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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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## MISSOURI SHERIFFS' ASSOCIATION

# FAREWELL LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

**A**s I come to the end of my term as president of the Missouri Sheriffs' Association, I'd like to extend my deepest thanks and heartfelt appreciation to the MSA staff and to my brother and sister sheriffs for the support and encouragement they've given me this past year. I also want to thank the citizens of our state for the support you have shown your sheriffs.

We made significant progress this year working with our partners in the legislature and the governor's office. However, we still have work to do. We need to find answers to the challenging issues that are being faced by Missouri's citizens. I believe that by keeping the lines of communication open and with hard work, dedication, and a team approach from an outstanding group of sheriffs, MSA staff, legislative partners, and Governor Parson and his staff, we can get the answers pushed across the finish line.

To stay ahead of the ever-changing challenges in law enforcement, we must also continue to work hard developing new training and improving upon existing training that's being presented by the MSA in our academies, at the many conferences held each year and in the programs being delivered on site at sheriffs' offices and jails throughout the state.

We accomplished an important goal this year when the MSA joined the Western States Sheriffs' Association, which consists of sheriffs west of the Mississippi River. Joining this amazing group of sheriffs gives us a greater voice in Washington and larger influence to make our communities better and safer places to live and raise our children and grandchildren.

In closing, it has been a tremendous honor and privilege to serve the sheriffs of Missouri as president of the MSA. I look forward to seeing the growth and accomplishments of the MSA as it continues to meet the needs of the sheriffs it serves. As always, I remain committed to standing resolute with my fellow sheriffs in the service of our communities, protecting our citizens from victimization by dangerous criminals.

Good luck to incoming MSA President Brad Cole. I am confident that you will do an excellent job leading the MSA and that you will accomplish amazing things.



**SHERIFF BILL PUETT**  
BUCHANAN COUNTY  
MSA PRESIDENT

"We need to find answers to the challenging issues that are being faced by Missouri's citizens."



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## MISSOURI SHERIFFS' ASSOCIATION

# INCOMING MSA PRESIDENT IS READY TO LEAD

**I**t is an honor to be the elected sheriff of Christian County and a privilege to serve as president of the Missouri Sheriffs' Association for the year 2023-2024. I look forward to what the next year holds for the sheriffs of Missouri and the opportunity to work with my fellow colleagues on key issues that affect not only the citizens of Missouri, but the citizens of the United States.

During my term as president, I will work to educate the citizens we serve as to the dangerous policies of the current presidential administration related to border security and illegal immigration. We must act now to educate and demand accountability on the borders before our nation's public safety resources are overwhelmed with the criminal side effects of illegal immigration, including transnational gangs, guns, dangerous drugs, and human trafficking.

We, as sheriffs, took oaths and made promises to the American people that we would uphold and enforce the rule of law. The crisis at the border is penetrating our neighborhoods throughout the interior of the United States, thus undermining our unyielding commitment to protect "We, the People."

We recognize that for democracy to flourish and remain healthy in our republic, we must uphold and enforce the rule of law. There is no place for injecting political agendas that diminish the safety and security of our nation. We cannot undermine the confidence and faith of the people in our basic precept of equal justice under the law. Our founders established the legislative branch of government to create and amend laws. Neither "We, the People" nor the founders ever intended for those elected officials, chosen by the American people to represent their interests, to circumvent the legislature and decide for themselves what special class of individuals will be excused from abiding by our existing laws.

In closing, I am committed to seeing that the training and academies sanctioned by the Missouri Sheriffs' Association are using the most up-to-date technology and tools to teach new deputies the tools of the trade. We must commit as sheriffs to work together to fix what I believe to be a tattered system of academy material and classes to bring us into modern times. If we continue with the status quo, we will undoubtedly fall behind and fail our new generation of deputies and law enforcement. I encourage the sheriffs of Missouri to pull up their bootstraps and help me, the board of directors, the executive director, and committees to move the organization forward.

Thank you. I am honored to be your next president of the Missouri Sheriffs' Association.



**BRAD COLE**  
SHERIFF OF CHRISTIAN COUNTY

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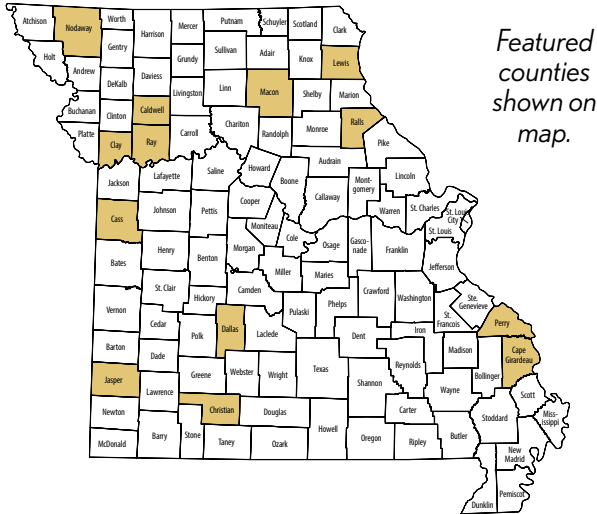
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# NEWS AROUND THE STATE



## CASS COUNTY PROMOTIONS

Congratulations are in order for (left to right) Elizabeth Hizey and Stacy Drake, who were both promoted to the rank of corporal.



## PROTECTED WHILE THEY SERVE

The United States Deputy Sheriff's Association recently awarded the Ray County Sheriff's Office with ballistic helmets. Sheriff Scott Childers said he greatly appreciated the gift.



## CLAY COUNTY GRADS

Congratulations to the Spring 2023 Clay County Sheriff's Office Citizens Academy graduates. They spent 10 weeks learning about everything from K9s to crime scene investigation. They took a behind-the-scenes tour of the jail, participated in shoot/don't shoot simulator exercises, tried a standard field sobriety test and did so much more. Sheriff Will Akin said the program, offered free of charge twice a year to those who live or work in Clay County, aims to increase rapport with the public through education, thereby dispelling misinformation and giving participants a greater understanding of "why we do what we do."



## FACES OF FENTANYL WALL

The Drug Enforcement Administration has created a special exhibit, "The Faces of Fentanyl," at its headquarters in Arlington, Virginia, to commemorate the lives lost from fentanyl poisoning. If you would like to submit a photo of a loved one lost to fentanyl, send their name, age, and photograph to [fentanylawareness@dea.gov](mailto:fentanylawareness@dea.gov), or post a photo and their name to social media using the hashtag #JustKNOW.



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## RECOGNIZING IMPROVEMENT

School Resource Deputy Bransfield started the “Clay County School Resource Unit Improvement Award” at Maple Park Middle School this year. Each month, he works with school administrators to identify two eighth-grade students who have made major improvements from seventh to eighth grade. These students have turned into ambassadors in the school and lead by example. Deputy Bransfield calls each winner’s parents to ensure they know about the great job their child is doing. “Our school resource deputies do so much more than provide security at North Kansas City Schools,” said Sheriff Will Akin. “They care deeply about the students and serve as mentors, confidants, and teachers.”



## EXPLORING A CAREER PATH

Canton R-V sophomore Chandler Schumacher recently spent a shift working with Deputy Jason Slater and Jail Officer Joe Crowell to learn about the operations of the Lewis County Sheriff’s Office. Sheriff David Parrish said he appreciates the young man’s interest in law enforcement and hoped they could encourage him and other men and women in their community to consider a career in law enforcement.



## SMILE FOR THE CAMERA

The United States Deputy Sheriff’s Association recently gave a FLIR (Forward-looking infrared) camera to the Ralls County Sheriff’s Office. The cameras detect infrared radiation, which is emitted from a heat source, to create an image for output. The cameras can be used for surveillance, search and rescue operations or tracking. Sheriff Brad Stinson said they are truly grateful for the donation.



## COURT ACCOLADES

Clay County Sheriff Will Akin recognized the Court Security Unit for their “continuously exceptional performance.” A well-known Kansas City area attorney recently sent the sheriff this letter about them after his firm was involved in a weeks-long trial:

“I have tried more than 80 jury trials in four different states at the Federal and State level (eight different counties) in my 41 years practicing law. I have never come in contact with a more professional, polite, or efficient team providing security at a courthouse.”

