

COMMUNITY BRIEFING

Westminster Police Department

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<http://www.westminster-ca.gov/depts/police/default.asp>

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Produced by Office of Research & Planning

July – September 2006

Volume 4 Issue 3



Words from Chief Hall

In this edition of the *Community Briefing* you will read an article on our Distinguished Service Awards Ceremony which honors meritorious, courageous, and valorous acts from the past year.

Although you will read about the six very deserving officers who were honored in this year's ceremony, I can assure you our employees are frequently involved in heroic acts that unfortunately go unnoticed. It may be the simple contact of a suspicious person in your neighborhood that prevents a crime or guidance given to a domestic violence victim that assists in changing their life. These incidents are difficult to calculate, but I can assure you they happen often.

I hope you enjoy this edition of the *Community Briefing* and be sure to share it with your neighbors and friends. We truly appreciate all the support we receive from the community and encourage any feedback regarding the service we provide.

Distinguished Service Awards

The WPD recognizes officers for their distinguished service by awarding medals of Merit, Courage, or Valor. This year, six individuals were honored.



Medals recipients (from left to right) Officer Don Webb, Officer Ryan Reyes, Sergeant Darin Upstill, Detective Cindy Sweasy, Officer Jim Wilson, and Sergeant Cliff Williams were congratulated by Chief Andy Hall, Captain Mitch Waller, and Captain Ron Coopman.

After a 20-hour stand-off with a man who had threatened his own family and refused to surrender, Sergeant Darin Upstill approached the house window in an attempt to subdue him with a Taser. However, the suspect began firing his handgun. Seeing another officer fall back onto the ground as if he had been shot, Sergeant Upstill believed he had to act immediately to defend other SWAT members. He stepped in front of the window and engaged the suspect who was still actively firing at officers. The suspect was killed in the gun battle, and no officers were hurt.

For knowingly placing his life at risk while performing an extreme act of heroism in the defense of other officers, **Sergeant Darin Upstill** received the Gold Medal of Valor.



While patrolling the Westminster Mall, Officer Ryan Reyes responded to help a heart attack victim who had collapsed, was not breathing, had no pulse, and was turning blue. Officer Reyes immediately began CPR until paramedics arrived. By then, the victim had a pulse and had partial breathing restored. After a short stay at the hospital, the victim made a full recovery.



For his outstanding performance in providing CPR which ultimately saved the life of a heart attack victim, **Officer Ryan Reyes** received the Bronze Medal of Merit.

A suspect wanted in the murder of his child and attempted murder of his estranged wife in Long Beach was reportedly in our city. As the police gathered information from neighbors around the residence, the suspect appeared in the side yard and opened fire on the officers. Officer Jim Wilson returned fire, providing officers an opportunity to retreat. Sergeant Cliff Williams immediately placed officers in strategic positions to contain the suspect and prevent his escape. Not realizing the suspect had made his way to the edge of the perimeter and was lying in wait to ambush officers, Sergeant Williams

walked by and the suspect shot him in the back. Without any hesitation or fear for his own safety, Officer Don Webb immediately returned fire. Detective Cindy Sweasy saw the muzzle flashes, drove towards the gun battle, placed herself in harm's way, and quickly pulled the wounded Sergeant to safety. Ultimately, Officer Webb's quick response to the suspect's ambush resulted in the suspect being killed. Even as Sergeant Williams was being treated for his own gunshot wound, he maintained supervisory control until the area was safe.



For outstanding performance in the face of danger while providing cover fire which allowed other officers to reach safety, **Officer Jim Wilson** received the Bronze Medal of Merit.

For exceptional courage displayed by driving into a life-threatening situation and rescuing Sergeant Williams from harm's way, **Detective Cindy Sweasy** received the Silver Medal of Courage.



For exemplary leadership in supervising the most critical of situations and, after being shot, continuing to put the safety of other officers and the community first, **Sergeant Cliff Williams** receive the Silver Medal of Courage.



For high degree of courage and immediate and decisive response in confronting an armed suspect who had ambushed an officer, **Officer Don Webb** received the Silver Medal of Courage.

