



MNPD NEWSLINE

THE OFFICIAL EMPLOYEE NEWSLETTER OF THE MNPD

February 27, 2009

News from the Chief

In a renewed effort to build on the Crooks with Guns law passed by the Tennessee legislature and signed by Governor Bredesen in 2007, state lawmakers this year are being strongly urged to change the crime of aggravated robbery from a Class “B” to a Class “A” felony, effectively doubling the prison sentence for those convicted. If aggravated robbery was classified as a Class “A” felony in 2005, the 153 defendants convicted that year should still be in prison right now. Instead, 55 of those defendants have re-offended IN NASHVILLE since their 2005 convictions by preying on 145 new crime victims and collecting 343 new criminal charges.

Of the 153 convicts mentioned above, 116 scored their first aggravated robbery conviction. But that does not mean they haven’t been a menace in the past. In fact those 116 had amassed 1,578 criminal charges in Davidson County alone prior to their aggravated robbery convictions.

Tennessee’s police chiefs, sheriffs and district attorneys general, acting through the Public Safety Coalition, will be meeting with the legislative leadership on March 10 seeking commitments of support. Yes, this is a tight budget year for the state, and yes, the state needs to set priorities. What priority could be any greater than helping protect the safety of Tennessee’s families and visitors? After all, Article One, Section One, of our state constitution clearly states, “That all power is inherent in the people, and all free governments are founded on their authority, and instituted for their peace, safety and happiness” (emphasis added).

The Public Safety Coalition strongly considered asking for a law that would require first-time convicted armed robbers to serve 85% of their sentences. However, such a proposal was likely to have been met with a huge fiscal note (state cost estimate), which would have effectively killed the legislation. Instead, we are advancing a law change that should be more financially palatable, one that would up the sentencing range for aggravated robbery from the current 8 to 12 years to 15 to 25 years. Even with the state law’s current presumption that an armed robber is eligible for parole consideration after serving 30% of his sentence (not to mention the issue of time off for “good behavior”), the classification change from a Class “B”

to a Class "A" felony would still mean several more years behind bars for those very dangerous persons who use weapons to rob innocent Tennessee citizens and businesses.

The Public Safety Coalition's proposals have been carefully crafted given the state's financial picture and are the right law changes for Tennessee this year. There is a groundswell of support from citizens across our state. I am guardedly optimistic we can build on the Crooks with Guns law in 2009. You can help by asking your state representative and state senator to please support the Public Safety Coalition's initiative to keep armed robbers behind bars and away from our families. Legislators across the state understand this issue and I believe really want to work to improve the safety of Tennesseans.

Thank you all for your dedication and for working every day to make a difference in the lives of Nashville's families and guests.

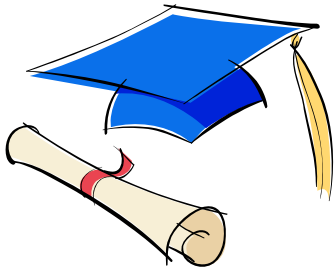
Happenings

Mayor Karl Dean and Chief Ronal Serpas welcomed 57 prospective police officers at the Metropolitan Police Department's Training Academy February 17 for the beginning of Recruit Session 60, the class that represents full police department staffing for the first time in more than five years.

Session 60 is slated to graduate on July 2.



Chief Ronal Serpas welcomes members of Recruit Session 60 at the Training Academy



Session 59 Graduation

Thursday, March 12, 6 p.m.

Christ Church at 15354 Old Hickory Boulevard

South Precinct Apartment Complex Managers & Neighborhood Watch Leadership Meetings

Over 50 apartment complex managers and Council Members Duane Dominy and Parker Toler met in the South Precinct's community room February 17 to address ongoing issues and concerns including how to improve security for residents.

Community Coordinator Sergeant Suzanne Stephens organized the bi-annual event which included South Precinct, Gang Unit and Special Operations Division personnel.



Apartment complex managers gathered at the South Precinct to discuss issues and concerns

On February 24 nearly 90 persons attended the Neighborhood Watch Leadership Meeting including State Representative Janis Sontany, Council Members Duane Dominy, Robert Duvall, Anna Page, Sandra Moore, and Jim Hodge, the Neighborhoods Resource Center's Mike Hodge, Neighborhood Watch leaders Steve Abernathy and Don Johnson, members of the clergy, apartment managers, and business leaders.