Sheriff Akin said that in 2022, the Unit served as bailiffs in 67,229 cases and transported 6,287 inmates to their court appearances, adding, “They’re not often in the spotlight, but we’re so proud of the hard work and professionalism of our Court Security Unit.”



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## VESTED INTEREST GIFT

Dallas County Sheriff's Office K9 Zeus has received a bullet and stab protective vest, thanks to a charitable donation from the non-profit organization Vested Interest in K9s, Inc. His vest was sponsored by Vested Interest in K9s, Inc. and embroidered with the sentiment "In memory of Zeus Stevens."

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 US. Since its inception, the organization has provided over 5,043 vests with a value of \$6.9 million to K9s in all 50 states. The gifts were made possible by both private and corporate donations. Vested Interest in K9s, Inc. accepts tax-deductible contributions in any amount. A single donation of \$985 will sponsor one vest, which has a value of \$1800, weighs an average of 4 to 5 pounds, and comes with a five-year warranty. For more information or to learn about volunteer opportunities, call 508-824-6978 or visit [www.vik9s.org](http://www.vik9s.org).



## ACKNOWLEDGING OUTSTANDING SERVICE

The Cape Girardeau County Sheriff's Office observed Law Enforcement Memorial Week by presenting awards to outstanding officers and employees of the sheriff's office. Sheriff Ruth Ann Dickerson presented the 2022 Timothy J. Ruopp Award to Richard Rushin, who has served as jail administrator since 2021. The award has been presented to the outstanding officer of the year since 1984 in honor of Timothy J. Ruopp, a past employee of the Cape Girardeau County Sheriff's Office who was killed in the line of duty as a law enforcement officer in San Diego, California.

Sheriff Dickerson also presented four Copeland Excellence Awards, given in honor of former Sheriff Norman Copeland, who "commanded respect and strived for excellence in the performance of the job." The award is given to employees who have demonstrated they are striving for excellence in the performance of the task assigned to them. This year, an employee from each division — Field Operations, Business Operations, and Jail Operations — was chosen; two went to Field Operations.

Pictured with Sheriff Dickerson (left to right) are Deputy Sheriff Kenton Martin — Jail Operations; Jail Administrator Richard Rushin; Perry Hazelwood and Brian Egger, both patrol deputies in the Warrant Task Force — Field Operations; and Maintenance Staff Supervisor Austin Hahs — Business Operations.

## MACON COUNTY DEPUTY NAMED 'OFFICER OF THE YEAR'

A northeast Missouri law enforcement officer, who was born and raised in Ottumwa, is being recognized for a job well done. Deputy Seth Rupp with the Macon County Sheriff's Office was named "Officer of the Year" in the Small



Department category for his outstanding efforts in traffic safety and impaired driving enforcement. The award was given by the Missouri Law Enforcement Traffic Safety Advisory Council.

Deputy Rupp was nominated for the award by his co-worker, Major Tyler Southern, who said that Rupp's traffic stops often lead to convictions for more serious crimes. She wrote in the nomination letter that Deputy Rupp's dedication to traffic safety and the attention to detail he puts into his cases is unmatched.

She also said that of the 1,554 traffic stops made by the Macon County Sheriff's Office in 2022, 580 of them were made by Deputy Rupp. He wrote a total of 323 citations and made 114 arrests in 2022; 73 of the arrests came from traffic stops and 41 came from criminal investigations. On some of his days off from the Macon County Sheriff's Office, Deputy Rupp works for the Linn County Sheriff's Office, Randolph County Sheriff's Office and Brookfield Police Department. He will be given his "Officer of the Year" award during a banquet set for July 13 at Lake of the Ozarks.





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## LEARNING TO PROTECT AND SERVE

Governor Mike Parson, a former Missouri sheriff, recently invited students enrolled in the Joint Law Enforcement/CSI programs at Lake Career and Technical Center in the Camdenton R-III School District and Doniphan R-I School District's Current River Career Center to the capitol.

During their visit, the governor shared stories of his time in law enforcement and said he appreciates the program instructors for giving students access to training they need to help determine if law enforcement is the right career path for them. "Public safety starts with supporting our men and women on the front lines who answer the call, who wake up every day to protect and serve," he said. "In this state, we support and defend our law enforcement officers. We don't defund them and as long as I am governor, we never will."



## PROMOTION

Christian County Officer Michael Lewis was recently promoted by Sheriff Brad Cole to the rank of corporal. He has been an employee of the Christian County Sheriff's Office since February of 2022.



## HONORED TO HONOR

In May the Jasper County Sheriff's Office held its bi-annual new hire and promotion ceremony. At the event, 17 new employees were honored for starting their law enforcement career with the sheriff's office and seven employees were recognized for being promoted in the past six months. Friends and families were invited to attend the event and command staff presented certificates to participants. "We are honored to recognize and welcome amazing employees, that we call family, to serve the community with us," said Sheriff Randee Kaiser.





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## IMPROVING PUBLIC SAFETY

Corporal Shaun Shadwell with the Ralls County Sheriff's Office recently completed the Crisis/Hostage Negotiation program offered by the Midwest Counterdrug Training Center. The program equips law enforcement and corrections personnel to mitigate threats involving barricaded and/or suicidal subjects, hostage takers, and others with behaviors associated with precipitated homicide or "suicide-by-cop." Special emphasis was placed on handling those who are drug-affected, suffering with mental illness, or experiencing an emotional or psychological crisis. Sheriff Brad Stinson said the knowledge Cpl. Shadwell gained during what he described as a "very difficult course" will be a great benefit to their community.

"Shaun Shadwell has a gift for talking down tense situations. He showed his interest in this class and I thought it fit his personality very well," the sheriff said, adding that minimal time was spent in the classroom. The majority was used for staged scenarios where students had to apply what they learned to handle the conflicted role player. "Cpl. Shadwell got his turn and learned the stress and challenges of dealing with a barricaded subject. This was a great experience for Cpl. Shadwell and he brought back a whole bag of tools (knowledge). This training gives the opportunity for the best possible outcome in a high-risk situation. Thank you Cpl. Shadwell for your dedication and effort in making our citizens safe."



## ADDING 'ELEMENT OF PROTECTION'

Nodaway County Sheriff Randy Strong applied for a grant with the Gladys Rickard Charitable Trust to fund the purchase of 14 ballistic shields. In December of 2022 they were awarded the grant and the shields were ordered. Rickard Trust Board Members Katie Gumm and Danielle Miller met with Captain Austin Hann when the shields were delivered in February.

"I'm happy to report that the shields were assigned to each Nodaway County deputy and that they are carried in the deputies' patrol vehicles," Sheriff Strong said. "My objective for the ballistic shield project was to add another element of protection for our deputies if they respond to a call involving an active shooter in a school or business. In addition, the ballistic shield has many other uses, such as providing protection when serving high-risk search warrants of homes or high-risk felony traffic stops." The price for each shield was \$1,700.



## MEET AXEL

The Caldwell County Sheriff's Office recently added a new member to the team — K9 Axel, a Belgium Malinois from the Czech Republic. Axel was purchased through a grant obtained by the sheriff's office and fundraisers. Veterinary services will be provided by Allee Veterinary Services, Inc. of Hamilton, Missouri. Deputy Zachary Feil and K9 Axel spent eight weeks at the Boone County Sheriff's Office K9 Training Center to get certified in multiple fields including tracking, building and article search, and drug detection.



## FRANKLIN COUNTY GRADS

Sheriff Steve Pelton said he was pleased that another class had completed the 2023 Franklin County Citizens Law Enforcement Academy. "The Citizens Law Enforcement Academy is dedicated to building relationships between the sheriff's office and the community. The combined efforts of residents and deputies encourage the best atmosphere to problem-solving," he said. "Transparency, communication, and understanding between deputies and residents are prioritized through education and collaboration and we are happy we can share this with our citizens."

## TWO CELEBRATIONS IN ONE

K9 Argon, who served with the Perry County Sheriff's Office for more than four years, recently celebrated his 6th birthday and retirement day — at the same time. He was able to retire to his handler's residence and now plans to spend his days fishing and chasing rabbits instead of bad guys. Job well done Argon!







