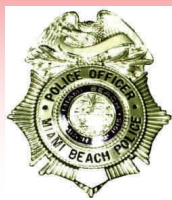




Miami Beach Police Department



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Happy Holidays!

MBPD Retiree News

December 2009 Issue

"Unity Is Strength For A Better Retirement"

Sam's Corner

"A Collection of Disorganized Thoughts"

Well, we've finally made it to the end of the year, and may I add it went pretty quickly. Not to say that that the Year 2009 lacked challenges for me. There were plenty,



some good and some bad. I'm sure most of you had yours, and I hope that 2010 turns out better for *all* of us. If this message has sort of a bittersweet ring to it, it's because as editor of this newsletter, I've had the opportunity to hear about the tough times some of our members are going through and it's not funny. Money

troubles, relationship troubles, health troubles, etc... But I've also have the opportunity to hear about some of the good stuff. Vacations, new additions to families, new jobs, newly (and happily) retired members looking forward to a great life on the "other side".

It all seems to balance out, and when I attend some of the retiree's events throughout the year, I am amazed and pleased to that most of our retirees are looking well, even into their 80's.

Sort of shoots down the theory that most cops go downhill after retirement. That may happen in other places, but Miami Beach PD for the most part seems to be immune from those statistics. None of us can avoid growing old, but I think being part of this little (but growing) retirees organization keeps us young.

I'm writing this column on the day after the annual Retiree's Holiday Party.



Continued on page 2



Vinny's Breakfast...



On November 13, 2009 a breakfast was held at the 84 Diner with 24 people attending. Attending were Billy Rosenstein, John Tighe & Cathy Tighe, Mike Bauer, Vinny Aprile, Pat Ryan, Carlos Deva-

rona, Charlie Seraydar, Bobby Bauer, Dean & Ana Adler and their daughter Jennifer, Jack & Amy Tighe, Kevin Graham, Pete Bitume, Bobby Jenkins, Fred Walder, Jack Mackie, Eddie

Bason, Eddie Santiago, active Officer Pat Quinlan, retired Miami Beach firefighter Tom Columbano and Charlie Vega, who used to work the security at the Fontainebleau.

"A Collection of Disorganized Thoughts"



Not out of laziness mind you. Ok, well that's not *entirely* true. Actually, I've been incredibly busy, so forgive me if you get this newsletter a bit late into the month. We try not to let that happen too often, but it does happen, so please bear with us. With a new house and a part-time job that's looking more and more like a full time job, generating disorganized thoughts is becoming easier. Writing them down is another story. I'm not going to share details about the holiday party, which was very nice. That's for next month's issue. I will tell you that I sincerely appreciate the kind words about our newsletter. I also thank Jack Tighe for giving me the opportunity to step into his world and take over the newsletter. He has a certain "style", as I do. Not better, just different. For example, I have access to "spell check", and he didn't. It has been a great honor to know him. We'll talk about him a little more in next month's newsletter.

As promised last month, I am going to talk about Miami Beach Police cars, 1990 and beyond. In the early 1990's, Ford Motor Company was in the process of getting back into the police car business after Chrysler discontinued their popular Fury and Diplomat line. The Department purchased a bunch of new either 1990 or 1991 Crown Victorias. These were probably among the worst police cars I had ever driven. They were slow, unreliable, cheesy, overheated often, and had the worst air conditioners around. The

worst feature about those cars however, were the roaches. The entire fleet was infested with those little German cockroaches. They were all over the place. They would crawl on you as you drove, crawl up the windshield, get into your equipment, and generally annoy the heck out of you.

One day, as I loaded up for a Sunday afternoon shift, I noticed an entire family of them having a Bar-b-que on the dashboard. They had a little picnic table set up with paper plates, sodas and condiments while another little roach with an apron on was flipping burgers on a gas grill. A bunch of smaller roaches were playing tug of war on the rear view mirror while a few of the older ones were bunched up near the defroster vents drinking tiny little bottles of Bud Light. I didn't know they made them that



small. One of them even had the audacity to offer me a beer. I respectfully turned him down, and then I proceeded to "shop" the car and get another

one. I didn't want to disturb their fun.

