

**Versus:**

Immigration is clearly one of the nation's great debates. Readers of The Justice Journal sound off.

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**State Innocence Project:**

One man has been freed after 16 years and another 20 cases are under consideration by this group which investigates people who may have been wrongfully incarcerated.

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**Scarce Supply:**

While there are plenty of aspiring police officers, very few applicants make it through the intense requirements, screening and training.

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February 2008

**FIGHTING CRIME IN CONNECTICUT**

VOL. 2, ISSUE 1



**An Officer and a Hero**

President George W. Bush honored Officer Todd Meyers of the West Hartford Police Department along with several other police officers throughout the country with a national Medal of Valor for heroism in Connecticut with the tragic truck crash on Avon Mountain that killed four people in July 2005. Story on page 15.

**Teen Prescription Drug Abuse Increasing in Fairfield County**

By **NATALIE MISSAKIAN**  
Correspondent

*Ryan was a star basketball player in the wealthy suburb of Newtown. Popular and personable, he came from an ambitious, athletic family.*

*At the end of his freshman year, like many of his classmates, Ryan started dabbling in prescription drugs. First it was the Ritalin his doctor had prescribed to treat his attention deficit disorder. Then it was Xanax, Klonopin, Vicodin, Percocet, OxyContin or anything else he and his friends could get their hands on – either by searching the bathrooms at weekend house parties or raiding their own parents' medicine cabinets.*

*By the time he was a senior, he was going through as many as 15 to 20 pills a day, right under his teachers' noses, a few times being so bold as to take the stuff right at his desk.*

*"It didn't matter if you were the star basketball player or the kid from the other side of the tracks. Everyone was doing it," said Ryan, who asked that his real name not be used.*

*Today, at 26, Ryan is a recovering heroin addict. And he is not alone.*



Like their peers across the country, Fairfield County teens are increasingly finding their highs from grandma's purse or their best friend's medicine cabinet.

Substance abuse experts throughout the region report a disturbing rise in teen abuse of prescription drugs, particularly painkillers, saying many are switching from drugs like OxyContin and Vicodin to heroin at ages younger than ever before. The increase comes as abuse of other drugs, such as marijuana, is dropping.

"It's the biggest new drug trend for adolescents and young adults," said John Hamilton, who heads a regional network of drug prevention and treatment programs in Greater Bridgeport. "I think in Fairfield County it is something that has become a real concern."

**"Outbreaks" in Fairfield County**

Nationwide, nearly one in five teens has tried prescription medication to get high in their lifetime, according to a 2005

- See **Teen Drug Use** on page 13

**Stamford Initiatives Lead to "Safe City" Designation**

By **LEISA TAYLOR**  
Correspondent

Bridgeport is the largest, Hartford is the capital, and New Haven has Yale University. But it's Stamford that can boast to being the safest city in Connecticut. The ranking follows last month's release of the FBI's preliminary crime statistics for the first half of 2007.

"We saw a very substantial drop in crime in the first half of 2007," said Stamford Mayor Dannel P. Malloy. "We had an extraordinary year. Crime is unbelievably low here." Preliminary figures for the second half of 2007 also show a drop in crime.

Naysayers might respond that since the FBI defines "city" as a municipality with a population of 100,000 or more, only five Connecticut cities were in the race. Stamford, with a population of

"By being proactive we made a lot more arrests. The patrol division was encouraged to make more vehicle stops. A lot of times, you make a motor vehicle stop that starts out as a guy going through a red light. You can end up with a guy who's got a warrant or someone who's got a gun or drugs in the car."

- Stamford Police Lt. Sean Cooney

approximately 120,000, ranks fourth in population behind Bridgeport, Hartford, and New Haven. Waterbury is the fifth and final city within that definition.

But the boast continues. Of the 250 cities across the country that reported data to the FBI, Stamford ranked as the third safest, an improvement from its ninth-place ranking in 2006. Moreover, of the 27 cities in the northeast region that reported data, Stamford came in second behind only Amherst Town, NY.

**Mayor Proud of Police**

"The men and women of the Stamford Police Department are to be commended for this outstanding achievement," Malloy said. "I am extremely proud of the accomplishments of our police department personnel and am pleased that these statistics validate the hard work done by so many to maintain safe neighborhoods in our city."

This picture wasn't always so rosy. In 1995, when Mayor Malloy was first elected,

Stamford's national ranking was 44<sup>th</sup>, and its regional ranking was fifth. Malloy points to several factors which have helped turn around Stamford's crime image.

"We reshaped and essentially modernized the police department several years ago," Malloy said. "We fully embraced community policing – the idea that police have to spend as much effort preventing crimes as they do apprehending people who commit crimes. There's also the obvious benefit that for every crime you prevent, you don't have a victim."

Malloy also credits the city's clearance rate of crimes as a deterrent to criminals. "We have a great clearance rate in Stamford," he said. "I think this leads people to making a decision that if they're going to commit crimes, they need to go to other places to commit them. We

- See **Safe City** on page 14

# Technology for Security Systems Provides Numerous Benefits

By **RONALD WINTER**  
Correspondent

In the mid-1980's movie *Weird Science*, a teenaged loser, charged with watching over his absent parents' house with his best friend, uses computer technology to conjure up the gorgeous Kelly LeBrock, then throws an unauthorized party that results in damage of Biblical proportions.

Unfortunately for most teenagers, it is possible to create that kind of mess, but not to clean it up, at least not in a matter of seconds as occurs in the movie.

Fortunately for most parents, the ability to monitor their home, belongings, and errant teenagers from distant locales to prevent that kind of catastrophe now is as close as the nearest computer.

Bob McVeigh, president of the Connecticut Alarm and Systems Integrators Association, CASIA (phone, 1-800-762-3099; Web site: <http://www.casiact.org/>), says the days are long gone when homeowners were at the mercy of people they didn't know, or clueless burglars needed to break an electric circuit to set off the alarms.

CASIA is a trade organization that provides security system education, consumer awareness, industry contacts, and regular news on Intrusion, Fire, and Supervisory systems, closed circuit television, telephone and intercoms, home theaters, access control, and computer wiring.

The home and business security industry is evolving at an incredible pace, capable now of seamlessly integrating alarm systems, video, and access control, with other technologies, enabling users to monitor and control their home and business systems from thousands of miles away.

The extent to which Internet Protocol (IP)

technology can assist property owners does not stop at security. McVeigh notes that "the days of leaving your doors unlocked are gone," but rather than placing trust in our fellow man, we have the ability to remotely monitor myriad conditions that could cause us harm.

"People want protection, but they also want convenience," McVeigh says. Now, "you can sit at your desk and look at your home on your computer."

In addition to smoke detectors and fire alarms, security systems now can be integrated with carbon monoxide detectors, medical alert detectors, and even low temperature detectors that can alert responders in cold climates if a home heater is malfunctioning.

With cold temperatures creating the potential for tens of thousands of dollars in damage from frozen

plumbing systems, the ability to anticipate the problem before it occurs is crucial.

"It's better to get a notice at 40 degrees, rather than come home to burst pipes at 10 degrees," McVeigh said.

In addition to enabling home and business owners to secure their property from distant locations, the new technology is not limited to just the wealthy. It also makes security systems affordable to the average family, he said, adding that the monthly cost is about the same as a teenager's cell phone.

While there now are many uses for security systems, the ultimate purpose of security systems is to deter crime, and seeing a decal on a building or window often is sufficient to keep potential burglars moving elsewhere.

McVeigh, who also is vice president for Security Solutions in Norwalk, relates that some people try to avoid installing a full system by simply pasting a decal on their home or business, a ruse that usually doesn't work for long in the presence of professional criminals. That approach merely says, "I've got something in my home worth protecting, but I didn't really protect it," he adds.

Criminals look for opportunities, which generally translates to the easiest road to do their crimes, McVeigh says. An effective security system does not have to represent a huge investment, but in terms of preventing crimes and resultant losses, "it is well worth the cost."

"Criminals are lazy. If they weren't, they would have a real job," McVeigh adds. A security system might not prevent robbers from entering where they don't belong, "but it can limit their stay. We can't stop crime, but if I can stop it at your house, that's a good thing."

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## Use the following checklist when choosing an alarm company

- Be sure that the installation company is a member of CASIA, a Charter State Association of the National Burglar & Fire Alarm Association (NBFAA). Members agree to maintain a high level of conduct under a Code of Ethics and render services at the highest level of quality.
- Call more than one company. Schedule an appointment when all members of your household are present. When a security professional visits, ask to see company identification.
- Ask if their technicians are licensed C5, C6, L5, L6 or under the State apprentice program. A low-voltage electrical license is required to install security/fire alarm systems in Connecticut. A license is not required to sell.
- Under CT statutes a license number should appear on all company letterhead, contracts, business cards, and vehicles. Ask if they screen employees before hiring.

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# Connecticut Innocence Project Provides Hope for Wrongly Convicted

By **TEALE CALIENDO**  
Correspondent

Even though Public Defender Brian Carlow said he learned long ago not to trust his “gut,” somehow he felt this time it was right.

“We were leaving the Cheshire correctional facility,” he explained. “We were both pretty quiet, and I remember we looked at each other and verbalized it almost at the same time: ‘This guy didn’t do it.’” That was in January 2006, and on the ride back to their office, Public Defenders Carlow and Karen Goodrow decided to work on the case of James Calvin Tillman, as part of the new Connecticut Innocence Project.

Tillman had already served 18 years

in prison and was facing another 27 years behind bars. Today Tillman is a free man, and last year the State of Connecticut granted him \$5 million for the miscarriage of justice that sent him to prison for a crime he didn’t commit.

The events that led to Tillman’s ordeal began on a cold January morning in 1988 with the abduction, rape, and beating of a 26-year-old woman. According to police, the victim was warming her car in a Hartford parking lot when a stranger pushed his way into the vehicle and kidnapped and attacked her before escaping. Police picked up Tillman as a suspect after the victim identified him from a photo. Forensic testing was in its infancy at the time, and an analysis of semen found on the victim’s clothing

## James Tillman

**Incident Date:** 1/22/88

**Jurisdiction:** CT

**Charge:** Sexual Assault, Kidnapping, Robbery, Assault, Larceny

**Conviction:** Sexual Assault, Kidnapping, Robbery, Assault, Larceny

**Sentence:** 45 Years

**Year of Conviction:** 1989

**Exoneration Date:** 7/11/06

**Sentence Served:** 16.5 Years

**Real perpetrator found?:** Not Yet

**Contributing Causes:** Eyewitness Misidentification



showed it could have come from 20 percent of the male population. That 20 percent included James Tillman.

Tillman maintained his innocence and refused to accept a plea bargain that would have given him five years in jail. Instead, the jury convicted him

and he was sentenced to 45 years. The conviction was based on the victim’s eyewitness testimony. The victim was a white woman, and Tillman is a black man. In general, stranger identification, especially across racial lines, is not considered very reliable.

The tale of James Calvin Tillman’s freedom is the story of Connecticut’s Innocence Project, to assist inmates who have been wrongfully convicted. In the summer of 2004 the state’s public defender’s office decided it was time for Connecticut to start an innocence project. It is modeled after Attorneys Barry Scheck’s and Peter Neufeld’s Innocence Project at the Benjamin N. Cardozo School of Law at Yeshiva University in New York. Over the past 16 years the original Innocence Project has exonerated 218 inmates through DNA evidence. Sixty percent of the men freed have been black men wrongfully convicted of raping white women. In 40 percent of its cases, the Innocence Project has freed someone unjustly imprisoned and identified the real assailant.

“I have always had an interest in misidentification and innocence cases,” said Goodrow, “and a colleague of mine, Brian Carlow, was our resident DNA expert...so we chaired...this innocence project.” At the time there wasn’t separate funding for the project so Goodrow and Carlow spent what extra time they could reviewing cases to work on.

“It was Brian’s keen eye,” Goodrow said, “that pointed out the Tillman case should move to the top of the list.” It was a stranger rape, it was cross-racial, and since it occurred in 1989 the DNA technology at the time wasn’t specific enough to pinpoint the attacker. “Brian said this could be one of those cases where DNA could help out.”

“And so then the weight on our shoulders was much heavier, and we knew we needed to do everything we could to try to prove his innocence,” Carlow added. “But whether or not we ultimately would be able to show a court that an injustice had been done...we had no idea.”

The first step for the public defenders was to get the 18-year-old evidence tested. But they couldn’t locate the victim’s semen-stained dress and pantyhose. As part of a previous court process the evidence had been transported from the

## Facts on Post-Conviction DNA Exonerations

(Source: Innocence Project)

### There have been 212 post-conviction DNA exonerations in the United States.

- The first DNA exoneration took place in 1989. Exonerations have been won in 31 states; since 2000, there have been 149 exonerations.
- 15 of the 212 people exonerated through DNA served time on death row.
- The average length of time served by exonerees is 12 years. The total number of years served is approximately 2,606.
- The average age of exonerees at the time of their wrongful convictions was 26.
- The true suspects and/or perpetrators have been identified in 80 of the DNA exoneration cases.
- Since 1989, there have been tens of thousands of cases where prime

suspects were identified and pursued—until DNA testing (prior to conviction) proved that they were wrongly accused.

- In more than 25 percent of cases in a National Institute of Justice study, suspects were excluded once DNA testing was conducted during the criminal investigation (the study, conducted in 1995, included 10,060 cases where testing was performed by FBI labs).
- 45 percent of exonerees have been financially compensated. 22 states, the federal government, and the District of Columbia have passed laws to compensate people who were wrongfully incarcerated. Awards under these statutes vary from state to state.
- 33 percent of cases closed by the Innocence Project were closed because of lost or missing evidence.

### Races of the 212 exonerees:

128 African-Americans • 59 Caucasians • 19 Latinos • 1 Asian-American • 5 whose race is unknown

## Leading Causes of Wrongful Convictions

These DNA exoneration cases have provided irrefutable proof that wrongful convictions are not isolated or rare events, but arise from systemic defects that can be precisely identified and addressed. For more than 14 years, the Innocence Project has worked to pinpoint these trends.

### Mistaken eyewitness identification testimony was a factor in 77 percent of post-conviction DNA exoneration cases in the U.S.

This is the leading cause of wrongful convictions. Of that 77 percent, 48 percent of cases where race is known involved cross-racial eyewitness identification. Studies have shown that people are less able to recognize faces of a different race than their own. The Innocence Project has adopted a series of guidelines to improve the reliability of eyewitness identifications. These suggested reforms are practiced in the state of New Jersey, large cities like Minneapolis and Seattle, and several smaller jurisdictions.

### Lab error and junk science have played a role in 65 percent of wrongful convictions.

In over half of DNA exonerations, the misapplication of forensic disciplines—such as blood type testing, hair analysis, fingerprint analysis, bite mark analysis, and more—has played a role in convicting the innocent. In these cases, forensic scientists and prosecutors presented fraudulent, exaggerated, or otherwise tainted evidence to the judge or jury which led to the wrongful conviction. Three cases have even involved erroneous testimony about DNA test results.

### False confessions and incriminating statements lead to wrongful convictions in 25 percent of cases.

350 jurisdictions now record interrogations. False confessions are another leading cause of wrongful convictions. Twenty-five percent of cases involve a false confession or incriminating statement made by the defendant. Of those cases, 35 percent were 18 or under and/or developmentally disabled. The Innocence Project encourages police departments to electronically record all custodial interrogations in their entirety in order to prevent coercion and to provide an accurate record of the proceedings. More than 350 jurisdictions have voluntarily adopted policies to record interrogations. State supreme courts have taken action in Alaska, Massachusetts, Minnesota, New Hampshire, New Jersey, and Wisconsin. Illinois, Maine, New Mexico, and the District of Columbia require the taping of interrogations in homicide cases.

