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Kruithoff, John Oral History Interview: History of Law Enforcement in Holland

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ABSTRACT: (Topics Appear in similar order of Transcript)
Roles and responsibilities as Chief, How JK became an officer, Rewards and challenges of working in the HPD, Team Policing, Benefits of Team Policing, Community between officers, Relationship with Holland community, Junior Police Academy, Role of the individual officer, Challenges the HPD currently faces, Creative policing, Stigmas and scrutinies, Future of HPD, New station better serving the needs, Recognizing policing issues, Prevention Programs, Change over the years.
MN: Could you talk about what your role as chief is with the Holland Police?

JK: My responsibilities?

MN: Your responsibilities.

JK: As police chief?

MN: Right.

JK: Well, ultimately I am responsible for the entire operations of the Police Department, whether it be patrol, investigative, or services, and make sure those divisions are run and operated properly. I represent the department at the city level, the county level, and the state level. As far as any issues pertaining to law enforcement, and I also am responsible for development and maintaining the police department’s budget. That is developed with the assistance of the city manager, and then over the course of the year I have to manage that to make sure that we stay within our budget and I am also responsible to develop and administer department polices and procedures. So it’s kind of an overview, generally of the responsibilities.

MN: Okay. Going back, what brought you to police work?

JK: My history with the Holland Police department started in 1972. In 1972, the police department started a police cadet program and a cadet program is for students who are in college who are pursuing a career in law enforcement and criminal justice, and at that time I was going to college for a law enforcement
career and when the department started their police cadet program I made an application here and was the first police cadet hired at this department. So I go back to the years of 1972 and I was here for a year and a half, and then I was attending Ferris State University and I had to quit for about a year to complete my education. That’s in Big Rapids, which is about a 100 miles away, so I could not keep my job as police cadet and go to school, so I went down there and finished up and attended the police academy in winter/spring of 1975, and I completed that, then I came back here. And I had, you know, been previously employed as a police cadet and in July of 1975 and opening became available for a police officer, and I was hired by the then Chief Charles Lindstrom. And so my career as a police officer started in 1975 and the history of my personal career was I was a police officer for 11 years, and did a variety of duties, road patrol, evidence technician, breathalyzer operator, just a lot of various aspects that police officers do. And then, I believe it was in 1986, I was promoted to the position of police sergeant, which is a supervisor over a platoon of police officers. I was a supervisor, a sergeant for six years, and then I believe it was in 1992, in that area, that I was promoted to police captain, in charge of the patrol division. And I was in that position till 1996, and then in May of 1996, in fact it was six years, this week that I was appointed Police Chief by the city manager. So that’s kind of my history here. So I have 27 years as a full time police officer, and about a year and a half prior to that as a cadet. The reason why I got into police work, as a young child I always admired police officers, and just as I grew up I just thought it was a neat job, and as a teenager, I did not change my attitude about it, and I know in
my junior year of high school I was challenged by my school counselor to look at schools for college seriously, and I knew I wanted to pursue law enforcement so I headed in that direction, and this is where I'm at today, so. So through my career I've kind of woven through the department and held most positions that we have here and then like I said, in 1996 I was appointed as the Police Chief.

MN: Were there any particular individuals who influenced you along the way or, in your career?

JK: Probably the biggest influence, later in my career was Police Chief Charles Lindstrom. He was here, and retired here after a career of 25 years as Police Chief. He hired me as a police officer. I worked hard and I had goals to move into the administration someday. And so I looked at him as, probably a mentor that I had, so I would say him.

MN: Now as chief, I am sure there are certain rewards and certain challenges, could you describe what they might be?

