

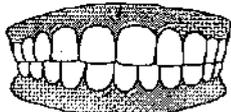


POP TALK



March-April 1996

EDITOR CHATTER



The Police Department has been plagued with false 9-1-1 calls since the emergency response call number was implemented. This problem surfaces when kids "play" around with the number or someone purposely, for some unknown reason, calls. Officers respond to these calls and sometimes more than one field unit is sent on the request. False calls cost the Community valuable officer time and decrease an officer's ability to respond to emergency situations.

Congratulations to Sgt. Al Maroney and Sgt Daryl Green who graduated from the Supervisory Leadership Institute on March 13, 1996. This intensive leadership development program, sponsored by California State Peace Officer Standards and Training, serves to enhance leadership skills of law enforcement supervisors throughout California.

The Fresno Police Department continues to share its good work with the nation. The Community Policing Consortium in Washington D.C. publishes a newsletter, *Community Policing Exchange*, every two months. Stories on the Departments Police and Probation efforts at the Fresno area high schools and the use of non-conventional empowerment training by police officers were featured. Your Department continues to deliver quality service and believes others may benefit by our success. After all, information shared helps us all!



WEST BUREAU

NORTHWEST

Changes for a Better Mobile Home Community

Progress has been made toward changing the reputation of the Sierra Mobile Home Park, a challenging POP project. With 229 calls for service in a year from July 1, 1993 through July 01, 1994 the park's reputation was obviously not good.

Officer Romo first met with Marlene Strome, the manager of the Sierra Mobile Park, over a year ago. At that time she identified 17 mobile home spaces as involved in the use or sales of narcotics. She also identified various units as having juvenile gang-type problems. The question at the time was why there were so many spaces involved in illegal activity with the management's knowledge.

The Northwest POP Team made a commitment to the manager to help reduce criminal activity in the park. We discovered that such a commitment was all that was needed to remove numerous problem tenants. Several arrests which gave cause for eviction of narcotics dealers resulted in the eventual eviction of tenants in other spaces. Evictions were occurring at a rapid rate; when problems were identified by checking calls for service (CFS) printouts, oftentimes it was discovered that the manager was already aware of the problems and evictions were in progress. From the time of POP's initial involvement to the present time, approximately 70 evictions have taken place.



Other problems were identified as well. The Park appeared to be in a general state of disrepair. City inspectors were contacted; however, it was learned that State Inspectors had

jurisdiction over mobile parks. They were advised of the conditions and subsequently inspections were conducted. Approximately 500 tenant and 50 park violations were observed in this 127-space park. In time, remedies occurred and minimum standards were met.

Discussions between POP members and Strome were held on how to socially and physically improve conditions at the Park. Officer Terry suggested a library for the Park community. Strome was very receptive to this idea, and arrangements were made for her to tour the Quailwoods Apartment Complex for the purpose of observing their library and community center. Sandi Ditomasso, the Manager of the Quailwoods, explained what she had implemented. Their community center served as library, tutoring center, and eating area for children to enjoy lunches provided by the City. Strome immediately began plans to start a similar program. She contacted Don Cooley, the Park owner, explaining plans to improve the area. The improvements would make the Park a more desirable place to live and would hopefully draw other families to the area. The manager would benefit from a larger pool of applicants for the Family Park. Cooley immediately donated a double-wide trailer unit to serve as the Park's Community Center.

Upon learning of the Park's commitment to the community, Ditomasso donated a computer and printer to the center. Community meetings are now being held, headed by Strome and volunteer residents.

In comparing CFS from January 12, 1995 through January 12, 1996 to those figures previously mentioned, CFS have dropped in critical areas. Disturbances decreased in number from 80 to 67, suspicious circumstances from 45 to 22 and burglaries from 16 to 3. Long-term residents have confirmed that the Sierra Mobile Home Park's reputation is changing for the better!

