



2023 ANNUAL REPORT



VILLAGE OF WINNECONNE POLICE DEPARTMENT

Our Mission:

The Winneconne Police Department's mission is to ensure the security of the citizenry through high quality police services and community partnerships through the compassionate and dedicated members of the police department with the goal of improving the quality of life within the Village of Winneconne, while upholding everyone's Constitutional rights.

Chief Ben R. Sauriol
bsauriol@winneconnewi.gov



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Department Staff:

The following are the officers and non-sworn staff at the police department. It's important for people to put a name with a face. I want to again thank the officers and Lisa Hall for their hard work and input to the department. Without a team, there would be no organization.

Full-Time Staff:



Chief Ben Sauriol: Chief Sauriol has been a sworn officer for over 23 years. He started in Winneconne in May 2003 and worked up to the rank of Chief. He started his law enforcement career as a Community Service Officer (CSO) for the Neenah and Menasha Police Departments in October 1996-2000 while attending Fox Valley Technical College's police science program. After graduation in June of 1999, Officer Sauriol was hired by the Wild Rose Police Department. Chief Sauriol is the agency's EVOC instructor and general subject instructor. Chief Sauriol is a Certified Public Manager through UW Madison's/WI Dept of Justice's Law Enforcement Command College.



Lieutenant Kyle Sorensen: Lt. Sorensen has been with the Winneconne Police Department for almost 14 years. He specializes in drug and criminal investigations. Lt. Sorensen is also the field training supervisor, evidence room custodian and the department's equipment guru. Lt. Sorensen was a CSO and an Auxiliary Officer for the Oshkosh Police Department and worked as a Police Officer for the Town of Marion PD, specializing in water patrol. Lt. Sorensen was promoted to Lieutenant effective January 1st, 2024. He is the second in command of the department and has enhanced duties and roles while working as the Lieutenant on patrol.



Officer Benjamin Honer: Officer Honer is also known as "The Other Ben" and is the School Resource Officer. He has been serving the Winneconne Police Department since 2009. He was a combat veteran in the US Army and saw two tours in Iraq. He is our agency's firearm and taser instructor. Officer Honer received the First Responder of the Year award representing Assembly District 53 and Senate District 18 in October of 2023. Officer Honer received this award for his dedicated work in the schools and for his response to the September 6th shooting. Officer Honer is an asset to the schools.



Officer Adam Kelm: Officer Kelm started here in 2012 and is our full-time night shift officer. Prior to beginning his service with our department, Officer Kelm worked security at a ski resort in Colorado. Officer Kelm is well versed in landlord tenant laws which comes in very handy. Officer Kelm is also our resident carpenter. He helped "whittle" down some costs of the evidence room upgrade by cutting and putting up the trim.

Part-Time Staff:



Officer Duane Luker: Officer Luker is a retired Winnebago County Sheriff's Deputy with over 30 years of experience. He works to help fill shifts and his knowledge and experience are an asset. Officer Luker is also an expert with crash investigations. Officer Luker also works part-time for the City of Green Lake.



Officer Danielle Laluzerne: Officer Laluzerne comes from the Grand Chute Police Department. She has been with us since May 2023. She is currently working on her master's degree. She has been a sworn officer for 5 years. Officer Laluzerne specializes in sexual assault investigations and has a knack for operating while intoxicated interdictions.



Officer Chad Reinhard: Officer Reinhard has been with us since 2020. Officer Reinhard is very active with community policing and enjoys going out and interacting with as many people as possible especially the youth.



Officer Katie Boerst: Officer Boerst has been with us since late 2023 but worked here as a part time officer in 2011-2012. Officer Boerst also works at Fremont PD as a detective sergeant and has a lot of experience with grant writing.



Officer Michael Zamzow: Officer Zamzow is a local and currently working the vacant open night shift position and wherever he can, which has been a great help to our department. He is also currently in the academy and will graduate in May 2024. He has been with us since July 2022.



Officer Emmaus Schaefer: Officer Schaefer recently started at the police department in December of 2023. He lives on a farm with his family and works as a part-time police officer at Iola PD as well. Officer Schaefer finished field training recently and is working solo shifts. Welcome aboard Officer Schaefer!



Secretary/Admin Assistant Lisa Hall: Mrs. Hall has been with the Winneconne Police Department since August 2022. She is part-time and works Mon-Fri 8a-12pm. She finalizes reports, enters data for WIBRS/UCR reporting, enters calls for service among many other administrative tasks and greets community members when they come to the police department. Mrs. Hall organized the Christmas Crusade and did a sensational job.

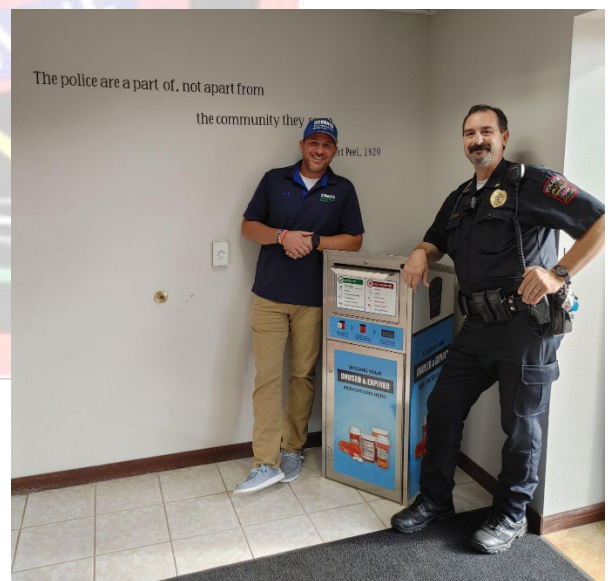
OUR NEW DRUG DROP:

Big Thanks to Covanta!!!

Where? Our Police Department

When? Monday – Friday (8am-4pm)

What? Unused and / or Expired Medications





A Year in Summary from Chief Ben Sauriol:

I hope this report finds all of you well. I would like to thank everyone in the community for their continued support. Without the support and partnership of the citizenry, we couldn't do the job we do and strive to do. I would also like to thank the Village Board for their support through some challenging times with the budget process in the last couple of years. Finally, I would like to thank the officers and staff in the department. Everyone has worked hard and helped each other out. An organization is only as good as their team members. A proper team relies on everyone in it. It's not about one person, it's about everyone having ownership and pride in the place they work. Everyone here is invested in making the Village of Winneconne a wonderful place to live, work, visit and go to school.

As we start 2024, I would like to share with the community, Winneconne Police Department's 2023 Annual Report. Later in the report will be yearly statistics of what our department output was. Lt. Sorensen will breakdown the statistics in detail and what they mean. He will also dive deeper into some of the projects we accomplished in 2023. Lastly, we will close with a school update from our School Resource Officer, Officer Honer.

The department has seen a lot of changes in in 2023. Former Chief Paul Olson retired January 6th, 2023, then on January 7th, 2023, I was named Interim chief of police. I graduated Wisconsin's Law Enforcement Command College, (Class 9), June 9th, 2023, becoming a nationally recognized accredited Certified Public Manager (CPM). That was the best executive training I have ever experienced. I would like to thank the Village Board for allowing me the amazing opportunity to attend that program. Later that month, I was appointed permanent chief of police by the Village Board. I would also like to thank the staff, Village Administrator Fuller and the Village Board for their support.



Goals and Changes:



We intend to set up a proper firearms range so we can have proper training above the standard state qualification course. What we currently have doesn't work and the area is also a multiuse storage area, which makes scenarios difficult at times.

