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COMMUNITY PARTNERS

COMMUNITY/LAW ENFORCEMENT PARTNERSHIP PROGRAMS

CRIME PREVENTION NEWSLETTER, MARCH 2005



Sheriff's Teen Traffic Offender Program

Over the past three years, the Lost Hills Sheriff's Station has been home to a remarkable prevention program. The Sheriff's Teen Traffic Offender's Program (STTOP) bridges a long standing gap in Law Enforcement's legal ability to enforce traffic infractions committed outside their presence. California State law requires any traffic infractions to be witnessed by a law enforcement officer in order for a citation to be issued. This limitation, though frustrating to most police officers, helps protect our Constitutional right to freedom from unlawful seizure and our freedom of travel.

So how does a police officer reconcile this fine balance between preserving our individual freedom and enforcing the law? Sheriff's Department Chief William J. McSweeney (Formerly Captain of Lost Hills Station) chose to find an answer. He developed STTOP in an effort to bridge the gap and reduce the rash of traffic offenses and collisions involving teenage drivers within the Lost Hills Station service area.

For years insurance companies have known that young drivers are involved in over double the collisions that more mature drivers are in. Sixteen to Eighteen year olds make up about 12% of the driving population, however, they are involved in approximately 25% of all collisions. In fact, first year drivers are four times more likely to be involved in a collision than a driver with 2 years of experience.

Immaturity, the lack of driving experience, distractions, and peer pressure are the primary reasons for the high collision rate for new drivers. Additionally new drivers tend to be overconfident in their driving ability.

It is the reckless behavior and other bad driving practices that the STTOP program hopes to correct. The STTOP program is designed to intervene when young drivers display poor judgment or dangerous driving behavior.

The STTOP program allows citizens to call and report dangerous drivers. The STTOP program does not dispatch an immediate police response. (See STTOP, Page 2)



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S.T.T.O.P. (From Page 1)

If an immediate response is needed then the reporting party needs to call 911 as in any other emergency.

At times, patrol officers are not present to see the dangerous driving. The inability to catch the offender in the act ties the hands of law enforcement which cannot enforce a vehicle code infraction that they do not witness. Often the youthful driver screeches tires, races another car, or engages in other dangerous driving then vanishes before patrol units can arrive.

STTOP will take the information about the driver, his/her vehicle, and the dangerous driving behavior and contact the offender. Intervention is conducted with the driver, and his/her parents in order to correct dangerous behavior. The intervention can include anything from a brief discussion to a driving privilege being revoked. The programs' purpose is not to prosecute, but to correct and educate the offender and his/her parents.

Getting parents involved and informed is the key. Young drivers do their very best to impress parents with their safe driving. Parents can't always be there and peer pressure or simply wanting to impress friends often leads to deadly consequences. For more details or information on STTOP contact Deputy Mike Woodard at Lost Hills Sheriff's Station (818) 878-1808.

COMMUNITY PARTNERS

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Community Partners is published monthly by the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department, Community/Law Enforcement Partnership Programs Unit. It provides a recap of the monthly Crime Prevention/Community Relations Meeting held on the 3rd Thursday of each month. The meetings are held from 10:00 AM - 12:00 Noon at the PPOA office in Monterey Park. For more information, please call our office at (323) 526-5015.

Train Safety

Did you know that in the United States, an automobile and a train collide every 90 minutes? In fact, about 2,500 deaths and serious injuries a year occur as a result of these horrendous accidents. Since 1990, there have been about 3,700 people killed while trespassing on railroad rights-of-way and property. Here are some ideas you can use to help make your crossing of railroad tracks safer.

Never drive around lowered gates - it's illegal and deadly. If you suspect a signal is malfunctioning, call the 1-800 number posted on or near the crossing signal, call your local law enforcement agency, or dial 911.

Never race a train to the crossing - even if you tie, you lose.

Do not get trapped on a crossing. Proceed through a crossing only if you are sure you can cross all the tracks.

If your vehicle stalls on a crossing, immediately get everyone out and far away from the tracks. Call your local law enforcement agency for assistance.

At a multiple-track crossing while waiting for a train to pass, watch out for a second train on the other track, approaching in either direction.

Be aware that trains cannot stop quickly. Even if the locomotive engineer sees you, a freight train moving at 55 miles per hour can take a mile or more to stop once the emergency brakes are applied. That is at least 18 football fields!

Do not be fooled by the optical illusion - the train you see is closer and faster moving than you think. If you see a train approaching, wait for it to go by before you proceed across the tracks.

ALWAYS EXPECT A TRAIN! Freight trains do not follow a set schedule.

— Keep your head up and stay safe!

