

What If?

When you drive under the influence, it is like you are walking in a minefield.

Page 22

Law Enforcement Profile

A University of New Haven professor and leading expert on serial killers believes each killer has his own behavioral fingerprints.

Page 5

Dinner Set Gang

After a 30-year run that ended 15 years ago, police still believe that a Fairfield County duo set the standards for cat burglars.

Page 10

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FIGHTING CRIME IN CONNECTICUT

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27.5% of State's Traffic Accidents Occur in Fairfield County

By **TEALE CALIENDO**
Correspondent

While slightly more than 27.5 percent of all Connecticut's traffic accidents occurred in Fairfield County in 2006, both transportation and law enforcement officials say the problem is drivers, not the road, weather, or traffic conditions.

A preliminary Department of Transportation (DOT) report for 2006 shows there were 19,864 accidents in Fairfield County, 19,482 in New Haven County, and 16,525 in Hartford County. In all there were 71,746 accidents in the state, about 40 percent of them with injuries. Three hundred and nine people were killed.

Statewide statistics show that motor vehicle operators are responsible for approximately 95 percent of all accidents on state roads. The top reasons are drivers following too closely (34 percent), failing to grant right of way (18 percent), losing control of a motor vehicle (11 percent), driving too fast for conditions

(9.5 percent), improper lane change (6 percent), and violating traffic control (nearly 5 percent). Objects in the roadway, such as debris, obstructions, or animals, contribute to nearly 3 percent of state accidents. Slippery roads caused slightly more than 1 percent of Connecticut's accidents.

Half of Connecticut's accidents occurred on a state-maintained road and 17 percent on an Interstate, according to DOT. Sixteen percent took place on a U.S. highway, while 14 percent were on local roads. Forty-two percent of all Interstate accidents were on I-95.

The DOT study also reports:

- 72 percent of all accidents and 80 percent of fatal accidents occurred on dry pavement.
- 79 percent of all accidents and 86 percent of fatal accidents happened with clear weather conditions.
- 71 percent of all accidents and 45 percent of fatal accidents occurred during daylight hours.

"The statistics are very clear," says Kevin Nursick of the Connecticut DOT's Office of Communications.

Rate of Fatalities in Connecticut Counties per 100,000 Population in 2006

	No. of fatalities	Rate per 100,000
Hartford	77	8.78%
New Haven	64	7.57%
Fairfield	57	6.33%
New London	40	15.19%
Windham	22	18.82%
Litchfield	17	8.94%
Middlesex	16	9.77%
Tolland	8	5.40%

U.S. Department of Transportation

"Driver behavior is the number one contributing factor in accidents on Connecticut's roads."

For every argument drivers make that an accident was the result of a dangerous, curvy road, Nursick will

- See **Traffic Accidents** on page 17

Mentoring Programs Offer Opportunities for Released Inmates

By **MEG BARONE**
Correspondent

The sound of a prison door slamming shut on an inmate, whether for a matter of months or years, can be perceived, in that inmate's mind, as the sound of society turning its back and giving up on them ever becoming a contributing member of society.

Kenneth R. Jackson, 53, of Bridgeport,

knows that feeling firsthand. He also knows that even the most hard-core criminal can turn his or her life around. Jackson, a former high-profile drug dealer who spent 14 years in prisons in Connecticut and Michigan, is now a successful ex-offender counseling other ex-offenders, and he's doing his best to lower the recidivism rate.

For each individual who does not enter prison or return to prison, the taxpayers of

Connecticut realize a maximum benefit of \$60,000, the cost of the average two-year incarceration, according to statistics provided by the Norwalk-based Family ReEntry, Inc., a nonprofit organization that reaches out to inmates, ex-offenders, and at-risk youth. They offer 15 programs aimed at reducing crime, violence, abuse, and neglect, helping inmates transition from incarceration back to their family and community and helping ex-offenders

break the cycle of repeat incarcerations.

Jackson's vision includes mentoring at-risk youth to keep them from entering the state's judicial system in the first place. Through the Beacon Beam of Hope Mentoring program, which Jackson established in 2001, he and others work in school systems, providing information and workshops on anti-gang activity, anti-violence, and alternative dispute resolution. The program also does juvenile review board work and has a center in Bridgeport to provide group mentoring.

Jackson is also recruiting and training other successful ex-offenders to provide positive role models, "setting a new standard for values and behaviors and giving them the support and encouragement that they need," said Stephen Lanza, executive director of Family ReEntry, of which the Beacon program is part.

Family ReEntry serves about 2,000 clients per year in Fairfield County, particularly the Norwalk, Stamford, and Bridgeport regions, and three prisons - York Correctional Institution in Niantic, Manson Youth Institution in Cheshire, and Webster Correctional Institution, also in Cheshire. Family ReEntry provides domestic violence treatment programs, anger management programs, substance abuse evaluation and treatment, couple

- See **Mentoring Programs** on page 18



Evolution: Police cruisers have evolved to become an office on wheels and a mechanical partner, and the cost of outfitting them can equal the price of the car itself. Story and photos on page 12.

Connecticut State Police Recognizes Trumbull Officers, Commends Auto Theft Task Force

Two Trumbull police officers were recently recognized in a Connecticut State Police Awards ceremony for their life-saving efforts, and several other Fairfield County officers were commended for their contributions as part of an auto theft task force.

Trumbull Police Officers James G. Leos and Douglas B. Smith responded to a two-car, serious injury accident on Route 15 in Trumbull on January 29, 2007.

One of the operators was seriously injured and needed to be extricated. Without hesitation, the two officers entered a hazardous environment by crawling inside the heavily damaged car to render first aid to the injured operator. The first aid included rescue breathing, cervical immobilization, and extrication. Medical personnel on the scene and at the hospital indicated that the swift first aid administered on scene helped save the operator's life and prevent further disability.

Officers Leos and Smith were presented with awards for lifesaving.

Members of the Connecticut Regional Auto Theft Task Force (CRATTF)



Douglas B. Smith



James G. Leos

received a unit citation for its efforts involving auto theft criminal investigations within the state of Connecticut.

Comprised of state troopers, municipal law enforcement officers, Department of Motor Vehicle inspectors, and agents

from the National Insurance Crime Bureau, the task force also participates in joint investigations with federal, state, and local law enforcement agencies, as well as with various insurance investigators.

In 2006, the unit had an increase of 190 percent in stolen vehicle recoveries, recovering 458 stolen motor vehicles valued at nearly \$3 million. The task force also increased criminal arrests by 130 percent, making 117 arrests of persons in possession of stolen vehicles or parts.

Members of CRATTF receiving a Unit Citation award were: Lt. Martin Lane, Sgt. Timothy Nolan, Sgt. James Lynch, Sgt. John S. Eckersley, TFC Christopher Bartolotta, TFC Paula Brunetto, TFC Peter Pinelli, and TFC Mario Caruso of the Connecticut State Police; Sgt. Howard Koenig of the Department of Motor Vehicles; Det. John Pribesh of the Bridgeport Police Dept.; Sgt. Anthony Zona, Det. Joseph Dease, Det. Andres Diaz, and Det. William Hurley of the New Haven Police Dept., Det. Richard Vetter of the Stamford Police Dept.; and Keith Carlough of the National Insurance Crime Bureau.

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After-School Programs Seen as Aid in Curbing Crime But Fairfield and State Resources Limiting Reach

It is 5 p.m. on a rainy Thursday evening. The streets of New Haven's Hill neighborhood are dark, but bright lights shine from the windows of the John C. Daniels School.

Inside, about 25 boys and girls are huddled in groups of three or four around tables in the cafeteria.

The room is bubbling with chatter, as the kids mingle and collaborate to solve the brainteasers passed out by their instructor. They clearly appear to be enjoying themselves.

Next up is a lesson on conflict resolution. The teacher pulls out a menagerie of hand puppets to illustrate different styles for dealing with conflict. There's the retreating turtle, the accommodating teddy bear, the compromising fox, the problem-solving owl, and the take-charge-and-get-it-settled bull.

Finally, the group files into a nearby room for an hour of martial arts lessons, where the children get some physical exercise along with potentially life-saving lessons in self defense.

"If you do this right, this is going to get you home safe," Grand Master George Logan of the Connecticut School of Survival told the children, who watched eagerly as he demonstrated a move known as a palm heel strike.

By NATALIE MISSAKIAN
Correspondent

These are all lessons from the Open Schools program, the latest tool in New Haven's fight against youth crime, and many are calling it a model for other cities to follow.

Responding to a rash of violent juvenile crime last year, New Haven now opens 10 of its schools to kids in the surrounding community five days a week, from 4 to 8 p.m. The schools, located in the city's poorest neighborhoods, offer a mix of free drop-in programs and workshops such as martial arts, yoga, digital storytelling, and fashion design.

The program seeks to provide young people with a safe place to hang out while bolstering their confidence and teaching life skills, said Che Dawson, deputy chief of staff for Mayor John DeStefano Jr.

"We talked to a lot of young people. One of the big things they said is we don't have anywhere to go or anything to do," said Dawson.

In a survey of police chiefs nationwide, 86 percent felt expanding after-school and child care programs would significantly cut down on youth crime and violence, according to a report by Fight Crime: Invest in Kids, an anticrime group made up of police chiefs, sheriffs, prosecutors, and crime victims.

Statistics show young people are most likely to commit crimes or be victims of crime between the hours of 3 and 6 p.m., and children who lack supervised activities during those critical hours are more likely to smoke, drink, use drugs,

and be involved in car crashes, according to the report.

"When the school bell rings, turning millions of children and teens out on the street with neither constructive activities nor adult supervision, violent juvenile crime suddenly soars," the report said.

In Connecticut, 26 percent of kids in kindergarten through grade 12 take care of themselves after school, according to the Afterschool Alliance, a national group that wants to make after-school programs available to all students by 2010.

Statewide, only 10 percent of children between the ages of 5 and 14 participate in a structured after-school program, according to a recent poll by the Connecticut After School Network.

But the parents of 60 percent of those children said they would likely enroll their kids if more after-school programs were available to meet their needs. Nearly 30 percent said the options for after-school care in their communities were limited.

"There are a fair number of programs, especially in the cities, but there are lots of families that do not have a school program that they can afford," said Michelle Doucette Cunningham, executive director of the Connecticut After School Network.

Most larger cities in Fairfield County offer some type of after-school programming. Bridgeport, Norwalk, Danbury, and Stamford all have organizations or networks dedicated to coordinating the offerings. But

- See **After-School Programs** on page 16

In Connecticut, 26 percent of kids in kindergarten through grade 12 take care of themselves after school.

■ ■ ■

In a survey of police chiefs nationwide, 86 percent felt expanding after-school and child care programs would significantly cut down on youth crime and violence.



Above: Christina Cavallieri, 13, Pierinna Tonacca, 10, and Jailene Rivera, 10, work on their brainteasers recently during the Open Schools program at John C. Daniels School in New Haven. **Below:** Grand Master George Logan of the Connecticut School of Survival leads students in stretching exercises before martial arts class.



Parole Officers Strive to Become “Agents of Change”

By **PAMELA FALCIGNO**
Correspondent

A lot of people probably wish they could feel as good about their job as Gregory Everett does.

“I enjoy going to work every day. It’s a rewarding job. I’ve seen people turn their lives around. I’ve seen some of the success stories.”

As parole supervisor and community services manager for the state Department of Correction, Bridgeport District, Everett says the role of a parole officer is probably one of the most interesting and challenging jobs in the criminal justice system.

“Most of the time in the media you only hear the negative and the failures. In 20 years I have seen some fabulous success stories of how people transformed their lives. That’s really what it’s all about.”

He likes to refer to parole officers as a support network and “agents of change” and says former parolees have shaken his hand and told him how they have succeeded in the community.

The job also comes with its challenges. Officers are on call 24/7, and their personal lives are frequently interrupted.

“It’s a tough job,” says Everett, and one that takes a “unique skill set,” balancing social worker, caseworker, and law



Supervisor Greg Everett (left) and Supervisor William Griffin (right) review a case for release consideration and suitability for community placement.

enforcement official, which can create a conflict of interests.

“You have diametrically opposed functions which the officers are supposed to perform, on the one hand, being a helper and assisting people, and on the other hand arresting people when appropriate.”

Other necessary skill sets include good judgment and compassion for the offender, while never taking anything personally, says Everett.

Though an officer may see success with a parolee, he or she has to be able to recognize the need to take this person “out of the community and off of the street,” should that person become a re-offender.

Providing resources for basics such as housing, employment, and drug and alcohol sobriety are all part of the parole officer's role. Many parolees don't even know how to manage money or use a checking account. The parole officer is there to help.

Many parolees have never had a “verifiable” job. Parole officers have network resources with local businesses to help parolees establish an employment track record and also rely on CT Works and the state Department of Labor.

“This is not rocket science. If you give

- See *Parole Officers* on page 16



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Serial Killers Have Unique Behavioral Fingerprints, UNH Expert Believes

By **RONALD WINTER**
Correspondent

Profile

“They have their own fantasies, their own anger, their own power needs. The motivating factors behind each serial killer’s rampages and methodology are unique to the individual personality.”

Robert Keppel,
UNH professor and national expert



Robert Keppel, University of New Haven professor

In the netherworld of serial killers it might be expected that somewhere along the line there would be some similarities between, say, Jack the Ripper and the Son of Sam, or Ted Bundy and Gary Ridgway, the Green River Killer.

