

# NEWS RELEASE

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CONTACT: CPT. DOUG GOODMAN

# ASHLAND POLICE DEPARTMENT

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THOMAS A. CLARK, CHIEF

Yesterday at the Ashland Ukrops, a citizen reported to the Ashland Police that some unknown person had stolen her wallet from her purse while she was completing her shopping. The wallet was removed without the victim's knowledge and did not involve a struggle, and because the victim did not see the suspect, no description is available.

The Ashland Police Department has taken four reports of similar larcenies that have occurred at other retail establishments in Ashland since September 1, 2007. In all the other instances, wallets or purses were removed from the victim's shopping cart in a surreptitious manner, only for the victim to find out later that they had suffered a larceny of their belongings. Although these crimes are of a serious nature and the members of the Ashland Police Department have put tremendous effort into investigating each case, fortunately none of the cases have involved violence.

Unfortunately, a string of emails was circulated in our community today indicting that yesterday's larceny was a crime of violence, and only one of five cases that day. Although this email was based on a true and unfortunate event, the **details are inaccurate** and have caused fear and panic in our community today.

The Ashland Police Department continues to aggressively investigate this case and the other related cases. Unfortunately, even non-violent thefts of wallets and purses can lead to not only an immediate loss to property, but also unfortunately result in crimes associated with identity theft. We encourage all of our citizens and visitors to be aware of their surroundings inside of any retail establishment and especially in the parking areas. Please keep your purse, wallet and other valuables close to your person as you complete your errands.

Please find attached, a Crime Alert released by this agency on September 4, 2007 that provides more details on the other similar cases. If you see anyone suspicious that may be lingering around you or other shoppers, or trying to distract you from your rounds, please notify the Ashland Police Department immediately at 798-1227 or by simply calling 911.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to call Captain Doug Goodman at 412-0605.

