



Hamden Police Department Monthly Report August 2012



Personnel Matters and Events

On August 16, 2012, Detective Thomas Rhone of the Major Crimes Unit retired after serving the Department for 36 years. (Det. Rhone seen on the right with his Dad, Donald Rhone, also a retired Hamden Police Officer.)



On August 26, 2012, Officer John Battick of the Patrol Division retired after serving the Department for 26 years.



On August 31, 2012, Officer John Sommers of the Support Services Division retired after serving the Department for 31 years.

On August 31, 2012, five (5) Dispatchers (Brian Esposito, Michele Lee, Kirk Trofatter, Christopher Jones, and Robert Sjogren) retired after serving the Department for 30, 28, 26, 26 and 25 years respectively.



Effective on August 20, 2012, Officer Michael Mello was transferred from the Patrol Division to the Street Interdiction Team (SIT) of the Special Operations Bureau.

Effective on August 29, 2012, Officers Paul Calamita and Jay Bunnell were transferred to the Special Victims Unit and assigned as the School Resource Officers for the Hamden High School and Hamden Middle School respectively.

On August 21, 2012, the Hamden Police Department's Traffic Division, along with the Connecticut State Police Commercial Enforcement Division, conducted commercial vehicle safety inspections at various Hamden locations. Inspections were conducted on State Street, Whitney Avenue and the Route 40 Connector. Officers stopped 38 trucks and inspected 9 commercial vehicles. In addition, 22 infractions were issued, with fines totaling \$2,600.00. Furthermore, 2 vehicles were taken out of service for mechanical reasons and 9 Level 1 inspections were conducted. The "Joint" multi-agency commercial vehicle inspections will continue throughout the summer months.





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Personnel matters and events (continued)

During the month of August, the community liaison unit was involved in the following Community outreach events:

- National Night Out @ Rochford Field – Lieutenant's Brian Carmody, and Michael McNeil, Sergeant John Testa, and Officer's Kevin Hall, John Battick, Craig Appleby, Michael Pantera, David Falcigno, Robert Dunham, Jay Bunnell, Beatrice Montijo, Angela Hall, and Gregg Curran.



- Muscular Dystrophy "Lock Up" fund raiser
- Health and Wellness Fair at the Muhammad Islamic Center

Traffic Calming

Members of the Traffic Division deployed our newly acquired portable Speed Compliance Signs and Speed Compliance Trailer throughout areas in Town with a high volume of speeding complaints. The signs and trailer were deployed on: Whitney Avenue/Brooksvale Road, Whitney Avenue/Mt. Carmel Avenue, Augur Street/Paramount Avenue, Woodin Street/Belden Road, Blue Hills Avenue, Whitney Avenue/Evergreen Avenue, and Pine rock Avenue/Jones Road. The Department continues to receive positive feedback from residents, schools, and business owners.





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Training - Sworn Personnel

There was no scheduled Department wide training for the month of August.

Training: In-Service

- Undercover Drug Operations @ POST – Officer Shawn Nutcher
- Police Management @ University of New Haven – Chief Thomas J. Wydra, Deputy Chief John Cappiello, Lieutenant Timothy Wydra and Lieutenant Francis McDermott



Training – K-9

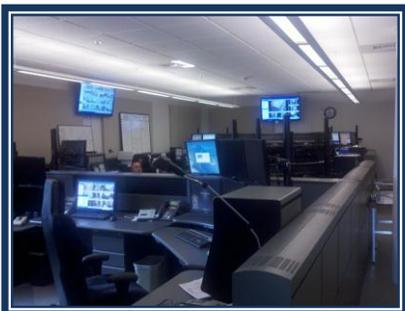
K-9 Units participated in training sessions at the Michael J. Whelan building on Newhall Street and the former High Meadows facility on Hartford Turnpike. The training curriculum included:

- Building searches
- Narcotics detection
- Patrol techniques
- Obedience
- Explosive detection
- Tracking
- Suspect apprehensions



Training – Dispatchers

There was no Department wide training for Dispatchers for the month of August.





