

# COMMUNITY ALERT

Provided by: Tucker Crime Prevention Unit of the DeKalb Police Department

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## ARRESTS

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**GRAVE ROBBERY ARRESTS-** Sometime during the night of Jan. 22-23, over 70 bronze flower vases were stolen from gravesites in Floral Hills Memory Gardens located on Lawrenceville Highway in Tucker. These items were taken to a recycling center located in Gwinnett County. Working together, DeKalb and Gwinnett Police Departments were able to gather information that led to the identification of the suspects and the recovery of approximately 1/3 of the stolen vases. As a result of this investigation, 2 suspects were arrested by DeKalb Police and a warrant for a third suspect was obtained. Georgia law allows for enhanced penalties for thefts from graves, veteran's graves and war memorials, all of which apply to this incident. *Metal theft is increasing due to the profitability of selling it as scrap metal.*

**FUGITIVE SQUAD ARREST-** DeKalb and Gwinnett Sheriff Department Fugitive Squads arrested 3 suspects for the murder of a Cobb County resident. The incident occurred on January 15<sup>th</sup> outside a restaurant on Buford Highway in Chamblee.

**SANDY SPRINGS L.A. FITNESS ARREST-** On January 31, the Sandy Springs Police Department made an arrest for multiple thefts from the men's locker room. The suspect stated he would obtain a one day pass to use the facility. He carried a small tire iron concealed in his gym bag into the locker room to disable the locks on the lockers. The suspect would steal wallets and fraudulently use the victim's credit cards. He would also steal the victim's vehicle keys. Having possession of their keys enabled him to steal additional items from the vehicles and, in at least one incident, he stole the vehicle. I include this arrest even though it was made by another police agency for 2 reasons. First, any parking lot has the potential for entering auto incidents. Gyms and fitness centers are frequently targeted because victims leave their valuables in their vehicles, often in plain sight, while they are using the facility. Second, the suspect is a *senior citizen* who *stole to support a drug habit*. If you notice any **suspicious persons**, anywhere, regardless of whether the suspects are young or old—call 911.

**STONE MOUNTAIN RESIDENTIAL ROBBERIES ARRESTS-** Two males (one adult and one juvenile) have been arrested in connection with two incidents that occurred in two separate neighborhoods in October and November, 2006. The adult male is charged with multiple charges including Burglary, Aggravated Assault, Armed Robbery, and 2 counts of Kidnapping in the incident that occurred on October 5, 2006. The second incident, which happened on November 2, 2006 resulted in charges of Burglary, Armed Robbery, Aggravated Assault, Sexual Battery, and Kidnapping for the same adult male. The juvenile arrested faces charges in the November incident only, at this writing. No information is available as to whether the juvenile will be tried as an adult in the event of a trial. Another suspect was arrested during this investigation on an unrelated Burglary charge.

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Several Tucker Precinct police officers, a K-9 officer and his dog, DeKalb County District Attorney Investigators (Juvenile Court), an Apartment Manager, and one of the victims all played a part in these arrests. The victim was able to provide important information to law enforcement by supplying a good description of the perpetrator's shoes; the K-9 officer and dog tracked the perpetrator to the general area where he was living; and a baseball cap found along the flight path was used in DNA testing—all factors that led to the arrests.

**PLEASANTDALE ROAD PEDESTRIAN ROBBERY ARREST**-The DeKalb Police Crime Analysis Unit advised that several H/Ms were targets of Pedestrian Robberies along the Pleasantdale Road Corridor. An alert providing information about these incidents and proactive safety measures to deter them was distributed to 14 apartment complexes in this area. On January 28<sup>th</sup>, a H/M was approached by 3 B/Ms while walking his dog and was relieved of his property. Several days later the victim called 911 to report a Suspicious Person. Two juveniles (brothers) were arrested as a result of this call when the victim identified them as the Pedestrian Robbery perpetrators.

