

# THE MISSOURI Sheriff

OFFICIAL MAGAZINE OF THE MISSOURI SHERIFFS' ASSOCIATION



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# President's Message

from Christian County Sheriff Brad Cole

## NAVIGATING THE LEGISLATIVE STALEMATE WITH CONFIDENCE

The Missouri Sheriffs' Association is actively engaged in the legislative process, working alongside area sheriffs to advocate for crucial law enforcement policies. Presently, the state legislators find themselves at a standstill within the hallowed halls of our capital. Despite this impasse, the Missouri Sheriffs' Association remains resolute, displaying unwavering confidence in the forward momentum of the legislative process and standing firm in the belief that the wheels of lawmaking will continue to turn.

Our dedication and commitment to progress within modern law enforcement serve as a testament to our unwavering resolve. It is this determination that assures both the sheriffs and the public that advancements in law enforcement practices will persist, regardless of the current legislative gridlock.

The Missouri Sheriffs' Association urges the community to also maintain faith in the legislative process. We emphasize the importance of ongoing support for local legislators, underscoring the pivotal role that constituents play in shaping the future of law enforcement policies. As the association continues to navigate the complexities of the

legislative landscape, they remain steadfast in their promise to keep the public informed as developments unfold.

In an era marked by evolving societal needs and challenges, the Missouri Sheriffs' Association's commitment to progressive law enforcement is unwavering. Our diligence in engaging with legislators and advocating for crucial policies underscores our dedication to serving and protecting the community. It is through our tireless efforts that the Missouri Sheriffs' Association embodies the spirit of proactive and adaptive law enforcement, ensuring that the needs of citizens remain at the forefront of their mission.

As the legislative stalemate unfolds, the Missouri Sheriffs' Association's unwavering dedication to progress serves as a beacon of hope. Our assurance that modern law enforcement will continue to evolve and adapt resonates with the community, instilling confidence in the future of law enforcement practices. The association's pledge to keep the public



*"Our dedication and commitment to progress within modern law enforcement serve as a testament to our unwavering resolve."*



updated underscores our transparency and commitment to fostering a collaborative and informed community.

In the face of legislative challenges, the Missouri Sheriffs' Association remains resolute, standing as a testament to the unwavering spirit of progress and adaptability within modern law enforcement.



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# Serving and Protecting

News from Missouri Sheriffs' Offices



## Johnson County

Caiden Shackles (center), the son of Johnson County Jail Administrator Jason Shackles (left), signed a letter of intent to continue his academic and football career at Oklahoma Baptist University in Shawnee, Oklahoma. To help offset some of his college expenses, Caiden applied for and was awarded a scholarship from the Missouri Sheriffs' Association. The scholarship fund was established several years ago to assist the children and grandchildren of sheriffs' offices' staff members. Sheriff Scott Munsterman posed for a photo with Caiden and his dad.



## Crawford County

Sheriff Darin Layman congratulated and thanked Office Manager Teresa Hickey and Deputy Justin McKinney for being named Employees of the 2nd and 3rd Quarter.

"Teresa Hickey has been with our Office for 11 years and has been a valued employee during that time. Teresa goes above and beyond to help maintain the smooth running of our office, and we appreciate the hard work she puts into her efforts. Deputy McKinney has been with our office for six years, starting as a detention officer, then being a recipient of our academy scholarship, and proving himself by becoming a dedicated deputy and field training officer in that time. Deputy McKinney is always willing to help when needed, and our community appreciates that work ethic," Sheriff Layman said.



## Schuyler County

Paws 4 Blue K9 recently provided the Schuyler County Sheriff's Office with a Demanet bite sleeve to use while training their K9, Rooster. Sheriff Joe Wuebker said he was very appreciative of their generous support and encouraged people to visit the website at [paws4bluek9.com](http://paws4bluek9.com) and consider making a donation. The organization, which operates on donations and fundraisers, provides grants to law enforcement K9 programs that do not have an allocated budget and retired K9s in need of funding.



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# Serving and Protecting



## Jasper County

Jasper County Sheriff Randee Kaiser recognized what he described as “the outstanding achievements of several incredible employees.”

Amy Metscher received the Civilian Employee of the Year award for her unwavering commitment to going above and beyond in her job duties, always extending a helping hand to others. Sheriff Kaiser said her dedication and selflessness make a difference every day.

Corporal Andy Albertson received the Deputy of the Year award for his “exceptional efforts in going above and beyond his regular duties to train and mentor new employees at the sheriff’s office. His commitment to excellence sets a remarkable example for our entire team,” the sheriff said. He added that Sgt. Tom Crossley and Deputy Justin Henry were recognized with the Community Service award for “their tireless and continuous work within the village of Airport Drive. Their dedication to service and their community is truly commendable. Congratulations for their well-deserved recognition.”



## Camden County

Six deputies with the Camden County Sheriff’s Office were presented with Letters of Commendation for actions they took in 2023 that led to cases being solved. Pictured left to right are Sheriff Tony Helms; award recipients Detective Cody McGuire, Detective Kenny Nelson, Deputy David Creamer, Deputy Robert Holland, Deputy Cody Hunter, and Deputy Thomas Driver; and Chief Deputy Colonel Jim Brashear.

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# Serving and Protecting

## Franklin County

In mid-December, Deputy Chris Neace was presented the James "JP" Lashley Award for Drug and Alcohol Awareness. The late Deputy James Lashley was assigned to many different divisions during his 32 years with the Franklin County Sheriff's Office but was instrumental in the DARE program. The award recognizes local officers who go above and beyond promoting drug and alcohol awareness. Deputy Neace has been working in law enforcement for 12 years. He's been a DARE officer for two of the four years he has served with the sheriff's office. This award was presented to Deputy Neace by DeAnna and Phillip Lashley. Pictured (left to right) are Deputy Phillip Lashley, Deputy Chris Neace, DeAnna Lashley, Major Trevor Wild, and Sheriff Steve Pelton.



In 2011, then Deputy Herwig began the DARE Kids for Vets Campaign. This project was to challenge his DARE Kids to do something to give back to their community. As a veteran of Operation Iraqi Freedom, now Detective Sergeant Herwig, along with Lt. Harden, challenged their students to gather toiletry and nonperishable food items for veterans in need. Since then, the program has donated more than 212,541 items to veterans. The VFW Post distributes the items locally and then to other shelters.

Deputy Neace's fifth-grade students from St. John the Baptist Gildehaus School won this semester's DARE Kids for Vets Challenge by collecting the most average items per student. The students were allowed to go on a field trip to take the items to the VFW Post in St Clair, meet local veterans, and learn about their military experiences. The students also got to visit the National Guard Amory in St. Clair, where they ate lunch and spoke to active guard members about the equipment they use.



## Wright County

Congratulations to Wright County Deputy Jordan Goodwin on completing his master's degree in Criminal Justice from Columbia Southern University.



## Platte County

Tim Baysinger, regional program manager with the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies (CALEA), presented Sheriff Mark Owen and the Platte County Sheriff's Office with a letter of accreditation during the Platte County Commissioners Administrative Session. The sheriff's office obtained accreditation in 18 months. The process commonly takes up to three years.



## Cape Girardeau County

Cape Girardeau County Deputy Arman Clark was selected to travel to Jefferson City to accept on the sheriff's office's behalf an award for the Outstanding Agency of the Year for support of the Special Olympics Missouri Law Enforcement Torch Run. Sheriff Ruth Ann Dickerson said they are grateful for their partnership with Special Olympics Missouri and thanked them for this recognition.



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## Clay County

Sheriff Will Akin recognized a group of men and women whose work resulted in the arrest of four men who were seeking to sexually exploit children in April. The operation involved disturbing online conversations with child predators and a sting operation. "Men came from across the country thinking they were going to engage in sexual activity with a child in Clay County, but they were met instead with arrest and prosecution," Sheriff Akin said. He added that the group of investigators, who were presented with a special Commendation Award, received a standing ovation from the crowd at the awards ceremony.



## Clay County

Congratulations to Deputy Andrey Ignatenko for earning North Kansas City Schools' new Relentless Champion Award. This peer-nominated quarterly award provides a way for colleagues to recognize each other for great things happening at school sites each day. He was surprised with the award in late December. According to school officials, "Deputy Andrey Ignatenko, better known as 'Iggy' by students and adults alike, is a familiar and friendly face in all of our southern schools. Iggy and his partner, (K9) Csibi, make all feel safe, supported and cared for everywhere they go."



## Greene County

Greene County Sheriff's Office recently announced the names of those chosen as award winners for 2023. Sheriff Jim Arnott said their dedication, hard work, and positive impact have set an outstanding example for the entire team. Left to right, Commissioned Employee of the Year was presented to Deputy Tyler Marshall, Civilian Employee of the Year went to Donna Bass, and the Volunteer of the Year award was given to Randy Thomas.

