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ABOUT THE MSA

Jail Administrator Committee

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Lieutenant Eric Foree — Montgomery County
Captain David Hannon — Miller County
Eric Schleuter — Warren County
Captain Chris Wolfe — Jackson County



We Have Lots of News to Share!



“As always, if you have ideas for stories or suggestions, please email me at jeanne@mosheriffs.com. I'd love to get your feedback.”

We just wrapped up our 13th annual Jail Administrator Conference at Margaritaville at Lake of the Ozarks. I am always so excited when this conference takes place. Jail administrators and some of their staff from all over our state attended. The training was excellent, and their participation is amazing. This year we also had nine sheriffs present. The support they give their jail administrators and staff to attend not only the conference but other training throughout the year is rewarding. When you read this issue, you'll find a story about the conference and several pictures. If you see your county's jail administrator, thank him or her for a job well done.

At this year's conference we were honored to recognize four individuals who are dedicated to their jobs, their agencies, and other staff.

Jail Administrator Sgt. Kevin Coates took home the Jail Administrator of the Year award. Thank you, Sheriff Shinn, for the great letter regarding Sgt. Coates' accomplishments. Sgt. Coates also serves on our Jail Administrator Committee. Jail Officer of the Year went to Officer Amber Esarey for her outstanding performance while working in the jail and other areas for Johnson County. The Achievement of Excellence award went to two individuals. Dave Hannon, jail administrator for Miller County, and Skyler Viebrock, jail administrator for Pettis County, have continued to provide their agencies with outstanding leadership and training. Both of these men not only take care of their responsibilities in the jail, but they travel throughout the state providing training to other jails and do a fantastic job. Thank you to each award recipient.

I enjoyed reading the articles included in this issue. The story about Phelps County and the changes being made there is interesting. The historical piece about Cass County's old jail becoming a retail center is also a good read. The vendor profile helps jail administrators who are looking for an easier way to run their jails — and it's great to see how many jails will benefit from the grant money provided by Governor Parson.

Each issue just gets better and better. I hope you enjoy this issue as much as I do. As always, if you have ideas for stories or suggestions, please email me at jeanne@mosheriffs.com. I'd love to get your feedback.

Jeanne Merritt

*Marketing Director
Jail Training Coordinator
Missouri Sheriffs' Association
Missouri Sheriffs United*

NOTEWORTHY



MEETING AND OVERCOMING CHALLENGES

From February 11 to 16, Corporal Lori Ellsworth served as shift supervisor for Platoon A. St. Charles County Department of Corrections Director Daniel Keen said that during that time, she had the cameras and phones go out on Super Bowl Sunday and had to lock the facility down. She also had a hospital post to staff, multiple hospital runs, and encountered a mass refusal to lockdown. “Corporal Ellsworth also took the lead on restructuring the laundry system for SCCDOC and made other great changes, with the assistance of CO Linda Jones and CO Tracy Leslie,” Director Keen said. “Corporal Ellsworth took on all these challenges and found solutions for them. Her leadership, dedication, and work ethic have reflected well upon herself, SCCDOC and St. Charles County.” She was presented with a Certificate of Appreciation by Director Keen.



KEEPING UP THE GOOD WORK

Morgan County Adult Detention Center Captain Dave Salzman issued training certificates to staff that completed the following training programs: 40-hour basic corrections, glove training, and OC training. Also pictured is Officer Tristan Christiansen (left), who is receiving a Commitment to Excellence award, and Wendy Gray (right), who is receiving her corporal promotion certificate.



KEEPING OUR FOUR-LEGGED HEROES SAFE

Protecting K9 Heroes recently donated a Canine Trauma Kit to Sgt. Matter for K9 Ammo, who work together as a team in the Johnson County Detention Center. The kit includes essential medical supplies, including Narcan, that can be utilized in the event of a medical emergency with Protecting K9 Ammo.

Heroes recognize the budgetary constraints of agencies and works to supplement the ability to properly protect the valuable assets that are the working K9s throughout the United States. Protecting K9 Heroes provides Ballistic Vests, Medical Kits, NARCAN, and other protective gear to many working K9s. Their direct and indirect efforts strive to reach the goal of 0% of the in service K9s being killed or gravely injured in the line of duty. They continue to recognize and respect the working K9s and the critical role they play in all aspects of law enforcement. Visit protectingk9heroes.com for more information or to donate.

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NOTEWORTHY



DOUGLAS COUNTY GIVES CHANCE TO SUCCEED

The Douglas County Sheriff's Office recently implemented two programs in their jail to assist offenders who choose to participate — at no cost to the budget. The AEL HiSET Program (formerly known as GED) is spearheaded by sheriff's office Clerk Stephanie Dering, who holds a bachelor's degree from Drury University and who applied to teach the AEL HiSET Program through Missouri State University. MSU has provided this program through a grant. Dering holds classes a couple of nights a week and on weekends in the jail. She held her first testing in April with six students who tested very well, according to Sheriff Chris Degase, who said he's happy that they could start the program to help offenders get their High School Equivalency certificate.

The sheriff's office also partnered with Care Center Ministries, a one-year, faith-based discipleship program focused on freeing men and women from life-controlling issues. In addition, they operate successful men's and women's rehabilitation programs that focus on healing and restoration. Blake Atchison and the Care Center Ministries staff come to the jail every Tuesday to provide services.

Sheriff Degase said he's hopeful that by providing these two resources, they will be able to help offenders get headed in the right direction. "I have always felt that our job was more than just arresting people and that we needed to give them every chance possible to succeed if they choose to," he said.



