



The Police Blotter

Volume IV Issue II

December 2008

Three Reasons why You'll Want to Read this Newsletter!!!

- You will learn of the progress of the University Emergency notification systems
- You will be introduced to Bea and Officer Burket, UNLV's own K-9 bomb unit
- You will discover what has changed over the past two years at the UNLV Department of Police Services

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"Protecting and serving the University Community"

UNLV's Emergency Text Messaging System: Txt Msg will B Ready 4 U 2 C Soon ;)

As was mentioned in our most recent newsletter from July, the UNLV Department of Police Services has begun the process of implementing a new emergency text messaging system for the campus community. Since that newsletter there have been several significant developments, which have moved UNLV closer to the actual implementation of this service on campus. This new notification system will play an integral role in the future operations of our emergency operations center (E.O.C.), so the department would like to let you know what the current status of the project is and what is coming next.

What is our current status for the project?

- Currently, the Department of Police

Services is in the final stages of developing the University's "user agreement" with Send Word Now. For those unfamiliar with Send Word Now they are the vendor that UNLV is currently working with to provide this notification service.

- Chief José Elique, Deputy Chief Michael Murray and Assistant Chief Dustin Olson have received training from Send Word Now on how to activate the system in the event of an actual emergency.
- This police leadership team has also been meeting with Dr. Lori Temple, Ken Swisher and Dave Tonelli to

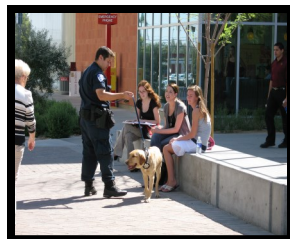


ensure that UNLV information technology, marketing and communication components are working seamlessly together to successfully implement this project.

What are the next steps that will be taken to implement the system?

- Send Word Now will soon begin work with UNLV to develop the
- ("Text" Continued on page 2)*

Just Another Hectic Day In The Life of UNLV's K-9 Explosives Detection Unit



Like all large urban universities, UNLV has large sports venues that are often the staging area for major sports and entertainment events. Providing for the safety of students, patrons, athletes and entertainers is the primary concern of UNLV Police Services, and that is part of the reason why the department acquired its explosive detection (bomb) dog last year. Prior to "Bea" joining the force the UNLV Department of Police Services routinely had to request the assistance of bomb dogs from the ATF in order to ensure that all of UNLV's sporting and entertainment events were properly swept for bombs. *("K-9" Continued on page 3)*

Emergency Audible Siren Update: “Can You Hear Me Now?”

UNLV Police Services recently reported that the Department of Risk Management and Safety is in the process of acquiring an emergency audible siren system for the campus. The purpose of the system is to provide an additional emergency notification mechanism (redundancy) for those members of the campus community who are unable to access emergency messages from campus e-mail systems or the new text messaging system.

Back in July the University was in the process of issuing a request for proposals (R.F.P.), intended to provide a list of potential vendors for the University by late October. The October deadline recently passed, and UNLV received several potentially

viable bids. A committee was established by Risk Management & Safety to begin the process of rating these bid applicants. The committee is composed of members of UNLV Department’s of Risk Management, Police Services, Public Affairs and Campus Computing Services, and it recently approved three companies to conduct demonstrations on campus during the week of November 17th.

The budget and implementation deadline for this project are still awaiting a final determination from UNLV’s administration, and it is unlikely either will be set until after all three companies’ demonstrate their equipment. We will keep you updated on new developments as they occur.



(“Text” Continued from page 1)

website applications that will be used to register students, faculty and staff on campus.

- In the coming few weeks Police Services and Send Word Now will

“...for the first time in the Department’s history, over 50% of all personnel within the Department represent a minority group. “

begin an initial testing phase that will involve

issuing emergency messages to the department’s police staff.

- Upon successful completion of the testing phase, the marketing phase of the project will begin. Members of the UNLV campus community will be educated as to how the notification system works and how they can participate. With the commencement of the marketing phase the text messaging system will be considered “active”.

When will the system be fully operational?

- “Voluntary” enrollment in the system should commence simultaneously with the marketing phase during the upcoming winter break.
- The first test message will be sent out to all enrolled members of the campus community at the beginning of the 2009 spring semester.

