



Community Connection

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Sacramento PD Contacts

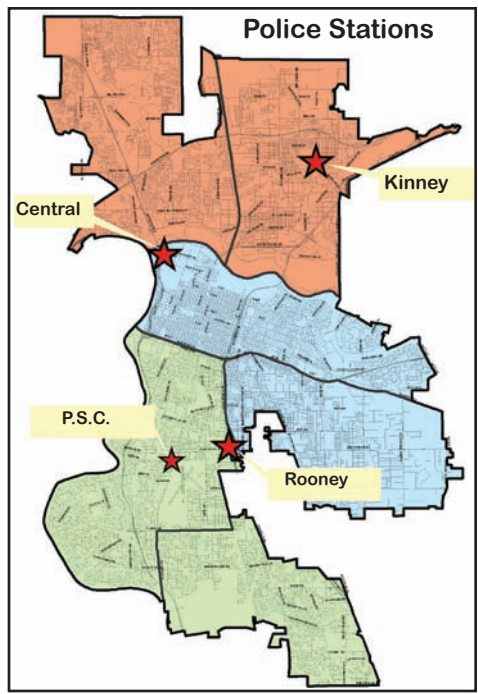
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Chief's Update



Chief Rick Brazier

People go into police work for many different reasons, and as in any field, when people have a passion for their work, great things can be accomplished benefiting society. The

Police Department has many such examples of individuals who have found special niches where they can affect lives in so many ways. I wish I could recognize them all, but hope the following few examples provide a hint of the great work the men and women of Sac PD are doing above and beyond their normal duties.

In September, Officer Michelle Lazark posted her 400th blog answer on the Police Department's blog feature "Ask Officer Michelle." This does not count the over 100 questions answered directly due to their sensitive nature. This feature has proven to be the most popular of the blog which was started in 2006 as a service to the public. Although Lazark will say she is "just doing what's right," the reason for the success of "Ask Officer Michelle" is her dedication to making sure she accurately and promptly answers the wide range of questions people submit to the blog. Often, she has gone out of her way to assist where a simple answer to a blog question wasn't sufficient. Even through changes in her work assignments, maintaining "Ask Officer Michelle" is one responsibility Lazark is happy to keep.

Well-deserved honors recently went to a member of Sac PD who is passionate about his work in traffic

safety. Traffic Sgt. Dave Hargadon received the Award for Traffic Safety Excellence from the state Office of Traffic Safety for his accomplishments in 2009. Hargadon led his team to tremendous success in DUI arrests, traffic stops, court stings, saturation patrols, and DUI checkpoints. In 2009, Sacramento's alcohol fatalities decreased by 50% and alcohol-related collisions decreased by 23%. Hargadon not only motivated and mentored his team, but led by example working side-by-side with them. The success of his team is proof of Hargadon's passion for keeping our streets safe.

Finally, SHRA POP team Sgt. Ben Gomez was inspired to initiate a kids fitness camp this summer. His goal was to strengthen the health and fitness of the kids and the relationship between them and officers. Gomez partnered with Sac PD's fitness coordinator John Hansen and the Sacramento Police Athletic League to make the 6-week camp a reality for kids 8 - 14 years old living in the Marina Vista, Alder Grove, and Land Park Woods housing complexes. The camp included modified physical training used in our Academy, and many character building and leadership opportunities. The kids also enjoyed a camp award ceremony, a trip to a River Cats game, and received school backpacks. Thanks to Gomez and his team of officers and volunteers, the camp was a great success. A video montage can be viewed at www.sacpal.com.

These are just a few of our stories about the kinds of great things that can be accomplished by people passionate about helping other people and the community.

News from the Area Captains



*Kinney Station
North Area
Capt. Jim Maccoun*

jmaccoun@pd.cityofsacramento.org
Hello, and thanks to all the community members who have welcomed me in my assignment to North Sacramento and Natomas. The officers and staff at the Kinney Station are top notch and have worked hard to develop effective partnerships with the communities we serve. My goal is to both continue and improve these relationships. One way to stay connected with issues within our districts is to subscribe to our email updates which my predecessor, Capt. Dan Hahn, began. The information is specific to your police district and allows for two-way communication with our station. If you are not currently enrolled, send me an email with your email address and describe the area where you live or have an interest.

This email list is a great way to stay informed, but it is not the only solution. Our staff are looking at different methods of improving online information for you. Hopefully, by our next edition we will have something new for you to try!

