TACOMA POLICE HISTORY
By Officer Erik Timothy (Department Historian) 1889-1890 (to be continued)

As the city grew, so did the department. Unfortunately, police officers were often appointed by the mayor as political favors and, when another mayor was elected, he often dismissed many officers to give jobs to his friends. One mayor felt obligated to provide jobs for elderly civil war veterans. Since they could not work at more strenuous city jobs, he placed them on the police department. In 1889, the city attorney, commenting on the state of the department said: "...many of his (Chief A.M. Chesney’s) officers are not worth the powder it would take to blow them up." All of this led to a shortage of qualified and experienced officers, but in spite of these problems, Tacoma Police Officers did not gain Civil Service protection until the early 1900’s.

By the late 1880’s, Tacoma stretched from the Northern Pacific RR shops at 56th and South Tacoma Way to the smelter in Ruston. St. Helens Avenue was the main thoroughfare connecting “Old” and “New” Tacoma, and it was little more than a muddy wagon trail. There was no patrol wagon, and when prisoners refused to walk, officers had to convey them to the station as best they could. Patrolman C.B. King, who retired in 1908, told of transporting a man to the station in an old rusty wheelbarrow because the man was too drunk to walk and couldn’t be left out all night.

By 1890, the department numbered 25 Patrolman, who covered three, 8 hour shifts, patrolling 3,840 acres of city. In addition, there were 2 Health Officers, 2 officers in charge of the chain gang (a chain gang of 15 to 18 prisoners built and maintained the streets), 1 Mounted Officer, 2 Jailors, 1 License Inspector, 1 clerk, 3 Captains and the Chief of Police. The Chief was paid $150 per month, Captains $90 and all others, except the mounted officer, received $75 per month. The Mounted Officer received $105 per month, since he had to provide his own horse and feed.

Duties of Police Officers in this era included helping ladies cross the unpaved streets. The mud was sometimes so deep at the cross streets that it came over the top of your shoes, so the officers would hitch the ladies up on their hips and carry them across the street. Horses, wagons and streetcars clogged the roads and 11th and 13th Streets were paved with wooden planks that became very slippery in the rain.

In 1890, under Chief Mart Dillon, the department purchased a horse drawn patrol wagon. Men hired as wagon drivers, and when an officer called for the wagon, the Desk Sergeant would ring a bell to signal the driver to hitch up the horses. The Jailer would hand his keys to the Desk Sergeant, and then accompany the wagon driver to his destination. In the 17 years this wagon remained in service, it is estimated that it wore out about 20 teams of horses and traveled nearly 100,000 miles. It was wrecked so many times that when it was replaced, few of the original parts remained.

AGENDA
July 15, 2015
6:30 pm
STAR CENTER
3873 South 66th Street

COP’S MEETING

Are you having security problems in your neighborhood? Strangers lurking? Our Community Liaison Officers attend our Cop’s Meetings to keep you posted on criminal activity in your neighborhood and to provide you the opportunity to bring your neighborhood’s problems to their attention. Discussing your problems at the meeting also alerts other members to recent criminal activity that might hit their neighborhood next.

John Warczak attends our meetings and is a great example of our dedicated, professional Community Liaison Officers. See the reverse side for the phone number of your Community Liaison Officer.

ROUNDABOUT —
Wapato Hills — We are planning another work party on Saturday, July 11th from 9 until noon. We will be weeding whacking the tall vegetation and removing some more "urbanite" from the site. Dress appropriately for the weather and wear sturdy shoes. Bring work gloves, water to drink, snacks for yourself, etc. Please bring a weed whacker if you have one. All are welcome. Come for an hour or stay for the morning. Contact Carol Munsey, Habitat Steward, 753-6417 Cemunsey@nventure.com

Community Gardens —
The Wapato Hills Garden is located on the west side of Wapato Hills near South 60th. For info contact Carol Munsey, 753-6417 or Cemunsey@nventure.com

The South Tacoma Community Garden is located at 70th and Puget Sound. Contact Sherrie Hayward at 212-2685 for info.

The Dan Mulholland Memorial Garden is located at the Manito Community Center, 4808 South 66th Street. Contact Andy Mordhorst at 475-8416 or amordhorst@harbornet.com

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INNOVATIVE GRANTS — Applicants for Innovative Grants will be presenting their projects at our August 19th meeting. Recommendations will be forwarded August 20th.

National Night Out — August 4th. Coming soon! Start your planning to make it special!!

FREE DOOR PRIZES AT THE MEETING
COMMUNITY LIAISON OFFICERS: Community Liaison Officers are here to team up with us on neighborhood safety and security problems. Contact them thru Sector Commander: Lt. Al Roberts (591-5190), or at Email—aroberts2@cityoftacoma.org

Your CLO’s are: Sector 3-1 Officer — Mike Sbory  594-7858; Email—MSbory@cityoftacoma.org
Sector 3-2 Officer — Robert Luke  591-5692; Email—rluke@cityoftacoma.org
Sector 3-3 Officer — Debra Vause  573-2563; Email—dvause@cityoftacoma.org (Temporarily unavailable)
Sector 3-4 Officer — John Warczak  573-2562; Email—jwarczak@cityoftacoma.org

The contents of this newsletter are believed to be the consensus of the Board and membership of the Neighborhood Council.

GRAFFITI AND YARD SALE SIGNS: People are still trashing our neighborhoods with “Yard Sale” and “For Rent” signs on utility poles, street, and stop signs. Report graffiti and illegal signs. Help out by removing illegal signs and picking up the signs that have fallen and become litter on our streets. Don’t litter on our utility poles, street, and stop signs.

SOUTH TACOMA NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL
c/o City of Tacoma
Neighborhood Council Office
747 Market Street
Tacoma, Washington 98402-3793

WHO ARE WE?: The South Tacoma Neighborhood Council is an independent non-profit corporation formed by neighbors to address neighborhood issues and concerns. All of our meetings are open to the public and you are more than welcome to attend. Our “Board” meetings are on the first Thursday of each month, at 6:30 pm, at the STAR Center at 3873 South 66th Street. Our General” meetings are once a month on the third Wednesday at 6:30 pm at the STAR Center at 3873 South 66th Street. Contact Skip Vaughn at 475-3121 with any questions.