

# Riverbank Police Services 2010 Year-End Report





Law enforcement services for the City of Riverbank are performed under a mutual contract with the Stanislaus County Sheriff's Department. Personnel assigned to Riverbank Police Services perform Patrol, General Investigations, Traffic Enforcement, Crime Prevention and Business Office functions. A wide array of ancillary services, such as the SWAT Team, Dive Team, Bomb Team and other Administrative functions are also

provided by the Sheriffs Operations Center, located on Hackett Rd. in the City of Modesto.

*"Our Department exists for no other purpose than to protect and serve our community."*

- Sheriff Adam Christianson

## **Message from the Chief**

*"Our goals are to remain responsive to the needs of the public we serve, reduce crime and improve the quality of life for the citizens of Riverbank. We should always strive to improve the safety and well-being of our community and truly make the City of Riverbank a special and desirable place to live and do business. We are committed to preserving the sense of security that we all cherish. You will find no more dedicated and committed employees than the men and women in this department."*

- Bill Pooley, Chief of Police Services



## About Riverbank Police Services

Riverbank Police Services is comprised of 20 Sworn Deputies who provide law enforcement services to the 22,201 plus residents of the city. This averages .90 Deputies per thousand residents, which is below the P.O.S.T. recommended average. The city has set a five year goal of 1.25 Deputies per thousand. This time line will have to be extended due to the current economic climate. The Sworn Deputies are assisted by several reserve Deputies, 6 civilian employees and numerous civilian volunteers.



Patrol made more than **17,600** calls for service, including over **4,500** traffic stops and more than **2,500** issued citations. Deputies contacted **827** suspicious vehicles/persons, investigated **213** traffic collisions and handled **1,326** domestic disturbance calls. Riverbank Police Services made a total of **678** arrests this past year.

## 2010 Crime Trends

<b>TYPE</b>	<b>2009</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>% CHANGE</b>
Homicide	3	1	<b>- 67%</b>
Robbery	11	9	<b>-18%</b>
Felony assault	173	166	<b>- 4%</b>
Rape	1	2	<b>100 %</b>
Burglary	173	215	<b>24%</b>
Larceny	334	339	<b>1%</b>
Auto Theft	71	76	<b>7%</b>
Weapons Offenses	19	29	<b>53%</b>
Family Offenses	77	118	<b>53%</b>
DUI	50	55	<b>10%</b>
Traffic Collisions	104	140	<b>35%</b>
Traffic Collisions (Injury)	23	26	<b>13%</b>

## CASE HIGHLIGHTS

In late July, Detective Josh Humble started an investigation into an employee of Chevron in the City of Riverbank who had been soliciting several individuals to rob the very Chevron station at which he worked. We were able to introduce an undercover Detective from the Sheriff's STING team to the suspect, Lester Mangan. Over several weeks, Mr. Mangan talked to the undercover officer about how they would go about robbing a store in Peteluma, CA and the Chevron in Riverbank. These conversations were recorded; and during the conversations, the suspect told the officer how and when the Chevron would be robbed and how

much money they would obtain. He also bragged about having a friend come into the store and rob him several months prior.

Mr. Mangan advised the undercover officer to wait nearby and Mangan would call him to let him know it was all clear and safe for the undercover officer to rob him. On 9/18/10, a Saturday evening just after 0100 hours, Mangan called the officer, giving the "all clear". At this point, the STING detectives walked into the store and arrested Mangan for the conspiracy to commit robbery of the Chevron. The owner of the business was contacted and advised of the undercover sting operation.

This was an exceptional sting operation conducted in partnership between detectives from STING and Riverbank Police Service's Detectives. All parties involved all did an outstanding job in taking this subject into custody. Detective Humble was able to solicit a full confession from Mangan after his arrest. This investigation accounted for a total of 75 man-hours.

