



MNPD NEWSLINE

THE OFFICIAL EMPLOYEE NEWSLETTER OF THE MNPD

December 22, 2016

News from the Chief



In this final newsletter of 2016, I want to begin by thanking all of our police department family for your dedication, ingenuity and otherwise incredibly hard work over the past year. I greatly appreciate all that you do on behalf of Nashville's citizens and visitors every day. As you know, 60 new police officers (Session 80) graduated from the academy last week and are now on the streets with Field Training Officers. A portion of my remarks to the graduating class, is, I think, appropriate for the last newsletter of the year.

Before us here tonight are 60 men and women ready and prepared to start a career in law enforcement. It is my hope that you will be with us for the next 20 to 30 years. So let's talk about these next few years.

Over these last months there has been a lot of public discourse concerning law enforcement, much of it not favorable to us. This is disappointing to me but, like all other matters, we need to keep things in perspective. There are over 17,000 law enforcement agencies in the United States, employing more than one million law enforcement officers. Frankly, as in any profession, some of these agencies should not exist. They do not serve the public well. Some of the law enforcement personnel do not have the qualifications to serve as a law enforcement officer.

However, when something happens anywhere that is negative, the same video or other account is replayed, over and over, on CNN and other news outlets. You and I have no responsibility or authority to control what occurs in other places by other people. Yet, in the minds of some, we are thought of as "the police" and any bad thing that happens anywhere is imputed to us here in Nashville. Although we do not have the authority or ability to control events in other places by other people, there are some who attempt to hold us accountable. As is said in some circles, "we get painted with the same brush." This is unfair, but it is reality.

So, what does the public really think of us? What is the public confidence in us? Do we have the support of the public—the people we work for? The answer is yes, and there is definitive evidence to support this.

I point you to a Gallup poll of the American public released in October of this year. We all know about the Gallup folks. They have been in the market research and public opinion business since 1935. If not the premier polling firm in America, they are certainly the most well-known and respected. According to this poll the public confidence in us is the highest it has been since 1967. The actual number is 76 percent, up 12 percent since last year—again, the highest rating since the 1967 rating of 77 percent...higher than at any time since the 1990s. But you didn't hear about this poll. It wasn't broadcast on the news on a daily basis. People on the talk shows were not discussing it. It wasn't the sort of thing the people that bring us the news felt was worthy of attention.

A smaller number of persons do not have confidence in us, and, although smaller in number, their thoughts should not be discounted. Actually, there is a benefit to us in having this smaller number of people receive the majority of the media attention. It puts us on alert, every day, to evaluate our practices and procedures. We should always listen to every voice. But, in the end, it is our responsibility to carry out our procedures in a manner that best serves the public good.

Remember the poll I mentioned—that 76 percent—keep in mind that is an average. It is very certain that there are places in America where the public confidence in law enforcement is very low. This obviously pulls the average down. This also means that there are some places where the public confidence far exceeds this 76 percent average. Nashville is one of those places. We work very hard to earn the confidence of the Nashville public and we will continue to do so.

For more than five decades, the men and women of this police department have gathered together on Christmas Eve morning to deliver food baskets and toys to needy Nashvillians who are not able to provide a meaningful Christmas for their families. That tradition continues this Saturday as we make deliveries to more than 170 families and elderly citizens. The recipients are those we have become aware of during the year through responding to calls for service in various neighborhoods.

I ask that all police department employees, sworn and civilian, certainly including the police officers who have graduated from the academy over the past year, do your best to join us this Saturday morning and take part in the deliveries. We will gather in the cafeteria of the old Tennessee State Prison at 6404 Centennial Boulevard in West Nashville. There will be a brief roll call celebration at 5:30 a.m. The first delivery will leave at 6 a.m. Those with Metro vehicles may use them for this purpose. You are also invited to bring your families.

Former Commander and now ECC Director Michele Donegan is serving as our Christmas Basket coordinator, also known as the "Chief Elf." This is no small undertaking, and I thank Michele and all of the Christmas Basket "elves" who continue to ensure that this tradition remains strong.