### Snitches contribute to wrongful convictions in 15 percent of cases.

Another principal factor in wrongful convictions is the use of snitches, or jailhouse informants. Whenever snitch testimony is used, the Innocence Project recommends that the judge instruct the jury that most snitch testimony is unreliable as it may be offered in return for deals, special treatment, or the dropping of charges. Prosecutors should also reveal any incentive the snitch might receive, and all communication between prosecutors and snitches should be recorded. Fifteen percent of wrongful convictions that were later overturned by DNA testing were caused in part by snitch testimony.

- See *Innocence Project* on page 18



## Darien Police Seek Help in Bank Robbery

On Saturday, 1/12/08, at 12:01 P.M., a bank robbery was reported at the Webster Bank located at 1101 Post Road, Darien.

Darien police are asking for the public's help in identifying the perpetrator, who is described as a black male approximately 6'3" to 6'6" tall, wearing a baseball-type cap, red sweat shirt, jeans, and black and white sneakers. No additional suspects were observed. A vehicle that may have been involved in the robbery is an older model 4-door vehicle passenger vehicle, described as tan or light-colored.

The robber said he had a gun when he presented a note to a teller demanding cash. An undisclosed amount of cash was taken.

The subject entered and exited the bank via the front door, and was last observed fleeing the area on foot. The robbery is being investigated by the department's detective division. Anyone who may have information concerning the robbery is asked to contact the detective division at (203) 662-5330.

# State Police Honored by Elks Club

The Fairfield Elks Lodge #2220 honored 11 members of the Connecticut State Police during a ceremony led by Jane Celon, Americanism Chairperson. Guest speakers included Senator John McKinney, State Representative Tom Drew, and First Selectman Ken Flatto.

Those recognized for their outstanding service and contributions to law and order in the state of Connecticut were:

**Colonel John Danaher**  
*Commissioner of Department of Public Safety*

**Colonel Thomas Davoren**  
*Head of State Police Department Commander*

**Lt. Col. Peter Terenzi**  
*Commanding Officer of Field Operations*

**Lt. J. Paul Vance**  
*Commanding Officer of Public Information Office*

**Major Warren Hyatt**  
*Commanding Officer Connecticut State Police - Western District*

**Capt. Sarah Kasacek**  
*Executive Officer Connecticut State Police - Troop A*

**Lt. Dale Hourigan**  
*Commanding Officer Connecticut State Police - Troop B*

**Lt. Scott Anderson**  
*Commanding Officer Connecticut State Police - Troop G*

**Sgt. Michael DeCesare**  
*Connecticut State Police - Troop G*

**Lt. Shawn Boyne**  
*Commanding Officer Connecticut State Police - Troop L*

**Ronald Kadar**  
*Auxiliary Trooper Connecticut State Police*

Ronald Kadar has served as the Auxiliary State Trooper at Troop G in Bridgeport for more than 50 years. During his tenure, he has served under the command of 24 lieutenants at Troop G. He has assisted at countless scenes and has always been ready to perform any needed task. He was named Auxiliary Trooper of the Year.



Ronald Kadar has served as an auxiliary state trooper at Troop G in Bridgeport for more than 50 years. During his tenure, he has served under the command of 24 different lieutenants at Troop G. Honored as Auxiliary Trooper of the Year, he has assisted at countless accident and crime scenes. Discussing the event with him is Fairfield First Selectman Ken Flatto.



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# Taser Use Increasing in Local and State Law Enforcement

By **BETH LONGWARE DUFF**  
Correspondent

Tasers – also known as electronic control devices, or ECDs – are coming of age more than three decades after they were first introduced.

The word “tase” has even made it into the American lexicon (as in “Don’t tase me, bro!”, declared the most memorable quote of 2007 by *The Yale Book of Quotations*), and sales of purse-size personal Tasers are on the rise (see story below).

In 2006, the last year for which statistics are available, 98 police departments in the state (20 in Fairfield County) were either using or evaluating Tasers. That puts the weapon firmly in the plus column as a safer use-of-force option, according to several departments who spoke with the *Justice Journal*.

“I teach tactics from hands to guns, and I think the department is best served when Tasers are part of a package,” says Sergeant Michael Georgoulis, Taser program coordinator at the Danbury Police Department and master instructor for TASER International. “It’s a tool in the tool box, not this evil thing.”

The trademarked name is an acronym for “Thomas A. Swift’s Electric Rifle,” named in 1974 by its inventor, NASA scientist Jack Cover, after the hero of a 20th century science fiction adventure series. His original model resembled a large flashlight and used a gunpowder blast to launch two wires at its target, making it technically a firearm.

In its current incarnation, gunpowder’s out and compressed nitrogen cartridges are in. They’re used to shoot two fishhook-like probes up to 35 feet at a speed of over 160 feet per second. The probes are attached to the Taser by insulated wire, through which an electrical signal is transmitted. The “power plant” is two 3-volt lithium camera batteries.

The controlled cycle of electricity, which usually lasts five seconds, stimulates muscles without affecting the heart or other vital organs, according to the company. This state-of-the-art technology, called Neuromuscular Incapacitation, temporarily overrides the nervous system of the suspect regardless of mental focus, training, or size.

TASER International, which dominates 95 percent of sales and markets five professional models in its Citizen Defense System, claims over 12,000 law enforcement, correctional, and military agencies in 44 countries are onboard, with more than 301,000 Tasers sold to law enforcement since February 1998. The company’s revenue has grown from approximately \$2.5 million for fiscal year 1999 to an estimated \$67 million in 2004; third quarter 2007 revenues alone were \$28.5 million, a 56 percent increase over the same quarter of the previous year.

The effectiveness of Tasers was the subject of a June 2007 *Police Quarterly* article entitled “The Taser as a Less Lethal Force Alternative: Findings on Use and Effectiveness in a Large Metropolitan Police Agency.” The article focused on the use and effectiveness of the weapon



by examining all Taser deployments by police officers in an unidentified large metropolitan department from 2002 through 2004.

“Findings indicate that the Taser was used almost exclusively against violent suspects classified as ‘emotionally disturbed’ by emergency service officers with supervisors present,” it reported. “Despite use on a population perceived as being higher risk for injury, findings indicate that the Taser was effective, as 85 percent of suspects were incapacitated and taken into custody without further incident.”

Law enforcement officers agree that Tasers offer a safer use-of-force option than batons or other impact weapons.

“Our continuum of force includes verbal commands, pepper spray, Taser, up to and including use of deadly force,” says Captain Michael Lombardo of his department’s policy in Wilton. “If we have a situation where we can use something in the force continuum before deadly force, it’s an asset to us and the community.”

He adds that the Taser can be an excellent tool in a standoff situation, and offers a recent incident as an illustration.

“The officer was out of his car, talking to this person at somewhat of a distance because the fellow was threatening himself with an instrument if the officer got any closer,” he explains. “The supervisor showed up on the scene, removed the Taser from its holster and pointed it at him, gave verbal commands, and the fellow complied. They didn’t have to get into any type of physical confrontation. He actually told the officers he didn’t want to get tased.”

Lombardo notes that his department has not actually deployed a Taser since purchasing its first in mid-2006. It recently added three more; all four were funded through the department’s asset forfeiture funds.

When departments in Connecticut add the weapon to their arsenal, they generally look to three professional organizations for guidance in writing policy for its use: the Connecticut Police Chiefs Association, the International Association of Chiefs of Police, and the Police Executive Research Forum (PERF). The Danbury Police Department, which has had Tasers since 2003 and now counts 57 in its arsenal, abides by the recommendations of the

latter.

“Our data collection is enormous,” says Georgoulis, who served on the CPCA committee that drew up minimum standards for Taser use. He says officers are required to fill out an incident report, a Response to Resistance report, plus another form to meet PERF data collection requirements after each Taser use. The reports are then reviewed by at least four different officers.

While Danbury and Wilton report no problems with public acceptance of their Tasers, some municipalities have encountered opposition. In neighboring Ridgefield, public controversy erupted late last fall over five video-equipped Tasers purchased with a \$9,000 donation from a private citizen. The anonymous donor acted after the town’s Board of Selectmen rejected the police department’s funding request for four years running.

Numerous citizens raised questions over the gift itself and the timing of its announcement (shortly after Election Day), weighing in on whether the commission had made an “end run” around the selectmen and whether Ridgefield is “the kind of community that warrants Tasers.”

“There are two areas where I think there’s been misunderstanding, miscommunication, and a dearth of facts: the propriety of the process that we underwent in terms of acquiring Tasers and the propriety of the tool itself,” says Police Commission Chairperson Susan Craig, who maintains that the commission acted within its mandate when it accepted the gift. “From our perspective, the commission has heard the need of the police department for less-than-lethal tools.”

The five Tasers are being evaluated in Ridgefield over a six-month period. One has been issued to each shift supervisor, one stays at police headquarters, and one is earmarked as a back-up.

“At the end of the pilot program, when everyone is trained and up and running, we’ll revisit the issue,” promises Craig. “Maybe we’ll say we don’t need them, or that we want more, or that we’re happy with what we have, or let’s evaluate for another six months.”

Danbury’s Georgoulis admits that there’s no magic wand when it comes to law enforcement, but he adds that Tasers come pretty close.

“I’ve been a cop for almost 20 years, and in any physical confrontation I’ve ever been in or at, there are things that work in Case A that may not work or may be inappropriate in Case B,” he says. “When you limit your tools, you limit your options. And that’s never a good idea because each event is a set of circumstances unto itself. I can point to specific examples in Danbury where the Taser was used against someone who was intent on hurting themselves when there was literally no other option. When someone who wants to kill himself is waving a sword around, and is trying to incite you to kill him, what is your option – grant his wish?”

([b.longwareduff@thejusticejournal.com](mailto:b.longwareduff@thejusticejournal.com))

## Is there a Taser in your future?

Women are notorious for carrying a variety of items in their purses, but a growing number are now packing a little something extra: personal palm-friendly Tasers in female-pleasing shades like metallic pink and electric blue.

Marketed by TASER International online and at home parties, the C2 Personal Protection System packs a punch of 50,000 volts with a range of up to 15 feet. It retails for \$299 without laser sight, and \$349 fully equipped. Accessories, like a holster in black or pink, cost extra.

“We did extremely well at the Consumer Electronics Show in January, where we debuted three new colors, including Red Hot Red and Passion Pink in time for Valentine’s Day marketing,” reports TASER International’s Vice President of Communications Steve Tuttle, who adds that the advertising slogan for that campaign will be “Love Her, Protect Her.”

And for good reason, since six out of ten C2s are purchased for or by women who are hip to the idea of carrying heat but no bullets. The model has been popular, to say the least. Released in late July, almost 7,000 C2s were sold in the third quarter of 2007 alone, with buzz generating a backlog of close to 6,000.

“We finally have the right product mix for the consumer market that we’ve been trying to do for the last 14 years,” says Tuttle, who notes that 160,000 Taser systems have been sold to civilians since the company was established. “One of the things we probably should have picked up earlier is that we never carried them around in public on our belts. If you’re going to wear it, it has to have fashion sense to it. It’s no different from wearing a cell phone. In light of the 1.4 million violent attacks that occurred in the United States last year, we think we can put a small dent in that.”

Tuttle notes that potential buyers undergo identification verification and a criminal background check before they can purchase the C2. “On top of that, if you pass that system and use it to commit a crime, it leaves 20 to 30 pieces of confetti all over the scene with numbers that match back to it,” he says. “Keep in mind, you can buy a gun legally in the United States. This is clearly a safer alternative to using a baseball bat, knife, or any other tool, for that matter.”

Intrigued? Be advised that although you’re good to go in 43 states, possession of personal Tasers is restricted in Connecticut and prohibited in neighboring New York and New Jersey.

– Beth Longware Duff

# VERSUS: Weighing in on Immigration Issues in Connecticut

IMMIGRATION IS ONE OF THE NATION'S MOST HOTLY CONTESTED ISSUES

## Sanctuary Cities, Good for New Haven and Good for America

When addressing issues of police effectiveness, it has always been true that participation from citizens is vital for a thorough crime investigation. It is the openness of witnesses that help solve violent crimes more effectively. This is especially true in neighborhoods subject to high crime rates. However, many of these high-crime areas may be populated by groups of virtually non-English-speaking residents. Under the protection of "don't ask, don't tell," key to all sanctuary city ordinances, immigrants have no fear they will be subject to punishment (turned over to ICE) by speaking with police authorities. The practical truth is sanctuary cities actually help the cause of crime fighting.

Kamala Harris, the San Francisco district attorney, supports sanctuary cities. She cites an incident where a local doctor took hundreds of thousands of dollars from immigrants for immunizations that later turned out to be saline solution. Ms. Harris was able to get a seven-year prison term for the doctor. However, she cites that because witnesses were afforded protection from questions about their immigration status, they were far more willing to come forward about the crimes.

Furthermore, in San Francisco and most sanctuary cities, police can inquire of a suspect's immigration status in felony or drug cases.

More than 31 American cities and several states including Alaska, Maine, and Oregon have adopted some form of sanctuary status. Despite the right wing's constant attacks and paranoia about illegal aliens, sanctuary cities are here to stay. The rewards in crime fighting far outweigh the risk that an illegal immigrant gardener might pass below the radar and continue providing a useful service that the typical American is unwilling to do.

The real crime is this administration's failure of the Department of Homeland Security to do its job of securing our borders. It is unconscionable that local police authorities should be asked to shoulder the responsibility of weeding out illegal immigrants, especially when it hampers cooperation in crime investigations. Let's agree to stop the madness. Sanctuary cities are not going to be the downfall of western civilization. They are good for our police, good for New Haven, and good for America.

Larry Williams

## We Need to Seal Our Borders

There is a false impression about the immigrants in this country—those who are duly naturalized, as opposed to illegal aliens, and undocumented workers, often here illegally and sometimes through no fault of their own. Because of endless red tape they are all routinely and loosely

Although the flow of immigrants—both legal and illegal—is most evident in states along the U.S.-Mexico border, in Connecticut there has been a recent surge in the numbers, and many residents have formed strong opinions.

According to The Urban Institute, Latin Americans are the most recent and fastest growing immigrant population in the state, followed by Asian and Caribbean immigrants, while European immigrants are an older, shrinking population.

Some claim that these immigrants are responsible for economic, social, and criminal problems—but do the facts support these claims?

The City of New Haven has introduced municipal identification cards, providing undocumented immigrants a locally legal form of ID that makes it easier to apply for bank accounts and sign rental leases. A "Sanctuary City" or "Safe Zone" is an area where leaders do not permit police or municipal employees to inquire about the immigration status of those within the city limits. Sanctuary Cities generally do not enforce immigration laws. Should there be sanctuary cities in the state—do they help or hurt legal residents?

Governor Jodi Rell has vetoed an immigration tuition bill that would have allowed illegal immigrants attending high school, who sign an affidavit promising to seek citizenship, to pay the lower in-state rate for college. Was that veto the right thing to do, or does an educated population benefit us—regardless of immigration status?

Undocumented day laborers and domestic employees work in every community in Fairfield County. Does this cheap foreign labor drive down wages and create unemployment for U.S. citizens, or are these jobs that Americans don't want providing a service that is needed? Should residents as well as businesses who hire undocumented workers be held accountable?

