

TOWN OF ARNAUVILLE
CITY COUNCIL MEETING
JUNE 11, 2014

POLICE DEPARTMENT REPORT

Work continues on the upgrading and updating of the Police Department's SOP manual. To date, we are nearly one-third completed with this process. Mr. Jerry Quebedeaux, who has been assisting us, cautioned me that it might take 4 to 6 months to make the necessary changes.

Our evidence locker was opened by members of the Louisiana State Police on Wednesday, June 4th at approximately 8:30 AM. Officer Joseph Carriere was present during this procedure and stayed with the LSP officers during their audit of the contents. The LSP officers were at our location for two (2) days, all day Wednesday and Thursday, before completing the audit. Some items stored as evidence had been inside the locker since 1994. As of now, all the items in the evidence locker have been identified and been given a case number that ties the evidence to a particular crime. Officer Carriere and Officer Howell have been assigned to monitor the evidence locker in the future. Their job now is to contact the District Attorneys of both St. Landry and St. Martin to determine if the evidence we have is still needed for future trials. Once those Parishes have informed us that the evidence is no longer needed, they will issue us an order to dispose of the evidence. Until then we have to keep the evidence locked up in our locker.

The tennis courts are now being monitored by observation cameras. The fence surrounding the courts are in good condition except that one of the security gates is missing and no one knows where it is. I have contacted Affordable Fence Company and they will be putting in a new gate shortly. The basketball goals will be ordered when I can take a check to Walmart to pay for them. As soon as we receive the goals they will be put together by volunteers.

We are currently sending, and scheduling, our Patrol Officers for the 20 hours of required training necessary for them to retain their Post certification. I have received from POST headquarters information necessary for us to upload the training received by each Officer to their office.

I have completed the paperwork necessary to print MIC (Miscellaneous Interview Cards) that will be used by our Officers when they investigate a complaint that does not require a full report. I will have these printed in the near future for our use. These cards will be filed, as are the FIC (Field Interview Cards), for information purposes and to track any trends.

Officer Carriere has begun accepting applications for Senior Services. We have contacted the individual who will conduct the training necessary to certify two (2) of our dispatchers and two (2) Officers in how to correctly monitor the individuals in the program, which will also include observing any signs of abuse. The other two (2) dispatchers and two (2) Officer will also be given the opportunity to attend this training. We did find out that this training is geared more to Officers; however, if there is room in the class the dispatchers will be included. These classes are scheduled to begin in September or October and will be offered every 2 or 3 months.

We are in the process of reviewing two (2) computer software packages that will be installed on our computers. The first, called LEMIS is from the Louisiana Commission on Law Enforcement and its function is for report writing and keeping track of calls for service. As part of the preparation for this program we have begun issuing Case Report numbers for every call for service we get, no matter how minor. We have also divided Arnaudville into five (5) zones. LEMIS will be able to keep track of every service call received in our office as well as designate which zone the call came from. With this information we will be able to determine which zone in our town needs more monitoring. The second software package is LACRASH. As the name implies, this program will aid in the writing of crash reports. Right now, all of our crash reports are done by hand. Both of these programs afford us the capability to keep our records stored electronically for easy retrieval and, also, both are free.

We have joined the Louisiana State Police with their push for more enforcement of the seatbelt law, "Click It or Ticket". During the past six (6) months St. Landry Parish has had ten (10) traffic accident fatalities. According to the State Police, each of these deaths were a direct result of the driver or passenger not wearing a seatbelt. Be warned that we will not give anyone a warning where seatbelts use are concerned, a ticket will be issued for this violation.

Approximately 2 or 3 weeks ago an Officer observed a vehicle speeding on Market St. heading towards Leonville. The driver of the vehicle was traveling at over 60 miles per hour when he passed a truck, heading in the same direction but following the posted speed limit. The Officer attempted to make a stop of the vehicle; however, the driver refused to stop and sped away. Our Officer turned on his overhead lights and siren and began pursuit. The Officer stated that the driver of the speeding vehicle went through the "S" turn outside of town traveling at over 75 miles per hour. The pursuit ended when the driver of the vehicle lost control, ran off the road, and his vehicle flipped over approximately four (4) times before coming to rest upside down. While the vehicle was flipping the fourth time, the driver was ejected from the vehicle through the rear passenger window but was not killed. I have been questioned as to why we gave chase during this incident. Someone driving to Arnaudville might have been hit by this speeder, or a bicyclist, or just someone walking along the side of the highway. In answer to that I want to point out that the driver was not only a fugitive from Lafayette but had a blood-alcohol level of .19 (over twice the legal limit of .08), and he also had

two (2) previous DWI convictions. The Arnaudville Police Department will enforce the laws of this Community and the State of Louisiana. Could a tragedy have occurred while we were in pursuit; absolutely...but one could have just as easily occurred had we done nothing and let this drunk continue on his merry way.

As a service to our citizens we are currently looking at a way that they can come to the Department and have their items, such as bicycles, lawnmowers, weed eaters, etc., registered and have the item specifically marked for easier identification in case the item is stolen. This would be done by our office and a file, along with a photograph of the item, would be kept. If a person already has some of their items marked and would care to have recorded, they could contact us and an Officer would go to their residence to take the necessary information and a picture and it would also be filed. Once this service has been implemented our citizens can call for an appointment to have their items recorded. It is difficult to put some stolen items back into the hands of the rightful owner. An example of this is the number of bicycles that are located on the side of the Police Department office and those in storage at the old jail across Bayou Fuselier.

The question of adequate patrol was brought up at the last town meeting and we have addressed that problem. All Officers have been instructed to patrol the entire town at least three (3) times during their shift, and more if possible. Understand that these patrols may be interrupted should the Officer be on a call or is involved in an emergency situation.

There has been some concerns expressed about the drug problems here in Arnaudville. Our Department is currently gathering information and this information will be passed on to the proper authorities with the St. Landry and St. Martin Sheriff's Offices. Our goal has been, and always will be, the removal of this activity from the streets of our town.

Statistics from our Department for the month of May were: 7 Citations issued, 5 Arrests, and 145 calls for service. It should be noted that although we only wrote 7 Citations, we wrote over 80 FIC's for traffic violations that were filed and no ticket was written.

Finally, I come to the part of this report that I like the most, the naming of "Employee of the Month". I received some positive feedback from a citizen regarding this employee. We received a call for service involving the sound of an animal in distress. When this Officer investigated he found a dog, whose leash had been tangled around some metal items in the yard of a residence, in a position where the dog could not move. The Officer noted that the water bowl for the animal was out of reach and that the food bowl was located behind a fence and was empty. The dog, which was a pit bull, was whimpering. The Officer approached the dog and after gaining the animals trust set the dog free from the tangle. The Officer had to cut the leash in order to accomplish this. The Officer then contacted the St. Landry Parish Animal Control Shelter and had the dog picked up. The Officer then tracked down the owner of the animal and filled out a warrant of arrest for Animal Cruelty against this individual. Since the animal was to be put down within 4 days the Officer went out of his way to have the charges placed on

the Mayor's court docket in order that the fines could be paid and the animal picked up by the owner within that time frame. Also, this Officer was involved in a traffic pursuit that resulted in the crash of the vehicle being pursued. This Officer not only contacted the proper authorities to come to his and the suspect's aid but he also provided first aid to the person, who had been ejected from the vehicle, until EMT's arrived on scene. It is my pleasure to give an award certificate as well as a gift certificate for this month's Employee of the Month, Patrolman Jason Howell.

This concludes the Arnaudville Police Report.

Respectfully submitted,

Eddy J. LeCompte, Chief of Police