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Incidents of Special Interest

On August 1, 2012, at approximately 2:00 pm, the Hamden Police Department responded to the Wine Merchants store @ 2300 Dixwell Avenue located in the Hamden Mart on a reported Robbery. Investigation revealed that a lone individual described as a black male, stocky build, approximately 5' 7" – 5' 8" tall, wearing a dark colored shirt, jeans and wearing a black colored ski mask entered the establishment and robbed the clerk of an undetermined amount of cash. A weapon was implied during the robbery and there were no reported injuries. The suspect was last seen leaving the store in a grey colored sedan that was parked in a handicap space directly across from the front entrance of the building. Any witnesses to this incident were asked to contact Detective Sean Dolan of the Major Crimes Unit @ (203) 230-4065. On August 4, 2012, at approximately 10:30 am, Officer Derrick Manning of the Patrol Division conducted a motor vehicle stop on a vehicle matching the description of the vehicle used in this incident. Officer Manning identified the driver as Robert Gordneer (DOB: 06/14/50) and determined that he also matched the physical description of the suspect in this incident. Officer Manning and Detective Angelo DeLieto obtained a full confession from Gordneer regarding his involvement in this incident. Officer Manning also located items of evidentiary value inside of Gordneer's vehicle. This information was forwarded to Detective Sean Dolan for the arrest warrant application.

On August 10, 2012, at approximately 3:34 am, members of the Patrol Division responded to 3 Allene Drive on a reported burglary in progress. A resident awoke to find an unknown male in the residence who ran out of the house when he was seen. The subject was described as a white male, in his twenties, with wavy almost shoulder length brown hair parted in the middle, approximately 5'8" to 5'9", with a slender build. A motor vehicle belonging to the resident was also entered and personal items were stolen. There were NO injuries reported. The Detective Division is also following up on a second motor vehicle break-in on Corbin Road, a nearby street. The Police Department has continued to investigate numerous motor vehicle break-ins throughout the Town, mainly during the overnight hours. Based on many of the investigations, it is believed that several different unknown subjects are committing these crimes.



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Incidents of Special Interest (continued)

On August 11, 2012, at 2:58 pm, Officer Bryan Kelly of the Patrol Division responded to Family Auto Center, 93 Goodrich Street, to assist DEEP Officer Kenneth Leclerc, who was investigating a strong odor of gas/oil in the area, where underground gas/oil tanks had over flowed due to the heavy rains and were causing the contents of the tanks to flow onto Shelton Avenue. Due to the fluids backing out of the tanks DEEP called MCVAC Environmental out to clean the area which had been exposed by the contaminated fluids. Hamden building official, Robert Labulis, and Hamden Fire Marshall Dolan also responded. Located in the garage was a 2004 Lexus RX300 w/fresh body work done to the driver side and appeared to be prepped for new paint. It was clear that the body work on this vehicle was done at this location and done of recent. The evidence overwhelming indicated that this area has been used for auto repairs. Robert Labulis explained that the building had multiple electrical safety issues and he felt that the building was unsafe. After finding the evidence inside of the building, Labulis contacted the UI Company and ordered that the power be cut due to the safety issues. A short time later, UI personnel arrived and disconnected the power from the street and Clarence William Jr. was subsequently arrested for operating a repair facility without a license.

On August 11, 2012, at approximately 7:38 pm, members of the Patrol and Detective Divisions responded to the area of 19 North Street, after several calls were made to 911 of gunshots being fired. A male was located on the ground suffering from gunshot wounds. The Hamden Fire Department responded along with AMR and treated the male. He was transported to St. Raphael's Hospital in New Haven and was pronounced dead at 8:08 pm. It appears he was shot several times and this incident is being investigated as a Homicide. The victim has been identified as: James T. Dudley, DOB: 01/14/90, 110 East Gate Lane, Hamden, CT. The Major Crimes Detectives have continued the investigation and are following up on several leads. The shooting appears to have possibly started as an altercation on North Street between Dudley and unknown subject(s) near Dudley's motor vehicle. The Hamden Police Department announced the arrest of a juvenile male in connection with the homicide that occurred on August 11, 2012 on North Street. The juvenile has been identified as the shooter in the incident. The victim was previously identified as James T. Dudley (DOB 01/14/90) of 110 East Gate Lane, Hamden, CT. The juvenile has been charged with Felony Murder, 53a-54c, Unlawful Discharge of a Firearm, 53-203 and Carrying a Pistol without a permit, 29-35 of the Connecticut General Statutes. The juvenile was transferred to the Juvenile Detention Center, located in Bridgeport, CT on August 12, 2012.



