MERRIAM POLICE DEPARTMENT 1999 HIGHLIGHTS AND STATISTICS

AUGUST 1999 NATIONAL NIGHT OUT AGAINST CRIME GROUP MEETING WITH THE VERNON PLACE HOMES ASSOCIATION MEMBERS

AUGUST 1999 NATIONAL NIGHT OUT AGAINST CRIME GROUP MEETING WITH THE RESIDENTS NEAR 70th AND SWITZER

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A group photo of the Merriam Police Department—1969

Message From The Chief

Merriam Police Chief Kenneth Sissom

The City of Merriam continues to demonstrate that it is a progressively managed community. In 1999 much work was done to ensure that the City would continue to grow and prosper. The City has demonstrated that its primary mission is to improve the quality of life for its residents and businesses.

Merriam is widely known for the high quality level of service that is provided. This success is possible for two reasons: (1) professional city employees that are committed to excellence; and (2) the high degree of dedication and support that these employees receive from the Mayor and City Council.

This document has been written to chronicle the 1999 events and experiences of the Merriam Police Department. It is written in a series of reports listed by category. Its purpose is to illustrate the activities and provided services through narrative form, statistics, charts and graphs.

MERRIAM POLICE DEPARTMENT MISSION STATEMENT

We, the Merriam, Kansas Police Department, are a community-oriented police department. We are committed to providing the highest quality of police services by empowering our employees to work co-actively with the community toward the goal of improving the quality of life within Merriam. We pledge to maintain the highest level of respect for an individual's rights and human dignity.

Our purpose is to provide safety and security for all persons within our city with responsive and professional services utilizing compassion and concern. Our mission is accomplished within the moral and legal standards of our community, through a partnership of the community and the employees of the Merriam Police Department.

NOTE:
The Mission Statement and Organization Values were developed by a committee of Merriam Police Officers with the assistance of a group of concerned Merriam citizens. This Mission Statement was adopted June 1993.

ORGANIZATIONAL VALUES

PARTNERSHIP:

We are committed to working in partnership with the community and each other to identify and resolve issues which impact the community, ourselves and other professional agencies.

DEDICATION:

We are committed to providing the highest quality of law enforcement service to the community with the goal of enhancing the quality of life within Merriam.

RESPECT:

We are committed to the respect of individual rights, human dignity and the values of all members of the community and the department.

INTEGRITY:

We value the adherence to the rule of law, to the Constitutions of Kansas and of the United States, and to utmost honesty. We are committed to nurturing the public trust by holding ourselves accountable to the highest standards of professionalism and ethics.

COMMUNITY:

We value working with Merriam's diverse community to ensure the safety and security of our neighborhoods. We are committed to the highest level of communication and cooperation with both the residential and business communities of Merriam in an effort to reduce crime and increase the feeling of security and well-being within the city.

EMPOWERMENT:

We are committed to empowering our employees and the community to resolve problems by creating an environment that encourages solutions that address the needs of the residential and business communities.

ORGANIZATIONAL GROWTH:

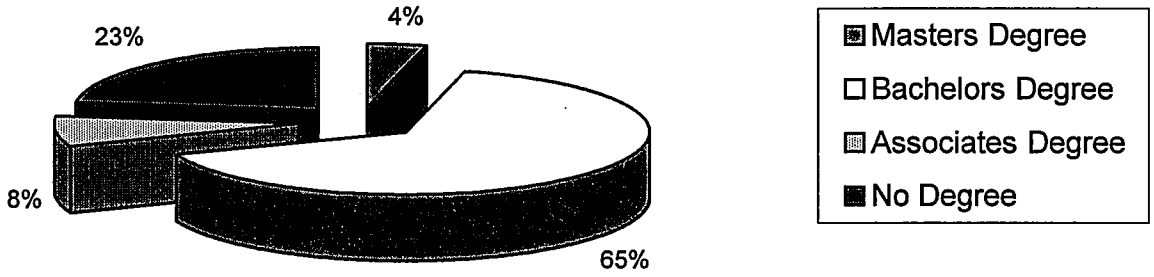
We value the creation of an environment which focuses on solving problems through teamwork, participation, cooperation and enthusiasm, fostered by decisive, professional leaders who support creativity and innovation.

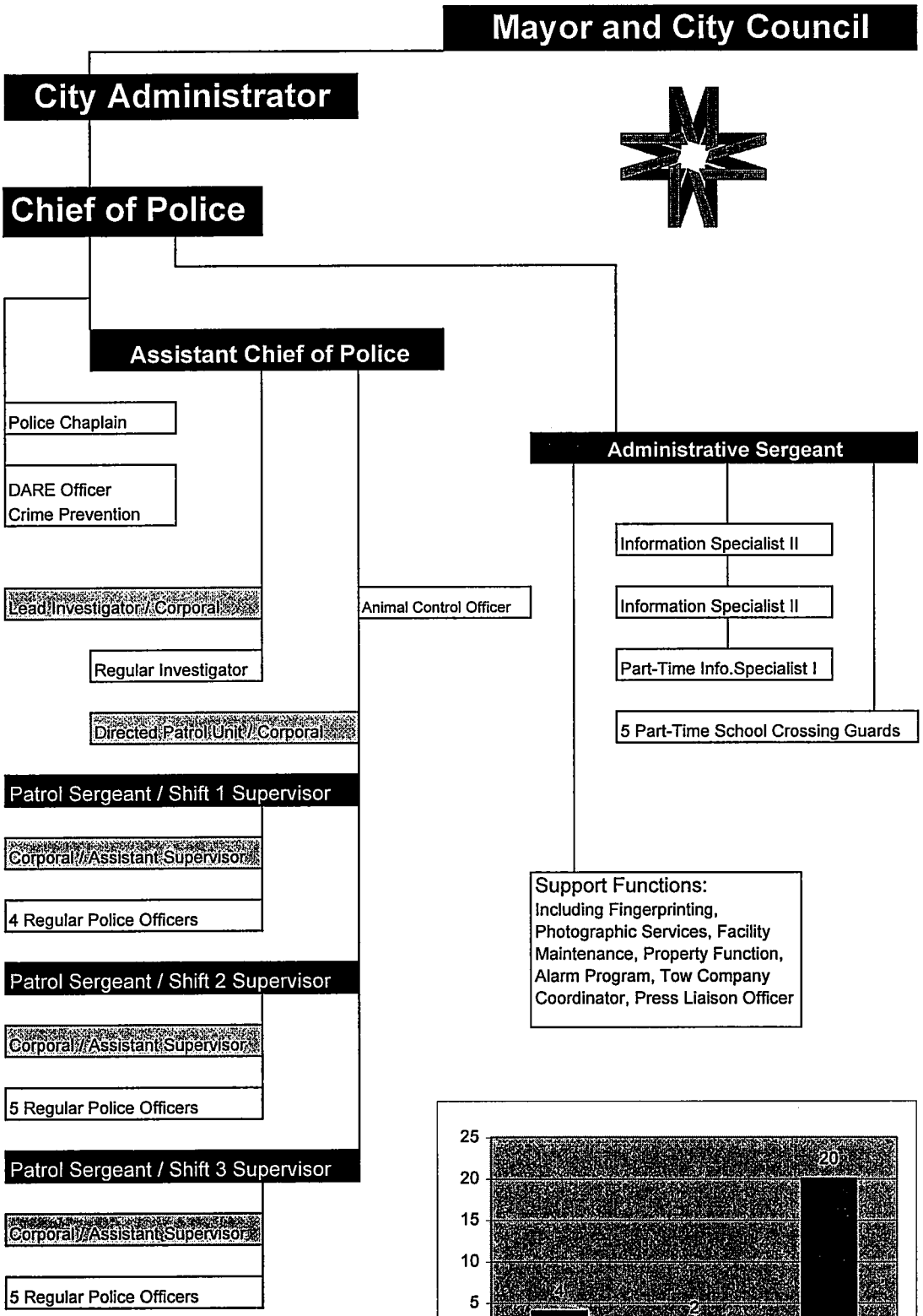
Employee Roster 1999

As of 12/31/1999

RANK	NAME	ASSIGNMENT	TENURE
Chief of Police	KENNETH SISSOM	Administration	20
Asst. Chief of Police	BILL LIETZKE	Administration	19
Sergeant	BOB SMITH	Administration	22
Sergeant	RANDY DAVIS	Patrol	18
Sergeant	TIM BURNETT	Patrol	17
Sergeant	AL JONES	Patrol	16
	Average tenure for Staff Officers =		18.7 Years
Corporal	DAN KELLERMAN	Patrol	15
Corporal	MIKE DANIELS	Investigations	12
Corporal	LORI VICTORINE	Patrol	11
Corporal	ROBERT SCHLUBEN	Directed Patrol Unit	9
Corporal	DARREN MCLAUGHLIN	Patrol	10
Master Police Officer	CHARLIE SWEANY	Patrol	9
Master Police Officer	TODD SPARKS	Patrol	9
Master Police Officer	GERRY EICKHOFF	Patrol	8
Police Officer	CHARLIE YOCUM	Patrol	22
Police Officer	JEFF MAGEE	Patrol	12
Master Police Officer	LARRY BIRT	D.A.R.E.	11
Master Police Officer	TROY DUVANEL	Investigations	5
Police Officer	TODD ALLEN	Patrol	3
Police Officer	GREG LENKIEWICZ	Patrol	2
Police Officer	SCOTT MCGAHA	Patrol	1
Police Officer	JOHN WALTON	Patrol	1
Police Officer	BARRY MARTENS	Patrol	1
Police Officer	MELINDA COPELAND	Patrol	<1
Police Officer	ROBERT HOLLAND	Patrol	<1
	Average tenure for MPOs & P.O.s =		7.5 Years
Animal Control Officer	DAVE THOMAS	Animal Control	12
Information Specialist 2	LISA ALDRICH	Clerical	8
Information Specialist 2	KAREN GIBSON	Clerical	7
Information Specialist 1	RONDA BRUMBAUGH	Clerical	<1

Education Level of Officers




Mayor and City Council
City Administrator
Chief of Police
Assistant Chief of Police
Police Chaplain
DARE Officer
Crime Prevention
Lead Investigator / Corporal
Regular Investigator
Directed Patrol Unit / Corporal
Animal Control Officer
Patrol Sergeant / Shift 1 Supervisor
Corporal / Assistant Supervisor
4 Regular Police Officers
Patrol Sergeant / Shift 2 Supervisor
Corporal / Assistant Supervisor
5 Regular Police Officers
Patrol Sergeant / Shift 3 Supervisor
Corporal / Assistant Supervisor
5 Regular Police Officers
Administrative Sergeant
Information Specialist II
Information Specialist II
Part-Time Info.Specialist I
5 Part-Time School Crossing Guards
Support Functions:
Including Fingerprinting, Photographic Services, Facility Maintenance, Property Function, Alarm Program, Tow Company Coordinator, Press Liaison Officer
25
20
15
10
5
0
4
2
20
Admin.
Invest.
Patrol

Crime Statistics 1999

INTRODUCTION:

The collection of crime statistics is required by the Kansas Bureau of Investigations. The information collected is used for local, state and federal databases to compare rates with previous years to get a picture of the amount and types of crimes that are happening in a given area.