SOUTHWEST

Dealers in the Trees

The area surrounding the 1800 block of East Dorothy was a haven for narcotic sales. The environment was a perfect breeding ground for such activity. Numerous abandoned houses were in the area and there were many fields used for illegal dumping.



Along with impacting the quality of life of the neighbors who lived there, we also observed an increase in CFS at nearby businesses. The AM/PM Mini Mart at 2590 S. Cherry, which was only a few blocks away, was experiencing over 400 calls per year. These calls were mostly robberies, carjackings, and deaths.

Southwest TAC Officer Mercado started a POP Project; he was later joined by Officer Kobashi. Officer Mercado determined that narcotics were being sold from 1859 E. Vine. After two search warrants and a posting on the home for non-occupancy, the dealers took on a new strategy. They moved into the vacant fields in the area. The dealers used the trees on the property and approximately 300 used tires to make paths and barricades to conceal their activity. Officers Mercado and Kobashi changed their tactics, requesting that the City remove the trees. The officers even helped the 70 year-old property owner to remove the trees from his property. City Sanitation removed the abandoned tires and posted the property for no dumping. With the ability for concealment removed, Southwest officers were able to observe and arrest the remaining drug dealers who continued to operate.

Narcotics sales in the area have been greatly reduced. Citizens in the area are pleased about the improvement and calls for service at the AM/PM Mini Mart have been reduced over 50 percent!



All... Right

POP Shorts - Short & Sweet

- A review of calls for service revealed that over 240 calls for service were made from 3840 E. Hamilton. Officer Greg Rayburn determined that the problem was a disturbed individual living at the location. A conservator was found for the subject and his phone was removed. Excessive calls for service from the location have been eliminated.
- Nightclub
The El Durango Night Club at 3624 E. Butler experienced 138 calls for service over a 24 month period. POP officers in Southwest spent approximately 8 hours of time developing solutions to diagnosed problems and the result so far has netted no calls for service. An example of officers working smarter.

• Noise Problem

The Southwest Area has received numerous complaints of disturbances on Friday nights at 901 L Street, the location of the 20th Century Elk's Lodge. Officer Kirkman determined that the Lodge was operating outside the parameters of its Alcohol, Beverage and Control (ABC) License. He called a joint meeting with ABC, Southwest staff, and the operators of the 20th Century Elk's Lodge. At this meeting the Elks Lodge was advised of their non-compliance. A check on March 30 determined that they were operating as per the terms of their license.

CENTRAL

519 N. Fresno
by Mark Hudson

• In June 1994, the El Molino Rojo, a nightclub at Fresno and Belmont, was opened as a POP Project. This JLI business generated over 150 CFS and was known throughout the city for being a nuisance. Even though the El Molino Rojo was generating an excessive number of calls, it was not the only problem in this area.

Since this time, a POP Project has been opened for each business at this intersection. The final piece of the puzzle was the apartment complex at the northwest corner of Fresno and Belmont (519 N. Fresno). In 1995 alone, this complex generated over 65 CFS. These calls were attributed to drug dealers, pimps, prostitutes, drunks, and parolees. With these problems in mind, property and business owners became partners in solving the problems at this address. The first goal was to identify and eliminate the criminal activity inside the complex. It was discovered that three out of sixteen apartments were actively selling narcotics. These sellers were systematically removed by using the following traditional methods:

- Service of a search warrant, resulting in the recovery of an ounce of rock cocaine.
- A buy bust operation, resulting in the arrest of a major supplier at this complex.
- The service of two felony narcotic sales warrants.
- A consensual search resulting in the arrest of a known distributor.

With the bulk of the criminal element removed, our efforts turned towards identifying and implementing long-term solutions. The following are some of the non-traditional steps taken:

- A police call box was placed in the alley behind the apartment complex.
- Self-closing doors and locks are to be placed on rear entrances. City Sanitation has agreed to move garbage pickup to the alley, allowing the Belmont entrance to be closed off.
- The lot was posted for no trespassing and loitering.
- Lighting in the parking lot will be improved.
- Nearby businesses have agreed to sign restraining orders against well-known prostitutes.

