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Spate of Thefts from Motor Vehicles Continues with Some Windows Smashed

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Categories : [Public Safety](#)

Tagged as : [Darien Motor Vehicle Burglaries 2017](#), [Darien Motor Vehicle Burglary 2017](#), [Felony Lane Gang](#), [Felony Lane Gang 2017](#)[Unlocked in Darien 2017](#)

Date : October 17, 2017

Items were taken from an unlocked car at Goodwives Shopping Center last Tuesday, Oct. 10 and at about the same time, the drivers of three other vehicles a half block away were even worse off — windows of their SUVs were smashed.

Five days later, on Sunday, Oct. 15, someone visiting a grave at St. John's Cemetery at 25 Camp Ave. found a window smashed and items taken from her car.

The first reported incident occurred within 10 minutes of the 7:19 p.m. call to police. The other three incidents were initially reported 50 minutes later, at 8:28 p.m., by customers of the Bar Method fitness studio

at 800 Post Road.

They had parked their cars in the small Sedgwick Avenue parking lot behind the studio, about a half block away from the entrance to the shopping center. On the same block as the parking lot, purses were stolen from two unlocked vehicles [the week before](#), on Tuesday and Thursday, Oct. 3 and 5.

- Police didn't say so, but the smash and grab thefts fit the pattern of the Felony Lane Gang, a Florida-based group of hundreds of thieves who travel around much of the country targeting purses and other valuable items visible in locked cars at places like public parks [and fitness clubs](#). The group has been in Darien before. Fitness clubs are often busy from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m., which is when three of last week's thefts occurred. Cars in the parking lot of Darien YMCA have had windows smashed in similar thefts in the past.
- The thieves or other members of the group then try to cash checks and commit identity theft with credit cards found in the purses. Whether or not the same gang is involved in these thefts, many police departments (including Darien's) strongly recommend that people not leave purses or other valuable items in plain sight within locked cars.

Goodwives Shopping Center Theft

The woman who called police at 7:19 p.m. told them that her backpack had been stolen from her unlocked, black Audi A4 within the previous 10 minutes.

The backpack, a navy blue, nylon "Long Champ" brand valued at \$250 was taken, along with car and house keys, \$80 in cash, a driver's license and numerous credit cards.

Police have no suspect but are continuing to investigate the theft.

Parking Lot Behind 800 Post Road

In the parking lot, the three victims told police they had arrived for a class at the Bar Method fitness studio, parking their SUVs between 7:15 and 7:36 p.m. in the lot off of Sedgwick Avenue, behind the building. Each victim had left the studio at about 8:20 p.m. The first call to police came in at 8:28 p.m.

Here's what happened to each victim:

— The left rear window was smashed on a gray 2010 Acura MDX told police her wallet was missing from the floor. The silver-colored Delux brand wallet is valued at \$25. It had \$10 in it, the woman's driver's license and six credit cards.

— The right rear window of a black 2016 Chevrolet Equinox was smashed and a black Italian leather purse valued at \$200 was missing. In the purse was a red Marc Jacobs brand wallet, also valued at \$200. Also taken: a driver's license and credit cards.

— The front right passenger window was smashed on a black 2013 Toyota Highlander and a wallet was missing from the console area. The light blue Kate Spade brand wallet is valued at \$50 and held five credit or debit cards, a driver's license and the vehicle insurance card.

St. John's Cemetery on Sunday

A New Jersey woman visiting a relative's grave at St. John's Cemetery at 25 Camp Ave. called police at 4:28 and told them that sometime in the 10 minutes from 2:50 to 3 p.m. on Sunday, Oct. 15, her purse was stolen from her car.

She found the driver's side rear window of her black 2010 Honda Accord was broken and a tan Vince Camuto brand purse valued at \$100 was taken. Also missing was a black Coach brand wallet valued at \$100, a total of \$150 in cash, an ID card and several debit and credit cards.

Darien police detectives are investigating all of these incidents but have no suspects in any of them.