Neighborhood Watch Leadership Meeting

Polar Bear Plunge

Nearly 200 people gathered at Nashville Shores Saturday for the 10th annual “Freezin’ for a Reason” Polar Bear Plunge benefiting Tennessee Special Olympics.

Sponsored by the Metropolitan Nashville Police Law Enforcement Torch Run Program, the event featured a plunge by participants into Percy Priest Lake in anything but a wetsuit. Plungers collected a minimum of \$25 in donations for Special Olympics.

The Metropolitan Police Department has a long-standing commitment to raise awareness and funds for Special Olympics, the nation’s largest provider of athletic events and sporting activities for mentally challenged children and young adults.

In they go.....



The Easter Bunny appears to have second thoughts...



And out they come!



All ended well with over \$20,000 raised for Special Olympics Tennessee!!

Northwestern University's School of Police Staff & Command

Two members of the Metropolitan Nashville Police Department have completed Northwestern University's ten-week School of Police Staff and Command. Hermitage Precinct Lieutenant Warren McConkey and East Precinct Sergeant Christopher Bryant are being recognized for their educational and professional advancement in organizational methods and management concepts that will benefit the community.

Both Lieutenant McConkey and Sergeant Bryant were also honored by their peers. McConkey was elected Treasurer while Bryant served as Co-Activities Director.

El Protector Program Receives National Recognition

The New York City based Vera Institute of Justice named the Metropolitan Nashville Police Department's El Protector Program as among the nation's best law enforcement efforts at communicating with limited English proficient communities.

The MNPDP is one of six American law enforcement agencies profiled by Vera in a special report entitled, "*Bridging the Language Divide: Promising Practices for Law Enforcement*," which is now posted online at www.vera.org. The report was created in partnership with the U.S. Department of Justice's Office of Community Oriented Policing Services.

The MNPDP's El Protector Program, which was begun in 2004, is headed day-to-day by two officers who speak fluent Spanish. They are assigned to the South and Hermitage Precincts, which encompass areas of Nashville with the highest Latino population. Those officers liaison with leaders of Spanish speaking communities and Latino businesses, as well as make regular appearances on Spanish radio to provide key law enforcement information and offer crime prevention tips.

The Vera Institute of Justice is an independent nonprofit organization that combines expertise in research, demonstration projects, and technical assistance to help leaders in government and civil society improve the systems people rely on for justice and safety.

Drill and Ceremony Team

Tuesday night Lieutenants Grant Carroll and Ben Rodgers of the MNPDP Drill and Ceremony Team along with members of the Nashville Fire Department's Honor Guard performed a flag and rifle exhibition prior to the Predator's hockey game at the Sommet Center before a crowd of over 15,000 fans on Metro Employee Appreciation Night.

The Predators came back in the third period to beat the Chicago Blackhawks 5 to 3.

Retirement Celebration

Who could it be?



Officer Fred Cloud circa 1981

Central Precinct Officer Fred Cloud retires after 29 years of service!



Pictured (l-r) Central Precinct Commander Damian Huggins and Officer Fred Cloud

The Precinct News

Hermitage

Outstanding police work by Officer Ricky Martin led to the apprehension of suspected serial bank robber Fred Bates moments after Bates fled with cash from Wachovia Bank's 4740 Lebanon Pike branch.

At 4 p.m., Bates entered the bank armed with a revolver and demanded money. Bank staff complied and Bates fled to the parking lot of the Oakwood Commons shopping center just as a dye bomb mixed with the cash exploded.

At that moment, Officer Martin was stopping a car nearby for a traffic violation. As Martin got out of his police car, a citizen ran up and told him that the man making his way through the parking lot (Bates) had apparently just robbed the bank. Martin then realized that what appeared to be debris blowing in the wind was actually money.

Bates saw Martin heading his way and began running. Martin caught up with him at the side of the PetSmart store and took him into custody without incident. The loaded revolver was recovered from Bates' pocket.

The FBI's Violent Crimes Task Force is charging Bates with armed bank robbery. He is expected to be charged with three additional bank robberies.

