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JULY 2010 EDITION

Village summer Safety Committee meetings

Greg Novak SVHOA Safety Committee

As you probably know by now, earlier this summer there was a home invasion in Sheffield Village. Fortunately no one was injured and less than \$100 was stolen from the longtime Villagers. The Board of Directors meeting after this event drew a large turnout to hear details and share ideas and concern. There were too many to discuss at the Board meeting, so the Sheffield Village Safety Committee acted and set its own meeting for July 7.

At the July 7 meeting, many came out and shared ideas on how to make the Village a safer place for all of us. Villager Deni Hodges shared her experience at the recent Oakland Police Safety Fair (see her article in this issue). Several safety ideas and tips were discussed including the use of Air Horns to alert your neighbors, Home Alarm Systems, Security Cameras, National Night Out and Speeders.

One other topic that drew particular interest was that of hiring a private security company which could augment the Oakland police patrols in the Village. The committee first discussed this in 2005 and found very little interest particularly as

the costs could triple the current homeowner's assessments. However this recent Village home invasion and the pending Oakland police layoffs seem to have changed the mood on this topic. To that end, the Safety Committee is moving forward to see if this is a viable option for the Village.

We contacted one security patrol provider, Securitas Security Services and they gave us some informal costs of a little over \$6,000 per month. This would increase Homeowner's Assessments by approximately \$220 per annum. Such an increase would require approval of the general membership and this was seen as unlikely to occur.

Another more practical option being looked at is having a "Pilot Program" of perhaps 3-days/week for a month or two. Any use of HOA funds would still require Board of Directors approval of course. Some residents expressed an interest in pulling their own money to run this Pilot Program.

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Important notes from Oakland Police Department

Deni Hodges SVHOA Safety Committee

By the time of this publishing, most of you will know that on July 13, 2010, 80 Oakland Police Officers were laid off. Police Chief Anthony Batts issued a press release that included answers to FAQs about the layoffs. Below are highlights of the release, which can be found at the following website:

<http://www2.oaklandnet.com/Government/o/OPD/index.htm>

Scroll down to Police Department News to get details about these facts.

- Specialized Units eliminated: Problem Solving Officers, Walking Officers, Probation and Corrections Team, and Targeted Enforcement Task Force
- Expansion of computerized reporting (called "Coplogic") by August 2, 2010, meaning that lower priority crimes must be reported via the internet at www.oaklandpolice.com (see the website above for more information). Reports may include the following under Phase II of this call reduction strategy: residential burglary, identity theft, annoying/harassing phone calls, barking dogs, and violations of restraining orders and court orders.
- Phase I of the program is already underway; we currently must report lost property, theft, vandalism, and vehicle burglary and tampering online via Coplogic.

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When neighbors know each other, neighborhoods are safer.



America's Night Out Against Crime

It's Time to Organize Your Block Party!

Tuesday, August 3, 2010 • 7-9pm

Organize a block party, barbecue, ice cream social, or other outdoor event that brings your neighbors together. Register early to receive give-away items for the kids, and a special gift for the host.

For more information or to register online:
www2.oaklandnet.com/nno
510.238.3091



**** DUE TO RECENT SAFETY CONCERNS IN THE VILLAGE, THIS ISSUE IS DEDICATED TO MAKING VILLAGERS MORE AWARE.**

****NEXT BOARD MEETING: WEDNESDAY, JULY 28, 7 PM WITH GUEST SPEAKER, CAPTAIN JOYNER OF THE OAKLAND POLICE DEPT.**

Nathan Wolfe, the Area Vice President for Securitas will be at our next meeting to discuss how his company could assist the Village.

This meeting has been scheduled for August 11 and will begin promptly at 7 pm with the presentation by Mr. Wolfe followed by questions and answers for him. At 7:30 pm he will leave and the committee will move on to discuss what we have learned and whether or not there is interest in moving forward. This meeting will be in the Clubhouse/Recreation Center. We encourage every Villager who has an opinion one way or another about this subject to attend this meeting. The portion with Securitas will begin and end promptly, so you are asked to please be on time in order to fully participate.

SAFETY TIP OF THE MONTH

Do you Yahoo? There are approximately 200 of us Villagers on the Village Safety Yahoo Group at <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/sheffieldwatch/>

(Remember that there is no “w-w-w” there). Given that there are over 300 homes in the Village and many homes have multiple residents in the group this still only represents about half of the Village. If you’ve read this far, you are certainly one of the half who are in. That probably means one of your neighbors is not. Wouldn’t you feel safer if all of your neighbors were members of this group? If so, please share this with your neighbors and let’s shoot for 250 members by the end of the summer!

On June 30, the Oakland Police Department hosted a Safety Fair Program at their downtown headquarters. Along with a Resource Fair with handouts, presentations by police officers, OPD representatives, and a Secret Service Agent were given on identity theft, the Neighborhood Services Division, Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED), and LoJack. I attended the first two talks, which were excellent. Below are some useful tips for avoiding identity theft or dealing with it if you are a victim. Most were given by Pete Jensen, a Secret Service Agent on special assignment to the OPD as part of the Bay Area Identity Theft Strike Force.

- “Harden the target,” which means since YOU are the target, make it harder to be a victim! Do what is necessary to protect yourself from identity theft.
- Traveling: carry only the credit card(s) you need, and don’t keep any in your wallet if you don’t need them. Don’t use your ATM card as a debit card where you have to use a PIN. Use it as a credit card (VISA/MasterCard) instead. When paying for anything with a credit card, watch who you give your card to and make sure it doesn’t leave your sight (this includes restaurants!). Don’t flash your card, driver’s license, or other identifying information in public. Checking out of a hotel? Take that room card key home with you and shred it—it could contain certain information about YOU.
- Get credit reports annually and close out old, unused accounts.
- Skimming devices: these small, carefully hidden devices are being used in restaurants, gas pumps, and elsewhere to steal your credit card number.
- Cybertheft is rampant all over the world, with over 11 million cases in 2009. Be careful when paying for anything online.
- Investigate implementing a “credit freeze” with all 3 credit reporting bureaus.
- Shred EVERYTHING, from personal mail with signatures to bills to promotional offers that come in the mail. Use the “criss-cross” type of shredder, otherwise criminals can piece together shredded materials.
- Don’t leave outgoing mail in your mailbox for the mail carrier
- Lock up valuable account information in your home in case you are burglarized
- Should you be an unfortunate victim (and it is predicted that everyone will be at some point in their lives), FREE assistance is provided by the Identity Theft Council (headed by Neil O’Farrell, who was a presenter) in partnership with the OPD. Call (888)771.0767, email support@identitytheftcouncil.org, or visit the website at www.identitytheftcouncil.org.

National Night Out Tuesday, August 3

There will be at least five block parties celebrating *National Night Out* on August 3 from 7-9pm.

One party will be at the corner of Revere and Covington, others on the 170 and 350 blocks of Marlow, a fourth will on Brookfield, and a fifth on Roxbury.

These parties are a chance to meet your neighbors and have a good time.

If you want to host a block party, contact Steve Murphy at 562-9795 or the city of Oakland at 238-3091. You may choose to register with the city, but it is not necessary. The benefit of registering is that city officials will come by your party. You can also register online at www2.oaklandnet.com/nno.

As new parties become available, we will keep you informed via the yahoo group Sheffield Watch.

See you at *National Night Out*

****The regular ad space, Message Board and Block Captain list will return in the next issue. Look online for contacts.*

***Thanks to Donald and Olga Kempton of Cranford for their generous donation.*

***There were no applicants for consideration for the 2010 SVHOA Scholarship.*