“...The mission of the Austin Police Department is to enhance the quality of life in the City of Austin by working cooperatively with the public to enforce the law, preserve peace, reduce fear, and provide for a safe environment.”
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ANNUAL REPORT
Austin Police Department
2018

It is with great pleasure that I present the Austin Police Department’s 2018 Annual Report to the Mayor, City Council, and citizens of Austin. This report is meant to give you a brief overview of the activities and accomplishments of the men and women who serve our department.

Our current staffing level remains the same with 34 sworn Officers, 2.5 CSOs (Community Service Officers), one Administrative Assistant, and one part-time Parking Enforcement Officer. Our officers continue to respond to a high volume of calls with 21,295 calls for service, 1,918 medical calls, and 730 motor vehicle accidents.

We enjoyed a very successful National Night Out on August 7, 2018. We also hosted our fourth consecutive year of our Citizens Police Academy with nineteen individuals attending six sessions in September and October to gather a greater understanding of the duties and training requirements of our police officers.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the officers for the great effort and fine work they perform for this department and the citizens of Austin.

Respectfully submitted,

Brian M. Krueger
Chief of Police
AUSTIN POLICE DEPARTMENT 2018 ROSTER

Chief of Police Brian M. Krueger
Captain David McKichan

Lieutenants
John T. Mueller
Matt Holten
Dustin Wollenburg

Detectives
Todd Clennon
Pat Retterath
Mark Walski
Brant Strouf

Sergeants
Jeff McCormack
Kim Lenz
Michael Hartman

Officers
Ryan Leif
Chad Norman
Brian Blake
Mike Tischer
James Lunt
Samuel Schuweiler
April A. Kline
Travis Martin
Derek Ellis
Aaron Juenger
David Dyke
Nate Curtiss
Nathan Hoefs
Jorge Jimenez
Dustin Hicks
John J. Mueller
Nathan St. Aubin
Michael Nordean
Tyler Freeman
Michael Hulopeter
Ryan McCormack
Josh Bradley

Community Service Officers
Ernesto Cantu, Sarah Hubacher, Bronson Hindal

Parking Enforcement Officer

Administrative Assistant Jeanne Steinbrink
2018 Highlights
Chief Brian Krueger

- The Austin Police Department welcomed three new officers in 2018:
  - Michael Hullopeter from New Richland 9D125 on 4/17/18
  - Ryan McCormack from Austin 9D124 on 11/19/18
  - Josh Bradley from LeRoy 9D127 on 11/19/18

- Three officers successfully completed their one year probationary periods and became permanent members of the department:
  - Nathan St. Aubin 10/10/18
  - Michael Nordean 10/10/18
  - Tyler Freeman 11/06/18

- The Austin Police Department had one retirement in 2018. Detective Mark Haider retired on June 9, 2018 after 33.5 years of service with the Austin Police Department, which included patrol duties, SIRT (Special Incident Response Team), and sergeant.

- The Police Department took a new department photo at the Band Shell Park.

- The Austin Police Department continued to implement an excellent K9 Program with Officer Derek Ellis and K9 Rudy winning several USPCA Region 12 awards:
  - Narcotics Trial 1st Place
  - Patrol Dog Trial 3rd Place
  - Dual Purpose Narcotics and Patrol Top Dog/1st Place
• The Department continues making strides with SEMVCET (Southeast Minnesota Violent Crime Enforcement Team) to reduce the availability of illegal drugs in Austin and the associated criminal activity.

• Facebook pages for the Austin Police Department and the K9 Program continued to promote positive interactions with the community and department in 2018.

• Offices continued to raise thousands of dollars through the Austin Police Officers Association (APOA) with Lt. Mueller coordinating the annual Fall Country Music Show. The APOA donates to numerous local charities during the year, along with Riverland’s Law Enforcement Program.

• Several officers volunteered as bell ringers for the Salvation Army in December and numerous officers participated in the “Shop with a Hero” event sponsored by Walmart on December 13, 2018.

• Many of our officers take advantage of our exercise weight room to maintain their fitness and overall wellness to perform their duties.

2018 Citizen Academy Graduates
Austin Police Department 2019 Goals

- Implement the New Standards and Training from the Minnesota P.O.S.T. Board. Three new learning objectives totaling at least 16 hours of continuing education are required every three years, bringing the total hours of education up from 48 hours to 64 hours every three years. New objectives:
  - Crisis Intervention and Mental Illness Crises
  - Conflict Management and Mediation
  - Recognizing and Valuing Community Diversity and Cultural Differences

- Continue running the Citizens Police Academy in September and October 2019

- Continue to partner with the Southeast Violent Crime Enforcement Team (SEMVCET) to reduce the availability of illegal drugs and associated criminal activity in Austin

- Continue to work with the leaders of our diverse community to educate current and new residents regarding state laws and local city ordinances

- Attend community events and grow a strong bond between officers and the youth in our community

- The Austin Police Department is expecting two retirements in 2019.

- Seek approval to make the one part-time Community Service Officer position a full-time position as soon as possible
The normal hours of the day shift are 7:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. There are six street patrol officers, a sergeant, and a lieutenant assigned to the shift and these officers work on a rotating schedule of days which includes working weekdays, weekends, and holidays. There are also two school resource officers that are assigned to the school district, but work street patrol on weekdays when there is no school and at least one SRO is assigned to the day shift during the summer months.

The day shift is supported by a full time Community Service Officer (CSO), who also works weekends and holidays, as well as a part time Parking Enforcement Officer (PEO). In addition, the day shift lieutenant is responsible for the hiring and supervision of four adult school crossing guards.

It has been many years since the shift roster ended the year the same as it started and 2018 was no exception. Once again, we saw the departure of some officers and the addition of others. The day shift started 2018 with Lt. Mueller, Sgt. Lenz, Officers Leif, Norman, Blake, Schuweiler, Dyke, and SROs Ruroden and Lunt, and Community Service Officer Hindal. By the end of the year, the day shift was made up of Lt. Mueller, Sgt. Lenz, Officers Leif, Norman, Schuweiler, Kline, Dyke, Jimenez, and Hicks, along with School Resource Officers Blake and Lunt, and Community Service Officer Hindal.

In addition to those officers, the day shift includes a part-time parking enforcement officer and four adult school crossing guards and a substitute. 2018 was a challenging year as the parking enforcement officer resigned and it took some time to find a replacement. Then the replacement resigned after only a few weeks on the job. One crossing guard also resigned, but a new one was hired and has remained in place. When either of those positions is not filled, it can add to the duties of the CSOs and police officers to fill those duties.

**The Day Shift is a Busy Shift**

Day shift continues to be extremely busy. Between the hours of 7:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. officers had nearly 9,200 contacts in 2018. Officers issued 484 criminal and traffic citations, and made 187 warrant arrests. Officers responded to thousands of calls for service including, but not limited to, traffic accidents, medical needs, burglary and robbery alarms, assaults, thefts, suicides and other deaths. Day shift officers often get called for civil or other matters, ranging from property disputes to parents that cannot make their child attend school or follow rules.
The officers of the day shift are fortunate to have the services and assistance of the Community Service Officers. The Community Service Officers responded to more than 1,000 calls, most of which were animal control, and lost and found property calls. The CSOs also respond to vehicle lock outs, runaway reports, and department errands. Their assistance is valuable and important because it allows the sworn officers to focus on and respond to emergencies and criminal matters.

The officers of the Austin Police Department work in unison with several other agencies including the Mower County Sheriff’s Office, the Minnesota State Patrol, Minnesota Bureau of Criminal Apprehension, as well as federal agencies such as the FBI and United States Secret Service. Officers also respond to calls and work closely with the Austin Fire Department and Gold Cross Ambulance Service.

The Officers of the Day Shift

- **Lt. John Mueller** has been with the Austin Police Department for more than 24 years and has been a supervisor for over 19 years. He is involved in many department activities including crime prevention and public presentations, and serves as the Day Leader for the Leadership Austin program on Public Safety Day. Lt. Mueller oversees the department’s criminal vehicle forfeitures, as well as the department’s vehicle and property auctions. Lt. Mueller serves as president of the Austin Police Officers Association (APOA) and is president of the supervisor’s labor group. Lt. Mueller is a graduate of Leadership Austin, as well as The Blandin Foundation’s Community Leadership Program. He serves on community boards and volunteers in several community organizations.

- **Sgt. Kim Lenz** is an 11 year veteran of the Austin Police Department. Sgt. Lenz became a Sergeant in 2015 and was assigned to the afternoon shift until coming to the day shift in September of 2017. Sgt. Lenz is the shift supervisor when the lieutenant is not on duty. In addition to her supervisory duties, Sgt. Lenz is a member of the Special Incident Response Team (SIRT), serves as a Field Training Officer (FTO) for newly hired officers, she is a coordinator of National Night Out, and she is the law enforcement representative in the city’s new rental property ordinance program. Sgt. Lenz is a graduate of the Leadership Austin program and completed her BCA Supervisor Management Series certificate.

- **Officer Ryan Leif** has been with the department for more than 18 years. Officer Leif is occasionally the acting shift supervisor. Officer Leif has been a “decoy” or runner for the K-9 program for many years and has worked with another officer to teach him the techniques a good decoy should possess.

- **Officer Chad Norman** joined the department 15 years ago. Officer Norman is responsible for managing and maintaining the department’s fleet of squad cars. He has a great passion for this task and keeps the department current on equipment and updates. Officer Norman is active in coordinating National Night Out, as well as a negotiator for the Special Incident Response Team.
Officer Norman’s negotiating skills learned as a SIRT negotiator have served him well several times on patrol calls.

