TPD

NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH NEWSLETTER

JANUARY TO MARCH 2011 VOLUME 48

GREETINGS FROM TORRANCE POLICE CHIEF JOHN J. NEU

2010 is now behind us, and as we enter 2011, I would like to wish you and your families a safe and happy New Year. We entered 2010 with the new Team Policing model and though there were some initial challenges, this model has proven to be successful in enhancing the service we provide to the citizens of Torrance. Teams of officers are assigned to one of three specific areas within the city along with a lieutenant and sergeant. This policing model has enabled us to have more officers on the streets of Torrance at the times and places where they are needed the most in an effort to further reduce crime.

As always, reducing crime will continue to be our primary goal, but we realize we cannot do it alone and we need your continued support through your involvement in Neighborhood Watch. Throughout the city of Torrance, our Neighborhood Watch Program has continued to grow with new groups forming each month. The Neighborhood Watch Program involves the joint efforts of the police and the community. It is designed to strengthen neighborhood security, increase the community's power of observation and encourages mutual assistance and concern among neighbors. Neighborhood crime prevention is everyone's responsibility and I look forward to your active participation in this important program.

It is important to remember that we would be completely ineffective without the help and assistance of attentive citizens who care about their neighborhood and their neighbors. The most talented officer that we have will never know as much about your neighborhood than you do. Things such as what cars belong in the neighborhood to what time your neighbor leaves for work and what time s/he returns. In short, we need you to continue to be our eyes and ears because without your active participation, it will be much more difficult to succeed.

Your continued participation in Neighborhood Watch and you choosing to be a part of the solution to crime reduction is greatly appreciated. This is a partnership that one can not put a price on. Just as I continue to be so impressed with the dedication and professionalism of the men and women of our outstanding police department, I have also been gratified at the support and kindness that is regularly demonstrated by the citizens of Torrance. Thank you and have a great 2011.

John J. Neu
Chief of Police

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As of January 1, 2011, the Torrance Police Department began the full-time utilization of a new messaging service called "Nixle" to send E-Mails and Text Messages (SMS) to the community for "real-time" notifications. The notifications sent out, primarily from the Community Affairs Division, are for **Alerts** (police containments, school lock-downs, etc.), **Advisories** (crime fliers from crime trends, etc.), **Community** (safety reminders, fund raisers for the department, etc.) and **Traffic** (road closures, lights down at intersections, etc).

Nixle, www.nixle.com, is a 3rd party web-based application where citizens can create a "user account" with a password to customize their account settings and select who they want to receive notifications from (i.e. TPD, LASD, LAPD, etc.) and how they want to receive it (i.e. E-Mail, SMS or both).

We would like to encourage all citizens, business owners, employees, visitors, etc within the City of Torrance to create their own personal account as "a citizen" to keep up with pertinent information being pushed out to the community from the Police Department.

If anyone has questions or difficulties either signing up for Nixle or customizing their account settings, please call us at (310) 618-6391 or 6392.

As a reminder, we are also on Facebook (Facebook.com/TorrancePD) where you can "like" us, but not "friend" us. We are also on Twitter (Twitter.com/TorrancePD) where you can "follow" us.

COMMUNITY AFFAIRS PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH

Since our revitalization of Neighborhood Watch in 2007, we increased our number of Neighborhood Watch participants from 500 active neighborhood watch members to close to 2000 by the end of 2009. Our goal for 2010 was to increase the number of Neighborhood Watch participants by at least 10%. The willingness of Torrance residents to become more involved in keeping their neighborhoods safe helped us surpass our goal. We closed 2010 with 2474 Neighborhood Watch Members, a 12.4% increase and though we are very pleased with this growth, we are mindful that with a city of over 150,000 residents there is still a lot of work to be done to further develop this program.

As members of your Neighborhood Watch Program, you:

- Help the Torrance Police Department by becoming the eyes and ears of the community.
- And your neighbors look after each other .
- Establish a power of presence and in doing so establish a zone for criminals where the risk of being caught is too high for them to practice their profession.

NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH ….CONTINUED

Here are just a few examples of the positive impact Neighborhood Watch has had::

~"The Neighborhood Watch Program has helped the families on our street become more watchful and concerned for one another. The program has brought a closeness amongst neighbors that we did not have before. We keep an eye on each other's home and genuinely care about family members" ~ Yukon/190th NW Block Captain

~""We were having some car break-in on Mesa. I found out about it from a neighbor who is on my block captains/"map your neighborhood" list. He took the time to walk down to my home to notify me. By this connection of neighbors, such a bond was formed. I in- turn emailed my list of neighbors to notify them to be on the watch and also emailed them the info I received from Torrance PD on what not to leave in your cars. Resulting a well informed block on Mesa" ~ Mesa NW Block Captain