But Robert Keppel, University of New Haven (UNH) professor, author, retired police detective, and world-renowned expert on serial killers, says just the opposite is true. In fact, the myriad idiosyncrasies that rumble through a serial killer’s head are so individualized that they leave what can be termed a “behavioral fingerprint” that is psychologically as unique as an individual’s thumbprint.

For instance, George Russell, known as the “Eastside Killer,” a small-time burglar and con artist who pretended to be a policeman, raped and killed women he met in bars, many in Seattle. But his signature was necrophilia and sexually assaulting the victims with foreign objects after they died. He then manipulated the bodies, leaving them in poses that were intended to shock the person who discovered them, as well as the police.

Although serial killers usually kill by strangulation or other hands-on physical means, one, Robert Yates, was unique in that he killed with a handgun. Yates was convicted of killing at least 15 young women, most in the Spokane, Washington, area, with a signature gunshot. Many, but not all, of his victims were prostitutes, and Keppel notes that Yates showed a sense of possessiveness and dominance over them. In fact, one victim was buried in his yard, right underneath a window of his house. Unlike Russell, Yates did not further abuse the victims’ bodies once the crime had been committed.

Keppel has investigated, reviewed, or consulted in more than 2,000 murder cases and has lectured extensively to police officers at national seminars on homicide investigation. He has testified in court as an expert on serial killers’ methods of operation and the “signature aspects” of murder investigations.

Serial killers can be especially difficult to track, but they do leave their own brand of calling cards.

“They have their own fantasies, their own anger, their own power needs,” Keppel says. The motivating factors behind each serial killer’s rampages and methodology are unique to the individual personality, he notes.

To identify the work of a serial killer, investigators must “examine the rarity of that characteristic in the signature,” Keppel said. The signature will surface “in what the killer does over and beyond” the death of the victim.

But finding them or even tracking down all of one individual’s victims can be extraordinarily difficult. “They don’t share anything,” Keppel said.

Although investigators have not identified a personality characteristic that is common to serial killers, there is one overriding motivation behind their crimes. “They like it,” Keppel said. “It’s a pleasure principle to them,” regardless of how horrendous the crimes are to a normal person.

Even when apprehended, serial killers are loathe to reveal the numbers of victims, their identities, or the whereabouts of the bodies, unless by doing so they can leverage a better sentence.

“They have to maintain their significance, by secreting away all the information on their victims,” Keppel added.

Keppel was hired this year as an associate professor at the Henry C. Lee College of Criminal Justice and Forensic Science at the University of New Haven in West Haven. He teaches “Principles of

Criminal Investigation” and “Advanced Investigations” at the undergraduate level, in addition to “Advanced Investigations II” and “Serial Murders” to graduate students working toward their master’s degrees.

Graduate students and undergrads alike who want to apply their knowledge of basic science to the world of criminal investigations are taking advantage of the encyclopedic knowledge that Keppel has amassed over a more than three-decade criminal investigation career. Keppel earned his PhD in criminal justice at the University of Washington in Seattle and has taught and lectured extensively. He was the primary investigator for the King County, WA, sheriff’s department in the Ted Bundy serial killings in the Pacific Northwest and was present for Bundy’s final confessions before his Florida execution.

In keeping with advances in the use of science to resolve criminal investigations, many of his students are seeking careers in forensic science and medical legal investigations.

Keppel also is working on a book entitled *Serial Killers: The Practical Analysis of Signature and Modus Operandi*. The book should be published next year.

Students of criminal investigation techniques as well as amateur sleuths will find a wide range of cases to peruse in *Serial Killers*, some well known, others more obscure but nonetheless just as shocking. Keppel said the book will review cases from across the nation, including Virginia, New York, Delaware, Louisiana, California, and Washington.

Although he spent much of his career on the west coast, Keppel also is a visiting professor at (CIRPO) Centre International de Recherche en Profilage Operationnel (International Research Center on Operational Profiling), and was associate professor at the Criminal Justice Center at Sam Houston State University in Huntsville, Texas. He has worked on high-profile cases in Texas and Louisiana as well.

Moving to Connecticut was more a matter of fate than design. Keppel was attending a seminar at Foxwoods Casino taught by none other than Henry C. Lee, when he was approached by the dean of the College of Criminal Justice and Forensic Science, who inquired whether Keppel would be interested in teaching at UNH.

He was told the university needed a retired detective who also has a PhD. Keppel fit the requirements perfectly. Now he is spreading the word on signatures and MOs to students who soon will be entering the world of criminal investigations armed with a wide range of tools to help track and apprehend criminal suspects.

Although the scientific side of criminal investigations has grown exponentially in recent decades, the next generation of criminal investigators still won’t have a cakewalk. Finding one individual in a constantly growing world and national population will take all the skill and knowledge available.

In addition to sharing his personal knowledge of the field, Keppel also is working to provide students at UNH with a massive database of information on homicides that can be used in researching master’s degree theses, and eventually doctoral dissertations. Sam Houston State University, where Keppel taught previously, already is using his database.

In the meantime, he is focusing on finishing his book and helping a new generation of crime fighters get off to a good start. In a nutshell, Keppel says his goal is “to pass on to others the experiences gleaned from my investigations.”

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Irish Detective Studies Connecticut Crime Prevention Programs

By **LEISA TAYLOR**
Correspondent

An Irish police detective who studied various Fairfield County police departments and the state's TRIAD programs returned to his country impressed and anxious to propose many programs which will protect elder residents, but he suggested that the political and religious differences in his country could be a problem.

Chris Nolan, a detective sergeant with the Police Service of Northern Ireland, also chose Connecticut because he thought it shared many similarities with the region he serves. In November, Nolan spent two and a half weeks in Connecticut under a grant to research crime prevention and policies related to senior citizens. He shared some of his observations in an interview with The Justice Journal.

"We don't have a gun culture," Nolan said. "You're not allowed to have a gun unless you have a really good reason, like you're either a farmer and it's for pest control or you're a member of a gun club. We can go to any kind of call, like a domestic disturbance, and the worst we're possibly going to face is a knife or something from the home used as a weapon. I don't think our officers face the same dangers (as American officers). We don't see officers being injured unless they're specifically targeted. We don't have that same fear of gun crime."

A native of Belfast, Nolan lives with his wife and infant daughter in a town called Ballyclare, about 15 miles north of Belfast. Just 31 years of age, Nolan began working with the Police Service of Northern Ireland in 1998, at a time when Northern Ireland was experiencing heightened religious tension and violence. "We have 7,500 police officers in our department now," said Nolan. "When I first joined, there was about 12,000 because of the security situation. We had three police officers just outside the station, making sure it wasn't attacked."

"At the time, we had quite a lot of terrorism, although it was coming to an end when I joined. For every single call, no matter what it was, we had six police officers turn up – that was the minimum patrol to go anywhere. So if you had a shoplifter, six officers would show up. One guy would go in to deal with the shoplifter, and the other five would make sure the first officer was okay and wasn't attacked."

Northern Ireland in the 1990's was dangerous for officers. "You couldn't just put on your jacket for a walk and say hello to everybody and chat," Nolan said. "You just couldn't do that; it wasn't safe. In order to be nice to everybody, you wouldn't have lasted too long. If you went to the same place every day at the same time and you didn't bring your gun with you, absolutely within a week you'd be dead. When I first joined, you really protected yourself and were



**Chris Nolan, detective sergeant with the
Police Service of Northern Ireland**

suspicious of every single person who walked past you."

The political situation in Northern Ireland has changed in the last 10 years, and Nolan said attitudes toward the police have improved, although not to a huge extent. "You're going to meet an awful lot of communities that for all the money in the world will not be the most welcoming to the police," he said. "It's not like here (in the United States) where for the most part, people become more accepting and understanding of the police as they get older. The anti-police feeling in Northern Ireland goes from birth through death. Because of the political situation, the police are viewed as representing one community."

Nolan said he entered law enforcement for a number of reasons. "It's a good-paying job and it's a job for life, of which there are not too many in Northern Ireland. Plus, every day is interesting. If you're a police officer, everyone wants to ask you questions and talk about what you do. If you work in a factory, there's only so many questions people ask you. We're also a very big police department, so you can spend four or five years doing something and then go to something completely different. You can do that the whole way through your career and never do the same job for more than four or five years."

If Nolan came to Connecticut to learn about crime prevention, he met that goal but also left with something else: a deep respect for the state and its law enforcement.

"Every single police department that I've been to has been fantastic," said Nolan. "They've been really, really welcoming. My good memory is that everyone's been tripping over themselves to help me. Everyone has been going out of their way for me, and they're doing far in excess of what they need to do. It's made my job very, very easy."

"Through my research I have been impressed by the National Association of TRIADs and in particular, the support

- See *Irish Detective* on page 14

Commentary

Preventing or Fighting Crime:

No "Quick Fixes" or "Simple Solutions"?



By **KENN VENIT**

Call it "The Season of Reflection and Hope." It starts with Thanksgiving, runs through Chanukah and Christmas, and continues on through Kwanzaa and New Year's Day, as well as the Muslim New Year (or "Al-Hira," on January 10 in 2008) and the Chinese Lunar New Year (February 7 in 2008).

It might also be called "The Season of 'Watch-Out-for-What-You-Wish-for-Because-You-Might-Get-It.'" We're talking about so-called "quick fixes" or "simple solutions" – especially those that ostensibly would help prevent or reduce crime.

The "wish list" – depending on your priorities and philosophy, might include:

Increase the use of the "death penalty" dramatically so it would really be a deterrent to crime. "Texas Justice" could become "Connecticut Justice."

Eliminate the "death penalty" because it costs more to keep Death Row inmates alive and filing appeals for perhaps two decades, than to just sentence them to life-in-prison with no chance of parole. The money saved should be used to hire more prison guards.

Oh, and eliminate the possibility of parole for any felon, taking away some judicial discretion when it comes to sentencing. That would mean more prisons and more prison guards.

Go with the "three-strikes-and-you're-out" concept to prevent repeat offenders from engaging in criminal behavior more than three times...or maybe make it "four strikes" or just "two strikes." That would also mean more prisons and more prison guards.

Build prefabricated prisons as soon as possible to house minimum-risk offenders – but do not build any prison of any kind in my neighborhood or yours. Of course, more prisons mean more prison guards.

Hire all the police and other personnel needed to provide the proper level of service to protect public safety, and fund that by just cutting all the wasteful spending we hear is done by various levels of government.

Take away the pensions from any public servant – including police officers and governors –convicted of felonies while they were on the public servant payroll. Use the saved pension money for crime prevention.

Install many more video-recording camera systems to cover public areas. Hire enough people to watch those cameras, perhaps working right from their homes.

Send all "illegal" aliens right back to their homelands so they do not burden our American system of justice by taking resources away from crime prevention.

"Legalize" all "illegal" aliens so they can stay here, thus saving the costs of enforcing immigration laws. Use the money saved for increased crime prevention.

Put a "C" on the forehead of every person who becomes a convict – kind of like centuries back when we carved the scarlet letter "A" on people convicted of adultery.

Require every person 18 or over who resides in America to carry a hologram photo identification card with their encrypted DNA information and an iris scan. As an optional alternative, a person could elect to have a virtually indestructible microchip containing all such information, linked to a global positioning system (GPS) so they could be identified anywhere, anytime, dead or alive.

Have any additions to the list above? Now is a good time to think about them...and share those ideas with the rest of us who would appreciate a "quick fix" or "simple solution" in the fight to make our world...starting in our own backyard...a safer place, at whatever the price.

This is the opinion of Kenn Venit.

(Kenn Venit is the immediate past president of the Connecticut Pro Chapter of the Society of Professional Journalists. He teaches journalism courses at Quinnipiac University and Southern Connecticut State University.)

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mail must be typed and should not exceed 250 words in length. Anonymous letters will not be published.

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The Justice Journal Editor
21 Charles Street, Suite 114
Westport, CT 06880 - Or e-mail:
Editor@thejusticejournal.com

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FIGHTING CRIME IN CONNECTICUT

DOUG JOHNSTON *Publisher*
TED HOLCOMB *General Manager*
JOHN C. PETERSON *Interim Editor*

Correspondents

Meg Barone
m.barone@thejusticejournal.com
Teale Caliendo
t.caliendo@thejusticejournal.com
Pamela Falcigno
p.falcigno@thejusticejournal.com

Chandra Niles Folsom
c.nilesfolsom@thejusticejournal.com
Natalie Missakian
n.missakian@thejusticejournal.com
Grant Stinchfield
g.stinchfield@thejusticejournal.com

Leisa Taylor
l.taylor@thejusticejournal.com
Ronald Winter
r.winter@thejusticejournal.com

Contributing Analysts

Capt. Gary MacNamara
Richard Meehan, Esq.

Advertising Sales

Lisa Levitt
Ben Johnston, Intern

Distribution

Richard Gabriele -
Direct Marketing Distribution

Advisory Board:

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Office Manager

Robin Kozakiewicz
Proofreader

Martha C. Stewart

Intern

Evan Wagner

Editorial & Corporate Headquarters APB Media LLC

Doug Johnston, CEO
21 Charles Street, Suite 114
Westport, CT 06880
Telephone: (203) 454-5910 • FAX (203) 227-0092

E-mail: info@thejusticejournal.com
editor@thejusticejournal.com
advertising@thejusticejournal.com
Website: www.thejusticejournal.com

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Letter from the Publisher



This December issue marks the close of our first year, and we are gratified to have received so much support from readers and advertisers. It has been our mission, at The Justice Journal, to encourage each Connecticut resident to get involved and take a more active role in keeping our communities safe.

