

Imagine Yourself On A Segway



Segway Patrol has been called "the greatest community policing tool ever" by being the ultimate icebreaker for positive interactions and intelligence-led policing. So it was not surprising when the Plano Police Department suggested volunteers use their Segways to help patrol the parks, downtown, and events.

The Segway Program began in June of 2011 and was spearheaded by Sergeant Lindy Privett, who coordinates with the Parks Department for events and park usage locations. Daryl Molitor and Donna Petty are two of the first Citizens Assisting Plano Police (CAPP) Program volunteers to venture out on the Segways, a two wheeled, self balancing transportation machine.

After putting in their time and hard work to master the machine, both say they love every minute of it. Now they routinely patrol parks, downtown and events. Donna says, "The Segway is a great way to get around, we assist police and park staff by being extra eyes and ears, we help to ensure visitor safety and report maintenance needs as we see them." Donna loves being on the Segway so much that she doesn't even mind

going out in the 100+ degree summer weather or having helmet hair! Daryl, who has been with CAPPs for over 16 years says, "We get positive feedback from the community and the people we see. Parents thank us for a clean and safe place for their kids to play, others tell how much they enjoy the parks and knowing we are there." He also explains, "Riding a Segways is a terrific way to get from one end of a park to another, maneuver through crowds and enjoy our wonderful parks and preserves, while serving the community and getting exercise!"

Segway volunteers go through a regimented training process and must pass a series of operational qualifications in order to be certified. To maintain their Segway certification, volunteers must take 36 hours of training a year. To date, eight volunteers have been certified to do patrol duties, riding over 850 miles and have posted over 350 Segway related hours. Most of these miles and hours have been dedicated to the patrol of parks. While on patrol, they look for suspicious activities, clear trash from the trails, report graffiti or broken equipment, and give information out to citizens.

Not only do the CAPP volunteers do an outstanding job, but they get to have the coolest ride in town. Sergeant Privett puts it in prospective, "The CAPP volunteer Segway Patrol is a great addition to our department. It is a creative way to patrol areas not accessible by cars. CAPP volunteers assist the Police Department in achieving its mission - 'To provide outstanding police services in partnership with the community, to maintain a safe environment that contributes to the quality of life' and we appreciate all they do." Other CAPP functions include the City's "Open Garage Door" program, handle special enforcement requests, monitor the SKYWATCH Program, aid in crime scene assistance, festival patrol and help keep area parks safe and clean.

In a December 2011 article, Forbes magazine writes that Plano is one of the safest cities to live in. It credits its hard working police department and its strong volunteer program as one of the many reasons why Plano is a low crime area. "Plano boasts strong citizen involvement in public safety: the U.S. Department of Justice honored the city last year with a National Award for Excellence in Neighborhood Watch. Plano Police Chief Greg Rushin says his department works with 194 volunteers who help with tasks from patrolling neighborhoods to manning observation towers in public places and monitoring security camera feeds." CAPPs and the CAPPs Segway Program are a strong factor in making the city a safe and beautiful place to live or to visit.