

**Gulf Breeze Police Department  
2003 Herman Goldstein Award submission**

**1. Summary:**

• **Project Title:**

**Averting a Tragedy in a Post 9-11 Environment**

- **Nature of the problem addressed:** In a post 9-11 environment, citizens have become more vigilant and concerned about trespassers and late night activities in their neighborhoods. Our community has engaged in "Homecoming highjinks" for at least a generation whereby the high school students 'roll' each others' trees and houses with toilet paper. Since September 11, 2001 students engaged in this activity have been confronted on several occasions by armed home-owners. Twice a home-owner has held students at gunpoint and once a bat was used as the weapon. Students were being assaulted with the weapons and also physically attacked. Home-owners were being arrested and students were being arrested for committing assaults and vandalism while engaging in a long-standing and otherwise rather benign activity. To avert a tragedy, steps needed to be taken that would keep the students away from the residences in the late hours of the night. In addition to this obvious threat and danger to our youth, vandalism had been increasing over the years in concert with the 'rolling' activity. Frozen paintballs shot through car windows, cars spray painted, pool furniture thrown into pools damaging the furniture and pool, cars being 'keyed' and trespassing complaints were being received in ever increasing numbers. By the year 2000, the incidents of vandalism had escalated to a figure of **ten** times the monthly average during the month of October when Homecoming occurred.
  
- **Brief account of measures taken:** The practice of 'rolling' was so ingrained in the community that some parents were actually driving some students to engage in the activity. A broad-based approach was needed to solve the problem that was viewed as a benign rite of passage and 'high school high jinks'. The act of 'rolling' was not the problem by itself. The attendant vandalism that occurred as students were out in the **late** hours under the guise of 'rolling' and the escalating number and intensity of confrontations between students and homeowners was the clear problem that needed addressing. Since the 'rolling' begat the subsequent vandalism and assaults, it was felt that if 'rolling' was curtailed the acts of vandalism and the clear danger to the youths being confronted by weapons would be reduced. A curfew was deemed possible, but politically sensitive due to the long-standing and pervasive practice of 'rolling'. To enact a curfew would be viewed as imposing a curfew to end Halloween 'tricks', would be virtually impossible to enforce and would encounter extensive resistance from the youth and their parents. The students currently engaged in 'rolling' activities are actually the second generation of students to do so. Many of their

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parents also engaged in 'rolling' and the culture strongly supported such activity. Since the activity was so ingrained in the culture of the community, it would be difficult to decree or enforce it out of existence. **Efforts** to increase patrols and enforcement had failed and an increase in vandalism over the years had occurred in spite of these preventative efforts. Clearly, a very extensive education process would be required along with a strong and vigilant law enforcement effort. A comprehensive solution was sought that incorporated peer pressure, parental control, school discipline, law enforcement and positive incentives. Working with the high school, we developed a response whereby all stake holders were brought together to address the problem. Participants included students from each grade, parents, school administrators, teachers, school resource officers, Santa Rosa Sheriff, Escambia Sheriff, Gulf Breeze Police and the media. Students created and agreed to an 'anti-vandalism pledge' similar to a 'prom pledge'. The pledge contained a self-imposed curfew and consequences of prohibition from attending the Homecoming dance if violated. Parents obtained giveaways for a raffle for those signing the pledge. The giveaways included a **limo** for the dance, tuxedo, gown, hair styling, corsages. Students suggested that school authorities add an additional tardy pass to all who signed the pledge. The high school principal enacted the proposal. Those who violated the pledge could be excluded from the dance. Law enforcement committed significant resources for the week and doubled patrols in the neighborhoods, field interrogating all youngsters out after the 'curfew' and reporting them to school authorities. Parents were notified of the plan through a closed circuit TV presentation by the police chief and the high school principal during school orientation parents night at the beginning of the school year. The police chief and the high school principal also co-authored a letter that outlined the plan and was mailed to every parent the week before the Homecoming activity **began.** The media publicized our activities to the community at large, which also acted as a reminder to our students, the public, the parents and our officers. The school resource officer, the high school principal and the police chief enlisted the aid of the student peer leaders in the high school by presenting the problem and the solution to them and answering their questions extensively. With their support, the school resource officer and the high school principal went to every class in the high school and the middle school to outline the problem and the planned solution. Patrols were increased for the Homecoming week period by the Gulf Breeze Police, the Santa Rosa Sheriff and the Escambia Sheriff to cover the areas in which all of our high school students resided.

- **Results using most important measures of success:** Vandalism complaints reduced from a traditional increase of ten-fold for the month of October to an actual reduction of 50% below normal monthly levels for the month of October, 2002. Assaults against youth were reduced to zero and even minors in possession of alcohol reduced to zero for the month. Anecdotal and actual reports of cars being keyed, spray painted, trespassing, property vandalism and trees being 'rolled' reduced to almost zero. It was clearly visible each morning that our efforts

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were successful as no trees or houses were 'rolled' during the week. The only instance of 'rolling' that was detected throughout the week was an instance where a homeowner actually provided written permission to his child and friends to roll his house. In years past, dozens of houses were rolled each **night**, some of them every night during Homecoming. The amount of toilet paper seized was reduced significantly, which is akin to eliminating the seizure of eggs and shaving cream on Halloween.

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**2. Description:**

## **A. Scanning:**

- 1. What is the nature of the problem?** A long standing high school tradition that accompanied the Homecoming week and Homecoming dance was late night house 'rolling'. Groups of students would obtain large quantities of toilet paper and go out very late at night or early in the morning and completely cover the very large oak trees or even the houses of their **friends**. Parents even drove students if they were too young to drive. It was somewhat of an honor to be 'rolled' and a challenge to accomplish the act without being detected. Over time, this late night activity brought out vendettas and led to vandalism under the guise of this benign activity. Furniture was thrown in pools, cars spray painted or car windows busted out, cars 'keyed', or outdoor items stolen. Some offenders were **freezing** paintballs and shooting out car windows. After September 11, 2001 a new problem arose. The population in general was very nervous and on edge. The attacks in New York and Washington D.C., coupled with the anthrax incidents led to heightened fear and suspicion. Vigilant home-owners would respond to youngsters in their backyards or 'rolling' their property by confronting them with weapons. One group of youths was held at gunpoint by a homeowner with a laser-sighted **Glock 9mm**, another group were chased by a baseball-bat-wielding homeowner and another youngster was confronted by a gun when he went to the wrong house. Most of the students out 'rolling' were engaging in a rather harmless activity, yet were genuinely putting themselves in jeopardy. Vandalism was getting out of hand and vendettas were being settled using the 'rolling' activity as a ruse.
- 2. How was the problem identified?** The problem was identified by patrol officers and by police reports of the assaults that occurred. An analysis of the crime statistics showed a tenfold increase in vandalism in the month of October. Some of this increase was attributed to Halloween activities, but much was from Homecoming. The residents of the community knew about the problem, the toilet paper in the trees was graphic evidence of the activity and the students were also reporting the spray painting, paintball shooting and car keying.
- 3. Who identified the problem (e.g. community, police managers, politicians, press, etc.)?** School resource officers brought the matter to the attention of the school authorities and to police management. The initial report indicated more extensive vandalism activities. Analysis of police reports revealed the greater danger of youngsters being confronted by weapons and the clear **possibility** of a tragedy.
- 4. Far more problems are identified than can be explored adequately. How and why**

