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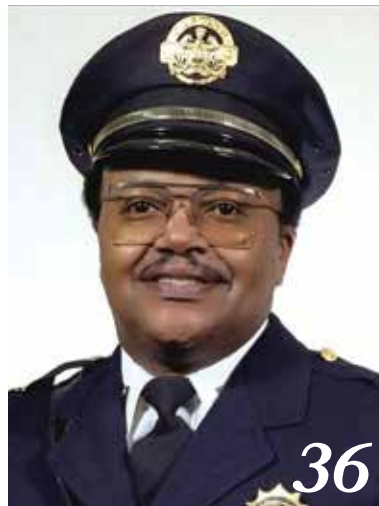
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**The Missouri Sheriff magazine is the official publication for the Missouri Sheriffs' Association.** MSA is dedicated to providing informative and timely information to enrich the lives of the dedicated men and women providing county law enforcement, jail, court security and judicial services throughout the state of Missouri, and the public they serve. **Visit us online at [mosheriffs.com](http://mosheriffs.com).**

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VOL. 10, NO. 2

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## FROM THE PRESIDENT

# SERVING THE PEOPLE

I am extremely proud to be the elected sheriff of Buchanan County and tremendously honored to represent all the sheriffs of Missouri as the president of the Missouri Sheriffs' Association for 2022-2023. There is no greater privilege than to serve those who elected you — those who have placed their faith and trust in you. I look forward to working with our sheriffs, Governor Parson and his team, the Missouri legislature, and other stakeholders to do amazing things for the citizens of Missouri.

I hope that you and your families had a very blessed holiday season, and those blessings continue throughout 2023. As spring approaches and Missouri's tremendous beauty unfolds before us, we feel reinvigorated and full of anticipation for the upcoming season of renewal and growth.

The sheriffs of Missouri continue to stand tall to guard against evil and protect our citizens from those who would victimize the innocent. We are taking steps to advance that duty and to further strengthen our ability to provide the highest level of service.

Firstly, we forwarded legislative language asking the legislature to submit a constitutional amendment for consideration by the people to make the Office of Sheriff part of the Missouri Constitution. If passed, the Office of Sheriff would become a constitutional office not subject to any attempts to remove or diminish the sheriff's ability to stand firmly against any overreach or unconstitutional acts.

Secondly, we are stronger together than we are apart, as stated by our Missouri motto "United we stand divided we fall." In that spirit, Missouri's sheriffs have voted to join the Western States Sheriffs' Association, which consists of the sheriffs west of the Mississippi River. By joining the WSSA, we will have a greater voice and larger influence against national issues that could impact our citizens.

Something that is extremely important to me is to recognize the difference between the sheriff and the sheriff's office, more specifically, to recognize the amazing and professional members of each sheriff's office who ensure the delivery of services. The sheriff's office is unique in its mission; it has several equally important areas of responsibility that must be carried out with the same level of commitment — patrol, jail, court security, civil process, and criminal investigations.

I often say that I am the sheriff and the face that people see, however, I am not the sheriff's office. I have over 100 dedicated men and women who every day perform their duties flawlessly, serving our citizens with honor and integrity. This is the same for every sheriff's office in the state. I, as well as all my brother and sister sheriffs, greatly appreciate the service and sacrifice that each one of these brave men and women makes without hesitation every day for our citizens.

In closing, I say thank you to our citizens; thank you very much for the tremendous support you give to the brave men and women of the sheriffs' offices of the great state of Missouri.



**SHERIFF BILL PUETT**  
BUCHANAN COUNTY  
MSA PRESIDENT

"The sheriffs of Missouri continue to stand tall to guard against evil and protect our citizens."

## MISSOURI SHERIFFS' ASSOCIATION

# FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

I got a late start on my work life. I didn't attend college until I was in my 30s and my three kids were in school full time. I loved to fish, I loved the outdoors and I figured there would always be a need for a conservation agent somewhere in Missouri, so I decided to pursue that field. Because English comp was required and I figured it would help with term papers, I took it in my first semester. About halfway through the course, my professor pulled me aside and said I was such a good writer that I should consider writing as a career.

My first thought was that I could never sit still long enough to finish a book and I quickly discounted her advice. Then one day it dawned on me that a newspaper reporter's job might be interesting — especially if I could write about fishing. So the next semester I enrolled in Journalism 101. I knew from the moment my professor started talking that I was exactly where I needed to be. A feature story I wrote about a dog obedience class that my cocker spaniel attended, was submitted (unbeknownst to me) by my professor to the local newspaper. It ran on the front page and my career choice was validated. Since that time, I have written and/or edited thousands of stories for daily, weekly, and monthly publications.

One day I got a call from Jeanne

Merritt, the marketing director of the Missouri Sheriffs' Association. She said she had read some of my stories and wanted to meet me to discuss her idea for a magazine that would provide an inside look at Missouri's sheriffs. She wanted people to see just how difficult their jobs were and how much responsibility rested on their shoulders. A couple years earlier, God had put it on my heart to pray regularly for our law enforcement officers, so to me, this was a way to put names and faces to my prayers. That was 15 years ago. Today I still write for newspapers but this is where my heart is. Don't tell Jeanne, but I am so honored and happy to do this job, that I would work for free.

My favorite part of this job is getting to write the stories about our sheriffs. None of them have taken on this responsibility because they want the glory (because there isn't any). It's my desire to show you their hearts — that they took the oath of office because they truly care about their communities and want to make them better and safer.

We sincerely hope you enjoy the stories in *The Missouri Sheriff* and *Missouri Jails* and that they accomplish what we originally set out to do. We also hope that the information shared in the magazines will inspire you to become an honorary member of the MSA, which supports the Office of Sheriff and the



**NANCY ZOELLNER**  
EDITOR AND SOCIAL  
MEDIA COORDINATOR

If you have ideas for stories you'd like us to cover, email them to [nancy@mosheriffs.com](mailto:nancy@mosheriffs.com).

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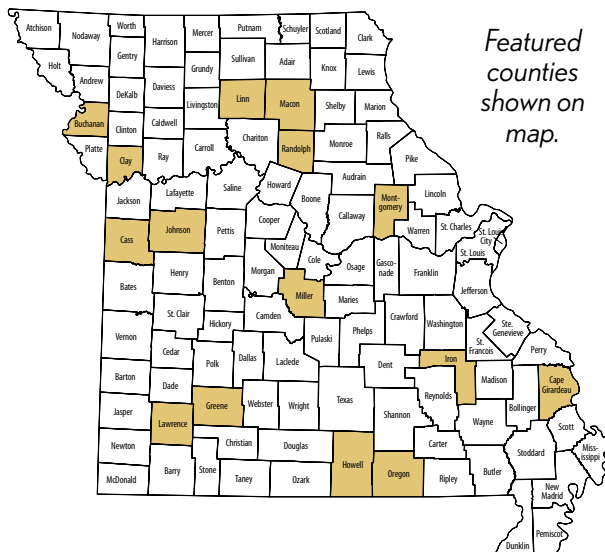
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## NEWS AROUND THE STATE



## MO CIT COUNCIL SUPPORT



2022 was yet another productive year for MO CIT (Missouri Crisis Intervention Team). Thank you to all who played a part in providing training and support for MO CIT and first responders across the state.



# A JOB WELL DONE

Greene County Sheriff Jim Arnott recognized Deputy Winchell, who recently transitioned back to a uniform patrol deputy from the DWI Unit. "Deputy Winchell has worked in the Greene County DWI Unit for the last three years and made 264 DWI arrests during his time in the unit. In 2022, Deputy Winchell made 80 DWI arrests. He is also a Drug Recognition Expert for Greene County. Deputy Winchell has gone above and beyond for this unit to keep the Greene County roadways safe from impaired drivers," Sheriff Arnott said.



Share your news!

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# LIFESAVING GIFT

Macon County Sheriff's Office K9 Saar and Oregon County Sheriff's Office K9 Amul both received bullet and stab protective vests, thanks to a charitable donation from a non-profit organization, Vested Interest in K9s, Inc.

K9 Saar's vest was sponsored by the National Police Association and is embroidered with the sentiment "Gifted by NationalPolice.org." K9 Amul's vest was embroidered with the sentiment "In memory of Captain David Dorn, St. Louis, MO- EOW 6/2/20."

Vested Interest in K9s, Inc., established in 2009, is a 501(c)(3) charity whose mission is to provide bullet and stab protective vests and other assistance to dogs of law enforcement and related agencies throughout the United States. This potentially lifesaving body armor for four-legged K9 officers is made in the USA, custom-fitted, and NIJ certified. Since its inception, Vested Interest in K9s, Inc. has provided more than 4,845 vests to K9s in all 50 states at a value of \$6.9 million, made possible by private and corporate donations.

Vested Interest in K9s, Inc. accepts tax-deductible contributions in any amount. For more information or to learn about volunteer opportunities, call 508-824-6978 or visit [www.vik9s.org](http://www.vik9s.org).





