



The Jacob Journal

A Newsletter from Supervisor Dianne Jacob

March 2006

Truncation Law is Good for Business, Privacy

Strike Force warning: meth-fueled ID thieves are out for your receipts

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Each time you use your credit card to buy gas, groceries or pay bills, a little-known State law is working to protect your personal information from identity theft. The California Truncation Law requires merchants to block out all but the last few digits of your credit card number on your receipt.

Most merchants are in compliance with the law and have updated their equipment to protect your account number. Others however, are unwittingly aiding thieves.

What do thieves want with your personal information? In San Diego County, a huge percentage of ID thieves have been linked to the meth trade.

Last year, local prosecutors witnessed a 30 percent jump in identity theft cases involving the intense stimulant.

An informal survey of District Attorney investigators indicates that 75 percent of suspects in local identity theft cases showed evidence of meth use.

From explosive labs to crazed users, to weapons, porn, violence and toxic sludge dumped carelessly in places where children play, San Diegans already know that the ravages of meth extend beyond

the individual user. To those familiar with the meth lifestyle, it's no surprise that the drug is fueling identity theft.

Meth is highly addictive and its users quickly develop an insatiable need for more of the drug to feed their increased cravings for it. Meth so incites the central nervous system that it rockets users on sleepless binges for days, sometimes weeks, on end.

In the so-called "tweaking phase" of the meth high, it's not uncommon for users to hack into computers, steal mail, counterfeit checks, forge documents and acquire goods to sell for quick cash to buy more meth.

To the meth user rooting through a business trash bin, a non-truncated credit card receipt is a ticket to the next high.

You can help the Meth Strike Force thwart these crimes and protect your good name by taking a closer look at your next credit card receipt. If your card number is printed in its entirety, that merchant is putting you and other businesses at risk of potentially devastating financial loss.

On average, an identity theft victim will spend 330 hours and \$1,400 in out-of-pocket expenses to regain control over his or her financial situation, according to the San Diego-based Identity Theft Resource Center (ITRC). Those figures do not include time lost from work.

The business community loses \$15,000 per

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WARNING:

Check your credit card receipts to make sure your card number has been truncated.



compromised identity, according to the ITRC. Federal statistics indicate that identity theft costs the national economy upward of \$53 billion annually.

The Meth Strike Force needs your help to educate merchants who don't truncate credit card receipts. Use the anonymous Meth Hotline or the Meth Strike Force website to report businesses that print your credit card number in full. The Strike Force will contact those stores and teach owners how to comply voluntarily with the law.

Last year, Meth Strike Force officials surveyed recovering meth users in San Diego County to learn more about the connection between the drug and identity theft. One user estimated that 95 percent of addicts traded stolen information for drugs.

Another meth user offered this advice to those seeking to protect themselves: "A dumpster is a box of presents. Shred everything," she warned.

To the meth addict, the need for

the next fix is so intense that the user won't think twice about breaking the law.

The public must be equally as determined to stop identity thieves by making certain that important barriers to the crime, such as the truncation law, are firmly in place.

The last ten years have brought a wild proliferation of meth problems nationwide. The Strike Force, with its diverse membership of treatment, prevention and law enforcement experts, is credited with keeping regional meth problems in check.

In the past, the Strike Force has expanded drug treatment options, limited sales of products used to cook meth and trained merchants to spot suspicious purchases. With your help, we can tackle identity theft too.

Meth Hotline: 1-877-No2Meth
Meth Strike Force website: www.no2meth.org



Play Ball!

From Jamul to Ramona, kids in cleats are running around little league diamonds once again. The 2006 little league season is underway. A former softball coach, Supervisor Jacob is a longtime supporter of youth sports. She believes that kids who are involved in healthy activities like little league are more likely to stay on the right track, do well in school and lead safe, productive lives. She wishes young players and their families a safe and fun season!

Snapshots: Players maul "Scratch" the Steele Canyon mascot, Supervisor Jacob gets play underway and former SF Giants pitcher Mark Grant helps Jamul Little League celebrate a new infield.



Preserving the Ramona Valley



Since 2001, the County has taken steps to create a river park along Santa Maria creek in an effort to preserve the rural character of the Ramona Valley. Last month, the County took another big step toward that goal.

At the request of Supervisor Jacob, the Board approved developing an action plan for Santa Maria Creek that will identify a trail corridor from Ramona's Wellfield Park to the northwest edge of the Valley. The benefits of the greenway are many. It will preserve the area's rural character, increase flood protection and the natural filtering of runoff water flowing into the creek and protect plants and animals unique to the County.



STAYING FIT

Summer is just around the corner and it's time to turn from a couch potato to a hot potato.

Getting healthy and staying healthy doesn't have to be costly or boring. Fun, exciting and affordable resources are available to you compliments of the County.

The Department of Parks and Recreation maintains more than 40,000 acres of terrain perfect for hiking, jogging, playing sports, or enjoying a bike ride on one of the beautiful trails.

The Lakeside and Spring Valley Community Centers offer a variety

of classes for any age group at low to no cost. Here are some samples:

<i>Aerobics</i>	<i>Gymnastics</i>
<i>Kick boxing</i>	<i>Organized sports</i>
<i>Tai Chi</i>	<i>Jazz/Hip Hop</i>
<i>Ballet</i>	<i>Golf</i>
<i>Western dance</i>	<i>Tennis</i>
<i>Karate</i>	

For more information, visit the County Parks and Recreation website at www.sdparks.org, or call the community centers directly.

Lakeside: (619) 443-9176

Spring Valley: (619) 479-1832.

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Better Prepared for Disaster

The Mountain Empire Family Practice Health Center has a new emergency generator to help maintain center operations in the event of a disaster.

During the 2003 firestorms, thousands

of dollars in vaccine and other medicines were destroyed when the center lost power. Thanks to \$19,000 in local, state and federal funding, that won't happen again.

Fire Protection Plans in Place

A dozen rural communities have finalized Community Wildfire Protection Plans and now are eligible for special Federal funding that will help them deal with dangerous, dry fuel.

The need for the plans was spelled out under the 2003

Healthy Forests Restoration Act. Local residents and businesses came together with federal state and local agencies, including the County, to prioritize fuel reduction projects.

The Track is the Star at Helix High

Supervisor Jacob enjoyed firing the starting gun to begin the first race of track season at Helix High School. The team is celebrating its new rubberized track, the first all-weather track in East County. Jacob helped secure funding for the track.

COFFEE AND CONVERSATION

Supervisor Jacob invites you to an informal coffee to share your thoughts and ideas.

Friday, May 12 at 8:30 a.m.
Guy B. Woodward Museum
645 Main Street, Ramona

Get The Jacob Journal!

The Jacob Journal will be mailed to you on a regular basis by request only. If you like what you've read, fill out the form below and mail it back to us at 1600 Pacific Highway, San Diego, CA 92101 or fax it to us at (619) 696-7253. You can also sign up to receive the Jacob Journal on our website at www.diannejacob.com.

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We hope to hear from you soon!

Mar 06

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