NEW GRAD

Dr. Ozundu Ugboja (center), with the Jackson County Detention Center, graduated in May from AJA's Jail Executive Institute. Congratulations!



WELCOME ABOARD!

Ronnie Morrow (center) is the son of Dan and Laura Morrow and is a third-year student in the Lake Career and Technical Center (LCTC) Law Enforcement Program offered through the Camdenton R-III School District. He has already secured a position with the Camden County Sheriff's Office and plans to become a corrections officer. In his time at LCTC, Ronnie has earned certifications through the Missouri Peace Officers Association. He said he is looking forward to starting his career in law enforcement.



RIISING STARS IN CORRECTIONS

These are just some of the latest recipients of the Rising Star Awards at the Jackson County Sheriff's Office Detention Center during Corrections Employees Week 2023. Pictured left to right:

- Supervisor of the Year (non-uniform), CCW Supervisor Ekechukwu Nwakolam
- Excellent Service Award, Recreation Coordinator Osagie Omorogieva
- Rising Star (non-uniform), Payroll Specialist Karen Crockett
- Director's MVP Award, Safety and Security Administrator Matthew Lewis
- Detention Supervisor of the Year, Lieutenant Aliu Bashiru
- Manager of the Year, Criminal Records Manager Pamela O'Riley
- Director's MVP Award, Technology Specialist Seth Helmuth
- Unmatched Dedication, Criminal Records Supervisor William Ngenza



LaQuanda Littleton



Linda Jones



McKevin Davis

SCCDOC EMPLOYEES OF THE MONTH

In February, Case Worker Melissa Hastings was doubly recognized by St. Charles County Department of Corrections Director Daniel Keen. He said Hastings was chosen as Employee of the Month because she is “hardworking and professional. She is dependable, consistent, and a team player. Melissa pays attention to detail and is thorough in her job duties, and she is calm, knowledgeable, and takes pride in her job performance.”

Hastings was also presented with a Certificate of Appreciation for actions taken on February 15 when she observed emails from an inmate in Unit F giving directions to a female laundry worker in Unit L to pass contraband to another inmate. “On several occasions, Ms. Hastings has intercepted information via emails, mail, or phone that has helped security stop trafficking at SCCDOC. Her dedication, attention to detail, and concern for safety has helped make SCCDOC a safer place. Her actions reflect well upon herself, SCCDOC, and St. Charles County. We appreciate you,” Director Keen said.

CPO LaQuanda Littleton was chosen as the March SCCDOC Employee of the Month. Director Keen said she is positive, hardworking, dependable, consistent, and a team player. “CPO Littleton works tremendous hours of overtime to assist with the department and maintains great work performance. She has an admirable work ethic and supports her co-workers. We appreciate her dedication and service and a job well done,” he said.

Officer Linda Jones, named SCCDOC Employee of the Month for April, is “dedicated to the mission and vision of the SCCDOC.” Director Keen said she takes pride in her work and is motivated



Melissa Hastings

to go above and beyond to complete tasks. “Officer Jones is a team player, and she strives to increase positive morale. She is professional, a problem solver, and accountable for her work performance. I appreciate her commitment,” he said.

McKevin Davis was selected by his peers as the SCCDOC Corrections Officer of the Year.

“Your hard work, positive attitude, and professionalism do not go unnoticed,” Director Keen said. “You exemplify our core values in your work ethic. You are deserving of this award and we appreciate what you bring to our work family. Congratulations.”

PHELPS COUNTY JAIL

SHERIFF PUTS HIS PLAN INTO ACTION



Phelps County Sheriff Michael Kirn is a man with a vision, a plan, and a way to fund them both.

Like other counties around Missouri, Phelps is running out of jail space. Fast. It's become a common theme in county jail construction that after a couple of decades, advances in technology, growing populations, and the latest crime-inducing drug craze — and associated spin-off crimes — make the “new” jail out of date.

Phelps County is no different. As the calendar pages have turned over, the cells have filled up, the problems have changed and the time has come to look toward the next two decades of jail-space need. The current jail and the “old” jail annex, which was remodeled in 2019 to create more space, have a combined capacity of 196 — and see an average daily population of 220. The new jail will house 350 and will come with all the modern innovation that can be jammed into 17,000 square feet.

What's different in Phelps County is that there has been no push for a tax increase to meet that need. The annex reno-

vation and the new \$17 million expansion are being paid for by the sheriff's office, not the taxpayers. The Phelps County model is to pay for law enforcement facilities with tools already in the sheriff's tool kit — incarceration and interdiction.

Obviously, the purpose of jail is to hold those who have been charged with breaking the law. In Phelps County, Sheriff Kirn, who is in his first term of office, is carrying on a long-standing department policy of holding federal prisoners and banking the per diem paid by the government for that service. Housing these federal detainees allows the sheriff to maintain sufficient jail space for local offenders at far less cost to the taxpayers. There hasn't been a tax increase in Phelps County for 16 years, and Sheriff Kirn plans to do his part to see that trend continue.

“I started out with this sheriff's office 22 years ago,” Sheriff Kirn says. “We had a little jail and 16 employees. Now we have over 100. I'm preparing for what comes next — and I've had 20 years to think about what I would do.”

And now he is doing it.