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## EMPLOYEE OF THE YEAR

Corporal Brian Maskey was awarded the 2022 Employee of the Year for the Patrol Division of the Montgomery County Sheriff's Office. He started as a full-time road deputy with the sheriff's office in June of 2020. On August 30, 2022 he was promoted to corporal and was then assigned to command one of the two squad rotations in the Patrol Division. His law enforcement experience includes working more than four years as a Fulton Police Officer, 10-plus years as a Wellsville Police Officer, and 10 years as the Martinsburg chief of police. Cpl. Maskey is certified in CIT, Advanced Accident Investigations, Forensic Analysis of Written Statements, Field Training Officer, Racial Profiling Instructor, and Federal Crisis Response Instructor.

Sheriff Craig Allison wanted to recognize two employees — one from the jail division and one from patrol — for their hard work and dedication to the sheriff's office and the community they serve. This year employees chose the recipients. In November, the staff was asked to nominate one of their peers, explaining why they felt that person deserved the recognition. Their nominee needed to possess certain attributes such as a positive attitude and good leadership and communication skills, if he or she encouraged cooperation among their peers, had regular attendance, was a problem solver, could adapt to change without complaint and worked well under pressure and during times of crisis.

"We were very pleased with the responses we received and we agreed the staff had chosen two employees who definitely stood out over this past year," Sheriff Allison said. "Since starting with the sheriff's office Brian has proven himself as a valued leader within our ranks. His peers mostly commend him for leading by example, for continually praising and encouraging those around him, for his willingness to help and to listen, and for being consistently proactive. Congratulations Brian, you earned this award!"

## AMAZING LEADERSHIP

Aaron Prange with the Randolph County Sheriff's Office was recently promoted to sergeant. Sheriff Aaron Wilson said he is pleased with Prange's leadership, knowledge, and outstanding service to their office and community.



## HER WORK WAS NOTICED

Jennifer Murray was recognized as the Cape Girardeau County Justice Center Employee of the 4th quarter. Murray's job is civilian-based and entails providing the sheriff's office with data entry, updating and maintaining all court disposition reports for JMS, tracking court appearances of in-custody inmates, and handling court docket reports. In addition, Murray provides support for data entry, updates, and maintenance of inmate files to build court dockets and coordinate inmate information with the courts. It is a monumental task that does not go unnoticed, according to Sheriff Ruth Ann Dickerson.

## EMPOWERING YOUTH TO SAVE LIVES

The Missouri Department of Transportation is partnering with the Cape Girardeau Police Department to offer TRACTION — Teens Taking Action to Prevent Traffic Crashes, a traffic safety leadership training conference opportunity to all high schools statewide.

TRACTION is a three-day training program for up to 12 students and two advisors. The goal is to empower youth to take an active role in promoting safe driving habits. That's accomplished by providing participants with the motivation, information, skills, and support necessary to develop a plan of action that addresses impaired driving, drowsy driving, and driver inattention, and promotes safety belt usage through events and activities at their schools and in their communities.

Each team will complete an action plan for their school and community to implement the following year. The summer conference schedule includes general sessions, seven workshops, team break-out time,

recreational activities and other fun surprise events directly related to the focus of the TRACTION program. The conference is designed to be high energy and provides activities from early morning until late evening.

### 2023 CONFERENCE DATES:

Cape Girardeau — July 16-18

Kansas City — July 20-22

The cost for the conference is a \$15.00 per person. Up to 12 students and 2 advisors can attend. At least one advisor has to be employed by the school but the other can be a parent. The conference is available to any incoming 9-12 grade students. Each school is responsible for their own transportation. Rooms for the students and advisors will be provided. Any school 125 miles or more from the conference location will be allowed to stay an additional night before the conference. All meals during the conference will be provided. The conference is informal. Facilitators want the students to have fun while learning.

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## LIFESAVER AWARD

Congratulations are in order for Deputy Hamby who recently received the Life Saving Award from the Cass County Sheriff's Office. On October 27, 2022, deputies were dispatched to the report of an animal bite in Creighton. Upon his arrival, Dep. Hamby located a 7 year-old child who had been the victim of a violent dog attack. The child had lost a substantial amount of blood and had numerous serious physical injuries. Dep. Hamby quickly identified that the child had a potentially life threatening laceration to her arm and placed his issued tourniquet on the child's arm and also addressed her other injuries. In addition to performing life-saving treatment, he also comforted the child until EMS personnel responded. The child was flown to Children's Mercy Medical Center and has recovered from her injuries. Without Dep. Hamby's quick thinking and action, the outcome of this incident could have been tragically different.



## MADD HERO

In January, Anna Riley, court monitoring specialist, presented Deputy Zach Craft of the Buchanan County Sheriff's Office with a MADD Hero Pin for his outstanding work in impaired driving enforcement. Prosecuting Attorney Michelle Davidson contacted MADD Kansas City, to tell them about the exceptional DWI enforcement efforts by Deputy Craft and his 58 DWI arrests in the last six months of 2022. MADD acknowledged and thanked Deputy Craft for saving a life with every DWI arrest. "Deputy Craft is a MADD Hero, making the community safer and helping move us to a world of No More Victims."

## HOMELESS DOG GETS HOME AND JOB



Batman, a high-energy Belgian Malinois/German Shepherd mix in the Puppies 4 Patrol program at South Central Correctional Center (SCCC), was chosen by the Greene County Sheriff's Office to be trained as a drug-detection dog. Starting in January, the formerly homeless dog will be trained by an offender in prison. As a result, Batman will not only become a member of a loving family, but he will also become a working dog, helping law enforcement keep our communities safe.

## FORMER SHERIFF PASSES

Former Linn County Sheriff Rick Freeman passed away December 2, 2022, after a short battle with lung cancer. He served as a Linn County deputy for over nine years before being elected and serving as Linn County sheriff from 1987 to 1996. He continued working closely with law enforcement throughout his career, serving as a justice design consultant for architects and most recently with Lexipol.

Steve Davis, a friend of Freeman, called him "a man of unparalleled integrity; his 'yes' was yes...and his 'no' was no...and his handshake you could 'take to the bank.' Though quiet about it, Rick always hoped people would see his Christian faith demonstrated in how he interacted with people."

Linn County Sheriff Jeff Henke and a deputy led the 15-car procession from Liberty United Methodist Church to the Mount Olivet Cemetery. A Missouri State Highway Patrol trooper accompanied the procession, and members of the local fire department lined the overpass and saluted as they passed under. Members of the Marceline Police Department met them at the cemetery. His wife Raylene said it was beautifully and perfectly orchestrated and showed how well he got along with the other agencies during his service.



## BATTLE OF HIS LIFE

January 4, 2023, Iron County Sheriff Jeff Burkett was presented the Law Enforcement Purple Heart by Judge Michael Randazzo. The Iron County Jail experienced a COVID outbreak in January 2022. Sheriff Burkett was working countless hours taking care of his office duties while also patrolling the county in an effort to keep the COVID exposure to a minimum. Unfortunately he contracted the virus in the line of duty which led to a four-month stay in the hospital; three of those months were spent in the intensive care unit. His employees said they were very pleased that the award was presented to their sheriff.



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## DEPUTY AND DETECTIVE IN THE SPOTLIGHT

The Lawrence County Sheriff's Office recently recognized Deputy Conner Anderson for his outstanding efforts in removing intoxicated drivers from the roadways. With 19 arrests, Deputy Anderson was the top DWI officer for Lawrence County for 2022. "What makes this even more amazing is that Lawrence County does not have a dedicated DWI enforcement team. Deputy Anderson has gone above and beyond his regular call of duty to seek out impaired drivers and remove them from the roadway. These arrests were made on top of his regular duties in the patrol division covering 625 square miles nightly and answering any number of calls," said Sheriff Brad DeLay. "Drinking and driving is a choice. A choice you can easily make not to do. Please don't drink and drive. If you do, Deputy Anderson and all the deputies in Lawrence County will find you."

Sgt. Melissa Phillips was selected as the 2022 Detective of the Year for the Lawrence County Sheriff's Office. This is the second time Sgt. Phillips has been selected for this award. The selection process is lengthy and starts with peer evaluations, then goes up the chain of command to the division commander, other division commanders, and finally to the sheriff. Sheriff DeLay said, "Sgt. Phillips has proven time and time again to be a valuable asset to the sheriff's office and the citizens we are sworn to protect. Her dedication and devotion to her job is shown every day as she works to solve crimes and provide assistance to victims. Great work Sgt. Phillips! We are glad to have you on our team."



## FRIENDLY, TASTY COMPETITION

Johnson County recently held its first "Crock Pot Cook Off" competition lunch between Administration, Detective, Patrol, and Detention divisions. They had 10 crock pot entries, and 32 staff members at lunch. Everyone voted for their favorite dish. First place went to Administration with baked beans.

## LAWRENCE COUNTY DEPUTY IN NEW PROGRAM

Deputy Ryan Devost with the Lawrence County Sheriff's Office is one of 11 law enforcement officers in the state selected to participate in a pilot program designed to enhance DUI/DWI enforcement. The program may be expanded to other agencies in the near future.

