

From the Sheriff's Corner

"My Story"



I am in the process of developing a series of articles that we are going to call "from the Sheriff's Corner". These articles will cover a variety of subjects that affect you, the public, and us, the sheriff's office. There will be no set schedule, but I will write them as time and energy allow.

These articles will be my opinion, but I will base them on facts that I believe are relative to the subject matter.

But for you to understand my opinions and conclusions, you need to know my personal story and what I believe my purpose in life is. So with that in mind, here it goes...

I have lived in Allegan County for more than 40 of my 51 years of life, mostly in the Hamilton area. I moved to Holland for about 10 years when I was first hired as a police officer there.

My father served his community as a truck driver for 36 years and was a Teamsters Union steward for many years. My mother served her community as a cook in the Hamilton Community Schools and was a "stay at home" mom. I respect them both greatly; they provided me with a very strong foundation for my life. I have one older brother – who I consider my best friend.

I am the first in my family to graduate from college, let alone complete graduate school. I also graduated from the F.B.I. National Academy. Furthermore, I have taught criminal justice both at Michigan State University, as well as a nationally acclaimed "Top Ten" university.

My wife and I have been married for 25 years – she truly is my soul mate. We have two great daughters. Our 22-year-old believes in a sense of social justice for everyone and loves world travel. Our 17-year-old believes the world is her diamond and lives life to the fullest. I love to go deer and pheasant hunting and walleye fishing in Canada.

My purpose:

I knew at age 17 I wanted to be a police officer. I have always had a desire to serve my community as a law enforcement officer, with the added benefit of it being an exciting career. I believe that the law must always be enforced fairly, firmly and equally. I worked for the City of Holland as a police officer for 26 years, and left at a Captain's rank when I was elected to the Office of Sheriff in Allegan County. I regard serving as Allegan County's Sheriff a true honor and privilege.

I am a Christian – my faith is between me and my God. I am a strong believer in the division of church and state.

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"My Story" Continued

My honor and integrity are of utmost importance to me – virtues that I try to live by everyday.

I am a strong believer in education. I believe education is knowledge; knowledge is power - the power to make the right decisions with fact, rather than with supposition and speculation. I believe in treating people the way I want to be treated. Unless we can treat everyone – no matter their station in life – with respect, we will fail in our mission of serving others in our community.

In my job, I am a cop first, a politician second – there I said it. Some people won't like it, but that is who I am and the way it is. My opinions are my own; I make them based on facts and information as I know it.

My decisions are based on a number of dynamics. First and most importantly because of the values that have been instilled in me by my family. Second, because of the years I have been in the business of protecting the public. Finally, my educational experience is an important factor in how I make my decisions.

I will begin our series on public safety issues facing all of us in Allegan County by editorializing on the correctional system in Allegan County - what the Allegan County correctional system is, and what it is not.

A future article will include subjects such as the delivery of patrol and investigative services – who is responsible to provide them and who pays for law enforcement in Allegan County. Other articles will focus on special programs we offer and issues we face at the Allegan County Sheriff's Office.

So, until I write again – stay safe.

Blaine A. Koops
Sheriff