

St. Joseph County

Central Dispatch 2014



Dennis Brandenburg



Lori Lackey



Stacey Roeder



Kristen Guggenbier



Kelli Bazzani



Ramona Metzger



Candace Scott



Mike Haydon



Kelli Lusk



Angie Guthrie



Kyle Murk



Abe Merton



Regan Taylor



Brendan Westrick



Yvonne Kline

A MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR...

It is my pleasure to present to you the 2013 and 2014 Annual Report for the St. Joseph County 9-1-1 Dispatch Center. 2014 was very challenging year for our Dispatch Center with the loss of our Director and Deputy Director. Through the strength of the Supervisors and the excellent Dispatch staff, the general public was unaware of the turmoil going on within the Center. The staff remained professional and committed to the citizens of St. Joseph County throughout these leadership changes.

I was appointed Director October 27, 2014. With that appointment there were many things that needed to be immediately addressed. The primary goal, was to bring our center back to full staff. Our employees have been working an incredible amount of overtime to maintain minimum staffing of the Dispatch Center.

April 2014, two Telecommunicators were hired. Each of these candidates completed a 14 week training program presented by our Certified Communication Training Officers. September they were added to our full-time staff.

Between September and December 2014 we tested and interviewed several applicants. From that pool, two trainees were selected and began their training in January 2015.

MAKING A DIFFERENCE ONE CALL AT A TIME

St. Joseph County Central Dispatch is committed to providing a single point of contact for all emergency services within St. Joseph County. Central Dispatch is staffed 24 hours a day with dedicated and conscientious Telecommunicators to ensure that all calls are handled with urgency and to ensure the appropriate agencies respond as quickly as possible.

Our staff is currently comprised of 13 employees who are committed to serving the public during times of crisis and distress with courtesy and professionalism.

Central Dispatch provides communications for all Police, Fire, EMS agencies that serve St. Joseph County. Along with after-hours contact for various agencies such as; Department of Public Works, County Road Commission, Department of Human Services, Community Mental Health, Water, Sewer, Gas and Electric services, should residents encounter any kind of problem anytime, day or night.

For many, we are a comforting and confident voice at the other end of the line when they need help or are reporting a crime. Our Telecommunicators are trained to handle every call professionally, timely, and accurately. They must determine the seriousness of the call, the proper agency to dispatch, and to obtain as much information as possible for the responding

units. This is a massive amount of information that each Telecommunicator has to obtain and then properly apply each time they pick up the phone and say “911, where is your emergency”.

It may seem to some callers that the Telecommunicator is asking a lot of questions. These questions are not only for the caller’s safety, but the responder’s safety as well. The telecommunicator must gather detailed information as to what is happening and who is involved so they may offer assistance. Our Telecommunicators main concern is the safety of the public and the responders.

POLICY BOARD MEMBERS, JANUARY 2015

Chief Thomas Bringman
Three Rivers Police Department
Representing:
Three Rivers Police Department

Chief Lynn Baker
White Pigeon Police Department
Representing:
Village Police Departments

Chief Carl Holcomb
Three Rivers Fire Department
Representing:
Fire Chief’s Association

Director Geoff Smith
Sturgis Police Department
Representing:
Sturgis Police Department

Sheriff Brad Balk
St. Joseph County Sheriff Office
Representing:
St. Joseph County Sheriff Office

Commissioner Robin Baker
St. Joseph County Board of Commissioners
Representing
St. Joseph County Board of Commissioners

First Lieutenant James Coleman
Michigan State Police
Representing:
Michigan State Police

Lisa Kinsman
Representing:
Emergency Medical Service

J. Patrick Yoder
St. Joseph County Administrator
Ex-Officio Member

ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF

Dennis M. Brandenburg
Director

Shift Supervisors

Lea Lackey

Stacey Bower

Kristen Carpenter

Telecommunicators

Keli Bazant

Ramona Metzger

Candace Scott

Mike Haydon

Kelli Lusk

Angela Guthrie

Kyle Murk

Abe Merten

Regan Taylor

Brendan Westrick

Part-Time: Yvonne Kline

Retirement

Douglas Kuhlman

August, 2014

Training of Employees

Our staff is continually attending various types of training as mandated by the State of Michigan. Each new Telecommunicator must become a Certified within the first 24 months of employment. This includes a 40 hour Basic Dispatching Course and then a second 40 hour Advance Dispatching Course. After that, every telecommunicator must attend a minimum as 16 hours of Continuing Education Training over a two year period. This training must take place off-site, and then an additional 8 hours of training can be conducted in-house. This training covers numerous topics such as;