Three teens, ages 14-16, are charged with robbery after Flex officers patrolling in the University Court area were approached by another juvenile who told officers the teens had held him at gunpoint and took his belongings.

Officers Eric Knight and Jeremy Smith quickly located two of the suspects. They were positively identified by the victim. The third suspect was later taken into custody in the 900 block of Cannon Street. All three are charged in Juvenile Court with robbery.

Proactive police work by Officer Charles Large in two separate incidents led to the arrest of a burglary suspect and two teenagers charged with breaking into multiple vehicles.

Officer Large spotted a white Cadillac that matched the description of a suspect vehicle involved in a break-in at a Gallatin Pike business. He stopped the driver after he ran a stop sign at Cannon Street and Fairfield Avenue.

A large flat screen TV stolen from the business was recovered. The driver was taken into custody and charged with DUI, theft, burglary, and vandalism.

In the second incident, Officer Large was taking a theft from a vehicle report when he saw a car leaving the area at a high rate of speed. He radioed a second officer who stopped the suspect vehicle. Two 16-year-olds were taken into custody. They admitted they had broken into several vehicles. Several items including golf clubs and electronics were recovered.

South

Coordinated police work between Patrol officers, Flex officers and detectives led to the arrest of four teenagers for robbing citizens at gunpoint in the parking lots of three separate apartment complexes.

Rafael Stem, 15, of University Court, **Pierre Vaughn**, 16, of Charles E. Davis Boulevard, and **Boris Lavri**, 17, of Whispering Oaks Place, are being held at Juvenile Detention on charges of unlawful gun possession and multiple counts of aggravated robbery. **Jeremy Brown**, 18, of Rio Vista Drive, is being held in the Metro Jail in lieu of \$165,000 bond on gun and aggravated robbery charges.

The investigation shows that the four committed armed robberies within a 30 minute time span in the parking lots of Dominion House Apartments on Linbar Drive, Southern Hills Condominiums on Wallace Road, and the Arbors of Brentwood complex on Brentwood Place. In each case, the victims provided quickly arriving patrol officers with descriptions of the suspects and their getaway car, which turned out to be a 1993 Infinity. Flex Officers Sean Pulizzano and Seth Ranney spotted the car turning onto Nolensville Pike from Edmondson Pike and stopped it as it approached Joyner Avenue. Personal items taken from the last robbery victim were found in the car, as were two pistols.

Acting on a tip from a citizen, South Precinct undercover detectives Thursday night raided a home at 1233-A Currey Road suspected of concealing a marijuana grow operation. Found inside the basement/garage area were a total of 102 marijuana plants, most of them in their infancy. Found underneath a bedroom mattress was one quarter pound of processed marijuana.

The resident, Thomas Andrew Robinson, 18, admitted the marijuana was his and that this was the first time he had tried his hand at a grow operation. Robinson is charged with manufacturing marijuana in a drug free zone (his home is within 1,000 feet of Seven Oaks Park), possession of marijuana for resale in a drug free zone, and two counts of possession of drug paraphernalia. Robinson's bond is set at \$30,000.

East

SWAT officers assigned to the Special Response Team arrested two more persons in connection with the August 26, 2008, shooting deaths of Vanderbilt University Professor Pierre Colas and his sister, Marie, during a robbery at Pierre Colas' McFerrin Avenue home.

Lavonta Churchwell, 19, of W. Greenwood Avenue, and Nathaniel Carson, 29, of Highlander Drive, were recently indicted by the Davidson County Grand Jury on murder, robbery, identity theft and forgery charges. Churchwell was arrested at his home. Carson was arrested on Charles E. Davis Boulevard.

A total of six persons have now been arrested in this case. The investigation by East Precinct detectives indicates that Churchwell and Carson conspired with the co-defendants in the robbery-double murder.

North

A convicted burglar on probation was again arrested after attempting to break into two homes.

Lonnie Nicholson, 33, parked a 1991 white Oldsmobile Cutlass in front of a residence in the 4100 block of Brick Church Pike at 10:30 a.m. He got out and walked inside the garage. The homeowner came outside and confronted Nicholson who fled in the vehicle. An hour later, Nicholson was spotted by a concerned citizen attempting to break into a garage in the 6200 block of Lickton Pike.

