

# 2009 ANNUAL REPORT



## Saratoga Springs Police Department

**Richard Wirth\***

Commissioner of Public Safety

**Christopher J. Cole\***

Chief of Police

*\*Note –This report is submitted under the Administrations of DPS Commissioner Richard Wirth and Chief of Police Christopher Cole. However, Ronald J. Kim held the Office of DPS Commissioner through 12/31/2009 and Edward Moore held the Office of Chief of Police until his retirement on 12/12/2009.*

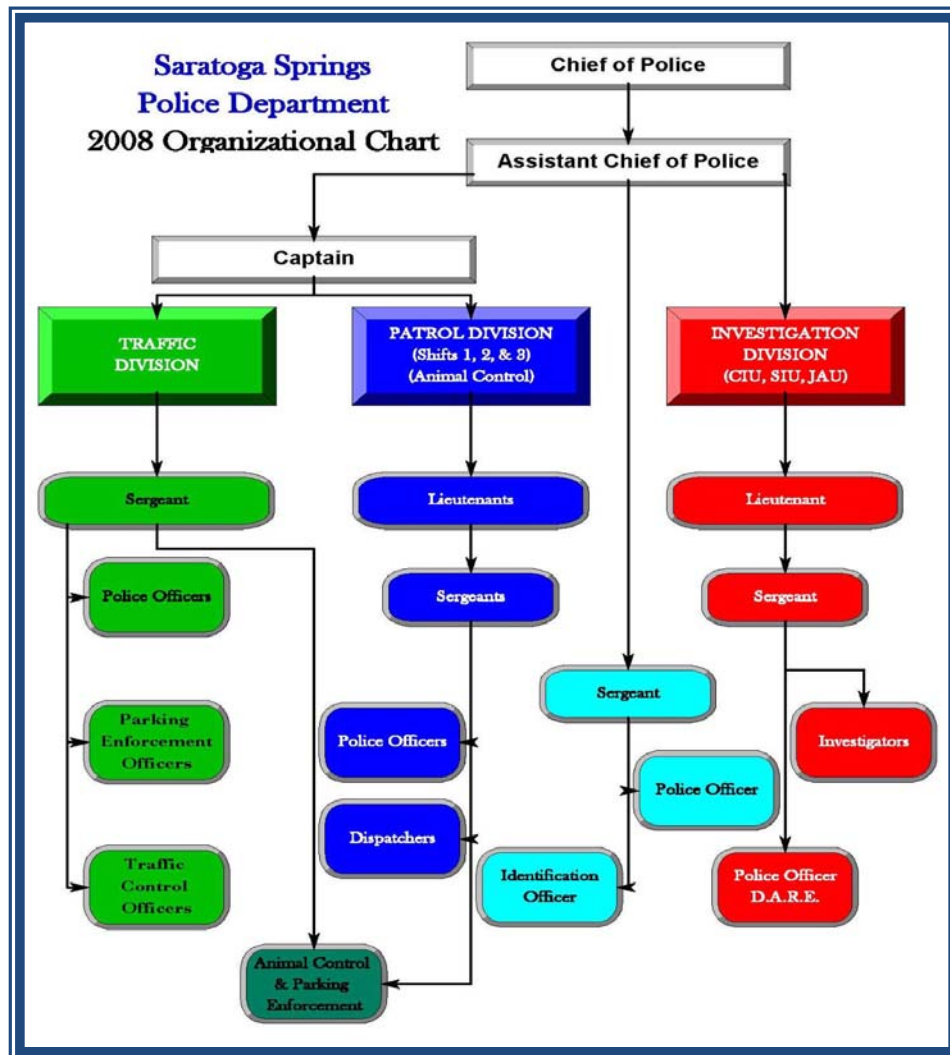
The Saratoga Springs Police Department continues to proudly serve the citizens of Saratoga Springs, its visitors and business community and has done so since its inception in 1887. Upon appointment to the department, all members take the Oath of Office that reads in part ...” ***to support the Constitution and laws of the United States, and the Constitution and laws of the State of New York, and the ordinances, laws and regulations of the City of Saratoga Springs, and that I will faithfully discharge my duties as a Police Officer for the City of Saratoga Springs, according to the best of my ability.***” The members of the SSPD take this Oath very seriously and continue to be highly motivated and dedicated to their profession.

In 2009, the Department continued to provide essential police related public safety services. The Department additionally provided many ‘extra’ services to the citizens of Saratoga Springs; services that most communities have either previously abandoned or never provided. Through our many programs such as Safe Child ID, DARE, the Child Passenger Safety Seat Program, and the School Resource Officer, the department continued its commitment in 2009 to providing parents a safe community to raise their families, to provide a community where residents and visitors feel safe to walk the streets, shop and play. Officers also routinely attended neighborhood association meetings, crime victim advocacy panels, and academic sponsored discussions. They designed and conducted “directed patrols” in an effort to target very specific crime and safety issues such as aggressive driving and drug related crime and violence.

As was the case nationwide, 2009 proved to be a very difficult year financially for the City and Police Department. In June the department was forced to drastically reduce its operating budget for the final six months of the fiscal year. Chief Edward Moore and his staff, along with Commissioner Kim’s Public Safety Administration, completed a comprehensive review of the police department operating budget. \$211,722 in expenses were cut directly from the police department budget to assist in closing the major deficit in the City Comprehensive budget

caused by the loss of VLT (Video Lottery Terminals) revenue. Although sworn police positions were spared in these mid-year cuts, the Department did lose a Public Safety Dispatcher position and absorbed other large reductions in compensatory time (overtime), uniforms, supplies, gas/oil, training, phones, professional services, and police equipment. Working cooperatively and within the best interest of the City's residents, the administration and labor unions were able to find ways to reduce spending to meet this mandate. Further cuts however, will inevitably result in a drastic reduction of police related services provided to the public which will in turn have a direct negative impact on the ability of the police department to provide for the safety and welfare of the public we serve.

