

Fredericksburg Police Department



Annual Report Calendar Year 2008

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Photos courtesy of Robert Martin, Cindy Walker and PD staff.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Message from the Chief	3
Officer Todd Bahr	5
Medal of Honor	8
Crime Analysis	9
Watershed Property Manager	14
Tactical Training	15
Traffic Enforcement	16
VML Award	17
Community Policing	19
Domestic Violence Unit	21
Advanced Technology.....	22
Accreditation	23



*This report is
dedicated to the
memory of
Todd Allen Bahr.*

MESSAGE FROM THE CHIEF

Characterized by considerable challenges and overwhelming losses, the year 2008 was by far the most difficult I have ever faced in my law enforcement career. The Fredericksburg Police Department as a family endured the devastating deaths of three of our own: Officer Todd Bahr was tragically killed in the line of duty while pursuing an armed suspect, Communications Officer Kevin Williams succumbed to leukemia at the age of thirty-seven, and our long-time police Chaplain, the Reverend John Perry, passed away after giving twenty-six years of volunteer service to the department.

Also in 2008, the department tackled our highest profile investigation in recent memory with the abduction and subsequent homicide of local delivery driver Yong Hui Zhang. Despite its complexity and the large amount of media attention it received, the Zhang case demonstrated the ability of this department to work collectively and cooperatively toward a successful resolution of an all-intensive investigation.

The Police Department faced these and other challenges with resolve and determination, and with a renewed commitment to proven law enforcement strategies and initiatives and to technological advancements.



Officer Todd Bahr's tragic line-of-duty death demonstrated the danger and far-reaching effects of domestic violence. Police calls related to domestic violence are known to be among the most volatile and unpredictable scenarios that law enforcement professionals face on a daily basis.

In recognition of the risks and the widespread prevalence of family abuse, the Police Department created the specialized Domestic Violence Unit. Comprised of a Detective and a civilian Victim's Advocate, the Domestic Violence Unit is committed to breaking the cycle of violence in families by educating and empowering the victims, and connecting families to resources available within the community, and strengthening the prosecution of offenders.

Our Community Policing initiative now includes two officers assigned full-time to the residents of the Fall Hill Avenue corridor and two officers to the neighborhoods of Hazel Hill, Darbytown, and Mayfield. The efforts of the community police officers have yielded positive gains in all of their neighborhoods and have fostered collaborative relationships between residents and law enforcement.

Notable enhancements to our supportive technology included the implementation of a website upgrade called P2C that allows citizens to make police reports online and to obtain copies of motor vehicle accident reports, and the inclusion of our department in the regional LInX system, which allows law enforcement agencies to

share information related to suspects and investigations. These improvements are designed to increase our efficiency and provide a higher level of service to the citizens of Fredericksburg.

Throughout the entire year, the Accreditation Manager continued with the necessary steps to qualify our agency for approval and endorsement from the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies (CALEA). The Fredericksburg Police Department fully expects to become a nationally accredited police department in 2009, meeting stringent CALEA standards that promote professional excellence and efficiency under a proven law enforcement management model.

The challenges faced by our department in 2008 were compounded by the economic crisis that has afflicted the entire country. In 2009, we are confronted with the difficulty of maintaining the high level of service this community expects and deserves while the ability to finance those services becomes more and more problematical. Like every challenge we have surmounted in the past, I expect the Police Department to meet our budget dilemma with creative solutions and applied teamwork, and we will continue to move forward with dedication to our mission:

The Fredericksburg Police Department exists to enhance the quality of life in our community by protecting the right of all citizens to live in peace and safety; by enforcing the law and maintaining social order; and by protecting property from unlawful destruction and theft.



OFFICER TODD BAHR

The Fredericksburg Police Department suffered the first line-of-duty death in forty-four years when on the night of June 6, 2008, Officer Todd Allen Bahr was shot and killed while pursuing an armed suspect from a reported incident of domestic violence. The department was devastated by the loss of one of our own, but we were also tremendously touched by the outpouring of support from the community and from fellow law enforcement agencies across the country.



The department continues to grieve for Todd and to honor him. In the spring of 2009, Todd's name will be added to the National Police Memorial in Washington, D.C., and members of the Fredericksburg Police Department have formed a team to ride in the Police Unity Tour, a long-distance bike ride which raises money for the National Police Memorial Fund. A special decal has been added to all of the patrol cars in remembrance of Todd, and a memorial bench inscribed with his name has been placed outside of our Headquarters. All of these items are designed to show respect for Todd's bravery and selfless sacrifice to our community.

