

WASHINGTON ASSOCIATION OF SHERIFFS & POLICE CHIEFS

3060 Willamette Drive NE Lacey, WA 98516 ~ Phone: (360) 486-2380 ~ Fax: (360) 486-2381 ~ Website: www.waspc.org

Serving the Law Enforcement Community and the Citizens of Washington



November 1, 2018

Greetings from Your Executive Director:

One of the themes we have been talking about a lot is “using **law enforcement as a political football**” in the current divisive environment. This week we see federal and local law enforcement once again working together to investigate and make an arrest in the political mail bomb case as well as the response to the shootings at the synagogue in Pittsburgh. As politicians and the media fall over themselves trying to make political hay over these incidents, law enforcement did their job quietly, courageously, and professionally. This week provided abundant examples of our colleagues doing the job quietly and skillfully in the middle of everything- I continue to be honored and proud to work with you!

This week, Chief Gary Jenkins of Pullman PD had an officer investigated and arrested for sexual assault, and with this very challenging issue, and while respecting due process, he sent a message that was **transparent, clear and supportive of his community**. His communications and leadership focused on our profession and here is an excellent editorial from the Pullman newspaper:

http://dnews.com/opinion/our-view-we-applaud-police-chief-for-being-transparent/article_1304e920-ddfd-11e8-b8b7-6fa4b0051642.html

This week, KOMO did a very good story on the “**Rapid Responder**” app that is part of WASPC’s school safety program. WASPC’s own David Corr is highlighted and if you would like more information about Rapid Responder, please let us know:

<https://komonews.com/news/local/phone-app-puts-school-security-in-educators-hands>

Last week I sent out a long list of newspapers that have come out for, and against, **I-940**, and mentioned that they all pivot directly to the agreed “final draft” for the legislature to pass as soon as possible. This week, the Tri-City Herald published the most half-hearted endorsement of an initiative I have ever seen- but it sent the exact same message- we all need to make sure the legislature passes HB 3003 as soon as they come back in January:

<https://www.tri-cityherald.com/opinion/editorials/article220371905.html>

Here is a link to a story from the Everett Herald this week with a “pro” and “con” for I-940 in which WASPC provided input:

<https://www.heraldnet.com/opinion/viewpoints-pro-and-con-on-i-940s-change-to-deadly-force-law/>

Finally, as we reflect on law enforcement continuing to show our service, humility, and courage, all while another divisive election season is wrapping up, here is an interesting link to a story on social media, the “rabbit hole” of reinforcing messages driven by algorithms and ad revenue, and how peoples’ opinions are being driven into separate corners. The column focuses on the right, but I would add that biased, hostile and misleading stories about law enforcement are also part of this problem. The column points out

President KEN THOMAS <i>Chief—Des Moines</i>	President Elect JOHN SNAZA <i>Sheriff—Thurston County</i>	Vice President CRAIG MEIDL <i>Chief—Spokane</i>	Past President BRIAN BURNETT <i>Sheriff—Chelan County</i>	Treasurer BRIAN WINTER <i>Sheriff—Yakima County</i>
STEVE CROWN <i>Chief—Wenatchee</i>	RONNIE ROBERTS <i>Chief—Olympia</i>	Executive Board GARY JENKINS <i>Chief—Pullman</i>	BILL BENEDICT <i>Sheriff—Clallam County</i>	MARK NELSON <i>Sheriff—Cowlitz County</i>
RICK SCOTT <i>Sheriff—Grays Harbor County</i>	MARK COUEY <i>Director—OIC</i> <i>Criminal Investigations Unit</i>	JOHN BATISTE <i>Chief—WA State Patrol</i>	JAY TABB <i>SAC—FBI, Seattle</i>	STEVEN D. STRACHAN <i>Executive Director</i>

that on social media, when someone clicks on a story, built-in algorithms, in order to keep selling ads, will drive the consumer to additional related, and often more extreme and sensationalized, stories and messages. This serves to exacerbate the opinions and emotions of the reader:

<https://www.seattletimes.com/opinion/social-medias-algorithms-lead-us-down-dark-divisive-rabbit-holes/>

There is no easy fix for this dynamic that is creating hostility and unfair perceptions of a lot of groups, including law enforcement. Recognizing it, and calling out social media for sitting back and making money from it, is part of the solution, and we in law enforcement need to be aware of it without taking the bait and becoming negative.

Hope you had a good and quiet Halloween—

Have a great weekend-

Work Hard- Have Fun- Stay Safe

Steven D. Strachan, Executive Director
Washington Association of Sheriffs & Police Chiefs
3060 Willamette Drive NE
Lacey, WA 98516
steve@waspc.org
360-486-2380



Olympia PD



Des Moines PD



Everett PD



Bothell PD



Pierce County Sheriff's Office