**STOLEN VEHICLE/KIDNAPPING ARREST**- A 1 year old child was left alone in his car seat when his mother exited the vehicle while the vehicle was running. The vehicle was stolen with the child inside, but the child was quickly dropped off at a nearby business, unharmed. A quick witted witness was able to provide police with the make, model and license number of a second vehicle involved. Police were able to obtain address information from the tag of the second vehicle. They proceeded to this location and found the stolen vehicle abandoned in the driveway. A short time later while patrolling the area, a Tucker Precinct beat officer and a Pine Lake police officer spotted the second vehicle, initiated a traffic stop, and arrested 2 suspects. A third suspect was later taken into custody at a separate location. This is a prime example of why a child should NEVER be left unattended in a vehicle, especially while the vehicle is running.

**NOTE:** You may be wondering why I am sending you this information. I am frequently asked about the status of criminal activity, usually whether or not an arrest(s) were made. I don't receive this information on a regular basis. To explain why this is the case, let me provide you with some details on how the system operates. The precinct beat/patrol officer is the first responder to crimes that occur within the precinct. If the criminal activity requires investigation, it then it is sent to a detective. The only in-house (precinct level) investigations that all precincts handle are burglaries (theft or attempted theft from a residence) or general theft. All other investigations are handled by Special Units including: Robbery, Assault/Homicide, Auto Theft, Youth and Sex, Homeland Security/Gang Unit, etc. Most of the Special Units are located at the Police Headquarters building, not the precinct. This means that I don't have the same accessibility to them as I would if they were located at the precinct.

I was able to obtain this information regarding several recent arrests in Tucker Precinct and elsewhere, so I thought I would share the results with you. Most importantly, this correspondence provides examples of why you should call 911 when you spot suspicious persons, why you should never leave children unattended—even for just a minute, why you should not leave valuables in your vehicle when using a fitness facility, why thieves are stealing flower vases from gravesites, etc. I hope this correspondence will encourage you to consider evaluating and updating your safety measures to adapt to ever changing criminal trends.

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**FOLLOW UP TO UNSUBSTANTIATED RUMOR ALERT**- I received an E-Mail forwarded to me by several N/W Coordinators regarding an incident that involved a Pedestrian Robbery and a Stolen Vehicle. Upon recovery of the stolen vehicle, a body was, *allegedly*, found in the vehicle. I researched this incident as much as I could with the sketchy information detailed in the E-Mail. I found no evidence to substantiate this rumor with the information I had. BUT, due to the fact that some *unsettling information* was included in the E-Mail (body in vehicle) I sent out information to all Tucker Precinct N/W Coordinators stating that this was an unsubstantiated rumor. I left the door open for the original sender and/or others to provide additional details. I now have the following information:

- The Pedestrian Robbery/Stolen Vehicle incident occurred in January at a Stone Mountain apartment complex.
- The stolen vehicle was used in the commission of another crime, in **GWINNETT COUNTY**, **not** DeKalb County.
- As a result of the above mentioned criminal activity, one of the perpetrators was shot and killed and a second perpetrator was wounded.
- **The victim of this criminal activity, NOT POLICE, fired the fatal and non-fatal shots.**
- All of this activity occurred in Gwinnett County, except for the initial Pedestrian Robbery/Stolen Vehicle theft.
- **The deceased perpetrator was not found in the stolen vehicle.**
- The wounded suspect was arrested in DeKalb County on Pedestrian Robbery and Stolen Vehicle charges.

**ONE LAST ITEM** I would like to mention is in regard to a recent arrest by the ATF in a neighborhood located in the La Vista Rd. area. The suspect arrested exhibited behavior that prompted many police calls and 2 neighbors obtaining Permanent Restraining Orders against him. The reason that I mention this is because in spite of all the negative actions from the suspect over a 2 year period, the neighbors responded in a positive, proactive manner. They went to court, worked closely with Tucker Precinct, didn't retaliate with negative actions, didn't take this matter to the media to solve, revamped their N/W program, etc. I share this with you because I think this is a *success story*. By employing proper actions, the situation has been diffused, at least for now. It took longer than anyone would have liked it to, but it has been resolved with no one harmed.

*Sharen Dorcon*

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March 2, 2007