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**was this problem selected from among problems?** The potential for harm was the overriding reason **this problem** became such an issue. Should a student approach the wrong home or confront the wrong home-owner, a serious bodily injury or death could result from being shot with a gun or beaten with some other weapon. Gulf Breeze has a strong commitment to the safety of its citizens and the youth in particular. The police provide a school resource officer in every school in the City. The recreation facilities are extraordinary and many activities for the youth contribute to a very low delinquency rate. The rise in vandalism associated with Homecoming was causing concern by citizens and was noted by the school resource officers, police management, school administrators and the City fathers. While efforts had been initiated to address the problem prior to fall 2001, the rapid and alarming increase in weapons-wielding citizens confronting toilet-papering youngsters demanded a response that **would** actually solve the problem and avert a tragedy. When approached by the police, the school **administration** immediately shared the alarm and began to work to address the problem. As students, parents and the media became aware of the genuine danger, they became motivated to solve the problem and joined our efforts to resolve the matter.

- 5. What is the initial level of diagnosis/unit of analysis (e.g. crime type, neighborhood, specific premise, specific offender group, etc.)?** The initial level of diagnosis was a notable increase in vandalism and malicious damage complaints. This increase reflected **itself** in crime analysis and in anecdotal reports received from the community. The offenders were mostly juveniles out late at night or the very early morning hours. They were unsupervised and were creating problems much like those of Halloween vandals in any other community. The school resource officers were a significant source of intelligence on proposed activities and would sometimes have knowledge of targeted individuals or houses. Due to the universal and pervasive nature of the practice, this intelligence was woefully inadequate to address the problem. When separate groups of youths were confronted by **weapon-wielding** adults in the same night, the concern increased significantly. The arrest of one of the adults underscored the need for decisive action when he told the arresting officer "I almost shot the kid". It became clear that the only way to get youngsters out of the neighborhoods and out of harms way was to take steps to end the practice of rolling.

## **B. Analysis:**

- 1. What methods, data and information sources were used to analyze the problem (e.g. surveys, interviews, observation, crime analysis, etc.)?** The initial response was generated by the school resource officer attempting to respond to 'rolling' related vandalism. Using anecdotal evidence, the officer was aware that incidents of vandalism increased during

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Homecoming week. As students were out in the late evening and early morning hours, vandalism incidents were occurring. Frozen paintballs shot through car windows, cars spray painted, pool furniture thrown into pools damaging the furniture and pool, cars being 'keyed' and trespassing complaints were being received. In 2000, evaluation of crime statistics and data revealed that incidents of vandalism increased ten-fold during the month of October. Most of the vandalism appeared to be Homecoming related. Attempts to respond to the complaints by increasing patrols were of limited success. Since most students were not caught in the act of committing vandalism, but merely out in groups carrying toilet paper; efforts to refer them to school authorities were pursued in 2000 and 2001. Arrangements to have those caught out late at night by officers disciplined by school officials caused another problem. The students that were caught were given detention. This did curtail some activity, however parents became upset that their children were getting detention for a "non-school" related activity and threatened legal action. This caused the school to discontinue disciplining those students. The most compelling fact that demanded action was the reports received in October 2001 of students being confronted by homeowners with guns and other weapons. It became immediately clear that urgent and effective action was needed to keep the students out of harm's way. While they were engaging in a rather benign and long established activity that some of their parents even participated in when they were students years before; they were placing themselves in grave danger. The acts of trespassing and 'rolling' had now moved from that of tolerable childish pranksterism to that of potential lethal and deadly activity. The students had to be diverted from the activity immediately, before one of them was accidentally shot or killed by a nervous, zealous or scared homeowner. The events of September 11, 2001 had changed everything. Homeowners were more suspicious and vigilant. They were responding to perceived threats with deadly force. In a post 9-11 environment, the community response to suspicious activity and perceived threats in their neighborhoods was heightened. The benign activity of 'rolling', the late night activity and the fear of the citizens was clearly on a collision course that could only have one predictable and tragic outcome. The accidental injury or death to a youngster sneaking through a neighborhood while engaged in a rather harmless and long standing tradition of 'rolling' houses.

2. **History: How often and for how long was it a problem?** 'Rolling' has occurred in Gulf Breeze since the 1970s. Each class of high school students would 'roll' each other's houses. The goal was to go out with friends and to 'roll' other friends. There was some status associated with being 'rolled'. The more popular girls and boys would be targeted more frequently and singled out for more thorough 'rolling'. Students would go to bed at night with a clear and clean yard and in the morning the family would awake to find their trees completely covered with toilet paper. The evidence was very clear and the statement obvious; the more popular students would be more thoroughly and more frequently 'rolled'. In order to be successful 'rolling' a house, students would often sneak through backyards on

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foot carrying large amounts of toilet paper. They would creep through yards and stay in the darkness to avoid detection. The key to success in 'rolling' was to avoid **detection**, yet to thoroughly cover trees in toilet paper. As time went on, some students used the opportunity get out of the house in the late hours to get even with those they disliked or had wronged them. Some simply used the opportunity for criminal activity. It was much like a Halloween event in other communities, however it lasted for at least an entire week.