The following is a timeline of the events surrounding the murder of Officer Bahr:

- June 6 at 8:30 pm, an officer responded to an apartment in the 2300 block of Cowan Blvd, the Commons at Central Park, for a report from a female resident that her former boyfriend had made threatening phone calls.
- The boyfriend was identified as Gregory Berryman, 47, last known address in Stafford
- Berryman was involved in prior violent incidents with the female complainant. In September 2007, Fredericksburg police arrested Berryman on charges of abduction, B&E with the intent to commit a felony, and carrying a concealed weapon. Berryman was convicted of brandishing a firearm and carrying a concealed weapon, which resulted in him being sentenced to a term of 12 months incarceration, of which he served 6 months in the Rappahannock Regional Jail. Berryman was released from jail on March 8, 2008.
- When the officer made contact with the complainant, he advised her how to obtain a protective order from the magistrate. A protective order was not issued when the female attempted to obtain one.
- 10:50 pm, officers responded again to the female's apartment after receiving a report that Berryman was outside brandishing a handgun.
- Approximately 11:00 pm, an officer located Berryman sitting in his vehicle in the Park N Shop shopping center. The officer requested back-up, and Officer Bahr responded to Park N Shop to assist.
- When officers ordered Berryman out of the vehicle, he sped away with officers following in a brief pursuit.
- The pursuit ended in a parking lot of Belmont Apartments, a complex which is also located off of Cowan Blvd and next door to the female complainant's apartment complex. Berryman jumped out of the vehicle and fled on foot into the apartment complex. Officer Bahr ran after Berryman in an attempt to apprehend him.
- At 11:05 pm, officers searching for Berryman on the scene reported hearing shots fired.
- Moments later, one Fredericksburg officer and two Fredericksburg Sheriff's deputies encountered Berryman in a parking area near the female complainant's apartment and exchanged gunfire with him.
- Berryman was struck more than once by police gunfire before he shot himself in the head.
- At 11:22, Officer Todd Bahr was found fatally wounded with a single gunshot to the head.





Todd Allen Bahr

Officer Bahr was 40 years old, and was a two-year veteran with the Fredericksburg Police Department. He began as a volunteer auxiliary officer and joined the ranks of career officers on September 21, 2006. Officer Bahr grew up in Stafford County, attending Hartwood Elementary, Gayle Middle School, and Stafford High School, graduating in 1986. Officer Bahr is survived by Stefanie, his wife of 13 years, parents Kathy and Del Bahr, of Stafford County, and a sister, Trisha Byrd of Washington State.



MEDAL OF HONOR

The murder of Officer Bahr also highlighted the extraordinary courage of the patrol officers who protect the citizens of Fredericksburg every day. The decisive acts of Officer Joe Young during the chaotic events of June 6 earned him the highest honor ever bestowed upon a Fredericksburg Police officer, the Medal of Honor. In addition to this accolade, Joe was also chosen by his colleagues to be named Officer of the Year for 2008.

Officer Young's actions on the night of June 6 were an example of exceptional bravery combined with tactical thinking in response to the lethal set of circumstances that resulted in the death of Todd Bahr.

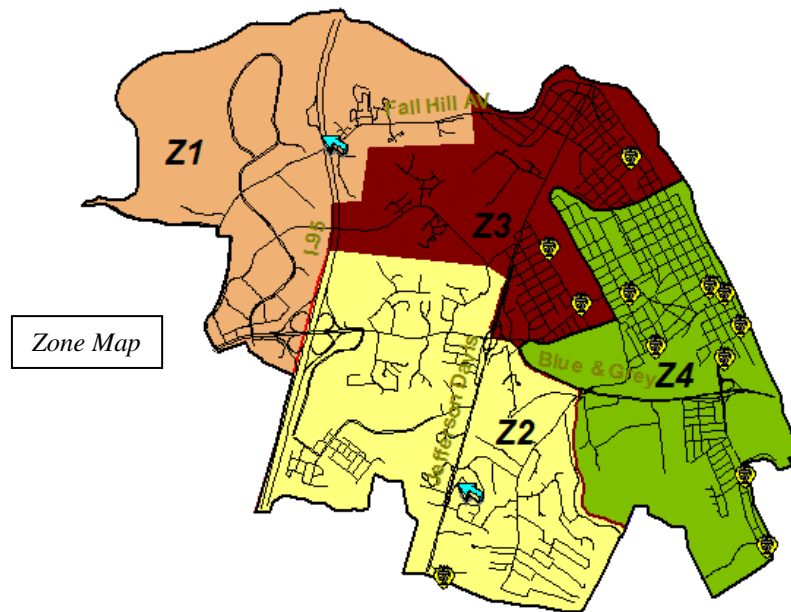
When Officer Young realized that the armed suspect involved in a domestic altercation was heading towards his location in an apartment complex, Joe first secured the female target and her family members inside the apartment with instructions to barricade themselves. Joe then removed his civilian ride-along to another area in the complex with instructions to conceal himself until he was given the all-clear. Officer Young also repositioned his patrol car away from the intended victim's location in an effort to divert the attention of the gunman, a tactic which proved to be critical and successful. Joe placed himself on the landing overlooking the parking lot as the final barrier between the gunman and his target.

When the suspect started shooting, Officer Young and two Fredericksburg Sheriff's Office deputies returned fire and the suspect was killed. Joe maximized his control of a chaotic situation and never lost sight of his primary objective of protecting the citizens he serves. Although Joe was not aware of it at the time, just prior to this encounter the armed suspect had shot and killed Fredericksburg Officer Todd Bahr and was heading directly to his ex-girlfriend's home with apparent deadly intentions. Officer Young's actions on the night of June 6 undoubtedly saved the lives of fellow officers and innocent civilians, and he sets an example for outstanding and professional police work.