The fact is that illegal immigration is a complicated matter—especially in a nation that has historically prided itself in welcoming immigrants. Here is what some of Connecticut's citizens think....

referred to as immigrants. Although separate and distinct groups, they are thrown together indiscriminately because of government inefficiency, disorganization, inadequate numbers of personnel, and perhaps intended sluggishness. Existing enforceable legislation is ignored and so the situation has worsened over time, while the daily illegal influx continues.

The practice in some cities, such as New Haven, of providing sanctuary for persons with no legal status here or with status based on false documents, is thought by some to be an effective way to get them "out of the shadows" and to weed out

the criminal and terrorist elements. But blanket sanctuary granted without reliable pre-information allows many such persons simply, to all intents and purposes, to disappear.

Our borders must be sealed posthaste, and as further protection, additional funding must be appropriated for this as well as for more border patrol agents and more office personnel to sort through the mountainous paperwork. Tamper-proof ID cards must be issued to citizens and noncitizens alike.

Illegal behavior must not be tolerated or rewarded, and when appropriate, certain

illegal aliens must be returned to their country of origin.

Elizabeth Gerteiny, Westport

## Don't Let Connecticut Attract Illegal Immigrants

There is a natural tendency for a criminal illegal immigrant to be attracted to a community that is lenient on enforcing the law on immigration deportation. This is what has happened in large sanctuary cities throughout the country, so why wouldn't that happen to cities in Connecticut that are safe zones? The fact is that a disproportionate amount of crime is being committed by illegal aliens. Now the community has the cost of incarcerating and prosecuting them. They are not being required to conduct themselves as good citizens!

Illegals don't pay taxes, yet they receive the services from the city that others pay for. They have a derogatory effect on a neighborhood. Single-family dwellings many times have multiple families living in one house.

The argument that illegals will do jobs others don't want is not true. They might do it cheaper since they don't pay taxes, rent, utilities, services, etc. that citizens have to pay. This is a drain on the economy of the community. Where do the dollars go that these people do earn? Reportedly, a large amount of it is sent back to the country where their relatives live.

The education system is being stretched by overcrowding and cost. Does this cause citizens' children to "dumb down" while the illegal immigrants are trying to catch up because of a language problem? To limit the cops in their ability to protect the citizens in a community does not make sense. "Don't ask" might work for the military, but not in everyday life for a community

- See *Versus* on page 19





## Commentary

# Paying for Substance Abuse Rehab: Private Money and/or Our Tax Dollars?



By **KENN VENIT**

Someone I have known for almost half-a-century recently recognized that the abuse of alcohol and the longtime so-called "recreational" use of cocaine were about to destroy their life. Fortunately, the financial wherewithal existed to deal with the critical situation

privately and immediately—before the criminal justice system might have become involved. That person is now a recovering alcoholic and recovering drug addict, with no criminal record, and plans to remain that way, taking all necessary measures.

Obviously, not everyone who uses illegal drugs goes to prison. Some just never get caught. Some just stop, cold turkey. Others seek rehabilitation on their own, sometimes costing them \$1,000 a day for their treatment, perhaps at one of the highly regarded private rehab facilities in Connecticut.

It is eye-opening to see how close some people may have come to losing productive lives as a result of their addictions. Among those who have admitted using illegal drugs, and who do not have criminal records, is Democratic presidential hopeful Sen. Barack Obama. He wrote in his biography that when he was in his teens, "I had learned not to care...I blew a few smoke rings, remembering those years. Pot had helped, and booze; maybe a little blow when you could afford it. Not smack, though." (Note: "pot" is marijuana, "blow" is cocaine, and "smack" is heroin.)

Other political figures who have indicated they smoked marijuana during their younger years include Bill Clinton (but who says he did not inhale it), Al Gore, and Newt Gingrich. None were ever jailed for such behavior, nor was a man who is now a highly respected district attorney in a Northeastern state. During a media training session I conducted for him years ago, when I asked, "Have you ever used illegal drugs?" he answered that marijuana had helped him get through college and law school. He also said he had recognized that he needed to quit, and did so before beginning his career as a lawyer.

George W. Bush, then 30, was arrested in 1976 in Maine for driving under the influence of alcohol. The Labor Day weekend incident (a police officer noted a car moving suspiciously slowly) took place near his family's Kennebunkport summer home. His sister, Doro, was in the car with him at the time of his arrest. The future president pleaded guilty to the Class D misdemeanor DUI charge (his blood alcohol was 0.10 as a result of beer drinking), paid a \$150 fine, and had his driving privileges revoked for a month. Bush has said he became a recovering alcoholic about a decade later.

Future Vice President Dick Cheney was

convicted of drunk driving twice during an eight-month time frame in the early 1960's in his home state of Wyoming, when he was 21 and 22. He paid fines and had brief suspensions of his driver's license. Back then, Cheney had dropped out of Yale and was working as a "groundman" laying power lines. In an interview with The New Yorker several years ago, Cheney said those DUI arrests made him "...think about where I was and where I was headed down a bad road, if I continued on that course."

Musician Ike Turner died of a cocaine overdose at age 76 in December 2007. When he was 49, he was sentenced to 18 months in prison on cocaine charges. Turner was in jail when he and then-wife Tina were inducted into the Rock 'n' Roll Hall of Fame. She had blamed Ike's cocaine addiction for being part of the cause of the abuse he did to her, leading to their divorce in the 1970's. He reportedly estimated spending about \$11 million on coke over the years.

The nonprofit research and analysis "think tank" known as the RAND Corporation issued a study in 1994 claiming: *"Treatment is 10 times more cost effective than interdiction in reducing the use of cocaine in the United States...Every additional dollar invested in substance abuse treatment saves taxpayers \$7.46 in societal costs...Additional domestic law enforcement efforts cost 15 times as much as treatment to achieve the same reduction in societal costs."*

According to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' "Changing the Conversation: Improving Substance Abuse Treatment: The National Treatment Plan Initiative; Panel Reports, Public Hearings, and Participant Acknowledgements" from 2000, *"The Panel anxiously awaits the time when the disease of addiction is no longer treated as a criminal justice issue, but as a public health problem. Moreover, the Panel embraces the notion of a society that enables any individual with a substance abuse problem, regardless of criminal history, to receive treatment in a safe and respectful environment. The Panel hopes to create a climate in which people who are at risk for, suffering from, or in recovery from alcohol or other drug addiction are valued and treated with dignity."*

Should tax money pay for substance abuse rehabilitation, when someone can't afford the cost?

If the RAND people are right, a dollar investment now in substance abuse treatment saves several dollars more in the criminal justice system and society in general. As the old ad slogan for automotive maintenance and repair costs puts it, "You can pay me now or you can pay me later." You decide.

*(Kenn's opinions are his own, and not necessarily those of The Justice Journal. He is the immediate past president of the Connecticut Pro Chapter of the Society of Professional Journalists. Kenn teaches journalism courses at Quinnipiac University and Southern Connecticut State University.)*

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## Events & Notices

### Pediatric First Aid/Safety & Infant/Child CPR

This two-day class provides instruction in pediatric first aid and safety and American Heart Association-approved Infant and Child CPR. Saturday, February 16<sup>th</sup> and Saturday, February 23<sup>rd</sup>, 8:30 a.m.-5:00 p.m. each day at Bridgeport Hospital duPont Boardroom - 1<sup>st</sup> floor. \$45 for first aid portion only; \$75 for first aid and CPR. To register, call 203-384-4497.

### Amber Alert ID Sessions

Sponsored by the Wilton Rotary Club on Sunday, February 24<sup>th</sup> and Saturday, March 15<sup>th</sup>, 1-4 p.m. Offered at the Wilton Library, 137 Old Ridgefield Road. Any questions, call 203-762-3950.

### Safe and Sound Class

Sponsored by Safe Kids of Fairfield County, the class is designed for parents and grandparents with children between birth and five years of age. Held at Kings Street Church in Danbury on Wednesday, February 20<sup>th</sup>, 6:30 p.m. To register, call Doris Peltz at 203-739-6134.

### Car Seat Clinic

Karl Chevrolet and New Canaan will host a child passenger safety seat clinic on Saturday, March 1, from noon to 4 p.m. at 261 Elm Street, New Canaan.

### Heroes of Lower Fairfield County

Sponsored by the American Red Cross to honor community-nominated heroes. Friday, March 14<sup>th</sup> at the Westin Hotel in Stamford from 7:30-9:00 a.m. Contact Stacey Hafen at 203-966-1665 or [red.cross@snet.net](mailto:red.cross@snet.net).

## Submit Articles

The Justice Journal encourages original letters to the editor pertaining to subjects and issues raised by the writers.

We reserve the right to publish or edit letters for taste, length, and clarity. Make sure to include your full name, address, and a daytime telephone number so that we can verify who you are. All letters through the

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

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## What to Believe?

# Evaluate E-mail Information Carefully, Authorities Advise

By **BETH LONGWARE DUFF**  
Correspondent



Ever been told that if you're accosted at an ATM and forced to withdraw cash, just enter your PIN backwards and help is on its way? Or never flash your headlights at an oncoming car running without its lights on because the occupants could be part of a gang initiation just waiting to open fire on you?

Call them urban legends, good intentions gone bad, or just plain ol' hoaxes – we've all heard them or discovered them in our E-mailbox. To believe or not to believe is the quandary facing folks, but who to ask?

Many turn to the Connecticut State Police, according to Lieutenant J. Paul Vance, commanding officer of its Public Information Office.

"We have a department E-mail where we receive questions from the public all the time," he says. "It's not uncommon for people to ask about things such as the ATM story and gang initiations. Sometimes there's intelligence that we do gather on things similar to those, but other times they're just simply fabricated. They're not issues that we can substantiate."

And he adds that many times the issue at hand comes down to a question of basic common courtesy.

"Don't flash your headlights at people," he gives as an example. "It's annoying, unnecessary, and probably raises more intestinal distress than anything else – and it can lead to a case of road rage."

Information passed along via E-mail is often forwarded multiple times, making it difficult to authenticate, he continues.

"When people E-mail them to us and ask about

them, we tell them whether or not we've had any information to substantiate it. Ninety-nine-point-nine percent of the time we have not," he says. "The smartest thing to do is check with your local police in a nonemergency manner to see if there's any authenticity to it."

Another avenue for tracking down the truth is a Web site called Snopes.com, where "Rumor has it" is the slogan. The site concerns itself with urban legends in the broadest sense of the term, including "common fallacies, misinformation, old wives' tales, strange news stories, rumors, celebrity gossip, and similar items."

For example, under its "Crime" category, the "Warnings" section includes numerous stories that have been making the cyber rounds, such as a serial killer who lures women with \$5 bills he claims they dropped at a gas station or convenience store. Snopes' "Fraud" category covers telephone, sales, and ATM scams as well as "nefarious schemes" for identity theft.

Barbara and David Mikkelson, the couple that maintains the site, admit that they don't expect anyone to accept them as the ultimate authority on any topic. But they do back up their work.

"Unlike the plethora of anonymous individuals

who create and send the unsigned, unsourced E-mail messages that are forwarded all over the Internet, we show our work," they declare on the site. "The research materials we've used in the preparation of any particular page are listed in the bibliography displayed at the bottom of that page so that readers who wish to verify the validity of our information may check those sources for themselves."

For inquiring minds, "snope" is an actual word, according to UrbanDictionary.com, which defines it as "to use knowledge gained from an urban legends Web site or other research to administer a firm rebuke to people who chronically forward junk to your inbox. This action may involve hitting the reply-all button (public snooping)."

Another Web site for scoping out those E-mails is TruthOrFiction.com, which bills itself as "Your E-mail Reality Check."

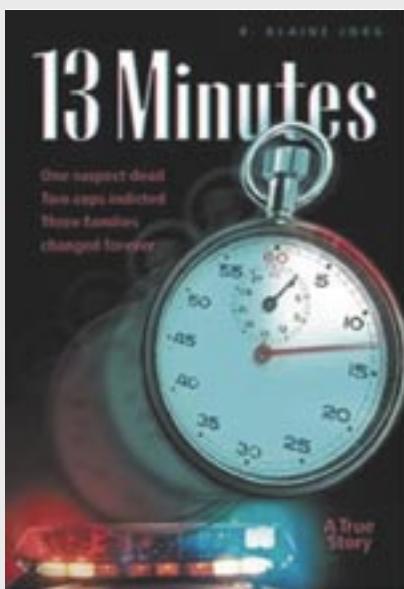
"The Internet is the largest publishing machine that has ever existed, and e-Rumors can spread around the globe at lightning speed," it notes, ending with the exhortation, "Help spread truth on the Internet!"

UrbanLegends.about.com offers a similar service, including a list of new and updated Netlore, the Urban Legends Top 25 of the last week, and the opportunity to contribute your own suspected hoaxes.

So, when it comes to most tales passed around by word of mouth or on the Internet, it's probably prudent to follow two classic adages: "If it sounds too good (or bad) to be true, it probably is" and "Take it with a grain of salt."

([b.longwareduff@thejusticejournal.com](mailto:b.longwareduff@thejusticejournal.com))

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# Stringent Standards Make Officer Recruitment "Arduous"

By **RONALD WINTER**  
Correspondent

So you want to be a police officer? Well, the good news is that it's much easier to apply to numerous departments simultaneously, without expending inordinate amounts of time or gasoline.

The other good news is that the requirements are stiffer, the training is longer, but the result is a police officer who is better equipped to meet the challenges of a modern career in the criminal justice field.

Over the past two to three decades the number of applicants for open slots in the public safety field has dropped significantly, possibly because of more stringent entry requirements, as well as the demands placed on police officers once they are on patrol.

But while the number of applicants has dropped, the ability to screen for the very best candidates has improved. Even those candidates who successfully pass all the physical, mental, and background tests, and undergo months of rigorous police academy training, still are monitored on the job to ensure compliance with society's dictates.

Westport Chief of Police Al Fiore,

who has 30-plus years of experience, says the application and approval process "has changed drastically." The process of finding, testing, approving, and fielding the best candidates "is arduous," he adds.

Police departments conduct periodic screening tests to build a pool of potential recruits, which if passed, are followed by physical, psychological, and oral screenings. Applicants must take lie-detector tests and pass rigorous background checks before they are hired. Even after passing all the basic requirements and the training academy, which has expanded from two months decades ago to five months now, new officers can face as much as 400 hours of intense review once on the job.

But before an aspiring recruit makes it to the patrol division, the screening process can take several months, with the vast majority dropping out along the way. When the Westport department gave its latest screening test, for instance, a total of 294 applicants signed up to take the test, but only 145 showed up.

Westport recently began filling seven openings in its 70-member department, with five recruits hired so far. While as many as 500 applicants would have taken

- See **Recruitment** on page 18



## THANK YOU



On Thursday, December 13, 2007, the Connecticut Police Chiefs Association held their Winter Meeting at the Crowne Plaza in Cromwell. CPCA would like to thank Fleet Auto Supply for sponsoring the meeting and Public Safety EAP for sponsoring the coffee.

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# Milford Mall Creates Nation's First Regional Mall Community Emergency Response Team

By **MEG BARONE**  
Correspondent

The Westfield Connecticut Post Mall, working with the City of Milford, has distinguished itself by becoming what officials believe is the nation's first-ever Regional Mall Community Emergency Response Team (CERT), and it joins a variety of local efforts created to help the region respond to disasters of any kind.

"It's really designed for all disasters, so we call it an all-hazard program. Some of the training is related to fires, law enforcement, evacuation, search and rescue, and first aid," said Wayne E. Sandford, deputy commissioner of Connecticut's Department of Emergency Management and Homeland Security (DEMHS). "It's going back to the days of our grandparents, where neighbor was helping neighbor. We're trying to re-instill in the citizens of the State of Connecticut that that's how it needs to be," Sandford said.

