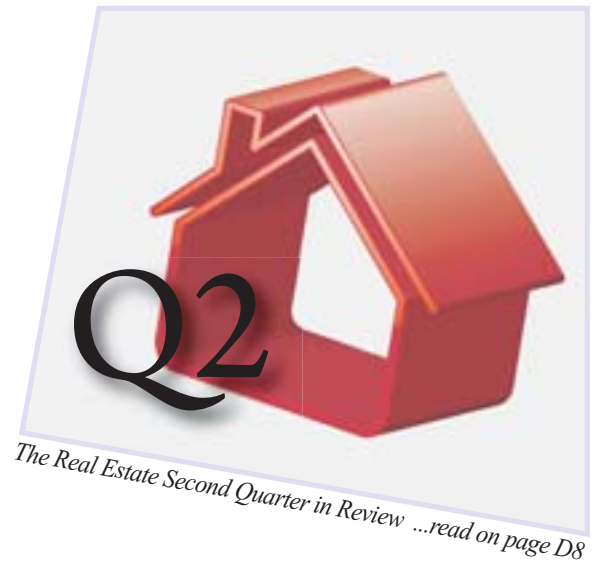


Lamorinda OUR HOMES

Lamorinda Weekly Volume 07 Issue 10 Wednesday, July 17, 2013



Burglars, Beware:

The eyes of homeowners may be upon you!

By Cathy Dausman

The good news: Lamorindans live in an affluent area. The bad news: that affluence can entice would-be burglars. That is why Moraga Police Detective Will Davis is a fan of residential security cameras.

"A security camera adds a level

of protection," he said. "I'd be the first to voice concerns over Big Brother," Davis added, but he feels the camera benefits outweigh any detractions. Simply put, the cameras never sleep, and the video evidence they produce is readily admissible in

court.

Homeowners who are installing security cameras should consider having one that monitors the front of their house, and another that captures a view of the street, he said. The street view will capture auto traf-

fic, and that could be key to tracking down any suspects.

Davis said Moraga neighborhoods with one or two entrance roads and one or two exits are places which would most benefit from such cameras. Sanders Ranch has a camera at its entry guard shack, and video from the camera helped police search for a suspect vehicle after a burglary there in June.

Police learned a car was involved in that daytime residential burglary; Davis said video from that day was valuable in developing a general vehicle description. Sometimes it will even show the license plates. "Lafayette [police department] has had real success with camera use [to help solve crimes]," Davis said.

Lafayette Police Chief Eric Christensen said a number of Lafayette neighborhoods have already installed residential cameras, and the city's crime prevention commission is considering installing them at various city entry points. He cited six recent cases in which footage from residential camera systems helped develop leads. In one case, police responded to a break in along Reed Drive.

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The entrance to this gated neighborhood in Lamorinda includes a security camera.

Photo Andy Scheck