

2023 Annual Report

Maquoketa Police Department



Brendan Zeimet
CHIEF OF POLICE

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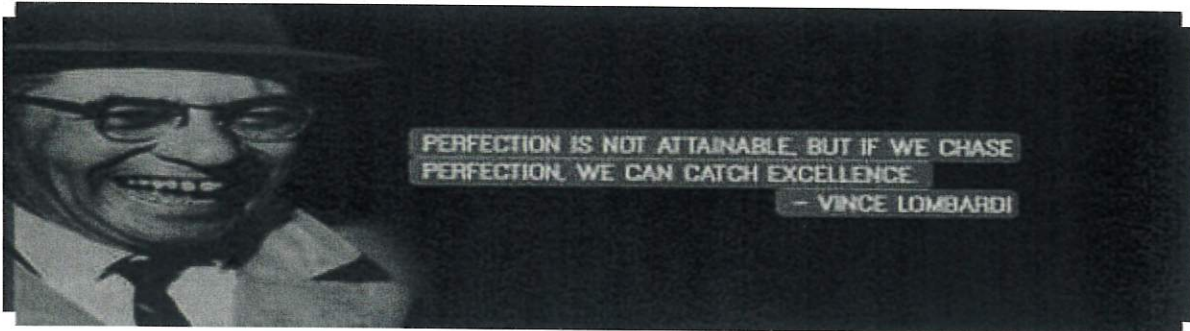
Maquoketa Police Department Mission Statement

The Mission of the Maquoketa Police Department is to enhance the quality of life in the community with dedication and excellence. The Maquoketa Police Department is a team of committed employees whose focus is on safety and service. The 23 members make up three divisions: Enforcement, Communications, and Reserves.

The Enforcement personnel are sworn officers who participate in uniform and plainclothes traditional policing functions and community interactions.

The Communication personnel are 911 civilian dispatchers and administrative staff who are the answering point for county-wide law enforcement, fire and medical services.

Reserve Officers are volunteer personnel who are sworn men and women who assist full-time law enforcement personnel during emergencies and other times when more help is needed.





MESSAGE FROM THE CHIEF:

To the Honorable Mayor Tom Messerli, City Council, City Manager Josh Boldt, and the citizens of Maquoketa.

Looking back on 2023, it's clear our agency is trending in the right direction. We are fully staffed, we have a good mix of fresh ideas, and veteran experience to lead us into 2024. While statistics are important, we must remember that the Maquoketa Police Department is about the men and women who serve our community selflessly, with commitment and dedication to others.

The 2023 Maquoketa Police Department Annual report is herein presented for your review. This report documents the department's challenges, accomplishments, community involvement and crime data from 2023.

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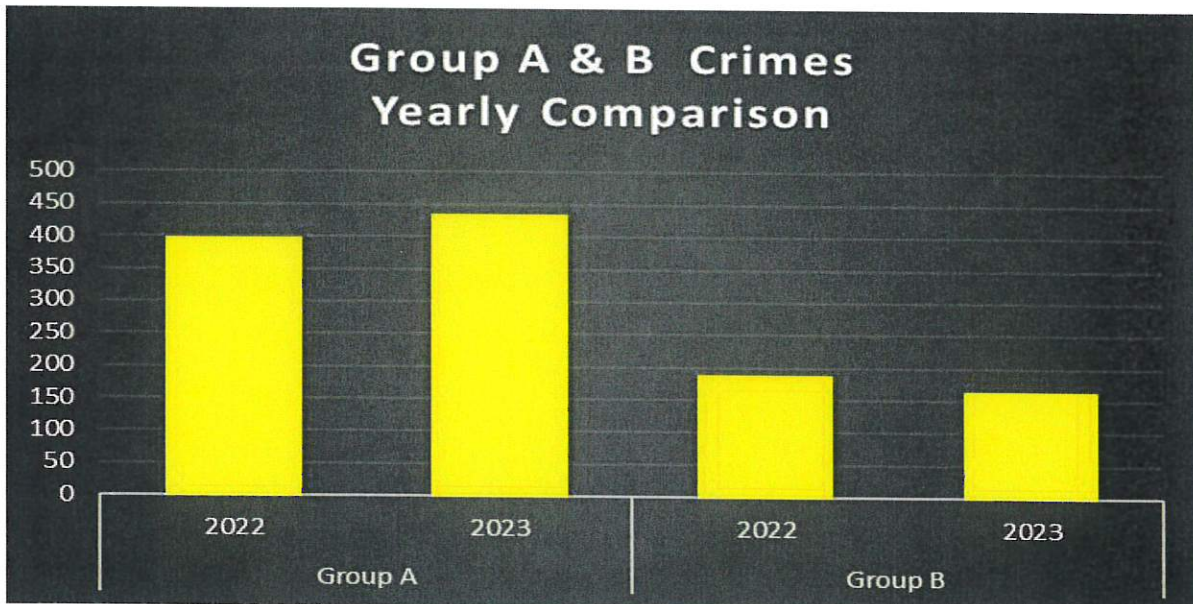
Ever been stuck in a scary situation, not knowing what to do? It's terrifying, right? That is where emergency dispatchers come in. In those heart-stopping moments, there's one lifeline we reach out for – dialing 911. But who answers that call?

