



Cooperation and Communication are the keystones to A Safe Community

By Mayor Gerald W. Tamburro

The safety of our residents is not something we take lightly in this community.

That's become increasingly apparent in recent years as Monroe emerges a leader in numerous independent national and regional safety surveys conducted by the National Council for Home Safety and Security, Safewise and even ADT Security.

That reputation hinges on a several variables, including the FBI's uniform crime report, our comprehensive disaster-preparedness plan and our regimented training cycles for emergency responders.

But those safety standings are also the result of our residents and police and their proactive approach to crime prevention – from National Night Out to community classes to the watchful habits we've cultivated over time here in the Township, all of which are improving the lines of communication and acting as deterrents for potential threats and danger.

Despite Monroe's warranted sense-of-security, I think the recent Stoneman Douglas High School shooting that claimed the lives of 17 faculty members and students in the quaint community of Parkland, Florida has left us all feeling a bit on edge and vulnerable.

I have a lot of respect for our Township residents, both parents and students, who recently spoke out about these fears during a public forum on school safety that followed the Florida tragedy. In partnership with the police department and the board of education, the Township heard those concerns and responded accordingly.

Starting in March, we began stationing off-duty police officers in all eight of our school buildings.

This interim measure has been implemented as a complement our district's current security protocols. In the meantime, our board of education will be working to amend their present-day policy to permit their security staff, many of whom are retired police officers, to eventually assume the armed detail.

These officers will be working in addition to our normal patrols and there will be no impact on police response or service levels.

We are fortunate to have six new officers join our ranks this past February, adding to the many seasoned professionals we have on our force.

In the larger scope, vigilant and proactive action, along with effective communication, are really what we have working for us in Monroe. It's my hope that we maintain a healthy and productive dialogue between our residents and our community's leaders to continue as Middlesex County's safest community.

