

2023



# ANNUAL REPORT

*McCracken County Sheriff's Office*

# SHERIFF RYAN NORMAN



Ryan Norman

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## *Message from the Sheriff*

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Thank you for spending a few minutes to learn about your McCracken County Sheriff's Office. As a constitutionally elected official, I believe that it is of utmost importance that we know how our government offices function, what resources they provide, and how they serve the community. It is my honor to serve as McCracken County's 47<sup>th</sup> Sheriff.

In the following pages, you will learn that in terms of calls for service, 2023 was a record year for the MCSO. As an agency, we responded to 41,532 calls for service. This is the most calls for service for us on record. These calls range from collisions to verbal disputes to serious crimes. This is also a measure of deputies' proactivity in deterring crime and keeping McCracken County residents and visitors safe.

The McCracken County Sheriff's Office has four main functions, by Kentucky statute. We are responsible for service to the courts, property tax collection (not the setting of rates), election duties, and finally law enforcement. Within each responsibility, there are multiple facets which employees navigate daily. In the following pages we will highlight these duties and accomplishments that we believe may be of interest to you.

The majority of the funding for our office comes from taxpayer funds, distributed to the MCSO by the McCracken County Fiscal Court. We know the money we use everyday is your hard earned money and we promise to diligently use it.

In addition to our statutory responsibilities and the record number of calls for service, I am an advocate of frequent and relevant training for all of our employees. We cannot serve our communities if we do not train to become more proficient and more knowledgeable. We were fortunate enough in 2023 to receive an increase in our allotted training budget to allow for more training for employees.

In addition to the training increase in 2023, we also purchased and installed in car cameras in all patrol vehicles, which was available due to a requested increase in our technology budget. These cameras integrate with the deputies' body worn video cameras to provide crucial recordings of interactions and evidence.

As always, thank you for your support of your McCracken County Sheriff's Office. We are always attempting to improve our service to you and as our motto states, we are constantly "Striving for Excellence".

# CHIEF DEPUTY RYAN WILLCUTT



Ryan Willcutt

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## *Message from the Chief Deputy*

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I am honored to extend a warm welcome to you on behalf of the McCracken County Sheriff's Office. As the Chief Deputy, it is my privilege to serve alongside our dedicated team of deputies and personnel, who are committed to upholding the values of integrity, compassion, and service to our community.

In times of adversity, we understand the importance of coming together as a community to overcome challenges and support one another. Whether facing natural disasters, public health crises, or other unforeseen circumstances, the McCracken County Sheriff's Office remains steadfast in our commitment to caring for the citizens we serve.

One of our top priorities is ensuring the safety and well-being of all residents, and we take this responsibility seriously. Our deputies undergo rigorous training and education to equip them with the skills and knowledge needed to effectively serve and protect our community, even during the toughest of times.

We understand that serving our community goes beyond law enforcement duties. It also involves building trust, fostering positive relationships, and providing resources and support to those in need. Through community outreach programs, educational initiatives, and proactive engagement, we strive to strengthen our bond with the residents of McCracken County and create a safer, more resilient community for all.

As we navigate the challenges and uncertainties that lie ahead, know that the McCracken County Sheriff's Office is here for you. We are committed to standing by your side, supporting you, and serving you with the utmost professionalism, compassion, and dedication.

Thank you for entrusting us with the privilege of serving you. Together, we will overcome any adversity and emerge stronger and more united than ever before.

# 2023 CRIME STATISTICS

## McCracken County Sheriff's Office Crime Report

Annually, law enforcement agencies, including the McCracken County Sheriff's Office, report crime data to the FBI. Until 2021, this information was formatted under the Summary Reporting System (SRS), categorizing crimes into Part 1 and Part 2 offenses, with Part 1 crimes considered the most serious.

With the adoption of the National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS) in 2021, the reporting standards underwent a significant shift. Unlike the previous system, NIBRS offers a more comprehensive approach to crime reporting, capturing detailed information on various aspects of criminal incidents.

The transition to NIBRS allows for a more nuanced understanding of crime trends by providing data on weapon usage in violent offenses, highlighting drug- and

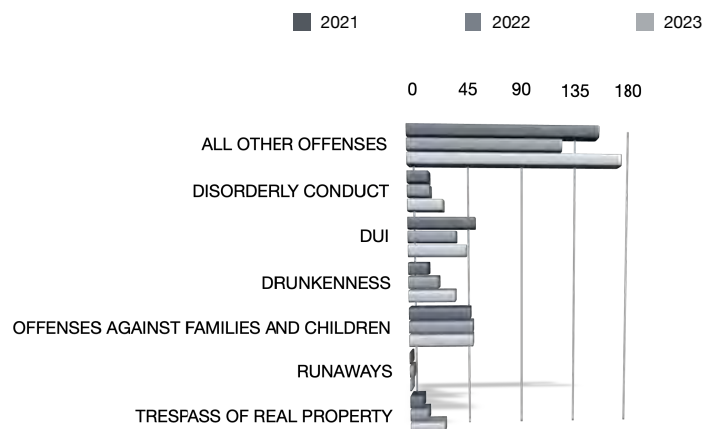
computer-related crimes, distinguishing between attempted and completed offenses, documenting types of injuries per victim, and detailing incident locations and timestamps.

Moreover, NIBRS fills the gaps left by SRS, offering a more complete picture of criminal activity and enabling law enforcement agencies to better address community safety concerns.

The McCracken County Sheriff's Office has been utilizing the NIBRS reporting system, facilitated by the Kentucky State Police, for many years. This system ensures that reported crime data is accurately relayed to the FBI, enhancing the accuracy and effectiveness of crime reporting and analysis.