Interstate 44 roars through Phelps County, carrying thousands of travelers, thousands of trucks, and millions of dollars' worth of illegal drugs. Those drugs are not going to get through Phelps County only to be other people's problems if Sheriff Kirn can help it. Phelps County maintains a local Drug Task Force that looks for people running drugs back into the county from St. Louis. At the same time, he has an interdiction deputy focused on keeping drug shipments from going elsewhere. The interdiction effort has a fiscal component — the county gets a share of confiscated cash that goes right back into the budget. “And we have top-notch interdiction,” the sheriff added.

Federal prisoners and a serious approach to drug interdiction require serious commitment. Sheriff Kirn is a serious guy. He's a Marine who wanted a career in law enforcement. He started out as a patrolman in St. Louis, joined the Phelps County Sheriff's Office in 2000 and worked his way up through the ranks. In 2021 his hard work was recognized by voters who elected him sheriff. Just in case he might have a free minute, he is also the county Emergency Management Director





— a full-time job most places.

What does all this extra effort by the sheriff and his people fund? Lots of bells and whistles in the new jail. Instead of the current dorm-style pods, the new facility will have two-pod units, which is a safety and security upgrade. The new jail will also include an expanded kitchen, laundry, and first-rate medical facility with staff nurses, four beds and six isolation cells to allow for circumstances like COVID-19. The new jail will also include a remote door-locking system and additional office space for law enforcement.

The sheriff has planned a separate holding area for those on work-release. It will keep them out of the general population and focused on getting themselves lined out and back into the taxpaying public. With space for 12 offenders, the unit is a commitment to opening the door to better days for those who are trying. It also eliminates one more portal for contraband.

As with any new facility in the 21st century, upgrades to technology will be a big part of the jail. Video surveillance will be multiplied with “lots of cameras,” Sheriff Kirn says, and all the current technology in the jail will be brought up to “right now” standards.

A piece of old tech that will be greatly improved is the sally port — one of the things the sheriff says he is really excited about. The current sally port driveway forces vehicles to back onto a busy street. The new drive-through version with holding cells immediately accessible will make



intake safer and easier.

The new jail will be built in a county that is growing and, according to Sheriff Kirn, seeing an uptick in violent crime. In just the last two years they’ve handled 11 homicides in the county, drugs are ever-present, and they’re experiencing a growing problem with drug-related homelessness. As a result, Sheriff Kirn and his 43 deputies spend their days keeping order in the county of 50,000, and in the process, keeping the jail full.

Another problem Sheriff Kirn and all Missouri sheriffs face is the high percentage of detainees with mental health issues and drug addiction. A recent survey showed 53 of 200 Phelps County detainees were on psychiatric medication. In published reports, Sheriff Kirn has said that detainees with those problems have “overwhelmed our abilities at the jail.”

With just four isolation cells in the current facility, the sheriff is planning for 12 in the new expansion with the possibility of eventually adding three more. However, Sheriff Kirn is looking to future improvements that could turn the old jail annex into a separate 40-bed facility for detainees with mental health issues, creating an environment where they could be offered appropriate services.

As he says, Sheriff Kirn has had 20 years to think about the best way to handle Phelps County’s incarceration challenges. Now, as the man at the top, he is finally getting to turn those thoughts into realities that will benefit his office and his community today and give future sheriffs a running start.

BY MICHAEL FEEDBACK



BEING PROACTIVE, SAFE AND NOT SORRY

As county jails get crowded and the number of detainees with drug addictions multiply, sheriffs are being faced with the challenge of keeping contraband out of facilities that are, in many cases, understaffed, overcrowded, and equipped with old technology.

Phelps County is no different. In recent years they were experiencing a growing problem with contraband getting into the jail, adding to the challenges already faced every day by the sheriff and jail administrator. A wave of drug-related incidents among detainees led to direct action by those with the responsibility for safety and security.

What sheriffs often say of detainee escape efforts — that they have “24 hours a day to think up ways to get out,” holds true for getting drugs into a jail as well. It’s a deadly game for county law enforcement trying to stay one step ahead.

In Phelps County the good guys jumped ahead.

Jail Administrator Lt. Joe Taylor said the continued overdosing in the pods led to an investigation that discovered a couple of sources. Incoming mail was one. The mail was being soaked in fentanyl and K-2 by senders; detainees were buying pieces of the recipients’ postcards that had been laced with the drug, eating them, and dropping.

Jail staff trained in CPR and administering Narcan saved several lives in the jail. Narcan brought back the victims — including two officers who were handling the mail — but did not solve the problem. A closed mail system did.

All detainee mail is now scanned in, front and back, and detainees can view their mail electronically on tablets or on the kiosk. The hard copy is placed with their personal property that they get when they leave the jail. Known tampered mail is dropped in a sealed box for safe keeping until it can be properly disposed of.

But that didn’t take care of the entire problem. Arrestees were smuggling fentanyl capsules into the jail by hiding them inside body cavities, so the county spent \$160,000 on a body scanner, similar to those used in airports. They show anomalies. Lt. Taylor said new arrivals at the jail are scanned and if anything looks “hinky,” the person is put in a holding cell for a time and scanned again.

The sheriff and jail administrator breathed a sigh of relief — a little too soon — because even after taking those steps, they again had overdoses.

Detainees had been allowed to receive new, unopened packages of underwear and t-shirts — whites — that were brought in by family or friends. It turned

out that those on the outside had figured out how to invisibly reveal the packages after they had removed the contents and sprayed or soaked them with drugs. Once again, policy was changed. All whites must now be purchased through the commissary.

Lt. Taylor said all food and other products come sealed directly from the supplier so they are hopeful that they won’t have any further incidents of drug overdoses. In the meantime, Sheriff Kirn and Lt. Taylor are working every day to secure the jail and stay ahead of the next scheme devised by detainees.

