

OFFICER COCHRAN

- o Assigned to Eaton School and Cleveland Park since 1973

I've worked in Cleveland Park for the last ten years as a police officer. I enjoy working with the community. As far as police work goes, this is one of the nicer assignments you could have....working in a community rather than in a transient area. There is community spirit. In a community you can have a positive effect. You are dealing with the same people on a day-to-day basis. It's the sense of a community that is rewarding. I like to think that I make the community a somewhat better place to live.

When I started here there were children that were in the sixth grade and now I see those same children that are in college. It's the overall sense of belonging, I think, that keeps me here. Most of the people in the community I know. A lot of them I don't know by name, but I recognize their faces. You see them day after day. And you get to know who lives where and who doesn't live there. Travelling to and from the different schools, I keep an eye on the neighborhood and I look for suspicious people. My greatest concern is the safety of the children going and coming from school. My second concern is the drivers of automobiles....that they do not exceed the speed limit, causing a danger.

Cleveland Park is basically the same as when I came, but one thing I have noticed is that there are not as many school-aged children now as there used to be. Therefore there is probably less involvement among the families within the community. Children seem to bring together the families in a community. If you have children playing together, the parents get to know each other. Ten years ago there was more activity on the playground and more children about. Children make for a nice neighborhood. There are fewer children who walk to school now than there were ten years ago. Many now ride buses from other parts of the city.

There are probably not many police officers who have been doing the same job for ten years. Ten years is quite a long time to stay in one place for the police department. A few people have wondered why I haven't tried to get promoted to Sergeant. If I get promoted I will lose my assignment and I'll be transferred. But I enjoy it here and I'd rather do this than be promoted.