JK: Well the challenges are many, okay, obviously when difficulties occur in our community, as far as criminal acts, and to give you an illustration most people would remember if you'd been around here, the issue of gang violence especially in 1999 when we received, or had six homes firebombed, when you have those types of significant criminal acts in our community, the community looks to us to prevent them and to bring those responsible to justice. So, probably the biggest, most difficult issues are when significant criminal acts occur in the community, we are looked at to solve those problems. And we try to do the best we can obviously, we don't have a crystal ball but we aggressively pursue those
responsible for committing those crimes and until they are solved, that can be quite a stressful time. So you really want to make sure that there's not unrest or outrageous criminal acts going on in the community. The rewards, obviously, we can look at that same element and to see when we do solve significant crimes and when we see neighborhoods that are in real need and we go in and do law enforcement's part of bringing neighborhoods back to an area of peace and tranquility and neighborhoods where kids can safely play in their backyards and streets and parks and areas, there is real satisfaction there when we have seen significant progress. Along with that is just trying to partner with our community, the people, my personal goal through the nineties, and it still is, is to have our residents and our officers to know each other personally, instead of seeing officers riding around and not knowing any of them. So we made a very serious effort in the nineties with putting and assigning officers into neighborhoods so people will know that they have some ownership in the police department, there's my officer, I know him personally, I see him regularly, and that has been a real positive thing for our community and for the department. I initiated that in 1993 through the effort called community policing. Since then its evolved into what we have today, its team policing where in 1993 we took 3 officers and assigned them into neighborhoods, now I have divided the entire department into policing teams and now they, the full teams, are assigned to neighborhoods, so its now a department wide concept.

MN: I guess as far as the team policing goes, I am not sure how much you can speak on this being in effect in November...
November of 2001, it went into effect. So it took about two years to, well I made a recommendation; do you want me to go into that history?

Sure.

Right after the summer of 1999 when we had the firebombings, I made a recommendation to the city council that we put together a committee to study the services that we offer to the community. I recommended that the committee be made up primarily of citizens who lived in our city. Representatives from businesses, from education, which included public schools, Hope College, large industry, small business, law enforcement, from city government, and from the court system. So it was made up of a variety of people, we used two individuals that we hired from Michigan State University to facilitate this whole thing so I was kind of, off in the background, I didn’t want to lead this thing, I wanted somebody from the outside to lead us through the process which took six months to study the services that we provide our community, to see if we in fact are providing the correct services. Or is it that we are meeting the needs of our citizens. And that process took about six months and at the end of that, this committee presented City Council and myself with a variety of recommendations. The committee was formed in January of 2000. It went for six months and in June of 2000 the recommendations were given to council and then they gave them to me and said ‘okay, here’s the recommendations, what can you do with them?’ I took them, and then I over the course of the next six months took their recommendations and developed an in house task force, and we examined them. I broke them down into numerous working committees, ad hoc committees that
were assigned a variety of tasks, and then in December of 2000, so that was six months later, we came up with a proposal as to how we should make some changes and adjustments here in the department regarding some internal issues, regarding the whole concept of how we deliver services to the community. And that was presented to City Council in January of 2001. One of those primary recommendation was to bring community policing, officers assigned to neighborhoods, into the full department. The plan was approved, and then there were a variety of other things that we recommended also, and I presented what those were, and a timeline of implementation. Also, included in that was the building project, recommending a new building facility because of the age and this facility is just pretty tired and we’ve outgrown it. That was also included in there, well, like I said, the primary goal was to implement team policing. We had to figure out what team policing was before we could implement it, so it took a year to do that. After it was approved in January, the concept, we worked on it and then implemented it in November. And I can go into that in a little more detail if you want me to.

MN: Yes, could you describe how it’s organized?