- 3. Who was involved in the problem (offenders, victims, others) and what were their respective motivations, gains, losses?** The student population of the high school were engaged in rolling. Additionally, many middle school students were also going out very late (one car of middle schoolers was actually detected out at 3:00am being driven by a parent). The homeowners and property owners were victims of trespassing, disturbances late in the night, property damage and the mischief of having their property 'rolled'. The repair costs and clean up costs for such activity is **significant**. Others would be out and about under the cover of the 'rolling' activity and would use the event as a **subterfuge** for vandalism and other types of crimes. The scenario is much like a typical Halloween in any community that it lasted for an entire week.
- 4. What harms resulted from the problem?** Frozen paintballs shot through car windows, cars spray painted, pool furniture thrown into pools damaging the furniture and pool, cars being 'keyed' and trespassing complaints were being received. The trees or houses were covered in toilet paper, which required significant effort or cost to remove. The trees are as high as 60 feet and houses can be up to 35 feet above the ground. Many of the clean up efforts were beyond the ability of the average homeowner. The most significant harm, however, was the potential for severe injury or loss of life from a student being confronted by a weapon-wielding adult.
- 5. How was the problem being addressed before the problem-solving project?** Efforts had been made for several years to curtail the vandalism and other crimes by increasing patrols and remaining as vigilant as possible during the week of Homecoming. The school resource officer made significant progress in 2001 when he conferred with school officials and arranged for detention for those caught out during Homecoming week with toilet paper or in groups in the neighborhoods. Officers would conduct field interviews of those caught out in neighborhoods with large amounts of toilet paper. Their names would be turned in to the school principal and the students would receive Saturday detention. **What were the results of these responses?** The results of the traditional response of increased patrols and increased vigilance by the law enforcement was disappointing. The number of vandalism and malicious mischief complaints increased steadily over the years until it reached a ten-fold increase in complaints reported for the month of October. The results of the school resource

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officer were encouraging and effective. Incidents of vandalism decreased by 50% during the month of October 2001 from that of October 2000. However, even this significant reduction represented a five-fold increase in vandalism complaints for normal monthly incidents. Two events occurred that required a different response. The first occurrence that required a change in our response was the threat from parents of students to bring legal action against the school for giving detention for 'non-school related' activities. The school's legal counsel advised that the challenges may be sustained and recommended a cessation of the school detention practice. The second and far more urgent event was the confrontation of students by gun-wielding and weapon-wielding adults. The incidents occurred on the same night and involved two separate groups of students and two different adults. Other similar incidents have occurred during the year to reinforce our decision to take immediate and effective action. A plan needed to be developed and implemented that would remove the students from harm's way.

- 6. What did the analysis reveal about the causes and underlying conditions that precipitated the problem?** Students would go out in groups to 'roll' each other's homes. The intent of the 'rolling' was to cover another's live oak trees in their yard or house with toilet paper. The trees could be as tall as 60 feet high. Students took pride in almost completely covering a tree or house in toilet paper, doing it quickly and without detection. In addition to the large numbers of students out in the city neighborhoods each evening during Homecoming week, many undetected vandals were also out. The subsequent reports of frozen paint balls shooting out windows, scratched cars, painted cars, pool furniture thrown in pools, damaged pool liners and the like revealed a more sinister side to the benign activity encouraged and enjoyed by all. Since it was very difficult to detect and apprehend the perpetrators in the act of committing vandalism, efforts were made to interdict the students out in groups. Like Halloween night, those committing crimes during Homecoming week made every effort to avoid detection. Bicycle patrols, cruiser patrols, officers on foot and neighborhood watch groups were employed with limited success. Many carloads of youths were intercepted with large amounts (cases) of toilet paper. The paper would be seized and brought to the **station**, the individuals field interviewed and the names turned over to school authorities. These efforts had limited results. Furthermore, the heightened response of homeowners in a post 9-11 environment made the potential for a tragic event quite high. Youths were in city neighborhoods in the late hours either up to mischief or committing crimes and residents were reacting to the provocation in drastic ways.
- 7. What did the analysis reveal about the nature and extent of the problem?** Students would go out in groups to 'roll' each other's homes. The intent of the 'rolling' was to cover another's live oak trees in their yard with toilet paper. The trees could be as tall as 60 feet high. Students took pride in almost completely covering a tree in toilet paper, doing it quickly

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and without detection. In addition to this rather benign activity, incidents of vandalism increased ten-fold during the month of October. Homecoming week and Halloween both occur in the month of October. Homecoming week is the third week of October. With a tremendous increase in criminal activity and a large number of students out in the city in the very late hours, students began to be **confronted** by homeowners acting on their own. Several incidents of **gun-wielding** and **weapon-wielding** adults **confronting** groups of students in the very late hours set the stage for a tragedy if positive action was not taken soon to avert the action. Students and their parents saw 'rolling' as a rite of passage and the activity was expected. Parents did not discourage their children from going out with their friends to 'roll' trees and houses, but rather encouraged **it** . Some parents even provided transportation for their children. The homeowners were extremely vigilant and alert following the September 11, 2001 attacks in New York and Washington and the nightly news reports of **Al-Queda** activity. Anthrax reports were being broadcast nightly and supposition of future attacks on our **infrastructure** were keeping the stress levels and suspicion at a very high level. As a result, some homeowners responded with excessive and deadly force in defense of their property and families. Students were used to creeping through back yards and down dark side streets. Their activity was now being noticed by many residents and they were now being confronted by a potentially lethal response. The motivation for both sides was so different, that the only reasonable response was to intervene to halt the practice of 'rolling' to keep the students away from the neighborhoods in the late hours of the night or early hours of the morning.

**8. What situational information was needed to better understand the problem (e.g. time of occurrence, location, other particulars re: the environment, etc.)?** An appreciation of the depth of the feeling about 'rolling' was important. Gulf Breeze is a young city. It was incorporated in 1962. The practice of **'rolling'** began soon after the city became populated. Each high school class engaged in the practice and it became an ingrained tradition in the City. There was some status attached to the practice, both the ability to 'roll' a house without detection so that the homeowner awoke in the morning to hundreds of feet of toilet paper over the house and large live oaks in the yard; and in being the recipient of **'rolling'** as validation of one's popularity in the school. 'Rolling' occurred in the very late hours and students would travel through the City in carloads and caravans; parking down the street from the target and sneaking through the yards to the target without being detected. After the house and trees were 'rolled' the students would flee the area. It was a rather harmless and benign activity. The mischief of **'rolling'** the trees would often have to be addressed by the target house student. The trespass that occurred was akin to that of Halloween 'trick or treaters'. As time went on, vandalism became more prevalent. The subterfuge of being out late to **'roll'** excused many from the scrutiny of their parents. Scores were settled and malicious intentions were fulfilled. After September 11, 2001; the heightened fears and suspicions of homeowners and residents of the community began to produce exaggerated

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responses from homeowners. Several students were confronted by weapon-wielding homeowners and were in genuine jeopardy of injury or death without realizing it. One homeowner stated to the arresting officer when he was brought in for assaulting students with a firearm, "I almost shot him." That homeowner had confronted several students by detaining them at gun point. He was armed with a laser-equipped **Glock** 9mm handgun.

