



CAPD

2024 Annual Report



Christopher Botsch
CHIEF OF POLICE

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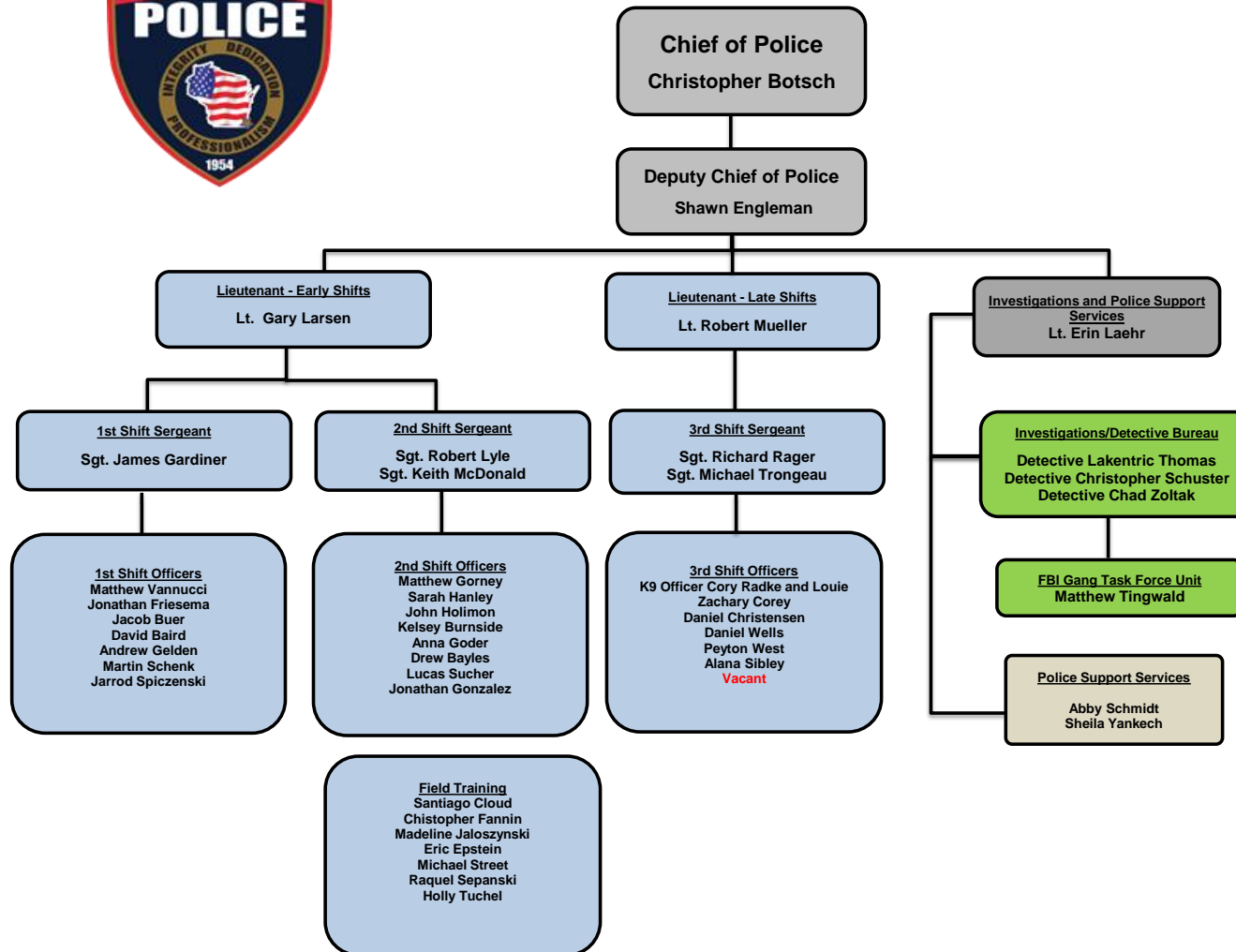
"The mission of the Caledonia Police Department, through a cooperative effort with the community, is to impartially serve and protect all citizens with integrity, dedication, and professionalism."



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Caledonia Police Department ORGANIZATIONAL CHART 2024



Your Police Department



Chief Botsch



Deputy Chief Engleman



Lt. Larsen



Lt. Mueller



Lt. Laehr



Sgt. Gardiner



Sgt. Lyle



Sgt. Trongeau



Sgt. Rager



Sgt. McDonald



Detective Thomas



Detective Schuster



Detective Zoltak



Officer Vannucci



Officer Friesema



Officer Radke



Officer Buer



Officer Gelden



Officer Baird



Officer Schenk



Officer Gorney



Officer Corey



Officer Christensen



Officer Tingwald



Officer Wells



Officer Spiczenski



Officer Hanley



Officer Holimon



Officer Burnside



Officer West



Officer Goder



Officer Sibley



Officer Bayles



Officer Gonzalez



Officer Sucher



Officer Cloud



Officer Fannin



Officer Jaloszynski



Officer Epstein



Officer Street



Officer Sepanski



Officer Tuchel



K9 Louie



PSS Schmidt



PSS Yankech





Acknowledgements

“Law enforcement has the only bond that gets stronger when the pull gets harder.”

This year's Annual Report continues our effort to provide an opportunity for our community to get to know the Caledonia Police Department, its employees, and some of the many tasks they do. Many of the employees were asked to write about a particular aspect of their assignment or provide some information that might be of interest to the community. On the left side of each article is a short bio listing their position, years of service, and past/current assignments and some of their duties. The articles, of course, do not cover all the duties of each employee of the Department, but they do give some idea of the varied assignments or duties of the employees of your Police Department.

We would like to thank each member of the Department for their dedication, cooperation, and contribution to this Annual Report.



Chief's Welcome



Chief Christopher Botsch

Position/Title:

Chief of Police

Length of Service:

28 Years / 5 years at CAPD

Previous Experience:

Beaver Dam PD

- Officer

West Allis PD

- Officer
- Detective
- Captain of Administration
- Captain of Criminal Investigations Bureau
- Deputy Chief of Police Support Services Division
- Deputy Chief of Police Operations Division

Special Assignments/Training:

- Associate's degree – Police Science
- Bachelor's Degree – Criminal Justice Administration
- Master's Degree – Human Services
- Certified Public Manager
- Northwestern University's School of Police Staff and Command, Class #462
- FBI National Command Course, Class #4

Village President Tom Weatherston
Village Trustees
Village Administrator Todd Willis
Members of the Police and Fire Commission
Residents, Community Leaders, Business Owners, and Guests

Ladies and Gentlemen,

On behalf of your Caledonia Police Department, it is my honor and privilege to present to you our 2024 Annual Report. We hope you find the information useful.

Our staff continues to embrace our *Community Focused ~ Data Driven* policing philosophy. This motto emphasizes and reinforces our commitment in these two areas. It ensures our focus is on building and maintaining great relationships with our community while also strategically utilizing our resources to keep our community safe.

In early 2024, we moved into our new Public Safety Building. The address of our new facility is 5045 Chester Lane, Caledonia, WI 53402. We held our Grand Opening / Open house on Sunday, June 6th, which allowed our community to take a look inside. We spent much of the year moving-in and getting settled into our new space. This was no small task. In addition to physically moving all our equipment, files, evidence, etc., much time and effort went into re-writing many of our policies and protocols as we gained functionality that did not previously exist in our building.

Our new facility meets industry standards and best practices and assists us in providing progressive law enforcement services. Our new police facility provides a safe and professional environment for staff and reduces our risk and liability in many areas. Each and every day we come to work and enter our new building we appreciate the great support we have from our community and Village leaders who recognized our needs and moved this project forward.

With the passage of the Public Safety Staffing Referendum in 2023, our budgeted staffing for sworn police officers increased to 44 effective January 1, 2024. We spent considerable time trying to attract and hire quality candidates to fill our new positions. I am happy to report that as we close out 2024 and enter 2025, we are fully staffed.

We have a lot of new officers, so our field training officers and supervisors are working hard to ensure the officers are properly trained, guided, coached, and mentored. We want to help them to be successful and to ensure they are embracing our *Community Focus ~ Data Driven philosophy*.

We are extremely thankful for all the support we have received in 2024, and we move forward into 2025 with excitement and a continued commitment and dedication to serving our great community.

For more information regarding your Caledonia Police Department, we encourage you to follow us on Facebook at the Village of Caledonia Police Department. If you don't already follow us on Facebook, I think you will find it informative and entertaining.