The CERT program recognizes the need for a trained citizenry to augment the work of police, fire, and other emergency personnel in the event of a major disaster – man-made, natural, or medical, as in a flu pandemic. It was adopted by the U.S. government, fashioned after a program first developed and implemented by the Los Angeles Fire Department in 1985. The LAFD's CERT concept now blankets the nation with a cadre of trained volunteers that would mobilize immediately to complement standard emergency first responders during major catastrophes or medical crises.

"There's not a police department, a fire department, or any community that can be totally self-sufficient in a large-scale incident. The number of calls for assistance and the number of people looking for aid will be so large that it will be trained citizens like this that will be able to help their neighbors deal with the crisis until first responders can actually get to them," said Sandford, who is also an instructor at the University of New Haven and the National Fire Academy.

Dr. A. Dennis McBride, director of the Milford Health Department, said police, fire, and health officials could be overwhelmed depending on the scope of an emergency, and it makes sense to train civilians to support the standard infrastructure. "Chance favors a prepared mind," McBride said.

The detailed CERT course includes training in disaster preparedness, basic lifesaving skills, triaging patients, medical operations, fire suppression, traffic control, assessing potential threats, light search and rescue, disaster psychology, and organizational skills. CERT members can also organize and instruct those volunteers who have not gone through the training.

"It's impossible at the time of the emergency to try to get someone trained for specific tasks. You want the best possible people there, and you want them to know what they're doing, and you want them to be prepared so that they don't get hurt themselves trying to help you out," said Trumbull Police Lt. Ronald Kirby, director of that town's Office of Emergency Management.

Since 1993, when this training was made available nationally by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), communities in 28 states and Puerto Rico have conducted CERT training programs. In Connecticut alone there are 80 teams comprising a total of 2,500 local citizens who have received the training since the CERT program began in the state in 2003 and in more earnest in 2005 with the creation of the State Emergency Council.

That figure includes a team at Mohegan Sun Casino



**Under the watchful eye of Milford Fire Inspector Andy Vargo, Glenn Krieger and Chris Lickteig are trained in the use of fire extinguishers as part of the Connecticut Post Mall's Community Emergency Response Team.**

and now the Regional Mall CERT at the Connecticut Post Mall. The Milford Health Department, with funding from the state's DEMHS, offered the 12-week, 30-hour CERT course last fall.

The graduating class of 19 people included security and management representatives of the Westfield Connecticut Post Mall in Milford, Westfield Trumbull Mall, and the Westfield Meriden Mall, as well as members of the general public.

"It makes you look at things differently, not in a negative way, not with panic, but to prepare yourself and prepare your community, because disasters happen but disaster response doesn't just happen. It's planned," said Sheri Filanowski, a registered nurse who was among the recent Regional Mall CERT graduates.

Bill Davis, operations and risk manager for the Trumbull mall, was a catalyst in creating the Regional Mall CERT program, and he is now planning to train a CERT team specific to the Trumbull shopping facility. It makes sense to have mall personnel and even retail stores' employees trained, because in a large-scale emergency a mall could serve as a staging area, but malls could also become the site of an emergency situation.

Last December, a 19-year-old gunman opened fire on shoppers at an Omaha, Nebraska, mall, killing eight and wounding four before turning the gun on himself.

If a mall were targeted, trained CERT members would already be on-site and could begin to assess the situation, triage the injured, and gather critical information even before professional emergency responders arrive on the scene.

"Malls are soft targets, and anything can happen. Why not be prepared? It makes for a safer environment for everyone," said Rick Fontana, regional emergency preparedness coordinator for the Milford Health Dept.

Davis, who graduated from Milford's Regional Mall CERT course, said it's better to have the training and hope never to have to use it than to be caught unprepared for a disaster.

"In today's world, post 9-11, you have to be prepared," he said.

There are a number of CERT teams in place in six Fairfield County municipalities – Danbury, New Canaan, Westport, Fairfield, Wilton, and Redding – and others may be introduced this year. Trumbull is considering the CERT program for its community.

"What CERT offers is an extra asset to the town and volunteers, but not just random volunteers. These volunteers are specifically trained. It's definitely

something we're interested in," Lt. Kirby said. "If they can help keep things under control, that's an asset because it frees up other personnel, as in police, fire, and EMS, to do other things," he said.

Tim Brandon, of Milford, said he signed up for the course to learn how to prepare for a disaster personally but also to serve his community in a time of need. "It doesn't hurt to have the extra knowledge and be able to help the neighborhood," Brandon said.

With the knowledge he gained, Brandon would be able to help evacuate a mall, dispense medications in the event of a medical emergency, or otherwise serve the public as instructed by local, state, or federal officials.

"They are not self-activating. They would be told what to do by a person of authority. We teach them there is a chain of command and how it works," Fontana said.

The City of Danbury was the first to create a Citizen Corps, an umbrella for CERT and other Homeland Security-centered organizations. "We have gone on to have nine separately trained CERT teams with upwards of 100 certified CERT members on these various teams, and we are beginning a new program this year to recertify these folks because some of them were trained three years ago," said Michael McLachlan, chief of staff for Danbury Mayor Mark Boughton.

McLachlan said it's important to offer refresher courses and a chance for team members to practice the skills they've gained. "Once you've trained them, you have to keep them engaged by continuing with further training and piquing their interest in the volunteerism that comes along with being a CERT member," he said.

There is no need to wait for an actual emergency to put CERT members to work, McLachlan said. Danbury has deployed CERT members, using their skills in 2006 to check on elderly residents when a widespread power outage occurred on a hot summer day. "They went door-to-door to check on every person in a housing complex, and if there was a question of whether they were okay or not a medical specialist was sent in," McLachlan said.

The city is about to train a CERT team specific to Western Connecticut State University, and also on the horizon, McLachlan said, is the training of a CERT team that would complement emergency services at Danbury Hospital.

Sandford said the DEMHS works directly with municipal emergency management directors to set up new teams and schedule training. CERT courses are ongoing in a number of municipalities. Milford and Danbury both plan to offer the course again this year.

"We hope to have close to 3,000 citizens trained by this hurricane season (which begins in June)," Sandford said.

The training is free of charge and open to anyone except those convicted of a felony. "Because of the type of training and the things that we do, you cannot have a felony record. We do background checks on all people applying for the CERT training, and that's done typically through the local police department," Sandford said. It usually includes fingerprinting and a check to determine whether an applicant has a criminal record.

Those interested in applying for the CERT training should contact their local emergency management director or Connecticut DEMHS at (860) 256-0852. Additional information about the CERT program is available at [www.citizen corps.gov/cert](http://www.citizen corps.gov/cert).

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# FBI Identifies Fraudulent Government Agency E-mail Scam

The FBI has recently developed information indicating cyber criminals are attempting to once again send fraudulent e-mails to unsuspecting recipients stating that someone has filed a complaint against them or their company with the Department of Justice or another organization such as the Internal Revenue Service, Social Security Administration, or the Better Business Bureau.

Information obtained during the FBI investigation has been provided to the Department of Homeland Security (DHS). DHS has taken steps to alert its public and private sector partners with the release of a Critical Infrastructure Information Notice (CIIN).

The e-mails are intended to appear as legitimate messages from the above departments, and they address the recipients by name, and other personal information may be contained within the e-mail. Consistent with previous efforts, the scam will likely be an effort to secure personal information. The nature of these types of scams is to create a sense of urgency for the recipient to provide a response through clicking on a hyperlink, opening an attachment, or initiating a telephone call.

It is believed this e-mail refers to a complaint that is in the form of an attachment, which actually contains virus software designed to steal passwords

from the recipient. The virus is wrapped in a screensaver file wherein most anti-virus programs are unable to detect its malicious intent. Once downloaded, the virus is designed to monitor username and password logins, and record the activity, as well as other password-type information, entered on the compromised machine.

“Through FBI investigations we

frequently uncover information about ongoing cyber attacks and scams. We share this information through our partnership with DHS to alert the public and the private sector,” noted James E. Finch, assistant director of the FBI’s Cyber Division.

Be wary of any e-mail received from an unknown sender. Do not open any unsolicited e-mail and do not click on

any links provided. To receive the latest information about cyber scams go to the FBI Web site and sign up for e-mail alerts by clicking on one of the red envelopes. If you have received a scam e-mail please notify the IC3 by filing a complaint at [www.ic3.gov](http://www.ic3.gov). For more information on e-scams, please visit the FBI’s New E-Scams and Warnings webpage.

## Credit Card “Vishing” Attacks on Increase

Are you one of many who have received an e-mail, text message, or telephone call, supposedly from your credit card/debit card company directing you to contact a telephone number to re-activate your card due to a security issue?

A number of variations on this theme, known as “vishing,” have been received by the Federal Bureau of Investigation, which reports these attacks on institutions and consumers continue to rise at an alarming rate.

Vishing operates like phishing by persuading consumers to divulge Personally Identifiable Information (PII), claiming their account was suspended, deactivated, or terminated. Recipients are directed to contact their bank via a telephone number provided in the e-mail or by an automated recording. Upon calling the telephone number, the

recipient is greeted with “Welcome to the bank of .....” and then requested to enter their card number in order to resolve a pending security issue.

For authenticity, some fraudulent e-mails claim the bank would never contact customers to obtain their PII by any means, including e-mail, mail, or instant messenger. These e-mails further warn recipients not to provide sensitive information when requested in an e-mail and not to click on embedded links, claiming they could contain “malicious software aimed at capturing login credentials.”

The FBI warns, “Please beware—spam e-mails may actually contain malicious codes (malware) which can harm your computer. Do not open any unsolicited e-mail, and do not click on any links provided.”

A new version recently reported involves

the sending of text messages to cell phones claiming the recipient’s on-line bank account has expired. The message instructs the recipient to renew their on-line bank account by using the link provided.

Because of rapidly evolving criminal methodologies, it is impossible to include every scenario, the FBI advises, so people must be cognizant and guard against all e-mails, telephone calls, or text messages requesting your PII.

If you have a question concerning your account or credit/debit card, you should contact your bank using a telephone number obtained independently, such as from your statement, a telephone book, or other independent means.

If you have received this, or a similar hoax, you should also file a complaint at [www.ic3.gov](http://www.ic3.gov).

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## Parents Support Safety Seats But Many are Uninformed

Thirty years after the nation's first child safety seat law was passed, a new national American Automobile Association (AAA) survey shows 93 percent of parents strongly support child seat laws, but less than half of them (39 percent) can accurately identify the age their state allows a child to ride in a vehicle with only a lap and shoulder belt.

These results send a clear, powerful message to state legislators throughout the nation: stronger laws and better education will help save young lives, says AAA.

Parents may look to state law for guidance, but laws vary greatly from state to state. And although every state has a safety seat provision for children under age four, just 18 and the District of Columbia require children up to the age of eight or older to be restrained in a booster seat.

In Connecticut, children must remain in a child passenger safety seat until they are both seven years of age and over 60 pounds. However, statewide safety supporters including AAA Connecticut Motor Club advocate having children continue to ride in a car seat or booster

seat until they reach 4'9" in height. At that height, in many cases, a child generally will be eight years old and weigh around 80 pounds.

The national AAA released its new survey data in conjunction with the 30th anniversary of the first state child passenger safety seat law passed in Tennessee in January 1978. The pioneering legislation sparked a national movement to protect our most vulnerable passenger population: young children.

Despite strong support for child passenger safety, the latest federal statistics report 72 percent of parents use their car seats incorrectly. That number parallels local statistics compiled by AAA Connecticut Motor Club, which has found that 78 percent of the car seats its technicians have inspected are used incorrectly or installed improperly.

Despite national legislative gains, better child car seats, and stepped-up safety seat advocacy efforts, more than one-third (35 percent) of children under five who were killed in fatal crashes in 2006 were unrestrained, according to federal statistics. In total, 145 of the 452 children under age five who died in crashes were unrestrained.

### Other findings in the national AAA survey include:

- 54 percent of all parents who responded said they look to their state law for guidance on how to restrain their children.
- 31 percent of the parents said they learned about their state's car seat law from physicians.
- 40 percent cited the government as their source of information,
- Most parents (80 percent) felt that pediatricians and other physicians should educate parents about child restraint laws, and
- 73 percent felt the government should also take a more active role in educating parents.

Research for AAA's child safety restraint survey is based on a national Internet survey of 1,000 parents with children younger than age eight.

### 3 Out of 4 Child Safety Seats Installed Incorrectly, Says AAA CT Motor Club

Keeping children safe on the road not only means putting them in the right restraint at the right age, but installing and using a child safety seat correctly in a vehicle.

Unfortunately, most parents and guardians on a statewide level don't do this. At least that's what the AAA Connecticut Motor Club has discovered after installing nearly 7,800 child safety seats over the last five years.

Based on data compiled since June 2002, the AAA analysis shows that 78 percent of the seats are either installed improperly or used incorrectly. AAA's numbers parallel 2006 government statistics that show 72 percent of parents don't use their car seats correctly.

AAA Connecticut Motor Club released its statistics to coincide with the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Tennessee's first-

in-the-nation child safety seat law. The pioneering legislation sparked a national movement to protect our most vulnerable passenger population: young children. The data release is also part of the Hamden-based club's ongoing *Seated, Safe & Secure* child passenger safety initiative aimed at educating parents and guardians about proper safety seat use.

According to the Connecticut Motor Club's analysis, parents and guardians make three common mistakes when installing or using a child passenger safety seat.

**Child seats aren't installed as tight as they should be.** About 67 percent of the seats inspected are too loose in a vehicle. There should be limited movement once the seat is properly installed. To check for

- See **Safety Seats** on page 17

# Teen Drug Use—

Continued from page 1

study by the Partnership for a Drug-Free America. The study surveyed more than 7,300 teens in grades seven through 12.

Prescription drug abuse is now second only to marijuana as one of the largest categories of abuse nationally among teens. And in 2005, prescription drugs surpassed marijuana as the drug of choice for first-time users, making it the new so-called “gateway drug,” national statistics indicate.

In Connecticut, the number of teens identified as needing treatment for opiate addictions, including painkillers and heroin, is rising, said Peter Rockholz, deputy commissioner for the state Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (DMHAS).

Among young adults over 18, opiates now make up the most common primary drugs people report when they enter the DMHAS system for treatment, Rockholz said.

“It used to be alcohol, and that’s no longer the case. That’s a very significant change,” he said.

Rockholz said the problem has mostly taken hold in the state’s wealthier suburban areas, with anecdotal evidence pointing to serious “outbreaks” in towns in lower Fairfield County.

Experts believe easy access to the drugs – from friends, relatives, or the teens’ own medicine cabinets – combined with a cavalier attitude toward the risk is fueling the trend.

“The kids I’ve spoken to say, ‘Hey, it’s FDA approved, I know what I’m getting. My grandmother takes it. How bad can it be?’” said Hamilton.

## Mixing Drugs, “Bowling” Parties

Results of the latest Monitoring the Future survey, released in December by the National Institute on Drug Abuse and the University of Michigan, found illicit drug use among teens overall has dropped by 24 percent since 2001. Marijuana use has declined by approximately 25 percent.

But the nonmedical use of legal drugs—including sedatives, tranquilizers, and narcotics other than heroin—has been holding steady or rising, the survey found. According to the 2007 survey, one in 20 high school seniors has tried OxyContin in the past year, and one in 10 has tried Vicodin.

