

Bahia Lakes residents,

Crimes of opportunity are becoming more and more prevalent in all of Hillsborough County. It doesn't matter if the community is gated with cameras at the entrances, such as Mira Lago, or if they have a 24/7 guard on duty, also with cameras, such as Mira Bay; those communities are just as effected by this issue. The difference being, they pay considerably more to maintain gates or keep a guard on duty. Just a few years ago, Bahia Lakes NWP assisted Mira Lago residents when two of their bicycles were stolen from in front of their community pool. A few alert Bahia Lakes residents with security cameras saw that the thief rode the bikes right through Bahia Lakes and were able to provide the Sheriff with video footage of it.

Several residents, of a gated and guarded senior citizen community, recently complained about the increase in crime (break-ins) and thefts within their community. The problem is you never know the caliber of people living within the community or those representing companies that are authorized to be there.

When I spoke with a HCSO deputy recently about the issue, he once again reminded me the best deterrent against these crimes of opportunity, is to reduce the opportunities (lock things up) and increase vigilance (Neighborhood Watch). I asked him about our stats compared to the rest of the district he patrols; his response was we have a relatively low number compared to the remainder of Hillsborough County.

But, that doesn't mean we should let our guard down. It does mean though we should take every theft serious and devote our time and energy where it will serve us best. For those that have not had an opportunity to get familiar with Bahia Lakes Neighborhood Watch Program, please take a few minutes to get informed and then hopefully involved. The BLNWP is by no means a vigilante group out for a head hunt, but rather a group of residents concerned with the security and safety of all Bahia Lakes residents. We use a private Facebook page to stay in contact and inform one another about ongoing incidents. It is our vital communications channel and we would love to have

more eyes and ears using the venue to provide better situational awareness and improve our chances of combating the crime level in Bahia Lakes, even if it is low, many of us would prefer it to be nil. So please take a moment and join the BLNWP even if only to pass along your observations to the block captains.

<http://www.bahialakeshoa.org/facebook.html>

<http://www.bahialakeshoa.org/neighborhood-watch.html>

Respectfully,

Ralph Skokanic
President, Board of Director
Bahia Lakes Homeowners' Association