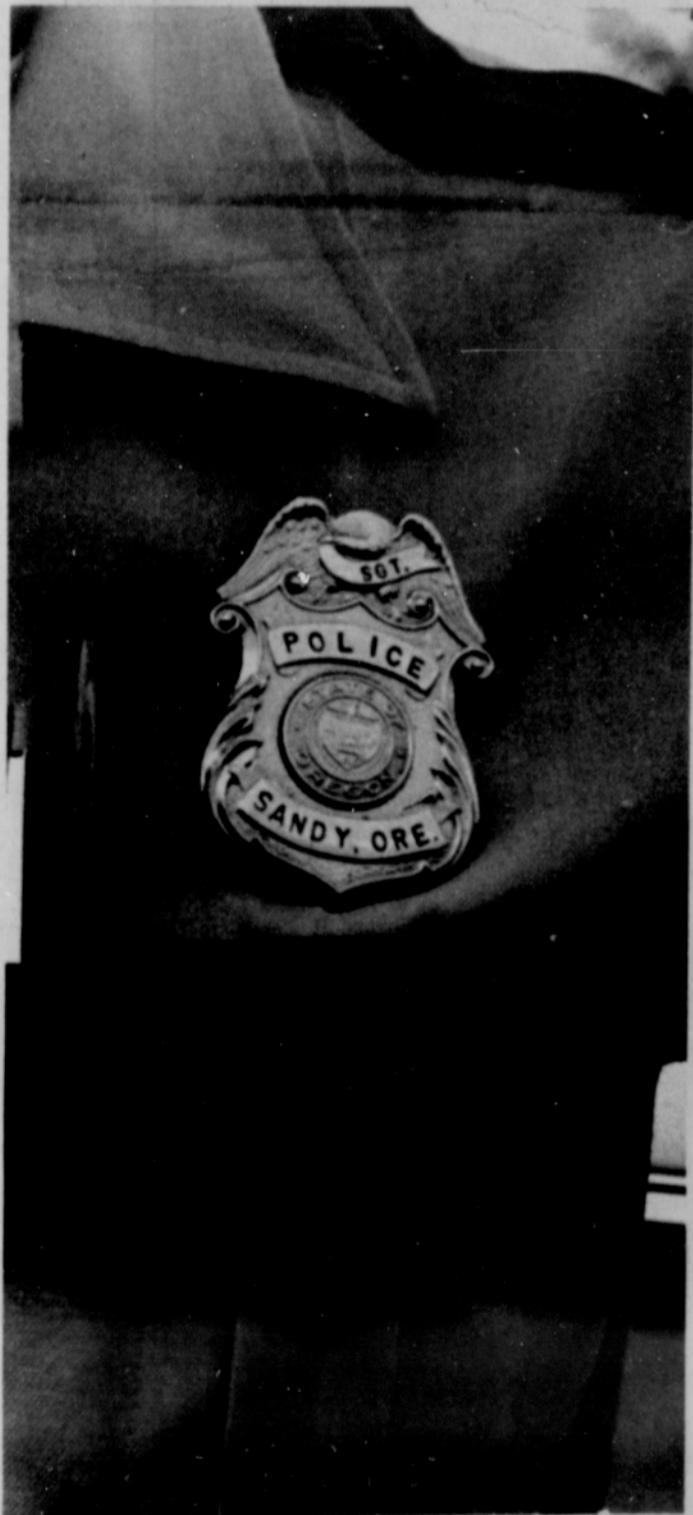


Cop waves Trigger fingers at public daily



SANDY POLICE Sergeant Don Predmore cruises local streets in familiar blue and white car.



TOOLS OF the trade for Don Predmore.

Don Predmore's the kind of cop who's quick to use his hand.

To wave at people.

In fact, in the seven years he's been a Sandy Police officer he's only had to pull his gun once. But, his waving hand sees action all the time.

And usually it's the other people who wave first.

"I like my job because I like people," claims the Sandy Police sergeant. "Sometimes it can be a little frustrating; however, I enjoy it."

Predmore was named the Police Officer of the Year by Clackamas County Law Enforcement Council this year.

Chief Deputy Bill Brooks of the Clackamas County Sheriff's Office said Predmore received the highly respected honor due to "dedication to his work and his off-the-job contribution to the criminal justice system."

Predmore keeps special tabs on kids.

While on patrol Tuesday he spotted two youngsters walking south on Bluff Road. Predmore slowed his blue and white Mercury V-400 and crept up behind the raincoat clad pair. Eyeing the two, he reached for his hand mike and flipped the switch on the car's outside bullhorn.

