

# Views

## Richmond Heights Neighborhood Council

Visit us at [www.richmond-heights.org](http://www.richmond-heights.org) Jovanka Beckles, President • P.O. Box 5253 • Richmond, CA 94805

### quick-takes

#### Burglary Suspect in Custody

Tuesday, Feb. 10, 2009, 2:15 p.m., 2100 block Carlson Blvd.-- Officer Abetkov responded to a report of an attempted burglary. Upon arrival, the victim told the Officer that he heard loud banging coming from his front door. The victim went to the front door to see who it was. He opened the front door, but nobody was there.

The victim then heard someone at his bathroom window. He went to the bathroom window and opened it. He saw a black male adult standing outside the window. The victim yelled at the suspect and asked him what he was doing. The suspect took off running northbound on Carlson Blvd.

Officer Shanks observed a BMA, fitting the description of the suspect, walking northbound along Carlson Blvd. Officer Shanks and El Cerrito PD officers detained the suspect who was positively identified by the victim. The suspect was found to be in possession of a woman's purse and jewelry. El Cerrito officers went to an address found in the purse and determined that another residence was also burglarized.

Detective Hall and Detective Wentworth from El Cerrito PD interviewed the suspect and determined that he is suspected of several other burglaries in Richmond and El Cerrito.

#### Everybody wins in brush clearing project

By Tom Lochner WCCCT staff writer

It was the ultimate winning situation on Bernhard Avenue in unincorporated East Richmond Heights. Residents got help protecting their homes from possible wildfires, students of the Civicorps charter school of Oakland learned about "defensible space," and the giraffes of the Oakland Zoo got some fresh acacia branches delivered by the truckload during the course of the day.

Organize a minimum of five properties to qualify for Neighborhood Defensible Space Work Days, a program of the Contra Costa County Fire Protection District that helps seniors and disabled people clear vegetation around their homes as part of a greater effort to reduce fire danger along the urban wild land interface.

A priority hazard zone, defined according to criteria that include proximity to open space, topography, slope, density of homes, amount of vegetation, difficulty of access for emergency vehicles, and other conditions favorable to fast moving and destructive fires.

Civicorps has worked clearing vegetation for Caltrans, EBMUD, the city of Oakland, East Bay Regional Park District and other agencies.

"Fuel reduction and vegetation management are usually the most immediate and effective measures homeowners can take to protect themselves and their property," said Emily Hopkins, the community and media relations official for the county fire district.

More than 10,000 homes in Contra Costa County are at high risk of urban wild land interface fires, based on information from fire agencies throughout the county. About 6,000 homes are in the priority hazard zone, mostly around Richmond, El Sobrante, Lafayette and Martinez.

Reach Tom Lochner at 510-262-2760 or [tlochner@bayareanewsgroup.com](mailto:tlochner@bayareanewsgroup.com).

#### Fire Victim Receives Donations

Things looked bleak for Richmond High School's baseball and softball teams in February after an arsonist on campus turned their equipment into charcoal a day before practice was to start.

Within a week, the teams were back on the field, thanks to an outpouring of generosity from businesses, organizations and individuals who have donated thousands in cash and equipment.

"Definitely, there's been great outreach," Richmond High Athletic Director Darrin Zaragoza said. "We've been so impressed. Especially in this economy we're in."

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**next meeting**

See back page for agenda


**quick-takes**

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**Immigration & Motherhood**

Gloria Castro, PsyD, will reprise her much admired presentation at the National Training Institute of Zero to Three, "Stranger in a Strange Land," on Friday, April 17, as part of a new series on "Topics in Infant Mental Health." Dr. Castro will speak of the challenges immigrant women face upon becoming mothers and will show how infant / parent therapists can use dyadic work to help the new mother develop a sense of herself as a competent mother and a competent immigrant at the same time.

Dr. Castro's lecture will be presented on Friday, April 17, from 1 pm to 3 pm at the First Presbyterian Church of Richmond, 3415 Barrett Ave. To reserve your place, please call our NEW reservation line 510/981-2205. Your reservation will be confirmed unless we call to let you know that the hall is full. There is no charge for admission. Continuing Education Units (CEU's) are available, free of charge, to mental health professionals. Please mention that you want CEU's when you make your phone reservation. All guests receive a certificate of attendance.

