

To the Editor:

I would like to respond to Amanda Davidson's recent letter regarding the misconduct of two local police officers. The two officers in question do not work for the Sheriff's Dept. or for an agency within Dodge County. I do agree with just one point she makes in that these officers deserve tough punishment. Should Amanda have seen the television interview I did, my recommendation for the primary offender was termination.

Amanda also makes some serious charges against the members of the Sheriff's Dept., to include myself. I get paid to accept a few shots once and awhile but I will stand up and support the members of the department. The letter does not ask for accountability of my staff it alleges misconduct on the part of the Sheriff's Dept. I need to clarify my position and set the record straight to ensure the citizens of Dodge County that we did it right.

I received a call early that morning from the supervisor on duty and he briefed me regarding the initial vehicle crash and that the suspects were two off-duty police officers. My direction to the supervisor was to work it hard, locate and identify both and hold them to a higher standard due to their occupation. That's what we did. Had this been a case or an ordinary citizen we would have finished the investigation within an hour and held the motor vehicle until the owner/operator came forward. Several deputies and a Randolph officer officers worked several hours to complete this task. They did a great job. I personally made contact that morning with the police chief and Mayor to tell them what had occurred. We hide nothing.

Amanda's allegation that "too many officer's have gotten away with stuff along these lines for too long" is totally false. At the Sheriff's Dept. we take off-duty conduct very serious and as serious as on-duty conduct. Our record is very clear. We have initiated harsh discipline, lengthy suspensions w/o pay, and terminations due to the off-duty conduct of Sheriff's Department employees. Law enforcement officers are held to a higher standard and rightfully so.

The letter lists a variety of offenses that Amanda feels these officers got away from. Most of her offenses do not exist. I want to assure everyone, for each traffic violation identified, a citation was written. We also requested criminal charges to the District Attorney's Office. As far as any discipline regarding their employment. That duty falls within the responsibility of their employer's policies and procedures. I am sure the Police and Fire Commission will look at this situation as seriously as I have.

The letter also makes mention of a previous WI Attorney General arrested in Dodge County for OWI. I remember that early morning call as well. Both of these cases were handled professionally with no favoritism to anybody. For Amanda to assume that both officers were "only getting a slap on the wrist" is a premature statement at best.

Lastly, our country's judicial system is based upon innocence until proven guilty. I recommend we let the system work as designed before we cast judgment upon anybody.

Sheriff Todd Nehls