There are two ways to live your life.
One is as though nothing is a miracle.
The other is as though everything is a miracle.
Albert Einstein (1879 - 1955)

EDITOR’S NOTE:  This is the inaugural edition of the Morro Bay Police / Community Newsletter. It has been sent to your email address because you are an important member of our Morro Bay community, either as a resident, a business person, a shopper or merely a friend. The purpose of this humble little newsletter is communication between ‘your’ police department and ‘our’ community. The logos on Morro Bay Police cars read “Police and Community . . . Together.” This newsletter will try and hold true to that theme by keeping you informed about ‘your’ police department. This newsletter will be sent out around the 1st of each month and we sincerely hope you find it informative and entertaining. Your email address will remain confidential and be used only to distribute the newsletter. If for any reason you wish to be removed from our distribution list or have thoughts on how to improve the newsletter, or add a friend to the distribution list, please contact me at mbpolicenewsletter@charter.net.

CHIEF JOHN DeROHAN
Welcome to the Morro Bay Police Department’s first monthly newsletter. It’s with great pleasure that we begin a monthly newsletter to enhance our interaction with the community. I would like to especially thank Officer Richard Hannibal for volunteering his services as the publisher of this newsletter. I hope you enjoy our newsletter!

The Morro Bay Police Department is made up of very dedicated professional police officers and employees committed to providing the best possible police services in partnership with our community. We continue to build relationships with the community through collaborative efforts. We take pride in our community programs such as Neighborhood Watch, participating in special events, and involvement in a host of other programs. As an example, over the past month, the Morro Bay Police Department participated in the Special Olympics Torch Run raising funds for Special Olympics, hosted the annual Peace Officer Memorial Service at the Rock, hosted a Car Seat Safety Check program at Spencer’s Market, participated in the Music Festival, and participated in the Del Mar Elementary School Ride of a Lifetime. The Friends of the Morro Bay Police Department organization helped staff the Music Festival and is also involved in a collaborative effort with the Rotary Club of Morro Bay and Friends of the Fire Department organizations in a large fundraiser involving the Toyota Prius raffle. With the assistance of the Sheriff’s Department, we graduated another DARE class at Del Mar Elementary School.

The Morro Bay Police Department as well as the rest of the city, continues to be challenged with reduced budgets and staffing and below average salaries and benefits. Two police officers are in the background phase with other higher paying law enforcement agencies. Our major focus currently and into the future is retention and recruitment. This challenge
was also outlined in the recently released Management Partners Efficiency Study of the city. The report confirmed that the police department is under budgeted, understaffed, and well below average wages and benefits. The report suggested elevating the police budget to levels of comparable cities or exploring contract prices with the Sheriff's Department to provide law enforcement services in the city. City staff and the City Council will be discussing the Management Report in more detail and developing priorities and goals in a workshop on June 30th. The police department looks forward to working with the City Council and Andrea Lueker our Interim City Manager who is in the process of negotiating a contract for the permanent City Manager Position. Congratulations to Andrea!

We are also planning a series of our own workshops in July with all the members of the police department. The focus of these workshops will be to evaluate our organization in terms of strengths, areas we can improve, opportunities, and challenges with a strong focus on retention and recruitment given our current budgetary constraints. The outcome of the workshops will be a department plan of our own goals and objectives along with blending in with those developed by the City Council.

I would also like to share a couple commendations of our employees this past month. Sgt. Dave Bergantzél received a Chief’s commendation and was recognized at the recent City Council meeting for a job well done. I received a phone call from a local resident that wanted to express her gratitude for going 'above and beyond' to help her on May 19, 2008. She essentially said the following.

She got word that her daughter was experiencing some problems and drove herself to the hospital where she collapsed in the emergency room. Her daughter was transferred to Kaiser Hospital in Woodland Hills, CA where she began having emergency brain surgery to remove a tumor that was discovered. The resident did not know where Kaiser Hospital was and called LAPD. They said they could not help her. She then called LA Co. Fire Dept. and they could not help her either. Not having a computer she did not know how to get directions and was panicked. She then decided to call our department and dispatch put her through to Sgt. Bergantzél. The resident said Sgt. Bergantzél took the time to go online and print out portal to portal driving directions from Morro Bay. He then personally drove these directions to her house and delivered them to her. The resident described Sgt. Bergantzél as her angel that evening. She had nothing but praise for him and the Morro Bay Police Department for going way beyond the call of duty. The compassion showed by Sgt. Bergantzél in this situation exemplifies our mission and values and is a prime example of the quality of service our department provides.

Morro Bay Rotary Club President Scott Beer honored Chief DeRohan with a plaque for coordinating the Rotary Club’s annual major fundraiser golf tournament this past year. The event raised over $20,000 that was in turn given to local charities and scholarships to Morro Bay High School.

