

Police sweep snares 10 for probation violations

On Monday, Feb. 29, 2016, the Costa Mesa Police Department partnered with the Orange County Probation Department in a collaborative effort to arrest 10 people in the city who were in violation of probation.

The offenders will face charges that range from drug use and possession, identity theft, conspiracy, providing false information to officers and possession of drug paraphernalia. These are new charges in addition to violation of their probation.

Officers conducted the compliance checks on offenders who are subject to Post-Release Community Supervision (PRCS), per Assembly Bill 109 (State Prison Realignment).

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

Three of those arrested were found in a residence in the 100 block of Costa Mesa Street, while five others were found in the 2900 block of Babb Street.

The other arrests occurred in the 300 block of Princeton Drive and the 2000 block of Meyer Place.

Eight of the offenders were from Costa Mesa and the other two from Huntington Beach.

CMPD Park Ranger Returns from Deployment

January was a month of achievement and celebration for the Costa Mesa Police Department with several new hires and promotions.

In addition to four new officers joining the department, on Jan. 21 the CMPD welcomed home Park Ranger Lorna Lyttle who had been deployed to Bagram, Afghanistan as a member of the U.S. Army Reserves.

Lyttle joined the CMPD Feb. 19, 2006 and worked for the department as a park ranger for four years before her decision to enlist with the U.S. Army Reserve. Her service in the Army Reserves began on May 17, 2010 and she was deployed to Bagram Afghanistan in April of 2014.

“You don’t feel the full affect until you land and realize where you are,” she said.



Lyttle spent a year as a convoy escort protecting and assisting with the move of fuel and U.S. military equipment between bases.

Lyttle is glad to be back, "It was an experience that I will never forget and now that I am home, I am just trying to get back to the daily grind and back to living life as I knew it before I left with a whole lot more gratitude for being a US Citizen."

When she is not working Lyttle enjoys spending time with her family, relaxing and going for a good drive.

Lyttle's long term goal is to further her education and promote through the army ranks. She currently holds a sergeant title and hopes to attain rank of an officer.

In the meantime, she is happy to be home and back with the CMPD; her other family.

"They are my other family, you see them every day and spent a lot of time together," she said.

Chief Sharpnack names Jennifer Ruffalo as new Communications Supervisor

The Costa Mesa Police Department continued a trend of new hires and promotions this Wednesday Feb. 17 as Chief Rob Sharpnack announced the promotion of Jennifer Ruffalo to Communications Supervisor at a swearing-in and badge-pinning ceremony outside his office.

"These promotions are so uplifting for our department," Chief Sharpnack said.

Sharpnack noted that the department's communication staff

answered more than 120,000 calls for service last year. And he had high praise for Ruffalo, who began her career with Costa Mesa police in 2004. Two years later, she was already a training officer and shift lead.



“You gain such an appreciation for what these folks do day in and day out,” Sharpnack said. “Jennifer is a team player who always puts the organization first.”

In 2009, Ruffalo was working with a trainee who had taken a call from a person in distress who was unable to speak. Working closely with the trainee, they were able to assist the caller with their emergency situation.

Later that year, the trainee was given an Award of Recognition at the State 911 level for exemplary performance, and that 911 call is still used in the department’s communication’s training program.

Ruffalo had her badge pinned on her by her sister Courtney as several high-ranking officers, city staffer and members of the communications team looked on.

“I thank you all for your support,” she said.

Le and Brown are named new sergeants for CMPD

The Costa Mesa Police Department has two new sergeants today as veteran officers Bang Le and Jimmy Brown were sworn in Thursday outside Chief Rob Sharpnack’s office.

“We couldn’t be prouder of these two individuals,” Chief Sharpnack told the crowd, which included Mayor Steve Mensinger, several top ranking officers and police staff and family members who had gathered in support.



Le is a Garden Grove native who joined the department in 2000 and was the first in his family to pursue a career in law enforcement, Sharpnack said.

