

Belmont Policeman Uses Skills To Assist Stricken Resident

BEL. COVR. 11/9/77
BY C.J. MARROW

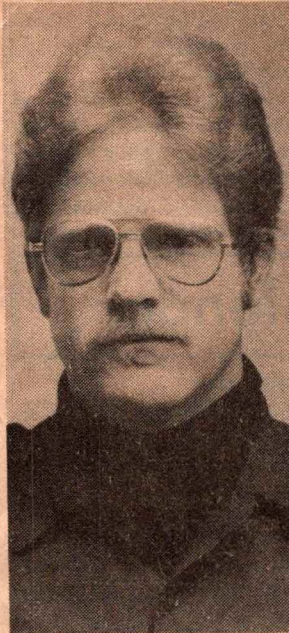
A Belmont man is alive today because of the training and expertise of members of the local police and fire departments.

Belmont Officer Michael Stasko was dispatched to investigate a minor accident at El Camino and Hill Street on Jan. 11. When he reached the scene, he found that James Robert Sullivan, of 418 Hiller Street, bumped into a parked car and was now slumped over in his own car, apparently lifeless.

Officer Stasko summoned aid from another police officer, Stephen McCreadie, and called the fire prevention rescue squad. He then pulled Mr. Sullivan out of the car and began closed-chest heart massage, along with mouth-to-mouth resuscitation.

He maintained Mr. Sullivan's precarious hold on life until the Belmont Fire Department came, and at that point John Serowchat took over and

continued the heart massage in the ambulance



MICHAEL STASKO

as Mr. Sullivan was taken to Chope Community Hospital.

Mr. Sullivan, who has a history of heart trouble, was in intensive care for several days, but his

condition is now stable, according to Chope Hospital staff.

Officer Stasko, 25, was originally trained in life-saving techniques when he worked as a lifeguard during his student days. He studied at City College of San Francisco, San Francisco State University and St. Mary's College. His life-saving training was furthered at the police academy training section at Chabot College. He joined the Belmont force last August after two years with the San Francisco Sheriff's office and prior service as an airport police officer at San Francisco International Airport.

This is the second time he has put his paramedic knowledge to work—the first involved a near drowning.

According to Capt. Michael Collins of the Belmont Fire Protection District, Officer Stasko's actions will win him a commendation from the department.

Kaiser Joins

Belmont PD

BEL. COVR. 11/27/77
Samuel M. Kaiser has been appointed to the Belmont Police Department. Officer Kaiser is replacing Officer Barry Bennett who resigned earlier this year.

Officer Kaiser comes to the Belmont force as a lateral transfer, having been a member of the Los Angeles Housing Authority Police and the California State University Police in Northridge. Mr. Kaiser will bring his wife, Cindy, and 12-year old daughter Michelle.

Officer Kaiser speaks Spanish fluently and has expertise in sign language. His hobbies include music composition, swimming and jogging.

Police Ask Citizen Aid To Help Reduce Crime

DEL. COUR. 3/23/77

By C.J. MARROW

"We're yelling 'Help!'", said Lt. Jim Scales of the Belmont Police Department to the Chamber of Commerce members and citizens who attended the mixer at the Iron Gate Restaurant the evening of March 15.

The public has a misconception of what it can realistically expect from the police department, the lieutenant explained. The department consists of a chief, a captain, two lieutenants, five sergeants and 20 patrolmen. With this staff, the department must maintain four shifts; allow time for sick leave and vacations; transport people to jail; aid accident victims; make court ap-

pearances, and confront a mountain of paperwork.

One of the sergeants is a detective who handles crimes against people—homicides, rapes, armed robbery and the like. Another detective handles crimes against property—burglary, vandalism, fraudulent checks and such.

Another sergeant is the juvenile officer who, according to Lt. Scales, has his hands full—especially since a new law was recently passed requiring that juveniles be given the same status as adults under the law. This wipes out curfews and leaves the police with no authority to cope with runaways.

Two of the officers comprise the motorcycle

traffic detail. As they are supported by a federal grant, they can be used only for traffic control...no routine calls.

So for crime prevention, there are normally only one sergeant and three men on the road at any one time to patrol 64 miles of streets and protect 26,000 people. And much of their time is spent answering the more than 1,000-per-year disturbing-the-peace calls—which are usually noisy parties or barking dogs.

Lt. Scales stated that it was not his intention to make a plea for more police officers, although he did admit that while the crime rate has risen rapidly, there are 10 per cent less officers on the force now than there were three years ago. However, there is no way to place an officer in the right place at the right time, regardless of the number on the force, Lt. Scales pointed out. "and certainly no one wants a military police state."

His plea was for community involvement. "We don't want you rushing out and apprehending the criminals," he said. "We just want you to point us in the right direction. Report suspicious occurrences."

