



# The Utah Sheriff

November 2016

A special fall newsletter edition from your Utah Sheriffs' Association



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## Legislative Session 2017: Looking Ahead

While several key legislative priorities advanced in the legislature during the 2016 regular session, we're expecting several issues to come forward again. Three which we've reported on earlier in the year include:

### Legalizing "Medicinal Marijuana"

We strongly oppose efforts to legalize marijuana in "medicinal" or any other forms in Utah. In addition to the well-documented dangers of marijuana on an individual, family, community, and societal level – jurisdictions face another problem. With a growing population of drivers under the influence of marijuana, there is great difficulty in defining "high" driving and developing an accurate field test.

Unlike sobriety tests developed for blood alcohol content, which metabolizes within a predictable range and correlates to impairment, marijuana tests need to be structured differently. The residual elements of marijuana intake remain in a person's system for a week or more, and are present outside the window of acute impairment, making "false" positives

a concern for the potential overturning of convictions in court.

We are grateful that two separate bills were defeated in the legislature this year, but proponents of legalized marijuana are focused on a two front effort moving forward. A new legislative sponsor is expected to

introduce a revised form of the legislation combining elements of both bills. Additionally, a statewide ballot initiative is being planned for 2018. We want to ensure strong resistance against such a measure in the legislature and in the general public. We hope to continue educating the citizens of Utah as to the very real dangers and questionable benefits of legalizing marijuana.



### Death Penalty

While legislation to remove capital punishment as a judicial remedy for first-degree felony aggravated murders failed to pass both houses, it's expected to return in the 2017 legislature. The Law Enforcement and Criminal Justice Interim Committee (LECJIC) has been discussing death penalty costs and the appeals process since the end of the regular session in

March. Deliberations have included initial and appellate legal costs, the length of stay on death row at the state level compared to the federal level, and the review process.

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## Letter from the President

*Sheriff Cameron M. Noel, President Utah Sheriffs' Association*

It is an honor and a privilege to serve and represent you as the new President of the Utah Sheriffs' Association. I have worked in law enforcement for over 25 years and served as the Sheriff of Beaver County for the past 11 years. Throughout my life, I have been a defender of the Constitution of the United States of America. It is no small thing, that as law enforcement officials and because we hold the office of Sheriffs, we have taken a solemn oath to use our authority to protect and defend this great document.

These past few years have been some of the most difficult in my life to be a member of law enforcement. There are elements in society today that have a hatred for law enforcement of any kind. I don't believe for a minute that the haters are a majority. They have been able to garner support and use that support to attack long held traditions of respect for the badge, the uniform and for the officer. They demonize our entire profession for the actions of a very few that have not acted honorably. They blame law enforcement for the crime and unrest that is an integral part of society today, in many parts of our country.

I feel that the office of Sheriff is still respected and is still the most highly regarded law enforcement officer in any given county. During my tenure as your president, I want to increase that support for law enforcement in the state of Utah. My vision is an expanded public relations effort with a new commitment to public outreach and public service to our communities.

I will need your help and support to realize this goal, knowing that each of us can do a better job of working with the public and with other elected officials to make that happen. Your ideas are welcome. We are a front line community of men and women in this great state that has the potential to positively impact the public image of law enforcement. Working with local and state elected leaders, religious organizations, schools, universities, community organizations and other law enforcement organizations, we can, and will have an impact on the public perception of law enforcement in our state.

Let's embark on this new effort with a commitment to be a better example in our own counties and throughout the state. We need a call to action. Serving and honoring those who elected us is the most American principle we can embrace. God Bless our nation and those who have been chosen to serve and protect our fellow man!

## TOURISTS OR NO TOURISTS?

*Sheriff James D. Perkins, Garfield County*

Garfield County has an approximate population of 5,500 people that live in our county full-time but during our tourist season our population grows by leaps and bounds.

Ruby's Inn is the gateway to Bryce Canyon National Park. At the end of the tourist season in 2015, there were a total of 1.7 million people that visited the park and now this year, the park is now at 2 million visitors with a projected reach of 2.2 million people by the year's end, an approximate 400% increase from 2015.



