



MERRIAM POLICE
"Proudly Serving Since 1951"

2008
Annual
Report

MERRIAM

Just right.

OFFICERS AT WORK

INTRODUCTION:

Each year Merriam Police Department officers respond to thousands of calls for service ranging from motorist assists to aggravated assaults, rapes and deaths. I'd like to share just a few examples of the various types of incidents the Merriam Police Officers handled in 2008.

Officer Confronts man with an axe:

On January 4th, 2008, PO Melinda Copeland observed two vehicles involved in a road rage incident in the 6500 block of East Frontage. One of the subjects, a 24 year old male exited his vehicle and threatened the other driver with an axe. He was taken into custody at gunpoint by PO Copeland. The suspect was found to be in possession, and under the influence, of methamphetamine. A switch blade knife was also found in his vehicle.

Woman tries to commit suicide by jumping off bridge:

On December 26th, 2008, Sgt. Duvanel, Officer Jeff Magee, Officer Charles Boyce and Officer Wes Waller were dispatched to the bridge at 75th St. over I-35 on an attempted suicide. A 42 year old female with a history of mental problems climbed over a fence on the bridge and was attempting to jump onto the interstate below. Even though several passing motorists stopped and grabbed her prior to the officer's arrival, she was able to struggle free and fell about 20 feet. Luckily she landed just short of the interstate and only sustained non-life threatening injuries.

Officers use a Taser on a man trying to commit suicide after he assaulted a woman:

On March 30th, 2008, a man and woman that had been corresponding via the internet decided to meet in person. Apparently the romance didn't blossom and the female asked the male to leave. Taking the rejection poorly, the man produced a knife and threatened the woman. She and her 17 month old child were able to escape unharmed. Officers Phil Lewis and Wes Waller located the man behind the Penguin Pawn shop at 75th and Switzer. The man, still holding the knife, began cutting his wrist and refused commands to drop the weapon. The officers used their Taser to disarm the subject. He was subsequently treated for his minor self-inflicted injuries and taken to the Johnson County Jail.

Merriam Officers assist the Overland Park Police in arresting a shooting suspects:

On September 5th, 2008, officers from Overland Park were doing surveillance at the King's Cove apartments on some suspects involved in an earlier shooting incident that occurred in their city. When one of the suspects left the area, Merriam Officer Wes Waller was requested to stop the vehicle with Overland Park PD. Other Merriam officers also responded and checked the apartment and arrested another suspect. Because of our officer's quick response, both of these violent suspects were safely taken off the streets and into custody.



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Merriam Officer sneaks up on car burglar:

On May 13, 2008 at 12:01am, Cpl. Todd Sparks responded to a call of an auto burglary in progress in the 4900 block of Wedd. The caller saw a subject with a flashlight enter her neighbor's vehicle. At 12:03am, Cpl. Sparks arrived and positioned his vehicle at the end of the street. As he approached on foot, he saw a light inside the vehicle. Cpl. Sparks was able to walk up to the vehicle without the suspect seeing him. The suspect was ordered out of the car and was taken into custody. He had a screwdriver, a flashlight, and was wearing latex gloves. He was later linked to four other auto burglaries that were reported on May 12, 2008.

Road rage incident that results in gunfire goes through Merriam:

On October 21, 2008 at 1:43am, Officer James Browning responded to a call of a rolling disturbance southbound on Interstate 35 near Johnson Drive. The calling party said the occupant of the vehicle chasing him had fired 4 to 5 shots at him. Officer Browning strategically positioned himself on I-35 at 67th Street to intercept the cars. The cars passed him and he caught up to them at 75th St. He activated his emergency equipment and proceeded after the vehicles. They continued south and exited onto 87th Street. They turned north onto Quivira where the vehicles stopped after one of the cars pulled in front of the other. One of the drivers then jumped out and ran towards the other car waving his hands wildly in the air. He was stopped at gunpoint and taken into custody immediately. It was determined that this road rage incident started with an accident between these two drivers. One of the drivers then pulled a gun and fired shots. A gun was recovered. It was determined that all the incidents occurred in Kansas City, Missouri. KCMO PD responded and took over the investigation.

Good police work ends major burglary ring:

On December 14th, 2008, officers responded to Homestead Village to assist management in removing a group of people who had not paid for their rooms. The officers were first asked to check room #275 after finding that the occupants were gone and had apparently left some abandoned property behind. While looking in the room, Corporal Troy Duvanel recognized a computer that had been taken in a recent Merriam residential burglary. Officer Wes Waller then checked outside the room and located a stolen vehicle. Corporal Duvanel and Corporal Jason Reynolds then responded to room #271, which was linked to #275. Three people in that room were found to be in possession of marijuana. Further investigation revealed two more stolen cars parked outside. These three subjects were arrested immediately and a fourth subject was arrested later while trying to pay for room #275. The group was linked to other residential burglaries in the area including Overland Park, Bonner Springs, and Kansas City, KS. Over 400 pieces of property were recovered from the two hotel rooms.

Overdose leads to prosecution of a drug dealer for murder:

On December 14th, 2008, officers received a tip about a dead body at a local hotel. Sgt. Todd Allen and officers Charlie Yocum and Larry Birt found a 42 year old female deceased in a hotel room in the 5000 block of Merriam Drive. An autopsy revealed she had overdosed on heroin. A follow up investigation revealed the person who sold her the illegal drug is a known heroin dealer. Det. Chris Brokaw coordinated with the DEA and the Federal Prosecutors Office to secure federal charges against this suspect for contributing to her death.