

The Upland News

From the board of the Upland Condominium Association

November 1, 2008

KEEPING OUR HOMES AND NEIGHBORHOOD SAFE

There have been several burglaries in the Uplands recently. Most home invaders are in and out of a home in 3-8 minutes: an astonishingly short amount of time. More than anything else, criminals are looking for an easy target. If your home seems occupied and difficult to rob, burglars will move on. Burglar-proofing your house takes time and forethought. It is not something that just happens.

The most important thing you can do is leave the lights—especially the outdoor lights—on! Our neighborhood, with its lack of streetlights, is darker (easier to rob) than others. According to Detroit Edison's website, leaving a 100-watt incandescent bulb on for ten hours uses less than 9 cents worth of electricity. (CFC's use less.) This is the cheapest burglar alarm there is. Consider leaving a radio on when you're gone. Talk radio sounds like a conversation in the house.

Lock the doors and windows each and every time you leave the house, even if it's just a short trip. Can you be gone and back in under three minutes? Most burglars enter through unlocked doors.

Windows are doors too. The lock that came with your window—especially your sliding glass door—isn't enough. The hardware store has multiple options from pin locks to anti-slide blocks. On the most vulnerable windows, consider laminated or tempered glass. These are hard to break and most burglars won't bother.

Daytime break-ins slightly outnumber nighttime ones (55% vs. 45%). So, be cautious during the day, too. If someone looks suspicious, ask questions. Make criminals aware that people are watching. The more careful we are, the more the entire neighborhood benefits.

VANDALISM

There have been several acts of vandalism of trees bordering our sidewalks. Limbs have been cut down and left on the grass. Please do not cut other people's trees. If a neighbor has low-lying limbs that interfere with walking, please contact that homeowner or tell the Upland Board. Twice a year, the Upland board makes a walking tour of the neighborhood and sends written reminders to homeowners who need to trim their trees. While it is the homeowner's responsibility to keep their trees pruned, it is *only* the homeowner's responsibility.

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SNOW ON SIDEWALKS

As winter approaches, we'd like to remind homeowners about their responsibility to keep their sidewalks clear of snow. As per township ordinance and Upland bylaws, snow must be shoveled within 24 hours. Please be considerate of neighbors who use the sidewalks and **remember that schoolchildren need clear sidewalks in order to walk safely to and from their bus stops.**

ANNUAL MEETING

The Upland Condominium Association's annual meeting will be in January at the Scio Township Hall. Please look for more details in a notice which will be sent in December.

BOARD MEETING

Residents are encouraged to attend board meetings. If anyone has a specific issue or concern, **please contact Fred King beforehand so we're sure it is on the agenda.**

Fred can be reached at frking@comcast.net. The next meeting is December 3, 7:00pm at 1844 Chicory Ridge. All are welcome to attend.

YOUR NEIGHBORS NEED YOU!

The recent break-ins in our neighborhood have revived interest in having a neighborhood watch. Working together, we can keep our neighborhood safe. A watch needs a coordinator, who acts as a liaison between watch members and law enforcement. It also needs block captains, one for every 10-15 houses. For more information on what a neighborhood watch entails, including a training manual, see www.usaonwatch.org.

If you can volunteer for any of these important positions, please contact board president Fred King at 665-7625.

KEEPING YOU INFORMED

At times, it is useful to contact homeowners quickly. We are compiling a list of e-mail addresses for every household in the neighborhood, which will be especially useful as we create our neighborhood watch. Thank you to everyone who has sent their e-mail. If you haven't sent yours yet, please contact Steve Hastings (slhastings33@yahoo.com) with the word "Uplands" in the subject line and your name and house address in the body of the e-mail. We will not spam you and we will keep your e-mail private.

NEW SPEED LIMIT SIGNS SAY *SLOW DOWN*

You may have noticed a new speed limit sign on Upland Drive. Although the sign is new, the limit has not changed. **Unmarked residential streets are limited to 25 miles per hour, and this includes Upland Drive.** The safety of everyone in the neighborhood depends on drivers driving slowly, especially when turning onto a residential street from the higher-limit Scio Ridge Road.

BOXTOPS FOR EDUCATION

Cindy Lechtner is still collecting "Boxtops for Education" for our local elementary school. Look for the small coupon on boxes of ordinary grocery items. Don't let those valuable boxtops go into the recycling bin when they can mean so much for Dicken school, and in turn, for your property values. You can give them to any neighbor with a grade-school child or drop them off at Cindy's house, 1839 Cranberry Court.