbors have voiced concern regarding possible drug use; however these concerns have been unfounded at this point.

One aspect of the project was sending out a letter to the neighborhood surrounding the repeat offender's house. This letter was sent out only once to the neighborhood around [REDACTED]. I received calls from residents who were appreciative of the efforts of the police department. They were frustrated the problem had been going on for so long, but were pleased we were addressing it. In the last couple weeks some of these residents have called back and thanked us because the homeowner has not had a problem party in almost two months. I included the department approved letter which was sent out to the neighborhood around [REDACTED] with this final summary.

I included a copy of my log which details our work with the homeowner at [REDACTED]

I was able to work on this detail with limited intrusion on my patrol time. I worked three hours of overtime which was needed to attend meetings during the day with Monique. I worked approximately three hours during my regular shift on paperwork and analysis.

Although there was success during the project, it was somewhat limited to one address. I also expect that address may require additional attention if it returns to having parties. It was disappointing the address needed so much direct attention before the problem was corrected.

The Brooklyn Center Fire Department never provided a letter regarding the dangers of having so many people in one residence at one time.

Many of the criminal statues I considered as an option for enforcement action appear to have elements that don't apply to parties within the Liberian Community. The parties according to cultural customs offer free alcohol, which limits the enforcement of many statutes. I had planned on making contact with the County Attorney's office to discuss applicable statutes. The homeowner of [REDACTED] began to comply with our Noise Abatement ordinance making this contact unnecessary.

The meetings did allow us to create a positive contact within the Liberian community even after one homeowner was cited 3 separate times. I recommend some form of this project be implemented as a permanent response to large parties within the Liberian community. Monique Drier was able to communicate ways for homeowners to adapt to our city ordinances while continuing their

cultural celebrations. I believe this format may be used to create a standard response to all addresses with a history of large parties and loud disturbances.