In August, we had our only homicide of the year. At approximately 1:30 a.m., the victim, Chaz Bettencourt, had gone to the AM/PM located on Oakdale Rd. to purchase a soda with a friend. On their way out of the store, three gunmen confronted them, demanded their car keys and a struggle ensued. During the struggle, Mr. Bettencourt was shot to death,



and the three suspects fled the area on foot. The subsequent investigation led to the arrest of all three suspects, who were affiliated with gangs. This investigation accounted for over 500 man-hours.

Over the past year, the department coordinated four large-scale probation/parole sweeps; focused on violent offenders, sex offenders and general probationers who live in the North/East county areas, including Waterford, Oakdale and Riverbank. These joint operations with the Sheriff's Department, County Probation, Oakdale PD and Waterford PD have been very successful in terms of the number of arrests, recovery of stolen property and taking guns off the streets. In one day, the teams conducted 27 searches, resulting in 14 arrests, of which five were parolees, and the seizure of seven firearms. In addition to these large-scale multi-agency probation sweeps, we conducted 3 citywide probation sweeps during the year; targeting our local probationers, dangerous felons and registered sex offenders.

We will continue to take a proactive approach to reducing crime in our city. During the coming year, we will again conduct these sweeps in an attempt to prevent crimes from occurring in our city.

### **Street Gang Activity**

The State of California deemed gang activity a clear and present danger to public safety. In 1988, the CALIFORNIA STEP act was created to battle gangs. In 2009, Stanislaus County was estimated to have 15,000 gang members, of which 5,000 are documented. They are comprised of 80% males and 20% females.

The City of Riverbank has approximately 223-documented gang members, with many more flying under the radar. Of the 223 documented gang members, they range from outlaw motorcycle gangs and white pride gangs to the more predominant Hispanic street gangs (Surenos vs. Nortenos). There have been approximately 15 sets of Hispanic street gangs documented just in the Riverbank area. Out of the various sets documented in the Riverbank area, the two most well noted by local law enforcement are the RVL (Riverbank Vato Locos), which represent Nortenos, and the MLS (Mexican Loketos Surenos), which represent Surenos.

The statistics of crime reports involving criminal street gangs is very clouded. The majority of these crimes usually go unreported or without a victim, due to the fact people fear retaliation in their own neighborhoods and it prohibits them from coming forward as a witness/victim. In the gang culture, gang members also refuse to come forward as a victim/witness for fear of being labeled a "rat" or "snitch", which can be dealt with through severe consequences.

In our small community of Riverbank, one drive-by shooting is far too many. Of the gang related drive-by shootings reported in Riverbank, 4 were reported in 2009 and 9 were reported in 2010. Gang-related assaults with deadly weapons went from 5 reported in 2009 to 7 reported in 2010 and gang-related homicides went from 0 in 2009 to 1 in 2010.

We have had two bomb call-outs this year; One for a grenade, which Detectives located during the search of a probationer's residence, and the second for a "Post Blast" investigation, where a mail box had been blown up.

## **Community Events**

This past Christmas, we initiated the "Shop with a Cop" program. Through our partnership with the Riverbank School District, we identified 18 underprivileged children from five families and adopted them for the holiday season. Through generous donations from the community and participating local businesses, the selected children were picked-up by a Deputy in a patrol car and escorted to selected stores throughout the City of Riverbank. The Deputy took the children shopping, and they received warm jackets and much needed essential clothing. At the conclusion of the shopping spree, the children were escorted to the Riverbank Community Center, where they were reunited with their parents and enjoyed a pizza dinner. Santa was



present, and we took pictures with the children and passed out gifts. Additionally, every family received a gift bag of food and a full sized Christmas Tree. It was a great experience for the children, their families and especially for the Deputies.

During the past year, we were responsible for policing the following events, The Cheese and Wine Expo, Fiesta Riverbank and the Blues and Bibs, I am very pleased to report we had just two incidents in all of our events this past year; and both were very minor, consisting of drunk in public offences. I believe we continually demonstrate to the public that Riverbank's Public Events are fun, safe and provide a atmosphere where people want to bring their family and friends. Although we are experiencing harsh economic times, we will continue to prove this level of service to the city. It is what helps makes Riverbank a great place to live and do business.