CRIME ANALYSIS

In 2008, the Police Department made some significant changes to patrol procedures by changing its geographical division from three zones (patrol beats) to four. Another important alteration was the extended assignment of each officer to one zone in order to promote familiarity and trust with the residents and business owners within that vicinity. Following the model of community-based policing, semi-permanent zone assignments also facilitate follow-up investigations to criminal reports. While officers are not strictly confined to their zones during their working shift, the majority of their calls for service and patrol activity will be within their assigned zone locality.



The police zones encompass these neighborhoods:

- Zone 1 - Bragg Hill, Heritage Park, Forest Village, Fall Hill Apartments, Crestview, Riverside Manor Townhomes, Central Park shopping center
- Zone 2 - Wellington Woods, Wellington Lakes, Townsend Square Apartments, Idlewild, Greenbrier Apartments, Braehead, Westwood, all the neighborhoods off Lafayette Blvd south of the Blue and Gray Pkwy
- Zone 3 - Upper College Heights, University of Mary Washington, Mary Washington Hospital and surrounding neighborhoods, Normandy Village, northern business section of Route 1, upper section of Princess Anne St, James Monroe High School and neighborhoods surrounding it off Fall Hill Ave and Washington Ave
- Zone 4 - Lower College Heights, Historic Downtown (business and residential), Hazel Hill, Darbytown, Mayfield, Dixon Park, train station

	JAN. 1 – Dec. 31, 07	JAN. 1 – Dec. 31, 08	CHANGE
Murder and Non-negligent Homicide	3	2	-1
Forcible Rape	11	8	-3
Robbery	38	46	+8
Aggravated Assault	76	70	-6
Burglary/Breaking & Entering	98	101	+3
Larceny	944	1006	+62
Motor Vehicle Theft	43	63	+20
TOTAL	1,213	1,296	+83

The Crime Analyst for the Police Department compiled bi-weekly reports throughout calendar year 2008 that organized the data extracted from police incident reports into a format that allows for greater scrutiny and understanding. This form of analysis is a new venture for Fredericksburg and did expose some flaws in the previous method of data capture, primarily involving the accurate categorization of specific crimes. The Crime Analyst conducts ongoing training with patrol officers to ensure that the statistics provided for reporting and analysis are without error. With grant-funded software made available by the Department of Criminal Justice Services, the Analyst tracks trends and development in criminal activity; that information is then studied to determine the most effective deployment of department resources.

The above chart represents the number of reported major crimes in calendar year 2007 and 2008.

The statistics in the above comparison may differ from those published in the Virginia State Police Crime Report for one or more of the following reasons:

- The numbers represent the capture of different data. The State Crime Report records the number of *victims* (for crimes against persons) while our report records the number of *incidents*.
- Errors in crime classification, or software errors that result in false data transfer.
- The case status of a report may have changed since the publishing of the State Crime Report. An incident report that has been determined to be *unfounded* is removed from our internal statistical analysis.

HOMICIDE

Both of the homicide cases from 2008 were resolved, the first with the arrest of the suspect in the days following the incident, and the second, of Officer Todd Bahr, with the perpetrator taking his own life while engaged in a shootout with officers.

At approximately 1:00 am on January 12, 2008, police responded to Mi Casa Restaurant in Central Park for reports of a shooting that occurred just inside the main entrance. One of the security guards at the establishment had been shot twice in the chest, and despite immediate attempts at life-saving measures, Dasan Ka'Wila Richardson was pronounced dead a short time later at Mary Washington Hospital. Based on numerous witness accounts from the scene, arrest warrants were obtained for Brandon Lee Smith, 19, of Fredericksburg charging him with first-degree murder and use of firearm in the commission of a felony. At 11:00 am, the Special Equipment and Tactical Team served a search warrant on Smith's home in Riverside Manor Townhomes, but Smith was not there. Shortly before 2:00 am on January 22, sheriff's deputies in Westmoreland County took Smith into custody without incident and turned him over to Fredericksburg detectives. Smith is scheduled to go to trial in April 2009.

RAPE

There was a decrease in the number of rapes in 2008, and all of the reported cases within the City's jurisdiction involved suspects who were previously known to their victims.

ROBBERY

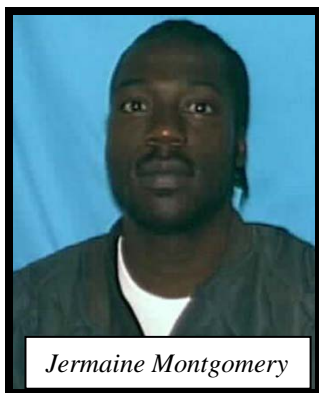
Of the 46 robberies which occurred in 2008, 28% of those reported crimes were against businesses, including two bank robberies, four robberies of hotel clerks, two reports each at gas stations and convenience stores, and one report each at a restaurant, grocery store, and specialty store. The remainder of the reported robberies were committed against individuals, with the largest percentage of those (45%) occurring in the parking lots of residential and commercial areas.

Thirty-five percent of the total robberies reported involved the use of a handgun or other firearm during the commission of the crime, while 13% involved the use of a knife or other similar instrument. Significantly, 52% of the reported robberies involved the use of personal weapons such as hands, fists, and feet, or did not involve the use or threat of a weapon at all.