Lt. Taylor says while some of the extra steps can be time consuming, it is all part of living up to the responsibility that comes with the job, adding, “What everyone needs to remember is that we’re trying to save lives, not infringe on people’s rights.”

BY MICHAEL FEEBACK

HE CLIMBED THE LADDER TO SUCCESS



Lieutenant Joe Taylor is, by his own account, a guy who walked in off the street and took a job as low man on the totem pole at the Phelps County Jail.

Two decades later he is the jail administrator, having, through very hard work, made his way to the top.

Lt. Taylor's connection to law enforcement dates to his childhood. His father came home from the Navy and joined the mounted police in Washington D.C. — a role bound to catch the eye of any American kid. His family eventually moved to Fernandina Beach, Florida where his dad worked as a police officer, and later to St. Mary's, Georgia where he was police chief.

In the 1990s he was living in Jacksonville, Florida working as a paper maker in that state's strong papermill industry. While taking a vacation to visit family in the Ozarks, he took a look around at the urban environment of a booming state and decided his two young boys would be better off in the woods. He moved his family to Dent County and began to make a life for them. In 2004, he went to work at the jail and began his rise.

Being a corrections officer is not for everybody, Lt. Taylor says, but it has been a suitable fit for him. He came on board working the night shift in the jail, adding that it was "all new and all pretty exciting."

After a while he switched to days. Phelps County jailers work 12-hour shifts, two on, two off, with alternating three-day weekends — not a schedule that everyone can make work but Lt. Taylor thrived and decided if he was going to do the job, he was going to do it right and build a career.

He gained rank to corporal early on and was promoted to sergeant soon after. He had spent 15 years in the jail, the last 12 years as a sergeant, when in October of 2019 he was promoted to lieutenant and made jail administrator. It was the end of the rainbow for a man who had spent years doing the job correctly and conscientiously. "I feel fortunate to have come in off the street and climbed the ladder," Lt. Taylor says. "I have some satisfaction over that."

He says that a tough job was made easier with the help of the good people on his staff and changes the sheriff made — including coming up with a 15-percent pay increase. The sheriff also plans to sponsor one to two corrections officers to attend the law enforcement academy each year, which he feels will have the effect of drawing good job candidates and setting them on a positive career path.

Lt. Taylor has not let his career keep him from enjoying the area where he chose to bring his family. He hunts and fishes in some of the best places the state has to offer. He was out in the woods this spring, turkey hunting with his 10-year-old granddaughter — one of eight grandkids. Nothing he had to say about his accomplishments at the jail were said with anything close to the pride in his voice telling the story of his granddaughter using her 20 gauge to bag her first turkey.

BY MICHAEL FEEBACK

Lt. Taylor's connection to law enforcement dates to his childhood. His father came home from the Navy and joined the mounted police in Washington D.C. — a role bound to catch the eye of any American kid.



JAIL-THEMED *Hospitality* ON CASS HORIZON

Don't tear down that old jail — sell it to someone with an idea.

That's the message coming out of Cass County where the jail built in downtown Harrisonville and abandoned for two decades is on its way to becoming a retail center and boutique Airbnb.

"Boutique" lodging facilities offer a "unique" guest experience, such as guest rooms that provide personal touches or distinctive amenities. Spending the night in a facility that for 40 years housed those who failed to color inside the social lines, certainly seems to fit that description.

While the idea of turning a jail into an interesting part of downtown is not new, the project underway on the edge of the Kansas City metro area is drawing a lot of attention.

The investor says he can see a lot of options for the property, listed at \$195,000 but sold at auction for an unknown price. Located on a secure half-acre lot with 10,000 square feet total and more than 5,000 square feet of former office space, there is plenty of room for big ideas. The 34 cells are equipped with sinks and toilets leading Zillow to speculate on its use as a pet resort or escape room experience.

Although Cass County will be losing some storage space, the county seat will be gaining another piece in the ongoing renovation project focused on the courthouse square.

Those who own property or run businesses on the square were faced with what they perceived as a significant danger to their investments when it was learned that one of the bidders for the old jail had plans to turn it into a private penal facility. In the end a move by a group of business people to pool their money and buy the building proved moot when another investor with non-jail visions had the highest bid.

For years buildings lining the square were in a state of decline. The brick structures are a reminder of the time when this town so close to the Kansas line was part of the Burned Over District as Missouri bushwhackers and Kansas Red Legs looted back and forth.

More than a century later, Dale Dunmire, former bank robber turned eccentric millionaire, at one time owned a number of the historic brick structures on the square but never really did much with them. Since his passing, buildings on the square have become home to restaurants, shops, and an attorney with ground floor offices and upstairs loft, all of which have provided a

new life for an old town. While Dunmire may not have attracted new businesses, business people on the square credit him with stabilizing structures that might well have been lost to a wrecking ball.

The old jail was the backdrop for a recent movie. Lee's Summit-based filmmaker Dylan Weiter shot "Confinement" there. The film focuses on the issues surrounding solitary confinement and can be seen on Amazon. He

was captivated by the graffiti left by the non-film stars who passed through. As with the experience of people who honeymoon in the renovated cells of the old Dallas County Jail turned B&B, it's far from an ordinary night in jail when the doors don't lock.

BY MICHAEL FEEDBACK



Missouri Sheriffs' Association Promotional Items



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MANY JAILS TO GET **UPGRADES**

On December 1, 2022, Governor Mike Parson announced in a press release that up to \$10 million in grant funding would be made available for maintenance and improvements to jails across the state “to ensure facilities are safe and secure for inmates, staff, and the citizens of Missouri.” Eligible grant expenditures included equipment, supplies, and contractual expenses to support county jail maintenance and improvements.

