

## **Technology**

### **Sergeant Ed Hude**

The year 2007 was one of major technology improvement for the Mason Police Department.

The Department received and installed the new L3 digital in-car video recording system in September, thanks in part to a grant from the Michigan Municipal Risk Management Authority. This replaces the antiquated VHS system which had become problematic, requiring frequent and costly repairs, as well as taking cars out of service. The Flashback Digital Video System is smaller and more compact. The old VHS units took up a large amount of space inside the trunk of each patrol car—the new unit is so small it is installed in the car's glove box. The Flashback DVS features a rear seat camera, along with a microphone system. All patrol cars are outfitted with a digital recorder which downloads remotely to the Department's dedicated L3 server when the unit is parked at the back of the police department. The server stores data for a limited amount of time then downloads onto a backup disk which, in turn, is stored in a secure location. The volume of data we can store now is far greater than what we could with the VHS system, which was on a 60-day rotation to reuse tapes. We can store a year's worth of digital recordings with the limited space we currently have.

The Mason Police Department is a member of the Ingham County Technology Committee. During October, the Department was one of the first two agencies to install and use the VisionAir police reporting system. We are currently working with the other participating county law enforcement agencies on implementing the various sub programs within the new reporting system. One of the Committee's goals is to link with the Ingham County Prosecutors Office and create a paperless warrant request procedure. Another is to use field-based police reporting through mobile data computers. This would allow officers in the field to access more information and photographs and to enter police reports to the RMS from the patrol car without having to return to the station to use a desktop computer. Each of these will be major improvements in fighting crime and in homeland security.

The Police Department added 2 new Chevrolet Impala police cars to the fleet in 2007. An LED emergency lighting package was installed in each car. LED systems are much brighter, require less maintenance, and draw considerably less electrical current than the older emergency lights. LED's do not create the electrical interference problems previously experienced on the police car 460-Mhz radio systems. These problems were caused by the strobe lights which required special wiring, installation, and frequent maintenance.

