

Seattle Police Email Community Newsletter

September 11, 2013



Dear Community Friends,

Robberies

Armed and Strong-Armed Robberies have spiked. Just for clarification: an *armed*-robbery is one in which a weapon or threat of weapon is used to get property directly from a person; a *strong-armed* robbery is one where physical force or threat of force – not involving a weapon - is used.

We've seen groups of individuals, male and female, rob and assault individuals. The suspects range in age and description, as do the victims. A youth is robbed of his/her cell phone/iPod/Smartphone by other youth. An elder's gold necklace is ripped from her neck by a teenage male who comes up from behind. A 14-year-old likes to intimidate her fellow students and take their property (this young woman is a suspect in numerous strong-armed robberies). Weapons have been implied and no injuries have occurred. In other instances, weapons have been used resulting in injury and the victims needing to be treated at Harborview. Even with Strong-armed robberies, victims have suffered injuries from being pushed down, beaten and kicked. Almost every neighborhood has touched by street robberies.

In the South Precinct, Captain Paulsen has directed resources to address this problem, putting additional resources in to play, including emphasis and bicycle patrols.

The Good News; because of people willing to come forward as witnesses and rapid response on the part of Patrol officers, some of those committing these robberies have been taken in to custody. We highlight two instances to illustrate this point.

On 8-14-13, after some juveniles had just left their alcohol and drug treatment class, some in the group wanted to smoke some weed while others wanted to commit a robbery. While smoking, the group singled out a victim; he was chased and assaulted at the corner of Rainier Ave S & S Ferdinand ST. Calls to 9-1-1 came in and the suspects fled the area westbound through the Columbia City Farmer's Market.

Fortunately, bicycle officers were working an emphasis patrol the area and quickly responded. One officer headed towards the Farmer's Market where witnesses told him the suspects were seen while the other bike officer rode further to the west to cut them off. The first officer saw the suspects at Martin Luther King Jr Way S and S Alaska ST and directed other patrol officers to the suspects. As the suspects saw the bike officers and the patrol car, they started running again. After a brief chase, the two were apprehended. The victim had been taken to Harborview Medical Center to be treated for his injuries, however witnesses were able to identify the suspects, who were both arrested and booked into the Youth Service Center. This successful outcome was due to people in the community getting involved, bicycles officers being in the area and rapid response by patrol officers. We want to acknowledge South Precinct Bicycle Officers J. Ornelas and K. Squires, and Patrol Officers R. Bourns, M. Hurst, S. Jenkins, W. Johnson, D., Perkins, and J. Suarez for their response and service.

In another instance, as reported in the SPD Blotter on 8-21-13:

Trio Responsible for Series of Robberies in South, West Seattle, Possibly More

Written by [Detective Mark Jamieson](#) on August 22, 2013

Three men, ages 19, 21 and 22 were taken into custody after committing a series of robberies that stretched from Holly Park to Fauntleroy to Arbor Heights in a span of about 90 minutes. These men are possibly responsible for many more robberies. Please refer to this Blotter posting for the details (Det. Jamieson wrote it up better than I could). We do want to acknowledge the victims who had the courage to identify their assailants, and those witnesses who stepped forward to call 911, provide aid to the victims and helped identify the individuals responsible for these crimes. We'd also like to acknowledge the Southwest Precinct officers who responded and were involved in this particular arrest: Officers P. Chang, J. Cole, H. Crumpton, A. Ferreira, K. Heffernan, J. Olson, N. Nguyen, J. Pitts, D. Skaar, S. Specht, and L. Steiger

The reason for these outcomes is not just police response. These outcomes are the result of people willing to call 911, willing to come forward and aid a victim, and willing to identify the perpetrators of these crime. We thank you.

Below we provide some robbery prevention and response tips that we hope you will find useful.

Robberies: What You Can Do

General

- Preparation is key to personal safety. Before you leave home, decide what you actually need to take with you rather than automatically taking your entire handbag or wallet out of habit. For example, if you are going to the grocery store for a few items, you can carry cash, or a credit/debit card, I.D. and keys in a pocket.
- Follow your intuition. Pay close attention to the uncomfortable feelings that often warn us of potential danger. "Trust Your Gut." If you feel that a situation is not right, move out of the situation. Trusting your own instincts that a situation feels "wrong" can be the best personal safety tool you have. Don't be afraid to cross the street, change directions, return to a business, or ask for help based on that "funny feeling;" you may be right.
- Carry minimal items; overloading yourself can make you appear vulnerable.

On The Street

- Always plan your route and pay close attention to your surroundings. Avoid unknown shortcuts.
- Scan your surroundings and make eye contact with people, not to stare them down, but to let them know that you are aware of them and acknowledge their presence. This sends the message that you not only know they are there, but you can also identify them if necessary.
- Avoid listening to music through earphones when out on the street. It can prevent you from paying the full attention needed and distracts you from what and who is around you.
- If you are being followed, or you see a person or group that makes you feel uncomfortable, give yourself permission to act; cross the street, walk in another direction, go in to a business, or ask other people walking if you may walk a short distance with them.
- Carry your valuables safely. Don't display items (e.g., iPods, Smartphones, cash, small electronics), when walking to and from your destination.
- Learn street names, hundred blocks and directions (i.e. north, south, east, west). Chances are you'll be using a cell phone to report something of significance, and anything you can do to help the first responders locate you or the incident you are reporting is extremely helpful.

When Using Mass Transit

- Use the transit schedules to minimize the length of time waiting for the bus or train.
- Avoid using your electronics (laptops, tablets, Smartphone's, etc). Robbers have often identified potential victims who use their electronics while on the bus/train, then follow that person once they exit to commit the robbery.
- If someone is bothering you on the bus or train, notify the driver.
- If few people are on the bus or train, sit near the driver.
- Keep your purse, shopping bag, backpack, packages, etc., in your lap, on your arm, or between your feet -- not by themselves on an empty seat.
- If you feel uneasy about getting off at your usual stop, stay on until the next stop.

If You Are Confronted

- If someone demands your property and displays or implies in any way that they have a weapon, don't resist. Physical property isn't worth getting injured or killed over. You are more important than your stuff. You can replace "stuff;" you can't replace you.

The Stone House

Many South Precinct residents are familiar with the Sharon Stone property on the 8400 Block of 55th Ave S. This home was the nexus of many criminal and public safety concerns in the Rainier Beach community, including narcotics activity, burglary, prostitution and other crime. As a result, the home was declared a drug nuisance and the City of Seattle abated the property. Beth Gappert, the City Attorney Liaison with our Narcotics section, pursued forfeiture of the property, resulting in the sale of a property to a buyer who understood the community's concerns and was willing to do extensive renovations to make the property habitable. We are happy to report that after a lengthy process, the sale of the property became final on August 30, 2013. This was the result of years of effort by many people: Patrol officers; Narcotics detectives; Community Police Team officers; the City Attorney's Office; most importantly, the neighbors in this community who endured the problems emanating from the home, never gave up, kept reporting, and supported each other through this lengthy process. Once again, we say Thank You.

Thank you for all you do for your neighborhoods. Until next time, Take Care and Stay Safe!

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