WPD Remembers Police Chaplain David L. Peterson

One of our Police Chaplains, **David L. Peterson**, lost his seven year battle with cancer on August 25, 2006. Funeral services were held at the Westminster Christian Assembly Church and internment was held at the Westminster Memorial Park on August 31, 2006.

David began his Chaplaincy with the Westminster Police Department in 1991 when then Police Chief James I. Cook approved the program to be implemented within the department. Dave was one of the first five WPD Chaplains at the time. He deeply respected and honored the badge, and the men and women working in law enforcement.

Dave pledged availability to the needs of all law enforcement officers and victims of crime, and he subjected his life and office to scrutiny which ensured integrity.



Dave offered professionalism of service, including confidential listening and spiritual counsel to countless Westminster residents and police personnel.

Aside from his work as a Police Chaplain, Dave also served on the Chief of Police Advisory Council, and he participated in the Mayor's Prayer Breakfast Committee. He was also on the All American City Committee, which took him to Texas to represent the City in 1996 when it was named an "All American City."

Dave will be missed by all who knew him, and our thoughts and prayers go out to his family.

CA Governor Schwarzenegger Visits Westminster

City officials welcomed **Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger** to Westminster on August 5, 2006. During his visit, the Governor held a press conference in front of the Rose Center. He gave a short speech and signed an Executive Order that honors Vietnamese heritage.



(Left to Right) Mayor Pro Tem Frank Fry, Mayor Margie Rice, Councilman Andy Quach, and former Councilman Tony Lam looked on as Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger delivered his speech and signed the Executive Order honoring Vietnamese heritage.



Governor Schwarzenegger also met briefly with **Chief Andy Hall**. Afterwards, the Governor toured the Superstore located on Beach Blvd. with Mayor Rice and other dignitaries.

Missed our last issue?

You can now read and print past issues of the *Community Briefing* on our website! Go to www.westminster-ca.gov, click on "Police Department" for a link to the WPD homepage. You can find the newsletters under "Community Outreach."

Safety Day at Sigler Park



On Tuesday, July 25, 2006, local children and their families braved the hot sun to attend the annual Public Awareness Safety Day at Sigler Park. Our City's police officers, firemen, and other safety staff were on hand to answer questions from the public.



But the police dog was the most popular safety officer, attracting the most attention from the children! They loved the demonstration where the K9 officer took down the bad guy!



The most anticipated event was the dramatic "hostage rescue" demonstration, with West County SWAT Team members jumping out of a helicopter!



Some children even got the chance to hold a rifle (under the supervision of our officers, of course)!



Update on the Use of Federal & State Funds

Grant funds are an important part of our operating budget. Here is a snapshot on how funds from two current grants were utilized.

Forensics Grant

In addition to equipment purchased for our Forensic Services Unit, grant funds from the **U.S. Department of Justice** were used to send our staff to various forensic-related training courses. Since January 2006, staff members have been trained on:

- Advanced Chemical Latent Print Processing
- Advanced Palm Print Comparison
- Courtroom Testimony Techniques
- Forensic Digital Imaging
- Crime Scene Reconstruction



They have also attended the *International Association for Identification* annual conference to meet and learn from other forensic specialists in the nation.

DUI Grant



The **W.I.D.E.** (**W**estminster **I**mpaired **D**river **E**nforcement) program continues to fund special DUI enforcement details in the City. By now, many members of

the public have been educated on the dangers of driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs.



Motor Officer Bill Drinnin administered the field sobriety test on a suspected drunk driver. The driver was arrested after he failed the test.

Since October 2005, this two-year grant program has accomplished the following:

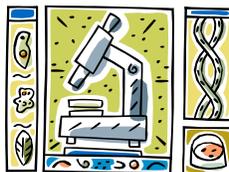
- **1,039** DUI Enforcement Stops on suspected drunk drivers
- **222** Field Sobriety Tests
- **158** drunk drivers arrested
- **100** cars from drunk drivers impounded

Funding for this program was provided by a grant from the California Office of Traffic Safety, through the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.

Gangsters Convicted Murderers Off the Streets

On September 26, 2002, three suspects shot at rival gang members at the rear of a local cafe and fled the scene. After dropping his accomplices in a residential area, the driver was caught by the police when he tried to flee. Soon after, the second shooter was arrested and sentenced to 20 years in prison after pleading guilty.