Within the police department, we use statistics to plan patrol strategies for the coming year in hopes of reducing crime. While it is difficult to accurately predict crime statistics, one thing is certain — the statistics will vary from year-to-year. This is especially true for a small city like Merriam.

There are many factors that can alter crime statistics which cause this variance. The factors can include economic conditions, weather, incursion of drugs, gangs, organized crime, development of new businesses and the increase or decrease of law enforcement presence in the community.

CRIME RATES FOR 1999:

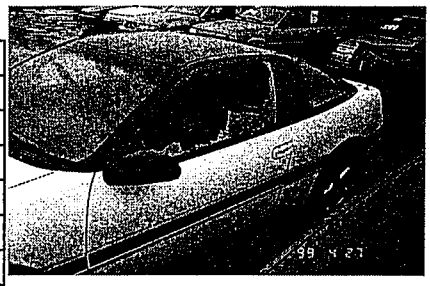
As predicted above, there were fluctuations in crime rates when 1999 is compared to the previous year.

While most types of crimes remained stable, there were categories with notable changes. Auto thefts increased dramatically over 1998, along with other types of thefts, forgeries and criminal possession of drugs. There are two main reasons for these increases: 1) There are more retail businesses in Merriam. Many thefts (shoplift) occur at large retail centers. 2) A majority of all our crimes are drug or alcohol related. The drive to get money to feed a drug habit has caused many people to turn to check forgery and shoplifting to feed their habits. Many of the people that we arrest for property crimes in progress (forgeries and thefts) are in possession of drug paraphernalia at the time of arrest.

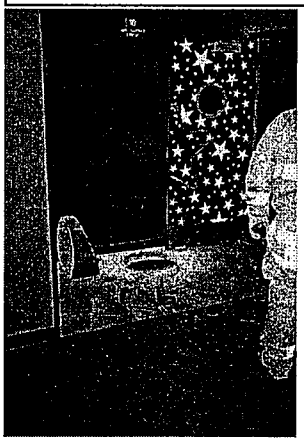
PART ONE CRIMES:

Each year, we are required to report Part-One Crimes to the KBI and FBI. The 1999 statistics are listed below. There was a **4.7%** increase in Part-One Crimes. A more complete breakdown of all crimes is listed on the following page.

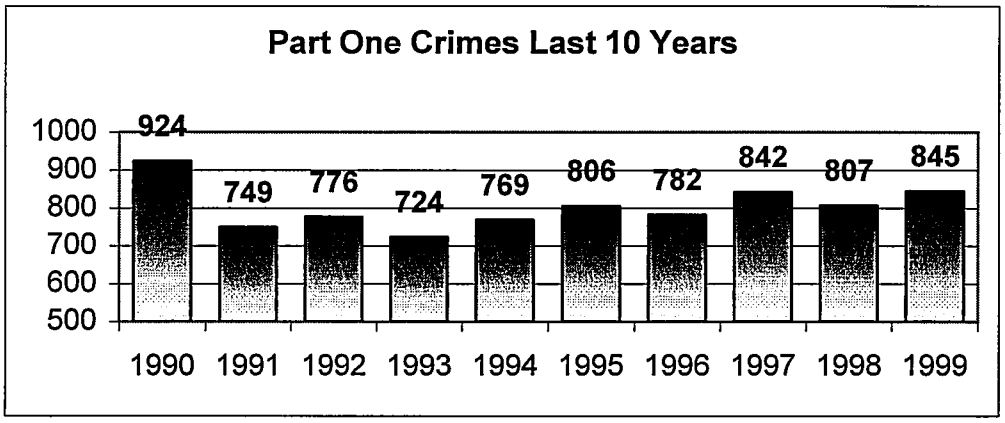
Part One Crimes	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999
MURDER	0	0	0	1	1
RAPE	5	7	6	9	6
ROBBERY	18	12	9	11	9
AGG. ASSAULT	27	18	37	31	23
BURGLARY	249	256	256	303	236
THEFT	429	429	431	376	454
AUTO THEFT	71	68	98	72	113
ARSON	7	3	5	4	3



Scene of an Auto Burglary on Merriam Drive



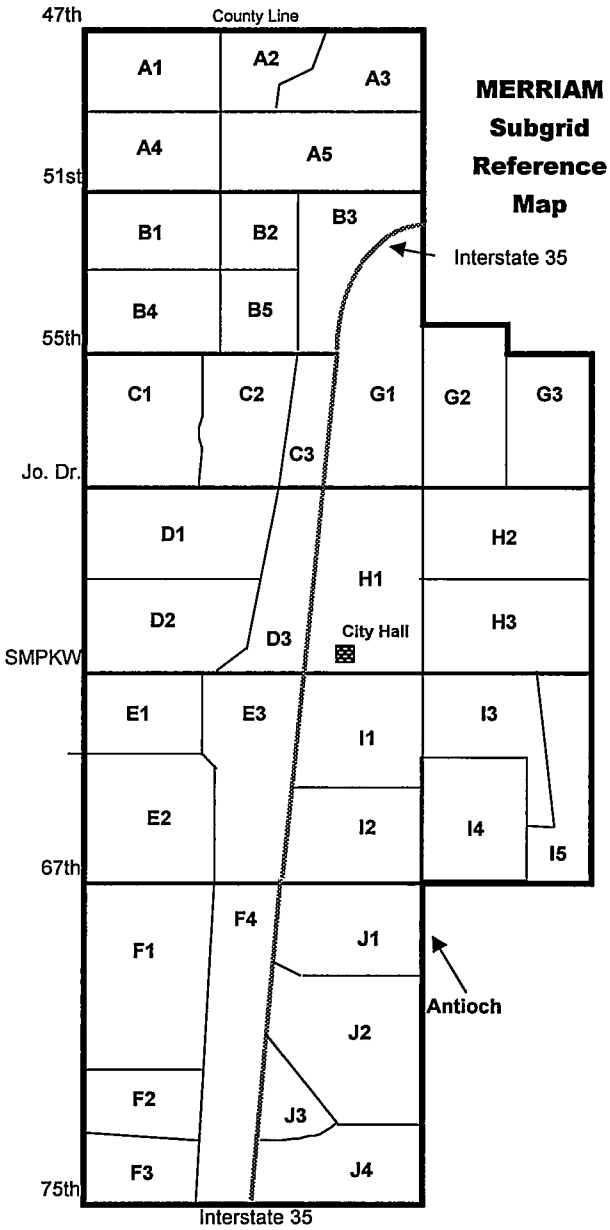
Arson at Cinemark Theatres

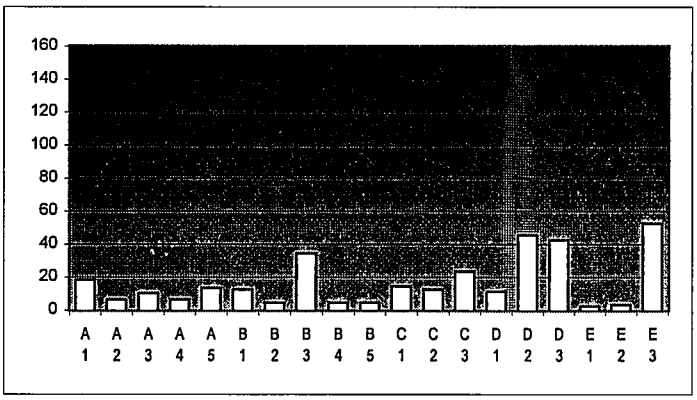


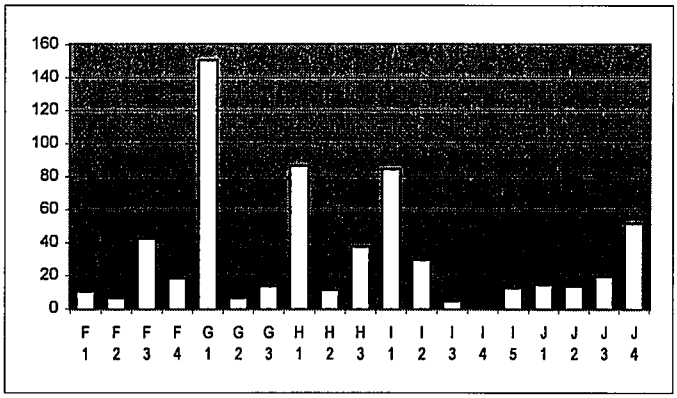
Part One Crimes / 1999
By Location

Grid	1996	1997	1998	1999
A1	33	49	27	18
A2	16	13	10	6
A3	13	18	18	10
A4	21	18	9	6
A5	90	52	26	13
B1	60	45	20	12
B2	17	20	4	4
B3	98	56	28	34
B4	13	12	16	4
B5	11	12	7	4
C1	21	11	5	14
C2	17	21	5	12
C3	46	36	25	23
D1	20	28	9	11
D2	91	58	35	45
D3	41	50	68	42
E1	8	1	1	2
E2	3	2	2	3
E3	55	36	38	52

Grid	1996	1997	1998	1999
F1	17	23	10	10
F2	6	5	3	6
F3	65	66	47	42
F4	12	15	21	18
G1	57	20	58	150
G2	23	18	11	6
G3	6	9	1	13
H1	104	105	65	86
H2	25	12	9	11
H3	46	36	25	37
I1	139	168	73	84
I2	37	38	45	29
I3	6	7	1	4
I4	0	0	0	0
I5	9	10	9	12
J1	25	17	12	14
J2	23	28	15	13
J3	32	21	15	19
J4	71	83	48	51



