



Topanga Community Police Station Newsletter



Serving the Communities of: Canoga Park, West Hills, Woodland Hills, and Winnetka
21501 Schoenborn Street, Canoga Park 91304

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Topanga Community Relations Office (818) 756-3180
Topanga Senior Lead Office (818) 756-3070

March/April 2011

Hello Topanga Community, as you read the newsletter, you may notice some changes. As a cost saving measure, the newsletter will now come out every two months. You will also see that we have added more information regarding the Community Relations Office (CRO) and the CRO programs.

A Message From Captain Tom Brascia:



In the meetings that I have attended in the past few months, I have emphasized that we, the police department, are just a “piece of the pie” in the world of law enforcement and crime prevention. The other piece is you, the community. People in our communities are our most important customers. Our motto, “To Protect and to Serve,” is not just a slogan – it is our way of life. We will work in partnership with the people in our communities and do our best, within the law to solve community problems that affect public safety.

We have talked about communication, becoming involved and being support when we need it. My officers and detectives have the ability to accomplish many things and be successful. However, to do their best and to accomplish my goal of crime reduction, I need your help to complete the pie.

Encourage your neighbors, friends, and business contacts to become involved by subscribing to *Nixle*, attending neighborhood watch meetings and to have block meetings. The more people that are involved the better chances we have learning clues, getting

information regarding suspicious activity, and ultimately solving crimes. But before we have the need to solve crimes, we need to prevent crime and by you becoming a piece of the pie, we can do just that.



With the New Year already in full swing, we are setting our sights high for the 2011 year! There are many fun and educational field trips being planned for the spring and summer breaks and we are in the beginning process of looking for a new PAL location, one that we can call our own! We are very excited about this prospect, as a location of our own means a larger space for more kids and more activities after school! PAL applications are available year-round. If you know a child who would be interested in joining, please contact Officer Leslie Kincaid to find out more about the program!

Hi! I’m Officer Melissa Olsen and I am in charge of the Topanga Area Jeopardy Program. Jeopardy is a program of the Los Angeles Police Department which



focuses on at-risk juveniles between the ages of 9-17. The program runs after school Monday-Thursday from 3:00 p.m.-6:00 p.m. For more information about Jeopardy, please call me at (818) 756-3185 or email me at or 30734@lapd.lacity.org.

The Cadet Program is a youth Volunteer service program for young men and women ages 14 to 20 years. This program for provides participants with discipline, critical thinking, teamwork exercises, opportunities for leadership, and physical fitness training.

In January, the Topanga Cadet Post Cadets had a lot of fun sledding building a snowman, and throwing snowballs during a field trip to the snow. The 2011 LAPD Cadet Academy began on January 22. It is held every Saturday for 18 consecutive weeks. We wish all 10 Topanga Cadets attending the Academy good luck and encourage them to continue working hard. We would like to recognize Cadet Rassohin for his outstanding effort in the LAPD Cross Fit Competition. Topanga continues to accept applications for its Cadet program. Contact Officer Godfrey at (818) 756-3183 or Officer Archambault at (818) 756-3182 for more information. You may also, visit www.LAPDCadets.com for more information.



Recent news in my area: This segment contains some activity in Topanga, but it is not intended to reflect all of the crimes in your area.

News from SLO Dennis Cunningham (A1):

Distraction burglaries are continuing to occur in the Topanga area. The targets of these crimes are usually the elderly. The suspects use a cover story to gain entry into the victim's home. We have seen suspects identify themselves as DWP employees, salesmen, neighbors who have had a cat jump the wall and just about anything else you can think of. The main goal is for the suspects to gain entry into the victim's home. Once inside the two- man or woman team split up. One suspect speaks with the victim distracting them as the second suspect searches the house for items to steal. Many times the victims have no idea that they were victims of a crime. It is important for anyone reading this to identify the elderly in their area and inform them of this trend.

News from SLO Alex Padron (A5):

Hello Canoga Park Residents! The overall crime numbers are down in our area, but there is still a lot of work to do. For example, if you live in the area South of Lanark Park, in the grid bound by Saticoy Street at the South, Strathern Street to the North between Topanga Canyon Boulevard and Canoga Avenue (in what we call Reporting District 2125), we have seen a spike in residential burglaries where there have been almost none in the past. Please be on the lookout for any suspicious activity during the day hours.