- 9. Was there an open discussion with the community about the problem?** Absolutely. Initially, students were approached by the school resource officer and urged to curb their activities to reduce the vandalism. After the incident that put our students directly in harm's way, the school administration was approached by the police chief and talks to curtail the activity were begun. The principal expressed concern and frustration. She had been placing students on detention, but threatened legal action by some parents and the advice of the school's legal counsel resulted in a cessation of that practice. A task force of student representatives of each grade, school administration, teachers, active parents, law enforcement, and the press began to meet to expose the extent and severity of the problem and then to develop a response to the issue. The task force began meeting in late Fall of 2001 and met throughout the school year and into the early Fall of 2002. The pledge was created by the students, law enforcement planned to increase patrols, the press provided coverage to the community and the school administration supported the plan with the possibility of exclusion from the Homecoming dance for violators.

## **C. Response:**

- 1. What range of possible response alternatives were considered to deal with the problem?** In 2001, the school resource officer developed an initiative with the school authorities that demonstrated significant effectiveness. The plan called for police patrols to conduct field interviews of student groups out late and turning their names into the school administration. Those out late, in groups, in cars or in the neighborhoods in groups and carrying toilet paper, paint ball guns and other associated items were intercepted. The school assigned detention to those students that were clearly engaged in 'rolling' activity. This resulted in a 50% reduction of vandalism complaints received, however threatened legal action by parents brought the plan to a halt. In 2002, alternatives that were considered were dependent on the proponent. The police proposed increased patrols and a mandated curfew that could be enforced with police action. The students proposed rewards such as free corsages, **limos** and tuxedos; additional tardy passes. The school administrators had tried to curb the action through assignment of detention. Some parents could not understand why any action was needed at all. A model that was adopted and pursued was the 'prom promise' concept. In response to drinking-related fatalities; the school had adopted a program of

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encouraging students to sign a non-drinking pledge and then provided significant rewards for those that signed **and stayed** in prom night at the dance. Students were 'locked in' and then a great many activities were provided to them to keep them entertained and active throughout the prom night. Students were not allowed to leave and the result was a cessation of teenage drinking-related problems.

**2. What responses did you use to address the problem?** While **efforts** were begun to curb the problem with heightened enforcement efforts, it quickly became clear that this approach would not succeed. It was extremely difficult to detect the students in the act of 'rolling' or committing a criminal act. Many students were detected out in the neighborhoods in carloads with cases of toilet paper. Their intentions were clear, yet they were not in violation of any criminal statute or ordinance. Increased patrols resulted in numerous field interviews of youths and also the seizure of large quantities of toilet paper. However we knew we were only detecting a small number of students, as the resultant large number of **'rolled'** houses each daybreak revealed. The ten-fold increase in vandalism and malicious mischief complaints for the month of October also underscored our lack of success. Since the action was so deeply ingrained in the social structure of the community and was so universally regarded as a harmless activity, it was not politically feasible to adopt ordinances or enact a curfew to curtail the activity. Efforts by increased numbers of police officers patrolling late at night had limited effects and failed to curtail the 'rolling' or the vandalism to any appreciable degree. The number of incidents actually increased until the increase in vandalism and malicious mischief complaints was a tenfold increase over non-Homecoming months. The efforts of the school to impose detention on those caught out late with toilet paper met with some success and reduced the tenfold increase to a fivefold increase (cut in half the complaints), but had to be abandoned after threatened legal action appeared. It became clear that the depth of the problem required an approach of community education and voluntary participation that was universally recognized as necessary and that the peer pressure causing the problem was redirected to curb the problem.

**3. How did you develop a response as a result of your analysis?** Our response was modeled on the 'prom promise' concept. Using the 'prom promise' concept, students would be asked and encouraged to sign a pledge that would promise not to engage in vandalism or be out late during Homecoming week. Since the promise would be voluntarily signed, violators could face consequences that they agreed to in the promise. That was to be built into the promise. Educating students, parents and the community also became a vital component of the plan. All stakeholders needed to be convinced of the necessity of altering past action and implementing a new behavior. By educating parents and students to the danger of 'rolling' and then developing a positive response, it was hoped to change the direction of the problem. It was also recognized that the solution would not work without 'buy in' from all aspects of

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the community. The students would have to be engaged to shape an acceptable response as well as law enforcement and the school administration. In addition to the students, the parents needed to be informed about the jeopardy their children were in and then had to be convinced that the response was appropriate. Lastly, the community at large needed to be involved and informed that the problem was not terrorists in their back yards, but high school students. While it was hoped that the numbers of students out late would be reduced and that the lateness of the hour would diminish; it was understood that some students would still engage in both the practice of 'rolling' and in acts of vandalism.

- 4. What evaluation criteria were most important to the department before the implementation of the response alternative(s) (e.g legality, community values, potential effectiveness, cost, practicality, etc.)?** The effectiveness of response and the ability to actually implement whatever response was developed were overriding. However, there were several factors that had to be considered as well. Politically, the practice of 'rolling' during Homecoming week was so pervasive that legislating it out of existence was not feasible. It was also not feasible to enforce it out of existence. Attempting to do so would be akin to trying to enforce Halloween out of existence because of the high numbers of vandalism incidents occurring during that time. Legal issues needed to be considered from the school's perspective as they had been threatened with legal action for the attempts that they had already made at curtailing the activity. Due to the extreme jeopardy that our youngsters were facing, cost was not an overriding factor and additional resources could be committed without fear of justifying increases in the future. As it turned out, the cost increase was minimal. Our school resource officers worked nights during that week to detect those students that were out late. Additional patrol officers were also added to patrol on bicycles, however we had a bicycle patrol grant to offset that expense.
- 5. What did you intend to accomplish with your response plan (i.e., project goal and corresponding measurable objectives)?** We had a twofold intent; eliminate the threat and danger to our youth and to reduce vandalism in the community. We approached the solution to the problem with the outlook that we needed the cooperation and voluntary acquiescence of the students for our plan to work. We needed for the students to recognize that there was a **problem**, to adopt an appropriate response to the problem and then to create peer pressure to seek comprehensive compliance. By getting the students to realize they were in danger by being out late at night in peoples yards, we sought to get agreement from them that the behavior was no longer 'cool'. By successfully getting them to adopt that position, their failure to go out to 'roll' achieved success in both areas. The students were no longer in people's backyards and in jeopardy by being there and they were also not out late at night committing acts of vandalism. Since the latter were violations of criminal law, law enforcement did not need the cooperation or agreement of the students to enforce that. It was

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stressed that we expected compliance and cooperation, but that we would be firm in our dealings with offenders.