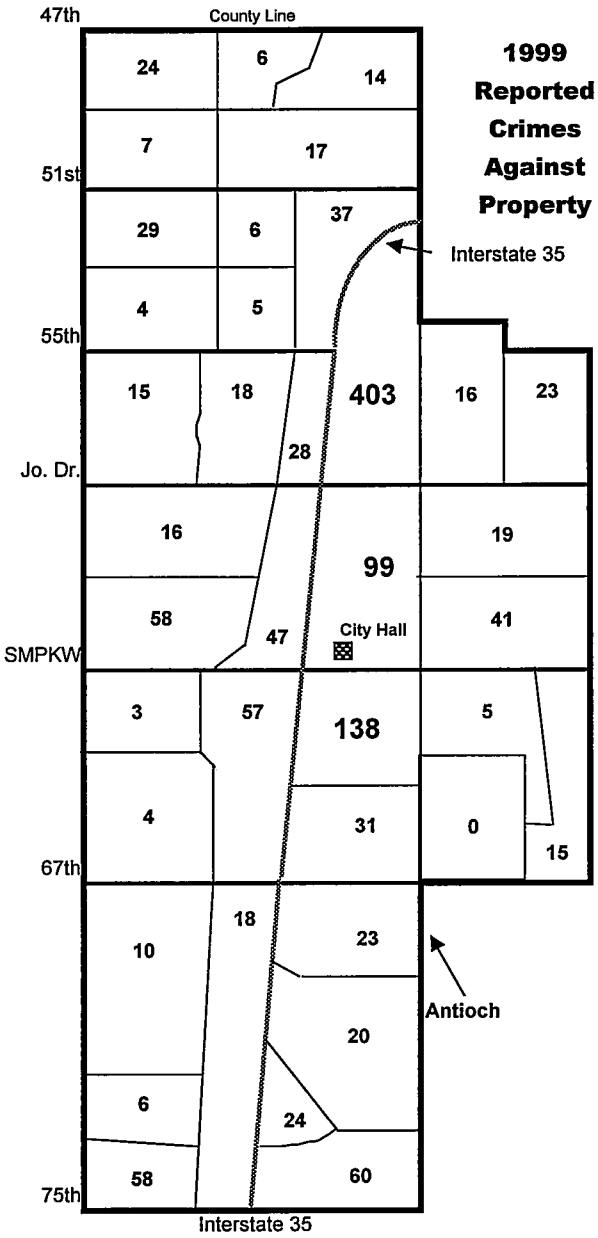




Reported Crimes 1999

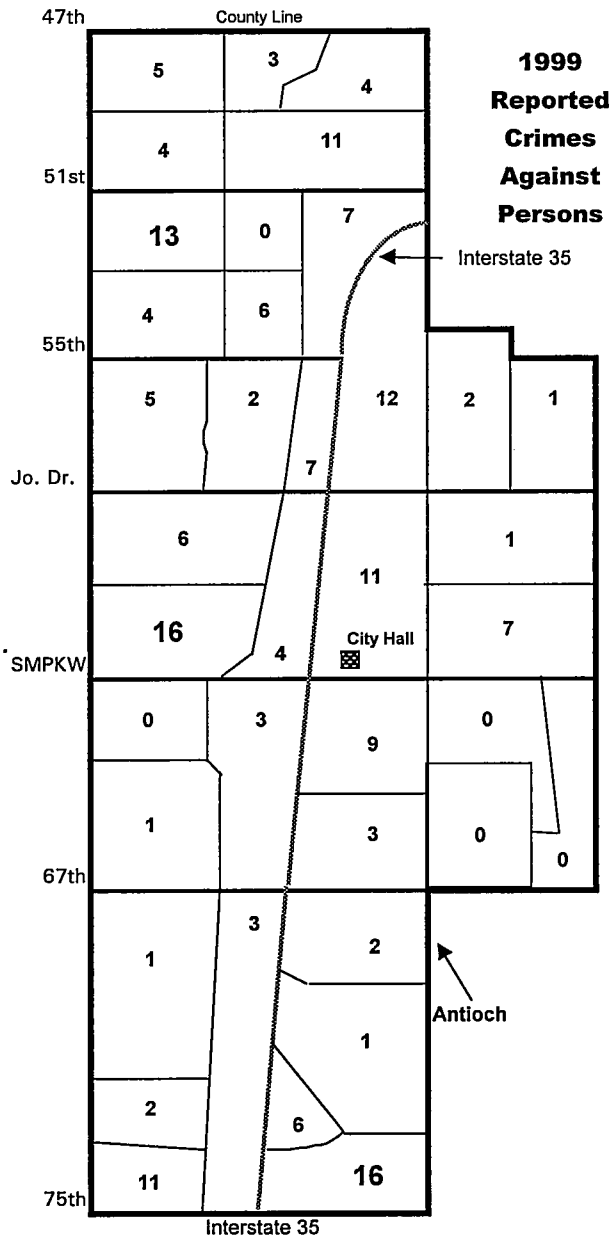
Annual Report *** Merriam Police *** Annual Report *** Merriam Police *** Annual Report *** Merriam Police

TYPE OF CRIME	1997	1998	1999	TYPE OF CRIME	1997	1998	1999
Aggravated Arson	0	1	1	Forgery	53	131	289
Arson	5	4	2	Furnishing Alcohol or CMB to Minor	1	7	2
Aggravated Assault	21	19	9	Habitual Traffic Violator	10	19	16
Aggravated Battery	16	12	14	Harassment by Phone	34	37	47
Aggravated Burglary	11	10	4	Murder	0	1	1
Aggravated Sodomy	0	1	1	Indecent Liberties with a Child	1	2	1
Aggravated Indecent Liberties	2	2	3	Indecent Solicitation of a Child	0	0	2
Aggravated Kidnapping	0	3	1	Interference with Parental Custody	1	0	0
Aggravated Robbery	5	7	6	Intimidation of a Victim/Witness	0	1	0
Aggravated Sexual Battery	1	1	1	Kidnapping	0	2	0
Assault	0	5	3	Lewd and Lascivious Behavior	3	4	3
Attempted Murder	0	0	1	Littering	5	3	3
Attempted Theft	0	0	5	Minor in Possession of Alcohol	6	12	10
Battery	118	104	99	Obstructing Legal Process	14	17	17
Burglary to Auto	161	187	162	Perscription Fraud	3	3	9
Burglary to Business	19	32	22	Possession of Controlled Substance	56	42	77
Burglary to Residence	41	52	38	Possession of Drug Paraphernalia	1	7	9
Burglary to Storage Area	25	22	10	Possession of Drug / Intent of Sale	0	0	4
Child In Need Of Care	38	25	19	Possession of Stolen Property	5	8	13
Child Abuse	0	3	0	Possession of Tobbaco/Minor	0	0	4
Computer Trespass	3	0	1	Prostitution	0	0	1
Criminal Damage - Felony	22	24	30	Rape	7	9	6
Criminal Damage - Misdemeanor	106	101	111	Robbery	4	4	3
Criminal Deprivation of Property	11	15	2	Sexual Battery	1	2	7
Criminal Discharge of a Weapon	5	6	0	Theft of Lost of Mislaid Property	10	31	46
Criminal Threats	26	29	20	Theft of Services	2	11	11
Criminal Trespass	14	16	12	Theft of Auto	98	72	115
Criminal Use of a Financial Card	4	5	5	Theft of Auto (Attempted)	12	5	9
Criminal Use of a Weapon	5	1	4	Theft - Felony	67	60	86
Cruelty to Animals	0	1	2	Theft - Misdemeanor	364	316	369
Disorderly Conduct	66	53	43	Truancy	3	0	0
Disturbing the Peace	0	0	0	Violation of a Court Protection Order	11	7	13
Escape From Custody	0	2	0	Worthless Check	2	2	0
Falsely Reporting a Crime	0	1	1	Other Crimes Not Listed Above	0	0	7
False Writing	0	0	6	Open	0	0	0
TOTAL OF CRIMES REPORTED PER YEAR					1499	1559	1818



1999 Reported Crimes Against Property

City of Merriam, Kansas
Sub-Grid Maps



1999 Reported Crimes Against Persons

These two Merriam maps illustrate crimes that were reported by victims in Merriam.

The top map illustrates the number of "property" crimes, including burglaries, thefts, forgeries, frauds and vandalisms.

The bottom map illustrates the number of "persons" crimes, which include murder, rapes, robberies, assaults and batteries.

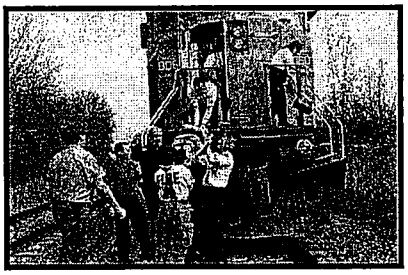
NOTE: Some minor crimes such as disorderly conduct are not represented on these maps.

Critical Incidents 1999

INTRODUCTION:

Each year, officers of the Merriam Police Department respond to over 15,000 incidents ranging from motorist assists and animal control calls to aggravated assaults, kidnapping and deaths. This is the second year that the Annual Report features the "Top Ten Critical Incidents" of the year. These incidents are listed in chronological order as they occurred in 1999.

#1 April 2 – Juvenile Suicide Attempt, Railroad Tracks, Rear of Hampton Suites



A despondent 16-year-old female decided to stand in front of an oncoming train in order to commit suicide. As a slow-moving train approached, the girl decided instead to lie down across the tracks. The engineer spotted the girl and immediately applied heavy brakes. Unfortunately the 130-car coal train could not stop in time and the train struck the girl. When the train finally stopped, the engineer found the girl climbing up the ladder to the engine compartment. There she awaited medical personnel. The train's snow plow rolled the girl several times and kept her from being ran over. She suffered contusions, bruises and scrapes, but was otherwise OK.

#2 April 10 – Homicide / Suicide in the 6400 block of Craig Street

The city's first and only homicide occurred when a 59-year-old woman was murdered by a 43-year-old live-in acquaintance after a short argument. A neighbor, working in his yard across the street, heard four gunshots and ran to the home to investigate. The neighbor opened the screen door and found the woman with four gunshots to the back. Immediately upon making this discovery he heard another shot coming from inside the home. The neighbor ran back to his home and called the police. The responding officers found the murderer near death with a self-inflicted head wound. The suspect died two hours later at KU Medical Center.