As far as great officer arrests, my hat goes off to my partner in our office, SLO Sean Dinse. On February 14, 2011 at approximately 1215 hours a radio call was broadcast stating an off-duty Sheriff Deputy had seen a white male looking into vehicles in the "Big Lots" parking lot in the area of Sherman Way and Vassar Avenue. The off-duty officer called it in and followed the suspect(s) as they entered their vehicle. The vehicle was described as a green Jeep Cherokee and drove off northbound up Topanga Canyon at a high rate of speed. Officer Dinse heard the radio call and jumped on it as fast as he could. He located the suspect's vehicle on Topanga Canyon Boulevard at Schoenborn in the strip mall. Officer Dinse conducted a high risk stop and detained a brother/sister duo and a search of the vehicle produced evidence from at least three victims from auto burglaries in the last couple days in the Foothill area and Agoura Hills area. Officer Dinse is to be commended for his hard work ethic that produced a great arrest of a couple of car burglars in our area and the return of stolen property to its rightful owner. Be Safe.

News from SLO Jose Maldonado (A29):

The crime rate has remained low for our basic car area (parts of Winnetka and Woodland Hills). In December 2010 there were 41 reported Part One crimes. Part One crimes are Robbery, Aggravated assault, Burglary, Grand theft auto, Burglary from motor vehicle, and thefts. In January there were 41 reported Part One crimes and for the month of February 2011 there were 44 reported part one crimes. If you want to know more about what goes on in your neighborhood, please come and join us at a Neighborhood Watch meeting on the 2nd Thursday of each month at 7:00 PM at Topanga Police Station.

News from SLO Sam Sabra (A43):

Topanga Officers Lukaszewski and Romero were directed to conduct extra patrol in the area of Kittridge Stree west of Platt Avenue for a nuisance location. They observed some suspicious behavior exiting one of the residences. As they continued to observe the strange behavior they waited for these individuals to get in their car. Lucasewski and Romero conducted a traffic stop of the same individuals and both were questioned.

One of the individuals was arrested for a felony narcotics warrant and who had a long history of drug abuse and sales.

Also, please be reminded to take care of your elderly neighbors and advise them on the crime trends in your neighborhood. Recently, distraction burglars have been targeting the elderly. Get the word out to help your elderly neighbors from being a victim.

News from SLO Janet Zumstein (A57):

Don't be a victim of burglary from motor vehicle. Remember to always hide your valuables (out of sight, out of mind) and ALWAYS lock your doors and close your windows. At night time, try and park your vehicle in a well lit area.

At local shopping centers we are having a problem with Escalade, GMC or Chevy SUVs that have third row seats. On these types of SUVs the third seat can be removed easily from the vehicle by releasing the seat lever. We would like to encourage you to remove your third row seat from your SUV if you don't plan on using them or lock your seat in by using a cable style lock.

News from SLO Brent Rygh (A73):

Foreclosures, Abandoned Homes, and Squatters

One of the troubling signs of poor economic times is a rise in foreclosure properties and abandoned homes. These properties become a ripe opportunity for all sorts of scammers that cheat the owners and tenants out of thousands of dollars.

Scenario: A home on your street goes into foreclosure; the owners pack up and move out leaving the bank to manage the property. The bank lists the property to the public by various means (foreclosure lists, auction sites, etc). A scammer finds a property that looks good, breaks in, changes the locks, prints up a lease agreement, and takes out an ad to rent the property. New tenants move in paying the scammer thousands of dollars in rent and security deposits. When the police are called (usually by the property owner and/or bank) the tenants discover that they have been scammed out of their savings, are actually trespassing in the home, and have to leave immediately to avoid arrest.

To help avoid the blight and scams associated with these properties, the Los Angeles City Council established the "Foreclosure Registry Program." This program gives us the tools to make the banks cooperate with our investigations and clean up the property. If you have an issue with a foreclosure property, please call 311 and register your complaint.

News from SLO Sean Dinse (A97):

On January 18, Police Officer Dave Sanchez and Police Officer Josh Lukaszewski received information regarding a narcotics location in the 21300 block of Avenue San Luis. They received the information from a Woodland Hills resident.

