

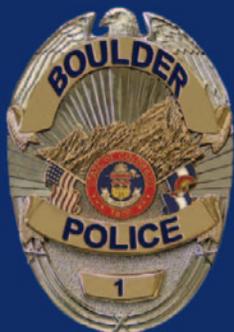
# The Spotlight



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## Planning for the President: Obama makes historic visit to Boulder

Traveling comes with the territory when you're the leader of the free world, so for President Barack Obama and his security detail, it's probably business-as-usual when the president visits a city like Boulder, CO. However, for the local police departments tasked with assisting the Secret Service in planning for the visit, word that the president is coming to town sets off a frenzy of activity that doesn't end until the president is back on Air Force One, heading to his next stop.

President Obama came to Boulder on April 24, 2012 to give a speech at the University of Colorado's Coors Event

Center which focused on making college affordable for all Americans.

The White House didn't share the president's travel plans with the Boulder Police Department until four days before his arrival.

"I knew it was going to be a lot of work, and require a lot of planning and officers to secure the president's motorcade route," said Cmdr. Carey Weinheimer, who headed up the planning process at the BPD. "The logistics are incredible – you have to have enough people to secure every single intersection, every

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President Obama greets patrons outside The Sink on University Hill.



Practice drills at Boulder Municipal Airport before the president's visit.

major driveway, every bike underpass and every railroad underpass. We didn't have enough cars for all the officers, and had to pull vehicles from the city fleet to make it work."

Detective Tom Dowd acted as the police department's liaison with the Secret Service. He previously worked for the US State Department in the Diplomatic Security Service, and has served on protective details for high-profile politicians such as former Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, former president of Spain Jose Maria Aznar and Jack Straw, the former prime minister of Great Britain.

Dowd said the police department and Secret Service made plans, contingency plans, and contingency plans for the contingency plans. "You have to think of every possibility – things like a medical emergency, for example – and then you need to know where you're going to take the president," said Dowd. "What are the escape routes? Where is the nearest hospital? What if there's a traffic accident on the route and you need to divert? You plan for every building you're in, and for every motorcade. It's intricate."

Detective Dowd, along with Deputy Chief Greg Testa, Cmdr. Carey Weinheimer and Cmdr. Ron Gosage spent the weekend before the president's visit meeting with Secret Service agents to discuss the safest way to bring President Obama to Boulder. Although there was some discussion about landing Marine One (the president's helicopter) at the University of Colorado's campus, that idea was nixed in favor of landing at the Boulder Municipal Airport, which provided better security. From the airport, the president took a motorcade to the university for his speech.

"We locked down the route from start to finish," said Cmdr. Weinheimer. "There were more than 100 officers stationed at intersections along the motorcade route to ensure the safety of the president."

All was going as planned, until the White House decided to go "off the record" (OTR) to a restaurant on University Hill. An OTR stop is an unplanned stop, usually so the president can meet people, shake hands and get his picture taken by the media. The White House staff doesn't share information about the OTR stops with police beforehand, so it can be a bit chaotic.

Cmdr. Weinheimer said that after four days of constantly changing plans, he knew they were going to have to make

quick adjustments to the motorcade plan when the president took his side trip – wherever that was going to be. "We had no pre-positioned road closures once we left 28th St., and we developed our new plan on the fly. We worked out the new plan in five minutes with a map spread out on the trunk of my patrol car," explained Cmdr. Weinheimer.

Boulder police officers train regularly for situations that potentially involve crowd control. "The presidential visit came right on the heels of the annual 4/20 gathering at CU. We had prepared for various possibilities for that event, as we do every year, so those techniques were already on our minds when we found out the president was stopping in Boulder," says Deputy Chief Greg Testa. "It's a more intense process when the president is involved, and when the motorcade went off the route, it required a lot of flexibility on everyone's part to pull it off."

Detective Dowd was riding in the presidential motorcade, and recalled his reaction when told they were going "OTR." "That was my worst nightmare. There was construction,



Cmdr. Carey Weinheimer and BPD motorcade detail map out the "off the record" stop at The Sink.

we were in the middle of rush-hour traffic, and we're in a 25-vehicle motorcade heading up to the University Hill," said Dowd. President Obama was going to The Sink, a local landmark restaurant near the university campus. For Dowd, this OTR stop was the best part of the presidential visit. "The motorcade just stopped, and I said 'tell me where to stand and I'll do it!' At that point, I didn't have protective responsibilities because the Secret Service was in charge. I worked behind the rope line and paralleled the president as he was shaking hands on the Hill, and kept an eye on the crowd."

The OTR stop at the Sink required reinforcements for crowd control, and even Police Chief Mark Beckner was called in to assist near the intersection of 13th and Pennsylvania. "The crowd was well-behaved," said Chief Beckner. "They knew something was going on, but many of

# Silvia Solves Cold Cases

## Department Volunteer Focuses on Forgotten Victims

Silvia Pettem says if she could live her life over again, she'd be a police detective. The author, historical researcher and newspaper columnist isn't about to start her life over, so she is doing what may be the next best thing: researching cold cases to help law enforcement, and the families of victims, bring unsolved cases to a close.