## GROUP B COMPARISON 2021-2023

GROUP B	2021	2022	2023
ALL OTHER OFFENSES	149	120	167
DISORDERLY CONDUCT	16	17	27
DUI	52	37	45
DRUNKENNESS	15	23	36
OFFENSES AGAINST FAMILIES AND CHILDREN	48	50	50
RUNAWAYS	1	3	1
TRESPASS OF REAL PROPERTY	10	14	27



# 2023 CRIME STATISTICS

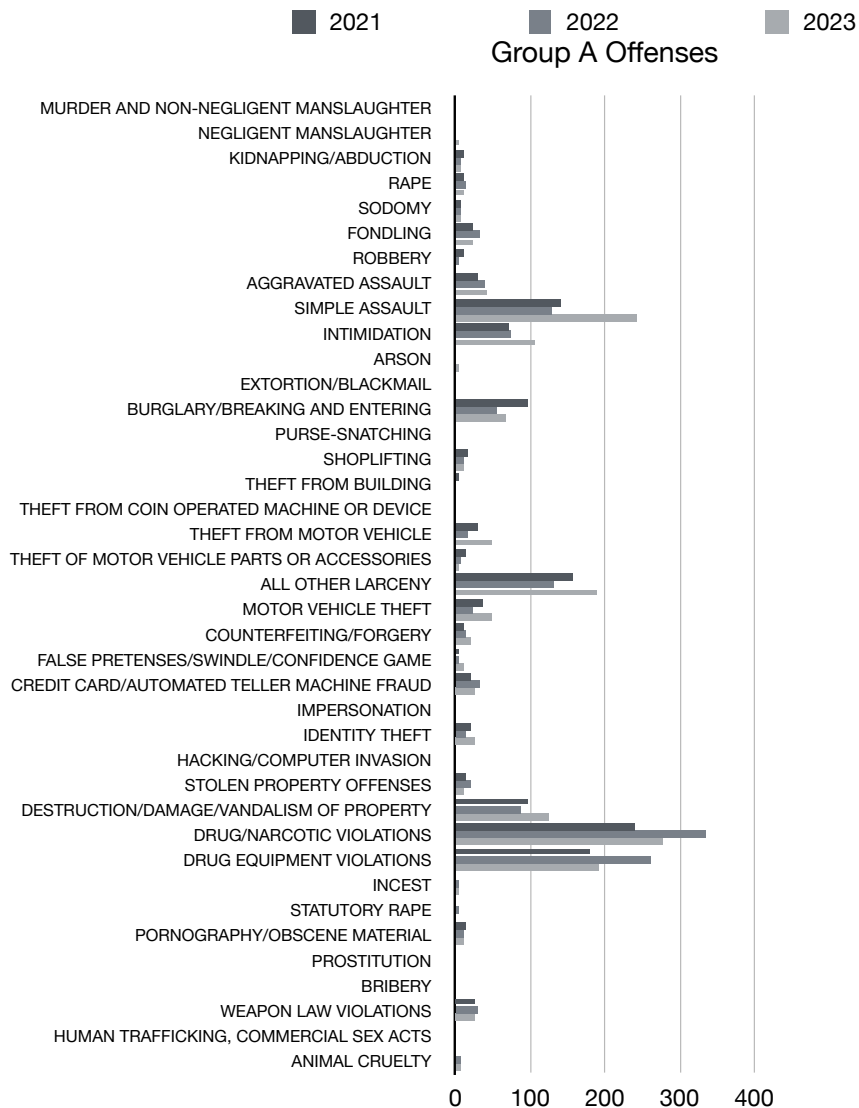
GROUP A	2021	2022	2023
MURDER AND NON-NEGLIGENT MANSLAUGHTER	2	1	2
NEGLIGENT MANSLAUGHTER	1	0	4
KIDNAPPING/ABDUCTION	9	6	8
RAPE	10	12	9
SODOMY	7	7	8
FONDLING	22	34	22
ROBBERY	9	4	3
AGGRAVATED ASSAULT	28	39	41
SIMPLE ASSAULT	140	127	242
INTIMIDATION	72	73	107
ARSON	1	3	4
EXTORTION/BLACKMAIL	0	3	1
BURGLARY/BREAKING AND ENTERING	96	56	66
PURSE-SNATCHING	1	0	0
SHOPLIFTING	18	10	9
THEFT FROM BUILDING	4	0	2
THEFT FROM COIN OPERATED MACHINE OR DEVICE	0	0	0
THEFT FROM MOTOR VEHICLE	28	18	48
THEFT OF MOTOR VEHICLE PARTS OR ACCESSORIES	12	6	5
ALL OTHER LARCENY	157	130	189
MOTOR VEHICLE THEFT	37	23	47
COUNTERFEITING/FORGERY	9	14	19
FALSE PRETENSES/SWINDLE/CONFIDENCE GAME	5	5	9
CREDIT CARD/AUTOMATED TELLER MACHINE FRAUD	21	31	25
IMPERSONATION	1	1	
IDENTITY THEFT	21	13	27
HACKING/COMPUTER INVASION	1	0	0
STOLEN PROPERTY OFFENSES	13	21	10
DESTRUCTION/DAMAGE/VANDALISM OF PROPERTY	97	85	126
DRUG/NARCOTIC VIOLATIONS	238	335	277
DRUG EQUIPMENT VIOLATIONS	180	263	193
INCEST	2	4	4
STATUTORY RAPE	1	5	2
PORNOGRAPHY/OBSCENE MATERIAL	14	10	9
PROSTITUTION	1	1	0
BRIBERY	0	0	0
WEAPON LAW VIOLATIONS	26	30	26
HUMAN TRAFFICKING, COMMERCIAL SEX ACTS	1	0	1
ANIMAL CRUELTY	2	7	8

## BENEFITS TO USING NIBRS REPORTING

- ◆ No Hierarchy Rule: The Hierarchy Rule only counts the highest offense occurring within an incident and ignores others. Established specific UCR Offense Codes
- ◆ Expands Burglary Hotel Rule to include rental storage facilities
- ◆ Expanded offense definitions
- ◆ Correlation between offenses, property, victims, offenders, and arrestees
- ◆ Expanded victim-to-offender relationship
- ◆ Increased circumstance reporting
- ◆ State and local agencies can collect additional crime data not required by the FBI UR Program
- ◆ Greater data quantity and quality
- ◆ Timely data submissions
- ◆ Improved methodology for compilation, analysis, and publication of data
- ◆ Complete and detailed incident information
- ◆ Ease in adding new codes

*NIBRS GROUP A AND B CRIMES - 2020 THRU 2023*

# 2023 CRIME STATISTICS



In 2021, Group A reported offenses dropped 15% and Group B offenses dropped 4% from the previous year. The crime rate can be influenced by different factors over the course of a year. Undoubtedly, Covid has had some influence on the rate of crime, but the exact influence may not be determined anytime soon.