One notable case exemplified the coordinated response and tactics of patrol officers and detectives which resulted in the swift resolution of one of the most heinous crimes in Fredericksburg history. On July 3, 2008, delivery driver Yong Hui Zhang left his parents' China Express Restaurant at approximately 9:20 pm to make three deliveries. When he hadn't returned by closing time, his relatives contacted police to request assistance in locating him. Officers checked one of the delivery sites at

202 Charles Street and found a great deal of evidence to indicate that a violent crime had been committed there. Mr. Zhang and his vehicle were missing.

The entire Detective Division and a number of patrol and auxiliary officers, assisted by the Virginia State Police, local agents with the Federal Bureau of Investigation, and regional Sheriff's Departments, mobilized throughout the night and into the July 4th holiday weekend, collecting evidence and following numerous leads. Within twenty-four hours of Mr. Zhang's vicious robbery and abduction, two suspects were identified after they used Mr. Zhang's credit card at the Four Mile Fork Shell station in Spotsylvania County. On the afternoon of July 5, suspects Marcie White and Jermaine Montgomery were arrested at a Wal-Mart in Franklin, Virginia after again using Mr. Zhang's credit card. As a result of the arrests, information was obtained that led detectives to the location of Yong Hui Zhang's body in Sussex County. It was later determined that Mr. Zhang had been killed in Spotsylvania County, shortly following his brutal abduction from Fredericksburg.



Jermaine Montgomery



Marcie White

Jermaine Montgomery is scheduled to go to trial in August 2009 on charges of homicide in conjunction with robbery and abduction in conjunction with robbery. The Spotsylvania Commonwealth's Attorney has stated that he intends to seek the death penalty against Montgomery. Marcie White pled guilty to charges of robbery, abduction, and carjacking, and she is currently awaiting sentencing on those charges.

AGGRAVATED ASSAULT

Aggravated Assault is defined as an unlawful attack by one person upon another wherein the offender uses a weapon or displays it in a threatening manner, or the victim suffers obvious severe or aggravated bodily injury. The incidence of aggravated assaults dropped somewhat in 2008, and in only six of the reported cases were the assailants unknown to the victim.

BURGLARY

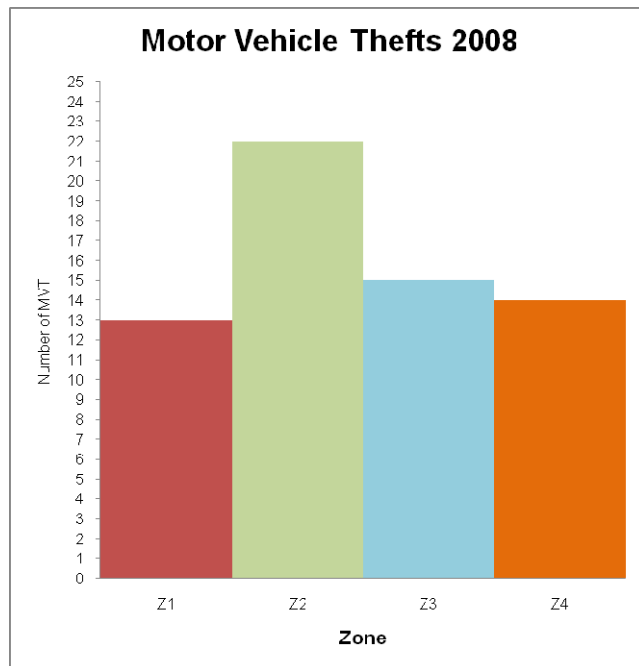
Burglary is defined as the unlawful entry into a building or other structure with the intent to commit a felony or theft. Of the 101 burglaries reported in 2008, 67 were to private residences and 34 were committed at commercial structures. The total number of burglaries increased by a small margin in 2008.

LARCENY

The single largest increase in reported crimes was encompassed in the category of larcenies. The most significant increases occurred in the sub-categories of shoplifting and larcenies of accessories (radios, GPS systems, etc) from motor vehicles. This type of rise in property crimes is not unusual during times of economic stress.

AUTO THEFTS

In 2008, the City saw an increase in motor vehicle thefts, which spiked during the summer months when it is believed that Fredericksburg was used as a drop-off location for vehicles stolen elsewhere. On numerous occasions, officers investigating a report for the theft of a resident's car would find another vehicle in the vicinity which had been stolen from another jurisdiction. As shown in the chart at right, the incidence of vehicle thefts occurred most often in patrol Zone 2, with the remainder of the incidents spread fairly evenly throughout the City. Mirroring national statistics, the most common type of vehicle stolen in Fredericksburg was a Honda Accord.



WATERSHED PROPERTY MANAGER

The City of Fredericksburg activated the new position of Watershed Property Manager in 2007 to oversee the City-owned lands along the Rappahannock River and to act as a Special Conservator of the Peace. Graduating from the Rappahannock Regional Criminal Justice Academy in 2008, Lee Sillitoe stepped into this new job with unique qualifications.



