**A note from …**


## CAPTAIN JONATHAN TOM

Los Angeles Police Department
West Los Angeles Area
Operations-West Bureau

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**DATE:** October 30, 2020

**TO: West Los Angeles Community**

**SUBJECT:**

I hope this letter finds you well. I apologize in advance for the length of this letter, but I wanted to address some issues and know that this may be the most effective way to get the message out to a large swath of our community. If you are not inclined to read the whole letter, look for the bolded section headings and skip ahead to what interests you.

**CRIME:**

The good news is that as compared to last Year to Date (YTD), West LA has achieved a 7.3% reduction in Violent Crime (Homicides, Rape, Robbery and Aggravated Assault) and a 0.4% reduction in Property Crime (Burglary, Grand Theft Auto, Burglary Theft From Vehicle, and Theft) Year to Date. This is on top of the 18% reduction in Violent Crime and 10.4% reduction in Property Crime from 2019/2018 YTD. The only crime categories with significant increases YTD were Homicides at +300% (4 vs 1) and Grand Theft Auto with a staggering +59.3% (537 vs 337). Both of these categories are experiencing increases across the City (Homicides are up 24.7% Citywide (278 vs 223) and Grand Theft Auto is up 34.9% Citywide (17,527 vs 12,989). To put these numbers in perspective, WLA Homicides accounted for only 1.4% (4 vs 278) of the City's Homicides and 3.1% (537 vs 17,527) of the City's Grand Theft Autos.

In our analysis of these crime categories, we believe that both crimes are up in large part due to Covid 19 related issues. Two of the four homicides occurred at short term rental party houses, which had seen an increase in activity during Covid due to bars and night clubs being closed. These homicides spurred our efforts to address this ongoing issue and we have seen some success in reducing that type of activity through enforcement of the Mayor's Safer LA Order. In regard to Grand Theft Auto, we believe that it is due in large part to more people staying home, which means they check their vehicles less. For several months this year we saw a disturbing trend of approximately 50% of the stolen vehicles having their key fobs left in the vehicles. Utilizing our Senior Lead Officers, Social Media and community organizations we were able to get the word out to the community to remind that although we are a relatively safe community, we all have to do our part to minimize the chances of being a victim of crime.

Live your lives, but be cautious as you go about your daily activities. Be vigilant and aware of your surroundings. Hide your valuables and lock your vehicles, homes and businesses. Install motion

activated lights and security cameras if possible and get to know your neighbors. If you do all of these things you will reduce the chances that you will be the victim of a crime. The simple act of being observant will also lessen the chances of you being targeted for a crime because criminals generally choose what they perceive as easy targets. The criminals that prey upon our community generally shy away from locations where people are paying attention to their surroundings, that are well lit, have clear lines of sight, that have alarms and cameras and have animals that might be protective of the property. Our criminals, like the vast majority of criminals, are looking for the most return for their efforts. They want to take things that are easily converted to cash while minimizing their chances of being caught. Doing the things I'm suggesting will harden the target, namely yourselves and your property.

We need your eyes and ears out there. We cannot be everywhere and rely on you being good community members by letting us know when suspicious activity or crimes are occurring. As the old saying goes, if you "See something. Say something!" Rest assured that West LA continues to be one of the safest communities in the City and we will always strive to keep you safe, lower our crime numbers and address your quality of life issues to the best of our ability.

**ELECTION WEEK:**

There is a lot of concern about the upcoming election week. I'm being asked is it safe to vote at a polling center? Are there going to be riots? Should I stay home or keep my child out of school? Should I close or board up my business? It's understandable that people have anxiety right now. It's really a symptom of everything that we have been experiencing this year. We are all feeling off-balance and uneasy due to the impacts of Covid, civil unrest, daily/weekly demonstrations, riotous activity in the wake of the Lakers and Dodgers championships, and the vitriol surrounding the presidential elections. Adding to the anxiety is the information being circulated about the lengths that the City of Beverly Hills is going to in order to prevent unrest in their city coupled with the rumors that the hotels in downtown Los Angeles have been booked to capacity for the week of the elections.

I want to assure you that we are in communication with the Beverly Hills Police Department and they do not have any specific intelligence or information about looting or riotous acts in the upcoming weeks. You should know that the LAPD has our own intelligence analysts that scour the internet and social media for information about upcoming events and rumors of criminal activity and they communicate regularly with their counterparts in other agencies. As rumors and information are uncovered, it is investigated, shared and vetted with our federal, state and local law enforcement partners in the area and across the country. There is no truth to our downtown hotels being fully booked next week. There is also no evidence that there are large groups of people coming to the city to create havoc here. That does not mean that it will not happen, just that we do not have any forewarning of it. As always, we have to balance being reasonably prepared with over-reacting out of panic. While the City is experiencing financial difficulties, we have taken reasonable precautions to safeguard the lives and property of the communities we serve. The majority of the LAPD has gone through advanced crowd control/management training and we are heavily deployed during the election week with contingencies in place to respond to any unrest that may spontaneously occur. We are also aware of our polling locations and will be ready to respond if there are any crimes or disruptions to voting activity.