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## COVER STORY: DALLAS COUNTY SHERIFF SCOTT RICE

# SHERIFF FULFILLS A DREAM AND A CALLING

For as long as he can remember, Dallas County Sheriff Scott Rice wanted to work in public service. He had two uncles who served as sheriffs in the 1950s — one in Laclede County, the other in Dallas County. He grew up listening to their stories at family gatherings and always wanted to be a deputy — not a city cop.

In his years following high school, Sheriff Rice tried his hand at various occupations, but none provided a sense of satisfaction. Finally, his wife Jacquie urged him to pursue his dream. So in 1997, he went to work for Dallas County as a bailiff and jailer. The following summer he attended the academy. The day he graduated, he walked into the sheriff's office, was handed car keys, and was sent out on his own — the only deputy on the night shift. He was dispatched to a domestic disturbance around 4 a.m. his second night on the job.

"I walked up to the house, looked through the windows, and didn't see any movement, so I walked around back. I looked through the patio door and saw a guy sitting at the kitchen table drinking a cup of coffee. Around the corner came this gal with a cast iron skillet. She hit him on the head and knocked him out cold. I busted the glass and yelled 'Sheriff's Office' because she was standing over him, ready to beat him again," the sheriff said. "When he came to, he said, 'I'm so glad someone caught her in the act. She beats me up all the time.' She got a couple of years because he also had puncture wounds all over where she had stabbed him with a broken pool cue."

Over the next 10 years, Sheriff Rice continued working the road, also handling investigations for several of those years. In the meantime, he and his wife had their second child. So he left law enforcement for about eight years. In 2016, the calling on his life became too strong to stay away. He ran for sheriff, won, and took office January 1, 2017.

One of his biggest challenges came three years into his term — post-COVID-19. "There's so much competition for quality people, and we haven't been able to keep up with Greene and

Camden counties, which both pay more," Sheriff Rice said, adding that they've been put to the test cracking homicide cases. Since taking office, they've solved 11 with only one remaining open.

The first homicide Sheriff Rice worked after taking office involved a man shooting his wife with a black powder revolver in a Buffalo hotel. The couple was no stranger to the sheriff. In 2002 they had set up an ambush, and the wife used a sawed-off shotgun to shoot Sheriff Rice in the back as he dove for cover behind his vehicle. He wasn't even aware that he was shot until someone asked why his shirt was ripped, and his back was covered in blood.

"My wife was teaching school and had just got home when she heard me say over the scanner, 'Shots fired' and 'I need somebody.' She called the other deputies to tell them I needed help because the dispatcher was away from the radio dealing with inmates," he said. "God was looking out for me that day."

God protected Sheriff Rice again on a meth lab bust when a knife-wielding man, head down, charged him like a bull. "I jumped out of the way, gave him a shove, and he ended up with his head stuck through the sheetrock," he said. "The good people in our county have no idea what we deal with on a daily basis."

Fortunately, his commissioners do. They agreed to outfit deputies with work phones, which provide

hotspots, and in-vehicle laptops tied into a server that backs up to the cloud. They also supported a raise that brought the starting pay to \$17 per hour — not great, but good.

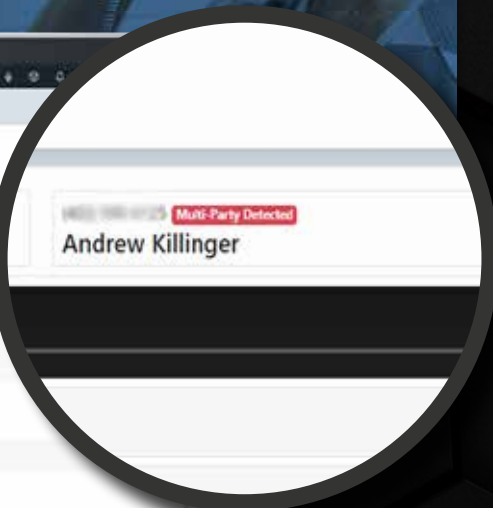
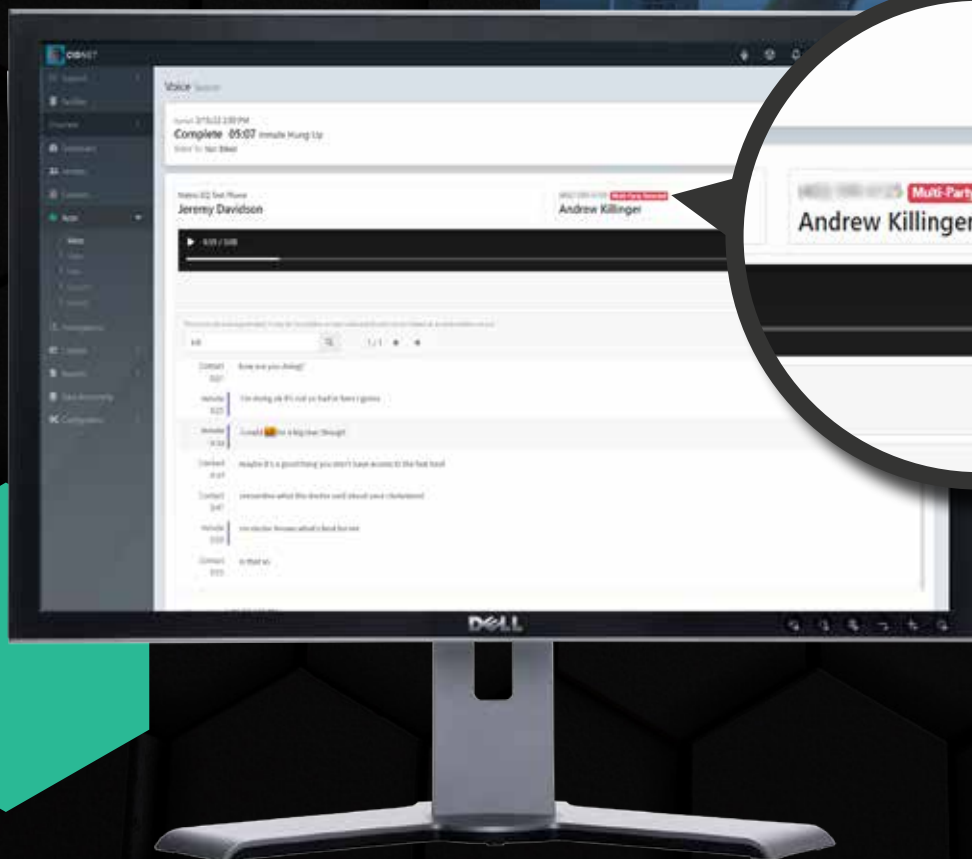
"If law enforcement is in your blood, you find a way to make it work," Sheriff Rice said.

His long-range plans include expanding their jail — built for 34 but always housing 45 or more. "That's good because it means we're doing our job, but it's bad because we're always overcrowded," he said, adding that the days when they put sex offenders — especially those who prey on children — behind bars or solve a burglary and return stolen items are the most rewarding. "We have a bad element, but the majority of our residents are good people. I'm proud of them. I'm thankful for their support. And I'm proud to be their sheriff."

BY NANCY ZOELLNER







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## COVER STORY: MISSISSIPPI COUNTY SHERIFF BRITTON FERRELL

## FROM FARMER TO THE FIELD OF LAW ENFORCEMENT

Unlike some, who knew from the start that they wanted a career in law enforcement and jumped in with both feet, Mississippi County Sheriff Britton Ferrell didn't "get the call" until he was firmly planted in another profession — and it took more than a decade to finally get paid for the work he knew he was called to do.

Sheriff Ferrell is a third-generation farmer. He met his wife Anna while attending college, they married in January of 1996. In February, he took over the reins of the 3,200-acre family farm, growing corn, wheat, soybeans, and raising 200 head of cattle.

"From February 1996 to 2007, I was fully immersed as an agriculture producer. Then late one night, I saw a guy running across my yard and red and blue lights flashing. I went out the door, and the Charleston Police were in the alleyway behind my house, chasing some thieves. They asked me to watch the one in the back of the patrol car while they searched the yards. The lights, handcuffs, and thought of chasing bad guys got my adrenaline flowing. I stayed up all night thinking, 'I could do this.' And that was the catalyst that got me going in this direction," he said.