## DEPARTMENT ORGANIZATION



Organizationally, the Police Department is broken into three major components: Patrol Division, Investigations Division and Traffic Division. The department also has an Administrative Services and Support Unit that report directly to the Assistant Chief of Police. The Administrative Services & Support Unit is responsible for maintaining the department's record system, fixed asset inventory, the Accreditation program, the city's Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan, training, and is tasked with coordination of special event planning. The 2009 Organizational Chart for the Police Department on the previous page represents a graphical illustration of the lines of command and authority within the department.

In 2009, the Saratoga Springs Police Department was comprised of a staff of seventy-two sworn police officers, supported by a civilian Identification Clerk, fifteen part-time School Crossing Guard positions, and twenty-three seasonal Traffic Officers employed during the thoroughbred-racing season. The 2009 police department staff also included a Senior Dispatcher and eleven Public Safety Dispatchers, two Parking Enforcement Officers, and one animal Control/Parking Enforcement Officer position.

Complementing the department staff during 2009 were police service animals. The department had two police canines, Dara and Agbar. Dara and her handler, Officer Mark Leffler, worked First Shift (12:00 AM to 8:00 AM) while K-9 Agbar and handler Officer Paul Veitch were assigned to Third Shift (4:00 PM to Midnight). The department also deployed two horses for the mounted program, Jupiter and King Tut.

The 2009 Year End Report for the Police Department will cover 2009 activity and reports that affected the Patrol Division, the Investigation Division, the Traffic Division and the Administrative Unit.

## PATROL DIVISION

The Patrol Division is staffed 24-hours per day, 365 days per year and is comprised of three shifts, 12am-8am, 8am-4pm, and 4pm-12am. Officers assigned to these shifts are the frontline officers whose primary responsibilities include maintaining order, preventing and deterring crime, responding to calls for service, crowd control, parking enforcement, traffic control, vehicle and traffic enforcement, motor vehicle accident investigations and preliminary criminal investigations. These officers are also responsible for the handling and transportation of prisoners for arraignments and court appearances in both City and County Court.

### 12am - 8am (First) Shift

Members on the first shift responded to 6,493 calls for service in 2009. Included in these calls were: 1302 Vehicle Stops, 600 Suspicious persons/vehicles/activity, 478 Medical Assists, 413 Area/Building Checks, 391 Disputes/Disorderly Persons, 387 DWI's, 269 Alarms, 182 Noise Ordinance Violations, 164 Trespasses, 124 Motor Vehicle Accidents (1 Fatal), 116 Parking Problems, 102 Domestic Complaints and 101 Intoxicated persons. Officers also responded to other call types including Missing Persons (10), Larcenies (59), Driving Complaints (54), and Burglaries (11). In addition to responding to calls for service, members of the first shift also conducted 61 unannounced checks of area businesses for compliance with the NYS Alcoholic Beverage Control Law and participated in several "Controlled Party Dispersals"

First shift members were involved in several notable criminal investigations:

On 02/01/2009, officers observed a dispute in front of 388 Broadway. Further investigation revealed a man had been stabbed repeatedly and had suffered serious injuries. Responding officers observed two persons apparently trying to flee the scene and immediately stopped them. It was determined, through a very comprehensive investigation, that these two

persons were responsible for the stabbing and were subsequently arrested and charged with felony assault.

On 05/20/2009, officers responded to a domestic complaint on Kirby Road. While at the residence, officers observed numerous weapons including shotguns, rifles, a grenade launcher and a live grenade. Members of the shift, with the assistance of the Criminal Investigations Unit and the NYS Police Bomb Squad, investigated this incident. The suspect was charged with Criminal Possession of a Weapon, Criminal Mischief, and Assault.

On 07/24/2009, officers were called to the area of Washington Street and Walnut Street for suspicious activity. It was later determined that a woman had been abducted at gunpoint, forced into a vehicle, and made to disrobe as she was driven toward Greenfield Center - where she was able to escape her captor. The suspect was later located and charged with multiple felonies including kidnapping, assault, possession of a weapon and robbery.

## 8am - 4pm (Second) Shift

Members of the second shift responded to 12,553 calls for service including, but not limited to: 1,206 Medical Assists, 942 Vehicle Stops, 836 Motor Vehicle Accidents, 707 Area Checks, 663 Parking Problems, 494 Suspicious Persons/Vehicles/Activity, 466 Alarms, 276 Larcenies, 249 Prisoner Transports, 225 Hazardous Conditions, 213 Warrant Arrests, 200 Disabled Vehicles, 172 Domestic Complaints, 169 Driving Complaints, 127 Welfare Checks, and 107 Harassment Complaints. Additionally, on-duty members of the second shift assisted with crowd control and traffic related duties during at least (19) 'special events' over the course of 2009 – parades, walks, road races, Fourth of July celebration, etc.

Several major incidents and drills occurred on second shift during 2009 in which members of the shift played a major role:

On 01/27/2009, members of the second shift were called to the area behind Four Winds Hospital on Crescent Avenue for a male who had fled the hospital on foot and ran off into the

woods behind the hospital. At the time of the incident, the individual was not appropriately dressed for the weather conditions. Temperatures were well below freezing, snow covered the ground, and a major winter storm was expected later that night. Officers worked past the end of their regular shift to assist with the search. The victim was located by search teams hours later; still in the woods and suffering from weather related injuries.