## Barton County

The Barton County Sheriff's Office K9s Barrett and Magnum received protective equipment from Paws Alive, Inc. K9 Barrett's handler is Chief Deputy Justin Ehram. K9 Magnum's handler is Sgt. Toby Luce.

Each K9 received a K9 Narcan kit and an Ace K9 Vehicle Heat Alarm System. The system, valued at \$13,000, alerts for high-heat cabin temperatures and monitors for smoke, fire, carbon, and engine stalls. It also makes automatic corrective actions such as turning on fans and rolling down windows while providing real-time updates to the handler's and agency's smartphones. The system includes a K9 door popper that can

release the K9 from the vehicle to be by the handler's side in an emergency. PPAK9's complete K9 NARCAN kit, which can stabilize a K9 exposed to opioids, costs \$350 and includes two separate nasal spray doses and a weatherproof NARCAN carry pouch, which can be worn on the K9 handler's duty belt or vest to ensure constant access.

Project Paws Alive, Inc. is a nationwide 501(c)(3) charity whose mission is to provide protective equipment to dogs of law enforcement, military, and related agencies in the United States. Visit [PPAK9.org](http://PPAK9.org) for more information. Projects Paws Alive, Inc. accepts tax-deductible donations of any amount at [www.PPAK9.org](http://www.PPAK9.org) or via mail to Project Paws Alive, 2095 HWY 211 NW, STF-2, Box 273, Braselton, GA 30517.





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# Serving and Protecting

## Dallas County

At year's end, Sheriff Scott Rice recognized staff members for their exemplary service to his office and the Dallas County community, naming Chris Carriger as Detective of the Year and Kurtis Labby as Deputy of the Year. He also presented Office Administrator Karen Ethridge with an award, thanking her for her "continued dedicated service."



## Miller County

In December, the Miller County Sheriff's Office recognized several employees for their hard work and dedication to the sheriff's office and the citizens of Miller County.

**1** Mid-Mo Drug Task Force Detective David Neuman was recognized as Reserve Deputy of the Year for his hard work and dedication in finding and removing drugs from the streets of Miller County.

**2** Chief Deputy Mike Rayhart was recognized for his efforts in securing over a million dollars in state and federal grants for both the sheriff's office and county. Additionally, he was presented with a resolution by the Miller County Commission for his hard work.

**3** Detective Randy Wheeler was recognized as Deputy of the Year for his dedication to investigating crimes against children.



## Phelps County

The Captain David Dorn Foundation donated 55 equipment bags to deputies with the Phelps County Sheriff's Office. Each bag included an LED streamlight flashlight, hearing and eye protection for firearms qualification, trauma kit, tactical tourniquet and CPR mask. As always, the equipment, valued at approximately \$300 per bag, was donated directly to and for the deputies.





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## Maries County

The Maries County Sheriff's Office Posse and members of the Sleeper and Stoutland Volunteer Fire Departments completed Community Emergency Response Team training through the Camden County Emergency Management Agency. CERT trains volunteers in basic disaster response skills, such as fire safety, light search and rescue, team organization, and disaster medical operations.

Trained CERT volunteers can assist with tasks like traffic or crowd control, parking, and first aid tents at special events in non-emergency times. During large-scale emergencies, CERT volunteers use their skills and additional training to assist with shelter operations, search and rescue operations, Emergency Operations Center (EOC) operations, and more. CERT volunteers are not first responders; they support first responder efforts and assist where needed.

The CERT concept was developed and implemented by the Los Angeles City Fire Department in 1985. It became a national program in 1993 and has grown to include more than 2,700 CERT programs responsible for training more than 600,000 people in all 50 states, including many tribal nations and U.S. territories.

## SHARE YOUR NEWS

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## Morgan County

Several awards were presented at the Morgan County Sheriff's Office Annual Awards Banquet 2023. Captain Dave Salzman was named Employee Of the Year, Deputy Christopher Dunham was recognized as Deputy Of The Year, and Hope Vogt was named Deputies Choice Dispatcher of the Year.

Detective Mark McLaughlin, Cody Ketcham, Charles Black II, and Jamey Evans were each presented with a Medal of Merit. Christopher Dunham and Jared Allen were awarded Medals of Valor. Lonnie Dunham was awarded Dispatchers Choice for Deputy of the Year, and 911 voted Alexis Miller Dispatcher of the Year.

## Montgomery County

The award for Montgomery County Sheriff's Office Patrol Division Employee of the Year went to Deputy Joe Crouch. Sheriff Craig Allison described Deputy Crouch, a newcomer to the sheriff's office, as a "highly motivated patrolman who is greatly appreciated by all of his peers. Joe's dedication to duty, professionalism, and integrity inspires us all. There is never a somber moment in Joe's presence. He always comes to work with a positive attitude and a smile on his face. Without a doubt, the world needs more people like Deputy Joe Crouch." In addition to receiving a plaque, Deputy Crouch was also presented with a Smith & Wesson M&P Shield 9mm pistol with the sheriff's office badge emblem and his DSN laser engraved on the pistol slide. Mark Brendel of Mark's Automotive donated the firearm.

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# Slow and Steady Wins the Race

**That's been Sheriff Danny Boyd's attitude since taking office and discovering that serving as sheriff is a lot more difficult than it looked.**

**"From Day 1, it has been a huge eye-opener! People can tell you what it's like, but it's nothing you can imagine, and every day is different. I decided to just take it one day at a time and do the best job I could. It's by far the hardest job I've ever had," he said, adding that the "biggest headache" is the jail. "It's very old, but we got a ½ cent law enforcement sales tax passed in 2022, and we're in the process of building a new 30,000-square foot, 100-bed jail that will be done in August of 2024."**

But it's not just an aging facility that's cause for concern. Sheriff Boyd said many detainees suffer from mental health issues, and the nearest hospital equipped to help them is more than an hour away. The new facility will also include a room where those suffering from mental health issues can meet with Clark Community Mental Health Center counselors, who can help them get back on their meds or assist them with other needs.

Recidivism has also been a problem. Sheriff Boyd said of the 40 detainees he was holding in mid-December, 39 had been in jail two or more times.

"They're in jail for a reason, but at the end of the day, it's up to us to help them straighten out their lives," he said. "If we just push them out the door, we're setting them up for failure. So we have a jail ministry, and when detainees are about to be released, people from the Clark Center come in to help them get a job and find a place to live. If we don't help them, what kind of society — what kind of community — are we going to have?"

Soon after graduating from high school, he knew he wanted to serve that community as a law enforcement officer.

"I had a friend who worked for the Joplin PD at the time, and I rode with him a couple times. That's all it took. I went to college on a baseball scholarship. But two years in, a shoulder injury from an accident caused me to lose the scholarship. I worked in construction until I enrolled in Missouri Southern's law enforcement academy, and I've been in law enforcement ever since," Sheriff Boyd said.

After completing the academy, he took a job with a small municipal department. Five years later, he tested with the Missouri State Highway Patrol, was hired, and spent the next 10 years as a trooper. Life changes required him to get a job where he could be home at night, so he took a job with the Cassville PD, working his way up to lieutenant before running for sheriff of Barry County. He was elected and took office January 1, 2021.

Staffing has been a challenge since Day 1, but is showing signs of improving. When he took office, deputies were making \$32,000 a year. With help from the sales tax, they've been bumped up to \$43,000 a year, the sheriff said, adding, "We used



to be one of the lowest paying agencies in the county. Now we're one of the highest, and that's helped us retain employees."

He's also been able to replace three to four aging patrol vehicles each year and outfit them with computers. Currently, the deputies carry their own firearms. But that will change soon, thanks to his commissioners, who agreed the county should fund new weapons. The sheriff said that will allow them to save money by purchasing ammunition in bulk.

"Illegal drug use — especially fentanyl — has presented the biggest challenge on the street because most addicts steal to support their habit. As a result, property crimes have been on the rise. So we're starting a Neighborhood Watch program in our cities, and we're getting a great buy-in from the community. And because quite a few people have shown an interest in the operations of the sheriff's office, we're also starting a citizens academy. We'll be busy," Sheriff Boyd said.

He's also kept busy at home. In addition to taking care of a farm with 40 head of cattle, he and his wife, Frances, also run a dog boarding business. With the full support of his wife, he plans to run again in the next election.

"We can't make everyone happy, but I want the people in this county to know we are working hard to make a difference — to make our community a safer place for them and their families," he said. "That's why I'd like to serve two more terms. I still have things I'd like to accomplish."