Respectfully,



Christopher Botsch
Chief of Police



Community Policing



Deputy Chief Shawn Engleman

Position/Title:
Deputy Chief of Police

Length of Service:
• 25 Years/5 years at CAPD

Previous Experience:
• Lieutenant/Detective Butler PD – 4 years

Two Rivers PD
• Officer – 2000
• School Resource Officer – 2001
• Lieutenant – 2006
• Professional Standards Lieutenant – 2014

Special Training and Assignments:
• Treasurer/Board of Directors, Wisconsin Crime Prevention Practitioners Association, Inc.
• Bachelor's Degree – Business Administration
• Certified Public Manager

Community policing is the backbone of any successful, modern police department. Community policing is not just events and programs, but a department wide philosophy that the Caledonia Police Department wholeheartedly embraces. As you will see from the pictures in this report, officers stop at lemonade stands, engage with the community in their neighborhoods while on routine patrol and identify other opportunities to positively engage with our citizens. The department has a bike patrol team that is utilized to connect with citizens and children which might otherwise not be reached when patrolling in a squad car.

As far as community policing events, we have our annual Citizens Academy which is a 10-week program held in fall that teaches 10 – 12 Caledonia citizens on what we do and why we do it so they can share their knowledge and experiences with other citizens.

On a quarterly basis we have Coffee with a Cop that we rotate among the coffee shops in the village. It gives citizens the opportunity to sit down and have a cup of their favorite java and talk one on one with members of our department about any questions or concerns they may have.

In May, we had our first (in recent years) bike rodeo at Crawford Park, where kids are taught bike safety and can try to navigate our bike safety course. They also have the opportunity to win a helmet, and one lucky winner gets a new bike.

In July, we have Cones with Cops, like Coffee with a Cop, but more focused on children and families where they can come and have ice cream with an officer and look at our squads and equipment.

In August, we have our largest and most anticipated event, Community Care Day/Touch a Truck event. The event takes place at Franksville Park where families can have the opportunity to see many of our vehicles and equipment as well as equipment from the fire department, public works, area tow companies, Coast Guard, FBI and others. We also get a visit from Eagle III medical transport helicopter. Area non-profit organizations also have information booths set up.

In October, we have our Treat and Greet at Swan's Pumpkin Farm, where children can come and get a free pumpkin to decorate and the best costume in various age categories get a prize for the best costume.

We are looking forward to adding more events and programs to our community policing program in 2025 with the newly created Community Engagement Officer position. The officer will be dedicated to growing our community policing program and creating new opportunities to engage with our citizens.

"Community Policing is generally defined as a law enforcement philosophy that allows officers to continuously operate in the same area in order to create a stronger bond with the citizens living and working in that area."





Drone Program



Sgt. Keith McDonald

Position/Title:

2nd Shift Patrol
Sergeant

Length of Service:

- 10 years (3 years at CAPD)
- Promoted to Sergeant in 2024

Previous law enforcement experience:

- Chippewa County Sheriff's Office (2 years)
- Lake Hallie PD (1 ½ years)
- Waukesha County Sheriff's Dept (5 years)

Special Assignments:

- Drone Unit Commander
- Evidence Custodian
- ATV Search and Rescue
- Crisis Intervention Training
- Professional Communications Instructor
- Honor Guard
- Traffic Incident Management Instructor
- General Law Enforcement Instructor
- Intoximeter Operator

The introduction of drones into the police department's arsenal has proven to be a game-changer, bringing unprecedented advantages to how we monitor, investigate, and respond to incidents. Since becoming operational in 2021, the Caledonia Police Department's Drone Program has become a cornerstone of our operations, allowing us to perform tasks more efficiently, effectively, and safely. The Caledonia Police Department is the proud owner of two drones, DJI Mavic Air 2 & DJI Matrice 30T. Our drones have the luxury of riding shotgun in a squad car with one of our 8 licensed pilots and have been deployed on calls for service 17 times this year.

Training and Safety Protocols

A critical component of the Drone Program's success lies in our team of skilled drone operators. Each officer selected to operate drones undergoes rigorous training in piloting, safety protocols, and legal considerations. This ensures that drones are used in a responsible and ethical manner while adhering to privacy laws and other regulations. The safety of both the public and our officers remains our top priority, and strict guidelines are followed to minimize risks during drone flights.

Privacy and Accountability

We understand that the use of drones raises important questions about privacy. Our department is committed to transparency and responsible use of technology. Drones are deployed only for legitimate law enforcement purposes, such as crime scene mapping, search and rescue, evidence gathering, and public safety. We follow strict protocols to protect the privacy of individuals, and all drone operations are subject to oversight. Additionally, our Drone Program is regularly evaluated to ensure it is being used effectively and ethically.

Our Newest Drone

DJI Matrice 30T



Camera & Imaging:

- The Matrice 30T features an integrated thermal camera (Lepton 3.5), as well as a wide-angle camera, telephoto camera, and laser rangefinder, allowing for both visual and thermal imaging.
- The thermal camera offers up to 640x512 resolution with high sensitivity, making it excellent for search-and-rescue operations, firefighting, inspection, and surveying.

Flight Time:

- The drone has a flight time of up to **41 minutes** (depending on payload and flight conditions), which is quite impressive for a drone of this size.
- The M30T uses the **DJI TB30 battery**, which provides efficient power and is interchangeable. The drone also has an option for **fast charging**, reducing downtime between flights.

Payload Capacity:

- It is capable of carrying a variety of payloads, including different types of cameras, sensors, and equipment, making it versatile for different types of missions.

Durability:

- The Matrice 30T is designed to withstand harsh environments. It has an **IP55 rating**, meaning it is resistant to dust and water, and can operate in a wide range of temperatures (from -20°C to 50°C).

Advanced Flight Features:

- The drone supports **Omnidirectional obstacle sensing**, which helps ensure safe operations in complex environments.
- It features **autonomous flight modes**, like **Waypoints**, **Return to Home**, and **Advanced Pilot Assistance Systems (APAS)** for smoother and safer flights.
- The M30T also includes **dual GNSS** for more accurate positioning and better reliability in difficult environments.

Control System:

- The Matrice 30T can be controlled via the **DJI Smart Controller Enterprise**, offering a more intuitive experience with the high-resolution touchscreen and robust control features.

Portability:

- Despite its advanced capabilities, the drone is relatively compact and can be folded for easy transportation, making it highly mobile.

Looking Ahead

The future of our Police Department's Drone Program is bright. As technology continues to evolve, we are exploring ways to further enhance our capabilities. Advances in artificial intelligence (AI), machine learning, and automated flight systems have the potential to make drones even more effective in areas such as predictive policing and real-time data analysis. The possibilities are endless, and we are excited about the ways in which drones will continue to shape the future of law enforcement.



New Evidence Room



Abby Schmidt

Position/Title:

Police Technician/
Evidence
Custodian

Length of Service:

5 Years

1 ½ years
Dispatcher for
Pleasant Prairie
Police Department

Special Assignments:

- Evidence Custodian
- Payroll
- Notary Public
- Maintain office supplies
- Accounts Payable
- CIB TIME Agency Coordinator
- NIBRS Certified

This was a very exciting year for our evidence room! Our evidence room is run by me and Sergeant McDonald. We started in the old building with a very small and outdated space utilizing two old cells as secure storage. We have moved into a brand-new building with an evidence room designed to meet our needs for many years to come! We now have a very large room for general evidence, a drug room, a gun room, an industrial-size freezer and refrigerator, a bike rack, and space for larger items. The new public safety building is also equipped with a packaging room and a processing room.

The evidence move was a very long process starting with purging items we no longer needed to store. It sounds like a very simple process but is very time-consuming as you must review each case and ensure it is closed or has met the statute of limitations before removing anything from the evidence room. Not everything gets removed the same way. Some items need special destruction, and some items are property that belong to people. With property we must find the most current address and attempt to return their property by sending them a letter letting them know their items are releasable. There is a time frame that then must be met before the property is ultimately deemed abandoned.

The second step was surprisingly the easiest. We prepared a team for a two-day secure transport of evidence from the old facility to our new one. This team packed and labeled all items into boxes, loaded them into a truck, and together moved them into the new facility.

The last step was to unpack all items and move them in our system to the new location. This sounds very simple but was also very time-consuming. We had to recreate our storage areas in our computer system and decide how everything was to be placed and organized. This took a few months of myself and Sergeant McDonald dedicating a lot of our time to ensure everything was done accurately and efficiently. We then had to check our old locations on the computer to ensure everything was accounted for. I am happy to report that 100 percent of the evidence room was accounted for.

Along with the new evidence room we now have a processing room. This has some new equipment for our department including a drug testing station, a fingerprint station, and a drying room.

