



Sherman Oaks Neighborhood Association

Sherman Oaks Neighborhood Association is a volunteer group of residents working to make our neighborhood a better place to live work and play. A Community Action & Pride Grant from the City of San Jose supplements newsletter funds.

Issue 123 of your local neighborhood newsletter.

Notes From the President

As you can see, our July meeting is going to be a very casual and is meant to allow you to get out of the heat and get to know your neighbors. This isn't the competitive "who's the best cook in the neighborhood" type of potluck, it's the "hey, we're all really busy" kind of potluck. So grab something and join us. Of course, if you want to impress us with your culinary talents, we're not going to stop you. There will be games and activities that help break the ice if you're new to the neighborhood, and of course, Bingo towards the end.

Our August meeting will be on the first Tuesday of the month as we celebrate National Night Out. Mark your calendars and change the date you expect to join us. We'll have details on the where and when in our next newsletter, but make sure you can join us for this fun event. National Night Out is celebrated around the globe as a way for neighborhoods to take back their streets, celebrate their neighborhoods and connect people to people. Our homes are safer when we are connected to each other.

We are under siege with crime right now. Not the dangerous life threatening crime, but after years of peaceful times, we're seeing the rise of burglaries and thefts. We've been asked to supply residents with tips and advice, so check out page 3 for more details.

While we just got summer started, it's not too soon to figure out whether your child is up to date on inoculations. There are new rules for kids, including middle school and high school. Contact your school district or go to <http://www.shotsforschool.org/> to get the latest info.

See you at the meetings...Randi

General Meeting

July 14, 2011

6:00PM – 8:30PM

GAME NIGHT & POTLUCK!!!!

July's meeting will be our summer potluck, so save the second Thursday for that! Don't worry about impressing us with your cooking; this is simply a "come in, get out of the heat, meet your neighbors and have fun" night.

Grab the kids and bring something to share.

We'll provide turkey and trimmings, ham, coffee and iced tea. Grab a side dish and join us. Set up at 6pm so we can enjoy an air-conditioned room.

Notes and News

SONA E-mail List: We are looking to add you to our list of online members for several reasons. First of all, it's expensive to deliver newsletters and our grant funding for this has been drying up. Second, it's the right thing to do. We need to reduce the amount of paper we use and become a leaner, greener community. Third, we need to expand our ability to contact each other and stay in touch. Because our newsletter is delivered monthly, we miss sending you vital information about your neighborhood. We also miss the general "chat" that makes life interesting and fun, so we'll be sending you requests to join our Yahoo group as well. Plans are in the works to launch our Facebook page and re-vamp our website. Who's having a garage sale, who needs a gardener or plumber, who's looking for a babysitter, who's having a block party, who's selling their home? Online forums will allow us to build these neighbor-to-neighbor ties. **At no point will your information be given out or sold to anybody, at no point will your info be published.** If you have the skills and are interested in helping us grow our e-presence, contact Layne Kulwin (see below).

PayPal is available on SONA's website! You can pay your yearly dues with just a few clicks, make donations and contribute to SONA's success. We simply cannot afford to mail out reminders to people, so we are hoping that you will use the PayPal option on the website's front page and make your contribution count. This is a secure and easy way to pay your dues each year and you can also opt to have your dues deducted every year from now on. What a great way to support your neighborhood from the comfort of your own home. **The SONA website is located at <http://www.sona-sj.com/>** You can also sign up for easy to use yearly renewals or add a little extra to support SONA.

Friends of Bascom Library and Community Center are still working hard to identify alternatives that will allow our local site to be opened. There are ongoing meetings being held with other neighborhoods to develop a strategy that brings this to the forefront of budget discussions and work on fund raising ideas. Our community center and library will be doomed to remaining vacant and unused for many years if we can't start moving folks at City Hall to respond to us. If you want to join in on this effort or just want more information, contact either Steve or Marlene (see below). The Friends of Bascom also have a Facebook page that easily keeps you in touch with the latest information.

Assembly Member Jim Beall and Congresswoman Zoe Lofgren are hosting a "Preparing for Medicare 2012" event on September 17, 2011, location and time to be determined. With the new healthcare reforms and changes in Medicare options, even if you know how things work now, they are going to change in the future. There will be counselors on site to answer your specific questions. For more information you can contact Beall's local office at 282-8920 or sign up for his monthly newsletter at <http://asmdc.org/members/a24/>. We'll publish the information when we get it, but mark your calendars now.

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SONA's newsletter is published monthly and distributed to 1500 residences. All ad copy is due by the 15th of each month. Newsletter editor is Randi Kinman. Our all-volunteer group welcomes your participation. Feel free to contact any of us with ideas or questions.