Brown was born and raised in Orange and also started his law enforcement career in the year 2000, first joining the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department. He became a Costa Mesa officer in 2005.

http://cityofcostamesanews.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/MVI_5210.mp4

Le thanked the chief and his fellow officers for entrusting him and Brown with these leadership roles.

"It's something we take seriously and we promise we won't let you down," Le said. "It's a privilege and honor to carry on the great traditions of this department."



Brown also welcomed the challenge.

"I look forward to leading the next generation and moving forward with the department," he said.



During the badge pinning, both men had their children do the honors, with Brown having his daughter pin his badge and Le had both his son and daughter take part in the ceremony.

Sharpnack pointed out how important the families are to these officers and others in the department and he thanked them for their support. And he reiterated that these promotions are symbolic of where the Costa Mesa Police Department is headed in the future.

“Our department is on the rise,” he said. “And we are going to seek excellence in all we do.”

Former CMPD Chief Neth receives Mayor’s Award

Mayor Steve Mensinger presented former Costa Mesa Police Chief

Roger Neth with the Mayor's Award at the Tuesday Feb. 2, 2016 City Council meeting.

Mensinger noted that Neth was an instrumental figure in the formative years of the Police Department, bringing innovative technology and other best practices to the Costa Mesa Police Department.

Not only was he one of the first three officers hired by the City, but he is credited as being the very first officer on patrol.

And with 22 years at the helm of the Department, Neth is Costa Mesa's longest tenured Police Chief.

Below is a video clip highlighting Neth's career.

"I'd like to thank Mayor Mensinger for this honor tonight," Neth said. "I'm very proud to receive it."

Neth said the city's first Police Chief Arthur McKenzie, who urged the officers to follow three principles: be innovative, be progressive and above all be professional.

"We were a new police department so we didn't have to change old methods," he said Tuesday night. "We built on those three principles."

Bark Park closed because of windy conditions

Due to unsafe wind conditions and falling trees, the Bark Park is closed until further notice.

City staff is working as quickly as possible to clean up the fallen trees and branches.

Please call (714) 754-5300 for additional information.

Costa Mesa TV staff produce video on El Nino prep

The CMTV staff have created this new video to let members of the public know how the City of Costa Mesa is preparing for El Nino 2016.

From the City's Public Services and Fire Departments to the Costa Mesa Sanitary District and Mesa Water District, residents and businesses in Costa Mesa can be assured that their local public services are as prepared as possible for El Nino 2016.

Fire battalion chief recognized for his work in terror attack preparation training

Battalion Chief Kevin Diamond was recognized recently as the Fire Terrorism Liaison Officer of the Year for Orange County at an annual meeting of the Orange County Intelligence Assessment Center.

The assessment center is responsible for assisting in keeping our Orange County community safe from terrorist attacks. The web page can be found [here](#).

Chief Diamond was instrumental in getting every member of the Costa Mesa Fire and Rescue certified as a Terrorism Liaison Officer.

These officers are trained to recognize possible indicators of terrorist activity, and then report such findings to assessment center.

Chief Diamond has been the coordinating officer for Costa Mesa Fire and Rescue and the assessment center.

CMPD adds another officer this week

Costa Mesa Police Department brass and ranking city leaders welcomed new Police Officer Nick Wilson in a swearing-in

ceremony early Tuesday morning.

Police Chief Rob Sharpnack officiated the ceremony with some welcoming words for the new lateral hire officer, who formerly worked as a Los Angeles County Sheriff's deputy. Sharpnack noted Wilson's already impressive career achievements.

"He really embodies what we embody as a city and a police department," Sharpnack said. "I'm excited to welcome Nick. We are fortunate to have him."

Wilson is one of three boys raised by John and Antonia Wilson in the small town of San Marino, nearby Pasadena. He is a graduate of San Marino High School, where he played high school baseball. He served as a cadet for San Marino Police Department from 2008-2011.

Wilson's father is a retired 31-year veteran of the California Highway Patrol and one of his brothers is an officer for the San Marino Police Department. Wilson graduated from Rio Hondo with an Associates of Science degree in Administration of Justice in 2011.