Burglaries are occurring in Belmont now at the rate of two per day. So far this year, major crimes are up 19.6 per cent over last year. There is no specific 'high crime area' in the city. Criminal activities are well scattered.

Many times people worry about strange goings-on at a neighboring home, but are uncertain what to do. Perhaps the 'burglar' is only the son of the family who forgot his key, they reason, or the 'repairman' really is there to fix the TV. "Call us," said Lt. Scales, "We'll check. If everything is OK,

there's no problem. If you're embarrassed or frightened, don't leave your name...but please call."

He also suggested "Home Alert" meetings. "Get a group of neighbors together and I'll come and talk to you", he said, "and tell you how you can make your homes and businesses less vulnerable to burglary."

City Officials Prepare For Prevention Day

BEL. COUR. 1/26/77

Belmont Mayor William Hardwick declared the week of Feb. 6 through 13 to be Crime Prevention Week in a recent proclamation.

Belmont's observance will tie in with the first Citizen's Crime Prevention Day scheduled for Feb. 13 at the San Mateo County Fairgrounds.

The day is being sponsored by Capture, a federally funded program

Belmont police officer, is in charge of the crime prevention program locally, said police chief William Singer.

"Burglary has definitely increased," Chief Singer said.

Police are also available to go to individual homes to give resident's tips on securing doors and windows.

Lt. Scales will attend the Crime Prevention Day on Feb. 13, along with San Mateo County Sheriff-John D. MacDonald and other local police officials.

designed to reduce burglaries. It is operated by police department and citizen volunteer support.

Capture is responsible for starting a program of neighborhood watches, where neighbors keep an eye on each other's homes while they are away, and work together to stop burglaries.

Lt. Jim Scales, a



Sitting Pretty

BEL. COUR. 3/23/77

BELMONT TRAFFIC SAFETY OFFICERS Joe Rogus and Brent Harnish (left, right) were pleased with the results of the Selective Traffic Enforcement Program, the results of which were recently released. Statistics showed that property damage accidents were reduced by 26 percent and injury accidents were cut by 47 percent from October to December. Under the program, the two officers are assigned to hazardous intersections and roadways at times when many

accidents occur. Officer Harnish also taught bicycle safety and registration classes in Belmont schools and Officer Rogus handled Traffic Safety Programs with the school safety patrol personnel. They have also requested engineering reviews when it appears a condition, not a motorist, contributed to an accident. The program, funded by the State Office of Traffic Safety and the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, is headed by Lt. Donald Davis.

Home Alert Meetings Seek to Up Security

BEL. COUL. 4/20/77

By C.J. MARROW

Burglaries go up each year in Belmont, and the sad thing, according to Belmont Police Lt. James Scales, is that many if not most of them could be prevented by the victims themselves.

Not that Scales is telling people they should personally try to apprehend burglars in their home. Indeed, he preaches caution to anyone who confronts a burglar face to face.

Rather, he believes that most burglars, far from having to struggle to earn their keep, usually take advantage of carelessness by homeowners that could easily be prevented.

To combat the problem, Scales has conducted home alert meetings, crime prevention meetings, in-

spected private homes, and given tips to service clubs and other organizations on how to make one's property less vulnerable.

The best way to make a burglar's life difficult, says Scales, is simply to tighten up a house's security. Most private homes are so easy to enter that burglars often need nothing more complicated than a credit card or screwdriver to gain entry.

The two most frequent entries burglars use, of course, are the front door and the windows. To show how vulnerable doors are, Scales, in his safety inspections, used to ring the doorbell, wait until he heard the homeowner approaching, then open the door with a plastic card and say cheerfully, "Hi! I'm here to check the security of your home."

INDISCREET

The technique made his point effectively, but when one homeowner brought out his police dog and another faced him with a shotgun, Scales decided that there had to be a safer way to get the idea across.

The best way to make a door safer is to use a deadbolt, notes Scales.

Speed is critical to a successful burglary, and often the sight of as simple an obstacle as a deadbolt is enough to make a burglar move on to the next house.

Windows should also be securely locked from the inside.

Scales also suggests at his meetings that homeowners engrave

valuables with their social security number whenever possible. Marked items are more difficult to fence, and thus of less value to a thief, and also make it easier for the owner to recover stolen property.

The police department lends an engraving pen to the public for this purpose.

Other suggestions from Lt. Scales are: Don't hide a spare key under your door mat or flower pot or other 'logical' spot. Renters should have house locks reset, since they have no way of knowing who might hold keys to their home.

Don't name-tag your keys. Don't advertize your absence by letting papers pile up...stop subscriptions and ask neighbors to pick up throwaways. Keep police emergency numbers handy. And let your neigh-

bors know when you are planning to be away.

