

San Rafael Police Newsletter



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Chief of Police

Volume II, Issue I
Spring 2008

Department Awards Ceremony and Challenge Coins

The Department's annual awards ceremony was held on March 6, 2008. This year, along with the awards, the Department decided to participate in Challenge Coins. The Challenge coins were given to department members as part of the ceremony. These coins are keepsakes for department members and are meant to promote camaraderie. The 2007 Department awards were handed out to several officers and one citizen. These awards recognize exceptional acts of bravery, valor and meritorious service by individuals. The metals and the honorees were:

Silver Medal of Valor: Awarded for manifesting outstanding bravery above and beyond that expected in the line of duty.

- Corporal Rick Clary and Sergeant Chris Coale for bravery in evacuating 3 subjects and a dog from a burning building.

Meritorious Conduct:/Life Saving:

- Sergeant Jonathan Bean and Officer Mill Garrett for reviving a woman in 2005 after her breathing stopped.
- Corporal Dan Hanlon, Officer Anthony Augustyn, and Officer Chris Duncan who revived a man last year after he stopped breathing after a fight.

Meritorious Conduct:

- Corporal Kevin MacDougald for his expertise and productivity in arrests for DUI.
- Corporal Lisa Holton for dedication, professionalism, and poise in investigating and tracking sex offenders.
- Corporal Dan Hanlon for his work and dedication to the "Santa Cop" program.

- Corporal Scott Eberle for expertise, skill and dedication in the area of narcotics and vice arrests.
- Sergeant Jonathan Bean for exceptional dedication and skill in starting up and continuing the AED program.

The **Medal of Courage** award recognizes citizens who display "outstanding bravery" in protecting life or property. The award was given to Hermilindo Barros, a resident of the Canal neighborhood. Barros chased after a subject after he looked outside to see 2 shooting victims. He followed who was believed to be the gunman, and contacted the Police with his location. The suspect was arrested and is currently awaiting trial for murder.

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9-1-1 FACTS

Many people find it difficult to decide when it is appropriate to call 9-1-1. It was designed to be an easy number for people to remember in an emergency, and don't have to go through an operator or look up an agency's phone number. The problem now exists, that

9-1-1 is so publicized, people use it for everything. Many people call for non-emergencies, such as directions, weather conditions, and information.

Before you ever need to use 9-1-1, become familiar with the proper use. Ask yourself the following questions:

- Is this a life or death emergency?
- Is this happening right now?

If you answered yes to both of

those questions, that is an emergency.

When calling 9-1-1, remember to speak clearly, and answer all the dispatcher's questions.

- Tell the dispatcher what is going on
- Give your name, address, location where it is occurring, and phone number
- Try to remain calm when answering questions.

In San Rafael, there are usually 2—4 dispatchers on duty. That means that while one dispatcher is asking you questions, the other dispatcher is already sending an officer, depending on the situation. Calls are triaged in order of priority, and not

necessarily based on whose call came in first.

Wireless Calls: Because wireless phones are mobile, they are not connected to one fixed location or address. This means that when your call comes in to the dispatcher, your location does not automatically come up on the screen. While the location of the cell site closest to the caller may provide a very general indication of the caller's location, that information is not usually specific enough for dispatchers to deliver assistance to the caller quickly. Here are some tips when calling from a wireless mobile phone:

- Give location immediately. Be aware of where you are and your surroundings.

- Give your wireless phone number in case your call gets disconnected.
- Refrain from programming your phone to automatically dial with a single key, such as the "9" key. Unintentional wireless 911 calls, which often occur when auto-dial keys are inadvertently pressed, cause problems for emergency call centers.
- If your wireless phone came pre-programmed with the auto-dial 9-1-1 feature already turned on, turn off this feature. Check your user manual to find out how.
- Lock your keypad when you're not using your wireless phone. This action also prevents accidental calls to 9-1-1.

Employee News

Longtime employee, Kathy Wata retired in January after 30 years of service as a communications dispatcher. Kathy started at SRPD in 1977. She has seen many changes over the years and has many good stories to tell of



Kathy Wata

some of the calls she has taken. On Kathy's last night, January 3, 2008, we had one of the biggest storms of the season! Kathy was given a luncheon at SRPD with many of her co-retirees, and employees she has worked with over the past 30 years. SRPD is lucky enough to retain Kathy as a part time dispatcher.

