

# King City police look sharp

*New computers, cars brighten department's outlook*

By **JANICE AUSTIN**  
For The Salinas Californian

Nick Baldiviez took over as King City chief of police in January 2005, when the city was nearly bankrupt. A new City Council had just been elected, and the municipality lacked a permanent city manager.

"When I took over as police chief, the city was having severe financial difficulties," Baldiviez said. Just over a year later, though, "We're now out of the negative," he said. "The future is looking very bright."

Despite the city's financial crisis, with the help of a supplemental law enforcement grant, Baldiviez has been able to buy eight new police cars and to install brand new computers throughout the station.

The department, which serves the city's roughly 13,000 residents, is now in the process of negotiating a joint SWAT team with the city of Greenfield.

"We'll each donate a couple of officers to form a six-man SWAT team," said Baldiviez.

The departments will send an officer for training in April and expect to have the team in place by the end of the year.



RICHARD GREEN/THE SALINAS CALIFORNIAN

King City Police Department Chief Nick Baldiviez, right, and Sgt. Alejandrina Tirado leave their police vehicle to enter the police station at 415 Bassett St. in King City, in February. Tirado has been with the department since 1983, starting as a meter maid and rising through the ranks to sergeant.

*'I invite anyone to come and work here. I've been here 23 years and I learn something new every day.'*

— **Alejandrina Tirado**,  
King City Police Department sergeant

Baldiviez is grateful to have a close working relationship with other south county law enforcement agencies.

"We share the same issues as the other south county agencies when it comes to gangs and narcotics," he said. "We work closely with the other agencies."

### **Bond is strong**

The police chiefs all have a great working relationship. We're starting to collaborate more on different projects, especially King City and Greenfield on animal control and abandoned vehicles."

That neighborliness is much appreciated, Baldiviez said.

"Recently, when we were tied up on a homicide investigation, Greenfield came and patrolled the streets for us," he said.

King City is home to a Mon-

terey County Sheriff's Office substation and a California Highway Patrol station, setting it apart from other south county cities, he said.

"There is always law enforcement close," Baldiviez said. "Sometimes you need backup quickly."

It's the variety his career provides that Baldiviez finds most enjoyable.

"Everyday is something new," he said. "It's never the same."

Baldiviez started with the department in August 1989.

"We were just getting settled into the new station (on Bassett Street) then," he said.

Sgt. Alejandrina Tirado, who has been with the King City police department for 23 years, has seen many changes.

"I started fresh out of high school," she said. "I started in

## **KING CITY POLICE DEPARTMENT**

n **CHIEF:** Nick Baldiviez

n **STAFFING:** Eight officers, one corporal, four sergeants.

n **LOCATION:** 415 Bassett St., King City.

n **HISTORY:** Moved into current building in 1989.

n **ONLINE:**  
[www.kingcity.com/pd.html](http://www.kingcity.com/pd.html).

1983 when we were in the old, tiny building. We had just a huge cement room with a bench and one toilet that every suspect went into, all housed together. We did everything on 3-by-5 cards. We didn't have computers. Everything was manually written and kept in files."

Tirado grew up in King City.

"I've always liked to help the public," she said. "Being bilingual, I have an advantage in being able to communicate with my community. It's an awesome career. I invite anyone to come and work here. I've been here 23 years and I learn something new every day."