Eugene Police
Historical Perspective

1920s

1970s

2000s

Protect.Serve.Care.

The Beginning

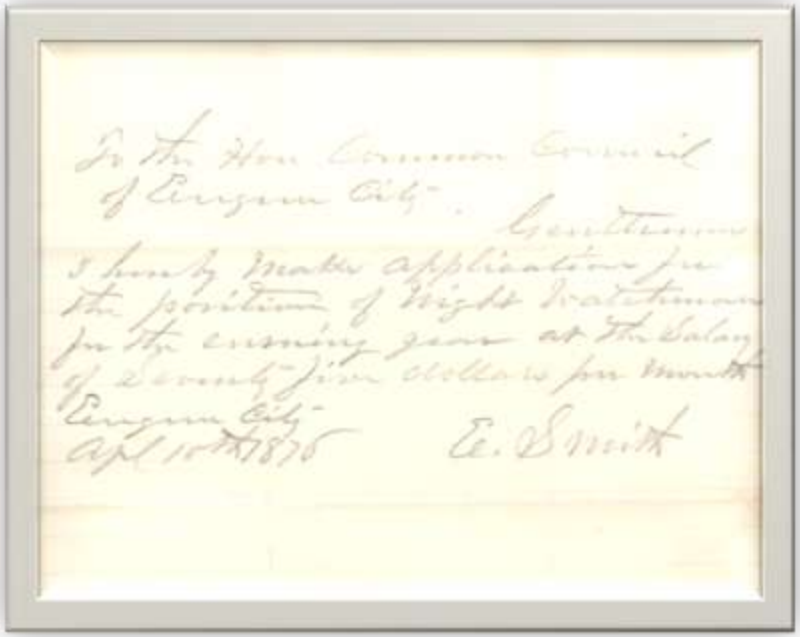
On October 17, 1862, Eugene was incorporated.

In 1863, the City hired its first marshal, C.H. Fox, who began patrolling Eugene as the first member of what would become the Eugene Police Department.

Protect.Serve.Care.

1864

The City passed a “Blue Sunday” ordinance which kept most businesses closed on Sundays (drug stores and funeral parlors were among the rare exceptions). “Bawdy” houses were outlawed in 1889.



Application for Night Watchman, 1876

Protect.Serve.Care.

1876

After writing this note in the year 1876, John Quincy Adams Brown unscrewed the bolts on the door of the jail and walked out a free man.

"Eugene, Lane Co. Oregon March 12 I am agoin to git out of this if I kin I don't do this for any ill will to anybody but because I can't git any money to defend myself this is the first crime ever I done and it will be the last if I aint coat I think I have been here long enuf for what I done I have no ill will at any one in town they all treted me well I leve my sincer regards for you for ben so kind to me while in jale S. B. and C. H. and if I ant coat I wont let whisky git me in jale agin."

Protect.Serve.Care.

1892

Bonds are signed by Sheriff J.E. Noland to build a jail on the park blocks at what is now 8th and Oak Streets.

Protect.Serve.Care.

1894

"Unchaste and demoralizing" shows were banned in 1894.

T.J. Dunten, Late 1800's

1897

In April, Joseph S. Stiles was appointed chief of police by Mayor William Kuykendall. In 1898, he resigned. He was reappointed to a second term in 1900, but resigned again in 1903 to run as the Republican nominee for Lane County Sheriff. After losing the election, Stiles was reappointed police chief for a third term. However, in 1906, he committed suicide after being accused of a crime that there was no evidence he committed. The accusation was enough to cause irreparable and grievous social repercussions.

