



The INFORMANT

The Kansas City Missouri Police Department

New intel center connects guns to crimes

With only bullets left on the ground, a new task force is piecing together who is responsible for the majority of the shootings that take place in Kansas City.

The Crime Gun Intelligence Center (CGIC) is a new partnership with the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives. It's assigned to the Perpetrator Information Center. Work has been underway since July 2014 to get it up and running, said Sergeant Terry Freed, who supervises the CGIC. Kansas City is one of just a handful of cities in the nation to have this task force. The ATF is looking to get them going in more municipalities. Here, the task force consists of a KCPD sergeant, two detectives, a civilian analyst, an ATF special agent and an ATF investigator. It receives some federal funding.

The CGIC's goal is to analyze cases linked by the National Integrated Ballistics Information Network (NIBIN). NIBIN essentially is like the national DNA database, but for shell casings and firearm marks. Every gun makes unique marks on the bullets it fires. By entering shell casings into NIBIN, investigators are able to trace bullets back to guns and those who fired them. NIBIN will generate a hit when a shell casing matches another one in the system or the gun from which it was fired.

"We know a small percentage of the population is using crime guns during offenses," Sergeant Freed said.

The Crime Gun Intelligence Center aims to narrow down who those people are. ATF Special Agent Trista Frederick said the task force is changing the way police use ballistics information.

"We use it as an intelligence tool," she said. "Previously, it was just a forensics tool. Now we start seeing cases linked together. We find the shooters and get those people off the street. We can show certain people constantly are involved in violent crime."

Using NIBIN information, Sergeant Freed said the CGIC recently created a large file on a man who was linked to a number of shootings. He said there was a high probability the man soon would become a suspect or victim of a homicide. Shortly after

CGIC compiled all of their intelligence information, the man indeed shot and killed two people, one of whom died. Because of CGIC's work, prosecutors are working to link numerous cases to the man, and charges are pending as that investigation continues.

Freed and Frederick said CGIC has been able to identify groups that are feuding from all over the metropolitan area just from shell casings. They've also identified numerous "straw purchasers" — people who buy guns for those who can't obtain them legally. CGIC turns their information over to investigative elements like the Illegal Firearms Squad and Assault Squad for enforcement.

The successes and case leads keep rolling in, Frederick said. In 2013, the Department recorded 53 NIBIN hits, and 87 hits in 2014 (CGIC began in July). In the first three months of 2015, 38 hits have come in.

But none of this would be happening without the work of other department members, particularly the Firearms and Toolmarks Section in the Kansas City Regional Crime Lab. Patrol officers now are asked to recover every spent shell casing they come across and submit it to the Lab.

Technicians there analyze them and enter them into the NIBIN system. Other than St. Louis, KCPD is the only agency in the state to have the equipment for NIBIN analysis. The Lab reports back

any NIBIN hits to the CGIC, and task force members analyze that information and give their findings to case detectives.

Sergeant Freed said he appreciated the change in processes Crime Lab and Property and Evidence Unit personnel have had to make to get the shell casings collected and processed efficiently. What used to take months now takes days.

"That's important because if you wait a month, that gun could have been fired in 10 or 20 more offenses," Sergeant Freed said.

ATF Agent Frederick said the goal is to make Kansas City's Crime Gun Intelligence Center a regional resource, starting with the metro area and eventually linking into other areas like St. Louis and Omaha.



Pg. 2 Women in Public Safety
Northland Coalition
Prevention Award

Pg. 3 Text-A-Tip School Program

Pg. 4 Officially Speaking
Upcoming Events

Women's group offers networking, mentors

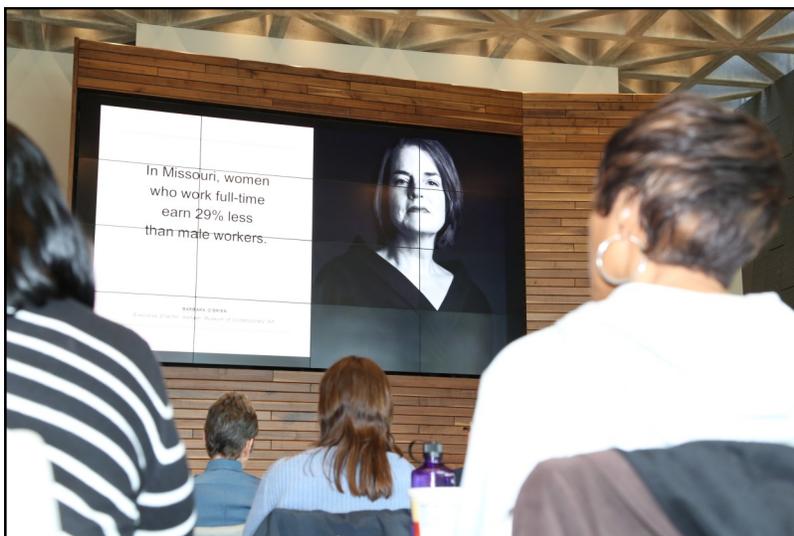
The Kansas City Police Department has many women among its upper ranks, but other area law enforcement agencies aren't as progressive.