By Nancy Zoellner



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St. Joseph & Kansas City

# Sheriff Brought Change to His Community

From a very early age, Brad Cole knew he wanted a career in law enforcement. He wanted to follow in the footsteps of the men he admired most — his dad, who was a trooper with the Missouri State Highway Patrol, and his grandpa, who was a deputy with the Texas County Sheriff's Office. However, after graduating high school, he attended Oklahoma State University to study architectural engineering, but not for long.

"I enjoyed it, but I quickly realized it wasn't something that I would enjoy for the rest of my working career, so at the end of the first semester, at the age of 19, I applied and was accepted into the Central Missouri State University Law Enforcement Academy," he said.

After graduating, he took a dispatcher/jailer position with the Texas County Sheriff's Office, but as soon as he turned 20, he switched to patrol.

"The laws were different back then. You were allowed to work for a year before you were POST certified," Sheriff Cole explained. "I rode with a field training officer the first two or three months, but after riding with my dad and other friends in law enforcement since high school, I already knew the job. Since I had taken and passed the POST test at the academy, as soon as I turned 21, I was certified."

Over the next several years, he worked at a few different agencies. Then, in 2004, he was offered a job with the Christian County Sheriff's Office. He accepted and has been there ever since.

He started out as a patrol deputy, moving up the ranks to patrol corporal, patrol sergeant, and Community Oriented Policing sergeant. His next step up was to investigations supervisor. Then in 2012 he was elected county coroner, which, in Christian County, is a full-time job. In May 2015, after the former sheriff left, he ran for sheriff in a special election and won.

After working several years in the sheriff's office, he knew what to expect, but he never expected to find that with a little more than six months left in the year, the sheriff's office budget was in the red.

"We tightened things up, and for the rest of the year we spent money only on the things we needed — not the things we wanted. That made a huge difference, and we actually ended the year 2 percent under budget," Sheriff Cole said. "In the meantime, to regain the community's trust, we changed our method of operation to more of a community-oriented policing concept that we've continued."

Those efforts included forming a Citizens on Patrol group, which consists of trained volunteers who assist the sheriff's office with a variety of functions; hosting both a Citizens Academy and a Youth Academy; regularly attending community and school events; and holding women's self-defense classes and Neighborhood Watch-type classes throughout the county. The sheriff also started "Coffee With Cole."

"Each month, five or six deputies and I go to a café or coffee shop in a different community where people can stop by and ask questions, share their

concerns, or just have a cup of coffee with us. We've had good attendance every month. I feel like it's helped me and my deputies better connect with the community, and it lets the citizens get to know us," Sheriff Cole said. "I think that has made a huge difference in the way our community sees us."

But he didn't stop at improving community relations. Sheriff Cole, who, with his family, is very much involved in his church, is providing an opportunity for detainees to improve their lives through an ongoing bible study that includes opportunities to be baptized. He said he has also improved working conditions for his staff by upgrading technology, "so we're finally into the 21st Century. I think any of our staff or deputies would say they have some of the best equipment available."

Because he still has a few more improvements he'd like to make, Sheriff Cole plans to run for reelection in November. He said his wife, Sunni, is "quietly supportive."

"She knows that I care very much for our community and that serving as sheriff is something I've wanted to do since getting into law enforcement," he said. "It's very humbling to know that the citizens I serve trust me to be their sheriff and protect them. I take this job very seriously, but I am well aware that I wouldn't be in this position if it wasn't for their support. I appreciate their trust in me to do this job."



By Nancy Zoellner

# Get to Know Us

## Who is Turn Key Health Clinics?

Turn Key is driven to provide the best correctional health partnership for the dedicated law enforcement and detention agencies within our region. Our vision is to enhance the delivery of healthcare for correctional facilities while controlling the program's financial burdens for the citizens of the community.

Our team oversees the day-to-day healthcare operations in facilities with inmate populations ranging from 25 to nearly 2,000 inmates. Our attention to detail assures our clients that professional standards of care are met, and with efficiencies we are able to help our clients avoid unnecessary costs.



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**-Capt. Louis Dahlman**

**Wood County Sheriff's Office**

## What sets Turn Key apart?

We understand every detention facility's operational and budgetary structure is unique. Therefore, Turn Key Health Clinics will never push a generic cookie cutter program onto any client. Instead, we will work with each client, to provide appropriate, cost-effective health services customized to the needs of their facility.



### Contact

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Turn Key Health Clinics  
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[artrose@turnkeyhealthclinics.com](mailto:artrose@turnkeyhealthclinics.com)

## How do we add value for our clients?

Turn Key Health Clinics continues to be unmatched, even during the recent nursing shortage related to Covid-19, with our ability to recruit dependable personnel in our region. With such an emphasis on local recruiting, Turn Key Health Clinics has established a strong record of providing dependable and professional staff.



# Sheriff Took the Good and Made it Better

Taney County Sheriff Brad Daniels worked at the sheriff's office for 20-some years before being elected, and he respected and liked the man he worked for – Sheriff Jimmy Russell. Sheriff Daniels even served as chief deputy for three years before Sheriff Russell retired and he took office – but it was still a bit of a shock to suddenly be the top law enforcement officer in the county. However, he quickly settled in and hopes to continue as sheriff for at least a couple more terms before retiring.

“Being sheriff is something I always wanted to do. From the time I was very young, my dad worked as a Taney County reserve deputy, and my sister was a dispatcher. I attended the academy part-time when I was around 19,” he said. “After graduating, I continued working my job and volunteering as a reserve, but seven or eight months in, I was hooked and went to work for the sheriff's office full time.”

He worked patrol until 2005, when his first son was born. Then he switched to civil process because it allowed him to have evenings and weekends with his family. In 2017, he was promoted to chief deputy, a position he held until he was sworn in as sheriff on January 1, 2021.

“I liked the direction we were going so I didn't make a lot of changes after taking office,” Sheriff Daniels said. “I just added a few things - one that I'm particularly happy about. We put school resource officers in every rural public school in the county, with the exception of one that doesn't see a need.”

They also added a K9 unit and started a citizens academy. It made such an impact that the graduates formed an alumni group to support the sheriff's office. They've provided boxes of snacks for deputies, they raised \$4,000 to provide a Christmas party for the staff and their families, and when the sheriff's office is working a crime scene, alumni members bring them food and drinks.

“They've really been a blessing. Eight signed up for the first academy, but they talked about it so much that we have 18 in this year's class,” Sheriff Daniels said, adding that his training officer put it together after sitting in on a few citizen academy classes at the Branson PD and the Stone County Sheriff's Office.

To help detainees, Sheriff Daniels is adding a peer support program in the jail. He also purchased another body scanner and invested in the TruNarc Handheld Narcotics Analyzer to scan incoming mail. “Family and friends of detainees were watering down fentanyl, soaking postcards in the mixture, letting them dry, and sending them to the jail - but no more,” the sheriff said.

Along with new technology, they added body cameras for deputies and corrections officers and outfitted the jail staff with stab-resistant vests.

Sheriff Daniels said he is looking at one change that could be significant. In the past, they ran patrol

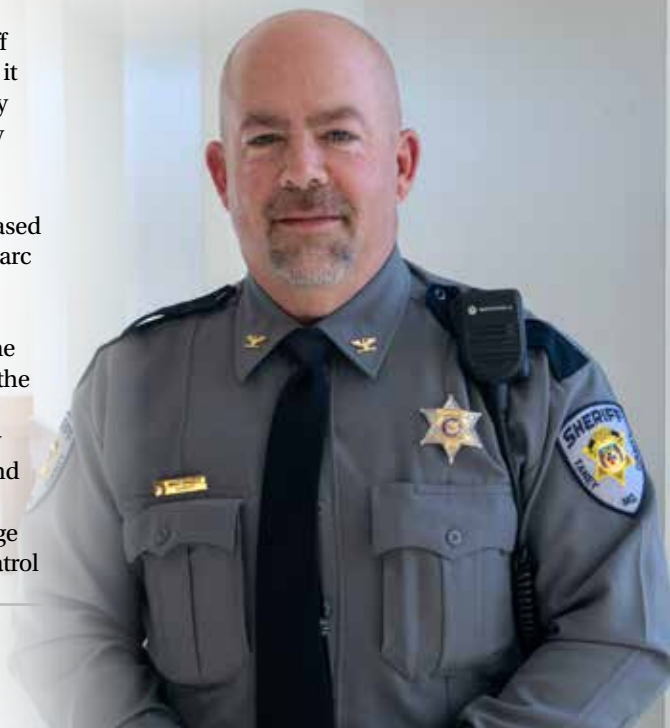
cars until they hit 100,000 miles – but he's talking to his commissioners about rotating them out at 50,000.

“Christian County is doing that, and they're selling their vehicles for \$500 less than what they paid for them while saving on maintenance,” he said.

