

Orange County DA Rackauckus says state measures and laws are contributing to crime spike

Orange County District Attorney Tony Rackauckus told a Costa Mesa Chamber of Commerce breakfast crowd that state laws that make it harder for law enforcement to put criminals in jail are bad news for communities where crime is now on the rise and he warned that similar laws could be passed in November.

Speaking to chamber members gathered at the Costa Mesa Country Club, Rackauckus decried the passage of AB 109, which allows early release of those convicted of so-called victimless crimes and Proposition 47, a statewide measure that reclassified a whole list of felonies to misdemeanors.

"It's a big problem and it's a growing problem," Rackauckus said of the spike in the number of offenders who are either back on the street or getting slaps on the wrists for burglary and robbery. "Crime is on the increase."

The district attorney said tougher laws passed in the 1990s, like the Three Strikes law that sent criminals to jail for life after three major offenses, had brought the crime rate down to historic lows. But he said the latest measures are making it harder for law enforcement to do its job and reversing those years of progress.

"The Three Strikes law was great and put a lot of career criminals in prison," he said. "It was part of a national wave to reduce crime."

Rackauckus told the crowd that in 2015 his staff of 800 prosecutors and investigators reviewed 70,000 cases. Of those

cases, 58,000 charges were filed with a 92% felony conviction rate.

He also said he has worked with other DAs to get a measure on the ballot, Proposition 66, that would make the death penalty more efficient.

But he warned of a competing measure, Proposition 62, that would eliminate the death penalty and Proposition 57, which if passed would make parole hearings easier to get for those behind bars.

That measure would potentially make 35,000 to 45,000 criminals eligible for parole.

Alley and street repairs get underway

Alley reconstruction, street rehabilitation and slurry seal projects awarded by the City Council are currently under construction. Work has begun and this month is going to be a busy one for Public Services staff.

These projects will construct 800 cubic yards of concrete alleyway, repair 573,700 square feet of roadway utilizing 17,500 tons of new asphalt concrete and apply 1,200 extra-long tons of slurry seal. Work also involves adjustment of utility manholes and valves to new grade, replacement of traffic signal loop detectors, lane markings, striping and new pavement legends.

The following areas are scheduled for improvements:

- Flower Street Alley (Alley No. 81) located between

Flower Street and Broadway, from Tustin Avenue to Irvine Avenue and 18th Street Alley (Alley No. 96) located between 18th Street and Abbie Way, from 18th Street to Irvine Avenue will be reconstructed.

In addition, 36 streets located within the following neighborhoods will be rehabilitated:

- Freedom Homes Neighborhood bounded by Victoria Street to the North, 19th Street to the South, Aviemore Terrace to the West, and Placentia Avenue to the East.
- Eastside Neighborhood bounded by Santa Isabel Avenue to the North, 21st Street to the South, Newport Boulevard to the West, and Tustin Avenue to the East.
- Bristol East Neighborhood bounded by I-405 Freeway to the North, Baker Street to the South, Bristol Street to the West, and SR-55 Freeway to the East.
- Halecrest Neighborhood bounded by I-405 Freeway to the North, Adams Avenue to the South, Harbor Boulevard to the West, and Fairview Road to the East.

Work on these projects is expected to be completed over the next four to six weeks.

New 1/5 Marine Banners now adorn Fair Drive

The Costa Mesa Military Affairs team, in support of the Costa Mesa City Council, relaunched its Military Banner Program on Monday July 11 in front of Costa Mesa City Hall.

To kick off to the program, 12 banners were installed along Fair Drive with language that reads “Costa Mesa supports the

1/5 Marines.” The banners are in reference to the 1st Battalion 5th Marine Regiment unit that the City adopted in 2008 and currently supports.

The installation of the banners is designed to encourage support by the community and help to promote the City’s existing Military Banner program, which allows for Costa Mesa citizens to pay for and display a banner along Fair Drive that honors current family members who are active in the military.



The outpouring of support provided by our community through various events and activities brings funds for the troops and their families, evokes good will, inspires civic pride and patriotism, and is encouraging to the men and women of the battalion.

