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MARCH 2009 EDITION

Villagers, be aware: stranger at the door

Greg Novak *Safety Committee*

A few weeks ago several Villagers reported a stranger knocking on their door in the evening asking for money and/or the use of a phone. The excuse was generally that she needed a locksmith. She didn't ask for much, always less than \$30 but she did go to many Village homes and was given an undisclosed amount of money by kind and trusting Villagers. It seems she either started or ended across the creek as at least one San Leandro resident reported the same experience.

It's very unlikely that this was legitimate given the fact that she was

given money by several Villagers, her excuses varied, and she never returned to pay them back. Besides the loss of a few dollars, she very likely could have been "casing" homes to burglarize later.

Everyone who was victimized of this crime should report it to Oakland Police at (510) 777-3333, even if it occurred weeks ago. It's very important for the OPD to know about this woman and her scam. This is the most effective way to get increased police patrols in the Village. It doesn't matter how small the crime seems to you, the police repeatedly tell us they want and need

us to report every crime. You can also call our Problem Solving officer, Officer Vierra at (510) 777-8792 and leave him a detailed message. We all now know not to give this woman any more money. If this continues, it's equally important to inform her or anyone looking for money that soliciting is illegal in our neighborhood without a permit and that you will be notifying the police. Remember to be safe and do not open your door to anyone, day or night that you do not know.

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Good Gnus

By Jill and Jennie

I don't know about you, but I have started to get a large knot in my stomach every time I listen to the news or read the paper. It's tough to stay positive in this economy, especially seeing lovely Village homes selling for a song (when some of us paid an opera for them just a few years ago!). However, my very wise friend Jill said to me just the other day, "Well, there isn't any reason for me to be upset about it today, since I don't plan on leaving this wonderful place. I won't need my retirement money for a while. I'll wait until then to be upset!" Wise words indeed.

So, in place of anxiety and worry I am attempting to substitute peace and faith, which can be a big job in today's world. Walking in our beautiful oasis with my dog; seeing fellow Villagers smiling and enjoying a sunny day; gazing up at our gloriously house-free hills; watching freesias, daffodils, and crocuses bursting from their winter slumber, THESE are the things that bring me peace and faith in a down economy. The stock market can't touch them now or ever. I keep that in mind when I watch the news or read the paper and it helps... I hope it might help you too!

Village Safety Committee Meeting:

**Wednesday, April 8,
7 pm at the
Recreation Center.**

NEXT BOARD MEETING:

**WEDNESDAY, 7 PM
MARCH 25, 2009**

**THE CRIER WILL BE BACK IN MAY...
APRIL BOARD MEETING: WED, 4/22, 7PM**

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DUES REMINDER

I know. This is the same old article telling folks to pay their dues. It runs for the first three, four or maybe even five months of the year. Then it switches over in month 5 or 6 to: "We're gonna place liens if you don't pay."

For those of you who did not get the email or the mailed invoice, dues are \$80 for a house and \$130 for an apartment building. Please pay your dues at your earliest convenience. At press time, 51 owners have not paid.

The address to mail your dues to is 3032 Roxbury Ave. You can also just drop it by that same address. Please do **not** leave your dues at the Recreation Center. We do not have our office there anymore.

FYI: there are only two members who did not pay last year. And yes, we placed liens on their properties.

If you are a new homeowner and have an e-mail address, please contact me at bookkeeper@sheffieldvillage.org. Billing via e-mail saves the HOA money. If you have any questions, call me at 562-9795.

--Steve Murphy
SVHOA Bookkeeper

Because of this and some seemingly unrelated recent car crime, the Sheffield Village Safety Committee has set a meeting for **Wednesday, April 8th at 7 pm**. We'll meet in the Recreation Center to discuss this and other recent crime and brainstorm ideas to better protect our neighborhood. All Villagers are welcome to attend.

The Village Crime/Safety online message board, "Sheffield Watch" currently has 147 members. If you're not one of them, please log on to <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/sheffieldwatch/> for your free membership. This is the fastest way to stay alert to Village crime.

How can you be a Good Samaritan and still protect yourself from being scammed at your door? There's no foolproof way but there are a couple steps you can take to better protect yourself. The first is to not unlock your door to them. This will make it harder for them to "case" your home or force their way in. Then ask for their photo identification. If they show you their driver's license, it's probably more likely that they're being legitimate. If you choose to loan them money for their emergency, write down their information and they will be more likely to return your money. If they refuse, offer to call the police on their behalf. If they are legitimate, they will likely welcome the police assistance. If they need to use your phone to make a call, offer to make the call for them. It's very important to listen to your instincts. If they are giving you a "funny vibe" there's a reason for that, so be careful.

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BLOCK CAPTAINS