If you haven't already done so, get out and vote at one of West Los Angeles Area's 15 polling locations:

**Skirball Cultural Center** (2701 North Sepulveda Boulevard, RD 804)
**Barrington Recreation Center** (333 South Barrington Avenue, RD 827)
**Wodoc and Sooky Goldman Nature Center** (2600 Franklin Canyon Drive, RD 809)

**Hammer Museum** (10899 Wilshire Boulevard, RD 817)
**UCLA Tom Bradley International Hall** (417 Charles E. Young Drive, RD 818)
**UCLA Ackerman Union** (340 Royce Drive, RD 818)
**Emerson Middle School** (1650 Selby Avenue, RD 834)
**Saint Paul the Apostle Catholic Community Church** (1526 Selby Avenue, RD 834)
**Brockton Avenue Elementary School** (1309 Armacost Avenue, RD 841)
**Felicia Mahood Multi-Purpose Center** (11338 Santa Monica Boulevard, RD 853)
**Stoner Recreation Center** (1835 Stoner Avenue, RD 881)
**Avenue of the Stars** (10050 Constellation Boulevard, RD 839)
**Westfield Century City Mall** (10250 Santa Monica Boulevard, RD 839)
**B'Nai David Judea** (8906 West Pico Boulevard, RD 858)
**Vista Del Mar Child and Family Services** (3200 Motor Avenue, RD 895)

> **Note:** There have been rumors that there will be armed right wing extremists at polling locations. California state law prohibits the "open carry" of firearms and for that reason, we do not believe that will be occurring here. If you see anyone with a firearm in public (including polling locations) other than a security guard or law enforcement officer, get to a safe place, call 911 and we will respond right away to investigate.

## LARGE GATHERINGS/PARTY HOUSES:

Large gatherings/party houses continue to be a problem, but we have had great success since we implemented a more effective strategy approximately two months ago. We now have dedicated resources on Thursday, Friday and Saturday nights to respond to radio calls for large gatherings/house parties. While we do cite for loud music, the most effective tool we have had is the threat of the Mayor's Office disconnecting Department of Water and Power (DWP) services from locations that have received two Notices of Violation of the Mayor's Safer LA Order. We have made two referrals to the Mayor's Office for DWP disconnection resulting in one disconnection and one pending approval.

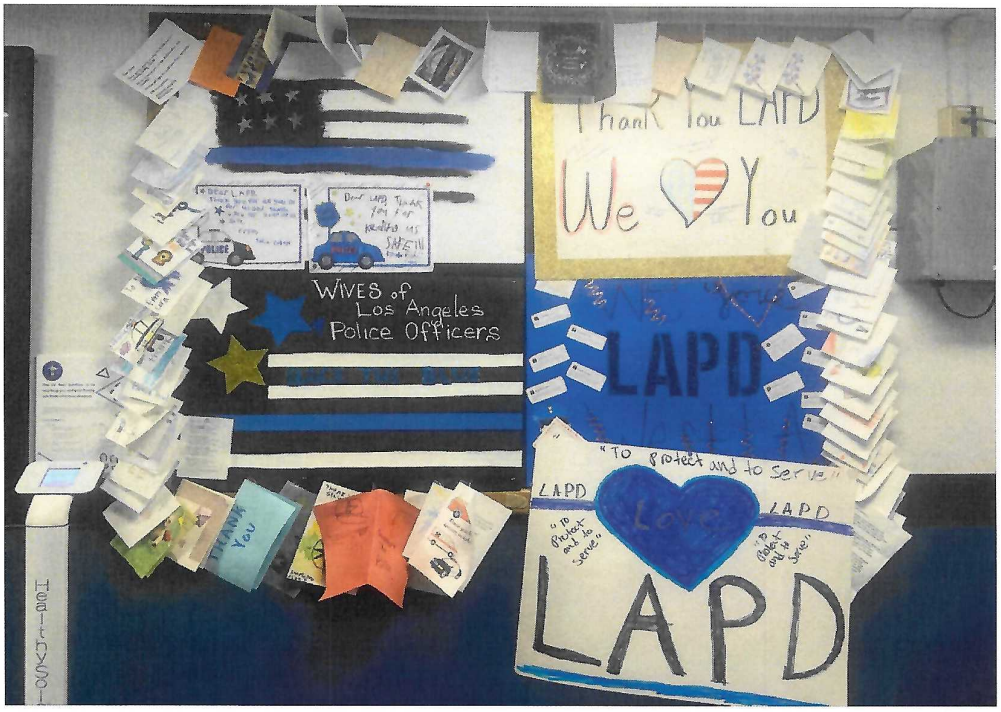
If one of your neighboring properties is being used as a short term rental, you can go to https://planning.lacity.org to learn more about the City's Home Sharing Ordinance. Please direct any concerns you may have to the Planning Department's Complaint Hotline at (213) 267-7788.

If you have concerns about large gatherings or loud music emanating from one of these large gatherings, call (877) ASK LAPD or (877) 275-5273. Please be patient when you call as I have heard that there can be very extensive hold times. Understand that in a city of 4 million people, our operators answer thousands of calls a day. When you do get to speak to an operator, be very descriptive when you describe the nature of the call and ask for an incident number so we can refer to it at a later date or time.

## Community Support:

As a community, you have been incredibly supportive of the men and women of the West Los Angeles Community Police Station! You have told us in person that you appreciate our officers and sent us snacks, meals and dozens of letters, cards and posters of support to us. I want you to know that we read and cherish every one of them. I proudly and conspicuously have all of them posted (see attached photo) in our hallway right by our back door.

These cards, letters and posters are the first thing our officers see when they come in the station and the last thing they see as they exit. These heartfelt gestures are much appreciated by everyone!




Please follow us on our social media:

**Facebook** [Facebook.com/LAPDWestLA],
**Instagram** [Instagram.com/LAPDWestLA/] and
**Twitter** [@LAPDWest LA)

**And** join us every two weeks on our regularly scheduled **Community Police Advisory Board** updates via Zoom (Next meeting is November 11, 2020 at 2PM):

https://lapd.zoom.us/j/2087969708?pwd=RHdJL2tpb3NXaFpERHovS0l6SU1UQT09
(Meeting ID: 208 796 9708; Password: 915421)

**Note:** You can also join by phone at (669) 900-6833 by using the above Meeting ID/ Password.

My sincere thanks and appreciation!

Sincerely,

JT