According to the property owner of 519 N. Fresno, criminal activity has declined. He attributes this to our problem-solving efforts. This area will continue to be monitored and an assessment of CFS will be conducted after one full month has elapsed. We hope that the results will corroborate the owner's observations!

New Projects/POP Shorts
by Sgt. Robert Nevarez

- During the last two months, there were 21 CFS related to petty theft at the Circle K-Olive/Palm Convenience Store. Officer Mendoza met with the store manager and spoke to him at length about their problem. He found out that this business purchases cases of beer in large quantity to obtain lower prices. Since they do not have enough storage area to maintain this surplus beer, they are forced to stack it at the end of the aisles. Needless to say, this is a big factor in generating beer runs. Several solutions were offered to the manager. A major one was a modification in the store layout which would force customers to walk somewhere near the cashier prior to exiting. In addition, it was suggested that the surplus beer be placed on rolling carts. This would allow for movement of the beer after 0200 hours, when beer cannot be sold but is likely to be stolen.
- About one month ago, Officer Cooley reported, the SOHO Nightclub began to experience a steady increase in CFS. Most of them were disturbances involving drunk patrons. The owner has been cooperative in the past, and POP will continue to assist him in solving his problem. However, his dance permit contains a clause which prohibits him from generating over 50 CFS in one year. Should the cooperative effort not resolve the situation, his dance permit will be in jeopardy.
- About two months ago, a questionnaire was distributed asking whether a report writing room/restroom would be beneficial in the Blackstone/Princeton area. Officers

overwhelmingly stated that it would be, since this location is quite a ways from the Central substation. By the end of April, the facility should be complete. It will have a restroom, report writing desk, and phone. •

EAST BUREAU

NORTHEAST by Eric Eide

Junior Officers on Duty at Pyle Elementary

Have you seen the recent increase in police officers in the City of Fresno? No, I don't mean the recent hires by our Department to put men and women in blue on our streets.



... rather, the students of Pyle Elementary! The program enlists the help of all of the students by making each one of them a "Junior Officer." The students are then given their own "notice book," similar to the ticket books that officers carry, and are entrusted with monitoring their own behavior

as well as that of their classmates.

The Junior Officer Notice Book Program at Pyle Elementary was developed in the tradition of the POP philosophy. The idea is to take the message taught in the POP project areas and tie it in with the school's message of proper behavior. By being in both the project environment and in the school, the students can then see that good behavior is important EVERYWHERE ... a message that bears repeating!

Since each student is a "Junior Officer," they now have a reason to follow the rules rather than break them. If a violation is spotted by one of the Junior Officers, they can give a "notice to change behavior" to the other students. By signing the notice, the offending student promises to change their behavior for the better. Why would they do this, you ask? Each month, the notices are collected and the top Junior Officers, *along with the students who promised to change their behavior*, are rewarded. Last month, the prize was a ride in a patrol car, lights and sirens going, and pictures with an officer. Future rewards promise to be bigger and better! The next scheduled event is March 28 when the K-9 Unit will put on an **up close and personal** demonstration of their dogs and their skills. Future rewards planned will involve the Motor Squad and the SWAT Bus,

gearing up for a final prize at the Marine Reserve Base for a day with the Few **and the Proud**.

The response from the teachers whose classrooms are participating in the program has been very positive. Incidents of behavioral problems have been reduced. The Junior Officer Notice Book is the talk of the school! The program will be evaluated at the end of the school year and if it proves successful, it can be implemented district-wide.