COMMANDER TIM OLIVAS
Recruitment:
We are neck deep into the process of testing police officer candidates for anticipated vacancies from one ‘officer’ and one ‘corporal’ position. The officer and corporal are currently in backgrounds with other agencies. The Basic Police Academy at Allan Hancock College starts July 28th so we are prioritizing the hiring process in order to meet that deadline.

The first phase of the hiring process involves a screening of all applications to ensure the applicants meet the minimum standards and community emphasized focus of our agency. The next step is for them to take and pass a POST (California State Peace Officer Standards & Training) physical agility test and written test. On June 23rd we tested 13 candidates. Some of the candidates travelled from as far away as Southern California, Colorado and Nevada to complete the test. The testing was administered by Police Department staff with the assistance of volunteers at the Allan Hancock Basic Police Academy.

It takes approximately one week to get the written test back from the Department of Justice. At that time, candidates who have successfully passed both tests will be invited to an oral interview. Successful candidates will then undergo an expedited background investigation, psychological test and
medical test with the plan of getting them in the 20 week academy by the start date.

We are also in the testing process to fill a vacant dispatcher position. Oral interviews were held during the week of June 23rd. Successful candidates must now go through the same background psychological and medical testing as a peace officer.

**SPECIAL ANNUAL RECOGNITION**

Each year the Morro Bay Police Department recognizes its employees and volunteers who have exhibited exceptional dedication and service to the citizens of Morro Bay.

Following are those chosen for the year 2007.

**2007 OFFICER OF THE YEAR**

**OFFICER TYLER BROOKS** was honored for his devotion to duty. He is consistently active in arrest, traffic safety and crime prevention. He seems to be ‘everywhere’ and is tireless in his efforts to serve and protect the citizens and visitors of Morro Bay. His law enforcement efforts are complimented by his compassion and respect for others. Tyler has been a Morro Bay Police Officer for almost two years.

Tyler was born in San Bernardino, California and raised locally in Arroyo Grande where he attended high school. During his formative years, Tyler was active in baseball and catching the waves at local beaches. In spite of his active life style in those years, Tyler had no idea what he wanted as a career. He told me, “At that time it was not being a cop, that’s for sure.”

Tyler worked several jobs after high school graduation, including customer service at local airports. Finally, Tyler became acquainted with some local police officers who encouraged him to look into a career in law enforcement. Tyler went on a couple ‘ride-alongs’ with local police agencies and became ‘hooked’. Tyler paid to put himself through the Allan Hancock College Police Academy where he was recruited by the Morro Bay Police Department. Tyler is unmarried and continues his love of sports, particularly surfing and off-road motorcycle riding.

**2007 NON-SWORN EMPLOYEE OF THE YEAR**

Dispatch Supervisor **RICH ROLSON** was recognized for his exceptional service and dedication in the area of Police Dispatch and Records.

Rich began his adult life receiving an Associate of Arts in Language. He went on to attend Cal Poly as an Electrical Engineering major. His education was interrupted by a four year enlistment in the U.S. Navy where he served as an Indonesian linguist at the National Security Agency and in the Philippines. Rich left active duty and remained in the Navy Reserve for several years and continued his college education. Rich decided music was his love and for the next twenty years he was a professional musician, singing and playing the keyboard.

Rich finally decided music was not providing him with the necessities of life, such as food. He eventually put himself through California State mandated classes to certify him as a Police Dispatcher. Rich applied at the Morro Bay Police Department and was hired as a Reserve Police Dispatcher and records specialist. He was soon employed full time and promoted to Dispatch Supervisor in September 2004. Rich is married with one daughter and has a part time business providing sound amplification for concerts, events and conferences.

**2007 COMMUNITY SERVICE VOLUNTEER (CSV) OF THE YEAR**

**VOLUNTEER BILL BLACK** was recognized for his awesome dedication, and volunteering behind the scenes at the MBPD. The budget of a small police department limits the kind of in-house maintenance and renovation that larger departments enjoy. In the case of the MBPD, we rely on volunteers, officers and employees to provide some of these services. Bill is everywhere that things need repaired, constructed or painted. Bill is even out in the community promoting the City in general and the police department in particular. He avails himself in helping some of our elderly citizens with the
complexities of life.

Bill was born in Canada and came to America at the age of six. Bill became a United States Citizen when he was 22. He was a plumbing contractor in his early years and in 1972 became a general contractor working in San Leandro on new construction, both Residential and Commercial. In his later years Bill and his wife built a home in Morro Bay, complete with solar panels and other self sufficient amenities. Bill and his wife retired and moved to Morro Bay in 2006 and most recently joined the ranks of the Morro Bay Community Service Volunteers.