The Maquoketa Police Department operates, manages, and maintains dispatch operations for all of Jackson County. This isn't just another day at the office; it's making sure help arrives when it matters most. A 911 call sets off a rapidly evolving sequence of events. A Dispatcher must make quick, real-time assessments to determine the proper police, fire, or medical response. All while keeping a panic-stricken caller calm enough to obtain and relay vital information to responding units.

In 2023, Dispatchers with the Maquoketa Police Department generated 26,919 calls for service into our Computer Aided Dispatching system or CAD. These calls for service (CFS) represent the entire number of emergency and non-emergency calls in all of Jackson County for 2023. A CFS is an event that requires a response from police, fire or Emergency Medical Services (EMS). These events can range from assist public calls, felonies in progress, to a medical emergency.

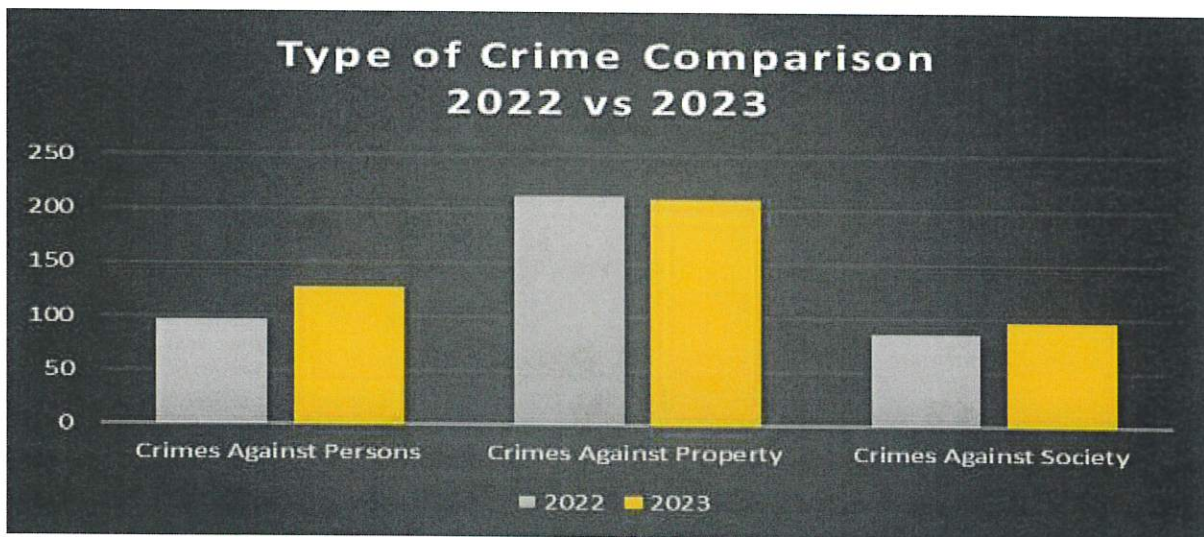


The Iowa Uniform Crime Reporting System (UCR) separates crimes into two types of offenses, Group A & Group B. Group A Offenses are generally more serious crimes by nature such as murder, sexual assault, aggravated assault or weapons law violations just to name a few. Group B Offenses are less serious crimes such as public drunkenness, bad checks and trespassing and are only reported when an arrest is made.



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Group A & B crimes are then separated into three different types of categories; crime against person, crime against property, and crime against society. The chart above shows a 9% increase in group A crimes and a 10% decrease in group B crimes. The chart below shows slight increases in Crimes Against Persons, and Crimes Against Society, while showing a small decrease in Crimes Against Property.



While our community experienced a small increase in one of the reported crime categories, it was not drastic. The Maquoketa Police Department will continue to employ proactive policing strategies in an effort to prevent and reduce crime, while also building relationships within our community.

Personnel:

We entered 2023 fully staffed in our communications center, but still searching for someone to fill our open School Resource Officer position. Thankfully, we were able to fill our School Resource Officer need in the Spring.

Our Communications Center has an authorized staffing level of seven (7) full-time Dispatchers, and we are fortunate enough to have one dedicated part-time Dispatcher who regularly fills in when needed. Providing coverage 24 hours a day, seven (7) days a week, this small, but dedicated group, must be proficient with multiple computer programs, local and county geography, all while monitoring multiple phone lines and radio frequencies. Our Dispatchers are effective communicators, who receive, analyze, and even at times anticipate a caller's situation to efficiently dispatch emergency services to them. We are fortunate to have such a dedicated professional group.

The Police Department has an authorized staffing level of 11 sworn full-time officers to provide the same round the clock coverage as our dispatchers. While we strive to have at least two officers on-duty as much as possible, there are times officers work alone, during these times it leaves a single officer responsible for handling a wide variety of calls in our community. Officers are required to become a "jack of all trades" and can go from working a property damage accident, to a major criminal investigation within the same shift. In today's rapidly-changing world this versatility allows our Officers to be successful in a variety of roles. This versatility allows us the ability to serve the citizens of our community as efficiently as possible.