When the Fredericksburg City Council conveyed the conservation easement over the City's riparian lands to the Virginia Outdoor Foundation, The Nature Conservancy, and the Department of Game & Inland Fisheries in 2006, it placed the \$1.6 million payment in a special fund for a "river steward." It envisioned this individual as combining scientific understanding of

environmental issues, the ability to work with neighboring property owners and localities, land management planning skills, and law enforcement authority. After retiring from a career in the Marine Corps, Officer Sillitoe attended the University of Mary Washington, earning a degree in environmental science. Lee is an avid and knowledgeable outdoorsman, and he is highly motivated to protect the City's long-term interests along the watershed properties.

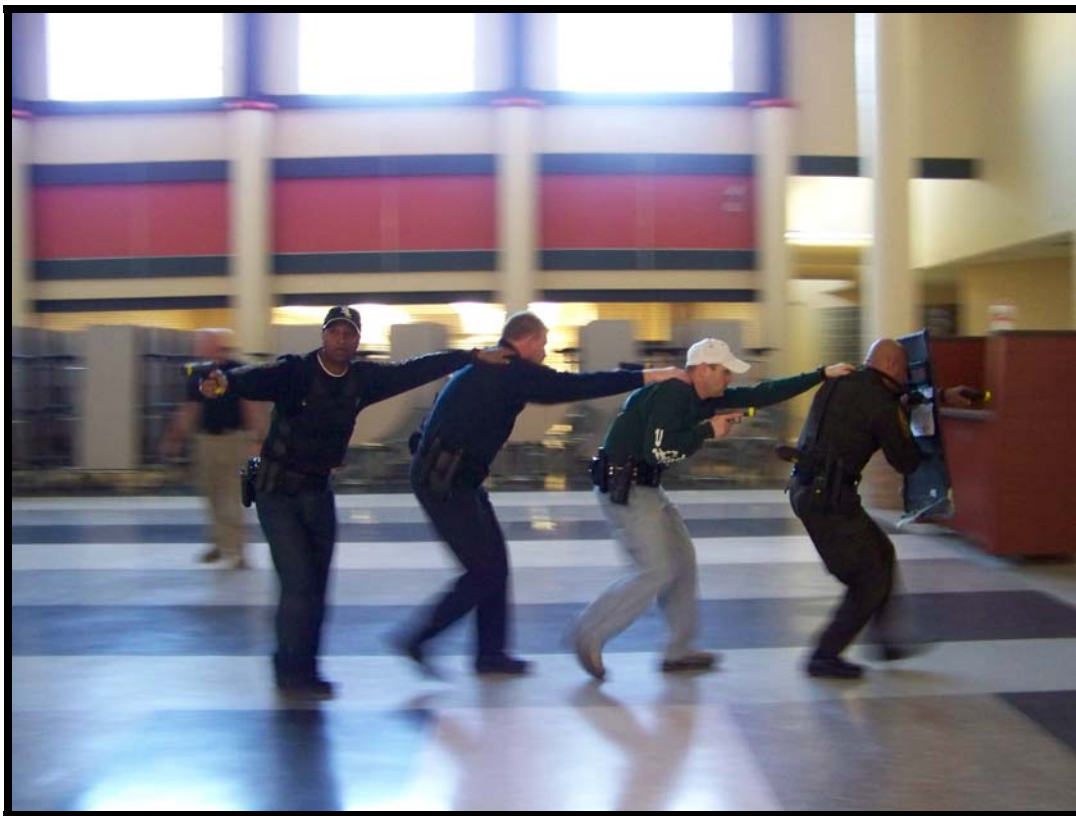
The Watershed Property manager patrols the City's riparian lands throughout the five up-river jurisdictions – Stafford, Spotsylvania, Orange, Culpeper, and Fauquier. Virginia Code §15.2-1725 confers police power upon the City with respect to its lands lying outside the City limits; and City Council has used this authority to adopt an ordinance governing activities upon the riparian lands (City Code §66-142). For example, the City prohibits cutting trees, setting fires, discharging firearms (except for lawful hunting), and dumping trash on the riparian lands. Under Virginia Code §15.2-1725, City police officers have the authority to arrest persons on the riparian lands for violations of the City's ordinance.

As a Special Conservator of the Peace, Officer Sillitoe is also conveyed enforcement authority over the river itself, and into the county lands adjoining the City's conservation easement. Officer Sillitoe patrols his rugged territory via all-terrain vehicle, on foot, or in a canoe. He even occasionally camps overnight to address violations that may occur at any hour.

TACTICAL TRAINING

Tactical training conducted in 2008 was held at James Monroe High School and was specifically intended to prepare all sworn personnel, through simulated-ammunition scenarios, for an incident involving one or more perpetrators with live weapons and deadly intent.

Using funding from the Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant (JAG) Program, the Police Department conducted training for all patrol officers and detectives in order to prepare for “active shooter” scenarios. Recent tragedies at the Columbine High School in Colorado and Virginia Tech in Blacksburg highlighted the genuine necessity of preparation for an armed assault against defenseless victims. The active shooter training also included members of neighboring law enforcement agencies so that officers could determine the best strategies for coordinated response efforts. Reliance on mutual aid between other jurisdictions is a long-standing and jointly beneficial approach for most large-scale emergencies.