We are public servants and transparency is paramount. I intend to uphold high standards of conduct and ensure the officers here treat people with respect, compassion, empathy, and kindness. To help ensure this, I am working on a contact survey. When an officer has contact with someone, traffic stops, calls for service or other contacts, they will hand a person a business card. On that card will be a QR code bringing them to a link where they can leave comments and complete a questionnaire via a drop-down list. It's important to hear both positive and negative feedback to ensure growth and improvements. Moreover, I was able to get, for free,

several gently used body worn cameras from a Command College classmate to help ensure we maintain our bodycam operations.

We want community members and visitors to have a high quality of life in the Village of Winneconne. That means the officers here will be out and about shaking hands, getting to know people, building relationships, solving problems, and, upholding every citizen's constitutional rights while securing the citizenry, and perhaps enjoying snow cones with the youth.



Knowing the community is an effective way to enhance our service. For example, an officer will notice when there is a different vehicle in a driveway or in front of the house or notice that "Bob's" garage door is open which is unusual for Bob thus prompting us to take a deeper look. Those are the type of intangibles that occur with small-town policing. Officers in small communities will generally have more intimate knowledge of their community and relationships with the people. The officers here must wear many hats versus a larger agency; therefore, the community will rely on us for a wide range of things. We must be knowledgeable in different aspects of the job. If there is a theft or burglary, for example, we must rely on each other to investigate as we don't have a detective bureau. Those intangibles are rooted in the statement from Sir Robert Peel who is considered the grandfather of modern policing. In 1829, he is quoted as writing, "The police are a part of, not apart from, the community they serve."



In Command College, we had to complete an individual applied project that applied to our own agencies. The subject had to be something which would benefit the organization and the community and apply those ideas in real world practice. As I thought about it, I considered the values we have in Winneconne. Small-town life, neighbors helping each other, a strong sense of community and relationships. Essentially, a Mayberry feel. Those "Mayberry" values are important and are what makes Winneconne strong. The small-town feel should be embraced but also enhanced. Thus, I decided to do my paper/project on core-accreditation.

Accreditation is the most cost effective and efficient way for an agency to assess the overall performance and service they provide to the public. The standards guide agencies to current best practices, but the process also allows agencies to identify problem areas, deficient policies, and potential areas of liability. Additionally, accreditation inherently improves documentation of performance as all staff participate in the creation and retention of proofs of compliance.

Core accreditation consists of 65 core standards dealing with high liability areas. The accreditation is through WILEAG (Wisconsin Law Enforcement Accreditation Group). Many agencies in the area and state are fully accredited through WILEAG. Full accreditation consists of over 200 core



standards. Core accreditation was designed for smaller agencies that don't need to have the full accreditation. The process is time consuming and could take 12-18 months to complete given we have a small staff. Once accreditation is official, it will last for three years. After three years, the assessment process must be done again. Being accredited could also reduce the Village's liability insurance cost.

In 2023, the Village Board passed a new abatement ordinance to deal with nuisance properties. This means the Village will have more tools to help clean up problem homes. For example, a house that has junk vehicles or junk that cause eyes sores and lower quality of life. The abatement ordinance also applies to residents that have too many negative police contacts within a year, such as noise complaints, disturbances, or drug calls. The ordinance will allow for enhanced penalties and processes and avenues to clean up yards and end problems that cause concerns for neighbors.

We recently updated the evidence room. The evidence room was obsolete and had too many security deficiencies. Thanks to the Village Board's approval, we were able to create a new proper evidence storage room that is completely secure. This also allowed for us to have more space for processing evidence before evidence is placed in a pass-through evidence locker. I contacted fellow chiefs in the state asking if they had any pass-through evidence lockers they were looking to part with. The Police Chief at Jackson PD was gracious enough to call me and tell me he had some pass-through lockers he would donate to us. I drove there and picked them up. The cost for these lockers is around five thousand dollars. We ordered a state-of-the-art evidence software management program to ensure proper evidence chain of custody and integrity which will aid in being compliant with accreditation and state standards. This money came from extra money that was left over in the 2023 budget.



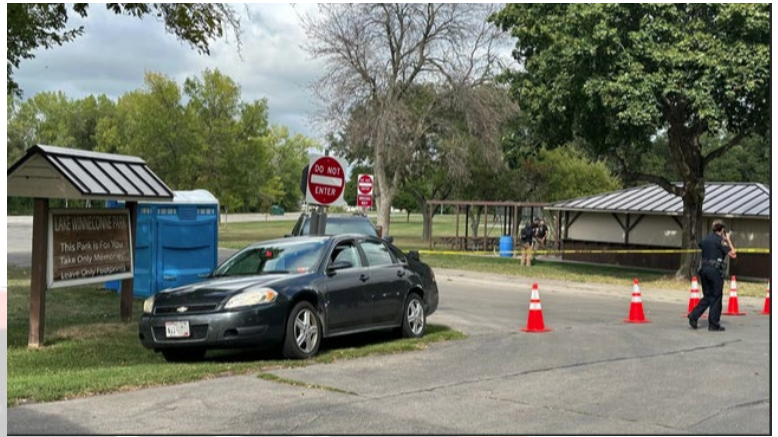
The Village Board approved money from the Village's ARPA funds to allow the purchase of safety equipment and other equipment we needed. Each pickup now has shields and ballistic helmets to ensure the safety of the officers in the event of a shooting or other dangerous situation. Each truck is equipped with a life jacket and throw ring. Being on the Wolf River, we want the squads to be equipped with water rescue equipment

given the police are usually the first to arrive on scene to an emergency. We were also able to purchase proper storage compartments to store drug testing kits, other safety equipment, and other items. Having these storage compartments will ensure the equipment purchased will stay in good working order.

2023 was also a challenging year. The Village experienced budget issues, and as a result, everyone had to tighten up their belts. Ultimately, we couldn't fill a vacancy after Chief Olson retired. We had to fill the open night shifts with part-time officers. Due to the hiring and retention crisis around the country for police agencies, we are lucky to have the staff we have. 15 years ago, we would typically see 20-30 applicants for one part-time officer job opening. Today, we're lucky to see three. To help combat this issue, the village board agreed to significantly

increase the wages of the part-time officers. That helped retain two part-time officers and will hopefully bring in more applicants as we have an ongoing recruitment for part-time officers.

On the afternoon of September 6, 2023, the Village experienced a shooting at Lake Winneconne Park. A male was shot due to a road rage incident. After he was shot, he drove himself to Marsh Family Dentistry on E. Main Street to get help. Due to the heroic efforts of the staff at the



Marsh Family Dentistry, the victim was tended to and transported to the hospital where he made a full recovery after suffering serious injuries. Due to their efforts, everyone at the dentistry and a local first responder were given “Hometown Hero” awards at the November 2023 Village Board meeting. The shooter was found in West Bend, and when the police approached him, a pursuit occurred where he later crashed due to dying from a self-inflicted gunshot wound. This shooting was the first shooting the Village experienced in years.

I would like to sincerely thank the Winnebago County Sheriff’s Office, the Omro Police Department, State Patrol, the West Bend Police Department, and the Washington County Sheriff’s Department for their help. The Winnebago County Sheriff’s Department assisted with their detectives and patrol units to help secure the schools, and aid with the investigation.

