

Off the record, on the beat

Two TTT reporters spent an evening riding along with Lindenhurst police officers, learning the ins and outs of law enforcement in our community.

By Ian Lutz
Co-editor



When I was given the opportunity to ride with an officer from the Lindenhurst Police, I already had a clear image of the experience I was about to have before I even stepped in the car. I could see myself taking notes at a multitude of frivolous traffic stops and watching an officer go through a whole stack of tickets "just because".

Thinking this, I was pleasantly surprised to find the Lindenhurst Police going above and beyond their reputation as tireless traffic cops.

My ride along started a little after six in the evening, and within a few minutes we had our first call, a reckless driver with a suspended license driving a car with dealer plates. This seemed like a normal stop, but I was surprised to see the interaction between the officer I was with, Officer Lisa Demiglio, and the man arrested in the back of the car.

Demiglio was respectful, even courteous to the man in the back, even though he showed no effort to return her kindness.

"I talk to people like I understand, and use empathy towards them," said Demiglio. "For most people this is just a mistake

that they can learn from, and I try to be as respectful as I can."

The next call was to an elderly man who had trouble breathing. We arrived at the same time as the paramedics, and assisted them with their equipment and aided them in getting the man into the ambulance. Of course, no tickets were written, no arrests were made; it wasn't that kind of call. Demiglio just used her position as an officer to provide a service to the community.

During the next few hours, we made some routine stops at local businesses, and here I saw another often unnoticed service of the police. Demiglio went to various closed businesses and peered her spotlight in and around stores to make sure no one was in there that should not have been.

"If someone's walking around these businesses late at night, you have to wonder what they're doing, so we check up on that," said Demiglio. "It's just one more service we provide."

Our last stop was a domestic service call, which Demiglio wasted no time in getting to from across the town. In this instance, another officer assisted her in calming down two parties who were having a domestic dispute. Both parties went to their respective homes, no arrests were made, and in about half an hour, it was eleven o'clock and my ride along was over.

There is still a lot I have to change about my perspective of the police, and I'm sorry it took so much for me to realize that the Lindenhurst Police can be helpful. I'll still be slightly afraid of the flashing lights, but at the same time I feel a lot safer knowing that behind that badge, those lights, and that siren, there are thinking, caring people working their hardest for, not against, their community.

By Chani Bockwinkel
Co-editor



The shift began at 3 p.m. and the action started right away. Officer Fischer got a call from a paramedic saying that he saw a man driving recklessly by Grand Ave. in a black car. We hopped in the squad car and were on the look out for a vehicle fitting the description.

We found the car exiting a parking lot, speeding and driving on the wrong side of the road without a seat belt. We scanned his plate number in the computer installed in the police car and found that on top of it all, he had a suspended license. This was grounds for arrest. Fischer cuffed him and brought him back to the station to have his mug shots taken.

While Fischer was filling out paper work, I had a chance to ask him about his job. He has been working for the Lindenhurst police for six years. He is a field training officer and works with the Police Explorer Program, in which some of Lakes students are involved.

As far as the reputation of the police, he

says the negative portrayal is worth it, since they save lives.

The next stop we made was pulling over a non-truck with a truck license plate. He could have given her a ticket, but instead chose a warning to inform her of the mistake.

Fischer also acknowledges that, "The Lindenhurst police have a reputation of being ticket Nazi's."

He explains that it really depends on the officer. Some officers will give a juvenile a ticket for his first speeding offense to teach him a lesson, while another will let the juvenile off with a warning. The biggest way to upset an officer is to give him lip or attitude.

Another common myth is that the officer has a ticket quota to fill. There is no set number to meet. Some officers will write eight a month and others will write over forty.

Our next job was to stop at an accident scene where a Flight for Life helicopter was coming. The copter set down and the debris and dirt blew in our faces and eyes. The

reason the police need to be there is to make sure all goes smoothly and nothing happens with the copter. The paramedics, Flight for Life, fire department and two different police departments were there. It really showed me how everyone really has to work together to keep the town safe.

If I learned anything from this experience, it was that police officers are human too. This was especially apparent in the girls' locker room when I saw a straightener plugged in next to a walkie talkie. They, like everyone else, have good days and bad days, and they do their best to be objective.

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Save some time to save a pet

By Devon Dittmer
Photo/Art Editor

Walking into Save-A-Pet, the first thing you will probably notice is the warmth of all the people working there. The second thing you might notice is the smell.

This smell, however, is inevitable considering there are so many animals housed together in one place. Save-A-Pet currently has about 90 dogs and 170 cats housed in their shelter.

Save-A-Pet, a non-profit, no-kill shelter, located in Grayslake, is the perfect place to find a new pet, cat or dog.

The cats reside in a large room called the Main Cat Room. After spending time there, you will forget the smell, and recognize the array of personalities from the cats. The personalities are often reminiscent of Snow White's seven dwarfs: Grumpy, Dopey, Happy, Bashful, Sleepy, Sneezy, and Doc.

The dogs are kept in a separate area, away from the cats. Though the ages of the dogs

range, volunteers have to be 18 years old to work with them.

"Adoptions vary every week, but last year we adopted over 1,100 animals," said Save-A-Pet volunteer, Dominique Allion.

If interested in adopting all you have to do is complete an application and meet with an adoption counselor to determine potential matches.

If you are not ready to make a pet a permanent member of your family, but you are still interested in caring for one, it is possible to foster a pet for a short or long term period.

Adopting an adult cat costs \$100 and a dog costs \$125. These prices include all up-to-date shots and spaying or neutering. All adoptable cats have tested negative for feline leukemia and Feline Immunodeficiency Virus. The dogs have tested negative for heartworm and are on prevention medication.

More information can be found at www.save-a-pet-il.org.

Photos by Devon Dittmer

These cats currently live at the Save-A-Pet shelter in Grayslake, but they are in need of a home. If you are interested in adopting a pet or volunteering your time at the shelter, you can contact the shelter at (847)740-7788.

