



Policing in Norwalk

February 5, 2015 - Over the course of the last year, the law enforcement profession has been maligned and disparaged by many. This was due in large part to a few high profile events where police actions were viewed as being overzealous, out of line or even illegal. It has been a difficult time for the profession. Images of uniformed officers in aggressive postures and/or using force to make arrests that some consider inappropriate have refueled discussions of negative stereotypes that have labeled the police over the years.

Fortunately in Norwalk our police department has taken steps to try and prevent these negative feelings about the police from occurring. We have done this through open communication and transparent activities designed to build trust and ensure fairness. In short, we embrace community policing.

Regrettably, there are officers around the country who do make poor decisions or come to work with malicious intent that brings harm to citizens. Nationwide there are over 600,000 officers working for any one of over 18,000 police departments. It stands to reason that at least a few of these individuals are dishonest, unethical or are in the profession for the wrong reasons. However, regardless of your feelings concerning the high profile incidents that have been reported of late and or any personal contacts you may have had with a police officer, the vast majority of officers are good people with good intent. In Norwalk this is exactly the situation. Because after all:

It wasn't an emotionless "just the facts ma'am" officer who purchased Christmas lights for a family who had theirs stolen in the night.

It wasn't a bunch of rogue officers who donated money, fed the hungry and played with the children at "Lunch in the Park"

It wasn't a closed minded, "our way or the highway department" who asked four community members to help select new patrol officers.

It wasn't donut-eating, powdered sugar-encrusted officers who learned of an elderly woman with nothing to eat and promptly went to the store and filled her refrigerator with food.

It wasn't an officer with a callous disregard for decency who washed the eggs off of a community member's house after it was hit by vandals.

It wasn't a group of prejudiced police officers who donated money and played games with ALL the children at Family Fun Night.

It wasn't officers with vicious intent who twice rushed to the aid of dying elderly citizens and saved their lives with CPR.

It wasn't a stone-faced officer with no emotion who stood at attention during your loved ones funeral procession, hugged your child when they were scared, or read to the children at daycare

It wasn't uncaring and indifferent officers who worked tirelessly all year raising money and awareness for the Children of the Iowa Special Olympics.

It wasn't a "shoot first ask questions later" type officer who replaced a young boy's hot wheels car after it was stolen.

It wasn't an oppressively minded and overbearing officer who volunteered their time to help distribute school backpacks to children who needed one.

And it wasn't racially-profiling officers who gave 50 dollars to unsuspecting Norwalkians hoping that their Christmas might be a little brighter.

None of the officers involved in the above listed events were callous, or prejudiced or had bad character. The officers above were and are our officers; officers of the Norwalk Police Department who are committed to Noticeable Professionalism and Dedicated service. We enjoy our role as community caretakers. We strive to remain relevant by using force only when necessary. While we are poised to take enforcement action when needed, we understand that compassion for all is a mindset to be embraced.

We are also appreciative of your continued support. The blueish hue that took over the night when all of the blue porch lights were on was something to behold. It shows that when the police and the community are on the same page with each other's needs and responsibilities, good things can happen. Success in public safety can sometimes be a tricky thing to measure, but from all indications, 2014 was a great year for the NPD. Hopefully we helped to make your 2014 a memorable year as well.