

14 - The Napa Valley REGISTER

Thursday, July 16, 1992

From active duty to active service

Ken Narlow takes second career jump

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Some people retire to a life of fishing and travelling. Not Ken Narlow, who like many in retirement quickly became bored with the leisure routine and found a new challenge.

After a colorful, three-decade career as a detective with the Napa County Sheriff's office — chasing the illusive "Zodiac" serial killer and working on other equally intriguing cases — Narlow decided to remain in public service and today is Director of Transportation for Justin-Siena High School.

He is not unique. More people are choosing post-retirement careers for reasons ranging from the desire to keep active to the need for additional income.

Narlow began his career in law enforcement in 1959 following two years employment with an oil company. He worked his way through the ranks, gaining national attention while on the trail of the elusive "Zodiac."

Not capturing the murderer, whose victims included a Pacific Union College coed, remains Narlow's greatest career frustration and disappointment.

"It haunts me," he conceded.

After an unsuccessful election bid for sheriff, he traded his badge for a "fifth wheel" recreational vehicle.

Using retirement funds, the ex-cop also purchased several small homes to be used as rentals, but soon found himself wanting more regular work.

In 1988 he was hired as a part-time bus driver for the Napa Valley Unified School District. The following year he took a similar position with Justin Siena High School. Within months their director of transportation left and he was offered the position.

Narlow says he loves his new work, adding he has the entire summer off and "it's nice to get all holidays off."

His workday often finds him on the job by 5:30 a.m., con-



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Retired Napa County Deputy Sheriff Ken Narlow now runs transportation for Justin-Siena High.

furring schedules and sometimes getting behind the wheel of one of the large yellow buses. On a typical day he can finish the morning routes and be home as early as 8:15 a.m. He's back on the job at 2 p.m. and works to 4 or 5 p.m.

Narlow schedules all buses,

including athletic trips and field trips for feeder schools. Regular school routes now include Glen Ellen, Vacaville and Fairfield.

Justin-Siena High School has seen evidence of the economic slump. Narlow said more than 100 people applied

for recent opening as school business manager.

"It's simply an employer's market," he said, noting many agencies and businesses have been forced to lay off employees.

As for his own re-entry into the job market, Narlow says "I'm having a great time."