

*Tales  
From  
The  
Cop  
Shop*

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# TALES FROM THE COP SHOP

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## FOREWORD

The following writings are my recall of several events that occurred in my 19 years as a police officer. I retired from law enforcement in 2000, and have been asked to commit my memorable moments to written form. That which you are about to read are events that remain with me, being 16 years removed from duty. These are as factually as true as my brain cells allow. While these jottings may not stand out to most as the consummate thriller, it does reflect the reality of the times and, to a degree, a different political and sociological climate than contemporary times.

To repeat (with some variation) the pro-show dialogue from the show television show “Dragnet”, the names have been changed so as to minimize the damage. Enjoy.

To Boo- Here ‘tis.....

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# The Transition

## Chapter 1

It was post-summer, 1980 and my wife, infant son and I were living in unincorporated Broward County in what eventually became Coconut Creek, Florida. By day, I was a cable television technician, and by night, a security guard. One weekend a month, I was doing drills with the Florida National Guard.

As a “rent-a-cop”, I was assigned to what was then the College of Boca Raton (later Lynn University). School was in session and my job began in the evenings by shaking classroom doors and checking parking lots for general security. Then, it was off to provide a physical appearance in the dorm areas (primarily the ladies dorm entrance) and then, at a specified time, I would report to the security office at the entrance to the college. There, I checked all incoming vehicles and student identifications, to ensure that those driving onto campus had a legitimate reason for being there.

The college had a reputation for being a paper mill for the rich folks from the north-east. It was an expensive place to study by day and party hard by night. There were complaints that came to the security office for me to log and deal with. The school truly lived up to its reputation. There were the usual complaints- ladies with suddenly unwanted guests in the dorm rooms, nude and drunk “bathers” at the pool, loud parties in the men’s dorm with those who were highly influenced by their behavior being directly proportionate to the amount of alcohol and/or other mind altering substances ingested. My job was primarily that of documenting a situation and insuring that the police were in route. As a result, several students were either suspended or expelled from the premises.

On any given night shift, there was down time, when I had the opportunity to do whatever. This was the time I normally grabbed the telephone, and called my other guard post friends for casual chatter and insured that all of us were awake. They were a diverse collection of people who were working in similar posts to mine at exclusive housing developments (plenty of those in that area, thank you) and various businesses requiring an additional set of night eyes.

It was during one of these conversations in which a friend and fellow guard told me that he was considering taking a test for openings at the Boca Raton Police Department. He asked me if I would be interested in doing the same. I thought about it for a while, and decided that yeah, I could give it a shot. It was short notice, so I didn’t have time to review the preparatory books available for the tests, but hey, I

was already employed so, even if it didn't happen, my family would still eat. And I did realize that, while being a cable technician wasn't bad work, it really didn't feel like a career. I spoke to a friend of mine from church who was a Florida Fish and Game officer who told me that "Law enforcement can do some funny things to your head." Or perhaps it was something I pondered while I was standing at an intersection in Miami in the summer 1980, during our National Guard deployment in Miami due to civil unrest (a.k.a. riots). The thought had crossed my mind that if I had to put my life on the line, it would be nice to be paid accordingly. And, if I was killed as a result of participating in games people play, then at least my wife could collect bigger insurance benefits and cry all the way to the bank.

So, I called my friend and let him know we were on. I arranged for an off day from the cable TV gig and the two of us met for breakfast the morning of the tests and proceeded to the community center where the written tests were administered. There were over 100 people going for the openings. As I looked out, I saw guys that at least looked the part. They were husky, fit looking guys- the type that spent any and all spare moments of life lifting weights. At 6 foot 2 and 165 pounds, I will be the first to admit there was a slight air of intimidation. But there was always the cable job waiting.

On the same day, we did the physical agility test. This was no problem. The sit-ups, push-ups and running were things I had routinely done almost daily for years. And, my National Guard PT standards were something I maintained.

It was some days later that I had a physical examination. The Doctor pushed, probed and X-rayed to his satisfaction and determined that I was a human of the species and, at least on paper, appeared to be capable of doing the job.

Then there was the polygraph test. The detective that administered the test was an individual who had learned the craft from those who had initially formulated the procedure. There were questions that were very direct: "Outside of your wife and masturbation, have you ever had sex?"...

"Are you homosexual?"

"Have you ever had sex with an animal?"

