

Ten things I learned from the my local neighborhood Police Public Safety Meeting

{There was an 'incident' back in 2008, something about a break in, slamming a computer over the perp's head, and things of that nature. A community meeting was announced. I attended. This is my impression. Nothing has been fact checked. As such, the exact locale can hardly matter, though take it as a given, I was living out in the boonies}

1) If you call 911, scream for help at the top of your lungs, explain that your husband is on the ground wrestling with an assailant, and repeat your address over and over into the receiver, the person on the other end of the line will take no action. None. Nada. Zip.

2) If you call 911 back--hoping perhaps to be connected with another (more helpful) dispatcher--you will need to spell your name (correctly if you please), provide your telephone number, and give excruciatingly detailed directions before a squad car will be dispatched to your house.

3) This is normal.

4) So is waiting 25 minutes for help to arrive.

5) If you bring this sorry tale of woe up at a police public safety meeting, you can expect the officers present to say something along the lines of, someone might want to look into that, without really commenting on whether that sort of response to a 911 call is normal or not.

6) But please don't be so naïve as to expect that any of the officers present will take any action.

7) Because they won't even be taking any notes. They'll probably say as much halfway through. This meeting--after all--is for you, for your peace mind. So like, nothing--absolutely nothing--is ever going to come of it. Once the meeting is over, that's it, it's over.

8) But you will hear a lot of juicy gossip about where to go if you want to score drugs in your neighborhood. I mean, I was amazed at how many drug dealers live--or at least camp--within a mile of my house.

9) Who knew?

10) Certainly not the cops. I mean, someone might want to look into that, but without the specifics... Who? What? Where? When? Well, without those specifics, what can an officer of the law do?

11) Oh, wait! I almost forgot the best part. If someday you should be unlucky enough to have your house broken into, the cops will give you two of these nice high-gloss pamphlets that talk about home security (and which can be summarized as follows: LOCK YOUR DOORS). Well. The good news is, if you go to one of those neighborhood safety meeting thingamabobs, they'll give you a copy of both of those pamphlets for free... I mean like irrespective of whether your house has been burglarized while you were at the meeting or not.

{I do believe the only reason there was a community meeting in the first place was to nip the possibility of any vigilante action in the bud. Nothing that I know ever came of this meeting -- no action, change, etc. Oh, and if I had to write this over in hindsight, I might mention how the 'victims' in question sort of admitted (in the days that followed) that they might not have been overly clear in their first few calls to the police, they were fighting off a home invader, not necessarily concentrating on diction or that sort of thing, so it's entirely possibly, they never gave their address, etc. And so, that might have accounted for the apparent lack of police response. So there's that. And then, I learned that a lot of my neighbors have guns... and are apparently quite eager to see if they will work as intended and kill an invader in the night...}

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