2023

# MCCRACKEN SHERIFF'S FOUNDATION



In 2023 the McCracken County Sheriff's Foundation purchased an Axon VR system. The system offers realistic simulations of critical incidents that officers may encounter, such as traffic stops, domestic disturbances, active shooter situations, and crisis intervention scenarios. Through virtual reality, officers can experience these situations in a highly realistic manner, allowing them to make decisions, interact with virtual individuals, and practice de-escalation techniques without real-world consequences.

The goal is to enhance decision-making skills, improve situational awareness, and reinforce proper protocols in a way that traditional training methods may not fully provide. By using the Axon VR System, law enforcement agencies aim to improve the preparedness and response capabilities of their officers, ultimately leading to better outcomes in real-life encounters and safer communities.

Additionally, the Sheriff's Foundation purchased eleven ballistic helmets for the McCracken County Sheriff's Office Special Services Team.

The McCracken County Sheriff's Foundation is administered through an all-volunteer board of directors that is wholly responsible for determining how donations are spent. Board members are Cory Samsil-Board Chair, Ronnie James-Vice Chair, Tom Clayton-Treasurer, Keith Murt Member.

Donations can be mailed to:  
McCracken County Sheriff's Foundation  
P.O. Box 41  
Paducah, KY 42002-0041  
Or dropped off at any Paducah Bank location. Tax deductible

# PATROL DIVISION



Trent Hardin

The McCracken County Sheriff's Office Patrol Division is dedicated to achieving the following goals and objectives:

**Delivering Outstanding Service:** Our commitment is to provide

exceptional service to our esteemed community.

**Thorough Investigations:** Conducting meticulous investigations into criminal activities and documenting findings comprehensively.

**Prompt Responses:** Ensuring swift responses to both emergency and non-emergency calls, offering assistance to all citizens and visitors, and facilitating referrals to appropriate agencies when necessary.

### **Dedicated Service**

Comprising uniformed deputies who are a visible presence in our community on a daily basis, the Patrol Division diligently patrols county roads, responds to service calls, and assists the public in various capacities. They serve as the frontline of public service, embodying our commitment to protecting and serving McCracken County.

### Division Structure

As the largest division within the Sheriff's Office, the Patrol Division boasts a robust team consisting of:

- ◆ 26 full-time deputies
- ◆ 1 Patrol Lieutenant
- ◆ 3 Patrol Sergeants
- ◆ 3 Corporals

Operating on three shifts, our deputies typically work four 10-hour days per week. Additionally, the division is enhanced by three K9 units, strategically assigned to each shift to bolster our capabilities.

### Operational Highlights

In the year 2023, the Patrol Division responded to approximately 41,445 calls for service. In addition to call responses, our deputies enforce traffic laws, actively pursue drug offenders, and serve court paperwork. Notable achievements include:

- ◆ Nearly 800 collision investigations
- ◆ Over 1250 criminal investigations
- ◆ More than 2,000 arrests
- ◆ Almost 7,000 reports generated

Moreover, the Patrol Division frequently manages situations involving individuals with mental health issues. All patrol deputies are trained in Crisis Intervention Techniques (C.I.T.), allowing them to provide vital support and assistance to community members during crises. Furthermore, our deputies hold various other training certifications, including defensive tactics, firearms proficiency, less lethal weapons, animal abuse, accident reconstruction, and other relevant topics.

The McCracken County Sheriff's Office Patrol Division remains steadfast in its mission to safeguard our community, uphold the law, and provide assistance to those in need, ensuring McCracken County remains a safe and secure place to live, work, and visit.



# INVESTIGATIONS DIVISION



Benny Kauffman

The General Investigations Unit of the McCracken County Sheriff's Office consists of four detectives, with oversight from Detective Sergeant Benny Kauffman.

### Scope of Work:

MCSO detectives handle investigations into virtually all felony crimes reported to the MCSO, as well as certain misdemeanors. On average, each detective manages around 50 open cases simultaneously, covering offenses such as child abuse, firearm crimes, sexual crimes, burglaries, murders, and other felonies. To ensure swift response, the Sheriff's Office assigns a detective on call 24/7 to address significant or complex crime scenes as needed.

### Specialized Training and Expertise:

While detectives are equipped to investigate a broad range of felony crimes, they also pursue specialized training based on their interests and the needs of the community. Each detective primarily focuses on cases within their area of expertise. With advanced training and experience in investigation, interviews, and interrogation techniques, detectives play a critical role in documenting evidence, processing crime scenes, and impacting the prosecution of offenders.

This specialized training is particularly vital in securing convictions for the most serious crimes. Notably, in 2023, several murder investigations led to convictions, including one resulting in a life sentence without parole for a double homicide.

### Proactive Approach:

The detectives at the McCracken County Sheriff's Office are proactive in combating crime. In addition to responding to reported crimes, they employ various technologies and techniques to prevent and deter criminal activities. In a notable instance in 2023, multiple burglaries occurred at a storage unit complex. Detectives implemented covert surveillance, resulting in the apprehension of an offender caught in the act.



Sarah Martin



Kyle Seratt



Jerry Jones



Ronnie Giles

# DRUG UNIT



Jesse Riddle

The Drug Division of the McCracken County Sheriff's Office is spearheaded by Detective Sergeant Jesse Riddle, a 22-year law enforcement veteran renowned for his expertise in investigating illegal drug activities. Under his guidance, the division operates with perseverance and dedication.

### **Team Composition:**

Assisting Detective Sergeant Riddle are Detective David Clark and Detective Blake Maness, both adept at navigating the complexities of drug-related investigations. Their collective experience and strategic approach enhance the effectiveness of the division's operations.

### **Collaborative Approach:**

The success of the Drug Division hinges on collaborative efforts and strong partnerships forged with other law enforcement agencies.

### **Operational Demands:**

The role within the Drug Division demands unwavering commitment and resilience. Detectives often find themselves working extensive hours, sometimes exceeding 24-hour shifts.