**6. What resources were available to help solve the problem?** We used personnel resources. The school, students, parents, local political figures, law enforcement and public education. By working closely with student representatives to create our response plan, we were able to adopt a plan that was acceptable to student body. Incentives were created to get the students to sign a pledge that they agreed not to be out after **11:00pm** and not to vandalize or disrespect others' property. The school administrators offered an additional tardy pass to those that signed the pledge. That resulted in an almost **100%** sign up rate. The media agreed to publicize the problem for the community. This was intended to educate and inform the citizenry of the actions that had been occurring, the scope of the current problem and what efforts were being made to solve the problem. It was our hope to reduce the fears of the public and to mitigate the response that those students who might violate the pledge would face if detected in the neighborhoods. The police chief appeared on closed circuit TV at school to address the parents during the school orientation so that all parents would be made aware of the problem. A letter co-signed by the principal and the police chief was mailed to the home of every student the week before Homecoming that reiterated our efforts and the plan that was created. Additional patrols were put on during the night time hours that doubled our patrol strength that week. The Santa Rosa Sheriffs Office and the Escambia Sheriffs Office put on additional patrols for that week as well. The student peer leaders, the school resource officers and the school administration went to every single class in the high school and the middle school to get the message out that there were rules and there were consequences for violation. Additionally, local citizens obtained giveaways like corsages, **limo** rides, tuxedo, dress rental, hair dresser appointment that was given in a drawing to those that signed the pledge not to be out late and not to vandalize.

**7. What was done before you implemented your response plan?** Meetings, community education and plan development. Efforts were begun at the conclusion of Homecoming week in October **2001** to form a committee to develop a solution to the problem of vandalism and students being in jeopardy in the neighborhoods in the late hours. By convening a group of student representatives **from** each grade and the middle school, the school administrators, the local law enforcement agencies, active citizens, the press, teachers and student peer leaders; a comprehensive plan was developed. The plan was designed to get general compliance from the students that they would not be out late and would not engage in dangerous or criminal behavior. By working closely with student representatives to create our response plan, we were able to adopt a plan that was acceptable to the student body. Incentives were created to get the students to sign a pledge that they agreed not to be out after **11:00pm** and not to vandalize or disrespect others' property. The school administrators offered an additional

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tardy pass to those that signed the pledge. That resulted in an almost 100% sign up rate. Students who signed the pledge indicated that they would adhere to the agreement. It was also pointed out by the students that there was a lot of peer pressure to engage in the activity and that they went out in groups. It was also pointed out that if "my friends don't go out, then I won't go either". Therefore, if a majority of a social group signed the pledge and adhered to it, chances were good the entire group would effectively be prevented from going out 'rolling'. The parents were educated by the police chief and the high school principal during school orientation when all of the students' parents were in school for orientation at the beginning of school. The problem and the proposed response was laid out for them to understand that the overriding concern of our actions was the safety of their children. The student peer leaders were also addressed by the police chief, the school principal and the school resource officer. The meeting outlined the problem and the danger that the students faced and our proposed response. Their feedback was sought and their questions addressed. They bought into the plan and were recruited to assist our efforts getting the students to sign the pledge and to begin to talk among the students about the dangers of the activity. The additional tardy pass was offered and the pledges were distributed for signature. Students who signed the pledge were eligible for the additional pass and for the incentives that had been donated to our efforts. It was also made clear to students that violators of the pledge also faced the possibility of being banned from the Homecoming dance. While this did not have to be implemented, it represented a significant sanction for violators. A letter was mailed home to each family that outlined our efforts and our response and sought parental cooperation in keeping the students home during the late hours. Law enforcement scheduled additional personnel to work that week. The officers were also educated about the scope of the problem, the dangers that the youth faced and the annual increase in vandalism. The community was made aware of the problem and the anticipated response through media publicity and the City council was kept informed throughout the year.

- 8. What difficulties were encountered during response implementation?** Few difficulties were experienced. Since all stakeholders were involved in solving the problem, each time an obstacle appeared, the solution to the problem was generated and implemented. Cooperation was received from every agency and group that had a stake in the issue and workable solutions were generated and offered at every step of the way.
- 9. Who was involved in the response to your problem?** Our broad based response included school **administration**, law enforcement agencies, students of all grades and the middle school, student peer leaders, press, political representatives and the community at large. Every aspect of the community that had a stake or an involvement in the problem was invited to participate, and every one did participate during the process. It was felt that this was the only feasible way to achieve success. Since 'rolling' was so ingrained in the social fabric of the

**Gulf Breeze Police Department**  
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community, was so tolerated by the residents and the parents and engaged in for so many years; the only way to effectively address the problem was to create the solution with those participating in the problem.

## **D. Assessment:**

- 1. What were the results?** Vandalism and malicious damage complaints were reduced to 50% of the monthly average for the month of October. The number of assaults on youths and complaints of residents **confronting** youngsters was reduced to zero during the same time period. **What degree of impact did the response plan have on this problem?** Results were outstanding. Reduction of vandalism to 50% of the monthly average for the month of October and reduction of incidents involving youths being confronted by homeowners to zero. It is safe to say that the response plan eliminated the problem. In fact, it was so successful that there were not even any vandalism complaints associated with Halloween that occurred the following week.
  
- 2. What were your methods of evaluation and for how long was the effectiveness of the problem-solving effort evaluated?** Crime statistics analysis and anecdotal reports from students and officers. The crime statistics for vandalism and malicious mischief complaints were evaluated for the month of October. Additionally, the statistics of assault on juveniles was evaluated. Our anecdotal evidence came in several forms. City Counselors noted that there were no problems or complaints to them about illegal activities during Homecoming. Officers noted a significant reduction in the number of youngsters out in the late hours and the subsequent reduction in juvenile field interviews. There was also a reduction in the amount of toilet paper seized.
  
- 3. Who was involved in the evaluation?** The police chief and the administrative staff of the police department evaluated the data. The school administration also reported a drastic reduction in the number of complaints that they received about student activities during Homecoming week.
  
- 4. Were there any problems in implementing the response plan?** No, once the reasoning was provided and the scope of the problem explained; all parties approached were willing and diligent participants.
  