2007 POLICE EXPLORER OF THE YEAR

BRETT MOBLEY was recognized for his enthusiasm and leadership. Brett is a high school senior with his sights set on a law enforcement career. Brett lives with his parents who are “100% supportive” of his law enforcement goals. Brett is a very active young man, involving himself in football, snow and wake boarding, hunting and fishing. He said he just likes to be outdoors.

Brett has been a Morro Bay Police Explorer for almost three years and attended the last two Police Explorer Competitions in Las Vegas where our local Explorer group came in 1st place overall in 2007 and 2nd place overall this year. Brett played a big part in his team beating out teams from much larger police agencies. Brett is the epitome of a potential law enforcement officer and we all look forward to him joining the ranks of professional law enforcement.

DEDICATED TO SERVE
Profile of new Officers

OFFICER DOUG COLLINS was born and raised in Riverside, California. Like many high school graduates Doug was unsure of what he wanted to do. He thought about a career in architecture, but his doubt persisted so he joined the Army National Guard and trained as a Combat Medic. Doug’s interest in emergency services began then.

Doug was sent to Iraq and served in a financial unit for over a year before returning home. Back in the States, Doug became a Reserve Fire Fighter with the Morro Bay Fire Department. Thinking he wanted to be a Fire Fighter, Doug began placing job applications at several fire departments. This went on for about one year when a Police Officer friend of his suggested a career in Law Enforcement. About this time Doug applied for a Police Officer job with the Morro Bay Police Department. The MBPD quickly recognized Doug’s potential and sponsored him at the Allan Hancock College Police Academy where he underwent 5 months of rigorous training. Doug graduated 3rd in his class of 37 cadets and began 3 months of field training with a certified Police Field Training Officer (FTO).

Doug completed this training in May 2008 and has been patrolling the streets of Morro Bay ever since. Doug continues to not only serve the citizens of Morro Bay, but serves his nation as a part time Army National Guard member. Doug remains a single man, but there are ‘romantic winds’ on the horizon. Doug is certainly a positive addition to our police / community safety goals.

OFFICER LARA KELLY is one of our newest Police Officers. Lara was born in Fresno and raised in Clovis, California. Lara graduated from high school and continued her education at Fresno State College as an Art Major. Lara was interested in Graphic Arts and Digital Photograph and pretty much majored in those areas. Lara was relatively happy with her chosen career field until she happened to ‘ride-along’ with a Clovis Police Officer. Lara says at that moment she was ‘hooked’ and switched her interest to a career in Law Enforcement.

Lara attended the Regional Police Academy in Fresno where she was recruited by the Morro Bay Police Department. Lara graduated from the Police

THOUGHTS
Could it be that all those trick-or-treaters wearing sheets aren’t going as ghosts, but as mattress?

If a turtle doesn’t have a shell, is he homeless or naked?

If the police arrest a mime, do they still have to tell him he has the right to remain silent?
academy in December 2007 and hired by the MBPD as a Probationary Police Officer. Lara underwent over three months of field training with a State Certified Field Training Officer. Lara recently completed this training and is now working day shift, patrolling the streets of Morro Bay. Lara is a single woman who has devoted most of her time to her education and police officer training. We welcome Lara to the Morro Bay Police / Community family.

HAVE YOU EVER WONDERED? An inside glimpse into becoming a Police Officer
By: Sergeant Bryan Millard
MBPD, Field Training Officer Coordinator

Perhaps you have passed by an officer on our streets and wondered what he or she had to go through to become a Police Officer. Many people have heard of ‘the police academy’, but few actually understand what it takes to get from an application to a police car. I offer this inside view…

It often starts with what most of us refer to as ‘the call’. It may happen at a very young age, or at that ripe age of ‘20-something’. It is hard, at that time in our lives, to explain to anyone in precise words what draws us to police service. Certainly at the core is a desire to help people, but many professions offer that. For many, including myself, it is the firm belief that all citizens are entitled to protection under the law and that our great country’s founding principles of tolerance and freedom must be defended. Mix that with an ‘actively-oriented’ individual, those that like the outdoors and don’t mind risk and you have the makings of an officer. Being fit enough to carry 30 pounds of gear on your waist, 12 hours a day and still be able to chase a bad guy doesn’t hurt either!

So, having your mind set upon becoming a police officer, what does this entail? Like all other professions, a job application and resume are the first step. Once past that step, there is a written test and physical agility test, based upon State-mandated requirements. Those that pass the physical and written tests are invited to take an oral interview examination. This usually involves a three-person panel, made up of police department employees and community members. Questions during an oral board can include ethics questions, scenario ‘crime’ based questions, or specific questions based upon that person’s application.