The schools are now in session and we have a great relationship with those responsible for security and safety at Natomas, Robla, and Twin Rivers. Due to budget cuts, some of the districts have had to merge students into schools with capacity for increased attendance. This means that pedestrian, bicycle, and vehicle traffic patterns associated with schools may have changed in your area. Please continue to insure a safe school year by following school directions regarding pick up and drop off of students. We all need to be extra cautious and slow down along the routes our young people take to school. To insure safety, officers will periodically be out to enforce violations.

You can also help keep a good kid from doing something bad! Please call our non-emergency (264-5471) to report truants. Whenever possible our officers will get them back to school and in contact with services to keep them on track.



*Central Station
Central Area
Capt. Dana Matthes*

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Summer is always a busy time for us. We rely on residents such as those who quickly notified police this summer about suspicious activity resulting in numerous theft and burglary arrests! Alert neighbors enable us to intercept crimes in progress and prevent future incidents.

Great work by neighbors! A recent call from a neighbor about four juveniles jumping the fence into an elderly neighbor's yard resulted in arrests of all four suspects who had burglarized the house. Another neighbor grew suspicious of a man claiming to be a census worker. Officers arrested the man after he was found to have burglarized a nearby house.

In August, an officer was attacked, his leg seriously injured, when contacting a man near an East Sac restaurant. A passerby assisted the officer, helping hold down the suspect until additional officers arrived. The officer is recovering and the Department wants to express its deepest gratitude to this mystery hero!

A trend impacting our community is the abuse of the highly addictive prescription pain medication Oxycotin. This opiate is much desired by drug abusers. A recent trend of robberies has targeted pharmacies for Oxycotin. Several robbery arrests were made, but we anticipate the trend to continue as this drug's availability becomes increasingly restricted.

The last 90 days has seen a noteworthy reduction of more than 6% in reported robberies in the Central District, while the East had a nearly 19% decrease. Unfortunately, burglaries have risen significantly. Central is up over 13% and East is up over 50% in the last 90 days. Our resources have also been focused on violent crime, especially gang activity. In addition to the Gang Unit, the POP Team and the newly-formed Crime Suppression Team have also been assigned to target these crimes. Remember – report all suspicious activity!



*Rooney Station
South Area
Capt. Dan Schiele*

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School is back in session and I wish all our students and families a safe, productive year. Each year when our children return to our neighborhood schools, we see a major shift in traffic patterns. Neighborhoods normally subjected to small amounts of commuter traffic are overrun with cars, buses, bikes and walkers. The hour before and after school becomes very dangerous for our children. Parents, grandparents, other relatives, and friends of our children who are normally law abiding drivers become driving scoff-laws. We see parents parking in no parking zones, red zones, double parked, driving the wrong way and worst of all speeding through school zones, all in the name of getting their child to school safely! Everyone dropping off a child at school should know and follow their school's student drop off and parking plan. If you are not familiar with the plan, inquire with your school. If you feel the plan is not working or needs updating, the Department will happily work with your school to create a safe parking and drop off protocol.

There is no one ideal way to control traffic around schools; each has its own unique needs and challenges. School districts and the Department can't do it alone; school traffic safety is everyone's responsibility - and we need your help. Take the pledge to obey your school's traffic plan, follow the rules, and allow the system to work.

Lastly, remember the speed limit in a school zone is 25 mph. Everyone needs to be on high alert while driving in a school zone; kids often dart in and out of traffic without hesitation. We don't need another traffic-related school tragedy this year. For extra incentive, the Department will be aggressively enforcing traffic laws around schools during the year. Drive safely! Courtesy is contagious and the life you save could be that of a child.

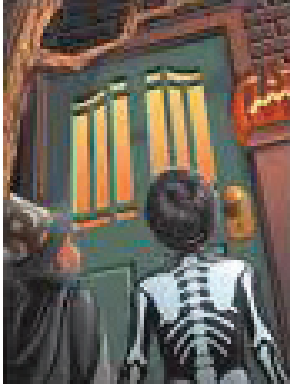
October is Crime Prevention Month & Time for Halloween Fun

Since 1984, October has become the official month for recognizing and celebrating the practice of crime prevention, while promoting awareness of important issues such as victimization, volunteerism, and creating safer, more caring communities.

Many communities and neighborhoods tend to make this an opportunity to center some of their activities around Halloween safety, and this is a great way to get kids involved too so that everyone has a hand in practicing safety and crime prevention.

