

Crunching Tiny Town Crime for 2013 ...

Written by Administrator

Tuesday, 03 June 2014 14:55 - Last Updated Tuesday, 03 June 2014 15:43

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By Franklin Crawford

The officer in charge of records was at lunch. When he got back from lunch, I was at lunch. Lunch is very personal. When a body leaves the relative security of its work space and enters this hyper-pollinated Desiderata in broad daylight, anything can happen. Lunch is not as safe as it sounds.

Anyway. I got back from lunch unscathed. But by the time I'd settled a dispute with my computer, the records officer was no longer in his communication's space. That's okay! The Ithaca Police Department is under-staffed. I've written about this. The mayor knows this. In fact, the mayor made sure that for the next year or so, it stays that way. So I did some interpolating of the data at hand: End of the year crime statistics for 2013.

There are some items on this IPD readout that make sense. Some don't.

This caught my attention: 14 kidnappings in 2013. I don't really know what that means. What constitutes a kidnapping? Actual kids being spirited away by creeps, or some family thing – or both?

Further evidence of a staffing problem: Last year's stats are all neat and tidy in a chart. This year's stats, available off the IPD website, are a mere data dump. Some categories resemble last year's references, some don't. Things change. For instance, there is a line in the 2013 stats called "forcible fondling." That isn't in the previous year's chart. "Rape" also has changed. It was simply entered as "rape" last year, but in the 2013 numbers there is a new emphasis, something called "forcible rape." Which strikes me as redundant (is there consensual rape? Answer that in the quiet of your own brain-casing). In 2012 there was a single case of "forcible sodomy" but in 2013, it is not even listed.

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What you'll see in the 2013 numbers: Five instances of forcible rape reported; six incidents of forcible fondling.

Let's move on.

It is good to note that "aggravated assault," is down a notch, from 29, in 2012, to 27, in 2013. Huzzah! Props to McGruff.

The bad news starts around the "Break-in and Entering/Burglary" category: 179 in 2012; 200 in 2013. Where did these occur? We don't know. Ask a policeman on the street. Dial 911. Form a Neighborhood Watch Group. Call a realtor! I'm sure these kind of facts give agents the hives.

This is not a cheap-shot at police authorities. It's just that, holy smokes, they got a \$2 million-plus computer to number-crunch and GPS-coordinate these crimes. But it's just "Mission Critical" all the time at the IPD. And that means a data collector has no time to harvest, sift, sort and create user-friendly data charts, not to mention, eat a humane lunch. I volunteered for the task of data entry and the chief thought I was joking.

I wasn't. Chief?

More data: "Theft from buildings" jumped from 218 in 2012 to 247 in 2013 – roughly a 12.4 percent increase; "Shoplifting" – hooooo-ey! In 2012: 298; in 2013 – 343; a 14 percent increase. "Thefts from motor vehicles": In 2012, a mere 195 –wanna bet on the spread, gambling friends? Faggedaboutit: Only 211 in 2013. Go back to your scratcher cards.

Here's a category: "All Other Larceny." Sounds like a love story. It's not: 327 larcenies in 2012; 350 in 2013, a six percent increase.

Good news: "Motor vehicle thefts" were down last year: 16 as opposed to 29. As well with "counterfeiting and forgery": In 2012, a whopping 57 con-artists got popped; in 2013, we

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amended our ways in view of its incarceration-potential, and only 29 locals faced the orange-jump-suited penal colony.

You know, those uniforms give orange a twist that Tropicana never intended. Would you call it a Syracuse orange?

Ah, but. The “destruction of public property and vandalism.” Sorry, realtors – the numbers are up! In 2012, 343 instances; 363, in 2013: A five percent increase

I’m going to skip drug violations. I believe in Colorado and Oregon – let’s work it out in the stupid bowl. As for the tons of meth and crack and heroin in Ithaca, speak to your doctor, or, contact an offshore pharmacist.

Other news: “Disorderly conduct” up by 10 instances. But! “Driving under the influence”? Down – from 116 to 70.

Lastly among a long list you can look up yourself: “Impersonation.”

You’d think with all the acting classes and stagecraft we have in such abundance here it would be boom times for impersonators. Not so. Last year 22 daring individuals stepped outside their own characters, largely for nefarious reasons, and lost the charade. In 2013? Feh. Only 19 bothered gave it a shot.

Practice, practice, practice, and get to those casting calls: The Ithaca Blues are always on the lookout for fresh talent to bust.