To make a donation or to enquire about supporting one or both programs, please send a check or contribution to the City of Costa Mesa. P.O. Box 1200, Costa Mesa, CA 92628-1200 and designate the gift for either the “1/5 Marine banner fund,” or the “Military Banner Fund.” To discuss contributions or take the steps to apply to have a banner installed to honor an active Military Family member please contact Dan Baker at (714) 754-5156 .

Three more officers join Costa Mesa Police Department's rising ranks

Police Chief Rob Sharpnack praised yet another "bright spot" in the department's rebuilding efforts as he introduced two promising new officers and one new reserve officer in a swearing-in and badge-pinning ceremony Monday morning July 11.

The two officers were much-coveted lateral hires, bringing in valuable experience and leadership to a growing police department.

Kristofer Moore comes to Costa Mesa via the San Bernardino Sheriff Department and Denny Bak moved from the Fullerton Police Department. In addition, the chief announced the addition of Reserve Officer Cory Estes, who comes by way of the Los Angeles Police Department, where he is currently a field training officer.

Chief Sharpnack said he was especially proud of the new, young and enthusiastic talent that makes up a big portion of the Costa Mesa police force and the success of the department's training programs.

"Throughout the county, a number of executives and law enforcement leaders have talked about the excellence and energy this agency has shown," Sharpnack said, referring to the department's success in enforcing high-profile criminal cases. "We are at the tip of the spear when it comes to technology and advanced training."

City CEO Tom Hatch, Mayor Steve Mensinger and Councilwoman

Katrina Foley also attended the ceremony and personally welcomed the new officers aboard.

“There are a lot of people here who have worked hard to make this a great organization,” Hatch told the officers. “We are the best police department in Orange County.”

Bak grew up in Laguna Beach and attended UCI, where he graduated in 2005 with a bachelor’s degree in economics. He attended the Rio Hondo Police Academy in 2008 and was hired by the Irvine Police Department in 2009. In 2010, he was recognized as Auto Theft Officer of the Year. In 2011 and 2012, Bak earned MADD awards for DUI enforcement along with the MADD Hero Award in 2012.

In 2013, Bak joined the Fullerton Police Department, serving as a patrol officer and field training officer. He is also Drug Recognition Expert and Firearms Instructor and helps prepare new recruits for the police academy. Bak also earned MADD awards there as well in 2013 and 2015.

Moore has been with the San Bernardino County Sheriff’s Department since 2014 and attended the department’s basic academy, where he graduated top of the class. He was assigned to the custodial environment at West Valley Detention Center. Over the past two years, Moore has been exposed to a variety of custody assignments and training opportunities.

A state champion and All American swimmer in high school and college, Moore served as an ocean lifeguard for the city of San Clemente from 2006 to 2014, where he was awarded both the Unsung Hero and the Lifeguard of the Year awards.

Estes was hired by the Los Angeles Police Department in 2008 and attended that department’s basic academy. Over the past

several years, Estes has been assigned to the Hollywood Division, West Traffic, and Harbor Division. He has worked collaterally in plain clothes-undercover, bike patrol and special enforcement assignments. Currently, he serves as a Field Training Officer in the Harbor Division.

Estes grew up in Long Beach and attended UCI, where he earned a bachelor's degree in psychology and social behavior.

After having badges pinned on them by family members, the three officers were sworn in by Costa Mesa City Clerk Brenda Green. See video below:

http://cityofcostamesanews.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/MVI_7923.mp4

Costa Mesa Police Officer Lance Healey honored with CEO Leadership Award

City CEO Tom Hatch presented Costa Mesa Police Officer Lance Healey with the June CEO Leadership Award at the monthly meet and greet on Thursday June 23.

Healey joined the Costa Mesa Police Department in 2005 after a lengthy and distinguished 20-year career in the Marine Corps, where he held the titles of Team Leader, Platoon Sergeant, Platoon Commander and Chief Instructor at Camp Pendleton's Scout Sniper Basic Course.

Officer Healey currently serves as the Sniper Team Leader for the department's SWAT team and is responsible for the section's monthly training. His involvement in the Training

Bureau includes serving as a Firearms Instructor, development and execution of the new 16 hour POST-mandated firearms course, and development and administration of the Pre-Academy, as the Lead Instructor, preparing recruits from multiple agencies for the Sheriff's Academy. Lance is instrumental in ensuring the success of our Academy recruits.

