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Crimes and Misdemeanors

News Staff

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From the "Where were you when we needed you, Ken Starr?" file. The other weekly in town, the Los Angeles Independent, provides a tremendous public service with its publication of Crime Blotter, a Joe Friday- style compendium of local police reports. OffBeat has spent many a happy hour in our driveway, where the paper is tossed, reading about vaguely sinister-sounding "African-American duos" and "50-year-old Caucasians with long hair"

wreaking such havoc as snatching a cell phone from an open car window, or stealing a can of paint. Now, we all know the crime rate is way down. And no infraction is too small to escape the long arm of the Blotter. Still, even we, its most loyal readers, were stunned to read the Blotter's account of a September 8 incident in Glassell Park. It seems that a 50-year-old tattooed man, 5 feet 11 inches tall and 200 pounds, called a woman at her business and (cut to Austin Powers shot of Mike Myers with curled pinkie in the corner of his mouth) ASKED HER OUT TO LUNCH! Now, we don't know if Mr. Starr has been called in yet, but we suspect he could have found HIGH CRIMES AND MISDEMEANORS in this pithy little scenario. If what every day looks more like a classic case of entrapment by Starr's team can topple the leader of the free world, we guess we shouldn't be surprised that an unsolicited luncheon invitation has become a crime. Particularly when tattoos are involved.-Gale Holland

Police Commission Gets Its Gunn

The fix was in from the beginning, so it was no surprise last week when the City Council agreed in closed session to a 59 percent salary hike for Joseph A. Gunn, the man who would be Police Commission czar. There was little council resistance - the vote was 12-2 - even though they were rushed into it by a \$115,000 salary agreement that the Police Commission had no authority to make.

The commission's labors focused on getting Gunn, a 20-year LAPD veteran who left the force in 1979, the six-figure salary they had promised him when they hired him this summer as executive director of the Police Commission.

The commission agreed to pay Gunn at the top step of his job category even though the city administrative code places his salary at \$92,000. The council had to pass an ordinance to jump Gunn's pay to the higher level - and they did that last Wednesday.



If most of the council were not fazed by the unorthodox salary process, they were equally unruffled by the implications of the argument that Gunn should receive a salary 15 percent higher than that of Katherine Mader, the inspector general of the LAPD, charged with investigating allegations of police misconduct, because of his role as her supervisor.

Gunn has repeatedly made it clear that when it comes to the inspector general, he's the boss, an interpretation that gives a sharp elbow in the ribs to the spirit of voter-approved police-reform measures.

In the meantime, the commission got the executive director they wanted at the price he wanted in a process that makes you wonder if the voters will get the police reform they wanted.-Bobbi Murray