Current Staff

911 Dispatch:

Communications Supervisor	Bob Lane	36 Years of Service
Dispatcher	Andrea Werner	34 Years of Service
Dispatcher	Teri Kaune	16 Years of Service
Dispatcher	Amber Casteel	2 Years of Service
Dispatcher	Jerry Kirton	2 Years of Service
Dispatcher	Ann Magil-Hamilton	2 Years of Service
Dispatcher	Jessica Scharff	2 Years of Service
Dispatcher P/T	Melissa Kinion	6 Years of Service

Police Officers:

Chief	Brendan Zeimet	23 Years of Service
Asst Chief	Jason Thomson	19 Years of Service
Sergeant	Darin Risinger	24 Years of Service
Sergeant	Cory Pirtle	5 Years of Service
Officer	Mike Owen	15 Years of Service
Officer	Jayson Heiar	11 Years of Service
Officer	Richard Ewoldt	6 Years of Service
Officer	Rebecka Aragon	3 Years of Service
Officer	Ronald Paulsen	2 Year of Service
Officer	Kane Kopp	2 Year of Service
SRO	James Tenney	1 Year of Service

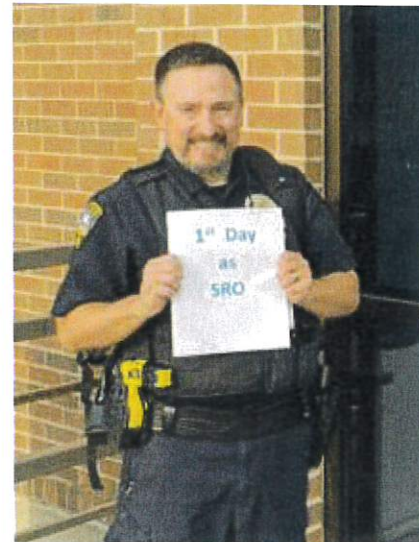
School Resource Officer Program



What a difference a year makes! We entered 2023 still searching for someone to fill our vacant School Resource Officer (SRO) position. While on-duty officers did a great job in filling the void of the vacant SRO position, it's impossible to develop the relationships and trust a full-time SRO brings to a Police Department and School District. In April, Officer James Tenney joined the Maquoketa Police Department to fill our vacant SRO Position.

Prior to joining us, Tenney worked for the Fayette County Sheriff's Office where he had served as a Corrections Officer and a Deputy for the previous three years. Prior to law enforcement, Tenney was a martial arts instructor, and had years of youth mentoring experience. While Tenney enjoyed his time as a Sheriff's Deputy, he felt the role of SRO would offer an opportunity for him to have the best of both worlds.

The concept of a SRO position was developed in Tucson, Arizona in 1963 and is a position that has existed in the Maquoketa Police Department since 1999. In 2005 and 2006 the position was not filled and there was not a police officer in our schools. The program was renewed in 2007 and is under contract on a year-by-year basis. Under this contract the City of Maquoketa and the Maquoketa Community School District agree to split the cost of the SRO position.



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Tenney began serving in his role as SRO in August of the 23/24 school year. In September Tenney attended the National Association for School Resource Officers Training Course. This training helped prepare Tenney for his job as SRO, giving him a better understanding of the role and responsibilities of an SRO. Tenney has been a fantastic addition to our department, and his presence in the schools is much appreciated by the students, staff and their families.



Maquoketa Reserve Program

The Maquoketa Reserve Officer program is made up of dedicated individuals who volunteer their time to the Maquoketa Police Department. These individuals have full-time careers outside of Law Enforcement but a desire to serve the Community of Maquoketa in a volunteer capacity.

Members of the Reserve Unit go through online and in person training to become Certified Reserve Officers for the State of Iowa. Certified Reserve Officers have the same arrest powers as Full-time Officers when they are on duty and are required to complete the same mandatory trainings.

Reserve Officers provide us with an extra set of eyes and will be called in to assist at crime scenes, to execute search warrants, or assist with public events. Reserve Officers also provide security for special events and school functions. Reserve Officers volunteer hundreds of hours a year to our community and are a valuable part of our organization.

Numerous former and current officers with the Maquoketa Police Department started their Law Enforcement journey as Reserve Officers.