Happy Holidays. Be safe and enjoy family at this special time of year. I look forward to working with you in January to meet the challenges and congratulate the successes of 2017.

Happenings

Sixty new police officers graduated from 5½ months of training on December 15th and received their badges during a ceremony presided over by Mayor Megan Barry and Chief Steve Anderson.



Prior to graduation, Session 80 provided Christmas gifts to a family at a local shelter and assisted in planting 60 trees along Riverside Drive in East Nashville.



Shop with a Cop

Officers took 70 underprivileged kids Christmas shopping on December 20th as part of the Fraternal Order of Police's annual Shop with a Cop program. After shopping, the children wrapped their presents and enjoyed a pizza lunch provided by Hunt Brothers at the FOP's Andrew Jackson Lodge.





Season to Remember

Chief Steve Anderson on December 8th placed an ornament in honor of police officers killed in service to Nashville's citizens during the Season to Remember ceremony at Centennial Park.



Domestic Violence Division Captain Michelle Richter placed an ornament in remembrance of domestic violence victims.



Christmas Basket Program

Tennessee Titans players and staff donated a load of new toys to the MNPD's Christmas Basket Program, which will be delivered by officers to needy Nashville children on Christmas Eve morning. Titans quarterback Marcus Mariota was on hand to greet Chief Anderson and Christmas Basket Program volunteers at Baptist Sports Park on December 13th.



Mounted Patrol partnered with the Nashville Zoo and collected 1,637 new unwrapped Toys for the Christmas Basket Program. Mayor Barry stopped by, bringing gifts which will be delivered to needy children on Christmas Eve morning.



Drill & Ceremony Team

The Drill & ceremony team participated in the Nashville Christmas Parade and Session 80 graduation.



Citizen Police Academy Graduation

Chief Anderson congratulated the most recent graduates of the Citizen Police Academy during their December 5th graduation ceremony. They are now part of the MNPDP's 1,548 CPA alumni. The next class will convene early next year.



Annual Motorcycle Recertification

The 2016 annual motorcycle recertification was held November 7th -10th at the Metro Police Training Academy.

In addition to the certification exercises, additional skill building exercises were created.

Midtown Hills Precinct Officer Paul Joyner became the first champion of the Last Man Standing competition where riders participated in a timed skill event.



Central Precinct Officer Wes Henderson presents the “Elite Racing” cone to Officer Joyner.



Officer Henderson (background) and Midtown Hills Precinct Officer Phillip Murphy compete in the “Last Man Standing” event.



Central Precinct Officers Michael Schlegel and Michael Douglas participating in separate exercises.

Police Service Dog Certification

Canine officers competed in a Police Canine Association/ Police Service Dog Certification exercise which included the following events: Obedience, Agility, Evidence Search, Suspect Search, and Criminal Apprehension. Congratulations to Officer Brad Bracey and his partner Mojo, who scored an impressive 683.51 out of a possible 700 points.



Training Division Fitness Initiative

Participants in the 2016 MNPD Fitness Initiative completed a nine week program that began in August and concluded on October 15th, the date of the Heart Walk. The overall winner was Domestic Violence Division Police Operations Assistant II Brandon Hubbard.

Officers Cressie Prill and Ryan Allen placed second.



Pictured (l-r) are Captain Keith Stephens, Commander John Drake, Officer Cressie Prill, Police Operations Assistant Brandon Hubbard, Fraternal Order of Police President Sergeant James Smallwood, Training Officer Brian Allen, Training Sergeant Tiffany Gibson, and Fraternal Order of Police Vice-President Sergeant Mark Woodfin.

Explorers Program

MNPD Explorer Devyn Hollinsworth on December 8th was given the 2016 MADD Power of Youth Award for his work to prevent underage drinking and impaired driving.



Peer Supporters Training

Assistant Behavioral Health Services Manager David Kennington and Police Advocacy & Support Services (PASS) counselors on November 4th provided orientation and training to a new group of more than 60 Peer Supporters from Metro Police, Fire, the Sheriff's Office, and Emergency Communications Center.