The primary source of funding for the Missouri Law Enforcement Phlebotomy Program (LEPP) Pilot is from the Missouri Department of Transportation (MoDOT) Highway Safety and Traffic Division through the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) Section 405d program areas. The pilot training program funds the phlebotomy courses, textbooks, and instructors. Additional NHTSA funding assisted in developing the LEPP Task Force and purchasing supplies for the start-up program.

Law enforcement phlebotomists get specialized training to draw blood for investigative purposes such as DUI/DWI investigations, DNA testing, communicable disease testing, and other reasons. The first program in the country was established as the Arizona Officer Phlebotomy Program in 1995. The purpose was to streamline the search warrant process. In 2000, the Phoenix College phlebotomy director developed a new course specifically designed for law enforcement.

Arizona statutes allow for breath, blood, or urine at the choice of the officer. Missouri statute allows for "a licensed physician, registered nurse, phlebotomist or trained medical technician" to withdraw blood (RSMo Section 577.029) and provides the phlebotomist shall not be "civilly liable in damages to the person tested unless for gross negligence, willful or wanton act, or omission" (RSMo Section 577.031).



## KEEPING THEM SAFE

The Miller County Sheriff's Office recently received grant funding to purchase new custom-fit armor for each deputy. Sheriff Louis Gregoire said Leon Uniform Company was a big help in assisting them with fitting and ordering. Deputies are required by policy to wear body armor while in uniform and on duty. Custom-fitted armor is more comfortable; the type that they ordered has adjustable straps to accommodate both weight gain and loss.







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Once AEDs are identified, their locations can be viewed by anyone using the PulsePoint AED app—or the PulsePoint Respond app—in PulsePoint connected communities. Problems discovered with AEDs already in the registry, such as a closed business or an AED that is no longer present where shown, can quickly be reported right in the app, helping to keep the registry accurate and reliable. For more information or to register, visit [pulsepoint.org](http://pulsepoint.org).



## HONORING SERVICE

Several Howell County Sheriff's Office staff members were recognized for going above and beyond in their duties, some with promotions and others with awards:

Corporal Logan Wake was assigned to the Investigations Division as an Investigator.

Rhaquinda Guy was promoted to Lead Jail Supervisor.

Glenda Zook was promoted to Lead Dispatch Supervisor.

Matt Roberts and Nicholas Bruno were each promoted to Corporal.

Seth Smith was promoted to Deputy First Class.

Deputy Dakota Millard, Dispatcher Kyle Holloway, and Jailer Austin Ryan were named Employees of the Year in their departments.

Top Professional Character Corporal went to Logan Wake.

Top Professional Appearance went to Deputy First Class James Hatten.

Top Carbine Marksmanship went to Deputy Jared Hummel, Lieutenant Jason Long, Deputy Devon Mendenhall, Deputy Dakota Millard, Deputy First Class Seth Smith, Corporal Buddy Thompson, Deputy Paden Turnbull, and Corporal Logan Wake.

Top Pistol Marksmanship went to Deputy First Class James Hatten, Lieutenant Jason Long, Deputy First Class Seth Smith, Deputy Paden Turnbull, and Corporal Logan Wake.

Lieutenant Jason Long was recognized for his 24 years of service with the Special Weapons And Tactics Unit.

Award of Meritorious Conduct went to Deputy Dakota Millard for a traffic stop that resulted in a large quantity of methamphetamine.

Performance and Professional Excellence Recognition went to Deputy Travis Weaver, Deputy Devon Mendenhall, Deputy Matt Foster, Dispatcher Kyle Holloway, and Jailer Hunter Ward.



## RECOGNITION OF THEIR IMPORTANCE

Clay County Sheriff's Office K9 officers recently became "official" with the arrival of their personalized badges. K9 Kratos modeled his for the camera.

## HELP FINDING THE MISSING

According to NamUs, some 4,400 unidentified bodies are recovered each year, and about 1,000 of those bodies remain unidentified after one year due to gaps in databases. The "Help Find the Missing Act," also known as "Billy's Law," named in recognition of the unsolved disappearance of William Smolinski Jr. in 2004, will expand a federal law enforcement database on missing and unidentified persons and streamline the national process for reporting those cases. It will also provide more funding to expand the National Missing Persons and Unidentified Persons System (NamUs) database and it will coordinate with the FBI's National Crime Information Center (NCIC).

The law establishes best practice guidelines for reporting missing persons cases and requires law enforcement to collect such identifiers as DNA and dental records, and then upload that information to the database. Sponsors of the law said it will make it easier for families of missing persons to stay involved, contribute any important information, and track the case.







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## COVER STORY: ANDREW COUNTY SHERIFF GRANT GILLETT

## DOING THE RIGHT THING

His dad was a mechanic. His grandfather was a mechanic so Grant Gillett figured he'd be a mechanic too. Then in his senior year of high school, a buddy that had graduated before him became a Savannah police officer. "I started riding along with him and some of the deputies. There was something different on every shift so I decided to look into law enforcement," he said.

After graduating, he took a job with Andrew County as a dispatcher on the midnight shift under Sheriff Gary Howard. In January 2001, while still dispatching, he enrolled in the Missouri Western State College Law Enforcement Academy.

"I graduated in July of 2001 but I wasn't 21 yet. On my 21st birthday I took the P.O.S.T. test; I passed and was commissioned as a reserve deputy with Andrew County because they didn't have any fulltime spots open," he said. "Right after, the Holt County Sheriff's Office had a fulltime road spot open up, I took it and worked there until October 3, 2003, when Sheriff Howard had a road opening. I came back to the Andrew County Sheriff's Office and I've been here ever since."

The job was everything he thought it would be and more. Under Sheriff Howard, he moved up to the rank of sergeant on the road patrol side. Then in 2009, Bryan Atkins was elected sheriff and he created an investigator spot. "I was very interested in investigations and working all different types of cases allowed me to further my career in law enforcement. In January of 2020 when he announced he was retiring at the end of the year, I talked to him about running for sheriff. He said I was crazy," Sheriff Gillett laughed, "but in August he promoted me to chief deputy. I won the primary and didn't have an opponent in November."

His biggest challenge after taking office was the budget. He knew it was tight — he just didn't realize how tight. "Our law enforcement tax was passed in 1986. Times have changed and costs have risen since then. My chief deputy Josh Smith and I write grants and those help tremendously with equipment," he said adding that they just submitted a grant in hopes of funding a body scanner for the jail.



He has two school resource officers and would like to put an SRO in every school but that would take additional funding. Sheriff Gillett said he would also like to increase wages. "It's hard keeping deputies when they can drive 10 minutes to Buchanan County and make \$10,000 to \$15,000 a year more starting out — but that would take some kind of law enforcement tax down the road."

His 84-bed jail stays fairly full most of the time. Because he had worked in the jail in his early years and again when he was a deputy, he knew the moving parts — but knowing them and overseeing them were two different things. Sheriff Gillett created a jail administrator position and assigned a supervisor to help her keep things in order.

He established a chain of command in the sheriff's office by creating supervisory roles, promoting one to chief deputy and two to sergeants. He's also moving toward a paperless system, and they created a website and Facebook page to keep the community updated.

His wife Jessica and three children are his biggest fans. "If I didn't have the full support of my family it would be a very hard job because there are times that you miss holidays, you miss school events — but they understand why," he said, adding that he also feels the sheriff's office has the full support of the community.

"People appreciate us for what we do. I know there are some that we arrest who don't like us, but even people I have arrested have come up to me later and said, 'I know I screwed up but thanks for being respectful to me that night — not

just being a jerk.' I know it sounds corny but the most rewarding part of the job is knowing that we can make a difference," Sheriff Gillett said. "We see people on their worst days but we get to help them during those challenging moments. Sometimes it's really hard — like when you have to tell them a family member

**"I KNOW IT SOUNDS CORNY BUT THE MOST REWARDING PART OF THE JOB IS KNOWING THAT WE CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE."**

isn't coming back home — but you know that if you can stay with them and let them know you truly care and that you're there to help, it's the right thing to do. I am humbled to be their sheriff; I love Andrew County and I can't think of a better place to raise my family. I'm truly passionate about protecting and serving this community and I hope to be their sheriff for years to come."

BY NANCY ZOELLNER



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## COVER STORY: BUCHANAN COUNTY SHERIFF BILL PUETT

# PUTTING IDEAS TO WORK HAS WORKED

When Bill Puett was about 4 years old, his Uncle Earl, who was on duty as a police officer, came by to see his dad.

“He put me in the front seat of his patrol car, and I got to flip on the lights and siren and use the microphone. I was pretty sure I was talking to the chief, which now I’m sure I wasn’t, but I was hooked. Ever since that day I wanted to work in law enforcement,” he said.

Just as he was about to start high school, his dad passed away. Money was tight so he got a job in a pharmacy delivering drugs, he jokes, to help with the family finances. After high school, he continued working and started college but didn’t get serious until March of 1987 when he turned 21 and went to work for the Buchanan County Sheriff’s Office. Sheriff Puett later returned to Missouri Western, obtaining two bachelor’s degrees — one in Criminal Justice and one in History — and later earning a master’s degree in Criminal Justice Administration from CMSU. In 1995 he became an adjunct professor and academy instructor at Western. He has also served as a site coordinator for the Missouri Sheriffs’ Association Training Academy.