Unlike most media, which overwhelm us with the problems, our focus is to provide solutions – solutions in the form of new ideas, community activism, education, and positive role models, which can help to prevent crime and improve the quality of all our lives.

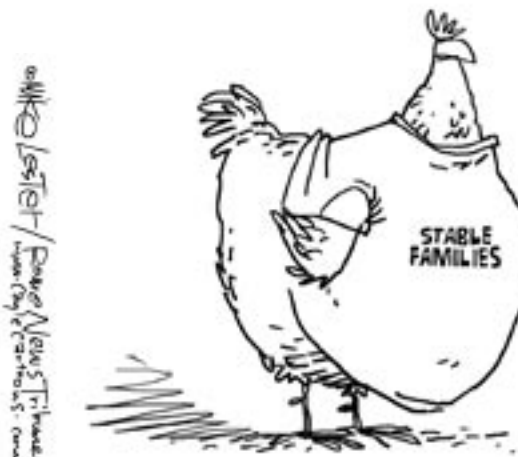
My general observation, one year into this endeavor, is that crime in Fairfield County on average is no better or worse than any other area. However, we do tend to be far more complacent about it – a problem doesn't exist until it actually happens to us. Conversely, when Connecticut residents do decide to pay attention to an issue, rarely do we fail to bring about positive change.

The Justice Journal will continue to bring you stories of positive activism because it works. We are now moving forward with our plans to take our newspaper statewide in the upcoming year. We will do our best to promote our ideals and encourage you to get involved.

We will see you again in February.

Sincerely,
Doug Johnston

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Bridgeport Safety Forum

One hundred and fifty Bridgeport residents recently participated in a Public Safety Forum organized by the Bridgeport Police Department. The day-long session offered workshops on community services, home and personal safety, school safety, and a variety of other topics. Mayor John Fabrizi, Chief Bryan T. Norwood, and Mel Wearing, school safety director, were featured in a panel discussion. Here, Officer Nicholas P. Ortiz provides crime prevention tips to attendees while Officer Frank Jacobellis navigates the PowerPoint presentation.

THE VERDICT: HANG UP Don't Fall for Jury Duty Scam

The phone rings, you pick it up, and the caller identifies himself as an officer of the court. He says you failed to report for jury duty and that a warrant is out for your arrest. You say you never received a notice. To clear it up, the caller says he'll need some information for "verification purposes"—your birth date, social security number, maybe even a credit card number.

This is when you should hang up the phone. It's a scam, advises The Federal Bureau of Investigation.

Jury scams have been around for years but have seen a resurgence in recent months. Communities in more than a dozen states have issued public warnings about cold calls from people claiming to be court officials seeking personal information. As a rule, court officers never ask for confidential information over the phone; they generally correspond with prospective jurors via mail.

The scam's bold simplicity may be what makes it so effective. Facing the unexpected threat of arrest, victims are caught off guard and may be quick to part with some information to defuse the situation.

"They get you scared first," says a special agent in the Minneapolis field office who has heard the complaints. "They get people saying, 'Oh my gosh! I'm not a criminal. What's going on?'" That's when

the scammer dangles a solution — a fine, payable by credit card, that will clear up the problem.

With enough information, scammers can assume your identity and empty your bank accounts.

"It seems like a very simple scam," the agent adds. The trick is putting people on the defensive, and then reeling them back in with the promise of a clean slate. "It's kind of ingenious. It's social engineering."

In recent months, communities throughout the country have reported similar scams. In August, the federal court system issued a warning on the scam and urged people to call their local District Court office if they receive suspicious calls. The FBI suggests victims also contact their local FBI field office.

The jury scam is a simple variation of the identity-theft ploys that have proliferated in recent years as personal information and good credit have become thieves' preferred prey, particularly on the Internet. Scammers might tap your information to make a purchase on your credit card, but could just as easily sell your information to the highest bidder on the Internet's black market.

Protecting yourself is the key: Never give out personal information when you receive an unsolicited phone call.

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A Public Service to Save Children's Lives Made Possible By:

Nuisance Unit Targets More Than Mere Annoyances

By **RONALD WINTER**
Correspondent

Are you having trouble deciding what to do with that crack house two blocks over?

Have prostitutes been hanging around your favorite bookstore/coffee shop and creating a nuisance – but not buying books?

You are not without recourse.

A little-heralded but effective crime-fighting organization within the Chief State's Attorney's Office, the Nuisance Abatement Unit (NAU), has the means and the track record to shut down nuisance violators.

The NAU works within the framework of the civil rather than criminal court system, to bring lawsuits and similar remedies against businesses and individuals who make a habit of wrecking the neighborhood. According to the state's attorney's web site, the unit "combines civil remedies and innovative problem solving with traditional policing and criminal prosecution to address the quality of life in communities throughout Connecticut."

Nuisance Abatement prosecutors work with the State's Attorneys, police departments, municipal agencies, and neighborhood groups to clean up nuisance properties.

What exactly does that mean

to the average citizen? According to Christopher Malany, bureau supervisor, the unit focuses on public nuisances including prostitution, gambling, and drug use and sales. The most common targets are "common drug nuisances," Malany said.

Essentially the unit works with landlords to rid their properties of tenants who are engaged in illegal activities. "We're not concerned with gaining title or taking possession" of the properties, Malany said.

Assistant State's Attorney Alana Cathcart was especially effective in helping the landlord of a building that housed a now-defunct stripper bar in Bridgeport clean up the premises. Located near the ferry dock, the bar was called Ponchos, and it featured "exotic dancing."

But as so often happens in that environment, the unit received information that far more was taking place inside, including prostitution. Working with the Bridgeport Police Department the unit applied for and obtained warrants. During the investigation it was learned that the landlord was attempting to evict the tenant, Cathcart said, "so we helped it along."

As a result of the combined approach, the unit went to court and obtained an injunction. "We got them closed

temporarily... but immediately," Cathcart said. "They were able to reopen, but with strict rules in place."

These rules included eliminating divided rooms or stalls that had been used for private "dances," and also giving the unit control over personnel changes including hiring. The unit had pre-approval status over any hires, for a year, she said. In addition, the business paid fees to the city of Bridgeport equal to the cost of the investigation.

Cathcart also was involved in cases in other Bridgeport hotspots over the past few years, all resulting in a resolution.

Under the law establishing the Nuisance Abatement Unit, complaints can be investigated after repeated instances of one type of criminal behavior or a combination of offenses.

There are three primary means of ridding individual properties as well as neighborhoods of nuisance intruders.

These include the Multi-Agency Response to Community Hotspots, or M.A.R.C.H. program, which focuses on chronic nuisances. Under this program police prepare a history of complaints and criminal incidents, and the Nuisance Abatement prosecutors assemble a team of municipal and state inspectors who conduct an inspection.

Inspectors may cite landlords for violations and make arrests. If conditions on a property pose an immediate danger

to the health or safety of the tenants or surrounding neighbors, an administrative agency can order the building closed. In addition to coordinating prosecutions with the Nuisance Abatement Unit, the M.A.R.C.H. team can also coordinate follow-up action with the local Housing Court prosecutor.

Another useful method is the Landlord Intervention Program, or L.I.P., which works with landlords who are willing to make good faith efforts to clean up their properties.

The Chief State's Attorney's Office, in partnership with neighborhood groups and police departments, identifies properties where individuals are engaged in chronic illegal activity including drug sales and prostitution.

Once a location is identified, the NAU notifies the landlord of the problems and arranges a meeting between the landlord, prosecutors, and police. They develop a memorandum of understanding spelling out the steps the property owner will take to clean up the property, including: evicting undesirable tenants; authorizing increased police patrols; making changes or repairs to improve building security; and attending a landlord training class.

If the owner or manager takes the actions agreed to in the memorandum of understanding and the nuisance

- See **Nuisance Unit** on page 11

BLOOPERS & BLUNDERS:

by Jim Sukach - www.quicksolvemysteries.com



CAR THIEF CAN'T GET HOME

Michael M. had just completed a six-month sentence for possession of a dangerous weapon. The trouble was he had no ride home, so he started to walk. Apparently, he decided the ten miles home was too far to walk, so he stole a car from a gas station. He was seen pulling out with the stolen car, and workers at the gas station chased him.

He managed to drive less than a block when he was held up by heavy traffic where two gas station workers caught up with him. He pleaded with them to let him go, saying he had just gotten out of jail. They held him for the police, and he was taken back to jail. Maybe he will take a cab the next time!



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Fairfield County Duo Set Standard for Cat Burglars

By **CHANDRA NILES FOLSOM**
Correspondent

They could hear the barking of dogs closing in on them and finally decided to just sit back and wait for the inevitable. It was long overdue.

"It was cold—there was snow on the ground and we were in a box," said Dominick Latella, recalling his capture following the last cat burglary he attempted with partner Pete Salerno. "I looked at Pete and said, 'this is it.' So we sat with our backs against a tree until the dogs came."

It was the end of a 30-year run—a string of high-end burglaries that finally landed Latella and Salerno in prison—but not before stealing an estimated \$75 - \$150 million in cash and jewelry from some of the nation's wealthiest families including the DuPonts, Gimbels, Macys and Pillsburys, taking on average a quarter-million dollars per job. Dubbed by the press as the "Dinner Set Gang" and the "Fat Cat Burglars", the pair was finally brought to justice on January 21, 1992, on Clapboard Hill Road, in Westport.

Latella and Salerno were more than just partners in crime. The two married Gloria and Sandra Savino—identical twin sisters from a mob-connected family in New York. They committed amateur burglaries before developing a modus operandi that allowed them to slip in and out of mansions undetected.

"They stole while people were at home eating dinner," said Dick Atkins, who is currently producing a film about Salerno and Latella. "Their tactic was actually common-sense—if counterintuitive. If people were at home, their alarms were turned off. And if they were eating dinner, their best jewels would be in the master bedroom suites, instead of on their wrists and around their necks."

By Land or Sea

They traveled by land or sea. Beachfront mansions were often approached by raft. After committing their burglaries, the team would push off the shoreline and be miles away before homeowners ever knew what had hit them.

"Their heyday was during the late 1960s and early 1970s, when they robbed mansions that had never been robbed before, but they knew if they were going to be successful, they must be careful," said Atkins. "If the situation didn't look right they walked away—they were non-confrontational and never brought weapons."

Salerno would scale the houses—entering usually through a second story window—while Latella waited outside in the bushes, watching the dining room carefully to make sure nobody left the table, and keeping an eye on the driveway. If anything went awry, he'd blow a whistle to alert his cohort and they would flee the scene, undetected. They hit New England during warm months, when foliage provided good cover, and worked the sunbelt in the winter, following the wealthy in their seasonal travel.

Cops Close Behind

But the cops were always just a few steps behind them.

"I had been investigating other burglaries in mansions," said retired Westport Police Detective Mike Barrett, who now runs Barrett Investigation, LLC, in Westport. "The local precincts held burglary meetings where we'd swap notes and keep each other apprised of crimes in the area."

The police found that similar burglaries had been committed in Palm Beach County, Florida—where the team sometimes followed the families and their jewels to vacation homes. The robbers did research at local libraries—often gleaning information about the rich and famous from "Who's Who," "Town & Country," "Forbes," and "Architectural Digest" magazines. The magazines were excellent references for lifestyles and floor plans.

"I was appointed to the detective division in 1975," said retired Greenwich Police Officer Jim Hirsh, now



Out on the town Robbing some of the richest families in Fairfield County provided a lavish lifestyle for the "Dinner Set Gang." From left to right are Carmine and Mary Stanzione, Dominick and Sandra Latella, and Gloria and Pete Salerno. Sandra and Gloria were twin sisters and Mary was Pete Salerno's sister.

director of security for the Tudor Investment Group, in Greenwich. "At the same time, Detective James Smith, who had been spearheading the burglaries, handed me a book he'd been keeping on them and said, 'Here—you will be handling this at some point.'"

The book came in handy. Along with his partner Peter Hansen, Detective Barrett and officers from Westchester and Putnam Counties collected bits and pieces about the mysterious cat burglars that led them up and down the Atlantic coastline.

Loved Fairfield County

"We loved Fairfield County," said Salerno—currently serving a sentence for an unrelated crime in Florida. "We hit a ton of houses in Greenwich, New Canaan, Darien and Westport. We wanted only the biggest and the best so we picked our targets. In Greenwich, we hit the Gimbel Estate, called Chieftans, in 1970. We scouted out the area first. It took me more than three minutes to run across the property so I figured it was a half-mile wide."

Where there was no water access, the team used a driver—usually the husband of Salerno's sister, Carmine Stanzione, who would meet them miles away from any potential witnesses.

"Pete wasn't tall, but he was built like a brick house," said Atkins. "When the money and jewels were in a safe, if he couldn't crack it, he'd pick it up and hurl it over the balcony, where he and Dominick would drag it far away from the house and pry it open."