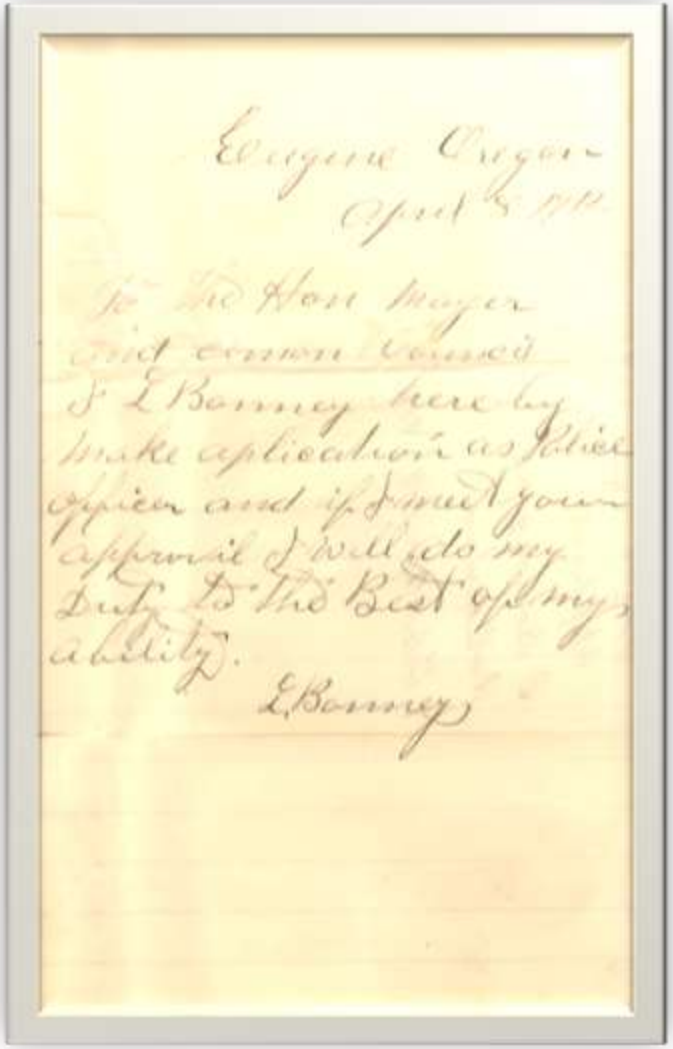
Joseph S. Stiles

Protect.Serve.Care.

1908

Under a “local option” provision for selling alcohol, Eugene voted to go “dry”. Springfield voted itself “wet”.

Chief E.A. Farrington
- 1907



Eugene Oregon
April 8 1912

To the Hon Mayor
and common Council
I L Barney here by
make aplication as Police
officer and if I meet your
approval I will do my
Duty to the Best of my
ability.

L Barney

Application for Police Officer, 1912

1916

There wasn't much traffic on Willamette Street in 1916, but speeding – as it is today- was a problem. The City speed limit was 16 m.p.h.

Officer Will Judkins, 1916 traffic patrol

1920

The department was having troubles on Skinner Butte. In the early 1920s, the Ku Klux Klan burned a cross there.

1926

The department consisted of six employees (including the chief), two motorcycles, and one car.

1927-

Department Photo

August 13, 1930

Eugene Police Officer Oscar Duley, was killed in a Marcola liquor raid by a bootlegger names Ray Sutherland while assisting the Lane County Sheriff's Office. Duley used to live at 531 Monroe Street with his wife Jacyln. He was a well known local athlete and wrestler. In fact he was known as “Duley the Wrestling Cop” and he was scheduled to wrestle an opponent at the Lane County Fair the night he died.

Above:
Officer Oscar Duley

Left:
1930 –
Chief Hall & Staff

June, 1934

Officer Jesse Jennings Jackson was a passenger in a patrol car that was pursuing a speeding vehicle. The fleeing vehicle forced its way in front of the patrol car, resulting in the patrol car landing upside down in a mill race pond. Officer Jackson was knocked unconscious and drowned in the pond. According to his daughter, Francelle, he was the only officer on the force with a car and a driver. According to Francelle, he also didn't own a uniform.

Protect.Serve.Care.