Flex Sergeant Scott Billingsby directed officers to areas he thought the suspect would likely drive through. It wasn't long before Flex Officer Robert McIsaac spotted the Cutlass, which had been reported stolen, on Union Hill Road. After a brief pursuit, the getaway car broke down in the 3500 block of Stevens Lane. Nicholson was taken into custody without incident. He was positively identified as the burglar in both cases.

Nicholson, of Old Hickory Boulevard, is charged with two counts of attempted burglary, reckless endangerment, vehicle theft, and evading arrest. He is being held on \$39,000 bond.

Not including this latest incident, Nicholson has been arrested 15 times on 52 charges with convictions for aggravated burglary, motor vehicle burglary, vehicle theft, unlawful weapon possession, assault, evading arrest, and DUI. He was also wanted on two outstanding theft warrants and is suspected in several more residential burglaries.

Sergeant Scott Billingsby's suspicions were understandably raised when he noticed a man wearing gloves in 70 degree weather in a residential area hard hit by burglaries.

Andrew Collins, 30, spotted Sergeant Billingsby and attempted to flee on foot. Officer Angela Booker took him into custody. At the time of his arrest, a warrant had been issued for Collins charging he set a woman on fire last month during an argument. He was also on probation for copper theft.

West

Two detectives looking for a 16-year-old murder suspect got their man after the teen decided to engage in a shootout in the James Cayce public housing development within earshot of the officers.

Detectives Mike Moss and Sergeant Freddie Stromatt spotted Norman Hines running from the shootout in the 500 block of Sylvan Street at 2:15 p.m. East Precinct officers quickly flooded the area. During the ensuing foot pursuit, Detectives Moss and Stromatt spotted Hines, of Inglewood Court, and Rondarius Williamson, 18, force their way into a woman's apartment in the 600 block of South 6th Street. SWAT officers assigned to the Special Response Team assisted Patrol officers in establishing a perimeter around the apartment building. After officers

made repeated announcements asking the pair to surrender, Williamson and Hines exited separately. They were taken into custody without further incident.

Arrest orders were taken out this evening in Juvenile Court charging Hines with murder in the January 24 shooting death of Eric Crook, 19, on Hillside Avenue. Crook and several friends were standing outside when three armed young men approached and demanded their belongings. Crook was shot during the robbery. In a related arrest, West Precinct detectives Friday arrested Danarius Hancock, 18, of Moss Rose Drive, and charged him with four counts of aggravated robbery in connection to the Crook homicide/robbery. He is being held in lieu of \$500,000 bond.

Central

A quick police response a citizen's tip concerning a burglary in progress led the arrest of a man wanted on five outstanding warrants for domestic assault and evading arrest.

Sergeant Chris Vick and Officer Chris Lo spotted William Southern, 30, attempting to break into a market in the 600 block of Garfield Street. He fled but was quickly taken into custody after a brief foot chase. Southern, of 5th Avenue North is charged with burglary, evading arrest, and four counts of domestic assault.

20th Judicial District Drug Task Force

A six-month investigation into a large scale marijuana distribution operation in Madison led to the seizure of 1,352 pounds of marijuana from the home at 114 Hillcrest Drive.

Metro detectives assigned to the 20th Judicial District Drug Task Force believe that the resident, Louis Albert Guajardo, has been involved in the marijuana trade for several years. He was convicted on a felony marijuana charge in Nashville in 2002 and received a one-year sentence.

During the execution of a search warrant at Guajardo's home, Task Force and West Precinct Crime Suppression Unit officers found large amounts of marijuana inside both the garage and living areas. They also seized \$15,000 from a safe, two sets of digital scales, and a GMC Yukon Denali SUV.

Guajardo is charged with possession of marijuana for resale within a drug free zone (he lives within 1,000 feet of Love Childcare and Enrichment Center). His bond is set at \$400,000.

Interdiction Unit

A couple from Houston, Texas, is charged with trafficking more than 300 pounds of marijuana from Texas to Nashville using a motor home.

Jakie Spencer, 61, and Jennifer Robinson, 27, are presently being held in lieu of \$1,010,000 bond each. They were stopped February 13th after Interstate Interdiction Officer David Hacker saw the motor home following too closely on I-40 west of downtown. During

the stop, police dog Mario alerted to the presence of a drug odor coming from the vehicle. A subsequent search revealed a loaded semi-automatic pistol in a closet and 313 pounds of marijuana concealed inside a luggage compartment on top of the motor home. The investigation leads drug detectives to believe that the marijuana was to be delivered somewhere in Nashville for local distribution.

