



Employee Spotlight

Police Officer Alison Martinez

By Sean Gillham



This edition of the Employee Spotlight shines on Alison Martinez, a Police Officer with the City since 2002. Many of us here like to think we stole Alison from the Santa Maria Police Department. In actuality, our country stole Alison from the Queen's service many years before.

Alison was born the youngest of five children to British parents in a small town near London, England. She first became interested in law enforcement at the age of 19 when she answered an advertisement in the local newspaper soliciting volunteers for the Special Constables (unpaid reserve police officers). Soon after, Alison found herself hired as a full time Constable with the Cambridgeshire Constabulary. Her

police academy training was at the Ashford Police Training Centre in Kent, England. The facility was originally built in the 1800s as an old manor house. It was later converted into a hospital for tuberculosis patients before becoming the academy. The buildings were said to be haunted by the deceased patients.



During the police academy Alison and the other cadets were awakened in the middle of the night by their training staff. With temperatures sometimes down into the 30's, the cadets were required to dress in their full uniforms and jump into the unheated swimming pool. Several times a day the cadets participated in drill (marching) around the academy's square.

After the academy Alison was assigned to a police station in Huntingdon, Cambridgeshire. For the duration of her two year probation period she was required to work night watch foot patrol. Despite the chilly temperatures, officers could be disciplined if they were found trying to warm up in a fellow

Constable's police car. Consequently, Alison became very familiar with the shops that were open all night. The library was one of her favorite places to take her tea break because of the nice warm old boiler at the rear of the building.



During her tenure as an English Bobby, Alison worked in patrol, juvenile crimes, served as a field training officer for new recruits, and was assigned to a sex-related crime detail. Alison's journey to the United States was a result of meeting and marrying a US Air Force Airman. Soon after, Alison found herself stationed with her husband at Vandenberg Air Force Base.



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Alison was disappointed to learn that the chilly midnight dips and hours of drilling at the Kent Police Academy in England would not count towards a job in American law enforcement. As a result, Alison found herself back in the police academy - but this time with classmates who spoke with a funny American accent!



While at the Allan Hancock Police Academy Alison had her first experience with one of the unique

tools generally absent in English law enforcement – firearms! During her tenure in England, Alison had never seen (let alone shot!) a handgun. The only weapons she ever encountered in the UK were the shotguns owned by hunters!

After completing the police academy Alison initially worked for the Santa Maria Police Department. Her tenure there included stints in patrol, narcotics, field training, and field supervision as a corporal. Since transferring to the San Luis Obispo Police Department Alison has worked in patrol, detectives, and is currently our Community's favorite DARE Officer!

Alison, her husband Joe, and son Jaydon live in southern SLO County with a menagerie of horses and other pets. When you see Alison driving around in her eco-friendly hybrid DARE vehicle, don't hesitate to give her a shout out of "Blimey! 'ell-o, Gov!"