- **Officer Brian Blake** has been an Austin Police Officer for 12 years. He has served the department as an FTO and is always willing to take on new tasks and learn new skills. Officer Blake stepped into the role of School Resource Officer in January of 2017. He is responsible for Ellis and I. J. Holten Middle Schools, as well as visiting several elementary schools. In addition, he conducts tobacco and alcohol compliance checks in Austin. Officer Blake is an Emergency Vehicle Operation Course (EVOC) instructor, patrol union representative, and a graduate of the Leadership Austin program.

- **Officer Jim Lunt** has been an Austin Police Officer for 11 years and has been the School Resource Officer at Austin High School since 2012. Officer Lunt is responsible for Austin High School, Oakland Education Center, and he conducts tobacco and alcohol compliance checks in Austin. Officer Lunt is a Gold Cross paramedic, a medic on the Special Incident Response Team (SIRT), and a Mayo Clinic Health Systems Death Investigator. Officer Lunt provides medical training to officers.

- **Officer Sam Schuweiler** has been an Austin Police Officer for 11 years. Officer Schuweiler is an Emergency Vehicle Operation Course (EVOC) instructor and a negotiator for the Special Incident Response Team (SIRT). He is also a patrol union steward and serves on the department’s uniform committee.

- **Officer April Kline** has been an Austin Police Officer for ten years. She joined the day shift in January. Officer Kline is trained in interviewing children who may be the victim of a crime. She participated as a presenter in Responsible Beverage Server Training that is provided to area alcohol establishments.

- **Officer Dave Dyke** has been an Austin Police Officer for three years. However, he came to the department with 17 years of experience in law enforcement. Having been on a drug and gang task force, Officer Dyke’s experience is beneficial to the other officers and to detectives, as well.

- **Officer Jorge Jimenez** has been an Austin Police Officer for two years. Officer Jimenez was working the overnight shift when he posted into the day shift in January, but due to man power issues he didn’t actually move to the day shift until May. Officer Jimenez is a co-advisor for the Austin Police Explorers post.

- **Officer Dustin Hicks** has been an Austin Police Officer for two years. Officer Hicks was working the noon to 10 p.m. shift when he posted into the day shift. But, again due to manpower issues, he was on days for a short time starting in January, then in April he went back to the noon to 10 p.m. shift, and then in August he was able to return to the day shift. Officer Hicks is a co-advisor of the Austin Police Explorers post.
Caring For Our Community

Austin police officers believe their relationship with the community they serve is important. Throughout the year, officers enjoyed opportunities to have positive interaction with the people in the community, especially children. Officers rewarded kids wearing bike helmets, obeying laws, and doing good deeds by giving them coupons for free ice cream cones, hamburgers, and mini-pizzas. As the holidays approached, the Austin Police Officers Association purchased $25 gift cards which officers handed out to people they encountered that could use a little help, and several officers participated in Shop With A Hero using gift cards provided by Walmart to help children buy Christmas gifts for their families.

It is evident that the community appreciates their police officers. Our officers enjoy great support from the community, as proven by the many kids and adults that have thanked officers in public and brought acts of kindness and notes of thanks to the Law Enforcement Center.

The officers of the Austin Police Department’s day shift are committed not only to their job and their department, but also to their community. Most officers are involved in at least one community organization or activity. Officers give their time to raise funds, coach and mentor youth, and help organize community events. The officers of this department care about the community in which they serve!

EVENING SHIFT - PATROL
Lt. Dustin Wollenburg

The evening shift is responsible for providing police services between the hours of 4:00 p.m. and 2:00 a.m. The evening shift is one of the largest and busiest shifts on the department. When at full staff, there are a total of nine officers assigned, including two mid-shift officers that work from 12:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. The mid-shift also provides supplemental manpower to the day shift, but those officers are primarily responsible to the evening shift schedule. The evening shift has a minimum of four officers working at any given time. The evening shift overlaps with the night shift from 10:00 p.m. to 2:00 a.m. which provides extra manpower during what is often a busy time of the shift.

The evening shift patrol division consisted of the following officers in 2018:

- Lt. Dustin Wollenburg – Badge# 3D89, a 16-year veteran officer, Lieutenant and Evening Shift Patrol Supervisor, Special Incident Response Team Senior Operator, Field Training Officer, Field Training Program Coordinator and DMT Breath Test Operator.
• **Sgt. Michael Hartman – Badge# 8D103**, a nine year veteran officer, Sergeant, Community Service Officer Supervisor, Special Incident Response Team Operator and Chemical/Less Lethal Munitions Instructor, Field Training Officer, Internship/Mentorship Program Coordinator, Department Head Use of Force Instructor, Social Media Coordinator and DMT Breath Test Operator.

• **Patrol Officer Travis Martin – Badge# 9D109**, a five year veteran officer, Department Firearms Instructor, Firearms Armorer, Field Training Officer, Special Incident Response Team Operator, Department Toward Zero Deaths (TZD) Coordinator, Internship/Mentorship Program Coordinator, and DMT Breath Test Operator.

• **Patrol Officer Aaron Juenger – Badge# 9D111**, a three and a half year officer, Firearms Armorer and recently selected to be a Use-of-Force Instructor for the department.

• **Patrol Officer Nathan Curtiss – Badge# 9D115**, a three year officer, started with our department in January 2016. Curtiss is a DMT Breath Test Operator.

• **Patrol Officer John J. Mueller – Badge# 9D119**, a two and a half year officer, started with our department in July 2016. Mueller previously worked as a police officer in the State of Wisconsin. Mueller frequently assists the Department K9 Unit with training and he is also a DMT Breath Test Operator. Mueller was recently selected to join the Special Incident Response Team as an operator.

• **Patrol Officer Michael Nordean – Badge# 9D123**, a one year officer, started with the department in October 2017.

• **Patrol Officer Michael Hullopeter – Badge# 9D125**, a probationary officer, started with the department in April 2018. Officer Hullopeter is currently assigned to the mid-shift from 12:00 p.m. – 10:00 p.m. The evening shift patrol division is also supplemented by Community Service Officers Sarah Hubacher and Ernesto Cantu. CSO Hubacher works full-time on a rotating evening and day shift schedule, while CSO Cantu works part-time on a varying schedule. The CSOs handle the animal control duties throughout the city and also handle many minor violations of state statutes and city ordinances. The CSOs frequently assist the patrol officers during the course of their duties and are a real asset to the department. The CSO Program is supervised by evening shift Sgt. Michael Hartman.
The evening shift saw some significant staffing changes in 2018, including a new shift sergeant at the beginning of the year. For much of the year, the evening shift had staffing shortages due largely to retirements and new officers starting with the department.

- **January:** Sgt. Hartman posted into his new role as the evening shift sergeant following his recent promotion. Hartman had previously been working on the evening shift as a patrol officer prior to his promotion. Following a large posting meeting in January, there were several changes to the shift staffing. Officer Hicks posted onto the dayshift, while probationary Officer Rachel Olson joined the evening shift in the 12:00 p.m.-10 p.m. position.

- **April:** Officer Hicks was temporarily assigned to the evening shift for about four months due to a staff shortage. At that same time, Officer Nordean was temporarily assigned to the night shift.

- **August:** Officer Ellis and K9 Rudy left the evening shift and posted into the night shift. Probationary Officer Hullopeter successfully completed his field training and posted into the evening shift in the 12:00 p.m.-10 p.m. position. Officer Olson resigned her employment and left the department. Olson had been assigned to the mid-shift.

In 2018, the evening shift officers responded to a wide variety of calls relating to things like Domestic Disturbances, Assaults, Illegal Drugs, Robberies, Burglaries, Thefts, Missing Persons and Medical Emergencies.

Officers also handled many traffic related incidents including DWI-Alcohol and Drug Impaired Drivers, Unlicensed Drivers, Reckless/Careless Driving, Traffic Accidents and General Traffic Enforcement.

The evening shift officers handled 13,558 calls and contacts in the community this year, which is down from 14,137 in 2017. Calls and contacts include both dispatched calls for service and self-initiated activities. This high volume of activity, combined with the staffing shortages on the evening shift, made for a very busy shift with little down time.

Evening shift officers issued 1,053 citations and documented warnings throughout the year for various criminal, traffic and parking related offenses. This total was approximately 217 fewer citations than the previous year. The most common criminal offense that the evening shift officers cited was for theft-related crimes. The most common traffic offense citations were issued for driver’s license violations (No Driver’s License, Driving after Revocation, Suspension or Cancellation).
Highlights of evening shift activity and community involvement:

**February:** Several evening shift officers responded to a report of an unresponsive subject in cardiac arrest. Officers performed CPR and administered shocks from their automated defibrillators, which helped revive the victim.

Sgt. Hartman and Officers Martin, Mueller and Olson, along with the Austin Fire Department, assisted in the successful rescue of a young girl who fell through the ice on the Mill Pond.

**March:** Lt. Wollenburg, Sgt. Hartman and Officer Ellis gave presentations to the Leadership Austin group during Public Safety Day at the Austin Police Department. The topics included the role of the Special Incident Response Team, Use of Force and an overview of the Austin Police K9 Program.

**April:** Officer Ellis and K9 Rudy passed their narcotics certification with an impressive score of 198.5 out of a possible 200 points. Ellis and Rudy also won the team narcotics competition with a fellow K9 officer from Houston County.

Officer Nordean, along with dayshift Sgt. Lenz, participated in the Warrior Wagon event at the Austin Holiday Inn. This is a great organization that provides wagons filled with comfort and helpful items to families with newly diagnosed pediatric cancer patients.