Currently our Reserve Unit consists of four members:

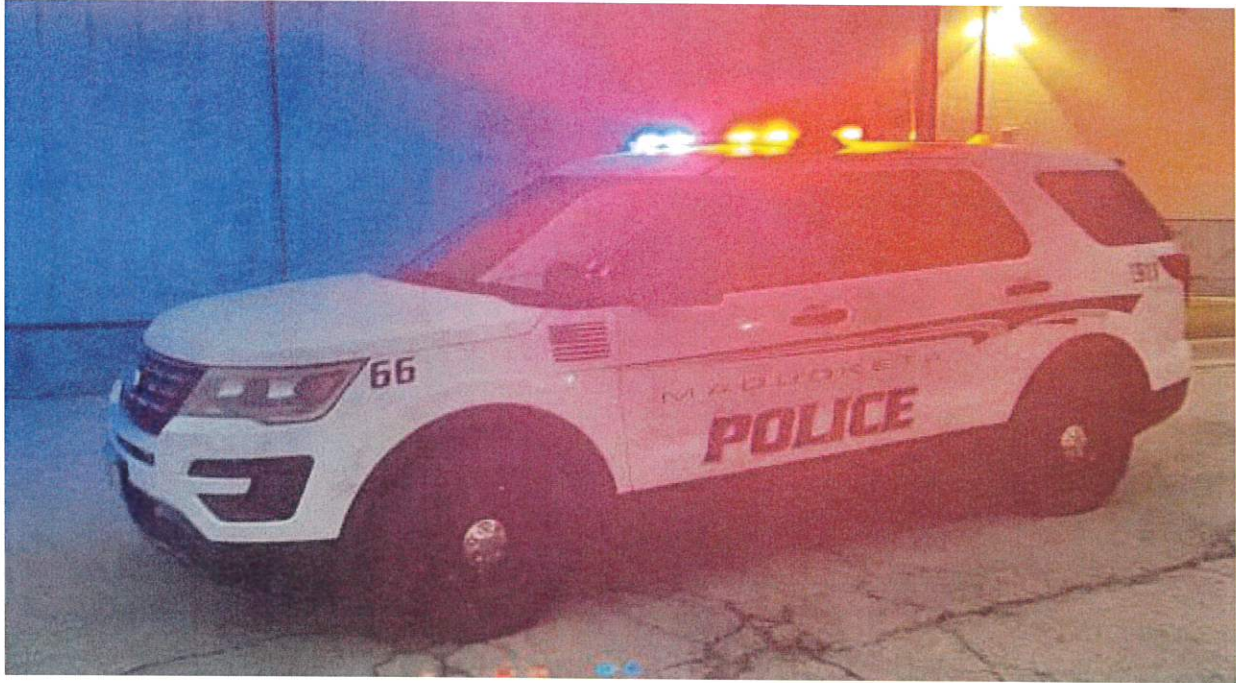
Jon Eggers – Serving Since 2014

John Sitzmann – Serving Since 2016

Danny Eads – Serving Since 2018

Joshua Collister – Serving Since 2019





Infrastructure & Vehicles

The current police department was built in 1989, housing the Maquoketa Police Department and Dispatch since that time. The current building provides adequate room for current staff needs but does not offer room for growth. In the past 30 years Dispatch has gone from the presence of one computer monitor in the room, to 11 computer monitors at each dispatch station with a total of 24 computer monitors in the room. Currently, there are two dispatch stations at the police department with no room for expansion.

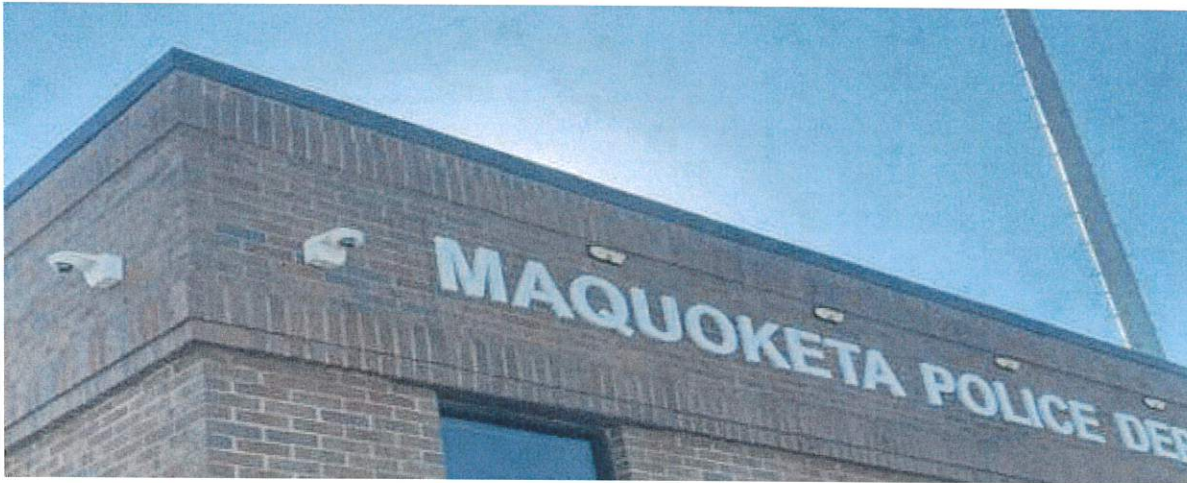
The property/evidence room is being managed properly and is adequate for our current needs. On occasion we do have to utilize our storage building in the parking lot behind the fire station for larger objects.

