



Central Police Chronicle

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Central Regional Command – (915) 577-5000 • PAR Section – (915) 838-8013

Commander's Corner

By Acting Commander, Commander Raymundo Rodriguez



Summer is in full swing and I hope that everyone enjoyed the Fourth of July weekend and their celebration of our Nation's independence; an independence and freedom that many stand guard to protect and many more have paid the ultimate sacrifice to preserve.

This month our newsletter focuses on preserving your welfare and protecting others. As a police department, one of our objectives is to educate people about how to prevent crime and, more importantly, how not become a victim of crime.

Our "Story of the Month" by Lieutenant Hank Di Matteo talks about "making time", time to

prevent your victimization. You'll find this theme throughout the newsletter with important information on identity theft, elderly abuse and neglect prevention, and an actual incident titled, "Where are your Children", where a store clerk took the time to care.

This is what it is all about, taking the time to care about others and making time to care for yourself and your family. If we as a community do these two things, the benefit to all of us would be tremendous. I encourage everyone to "make time." If you would like additional information or would like us to give a group presentation on these topics or preventing crime in general, please contact Crime Prevention at 838-8013. Until next month, enjoy the rest of your summer and be safe.

Special Interest Articles:

- From the Graveyard...
- Identity Theft
- Where are your children?
- New Unit?
- The Helmet Law

Stories of the Month From the Graveyard...

By Lieutenant Hank DiMatteo

By the time you read this article, the 100-degree hot days of summer will be normal by now. For those of us on the Graveyard Shift, however, our day does not begin until the sun goes down and darkness sets in. Your day is ending and ours is just beginning (still at 90 degrees). The days of summer will be just as busy it seems as any other period of the year. Many Officers believe it is busier. People will go on vacation, go shopping, or just stay outside longer hours. The parks are occupied until closing and baseball is alive and well! During the summer it seems that people in general interact more. As a result, "Make Time." That's right. It is probably two words you yourself have heard many times. Back in

the day, I would hold onto the excuse of not having the time to complete the chores and tasks my elders would hand down to me. When they heard my excuses, they always said, "Make Time!" From childhood to adulthood, this phrase was used on many occasions. Although I never liked the word, "make time", I have come to learn the application in many areas of my life. "Making Time" can make a big difference in your life too.

Daily we have an information overload of crime and social problems to make us worry. The liberal media would try to make our conscience feel guilty about our prosperity for working hard. At the same time, we are tasked with many

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There are many things you can do to prevent crime from occurring to you or around you...

burdens. Ever-tighter budgets, constraints on our time, and heightened concerns over family safety all placed greater demands on our home lives. But we do need to “make time”.

Each month, this newsletter encourages every leader to do even more than you have already done to prevent and prepare for criminal opportunity. You probably do not have the time to implement many of the concepts that you read in many publications, even when you feel they are appropriate to your situation. As in so many other areas of your life, you must identify safety needs and prioritize responses that will likely provide the greatest return for the time and resources invested. Proper management of your time and money to address safety issues is a critical part of any crime prevention strategy.

What I would suggest to you this month is to take a step back from the rush of the summer activities and “make time”. While you are enjoying the extra daylight with more activities, “make time” to have a focus on the most urgent crime prevention issues that many of us ignore. Criminologists tell us that many times the victim contributes to their own victimization. There are many things you can do to prevent crime from occurring to you or around you. “Making Time” will also provide an important opportunity to take stock of the improvements that you may have already made.

On Graveyards, the Officers encounter many persons who have been victimized. Many times these persons did not take care of themselves and contributed to their own victimization. The Officers also encounter property owners who did not “make time” to take care of their business. There was no alarm and their property was entered very easily. Thousands of dollars of damage was done to a business, which could have easily been secured very inexpensively. An alarm is not necessarily the answer. Central crime prevention officers can best advise you here. Another simple yet helpful technique is to develop a list of crime prevention concerns for your situation. After the list is compiled, assign priority rankings based on frequency or likelihood of occurrence. A second rating is then applied that addresses the gravity of each item. You may find this approach to be helpful in focusing your energies in the most efficient manner.

We do not live in an ideal world, and we must be realistic in our efforts to provide the highest level of concern to safety as our responsibility. Government reports document that crime is “reportedly” down but that does not mean one takes their guard down. “Make time” for your own personal safety and the safety of your personal property. If you need assistance, contact the Central Regional Command, Crime Prevention Officers at 838-8013.