- Communication Officers Training
- Active Shooter Responses
- Domestic Violence
- Emergency Medical Dispatching
- Suicide Intervention
- 9-1-1 Homicide Calls
- Fire Communications
- Discipline and Disciplinary Investigations
- Homeland Security
- Stress Resilience Training
- School Violence
- Leadership Classes

The majority of this training is funded through Public Act 32. Our employees attend this training at various locations throughout the state. The remainder of the Continuing Education requirements are accomplished through in-house training, by our Certified Training Officers and from on-line services such as Police Legal Sciences, and The National Emergency Medical Dispatching to which our center subscribes. These on-line programs cover actual calls taken by other dispatch centers throughout the country, covering topics such as proper call-taking techniques, decision making, professionalism, and customer service. Along with the legal aspects, liability, and proper handling of various calls.

2013 – 2014 Projects

CAD/RMS/MOBILE Project

The Alert CAD Program was launched on March, 2013. We have not been without some struggles with the new CAD program, but we are working through them. The Alert CAD Program is much more user friendly than our previous system that had been in operation since 1992. We are making great headway in solving these problems and with the help of the County IT Department, Alert Public Safety System, and our County GIS Department we are working through the difficulties and the system is improving every day. Training the current staff and the new employees on the new CAD system is much faster. The Alert CAD system is much easier to teach, learn and operate.

IT Projects

Midway through 2014 all IT issues were turned over to the County IT Department, freeing up the Dispatch staff. Our Supervisors still help trouble shoot some problems, and in many cases can solve the minor issue themselves. If the problem is determined by the Supervisor that it is

beyond their expertise, the officer or agency is then referred to the County IT Department. The County IT Department has been very instrumental in correcting the nagging problems we had been experiencing. It has been a pleasure getting to know the IT employees and working with them. This method has streamlined the whole process of support of the laptop computers in the patrol cars throughout the county, the connections between the various agencies and Central Dispatch, along with the numerous systems we deal with on a daily basis in the Dispatch Center. The clutter of computers has been reduced around out Dispatch Center by the use of new servers, and the IT department helping out to rewire some of our work stations and remove unnecessary wires and other items that are no longer needed.