VOLUNTEER BRIGADE

Become a Hero in the Life of a Child



“TransitPeople” is an all-volunteer Los Angeles area non-profit organization that utilizes the public transit system to conduct educational field trips for children. Children, volunteer “Trip Leaders”, and escorts ride the Blue Line to the Long Beach Aquarium, the Route 81 or Route 40 bus-lines to the Natural History Museum, the Red Line subway to the Central Library, and many other rail and bus routes to different attractions around the Los Angeles Basin.

Since 1999, TransitPeople has completed trips for over 4,000 children from more than forty schools, churches and police youth programs. Most field trips take place on Saturdays and Sundays, but a limited weekday program is also available.

TransitPeople Trip Leaders supervise the children during excursions, with help from other volunteers. The children are usually between seven and twelve years old. They receive an educational experience they wouldn't normally have access to, and introduce their families to the world of public transit. Most are surprised by the notion that one may travel throughout Los Angeles without a car!

Most participants on these excursions are children from inner city, low income neighborhoods. Some of the areas where past participants live are East Los Angeles, the mid-Wilshire area, South Central Los Angeles and the Pico Union district. Although most of the children's parents could afford to pay for the admission to the Zoo or Aquarium, the folks at Transit People believe they shouldn't have to. All those involved with Transit People believe their organization would be far less effective if parents felt obligated to pay for their child to experience these field trips.

As one of its corporate goals, Transit People has made the commitment to provide financial assistance scholarships to the low income families participating in these trips. The organization has been recognized by the Internal Revenue Service as a 501(c)3 non-profit, public benefit corporation. Insurance for excursions is provided by NIAC, the Nonprofit Insurance Alliance of California.

For more information on these excursions or to become a volunteer, please visit the TransitPeople website at www.transitpeople.org or call (213) 637-0409.

AT THE LAST VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR'S MEETING...

Deputy Ira Bornstein of the Department's Emergency Operations Bureau (EOB) discussed Disaster Communication Services (DCS) volunteers, informing everyone that there are 1300 DCS volunteers. He reported that DCS volunteers complete a standard volunteer application, in addition to a job specific documentation, and all their hours are tracked by EOB. Deputy Bornstein reported that DCS volunteers have permission to drive county vehicles, when necessary. He indicated that he maintains a list of all DCS volunteers.

Sergeant David Haney informed everyone that Volunteers on Patrol Regional Training will be held on three consecutive Saturdays beginning on April 26, May 3, and May 10. The curriculum will include driver's training, radio procedures, traffic instruction, and basic rules and regulations. The goal is to have 4 of these training sessions per year with 50 people per class. The next training will be in the north county area, possibly at College of the Canyons. He reminded everyone that the training does not cover station/unit specific duties.

National Volunteer Week - April 27 though May 3



Volunteers are one of the nation's most valuable resources. During National Volunteer Week, April 27-May 3, millions of these dedicated men, women, and young people in communities throughout the nation will be saluted for their efforts and their commitment to serve. The week's theme, "Celebrate Volunteers-The Spirit of America!", reflects the resolve of the American tradition of neighbor helping neighbor.

National Volunteer Week began in 1974, when President Richard Nixon signed an executive order establishing the Week as an annual celebration of Volunteering. Every Presi-

dent since has signed a Proclamation in support of the Week.

Sponsored by the Points of Light Foundation and Volunteer Center National Network, National Volunteer Week is a time to recognize and celebrate the efforts of volunteers at the local, state, and national levels.

Volunteers make a difference in our community. They make our country a better place. What better

way to honor them than to give them a hand—not just applause—a little help. We urge those who are not yet part of this special group to join. Everyone can serve, and there are volunteer opportunities for seniors, families, people with disabilities, youth and businesses.

Call 1-800-VOLUNTEER or be sure to log on and visit www.1800Volunteer.org to find out how to **Celebrate Volunteers- The Spirit of America!**

California Attorney General warns against "Living Trust Mills" and Annuity Scams

Attorney General Bill Lockyer wants California consumers to be on the lookout for living trust mill con artists who fraudulently sell trusts and annuities to senior citizens.

Sales agents for these scam operations often misrepresent the disadvantages of seniors current investments and the advantages of the investments the agents are selling. They may even make seniors believe their bank accounts are less safe than the annuities or other investments they want seniors to

buy. To give themselves a cloak of legitimacy, these sales agents pretend to be experts in living trusts.

They often work in assisted living centers, churches and other places where seniors gather, hooking elderly victims through free seminars and other sales presentations.

"Consumers, particularly seniors and their families, should be wary," said Lockyer. "We believe there are living trust mills violating the law - and the trust placed in them by seniors. We are determined to investigate and punish fraudu-

lent conduct, but we also want to help seniors avoid becoming victims."

Seniors pay substantial sums of money to sales agents for living trust mills. But through fraud and deceit, the sales agents damage seniors estate plans, and the security of their investments and life savings.