TRAFFIC ENFORCEMENT

Two officers who each work a daytime shift have traffic enforcement as their primary assignment. Due to their experience with accident investigations and issues related to traffic offenses, these two officers work the majority of motor vehicle accidents and other duties pertaining to traffic enforcement. There were 795 traffic accidents reported in 2008, and no fatalities, compared to 876 accident investigations in 2007, with one fatality.

Weight Enforcement – The department purchased portable truck scales and began deploying them in targeted traffic corridors in late February 2008. One of the traffic officers has previous law enforcement experience inspecting trucks for equipment and operational violations, and also in operating the portable scales. The portable scales had immediate impact for their effectiveness in identifying unsafe trucking practices that cause undue wear and tear on the city's roads and pose a risk to other motorists.



The below chart shows the fines *collected* from overweight violations in 2008.

Motor Carrier Services Overweight Citation 2008	
Month	Disbursement Amount
March	\$5,823.00
April	\$707.00
May	\$22,545.00
June	\$21,724.00
July	\$3,168.00
August	\$18,458.00
September	\$2,481.60
October	\$18,136.00
November	\$656.00
December	\$803.00
Total	\$94,501.60

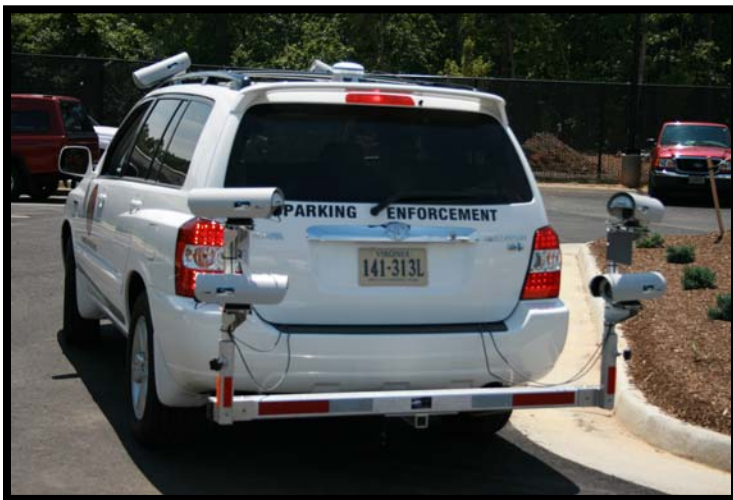
VML AWARD



City Manager Phil Rodenberg accepting the VML Award with representatives from Tannery Creek Systems and the Police Department

The Police Department and the City of Fredericksburg are very proud to have been distinguished by the Virginia Municipal League (VML), which honored us with a prestigious Achievement Award in 2008. The award recognized the City for its innovative approach to parking enforcement through the use of *autoChalk*.

Developed by Tannery Creek Systems in Ontario, Canada, *autoChalk* is original technology that employs a vehicle-mounted camera, laser, laptop, and GPS unit which tracks the turnover of vehicles in time-restricted parking. With *autoChalk*, the Parking Enforcement Officer (PEO) drives through the downtown area at the



posted speed limit while the system records parked vehicles through digital photography and specialized software.

When the PEO drives through the enforcement area again after the time limit expires, *autoChalk* alerts the officer to any violations detected. The officer then compares the before and after images to confirm the infraction and

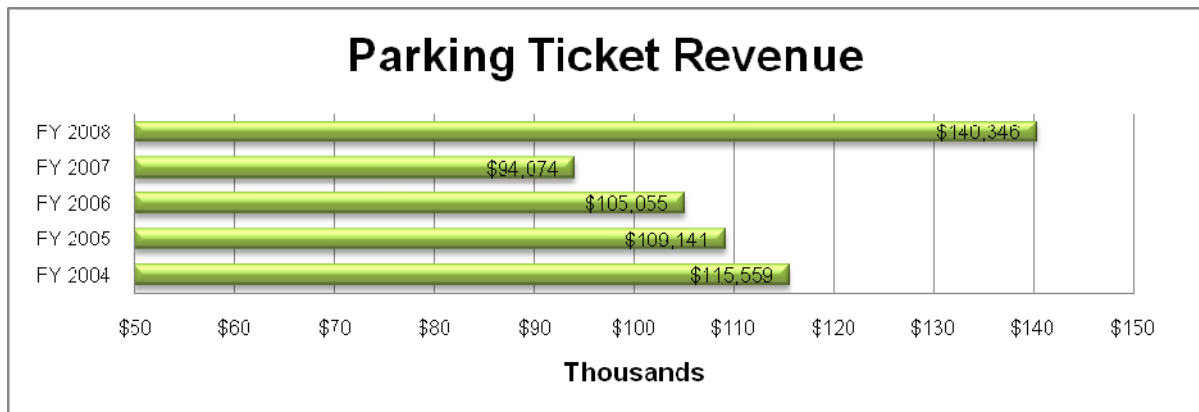
autoChalk generates a ticket to be sent by mail to the vehicle's owner, using information from the license plate registration.