WPLN Movers and Thinkers Program

Chaplain James Duke appeared December 8th on a panel for WPLN radio's Movers & Thinkers program. Personnel who respond to assist families and communities after traumatic events were interviewed.



G.R.E.A.T. Program

Officer Mark Bennett on December 3rd spoke with the Islamic Center of Tennessee Girl Scouts Troop about safety awareness, bullying, and communicating with parents and police.



Precinct News

East

Ralph Martin Jr., 41, is now charged with attempted criminal homicide for the November 12th stabbing that critically injured a man inside his apartment in the 1000 block of Russell Street.

During an interview with East Precinct Detective Jesse Holt, Martin admitted to stabbing the victim, taking his credit card, and using it at an area convenience store.

Prior to the interview, Martin, a registered ex-con for burglary, had been jailed on charges unrelated to the stabbing.

Martin, who has seven aggravated burglary and five felony theft convictions, is being held in lieu of \$250,000 bond.

West

A three-month long investigation by West Precinct undercover detectives into alleged drug sales, led to the arrest of William A. Plunk, 33, and the seizure of 17.1 pounds of high grade marijuana, 36 mason jars of marijuana wax, 909 pills (including ecstasy & prescription pain medication), nine guns, three vehicles, three motorcycles, more than 200 pair of designer shoes, electronics, and \$6,227 cash.

Detectives executed search warrants on December 1st at three locations, 8000 Sawyer Brown Road (Plunk's residence), 111 Old Hickory Boulevard, and a storage unit at 5916 Robertson Road. Much of the seized property is alleged to have been acquired with drug proceeds.

Plunk is charged with seven counts of felony drug possession and seven counts of violating the Crooks with Guns statute. He is being held in lieu of \$230,000 bond.

The investigation, conducted with the assistance of Drug Task Force members and the U.S. Postal Inspector, continues.



Hermitage

Hermitage Precinct officers on November 19th assisted in distributing Thanksgiving food donations to families in the Tony Sudekum and J.C. Napier homes.



North

North Precinct officers on November 23rd joined Mounted Patrol, Special Response Team members, and Zycron Inc. to give away more than 100 turkeys to residents at the Cumberland View apartments.



Central

Investigation by Central Precinct detectives led to the identification and arrest of Christopher Darnell, 22, and Brandon Dotson, 18, for the November 19th robbery of a 59-year-old woman.

The victim was walking near First Tennessee Park on the way to her 3rd Avenue North home when she was robbed and struck in the head with a metal stake. Darnell and Dotson are both charged with aggravated robbery and fraudulently using the victim's credit card.

The Nashville Predators on December 3rd hosted Law Enforcement Appreciation Night at Bridgestone Arena.



Thank you to Jeff Ruby and his staff for providing Thanksgiving turkeys to all Central Precinct officers.



South

Commander Paul Trickey attends an open house at a new Firestone store.



Special Operations Division

Members of the Emergency Contingency Section outside Nissan Stadium



Mayor Barry visited the Aviation Unit and flew in a police helicopter.



Special Operations Division officers participated in the “Count Me In” campaign urging motorists to buckle up and not drive distracted or impaired.



Specialized Investigations Division

While serving an outstanding warrant, Gang Unit detectives uncovered an illegal drug operation at 4820 Highlander Cove in South Nashville.

Detectives had information that Thomas Shepherd, 52, who is on lifetime supervision for rape, was at the location. He was wanted for a probation violation. Officers knocked on the door and when it opened, detected a strong odor of marijuana. Shepherd came outside and was taken into custody.