Volunteering her time and research services at the Boulder Police Department's Detective Unit since March 2011, Pettem inventories files, police reports, and witness interviews for several open cases. "I'm looking for things that someone missed, perhaps a tip that came in 20 years ago and no one followed up on it," said Pettem. "I find that kind of information and pass it on to detectives who follow up now."

Pettem is well known in Boulder for her work on an unsolved 1954 homicide. Two college students found the body of a young woman as they were hiking in Boulder Canyon. The victim's identity remained a mystery for more than 50 years, until Pettem began researching missing person's cases in an attempt to make a positive identification. It took several years, but ultimately the woman was identified as Dorothy Gay Howard, a missing 17-year-old from Phoenix.

"This young victim tugged at me as a mom," says Pettem. "My heart is with the victims, it really is. They don't have anyone else to speak for them." When Dorothy Howard



Silvia Pettem and her assistants researching a cold case at her home office outside of Boulder.

was reburied after the completion of the investigation, 32 members of her family came from across the country to attend the memorial service in Boulder.

Sorting through cold-case files can be tedious and time consuming. But Pettem says, every once in a while, she finds something unexpected. "I found a name from a decades-old case, and I ran to the computer to see if I could find the person. I'm back in the 1960's in this box."

As Pettem filters through the files, she provides summary information for the Detective Unit that outlines the people involved, where they can be located if they're alive, and some suggested leads to prioritize. Over the years, she's become a kind of cold-case guru not only for families searching for a missing or murdered loved one, but also for law enforcement agencies looking for help and advice.

To that end, Pettem, author of more than a dozen books, has written "Cold Case Research: Resources for Unidentified, Missing, and Cold Homicide Cases" to guide law enforcement officers through the various research tools that are available. She uses the Internet, of course, but also turns to old-fashioned "gum shoe" resources when necessary. "Some of the newer officers don't know what microfilm is, and there's a black hole between the 1950's and the 1980's as far as Internet research," said Pettem. "I want them to understand that yes, they need to use their computer skills, but they may need to combine those with approaches that are more old-fashioned, like searching old newspaper archives at the local library."

In addition to writing books and assisting detectives at the Boulder Police Department, Pettem works one day a week at the Colorado Bureau of Investigation, teaching classes and following up on certain cases. Pettem is married, has two daughters, four grandchildren, and has no intention of retiring. "I will probably keep researching and writing the rest of my life. I'm not going to be a stay-at-home grandma. I'd rather find some missing persons."



After the mystery of 1954 murder victim "Jane Doe" is solved, the victim is reburied at Columbia Cemetery, this time with her real name: Dorothy Gay Howard.



# Front page story continued

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them weren't sure what it was until President Obama stepped out of his vehicle and began interacting with people."

Other than the president being late for his speech at CU, the presidential visit came off without a hitch. The Secret Service praised the Boulder Police Department for what they called "a textbook motorcade route."

Boulder Police Chief Mark Beckner says it was a privilege to take part in this historic event. "This was a really exciting day for Boulder. We were honored to have been a part of the protection detail for the president and his motorcade," says Chief Beckner. "The resources required to pull off a successful protection detail are amazing, and we're proud of the service we provided to President Obama."

"It was a blast," said Det. Dowd. "I got to see a lot of what happened from beginning to end, from the airport landing, to riding in the motorcade, to the Hill and backstage at the Coors Events Center. Considering that the last president to visit Boulder was President Eisenhower, this is probably a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity."

And what about advice for other police departments who find themselves the destination of a presidential visit on short notice? "Expect everything to change until the last minute. He's the president, and that's his prerogative," said Cmdr. Weinheimer. "Always expect the unexpected."



The BPD Motorcycle Team escorts President Barack Obama during motorcade to Coors Events Center.

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*Do you have a question you'd like to see answered in an upcoming edition? Email your question to Kim Kobel at [KobelK@bouldercolorado.gov](mailto:KobelK@bouldercolorado.gov)*

## Additional contact information:

### Emergency Assistance — 24 hours

Police 911  
Fire 911  
Medical 911  
Mental Health 303-447-1665  
Rocky Mountain Poison Center  
1-800-222-1222  
Xcel Energy/Electrical outage  
1-800-895-1999  
Xcel Energy /Gas leak or odor  
1-800-895-2999

### Non-Emergency Assistance

Police 303-441-3333  
Fire 303-441-3333  
Medical 303-441-3333  
Police Records 303-441-3300  
Professional Standards  
303-441-3312  
Public Works 303-441-3249  
Paramedics

### Community Police Center

303-413-7324  
Located on 16th Street, just south of Pearl St.  
Staffed Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