In order to achieve recognition from the VML, the project must have demonstrated success in the following criteria:

- *The project must have developed more efficient and innovative ways of delivering government services.*
- *The project must have documentation of effectiveness that illustrates how it has achieved its goals.*
- *The successful approach must make the project relevant to other local governments.*
- *The new and improved approach must address a significant community need.*

Winning the 2008 Achievement Award affirmed that *autoChalk* has met and exceeded its goal of improving parking enforcement through enhanced technology. The *autoChalk* system has proven to be cost-effective and efficient, has encouraged greater compliance with the two-hour parking restrictions in the downtown area, and has allowed the Police Department to expand enforcement to other under-served locations throughout the City.

Although the intention of *autoChalk* was not to generate revenue, the chart below demonstrates a marked increase in parking ticket proceeds in Fiscal Year 2008:



COMMUNITY POLICING

The Fredericksburg Police Department's community policing initiative was established in July, 2006 to improve the quality of life in at-risk neighborhoods. By assigning Community Police Officers (CPOs) to neighborhoods facing challenges, the department is able to address the underlying problems that promote criminal activity and the perception of crime. The emphasis on problem-solving by involving neighborhood stakeholders allows the Community Police Officers to focus on the priority issues identified by the neighborhood. Creative and inclusive solutions to identified concerns are developed by engaging



residents, property owners, the business community, and other City agencies. The Community Police Officers employ proactive policing strategies that include: frequent citizen contact, high visibility patrol, crime analysis, citizen surveys, and focused enforcement on common violations.

The effectiveness of community policing has been demonstrated in the neighborhoods of Mayfield, Hazel Hill, Darbytown, and the Fall Hill Avenue Corridor (Heritage Park, Bragg Hill, Crestview, and Fall Hill Apartments). All of these neighborhoods have experienced a reduction in crime and demands for police service, as well as an increased sense of safety as measured by resident surveys. The Community Police Officers not only focused their efforts on criminal activity, but also on

the conditions that create the opportunity for crime such as absentee landlords, substandard housing, environmental security, homelessness, youth activities, and inadequate management of apartment complexes.

As the problems in these target neighborhoods began to decrease, the CPOs were able to expand their efforts to include Forest Village Apartments, as well as to make limited inroads into the downtown area through occasional selective enforcement details. Despite the additional responsibility of Forest Village, the number of police-involved events dropped by 18% in the Fall Hill Avenue corridor in 2008. Police-involved events are those calls for service which require an officer response or that are initiated by an officer on patrol, excluding traffic stops.



In response to the growing Hispanic population, particularly in the neighborhoods along Fall Hill Avenue, one of the officers chosen for that CPO assignment is fluent in

both the language and culture of a significant portion of the residents. An extra measure to address this issue is the deployment of grant-funded Spanish language interpreters who ride along with patrol officers and assist with the difficulties created by language barriers. The effectiveness of the community policing model also influenced the Police Department's decision to adopt extended beat assignments for all regular patrol officers. In addition to the core duties outlined above, the community police officers spearheaded various projects to further their mission:

- In conjunction with the Department of Public Works, developed a solution to the problem of pedestrians haphazardly crossing Princess Anne Street near the train station by installing a decorative concrete pedestrian safety barrier, reconfiguring on-street parking and a bus stop, and increasing signage and enforcement.
- In collaboration with the Commonwealth's Attorney office and the Fire Marshall, hosted "Managing the Nightlife" seminars for employees of City establishments that serve alcohol. Over 80 attendees received information on ABC regulations, fire codes, applicable City ordinances, and how best to handle questionable ID's and unruly or intoxicated customers. Posters encouraging safe drinking and driving practices were also distributed. Subsequent inspections revealed substantial improvement in compliance with these issues.
- Partnered with Micah Ministries to address issues related to the homeless, resulting in a reduction in complaints as well as the transition for some homeless individuals to permanent housing.
- Significantly expanded participation in "National Night Out" from a single neighborhood taking part in 2007 to four apartment complexes becoming involved with the program in 2008. The purpose of National Night Out is to discourage criminal activity by getting people to come out and meet their neighbors. The focus is on creating solidarity in neighborhoods by hosting small events like block parties and ice cream socials, and the solidarity is symbolized by people turning on their porch lights during National Night Out.



Three residents of Hazel Hill enjoyed a "Movie Night" put on by CPOs

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE UNIT

Comprised of a detective and a civilian victim's advocate, the Domestic Violence Unit was established with the aim of addressing the underlying causes of family abuse through victim empowerment and strengthened prosecution.

The Domestic Violence Unit (DVU) tackles the overall problem of family abuse through systematic efforts of prevention and an aggressive approach toward prosecution. The Victim Advocate addresses prevention first with a commitment to have contact with every victim of domestic abuse or *potential* abuse through letters, phone calls, and in-person visits. Once contact is established, the process of education begins with the victim being made aware of the many community services available that enable and support positive changes in the family environment. Education continues with the empowerment of the victim through the protection of the legal system and the knowledge of the actions that can be taken by a victim to protect herself.