Our county welcomes all tourists. It is literally what helps our business survive for the year and without these visitors, the communities in Garfield County would blow away in the wind. But there is a downside regarding this large increase of tourists. Our law enforcement agency is pushed to their limits with the large increase of people. There are increases of traffic accidents, speeding tickets, drug offences, along with other different offences. I also don't want to disregard the many Search and Rescues that we have each year which can take many hours, even days from the regular duties that we perform. We have had multiple searches in the Grand Staircase

National Monument this year.

Garfield County only has nine (9) full-time deputies and six (6) part-time deputies that cover the county, which consists of an area of 5,208 miles.

I understand that we are not the only county that is impacted



by the high quantity of visitors coming to enjoy the area. Many surrounding counties, such as Kane, Piute, Iron, and Wayne probably have the same kind of increase we do in Garfield County with the same issues.

The question would be, "Tourists or no tourists?" Well, I believe that we could never survive without the tourists even if it impacts our county like it does. The point of the matter is the tourists bring in the money to the county and our community relies on the tourist season. My officers might get busier during the tourist season but it's only a temporary thing and have no doubt, winter comes to Garfield County in full force and everything quiets down in our wonderful county. So come and enjoy a little piece of "God's work": "Garfield County".



# Harris Palmer Life Saving Nomination

*Sheriff Rick Eldredge, San Juan County*

On Tuesday evening, September 20th, 2016 in St. George, Utah, Deputies Harris and Palmer were recognized with the Life Saving Medal at the 21st Annual Law Enforcement and Corrections Award Banquet. The Utah Sheriffs' Association Awards Banquet is designed to honor the individuals who provided significant service during the previous year.

On May 21st, 2016, three men were riding their motorcycles on the Lockhart Basin Road from SR 211 in San Juan County to Moab. The group underestimated the difficulty of the trail and had not accounted for the extreme heat that rose to 110 degrees in the daytime and 80 degrees in the night.

The group had planned on spending one day to ride the 60 miles of road to Moab, but on the second day of riding in the heat, they ran out of water and heat exhaustion set in for one of the men. The men used a Spot Locator to send a message that one of them needed emergency help. The Spot Locator gave their GPS coordinates.

Deputy Joe Harris was contacted by dispatch and told of the situation. Deputy Harris immediately dispatched a helicopter from Classic Lifeguard to the GPS coordinates to rescue the man. He then proceeded to the Moab area, planning to meet the victim upon his arrival.

While the helicopter was en route to Moab Regional Hospital the pilot said they had given the group all of their water, but they did not believe it was enough water for the other two men to get back to Moab.

Knowing time was of the essence, Deputy Harris and Sergeant Mike Palmer borrowed Grand County's Search and Rescue Razor rather than run back, two hours round trip, to San Juan County to get theirs. They quickly bought Gatorade and water using their own money and headed out on the Lockhart Basin trail hoping to intercept the riders.

The deputies located the two men and actually witnessed one of them fall over on his bike from heat stroke. They once again called for a life flight helicopter. The deputies drug the man to some shade, got him out of his clothing and rendered help while the helicopter was en route. They were able to get him to drink a little bit of water as they poured water over his body in an attempt to lower his body temperature. However, the man became unconscious and eventually slipped into a coma.

When the helicopter arrived the man's blood pressure

had fallen to 56/25. The man was airlifted to the Moab area then eventually a trauma hospital in Grand Junction, Colorado where he remained in a coma for several days.

Deputies have kept in touch with the victims of that day and learned that the man air lifted is in a rehab center in Salt Lake City and his prognosis for a full recovery is good. He is undergoing neuro, physical and speech therapy. His wife says that her husband is doing great, that he is able to walk and talk and he is getting better every day.

Along with their knowledge and training, Deputy Harris and Sergeant Palmer were deliberate and proactive in their quick actions which clearly saved these men's lives.



## Know someone needing a College Scholarship for Fall 2017?

The Utah Sheriffs' Association provides annual scholarships to individual Utah residents pursuing an education and career in a law enforcement field at a Utah College or University.

Visit [www.utahsheriffs.org](http://www.utahsheriffs.org) for more information and a complete list of scholarship qualifications needed to apply.



