

# Tighter patrolling for holiday season

## More police officers have been deployed around synagogues

By **EVAN NEMEROFF**

Safety and security, always top priorities for the police department, become more prominent issues during the Jewish holiday season.

In a meeting at Nassau County Police Department headquarters in Mineola on Sept. 24 attended by rabbis and other Jewish leaders, police officials offered the details of their crime-prevention

efforts for the High Holy Days which continue through Yom Kippur (Oct. 8-9) and Sukkot (Oct. 13).

"Right now, there are no known threats for any type of activity," said Deputy Inspector Kenneth Hettler of the 4th Precinct. "We are going to be more spread out and visit all posts in our neighborhoods."

The Five Towns auxiliary police also planned

to be busier, explained Lt. Danny Gluck of the auxiliary. "We're going to have cars posted in the area around local synagogues during the high holidays," said Gluck. "There will be full patrol of auxiliary officers, and we will be in direct communication with the 4th Precinct if there is suspicious activity anywhere."

There are not only some 50 synagogues in the

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# Patrolling increase for high holidays

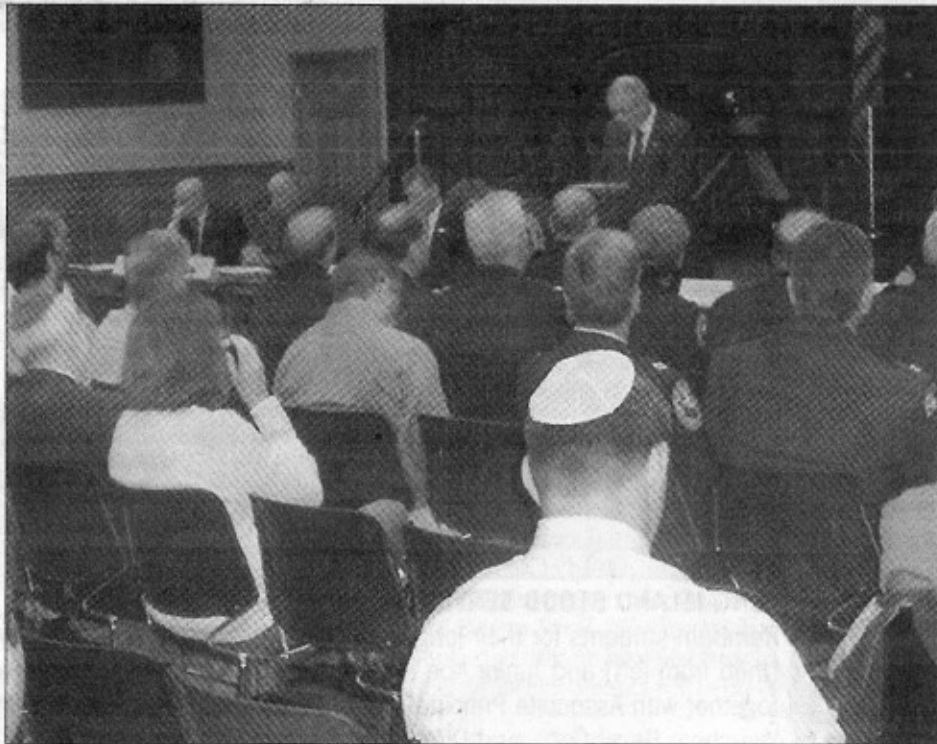
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areas encompassed by the 4th Precinct — the Five Towns, Atlantic Beach, Oceanside, Island Park, East Rockaway Lido Beach and Point Lookout — but neighborhoods full of observant Jews as well. "It's important to not only be aware of crime in the synagogues, but the back streets of the neighborhoods, too," Hettler said. "We will have personnel in [uniform] and in plain clothes that will help patrol and keep the areas safe."

Officers would be on the lookout for any unusual people or activities both inside and outside places of worship, Hettler explained. "If people have any questions, they should feel free to go up to an officer," he said. "If we're not wanted inside by any temples, we'll respect that."

To keep potential miscreants guessing, police planned to vary their routines. "It's important for our officers to not present a pattern when they're patrolling," Hettler said. "There is a better sense of security when officers do random patrols around temples and the streets this time of the year."

Religious leaders say they are happy with the extra security at this time of the year. "We've had a wonderful experience with the 4th Precinct, especially during the holiday season," said Adrienne Novick, co-president of the Reconstructionist Congregation Beth Emeth in Hewlett. "Our congregation is aware of the police presence, and they feel protected coming to services. We are appreciative for everything the 4th Precinct does



Evan Nemeroff/Herald

**NASSAU COUNTY POLICE COMMISSIONER** Lawrence W. Mulvey speaks about crime prevention for the High Holy Days at a meeting on Sept. 24.

for us."

Rabbi Steven Graber, spiritual leader at Temple Hillel in North Woodmere, agrees that police play a big part in reducing crime during the Jewish holiday season. "Having the police present around the synagogue

might stop a crime from being committed," Graber said. "It makes a person think twice having the police there before thinking about doing something."

Police urged temples to contact them if they have any information about bias-relat-

ed incidents or terrorism threats. A special phone line — (516) 573-7720 — is being manned 24 hours a day until Oct. 21.

To keep crime down, the police recommended that temple officials regularly inspect their buildings, and be on the lookout for suspicious-looking packages. Congregants and ushers should make inquiries about any unusual guests.

"It's smart to interact with suspicious people to see their general interest in the facility," said Anthony W. Rocco, the NCPD's chief of security planning. "It's good to watch their behavior and whether they continually come in and out of the building, and what type of clothing they wear."

The police also encouraged temples to have an evacuation and lockdown plan ready in case of an emergency, and to provide police with their holiday schedule.

According to Nassau County Commissioner Lawrence W. Mulvey, there has been a 19 percent drop in anti-Semitic crimes in the county this year. In the first nine months of 2008, there have been 40 such incidents.

"I am encouraged by the Nassau County Police Department's thorough plans for security during the upcoming Jewish High Holy Days," said county Legislator Jeff Toback. "The police are committed to providing for the safety of our Jewish residents as they participate in these important religious observances."

*Comments about this story? ENemeroff@liherald.com or (516) 569-4000 ext. 210.*