JK: Team Policing, what we did was take the whole geographic area of the city, and we took a lot of different statistics, mainly our calls for service in the neighborhood, we plotted where the majority of those are over a given twelve month year and all our criminal calls, they are broken down into Part 1: more serious calls, and your Part 2: your less serious crimes, and then your accidents. So we took four components, Part 1 crimes, Part 2 crimes, service calls (service
calls are non-criminal calls that we go to when people call us for anything), and then your accident calls. Those make up what we do which amount to about 23,000 police calls a year. So we plotted all them on the map and figured out where all these are happening and during times of day and all this kind of stuff, and we divided the city of Holland, and at that time, if I can just add this, they annexed in 1,100 more acres of property into the south end of Holland. Most of that is agriculture, but it also included a portion of highway 196 which we've never policed before and the M40 corridor which included a truck stop and a variety of businesses down there, and that added to our call load and our responsibility. So we took all that data, and all that information, and that new annexation area took all that stuff, and we divided the city into three geographic districts. Okay, right, and then we looked at it and one of them which includes the central core city, is our biggest policing district, and then we took our staff, which is our police officers, traffic officers, our community policing officers, our detectives, and other miscellaneous staff which we have and we assigned three policing teams. So, one policing team is responsible for a geographic area, so when they come to work, they now know where they are going to be working and what they are responsible for. The difference that we didn’t do before is that we didn’t have specific teams or geographical areas assigned, if you came to work you’d work one area one day and the next area another day, you just kind of bounced around. Now when you come to work, you know what area you are going to be assigned to, and whatever is going on in that area, your team is responsible to police, and enforce the law. And if certain problems pop up in
those assigned areas, the team is responsible to look at the problem, look whose responsible, who's got a stake in this whole problem, work with them and become problem solvers and take care of that issue. And that can be involving business people, involving residents, it can be involving, hey one of the solutions could be a church, a social agency, or a health clinic, or drug enforcement teams, or just plain old hard traffic enforcement. Or whatever. It can be variety of things to solve that problem what ever it is. Each team has two sergeants in charge of that team, and they oversee that team, and now there is a policing team responsible for each are of that city, and that is significantly different. One thing that it did was it unified the staff and the department to work better, and communicate better. The teams meet on a monthly basis. We never did that before, had groups of officers meet together to discuss issues together, now they meet monthly and we have the opportunity to gather tons of data, and so we can take our data our problem areas and all that and in these monthly team meetings, they discuss the problem areas, what we need to do to problem solve, an then during the month, different officers are assigned to do different things, thus hopefully more effectively police the community.

MN: Have you been able to see the effects or benefits of Team Policing yet, or is it still really early?

JK: It's pretty early yet, but its six months already, there are certain areas. One thing we do, that we specifically do, is because of all our data is all documented on police reports, those are all entered into the computer and with technology nowadays you can do almost anything with your data. What we do is we can ask
the computer through a request, where have we been anyplace three times or more in the last month. Okay, so the computer kicks out, well you been at this address five times in the last thirty days. Well, we’ll look at why were we there, and if it looks like it is a problem that’s starting to occur, then we’ll, lets say we’ve been at this home three different times in the last three weeks, and each time we were there was a domestic problem. Okay, well domestic problems mean that there are problems within the family. If they have been there they will probably know who’s involved and what’s going on. Maybe the parents have a son that’s out of control. For whatever reason, maybe he’s become addicted to drugs or alcohol. We’ll go there and look at that and we’ll say ‘where can we point these people in the right direction. That’s where you get your social services or whatever. If there’s drug activity going on there. We are going to go in there and arrest people with drug teams and investigators and stuff, and lets say that it is a neighbor complaint, then we know that they are not getting along with the neighbors for some reason. So we try to figure out what’s the problem there and we might refer, sit and talk to them, or we might refer them to the mediation board to resolve an issue. Or we may see an area that we got a lot of traffic crashes, when we’ve got a problem with traffic let’s deal with that. We are looking at where are we going on a regular basis, identifying the problem and trying to solve that problem. And that’s been working pretty well. Now, it’s easy to say you are going to solve the problem, that’s easier said than done, because sometimes some people don’t want you to solve their problem, or be involved. I would say overall its being effective. It is too early to really see the effects out in the community.
But there are some people who are going like well, you are really getting on us you know, you’re here all the time and you are talking to us, and so I think if we went out and found some of those we’d say ‘yeah, it’s been effective’. I think it has been very effective within the department. Like I said earlier, there is much better communication here, and feedback and information flow, and I think the moral and unity has really increased.