Although children look forward to tricks, treats, and ghoulish garb, Halloween can be fraught with fright for parents, with

candy given to their kids by strangers and a legion of masked and costumed trick-or-treaters at the door.



However, following a few safety tips can ensure safe fun for kids and candy givers alike.

The activities below focus on Halloween, but the efforts throughout the month generate enthusiasm for crime prevention so it can grow stronger and become more widespread.

To ensure that trick-or-treaters, you, and your house stay safe, remember the following tips:

- Clear your yard and sidewalk of any obstacles or decorations that may be hard to see in the dark, lest someone go bump in the night.
- Keep your house well lit, both inside and out; you wouldn't want to miss any particularly good costumes, would you?
- Ask your Neighborhood Watch or

local citizen's group to haunt (patrol) your neighborhood.

- Report any suspicious or criminal activity to the police department.

To make sure even the scariest costumes are safe, keep the following in mind when buying or designing one.

- Try makeup instead of masks; it's more comfortable and doesn't obstruct vision the way masks can.
- Check to ensure that costumes are flame-retardant so that young ones are safe around jack-o'-lanterns, candles, and other flames.
- Keep costumes short to ensure that the only trip taken is the one around the neighborhood.
- Look for brightly colored costumes, attach reflector strips to costumes and bags, and remind trick-or-treaters to carry glow sticks or flashlights.
- If a costume involves any sort of fake weapon, make sure that it is made of a flexible material such as cardboard or foam. Or, avoid the whole problem of weapons by challenging your child to design a costume that is scary without one.

Keep in mind the next few tips to make sure your trick-or-treaters' night in the neighborhood will be safe and fun.

- Older kids should trick-or-treat in groups; kids walking around alone are never as safe as those in groups, and especially not at night. Younger kids should be accompanied by a parent or trusted adult.
- Review the route for trick-or-treating beforehand and set a time when kids should be home. Also,

have a plan if your child gets separated from his or her friends, or from you.

- Remind your children not to enter strange houses or cars.

After a successful and safe night around the neighborhood, remember that the treats still need scrutiny before anyone eats them.



- Remind your children not to eat treats until they've come home. To help ensure this, feed them a meal or snack before they go out.
- Check all treats at home in a well-lit place. Be especially wary of anything that is not wrapped by the factory or that is no longer sealed.
- Remind kids not to eat everything at once, lest they be green without the makeup.

Halloween falling on a weekend (Sunday) this year can be more fun, but also more dangerous as many festivities are expected to take place. More adult partygoers will be out and about as well as the kids, so let's all be safe out there.

For more information and great tips about a wide range of Crime Prevention topics, visit www.ncpc.org.



Team Profile - Central's Marine Unit

by Program Analyst Mary McFadden

Sacramento's identity as the "river city" evokes visions of the clear, fast-moving American River and the lazy Sacramento River winding through the city and agricultural Delta. For the Police Department, our rivers define a different kind of police beat most people rarely think about, between the levees, but is no less busy or varied than any street beat in the city.



The Sac PD Marine Unit's beat extends approximately 30 miles - on the Sacramento River from the Freeport Bridge north to the Bryte Bend Bridge, and on the American River from Discovery Park to Watt Avenue - and it sees its share of the exciting, bizarre, awful, and beautiful. Marine Unit officers, William "Jim" Conner (left) and Mark Phillips, are the go-to guys for a whole host of issues that can occur on the water, beaches, or from the levees and bridges. To keep a perspective on what they see and deal with on the river, they have nicknames, from the humorous to the graphic, for everything they encounter.

The Marine Unit has two, 28-foot-long, 8-foot-wide, boats at its disposal. These workhorse boats are all aluminum and heavy, and they get the job done. Each are outfitted with long-range water cannons for putting out a fire if the need suddenly arises. They

aren't fancy to look at, no teak trim, but are made comfortable by fully-enclosed cabins for working long hours in all kinds of weather, which can be exhausting. They were purchased by a federal grant about four years ago and were designed to Sac PD specifications with large dive doors and decks for water rescues and recoveries, and jet engines (instead of propellers) to enable navigation in shallow water and instant reverse capabilities. Even though a boat can go through two of its 70-gallon tanks in a day, the price to operate Marine Unit equipment is only about \$20,000 per year - very reasonable considering the high value of work performed.