Spencer and Robinson are each charged with possession of marijuana for distribution and violation of the Crooks with Guns law.

**The following officers in the Field Operations Bureau were chosen
Police, Patrol, Investigator and Special Operations Officers of
the Month for January 2009**

Patrol Officer

South Precinct Officer Patrick Baird

Police Officer

East Precinct Officer Christopher Jones

Investigator

**West Precinct Detective Scott Cothran and Central Precinct Detectives Nathan Clark,
Kevin Pollard, and Stephen Ray**

Special Operations Officer

Canine Officer John Hutcheson

Congratulations:

Sergeants Kerry Fowler and Brenda Steinbrecher, North Precinct, welcomed their granddaughter, Lillian McClure Rose, born February 12.

Sergeant Brian Anderson, Hermitage Precinct, and his wife, Wendy, are the proud parents of Addyson Shannon Anderson, born February 20.

Kevin Wallace, Hermitage Precinct, and his wife, Dana, are the proud parents of Carter Lee Wallace, born February 24.

Sergeant Jonathan Rogers and his wife are the proud parents of Xavier Cortez Rogers, born February 26.



Condolences:

John Craig, grandfather of Jonathan Craig, Identification Unit, passed away February 8.

Bob Beasley, father-in-law of Sergeant Robert Norton, Youth Services, passed away February 7.

The mother of Foster Hite, Traffic Section, passed away February 10.

Cindy Wigger, sister of Lieutenant Phil Wigger, Fleet Management, passed away February 13.

The mother of Sergeant Marvin Keith, Central Precinct, passed away.

Gwen Browning Qualls, mother-in-law of Officer Charles Boles, West Precinct, passed away.

Ralph Mahoney, father of Officer Ken Mahoney, Warrants Division, passed away February 19.

Gaylon Smith, father of Sergeant Kendall Smith, Warrants Division, passed away.

Martha Yates, the grandmother of Officer Joseph Helmtoller, South Precinct, passed away February 24.

Myra Davis, wife of retired Officer Walter Davis, sister of retired Officer David Gant, and aunt of Officer Brian Gant, East Precinct, passed away February 24.

Retired Sergeant Robert Parrish, uncle of retired Sergeant Ronald Parrish and retired Officer Kenneth Parrish, and great uncle to South Precinct Sergeant James Jones and West Precinct Officers Derek Smith and Jeffrey Brown, passed away February 23.

Willie Prowell, great uncle of Stephen Dixon, Facilities Security Section, passed away.

FYI:

The MPD Credit Union Opens New CJC Branch Office

The new MPD Credit Union office is located in the front lobby of the Criminal Justice Center next to the Records Division on the first floor. Initially, this branch will be open Monday, Wednesday, and Friday from 8 a.m. – 10 a.m.

The credit unit staff is asking for input from members. Any comments, suggestions or questions can be directed to MPD Credit Union Manager Nancy Walker at nwalker@mpdcu.org

1st Annual "Police Unity Tour" Golf Tournament

When: **April 6th 2009**

Where: **Through The Green** / Highland Rim 1725 New Hope Road Joelton, TN.

Time: **11am for Lunch (Included in Price) Tournament Starts at Noon !!!**

4-Man Scramble with a Shotgun Start

\$5.00 Mulligan's

Prizes for Longest Drive and Closest to the Pin and other Give-A-Ways !!!

Unlimited Range Balls

**All money raised from this event goes to the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial Fund !!!
The Police Unity Tour is a 501-c-3 Charity**

Please Contact: **Corey Sanderson or Buddie Clark to Register**

Policemen's Benefit Association

The Policemen's Benefit Association will have an election for Board of Directors March 13. Anyone who is interested should apply in writing to any Board member by March 6 and you will be added to the Ballot. The Board of Directors consists of a president, vice president, treasurer, secretary and five board members.

Current board members are: Jeff Weaver- President
Chuck Hagar- Vice President
Gordon Howey- Treasurer
James Jones- Secretary
Jim Grady- Board Member
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