MN: What kind of community exists between officers, within the department, maybe not just inside work...

JK: Off duty type of thinks you mean?

MN: Well, on the job and off the job also.

JK: Well, I think we go through changes, right now we are going through, we have a really young patrol division. A lot of officers were working assigned to teams are in their twenties, so we are a pretty young department again. We’ve had a lot of people retiring because they have been here, the pensions been enhanced so they are able to leave a little earlier, but I think that overall you’re going to find it is a pretty close knit group, and they are very close on the job, but you have to do that because you depend on each other. For if you get yourself into a situation where you need backup you obviously want people to make sure they come. And that’s never been an issues here, we’ve always had excellent relationships with backing people up and those types of things. As far as socially, just to give you an example, we just had a group of I think twelve officers that just got back from hiking out in Utah together. They went, and just had a great time. They were gone for about eight days, eight or nine days, and so there are a lot of social
events and I am glad to see that because back when I was, my days in 1975 and '76, the guys that are captains now and in the administration, we did the same thing. And we've talked about that, about the different vacations, and hiking excursions, and fun things we did away from the department that bonded us together, and now we are seeing the younger staff do the same thing. There is a real good relationship amongst us both here at work and when we are not here.

MN: How does the Holland Police Force strive to have a good relationship with the community, what kinds of programs or what kinds of strategies do you use to get into the community to build those relationships so that, you talked about a sense of ownership on the beat, perhaps, what kind... how is that sense of ownership built?

JK: Probably one of the most significant things we've started in 1996, that was the first year I became chief is we started what we call the Citizen's Police Academy, we offer two different times during the year, it's a ten week, one evening a week training course if you will, or an academy. We can host up to twenty people, and it's ten, I think it was the last one, it was ten Monday's in a row. During those ten weeks we give them a full look at how we operate, how the court system operates, how the jail systems operate, how the central dispatch operates, and then we offer them the opportunity to ride a full shift with an officer, out on the beat with them. We allow them to go down on our range a fire our guns and show them how we qualify. So we give them a real hands on experience, we have done twelve classes already, and they are always full, so what's that, just about 200 people have gone through it. And that has been a real plus for the department and the
community. That’s a… like I said earlier, team policing and getting officers in neighborhoods is key, that is our primary goal that we are trying to achieve, but this is more at an educational level. We’re bringing the community to us, in our home here, in the building, in our facility, and allowing them to observe, and teaching them how we operate and why we do what we do. And then we went one step further, I think we are going to start of fourth year. During the summer, it’s called junior police academy. The officers that are assigned to the schools during the school year we bring them in during the summer, then we offer two four week classes, and those are four days a week, so they are Monday through Thursday, like 9 to 2, okay, and that’s four weeks in a row. We do the same thing that we do with the adults, with the exception that we do them with kids, and then we don’t let them ride, we don’t let them shoot, but we educate them at their level, but we have a kind of, we make it more fun for them. To give you an example, we set up a complete mock accident scene. There’s twenty kids in the class and we make them work as teams, we will never let anybody work as an independent, so they are assigned a team. At the crash scene, five of them are going to be firemen; we get the fire department to participate. So they ride on the fire truck and work side-by-side with a fireman. Five are going to be paramedics, so we get the ambulance service involved, and then five of them are going to work with the police officers, and them five of them are going to be victims in the car. And we will set it up, we have two wrecker companies, or the wrecker companies bring two smashed cars together. We use Central Wesleyan Church’s parking lot cause it is so big. We set up a mock crash scene, and then we have the
kids, we stage down at Holland Christian down there on Ottawa, and we let them all run up there with lights and sirens so kids get the thrill of riding in a police car, a fire truck, and an ambulance. And then five of them are in the car, and we make it a drunk driver situation and the firemen, they have the hoses all throwing water all over, and everybody is taken out of the car and put on backboards, and then the driver we always make sure that they are okay, and the officer kids bring that person, we teach them how we go through a whole drunk driving scenario, and then we let them arrest him, and handcuff him and put him in the police car. So it’s a whole mock crash scene, and we do that, and we do lots of hands on stuff. We’ll have... set up a crime scene, and let the kids dust for fingerprints, and lift that and photography and stuff, so we do that during the summer for the community kids. So those two are huge efforts, which I’ll tell you, not many police agencies offer their community, and that just really has bonded us again. We’ve done that and I think we are starting our fourth year, and again that’s twenty kids in each. I am real pro into education, and getting the community involved in what we do.

