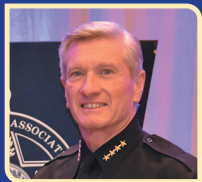




The South Carolina Sheriff

Summer 2021

A special newsletter from your South Carolina Sheriffs' Association



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President Tolson's Remarks

Sheriff Kevin Tolson, President South Carolina Sheriffs' Association

Sometimes, you do not fully appreciate the significance of a moment until you are in the middle of it. Then, it hits you and you realize how special it is. This is truly special, and I am humbled by the opportunity to serve as your President.

I cannot let Sheriff Crenshaw's time as President conclude without saying a few things about him. I have a couple of constructive criticisms for Sheriff Crenshaw. First, your northern accent is extremely hard to understand. We may have to invest in an interpreter. Second, you need to be a little less high strung. We had to calm you down during some Board Meetings. Of course, if you know Sheriff Crenshaw, you know I am being VERY facetious. Mike Crenshaw is a good and thoughtful man, a very good Sheriff, and a wonderful representative for our State and our Association. He deserves a lot of praise for the job he did leading our Association!

I am a simple man. As such, I try to keep things as easy as possible. So, during my term as President, I want to make things as simple as A-B-C.

A – Accountability. We hold our deputies accountable. We live in an age where we are accountable to our public. We are filming ourselves everywhere we go with body cameras. But we need to hold ourselves accountable as well. Thirteen Sheriffs indicted in a decade is unacceptable. We must hold each other accountable. Period. There is no excuse. I will make this a priority during my term.

B – Better. We need to do whatever we can to better our profession, to better our officers, to better our benefits. Our men and women are doing incredible work and they deserve to be rewarded. Therefore, I am calling on Governor McMaster and members of the General Assembly to address our "retire and return to work" problem in the Police Officers

Retirement System. We are losing educated and experienced officers everyday who are tired and feel there is no other way to get ahead financially. We must be able to recruit and retain the very best candidates if we want to provide our citizens with the very best service and protection.

C – Communication. We need to better our communication with each other and especially with our communities. We must communicate that we are not the bad guys, we are the good guys, and we are still going to be cops. We are going to enforce the law and we will not coddle those who break the law. I firmly believe if we communicate this message and serve and protect with integrity and fairness, our communities will support us. There is a loud group on the fringe on both ends and the media is giving them a large microphone. We need to communicate our stories with our citizens and encourage those who support us to make their microphones louder.

As I said, it is simple. But I firmly believe if we follow these A-B-Cs, our profession and our Association will grow and will be enhanced. Again, I am grateful for the opportunity to lead this tremendous organization, and I look forward to a wonderful year!

Sincerely,

Sheriff Kevin Tolson
York County
SCSA President 2021-2022



Sheriff Tolson, with his wife, Beth, being sworn in as SCSA President by House Representative Bruce Bryant, Ret. Sheriff

Progressive Leadership and an Inclusive Approach

SCSA's 2021 Sheriff of the Year, Sheriff Leon Lott of Richland County

Sheriff Leon Lott is a 43-year career law enforcement officer who leads one of the largest Sheriff's departments in the southeastern United States. Under his leadership, the nearly 1,000-employee Richland County Sheriff's Department (RCSD) has been recognized as one of the most creative, innovative, bridge-building law enforcement agencies in the nation.