So, until next month, Buckle Up, No Cell Phone while Driving, and Stay Safe!

Be on the Lookout – Crime and Hot Spots

Identity Theft: What to do and how to minimize your risk!

By CID Sergeant - Sgt. John Haddad

Identity Theft is a major problem for the 21st Century. Knowing how an identity thief operates, and what to do if you become a victim can increase your chances of being able to help Law Enforcement officials apprehend the suspect or suspects involved.

Identify Theft occurs when someone takes your personal information and uses it without your knowledge to commit fraud or theft.

How identity thieves operate:

- They open a new credit card account, using your name, date of birth, and Social Security number. When they use the credit card and do not pay the bills, the delinquent account is reported on your credit report.
- They call your credit card issuer and, pretending to be you, change the mailing

Identity Theft is a major problem for the 21st Century...

address on your credit card account. Then, your imposter runs up charges on your account. Because your bills are being sent to the new address, you may not immediately realize there is a problem.

- They establish cellular phone service in your name.
- They open a bank account in your name and write bad checks on that account.

How identity thieves get your personal information:

- They steal wallets and purses containing your identification and credit and bankcards.
- They steal your mail, including your bank and credit card statements, pre-approved credit offers, telephone calling cards and tax information.
- They complete a "change of address form" to divert your mail to another location.
- They rummage through your trash, for personal data in a practice known as "dumpster diving."
- They fraudulently obtain your credit report by posing as a landlord, employer or someone else who may have a legitimate need for - and a legal right to - the information.
- They get your business or personnel records at work.
- They find personal information in your home.
- They use personal information you share on the Internet.
- They buy your personal information from "inside" sources: an identity thief may pay a store employee for information about you that appears on an application for goods, services or credit.

While you probably cannot prevent identity

theft entirely, you can minimize your risk. Managing your personal information wisely, cautiously and with an awareness of the issue can help guard against identity theft.

How do I protect myself?

- Before you reveal any personally identifying information, find out how it will be used and whether it will be shared with others.
- Pay attention to your billing cycles. Follow up with creditors if your bills do not arrive on time. A missing credit card bill could mean an identity thief has taken over your credit card account and changed your billing address to cover his tracks.
- Guard your mail from theft.
- Put passwords on your credit card, bank and phone accounts. Avoid using easily available information like your mother's maiden name, your birth date, the last four digits of your Social Security Number or your phone number, or a series of consecutive numbers.
- Minimize the identification information and the number of cards you carry to what you will actually need.
- Do not give out personal information on the phone, through the mail or over the Internet unless you have initiated the contact or know whom you are dealing with.
- Keep items with personal information in a safe place. To thwart an identity thief who may pick through your trash or recycling bins to capture your personal information.
- Always tear or shred your charge receipts, copies of credit applications, insurance forms, physician statements, expired charge cards, credit offers you get in the mail, bank checks and statements before you discard them.
- Be cautious about where you leave personal information in your home, especially, if you have roommates, employ outside help or are having work done in your home.
- Find out who has access to your personal information at work and verify that the records are kept in a secure location.

- Give your Social Security Number only when absolutely necessary.
- Never carry your Social Security Number card; leave it in a secure place.
- Order a copy of your credit report from each of the three major credit-reporting agencies every year. Make sure it is accurate and includes only those activities you have authorized.

The three major agencies are:

1. Equifax: www.equifax.com;
2. Experian: www.experian.com;
3. TransUnion: www.tuc.com.

If you suspect your personal information has been hijacked and misappropriated to commit fraud or theft, take action immediately, and keep a record of your conversations and correspondence.

Exactly which steps you should take to protect yourself depends on your circumstances and how your identity has been misused. However, three basic actions are appropriate in almost every case:

- Contact the fraud departments of each of the three major credit bureaus and tell them that you are an identity theft victim;

request that a "fraud alert" be placed in your file, as well as a victim's statement asking that creditors call you before opening any new accounts or changing your existing accounts. This can help prevent an identity thief from opening additional accounts in your name.

- Contact your creditors for accounts that have been tampered with or opened fraudulently; this includes credit card companies, phone companies, utilities, banks and other lender institutions. Ask to speak with someone in the security or fraud department of each creditor, and follow up with a letter. It is particularly important to notify credit card companies in writing because that is the consumer protection procedure the law spells out for resolving errors on credit card billing statements. Immediately close accounts that have been tampered with and open new ones with new Personal Identification Numbers (PIN's) and passwords.
- File a report with your local police or the police in the community where the identity theft took place and get a copy of the police report in case the bank, credit card company or others need proof of the crime. Even if the police cannot catch the identity thief, having a copy of the police report can help you when dealing with creditors.