That's why every other month, female officers from as far as Salina and Topeka, Kan., travel to the Kansas City area to enjoy mentorship, camaraderie, networking and thought-provoking discussion at a group called Women In Public Safety, started by KCPD Deputy Chief Cheryl Rose and Overland Park Police Department Major Sonta Wilburn.

"It's really beneficial for the smaller agencies," D.C. Rose said. "They may be the only female commander in their organization and have no one to talk to."

It's always helpful to have someone who has had experiences similar to you to bounce ideas off of, discuss issues and commiserate, D.C. Rose said, especially professionally. A mentor also is very beneficial. Many women in law enforcement don't feel like they have that.

The Women In Public Safety group sought to change that. Rose and five other female KCPD commanders met up with several other women from Kansas City-area police departments at a National Association of Women Law Enforcement Executives conference in 2012 in Texas. They all thought it was a little silly they had to go to Texas to meet each other, so the group of about 10 women decided to meet informally for lunch every other month at a centrally located Chili's



Women from the KCPD and other area police departments came to the February Women in Public Safety networking lunch at Headquarters to learn about the Women's Foundation's mission and research.

in Merriam, Kan. As time went by, they invited their colleagues, and the lunch eventually outgrew the restaurant. They decided to have their agencies take turns hosting, and they wanted to feature a topic each time. They also wanted non-sworn employees and women in fire departments to be able to attend.

KCPD hosted the most recent lunch in February, with attendees bringing their own lunches. The event featured the president of the Kansas City-based Women's Foundation, Wendy Doyle. She spoke about the organization's mission and recent research the Foundation conducted about the pay gap between men and women (in

Missouri, women working full time make 71 cents on the dollar compared to men, Doyle reported. That's well below the national rate of 79 cents for every dollar a man working full time makes).

A few men were in the audience, too.

"We open it up to everybody," D.C. Rose said.

Women from police agencies on both sides of the state line also were in attendance, including those from Salina and Topeka. Many of the attendees have connected with mentors through the group.

D.C. Rose said she hopes to see more KCPD participation in women's events organized by Captain Stephanie Price, such as a forum on gender bias on March 26 and a panel of area female commanders last year.

Northland Coalition recognizes KCPD for prevention work

Officers and commanders of the Shoal Creek and North Patrol Divisions were honored to accept the 2015 Outstanding Partner in Prevention Award from the Northland Coalition on Feb. 27 at the Northland Prevention Conference.

"KCPD officers are present and take an active role at almost every prevention coalition and program that touches Kansas City northland residents," the Northland Coalition stated when bestowing the award.

They cited KCPD's involvement in numerous fund-raisers, compliance checks at businesses to ensure they didn't sell alcohol or tobacco products to minors, working with transportation rental companies to prevent under-age drinking at prom and graduation and providing places for the public to drop off unwanted prescription drugs, among other initiatives in which KCPD participates.



Members of the North and Shoal Creek patrol divisions accepted the 2015 Outstanding Partner in Prevention Award.

Cell phones aren't just for selfies

Across local high school campuses, heads are bent and fingers are flying. Are they checking emails, texting their friends or following the latest trend on social media? Perhaps they are intent on helping right a wrong.

According to Crime Stoppers Coordinator Detective Kevin Boehm, high school and some middle-school students now can come forward with valuable information using something that is readily available – their cell phones.

Teens can access a school-based program called “Text-A-Tip.” By texting their tips to 274637 – which spells out CRIMES — and entering the school-specific keyword within the body of their text, they can report anything from drug transactions to administrative issues. The program is operational from anywhere in the U.S.