Home Alert Programs are under the auspices of CAPTURE — Citizen's Active Participation Through Utilization of Relevant Education — a federally-funded, county-wide program.

EDUCATION

CAPTURE puts emphasis on educating citizens in crime-prevention techniques, stimulating citizen participation, opening channels of communication with the police departments and developing a coordinated effort to confront crime-related problems of the area.

It's easy to set up a Home Alert group, Lt. Scales says. All you have to do is contact your neighbors and arrange an informal get-together. The lieutenant

will join the meeting and present a 25-minute film called "Invitation to Burglary" narrated by Raymond Burr.

A brief talk by Lt. Scales and an informal discussion period follows. So far this year there have been approximately 20 of these meetings.

MAJOR DROP

Other Bay Area cities such as Foster City and Hillsborough have reported a dramatic reduction in burglaries since the inception of their Home Alert programs.

The lieutenant explains that even if the police force were twice its present size, it would still be impossible to place men at the right place at the right time, so citizens are urged to notify the police of any suspicious activity.

To point up the effectiveness of citizen in-

volvement, Lt. Scales cites a recent example. A man phoned to report that persons were removing things from a neighbor's home on Old County Road. He provided license number and description of the car.

As a result, the police apprehended the suspects entering the freeway a few minutes later and found the car to be not only loaded with the Old County Road resident's possessions, but also the loot of half a dozen other burglaries.

There is also a crime prevention meeting held the fourth Thursday of each month, at the Belmont Police Headquarters. This meeting, under the chairmanship of Dorothy Gay and a committee of half a dozen concerned citizens, is open to the public.

Belmont Safety Soars

BEL COURIER 5/18/77
A recent report, published by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, revealed that motor vehicle traffic accidents cost Americans nearly \$38 billion annually in terms of deaths, injuries, lost income and property damage, but according to Police Lt. Don Davis, accidents have been on the wane in Belmont.

Lt. Davis credits the success to the work of Traffic Officers Joe Rogus and Brent Harnish. The traffic officers are being assigned to hazardous locations upon the daily review of accident frequency patterns as they apply to the time of day and the type of violations that are contributing to accidents.

Excessive speed, right-of-way and arterial stop sign violations are the leading causation of traffic accidents in Belmont.

Kaiser Joins

Belmont PD

BEL COURIER 4/27/77
Samuel M. Kaiser has been appointed to the Belmont Police Department. Officer Kaiser is replacing Officer Barry Bennett who resigned earlier this year.

Officer Kaiser comes to the Belmont force as a lateral transfer, having been a member of the Los Angeles Housing Authority Police and the California State University Police in Northridge. Mr. Kaiser will bring his wife, Cindy, and 12-year old daughter Michelle.

Officer Kaiser speaks Spanish fluently and has expertise in sign language. His hobbies include music composition, swimming and jogging.

Belmont Police to Get New Bullet-Proof Vests

SIM. TIMES 10/13/77
Belmont police officers will get new bullet-proof vests, the City Council agreed Wednesday night, after being told the present vests, now two years old, are fraying and might not stop bullets.

The council agreed to spend \$5,125 for 25 new vests. Officers wear them when on duty.

Two items not on the agenda occupied the early part of a long council meeting — the presence of some unwanted dirt on a section along San Juan Boulevard partly owned by the city, and the fact that a contractor had, it was alleged, stretched a permit to excavate 200 yards of dirt into about 500 yards.

In the case of the dirt, which neighbors say will silt a creek going into San Mateo if a heavy rain should fall, the council instructed the city staff to press for immediate removal.

After discussing such measures as going to court, the council agreed that perhaps the best action would be a phone call to the developer to suggest the council's displeasure, now and in the future, if that dirt isn't quickly gone.

In the case of the stretched permit, a stop-work order was authorized.

In other action, the council extended a hearing on a council-originated appeal concerning a use permit and conditions given the San Mateo County Arts Council for the Twin Pines Manor to its Oct. 25 meeting, with the public hearing remaining open.

It directed the city attorney to prepare an ordinance for its next meeting setting a new fee schedule for dirt excavation, designed to discourage any more excavation than necessary.

The new fees would be 30 cents per yard for the first 500 cubic yards, 40 cents up to 1,000 yards, then 50 cents up to 2,000 yards, 60 cents to 6,000 yards and 70 cents thereafter.