The Oral Board is the last of the initial screening. Those who we determine are a good fit for our department and community are invited past this stage. An applicant must then fill out an extensive background packet, revealing all of the employment, social and financial history for at least the last 10 years, including any prior contacts with law enforcement (even as a juvenile). A background investigator will interview family, employers, friends and prior co-workers until the investigator is satisfied there are no skeletons in the applicant’s closet which would disqualify them. This is also the stage of the all important polygraph or ‘lie detector’ test. This is when the department gets to find out if the background information, interview and application were truthful and complete. Any omission, lie, or falsification at this stage is cause for automatic disqualification from employment. In our business, integrity and credibility are of paramount importance. The community we serve count on us to be truthful, so we must only hire and retain truthful people. This process often takes a couple months.

The background information is then made available to the Chief who determines whether that person meets the criteria to move on in the process. A clean background is a must. If the Chief approves, it is customary to offer an applicant a “conditional” job offer at that stage, which indicates the department’s desire to hire that individual if the remaining tests are passed. What does remain?

Conditional employees must take a thorough psychological examination, including an in depth interview and a written examination lasting several hours. A medical screening follows to determine freedom from illegal drugs and to rule out medical conditions that might hamper a person’s ability to do the job.

Are we done yet, you ask? Not even close. While the above process may take anywhere from 1-3 months (or more), we haven’t even begun to train them yet. If the above process works out well, this person might be called in at the Chief’s discretion for a ‘Chief’s interview’ to determine if he or she is a good ‘fit’ for our agency. The Chief then makes the final decision
regarding employment, and an applicant now becomes a trainee.

Our agency sends this trainee to the next available police academy. We train through Allan Hancock College. Their full-time police academy takes 5 months to complete. It includes over 40 disciplines, more than 20 written examinations, a military style drill program (think lots of yelling!), scenario tests, driving tests, shooting tests and all of it has a minimum passing score. More than a few have failed out at this stage.

If a trainee graduates from the academy, they are ‘sworn in’ by our Chief as a Morro Bay Police Officer and presented their badge. A ‘swearing in’ ceremony is where each officer commits themselves to the protection of the community; even at the cost of their lives. Next time you walk by an officer, ask them what the “badge” means to them. At least for me, it is this oath that I remember; it’s not just a shiny piece of metal.

Hey, we’re done right, we have an officer? Well…not really. Now we start what is called the Field Training Officer or FTO program. The FTO program is the real hands-on job training. It is impossible to fully evaluate a potential Morro Bay Police Officer without getting him or her on the streets of Morro Bay. FTO is roughly a 3-month process where that new officer is assigned under the direct supervision of a Training Officer. The trainer and trainee ride together during the course of normal patrol duties, where the trainee gradually watches, learns, and then takes over the duties for the trainer. The trainee is evaluated in 33 separate categories every day they work, and all 33 categories must reach an acceptable level by the end. Add to that the large list of codes, policies, and procedures that must be read, understood, and signed-off.

At the end of the FTO program, the trainee officer undergoes what is called a ‘Shadow Week’. This is a week where the trainee assumes total responsibility as a solo officer while a training officer rides as a “shadow” in the same car (dressed in plain clothes). The training officer cannot help or intervene at this stage, except in emergency situations. Successfully passing the shadow week means acceptance as a solo qualified patrol officer. This is the end of the initial training period, usually about 1 year from the time of application.

Are we finally done? No, now the officer must sweat out an eighteen month Probationary Period. During this time the officer is closely watched to make sure he or she adheres to the high moral, ethical and professional standards of the Morro Bay Police Department.

Well, I guess in law enforcement, you are never done. You will continue to be closely scrutinized by the community, your peers, your supervisors and department management. All this time you will tip toe through the mine field of statutes, ever changing case law, department policy and high community expectations. As with many highly skilled professions, the career training never ends. The State of California requires extensive on-going training from the day you start until the day you retire, no matter your rank or assignment. And we do it all because we are driven by that initial ‘call’ back in our youth.

So now you have some insight into the level of Morro Bay Police Officer you see every day.

CRIME STATISTICS & SUMMARY
MAY 2008 STATISTICS
COMPARSED TO MAY 2007

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** It should be noted that Morro Bay Police Officers ‘warn’ over twice the amount of motorists then those cited.

Traffic Collisions 18 14

MORE THOUGHTS
Would a fly without wings be called a ‘walk’?

It you try to fail, and succeed, which have you done?
The Morro Bay Police Community Service Volunteers (CSV) perform a variety of crucial services on a daily basis along side sworn Police Officers. The CSV program consists of 29 dedicated citizens who consider serving the community a privilege and have racked up impressive numbers of hours worked. This group of amazing people average between 450-500 hours of volunteer service on a monthly basis.