1941

The department had only one patrol car equipped with a one-way radio and officers could receive, but not return calls. Officers on foot patrol were reached through the use of red call lights on buildings and at major intersections that signaled for them to call headquarters.

EPD officers in the early 1940s, and probably before, provided their own guns and equipment and were minimally trained - usually on their own after only a day or two. The department consisted of 10 officers.

Chief Carl Bergman,1932-1945

1948

The Identification Division (investigations) is organized

Chief Keith Jones, 1947-1950

1950

Police stopped handling animal control—this function was turned over to the Humane Society. Animal Control appeared off and on in EPD history. It is mentioned in the 1964 Annual Report.

In the 1950s, the department offered vacation prowler checks to city residents. Residents notified the department when they would be out of town and police would check the residence at least once daily. These checks were eliminated in 1974, due to severe budget cuts.

1951

In November, the new Municipal Jail opened at 5th and Olive; staffed by Police Department personnel.

1953

The City entered into an agreement with Lane County to house short-term County prisoners at the Municipal Jail; this decision doubled the jail population.

In November the emergency call volume increased to the point that the Eugene Police Department was given its own radio frequency.

There were 34 uniformed officers and female employees.

1954

The department first began using radar for traffic control in July.

Multiple annexations to the City limits increased the department workload.

The department joined the Oregon State Teletype Network, which linked police agencies throughout the state for the first time.

The department switched to all-white police cars and also adopted a summer uniform (cars previously were black with white door panels).

Protect.Serve.Care.

1955

The first full-time officer was assigned exclusively to the Training Unit.

A law is on the books during this time that a driver could lose his or her license if involved in more than two crashes.

1956

The department adopted a 40-hour work week.

1958

The Skipworth Juvenile Home opened and juveniles were no longer held at the Municipal Jail.

The department hired its first “meter maids” in July (Helen Coverdell & Penny Anderson). They began using motorized scooters to make their rounds in 1960.

Protect.Serve.Care.

1960

In the early 1960s, Eugene hired its first Black police officer who worked from 1965 to 1976. Officer Lem McKinnie was also an ordained minister, the pastor of St. Mark's Christian Methodist Episcopal Church, just off 11th Avenue in Eugene. So McKinnie held two full-time jobs.

Officer Lem McKinnie

City of Eugene 1964

Protect.Serve.Care.

Reverend McKinnie's death in 2001 prompted a fellow officer and one-time partner, Wayne Irvin, to write fond memories of the soft-spoken officer. One time they were called to a "family beef" between a man and his girlfriend.

"They were calling each other every name you can think of with a considerable amount of profanity thrown in," Irvin wrote in a police publication. After they knocked on the apartment door, the man "looked at me and said loudly 'come on in officer!' He then glanced over my shoulder at which time his eyes opened wide. He gasped and said, 'Good evening. Reverend McKinnie.' There was his minister in uniform. I never saw a family beef dissipate as fast as that one."

1961

Jail remodeling and expansion began to relieve overcrowding

The Eugene Police Benevolent Association was organized.

Fingerprinting demonstration at Jail

Protect.Serve.Care.

1962

The Detective Division, the Crime Laboratory, and the Identification Bureau were combined into a single Criminal Investigations Division to streamline investigation.

1966

The department began operation of a new telephone PBX separate from the City Hall switchboard to handle an increasing load of calls.

The department held four recruit training classes during the course of the year to try and fill the large number of empty positions.

1967

The Lektriever, containing a master name file, was introduced in Records.

In September, the Eugene Naval & Marine Corps Reserve Training Center was damaged by a series of explosions and fires.

In November, a bomb exploded at the Air Force ROTC building.

1969

The Lane Interagency Narcotics Team (L.I.N.T.) was created and included members from the Lane County Sheriff's Office, Oregon State Police, Eugene Police, Springfield Police and Cottage Grove Police.