"Do you use alcohol?"

"Have you ever used marijuana or other illegal drugs?"

"Have you ever stolen money?"

"Have you ever been suspected by law enforcement for the commission of any crime?"

"Have you ever been read your Miranda rights?"

One of the things I volunteered was a situation that led to my termination from a convenience store. While living in Jacksonville, my wife and I were asked to make

a deposit to the bank for the manager, which was later described as “missing money” from the store’s register. As there was no paper trail for me to show how it ended up in the manager’s home deposit, I was given an option of quitting or being fired. The polygraph quickly cleared me of any wrong doing.

So, with most of the battery of tests completed, it was now time to sit and wait. Results were in with a good news/ bad news combo. Out of all applicants, I had managed to finish fifth. The problem was that they were only hiring four. OK, I thought, I have a few options. Cable was looking less desirable than ever, so I began thinking about the fact Boca Raton was not the only police department. I began thinking about Delray Beach. It was another coastal city. Perhaps a tad rougher by reputation, but I thought I would test there and see what would happen. My friend who I tested with was eliminated early on. It seems that shortly after we finished the tests, he was involved in an incident involving a handgun. Oops.

But then something happened. Yes, folks, there is a God. One of the applicants decided that he was going to the first city that called him with employment. (Oddly enough, it was Delray Beach). This moved me into the number four slot. The way I found out was a phone call I received on January 1, 1980. While most people were recovering from a night of partying, one lady was busy at her office telling me that I had an appointment for a psychological examination that I had to pass before I could be hired and start the police academy. So, it was off to see the Mind Wizard. The doctor told me that, ordinarily, he would not administer the test because I had been up for 24-plus straight hours. But, for better or worse, he did...and apparently I did alright, as shortly after, I received a phone call from the same lady- the Personnel Director for Boca Raton, offering me the position of police officer. It was with a degree of pleasure I resigned as a cable TV guy. I also resigned my post as a security guard.

There we were- the four of us who had been selected by process of elimination, standing in front of the acting Chief of Police, taking an oath of allegiance much longer than that which is administered to the President of the United States. Then, there was the matter of logistics, including vehicle issues, schedules and policies, procedures and demeanor which would be strictly adhered to.

And then, on January 12, 1981, the newly ordained quartet met at the police station, and for the first time ever, sat in a patrol car which we used to commute to (then) Palm Beach Junior College (which changed to Palm Beach Community College and is now Palm Beach State College) to begin “Basic Standard Recruit Class # 25”. We were three males and one female. On the weekend prior to our start, there had been a homicide in Boca Raton. There was a fair in town, and a carnival employee had murdered someone and taken flight. We were told to “keep an eye

out” for the suspect, as we passed the area en-route to PBJC. We never did find him, which was probably a good thing.

We arrived at the campus and found our way to an orientation meeting. There, the 376-hour course was laid out for us. Soon enough, we were being immersed into the world of police stuff. A variety of folks from a variety of fields and a variety of agencies began injecting the training criteria into the classes. There were local deputy sheriffs, sheriffs, police officers, sergeants, lieutenants, and chiefs from city police agencies, state agencies, and federal agents (primarily FBI personnel). All had a specific field of expertise to teach. Some classes were informative, introducing us to the various specialties within police work. But most classroom time was devoted to Federal constitutional law, the gospel according to Florida, and city and county ordinances that were more or less universal.

Outside the classroom walls, there were graded classes in pursuit driving, self-defense, physical training, situational responses (car stops, dealing with street issues, from one-on-one to crowd control, etc.) and the gun range. The range covered everything from gun safety, situations and qualification shooting. There was also a night-fire exercise series.

On our daily commutes to classes in the issued patrol car, we kept ourselves entertained. One of our favorite cheap thrills was holding a coffee cup outside the car as we drove down I-95. The “device” looked somewhat like a radar gun, which had people backing down big time from their cruising speed. We would use the public address system to warn drivers of their errant ways. Amazingly, it had the desired effect.

Finally, the big day arrived. On March 17, 1981, we sat in a ceremonial gathering as a class for the last time. Every agency throughout the county that had one or more officers graduating had a major officer or chief in attendance. We were all decked out in uniform and ready to defend truth, justice, the American way and whatever else would be thrown at us. Our department’s road captain gave us our congratulations and condolences- we had to report the following morning for work. So much for the parties some had planned. But, sure enough, we were now officially law enforcement officers in and for the city of Boca Raton.