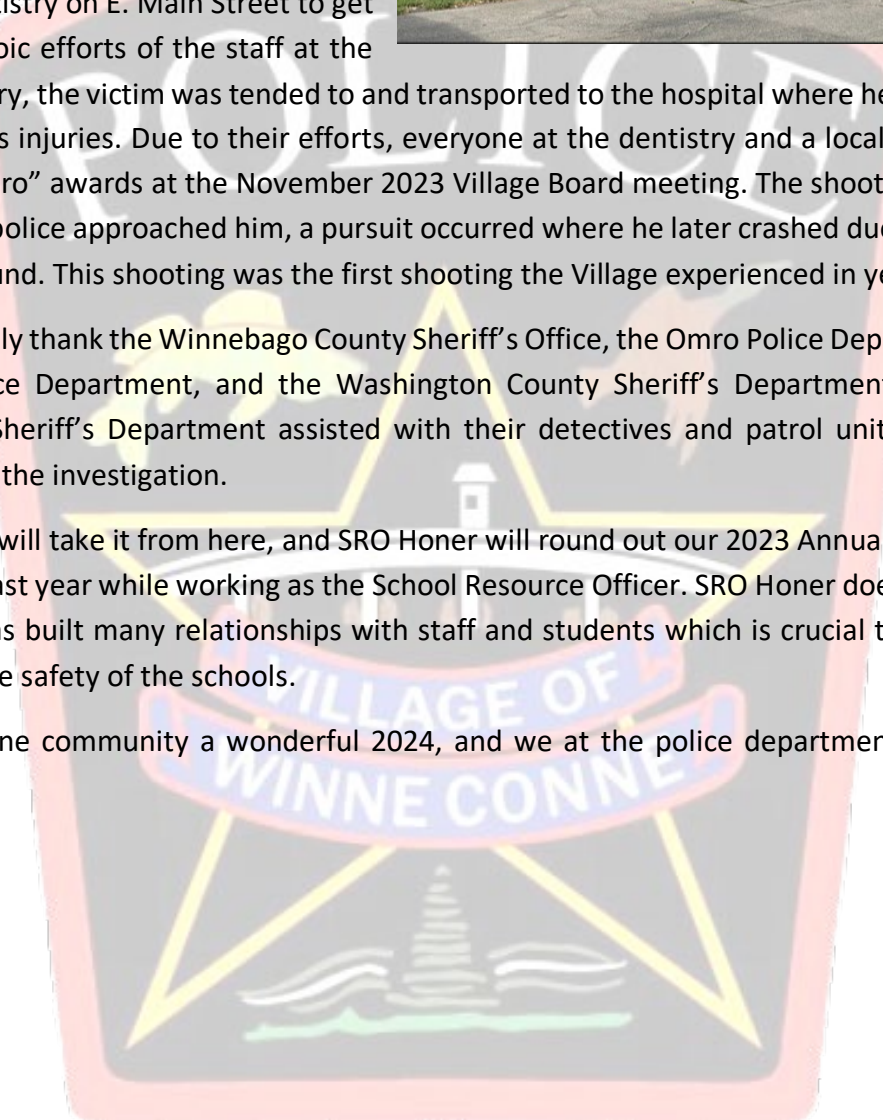
Lieutenant Sorensen will take it from here, and SRO Honer will round out our 2023 Annual Report with some of his adventures this past year while working as the School Resource Officer. SRO Honer does a great job working in the schools and has built many relationships with staff and students which is crucial to helping students in need and ensuring the safety of the schools.

I wish the Winneconne community a wonderful 2024, and we at the police department thank you for your continued support.

Sincerely,

Ben Sauriol

Chief of Police





From the Desk of Lieutenant Kyle Sorensen:

This year seems as though it has flashed by with a blink of an eye. With the retirement of Police Chief Paul Olson at the beginning of the year, Ben Sauriol was promoted to Interim Chief. With his promotion, I was in turn promoted to Officer in Charge (OIC) in April of 2023. In June of 2023, Chief Sauriol was promoted as the permanent Chief, and as of January 1st, 2024, I have been officially promoted to Lieutenant. I am very thankful for this amazing opportunity to advance my career, and very excited to assist Chief Sauriol in meeting the goals he has set for our department to accomplish.

With my new position, I have been given a lot more duties that I must fit into my regular patrol duties. These include managing our equipment (including vehicles), serving as the department's evidence room custodian, providing guidance, counseling, and feedback to other department members, and assisting Chief Sauriol with some administrative tasks such as monitoring department data and statistics.

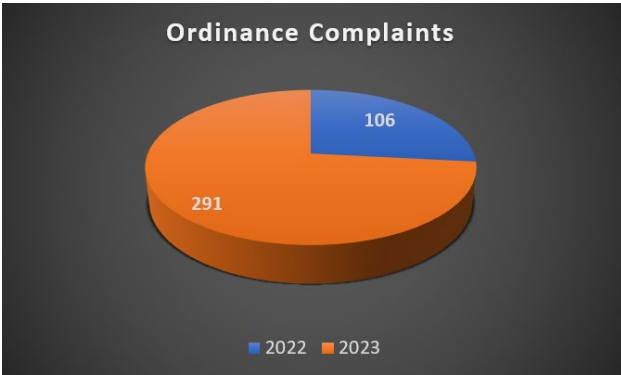
Even with all the movement and changes, it has sure been a busy year in policing. As we move forward in 2023's Annual Report, we will go into department statistics and trends, a look into the evidence room transition / upgrade, the history of our F150 police vehicles and a breakdown of their newly upfitted pieces of equipment. With our department being down two full-time police officer positions, resulting in thousands of extra hours in part-time officer hours, every member of our department has had to step up to accomplish the goals set for 2023. I'm happy to report that we have, and then some.

WHAT DID WE DO ALL YEAR?

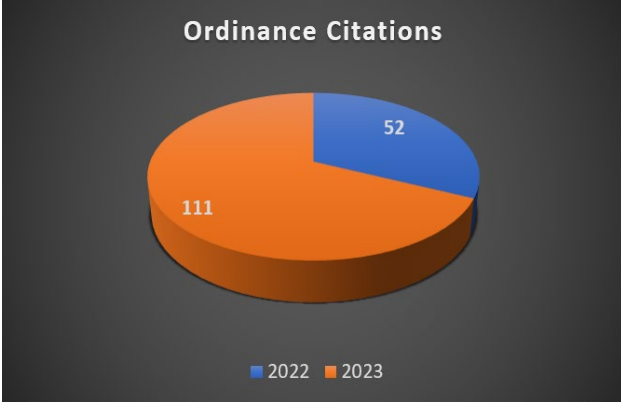
As we evaluate department statistics, we look at what our numbers were the previous year(s) compared to the current year. We also go into the data a bit more and compare ourselves to the communities around us that are similar in size. Are we succeeding in an area? Can we do better in an area? Is there a certain type of evolving trend that needs to be analyzed further? So many possible questions with so many possible answers. It all depends on how many questions one wants to ask.

We will start with some of the more interesting categories that have stood out in 2023's statistics compared to 2022. We will then transition into an overall department activity report which breaks down several types of incidents, comparing the years, and then we'll look at our current drug trends which just might surprise you.