The responsibility of Evidence Custodian is an important one. A job that requires dedication, attention to detail, with exceptional documentation and record keeping.

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This past year we began the transition of the evidence custodian responsibilities from Sgt. Risinger to Officer Jayson Heiar. Risinger has fulfilled the role as the “gatekeeper” to our evidence room for the past 8 years. Unfortunately for us, Sgt Risinger is starting to think about retirement, so this past year was a good time to start the transition.

As we enter into 2024, Heiar will now oversee and maintain our property/evidence room for the police department and I have no doubt he will do a fantastic job.



It's expected that a 35-year-old building will require care and maintenance. That's why building improvements continued to be a point of emphasis in 2023.

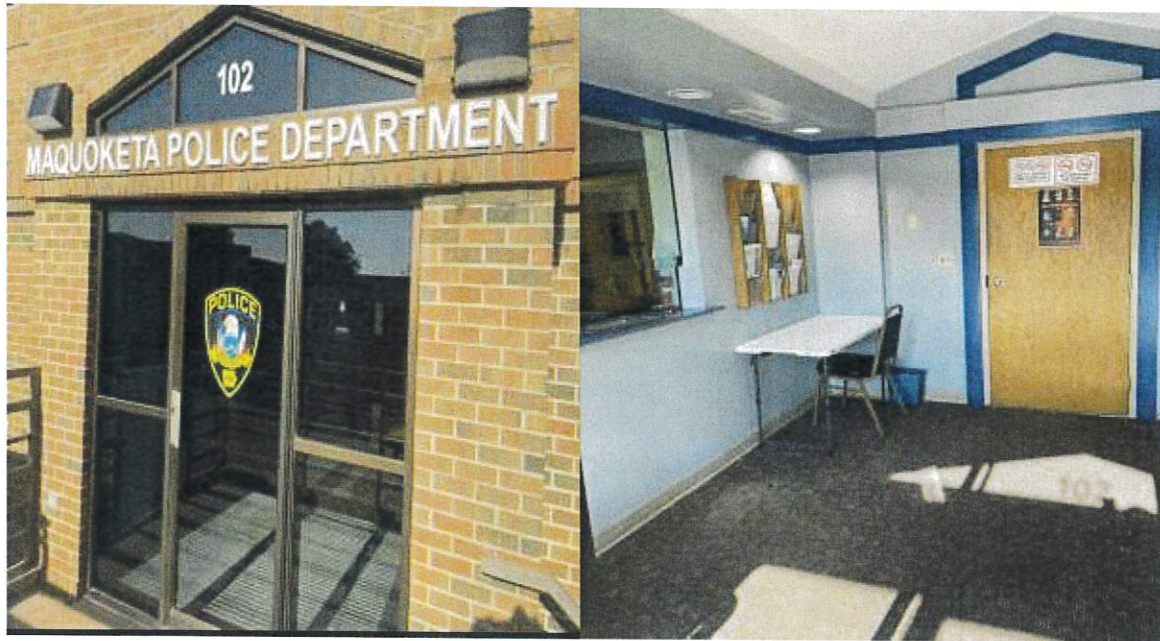
In Fall 2023, we installed an interior and exterior camera system. The system allows Dispatchers to monitor interior and exterior areas of the building, including interview rooms, parking lots and points of entry in the building.

Lighting improvements were made in our Dispatcher Center. Prior to the improvements, all of the lights in the room were controlled by one switch. Dispatchers had two options, on or off. With two dispatching consoles, and another

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non-dispatching work station in such a small space the old system created an environment where someone was always uncomfortable. Staring at numerous screens for a 12-hour shift its easy to understand why a Dispatcher may want to adjust the lighting in their area to their own comfort level. The lighting upgrade allows for each work station to individually control the brightness in that area.

The front entry and lobby to our Police Department received a much-needed facelift. A new, professional looking sign, and lighting were installed above the front door of the Police Department. Our Department Patch was added to the front door making it clear people are entering the Maquoketa Police Department. The carpet in the lobby was cleaned and the walls received a fresh coat of paint. A clean, professional appearance sends a positive message to the citizens who visit and reside in our community.



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Currently the Maquoketa Police Department provides each full-time officer with their duty weapon (Smith & Wesson M&P 9mm).

In 2023 the decision was made to purchase five (5) new shotguns. Previously the shotguns in our squad cars were of various makes and models and offered no uniformity. Now, each squad car is equipped with an identical shotgun featuring the same tactical equipment. Now, officers know that no matter what squad car they are driving, it shotgun is the same as all of the others and reduces the likelihood of not knowing a weapon system in a threatening or life-saving moment.



Patrol Fleet

Maquoketa Police Department Officers are all too familiar of the pain government organizations and private businesses have felt due to equipment shortages, and backordered materials for the past couple of years. However, after patiently waiting for almost a full year we were able to get a new patrol vehicle added to our fleet. With Council Support, we purchased a 2023 Ford F-150 Police Responder that unexpectedly became available. While still waiting on the Ford Explorer we originally ordered in February, and having an aging fleet of squad cars with some spending more time in the shop then on the road, the decision was made to acquire the F-150. Patrol vehicles are a police officer's office, with countless hours spent inside the vehicles every year. The police department appreciates that the leaders of our community understand the importance of an up-to-date, well-kept fleet of patrol vehicles.

