

MAY 2012

Quarterly Community Newsletter

On February 26th, in the state of Florida, a Volunteer Neighborhood Watch Block Captain followed a young man he thought looked suspicious, on one of the streets in his neighborhood. Then he did the right thing. He called 9-1-1 to report what was happening. The Dispatcher at 9-1-1 told the Neighborhood Watch (NW) Block Captain to stop following the young man and let the police take over. The Block Captain unfortunately did not follow the Dispatcher's instructions. The result was a huge disaster for everyone. That is so sad. We don't know what will happen next. However – we thought we'd review NW with you – so everyone will be quite clear just exactly what NW is all about.... so something like this will not happen again.

NW IS EVERYONE'S BUSINESS

I have a question for you. Who, in your opinion, is responsible for the law and order – safety and security in our valley? Did I hear "the police"? Good answer, but only half the answer. The whole answer is: You, I, the public in our valley and the local Police, Riverside Sheriffs and California Highway Patrol officers are responsible for our law and order – safety and security. You and I, and everyone are (or should be) in a partnership with the Police.

Is this some kind of a new idea being foisted on the public? No. Actually the idea of a partnership is quite old. Let me quote to you a portion of the mission statement, written by Sir Robert Peale, for the London Police (aka Scotland Yard) in 1829:

"To maintain at all times a relationship with the public that gives reality to the historic tradition that the police are the public and the public are the police. The police being only the members of the public that are paid to give full time attention to the duties which are incumbent on every citizen in the interest of community welfare and existence."

So, okay, what is our role in the partnership? You knew it all along, Crime Prevention. You and I need to review or rethink our plan to; target-harden our home security; update our habits on handling U.S. Mail, our telemarketing calls and improving the security on our home computers. We need to do the same kind of things in our businesses. Further, we need to look at our habits when we drive and park our vehicles. Also, we need to review and update our skills on how we handle ourselves when we are out and about. An update here, a tweak there, and extra 30 seconds somewhere else can, and does, make an important difference in our safety and that of our family and friends. Then, if something fails – and it

sometimes does – you call your partner. Our partner (the police) then do the things they are educated, trained and certified to do – **law enforcement**.

Crime prevention and law enforcement are a powerful partnership for everyone's safety and security.

Sound fair? There are roughly 200,000 residents in our valley. There are roughly 120 sworn officers assigned here in the valley from the Highway Patrol, Riverside County Sheriffs and Hemet and San Jacinto Police Departments. Sounds fair to me. How do we strengthen this team? A Neighborhood Watch is a good idea.

NOW, HOW TO FORM A NW

Step 1: (Call the Hemet Police Volunteer NW group at (951) 765-2415. We can help you.) What is it all about? First, having a get-together, a meeting with the folks that live close to you. Where? In your living room, or front yard, or back yard, or drive way, or club house or if you have a park nearby. We can help you review and update personal, home and possession security, vehicle, vacation, scams and fraud security, etc.

Step 2: Then you, as a group, must decide how you – as a neighborhood – will work together to remain friends (it doesn't have to be best friends) and together, keep an eye on what's happening and what will make you all safer. We (as police) can't really dictate what you must do. You, as a group, must decide what you can and will do.

One of the reasons we won't tell you what your group must do is because neighborhoods are so different. Think about it for a minute. Some neighborhoods are filled with kids, some are full of seniors only, some are apartment houses, some are all mobile homes. Some neighborhoods are on open streets, some are fenced in by walls, some streets are busy with traffic, some streets are quiet. Some neighborhoods include businesses, churches, schools and/or parks. In each situation a NW group or team could use a somewhat different plan.

A patrol would always be a good idea. That way the person (or better still – persons) could look for and report such things as:

- Graffiti – In progress – call 9-1-1. For clean up, call (951) 765-2309.
- Abandoned shopping carts: Call (800) 252-4613.
- Emergencies – like easy-to-see from the street, smashed doors or windows on homes or vehicles. If the residents are not there, call: (951) 765-2400.
- When a usually, nicely kept residence suddenly begins to look shabby – do the neighbors need help? Call them. Can you help?
- When throw-away newspapers are not being picked up – call the residents at the house. If no answer, they could be on vacation or in the hospital. Check with their neighbors. Could the patrol persons pick up the throw-aways and put them someplace?