He also hopes to reestablish Costa Mesa's K9 program and develop a new standard of excellence to ensure the program's long-term success.

In addition, Hatch honored seven newly hired employees, namely McKenna Ewing from the CEO's Office, Victoria Chavez, Ana Cordova, Rohan Ronvelia and Quinn Harter from Parks and Community Services and Kevin Suy and June Jeong from the Police Department. Jeong, the newest police recruit, graduated top of the class from the Orange County Sheriff's Academy.

Also honored was Bart Mejia from Public Services who was recently promoted to City Engineer.

Be safe on July 4 and avoid injuries

Beginning June 30 through July 4, safe and sane fireworks will be available for sale and for use in the city of Costa Mesa.

While the city encourages residents to purchase the legal fireworks, which supports local non-profit groups, there will be zero tolerance for anyone caught using the illegal versions. Sale of a illegal fireworks in California is a felony and lighting them is a misdemeanor. [Click here for more information in English and Spanish on fireworks.](#)

We urge residents to follow these safety tips provided by the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission when using legal fireworks:



- Never allow young children to play with or ignite fireworks.
- Avoid buying fireworks that are packaged in brown paper because this is often a sign that the fireworks were made for professional displays and that they could pose a danger to consumers.
- Always have an adult supervise fireworks activities. Parents don't realize that young children suffer injuries from sparklers. Sparklers burn at temperatures of about 2,000 degrees – hot enough to melt some metals.
- Never place any part of your body directly over a fireworks device when lighting the fuse. Back up to a safe distance immediately after lighting fireworks.
- Never try to re-light or pick up fireworks that have not ignited fully.
- Never point or throw fireworks at another person.
- Keep a bucket of water or a garden hose handy in case of fire or other mishap.
- Light fireworks one at a time, then move back quickly.
- Never carry fireworks in a pocket or shoot them off in metal or glass containers.

- After fireworks complete their burning, douse the spent device with plenty of water from a bucket or hose before discarding it to prevent a trash fire.
 - Make sure fireworks are legal in your area before buying or using them.
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Justin Martin named as new Recreation Manager

Interim Recreation Manager Justin Martin has been named as the city's new Recreation Manger.

Assistant Chief Executive Officer Tamara Letourneau announced that the vacant Recreation Manager position would be filled by Martin. Serving as Interim Recreation Manager for the past several months and with extensive knowledge in youth programming, teen programming, camps, contract classes, recreation needs and parks, Martin is the perfect candidate.

Martin has been the city's Recreation Supervisor since December 2014 and filled the roll of Interim Recreation Manger over the last few months with a seamless transition.

"Justin brings many years of experience in recreation to this position," Letourneau said. "He has shown the ability to create a vision and lead a team to accomplish that vision with the utmost professionalism, integrity and creativity."

With his extensive knowledge of the community and programming, Martin will continue to shape the city and it's recreation needs through his new role.

Costa Mesa Fire & Rescue Unveils 90th Anniversary Badge to honor History and the Community

Costa Mesa Fire & Rescue members will wear a 90th Anniversary Badge on their uniforms for the remainder of the year to pay tribute to the valued history of over 90 years of service to the community, dating back to its origins as a volunteer fire department under the leadership the first Fire Chief Fred Brush.



CMFD Chemical Wagon, April 1929

“Like so many great ideas in the fire service, this one came from one of our talented firefighters, Engineer Scott Purcell,” said Fire Chief Dan Stefano. “He deserves the credit for taking his idea of a 90th anniversary badge from its

conception to full implementation. We are extremely proud of our storied history serving such an incredible and vibrant community and of Scott's passion and dedication to bring the badge to life."

Engineer Purcell, who worked with others on the design, sought input from the entire organization, in addition to working with our community partners.

"The badge encompasses multiple aspects from within our city, county and the fire service as a whole," Engineer Purcell said.

The center of the badge pays tribute to the legendary Segerstrom Hall, with the lima beans and oranges on the sides representing the famed farming history of Costa Mesa and the County of Orange as a whole.

The bottom of the badge includes the individual identification number for each fire and rescue team member and the axes on either side of the badge are a signature tool of a firefighter.

