



# DODGE COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

Dale J Schmidt Sheriff Scott Mittelstadt Chief Deputy

## June Sheriff's Column - Partnership with the District Attorney's Office and Investigation of Major Cases

Over the last 7 ½ years the Dodge County Sheriff's Office has worked hard to build excellent law enforcement partnerships in service of our community. Those relationships could not be built if we did not first focus internally, specifically in the area of leadership development within our agency. This includes not only our administrative staff but also staff throughout the agency. We have focused on growing leaders, and as I have spoken about recently, we have focused on accountability ensuring we always put together an excellent work product in service of our citizens.

During my tenure as sheriff, there of course have been significant incidents that the sheriff's office has been responsible for investigating. Some of those incidents include burglaries, robberies, and even homicides. Recently I had a conversation with our district attorney (DA) who expressed his thanks for the way our sheriff's office conducts investigations in collaboration with the DA's office. He praised our staff indicating that the detective bureau of the sheriff's office works extremely well with the prosecutors of the DA's office. He also thanked me for ensuring that adequate administrative response occurs when serious incidents occur in Dodge County. The result is ensuring that investigations are proper and thorough when investigating these serious incidents.

While our offices have always worked well together, the partnership between the DA's office and the sheriff's office has not always been as strong as it is right now. Shortly after taking office, DA Kurt Klomberg and I sat down regularly to foster an environment that would serve both offices, and ultimately the citizens of Dodge County, well. As a result, our offices have been able to work together to put dangerous criminals behind bars, many times with very little litigation needed in court.

A prime example of this is evidenced by the recent conviction in the Baby Theresa cold case in which a baby was discarded in a trash bag in a field back in 2009. The excellent collaborative work of our investigators, the medical examiner's office, and the DA's office led to a felony conviction without the need for a trial.

Another example of this is the Nigel Schultz homicide investigation, which occurred in late 2018. This was a very difficult case as there were so many moving parts occurring not only in Dodge County but also in multiple locations around the state. However, our staff working closely with other law enforcement agencies and the DA's office were able to put together a rock-solid case, which not only led to a conviction but the suspect pled to the charge of 1<sup>st</sup> Degree Intentional Homicide. This is a Class A Felony with a penalty of life without the benefit of parole. This was possible because of excellent collaboration with the DA's office from the onset of the investigation throughout the conclusion, ensuring that the investigation was done in a manner that was lawful and complete.

Finally, our patrol division and our detective bureau have worked closely with the DA's office to investigate some of the most disgusting cases of sexual assault and child pornography imaginable. I will not go into any of the horrible details of these cases, but what I will tell you is that the sheriff's office has investigated or is currently investigating 41 internet crimes against children (ICAC) cases. We have also taken 191 sex offense reports since 2018.

While all sex offenses are serious, fortunately, most of these sex offense cases are non-violent. Frequently, these types of cases result from children being inappropriate with technology such as sexting or result from complaints of inappropriate touching. Dodge County does, however, have a couple of violent sexual assault cases each year. Over the last two years, those numbers have decreased from 10 or 12 per year down to 2 or 3 per year. It is no coincidence that these statistics have reduced since the arrests we made at local strip clubs. If you recall, the sheriff's office worked very hard to shut down these clubs because of successful prosecutions for violent sex trafficking, drug use, and prostitution.

I applaud the excellent team we have at the sheriff's office. Our staff is trained to do a complete investigation in collaboration with the DA as soon as practical with the goal of presenting an excellent work product to the DA and courts when crimes are committed. Victims of crimes need to know that the sheriff's office is committed to taking every case seriously and the best way that we can do that is by doing the best possible work we can on every case. As a result, we help to ensure that everyone can enjoy Dodge County, a great place to live, work and visit.

Sheriff Dale Schmidt