
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



FOR INFORMATION CALL

June 13, 2008

Ald. Bob Donovan
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Operation Impact Camera Helps Nab Suspect 36 Hours After Being Installed

Officers Find Gun in Vehicle, Review Footage and Determine Man Was Lone Occupant

A newly installed Operation Impact surveillance camera behind a business on the near south side helped Milwaukee police officers in their investigation of an armed fleeing suspect early Wednesday, according to Ald. Bob Donovan.

The arrest June 11 in the alley between 2200 S. 28th and S. 29th Streets was “backed up by what officers saw on the video footage,” said Ald. Donovan. “We were hoping that Operation Impact would have an immediate and sudden impact, and that’s actually happening,” he said.

Greg Mertens, co-owner of Wildflour Bakery, 2800 W. Lincoln Ave., said he heard the commotion (at about 12:30 a.m. June 11) and went downstairs and saw that there was a car stopped in the alley and officers were scouring the block looking for someone. Mertens, who lives above the store, was quickly approached by officers who wanted to see if they could review the DVR footage from the camera.

“They rolled back the video (footage) and saw that the suspect – who was in the car by himself – had made a point of jumping out the passenger side of the car so officers would think he wasn’t the driver,” Mertens said.

“As they say, ‘the video doesn’t lie,’ and the officers said the clarity of the video was superb for a dimly lit alley,” he said.

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New Camera Helps MPD/ADD ONE

Mertens and his wife have pledged to contribute money to Operation Impact, and he said he's sold on the initiative. "We're really pleased with this system, and we are just glad to do whatever we can to help make this neighborhood safer," he said.

Ald. Donovan was joined by Common Council President Willie L. Hines, Jr., Police Chief Edward Flynn, Milwaukee County District Attorney John Chisholm and others last week in announcing the launch of the innovative public-private partnership. The effort to fortify public safety using private donations from businesses large and small will flood a large area of Milwaukee's near south side this year with beat patrol officers, surveillance cameras and lights from new alley lighting systems.

Operation Impact has been described by founder/author Ald. Donovan as "a unique, multifaceted, comprehensive approach to fighting crime, restoring order, and revitalizing that involves the community pulling itself up by the bootstraps."

Operation Impact will cover the area bounded by W. Pierce St. on the north, W. Lincoln Ave. on the south, S. 16th Street/S. Cesar Chavez Dr. on the east and S. 38th St. on the west – an area considered one of Milwaukee's most ethnically diverse and touching three aldermanic districts. The area lies within MPD's District Six