

BICYCLISTS: Complaints bring police crackdown

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Bicyclists in the neighborhood agreed they tend to ignore the rules, and that it could lead to injury. Police decided to start on Halsted Street because business owners had complained about too many bicycles on the sidewalks, Chicago Police Sgt. Phil Greco said.

"We're not out to hurt anyone with a citation," Greco said. "We're just out here to make it safer."

Greco said a lot of bicyclists do not know that only children younger than 12 may ride on sidewalks or that the same laws that apply to cars apply to bicycles. But some of them do and ignore the rules.

Just after scooting through a red light, Josh Zaffino said police had no reason to patrol the neighborhood because most of the bicyclists are regulars who know the rules.

"Granted, there was a red light back there," he said, "but there weren't any cars."

As he spoke, another man drove his bike past on the sidewalk.

Zaffino said he sometimes rides his bike on the wrong side of the road, but that sometimes it is hard to get over to the correct side when traffic is heavy.

"But it's not a problem," he said. "If people are coming from the other direction, bikers always get out of the way."



A bicyclist rides along in the bike lane on Halsted Street near Roscoe Street on Tuesday in the Lakeview neighborhood, where police were issuing warnings to bikers who violated traffic laws.

Tribune photo by Kuni Takahashi

'We're not out to hurt anyone with a citation. We're just out here to make it safer.'

—Chicago Police Sgt. Phil Greco

Eve Jennings, program director for the Bicycle Ambassadors, said bicyclists need to obey the law because they cannot always be sure what everybody else is going to do. For ex-

ample, a person opening a car door might look to the rear to make sure no one is coming, but not forward because traffic is not supposed to be coming from that direction.

And bicyclists need to be safer in general. Jennings said seven bicyclists died in 2003 in Chicago. "We want more people to bicycle," she said. "We aren't here to scare people, but they have to be safe."

Since she began in her position four years ago, Jennings said she has seen more people biking, as well as more bike

lanes and programs for bicyclists.

And, cities known for being bicycle-friendly are calling her to ask about the ambassador program, she said. The program includes five full-time staff members and 10 part-time junior ambassadors who will attend 350 events this summer to talk about bicycle safety.

"Motorists are beginning to anticipate bicyclists and give them more space on the road," she said. "But it's not perfect yet."

Three blocks north of Roscoe,

By the numbers

Illinois in 2002

■ There were 22 bicyclists killed in traffic accidents.

Nationally in 2002

■ There were 662 bicyclists killed and 48,000 injured in traffic crashes.

■ Bicyclists younger than 16 accounted for 24 percent of all bicyclists killed and 39% of those injured in traffic accidents.

■ Alcohol was involved in more than one-third of the bicyclist fatalities.

■ 68 percent of bicycle deaths occurred in urban areas, and 68 percent occurred at non-intersection locations.

■ Bicycle deaths are most likely to occur in the months of July, August and September between 5 and 9 p.m.

Source: Illinois Department of Transportation and the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration

DRUG BUST: Informants, taped talks were essential

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nest McCarter, of Ford Heights; and Darryl Franklin, of Tallahassee, Fla., remained at large Tuesday evening and are the subjects of an ongoing manhunt, FBI officials said.

None of those arrested has had an opportunity to appear in court to answer the charges.

The sting began in October 2003 and relied heavily on information from convicted drug dealers and recordings of cell phone conversations among the alleged gang members.

An 82-page criminal complaint quoted a number of the conversations when the men allegedly referred to money and drugs in veiled language, calling \$1,000 a "stack" and cocaine "strippers."

Often the code they are alleged to speak in consists of little more than exchanges of numbers that refer to the quantity and price of drugs.

At several points, however, the makeshift code appears to break down.

On Jan. 26, Murray was recorded talking to a man he allegedly supplied heroin about a drug debt the man had incurred. Murray thought he would cover his tracks by veiling his negotiations in football talk, the complaint states.

"What about Walter Payton," Murray is alleged to have asked, expecting the man would assume Payton's jersey number was the price Murray wanted to receive for the drugs.

But he confused Payton's number, 34, for 32 and in so doing quoted himself a lower price, the complaint states.

The charges also reveal what authorities believe is considerable cooperation between gangs. At various points, the Hustlers were recorded doing business with members of the Latin Kings, a gang based out of Little Village, and the Gangster Disciples, another South Side gang.

"It was predominantly Four Corner Hustlers, but when you get to that level, they'll deal with anybody. It's all about the money," Brennan said.

The inter-gang dealings often hovered on violence, however, and at one point investigators recorded Murray discussing threats he had received from alleged Latin King member Ramon Ceballos Jr., 25, the complaint states.

"If he wants to see me, I'll come up there," the complaint quotes Murray saying about Ceballos. "If I go up there, I'm going to be [expletive] up his whole joint."

Ceballos, of Chicago, is incarcerated in El Paso, Texas, and has been charged in the sting.

The 19 defendants in custody in Chicago are set to appear before U.S. Magistrate Judge Arlander Keys Wednesday.

If convicted, they could all face life in prison.

rrbush@tribune.com
dheinzmann@tribune.com

UNIONS: Retirees won't get back pay

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receive back pay for the 28 months spent negotiating a deal, but workers who have re-

tired during that time will not, said two sources with knowledge of the final agreement.

"Retirees will not receive back pay," said one negotiator. "It would have cost the city about \$3 million to pay the retirees back pay."

It was unclear how retirees' final salary, which determines pension payments, would be set, but those with knowledge of the talks said they expected salaries to include the settlement raises.

Labor stalwarts said they decided to give up the back pay for retirees in favor of maintaining

current wage rates and fewer work rule changes.

Unions "understand and appreciate the many financial challenges facing the city," John Harris, city budget director, said in a statement. "They displayed a willingness to work with us."

The city's 2005 budget provides funding for employee wage increases, but Harris has declined on previous occasions to say whether the set-aside is enough for the new agreement.

Health benefits could jump by as much as a third for some, in

line with a recent Fraternal Order of Police arbitration award, according to sources with knowledge of the deal.

The health-care provisions awarded to police officers earlier this year called for increased contributions from 1.5 percent of gross pay to 2 percent. Many co-pays, deductibles and prescription drug costs also rose.

The building trade workers' raises are not expected to equal the almost 4 percent a year over four years awarded to police officers.

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year 2000 for the creation of the notes because Peter could not be implicated if the notes had been created in 1996-1997," Smith said. The restaurant was sold in 1996.

As recently as January, Black said that he stood by his original testimony, and his attorney, Elliot Samuels, said Monday that he continues to stand by it.

Smith urged Lefkow to hold a contempt hearing for Assistant U.S. Atty. Marsha McClellan and William Hogan, former Assistant U.S. Atty. Eric Wilson, federal agent Thomas Heinzer and Samuels.

In court, McClellan called the motion a "retreading, rehashing and repackaging" of a past motion Palivos filed to vacate his sentence.

"This is nothing but Mr. Palivos' desperate attempt to try to change the verdict of the jury," she said.

Samuels, meanwhile, said he is "sick and tired" of Palivos' court maneuvers

"I never committed a fraud; it was Mr. Palivos who committed a fraud," he said.

Lefkow did not rule on the motion but asked prosecutors for a response by Aug. 10.

rrbush@tribune.com