In August of that year — in the middle of the corn harvest and before becoming sheriff — Ferrell started at the Southeast Missouri Law Enforcement Academy. For the next nine months — through the corn and soybean harvests and the wheat and corn plantings — he worked the farm Monday through Friday and attended classes on the weekends. Then, in 2008, he was commissioned as a reserve with Mississippi County and rode with FTO David Watkins, who is now Sheriff Ferrell's chief deputy.

"It provided me with good experience. I learned how to write reports and serve papers. But more importantly, through Watkins's work ethic, I learned how to treat and talk to people and what law enforcement is really about. He hired on at the farm for his relaxation, and I went on patrol with him for my relaxation," Sheriff Ferrell laughed. "We'd farm until around 7 or 8 at night, then patrol until 3 or 4 in the morning."

Finally, in January of 2016, after serving eight years as a reserve, Sheriff Ferrell was hired as a full-time road deputy — while still farming.

"My farm loan was coming due in April, and I knew I had to commit to one job or the other. I told my dad I didn't want

to farm anymore, and he said he'd support me in whatever I wanted to do. So we cleared our loan and I worked as a full-time deputy only. It was tough because my grandpa had the farm, my dad had the farm, I had the farm, and I made the decision to let it go. But I don't regret it. I know I made the right choice."



**"I'M  
THANKFUL  
THAT THE  
COMMUNITY  
PUT ITS  
TRUST IN  
ME."**

When it was announced that a special election would be held in January 2019 to replace the former sheriff who had stepped down, Sheriff Ferrell threw his hat in the ring. After winning the election, knowing he had only a year and a half to prove himself before the August 2020 primary, he hit the ground running, meeting with area law enforcement to develop better working relationships, making person-

nel changes, and scrutinizing the budget.

The county had been kicking in \$300,000 to \$800,000 annually to fund the sheriff's office and the 132 bed jail, so he looked at ways to improve conditions while whittling expenditures and boosting revenues. His plan worked so well that he was able to implement a new computer and phone system, add cameras to the jail, purchase in-car computers that communicate with new body cameras and tasers, purchase new radios, and even put a new roof on the building — all while lowering the budget. He also added a third-party medical provider to better care for inmates and increased wages for his staff, improving morale.

"We underwent a total transformation. Now we're making inroads into some of the drug activity here, not arresting the user, but working up the chain to arrest the dealers, and we're helping the user get clean. Seeing those people change their lives and get their families back is very rewarding," Sheriff Ferrell said. "I'm thankful that the community put its trust in me. We'll always try to get better, and we'll always strive to do our best. Hearing from the people that they appreciate the job we're doing lets me know we're heading in the right direction."

BY NANCY ZOELLNER





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## COVER STORY: SCOTT COUNTY SHERIFF WES DRURY

# THIS SHERIFF IS A MAN OF MANY TALENTS

Scott County Sheriff Wes Drury worked all aspects of the emergency field before settling on just one.

Right out of high school, he became a volunteer EMT with the North Scott County Ambulance District while working at Saint Francis Medical Center. He held various positions at the hospital, including supplying the blood banks of 15 southeast Missouri and southern Illinois hospitals. He started working as a reserve deputy with the Scott County Sheriff's Office in January 1984 and went fulltime in November 1985 as a Scott County jailer/dispatcher. He held those positions until 1988 when his first child was born.

"I had to leave for a few years to go make some money," he said. "Then on Thanksgiving in 1991, I came back to the sheriff's office with no intention of staying, and I've been here — or somewhere close — ever since." He returned as a road officer/jailer/dispatcher and was promoted to jail administrator in 1992.

In November 1995, Sheriff Drury accepted the criminal investigator position for the Scott County prosecutor's office and spent 21 years doing that job. But after 9-11, he wanted to be even more involved in protecting his community so he joined the Scott City Fire Department as a volunteer firefighter, and on his days off he attended the classes required to become a state-certified arson investigator.

He decided to make a third attempt for sheriff after a family member was a victim of a sex crime — and he was successful.

"That gave me a more personal understanding of victims. Instead of trying to understand how they felt, I truly knew how they felt when their children were violated, and I wanted to ease their pain as much as I could. I wanted to provide them with the support they needed and get them with the right counselors to help them get through the toughest time of their lives. I wanted to do what I could to keep victims from being revictimized by the system," the sheriff said.

While he does not pity lawbreakers, because of the life he's led responding to various crises, he has compassion for all who need their help.



"People don't call us because they're having a good day. They call when they're dealing with something bad. I tell my deputies that's why it's important for us to be professional but also to show kindness, considerateness, and compassion," he said. "Of course, we're tough when we have to be, but we don't go in like we're the big heroes. We go in as the helpers. I think our community appreciates that because it shows them that we care."

Sheriff Drury said he and his community are also pleased that his deputies have been able to spend time in their local schools fairly regularly, which was one of his biggest goals when running for office.

"Their parents trust us. I want the kids to trust us too — to feel comfortable talking to us and know we're not the bad guys, especially with everything we have going on around our country today," he said.

One of the biggest challenges the sheriff has faced has come recently as he's tried to convince county commissioners to build a new Scott County Justice Center to meet not just their current needs but also their future needs instead of booting him out of the building so they can turn his office space into a courtroom.

"I don't think they realize what it will cost to recreate what we have here. We have an interview and interrogation room, a bolted room for ammunition and weaponry, a juvenile lockup that's out of sight and out of sound of adult detainees, and a room for our records — rooms cased in concrete for those purposes. We can't just move into any building," he said.

Sheriff Drury said although some days are frustrating, he's not yet ready to hang up his holster. Connie, his wife of 39 years, finished her doctorate the same year he was elected and now serves as the chair of Nursing at a local university — and she doesn't plan to retire any time soon.

"I can't leave anyway until I get the pay up for my staff. I've got a good group of people, so I have to figure out how to get more money for them," he said. "I truly believe law enforcement is a calling. We sure don't stay in this line of work for the pay — but my people need to be paid more because they deserve it."

BY NANCY ZOELLNER





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## COVER STORY: TEXAS COUNTY SHERIFF SCOTT LINDSEY

# TEXAS COUNTY SHERIFF IS LIVING HIS DREAM

From the time Scott Lindsey was a child, he was fascinated by law enforcement, but he also toyed with the idea of teaching or coaching. Then when he was in high school, someone broke into his family's home and stole, among other things, his basketball shoes — and the season was about to start.

"It really affected me, but the officer that took the report had a lot of patience. He explained the process and listened to a high school kid ask a lot of questions. It was him taking the time to not only talk to me but to become a friend, give me advice, and later help me get a job as a dispatcher with the police department in Cabool, where I grew up, that interested me in law enforcement even more," he said.

After graduating high school, Sheriff Lindsey attended St. Louis Christian College, and on summer break, dispatched part-time for the Cabool PD. One of the perks was getting to ride along with the officers. He was hooked.

"I left for college but turned around and came home because I knew I wanted to work in law enforcement. So I started taking college classes locally while working as a dispatcher with Cabool. Then in January, I started dispatching for the Texas County Sheriff's Office," he said.

A few months later, prior to becoming sheriff, he enrolled in the law enforcement academy at Drury University. After graduating in November, he was commissioned as a reserve but continued dispatching because no road spots were open. His first patrol position was with the Licking PD. He applied, was hired in May of 98, and stayed there 20 years, working his way up the ranks to chief of police in 2006. He held that position until 2018, when he ran for sheriff in a special election and won.

"Licking was a great place to work, and because it was a small department, I got experience doing just about everything, but once I got into law enforcement — especially after dispatching for Texas County — my dream job was to serve as sheriff. So when the opportunity came up in 2018, I decided to pursue it," he said. "I knew in my heart that it was something I had wanted to do for a long time. But even more importantly, I knew Texas County needed a leader that could rebuild trust. With my experience, I felt called to step up and run."

**"I WANT THE  
COMMUNITY  
TO KNOW  
THAT WE  
ARE ALWAYS  
HERE FOR  
THEM."**

After taking office, Sheriff Lindsey began upgrading technology, purchasing mobile computers that integrated into the county's computer-aided dispatch system. He also bought new duty pistols and rifles for deputies. His biggest surprise was the amount of time required to handle the jail. He was reelected in 2020 and, with COVID, switched to video visitation, which was well-received by staff because it is safer and less time-consuming. It was also well-received by people who could visit on their schedules and from their homes if they have internet access.