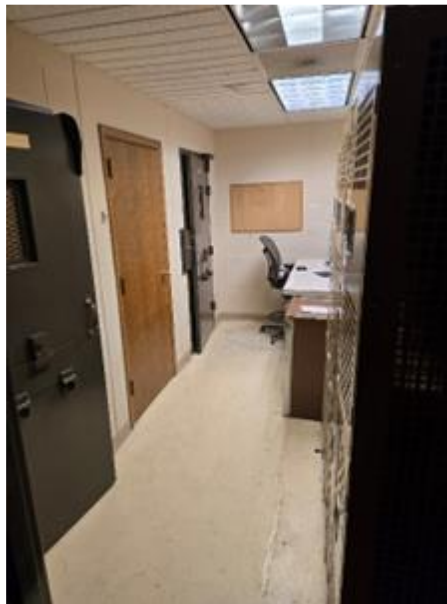
The drug testing station ensures the safety of the officers during the testing of drugs brought into the department. This is accomplished by ventilating the drugs away from the officer and reducing exposure significantly while they are being handled in the machine.

The fingerprint station is used while dusting items for fingerprints. The machine will keep the powder under control by downflow venting throughout this process.

Finally, there is a new drying room in addition to the drying machine we already have. The drying room gives a lot of space for drying any incoming evidence before packaging. This is built with a floor drain, ventilation, and is easily cleanable.

The above descriptions of space and equipment greatly increase the ease and safety of our personnel while performing their duties. Below are pictures of the old facilities, along with the new facilities and equipment that have been talked about.

OLD FACILITY



NEW FACILITY





FBI National Academy



Lt. Erin Laehr

Position/Title:

- Lieutenant
- Detective Bureau Supervisor
- Police Support Services Supervisor

Length of Service:

- 25 Years/21 years at CAPD
- Detective – 2013
- Patrol Sergeant - 2015
- Administrative Sergeant - 2016
- Lieutenant - 2019

Special Training and Assignments:

- FBI National Academy – Class 291
- Certified Public Manager – UW Madison
- Command Leadership Institute
- DOJ/CSA Local Agency Security Officer
- FBI LEEDA Command

Awards:

- Commander's Silver Metal Award – VFW
- Chief's Leadership Commendation Pin 2017

A Journey of Excellence: Graduating from the FBI National Academy

I had the esteemed honor of graduating in September of 2024 from the 291st session of the FBI National Academy in Quantico, Virginia, a prestigious institution renowned for its commitment to advancing law enforcement leadership and training. The National Academy, held at the FBI Training Academy, is the same facility where the FBI trains its new special agents and intelligence analysts.

The 291st session comprised dedicated professionals from 47 states, the District of Columbia, and Guam, along with participants from 26 countries, seven military organizations, and seven federal civilian agencies. This diverse cohort underscored the National Academy's international reputation for academic excellence, as it gathers law enforcement leaders from around the globe.

Over the course of 10 weeks, we engaged in advanced training that encompassed communication, leadership, and fitness. Admission to this program requires a proven record of professionalism, and on average, attendees boast 21 years of experience in law enforcement, often returning to their agencies to take on executive-level roles.

The training was delivered by a team of highly qualified instructors, including FBI special agents and staff with advanced degrees, many of whom are recognized internationally in their respective fields. Since 1972, students at the National Academy have been able to earn undergraduate and graduate credits from the University of Virginia, which fully accredits all courses offered.

A significant aspect of our training included weekly fitness challenges that escalated in difficulty, culminating in the final test known as the “Yellow Brick Road.” This demanding 6.1-mile run traverses a hilly, wooded trail designed by the U.S. Marines. Participants must navigate various obstacles, including climbing walls, crossing creeks, jumping through simulated windows, scaling rock faces with ropes, crawling under barbed wire through muddy water, and maneuvering across cargo nets. Those who complete this arduous course are awarded an actual yellow brick as a testament to their achievement.

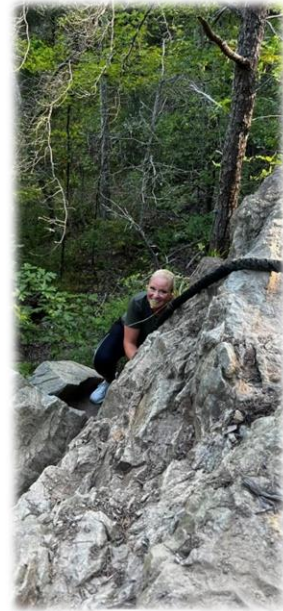
The Yellow Brick Road earned its name years ago when Marines placed yellow bricks along the route to guide runners through the woodland trail. This overall fitness challenge has been a hallmark of the National Academy since 1981, with the first yellow bricks awarded in 1988.

In addition to the rigorous physical training, I undertook graduate-level courses through the University of Virginia, achieving a perfect 4.0 GPA. This academic component, combined with the physical challenges, enriched my experience at the National Academy. Networking opportunities were plentiful, with events such as International Night, Flag Night, Texas and Louisiana Night, and a Silent Auction, allowing attendees to build lasting connections with fellow law enforcement professionals.

Since its inception in 1935, the FBI National Academy has graduated a total of 55,440 individuals, all of whom have contributed to enhancing the standards of law enforcement across the globe. It was a profound honor to represent the Village of Caledonia and the Caledonia Police Department during this transformative journey.

In conclusion, my time at the FBI National Academy was not only a personal milestone but also an opportunity to further develop my skills and forge invaluable relationships within the law enforcement community. I am deeply grateful for this experience and look forward to applying what I have learned to serve and protect my community more effectively.







Part Time Police Academy



**Officer Santiago
Cloud**

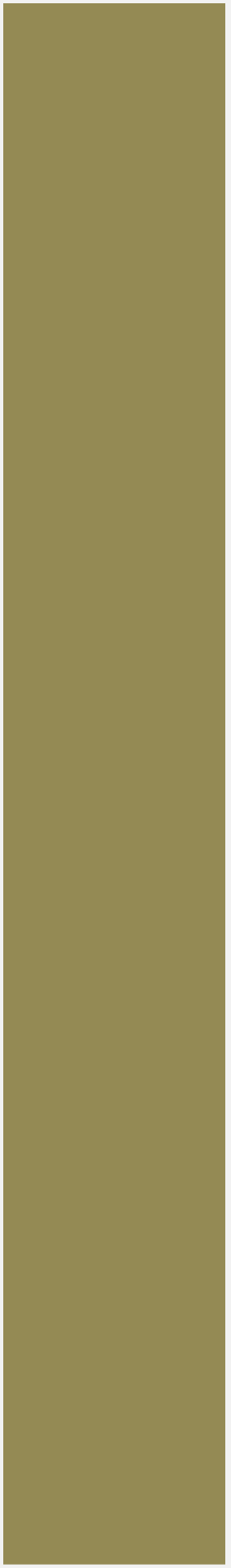
Position/Title:
2nd Shift Patrol
Officer

Length of Service:
• 1 Year

Becoming a police officer is a career path that requires a sense of duty and commitment to public service. Prior to my entry into law enforcement, I worked as a paralegal in both state and federal court and found a deep sense of passion for the rule of law. For me stepping into this career path was both exhilarating and a new challenge. When I was hired in the spring of 2024, the combination of excitement and nerves were palpable. During my hiring process I was advised that I would be given the unique opportunity to be the first officer for the Village of Caledonia to attend the part-time police academy while also working part-time at the department. This opportunity allowed me to gain invaluable hands-on experience while still progressing through the police academy training, a balance between both environments proved to significantly shape my professional development as an officer.

Being able to work part-time at the police department while attending the part-time police academy created the most unique learning environment that was unparalleled to the traditional approaches of law enforcement training. I was able to actively apply my police academy training and knowledge to real world situations, which helped me solidify my understanding of law, procedures, and police protocols. In the police academy, I was introduced to various foundational trainings that were fundamental to law enforcement, but it was in the field that I truly learned how to put my training into practice. From assisting senior officers on calls to learning the intricate details of paperwork and case management, each shift provided me a new opportunity to learn and gain new insights into the daily operations of the police department. This practical approach of having part-time training and part-time patrol experience allowed me to gain valuable hands-on experience.

My experience working through this new program was successful because of the veteran officers that worked patiently and diligently to assist in my training experience. In any profession teamwork is essential, but in law enforcement, it is vital for success and safety of the community and fellow officers.



The camaraderie among officers was evident from day one. Senior officers were always willing to offer their guidance and share their expertise, while I was actively attending the police academy and working alongside them. This collaborative learning experience fostered trust and mutual respect for my fellow officers, which has been crucial to my development as a new officer. I learned that effective communication and cooperation are key, not just in handling calls of service but in managing the challenges that come with the profession.

