

NEWS RELEASE
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FIRST PLACE FINISH FOR SUFFOLK'S NATIONAL NIGHT OUT

SUFFOLK, VA (November 14, 2008) The National Association of Town Watch has completed judging for National Night Out 2008 and the City of Suffolk placed **1st** in nationwide judging. National Night Out, which was held on August 5th this year, is an annual event designed to heighten crime and drug prevention awareness, generate support for, and participation in, local anti-crime efforts, strengthen neighborhood spirit and police – community partnerships, and send a message to criminals letting them know neighborhoods are organized and fighting back.

This was Suffolk's eighth year participating in National Night Out, which included 35.4 million participants in over 10,000 communities across the country. After the August event, participating cities submit both written and video documentation of their National Night Out event(s). Suffolk's participation entry was selected from 294 entries in category three, which includes cities with populations of 50,000-99,999.

This year Suffolk had its largest National Night Out ever with over 5,000 people in 40 communities and businesses participating in National Night Out events and pre-events. Debbie George, Director of Media and Community Relations, who chairs Suffolk's National Night Out committee, credits citizen and business involvement for the high finish. "It was truly incredible to see our citizens and communities working together for a common cause. I think everyone that participated in National Night Out in Suffolk this year felt the energy and community spirit at the events and recognized that Suffolk was experiencing something special," George advised.

George noted that the announcement of Suffolk's first place achievement this year could not have come at a better time. "Chief Freeman has always put great value in National Night Out and the partnerships formed while planning the events. Suffolk's first place finish is an impressive footnote to an exceptional career."

Suffolk Police Chief William Freeman announced his retirement earlier this week.

Chief Freeman believes that participation in the campaign has far reaching effects, "The increased participation of our communities in National Night Out activities throughout the year has demonstrated a genuine desire to make Suffolk a safer place to live," he said.

Suffolk's first place finish was up two positions from last year's ranking. Suffolk placed the highest of any city in Virginia in any of the entry categories, and was the only city in Hampton Roads to be recognized. Suffolk's National Night Out video entry can be viewed at <http://www.suffolknno.org/>

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