

Glen Park ponies up for Patrol Special

After shop owner is beaten and stabbed, neighbors hire part-time officer to hit beat

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It was a violent attack on one of their own that shook members of sleepy Glen Park wide awake.

Neighbors' outrage over the Aug. 29 beating and stabbing of Buddies Market owner Paul Park turned immediately into action. Six months later, the momentum has never been stronger.

Scraping together their own money and without help from homeowners or merchants associations, residents and a few business owners got together and recently hired a veteran law enforcement officer.

Calvin Wiley, a Patrol Special officer for 37 years, has been patrolling Glen Park for six weeks now. Since the Gold Rush days, the San Francisco Patrol Special Police have provided neighborhoods with supplementary police patrol. They are invariably paid by merchants or homeowners associations. That is, until now.

In the weeks after Park's attack, neighbors circled the wagons around his wife, Jennie. The attack left Park badly injured, but he has since recovered.

Police stepped up patrols to combat the district's rise in batteries and thefts. But when Glen Park began to slip back into normalcy, 11 people decided they needed a



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long-term crime deterrent.

They hit the streets, gauging the interest of 2,000 people, said Ann Grogan, a 30-year resident and member of the provisional steering committee for the Glen Park Patrol Special Safety Program. For safety reasons, Grogan does not reveal the number of subscribers she found, but says it is in the double digits.

They pay what they can afford, from \$8.50 to \$150 a month. One resident, a single mother of three, supports the program with volunteer work. It was enough to hire Wiley part time for five days a week. They are now raising the money to support a full-time position, which would include checking on the

properties of vacationers, offering after-hours escorts and crime prevention classes.

Wiley's focus is firmly on crime prevention, not enforcement. He chats with merchants, walks nervous commuters from BART and deters loitering and petty crime with his uniformed presence, neighbors say.

"If people are causing problems at a bus stop, I'll ask them to keep the noise down. It's not a confrontation, it's just being on the scene," Wiley said. "If you're constantly talking and communicating with people, the bad guys tend to stay away."

The relationship between patrol specials and police has long been fraught with controversy, with some

Facts about Patrol Specials

- Formed in 1847 by merchants to combat the resurgence of Barbary Coast outlaws
- Incorporated into the City Charter in 1935
- Supervised by the San Francisco Police Department
- Carry firearms and a two-way SFPD radio
- Emphasis on problem solving and community outreach
- Work with police and other city agencies to find resolutions to neighborhood concerns
- Hired privately, not through The City

On patrol: Calvin Wiley, left, speaks to the owner of Glen Park Market during a patrol of the Glen Park area. Residents hired Wiley to police the neighborhood after the owner of Buddies Market was attacked.

police officers criticizing the patrol specials' amount of training or the way they can be easily confused with sworn officers.

It is a problem police commissioners are working hard to resolve, said Police Commission President Theresa Sparks. On Feb. 15, commissioners approved interim rules that change the way patrol specials are evaluated and appointed. It also changes the uniform criteria so there's a clear differentiation between them and police.

To get involved in the Glen Park Safety Patrol Special Program, call Ann Grogan at 415-587-3863 or visit www.romantasy.com/sf/patrolsurvey.html.

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