The next car I checked out had them too. No Bar-b-ques on the dashboard however. This car had a small golf course in the back seat. From time to time, tiny lit-

tle golf balls the size of ice cream sprinkles would hit the Plexiglas on the prisoner divider. Once in a while, I would hear screams and cursing coming from the German cockroach golfers, no doubt upset with their measly little game. I ignored it and kept the car for the rest of the shift.

Aside from the obvious, the cars were not well built at all. The interiors were made of substandard materials, all the way to the gearshifts. How do I know this? One evening, when the Loew's Hotel at 16th Street and Collins Avenue was being constructed, I was working off duty, keeping an eye on the construction site. I had checked out a Crown Victoria. At about 9 P.M., I decided I was hungry and wanted some chicken from the KFC across the street. Since I was too lazy to walk, I drove the unit into the drive through lane and ordered. I moved the car to the take out window and got my order. It was closing time and I was the last customer. The employee locked the window and the lights went off in the restaurant. As I put the gear selector into "drive", it broke off in my hand. The darn thing was made of cheap pot metal. I couldn't move the car.

Now I was in *big* trouble. I parked really really close to the drive through window, I had a lot of equipment on the passenger seat, and I was really really big.

Continued on page 4



Newsletter Exclusive! MBPD cars of the 30's & 40's

They say no news is good news. That may or may not be true, but strangely enough, I have no retiree news to report for the month of December. That's good news for you, since it gives us more space for your letters, like the one I received from our frequent contributor, Jesse Webb. Thanks again Jesse!



1930 Ford Police Car

Morning Mr. Sam,

Your very interesting article about the cars used by the Department in the 70's invites "stories from old timers", and I believe I qualify as I will be 90 next birthday!

My first day with the Department was February 1st, 1947. Obviously I was assigned to walk a beat for several years, but also filled in for patrol officers in cars fairly often....AND...Those cars were interesting! World War II started in 1939 and our country joined in 1941. Even back in 1939 our auto factories turned their efforts to making war materials and drastically reduced the number of cars it turned out. So, when I joined our department, none of our patrol cars were made after the late 1930's. What we had was being used day and night by patrolmen.

Also, please note, new tires had not been available since the start of the war. The only tires available were what were called "retreads". Some rubber company would somehow attach a layer of new material on

top of what had been a tire and that was it!

The department had a small garage building in the back of the station with one mechanic and one helper. Also, all motorcycles were parked in that building, so car

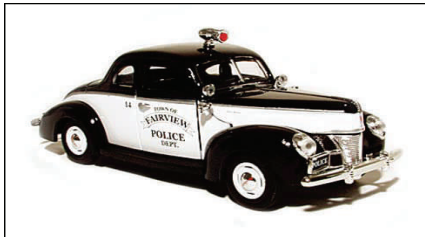
space was quite limited.

As each shift started, the patrolmen went to the parking lot back of the station, tried to find the cars with the keys he was given, then tried to get the car started, which usually took some time. Out on patrol, many cars quit running frequently and the officer just sat there in full view of the public until the mechanic arrived, which usually took quite some time! The mechanic had a tow bar from the rear of his car to the front of the patrol car, so he just towed it to the station. The officer then had to look for another unit.

That action was routine and nothing was done to lessen the car problems.

The cars were all made in the late 1930's and almost every different make was used by our department, even the expensive luxury cars made by Cadillac. Windows did not work, windshield wipers failed, lights were out, dents were frequent, etc, etc...

These problems were not attributed to failures by the department brass or the city. It's just that neither cars, parts, tires, or anything else were available to anyone at that time! But, it made a very interesting shift for our patrol officers who had to devote more energy, time, and effort in keeping his unit running, than to fight crime!



1940 Ford Police Car

Oooh! In closing, I remember that one old time car, a luxury model was considered so dangerous to use, that two experienced, long-time patrol officers deliberately crashed it into the end of a concrete bridge railing in mid-city to cause it so much damage, it had to be removed from

service. They were just trying to save the life of an officer or a citizen as the thing was falling apart!