To qualify for service with the CSV Program, a citizen must live in close proximity to Morro Bay, must have a clean personal record and must pass a personal interview by Morro Bay Police Department Staff and background investigation. After attending the Morro Bay Police Department’s Citizen’s Academy and completing the Community Service Volunteers’ Field Training program, the citizen volunteers are utilized in a variety of circumstances.

Working independently or alongside sworn officers, the volunteers perform routine patrols by vehicle and on foot covering the city parks, city schools, all streets and neighborhoods, the downtown area, Embarcadero and the beaches. While on patrol they are the police department’s eyes and ears and report suspicious activity and safety hazards to police dispatch. The CSV’s provide traffic control at accident scenes, downed power lines, flooding, fallen trees, hazardous material spills and assist the fire department with traffic control at fire scenes. Perimeter security is also provided at some crime scenes. The volunteers participate in search and rescue activities within the City of Morro Bay. Some of our volunteers assist in the dispatch center. Whatever the need, the CSV team has a volunteer who is properly trained and outfitted to meet that need.

The Community Service Volunteers are on call twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week. They carry emergency gear in their personal vehicles so they can respond quickly to traffic accident scenes or other emergency situations. The volunteers meet as a group every month for ongoing training and programs that enhance their ability to grow and expand with the responsibilities the department gives them.

Any one interested in getting involved in this rewarding and very important aspect of the Morro Bay Police Department is encouraged to contact the CSV Chairman, Ian McKnight at 805-310-3003 or Crime Prevention Coordinator Hank Roth at 805-772-6228.

The Morro Bay Police Explorers once again competed in the annual EXplorer CONference (Ex-Con) competition held in Las Vegas, Nevada. We are proud to announce Morro Bay Police Explorer Post 43 placed second overall in the competition. The Ex-Con is advertised as providing the best law enforcement explorer competition in the United States. The competition took place on June 14, 2008 and was comprised of a challenging array of law enforcement "scenario" based exercises and physical challenges. The Morro Bay Police Explorers, faced off against 41 other Explorer Posts gathering together for the annual competition from all over California, Nevada, Arizona, Colorado and as far away as Montana.

To prepare for the competition, the Explorers trained at the police department with their advisors who provided advice and guidance on the various law enforcement disciplines required for each scenario.

Our Explorer Post members include young adults from the surrounding community between the ages of 14 and 21. The current members are: Travis Hileman, Brett Mobley, Amish Patel and Brian Weaver. The Post 43 Advisors are Morro Bay Police Corporal Jeremy Douglas and Officer Gene Stuart.

Along with the 2nd place overall finish, which was based on the highest overall average from the event scores of the day, Post 43 took home individual event trophies that included a 5th place for the Crime Scene Investigation Scenario, a 4th Place for the 911 Disconnect Scenario, and a 4th place for the Vehicle...
Stop Scenario. Corporal Douglas and Officer Stuart also competed against other Post Advisors in a patrol bicycle course and placed 3rd.

This is the third year in a row the MBPD Explorers have finished in the top three overall for the competition. This is even more of an amazing accomplishment considering two of our four explorers are new to the program this year. We are very proud of the professionalism, hard work and dedication our explorers and their advisors exemplify through this competition. They provide us with a positive vision of the future for the next generation of law enforcement officers.

CRIME PREVENTION

Compared to other areas of California, we live in a relatively safe and sane community. This can be attributed to a dedicated police department and community awareness and support. We are a team! However, this relative safety can allow us to become complacent. Our community is often victimized by thefts from vehicles. The thefts are sporadic throughout the city, but lately concentrate in the neighborhoods east of the 2700, 2800, 2900 and 3000 blocks of Main Street.

Most of the thefts have one thing in common and that is the property is stolen from unlocked cars. We seldom have what we call an auto burglary, where a window is smashed, a lock tampered with or a door pried. The thefts usually occur during the night and appear to be crimes of opportunity. That means that the thief(s) are simply walking down the street checking for unlocked cars and taking property lying on the seat or inside the glove compartment.

So, the simple thing to do is lock your car and be vigilant for suspects. Don’t hesitate to call your police department concerning any suspicious activity. Remember, we are a ‘team’ and it takes a ‘team’ effort to enjoy life in this beautiful community.

CAUTION ALERT! The brass valve in a propane cylinder will be damaged if it comes in contact with anhydrous ammonia. This deterioration will lead to cracking of the valve body or its components and can ultimately result in a violent, unexpected expulsion of the valve from the cylinder, causing personal injury or death.