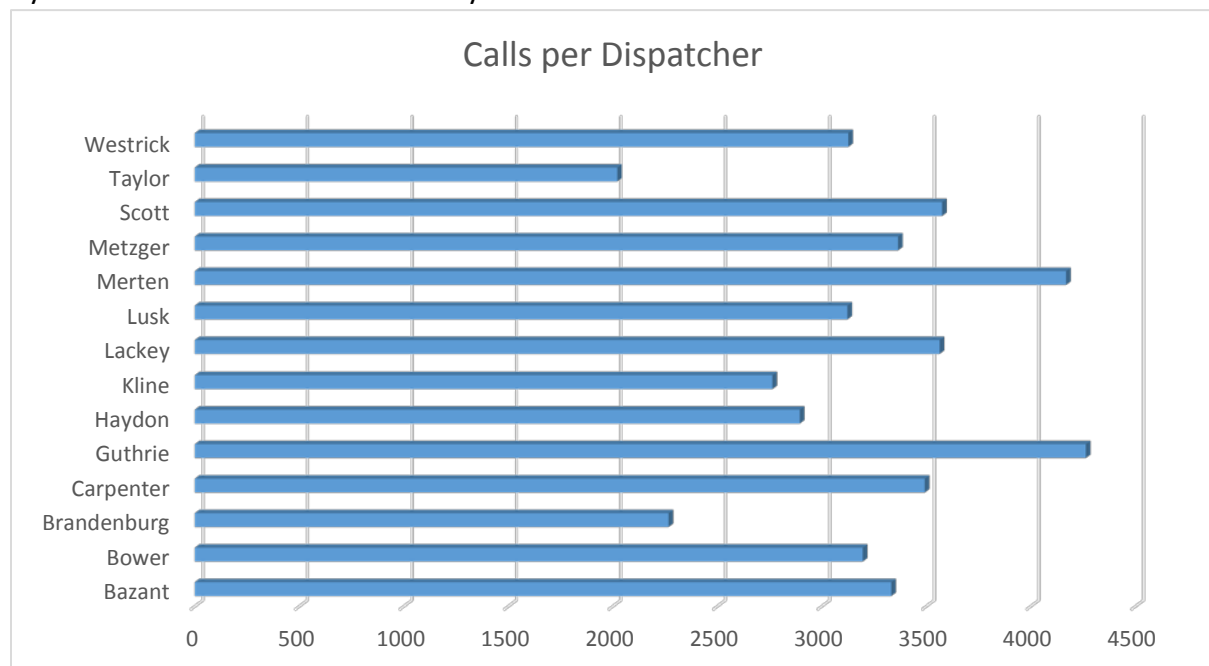
New Generator

The New Generator was installed in late October, replacing the old generator with a larger unit. The new generator is now connected into the MSU Extension office where some computer and telephone equipment is installed. This will help prevent loss of telephone and computer systems due to power outages.

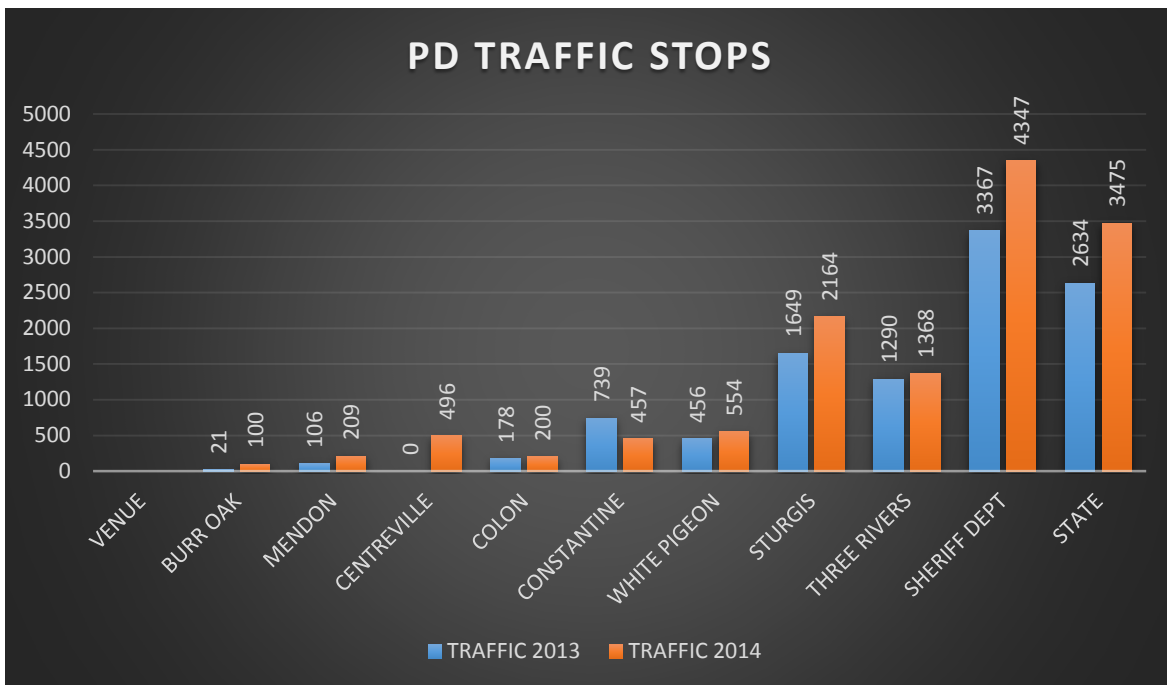
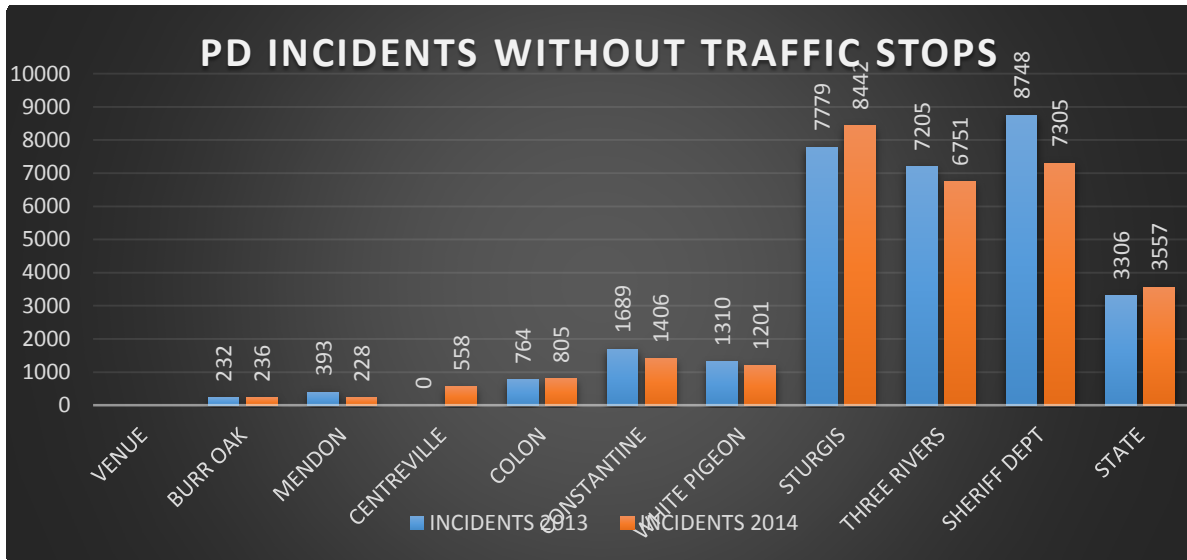
DISPATCH CENTER ACTIVITIES

