

NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH NEWSLETTER

BANORA POINT TWEED AREA 7

ISSUE 83

November 2010

Tweed Heads Police 5536 0999 – 52 Recreation St, Tweed Heads 2485 – P O Box 692
Volunteers in Policing 5536 0929 – Police Assistance Line 131 444
Crime Stoppers 1800 330 000

News from our Editor

This Newsletter could be important to you – it is NOT Junk Mail!

**We meet at 1.00 pm at the Banora Point
Community Centre, Woodland Drive
just off Leisure Drive
Tea/Coffee/Biscuits afterwards
ALL WELCOME**

**Our Meeting Dates for 2010:
16 November (AGM).
And for 2011, 15 Feb, 17 May,
16 Aug & 15 Nov**

Committee contact details are as follows:

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Online Resources

www.police.nsw.gov.au
www.consumersonline.gov.au

www.fairtrading.nsw.gov.au
www.tweed.nsw.gov.au

www.scamwatch.gov.au
www.surf.to/usda

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Why Neighbourhood Watch?

Some must be asking this question, and it is a very valid question to ask.

Unfortunately there are some people in the community who have not learnt the importance of the distinction between “mine” and “thine”. As a result they apparently work on the basis “What is mine is mine and what is thine is mine.”

Why do people steal?

There are generally reckoned to be several reasons why a person will steal. One is the feeling “I want it!” often to be heard from screaming toddlers in a supermarket, or toyshop. Another, possibly from the more adult, “If I take it I can sell it and get money to buy what I want.”

Of more interest to us is why people don't steal. Most of us have learnt that, if nothing else, if we take what belongs to others, it opens the way for them to take what is ours – and the stronger wins! So to protect ourselves, we have the social ethic

“Thou shall not steal.” Parents do their best to inculcate this ethic into their children. In about 99% or more cases, by the age of five this is ingrained, and by the age of fifteen the proportion rises to perhaps 99.999%. Unfortunately there are the ones who never learn, and would continue taking the goods of others unless deterred.

Unless deterred?

How? I believe it is generally understood that there are three important considerations – the severity of punishment, the likelihood of conviction, and the likelihood of detection.

The first is a matter for the courts of justice. The second is a matter for the Police Force, in collecting the evidence which in the first place will enable them to identify the offender, and in the second place will be sufficient to convince the court that the offender has been correctly identified.

The NHW role.

The third – the likelihood of detection – is where Neighbourhood Watch comes in.

NHW and Police: Working together to provide safer communities.

But first let me emphasize that NHW is not a vigilante organization. We have nothing to do with apprehending an offender. Rather, we can assist the Police Force in their task of identifying the offender.

There are roughly 750 policemen (which being a generic term covers both men and women) in the Tweed area. Of these, many are on leave, many are on sick leave (it is a very stressful task and 'burn out' is not uncommon, so police are entitled to lengthy time off if necessary to recover – why let a well trained policeman go if by a time of recuperation he can return to being an effective policeman?). They are spread over a large area, but a crime is committed in only one place at a time, so the likelihood of a crime being committed in the sight of a policeman is very low.

This is mutual help.

We can act as the “eyes and ears” of the police by noting unusual events, especially those that could be construed as criminal activities. We keep our eyes and our ears open to protect the property of our neighbours in the valid expectation that they will do the same for us.

Know your neighbours!

If you have no idea who your neighbours are you are not able to identify people going in or out their property, though if you see persons carrying out television sets, computers, radios from a neighbour's property you may well think it suspicious, even if you have never seen the people in the house. (And unfortunately unless you are a keen gardener it is likely that you are not in the front to observe.)

What can you do?

If you see something odd, if possible make some record of the event. A description of the people, and especially of any vehicle involved – type, colour, any markings, and if possible the registration plate. A mental note of the day and time, perhaps, or even a note in a diary. If you know the owners are away and people are removing goods from the house, call the police (**Crime Stoppers, Police Assistance Line, Tweed Heads Police Station** – numbers are at the head of this newsletter) and let them know what is happening. First give your name, address and phone number, then all the relevant details, and keep watch until either the villains depart or the police arrive. If you can take a photo using either a camera or a mobile phone, do so, focus on faces, vehicles, goods being removed.

We can't stamp out crime, but working together we can keep it down to what might perhaps be called 'reasonable limits'

Email from South Australia

“I did use my digital camera to photograph a teenager who was vandalising my boat in a South Australian river port. With digital lag, he had time to bare his buttocks and challenge me: 'If you take that photo, I will have you up on molestation charges'. Obviously he was a hardened thug, and I could call his bluff. 'Undoubtedly local police will recognise your buttocks from similar scenarios'. They didn't even need the photo. 'That gang has been stealing trolleys from the local supermarket and throwing them into the river; I'll head around and have a chat with his mother'. We live in a bizarre era.”