Success for the Dinner Set Gang came with perks—they drove a Rolls Royce and wore \$500 suits. Their wives kept \$20,000 at a time in envelopes—spending lavishly on whatever caught their fancy. Most of the cash was provided by the gang's main fences—Wally and Flo Gans—a couple who ran a shop in Manhattan's 47th Street diamond district. Their biggest score—valued at \$12 million was at a DuPont Palm Beach rental property, where Pete found a leather traveling case in a linen closet containing, among other items, a 17.65-carat flawless pink diamond, valued at \$1.8 million, according to FBI reports.

"Me and Dom lived under assumed names on Indian Field Road, in Greenwich for about six months in 1970," said Salerno. "We loved that area until the cops in Greenwich picked us up and charged us with vagrancy."

Left Few Clues

Because the Fat Cats left few clues—even tossing their shoes onto the highway afterwards in case

footprints were left behind—the police were unable to pin anything on them, even though they had strong suspicions about their identities and activities.

"I was driving my Cadillac El Dorado with Florida plates and \$1,800 in cash," Salerno added. "The judge said to the cops, 'so are you arresting rich vagrants, now?' That's when the Lieutenant gets me aside and says, 'don't bother us here anymore. Before you came these people were virgins. Please leave us alone.' So they escorted me to the state line and let me go."

The following month, the Greenwich police picked up Latella at the local A&P and immediately escorted him out of town, with the same request.

The boys robbed more mansions in mega-million-dollar hubs including Florida's Jupiter Island and in Marion County, Pennsylvania, earning them enough to go into semiretirement during much of the 1980's.

Then something happened that caused Salerno and Latella to return to Fairfield County, CT.

"What happened was, Pete's wife Gloria was diagnosed with breast cancer," said Atkins. "They needed cash badly to pay for her treatments and so decided to return to a place they knew well—Fairfield County. They went on a tear and weren't careful because they were in panic mode—breaking all their own rules."

Stress Brought Them Down

Although stressed and not as fit as in their earlier years, Salerno and Latella still managed to carry out about 40 successful cat burglaries in the Fairfield County area.

"During the 1992 season, we heard about a series of burglaries that fit the same MO, so we knew they were back in the area," said Hirsh. "Me and my partner Pete Hansen put out an APB (All Points Bulletin) to all the precincts in Fairfield and Westchester counties, knowing these guys did quick hits, in and out of different towns."

Between departments, cops were able to conclude the burglars had been staying at the Rye Town Hilton.

"In the beginning they paid for everything with cash but, later on, started using credit cards, enabling us to trace their activities," recalled Barrett. Police were able to trace their telephone calls and then discovered who was driving the getaway car.

"They hired a new driver—Louie Cardillo, who actually suggested Clapboard Hill Road as a good place to rob even though the homes weren't mansions," said Atkins.

- See *Cat Burglars* on page 22

Nuisance Unit-

Continued from page 9

ceases, the State in turn agrees not to prosecute.

If the landlord reneges on the commitments, or if the nuisance persists, the NAU can take further action, and if a landlord is profiting from the illegal activity, the State can sue to confiscate and condemn the building.

If all else fails the unit can resort to outright prosecutions under the Nuisance Abatement and Quality of Life Act. Nuisance abatement actions focus on cleaning up properties that are magnets for illegal activity, in addition to punishing wrongdoers.

The Nuisance Abatement and Quality of Life Act requires a minimum of three arrests or the issuance of three arrest warrants indicating a pattern of criminal activity on the property during a one-year period before a nuisance abatement action is brought.

The law specifies drug trafficking, illegal gambling, prostitution, obscenity involving minors, illegal liquor sales, operating motor vehicle chop shops, inciting injury to persons or property, murder, sexual assault, and felonious assault as actions that can bring arrests under a nuisance abatement action.

Public nuisance actions are filed in the Superior Court for the judicial district where the property is located. The prosecutor will seek court orders

or negotiate a stipulated agreement for whatever relief is necessary to stop the criminal activity underlying the nuisance. Many remedies may be possible, ranging from screening prospective tenants for a property to closing the premises.

The unit has been working with police departments across the state and having its share of successes, officials say.

Malany relates another case involving drug activity right across the street from the Bristol City Hall. That started with drug activity but evolved into a situation where a gun was drawn on an undercover investigator.

Cathcart said the unit considers the impact its action will have on the neighborhood as a whole when working on a case. The unit also must document a pattern of abuse of the nuisance statutes to take action, even if there have been raids and arrests previously.

It is harder to work in an apartment building than in a single residential or commercial building, for instance. "You can't throw out a whole building for one bad tenant," she said.

The essence of a successful application of nuisance abatement procedures is determining the best approach for each case. "We tailor remedies to the location," she said.

(r.winter@thejusticejournal.com)



Events & Notices

Toy Drive

Gibbs College will hold a toy drive sponsored by Phi Beta Lambda club through the holidays to benefit Bridgeport Hospital Pediatric patients. New toys can be dropped off at Gibbs College main lobby, 10 Norden Place, Norwalk. For information call Kathy Foley at 203-663-2355.

Toy for Tots

Fritz's Harley Davidson of Stamford is collecting new, unwrapped toys through December 20th during regular business hours. 575-570 Pacific Street, Stamford. Also, at the Harley Davidson of Bridgeport, 155 Research Drive, Stratford.

Amber Alert ID Session

Sponsored by the Danbury Rotary Club, Long Hill Fire Department in Trumbull Saturday December 15th, 10-5pm. Questions call Bob Vetter at 203-748-1105.

Safe and Sound Class

Wednesday, December 19th 6:30 United Church South King St. Danbury. Classes deal with the issues of car seat and home safety for children from birth to age 5. To register please call Danbury Hospital at 203-739-6831.

Westport Police Sponsoring Annual Toy Drive

The Westport Police Dept Local Union 2080 will again sponsor its annual Holiday Toy Drive, which provides toys for underprivileged children throughout Fairfield County. Donations of new, unused and unwrapped toys may be brought to the Westport Police Department at 50 Jesup Road, anytime until Friday, Dec 21.

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Modern Police Cruisers: An Office On Wheels

By **RONALD WINTER**
Correspondent

When actor Broderick Crawford, playing police chief Dan Matthews, pulled over a suspect on the 1950s television series "Highway Patrol," he was driving a basic black and white that had no visible extras except a decal on the door and a two-way radio mounted under the dashboard.

The length of the cord between his microphone and the transmitter determined how far he could go outside the vehicle and stay in contact with headquarters.

How times have changed.

In the early days of motorized police work the extra equipment on a typical cruiser ranged from minimal to nonexistent. Communications between patrolmen and headquarters were on an as-needed basis, and police on the scene were the ultimate arbiters of the law with little need to make emergency calls for a shift supervisor.

Contrast that image with today's cruiser that is jammed with electronics in the space previously reserved for a coffee cup, and a dashboard that more closely resembles the cockpit of a commercial airplane. Today that vehicle is also a fully equipped office. The cost of outfitting a cruiser can easily equal the price of the vehicle, which averages in the low \$20,000 range.

Lt. Richard Gunter of the Fairfield Police Department, who joined the force on January 1, 1963, remembers the old cruisers all too well.

Heaters an Option

"There was no air conditioning" in the hot summers, he said, and even in New England winters, "heaters were an option."

The first sirens Gunter remembers using were mounted under the hood, "but no one could hear them." Those were replaced with a much louder "huge, chrome" version, but its size required that it be mounted externally on the front fender, which in turn created problems with metal fatigue because of its size and torque. That issue was solved with the addition of support brackets.

Once the siren started wailing, "it took forever to wind down," Gunter said, chuckling as he remembered a local hospital asking the department not to run the sirens when coming in, as they would still be going when the officer was inside attending to business.

Chief David Erskine, who is retiring in February after 43 years with the Stonington Police Department, remembers the old two-door sedans that were preferred then because it made escape more difficult for prisoners riding in back.

Erskine started his career in Stonington in 1965, when roof lights resembling "gumball machines" were all the rage. They were big rotating lights that flashed red and white, or red and blue depending on the model and year.

Carrying a prisoner in the back seat with no cage for restraint was standard, Erskine said, a procedure that seems out of touch

today when no "reality" television police episode is complete without a prisoner attempting to kick out the rear windows.

There have been great strides in the design of police car interiors, and meanwhile, the advancement in electronics, especially those pertaining to communications and officer safety, are also striking.

The one person in a position to see most if not all of these changes as they occur is Bill Chizmadia, owner of Fleet Auto Supply in West Haven (formerly Fair Auto Supply in Bridgeport).

Chizmadia's crew of factory-trained specialists outfits new cruisers for police departments throughout the state, and notes that the "vehicles changed with the role of the police."

Larger Role for Officers

With some exceptions, police did police work, firemen fought fires, and ambulance crews handled medical emergencies. That has changed and now many police departments require their officers to carry medical kits in the cruiser, in addition to several types of firearms, a computer, radar, dashboard video camera, three-way radios that enable communication with more than one department, and global positioning equipment.

Gunter remembers the beginnings of multitasking when the Fairfield department purchased station wagons in the late 1950's so a stretcher and oxygen equipment could be stored in the back.

But those changes didn't necessarily mean a better ride for the police. "We couldn't open the back windows," Gunter said, "not because of carbon monoxide, but because dust would come in and get all over everything." Keeping the rear window closed made for a hot ride even if it did keep the dust down.

A major difference between today's cruisers and their predecessors is standardization. As Gunter notes, nothing was standard on the old cruisers.

Spotlights could be installed on side doors or the roof - Gunter says he had to stop at a diner for a coffee cup every time it rained, because the roof leaked. Foot activated switches for sirens were on the floor, but not always in the same place. "Every car was different," Gunter says.

The evolution of police cruisers was slow at first, and we can see much of how they changed by watching old television shows and movies.

On the sitcom "Car 54 Where Are You?" which ran for two seasons in the early 1960's, the cruiser driven throughout the Bronx by officers Toody and Muldoon had a light on top and POLICE painted across the hood. The sparseness of the 1950's had evolved into the big lights and antennas in the next decade.

No Radio, Carry Nickels

Whip antennas and roof-mounted light bars became standard for any well-equipped patrol cruiser, as well as department heads who had a vehicle assigned to them.

But even with the addition of standard

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Police cruisers today with their high-tech trimmings, 50-60 years ago.



The interior of modern police cruisers resemble the cockpit of a commercial airliner and a fully loaded office.



Years ago the standard equipment on transport were far less. Today's officers are protected by a bulletproof shield, and windows are tinted.



Years ago a police cruiser carried a fire extinguisher in the center console, and responders they carried extra weapons and a radio in the center for electronic communication.

radios and whip antennas, communications with headquarters was not a sure thing.

Erskine and Gunter both remember "dead spots" in their towns where radio

communications were impossible. Gunter also remembers that while he couldn't always raise headquarters a few miles away, the third shift could listen to radio

On Wheels and Mechanical Partner



THEN

**1950
Ford
Police
Cruiser**

Modern police cruisers are a far cry from the stark simple transportation (Photos by Ronald Winter)

Modern police cruisers are a far cry from the stark simple transportation (Photos by Ronald Winter)

Standards for prisoner transport are demanding. Today's cruisers are loaded by a fully-sealed mobile office.

Officer safety is a top priority. Today's cruisers have bars and other safety features to protect officers and passengers.



transmissions from officers in a Texas department clear as a bell, due to what was called an atmospheric "skip."

There were numerous ways to get around

the communications issue, the simplest of which was to move to a location where the signal was stronger. Veteran officers also recall their rookie days when officers who

had started in the 1930's and 1940's spoke of taking a pocketful of nickels on the road so they could call headquarters from pay phones.

Erskine says the Stonington department had a system that ranged from call boxes mounted on telephone poles, which Gunter also remembers, to an informal system of alerts from local merchants. Headquarters personnel knew the general route of the patrolling cruisers, and merchants in that area were called "and asked to get in touch with you."

As hardwired microphones gave way to two-way radios and rotating beacon lights evolved to strobes, the interior of the cruisers also was changing.

Two-door models gave way to four doors, and the old practice of transporting a prisoner in the backseat with one officer driving and another keeping an eye on the suspect, was scrapped in favor of a cage separating the back from the front.

Erskine remembers police taking drunk drivers to the lockup with no concern for the safety of either the suspect or the officer. "People didn't attack the police" in those days, he said.

But problems ultimately arose with the cages too, including suspects stuffing contraband between the seat sections, or drunks leaving a disgusting mess of bodily emanations on the seat and floor for the officer to clean up, all of which contributed to the ongoing evolution in police cruisers.

Officer Safety

Chizmadia notes that "Our number one concern is officer safety," which means his job involves selecting appropriate equipment and ensuring it is properly installed. His firm works closely with Whelen Engineering Company in Chester, CT, which manufactures much of the equipment his crews install.

On the outside, the big light bars and strobes are gone in favor of a flatter design that uses Light Emitting Diodes and eliminates the colors. The new lights are more intense, and more visible, Chizmadia says. High-visibility LED strobes also are installed on the front and rear fenders as well as the external mirrors, providing a much more visible profile for cruisers stopped on the road shoulder or median at night.

Inside, in addition to the bank of electronics up front, the rear of the vehicle has changed drastically too. A tragic incident in Tampa, FL in the late 1990's where a suspect got his hand underneath the cage and grabbed an officer's gun from his holster, killing two detectives and later a Florida trooper, has led to a complete revolution in the rear seat design.

Two-piece fabric seats and separate flooring have given way to one-piece composite interiors that incorporate the seat and flooring with no seams. This eliminates hiding spots for contraband, and makes cleanup much easier and thorough.