Oooh! And one more thing! This may be interesting to our group. When the new cars became available in the late 1940's, there was a large Ford dealer on Alton Road and 6th or 7th Street. He featured a Ford Club Coupe, 2 door, front and rear seats, V-8 engine, plush everything, for the price of.....\$ 695.00 !!!



Sam's Corner... "Collection of Disorganized Thoughts"

I was stuck in the car my friends. Fortunately, KFC was closed, so there was no one behind me. I was not about to call it off on the radio, too embarrassing. What was I to do? Ding! A light went off in my head. I called Tremont and had them come out and tow the car out. With me inside!! I think you guys can figure out the rest of the story. Funny, since that happened, Kentucky Fried Chicken just doesn't taste the same to me.



The 90's saw the Department purchasing Ford's for their uniform fleet, as nothing else was really available. The new (crappy) Crown Victoria's did sport the newer color scheme which was started in the late 80's. They did look much better, but obviously did nothing for the car's performance. They looked pretty good standing still. The roaches didn't care one way or the other, they liked being *inside* the car. The 1992, 1993, and beyond cars were actually a marked improvement. The Department experimented with different ways to do the striping on the cars, as well as different logos. At one time there were several different color schemes out there giving the impression that Miami Beach had several different police departments. Some complained that the cars looked too much like mail delivery vehicles, what with the red white and blue striping. But then again, as you know, some people complain about everything!

My first "official" take home car was a 1997 Crown Victoria. City shops had a set of strobe lights they received as a sample from a company called Whelen, whom at the time was trying to win a contract with the city to install them

on all the cars. I was selected to be the evaluator for the lights, so they installed them on my car. They looked

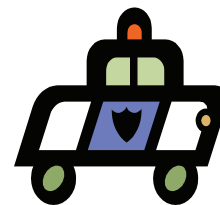
nice, but they were not what they were cracked up to be. First of all, they were expensive and very complicated, requiring a power supply in the trunk and constant maintenance. They were not as bright as the other lights and after awhile I really didn't care for them, but I had to live with them until several years later when I was issued a newer car. I don't really recall what I had after that because I was promoted to lieutenant and drove several unmarked cars, amongst them, a Chevy Impala and Ford Taurus. The roach problem was eliminated with the advent of the take home car program, a big plus.

Speaking of the Taurus and Impala, the city purchased several in the 1990's to try them out. Actually, I believe the police package Impalas of the 90's were called the Caprice and were equipped with very powerful engines. If you got lucky enough to check one out you were in for a very interesting shift. In fact, the cars were so fast that they managed to "get away" from some of our less skilled drivers. Some

ended up crashed. The Ford Taurus' were front wheel drive and were not yet up to the rigors of police work. They didn't last long either.

Ford changed the body style of their Crown Victoria in 1998 to the shape we know now. They have made huge improvements and the modern day Crown Victorias, now called "Police Interceptors" are great cars. They won't be around ong however. Ford is slated to discontinue them in 2011 and introduce a whole new police car. I'm sure the old Police Interceptors will be around for many years to come though. Central Cab will be scarfing up the remainder of them when they're "deadlined" several years from now.

In 2002 or 2003, Miami Beach also started to purchase the police package Impalas for use as supervisor's cars and for the detective bureau. These cars were good and got even better when they were redesigned in 2005. I was issued one in 2006 or so as a lieutenant's car and I loved it. The thing was loaded, A/C (of course), power windows, power seats, tilt wheel, cruise control, and a six speaker CD stereo. It handled great and was very comfortable, even for me. It was probably one of the best police cars I ever drove.



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Minigathering...

Shayne Prather forwarded this photograph of a recent "mini-gathering" of retirees at their Everglades camp. These guys *know* how to have fun!

From left to right:

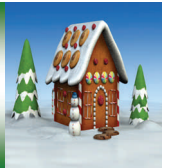
Dan Pinder, John Clements, Ernie Prather,
and Mike Lowe.



Retirees at their Everglades camp



December Birthdays ...



