

LAKEWOOD SUN POST


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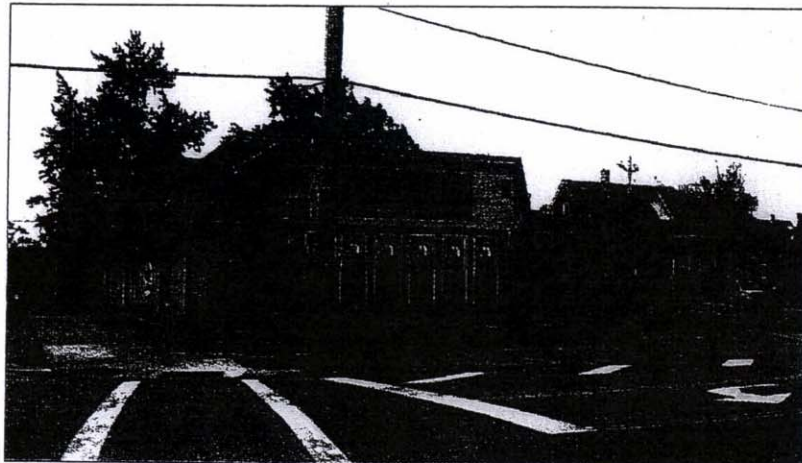
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Off-duty patrols keep peace, quiet

QUIET

From A1



JULIE KREUZ/SUN NEWS

Owners of bars in the West End, such as Johnny Malloy's at 17103 Detroit Ave., have agreed to contribute to a fund for off duty police officers to patrol the area.

By Julie Kreuz
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Quieter evenings should be in store for residents of the West End.

Off-duty, uniformed police officers started patrolling bars June 6 along Detroit Avenue and connected side streets from Lakewood Riviera, 16719 Detroit Ave., to the border of Rocky River.

The patrols are paid for by 12 bar owners through a fund managed by Lakewood Community Progress, Inc. The patrol is an agreement between the bar owners in the area, city officials and police to help decrease reports of noise and unruly patrons in the area, said Kevin Butler, Ward

1 councilman.

"We're trying to find a way to solve a problem that doesn't ruin the industry but at the same time truly impacts how residents can feel in their own homes," he said.

Complaints about the bars have increased in the last few years, said Butler. The idea for the fund started after the owner of a bar in the Scenic Park neighborhood petitioned in the spring of 2007 for permission to expand the bar's patio. Residents close to the business voiced objections because they believed the larger patio would increase the noise from the bar, Butler said. The owner pulled the request off the table and approached city

council for solutions to the problem, said Butler.

"(The patrol is) going to make patrons think twice about going on to someone's property and doing something stupid or shouting at the top of his lungs or breaking the law," said Butler.

Up to two off duty police officers will patrol the bars from 11 p.m. to 3 a.m. Friday and Saturday, said Police Chief Tim Malley.

"The idea is to run through Labor Day," said Malley. "It depends on the commercial owners on what sort of funds they have to get the job going."

The officers have full police responsibilities and may make arrests when necessary, he said.

"Hopefully it will reduce

calls for service to on-duty officers so they have time to react and do other things. If these officers can reduce or eliminate calls that normally go to officers on duty it will free them up to do other things in the community," Malley said.

"It's way too early to see what kind of impact they've had," said Malley, "but any sort of added visible presence will certainly serve to detract anybody from acting up on city streets."

Butler said he is working to add a 13th bar owner to the agreement.

"It also shows, I think, a good commitment and understanding on the part of bar owners about some of the problems they've had," said Malley.

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