# The Road

## Chapter 2

The city of Boca Raton is a Palm Beach County seaside city sandwiched between Delray Beach on the north and Deerfield Beach on the south, which is in Broward County. (The town of Highland Beach is to the immediate north of Boca Raton on A-1-A, but doesn't extend but a couple of blocks west). To the locals, it is known on a first-name basis. "Boca" has always been a city of affluence. In 1980, the official population was 49,447. It was home to Florida Atlantic University and the College of Boca Raton. It was also the southern home to IBM. The facility was immense, occupying several blocks of buildings and recreational facilities for their employees to include baseball fields and picnic-style areas. It was *the* place to work. In fact, there were police who were hired from IBM and police who worked security for IBM.

Many affluent folks called it home. There was a busy small airport that was quite convenient for business and tourist travel. There was the Boca Raton Hotel and Club which is still a five-star resort. And there were several exclusive private communities, many with private security. Yes, it was an aesthetically beautiful community. Among other selling points was the fact that there was a comparatively low crime rate. So, there I was, staring at Paradise, only now from the inside of a police car.

I was introduced to my Field Training Officer (FTO) by way of my Shift Lieutenant and Sergeant. I had a full complement of issued items: uniforms for all occasions, a gun (a Smith and Wesson .357 Magnum), leatherworks, police radio, tons of police forms, traffic citations and probably a stupid grin that said "rookie". On the plus side, I was 30 years old as I began this gig, so at least, theoretically, I would minimize the effects of "rookie-itis"... a mental power trip one has when suddenly given authority. I was briefed by my sergeant, who laid out the ground rules in no uncertain terms. Sgt. Seeque was a black man who had my respect from day one. He was adamant about his level of tolerance when it came to doing things that were done stupidly. There wasn't a whole lot of flexibility.

At any rate, Jeff, my assigned FTO, was a 10-year veteran in police work. He possessed lot of patience (a prerequisite when dealing with trainees) and was fully capable of knowing how to critique one's work. He would have me doing radio transmissions from our 100-plus signals and 100-plus codes after a brief rehearsal and then keying the radio and talking on the air. There was finding street locations from the map, and then the actual road. There was a metric ton of stuff to gather



about which forms to use, how to write correctly in police lingo, how to handle dealing with the public and when and how to conduct traffic stops, and how to put bad guys in jail.

Unlike some of the other field training officers, Jeff didn't throw me under the bus. There were those who, on day one, would take their trainees and drive quickly to a location that had no street signs, and tell the rookie to give his location. Being clueless, the rookie had no response. Then, he would be given the "always know where you are" talk-off. All of us had a shot at directing traffic at 20<sup>th</sup> St. and Federal Highway...a five-way intersection. The traffic lights were disabled and the new officer would do a 15-minute stint moving vehicles through the busiest intersection in the city during rush hour.

Then, there were the practical joke varieties. The FTO would introduce his rookie to a particular veteran officer, who had mastered the art of the "boomerang nightstick". When encouraged by the FTO, the rookie would approach the veteran officer and request a demonstration of the nightstick that would be tossed and return on its own. Initially, the officer would refuse, but would, on request, provide a demonstration. Then, with an obligatory approach, the veteran requested the nightstick of the rookie. After carefully sizing and analyzing the long black stick, he would go into an Olympic-style approach, and launch the stick as far as it would go. The stick (needless to say) would land the better part of a football field away. No return. No boomerang. No nothing. The veteran would look down field, just shake his head and mumbled something about how he must have done something wrong. Meanwhile, the rookie would walk the distance to retrieve his night stick, realizing he had been scammed. Oh, well.

I had been on the job a whopping 2 days, ingesting all that I could about being a Boca officer, when my FTO and I were dispatched back to the station. On the previous night, a man approached his estranged wife and shot both her and a female friend of hers. The wife had survived the attack, but was in the hospital with serious gunshot wounds. Her friend had been treated for minor wounds and released. The shooting subject had eluded the police and had telephoned the station, stating that he intended to "finish the job." Our Lieutenant told him "Yeah...go ahead and try it- we have something for you if you do." He then assembled a 24 hour police security group to be at the hospital for the victim's protection. No one knew exactly where the shooter was, so the game was on. I was taken from my FTO, and placed in the hospital as part of the security team. I was assigned to the evening shift.

