



City of Gilroy

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Police Chief Gregg Giusiana to Leave in January

Gregg Giusiana, Police Chief for the City of Gilroy, has announced his last day on the job will be January 24, 2008. This will mark the end of his 34th year of service, to the day, since starting as a cadet with the Gilroy Police Department in 1974.

Gregg started his service to the City of Gilroy and the Gilroy Police Department as a Police Cadet in January, 1974. Since then he has held the positions of Police Officer, Juvenile Detective, Field Training Officer, Sergeant in charge of Patrol and Administration, Lieutenant in charge of Support Services, Captain in charge of Operations, Interim Chief, and, since 1997, Chief of Police.

Giusiana says that some of the biggest challenges that he and the department have faced have been related to gang activity. In the 1970's and early 1980's there were significant problems involving prison gang members in Gilroy. In the late 1980's, this transitioned to gang activity related more to youth gangs. The gang problem became much more visible to the community-at-large after a triple, non-fatal shooting involving gang members in the early 1990's. As a result of this problem, the Anti Crime Team (ACT) was formed. Initially ACT conducted investigations of gang activity, but over time, they became proactive in keeping gang violence from erupting. During this time, Giusiana also convened a community-wide graffiti summit, and established Wipe-Out-Watch, a Graffiti Hotline, and hired painting contractors to report and eradicate graffiti, which is often associated with gang activity.

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Mounted and Bike units were other successful programs that helped get the officers out and visible in the community. Giusiana stated that these activities “did not win the war, but they certainly went a long way to win many of the battles, and allowed the citizens to take back their community.”

Giusiana has seen and experienced many changes with the department and the community during his 34 years of service. When he joined the force, Gilroy had a population of about 12,000 people. The population of Gilroy is now about 50,000, and the Police Department now has 106 employees, of whom 63 are sworn officers, has an operations budget of over \$19,000,000, and just last year moved into a new, state-of-the-art police station.

One of the biggest changes he has seen has been in the quality of training. In 1974 the academy was 10 weeks long. Today, it runs for 22 weeks, after which a new officer will spend 3 to 4 months with a field training officer. The Gilroy Police department also spends considerable time and resources on on-going training. Another big change has been in crime-scene processing. “In the old days, we would collect a blood sample to get a blood type. Today, we process samples to get DNA information. This will have as major an effect on solving crime as did fingerprinting in the 1920 and 30’s.”

The Citizens Police Academy and Volunteers in Policing programs are two more success stories that Giusiana oversaw. The former introduced citizens to the scope and challenges of police work. The latter trains and utilizes volunteers to assist in traffic and crowd control among other duties, to the tune of 5,600 volunteer hours last year alone. “The V.I.P. program has been a great program for the department, and a huge benefit to the community.” He also points with pride to the new Police Building, opened in March of 2007, which should benefit the community for at least the next 50 years.

He said “I will miss the great organization, with it’s wonderful and dedicated people who really care about the community, I know they will fully support the new Chief.”

Gregg and his wife Chris plan to stay in the area, travel to Hawaii, and maintain his involvement in the community. He also hopes to spend more time pursuing his longtime interests in railroads and photography.