

WASHINGTON ASSOCIATION OF SHERIFFS & POLICE CHIEFS

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Serving the Law Enforcement Community and the Citizens of Washington

June 8, 2018



Greetings from your Executive Director:

As we head into what looks like a balmy weekend of 60 degree temperatures and rain, here are a few updates for you-

First, once again under the heading "being a political football in the middle of societal problems", the ACLU filed a [lawsuit](#) this week against Whatcom County seeking to **require the jail to provide opioid treatment medication** to opioid users placed in the jail. Each of our members, especially those with responsibility for jails, need to closely monitor this lawsuit, and our Jail Services Liaison, Ned Newlin, will keep a close eye on this issue as well. As with McCleary and the Trueblood lawsuits, state public policy is being driven more by lawsuits and reaction than by planning and legislation, and we are again in the middle. If you have any questions on this lawsuit or need any other information on it, feel free to contact Ned at ned@waspc.org or 360-486-2401. Here is a link to the story and we have also attached the lawsuit itself for your info:

<http://www.thenewstribune.com/latest-news/article212766764.html>

Also this week, the **Supreme Court scheduled hearings for the appeal of the I-940/3003 case** to be heard on June 28. We have developed a statement in conjunction with the entire coalition of groups that worked out the improved language of HB 3003, making clear that we are committed to working together to do whatever it takes to make sure 3003 becomes law no matter what the Court decides, including seeking a special session to amend the law if necessary. As always, our "big picture" goal is good public policy and to avoid a negative and divisive campaign over the initiative. The unity statement can be accessed [here](#).

Here is an article on a very serious **assault on a Kent Police Officer this week**, which was a "routine" drunk driver call that turned out to be a person who had robbed a store in Olympia earlier, and the assault quickly turned into the officer fighting for her life as the suspect took her flashlight, struck her with it, and tried to get her gun. I know this officer well from my time at Kent PD, and she is a very good officer, both tactically and in terms of her ability to communicate and deal with difficult situations.

<http://www.kentreporter.com/news/man-punches-kent-police-officer-strikes-her-with-flashlight-during-vicious-attack/>

Here are a few takeaways for me, and for us as an association and profession:

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1. The current environment, driven by social media and a culture of outrage and viral videos, does not lend itself to us telling the story of the real challenges and dangers of law enforcement. Think about how frequently we hear people complain about "why did so many cops show up?" and "why do they overreact?" when we read this story.
2. This article appeared in the Kent newspaper, and as far as I can tell, nowhere else. It does not fit the "Cops are really suspects, and suspects are really victims" theme. I checked the Seattle Times and searched the word "police" and nothing appeared about this case, but the following headlines were among those from the last three days: "Two members of rogue police unit each get 7 years in prison", "'Man shot by Chicago police had been shot days earlier'", "L.A. Sheriff's lieutenant accused of sharing raid info for sex", "Woman wrongly jailed after ID stolen, refused lawyer", "Authorities: Police official texted explicit image to teen", "Judge acquits Alabama officer accused of domestic violence", and finally, "Charlottesville police and topless protester settle lawsuit".
3. This all speaks to the need for us to continue to work to tell our story- and it is made more difficult by the fact that we do not engage in name calling and encouraging outrage.

Our challenge is not to be frustrated, but to recognize the difficulties of communicating in this environment and to work together to tell our story.

Delays in getting new officers and deputies into BLEA continues to be a huge issue for our members- we heard this week that a new officer hired today would not be able to get into BLEA until December. CJTC is well aware and, as frequently has happened, did not get funding for all of their requested classes. James McMahan from our office has been working on the possibility of emergency funding, and we are also developing some strategies to do what we can to ensure there is funding to provide necessary classes to shorten the timeframe in future years.

Which brings us to our Legislative Committee- **just a reminder that the committee will meet next Wednesday here at the WASPC office at 10:00 AM-** also remember that every member of WASPC is a legislative committee member- everyone is invited to attend and provide input. Give us a heads up if you wish to attend so we can have lunch for everyone, but if you cannot make it, please feel free to provide any comments/suggestions/input to me, James, or any of our Committee Chairs- Sheriff Dave Stanko, Sheriff John Snaza, Chief Michelle Bennett, or Chief Craig Meidl.

Have a great weekend-

WORK HARD- HAVE FUN- STAY SAFE

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