

Beat Cops Honored

Brass Bulldog to Community Police of the 24th

BY ROBERT KOLKER

Jill Greenbaum, president of the Police Liaison Group, and other residents of the Upper West Side played cheerleaders to the entire Community Police Unit of the 24th Precinct last Tuesday, Nov. 16. The officers were presented with the Group's Bulldog Award for dedication and tenacity in fighting crime.

Boosting those in blue

"Our focus is to be partners against crime with the police," Greenbaum said at the event, which has been held semi-annually for two years, ever since the NYPD adopted its community policing policy.

Reading each officer's name and allowing the group a generous ovation, Greenbaum personalized the ceremony with anecdotes about her own community police officer. When Sgt. John Shea kept his remarks brief in accepting the award on behalf of the Community Police Unit (CPU), she smiled and explained that he had a reputation for no nonsense.

Greenbaum's group, which represents a beat in the Precinct extending roughly from 88th to 91st streets, Broadway to Riverside

Park, pushes for harsher sentencing of criminals. At least one other police liaison group is in the process of forming in the beat just south of Greenbaum's.

A Paper-Free Precinct

The evening was a rare chance for West Siders to hear from a high official from the Police Department. John S. Pritchard III, First Deputy Police Commissioner under Raymond Kelley, spoke at length about Department-wide technological improvements that he said would speed the arrest and booking process and get officers back on the beat more quickly. "By the end of this year, all precincts will have eliminated paperwork from the complaint process," he said.

"This is the first city where community policing has been tried on this scale," he concluded. "And let me tell you, it is working." [See page 1 article for 24th Precinct crime statistics.]

Paul Schechtman, counsel to the Manhattan District Attorney, spoke about reforming the rest of the criminal justice system to make it as hands-on as the community police process. Citing a 50 percent



24th Precinct Capt. Luigi Locco, Sgt. Michael Shea, First Deputy Police Commissioner John S. Pritchard III, Jill Greenbaum of the Police Liaison Group, and Marjorie Cohen of West Side Crime Prevention.

Maggie Sweeney

no-show rate for requested desk appearances by defendants, he said, "Too often the defendant walks out the front door and is never seen again until he is arrested again." Remarkably, he noted, there is no penalty for repeatedly not answering a court summons.

"When I grew up, the threat of an arrest kept me good," said Paul Dunlap, a resident who attended

the meeting and has helped organize his own group, the Upper Manhattan Valley Community Association. "Now the threat of an arrest is a joke."

Dunlap, whose group has had occasional complaints about the police, said he enjoyed the event. "Sometimes it's difficult to sit back and look at the whole picture," he said. ☐