On arrival at the hospital, I was escorted to victim's room. There was a chair outside the room for us to use. It was something I really didn't use. Instead, I spent my time pacing up and down the aisle outside the room, with an occasional peak in

the room to insure the suspect hadn't managed to parachute in through the roof or crawl in through the air vents or windows. I began plotting the best places to shoot from, so as not to strike oxygen tanks, other people and objects that weren't compatible with gun shots.

This procedure continued around the clock. Three of us were covering the victim with blankets of security throughout all hours. But then, she was released from the hospital, and sent home. Now, things got a little trickier. On arrival at her home, I met with her parents, and toured the home. I stationed myself in the hallway and listened for suspicious sounds. It's funny, the number of things that go bump in the night.

The following night, I was prepared to repeat the hallway position, but was told it wasn't necessary. The suspect had been located and arrested in New Jersey. What was nice was that, during the post-action review, I was told that the victim only felt secure enough to sleep of a night when one of two specific officers were on duty. One was a senior officer, and I was the other.

So, it was back to my FTO to resume my training. At the time, we were working a 5-2/5-2/7-5 shift schedule. There were 5 day shifts, 5 evening shifts and 7 midnight shifts, followed by 5 days off. During the first half of the training cycle, Jeff drove the car, did most of the radio, directed and corrected the paper work. There was even a form for calls not requiring a report called a no-report report...also known as a field incident report. This wasn't to be confused with a field investigation card, for folks you talked to under suspicious situations. There was also a green sheet that was used when you wished to editorialize on a report and had information that couldn't be placed in the report itself.

My first call with a drawn weapon happened in short order. It was an alarm call at a jewelry store on an early morning call. Both Jeff and I entered the store and Jeff had me draw my weapon and be at the ready. It was, for me, a moment of wide-eyed concentration on all sides. As we moved slowly into the store, one of the employees advised that the alarm had been set off accidentally and that all was secure. I re-holstered with the feeling of relief.

During the second half of the cycle, there was a role reversal. Jeff was the passenger and I called the shots. Overall, I suppose I did alright, but there were things brought to my attention that could have/should have been approached differently. One of my reports was reviewed by Lt. Starr. He was a highly educated and intelligent individual, who knew his business. He was resented by some as he would administer corrections when necessary. My first report given to him for his authorization was decorated with what looked like an entire ink supply from a red pen. I was initially irritated, but after reading his comments, I realized that he knew

what he was doing. Over time, we actually got along very well and I appreciated his input. He would be my direct supervisor further down the road.

I recall an in-progress call on the night shift in which there was a house burglary. While en-route, there was a vehicle which passed us which generally matched the bad-guy getaway vehicle. Jeff wanted to pursue the vehicle, which was going the opposite direction on a main street. I was more focused on getting to the scene of the crime. Jeff wanted me to turn around and go for the car, but realized that I would have probably gotten us killed had I even attempted to do a quick turn. Jeff decided that the radio was a better solution, and we proceeded to the call.

One night, Jeff was off. (He probably needed a break from me). Sgt. Seeque had me ride with him. We were working the late shift. He was driving and parked for a few moments in an isolated area while I was doing reports. There was a brief time of silence, and suddenly there was snoring. OK, I thought, what do I do? Here's my supervisor, asleep. I made a few distracting overt movements and throat-clearing noises, but to no avail. So, I finally opened the car door and went for a walk. When I returned, he was awake.

Then there was the third phase of the cycle. This is where I was given a patrol of my own. I would either respond to, or initiate calls on my own. One call came when I was on evening shift. There were two vehicles that were northbound on Federal Highway, the major artery through Boca, approaching Palmetto Park Road, a major east-west roadway which (eventually) connected the beach with the westbound city limits. There was a conflict between the cars that eventually resulted in a conflict between the drivers. As the cars approached Palmetto Park Road, the cars stopped for a red light at Palmetto and Federal. The driver of the second vehicle exited his car, and approached the driver of the first, and proceeded to attempt to waylay the driver by pulling him out through the car window. I apparently radioed the fight-in-progress appropriately and Jeff approached the intersection as a backup. After breaking up the fight and obtaining the crucial information, I began the report. The driver of vehicle one, whose wife was a handicap passenger and visibly upset, wanted to assist me in making the report. In the long run, the aggressor- a young man, later plead guilty to charges, thus avoiding a trial and further action. It was finally that moment in time. I was a fully trained and equipped police officer. Jeff did quite well considering what he had to work with. Now, I sat in briefing, looking at the lineup of the officers with whom I would be working with. I had been assigned zone thirty-one. This was a common designation for rookies. It was (literally) at the beach. It was a long zone which extended from Deerfield Beach to Delray Beach. It was primarily condominiums with an occasional single-family dwelling and a motel or two. And there was plenty of public park acreage. There was Palmetto Park, Red

