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This is AM for CC

Property Crime--Stealing Stuff--is a huge problem for Humboldt County.

From the Grown Men riding bicycles during the day, scanning front porches and car windows for targets of opportunity, to druggies who will shoplift, anything to get their next fix.

The results have been disastrous. Locals dont feel safe in their homes, and merchants must be extra vigilant in their stores.

There are multiple reasons we have so many hobos, a large factor being the easy access to hard drugs. Because local charities treat hard drug users as if they are just people down-on-their luck, these urban outdoorsmen spend all day either looking for drugs or hoping to get things to trade for drugs.

When a town gets run down to the point Eureka is, stolen stuff is no longer a disconnected problem. I look at it this way. You have the first group the dangerous thugs who break into homes, mug people and steal expensive stuff. These people use the stolen items to trade for drugs. The Second Group are the actual drug dealers who use their homes as trading posts. Quite rightly, these are the homes and cheap hotels that the EPD's Problem Oriented Policing Program has been great about targeting. The Saddest group is the third, the drug addicts that travel to the houses. If these addicts dont have the money for drugs, then they are allowed to borrow stolen items that they then attempt to resell at a local store, individual, pawn shop, antique store, and so on. Because our local merchants are very smart about who to watch out for, there is always a real danger of a new junkie pedalling something that doesnt belong to them.

So that is the cycle. Stolen items like bicycles, music instruments firearms knives and tools, are all used as commodities they are a medium of exchange to obtain drugs.

The good news is that if your item is stolen, there is a real chance that it is locked up in one of these commerce houses. It's a good idea to keep records of your serial numbers and always report any theft. You then will be given a case # that you can use for reporting the stolen item to merchants. Keep an eye on Craigslist and if your item is unique--ebay as well.

Working with the victims and law enforcement, I have personally recovered a good number of musical instruments. I am often surprised how good of a condition the items are in.

Let's continue the conversation on the big problems that no one wants to talk about. If we can all pull our weight, keep our eyes open and report anything suspicious-maybe we can turn this around.