The Marine Unit's tools of the trade can be similar to any Sac PD patrol officer including radios and computers, but on the river, officers also need unique equipment and skills including binoculars, depth finders and radar, battery chargers, life jackets, flotation devices, handiness with mechanics, and the ability to tie a variety of knots, all while carrying out police officer duties. Last but not least, the ability to expertly maneuver a boat and serve as an efficient deckhand is a must - duties Conner and Phillips alternate throughout their shift. Marine officers must work as a well-coordinated team which includes watching for and calling out the location of other water craft and debris, such as floating logs, for each other.

For Marine officers, there is a unique technique to everything they do including towing disabled boats, docking, traffic stops, and anchoring without causing

damage. Police boats are required to do a lot of things regular boaters don't do such as lots of backing up, beaching the boat, 360 degree spins, and holding the boat up against objects. Understanding the effects of wind and currents is critical. Much of the most difficult boat handling they do is actually the slowest in tight spots. Marine officers must attend a month-long basic Sac PD course just to get started, followed by additional training in various techniques and situations.

An assignment to work on a boat all day is not for everyone, with some Marine Unit prospects dropping out due to motion sickness. In addition, they must possess knowledge beyond the typical penal code, ordinances, and traffic laws officers must know. On the river it's important to also understand the Harbor and Navigations Code, Federal Navigational Law, DUI and BUI, and some Fish and Game regulations. Investigations on the river pose a special challenge because accident and crime scenes are always on the move. It can be difficult to ascertain what happened when there are no skid marks or airbags, and evidence including objects and bodies drifts downriver carried by the current.

Because of the water and nature of accidents, much of what the Marine of-
(Cont. next page)



Marine Unit (from page 4)

Officers handle is not for the faint of heart or those with weak stomachs. Marine officers are not required to have special medic training beyond that of any officer. Fortunately, the river's urban location means that medical response time by the Fire Department is very short. The officers make sure to get the injured or bodies to shore.

Just imagine policing an environment where people can drink alcohol, and don't have to have a license or be a certain age (except person's under 16 who must be supervised onboard by an adult in crafts over 15 horsepower) to motor a powerful vehicle with sharp edges and props down the river at 70 MPH, and you get an idea of what an unpredictable free-for-all the river can seem like and how anything can occur.

Conner is a six-year Sac PD veteran who has worked on the boat patrol since 2007. Phillips has been with Sac PD since 1991 and was a founding member of the fledgling version of the Marine Unit when it was a reserve unit in 1998 until 2003. He returned to the Marine Unit in 2007. Since its early days, the Marine Unit has become a more sophisticated operation in terms of equipment, training, and officer staffing. Conner and Phillips are versed in other special units, such as Mounted, Bikes, and Traffic. For greater effectiveness, the Marine Unit typically works four, 10-hour days per week and often coordinates time on the river with other law enforcement agency marine units such as the Sacramento and



Yolo County Sheriff Departments.

A ride-along on Labor Day weekend unexpectedly revealed that patrolling the river is no picnic. Even if someone is not prone to motion sickness, an 8- or 10-hour shift on the river is fatiguing, no matter how enjoyable the view or weather. As one would expect, the time of year determines the rivers' visitors from experienced and inexperienced swimmers, water skiers, wake boarders and jet skiers, to fisherman and people going for a slow, scenic cruise. As the officers say, there are all kinds of people on the river for their own activities which can sometimes



conflict.

Unfortunately, even the best intentions for an enjoyable day can turn tragic, and the Marine Unit is there to respond. They've seen all the river can offer, from happy fishermen and families to terrible accidents, drownings, and suicides. They say it's not their intention to be "river Nazis" or the "buzz kill," but they want to ensure the river is safe for everyone by responding quickly and using continuous creative community policing on the river. They also have their share of friendly regulars - they call them their "cast of characters" - who can provide important information when the officers need to problem solve.

Marine officers have to be code enforcers too. They handle an increasing number of complaints about boats and river camps abandoned by transients, and left to sink into the river. Not only are these eyesores that anger the pub-



lic, they are hazards to people and the environment. They've seen it so many times, these officers can identify the next mess they'll be cleaning up. They also have to work on clean up of gang issues on certain beaches frequented by gangs.

Our day included citing a speeding boat, being hailed down several times by distressed boaters needing tows, and searching for a missing jet skier, who fortunately made it back to her beach. People have

plenty of questions and are often provided safe boating pamphlets by the officers. It was a busy day, but relatively quiet compared to the last weekend when a serious boat vs. jet ski accident occurred.

Come to think of it, any queasiness felt that day could have been from hearing stories of past calls the Marine officers have handled. Given the nature of their work and service they provide, it's hard to imagine the river without the Marine Unit.





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