In their investigation, they saw a car pull up to the house with four people who went into the house then come back and get into their car. After a short following, the car was stopped for a traffic violation and upon approaching the car the officers could smell the odor of Marijuana. The driver was arrested and a large amount of narcotics and cash were recovered.

In subsequent investigations, the suspect was arrested after bailing out from the January 18, two more times for sales and possession of narcotics.

As the SLO for this area, I truly appreciate the work of patrol and Topanga's Narcotics unit. It is because of their investigations the occupants of this residence was evicted and forced to move.

Sergeant Rachel Raigoza, SLO Supervisor
818.756.3070

SLO Dennis Cunningham, Basic Car 21A1
(Covering the North part of West Hills including part of South Chatsworth near the Chatsworth Reservoir)
Office (818) 756-3073 Cell (818) 731-2578
Email 34966@lapd.lacity.org
The 21A /21A43 meeting will be held every 2nd Monday of the month at 7 PM at Topanga Station.

SLO Alex Padron, Basic Car 21A5
(Covering North Canoga Park)
Office (818) 756-3191 Cell (818) 731-2583
Email 32977@lapd.lacity.org
The 21A5 meeting is held every 2nd Tuesday of the month at Topanga Station at 7 PM.

SLO Jose Maldonado, Basic Car 21A29
(Covering Winnetka)
Office (818) 756-3079 Cell (818) 731-2569
Email 23639@lapd.lacity.org
The 21A29 meeting is held every 2nd Thursday of the month at 7 PM at the Topanga Station.

There is now a SPANISH SPEAKING Neighborhood Watch Meeting! SLO Jose Maldonado will now hold a Spanish speaking Neighborhood Watch for any residents within the Topanga Police Area every 2nd Wednesday of the month at Topanga Station at 7 PM

SLO Sam Sabra, Basic Car 21A43
(Covering the South part of West Hills)
Office (818) 756-3074 Cell (818) 731-2558
Email 34819@lapd.lacity.org
The 21A43/21A1 meeting will be held every 2nd Monday of the month at Topanga Station at 7 PM at Topanga Station.

SLO Janet Zumstein, Basic Car 21A57
(Covering South Canoga Park and Topanga malls)
Office (818) 756-3188 Cell (818) 731-2570
Email 24571@lapd.lacity.org
The 21A57 meeting will be held every 4th Wednesday of the month at the Topanga Station at 7 PM.

SLO Brent Rygh, Basic Car 21A73
(Covering Woodland Hills, West of Topanga Canyon Boulevard)
Office (818) 756-3075 Cell (818) 731-2581
Email 30450@lapd.lacity.org
The 21A73 meeting will be held on the 3rd Wednesday of every month at the Topanga Station at 6:30 PM.

SLO Sean Dinse, Basic Car 21A97
(Covering Woodland Hills, East of Topanga Canyon)
Office (818) 756-3076 Cell (818) 731-2568
Email 34920@lapd.lacity.org
The 21A97 meeting will be held on the 3rd Wednesday of every month at the Topanga Station at 6:30 PM.

Sergeant Thomas Mason, Officer In Charge,
Community Relations Office
818.756.3180

Cadet Coordinators 818.756.3180
Police Officer Danielle Godfrey
Police Officer Greg Archambault

PALS Coordinator 818.756.3180
Police Officer Leslie Kincaid

Jeopardy Coordinator 818.756.3180
Police Officer Melissa Olsen

Volunteer Coordinator 818.756.3180
Police Officer Joe Breyer

Community Police Advisory Board (CPAB)
Police Officer Todd Jaron 818.756.3180

PLEASE..Sign up for Nixle! Nixle keeps you informed of the useful information in your community www.nixle.com.

Other useful websites are www.lapdonline.org or <http://projects.latimes.com/mapping-la/crime> to look up the crime activity in your neighborhood.



Upcoming Events/Dates to Remember!!!

Topanga Police Station Open House:
March 19, 2011 10AM – 2PM

*What to do... When to call the police:
911: for emergency, crime in progress or immediate response for serious crimes*

877 ASK LAPD/877-275-5273: for non-emergency police response