Stefanie Farina has been promoted to Communications Dispatcher Trainee. Stefanie previously attended Sonoma State University. She worked at SRPD as a cadet for 20 hours a week while attending school. She will fill the vacancy made by Kathy Wata's retirement. Her training will consist of approximately 6 months of on the job training and a 3 week Dispatch Academy class. She started on January 31st.

In Patrol news, Alan Piombo has been promoted to Lieutenant, effective January 31st. Alan has been with the department since 1991. For the past two years, he has been the Investigations Sergeant. He has previously worked in Patrol, the Directed Patrol Unit, SWAT, Investigations, and as a training officer. He currently oversees the Investigations Unit, supervising a Sergeant

and 5 detectives.

Sergeant Ralph Pata has been transferred to the Investigations Unit. Sgt. Pata comes from Patrol as the Administration Sergeant. He grew up in San Rafael and has worked here since 1984, starting as a cadet, and has worked as a Police Service Aide, patrol officer, in the Task Force, Street Crimes Unit, Detective and Forensic Artist.



Sergeant Ralph Pata

Kim Larkey has been promoted to Police Officer trainee. Kim was also a cadet at SRPD while she attended Sonoma State University, where she graduated in De-

ember 2007. Kim is currently in the Napa Police Academy until June 2007. Once she graduates, she will then enter a Field Training Program at SRPD that lasts approximately 16 weeks.

SRPD is pleased to congratulate Reverend Jan Heglund, the Police department's chaplain for the past 13 years, on being chosen as the winner of the Soroptimist International of Marin County, Making a Difference for Women award. The Soroptimist International is a nonprofit women's organization, saying her police work in a profession dominated by men "raises the horizon for all women". She will be honored at it's "Soul Patrol" awards dinner, set for April 26 at the Club at McInnis Park in San Rafael. For information,



Kim Larkey

call event chairwoman Colleen Finney at 457-6444.



Reverend Jan Heglund

CSI San Rafael

By Sergeant Jim Correa

CSI San Rafael on at 9 pm? Not quite like the CSI TV show, but the San Rafael Police Department's Crime Scene Investigations Unit (CSI) is available 24 hours a day to respond to major crimes. The SRPD CSI Unit is comprised of 18 Investigators who are police officers, police service specialists, and dispatchers. Day to day they work their respective assignments, but come together as a group when called to process a crime scene. The crime scenes the unit processes include homicides, shootings, assaults, burglaries, sexual

assaults, and major injury traffic collisions. The Investigators on the team receive over 200 hours of training in the collection and processing of evidence. The classes include instruction in the collection of biological evidence, fingerprints, firearms, weapons, and blood evidence. Evidence collected is typically sent to



CSI's Crime Scene Response Van

the California Department of Justice Lab for analysis. Technology continues to improve everyday and DNA evidence has become an extremely valuable tool in the investigations of crimes where trace evidence is left behind. Unlike the TV show, crime scenes often take

many hours to process and evidence collected may take months to analyze due to state backlogs.

Recently, the department was finally able to replace their aging CSI response van. The old van was a converted 1982 ambulance that served the department well. CSI was able to get a new truck outfitted with all the supplies needed when responding to a call.

Tips for Avoiding Accidents

Courtesy of www.autoinsurancetips.com

With all the stormy weather this winter, the accident rate jumps with the wet pavement. Over 90 percent of automobile accidents are avoidable. The following are seven such instances where you can completely circumvent collisions with a little common sense and precaution.

- Intersection Errors.** According to the Federal Highway, intersection and intersection related crashes make up approximately 23 percent of all fatal crashes, and more than half of all fatal and injury crashes occur at intersections. Look around carefully and always proceed with caution into an intersection, even if you have the right of way.

- Inattention.** Pay close attention on your own driving, with other drivers, pedestrians, and driving conditions.
- Following too close.** Most rear-end accidents are caused by tailgating, according to the California DMV. Maintain a 3-second following distance from the car in front of you, except in hazardous weather conditions where you should maintain a 4- or 5-car following distance.
- Vehicle Malfunction.** Have regular checkups, particularly of wiper fluid, brakes and tires, and replace wiper blades whenever they are worn.
- Dangerous Roads.** Ice (which tends to develop more frequently on bridges, overpasses, shady spots, and intersections), snow, fog and rain conditions require slower speeds and much greater caution.
- Unsafe Speeds.** According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, "the economic cost of the speeding-related crashes is estimated to be \$40.4 billion each year." Excessive speed reduces reaction time and greatly increases impact and injuries.
- Improper Lane Changes.** Before you change, check all mirrors, and signal long before you change. Also, watch for the other vehicles.

