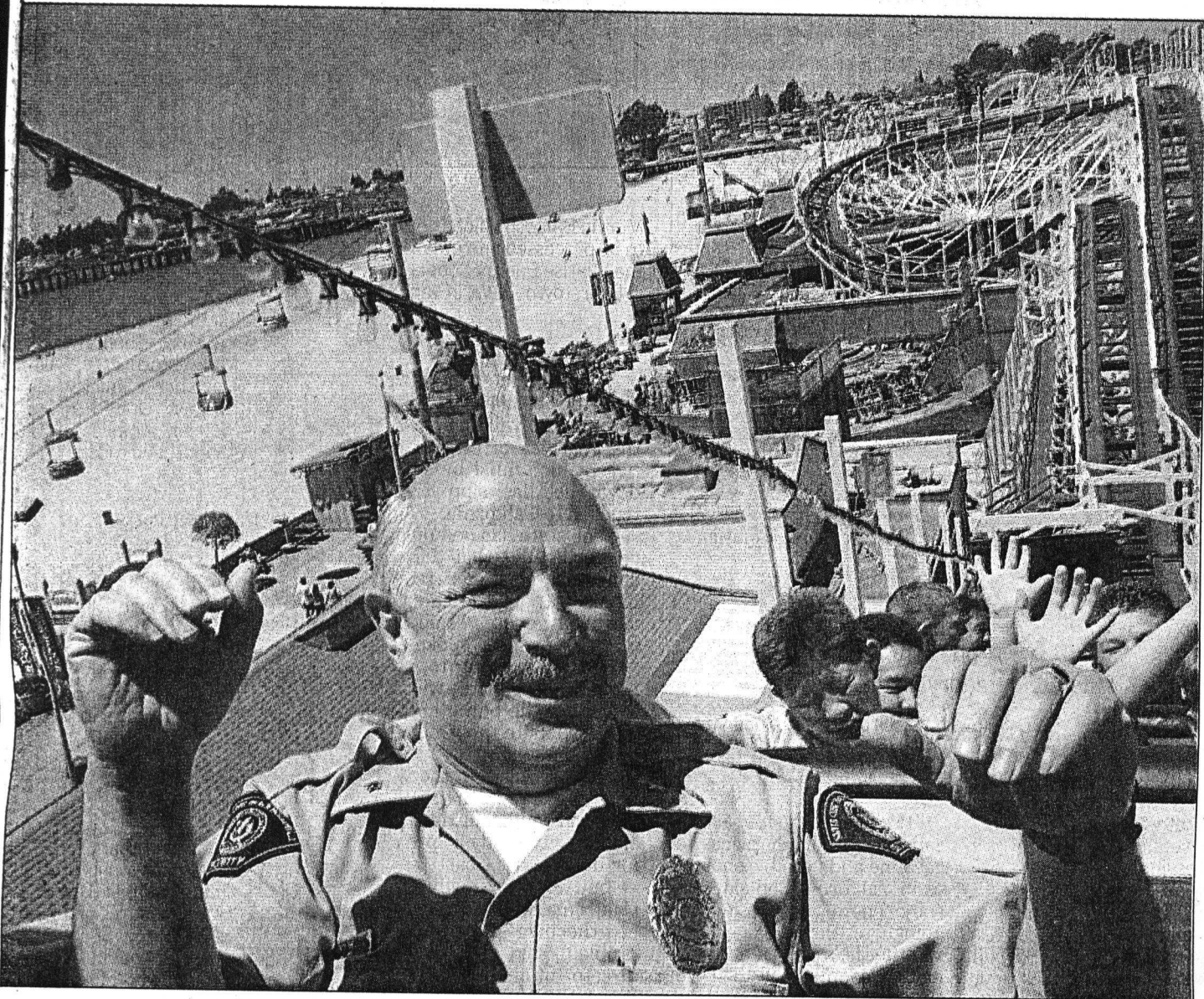


SANTA CRUZ

"I didn't get the math and the foreign language genes. I can't fix things. I'm a lousy golfer. I don't fish and I don't hunt. This is what I do best."

— STONEY BROOK, BELOW



KAREN T. BORCHERS — MERCURY NEWS PHOTOGRAPHS

Stoney Brook loves to ride the Great Dipper at the Santa Cruz Boardwalk. The retired sheriff is the new chief of the boardwalk's security team.

Man of law finds niche keeping boardwalk safe

STONEY BROOK

A look at the new chief of security at the Santa Cruz Beach Boardwalk:

■ **Age:** 57

■ **Education:** Degree from the University of San Francisco; teaching credential from the University of California-Santa Cruz.

■ **Teaching experience:** Professor at Evergreen and Cabrillo colleges.

■ **Military experience:** Marine Corps.

■ **Law enforcement experience:** Spent 25 years with Santa Cruz County, first as a sheriff's sergeant, then as an investigator for the District Attorney's office. He later was head of security for the West Valley-Mission College system in Santa Clara County. He retired from West Valley in 1996.

■ **Career highlight:** Helped catch Trailside Killer.

