CMPD Chaplain leads volunteers in cleanup efforts at Westside senior mobile home park

Last week, Costa Mesa Police Chaplain Mike Decker led 49 young volunteers visiting from North Dakota in a park-wide cleanup project at the Greenleaf Mobile Home park located on the Westside of Costa Mesa.

The volunteers affiliated with The Gathering, a once every three years event showing kids how big of a change they can make in local communities, picked Costa Mesa to make a difference in.

“These Dakota kids and their sponsors, traveled 1,600 miles to share God’s love with our community,” said Decker, who also serves as pastor of Palm Harvest Church. “From all of us in Costa Mesa, we say thank you.”

The Gathering event serves as the national youth gathering for the North American Baptist Conference.

The Visitors arrived on Sunday and were quickly hard at work throughout the park.

On Monday, July 10, the team set out to clean up multiple homes that needed some TLC and shore up the landscaping throughout the park.

A fence or two was even constructed. Planned for the week were visits with senior citizens in the park and a few trips to the beach.

Lynn Singer, one of the organizers of the trip explained that some of the kids making a difference had never been outside the small North Dakota town.

She also explained that it was important for the volunteers to remember that you don’t have to go to Africa to make a difference.

Police seek robber of local McDonald’s restaurant

Costa Mesa police are seeking a man who robbed a McDonald’s restaurant in the 3000 block of Bristol Street.

On Tuesday July 25, a lone male had walked inside the restaurant and approached the female cashier.

The man presented a note demanding cash, while simultaneously brandishing a visible handgun partially tucked into his waistband.

Fearful of being harmed, the cashier complied with the demand note and handed the man cash from her register. The suspect fled on foot, and a witness phoned CMPD Dispatch.

The Huntington Beach Police Department helicopter immediately assisted Costa Mesa police officers who had responded to the business location.

Police were unable to locate the outstanding suspect or a vehicle used in the commission of the robbery.

Costa Mesa police coordinated with detectives and officers from neighboring jurisdictions, investigating the possible

connection of similar robberies recently committed in Orange County.

The suspect is described as a Hispanic male, 20’s, five feet, 11 inches tall, medium build wearing dark grey shorts and a black long-sleeve sweater. No vehicle is described.

Anybody with additional information regarding the robbery incident should contact the Costa Mesa Police Detective Bureau at 714-754-5637.

Costa Mesa police officers conduct compliance checks

The Costa Mesa Police Department collaborated with the Orange County Probation Department last week to conduct compliance checks on offenders subject to Post-Release Community Supervision (PRCS), per the State Prison Realignment Assembly Bill 109.

These checks were designed to locate and audit the activity of local criminal offenders residing within the City of Costa Mesa who are under the supervision of OC Probation.

Officers completed 27 residential home checks of offenders and contacted 43 individuals, 23 of which were and classified as PRCS/Probation offenders and five of which were on formal probation with gang terms.

The compliance checks resulted in eight offenders being arrested for violations of the conditions of their probation and/or new criminal law violations, and two other individuals being cited for having an open container in public.

Man accused of molestation and peeping of Eastside Costa Mesa residents pleads guilty

Costa Mesa resident Jeffrey Robert Smith pleaded guilty on Friday May 12, to multiple criminal charges that included burglary, peeping, molestation and indecent exposure.

Costa Mesa police officers arrested Smith in July of 2015 after being alerted to a naked male found by residents on their porch of their apartment complex. Costa Mesa Police Detectives had been investigating Smith, since May of 2015, for several cases involving sexual battery, burglary, indecent exposure, peeping, prowling and trespassing. Those earlier cases all occurred during early morning hours on the Eastside of Costa Mesa.

In late April of 2015, Smith had been arrested for failing to register as a sex offender with Costa Mesa, and he was sentenced to 60 days in jail. Approximately one month later, in May, Smith was arrested in Costa Mesa for battery and trespassing charges. In early July, Smith was arrested for failing to register as a sex offender with Costa Mesa, however, upon formal review of the case by court staff, he was subsequently released from custody.

