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Police Laud Chinatown Crime Watch

Jun 3, 2005

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by Adam Smith

Boston Police said at the June 1 Chinatown Safety Committee meeting that the neighborhood crime watch appears to be helping to lower crime in the area.

"I think the crime watch is working," said police captain Bernard O'Rourke, whose district includes Chinatown.

O'Rourke said the number of reported crimes was lower in May than April.

"We have not had a (successful) robbery of an Asian female since April 9," he said. One wallet-snatching of an Asian female occurred, he said, but the suspect was quickly

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caught with the help of a witness and police.

Chinatown only experienced five robberies in May, and three of those resulted in arrests, police said.

Police sergeant Tom Lema said of the crime watch: "maybe that's why you see five robberies instead of nine." He said that when residents and community leaders show they care about safety, criminals will take notice.

The Chinatown Crime Watch started around April and now has a total of 60 volunteers, said its leader, Michael Wong. The volunteers wear blue vests and hats that read "Chinatown Crime Watch" as they observe the neighborhood from 4:30 to 10:30 p.m. Typically, one police detail is hired by the group every night for \$40 per hour, said Wong. The group receives financial support from donations and the Chinese Consolidated Benevolent Association.

"If you compare day one to now, (Chinatown) is totally different," said Wong.

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