In May, five dynamite bombs exploded in one evening at a bank, a church, the state Highway Division maintenance yard, the Eugene Register-Guard, and Emerald Hall on the University of Oregon campus. A week prior to that, another bomb exploded at the Central Presbyterian Church

Protect.Serve.Care.

1969

In 1969, EPD sent three officers to the Northwest Traffic Institute Acc. Reconstruction School. Along with a lieutenant, and the department's first policy for "Fatal Accident Investigation Team," they went out as two-person teams for fatal crashes or potentially fatal crashes. The team investigated a drag racing crash at 13th and Willamette in December 1969, in which the driver was subsequently convicted of negligent homicide. The offending driver was below the legal limit for blood alcohol level and only .07 (.15 was DUI in those days), but the case made headlines in the "National Law Review." It was the first negligent homicide in Oregon with a blood level less than .15 (then the legal limit) and the first negligent homicide in Lane County in many years prior to 1969.

1970

In August, the Division of Internal and Community Affairs was created " to assist (with) research, planning, and community policing."

The High School Observer Program was organized (high school students rode in patrol cars and observed officers at work). Youth officers were also assigned to each of the city's high schools.

Chief Allen organized a program for career advancement of women in law enforcement after two police matrons, Alice Stankey and Virginia Hunt, testified before the Eugene Human Rights Commission regarding sex discrimination in the Police Department.

Janelle Mitchell, Lane County's First Female Armed Officer

Protect.Serve.Care.

1970

The jail was once more expanded and officially renamed the “City-County Jail.”

Five homicides occurred within the city, up from one the year before. The Department also noted a marked increase in drug use and drug seizures.

Bombs exploded at Emerald Hall (August), Prince Lucien Campbell Hall (October), and Johnson Hall (December) and an arson fire was set at the Men’s Physical Education Building (ROTC office) on the University of Oregon campus. The bombs caused extensive damage but no injuries.

1971

White police cars were replaced with blue and white cars beginning in February.

The Community Service Officers program was initiated (originally a federally funded program).

The downtown mall was created, and after problems began cropping up, the department initiated foot patrols of the area.

EPD hired its first woman officer, Ginny Hunt, who did not go on patrol, and was assigned to the Juvenile Division.

Protect.Serve.Care.

1973

New communications equipment was installed, including new radio and phone systems.

Four homicides occurred in a three month period from August to October. The Violent Crime rate increased by 66% from the previous year.

Eugene became the first West Coast city to swear-in women as regular patrol officers. Chief Dale Allen received an award for his efforts in advancing women in police work. The first women sworn for patrol were Margo Piquette, Deb Blankenship, and Dee Hunter.

Protect.Serve.Care.

1974

Severe budget shortages caused the reduction and elimination of a variety of positions.

The Lektriever cross-reference card file was replaced by a new system.

The Department began sponsoring a Neighborhood Watch program.

1974 -Officer Bill Brooks

In response to a rising number of rape cases, the Department organized a four-member interagency team for investigating rapes.

Protect.Serve.Care.

1974

The Special Weapons and Tactics Team (SWAT) originated about 1974. This team took their specialized weapons and tactics training at the FBI Academy, in Quantico, Virginia. The teams very first tactical assignment was a house-to-house search in the South Willamette area for fugitive, Carl Cletus Bowles. The team did apprehend Joan Coberly, Bowles' niece/girlfriend, during this search. She was hiding in a house in the 3600 block of Willamette Street. (In 1965 Carl C. Bowles was convicted of killing Deputy Sheriff Carlton Smith. Sentenced to life, he escaped in 1974. A manhunt ensued, which narrowed to a south Eugene residential area cordoned off by police. Bowles escaped by kidnapping a retired couple, Earl and Viola Hunter, and forcing them to drive him away. The Hunters were found murdered in Washington state, and police recaptured Bowles in Idaho.)

The Crisis Negotiation Team was originated within a couple of years after SWAT.

Protect.Serve.Care.