#3 May 8 – Attempted Carjacking and Aggravated Battery at Reike's Landing

A 21-year-old woman was approached in the parking lot of Reike's Landing during the evening hours by a 39-year-old male stranger. The man attempts to steal her car, but the woman resists and is stabbed in the side with a knife. The bar bouncers observe the commotion and approach, but are threatened by the armed man. He runs from the lot and is observed by a Merriam officer who is driving by on routine patrol in the area. He is chased into the Turkey Creek / Brown Park area, where he tries to hide himself by submerging in the creek water. Officers locate the man and drag him out of the creek and place him under arrest. The knife was found nearby. Luckily the victim's wounds were not serious.

#4 May 21 – Armed Robbery Pursuit in the Shawnee / Merriam / Overland Park areas

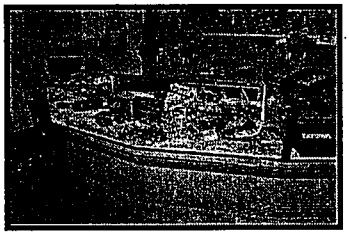
Merriam officers joined in with Shawnee officers in a police pursuit involving a stolen truck, suspected in a Shawnee bank robbery that had just occurred. The chase came into Merriam at 67th and Mastin, where it proceeded to Antioch, then to Shawnee Mission Parkway, and then on Hadley to 61st and then into Overland Park. The Merriam officers discontinued the pursuit when Mission officers joined in on Metcalf. A short distance further on I-35, the suspect vehicle struck at least 5 other cars before wrecking. Three vehicles were totaled and the three drivers injured. No Merriam officers were involved in this portion of the pursuit.

#5 May 27 – Aggravated Assault / DUI in the 6100 block of Merriam Dr.

A woman, driving drunk, southbound on Merriam Drive, hits a light pole at 61st. The woman did not stop and continued for one block where she hit another car head on, causing minor damage. The woman stopped briefly when an uninvolved witness approached her and reached inside the car in an attempt to take the car keys (due to her extreme

intoxication). The woman then pulled a handgun from her purse and pointed it at the witness and then ordered him to back away. He complied and the woman drove away, southbound, on three tires. The responding patrol officer drove on the scene as the woman was leaving. The witness informed the officer about the woman with the gun and the officer began following the woman with his emergency equipment activated. The woman stopped in the 10400 block of Shawnee Mission Parkway (Shawnee) where she was arrested without incident.

#6 June 10 – Business Burglary, Fastronics, 9910 W. 62nd Terrace

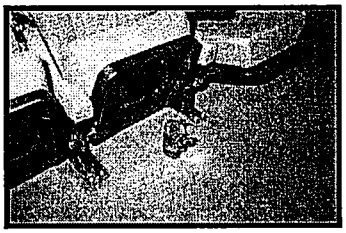


At 2:18 a.m. two business burglars crashed through the plate glass window at the Fastronics business. Once inside they removed several thousands worth of expensive stereo equipment. They were not aware that they were on video camera during the burglary. Merriam detectives contacted the television stations and asked them to run the video of the suspects and ask for the public to get involved. The next day the identity of one of the suspects was verified when an Overland Park detective saw them on TV. The two were tracked down and later arrested by Merriam Police.

#7 June 28 – Heavy Rain and Flooding in the 5100 block of Merriam Drive

During the evening of June 28th, a narrow band of thunderstorms dropped heavy rain causing flooding in the 5100 block of Merriam Drive. The police department assisted the fire department with evacuation of the area. The damage to the businesses was minimal. This was the first time the fire department's new Water Rescue Team was used.

#8 August 20 – Aggravated Arson, Aggravated Criminal Threats at 5500 Antioch, Cinemark



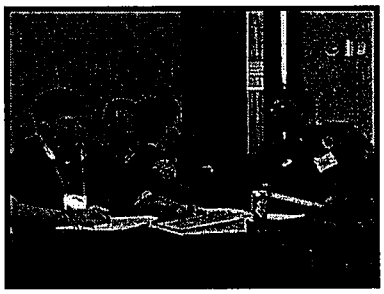
It was a busy Friday evening at the theatres when someone ignited two homemade chemical devices inside one of largest crowded movie theatre. Theatre staff and off-duty police officers safely evacuated the building without much panic. Once evacuated, police and fire units secured the building, collected evidence and the FBI was called. They responded and took over the investigation. Apparently this incident may involve a disgruntled out-of-state labor group that has been setting off similar devices in several states. This matter is still under federal investigation.

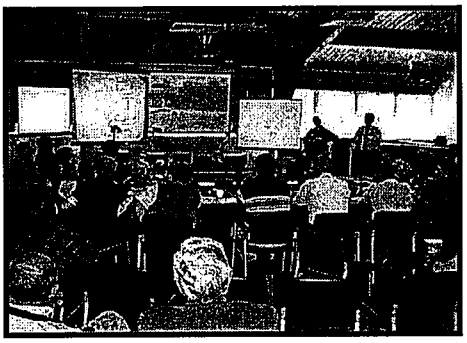
#9 December 12 – Aggravated Burglary, Rape and Kidnapping, in the 5500 block of Farley

A woman was accosted at knife point while at her residence by her ex-boyfriend. She had previously filed a Protection from Abuse Order on the suspect. It was in effect at the time of the crime. Inside the victim's residence, the man beat and raped her and then forced her to her car where they drove around the Metro Area that evening as he continued to assault her. The woman escaped his control the next morning when he brought her home. A warrant was later issued for the suspect along with a metro-wide news alert on the suspect, which was broadcasted on all major television news outlets. The man turned himself in two days later and was held on $1,000,000 bond.

#10 December 31 — Y2K Event

After much preparation the police department was ready for potential problems that might occur as a result of the Y2K celebration. Double shifts were on duty and a command post was set up in the fire department. Activity turned out to be lighter than normal for a New Year's Eve.





During September a city-wide disaster scenario training session was held at City Hall concerning a simulated school shooting incident. This was part one of a two part planning/training session.

Administration 1999

INTRODUCTION:

The administration function of the Merriam Police Department is segregated into three main responsibilities — Personnel, Budget and Professional Standards. While these are all important functions, they are predominately designed to help support the overall mission of the department. The Administration Unit currently consists of the Chief of Police, the Assistant Chief of Police and one Administrative Sergeant. There are also two full-time and one part-time Information Specialists that work in this unit taking care of the clerical needs of the department. The only other employee assigned to the Administration Unit is the DARE / Crime Prevention Officer, who works at the direction of the Chief of Police.

PERSONNEL REPORT:

In 1999, two regular officers resigned from the department. One officer took a police officer job with the Lenexa Police. He had four years experience. The other officer, who had been with the officer less than two years, moved out of state to take a job in the ministry. The department was very fortunate to be able to hire two replacement officers that were state certified. Because of this it was not necessary to send them to the police academy. This saved the city several hundreds of dollars on training and salary. Both of these officers had previous experience working at the Johnson County Sheriff's Department.

In addition to law enforcement experience one of the new officers is a female officer and the other is bilingual (Spanish). This helps our department to be more diverse. Increasing diversity among employees has been a long-time goal, but unfortunately attracting interested and qualified females and minorities has proven to be a huge challenge for law enforcement nationwide.

In 1999 there were three staff officers working in the Administration Unit plus one DARE officer. Two officers are assigned to the Investigations Unit and the remaining 20 officers to work in the Patrol Division. The ratio of staff officer to line officers is low which indicates that a proper majority of the department is dedicated to patrolling the streets of Merriam to improve citizen safety, increase crime prevention and providing an appropriate police response to crimes and other problems as they occur. The ration of police officers to population is also within national standards for a city of our size and configuration.

BUDGET REPORT:

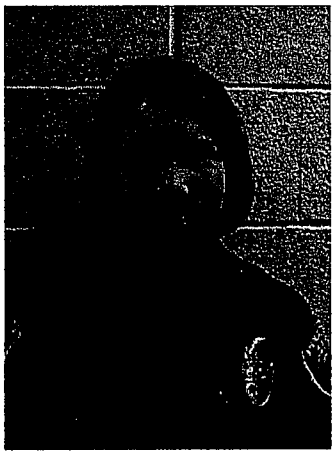
The approved annual budget for the Merriam Police Department for 1999 was $1,505,453. According to the December 1999 Expenditure Report the department finished the year spending only $1,422,720, turning over $82,000 back into the general fund unspent.

OVERTIME COSTS:

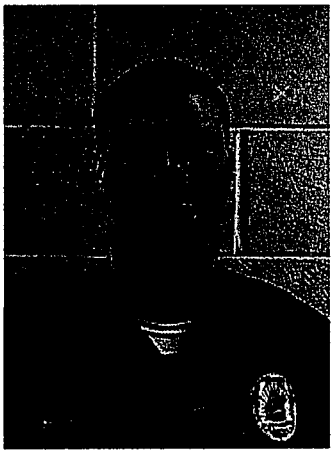
In 1999, Merriam police officers worked **4,771.75** hours of overtime. This represents a **4%** decrease over 1998. The chart on the following page shows the breakdown on overtime costs, department-wide. There are two predominate reasons for the decrease. First, in 1998 four officers were replaced due to turnover. Only two officers left in 1999. The other reason has to do with being a relatively calm year. We did not have the serious crime or bad weather that was experienced the year before.

The Administration is always looking for ways to cut down the hours of overtime without sacrificing services to the citizens. Officers are allowed to use flextime when possible to offset overtime. In the 1998 Annual Report it was predicted that the overtime rate would start to drop as our new officers become fully trained and more competent in their work. This prediction has come true.

New Officers Hired in 1999



Officer Melinda Copeland



Officer Robert Holland

1999 OVERTIME COMPARISON CHART

OVERTIME REASON	1998	1999
COURT	551.25	486.75
TRAINING	757.75	652.75
REPLACEMENT	668.25	781.50
REPORTS	488.50	349.75
HOLIDAY	1333	1672
LATE CALL	197.50	178.75
INVESTIGATIONS	498.25	229.00
OTHER OVERTIME	483.75	422.25

PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS:

One of the assigned functions of the Assistant Chief is to conduct internal investigations when necessary. He is also charged with making sure that proper procedures are followed by all officers.