Sheriff Puett is an LECC executive board member at the US Attorney’s Office, criminal investigation subject matter expert for P.O.S.T., and sits on numerous state and local committees advancing law enforcement and service to the community.

“One of my passions has been working violent crimes and working with crime victims and the Major Case Squad to solve those crimes. When people are experiencing the worst day of their life, it’s very rewarding to be able to find justice for them or their loved ones and help them through the healing process,” Sheriff Puett said.

During his 36 years with Buchanan County, he worked in just about every position — jailer, patrol, investigations, civil process, administration, training — and earned promotions to sergeant, lieutenant, captain, and undersheriff — before being elected sheriff and taking office in 2017. He said having a good understanding of criminal work as well as the different divisions of the sheriff’s office all helped him be prepared to run for sheriff.

“I had been thinking about it for a long time because for so many years we struggled with pay and equipment needs. I always wanted to make the sheriff’s office better, but you can’t do that if you’re not the decision maker. You can make suggestions all day long but at the end of the day they are just that — suggestions,” he said.

Soon after taking office, he began putting his ideas to work.

“We changed uniforms, we went to external carriers, we updated equipment, we put AEDs in the cars, and the deputies

**“WE ARE TRULY BLESSED BECAUSE OUR COMMUNITY SUPPORTS US 100 PERCENT.”**



now carry Narcan and tourniquets,” Sheriff Puett said. “We’ve enhanced training significantly,

we went back to a star badge, which is the emblem of sheriffs — we’ve done everything we can to help them go out and serve better. I felt that by having top-notch equipment, by adopting high standards with policies and directives on performance, and by providing quality training we could develop a highly professional staff. That makes the office better and that makes the community better.”

His ideas worked. They’ve had multiple saves with Narcan, tourniquets, and AEDs. And Buchanan County is one of the first sheriff’s offices in the state to use non-sworn detention officers in lieu of deputies in the jail. Sheriff Puett said it opened a career path for those who are interested in law enforcement but might not want to work the road.

“We’ve seen ups and downs through the years, but we’ve never seen the problems we’re having now with retention and recruitment. I don’t know if it’s the national anti-police rhetoric, the pay, the threats to law enforcement — none of which is true in Buchanan County. We are truly blessed because our community supports us 100 percent,” he said.

Although it was difficult to miss family events, he knows that his wife Rhonda and his two children also always supported him. Their career choices prove it. His daughter works for a sheriff’s office and is married to a deputy and until recently, his son was a deputy. Being a husband, dad and grandpa have always been his greatest joys.

The joys of serving his citizens and acting as a mentor to the men and women of his office and to those he has trained follow close behind family. “I like to say that I’m the sheriff, but I’m not the sheriff’s office. There are amazing people that are the sheriff’s office. Having the opportunity to serve our citizens while also training future law enforcement officers through the academy and the university is ‘where it’s at’ for me,” he said.

BY NANCY ZOELLNER





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## COVER STORY: DAVIESS COUNTY SHERIFF LARRY ADAMS

## HE'S COMMITTED TO DOING HIS BEST

As a young man, Larry Adams didn't like his classmates getting bullied or picked on by others. About halfway through high school, he realized that as a law enforcement officer, he could stand up for those who couldn't stand up for themselves. From that moment on, his career path was laid out before him.

After graduating from high school, he enrolled in the Criminal Justice program at North Central Missouri College, taking classes during the day and working at a metal fabrication factory at night. About halfway through, he decided he couldn't wait any longer, so he left college and enrolled in the Missouri Western Regional Law Enforcement Academy in St. Joe. He graduated in 2000 and started working at the Trenton Missouri Police Department.

"My initial plan was to join the Army after high school, then go to the academy, but I did it backward. While working at Trenton, I joined the Army Reserves, and in 2004 I was deployed to Balad, Iraq, for Operation Iraqi Freedom, third rotation. I served as an ammunition specialist and I also served with force protection details. It was the best worst time of my life," he quipped.

At the end of his tour, he returned to the Trenton PD and worked there until 2009, when he moved to the Daviess County Sheriff's Office under Sheriff Ben Becerra.

"I started as a deputy sheriff, but for about six years, I was loaned to a federal Violent Crimes Task Force. We investigated career criminals using stolen firearms to further their criminal activities — mainly drug dealing. When I came back to the sheriff's office, I was promoted to sergeant, then served as chief deputy until Ben decided to retire," he said.

Sheriff Adams didn't have to think twice about his next step. He knew he would run for office because he had seen how sheriffs could influence positive change through legislative measures, how they protected people's civil rights, and how they safeguarded their communities — all things that were important to him when he chose law enforcement as his profession. "Working as chief deputy, I learned how to prepare

a budget and how to schedule but nothing prepared me for the depth of the responsibility that suddenly rested on my shoulders."

However, he stepped into his new role easily. After taking office, he worked with his commissioners to improve employee pay and upgrade equipment. Then, unexpectedly, his office was asked to take over law enforcement services for the city of Gallatin, and they took it on without missing a beat. "We were already a force multiplier for them, and we handled most of their felony investigations, so it was more of a business transaction than anything else," he said, adding that one of his most important goals is to get deputies back in their schools was soon realized.

"We don't have SROs, but we created drug awareness, anti-bullying, and cyber-bullying programs, we hold assemblies, and visit often, occasionally eating lunch with the kids. Most of the deputies are natives, so it's fun for everyone when they go hang out in the schools they attended as kids. The students know our names, and we know most of theirs, so when we're out, they always bump knuckles," Sheriff Adams said. "When I was in school, I remember seeing law enforcement in their

uniforms and watching in awe at how they carried themselves. My goal is to build that same relationship with our high schoolers so they will look at law enforcement as an honorable profession and, like me, choose that as their career."

His personal goal is to be as consistent as he can be in every area and "to be the best husband to my wife Amber and the best dad for my 4-year-old daughter."

Because he cares deeply about children, he taught Sunday school at his church, and he is an active board member of Bright Futures of Gallatin, an organization dedicated

to ensuring children have what they need to succeed in school.

"This is such a wonderful community. They support us and help us with anything we need," Sheriff Adams said. "When Ben decided to retire, one of the concerns was how long I'd stay. People didn't want someone who would be around for one or two terms, then leave. I have no intention of leaving. My plan is to serve as long as I'm able. I've made mistakes, but I'm trying to learn from those mistakes and be the best sheriff I can be. It's what they deserve. They give so much to us. I want to give that — and more — back to them."

BY NANCY ZOELLNER







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## COVER STORY: DEKALB COUNTY SHERIFF KASEY KEESAMAN

## WALKING THE RIGHT PATH

Since high school, Kasey Keesaman knew he wanted to work in law enforcement.

"It's one of the corniest reasons in the world, but I wanted to help people, and I thought this would be a career path where I could do that," he said. "I was friends with Andy Clark, who was a deputy at the time, and I rode along with him on the weekends. Every time, it just further convinced me that this was the path the Lord had for me."

When he turned 19, he enrolled in the law enforcement academy. However, he couldn't join the sheriff's office until he turned 21 so he went to work for a security company. Then on his 21st birthday, he took the P.O.S.T. test, passed, and soon after went to work for the Maysville Police Department.

A month later, the DeKalb County Sheriff's Office had a part-time reserve spot open, and he signed up; when a full-time patrol spot opened a few months later, he jumped at the chance.

"I started at \$17,000, and they had just started buying patrol cars for us. I had a 1988 Caprice Classic that went from zero to 60 in — oh, about 20 miles," he laughed. "It was brown and had a hole in the passenger side floorboard that looked almost like a Flintstone brake. We put plywood over the hole to keep people from sticking their feet down, but I was happy because it had a bubble light and was mine to drive. When I look back, it's absolutely horrifying that it was a patrol car, but at the time, it was awesome."

He worked as a deputy sheriff for about five years until he and his wife Christy learned their second child was actually a set of twins. So he backed down to part-time with the sheriff's office and took a full-time position with the Weston Missouri PD. After five years, he decided he wanted to work in the county where he lived and returned to the sheriff's office. He's been there ever since.

"I worked 15 years as a deputy. Then when Andy was elected sheriff, he made me chief deputy. After he was killed (in June

of 2020), I was appointed sheriff. Then I won the election in November and was sworn in on January 1, 2021. I didn't have much administrative experience, and I'm not an IT guy, so that was kind of interesting. In addition to learning the job, I learned a lot about patience," he said. "Fortunately, I have been surrounded by great people, and we have all worked together to get the job done. Our prosecutor's office is excellent, and our courts are awesome as well. We're in one accord. We protect those who need to be protected and stand up for those who don't have a voice, whether it's child victims or domestic violence victims or people who have things stolen from them."

His biggest surprise after taking office was finding that, as sheriff, he was never really off duty. "We're a small community, so I'm a working sheriff. I respond to domestics, handle investigations, and go on calls just like everyone else, but when I go home if someone knocks on the door late at night because they need to talk to me — I talk to them."