Below is a current list of our patrol fleet with current mileage.

- 2016 Ford Explorer >123,000
- 2018 Dodge Ram >80,000
- 2020 Ford Explorer >71,000
- 2021 Ford Explorer >58,000
- 2023 Ford F-150 >2,000



Community Based Initiatives



The Maquoketa Police Department has teamed up with Eastern Iowa Mental Health and Disability Regional office and Family Resources to implement a Co-Responder program in Maquoketa. The Co-Responder program consists of a mental health professional assisting any law enforcement officer during mental health crisis calls. The Co-Responder is trained in de-escalation and can help stabilize individuals by connecting the individual in crisis with services and resources that will help prevent the individual from representing in crisis.

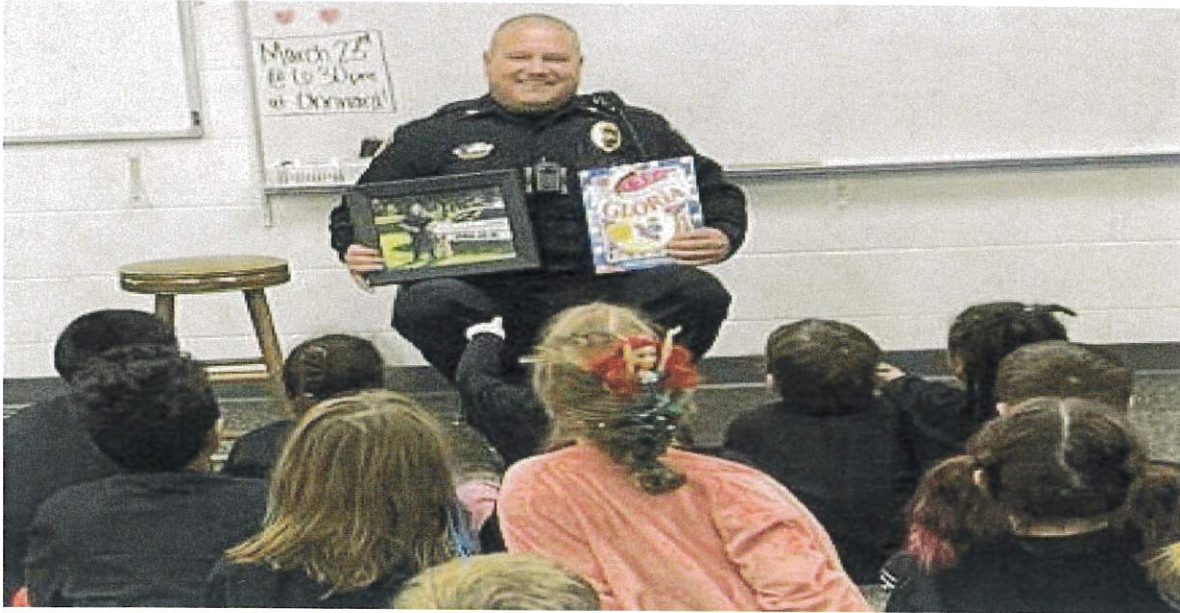
Bre R. is our local co-responder through Family Resources. Bre rides with Maquoketa Police Officers and other Jackson County Law Enforcement responding to calls for service. The idea behind the program is, often times individuals in crisis call 911 when they don't need police, fire or ambulance. What they need are services. Bre connects individuals in crisis with resources and services that they may not have known were available to assist them. Individuals are put in contact with a Care Coordinator who works with them to get them through the crisis they were facing. The goal is to keep people from representing in crisis by not only providing them with services, but by connecting them with a Care Coordinator they can call directly instead of calling 911.

Bre started in July of 2023 as a part time co-responder, in October 2023 Bre began full-time as our local co-responder. During the past 8 months, Bre has made 139 referrals with residents in Jackson County.



Community Based Initiatives

Read Across America



In March 2023, I was invited to Cardinal Elementary School to read to their students as a part of the school's Read Across America Celebration. Launched in 1998 by The National Education Association (NEA), NEA's Read Across America is an annual reading motivation and awareness program that calls for every child in every community to celebrate reading with the theme: Celebrating a Nation of Diverse Readers. Many schools, libraries, and communities of readers celebrate with an annual event on March 2, but NEA's Read Across America also provides educators, parents, caregivers, and children the resources and activities they need to keep reading on the calendar 365 days a year.

I read the book "Officer Buckle and Gloria", a story about a rather boring police officer who gets paired with a police dog that ends up being the center of attention during Officer Buckle's school safety speeches. Reading to the kids was fun and a great experience. I told the kids this book was very relatable for me because I was a K9 handler for a number of years and showed them a picture of me and my old K9 partner "Ricky".

