

Safety is about Awareness – among other things!

Urban living means many things to many people. Often it means you don't always know your neighbors and often aren't aware of what's happening just around the corner. While Bowmanville is a pretty safe neighborhood, and benefits from lower crime stats that most other parts of Chicago, it is still important that we – as individuals and as neighbors and members of a community – take steps to know and share information on what is happening around us. It is crucial to our safety and that of our neighbors, almost an urban responsibility if you will. A crucial piece of security is *awareness*. Here are some tips on ways to stay informed and feeling safe and connected in our area.

Create your own community within Bowmanville

www.bcochicago.org

We have come together as a community via the BCO, and continue to feel strongly that you benefit from being a part of that collaboration. However, to feel fully connected, you also need to take it one step further. Form a block club on your street. It's pretty simple – collect the names/email/phone numbers for anyone interested on your block. Form an email list, google group, or phone tree. And start sharing information! Talking to your neighbors remains one of the best ways to stay plugged in to what is going on and to support one another. The BCO has tried to make this easy by publishing guidelines on how to become a block captain in our neighborhood. The BCO connects the block captains across Bowmanville so that they can learn from one another, and keep the information flowing on each block. The block captains were in action recently alerting neighbors to events as they unfolded around a 'bank-robbery-turned-suicide-bomb-scare' that unfolded off of Western Avenue at the edge of Bowmanville in early August. Neighbors really valued the real-time exchange of information that was happening. If this sounds new to you, your block probably needs a block captain! Check out the Block Captain information on the BCO website to see how easy it is.

<http://www.facebook.com/bcochicago>

Social media continues to evolve as a very effective way to stay connected within a membership organization. The BCO has a Facebook page for information sharing amongst neighbors, with discussion sections setup for graffiti, safety, gardening, and more. Use it to talk amongst your neighbors!

Everyblock Chicago: Chicago local news and public records

<http://chicago.everyblock.com/locations/neighborhoods/bowmanville/>

Bowmanville is a defined neighborhood on this very useful tool and you can sign up for email alerts of happenings from crime to foreclosures to street closures in the neighborhood. You can specify what info you want and how often, or if you don't want email 'pushed' to you, you can surf the site when you want to catch up. I highly recommend this site! They pull information from a variety of public information sources and consolidate much relevant information by geographic location so it is at your fingertips. If you want a broader view than Bowmanville you can look at the entire 40th ward, pull in adjacent neighborhoods, or even customize the boundaries you want on your own map.

Edgewater Community Blog

<http://edgewatercb.blogspot.com/>

Billed as *A blog about news, events and businesses in and around Chicago's Edgewater neighborhood*, this site is rich with information about the area east of Bowmanville, all the way to the lake. They publish the 'word on the street' as they hear it- almost always from reliable sources, which means you may hear many things first on this blog. You can also follow them on Facebook. The blog invites a dialogue about their postings, which often results in constructive community

discussion from their many followers (>1000) who all seem to live locally. This site is a don't miss – you may prefer to follow them on Facebook.

Alderman Websites & Newsletters

While Bowmanville is officially in the 40th ward, represented by Alderman Patrick O'Connor, our neighborhood sits almost at a 'triangle' between three wards – the 40th, the 47th, and the 48th ward. In addition to following Ald. O'Connor's website, further insight into what is happening around us can be found within Gene Schulter's and Mary Ann Smith's websites and newsletters. Alderman Schulter's 47th ward email newsletter in particular is very informative and relevant.

<http://www.aldermanoconnor.com/>

<http://www.ward47.com/>

<http://www.masmith48.org/>

ClearPath: the Chicago Police portal

<https://portal.chicagopolice.org/portal/page/portal/ClearPath>

Attend CAPS meetings in person. Call our CAPS liaison (Sgt. Jeffrey Sacks, 312-742-8770 Ext. 119). Call (and have neighbors call) 311 and 911. These are the best way to engage with the police on ongoing safety issues in the neighborhood. Beyond that, the ClearPath website is the originating source for the crime stats you can see elsewhere online (such as on EveryBlock). It goes beyond crime blotter though, with resources for block clubs, mechanisms to submit issues of concern to the police, as well as many other community resources. The CAPS meeting schedule and contacts can be found on this site. Check it out. Next CAPS meeting: Oct. 13th, 7pm, 1609 W. Gregory.

City, State and Federal Elected Officials

Both elected and appointed officials serving Bowmanville have resources they are employing to support our community. Following, and more importantly, *influencing* what they are doing and how it affects us is very important. There is strength in numbers so if you are advocating personally for something let us know and we can help identify others in the community with common interests.

Our elected officials:

<http://www.aldermanoconnor.com/>

<http://www.bridgetgainer.com/>

<http://www.senatorsteans.com/>

<http://www.gregharris.org/>

<http://quigley.house.gov/>

<http://burrissenate.gov/>

<http://durbin.senate.gov/>

Bowmanville is:

- In the 20th Police Precinct, Beat 2012; supported by Police Commander Lucy Moy and CAPS liaison Sgt. Jeff Sacks
- In the 40th Ward of Chicago, represented by Alderman Patrick O'Connor on the City Council
- In the 10th District of Cook County, represented by Commissioner Bridget Gainer.
- In the 7th IL Senate District, represented by State Senator Heather Steans
- In the 13th IL House District, represented by State Representative Greg
- In the 5th District of IL, represented by U.S. Congressman Mike Quigley.
- Represented by U.S. Senators Roland Burris and Richard Durbin.

Tell us how you stay 'plugged in' and feeling safe in Bowmanville and we will share your tips with others. Contact us at comm@bcochicago.org.