CMPD joins OC Sheriff and Costa Mesa and County fire for training exercise at South Coast Plaza

The Costa Mesa Police Department, Costa Mesa Fire & Rescue, Orange County Sheriff's Department, Orange County Fire Authority and the Orange County Crime Lab conducted a routine training exercise on May 9, 2017, at South Coast Plaza.

The training exercise is part of a strategic multi-agency plan to stay updated on best practices and mitigate future large-scale incidents with required inter-operational cooperation.

South Coast Plaza officials offered their location, which was chosen by law enforcement for its size and accommodation to carry out a major proactive effort.

The training exercise took place in the evening with various facets of three emergency scenarios put together to improve technique and coordination between all agencies involved. No further information will be provided in regards to the training exercise in order to protect law enforcement and emergency services tactics and operational strategy.

"Police work and emergency response is ever evolving, and it's important that we keep up with the times and improve our techniques," said CMPD Chief Rob N. Sharpnack. "I would like to thank everyone involved for all their attention to such an important training and South Coast Plaza for graciously allowing us to use their location."

Costa Mesa and Santa Ana police seek two men who reportedly have scammed two elderly victims

The Costa Mesa Police Department (CMPD) and the Santa Ana Police Department (SAPD) are seeking the public's help in identifying two men suspected of scamming two elderly victims on two separate occasions, in the Cities of Costa Mesa and Santa Ana.

On April 11, 2017, at approximately 1:20 p.m., two suspects approached an 84-year-old Santa Ana resident on the street. The victim was convinced to go to a bank on Main Street and make a withdrawal from his own back account. The two men are suspected of then taking the victim's money and fleeing the scene.

On April 28, 2017, at approximately 10:30 a.m., the same suspects from the previous Santa Ana incident approached a 68-year-old Costa Mesa resident as he is walking home and started a conversation with the victim. The two men are suspected of co nvincing the victim into a car and driving him to his bank on Harbor Boulevard. They are further suspected of convincing the victim to withdraw money from his bank account and took the money from him. The two suspects then dropped off the victim in the same neighborhood before fleeing the scene.

These two suspects are known to loiter around banks and bus stops near banks.

The investigation is ongoing. Anyone with additional information regarding this is encouraged to contact CMPD's Det. George Maridakis at (714) 754-5051 for incidents in Costa Mesa, and SAPD Robbery Unit Det. Cpl. A. Silva at (714)

245-8545 for incidents in Santa Ana.

Descriptions:

Suspect 1: Male, Hispanic, 50-60 years old, 5’06”-5’07” tall, 150-160 lbs., brown eyes, gray hair, missing teeth (in photos).

Suspect 2: Male, Hispanic, 50-60 years old, 6’00”-6’02” tall, 160-170 lbs., gray hair, brown eyes, and broken teeth (no photo available).

Vehicle: late model Gold American sedan, possible Ford Taurus.





Costa Mesa Police Department

unveils Coyote Management Plan with tracking tool

The Costa Mesa Police Department held a Town Hall meeting Tuesday April 25 to launch the first round of a new Coyote Management Plan to educate the public about ways to prevent and report coyote encounters.

“The key to mitigating coyote encounters is much like reducing crime,” said Capt. Mark Manley, who oversaw the plan’s creation. “It takes a partnership that starts with the community and links up with a comprehensive Coyote Management Plan.”

Costa Mesa Police Lt. Victor Bakkila, California Department of Fish & Wildlife Lt. Kent Smirl, and University of California’s Dr. Niamh Quinn answered questions and addressed concerns. The plan is modeled after other similar plans within Orange County and has three main components including education and prevention, coyote hazing, and the reporting of coyote encounters.

The City has launched a Coyote Information Page where residents can get information about the Coyote Management Plan and report sightings and encounters here on the Coyote Cacher.

New Coyote Management Plan to be discussed at Town Hall

this Tuesday April 25

The Costa Mesa Police Department will be holding a town hall meeting on Tuesday, April 25 from 6 to 8 p.m. in City Council Chambers to unveil the City's new Coyote Management Plan.