**May:** Officer Martin attended a Toward Zero Deaths (TZD) conference and photo shoot. TZD is a state funded public safety campaign that promotes traffic safety through public education and enforcement. The evening shift officers were active in the Toward Zero Deaths (TZD) campaign enforcement waves throughout 2018. Each enforcement wave focuses on seat belt enforcement, distracted driving and drug/alcohol impaired drivers.

**Summer:** Evening shift officers participated in the “Catching the Good Campaign”. This is a program that rewards young citizens in the community for doing good deeds and making wise decisions.

**July:** Officers Ellis and Mueller, along with night shift Lt. Holten, participated in a K9 fundraiser at the Veteran’s Pavilion. The money raised is used to provide equipment and training for the Austin PD K9 unit.

**August:** Evening shift officers participated in the National Night Out event at the Veteran’s Pavilion. This annual event is an opportunity for citizens in the community to connect with one another and become involved in crime prevention.

**September:** Sgt. Hartman and Officer Martin presented during the APD Citizen Academy on topics, including Use of Force and Firearms. The participants got to participate in a live fire firearms exercise at the Austin Police Firearms Range.
December: Lt. Wollenburg and new APD Officer Joshua Bradley participated in bell ringing for the Salvation Army at the Austin Walmart.

Officers from the evening shift participated in the “Shop with a Hero” program at Walmart. This program allows underprivileged children in the community to shop with members of local police, fire and ambulance services. The children get a $50 gift card to purchase Christmas gifts for themselves and their family members.

Lt. Wollenburg and Officer Juenger handed out special hockey pucks to kids at the Austin Bruins Hockey Game. The event was sponsored by the Austin Police Officers Association (APOA) and each hockey puck had the APD logo emblazoned on it.

The evening shift is a very pro-active team of professional officers that work together to achieve the ultimate goal of enhancing the quality of life for the citizens of Austin. We are committed to providing the best service possible to our community and we look forward to continuing that service in 2019.

NIGHT SHIFT - PATROL
Lt. Matt Holten

2018 was a busy year for the night shift with some changes in personnel. Officer Jimenez posted into dayshift and Officer Juenger posted into the afternoon shift. At the close of 2018 the night shift consisted of seven officers: Lt. Matt Holten with 32 years of experience; Sgt. Jeff McCormack, 22 years; Mike Tischer, 12 years; Derek Ellis, four years; Nate Hoefs, three years; Nate St. Aubin, one year; and Tyler Freeman, one year.

The night shifts officers start working at 10:00 p.m. and finish at 8:00 a.m. Typical calls for service for the night shift are fights, domestic disputes, vandalism, thefts, burglaries, and noise complaints. Traffic/DWI enforcement is also a big part of night shift officers’ activities. A disturbing trend that continued in Austin this year was an increased number of shootings, several of which happened between 10:00 p.m. and 8:00 a.m.

Here is a sampling of some of the calls that the night shift handled in 2018:

January: Officers responded to a report of a shooting in southeast Austin near the post office. A male subject reported to Officer Martin that two men had stolen his car and shot at him in his driveway. Officer Curtiss recovered the stolen car two blocks from the victim’s home, riddled with bullet holes. Investigating officers determined that the victim had been shot at and then had likely shot several rounds at his car as the thieves fled his driveway in it.
Ultimately Detective Strouf responded and Officer St. Aubin located a 9 mm pistol hidden inside a carpet roll in the basement of the victim’s home. As a result of the investigation, several people were charged with felony offenses, including the victim, who was charged with being a convicted felon in possession of a firearm.

Officers responded to multiple reports of shots fired in the 1400 block of 2nd Ave. SW. Multiple officers responded and learned from witnesses that a silver vehicle had been seen speeding from the area right after shots were heard and a man was seen running into a residence. Officers located a parked vehicle that had been hit with gunfire outside of that residence and found several bullet casings near it. Officers made entry into the residence the man was seen running into, and located three men hiding in the bathroom. The men were not cooperative, but investigators believe someone in a silver car attempted to buy Xanax from the three men and fired upon them after the drug deal went bad. Two of the three men were arrested for charges unrelated to the shooting. Once at the jail, a detention deputy performed body cavity searches on the suspects and found that one of the men had a large bag of Xanax hidden.

**February:** Officers Jimenez, Martin, and Curtiss responded to a medical emergency at an Austin home after a man collapsed and went into cardiac arrest. Officers were able to save the man using an AED and CPR and the victim made a full recovery.

**March:** Officers responded to a report of shots fired incident behind the El Maguey bar in the Plaza parking lot. Responding officers spoke to witnesses and also found bullet casings outside of the bar. Based on witness information, officers contacted a group of people parked in a vehicle in the Plaza lot. Officers found a handgun in the vehicle and arrested an Albert Lea man for reckless discharge of a firearm and being a convicted felon in possession of a firearm.

Officer Ellis and K9 Rudy took the annual USPCA certification test for narcotics detection and won the award for top region team with Lt. Tracy Erickson, the K9 handler from Houston County.

**April:** Officers responded to another report of shots fired in southwest Austin. Officers found several spent bullet casings at the scene of the report and spoke to several people in the area, but were not able to gain any useful information.

**May:** Officers were called to MCHS Austin by staff after an adult male came into the emergency room with two gunshot wounds to the abdomen. The man was airlifted to St. Mary’s hospital in Rochester. Investigating officers were able to determine that the shooting occurred at the victim’s home in northeast Austin. The victim recovered from his injuries, but did not cooperate with investigators so the case remains unresolved.
Officer Ellis and K9 Rudy won awards at the USPCA patrol dog trials, finishing 3rd place overall and winning the award for the top dual purpose dog, which combines the score annually for the narcotic and patrol dog trials. Officer Ellis and K9 Rudy also won several commendations and medals from the USPCA awards committee for their patrol and narcotics case work on the streets of Austin. Many of these cases are detailed in the K9 section of the annual report.

**July:** Sgt. McCormack was named to the MN DWI All-Star Team, a recognition given to the State’s top DWI enforcers. Sgt. McCormack has won this honor for several consecutive years and he is the Austin Police Department’s leader in DWI arrests every year.

**August:** Officers responded to three reported shootings in different areas of town, all happening within 45 minutes of each other. A residence in southwest Austin, with three children inside, was struck several times by gunfire and an Austin man had reportedly shown up in the emergency room with a gunshot wound to the leg. None of the children at the residence were injured, and the male shooting victim was treated and released. None of the possible witnesses contacted by police cooperated with the investigation, although K9 Rudy did recover a gun at one of the reported shooting scenes.

Officers responded to the MCHS emergency room for a report that a man had come there after being stabbed at the McDonald’s on Oakland Ave. West. The victim reported that he had been "jumped" in the McDonald’s parking lot by eight or nine people and that one of the suspects had stabbed him. Investigators became involved and an Austin juvenile was ultimately arrested for the stabbing.

**November:** Officers responded to a reported armed robbery at the Ankeny’s store on Oakland Ave. East. Two males had reportedly used a handgun in the robbery. The suspects had fled the scene and were not located. Investigators were able to learn the names of the suspects, one juvenile and one adult, both Austin residents. Officer Tischer located and arrested the juvenile, and detectives arrested the adult at his residence while executing a search warrant. The gun used was found to be a BB gun.

**December:** Officers responded to a reported house fire in northeast Austin. The lone occupant of the house made it out safely, but the house was completely destroyed. The cause of the fire was determined to be a hotplate that the resident had been using to keep some clothing items warm.
The Austin Police Department Community Service Officer (CSO) program provides many valuable services to the citizens of Austin and is a great asset to the department. The CSOs handle the animal control duties throughout the city, care for and maintain the city’s animal shelter, oversee the operations of the city’s bike shed, and handle many minor violations of state statutes and city ordinances. These are just a few of the services the CSOs provide. Additionally, the CSOs frequently assist the patrol officers during the course of their duties and they are a real asset to the department.

Community Service Officers

The CSO Program has two fulltime positions and one part time position.

- Ernesto Cantu, CSO 11, is the most senior CSO and has been with the department since the start of the program in 1999. CSO Cantu is employed part time and works both day and evening shifts in the absence of the fulltime CSOs.
- Sarah Hubacher, CSO 16, has been with the department since May 2017 and works part evening and part day shift fulltime.
- Bronson Hindal, CSO 17, has been with the department since July 2017. CSO Hindal works the day shift fulltime on a rotating schedule. He is the primary caretaker of the city’s Animal Shelter and Bike Shed.

The Animal Shelter is located next to the Humane Society. The new Animal Shelter can hold sixteen dogs and sixteen cats inside, compared to holding only ten dogs and twelve cats at the old facility. The dog area has a feature that makes feeding and cleaning easier without taking the dogs out. The CSOs responded to 2,522 calls for service in 2018, which were 449 more calls than they handled in 2017. The majority of these calls were for animal related complaints, found property, juvenile runaway reports, and key retrievals from locked vehicles. There were a total of 256 citations issued by the CSOs in 2018, compared to 113 in 2017. The vast majority of citations issued were for various parking violations.

A total of 292 animals were placed at the Animal Shelter in 2018; including 133 dogs, 156 cats, two pigs, and one chicken. Of these, 95 dogs, thirteen cats and two pigs were released to their owners. Two dogs were adopted by private owners, as well as two cats. The chicken was adopted by a private farm outside of the city.
Officer James Lunt is currently the School Resource Officer serving Austin Public Schools. SRO Lunt has been located at the Austin High School since October 2013. Officer Lunt is primarily responsible for Austin Public High School, along with Banfield and Sumner elementary schools. Officer Lunt will continue to build the SRO program and work closely with school administration, teachers, staff, and students to provide high quality, school based law enforcement.