In Connecticut in 2004–2005, 7.2 percent of teens ages 12 to 17 reported using prescription painkillers to get high in the past year, according to the National Survey on Drug Use and Health by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. The figures, which do not include other prescription drugs like stimulants and sedatives, were up slightly from 6 percent in 2003–2004. The increase was greater among 18- to 25-year-olds, with 15.3 percent reporting nonmedical use of prescription painkillers in 2004–2005, up from 12.5 percent in 2003–2004.

Prescription drug abuse made the news recently in East Haven, when police responded to a possible overdose at the high school. Police were told that three students had taken the prescription drug Klonopin, which is often used to treat epilepsy or panic disorder. According to published reports, a girl had shared her prescription drug with other students during in-school suspension. The students were hospitalized for observation.

Kevin Kasbarian, director of Stamford Family and Youth Options at Liberation Programs, a drug treatment and prevention agency, agreed that he is seeing more young people addicted to pharmaceuticals.

“A lot of kids are abusing Adderall, they’re abusing OxyContin,” he said. “We’ve heard that they’re actually doing bowling parties, where they put pills in a big bowl and grab one and whatever happens, happens.”

Dorrie Carolan, co-founder of the Newtown Parent Connection, a substance abuse awareness and support group, has heard similar reports from parents and teens

she works with in northern Fairfield County.

“It’s happening in Newtown, it’s happening in Ridgefield,” said Carolan, whose son died of a prescription drug overdose in 1993.

Because they are prescribed by a doctor, kids mistakenly believe the drugs are safer than illegal drugs like cocaine and marijuana, experts say.

But since teens often combine several different kinds of prescription pills, mix them with alcohol, or take far more than the recommended dosage, the effects can be deadly. A large dose of some prescription drugs can cause respiratory depression, heart failure, or seizures, officials say.

Hamilton said teens have told him they would crush OxyContin in a tissue to destroy the time-release, and then swallow the tissue to get a flood of the drug in their system, a practice known as “parachuting.”

He said teens often start in middle or high school by abusing Ritalin or Adderall, both stimulants prescribed to treat attention deficit disorder. Also popular are sedatives like Xanax and Valium, which are prescribed to ease anxiety. Soon, they are moving on to OxyContin and by the time they reach college age, some will end up shooting heroin, which contains the same ingredients and produces a similar high.

“They can get into the throes of addiction pretty easily,” Hamilton said.

## Heroin Addiction Up 18 Percent

State officials worry the rise in teen OxyContin abuse could be fueling the trend of increased heroin addiction among college-aged adults. According to data provided by the DMHAS, admissions for the treatment of heroin addiction by 18- to 24-year-olds rose by 18 percent between 2003 and 2006.

Janice Anderson, deputy director of the Regional Youth/Adult Substance Abuse Partnership, which covers Bridgeport, Easton/Redding, Stratford, Trumbull, Fairfield, and Monroe, said teen-agers typically will abuse painkillers like OxyContin when they are living at home and being supported by their parents. But when they run out of money and need greater quantities of the drug, they turn to heroin because it is cheaper.

Ryan said his heroin addiction began when he realized he could “just drive to Bridgeport and buy heroin for \$10,” as opposed to the \$40 he would spend on OxyContin. He estimated between 75 and 80 percent of the kids he knew who were abusing OxyContin eventually tried heroin.

State statistics for 2005 show 4.3 percent of Connecticut high school students reported trying heroin in their lifetime, significantly more than the national rate of 2.4 percent.

“Once you cross that line and do prescription drugs, then everything else seems not so bad,” he said. “You really become numb to all of the bad stuff you’ve heard about it. You think, ‘Well, if my best friend’s doing it and he’s a great kid . . . it can’t be that bad.’”

## Parent Education Needed

State and local prevention officials say a key to curbing the problem is educating parents about the need to keep track of their prescriptions – and to make sure friends and relatives do the same.

“One of the main things we’re suggesting is that all adults lock up their prescriptions, and if they’ve got supplies of no-longer-needed prescriptions, to stuff them in the garbage mixed in with the most disgusting stuff they can find – coffee grinds, cat litter, grease,” said Rockholz. He said the state also is trying to better educate the elderly, who are more likely to be prescribed such drugs.

Officials say parents also should monitor their teens’ computer use, since many are becoming savvy to a proliferation of Internet sites selling painkillers like OxyContin and prescription Codeine without the need of a prescription.

Carolan of the Newtown Parent Connection said there also needs to be more education among doctors,

## Tips for Parents:

- Educate yourself and your teen about the risks. Prescription drugs can be just as dangerous and addictive as “street drugs,” and can be lethal.
- Keep track of quantities. Take note of how many pills are in a bottle or pill packet and ask other households your teen visits to do the same, such as grandparents or friends. If you find you have to refill your prescription for a chronic condition more often than recommended, there could be a problem.
- Talk to friends, relatives and school administrators. If you don’t know the parents of your child’s circle of friends, then make an effort to get to know them.
- Follow directions carefully. Make sure you and your teen use prescription drugs only as prescribed by a medical doctor and take only the recommended dosages.
- Discard old or unused medications in the trash. It’s best to add an undesirable substance (like used coffee grounds or kitty litter) and put the mixture in an impermeable, non-descript container like an empty can or bag. Do not flush down the toilet.
- Monitor your teen’s time online. Check browser histories and set a time limit.
- Be observant. If you find empty bottles and pill packages among your child’s things, talk with her, listen carefully, and determine if there’s a problem. If so, call your family doctor immediately.
- Find other ways to relieve stress and have fun. Many teens point to personal and family stress and boredom as reasons they abuse prescription drugs. Help your teen find other ways to relieve pressures, through positive activities that interest your child, positive friendships, or by simply listening and offering guidance.

Source: *Parents: The Anti-Drug.*

For more information go to: [www.theantidrug.com](http://www.theantidrug.com)

some of whom readily prescribe pain medication to teenagers, unaware that they are addicts who may be “doctor shopping.”

“Having an 18-year-old kid go into a doctor’s office with a complaint of back pain and walk out with a prescription, there’s something wrong with that,” Carolan said. “A lot of these doctors, I think, don’t understand how addictive some of this medication is.”

To address the concerns, Rockholz said DMHAS and the state Department of Consumer Protection are launching a prescription monitoring program that requires all pharmacies to report controlled substance prescriptions through a centralized database. The physician who has someone in his or her office who needs pain medication can then check to see if the person is already receiving a prescription from another doctor.

For teens who are already addicted, Rockholz said DMHAS works closely with the Department of Children and Families to intervene early. He said the department is encouraging the use of a new drug, Suboxone, to help teens taper off painkillers and deal with withdrawal symptoms.

“There are effective medications that can be prescribed from qualified physicians’ offices rather than going into a clinic,” he said. “But they need to have counseling along with it.”

Ryan, who has been clean for 15 months, said school officials also need to be more vigilant, even if it means hiring more security guards and conducting more frequent random searches of kids.

“I was getting high for at least three years in high school. I got searched once, and I knew it was coming,” he said. Teachers also need to look for red flags, he added.

“If you go to the bathroom every single day at least once per class, something’s up. Sometimes I would go two and three times during one class,” he said.

After three bouts in rehab, Ryan said he ultimately had to leave Newtown and start his life over in Florida to recover. He offered hope to teens who are struggling with addiction, saying, “No matter how bad it gets, it can get unbelievably better.”

“Even when I was a sophomore in high school, I wouldn’t have thought that my life would be as good as it is now,” he said. “I live in South Beach, I go out to clubs, I have a great time. I just don’t drink or do drugs.”

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## Safe City—

Continued from page 1

also have a very aggressive program with people who are returning from jail. We talk to them and let them know that we know the conditions of their parole, their bail, or their release. We like to interview them and get pictures so we know what they look like.”

### “Operation Clean Streets” Worked

One initiative, dubbed “Operation Clean Streets,” was implemented in 2006 after a spree of violent crime primarily by youths with ties to gangs. This aggressive, proactive strategy increased patrols on the streets, created a new overnight patrol squad, and targeted drug dealers and wanted criminals.

“In the early part of 2006, we had a particularly bad incident,” said Stamford Police Lt. Sean Cooney. “A kid was shot, and then there was some retaliatory violence back and forth. Many people involved were either in the drug trade or on the periphery. So we put our heads together and initiated Operation Clean Streets (OCS) in response to the uptick in violent crime. The decision was made that if we attack the drug trade, we can put a dent in the violence.”

Cooney, the department’s public information officer, said OCS had a significant effect on the city’s crime rate. “The operation had a lot to do with the narcotics trade and the nexus between drug dealing and violent crime especially,” he said. “The narcotics guys spearheaded the effort and targeted a lot of drug dealers.”

OCS was touted as extremely successful, accounting for over 100 arrests, and the crime rate dropped. “By being proactive, we made a lot more arrests,” Cooney said. “The patrol division was encouraged to make more vehicle stops. A lot of times, you make a motor vehicle stop that starts out as a guy going through a red light. You can end up with a guy who’s got a warrant or someone who’s got a gun or drugs in the car.”

### Community Police Concept

Cooney said patrol officers are also encouraged to get out frequently in the housing projects and walk around rather than just ride by in the patrol car. “Community policing means a lot of things,” he said. “One is going to community meetings and finding out what’s going on in each neighborhood, and then using that information to better deal with the problems.”

One continuing problem in Stamford has been drug activity, which is often connected with other crimes. “Many of the people who buy drugs commit crimes in order to get the money to buy the drugs,” Cooney said. “So indirectly, the drug dealers facilitate burglaries and larcenies and robberies. If you make a lot of narcotics arrests, you’re going to reduce the number of crimes out there.”

Having worked on the street for 16 years, Cooney’s drug arrests have ranged from construction workers and painters to those with high-paying jobs. “I can

tell you that a wide spectrum of people use drugs to various degrees,” he said. “Some use it recreationally on a smaller scale, and others use it to such a degree that it ruins their lives. If their drug use is controlled to such a degree that it doesn’t ruin their lives and they keep their jobs, that’s where the money comes from (to purchase drugs). If you’re a rampant drug user and you have no job, then you rob or steal or whatever it takes. Affluent people can consume cocaine and heroin as well as poor people, although the street-level drug activity tends to be more concentrated in poor areas.”

Poverty can also lead to gang activity. “Where you have public housing, you can have a lot of gang activity,” Cooney said. “A lot of these kids are raised in single-parent homes; there may be no father around or maybe the mother drinks. It’s a vicious cycle. I’m sure they’ve been told a number of times by different people that the way out is through hard work and school and getting a job. They’ve probably watched some people do that, too, but it’s hard work.”

### Gang Efforts Beat Back

Mayor Malloy describes Stamford’s gang activity as rudimentary. “I would characterize our gang activity as this sort of nascent, early involvement with gangs,” said Malloy. “I read a lot and know a lot about formalized gang activity in the United States, and we don’t really have that. What we do have, from time to time, is people trying to insert that into our community. And we’ve done a great job of beating that back. We beat them back by making arrests, by closing large numbers of cases, and by making it clear that certain behaviors aren’t going to be tolerated.”

According to Malloy, gang behavior can arise out of desperation due to lack of food or money, the failure of school systems, or an inability to visualize prospects for one’s life. “I don’t think we have the levels of desperation in Fairfield County that lead to gang lifestyles elsewhere,” he said. “Are there people who want to bring about gang activity? Absolutely. We continue to be in a battle with people who would like to bring that kind of behavior and behavior systems to communities in Connecticut. They’re having a harder time here than they are elsewhere. And I think part of it is that people here aren’t as desperate.”

The issue of money, or rather financial realities, recently emerged in the Stamford Police Department itself. Lt. Cooney said that with the 2007-08 budget cuts, the low crime rate in Stamford may be difficult to maintain. “We had about a million dollars cut out of our most recent budget, so we had to do a lot of rearranging,” Cooney said. “Financially, we’re scratching our heads at how we’re going to maintain the kind of numbers we’ve had. It takes a certain level of manpower to deal with crime.”

In particular, Cooney laments the loss or reduction in two programs geared toward crime prevention. “We had to eliminate very successful programs like the downtown foot patrols and the school resource officers,” he said. “One of the things that school resource officers were very good at was developing rapport with



Stamford’s Chief Brent B. Larrabee

### Crime Statistics for January-June 2006 as Compared to January-June 2007

	2006	2007	Diff.	% Change
Total Crime	1402	1035	-367	-26.2%
Serious Crime	186	145	-41	-22.0%
Property Crime	1216	890	-326	-26.8%

Serious Crime is defined as violent crime: homicide, rape, robbery, and aggravated assault. Property Crime is defined as burglary, larceny, and motor vehicle theft.

### Comparison of Types of Crimes

	2006	2007	Diff.	% Change
Homicide	2	0	-2	-100%
Rape	13	21	8	61.5%
Robbery	94	55	-39	-41.5%
Assault	77	69	-8	-10.4%
Burglary	214	156	-58	-27.1%
Larceny	905	611	-294	-32.5%
MV Theft	97	123	26	26.8%
Total	1402	1035	-367	-26.2%

The regional ranking for the other Connecticut cities is as follows: Bridgeport (21), Waterbury (23), and Hartford (27). New Haven did not report data to the FBI.

kids who might be on the fence about being either a good kid or a bad kid.

“We’ve found that if you put a police officer in the school, not so much in the traditional role as a law enforcer but as a role model and mentor and counselor, and he’s there every day, the kids get to know him on a first-name basis. The kids end up telling him things that they would never tell their mother or teacher or another police officer, because the kid knows the officer as a friend rather than as a guy who wears a blue suit. We once had 13 (school resource officers), but now we’re down to five.”

### Budget Cut Impact?

Mayor Malloy remains optimistic. “Will budget cuts have an impact? They

might. But I don’t think it’s had much of an effect so far. For example, we had a pretty good second six months of the year, which began July 1 (2007). We didn’t see a dramatic upswing in crime.”

For Lt. Cooney, certain swings in crime are just part of the landscape. “Rates of violence ebb and flow,” he said. “We had a number of years where violent incidences were increasing, and now they’re decreasing. Stopping crime is a long haul, so we try not to get too caught up in the current ebb and flow. It’s a long-term thing. We don’t want to crow too loudly when it’s down, and we don’t want to be criticized too much when it’s up.”

But for now, at least, Stamford can crow.

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# Quick Thinking, Long-Term Preparation Earn Medal of Valor for West Hartford Officer

*Some people are born to greatness, the saying goes, while for others it is thrust upon them.*

*Then there is Todd Myers, West Hartford police officer and Simsbury volunteer firefighter, who spent years preparing for any eventuality in emergency management and was in the right place at the right time when he was needed.*

*The place was Rt. 44, on the section known as Avon Mountain on the West Hartford-Avon town line. The time was the morning commute on July 29, 2005.*

*An out-of-control dump truck careened down the hill smashing into cars and a commuter bus stopped at the light at the bottom. The crash and resultant carnage killed four people including the truck driver. Twenty vehicles were involved.*

*Myers was in the gaggle of traffic stopped for the light that day, just far enough from the front rows to avoid being hit. But the second he saw what was happening his training took over and Myers leaped into action.*

*He wasn't thinking of it then, or even later, but his actions in the next half hour would result in a visit to Washington, D.C., a meeting with President George W. Bush, and a Medal of Valor for heroism.*

## Profile

By **RONALD WINTER**  
Correspondent

News reports from the area media describe scenes of unimaginable horror that morning. Ask Myers to give you his impressions of the scene and he'll use brief descriptions like "horrific ... surreal ... slow motion."

Then he'll stop and tell you, "It takes longer to describe it than the actual event."

