

OPEN LETTER TO THE EDITOR

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Dear Citizens of Rossford:

The year was 1972. Rossford had just completed its first complete year of transformation from a village to a city. Louie Bauer had just been elected to his first term as mayor. In March, the Rossford Police Department appointed Ron Parrish, Mike Reiter and Rick Marcis as patrolmen, increasing the police staffing level to 12.

That's right, citizens of Rossford, despite having twice the area to cover and four to five times the calls for service to answer, the current manpower level has regressed to the level of 36 years ago.

You as citizens have the right to be concerned. Your safety is being put in jeopardy.

In an article last week in the *Journal*, Acting Chief Kitzler was certainly correct in stating that bike patrol is a very good crime deterrent and also very useful in the apprehension of offenders in certain situations.

However, Sgt. Kitzler understands that to suggest scheduling a few hours of overtime at the problem is nothing more than window dressing and equivalent to putting a band-aid on a gunshot wound when talking about our overall public safety problem.

Officer Goss also was correct when stating that crime is directly related to manpower levels. How can it not be? At our present manpower level, officers simply cannot provide the public safety service that you as citizens deserve.

Some of you may remember I wrote a letter to the editor as Chief of Police concerning proactive prevention of crime. I made an analogy between tooth decay and community decay. The whole point was that without proper prevention techniques, decay was inevitable.

I know none of the specifics of the current vandalism, however, I can assure you that this is only a start. As citizens, what we all should be concerned with is the unreported and the undetected crime that without the proper detection, investigation and apprehension will continue to eat away at our core community values. The above can only be accomplished with proper manpower.

In closing, I would like to emphasize that council and the mayor have done a very good job in many areas. The growth in the southern portion of town has saved our city. I still consider myself a friend of the mayor and at least personal and/or professional acquaintance of members of council.

This letter was not even written as constructive criticism – rather as a plea for the administration to keep Rossford a safe place to reside, work or visit.

Last, but certainly not least, we have officer safety issues when we are constantly down to minimum manpower. This is not 1972. Most of the time two officers is simply not sufficient. We now live in a very mobile society where crime knows no boundaries. The Crossroads creates a great deal of traffic and additional calls for service, and we are five minutes from downtown and bordering east Toledo.

All of this creates not only perceived officer safety issues, but the real potential of an officer putting his life on the line without back-up available. Our officers and the community deserve more from our city officials.

Dennis Foy

Former Chief of Police