Like most agencies, staffing has been his biggest challenge. When he took office, they were 17 positions down in the jail staff of 40. However, a deputy started attending career fairs and visiting academies, and that PR work, along with pay increases, cut that number by two-thirds.

Sheriff Daniels said, overall, he's happy with their progress and he's looking forward to continuing building on their strong base, adding that a Law Enforcement Tax and with a good relationship with the commission has helped.

“I have a lot of support in the office and at home. When days get tough, my wife Renea is always there to back me up, and even though I think my being sheriff has probably caused some issues at school for my two sons, I think that overall, they're proud of where I'm at and what I do. I also feel that our office has strong support from the community. People are always dropping off cookies or pizza to thank us. I hope they understand how appreciative we are for everything they do for us and for their support of law enforcement in general. This can be a difficult job. Knowing we have their backing makes it a little easier.”



By Nancy Zoellner

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# A Man of His Word, A Man of Action

**The list of changes Wright County Sheriff Sonny Byerley made after taking office is long.**

**He bought new vehicles which, under warranty, did away with repair costs, and he outfitted them with computers and printers, allowing deputies to spend their shifts on the road rather than in the office writing reports.**

**He hired a full-time detective and started a criminal investigation division, allowing deputies to work more road hours versus investigative hours, resulting in 100 percent of their cases being cleared.**

He worked with police departments in the county to form a special task force trained to enter dangerous situations and take people into custody. “Deputies were finding dope, and our detective was turning that into multiple search warrants, but we didn’t have the manpower we needed. Now, not only are we taking criminals to jail, we’re doing it safely,” the sheriff said.

When he took office, deputies had to buy everything but their vehicles and uniforms. “We were carrying our own guns, and to me, that was a liability risk. With a grant and fundraisers, we purchased pistols and equipment, including new Tasers and body cameras.”

Thanks to community support, he added two K9s and sent them and their handlers to training – at no cost to the county. And, because they were having issues with missing people and fleeing suspects, he obtained a drone pilot’s license and purchased two drones, which were also funded by the public.

And he didn’t forget about the jail. He implemented a chaplain program as well as an Alcoholics Anonymous program, and he’s working on adding a GED program.

Neither did he overlook his staff. Sheriff Byerley is in the process of starting a voluntary health and wellness program with two personal trainers volunteering their time to help plan diets and exercise programs.

He also hasn’t stopped supporting his citizens. When he’s not in the office or out patrolling, he can be found hovering over his nine smokers to provide around 2,000 pounds of barbecue each year – at no cost – for benefits or fundraisers. “My wife Mikaela and I do it because we care about our community,” he said.

Although Sheriff Byerley knows he’s right where he’s supposed to be, there was a time when he didn’t even consider law enforcement as a career. That changed in 1996 after Stone County Sheriff Richard Hill offered him a job in the jail.

“I didn’t know what to expect, but I took it – and I loved it. The sheriff talked me into attending the academy, and I did that in ‘98,” he said, adding that he worked patrol for a couple agencies. “Back then, you had to wait for someone to get fired, retire, or die before you could get a job, so I just kept



chasing opportunities to get closer to home.” Over the next several years, he worked at the Wright County Sheriff’s Office and the Mountain Grove PD, “swapping back and forth, chasing money and shifts,” until 2013, when he took a full-time job with Mountain Grove, working there until he was elected sheriff and took office on January 1, 2021.

Because of his background, he thought the jail would be the easiest part of the job. It wasn’t.

“We were in the process of building a new jail. Our old jail held 28 detainees; our new jail holds 84, so just finding the right employees to staff it was a challenge. In addition to training the new employees, we all had to learn the technology in the new jail,” Sheriff Byerley said. “Then there was the move, which took time, and we converted the old jail into the sheriff’s office so the deputies have an office, and we have a conference room and a fully recorded interview room.”

And as if that wasn’t enough, he also wrote policies and procedures manuals for both the sheriff’s office and the jail. “The first couple years were exhausting, but we finally got everything worked out, thanks to my chief deputy, jail administrator, and supervisors, who all do an outstanding job,” he said.

Although he’s accomplished much during his first three years in office, Sheriff Byerley said he’s not finished yet.

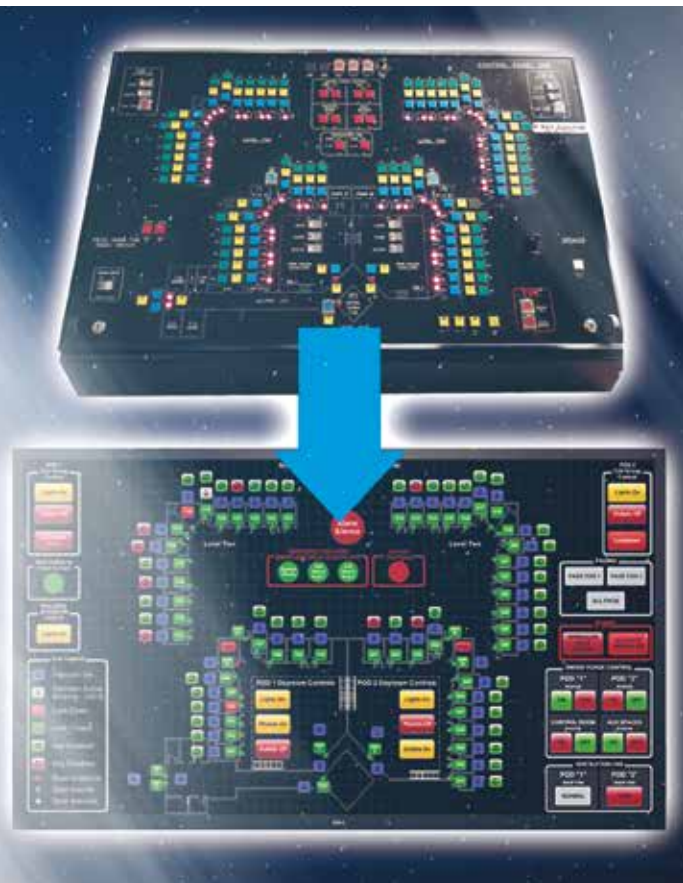
“We’ve taken down some very big players in the drug world, and that’s drastically reduced our property and family crimes. I want to continue working to rid our community of drugs. By doing that, I think a lot of our other crimes will lessen too, so my goal is to stay in office as long as I can,” he said. “I’ll continue working hard, being proactive and protecting the community at all costs, doing the job they hired me to do.”

By Nancy Zoellner





CORRECTIONAL CONTROL



Everybody's on a budget these days, and ECC has basically done everything they can to meet my needs, and they've done that on my budget. They're a dependable company. They're a reputable company. They've been around, and anytime I have a problem, they're always there for me to help me fix that problem. I get very quick service. They're very responsive, and its just been a great partnership with them in the years that I've been here at this facility.

**SHERIFF RODNEY HERRING**  
GRUNDY COUNTY, MISSOURI



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# LOOKING FOR A LIFECHANGING CAREER? LOOK NO FURTHER

The Missouri Sheriffs' Association's 700-Hour Basic Peace Officer Law Enforcement Academy is your gateway to a fulfilling career in law enforcement. Whether you aspire to serve in municipal or county law enforcement, our comprehensive program is designed to equip you with the essential skills and certifications needed to excel in the field.

The MSA Training Academy also takes pride in being the only academy in the state that integrates jail and court security officer certification seamlessly into our curriculum.

At the MSA 700-Hour Basic Peace Officer Academy, we go beyond the State of Missouri's minimum basic training requirements for peace officer licensing. Upon graduation, you will not only meet those requirements, but you will also emerge with a host of valuable certifications, including:

- Class "A" Peace Officer License: Providing you with the authority to safeguard and serve your community with integrity.
- HFRG Defensive Tactics Certification: Equipping you with essential skills for personal and public safety.
- TASER Certification: Ensuring proficiency in the responsible use of conducted electrical weapons.
- OC/Pepper Spray Certification: Fostering expertise in the application of non-lethal force when necessary.
- First Responder Certification: Empowering you to act swiftly and effectively in emergency situations.
- NHTSA SFST Certification: Mastering the art of Standardized Field Sobriety Testing for impaired driving detection.
- Less Lethal Munitions Certification: Understanding the proper use of less-lethal tools for crowd control and self-defense.



The Missouri Sheriffs' Association Law Enforcement Academy Class #283, hosted by the Stone County Sheriff's Office, graduated 15 students in November and all of them had jobs waiting for them. Three graduates are now working as Stone County deputies: (left to right) Deputies Ashton Canfield, Luke Houseman, and Ethan Newbold. Sheriff Doug Rader (right) said he was very proud of all of them for their dedication and commitment to completing the 11-month academy.



