

**Friday, January 24, 2014**

**11 Unlocked Cars Entered This Week**

*Nothing taken from 8 of them; loose change taken from 3*

On Tuesday, January 21, Village police issued a Crime Alert informing residents that the police had received five reports of unlocked cars being entered overnight (Monday/Tuesday). Soon after the message went out, several additional reports came in. All told, eleven unlocked cars were entered. In each case, the interiors of the cars were left in disarray, yet only three residents reported anything missing (loose change from only three cars). After rifling through the contents of the cars, the suspect(s) were careful to close the car doors quietly; in several cases, car doors were left slightly ajar.

All of the attempted thefts occurred on the west side of the Village in the following locations:

- \* 5500 and 5600 blocks of Center Street (4 cars)
- \* 3900 and 4000 blocks of Oliver Street (4 cars)
- \* 5600 block of Kirkside Drive (2 cars)
- \* Unit block of Grafton Street

This is a crime of opportunity, and you can dramatically reduce the opportunity by locking your car doors. In early 2013, Village officers went door to door distributing crime prevention flyers. Please, please do not become complacent, and remember to do the following:

- 1. Lock your car every time you park.**
- 2. Remove all valuables from your car.**
- 3. Leave your front and back porch lights on all night long.**
- 4. Call the police whenever you see or hear anything suspicious.**

**Remember: Don't Drive Distracted**

*'Hands free' means just that: You can't use your hands to hold your phone - even when it's on speaker*

It seems that some drivers just can't help it - they just HAVE TO make or answer that call or read that text while they're driving. It seems that it's very much like a drug addiction. When that smart phone vibrates or makes a noise, some folks have no will power - they go to the phone the way Pavlov's dog reacted to the ringing of the bell. If this describes you, STOP IT! You are endangering yourself and others. It's selfish, it's unsafe, and by the way, it's illegal.

If you cannot trust yourself to refrain from handling your smart phone while you are in control of a vehicle, then either turn it off or put it out of reach before you start driving. If you absolutely must communicate using your smart phone while you are in your car, then stop in a safe place (a parking lot or a side street - NOT in a place that will impede traffic), put the car in 'park' and make/receive that communication. Please.