Crime down, except for auto thefts

Vehicle task force already having effect, local police say

By LAURA MCVICKER
Columbian staff writer

Automobile thefts rose 19 percent in Clark County last year, while violent crime dipped slightly, according to statistics released this week by the Washington State Association of Sheriffs and Police Chiefs.

Clark County’s spike in auto thefts isn’t consistent with the statewide trend, which saw a nearly 25 percent decrease in reported stolen vehicles.

Police couldn’t explain the discrepancy, except to say the local numbers reflect an ongoing surge in auto thefts that was among the reasons behind the inception of the Vancouver Police Department’s auto theft task force last fall.

“Auto thefts in the area were increasingly creeping up,” said Washington State Patrol Sgt. Randy Ballinger, who works on the task force with a VPD detective.

Last year’s brief spike could be blamed on “more people moving to the area and the economy being bad.”

“People try to make a buck here and there,” so they steal cars to sell, he said.

The 2007 numbers were lower because more cars were being stripped for parts instead of being stolen.

CLARK COUNTY CRIME STATISTICS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Crime</th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>2006</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Murder</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rape</td>
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<tr>
<td>Robbery</td>
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<tr>
<td>Aggravated assault</td>
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<tr>
<td>Burglary</td>
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<td>Arson</td>
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<td>Larceny</td>
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<td>Auto theft</td>
<td>1,640</td>
<td>1,490</td>
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</table>

SOURCE: Washington State Association of Sheriffs and Police Chiefs

TIME CAPSULE: 1984

A peek into lives of Penguins past

From left, former Clark College teacher, dean and interim president Ellis Dune, spokeswoman Barbara Kerr and current President Bob Knight check contents of a time capsule assembled for Clark’s 50th anniversary in 1983-84.

By HOWARD BUCK
Columbian staff writer

No Michael Jackson albums.
No Donald Reagan campaign buttons.
Not even a tiny stuffed Penguin, circa 1983-84.

But plenty other historical items and evidence of dreams and dedication were found tucked inside a 25-year Clark College time capsule cracked open Tuesday afternoon by school leaders.

The artifacts were a gift from those who marked Clark’s 50th birthday in spring 1984 to those celebrating its 75th anniversary this school year.

Inside the tapered steel cone were well-preserved Clark yearbooks, graduation and dance programs, class catalogs, old Columbian and student newspapers, photographs of school luminaries, and more.

Most tours, in fact, came from Clark’s earliest days in the 1950s, after it opened in 1953. They included a photo of the first student body, the school mascot.

CAPSULE, page B-4

Newspaper pages from the past were among items tucked into a 25-year time capsule opened at Clark College.

Study: Small temperature changes have big effect on Cascadia

One-degree

By NICHOLAS K. GERANOS
Associated Press writer

The snow falls with a high water content and melts and washes away long

sia, the area we looked at,” said Jo-

settings Canada, a UW doctoral student

mate change. Average tem
Dunn, 77, said he can't recall much of the 1984 birthday — aside from an 800 pound cake baked by Clark students. He cracked, "It's new to me," as items were shown and described to about 75 Clark employees and other onlookers gathered.

What truly is new is a bronze- and stainless steel sculpture crafted by noted artist and part-time Clark instructor Beth Heron, titled, "Scend."

The shiny work installed outside Gaiser Hall's north doors represents woven waves of energy carrying the hopes of students and the community forward — a metaphor for Clark educators and support staff — much like a bottled message in the sea, she said.

Also displayed Tuesday were likely current items for use in a new Clark 25-year time capsule, soon to be secured in the sculpture's sturdy pedestal.

They include, yes, a stuffed Oswald; some fresh newspapers; CD recordings of Clark student jazz and orchestra musicians; and plenty of new Clark literature and memorabilia.

There also will be a written message from Knight, plus a special letter from Washington Gov. Chris Gregoire, to be kept under wraps until 2034.

Meanwhile, 75th anniversary organizers and other boosters raised money to pay for two new $3,000 tuition scholarships for Clark students (plus $750 for books and supplies).

Joseph Matter, now a Port Vancouver High School senior, earned a new-student scholarship; Kellie Kusk, a Clark nursing program candidate, earned a continuing-student scholarship.