

1,000 Days Since the Borderline & Grill Mass Shooting
By Supervisor Linda Parks and Sheriff Bill Ayub, September 2021

On Nov. 7, 2018, our peaceful town was shattered when a disturbed man with a gun took the lives of 11 innocent men and women and caused the death of Ventura County Sheriff Sergeant Ron Helus. We looked at what happened in the 100 days after the Borderline Bar & Grill mass shooting and set a course to help prevent further gun violence.

Here's what has happened in 1,000 days since that terrible night:

Day 135 — Ventura County Supervisor Linda Parks initiates the Mental Health & Safety Task Force to consider circumstances specific to the Borderline massacre and return with recommendations.

Day 138 — Ventura County Community Foundation distributes \$3.6 million in donations to victims' families.

Day 226 — The Gun Show Committee of the Ventura County Fairgrounds Board of Directors recommends adopting a policy to hold gun shows there.

Day 313 — Congresswoman Julia Brownley introduces the Gun Suicide Prevention Act (HR 4271) requiring purchased firearms to have a warning label with the toll-free telephone number for the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline (800-273-8255).

Day 338 — Governor Newsom signs Assemblymember Irwin's Assembly Bill 12 that strengthens Gun Violence Restraining Orders (GVRO) by extending the duration to a maximum of five years.

Day 364 — A portion of the 101 Freeway is named in honor of Sgt. Helus.

Day 365 — A Healing Garden is dedicated in Thousand Oaks at Conejo Creek Park North.

Day 366 — The community comes together for a storytelling event to listen to personal experiences from November 2018.

Day 366 — The Board of Supervisors receives 26 recommendations from the Mental Health and Safety Task Force to enhance citizen and law enforcement safety, strengthen access to mental health services, and expand awareness and enforcement of firearms safety.

Day 450 — A 434-page Investigative Summary created by the Sheriff's Major Crimes Bureau is submitted to the Ventura County District Attorney's Office.

Day 468 — Assemblymember Irwin introduces AB 2372, which states "the confidentiality of a decedent's autopsy records will help decedent's families avoid additional trauma and privacy violations."

Day 621 — An ongoing program established by the Sheriff's Office expands training, enhances equipment, and increases preparedness to mitigate incidents of active violence in the community.

Day 731 — A video is released by the City of Thousand Oaks remembering the victims. A second-anniversary memorial gathering is held at the Healing Garden. People are encouraged to do twelve acts of kindness.

Day 771 — The Ventura County District Attorney releases a video made from various surveillance cameras inside Borderline and releases a report finding that use of deadly force by a California Highway Patrol Officer and Sgt. Helus was justified.

Day 786 — Ventura County Sheriff's Office goes online with a case management system of Armed Prohibited Persons System, several hundred cases are now in the system. Since then, approximately 140 cases have been closed and 70 firearms confiscated.

Day 812 — Ventura County Sheriff's Office conducts a countywide gun turn-in event and 60 guns and 1,000 rounds of ammunition are turned in for destruction.

Day 868 — The Ventura County Sheriff releases the 87-page Borderline Bar and Grill Mass Shooting Public Safety Response After Action Review Final Report.

Day 940 — A new tactical training center in honor of Sgt. Ron Helus featuring live-fire training begins construction with funding from the Ventura County Sheriff's Foundation.

Day 957 — The Board of Supervisors approves \$2,200,000 to expand the County's Crisis Stabilization and Inpatient Psychiatric Units and identifies plans for a new Mental Health Rehabilitation Center for over 100 patients.

Day 1,000 — An update on Mental Health and Safety Task Force recommendations finds 20 of 26 recommendations completed including disengagement/re-engagement practices for law enforcement to de-escalate specified situations, and threat assessment training to schools and the greater community. Of the six recommendations still to be implemented is an enhanced two-way communication system that will allow the Records Management Systems (RMS) of individual law enforcement agencies to tap into Ventura County Sheriff's real-time crisis intervention information.

While we honor those whose lives were taken and grieve our loss, we recognize that the lives of the survivors, their families and friends, and our first responders will never be the same. What brought about this horrific mass shooting is complex, and it is clear there's no single solution. However, one thing is clear: We must do all we can to prevent such an atrocity from happening again because our lives and the lives of those we love depend on it.