Sheriff Lindsey said 2022 was a good year. ARPA money allowed every officer in the county to be equipped with new portable and car radios. Even better, that year the community passed a 3/8-cent law enforcement sales tax which Sheriff Lindsey said allowed him to start raising salaries — including the salaries of those working in the jail, where they have the highest turnover. It will also allow him to add two more deputy positions.



"We've tried to use every funding source we can, but the law enforcement sales tax is the biggest thing to help us going forward. I am so thankful for the community's support," Sheriff Lindsey said, adding that he is also thankful for the support of his wife, Mandy, and their two children. "I feel like I have more resources than any other sheriff in the county's history. I want the community to know that we are always here for them in good times and bad. I know that when they call us, they may be having the worst day of their lives. But I'm committed to helping them and doing the right thing with professionalism, honesty, and respect. We may not be able to solve every crime that comes in, but we will certainly give a 100-percent effort. I hope the people will continue to trust us because we will try to do everything right to keep their trust."

BY NANCY ZOELLNER





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**T**alented. Creative. Smart. Absolutely wonderful to work with.

Those are all words that staff use to describe Stacie Marshall, who is in her tenth year as creative director for the Missouri Sheriffs' Association. And what a difference she's made since joining the team.

Working with the MSA Marketing Director, Jeanne Merritt, Marshall revised the overall appearance and information throughout the Missouri Sheriff magazine, Missouri Jails magazine, promotional materials, conference programs and the Annual MSA Sheriffs' Directory. But the update was not just in print. MSA's online presence, at [www.mosheriffs.com](http://www.mosheriffs.com) and [www.mosheriffsunited.com](http://www.mosheriffsunited.com), now makes it easier than ever to find training, conferences, memberships, publications, and helpful information.

"The Annual Sheriffs' Directory used to consist of a printed list that was only updated every four years. Stacie designed the booklet and made it what it is today — a valuable resource that gets updated yearly. I think I value her creativity the

most because I can give her an idea, like the directory, and she can create exactly what I have in mind," Merritt said. "Because of her clean, professional design and the quality of our stories, I think we have the best sheriffs' association magazines in the country."

Marshall has been in the graphic design business for nearly 30 years, starting out in 1994 as a graphic designer at a small weekly paper at Lake of the Ozarks. That's where she met Nancy Zoellner, MSA's writer, editor, and social media coordinator. Zoellner was the editor of the paper at the time. Marshall's talent and creativity was noticed and appreciated by her employer. She worked her way up through the company until she became the production manager over all publications.

After 14 years, Marshall accepted a job offer as a senior graphic designer in the retail division of O'Reilly Auto Parts in Springfield, Mo. "It was a great benefit of the job to see my designs featured in stores all over the country," she said.

Marshall had been building her freelance business for years, and it was really taking off. She had made several valuable business connections, and she was getting more and more clients. But success came at a price. Marshall was now working a full-time job and spending all her free time on her business. She was exhausted and knew something had to give.

"It was just too much. I was in front of a computer all day and night. The stress was getting to me! After much deliberation, I officially started Hill Design Co. and never looked back. I've been extremely blessed because all my work has been word-of-mouth and I've been able to work as much or — I was going to say, 'as little,' but I never have a little work to do," she said with a laugh.

Many of Marshall's clients were non-profit organizations.

"I find it rewarding to help people that



MSA's marketing team (left to right) Nancy Zoellner, Jeanne Merritt and Stacie Marshall.

are ultimately helping others. I'm a good niche for nonprofits who don't have the budget to hire someone full time."

All of this led her to MSA. Jeanne Merritt needed a graphic designer and Zoellner knew who to call.

"I have truly enjoyed working with everyone at MSA and grateful for the opportunity to get to know the sheriffs and their staff. I have immense respect for them and the job they do," said Marshall.

She and her husband, Joseph, have three boys who are active in sports and keep the family on the go. Marshall enjoys spending time with her family, vacationing, hiking, gardening, and taking care of her chickens, turkeys, cats, and dogs.

Zoellner also had the highest praise for Marshall.

"I could add several more adjectives about Stacie," she said. "A big one would be 'patient.' No matter how many changes need to be made to magazine pages, newsletters, or conference agendas, she never complains. She just keeps fixing things until we finally get them right. She's not only the best of the best in design, she's also a great person. She's fun, she's funny and she's a joy to be around. I can't think of anyone I'd rather work with."

BY NANCY ZOELLNER



Pictured on the left is Linda Owen and Stacie Marshall, and the sweater gifted to her by Owen. Below is the marketing team at the 2014 MSA Summer Conference held in St. Charles, Mo.





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# Training for the UNIMAGINABLE

**May 10, 2023, strands of yellow police tape surrounded parts of Busch Stadium in Downtown St. Louis as tactical teams converged on the hulking structure. Their mission: find the shooter, end the threat, and save lives.**

Inside, dumpsters and trash cans were strewn about, creating obstacles and blind spots. Many were used as cover by terrified fans who just minutes before were enjoying the sights and sounds of

a ballgame. Any of them could be concealing the unidentified shooter who might be lying in wait to ambush responding officers.

Panicked crowds ran past the tactical teams, bogging down the officers' movement and making communication difficult. The bodies of those who didn't survive the attack lay in concourses, doorways, stairwells, and shops. It's a nightmarish reality that today's law enforcement must be prepared to confront and overcome.



Fortunately, this was only a training opportunity coordinated by Sergeant Brian Rossomanno of the Jefferson County Sheriff's Office. Sgt. Rossomanno, a longtime SWAT commander and owner/managing partner of 0311 Tactical, told a reporter from KSDK-TV in St. Louis the training was meant to make law enforcement think about the challenges posed by such an emergency.

"We tried to recreate all the different things responders would be confronted with when dealing with a mass casualty event in a heavily populated area," said Sgt. Rossomanno. "We had several role players, the stadium had crowd noise playing over the speakers, we put a bunch of obstacles in their way."

Tactical teams from the Jefferson County Sheriff's Office, St. Louis Metropolitan Police, St. Louis County Police, and St. Charles County Police departments were challenged to work together in one of the most difficult environments imaginable. EMS personnel from St. Louis Fire Department were also on-hand to practice medical response to the injured.

Sgt. Rossomanno says despite varying departmental procedures and distractions during the response, the goal must remain clear.

"When you're talking about thousands of people in panic mode, really the best way to work through it is to just stay mission focused, understand where the problem is, where you need to be, and just work your way there as best as you can."

The drill at Busch Stadium was held at the request of the St. Louis Cardinals to emphasize preparedness and fan safety. Cardinals Director of Security, Phil Melcher, said lessons learned from this exercise can benefit teams across Major League Baseball.

"We let the guys have the rivalry out on the field," Melcher told KSDK. "But we definitely communicate with each other because we understand if one of us gets hit, it's going to hurt all of us."

Sgt. Rossomanno says he and 0311 Tactical will hold more large-scale response trainings in the future.

BY GRANT BISSELL,  
PUBLIC SAFETY INFORMATION  
COORDINATOR FOR THE JEFFERSON  
COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE



# THE POSSE IS COMING

Sheriff Chris Heitman said he was both proud and impressed with the turnout for the posse informational meeting.

"I am proud of our citizens who are willing to serve, as well as the men and women who are representing my office. Volunteers are hard to find anymore and, with minimal information published, my office received nearly a dozen posse applications before the meeting and had more than 20 turned in immediately after the meeting," the sheriff said. "When my chief deputy, Scott John, brought this to me I thought it was a great idea and told him to run with it. This is something he's passionate about and he's confident that it will be a positive influence on our community and youth. Knowing his plans, I share his confidence and have given him my full support."

We have all seen it in the old western movies. The sheriff, outnumbered, is hunting a group of outlaws so he gathers a posse — a group of men who are willing to saddle up and help hunt them down. What a time in law enforcement history that must have been!

However, that's not the posse of today.

While it is true that law enforcement can still be outnumbered and the posse can be a force multiplier in times of crisis, most of today's posses are being used as part of community policing programs, bridging the gap between communities and law enforcement. The Maries County Sheriff's Office is joining the ranks of other Missouri sheriffs who have active posses working in their counties.