UNLV’s Upcoming Tabletop Exercise & Disaster Drill

The UNLV Department of Police Services recently scheduled its next E.O.C. disaster drill and tabletop exercise for the month of December. For those unfamiliar with the term “table top exercise” it is a simulation of emergency situations in an informal, stress-free classroom type environment. The goal of a table top exercise is to give all participants an opportunity to discuss current emergency plans and offer refinements to the plans as needed. Tabletop exercises are very different from “disaster drills”, which

tend to simulate actual disasters in real environments to test the response capabilities of emergency first responders and their equipment.

Police Services’ upcoming December event will include both kinds of exercises. The table top exercise will be conducted out of the Harmon Avenue (police headquarters) E.O.C. location.

Portions of the E.O.C. staff and C.A.T. (Crisis Action Team) have been invited to participate in the tabletop exercise portion of the event, which will take place on

December 16th from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 a.m. All invited participants in the event are asked to R.S.V.P. with Assistant Chief Dustin Olson via e-mail at dustin.olson@unlv.edu, so the department can provide lunch. Participants have also been asked to bring a copy of their emergency response plans and/or policies with them to the exercise and to designate someone as their replacement for the exercise if they are unable to attend. Of course, if a participant designates a representative (“Disaster Drill” continued on page 3)

("K-9"Continued from page 1)

Officer William Burkett and Bea first trained together in Front Royal, Virginia, where Officer Burkett was assigned by the UNLV Police to receive 10 weeks of intensive bomb dog handler training from the ATF in order to become a police dog handler. Bea was assigned to the department at that training after having received 18 weeks of training herself. Today both dog and handler continually maintain their skills through a "food reward" training regimen. Essentially, Bea is required to successfully locate hidden "stash" of explosives routinely throughout the day, and when she succeeds she is rewarded with meals. Needless to say UNLV's K-9 Explosives Detection Unit is quite successful, and Bea never manages to miss a meal.

The holiday season is a particularly busy time of the year for the K-9 Unit at UNLV because of all the major sporting and holiday entertainment events that go on, and none of these are bigger than the Professional Bull Riders (PBR) and National Finals Rodeo (NFR) events held in November and December respectively. Both the PBR and the NFR are considered events with a higher level of security concern than most other UNLV events due to the activities of groups like the Earth Liberation Front (E.L.F.) and People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (P.E.T.A.) Both organizations have targeted these events in the past, and in some cases individuals have shown an interest in possibly heightening their activities beyond peaceful protest.

A typical workday for Officer Burkett and Bea at these weeklong events starts when they report for their assignment approximately 90 minutes ahead of the event's police briefings. At that time the duo sweep the event floor, contestant dressing rooms, underground tunnels, event hallways and concourse for any suspicious scents. Bea is trained quite literally to detect the scents of over 19,000 different combinations of explosive materials. If something suspicious is detected then the Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department's Armor Division (bomb squad) works closely with UNLV Police Services to identify and isolate any potential threats.

Of course, you might think that the K-9 Unit has relatively little to do in between semesters, but the reality is that their schedules can actually become even more demanding. In the last year alone UNLV's K-9 Unit has been called upon to assist in securing the Super Bowl, the Miss American Contest, a variety of PGA Tour events and several Presidential debates & appearances by President-Elect Barack Obama, Senator John McCain and Governor Sarah Palin. In fact, UNLV's K-9 Unit must be available on a 24 hour basis and must frequently make themselves available to assist other departments in Southern Nevada and throughout the United States when called upon to do so by the A.T.F. or other federal law enforcement entities.

"...for the first time in the Department's history, over 50% of all personnel within the Department represent a minority group."

Is the Department of Police Services Working Better with the University Community Today than Two Years Ago?

John Carpenter, San Diego State's Chief of Police, was the head of a review team, which came to the UNLV campus back in **March 2000**. The goals of the team during that assessment were to do the following:

- Determine the effectiveness of the Department of Police Services's operations.
- Make recommendations on what the Department of Police Services needed to do to improve its daily operations.
- Make recommendations on how the Department of Police Services could improve its relationship with

the rest of the university community.

The team members completed their assignment, and they delivered an assessment report to the UNLV administration. The Department of Police Services took the report seriously and used the recommendations of that report to establish goals for departmental reform. The changes were implemented over the course of 2 years. Because the assessment report was so central to the department's reform process, it only made sense that Dr. Rebecca Mills and Chief Elique would ask the original assessment team to come back to UNLV and review Public Safety's progress.