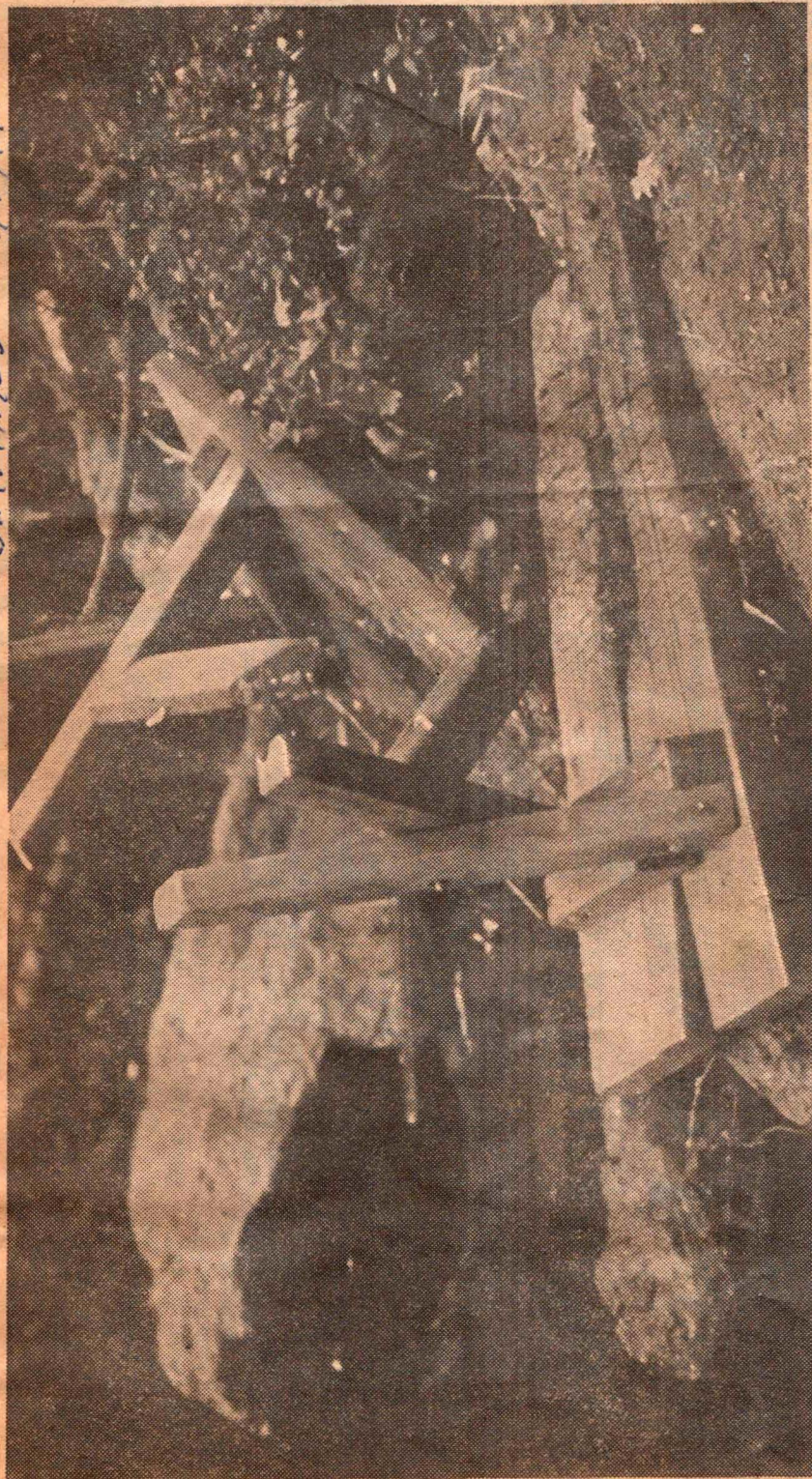
A public hearing to consider an application by Antonio Ruiz and the Belmont Planning Commission for amendment of the Belmont General Plan from multi-family residential to highway commercial use on a strip in the Sterling Downs subdivision was put over to Nov. 14.

The council appointed David Simpson, Robert Burger and Jacqueline Massing to the city Personnel Board, and Jerry Webb again to the Board of Design.

Dogs to Protect

Against Vandals

S.M. TIMES 9/14/77



(Times Photo by Mike Spinelli)

MORE VANDALISM AT TWIN PINES

Even while Belmont City Council was asking police to tighten vigilance at Twin Pines Park, another picnic table was burned.

Belmont police are starting an all-out drive to curb vandalism in city parks after the City Council reacted this week to \$2,300 in losses since July 1.

A week previous, the council learned, vandals entered Twin Pines Park, just a few hundred feet behind the police station, and picked up several heavy picnic tables and benches chained to the tables and threw them in the creek.

Police caught three vandals recently after they had caused about \$1,000 damage to Alexander Park. The culprits were ages 9, 8 and 6.

Councilman William Hardwick suggested it might be time to go to the dogs.

Police Chief William Singer said today that, while dogs will be used in the park areas, they will not be turned loose to flush out vandals.