DERBY BRENNAN

CHRIS DEE

LOU FATA

LESLIE (SCOTT) FORSYTH

MEL GARVEY

IRWIN GOODMAN

ROBERT HANLON

TONY HOLT

JOAN DONNELLY-OCHOA

JASON PSALTIDES

RICHARD PELOSI

TED SCHEMPP

STEVE STUART

LEWIS SUGAR

WILLIAM TEASDALE

JOHN H. TIGHE

GENE TOREKY

CARL WARD

ROBERT WILLIAMS



Happy Birthday

Sam's Corner... "Collection of Disorganized Thoughts"

The last car issued to me as a Miami Beach officer was a 2008 black and white Police Interceptor. It wasn't "loaded" like the Impala, but it looked *mean*. It was a true "cop car". I never dreamed Miami Beach would have Los Angeles looking black and white cars. A far cry from when I began my career as a civilian, and the cops were driving those pukey green cars with the simple round city logos. It's truly interesting how things change. Regardless of what cops on the Beach drive, one thing will always remain the same, the "low lifes" on the street and the politicians. They never change and never will. I think you *know* what I mean!

Closing out this month's

"disorganized thoughts" column, I wanted to share my thoughts about something that's been bothering me lately. Usually, I have a clear cut idea of how some things *should* be; or a clear cut idea of how to feel about certain things. Most, if not all of us who live in South Florida, especially Dade and Broward counties have had the occasion to encounter folks collect-

ing money at traffic lights. They do this either for themselves or for organizations such as "The Homeless Voice", which appears to be a large outfit.

We've seen the signs. "Will work for food" or "help, lost my job, have 3 kids". I honestly don't know how to *feel* about this. As a cop, I know that many of these folks are drug

abusers, losers or criminals who've basically "made their own beds". Now they expect hard working folks to bail them out of their situation. We really don't know what many of them do with their money. We suspect that many of them just go out and buy more drugs or booze. We rarely picture them going back and buying baby formula or paying a bill but we just don't know, unless of course we follow them around.

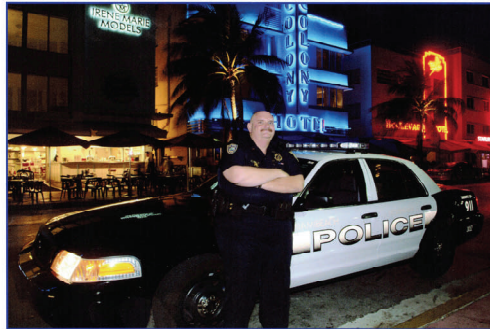
Years ago I saw a documentary about some of the folks who collect money on the streets. Hidden cameras filmed some of them getting into their

cars at the end of the day and going home with a few hundred bucks in change. This was a full time job for some. At times I have given money. At times I refuse to face "them". At times I say hello, other times I avoid them.

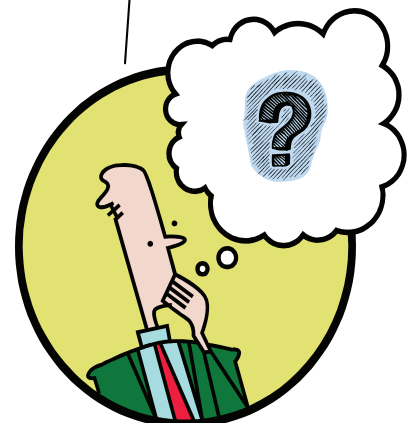
Sometimes I feel bad, other times I don't. My belief is that if you can stand on a street corner from 8 to 5 and collect money in July, you can certainly get a job and stop mooching off the public. But...Another part of me says that some of these people are mentally ill or criminals who can't do anything else.

I hate not being able to figure this out. And why do I want to figure this out? I don't really know. Other than the fact that I think we all realize that "they" could be "us", if things turned bad, or didn't go quite well. You never really know do you? Hopefully I won't find out. Overall however, I do feel bad and wish them the best, with or without my help.

Hope you all have a great holiday season, whatever your holiday may be. Stay safe, happy New Year and we'll see each other in 2010. Cheers!