Dr. Castro was educated in Mexico City and was a child psychologist at the Children's Hospital of the National Medical Center there. She earned her PsyD at Argosy University. Dr. Pawl, who was a long time consultant to Early Childhood, plans to attend Dr. Castro's lecture. We are pleased that the support of the George Miller Youth Fund and Mrs. Cynthia Miller makes it possible for us to offer this lecture that is so relevant to work with children and families in West County.

*Continues on page 4***'Broken Window' Syndrome****By Carolyn Y. Johnson, Globe Staff**

In 2005 the city of Lowell, Massachusetts was being turned into a real life crime fighting laboratory.

Researchers, working with police, identified 34 crime hot spots. In half of them, authorities set to work clearing trash from the sidewalks, fixing street lights, and sending loiterers scurrying. Abandoned buildings were secured, businesses forced to meet code, and more arrests made for misdemeanors. Mental health services and homeless aid referrals expanded. In the remaining hot spots, normal policing and services continued.

Then researchers from Harvard and Suffolk University sat back and watched, meticulously recording criminal incidents in each of the hot spots. The results, just now circulating in law enforcement circles, are striking: A 20 percent plunge in calls to police from the parts of town that received extra attention. It is seen as strong scientific evidence that the long debated "broken window" theory really works, that disorderly conditions breed bad behavior, and that fixing them can help prevent crime.

"In traditional policing, you went from call to call, and that was it, you're chasing your tail," said Lowell patrol officer Karen Witts. Now, she says, there appears to be a solid basis for a policing strategy that preemptively addresses the conditions that promote crime.

Many police departments across the country already use elements of the broken window theory, or focus on crime hot spots. The Lowell experiment offers guidance on what seems to work best. Cleaning up the physical environment was very effective; misdemeanor arrests without cleaning up the physical environment less effective and boosting social services without cleaning up the physical environment had no apparent impact.

Such evidence based policing is essential, argues David Weisburd, a professor of administration of justice at George Mason University. "We demand it in fields like medicine," Weisburd said. "It seems to me with all the money we spend on policing, we better be able to see whether the programs have the effects we intend them to have." And this particular study, he said, is "elegant" in how clearly it demonstrated crime prevention benefits.

The broken window theory was first put forth in a 1982 Atlantic article by James Q. Wilson, a political scientist then at Harvard, and George L. Kelling, a criminologist. The theory suggests that a disorderly environment sends a message that no one is in charge, thus increasing fear, weakening community controls, and inviting criminal behavior. It further maintains that stopping minor offenses and restoring greater order can prevent serious crime.

Bernard Harcourt, a professor of law and political science at the University of Chicago who has been critical of the broken window policing method, called the Lowell experiment fascinating because it showed that changing the nature of a place had a stronger effect on crime than misdemeanor arrests. "It helps practitioners," said Brenda J. Bond, assistant professor of public management at Suffolk. "We need to focus on hot spot areas like this using these kinds of tools and techniques." With lead author Anthony Braga, a senior research associate at Harvard Kennedy School, Bond co-wrote the study detailing the findings, published in August in the journal *Criminology*.

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## contacts



You'll find many more phone numbers, as well as e-mail links for public services at our website, [www.richmond-heights.org](http://www.richmond-heights.org)

### Emergency 911

Crime in progress, medical

### To report suspicious activity

Richmond Police 233-1214  
Unincorporated area 925/646-2441  
Anonymous tips 232-TIPS

### Community Police Officer

Officer Tim Gard 621-1212 ex 7099  
e-mail [tgard@richmondpd.net](mailto:tgard@richmondpd.net)

### General security concerns, other police services

RP Watch Commander 620-6643  
Michelle Milam 620-6538

### Neighborhood Council issues

Jovanka Beckles 813-7008

### Report blight and graffiti

Richmond Graffiti 231-3010  
Volunteer to remove 231-3031  
CalTrans 925/926-6112

### Report abatement issues

Auto on Private land 621-1278  
Auto on Public land 620-6644  
Alma Munguia 621-1279  
Pot Hole Repair 231-3011

As always we are looking for community events for the newsletter. If you know of an event coming up, let us know at five weeks before the beginning of the month of the event. E-mail [owenlmartin@earthlink.net](mailto:owenlmartin@earthlink.net) with your articles. Contributions and articles are most welcome. This is your newsletter.

