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NOVEMBER 2013

## Quarterly Community Newsletter

### **YEAR-END SAFETY**

As we approach the year-end, our Fall and Winter seasons, our time is filled with duties and events we usually do not have other times of the year. We'll be rushing about doing shopping, attending patriotic, religious, and social events of all kinds.

Before it all begins – let's take a few minutes to review and update safe and secure steps we can take to make the seasons not only happy and blessed, but a bit safer and more secure.

### **HAPPY AND SAFE HOLIDAYS**

#### **IF YOU ARE LEAVING HOME FOR A FEW DAYS OR WEEKS:**

1. Go to the Post Office and stop your mail delivery.
2. Call your newspaper office and stop your newspaper delivery.
3. If you don't want to do #1 and #2, ask a friend you trust to pick up your mail and newspapers every day. Also, give your friend an address and telephone number where they can contact you if something goes wrong at your home.
4. Put your indoor lights and a radio on automatic timers. Have one light go on for a few hours, have it go off and have another light – in another part of the home – go on for awhile. Do not leave lights and radios on 24/7. It's a signal no one is home.
5. Consider buying a light bulb for your entry way or your porch that has a device to turn it on at dusk and turn off at dawn. Do not leave outdoor lights on 24/7.
6. Be sure to hide any gifts that may be left in the house while you are gone.
7. Ask your friend to watch your home, pick up any throw-away newspapers, and packages that may be left at your door. And, ask your friend to park their vehicle in your driveway from time to time.

## **IF YOU ARE GOING OUT FOR THE EVENING**

1. Turn on an inside light that can be seen from the street. Turn on a radio or TV that can be heard (muffled) outside the house. Be sure to close your drapes, shades or blinds so no one can look into your windows.
2. Be extra careful to lock all your doors and windows while you are away, even if you are gone for only a few minutes.
3. Consider where you are going – if it's too public – carry only what you need and don't wear good/valuable jewelry.
4. Do not place packages or gifts near doors, windows or other highly visible sites.
5. When you park your vehicle – even if it's in a church parking lot – make sure all your windows are up, your seats and floors are empty of stuff and manually lock your doors.
6. If you are alone and returning to your vehicle to go home, look around. If anyone you don't know is watching you – look them up and down so you can describe them – say nothing and go back indoors – ask someone to walk out with you.

## **IF YOU ARE GOING SHOPPING**

1. Wear and carry only what you need today. Don't load yourself down and:
  - a. We suggest you do not wear flip-flop shoes when you go shopping because if you have to move quickly, for any reason, you may lose your flip-flops and have to walk or run barefooted.
  - b. Dress yourself as comfortably as you can.
  - c. Consider wearing inexpensive jewelry so you do not attract attention from thieves.
  - d. Avoid carrying large amounts of cash. Consider paying for purchases with checks or debit/credit cards when possible. Carry your check book only if you plan to use it. Carry only the debit/credit cards you plan to use today. Leave the others at home.
  - e. Consider a wallet with a RFID shield in it.
  - f. Consider placing your wallet into the front pocket of your jacket, sweater or pants. Why? It will give you more control over your wallet.
2. When you are ready to leave home – look into all your rooms. Check to see all your windows are closed and locked and your doors are closed and locked.
3. If you plan to use public transportation, be sure to keep your head up, look around you, be alert and aware of who is around you at all times.
4. If you are going to use your vehicle to travel to the stores: Before you enter your vehicle, look inside. If there is anything in it that didn't come with the vehicle, consider moving it out or hiding it away. Loose products inside a vehicle encourage theft. Once you are inside your vehicle, fasten your seat belt, lock the doors and drive away.
5. When you drive into the parking lot where you will shop, look around at the parking spaces. If it's dark outside, consider selecting a space under or near a lamp post. We recommend you do not select a space between or beside much larger vehicles. It can be used by thieves to hide and steal from you. Make sure all the windows on your

vehicle are closed. Lock all your doors, step out, close the door and look around so you will verify where you are parked.

6. If you are traveling with young children, make sure they understand – if you become separated, they should go to a store clerk or store security guard and ask for help. They should never go into the parking lot and to your vehicle by themselves.
7. As you finish your purchase, before you leave the counter, make sure your check book, your debit/credit cards or cash are securely returned to your purse or wallet and/or your pocket.
8. Make sure you don't overload yourself with packages. If you periodically take your purchases to your vehicle, be sure they are out of sight, in the trunk of your car or at least hidden under a blanket. Look around the area. If someone is watching you, we suggest you enter your vehicle, drive around the block, come back into the parking lot from another entrance and park there. Then you can resume your shopping.