MN: From an officer’s perspective, what do you think the role of the individual officer is in the community? What his primary job or primary set of goals?

JK: Obviously it is to protect the citizen’s who live here from criminal acts, and it is to try and prevent criminal acts from occurring though preventative control, we do it through education, and then our response for immediate police service. When people get hurt in accidents or people are victims of crime, our job in to immediately respond to them and their needs, and if they are victims of crime, to
find those who are responsible for who have committed that crime and make them become responsible for their acts.

MN: This is a more general question, what challenges are the Holland Police faced with right now, today?

JK: The biggest concern, there’s probably three issues I am concerned, majority concerned about. The first one has to deal with the amount of violence we are seeing in homes, domestic violence is probably my number one concern, and the reason that’s happening, is because it is an effect that is going to last for generations. Because I am totally convinced in my career here is that behavior that is observed in the home, is going to be learned behavior by children and will be demonstrated by them as they grow up and become adults themselves. So if they see at an early age dad beating up mother and that is causing all kinds of problems in the home, the child has learned this behavior from the parents, and may (not saying all of them will) but we have seen it over and over and over, and kids will grow up and behave like their parents. And that effects the next generation and the next generation. I have been around long enough now, that we are dealing with kids, with families, who the parents were kids in the homes when I was in their home back in the seventies and the eighties. Well, I can name scores of kids who have followed and grown up just like mom and dad. That’s the first problem.

The second one is the continuation of gangs in the Holland area. You don’t hear about them lately, but they are still here, and groups of individuals that just, are organizing together to cause problems in our community and is primarily against
other organized gangs. That concerns me yet. And then obviously with the whole
growth of the Holland area, the whole issue of traffic and the number of cars,
when you add more cars and more cars and more cars, you are going to have
traffic problems, and traffic behavior and traffic accidents and we need to
continue to work on those and we are looked at to enforce all of the traffic laws,
and then, so we have a balancing act. We need to respond to the calls, but we still
need to be available enough where we are not going to calls to try to enforce
traffic laws and keep all that under control. It is a big balancing act.

MN: I think you have already described some of this but, Holland’s Police Department
and Holland’s policing has been described as creative. Could you maybe go more
in depth on what kinds of ways you strive to be creative in your policing?

JK: Sure, like I said, back in 1993 we initiated the whole idea of putting officers in
neighborhoods, called it community policing, that became a very common hot
topic, the thing to do throughout the nineties, I think that we introduced it at a
pretty early level, then we went to the, like I have mentioned the Citizen’s Police
Academies, the Junior Academies [End Side A] Prior to that I don’t know who
was doing community policing like we are, I am not saying we are doing it the
best or the greatest, I think we are doing it the way our community wants it to be
done. So we’ve changed a lot of things and done a lot of things differently, and
we will continue to always think of ways too positively impact our community.