### **Federal Collaboration:**

Detective David Clark's assignment to the DEA Task Force highlights the division's proactive approach to utilizing federal resources. This collaboration not only enhances the division's capabilities but also facilitates substantial cost savings for the McCracken County taxpayers.

### **Enforcement Highlights:**

In 2023, the Drug Division achieved significant milestones in its relentless pursuit of drug traffickers. Notable achievements include:

- ◆ In May 2023, detectives conducted multiple undercover operations targeting a local drug trafficker, resulting in the execution of search warrants at two residences. Substantial quantities of methamphetamine, cocaine, fentanyl, marijuana, and illicit funds were seized during these operations.
- ◆ In a separate investigation, detectives uncovered a methamphetamine distribution network operated by a fugitive from a local correctional facility. The subsequent search yielded a substantial quantity of methamphetamine, along with evidence linking the suspect to previous drug-related offenses.
- ◆ In June 2023, detectives executed a series of search warrants that uncovered a significant cache of illicit drugs, firearms, and ammunition at various locations in Paducah. The operation disrupted a major drug trafficking operation and led to the arrest of several individuals involved in the illicit trade.

The diligent efforts of the Drug Division continue to yield tangible results, safeguarding the community from the scourge of illegal drugs and enhancing public safety across McCracken County.

# COURTHOUSE SECURITY

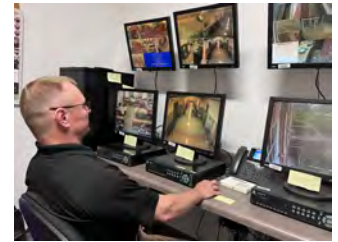


Melissa Dillion

One of the vital roles of the McCracken County Sheriff's Office is Courthouse Security

• **Visitor Management:** The courthouse served as a hub of community activity, welcoming a total of 204,773 visitors throughout the year, averaging 17,064 visitors per month.

• **Weapons Detection:** Upholding security protocols, set by the Chief Circuit Judge the Sheriff's Office detected a total of 2,093 weapons, both inside and outside the courthouse, averaging 174 weapons located per month.

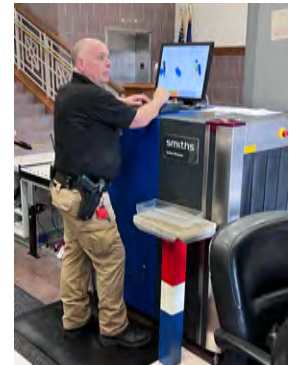


• **Vehicle Inspections:** The Sheriff's Office conducted 4,401 vehicle inspections in 2023, with an average of 367 inspections per month.

- **Inmate Transportation:** Facilitating the judicial process, the Sheriff's Office transported 4,713 inmates from the jail to the courthouse for court proceedings, averaging 393 inmates transported per month.

- **Court Operations:** CSO's are present in all court proceedings, despite proactive measures, the Sheriff's Office responded to 28 courtroom/courthouse incidents in 2023. These incidents led to 12 additional arrests or charges and resulted in five injuries to Courthouse Security Office (CSO) staff.

- These statistics underscore the Sheriff's Office's commitment to maintaining safety and order within the Courthouse Through diligent operations and swift responses to incidents, the Sheriff's Office continues to uphold its duty to protect and serve McCracken County residents.



# DEPUTY OF THE YEAR



Kenneth Baldwin

Deputy Kenneth Baldwin is honored with the title of 2023 Deputy of the Year, a testament to his exceptional dedication and service to the values upheld by the McCracken County Sheriff's Office.

Joining our team in July 2019, Deputy Baldwin brought with him a positive attitude and a strong commitment to learning. Throughout his time with us, he has consistently shown improvement in all areas, demonstrating proactive policing, a thirst for knowledge, and a willingness to assist others.

In addition to maintaining a high level of activity, with notable achievements such as 99 arrests and 166 criminal charges in 2023 alone, Deputy Baldwin also serves as a Field Training Officer and contributes to transport duties during his commute. He has recently begun training in collision reconstruction, showcasing his dedication to personal and professional growth.

Deputy Baldwin's willingness to support his colleagues, whether by covering open shifts or offering assistance, has earned him respect as a trusted leader within our agency. His professionalism and thoroughness set a standard for excellence that inspires others.

Deputy Kenneth Baldwin's commitment to service and continuous improvement reflects the values of the McCracken County Sheriff's Office, and we are proud to recognize him as the 2023 Deputy of the Year.

*"Deputy Baldwin's attitude toward work is what every co-worker and supervisor would ever want. Dep. Baldwin never says no to an extra duty, overtime, or simply assisting a co-worker. Dep. Baldwin constantly goes above and beyond in his responsibilities, completes his work in a timely and complete manner and needs minimal supervision in his day to day responsibilities. Deputy Baldwin is instrumental in training new deputies and constantly volunteers to take on new tasks and learn more. Since joining our team at the MCSO, Deputy Baldwin is constantly striving for excellence." - Sheriff Ryan Norman*

# DETECTIVE OF THE YEAR



Benny Kauffman

The McCracken County Sheriff's Office proudly recognizes Detective Sergeant Benny Kauffman as the distinguished recipient of the 2023 Detective of the Year award. His unwavering commitment to excellence and adherence to the highest standards of the law enforcement profession epitomize the core values of our agency.

Beginning his law enforcement journey in 2005 with the Eddyville Police Department, Detective Sergeant Kauffman brought a wealth of experience and dedication when he joined the McCracken County Sheriff's Office in 2012. After diligently serving four years in the patrol division, he seamlessly transitioned into the role of detective, where his remarkable aptitude and steadfast work ethic quickly propelled him into a leadership position.

Elevated to the rank of Detective Sergeant in January 2019, Benny assumed the pivotal role of supervising the General Investigations Division with distinction. Throughout his tenure, he has demonstrated exceptional leadership skills while overseeing a myriad of complex and high-profile cases, including homicides. His ability to navigate challenging situations with poise and professionalism has been instrumental in maintaining the integrity of our agency.