What he saw, Myers said, was a typical moment in a morning commute suddenly go horribly awry. Everything was normal, and then suddenly there was a crash that went on and on, explosions, fire, screams.

"I got my truck over to the side," Myers said, and he ran into the maelstrom, looking to help in any way he could. Vehicles were on fire, some people were in shock, and others were screaming for help.

Myers stopped at a car with a woman trapped inside and immediately began working to get her out. The car had just caught on fire, and he tried to extinguish the flames by throwing dirt on them. But he noticed the fire was getting close to the gas tank, and the victim was pinned inside with her seatbelt jammed.

"Luckily I had my patrol knife," Myers said, which was used to cut the seat belt. He worked from one side of the car and another volunteer helped from the other side.

"When I pulled her out, she was a bloody mess," Myers said.

It turned out the man on the other side of the car was a doctor. Myers left the woman, a dentist from Torrington, in the doctor's care and continued on.

He helped get the driver out of the burning bus and worked with several other emergency personnel trying to free another man who was trapped inside his vehicle. Ultimately the victim was freed, but he died later that day.

It doesn't take a lengthy interview to conclude that Myers was as saddened by the death of one victim as he was happy

that others survived.

Myers said he was so busy that he was surprised to look up and see how many emergency personnel had arrived at the scene, and how quickly.

"The number of responders was amazing."

His familiarity with other emergency personnel, developed over 15 years as a volunteer firefighter and eight years as a police officer, helped him coordinate and communicate the manpower and equipment requirements to other emergency responders, who immediately acted on his requests. "I knew people from other towns by their first names," he said.

It was only after a half-hour of frenzied activity that Myers realized he had been badly burned on his left arm. He reluctantly went to the hospital for treatment, only to return to the scene later that day "to piece it together."

He took four days off from work and then returned to duty. But the events of July 29 were never far from his mind.

Two weeks after the crash, Myers received an unexpected boost when the woman he had helped extricate from her burning vehicle came to the West Hartford police station to thank him in person. That was both unexpected and very much appreciated, he said.

News reports have continued to follow developments stemming from that morning, including legal issues with the company that owned the truck, and politicians debating how best to ensure public safety without destroying the aesthetics of the area.

The issue leaped to the forefront of the news again last August when another truck lost control on the mountain. This time the driver was able to avoid other vehicles at the intersection, but the truck still smashed through the front of a nearby furniture store.

After that incident, the debating ended and the state Department of Transportation began installing a runaway truck ramp at the bottom of the hill.

While the public's attention was focused



**West Hartford Police Officer Todd Myers and his wife Megan visited with President George W. Bush and Attorney General Michael B. Mukasey when he recently received one of the nation's highest valor awards for his efforts to rescue victims of a truck crash which killed four people and injured others in 2005.**

on Avon Mountain and what would or wouldn't be done there, Police Chief James Strillacci had quietly submitted Myers for consideration for the U.S. Department of Justice Public Safety Officer Medal of Valor. He was one of only five public safety personnel (police and fire) from the entire United States to earn the award in 2007.

On the Wednesday before last Thanksgiving Myers received a call from a Department of Justice official in Washington, informing him that he had been approved for the award.

"I didn't really believe it," considering that he didn't know his name had been submitted, Myers said. But he nonetheless participated in an intense security review and in-depth background check that was required before he could meet the president.

Finally, all was ready, and on December 13<sup>th</sup>, Myers was outside the Oval Office at the White House. He and his wife Megan had been flown to Washington, and spent nearly an hour speaking with Attorney General Michael B. Mukasey.

Mukasey is "very quiet" but at the same time "very impressive," Myers said. He enjoyed their discussion, and then the door opened and George W. Bush was waiting to usher him into the Oval Office.

So, what is the president of the United States like up close?

First off, Myers voted for Bush both times he ran for president, but Megan Myers didn't. Nonetheless, after she met him in person, Mr. Bush had another supporter.

"He is very down-to-earth, very laid-back, very charismatic," Myers said. The interview with President Bush lasted about a half hour.

"He talked about the history of the Oval Office, some of the artifacts in the office ... the War on Terror.

"It was very impressive. You got the impression you could sit around the pond and go fishing with this guy."

Myers had his photo taken with the president, both alone and with a group of other officers who also were honored that day. Then it was over and he was on his way back to Connecticut.

Meeting the president was "a once in a lifetime experience," Myers said, but he also hasn't forgotten a moment of that morning on July 29, 2005. He watched the daily progress at the bottom of Avon Mountain as the state made the site a priority and constructed the runaway truck ramp.

It moved quickly, and now there at least is a measure of safety for motorists and businesses there.

Much has transpired since Myers looked up to see a dump truck careening out of control, and without thinking of his own safety immediately put his training to the test. But the exact location of the 2005 crash is still visible, marked by new pavement that stands out from the road around it.

It has been more than two years, but in another way, "It seems like it was just yesterday. I still drive that section (of Rt. 44) every day," Myers said. "It's an eerie feeling."

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# Computer Forensics is a Real-Life Game of Cat and Mouse for Monroe Officer

By **BILL BITTAR**  
Correspondent

Michael Chaves remembers leading his football team to victory on an old 286 model computer he owned while growing up in Monroe, and tracking down bad guys while playing "Police Quest" on his neighbor's machine.

Starting a career in the National Football League might be a long shot, but the 30-year-old Monroe police officer is still using his computer skills to bring criminals to justice.

Chaves is the Monroe Police Department's computer forensics expert, and when the Connecticut crime lab is overbooked, Bridgeport and Trumbull police have also sought his expertise.

People might expect police to track down computer evidence to nab embezzling executives, con artists, and sexual predators, but Chaves said a successful investigation could also shoot holes into a burglar's alibi.

"When a burglar who uses a GPS system to return to a house he cased is arrested and says, 'I wasn't there,' we can say, 'The GPS system in your car shows you entered the address,'" Chaves said during an interview on a recent afternoon.

An ex-husband who sends his former spouse a threatening E-mail also could be exposed after Chaves traces the Internet Protocol address of the E-mail back to the perpetrator's computer.

Most of the cases Chaves has worked on have consisted of child pornography or a financial crime.

Chaves recovered financial information from the laptop computer of the Stepney Volunteer Fire Department's treasurer, Karen Wickson, which led to her arrest and eventual guilty plea for embezzling \$166,000 from the Monroe organization.

And while a computer investigation can lead to proving one's guilt, it can also prove one's innocence.

The Bridgeport Police Department had received a complaint from a woman who claimed her boyfriend used nude pictures taken of her with a webcam to blackmail her into performing sexual favors.

"He said it never happened," Chaves said of the suspect. "I was given his computer and found no webcam had ever been installed. Charges were never brought."

## From Masuk to the Marines

Chaves graduated from Masuk High School in Monroe in 1995 and enlisted in the United States Marines.

"I needed discipline," he said. "I took core courses: math, science and English. I took a biology course in Japan. That was cool. By the time I left, I had a year's worth of college credit."

Chaves served in the Marines for five years. When he came back home he enrolled at Sacred Heart University where he majored in computer science.

That is when he read about the field of computer forensics.

"I knew I was interested in computers, and the investigation part intrigued me too," he said. "And I thought I could use it in law enforcement. I knew it was going to be big because computers are cheap and more accessible for people to use."

Chaves graduated from Sacred Heart in 2004 and applied for a job at the Monroe Police Department. He was hired and trained at the Police Academy in Meriden. Aspiring officers stay on the campus from Monday to Friday and are allowed to go home only on the weekends, according to Chaves. "It's lights out at



Monroe Police Department's computer forensics expert Michael Chaves

10 p.m. and you're up at 4 a.m.," he said.

The academy training lasted from July to December.

## Tools of the Trade

In the Internet age, criminals are developing more sophisticated ways to steal identities, lure innocent victims into meeting them, and hide their destructive acts. Law enforcement has to undergo constant retraining to compete on this new, virtual turf.

In 2005, Chaves participated in training sessions the Department of Homeland Security offered in Georgia. The intensive two weeks included classes on recovering seized computer evidence and becoming a digital evidence acquisition and seizing specialist.

"Lieutenant Rose Stuart and Chief John Salvatore had the foresight to see this would be a huge asset in the future and sent me to the training," Chaves said.

The National White Collar Crime Center has been offering new training for police officers, and Chaves expects more area departments to take advantage of the opportunity.

Aside from having expertise on computer forensics, investigators also have tools at their disposal to get the job done.

When someone deletes a computer file, the name disappears on the master file table, according to Chaves. However, if it is not overwritten with other data, it still exists on the hard drive. When Chaves conducts an investigation, he hopes the computer has a lot of memory, because that makes it more likely that older, critical data is still available.

Chaves opened a metal cabinet in his office and pulled out a computer attachment called a "right blocker." Just as yellow tape cordons off evidence at a crime scene, the "right blocker" prevents police from accidentally overwriting data on a suspect's computer hard drive while conducting an investigation. Police

use the device to take all the data from the computer's hard drive.

An "acquisition hash value" (a series of numbers and letters) proves that the data investigators took is the same as the data in the suspect's computer, according to Chaves.

Of course, some people try to change file names to deter law enforcement from opening incriminating data. For instance, Chaves said a child pornographer may change "jpeg" on a photo file to "DLL."

"We have tools that will analyze the file header and the signal file header against the extension," Chaves said. "It will say it doesn't match, and it should be a jpeg."

Other ways criminals try to hide computer data is by using passwords to access it. "We have tools that will break passwords," Chaves said. Breaking a password can take as little as a few seconds to as long as a few months, he said.

And if someone uses an unidentifiable E-mail address to harass a victim, Chaves said Internet providers are cooperative with police officers who have a warrant and will reveal the suspect's identity.

## Chaves and the IRS

After graduating from Sacred Heart, Chaves initially applied for a job with the Internal Revenue Service. But by the time the agency offered to hire him, Chaves had his heart set on police work.

"I said, 'I'm sorry, I'm not interested anymore,'" Chaves recalled. "I didn't want to sit behind a desk all day." Being a police officer allows him the freedom of going out on patrol.

"I can do different things everyday," he said. "You never know what you have or what you're going to get. I like being outside too. When it's rainy, I can go in and do computer work."

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# Safety Seats—

Continued from page 12

tightness, grab the child seat where the car's seat belt threads through it and pull. The child seat shouldn't move more than an inch from side to side. If it does, it's not in tight enough.

**Harness straps aren't used correctly to adequately secure the child in the seat.** This accounted for about 22 percent of the mistakes. Harness straps should be flat and snug across the child's chest and over the child's shoulders. Many are found to be too loose. The straps should also lie on the child without any slack. The retainer clip – the plastic gadget that holds the straps in place – should be placed at armpit level on the child.

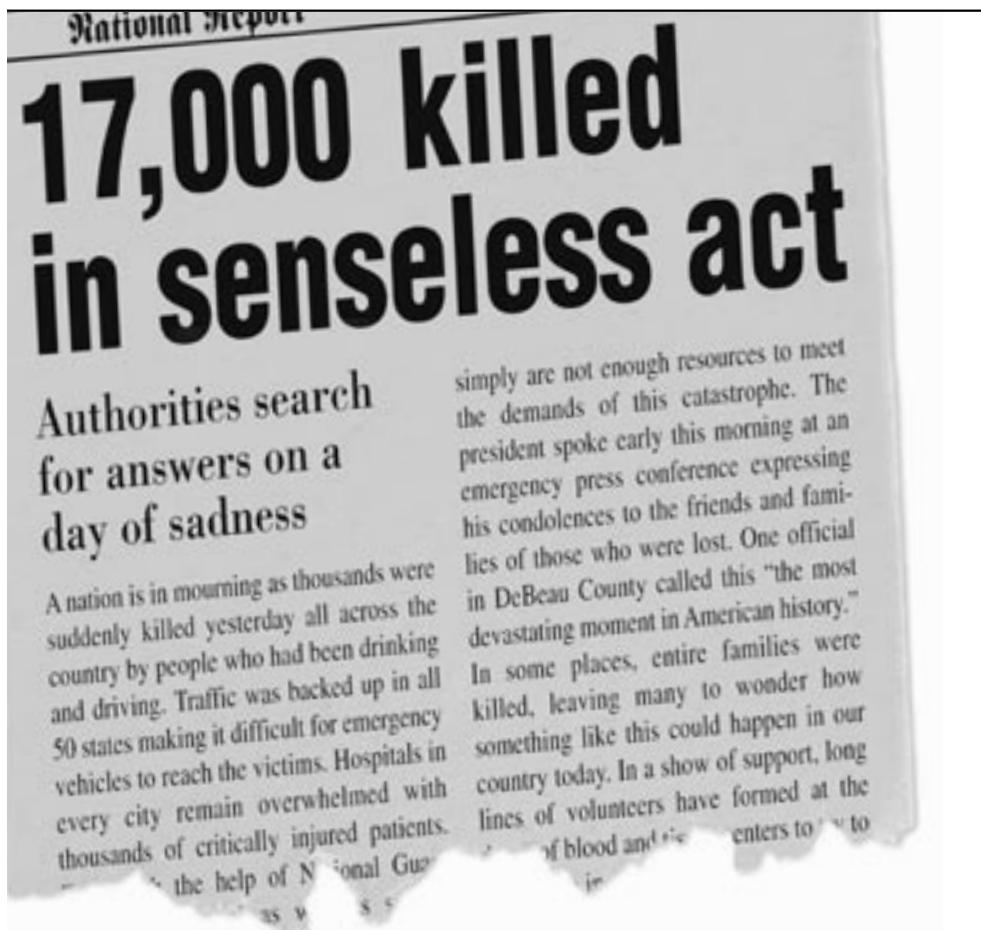
**Locking clips either aren't used or aren't used correctly.** In another 20 percent of the inspected seats, the locking clip – a buckle-like device that sometimes is used to secure the seat in place – was either not used or used incorrectly on the car's seat belt system. Not every child seat needs a locking clip; that depends upon the car's seat belt system.

To educate parents and guardians on proper installation techniques, the Connecticut Motor Club conducts numerous clinics in partnership with the Milford Police Department, the Weston Fire Department, and the Belltown Fire Department.

According to the latest figures from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), motor vehicle crashes are the number one killer of American children ages 2 and older. NHTSA's statistics report more than one-third (35 percent) of children under five, who were killed in fatal crashes in 2006, were unrestrained. In total, 145 of the 452 children under age 5 who died in crashes were unrestrained. NHTSA also reports of those who were saved, 392 were in car seats and 32 were in adult seats. NHTSA estimates an additional 98 lives could have been saved if all children under age 5 were properly restrained in child safety seats.



The AAA Connecticut Motor Club works closely with police departments and community groups offering clinics and tips on the use of child safety seats. The group has installed over 7,800 in the last five years and estimates that their data indicates that 78 percent of seats are either installed improperly or used incorrectly.



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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## Recruitment—

Continued from page 9

the initial screening test two or three decades ago, Fiore says, the 145 who took the most recent test still represent a good pool of potential recruits.

In fact, the people who signed up to take the test but didn't show up have weeded themselves out of the process by showing they weren't serious about the job. Still, with the requirements that today's departments must use in selecting recruits, the winnowing down process often yields only a few qualified applicants out of the initial pool.

Also, the departments find that in many cases, "we are competing for the same candidates," Fiore said. In fact, he adds, all applicants who make it to the oral interview are asked how many other departments they have applied to, with most responding in the area of a half-dozen.

But while the application process itself is more involved than in previous years, getting a foot in the door has become significantly less eventful.