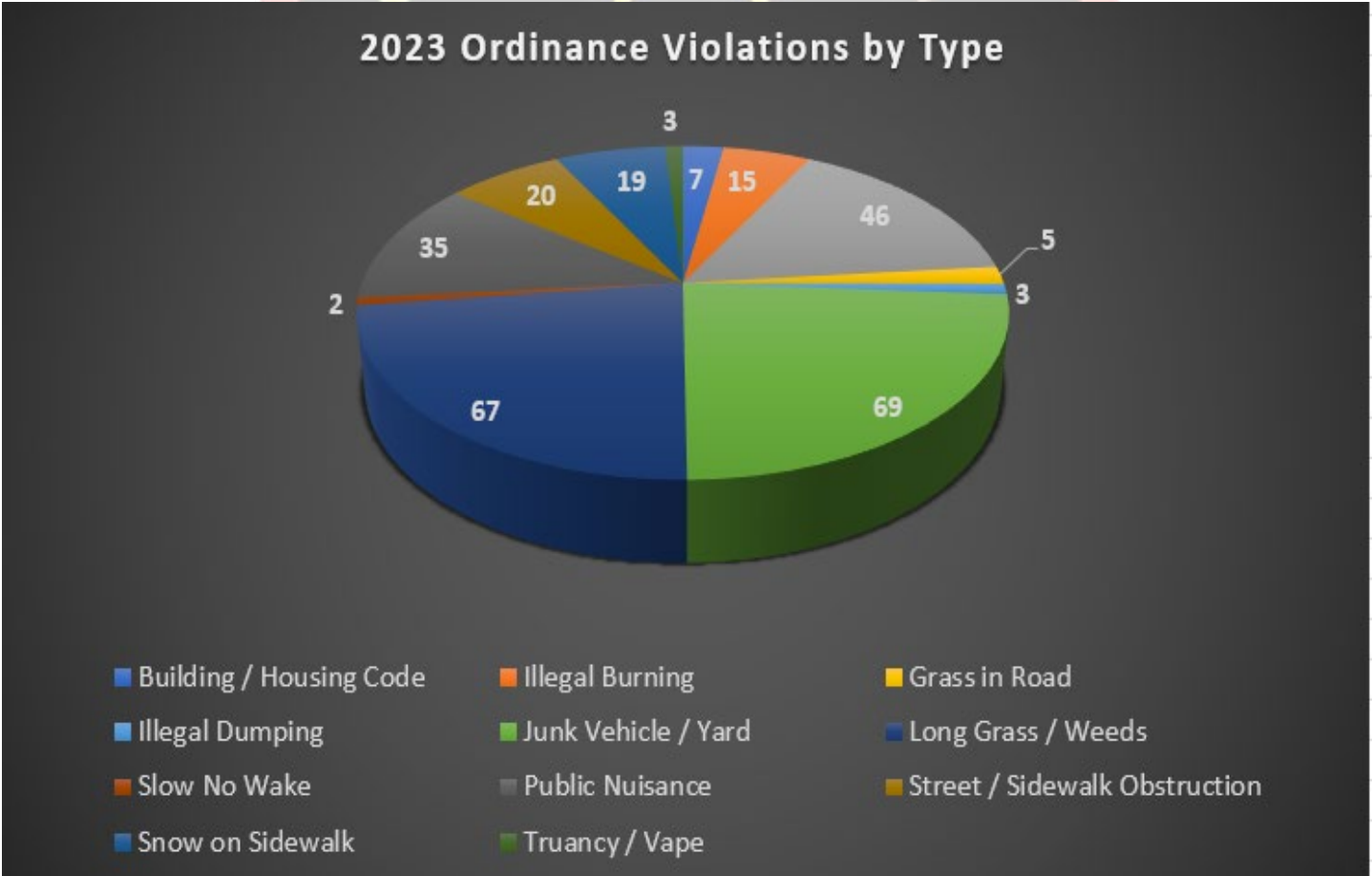
Overall, in 2023, we had 14,990 incidents which were up about 7%, compared to 2022 when we had 13,909 incidents. An incident is everything we do, from a building security check to an in-jail arrest. While these total incident numbers seem high, in 2023, 7,911 of these were building / vacation home checks. In 2022, we had 7,798 checks. In 2023, we had 238 actual report numbers pulled which was up over 32% from the 161 pulled in 2022. Each police department does their report number pulling a different way. Many departments pull report numbers for parking complaints, traffic stops, even community policing activities; we do not. Our department only pulls an actual report number for the more serious incidents we investigate which results in a formal report, such as a disturbance, drug arrest, theft, etc. As we did not change our reporting methods from 2022 to 2023, one can infer that our department investigated more reportable types of calls this past year.



Ordinance Enforcement became a higher priority for the department in 2023 which resulted in a nicer looking community. We had over 63% more self-initiated complaints compared to 2022. These included a variety of different ordinance violations as depicted below. These overall complaint numbers are not school related and are strictly from patrol response outside of the schools. The citation numbers, however, include school related calls, and over 53% more ordinance citations were issued in 2023 compared to 2022.

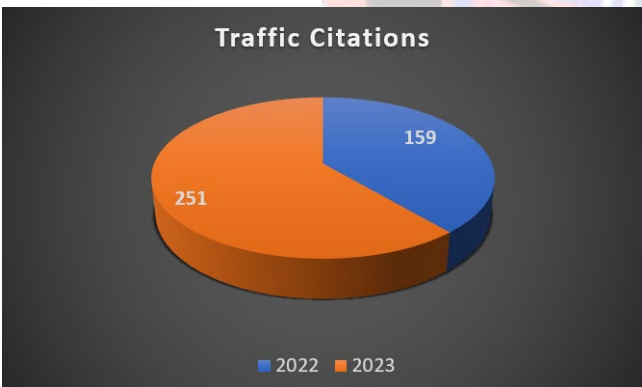
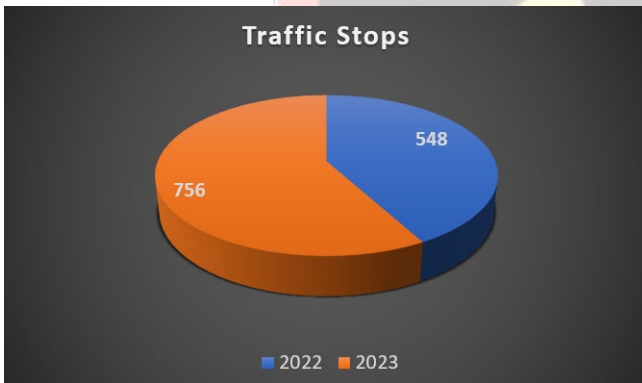


It's very important to note that a vast majority of the violations observed resulted in warnings and education. We want our community looking clean, and again, we would rather educate and inform, rather than issue a citation. Higher numbers of ordinance citations were slightly influenced by our increasing drug enforcement statistics for minor cases regarding the possession of marijuana, along with more tobacco / vaping incidents at our schools (discussed later).

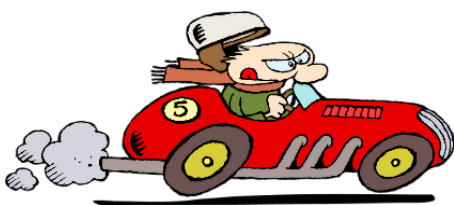
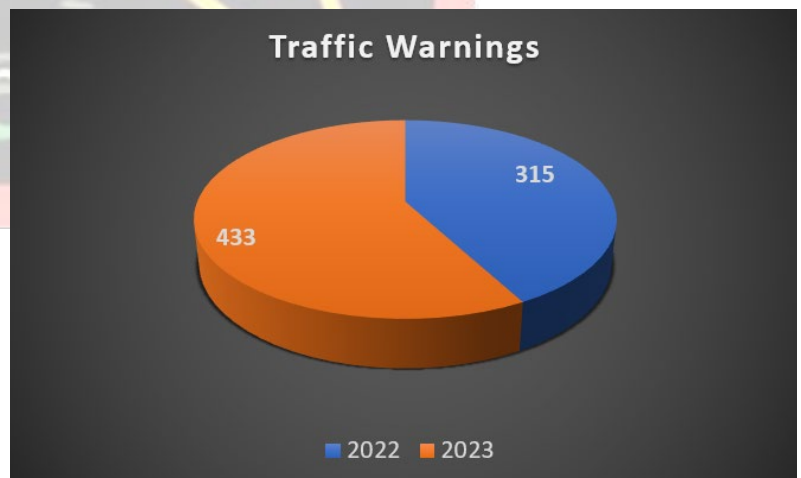


Parking Enforcement climbed as well. In 2022, we were having issues with the kiosks, along with other boat trailer parking issues. With the Village transitioning to these new and practically self-sufficient units, it allowed our officers to enforce the boat trailer parking locations more efficiently and effectively. Because of this, including increased encouragement from Chief Sauriol, officers over doubled parking enforcement efforts around the Village in 2023 compared to 2022.

