

BHNA General Meeting Minutes
June 17, 2014, 7:30pm

Speaker: Sargent Dave Norris, San Mateo Police Department

Topic: San Mateo Police Department and Crime Update

Number of Attendees: 35 current BHNA members, 1 nonmember, 36 total attendees
Board Members in Attendance: Jan Prisco, Kaye Sharma, Ellen Wang, Monika Lee, Heinz Plischke and Susan Rowinski.

The meeting was hosted by Ellen Wang who introduced board members and mentioned the next two general meeting topics and dates. She then introduced Sgt. Norris. Sgt. Norris is the Community and Media Relations officer for the San Mateo Police Department.

Sgt. Norris began by sharing the many steps that the SMPD (San Mateo Police Department) is taking to use social media tools to reach out to residents. Using social media is helping PSPD to help solve crimes, raise awareness, and prevent crimes.

Current crime trends were reviewed, including two phone scams. One is a phone scam through which the caller poses as a member of an official of a local organization owed money. The caller will ask for a money card to be taken out and sent...DON'T DO IT, EVER. The second phone scam is a "grandson scam" which targets older and/or non English speaking households. They will ask for money to help out a relative of the call recipient...DON'T DO IT and research with other relatives. It is difficult to trace these scam calls because they take advantage of a program informally called "spoofing" which allows a different caller ID to be shown every time the criminal makes a call.

Two common crimes of opportunity were also discussed. One is Door Knock Burglaries. The burglar knocks on the door and if no response is received attempts to enter the house. Solution: Leave no doors or windows openable from the outside and keep side gates locked. Crime of opportunity two is vehicle thefts and burglaries. At all times lock your car when leaving it (very important in public parking lots) and keep all valuables out of site. Valuables should be stowed BEFORE you park, not after you park, so that people nearby can't see you store them.

Re general safety issues: Sgt. Norris recommended that when walking at night that one should stay in well lit areas, wear lighter clothing, and keep police numbers handy.

A question and answer period followed. The question of skateboarders arose and Sgt. Norris explained they are treated under the law like fast moving pedestrians and defensive driving is important.

He also discussed two upcoming systems available to the public. These include a registry of video surveillance systems called NEST available at www.cityofsanmateo.org/Nest and a registry of serial numbers called ReportIt (Citizen Property Inventory System), www.reportit.leadsonline.com.

In response to a question about the canine program, Sgt. Norris was pleased to share that San Mateo currently has two police dogs, Ajax and Hero, who are being trained in building searches, arrest techniques, tracking, and detection of drugs and explosives. Donations are welcomed to fund the canine program.

The program adjourned at 8:45.