**Officer Lunt is involved in a variety of functions:**

- Responsible for the safety and security of assigned schools
- Liaison between the Austin Police Department and Austin Public Schools
- Serves on the school safety committee to implement security and emergency procedures
- Maintains surveillance equipment
- Coordinates alcohol compliance checks within the City of Austin
- Conducts investigations in cases assigned within the school district
- Serves as a guest speaker for classrooms on topics such as alcohol, drugs, and criminal matters
- Assigned to patrol division when not performing School Resource Officer duties
During the summer, Officer Lunt continues to be a part of the Austin Public School system for summer programming, and assists with patrol as needed. Officer Lunt is a member of the Mower County/Austin S.I.R.T and serves as Team Medic. He is the Austin Police Department medical trainer and instructs officers in first responder duties; that include basic first aid, the use of oxygen, CPR, and use of an AED.

Officer Lunt provides a program of educational leadership to the school staff, students, and parents. The program addresses tobacco, alcohol, drug issues, gang activity, violence prevention, crime prevention, and safety issues in the school community.

Officer Lunt continues to combat the rise in use of electronic nicotine delivery devices known as “Vapes.” Vaping is becoming increasingly common in our high school; not only do vapes deliver a high concentration of nicotine, vapes can be used as a delivery device for a controlled substance. Through an array of anti-vaping polices and school discipline initiatives, we will continue to fight this issue and educate students about the health hazards of vaping.

Additionally, Officer Lunt is fighting a tremendous increase in marijuana use within the high school. With many states legalizing the drug, students have seemed to have formed an opinion that marijuana is safe. Students can now get high by eating edibles, or using odorless vape pins which can be very hard to detect. Lunt continues to educate students through discussions in health classes.

Officer Lunt has been involved with a variety of incidents while working within the schools. Most of the criminal complaints he responds to include theft, drug use, child abuse, child welfare, assaults, disorderly conduct, and socially-based media harassment.

SROs also work closely with patrol and other entities within the department, both in and out of the school. School Resource Officers Lunt and Blake work closely with the SROs in surrounding cities when issues arise.

Officer Lunt continues to develop relationships with students and staff. He participates within the classroom, assisting in the education of students. Officer Lunt continues to be an integral part of the daily operation at the Oakland Education Center. Oakland Education Center is a cooperative school with Albert Lea and Austin that provides education to Level 4 students with behavioral and emotional disturbances.
Officer Brian Blake has been involved in the SRO Program for a full year in his assignment to Ellis Middle School. Officer Blake has continued in his role as Ellis SRO with excitement and enthusiasm. This year will be Officer Blake’s thirteenth year with the Austin Police Department.

Officer Blake also has the responsibility for working with the following schools: Woodson Kindergarten Center, Southgate Elementary, Neveln Elementary and I. J. Holton Intermediate School. During the past year Officer Blake has been able to make great connections with the student body, staff and administration at these schools.

During the school year Officer Blake has participated in the Parent Teacher Committee Walk-a-Thon that helps raise money for the children at Southgate to do activities. Officer Blake visits the I. J. Holton Intermediate School at least twice a week and greets the children as they come to school. This allows the children to have a positive encounter with Officer Blake and see him in a different light.

Officer Blake gets to interact with the student body at Ellis Middle School in a number of ways, such as auditing classes, learning what the students are learning, teaching a couple of health classes and just being able to talk to the students on an equal level.

The SRO Program has been and continues to be a good experience for Officer Blake.
K9 Rudy is a four year old male Belgian Malinois and is partnered with Officer Derek Ellis on the night shift from 10:00 p.m. – 8:00 a.m. K9 Rudy is a dual purpose K9, trained for patrol work and narcotics detection.

K9 Rudy certified at the United States Police Canine Association (USPCA) Region 12 Narcotics Trial in Wright County, Minnesota in the March 2018 where he placed 1st in the team category with Lt. Trace Erickson and K9 Roman from Houston County Sheriff’s Office. K9 Rudy certified and placed 3rd at the USPCA Patrol Dog Trial in Alexandria, Minnesota. K9 Rudy also received the award of Top Dual Purpose Dog in Region 12, meaning K9 Rudy had the highest combined scores (narcotics trial and PD1 trial) of all dual purpose dogs in Region 12.

K9 Rudy was deployed over 91 times in 2018. K9 Rudy assisted in many narcotic cases including traffic stops, search warrants, and locker sniffs at area schools. K9 Rudy also assisted in many building searches involving possible burglaries and was deployed on several tracks.

Officer Ellis is an operator on the Special Incident Response Team (SIRT), where K9 Rudy is utilized for search warrants and high risk call outs. K9 Rudy has been actively involved in the community by providing demonstrations of his skills to the public on numerous occasions including: Leadership Austin, Austin Police Department Citizen Academy, Mower County Humane Society Fundraiser, Circle of Friends Day Camp of Austin, National Night Out, and many more.

Some K9 highlights of 2018:

January: K9 Rudy assisted officers in locating and capturing a suspect involved in a burglary of a residential home. K9 Rudy located the suspect hiding under a pile of clothes in the victim’s house and the suspect was taken into custody.

March: K9 Rudy certified at the USPCA Region 12 Narcotic Trials in Wright County, Minnesota placing 1st in the team category. K9 Rudy certifies yearly with the USPCA by demonstrating his ability to recognize and locate illegal drugs.
June: K9 Rudy placed 3rd in the USPCA Region 12 Patrol Dog Trial in Alexandria, Minnesota. K9 Rudy competed against approximately 102 other K9 teams from around the Upper Midwest. K9 Rudy also won the award of Top Dual purpose dog in Region 12, by having the highest combined total score from the Narcotics and PD1 Trials.

August: K9 Rudy was called in to assist in locating a gun that might have been used during a shooting where one person was taken to the hospital with a gunshot wound. Upon arrival at the scene, Officer Ellis was advised that handgun ammunition was located on the suspect’s front porch and an officer believed they saw the suspect throw something as officers arrived on scene. K9 Rudy was able to locate and retrieve a loaded 9 mm handgun from bushes in the backyard of a residence. Two suspects were taken into custody for questioning by detectives.

November: K9 Rudy assisted the Mower County Sheriff’s Office in a search at Lyle, Minnesota. Sheriff’s Deputies believed a suspect with felony warrants was hiding in a house. The suspect had been involved in a high speed chase in Freeborn County a few weeks prior and had escaped custody. Freeborn County also advised that the suspect was known to flee on foot and/or fight with officers. K9 Rudy was positioned as perimeter containment on the house. The suspect fled out the back of the house as deputies entered the front. The suspect ran through a backyard before getting apprehended by K9 Rudy. K9 Rudy was able to hold the suspect until Officer Ellis and deputies arrived to place the suspect in custody.

SPECIAL INCIDENT RESPONSE TEAM (SIRT)
Detective Todd Clennon, Commander
Detective Brant Strouf, Assistant Commander

The Special Incident Response Team (SIRT) had several changes in personnel during 2018. Officer Hicks was selected to join SIRT in the spring of 2018. His addition brought the team to its full operational strength of twelve officers. Sgt. McCormack stepped down from the team in the fall of 2018 after 20 dedicated years as an Operator and Assistant Commander. His skill, knowledge and comradery will be missed. Sgt. McCormack’s position as Assistant Commander was filled by Detective Brant Strouf and the open operator position was then filled after Officer J. J. Mueller was selected to join the team.
SIRT consists of twelve tactical operators: Commander Detective Todd Clennon; Assistant Commander Detective Brant Strouf; Operators Lt. Dustin Wollenburg, Sgt. Kim Lenz, Sgt. Mike Hartman, Officer Travis Martin, Officer Derek Ellis, Officer Dustin Hicks, Officer J. J. Mueller and MCSO Deputies Tim Donovan, Tom Brogan and T.J. Lynch. Officer Jim Lunt serves part-time with the team and operates as the team paramedic as needed.

The SIRT negotiator team consists of Officer Chad Norman, Officer Sam Schuweiler, Officer Dave Dyke, Deputy Tyler Wilson and Dispatcher Laura Geffert. The Crisis Negotiation Team (CNT) trains quarterly with the communications equipment and vehicles to maintain its readiness status.

Monthly in-house training was held on eleven days in 2018 and all SIRT operators completed their training goals. Training included entry team use of force, less lethal munitions, ballistic shield operations and marksmanship. The Austin HRA offered a house for training in June 2018 that was set to be demolished. This was an opportunity for SIRT operators to work with SIRT negotiators on various scenarios testing communication, equipment and responses to difficult tactical situations. SIRT conducted another training exercise in fall 2018 with negotiators at Banfield Elementary School. The training took place after school hours, but gave officers an opportunity to interact with some “Kids Corner” children in the gym prior to scenarios.
SIRT operators attended outside training hosted by KCMTOA in 2018, including basic SWAT school in Kansas City and an intermediate sniper course in Kansas.

Of the current twelve operators, five are active instructors in various roles with their department and all are seasoned, well-respected officers, with most taking on additional roles. SIRT operators lead active roles in the community and in department events including Shop with A Hero, National Night Out, and workplace violence education at Austin Public Schools, the Austin Public Library, and other businesses in the community. SIRT operators have also given presentations to Leadership Austin and the Austin Police Department Citizen Academy. Thank you to Sgt. Lenz and Officer Norman for spearheading several of these community events.