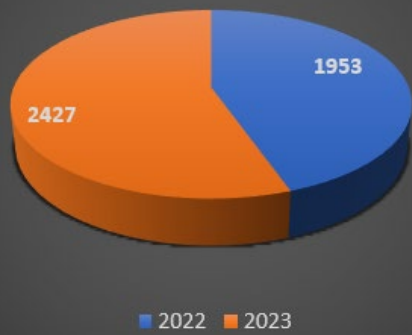
As with more enforcement, citation numbers rose as well, not just a lot, but over 62%. It should be noted that some of these citations were dismissed if the individual brought in their valid permit and / or purchased an annual permit from the Village. The three most common violations included: Permit Required, No Parking 2am-6am, and Parked on Grass.



Traffic Enforcement is another important aspect of our job. This year, our officers made over 200 more traffic stops compared to 2022. Most of the infractions included either equipment or moving violations. Our officers were more visible and certainly more active this past year and we believe this increased enforcement helped us to have far fewer crashes that resulted in *injury*. Due to more enforcement, more citations were also issued. It's against state law to have a quota for traffic citations and our goal is not always to write citations. Our "citation to warning ratio" clearly shows that, and in 2023, we issued over 27% more traffic warnings compared to 2022. Education is #1.



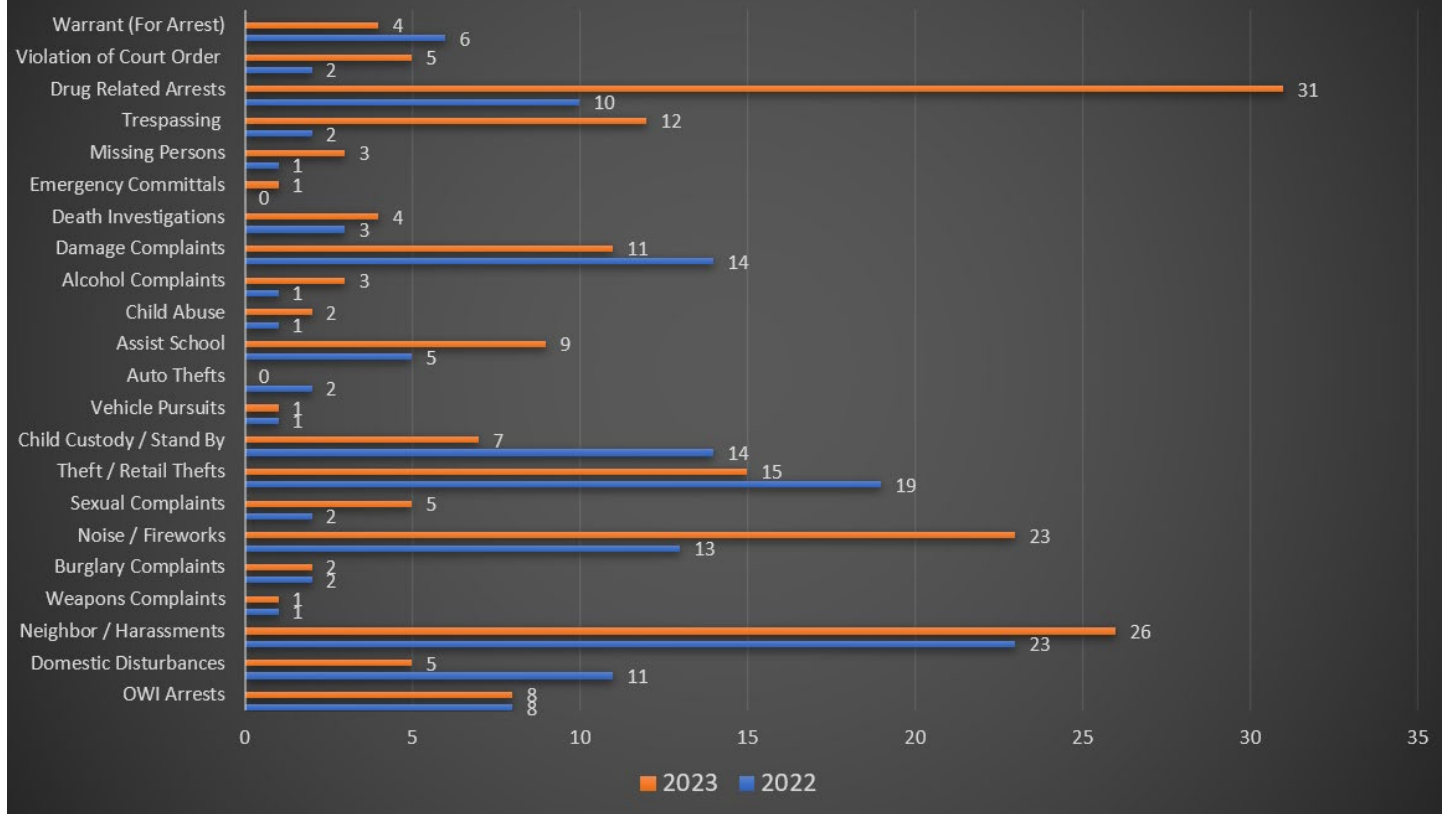
Community Policing Incidents



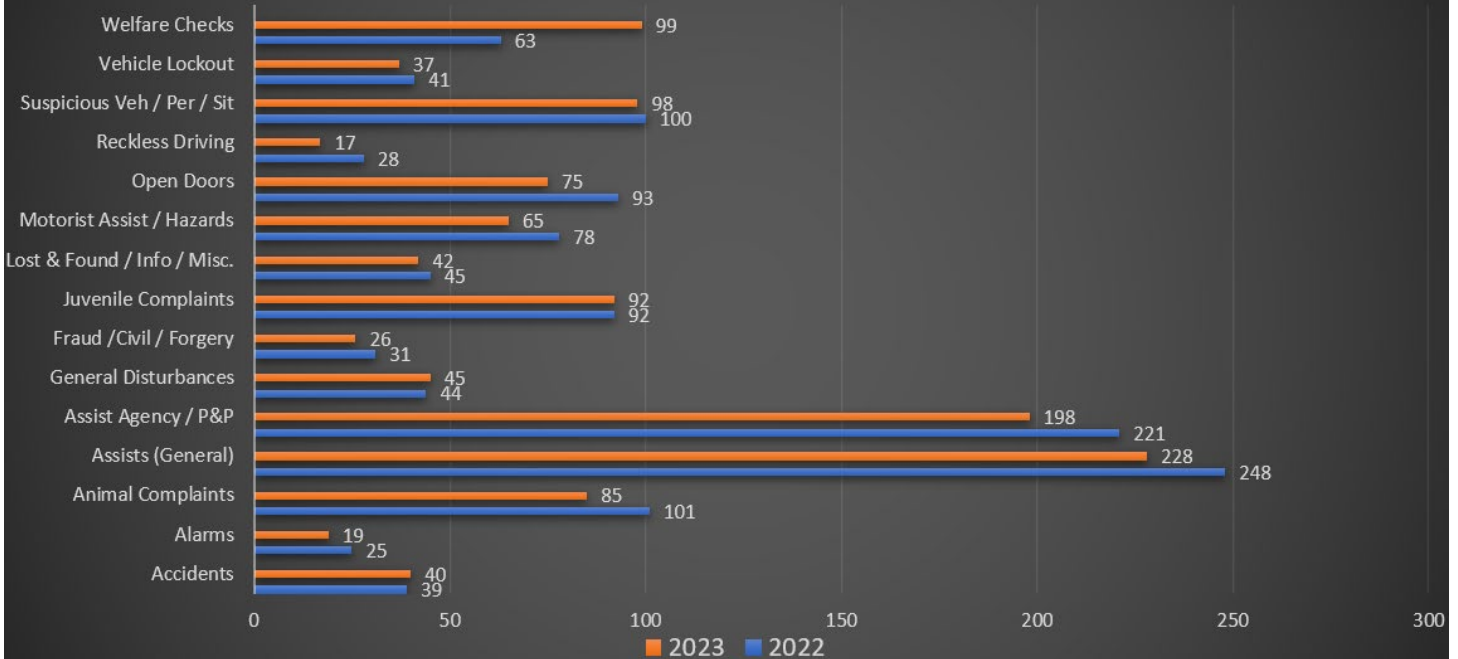
Community Policing initiatives were pushed higher this year. A community policing incident could mean us stopping to show a child our police car / truck, talking with a community member about current events, stopping at a school to walk around... the possibilities are endless. As Chief Sauriol pointed out earlier, "The police are a part of, not apart from, the community they serve.". We were VERY pleased with our officers' output in this area.