There are three categories of incidents that the department takes very seriously. These categories include: 1) officer complaints; 2) vehicle pursuits; and 3) use of force incidents.

Officer Complaints: When a citizen makes an official complaint against an officer it is documented and investigated by the officer's supervisor. If the complaint is serious in nature or can not be resolved by the supervisor, it is forwarded to the office of the Assistant Chief. He conducts the investigation and concludes by forwarding the results with a recommendation to the Police Chief. During 1999 there were no serious officer complaints investigated. Minor complaints were either unfounded or resolved to the satisfaction of the complaining party.

Vehicle Pursuits: The department has a very strict vehicle pursuit policy. When an officer engages in a pursuit it is closely monitored by the on-duty supervisor. They have direct authority to discontinue a pursuit at any time. ALL vehicle pursuits are investigated by the on-duty supervisor and the Assistant Chief to make sure they are in strict compliance with written department policy.

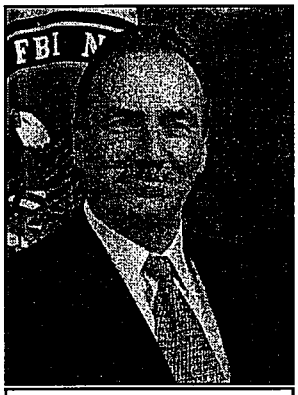
During 1999 there were **5** police pursuits involving Merriam officers. All of these pursuits were found to be in compliance with department pursuit policy except one. In that case the officer was properly counseled. None of the pursuits involved accidents or vehicle damage.

Use of Force Incidents: As with pursuits, officers are required to report all use of force incidents. A specific report is used that details the circumstances that led up to the force incident. It also documents the amount of force used and the results. All of these reports are reviewed by the on-duty supervisor and forwarded to the Administration Unit where they are reviewed by the Assistant Chief and ultimately the Chief of Police.

During 1999 there were **22** incidents where an officer had to use force to effect an arrest which represents an increase over 1998 in which there were only 13 reported cases of use of force. The number of use of force incidents is extremely low when it is compared to the fact that the department made **1,151** arrests in 1999. The increase in incidents is due to a change of reporting. Now all incidents where an officer draws his or her weapon are now reported as use of force incidents. These were not reported on this form in 1998.

NOTE: The Merriam Police Department has an excellent record of near litigation-free operations. It is probably among the lowest in the Kansas City Metro area, for cities of similar size or larger. It has been over 20 years since a Merriam police officer has been involved in a situation that required them to fire their weapon.

FBI NATIONAL ACADEMY:



Asst. Chief Bill Lietzke

It is important for every police agency to prepare their employees for their next possible promotion. Training a possible replacement is the obligation of every police administrator. This will ensure that someone is qualified to take over in case something should happen.

During spring 1999, the Merriam Police Department got an opportunity to send Assistant Chief Bill Lietzke to the prestigious FBI National Academy in Quantico, Virginia. This academy took 12 weeks to complete and involved training in various up-to-date police tactics and the current administrative philosophy needed by contemporary police chiefs and commanders. On June 25, 1999, Bill Lietzke became the first Merriam officer to ever graduate from this academy. This training was provided at no cost to the citizens of Merriam other than airfare and salary.

Patrol Statistics 1999

PATROL DIVISION:

Patrol is the largest unit of the police department. Twenty officers or 76.9% of the commissioned force are assigned to patrol the streets, respond to calls for service and proactively enforce the laws of the state and city. The majority of the police department's work is done by these officers.

CALLS FOR SERVICE:

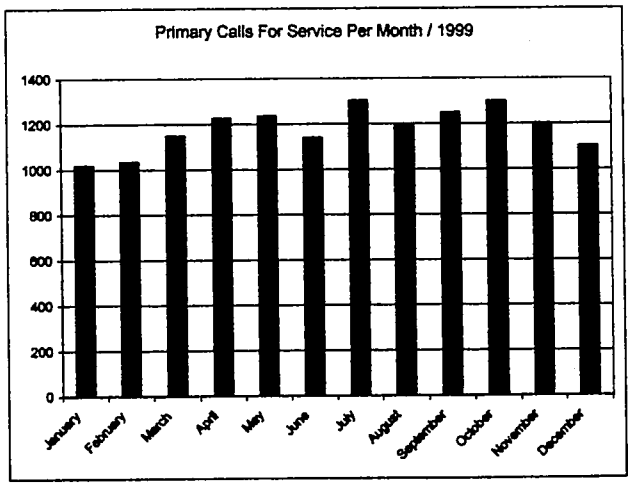
For the most part, police service is driven by the calls received from citizens and businesses. Each year the number of these calls for service varies due to weather, changing crime trends or even the style of policing.

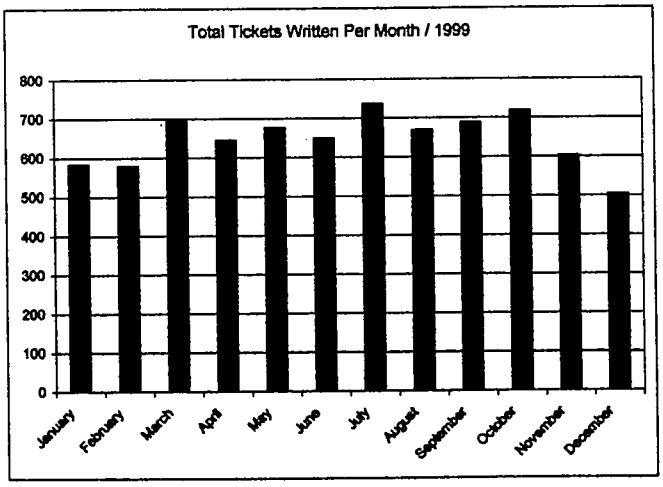
The Merriam Police Department has been involved in Community Policing since 1993. One of the by-products of this philosophy involves a strengthened relationship between the police and the general public. This will result in increased cooperation that will many times increase the number of calls for police service. As the public becomes more accountable for problems in their neighborhoods, the more they involve the police at an earlier stage of problem development, which can result in an increase in police calls for service. Suspicious activities are more likely to be reported when there is increased cooperation and trust between the police and the public.

In 1999 the Merriam Police Department experienced a 11.7% increase in calls for service over 1998. Patrol responded to 18,824 primary and backup calls for service. Below is a breakdown on the number of calls for service in the past few years:

Year	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999
Calls	18959	18152	17992	17049	15253	14964	16629	18824

1999 Annual Report	Total Shifts	Primary Call Total	Total Reports	Traffic Stops	Moving Violations	Non-Mov Violations	Total Tickets	Rpt Writ. Minutes	Out of Serv. Minutes
January	318	1017	458	498	330	253	583	14255	33205
February	277	1033	449	501	379	199	578	14545	31375
March	319.5	1148	454	587	448	247	695	15950	30700
April	304	1226	479	522	381	264	645	15620	35251
May	299.5	1235	528	526	418	258	676	16680	33990
June	282.5	1138	491	507	415	233	648	15845	33470
July	311.5	1302	528	581	456	281	737	16085	36345
August	293.5	1193	518	501	389	280	669	17935	33711
September	315.5	1248	473	512	420	268	688	16300	37605
October	345	1299	495	510	446	272	718	16080	36225
November	301	1200	477	439	361	241	602	15920	29550
December	292	1101	467	423	298	205	503	17025	28930
1999 TOTALS	3659	14140	5817	6107	4741	3001	7742	192240	400357
1998 TOTALS	3617	12833	5945	5611	4181	2678	6859	203720	338699
Difference 98/99	**1%**	**10%**	**-2%**	**9%**	**13%**	**12%**	**13%**	**-6%**	**18%**





AN AVERAGE PATROL SHIFT:

There is an average of four officers per shift throughout the year. This will include one supervisor and three regular officers. The average police officer drives 47.7 miles during his or her tour of duty. In total, police officers drove 174,597 miles on patrol.

Each day a shift of officers can expect to handle 17 calls for service. These calls will generate an average of 1 arrest and 4 offense, accident or incident reports. The report writing alone will take an officer out of service for an average of 2 hours and 50 minutes of their eight-hour shift. The average officer will also write 2 traffic tickets per shift.

REPORT WRITING:

One of the most underestimated aspect of policing is the amount of paperwork that is required. A patrol officer will spend a significant portion of his or her time writing police reports. The amount of time will vary from day-to-day, depending on the number of calls for service received and the type of activities that may require a report. A log is kept listing the number of minutes spent writing reports during the shift. This data is used to evaluate officer efficiency and report writing proficiency.

The most common types of police reports are:

Report Type	*Percent of Total Reports*
Offense	***37.6%***
Arrest	***23.7%***
Accident	***18.7%***
Other Incident	***20%***

In 1999, Merriam officers spent **3,204** hours writing police reports, representing a **5.3%** decrease from 1998. As a result, **3,878** new case files were created. This is the fourth year that officers are typing reports on the computer. During 1999, in-car laptop computers were installed in all marked patrol cars and reports are now being typed in the car, where officers can respond to calls for service more often from the car. This may have been contributory to the decline in report writing times.

SELF-INITIATED ACTIVITIES and RANDOM PATROL:

An officer's self-initiated activity is measured in four categories:

- Patrol miles driven per shift;
- Number of arrests made;
- Traffic enforcement; and
- Completion of special assignments.

Patrol Miles:

In 1999, police officers in Merriam drove a total of **174,597** miles patrolling the streets. This represents an **13.4%** increase in the number of miles driven, compared to 1998. Each year citizens and business owners give many complementary remarks on the department's high patrol visibility. This visibility has increased the feeling of security by residents and businesses, and has contributed to the reduction of some types of crimes.

Traffic Enforcement:

In 1998, Merriam police officers issued **7,742** traffic tickets to motorists. This number represents a **13%** increase, compared to 1998. This increase is mainly due to the department being at greater strength in 1999.

Arrests:

In 1999 the Merriam Police Department made **1,151** arrests. This represented a slight **(2.3%)** increase over 1998. Of the arrests made, **42%** were for felony, misdemeanor or traffic charges and the remaining **58%** were for outstanding municipal and district court failure to appear warrants. During the year **43** persons were arrested for domestic violence related crimes. Out of **1,151** arrests there were only **22** cases where a Merriam officer had to use force. This is an excellent arrest / use of force ratio.