Reef Park, and Spanish River Park. When I wasn't being dispatched to a call, there were security checks, traffic stops and moments to simply view the beach. There is no such thing as a bad day at the beach. The closest I came to being in trouble was the night I couldn't find my flashlight. In talking to the shift commander, Lt. Goldbar, I was simply reprimanded about city property and told not to do it again. He then proceeded to laugh. We found the \$100 flashlight rolling on the floor of the patrol car.

One potential problem that did exist was the draw bridges. There was the Camino Real Bridge at the south which linked the beach to the rest of the city. The bridge span crossed the Inter Coastal Waterway (ICW), and there was plenty of vessel traffic in transit which required frequent openings. There was also the Palmetto Park Road Bridge in the south end, as well as the Spanish River Blvd. Bridge. In addition to the boats, there were the mechanical and weather problems keeping the bridge in the upright position. It was technically possible the beach zone unit could be isolated from responding to calls for backup or receiving assistance from other zone units.

Over time, I was given different zone assignments to learn the layout of the city. It was always said that the south end was the most difficult. Most of the streets had names of trees. It was virtually all residential. The north end was a combination of industry and residential, while the middle was where most of the businesses were zoned. In fact, there was about to be a change that reflected these divisions.

For officers who wanted (or needed) added income, there were off-duty details. Regular officers and high-ranking personnel gravitated to these reasonably well-paying gigs. From mall rooftops and jewelry stores to night clubs and hotels, there were plenty of proprietors willing to pay to have the added armed security. For the most part, these shifts were uneventful, but occasionally, things could get a bit nasty.

One female officer was working one of the night shifts at a hotel-variety location. There was a lounge which was attached. One individual, a rather large male of the species, was obviously quite intoxicated and working his way to his vehicle. The officer, right at five-foot-tall and almost 100 pounds, attempted to dissuade the subject from driving away. Things began to escalate from the male side and culminated with him grabbing the officer. Bad move. The officer bent her knees slightly and sprung upwards and applied her officer-issued flashlight, and applied it to the side of the man's head. After he dropped to the ground, she called for a backup, and the man spent the night at the Boca Raton Police department's holding facility, and transported to the Palm Beach County "Gray Bar Hotel".

The following morning, the same man returned to the police department, accompanied by his lawyer. The lawyer, standing in the main lobby, demanded to speak to the officer who had arrested and allegedly mishandled his client. As it happened, the officer just happened to be in the room, behind the counter, pulling paper work. The desk sergeant, noting her presence in the room, pointed her out to the lawyer. The lawyer was apparently astonished. He looked at the diminutive officer, then his six-foot plus client, back at the officer, and told his client “You’re on your own.”

There was a particularly self-officious veteran officer who was quick to point out rookie’s mistakes. I recall something I had done that, in his opinion, warranted his input. His parting statement was that “...your FTO should have corrected the situation.” I didn’t know much about him until I spoke of the situation to another veteran officer. He laughed and told me the complaining officer’s nickname, which carried a feminine connotation, which he earned during another officer’s off-duty night detail at another bar. There was a fight in the parking lot, and an officer required an immediate back-up. Dispatch requested the location of the nearest unit for response. Officer Nickname advised he was nowhere near the situation. Unfortunately for him, his vehicle was seen by another officer who was en route to the back-up call for help, who immediately advised the actual position of Nickname, and hence the branding. I rode part of a shift with Nickname one night. I learned nothing. He eventually left law enforcement, which was to most officers’ liking.