Background and Recommended Action

It has come to the attention of the National Propane Gas Association that propane cylinders are being used in the manufacturing of Methamphetamines. This drug is commonly referred to as 'crank'. Manufacturers of this illegal substance are using propane cylinders for the storage and the use of anhydrous ammonia. These cylinders have been found in many states at cylinder exchange and refilling locations as well as in hotel rooms and mobile laboratories, where the manufacturing of this illegal substance takes place.

As observed in the illustration, a blue-green stain on any brass portion of a service valve is evidence that it may have been in contact with anhydrous ammonia*. The pungent odor of ammonia on or near the cylinder is also an indication. If you suspect that a propane cylinder contains or has contained anhydrous ammonia, exercise extreme caution and restrict access to the area.

It can be dangerous to move the cylinder due to the unknown integrity of the cylinder's service valve. If you determine that it must be moved, keep in mind that hazards due to valve expulsion can be reduced by pointing the end of the container in which the valve is placed away from yourself and others and towards the safest direction.

Immediately contact your Fire Department, Hazardous Materials Emergency Response Unit or the nearest office of the United States Department of Justice’s Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) for information on properly disposing of the cylinder. If these respondents are not sure what to do, for assistance call 1-800-728-2482, which is the contact number for PERS, an independent hazardous materials information resource.

*Note: Sherwood valves contain a green coated valve stem. Additionally, a green thread sealing compound is used on some valves. These valves should not be confused with those that have been exposed to anhydrous ammonia.
On June 4th the Morro Bay Neighborhood Watch, Morro Bay Police Department and the SLO County Car Seat Coalition sponsored a child seat check up at Spencer's Market parking lot. In spite of the high wind conditions, 20 child seats were checked, 8 seats needed corrections with 4 of the seats needing major corrections including improper installations and internal harness straps not properly adjusted for child. Staff and volunteers from San Luis Police, San Luis Fire, Arroyo Grande PD, Atascadero PD and Morro Bay Police were available to assist parents. The seats were checked for defects and recalls.

Parents were taught the proper use and installation of child restraint systems. Special thanks go out to Spencer's market for their support and lunch for the technicians.

Presently the law is: a parent or legal guardian "may not permit his or her child or ward to be transported ... without properly securing the child or ward in the rear seat in a child passenger restraint system ... unless the child is (1) six years of age or older (2) Sixty pounds or more. First offense carries a fine of $100.00, second offense up to $250.00. But remember, these are minimum standards. A child is safer in a car seat (or booster seats for older children). Children’s bone structure and muscles are not fully developed. The five point restraint system provided in a car seat gives extra protection to a child’s body.

Crash dynamics: In a vehicle crash, there are actually a series of collisions. The primary impact is between the vehicle and another object, while the occupants continue to travel forward at the pre-crash speed. Unrestrained occupants then come to an abrupt stop against the decelerating vehicle interior or the ground outside the vehicle. Restrained occupants collide with their belts or other restraint system very soon after the primary collision. Finally, there are collisions between the body’s internal organs and the bony structures enclosing them, which can be mitigated by the use of occupant restraint systems.

The front ends of vehicles are designed to crush during impact, thereby absorbing crash energy and allowing the passenger compartment to come to a stop over a greater distance (and longer time) than does the front bumper. By tightly coupling the occupants to the passenger compartment structure, through the use of snug fitting belts, the occupants ride down the crash with the vehicle. For adults, there is usually only one link, such as a lap/shoulder belt, between the occupant and the vehicle. For children, however, there are usually two links: the belt or other system holding the child restraint to the vehicle, and the harness or other structure holding the child.

Child restraint designs vary with the size of the child, the direction the child faces, the type of internal restraining system, and the method of installation. All child restraint’s, however, work on the principle of coupling the child as tightly as possible to the vehicle.

Again, the point of a child restraint system is to protect the child’s underdeveloped body and help insure the child survives the cash.

Periodic check-ups: It's important to have your car seat checked to insure proper fit to your child, the seat is installed properly in the vehicle and that there have been no recalls on the particular seat.

Four Key Safety Points:
1. Restrain your child on every trip, every time.
2. Keep your child in the back seat, if possible.
3. Use the best safety restraint for your child’s size.
4. Use the child safety seats and belts correctly.

MORE THOUGHTS

Atheism is a non-prophet organization.

Why don’t sheep shrink when it rains?
MORRO BAY POLICE
NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH

The Morro Bay Neighborhood Watch meets at 11:30 am, on the 2nd Thursday of each month at Dorn’s Restaurant. Here they discuss crime prevention issues, plan activities and to meet with the Chief of Police and other Department personnel.