New Unit?

Elderly and Domestic Abuse Prevention Unit

By Central D.A.R.T Officer - Officer Leticia Lujan

Actually no, the unit is not new at all. Only the name has changed. The Domestic Abuse Response Team or DART has been renamed to the Elderly and Domestic Abuse Prevention Unit. The name change was made to reflect an addition to its mission, which is, to respond and follow up with the elderly who have been victims of abuse, neglect, and other crimes. The unit will be spreading the word by giving presentations to the elderly to inform them of the unit's new mission and what resources are available to them in the event they are confronted with any crime.

One of these resources is a new program called "SALSA" (Successful Aging Through Long Term Strategic Alliances). The program provides education and support to neighbors wishing to help, teaching them to recognize risk factors, warning signs, and symptoms of elderly abuse and neglect. The program also informs them as to "who to call" for help, what social services agencies are available, how to create neighborhood volunteer groups, how to initiate community intervention for isolated, self-neglected elderly, and how to provide grassroots organizations with the information.

Another important and helpful program is “Be a Buddy”. The program teaches the elderly to look out for one another. Being a “Buddy” carries the responsibility of visiting or calling his or her elderly buddy during heat waves, making sure that the buddy has adequate air conditioning, is wearing lightweight clothes appropriate for the heat, and has plenty of fluids available.

These are just a few of the many programs and resource available to the elderly and their support networks. Although the unit has changed its

name and added an additional focus, we will not neglect our duty to assist all crime victims and will continue to provide support, guidance and resources to all in need.

For assistance contact Officer Leticia Lujan at (915) 577-5202/5222, Ms. Rivera at (915) 577-5222, or by e-mail:

LujanL@elpasotexas.gov

RiveraME@elpasotexas.gov

Officer of the Month

By Commander Raymundo Rodriguez

Officers of the Month:

Dwain Johnson #2082

Richard Prangner #2271

Michaela O’Quin #2265

These outstanding officers were awarded the distinction of “Officer of the Month for April 2004”. In a letter of commendation submitted by Sergeant Patricia Reyes, the events surrounding their exceptional efforts were highlighted:

“I am submitting this commendation letter for the above listed officers in appreciation for their support and commitment to the Central Regional Command Center’s Explorer Program.

The Police Explorer Program is a department based, and Boy Scouts of America sponsored program for youths between the ages of 14 to 20 years of age. These teens are educated and involved in police and community functions. Officers involved in the program act as mentors and leaders, guiding and training the teens in various aspects of policing. The program builds interest in and reflects a positive image of law enforcement in general. There are presently twenty-two Explorers in our Post, including three females and nineteen males.

Officer O’Quin works the graveyard shift but displays enthusiasm, devoting countless hours to training the Explorers. She has assisted in broadening the Explorer’s understanding and firsthand knowledge of the challenges and job skills that make up their community’s police

service. In addition to providing this knowledge of police work, Officer O’Quin has also provided career training in patrol procedures, first aid, laws of arrest, leadership, field rides with patrol officers, personal fitness, and training for national competition. She has participated in neighborhood clean ups, career fairs, finger printing, and traffic control, along with the Explorers.

The Explorers are presently preparing and training for national competition in Atlanta, Georgia scheduled July 19 through 24th. The majority of the Central Explorers come from low-income families; a few do not have their parents and are required to live with other family members or assigned guardians. The registration for the competition is \$350.00 per person and covers registration, rooms, and meals for the entire conference. We are currently working on raising funds for transportation to Atlanta and the return trip to El Paso. There will be six Explorers from the Central Regional Command Center that will be competing and attending the National Competition. I would like to mention that Officer O’Quin informed the Graveyard Shift of the predicament and the officers volunteered to donate money resulting in \$70.00 dollars being collected. Officers Prangner and

Johnson donated a large amount of money that brought the total to over \$700.00. These officers ought to be recognized for their generosity,

compassion, and effort to provide the Explorers with an opportunity to become triumphant in their search for success.”

