



September 20, 2018

Dear Citizens:

Earlier this month I received the Corsicana Police Department's good news on the decreasing crime rates. These statistics are impressive and paint a solid picture of the relatively safe city in which we live, so I wanted to know firsthand how a police officer sees the city. On September 4, I joined Officer Sergio Palacios, one of the city's Patrol Officers, for a ride-along. We spent a couple of hours together on a Tuesday. Sergio Palacios told me he was a graduate of Corsicana High School when I was Superintendent of Schools. He attended the Navarro College Police Academy and graduated in 2012. He joined the Corsicana Police Department almost two years ago, and has a total of five years of law enforcement experience. In other words, he's a locally grown contributor to the city.

I thought about that when we drove the streets of the city during his shift. What makes some young people feel that they must leave their hometown to find their career, while others choose a path that keeps them here? We have an abundance of work opportunities here, both with the city and with many of our businesses. The fact is, anyone who wants a career can find one here in Corsicana. We have the education and training available, and we have employers who are always hiring. In fact, the Police Department has openings right now for three officers.

While Officer Palacios went about his day with some routine traffic stops and other duties, I watched from the patrol vehicle. People he interacted with were polite and respectful. Even if they did not know each other, there was a connection and an understanding that we are all citizens here and that interacting with a Police Officer was not a strange or uncomfortable meeting. No doubt, part of this was the calm demeanor of Officer Palacios. I would hope the officers and citizens always conduct themselves this way.

The Police and Fire Departments work tirelessly year-round to educate young people on the many ways these departments can help them, and how young people can help the departments. These efforts over time create an understanding that we don't only see the Police when there is a crime, and we don't only see the Fire Department when there is a fire. I would like to think that these efforts show possibilities to young people like Sergio Palacios who choose to follow a path to serve the community and keeps them close to home.

The Police Department is definitely on to something. Double digit decreases in various crimes and a welcoming neighborhood camaraderie with citizen support are making Corsicana a city that has never been safer in modern times. Thank you to the citizens and officers whose efforts are a story much more important than a percentage sign.

Sincerely,

Don Denbow
Mayor