We were nearing the end of a midnight shift when an in-progress call came from a hotel. The call involved an Hispanic male with a gun, apparently a domestic oriented situation. The early morning traffic was just starting to become active and we were heading toward the hotel as back-ups. As I got on scene, I saw Lt. Smiley almost casually standing in the street near the entrance to the employee’s parking lot, aiming his shotgun at an individual in a car. I heard Smiley tell the driver to put his hands on the windshield. The driver just stuck his hands partially in the air. Smiley, still casual in his tone, said “Uh, that ain’t gonna quite cut it. I need your hands on the windshield.” For some reason, the driver understood what the lieutenant was hinting at as the shotgun barrel was placed in visual proximity to the suspect’s head. The issue was quickly resolved and the bad boy was cuffed and transported to jail.

It was the same hotel and this time, a night shift. I responded to a call involving another domestic disturbance. These were two employees who were cohabitating in the hotel living quarters. This time, the weapon of choice was a leg from a broken chair. The male suspect struck his female friend in the face so hard

with the leg that it appeared to have resulted in serious eye injuries. I managed to find him quickly. It resulted in my first felony arrest.

The call of a bank robbery was dispatched in the mid-morning hours. As we responded, we saw a man down beside an armored car from a security service. He was moaning, as would anyone who had been shot. He had been the bag bearer from the bank to the vehicle. The driver was waiting in his seat when the shot rang out that dropped the other guard in the parking lot. The driver secured the vehicle and the bank had police on the way. It could have been worse, and indeed, it went in that direction. The driver left the vehicle to assist police in information gathering. The guard was still on his back. Suddenly, the armored car began rolling backward, right into the path of the fallen guard. The scream from the guard was the reaction to the armored car rolling over his leg. The gunshot wound was painful, but the tires of an extremely heavy vehicle sliding over any part of the body were probably much worse, based on the volume of the victim's scream.

## Chapter 3

The Police Department had been conducting a search for a permanent Chief, and the day had finally arrived. He appeared somewhat younger than most of the veteran officers. He had a pleasant manner, at least with the rank and file. His wife, who was frequently present at the station, was quite sociable. Like any first impression situations, there was a favorable feeling that was being generated. But, with some of the upper brass, there was a sense of hostility that the new guy on the block was brought in from the outside, as opposed to promotion of those thought to be eligible already on hand.

Changes were quickly implemented. There was a new concept which the Chief adapted, which divided the city into three sectors- South, Central and North. Each sector would have its own commander, who was responsible for all events within his geographic designation. Personnel within each sector would be selected by the commanders by way of a rotational pick. I was told that I was being assigned to Central Sector. The commander of the sector was Lt. Goldbar. I was told that I was the second officer picked. Lt. Goldbar picked mostly rookies. His theory, I later learned, was that rookies work harder at trying to satisfy the upper brass and would listen to correction better than some of the veterans. We were assigned shifts of the 4 four -day, ten - hour variety. This was quite the change. One could actually make plans and schedule events around the shift. I also had Sgt. Seeque as the sergeant of the squad. We were given what was termed “prime time” which was the evening shift. Initially, it was 4 pm to 2 am.

Lt. Goldbar was right. While we were primarily rookies, we were energized. As statistics began to be assembled, it was noted that Central officers led in virtually all categories for productivity. This included arrests, field interviews, calls initiated, and calls responded to. We even did more traffic-related activities than our special operations unit (with the exception of traffic fatalities, where we assisted). We were moved out of the police department and placed in a two-story structure in the middle of town, which also allowed us quicker response time. The teamwork was, for the most part, air tight and waterproof. If we were in any way available for backup on a call, we were there. It was a tiny slice of magic.

For the most part, we had (more or less) permanent assigned zones. For dispatch purposes, South sector was the 30 series, Central was 40, and North was 50. Each sector had either four or five zones. I worked zone 42. On the plus side, we knew every square inch of our zone. We knew the convenience store clerks and other 24-hour business personnel. We knew when there was a new beer bottle thrown on

a median on a boulevard. We knew the adjacent zones for purposes of coverage. The only real down side was that, if we had to back up a unit in one of the other sectors, we would occasionally need dispatch assistance to expedite response. For the new officers, there was an unfamiliarity of the different areas within the city. But overall, it was a good thing. One night, one veteran officer in our sector got into a pursuit. The pursued vehicle stopped. The driver got out of the car quickly and approached the officer with what appeared to initially be a case of attitude. The look on his face did a 180-degree change when, before he got to the officer's car, four other units had converged on the scene. He gladly signed his citation and left.