SONA Safety Tips

- **Conduct a fresh safety check of your home.** Look at your home, driveway, carport or garage with new eyes. If you were a burglar, would it be easy to get onto your property undetected? Is your gate locked at all times? Can you secure all windows and doors? Can your neighbors see the front of your house or do you need to cut back some shrubs? Go out at night and see how your home looks.
- **Don't forget the second story.** Residents in local apartments have discovered that being on the second floor is no guarantee that you're safe from burglaries. Make sure that all second floor windows, doors or attic spaces can be secured.
- **This isn't just about the big things.** Most residential burglaries are not the kind of events where you come home and find all your property ransacked and major items taken. Some of your most valuable things (jewelry, electronics, etc.) can be grabbed in less than five minutes. This can mean a major loss in your life. You may recover financially, but you can't replace family heirlooms.
- **Secure your home each and every time you leave.** Even if you are running to the store for just a few minutes, that's all it takes for burglars to get in and out. Think how easy it would be to enter your house through an open window or unlocked door, grab lightweight items and leave. Try it yourself and see how easy it would be to take jewelry, computers, etc. in less than five minutes.
- **Keep nothing in your car.** Lock it each and every time, make sure it's cleaned out and don't leave anything in sight. There is nothing more aggravating than to find out you need to spend hundreds of dollars on replacing windows when they were after the 57cents left in the cup holder.
- **Prepare for the worst-case scenario.** Is your computer backed up? If so, is the back-up sitting right next to your computer or is it hidden away so you don't lose both? Is all your family jewelry in one location on top of a dresser? Are checkbooks, bank statements or credit cards sitting in plain sight on the desk? The tops of counters, desks and bureaus are the first place they look, so don't keep all of your valuables in sight and don't simply place things in the top drawer.
- **Know what you could lose.** We lose track through the years of what we've collected. We also lose track of how things increase in value. Take an inventory periodically. Get serial numbers for all of those I-Pods, game systems, etc. and keep the list updated. Take pictures or list family heirlooms. Remember that coin collection you had as a kid? What's it worth now?
- **Check your insurance.** Do you need a rider for jewelry, art or other expensive items? Are the heirlooms covered? If you have relatives living with you, do they need to be added to the policy? Knowing what's covered and what's not covered, know what your deductible is and know how to update as needed.
- **Be aware and alert.** Are there people acting suspiciously? Are there cars parked with people in them? Are there people you don't recognize? Do you know who does and doesn't belong at the neighbor's house? Do you see unfamiliar dog walkers just hanging out or are there kids (don't forget the girls!) where they don't belong? When getting in and out of your car, look around first. Shopping malls parking lots are also seeing a rise in crime so shop with a buddy or ask for an escort if you're parked in the back forty. You know the rules when on vacation so make sure you travel with everything secured.
- **To alarm or not to alarm.** The first line of deterrent is an alarm system, but whether or not that suits your family or budget is up to you. You can head to your local hardware or electronics store and get signs and equipment that allow your home to appear alarmed.
- **Don't leave home without it...securing it that is.** Make sure that things are locked up tight, that your neighbors know how to reach you and that you have stopped mail and newspaper deliveries. Have somebody take garbage cans in and out, keep up with yardwork and ask them to either move your car periodically or leave their car in your driveway. Use timers to have lights and radios on at different times of the day and night. Don't advertise your absence.
- **Don't let anybody in and don't give him or her helpful information about yourself.** Door to door solicitors are required to register with the City of San Jose and wear appropriate identification. All legitimate utility workers must carry ID. Is a carpet cleaning demonstration worth losing your possessions because they are really casing your home? Do not be distracted by "workers" who divide your attention, keeping you busy talking while one disappears. Don't fall for knocks at the door and pleas of emergency; if there is an emergency you can call 911 without letting people in. Never tell people you're home alone and never let them know when you'll be absent.
- **Report everything.** Report all suspicious activity even if you don't think the police will be there in time to do anything about it; they need to know patterns if nothing else and can't respond if you don't call. Report any event such as a break in or trespassing even if you don't lose anything or intend to file a claim. You can call 311 (277-8900 on your cell) to report non-emergency events. If you come home and find your home broken into and don't feel safe entering on your own, call 911 (277-8911 on your cell) and wait. You can report crimes by going to headquarters or file an online report by going to <http://www.sjpd.org/ReportingCrime/>. If something doesn't feel right, trust your instincts and call.
- **Never give out information over the Internet or phone and never fall for the scams.** Is somebody asking you to move funds or cash a check? Did you get a message that a relative or friend is in trouble and needs money? Does somebody want to verify your social security number or date of birth? And, really, did you even enter that Canadian lottery that is now telling you that you won?
- **This isn't an episode of CSI.** If you've experienced a burglary or break in, the odds are there will be no fingerprints or other evidence.
- **Get to know your neighbors.** Your first true line of defense is getting to know your neighbors and looking out for each other. SONA can help provide you with tools such as the HiFive program. Invite the neighbors over for a visit or go over and admire their garden. Join us anytime at one of our meetings and we'll help you connect.



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Emergency	911
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City of San Jose 24Hour 535-3500

Hotline to all Services
Santa Clara County 211 211

Referrals and crisis information for
Housing, financial assistance, services, etc.

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