## **WHEN YOU ARE AT HOME**

1. Do not allow strangers, people you did not invite, into your home, ever. If they say they are from the City, Fire, Police or a Utility company and you did not expect them, ask them to stand outside, lock your door, and telephone their office or vendor to verify they are at your home for a valid reason.
2. Many con artists take advantage of the holidays and your generosity by going door-to-door to ask for donations. Ask for identification and get specifics to how and where the donations will be spent/used. If you feel uncomfortable with them, or their answers, we recommend you just say "no thank you" and close and lock your door.
3. Do not place large displays of holiday gifts in full view of your windows or doors.
4. Make sure you leave lights, radios or TVs on so your house looks and sounds occupied when you are home. But, be sure your doors are locked and your windows are closed unless you are in the room.

## **HOLIDAY PARTIES**

At the holiday time, people like to celebrate with parties. People who usually do not drink alcoholic beverages during the year may now accept one or two drinks just to be sociable. Before accepting that first sociable drink, there are a few things you should know and options to consider.

### **ALCOHOL**

Medically, alcohol is a drug that depresses the central nervous system...it slows the activity of the brain and spinal cord. As a consequence, the drinker's mood and behavior quickly change, judgment and restraint are impaired and thinking is dulled. As more alcohol is consumed, walking, speech, and hand movements become clumsy, vision may become blurred, split or tunneled. Ultimately, the drinker could become disoriented, confused and unconscious.

Alcohol taken by itself should be used with careful discretion if you plan to drive a vehicle. With alcohol, there is no digestion process. It is absorbed directly into the blood from the stomach and intestines.

## **Tips for Party Going**

- If you are the designated driver, opt for non-alcoholic beverages. A new drinking trend among Americans is toward mineral water, exotic decaffeinated teas, non-alcoholic wine coolers, no alcohol wine and low alcohol beer.
- Never drink on an empty stomach. Eat high protein and carbohydrate foods like cheese and meats. They stay in the stomach longer, which slows the rate at which the body absorbs alcohol.
- If you mix your own drinks, use standard self-measuring, one ounce measuring devices. Use non-carbonated mixes such as fruit juice. The body absorbs alcohol faster when mixed with carbonation.
- Do not allow drinks you don't want to be forced on you. You may not wish to be rude to your host, but decline cheerfully.
- Stop drinking alcohol at least 2 hours before the party is over. Drink coffee, non-alcoholic beverages, and have some food.
- Remember....cold showers, fresh air, black coffee, or exercise will not sober someone up. Only time will do that.
- After a few alcoholic drinks, even the best driver can be impaired enough to injure or kill someone. If you are impaired, we suggest you stay where you are for a few more hours or stay overnight, if necessary, have a sober friend drive you home, or call a taxi to take you home. The life you save may be your own.

## **FOOD FOR THOUGHT AND CONSIDERATION**

If a driver is under the influence of drugs or alcohol, insists on driving a vehicle, is stopped by a law enforcement officer, is ticketed, charge and convicted on driving under the influence (DUI), the penalties can be huge, even for a first time misdemeanor. Consider this:

- A judge can sentence the driver to 48 hours or up to 6 months in jail.
- The driver may lose his or her driver's license for up to 6 months or have driving privileges restricted.
- The driver will be required to attend a DUI program and pay fines/fees around \$15,000.00.
- Driving drunk is a choice you make.

### The Possible Cost of One Alcoholic Drink

According to the Southern California Auto Club, even one drink of an alcoholic beverage, or one prescription medication can dramatically affect your thinking, actions and judgment while you are driving your vehicle. Alcohol and drugs can put your life, and the lives of others in your vehicle and/or the lives of others on the road you are driving at risk for injuries or death.

Also, if you are stopped by an Officer for bad or mistaken driving, or after an accident and you are arrested for DUI and convicted, the costs could be huge. Here is a breakdown of costs the Auto Club published this year.

For a first-offense misdemeanor DUI for an adult, age 21 or older:

DUI fine	\$390 (minimum)
County penalties	\$1,245
Vehicle tow/storage	\$350
Alcohol education class	\$575
Victim restitution fund	\$140
DMV license reissue	\$125
Booking (fingerprinting)	\$170
Auto insurance increase	\$10,154
Attorney and legal fees	\$2,500
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<b>Total Costs:</b>	<b>\$15,649</b>

### **PANHANDLERS**

Panhandlers' activities usually increase during the holiday season. Many of them are good actors. They sometimes cry. They have stories that can break your heart – if you allow it. If you are approached on the streets by someone asking for cash, here are some things you should know and can do to help them.