The head of each axe highlights two significant numbers; the year the fire department was established and the number 343, which represents the number of firefighters that made the ultimate sacrifice on Sept. 11, 2001.

Pilot Cup Soccer Tournament

founder Kirk McIntosh honored with Mayor's Award

On Tuesday June 7, Costa Mesa Mayor Steve Mensinger honored longtime resident Kirk McIntosh with the Mayor's Award for his years of involvement as the director of the annual Pilot Cup soccer tournament.

"You're one the people who make our city special," Mensinger said, noting that the event had 213 teams competing this year. "For Kirk and his legion of volunteers to pull off a tournament of this magnitude every year is extraordinary."

The Pilot Cup started 17 years ago and was the brainchild of McIntosh, a father of five soccer playing girls. He presented his idea to Daily Pilot editors and publisher Tom Johnson and the rest is history.

McIntosh, who attended the meeting with his wife Sue as well as some of his children and grandchildren, said the event wouldn't be possible without volunteers.

"As we all know it's nice to be recognized and I wish I could bring some others up here as this event requires a lot of volunteer participation.," he said. "But there is a lot of happy kids and happy families. I thank you for this award and I'll share it with the other folks who should also be up here."

The Pilot Cup originally started with only 500 players but has grown to 2,500 players from third to sixth grade and every school in the Newport-Mesa Unified School District competes as well as local private schools.

Two arrests made in Trump rally protests, suspect in police car vandalism sought

Costa Mesa detectives have made two arrests for the vandalism to the police vehicles that took place Thursday April 28 at the Donald Trump campaign rally at the Pacific Amphitheater at the OC Fair and Event Center and have compiled an image of the suspect they believe damaged a police car that night.

Both of the arrestees were juveniles and Costa Mesa residents.

[Click here](#) to read a bulletin regarding the outstanding suspect.

The Trump event was under the jurisdiction of the Orange County Sheriff's Department.

The Costa Mesa Police Department assisted and was primarily tasked with handling traffic control on the outlying streets surrounding the fairgrounds. Based on news sources approximately 31,000 attended the rally.

After the event ended, event attendees and protesters flooded the intersections along Fair Drive from Fairview Road to Newport Boulevard.

The Costa Mesa Police Department and the Orange County Sheriff Department responded and requested mutual aid assistance from surrounding law enforcement agencies to manage the large crowds leaving the fairgrounds.

The crowd's participation elevated to the level of civil unrest with incidents of vandalism and assaults occurring.

The Costa Mesa Police Department has proactively investigated the criminal incidents to identify and hold the responsible parties accountable for their actions. The incidents investigated by the CMPD are:

- Vandalisms – Four vandalism incidents were taken and/or reported by the CMPD. One incident consisted of the vandalism to six CMPD marked patrol vehicles. The other three vandalisms were to motorists who reported damage to their vehicles. There were no investigative leads for those other three incidents.
- Assaults – Two assault incidents were reported to the CMPD. One incident involved a CMPD officer being hit in the helmet with a rock and the second was of a citizen being hit in the head with a fist. Both assault cases are still being investigated.

In addition to the above investigations, an additional assault incident and a reckless driving incident is being handled by the OCSO. These investigations are ongoing.

The Costa Mesa Police Department continues to vigorously pursue investigative leads to identify and hold the responsible parties accountable for their involvement in the activities which occurred after the Trump rally in Costa Mesa. We will pursue all means to ensure that we recover full restitution for the cost of the city's damaged property.

Individuals with information and/or who can assist with identifying the outstanding vandalism suspect are asked to contact Detective Peters at 714.754.5198.

In the Spotlight: Alma Reyes

Fire Department Management Analyst Alma Reyes was the recipient of May's CEO Leadership Award.

Our video team spent some time with Reyes to get an idea of what her workday is like.

Water main break shuts down Northbound Fairview Street

Northbound Fairview Road (Baker Street to McCormick) is closed due to a Mesa Water District (MWD) water main break.

Northbound traffic will be detouring at Baker Street.

The Bismark Way neighborhood will be affected by the water main shut down.

Public Services is working with Mesa Water District on the road closure, signal timing and traffic control and coordination.

Our Engineering Division will be assessing the road condition and determining the extent of the damage.

The duration of the closure has not been determined at this time.