On 04/30/2009, on-duty members of the second shift assisted in a major evacuation drill at the Saratoga Springs High School Campus on West Avenue. This was a joint exercise conducted by the Senior High School Administration, the Saratoga Springs City School District Transportation department and the Police Department.

On 06/17/2009, officers were called to a domestic complaint on Madeline Drive. The caller stated her son had made comments about shooting police officers upon their arrival to the house. It was later determined that the suspect had climbed a tree in the rear of the residence and watched as police arrived. The suspect was located and taken into custody without incident. At the time of his apprehension, he possessed a .357 revolver. He was charged with Criminal Possession of a Weapon and Criminal Mischief.

On 09/22/2009, officers were called to a domestic dispute on Van Rensselaer Street. The victim had been stabbed repeatedly by her son and was found to be suffering what appeared to be life-threatening injuries. During the assault, two Department of Public Works employees who witnessed the assault from DPW property behind the residence and are credited with saving the victim's life helped the victim. The suspect was quickly located inside the residence and taken into custody without incident. He was charged with felony assault and possession of a weapon.

## ANIMAL CONTROL OFFICER

Per the city charter, the department employs an Animal Control Officer (ACO) responds to domestic animal complaints and takes appropriate action as deemed necessary. The ACO is a part-time position, listed as an "Animal Control Officer/Parking Enforcement Officer and is under the direct supervision of the Police Department. The ACO responded to a total of 552 PD-7

animal complaints in 2009. The complaints included dog bites, loose running animals, aggressive animals, and neglected animals. The ACO works closely with the County Health Department in circumstances of possible rabies exposure by ensuring quarantine, when necessary and other follow-up investigation.

## 4pm - 12am (Third) Shift

Members of the third shift responded to 10,743 calls for service during 2009. These calls included, but were not limited to: 2,001 Vehicle Stops, 966 Medical Assists, 788 Suspicious Persons/Vehicles/Activity, 621 Area Checks, 617 Motor Vehicle Accidents, 380 Parking Problems, 358 Alarms, 317 False 911 Calls, 302 Domestic Violence Complaints, 241 Directed Patrols, 217 Driving Complaints, 217 Warrant Checks/Arrests, 193 Larcenies, 176 Intoxicated Persons, 154 Noise Complaints, 147 Disputes/Disorderly Conduct, 134 Hazardous Conditions, 129 Trespass Complaints, 107 Harassments, and 115 Welfare Checks. Additionally, members responded to 69 DWI Complaints, 34 Assaults, 30 Burglaries, and 7 Robberies.

Included in the above calls for service were the following incidents:

On January 26, 2009, officer responded to a report of a burglary in progress to a residence on South Franklin Street. It was later determined that three persons had forced their way into the home with the residents present. Once inside the home, one of the residents was held at knifepoint while another was struck with a baseball bat. Investigation by third shift officers, with the assistance of the criminal investigations unit, resulted in the arrest of two of the suspects responsible for this attack.

On April 4, 2009, officers responded to the Rite Aid pharmacy on West Avenue for a report of a robbery. A male suspect had entered the store, walked to the pharmacy area, told the pharmacist that he had a gun and demanded a specific brand of drugs. The suspect fled the store but was located later by investigating officers by using the description given by the store

employee. The suspect was arrested and charged with Robbery First Degree and several other lesser charges.

On August 26, 2009, officers were called to Saratoga Hospital for a suspicious injury to a male patient. The patient had advised hospital personnel and police officers that he had accidentally cut himself with a hunting knife. Follow-up investigation indicated that he in fact had accidentally shot himself in the leg while staying at the Aldephi Hotel. Based on this investigation charges were filed for reckless endangerment and criminal possession of a weapon.

## **INVESTIGATIONS**

### **CRIMINAL INVESTIGATIONS DIVISION**

In 2009 members of the Criminal Investigations Unit (CIU) averaged 69.6 cases per investigator with a clearance rate is 63%. Members of the CIU are responsible for all class A, B, and C felonies along with any other major investigation requiring particular investigative skill. Members of the Investigations Division investigate crimes and incidents such as burglaries and robberies, sex offenses, assaults, white-collar crimes, identity theft and serious motor vehicle accidents.

CIU members investigated several major cases in 2009. The kidnapping of a young woman off of a city street at gunpoint on 07/24/2009 was foremost among these. The kidnapping investigation involved multiple agencies, numerous man-hours, the execution of several search warrants and the ultimate identification and arrest of a suspect four days later.

Members of CIU assisted the Traffic Division with the investigation of several serious motor vehicle accidents in 2009 including two fatalities. On 02/01/2009, a patron was stabbed multiple times outside of a local nightclub. Multiple assailants were involved and as a result of PD-9

the subsequent investigation two individuals pled guilty to crimes associated with the stabbing in Saratoga County Court in late 2009.

CIU members were instrumental in assisting Patrol Division Officers with three noteworthy Domestic Violence incidents. On 05/20/2009 a report of a Domestic Disturbance led to the discovery of a live hand grenade inside of a Kirby Road apartment. The investigation led to the recovery of several weapons and federal charges against the offender. On 06/17/2009 another Domestic Incident involving a young man with a gun was resolved without further violence when the suspect gave himself up to police. On 09/22/2009, another young man was arrested after inflicting serious injuries to his mother by slicing her throat with a knife.

In September, the Citizen's Bank in the Hannaford Shopping Center on Weible Avenue was robbed for the second time in two years. City Police Investigators later identified a suspect and a several months long investigation linked the suspect (who was on federal parole and arrested in Rensselaer the day after the robbery with a loaded gun) to the robbery. The suspect was charged with federal crimes and has since pled guilty to the robbery in Federal Court.