The Platte County Missouri Sheriff's Office hosted the graduation ceremony for Class 285 of the Missouri Sheriffs' Association Basic Law Enforcement Academy. Class 285 consisted of 16 cadets from five different agencies. Three of the cadets Deputy Paul Jaeger, Deputy Andrew Menefee, and Deputy Jon Middendorf were commissioned with the Platte County Sheriff's Office.



Franklin County Sheriff Steve Pelton recently welcomed five new graduates from the Missouri Sheriffs' Association Training Academy to his office. Pictured (left to right) are Connie Ward, who swore the deputies in; new Deputies David Cox, Alan Vance, Whitney Waggoner, Alex Lewis, Patrick Martin; and Sheriff Pelton.

The academy is committed to providing a comprehensive and dynamic learning experience that prepares you for the diverse challenges of law enforcement — and we have years of experience and thousands of graduates to prove it!

Shortly after being licensed by the State of Missouri, the Missouri Sheriffs' Association Training Academy (MSATA) started its first Basic Peace Officer Academy on January 14, 1997 in Bolivar, Missouri. The class of fourteen graduated on July 19 of that year. Since then, the MSATA has held 291 Basic Academy classes and graduated 3,712 newly licensed peace officers — more than any other academy in the state.

In addition to the graduation numbers, there is another uniqueness that sets the MSATA program apart from others. The MSATA is not tied to a brick-and-mortar location like other academies. Instead, we take part-time basic peace officer training to rural outlying areas of the state. This allows students to remain in their community — working and raising a family while attending class.

**Secure your path to excellence at the Missouri Sheriffs' Association's 700-Hour Basic Peace Officer Law Enforcement Academy. Your journey towards a rewarding career starts here, visit [www.mosheriffs.com](http://www.mosheriffs.com).**



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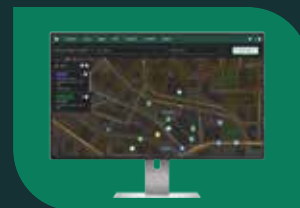
Discover how layering technology and data can help your agency respond to incidents faster while ensuring better outcomes and improving officer safety.



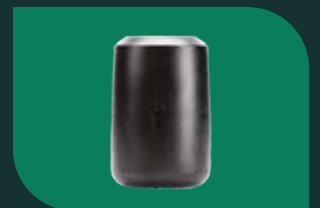
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# The Times They Are a-Changin'



The problem isn't going away. Missouri Department of Health & Senior Services data shows that adult-use marijuana sales reached approximately \$1.04 billion in 2023.

I recently had a conversation with my former chief, and for the first time in my adult life, I will no longer have a commission as a police officer in Missouri. I knew it was just a matter of time, and honestly, I really don't have much of a desire to put on a uniform again (although I won't hesitate to help out in an emergency situation). Thirty-plus years is good for me.

Since that conversation, I've had plenty of time to reflect on just how much has changed in this profession since I began back in the 80s and what new challenges are faced in the daily lives of law enforcement officers and administrators.

My first patrol car was the mighty Ford Crown Victoria with the big square front end, the vinyl

bench seat (that your co-workers would slather with Armor-All so you'd shoot across the thing on every turn if you weren't seat belted in), and just a few pieces of specialized equipment — the police radio with about ten channels, the siren with four tones and two knobs, the On/Off switch for the overheads, and the shotgun rack that always seemed to be in the way no matter how much you tried to avoid it. My first sidearm was a Colt Diamondback (which I still have), and that, with two speed loaders on my belt, was all I thought I needed to conquer the world and fight crime.

Early in my career, I learned that things would change over time, and I knew that I would have to adjust to those changes and adapt how we do things to address them. The one change that I NEVER saw coming as a rookie cop was the legalization of cannabis throughout the country and in our state and the negative impact it has caused, especially with vehicle crashes.

We are all aware of the problems that alcohol impairment cause, and I dedicated a large part of my career to fighting impaired driving issues and training others how to successfully identify impairment and make good cases.

Alcohol Impairment has been one of the main contributing factors in vehicle crashes for decades, accounting on average for about 30 percent of all crash fatalities. According to the NHTSA Traffic Safety Facts — 2021 Data:

- In 2021, there were an estimated 6,102,936 police-reported traffic crashes in which 42,939 people were killed and an estimated 2,497,657 people were injured, which was about a 10 percent overall increase from 2020.
- In 2021, there were 13,384 people killed in alcohol-impaired-driving crashes, an average of one alcohol-impaired-driving fatality every 39 minutes. Fatalities in alcohol-impaired-driving crashes increased by 14 percent (11,718 to 13,384 fatalities) from 2020 to 2021.

So, just how big is the cannabis issue that we are currently facing? According to a recent Gallup Poll, more people are smoking cannabis than cigarettes for the first time in the history of this country. Some states have even decriminalized some of the "hard" drugs like heroin and methamphetamine.

Don't let your 420 go up in smoke.  
Plan a safe and sober ride.

**NHTSA** IF YOU FEEL DIFFERENT  
YOU DRIVE DIFFERENT



According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), 56 percent of drivers in serious injury and fatal crashes had at least one drug in their system.

In a recent article that aired on CNN, they reported the following:

**Retailers reported a record \$106.5 million in adult-use recreational cannabis sales in December, breaking the previous record of \$98.7 million set in July.**

- Documented marijuana-related traffic accidents that required treatment in an emergency room rose 475 percent between 2010 and 2021.
- Just after Canadian legalization in 2018, when marijuana stores and products were limited, researchers found a 94 percent increase in emergency room visits.

• The 2016 Drug and Alcohol Crash Risk Study found marijuana was the most frequently detected drug other than alcohol. In addition, people using cannabis were more likely to be involved in crashes.

Unfortunately, we haven't kept up with the cannabis issue. The only research that currently exists on the effects of cannabis is on plant material with a THC level of less than 5 percent, even though most plant cannabis being sold today can contain 20 percent THC or more. Extracts can reach as high as 90 percent or more.

Most officers haven't received specialized training in detecting drug impairment, but there are courses available to help with that — many of them at no cost to the officer or agency.

Every spring, the Missouri Department of Transportation (MoDOT) participates in the National "Spring Impaired Driving Campaign," which runs from March 15 to April 19, 2024. This campaign focuses on impaired driving caused by alcohol and drugs, with a special emphasis during "4-20," which is one of the international days of celebration for cannabis users. During this campaign, every law enforcement officer is encouraged to aggressively work to remove impaired drivers from the roadways to help keep our communities safe.

MoDOT encourages all agencies to take part in this and all the other campaigns throughout the year, and overtime (you can now get double time instead of time and a half) funding is available. If you're not currently receiving funding, reach out to me, and I can help you with the application and process.

Unfortunately, too many law enforcement officers are killed as a result of vehicle crashes, too often caused by an impaired driver. As you go out and conduct your enforcement, remember, the life you save by removing an impaired driver may be one of your family, one of your co-workers, and may even be your own.

Be safe out there, and have a successful campaign!

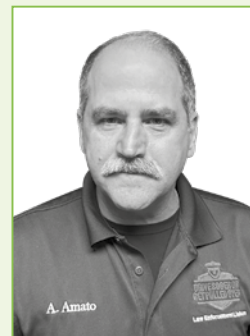
<sup>1</sup>\*Bob Dylan song, 1964

<sup>2</sup> <https://crashstats.nhtsa.dot.gov/Api/Public/ViewPublication/813515>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.npr.org/2022/08/30/1120024399/marijuana-cigarette-use-gallup-poll>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.nhtsa.gov/risky-driving/drug-impaired-driving>

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.cnn.com/2023/09/06/health/marijuana-traffic-accidents-wellness/index.html>



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Scan to view the 420 Drug-Impaired Driving Enforcement Campaign for sharing on social media.



# HEROES

By Nancy Zoellner

## *Among Us*

**D**ictionary.com defines a hero as “A person noted for courageous acts or nobility of character; a person who, in the opinion of others, has special achievements, abilities, or personal qualities and is regarded as a role model or ideal.”

That definition surely fits these men and women who were recognized in 2023.

### MISSISSIPPI COUNTY

Late last year, Captain Barry W. Morgan Jr., with the Mississippi County Sheriff's Office, and Missouri State Highway Patrol Trooper Joshua J. Schuenemeyer were presented with the Medal of Valor by Lt. Governor Mike Kehoe for their acts of bravery. Missouri's Medal of Valor, the highest award a law enforcement officer, firefighter, or EMS worker can receive, is awarded annually. Recommendations are submitted by the Medal of Valor Review Board, which includes representatives from Missouri's public safety disciplines and the general public.

On the morning of March 17, 2022, heavy fog enveloped Interstate 57 near Charleston, contributing to a chain reaction crash involving more than 45 vehicles, including many tractor-trailers. The crash killed five people and injured more than a dozen others.

