

From the Office of the Sheriff: “Change & Transformation – A Team Effort”

As 2009 comes to a close, it closes out my seventh year as your Sheriff. I do not take that responsibility lightly, and am honored to serve in that capacity. From 2003 – 2009, your Dodge County Sheriff’s Department has undergone historic and unprecedented change. The depth and breath of which is unmatched in the law enforcement field. Since 2003, we have fifty different programs and initiatives that are new to the department. We also track several metrics in an effort to gauge our success or lack thereof. Many of these are visible to you, many go unnoticed.

These successful efforts would not be possible without the support and dedication from each of the 200 employees within the Sheriff’s Department. Each of the divisions, Patrol, Communications, Criminal Investigation, Corrections, and administrative staff play a substantial role in the fifty initiatives. Employees have been empowered and several of the ideas came from the employees themselves. To that end, I have identified the Sheriff’s Dept. “Top 10” of the fifty initiatives that are new and which I feel have been the most beneficial to you – the customer.

For the next several monthly updates, I will focus on these efforts one division at a time. My intent is to provide some insight into all the divisions in the department, the key role each plays, and how these divisions support the Sheriff’s Dept. “Top 10”, ensuring productive, cost efficient, professional, and dedicated services to you. Too often, you see the Patrolman or Detective which make up just 30% of the force. We have 140 other employees behind the scenes, filling critical roles supporting our overall efforts. The Department’s Top 10 initiatives include, in no particular order; technology integration and transformation, Federal Inmate Program, department transparency, fiscal restraint, Inmate Labor Program, Volunteer Programs, centralized communications, Most Wanted Program, drug investigations and community services. Many of these have several subsets and I will share with you some insight into each one.

This month I want to recognize the administrative and support staff within the department. Chief Deputy Blaine Lauersdorf and the administrative support staff work tirelessly to ensure the day-to-day operations of the department are maintained. Budget preparation, department policy, report transcription, evidence, and training management are just a few of the key tasks they provide. In six of the past seven years the department has finished the year with a budget surplus. A new transcription program is less cumbersome and allows employees to dictate reports from the office, squad or from home. Our evidence room is now managed by a civilian, allowing certified officers to focus on investigations. Paying the bills, maintaining websites, answering the telephones, and serving the public all fall upon the shoulders of our administrative staff. Most importantly, as you know, whenever you start a new program it generates additional work for those in subordinate rolls. Dedicated and professional, the employees have stepped up in support.

On the National War College front, we are studying economics and the role it plays in our lives. I have completed my non-lethal weapons and media studies. I continue to tutor fifth graders at the local elementary school and spent an afternoon last week decorating the college rotunda for Christmas. Next week I will be part of a volunteer group that will assist in the sendoff of spouses and children whose parents were killed in action, as they depart Washington D.C. for a free holiday trip provided by American Airlines. Hope to see many of you over the holidays, thanks for listening, tnehls@co.dodge.wi.us.