Other Incident Response Rates show that we were mostly more active in 2023 as well. While general disturbances (juvenile disturbances, disorderly conducts, batteries, non-violent domestics) were almost identical, domestic disturbances (mandatory in-custody arrests) went down over 50% which is great to see. Medical / Fire calls (requiring police assistance), along with the amount of welfare checks, climbed up approximately 30% and 36%, respectively, from years 2022 and 2023. We believe this number is due to the increasing ages of patients, including a couple of specific households who were dealing with severe medical issues during 2023. These specific households needed more assistance / responses due to their situation.

General Call Types (2023 vs 2022)

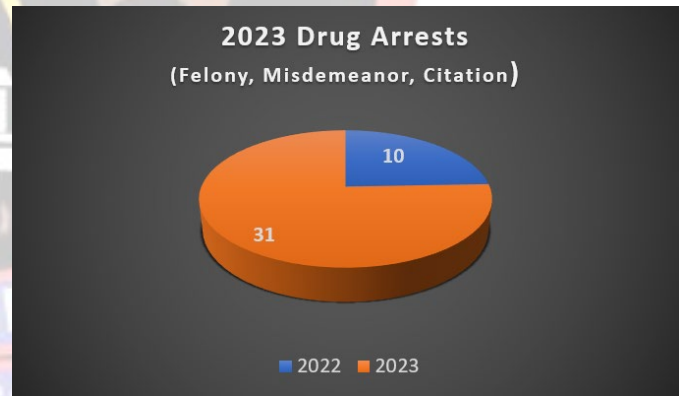


General Call Types - Continued (2023 vs 2022)

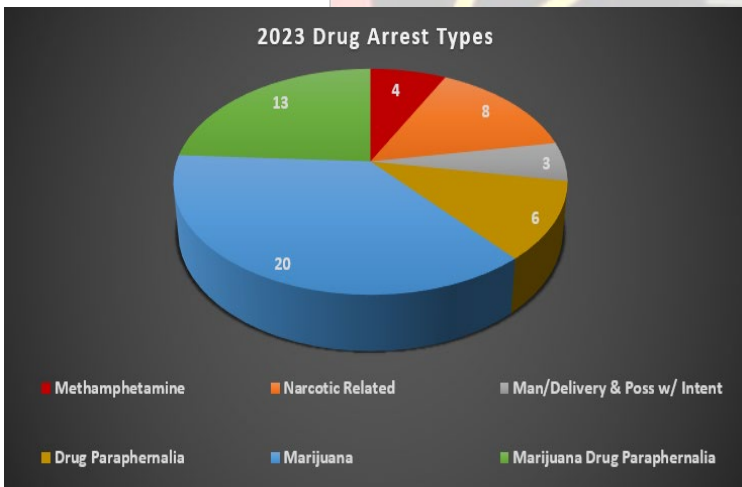


OUR DRUG TRENDS:

With our drug arrests climbing over 67% from 2022 to 2023, this is certainly a subject worth talking about. When we label an incident with a drug arrest, this could mean an in-custody arrest, referral, or an active case with pending criminal charges (felony or misdemeanor). It could also mean that someone received a citation for simple possession of marijuana and / or marijuana related drug paraphernalia.



If we look further into each drug related incident in 2023, there were 54 instances / charges / citations involved with the 31 arrests we had this past year. An example would be an individual was found to be in possession of methamphetamine and a methamphetamine smoking pipe (paraphernalia). This would count as two instances / charges within that one arrest.



If we look further, we see that 63% of our drug related instances involved citations for marijuana and / or marijuana related drug paraphernalia. Our focus is regarding methamphetamine and narcotic related cases (fentanyl, heroin, prescription pills, etc.) which have certainly been rising, not only in the Village of Winneconne, but also throughout Winnebago County as well.

How Do We Compare? Let's look into the drug arrest data between two comparable communities: the Village of Winneconne and the City of Omro. We have only placed the City of Omro within ours as a comparable to provide a perspective on the increasing drug problems in our communities. Our departments work closely together, especially when we utilize their K9 for an investigation.

If we take a brief look back to 2020 when our department last pulled the data, we can conclude that our drug arrests have jumped approximately 25% in three years and the City of Omro by approximately 30%. While it shows our departments are being proactive, it also shows there is an issue within our communities that needs addressing. If we let the problem continue to grow, quality of life issues will certainly follow, including actual overdose deaths.

Within all of Winnebago County this past year, there were 49 (includes five pending) drug-related overdose deaths. 27 of these are confirmed from fentanyl poisoning, again, with five cases still pending. The overall overdose death rate rose approximately 25% from 2022. Winnebago County also averaged 30.5 non-fatal overdoses each month in 2023, meaning the county averaged just over one non-fatal overdose a day in 2023.

While we did have four death investigations in 2023, none of them were drug related. We should remember though that the Village is not immune to the rest of Winnebago County, including the other municipalities, which are just a short distance away. That's why it is important to work with other jurisdictions as much as possible, along with staying proactive in enforcement, providing education, and enacting referral services when appropriate / necessary.

If we had to highlight the most memorable drug investigation in 2023 for our department, it wasn't the quantity of the seizure that occurred, it was the quality of the seizure. Our department received a call from a resident on the east side of the Village who stated his very young daughter had located a piece of drug paraphernalia underneath her swing set in their backyard.

An officer went to the residence and collected the pipe which appeared to be a methamphetamine pipe. It later tested positive for the presence of fentanyl. We are so happy that the young child didn't attempt to put the pipe in her mouth.

We immediately initiated an investigation into the neighborhood and located the target house. Living within the residence was an older male, originally from Oshkosh, who had moved into the low-cost rental with a roommate. After several investigative efforts, the residence was searched, and he was ultimately arrested on felony drug charges (methamphetamine related). He later moved back to Oshkosh. His ex-roommate, originally from Fond du Lac, was later arrested on felony drug charges (manufacture / delivery of a controlled substance), after our department served a search warrant on his new residence in the Village. This, in totality, is the meaning of the "quality" surrounding our most memorable drug investigation in 2023.



EVIDENCE ROOM UPGRADE:

2023 was a busy year for evidence as well. We had 41 evidence ledgers with sometimes several items contained on each ledger. As you saw in our 2023 statistics, we had 31 drug arrests in 2023. This is quite a lot for a municipality the size of ours but the proactive work by our officers has helped to get the illicit drugs off our streets, and as you read, literally off our playgrounds. With the influx in property seizures, and to achieve adherence to accreditation standards, the department needed to upgrade our evidence room.