Detective Sergeant Kauffman's unwavering commitment to upholding ethical standards, coupled with his innate ability to motivate and guide his team, ensures that justice is diligently pursued for all victims. His unwavering dedication not only enhances our agency's professional reputation but also solidifies our standing as a trusted pillar within the community.

*"Dedication, integrity, and leadership are the cornerstones of law enforcement excellence, and Detective Sergeant Benny Kauffman embodies these qualities with unwavering commitment. His tireless efforts and exceptional performance have not only elevated our agency but have also inspired his colleagues to strive for greatness. Detective Sergeant Kauffman's invaluable contributions to the McCracken County Sheriff's Office are a testament to his exemplary character and unwavering dedication to serving our community. We are privileged to have him as a member of our team, and his recognition as the 2023 Detective of the Year is a well-deserved honor."*

**Chief Deputy, Ryan Willcutt**

# COURT SECURITY OFFICER OF THE YEAR



Marian Abell

The McCracken County Sheriff's Office, it's with great pride that we announce Court Security Officer Marian Abell as the esteemed recipient of the "2023 Court Security Officer of the Year" award. This accolade is in recognition of Officer Abell's exceptional dedication and adherence to the lofty standards of both the McCracken County Sheriff's Office and the broader law enforcement community.

Officer Abell embarked on her journey in court security in 2016, briefly ventured into other professional avenues, but made a notable return to our agency in 2021, initially on a part-time basis. Her unwavering commitment and exceptional skills quickly paved the way for a full-time position within the same year.

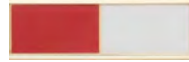
Officer Abell is renowned for her extraordinary efforts to foster a supportive and positive workplace atmosphere. She has been instrumental in the development of our new court security officers, offering mentorship, training, and guidance to ensure they are well-prepared and understand their responsibilities in depth. Her adept management of court proceedings and exemplary work ethic have not only enhanced the efficiency of our operations but have also earned her accolades from judges and courthouse staff alike.

Beyond her routine duties, Officer Abell has willingly taken on additional tasks, often at the expense of her personal time. Over the last year, she volunteered for transport duties on five occasions, including three instances that required her immediate attention outside of her scheduled hours. Her support for the Drug Division has been equally commendable, with her readiness to respond to last-minute calls, sometimes late into the evening.

Officer Abell's dedication extends into her active involvement in community engagement initiatives spearheaded by the Sheriff's Office. She has participated in numerous events, such as Trunk or Treat, the Citizen Sheriff Academy, Paws for a Cause, and Christmas Cops, embodying a genuine community spirit.

Her unparalleled dedication, commitment to excellence, and team spirit have made Marian Abell an indispensable asset to the McCracken County Sheriff's Office. Her contributions not only reflect her professional excellence but also her profound impact on the community and her colleagues.

# ANNUAL AWARDS



**Lifesaving Medal** – For contributing to or the actual saving of a life during the normal course of law enforcement duties while utilizing basic first aid skills, NARCAN, etc., without the risk of bodily harm.



Kenneth Baldwin

On June 24th, 2023, at approximately 1607 hours, Deputy Baldwin and Deputy Parker responded to a single-vehicle (motorcycle) injury collision at Lone Oak Road and Clinton Road. Upon arrival, Deputy Baldwin and Deputy Parker promptly applied a tourniquet to the motorcycle operator. A witness reported that the motorcyclist, riding with a group of other motorcyclists, had turned off Lone Oak Road onto Clinton Road. The motorcyclist lost control at a slight curve, causing the motorcycle to veer off into the grass.

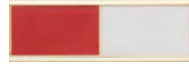


Tyler Parker

The timely aid provided by Deputy Baldwin and Deputy Parker likely contributed significantly to saving the motorcyclist's life. The application of a tourniquet can be crucial in stemming severe bleeding, especially in cases of limb injury where rapid blood loss can be life-threatening. The prompt response and effective first aid administered by law enforcement personnel underscore the importance of their training in emergency medical procedures. In situations like this, quick intervention can make a critical difference in the outcome for the injured party.



# ANNUAL AWARDS



**Lifesaving Medal** – For contributing to or the actual saving of a life during the normal course of law enforcement duties while utilizing basic first aid skills, NARCAN, etc., without the risk of bodily harm.



Kyle Latta



Jordan Springer



Tyler Bradley



Kenneth Baldwin



Austin Rushing



Brendon Weldon



Ray Sotomayor

The administration of naloxone, often recognized by its brand name Narcan, by law enforcement plays a pivotal role in addressing the opioid crisis affecting communities worldwide. Naloxone is a life-saving medication capable of quickly reversing the effects of an opioid overdose, rendering it an indispensable asset in efforts to diminish fatalities linked to opioid usage.

#### Community Impact

The LEO administration of naloxone exerts a significant influence on communities. It not only preserves lives but also aids in altering the perception surrounding substance use and addiction. Through active involvement in overdose prevention, LEO's contribute to the destigmatization of addiction, encouraging individuals and their families to seek assistance and support for substance use disorders.

The presence of Narcan among officers is vital for community safety, providing a frontline defense against the opioid epidemic. Their capacity to administer Narcan in emergencies fills essential gaps in response times, potentially saving lives before the arrival of medical assistance. This ability not only bolsters law enforcement's

contribution to public health but also fosters community trust by showcasing a dedication to life preservation amid an escalating epidemic.

In the 2023 McCracken County Sheriff's Annual Report, deputies received commendation for their life-saving interventions with Narcan in four instances of opioid overdose, illustrating the department's aggressive approach to combating the opioid crisis. The report details:

- March 14:** Deputies Latta and Springer assisted a 21-year-old in Lone Oak.

- May 30:** Deputy Bradley responded to a 22-year-old in West Paducah.

- November 16:** Deputies Baldwin and Rushing aided a 30-year-old in Paducah.

- November 27:** Deputies Weldon and Sotomayor provided assistance to a 41-year-old, also in Paducah.

These interventions highlight the lifesaving potential of Naloxone and underscore the indispensable role of law enforcement in managing opioid overdoses.



# ANNUAL AWARDS



**Sheriff Jon Hayden Award** – 12 year minimum at MCSO, professionalism, appearance, hard working, no disciplinary action, community oriented, high arrest/conviction rate. Must have extremely strong worth ethic and drive to make the community better and safer.



