

A Seasonal Warning

“Summertime, and the living is easy ...” The poetry of DuBose Heyward, set to the evocative music of George Gershwin, creates a distinctive ambience of relaxation, of repose, of carefree living.

If only reality lived up to the promise of the song. Each year, summer brings to Pittsford, as it does to most places, a seasonal increase in crime, particularly thefts. Rather than living easier, in some ways we need to exercise more caution during the summer than at any other time of year.

Most summertime thefts in Pittsford are crimes of opportunity. Please take care to close and lock your windows when you are not at home – not just windows on the ground floor, but also second story windows easily reachable by climbing a porch roof or by similar means.

When you’re at home and the windows are open, try to keep valuables out of sight from open windows. Unlocked doors or unlocked or open window, with purses, phones, wallets, computers, iPods in view from a window offer a soft target to anyone who’s looking for one.

The same thing applies to cars. In the month of June alone, there were 40 car larcenies in the part of Monroe County covered by Zone A of the Sheriff’s Department – Pittsford, Penfield and Perinton. A large number of these thefts involved purses left in cars and visible from the outside. The thief smashes a window and now you’re out a purse and everything in it.

According to the Monroe County Sheriff’s Department, the problem with thefts from cars is particularly acute this year because of a crime network known to law enforcement as Felony Lane. Run from Florida, the organizers of Felony Lane fly their people to all of the eastern seaboard states. They steal license plates to cover the plates of their rental cars, then get on with business. In our area they target parking lots of health clubs, exercise facilities and recreational sites, such as parking for the Erie Canal path. People who don’t want to take their cell phone, their wallet or their purse into the gym often leave them in the car. That’s what Felony Lane looks for. In a moment, your window is smashed and your property is gone.

Don’t let this happen to you. If you don’t want to take your wallet or your purse into the gym, don’t bring it with you. Put your driving license, your cash or credit card in your pocket and bring it into the gym. Above all, please don’t leave anything of obvious value or potential value in plain sight inside your car.

Many aspects of our physical surroundings in Pittsford have a way of bringing to mind the comforts and security of small town life of an earlier era. That, I think, is part of our Town’s particular charm. Just remember that, appearances to the contrary notwithstanding, Pittsford’s not Mayberry. Take care to lock your windows at home and to not leave valuables in your car.

As ever, please feel free to contact me at bsmith@townofpittsford.org or (585) 248-6220 about this or any other matter of interest to you.