The cages are custom-designed for each

model of cruiser, Chizmadia said, with a solid wall separating suspects from the officers. Composite window bars deny violent prisoners the opportunity to kick out the glass.

A key issue with the design of the new cruisers is to make them ergonomic and clean. Police have made the point for decades that their cruisers are their offices - Gunter says that was the argument that ultimately got air conditioning into his department's cars. As such, the more efficiently the office is arranged, the better it can be used.

Technology Evolving

But officer safety and efficiency go much further, and tomorrow's cruisers are taking the lead in making the job even safer.

If Broderick Crawford and Fred Gwynne accurately portrayed police work as it was done in the past, then the 1980's futuristic series "Knight Rider" starring David Hasselhoff as Michael Knight, who drove an advanced car, named KITT, featuring artificial intelligence, points where police cars are heading in the very near future.

Although they can't think and act on their own as the KITT car could, a new generation of cruisers already has been developed and is being tested in Connecticut.

The advanced police cruiser technology, named the 54 Project, to make the point that cruiser technology hasn't changed much since the 1960's, was developed at the University of New Hampshire's College of Engineering and Physical Sciences. Those developments have been advanced by 54Ward (pronounced five forward) Integrated Solutions, in Orangeburg, NY, with hardware manufactured by corporations such as Whelen.

When installed in police cruisers, the 54 Project technology uses embedded mobile computing equipment, wireless networking, and voice-activated technology.

The voice-activated components not only enable officers to communicate with other officers, headquarters, and other departments, they can activate lights and sirens, or instruct the onboard computer to run a license plate and read back the vehicle description, all while continuing to drive, and without taking their hands off the steering wheel.

Police officers who have been around long enough to see cruiser technology adapt to different requirements are upbeat about the changes. Improved lights, confinement of prisoners, use of high technology to improve communications, and computers that can do in milliseconds what once took hours or even days, all work in favor of the officers who are charged with maintaining public safety, in essence creating an electro-mechanical partner for the humans.

Reflecting on the state of bygone police cruiser technology compared to modern advancements, Chief Erskine summed it up succinctly.

"They're better for everybody."

(r.winter@thejusticejournal.com)

Irish Detective—

Continued from page 6

it appears to have in Connecticut," Nolan wrote in a January e-mail to Angela DeLeon, the TRIAD state coordinator [see story about TRIADs in the October issue of The Justice Journal]. "I am a serving police officer in the Police Service of Northern Ireland, and I am currently conducting research for a bursary into protecting the elderly in our society, with my focus being on increasing the quality of life and reducing the fear of crime among our senior citizens."

Nolan further wrote that if awarded a grant, he would be able to visit his chosen country to study how other communities are working to achieve a safe environment for vulnerable adults. "I have chosen Connecticut...as the state's demographics resemble Northern Ireland's in population and city size reasonably well, and this would transfer your ideas neatly to my own area. I have also been impressed with how many local communities are part of the scheme, and the apparent strength of support shown by local government is tremendous."

Nolan further explained his choice of Connecticut during his recent stay here. "If you take Belfast out of the equation," he said, "our major towns and smaller cities are around 50-60,000 people, which is comparable to Connecticut. There's no point in me going to the likes of New York City because we

have absolutely nothing like that. I did some research, and the TRIAD Web site lists every single TRIAD in the United States. I think New Jersey has two TRIADs and Connecticut has over 40. You can see that here's a state that's really going for it in a big way."

Internet research shows that Northern Ireland has 5,452 square miles, with 5,543 square miles listed for Connecticut. Although Connecticut has approximately twice the population of Northern Ireland, Nolan said that their elderly population of around 15 ½ percent is comparable to that in Connecticut. Nolan said that crimes against the elderly have captured the attention of Irish law enforcement.

"Every year, our organization picks a subject they want to know more about, and this year it's to reduce the fear of crime among the elderly," said Nolan. "Crimes against the elderly are increasing (in Northern Ireland) and getting a lot more coverage. We have organized criminal gangs who are specifically targeting the elderly who live alone or in isolated locations."

Nolan noted that telemarketing crimes are unusual in his country, as is identity theft. "Identity theft is not really a major problem for us as yet," he said. "Our senior citizens are not hugely computer literate nor have computers in their homes. If they do have a computer,

they may have forgotten how to use it because they don't use it often enough." Other crimes, however, mirror those found in Connecticut, such as criminals offering to do work at a senior citizen's home as an opportunity to get into the house.

The schedule for Nolan was planned by DeLeon and Brent DiGiorgio of People's United Bank, which helps sponsor the TRIADs in Connecticut. Nolan visited a number of police departments in Fairfield County, including Bridgeport, Fairfield, Seymour, Stratford, and Trumbull. He stayed at the Trumbull Marriott, and Trumbull First Selectman Ray Baldwin greeted him at police headquarters.

Nolan was especially impressed with both the Yellow Dot Program and the Uniform Fashion Show. The former helps first responders to an accident identify when the driver's vital information is in the vehicle's glove compartment, and the latter provides senior citizens with information about company officials' dress and identification.

"We have a parcel delivery that's not your normal postman," Nolan said. "We have an electricity board and a water board for the entire country. There are some private companies now, like for gas. The Uniform Fashion Show teaches that all these people must carry identification. It teaches the elderly that it's not rude to ask for identification to protect yourself."

Other programs Nolan found useful were (1) the placement of a "Stop" sticker

on the inside of the door to remind senior citizens to not immediately open their door to strangers, (2) the File of Life, where a resident's vital information is attached to the front of his or her refrigerator, and (3) the offering of credit checks at the local senior center or police station.

"All of these ideas are simple," said Nolan, "but the best ideas usually are. You don't need to over-complicate these things. The Yellow Dot Program seems to be very important, but again, it's so easy and very cheap to run." Nolan also revealed his sense of humor. "The File of Life is very good. I'm going to put my name on that and say that while I was bored in my hotel room, I came up with this and I should be promoted."

Nolan said that the information he has collected will be put to good use in Northern Ireland. "I'm required to do a university-accredited dissertation for the criminal justice department at the University of Ulster," he said. "In addition, I have to make a presentation to my chief officers, recommending which programs we should or should not consider and why. I'll report on the bones of the program, such as how many officers would be involved and what organizations would need to be involved. If I come back and say it only requires one police officer, that's music to their ears."

Nolan said one difficulty with starting TRIADs in Northern Ireland will be

- Continued on next page

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Irish Detective—

Continued from previous page

the long-standing religious divisions in that country. "In a small town like Seymour, you have one senior center to accommodate your population," he said. "We can't do that because you have two communities who don't really get along. You can't have one senior center serving the entire town because one side or the other will use it exclusively. That would be a key difference."

In June of this year, Nolan was promoted to sergeant and is assigned to the crime support division, where he works to help solve cold-case homicides. "We cover a period between 1998 and 2004," he said. "We work murders that occurred in that time that are unsolved on the books. I am the intelligence manager for this murder team."

So how did Nolan go from homicide investigation to elderly crime prevention? "Anyone that wants to can apply for the grant," Nolan said. "This wasn't specific to my line of work, but it's better in a way because I can look at elderly crime with a fresh set of eyes. I didn't know anything about community policing, so all of this is new to me. Since everything is brand new, everything's going to be taken back to Northern Ireland. But it all forms part of the big picture, and that big picture is TRIAD. It's a network that has been developed where you can share good ideas with people."

Nolan's demeanor makes it easy to

share good ideas with him. He is witty, friendly, and easy-going, which he acknowledges has been an asset. "I'm trying to get as much information out of people as possible," he said. "If I came here and sort of grunted at everything I'm told, people would just turn off and say I didn't care. I need to get people prepared to open up and talk with me."

Nolan also acknowledged the many gifts he received during his visit. "I've been given blankets, mugs, patches, hats, pens - anything they can throw at me. We don't have patches on our uniforms, so getting patches has been brilliant. I'm definitely going to show them off so I can say I'm a world traveler."

Jack Cratty, a 30-year veteran of the Stratford Police Department, also surprised Nolan with a custom-made set of business cards, complete with a Northern Ireland logo and Nolan's e-mail address. "Business cards are rare and hard to come by," said Nolan. "I'm not nearly as important as I need to be to get free cards in my country."

In sum, Nolan's visit to Connecticut was everything he hoped it would be, and more. "Everyone's made great efforts for me," he said. "Guys have come in from their days off to speak with me. Everybody's been open and gone out of their way to make sure I'm well looked after. It's been fantastic."

(l.taylor@thejusticejournal.com)



60 Years of Toys

Fritz's Harley Davidson of Stamford hosted the kickoff for the U.S. Marines 60th annual drive for toys. New unwrapped toys are accepted during normal business hours though December 20 at Fritz's showrooms in Stamford and Bridgeport. For more information call 203-975-1985. From left to right are Sergeant Henry Harsh, Corporal Amy Tereskiewicz, Corporal Mark Mennillo, and Staff Sgt. Gregory Humphries.

National Report

17,000 killed in senseless act

Authorities search for answers on a day of sadness

A nation is in mourning as thousands were suddenly killed yesterday all across the country by people who had been drinking and driving. Traffic was backed up in all 50 states making it difficult for emergency vehicles to reach the victims. Hospitals in every city remain overwhelmed with thousands of critically injured patients. The help of National Guard units is being requested in many areas.

simply are not enough resources to meet the demands of this catastrophe. The president spoke early this morning at an emergency press conference expressing his condolences to the friends and families of those who were lost. One official in DeBeau County called this "the most devastating moment in American history." In some places, entire families were killed, leaving many to wonder how something like this could happen in our country today. In a show of support, long lines of volunteers have formed at the entrances to...

If this were today's headline, would you notice? Last year, drinking and driving actually did kill about 17,000 people. It injured half a million more. But because it happened over a year rather than in a single day, it's not always front-page news. If you drink, find a safe way home. And do your part to keep drunk driving out of the headlines.

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Parole Officers—

Continued from page 4

“This is not rocket science. If you give somebody a safe place to live, keep them clean and sober, and give them a job, there would not be a lot of recidivism.”

somebody a safe place to live, keep them clean and sober, and give them a job, there would not be a lot of recidivism.”

A state of Connecticut study on comparison of offense and reconviction finds property offenders (those that do not involve people) and those offenders incarcerated for criminal justice process offenses have the highest reconviction rates at 45 percent. Violation of probation is next with 42 percent, followed by weapon offenses (41 percent), personal offenses (38 percent), and drug offenses (36 percent). Those convicted of motor vehicle offenses (31 percent) and sexual offenses (22 percent) have the lowest

reconviction rates.

The Bridgeport District is third behind New Haven and Waterbury in terms of number of supervised offenders. The district stretches from Milford to the New York border with 12 parole officers handling an average caseload of 60-65 parolees. There are also three specialized caseload officers each supervising 25-30 of the more difficult offenders, including those with mental health problems.

Statewide, an additional 15 parole officers are being hired to reduce the caseload throughout the state's five districts of Hartford, New Haven, Waterbury, Bridgeport, and New

London. Optimal caseload is a ratio of 50:1, but an increase in the number of offenders in the district is anticipated, says Everett.

Director of External Affairs Brian Garnett says the priority for the Department of Correction is to do “all they can to prepare offenders to return to law-abiding society before they go out the door.”

To qualify for parole, nonviolent offenders are required to complete 50 percent of their term while violent offenders must complete 85 percent of their term.

Calling post-prison supervision a “vital tool,” Everett says statistics bear out that individuals who are released under parole have a lower rate of recidivism than those who serve every day of their sentence and are released with no follow-up community supervision.

“From a public safety perspective, (parole) makes a whole lot of sense . . . rather than having someone serve their

whole prison sentence and, at the end... opening up the door and saying ‘your sentence is over, get out.’”

Everett recalls a parolee speaking before a group about a particular officer who had made a difference in his life. Because of guidance, the parolee had a family and a job and was successful. To Everett's surprise, the officer he named was him.

“I got goose bumps. I didn't know I had that impact on that person. I almost fell off the chair. Realizing I had that much impact on a person was very rewarding.”

Everett is a husband and father and in his “spare” time likes to coach sports and read. He is also an adjunct professor of criminology at Central Connecticut State University. He says some former students have thanked him for steering them into corrections as a line of work.

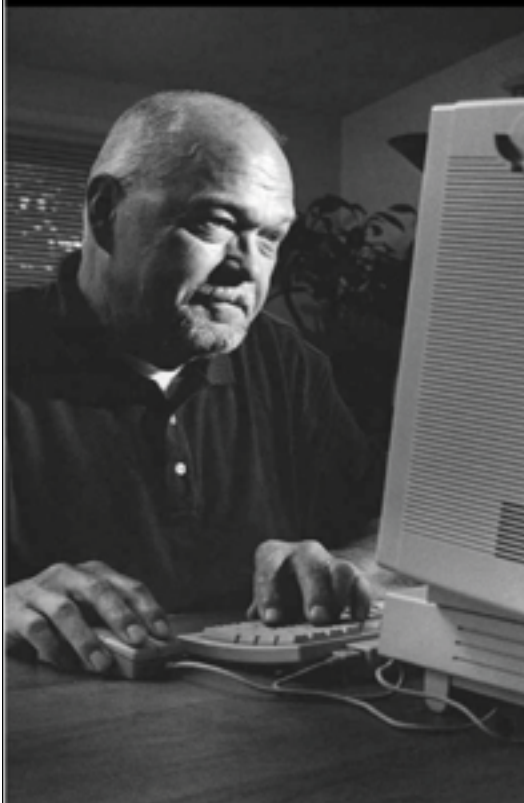
“Having an impact on a young person's life, as far as choice of career, is awesome,” Everett commented.

