

POLICE DEPARTMENT CITY OF BOYNTON BEACH

2009 – 2010 YEAR END REPORT

CRIMINAL ACTIVITY

During calendar year 2009 the city experienced 4889 reported index crimes. (Index crimes are defined by the Uniform Crime Reporting system as Felonious Homicide, Sexual Offenses, Robbery, Aggravated Assault [*we actually include all assault offenses in our analysis*], Burglary, Larceny, Motor Vehicle Theft and Arson). Compared with the 5095 index crimes reported in 2008, this represents a single year decrease of 206 crimes or approximately a 4% reduction. Violent crimes (Homicide, Sexual Offense, Robbery and Assault) for 2009 markedly decreased. Violent crimes numbered 1282 in 2009 compared with 1428 in 2008 for a single year decrease of 146 crimes or approximately a 10% reduction. Property crimes (Burglary, Larceny and Motor Vehicle Theft) numbered 3607 in 2009 compared with 3667 in 2008 for a decrease of 60 crimes or approximately a 1.5% reduction.

Overall arrests for the index crimes mentioned above showed little change as our officers made 9 more of these arrests in 2009 as compared to 2008. The most prevalent crime in our city is shoplifting which is a result of our increasing retail activity especially during the holiday shopping season. In 2009 shoplifting offenses numbered 947 which is an increase of 18 offenses over 2008.

A long term analysis reveals that crime in 2009 is 21% lower than it was in 2004.

Criminal homicide is at its lowest point since 2004. There were 2 instances of criminal homicide in 2009.

Robberies in 2009 decreased by a total of 23 offenses compared to the previous year. In 2009, the department began its holiday deployment the week before Thanksgiving concentrating on the mall and the shopping areas along Congress Avenue. From the beginning of the holiday deployment through the first of the New Year there were no crimes against persons committed anywhere in the commercial areas along Congress Avenue including the mall. Property crimes during that period in the deployment area consisted of three auto burglaries and one stolen auto.

In early 2009 we began to deploy in the residential areas where we noticed an increase in burglaries. These offenses are almost always committed by persons who live in close proximity to their victims or have some association with the neighborhood and are largely soft-target crimes of opportunity. This means that most houses are not properly secured and easily entered by a non-skilled perpetrator. Many of the burglaries involved theft of generators, pressure washers, bicycles, scooters or lawn care equipment from unsecured porches, garages, sheds and car ports. Entry to homes was normally accomplished through an unlocked or poorly secured door or window. A crime

resistance campaign by our CAT team and Crime Prevention Unit along with the planned and efficient use of discretionary patrol time as a result of our COMPSTAT process helped to achieve a decrease in burglary offenses (-32) for 2009 compared with the previous year.

A geographical analysis reveals that all four sectors experienced an overall decrease in crime: Northeast Sector -53; Southeast Sector -7; Southwest Sector -89; Northwest Sector -124. Additionally, each of the four sectors noted a reduction in violent crime.

MANPOWER DEPLOYMENT

Essentially, our philosophy encompasses some key principles:

- Grouping of Incidents – This involves moving beyond just “handling” an incident. Officers look for patterns and relationships among incidents in order to identify “covert” problems.
- Focus on Substantive Problems – Internal management of the police department is not the focus of our sergeants and lieutenants. Instead their efforts are directed to the substantive problems identified by the community such as criminal conduct and areas marked by frequent loitering for some illegal purpose. Instead of focusing on impractical goals such as productivity guidelines, they are empowered to identify and “own” an issue important to the neighborhood.
- Inquiry and Analysis of Problems – Officers, sergeants and lieutenants consider the reason a particular problem exists and formulate a response that will be long-range effective. Follow-up and analysis is performed by the patrol commander to determine if a solution is working or whether another approach may be more appropriate.
- Community Input – This is the heart of community policing philosophy and considers that priorities for a particular neighborhood are best established by the residents. Officers are encouraged and instructed to speak with residents at every opportunity and attempt to identify those problems that most seriously affect the safety of a neighborhood.
- Follow-up with Neighborhood Residents – Determine if the beneficiaries of a particular solution are truly benefiting by our efforts.

In brief, the department responds to crimes and neighborhood issues through directed patrol strategies that insure deployment of available patrol and support unit manpower to those areas where emerging crime patterns and neighborhood problems are most prevalent. The Boynton Beach Police Department utilizes the COMPSTAT model of patrol management which facilitates the processing of crime information along with criminal intelligence data and neighborhood/citizen input in order to determine how best to utilize our manpower resources. The Community Action Team is also utilized within the deployment areas in order to establish liaison with residents, provide increased bicycle and foot patrol presence and to assist in the formulation of a long-range solutions to crime problems within our city. The COMPSTAT process also triggers an examination and analysis of field reports for more intensive follow-up by our

investigators. The goal is to identify those responsible for the criminal activity and to establish a case against the perpetrators. The department does not wait for the year-end crime statistics in order to formulate a response plan. Crime is analyzed weekly in order to identify and to predict emerging crime patterns with the goal of deploying our forces to those areas where crime will be most prevalent. Our experience reveals that crime is not concentrated in any one area of the city. Rather, it emerges in patterns throughout our neighborhoods requiring us to constantly realign the deployment of the patrol force.