The Internet has enabled entrepreneurs like Sean Cassidy of PoliceApp.com to bring high technology to the recruitment and selection process. Cassidy's firm provides two-way recruiting services for departments including Manchester, the State Capitol Police, Avon, Farmington, Vernon, City of Groton, Rocky Hill, Westport, Monroe, and New Milford.

Two-way simply means that by using his site and services, departments can post their job opening advertisements on the Internet, in a place where people interested in public safety jobs will see them, and potential recruits can then submit applications for multiple job openings at once. Once a generic application form is filled out, the system stores it and will automatically forward it to departments that have posted new job openings.

Cassidy notes that the recruitment and selection process is often time-consuming and labor-intensive for both the applicants and the departments. The goal of his business is to simplify the process for both.

To that end, Cassidy says, he breaks down the application process to the basics required to apply: at least 21 years of age; a U.S. citizen; no felony or Class A or B misdemeanor convictions; and no drunken-driving convictions.

He also has combined the application formats from departments throughout the state, using the most frequently required skills and abilities, into one form that can be used for all applicants. The requirements are similar, but Cassidy says individual departments also can have special areas where they place emphasis. This can include a minimum 60 college credits, or prior military service. The key is to line up the applicants with the

department where their skills and abilities are the best fit, he says.

The feedback from users on both sides has been "overwhelmingly positive," Cassidy says. To increase awareness among potential applicants, Cassidy has implemented a marketing campaign, titled "Wear the Badge, Join the Force."

Yet, even with the simplified and speedy application process offered through PoliceApp.com, many departments are finding that modern society is often to blame for significantly reducing the number of qualified recruits. Drug use often emerges as a disqualifying factor in many candidates who otherwise would qualify. Fiore says departments try to be flexible and may not penalize an applicant for teen or college indiscretions. But applicants who have used drugs in their adult lives can expect to be cut from the field.

Fiore and Cassidy agree that the state has gone to great lengths to help standardize the requirements for public

safety careers, which enables departments large and small to use the same criteria when hiring. In addition, the extended training at the police academies produces officers who already have good basic skills when they report to their departments.

It takes considerably longer to field a fully trained officer now than it did a generation ago. Fiore notes that on his first day on the job he was assigned to the midnight shift, given a patrol sector and keys to a cruiser, and sent out to work, alone.

Now, even after months of academy training, new officers are closely monitored during their first months on the job. All together, it can take a full year to find, select, and train a new police officer.

But Fiore maintains that police departments and the public are better served by the process. "We'll see a better quality police officer" with the more extensive training, he said, which "is good for the profession."

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## Innocence Project—

Continued from page 3

court to a facility in New York for DNA testing. This was in 1991, and that earlier generation of DNA testing yielded no conclusive results. Although the evidence should have been returned to the court, it was mistakenly sent to the legal aid lawyers who had requested the testing. It took a number of phone calls and several months, but Goodrow finally located the evidence sitting in a box in the legal aid archives.

Today's more specific DNA testing provided conclusive results; there was no match between Tillman and the bodily fluids found on the clothing. Tillman, as he had maintained for so many years, was innocent. But his case wasn't disposed of immediately, said Carlow. The court granted a petition for a new trial, and Tillman was released on a promise to appear in court. This was in June of 2006; a month later Tillman was exonerated.

Last fall, appearing before hundreds of law students at Quinnipiac University, Tillman admitted he lost hope at times and would get angry. But his mother's weekly visits and her strong faith kept him going. She told him that God doesn't give you more than you can bear. When he felt he was at his breaking point, he took her advice and turned himself over to Christ. His mother recognized the change. "There's something different about you," she said on her next visit.

"I've put Christ in my heart," Tillman responded.

Soon after, the Connecticut Innocence

Project took up his case. "God sent his angels, Karen and Brian," Tillman said. His prayers had been answered.

"As a result of Mr. Tillman's case our legislature, to their great credit, funded the Connecticut Innocence Project...and four fully funded positions," Goodrow explained. Last year Attorney Goodrow was named director of the project.

"The fact that the (Tillman) case is so factually clear and you have as nice a man as you could ever imagine, (helped) the process go as quickly as it did," Carlow said. "People genuinely were impressed by him...and the dignity with which he dealt with the entire issue."

The Connecticut Innocence Project is currently reviewing about 100 cases. "These are not clients but inmates asking us to make them our clients; we will not make a commitment...until we have reviewed their case and feel there is some form of new evidence that can establish innocence. There are about 20...we have made a commitment to," Goodrow explained.

The Connecticut Innocence Project will only take on cases that meet certain criteria. The prisoner must be innocent, be indigent, and must not have plea-bargained, and there must be new evidence such as DNA specimens that can exonerate the accused. For more information on the Connecticut Innocence Project call (860) 275-6140 or Google the Connecticut Innocence Project.

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## Versus—

Continued from page 6

trying to keep its citizens safe. Connecticut now spends more on its prison system (over 19,000 prisoners in 46 facilities) than on education. Why would a city adopt ordinances and policies that will feed that system with illegal immigrant criminals? The local and federal governments need to work together on this issue. Both have a responsibility to the citizens of this country.

Don't let Connecticut become a haven for illegal immigrants and all the problems that go with that. We have enough issues to deal with already.

### Make Politicians "Personally Responsible"

"Safe zones" and "sanctuary sites" stress our public health system, tax social welfare programs, strain our public education system, and burden our criminal justice system.

U.S. immigration laws state: Illegal entry into the United States (entry without inspection) is a misdemeanor; and repeated illegal entry is a felony. Immigration and Nationality Act (INA) Section 275, (8 USC Section 1324).

The law is clear, whomever "harbors, shelters, conceals, transports, and/or aids illegal aliens" commits a felony offense (8 United States Code sections 1324 and 1325). These civil and criminal acts of disobedience should be referred to federal grand juries, and the U.S. attorney general should aggressively present these felony violations to the grand jury for consideration.

Politicians who blatantly break these laws by developing or supporting "safe zones" for illegal aliens should be held personally accountable, not the American taxpayers who currently foot this bill.

### Compassion Should be Extended to All Immigrants

Connecticut should continue to provide assistance for immigrants. These people do contribute to the American way of life, and assisting them will ultimately strengthen our society. Let's not forget, they usually provide much-needed labor for jobs Americans will not do! We should exercise compassion for these individuals, in the same way many of our (immigrant) ancestors were shown compassion. Our nation flourished as a result. "Justice,

equality, and compassion in human relations."

### Stop Aiding Illegal Immigration

No, I don't think it is the right way to go. I believe that illegal immigrants should travel back to their own countries. I think that if New Haven becomes a safe zone for illegal immigrants, the neighborhoods in New Haven will deteriorate. Businesses will suffer because everyone will want to move out of New Haven. It will become a very depressed area. I think that all companies should make sure before they hire new employees, that they are legal immigrants. I think that the underground economy should be aware of people who do not pay taxes, such as illegal immigrants. They stifle the economy. People who hire housekeepers and nannies do not always pay taxes, and they do not help the situation. We need to stop aiding illegal immigration and under-the-counter activity. Jobs would dry up because businesses in New Haven would dry up.

### There Should be a Moratorium

There are over 35 sanctuary cities throughout the United States.

That large number must have some reason for opening their communities up to undocumented immigrants. The American opportunity should be available to all of mankind, especially to those that are already here making a contribution to the community and their families. They should not be exposed to the irrational and racist attitude some people display or the humiliation of being referred to as "illegal" or "alien." These are human beings and not from another planet.

There needs to be a moratorium on raids and harassment policies of undocumented immigrants until the government comes up with an agreement on immigration reform. Our police should not be immigration agents for the federal government.

The Cambridge, Massachusetts, city council sums up the view of many Connecticut citizens with its sanctuary status, which instructs police and other agencies not to inquire about a person's immigration status when providing government services. Undocumented immigrants should have equal status in education, employment, health care, housing, political, social, and legal spheres.

Jordan

## Next Month's Topic

Certainly one of the most controversial topics the state Legislature will grapple with in its pending session will be the so-called "Three Strikes" legislation. It is intended to remove repeat offenders from society for extended periods of time, or life, depending on the nature of their crimes. Lawmakers, however, do not agree on specifics of the law.

Connecticut already has legislation allowing increased penalties for multiple convictions but leaves the sentencing to the discretion of the court.

State Republicans want new legislation calling for criminals convicted of three violent

felonies to be automatically sentenced to life in prison without the possibility of parole. State Democrats want a judge to review each case individually at the time of sentencing, arguing that misdemeanor and juvenile offenses could be counted as a strike.

Do you think new Three Strikes legislation should allow judges to weigh in on sentencing decisions or do you support imposing mandatory prison sentences?

Violent crimes include: Murder, kidnapping, first degree sexual assaults, first degree burglary, and now home invasion.

What is your opinion – how tough should Connecticut legislators make this law?

Be heard, send your thoughts to Versus/thejusticejournal.com. Names may be withheld on request.

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# What If...?

By **CAPT. GARY MACNAMARA**

Fairfield Police Department  
Special to The Justice Journal



## Hate Crimes are on the Rise and Evident in Fairfield County

Tying a knot in a piece of rope can serve many purposes, from securing a load in a pickup truck, to tying a boat to a dock, or even making a backyard swing.

But tying the wrong knot and using it to create fear is a crime, and the same standard applies to using a can of spray paint.

Last summer it was a simple knot displayed as a hangman's noose that was placed in a Coast Guard cadet's travel bag in New London, CT. The cadet discovered it upon returning from a training vessel. Soon after, another knot formed as a hangman's noose was placed in the office of a civil rights officer tasked with helping to train cadets at the Coast Guard Academy in race relations, a session prompted by the first incident.

It's not such a simple knot when used as a symbol of the lynching of African-Americans. Recently similar discoveries of nooses have been occurring in other areas of Connecticut. And over the years symbols of hatred, specifically swastikas, have been spray-painted on various places of worship in the area. There have been other displays of hatred, including cross burnings, vandalism to tombstones, and hate mail or flyers which can be considered bias.

These recent events in Connecticut

### Hate Crimes Reported to the FBI in 2006 in Fairfield County Communities

Town/City	No. quarters reporting	Race	Religion	Sexual Orientation	Ethnicity	Disability
Bethel	4	1	0	0	0	0
Bridgeport	4	7	0	2	2	0
Brookfield	4	1	0	0	0	0
Danbury	1	1	0	0	1	0
Easton	4	0	1	0	0	0
Greenwich	4	1	2	0	0	0
Norwalk	4	1	0	1	0	0
Redding	4	2	0	0	0	0
Stamford	4	0	0	2	0	0
Stratford	1	0	1	0	0	0
Trumbull	4	4	0	1	0	0
Westport	4	0	3	2	0	0
Western Connecticut State University	4	0	0	1	0	0
Connecticut State Police	4	2	1	4	0	0
<b>Total reported for state</b>		<b>56</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>2</b>

and elsewhere, specifically the discovery of nooses, are reminiscent of the December 2006 incident in Jena, Louisiana, an incident which illustrates how volatile a display of hatred can become. There, racial tensions escalated among high school students after nooses were hung on a tree on campus where an

African-American student sat. It ended in violence between black and white students.

All these can fall under the category of a hate crime.

What is a hate crime? In simple terms it is a crime committed by an offender who is motivated to commit an act because of something personal about the victim. The victims of these hate crimes differ from the victims of other crimes. Generally, targets of most random crimes are the victim of circumstances—being in the wrong place at the wrong time. The victims just happen to stop at an ATM, or fail to lock their car doors, or set their house alarms. They become victims, in part, based on what they do or don't do. A criminal is there, with the desire and means to commit the crime, and seizes the opportunity.

However, targets of hate crimes become victims, not because of what they do or don't do, or even where they are, but because of who they are or what they believe. Sure, they may also be the victim by being in the wrong place at the wrong time, but the crime is motivated by hatred or bias. In addition, structures can become the target of vandals, who damage property because of what it represents.

Hate crimes are most often the result of prejudice and bigotry. They can result in one single initial victim, but one single act often spreads an emotional and psychological impact to an entire community. This creates secondary victims and often leaves groups of people isolated, fearful, and vulnerable. Often one act will trigger other acts. One act may also prompt retaliation from a protected group, which may believe its response is the only way to protect others. That can create a further divide between the groups. It generally results in demonstrations, with people

trying to bring attention to the problem and hopefully prevent further acts.

In the State of Connecticut a person is guilty of intimidation based on bigotry or bias if the act is committed because of the victim's actual or perceived race, religion, ethnicity, disability, sexual orientation, or gender identity or expression. A person can be charged if an act results in serious injury, and if a person is attacked solely based on his or her race or religious belief. It can be the threat of violence if the threat is based on one of the protected areas. Any act of vandalism based on bias or hatred is also considered an offense. The seriousness of the crime will determine whether the crime is a felony or misdemeanor. In addition the underlying crime can also be charged.

Also, it is against the law in Connecticut to deprive any person of any rights under the Connecticut or United States Constitution, because of their religion, national origin, color, sex, race, blindness, physical disability, and sexual orientation, while wearing a mask, hood, or other device designed to conceal the suspect's identity. Sexual orientation was added as a class in October 2007.

Federal law also addresses bias crimes. Several statutes under the United States Criminal Code include fair housing laws, civil right statutes, and even laws to address the church burnings experienced at times around the country.

Are bias crimes or crimes of hatred a problem? According to a 2006 FBI report, hate crimes rose nearly 8 percent nationwide. A total of 7,722 incidents occurred, according to reporting agencies. Earlier reports by the Center for the Prevention of Hate Violence explored the rising increase of hate crimes related to the Internet, concluding technology not only increased the acts themselves, but has helped to spread the beliefs of some of the hate groups.

How does local law enforcement respond to a bias crime? Although each crime has specific elements which make each response unique, police always try to isolate elements of a crime. Hate crimes may be obvious, such as a swastika spray-painted on a synagogue, or it may take more investigation. An assault case may be just that, until later interviews or facts about the crime reveal another motive on the part of the offender.

What if you think you may have witnessed a hate crime, or have information about hate crimes? What should you do? You must report it to police. Even the seemingly innocent placement of hate-filled flyers on your windshield should be reported. Often this is indicative of a larger problem occurring in the community.

Hate crimes, although reaching the national level of attention, always start at a local level. Your local action or inaction can affect the national reaction.

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# SCAM of the Month

By GRANT STINCHFIELD  
Correspondent



## Less Greed and More Thought Best Protection Against Scams

There is nothing worse than being described as a "victim" or seeing yourself between the lines of the Justice Journal's "Scam of the Month" column.

It means you have been had, taken, scammed, and conned out of your hard-earned money. Our goal each month is to arm our readers with information that will allow them to protect themselves from falling victim to some elaborate scheme specifically designed to fool people into giving up their money or personal information.

Take hard-working Patrick Alva, who paid a contractor \$1,500 to refinish his wood floors. Three weeks later the contractor was nowhere to be found, and the floors were untouched. "He was half the price of the other contractors. His price was just too good to pass up," Alva said. He now knows he made a mistake. "We checked his record with the Better Business Bureau after we paid him the money; we should have known better." Alva said the contractor had a long history of getting paid and taking off without doing the work. "We were eager to get the floors done and looking for a deal. We should have done our homework first."

### Common Traits

In almost every scheme the Justice Journal uncovers, the victims all have common traits. The key is to avoid them. When you do, the chances of falling victim to any scheme dramatically decrease.

Sadly, fraudsters typically prey on those people who can least afford to lose their savings. They are the same people who, without exception, are looking for a "great deal" or an "easy way" to save money or make a quick buck. Many of them are already experiencing financial woes. They are desperate for more money.

