

Gwinnett Opinions: Gangs aren't isolated threat: Dear Ms. Brown, come be my quest

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Body

I wonder if the issues in **my** neighborhood moved into the neighborhood of Sue **Brown** [spokeswoman for the Atlanta office of the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement Agency], would they then become a priority?

On a recent Sunday at about 3 a.m., a **Gwinnett** County police chase ended in a crash in **my** front yard approximately 25 feet from **my** daughter's bed.

My experience leads me to believe the driver was drunk and had no driver's license, no insurance and no green card. **Gwinnett** police confirmed that he had a long list of criminal activity.

For the Journal-Constitution

Twice we have lost cars in our family from being hit by illegals. One was drunk and ran away. He even left his vehicle, which was permanently attached to **my** daughter's, from the head-on collision. Did they catch him? Of course not. Who pays for this? Our insurance . . . and the rest from our pocket.

While it is not a priority to the federal government, and obviously not to Sue **Brown**, I want to make it known that there are many good, decent, hardworking families who live among these illegal aliens and are held hostage and terrorized every single day. We live in fear of drive-by shootings (one of which happened on **my** street in January 2001 just after we entered our home). We contend with graffiti, car accidents that cost us out of our pocket, and our neighborhoods declining along with our property value. They let their dogs run loose (some pit bulls), among many other things.

There is a plaza at the corner of Jimmy Carter Boulevard and Singleton Road that is just full of illegal immigrants every weekend. Federal immigration officials could get more in just one Saturday than the 381 that were detained in 2002 --- if they wanted to.

Periodically, someone takes an interest in our neighborhood. They **come** in and clean up the graffiti and leave. Isn't that sweet of them? They **come** in like a storm and leave with their tail between their legs, whimpering.

When will someone care? When will someone **come** in and help make our neighborhood safe?

I am a single mother. I bought this home with **my** ex-husband about 11 years ago when it was a very nice, little, middle- to lower-middle-income neighborhood. I am now divorced, and this is **my** home.

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I am afraid for my daughter to even sleep in her bedroom because I do not want her to be hit by stray bullets, a drunken illegal driver coming through her bedroom, or now, to have a police chase end on top of her.

It is one thing for a family to come here legally, buy a home and have a good life, which some of the families in my neighborhood have done.

Then there are the others who break the law to come here and escape dirt-poor living conditions. Yet they continue to live in some of the same conditions --- sometimes as many as 30 people in one house (which they painted hot pink), half of their furniture in the yard where they congregate to drink beer, not to mention all of the vans that are parked in the yard and around their homes --- and the 20 homes on either side of them. The problem is compounded when you have two such households side by side.

I would like for Sue Brown to come spend a month with me. She can sleep in my daughter's bedroom.

* Tammy McAbee lives near Norcross.

Graphic

Photo: Tammy McBee

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