



Topanga Community Police Station Newsletter

Serving the Communities of: Canoga Park,
West Hills, Woodland Hills, and Winnetka
21501 Schoenborn Street, Canoga Park 91304



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Topanga Community Relations Office (818) 756-3180

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Happy New Year from your Topanga Station!!

As the 2012 year gets under way we would like to introduce and welcome Topanga Area's new Patrol Commanding Officer, Captain I, Phil Hearn. Captain Hearn comes to us from Harbor Division and is looking forward to making Topanga his new home away from home.



Captain's Corner

A message Captain Tom Brascia

In 2012, my slogan to the men and women of Topanga Area will be, "Educate, Engage and Enforce." Educate – Because of our line of work, we are very cognizant of the things we have to do to protect ourselves, our families and our property. So, it is incumbent upon us to educate our fellow citizens in the ways that they can protect themselves, their families and their property. Every time we have an occasion to talk to a citizen, we should be doing an assessment on how we can make their lives safer. If they are putting themselves in harm's way, then we need to do what we can to change their behavior, environment or activity. It's the first step in our crime prevention efforts. Engage – One of the things that we do best in Topanga is engage our bad guys. That has been one of the keys to our success and we need to continue with that effort. In fact, I will be asking that we are doing even more in that regard. Of course, in doing so, we must know the laws and policies as it relates to Consensual Encounters,

Reasonable Suspicion and Probable Cause. It is my expectation that our personnel are highly trained in these laws/policies. Enforce – If we can identify the real trouble makers, we must work diligently (doing everything legally, ethically and morally) to put them in jail and to keep them there. In today's climate it can be challenging, but we need to do our part, which is ensuring that quality investigations are conducted and that we have turned over all the stones and tied up all the loose ends to get cases filed and to keep them locked up for as long as possible.

I look forward to another successful year in Topanga Area working with the community.



Topanga Tackles the World Wide Web

If you haven't already heard through the grapevine, Topanga Area has entered the world of social media via the internet. We have established our very own website for Topanga with useful information such as: "Weekly Crime Maps", "Community Alerts", a "Meet Your Senior Lead Officer" section, "Upcoming Events in Topanga" and links to other useful sites. Our website can be found by going to www.LAPDtopangapolice.com. You can also find us on Facebook at: www.facebook.com/LAPDTopangaPolice and on Twitter at: www.twitter.com/LAPDTopanga. Please check us out and let us know what you think. The feedback we have received thus far is very positive.

Driver Safety Tips

Written by: Senior Lead Officer Sean Dinse

Every year in Topanga Division we receive a number of complaints from staff, parents and residents of improper driving around our schools. We at Topanga Division want to make sure that every child gets to school safely. The last thing we want to happen, is a child to get hurt because a parent is rushing to drop off or pick-up their own child. Topanga Division, Valley Traffic Division and LAUSD School Police Officers will be monitoring the traffic around our schools. As a reminder, below is a list of safety tips all drivers should be aware of and practice every time they are behind the wheel.

Parents and other adults can do much to improve traffic safety around schools by driving cautiously, teaching children safe practices, and limiting vehicle trips. In some cases, parents and other drivers may be the cause of safety concerns. Drivers shall obey all traffic laws, and apply the following practices:

- Carpooling can reduce the number of vehicles near the school, especially during poor weather.
- Avoid parking on the opposite side of the street from the school. When it is necessary, instruct children on how to safely reach the vehicle.
- Make sure children are careful in opening the vehicle doors and that they exit and enter on the curbside of the vehicle. Children should not be allowed to cross the street in the middle of the block to reach the vehicle.
- Drivers should not double park or block traffic.
- Waiting or parking in red zones is not allowed. If an emergency vehicle requires access the area should be cleared.
- Do not block buses or use areas designated for buses only.
- Never leave a vehicle unattended in a loading zone.
- Do not park within a crosswalk or pass a stopped vehicle which is allowing pedestrians to cross.

- Do not violate the law by using the excuse “I will just be here a minute” when picking up or dropping off children. Violations still present a danger and cause congestion during the time of day when it is most important to provide safety for children and avoid congestion.

- Learn the traffic pattern at the school and avoid being a disruption.



Protecting yourself against Identity Theft

Written by: Senior Lead Officer Dennis Cunningham

Identity Thieves still go through victims' trash and mailboxes for personal information. Here are some helpful tips on how to better protect yourself:

- Treat your trash and mail carefully. To thwart an identity thief who may pick through your trash or recycling bins to capture your personal information, always shred your charge receipts, copies of credit applications, insurance forms, physician statements, checks and bank statements, expired charge cards that you're discarding, and credit offers you get in the mail.
- To opt out of receiving prescreened offers of credit in the mail, call: 1-888-5-OPT-OUT (1-888-567-8688). Note: You will be asked to provide your Social Security number which the consumer reporting companies need to match you with your file.
- Deposit your outgoing mail containing personally identifying information in post office collection boxes or at your local post office, rather than in an unsecured mailbox.
- Promptly remove mail from your mailbox.
- If you're planning to be away from home and can't pick up your mail, contact the U.S. Postal Service at 1-800-275-8777 or online at www.usps.gov, to request a vacation hold. The Postal Service will hold your mail at your local post office until you can pick it up or are home to receive it.

Theft Prevention Tips

Written by: Senior Lead Officer Sam Sabra

▪Topanga Detectives want you to be aware of your surroundings when shopping or stopping off to get a coffee, etc. Do not place cell phones on the counter. Get in the habit of placing your cell phone in a pocket, purse, or utilize a belt clip device and attach it to your person.