Community Based Initiatives

National Night Out

On September 12th, 2023, members of the Maquoketa Police Department and Jackson County Sheriff's Office hosted National Night Out. National Night Out is a joint effort organized by Jackson County Sheriff's Office and the Maquoketa Police Department. Jackson County Sheriff's Office Criminal Secretary Karen Wells plays a huge part in organizing this event each year.

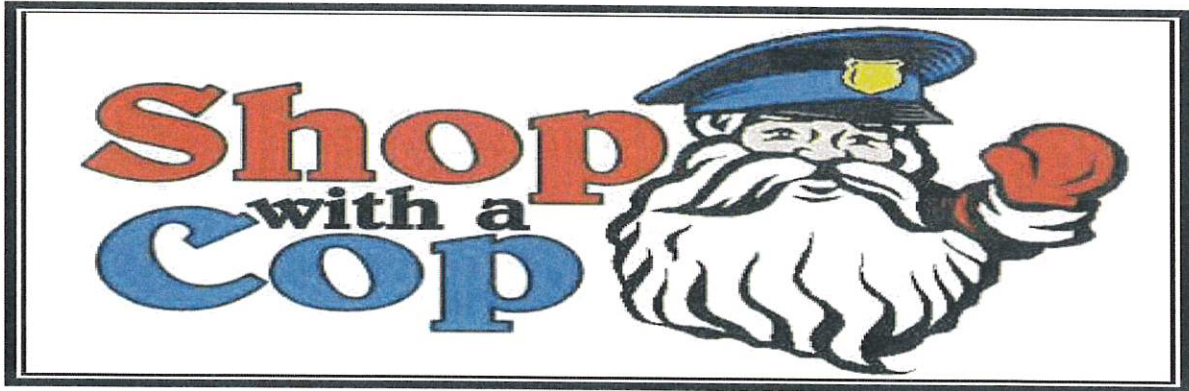
National Night Out is an annual community-building campaign that promotes police-community partnerships and neighborhood camaraderie to make our neighborhoods safer, more caring places to live. National Night Out enhances the relationship between neighbors and law enforcement while encouraging a true sense of community. Furthermore, it provides a great opportunity to bring police and neighbors together under positive circumstances.

A meal of hotdogs and chips was provided free of charge, along with snow cones and nachos. Kids and community members took part in water fights with the Maquoketa Fire Department, rode in MMEU's bucket truck and left their finger prints on a Maquoketa Squad car.

New this year, the Iowa State Patrol brought their "Seat Belt Convincer" for kids and adults to try. The Convincer simulates a low-impact crash and the benefit to wearing your seat belt. This was a great addition to our National Night Out event and hopefully it convinced a few skeptics to buckle-up.



Community Based Initiatives



On December 13th the Maquoketa Police Department held Shop with a Cop. Shop with a cop has been a long-standing tradition for the Maquoketa Police Department, for over 20 years we have organized this event for kids in our community. Our local Walmart Store was gracious enough to host the event again this year. Providing kids with drinks, snacks and a place for volunteers to wrap the presents.



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This year, the Jackson County Sheriff's Office, Preston and Sabula Police Departments also participated in the event. Twenty kids from three different communities participated in this year's Shop with a Cop event. Similar to past years, kids were paired with an officer and given a gift card to shop for themselves, friends and family. When the shopping was done, member of the Maquoketa Optimist Club, and Dispatchers from the Maquoketa Police Department wrapped the presents for the kids. This event is funded by civic groups, businesses and community members.



Community Based Initiatives

No Shave “November”

No shave November is a community service project that the officers of the Maquoketa Police Department came up with approximately 9 years ago. In November, officers make a donation of \$100 which allows them to have facial hair outside of the department’s traditional facial hair policy. Traditionally officers were only allowed to have a mustache, however, by participating in No Shave November, officers are allowed to have well-groomed beards and goatees all year long.

The participation in this event raises approximately \$900 every year. The money is then donated back into the community. Past recipients include, Maquoketa Community Cupboard, The Jackson County Humane Society, Relay for Life, the Head Start Program, and Hospice of Jackson County.

Two years ago, Officers decided that instead of giving all the money to one organization, they would use part of the money to award a scholarship to a graduating senior. To be eligible, the student must be a graduating senior from Maquoketa High School, and either have a family member in law enforcement, or be planning to attend college for law enforcement.

Our 2023 recipients of the 2nd Annual Maquoketa Police Department Scholarship Award were, Payton Hansen and Clare Hackman, each were awarded with a \$250 scholarship.



Payton is the daughter of Scott and Vicki Hansen and plans on attending the University of Iowa for Elementary Education.