- Are kids playing in the street or in a nearby park? Is anyone watching out for them? Could that be part of your NW?
- We recommend you pay close attention to the City's newly formed citizens ROC Team. All their recommendation could benefit your group and our City.
- If you are the owner and/or manager of rental property you will benefit greatly if you become a member of the Crime Free Multi-Housing Unit. Call Brent Cain at (951) 765-2415.

There is so much a NW group can do. Let me give you three examples of what three new NW Teams have done recently.

1. One park had been terrorized by night time home burglaries. We held a big meeting of all the residents in the park. A NW Team of volunteers was formed. At the Volunteer NW Team's first meeting they decided to cruise their streets at night, looking for possible trouble. Late nighters decided to slip into their vehicles and cruise their streets, slowly, before they went to bed. A second shift employee, who works out-of-town, volunteered to cruise the area before he went home. Early risers cruised their neighborhood before they had their morning coffee. So far they have had only one break-in in the last four months.

2. A neighbor noticed the lady across the street was not keeping her property maintained as well as she used to. Talking to her, the neighbor learned the lady had suffered a big loss and she didn't seem to be recovering. One day, not long after their talk, the neighbor saw the lady's newspaper was still in her drive way at 10:00 a.m. The neighbor went to the lady's house and knocked on the door several times. No answer. The neighbor then moved to a window and saw the lady slumped in a chair, in her living room. The neighbor knocked on the window and loudly called the lady's name several times - still no response. The neighbor quickly picked up the phone and called 9-1-1. The police, fire and ambulance service arrived. They entered the house and took the lady to the hospital. The lady stayed in the hospital for a week then went to a nursing home. She's home now and doing well. She would have died if the neighbor had not checked on her.

3. A new NW Team decided they would also take the C.E.R.T. Program training from the City Fire Dept. C.E.R.T. is a program that teaches folks how to handle disasters, like earthquakes or a 40-year flood - all things that have happened here in the valley. It's better to be prepared than sorry. There are any number of C.E.R.T. Teams among our NW groups here.

RECOGNIZING SUSPICIOUS ACTIVITIES

There's a lot you and your neighbors can do to build a better, safer community - a community that won't attract or sustain crime. Our police are not an army. They cannot be everywhere all the time. So, they need you as a partner. Not a "strong-arm of the law" partner, but rather a partner who will advise them of unusual or suspicious activities going on in your neighborhood; a partner who will be EYES, EARS, and sometimes, NOSE for them. Recognizing suspicious behaviors or activities and then calling your partner, the police, can stop crime in its tracks. Recognizing suspicious behaviors or activities begin by knowing your

neighbors and becoming accustomed to the normal routines and activities, until they become ordinary. That way, anything out of the ordinary will attract your attention.

If you observe activity or actions that appear out of the ordinary and look suspiciously like they may be threatening to property or people (like a crime in progress), as a partner, your commitment, in case of an emergency, is to call 9-1-1 and report what you see, hear, or sometimes, smell. To report a past crime, or suspicion, call (951) 765-2400.

Following is a list of some possible suspicious behaviors and/or criminal activities that should draw your attention.

OBSERVATION	POSSIBLE CRIME
Screams	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Robbery • Rape • Physical Abuse • Medical Emergency • Fire
Someone looking into a home's windows	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Burglary
Someone looking into a parked vehicle	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vehicle Theft • Burglary
Someone (not a Postal employee) looking into a mailbox	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mail Theft • I.D. Theft
Someone (not a Trash worker) looking into trash containers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I.D. Theft
Sound of Breaking glass	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accident • Burglary • Vandalism
Someone loitering around parks, school grounds, your house, watching children.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sex Offender • Drug Sales • Arson • Burglary
Someone in street clothes running, especially if something of value is being carried.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Burglary
Someone selling products from the trunk or back of a vehicle	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stolen Goods • Selling without a license