The Dispatch Center staff has been very busy over the past 2 years, our staff has taken it all in stride and have continued on with the excellent service they provide to St. Joseph County.

The following chart displays number of incidents in 2014 entered into CAD by each of the Telecommunicators. A feature we could not easily track in our previous CAD System. The first chart shows the number of incidents entered per Telecommunicator. There were 51,150 calls entered in the Alert CAD program for 2014, which is on an average over 3,400 incidents entered by each Telecommunicator for the year.



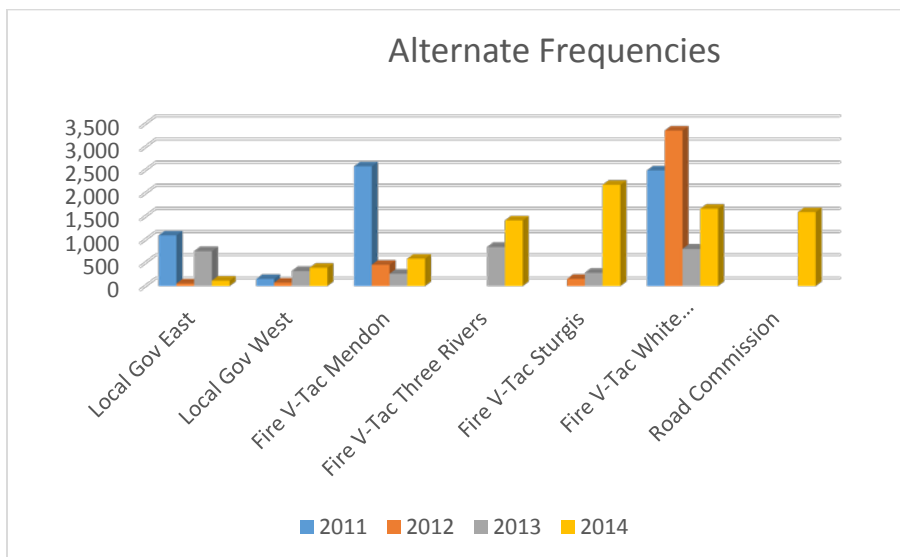
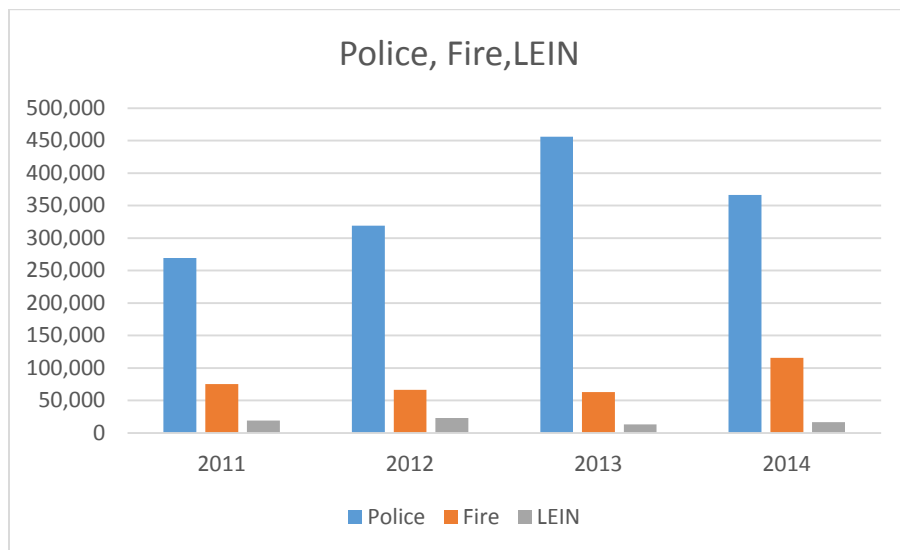
The following two charts show the activity of the Police agencies within St. Joseph County. All incidents for each Police Agency, excluding traffic stops are displayed in the first chart below, for 2014. The second chart shows the total number of traffic stops for each department.



