



Wash. Co. Deputy Sheriff
David Mery interview

(Brian Gamel) Ok today is May 22, 2005, 5:20 pm and I am interviewing Mr. David Mery on the topic of "evaluate the crime in Hillsboro since 1985".

(Brian Gamel) Are you aware of the topic Mr. Mery?

(David Mery) Yes.

(Brian Gamel) Now onto the first question. How long have you been in Hillsboro?

(David Mery) For about 4 and a half years.

(Brian Gamel) How long have you been on the sheriff office?

(David Mery) I have been a deputy sheriff for about a year now.

(Brian Gamel) Have you ever had any similar jobs to this subject?

(David Mery) Like law enforcement?

(Brian Gamel) Yea.

(David Mery) Yes I have.

(Brian Gamel) What did you do?

(David Mery) I was in the coast guard for 20 years and 11 of those years I have been a boating officer.

(Brian Gamel) Ok can you explain to me what you did?

(David Mery) In the coast guard you had to make sure that the commercial fishing vessels, fraterships and tanks, and all boats to enforce the federal laws.

(Brian Gamel) Along with the coast guard have you been in the coast guard in Hillsboro in the past few years?

(David Mery) No. the past few years I have worked in Astoria.

(Brian Gamel) Now in the past year as a deputy sheriff what was the most common crime that you arrested people for?

(David Mery) Fraud and ID theft.

(Brian Gamel) Any interesting stories you would like to share.

(David Mery) The most common crime that I arrested people for has been fraud and Id theft. The most interesting arrest that I have been in was an investigation in target in Beaverton/Hillsboro were a bunch of DVDs stolen and they had the guy on video and they also he arrested a couple of days earlier for uh the same crime. I was able to go to were he lived and I went there three times and on the third time he was there and I arrested him at that time. And I also made three DUI's .

(Brian Gamel) How do you feel when you are arresting someone who was drunk?

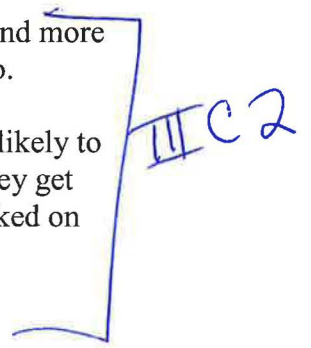
(David Mery) Well anyone who I arrest I feel god about it. Get the bad people off the streets.

(Brian Gamel) Ok. Well I am aware that there in an increase in gang activity in Hillsboro. Do you feel safe in Hillsboro?

(David Mery) Well I feel safe. Yea there are a lot of gangs and it is getting more and more relevant. I also work in the jail, and there is also a lot of gang activity in the jail to.

(Brian Gamel) Like how do you define gang activity in a jail?

(David Mery) They group together. And tend to pick on the people who are more likely to be the victim and their jail inmates are permitted to buy candy you know when they get the chance to buy stuff from the commissary. And during meal times they are picked on to give their food and a lot of assaults on inmates in the jail.



(Brian Gamel) On the jail lines, now Oregon has had a serious budget cut in the year 2002. Has this affected the sheriffs department?

(David Mery) Sure it has. Over the whole state of Oregon in general it has created less beds and less jail space. Less room to put away the people that we arrest. Everyday on average about 17 people are set free to make room for the people we do arrest.

(Brian Gamel) So these people that are being set free are let's say rapists.

(David Mery) No no no. Nothing that major. It is usually your minor crimes. For instance, dui, once they sober up we let them go or have a responsible person come and get them. So there are quite a few arrests there that never had to spend the night. Minor crimes like minor theft and depends on how good they have been behaving in jail and the severity of their crime.

(Brian Gamel) Well if Oregon were to give more beds do you think that there will be enough for the criminals now or do you think that there will be a need for more?

(David Mery) We will need considerable more, as it is there are plans to increase the Washington County Jail. Provided we get the funding. But I think that if we fill that up we would need more jails. As population increases crime increases as well.

(Brian Gamel) Going along with population increase as different races come to Hillsboro does this have any trend in crime?

(David Mery) I don't think it'll change any different than what it is right now.

(Brian Gamel) Do the police do any racial profiling? Would they arrest any more of one race than the other?

(David Mery) There is no such thing as profiling. But it depends on the neighborhood that is being patrolled. If you have a neighborhood that is predominantly Hispanic then chances are you are going to have more Hispanic criminals. Of the 3 dui arrests that I made 2 were white. Anyone can be a victim no matter what race you are.

(Brian Gamel) Is there any police brutality or do you think that it is pretty calm.

(David Mery) It is very small in relationship of the amount of good cops to the amount of bad cops. I don't think that there are truly any bad cops out there but what I think there is uh sometimes you get onto a situation were people may get upset. All the crimes that they see day after day after day and some people tend to let it get to them. But it is very rare, usually when it happens there is a lot of disciplinary action that happens.

(Brian Gamel) What kind of disciplinary action will be taken?

(David Mery) Usually they will probably get reprimanded and maybe some time without pay. And if it really serious they might get fired. It's unacceptable. So they should be taken upon it very seriously.

(Brian Gamel) Are cops held to a higher standard?

(David Mery) Yes and they should be.

(Brian Gamel) So you think that crime in Hillsboro has been staying very consistent.

(David Mery) I really don't have any statistics to give you.

(Brian Gamel) Is the gang activity in Hillsboro been focused in one spot or is it very spread out.

(David Mery) I think that it has been focused in the downtown part of Hillsboro. Were the bigger population is.

(Brian Gamel) Has the war on drugs have its toll on the sheriff's office.

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(David Mery) We go out for any crime out there but if we were going to eliminate methamphetamine then a lot of other crimes would disappear. Most of your fraud and id theft are centered around meth.

(Brian Gamel) Is there anything else that you think that we will need for our project?

(David Mery) No I think that is about all.

(Brian Gamel) Thank you.