MN: There may not be an answer to this question, but are there any stigmas, or
scrutinizes that the Holland Police have faced or had to overcome in your years as
an officer, and as chief.
JK: Well, I don’t know if it is just a stigma with the Holland Police Department, there’s a perception probably amongst people, that we are out picking on different groups, or that we have quotas that we have to reach as far as traffic tickets, and that we are just picking on different people, that is absolutely not accurate at all. The whole issue of racial profiling has come up and it went away when the 9/11 event and terrorism hit America, we have not, we are like any other community, I occasionally get calls where people think you know, I felt I was unjustly stopped for no reason at all, you are picking on me. Or I happened to be stopped three times in the last month; you are picking on me. When you look into it, and I look into every one of these incidences, maybe accurate, you’ve been stopped three times, its been by three different people, and you committed there different violations, okay, it just happens to be it was, but some people will perceive that we are picking on them for a reason. We get into some homes, many times over and over, and they think we are picking on them. Its not that we are picking on them, its just they are causing a behavior that gets our attention, either we are being called there, or they are being so disruptive that the neighbors are calling, or we happen to keep an eye on them, for whatever. And usually the people, who are complaining about something, usually are the ones that we can show pretty much of a history on. There are a lot of different stigmas I guess, but I don’t think there is anything significant. One of the things that I am very open about, when you take the Citizen’s Police Academy, if I thought we had something to hide, do you think I would let people ride with us. I have no idea what is going to happen when they are riding, so if I was a little leary about different things, the last thing
I would want to do is have people ride with the officers, to watch them. Well I have not had a situation yet in six years where I was embarrassed that something happened. Not everything happens correctly, but you’d have to have enough confidence in the staff, if they are going to do the right thing, or behave properly. So I am very open minded, and have a pretty much an open door here to the community, so there is always going to be a certain amount of people who have had preconceived ideas that we do things certain ways to pick on them, but we don’t. No time. We would not do that anyway.

MN: With the construction of the new station, are there any changes or preparations going on in staff to prepare for the future?

JK: Well, I’ve been working on this for five years, I introduced the concept of a new department in 1997 to the City Manager, and presented the need to council. And they have come through the building and have seen the need, this building was built in 1972, at that time we had 42 people in this building, now we have nearly 75 to 80 working in the same building, it was also designed back in the early days when female police officers were not here. We now have about eight female police officers. The design was obviously not properly planned for them, and I don’t blame anybody, but we need to move ahead because one, staff has increased, and because staff has changed, female, male, and we don’t have the facilities, proper facilities for everybody to work in. But I introduced the idea, and saw, brought the need, and the council and City manager have agreed that we need a new facility. What we are doing is a kind of unique thing, we are working in conjunction with the County of Ottawa, because they are responsible for the
new court, and we are going to stay on the same site. We purchased the property to our west, and we are going to build a new police facility on the corner, and hopefully construction will start this fall. That will be about an 18-month project, and then when that is complete, then we will move into that, so we don’t have to move out of here. And then when we are into the new facility, they are going to tear down this existing building and the court is going to build a new court complex where we are sitting right now. And then they can move in from where they are at, and then when they are in they will tear the old court down, so it’s a phasing project. But it has been on the drawing table for about five years and we are excited about seeing construction start this fall.

MN: How will the new station, with the new construction, how will it better serve the needs of the community and the force, other than just meeting the staff...

JK: Well, of the staff… One of the things that have increased tremendously over the years, is our ability to be trained properly, and this building is pretty inadequate for training, there is not a room in here, we don’t have a training room, or a training facility. We have a very old range that is too small, it is just outdated, and the equipment is pretty much just shot. So the new facility is going to give us an opportunity to meet all our training requirements, which are mandated by law. And obviously if an officer is trained properly, they are going to work, serve better. So overall, I think your working environment, your home, you know, the home you work out of, has a big influence about how you are going to perform your job. We are packed in here like sardines, with a lot of inadequate ability to train and do things, so with a new facility it will give us more room, people will
have a better attitude because the working conditions are better, and we are going
to train properly, and I think produce a better officer.

MN: I guess this is kind of a two tiered question: I'll start with the first half, how does
the Holland Police Department recognize problems, or potential problems early,
before they develop into larger problems. I understand that, was sort of what
happened with the gang problem, that you came out and recognized it when other
communities wouldn't, and that allowed you to go in and start solving the
problem, what ways of prevention and what ways of recognition of problems of
community are there?

