

# MINUTES OF THE SEMI-ANNUAL MEETING

## El Gheko Neighborhood Association

The El Gheko Neighborhood Association held their spring meeting on May 6, 2015 at 7575 East Speedway, East Side City Hall, Conference Room C.

Tom Wills, President, opened the meeting at 5:36 pm.

The minutes from the fall meeting were read by Jackie Theriault and approved by attendees.

Tom introduced Captain Barrett Baker from the Tucson Fire Department. Captain Baker can also be seen on KGUN's series, "No Bad Days with Barrett" on alternate Thursdays on the 5:00 news. Captain Baker brought up several serious topics, often using humor to highlight points:

- Bee Swarms - There was a recent swarm near Country Club in which there was a person who was stung often enough to go to the hospital. There have been about 50 calls about bees to the Fire Department in the last few weeks. Most swarms just kind of hang out for a couple of hours then disappear. Don't bother them, and they won't bother you. If a few bees keep returning to check you out, it's a warning; get out of there! If you are attacked, try to protect your face and run. Try to get in an enclosed space. They will follow you for as much as a 1/4 mile. Don't try to "hide" in a pool; the bees will hover and wait for you.
- Brush Fires - An alley fire spread to a fence, to a neighbor's carport, and then to a home. Fires spread quickly. To prevent this kind of fire, clean your yard and your section of the alley of weeds, scrap wood, debris, and overgrowth. Don't - repeat - DON'T use a blowtorch to clear out your yard!
- Monsoons and flood - Stay out of flood zones if there is water present, whether you're in or out of your car. Simple mistakes can turn deadly. As little as 14 inches of water depth can move a vehicle, depending on the force (speed) of the water.
- Power Outages - Keep an emergency kit at your home that will cover you for 72 hours of power failure. Look on any search engine online for the contents of the kit, but it will include matches, candles, batteries, food, water, cash, and any special items for babies or pets.
- Kitchen Fires - These are the most common type of fire in the home. There are two main causes:

Electrical malfunction - Prevent these by not using extension cords in the kitchen and unplugging electronics/ appliances (even the coffeemaker) when not in use.

Oil fire - Prevent these by NEVER leaving the room, even for a minute, when oil is heating on the stove. Have a fitted pan lid available (to smother a fire), even if the recipe doesn't require a lid. Remember to turn off the stove if there is a fire. Don't

try to move the burning pan to the sink.

- Pools - There are very few more tragic calls to the Fire Department than about a child drowning. Please remember the ABC's of children and pools:

**Active Adult Supervision** (don't just be present).

**Barriers** (fences/locks on door; have nothing near a fence that a child can use to help climb over; don't leave toys in the pool area after playtime that will attract a child).

**Classes** (CPR for adults and swim classes for children).

- Lock boxes - There are lock boxes available through the Fire Department. If a situation arises in your home, you can let the dispatcher know where the lock box is and emergency personnel can enter your home without damage. You can also give your alarm code to the dispatcher.
- Extinguishers - Have some fire extinguishers in your home: one in the kitchen and one in the shop/garage, at a minimum. An ABC extinguisher is best for these two areas. Inspect the extinguishers routinely for serviceability. They cannot be refilled any more by the Fire Department, but household-sized extinguishers are reasonably priced these days.
- Dangerous snakes - If they are in your house, call 911; the snakes will be removed.

Note from the group. If you have a problem with a neighbor's alleyway being a fire hazard, contact Tucson Planning and Development Services at 520-791-5843 or <http://www.tucsonaz.gov/pdsd/code-enforcement-violation-report> , Chapter 16 of the Tucson Code of Ordinances covers a number of neighborhood codes.

Tom introduced Sergeant Solis from the Tucson Police Department. SGT Solis is new in the position of Community Resource Sergeant, replacing SGT Williams. SGT Solis then introduced Officer Terry Hayward, who is a Community Service Officer for our area.

Officer Hayward talked about the "Lock It or Lose It" campaign. It consists of signs, seen as you enter a neighborhood, to remind residents to lock house and car doors and other valuables, and to deter crime by showing non-residents that the neighborhood's valuables are being locked up. The signs are provided for free, but they need to be affixed onto private property or onto an existing "Neighborhood Watch" signpost. Tom and the attendees talked about getting five signs posted at the neighborhood entrances at Langley, Green Hills, Caribe, Kingston, and Rosewood. If you have any ideas about specific locations for the signs, please contact Tom through the El Gheko web page.

Hopefully, with the signs and some diligence by the residents, thieves will leave our area alone, if they're looking for an easy grab. Officer Hayward pointed out

that thieves would much rather find items that aren't secured, so we need to lock our homes, and lock our cars, even in the driveway. She continued by asking the group not to leave tempting items, like change or shopping bags, in sight in a vehicle. Once they get into the vehicle, they'll steal anything, including any personal information that they can find about you.

It was brought up that another "Coffee with a Cop" will be held soon at the new Starbucks on Pantano and Speedway. Tom will post the date and time on the El Gheko web page.

Tom discussed the Walmart renovation. There will be a Grand Opening next April. The noisy part of the renovation is supposed to be completed in 60-90 days. The building that was on the northeast corner of the Walmart lot has been demolished and will be turned into parking. The west side, on Kolb, will have 3 exits and one row of parking. Tom wants help in changing the full access turn on Rosewood to a right turn only out of the parking lot. He pointed out the limited turn on the north side of Walmart as something more appealing. Paul Cunningham, Ward 2 Council-member, is staying involved, as well.

A resident brought up the need for a streetlight on 5th and Kolb. Tom said that because 5th doesn't go through, it's unlikely that there will be a light installed.

Tom brought up that he's already on his second term as Association President. Per the bylaws, he cannot run again during the November meeting's election. He asks that all the residents consider running!

Two gift cards were then awarded as door prizes.

Attendees moved and seconded to adjourn the meeting.