An arrest breakdown is listed below.

FELONY ARRESTS	***68 or 6%***
MISDEMEANOR ARRESTS	***278 or 24%***
TRAFFIC ARRESTS	***138 or 12%***
WARRANT ARRESTS	***667 or 58%***

Court Amnesty Program:

During the month of June the Municipal Court and the police department worked on a joint program that granted amnesty to those persons with city warrants. This program was advertised in the media. The court mailed out 270 letters to persons with warrants. As a result of the letters and the media campaign, 48 persons surrendered themselves on city warrants. Over $1,000 in fine money was collected immediately, with more to come later through deferred payments. This program cleared up 4.8% of the total number of warrants.

Vehicle Accidents 1999

INTRODUCTION:

One of the fundamental duties of any police department is to investigate motor vehicle accidents. The City of Merriam has 66 miles of roadway within its borders; of that, roughly 3 miles consist of interstate highway. According to the County Economic Research Institute, Inc. (CERI), "*An average of 142,630 vehicles pass along Interstate 35 (both northbound and southbound) south of the interchange at 75th Street on an average weekday. This is the highest traffic volume at any location in the county.*" Also listed in the same study is the intersection of Shawnee Mission Parkway and Antioch. Over 50,000 cars use this intersection on an average weekday.

With the types of roadways that run through Merriam, coupled with the high number of businesses and general drive-through traffic, the problem of traffic accidents is a full-time challenge for the department.

ACCIDENT RATES:

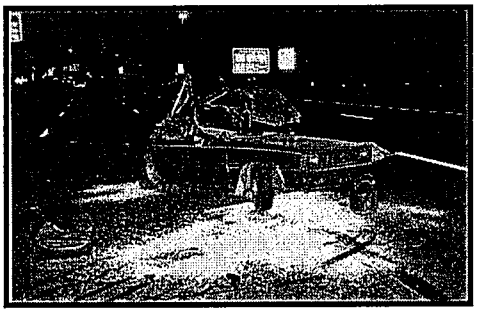
In 1999, **908** accident reports were written by the Merriam Police Department. This represents a **4.3%** decrease in accidents over 1998.

There were three fatality accidents that occurred in 1999. The first fatality accident occurred January 30th on I-35. This was a head-on collision at high speed. One driver was killed instantly and the other was critically injured. The second accident occurred September 2nd when an intoxicated motorist, driving the wrong direction on I-35, was struck by another motorist. The second motorist was only slightly injured. These two accidents were worked by the Kansas Highway Patrol. The third accident occurred on November 22nd when a motorist had a massive heart attack while behind the wheel. He was driving through the intersection on Johnson Drive at the I-35 off ramp. His car drove over a median at a slow speed and ended up in the field near the off ramp. This accident was investigated by MPD and luckily no one else was involved in this accident.

In reviewing the streets and highways that are considered high-traffic locations, there were notable increases on Interstate 35 for the second year in a row. There was also marked decreases of accidents on Johnson Drive, and 75th Street. Mild weather and the lack of significant construction have contributed to this decline.

MERRIAM STREETS WITH THE HIGHEST ACCIDENT RATES:

SHAWNEE MISSION PARKWAY
Total Accidents = 145 (1998 = 143)
JOHNSON DRIVE
Total Accidents = 88 (1998 = 114)
INTERSTATE 35
Total Accidents = 143 (1998 = 131)
ANTIOCH ROAD
Total Accidents = 42 (1998 = 63)
75TH STREET
Total Accidents = 76 (1998 = 93)
MERRIAM DRIVE
Total Accidents = 41 (1998 = 38)
67TH STREET
Total Accidents = 26 (1998 = 27)
TOTAL ACCIDENTS
City Wide = 908 (1998 = 954)
PRIVATE PROPERTY ACCIDENTS
Total Accidents = 153 (1998 = 121)
ALCOHOL RELATED ACCIDENTS
Total Accidents = 33 (1998 = 18)



Fatality accident that occurred on September 2nd near 67th and I-35. The driver was pronounced dead on the scene. Other motorist slightly injured. Extrication by Med-Act and Merriam Fire Department. Accident investigated by Kansas Highway Patrol.

This photo shows Med-Act and Merriam Firefighters attempting medical rescue of a 69-year-old driver that had a massive heart attack while driving west on Johnson Drive at I-35. The car drove off the road, across a median barrier and stopped in a field near I-35. Accident was investigated by Merriam Police

Traffic Enforcement 1999

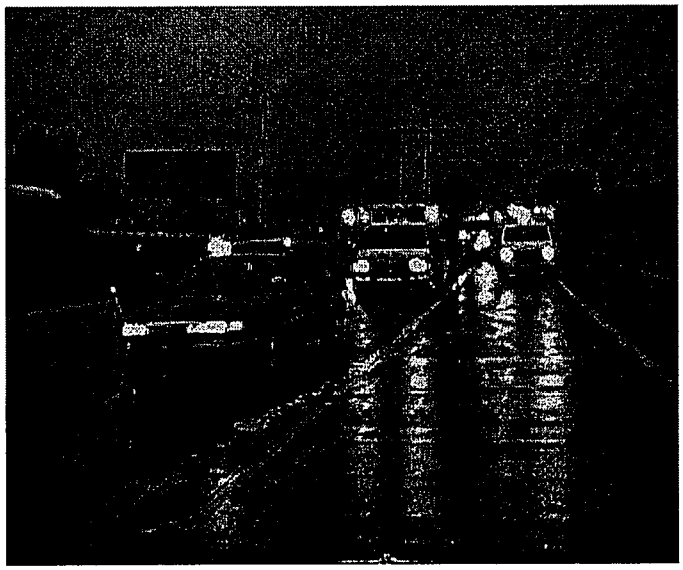
INTRODUCTION:

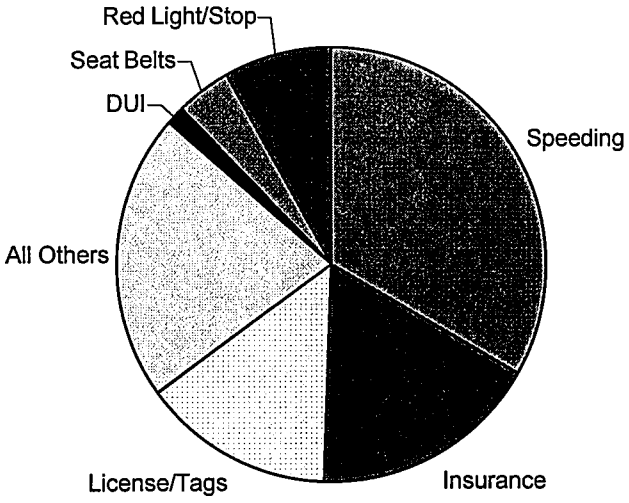
Traffic enforcement has always been a large part of the everyday duties of a Merriam Police Officer. Statistics and studies have shown that when more traffic enforcement is done, there is a reduction of accidents. Other recent studies have also shown that crime rates in general will decrease when officers are out stopping motorist violators. Many high profile cases were solved by an officer making routine traffic stops. The following graphs illustrate the level of enforcement activities in Merriam.

TRAFFIC STANDARDS:

For the past five years there has been a minimum traffic violation standard in existence. Each officer is expected to write at least two tickets per shift and 50% of the tickets written should be for moving violations. This standard was adopted in conjunction with the Community Policing Philosophy. During many public meetings residents have complained about the problem of traffic violators in their neighborhoods. They routinely request that officers run radar, enforce stop signs, etc.

MONTH	Assorted Speeding	Stop Sign	Drunk Driving	No Insurance	Expired or No Tags	No Drivers License	All Traffic Signal	No Seat Belts	Assorted Parking	All Others	Monthly Totals
January	193	23	8	126	57	43	25	29	14	65	583
February	219	27	13	98	43	36	33	21	18	70	578
March	269	31	11	132	39	43	20	22	18	110	695
April	252	20	10	154	54	28	24	27	4	72	645
May	260	27	10	122	42	41	20	45	19	90	676
June	244	32	8	134	38	40	32	27	15	78	648
July	296	22	12	159	60	43	18	41	32	54	737
August	245	21	13	145	71	33	29	35	25	52	669
September	247	26	10	138	65	38	24	29	54	57	688
October	224	21	13	139	69	50	68	24	34	76	718
November	210	21	6	106	56	40	29	29	16	89	602
December	188	18	11	116	54	27	15	13	9	52	503
Totals 1999	2847	289	125	1569	648	462	337	342	258	865	7742
Totals 1998	2571	268	122	1352	643	456	359	131	107	734	6743
Difference	***11%***	***8%***	***2%***	***16%***	***1%***	***1%***	***-7%***	***261%***	***214%***	***18%***	***13%***





Investigations Unit 1999

INTRODUCTION:

The Investigations Unit is comprised of two full-time investigators. The lead investigator is an experienced corporal and the other investigator is a regular police officer, on a one-year assignment from patrol. The unit supervisor is the Assistant Chief of Police, who assigns cases and is responsible for day-to-day unit operations.

The lead investigator is assigned to the unit on a permanent basis. Permanency allows this officer to become proficient in all types of criminal investigations, and make all the necessary contacts to make his or her job more effective. The second officer is assigned to investigations for one year. This allows one officer per year to get away from the normal patrol duties and learn new police skills. The officers assigned to this unit are required to be independent and reliable. There is very little supervision of their daily activities due to the nature of their assignment.

In addition to the two full-time investigators there is a group of officers that are trained as evidence technicians. They work normal patrol shifts. If a crime is reported that requires evidence recovery, these specially-trained officers are called to assist. This keeps us from calling out investigators and reduces overtime. It also helps by cross-training officers in different skill areas.

DETECTIVE UNIT SUMMARY FOR 1999

This year the Investigative Unit followed up ***653** cases. This is an **88%** increase over 1998. Of those cases, **174** were cleared with an arrest, charges in district court, or by exception. This equates to a 26.6% clearance rate.

The investigators and assistant investigators were called out **44** times (twice the number from 1998). The unit worked a total of **201** hours of overtime.

