



Campus Cops Corner

-Public Safety Tips for the PPCC Community-

Important Numbers & websites:

- 24-7 Emergency Number: 502-2911
- Emergency Alert Sign Up: www.ppcc.edu/alert

Public Safety Bi-Weekly Newsletter

In a few days, the media will begin trumpeting the ten year anniversary of the tragedy at Columbine High School which occurred on April 20, 1999. Two disturbed young men, ages 18 and 17, (names deliberately omitted) killed 13 people and wounded 24 others before taking their own lives. The Columbine tragedy is the seminal event when we discuss school shootings. Awareness and tactics certainly changed, but I also remember a tremendous amount of attention being paid to %Who knew what? When did they know it, and what did they do about it?+ What lessons have we learned?

Ken Hilte, MSM, Chief of Police
Department of Public Safety
Pikes Peak Community College
5675 South Academy Blvd., A-100
Colorado Springs, CO 80906



The Columbine Anniversary

Although schools remain a statistically safe place to be, Columbine represented a loss of innocence for all of us. The unthinkable is now understood to be possible no matter where you live, work or play.

Police tactics changed in the immediate aftermath. Time is precious and these events tend to be over in a matter of minutes. No longer do we %contain the threat and call SWAT.+ Now we practice and employ %active shooter+tactics which call for us to press the attack. While we don't understand their motives, we do know their goal, i.e., a high casualty count. Accordingly, our tactics are centered on getting people out of harm's way, slowing the shooter down, retarding their efforts, quick and effective response and denying them unchallenged access to large groups of people.

While we know April 20th (Hitler's birthday) has some significance to certain extremist groups, we still don't know exactly why these suspects resort to these means (there is no one %psychological profile+which fits all these shooters). We do know that many (not all) suffer from %inadequate personalities.+ Many display signs prior to committing their atrocities, and our best tactic is preventing the tragedy before it takes place. We do this by reporting suspicious behavior and allowing our behavioral intervention teams to intercede.

At PPCC, that's the Student Urgent Response Force (SURF) Committee. The Committee is multidisciplinary in nature (Human Resources, Crisis Counselors, Dean of Students, Vice President Student Services, and Public Safety) and our best work and successes are instances which never made headlines.

All you have to do is call and share your concerns.

