

Greater Rockridge NCPC Meeting Minutes (12Y/13X)
Thursday, February 9, 2012
The College Preparatory School, 6100 Broadway, Auditorium
General Public: 7:00-8:30PM

NCPC:

Frank Castro – Chair
Barbara Minton – Vice Chair
Denise Jorgensen – Treasurer
Karen Ivy – Secretary & Information Officer

Frank Castro opened the meeting at 7:10 PM and asked attendees to introduce themselves. 25 people signed in to the meeting.

Logitech camera program – Denise Boisvert

Denise explained that the NCPC had followed Montclair's example, working with Logitech to get community discounts on high-definition day/night security cameras. Paula Stringfellow has volunteered to coordinate the list of Rockridge participants and group them by neighborhood. Email paulaps@mac.com to order a system. State whether you want indoor or outdoor cameras and how many of each. Prices are:

- Outdoor master \$349
- Indoor master \$299
- Add-on outside \$279
- Add-on indoor \$229

You have to buy at least 6 cameras to get a 37% discount; she's accumulating lists of people in the same area to place orders together. She'll then get a discount code from Logitech for each group. We'll post a brochure on our web site with these details.

Q: What about wires? A: the cameras come with all necessary cabling and software; they use your house wiring to transmit data.

WhistleStop Donation Presentation

Margaret Wahlberg and Christine Acker formally presented the NCPC officers with a proxy check for \$441, the money left from the WhistleStop program, which is now dissolved. Margaret Wahlberg explained that WhistleStop was originally set up after the hills fire, when a lot of empty lots caused security problems. They sold over 1,500 small metal whistles for key chains over the years. In addition to selling whistles, they contributed (jointly with the RCPC, the RDA, and the NCPC) to buy a bicycle for the College Ave. walking officer. They also bought a dog for OPD search and rescue. Lately the money has not been used for much, so they are handing it on to the NCPC, which has set up a bank account to accept tax-deductible donations.

Frank Castro noted that although we're temporarily flush, you can still contribute to support the NCPC. The city hasn't funded us for some time.

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Crime Stats, Frank Castro

Frank commented that he wasn't sure what was going on with the crime stats – we've seen no numbers since the 1/12 – 1/23 report, so he's only able to report on that instead of the usual monthly basis. He handed around a printout. [Ed. Note: The statistics for 1/23 to 2/5 were published the day after the NCPC meeting and have been emailed to Rockridge Neighborhood Watch Network and RockridgeNCPC Yahoo groups.]

OPD Report, Joint beats 12Y-13X

Officer Vergara introduced Officer Jo Balaoro, the new PSO for beat 13. Officer Thompson has been assigned to a different beat.

Officer Vergara said they are already working on the Oakland Housing Authority property issue which was on the agenda; they think some robbery suspects may be in there. In the last 30 days there have been 15 automobile and 10 residential burglaries, some right around the OHA property, but fanning out over the west end of 12Y.

Q: is that the one they just rebuilt at Canning and 58th? A: Yes.

Stolen vehicles: 10 vehicles have been stolen in the past 30 days, in locations all around beat 12Y. Thieves often go for older Hondas and Toyotas. One or two 2010 cars were also stolen. All stolen cars were parked in the street or in a driveway right by the sidewalk. If you have no garage, get a Club, make the car hard to get into.

Robberies: Robberies continue out of control. There were 12 on the College and Telegraph Avenue corridors. Robberies are becoming more and more violent. Beat 17, around Park Ave. and 23rd Ave., has the worst problem. There is a pair of men doing business takeover robberies; Officer Vergara thinks they've done about 6. Robberies against the person usually involve following the victim from behind, pistol-whipping them or holding them at gunpoint; victims sometimes get hurt. Many victims were *obviously* using electronics as they walked (iPods, iPhones, earbuds). Don't have your electronics out when walking, especially around BART.

Q: Do robberies happen at a particular time of day? A: They can happen at any time; they often happen during commute periods, but also some around noon.

Assaults: We've seen a lot of shootings. The recent shoot-out in the 5800 block of Telegraph, by the laundromat, seems gang related, as there was no robbery. Stray rounds are very dangerous in a public place. OPD is trying to get a grip on gun violence and is now offering a reward for information about gun crimes. If you see anything like this, try to get a license plate number, see if you recognize anyone. The new line for reporting gun crimes is **510-517-8739**.

Q: I've had to describe people once or twice and it's really hard, any tips? A: The NCPC has a form showing useful things to notice. Officer Vergara suggested looking for distinctive characteristics: hair style, shoes, jewelry, tattoos, scars, gold teeth. Everybody seems to be wearing black hoodies these days.

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Q: If a crime is “forcible entry burglary,” is that with people at home? A: No, that's a forced door or window; if people are home it's a “home invasion robbery.” Criminals who do residential burglaries typically don't want any personal contact, if confronted they leave; but they may graduate to more violent crimes.

