

Shay's December 2008 Update

With 2008 nearly gone, Shay and I have been pondering just how exciting, challenging and busy the year has been. The demands on the Sheriff's Office have substantially risen over recent years and signs indicate the future holds more of the same. As always, those demands and challenges are being addressed head on and plans are being formulated to deal with future issues.



Like everyone in the Sheriff's Office, Shay and I play a unique and vital part in the day to day operation. We strive to be responsive to the public's needs, train hard and set good examples for others to follow. I have always maintained that no matter what carrier a person has or seeks, it's vital to be an active member of the community.

It seems like just when everything is going smoothly, something happens to really make you sit up and appreciate the life you have. This really hit home this year when several great people passed from our midst. Ken Steiner, a true friend to everyone died

doing what he loved so much and with the one he loved so dearly. We will miss you forever my friend! Kris Fairbanks, another great and true friend died in the line of duty in Washington. Like Ken, She too was passionate about her life and family. Kris was a Forest Service LEO and K-9 handler who Shay and I came to know over the past four years. She assisted with training and K-9 certifications annually and was always so impressed by Shay. Shay and I, along with several other K-9 units from Montana drove to Washington to be part of the 120 K-9 team honor guard at her funeral services in Port Angeles. What a tremendous honor and humbling experience this was for everyone, especially me.

In November, Shay and I, as well as other K-9 teams traveled to Kalispell for the annual K-9 certification. I am extremely proud and pleased to report that again, we passed all Obedience disciplines, Patrol and Narcotics detection requirements. We have retained our certification as a Dual Purpose K-9 Team.

Our newest deputy, Kim Williams took the K-9 Decoy class earlier this year and assisted getting Shay and I ready for the K-9 evaluations. It's vital that the person doing the decoy work know what he's doing in order to instill the proper behavior in a given situation. One wrong maneuver during live decoy work can produce a negative effect and may cause an unacceptable response from the dog. As with the patrol work, Shay loves the narcotics detection training. It's not quite as physical as some areas of patrol work but he loves the reward he gets for a successful event.





I am putting together ideas for a public K-9 demonstration day before the school year is over. I hope to be able to pick a day and location that will allow as many people as possible to attend. If arraignments can be made, I would like to have 5 to 10 K-9 Teams for people to see in action. It is pretty amazing to observe what these teams can do. There will be time for questions, answers and if possible, a chance for some to meet a few of the dogs up close and personal.

Shay and I have been slowly working our way around to meet with the schools again this year. It's always a fantastic experience for both of us and we look forward with great anticipation to visiting with everyone we can.

My sincere thanks to everyone who supports us and allowed us the time to be with you. It is my goal to be able to share more time, thoughts and experiences with everyone in the future. We (The Sheriff's Office) are continually investigating ways to make that happen. Please, if you have some constructive ideas or suggestions pass them along.

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