Overall, my experience attending the part-time police academy and working part-time on patrol has been transformative in my ability to be a police officer. It has allowed me to build critical relationships, gain firsthand experience, and continue to work alongside the dedicated officers of the Caledonia Police Department. This program has proven to change the traditional routes of law enforcement training and create new opportunities for the future.



New Officer Perspective



**Officer Jonathan
Gonzalez**

Position/Title:

2nd shift Patrol
Officer

Length of Service:

1 Year at CAPD

My new officer perspective began when I was sworn in as a Police Officer on March 18, 2024, with the Caledonia Police Department. Upon being sworn in, I was welcomed with open arms by numerous officers within the department. The following week I had the unique opportunity to attend Fox Valley Technical College for the police academy, and I was able to meet officers throughout the state and build genuine, long-lasting friendships.

Throughout my police academy experience I was frequently asked “Why did you choose this career path?” My response to that was always “To provide some good in the world and help people in need.” Another question I was asked was “What are you grateful for?” My response was that “I am grateful for this unique opportunity to change people’s lives.” Not everyone is allowed this opportunity and not everyone can handle the stress this job produces.

Soon after graduation, I started field training which lasted three and a half months. My field training experience consisted of one month on each shift with a new veteran officer every month. Every field trainer allowed a new perspective and different policing styles. I was able to successfully pass field training and realized that the questions will never stop. My coworkers understand what it’s like being a new officer on the road and always encourage me to reach out. This career path is constantly evolving and every call you respond to is never the same.

Not only have my coworkers been very accepting but so has the community. Numerous times I’ve been thanked for my service, and it’s been an honor to serve them. The community has reminded me time and again why I chose this career path. When people find out what I do for a living or when people in the same field give advice they always say, “Don’t let the job change you” or “It’s going to change you whether you like it or not.” With some self-reflection I can firmly say that this job has changed me, but for the better. I’ve learned to become more decisive and become aware of my surroundings.

Through deeper self-reflection, I can recognize that my actions have contributed meaningfully to the greater good. Each reckless driver and speeder I’ve stopped reduced the risk of a potentially fatal accident. Every rescue run I’ve undertaken provided an opportunity to save a life. Each call I’ve responded to has had potential to foster a positive interaction between law enforcement and the community.

Months after being on my own, the responses to the questions I was asked in the academy remain the same. Every day that I put on the uniform I’m still grateful and excited to take on the challenges the new day brings.



Crash Investigation



**Officer Kelsey
Burnside**

Position/Title:

2nd Shift Patrol
Officer

Length of Service:

- 3 Years

**Special Training and
Assignments:**

- Evidence Technician
- Crash Investigator
- Drone Operator
- ARIDE (Advanced Roadside Interdiction and Drug Enforcement)
- Crisis Intervention Training

Let's begin with the definition of a crash from an investigation standpoint. A crash is an unintended event that produces injury or damage. Motor vehicle crashes are an everyday occurrence and frequent calls for service that law enforcement officers respond to. These types of calls include minor paint scrapes in a parking lot to major events involving serious injury.

In crash investigation we often like to avoid using the term accident, but why is that? The term accident can imply that no one is at fault, that things simply just happen. However, that is often not the case. Research and proper documentation show that crashes are mostly attributed to human factors. These factors can include inattentiveness, inexperience, traffic violations, intoxication, and overreaction to name a few. That is why the term crash or collision is more frequently used in crash investigation, because "accident" just doesn't quite fit.

Why is crash investigation so important? Some crashes will sorrowfully end in the loss of life. This is an unfortunate aspect of crash investigation that we, as law enforcement officers, need to be excellent at investigating. Our goal is to give a voice to those who can no longer speak, provide families with an explanation of what happened to their loved ones, and to determine if a crime has occurred. We can do this by identifying factors such as driver error, road conditions, mechanical failures, or environmental influences that contributed to the crash. This information is vital not only for determining liability in legal cases but also for improving public safety through targeted changes to infrastructure, vehicle design, or traffic enforcement.

Crashes are not always black and white. Where vehicles finally come to rest may not be anywhere near where the initial crash occurred and there is often a lot of room for assumption, which we need to avoid. By thoroughly examining crash sites, we can gather essential evidence such as tire marks, vehicle damage, and witness statements. This information can then be used to help reconstruct the sequence of events leading to the collision, if necessary.

Thorough traffic crash investigations contribute to the broader goal of reducing crash rates. By studying trends and common causes preventive measures can be utilized to save lives and make improvements for the motoring community. Everyone has been affected by motor vehicle crashes, whether you have been involved, know someone who was involved, or simply had to take a detour because a roadway was closed. As law enforcement officers, we do everything we can to prevent crashes from occurring, but we also provide the best possible investigation for when they do, because let's face it, crashes are inevitable, and we need to be ready for them when they happen.





Peer Support



Sgt. Robert Lyle

Position/Title:

3rd shift Patrol
Sergeant

Length of Service:

17 Years

Promoted to
Sergeant in 2016

Special Assignments:

- Evidence Technician
- Crisis Intervention Trained
- Crash Investigations Level I
- Drug Recognition Expert
- Field Training Program Supervisor

Peer support programs are emerging as one of the most effective ways to address the mental wellness challenges faced by law enforcement officers. These programs involve officers helping their colleagues by offering emotional support, listening to their struggles, and providing a sense of understanding based on shared experiences. Peer support can play an instrumental role in mitigating the effects of stress, reducing isolation, and creating a culture of openness within departments.

Peer Support was very instrumental in 2024 for Caledonia PD in several different scenarios that ranged from officer-involved critical incidents, internal conflict, and day-to-day stressors of being in such a demanding & unpredictable field. Here are some key benefits to our department being involved in peer support and supporting mental health:

1. Building Trust and Reducing Stigma

Peer support programs help break down the stigma surrounding mental health issues. Officers who are trained in peer support can offer a safe, confidential space for their colleagues to express their struggles without fear of judgment. Since peer supporters understand the unique challenges of police work, they can offer advice, empathy, and reassurance that help is available without compromising an officer's reputation or job security.

2. Early Intervention and Prevention

Peer support allows for early identification of mental health issues before they escalate into more serious conditions. By creating an open environment where officers feel comfortable sharing their feelings and concerns, peers can offer guidance or suggest professional resources before problems worsen. This proactive approach can prevent the development of PTSD, depression, or anxiety disorders, and ultimately improve the overall mental well-being of officers.

3. Decreasing Burnout and Improving Resilience

Peer support systems offer officers the opportunity to decompress and recharge after high-stress events. Officers who experience compassion from their peers are better equipped to manage the emotional toll of their work. By leaning on one another, officers can build resilience and cope with stress more effectively. This not only benefits the individual officer but also enhances the overall performance and morale of the police department.

4. Promoting a Culture of Support

When peer support programs are implemented, they foster a culture of camaraderie, where officers actively look out for one another's well-being. In such environments, helping a colleague is seen as a part of the job, and the focus shifts from toughness to mental wellness. This shift in culture is vital in dismantling the harmful stigma that associates mental health concerns with weakness or failure.

5. Confidentiality and Trust

An important component of peer support is that it operates under a code of confidentiality, giving officers the assurance that their concerns will be heard without being shared outside of the program. This level of trust is essential, as many officers may hesitate to seek help from traditional mental health professionals due to concerns about privacy or their job security.

Implementing Peer Support in Law Enforcement

For peer support programs to be effective, law enforcement agencies need to establish clear guidelines and offer appropriate training for peer supporters. These programs should be integrated into the department's wellness and occupational health initiatives. Key elements of a successful peer support program include:

- 1. Training Peer Supporters:** Peer supporters should be trained in active listening, mental health first aid, and how to refer officers to professional mental health resources when necessary. Training ensures that peer supporters are equipped with the skills to provide appropriate support while maintaining boundaries and confidentiality.
- 2. Raising Awareness:** Departments must educate officers about the availability of peer support programs. This can be done through workshops, informational sessions, and departmental communication channels. The more officers are aware of the program, the more likely

they are to seek support when needed.

3. **Collaborating with Mental Health Professionals:** While peer support is invaluable, it should be seen as a complement to, not a replacement for, professional mental health services. Collaboration between peer supporters and licensed mental health professionals ensures that officers receive the comprehensive care they need.
4. **Creating an Accessible Support System:** Peer support should be accessible to officers at all times, especially during off-hours. This can be accomplished by creating a network of trained peers available on-call or by using technology to facilitate virtual support.