In December, CIU members investigated a report of a male subject who had been shot and dropped off at the Saratoga ER. Despite initial reports that the shooting took place in Schenectady, Investigators developed several leads indicating the shooting occurred in the City of Saratoga Springs and subsequently a suspect was identified and arrested.

## **SPECIAL INVESTIGATIONS UNIT**

The Special Investigations Unit (SIU) is responsible for the investigation of all narcotics related offenses within the City of Saratoga Springs. The members of SIU conduct investigations ranging from street level undercover narcotics purchases and the execution of search warrants to multi-jurisdictional drug trafficking conspiracies. They frequently work with other local law enforcement agencies in combating drug dealers in the City and surrounding areas. In 2009 the members of SIU conducted 68 separate undercover narcotics purchases from various

suspects. They executed 28 search warrants tied to numerous drug investigations in the City of Saratoga Springs. The average caseload was 98.5 cases for each member of the Special Investigations Unit. One SIU member is assigned to the DEA Northern Capital District Task Force. Our inclusion in the DEATF has enabled one SIU investigator to focus on upper level drug distribution groups operating in the Saratoga Springs area. DEATF asset forfeiture efforts are responsible for the receipt of over \$75,000 in funds by the Saratoga Springs Police Department in 2009. Seized assets may only be used to further drug related investigations. Seizing the proceeds of drug dealers is one of the most effective ways to disrupt and dismantle drug trafficking organizations.

Members of SIU were involved in several notable cases in 2009. In early 2009 SIU members, along with New York State Police CNET and DEATF members dismantled a New York City based drug distribution ring utilizing local drug carriers and contacts to distribute crack cocaine. The investigation resulted in the execution of several search warrants in and around Saratoga Springs along with the arrest of 11 individuals on various drug charges and the seizure of multiple ounces of crack cocaine. The investigation also linked members of the group to a number of home invasion robberies of other drug dealers in the area. The multi-jurisdictional investigation lasted approximately eighteen months.

A search warrant executed on Franklin Street in the fall resulted in the recovery of several firearms and a large quantity of marijuana.

SIU members assisted the U.S. Drug Enforcement Agency with a nationwide drug conspiracy and assisted in the seizure over \$1,000,000.00 dollars from a residence in the Town of Wilton.

Members of SIU noted a disturbing trend in drug activity in the City in the latter part of 2008 and 2009. Heroin has become an emerging problem that the members of SIU have been combating recently. At least two drug dealers were arrested in 2009 for heroin sales that in the past were known by SIU members to be involved in the cocaine trade. SIU members will continue to focus on this disturbing trend in drug activity in and around Saratoga Springs.

## **OPERATION IMPACT GRANT**

For the second year in a row, the department received an "Operation Impact" grant from the State of NY in the amount of \$45,000.00 with a \$5,000.00 matching component. This grant was used to fund personnel costs associated with specific details, patrols, and investigations relating to drug crimes and violence. Over the course of 2009, the department conducted thirty-nine (39) operations staffed with investigators and patrol officers targeting known drug prone locations in Saratoga Springs. The details resulted in ninety-two (92) arrests and numerous investigations of a drug related nature.

## **JUVENILE AID UNIT**

The Juvenile Aid Unit's primary function is investigating crimes committed by persons under the age of sixteen or serious crimes perpetrated against persons under the age of sixteen. The unit is comprised of Investigators, a DARE Officer, and a School Resource Investigator. The JAU has primary responsibility for:

- Coordinating investigations, arrests and/or diversions involving juvenile suspects under sixteen years of age;
- Collecting, maintaining and disseminating information on juvenile records;
- Developing programs to prevent and control juvenile delinquency;
- Assisting officers from other divisions or units with juvenile arrests or diversions;
- Maintaining a liaison with Family Court and other social agencies and coordination of procedural changes that affect the department's juvenile related activities;
- Coordinating missing child investigations of persons less than sixteen years of age;
- Assisting officers of other divisions or units in the investigation of any crime involving a child victim (less than sixteen years old);
- Investigation of all child abuse or neglect cases within the city;

- Registration and maintenance of the bicycle registration file and bicycle locker of the department; and
- Maintaining a liaison with the Saratoga Springs City School District, its student population, and associated intra agency and interagency coordination through the School Resource Officer Program.

This unit is a focal point for organizing many community-policing initiatives related to the youth of the community, including the Operation Safe Child ID program and the Bicycle Registration program. Investigators in the Unit also have a very close working relationship with Child Protective Services, Probation, Family Court, District Attorney's Office and School District Administrators.

The JAU is tasked with tracking and management of Registered Sex Offenders residing or visiting within the city. Investigators make unannounced home and work visits to verify the offender's compliance with state law requirements based on the offender's level as a sex offender. In 2009, investigators arrested three (3) sex offenders who failed to register or failed to notify the State or Saratoga Springs Police Department that they had moved. Two of these arrests were felony charges, meaning the offender had previously been convicted of failure to register.

During 2009, Investigators in the Juvenile Aid Unit were involved in six hundred forty three (643) calls for service and participated in 310 case investigations. Investigators also conducted alcohol compliance checks on thirty (30) retail stores, bars and restaurants around the city, resulting in five (5) arrests for unlawfully serving alcohol to minors. The five arrests reported here do not include persons under age sixteen involved in criminal incidents where an arrest would normally be made if the suspect were an adult. In these matters, offenders are referred to Family Court as juvenile delinquency matters and are often placed in the diversion program.