Officer Vergara said the PSOs spend a lot of time looking for robbery suspects. They have no leads: a typical description reads “suspect is a male black, 18-20, 5'8” - 6”, wearing black hoodie.” This is much too general to be helpful. They’ve also been doing prostitution busts, and going after pimps. They really have no time to do statistics. She also said we'll never see color maps again, as color printer broke and they can't repair it. OPDs computers are old and REALLY slow. Good equipment would make a BIG difference. A resident asked whom he could talk to about buying them a new color printer.

Q: What about CompStat? Who's doing that? A: Probably the commanders, the PSOs don't have time.

There is a new commander for BFO1, Captain Israel (BFO1). Captain Allison is now Deputy Chief.

Beat 13X has a little more crime than usual, burglaries in the area just below Highway 13. They’ve had 9 burglaries in that area in the last 30 days. One incident on Broadway Terrace involved boys 14-15 years old. Officer Vergara suggested that you close curtains when you aren’t home – robbers window-shop for things they’d like. Also, a lot of homes have alarm systems which are not turned on, or windows left open in hot weather. It doesn't take long to do a smash-and-grab, especially with an open window. Also don't leave belongings visible in a parked car.

Q: on Golden Gate Ave. the other day, a white van hit a car with a kid in it, and didn't stop; it shook the kid up badly. Officer Vergara replied that they don't have enough coverage for that kind of problem, please report it online.

BART Police Department report (Officer Steve Christ in attendance)

BART beat 13 includes the MacArthur, Rockridge, and 19th Street stations. BART Officer Christ is now on beat 13 patrol. BART also has detectives doing CAP (critical asset protection): they ride trains, and hang out at fare gates. Officer Vergara noted that the BART police do patrol station perimeters, and have the same police powers as OPD. Lauren LaPlante is BART community liaison. Crime around BART is the same as crime everywhere else: a lot of stolen older Hondas. Officer Christ is usually at MacArthur, that's a hub station, where a lot of stuff happens; he hits Rockridge a couple of times a night, driving around, watching people. Macarthur has more robberies than Rockridge because of all the people waiting for rides, and for Kaiser and other shuttles.

Q: Are the emergency phones in the BART parking lots still live? Officer Christ: yes as far as he knows. Q: they're kind of out of the way, do people use them? A: yes, they do – opening a box activates a line direct to BART dispatch.

Q: Do you have a feel for what percent of crimes aren't reported because people are in a hurry? He has friends who don't report crimes because it's too much trouble. A: There’s no information on that.

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Officer Vergara asked, how much worse is Macarthur than Walnut Creek? Officer Christ said the WORST station is Coliseum/Fruitvale, a lot of crime there. At least there are no car thefts at 19th Street!

Q: Do you look for crime when driving between BART stations? A: Yes, definitely, and he can act if he sees anything.

Q: What are the cars stolen for? Parts? A: Maybe to use in a crime and then dump the car, maybe for parts.

Setting of Priorities

Q: There's a guy asking for money in front of the Safeway, he's been there for years. Can we call that in as a crime? Officer Vergara asked the resident to send her an email with a detailed description of the man, it'll give her probable cause to stop him. She can't do anything if he's at the Safeway on 51st as that's another beat, but can help if he's at the College Safeway.

Q: What about the homeless encampment under the freeway at Patton – it's right next to the school. Isn't that a problem? Officer Vergara: there are always homeless camps all along the freeway, it's all BART and CalTrans property, OPD can't clean them up. Oakland statutes don't allow OPD to clean up homeless camps, it's a violation of their civil rights. CalTrans can clean up the property but not OPD. CalTrans usually responds quickly but their property is very large so they may not always do so.

OPD can refer the campers to Operation Dignity, but a lot of them like the lifestyle.

Q: Can you comment about Occupy Oakland? Officer Vergara: The PSO unit is the front line against Occupy, they're the ones out in riot gear, which means they're not on the beats. They haven't had a weekend off since October. If you go and look at web sites like IndyBay and Bay of Rage, you'll see these are clearly anti-police groups, the goals of Occupy Wall Street are not their goals. It may be tailing off. Last weekend OPD arrested 408 people, and at the next demonstration only 200 people showed up. Q: What happens after you arrest them? Officer Vergara: They'll be arraigned, then charged. She doesn't know how many were actually charged.

Q: what about that attempted child abduction last month, any update? A: Still working on it; there's no update, no leads beyond a composite sketch of the suspect.

Q: we get solicitors, some of them kids on Friday asking for "date money". What do we do about that? Officer Vergara: Beat 13z did a lot with that: they *all* put up No Soliciting signs. They also ask to see the solicitor's OPD credentials, and if they have no credentials say, I have to call the police now, what you're doing is illegal. If possible get details of the company they're working for, the police can try to cite the company for creating a nuisance.

Residents reported aggressive speeders on Ocean View above Broadway. The street has no speed bumps because of the grade. It's a major thoroughfare for people coming down the hill to the freeway.

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Priorities for February:

12Y:

1. Criminal activity around Canning OHA property.
2. Illegal garage on 63rd Street is back in operation.

13X:

1. Speeders on Ocean View above Broadway.

Meetings are the SECOND Thursday of the month.

*Next meeting is scheduled for **Thursday, March 8, 2012** at 7:00 PM
Rockridge Library Community Room, College & Manila.*

See you there and stay safe!

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