We at Riverbank Police Services recognize that the Cross Roads Shopping Center is the backbone of our tax base for the City. It draws shoppers from Modesto, Oakdale, Escalon, Salida and as far away as Sonora. It has become the place to shop in this region. Realizing the importance of maintaining the Center as a clean safe place to shop, we provided Mounted Unit Patrols during this past Holiday season. These patrols are designed to make the Cross Roads Shopping Center the safest place in the county to do your Holiday shopping. It also provides an excellent conduit for public relations, where our citizens seem to love to come up and talk to our Deputies, pet the horses and get to know us. The business owners have stated their incidents of shoplifting have been reduced from around seven incidents per day to nearly zero.



## **Traffic Enforcement**

Last year, we conducted 16 DUI/license Checkpoints, screening over 10,000 drivers. These checkpoints are not only for enforcement but are also used as an educational tool. Through the contacts made at the checkpoints to the media announcements, we are able to reinforce the message of not driving while intoxicated.

This past year, we unfortunately had to utilize the Modesto Police Departments MAIT Team to reconstruct a traffic collision, where an elderly female was hit while in the crosswalk at Patterson and Oakdale Roads. Fortunately, the victim survived the collision. This investigation utilized 80+ man-hours. We received these services free of charge as part of a negotiated sharing of resources between the Sheriff's Office and the Modesto Police Department.

## **Neighborhood Watch**

Our Neighborhood Watch Program is doing very well, with 12 active Neighborhood Watch Programs in our city. This is an increase of 4 just two years ago. This is credited to Community Service Office Gina Rino and Deputy Sigala, who along, with STARS volunteers, organize and assist with the Neighborhood Watch meetings. During the meetings, we explain the need for knowing their neighborhood routines, what to do if a suspicious person or vehicle is seen, how to organize and continue the Neighborhood Watch Program and how other programs like "Operation I.D. Owner Applied Number" function.



POLICE • COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

## **It's America's Night Out Against Crime!**

National Night Out (NNO) is a unique event sponsored by the National Association of Town Watch and is held the first Tuesday in August.

Last year, the National Night Out campaign involved citizens, law enforcement agencies, civic groups, businesses, neighborhood organizations and local officials from over 15,449 communities from all 50 states, U.S. territories, Canadian cities and military bases worldwide. In all, over 37 million participate in NNO worldwide. Last year, over 300 Riverbank residents participated in NNO by attending 6 block parties hosted by neighborhoods across the city.

National Night Out is designed to:

- Heighten crime and drug prevention awareness

- Generate support for and participation in local anti-crime programs, such as Neighborhood Watch

- Strengthen neighborhood spirit and police-community partnerships

- Send a message to criminals, letting them know that neighborhoods are organized and fighting back

Along with the traditional display of outdoor lights and front porch vigils, cities, towns and neighborhoods 'celebrate' NNO with a variety of events and activities such as:

- Block parties

- Cookouts

- Visits from local police and fire

- Parades, exhibits

NNO has proven to be an effective, inexpensive and enjoyable program to promote neighborhood safety and police-community partnerships. Plus, the benefits our community will derive from NNO will most certainly extend beyond the one night of the event.

## **Awards**

This past year, Traffic Deputies Gary Vernon and Mike Gilnskas received MADD awards for their outstanding work in DUI enforcement. They were honored at the annual MADD awards banquet in Sacramento.

Riverbank High School awarded Riverbank Police Services with their Community Services Award for 2010 for our continued partnership with the High School and participation in their numerous programs.

Riverbank Police Services Deputy Donald Worsham received the 2010 Stanislaus Civitan Club, Officer of the Year Award for his outstanding service. He was nominated for the award by his peers, based upon his hard work and dedication to the community. Deputy Worsham is a 20-year veteran with the Sheriff's Department and serves as a Traffic Officer for the City of Riverbank. During the past year, he participated in several Community functions where he spoke to schoolchildren on pedestrian safety. Deputy Worsham illustrates the epitome of a public servant, putting others first and placing service above self.