Speakers will include members of the Police Department, California Department of Fish & Wildlife, and a coyote researcher from the University of California.

City and Police Department staff have also produced a new video about coyotes that will be shown that evening.

The management plan includes a new mobile website for the self-reporting of coyote activity, a new Police Department coyote hotline and a community training program.

The experts will also provide a detailed explanation of coyote behavior and strategies the community can employ to mitigate the frequency of coyotes within City neighborhoods.

Costa Mesa Police Department recognizes 19 for their performance and service to community

The Costa Mesa Police Department honored its top performers in 2016 at the annual Employee Recognition Breakfast on Thursday April 6 at The Crossings church.

With Sgt. Clint Dieball officiating as Master of Ceremony, the

department paid tribute to 19 officers, including those who received Employee of the Year in their category, six who received Life Savings Award and seven who earned the Case of the Year Award.

In addition, the department honored South Coast Metro Business Alliance as this year's Community Partner.

"The men and women of the Costa Mesa Police Department make every effort to perform their duties in a competent, courteous and professional manner," Chief Rob Sharpnack said as he addressed the crowd gathered for breakfast.

The breakfast was attended by Mayor Katrina Foley, City Manager Tom Hatch, Assistant City Managers Tammy Letourneau and Rick Francis and by fellow officers and family members.

"Frequently, many of our department members exceed the expectations of the public in the performance of their duties," Sharpnack said. "Today, the Costa Mesa Police Department recognizes identified personnel, as voted on by their peers, for their exemplary performance and service to our community."

The awardees included William "Bill" Knowles for Volunteer of the Year, Citlaly Gomez for Explorer of the Year, Park Ranger Lorna Lyttle for Civilian of the Year, Records Supervisor Lidian Estecoc for Civilian Supervisor of the Year, Sgt. Jerry Souza for Sworn Supervisor of the Year and Det. Jose Morales for Officer of the Year.

Officers John Elliott, Jeremy Hermes, Glorosio Manigbas, Tyrus Ranck, Erick Ransdell and Jared Shurley were bestowed with Life Saving Awards for their efforts in resuscitating victims.

The Case of the Year went to the core team who worked on the Sudweeks Cold Case Homicide Investigation. Those members of the department who were honored included Lt. Paul Beckman, Sgt. Stephanie Selinske, Detectives Jose Morales and Jason Chamness, CSI Investigator Kimberlee Guluzian, Crime Scene Specialist Sara Nguyen and Police Aide Nicole Diaz.

“Your collective efforts led to the identification of the suspect after a 20-year period,” Chief Sharpnack said. “The culmination of this investigation has also provided much-needed closure for the Sudweeks family as they have had to carry the weight of this cold case for 20 years.”

UPDATE: Costa Mesa Police announce missing autistic boy Diego Garcia has been found

The Costa Mesa Police Department is searching for a 12-year-old autistic boy, Diego Garcia, who went missing from the 1200 block of Adams Avenue in Costa Mesa.

He was last seen by his parents last night, April 4, 2017, at approximately 9:00 p.m.

It is believed that he might have been spotted by an OCTA bus driver in area of South Coast Drive and Harbor Boulevard at about 3:30 a.m. this morning.

The boy has long black hair, possibly in a ponytail, is

wearing a red T-shirt, blue pajama pants and blue tennis shoes.

Anyone with information on his whereabouts is asked to please contact Detective Sevilla at 714.313.2784.

CMPD steps up enforcement for St. Patrick’s Day

As part of the Costa Mesa Police Department’s (CMPD) continued commitment to reducing injury and fatalities caused by impaired drivers, CMPD’s Traffic Unit will deploy additional officers on special DUI Saturation Patrols Friday, March 17, 2017, to stop and arrest drivers showing signs of alcohol or drug impairment.

In addition to this St Patrick’s Day enforcement effort, all police, sheriff deputies, and the CHP will be on heightened alert ready to stop and arrest any impaired driver throughout the long weekend. St. Patrick’s Day is a popular holiday to celebrate and party.