Missouri’s sheriffs jumped at the chance to get much-needed help, and their hard work paid off. Forty-two grants, ranging from \$8,147 up to \$1.8 million, were approved.

“As a former sheriff, I know how important it is for Missouri jails to have adequate security systems and updated equipment to help provide safety for deputies, jail personnel, and the communities they serve,” Governor Parson stated in his letter to agencies. “These grants are an investment in jail infrastructure that will help provide better safety and working conditions in our jails across the state.”

The grant funding opportunity has a fancy title: American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds (SLFRF) County Jail Maintenance & Improvements (CJMI) or ARPA SLFRF CJMI for short.

Sheriffs had 30 days to submit their proposals, and the grants required a local match of 50 percent. For example, if the total cost of a project was \$100,000, the



Cape Girardeau County Jail's water management system is badly in need of repair and upgrading.



Platte County will use the grant funds to renovate and upgrade the jail's current visitation room into a more productive multi-use area.

applicant had to be able to come up with \$50,000, and the grant would provide the other \$50,000. Adding a degree of difficulty for sheriffs operating on already tight budgets, the work had to be completed before sheriffs could seek reimbursement through the Missouri Department of Public Safety (DPS), which is facilitating the grant. Local ARPA funds may be utilized to match ARPA SLFRF CJMI funds.

According to Mike O’Connell, communications director for the DPS, grant sub-recipients have until June 30, 2026, to complete their projects.

“They are required to complete status reports on their projects twice a year. These reports and regular contact with the sub-recipient allow the grants team to track and monitor progress. Any funding left at the end of their grant performance period would be returned to the DPS,” O’Connell said.

Additional requirements also included the applicant agency to be compliant with statutes on Vehicle Stops Reports, Written Policy on Recording of Custodial Interrogations, Written Policy on Forwarding Intoxication-Related Traffic Offenses, Police Use of Force Transparency Act of 2021, National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS) and Rap Back Program Participation. And finally, applicants were required to submit a budget, an audit or financial statement, a Federal Fund Schedule (if not included in the audit), quotes for the project, and supporting documentation and it all had to be submitted online through the DPS WebGrants System.

Even with all those hoops to jump through, 48 grant requests were submitted by sheriffs. O’Connell said that because they were limited to \$10 million, safety and security projects were prioritized by a panel of “subject matter experts” selected by the DPS, Office of the Director. After reviewing and scoring the applications, the panel approved 42 totaling more than \$8.8 million that sheriffs’ offices had submitted. Another \$1.1 million was awarded to the St. Louis City Department of Public Safety. Requests from six counties and one emergency management agency were not approved.

We’ve included brief descriptions on how a few sheriffs plan to spend the money.

BY NANCY ZOELLNER

THE GRANTS AND WHERE THE MONEY IS GOING

Andrew County Sheriff's Office **\$149,000.00**

Andrew County will purchase a whole-body scanner that detects threats concealed under clothing and inside body cavities.

Buchanan County Sheriff's Office **\$582,150.50**

Buchanan County will use the grant money to complete three projects. They will place intercoms in each cell for emergency communications with inmates while they are in their cells, replace the camera system in the jail and add more cameras to cover blind spots, as well as add correctional fencing barriers to the upper mezzanine housing areas of the dayrooms and down the dayroom stairs leading to the ground floor housing area.

Cape Girardeau County Sheriff's Office **\$128,114.50**

Cape Girardeau County will upgrade the jail cell doors from sliding to hinged doors. Inmates are placing objects in the sliding mechanism, which keeps the doors from securing correctly and allows inmates to get out of their cells.

Christian County Sheriff's Office **\$589,724.03**

Christian County will repair and replace jail cell doors and locks, upgrade the video camera system, and replace a faulty plumbing system.

Clay County Sheriff's Office **\$58,805.50**

Clay County will retrofit approximately 70 cell doors with pass-thru access for passing food and other items into and out of the cells without requiring the cell door to be opened.

Cooper County Sheriff's Office **\$371,279.50**

Cooper County is replacing a leaking roof and a failing HVAC system.

Grundy County Sheriff's Office **\$120,000.00**

Grundy County will use the money to upgrade from an analog to digital camera system providing clearer pictures, upgrade the server that stores the digital video information and replace intercom speakers to get a clearer

sound when communicating with inmates while they are in their cells.

Lawrence County Sheriff's Office **\$75,406.33**

Lawrence County will purchase a whole-body scanner, a pharmaceutical refrigerator for the safe storage of a variety of fluids and substances, including medications, as well as to purchase a portable AED unit with cabinet and vital signs monitor.

Nodaway County Sheriff's Office **\$291,008.50**

Nodaway County will use the funding for a fire alarm and sprinkler retrofit, an HVAC system replacement, commercial laundry upgrade, to retrofit jail frames and doors, and install an integrated control system.

Platte County Sheriff's Office **\$233,879.38**

Platte County will renovate and upgrade the jail's current visitation room into a more productive multi-use area for Webex court proceedings and attorney/client meetings and create an updated video visitation area for inmates and outside guests.

Polk County Sheriff's Office **\$40,602.00**

Polk County is adding a new security fence and automatic gate around the jail parking lot to allow them to load and unload inmates in a more secure environment and help keep the public out of restricted areas. They are also insulating the jail with spray foam and installing new doors in the jail to replace missing or damaged ones.