OBSERVATION	POSSIBLE CRIME
Graffiti	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gangs in the neighborhood. CALL 765-2309
Someone removing furnishings from a home while the owner is away	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Burglary
Someone being forced into a vehicle	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kidnap • Rape • Child Molester
Open or broken windows or doors at a Closed business or unoccupied residence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Burglary (Do not enter. Burglary may still be in progress.)
Teens strolling in a gated senior Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Burglary • Gang Activity
Strange odor in the air	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gas Leak • Meth Lab
Telephone calls or "salesman" at your door Asking about your neighbors.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Burglary • Scams and Fraud
Running, especially at night for no Apparent reason.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Possible Suspect Fleeing Scene of Crime
Gun Shots	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Celebration • Shooting
Vehicle in unusually bad condition, with signs of a recent accident, Broken windows or bullet holes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Possibly Involved in hit/run accident. • Drive-by Shooting
Abandoned vehicle parked on the block for several days.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stolen Vehicle
A home has frequent visitors at all times of the day or night that stay only a few minutes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drug Sales • Prostitution
Occupants unfriendly, suspicious, paranoid, odd behavior. House has extensive security, chemical odors, trash contains numerous bottles, containers, and materials stained with chemicals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drug Lab

THE LIST IS ENDLESS

Remember, even though circumstances such as these may indicate nothing criminal (the drug sales you suspect, may be an Avon Lady doing a legitimate business). The police are trained and paid to make that determination.

TRUST YOUR INSTINCTS

CALL IMMEDIATELY!

DON'T HESITATE

HOW TO KEEP YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH ALIVE

Initially, a Neighborhood Watch group is usually formed in response to crime or some kind of problem. But when the problem is solved or the crisis has passed, the Neighborhood Watch programs sometimes fade. So, how do you keep the neighbors interested? Here are a few suggestions.

1. Keep information and communication flowing between Hemet Police and among your neighbors. Sharing this newsletter can help you with this.
2. Or produce a newsletter for your group and include information about your neighborhood other than crime news, like kids' birthdays, special events, community events, current events, etc.
3. Follow planning and zoning issues that may affect your area.
4. Host neighborhood events such as pot lucks, block parties, garage sales, and holiday events like a 4th of July pot luck picnic.
5. Organize activities like neighborhood clean-ups and youth projects to keep youngsters busy and learning. Cleaning a neighborhood helps the looks of your streets and can stop or slow decline and decay. Crime breeds and grows in areas without the appearance that owners care. Clean neighborhoods retain their property values better. These activities encourage citizens to interact and feel ownership within the neighborhood, not just their own homes. This makes a neighborhood a "community", not just a cluster or row of houses or apartments.

SOME FACTS.

- Working programs reduce crime as much as 80%. According to criminals, watch programs scare them into other neighborhoods.
- Burglaries, auto thefts, rape, child abductions, and arson are the prevalent crimes.
- Household burglaries are one of the easiest crimes to commit and prevent...but one of the hardest to solve.
- More than half of police time is spent investigating burglaries.

- Statistics show that in more than half of household burglaries, forced entry is not involved.
- Most household burglaries occur during daylight hours.

LOCAL ALERTS

The following are reports of events that have occurred in our valley. All names, and sometimes genders, used in this newsletter are fictitious and have been changed to protect the innocent.

In the last couple of months we've received any number of calls and reports from folks here in the valley, about weird, unusual, questionable and pesky telephone calls they have received. Let us share some of these reports with you.

- ◆ When Alice's phone rang, she looked at the receiver, the caller's ID was marked "PRIVATE". Alice thought the caller might be a friend, so she picked up the phone. To her surprise it was a vendor who wanted to come to her home to check out her furnace – "for free". Alice has a furnace contractor she knows and trusts. He installed her system 10 years ago and inspects it every year. So she said no, and hung up the phone.