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After-School Programs—

Continued from page 3

most programs have long waiting lists, and many have been forced to limit their hours and charge fees to help subsidize the activities in recent years. Transportation can also be a roadblock for many families.

“There is definitely more of a need in this area. The problem is money,” said Stephanie Ragin, coordinator of the Norwalk After School Alliance, a group of 40 organizations dedicated to providing after-school programming.

In a recent survey of 958 elementary school families in that city, 47 percent of respondents said they would like before- and after-school care, but only 25 percent of them were currently enrolled in such programs.

In Bridgeport, about 2,100 children are enrolled in the city's Lighthouse program, which operates out of 21 public schools, and there are another 1,200 spaces in community center-based programs. But the demand is for double or triple that number, said Marilyn Ondrasik, executive director of the Bridgeport Child Advocacy Coalition.

She said recent funding cuts forced the city to close the Lighthouse program at eight schools last year and to institute a \$25-per-week fee that has prevented some of the city's poorest families from participating. About 500 fewer children participated in the 2006-07 school year compared to the year before, according to the coalition. The cuts come at a time when violent juvenile crime in Fairfield County and the nation is on the rise.

“The highest-risk kids are sometimes the kids we're not able to serve,” Ondrasik said.

Proponents say after-school programs can improve grades, cut truancy, and help kids form positive relationships with friends and caring adults, all factors that can make them more resistant to the allure of drugs and gangs.

“They learn to respect themselves and

their neighborhoods and other people around them,” said Francine Shoffner, extended learning coordinator for the Danbury school district, which offers after-school programs in 14 elementary schools and its middle school. The program charges a fee of \$10 a week but offers financial assistance to needy families.

In New Haven, about 500 children were already enrolled in the school district's after-school program, which recently won a \$1.2 million grant from the state Department of Education to expand its offerings at three schools. But unlike the traditional school-run programs, Open Schools is not limited to children attending the school, according to Dawson.

“Anybody in the city can go to any program. It's not something you have to sign up for or even pay for,” Dawson said. The program targets young people ages 12 to 18 but turns no one away. Transportation is rarely a problem because many of the children live within walking distance of the schools, he said.

Since its inception, 800 children have registered for Open Schools, which began as a summer program in 2006 and expanded to a year-round program this school year. The city contracts with outside groups to run the workshops and activities.

Several of the children in the martial arts program at the Daniels K-8 school, which is offered on Tuesdays and Thursdays, said the alternative would be sitting at home watching television or just hanging out. Jalitza Rivera, 10, said she used to spend her afternoons waiting in the lobby of the public housing authority building where her mother works.

“I'd rather be in karate until 6:30. I have more fun than being at my mom's job being bored until five o'clock,” she said.

(n.missakian@thejusticejournal.com)

Traffic Accidents—

Continued from page 1

counter with "...that's why the speed limit there is reduced." For those who complain there's a lot of traffic, he'll remind them, "...driver education 101 will say you can't follow with your front bumper on the rear bumper of the car in front; you need to maintain a safe following distance." And if the roads are wet, it's logical, "...drivers are supposed to slow down."

State Police Public Information Officer Lt. J. Paul Vance notes that many of the accidents state police investigate involve excessive speeding, although he admits that term can be nebulous: "We're not (necessarily) talking about people who are traveling faster than the speed limit...(but) also people traveling too fast for the conditions, (such as) heavy traffic, wet roadway...and as we move into winter, slippery road conditions. People must understand that they are obligated to adjust their speed according to the conditions in order to travel safely and not interfere with other traffic."

"It's very certainly (the most congested), especially during commuter time in both directions...with residents heading south into New York, and Connecticut residents in the southern part of Connecticut heading up into New Haven," Vance says of southwestern Connecticut. "We have a roadway that was designed to accommodate traffic when it's flowing, even though it's extremely crowded

we're able to accommodate the increased volume. Once we have an incident or an accident it almost automatically sets us into a traffic backup and almost a gridlock type of situation. What we attempt to do is keep traffic flowing and attempt to keep all lanes open."

With all the inconvenience of slowing down and stopping for the dozens of road repair projects, such upgrades, says Nursick, are making our roads safer for the hundreds of thousands of vehicles that traverse Connecticut's major highways.

Those efforts seem to be helping this heavily traveled road over which about 60,000 vehicles pass daily; accidents on I-95 are trending downward. They have gone from 7,442 in 2003 to 6,892 in 2004, 6,698 in 2005, and 5,750 last year.

State fatalities during that time frame also dipped from 341 in 2000 to 309 in 2006. And, Fairfield County fatalities followed suit, going from 72 in 2000 to 57 last year.

State police say when road conditions do come into play, such as when there's an object in the road or sight lines are impaired, more often it is a problem on secondary roads. Such occurrences are reported and rectified immediately, Vance said.

Accidents around construction sites usually can be avoided because the areas are well marked and motorists are warned far in advance. Vance adds: "You could

say that anytime you have to compress traffic or lanes, you'll see a backup of traffic and that can cause accidents to occur." However, the state has been successful in making such areas safer, and that's resulted in a sharp decline in construction-related accidents, dropping from 33 in 2000 to 18 in 2006.

Vance notes, "Occasionally, we do see a driver, maybe someone from out of state, who is not paying attention to the...signs when we close a lane for construction purposes...and that can cause accidents."

Such inattention really annoys driver Spencer Richardson of Hopkinton, MA, who travels I-95 on a regular basis.

"You get a lot of people who don't follow the signs, so they cut from the left-hand lane over to the right-hand lane when they want to get off at exit 27 and they didn't realize it till they were

a quarter of a mile from the exit," he complains, "(and) with the congestion it makes it worse when someone isn't aware of what's going on."

That's why state officials reiterate if drivers remain alert, Connecticut could greatly reduce the number of accidents on state roads.

Charles Baker of Westchester, NY, says there are a lot of construction sites on I-95, but he's not complaining, "...it's a good idea they are improving the roads. It seems to be pretty safe, but you've got a lot of trucks out there so you have to use common sense."

"I travel a lot up and down (the state)," says trucker Brian Hogan of Warrington, VA. "Traffic's bad one day and good the next. (But) safety is good. Connecticut's police are out there all the time watching; you can't do any more."

(t.caliendo@thejusticejournal.com)

At-A-Glance

- 18 percent of drivers responsible for accidents who had consumed alcohol and 25 percent of drivers responsible for fatal accidents who had consumed alcohol, were aged 20-24
- 79 percent of drivers who consumed alcohol and were in an accident were male.
- 59 percent of drivers responsible for accidents and 74 percent of drivers responsible for fatal accidents were male.
- 45 percent of alcohol-related accidents occurred on Saturday and Sunday.

Vehicle Type

- 2,429 accidents included a tractor trailer.
- There were 1,184 motorcycle accidents, 951 with injuries, and 57 fatalities.
 - 370 accidents involved school buses.
 - Taxis were involved in 157 accidents

Mentoring Programs—

Continued from page 1

and family counseling, life skills, and mentoring.

“Who better to mentor ex-offenders than a successful ex-offender?” Jackson comments as he describes an innovative reentry pilot project in Bridgeport for men returning from prison. “We have support groups in Bridgeport on Thursdays, and I make a personal vow that I’m not going to let them go back [to prison],” said Jackson, who wants to teach others his formula for success: “Being able to be humble, being honest with yourself, being willing to learn, and most of all being willing to help others, because when you help others there’s a psychological advantage and a psychological appreciation that helps you grow inside. Once you realize that, then you know that it’s not just about you, so you can’t be selfish, and when you’re not selfish and you’re caring about others, you can succeed.”

Jackson also goes into prisons as part of Family ReEntry’s Fresh Start program. “We create relationships with these guys before they get out of prison...I started turning my life around when I was in prison,” Jackson said.

Volunteer mentors in Family ReEntry’s Transitions Youthful Offender Mentoring

programs, one for males, one for females ages 15-23, also travel to the state’s prisons once a week to visit the inmates with whom they are paired.

Jo, a woman from Fairfield County, whose identity must be kept private, has made the trip to York Correctional Institution, the women’s prison in Niantic, almost once a week since 2000. In those seven years she has mentored six women.

“It’s fairly intense. We meet for at least an hour, but we’ve gone as long as three hours when a girl is experiencing a problem and is trying to work things through,” Jo said.

Relationships develop quickly because neither can bring anything into the visiting room with them, “so all you have is your conversation. It usually starts out with a lot of questioning on both sides because neither one of us knows each other or has any other way of finding out about each other,” Jo said.

Inmates seem to open up to the volunteers more so than to the prison staff, Jo said. She assumes it’s because volunteers are not paid and are there by choice, “so I think there is a certain amount of trust. In their eyes, we’re not getting any benefit whatsoever out of being there, and most



of them are amazed that someone would come visit them every week. They’re surprised at that,” Jo said.

Jo is surprised, too, that any inmate would willingly go through what the prison system mandates of them in order to meet with a mentor. “They have to go through two full body-cavity searches. They have to strip and do a body search on the way in to the visiting room and again on the way out,” Jo said. “I can’t imagine why anybody would want to go through that to come see me when they don’t know me. That totally escapes me, but I think it answers to their desperation for human contact from the outside,” she said.

Many of them are hungry for a better life. They want to change their lives, but they don’t know how. That stranger across the table is sometimes their only hope, Jo said. Prisons are not the country clubs some people think they are. As was publicized last month, some facilities are inhumanly overcrowded. And, while there are some job training and educational programs available to inmates, it’s difficult to consider earning a GED, enroll in college courses, or even dream of a better life when despair is all you’ve known, Jo said.

“Intervention with the young women becomes critical to try to give them another perspective on life because many of them don’t have any other perspective. It just doesn’t occur to them there is another way of life. For a lot of these girls the future is hard to envision,” Jo said.

The goal is to get them to think about a better future and what they might want to do when they are released, Jo said. She encourages them to use the time in jail positively. “There is a lot of opportunity there, so I try to get them not to waste that time, but to think about using it as opposed to just sitting around and marking time,” Jo said.

She tries to provide them with a sense of hope, the ability to set goals, and a fighting chance to turn their lives around once they are released back into society. But, contrary to inmates’ thoughts that volunteers don’t benefit from the relationship, Jo said mentoring is rewarding. In return she said she gets a tremendous amount of unconditional love and a sense that maybe she has made a positive impact on someone’s life.

“Mentoring is a very valid concept and can be very effective in helping people change their lives and supporting them

through those changes,” Lanza said. The organization also has a Champions Mentoring Program for Children of Prisoners, which serves about 100 Bridgeport children, ages 7-15, who have one or both parents in prison.

There are about 50 mentors currently involved in Family ReEntry’s Transitions and Champions mentoring programs. “We need mentors for both. We could probably double that number,” Lanza said.

“We ask for a year’s commitment from people because of the importance of minimizing transitions in people’s relationships, particularly with vulnerable and young populations. The weekly time commitment is only an hour a week plus travel time, so it’s not a huge amount of time out of someone’s week,” he said.

Applicants will go through a local screening process done by the organization, followed by an interview and then a national safety net screening, which includes a check into any criminal background, sexual offender status, or motor vehicle violation. After being accepted, a Family ReEntry volunteer mentor will go through a brief training program and will have ongoing support from the organization.

Jo said prospective mentors should have an open, nonjudgmental mind.

“You have to be able to look beyond whatever their crime has been and see the good things in them. You have to be able to see the potential, and there’s always potential there. What I tell people is to look back at their own youth and think of the stupid things you did. We’ve all done stupid things. We’ve all made mistakes. Do we just go ahead and condemn young people for the stupidity of youth? I don’t think we should be doing that,” she said.

Lanza said all of Family ReEntry’s programs have the goals of increased public safety, reduced tax burden, and improved quality of life for its clients and their families.

For general information about Family ReEntry, Inc. call the organization’s administrative offices at 203-838-0496 or visit its web site at www.familyreentry.org. For information or to apply to become a mentor, contact the specific programs as follows: Transitions Youthful Offender Mentoring (male program) call 203-576-6924; Transitions Youthful Offender Mentoring (female program) call 203-838-0496; and Champions Mentoring Program for Children of Prisoners call 203-382-1190.

(m.barone@thejusticejournal.com)

At-A-Glance: Family ReEntry, Inc.

Mission:

Committed to reducing crime, violence, and abuse by providing effective and cost-efficient programs that help individuals make a successful transition from incarceration to family and community and by providing effective and cost-efficient programs as alternatives to incarceration.

- Operates 15 distinct community justice and prisoner reentry programs located in Bridgeport, Norwalk, Stamford, New Haven, and at four Connecticut correctional facilities.
- Offers 14 different behavioral health, substance abuse, counseling, life skills, parenting education, mentoring, and case management services. Family ReEntry will serve about 2000 clients in the 06/07 fiscal year with a staff of 25.