Saline County Sheriff's Office **\$1,838,339.51**

Saline County is replacing the HVAC system and plumbing along with upgrading lighting, flooring, and painting.

Shannon County Sheriff's Office **\$400,542.62**

Shannon County will add a medical exam room, a new addition to increase capacity to 36 beds, replace aging cell door and locks, as well as renovate the kitchen and laundry areas. They will also install new plumbing and an all-new sewer system.

GRANTS WERE ALSO APPROVED FOR THE FOLLOWING SHERIFF'S OFFICES

Callaway County \$21,686.50

Cedar County \$60,914.57

Clinton County \$8,147.00

Cole County \$25,585.50

Dunklin County \$34,302.88

Franklin County \$39,579.00

Greene County \$470,562.29

Henry County \$19,449.24

Holt County \$138,779.81

Iron County \$1 million

Jackson County \$161,465.43

Jasper County \$114,930.50

Jefferson County \$31,582.00

Johnson County \$119,500.00

Lafayette County \$129,817.42

Lewis County \$16,473.50

Lincoln County \$95,750.00

Madison County \$10,820.15

Marion County \$44,947.50

Miller County \$349,432.60

Oregon County \$126,250.00

Perry County \$44,022.22

Schuyler County \$26,923.12

Ste. Genevieve County
\$183,150.00

Stone County \$83,773.22

Texas County \$191,181.50

Vernon County \$124,487.50

Warren County \$310,000.00

Wayne County \$87,256.58

BEST OF THE BEST GET RECOGNIZED

Working in a jail can be difficult.

Jail staff oversee people who don't like where they are, and, for the most part, don't like the people who are keeping them there. As a result, those staff members often times take a lot of verbal abuse.

Some can't imagine how anyone could even consider working in a jail. Others can't imagine doing anything else. Four members of that latter group were recognized at the 13th Annual Jail Administrators Conference in May.

JAIL ADMINISTRATOR OF THE YEAR

Jail Administrator of the Year went to Sergeant Kevin Coates with the Marion County Sheriff's Office.

Sheriff Jimmy Shinn wrote a lengthy letter to nominate Sgt. Coates, who has been employed with the MCSO since August of 2005, serving in a variety of positions. However, according to the sheriff, his most valuable contributions have been performed as jail administrator, a position he's held for more than nine years. The sheriff wrote that since accepting this role, Sgt. Coates has done a complete overhaul of jail policy and procedures for staff along with rules and regulations for detainees, and he has taken the lead role reviewing policy and case law concerning their jail, as well as courts across our country. Sheriff Shinn wrote that because of Sgt. Coates' knowledge, other law enforcement agencies regularly reach out to him for advice or assistance — and he is always willing to help.

The sheriff said Sgt. Coates sits on the Missouri Sheriffs' Association Jail Committee and he teaches classes for the MSA, he is a married, family man, and an excellent public servant, "but more importantly, Sgt. Coates is a man of God. He is heavily involved in ministry activities in Missouri and Illinois, assisting

churches that are absent a minister. Sgt. Coates has been on several mission trips to El Salvador and Haiti. I am privileged to have Sgt. Coates as our jail administrator and I am thankful that he spreads his spiritual attitude and words to our community."

JAIL OFFICER OF THE YEAR

Jail Officer of the Year went to Amber Esarey with the Johnson County Sheriff's Office.

Lt. Jason Shackles, jail administrator for Johnson County, nominated her for the award, describing her as "a great find for our facility." He wrote, "Officer Esarey has taken on this career path with everything she has and is excelling at every opportunity that she is faced with. Officer Esarey applied to our agency with no previous law enforcement experience, but what she did have was a passion for wanting to do something that made a difference and, at the same time, helped others in her path."

Lt. Shackles wrote that her willingness to help out with anything around the office made her stand out. "Officer Esarey has been one of the bright spots in our jail since the first day she started with us. She has been nothing but a continual joy to work with and has done a wonderful job of figuring out the inmate management world. The way she carries herself and goes about her job you would think she is a seasoned officer on the floor. We would be very lucky to have her continue to be part of our agency and to help her grow as far as she would like."

ACHIEVEMENT OF EXCELLENCE AWARDS

The Achievement of Excellence Award was handed out to two people:

Captain Skyler Viebrock with the Pettis County Sheriff's Office and Captain Dave Hannon with the Miller County



After the presentation, Marion County Sheriff Jimmy Shinn; Sgt Kevin Coates, who was named Jail Administrator of the Year, and his wife Melissa; Capt. Lisa Jones and Assistant Jail Administrator Barb Brown were all happy to pose for a picture.



On hand for the ceremony were (front row, left to right) Dawn Morris, Amber Esarey, who was named Jail Officer of the Year; Esarey's grandparents) Jim and Diane Brack; and (second row, left to right) Sheriff Scott Munsterman; Lt. Jason Shackles; and Captain Mike Hanes.



Capt. Skyler Viebrock's mom, Fern Viebrock; his girlfriend RaShelle Ryon; and Lori Whittle, Ryon's mom, attended the luncheon to see him get his award.



(Left to right) Sheriff Louie Gregoire, Deputy Ray Hannon, her husband Capt. Dave Hannon, who was presented with the Achievement of Excellence Award, and Chief Deputy Michael Rayhart posed for a photo after the luncheon.

Sheriff's Office.