First Here is some information you should know:

1. Panhandling is not against the law. Panhandlers' freedom of speech (just like ours) is protected by the First Amendment of the Constitution of the United States. As long as they only ask for money, but do not become confrontational, abusive or threatening. If they ask for money, are turned down and simply walk away, there is not much police can do.
2. A sample survey taken of panhandlers in the Valley revealed the majority are not homeless people. They say they are unemployed citizens simply looking for help.
3. Unemployed residents are eligible for welfare, food stamps, rental assistance, aid to dependant children, Medi-Cal, retraining programs, and other benefits.
4. It appears many panhandlers may not know such assistance is available to them.
5. Over time, a person remaining unemployed can develop it as a habit. Habits can be hard to break if they are supported.
6. **By giving panhandlers money (a hand out), you are helping to support their habit, which may include illegal drugs and alcohol.**

#### **\*\* WHAT YOU CAN DO \*\***

1. DO NOT GIVE PANHANDLERS CASH.
2. GIVE THEM A 'HAND UP' BY PROVIDING THE INFORMATION THEY NEED THAT MAY CHANGE THEIR LIVES FOR THE BETTER.
3. GIVE PANHANDLERS 'A HAND UP'. (Smile and say you hope life gets better for them.)
4. IF A PANHANDLER THREATENS YOU, GO IMMEDIATELY TO THE NEAREST OPEN BUSINESS. ASK TO USE THEIR TELEPHONE, OR USE YOUR OWN TELEPHONE IN THE

SAFETY OF OTHER PEOPLE. CALL YOUR POLICE TO REPORT THE INCIDENT. TALK TO YOUR BUSINESS PERSON ABOUT WHAT HAPPENED.

5. GIVE YOUR DONATIONS IN PERSON TO ORGANIZATIONS THAT HELP OUR VALLEY'S POOR PEOPLE.
6. YOU CAN GIVE THEM HELP AS FOLLOWS:

\* Community Pantry  
521 N. San Jacinto St.  
Hemet, CA 92543  
(951) 929-1101

\* Valley Restart Shelter  
200 E. Menlo Ave.  
Hemet, CA 92543  
(951) 766-7476

\* Salvation Army  
340 S. Palm Ave.  
Hemet, CA 92545  
(951) 791-9495

\* Riverside Transit Agency (RTA)  
1 (800) 795-7887

## **NEW GUN LAWS**

On October 11<sup>th</sup>, Governor Jerry Brown signed eight bills related to firearms. These measures were introduced this year by the Legislature.

Many law-abiding gun owners have guns in their homes, garages and vehicles and they should be alert and aware of the new rules.

### **NEW LAWS**

- ◆ **AB 48.** Makes it a misdemeanor to manufacture, import or sell a large capacity-magazine conversion kit.
- ◆ **AB 170.** Only people can get permits to have an assault weapon, .50 BMG rifle or machine gun, not corporations.
- ◆ **AB 231.** Creates the crime of criminal storage in the third degree for people who leave a loaded gun where they should have known a child could find it.
- ◆ **SB 363.** Expands the definition of "Criminal storage" to keeping a loaded gun where a person prohibited from having guns has access to it.
- ◆ **AB 500.** Halts a gun purchase if state records show that the buyer has a history of mental treatment or criminal convictions that prohibit them from having a gun.
- ◆ **SB 683.** Requires people who buy long guns to take the same safety training as people who buy handguns.
- ◆ **AB 711.** Increases from six months to five years the amount of time when a person cannot own a gun after making a threat of physical violence to a licensed psychotherapist.

For more information contact: The National Rifle Association, or your favorite local gun shop or gun range.

## **A NEW TOOL**

In the early part of the fall season, our own Chief of Police, David Brown, the Redlands Police Department and the Riverside County District Attorney, Paul Zellerbach, got together to introduce to the public, a new microdot technology tool named COPDOTS. This new, high-tech device contains microscopic identity chips that can help return stolen property to their rightful owners more quickly than ever before.