Our old evidence room was obsolete to say the least. Because of this, a lot of planning went into the project to make sure every penny was stretched in order to get us to where we needed to be. The Department of Public Works, John Bartow from WinHaven and the Kubasta's all assisted in the remodel. The following are some of the updates that were completed:

- New proper evidence storage room with a secure entrance, including repurposed shelving for organizing.
- Evidence pass-through lockers for temporary storage which lead into the long-term evidence storage room.
- A sub wall that provides office space for the Lieutenant to work on his administrative and investigative duties.
- A proper "L" shaped evidence processing desk, equipped to store evidence processing and testing equipment.
- Storage locker w/ drawers to store evidence bags, evidence narcotic pouches, DNA collection materials, knife and gun boxes, etc.

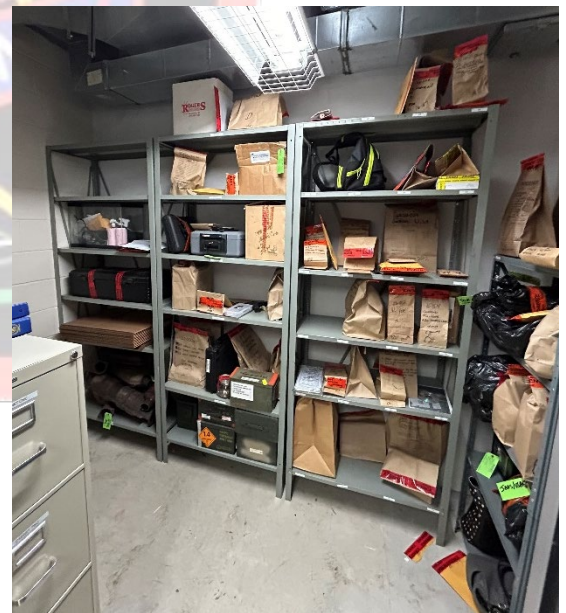


- Two computers, including upgraded infrastructure for networking use throughout the department.

- Narcotic processing mats and new testing equipment.

- A new digital scale accurate to .001gr.

**Most of these items were purchased from approved ARPA funds.*



For the last phase of the project, the Village Board allocated just under \$10k for the purchase of a much-needed evidence management system called the BEAST. All evidence will be audited as we switch over to the new system and each piece of property will be assigned a barcode. Random audits from the software will send a randomized list of items on a quarterly basis. The Lieutenant will then locate them within the storage room, examine the packaging, then scan them into the system as located and secure. The random property audits will hold the highest accountability standards for our department going forward.

A lot of personal time and personal funds went into this project, and we cannot thank everyone enough who have helped to make this much needed “dream”, a reality. We are extremely proud of the room and the professional view it presents.

(before)

(after)



KEEP YOUR FIREARMS SECURE!

FOR FREE!!!

Stop into the Police Department M-7 (8am-4pm)

To Get Yours. Help Lockdown a Life!



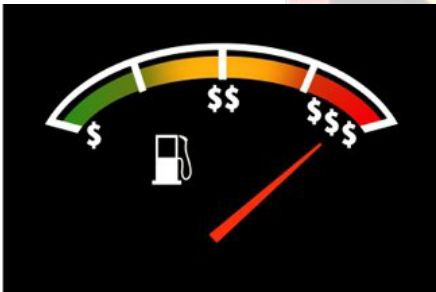
REFLECTING ON THE F-150 FOR PATROL:

By now, you have probably seen one of our two 2022 Ford F-150 Responders around town. We have one marked vehicle for nightshift patrol (pictured) and one unmarked vehicle for dayshift / investigative use. By having two (which wasn't planned), we are doubling the time we have them which allows for a full five years of warranty coverage.



If you didn't hear, the reason why we have two F-150's is because one of our part-time officers got into an accident with our 2019 Explorer, resulting in it being fully totaled out. Our insurance company paid for a new replacement squad (a 2022 F-150 Responder), including almost the entire cost of upfitting it for patrol use. After a full year of having both in service, we can report back just how amazing they really are. A lot of thought went into transitioning to a truck for patrol use. First and foremost was the cost factor.

When we originally received the state contract bid pricing for the Ford Interceptor Utility (Explorer), we noticed a large price increase that was reflected across the industry. We then saw that the F-150 was only about \$1,800.00 more than an Explorer. When factoring in resale value (when we would sell the vehicles), we saw that the F-150 had well over \$7,000.00 more in value, which is much more now due to inflation, compared to the Explorer. The F-150 Police Responder is the only pursuit rated pickup on the market. It is rated for speeds upwards of 120MPH due to its beefed-up attributes such as its suspension, custom tires, etc.



Going hand in hand with the cost factor, we had to also look at fuel consumption for the life of the vehicle. The F-150's come standard with the EcoBoost engine (turbo charged), whereas the Explorers come standard with a non-turbo engine. With the EcoBoost, even installed within the frame of an F-150, they had the same rated MPG as the Explorers. Moreso, the F-150's have a 1 MPG better rating when in highway conditions. This proved correct as we came in thousands of dollars under our budgeted fuel amount

in 2023. Other options for us included the Explorer being equipped with an EcoBoost engine or even selecting the Hybrid models. Based upon calculations, and the thousands of dollars of added costs to upgrade to these models (approximately \$7,000.00 more for the hybrid version), the return on investment did not project as good as the F-150's.

Upfit costs remained the same for either the F150 or the Explorer. With the change in the Explorer's body style, we would have had to purchase new cages, etc. anyway, so there really wasn't a cost difference in this aspect. We chose to purchase (and reuse) our own lights, then pay a company to professionally install them for us. By taking this approach, we have a five-year unlimited mile warranty on all electrical equipment. If we were to go with the



“Ready for The Road Package”, which includes all emergency equipment pre-installed directly from Ford, their warranty expires within three years or 36,000 miles. While it would certainly be less work for us to just opt into the Ford package, our direction offers the best reliability and is the most cost efficient of the two options.



Reflecting on the past year, officers have reported the amazing performance of the F-150's, especially during one pursuit that an officer was involved with. The acceleration and handling abilities were quite impressive. The room within the cab of the truck is bar none the best we have experienced. The on-demand four-wheel drive is a blessing, especially when in blizzard-like conditions like we recently had. The F-150's can sure slice through some of the many snow drifts we have met in the midnight hours prior to the plows arriving.

What are some disadvantages we have noticed? There are three... The first is the ride quality. The F-150's certainly have a stiffer ride than our Explorers. Every bump is somewhat magnified. This is due to the suspension needed for the pursuit rating, not to mention the obvious, it's a truck. The second has been the tire wear. It's no secret, we have a lot of short turns and intown driving. As previously mentioned, the tires are custom on the truck, so they cost more. Approximately \$400.00 more for a set compared to our Explorers. While this isn't a large yearly cost, we estimate this will cost us \$1,600.00 more over the life of each F-150. Given the full warranties on the trucks, the overall maintenance / repair cost compared to the Explorer is still less. The third was equipment storage. Due to the cost, we were unable to find a decent storage / organizer unit to hold all our equipment. We ended up using plastic totes which did not work out at all. Thankfully, this was corrected this past year with the ARPA funds allotted to us by the Village Board.

EQUIPMENT UPGRADES:

We were not only able to purchase rear organizers for the F-150's, but we were also finally able to equip them with much needed pieces of equipment that we needed. As you can see from the top photo, the rear organizer mounts safely under the tonneau cover and has two locking drawers that pull out for easy, weatherproof access.



