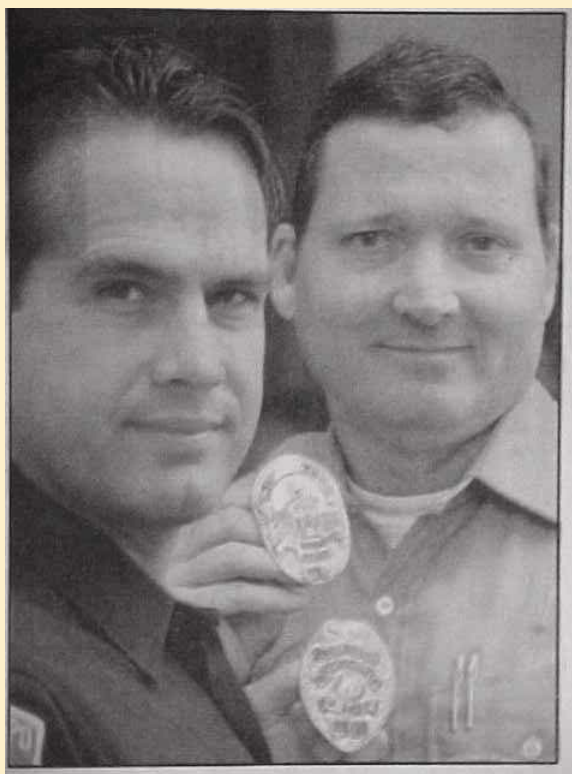


the 2000's

As we come into 2006, so many events have already occurred this decade that it's hard to believe we have four more years to go. Here are some of these events so far:

- We entered the new millennium and the Y2K concern was a fizzle
- "Peanuts" comic strip became history as the final strip was completed
- One of the saddest days in history took place on September 11, 2001. Terrorists crashed two planes into the World Trade Center, another plane into the Pentagon, and the fourth plane was brought down by very real heroes in Pennsylvania before it hit its final target, saving countless lives. The death toll of these attacks was over 3,000
- Anthrax attacks via mail targeted news agencies and politicians
- Scandals surfaced naming Enron and Martha Stewart
- Homeland Security came into being
- Suicide bombers continued with a new twist, ushering in more females into their ranks
- A tsunami in Indonesia killed more than 200,000 people
- Serena Williams defeated her sister Venus in tennis
- The Columbia space shuttle disintegrated over Texas, killing seven astronauts
- The Red Sox won the World Series in 2004 for the first time since 1918
- Pop music was giving way to rap music, including its new styles for young people such as caps worn backwards, very large pants in danger of falling off completely, bare midriffs, tattoos, and piercings
- The war in Iraq began
- Michael Jackson was arrested
- Katrina and Rita were two of the worst hurricanes to hit Florida, Louisiana and Mississippi
- Bagdad fell and Saddam was captured
- Apple created the iPod

In the year 2000 the department supported a new badge design. The Tribune stated on October 13, 2000, "Officers Proudly Stand Behind SLO Mission." It reads:



Officer Ian Parkinson & FST John Caudill

"The entire San Luis Obispo police force turned in their badges Thursday morning. But they weren't badgeless for long. All 85 officers, technicians, and dispatchers in the department immediately received new badges featuring the San Luis Obispo Mission.

"'The old design was probably the most common type of municipal police badge around,' said Police Chief Jim Gardiner. For the last 45 years, officers have worn a badge that features the state seal - something many police departments incorporated into the design. 'We're looking at this as our department identifying with our community,' Gardiner said, 'and taking a real pride in the community we serve.' On the new badge, a gold representation to the Mission Church stands out against a silver background. The department, specifically John Caudill and Officer Ian Parkinson, have worked diligently to bring a new badge to the department. 'Designating the Mission for the badge's design was easy.'"

In 2002 Chief Jim Gardiner announced his retirement and the search for a suitable replacement began. On November 8, the city announced the appointment of Deborah Linden. The article was titled "Deborah Linden is a 'Perfect Fit' for the City." It reads as follows.

"San Luis Obispo's incoming police chief plans to 'do a lot of listening and learning' when she takes over January 1 for the retiring Jim Gardiner. 'I'm not one to come in and make sweeping changes,' said Deborah Linden, an 18-year law enforcement veteran who is a current commander with the Santa Barbara County Sheriff's Department. 'The San Luis Obispo Police Department excels and we can keep building on that.' she said.

"City Administrator Ken Hampian announced Linden's hiring Thursday. 'She's going to be a perfect fit,' he said. Linden will make between \$90,000 and \$112,000 a year. She will be the sixth female police chief now working in the state's 328 municipal departments."



Police Chief Deb Linden

On January 7, 2003, Chief Deborah Linden was sworn in as the new police chief. Her thoughts on law enforcement were stated in a quote that day. "Law enforcement is never just a job - it's never something you can just put your time in and leave behind. You live it, you breath it, you have a commitment to it far beyond the hours that we put in on an average shift." Truer words were never spoken. The job is 24-7, and always a part of each man and woman working for the department.

In 2004 the problems with the annual Mardi Gras celebration came to a head. It had been gradually building over the years as more and more people chose to come and celebrate the holiday in San Luis Obispo. The alcohol consumption and crowds spun out of control and the local police were so far outnumbered they were sorely pressed to keep up with the chaos. Additional help was added with the assistance of the San Luis Obispo Sheriff's Department, the CHP and Cal Poly University police. However, in 2004 things turned violent. The Tribune covered it with the following.

"Crowd turns violent on Mardi Gras weekend. Partiers threw bottles and rocks at police, who returned with a volley of non-lethal weapons and tear gas as Mardi Gras celebrations near Cal Poly turned violent Saturday.

"Police said 50-60 people had been arrested as of midnight. The problems began after police broke up two large parties at the Mustang Village apartment complex around 9:30 PM. Thousands of people then packed into the intersection of Foothill and California Boulevards, hurling beads, bottles, cans, orange road cones, and even a steel pipe at the officers, leaving the road strewn with broken glass. Several dozen police officers and sheriff's deputies gathered in the area to try to disperse the crowds police estimated at about 5,000. By 10:30 PM, officers were using a public address system, declaring the area an unlawful gathering, ordering partiers to disperse and saying they would arrest those who didn't disperse. This led to chants by the partiers of 'Kill the cops.'

"The windows of two patrol cars were broken out and one patrol car was completely smashed. Officers in protective helmets fired beanbag guns and rubber bullets. Officials had called in 200 additional officers from as far away as Monterey and Ventura. A CHP helicopter circled overhead and shone a spotlight on the area. The throng of people started to break up after officers arrested the instigators in the crowd.

"Police attributed most of the trouble to people who came from out of town for the weekend. SLO police department spokesperson Rob Byrn said the majority of the more than 40 arrests made Friday night were people from out of town, some of them as far as Florida and New Jersey. 'The issue is when a mob mentality begins, people do things they wouldn't normally do.' Bryn said."

The department responded to this riot by working with city officials to better control things in the future. In 2005 out-of-towners were told in advance that if they came and caused problems they would be arrested and fined for their trouble. Also the Mardi Gras organizers agreed to cancel the parade. It was determined that many of the parade-goers seemed to ignite things and set the scene for nighttime violence. The City Council also agreed to triple fines for troublemakers during the Mardi Gras weekend. As a result, things were much calmer and under control. Only time will tell how long that will last, though the city and police department are working together to anticipate the future events.

