

Greater Rockridge NCPC Meeting Agenda (12Y/13X)
Thursday, March 8, 2012
Community Room, Rockridge Library, College & Manila
General Public: 7:00-8:30PM

NCPC:

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

Because the volunteer in charge forgot to collect the library key, the meeting was held on very short notice at Restaurant Chu, upstairs. The NCPC is extremely grateful to Restaurant Chu management for this. Twenty-eight people attended the meeting including nine OPD officers (three PSOs, and six patrol officers from District 2, our area of north Oakland).

At 7:07 PM Frank Castro skipped introductions and his own crime statistics report, due to the very crowded room, and asked Officers Vergara and Balaoro to present the joint OPD report. Officer Vergara introduced the patrol officers as a group, and explained that PSOs work on chronic problems that patrol doesn't have time to deal with.

OPD crime statistics, last 30 days

Robberies have been a big problem citywide. Rockridge hasn't had many in the last 30 days, compared to the previous month, but they move around and they'll be back. The NCPC web site has [great prevention tips](#). They see a lot of iPhone and iPad thefts, especially where people are walking around holding the device and staring at it; the thieves come up from behind and snatch the device, or point a gun and do a more comprehensive theft. Don't get absorbed in your electronics; watch your surroundings, especially check who's behind you. It's very easy for suspects to hit the freeway from College Avenue. The thieves appear to work in teams, with a lookout and a getaway driver. The victims can almost never identify the suspect, and usually don't see the car. In the last 30 days there were 5 robberies: 3 armed, 2 at a business, 3 robberies of pedestrians. All incidents happened around College Avenue to people going to or from BART. Frank Castro asked if this list includes the 2 robberies the morning of the meeting, on Ocean View? Officer Vergara: No, those are not in the statistics. A patrol officer reported that 2 of the 3 suspects from the 3/8 robberies were caught near San Pablo Avenue, and 2 guns were recovered. The third suspect got away.

Burglaries are down except for auto burglaries; of the 17 burglaries in the last 30 days, 12 were self-reported auto burglaries, especially in the Canning/Telegraph Avenue area in lower RockRidge. The numbers are down a little from previous months.

The last 30 days saw no stolen vehicles. There were two catalytic converter thefts (both from Toyota Tacomas parked in the street), and 2 snatched iPods.

IMPORTANT RESOURCES:

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Claremont Middle School has reported internal theft problems – students appear to be stealing teachers' electronic devices. The school also has bicycle thefts and other minor thefts.

Projects:

Nude Sushi, 6228 Telegraph, is a long standing problem, with numerous nuisance issues. It was originally reported for loud noises late at night. The Health Dept. inspected the restaurant and closed it for egregious violations; the city will now schedule a code compliance inspection.

The illegal auto repair operation on 63rd is still under surveillance.

The PSOs have set up a project to deal with aggressive panhandling on both Telegraph Avenue and College Avenue. Call sidewalk solicitors in, they have to be certified by the city to solicit and they have to display the certificate. If they show no documents, they are probably a scam. There's information about [dealing with solicitors](#) on the NCPC web site.

Projects in Temescal area:

There is an OHA residential property on Canning; a lot of residential and auto burglaries seem to happen around it. The OHA police are working with OPD, enforcing compliance with OHA conditions, and OPD is doing probation and parole searches in the unit.

Speeding on Ocean View has been reported to Traffic Division, but the 100-block area is getting all available resources. A resident of Ocean View reported that her neighborhood group is talking to Jane Brunner's office about speed bumps and traffic calming options.

There was a recent request for a street security assessment on Kales. Officer Vergara noted that PSOs also do security analysis. They can review your property and point out how thieves can get in, and where they can ambush you. She and our Neighborhood Service Coordinator will do an assessment on Kales in a couple of weeks to suggest changes residents could ask the city to make. The goal is to make the environment unattractive to criminals. The process is called Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) – Karen Ivy noted that there is an [OPD document about the process](#) on the NCPC web site. A resident said they didn't know that the PSO will come by a street and suggest things to do to improve the area.

Q: How does this security evaluation work? What response do you get?

Neighborhood Services Coordinator: a group or a neighborhood watch can arrange with the PSO and NSC to go out and walk each house and see what you need to do to harden the target. Once you learn what to look for you don't need the police to do it. Evaluations have to be coordinated with PSO work times, usually Tuesday - Friday 2:00 – 10:00 PM.

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The noise problem at The Hut has been forwarded to the city's Alcohol Beverage Action Team, who will try to set up an inspection shortly. Officer Vergara noted that there are a lot of ways to deal with businesses who have liquor licenses.

The patrol officers left the meeting.

Officer Balaoro noted that OPD is getting great recoveries of stolen iPads, iPhones, and so on by tracking the GPS units in the stolen devices. If your smartphone or iPad, or anything with active GPS tracking, is stolen, tell the officer when you report the theft, these can be tracked and it usually leads to the suspects. Write down your device serial numbers! You can't prove it's your device without the serial number!

In beat 13X, the last 30 days saw 3 residential burglaries, and 1 auto burglary. There were no robberies, and no stolen vehicles. It is very busy out there now, OPD responds as quickly as they can.

Resident complimented the officers who responded when her Taiwanese exchange student was mugged, they were very kind, and one officer even spoke Mandarin.