Pettis County Sheriff Brad Anders had high praise for Capt. Viebrock, who joined the sheriff's office in October of 2021. "Since that time, the transformation of not only the physical characteristics of the jail have changed, the professionalism and leadership in the jail has been significantly transformed," he wrote. The sheriff also credited Capt. Viebrock with transforming the jail's budget to focus on detainee medical and mental health needs and increasing training "with particular concentration on inmate well-being and safety." He said that training allowed staff to stop multiple suicide attempts.

Sheriff Anders said Capt. Viebrock's training on conflict and social interaction created a more professional environment and resulted in better communication with both the public and the detainees; he facilitated the acquisition of a body scanner, making the facility more safe and secure; and he revamped the extradition procedures, saving the county "tens of thousands of dollars." The sheriff said Capt. Viebrock also implemented a new jail policy manual that included legal references and national standards for jail operations; he created positions to streamline arraignments and court appearances; and fostered agreements with neighboring agencies to hold their detainees.

The sheriff also praised Capt. Viebrock for his willingness to travel across the state, training other corrections officers and jail staff on best-practices in jail operations, adding, "Capt. Viebrock is routinely sought for training and receives numerous accolades for his dedication to the field of corrections."

Miller County Sheriff Louie Gregoire nominated Capt. Hannon for the award he received. Capt. Hannon served as a jail administrator until becoming a commissioned officer in 2012 and then rose through the ranks as a road deputy before becoming jail administrator in 2017. The sheriff said Capt. Hannon was responsible for the successful implementation of a jail training program for the staff and served as a key decision maker when integrating video visitation into the jail. He also streamlined the booking and inmate service process by working with vendors to provide the best and most cost-effective products.

"Capt. Hannon's greatest asset is his ability to be personable and communicate with his staff at a degree which has decreased the turnover rate in the jail and has raised morale significantly. His communication skills and his knowledge of jail procedure

has allowed the Miller County Jail to grow into what it is today," Sheriff Gregoire wrote, adding that his outstanding service and continued dedication will allow them to meet the goals of tomorrow. "David also is our lead in making our fundraisers a success. He oversees our 5K 'Run with the Cops not From the Cops,' and he also organizes the Shop with a Deputy to benefit less-advantaged children during the Christmas holidays."

MSA Marketing Director Jeanne Merritt, who coordinates jail training classes around the state and who was instrumental in establishing the jail administrators training program, said the Jail Administrators Conference is one of her favorite events of the year.

"These men and women have difficult jobs. They need all the training we can provide to help them do their jobs better and make their jails and their communities safer," she said. "It's also nice to give them a pat on the back. They seldom get recognition outside the walls of the jail so it's great that we can recognize them here. They are all great. They all deserve awards."

This year's conference, held at Margaritaville Lake Resort, was attended by more than 140 jail administrators and jail staff who represented all but three of the state's 115 sheriffs' offices. Training included such topics as wellness, mental health, leadership, legal updates, Sunshine Law compliance and recognizing inmate manipulation tactics.

The Expo portion of the conference featured 60 vendors who provide products and services to law enforcement and particularly jails. Attendees also were invited to participate in a golf tournament sponsored by vendors, and an evening barbecue with music and a cornhole tournament. The week-long training wrapped up with a roundtable discussion that allowed jail administrators to ask questions, share ideas and learn from others' mistakes and successes.

Merritt said she was pleased with the outcome and felt others were as well.

"We always hand out a survey to attendees and once again, everybody was pretty happy," she said. "They appreciated the training, they enjoyed the food, they had fun at the barbecue and they loved the music. All-in-all, I'd say it was a success."

BY NANCY ZOELLNER

NEW JAIL OFFICER TRAINING ACADEMY

Equips and Prepares

After talking for more than a year about the importance of developing a standardized training program for jail officers, the Missouri Sheriffs' Association put together the 48-Hour Jail Officer Training Academy.

This course is designed to prepare participants to work in a jail or detention center by developing the knowledge and skills needed to maintain the safety and security of a facility, while also ensuring that incarcerated individuals' needs are met in a humane and legal manner. It is a must for individuals just beginning a career working in a jail and a "friendly refresher" for those who have been working in a jail for some time.

"This was exciting for me because I know how important this is for the jail officers," said Jeanne Merritt, jail training coordinator for the MSA. "The job can be challenging and the individuals they work with on a daily basis can also be challenging. They need to get all the training they can."

Topics include working in corrections, health and safety issues, legal issues, intake, booking and release, daily operations of a jail officer, controlling resistive and manipulative behavior and use-of-force in jails.

Instructors are certified by the state and they are or have been jail adminis-

trators so they teach from experience, Merritt said, adding "Each instructor is dedicated to each student getting as much training as they can to be efficient and grow in this profession."

Just like the job, the class isn't for everyone. Applicants must possess the following competencies:

- Adaptability
- Conscientiousness
- Judgment/ Problem Solving
- Critical Thinking
- Learning-Memory-Recall
- Organization Skills

Merritt said the academy has a dress code. Attendees are expected to wear their agency uniform or business casual attire to class. If they don't dress appropriately, they can be asked to leave. And just like any other class, attendees are also expected to come prepared with a notebook and pencil or pen to take notes. They're also required to bring a laptop, tablet, or smart phone that's capable of accessing the internet.

"We put this together to help them be the best they can be at their jobs so students are required to attend every class and they have to pass a 120-question final exam with a minimum score of 80 percent to obtain a certificate of academy completion," she said. "We take this seriously."

Graduates from this course can go on to complete two additional courses and apply for certification as a MSA Certified Jail Officer.