POP Shorts

- A successful search warrant was served at the Courtyard Apartments (3222 E. Dakota) POP Project. Complaints from tenants and concerns by management led to a warrant being issued for Apt 242. While serving the warrant, another apartment nearby became involved, and its resident was also arrested for sales. Management followed through with a notice and three tenants were evicted. The apartments were reported by management as being "quiet as a mouse" for the last week.
- The Saris' Red Carpet Lounge will be undergoing some changes in the near future. A location that has been excessive in CFS, violations of Alcoholic Beverage Control licenses, and Health Department violations for the past year is coming to an end. In a recent bid to expand, the Planning Commission imposed a severe Conditional Use Permit (CUP) at the request of FPD, Alcohol Beverage and Control (ABC), and the Health Department. The owner was very upset as "he has been running this business for 20 years" and couldn't understand why he had to now follow the applicable rules. Our response was ... "you should have been following them all along."
- The neighbors of 2725 N. Millbrook are jumping for joy! After complaints of loud parties and neighborhood disturbances, action has been taken. The POP Team, along with Neighborhood Revitalization, inspected the house responsible for the problems. We found that the problem folks were \$800 behind in City Water payments, and the house was unfit for occupancy. The residents next door began giving the problem house electricity via an extension cord. They were subsequently inspected and their house also found to be unfit for occupancy. All in all, two problem neighbors have been removed from the neighborhood and it has been quiet ever since! Neighbors are ecstatic!



New Project Locations:

- 9300 N. Blackstone
- 4725 E. Ashlan
- 4811 N Winery Circle
- 2725 N. Millbrook
- 2805 E Robinson
- 3608 N Callisch

SOUTHEAST
by John Pinedo

Remember the Bristol Apartments (POPTALK Vol.3, Issue 1 Don't worry, this article is not about the Bristols; rather, it is about their neighbors, the Sierra Vista Apartments located across the street at 5655 E. Huntingdon. Project Number 95-55 is a complex of only 26 units, so one might ask: "How could this be a problem for the Fresno Police Department?"

In December of 1994, POP Officer Pinedo was assigned this project. He ran the CFS for the year of 1994 and found they numbered 153. That's right, 153 CFS for a complex that only has 26 units! There were 56 CFS for suspicious persons, 39 disturbances, and 14 thefts. Officer Pinedo contacted the manager and the management company, Golden State Financial (GSF Properties) in early January of 1995. The manager and GSF were informed of the problems occurring at the complex. While GSF traditionally does an outstanding job of screening their tenants and cooperating with the police, they did not know that this area had become heavily involved in drug activity due to occupants of the Bristol Apartments. This was not a problem that was going to disappear overnight, and all parties were aware of that. Over a period of months a number of actions were taken including a change in managers, increasing management presence after dark, eviction of those suspected of drug dealing, and elimination of the problem tenants at the Bristol Apartments. Through this multifaceted approach, the area environment has significantly improved.

Upon checking the CFS for the entire year of 1995 Pinedo found that there were only 80 CFS, a reduction of 73 CFS from 1994. From January 1 to March 5, 1996, there have been only two CFS!



*That's right, Bub!
You're Outta Here!*

This project would not have been a success if it were not for the POP Team and an outstanding management company willing to work with the police department to solve problems of mutual concern. Both the POP Team and GSF Properties deserve a "pat on the back" for staying with this problem until it was resolved.

Project Updates

- 4600 E. Mono: This project will be closed after approximately six months of work that has yielded significant results. Court testimony on the final arrest concluded with a conviction on Joseph Taylor who is looking at a second strike and will be in prison for some time. The occupants at this location are happy that they now can spend time outside and not have to fear the drug addicts and dealers that frequented this area. CFS in the last three months show zero after the previous three months showed 22.
- 4229 E. McKenzie: TAC Officer Grimm handled a neighborhood complaint which involved a single residence producing 106 calls for service in the past year. It was discovered that the resident played in a rock band, and that the band practiced in the garage of this residence. The resident was contacted, and an arrangement was made for the band to practice in a more suitable location in another part of the city. A Management of Real Property Ordinance letter was mailed to the property owner. It appears that most if not all of the 106 CFS will be eliminated.

Addresses of New Open Projects

- 96-11 3800 Block of E. White
- 96-14 5647 E. Balch
- 96-15 5575E. Tulare
- 96-16 4910 E. Anderson





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