

# It's Nice To Have A Cop On The Beat, They Say On The Mall

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Last month about the only place you'd find a cop walking a beat was in an old movie on television.

This week a patrolman hit the pavement to begin a routine beat on the Pacific Garden Mall. Which is the way life is. What was old becomes new again.

"The mall presents some unique problems," said David Koester, city manager. "We have had complaints about everything from stray dogs to double-parked trucks blocking traffic. A logical answer seemed to be a foot patrolman."

As a result, Koester and Chief of Police Geno Pini decided to begin a test program, having the patrolman keep a log of all complaints filed and situations handled.

The patrolman is Dan Bertuccelli, on the force for one year, and a reserve Sheriff's deputy prior to that. He walked the same beat over the holidays, when Pacific Avenue has traditionally had a foot patrolman.

"It's pretty quiet down here, really," Bertuccelli said. "I issue a few citations, warn a couple of people about parking in the wrong places, give directions to people, that sort of

thing." Bertuccelli smiled. "The people down here are really beautiful. You can feel it. They like to have me around."

The patrolman's feeling seems to be right. Or at least is borne out by a random sampling of passers-by and merchants.

"I think it's something that should have been done long ago," said Helen Gates, 550 Second St. "You at least know where a policeman is if you want one."

Gloria Martina, co-owner and manager of the Franciscan Gift and Import shop expressed much the same opinion. "I think it's great. I'd like to see

a couple of policemen down here, if only to keep people from hanging out on the streets."

It is too soon to tell whether the constant presence of a police officer on the mall has solved merchants' problems. Except for one. Stray dogs. Which is inaccurate. The dogs are not strays, but belong to people who let them run free, sometimes damaging merchandise in stores in embarrassing ways.

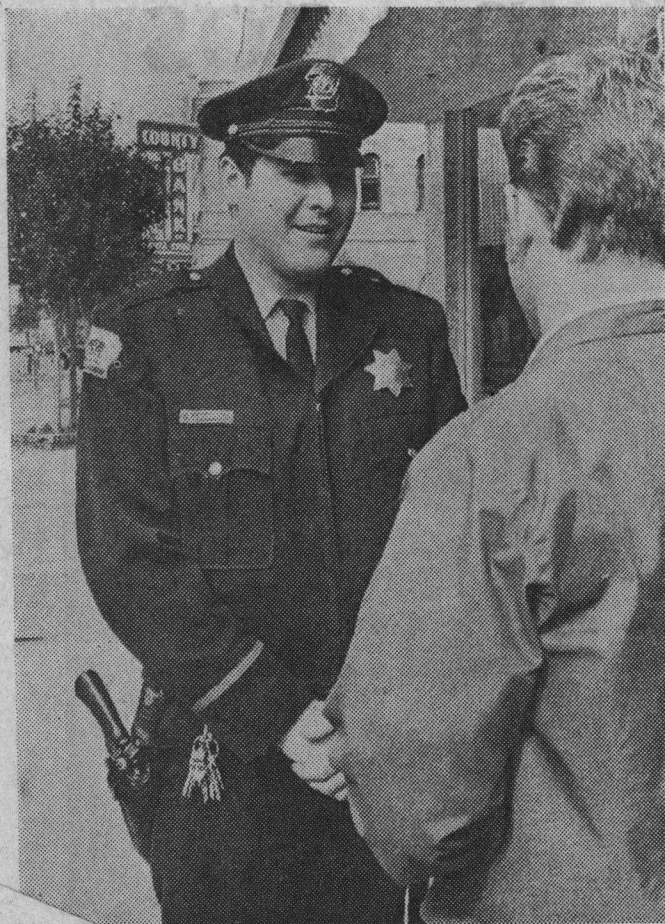
Bertuccelli dealt with that problem, through warnings and citations.

As time goes on, other problems, which taken singly are

trivial, but in a large dose can kill a community's center of commerce, will be faced by a lone cop on a foot-killing beat.

"I see him go by," said B.G. Whipple, superintendent of Leask's Department Store, "and get a good feeling. Because you know there is someone there, just in case. I'd like to see him even walk through the store, the way they used to in New York. But things change." He crinkles his eyes, as though looking at something a long way off. "Maybe that kind of thing won't go anymore."

Maybe.



Patrolman Dan Bertuccelli

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