Jesse Riddle

Detective Sergeant Jesse Riddle retired from the McCracken County Sheriff's Office in 2021 as the Captain of the Drug investigation Division. He returned in 2022 and currently serves as the Sergeant of the Drug investigation Division. His career has spanned almost 23 years and four different Sheriffs. He won the Kentucky Sheriff's Association Deputy of the Year in 2018 and McCracken County Sheriff's Office Deputy of the Year in 2019.

There are very few people in the law enforcement community that can say they have accomplished as much as Jesse. His dedication to McCracken County, the west Kentucky area, and the Sheriff's Office is more than most people can understand. For over 15 years he has led the drug investigation efforts of the Sheriff's Office, always ready to work and never shying away from assisting. His dedication and determination has led to career highlights that most of us can only dream about. Illegal drug traffickers know him by name and are constantly on the lookout for him. Law enforcement agencies from across the state and country have leaned on Detective Sergeant Riddle for advice and assistance on cases.

Not only is Jesse an authority on drug investigations, but he is always lending a hand on any major investigation the Sheriff's Office has. From burglaries to murders, Detective Sergeant Riddle helps solve them all.

Jesse has a determination to fight for our community like few have. He is a fierce advocate for his brethren in law enforcement and his work ethic is truly unmatched. Detective Sergeant Riddle is the first ever recipient of the Jon Hayden award.

# ANNUAL AWARDS



**Chad Shaw Community Service Award** – For exemplary community service outside of the Sheriff's Office. Community service efforts do not have to be necessarily organized, but should be above the expected or usual amount for a citizen or deputy. Must have strong character traits of fairness, integrity, honesty, and a commitment to the community and fellow law enforcement officers.



Melissa Dillon

Chief Bailiff Melissa Dillon has been a law enforcement officer for 21 years and has built quite a career in that timespan. Melissa started at the Paducah Police Department and during her career there, she became known as a kind and caring officer who always went out of her way to help people. After retiring and coming to work at the Sheriff's Office, she continued to carry on what she had come to be known for. Although she no longer works in the patrol capacity, she has stayed active in our community.

Melissa started the Sheriff's Office's Paws for a Cause campaign where members collect donated pet food and other items. Every year Melissa takes it upon herself to organize the event and make sure it is successful. She ensures that the thousands of pounds of pet food makes it to proper shelters and other places that need it. Her love for animals is unmatched and she is a constant advocate for them.

Chief Bailiff Dillon is consistently thinking of others and lending a helping hand. Over the past few years Kentucky has had two large scale natural disasters and both times Melissa answered the call to help collect items for those affected. Never once did Chief Bailiff Dillon complain about working extra to help those in need.

Melissa has integrity in all she does, always doing the right thing, even if it means more work for her or admitting that she made a mistake. She is fair in all she does and expects the same out of her subordinates. While she expects a high level of work ethic, she exhibits exactly that. Her commitment to her fellow community members and law enforcement family would make Chad Shaw proud.

# ANNUAL AWARDS



## Sheriff's Special Recognition Award –



Denver Watson

Denver Watson has been a steadfast member of the McCracken County Sheriff's Office for 14 years, serving as the Chief Financial Officer throughout his tenure. During this time, Denver has significantly improved the efficiency and reduced the stress associated with tax collection among various other responsibilities. For the past 12 years, Denver, along with his team, has successfully managed the collection and redistribution of hundreds of millions of dollars in tax revenue, consistently concluding each fiscal year with a balanced account. Just last year, Denver was instrumental in collecting \$49.7 million and allocating these funds across fourteen taxing districts.

Beyond tax-related duties, Denver has embraced additional responsibilities. He oversees the submission of paperwork for state reimbursements, assists in grant management, and provides crucial advice on nearly all financial matters affecting the office. Notably, Denver also serves as our on-call mechanic, playing a key role in the auction process that generates significant revenue for both the Sheriff's Office and the county. Throughout the year, Denver frequently lends his expertise to help citizens or fellow employees with vehicular issues. It is with great pride that I acknowledge Denver as a friend and celebrate his remarkable contributions and unwavering support, which have been instrumental in the success of the Sheriff's Office. Denver is deservedly recognized with the Sheriff's Award for his dedication and achievements.



Cassidy Kinsey

Cassidy Kinsey represents one of the welcoming presences people encounter upon their initial visit to the Sheriff's Office. Along with her colleagues, Cassidy manages a diverse array of responsibilities and frequently addresses unique challenges. She oversees the Sheriff's Office's concealed carry permits and the highway safety grant, showcasing her versatility and commitment. Furthermore, Cassidy plays a crucial role in the tax collection process, facilitating payments in addition to her regular duties.

Beyond her professional responsibilities, Cassidy embodies kindness and compassion, consistently inquiring about others' well-being and contributing positively to the office environment. Although she may humbly disagree, Cassidy's generous spirit significantly enhances the Sheriff's Office, making it a more supportive and efficient place. Her dedication and warmth are indispensable, positioning her as a vital component in the smooth operation of the Sheriff's Office.



Steve Croft

Steve Croft has served as a Deputy since 2007, having previously worked with the Lone Oak Police Department. He is our most experienced K9 Deputy, handling four different canines throughout his tenure.

In law enforcement, deputies often gravitate towards and excel in areas that play to their strengths, becoming known for these attributes. However, sometimes an officer's most significant contribution to the community transcends traditional law enforcement roles. This is certainly true for Deputy Croft.

Throughout his career, Steve has exemplified kindness and compassion in his law enforcement duties. He readily assists fellow officers and is particularly adept at soothing distressed children. A notable trait of Deputy Croft's is his unparalleled generosity; he is known to offer his last \$10 to those in need. In 2023 alone, Steve played a pivotal role in organizing fundraising efforts for various individuals and groups in need—be they community members, victims, or fellow deputies. Thanks to Steve's initiatives, thousands of dollars have been raised to support our local community, with the Croft family also contributing personally.

Steve's daily display of compassion and kindness significantly enriches our office and community, perfectly aligning with the vision and goals of the McCracken County Sheriff's Office.