Unfortunately, too many people are taking to the roads after drinking, making this holiday one of our most dangerous. According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), 252 people lost their lives in drunk driving-related crashes during the St. Patrick’s Day holiday period from 2011 to 2015. More than a fourth of them were killed in drunk driving crashes that occurred in the early morning, post-party hours between midnight and 5:59 a.m.

That is why CMPD and the California Office of Traffic Safety are teaming up to reach all drivers with an important life-

saving message and warning: “Don’t drive impaired by drugs or alcohol.”

If you plan to celebrate this St. Patrick’s Day, follow these tips to stay safe:

- Before celebrating St. Patrick’s Day this year, decide whether you will drink or you will drive.
- If you are planning on driving, commit to staying sober.
- Drugs such as prescription medications, marijuana, or illicit drugs can also lead to impairment and unsafe driving, leading to a DUI. When mixed with even a small amount of alcohol the affects can be compounded.
- If you have been drinking, you have many choices to get home safely. You can call a taxi, sober friend, or family member. You also have the option to use public transportation or a location-based app used to purchase a ride through a private driver.
- Download the Designated Driver VIP free mobile app, “DDVIP,” for Android or iPhone. The DDVIP app helps find nearby bars and restaurants that feature free incentives for the designated sober driver, from free non-alcoholic drinks to free appetizers and more. The feature-packed app even has social media tie-ins and a tab to call Uber, Lyft, or Curb.
- Help those around you be responsible. Walking while impaired can put you at risk of getting hit by a vehicle.

This enforcement effort is funded by a grant from the California Office of Traffic Safety, through the NHTSA, who reminds everyone to be alert and “report drunk drivers – call 911” immediately if you see a dangerous driver!

February City Manager Leadership Award goes to police records veteran Sandra Lozano

City Manager Tom Hatch presented Costa Mesa Police employee Sandra Lozano with this month's City Manager Leadership Award at the Thursday Feb. 23 Meet and Greet event at City Hall.

"Sandra exemplifies our commitment to provide the highest levels of service to the residents of Costa Mesa," Hatch said. "She is a leader and dedicated employee not only amongst her peers in the Police Department but for the entire city organization."

A Police Records and Evidence Administrator, she oversees the Records and Evidence Bureau, consisting of both the Records and the Property and Evidence units. These are two major areas of responsibility, which are critical to the Police Department's daily operations.

Lozano's leadership style is based on communication, regular interaction with staff and mentoring. She is also part of the department's Peer Support Program, where she is regularly sought by individuals for her approachability, input, guidance, or council, Hatch noted. Additionally, her commitment and efforts put into matters behind the scenes is unmeasurable, he said.

Out of her many accomplishments, one of the more notable ones is her work as the department's SunGard Administrator, responsible for the City's Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) and Records Management System (RMS). Lozano has been involved with the system since 2013 and has been critical to the system's implementation and development since then.

A 12-year Costa Mesa employee, Lozano previously worked for the Whittier Police Department, where she served over 14 years and achieved the rank of Records Supervisor. She graduated with honors from the University of La Verne, where she received a Bachelor of Science in Organizational Management. She has also been the recipient of the Costa Mesa Police Department's Civilian of the Year Award for 2008 and Supervisor of the Year Award for 2015.

In addition to honoring Lozano, City Manager Hatch welcomed several new employees and commended one for a promotion.

Joining the city in the Parks and Community Services Department is Jennifer Crisol – Recreation Leader II, Claude Garrett – Recreation Leader II, Sierra Grindstaff – Recreation Leader I, Tyler Hoang – Recreation Leader II, Gabriela Lopez – Recreation Leader II, Tyler Palmer – Recreation Leader II and Jodie Mccann the department's new Management Analyst

From the Police Department, Hatch welcomed new Officer Erik Nippert, a recent Sheriff Academy graduate as well as Isai Flores Barrera, a Public Services intern.

He also congratulated Kelly Dalton on his recent promotion to Engineering Technician III.