JK: Well, when you respond to certain calls, you can start seeing different elements,
like the gang problem, you know, when you identify individuals that are dressing
a certain way, that we know through intelligence, and information that this is the
way gangs act. Obviously with the intelligence you get with people giving you
information that's probably your primary source of information is people telling
you what is going on. And you take a lot of your information, and what you
already know, and what you observe, and you look at it then you start to become
pro active. I'll give you an example of what we are trying to do now, there is a
reemergence of some kids that are starting to reorganize some gangs, we are
going to get their names and addresses and we are going to go visit their parents
and talk to them, and say you know what, we are not accusing your kid of
anything, but we know who they are hanging around with and it is not a good
peer, and there is the possibility that significant problems could occur, we hate to
see your kid involved in it, and possibly get hurt. So we are going to pre-warn
people better, and do some things like that. But obviously, we are out there everyday, we are patrolling all over the place, we know what is going on, and as we see things continuing to increase, we become aware of it and then we try to do the proactive thing. We have officers in schools, a lot of the kids who are involved in things are in schools, we try to talk to the kids, when we arrest them we go to the courts and say hey, sometimes these kids need significant consequences here, instead of just a slap on the hand. So we work a lot with the courts, with the probation department, with the schools, and with our own educational process to identify and try to ward off some of these things, however, some things are still going to happen, and when that happens, and I have told everybody in the community, if you are going to commit a crime, we’re coming after you, and you are going to pay the consequences for whatever you did.

MN: The second half of this question is what kinds of prevention programs are there for the Holland community to get involved in, or perhaps be educated by?

JK: We do a variety of things depending on what the situation is. We educate everybody from kids in school, we start in elementary schools, and we go right up through the high school because we have officers in both east and west middle schools and the high school, they do a lot of different education components in the schools, primarily, we’ve had D.A.R.E. for a long time, and we changed it, we got rid of the D.A.R.E. curriculum, we still do drug education, its called SAVE, because we added not only substance abuse but violence. So that’s where the V of SAVE comes in. Substance Abuse Violence Education, and we made it our own curriculum so we can apply the things we have going on here, and we can
educate the kids. But outside of that we get involved now in the Driver’s Education Programs, and go in there and really try to focus in on the effects, the adverse effects of alcohol on driving, in fact, this coming June over at Craig’s Cruisers, have you ever heard of vision goggles?

MN: No.

JK: We a set... we have several sets of goggles, you put them over, you wear them, and they make your vision look as if you were impaired, as if you were at a .15% Alcohol Level. Craig’s Cruisers cooperates with us with their go-karts, they put governors on the engines so they can’t go very fast, we make the kids put the goggles on and try to drive, and then they bash into things and you know they do it in a safe manner, but to show the kids that if you are going to drink and drive, the effects of alcohol are incredible. So we do a lot of those kind of unique things, so Drivers Education is a big thing we are involved in, seatbelt use, the whole issue of traffic enforcement is whole component of things we do, the academies are another great way to get our message out to people. We head to senior citizens, and we will go to Evergreen Commons or Freedom Village or Churches and we present a program to senior citizens about what are you vulnerable at, and it is going to be the whole issue of scams, telephone solicitations and those kinds of things that are going to be after these people’s money. So we’ve got pretty much an educational program to fit any need. Then I go and I speak all over, I never turn down an opportunity to speak, and I ask what topic do you want to speak on, and we’ll speak to it.
MN: One final question, how have you seen the Holland Police change over the years from when you started as a cadet, to now as chief?

JK: Three words, reactive to proactive. We used to react to calls. We'd be out there and you would go to your call, and we still do, but now we try to be much more proactive. Observe, and that's what the teams are all about, they are in the neighborhoods, they are in the community, they are in the city and they are looking for problems, and lets problem solve and get rid of the problem before it grows and is a constant problem. So instead of just reacting to everything we do, we are going here, well, we've been here 50 times in the last year, why go another 50 times, lets look and identify the problem, see if we can solve it so we can quit coming and maybe make life for some else a little bit better, and so that is probably the biggest way to narrow it down is those three words.

MN: Excellent, thank very much Chief Kruithoff.

[End Tape]