A year later, the third shooter was identified through DNA left in the getaway car. By then, he was a suspect in yet another shooting at a local plaza.



Working diligently, the WPD's T.A.R.G.E.T. (*Tri-Agency Resource Gang Enforcement Team*)

was eventually able to locate and arrest the suspect for both crimes.

In July 2006, T.A.R.G.E.T. Deputy District Attorney Brett Brian successfully prosecuted both cases together. The third shooter was found guilty on all counts and faces two life sentences.



TARGET team members who worked on tracking down the suspect: (left to right) Detective Tim Walker, Deputy Probation Officer James Hong, and Detective Edward Esqueda.

Through the combined efforts of Patrol Officers, Detectives, Probation Officer, and the District Attorney, dangerous gang members were taken off the streets.

WPD Community Involvement Beyond Policing

"Relay for Life" Cancer Walk



The annual "Relay for Life" Cancer Walk raises funds for the American Cancer Society to conduct research. This year, Westminster hosted its first "Relay for Life," and Event Chair **Officer Al Brackett** is proud to announce that *Team Westminster* raised over **\$27,600!**



The Westminster Police Officer Association (WPOA) pledged \$1,000 to the cause, and WPD staff members participated in the walk on August 12-13, 2006. Many were sponsored by colleagues, family and friends who generously opened their wallets to support cancer survival and research. In total, over 500 participants took part in this year's "Relay for Life."



Members of the Westminster Police Explorers helped out at the event.

The **Westminster Police Explorer Post** also showed its support by helping out at the registration and event booths.



A candle was lit in memory of the late Councilman Russell C. Paris, who passed away on March 7, 2006, after a long battle with cancer.

"Mayor's Ball" 2006 Sponsorship

Each year, the WPOA supports the City through sponsorship of the Mayor's Ball. **This year, the WPOA pledged \$1,000.**

"Salute to Seniors Day" 2006 Sponsorship

The WPOA sponsored five seniors at the "Salute to Seniors Day." **Chief Andy Hall, Captain Mitch Waller, Chief's Secretary Judyth Lance, Sergeant Dan Schoonmaker, and Detective Knauerhaze** dined with their special guests and enjoyed the lunchtime performances at the Senior Center.

New Handguns Improved Design for Safety

The WPD recently purchased the **Sig Sauer P226 handgun** to replace the 7 year old guns that were beginning to show normal wear from range qualification and exposure to the elements. Essentially, it is the same gun but with upgraded night sights and a new frame design to mount lights.



The light system is the Streamlight TLR-1 tactical light. It has an LED light and can be activated whenever the officers use the handgun, allowing officers to keep both hands on their gun instead of trying to hold a flashlight next to the gun.

All officers were trained on the new guns and lights during the 3rd quarter range qualification in July 2006.

Special Awards And Community Recognition



Western States Police and Fire Games



Hosted by San Diego, the 2006 **Western States Police and Fire Games** took place on June 18-25. Several WPD officers competed in sporting events often found at the Olympics.

Congratulations to the following Medal Winners:

Officer Manh Ingwerson
Gold Medal: Bench Press

Officer Michael Nguyen
Gold Medal: Triple Jump
Silver Medal: Doubles Racquetball
Bronze Medal: Singles Racquetball

Sergeant Darrick Vincent
Gold Medal: Boxing



(Top from Left to Right) Officer M. Ingwerson, Sergeant D. Vince, and (bottom) Officer M. Nguyen.

Honorable Mention:

Although they did not win any medals, the WPD Softball Team placed 6th (out of 16 teams). They beat out 10 other teams from around the Western States.

WPD Softball Team Members

- Officer Al Brackett
- Officer Claudia Fletes
- Officer Scott Gump
- Officer Rich Mize
- Officer Adriana Naranjo
- Officer Michael Nguyen
- Officer David Ramirez
- Officer Kyle Seacock
- Sergeant Darin Upstill
- Officer Norma Vasquez
- Detective Ron Weber
- Officer Rachel Zapalla

Congratulations to all athletes who participated in this year's Police and Fire Games!

