

**POLICE BLOTTER**  
**By Chief Thomas W. Finn**

October 25, 2012

There is an issue I have been asked about recently that I must address. Despite the apparent belief by a handful of citizens that a police chief's primary responsibility is to sit in the sterile vacuum of his office for forty hours a week shuffling paperwork, giving orders to subordinates and running the police department from behind a desk, that's simply not how it's done. I've been a police officer for almost 32 years, and for almost 14 of those years I've served as a chief of police in two states. There are certainly many internal and external challenges facing today's law enforcement executives, however they are not insurmountable. If a police chief possesses a broad range of experience, an advanced education, a highly-developed ability to communicate verbally and in writing, an unwavering community commitment and an abundance of common sense, he or she has a high probability for success. My four primary responsibilities as chief of police are: 1) to provide a safe and secure environment for those who live and work in our city, as well as those who visit the "City That Built Hoover Dam"; 2) to ensure the effective and efficient operation of the police department within the confines of the law and the budget appropriated by the city council; 3) to train and guide my personnel, to mentor a successor to ensure a smooth leadership transition when I step down, and; 4) to establish and nurture external professional relationships with the city's residents and business leaders, and my law enforcement counterparts on the local, state and federal level.

A chief must also walk the walk, talk the talk, and look the part. A "do as I say, not as I do attitude" will result in a loss of confidence by the rank and file and a brief career. The selection process for police officers is designed to identify intelligent, educated, observant and astute candidates whose "BS Sensors" are usually quite accurate. I work the street with them periodically, show up on calls, back them up, get out of the office and walk the hallways of the police station, and take the time to speak with them beyond idle chit chat. I am extremely proud of the men and women of the Boulder City Police Department. Their sacrifices make a difference each and every day for those they serve.

"Looking the part" takes effort and a commitment to stay in shape. Taxpayers expect their police officers to stay in reasonable physical condition so they can perform the job they are paid to do. Unfortunately, we must rely on each individual officer's internal desire to stay healthy and fit. Mandating physical standards for public employees, including police officers and firefighters, requires the employer (i.e., taxpayer) to provide paid time for them to work out. As I close in on my 59<sup>th</sup> birthday I'm finding it a bit more difficult to fit into my well-tailored uniform, but I am committed to my city, my officers and myself to maintain physical, mental and emotional fitness. Anything less is a disservice to those we are sworn to protect and serve.

Some people are of the impression that a chief of police must be liked by all and keep everyone happy, both within and outside the organization. Well, it's not a popularity contest and I am not a politician. I do what is right for the city, my officers and my oath, and in the end I am driven to provide the safest community I can with the limited resources I have. Knowing that I cannot afford a SWAT Team, an Aviation Unit and a "quick reaction force" of 100 officers at a moment's notice, I depend on my relationships with my local, county, state and federal partners for that assistance. Those relationships are developed and nurtured through frequent contacts at meetings, professional functions and social gatherings. They are also established by my involvement as a commissioner on the Nevada Peace Officers' Standards & Training Commission, a position I have held for more than five years through consecutive appointments by two different governors. My recent appointment to serve as the nation's only police chief on the National Sheriffs' Association's Traffic Safety Committee provides me with a national resource of over 20,000 sheriffs, deputies and other associate members. As we saw during the weekend of June 22-24, those relationships are essential to our safety and security.

During the evening of October 17<sup>th</sup>, officers were dispatched to the Rebel gas station in reference to a vehicle that was talking to its owner. Yes, the person who called dispatch said his car was talking to him. The reporting party, a 23-year-old homeless man, was quite serious and tried to convince the officers that his vehicle could speak. Unfortunately, the car was a Volkswagen and none of my officers spoke German. Seriously, upon further investigation it was learned that the man had smoked methamphetamine and spice, and he admitted to not sleeping for two days.

A home on Keys Drive was burglarized on October 17<sup>th</sup>. A burglary report was taken after the resident reported that a purse and wallet were taken from the kitchen counter. Unknown suspect(s) entered the home through (shock and surprise!) an unlocked door and took the items. No damage was reported and no other items were reported missing. I can't say it enough times; lock your doors or make sure your homeowners insurance is current!

On October 20<sup>th</sup>, Officer Anes Buric was dispatched to a burglary on Stone Canyon where eight guns and other items were taken from a garage. The homeowner left an unlocked vehicle in the driveway with the garage door opener inside. The thief opened the car door, used the garage door opener to open the garage, and accessed the garage's interior. Please lock your cars!

At 8:03 p.m. on October 21<sup>st</sup>, Officer Armando Salazar responded to the Boulder Dam Brewery on Nevada Way in response to a loud music complaint. Officer Salazar arrived and determined there was excessively loud music noise coming from the location. Officer Salazar issued a citation for the noise disturbance.

Have a great weekend.....