The idea of the posse came to me while researching ways our office could become more involved in the community. I found that Greene, Cole, and Jackson counties each have a mounted posse that provides traffic and security patrol at fairs and other events. They also represent their sheriffs' offices in parades, and they assist with searches for missing persons and evidence thrown from vehicles.

When I discussed my idea with Sheriff Chris Heitman, he not only supported it, but he entrusted me with its organization and deployment. I began by setting a date in May for an information meeting and creating a flier announcing the idea to our community. The meeting was well attended and several people turned in applications.

Because of the positive response at that meeting, we plan to start a few different posse programs. We will begin with a Community Policing Team, which will work with businesses and citizens to address areas of concern and discuss solutions that the sheriff's office can bring to the table. A School Safety Posse will

assist the school resource officer with our Junior Deputy Program, which is similar to D.A.R.E. Its members will also be part of mentoring programs for youth, and they will provide extra security at drop-off and pick-up times and at special evening events. A Mounted Posse of both horseback and ATV/UTV enthusiasts will be trained in search and rescue techniques.

All posse members will be asked to assist with our annual fairs and special events and they will be given the opportunity to ride along with deputies and assist in the dispatch center and in the jail. In the future, we plan to add a program that will use posse members to assist with checks on homes for people who are on vacation, on river lots where citizens have campers and personal property, and with after-hours business checks.

All volunteers will be trained in first-aid, self-defense, use of less-lethal devices, and firearms. Posse members will also be fully briefed on their legal limitations as well as how they are expected to react to incidents they encounter.

I believe that our posse will draw people who feel a call on their lives to serve their communities. As a military veteran and a bi-vocational Southern Baptist minister, that call led me to begin my service with the Maries County Sheriff's Office as a volunteer chaplain. After serving in that position for just a short period of time, I saw that God had a bigger plan that included serving as a deputy sheriff. Years later, I became part of Sheriff Heitman's command staff and eventually was appointed as his chief deputy. My hope is that some members of our posse will, like me, decide to take their community service a step further and become law enforcement officers. Just like the sheriffs of old, we need help catching the bad guys of today.

BY MAJOR SCOTT JOHN, CHIEF DEPUTY,  
MARIES COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE





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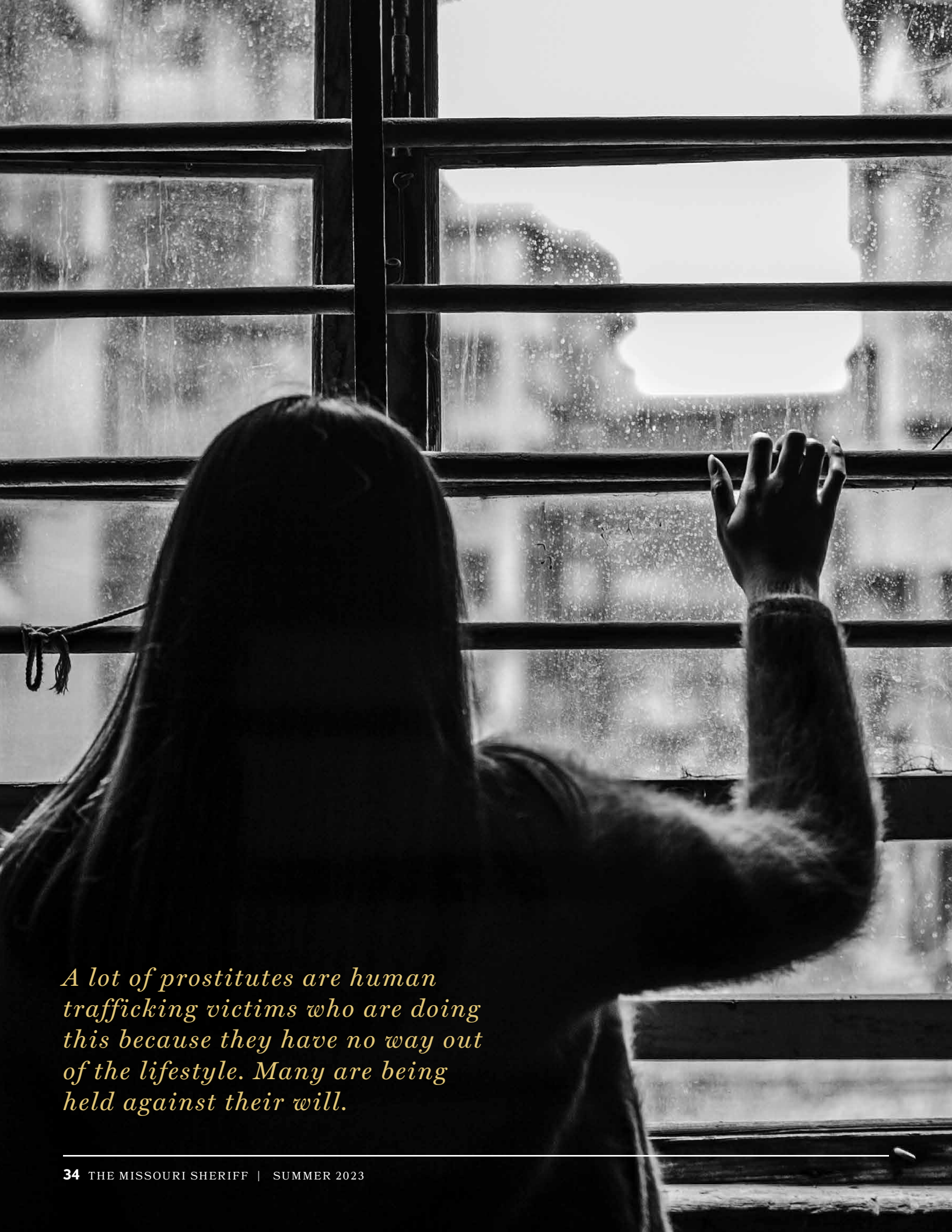
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*A lot of prostitutes are human trafficking victims who are doing this because they have no way out of the lifestyle. Many are being held against their will.*



# Clay County, Homeland Security Partner to Stop Child Exploitation and Sex Trafficking

**T**he Clay County Sheriff's Office and Homeland Security Investigations (HSI) Kansas City Office worked together to arrest three men seeking to engage in sexual activity with children during the time period of the NFL Draft in Kansas City. This was part of a relatively new partnership between the two agencies aimed at stopping human trafficking.

It began in the spring 2022 when a former reserve Clay County Sheriff's investigator who served as a task force officer with HSI-KC connected the two agencies. Sheriff Will Akin was eager to work together to address issues of human trafficking and child sexual exploitation. A task force composed of Sheriff's Office and HSI-KC investigators formed and went right to work.

Operation Blue Ghost took place in early June of 2022. During that operation, the Sheriff's Office's Investigations Division arrested six men who believed they were meeting a 14-year-old girl for sex in Clay County. The task force has run several operations since then, including the most recent operation during the 2023 NFL Draft in Kansas City.

"The NFL Draft was an amazing experience for the entire Kansas City metro area. But we know events of that magnitude can also increase the opportunity for victimization," Sheriff Akin said. "Through this joint operation with HSI-KC, we wanted to reduce the chance any child in our community would fall victim to such a heinous crime."

From April 26 to 30, 2023, three men traveled to Clay County to meet with whom they believed to be children ranging in ages from 10 to 14 years. The men had previously chatted online with Clay County Sheriff's Office and HSI-KC investigators posing as children or adults who were purportedly offering the children for sex. Deputies arrested the men shortly after their arrival at the designated apartment or hotel room.

Captain Steve Wilhelm, commander of the Sheriff's Office's Investigations Division, explained the benefit of partnering with a federal agency like HSI.

"They brought manpower and expertise in the field," Captain Wilhelm said. "Child enticement investigation is not something we have historically done a lot of. The biggest thing HSI brings to the table for us is child enticement case



experience and how to work them."

While HSI's focus is on federal crimes, they provide expertise and support wherever possible. HSI and the Clay County Sheriff's Office partner on cases that target both the supply and demand for human trafficking. In addition to work on child sexual exploitation cases, the task force conducts operations targeting "johns" in addition to sex workers. Instead of arresting the sex workers, they connect them with services to help them leave prostitution.