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Incidents of Special Interest (continued)

On August 12, 2012, at approximately 4:15 am, members of the Patrol Division responded to a Lexington Street address on the report of a domestic dispute. Investigation revealed that the complainant, a 30 year-old Hamden resident, was continuously assaulted by her boyfriend, Melvin Wilkes. Officers learned that Wilkes allegedly struck her in the head repeatedly and strangled her. The victim, who was able to contact Hamden Police, was treated at Yale-New Haven Hospital and suffered a broken eardrum. Officer Stephen Baris of the Patrol Division located Wilkes, who had fled the scene in his motor vehicle. Melvin Wilkes, 36, of Lexington Street, Hamden, CT, was arrested and charged with Strangulation in the 3rd Degree, Assault in the 3rd Degree, Unlawful Restraint and Disorderly Conduct. Wilkes, who was detained at police headquarters on a \$50,000 bond, was scheduled to appear in Meriden Superior Court on August 13, 2012. Officer Jennifer Gaynor conducted the investigation.

On August 13, 2012, at approximately 10:00 am, David Taylor turned himself into police custody and was arrested on the strength of an active arrest warrant. David Taylor, 52, of 34 Lantern View Drive, Branford, was charged with 5 counts of Issuing a Bad Check and Larceny in the 2nd Degree. Taylor, who was released after posting a \$7,500.00 bond, was scheduled to appear in Meriden Superior Court on August 23, 2012. The arrest warrant was based on an incident that had occurred on July 20, 2012, when Hamden Police received a complaint from Citizen's Bank regarding a larceny. Detective John Marks of the Detective Division was assigned the investigation. Investigation revealed that in 2008, a couple who resides in Waterbury purchased a used motor vehicle from a dealership in Watertown. In August of 2011, the couple purchased a motor vehicle from Bernardo Motors, 2575 State Street, Hamden, by trading in their previously purchased vehicle. Bernardo Motors made several attempts to pay off the previous automobile loan with Citizens Automobile Finance (CAF). Bernardo Motors allegedly sent CAF 4 checks that were returned as "insufficient funds." CAF advised Hamden Police that they have suffered a monetary loss of \$14,404.47. That upon receipt of the second check, which was later deemed insufficient funds, CAF released the title to Bernardo Motors. Bernardo Motors then allegedly sold the vehicle, which was traded in, without paying off the automobile loan. Detective John Marks subsequently submitted an arrest warrant application to the court for the owner of Bernardo Motors, Mr. David Taylor. The arrest warrant application was approved.



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Incidents of Special Interest (continued)

On August 14, 2012, at approximately 7:15 pm, members of the Patrol Division responded to the area of Rodgers Road on the report of a trespass. Upon arrival, officers observed a white female fleeing from a residence. The female was subsequently apprehended in a wooded area by Officer Michael Nawrocki. Investigation revealed that the female, who was identified as Lauren Curtis, allegedly broke into a motor vehicle that was parked in the neighborhood. She was also allegedly in the possession of other stolen items from other Hamden locations. Lauren Curtis, 21, of 83 Rogers Road, Hamden, was arrested and charged with Burglary in the 3rd Degree, Larceny in the 6th Degree (2 counts) and Interfering With a Police Officer. Curtis, who was detained at police headquarters on a \$5,000 bond, was scheduled to appear in Meriden Superior Court on August 27, 2012. Officer Eric Goclowski of the Patrol Division conducted the investigation.

On August 15, 2012, at approximately 11:00 am, Detective John Marks observed Donald and Allison Strait on Whitney Avenue, riding a bus. They were promptly arrested on the strength of two active arrest warrants. Donald Strait, 41, was charged with Illegal Use of a Credit Card, Conspiracy to Commit Illegal Use of a Credit Card, Credit Card Theft by Transfer, Conspiracy to Commit Credit Card Theft by Transfer, Identity Theft, Conspiracy to Commit Identity Theft, Receiving Goods/Services Obtained Illegally, Conspiracy to Receive Goods/Services Obtained Illegally, Larceny in the 4th Degree, Conspiracy to Commit Larceny in the 4th Degree and Forgery. Allison Strait, 32, was charged with the same charges except Forgery. They were both detained at police headquarters on a \$5,000 bond, and were scheduled to appear in Meriden Superior Court on August 29, 2012. The arrest warrants were based on an incident that had occurred on June 11, 2012, when Hamden Police responded to the Carriage House, 2297 Whitney Avenue on the complaint of a larceny and fraud. Investigation revealed that the 60 year-old complainant allowed two homeless individuals to stay with her. Shortly thereafter, the 60 year-old was hospitalized. She allowed the 2 homeless individuals to stay at her residence, and upon returning from the hospital, she discovered that her debit card was fraudulently used 19 times and that a check was stolen. She suffered a monetary loss which totaled nearly \$1,900.00. Detective John Marks of the Detective Division conducted an investigation, which led to the application of arrest warrants for the 2 individuals, identified as Donald and Allison Strait. The arrest warrants were subsequently approved by the court.