"Want a ride into town?" queried the patrolman as the young pedestrians turned in surprise, quickly answering with nonverbal grins.

"Hop in the back," the local cop continued, also grinning, "that way, you can save the expense on shoes."

It was Predmore who started Sandy's juvenile diversion program.

Don didn't like seeing first-time shoplifting offenders sent down to the clink in Oregon City. (Sandy has no jailroom facilities.) So, he helped devise a more progressive approach to criminal apprehension with a special new twist emphasis on crime prevention.

Under the juvenile diversion program a young shoplifter—following a mutual agreement between police, store owner and parents—has an alternative of working at the store to pay off his debt.

"If he doesn't complete the job satisfactorily, we then refer him to the proper juvenile authorities at the county level," explains Sgt. Predmore. So far, the program has proven very successful, he reports.

The blond-haired, blue-eyed Sandy Cop applies his own psychological insight into a child's motive for this unfortunate popular offense.

"The biggest problem with these kids is one may have what another one wants. For instance, a kid sees another with a brand new B-B gun and it's hard for him to understand that his parents just can't afford it—maybe they're on welfare or a limited income. If you see this kid in the store you can feel him wanting to reach out and grab it."

But, older (veteran) shoplifters beware. "They're old enough to know better," Predmore points out. "For them it's a straight shot to the Clackamas County Jail."

Even if your teenage years are far behind you, don't sweat it. This particular Sandy sergeant isn't completely

prejudiced against older folks.

Adults in this town who take vacations are among the many who can verify this premise.

Part of Predmore's patrol duties can include checking on the empty homes of vacationers. "Occasionally, I'll even water a lawn or two," he smiles.

More than once, the sarg has opted not to take an intoxicated driver all the way into Oregon City. "On some occasions I've taken a guy's keys and called his wife to come and get him," reflects Predmore.

"Of course, I've known a lot of the people around here most of my life," he continues. "Sometimes I'll just take a guy home and chew him out."

The local officer of the law and longtime Sandy resident has also been instrumental in the department's ride-along program in which high school students travel on a shift with a cop, getting a dashboard view of what it's really all about being a constable of the law.

"The kids enjoy this. As a matter of fact, I enjoy it too," Predmore nods.

He may pack a revolver and even carry a billy club in his car, but Predmore's no head masher. He empathizes with the growing pains of the younger set.

"I spend a lot of time with kids who are in trouble. Much of the time, I'm mediating between the kids and their parents. I've found that both sexes from 14 to 16½ years of age go through some real trying periods."

Predmore himself is the father of five, four girls and one boy—"I'm outnumbered," he confesses. Two of his children are members of the Sandy Police Department's explorer post.

Linda Predmore's husband starts out each weekday at 8:30 a.m. catching up on necessary office work at his desk in police headquarters inside Sandy City Hall. Then, from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. he rides patrol. "I get off work at six and have to be at school by seven," informs Predmore, who is 35.

At this time each weeknight he attends classes at Mt. Hood Community College where he is a full-time Law Enforcement major.

"My duty extends more or less 24 hours a day," says the local policeman. It's not unusual for the seven-year veteran to be called out of bed in the middle of the night on official business or to see action on weekends.

Besides mediating between generations, Predmore, like many cops, is sometimes called to play referee at family disturbances that match husband and wife.

"These fights usually come during the winter months when the old man is out of a job and the couple is cooped-up together at home," observes Sgt. Predmore.

When he was driving night shift a few years back he figured he was averaging almost 85 miles a shift. Now, however, with more office work to be completed during the day, he says he doesn't patrol quite so many miles in and around Sandy. Still, he gets around.

While cruising Tuesday morning he turned in two abandoned automobiles, one from California and one from Nevada. Some duties of Sandy Police Department

officers are multiplied thanks to a U.S. Highway running smack dab through their town.

"Our worst traffic time here is during the skiing season on Saturday mornings," warns Predmore. "On Sundays the traffic flow seems to be more spread out."

"Another bad time is from 3:30 p.m. up until six during the week. When people are getting off work there's an awful lot of traffic here."

In the daily life of Don Predmore the cop, there's more to worry about than just traffic control.

"So many people watch television these days," complains Predmore. "They think all crimes are solved." Off the screen things are a little different, he believes.

"When it comes to robberies and burglaries we might know or have a good suspicion who is guilty, but often times not enough for an arrest."

Even after an arrest is made, Predmore says it still isn't television. "I'll take an apprehended burglar down to the county jail and he'll turn around and get a lawyer who will get him out on his own recognition."

"These guys usually beat me home," he states with frustration.

The friendly man in blue has only had to pull his gun once on a car load of deserving bad guys a few years back.