Wilson was hired by the Los Angeles Sheriff Department in 2012. Since then he served in the custodial environment and is currently assigned to the courthouse in Compton.

Several family members attended the ceremony, including his father and brother. Also attending was his wife, who placed his badge on him after he was sworn in by City Clerk Brenda Green.



Mayor Steve Mensinger and Councilmember Katrina Foley, City CEO Tom Hatch and Assistant CEO Rick Francis, and several members of the police command staff were also in attendance.



The department's three new academy graduates, Brandon Kim, Tyrus Ranck and Matthew Richie, also made an appearance to support their fellow officer.

Chief Sharpnack noted that the department continues to move in the right direction with these new hires, which puts the staffing levels now at 112 sworn officers.

Three new officers graduate academy and join Costa Mesa Police Department

The Costa Mesa Police Department continues its practice of hiring the best and the brightest new officers, three of whom graduated from the Orange County Sheriff's Academy on Thursday night.

The new Officers, Brandon Kim, Tyrus Ranck, and Matthew Richie all finished in the top 10 of their class, with Kim receiving the Top Recruit ranking (No. 1 in the class).

In addition, Officer Ranck earned the Top Shot award with the best shooting score in the class.

"We are very proud of these new officers and we look forward to their contributions to our community and our department," Chief Rob Sharpnack said. "We are happy to see that our new recruits have continued the tradition of being the top recruits in what is a very competitive sheriff's academy class."

In addition, three more recruits will begin their academy classes next week.

City and residents brace for punch of winter storms

Residents are urged to take precautions as three winter storm systems bear down on Costa Mesa and the Orange County region over the next few days. The first will hit today and more is expected Wednesday through Friday.

Click [here](#) for additional information on how to prepare for the winter storms.

Sandbags are available to residents at Fire Station No. 4 at 2300 Placentia Ave. In addition, two more locations will be available 24/7 to the public at City Hall and Lions Park.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t6i_rJzHUMo&feature=youtu.be

These two additional locations have the advantage of being lighted for safe 24 hour access; allow for pull through traffic circulation to ease congestion and easy access for dump truck supplying sand; are adjacent to city facilities to support potential volunteers providing assistance to citizens; and are non-flood prone or high traffic areas to reduce likelihood of not being able to access the sites easily.

Location No. 1: City Hall parking lot; southeast corner. Drive straight in the City Hall signal and proceed to the back of the parking lot.

Location No. 2: Historical Society/Donald Dungan Library parking lot. Enter off of Park or Anaheim. Sand & bags available north of library, east of Historical Society.