That can be difficult to balance with family life — especially with four active boys.

"When I had to step up to be sheriff, we sat down as a family and talked about it. I knew it was my duty, but I also knew

it meant I was going to have to sacrifice family time," he said.

"But my wife and boys were all okay with it and somehow, we've worked it out and found time to talk, even if it's not while we're out camping in the woods."

Although it sometimes wears on his heart, being able to serve his community is what he likes best about the job. Sheriff Keesaman said they have a new school resource officer program that he'd like to grow, and he'd also like to grow his staff by a few more deputies.

In the meantime, they are focusing on training.

"My staff members have unique God-given talents and interests. The more we can build on those — whether it's with drug recognition, tracking with the dog, conducting forensic interviews, or using technology to extract information from phones — the better equipped they will be to help our community. That's why we're here," he said, adding, "I'd like to continue serving as sheriff for as long as I can, but when I leave the office, I want to leave it better than I inherited it. I think the way we're headed, we'll accomplish that."

BY NANCY ZOELLNER



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## COVER STORY: HOLT COUNTY SHERIFF STEVE PORTMAN

## DELAYED NOT DENIED

It would probably be difficult to find another sheriff who followed the same path to leadership as the one followed by Holt County Sheriff Steve Portman.

For as long as he can remember, he wanted to get into law enforcement, but the timing never seemed right. Instead of following his dream, he took the physically demanding course of a concrete finisher— and he walked it for 23 years, thinking that maybe later in life, he could pursue his passion. Over the years, his three children had tried to convince their dad that because of his caring nature and desire to help people, he should make the change. Finally, in 2019, after talking to a few law enforcement officers, he followed that advice.

With his wife Brandy's full support, he enrolled in the Missouri Western State University Law Enforcement Academy in St. Joseph Missouri. He started work as a patrol deputy with the Holt County Sheriff's Office right after graduating. Then, in an unexpected turn of events, Sheriff David McClain turned in his resignation to Holt County Commissioners in March 2020 and left a couple of weeks later. A special election was set for June to fill out his term, which ends in 2024. Sheriff Portman ran against two other deputies and won.

"I decided to run because, even though I didn't have a lot of time in the job, I wanted to do more for my community. I grew up in Holt County. People know me, and they know how I am, so I guess that's why I won," he said.

His work was cut out for him.

"Our sheriff's office was so outdated that we needed to get caught up with the times. We're doing that with the help of my office manager Lydia Dearthmont. She's been here 12 years and is great at what she does," Sheriff Portman said.

Dearthmont went to work writing grants — a lot of grants, according to the sheriff — and he started talking to commissioners, who, fortunately, were aware of the condition of the equipment.

Between their combined efforts and with help from ARPA money, they were able to get new weapons, a new radio system, and several new vehicles — with cages in every vehicle. "Previously, we had only one vehicle with a cage," he said. "We also got

new body cameras, car cameras, and computers."

He started a sponsorship program for cadets to address staffing shortages, perhaps one of the most daunting challenges he's faced since taking office. The sheriff's office pays for successful applicants to attend the law enforcement academy. Then each year, a third of their debt is wiped out for the next three years of employment.

"Those who are interested have to apply and meet with commissioners. They also have to sign a contract promising to work in dispatch while attending the academy. Then after they graduate, they have to stay for three years, but hopefully, they'll stay much longer," he said.

The program is working. When Sheriff Portman started with Holt County, he was one of four or five deputies. Today they have nine and two attending the academy.

Sheriff Portman said that he would like to build a new small-to-mid-sized jail in the near future. Their current facility, manned by 911 dispatchers who double as jailers, was built in 1859 — six years before President Lincoln was assassinated.

"We have one cell with six bunks on the first floor and two cells on the second floor, one with six bunks, and a female cell

with four bunks. It's part of the outdated thing I was talking about," he quipped, adding that current commissioners aren't as supportive of this idea as they were with the others.

In the meantime, he's been fiscally responsible, staying under budget each year.

"When I was elected, I had to operate on the previous sheriff's budget for the remaining six months of 2020 — and I was under budget. Then the fol-

lowing year, I set my own budget, and we came in well under budget. I'm a big stickler on staying under budget while, at the same time, getting everything we need to get done, done," he said. "The biggest surprise was everything else. I really didn't know where to start, so I'm thankful that Grant Gillett (Andrew County sheriff) and Randy Strong (Nodaway County sheriff) let me bounce ideas off them. Now we're moving in the right direction and getting things done, and the people in Holt County are noticing. They're saying they're happy about the job we're doing — that they see more deputies patrolling and that we're responding to calls faster. My family comes first, but my community is a very close second, so I'd like to continue serving as their sheriff and continue making improvements."

BY NANCY ZOELLNER







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— *The Bicentennial of the Missouri Judiciary*

This historical significance and the architecture of county courthouses, not just in Missouri but across the nation, captured the attention of the Reverend Keith Vincent decades ago. It also spurred him to visit every county seat in every state and collect picture postcards of every county courthouse in America. As a result, he's almost reached his goal.

"When I was a child,

someone left me a whole bunch of postcards. I liked architecture and started collecting more but soon realized I couldn't buy cards of every building I liked, so I decided to collect postcards of county courthouses," he said.

Over the years, his collection — and his interest in courthouse architecture and history — grew. Rev. Vincent, who has served as the assistant pastor at Mt. Airy Baptist Church in Mt. Airy, Maryland, for the past 20 years, now has about 30,000 courthouse picture postcards — at least one of every county in the United States, plus another 6,000 duplicates.

As he got older and his collection grew, it was no longer enough to just read about the courthouses. In the late 1980s, he decided to see them for himself. Since then, he has driven nearly 30,000 miles and visited 2,700 of the nation's 3,144 counties or county equivalents. He also decided to try to return to counties that have built new courthouses and take pictures to post on his

website, [www.courthousehistory.com](http://www.courthousehistory.com). Rev. Vincent currently has around 18,000 photographs and pictures of postcards up.

"The idea of visiting courthouses started while I was on a mission trip to Iowa. I thought I might take some pictures on my trip, and it just grew from there," he said. "Now I sit down and map out my trip and try to get to 10 or 11 courthouses each day. Missouri was fairly easy because the county seats weren't too far apart, and I could almost drive in a straight line each day, back and forth across the state. I haven't been to all of the new courthouses in Missouri, but I did see the new courthouses built in Kahoka (in Clark County) and Huntsville (in Randolph County). I also remember being in Camdenton and taking a picture of the new addition because I knew there would probably never be another postcard made."

He said he still needs to travel to the western part of the country, "but with the price of gas, it's much more expensive to get there, and California is hard because you have to go to downtown Los Angeles, downtown San Francisco. Texas was also a challenge to cover because of the number of counties. I still have six counties to visit on the far west side of that state."

Before GPS, he would drive into a town and keep looking until he found the courthouse.

"If I remember correctly, nearly all of the courthouses in Missouri are downtown, but in New England and some places in the South, that's not always the case," he said, adding that almost every trip has provided him with a GPS story. "I've ended up in cemeteries, or a lot of times it has sent me on the backroads, which is especially nerve-wracking in West Virginia and Kentucky,







REVEREND KEITH VINCENT

where, unbelievably, they still have one-lane roads. I was praying another car wouldn't come toward me because I didn't know what I would do!"

In the days before the courthouse shootings, he also went inside and walked around. Today he usually takes pictures of the exterior unless a plaque with the names of the architect and contractor is easily accessible.

Although 30,000 postcards may seem enough, Rev. Vincent is always on the lookout for more professionally made cards. However, that's proven to be difficult — and sometimes expensive.

"Back in the 40s and 50s, a couple of guys drove around the country and made amateur postcards of courthouses, and I have most of those, but my goal is to obtain actual printed postcards from every county. Unfortunately, I am still missing a few. One is Bollinger County in Missouri," he said, adding that he recently started collecting stereoview cards made from the 1870s to the 1900s. "I collect them because they picture courthouses that don't exist anymore. I found one of the courthouse in Randolph County Missouri, and it's posted on my site, but I don't have many because they can be really pricey on eBay."

The reverend doesn't have group funding; he just saves his money all year

so he can use his two-week vacation to visit those "town anchors." When possible, he likes to travel in the fall after the leaves are off the trees, so it's easier to get good pictures.

"I've been very fortunate to be able to do this. I really like going to the rural areas because I enjoy visiting the towns and learning about their history. It's also very relaxing. When I take my trips, I usually drive about 7,000 miles, and that's why I usually rent a car — and why they usually freak out when I come back, and they look at the mileage," he laughed.

If you have courthouse postcards you'd like to send to Rev. Vincent, his mailing address is 7623 Woodville Road, Mount Airy, Maryland 21771. You can also reach him by email at courthouse3@yahoo.com.