# TRAINING

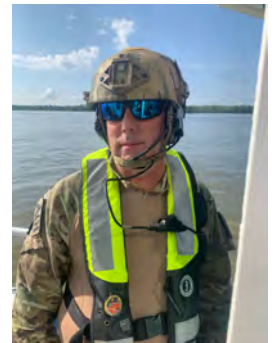
The McCracken County Sheriff's Office maintains an unwavering commitment to continuous training on a range of pertinent topics, ensuring the highest level of preparedness and professionalism among its deputies. This dedication encompasses various areas, including firearms proficiency, de-escalation techniques, defensive tactics, less lethal weapons, and legal knowledge.

The training program within the Sheriff's Office is in addition to the required 40 hours of annual inservice and is meticulously designed to equip deputies with the necessary skills and knowledge to effectively handle diverse and dynamic situations they may encounter in the line of duty. Firearms proficiency training focuses on enhancing marksmanship, weapon handling, and decision-making under pressure, enabling deputies to respond swiftly and accurately when faced with imminent threats.



De-escalation techniques are emphasized to facilitate peaceful resolutions and minimize the need for the use of force whenever possible. Through scenario-based training and role-playing exercises, deputies learn to effectively communicate, assess situations, and employ strategies to defuse tension and resolve conflicts safely.

Defensive tactics training provides deputies with essential skills in close-quarters combat, restraining techniques, and defensive maneuvers to protect themselves and others in physically demanding situations. This training instills confidence and competence in deputies, empowering them to effectively manage confrontational encounters while minimizing the risk of injury.



Training on less lethal weapons, such as tasers and pepper spray, ensures deputies are proficient in their use as alternatives to deadly force when confronting non-compliant or combative individuals. Deputies are trained to assess the level of resistance and select the appropriate less lethal option to gain control of the situation while minimizing the risk of serious injury.

Legal training is integral to ensuring deputies understand and adhere to laws, regulations, and departmental policies governing their conduct and actions. This includes training on use-of-force laws, search and seizure procedures, constitutional rights, and legal liabilities. By staying informed and up-to-date on legal standards and best practices, deputies can confidently carry out their duties within the bounds of the law.

# SPECIAL EVENTS

## Deputy Dogs Paw for a Cause.



The McCracken County Sheriff's Office continued its tradition of community engagement and philanthropy with the successful hosting of the annual "Deputy Dogs Paws for a Cause" event on Saturday, November 5th, at Rural King. This beloved fundraiser brought together animal lovers and advocates from across the region to support local animal shelters and rescue organizations.

The results of this year's event were nothing short of remarkable, with a total of 2,329 pounds of food collected for both dogs and cats. Additionally, attendees and sponsors generously donated:

- ◆ 80 pounds of pet treats
- ◆ 204 pounds of cat litter
- ◆ Three dog beds
- ◆ Two cat towers

These contributions will undoubtedly provide much-needed support to the furry companions awaiting adoption in shelters and rescue facilities throughout the area.

The success of "Deputy Dogs Paws for a Cause" would not have been possible without the collaborative efforts of the 11 participating agencies, each of which received donations tailored to their specific needs. These agencies included the:

- ◆ Marshall County Humane Society
- ◆ Marshall County Animal Control
- ◆ McCracken County Humane Society
- ◆ Cash for Cats (Southern Illinois)
- ◆ The McGansters
- ◆ Jackson Purchase Forgotten Felines
- ◆ Ballard County Animal Shelter
- ◆ Creatures Great and Small
- ◆ Sheree Senior Rescue (Paducah and Metropolis)
- ◆ Project Hope (Metropolis)
- ◆ Crittenden County Animal Shelter



Through the collective generosity of attendees, sponsors, and participating agencies, "Deputy Dogs Paws for a Cause" reaffirmed the McCracken County Sheriff's Office's commitment to supporting animal welfare initiatives and making a positive impact in the communities it serves. As we reflect on the success of this year's event, we extend our heartfelt gratitude to everyone who contributed to making a difference in the lives of our furry friends.

# SPECIAL EVENTS

## Holiday Food Drive

In December, the Court Security Division of the McCracken County Sheriff's Office (CSO) spearheaded a meaningful initiative by organizing a food drive to support local food pantries. With the dedication and support of CSO staff, as well as assistance from the Sheriff's Office team, multiple food pantries in our community were generously stocked each week throughout the month.

This collaborative effort reflects the compassionate spirit and commitment to service that defines our agency. By rallying together to address the needs of our community, we demonstrate our unwavering support for those facing food insecurity during the holiday season and beyond.

Through the generosity of all involved, the CSO's food drive has made a tangible difference in the lives of many, providing essential support to local individuals and families in need. We are immensely proud of our team's efforts and grateful for the opportunity to serve our community in this meaningful way.



# THE SHERIFF'S CITIZEN ACADEMY

The McCracken County Sheriff's Citizens Academy concluded its successful 6th annual class in 2023, providing an invaluable opportunity for community members to gain firsthand insights into the workings of our Sheriff's Office. Throughout October and November, participants convened for four enlightening sessions, delving into various aspects of law enforcement not always visible to the public eye.

Participants were treated to tours of key facilities including the Sheriff's Office, the McCracken County Jail, and the 911 dispatch center, offering a behind-the-scenes look at the critical operations that ensure public safety.

In addition to facility tours, the Citizens Academy curriculum featured engaging presentations by specialized units within the Sheriff's Office. Attendees had the privilege of learning from experts in the General Investigations Unit, Drug Unit, SWAT, DARE, K-9, and the Accident Reconstruction Unit, providing invaluable insights into the multifaceted roles of law enforcement professionals.



Applications for the next Citizens Academy are now available on our website at or can be picked up at our office located in the McCracken County Courthouse at 300 Clarence Gaines St.

Academy topics cover a wide range of areas including patrol operations, courthouse operations, criminal investigations, an overview of the legal process, constitutional duties of the Sheriff, specialized unit demonstrations, ride-alongs, and firearms training (voluntary), including interactive firearms and Virtual Reality experiences.