Q: In house burglaries, does an alarm system help?

A: An audible alarm is a deterrent, the neighbors may hear it.

Q: When an alarm company calls police, do they respond?

A: Yes, but how soon they respond depends on what else is going on. Officer Vergara noted that policies are changing on this, burglaries are now the very lowest priority, and you won't get a response unless you actually see a suspect, or unless the radio is dead quiet.

A resident said she's seen a lot of solicitors lately, she called one in today who was reported. He was tall, gangly, druggy looking, unshaven, wearing a dirty jean jacket, and a heavy metal logo tshirt. Gave a nice sounding name, and said he was selling magazines for a scholarship fund; he asked if she would let him in to discuss it! Officer Vergara suggested posting a No Solicitors sign. If you have a sign, it's a misdemeanor for him to come to the door. Then you can say, leave or I'll call the police. Most solicitors are fraudulent. Police certificates to solicit door-to-door cost \$100 per person and require a background check; the permit has an OPD seal on it. Solicitors commit crimes of opportunity. There was a black male on Chabot today, demanding entry – they picked him up after several people called him in, and he had outstanding warrants.

Q: is it worth calling OPD for these guys?

Officer Vergara: when she's off duty, she tells them "I'm calling the police right now" - usually they leave right away. Multiple neighbors called in today, they were pretty scared. The more people who call about a solicitor, the more likely OPD is to send someone out. Do your donations on line.

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Officer Vergara said that her unit has been working with BART to hand out victim prevention flyers. They'll be doing Rockridge BART fairly soon, and will need volunteers to help pass out flyers.

Frank Castro reported that he's been in touch with BART; BART will be auditing BART PD officers' behavior, on the instructions of the new BART PD director. The new director will probably come to April meeting; Frank will get more information later.

A Kales resident began a discussion of the recent exchange student mugging on Kales. The robbers had no gun and no knife, they just knocked the student down and grabbed her bag. She wasn't injured, and the officer was able to retrieve the bag, minus an iPod and some cash. The robbers left her iPad because it was in a case that looked like a book! The resident suggested you walk down the middle of the street late at night, that's better lighted; of course, this depends on the traffic level on the street. Frank Castro noted that tree trimmers are among those the city laid off recently.

Q: How about motion lights around the house?

Frank Castro agreed that motion lights are good, but they upset some people, dogs can set them off. Don't point them at someone's bedroom window. Rockridge tends to be dark.

The police always ask criminals, why did you hit that person? The answer is always: *because they were a victim*. If you have no sense of your surroundings, you are a victim.

No representative of BART Police attended the meeting.

Logitech camera program update by Denise Jorgensen

If you are interested the Logitech camera discount, email chair@rockridgencpc.com. We're still putting "buddies" into groups that will buy 6 or more cameras at once. People who've bought them are raving about how easy they are to set up. The NCPC gets no financial kickback from this, we're just facilitating the purchases.

Neighborhood Watch update by Karen Ivy

Karen Ivy reported on her request for neighborhood watch captains to email her – she asked Neighborhood Services to email all block captains in beats 12Y and 13X, and ask them to respond to her with information on where they are and who are the contacts. Ten or eleven groups have already responded, including a couple of teams who never got the email from Neighborhood Services. Frank Castro noted that the Neighborhood Watch Steering Committee is trying to make Neighborhood Watch more active and responsive in Oakland; they have asked block captains the question, would you share your contact information with Neighborhood Watch Steering Committee and/or with other block captains? Neighborhood Watch helps you get to know your neighbors. We aren't getting more police any time soon, neighborhood safety comes down to street level.

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Karen asked if any block captains in attendance would email her if did *not* get an email from Felicia Verdin of Neighborhood services about 3 weeks ago, asking them to email her.

Frank Castro reported that a small group met at his house to discuss how to set priorities; the NCPC's group priority is to grow the membership, and grow the volunteer pool, people who help us out monthly, even if only for a couple of hours. Right now we have maybe 5-6 regular volunteers, if we could get a few more people to spend an hour or two a month, it would help us expand projects. The woman who volunteered to buddy people together for camera sales was a new volunteer. Any time you can give us would be great.

Next month, Oakland Earth Day is Saturday, April 21. The NCPC has signed up with the city to host a work crew to go around Rockridge and do graffiti abatement, make Rockridge beautiful. We will need bodies, any help is great. Email chair@rockridgencpc.com. He'd like one or two people to help organize one or two work crews so it isn't just the four officers.

Q: Are you in touch with Christine Ralls? She is the city's volunteer coordinator for graffiti removal and cleanup. Frank said he didn't know her but will get in touch.

Setting of Priorities for upcoming month

Resident: Teenagers broke into her house, they bumped her side lock. Get better locks. Do call these incidents in. OPD may not come right away, it's a low priority, but if multiple people call in burglaries from the same area, the officer may come there to sit and do his paperwork, in his patrol car.

Priorities for March 2012:

12Y:

1. Rash of car burglaries along Colby between 60th and Alcatraz, and generally from Claremont toward Berkeley.
2. Noise reported late at night by patrons of The Hut.

13X:

1. Muggings in Ocean View.

Meetings are the SECOND Thursday of the month.

Next meeting is scheduled for **Thursday, April 12, 2012** at 7:00 PM
Rockridge Library Community Room, College & Manila.

See you there and stay safe!

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