### Neighborhood Meetings

The meeting schedule below may change July 6 for August 3 depending on the schools schedule.

6-Apr-09  
4-May-09  
1-Jun-09

## Calls for service to the Richmond Police

Calls made to the Richmond Police become Statistics provided to us each month by Crime analysis of RPD, whose support and assistance we continue to appreciate.

**Suspicious person** 31  
**Suspicious vehicle** 7  
**Abandoned auto** 3  
**Recovered stolen vehicle** 2  
**Vehicle tampering** 1  
**Disturbance** 34  
**911 Disconnect** 11  
**Dogs** 2  
**Dumping** 1  
**Stolen vehicle** 9

1/17 123XX San Pablo  
1/20 7XX Kern  
1/21 10XX Lassen  
1/22 7XX Sonoma  
1/24 123XX San Pablo  
1/27 10XX Ventura  
2/01 5XX Dimm  
2/13 4XX Mount

### Hit/Run property damage

1/21 Macdonald / San Pablo  
1/30 49XX Macdonald  
2/02 7XX McLaughlin  
2/10 McBryde / Amador

### Burglary from residence

2/02 8XX Sonoma  
2/06 50XX Solano

### Burglary from auto

1/16 128XX San Pablo  
2/03 9XX Lassen

### Shots fired

1/31 9XX Amador

### Robbery

1/20 Solano / McLaughlin  
1/30 Solano / San Pablo  
2/09 Solano / San Pablo

### Mail Theft

1/18 5XX Key  
2/06 6XX McLaughlin

### Petty theft/stolen property

1/16 6XX Lassen  
1/21 Solano / San Pablo  
1/21 7XX Kern  
1/22 49XX Macdonald  
1/27 Carlston / Rosalind  
1/31 48XX Macdonald  
2/03 124XX San Pablo  
2/06 22XX Key  
2/08 6XX Sonoma  
2/13 50XX Garvin  
2/15 Clinton / Amador

### Grand theft

2/11 7XX McLaughlin

### Battery

2/09 50XX Barrett

### Assault w/ deadly weapon

2/14 124XX San Pablo

### Arson

1/16 6XX McLaughlin  
1/19 Garvin / McLaughlin

### Calls related to juveniles

1/31 8XX Amador

### Vandalism

1/18 8XX Lassen  
2/06 126XX San Pablo  
2/09 125XX San Pablo

## Arts & Activism in the Community

Art has played a significant role in revitalizing communities. Artists often create new spaces and attitudes toward areas that were previous viewed through a negative lens. Murals, community gardens, artist cafes and galleries help redefine a community.

For More Information Call: 510-236-4049 [www.richmondmainstreet.org](http://www.richmondmainstreet.org)

Amanda Elliott, Executive Director, Richmond Main Street, 1000 Macdonald Ave. Suite C, Richmond, California 94801

## quick-takes

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### Time for Dad Enrollment

"Time for Dad," Early Childhood's long time parenting group for fathers, is now open for enrollment after a hiatus of more than a year. The original leader of the program, U-Sef Barnes, M.A., welcomes fathers, grandfathers, and father figures who want to improve their parenting skills. Barnes, who has degrees in child development and counseling, was on the staff of Early Childhood for many years. He has worked as a family mediator in public and private agencies and is now with child protective services in Alameda County. Fathers may enroll for a 12 week session and re-enroll if needed. Sessions are on Monday evenings from 6:30 pm to 7:30 pm. To enroll or to refer a father, please call 510/412-9200.

"Time for Dad" joins two on-going evening parenting groups that meet in the Family Center: Familias Seguras for Spanish speaking mothers who face domestic violence issues, led by Ana Maria Rullier, and Ser Papá for Spanish speaking fathers who want a better relationship with their children, led by Carlos Guerrero, ASW. Free childcare is provided for these groups. Early Childhood also offers a fourth group, Ser Mamá for Spanish speaking mothers of toddlers. Ser Mamá meets on Tuesday mornings at the Coronado YMCA, 20th and Maine in Richmond. Free childcare is provided during sessions.