If you would like to form a Neighborhood Watch group in your area or have questions about Neighborhood Watch please call:

Hank Roth, Crime Prevention Coordinator
Morro Bay Police Department (805) 772-6228
HARoth@morro-bay.ca.us
www.morrobaypolice.psnet.us

NEW CELLULAR TELEPHONE DRIVING LAW

Two new laws dealing with the use of wireless telephones while driving go into effect July 1, 2008. The two laws were the result of SB 1613 and SB 33, authored by Senator Joe Simitian and signed into law by Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger in September 2006.

Below is a list of Frequently Asked Questions concerning these new laws:

When do the new wireless telephone laws take effect?
The new laws take effect July 1, 2008.

What is the difference between the two laws?
The first prohibits all drivers from using a handheld wireless telephone while operating a motor vehicle, (Vehicle Code (VC) §23123). Motorists 18 and over may use a "hands-free device." Drivers under the age of 18 may NOT use a wireless telephone or hands-free device while operating a motor vehicle (VC §23124).

What if I need to use my telephone during an emergency, and I do not have a "hands-free" device?
The law allows a driver to use a wireless telephone to make emergency calls to a law enforcement agency, a medical provider, the fire department, or other emergency services agency.

Will there be a grace period when motorists will only get a warning?
No. The law becomes effective July 1, 2008. Whether a citation is issued is always at the discretion of the officer based upon his or her determination of the most appropriate remedy for the situation.

Are passengers affected by this law?
No. This law only applies to the person driving a motor vehicle.

Do these laws apply to out-of-state drivers whose home states do not have such laws?
Yes.

Can I be pulled over by a law enforcement officer for using my handheld wireless telephone?
Yes. A law enforcement officer can pull you over just for this infraction.

What if my phone has a push-to-talk feature, can I use that?
No. The law does provide an exception for those operating a commercial motor truck or truck tractor (excluding pickups), implements of husbandry, farm vehicle or tow truck, to use a two-way radio operated by a “push-to-talk” feature. However, a push-to-talk feature attached to a hands-free ear piece or other hands-free device is acceptable.

What other exceptions are there?
Operators of an authorized emergency vehicle during the course of employment are exempt, as are those motorists operating a vehicle on private property.

DRIVERS 18 AND OVER

Drivers 18 and over will be allowed to use a "hands-free" device to talk on their wireless telephone while driving. The following FAQs apply to those motorists 18 and over.

Does the new “hands-free” law prohibit you from dialing a wireless telephone while driving or just talking on it?
The new law does not prohibit dialing, but drivers are strongly urged not to dial while driving.

Will it be legal to use a Bluetooth or other earpiece?
Yes, however you cannot have BOTH ears covered.

Does the new "hands-free" law allow you to use the speaker phone function of your wireless telephone while driving?
Yes.

Does the new “hands-free” law allow drivers 18 and over to text message while driving?
The law does not specifically prohibit that, but an officer can pull over and issue a citation to a driver of any age if, in the officer's opinion, the driver was distracted and not operating the vehicle safely. Sending text messages while driving is unsafe at any speed and is strongly discouraged.

**DRIVERS UNDER 18**

Am I allowed to use my wireless telephone "hands-free?"
No. Drivers under the age of 18 may not use a wireless telephone, pager, laptop or any other electronic communication or mobile services device to speak or text while driving in any manner, even "hands-free." EXCEPTION: Permitted in emergency situations to call police, fire or medical authorities (VC §23124).

Why is the law stricter for provisional drivers?
Statistics show that teen drivers are more likely than older drivers to be involved in crashes because they lack driving experience and tend to take greater risks. Teen drivers are vulnerable to driving distractions such as talking with passengers, eating or drinking, and talking or texting on wireless devices, which increase the chance of getting involved in serious vehicle crashes.

Can my parents give me permission to allow me to use my wireless telephone while driving?
No. The only exception is an emergency situation that requires you to call a law enforcement agency, a health care provider, the fire department or other emergency agency entity.

Does the law apply to me if I'm an emancipated minor?
Yes. The restriction applies to all licensed drivers who are under the age of 18.

If I have my parent(s) or someone age 25 years or older in the car with me, may I use my wireless telephone while driving?
No. You may only use your wireless telephone in an emergency situation.

May I use the hands-free feature while driving if my car has the feature built in?
No. The law prohibits anyone under the age of 18 from using any type of wireless device while driving, except in an emergency situation.