Crime Stoppers was created in 1976, and the Scholastic Crime Stoppers program originated in 1980 in Colorado Springs. It was basically phone reporting. This evolved into the Text-A-Tip program.

Five years ago, northland schools were introduced to the program and ran with it. The Northland Safe School Task Force was running it, but was having a tough time, necessitating a call to Crime Stoppers for assistance. Since August of last year, Crime Stoppers has been involved.

Participating schools agree to a small financial commitment to cover the keywords and software licensing, which Crime Stoppers paid through September 2015.

Upon renewal, the schools will be invoiced \$175 per keyword, per year. Additionally, a \$5,000 grant from Sprint was recently received to enable the program to continue to grow.

Like the Crime Stoppers TIPS Hotline, the Text-A-Tip program is completely anonymous and can never be traced. All identifying information is “scrubbed” before the message ever reaches its destination. The servers the information is sent through, one in Utah and the other in Canada, delete all information every 72 hours.

“There is no way that information could be subpoenaed,” Boehm said.

Once someone initiates a text tip, they receive an automatically-generated code number. Using this code, two-way communication is used to continue back and forth messaging if more detail is needed. The user can always stop the text conversation by sending the word STOP.

The information is then forwarded to school administrators and the School Resource Officer for investigation; a double coverage, so to speak. If it is a non-criminal offense, the SRO will not get in-



Crime Stoppers officials and private donors announced the expansion of the Text-A-Tip program for schools at a press conference in January.

significant number of underage drinking or parties and a fair number of suicide attempt tips.”

Other tips include students reporting someone they feel may be suffering from depression, incidents of sexting, bullying, assaults, weapons offenses and administrative issues.

Various avenues are used to promote the program.

“Park Hill actually puts the information on the back of the student IDs,” Boehm said. “All of the schools have been provided a banner from Crime Stoppers that explains what to text to, a logo of the individual school and the process to follow.

We also do actual in-house education to explain how it operates and why they should be using it. The SROs are a big component of that. Each school has an SRO.”

The program is active predominantly north of the river in the North Kansas City School District and recently in Grain Valley high schools. The Liberty School District decided to include all of their middle schools, too. Several schools south of the

river are on board, while the Blue Valley District and other larger Kansas schools have shown interest. The Kansas City Missouri School District was given a recent presentation, which went well; their decision is pending.

Of the 29 participating schools, texts have come from 17 of them so far. While some schools may question the need, others have reached out to Crime Stoppers to join the program.

“We want schools to feel like their campuses are, for 8 hours a day, like a city environment or community, and the students are citizens of that particular community. They have information just like adults do,” said Boehm. “We hope to double the number of participating schools by the end of the year.”

While there are no monetary rewards offered for most tips received, if it results in an arrest involving a felony crime, Crime Stoppers will pay a reward of up to \$2,000. If the offense is not a felony, the individual school determines whether to pay a reward.

involved, but an administrator will. Since August, because of these texted tips, officials were able to intervene in 4 attempted suicides, recover a handgun and recover marijuana-laced gummy bears.

The Crime Stoppers TIPS Hotline (474-TIPS) also can be used to report tips, but this will cause a new code to be generated and is generally used solely for crimes. Text-A-Tip accepts information on anything at all.

Boehm said, “Since August, we’ve taken in the neighborhood of 160 or so text tips. We keep track of data. Lots of the tips were drug related. We also get a

“We want schools to feel like their campuses are like a city environment or community, and the students are citizens of that particular community .”

**- Detective Kevin Boehm
Crime Stoppers Coordinator**

Upcoming Events

April 13
Board of Police
Commissioners Meeting

April 15
25-Year Ring Ceremony

April 16
Academy Graduation

April 18
Tip-A-Cop at Corner
Café restaurants

April 22
Awards Ceremony

April 23
KCPD Open House

The Informant is a publication of
KCPD's Media Unit
(816) 234-5170
www.kcpd.org

Officially Speaking

Awards

Life-Saving Award
Sergeant Jarrett Lanpher
Master Patrol Officer Leslie Cornell

Special Unit Citation
Street Crimes Unit Gang Squad 1950

Retirements

Major James Pruetting, Jr.
Fleet Operations Technician
Thomas Think

Obituaries

Retired Officer Sammy Lee Wesson

The mission of the Kansas City
Missouri Police Department
is to protect and serve with
professionalism, honor and integrity.