Each one of these calls requires the Telecommunicator to make the entries into the CAD system, then continually monitor the officers while they are on each incident with regular status checks and continuous updates entered into the narrative for each incident. This includes vehicle information, any persons involved, arrests, and warnings, or any other details pertinent to each incident.

Telecommunicators must remain vigilant during each incident and be prepared to answer any requests for assistance from Police, Fire or EMS that are on scene. Along with keeping track and fulfilling each request made by the responders on scene.

The other half of the Telecommunicator's job is to listen and talk on the radio. The graph below shows the number of radio calls transmitted from and received by our dispatch center for 2013 and 2014.



As you can see by these charts there were over 350,000 radio transmission in and out of our dispatch center for 2014 on the Police Frequency alone, in comparison in 2013 there were over 460,000 radio transmissions. This decline in over 100,000 radio transmission can be attributed to the implementation of the new CAD system, and the laptops units in the cars, so the officer on the street can immediately see what the dispatchers are entering in each call, and to the increased use of instant messaging between dispatch and the officer thus reducing the use of the radio.

Part 1 Crimes

Uniform Crime Report (UCR) Part I Crimes are also referred to as "The Crime Index", composed of selected offenses used to gauge fluctuations in the overall volume and rate of crime reported to law enforcement. The offenses included are the violent crimes of murder and non-negligent manslaughter, forcible rape, robbery, and aggravated assault and the property crimes of burglary, motor vehicle theft, larceny-theft, and arson.

Criminal Sexual Conduct (1100) is the carnal knowledge of a female forcibly and against her will. Assaults or attempts to commit rape by force or threat of force are also included; however, statutory rape (without force) and other sex offenses are excluded.

Robbery (1200) is the taking or attempt to take anything of value from the care, custody, or control of a person or persons by force or threat of force or violence and/or by putting the victim in fear.

Aggravated Assault (1300.2) is an unlawful attack by one person upon another for the purpose of inflicting severe or aggravated bodily injury. This type of assault is usually accompanied by the use of a weapon or by means likely to produce death or great bodily harm. Attempts are included since it is not necessary that an injury result when a gun, knife, or other weapon is used which could and probably would result in serious personal injury if the crime were successfully completed.