For jail officers who are POST licensed, the class also provides 46 POST CLEE credits:

- 5 Hours Interpersonal
- 1 Hour Implicit Bias
- 4 Hours De-Escalation
- 14 Hours Legal Studies
- 22 Hours Technical Studies

"So far, we've held three 48-hour classes and already have academies booked through July. The sheriffs are very supportive. They know the jail is their biggest liability and having well-trained officers who know how to correctly and safely do their jobs only helps reduce that liability," Merritt said. "The first class was held in Pettis County. We had 12 jail officers enroll — and graduate. The students were great. They were there to learn because they're dedicated to the job."

The other academies were held in Webster, Henry and Adair counties.

For more information or to schedule a class call Jeanne Merritt at 573-529-6900 or email jeanne@mosheriffs.com.

Pictured below: Jail Academy Class #1 graduates, Pettis County April 19, 2023.





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JAIL SECURITY SIMPLIFIED

Gone are the days when the sheriff would head out on horseback to round up an outlaw, then transport him back to jail where he'd be held in a padlocked cell with the key to freedom hanging just out of reach on a big round ring.

While today some of the smallest, most rural county jails may still open cell doors with keys, most employ some form of electronic door lock. Sheriffs who partner with Electronic Contracting Company (ECC) to implement the IMPERIUM™ Jail Control System can control not only door locks, but also nearly every aspect of the jail - with just the touch of a fingertip.

Imperium's function buttons provide:

- Locking & unlocking of doors
- Lockdown ability
- Intercom control
- Paging control
- Audio monitoring
- Lighting control
- Water control
- Telephone control
- Power outlet control

Logan Hinnant, southern regional manager for ECC, said the beauty of the Imperium system is that it is custom designed to fit the exact needs - and budget - of each jail, and it can be implemented in stages.

"We start by asking sheriffs and jail administrators how they want their jail to operate. Because we bring a long history of working with jails, we can offer suggestions on how to modernize their systems and how to better handle the workflow to make things run more smoothly, but it's not 'all or nothing.' In some facilities they only want to handle doors and intercoms," he said.

Grundy County Sheriff Rodney Herring, who has been partnering with ECC for nearly 15 years, said he never dreamed technology could make such a difference.

"We were moving out of a 115-year old jail that had no electronic controls whatsoever, so when we moved into our new detention center in 2008, ECC completely transformed the way we worked. I had never seen or experienced anything like it," Sheriff Herring said. "In the old jail, our cells did have padlocks on the doors. Suddenly, we could not just open and close doors from a touch screen, we could look at the screen



and tell if our entire facility was secure."

He said that they have since integrated their closed circuit TV and intercoms so they can monitor as well as communicate with inmates anywhere in the facility; they upgraded the server that stores all the jail information; and they moved to a 50-inch screen that allows them to see the entire floorplan of the jail on one screen. With the County Jail Maintenance and Improvements grant money recently made available, Sheriff Herring plans to upgrade from analog to digital cameras, which will provide a clearer picture, and replace intercom speakers to get a clearer sound.

"The ability of the system is pretty amazing - and it was easy to learn. Our staff picked it up quickly," he said.

Hinnant said that, like Sheriff Herring, most of the sheriffs they work with are "blown away by how easy it is."

In part, it's because their programmers use the same color palettes and types of icons seen on smartphones. That makes learning how to operate the system a "natural and intuitive process."

"Usually within 20 to 30 minutes, someone who has never done anything like this before can operate and completely control a jail, which is huge for sheriffs because they can have two people in the command center as opposed to four," he said. "In smaller jails, when 911 dispatch is handled by the jail, the dispatcher can actually run dispatch and the jail. During the day, when there's a lot more movement and a lot more activity, you might have a jail operator, but from 10 p.m. to 6 a.m. the person working dispatch can control the jail as well, so sheriffs will only need to have one person in the control room at any given time."

The simplicity of the IMPERIUM system isn't only in its interfaces but extends into the hardware selection as well. For decades integrators have used very complicated PLC circuits and devices to control the functions in a jail. They were the golden standard,

no matter the size of the facility. But this method is very complex, expensive, and labor-intensive. It can also add hundreds (or even thousands) of potential failure points, which is a considerable risk that correctional facilities can't afford to take. So instead, ECC utilizes specific hardware manufactured and designed for detention environments. This approach to system design dramatically reduces the potential points of failure and the amount of onsite effort it takes to upgrade an existing jail with IMPERIUM.

Exhaust fans and fire alarm systems can also be integrated, as can technology in media and interview rooms. "We can even provide a simple way to stream video - whether Twitter, Facebook or other social media platforms," Hinnant said. "A lot of our technology ties together. We always have facilities that want things done differently and we can certainly accommodate them. We just finished one county where the sheriff didn't want the red to be quite so bright and it took us about 30 seconds to change that. Every single thing about our platform is 100 percent customizable to each individual environment."

Hinnant said they offer a package that includes remote support and unlimited training after installation because of the high turnover rate in corrections, "and we have employees, installers, and service technicians - dedicated crews that do nothing but jails - in Missouri. We currently have two offices - one in Kansas City and one in Springfield - but we run 80 percent of all jail projects out of our Springfield office so we can rapidly address any needs after the install."

ECC's robust and stable IMPERIUM platform, coupled with its commitment to customers after project completion, has enabled ECC to be awarded the prestigious National Association of State Procurement Officials (NASPO) security contract nationwide. This contract makes it easier for Missouri Sheriffs and County Officials to upgrade their systems for the modern demands of life, safety, and functionality in corrections facilities.

BY NANCY ZOELLNER



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