▪Women should remember to keep their purses on their person and not in a shopping cart or baby carriage. Purses should be zipped or snapped up so no one can reach into them and remove belongings.

▪Never leave items visible from outside the vehicle including what you hide under your seat. This also includes things covered by a jacket or blanket which may suggest something is hidden beneath it. You do not want to invite a break-in by having a thief think there are hidden valuables.

▪Do not leave any of the following in your vehicle:

- Cell phones
- IPODS
- GPS systems
- Laptops
- Backpacks/Packages/Bags/Boxes
- Anything else of value.

▪Do not leave GPS, phone, and or IPOD mounts or holders in your vehicle. To a thief, an empty IPOD or GPS holder means these items may be in the glove box or center console of your car.

▪Remember suspects may be watching you as you place items into your parked vehicle and observe you return to the mall to continue shopping.



Topanga Holiday Toy Drive

Written by: Senior Lead Officer Brent Rygh

Topanga Station closed out the 2011 year with a very successful Holiday Toy Drive and toy giveaway for needy families. The Topanga Police Station (with special recognition to Specialist Volunteer Siena Cawelti) collected toys from various sources and absolutely packed our Community Room with gifts.

Needy families from our local community lined up to receive handpicked toys selected to match the age and gender of their children. With the generous support of our community and a few very special donors, we were able to package up toys for over 450 children!



If you are interested in donating or have any special contacts for holiday toys, please contact the Community Relations Office. We collect toys (new/unwrapped) year-round for this event. Thank you for your help in making the holidays truly special for some of our local children.



The Topanga Cadet Program

Written by: Officer Greg Archambault

The Cadet Program is a youth volunteer service program for young men and women ages 13 to 20 years. This program provides participants with discipline, critical thinking and teamwork exercises, opportunities for leadership, and physical fitness training.

The Topanga Cadet Program accepts applications continuously. Cadets hold weekly meetings every Tuesday from 5:30 pm to 7:30 pm at Topanga Station. If you are interested in applying, visit us at our Tuesday meeting. There you can obtain an application and observe a meeting. Contact Youth Services Officer Halburian at (818) 756-3183 or Officer Archambault at (818) 756-3182 for more information. Also, visit www.LAPDCadets.com.

We want to congratulate the Topanga Cadets for participating in the Martin Luther King Day parade. Topanga Cadets marched along-side 200 Cadets from around the City. The Topanga Cadets have kept very busy recently with community service events such as the E-waste fundraiser, Topanga Mall

crime suppression, and mentoring at the Guadalupe Center.

The newest members of the Topanga Cadet Post began the Cadet Recruit Academy on January 28, 2012. This academy will last for 18 consecutive Saturdays. We wish all the Topanga Recruits good luck!



Topanga Jeopardy Program

Written by: Officer Melissa Olsen

During the winter Holiday break The Jeopardy kids enjoyed venturing out into nature. Exercise was the goal. Their reward was the opportunity to see beautiful ocean views, wild mule deer grazing, soaring hawks, and waterfalls. I felt the goal of the trip was accomplished when I overheard one of the kid's saying, "I never knew this was here." Now they do.



Senior Lead Officer Contact Information:

SLO Dennis Cunningham, Basic Car 21A1
(Northern portion of West Hills including part of South Chatsworth near the Chatsworth Reservoir)
Office (818) 756-3073 Cell (818) 731-2578
Email 34966@lapd.lacity.org

- The 21A1 meeting is held on the 2nd Monday of each month at the Topanga Station at 7 PM.



For crime mapping go to www.crimemapping.com
For arrests go to www.dailynews.com

SLO Alex Padron, Basic Car 21A5 (N. Canoga Park)
Office (818) 756-3191 Cell (818) 731-2583
Email 32977@lapd.lacity.org

- The 21A5 meeting is held on the 2nd Tuesday of each month at the Topanga Station at 7 PM.

SLO Jose Maldonado, Basic Car 21A29 (Winnetka)
Office (818) 756-3079 Cell (818) 731-2569
Email 23639@lapd.lacity.org

- The 21A29 meeting is held on the 2nd Thursday of each month at the Topanga Station at 7 PM.

- SLO Jose Maldonado holds a Spanish speaking Neighborhood Watch for any residents within the Topanga Police Area on the 2nd Wednesday of each month at the Topanga Station at 7 PM.

SLO Sam Sabra, Basic Car 21A43
(Southern portion of West Hills)
Office (818) 756-3074 Cell (818) 731-2558
Email 34819@lapd.lacity.org

- The 21A43/21A1 meeting is held on the 2nd Monday of each month at the Topanga Station at 7 PM.

SLO Janet Zumstein, Basic Car 21A57
(South Canoga Park and Topanga malls)
Office (818) 756-3188 Cell (818) 731-2570
Email 24571@lapd.lacity.org

- The 21A57 meeting is held every 4th Wednesday of the month at the Topanga Station at 7 PM.

SLO Brent Rygh, Basic Car 21A73
(Woodland Hills, West of Topanga Canyon Boulevard)
Office (818) 756-3075 Cell (818) 731-2581
Email 30450@lapd.lacity.org

- The 21A73 meeting is held on the 3rd Wednesday of each month at the Topanga Station at 6:30 PM.

SLO Sean Dinse, Basic Car 21A97
(Woodland Hills, East of Topanga Canyon Boulevard)
Office (818) 756-3076 Cell (818) 731-2568
Email 34920@lapd.lacity.org

- The 21A97 meeting is held on the 3rd Wednesday of each month at the Topanga Station at 6:30 PM.