Front Counter Hours
7:00am – 7:00pm, Every Day

Phone Number
714-898-3315, extensions 371, 372, 373, 374, or 375

Crime Prevention Tip from WPD

FLAT TIRE DISTRACTION

What is it? “Flat tire distraction” is a tactic in which criminals use the excuse of “you have a flat tire” to distract victims long enough to steal from them.

How does it work? In this scheme, the criminals follow an unsuspecting victim into a business, usually a bank. Working in pairs, one would watch the victim while the other would cause a leak to the victim’s car tires. This is usually done by slashing the tire with a small blade.



As the victim drives away in his/her car, the criminals follow the victim in their vehicle. At some point, the victim notices the flat tire and pulls to the side of the road or the criminals notify the victim of the flat tire. In both instances, the criminals would offer to help the victim. One of them distracts the victim by engaging in a conversation and saying, “come outside and look.” With the victim distracted and outside the vehicle, the other suspect enters the victim’s vehicle and removes all valuables.



With the victim distracted and outside the vehicle, the other suspect enters the victim’s vehicle and removes all valuables.



What Should I Do? “Flat tire distraction” crimes can occur anywhere. Criminals using these tactics often prey on trusting individuals. So, if you find yourself in this situation, follow these steps:

- Keep your car doors locked

- Keep your valuables (such as purses and wallets) with you at all times
- Be cautious when accepting help from strangers
- Pull over at a gas station, *or* at a place where there will be many people, to inspect your “flat tire”
- Be aware of your surroundings

Note: If you have just withdrawn a large amount of cash from the bank, and you find a “new” flat tire on your car, call the police!



If you are a victim of “flat tire distraction” crimes, contact the WPD at 714-898-3315 to file a police report. Also, contact your banks and credit card companies to report your loss.

Fact or Myth?

Frequently Asked Questions

Let this column help separate facts and myths about police work!

Myth. *The police don’t want to be bothered with suspicious activities, just actually witnessed crimes.*

Fact. You should always contact the police department of suspicious activity. Each person knows their neighborhood well. They know when their neighbors are home, what kind of car they drive, and the “normal” activity of their surroundings. When they see something they feel is suspicious or out of the ordinary, their instincts are usually correct.



Having the police respond to suspicious activity may prevent a crime that is going to occur and, if nothing else, gives you peace of mind. Even if it does not lead to

something criminal, it is always a good idea to contact the police of suspicious activity.

Myth. *The police sometimes turn on the siren and lights just to avoid stopping at a red light.*

Fact. Emergency vehicles (police, fire, ambulance) are granted the right to use lights and sirens by the California Vehicle Code. However, lights and sirens can only be used when the vehicles are responding to an emergency.



Additionally, each police department has policies and procedures that specifically address when an officer can use the lights and sirens.

Police Department News

Officer of the Month June 2006



Officers Tommy Chow and Jeremy Hill (pictured above) were on patrol along Bolsa Avenue when they spotted a male bicyclist matching the description of a burglary suspect who fled the scene of an earlier crime. Aware of an ongoing series of commercial burglaries in the area, the officers stopped the bicyclist and radioed for the crime witness, who happened to be **Officer Jason Stouffer** (pictured below), to respond to the location immediately.

Once Officer Stouffer identified the bicyclist as the same person who fled the other burglary scene, the suspect was arrested. A parole search of the suspect's nearby room yielded items from other burglaries, connecting him to crimes in Garden Grove and Westminster.



Thanks to the proactive policing and quick response by all three officers, multiple crimes were solved and a serial burglar was taken off the streets!

Employee of the Month June 2006



**Senior Animal Control Officer
Karen Pickl**

A woman approached **Senior Animal Control Officer Karen Pickl** for help in claiming her lost cat. The woman saw her Sphynx cat, which she brought to this country from Russia, being dropped off by another person at the veterinarian's office. Unable to convince the staff that it was her cat, she asked Karen for help.

Karen learned that the cat was implanted with a microchip; however, the microchip reader at the vet's office could not read the *international* microchip to confirm its ownership. Karen took the extra step to locate an international microchip reader and scan the chip to confirm that this was the lost cat. Thanks to Karen's efforts, the cat was finally reunited with its rightful owner!