"It would be very dangerous if the individual fought or ran," Singer said. "If a kid ran, he could be seriously injured."

"You don't turn a police dog loose just for search," Singer said, explaining that the dogs are so trained that they would let the handler know there was someone in the park bushes.

After a post-council conference with Park and Recreation Department officials, Singer said he had been informed that lighting is being installed to the rear of the Twin Pines buildings which will tend to discourage vandalism.

"We are stepping up patrols of the area," he said, "so that they will come to be hourly, although they will be staggered in time."

Singer emphasized that the police also will "definitely take action" to see that parents of convicted vandals pay for all damage involved. "Parents are held responsible for damage," he said, "and will be billed for the damage."

Return of Belmont youngsters to school is not expected to curb vandalism in itself. Police say that "destroying-type kids" act out continuously. "There are a limited number. It is just a matter of catching them," Singer said.

Mayor Frank Gonsalves said Monday that he wants "someone walking in there," not just police shining their lights into the darkened park areas.

"This is the place you use the dogs," Hardwick added.

Councilwoman Pam Ket-cham thought that use of spotlights "would let them (the vandals) know" they were being watched.

Slowdown of Ralston Auto Traffic Sought

S.M. TIMES 9/27/77
The Belmont City Council refuses to accept higher speed zones for Ralston Avenue and is asking the city staff to put up school-zone and other signs to slow traffic down.

The council made up its mind Monday night during a public hearing in which a parade of homeowner association leaders and residents told of the hazard to children, pedestrians, motorists and bike riders if the speed limits were made higher.

Vice Mayor Walt Worthge finally interrupted the testimony.

"Any other speakers would be an overkill," he commented. "I am convinced."

Other councilmen appeared in agreement. Nevertheless, more citizens got up to speak.

Finally, the council took over, without formally closing the hearing, and voted to support a Worthge motion that accepted a traffic study setting speed zones, but exempting Ralston Avenue.

The staff was instructed to come back at the second council meeting in October with information on the signs.

It all began, Police Chief William Singer explained, because a study was required by the state before the city could use radar on the streets.

The study showed that normal speeds on Ralston tended to be quite a bit higher than the 25-mile limit. Singer explained that the municipal court would not accept radar unless speed limits were on a par with normal traffic flow.

It also was pointed out that courts tend to allow a "tolerance" of up to seven to 10 miles an hour over the limit, or at least five.

That would mean that if the Ralston "long stretch" was posted for a 30-mile speed, as asked, motorists might go as high as 37.

The traffic is too fast now, one woman said. She pointed out that there are five schools on the street, and that the children frequent the street as late as 8 and even 9 p.m. in the summer.

Others pointed out the hazard to bike riders.

Some pointed to the dangers of left turns and in slowing down.

Lt. Gerald D'Arcy of the San Francisco Police Department declared that "few residents on this street feel they can back out or pull out without being an Evel Knievel kind of person."

He warned that "you are getting into the area of speed traps," referring to the fact that in presenting the study, it was noted that thousands of dollars of citation revenue might be expected if radar were used.

D'Arcy, who explained that his police job is to supervise about 60 San Francisco motorcycle policeman, said, "The trained traffic officer is the best deterrent on the road."

"Watch 'em slow down on the Bayshore when that Highway Patrol car comes along," he said.

He predicted that any increase in the speed limit would bring more rear-end

accidents when left turns were made. Meanwhile, D'Arcy said, one has only to walk along Ralston Avenue to see that even a 25-mile limit is on the border of being hazardous.

"I have seen many close calls."

Adult Crossing Guard Needed

BELT COUR. 9/27/77
The Belmont Police Department is accepting applications for the position of "Standby Adult Crossing Guard."

The crossing guard is responsible for the safety of pedestrians at an assigned intersection. The position is available on a fill-in basis for the regular crossing guards who require time off. As soon as a vacancy exists for a regular crossing guard, the standby person will be considered as the top contender for the job.

Qualifications include a general knowledge of traffic laws, ability to judge the speed of motor vehicles, ability to get along well with others, ability to command respect from motorists and

pedestrians, courtesy, reliability and good health.

Candidates are required to furnish a health questionnaire as part of the screening process, and will be expected to furnish their own transportation to their assigned location. The salary is \$2.85 an hour.

Interested candidates may obtain an application from the Belmont Police Department, 1215 Ralston Ave., Belmont. Completed applications should be returned to Lt. Don Davis as soon as possible.

Crossing Guard Post

Applications

S.M. TIMES 9/27/77
Belmont police are accepting applications for jobs as standby adult crossing guards. Applications are available at the Police Department at Twin Pines.

Standby crossing guards are activated when regular personnel require time off. Upon the resignation of a regular crossing guard, standbys get top consideration for full-time positions. They are paid initially \$2.75 per hour.