"A lot of prostitutes are human trafficking victims who are doing this because they have no way out of the lifestyle," Wilhelm said. "Many are being held against their will. The guys who answer the ads are perpetuating that victimhood."

The Clay County Sheriff's Office and HSI-KC will continue working together to protect children and victims of human trafficking.

BY SARAH BOYD  
PUBLIC RELATIONS MANAGER  
CLAY COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE



Nicholas Keith



Glicerio Gallahad



Link Laithreach

# THE NEED FOR **SPEED** ENFORCEMENT

My first car was a 1966 Ford LTD. It had 185,000 miles, a 390 cubic inch V8, it got 12 miles per gallon, and it burned a quart of oil every three tanks of gas. While my car was a clunker, my girlfriend was not. She was my first girlfriend, and she was a graduating senior, while I was just a lowly junior.

On her graduation day, we were at the high school awaiting the graduation ceremony when she came to me in a panic. She had forgotten her graduation hat (mortar board?). I told her no problem. We had 45 minutes — plenty of time to get her home to get her square hat. I would ask Wayne County Sheriff Dean Finch not to read the next few lines.

Highway 34 in Wayne County is a curvy, mountain road. There are a few straight stretches, however. On one of those straight stretches on the way back from my girlfriend's house, I noticed that I hit 100 mph. I thought to myself, "Don't be stupid! You are putting your girlfriend, other motorists, and your life in danger." I "slowed down" to 95. My only excuse is that love makes you do stupid things.

Fortunately, we made it back safely and on time for Cindy's graduation, with her square hat on her head. Unfortunately, she broke up with me later that summer. She said I was "too immature." Whatever.

I would like to think I learned a lesson, but I probably did not. A deputy, troop-

er or police officer pulling me over for a little "driver education" would have been a valuable lesson, however. Later I did regret driving that fast for such a silly reason. Pretty mature attitude for a 17-year-old, Cindy!

All joking aside, speeding is becoming an epidemic, especially since the pandemic. It has contributed to many serious and fatal crashes — and it's a rural, suburban, and urban problem. Statistics show that speeding is involved in approximately one-third of all motor vehicle fatalities nationwide. According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), a crash on a road with a speed limit of 65 mph or greater is more than twice as likely to result in a fatality than a crash on a road with a speed limit of 45 or 50 mph.

Speeding is more than just breaking the law and the consequences are far-ranging:

- Greater potential for loss of vehicle control
- Reduced effectiveness of occupant protection equipment
- Increased stopping distance after the driver perceives a danger
- Increased degree of crash severity leading to more severe injuries
- Economic implications of a speed-related crash
- Increased fuel consumption/cost
- One of the top citizen complaints (Too many speeding through the neighborhood)





Traffic crashes that result in death due to speeding are historically higher during the months of June through September. For this reason, the states in NHTSA Region 7 (Missouri, Kansas, Nebraska, Arkansas, and Iowa), and Region 5 (Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Minnesota, Ohio, and Wisconsin) will be joining forces on Wednesday, July 26 for this year's high visibility Speed Awareness Day enforcement campaign. This date was chosen because it is halfway between the Memorial Day Click it or Ticket seatbelt campaign and the Labor Day Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over impaired driving campaign. NHTSA also does a nationwide speed enforcement campaign during July every year.

So, what does this mean for your agency? We are asking that on July 26 you participate by conducting speed enforcement anytime of your choosing, either on grant overtime (check your grant terms) or just during a deputy's regular shift. If anyone from your agency does speed enforcement on that day, we ask that you fill out a simple activity report and submit it to MoDOT — or me.

A press event will be held in each region prior to the enforcement event to help drive up awareness. We can also provide you with social media and press release examples that are customizable for your agency. Feel free to contact me or your MoDOT law enforcement liaison if you have questions.

I don't want to stir up anything, but Region 5 says that they will outwork our region and the Cubs are better than the Cardinals and the Royals combined. Let's show them! Please participate.

Here are a couple other good reasons to participate, as if humiliating a Cubs fan was not a good enough reason:

Research shows that if someone receives a speeding ticket, they are 35 percent less likely to die in a crash for the next three to four weeks.

When someone receives a speeding ticket, their "perceived" speed before they will be stopped by law enforcement goes down. As an example, some feel they won't be stopped unless they're going 10 mph over the speed limit. Give them a speeding ticket and their per-

ceived "safe speed" (from a ticket) goes down 5 or so mph. I have lots of research about the value of traffic enforcement on preventing crashes, so if you'd like more examples, contact me.

In conclusion, speeding is one of the leading causes of crashes, a major factor in crash severity (physics), and a big concern affecting quality of life in neighborhoods. By the time this article is published, the July 26 Speed Awareness Day report forms (one simple page) will be available. Remember, you just need to conduct some speed enforce-

ment and then report it. It's simple and something you're probably already doing anyway. If you have any questions or need anything, contact me, your NHTSA law enforcement liaison, at bsully@sbcglobal.net.

Thank you for all you do to keep our roadways safe!

BY BILL SULLIVAN  
LAW ENFORCEMENT LIAISON, REGION 7,  
ENFORCEMENT AND SAFETY SERVICES  
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# NO ONE SLEEPS ON THE STREETS

**R**andy Minchew, president of the Salvation Army Columbia Advisory Board and a board member of Phoenix Programs detox center, is advocating for a transformative solution to combat homelessness. Drawing from his 40 years of experience in dealing with this issue, Minchew said he believes that adopting a policy of eradicating homelessness on a county level is feasible — provided the entire community comes together to support it.

“Attempting to address homelessness on a national scale would be hindered by competing interests and political funding challenges. Similarly, many cities lack the necessary resources to tackle this complex problem effectively. However, at the county level, by garnering the support of key stakeholders such as sheriffs, police chiefs, courts, mayors, state reps, and non-profit organizations, a united front can be formed to achieve the common goal of helping individuals transition off the streets,” he said.

Minchew emphasized the need for a consensus builder — someone capable of fostering agreement among all parties involved — to lead the initiative. He proposed a collaborative approach where each side commits to specific actions, creating a framework for cooperation.



According to the Department of Housing and Urban Development, a reported 5,992 people were experiencing homelessness in Missouri in January 2022, and an estimated 26.7 percent of them were unsheltered, the 22nd largest share among the 50 states. Randy Minchew, president of the Salvation Army Columbia Advisory Board and a board member of Phoenix Programs detox center, said eradicating homelessness could be accomplished on a county-by-county basis. However, it will take a buy-in of all stakeholders.

Minchew added that finding suitable living facilities is not the primary hurdle, as abandoned buildings or vacant hotels in every county can be repurposed for housing.

“Furthermore, financial resources, including state funds and available grants, are abundant. The crux of the matter lies

in fostering cooperation and ensuring accountability,” he said.

Minchew distinguished between two types of homelessness: situational and chronic. Situational homelessness often results from financial setbacks, where individuals lose their homes or housing due to unexpected circumstances. How-



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Earlier this year Greene County Sheriff Jim Arnott responded with deputies to several privately owned properties where illegal encampments had been set up. The individuals were arrested for trespassing and other outstanding warrants and transported to the Greene County Jail. Upon release, each individual was provided with a list of resources for assistance with food and shelter as well as a taxi voucher to the resource locations. Sheriff Arnott said while it is his responsibility to enforce the laws of this state and protect the rights of landowners, "Springfield is a great community that provides many resources and shelters to those in need. The Sheriff's Office is committed to enforcing the laws and connecting those in need with these resources."

ever, this category is more manageable as people actively seek assistance and support from organizations that exist to help them.

Chronic homelessness, on the other hand, is predominantly influenced by mental health issues and substance abuse. While initial situational factors may contribute to their predicament, he said it is the combination of addiction, mental illness, and lack of accountability that perpetuates their homelessness.

Housing poses a significant challenge for chronic homelessness. However, Minchew said that many individuals in this category may refuse available housing because they don't want to comply with rules and regulations. He said that individuals trapped in addiction often exhaust all resources and relationships, resorting to desperate measures to sustain their habits.