Conclusion

Law enforcement officers face unique mental health challenges that can negatively affect their well-being and job performance. Mental wellness must be prioritized within law enforcement agencies, and peer support programs offer a powerful solution to help officers cope with the emotional toll of their work. By fostering an environment of trust, reducing stigma, and providing timely support, peer support programs can help officers manage stress, build resilience, and ultimately improve their mental health. As departments continue to address mental wellness, investing in peer support is not only an investment in individual officers but in the overall effectiveness and health of the entire force.





Social Media 2024



Sgt. James Gardiner

Position/Title:

1st Shift Patrol
Sergeant

Length of Service:

28 Years

- Promoted to Sergeant in 2015

Special Assignments:

- Evidence Custodian
- ATV Search and Rescue
- Crime Scene Photography
- Crisis Intervention Training
- LIDAR/RADAR Instructor

Awards:

- Lifesaving Award 2014
- Wisconsin Crime Prevention Practitioners Association Crime Prevention Officer of the Year 2020

For 2024, our focus for social media remained the same as in previous years. We use the platform to communicate with Caledonia about what is going on in the community. I do add my own touch to messages, of course. Humor has its place and does allow the message to be received positively and increases the chances of it being passed along. Adding photos/videos increases the messages will be seen as we are visual learners, and Facebook is primarily viewed on a mobile device. I have always stated cuteness, whether it be kids, pets or Ofc. Gelden, sells.

META Data

During 2024 our page had:

VIEWS -1.6 million which covers the number of times the content was played or displayed.

REACH-504,000 people (estimated) which is the organic distribution of content. This also included reach from other sources such as tags, check-ins or page visits.

INTERACTIONS-74,800 people liked, shared, reacted or commented on a post.

FOLLOWERS-21,908, of which 53.7% claim to be residents of SE Wisconsin, 97.2% live in the U.S. We also have .2% in Nigeria, .1% in Bangladesh and oddly .1% in Puerto Rico, which is also in the United States. Breakdown of followers 67% females, 33% males, primarily between the ages of 35 and 64.

At the last census, there were 25,373 people living in Caledonia, so I fell below my goal of having more followers than residents.

Our most Popular posts:

#1 December 4 - The post covered information regarding the arrival of the 2024 CPKC Holiday Train arrival. Post reached 84,000 people primarily due to the popularity of the event with families in the area.

#2 March 3 - Hemlock the dog. Third shift located a dog in the City of Racine that appeared to have been neglected. The post generated a reach of 82,300 with 242 comments, 1568 interactions, and 411 shares. The post being shared by so many people caused it to be seen all over the country due to people's love of animals and the stark photo that was shared. An update posted on August 1, showed Hemlock at his new home, in much better condition and living the good life.

#3 July 13 - Milaeger's Birkenstock theft. I posted the picture and a short time later several people messaged us, identifying the person. The person shown was rather upset about having the picture out there and requested the photo be taken down, which was instead altered to hide their face. She showed up at the department within 2 hours to turn herself in. She was also upset I had incorrectly stated she brought the scissors, and she corrected me stating the scissors were sitting out on a cart in the store and she used them and put them back. Basically, confessing to the crime because she did not like what I said about her. The post had a reach of 63,600 people.

Conclusion

The role of social media remains important in law enforcement and will continue to be used. In fact, most people will not even read this as it can get boring. All personnel above the rank of Sgt. and the Detective Bureau have access to our page and the ability to post on it. My role will be ending soon as I will turn over roundup duties to Officer Buer who has been named our new Community Engagement Officer.



Law Enforcement Academy: An Instructor's View



Sgt. Mike Trongeau

Position/Title:

3rd shift Patrol
Sergeant

Length of Service:

12 Years

Promoted to
Sergeant in 2019

Special Assignments:

- Instructor at Gateway Technical College
- Defense and Arrest Tactics Instructor
- Tactical Response Instructor
- Taser Instructor
- Law Enforcement Physical Fitness Instructor
- Team Leader – Joint Tactical Team

For the last (6) years I have been privileged to serve the law enforcement profession, beyond just the Caledonia Police Department, as an Adjunct Instructor at Gateway Technical College in Kenosha. Gateway Technical College serves as the primary law enforcement academy for Racine, Kenosha, and Walworth counties.

As an instructor at the Law Enforcement Academy, I have had the privilege of working with a diverse group of future law enforcement professionals. The academy provides a comprehensive training experience designed to prepare individuals for the challenges and responsibilities of policing in today's society. From the perspective of an instructor, there are several key elements of the academy that make it stand out, both in terms of its curriculum and the values it instills in its cadets.

Comprehensive Curriculum

One of the most commendable aspects of the Law Enforcement Academy is its curriculum, which spans a total of 720 hours of instruction. The academy provides students with a well-rounded education in law enforcement, emphasizing both academic knowledge and practical skills. Instructors focus on various areas such as criminal law, ethics, response to an active shooter, defensive tactics, firearms training, and community policing. As an instructor, it is rewarding to see cadets not only gain technical skills but also develop critical thinking and decision-making abilities that are essential in the field of law enforcement.

The academy blends classroom instruction with hands-on experience, which is key to understanding the complexities of law enforcement. For instance, cadets engage in role-playing exercises, mock traffic stops, and simulated crime scenes that mirror real-life situations. This blend of theory and practice ensures that students are not only familiar with the laws they are sworn to uphold but also equipped to handle the physical and psychological demands of their future careers.

Commitment to Community and Ethical Policing

A key aspect of the academy's training is its commitment to ethical and community-oriented policing. In today's world, law enforcement officers are held to high standards, and the importance of building trust within the community cannot be overstated. The academy places a strong emphasis on the ethical responsibilities of officers, teaching cadets the importance of integrity, transparency, and accountability.

As an instructor, it is fulfilling to see cadets grow in their understanding of community-based policing strategies. The academy's emphasis on building relationships with the public, de-escalation techniques, and cultural competence ensures that students are prepared for the diverse environments they will encounter on the job. These values are not just taught but practiced through interactive learning and real-world scenarios, which enable cadets to internalize and apply these critical lessons when they eventually serve their communities.

A Supportive Learning Environment

One of the most important aspects of this academy is the instructors. Fortunately for the cadets, there are numerous instructors providing them with the knowledge for their careers. A robust blend of instructors with different experience levels from various police agencies, including those still active and retired from the job, provide the cadets multiple views on real-life experiences.

The academy's instructors are not only educators but also mentors who take the time to guide and shape the future of law enforcement. It is this level of engagement and personalized attention that makes the experience unique and helps cadets develop both professionally and personally.

Preparing Future Leaders

As an instructor, one of the most rewarding aspects of teaching in the law enforcement academy is knowing that I am helping to prepare the next generation of law enforcement leaders. The academy does not only focus on training individuals to become officers but aims to develop future leaders who will make a positive impact on their communities. Through a combination of technical training, ethical education, and leadership development, the academy equips cadets with the tools they need to excel in their careers and lead with integrity.

The bonds I have made with cadets over the years will never be forgotten. Many have succeeded in their careers, but some have also made the ultimate realization that this profession is not for them. After putting months of hard work into training, that is not an easy pill to swallow sometimes. I believe that this further highlights the sacrifice and dedication this career requires to be successful. As I've come to say over the years, "the job isn't for everyone."

While completing the Law Enforcement Academy doesn't necessarily guarantee that an individual will be successful, it is vastly important to the development of skills and knowledge that our officers require. I am truly proud to be part of that journey for them.



Criminal Case Review



Detective Lakentric Thomas

Position/Title:
1st Shift Detective

Length of Service:
19 Years CAPD
4 ½ years
Whitewater PD

Promoted to
Detective in 2017

Special Training:

- Certified Mobile Device Examiner
- SFST Instructor
- Basic Computer Evidence Recovery Training Examiner (BCERT)

Memberships:
ICAC Internet Crimes
Against Children Task
Force

On Saturday, May 18, 2024, Caledonia Police Officers were dispatched to an accident involving a motorcycle and a vehicle, in the area of Four Mile Road and Short Road. Officer Friesema approached the accident scene from the east and on arrival observed a chaotic scene. Officer Friesema observed a black SUV in the ditch just east of 6111 Four Mile Rd. The vehicle was on its roof and had heavy front-end damage. The vehicle was facing in an east to west direction. The operator and lone occupant was inside the vehicle. Officer Friesema also observed a severed leg lying on the yellow centerline in front of 6108 Four Mile Road.

Accident Scene

The operator of the motorcycle was found face down in the ditch with a severed right leg. The motorcycle was in the westbound ditch, facing in an east to west direction. The motorcycle was completely destroyed with parts of the motorcycle covering a large area of the accident scene.

