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## Lafayette Police Chief presents 2022 crime stats to council



**By Elaine Borden Chandler**

Chief of Police Ben Alldritt gave the Lafayette Police Department 2022 Annual Report to the City Council during its March 27 meeting. He started with a summary of the department and the year. Lafayette PD has 25 staff members who dealt with 12,674 calls for service, 1,293 police reports, 259 arrests, and 1,093 citations. Alldritt's report was based on the FBI's Uniform Crime Report which includes eight types of Part 1 Category Crimes: homicide, rape, robbery, assault, burglary, larceny, 10851 (joyriding) and arson.

"In a 10-year comparison, for 2022 we had the lowest number of Part 1 crimes," said Alldritt. But he noted certain

categories rose. Assault and larceny went down, while robbery, burglary, and joyriding went up from 2021. Both person crimes, such as homicide or robbery, and property crimes, such as theft or vandalism, were far below the national average.

Lafayette had no homicides in 2022. There was one reported case of assault with a deadly weapon and two cases of kidnapping. The assault was a case where a wife struck her husband and was arrested. The first kidnapping case involved a stranger attempting to abduct a teenager. There are currently no leads. The second kidnapping was a case where a family was restrained after a forced entry. The intruder is currently in custody.

The law acknowledges two kinds of robbery: armed, which involves a weapon, and strong-arm, which does not. There were two armed robberies and six strong-arm robberies, mostly shoplifting that became violent. Suspects were arrested in all cases.

There were two reported cases of rape, one of child molestation, six of felony domestic violence, and seven of mis-

demeanor domestic violence. Alldritt did not discuss details for the sake of sensitivity.

There was one assault on a police officer. Alldritt commented, "The gentleman had a little bird in his hand the entire time during the fight, and as he came to the ground the bird walked away."

Most crimes in Lafayette are property crimes. There were 17 residential burglaries, a jump from 2020 and 2021. Alldritt took responsibility but also asked residents to invest in home surveillance. Commercial burglary increased with 32 cases, 14 of which are solved. While there were 120 auto crimes, ranging from theft from car to stolen vehicles, auto burglaries have dropped significantly from 2019, which Alldritt credited to situational awareness cameras.

Traffic citations rose from 900 in 2021 to 1,039 in 2022. Alldritt stressed that traffic citations should correspond with traffic collisions and that traffic complaints have been very high in Lafayette. Traffic collisions were down from 2021 at 115 cases, and lower overall from the last 10 years. There

were no fatal accidents. Alldritt is hopeful the Lafayette Go Slow campaign will reduce these collisions further.

Code enforcement had 268 calls, including their first house abatement. The majority were for overgrown vegetation. Code enforcement also includes property violations, building and zoning violations, fire hazards, and parking violations.

Recess with a Cop is returning this fall after a pause during COVID. The PD also does active threat training with schools, involving one hour of free training for staff for a situation like a mass shooter. As per a question from Vice Mayor Gina Dawson, Lafayette PD works specifically with teachers, and schools are responsible for drills.

The Emergency Preparedness Commission updated the "Lamorinda Residents Guide to Wildfire Preparedness and Evacuation" and sent it to

every home. The CalOES Grant was used for purchasing radios in schools and school buses, solar panels and a backup generator. Alldritt gave a shout out to the Public Works crew for all their work, especially in the rains.

The written report also notes eight cases of felony vandalism, 35 of misdemeanor vandalism, 30 of identity theft, five of terrorist threats, and one of forgery, and expresses gratitude to the Crime Prevention Commission.

Alldritt ended saying March marked five years of his service in Lafayette. "I love being here, and I love the opportunity to work with this. We have a great community, a caring community, from school administrators to city staff to community members," he said. Council members Teresa Gerlinger, Wei-Tai Kwok, and Susan Candell praised Alldritt and thanked him for his work.

**Chief Alldritt's report at the March 27 Lafayette City Council Meeting with can be found at [www.youtube.com/watch?v=nxDEtp0hKGE&t=3024s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nxDEtp0hKGE&t=3024s). The "City of Lafayette Police 2022 Annual Report" can be found at [www.lovelafayette.org/home/showpublisheddocument/7242/638155998995970000](http://www.lovelafayette.org/home/showpublisheddocument/7242/638155998995970000).**

## The heart of Lafayette loses some of its rhythm

... continued from Page A1

Another tenant and business owner in La Fiesta Square who declined to give her name says she fears the worst but hopes for the best. "I heard that the corporation bought the plaza at an above market rate and they're distributing that high property tax rates on all of us who run businesses here," she said. "I hope it's just about making up for the dif-

ference in property tax. We always worry about the possibility of them continuing to raise the rent and make it so expensive and unrealistic for the current tenants that we all get pushed out to make room for big business. I hope that's not the case." The tenant shared that her business also has no interest in raising prices. "We're one of the only places in town where you can replace a (watch) battery for \$10. The

price has been the same for many years. It's a simple thing that we can do to be of service to our community at an affordable price and we take pride in that."

Parya Suri has lived near downtown Lafayette for the past three years with her husband and her now 2-year-old son. Suri also attended Bentley High School and considers Lafayette her home. Like many renters with aspirations of

home ownership, Suri and her family will soon be exchanging their status as Lafayette renters to Walnut Creek homeowners. "We tried to stay here, but it just wasn't really feasible with the costs," Suri says. To hear that the survival of businesses like Papillon is on the line makes Suri feel sad. "I know Sam, who runs Papillon. My 2-year-old son Jayden loves him. We walk in and Sam immediately knows my son's or-

der," Suri says. "It's nice to have that personal touch in the town that you live in. It's a community. It's comfort. It's home. I love the mom and pop shops. When we have external buyers who don't live here and are raising the rent (and fees) so much, you don't understand that you're literally putting people out of business. I would advocate for small businesses to stay here. That's what makes Lafayette the place that it is."

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