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Incidents of Special Interest (continued)

On August 16, 2012, David B. Fein, United States Attorney for the District of Connecticut, announced that Keith Sykes, also known as "Joker," 54, of East Orange, New Jersey, was sentenced today by Senior United States District Judge Ellen Bree Burns in New Haven to 72 months of imprisonment, followed by three years of supervised release, for distributing heroin. This matter stems from a Drug Enforcement Administration Task Force investigation dubbed "Operation Brick House," which targeted a heroin distribution organization based in New Haven that was headed by Tarulus Glass, also known as "Dred," and his associates. The investigation employed several law-enforcement techniques, including the use of confidential informants, controlled purchases of heroin, physical surveillance, and the use of court-authorized wiretaps on cellular telephones utilized by some of the defendants. The investigation revealed that Glass and his associates, including Sykes, obtained prepackaged heroin from sources of supply in the New York metropolitan area and distributed it to drug sellers in and around New Haven. During the course of the investigation, DEA Task Force officers seized heroin, cocaine and crack cocaine, four firearms and three vehicles. On July 28, 2011, Sykes pleaded guilty to one count of conspiracy to distribute heroin. Eleven individuals were charged and have pleaded guilty as a result of the investigation. Glass awaits sentencing. This matter is being investigated by the DEA New Haven Task Force, which includes participants from the New Haven, Meriden, Hamden, West Haven, Branford and Ansonia Police Departments, and the United States Marshals Service. The case is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorneys Patrick F. Caruso and H. Gordon Hall.

On August 23, 2012, at approximately 9:45 pm, members of the Street Interdiction Team encountered a suspicious vehicle traveling on Dixwell Avenue. Officers watched the operator, later identified as Michael Saunders; throw several bags of cocaine out of the window. A motor vehicle stop was subsequently conducted on Dixwell Avenue and Morse Street. Saunders was allegedly in the possession of an additional quantity of cocaine and he was promptly arrested. Michael Saunders, 47, of 55 Bishop Street, New Haven, was charged with Possession of Narcotics and Possession of Narcotics With the Intent to Sell. Saunders, who was released after posting a \$50,000 bond, was scheduled to appear in Meriden Superior Court on August 31, 2012.



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Incidents of Special Interest (continued)

On August 24, 2012, at approximately 4:00 pm, Officer Jeremy Brewer of the Patrol Division observed a go-cart traveling southbound on Dixwell Avenue. He subsequently conducted a motor vehicle stop. Investigation revealed that the 2 teen-aged occupants had allegedly stolen the go-cart earlier in the day, from the driveway of a Paradise Avenue resident. They were taken into custody. A 14 and 13 year-old, who both reside in New Haven, were charged with Larceny in the 3rd Degree, Conspiracy to Commit Larceny in the 3rd Degree, Criminal Trespass in the 3rd Degree and Conspiracy to Commit Criminal Trespass in the 3rd Degree. They are both scheduled to appear in Juvenile Court in New Haven on September 7, 2012.

On August 25, 2012, at approximately 3:15 pm, Hamden Police responded to the Whitneyville Bottle Shop, 1226 Whitney Avenue, on the report of a robbery. Investigation revealed that an individual, described as a white female, 5'5", 18 to 22 years of age and strawberry blonde hair, entered the store and stated "this is a robbery." She was in the possession of a knife. In addition, she advised the store employee that she was in the possession of a firearm. The female fled on foot with an undisclosed amount of money and there were no reported injuries. Further investigation led police to 83 Rogers Road. While searching the residence, officers found a broken window and Peter Pizzillo hiding in the unoccupied residence, in the area of a closet. He was promptly arrested, and is known to be the boyfriend of a female who fit the description of the robbery suspect. Pizzillo, 25, of 68 Westfield Street, West Haven, was charged with Burglary in the 3rd Degree and Interfering With a Police Officer. Pizzillo, who was released after posting a \$500 bond, was scheduled to appear in Meriden Superior Court on September 7, 2012. Detective Sean Dolan of the Major Crimes Unit is conducting the investigation.