"But, that's the last resort," says the man who hunts deer on horseback with bow and arrow in a country where most males molest nature's animal friends with

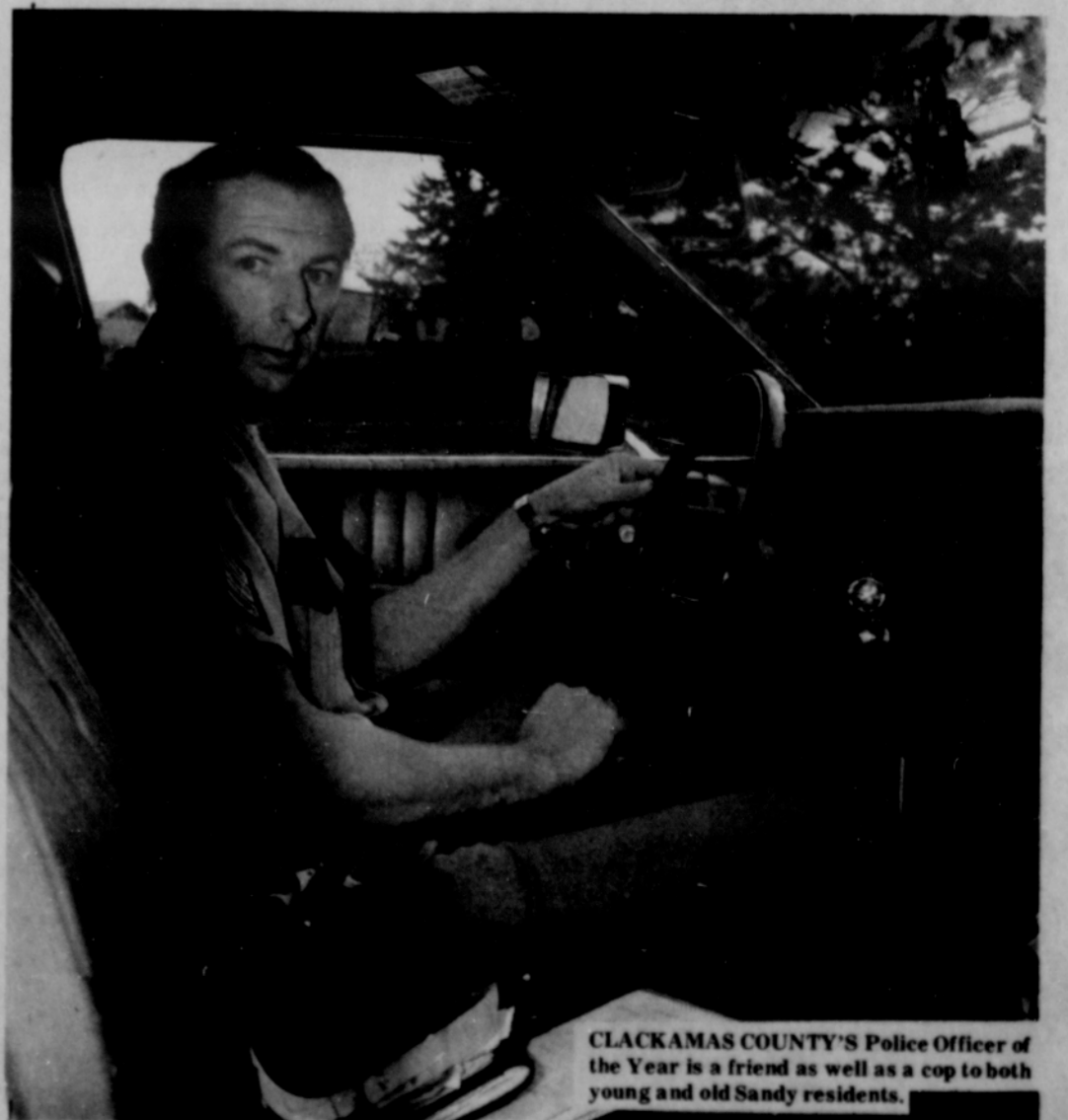
automatic weapons and four-wheeled rigs.

"If I'm confronted with a situation which warrants such action, I'm prepared to use my gun. It's much easier to disarm ahead of time to prevent showing up as a statistic on the teletype of the FBI."

This copper's no television actor or made-up Hollywood star. He's an ordinary guy who's good at what he does.

"I try to treat people the way I'd like to be treated myself," Don Predmore says. "So far it's worked out pretty well."

Story and photos
by Paul Keller



CLACKAMAS COUNTY'S Police Officer of the Year is a friend as well as a cop to both young and old Sandy residents.