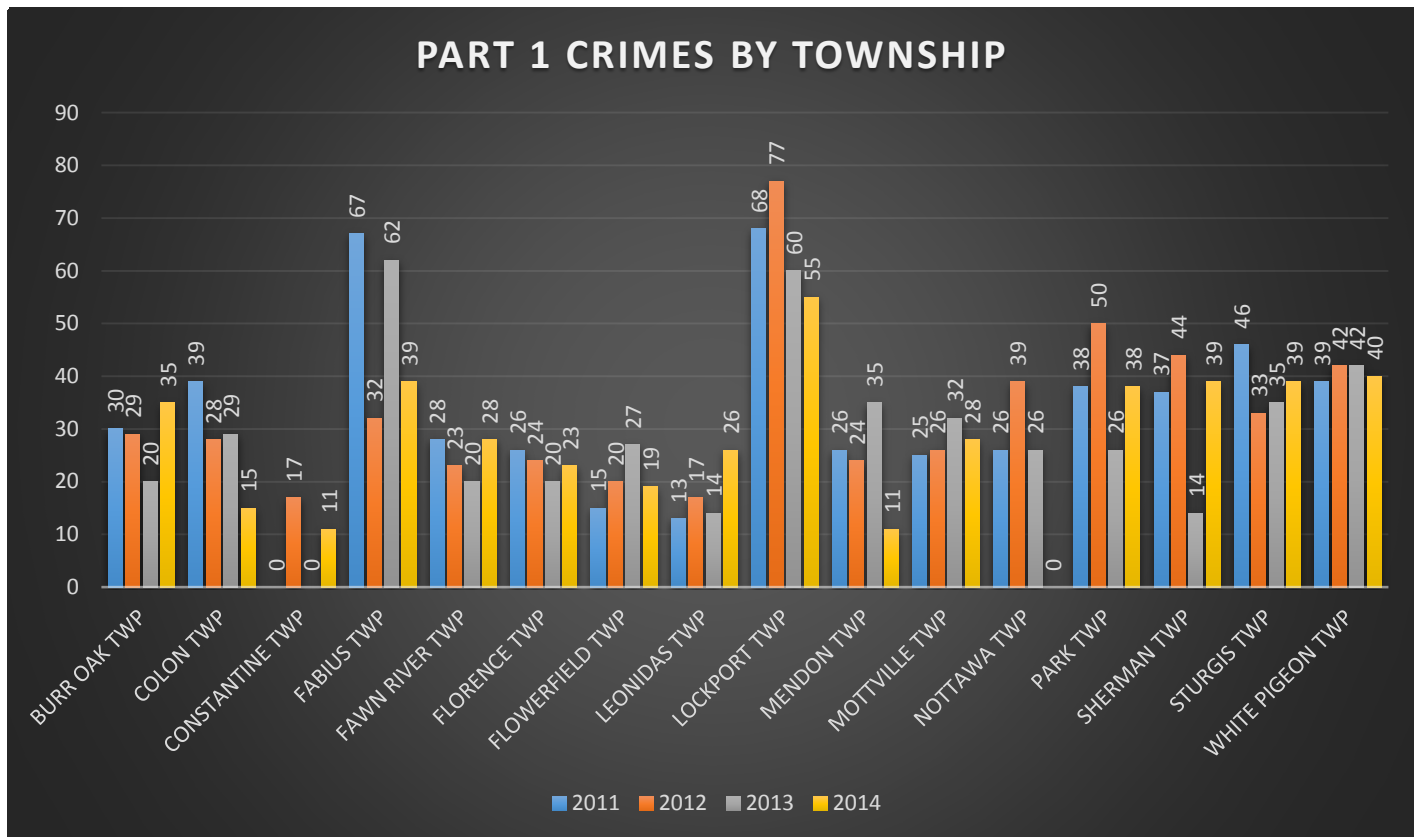
Burglary (2200) is the unlawful entry of a structure to commit a felony or theft. The use of force to gain entry is not required to classify an offense as burglary. Burglary is categorized into three sub-classifications: forcible entry, unlawful entry where no force is used, and attempted forcibly entry.