Source: Mercury News

RETIRED SHERIFF AND SECURITY TEAM ENSURE SUMMER FUN AT FULL FORCE

By David L. Beck
Mercury News

After 30-some years of collecting shiny gold badges — as sheriff's sergeant, as district attorney's investigator, as private eye — the one Stoney Brook pins to his polo shirt these days is made of blue plastic and bears the outline of a roller coaster.

Brook, 57, is the new chief of security at the Santa Cruz Beach Boardwalk, where his summertime force of 35 full-timers keeps things as smooth and cool as a Slurpee for nearly 3 million visitors. A man who once helped catch the gruesome Trailside Killer now sees his primary mission as helping people have fun.

"I'm a service kind of guy," Brook said. "I'm here for the same reason I became a Rotarian: It gives me an opportunity to do something proactive for the community I live in."

"I didn't get the math and the foreign language genes. I can't fix things. I'm a lousy golfer. I don't fish and I don't hunt. This is what I do best."

And besides, he adds, here at the boardwalk, "We're happier than the 'Happiest Place on Earth.'"

A few of the boardwalk security guards carry guns, but a lot more of them carry candy. That's a measure of how things have



Chief of security Stoney Brook, right, talks with game operator Oscar Perez. At the Santa Cruz Beach Boardwalk, Brook said, "We're happier than the 'Happiest Place on Earth.'"

changed over the years, Brook and others say:

■ In the '70s: Single guys with booze who spend the day getting a buzz and the night looking for trouble.

■ In the '00s: Families with kids who spend the day putting on sunblock, and the nights driving home.

"We just don't have those riots and near-riots we had in the '70s," said David Larson, Santa Cruz deputy police chief.

Now, said Brook, "We do a lot of giving directions: 'Where's the restroom?' 'What

BROOK | Man of law keeps boardwalk fun, safe

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time is it?" And, of course, "Where's my mommy?" which is why the security people carry candy and stickers — very popular with kids, those stickers.

In addition to the full-time security people, Brook has eight more who work weekends, plus a cadre of "guest service officers" in polo shirts "who handle low-profile security things."

His force is larger than the police forces of Capitola or Scotts Valley, though smaller than that of Santa Cruz, with which it cooperates.

"Our primary role," said Brook, "is to provide a safe recreational environment. And to protect our assets. This is going to sound almost silly, but probably some of the biggest issues we have are related to inappropriate behavior ... alcohol, substance abuse. Our approach is to ask them just to move along," and it seems to work.

Arrests? Private security officers aren't cops. They can make what most people think of as citizen arrests — Brook prefers the term "private person arrests" — and they have "a slightly more enlarged version of the right to detain," just as a merchant does, Brook says.

But that's about it. "Our authority does not extend to the public property" — that is, the street or the beach itself — although it does include other Seaside Company properties, such as the Surf Bowl across Beach Street from the boardwalk. And arrests are "the absolute last thing we do, when we've exhausted all other options."

A lot of his job is teaching. "Probably nine-tenths of the people that come to work here are using this as a stepping-stone" to police work, and what they get is 166 hours of training based on California police standards. Larson said Santa Cruz officers sometimes even train with boardwalk security people, using boardwalk facilities for things like dog-team work and building searches.

The SCPD emphasizes "community policing." And that, said Brook, is what his people do, too. "We identify issues, use collaborative approaches. This is what the new chiefs and sheriffs are looking for. The days of Bonnie and

Clyde are over. . . .

"This is a kind of life laboratory," he said. "You'll get more people contacts here in a season than you may get in a lifetime with other departments."

Brook grew up in Texas, joined the Marines and left the Corps in 1965. In Santa Cruz, he went to Cabrillo College and worked summers at the boardwalk.

He has a degree from the University of San Francisco and a teaching credential from

the University of California, Santa Cruz. He teaches at both Evergreen and Cabrillo colleges. "Oh, he's excellent," said Santa Cruz sheriff's spokesman Kim Allyn. "He coordinates a lot of the teachers at the police academy" at Evergreen.

He spent 25 years with Santa Cruz County, first as a sheriff's sergeant, then as an investigator for the District Attorney's office, before becoming head of security for the West Valley-Mission College system in San-

ta Clara County. He retired from West Valley in 1996 — "I got carpal tunnel butt from Highway 17" — and, because "like every other ex-cop I have a private investigator's license," he did some consulting work, specializing in sexual harassment training and embezzlement cases.

Now his blue name tag reads "C. Stoney Brook, chief of security." The C is for Charles, although he says only the IRS calls him that. His wife, Beverly,

who heads the federal probation office in San Jose, calls him Michael, his middle name. Stoney is his *nom de cop*.

He got yet another gold badge with the new job (this one worn inconspicuously on his hip), but most of those he's collected are mounted on his wall.

How did he end up working for the boardwalk again? "It was one of those, as we say in Santa Cruz, harmonic convergences." He knew Dan Fite, the

former SCPD lieutenant, who had just retired from the job. He saw an ad in the paper. The job is two miles from his home. He gets to wear New Balance cross-trainers instead of heavy black oxfords.

He even gets to run the occasional ride, just like the old days. "From ride operator to ride operator," he said happily.

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