We assisted South sector during a situation involving four individuals who were suspected of an armed robbery. The quartet was in an apartment building, playing cards. Two of the men decided they needed to make a snack run to a nearby convenience store. As their vehicle approached the store, a total of six units surrounded them, all with weapons drawn. They were in the middle of the street leaning on the trunk of the police cars with their feet spread. The facial expressions indicated they were compliant with any and all requests made by the officers on the scene. A short time later, the men in the apartment got into a car and went looking for the other two. It was the same greeting committee, same location and the same facial expressions.

We had a similar situation one night on Federal Highway. A South sector officer was advised that a vehicle he was following was stolen. By the time the officer turned on his emergency lights and popped the siren on, there were five additional units surrounding the suspect vehicle. And again, there were more weapons drawn and at the ready. It's always nice to have a tactical advantage. In this case, it turned out the car was not stolen. All of the Central units disappeared quicker than they appeared, leaving the officer to deal with the shell-shocked driver and passengers.

Weather played a role in how things were conducted. One very windy night, Officer Rickards and I had been placed in the same patrol car due to a vehicle shortage. He and I had attended the same academy and we got along very well. We initiated a traffic stop on a vehicle which had made an illegal U-turn just outside of Florida Atlantic University's main entrance on Glades Road. Inside the vehicle were two occupants. The male driver and female passenger were concluding a date night and returning to the dorms. I had the male produce his driver's license and vehicle registration. I could tell that he was nervous about the stop. He stepped out of the car to gain access to his billfold. In doing so, the vehicle registration got picked up by the wind and carried a short distance. As if scripted for a comedy routine, the male chased after the registration. As he leaned down to pick it up, the wind took the



registration several yards away. Once again, he began chasing the paper and again, as he went to grab it, the wind blew it further down the road. It happened a third time, and by now, the poor guy was out of view of our headlights. After several minutes, the driver returned. He was gasping for breath and sweating on what was, by Florida standards, a relatively cool night. The passenger had exited the car and was engaged in small talk with Rickards. When the paper was finally handed to me, I felt that enough was enough. I told him that, while he had violated a state statute, I was not going to issue a citation. He had worked hard enough for the evening. He was polite in return, and thanked me for my understanding. As he re-entered his car, Rickards and I got back in the car. We were howling in laughter for several minutes. Then there was yet another windy night- this one involved Sgt. Miecee. He performed a traffic stop on NW 2<sup>nd</sup> Ave., near NW 20<sup>th</sup> St., which was a well-travelled intersection; however, on this evening and hour, the road was empty.

Miecee had two females in the vehicle. He asked the driver of the car for her driver's license. She looked at him and said "I don't know if I should let you see it." Miecee was taken back a bit, and repeated the request to see her license. At this point, the passenger leaned across toward the driver's side and exclaimed in an arrogant manner "I don't think you heard her. She doesn't want to show you her license." Miecee, who was now getting highly agitated, explained to her that she (the driver) didn't have a choice in the manner unless she wanted to go to jail and have her vehicle towed. Reluctantly, she produced the treasured document. Miecee, who was fed up with the dynamic duo, waited until the wind had gusted up. Then, he threw her license into the air. The wind, blowing hard, took it to places unknown. The driver exited her car as Miecee walked back to the patrol unit. "Hey, you can't do that" she cried. "I just did" was the reply, and away he drove. The two females drove to the police station, and demanded to see the shift supervisor. Guess who the supervisor was. When Sgt Miecee walked into the front desk to respond to the complaint, the two saw him and left...never to return.

OK...One more windy night story. This one also involved Sgt. Miecee. There was a noise coming from the roof area at or near the supermarket at 20<sup>th</sup> St. and Federal Hwy. It was impossible to determine exactly where it was coming from. Roof burglaries were not totally uncommon. I called Sgt. Miecee to join me for the purposes of listening to ascertain the origin. We listened for only a moment, and the sound repeated itself. Miecee wasted no time in bringing the fire department onto the scene with a ladder truck. Now, I had been a volunteer fireman for a year, but our truck was a tanker. The only ladders were hooked onto the side of the truck. But this was a regular power ladder. It was a cheap thrill for me to go for a climb, albeit somewhat tactical. As I gained enough height, I was able to detect the source of the

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