Then she began to wonder – why was a vendor's phone number and name listed as "Private"? So she called us. The only thing we could point to was – Alice is on the Federal Do Not Call Registry, and the vendor did not want to be reported for breaking the law. If you are on the Federal Do Not Call List, the only people in business that can call you are: Law enforcement agencies and fire departments to warn of an emergency; charities; pollsters; politicians; and companies you've done business with in the last 18 months. Companies that call numbers on the Federal List without permission face fines of up to \$13,000 for each violation - if they are reported.

- ◆ When JT looked at his telephone receiver all he saw was an 1-888 number. When he picked up his phone, all the lady gave him was her first name. She told him she was calling to ask his help to collect money for a charity (no name) that would help kids with Autism. Would he please give her permission to send him pamphlets that he could pass out to his family, friends and neighbors. Then, he should ask them if they would also donate to the cause. JT thought for a moment, then said no. He told her he really feels sorry for families dealing with Autism, but he would not ask family, friends or neighbors to donate to a charity he could not check out ahead of time, didn't know and had never heard about before.

BANKS & FINANCIAL COMPANIES

Hank received a phone call from a woman who said she was calling from his bank – naming the bank. She said she had to verify some of Hank's account information. Hank asked her why that was necessary. She began to ramble on about how the bank was suffering a computer glitch and they had to straighten out the data. While she spoke, Hank heard a baby fussing and beginning to cry in an otherwise quiet background. He

hung up his phone. Then he looked up his bank's phone number and called them. The bank employee told him they had no problems.

LOTTERIES/SWEEPSTAKES

Any number of people have reported they received phone calls and letters declaring they have won lotteries and sweepstakes. Then, you are asked to pay up-front money for things like taxes or processing fees to obtain the thousands or millions of dollars won.

Remember, there is a federal law that states – we do not pay any money up-front to collect a prize we have won. It's only after you have the money in your hands that you pay the IRS. (Checks to the IRS are made out to the United States Treasury – no one else.)

Also remember there is a federal law that states we can not participate in foreign lotteries. Many of these lotteries you may receive letters for do not even exist. It's all about the money – all they want is your money and you will never hear from them again.

GRANDMA/GRANDPA/AUNT/UNCLE/COUSIN/FRIENDS

The Grandma/Grandpa scam has been so successful it has expanded to include other relatives and friends. What happens is you receive a phone call (or an email) saying a family member or friend is in urgent, deep financial trouble. Please wire them some money immediately. (Last request we heard was for \$10,000.)

We highly recommend if you receive such a call, take down all the information before you hang up. Then, pick up your phone and call the "victim", their parents, other family members or friends to verify where the "victim" really is. The last "victim" we heard about was supposed to be in a car accident in Canada. Grandpa later learned his grandson was playing basketball at his school that day.

How do scammers get the info? Do you have a Facebook or other social network account on the internet? What does it say?

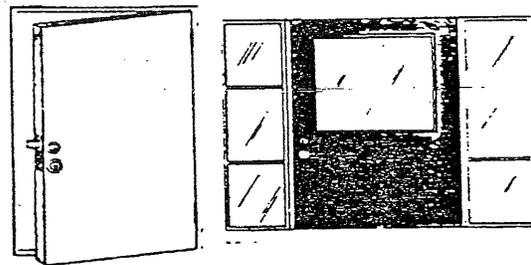
HEMET POLICE WANTS TO HEAR FROM YOU		
YOU HAVE A QUESTION? WE HAVE ANSWERS		
Send your comments, suggestions, question, or just interesting thoughts to the Hemet Police Department. We might even publish them in a future edition of the Quarterly Newsletter. Reach us at:		
Hemet Police Department Neighborhood Watch, R. Moyer 450 East Latham Avenue Hemet, CA 92543		
Phone (951) 765-2415	E-Mail rmoyer@cityofhemet.org	Fax (951) 765-2412



HOW SECURE ARE YOUR EXTERIOR DOORS?