"Addressing addiction, therefore, becomes pivotal in enabling these individuals to reintegrate into society as productive members," he said.



Minchew stressed the importance of accountability in addressing the issue effectively.

"In Boone County, for instance, where a substantial proportion of nightly arrests involve homeless individuals, caseworkers could be assigned three to five cases each for personalized interventions. It would be made clear that non-cooperation would result in some type of temporary incarceration," Minchew said, adding that he believes this approach could potentially resolve around 50 percent or more of the problem.

Recognizing the need for physical

addresses to access state and local services and facilitate communication with service providers, Minchew acknowledged the necessity of constructing suitable buildings. Basic amenities like bathrooms and showers are crucial for maintaining human dignity, he said. While organizations currently try to meet some of these needs, Minchew said that merely sustaining people is not a solution.

"Coronado, California is a good example. Their policy prohibits sleeping on the streets. Instead of maintaining its own shelter, the city pays for beds in a nearby shelter and offers individuals a choice between going to the shelter or receiving a citation from the police, which ultimately will lead to incarceration," he said.

Drawing from his personal experience as a recovering addict for 48 years who has helped numerous individuals on their path to recovery, Minchew emphasized that solving homelessness is not an insurmountable challenge. He said he believes that thousands of people across the nation make the decision to turn their lives around daily.

"I understand the complexities of mental health and addiction, and that's why I know it is crucial to combine compassion with accountability. Allowing people to continue to sleep on the streets is inhumane," he said. "We must have a collective effort to confront this crisis. As a society, we must strive for a better, more compassionate approach to addressing homelessness."

BY NANCY ZOELLNER



*"I understand the complexities of mental health and addiction, and that's why I know it is crucial to combine compassion with accountability."*

— RANDY MINCHEW



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MSA HOSTS TRAINING CONFERENCE

# The Glue That Holds It All Together



Attendance at MSA's Administrative Professionals Training Conference continues to grow. This year, 78 men and women who serve behind the scenes in sheriffs' offices across the state were able to attend.

All Missouri sheriffs have some form of administrative assistant, warrant clerk, CCW clerk, or office or jail personnel. Ask any sheriff and he or she will tell you that they are the unsung heroes — the ones who work tirelessly behind the scenes to get the job done with no recognition from the public and, in the past, without much ongoing training to help them stay updated.

A few years ago, Jeanne Merritt, the marketing director for the Missouri Sheriffs' Association, decided it was time to change that. She met with the MSA board of directors and presented her idea for a training conference that would provide detailed instructions on the tasks their support staff members were required to perform. The board supported her vision, and she went to work, lining up presenters with backgrounds in the areas that needed to be covered.

The first couple of conferences were held at the Country Club Resort — now the Regalia — at Lake of the Ozarks. The information shared was good, but the attendance wasn't quite what Merritt had hoped for.





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The newness of the idea, the at-home responsibilities of the women who held the majority of those positions, and the sheriffs' lack of funding that would be needed to send their office personnel away for a few days meant that around 50 showed up. Attendance dwindled over the years, then in 2020, COVID-19 shut it down completely.

Merritt put her conference idea on hold, but because she knew the value of training and networking, she organized meetings at MSA headquarters in Jefferson City so administrative professionals could continue to meet, share ideas and work together to solve problems. Her plan worked. The group began calling on each other when they had questions or needed help.

In the meantime, Merritt continued promoting her idea for a conference. Last year her plan came together. A training conference was held at Margaritaville, and 60-some administrative professionals attended. This year, 78 were able to be there. Merritt said she hopes the numbers will continue to grow as conferences are presented.

This year's session provided training on a wide variety of topics.

Kevin Merritt, executive director of the MSA, discussed and defined the "ABCs of Sheriff's Office Fees." He talked about how those fees are collected and recorded and where they are deposited; he detailed the reports that are required for reimbursement and the importance of filling out and filing those forms correctly; and he covered the penalties that can be issued when state statutes aren't followed. He also explained the 11 different funds they could be required to process, how to

respond to state auditor reports, and how to handle unclaimed property.

Lt. Jason Shackles, the jail administrator for Johnson County, taught attendees how to correctly fill out the forms that allow the sheriff's office to be reimbursed by the state for such expenses as boarding inmates awaiting trial. He also warned them that recouping funds for any process

**"They handle so many responsibilities that have to be done according to state statute, and if they're not done right, it can be a problem for them and their sheriffs."**

will require documentation, a strong records system, attention to detail, follow through, and most importantly, patience, adding, "Budgets are real things. Cost savings opportunities are needed, so recoup and get reimbursed whenever you can."

In a separate presentation, Lt. Shackles talked about the importance of being fair, flexible, honest, and respectful and the value of learning how to interpret behaviors — one's own and the behavior of others — to develop better relationships and create harmony in the workplace.

Victor Pitman, the training coordinator for the MSA, detailed the Sex Offender Registry, explaining the state statutes that define the registry, the Missouri State Highway Patrol database where the information is stored, and the tiers of classification used. He also discussed the importance of

developing policy and procedures to guide the registry's use, and the limits on information that can be shared with the public.

Melissa Dahms with the Franklin County Sheriff's Office discussed the benefits and pitfalls of Facebook. She shared examples of how social media could help identify subjects, find missing persons, and keep the public updated during various circumstances. She also explained the importance of reading every comment and how hate speech and inappropriate comments can be hidden.

Dr. Will Akin, the sheriff of Clay County, opened the conference by telling all the attendees that they were the glue that held the office together, and Piet Van Warde wrapped up the event by reminding them that they were valuable not only as critical components in the office but in life.

Brandi Hamilton, a clerk in the office of Clinton County Sheriff Larry Fish, was one who attended the conference. Sheriff Fish later posted on his Facebook page that he puts a lot of emphasis on training, adding, "I appreciate our staff members who are willing to take time away from their regular duties to better themselves and gain knowledge that benefits our office and our citizens, even when they know it means returning to a full inbox and several days of playing catch-up."

Jeanne Merritt said she appreciates sheriffs allowing their staff members to attend.

"They handle so many responsibilities that have to be done according to state statute, and if they're not done right, it can be a problem for them and their sheriffs," she said. "It's also important for them to get legal updates and understand why laws were changed. The more they know, the more they'll be able to roll with the changes — and they work in an environment that can change at a moment's notice. They need to be ready and able to hold things together, no matter what happens. Hopefully, we can continue to help them accomplish that."

BY NANCY ZOELLNER



The MSA Administrative Professionals Training Conference Committee members (left to right) Theresa Lasher, Phelps County; Mandy Warnecke and Melissa Dahms, both with Franklin County; Alex Baudro, Stone County; Patty Denney, Johnson County; and Alicia Chaves, Christian County; worked with Jeanne Merritt to put the conference together.





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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.



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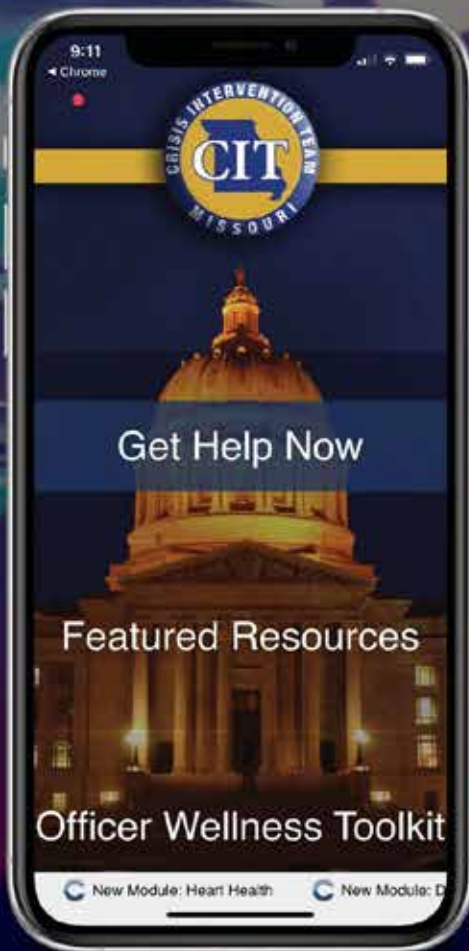
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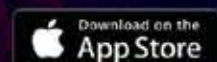
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