Parents who wish to enroll in any group may call 510/412-9200. Spanish speaking staff members are always available during business hours. **THERE IS NO CHARGE FOR PARENTING GROUPS.**

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## 'Broken Window' Syndrome

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That theory has been hotly debated even as it has been widely deployed. Critics have pointed out that defining "disorder" is inherently subjective. Some challenge the "broken window" success stories, questioning, for example, whether New York City's decrease in crime in the 1990s could have been caused by the decline in the use of crack cocaine or other factors.

The work has directly influenced policing in Boston, said police Commissioner Edward Davis, who was chief in Lowell during the study. In Boston, Davis has created "safe street teams" that target disorder in 10 crime hot spots. "We've given them a special number at City Hall to call for removal of graffiti, any kind of disorder, any broken windows, any trash in the street," Davis said. "You have to prove to the officers it works, and doing this type of experimentation, having findings published, goes a long way."

The strategies continue to flourish across Lowell. "Sometimes, we create mini-task forces to saturate an area at a particular time of day when we see disorder," Lowell police Superintendent Kenneth Lavalley said. "We target those activities that could be a quality of life issue, like drinking, and motor vehicle enforcement."

As a patrol officer pointed out evidence of success, a brick apartment building that once racked up 100 calls to police in a three month period has had just one incident over the last six weeks. Gone, she noted, are the unregistered cars in the parking lot, the broken fence, and the code violations in the building, as well as problem tenants and crime.

The Lowell study is not the only support being given to the broken window theory. A second study, published in the journal *Science* in December, reported on how it held up in individual experiments in Europe. In one, researchers staked out an alley in Groningen, Netherlands, where people parked their bikes. They attached fliers to handlebars in one setting that was clean, and one in which the walls were covered with graffiti. They found that only a third of the participants tossed the fliers on the pavement in the clean alley, whereas more than two thirds did so in the less orderly environment.

In a second experiment, researchers tried to stimulate a crime. Letters that clearly contained money were left sticking out of mailboxes, one in a clean neighborhood, and one in a neighborhood where the mailbox was covered with graffiti. In the clean neighborhood, 13 percent of passersby's stole the envelope, while in the disorderly neighborhood, 27 percent did. Beyond the broken window theory, psychologists are studying how the environment influences behavior and thinking. "One of the implications certainly is that efforts that invest in improving the environment in terms of cleanliness may actually help in reducing moral transgressions because people perceive higher moral standards," said Chen-Bo Zhong, assistant professor of management at the Rotman School of Management at the University of Toronto.

All of which plays out in the theory that Wilson and Kelling introduced in 1982. "Think of how long it took," Kelling, a Rutgers professor, said of the latest evidence. "If you're a police executive or a policy executive, you can't wait 27 years; you have to make good policy decisions based on bad data and good theory and correlation."

Carolyn Y. Johnson can be reached at [cjohnson@globe.com](mailto:cjohnson@globe.com)

## Fire Victim Receives Donations

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Vandals set a series of fires on the campus Feb. 7 and 8, burning down a shed that controlled irrigation of the school's fields and that stored thousands of dollars in baseball and softball equipment, rendering bats, balls, mitts, uniforms, a pitching machine and more useless.

School officials are still tallying up donations, but they hover around \$10,000 in cash and equipment. Donors have been dropping off everything from a single mitt to checks for large sums of money, Zaragoza said.

San Jose-based contracting firm gave \$5,000 as well as bats, balls, catching gear and other equipment. A spokeswoman said the company, has donated to other Richmond area schools in the past, felt compelled to support athletics.

San Ramon Valley Girls Athletic League board members donated \$1,500 for softball equipment. A board member's husband, who works for a container company, also has promised a water, fire, and bullet resistant container for the team to store its stuff.

"It was really important for the girls to start their sport in the spring, so we wanted to help them out," said board member Erika Weisenberg.

The donations will hold the teams over for a couple of years at least, Zaragoza said, and they restore two spring seasons that could have been lost.

"It just brings hope and encouragement to the kids," Zaragoza said.