Traffic Tip

Motorcycles and the Helmet Law

By Central Traffic Sergeant - Sgt. Raul Gomez

Summer is here and warm weather attracts motorcycling enthusiasts. Some still believe that Texas does not have a helmet law. According to Texas helmet law, both operator and passenger are required to follow it. There are some exemptions. You can ride without a helmet if:

1. You are at least 21 years old,
2. You are covered with at least \$10,000 in medical insurance, or have completed a Department (Texas DPS) approved motorcycle training course, and
3. You have a helmet exemption sticker on your license plate.

In order to obtain the exemption sticker, you will have to go by the Department of Public Safety and show that you have completed the training program at an approved location or that you do have at least \$10,000 in medical insurance. Persons operating or riding upon a motorcycle with a helmet exemption sticker displayed are presumed to meet the helmet exemption requirements.

See the Texas Transportation Code 661.003 - Offenses relating to not wearing protective headgear for more details. You can find this and other laws at: www.txdps.state.

Where are your Children? Recent Activity on the Beat

By Sergeant Glenn Archer

Welcome readers. My name is Sgt. Glenn Archer and I work the evening shift at Central Regional Command. I would like to confer with you on a pattern of incidents that involve children. We have had several recent cases involving child endangerment.

The first one that comes to mind was a situation whereby a two year old woke up in the middle of the night, about 2:00 a.m., and found himself alone in his residence. Later, the child was reported roaming around the street looking for his mother. Several concerned citizens called police dispatch. The child was subsequently turned over to police. It seems the child was looking for his parents. After searching the neighborhood, Officers A. Guerra and A. Anaya located the address where the child lived. About an hour later, the mother arrived home. While investigating the incident at the child's residence,

officers also discovered narcotics. The mother was charged with the Possession of Marijuana and Child Endangerment. This was wilful disregard for the safety of the child. It seems the mother was out selling narcotics while the child was home alone asleep.

On June 15, 2004, at 7:30 pm, Officers Campos and Nevarez located a one-year-old infant in his stroller, in the hot sun outside a beer establishment. It was discovered that his mother, who was under the influence of alcohol, was inside the bar, drinking and using the bathroom. The baby was left outside unattended with his little feet exposed. The investigation showed that in only fifteen minutes the child developed sunburn on his exposed lower extremities. The mother was arrested.

Central Traffic Unit

577-5310

Abandonment is leaving a child in any place without providing reasonable and necessary care for the child, under circumstances under which no reasonable, similarly situated adult would leave a child of that age and ability. And, these children were not old enough to be left alone, furthermore, the infant at the beer establishment could have been kidnapped or his stroller could have rolled into harm's way.

Another incident that comes to mind was on May 01, 2004, at 2:26 pm, where two small children were left locked in their vehicle with the windows rolled up. Their mother was shopping at a store near the Bassett area. The mother took her infant, but left the toddlers to wait in the vehicle. A clerk at the store noticed the children sitting alone in the vehicle for over twenty minutes and phoned the police. The mother was arrested for Child Endagerment. In this case, the question is, "would a reasonable person leave a child locked in a vehicle, in the heat exposed to elements and predatory opportunists?" The answer is, unequivocally NO! Thank you very much to the store clerk for her keen observations.

Because of intervention from on-lookers, these children were saved from great peril. We thank

the public in these cases for taking action and alerting us to act on the children's behalf. Reminding everyone that our children are our biggest asset and the most helpless and speechless when it comes to crime. If you see any of these types of incidents, do not hesitate to call us for intervention; your Good Samaritan actions, as in the above cases, could save a life. While we are on this topic, pets are also victims of the heat and unreasonable exposure. Let us look out for all those that live in our community. To report child endangerment, injuries to elderly or invalid, and cruelty to animals, please do not hesitate to call 911 in an emergency, or for non-emergencies 832-4000.

Your cooperation is always appreciated. If I could only show you the smiles on the children that we rescued, they are so sweet and innocent you would see your just reward for reporting these incidents.

Central's Most Wanted

By TAC Sergeant - Sergeant Mary Lou Carrillo



NAME:	Richard Trent
DOB:	02/06/1982
HEIGHT:	5'06"
WEIGHT:	180 lbs.
HAIR:	Brown
EYES:	Brown

Charge: ASSAULT ON PUBLIC SERVANT (Police Officer)

If you have any information or know the whereabouts of the above individual, please call: Sgt. Mary Lou Carrillo at (915) 577-5313, or 577-5000 and speak with the Sergeant on duty. For information about all of "El Paso's Most Wanted", click on the link to the left.