WI State Patrol responded to the scene for an accident reconstruction. Investigation showed that the suspect was westbound on Four Mile Rd from STH 31. He was operating a 2022 Tesla Model Y. The victim was eastbound on Four Mile Rd from Short Rd. The victim was operating a 2000 Harley Davidson motorcycle. The victim was pronounced deceased at the scene due to his injuries from the accident. The suspect vehicle went to pass another vehicle at a high rate of speed. By doing so, he went into the motorcycle's lane and struck him head on.

Arrest of the suspect

Signs of impairment were observed on the suspect at the scene, and he was ultimately arrested for OWI-Causing Death.

Investigation

On Saturday, May 18, 2024, at approximately 10:08 am, Detective Thomas received a phone call from Lt. Laehr, in reference to a fatal car accident in the Village of Caledonia. Detective Thomas responded to the Caledonia Police Department and was advised that the scene of the accident was on 4 Mile Road, just east of Short Road.

Upon Detective Thomas' arrival, he was briefed on the scene, and he determined what was needed moving forward. Detective Thomas assigned officers to tasks for the investigation. Evidence at the scene was collected and photographed, and the suspect was taken to the Racine County Jail. Detective Thomas notified the family of the accident and the death of the victim.

A search warrant was drafted for the cell phone of the suspect. The cell phone was locked by passcode at the time of the incident, and the phone was sent off for unlocking by the US Secret Service. The US Secret Service was not able to unlock the device. The suspect was able to bail out of the Racine County Jail, prior to seeing a judge.

On Wednesday, June 5, 2024, Detective Thomas continued follow up on this investigation. He completed an affidavit and search warrant for the vehicle involved in the accident. The warrant was executed on June 6, 2024. Through the search of the vehicle a flash drive was located which had video footage from the vehicle on all sides. The accident was observed through the camera views of the vehicle.

Conclusion

This case is in criminal proceedings and has not been resolved yet.



Criminal Case Review



**Detective
Christopher
Schuster**

Position/Title:
1st Shift Detective

Length of Service:

- 8 Years CAPD
- 11 years UW Milwaukee PD
- Promoted to Detective in 2020

Special Training and Assignments:

- Evidence Technician
- Domestic Violence Intervention Team
- Racine County Sexual Assault Response Team
- Management and Enforcement of Sex Offender Ordinance
- Professional Communications Instructor
- Traffic Grant Coordinator (UWMPD)
- Bike Patrol Team (UWMPD)
- Field Training Officer (UWMPD)
- UWMPD representative for LGBTQ union

On April 16, 2024, the Caledonia Police Department (CAPD) received a phone call from an individual who wished to report that her daughter was sexually assault several times by her uncle while staying in Caledonia. The CAPD was advised that the family currently resided in Florida and could not make it to Wisconsin for any interviews or to meet about the incident.

The Caledonia Police Detective Bureau was assigned to follow up with the mother and daughter. A detective contacted the mother and learned the identification of the uncle, and an approximate location and time frame for the incident. The incident date happened two years prior to the reporting date.

The detective contacted the State of Florida local Sheriff's Office where the victim was currently residing and coordinated with that agency to set up a Child Forensic Interview with the local Child Advocacy Center.

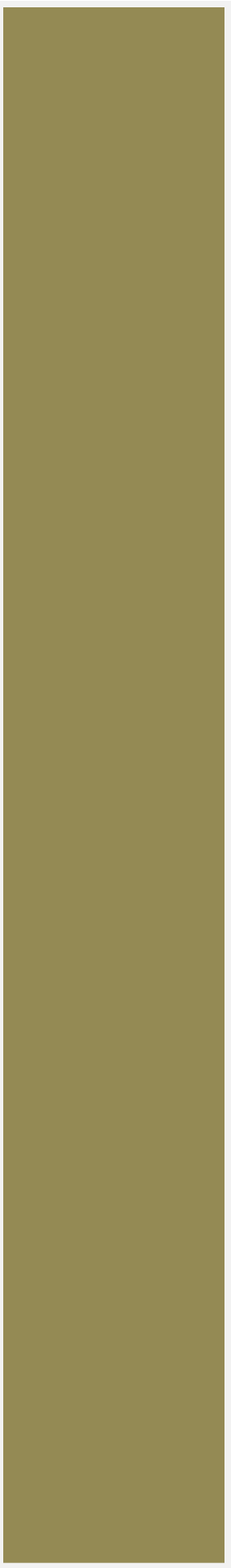
After several months of coordinating, the interview took place, and the child was able to recall very vivid details and disclosed that the uncle may have recorded the incident(s) with his cell phone.

The CAPD reached out to the State of Wisconsin Department of Criminal Investigations (DCI) Child Pornography Unit and requested assistance. The CAPD Detective Bureau investigated the suspect and found that the suspect owned property in the Village of Caledonia and in the City of Oak Creek.

The CAPD Detective Bureau coordinated with the Racine County District Attorney's Office and obtained a warrant to search the suspect's residence.

The CAPD Detective Bureau along with the aid of the Oak Creek Police Department, DCI, Mount Pleasant Police Department (MPPD), and the FBI Task Force, executed a plan to arrest the suspect on a traffic stop and once the suspect was taken into custody, execute the search warrant on the residence.

The suspect was taken into custody without incident on a traffic stop and he was in possession of a handgun. The suspect was transported to CAPD for an interview, while the warrant was executed on the residence.



While being interviewed at CAPD by the lead detective the suspect admitted to touching his niece inappropriately and to having sexual relations with animals.

The results of the search warrant yielded several cell phones, located several firearms, several thumb drives that contained Child Pornography (not with the niece) and videos of the suspect committing bestiality. Many of these items were located using DCI's and MPPD's electronic locating dogs.

The suspect was turned over to the Racine County Jail, and charges were requested with the Racine County District Attorney's Office. The Racine County District Attorney's Office has formally charged 4 counts of Possession of Child Pornography and 1 count of repeated sexual assault of the same child (at least three incidents of first-degree sexual assault). The suspect was also charged with one count of bestiality by the Milwaukee County District Attorney's Office.



Criminal Case Review



Detective Chad Zoltak

Position/Title:
Detective

Length of Service:
9 Years at CAPD

Special Training and Assignments:

- Drug Recognition Expert
- General Law Enforcement Instructor
- SFST Instructor
- Taser Instructor
- Intoximeter Operator
- Evidence Technician
- Crisis Intervention
- Peer Support

Memberships:

Crowd Control Team
DVI Team
Arson Task Force
Joint Tactical Team

Detective Case Review 24-9126: Robbery

On June 7th, 2024, Officers responded to the report of an armed robbery at Lakeshore Village Apartments. The victim, a 59-year-old male, reported that while walking to his apartment, a masked suspect ran up to him and pointed a gun at him and threatened to shoot him if he did not turn over his money. The victim then gave the suspect cash before he fled.

Officers and Detectives were able to quickly identify a vehicle associated with the robbery and a temporary license plate that was in the back window. Through investigative efforts we were able to identify the suspect as 23-year-old male who was currently on active supervision with the Department of Corrections for prior convictions.

While conducting area checks of where the suspect stays, I was able to observe the suspect driving his vehicle in the area of 13th Street and Racine St in the City of Racine. The suspect fled at a high rate of speed, and I lost sight of him. I then met up with City of Racine Officers and began searching the area for the suspect. During this time concerned neighbors in the 1000 block of Birch St in the City of Racine reported seeing a male breaking into a vacant house. Officers responded to the area and observed the suspect trying to break into a vacant house. A foot pursuit ensued, and the suspect was eventually taken into custody.

Interviews were conducted with the suspect and his girlfriend which led to the discovery that the robbery was planned. I was able to confirm via cellphone data and security camera footage that several days before the robbery. The suspect had encountered the victim at the gas stations and observed him paying for gas with cash. The suspect then began following and stalking the victim in the days prior to the robbery. Since his arrest the suspect was sent back to prison after his supervision with the Department of Corrections was revoked and is awaiting trial.



By the Numbers



Lt. Erin Laehr

Position/Title:

- Lieutenant
- Detective Bureau Supervisor
- Police Support Services Supervisor

Length of Service:

- 25 Years/21 years at CAPD
- Detective – 2013
- Patrol Sergeant - 2015
- Administrative Sergeant - 2016
- Lieutenant - 2019

Special Training and Assignments:

- FBI National Academy – Class 291
- Certified Public Manager – UW Madison
- Command Leadership Institute
- DOJ/CSA Local Agency Security Officer
- FBI LEEDA Command

Awards:

- Commander's Silver Metal Award – VFW
- Chief's Leadership Commendation Pin 2017

The Village of Caledonia Police Department continues to report monthly crime data to the FBI through the National Incident Based Reporting System (NIBRS). NIBRS is an incident-based reporting system used by law enforcement agencies in the United States for collecting and reporting data on crimes. NIBRS was created in 2005 and was made mandatory for all law enforcement agencies in the United States by January 1st, 2021.