1975

The department formed a "bike" squad consisting of a patrol car and two motorcycles, to try and decrease the number of car-bicycle crashes. A federal grant allowed Eugene Police Department to hire 4 traffic enforcement officers. This was likely the start of the Traffic Enforcement Unit.

The Lane County interagency rape team was formed in April. The team was composed of women as a way to encourage the reporting and prosecution of rapes in an effort to reduce the impact of such cases on the victim.

Protect.Serve.Care.

1977

Police officers were still expected to purchase their own weapons and equipment, such as bullet-proof vests, though uniforms were provided.

Above:
Gary Nauta, Becky Hanson, Bill Harris 1977

Left:
Chief Pierce Brooks 1977-1980

Protect.Serve.Care.

1980

Methamphetamine cases begin to make their appearance in Eugene in the early 1980s and rose steadily throughout the decade.

The City began investigating installing a 9-1-1 system.

In the spring, the City faced severe budget shortfalls and the Police Department faced the possibility of serious cutbacks.

The Eugene Police, Springfield Police and Lane County Sheriff's Office begin exploring the pros and cons of consolidating into a single agency. The program was deemed to not be feasible.

Protect.Serve.Care.

1981

From 1981 to 1985, the Police Department went through a number of budget cuts. Only five new officers were hired during those five years despite serious shortages in Patrol personnel.

In December, the City Council approved funds to initiate a Police Reserve program.

1982

The Lane Interagency Narcotics Team (L.I.N.T.) was disbanded late in the year amid controversy.

Because of cutbacks and other budget problems, the Eugene Police Employees Association accepted an eight month freeze.

1983

The position of Deputy Chief is eliminated from the Department after Pat Larion retires.

Eugene Police Department K-9 team started in June with 3 dog/handler teams.

1984

The number of reported rapes increased again for the third year in a row.

1984

In March, Agent Mark Krupar and Officer Rick Allen are wounded in a shootout with a robbery suspect at Izzy's Pizza. Krupar is wounded five times and Allen four. Both officers recover fully and eventually return to duty. It was that shooting which led EPD to eventually purchase and issue the semi-automatic handguns in use today. The incident demonstrated how ineffective the ammunition was at the time and the difficulty of reloading the revolvers.

1985

The Police and Fire Departments were administratively consolidated into a single Department of Public Safety in early October by City manager Mike Gleason. Chief Packard resigned and Everett Hall (Fire Dept. Chief) took over as the Director of Public Safety, supervising both Police and Fire Departments. Officially, the merger took place on Jan. 1, 1986.

In April, the 9-1-1 emergency telephone system became operational.

1986

The Cops in Schools program was initiated in September, Officers were assigned to two schools – South Eugene and Churchill High Schools, with plans to eventually expand the program to all area high schools. The program was jointly funded by the Department and the 4J School District.

1987

There was extensive media coverage of Eugene's rising burglary problem during the year. Police suspected much of it was drug related.

A new Interagency Narcotics Enforcement Team (INET) was organized and in place by June. It was disbanded due to budget issues in 2004, and then re-convened in 2008.

The Cops in Schools program began its second year with some minor changes including a shift in focus to crime prevention and delinquency and away from enforcement. Drug traffic in the schools also continued to be a major focus.

Protect.Serve.Care.

1988

On January 1, the merged department formerly known as Eugene Police, Fire & Emergency Services, officially became the Department of Public Safety. Within the Police, the patrol and detective divisions are merged to allow for more efficient routing and handling of services.

Protect.Serve.Care.

1990

In the first few months of the year, reports of hate crimes increase by 50% over the previous year in Oregon.

The Whiteaker Community Resource Center opens in August as both a community center and part-time police substation. The Department paid for the renovation, rent and utilities.

Officers begin wearing all navy blue uniforms.

The City faces a crunch for police officers and budgets extra money for recruiting.