@ <http://www.tyc.state.tx.us/>



Community Events

By Beatrice Najera

For July, the following major community events and programs have been scheduled:

June 7, 2004 to July 30, 2004 – Safety Town

What: 1-weeklong, pre-school age, general & bicycle safety program
Location: Bassett Center – near Carousel (visit the Information Booth for registration)
Address: 6101 Gateway West
Time: 10:00 am – 12:00 pm

July 23, 2004 – Child Fingerprinting

What: Officers will be fingerprint children
Location: Armijo Library
Address: 701 E. 7th Street
Time: 3:00 pm to 6:00 pm
(From I-10, take Downtown Exit, go south on Kansas, and make a left of 7th St., two blocks on the right)

July 30, 2004 – Help End Auto Theft (HEAT) Drive

What: Vehicle Registration with the HEAT Program
Location: Bassett Center
Address: 6101 Gateway West
Time: 10:00 am to 2:00 pm

July 31, 2004 – Help End Auto Theft (HEAT) Drive

What: Vehicle Registration with the HEAT Program
Location: Clardy-Fox Library
Address: 5500 Robert Alva
Time: 10:00 am to 2:00 pm

Note: If you would like additional information or would like to schedule a presentation or program, please call us at 838-8013.

Juvenile Investigations Section

WHAT IS A PROPER JUVENILE "HOLDING" FACILITY?

By JIS Investigator, Officer Angel Becerril

A proper holding facility is a juvenile processing office as defined in Section 52.025 of the Texas Family Code. That is the ONLY place where juveniles can be held before being released to parents or taken to the juvenile detention facility of the juvenile court. A juvenile processing office may not be a cell or holding facility used for detention of adults. The juvenile court has authority to define what activities may occur in a juvenile processing office. Furthermore, the child MUST be in an area where continuous visual

supervision of sight and sound separation from adult offenders is maintained.

If you have any questions or need assistance in this area, please contact one of our investigators:

1. Officer Angel Becerril – 849-2633
2. Officer Edward Mendoza – 849-2681
3. Officer Alex Bastidas – 849-2676

For more information on the Juvenile Justice System and related issues, click on the link.





From the June 23, 2004, Faxforce:

By Crime Prevention Officer Steve Crank

Traffic Focus

The Traffic focus for the month of June will be “**Speeding**” Transportation Code 545.351. Please remember to obey all posted speed limits. Strive to be a defensive driver and not an offensive driver. Please pay attention to all traffic signs and signals.

“An operator may not drive at a speed greater than is reasonable and prudent under circumstances then existing.”

Crime Trend

The Central Regional Command had several convenience stores fall victim to individuals committing beer thefts. The top three convenience stores beer thefts for the period from June 1 to June 23 are as follows:

1. 7-11 located at 5001 Trowbridge: 4 thefts
2. Good Time Store at 6100 Trowbridge and Circle K at 3910 Dyer: 2 thefts each
3. Twelve Central convenience stores had one beer theft each during the listed period.

If you witness a beer run or gas run, do not take police action, please be our eyes and ears. Note the descriptions of any subjects or vehicles involved and the direction of travel. Immediately notify police at 564-6900 for non-emergencies or 911 for crimes in progress.

Did You Know?

It is illegal to possess fireworks within the city limits of El Paso. It is also illegal to manufacture, store, sell, buy or transport fireworks within the city limits of El Paso; unless a permit is obtained for professional fireworks display purposes. A fine of up to \$500 and 90 days in jail may be assessed for violators of the fireworks ordinance.

Neighborhood Watch Block Captain Training

Remember that this coming Saturday, June 26, 2004 is Block Captain Training at Police Headquarters (911 N. Raynor), in the Chief’s Large Conference Room. The training will begin at 9:00 a.m. The guest speaker will be Edward Espinoza from the Rio Grande Council Area on Aging. Mr. Espinoza will be speaking on a program called, “Neighbors Helping Neighbors”.

The Central Police Chronicle is brought to you by:

- Cmdr. Ray Rodriguez
- Lt. Robert Pisarcik
- Sgt. Pat. Reyes
- Officer Gregory Furr

Special Contributors:

- Lt. Hank DiMatteo
- Sgt. John Haddad
- Sgt. Raul Gomez
- Sgt. Glenn Archer
- Officer Steve Crank
- Officer Leticia Lujan
- Officer Angel Becerra
- Beatrice Najera

Suggestions and comments can be e-mailed to: furr@elpasotexas.gov or call us @ (915) 838-8013