EXTERIOR DOOR CONSTRUCTION

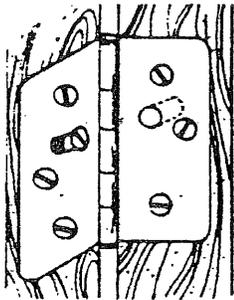
Burglars can virtually walk through a weak door. Hollow core doors should be replaced with solid core doors or strengthened with metal sheets. Replace weak door frames or reinforce them with steel or concrete. Glass in the door should be unbreakable safety glass. Glass also can be protected with steel bars or mesh, or by placing a polycarbonate sheet over the glass on the inside.



PINNED HINGES

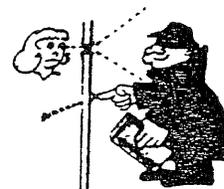
On the leaf that is attached to the door drill a small hole through the hinge plate into the door jamb and insert a solid metal pin, screw or nail. Cut the head off each screw or nail first.

After installation the pin should protrude from the hole about 1/2 inch. Close the door lightly, leaving a light impression of the protruding pin on the opposite hinge plate. Drill a small hole at the impression at least 1/2" deep. Do this for each hinge plate on the door. When the door is locked the hinge pins may still be removed but the door itself cannot be lifted out.



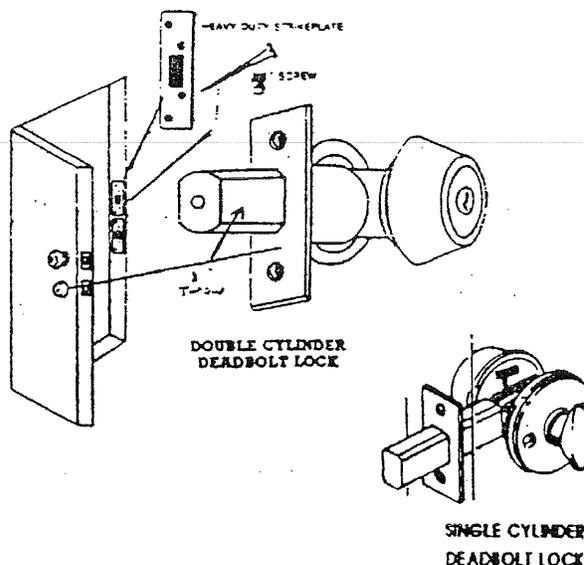
DOOR VIEWER

KNOW WHO'S CALLING before opening your door. A panoramic door viewer (180°-190°) enables you to identify the visitor. You can see him. He can't see you.



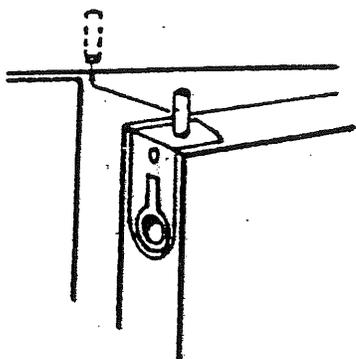
DEADBOLT LOCKS

The best locks are deadbolt locks with a minimum 1" throw bolt containing a hardened steel insert which resist sawing. The strike plate should be attached to the door frame with screws that measure 4 inches. The double cylinder deadbolt lock requires a key to open from either side. This prevents burglars from breaking glass in the door and reaching through to turn the knob from inside. It also prevents them from exiting through the door if they've entered through some other means. Make sure the cylinder of the lock has a steel guard - a ring around the key section. The cylinder guard should be tapered or rotate around the key section (if twisted) to prevent wrenching. Remember, though, a double cylinder deadbolt can also block your exit in an emergency. Check with your local law enforcement agency or building inspector to see if these locks are permitted in your area.



FLUSH BOLTS

Flush bolts which are installed at the top and bottom of the inactive door of a pair of doors offer additional security, since the intruder cannot get at these devices to tamper with them if the doors are locked. It is important that the bolts have at least 1" of throw and that they protrude well into the frame studs. Additionally, the strikeplates should be well secured with at least 3" screws.



DOUBLE DOORS

Cane Bolts - 1/2" in diameter by 12" high installed at top and bottom of the inactive door offer minimum security. Many homes with double doors use half-barrel slidebolts on the inactive door. These are weak and inadequate.