Seized during the execution of a search warrant were 1.5 pounds of marijuana, 1.5 ounces of cocaine, 17 Xanax pills, drug paraphernalia, gambling tickets, three pistols (one was reported stolen during a robbery this month), and \$850 cash. In addition to Shepherd, the following persons face multiple charges including felony weapon and drug possession:

- Convicted felon Kevin Strickland, 55, of 4820 Highlander Cove
- Jentri Peebles, 22, of 4820 Highlander Cove
- Convicted robber & parolee Kimar Peebles, 27, of Edencrest Drive
- Convicted felon Rossie Ellison, 37, of Hyde Street
- Yolanda Peebles, 45, of 4820 Highlander Cove



Seized drugs, weapons, and cash

A Middle Tennessee father and son are facing felony drug counts after meeting with an undercover police officer to sell 100 pills of the narcotic pain medication Roxicodone that one of the defendants said arrived here from the Philippines.

Jeffery John Pignone, 38, of Hickory Glade Drive, and Anthony Pignone, 70, of Bethpage, Tennessee, were taken into custody by Specialized Investigations Division detectives on November 21st in a business parking lot on Donelson Pike after Jeffery sold the 100 pills for \$2,000 cash. Jeffery was driven to the deal by his father. A search of the vehicle yielded an additional 400 pills. Jeffery told detectives that they were shipped to him from the Philippines. Anthony acknowledged he knew about the shipment and that the pills were to be sold.

Homicide-Cold Case Unit

The police department's Homicide-Cold Case Unit on December 8th charged Tennessee Department of Corrections inmate and convicted violent felon Teddy Warrick, 33, with 1st degree murder and aggravated robbery for the July 2012 shooting death of a Nashville man.

Fredrick Grant, 25, was fatally wounded while seated in a car near the intersection of Utopia Avenue and Edison Street. Investigation by Detective Jill Weaver led to the development of Warrick as the suspected gunman.

Warrick has been jailed since his July 2015 arrest for burglarizing a South Nashville convenience store and trying to steal its ATM. Warrick was convicted in Nashville of attempted second-degree murder in March 2015 for repeatedly stabbing a man. He received a mostly probated eight-year sentence in that case.

Retirement Celebration

Lieutenant Floyd Hyde celebrated 28 years of service



Congratulations:

Andrea Smith, Special Operations Division, and her husband Charlie, welcomed their son, Trace Smith, on November 8th.

Officer Peter Vaught, South Precinct, and his wife, Sarah Beth, welcomed their son, Mason, on November 12th.

Officer Brian Dugre, Special Operations Division, and his wife welcomed their son, Everett George Dugre, on November 14th.

Officer John Melia, Special Operations Division, and his wife welcomed their son, Niko Melia, on November 18th.

Sergeant Danny Cole, East Precinct, and his wife welcomed their son Lucas Joseph Cole on November 26th.

Officer Justin Franklin, Hermitage Precinct, and his wife welcomed their son Brayden Thomas Franklin on November 23rd.

Detective Kim Rothwell, Hermitage Precinct, and her husband, Jermey, welcomed their daughter Jillian Colleen on December 5th.



Condolences:

James Robert Smith, the grandfather of Sergeant Robert Smith, Forensic Services Division, passed away on November 6th at age 101.

Mai Dean Meriwether, the grandmother of Hermitage Precinct Detective Brent Bixenman's wife, Sarah, passed away on November 7th.

Kelvin Lee Chambers, the brother of Ella Chambers, Case Preparation, passed away on November 21st.

Hugh W. Griffith Jr., the father of Amy Griffith Taylor, Victim Intervention Program, passed away on November 22nd.

Patricia McClane, the mother-in-law of Officer Lloyd Sharp, Central Precinct, passed away on November 26th.

Vernon Kroll, the father of Officer Randy Kroll, North Precinct, passed away on December 4th.

Betty Jo Thompson, the widow of MNPD Lieutenant David Thompson, and mother of Emaly Thompson, who is retired from the Emergency Communications Center, passed away.

Margaret Lowry, the grandmother of Sergeant Rich Lowry, West Precinct, passed away on December 11th.

Arnold Pylkas, the father of Lieutenant Matt Pylkas, Hermitage Precinct, passed away on December 15th.

Elsy Joseph Ramapurath, the mother of George Ramapurath, IT, passed away.

Kenneth Stephens, the grandfather of Officer Blaze Williams, South Precinct, passed away on December 19th.