# Holiday Travel: A 7-Step Recipe for a Successful Trip

**M**ost people associate the holidays with family, friends, and celebrations. As we enter this time of year, the Utah Sheriffs' Association wants to help you stay focused on the best parts of the season.

The three biggest causes of fatalities on the road last year, according to the National Safety Council, include: alcohol (30.8%), speeding (30%), and distracted driving (26%). When those are combined with inclement weather, low seatbelt usage, and high traffic volumes, it's not a recipe anyone wants served to them. As a result, three of the six most dangerous holidays in terms of traffic fatalities are Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Day, and New Year's Day.

## The "100 Deadliest Days"

The great news is that between Memorial Day and Labor Day we saw a decrease in Utah traffic fatalities when compared to last year. In 2015, 110 people were killed on our roads during that timeframe. This year, 20 more people survived, but that's still 90 more people than any of us want to see lose their lives in traffic incidents.

## Here are several things to keep in mind this fall and early winter:

**1. Take your time.** If you plan to travel with enough extra time to arrive, it reduces the temptation to speed or tailgate, lowers your overall stress levels, and allows you to arrive at your destination feeling more refreshed and better able to enjoy the people you're visiting. It also allows you greater ability to respond successfully to longer stopping times and other drivers who may be aggressive, distracted, or impaired.

**2. Buckle up.** It's one of the simplest ways to protect yourself and loved ones in an accident. It's helpful to you, and it's the law.

**3. Set an alcohol limit BEFORE you start consuming.** Knowing it takes an adult of average size roughly an hour to metabolize one alcoholic beverage, arrange to have others help you limit your intake or transport you safely. You wouldn't drive somewhere without a map or other means of navigation and expect to reach your destination successfully. When you start losing cognitive function is not the time to make life and death decisions.

**4. Drive in daylight whenever possible.** Especially when roads may freeze or refreeze after sundown, it's a good idea to have the benefit of extra visual information during your trip. Other drivers tend to be more alert, and you'll most likely be less fatigued as well.



**5. Put the phone away.** The areas of the brain used to scan the road, notice other cars, and identify potential threats overlap with active listening centers. The National Safety Council notes the brain's activity "that processes moving images decreases by up to 1/3 when listening or talking on a phone."

**6. Be ready for bad weather.** In winter conditions, you'll want your car serviced (especially your battery and tires), well-fueled, and stocked with cold weather gear such as blankets, high calorie snacks, and digging/scraping tools. Of course, it's always a good idea to have a first aid kit, fresh water, flashlights, and a charged phone. And pair your car preparation with a driving adjustment to winter-protocols, such as accelerating, changing lanes, and braking more slowly.

**7. Be mindful in rural stretches.** According to DriversEd.com, rural areas are twice as dangerous to drive through than cities. Drivers tend to speed up in rural areas and may become distracted from being unaccustomed to crossing wild/farm animals, lesser maintained road conditions, and unmarked/covered entrances to homes/farms.

From all of us with the Utah Sheriffs' Association, we're working hard to make sure you have a happy and healthy holiday season this year, and we thank you for your support!





# Clown Sightings: Stranger (*than normal*) Danger

## Coast to Coast

This Halloween, there's something more troubling than cavities for parents and grandparents to be concerned about. In at least 10 states, stretching from California to the Carolinas, witnesses have reported adults dressed in clown costumes exhibiting disturbing behavior – including trying to lure children into the woods with money and candy.



## Child Abductions and Abuse

Regardless of the time of year, our young people need to be aware of how to deal with possible threats to their safety. According to The Irish Examiner, repeating the rules of Stranger Danger should be done often as children's brains are developing and capacity to think about situations they don't encounter daily is limited.

Studies estimate every 44 minutes in the United States, a child is abducted by a nonfamily member, and most are sexually assaulted before being released or escaping.

## Preparing our Young People

The most effective means of decreasing child abductions is equipping and empowering our youth with the knowledge and skills to avoid and respond to potential dangers.

Talk to children directly to give them the tools they need. Adults can send a strong message by being calm, factual, and forthright about potential dangers. It's also more powerful practicing solutions with the child rather than just telling them what to do.