On August 26, 2012, at approximately 8:30 am, members of the Patrol Division responded to a Tanglewood Drive residence on the report of a burglary in progress. The complainant advised officers that as he was checking his mother's home, when he observed an individual sleeping in her bed. He promptly left the residence and contacted police. Moments later, Officers Robert Dunham and Stephen Baris found David Alter in a rear bedroom. Alter had allegedly entered the home by breaking a window. David Alter, a relative of the homeowner, was subsequently arrested. David Alter, 18, of 15 Harding Street, Hamden, was charged with Burglary in the 3rd Degree and Criminal Mischief in the 3rd Degree. Alter, who was detained at police headquarters on a \$2,000.00 bond, was scheduled to appear in Meriden Superior Court in Meriden on September 10, 2012.



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Incidents of Special Interest (continued)

On August 30, 2012, David B. Fein, United States Attorney for the District of Connecticut, announced that two men involved in a New Haven drug trafficking organization were sentenced today by Senior United States District Judge Ellen Bree Burns in New Haven. This matter stems from a joint law enforcement investigation conducted by the FBI New Haven Safe Streets Task Force, the DEA New Haven Task Force, the New Haven Police Department and the Hamden Police Department. Through the use of court-authorized wiretaps, investigating officers identified and dismantled a large drug trafficking organization that was centered in the Newhallville section of New Haven and Hamden, and was responsible for the distribution of crack cocaine and cocaine throughout the Greater New Haven area. Russell Battles, also known as "Cuddy" and "Cuddy Russ," 29, of New Haven, was sentenced to 152 months of imprisonment, followed by five years of supervised release. On May 2, 2011, Battles pleaded guilty to one count of conspiracy to possess with intent to distribute more than 500 grams of cocaine. According to court documents and statements made in court, in September and October 2010, Battles was intercepted several times over a wiretap arranging to purchase multiple kilograms of cocaine. Milton Johnson, also known as "Tilt," 28, of New Haven was sentenced to 48 months of imprisonment, followed by four years of supervised release. On April 3, 2012, Johnson pleaded guilty to one count of conspiracy to distribute 28 grams or more of cocaine base ("crack cocaine.") According to court documents and statement made in court, between June and October 2010, Johnson distributed between 196 and 280 grams of crack cocaine. Forty-seven individuals have been charged in federal court with various narcotics offenses as a result of this investigation. U.S. Attorney Fein noted that federal prisoners are required to serve at least 85 percent of their sentenced term of imprisonment and are not eligible for parole. This matter was investigated by the FBI New Haven Safe Streets Task Force (composed of members of members of the New Haven, Milford and Hamden Police Departments and the Connecticut Department of Correction), the Drug Enforcement Administration's New Haven Task Force (composed of members of the New Haven, West Haven, Meriden, Ansonia, Hamden and Branford Police Departments), along with substantial participation by members of the New Haven and Hamden Police Departments. The United States Marshals Service also has assisted the investigation. The investigation was funded in significant part by the United States Attorney's Office Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Task Force and supported by the Office's Project Safe Neighborhoods and Anti-Gang programs. This matter is being prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorneys Christopher M. Mattei and Robert M. Spector.



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Incidents of Special Interest (continued)

On August 31, 2012, shortly after 8:00 am, the Hamden Police and Fire Department responded to Hamden High School on the report of a bomb threat. Moments earlier, a school administrator received a telephone call indicating that a bomb was placed in the school. Numerous Hamden Police Officers, with the assistance of the high school staff, evacuated the student body to the outside rear of the building, near the athletic fields. Officer Jason Venditto and his K-9 Partner "Titan" conducted an extensive search of the high school. There were no signs of suspicious activity. Approximately an hour thereafter, students were allowed to enter the building. The Detective Division is conducting the investigation.



Picture courtesy of New Haven Register.