



THE BLUE FAMILY TREE

Newsletter article November, 2022

It's November and time to pull that lever for your favorite candidate. You may be quick to dismiss an article designed to promote officer safety that begins by discussing getting out to vote. What can voting possibly have to do with officer safety? Well I am glad you have chosen to find out. This article was written before November 8th, and published after, specifically so that you have the knowledge of the election results and the un-influenced opinion of the author. This will demonstrate that the election results are not important. Wait, wait! Before you consider again walking away, hear me out. The results are not important to officer safety. It's the act of being involved that is important to our safety at work.

As representatives of our communities, we must be plugged in and up to date on the issues that our communities are concerned about. We have to keep our fingers on the pulse and know what is trending, what is spiking now, and what is here to stay. Understanding our community needs and the thought process's of our adversaries as well as our allies is a major part of what promotes good decisions on our part and can keep us safe during our shifts.

Another way to look at the same idea is called "ownership." We have all heard the term before. "Take ownership in your actions." is a familiar phrase. It means, if you took an action that was right be proud to call it yours, and if you took an action that was wrong, be big enough to admit you made a mistake. However if this is as far as you have contemplated ownership, I have a whole lot more for you to consider.

We have all been on that traffic stop with the fourth generation resident of our county. He knows the sheriff! He has extreme ownership and a vested interest in the area where you work, and at this very moment he

believes you don't belong. But you do. Whether you are 1 day on the job or 15 years, take ownership in your community. They have bestowed on you a remarkable trust to represent them appropriately and given you the right and privilege of creating that ownership in them. This is your community too. That grouchy old timer needs to believe that.

I have worked for several agencies over my career. I can tell you that the longer you work somewhere the easier ownership becomes, but the sooner you establish a respectable level of investment in your community the better off you will be. I work for a state agency, and I love my community I serve, all 5.75 million of them. I also love our daily guests and appreciate the value they bring to our community every day. If I didn't consider Colorado my community, I wouldn't have anyone to work for but the governor, or the chief, or my sergeant, and that would make for a long and rewardless career. To keep me engaged day in and day out and from one year to the next, I have to be invested in the people. I have to understand what they want from their law enforcement, and I have to find my place in that vision.

On many levels being informed and close with your community preserves the career life of an officer, but on many more levels it preserves your quick reactions and lifesaving measure from call to call. Be involved. Even if you're in the minority vote. Pay attention, use your voice, and take ownership in your community.

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