## Suspected Serial Rapist Arrested

On Feb. 3, 2009 Officer Googins had conducted a traffic stop on a silver BMW X5 on the Richmond Parkway. The driver of the BMW was arrested on an outstanding warrant. There was a known prostitute in the vehicle. Officer Longacre towed the vehicle pursuant to the driver's arrest.

On Feb. 4, 2009, Officer Longacre was reading the Contra Costa Times when he noticed an article about a rape that the Sheriff's Department was investigating. The rape had occurred several days prior in the 200 block of Parr Ave. The article listed a description of the suspect and a vehicle description (a silver BMW X5). The article urged anyone with information to contact the Sheriff's Department.

Officer Longacre recalled that the vehicle he had towed the previous day and he thought the suspect description might match the suspect in the rape case. Officer Longacre gave the article to Officer Decious and Officer Googins who also thought the description matched suspect. On Feb. 4, 2009, Officer C. Decious provided the department's Family Services detectives with the newspaper article, booking sheet, and a copy of the tow form.

Sgt. Bisa French contacted the Sheriff's Department and provided them with the suspects' information. She also spoke to RPD Detective Gray, who advised her that he was working three additional rape cases involving this suspect. The modus operandi in all the rape cases was the same. The suspect would pick up a prostitute and tell them that he was a police officer. He would then act as if he was talking to other officers on his cell phone or a walkie-talkie radio and drive to the area of Parr and the Richmond Parkway. He would then rape the victims and kick them out of the vehicle.

Upon the follow up investigation, several of the victims picked the suspect out of a photo line up. On Feb. 11, 2009, Detective Gray and Detective Sommers (CCSO) presented the case to Deputy District Attorney Cashman. DDA Cashman filed 14 felony counts against the suspect. His bail was set \$6,000,000. This suspected serial rapist is facing life in prison as a result of the outstanding police work done by the above mentioned officers.

## Remembering Jack Tucker

Dear Richmond Heights Neighbors, I am writing to thank you for honoring Jack Tucker with your generous purchase of an inscription on one of the new seats at the Masquers Playhouse. He was a great believer in the community of neighbors as well as community theatre, and would have been very proud of this honor.

Personally, I am deeply touched by this wonderful gift, and pleased and grateful to think of his name being permanently "in the house," twinkling there on a seat at the Masquers. I'll be looking for it next time I attend one of their productions, and hope you all will as well.

Again, a heart-felt thank you. Sincerely, Gail Morrison (Mrs. Jack Tucker)

RICHMOND NEIGHBORHOOD COORDINATING COUNCIL  
P.O. Box 485  
Richmond, CA 94808

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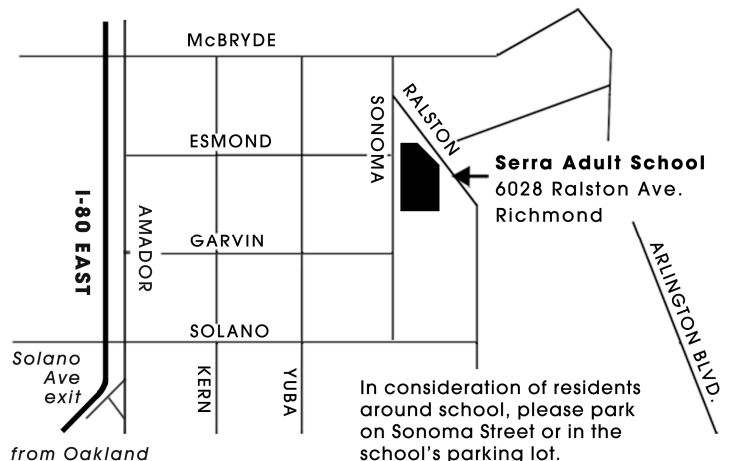
## **at the next RHNC meeting**

### **Graffiti Removal and Reporting**

Rochelle Monk and Trina Jackson will be informing our neighbors how to participate in reporting graffiti or cleaning it up as well as the revised City ordinance to property owners to remove graffiti within three days.

Gillian Clark to speak about the San Pablo Avenue Specific plan south of Macdonald Avenue. She is the outreach coordinator.

And Officer Tim Gard will talk about issues in our neighborhood and answer your questions.



**Monday, April 6<sup>th</sup>, 7 PM**  
Serra Adult School  
6028 Ralston Avenue