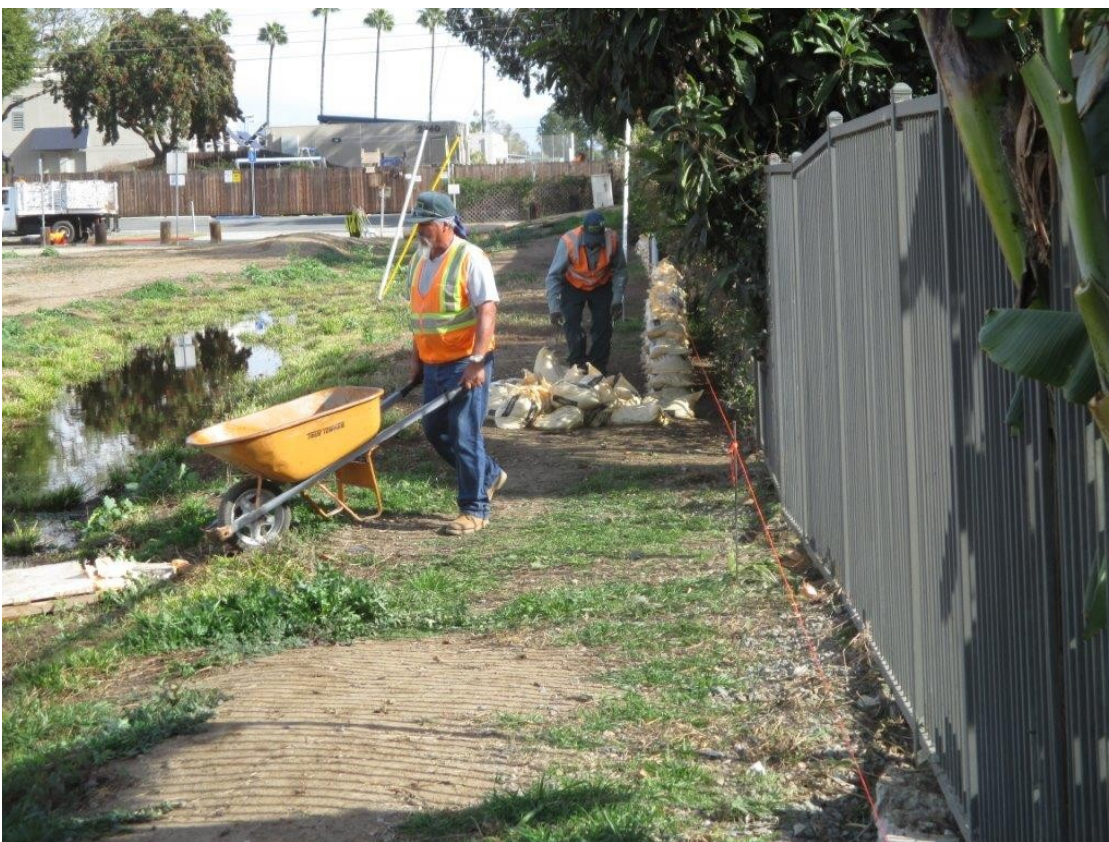
Signs will be posted at the street to assist residents.

Over the past few weeks, city officials have undergone emergency training to prepare for any problems the storms may bring and the city's Emergency Operations Center is on standby

and ready to be activated if need be.

Further, the County of Orange activated and staffed its Emergency Operations Center to a level II with County agency representatives at 8 a.m. Tuesday morning.

The county's Public Information Hotline is staffed and ready to accept calls in regard to the rainfall. The Public Information Hotline is (714) 628-7085. All resources and support personnel are identified and ready to mobilize other areas of the Emergency Operations Center when needed.



Additionally, the city's Public Services Department prepared for the coming rain storms by clearing vegetation water courses and placed sandbags and water diverting structures in Canyon Park and 7,000 sandbags in Fairview Park. Both locations have had high water issues in past winters resulting in property damage.



With the potential for multiple storms lining up, water courses that typically can handle storm runoff without a problem may be overwhelmed and need sandbags to protect property while the water recedes and flows return to more manageable levels. In addition, regular inspection and cleaning of catch basins and storm drains by City crews is continuing, with each storm that has passed through so far, providing a test of the City's preparations.

Police arrest 10 in DUI/Driver's License checkpoint

Nearly 290 vehicles were screened by Costa Mesa Police Department officers who conducted a DUI/Driver's License checkpoint on Friday, Dec. 18, 2015 along northbound Harbor Boulevard at Flower Street between the hours of 8 p.m. and 2

a.m. with 10 arrests made for suspicion of DUI or driving without a license or on a suspended license.

The checkpoint was jointly operated by both Costa Mesa Police Officers and the California Highway Patrol. Checkpoints are placed in locations that have the greatest opportunity for achieving drunk and drugged driving deterrence and providing the greatest safety for officers and the public.

DUI/Driver's License checkpoints lower DUI deaths and injuries. A major component of these checkpoints is the deterrent effect they have on those who might drive drunk or drug impaired, which brings about more awareness and encourages everyone to use sober designated drivers.

According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), checkpoints have provided the most effective documented results of any of the DUI enforcement strategies, while also yielding considerable cost savings of \$6 for every \$1 spent. This checkpoint resulted in the following:

- 3,252 Vehicles through the checkpoint
- 289 Vehicles screened
- 18 DUI investigations administered
- 4 DUI-Alcohol suspects arrested
- 6 Drivers cited/arrested for operating a vehicle unlicensed or on with a suspended license

This checkpoint was funded by a grant from the California Office of Traffic Safety, through the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.