



**Police Chief Dan Steidle contributed a column to the *Pacifica Tribune* to connect with local residents and keep Pacificans informed on issues that are of current interest in the City of Pacifica. Below is the submission for the August 14, 2019 edition of the *Pacifica Tribune*, which focuses on Active Shooter Response.**

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### **Active Shooter Response**

Following the 1999 Columbine High School active shooter tragedy, law enforcement quickly changed tactics for dealing with armed subjects. Prior, standard practice called for waiting for a SWAT team to arrive to engage a suspect confined in an area or building. However, with the advent of the active shooter, law enforcement developed tactics for first arriving officers to immediately enter an area where a suspect is actively shooting people in order to engage as quickly as possible, reducing the loss of life.

Since 2000, Pacifica Police Department officers have participated in regular active shooter training scenarios designed to prepare them for the unthinkable: an active shooter event in Pacifica. These training events are full-scale scenarios, designed to create the stress and chaos of a real active shooter scene. The department has several officers trained as active shooter instructors who stay abreast of the latest tactics so that officers are adequately trained.

With the April 2018 active shooter event in San Bruno at YouTube and the July 2019 shooting at Tanforan Mall, San Mateo County law enforcement officers experienced first-hand the massive law enforcement response to an event of this nature, and the coordination required to successfully manage the event. San Mateo County Law enforcement agencies have a long history of training together and preparing for major events. As part of a countywide effort to continue this history, in early August 2019, a multi-agency active shooter drill was held over the course of several days at Mills High School in Millbrae, hosted by the San Mateo County Office of Emergency Services. This drill allowed officers from numerous jurisdictions to practice working side by side in preparation for the next major emergency of this nature in San Mateo County.

The Pacifica Police Department hosts free training classes for community members several times per year designed to provide information on surviving an active shooter event. The class encourages attendees to develop the mindset needed to react and respond appropriately during an active shooter event. If the first time you consider what to do is during a real active shooter crisis, it is too late. Planning for these horrific events is not paranoia, it is preparation for survival. We encourage community attendance at these trainings a part of our attempt to keep our community members safe. Notifications of these classes are posted on the Pacifica Police Department Facebook page.

Recent events in Gilroy, El Paso and Dayton have reminded us that an active shooter can occur anywhere at any time. Rest assured, your police department will be prepared. Will you?

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