Calls for service to the Boynton Beach Police Department increased by 4106 in 2009 compared with the previous year.

DEPARTMENTAL HIGHLIGHTS FOR 2009

In April our detectives concluded a six month long investigation titled *Operation Decoder Ring* which uncovered a fraud operation that operated in South Florida and elsewhere in the southeastern United States. An alert manager at the *Toys-R-Us* store on Congress Avenue thought that the identification presented by a shopper seeking to open a credit account did not appear to fit the physical description and called 911. The shoppers quickly departed the store but were immediately stopped by several of our detectives who were having lunch across the street. This arrest and follow-up work by our detectives revealed a large identity theft operation that created false credit cards and Florida drivers' licenses which were used to purchase large quantities of electronic goods and tools that were being fenced in Miami and Hialeah. Stores from Texas to South Florida were being victimized by the criminal organization headed by Rolando Manuel Figueredo-Triana of Miami. In all, 25 people were arrested and charged with 75 felony violations in Boynton Beach alone.

The Palm Beach County Sexual Predator Enforcement Unit which was initiated by our police department along with the Boca Raton Police Department and the Palm Beach County States Attorney's Office is now fully operational. Working from a location in the City of Boca Raton, our Detective Charlie Ramos along with detectives from the Florida Department of Law Enforcement, the Boca Raton Police Department, the Palm Beach County Sheriff's Office and the Office of the States Attorney for Palm Beach County, are pursuing multiple cases at any one time in an effort to capture the most dangerous child predators. The unit uses a sophisticated computerized data-mining and tracking program to identify, investigate, capture and prosecute what are referred to as "super predators" who are abusing child victims in Palm Beach County. Among those captured this quarter were Gregory Cecere of Boynton Beach who was charged with 10 counts of utilizing children to perform sexual acts and then distributing this material via the internet. Also captured was Pedro Sauberer of Boynton Beach who was charged with numerous counts of distributing child pornography depicting sexual performance by children as young as three years old. The Unit also developed information on a distributor of kiddie porn DVD's in Miami. Working with the Metro-Dade P.D. the Unit located the source of the DVD's and assisted Metro-Dade in obtaining a search and seizure warrant for the location. On September 19th, the Unit along with Metro-Dade detectives served the search and seizure warrant on a residence located in the city of Miami. The officers

recovered over 1,000 kiddie porn DVD's that were made at the residence and they are currently in the process of identifying the victims. Many of the DVD's were being sold in Boynton Beach.

In October a four month long investigation by our Community Action Team (CAT) and the CRA policing unit into illegal activity at the Platinum Show Girls on Federal Highway concluded with the service of search and seizure and arrest warrants by our SWAT team at 11:30 p.m. on October 30th. Our officers were assisted by the Federal Money Laundering Task Force, the Drug Enforcement Administration, the Office of the States Attorney and the State Bureau of Alcohol and Tobacco Enforcement. The investigation revealed instances of drug sales, prostitution, gambling and money laundering. Over 30 employees were arrested and charged with various felonies and misdemeanors. The owner, Matt Barrow was charged with racketeering and felony public nuisance among other violations. The State ATF suspended the club's liquor license and the State Attorney filed a 90 day injunction on the business operation. The club remains closed as of this date.

DEPARTMENTAL OUTREACH PROGRAMS

The department continues to operate six very successful community outreach programs; Citizens Police Academy, Police Athletic League, Citizens on Patrol, Police Explorer Post, the Teen Academy and Shop-with-a-cop.

The Citizens Police Academy recently completed its 30th session which consists of 10 three hour lesson blocks and two officer ride-a-longs, designed to familiarize citizens with the organization and operation of the police department. All of our CPA classes fill to capacity (55) and the department will continue to conduct at least one session per year.

The Police Athletic League (PAL) continues to operate football, basketball, cheerleading and summer camp programs at the Ezell Hester Center, serving approximately 700 children per year. All of our PAL programs quickly fill to capacity.

The department's Citizens on Patrol program has over 1200 participants that serve as the "eyes and ears" of the police department. The COP's patrol neighborhoods throughout the city in departmental COP vehicles and report suspicious activity to our Communications center.

Our Police Explorer Post is a BSA program that introduces young men and women to the operation of a police agency and a law enforcement career. There are currently 20 men and women, between the ages of 14 and 17 participating in our program. They have traveled throughout the state participating in education and competitive programs designed to develop law enforcement skills.

In the summer of 2009 the department conducted the inaugural sessions of the Teen Police Academy. Two sessions consisting of a weeks worth of confidence building exercises along with practical and academic instruction on police operations were designed to get our older teens interested in law enforcement and to provide a mentorship opportunity for our officers. Both sessions filled to capacity within two weeks and we are hoping to expand the program this coming summer.

“Shop with a Cop” is in its third year and provides needy children an opportunity to receive presents during the holidays. Donated funds from businesses and citizens are utilized to make purchases for some less than fortunate children in our community. Crime Prevention officers work with local elementary schools in order to identify children in need of assistance and in 2009 we were able to make the holidays happier for over 100 kids. Our Crime Prevention Unit also gave away over 600 back packs with school supplies at the beginning of the school year. Most of the backpacks and supplies were donated by Office Depot which we supplemented with donations from the community.

We also fingerprinted and photographed over 1500 children last year, providing the parents with identification cards and crime prevention information.