Capt. Morgan and Trooper Schuenemeyer were among the first emergency personnel on the scene. Captain Morgan found a seriously injured driver trapped in the driver's seat in the remains of a tractor. Its cab had been torn away, and the driver was screaming for



**Pictured left to right: Trooper Joshua J. Schuenemeyer, Captain Barry W. Morgan, Jr. and Lt. Governor Mike Kehoe.**

help. Trooper Schuenemeyer, who had been assisting other motorists, arrived, and he and Captain Morgan attempted to pull away the crumpled dashboard and free the driver. So much of the tractor had been ripped away that the two stood on the engine block as they attempted the rescue.

Fire service personnel had not yet reached this area of the crash scene, and trucks and cars were burning around the remains of the





**Pictured left to right: Franklin County Sheriff Steve Pelton, Deputy Chris Coleman and Major Trevor Wild.**

tractor; the ground beneath it was covered with diesel fuel. Fire and intense heat were encroaching on all sides.

Capt. Morgan and Trooper Schuenemeyer attempted to pull the driver out through the passenger doorway, but his legs were caught under the dashboard. With time running out, Trooper Schuenemeyer ran to the driver's side of the truck, placing himself between two burning tractor-trailers. Flames now burned overhead as fire had spread to the tractor. Trooper Schuenemeyer was able to free the driver's legs, and Capt. Morgan pulled the driver out the passenger doorway as flames spread across the remains of the wreckage. The driver was transported to a local hospital but succumbed to his injuries as he was being flown to another hospital.

The nomination stated that "In the midst of a massive crash scene, with fire burning all around them, Capt. Morgan and Trooper Schuenemeyer each displayed undaunted courage and resourcefulness, risking their own lives in an attempt to save the life of the severely injured truck driver."

#### **FRANKLIN COUNTY**

Franklin County Deputy Chris Coleman was presented with the Franklin County Sheriff's Office Life Saving Award for exemplary service and bravery exhibited during an event on May 21. Deputy Coleman was helping direct traffic due to a downed power line when he observed smoke coming from an Ameren service truck. Sheriff Steve Pelton said Deputy Coleman "put himself in harm's way to extinguish fires on the vehicle and, finding an unresponsive person in need of medical attention, pulled the person from the dangerous area and assisted in life-saving techniques which led to a life being saved."

#### **BATES COUNTY**

Several members of the Bates County Sheriff's Office were presented with Life Saving Awards for bravery and courageous and quick actions taken in 2023. Several other employees received Letters of Commendation for their assistance in those calls for service.

**On March 26**, a call for service was dispatched to the Old Town Access boat ramp in rural Rich Hill, Missouri. Dispatch received a report of a boat that became disabled, causing the occupants to flee the boat as it floated down the river. One of those occupants, an 85-year-old man, was hanging on to some downed trees in the water. Off-duty K-9 Sergeant Justin Shaffer was on his way to the river to fish with his family. When he arrived, he and an off-duty Adrian firefighter sprang into action by entering the water and securing the male subject until additional first responders arrived. They then acted as a team to bring the older man to shore and secure his boat to prevent more damage to it. As a result, Sgt. Shaffer received a Life Saving Award. Deputies Jonhenry Jackson and Rance Mears and Communications Officer Becki DeLuca received Letters of Commendation for their actions during the event.

**In the late hours of July 9**, dispatch received a call from the Cass County Sheriff's Office about a possible kidnapping of a female who was being tracked by a cell phone. Cass County's dispatch quickly notified Bates County when they learned the car was traveling south on I-49 in their county. Deputies and a Missouri State Highway Patrol trooper identified and attempted to stop the vehicle. A pursuit ensued. The vehicle was eventually spiked but continued on flat tires. So Deputies Briar Tiller and Jonhenry Jackson tried to pin the vehicle in using the push bumpers on their patrol vehicles. When that failed, Sheriff Chad Anderson used his patrol pickup to PIT Maneuver the vehicle, pushing it to the side of the road and ending the pursuit. The female was rescued and transported to the hospital. It was later discovered that at least one of the kidnappers was armed with a loaded AK47 Pistol.

**Bates County Sheriff Chad Anderson**



In the midst of danger, they showed true heroism. Their actions define courage and selflessness, inspiring us all.





Deputies Tiller and Jackson and Sheriff Anderson were all presented with Life Saving Awards. Deputy Larry Marshal and Communications Officer Jessica Blomquist each received a Letter of Commendation for their actions during the event.

**On the night of September 7**, Bates County Dispatch was advised that the Butler Police Department was in pursuit of a stolen vehicle driven by a suspected armed subject. During the pursuit, the suspect rammed a Butler police officer head-on. Deputies picked up the pursuit on 52 Highway, where the truck lost control and left the roadway, flipping end-over-end multiple times before bursting into flames with the driver still in the vehicle. Deputies Rance Mears and Briar Tiller rushed to extract the driver, who was taken to the hospital by Bates County EMS. The deputies also received medical care at the hospital.

Deputies Mears and Tiller each received a Life Saving Award. Communications Officer Becki DeLuca received a Letter of Commendation for her actions during the events.

**On September 28**, dispatch received a call from a frantic mother dealing with her suicidal son, who had jumped from her moving vehicle and was walking along the interstate. The mother stated her son was going to commit suicide by jumping in front of a vehicle on the interstate. Deputies arrived on scene and began de-escalation techniques with the male subject, who continued to walk away from the deputies along the highway. Once several deputies arrived on scene, they determined it was no longer safe for him or them to continue to negotiate while cars were speeding by. The deputies worked together to overpower the male subject, who was secured into a patrol vehicle and transported to the Bates County Hospital for mental health treatment.

Deputies Brandon Lindsey, Jonhenry Jackson, and Detective Amy Fishbaugh each received a Life Saving Award. Detectives Paul Stockdale and Payton Wilson and Communications Officer Becki DeLuca each received a Letter of Commendation for their actions during the events.

## NEW FEATURE

"Heroes Among Us" is a new addition to The Missouri Sheriff magazine. Sheriffs — if one of your staff members is presented with a life-saving award, please send that information to our editor, Nancy Zoellner, at [nancy@mosheriffs.com](mailto:nancy@mosheriffs.com).





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# Boone County's Planned Training Facility Will Prepare Law Enforcement for Success

By Nancy Zoellner

**Boone County Sheriff Dwayne Carey said when he's invited to speak to civic organizations or on radio talk shows, he likes to compare law enforcement training to college football.**

"A college football coach has his players practicing all week. They're watching film, they're putting in schemes, they're doing everything they can to get ready for their opponent on Saturday. It's really the same thing for law enforcement. We have to train, we have to debrief, we have to plan for every situation, but the difference for us is we never know when our 'big game' is going to be. It could be on a Thursday afternoon, a Monday morning, or a Saturday night, but we have to be prepared for that 'big game' whenever it happens," he said.

For decades, they had been training in the Coliseum at the old Boone County Fairgrounds. Sheriff Carey said when ownership of that land was transferred to the city of Columbia in 2021, he started looking for a solution. That search included meeting with PW Architects.

"This new training center will be based off everything we've been doing for decades over at the old Coliseum. Basically, we're just transferring our philosophy from that old building into this new building, incorporating lessons learned from other critical incidents across the nation and the technology that's available to us. My goal is to provide the best training possible, not only for our deputies and staff but also for the sheriffs' offices in central Missouri and the municipal agencies within those counties."

The two 27,000-square-foot buildings will be constructed on the Boone County Sheriff's Office and Jail campus that's also occupied by the 911/

Office of Emergency Management and an annex building shared with the county clerk. They'll be separate facilities connected by a covered, enclosed walkway.

The sheriff said the tactical firearms range will be unique to Missouri, as it has not only a 100-yard range but also a live shoot house.

"A lot of agencies now carry patrol rifles,

so we wanted to be able to provide a 100-yard range, which is the length of a football field.

We'll have lanes in our building where you can shoot at 100 yards to qualify, but we'll also have it set up to where we can bring a patrol vehicle in, and officers can practice shooting quickly while sitting in the driver's seat," Sheriff Carey said. "We'll also have barricades throughout our tactical range, so they can move from cover to cover, firing rounds down range."

At the west end of the facility is the indoor live shoot house to allow year-round training – with a twist.

"We're working with a couple of different companies that make movable ballistic walls. We tentatively plan to have three different residential areas with three different layouts where SWAT teams can train or where we can hold building search or active shooter training. But what will make our shoot house unique is that we'll be able to move interior walls, so when SWAT teams or individual deputies/officers return, it could have a completely different look. I'm really excited about that because, although it's obviously training, it will feel like a live exercise when they're going through it," Sheriff Carey said. "It will be a great experience for our deputies and all of our law enforcement partners."