COPDOTS is a pen-like tool that you can use to place ID's on your possessions. It marks your property with tiny polyester adhesive dots, smaller than a grain of sand. The dots contain codes that can be read by an ultraviolet light detector. Each dot has a numeric code embedded in it and each pen uses a different code. ***"Jewelry is one of the big things this is going to help us with,"*** Hemet Police Chief, David Brown said. ***"Jewelry to most people is invaluable."***

Here is how it will work. You go to Lowe's store and buy a COPDOTS pen for about \$30.00. Take it home and use it as described in the instructions inside the packet. Then, register your unique COPDOTS DNA code and KEYCODE at [www.copdots.com](http://www.copdots.com), or phone COPDOTS at (800) 710-8155, as directed in the instructions in the packet.

If someone then steals your marked property and it is recovered by our Police Department, the Officer will examine the recovered stolen property under the microscopic high-tech device, (already installed at the station) that will expose the COPDOTS codes. The officers will then contact the COPDOTS website to learn who the property owners are.

## **STAY CONNECTED with the Hemet PD Quarterly Neighborhood Watch Newsletter!!**

### **To START your e-mail Subscription:**

Send an E-Mail to [nmiller@cityofhemet.org](mailto:nmiller@cityofhemet.org) with **"Subscribe to Newsletter"** in the Subject Line.

### **To CANCEL your Subscription:**

Send an E-Mail to [nmiller@cityofhemet.org](mailto:nmiller@cityofhemet.org) with **"Cancel Newsletter"** in the Subject Line.

### **To EDIT your Subscription:**

Send an E-Mail to [nmiller@cityofhemet.org](mailto:nmiller@cityofhemet.org) with **"Edit E-Mail"** in the Subject Line. Please include your new e-mail address in the e-mail.

**To DOWNLOAD and/or view Newsletter from our Web-Site:**

Go to [www.hemetpolice.org](http://www.hemetpolice.org) then click **Community Services** then **Quarterly Newsletter**.

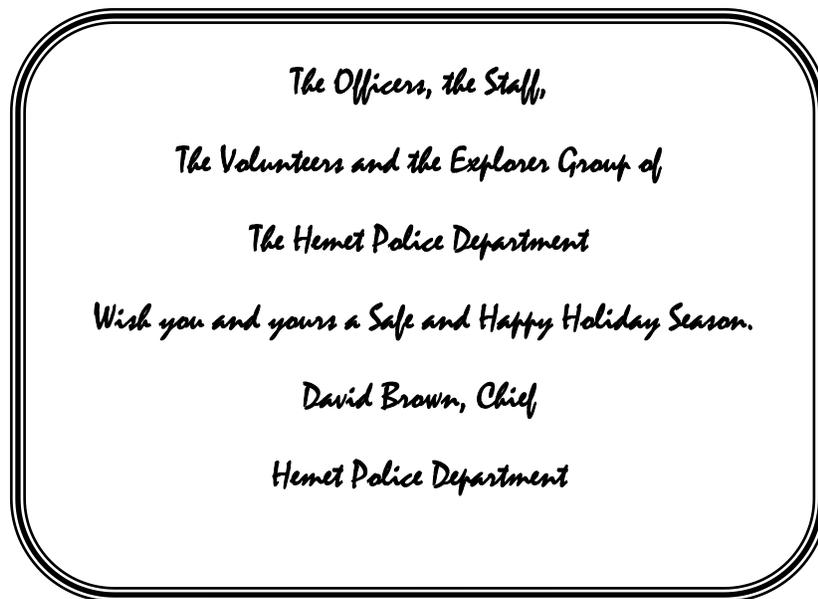
**To RECEIVE TEXT and/or E-MAIL ALERTS from the Hemet Police Web-Site:**

Go to <http://www.cityofhemet.org/list.aspx> then follow the 'NOTIFY ME' instructions. Select 'POLICE' under the NEWS FLASH HEADING.

**To follow HEMET POLICE on FACEBOOK:**

Go to <http://www.facebook.com/pages/Hemet-Police-Department/509975339028943?ref=ts> and **LIKE US!**

**\*\*As always, we will NEVER sell, loan, rent or otherwise share your personal information\*\***



**HEMET POLICE WANTS TO HEAR FROM YOU**

**YOU HAVE A QUESTION? WE HAVE ANSWERS**

Send your comments, suggestions, question, or just interesting thoughts to the Hemet Police Department. We might even publish them in a future edition of the Quarterly Newsletter. Reach us at:

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Neighborhood Watch, R. Moyer  
450 East Latham Avenue  
Hemet, CA 92543**

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