2018 SIRT purchases included membership to the National Tactical Officers Association, membership fees to KCMTOA, uniforms and apparel, and custom modifications to two sniper rifles. There were also several smaller purchases throughout the year such as LP gas, batteries, keys and jackets.

SIRT was called out for service on seven occasions in 2018; six call outs were in the city of Austin and one in Rose Creek, Mower County. Of the seven events, four were high risk search warrants in regard to narcotics activity, two were high risk search/arrest warrants, and one was in regard to a burglary with known violent suspects. Five of the seven warrants were no-knock.

- A search warrant on June 18, 2018 resulted in the recovery of a practice mortar round. The explosive was turned over to the St. Paul Police Department bomb squad.

- On August 27, 2018 the Rochester Police Fugitive Unit requested SIRT to execute a search warrant in Austin in an attempt to arrest a robbery suspect believed to be in possession of firearms. Rochester Police Dept. deployed a drone over a residence as SIRT was arriving at the destination. The drone caught the suspect sprint from the residence and hide in a shed in the yard. He was quickly taken into custody without incident.
On September 24, 2018 SIRT was requested by the United States Marshall Service Task Force and the Mower County Sheriff’s Office to apprehend a homicide suspect out of Fargo, North Dakota. The suspect was apprehended by SIRT and the home searched without incident.

The December 31, 2018 burglary warrant resulted in the recovery of firearms and three IED explosive devices by patrol prior to the search warrant.

SIRT has successfully met the challenges of 2018 and stands ready for future challenges. The team works together in a methodical manner and operators have learned their respective roles and duties well. The team’s best asset continues to be the high quality individuals that merge together as a team to provide the best possible service to the citizens they serve in Austin and Mower County. SIRT continues to serve, train hard, and be in a state of readiness for challenges that arrive in the future.

**SOUTHEAST MINNESOTA VIOLENT CRIME ENFORCEMENT TEAM**

Detective Mark Walski

The City of Austin continues to partner with the Southeast Minnesota Violent Crime Enforcement Team (SEMVCET), which is represented by eight counties and five cities. Detective Mark Walski is currently assigned to SEMVCET. Detective Hemann, of the Mower County Sheriff’s Office, joined the Task Force in 2018 and has been a great addition.

Besides working closely with SEMVCET by assisting in other communities, Detective Walski also receives assistance from all the detectives within the Austin Police Department (Detectives Clennon, Strouf, Retterath, and Haider) and the Mower County Sheriff’s Department (Detectives Hemann, Hillman, and Sandvik).

The Austin Police Department patrol officers and Mower County Sheriff’s deputies have been vital in assisting a proactive style of policing. Most of the narcotic investigations in Austin and Mower County start with the patrol division and their supervisors.

There were a total of 119 active drug and violent crime investigations, resulting in 86 drug/violent crimes-related arrests, many of whom were the same people charged with separate incidents. Some of the investigations are still pending into 2019. We seized 1,897 grams and purchased 231.23 grams of methamphetamine, seized 7.67 grams and purchased 5.02 grams of heroin, and seized 2,174 grams of marijuana in 2018. Fifty-two drug-related search warrants were executed that were the result of drug investigations or neighborhood complaints, and a total of 24 search warrants were written to support initial warrants.
2018 TASK FORCE HIGHLIGHTS

January: Detective Walski obtained a no-knock search warrant for a residence from which guns and narcotics were being sold. The Mower County Special Incident Response Team (SIRT) assisted in making entry. As SIRT made entry, the suspect exited the upstairs window and started to throw approximately two ounces of meth over the head of Detective Walski, who was conducting perimeter. The suspect then climbed on the roof and threatened to harm himself. SIRT operators did an excellent job talking the subject down and taking him into custody, and located 378 grams of meth in the residence.

February: Officers Nordean and Ellis responded to a residence in Austin following a report of someone who inflicted self-harm with a knife. Officers Nordean and Ellis did an excellent job identifying that the situation was an assault and not self-harm as reported to dispatch. Detective Walski was called in, along with the Bureau of Criminal Apprehension (BCA), after it was found that the victim had passed away. The BCA was a great resource during the incident and the weeks that followed. It was the quick actions of the officers who initially responded that helped preserve the evidence and gain vital information, leading to an arrest of the suspect for 2nd Degree Murder.

May: Detective Walski was contacted by the Minneapolis Airport Police, who recovered a package of five pounds of meth and one pound of cocaine addressed to a residence in Austin. Detectives Hemann and Walski prepared for the operation as the officer from Minneapolis came to Austin to deliver the package. It was found that the source of the drugs was actually from Rochester, Minnesota and the suspect was later taken into custody and charged federally by the United States Attorney General for Drug Trafficking. This case wouldn’t have happened without the help of other agencies and our local detectives who assisted.

Near the end of 2018 a rash of heroin use and dealers started to come back into the Austin area. Working narcotics is a priority of SEMVCET when dealers like these come into our area. SEMVCET works hard to get charges against the dealers as they start to emerge to help prevent further heroin deaths. Detectives Hemann and Walski worked with confidential reliable informants in identifying and making controlled buys into multiple targets, which included targets from out of state. There hasn’t been a known heroin death in Austin since June of 2017.
2018 proved to be another busy but productive year in the evidence room. Evidence room duties are handled by Sgt. Jeff McCormack and Officer Mike Tischer, who work the night shift patrol and then alternate Mondays from 8:00 a.m. until noon in the evidence room.

The evidence room is shared by the Austin Police Department and the Mower County Sheriff’s Office with over fifty officers and deputies collecting evidence, and occasional pieces placed there by surrounding agencies. When officers and deputies collect evidence they take the pieces to the evidence room where they are packaged, labeled and placed in temporary storage lockers. Evidence room officers then transfer the evidence from the storage lockers to a secure room for long term storage. In 2018, nearly 4,500 entries were made for collected articles of evidence from all of the above listed agencies.

The evidence room officers assist detectives, officers, deputies, prosecuting and defense attorneys with viewing and prepping evidence for upcoming court cases and processing new evidence. The items are stored until the cases in which they are involved are closed. Evidence pieces are then returned to the owners, prepped for public auction, or disposed of properly following the appeal period.

Evidence room officers also transport evidence to the Minnesota Bureau of Criminal Apprehension (MN BCA) in St. Paul for additional analysis and processing. This occurs on an average of one trip every 45 days. A usual trip consists of 20-30 pieces, but has exceeded 80 pieces on occasion. A majority of these pieces are tied to felony drug cases, but may include evidence from homicides, assaults, burglaries, robberies, sexual assaults and other serious cases. There are also articles that aren’t part of criminal cases, but are listed as found property. These items may be returned, destroyed or auctioned off; but none the less need attention at some point.

Evidence set aside for destruction is transported by McCormack and Tischer to two separate facilities. Any metal evidence, including but not limited to guns, bats and paraphernalia, is melted down and recycled into rebar at the Gerdau Foundry in St. Paul, Minnesota. All other evidence that is destroyed is transported to the Wilmarth Generating Plant, a subsidiary of Excel Energy, near Mankato, Minnesota. Here the evidence is placed in an incinerator and turned into energy. The outcome for all the evidence taken to these to facilities has a positive impact on our environment. Both Wilmarth and Gerdau provide their services to local police and sheriff’s departments as a public service, so there is no cost to departments to get rid of their evidence at these facilities.
In December of 2018, McCormack and Tischer took approximately 100 boxes of evidence to the Wilmarth Generating Plant. On normal operating days, this plant will accept up to 1,800 pounds of extra waste. Due to operating at half capacity, only 1,000 pounds of evidence were taken in 2018. Included in those 1,800 pounds was a fair amount of prescription and other drugs that had been placed in the County's drug drop box located in the lobby of the Law Enforcement Center. The drop box is in place to promote a secure, safe place to properly dispose of unused pharmaceuticals.

TOWARD ZERO DEATHS PROGRAM
Officer Travis Martin

The 2018 Toward Zero Deaths (TZD) grant was handled by Officer Travis Martin from the Austin Police Department, with the assistance of Deputy Jamie Meyer from the Mower County Sheriff's Office (MCSO). The Austin Police Department and the MCSO received up to a $16,850 grant from the Minnesota Department of Public Safety for TZD traffic enforcement in the 2018 cycle which, due to budget issues on their end, was slightly less than in past years (2017 was up to $18,575, for instance). The grant cycle ran from October 1, 2017 through September 30, 2018 and was used to cover overtime that was incurred by the officers and deputies during specific enforcement hours, and also for dispatch services.

Although the public considers traffic enforcement to be a core duty of law enforcement, it is secondary for most local agencies behind answering calls for service. This can mean that on a busy night when the call load is high from the citizenry, traffic stops could be quite low as officer resources will first go to answering calls to dispatch on the regular and 911 lines. The TZD grant program allows police and sheriff’s departments to call in additional resources whose sole duty is to work traffic violations.

The goal of the enforcement is to lower the rate at which accidents occur and the rate at which injuries/fatalities occur within those accidents. People will follow the traffic regulations in order to stay safe and to avoid getting a traffic citation. Enforcement is the “avoid getting a ticket” part of the equation that helps makes our roads safer and strives to get closer to the goal of the program, zero fatalities statewide.

The Minnesota Department of Public Safety works hand in hand with the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration to launch informational campaigns to make the public aware of upcoming enforcement waves and enhanced traffic enforcement. This is accomplished through Public Service Announcements with local, state, and national media.
The Austin Police Department made a Public Service Announcement with the help of KAAL TV to promote awareness of the program in southeast Minnesota.