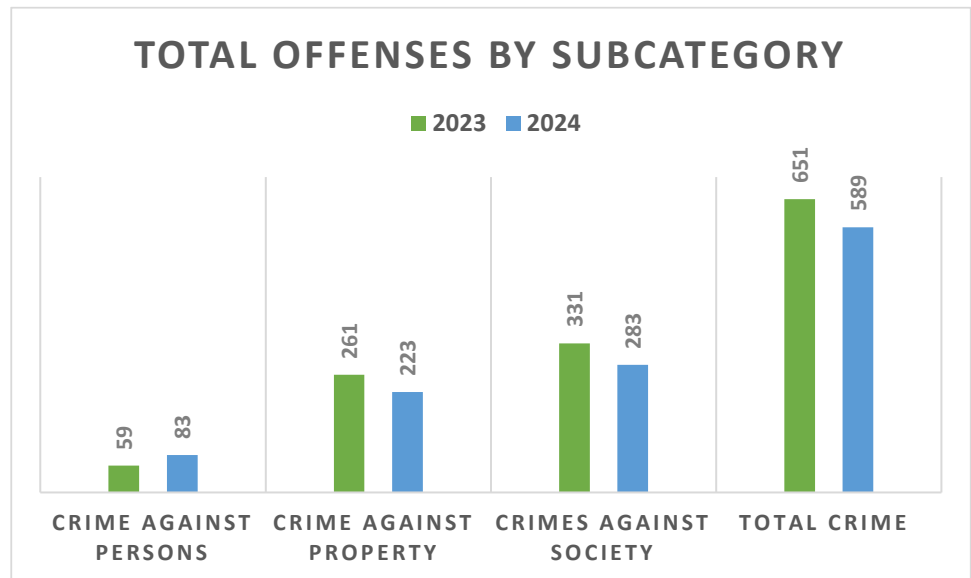
When used to its full potential, NIBRS identifies, with precision, when and where crime takes place, what form it takes, and the characteristics of its victims and perpetrators. Armed with such information, law enforcement can better define the resources it needs to fight crime, as well as use those resources in the most efficient and effective manner. NIBRS:

- **Provides greater specificity in reporting offenses.** Not only does NIBRS look at all the offenses within an incident, but it also looks at many more offenses than the traditional SRS does. NIBRS collects data for 52 offenses, plus 10 additional offenses for which only arrests are reported. SRS counts limited data for 10 offenses and 20 additional crimes for which only arrests are reported.
- **Collects more detailed information**, including incident date and time, whether reported offenses were attempted or completed, expanded victim types, relationships of victims to offenders and offenses, demographic details, location data, property descriptions, drug types and quantities, the offender's suspected use of drugs or alcohol, the involvement of gang activity, and whether a computer was used in the commission of the crime.
- **Helps give context to specific crime problems** such as drug/narcotics and sex offenses, as well as issues like animal cruelty, identity theft, and computer hacking.
- **Provides greater analytic flexibility.** Through NIBRS, data users can see many more facets of crime, as well as relationships and connections among these facets, than SRS provides.

Caledonia NIBRS data highlights

In 2024, 589 total offenses were reported. 83 crimes against persons, 223 crimes against property, and 283 crimes against society. Case clearance rates for Group A crimes are currently at 63% which is higher than the national average of 27.9%. See chart at end of this article for comparisons from 2021 – 2024.

NIBRS also classifies total offenses by subcategory. Below are the comparisons by subcategory for 2023 and 2024



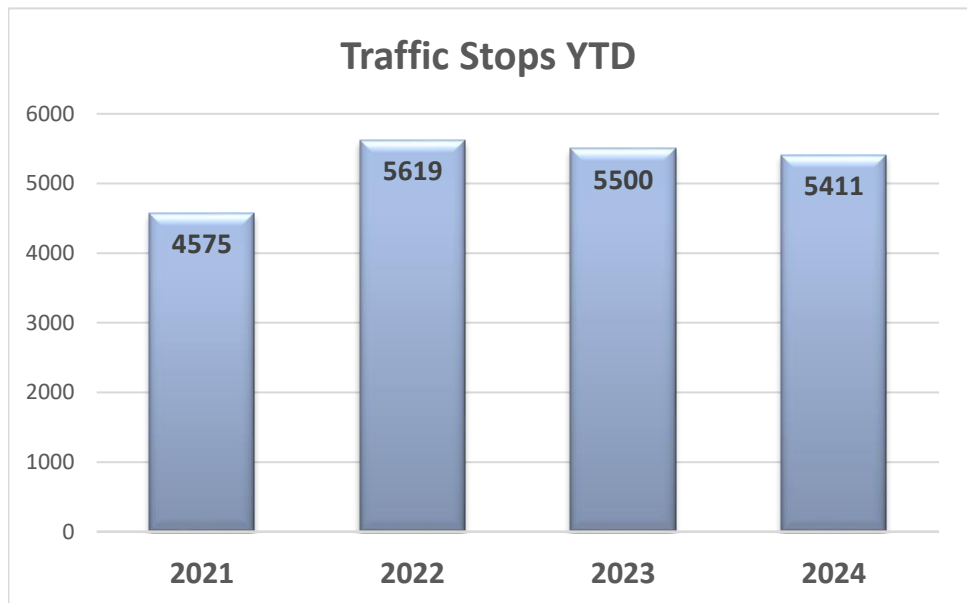
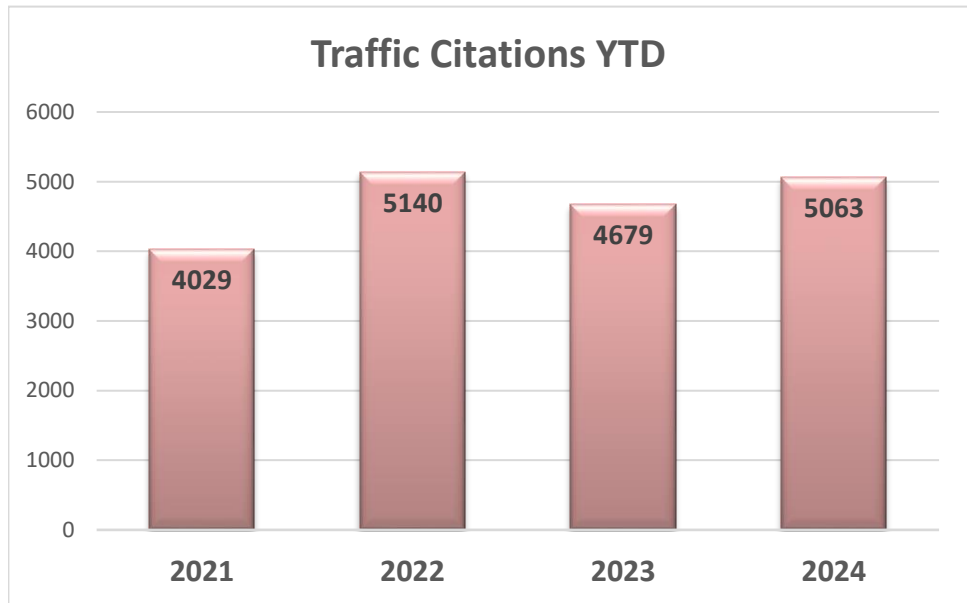
Below are Crime Clearance Rates for 2021 – 2024 as well as the 4 year average.

