

## NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH



By Barb Kanehl

I have received several phone calls from residents regarding solicitation in our neighborhood and what action can be done to stop this type of activity. To be sure, "**No Soliciting**" is clearly noted on signage as we enter our community by way of Sandy Point Drive, and on the Anchorage wall in the back entrance of our community (Tarpon Lake Boulevard & Lakeshore Drive). Both entrances also have signage that reflects we are also a "**Neighborhood Watch**" community.

If someone comes on your property and rings your doorbell, this constitutes "soliciting", as they want to engage in conversation with you and attempt to sell their product. Some solicitors may have the name of their company embroidered on their shirt or are wearing a lanyard with the same information to prove they are legitimate. **YOU** are under **NO** obligation to open your door, and if you do, politely let them know that "soliciting" is not permitted in our neighborhood and there is signage at both entrances that reflects that. If the solicitor is bent on keeping your interest in their product, politely tell them that if they continue, the Pinellas County Sheriff will be called regarding their illegal activity. You may also just tell them to have a "nice day", close your door quietly, and then call the Sheriff (582-6200).

I have been approached many times while working in the yard and each time, have politely told them soliciting is not allowed and then watched them saunter off to the next neighbor and ring their door bell. I waited until the individual was out of sight, then went inside, called the Sheriff and told them of the situation, and approximate location of the solicitor. They sent the Sheriff right away. If, and when, you make the call to the Sheriff, you can ask the call taker **not** to enter your name on the complaint; that you wish to remain anonymous, and they will honor your request. This is for your safety in the event the company being solicited calls the Sheriff to determine who made the complaint . . . it won't be available.

Now, if there are people in the neighborhood placing advertisements/flyers at your front door; this does **not** constitute "soliciting". They are just leaving you information to review if you so wish, and are not trying to engage in conversation to sell you something; i.e. tree service, pest control, landscaping, restaurant menu, etc. If for some reason you encounter this person, just accept the literature. Do not engage in conversation, as this puts them in a position of being a "solicitor". Also, don't chase these people down the street, waving their brochures. That doesn't solve anything.

Hope this information helps. If you have questions, don't hesitate to call me . . . 754-4042. Together we can hopefully get the word out that we mean what the signs say, "**NO SOLICITING**".