## OPERATION SAFE CHILD



Juvenile Investigators continued to staff a program called “Operation Safe Child” which was developed and put on line by the Division of Criminal Justice Services in June of 2007. Operation Safe Child was created through a partnership of State and Local Law Enforcement Agencies, DCJS and the Center for Missing and Exploited Children to raise awareness about child safety. The program issues ID’s to parents with their Child’s photograph, fingerprint, and personal information on it, very similar to a driver’s license. The data that is used to create the ID is sent to DCJS with the parent’s permission and put in a data bank in the event the child goes missing and an Amber Alert is required. The storage of this data insures a speedy release of the Amber Alert, and can make the difference in the safe recovery of a missing child who is in danger. The data stays in the DCJS system until the child turns age eighteen years of age.

In 2009 Investigators working under the Operation Safe Child ID initiative produced one thousand three hundred sixty five (1,365) ID cards. The department has developed a partnership with the Saratoga Springs City School District to do ID’s in all the elementary schools and participated in numerous ‘family day’ type events around Saratoga County.

## DARE



The D.A.R.E. program is a function under the Juvenile Aid Unit of the Investigations Division. Officer Anthony Straus is assigned as the department’s full time D.A.R.E. instructor and presents a curriculum of drug/alcohol and violence prevention to more than six hundred fifth grade students in the Saratoga Springs City School District. Officer Lloyd Davis instructs D.A.R.E. on a part time basis at St. Clements School. The D.A.R.E. program also

involves numerous child related and community safety programs throughout the city. Our D.A.R.E. officers work very closely with the Saratoga Prevention Council to develop and institute these programs to as many children in the school district as possible. Our D.A.R.E. Officers are involved in many community efforts, including the Safe and Drug Free School Committee and the D.A.R.E. All-Stars Camp, which is offered at the PBA Range. This one-week summer program is offered for four consecutive weeks and accommodates one hundred and sixty soon to be 6th grade students. The camp is designed to reinforce the D.A.R.E. message, develop friendships and acclimate soon to be sixth graders to the Middle School environment. This program fills up every year and often a waiting list must be established. The program is very well run and very well received by parents and students, and has become a model for D.A.R.E. programs throughout New York State.

The full time D.A.R.E officer is also the chairperson for the annual Christmas Party for underprivileged children. D.A.R.E. Officers work at securing donations to fund the event, finding a location, and identifying the underprivileged children through collaboration with school district nurses, administrators, and other community organizations. The D.A.R.E. Officers coordinate shopping for the children and wrapping the presents with the help of high school senior students. The majority of this program is done on the D.A.R.E. officers own time and routinely accommodates about one hundred twenty five children each year.

The D.A.R.E. officer participates in community functions such as Hats Off, Final Stretch, Victorian Street Walk and Holiday Train. D.A.R.E. officers are always visible in uniform at their assigned schools developing a rapport with their students.

The department's marked D.A.R.E vehicle is a leased 2008 Toyota Camry that was generously donated courtesy of Bob McKenna, the GM at New Country Toyota of Saratoga. The D.A.R.E. vehicle travels to all D.A.R.E. training in the Saratoga Springs City School District and is often at community functions.

## School Resource Officer

Investigator John Kelly from the Juvenile Aid Unit is permanently assigned to the Saratoga Springs High School as the School Resource Officer (SRO). The department receives grant funding from the Saratoga Springs City School System towards the salary and overtime expenses relative to this assignment. The Investigator is not only an enforcement tool at the school, but also assists the school administration in interventions with students, preventing problems from becoming crimes. Investigator Kelly meets daily with the School Administration to discuss the beginning of trends and situations, which may develop into problems. In addition to law enforcement, Investigator Kelly has been involved in the following activity:

- Counseling or student contacts
- Conferences with school psychologists
- Interviews for Participation in Government
- Escorts of unruly students to School Administrator's office
- Parent counseling sessions concerning their son/daughter
- Classroom presentations on various topics including Search and Seizure, Drugs and School Policies
- Telephone calls to Law Guardians
- Calls to Saratoga County Probation Department
- Superintendent Hearings
- Control and record security camera system
- Daily perimeter and security checks of building
- Attend and supervise approximately fifteen major school events

# **TRAFFIC DIVISION**

## **ACCIDENT INVESTIGATION/RECONSTRUCTION**

Members of the Traffic Division receive additional, advanced training in motor vehicle accident reconstruction. TSU officers are called upon to assist patrol officers with the investigation of accidents resulting in serious physical injury or death and any accident involving commercial vehicles or hazardous materials.

In 2009, TSU officers responded to and investigated three (3) fatal motor vehicle accidents. Two of the three accidents involved alcohol/drugs.

On March 30, 2009, TSU officers investigated a two-car accident on NYS Route 50 South. The operator of the first vehicle was found to be intoxicated and succumbed to his injuries. It was determined that the operator of the second vehicle was impaired by the use of drugs and was charged appropriately, ultimately receiving a sentence to state prison.

On August 14, 2009, TSU officers responded to Route 9 South to investigate a vehicle/pedestrian accident. The pedestrian, who was later determined to be intoxicated, crossed Route 9 and into the oncoming northbound traffic where he was struck and killed. No charges were filed against the driver.

On December 27, 2009, officers investigated a rollover of a tanker on Route 9 South. The tanker was fully loaded with Sodium Hydroxide, a Class 8 Hazardous Material. It was determined that the operator had suffered from a fatal a medical condition prior to going off the road and overturning. The tanker stayed intact upon impact and no leakage of the materials occurred.