Consumers who feel they have been victimized by a living trust mill, or annuity or promissory-note fraud, should report it to their local district attorney and the California Department of Insurance. Consumer complaints also may be filed online at the Attorney General's Website at <http://www.ag.ca.gov/consumers/mailform.html>





DEPARTMENT IN FOCUS

999 FOR KIDS – CHILD ABUSE AWARENESS DRIVE

In a recent memorandum to Department members, Undersheriff William Stonich passed on the following message:

I am pleased to announce a new direction in our “999 for Kids” fund raising efforts. The annual “Pledge for Miles” at Law Enforcement’s Baker to Vegas Run will now be called the “999 for Kids Child Abuse Awareness Drive.” The purpose of this title change is to more appropriately identify our charity and its relationship with Child Abuse Awareness Month which begins in April of each year.

**999 for Kids*



Every year since 1985, the men and women of the Sheriff’s Department, have generously provided tens of thousands of dollars to help over 1,000 children who have experienced, first-hand, the evils of child abuse and neglect. The funds collected have been used to purchase everything from sport wheelchairs and computers to providing an annual Christmas party. In 2001, the annual “Barney Johnson Memorial Scholarship Program” was instituted to benefit neglected and abused children who want to pursue a college education.

I am again asking you to support and promote our “999 for Kids” program as you have done for so many years. Each unit that donates at least \$999 during the year will receive a special plaque to be presented by Sheriff Lee Baca, Department of Children and Family Services Director Dr. David Sanders, and our 2003 Poster Child, Ivan, during our “Ice Cream Social” event where we recognize our units.

On behalf of the thousands of children you have and will continue to touch through your generosity, I sincerely thank you.

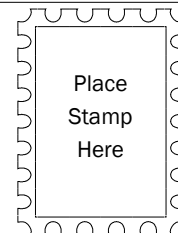
If you have any questions, please call the Sheriff’s Youth Foundation at (323) 526-5120.

THE BLOODY TRUTH

It seems everyday there is a new request for blood donors to assist someone’s sick child or relative. It is common for these requests to specify a blood type. But did you know that there is a type of blood that is compatible with all other types? Type A and B are not that rare, but Type A- (which means type A, Rh negative) is rare as is B-. However, persons who have these rare blood types can also receive blood from someone who is Type O-. Some people who are O- may not realize they are universal donors and can donate to anyone, whether A, B or O, and Rh negative or positive.

DONATION REQUEST INFO.

In the near future, the California State Sheriff’s Association is going to begin a mass mailing requesting donations for their organization. If you receive calls from concerned residents questioning the validity of the mailers, please advise them that it is legitimate. Also, kindly remind them that our Department has numerous charitable funds to which citizens can make a tax-deductible donation (i.e., YAL’s, Explorers, Volunteers, etc.). The donations made to these funds will go towards programs in their community. This allows the person to see a tangible result of their donation. Always remember to invite contributors to any events relating to the program they have sponsored.



2003 CRIME PREVENTION EVENTS CALENDAR

MARCH

- 4 Region III Community Academy begins, hosted by San Dimas Station. Contact the Crime Prevention Staff at (909) 599-1261 for details.
- 8 Industry Station 999 Run for Kids, 5k/10k run/walk. 8:30 AM. Contact Deputy Cook at (626) 934-3073 for more details.
- 18 Crime Free Multi-Housing program seminar. West Covina City Hall. 8:00 AM. Reservation required. Contact Erica Booth at (626) 939-8549.
- 20 Crime Prevention/Community Relations Monthly Meeting. 10:00 AM - 12:00 PM, in the PPOA Conference Room, Monterey Park. Contact the CLEPP office at (323) 526-5015 for details.
- 20 Volunteer Coordinator's monthly meeting. 1:00 PM - 3:00 PM, in the PPOA Conference Room, Monterey Park. Contact the CLEPP office at (323) 526-5015 or details.
- 22 Community Emergency Preparedness Training Seminar, 8:00 AM. Contact Deputy Lee or Deputy Budds at (323) 526-5015 for details (also see page 3).
- 24-31 Safe Communities Week. Contact your local Sheriff Station for event details or to schedule an event.

APRIL

- 17 Crime Prevention/Community Relations Monthly Meeting. 10:00 AM - 12:00 PM, in the PPOA Conference Room, Monterey Park. Contact the CLEPP office at (323) 526-5015 for details.
- 17 Volunteer Coordinator's monthly meeting. 1:00 PM - 3:00 PM, in the PPOA Conference Room, Monterey Park. Contact the CLEPP office at (323) 526-5015 or details.
- 27 Begins National Volunteer Appreciation Week, Contact your local Station Volunteer Coordinator for details. (Also see page 4 for information).
- 30 Hate Crimes Town Hall Meeting. 7:00 PM, John Anson Ford Theater, Hollywood. Call Deputy Matthew Budds at (323) 526-5015 for details
- Community Emergency Preparedness Training Seminar, 8:00 AM. Contact Deputy Lee or Deputy Budds at (323) 526-5015 for details. Date to be determined.