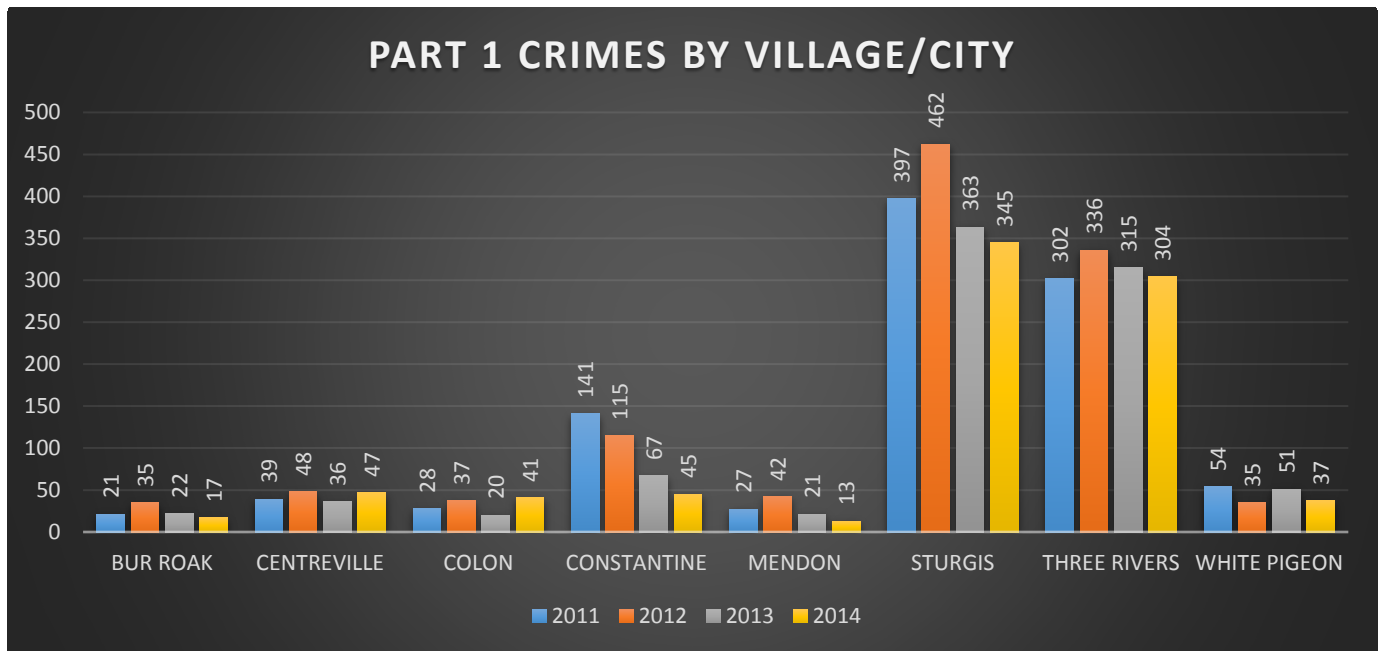
Larceny (2300) is the unlawful taking, carrying, lending or riding away of property from the possession or constructive possession of another. It includes crimes such as shoplifting, pocket-picking, purse-snatching, theft from motor vehicles, thefts of motor vehicle parts and accessories, bicycle thefts, etc., in which no use of force, violence, or fraud occurs. This category

does not include embezzlement, "con" games, forgery, and worthless checks. Motor vehicle theft is also excluded from this category inasmuch as it is a separate Crime Index Offense.

Motor Vehicle Theft (2400) is the theft or attempted theft of a motor vehicle, this offense category includes the stealing of automobiles, trucks, buses, motorcycles, motor scooters, snowmobiles, etc. The definition excludes the taking of a motor vehicle for temporary use by those persons having lawful access.

The report numbers for all Part 1 Crimes are shown in the graphs below, separated by Townships and Cities and Villages within St. Joseph County.





PUBLIC EDUCATION – COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

"911 For Kids"

The "911 For Kids" program evolved from a grant former Supervisor Susan Cook was awarded for a 911 Simulator. This program is currently being presented by Telecommunicator Angela Guthrie.

During this program, a DVD entitled "The Great 911 Adventure" is presented in a Muppets style video. Afterwards, the moderator reviews the basic points of the video: when to call and when not to call 9-1-1. She then discusses the types of questions a typical child 9-1-1 caller would be asked and what information they should know from memory (Address, phone number, name etc.)

These drills teach children what they should know and what they should be able to relate to the dispatcher. There is no need to be afraid: dispatchers are their friends and that they are on the other end of the line to help the child.

The program emphasizes that 911 is not just a number that should be called - just for fun. Included in this discussion, are the consequences of 911 hang ups and calls when children will not allow a dispatcher to talk to an adult at the residence. We also discuss the difference in cell phones and land lines when calling 911. This is followed by a question and answer session.

SOCIAL MEDIAL – FACEBOOK

In 2013 a Facebook page was created for Central Dispatch. This page was created to help relay information to the county about festivals, special events, road closures, and any other community events within St. Joseph County. This has come especially handy during the holidays, giving out the times and locations of fireworks, Halloween trick-or-treat times, and county offices closure. This has helped to inform the public and eliminate many unnecessary calls into Central Dispatch for this information.

We currently have over 9,800 likes on our Facebook page, which is increasing every day. I have had many people comment to me directly, how much they enjoy our page and want me to pass on to our page administrators how great of a job they are doing and how handy it is for them to get information about the county.