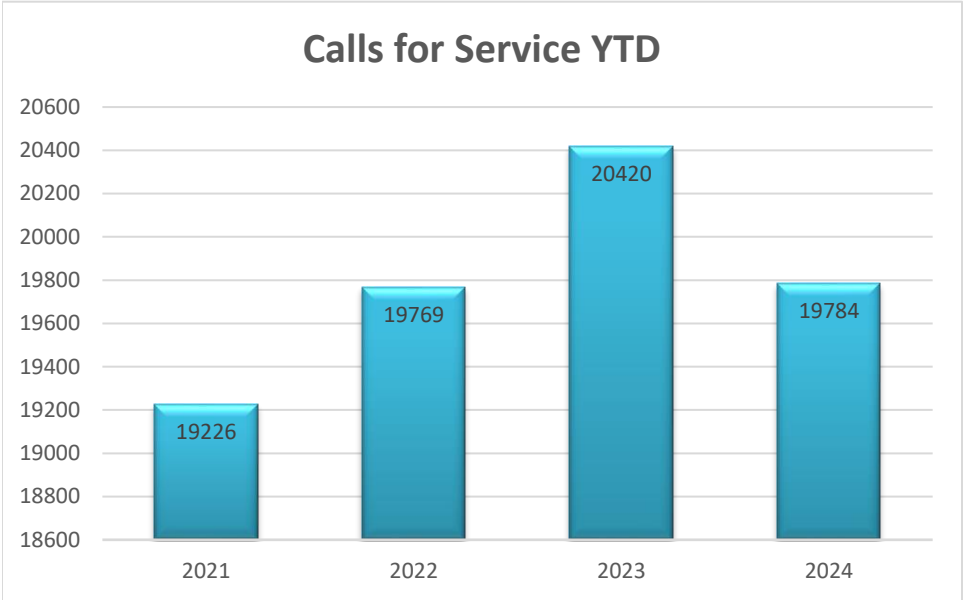




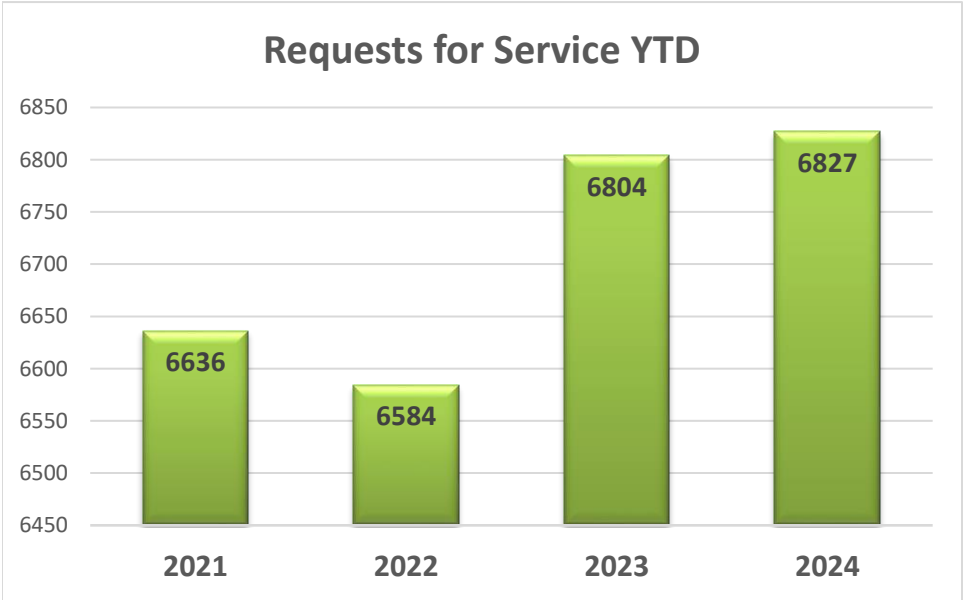
Statistics

The following graphs represent the number of traffic citations, traffic stops, calls for service and requests for service YTD (January – December) for the Caledonia Police Department in 2021 - 2024. The first graph shows traffic citations, and the second graph shows traffic stops, the third graph shows calls for service and the fourth graph shows requests for service.





****2021 are minus rescue calls to reflect current year stats**



****2021 are minus rescue calls to reflect current year stats**



Picture Pages

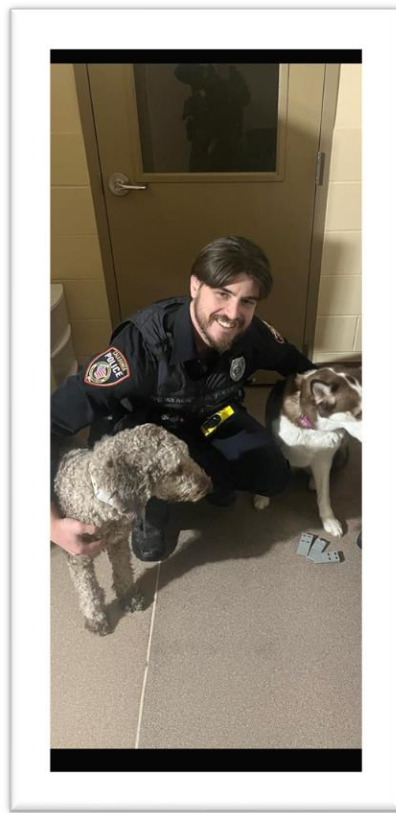
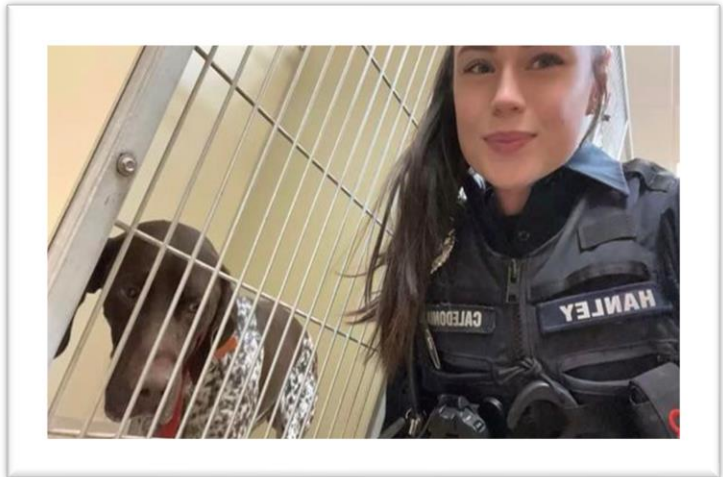
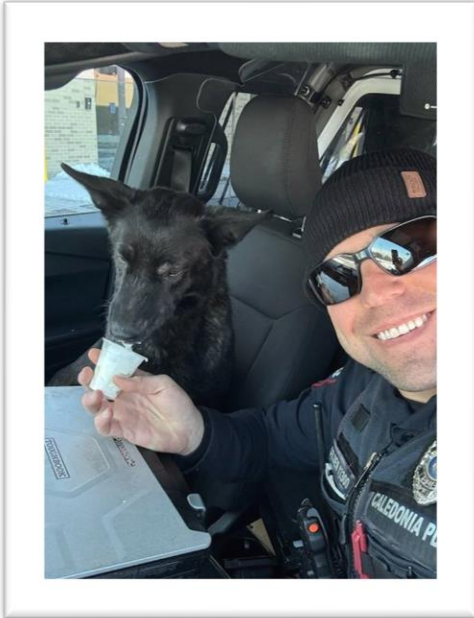
Shop with a Cop



Awards Ceremony



Interacting with our Furry (or not so furry) Friends

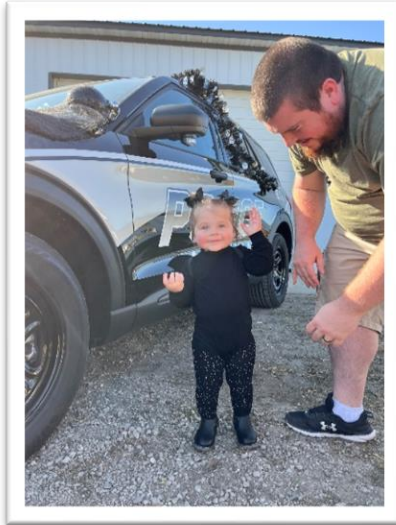
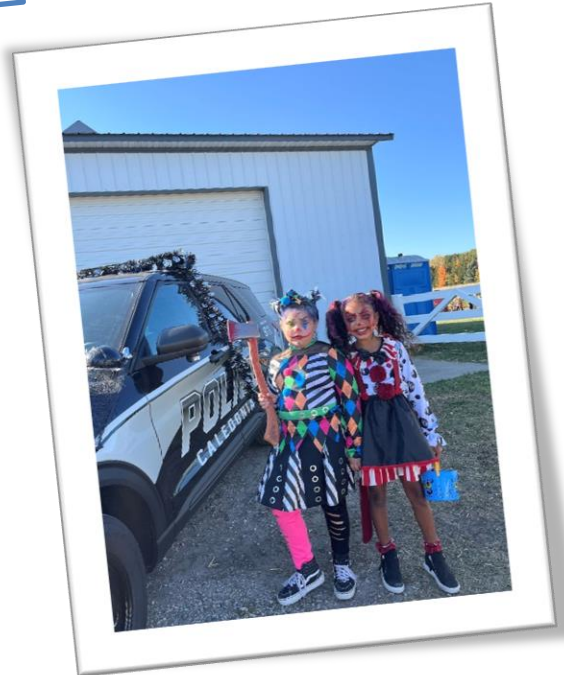


Honor Guard



Community Policing

Treat and Greet





Lemonade!



Lunch with a Cop



Community Care Day/Touch a Truck



Bike Rodeo