The educational component of the DVU is critical, as the detective assigned to the unit conducts ongoing training for all patrol officers and communications officers within the department to develop best practices for responding to calls for domestic violence, determining the "predominant aggressor", and identifying underlying signs of abuse that may be subtle to the untrained observer. The DVU also counsels victims so they understand their rights, the court process, and the use of Protective Orders, all of which ensure stronger testimony should the case come to trial.

The DVU assists the Commonwealth's Attorney Office by fully preparing a victim of domestic violence for court and supporting the victim throughout the process. According to statistics compiled by the CA's Office, of the 364 domestic violence-related charges brought against offenders in 2008, just 19% resulted in acquittals or a disposition of *nolle prosequi* due to lack of evidence. Nationally, the conviction rate for arrests related to domestic violence is 43%.ⁱ

Former CA Charles Sharp, during a meeting of the Department of Criminal Justice Services Subcommittee in 2008, was informed that the City of Fredericksburg had the highest rate of convictions for cases involving domestic violence compared to the entire state of Virginia. The exemplary work of the DVU has even allowed for three successful prosecutions of domestic abuse based on evidence alone, without the cooperation of a victim's testimony.

In addition to the services provided to victims of domestic violence, the DVU also provides the Police Department with unique and flexible capabilities to respond and assist with a wide variety of situations, reflecting well on the Department and the City as a whole. These services include coordinating with Adult Protective Services to maintain contact and provide tangible assistance to victims of elder abuse and neglect. Another specific example of the invaluable service provided by the Victim Advocate is the support and counseling offered to families who suffer a tragic crime, such as the abduction and homicide of Yong Hui Zhang.

ADVANCED TECHNOLOGY

The Fredericksburg Police Department embraces technological advancements to support the efficiency and accuracy of professional law enforcement. The most prominent of our recent enhancements is *autoChalk*, which replaced the “walk and chalk” method of parking enforcement with vehicle-mounted computerized equipment. These additional advanced systems were implemented in 2008:

P2C – The Police Department has added a new capability to its website called Police To Citizen (P2C) which allows members of the public to make non-emergency reports via the internet, and also allows individuals involved in a motor vehicle accident to get a copy of their accident report. P2C is accessed through the PD website www.fredericksburgva.gov/fredpd.

It is very user-friendly and provides convenient access to some functions of the department at any time of the day or night. P2C also has listings of missing persons and wanted subjects.

LInX – In 2008, the Fredericksburg Police Department became a participating agency in the regional Law Enforcement Information Exchange program (LInX), a data repository that allows multiple departments to share and access suspect and arrest information. LInX is an initiative designed to enhance information sharing between local, state, and federal law enforcement in areas of strategic importance, crossing the obstacles created by jurisdictional boundaries. LInX provides participating law enforcement agencies with secure access to regional crime and incident data and the tools needed to process it, enabling investigators to search across county and state lines to help solve crimes and resolve suspicious events.

Net Motion – New software called Net Motion was installed on the patrol vehicles’ Mobile Data Terminals (MDTs) in order to improve the connectivity of the computers and reduce the chance of losing a wireless signal throughout the city limits. Officers use the MDTs to communicate with the 911 dispatch center, run wanted and DMV checks, and track the activities of other patrol, fire, and EMS units that are also logged on to the system. MDTs are used to write reports and recode vital information pertaining to an investigation. Net Motion also allows the officer to connect to the LInX program and obtain critical investigative information while in the field. Net Motion facilitates the more efficient use of the MDTs as it uses the most up-to-date technology to seamlessly allow a user to move from wired to wireless connection, and eliminate the loss of data and productivity that can occur.

Looking ahead, the Police Department has received a grant for approximately \$25,000 to implement electronic ticketing in 2009. E-ticketing allows officers to write and print a ticket in the patrol car, and the software automatically populates the ticket information into our Records Management System. Electronic ticketing is expected to be a long-term cost and time-saving capability.

ACCREDITATION

As we move forward into 2009, one of the primary goals of the Fredericksburg Police Department is to achieve international accreditation from the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies (CALEA). An accreditation assessment is scheduled for late May 2009, when CALEA assessors will subject the department to intense scrutiny and a measurement of our standards against the best practices established for professional law enforcement agencies.

CALEA Accreditation demands the following prerequisites:

CALEA Accreditation requires an agency to develop a comprehensive, well thought out, uniform set of *written directives*. This is one of the most successful methods for reaching administrative and operational goals, while also providing direction to personnel.

CALEA Accreditation standards provide the necessary reports and analyses a CEO needs to make fact-based, informed *management decisions*.

CALEA Accreditation requires a *preparedness program* be put in place – so an agency is ready to address natural or man-made unusual occurrences.

CALEA Accreditation is a means for developing or improving upon an agency's *relationship with the community*.

CALEA Accreditation strengthens an agency's *accountability*, both within the agency and the community, through a continuum of standards that clearly define authority, performance, and responsibilities standards.)

CALEA Accreditation can limit an agency's *liability and risk exposure* because it demonstrates that internationally recognized standards for law enforcement have been met, as verified by a team of independent outside CALEA-trained assessors.

CALEA Accreditation facilitates an agency's pursuit of *professional excellence*.

ⁱ “Domestic Violence Cases: What Research Shows About Arrest and Dual Arrest Rates” July 25, 2008
U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs

