



PRESS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MOBILE COMMUNITY WATCH PROGRAM EXPANDS

[Lancaster, Ohio, July 30, 2010] Fairfield County Sheriff Dave Phalen is pleased to announce the graduation of the fourth annual class of the Mobile Community Watch academy. The program, now over 90 volunteers strong, has surpassed all expectations. Sheriff Phalen created the volunteer crime watch patrol after reading about similar programs in Arizona and Florida. While conducting research on programs of this type, he discovered that in some areas patrolled by volunteers there had been a fifty percent reduction in crime.

The current graduating class of Mobile Community Watch members consisted of seventeen volunteers from all walks of life within the community. The new Mobile Community Watch recruits completed 48 hours of training in topics such as patrol technique, defensive driving, CPR, First Aid, Policy and Procedure, and Community Relations.

The new Mobile Community Watch members are patrolling the streets of Fairfield County in four retired cruisers and one car donated by Layman Pontiac of Lancaster. Each car is specially marked "Community Watch" and is outfitted with amber warning lights. Mobile Community Watch members report any emergency or non emergency observations or incidents in their patrol area. Watch members serve as an extra set of eyes and ears as well as a solid volunteer support service for the Sheriff's Office. Mobile Community Watch Patrols have started handling some low priority service type runs in Fairfield County such as vehicle lock outs, speed surveys and traffic direction. A bicycle unit is also in the process of being added to assist with the neighborhood patrol

Mobile Community Watch patrols have been credited with discovering a potentially deadly gas leak last year, as well as locating several lost children. Mobile Community Watch Volunteers were also utilized on several natural disasters and training events.

Fairfield County Mobile Community Watch volunteers donated almost eight thousand hours in 2009, including patrol, deputy ride along, civil bureau support, assisting with special events and training.