Thanks to the lower profile design, there is space between the cover and the organizer to mount the larger, more bulkier pieces of equipment. In this area, each truck is equipped with a new throwable life ring (which clips onto the new throw bag of rope), a ballistic shield with room clearing light, a broom and lockout tool for vehicles. Door rams will soon be added when an acceptable mount is fabricated as they are quite heavy. Most of these items are new, especially the ballistic shields. After one of our officers was on scene during a shooting this past year in the City of Omro without any ballistic protection, everyone realized this needed to change, and fast.





As we open the drawers, starting on the top and working our way down, we find the following items, most of which are brand new:

Left Side:

- Kids' Reading Books to Give Out***
- Responder Lifejacket w/ Strobe***
- Fire Suppression Device***
- Personal Protection Equipment Kit***
- Throw Bag of Rope (100')***
- Collapsible Traffic Cones***

Right Side:

- Evidence Kit (including new drug test kits)***
- Ballistic Helmet w/ Storage Bag***
- Fire Extinguisher***
- Straps for Transporting Large Items in Bed***

Several other items were also upgraded within our squads. A new Alco-Sensor Portable Breath Test Unit (PBT) was purchased to replace one that is over 15 years old. We now have two matching models, one for each squad. A new Kustom Signals Falcon HR Radar Unit, with both approaching and same direction capabilities, was also purchased for the unmarked F150 as that did not have a unit mounted within. Three of our four squads now have fully equipped radar units (the SRO vehicle doesn't have one).



We would sincerely like to thank the Village Board for allowing us to purchase and / or upgrade the equipment we did this past year. It helps us to be more effective and efficient, while providing an even safer environment for us and the citizenry we serve.

OUR NEW FIRE SUPPRESSION DEVICE:



A Big Thanks to the Masons!!!

This allows for the officer to throw the unit into a burning room, vehicle, etc., and if the fire isn't too advanced, it will put the fire out. While we haven't had to use it yet, it is great to have this option for our citizens seeing we are usually first on scene!



The Past Year in Our Schools with School Resource Officer Honer:

It has been another great year of serving as the Winneconne School District's School Resource Officer. This will be my fourth year in this position, which serves the needs of students, staff, and families in our school district during the school year. When I am not serving in the schools, I conduct patrol duties during the summer months. While I have been a police officer for over 15 years, being the SRO has been a positive learning experience for me, and with the constant change of trends, and experiences amongst our youth, I feel that this learning will never end. These trends and experiences have been mostly positive in our district, but there also have been some negative experiences.

Peer pressure among students will always be with us, as it is a reminder that our children are still learning and navigating their lives. The negative peer pressures that I have observed and dealt with at a large scale this year have been the use of electronic nicotine vaping devices, including THC induced units. The use of vapes have hit our high school aged students hard, and that's where I am see vaping most of the time. There have been over 20 incidents involving vaping at the high school so far this year, with less than five incidents at the middle school and one at our elementary school. Five additional cases stemmed from the use of THC induced units at the high school. Due to the ongoing battle of combating vaping in our schools, the Winneconne School District approved the purchase of vape detectors to be put in our high school bathrooms. I believe this measure will be a more common sense and proactive approach to preventing our youth from vaping in our schools. With accountability, I also provide these students with education regarding vaping. I've had conversations with many students who are struggling with these addictions and involve their parents. Our county provides excellent educational classes and opportunities to students who are struggling with these addictions, which have shown to be helpful to the students I have referred.

This school year started out unlike any other school year with the shooting that took place inside of our village. During a road rage incident that started out on Main St, a man was shot several times at a park near our elementary school. The injured man drove himself to Marsh Family Dentistry, where he was attempting to get medical assistance. Chief Ben Sauriol and I were first on scene to help administer lifesaving assistance to the victim. While giving assistance, we also locked down our schools because we did not know where the shooter was. This incident was a real-life scenario that our school staff were able to use to show their education in active shooter reaction protocols (ALICE Training). From administration to teachers, our staff conducted themselves safely and professionally to ensure our student's safety. I firmly believe that our staff's response to this threat should be the model that every school should follow if an incident like this should happen.

Other incidents that I have dealt with this year so far have been truancy issues, child welfare issues, child abuse issues, a child sexual abuse issue, physical altercations between students, child custody issues, and students seeking advice. I have noticed in the past couple years that I have more and more students reaching out to speak with me about matters that aren't police related. I've found that these students are becoming more comfortable with me being at their school, and that I'm someone that they can lean on for advice and support. They know

that I'm not a teacher or school staff member, and anything that they speak with me about will be confidential. This is an ideal benefit for the students at our schools and has proven to me to be one of the most important jobs that I have in this role – to be approachable and trustworthy. I've shown them that I'm in their corner when they're doing great, and that I'm in their corner when they aren't doing so great. As an SRO, I believe that this is how we bridge the gap between our youth and the police.

Finally, I want to thank you for this wonderful opportunity that I get to have. I truly love my job as SRO for the Winneconne School District. Some days are harder than others, but even so, every day is an opportunity to spread positiveness to our youth. I aim to instill in them that no matter what, I will be there to keep them safe, encourage them throughout their day, and hold them accountable for their actions.

The 2023 Christmas Crusade!

Started by former Police Chief Pete Running, our annual Christmas Crusade was yet another success! We couldn't have done it without our amazing community of donors, including the

volunteers who gave up many hours of their free time. As officers deliver the presents and play "Santa", the smiles on the children's (and parents') faces make everything right in the world for that small moment in time. Sometimes a family finds hardship, through illness or injury, or maybe that family (or single parent) is just really hitting a hard patch. No matter the reasoning why a family might need our help, we come together as a community to help make their Christmas extra special. This year, we also provided gift cards to various local businesses so the families could also have a Christmas meal.

A special thanks to our Secretary Lisa Hall and Officer Honer for coordinating this year's Crusade, and our 4-H Club for wrapping all of the presents!!!

This Year We Served:
22 Families (56 Children)
Funds Donated:
\$9,014.00!



In Closing...

As we reflect on this past year, we especially would like to thank our community for all the support and help you give us at the Village of Winneconne Police Department. We are here to serve you and we strive for excellence, and you help us make the Village of Winneconne a great place to work!

As we charge into 2024, we have set some goals for ourselves to work towards, taking trends into account, along with the department's growing workload. While some will be challenging, we will give it our all. Thanks for reading and have an amazing 2024.

1. Continue to build and strengthen partnerships within our community.

- a. Development of more department programs and projects.
- b. Further promoting of the "Door is Always Open" philosophy.
- c. Further enhancing the amount of community-oriented policing incidents.
- d. Looking into creating an honor guard so the officers can participate in parades, represent at funerals and other formal functions.

2. Continue to work on being able to fill the fifth full-time police officer position.

- a. Filling one of our two open full-time positions will aid in the goals and vision of the department, while decreasing part-time officer coverage.
- b. Having a fifth full-time officer will establish another consistent officer that will be a part of the community and here on a regular basis.
- c. This will ensure the department can achieve / maintain 24/7 coverage.

3. Analyze our current quality of life, crime, and ordinances.

- a. Work with Village Board to implement concise ordinances to ensure we maintain a clean and safe Village.
- b. Work with other jurisdictions to implement high intensity drug interdiction campaigns throughout our area highways.
- c. Analyze the possibility of a K-9 Program while creating another form of community relations program. The need for a K-9 is there. Is it obtainable?

4. Implementation of a vehicle fleet management plan.

- a. Create a three, five and ten-year cycle projections with cost analysis.
- b. Reduce the cost to the taxpayer while keeping the squads as new as possible.
- c. Along with fleet management, apply for grants that will reduce the overall operations and equipment costs to the Village.