**1. Always Speak to a Trusted Adult.** This includes getting permission if the child wants to change plans, reporting if something happens that makes them sad, confused, or afraid, or seeking help if they see another child in danger. Children should know if someone wants them to keep a secret from their family that's a warning sign and they should remove themselves from the situation immediately.

**2. Trust their Instincts and Forcefully Resist.** If an adult or older child attempts to touch or photograph them anywhere their bathing suit covers, or otherwise threatens them or makes them feel uncomfortable, escape using whatever means necessary including kicking, hitting, and shouting/screaming for help. Use clear phrases like "No!" "I don't like that!" "Someone help!" or "Call 911!"

**3. Buddy System and Two Deep Leadership.** Mentorships are important, and coaches, teachers, program leaders, and others are great resources in helping children grow and learn (parents and guardians are the most important mentors). A good mentor is aware of, and committed to, healthy boundaries that protect the child and put their safety first.

**4. Be Door Savvy.** If an unfamiliar adult in a car approaches, avoid the car and run (or bike) in the opposite direction, preferably toward a trusted adult or a crowd. If they are home alone or with minor siblings, keep the door closed to everyone. Don't answer the door, don't respond, and call 911 if they are threatened or there is an attempt to enter. If they are Trick or Treating, don't enter into a home without their parent or guardian.

**5. Know their Contact Information and Keep it Safe.** Children should know their phone number, address, parents' or guardians' numbers, and know other trusted adults' contact information to use in an emergency. Children should never share this information online with strangers or anyone they haven't met in the real world. Parents/guardians should also know the contact information of their children's friends' families.

The latest clown sightings are a reminder of an often unseen danger that lies below the surface. When we take the time and effort to discuss the importance of stranger danger, it allows our children to become more street smart. And that is truly no laughing matter.



## Legislative Session 2017 (Continued from page 1)

Aside from costs and process, public policy factors include: the potential for “celebrity” status of death row inmates, impact on victims’ families, certain justice, and of course, public safety.

### Off-Duty Law Enforcement Employment Liability

A majority of law enforcement professionals rely on off-duty employment as a source of income to provide for themselves and their families, and legislators are evaluating the need for, and specifics of, any legislation to address that dynamic in a statewide fashion.

Potential legislation would clarify the boundaries for law enforcement professionals to engage in off-duty employment, address financial and legal liability concerns, and protect officers’ ability to move instantly from an off-duty to on-duty role as circumstances demand.

### Domestic Violence Homicide Prevention: Strangulation as Felony Assault

This spring, we noted Utah’s homicide rate being the 6<sup>th</sup> lowest by age and population compared to other states, which is good news. We also raised the issue of how to recognize and intervene in the single biggest factor (47%) in murders in Utah – unresolved domestic abuse. One “leading indicator” crime stands out in half of these cases: strangulation. Using a definition from the Utah Department of Health, strangulation or suffocation “is a form or asphyxia characterized by closure of the blood vessels and air passages of the neck as a result of external pressure on the neck.”

According to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), 43% of domestic homicide victims had been strangled by their perpetrator within the 12 months prior to his/her death. Draft legislation, *The Offenses Against the Person Amendments*, would make strangulation a felony to give law enforcement and victims an important tool in protecting domestic partners and children.

A report prepared by the Utah Prosecution Council notes the deceptively serious nature of the crime. “Even though damage may not be manifested immediately, strangulation can cause serious physical injuries and long-term health consequences, including brain injury, stroke, seizures, nerve damage, hoarseness, or loss of voice.” They also point out current state law makes it difficult to “prosecute as a felony,” due to a number of factors, including the lack of visible markings to the neck in 50% of strangulation cases (even many resulting in death). As a final thought from the Utah Department of Health study, “only 8 to 11 pounds of pressure on the throat area for approximately 10 seconds causes loss of consciousness.” Abusers often use strangulation to control their victims through their fear of not surviving a future attack.

### Law Enforcement Cyber Security Issues

Given the increased targeting of law enforcement professionals nationally, Utah legislators have drafted

*The Protection of Law Enforcement Officers’ Personal Information*. We expect it to be submitted this coming session. From the body of the text: “This bill: provides criminal penalties for posting on the Internet a law enforcement officer’s address and phone numbers, or posting the same information regarding an officer’s spouse and children; prohibits the solicitation or sale of the officer’s private information and provides for civil damages...”