OFFICER TRAINING: Response to People with Severe Disabilities

In June 2006, the WPD became one of the first agencies to participate in training on how to communicate effectively with victims or witnesses with severe disabilities.

The training, presented by the University of Southern California (USC), covered communication with individuals with autism, intellectual disabilities, cerebral palsy and other neuron-muscular disorders. Officers learned strategies for communicating with disabled people and resources that are available to them.

OFFICER TRAINING: Taser Deployment



Officer Rafaelo Papale (middle) experienced the effects of the taser first hand during training. He was supported by Captain Ron Coopman (left) and Officer Don Webb (right).

The WPD is expanding its use of less lethal restraint devices to support field operations and reduce the risk of injury to officers and the public. All police officers attended a six-hour training in August 2006 on the proper use and deployment of the taser.



A shot by the taser quickly brought Officer David Ramirez down on his knees.

The taser is an electronic control device. When deployed, it incapacitates its target by overriding the subject's sensory and motor systems. By providing our officers with this tool, we anticipate a reduction in injuries to both the officers and the people they arrest.



Sergeant Dan Schoonmaker (left) was assigned to shoot Captain Coopman with the taser.

OFFICER TRAINING: "Safe Return"

At the August 15, 2006 staff meeting, all Police Managers and Supervisors were provided with information and training on a program sponsored by the Alzheimer's Association called "Safe Return."

This nationwide program provides identification and 24-hour support whenever a person suffering from Alzheimer's or dementia is reported missing or located. This vital service is provided to everyone who wants to be included in their database at a nominal charge. Low-income Orange County residents have access to scholarships that will pay for the program.



"Safe Return" provides law enforcement with the necessary tool to help locate and return registered members 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Additional information is available by telephone (888-572-8566) or at their Website (www.alz.org/safereturn/).



Traffic Bureau

Your Question

Q: “Why are there 3-4 police cars when I only see one car pulled over by the side of the road?”

A: There are a wide variety of reasons why several police cars may be present when only one car is stopped. A few of them are:

- The initial officer may request back up, and two cars may arrive simultaneously. Police cars will stay long enough to ensure all is well before either one leaves.
- An extra vehicle may belong to a field supervisor arriving to either assist or evaluate.
- If the car stopped is considered a potential high risk stop, the officer will call for at least one more officer than there are occupants in the car. For example, if there are four in the car, there will be five officers at the scene, maybe more, until all is safe.
- Car stops may serve as a training opportunity for new recruits so they can learn by observing.

No matter the reason, officers have a strong commitment to each other and the job they do for you. Some calls may take more time than expected in order to be as safe and thorough as any citizen would want their police to be.

New Faces at WPD

Parking Control Supervisor



Parking Control Supervisor Sonya Radziuk officially joined the WPD as our new employee on July 3, 2006, after being sworn in by Chief Hall.

Sonya has 7 years of experience as a parking control supervisor at Santa Ana PD, which makes her transition into this new job an easy and smooth process. She is also fluent in Spanish. Sonya is a mother of three, and she enjoys camping and baseball. Welcome aboard!

Lateral Officer

Officer Mark Lauderback (left in picture) rejoined the WPD as our newest police officer. He was sworn in by Chief Hall in front of family, friends, and colleagues on August 21, 2006.



Mark is a former WPD Officer who spent the last 2 years at Anaheim PD. He has extensive police experience as a patrol officer, motor officer and detective. Welcome back!

Behind the Scenes: Meet the Employees Who Work Inside the WPD



This is the fifth issue where we introduce you to civilian staff members who have important jobs inside the police building.

Past focus has been on *Administration, Records Bureau, Information & Technology Unit, and Property Division.*

Dispatch Communications Center

When Communications Dispatchers do their job, they rarely get noticed. It can be argued that they are WPD’s unsung heroes – to the public they are voices without faces. Therefore, we would like to share with you, the public, some insights about their job.



The Dispatch Communications Centre is the primary answering point for all 9-1-1 emergency calls for the City of Westminster. It operates 24 hours a day, 7 days a week to provide our citizens with the highest quality service. It is staffed by a Communications Supervisor, 11 full-time and 4 part-time dispatchers.