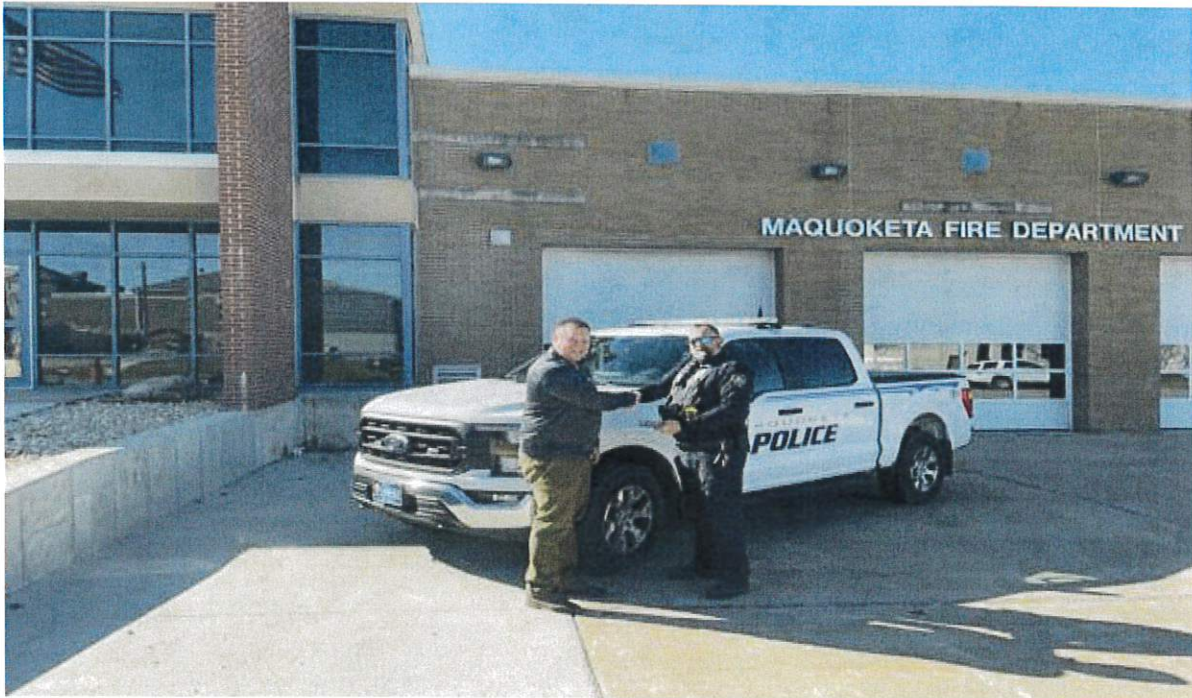


Clare is the daughter of Ryan and Melinda Hackman and plans on attending St. Ambrose University for Elementary or Early Childhood Education.

Congratulations to both recipients!

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One of the hardest parts of No Shave November is deciding what deserving group or organization to donate the money to. This year, Officers decided to donate \$400 from their No Shave November money to the Maquoketa Fire Department's Fire Prevention Program. Officers thought of this as another way to serve the youth in our community, while also supporting our local firefighters. During Fire Prevention Week, kids from our local schools visit the Fire Station to learn the importance of smoke detectors, receive fire safety tips, ride on fire trucks, and experience what a firefighter looks like in full gear. In the chaos of a fire, a firefighter in full gear can look scary to a kid, so it's important kids understand what they look like and are there to help.



Goals for the Future

0 to 6 Months:

- Implement new in-car and body worn camera system to replace our outdated failing old body worn cameras.
- Begin recruitment and hiring process to fill vacancy that will occur with a retirement this September.
- Continue building maintenance projects. Our building is 35 years old with many original features. This goal/project will be a constant, and something that we address little-by-little every year.
- Implement and adjust policies and procedures as needed when the current jail and Sheriff's Office move to their new location.

6 to 12 Months:

- Send officers to a variety of Instructor Level Certification Courses. In an effort to keep training costs down, its important to have in-house instructors to conduct our required yearly in-service trainings. Currently, we lack in-house instructors.
- Implementation of juvenile diversion program. Asst. Chief Jason Thomson and SRO James Tenney have been spearheading this project working with Juvenile Court Services to create a more fair and consistent way of dealing with minor juvenile offenses.

12 to 24 Months:

- Adjust Capital Improvement Plan to better prepare and measure for future changes, and expenses that occur with changing technology and required upgrades to systems.

Conclusion

Policing is not a profession that allows for much certainty. While crime rates will rise and fall for a variety of reasons, we as a Police Department must focus on the things that we can control. Proactive, community-oriented policing allows us to get out in front of events in hopes of preventing crimes, while also working with the community to reduce crime. I believe that engaging the community in positive ways not only improves communication with the public, but helps to create well-rounded officers who become more invested in the community they serve.

The members of the Maquoketa Police Department take great pride in providing the citizens of this community with the highest level of police service possible. I am thankful for their dedication and commitment to this agency and community. Day or night, rest assured our community is in the most capable of hands. Our citizens are fortunate to have good, hardworking, caring people, in positions of leadership throughout the city, and I am proud to work alongside of them. Finally, it is my honor to serve you as the Chief of Police for the City of Maquoketa. Thank you for the trust and support you have given me and my department. Your support is noticed and appreciated.

Respectfully,

Brendan Zeimet

Brendan Zeimet

Chief of Police