Crossing guards are responsible for pedestrian safety at assigned intersections.

Applicants must complete a health questionnaire. Completed applications are returned to Lt. Don Davis. Police note that "work is available now."

Promotion

For Officer

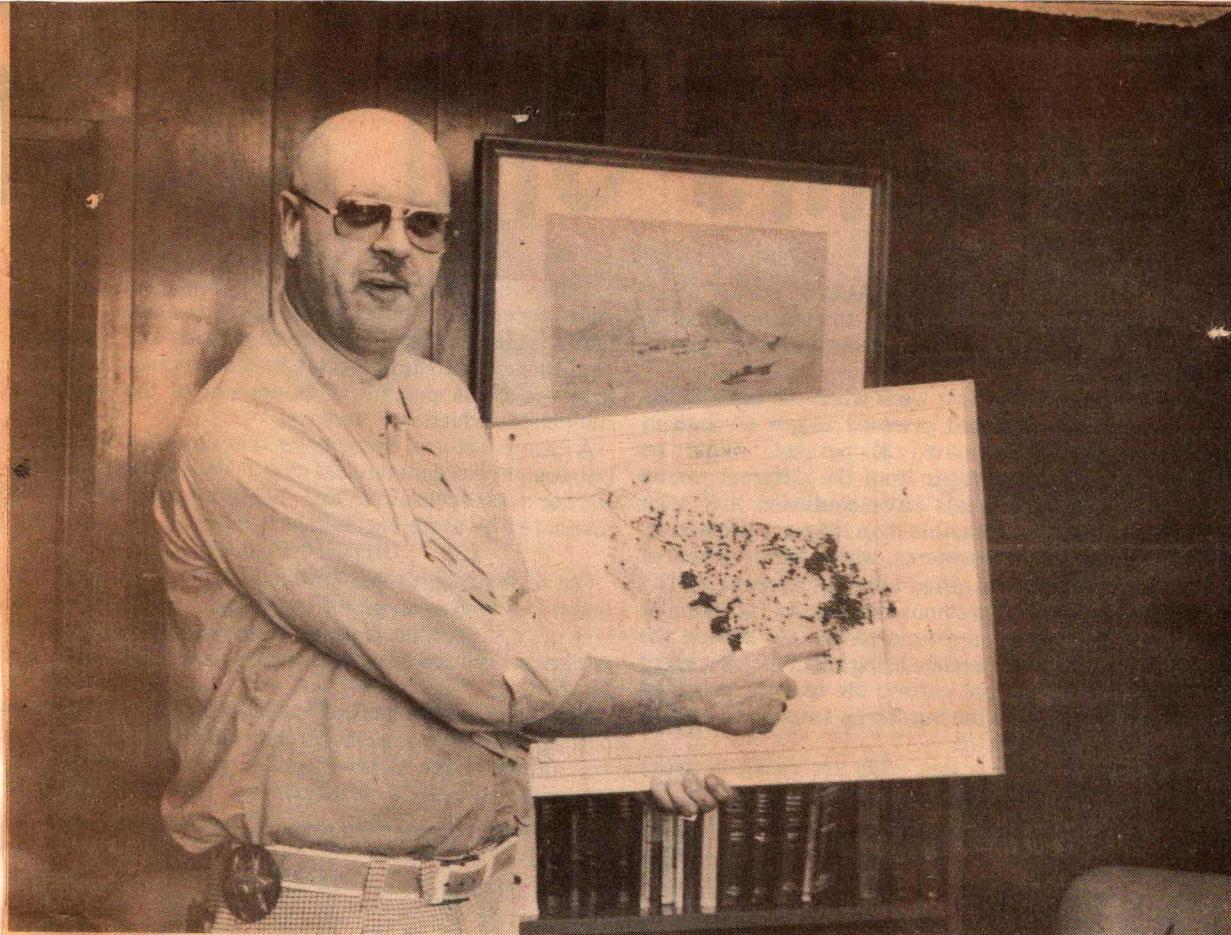
S.M. TIMES 11/29/77
Joseph Pierucci, a sergeant and 13-year veteran of the Belmont police force, has been promoted to lieutenant.

Chief William Singer said Pierucci will replace Donald Davis, recently named captain. City Manager James P. DeChaine said the appointment of Pierucci to the lieutenantcy would be effective Dec. 1.

Pierucci won the position after a competitive examination. Born in San Francisco March 18, 1943, he was graduated from that city's Galileo High School in 1960.

He received his associate in arts degree at College of San Mateo in 1971.

Pierucci joined the Belmont Police Department in 1964 and was promoted to sergeant in 1972. He and his wife, Anna Marie Pierucci, have a 12-year-old son.