Dispatch Communications Center Staff: (left to right) Roxanne Morales, Kristen Barnum, Jessica Parsons, and Ray Leong. Not pictured here are: Supervisor Sonia Kelly, Brenda Roberts, Dawn Albert, Cheryl Valle, Stephanie Subia, Nicholas Lewis, Leticia Hernandez, and Valerie Oberle.

The WPD processes approximately 2,700 emergency 9-1-1 calls and more than 12,000 business and administrative calls *each* month. Besides Patrol, Communications is the only other critical division in the PD that must be staffed 24/7.

It is a very challenging, yet rewarding, career that requires the ability to think quickly and clearly in high stress situations while performing many duties simultaneously. The dispatchers screen and handle approximately 6,000 calls for service each month and provide support for all police field operations. While fielding hundreds of incoming calls each shift, they need to determine the best course of action, and forward that information to the appropriate resource with a high degree of speed and accuracy.



Police Dispatcher Stephanie Subia handles hundreds of calls to the police department each day.

Not only must dispatchers be able to handle these calls for assistance, but they must also simultaneously monitor multiple radio frequencies, dispatch calls to the police units, access a variety of local, state, and federal databases, assign case numbers, track officer activity in the field, and coordinate mutual aid. Dispatchers must also be able to quickly recall hundreds of police codes and have a keen knowledge of city geography and streets, numbering systems, landmarks, and businesses.



Police Dispatcher Dawn Albert coordinates calls for service and the activities of police officers in the field.

During emergency situations, dispatchers must keep callers calm in order to get as much pertinent in-

formation as possible. That way, they can accurately prioritize the calls and assign them to police officers. Obtaining pertinent information rapidly and making sound decisions is a very crucial part of a dispatcher's job.

Our dispatchers are broadly trained in areas such as hostage negotiations, critical incidents, domestic violence, sexual assault, as well as how to effectively handle callers who are suicidal or mentally ill. Several dispatchers are also members of the **West County SWAT team** as tactical dispatchers and crisis negotiators.

If you ever find yourself calling 9-1-1, rest assured that the dispatcher at the other end of the phone line is well trained and ready to help with your emergency.

Westminster Police Officers Association Events & News

BBQ Potluck Lunches



Once in a while, the WPOA will sponsor department-wide potluck lunches for WPD employees (July 4, Labor Day... etc.). WPOA Board Members fired up the BBQ and cooked up some steak, chicken, and burgers.



Some employees showed off their cooking skills and brought in homemade side dishes and desserts! Everyone had a great time, and it was a nice way to celebrate the holiday at work.

"Old Timers" Beat "Rookies" (again) in Basketball



Five months after losing a football game, the rookies (*worked less than five years*) challenged the old timers (*worked more than 5 years*) to another friendly competition. This time, it's basketball!

The game took place on July 26, 2006, at the Westminster Boys and Girls Club. Family and fans were there to cheer on their teams! Taking aside the athletic skills of each player, the



old timers' stamina proved more powerful than the enthusiasm of the rookies! The final score was 68 to 57, giving bragging rights to the "old timers" yet again!



Join us at the next challenge, a softball game, on **September 20, 2006, at 6:30pm at Greer Field (Goldenwest/McFadden)**! Let's see if the rookies have what it takes to finally win a game!

Police Department Phone Numbers

**If you have an emergency,
call 9-1-1!**



**For non-emergency
or other business,
call (714) 898-3315**

General Information	ext. 425
Dispatch	ext. 326
Records Bureau	ext. 371
Traffic Division	ext. 339
Administration	ext. 301

E-mail List

If you would like to be on our newsletter e-mail list, please let us know by sending your name and e-mail address to admin@ewpd.org.



**Mayor Margie L. Rice
Mayor Pro-Tem Frank Fry
Councilman Kermit Marsh
Councilman Andy Quach**

We want to express our sincere appreciation to the Westminster City Council for their support and commitment to public safety!

Community Briefing is a newsletter produced quarterly by the Westminster Police Department. Its main purpose is to share information about the Department with the community we serve.

Further questions or comments regarding the contents of this newsletter should be forwarded to the Research & Planning Unit at (714) 898-3315 ext. 460 or admin@ewpd.org.