Can a law enforcement officer stop me for using my "hands-free" device while driving?
For drivers under the age of 18, this is considered a SECONDARY violation meaning that a law enforcement officer may cite you for using a "hands-free" wireless device if you were pulled over for another violation. However, the prohibition against using a handheld wireless device while driving is a PRIMARY violation for which a law enforcement officer can pull you over.
Living and driving in a rural county requires us to be extra vigilant of critters on the roadway. Driving is particularly hazardous at night. You do not want to occupy the same space in time as a horse, cow or deer. And, not even the police are immune. Recently one of our officers was making the routine journey with a prisoner from Morro Bay to the County Jail. Suddenly a large deer appeared in front of the patrol car and the officer had no time to react. Neither officer nor prisoner were injured, but the deer went to wherever deer go when they pass on. At this time it is unknown what the destiny of the police cruiser will be.

And attention those of you who ride motorcycles; it does not matter if you are right or wrong, if you collide with something as large as a deer, you lose.

We should so live and labor in our time, that what came to us as a seed, may go to the next generation as a blossom. And, what came to us as a blossom, may go to them as fruits.

Henry Ward Beecher

These thoughts come from Michael Josephson an authority on police ethics and character.

- Watch your thoughts; they lead to attitudes.
- Watch your attitudes; they lead to words.
- Watch your words; they lead to actions.
- Watch your actions; they lead to habits.
- Watch your habits; they form your character.

Watch your character; it determines your destiny. These words of unknown origin tell us that our silent and often subconscious choices shape our future. Every aspect of our lives, at home and at work, can be improved if we use our power to think, reflect, and make conscious choices about our thoughts, attitudes, words, actions, and habits. Instead, many of us think of ourselves as victims. We complain about our circumstances and what others did to us. Whatever psychological comfort there is in feeling powerless and blameless when things aren’t going right, in the end, victims lead unsatisfied lives.

We’re most vulnerable to victimitis when we’re under the influence of powerful emotions like fear, insecurity, anger, frustration, grief, or depression. These feelings are so powerful, we believe our state of mind is inevitable. Our only hope is they will go away on their own. Yet it’s during times of emotional tumult that using our power to choose our thoughts and attitudes is most important. We can’t make pain go away, but we can refuse to suffer.

Even when we don’t like any of our choices, we do have some – once we realize we can take control. It isn’t easy, but what we do and how we choose to feel about ourselves has a profound impact on the quality of our lives. Victims may get sympathy for a while, but that isn’t enough.

Taking personal responsibility for our happiness and success can be scary, but the payoff is enormous. Although we can’t make our lives perfect, we can make them better – usually a lot better.
PEACE OFFICER’S MEMORIAL SERVICE

The month of May was National Peace Officer Memorial month.

Ceremonies and tributes were conducted throughout the United States. On May 14, 2008, the Morro Bay Police department hosted the San Luis Obispo County Peace Officer’s Memorial for the very first time. The ceremony took place in a beautiful setting on the south side of Morro Rock. It was a wonderful remembrance of the nation’s Peace Officers who have been killed in the line of duty.

Hundreds of county law enforcement officers and community members showed up for the tribute. Chief John DeRohan and Sheriff Pat Hedges spoke, along with spiritual leaders from various faiths and denominations. Individual tributes were paid to the eight California Peace Officers who were killed in the preceding year (May 2007 to May 2008). With a backdrop of Coast Guard and Harbor Patrol Boats and a California Highway Patrol fly-over, a bell tolled after each name was called and portraits were hung on a Board of Honor. Bagpipes sounded and a bugler played ‘taps’. Everyone was emotionally touched and left the ceremony with a renewed sense of pride and purpose.

EDITOR’S NOTE: In a local newspaper ‘Letter to the Editor’ a writer complained about the time, energy and money spent memorializing our fallen Peace Officers. The letter went on to say that we don’t honor other members of our society who die, so why specially honor fallen Peace Officers. I initially bristled at the writer’s thought, but mellowed in realizing the writer had a ‘right’ to express that thought.

Why do we honor fallen Peace Officers, or for that matter, fallen soldiers? As I reflected on the writer’s ‘right’ to express the thought, I realized that without the sacrifices of every soldier and the sacrifices of every Peace Officer, the writer would not have that right. Without the protection of our nation and the enforcement of our laws we would be living in jungles and caves. That is why we honor every fallen soldier of every war and every fallen Peace Officer in every jurisdiction. We honor the institution along with the man or woman.

Every time a protector of our peace and security falls, our society as a family suffers. That brings me to the purpose of this newsletter; the police and the community are one family having similar dreams and seeking similar goals. Like every family, when a member dies the entire family mourns and pays tribute. This is not for the dead; it is for the living. These moments inspire us and give us courage to go on. That is the importance of a Peace Officer Memorial; it brings law enforcement and the community together in common reflection and respect. And, respect is what it is all about.

This is the sacrifice we memorialize!

We welcome all comments regarding the content of this newsletter and thoughts on improving ‘your’ Morro Bay Police Department. Please submit via email to: mbpolicenewsletter@charter.net