"The possibility of things being better one day can be more powerful than the need to think of the consequences of their actions," warns Dr. Rob Fazio, a psychologist with the nonprofit counseling group Hold the Door for Others. "When you are vulnerable your field of vision narrows. Instead, your focus needs to be on the reality of the situation rather than the dream of solving all your problems," adds Dr. Fazio.

Below is a list of traits that are most common among victims. By learning to spot the traits of a victim, you can stop yourself from becoming one. Take

*"I let the emotional side of me take over. I was unable to be rational. Deep down I knew the price was too good to be true."*

a hard look at the list below. If you fall into any one of the following categories, you need to beware. Often the people that lose the most money to a scam are those who possess more than one of the following attributes.

### Desperate for Money

Many victims often find themselves in a state of financial dire straits. They are out of work or on disability. The bills are piling up, and a quick fix to their financial woes makes a well-planned scheme hard to turn down. These people need to know that the "quick fix" that "sounds too good to be true," probably is. In the end the people so eager to solve their financial problems only make matters worse by creating an even bigger financial loss.

### The Age Factor

Victims often fall into an age range. Young and old are the most at risk. Both tend to be overly trusting. Young adults are often eager to make their first financial windfall. They end up being taught an early lesson that a con man has no remorse and will take advantage of anyone.

Older folks, specifically the elderly, are also at a greater risk of falling victim to a con job. Unscrupulous contractors, insurance agents, and anyone else hawking their bogus wares will specifically target the elderly because they tend to ask fewer questions. In the most egregious cases, the crook will prey on those older folks who are dealing with memory loss, Alzheimer's disease, or dementia. It falls on the younger generation to stand up and look out for their elderly relatives. And the older generation should not be too embarrassed to ask their younger relatives for advice or help.

### Overly Trusting

Many victims refuse to believe someone would try to take advantage of them. A shrewd con man with a smooth, kind demeanor can take overly trusting people for all they are worth. Many scam artists actually target churches and other religious institutions because the people there are more likely to find the good in someone. Con men will try to take advantage of people who are

overly compassionate. The key is to ask questions. Don't be afraid to ask tough questions, either. Many people who fall victim to a scheme don't want to offend the huckster by asking what could be perceived as a rude question. It's your money, so gather all the information.

### Uninformed

Before you venture into any business deal, you need to do your homework. It is amazing what a simple "Google" (Google.com) search can turn up. There are so many schemes that have been exposed over and over again, yet people continue to fall for them. The Justice Journal has exposed countless "Foreign Lottery Scams," "Bogus Check Cashing Scams," and "Phishing Schemes" designed to steal your identity. Yet every month thousands of people still fall victim to these old scams that continue to prey on new victims. People will believe what they want to believe. I will never forget the anger in the voice of one woman who called me asking about a

letter she received informing her she had won "The Canadian Lottery." When I asked her if she had ever entered a Canadian lottery, she responded, "No." I then asked her if she thought it was strange she had to send money via Western Union before she could receive the millions she had supposedly won. She agreed it was strange but informed me the letter had an official Canadian seal on it, and she would be sending the money anyway. She called and apologized three weeks later when her supposed winnings never arrived.

Dr. Fazio says victims like that need to try to raise their self-awareness and challenge their thoughts and beliefs. "People who are vulnerable or at risk of falling victim to a scam need to try to make a strategic response to an offer that they know is too good to be true rather than make a knee-jerk reaction," advises Dr. Fazio.

After Patrick Alva fell victim to a fraudulent contractor, he realized his quest for a great deal got the best of him. "I let the emotional side of me take over. I was unable to be rational. Deep down I knew the price was too good to be true."

(g.stinchfield@thejusticejournal.com)

"I let my kids and their friends drink at my house, but I take their keys. I don't think there's anything wrong with that."

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# Due Process

RICHARD T. MEEHAN JR.



## Clemens Could be in Trouble if He Taped Call in Connecticut

Dear Due Process,

*I saw recently that Roger Clemens secretly tape-recorded his conversation with his trainer who accused him of using steroids. Is it legal to tape someone's phone conversation with you?*

Rob Lesko

Dear Rob,

Recently Roger Clemens revealed at his press conference that he had surreptitiously tape-recorded his telephone conversation with his former trainer, and accuser, Brian McNamee. Clemens has been engaged in an all-out assault on McNamee in an attempt to counter the accusations leveled in the Mitchell report on steroid use in baseball. McNamee's attorneys have threatened an ethics complaint against Clemens' attorney, who was present when Clemens recorded the call and reportedly encouraged the recording.

Ethics aside, the question is: was it legal for Clemens to secretly record his phone conversation with another without that person's knowledge or consent? Depending on the jurisdiction in which the taping occurred, it may or may not constitute a crime.

Both the federal government and state laws prohibit the interception of telephone conversations without a court order. Interception generally implies that a third party is monitoring and recording a telephone conversation between unknowing participants. This form of electronic eavesdropping has been a major tool of law enforcement since Congress authorized wiretapping in the late 1960's. The process through which a legal wiretap is obtained is rigorous, and courts place strict limitations on the intrusion. Wiretap laws are grounded in respect for an individual's expectation of privacy when engaged in a private conversation.

By contrast, however, federal law and the law in 38 states does not prohibit one party's secret recording of a phone conversation. The theory being that there is not an expectation of privacy, since the party being recorded is willingly participating in a discussion that the recording party is at liberty to share with others.

Connecticut is one of twelve states that do not permit such secret recordings. Both parties to a conversation must consent if a call is to be recorded. Thus, when you contact a merchant there is generally an announcement that the call is being recorded for training or quality control purposes. In reality it is a warning that the call is being recorded, thus giving the caller the option of not participating in the call since it is being taped.

In this state it is a five-year felony to unlawfully engage in wiretapping or mechanical overhearing of a conversation under Connecticut General Statute sec. 53a-189. In addition to criminal penalties our law also provides civil sanctions. Sec.

52-570d states: "Action for illegal recording of private telephonic communications. (a) No person shall use any instrument, device or equipment to record an oral private telephonic communication unless the use of such instrument, device or equipment (1) is preceded by consent of all parties to the communication and such prior consent either is obtained in writing or is part of, and obtained at the start of, the recording, or (2) is preceded by verbal notification which is recorded at the beginning and is part of the communication by the recording party, or (3) is accompanied by an automatic tone warning device which automatically produces a distinct signal that is repeated at intervals of approximately fifteen seconds during the communication while such instrument, device or equipment is in use."

Individuals who violate this civil provision are liable for damages, including attorney's fees. Exceptions to this prohibition exist for law enforcement and several other very limited circumstances. Monitoring devices are easily and legally obtained at most electronic retail outlets. The possession of a device is not itself a crime, since it can be employed legally if both parties consent to the recording.

Thus, had Roger Clemens resided here rather than in Houston, his actions would have exposed him and his attorney to felony prosecution and civil damages.

Dear Due Process,

*I have read that Roger Clemens is planning to testify before Congress on the steroid scandal. Is this a smart choice?*

Charlie Nolan

Dear Charlie,

Roger Clemens is struggling with his control, but this time it is not on the pitcher's mound. This time it's his life and potential legacy. Without question Clemens will always be remembered as one of the most dominant pitchers in the history of baseball. The debate is already heated about how much, if at all, performance-enhancing drugs have contributed to that dominance. Will he also be remembered for allowing ego and arrogance to overcome judgment as he contemplates appearing under oath before Congress?

Senator George Mitchell, author of the

now-famous Mitchell report, testified that the reports provided to him by Clemens's trainer and friend, Brian McNamee, were deemed by him to be credible. His point: McNamee resisted giving up Clemens until he was told by federal investigators that he could save himself only if he gave completely truthful testimony. It was then that he dropped a dime on the Rocket.

Clemens has publicly challenged McNamee's account. He has secretly recorded a 17-minute conversation that he released to the press. He has also commenced a libel action against McNamee. Clemens supporters point to this public response as proof that Clemens has nothing to hide.

Receiving equal criticism is Clemens's lead attorney, Rusty Hardin. Lawyers for McNamee have fired back at Hardin, suggesting that his instigation of the taped phone call violated ethical proscriptions. Other legal pundits question the wisdom of commencing a libel suit at this juncture. In that lawsuit McNamee's attorneys can call Clemens to testify in a deposition, under oath.

Depositions are important tools for preparation of the trial of any civil lawsuit. It is an opportunity to commit the witness to a version of events. Any variance from that earlier testimony by the witness in a later proceeding allows the attorney to attack or impeach the witness's credibility by admitting the contradictory portions of the transcript of the prior deposition. Most civil depositions are recorded only by a court stenographer, but rules of practice everywhere permit videotaping depositions. Guaranteed, this one would be videotaped.

Should Clemens's deposition testimony be determined to be untruthful, he would be exposed to a perjury charge in the jurisdiction where that deposition will be taken. But there is a more immediate threat: his impending Congressional testimony. Issuing public denials is expected any time such an accusation is publicized. Testifying that it is false is something else altogether—witness Martha Stewart. The Domestic Diva served time because a jury convicted her of giving a false statement. Lying to or misleading the press is not a crime; if it was, most politicians would be serving time. Lying to or deceiving Congress or federal investigators is a

five-year felony. Future Hall of Famers have no special aura in this arena. Even the vice president's chief of staff, Scooter Libby, learned—painfully—that stature does not forgive deception in an official investigation.

Title 18, United States Code, § 1001 prohibits giving false or misleading information to federal investigators:

"(a) Except as otherwise provided in this section, whoever, in any matter within the jurisdiction of the executive, legislative, or judicial branch of the Government of the United States, knowingly and willfully—

(1) falsifies, conceals, or covers up by any trick, scheme, or device a material fact;

(2) makes any materially false, fictitious, or fraudulent statement or representation; or

(3) makes or uses any false writing or document knowing the same to contain any materially false, fictitious, or fraudulent statement or entry;

shall be fined under this title, imprisoned not more than 5 years or, if the offense involves international or domestic terrorism (as defined in section 2331), imprisoned not more than 8 years, or both.

...

"(c) With respect to any matter within the jurisdiction of the legislative branch, subsection (a) shall apply only to . . .

(2) any investigation or review, conducted pursuant to the authority of any committee, subcommittee, commission or office of the Congress, consistent with applicable rules of the House or Senate."

Clemens's resolve may already be weakening as his attorney is now resisting Clemens submitting to a deposition by congressional investigators in advance of his anticipated testimony.

Clemens has choices; choices most experienced criminal defense lawyers would recognize. An indictment for violating the false statement statute can be obtained with proof of probable cause that the utterances by Clemens are false or misleading. Case law in the federal system also recognizes that denials or claimed lack of recall, given under a situation where the Government believes one should have recall, is sufficient to indict.

Just like staring down a batter waiting for signs from his catcher, Clemens has choices. He can move forward with this folly and testify, exposing himself to federal prosecution (see Barry Bonds); or he can exercise his fifth-amendment right not to incriminate himself and refuse to testify.

There is one other choice, the one made by Andy Petite. If the Rocket did use performance-enhancing drugs, come clean with it; don't compound the offense by trying to brush back McNamee or Congress with a high and tight 99 mph fastball. There is a lot more at stake here than a place in Cooperstown.



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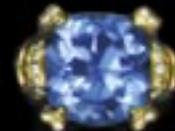
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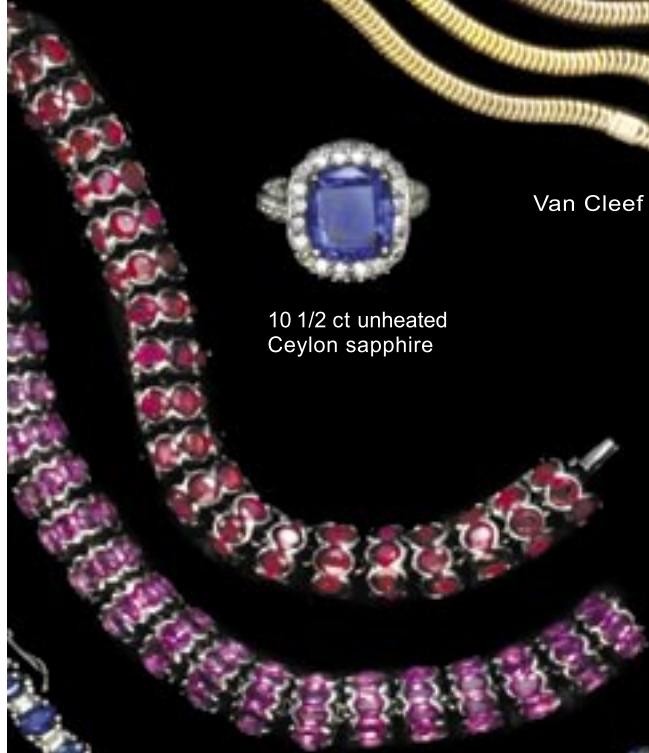
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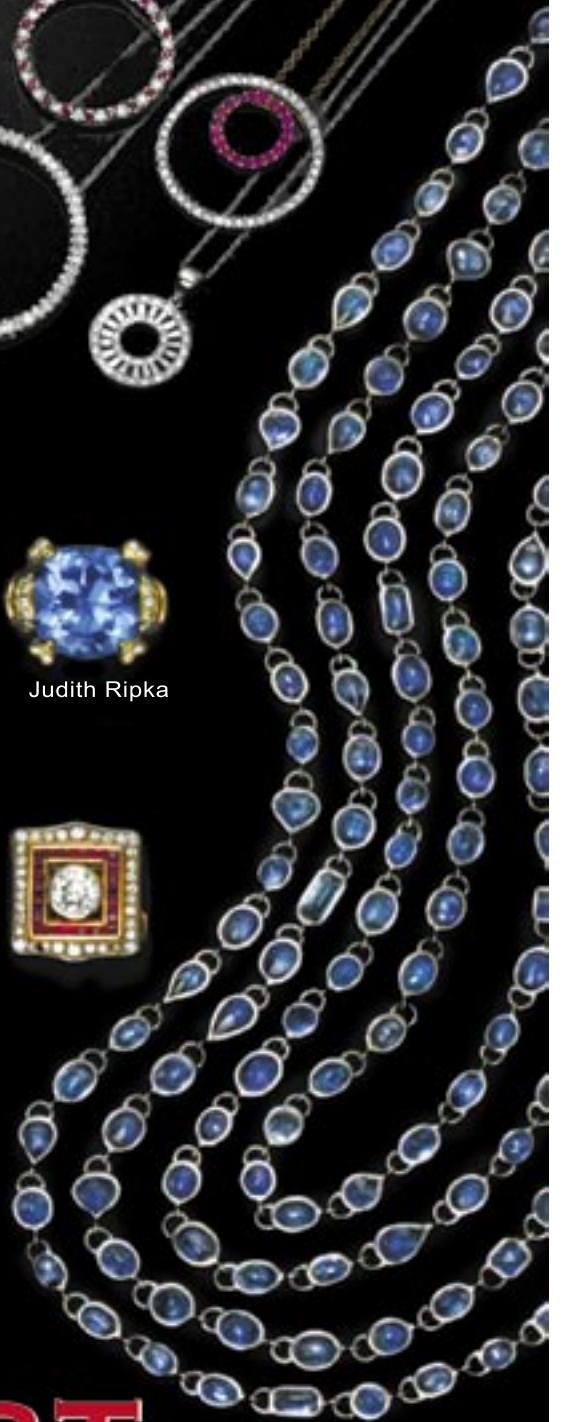
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