The TZD Program partners with and gets support from the Safe Communities Coalition. Representatives on the Coalition include the media, Parenting Resource Center, schools, law enforcement, driver’s education, medical professionals, and concerned citizens. They are a very vital part of the TZD Program. The Coalition helps line up the Public Service Announcements by working with the television stations and newspapers on ad campaigns, and they provide all of the electronic media around town. The Coalition helps law enforcement with the “making safe choices/educational” part of the equation, which is the other goal of the Toward Zero Deaths endeavor.

In addition to the enforcement and media messaging, the State of Minnesota also works with its Department of Transportation (DOT) branch to enhance the safety of roadways. The ultimate goal of the TZD campaigns is to get to zero deaths on our state’s roads.

The waves began in October 2017 with a seatbelt and child restraint wave, followed by a driving while impaired wave in December, followed by another seatbelt and child restraint wave in May 2018. The last wave of the year was a DWI Enforcement wave in August 2018. The Austin Police Department and Mower County Sheriff’s Office worked 335.25 hours in 2018 compared to 299.75 in 2017. 568 stops were made during the year with 15 arrests.

The trends have been very positive since the TZD campaign waves started; going from an average of over 600 persons killed per year in the late 1990s and early 2000s, to averaging fewer than 400 traffic related deaths per year for the past several years. TZD overtime work continues to help save lives by reducing fatality and injury statistics.

**DEPARTMENT FLEET**

Officer Chad Norman

Officer Chad Norman has been managing the Austin Police Department’s fleet of vehicles for ten years. The department’s fleet has eight marked patrol vehicles, two of which are K9 squads, and one 4x4 utility vehicle. In addition, the patrol division utilizes one unmarked squad car, a Community Service Officer (CSO) truck, and two marked cars that are used by the two School Resource Officers.
Other vehicles in the fleet include unmarked cars that are operated by the police administration and detectives, and a Special Incident Response Team (SIRT) truck that is used for SIRT deployment and also acts as a mobile command post. Another vehicle was added to the fleet after being forfeited in 2016 from a drunk driver, and one of our vehicles is provided by the Southeast Minnesota Violent Crime Enforcement Team (SEMVCET).

The four wheel drive Ford Police Interceptors have proven to be popular with our officers during winter weather conditions. The four wheel drive systems allow officers to stay safe while patrolling in the winter. The new squad cars have also proven to be more reliable than the outgoing Ford Crown Victoria squads, saving the city money on repair costs. Mileage has also improved with the new squad cars, saving the city fuel costs.

The Ford Police Interceptor Utility Squads have much more room for the officers, prisoners and equipment. The Ford Police Interceptor Utility Squads are built on the same chassis as the Ford Police Interceptor cars, which allows the vehicles to share common maintenance items such as oil filters, brakes and tires.

Austin’s patrol squads are kept an average of three years, during which they are driven about 100,000 miles, but can accumulate up to 300,000 wear miles on the engines due to idling time. The unmarked cars and other vehicles are kept much longer because they do not accumulate miles as quickly as the patrol squads.

The new Ford Police Interceptors have also proven to have a resale value that is twice that of the Ford Crown Victoria squads. This results in a much lower cost to the city to own the vehicles over the three year in-service life cycle.

We are looking forward to deploying the new 2020 Ford Police Interceptor non-hybrid and hybrid utilities. The hybrid squads have the potential to save our department up to $4,000 per year per squad in fuel costs. We hope to fill every patrol squad position with a hybrid utility in the years to come.
The Division of Investigation is staffed with five detectives. Todd Clennon, Patrick Retterath, Mark Walski, and Brant Strouf are the current detectives. One detective position is currently open and was held by Mark Haider who retired in mid-2018. Four of the detective positions work the general, non-drug related cases. Detectives Retterath and Strouf specialize in child crimes, criminal sex cases, sex offenders failing to register (POR), and computer crime cases. Detective Clennon works most of the serious assault and fraud/forgery/theft cases. Detective Walski was assigned to the Southeast Minnesota Violent Crime Enforcement Team (SEMVCET) and worked most of the city’s narcotics cases.

The Division of Investigation works with the SEMVCET in executing narcotics search warrants. The division works closely together with the three Mower County Sheriff’s Office detectives in executing numerous search warrants in Austin and Mower County. The detectives on the unit also work with each other and assist one another on cases whenever possible. This good working relationship with the city and county detectives serves citizens in both jurisdictions well, as there is so much cross over crime.

The general detectives work a day shift Monday through Friday. The Task Force member works non-traditional hours to complete his cases. One of the five detectives per week is assigned an "on call status," meaning they must maintain an hour response time during that week and are responsible for the investigation of any serious cases that come in after hours. Even matters that may end up not being criminal, such as suicides, require us to treat them as such until we can make a determination otherwise and may need investigative response after hours.

Detectives are often “assigned” cases that require follow up that the patrol division can’t do based on their time schedule and need to respond to calls. In addition to these assigned cases, the detectives are also often called on to do short next day follow-ups on arrest and in custody cases in which additional detail or interviews must be provided for charging. They also often do the same thing when cases reach the trial phase.

**Mark Haider** was the senior detective in the unit with 34 years of total law enforcement experience, with approximately 16 years of investigative work. He retired in June of 2018. He was assigned to 29 cases in 2018 prior to his retirement.

**Todd Clennon** has over 23 years of law enforcement experience with both the Austin Police Department and Kansas City, Missouri Police Department. He has eight years in investigations. Clennon is also the SIRT Commander, background investigator, and defensive tactics advisor for the department.
Detective Clennon had 94 cases assigned to him this in 2018. As the department experienced a lot of turnover in 2018, Clennon was also assigned several background investigations of potential new hire candidates, which is very time consuming work. In order to hire the four officers the department hired in 2018, twice that number of candidates needed to be fully backgrounded. That work included going over all their paper records and also going out and interviewing references, co-workers, teachers, etc. beyond the regular references.

Clennon’s SIRT work includes coordinating the training, equipment, and call outs for the unit. Their work will be highlighted in the SIRT section of the annual report. In addition some cases highlighted his 2018:

- A local business burglary resulted with two arrests. This was a team effort with Detective Walski developing info through confidential informants (CIs), conducting interviews, and ultimately Clennon was able to charge the suspects with the burglary.
- A P.O.R. /CSC in which a juvenile female was lured into garage to “fix a bike” and was sexually assaulted “over her clothes”. This was charged out.
- A group was committing crimes in Olmsted County including burglaries, auto theft, and discharging firearms. Clennon worked with Olmsted to bring charges there and local charges of firearm possession after gun located in a home where the main suspect was staying.

Patrick Retterath has over 22 years of experience in law enforcement. He has served eight years in investigations. Retterath is the main liaison with Mower County Human Services and works the majority of the child abuse, child neglect, sex abuse, and sex assault investigations that occur in the city. He handled 31 such criminal sex cases in 2018, and 64 cases overall. Detective Retterath is responsible, along with Detective Strouf, for screening all Human Services intakes for possible cases in which law enforcement would take action.

Examples of the type and seriousness of the cases Retterath worked in 2018 include:

- A robbery at a local convenience store that led to arrests.
- An assault that took place at a local business in which multiple interviews were conducted and several juvenile arrests made.
- A CSC case with an allegation of conduct from several years ago that was developed to the point of charging.

Mark Walski has approximately 18 years of law enforcement experience with the City of Austin’s Police Department. Walski is assigned to the SEMVCET. He joined the Investigations Division in 2015. Walski worked 114 of his own cases in 2018, while also helping on numerous other SEMVCET cases in southeast Minnesota. Mark will provide examples of his work in the Task Force section of the annual report.
Brant Strouf has worked for the Austin Police Department for 16 years and became a detective in 2016. He handled 88 cases last year. He assists Detective Retterath with Human Services intakes, handles general cases, and is taking over Detective Haider’s responsibilities related to sex offender work (POR). Detective Strouf also does background investigations and is starting to do computer forensic work. He has experience as a SIRT operator and is one of the department’s range instructors. Examples of Strouf’s case work include:

- A January 2018 shooting investigation led to the arrest of two prolific violent offenders for Felon in Possession of a Firearm charges. The suspects shot at each other as one suspect stole the other suspect’s car. The investigation took several weeks and was aided by the excellent work of both patrol and investigations.
- In July 2018 a career criminal/predatory offender was arrested following an investigation that he was receiving and disseminating child pornography. The lengthy investigation involved a coordinated effort with the BCA, DOC, patrol, and investigations.
- Juvenile burglars were charged in several 2018 burglaries following lengthy investigations. Investigation conclusions culminated in BCA evidence examination of DNA in connection with one of the juvenile’s involvement in an Austin gas station robbery.

Cases which the detectives handle tend to require additional follow up which the patrol division can’t complete due to call load. The cases often also require additional training and expertise. Even cases that seem simple in nature, such as a check forgery, often require hours of follow up to reach a point where a suspect can be identified and charged. The service of a search warrant at best also takes hours to write, prepare, and serve. Often these cases require more than one person, and the case of a single search warrant may require four to six hours or more.

From the perspective of cases assigned to the unit, 2018 was very close to the same numbers we have seen from 2010 onward with approximately 400-500 cases spread between the five investigators. The addition of the fifth investigator in 2016 was critical in better spreading out the cases to allow for follow up on more minor cases that may have been tabled in the past due to lack of time resources to pursue them. However with Detective Haider’s retirement in mid-2018 sandwiched between patrol losses, we have been unable to replace him yet in 2018, but hope to do so in early 2019. Some minor cases such as gas drive-offs, minor thefts, ongoing animal issues, or initial runaway reports continue to be shifted to the uniformed patrol division, CSOs, or school liaisons in order to free up investigators’ time for larger cases, as well as provide experience to the patrol officers in investigating cases.