The perimeter of the shoot house will be constructed with 3/8-inch steel covered with a ballistic rubber to keep all rounds inside. The interior shoot house walls will also be steel-covered with rubber-like block paneling engineered to capture the rounds.

"We'll use non-lead rounds that fragment in the shoot houses. If they don't hit on target and hit one of the walls, they basically break up and fall into the airspace between the steel and ballistic blocks. We're using the same product and the same setup that's used by the Navy Seals in their shoot houses," Sheriff Carey said. "No other law enforcement agency in the state has anything like it to my knowledge."

The adjacent training center will include a training room that seats about 160 people, allow-





ing Boone County to host large regional trainings; an accordion door down the middle will allow two smaller classes to be offered simultaneously. Another room outfitted with virtual reality technology will be used for shoot-don't-shoot and defensive driving training. A designated defense tactics room - basically a large open room with a college wrestling mat - will allow them to train as needed without first emptying the room of tables and chairs.

A large warehouse space outfitted with three large garage doors and a 911 telecommunicator room will allow indoor vehicle stop exercises that aren't available anywhere else in the state.

"For example, we can have a patrol vehicle with a deputy or police officer outside one of those garage doors, and we've already set up a scenario inside the warehouse. The dispatcher radios the officer waiting outside to tell him that an armed robbery just occurred, and the suspect is in a black truck with no license plates. Then the garage door goes up, and low and behold, there's a black truck and it's slowly moving away. The officer has to put the patrol vehicle in the proper position and then run through the scenario just like he or she would on the street," Sheriff Carey said, adding that the warehouse training area will be outfitted with a giant screen on one wall and a multitude of cameras that will capture the scene from different angles. "Just like after a football game, that will allow the instructors and the participants to see what they did really well and where they need to improve."

One end of the warehouse space will be cordoned into rooms set up like a typical home - complete with furniture.

"The dispatcher could send two deputies to a domestic disturbance. They might go into the living room setting where they'll need to watch

hands and separate the two parties so they can conduct interviews," Sheriff Carey said. "They might not ever see the exact same scenario when they're working on the street, but they're going to be able to pull from their memory - draw from that training experience - to get through the real-life experience."

The warehouse area will also include a large jail cell where they can train on cell extraction and entry - something they can't do in a jail that's always full.

If all goes as planned, they will break ground in late March or early April. Sheriff Carey said the \$14 million needed to build the training center and tactical shooting range is in place. As of deadline for this issue of the magazine, they hadn't yet learned if they were approved for a \$4 million grant that will allow them to build a childcare center on the campus.

"The architect and I have been working on the site plan, and we're trying to create kind of a college-like campus with some outdoor seating where, as an example, a 911 telecommunicator on his or her lunch break could walk over and have a picnic lunch with their child. Then the child goes back in, and the parent goes back to work," Sheriff Carey said, adding that if they get the grant, they'll start by offering childcare to the people who work on the campus. "Then, after we kind of get our feet under us, we'll look at opening it up to our other first responder partners in the area. The presiding commissioner and I have talked about the childcare business being a bit scary because it's not really our bailiwick. The state has a lot of rules that have to be followed, but we feel that it's important because in Columbia - and Boone County as a whole, childcare is not only expensive but there's no 24-hour, seven-day-a-week facility. The job of a first responder isn't just 9 to 5."

**A large warehouse space outfitted with three large garage doors and a 911 telecommunicator room will allow indoor vehicle stop exercises that aren't available anywhere else in the state.**

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St. Charles County Sheriff Scott A. Lewis presented Deputy John Fenner with the Sheriff's Commendation for his role in a trafficking case.

HE PUT HIS TRAINING INTO ACTION TO BECOME AN

# Agent of Change

By Nancy Zoellner

On the morning of August 24, 2023, Deputy John Fenner with the St. Charles County Sheriff's Department contacted his shift supervisor in Court Services regarding a possible human trafficking case. The evening before, Deputy Fenner had completed a two-day training on human trafficking presented by Dan Nash, a retired trooper who worked in the Human Trafficking Division of the Missouri State Highway Patrol.

Deputy Fenner said he was so impacted by what he learned that he made it a goal to use that training by the end of the month to identify and respond to a trafficking case. He never dreamed he'd accomplish that goal the very next day.

"I went into the courthouse at the start of my shift, and the X-ray machine was down, so people had to walk through our body scanner, and we had to manually search the contents of their purses and pockets. We have marshals (court security) who man that position, and usually, I would just go straight to my assignment. However, I saw that they were a little overwhelmed, so I went over to help move the line of people waiting to get into the courthouse through security," Deputy Fenner said. "I was there maybe 10 to 15 minutes when a guy came through the line with two tattoos that we learned in class were indicative of involvement with human trafficking. To have one is something. To have both – and right next to each

other – was an immediate red flag. It was exactly what they taught us to look for, so I knew I had to investigate it."

After striking up a conversation with the suspect, Deputy Fenner got consent to take a picture of those tattoos. He then left the security check-in and shared the photos with his corporal, who had also attended the human trafficking class. His corporal agreed – he was on to something. Deputy Fenner checked the suspect's criminal record and found that he frequented numerous addresses along the I-70 corridor, which is another red flag in trafficking cases. He also learned the suspect had outstanding warrants from other jurisdictions, so they had reason to detain him.

Deputy Fenner said during the suspect's warrant arrest, he conducted a property inventory and found identification belonging to a female – another red flag – and he received consent to search the suspect's phone. That led to the discovery of texts indicating the suspect was

involved in human trafficking, as well as possible additional criminal activity. Deputy Fenner said he took the information he had gathered and turned it over to the Regional Human Trafficking Task Force. He also provided the Missouri Information Analysis Center with relevant information.

In the meantime, while contacting the suspect near the courtroom, Deputy Fenner saw a female defendant leave the courtroom and make an unusual comment to the suspect. He recognized this as a clue for identifying trafficking victims and discretely contacted the possible victim. After using techniques learned in the course and identifying the female as a victim, he provided her with resources that could help her escape that life.

"We learned in training that they likely have been forced into prostitution for a number of years, and by arresting the prostitute, we do nothing to solve the problem. She gets arrested, booked on



Operations Commander Lt. Eric Gremminger, Sheriff Scott Lewis, Deputy John Fenner and Sgt. Don Van Court Services Supervisor were recognized by American Legion Post 312 for their involvement in the case. The Post also presented Deputy Fenner with a Meritorious Service Award.



charges, and released, and once out, she's punished by her trafficker for not making her quota and for making contact with law enforcement. She's usually sexually abused, then put back on the street and forced to work twice as hard to make up for the time lost," he said. "The training was about making us cognizant of the failed approach of the system and how we get past that. It taught us that instead of the 'who, what, when, and where,' it's more about treating them like human beings and offering help. So I followed the model and did exactly what I was trained to do."

Deputy Fenner said he recently learned that the woman had contacted the resources he provided to get help and get out. He has since used the training to provide assistance to another young woman who had been trafficked for four years but managed to escape.

St. Charles County Sheriff Scott Lewis later presented Deputy Fenner with a Sheriff's Commendation for his role in the first trafficking case.

"Deputy Fenner took the information he obtained in training and put it into action less than 30 minutes into his first duty shift after that training. His attention to detail and thorough investigation resulted in the identification of a human trafficker and two victims," the sheriff said, adding that with his full support, Deputy Fenner has since contacted numerous surrounding agencies involved in combating human trafficking to increase his knowledge and help expand his department's capabilities.

"I promised my supervisors that while working these investigations, I'd continue to take care of my court duties or any other duties handed to me. I wouldn't let this distract me, and I would do this on top of my other responsibilities. But I do have two goals for this year," Deputy Fenner said. "One focuses on education. I'd like to put together a training class that I hopefully would be able to get POST certified, and then I'd like to teach it here at the sheriff's department. I would share my experiences, but I'd also bring in a detective as well as our prosecutors and our victims advocate to teach all our deputies and marshals the behaviors and indicators of sex trafficking and child sex trafficking and how to investigate cases when they come up."

He said his second goal is a little more ambitious.

"I would like to come up with a team - and I've created the acronym HURT - Human Trafficking Uniform Response Team - here at the sheriff's department," Deputy Fenner said. "The team would take a handful of motivated deputies and marshals and liaison them with social workers, victim advocates, and anyone else that has a skill set they can contribute to be an agent of change."

He's already outlined the team requirements: HURT members must be willing to do work that has no end, to do the work and possibly never get the credit they deserve, and to do the work for the right reasons.