SPORTING HIS KOJAK HAIRCUT, Lt. James Scale points to a map showing how evenly distributed burglary is throughout the city. Scales believes a few simple precautions could make life tougher for burglars, and has tried to spread the word under the auspices of the CAPTURE program. *BEL. COUR. 4/20/77*—C.J. Marrow



JOSEPH PIERUCCI
...lieutenant

Pierucci Wins Promotion To Lieutenant

BEL. COUR. 12/7/77
Sgt. Joseph Pierucci, a 13-year veteran of the Belmont Police Dept. has been promoted to lieutenant, after a competitive examination.

The position became vacant, when Donald Davis was promoted to captain on the resignation of former Capt. George Stephenson last month. City Manager James P. De Chaine stated the appointment of Lt. Pierucci would be effective Dec. 1.

Pierucci, a native of San Francisco, was graduated from Galileo High School in 1960. He received an AA from the College of San Mateo in 1971 and joined the Belmont force in 1964. He was promoted to sergeant in 1972. He and his wife, Anna Marie have a 12-year-old son.

Safety Hazard Cited

Change in Ralston

BEL. COUR. 9/28/77

Limit Nixed after Fight

A city staff proposal to raise the speed limit in two sections of Ralston Ave. was junked by the City Council Monday night, after the plan drew withering fire from residents who charged that the city was placing greater emphasis on revenue than on traffic safety.

The controversy stemmed from a traffic spot speed study of Belmont roads conducted recently by the city staff, which City Manager James DeChaine said showed that the 25 MPH limit on Lower Ralston Ave. and the 35 MPH limit on Upper Ralston Ave. were "unrealistic."

The study is mandated every five to six years to demonstrate to local traffic courts that local speed limits conform to observed traffic patterns. If they don't, according to DeChaine, the limits must either be changed, or else the city can no longer use radar equipment to enforce the non-conforming limits.

The loss of radar equipment on those sections of Ralston, where the study indicated that actual driving speeds exceeded the posted limits by an average of seven to eight miles per hour, would mean a reduction in annual revenue of \$20-25,000, DeChaine estimated, unless the court could be persuaded that mitigating circumstances justified the lower limits.

NO FRIENDS

DeChaine's thinking found no friends among the public speakers — one of them a San Francisco motorcycle policeman — who charged that Ralston is already hazardous at its current speed limits.

Gerald Darcy, a Lt. in the San Francisco Police Dept., said that even at 25 MPH, Lower Ralston was "a borderline case of being hazardous. I walk the street a lot, and I sometimes feel like I have to dive to the side of the road."

Darcy said Lower Ralston was far too narrow to raise the limit. "There's not any motorcycle officer who doesn't allow five extra miles, so if your speed limit is 30, you're talking 35. In San Francisco, the average street with a 35 zone is 50-60 feet wide. Ralston is 38 feet wide," commented Darcy.

Darcy also complained that it is already difficult at the current limit for residents along Ralston to back directly onto the avenue. "It's probably improper for people not to be able to back out without being some kind of Evel Knevel kind of person," he quipped.

OFFICERS PRAISED

Darcy, who said that San Francisco uses no radar equipment, commented that Belmont traffic enforcement wouldn't be hurt by the loss of radar on parts of Ralston. "A trained officer is the best answer," said Darcy.

"You've all seen highways where everyone is doing 65, when a CHP officer comes along. Everybody's immediately down to 55."

Darcy's comments followed accusations from Sue Teising, of the Cipriani Homeowners' Assoc., who charged that the report was rife with inconsistencies.

Teising noted that the report said 50 per cent of Ralston drivers significantly violated the limit at Chula Vista, but that unlike the two areas under question, the report found the limit at Chula Vista wasn't too low, but that a majority of drivers were driving imprudently.

Teising also charged that the study of Ralston Ave. failed to consider pedestrian traffic, the safety of bike riders, and the visual confusion of the avenue, which several times gains or loses lanes, factors she said justified the 25 MPH speed limit.

FINDINGS REJECTED

Following three more comments criticizing the report, the Council unanimously voted to reject its findings on Ralston Ave., but to accept the report for the rest of the city, which supports the continuance of current limits.

"The people have spoken, and we're here to represent the people," said Councilman John McInerney to applause.

Councilman Walt Worthge had suggested that all data on Ralston Ave. be removed from the report and sent to the traffic courts with a note that Ralston was still being studied. Worthge argued that if signs were installed pointing out all of the street's school zones and a stop sign were added, the street's "natural" speed limit would fall to the point that it would conform with the 25 MPH limit.

The council voted instead to submit the report's data with a note that the council felt that mitigating circumstances made the 25 MPH limit justifiable.

Among the circumstances were the street's narrowness and a comment from City Engineer Adel Nepomuceno that Upper Ralston was only engineered for 35 MPH traffic speeds.