*Deltiology, the official name for postcard collecting, is one of the three largest collectible hobbies in the world, along with coin and stamp collecting.*

BY NANCY ZOELLNER



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# PARTNERING FOR GROWTH

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**T**he Jefferson County Sheriff's Office recently formed a strategic partnership with the Rock Township Ambulance District, where both agencies agreed to build a station together. The idea was first conceptualized by Rock Township Chief Jerry Appleton and presented to me in November 2021. I was immediately intrigued by the idea.

From a historical perspective, the sheriff's office implemented its first substation in 1995 in High Ridge Missouri under former Jefferson County Sheriff Oliver "Glenn" Boyer. Sheriff Boyer decentralized command in 2000 and added two more substations in the county that spans 664 square miles. With limited funds at that time, it was necessary for Sheriff Boyer to create partnerships to implement his vision. One such partnership was developed when he partnered with the Windsor School District, which gave the sheriff's office their old administration building on the school campus. The school district paid for most of the maintenance and having the sheriff's office on campus provided a visible presence for more than 20 years. Unfortunately, the sheriff's office outgrew the building.

We were considering several options for a substation that would serve that portion of the county. At the same time, Chief Appleton shared with me that he was preparing to build Station 5 in the Seckman Valley area, which is in Imperial Missouri. We met for lunch to discuss the concept, and later felt we could execute on the vision.

Under the partnership, each organization would share vehicle bays space, a training room, and a gym. On opposite sides of the shared space, each organization would have its own area. Each agency uses their space differently, so it was important for each team to weigh in on what was important to them. During the programming for space phase, FGM Architects used separate colors on the floor plan to illustrate shared space versus private space, which also helped isolate costs for each agency.

## SUBSTATION CONSIDERATIONS

Substations can be a great way to enhance community partnerships and increase patrol visibility. Cost and partnerships always determine what's possible. In Jefferson County for example, the first substation was created by renting office space. When a new strip mall was built in High Ridge, the developer offered cheap store front space to encourage new tenants to sign. That substation in High Ridge has been effective for more than 20 years and was recently renovated.

If you start conceptualizing a substation and let the community know of your intent, you might be surprised at the offers



that develop. We were offered several different spaces over the years, and we executed on a couple of them.

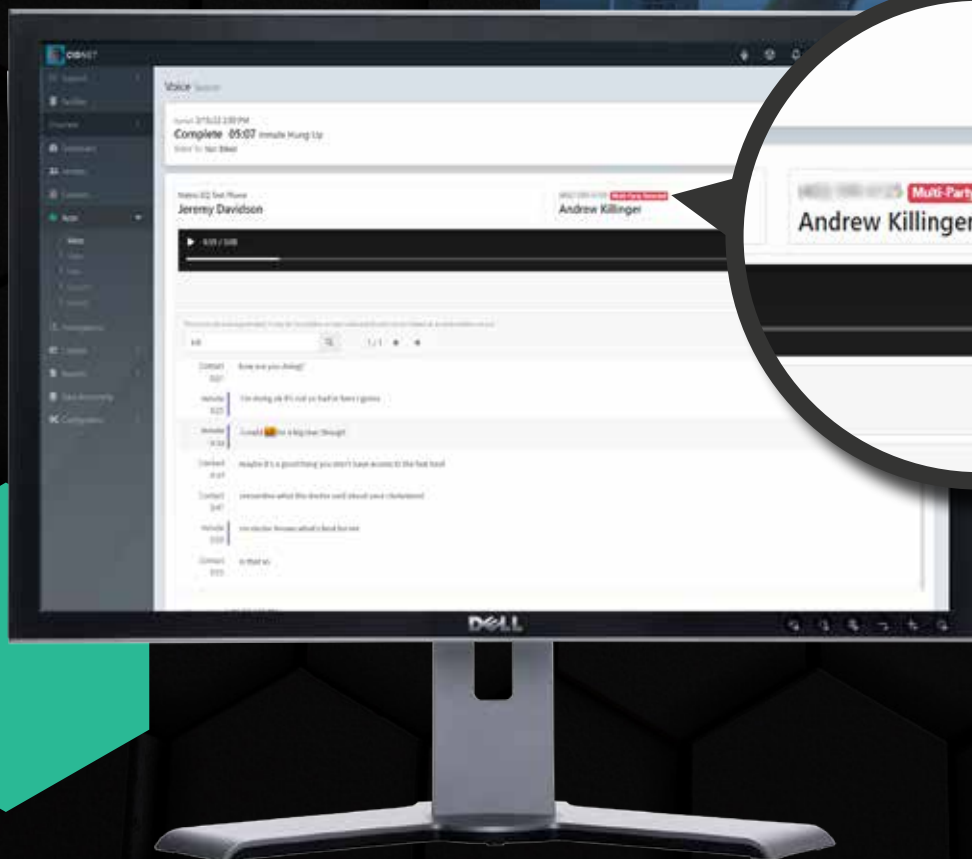
Substations don't look the same for every department and may need to be adjusted in time. We closed a substation on the Jefferson College campus three years ago because it wasn't strategically beneficial to the overall jurisdiction we serve. The college had its own police department for several years and there was no need to duplicate services. In another area of the county, the sheriff's office was offered a generous new space, but it would have drawn away law enforcement resources and assets from an area of the county that needed those. So the decision on where to establish a station should always include consideration of how the space will impact patrol operations.

## FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

The more an agency invests in a substation, the more leadership must consider the life expectancy of the substation. What an agency builds or leases today may change in 5, 10, or 15 years. It's important to have a vision for what you want now and consider how the space might be used for the future.

BY JEFFERSON COUNTY SHERIFF DAVE MARSHAK





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# Drug Court: Providing a Second Chance at Life

**I**t's no secret that illegal drugs have had a detrimental impact on society. According to the Missouri Association of Treatment Court Professionals two-thirds of all adult arrestees and over half of juvenile arrestees test positive for illicit drugs at arrest. Sadly, their numbers also show that up to 80 percent of child abuse and neglect cases and nearly 50 percent of domestic violence cases are substance-abuse related.

Research by the National Institute on Drug Abuse shows that close to two-thirds of those sent to prison with substance abuse problems are still addicted when released — and after their release, they often return to the same people, the same places and the same lifestyles that got them into trouble in the first place.

Drug treatment courts were established to break those patterns — and they're seeing success. Recidivism rates for graduates, who are tracked by the courts, typically range from 11 to 26 percent. In addition to drug courts, the state also

**"Drug court gives them a chance to live a good life rather than possibly ending up behind bars or dying of a drug overdose."**

offers DWI Court and Veterans Court, which are seeing similar successes.

Missouri's first treatment court started in 1993 in Jackson County. Today adult treatment court programs are offered in close to half of Missouri judicial circuits.

Participation in the Drug Treatment Court program, offered in lieu of jail time, is strictly voluntary, and is available to nonviolent offenders who meet certain criteria and who are willing to change their attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors. Treatment court teams are led by judges who are assisted by prosecuting attorneys, defense attorneys, law enforcement officers, probation and parole officers, and treatment providers. Stakeholders — employment counselors, educators, vocational trainers, housing specialists, childcare specialists — can also be asked to participate in the program.

While drug courts must adhere to a long list of standards established by the Missouri Treatment Courts Coordinating Commission, each judicial circuit can tailor the program to best serve its community. Yvonne Mercer, the Treatment Court coordinator for 26th Circuit, said while the program can be life-changing, it definitely isn't a "get out of jail free" card.

"Everyone selected for the program has to complete five phases. The first phase is two months long and then phases 2

through 5 are four months each.

If the participant has trouble meeting goals, it can take a little longer. Each phase is a little different but throughout the program participants are expected to attend court weekly, to comply with random drug testing, to be on time for appointments, and to attend treatment sessions," she said, adding that they also need to participate in support meetings - NA or other groups - and they are required to have regular attendance at a job or do volunteer work at approved non-profit organizations. In Camden County, participants must also perform a total of 240 hours of community service work and they are required to pay a monthly fee of \$100, which covers the drug tests and other costs.

With the help of community stakeholders, participants can get their GED, take vocational training, attend parenting classes, get help finding a job, and some can even get medical and dental services.

"It really does 'take a village' to make a change," said Judge Heather Miller, who was instrumental in establishing Drug Treatment Court in the 26th Circuit. She was on hand for a check presentation to







It was an event worthy of celebration. Sarah Seabolt, Michael Smith and Danny Cox completed Camden County's Treatment Court program and a graduation ceremony was held in their honor.

Camden County as part of the National Opioid Settlement, finalized earlier this year with Johnson & Johnson and three other drug distributors. Judge Miller said the \$125,039.83 would be used to help those participants who couldn't afford the monthly fee.

"This program is not just about staying clean — it's about getting a job and getting job training so that they're productive, they can support their families and themselves, and they become full functioning members of the community. But we all know the economy right now. I've got people working two or three jobs and they still can't make ends meet. It's not that we foot the bill with this money and that it's a free ride for them. It's that when there's a stopgap — when they can't make it work — we're not excluding them from the program," she said. "That's why these funds are so important. It's not a hand-out. It's making sure that every member of our county has access to these services and that they're able to complete these programs."