In addition to investigating new cases, the detectives are responsible for aiding the county attorney’s office in cases that go to trial. These duties in serious matters may tie up an investigator for the better part of a week’s time between trial preparations and testifying; all while new cases continue to flow in.
Other time may be spent working with the BCA and state crime lab to process evidence from victims or scenes. The Austin Police Department has had some success in identifying suspects from fingerprint recoveries and DNA evidence. It is also something that the public has come to expect from local law enforcement as technology has improved.

**TRAINING**

Captain David McKichan

All officers must have at least a two year degree in law enforcement (some have four year degrees) and be licensed by the State of Minnesota. Officers then must receive continuing education in order to maintain a Peace Officer license. Training is monitored by the Minnesota Board of Police Officers Standards and Training, or MN POST Board as it is more commonly known.

Licenses are issued for 3-year periods of time. They start 7-1-XX of the year of issue and expire three years later on 6-30-XX. Officers are required to have 48 hours of educational credits every three years. All officers receive mandatory in-house training in the use of force, firearms, first aid/CPR, and emergency vehicle operations. These are all tracked for POST audit purposes. In-house training alone can be enough for officers to receive their 48 hours of mandatory training every three years.

Beginning in 2018 officers needed to receive an additional 16 hours of POST mandated training every three years spread across the areas of crisis response, conflict management, and cultural diversity. This is dependent on when their POST license was issued. Those issued July 1, 2018 had their three-year window start this summer. The other groups of officers whose POST licenses expire in 2019 and 2020 will start their window in their new licensing phase. The Austin Police Department needs to track these hours for all 34 of its officers. We are actively trying to find partners in order for us to provide these hours to the officers.

The Austin Police Department is able to provide much of the training in-house because many of our officers have expertise and teaching skills in most of these areas. Training in-house can significantly cut the cost associated with training and often eliminates course fees, meals, and lodging costs; which can be significant. Having instructors and experts in-house also enabled the department to host its 4th annual Citizen Police Academy in 2018. The Academy is one of the highlights of the year for us and we have gotten great feedback from local residents who were able to participate in the course.
Officer Travis Martin and Detective Brant Strouf instruct officers in the use of firearms during quarterly qualifications. Officers qualify using handguns and rifles to increase their proficiency with both. Officers train in real life conditions that are likely to be encountered during the performance of their normal duties. Conditions include normal daylight, a two officer combat course, night time, and inclement weather training. The department continued its focus on training in 2018 with the weapons used, as opposed to simply qualifying with them.

Officers also receive non-mandatory training that may include instructor certifications, DWI detection, legal updates, and special investigation techniques for drugs, financial, computer, identity theft, and child abuse investigations.

The department added three new officers in 2018, all of whom were trained in-house for the first two weeks of their employment on things they would have last covered in their school training, but perhaps haven’t had exposure to in some time depending on their time in the job market. Also, as officers retire or move on to other places, new officers need training the previous officers may have already had, either as a result of just starting their career, or as a result of a veteran officer moving up in rank or adopting a specialty and then needing the same training the outgoing officer already had.

Officers Sam Schuweiler and Brian Blake focus on enhancing the driving skills of officers. Officers are provided classroom instruction and then must perform their skills on the driving course. This year’s training was held at the airport. Officers must acclimate to various conditions, such as darkness and slippery pavement. Receiving ongoing driving training is a POST licensing requirement. The Austin Police Department exceeds the state guidelines for driving training hours offered. The reason for this is the amount of time our officers spend behind the wheel and the many dangers posed by Austin’s traffic and diverse weather, especially when responding to emergency calls.

Sgt. Mike Hartman instructs officers in the Use of Force. Officer Aaron Juenger was selected to assist him in 2018 and will be attending training to become an instructor in 2019. Instruction includes discussion on Use of Force statutes and continuum; as well as hands-on instruction on techniques for defensive tactics, weapon retention, mace, Tasers, batons, and pepper ball guns.
Like driving training, this ongoing training is POST required, although there is no set guideline by POST as to hours needed. The Austin Police Department trains regularly to avoid injury to our officers, citizens, and suspects.

The success and safety of the officers is dependent upon practical and diverse training. We are fortunate to have officers that are qualified to share their knowledge and skills with others. The training that officers receive benefits the department and the City of Austin because it increases officer safety, reduces officer injuries, and reduces the chance of litigation.

In addition to the traditional hands-on type classes and classroom type activities, the Austin Police Department also encourages its officers to train physically for the rigors of the job. The department makes a workout room available towards that goal for the department, as well as a training room. Many of the items in these rooms are equipped and maintained by the officers. As our officers are often outside and exposed to environmental dangers, in addition to the potential physical encounters with suspects that occasionally occur, the need to be physically fit can help protect them from harm and the city from work comp and lost work related issues.

**Types of non-mandatory specialized training attended in 2018 by officers include:**

- USPCA region 12 K9 qualification and certification
- BCA leadership classes for supervisors
- DMT-G training (breath test instrument operator for DWI testing)
- Death scene investigations conference
- Missing persons training and conference
- MN Toward Zero Deaths conferences (statewide and regional conferences)
- Narcotics investigations
- Sex offender registration (POR) training
- Interview and interrogation
- Sniper training for SIRT
- Basic SWAT (for SIRT)
- Leadership Austin (the APD sends one officer per year and hosts one session)

**VEHICLE FORFEITURES**

Lt. John Mueller

Motor vehicles can be seized and forfeited for several offenses. Those offenses include certain levels of DWI, possession of controlled substances, use in the commission of a felony, drive by shootings, and prostitution. The Austin Police Department seized twenty vehicles in 2018 for Driving While Impaired. Sixteen of those drivers were charged with gross misdemeanor DWI and four drivers were charged with felony level DWI. In addition, three vehicles were seized as a result of the driver fleeing a police officer in a motor vehicle.
Several vehicles were seized for possession of controlled substances. However, those vehicles are processed by Southeast Minnesota Violent Crime Enforcement Team, SEMVCET, of which the Austin Police Department is a member.

When a vehicle is seized for forfeiture, the driver is served a Notice of Seizure and Intent to Forfeit. The driver of the seized vehicles has 60 days to challenge the forfeiture. The owner, if not the driver, is also served a notice and they, too, have 60 days to contest the forfeiture by filing suit against the car. The police department and the prosecutor must be served.

Most vehicle forfeitures are not challenged by the driver or by an owner that was present at the time of the arrest, however they are often contested by an owner who was not present. In most of those cases, the owner claims an “innocent owner” defense. They then must prove that they had no knowledge or reason to believe the vehicle would be operated contrary to law. In other words, they didn’t turn their vehicle over to someone that they knew was under the influence or had a history of DWI arrests.

If there is a lien on the vehicle, the lien holder is given notice of the seizure and intent to forfeit the vehicle. If they already had a repossession order on the vehicle, it is turned over to them. Otherwise, the vehicle is secured until the driver and owner have had 60 days to contest the forfeiture. After the 60 days has passed, and if it has not been contested, the vehicle may be released to the lien holder.

The lien holder can then sell the vehicle and if there is any money left after they take out their costs and pay the lien, those remaining proceeds are to be forwarded to the police department to be used for DWI enforcement, education, and equipment. In some cases, the lien holder chooses to not take possession of the vehicle, instead letting the police department sell it, take out any costs, and then forward the balance (up to the amount of the lien) to the lien holder. If there are funds left over, these funds are directed to the police department’s DWI fund.

The DWI fund is separate from the department and city general funds. The DWI fund is used for DWI training, education, and enforcement equipment. Education can include traffic enforcement law updates, seatbelt and child seat training, and training officers to be certified Data Master Breath Testing Operators. Equipment can range from traffic enforcement tools such as radar units and PBT (Preliminary Breath Test) units, to audio/video recording devices used for preserving evidence such as field sobriety tests.

Vehicles that are not returned to innocent owners, lien holders, or ordered by the courts to be returned, and are successfully forfeited, may be retained by the department for official use or may be sold in a commercially acceptable manner, which means taking bids or selling at public auction.
The Austin Police Department typically holds two auctions each year, usually in May and September. After a vehicle is sold, the costs of the vehicle preparation, towing, title, and auction are taken out of the gross income. It is important to know that not all of the vehicles sold at these two auctions were seized in the same year they are sold. The process for a vehicle to be successfully forfeited can be long.

In 2017 there were many issues with getting vehicle titles and that prevented the sale of several vehicles until 2018. The first auction of the year was held in June, 2018. Eleven seized and forfeited vehicles were sold bringing a total of $19,150.00. In addition, bicycles and other abandoned property brought another $3,604.50 in sales. After costs were paid, $18,000.00 was put into the DWI fund while $3,063.50 was deposited into the general fund. No other city departments provided items for the June sale.

The second sale of the year was held in September. Six vehicles seized for DWI were sold. The abandoned property sold included one vehicle, more than 100 bicycles, and other personal property including a diamond wedding ring. Altogether, the sale netted $10,913.22. Because the County Attorney’s office prosecuted two of the DWI cases that resulted in forfeitures, State law mandates that 30% of the proceeds, or in this case $357.45, from those vehicles be forwarded to the County Attorney’s office. After expenses, $7,972.50 was directed to the DWI fund and $2,583.22 went to the city’s general fund.