## **COMMERCIAL VEHICLE ENFORCEMENT**

TSU members also receive extensive training relating to the inspection of Commercial Vehicles and enforcement of the vehicle and traffic law, as it pertains to commercial vehicles. Saratoga Springs continues to be a shortcut for commercial vehicles traveling between Interstate 90 (western NY) and Interstate 87 (northern NY). The city continues to see an increase in this PD-17

commercial vehicle traffic with many of the vehicle carrying hazardous materials. Working in conjunction with NYS DOT, officers conducted three hundred thirty two (332) inspections during 2009. Of those vehicles inspected, fifty-nine (59) were found to have serious safety violations and were taken out of service until repairs could be made. Numerous inspections were also conducted during the July/August racing season. With the assistance of DOT and the NYS Police, (24) motor coaches (busses) were inspected for safety compliance. Five (5) busses were found to have violations requiring immediate attention and taken out of service until necessary repairs could be completed.

### **PARKING ENFORCEMENT**

The department employs and the Traffic Division oversees three (3) civilian Parking Enforcement Officers. Two of which have the full time responsibility of monitoring parking and enforcing appropriate NYS and City of Saratoga Springs parking regulations. The third officer is a full-time employee but only spends half of his time dedicated to parking enforcement responsibilities. The rest of his time is spent in the capacity as the City's Animal Control Officer.

In 2009, the department issued a total of 12,285 parking tickets, the majority of which were issued by the Parking Enforcement Officers. A total of \$391,307.00 in parking fine revenue was collected during this period. The outstanding balance of fines yet to be collected stands at \$1,268,779.00. Of the fines collected, \$9,022.00 was received due to a scofflaw program first instituted in 2008. This program, pursuant to adopted city code, allows the police department to tow and impound an illegally parked vehicle when it is found the owner is more than \$500.00 in arrears of unpaid parking fines.

### **SCHOOL CROSSING GUARDS/TRAFFIC CONTROL OFFICERS**

The Traffic Division supervised fifteen (15) part-time School Crossing Guards and Twenty-three (23) part-time summer Traffic Control Officers. Due to mid-year budget constraints, the department employed five (5) fewer Traffic Control Officers than in previous years. During the racing season, members of the TSU are reassigned full-time duties at the Saratoga Racecourse in order to ensure the most efficient methods of traffic control and the safety of motorists and

pedestrians around the racetrack area. Because of the lack of funding and the need to fill important posts, many times police officers, including those of the traffic division, were assigned to these posts; taking them away from other areas of responsibilities.

### **TRAFFIC RELATED GRANTS**

The Traffic Sergeant is responsible for the application process, management, and reporting of all traffic related grants. In 2009, the department received the following grants:

#### **“BUCKLE UP NEW YORK” (BUNY)**

This grant was awarded in the amount of \$6,800.00 and was used to fund personnel costs associated with specific enforcement of New York State’s seatbelt laws.

#### **“SELECTIVE TRAFFIC ENFORCEMENT PROGRAM” (STEP)**

This grant was awarded in the amount of \$16,500.00 and was used to fund personnel costs associated with aggressive driving issues and related vehicle and traffic enforcement.

#### **“STOP DWI”**

This grant was awarded in the amount of \$36,000.00. Funds were used to reimburse personnel costs for specific DWI enforcement as well as to purchase several pieces of equipment including Alco sensors, tint meters, Breathalyzer supplies, a RADAR unit, and a LIDAR speed measurement device.

## **ADMIN DIVISION**

### **ADMINISTRATIVE SERGEANT**

The Administrative Sergeant is responsible to maintain and update the department and city emergency plans, coordinate the department’s response and participation in special events, oversee the department’s Identification Clerk, act a liaison between the department and other

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City Hall departments, especially the Risk and Safety Office. He/she is also responsible for maintaining the city employee electronic ID system and electronic surveillance system.

In 2009, the Administrative Sergeant worked very closely with the Risk and Safety Director and Safety Committee to improve security in City Hall. In April, he participated in a thorough risk/threat analysis that was conducted by the Office of Homeland Security and worked throughout the year to help implement programs recommended in the findings of that assessment. Specific improvements will not be discussed in this report for security reasons.

As in previous years, the department was called upon many times to assist with traffic and crowd control issues relating to special events. Numerous events necessitated police services above and beyond the routine daily services provided by the department. There were at least thirty-two (32) special events that called for extra police services that included bicycle road races, parades, walks, runs and festivals. Each of these events required police personnel to monitor intersections, control vehicular and pedestrian traffic and maintain crowd control. There were larger events that drew crowds estimated to be in excess of 10,000 to the downtown area including the Victorian Street Walk, Hats Off Festival, Final Stretch Festival, First Night, etc. When possible, on-duty personnel were used to assist with these events. More often though, officers worked beyond their regular shift or were called in on overtime. In all, the department logged six hundred fifty six (656) hours in overtime to staff these events at a total cost of \$28,686.00. A minimal amount of this cost was reimbursed to the city.

## TRAINING

The training coordinator is responsible to ensure all minimum training requirements as dictated by federal, state, and department regulations are successfully met and all members requiring special certification receive the appropriate training to retain certification. The Coordinator is also responsible for the management of all training records, maintenance of specialized equipment such as department issued weapons (firearms, shotguns, electronic control weapons, etc) and patrol bicycles.

In 2009, the department continued its proactive approach of training officers in the latest techniques relating to active-shooter and management of critical incidents. With the cooperation of Skidmore College, The United States Department of Energy and the Saratoga Springs City School District, officers were again able to utilize local sites to conduct this type scenario based training.