Mercer said that even with the financial assistance, there are some who can't — or won't — follow the guidelines. They will serve the rest of their sentence in jail.

"Having a sober living house would help. Right now, there's only one place and it's for men and it's always full. Unfortunately, sometimes people have no other choice but to go back to the home or the friend's house where drugs are used," she said.

Those who stay in the program and meet their requirements get points along the way that they can use for things like getting to be the first to go before the judge on court day — or to shop for items that have been donated to the program.

As an added encouragement, children are invited to attend court with their parents. To help participants stay on track, they are required to add a specified tracking app on their phone — and to keep their phone with them at all times. The app will remind them of upcoming appointments — and warn them when they are in a place that's off-limits.

Those who successfully complete the program can ask the judge to terminate their probation "so that's a huge incentive, not to mention the fact that they get clean and sober. Drug court gives them a chance to live a good life rather than possibly ending up behind bars or dying of a drug overdose," Mercer said.

Graduates are invited to take part in the alumni program or act as a sponsor — a support person — for those still in the drug court program. Mercer said some have even chosen to train and get certified so they can work as peer support specialists.

Since Camden County began participating in the project in 2017, 60 people have successfully completed the program. Some have gone on to college or to a career they've always wanted, "and we had two babies born to clean families last summer. That was very special. The participants almost become like a family. They'll root each other on and cheer for each other when they succeed and they'll cry when they slip up. It really hurts their heart when someone can't make it because they know first-hand the life they'll be living. I found a phrase that I think sums things up perfectly. 'Addiction is giving up everything for one thing, Recovery is giving up one thing for everything.'"

BY NANCY ZOELLNER

## FACTS ABOUT DRUG ABUSE

In 2021, Missouri logged **2,163 fatal drug overdoses** — more than 70 percent involved opioids — heroin, fentanyl, methadone, morphine, oxycodone as well as other prescription and non-prescription pain relievers.

Among Missourians aged 18 to 44, **drug overdose is the leading cause of death.**

**Missouri ranked 32<sup>nd</sup>** in the nation for drug overdose death rates in 2020.

**More than 107,000 people in the U.S. died from a drug overdose** in 2021, according to provisional data from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. However, communities are fighting back and in some cases, winning.

During the 2020 reporting period, **4,552 adults participated in Drug Treatment Court** in Missouri

As of December 31, 2020, there were more than **100 treatment court programs operating** — Drug Court, Juvenile Court, Family Court, DWI Court, and Veteran's Treatment Court.

# His Legacy Lives On



CAPT. DAVID DORN

A relatively new nonprofit organization is helping deputies and police officers around the state by supplying them with much-needed equipment.

Founded in 2022, the Captain David Dorn Foundation provides high-quality flashlights, hearing and eye protection, and trauma first aid kits to those working in smaller departments.

The Foundation is named after retired St. Louis Metropolitan Police Captain David Dorn. Capt. Dorn was shot and killed when he tried to stop looters during the civil unrest that followed George Floyd's death in June 2020. However, his wife, Ann Dorn — also a retired officer from the St. Louis Metro



ANN DORN STARTED THE FOUNDATION TO CONTINUE HER HUSBAND'S LEGACY OF TAKING CARE OF HIS BROTHERS AND SISTERS IN LAW ENFORCEMENT.

Police — wanted to keep his legacy alive.

"David was always known for taking care of his officers," she said. "If they needed something, he made sure they had it."

She said the St. Louis Police Foundation often purchased things officers needed but their department didn't provide — items like flashlights and coats. Very few departments enjoy a foundation that buys them things, however. So she and Gary Foster, a former firefighter and paramedic who was a friend of David and Ann Dorn, started the Foundation to assist underfunded agencies.

Ann Dorn quickly points out that the equipment is for the deputies and officers, not the departments.

"We tell the sheriffs and chiefs that when we donate this, we're donating this to the officer," she said. "We're not donating it to the agency. This property belongs to the officer. If they leave, they take it with them."

Right now, the Foundation is providing bags with ear and eye protection to use at the range and a high-quality programmable flashlight that can clip onto vests or duty belts. They also provide first aid kits specific to law enforcement that include tourniquets and seals for sucking chest wounds.

"In some rural areas, you're 45 minutes away from a trauma hospital," Dorn said.

They decided what to put in the kits based on feedback from deputies and officers at small agencies. They've been well-received.

After a deputy at the Saline County Sheriff's Office reached out to them, the Captain David Dorn Foundation deliv-

ered there in December 2022.

"It's always nice to feel recognized for what you do," Saline County Sheriff Cindy Mullins said.

Her agency was due to order some flashlights, so they were able to save the money on that, she said.

The kits were a hit — and the Saline County deputies quickly spread the good news.

"It never fails," Dorn said. "When we were on the way home (from Saline County), we got four phone calls from other agencies wanting the kits."

Madison County Sheriff Katy McCutcheon said the donations were helpful to a department of her size.

"As a sheriff of a third-class county and having a limited budget, it was a blessing to receive such a donation," Sheriff McCutcheon said.

So far, the Foundation has helped more than 700 first responders, from deputies to paramedics to dispatchers. They're looking to expand their impact. One small-town police chief said he couldn't afford to purchase coats for his officers, and others said boots are significant needs that typically come out of the officers' and deputies' pockets.

"If me buying them equipment saves that money for their families, that's what we'll do," Dorn said. "That's what Dave was all about — taking care of his people."

The Captain David Dorn Foundation





DEPUTIES WITH THE MADISON AND SALINE COUNTY SHERIFFS' OFFICES (PICTURED), AS WELL AS THE BOLLINGER AND IRON COUNTY SHERIFFS' OFFICES RECENTLY RECEIVED GEAR BAG DONATIONS FROM THE CAPT. DAVID DORN FOUNDATION.



is funded entirely by private donations. However, they received a significant bump from former Missouri Governor Eric Greitens. When he shut down his Foundation, he gave the assets to the Dorn Foundation. So now the organization does fund-raisers and is seeking donors.

Dorn is the founder and CEO of the Foundation, but she doesn't take a salary.

"Every penny we get goes back to the officers," she said. "I have a pension. Gary (Foster) has a pension. I put my own money into it."

Dorn's generosity has been very appreciated, Sheriff McCutcheon said.

"Ann Dorn is an absolutely amazing person that, even as a retired law enforcement officer herself, still has the dedicated spirit and drive to continue serving first responders in the way her husband would want her to," she said.

If you would like to donate, go to [www.captaindaviddornfoundation.com](http://www.captaindaviddornfoundation.com). There's also contact information there for deputies or officers to request equipment.

BY SARAH BOYD

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# REPAIRING **INVISIBLE WOUNDS**

In his recently released book, "The Calling: Seated at the Table with the Broken," former Carter County Sheriff Richard Stephens Jr. examines the trauma often experienced by law enforcement but seldom addressed.

He said he started the book around the time of the Ferguson unrest.

"I was tired of seeing the lies being told about cops, so I initially hoped to give people a glimpse of what real officers are like — what prompted them to get into law enforcement and how and why they make the decisions they make. I wanted to show the 'human' side of law enforcement. Then it evolved over the years to include officer wellness," Stephens said. "Whether we've been working one year or 30 years, we sometimes don't even realize we need to focus on our mental health because we think the things we see, the traumas we handle, the problems we settle, are 'just part of the job.' So we put our feelings on the back burner, but eventually, they can overflow."

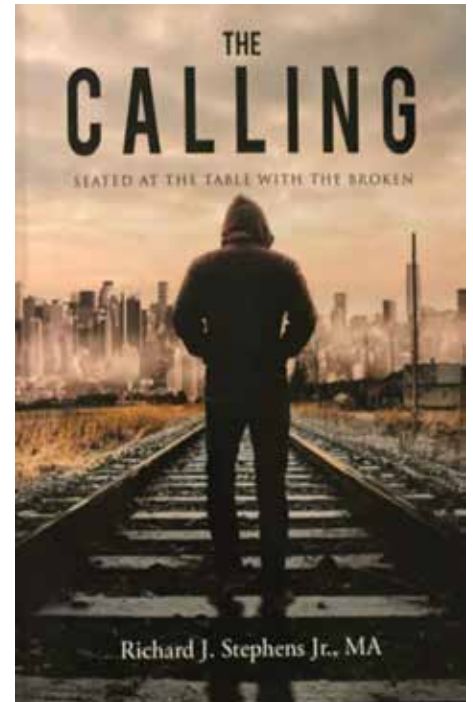
In his book, Stephens talks about some of those feelings — the challenges of responding to domestic violence calls, the heartache and difficulty of knocking on the door to deliver a death notification, the stress of responding to an "officer needs assistance" call and the frustration of not being able to adequately help the families of those impacted by crime. He also wrote about the overwhelming feeling of helplessness, dread, and bewilderment he experienced

as natural disasters unfolded in his county, and then fear and deep concern when one of his deputies was shot.

Stephens said that those experiences taught him that leaders must safeguard their staff and remain vigilant for their wellness. His book outlines how Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) programs can help meet those needs. Originally designed to equip the law enforcement community to handle mental health crises better, CIT now provides a First Responders Provider Network to help first responders find counselors. CIT also presents seminars for first responders to help them deal with the trauma they experience in the line of duty.