Family ReEntry research has shown:

Adults transitioning from prison significantly less likely to be rearrested

A 1995 study conducted by researchers Dr. Herbert Spirier, professor emeritus of the School of Business, and Dr. Marilyn Dueker, retired associate professor of Statistics, both of the University of Connecticut, found that inmates receiving family therapy were 3.5 times more likely to remain arrest-free three to five years post release when compared to a control group.

High risk youthful offenders in the community significantly less likely to be rearrested

A 2003 analysis of data from Family ReEntry’s New Directions Program for high risk youthful offenders in the adult probation system found that youth completing the program had a one-year rearrest rate of 11.1 percent compared to a rearrest rate for a national sample of 44.1 percent - four times less likely to be rearrested.

Family violence program participants report less likelihood of rearrest

Survey data from a 2005 family violence education program group indicated that 80 percent of the male participants reported that there was no chance that they would

be rearrested for the same behavior, and 15 percent reported that there was only a very slight chance that they would be rearrested for the same behavior. Data from a 2005 women’s group indicated that 79 percent of the female participants reported that there was no chance that they would be rearrested for the same behavior, and 21 percent reported that there was only a very slight chance that they would be rearrested for the same behavior.

Youth transitioning from prison significantly less likely to be rearrested

2003 data indicated that participants in the in-prison transitions mentoring program for youthful offenders when released from Manson Youth Institution showed a 25 percent decrease in recidivism rates when compared to Connecticut data for released offenders.

Policy changing research

Family ReEntry is implementing a comprehensive prisoner reentry pilot project for Bridgeport, CT. The project has a very strong and detailed research component that will help to shape reentry policy at the state level. Based on prior research and expert opinion, Family ReEntry expects the program will reduce recidivism by at least 25 percent.



SCAM of the Month

By GRANT STINCHFIELD
Correspondent



Fake Check Schemes Also Target Job Seekers

Erin Curry is like most 23-year-old babysitters: she's always looking for more clients. She placed an ad on a Web site designed specifically for parents to connect with babysitters. SitterCity.com is an award-winning Web site with thousands of satisfied users. Sadly, like on many other online job sites, con men are trolling SitterCity.com looking for potential victims.

Not long after Curry placed her ad online, she thought she had a new job. A man "sent me a picture of him, his wife, and his child," Curry says. The man who contacted Erin Curry about babysitting for his child went by the name of Bobby Zamora. After a series of phone interviews he informed Curry she was hired. "He sounded so legit, he had all these plans of what I could do with his three-year-old son, he even said I could use their car," Curry said. It turns out the e-mails and phone calls were all part of an elaborate scheme to gain Curry's trust and ultimately steal her money.

Zamora told Curry over the phone he would send her the first week's pay, \$400. When the check arrived, it was for a shocking \$3,250. Curry notified Zamora of the gross overpayment by e-mail. He then called her and told Curry

his company had made a mistake. It sent her his expense reimbursement check instead. "I couldn't believe it, I figured it had to be a mistake," Curry said. She now knows it was no mistake but a cold and calculated move to take advantage of a trusting young woman.

Zamora instructed Curry to deposit the check, keep \$400, and then wire him the balance. He told her he was overseas on business. "He had me—I totally believed him," warns Curry. She deposited the check, but unlike so many other victims, she waited for the check to clear before wiring the money back to Bobby Zamora. The check never did clear—it was a fake, and it bounced the next day.

United States Postal Inspectors warn us that hundreds of people fall victim to the "Fake Check Scam" every day. The scam artist sends his victim a bogus check, then asks the person to deposit it and wire him back a portion of the newly acquired cash. Many people wire the money before realizing the check is a fake. The check bounces, and the victim is out the money he or she wired from his or her account. "The fake check scam comes in all forms: foreign lottery schemes, bogus investment deals, and even sudden riches claims, where the schemer needs your help to get money

out of his war-torn country," warns U.S. Postal Inspector Amanda McMurry.

Recently the United States sent 25 postal inspectors overseas to crack down on scam artists targeting Americans with fake checks. Inspectors confiscated more than 17,000 bogus financial documents. They regret to say that their efforts accounted for the interception of only a small fraction of the phony checks bound for the United States. Inspector McMurry insists it's imperative for people to know, "Once you wire the money, it's gone; you will never get it back."

Postal inspectors say fake checkscams are the fastest-growing fraud on the Internet, and it has cost some victims thousands of dollars. The scammers find their prey by scanning online job sites. They may even place an advertisement posing as an employer. They will search the classifieds looking for people who listed items for sale. The end result is always the same. It involves an overpayment and a request to wire money back to a stranger. Inspector McMurry points out, "The thieves are looking for any way to get someone to cash a fake check and wire them money. As soon as we warn people of one form of the scam, they come up with another."

The United States Postal Inspection

Service has identified the job seeker as the new number one target for fake check con men. It doesn't matter whether you're a babysitter or a computer programmer—anyone who is eager for a job, and eager for money, can fall victim to the scheme.

"Thank God I waited before sending that man his money," Curry says with a sigh of relief. She sees the \$40 bank charge for depositing a check that bounced a small amount compared to what she could have lost. Sadly, Erin Curry still doesn't feel safe. "For two weeks he bothered me, giving me a weird vibe. He kept calling me every night asking me how I was doing."

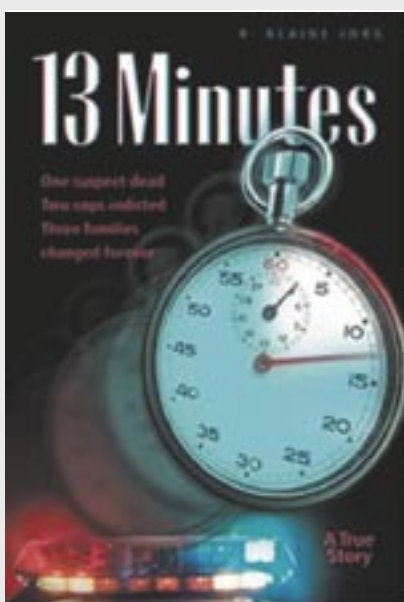
Curry notified SitterCity.com, and she says they told her they are aware of the scam. By phone SitterCity.com insists the safety of its users is its top priority, and it dedicated an entire portion of its Web site warning users about possible online scams.

As for the man that tried to scam Erin Curry, the so-called Bobby Zamora—he stole that name, too. The real Bobby Zamora is a famous British soccer star, not a man who scams babysitters out of their hard-earned money.

(Curry asked we not use her location for her own safety.)

(g.stinchfield@thejusticejournal.com)

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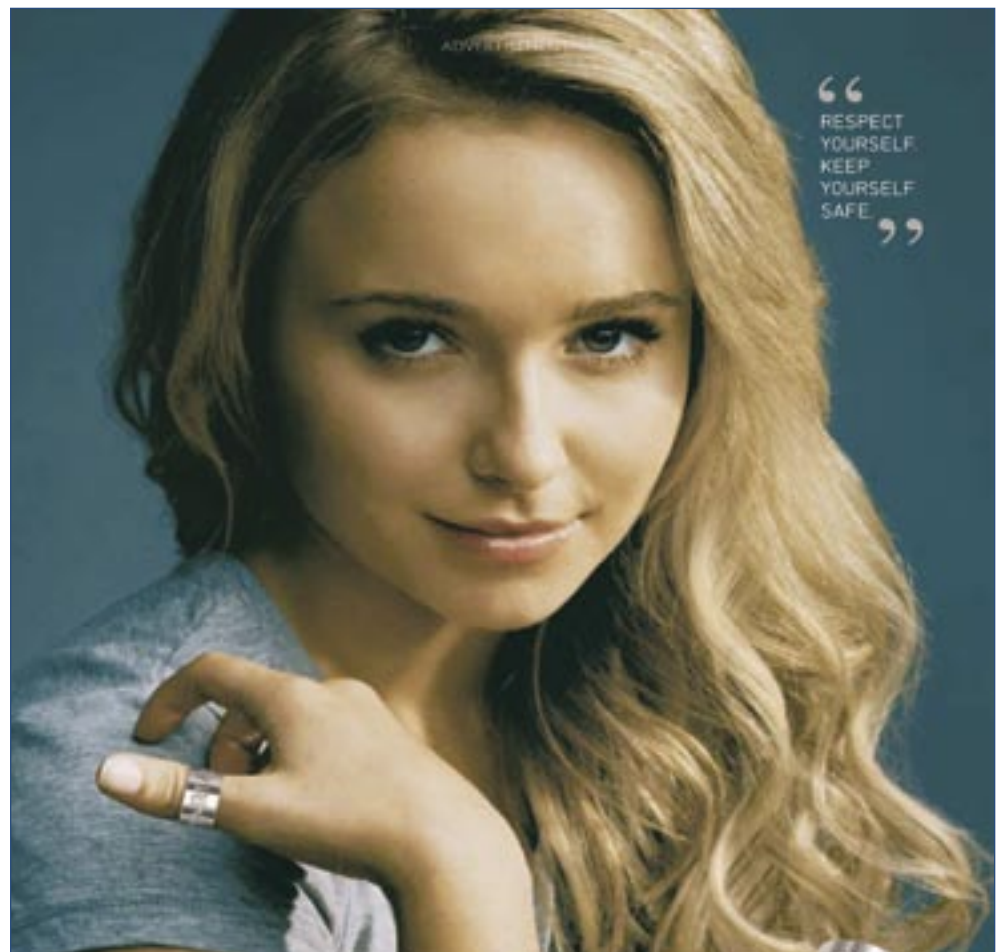
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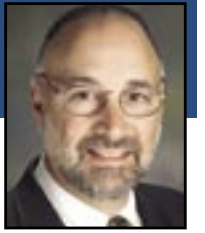


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Due Process

RICHARD T. MEEHAN JR.



Teen Sex Offenses Radically Changed by Legislature

No series of crimes has garnered more attention in recent years than those involving sexual assaults on minors. With the advent of Megan's Law, convicted sex offenders are required to register for a minimum of ten years. Jessica's Law, recently enacted in Connecticut, has dramatically increased the penalties for sexual abuse of children. In contrast, the legislature recently addressed the sexual relationships between younger and older teens. Sex, even consensual, with one under the age of 16 violates two separate statutes: those in the range of sexual assaults (1st through 4th degree); and Risk of Injury to a Minor.

An unfortunate by-product of the efforts to protect young teens from sexual predation, the law also ensnared older teens, effectively turning hormonal teens into registered sex offenders.

The stigma from conviction of any sex offense is lasting and devastating. Many of the sexual assault statutes carry mandatory minimum prison sentences. Those sentences are followed by extended periods of sex offender probation. Offenders are strictly monitored. They are restricted from attending events or going places where youngsters commonly congregate, unless

accompanied by a trained supervisor. They are prohibited from unsupervised contact with anyone under the age of 18. Future employers and neighbors are all informed that there is a registered offender among them.

Recognizing that sex among teenagers is a common occurrence, the law had provided a safety valve. It was an affirmative defense that the actor was no more than two years older than the underage partner, provided that partner was older than 13.

Acting on a bill supported by both the State's Attorneys and the Connecticut Criminal Defense Lawyers Association, that safety valve was recently increased from two to three years by the legislature.

Substitute Senate Bill 1458 became law effective October 1st. It provides in relevant part: "*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:*

*[*1] Section 1. Section 53a-71 of the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (Effective October 1, 2007):*

A person is guilty of sexual assault in the second degree when such person engages in sexual intercourse with another person and:
(1) *Such other person is thirteen years of age*

or older but under sixteen years of age and the actor is more than THREE years older than such person. . ."

The current dilemma facing defense counsel is how to remedy the convictions of 17- or 18- year-olds who would have qualified for the new three-year safety valve but were convicted under the predecessor act because they were more than two years the senior of their partner. Lawyers should consider applications to the Board of Pardons and Parole for young offenders who would have otherwise qualified had the new safety valve been in effect. Designation as a sex offender doesn't come with an explanation. Those surfing the Internet on the registry site are left with a view that such a youngster is a sexual predator rather than a hormonal teen.

What are preliminary hearings?

Dear Justice Journal,
I have been watching the hearings in Nevada for O.J. Simpson's arrest. I am interested in knowing why this hearing was conducted. The commentator on CourtTV mentioned that he could have been indicted by a grand jury. Can you explain this?

*Tyler Thomas
Fairfield*

Dear Tyler,

O.J. Simpson, former NFL great whose gridiron moniker was "the Juice," is back in a familiar place—seated at a courtroom table with a defense attorney. Now 60, Simpson is facing prosecution for kidnapping and armed robbery in a dispute over stolen memorabilia. The state of Nevada maintains that Simpson and armed codefendants gained access to a hotel room occupied by some sports memorabilia collectors with the intent to hold those men against their will and forcibly rob them of items that once belonged to Simpson.

Simpson, who doesn't deny being there, claims that he was merely securing property that had been stolen from him—no crime was committed; the defense is, "How can you rob someone of something you already own?"

That is unusual enough, but this current round in the proceedings is unusual for many reasons. This is a preliminary hearing, not a trial. The distinction is that in a preliminary hearing the prosecution must provide

- Continued on next page

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Due Process—

Continued from previous page

only enough evidence to demonstrate probable cause for the arrest. A finding of probable cause, under Nevada law, and in keeping with constitutional requirements under the Fourth Amendment to the United States Constitution, is always required before an individual may be detained and held for trial.