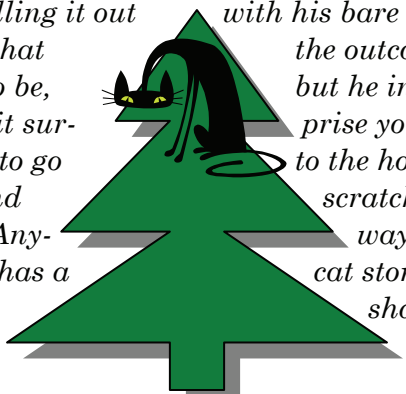


Disorganized Thoughts...



Itsy Bitsy Little War Stories... By: Tommy Moran

Recently, I sent out a copy of a report I wrote in North Bay Village. It started out when I and another officer were sent out early one morning to a "cat stuck in an attic" call. I already knew there was not much I could do, but my partner had other ideas. He decided to be the hero and try to get this cat out by reaching through an opening and pulling it out with his bare hands. I knew what the outcome was but he insisted. Would it surprise you to learn he had to go to the hospital with bites and scratches to his arms? Anyway, Tommy Moran has a cat story of his own to share.



Hey Sam: Enjoyed your story. Some of the old South end guys from 1970 will remember my cat story. I just had come off a year undercover assignment in the VIN unit and was back in uniform, south end. Got a call to a **cat stuck in a tree**. In those days the south end was strictly old Jewish people from New York. When I got there they were all gathered under the tree yelling "Oui! Oui! Officer help da poor cat, he's houit". Now me, I am a complete animal lover and was as upset about the hurt cat as they were. Forgetting that I was a cop in uniform and not a 15 year old back in the Bronx, I climbed about three stories up the tree and saw that the cat was wedged in a "v" section of branches on his side. I found out later that the cat had fallen from the 8th or 9th floor of the condo and landed in the tree. That cat was hissing and spitting and was scared s---tless. I remember grabbing a tree branch with one arm and extending the other as far as I could feeling that if I could grab the cat by the nap of the neck and pull him out, I would be a hero for the people waiting three stories below and I would also feel great myself.

So I reached out as far as I could, grabbed the cat by the fur of the neck and jerked him out of the tree. Immediately all the people started yelling, "God bless de offica, vut a nice young man"! They were actually applauding. In 1970, stuff like this could get you Officer of The Month. As I carefully brought the cat through the branches towards me, it all happened in slow motion. The friggan cat's head did a 360 like the chick in the Exorcist and it chomped down on my wrist with blood immediately spurting out. My first reaction was to get rid of the cat, which I did, by tossing it out of my grip to the concrete below, where it ran out of its ability to live nine times.



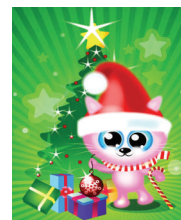
Now the crowd below immediately changed its opinion of my efforts and were now calling me a



"douity bastid" a "rotten animal hater" and a bunch of other things, which led to me needing a back up unit to get me out of there in one piece. The cat went to the Medical Examiner's Office to be

checked for rabies and I went to Mt. Sinai for some nasty needles. The next day, there was a big oak tag size drawing on the old bulletin board at 120 Meridian showing me throwing the poor cat out of the tree with all the old people screaming at me and all the backup units arriving captioned "MBPD Rescues Officer Moran, The Cat Killer". As a respected member of our profession once said "Ya know, you can't make this s---t up".

Tommy



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ROBERT L. SWITKES
ATTORNEY AT LAW

407 LINCOLN RD., PENTHOUSE SE
MIAMI BEACH, FL 33139
TELEPHONE: 305-534-4757
FACSIMILE: 305-538-5504

110 SE 6 ST., STE#1970
FT. LAUDERDALE, FL 33301
TELEPHONE: 954-653-0457
FACSIMILE: 305-538-5504

RSWITKES@ROSENANDSWITKES.COM
WWW.ROSENANDSWITKES.COM

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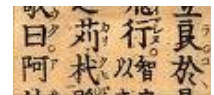
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Read His book...

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When rookie South Beach
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agreed to work undercover, the
exceptionally tall and attrac-
tive woman had no idea what
was in store for her. Follow
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along her destiny's path.



A Necessary End:
A Katie Maguire novel

Gerry Mackey - Author
E-Mail: Mackyg2007@yahoo.com

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