1999 Assigned Cases:

291	Forgeries	92	Thefts
58	Burglaries	28	Batteries
22	Stolen Autos	17	Criminal Damages
16	Phone Harassment	14	Sex Offenses
12	Criminal Threats	11	Hit and Run
8	Deaths	7	Rapes
7	Robberies	5	SRS Child Cases
4	Disorderly Cases	3	Assaults
3	Credit Card Cases	2	Missing Persons
1	Trespass Case	1	Murder
1	Attempted Murder	1	Weapons Violation
1	Kidnapping	1	Arson
1	Blackmail	1	Computer Trespass

** These numbers include cases held over from 1998.* There are also some cases that are still currently open and are not included. This will account for any differences between the listed totals.

REASON FOR INCREASE IN 1999:

The increase in the number of cases handled by investigations can be attributed to two factors. The first is the dramatic increase in reported forgeries. The second is the implementation of the Special Assignment Officer. The Special Assignment Officer is basically a uniformed detective assigned to Merriam's retail centers. He is responsible for patrolling and investigating all reports taken from businesses in the retail areas. He has investigated a majority of the forgery cases listed above. This takes a big load off the Investigators and gives better service to businesses.

METRO SQUAD SYSTEM:

The police department has been a member of the Kansas City Area Metro Squad for many years. This squad was designed to assist small metro-area cities when they have to investigate a homicide. These cities can request the Metro Squad and within 24 hours, a dozen or more specially-trained and experienced detectives will respond and launch an intensive and focused investigation. This system has proven to be very effective in investigating homicides and has been used as a model in many other metropolitan areas of the country. Nearly every homicide that Merriam has had over the past 20 years has been investigated by the Metro Squad. Our department currently has seven officers that are trained to work on the Metro Squad. Fortunately there were no Merriam cases in 1999 where the Metro Squad had to be activated.

1999 High Profile Case Synopsis

Case # 98-1927

On July 29, 1998, a young woman was a passenger in a 1998 Toyota which was northbound on I-35. A rock was thrown from East Frontage Rd and came crashing through the windshield hitting her in the face. She required 9.5 hours of surgery and 48 microscopic screws to put her forehead back together. With the help of a TIPS Hotline call, a suspect was developed in August of 1999. When the investigation concluded, the suspect, a 14-year-old boy, was charged with aggravated battery and his mother was charged with aggravated intimidation of a witness. The case is still pending.

Case # 99-0244

On January 28, 1999, a homeless man called the Merriam Police Department and reported that he was being paid to cash forged checks. The multi-jurisdictional investigation that followed resulted in the arrest of two men from Texas. The two men were charged in federal court with forging more than $170,000 worth of checks in several states. They plead guilty and were sentenced to prison.

Case # 99-1024

On April 10, 1999 the Merriam Police Department responded to a shooting call. When they arrived they found a woman who was shot several times and a man with a fatal gunshot to the head. The investigation that followed revealed that the man had shot and killed the woman. The murderer was renting a room from the woman and wanted to be romantically involved with her. Her refusal was the motive for the murder/suicide.

Case # 99-1314

On May 8, 1999, a Kansas City, Kansas, woman was stabbed and had her car stolen while she was at Reike's Landing. The suspect was chased on foot and apprehended. The investigations unit was called and interviews of witnesses and the suspect were conducted. The suspect was charged with aggravated robbery.

Case # 99-1512

On May 24, 1999, a mildly retarded 21-year-old girl from Kansas City, Missouri reported that she was raped in the Antioch Hills Apartments. A search warrant was obtained for the apartment and evidence was collected. The 56-year-old suspect was charged and arrested. This case is currently being decided in court.

Case # 99-1834

On June 17, 1999, a 10-year-old boy reported that his grandfather was sexually abusing him at his apartment in the Kings Cove Apartments. The boy was interviewed at the child advocacy center, Sunflower House, and a search warrant for the apartment was obtained which led to charges against the grandfather. With the amount of evidence from the apartment and the recorded interview, the suspect decided to plead guilty as charged and was sentenced to serve 20 years in prison. He could have faced a possible 80-year sentence without a plea in this case.

Case # 99-2570 and # 99-2625

In August of 1999, two Kansas City, Kansas, teenagers reported that they were sexually assaulted by a man at the Georgetown Athletic Club. During the investigation it was learned that an employee of the club had enticed the girls by paying them to help him clean and by letting them use the hot tub and other equipment. The man is currently in the Johnson County Jail waiting his trial.

Case # 99-2632

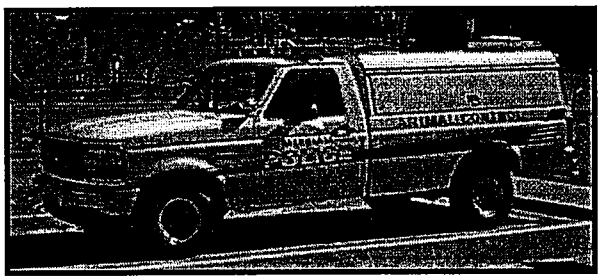
On September 4, 1999, a dark blue BMW 528 was stolen from Baron BMW. Detective Duvanel developed a suspect and recovered the car. In the process the detective developed a system of solving several cases where expensive luxury cars were stolen and licensed in Missouri. He was able to identify these cars in the computer system. Numerous cars from several jurisdictions were identified and recovered.

Animal Control 1999

INTRODUCTION:

The function of animal control has been a responsibility for the Merriam Police Department for many years. The Merriam Police Department has one full-time employee that is assigned to take care of all animal related problems. Handling these problems requires special training and equipment. It is a difficult and technical job requiring special skills. The current employee assigned to Animal Control has over 19 years of municipal animal control experience.

ACO ACTIVITY SUMMARY:



During 1999, Animal Control Officer Dave Thomas handled **1,403** requests for service. This number does not include 146 calls that are handled by the patrol officers during those time when the animal control officer is not on duty. The total number of animal calls received in Merriam in 1999 were 1,549.

In 1999 Officer Thomas spent the majority of his time patrolling the city looking for animal problems and violations. At times he has also assisted the department with other non-animal control duties such as filling-in as school crossing guard and working in the police department's front office.

Greater emphasis was placed on routine patrol for stray animals through 1999 which resulted in an increase in enforcement actions and investigations. More patrol miles were driven during the year.

During the summer months of 1999, the Animal Control Officer was assigned to work two weekend days per month to patrol the city parks and neighborhoods for leash law violations. The times worked were varied from mornings to afternoons to maximize effectiveness in patrol.

In March, Officer Dave Thomas attended Level 1 certified training at an Animal Control Academy sponsored by the University of Missouri in Columbia, Mo. He also attended a 3-day seminar in Olathe, Kansas, sponsored by the Kansas Animal Control Association. Several updated animal control techniques were discussed at these training sessions.

2000 UNIT GOALS:

Goal #1 – During 2000 the animal control officer will spend more time dedicated to the enforcement of animal ordinances.

Goal #2 – There will be more emphasis placed on public education and voluntary compliance of animal related ordinances.

ANIMAL FACTS

In 1999 there were 643 dogs and 125 cats registered with the City Clerk's Office.

In 1997 there were 547 dogs and 105 cats registered.

Year	1997	1998	1999
Service Requests	1319	1382	1403
Enforcement Actions	197	201	215
Animal Impounds	189	204	197
Investigations	801	837	846
Reports Written	669	702	698
Patrol Miles Driven	9057	8979	9213

Support Services 1999

INTRODUCTION:

In addition to responding to calls for service, working traffic accidents and traffic enforcement, the Merriam Police Department is involved in a number of other functions that directly impact and help to serve the public. A synopsis of these services are listed below.

FINGERPRINTING SERVICES:

Each year there are a number of requests from residents and business persons to be fingerprinted. The Administrative Sergeant provides this function, by appointment, for a small fee. During 1999, fingerprints were taken on a number of persons. Due to the inconvenience and time consumption of this service, it is only provided to Merriam residents or those connected to Merriam businesses.

COLLEGE INTERN PROGRAM:

For the past few years the Merriam Police Department has utilized the services of college students, during the summer months, in the College Intern Program. Our department is affiliated with Kansas University, Kansas State University and Washburn University who periodically provide interested students. During a specified number of weeks the student performs various work assignments at the police department, including clerical or statistical assistance. They are also exposed to various aspects of the police related duties through ride-alongs and other associations.

In 1999, Jason Fisher worked as a college intern. He worked from February 1st through the end of May, donating 12 weeks of quality work at no cost to the citizens of Merriam.

ALARM ORDINANCE MANAGEMENT:

1999 was the fourth full year of the Alarm Ordinance management. During the year, police officers responded to **433** false burglary and robbery alarms. This represents a **2%** decrease over 1998.

A total of **397** individual businesses and homeowners have registered their alarms with the department. 1999 marks the second year in a row that alarm registration has grown by **10%**. It is important to point out that there were fewer false alarms, even though there were more alarm systems in the city. The alarm ordinance and the way it is managed is at least partially responsible.

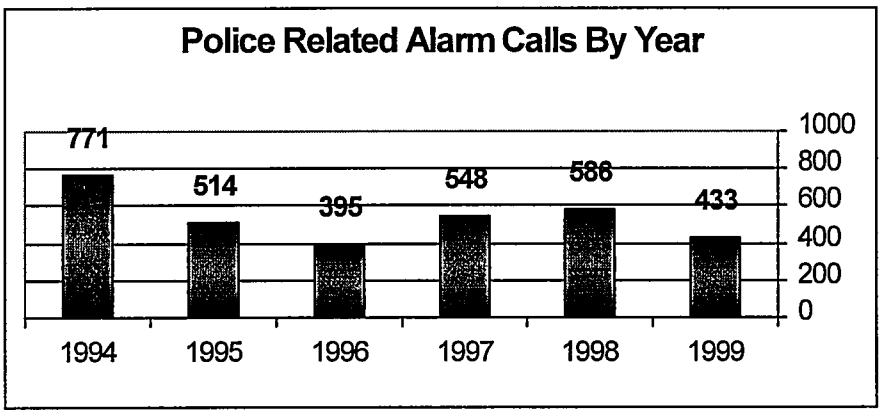
Alarm ordinance fines collected in 1999 totalled **$7,176**. There is an additional $4,364 in uncollected fines for 1999.