Since the department must operate 24 hours per day while at the same time maintain an adequate staffing level to appropriately respond to calls, it is often not possible to conduct training while officers are assigned on duty. However, in 2009 the department was able to significantly reduce the amount of training overtime. A total of 2,064 hours were worked by officers training in 2009, compared to 3,660 in 2008 – a 44% DECREASE in overtime hours. This decrease is attributed in large part to changes made in the manner in which several training topics were presented. The Training Coordinator position allowed the Department the flexibility to conduct more “one-on-one” training - while officers were on-duty. This flexibility was directly responsible for the reduction in training and overall department overtime.

Many officers also received additional training in 2009 based on his/her specific job duties. Examples of these topics include Crime Scene and Evidence Specialist, Police Supervision, Statement Analysis, Handling and Processing of Juveniles, Suicide Intervention, Cargo Tank Inspection, Controlled Party Dispersal, Autism Risk and Safety Management, and Investigating Animal Cruelty.

## IDENTIFICATION CLERK

The Identification Clerk (the only civilian clerk employed by the department) is responsible for processing Freedom of Information (FOIL) requests, processing all requests for copies of incident and accident reports, fingerprinting civilians for licensing requirements (Taxi, daycare, etc), conducting criminal history checks for military personnel or other entities for the purpose of employment, and issuing “letters of Good Conduct”. Additionally, the Clerk is responsible to file and maintain an appropriate filing system for all department reports, retain all department PD-21

records per federal, state, and local regulations, compile case/accident reports requested by the District Attorney's Office for prosecution purposes, inventory and reorder department supplies, and maintain the electronic fingerprint submission system (RICI).

In 2009, the department's Identification Clerk processed one thousand one hundred twenty - three (1,123) Freedom of Information requests, responded to one thousand four hundred (1,400) requests for accident reports, fingerprinted two hundred eighty-seven (287) civilians, processed 49 Taxi driver applications/prints, conducted six hundred seventy-six (676) criminal history checks, and issued twenty-eight (28) Letters of Good Conduct.

## **PROGRAMS/SPECIALTY UNITS**

### **K-9 UNIT**



The department continued its canine program in 2009, utilizing (2) canines and their assigned handlers. The canine teams are required to receive a minimum of (16) hours per month of training to maintain their certifications. SSPD canines are certified in Narcotics Detection, and Patrol (encompassing tracking, building searches, apprehension, etc).

In 2009, department canines and their handlers responded to (56) service calls. These calls were broken down as follows: Building Searches (22), Drug/Narcotic Searches (20), Area Checks (9), Assist Other Agency (2), Warrant Executions (1), Demonstrations (1), and Tracks (1).

## MOUNTED UNIT



The department's Mounted Unit consisted of (2) Equines and (3) specially trained officers. The unit was utilized whenever possible - especially on weekends in and around the downtown area for crowd control purposes and were called upon several times to disperse unruly crowds. Additionally, the equines were detailed to special events including the Hats Off and Final Stretch festivals, the Memorial Day Parade, and the Victorian Street Walk. They continue to be an asset to the department for their reliability and ability to effectively manage large, and sometimes unruly crowds while minimizing the potential of injury to officers and the general public.

## CHILD PASSENGER SAFETY SEAT



Through the NYS Governor's Traffic Safety Committee, the department again received a grant in the amount of \$4,300.00 for the purchase of car seats and related equipment needs for the installation of child passenger safety seats. The department has several specially trained officers certified by NYS as Child Passenger Safety Seat Technicians. Throughout the year, these technicians hold monthly "fitting stations" where the public can make an appointment to have safety seats properly installed by a trained technician. It is the goal each year to hold at least (1) of these events per month. The department was able to partially meet this goal and held fitting stations monthly through May. However, due to major mid-year budget cuts to the police department the program was drastically scaled back for the remainder of the year. Absent the ability to hold these events as planned for the general public, our technicians partnered with the Saratoga Springs Federal Housing Authority and

hosted a “Family Day” at the Jefferson and Vanderbilt Terrace housing complex and also participated in a community event at the Malta Community Center. State Farm Insurance Company covered all related expenses for this Malta event. In all, technicians installed (120) safety seats in 2009.

## NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH/ASSOCIATION



Three (3) officers attended training relative to Crime Prevention and received certification. Officers detailed to this program attended numerous neighborhood association meetings throughout the year. They routinely met with groups including the Southwest Neighborhood Association, Conquest Apartments, and the Reservation Avenue Neighborhood Association to listen to and discuss their neighborhood concerns. Additionally, officers attended Skidmore’s annual orientation for new students to speak about “good neighbor” habits, off-campus parties, and disseminated general information relating to law enforcement in Saratoga Springs.

## MISCELLANEOUS

### OVERTIME

2009 ended with a twenty-one percent (21%) reduction in overtime hours a compared to 2008. In 2009, members of the department worked a total of 19,953 hours of overtime. A total of 25,197 hours were worked in 2008. The reduction can be attributed to several factors. For the most of 2009, the department was free from extended absences as a result of long-term injuries and at the same time was fully staffed to its budgeted and authorized strength of (72) officers. There were two officers remaining on long-term injury during the year. The first of

these officers remained on disability thru 12/31/2009. The second officer received a disability retirement and was taken off the payroll on 12/18/2009. Additionally and because of good management practices, overtime was reduced (as previously discussed in this report) due to savings realized in the approach to training.

While it has been possible to reduce overtime in certain areas, in others it is more difficult to do so. For the safety of both the public and officers, the department must maintain an adequate level of staffing 24 hours per day, 7 days per week, 365 days per year. The levels are based on statistical data as well as years and decades of experience the department managers have dealing with the special circumstances, events, and the unique challenges the department faces because of Saratoga Springs' standing as a major national tourist destination. The staffing requirements continue to be a significant factor in the overall department overtime. Other areas that also tend to increase the demand for overtime include mandatory Court (City and County) and Grand Jury appearances, case/arrest investigations and follow-up, staffing of special events, and training. The department administration continues to track all overtime and is constantly reviewing areas for potential savings.