- 5. If there was no improvement in the problem, were other systemic efforts considered to handle the problem?** At this time we intend to continue with the effort on a reoccurring basis until 'rolling' is not longer perceived as a 'rite of passage' for high school students in the

**Gulf Breeze Police Department  
2003 Herman Goldstein Award submission**

City.

- 6. What response goals were accomplished?** All response goals accomplished. Incidents of vandalism and malicious mischief were reduced to 50% of the monthly average for the month of October. The number of assaults on juveniles also reduced to zero for the target period.
- 7. How did you measure your results?** Measured by crime reports and anecdotal reports from students and officers. Also measured by the amount of toilet paper seized. The drastic reduction in the number of complaints that were received by school administration and City Counselors was significant.
- 8. What data supported your conclusions?** The crime statistics of the Gulf Breeze Police Department and the reduction in the number of complaints that were received by the school administration and the City fathers.
- 9. How could you have made the response more effective?** It is not felt that it would have been possible to make the response more effective. The results exceeded our expectations. We were attempting to reduce vandalism to a level close to normal monthly levels and to eliminate the incidents of youths being assaulted or being confronted by weapon-wielding homeowners. By actually reducing the vandalism complaints to 50% lower than the monthly average and eliminating assaults, we exceeded our expectations.
- 10. Was there a concern about displacement (i.e., pushing the problem somewhere else)?** Yes, that is why the other law enforcement agencies were involved from the outset. Since the students that go to Gulf Breeze High School live in Santa Rosa County, Pensacola Beach (Escambia County) and within the City limits of Gulf Breeze, all agencies had to be actively involved in the plan creation and implementation. If the students realized that their activity would not be monitored in the surrounding jurisdictions, then it was felt the vandalism problem and subsequent juvenile assault problem would displace to those areas.
- 11. Will your response require continued monitoring or continuing effort to maintain your results?** Yes, due to the long standing tradition of 'rolling' and the involvement of parents assisting the students in this activity it is felt that it will take several years to extinguish the behavior. With that goal in mind, the school and the police will continue their efforts with the student population and with the student peer leaders until it is felt that the momentum has gone out of the activity.

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**3. Agency and Officer Information:**

- 1. At what level of the police organization was this problem-solving initiative adopted (e.g., the entire department, a few select officers, etc.)?** The initiative was adopted by the entire organization. The program was initiated by school resource officers pointing out the need for action to curb 'rolling' and the attendant vandalism. As it became evident that the weapons confrontations were becoming dire and demanded immediate and decisive **action**, the chief met with school officials and developed the working group that fleshed out a plan. The entire police department and neighboring agencies responded during the week long activities to interdict violators and take appropriate action.
- 2. Did officers or management receive any training in problem-oriented policing and /or problem solving before this project began or during its' execution?** The entire department attended mandatory community policing training conducted by the Florida Regional Community Policing Institute in 2002. The curriculum included an introduction to Problem Solving Policing.
- 3. Were additional incentives given to police officers who engaged in problem solving?** Each officer in the Gulf Breeze Police Department is required to complete a problem oriented policing initiative each quarter as a part of our award winning comprehensive community policing program. Noteworthy achievements are recognized at city-wide meetings where all city employees meet for a mandatory monthly breakfast. The school resource officers were given 'credit' for their participation in the plan creation and in the implementation. They were not required to submit an additional community policing activity report for the quarters that the plan was developed and implemented.
- 4. What resources and guidelines (manuals, past problem-solving examples, etc.) were used, if any, by police officers to help them manage this problem-solving initiative?** The chief worked closely with the school resource officer and attended all community meetings and planning meetings with the officer. At the conclusion of the assessment phase and the beginning of the response phase, the chief assisted in conducting the meeting with the student peer leaders and provided the necessary information and data. The officer was provided with a letter co-signed by the chief and the principal that was sent to every parent in the school. Officers were tasked with conducting a field interrogation of all youths in the community after the agreed upon, self imposed curfew of 11:00pm. The results of the FI's were turned over to school administration for action.
- 5. What issues/problems were identified with the problem-oriented policing model or the problem-solving model?** The problems that were identified were the large increase in

**Gulf Breeze Police Department  
2003 Herman Goldstein Award submission**

vandalism incidents and the clear jeopardy that students were placing themselves in when they were engaging in the rather benign activity of 'rolling'. Students would sneak through back yards and down darkened streets to 'roll' houses undetected. Vigilant homeowners and barking dogs were able to detect a number of students. Heightened fears and awareness from September 11, 2001 led some homeowners to respond to these trespassers with excessive force. Students were confronted with guns and other weapons wielded by the homeowners. Instead of waiting for a tragedy to occur and then responding, it was determined that urgent action as needed to avoid a tragedy. School and police officials worked in concert with the community and students to scan the problem, assess the situation, develop a comprehensive response and analyze the results.

**6. What general resources (financial and/or personnel) were committed to this project, and of those resources, what went beyond existing department budget?** The general resources that were committed to this project were personnel and time. The commitment of school administrators, school resource officers was utilized during the normally scheduled work time of those parties and did not require additional budgetary resources. The bicycle patrol officers, school resource officers and patrol officers assigned during the evening hours of Homecoming week was our principal increase from routine patrol. By supplementing our patrol force with bicycle patrol officers (working under the funding from an LLEBG grant) and allocating additional hours for the school resource officers to work the evenings and midnight shifts during that week, any groups that were out in the neighborhoods were immediately detected and intercepted. They were sent on their ways and reminded of the 'contract' not to roll or to be out late. Their names were forwarded to school administration daily for action. The Escambia County Sheriff and the Santa Rosa County Sheriff also increased their patrols and took the same action. The amount of additional hours committed during the week by the Gulf Breeze Police Department was just over 2 FTEs or about 88.5 hours. Of that total about half was taken as compensatory time and about half paid as overtime. The amount expended represented an increase of 4.4% of our weekly budget. Given the significance of our efforts and the outstanding results achieved; it is felt that the budgetary costs were reasonable and justifiable.

**7. Project Contact Person:**

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## Chief Paulding's proactive approach

# Homecoming dangers addressed

By Jean Freeman  
Gulf Breeze News

Gulf Breeze Police Chief Peter Paulding has initiated a community task force to promote student safety regarding after school and night-time events at Gulf Breeze High School.

The initiative arose from life threatening situations following last year's homecoming celebration.

Of issues addressed was the seemingly innocuous practice of "rolling," draping houses and trees with toilet paper late at night or during early morning hours.

Chief Paulding stated the danger; "During the last Homecoming, a startled homeowner met the 'rollers' with a powerful gun and refused to let them go until police arrived."

He explained, "The potential of an accidental shooting was real.