The top ten false alarm locations (this includes all alarms, both police and fire) were:

Shawnee Mission Medical Center	47
Aristocrat	20
D&L Auto Body	13
Lee Company	13
Safe Home	13
Mastin House	13
GRA, Inc.	12
Checkers Restaurant	12
School Service, Inc.	09
Wendy's Restaurant	09

1995 = 271 registered alarms

1999 = 397 registered alarms



Community 1999

COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP INTRODUCTION:

1999 marks the seventh year that the Merriam Police Department has been involved in the transition towards Community Policing. This important philosophy has grown in acceptance in nearly every corner of the country because it involves the community in the policing process. Each year the police department is involved in a number of activities that bring officers closer to the community they serve. The rewards for this style of policing are felt in many ways — some measurable, some not. For a more detailed description of Community Policing see the shaded box below.

COMMUNITY POLICING EFFORTS:

The Community Policing philosophy is supported in every level of the Merriam Police Department. Each employee has been trained and is familiar with this philosophy. Each employee is encouraged to look for ways for the department to improve its interaction with the public. This empowerment makes the department more effective.

In addition to the overall practice by employees, the Merriam Police Department engages in a number of specific efforts that promote and support the philosophy of Community Policing.

WHAT IS COMMUNITY POLICING?

- Policing based on a set of established values which reflect beliefs clearly articulated to the community and throughout the department;
- A commitment to problem solving rather than simply responding to each incident as it is reported to the police;
- An increased focus on the city's neighborhoods as a basic level of police service delivery, moving away from specialization toward generalized police service delivery at the neighborhood level;
- Getting the neighborhood and business communities involved in solving the problem of crime in their areas and sharing some of the responsibility for a solution of problems, not just leaving it up to the city to solve problems;
- Increasing the accountability of the police to neighborhood residents; and
- Involving and empowering police employees at the lowest level to problem solve.

COMMUNITY INTERACTION:

During 1999, members of the police department met with a number of residents and the Chamber of Commerce to facilitate communication and partnership.

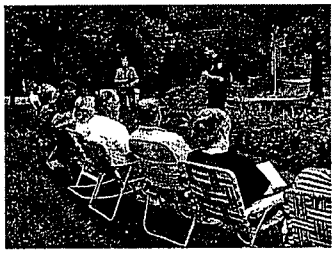
- NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH meetings were held throughout the year during various neighborhood meetings and block parties.
- On August 3rd the Merriam Police Department organized another successful NATIONAL NIGHT OUT event. At this event officers met with residents to help educate them on how to make their homes and neighborhoods safer.

Having an officer or group of officers at these neighborhood functions has helped to improve relations and facilitate communication and cooperation.

The department met with **14** different neighborhoods during the year.

These neighborhoods included:

- ◊ **Sherwood Forrest**
- ◊ **Antioch Hills**
- ◊ **West Vernon Place**
- ◊ **Wellington Woods**
- ◊ **Vernon Place**
- ◊ **Switzer Meadows**
- ◊ **Forest Park**
- ◊ **Edelweiss**
- ◊ **Sunflower Towers**
- ◊ **70th and Switzer area**
- ◊ **65th Drive and Mastin area**
- ◊ **61st Street and Hemlock area**
- ◊ **60th Street and Hardy area**
- ◊ **51st Terrace and Knox area**



Officer Larry Birt talks to group from 70th and Switzer area

Through these efforts the Merriam Police Department reached out to over **400** residents.

RIDE ALONG PROGRAM:

The police department offers a program where interested citizens can ride along with officers in an

effort to bring citizens and officers closer together to bridge some of the communication gaps. This program is also used by a number of high school students as part of a school assignment and by those interested in entering the law enforcement field.

In 1999, **48** citizens were involved in this program. This is a **20%** increase over 1998.

CRIME PREVENTION EFFORTS:

The department has one officer assigned to take care of normal crime prevention needs. General crime prevention requests are handled by this officer. Some of these crime prevention efforts are listed below:

- *SECURITY SURVEY PROGRAM* -Officer Larry Birt is a Certified Crime Prevention Officer. During the year he has completed security surveys on homes and businesses in Merriam. This service is offered free of charge, by appointment, and is designed to provide tips on how to make these facilities more crime resistant..
- *HOUSE WATCH PROGRAM* - For several years the MPD has provided a house watch program for residents who are on vacation. If a resident completes the required house watch form, an officer will check their home each day while they are gone. This increases security for these vacant homes and it gives the residents peace of mind while they are gone, knowing that their property is being watched. In 1999 there were **51** house watch requests in Merriam.

OTHER COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT PROGRAMS:

EXPLORER PROGRAM -

The MPD formed the Explorer Post five years ago. It is made up of young men and women that range from 15 to 20 years of age. They are affiliated with the Boys Scouts of America.

The group was supervised by Patrol Corporal Bob Schluben. They met basically twice per month to learn about police work and provide service to the community. In these meetings they were trained to complete certain tasks that have assisted the police department. Each year they have been very helpful with traffic direction and crowd control during the Turkey Creek Festival.

In 1999, members of the Explorer Post also assisted by being involved in two programs that encouraged compliance of the city's tobacco and alcohol ordinances. On March 10, 1999, Explorer volunteers went to all retail businesses that sold cigarettes. There they attempted to purchase tobacco products from store clerks. Out of the **13** businesses they were able to make purchases at **4** of them. On April 28, 1999, the Explorers went to the **4** liquor stores in Merriam in an attempt to make controlled purchases of alcohol as underage customers. All of the stores were found to be in compliance with the law. This was a very successful campaign that has helped to educate these businesses and cut down on illegal sales to minors.

COMMUNITIES THAT CARE PROCESS -

The Merriam Police Department co-sponsored the "Communities That Care" process in the fall of 1997. Merriam is the first community in Johnson County to be involved in this organized process.

In conjunction with the Regional Prevention Center of Johnson County, representatives of the police department attended a number of meetings in 1999 with the Shawnee Mission Community and Youth Coalition to find ways to address community concerns regarding juvenile related crimes, alcohol and drug abuse. This group is an expanded group that came from the original "Merriam for Merriam" group.

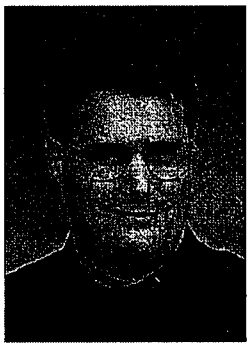
During the summer the Merriam for Merriam group was involved in a new community function named "Family Fun on the Streamway." This activity involved a number of family oriented activities near the Butterfly Garden area of the Streamway Park.

The Merriam for Merriam group with Merriam Police support also sponsored two all-teen swim nights at the Merriam Swimming Pool in an effort to give youth positive activities to be involved in during weekend nights.

The Merriam Police Department is one of the main partners in the SMCYC and Merriam for Merriam groups.

DARE Program 1999

INTRODUCTION:



Officer Larry Birt

The DARE (Drug Abuse Resistance Education) program is an internationally recognized, model program created in 1983 by the Los Angeles Police Department and the Los Angeles School District. It provides students from kindergarten through high school with the skills necessary to recognize and resist pressures to experiment with drugs and to avoid gangs and violence. Lessons emphasize self-esteem, decision making, communication skills, the consequences of drug abuse, conflict resolution and positive alternatives to drugs

Merriam's DARE Program is concentrated on the 6th grade students of the four Merriam elementary schools. This grade level is targeted because studies have shown that children are more likely faced with their toughest decisions about drug and alcohol use during the sixth and seventh grades. The DARE mission is to arm children with as much information as possible during this time, to increase their chances of making the right choices.

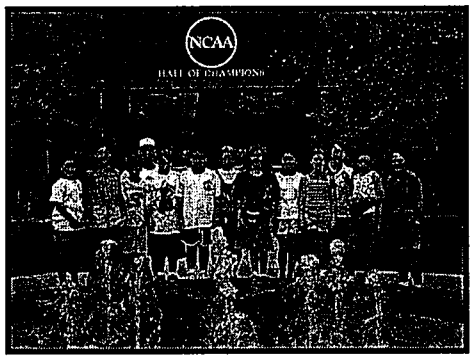
Officer Larry Birt has been assigned as DARE Officer for the past seven years. In full uniform, he conducts a series of structured classes at all four of Merriam's elementary schools. For reasons stated above the primary target group of Merriam's DARE Program is the sixth grade. Each sixth grader receives 17 weeks of specialized instruction. During a majority of the school year Officer Birt spends four days a week in the classroom. In addition to teaching classes, he participates in many recreation activities and often interacts with children during lunch periods. He is involved with the Parent Teacher Associations and attends those and other meetings with teachers and school officials.

DARE ACTIVITY SUMMARY:

1999 was the third year that the department asked the community and the schools to assist in financially supporting this program. The city received approximately **$1,400** from the school PTA's to help off-set the costs of materials and to help support some of the after school functions at the end of the year. In 1999 we received more than **$2,000** from private donations, service clubs and other Merriam businesses.

During the school year, Officer Birt made weekly visits to more than **60** classrooms — kindergarten through sixth grade. He gave classes to more than **1,125** students from South Park, Merriam, Crestview and West Antioch Elementary Schools.

From the four schools more than **165** sixth grade students graduated from the DARE program. In March the police department hosted a skating party for DARE graduates at Skateworld in Merriam. Over **120** graduates were in attendance. The evening was offered to the students to reward them for their hard work in completing the DARE course.



SUMMER CLINIC:

During the summer months the Merriam Police Department sponsored a summer clinic which involved a series of special week-long field trips. This special week-long clinic was targeted for **15** at-risk Merriam children from the fifth and sixth grades. The children were taken on several short field trips in the Kansas City Area including golf at Blue River Golf Academy, visits to the Merriam Community Center, Downtown Airport, Harley Davidson Plant, KC Zoo, KC Museum and Science Center, Sar Ko Par Park, a movie and Worlds of Fun. Officer Birt was assisted in this clinic by community volunteers. The field trips were also sponsored by Merriam Optimists, Merriam Feed and Seed and the Broadway Methodist Church.

DARE ESSAY CONTEST:

Each year the DARE Officer conducts a DARE Essay Contest for all the 6th graders of Merriam. Each student was assigned to write an essay. The best essays from each school were selected. Each of the winners received an award, including savings bonds worth $50 to $200 each. The $200 Best Essay winners for 1999 from each school are listed below:

Crestview: Jennifer Moore

South Park: Dacia Miller

Merriam: Shannon Dobbins

West Antioch: Stacy Thompson