In many states finding probable cause is left to a judge reviewing an arrest warrant or an affidavit from arresting officers after a warrantless arrest. Once probable cause is found, there is no need for a preliminary hearing. In those states that still employ a grand jury system, and in the federal criminal system, a warrant alone does not suffice to allow an accused to be held for trial. There must be either a judicial finding of probable cause after an evidentiary hearing or an indictment by a grand jury. This is the system Nevada employs.

In our Connecticut state court we had long ago eliminated grand juries and probable cause hearings for most felonies. Only in cases where an accused faces life or capital punishment is there a right to a probable cause hearing. In all other cases it is sufficient if a judge finds probable cause, either by the issuance of an arrest warrant, or in the case of a warrantless arrest, after reviewing affidavits from the arresting officers. There are times when police have to make spot decisions without the luxury of seeking a formal arrest warrant. Even so, those arrests must be supported by probable cause.

Probable cause, simply stated, is a reasonable belief that a crime was committed and the individual whose arrest is sought is reasonably believed to have committed it. The burden of proof for probable cause is the lowest standard in our legal system, described as a scintilla of evidence. Derived from Latin, it means a tiny trace or spark of a specified feeling. It exists in deep contrast to the burden necessary to convict—proof beyond a reasonable doubt.

In those systems that require a grand jury indictment, the preliminary probable cause hearing is an alternative. Either the evidence is presented to a panel of grand jurors, usually in a secret proceeding, generally not attended by the accused, or a full, public hearing is conducted before a judge.

The election belongs to the prosecution. On the one hand they can present evidence, unchallenged by the defense, to a captive audience of grand jurors, or expose their case and witnesses to discovery and cross-examination by the defense. Most prosecutors will always opt for the grand jury rather than give the defense a shot at their witnesses.

Many defense counsel love preliminary hearings. They are a dry run on the trial and serve to expose the state's evidence. Skillful cross-examination can expose weaknesses in the prosecution that are now immortalized. The transcript of the sworn testimony can be utilized at the later trial if the witness testifies

differently.

There are instances when seasoned defense counsel will waive a probable cause hearing. Once a witness testifies and is subject to cross-examination, that transcript can be used at trial if the witness is unavailable—a common situation in street shootings. When a hearing is waived, the burden remains on the state to locate and produce that witness for a later trial. The defense is gambling that the witness will not appear or won't be able to be located by the time a trial occurs.

In sensational cases, like the recent Cheshire triple homicide, experienced practitioners do not want to pollute the potential jury pool by the publicity that would be generated by a parade of witnesses that may recount grisly or damaging testimony.

Now having read this, one might wonder why the state of Nevada would expose their witnesses, especially some of the shady characters they are calling, by opting for a public hearing rather than the grand jury. Every decision made by lawyers is based on the search for a tactical advantage. Certainly the defense has gained an apparent advantage. But what of the prosecution? Are they seeking to create a negative image of O.J. in the minds of potential jurors? That hardly seems necessary, since he has worked for a decade to be reviled. Or is this another lucky stroke for Simpson, whose last criminal victory was as much due to tactical blunders by the prosecution as it was to artful representation by the defense?

If you have not had a chance to watch this, go to www.CourtTV.com to catch up with video, and you will see lawyers jousting as if this was a trial of guilt or innocence. In the end, probable cause was a simple threshold to cross for the state, and O.J. will be back at the defense table again as he was bound over for trial.

*Commentary and answers to your questions about legal issues will be provided by one of Connecticut's premiere trial attorneys, Richard T. Meehan Jr. of Bridgeport's Meehan, Meehan & Gavin (www.meehanlaw.com). Meehan is a nationally certified criminal trial specialist and a charter fellow of the Litigation Counsel of America, Trial Lawyer Honorary Society, as well as a former adjunct law professor. He has handled some of Connecticut's highest-profile criminal and civil cases. He can be seen as a law commentator on local and national TV, including Court TV's *The Best Defense* with Jami Floyd, and *Courtside* with Ashleigh Banfield and Jack Ford. Rich is a frequent contributor to the blog, *Cool Justice* (www.cooljustice.blogspot.org). He writes a weekly column on legal issues for the *Norwich Bulletin*. E-mail your questions to: Dueprocess@thejusticejournal.com.*



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What If...?

By **CAPT. GARY MACNAMARA**
Fairfield Police Department
Special to The Justice Journal



You Decide to Drink and Drive

It's the season to be festive and jolly, but it is also the season for us to review and reflect on the hazards of driving a motor vehicle while under the influence of alcohol or drugs.

What if you choose to drink and drive? What could happen? You may get arrested, get hurt, or even worse, may hurt or kill someone else.

The time to ask and answer those questions is now, not when you're leaving the party or bar, when your thought process is diminished, your reasoning and motor skills are affected, or other circumstances lead you to make the wrong choice. Now is also the time to learn and understand the "DUI land mines" that await you anytime you choose to drink and drive.

Throughout the history of warfare, armies have included land mines in their arsenal to add an unpredictable threat to the enemy. These land mines, spread over a battlefield, are designed to be placed or hidden in a field, or other area, and explode when a person or vehicle comes near it. Troops that traverse these minefields must carefully maneuver to avoid getting hurt or killed. An encounter with one of these land mines often becomes life-altering. Soldiers successfully and safely maneuvering around the land mines often exhibit a great sense of relief to have made it safely through.

What if, like in a battle, there were DUI land mines placed strategically along your route home? What if, like a soldier carefully crossing a minefield, a person operating a motor vehicle under the influence of alcohol and/or drugs had their own DUI land mines to avoid, as they attempt to make it home? There are. They're not buried in the ground, or used in warfare, but they can be just as deadly and life-altering if encountered. DUI

land mines can come in a variety of forms, from a police stop, a roadblock, a tree, a deer, or even a pedestrian accidentally walking in the path of your vehicle.

On December 13th, 2001, a 43-year-old Orange man decided to risk it. After consuming alcohol, he attempted to drive his truck home, only to hit a DUI land mine on Route 110 in Shelton. His land mine was a vehicle traveling in the opposite direction that he hit head-on

when he crossed into the other lane. Tragically, the 48-year-old mother and 13-year-old daughter who were in the other car coming home from a night of Christmas shopping were killed.

Tragic stories like these motivate the police to put their own DUI land mines in place, to catch violators before they hurt themselves or others. It starts with attempts to increase public awareness of the problems and the risks. "Don't

drink and drive" and "Over the limit - Under arrest" are anti-drinking and driving slogans, plastered everywhere. The message is clear on the hazards of driving while under the influence.

Police conduct random roadblocks, stopping drivers and looking for signs of intoxication. After a brief interview, the driver is either sent on his or her way, or the police investigate further. Police may also maintain roving DUI patrols to spot intoxicated drivers. These moving "DUI land mines" are staffed by officers looking for signs of intoxication by observing the way in which the motor vehicle is being operated. Once stopped, the officer may look for signs of intoxication. Police also monitor traffic for other violations, which may result in the discovery of an intoxicated operator.

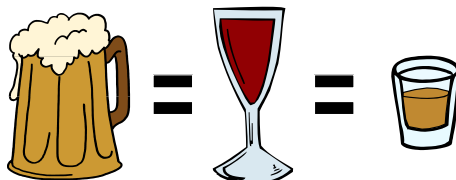
Drivers who drink plant their own land mines: passing out in the driver's seat, falling asleep at a traffic light, backing into a parked car on the way out of the bar parking lot, or getting a flat tire by hitting a curb. These are all DUI land mines that happen and that often result in a police response and arrest for drunk driving. There are also the more serious events such as driving the wrong way on the highway, failing to follow traffic signals, or speeding that have resulted in serious crashes because of the driver's condition. A drunk driver may not even be the one at fault for the initial incident, but when police arrive they will observe the condition of the driver.

There are other, less obvious, DUI landmines. Other drivers, observing a swerving, speeding vehicle, can report it to police. Bar owners and liquor store clerks make perfect land mines, often reporting intoxicated drivers to the police as they

- Continued on next page

HOW ALCOHOL AFFECTS YOU

Drinks	Body Weight in Pounds							
	100	120	140	160	180	200	220	240
1.....	.04	.03	.03	.02	.02	.02	.02	.02
2.....	.08	.06	.05	.05	.04	.04	.03	.03
3.....	.11	.09	.08	.07	.06	.06	.05	.05
4.....	.15	.12	.11	.09	.08	.08	.07	.06
5.....	.19	.16	.13	.12	.11	.09	.09	.08
6.....	.23	.19	.16	.14	.13	.11	.10	.09
7.....	.26	.22	.19	.16	.15	.13	.12	.11
8.....	.30	.25	.21	.19	.17	.15	.14	.13
9.....	.34	.28	.24	.21	.19	.17	.15	.14
10.....	.38	.31	.27	.23	.21	.19	.17	.16



ONE DRINK:
12 OZ. BEER
4 OZ. WINE
1 OZ. 80-PROOF LIQUOR

This chart is only a guide and not sufficiently accurate to be considered legal evidence.

Even at low levels, and regardless of a person's tolerance, alcohol dulls the senses, impairs judgment and decision-making ability, and slows reaction time. Some people may not feel "drunk," yet their driving will be impaired. Although no one of these systems may be affected greatly, the overall effect of slight impairment in all these areas makes for significantly impaired driving ability.

Source: State of Connecticut, Department of Transportation

Cat Burglars—

Continued from page 10

Off their game, cold and in a rush, the two began that final heist, even though there was no family dinner in progress.

"Something" Was Up

"I knew something was up," said Latella. "I could tell the woman inside had heard something because she acted startled and then reached for the phone. We didn't even have time to take anything before running. We had told Louie to meet us at 6 p.m. but, when he wasn't there, it was like hide and seek for two hours."

As it turned out, Cardillo, who had parked nearby, saw the patrol cars arriving and drove away, returning back to his home in Mahopac, N.Y.

"We saw the search lights and took off running toward I-95," said Latella. "If we had known Louie wasn't going to show up we would have crossed the highway

but instead ran back in the direction of the house."

"The cops don't normally stay more than five minutes if the perpetrator isn't located," said Hirsh. "But, because I figured it was them I told the Westport officers—be patient."

"An officer by the name of Butch Hyatt with a police dog from State Police Troop G tracked them sitting under a tree at a house nearby the one they attempted to rob," said Barrett. "We got a warrant and, with Jim and a Putnam County sheriff, went to Louie's house in Mahopac where we found Salerno's car in the garage."

They also found pawnshop receipts from Florida and Pennsylvania where stolen loot from Greenwich mansions was later located. When the authorities were certain they had captured the "Dinner Set Gang," the duo's bond shot up from

\$25,000 to \$1 million each, making it impossible for them to post bail.

"We didn't take anything from the house, so we figured the worst they could get us on was criminal trespass," said Latella.

Stolen Coin Got Them

"But Pete had a stolen coin in his pocket," said Atkins. The two spent 13 months in various county jails, separately, while deals were struck with authorities.

"A bunch of towns in Connecticut charged us separately—the judge offered me seven years and I said no," stated Salerno. "Then he offered me three, and I said, 'you and God both know you got zero on me. So the only deal I'll take is time served.'"

According to Atkins, the various jurisdictions consolidated the cases—giving them time served, and the men were then released to authorities in Pennsylvania, where Salerno served four years—after making a deal with

prosecutors—and Latella served nine years of a 20-year sentence.

Today, Latella—still on parole—resides near Fort Lauderdale, FL, occasionally assisting police and FBI in crimes similar to those he committed. Salerno, is currently serving time in a Miami, FL, area prison, convicted of selling his own prescription for Oxycontin to one of his nephews, and is due to be released at the end of 2008. They remain married to Gloria and Sandra, who both work in retail stores in the Fort Lauderdale area.

Given the nature of copycat crimes, it is not known exactly how many robberies Salerno and Latella carried out. Atkins estimates the number to be around 200. To this day many law enforcement authorities consider the pair to be the standard by which cat burglars are judged.

"Pete and Dom never hurt anyone and never robbed anyone who couldn't afford to be robbed," said Atkins. They were both gentlemen burglars in every way."
(c.nilesfolsom@thejusticejournal.com)

What If-

Continued from previous page

attempt to purchase more alcohol.

What can happen if you encounter one of these DUI land mines? According to the Connecticut Department of Motor Vehicles, driving is a privilege given to you by them. Any person who operates a motor vehicle in Connecticut is presumed by law to have given willing consent to submit to a test to determine blood alcohol

concentration (BAC). Driving under the influence in the state of Connecticut is a criminal offense. If arrested, the police will detain you, tow your vehicle, and transport you to the police station for BAC testing. If you refuse the test, your license is suspended for a minimum of six months. If your BAC is .08 or higher, you receive a criminal summons and a

court date.

If convicted, the penalties can include a monetary fine, possible jail time, and a license suspension. These all can increase for a repeat offender. At the same time as the criminal matter is being adjudicated, the Department of Motor Vehicles conducts an administrative hearing which can result in a suspended license for a period of six months to five years. The costs associated with insurance premiums, loss of work, family embarrassment, and lawsuits can also be devastating.

So prior to enjoying these holiday celebrations, remember that alcohol changes the way you think and affects your judgment, making those DUI land mines seem not so serious. Think before you go out. How will you arrive home safely? You should plan alternatives to the minefield that awaits you if you decide to get behind the wheel of a car.

What if you plan ahead, and what if you don't drive drunk? What if, in 2001, that 43-year-old man from Orange planned ahead and didn't drive drunk?

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