Keeping track of the status of these seized and abandoned vehicles is time consuming, as well as preparing them and getting them to the auction. I must thank the Austin/Mower County Law Enforcement Reserves for their help in accomplishing the task of preparing and moving the property to be sold.

Austin Police Officers continue to be diligent in their efforts to remove impaired drivers from the streets of our community, as well as curb other illegal activity. We will continue to seize and forfeit vehicles and other property from offenders when appropriate and within the limits of the law.

**CRIME PREVENTION -- NATIONAL NIGHT OUT**
Sgt. Kim Lenz and Officer Chad Norman

The officers of the Austin Police Department appreciate opportunities to interact with the public in a positive manner and to present information on topics of interest to the public. In addition to Law Enforcement Center tours for schools and other student groups such as scout troops, officers go to various places and service organizations within the local community to interact with community members and make presentations.
In what is probably the largest crime prevention event in the city, Officer Chad Norman and Sgt. Kim Lenz teamed up with the Austin Hy-Vee store to partner with the Austin Police Department in hosting the tenth annual “National Night Out” event in August 2018. This was Hy-Vee’s third year as a partner with us on this event, and their time and generosity are greatly appreciated. Hormel Foods once again showed their ongoing community support by providing thousands of hot dogs at no cost.

The event was held at the Austin Veterans’ Park, with several activities for the children, and this year was our largest turnout yet. The SIRT truck and armored Humvee were open for public tours, with a couple of SIRT members available to answer questions. A fire truck and ambulance were also at the event so the public could see the equipment inside their vehicles.

National Night Out is an opportunity for neighbors to meet each other and for residents to build relationships with local first responders from the Austin Police Department, Austin Fire Department, and Gold Cross Ambulance.

The Austin Police Department is hoping the event will grow and continue to make progress towards building more positive interaction with police and the public. The officers of the Austin Police Department take their duties seriously to prevent crime and nurture community relations through these opportunities, and they look forward to continuing their crime prevention efforts in 2019.
CRC donates over $4,200 to K9 unit

By Daily Herald  Published 8:50 am Wednesday, March 14, 2018

The Cooperative Response Center donated a check for $4,231.83 to the Austin Police Department’s K9 unit from its 2017 fundraising efforts. Each year, the CRC selects an organization for which to raise money. Last year marked the CRC’s 25th anniversary, and the CRC chose the APD K9 unit for its fundraising efforts. CRC employees raised the money, along with a matching donation from CRC up to $2,000.

CRC President and CEO Chris Holt presented the check to Officer Derek Ellis, who handles K9 Rudy for the APD. “Our local police officers provide such an important service to the community, putting their lives at risk every time they report to work to keep us safe,” Holt said in a news release. “We’re happy to support their K9 program and hope that the money raised helps meet the needs of K9 Rudy and any other dogs that join the program in the future.”

The money will be deposited into the APD’s K9 Foundation to help offset the cost of supporting the K9 unit. The department plans to spend $1,200 on the purchase of a full body padded bite suit to protect those acting as decoys during K9 training exercises. The rest will be saved for future expenses.

According to Austin Police Lt. Matt Holten, who supervises the K9 program, Rudy is deployed roughly 125 times per year. He assists the Southeastern Minnesota Narcotics Task Force and is used for drug searches in area schools. He has been recognized several times by the United States Police Canine Association for his work, including finding a loaded handgun that was discarded in a field by a convicted felon, finding eight grams of methamphetamine that was hidden in clay in a Play-Doh can, and apprehending a vehicle theft suspect who had fled from responding officers on foot.

This is not the first time CRC has donated to the K9 unit. In 2000, CRC donated money to help fund a two-week narcotics training force for the two dogs the K9 program had at the time. The APD has also been supportive of CRC’s Mower County Humane Society Meet-and-Greet fundraisers in the past, offering a K9 demonstration at four of the events.
Approximately 6 pounds of drugs seized

By Mike Stoll  Published 9:41 am Friday, May 11, 2018, Austin Daily Herald

Two individuals were arrested on Thursday after they were allegedly found to be in possession of roughly five pounds of methamphetamine and one pound of cocaine, worth approximately $100,000.

According to Austin Police Chief Brian Krueger, the Minneapolis-Saint Paul Police Department, Southeast Minnesota Violent Crime Enforcement Team, Austin Police Department and Mower County Sheriff’s Office conducted a joint operation after the MSP Airport Police intercepted the drugs, which came from California, at the airport.

The drugs were delivered to an East Oakland Avenue address, where the individuals allegedly picked up the package.

Police stopped the vehicle and arrested Jean Michael Miranda-Sanchez, 24, of Austin and Rudolfo Alonso Portillo, 21, of Rochester. Both men are being held at the Mower County Jail for felony first-degree drug possession, according to Krueger.

Krueger said an investigator estimated the street value of the drugs, if sold in 1/8 ounce “eight balls,” is $100,000.
## AUSTIN POLICE DEPARTMENT STATISTICS

### 2014-2018

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<td>All others/except traffic</td>
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<td>1,242</td>
<td>888</td>
<td>822</td>
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<td>(Contempt of court, OFP, trespass, crimes against administration, kidnapping, warrants, probation violations)</td>
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### Traffic & Other Citations

- Adult Arrests 1,144, 1,227, 1,286, 1,230, 1,304, 1,238
- Juvenile Arrests 612, 450, 318, 429, 325, 427

### Juvenile Non-Violent Offenses

- Curfew 6, 18, 8, 10, 5, 9
- Runaways/Protective Custody 53, 62, 40, 70, 61, 57

### Services

- Total 911 Calls Received 29,001, 31,848, 31,627, 32,196, 34,732, 31,881
- Calls for Service 20,305, 21,242, 22,711, 21,705, 21,295, 21,452
- Total Cases Assigned 17,501, 17,778, 20,844, 20,192, 20,042, 19,271
- Accidents Investigated 735, 698, 676, 718, 730, 711
- Total Calls to Dispatch 88,598, 89,154, 85,778, 81,142, 85,872, 86,109

The LEC switched to a new Records Management System in May 2014.
Letters and Cards of Appreciation

To: Chief Krueger, Law Enforcement team (Police, Sheriff, State Troopers, dispatchers—all of you—we don’t want to miss anyone),

Thank you.....those two words do not seem enough to express what we feel. How you honored our Dad was so amazing. The love and respect shown him was such an awesome tribute to Dad. I know he was watching.

The “Guards” you had standing by the casket during the whole reviewal, the Honor Guard at the funeral, the Law Enforcement escort to the cemetery, and the salutes from you were so heartfelt by all of us as you honored Dad. You’ve touched our hearts, our lives forever.

We salute you all for the caring you have shown for Dad/for us. God Bless each and everyone of you.

Family of Duane Klingerman

THIS IS 9-DAVID-13, I’LL BE 10-7
-----Original Message-----
From: WordPress [mailto:webmaster@ci.austin.mn.us]
Sent: Saturday, April 28, 2018 9:08 PM

Subject: Police Department Comments

From: Jeremy Halverson
Subject: Thank you!!

Message Body:
On Saturday April 28th around 2pm we hit a deer on I-90, the first officer to stop and give us help, was so kind and cool with us, having never been in any accident this one had me a bit shaken. We have 2 dogs and our car was full of "going on vacation" bags. The officer called in another awesome officer who gave us, our dogs (one is an Alaskan malamute... big dog) and all our bags a ride to a hotel to wait for a ride. We cannot thank you guys enough, not sure if giving rides with ppl who have dogs, is a common thing, but they sure made us feel like they cared.
Thanks again to your officers!
Jeremy Halverson

--

This e-mail was sent from a contact form on (http://www.ci.austin.mn.us)
Sorry - don't have paper bills & my parents wouldn't pay for me.
We ❤ Police Officers

Thanks for always being there to lend us a hand.
Apple Lane would like to say "THANK you" for your visit to our Center. Of course the children loved the candy and the talk about Halloween safety. You two did a wonderful job!! Thanks again and maybe we can do it again next year!

2018

The staff and children of Apple Lane
Dear Police Officers,

Thank you for keeping our community safe. I like my town safe. I would like to be a police officer when I grow up. I am so thankful for you keeping us safe. I would like to pay you back when I grow up. You guys are the best because you can do stuff that other people can't do. Thank you!!

Sincerely,

Alex

Pacelli 6th Grader
1-9-2019

Dear Chief Krueger:

We, at Lyle, would like to thank you and your staff for your role in “Shop with a Hero”.

Some of our students have written thank you’s stating their appreciation. I wanted to share these with you and your staff.

Christmas is a stressful time for the most learned of skills. Your participation helped to alleviate stress for many families.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

LuAnn Stroup
Lyle Public School Social Worker
Hi, thank you for taking me shopping. I had a fun time.

Thank you,

from: Shar

Thank you, Jim for taking me shopping! You are a very nice and funny guy.

Love,

Lily

Lyle School
you are
the best! you
did so much
for me!

from mckenzie
lyleschool
Thank you for everything you do to help us with our hospice patients!
-Lenette B.

Thank you for all you do for our patients!
-Merry Christmas!
-Emily

Thank you so much for everything you do to keep us comfortable and safe. We appreciate your help with the heavy lifting at all hours of the day. You are the best hospice team, Happy Holidays! Thank you.
-Knight

Thank you for all you do for our hospice patients! It doesn't go unnoticed!
-Sarah

Thank you for all you do for us, our patients and our community. God bless you all!
-Julie M.

A warm and happy Christmas to you!

MCHS Austin Hospice Staff
We ❤️ Police Officers

We’re sending a HIGH FIVE your way to say THANK YOU!