

2010 Amherst Police Report

Department Roster

Chief Peter A. Lyon

Lieutenant Mark O. Reams

Lieutenant James R. Brace

Sergeant Anthony E. Ciampoli

Sergeant Lance T. Hult

Officer Ralph J. Marschhausen

Officer Matthew R. Saunders

Officer Michael J. Knox

Officer Patrick A. Webster

Officer Chad E. Blake

Officer John H. Smith

Officer James B. Crocker

Officer Nathan T. Berry

Officer P. Derek Mahoney

Officer Sarah D. Arnold

Officer Nicholas A. Skiba

Officer David P. Audet

Officer Justin J. Gerome

Sharon Higley – Executive Assistant

Officer Ethan Lewis – Part-time

Officer Ryan J. Piotrowski – Part-time

Officer John Ingemi – Part-time

Sally Long – Crossing Guard

Carolyn Karnis – Crossing Guard

As always, 2010 was busy for the police department. The department was presented with many challenges; however once again, the officers met those challenges with professionalism and dedication. Foremost among these challenges, was the need to operate short staffed for the year, which necessitated many sacrifices, scheduling, and personnel reassignments in

order to prevent any disruption of service to the community.

In August, we hired two full time officers, replacing the two that had left for employment with higher paying communities. Officers David Audet and Justin Gerome were hired after an extensive process. They attended the 14 week police academy, graduating in December and have just recently completed several additional weeks of field training. The officers are now assigned to regular patrol shifts, and the department is fully staffed.

Fortunately, many categories of crime remained low during the year such as fraud & forgery, sexual assaults and thefts. Those categories that had increased rates of occurrence include burglaries for the second year in a row, criminal trespass and drug violations. Burglaries actually climbed a disturbing 40%, many of which were daytime residential burglaries which occurred during the spring and summer months. Similarly, criminal trespass violations also increased for the year. Drug violations rose sharply as well, up 50% over the previous year, but this number is not as alarming as it appears since an increase such as this is more a result of a concerted enforcement effort to address an issue important to the community than it is an actual increase in drug use.

Although incidents of criminal mischief were high during 2009, the numbers returned to a normal rate in 2010, with 106 instances having occurred. However, not surprisingly, the department statistics reveal increasing reports of suspicious activity, increasing applications for pistol permits and increasing security alarm responses, all of which are likely the result of recent events in our ever changing communities.

Last March the department was involved with a homicide investigation involving adult siblings, in which an arrest quickly occurred when the defendant turned himself in to authorities. Although homicides do not often occur in Amherst, we have had our share over the years and in every instance, it has had a profound effect on the community and on department resources.

Additionally, last spring, responding to the several burglaries which were occurring in town, the department focused all efforts, investigative and patrol, to stopping and solving the crimes. After many hours of work, several of the burglaries were solved with the arrest of a male subject believed to be responsible. The success is a highlight of the year because it was the result of several important factors, including a town resident reporting important observations that had been witnessed; many hours of preventative patrols; many hours of investigation; good forensic practices; and most importantly, good communication and teamwork between the community and the police department.

Residents are reminded of the increasing numbers of computer and internet based crimes occurring here and across the country. Often times, instances of theft, identify theft, fraud, scams, bullying, and crimes against children, which have been occurring long before the computer age, are now being perpetrated with the use of computers, the internet, and data phones. The prevention of these crimes requires everyone to be aware of the likelihood of being a target of one of these criminal endeavors, to discuss the dangers with your children and to make a call to the police department anytime you have a suspicion of criminal behavior.

For two years now the police department has been using two electronic services to communicate important information to the community. Residents are encouraged to sign up at www.Nixle.com to receive important newsworthy text and e-mail messages pertaining to police activity and services. Additionally, all of the town's emergency services departments encourage everyone to participate in the CodeRED notification program. CodeRED is used for situations such as weather related emergencies, missing children, evacuation notices, and major roadway issues, to name just a few. Electronic links for both of these services are available via the police department web page, at www.amherstpolice.com

As always, we remind everyone of the importance in reporting all unusual or suspicious activity that you may observe. A well timed telephone call from an observant resident can be the needed information to stop or solve a crime and can save hours of police work. The department has seen several cases in this past year which exemplify the value of an involved

community. Additionally, we encourage everyone to take advantage of the services we provide, such as vacant house checks, the Good Morning Amherst senior citizen call-in program, home security evaluations, and help from the school resource officers with questions related to your child and the internet, to name just a few.

The police department employees thank our residents, business people, community leaders, other town employees and department heads, for your continued help and support over the year in accomplishing our goal of providing the best police service available to our town.

Respectfully submitted,

Peter A. Lyon

Chief of Police