# A Letter from Chief Deputy Dale F. Ward

Sent from Sheriff Kevin Potter, Box Elder County

*Below is a letter to the community from my Chief Deputy, Dale Ward. After a series of events in our county that demonstrate a level of respect and support not seen in other places, this letter speaks for itself. I want to add my thanks to the citizens of Box Elder County for the support my office receives.*

We are so blessed to live and work in a community/county where our citizens are our best backup. We work for, and with, the finest group of citizens not only in the State of Utah, but these United States. In a time when emergency responders around our nation, and world, are being assaulted, verbally abused and even killed, we have the privilege of receiving the utmost respect and support.



The following are the stand out events that demonstrate your support:

- August 2016 started out with the community and businesses coming together to provide logistic support in way of food and water to our firefighters battling the Broad Mouth Fire. These firefighters worked tirelessly to contain this blaze, as did those people who donated food and drink to keep them going. I would not even attempt to name those that donated goods; you all know who you are. Thank You.
- Emergency responders were then chosen to be honored with our veterans at the Honor Flight Concert on the evening of August 20th at the Box Elder Fairgrounds. It was with great pride that they entered into the arena with those veterans that have fought for our freedom.
- The Box Elder Eagles surprised the Sheriff's Office

and Brigham City Police with a delivery of breakfast burritos as a thank you for our service. Thank goodness we had a refrigerator available to store the leftovers; they were available to our Deputies almost the entire week.

- On Thursday August 25th, Sgt Ralph Bennett led his organized group up to Middle Peak to refurbish the flag pole high above Willard. His goal was to once again hoist the American Flag on the taller of the two poles at the site. He also obtained a Thin Blue Line flag that was ultimately signed by at least one officer from every law enforcement agency in the county. With this flag on the second pole, it represented a small but heartfelt "Thank You" to you, the citizens of Box Elder County.
- On Saturday August 27th, our Golden Spike Rodeo Committee put together an unbelievable tribute to begin the largest performance of the weekend. I have dedicated nearly 40 years of my life to this profession, and I was so overwhelmed with pride and emotion by the cheers of everyone in the stands as we walked into the arena. I have always been proud to be a Sheriff's Deputy and have done my best to honorably represent you and make you proud. The month of August 2016 will always stand out as a time when all the pain and heartaches have been well worth it.

Words can never express our gratitude to you, the citizens; so all we can say is "Thank You" for your continued support.

Sincerely,

Dale F Ward, Chief Deputy  
Box Elder County



# Lone Wolf Terrorism: Response to a Growing Epidemic

In the last 12 months, we've published "How to Protect Yourself from an Active Shooter" and "8 Ways to Protect Your Community from Terrorism." In light of recent terrorist attacks on the East Coast and in the Midwest, we are giving you another tool focused on responding to "Lone Wolf" terrorist attacks. While there is no way to prepare for every eventuality, there are ways to minimize the initial risk and outcomes.



**1. Prepare physically** - assemble (an) emergency response kit(s) - ideally having a readily accessible, portable, water-resistant container that includes:

- First aid supplies (including prescription medications and nutritional supplements)
- Weather-resistant bedding for each family member
- Flashlights with fresh batteries
- Fresh water and high protein/high carb ready-to-eat foods
- Layered change of clothes with seasonal gear

- Cash and copies of important documents, such as licenses, passports
- 2. Prepare Logistically** – write up a family emergency plan:
- Decide and practice where to meet up if separated
  - Include contact information for each family member, and alternative emergency contact individuals, including phone numbers, email, social media, text, or other means of communication

- 3. Prepare Mentally** – train and practice:
- Have each family member take first-aid, self-defense, and outdoor/survival training appropriate to their age and physical abilities
  - Do family activities that reinforce the training with enough practice that they become proficient
  - Being aware of your surroundings is always a good idea, especially in higher risk areas, such as locations with large crowds, government facilities, and transportation hubs. If something seems off, trust your instincts

**4. Being prepared** not only allows you to protect yourself and your family, but it helps you serve others in the spirit of good citizenship.

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