"I think a lot of the time, officers are asked to look at the humanity in people, but people forget they are human. I shared some of my experiences to make people understand that. But I also wrote this book to make officers understand there's a need for them to find some positive coping measures. Maybe it's finding someone to talk to — therapy isn't for everybody — or maybe it's peer counseling. I found writing very therapeutic. Writing this book helped me through a lot of the stuff I was dealing with. So, the short answer to why I wrote this book is to give people a glimpse of who their officers are and what they do. But I also hope to make an effect on the officers — to encourage them to find positive coping measures to deal with the things they see every day."

Stephens will have books available at



the Sheriffs' Spring Training Conference, March 14 through 17, at Margaritaville Lake Resort.

Published by Newman Springs Publishing, "The Calling: Seated at the Table with the Broken" is also available in bookstores everywhere or online in paperback, hardback, and Kindle versions at the Apple iBooks Store, Amazon, or Barnes and Noble. For additional information or media inquiries, contact Newman Springs Publishing at 732-243-8512.

BY NANCY ZOELLNER



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# CANNABIS IS LEGAL, NOW WHAT?

**C**onsuming cannabis recreationally is legal. However, it's not legal to drive while impaired by cannabis or any other substance. So what can your agency do to make sure that your community gets effective messaging on the dangers of driving impaired by cannabis? How can you prevent people from getting behind the wheel while high or impaired? What works?

Before I outline effective messaging, here's some research on the dangers of driving while high. Does driving high cause more crashes? One recent comprehensive study from the Journal of Studies on Alcohol and Drugs, July 2022, showed that states with legalized cannabis have a 5.8-percent higher rate of Injury crashes and a 4.1-percent higher rate of fatal crashes. States that did not legalize cannabis had no change.

I recently attended a presentation by a researcher whose compilation of studies showed that if you are driving under the influence of cannabis, you are twice as likely to crash. The studies eliminated the bias from a statistical standpoint.

The presenter had lots of facts, figures, formulas, standard deviations and letters in math problems. She could have just said at the beginning that studies showed you are twice as likely to crash if impaired on cannabis. Some studies also showed combining cannabis and alcohol makes you even more impaired than just cannabis alone.

I have heard that cannabis users drink a beer before they drive to mask their cannabis usage. Untrained officers give them a PBT that shows they are not "drunk" and then tell them they are good to go. Contact me if you need more information on these specific studies.

So... four guys go to a bar, get drunk and start a fight. Four guys go into their basement, get high, and start a rock band. For many, this is their view on getting high. It is not as "bad" as getting drunk. How do you show effective messaging on the dangers of driving while high when the perception of some is that they actually drive better when they are high?

Here is what the research says about effective messaging:

- Campaigns should be factual, rely on research, and be focus-group tested.
- Unexaggerated, straightforward, and truthful education about the consequences of cannabis use and driving is more effective than fear, shame, or humor-based messaging.
- Messengers are most effective when they are trusted, community-based, and not government representatives. The exception is law enforcement officials who are trained to detect impairment by cannabis and other drugs.

A Texas marijuana messaging research study looked at two groups. Group One had no real knowledge of marijuana-impaired driving. This group was highly malleable and receptive to new information. Messages that work for Group One: "Marijuana-impaired driving is dangerous and illegal."

Audience Two consisted of high-risk marijuana-impaired drivers. They absolutely will not believe that marijuana-impaired driving is dangerous. They "know" marijuana improves their driving ability. They feel different, but in their mind, "different" means better at driving. They are highly sensitive to stereotypes involving stupid humor like Cheech and Chong and anything that is extreme, like "Reefer Madness." Messages that work for Group Two: "Police are actively targeting marijuana-impaired driving and have ways of detecting if you are high."

This study is consistent with what they learned in Colorado after cannabis legalization.

So that is all well and good, but you are thinking, "I have no time for focus group studies or market research. What can I do to spread the word that is effective?" Fortunately, if you go to the website [www.trafficsafetymarketing.gov](http://www.trafficsafetymarketing.gov), they have messages that have been focus-group tested for both groups. There are messages for all types of media: print, TV, radio, social media, etc. They even allow you to customize the messages to show they are

specific to your agency. There is no charge. Just download what works for you. It is easy, effective, and quick.

Another good place to find effective messaging is [www.SAVEMOLIVES.com](http://www.SAVEMOLIVES.com). If you visit this website, you will learn that over the last 10 years, drug-impaired-driving fatal crashes have increased 100 percent in Missouri. Research has shown that high visibility enforcement, combined with proper enforcement messaging, changes dangerous driving behaviors. Your community is expecting you to be a subject matter expert and leaders in reducing impaired driving.

I have one more nugget of wisdom from states that have already passed legalized marijuana. If you have a dispensary in your jurisdiction, get to know them. They are a wealth of information about the culture of cannabis use and can be a great help in messaging. The industry does not support driving while high, and they do not want negative community relations. In Colorado, they are placing the dangers of driving while high messaging in dispensaries. These messages are effective because they come from a trusted source.

OK, two nuggets. Send as many of your deputies to the ARIDE (Advanced Roadside Impaired Driving Enforcement) class as you can. This will help them to identify drivers that are impaired on all substances. Also, deputies that are trained as Drug Recognition Experts (DREs) can identify the substance the impaired driver has used and can testify to it in court. Your local MoDOT law enforcement liaison or the Missouri Safety Center can assist you in finding these classes in your area.

One of my favorite sayings is, "It is what it is." In this case, legal cannabis is in Missouri. Law enforcement has to deal with it, like it or not. One thing I know about law enforcement everywhere is that we adapt and handle any situation. We will do the same with legalized cannabis. Be safe!

BY WILLIAM SULLIVAN, LAW  
ENFORCEMENT LIAISON, REGION 7  
ENFORCEMENT AND SAFETY SERVICES  
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# FIRST RESPONDER PROVIDER NETWORK



The MO CIT Council is a network of representatives from each established local CIT council across the state, Community Behavioral Health Liaisons (CBHLs), state agencies and associations, and those with lived experience. The MO CIT Council provides direction and support on the CIT curriculum, training expansion, and implementation of the program.

## FRPN

The MO CIT Council has identified a list of trained behavioral health professionals who specialize in helping first responders who are struggling with depression, anxiety, relationships, post-traumatic stress symptoms and more. The providers on this network understand our unique professional culture and are trusted and vetted by first responders.

A list of these providers can be found at:  
[www.missouricit.org/first-responders](http://www.missouricit.org/first-responders)



*The FRPN is considered a self-referral source.*

## WELLNESS APP

The MO CIT Council has made available a free, confidential and anonymous wellness app for all current and retired law enforcement and their significant other, which includes self assessments, a wellness toolkit, and a therapist finder.



“Before EMDR, I was on the brink of losing my wife, my kids, my job, and even the will to live. Your sessions changed my life. My marriage is healing, and I don’t have the symptoms I used to. I have hope again.”

“I didn’t know what it was like to not feel anxious. I lived with it all my life and now I am even going to social events again.”

“I’m actually sleeping at night. I can’t remember the last time I’ve slept all the way through the night.”



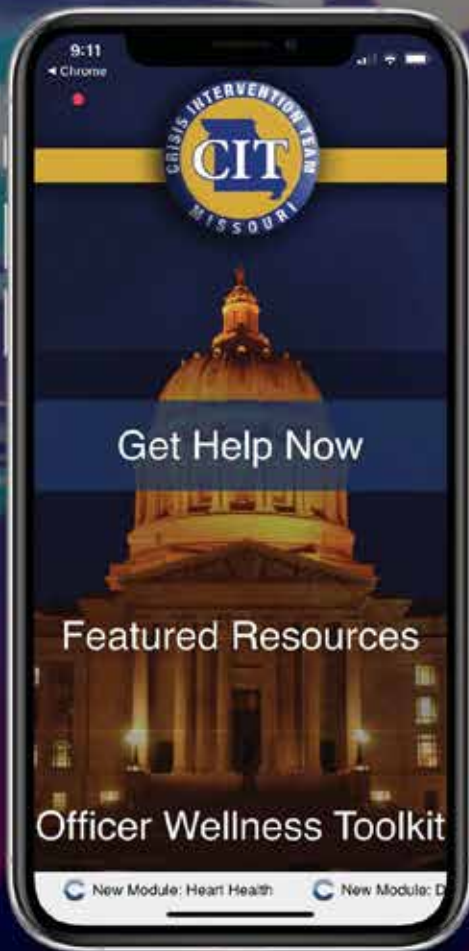
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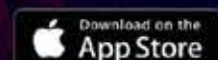
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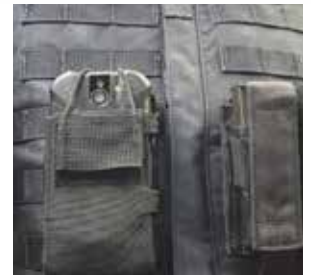
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