## ALARMS

In 2008, Commissioner Ronald Kim and the City Council passed an amended version of Chapter 58 of the City Code pertaining to alarm registration, usage, and fees for multiple false alarms. Although a revenue source for the city, the intent of this legislation is to begin to reduce the number of false alarms that both the Police Department and Fire Department respond to each year. If working as intended, the department should see a reduction in the number of false alarms – and a resulting reduction in fees collected. In 2009, the police department responded to 1,094 alarms (730 Business, 364 Residential), 1,026 of which were determined to be false alarms. This is down from 2008 when members responded to 1,462 alarms, 1,358 of which were false. The law provides for fees to be charges to “alarm users” who sound more than (2) alarms in a twelve-month period which are determined to be false (under specific circumstances). A total of \$9,300.00 was billed to alarm users in 2009 for excessive false alarm

activations. As of 12/31/2009, \$8,050.00 in fees had been collected. For more information regarding Chapter 58 of the City Code, go to [www.saratoga-springs.org](http://www.saratoga-springs.org).

## POLICE LOCKUP

The department continues to maintain holding cells for both male and female prisoners who have been arrested and are awaiting arraignment in City Court. A total of 637 prisoners were housed in SSPD holding cells in 2009. Of these prisoners, 552 were males and 85 were females. The holding cells are inspected by the NYS Commission of Corrections for compliance to minimum standards pursuant to statute. NYS mandates mandatory reporting of certain incidents

## MISC GRANTS

### Edward Byrne Memorial (JAG) Grant

In 2009, the department applied for, and was awarded, the Edward Byrne Memorial Grant through the Federal 2009 Recovery Act. This grant, in the amount of \$22,995.00, was used to purchase laptop computers, scanners, printers, software and other miscellaneous hardware for the department's fleet of patrol cars. The intent is to enable officers the ability to complete basic paperwork including case reports, arrest reports, accident reports, and uniform traffic citations electronically. To this point, officers must return to police HQ to complete this work, in effect taking them off the street and away from their regular patrol duties for an extended period of time. You can read more about Officer Edward Byrne at: <http://www/ojp.usdoj.gov/BJA/about/officer-byrne.html>

## 2009 C.O.P.S. (Non-hiring) Grant



In 2008, the department applied to then-Congresswoman Kirsten Gillibrand for a congressional appropriation in the amount of \$240,000.00. The department originally requested these funds to purchase a 'Mobile Response Vehicle' and other assorted tactical equipment and training. After careful consideration based on unforeseen major department budget cuts, the request was modified to include funds for various tactical safety equipment and uniforms as well as funds to enable the department to continue its proactive 'active-shooter' training. In 2009, this appropriation was granted and the department was awarded this federal grant. As of 12/31/2009, purchases were not made with the awarded funds. It is the department's intention to begin the purchasing process early in 2010.

## Ballistic Vest Program

The department was again awarded funds through the Ballistic Vest Program administered by the Office of Justice Services, US Dept of Justice. \$11.664.00 was awarded to the department to be used for the purchase of replacement ballistic vests.

Saratoga Springs Police Department  
2009 Year End  
Statistical Data

	<u>2009</u>	<u>2008</u>	<u>Difference</u>	<u>Pct</u>
<b>Calls for Service</b>	<b>30430</b>	<b>27693</b>	<b>2737</b>	<b>10%</b>
<b>Top 5 CFS</b>				
Vehicle Stop	4248	3243	1005	31%
Medical Assist	2651	2540	111	4%
Area Check	1712	966	746	77%
Accident-Property Damage	1268	1230	38	3%
Directed Patrol	1220	798	422	53%
<b>E-911 Calls</b>	<b>4798</b>	<b>4519</b>	<b>279</b>	<b>6%</b>
<b>Cases Opened</b>	<b>4016</b>	<b>4487</b>	<b>(471)</b>	<b>-10%</b>
<b>Arrests</b>	<b>1335</b>	<b>1033</b>	<b>302</b>	<b>29%</b>
Felony Charges	350	270	80	30%
Misdemeanor Charges	1340	1020	320	31%
Violation Charges	749	521	228	44%
<b>DWI Arrests</b>	<b>314</b>	<b>188</b>	<b>126</b>	<b>67%</b>
<b>Motor Vehicle Accidents</b>	<b>1680</b>	<b>1637</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>3%</b>
Property Damage	1268	1230	38	3%
Fatal	3	1	2	200%
Hit and Run	267	273	(6)	-2%
Personal Injury	142	133	9	7%
<b>Citations Issued</b>	<b>5366</b>	<b>4047</b>	<b>1319</b>	<b>33%</b>
<b>Part 1 Crimes</b>	<b>511</b>	<b>696</b>	<b>(185)</b>	<b>-27%</b>
Murder	0	0	0	0%
Rape	2	2	0	0%
Robbery	8	7	1	14%
Assault (Felony)	14	23	(9)	-39%
Burglary	86	96	(10)	-10%
Larceny	387	545	(158)	-29%
Motor Vehicle Theft	14	23	(9)	-39%
<b>Alarm Activations</b>	<b>1094</b>	<b>1462</b>	<b>(368)</b>	<b>-25%</b>
Residential	730	1001	(271)	-27%
Business	364	461	(97)	-21%
False Alarms	1026	1358	(332)	-24%