In September ,the new firing range, located at Short Mountain landfill in Goshen, is dedicated to be used the Police and Sheriff's Departments jointly. The estimated cost was $275,000.

1991

The Gulf War with Iraq (Desert Storm) sparks protests, demonstrations, and other crimes such as arson, bomb threats, graffiti and vandalism.

In June, the Department begins a pilot bike patrol program for the campus area and city bike paths.

The Department replaces mace with pepper spray because it acts more quickly and has fewer potential side effects.

Protect.Serve.Care.

1992

A handful of patrol cars are outfitted with computers in August with the intention of eventually installing computers in all cars.

1995

The Police Athletic League (PAL) is organized to provide activities and role models for high risk youth.

Funding for 9-1-1 is stabilized through a new telephone tax.

A second public safety station is opened in the West University Neighborhood.

1997

The Department of Public Safety is deconsolidated in October, recreating independent Police and Fire Departments.

On June 1, activist attempts to halt removal of trees for construction of a parking garage at Broadway and Charnelton develops into a riot as police begin arresting and removing protestors. Officers are accused of using excessive force because of widespread use of pepper spray on the activists and the crowd. Several activists also bring suit against the City.

1999

In March, the Eugene Regional Police Academy opens.

Protect.Serve.Care.

2005

The Department had 25 women officers (out of total of 178 officers).

2006

The Police Auditor was hired and began work in Eugene in October 2006, almost a year after the Charter Amendment was enacted by the City Council empowering the formation of the Independent Police Auditor. The ordinance that further describes the duties and authority of the Police Auditor and the Civilian Review Board was adopted unanimously by the City Council on December 13, 2006, and became effective on January 12, 2007.

2006

The Department switches to all blue police cars with new graphics.

2008

After months of discussion and input from the public, groups, individuals, officers, the ACLU, as well as after review of other policies and experiences from around the U.S. the Police Department acquired 40 Tasers for a pilot project and a new policy was put into place in January. March 9, 2008 was the first activation on an armed subject call downtown. During a typical 15-month period, EPD will make 16,000 incident arrests, including DUII and citation in lieu of custody arrests. In the 15-months of the Taser Pilot Project, 134 Taser incidents occurred, and in those incidents, the Taser was only actually activated in 30 cases.

2008

The Department implements in-car video.

A new interoperable radio system is installed to facilitate communication with other agencies.

Eugene Police heads up security for the 2008 Olympic Track and Field Trials and also provides security for many presidential campaign visits (Sen. Hilary Clinton, Chelsea Clinton, Sen. Barack Obama who became President.)

2008

Crisis Negotiation's New Response Vehicle

Protect.Serve.Care.

2009

Recognizing the complexity of crisis interactions with persons with mental illness the department worked closely with community agencies and public members in 2008 to create the region's first Crisis Intervention Team to help respond to people with mental illness. In February of 2009, 18 officers and a dispatcher became the first members of CIT. All sworn officers will received the training in 2010.

2009

There are 180 sworn officers and 125 civilian employees for a total workforce of 305. On a typical day – officers are dispatched to roughly 300 calls for service. There are 25,000 criminal cases handled annually. Each year, 8,000 people are arrested 12,000 times on 17,000 charges.

Per capita officers 2.45/1,000 U.S.
Per capita officers 1.2 – 1.3/1,000 Eugene

The starting monthly wage of a police officer is $4,641 and benefits are $1,066. There is $5,000 allotted to training each officer annually. An impressive number of officers are college graduates and have post graduate degrees. Once hired, a recruit is trained for approximately 1,720 hours before going on patrol.

Protect.Serve.Care.

2009

9-1-1 employees are our 1st ‘first responders.’ Our 39 dedicated Central Lane 9-1-1 employees take 400,000 calls for service per year. That’s 1,300 to 1,600 calls per day. Day or night, they are there for the public. They are the vital link between citizens, victims and public safety responders who apprehend criminals, save possessions from fire and save lives.

Protect.Serve.Care.