This program is open to individuals from all walks of life, including concerned citizens, Neighborhood Watch members, elected officials, members of the media, independent business workers, church members, college students, potential law enforcement applicants, and anyone else interested who Lives, works, or attends school in McCracken County and is interested in gaining a deeper understanding of how the McCracken County Sheriff's Office serves our community. We welcome your participation and look forward to sharing this enlightening experience



[www.mccrackencountysheriff.com/citizensacademy.php](http://www.mccrackencountysheriff.com/citizensacademy.php)

# RETIREMENTS



Jason Walters

Deputy Jason Walters concluded his distinguished career at the McCracken County Sheriff's Office on February 28, 2023, entering retirement after two decades of dedicated service. Beginning his journey in June of 2003, Deputy Walters committed himself to the safety and education of the community he served. For a decade, he was the face of the DARE (Drug Abuse Resistance Education) program, teaching countless students the importance of making safe and responsible choices. Beyond his role as a DARE Officer, he contributed significantly as a training officer and a Police Training Officer (PTO), where he shared his knowledge and experience to guide new deputies in their careers. Deputy Walters' legacy is marked by his dedication to community service, education, and the mentorship of fellow officers.



Brent McDowell

Deputy Brent McDowell concluded his exemplary career in law enforcement with his retirement from the McCracken County Sheriff's Office on July 31, 2023. He embarked on his journey in June of 2019, bringing a wealth of experience and dedication to the role. Deputy McDowell's career began in 1987 with the Princeton Police Department. Throughout his service, he held several key positions, including serving as a DARE Officer for four years and completing two tours as a Department K9 officer, showcasing his versatility and commitment to community safety and education.

Deputy McDowell's retirement marks the end of a long and commendable career dedicated to public safety and service.



# NEW HIRES



Jason Armstrong



Patrick Crown



Cameron Thomason

## *COURTHOUSE DIVISION*



Emilee Jones



Roy Roberts

# SPECIALIZED UNITS

## ACCIDENT RECONSTRUCTION TEAM

**Motor Vehicle Collisions In the year 2023**, the McCracken County Sheriff's Office diligently responded to and meticulously investigated a total of 799 motor vehicle collisions. Regrettably, these incidents resulted in the loss of six lives and left 267 individuals injured on the roadways of McCracken County.

**Specialized Investigation Approach** The exigencies presented by motor vehicle collisions involving loss of life or severe physical injury necessitate a specialized and methodical investigative approach. This approach is underpinned by a skillset cultivated through rigorous training and hands-on experience.

**Collision Reconstruction Team** Integral to our investigative endeavors is the Collision Reconstruction Team, comprising four dedicated members. This specialized unit is entrusted with the critical task of responding to collision scenes and employing advanced equipment for precise data collection.

**Trimble RS-4 GNSS Device** Reconstructionist utilize a Trimble RS-4 GNSS device. This state-of-the-art equipment interfaces with GPS satellites and, when paired with a tablet, facilitates the meticulous capture of specific points at a scene. Subsequently, these data points are seamlessly imported into sophisticated computer software capable of generating intricate 2D and 3D models of the scene, complemented by satellite imaging overlays.

**Utilization of Drones** Drones serve as invaluable assets in our investigative pursuits. These aerial devices are adept at capturing both photographs and videos of collision scenes, affording a comprehensive 'bird's eye view' perspective. The resultant media is rendered in 4K resolution, ensuring meticulous documentation of critical details.

**Gracious Donation from McCracken County Sheriff's Foundation** The acquisition of our drone capabilities was made possible through the benevolent contribution of the McCracken County Sheriff's Foundation. In addition to their indispensable role in collision investigations, these drones will also be deployed to document crime scenes and other major incidents, further augmenting our capacity to serve and protect the community with distinction.

# SPECIALIZED UNITS

## SPECIAL SERVICES TEAM-SST

The MCSO Special Services Team (or SWAT) is a group of volunteers who want to respond to high-risk situations. The SST is comprised of deputies, paramedics, and a physician. The SST is utilized when circumstances dictate that a deputy that trains more frequently and with more tools is necessary. The MCSO typically relies on a matrix to determine whether SST should be utilized in any given situation.

The SST responds to and conducts high risk search warrants, high risk arrest warrants, surveillance on armed individuals, barricaded subjects, and other incidents that require a higher degree of training and specialized tools. Members of SST also routinely assist in the planning of other incidents that may not require the full SST components.

Each member receives an additional intense training program upon joining the team. The team then trains monthly, adhering to guidelines established by the National Tactical Officers Association (NTOA). By adhering to these standards, the team consistently meets recognized benchmarks for evaluation, training and deployment.

Members of the team also receive training from a 3<sup>rd</sup> party tactical instruction team, covering a wide array of topics tailored to the team's specific needs and requests. These topics are organic to the McCracken County area, including maritime operations. By maintaining standards set by a national association and implementing a 3<sup>rd</sup> party training



# SHERIFF'S CHAPLAINS



Pastor Trad York has been serving the McCracken County Sheriff's Office as Chaplain since 2019. He is currently the Pastor of Waldo Baptist Church in Metropolis, IL. Pastor York has been in the Southern Baptist Ministry for 28 years. In the past, he served as Youth Minister and Associate Pastor of Hardin Baptist Church in Hardin, KY. He attended Chaplain training in Louisville, KY.

This past year, he has provided support and encouragement to the deputies and staff of the McCracken County Sheriff's Office. Specifically, weekly prayer in the office, monthly home bible studies, and personal guidance and counseling. Presently, he is available to deputies and their families as well as the community to comfort and assist them with any needs they may have. In the future, Pastor York plans to continue to foster relationships while providing spiritual leadership. He is honored to serve McCracken County as Chaplain and hopes to continue long into the future.



Tim Turner joined the McCracken County Sheriff's Office in 2018 to volunteer as a Chaplain. He has served as pastor for the Christ Community Church in West Paducah for the past 23 years. Chaplain Turner received his pastoral education from Lee College in Cleveland, TN.

Chaplain Turner's compassion, wisdom, and guidance are vital links in the chain between the members of the McCracken County Sheriff's Office and the citizens that we serve. We are blessed that God has called him to this ministry.

2023



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