"Fortunately, the problem was safely resolved and no one was injured, however, all participants broke local laws. The teens were trespassing and the homeowner definitely misused a firearm."

"Another possible tragedy could be a traffic accident as the

"rollers" make a quick get-away in the middle of the night. Again,

"There is risk of serious injury or death."

In taking a proactive approach to the problem, Chief Paulding asked for participation from the Santa Rosa Sheriff's Department, school administrators, teachers, parents, and students to develop incentives to discourage activities that are against the law and potentially dangerous.

Chief Paulding's "homecoming hit list" for the task force's first meeting was a solid foundation to foster action:

- Get students more involved in after school/night events.

- Involve parents more through letters, recorded calls, and PTA meetings.

- Encourage students and athletes to sign a promissory note that they will not engage in unlawful or hateful acts.

- Give special incentives to students who sign the promissory note.

- Involve the community through newspaper and television coverage.

Gulf Breeze High School stu-



Gulf Breeze High School Students Miguel Dumas, Greg Rosenbaum, Tracia Outzen, Amanda Starr, and Guerin Farley are members of a community task force in conjunction with other students, administrators, teachers, parents, Gulf Breeze Police, and Santa Rosa Sheriff's Department to encourage after-school night event safety.

dent task force members' input is considered key in developing a safe Homecoming plan. The students were selected from all grades and interest groups.

Currently under consideration are extra tardy passes, prizes, either cash or coupons from local businesses (fast food was high on the list), and special homecoming week activities at the school and also at local establishments.

The next meeting is planned

for mid April.

The consensus of the preliminary meeting was to develop "A Contract for Life" that could carry students to adulthood -- a guideline against destructive behavior.

Even long-standing traditions must be addressed when there is risk to personal property and, more important, to personal safety. New, safe traditions can be started with student and community support.

GB NEWS 3-14-02

# Chase puts lawyer on probation

Monica Scandlen  
@PensacolaNewsJournal.com

A Pensacola attorney accused of chasing teen-agers, dragging them from their vehicle, then waving a gun at them after they rolled his home with toilet paper will spend two years on probation.

Marcus Michles, 40, of the law firm Michles & Booth, pleaded no contest Wednesday to four misdemeanor charges: one count of improperly displaying a firearm and three counts of battery.



Michles

After entering his plea before Circuit Judge Paul Rasmussen in Milton, Michles said the teens startled him awake at his Gulf Breeze home.

"None of this would have happened if these men had not been outside my daughter's window at two in the morning," he said. "I would have slept through the night and gone to work the next day."

Michles declined to comment further.

A group of six teens went to Michles' home in the 600 block of Fairpoint Drive about 1:30 a.m. on Oct. 30, a Gulf Breeze Police Department report stated.

Nathan James Dillaha, 18, told police Michles pulled him out of a vehicle, punched him in the mouth and dragged him back to the front porch of his home.

Jacob Thomas-Michael Wagner, 17, said Michles also dragged him to the porch, then went inside, came back out with a gun and put it to

See CHASE, 5C

3-21-02  
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AL

# Chase lands lawyer on probation

FROM IC

the young man's head, the report stated.

Michles told police he thought the two were trying to break into his vehicle.

"(Michles) said he had his gun aimed at them while they were in the driveway by his vehicle and he almost shot one of them," the report states.

While police were at Michles' house, four girls who were with the two boys returned. They were all told to start cleaning up the mess when two teens in the group traded retorts with Michles' wife.

Michles grabbed Dillaha by the shirt, pushed him into some bushes and ignored the officer's demand to let go of the teen, according to the report.

Michles had been charged with a felony — aggravated assault with a firearm — but that was reduced to the misdemeanor charge of improperly displaying a firearm and offered to Michles in exchange for a plea, said Assistant State Attorney Harmon Massey.

Michles' plea means he neither admits nor denies the charges.

Barry Beronet, Michles' attorney, said the plea will not automatically affect Michles' law license. A complaint has been filed with the Florida Bar.

Francine Walker, director of public information for the Florida Bar, confirmed the group opened

a complaint file Dec. 13 after learning of the criminal charges. Walker said they are monitoring the case and no action has been taken.

Michles is in good standing with no public discipline history, Walker said.

Rasmussen sentenced Michles to 24 months probation, ordered him to enroll in anger management classes and perform 100 hours of community service. Michles must also write "sincere" letters of apology to the six teens.

The judge also ordered the 9mm Glock, already seized by police, be forfeited, that Michles not be allowed to have firearms while he is on probation and that he must stay more than 500 feet away from any of the teens and their families. Rasmussen made an exception for being at school events and driving to and from home.

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"I think they will never stop rolling."

— Amanda Starr, Gulf Breeze High freshman

# Toilet-papering no prank to some area homeowners

FROM 1A

Others call Michles a lunatic, a danger to the community.

Gulf Breeze High alumni T.J. Emma, 26, believes Michles went far beyond appropriate behavior.

"If he felt threatened by toilet paper when he had a gun, then he's got problems," Emma said.

Says Michles: "I don't at all want to be a vigilante hero. I want parents to be responsible for their children, and children be responsible for their actions."

## Tradition vs. trouble

Many community residents share Michles' frustration.

Every year during football homecoming week — usually toward the end of October — Gulf Breeze High administrators record more than 50 calls from area residents complaining about vandalism.

"In the past, we have said what students do outside of school, people should contact the parents. We can't control their evening curfews," said Gulf Breeze Principal Cherry Fitch.

But what started as harmless toilet-paper rolling has escalated. Now people are reporting cars scraped with keys, windows broken by frozen paintballs, and vehicles and homes spray-painted.

In addition to Michles, another vandalism victim chased students with a baseball bat last year.

In the wake of problems during homecoming 2001, school officials have tried to step in.

"Homecoming was supposed to be doing things in support of school — winning a football game. Not anything negative or hurtful," Fitch said. "After the incidents, we told them to stay in and not go out."

Gulf Breeze Police Chief Peter Paulding also has taken notice.

"My fear is that everything surrounding homecoming has gotten out of hand," he said. "Plus, this was after Sept. 11, when everyone has a heightened sense about their security."

Paulding increased patrols in anticipation of homecoming week

problems last year. The Michles incident was one of six reported cases of vandalism during October's homecoming, down from 26 the previous year.

"Times are changing," Paulding said. "Before someone gets killed or seriously injured, either from a homeowner responding or the kids injuring themselves, we have to do something. I don't want to wait for a death to occur."