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Traffic Grants

By Lt. David Starnes

Over the past several months you probably have either read in the newspaper, heard over the radio or have received an email from the police department regarding traffic operations or DUI / Driver's License checkpoints. Well, if you are wondering where the department gets the money to pay for these important operations... the answer is Grants.

The San Rafael Police Department has received several grants from the Office of Traffic Safety for equipment and to conduct DUI / Driver's License checkpoints and traffic operations. All of this is done to educate the public and to make the streets safer for motorists.

The Selective Traffic Enforcement Program (STEP) grant was obtained in October 2006. This is a \$377,517 grant that will last through September 2008. The funds from this grant helps the

department pay for DUI / Driver's License checkpoints, DUI patrols, and special enforcement operations focusing on red light violations, speed violations, high collision area operations and to increase the seatbelt usage of motorists. The STEP grant also paid for two fully equipped police motorcycles, a radar/LED solar message display trailer and a traffic collision reconstruction system.

The AVOID the Marin 13 grant involves all of the Marin County law enforcement agencies. The San Rafael Police Department is the lead agency that manages this grant. This grant pays for five DUI / Driver's License checkpoints and one DUI saturation patrol each fiscal year. The checkpoints are held in different cities each time. San Rafael usually hosts two of the checkpoints each year. The saturation patrol covers the

entire county of Marin. This grant also paid for the majority of a 25 foot command trailer that is used during the checkpoints and also major incidents in the city.



Sergeant Glenn McElderry

The DUI Mini grant was obtained for one year by the San Rafael Police Department.

The amount of this grant was \$24,400. This grant will pay for two DUI / Driver's License checkpoints held in the city. One checkpoint was held during the Holiday season and the second checkpoint will be held during the Labor Day weekend. This grant pays for the officers salaries during the checkpoints.

The Click It or Ticet grant was obtained by the San Rafael Police Department to concentrate on seatbelt violations. The department was funded \$5,000 for this grant to pay for officers to concentrate on seatbelt violations in May of 2008.

The department conducts a heavy media campaign during all of the grant enforcement period. This is to educate the public about the State working with the cities to help make the streets a safer place to drive.

I hope this helps answer any questions that you may have about some of the traffic operations that your department conducts throughout the year. If you have any questions about these or any other operations conducted by the San Rafael Police Department, feel free to give us a call at 485-3000.



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Commitment to Community
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Important Police Dept. Phone Numbers:

| | |
|-----------------------------|--------------|
| Emergency | 9-1-1 |
| Or | 485-3393 |
| Non-Emergency | 485-3000 |
| Community Oriented Policing | 485-3114 |
| Traffic | 485-3034 |
| Abandoned Vehicles | 485-3033 |
| Alarm Permits | 485-3114 |
| Investigations | 485-3000 |
| Youth Services Bureau | 485-3025 |

Department Statistics

The 2007 crime statistics for San Rafael Police shows an upward trend in rape and assaults, but a downward trend in thefts and stolen vehicles. The below information will show you the numbers from 2003 through 2007, and the incidents and reports taken from San Rafael Police.

| Crime | 2003 | 2004 | 2005 | 2006 | 2007 |
|-----------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| Homicide | 0 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 1 |
| Rape | 25 | 22 | 23 | 16 | 29 |
| Robbery | 66 | 62 | 66 | 81 | 80 |
| Assault | 656 | 682 | 612 | 647 | 679 |
| Burglary | 262 | 326 | 460 | 327 | 340 |
| Larceny | 1240 | 1328 | 1265 | 1251 | 1108 |
| Stolen Vehicle | 484 | 371 | 403 | 349 | 323 |
| Incidents Taken | 40,018 | 45,366 | 45,040 | 44,664 | 44,818 |
| Reports Taken | 11,658 | 11,333 | 10,675 | 11,361 | 11,224 |