~ "A couple of people came to my door one afternoon, these strangers were both VERY personable and offered me a discount to steam clean my carpets (I have wood floors). I said "No, thank you"
and they just left and moved on to the next house. I snuck out the back door to see if I could see a car or van and get a license plate, and I also wanted to verify what direction they were headed. I went back into my house and called the police to report their "suspicious" activity. In the meantime one of my neighbors did allow the solicitors to enter her house, luckily my husband overheard the neighbor and quickly made his way over to her house until police arrived. Officers asked one of the solicitors if he had a business license in Torrance. He said they were from Long Beach, and did not have a Torrance business license, he also told the TPD that they had other workers in the neighborhood. After further talking to the solicitors, Police officers warned and advised them that they were not allowed to do business in Torrance, but also explained to me that this is a typical MO for burglars. They rent a car, come in, case the house, and then return and rob it.
Thankfully, nothing like that happened. Please be watchful of your neighbors, and . . . report any suspicious behavior to the police, immediately - 310.328.3456, regardless of how insignificant you feel a situation may be. Your call may result in an arrest of a burglar."~ Post NW Block Captain.

Bringing Neighborhood Watch to your block is easier than you think; contact Community Affairs to schedule a date and time in which you want to have your Start Up Meeting, and invite your neighbors to come.... That is it!! The Torrance Police Department Community Affairs Team will run that initial meeting for you. Each meeting is attended by the patrol unit that is working in the area, a representative from the Traffic Division, a representative from the Community Affairs Division, and when possible, an on-duty Sergeant and the Watch Commander are also present. In this initial meeting, you and your neighbors are made aware of what could potentially be criminal/suspicious activity on your block and you are given the necessary tools to report this type of situation to the Police Department. In 2010, we made over a dozen arrests stemming from Neighborhood Watch members reporting suspicious activity on their block.

If you would like to learn more about Neighborhood Watch or if you would like to start this program on your block, contact Services Officer Luz Aceves (310) 619-6392 / laceves@TorranceCA.gov

The Torrance Police Department is committed to working with residents to keep the city of Torrance a safe place to live, work and play.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Safety Training Workshops

The community is invited to attend free safety workshops hosted by the Torrance Police Department. Each workshop is scheduled from 6:00 to 7:30 PM and will take place at the Torrance Police Department (3300 Civic Center Dr.) You may register online at www.Police.TorranceCA.gov or contact the Community Affairs Division at (310) 618-6391. Attendance is limited to the first 35 people who register. Please note that these safety workshops are for adults only.

DATE: Wednesday, February 9TH, 2011
Topic: Forensic Identification Specialist (CSI)

This class will focus on what to do if you are the victim of a crime. Our Forensic Identification Specialists will also be demonstrating how the Torrance Police Department is leading the way in the use of cutting edge technology to solve more crimes and keep more criminals off our streets.

The Rape Aggression Defense program is a nationally recognized self-defense program for women. It is a free 12 hour training seminar that will teach you how to protect yourself and the ones that you love by detecting, preventing and deterring violent encounters.

Our Instructional Objective is to develop and enhance the options of self defense so they may become viable considerations to a woman who is attacked.

This program is instructed by RAD certified members of the Torrance Police Department and is held at the Torrance Police Department. For more information on this program, contact Sergeant Jeremiah Hart at (310) 618-5688.

The Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) Program educates community members about disaster preparedness for hazards that may impact their area and trains them in basic disaster response skills. Using the training learned in the classroom and during exercises, CERT members can assist others in their neighborhood or workplace following an event when professional responders are not immediately available to help. CERT members also are encouraged to support emergency response agencies by taking a more active role in emergency preparedness projects in their neighborhoods.
To learn more about CERT visit :

http://www.TorranceCA.gov/TPD/CERT.htm

Have you ever thought what it would be like to walk in the shoes of a Police Officer? Imagine being seated in a police unit as it pursued a suspect vehicle at a high rate of speed or being able to talk to SWAT Officers while you were allowed to handle their firearms and equipment. Or what about seeing a Police K-9 up close and witness demonstrations by the K-9 Officer?

This opportunity is available through the ***"Partners In Policing"*** Program offered by the Torrance Police Department. This program is offered twice a year to adults who reside or work in the City of Torrance, who belong to local organizations or have ties to the city. The Partners In Policing Program is a 13-week course held at the Torrance Police Department on Thursday nights, from 6:00 PM to 8:00 PM. Each night you will hear from different Officers as they share their stories regarding their current assignment. The classes are free and the class is comprised of 25-30 people.

Every aspect of the Torrance Police Department is covered through lectures, hands-on exercises and demonstrations. By graduation, participants will have learned why we do certain things and have had the opportunity to actually experience certain training scenarios. The program is fun and informative.

For more information and to register for the program, go to www.Police.TorranceCA.gov or contact Officer Chad Farley at (310) 618—6391. You can also e-mail Officer Farley at CFarley@TorranceCA.gov