"They'll take it from whoever saw the indicator, then do all the legwork to gath-

er all the information they can to build a detailed informational report. They'll find out where the suspected trafficking is occurring, and then they'll pass that information on to detectives from the respective agencies," he said. "As law enforcement, we need to do everything we can to save these victims. I hope that by putting this information out there, other law enforcement agencies will want to know more and be inspired to establish a team in their areas. From the start, I've asked the Lord to put me in a position where I can make an impact - not to bring attention to myself but to bring attention to the issue. I hope I can continue to do that because this is a problem that is never going away."



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# Proven Methods

## Help Identify, Assist Victims of Human Trafficking

By Nancy Zoellner



**"We've trained over 150 people, and every time Dan (Nash) puts on a class, somebody contacts him within 24 hours and says they have a trafficking victim or a trafficker they want to go after."**

**S**tefanie Kaiser is the Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children Coordinator for The Child Advocacy Center of Northeast Missouri, which provided the training taken by Deputy John Fenner. She said they've heard a lot of success stories - just none that delivered as quickly as Deputy Fenner's.

"The deputy was able to identify a suspected trafficker and get him behind bars within 15 hours after leaving the training," Kaiser said. "We've trained over 150 people, and every time Dan (Nash) puts on a class, somebody contacts him within 24 hours and says they have a trafficking victim or a trafficker they want to go after."

She said one of those calls came from a school resource officer who had suspected that a child in his school was being trafficked. The day after completing the training, he said he knew she was being trafficked, and, thanks to the training, he finally had the tools and the understanding to do something about it. He helped arrange housing for the girl, helped provide her with an advocate, and got her connected to services. Then, he turned the traffickers' information over to the Eastern District of Missouri Trafficking Task Force.

Dan Nash, the co-founder of the Human Trafficking Training Center (HTTC) and the lead instructor, is a former Missouri State trooper. He retired after 27 years, 24 of which were spent as an investigator in the Narcotics/Vice Unit, Criminal Investigation Unit, and the Human Trafficking Unit, the brainchild of Nash. He also served as the enforcement supervisor of the Missouri Attorney General's Office Statewide Anti-Human Trafficking Task Force.

On the HTTC site, he explains why they're hearing so many success stories.

"The problem with most anti-human trafficking training provided to law enforcement is that it merely teaches what trafficking is and how to identify it. Such trainings are really, in effect, nothing more than awareness events. In order to be effective, law enforcement needs to learn actual skills so they are equipped to conduct investigations that ensure arrests and prosecutions, know how to properly interview a possible victim or offender, know how to set up various proactive operations, or even how to write up the proper reports."

To make it even more clear, he provides an analogy:

"We cannot expect law enforcement officers to arrest drunk drivers if all we do is tell them what a drunk driver looks like. We also need to teach them how to administer a standard field sobriety test and other basic, related police skills. The same is true for human trafficking. Across the country, a small fraction of law enforcement officers receive any training whatsoever on human trafficking, and most of that training doesn't provide practical skills that officers can use in the field."

He said the HTTC was established to address those issues.

To date, the Child Advocacy Center of Northeast Missouri, which serves St. Charles, Lincoln, Warren, Montgomery, Pike, Ralls, Marion, Monroe, Shelby, Lewis,



Clark, Knox, Scotland, and Schuyler counties, has funded the \$5,000-per-day cost of the trainings through grants.

Kaiser, who worked in law enforcement for 30 years, spent the last 16 or 17 years of her career as a detective in Major Crimes Against Persons. The bulk of her work was handling crimes against children. She said that's why she hopes the other 13 child advocacy centers in the state will look for ways to provide the training for their multi-disciplinary teams.

Child advocacy centers provide a coordinated response to victims of child abuse - mostly sexual abuse, but also physical and emotional abuse, as well as neglect, witnesses to violence, and drug-endangered children. The victims are interviewed in a child-friendly setting by an interviewer who's trained in child development and in asking non-leading, non-suggestive questions. Then, a multi-disciplinary team that includes medical professionals, law enforcement, mental health, prosecution, child protective services, victim advocacy,

and other professionals make decisions together about how to help the child based on the interview, which is videotaped.

The child advocacy centers also offer counseling, medical exams, courtroom preparation, and preventative training. There is no cost for any of the services. Kaiser said the HTTC program is part of that preventative training.

"Participants are taught how to provide victims with resources that will help them get out of that life," she explained. "Because most victims are in their childbearing years, when you give them the resources they can use to save themselves, you're also saving any children they might have. The benefit is generational."

*For more information on Nash's training, visit [humantraffickingtrainingcenter.com](http://humantraffickingtrainingcenter.com). Kaiser is available to speak to groups and to help other child advocacy centers find funding for the HTTC training. She can be reached via email at [skaiser@cacnemo.org](mailto:skaiser@cacnemo.org) or by calling 636-332-0545 x143.*

**"In order to be effective, law enforcement needs to learn actual skills so they are equipped to conduct investigations that ensure arrests and prosecutions, know how to properly interview a possible victim or offender, know how to set up various proactive operations, or even how to write up the proper reports."**

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# Sheriffs Talk

## About the Issues

By Nancy Zoellner



**A**re you interested in knowing more about law enforcement? Do you want to be better informed on proposed legislation that could affect your rights or how law enforcement does its job? Would you like an inside look at sheriffs' offices and jails provided by those who know them best? Then, you'll want to tune in to the new Missouri Sheriffs' Association (MSA) podcast, "Sheriffs Talk."

Each month, sheriffs and other law enforcement professionals will appear on the podcast, speaking on topics they care about or projects they're tackling. The podcast, which is taped at the MSA office in Jefferson City, can be streamed on the MSA website [mosheriffs.com](http://mosheriffs.com), the MSA Facebook page, YouTube, and Vimeo. As new podcasts are posted, earlier versions will be placed into an archive file and available to the public.

Sam Boyd hosted the inaugural podcast, interviewing Kevin Merritt, executive director of the MSA, and Christian County Sheriff Brad Cole, the current president of the MSA Board of Directors. Boyd, who has nearly 30 years of law enforcement experience, works in MSA Support Services.

Merritt discussed the mission of the MSA – to support the Office of Sheriff and the Constitution through legislative efforts, training, and technical assistance, and he discussed how that's accomplished. He explained how honorary and business members help the MSA carry out its mission and he talked about the MSA's 700-Hour Basic Peace Officer Law Enforcement Academy, which has graduated more students than any other academy in the state. He also provided information on the Benevolent Fund, which assists families of fallen sheriffs and deputies, and the scholarship fund, established for children of sheriffs' office employees.

Sheriff Cole shared information about his county, and he talked about his role on the MSA board. In that position, he's spent a lot of time walking the halls of the capitol and speaking with legislators, urging them to support public safety legislation that is good for Missouri and vote against bills that would take away citizens' rights and harm communities.

Jeanne Merritt, MSA's director of marketing, came up with the idea for the podcast in early 2023.

"I thought podcasts would be another way for sheriffs to educate their communities and make them more aware of what they do, the

issues they deal with, and the challenges they face. I also thought it would be a good way to tell people about the MSA. I took the idea to the board, and then Sam Boyd and I started watching podcasts to get ideas – to see how they were set up and how interviews were handled," she said.

**Each month, sheriffs and other law enforcement professionals will appear on the podcast, speaking on topics they care about or projects they're tackling.**

Jeanne also contacted sheriffs, asking if they'd like to appear on the podcasts. Several got on board right away, and the list has continued to grow.

Future podcasts will feature St. Charles County Sheriff Scott Lewis, who will discuss the history of the Office of Sheriff and how law enforcement

has changed over the years. Audrain County Sheriff Matt Oller will talk about the budgeting process, and Cape Girardeau County Sheriff Ruth Ann Dickerson will present a two-part series on mental health issues in jails.

"In the first session, Sheriff Dickerson will be explaining the problem because most people don't know that county jails are now housing people with mental health issues," Jeanne said. "In the second part, she'll discuss the lack of resources and the cost – not only the cost to the community but also the cost to the detainee, who is being held because a judge orders an evaluation but the sheriffs can't find a place that will take him or her. In the meantime, the detainee isn't getting help and isn't getting better, and in some cases may even be getting worse."

Jeanne said the podcasts will also allow sheriffs to share their ideas with other sheriffs.

Stone County Sheriff Doug Rader is one. He will discuss the benefits of hosting citizens academies.

This isn't Jeanne's first project aimed at educating the public about the role of the county sheriff. Fifteen years ago, she got permission from the board to start publishing *The Missouri Sheriff* magazine. In 2021 the MSA also started publishing a second magazine, *Missouri Jails*. The magazines, which come out four times a year, are mailed to business and individual honorary members of the MSA, business partners, Missouri's legislators, and other law enforcement agencies and organizations.

HomeWAV, which provides inmate communication technology for jails and correctional facilities, sponsored the first podcast.







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## 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

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