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Have a Night Out with Your Neighbors Sixth Annual Orinda Night Out is Sept. 12

By Laurie Snyder

When I was a boy and I would see scary things in the news, my mother would say to me, "Look for the helpers. You will always find people who are helping." To this day, especially in times of "disaster," I remember my mother's words, and I am always comforted by realizing that there are still so many helpers - so many caring people in this world. - Mister Rogers

Hundreds of Orindans will belly laugh, bond and begin to take a bigger bite out of would-be criminals tomorrow night, Sept. 12, from 5 to 8 p.m. as part of the city's Sixth Annual Orinda Night Out celebration.

National Night Out was launched in 1984, according to the website of the National Association of Town Watch (NATW), "to promote involvement in crime prevention activities, police-community partnerships, neighborhood camaraderie and send a message to criminals letting them know that neighborhoods are organized and fighting back." Roughly 2.5 million Americans participated that first year. Now, more than 15,000 communities mobilize over 37 million neighbors across the U.S. and Canada. Members of the military, and their families, participate at bases across the globe.

More than 600 residents participated just in Orinda events last year, says city manager Janet Keeter. Neighborhood organizers planned family-friendly ice cream socials, pool parties, potluck dinners, and other special activities for children and adults. The luckiest of kids caught some serious air time courtesy of parents who procured a bouncy house. "There are so many ways to enjoy sharing an evening with your neighbors, meet those you don't know and share information to make our town safe."

Representatives from the Orinda Citizen Corps Council will be fanning out across the city in partnership with Keeter, public safety personnel from the Orinda Police Department and Moraga-Orinda Fire District and members of the Orinda City Council, talking with children and adults about ways to make individual neighborhoods and the entire city a friendly, safe place for all residents.

To learn more about an event near you, or to schedule a visit by city staff at your neighborhood safety celebration, contact: pattyoung1@comcast.net or (510) 910-0311.

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