A school task force has begun meeting regularly to identify a solution. The students, parents and police officers in the group are working together to try to find a way to rein in teens during homecoming week.

One proposal involves teens signing pledge cards, promising not to be out in the early morning hours.

Laverne Baker, who chairs the school's advisory council and is a task force member, said the group is looking to substitute organized activities for the late-night hijinks and potential trouble.

"We tried to even do a sanctioned roll, like doing the principal's house. But the students we polled said it (preplanning) takes the excitement out of it," she said.

Some students in the task force have conceded that the tradition cannot be forced out of existence.

"I think they will never stop rolling. It's gone on for way too long," said freshman Amanda Starr, 15. "I don't think it's a bad tradition. It used to be a harmless, fun thing. Obviously, it's not anymore."

But, "they can do stuff about the vandalism. You can scare high schoolers straight and say police will be on watch," she said.

Amanda has known about — and looked forward to — the tradition since she was a Gulf Breeze Elementary School student.

"I have older sisters and brothers, so I knew everything about it," she said. "But they never did vandalism."

## Prank or problem?

In Michles' case, it was the friends of his stepsons who rolled

the house. One of the teens assaulted, Nathan Dillaha, had been a dinner guest at the Michles' home.

"There was no maliciousness involved," said Dillaha, a Pensacola Junior College student.

Regardless of the intention, Michles said what the teens did was dangerous.

"I'm not sure that I know the difference between a crime and a prank in broad daylight. But I'm not sure anyone knows that definition at 2 o'clock in the morning with people crawling around your daughter's window or your vehicle," Michles said.

When it comes to brandishing a weapon, Michles said he was showing the teens the gun to explain that he "could have killed them," and that their actions put their lives in danger.

To Jan Dillaha, her son was not the one acting irresponsibly — it was Michles.

"We've had people start to roll our house, and you turn your lights on and yell something out the door, and they leave," she said. "Toilet-papering is a mild prank. Everyone knows that's what happens that weekend. I think it's a shame that an adult pulled a gun on kids, and that it could possibly ruin the tradition."

Michles' response: "I don't believe that in the name of tradition, for a week or two, the citizens of Gulf Breeze or anybody else should be subjected to vandalism. I don't think young people should see that as a license to violate laws."

Gulf Breeze resident Deborah Roche, 40, can understand both points of view.

"As someone who has had her house burglarized, having people in my yard at 2 o'clock in the morning is a scary thing," she said. "I can understand a scared reaction. But as a parent living in Gulf Breeze, I am aware of the fact that during homecoming week, you have kids out there."

"He should have known. If you have children in high school, you pretty much know this is going to happen."



# GULF BREEZE HIGH SCHOOL

Cherry M. Fitch  
Principal

Sylvan J. Ladner III  
Assistant Principal

Annice B. Webb  
Assistant Principal

Thomas E. Williams  
Director, Guidance Services

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675 Gulf Breeze Parkway • Gulf Breeze, FL 32561 • (850) 916-4100 • FAX (850) 916-4109

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## Homecoming Pledge 2002-2003

**This Homecoming, students, teachers and administrators, in an effort to make safer and enjoyable Homecoming week experience for the student body is asking that all students sign The Homecoming Promise. This Pledge is a “contract” that you agree to abide by the terms listed below:**

- 1. I pledge that I will be home by the 11:00 p.m.**
- 2. I pledge that I will not take part in any vandalism, destruction of property, or illegal act of any sort.**
- 3. I pledge that I will work to enjoy Homecoming Week in a safe, happy manner**

**I understand that by signing this pledge that I am giving my word of honor that I agree and will do my best to abide by the terms listed.**

\_\_\_\_\_

Name

\_\_\_\_\_

Date

---

“Expect Excellence”

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# GULF BREEZE HIGH SCHOOL

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---

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Dear Parents:

We are very excited about our school related Homecoming activities that begin the week of October 21-26. Homecoming is a traditional school event designed to provide many wonderful memories of special events and friends. We have scheduled our class t-shirt painting for Wednesday, October 23, 3:00-5:00; float building Thursday, October 24, 3:00-9:00; Friday's pep rally in the morning, with the game begins at 7:30; and the week culminating in the dance on Saturday, 8:00-12:00.

Each year, a few GBHS students (or former students) seem to carry the "fun" a bit too far, endangering themselves or others. We always have calls from frustrated parents and community members, whose houses have been rolled, "egged", paint splattered, or worse, one too many times. Most of you are very patient with the friends "rolling" one another and know that it is done in fun. Acts of vandalism change that.

Last year we became more concerned than ever regarding student safety during Homecoming week. In the past, we had incidents where students were hurt running away, falling, being hit by frozen paint pellets, falling from a car, etc. Last year was much more frightening. For example, in two incidences, both involving students who were "rolling" or trespassing across a yard, the students were physically threatened by angry adults with weapons. As a result, we have formed a task force including students, parents, community members, representatives from the school and all local law enforcement agencies. After several meetings, this committee's recommendations include students signing a Homecoming Pledge, a self-imposed curfew, and planning alternative activities.

Everyone is more safety conscious now, to protect their property from unknown persons, to protect their families. Noises, strangers, vehicles that might have not elicited a second thought, people now investigate. Moreover, the later it gets, the more calls are made to the police and more frustrated neighbors, friends, and community members become. Most documented damage and calls come after 11:00 pm, the legal driving curfew for teens up to 17 years old.

Because of problems in previous pre-Homecoming activities, all law enforcement agencies, both in the city and counties are doubling their patrols and will be very active all week.

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"Expect Excellence"

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As a result, we have formed a task force including students, parents, community members, representatives from the school and local law enforcement agencies. After several meetings, this committee's recommendations include students signing a Homecoming Pledge, a self-imposed curfew, and planning alternative activities.

Everyone is more safety conscious now, to protect their property from unknown persons, to protect their families. Noises, strangers, vehicles that previously might have not elicited a second thought, people now investigate. Moreover, the later it gets, the more calls are made to the police and the more frustrated neighbors, friends, and community members become. Most documented damage and calls come after 11:00 pm, the legal driving curfew for teens up to 17 years old. Local law enforcement agencies are doubling their patrols and will be very active all week.

With your cooperation and assistance, we anticipate a safe and successful Homecoming Week. Please plan to join us for any activities you are available to attend.

Thank you in advance for supporting our school and community and for protecting your son or daughter,

*Peter Paulding*

Chief Peter Paulding  
Gulf Breeze Police Department

*Cherry Fitch*

Ms. Cherry Fitch  
Principal

### Crim Misch/Damage 2000-2003