STOWING PACKAGES — Lt. John Scales, crime prevention officer with the Belmont Police Dept., demonstrates how to stow holiday packages in order to deter theft.

—Photos by Rohn Wood



PURSE PROTECTION — Courier Bulletin reporter Liz Gort keeps a firm grip on her purse as Lt. John Scales advises. Crowded stores and sidewalks make ideal settings for potential purse snatchers.



ENGRAVING — One way to protect your property from theft is to engrave your drivers license number on it. The Belmont Police Dept. has an engraver that they will lend local residents on request.

How To Stop Holiday Crime

BY LIZ GORT

BE L. Conn. 12/7/77
Crime Prevention Officer Lt. John Scales of the Belmont Police Dept. agrees with a statement made by Attorney General Evelle Younger that the holidays are often marred by "increases in crime."

Lt. Scales, who has been with the Belmont Police Dept. since 1964, finds that crime "goes up all over" from petty thefts to shoplifting and burglaries.

Yet, of all the crimes Scales mentioned, the crimes of opportunity stand out.

"Most crimes are crimes of opportunity," he said.

"The holidays present more opportunity because people give them more opportunity."

Some suggestions on holiday crime prevention that Lt. Scales has for Belmont residents are: (1) When shopping keep packages in the trunk of the car. "People go right through the window," he said. (2) Buy or borrow an engraver.

The engravers, which the Belmont Police Dept. lend out, engrave your drivers license number on an item, whether it be a stereo, radio or television. The owner of the property would then record the serial number listed on the items.

With the drivers license number engraved on an item, if it is stolen, and found later by the police, "within 15 seconds through the computer, you can get the name and address of the person," he pointed out.

Other holiday tips mentioned in a report given to the various peninsula police departments, include: (1) When going out always check to make sure you have locked all doors and windows. (2) Keep all Christmas presents away from view of window. (3) If you plan a party for a large number of people, put your valuables in a safe place. (4) Do your shopping before dark. (5) Don't overload yourself with packages so that you can't watch your purse.

Although response time in Belmont is three minutes, with what Lt. Scales says is "pretty adequate" policemen on the job during the holidays, a big problem is still apathy or "non-involvement" by residents.

With burglaries already up over 400 the number this time last year, he cited the case of a moving van that moved out a whole house full of items, when a family was away on vacation.

"The neighbors were watching and they knew they were on vacation," he said.

"But they didn't want to get involved."

"During the Christmas holidays when you are going away, be sure to let your neighbors know," he suggested.

"Your best protection against burglars is a good neighbor."

The lieutenant also conducts Home Alert meetings, where he shows residents how to make a house "burglar resistant."

"You'd be surprised how many people don't know their neighbors," he said.

With resident cooperation during the holidays Lt. Scales feels community crime can decrease.

"What we need are people to point us in the right direction," he said.

Accidents Reduced Here

BE L. Conn. 11/23/77
Belmont Police Dept.'s "Selective Traffic Enforcement Program" continues to show a positive trend toward the reduction of traffic accidents. From July 1 through Sept. 30, 1977, injury/fatal accidents have been reduced by 33 percent and property damage accidents declined by 17 percent.

The Traffic Safety Program is funded by the State Office of Traffic Safety and the National Highway Safety Administration, and has completed six-quarters of operation. Captain Donald Davis, the program coordinator, said he was pleased with the results in light of traffic accident trends throughout the state. In California, for the year 1976, fatal accidents increased by 6.1 percent and injury accidents also increased by 5.2 percent. Over 90 percent of the 180,529 fatal/injury accidents were documented on roadways other than freeways and/or expressways, with broadside accidents listed as the major primary collision factor for injury accidents. The major factor in fatality accidents was alcohol related, with the vehicle striking a fixed object.

Captain Davis credits the success of Belmont's program to the dedicated work of Traffic Officers Joe Rogus and Brent Harnish. The traffic officers are being assigned to hazardous locations upon the review of accident frequency patterns as they apply to the time of day and the type of violation that is contributing to the accidents.

With the holiday season approaching, Captain Davis is soliciting the cooperation of the motoring public to use care and common sense rather than the all too common holiday carelessness in the operation of their motor vehicles.



BICYCLE RODEO— Belmont Police Officer Brent Harnish and Parking Enforcement Officer Judi Snodgrass give nine-year-old Jimmy Saunders some bicycle safety tips in anticipation of the police departments Bicycle Rodeo Saturday, Nov. 19. The event will be held from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. in the parking lot of Immaculate Heart of Mary Catholic Church in Belmont. Belmont residents between the ages of six and 13 are invited to participate in five competitive events including balance, control and coordination. *BEL. COUR. 11/16/77*