The assessment team did come back to

UNLV in June, and they had a great deal to say about Public Safety's current operations. The team's latest report offered both praise for the Department's progress and helpful suggestions as to how the Department could improve in the future. The assessment team met with representatives from Student Life, the Public Safety Advisory Board, the President's Cabinet, Student Government, Public Safety's Personnel and many others. According to the report, "... it is amazing how the public safety department has changed so completely. We have never seen a department with such serious overall problems change to a professional (*"Department Analysis" continued on page 4*)



("Disaster Drill" Continued from page 2)

on their behalf then Police Services has requested that the

designee be fully conversant in their offices' emergency policies and response capabilities.

The tabletop exercise will involve invited staff from UNLV and the Clark County Health District as well as a few outside evaluators, and the disaster

scenario for the tabletop exercise will be a "Pandemic Outbreak". Immediately following the tabletop exercise, Police Services will conduct a disaster drill from 1:30 p.m. to 2:30 p.m. The disaster drill portion will **not** involve E.O.C. members and will mostly involve emergency first responders from UNLV.

Mailing Address for the Department of Police Services

University of Nevada, Las Vegas
Department of Police Services
4505 South Maryland Parkway
Las Vegas, NV 89154-2007

Non-Emergency Contact Telephone Numbers for Police & Parking Services

- Police (Non-Emergency Calls): 702-895-3668
- Parking Enforcement: 702-895-1300
- Police Fax Line (Campus Police & Parking Enforcement): 702-895-3600
- Police Fax Line (Office of the Chief, Police Records & Police Administration): 702-895-2685



**DEPARTMENT OF
POLICE SERVICES &
POLICE SERVICES**

Public Safety Mission Statement

The University of Nevada, Las Vegas Department of Police Services is dedicated to providing excellence in protection and service to the University community. As law enforcement officers, we shall continuously endeavor to ensure a safe and secure environment conducive to a positive social and educational process.

We're on the Web!

www.unlv.edu/studentlife

UNLV Department of Police Services New Hires

- **(October 6) = James Cesaria** — Officer Cesaria is a 20-year veteran police officer of the New York City Police Department, and he received his law enforcement training from the New York City Police Academy. For many members of the UNLV community, Officer Cesaria is a familiar face due to the fact that he previously worked for the UNLV Police Department as one of our police officers. We are excited to welcome him back to UNLV. He resides in Las Vegas with his wife Joann and his son and daughter.
- **(October 6) = William Bill” Fender** — Members of the UNLV community may be familiar with Officer Fender because he is a former police officer with the UNLV Police Department. Previously, Officer Fender worked as a Deputy Sheriff for the Los Angeles County Sheriff’s Department and as a Police Officer with the California City Police Department. He retired from both organizations after 26½ years worth of experience in the field. He currently has an Associates Degree in Criminal Justice from Antelope Valley Community College. Officer Fender resides in Pahrump with his wife Denise.
- **(October 6) = John “Steeve” Spearmon** — Prior to John “Steeve” Spearmon’s appointment as a UNLV Police Dispatcher, he worked for 12 years as a police dispatcher for the Cleveland Police Department in Ohio. During Mr. Spearmon’s time in Ohio he all but completed a Bachelors Degree from the University of Akron, Ohio and is eagerly looking forward to completing his final semester here at UNLV. Steeve currently resides in Las Vegas with his wife Kathy and their two sons and two daughters.
- **(December 15) = Paul Velez** — Officer Velez is a 20-year veteran police officer of the New York City Police Department, and he received his law enforcement training from the New York City Police Academy. His work with the New York City Police Department included work in community-policing and community affairs. He also served on dignitary protection units for the United Nations and other high-profile New York City events. He currently resides in Las Vegas.

(“Department Analysis” Continued from page 3)

organization within just two years.”

The team stated, “the most critical issue facing the University and the Department two years ago was the open hostility that existed between the two, best described as an ‘us versus them’ mentality.” According to the report, these problems have been eliminated and the Department of Police Services is now far more community oriented and accessible to members of the University Community.

So what still needs to be addressed? The review team feels Public Safety’s future improvements will require the support of the UNLV Administration, Board of Regents and Nevada Legislature in order to upgrade facilities, equipment, staffing and salaries. The team’s primary concern is that the Department’s police personnel lack the manpower and equipment that other similarly situated university police department’s have. While progress in addressing these issues was cited in the report, this concern was highly emphasized in the report for two reasons. The first reason cited in the report is that policing in America has decidedly changed because of the events of September 11th. The second reason cited in the report is that UNLV’s campus is expanding beyond the main campus into new areas scattered throughout the Las Vegas Valley. Parties interested in reading both of the assessment team’s reports in their entirety can do so by clicking on to the Public Safety webpage at <http://police.unlv.edu>.