

## **Report of the Police Department 2008**

The year 2008 revealed some decreases in certain activity as compared to 2007. I can also report that the specific categories that showed decreases were not a surprise to me, because of some changes in direction the department committed to in early 2008. The changes in direction I refer to were recommended within the Assessment done of the police department by Municipal Resources Incorporated. This assessment was released in June of 2008, and the full text of it is available at [www.northhampton-nh.gov](http://www.northhampton-nh.gov). One of the recommendations within this assessment advised us to spend less time on Lafayette Road where a considerable number of motor vehicle arrests have historically been made, in order to concentrate our efforts on the patrol of town roads and neighborhoods in order to be more visible to the residents in those areas. Another obvious trend that jumps out at me that most likely had to do with the reduction in the number of arrests is the increase in "warrant arrests". These types of arrests require a much higher number of investigative hours by the Detective and Patrol Officers in order to properly investigate them, and successfully close them by arrest. We also have continued to make a deliberate effort to have an officer in the school to maintain our positive relationship with the children. The officer in the school also is very much involved in the continuous improvement of the School Safety Plan. After a recent Ice Storm on December 13, which caused the loss of electricity to at least 80% of our community, the police department will also be very much involved in working with the Select Board, and the School Board, so we can ensure that the residents of North Hampton will once again have a warm place to go in the event of another extended power/heat loss. Thanks to the School Board and the Superintendent of Schools our department already has a temporary unwritten contingency plan to open the school as a "Warming Center" for the residents of North Hampton, for when we experience another event similar to or worse than the one in December of 2008. Further efforts are being made by the School Board, and the Fire and Police Departments in order to create a permanent written plan, and a Memorandum of Understanding between the town and the school to use the school as a Warming Center in the future. This Memorandum will be in addition to the existing Emergency Shelter Agreement that currently exists between the School and the American Red Cross.

In 2008 the overall calls for service slightly decreased to 11,231, from 11,661 in 2007 (-3.6%). At the same time total number of Reportable Accidents (does not include self-reported) decreased from 167, in 2007, to 134 in 2008 (-19.7%). Investigative cases in 2007 were up from 439 in 2007, to 458 in 2008 (+4.1%) in the arrests category where the arrests in 2008 totaled 280, which is down considerably slightly from 2007 where total arrests was 323 (-13.3%). On-view arrests, i.e. crimes or violations in progress decreased from 221 in 2007 to 151 in 2008. The remaining arrests are categorized as "warrant arrests," which are disposed by follow-up investigation by the Detective Division or the Patrol Division. In 2008 there were 129 such arrests, compared to 102 in 2007.

In 2008 the continued concentration of Officer Michael Oliveira and other officers to provide enhanced services to the school greatly enhanced the viability of the School Safety Plan. The collaboration and cooperation between the school administration and our department was extremely important in completing, and subsequently ensuring persistent improvement of this plan. It is my intention to make sure that this will remain a priority project for the police department. We have a great deal of confidence that this approach will keep the children and

the staff at the school as safe as possible in the event of an internal event at the school, or even an external event that may occur in the immediate area of the school. In addition, I would like to thank the North Hampton School Board, and the Administration at the school for allowing Officer Oliveira to spend considerably more time inside the school on other programs in addition to DARE classes. Officer Oliveira and I have both noticed how much more comfortable the children are with the presence of the police officers in their uniforms when we stop by at the school. Because of our increased presence at the school, neither the children nor the staff feels that there is some type of problem at the school just because there is an officer in attendance. I would be remiss if I did not also thank Chief Lambert and the Fire and Rescue Department for the input and assistance they provided for the School Safety Plan.

On December 5, 2008 we also had our annual visit from Santa Claus, which took place at the Old Town Hall next to the police department. According to the feedback I have received from persons in attendance at the Santa visit, I once again can say that this event was a huge success. Without the incredible efforts of North Hampton's Recreation Director Diane Wheeler, and volunteers from the Recreation Commission, this visit from the North Pole probably would not be as successful as it is year after year. Knowing that there were a large number of children who actually met with Santa, we can once again feel confident that this event exceeded the attendance of 2007.

As always, I would again like to take this opportunity to thank the residents of North Hampton for their never-ending support, and also to remind them to call us if they see anything they consider dangerous or suspicious. This is more important than ever where the town has been experiencing a much higher number of Burglaries in the Route One Corridor since the middle of December. The success of any police agency relies greatly on the eyes and ears of the public, so please do not hesitate to call and make us aware of your concerns. We would prefer to receive your call, and find that there was not a crime being committed, than to not get a call and then discover that there was a crime committed and we were unable to intervene while it was in progress. In addition, any resident who wishes to be put on a volunteer list for hosting at an Emergency Warming Center should call us at the police department to leave your name and telephone number. These types of volunteers would be asked to provide light refreshments, and coffee and hot chocolate in the event we open the Warming Center at the North Hampton School. I thank all in advance for any assistance you can give us with this mission, and look forward to working with any and all volunteers.

Brian P. Page  
Chief of Police