During his 23 years in office, Sheriff Lott's extraordinary vision and creativity have enhanced the public trust of citizens. Since taking office in 1997, he has launched innovative programs designed to uplift, support, and protect

all communities in his jurisdiction. *Community-Oriented Policing* was introduced as a holistic approach to address degenerative community conditions and reduce fear of victimization. *Project H.O.P.E.* was initiated to support seniors lacking needed assistance from family and friends through

volunteers who call and visit hundreds of disabled citizens each month. *The Community Action Team* was formed to further build bridges between citizens and law enforcement

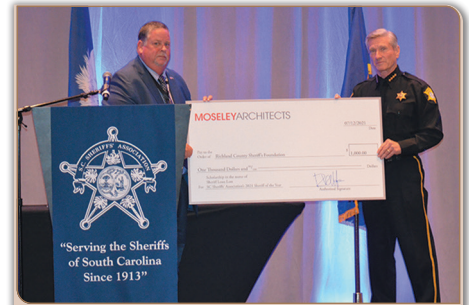
so that both groups had a sense of ownership in their communities. These initiatives and several more like them have furthered RCSD's efforts to restore dignity, fairness, compassion, and trust of law enforcement.

In 2018, Sheriff Lott was the first sheriff to launch the PEACE OFFICER identity program, a new framework for community policing, in collaboration with the nonprofit organization Police2Peace. This first-of-its-kind innovation has enhanced public trust, police legitimacy, deputy safety, and the willingness of the public to assist in the RCSD's crime-fighting efforts.

Recently being named Sheriff of the Year by the National Sheriff's Association, it is our privilege to recognize Sheriff Lott as SCSA's 2021 Sheriff of the Year for the State of South Carolina. Congratulations and thank you, Sheriff Lott. Your efforts have reflected positively on the entire South Carolina law enforcement community.



SC Governor, the Honorable Henry D. McMaster, left, presents the Sheriff of the Year award to Sheriff Leon Lott.



Todd Davis with Moseley Architects, left, presents Sheriff Leon Lott, right, with a check for the Richland County Sheriff's Foundation.



Sheriff Mike Crenshaw, Oconee County, presents the President's gavel to Sheriff Kevin Tolson.



Sheriff Mike Crenshaw and the Oconee County Honor Guard



Deputy of the Year, Sr. Corporal Gary Beaver, left, Detention Officer of the Year, Sheila Gillespie-Buckman, center, and Sheriff of the Year, Sheriff Leon Lott, right.



2021-2022 SCSA Board of Directors being sworn in.

Above and Beyond

SCSA's 2021 Deputy of the Year, Senior Corporal Gary Beaver of Sumter County

Sr. Cpl. Gary Beaver began his career with the Sumter County Sheriff's Office in 1994 as a Reserve Deputy while serving as a member of the United States Air Force.

In 1996, he was hired as a Class 1 Officer and assigned to the Civil Process Division. He has been an exemplary member of this division ever since, committed to serving the citizens of Sumter County in this capacity. Sr. Cpl. Beaver has served in excess of 57,000 civil documents.

Sr. Cpl. Beaver understands his role is first and foremost that of a Deputy Sheriff. He is always quick to respond to need, and Sumter County Sheriff Anthony Dennis says fellow officers are relieved to know he is '10-8' to any situation.

This was never more evident than on February 25, 2020, when he and two fellow officers were met with gunfire as they arrived to serve papers. While the suspect's actions resulted in the death of Cpl. Andrew Gillette, Sr. Cpl. Beaver relied on his training and experience, returning fire and ending the threat. For his valiant efforts that day, Sr. Cpl. Beaver was awarded the Medal of Valor.

Sr. Cpl. Beaver models the values of a consummate law enforcement professional on a daily basis. He is respectful to everyone he comes into contact with and treats all citizens with dignity and compassion. At a time when law enforcement agencies face the public perception of 'bad cops,' Sr. Cpl. Beaver stands in sharp contrast, representing law enforcement at its very best.

Join your SCSA in recognizing and congratulating Sr. Cpl. Gary Beaver, our 2021 Deputy of the Year.



Sr. Corporal Gary Beaver receives the Deputy of the Year Award from Sheriff Anthony Dennis, Sumter County

Life Saving Ingenuity and Action

SCSA's 2021 Detention Officer of the Year, Chesterfield County's Sheila Gillespie-Buckman

SCSA is proud to recognize the Director of the Chesterfield County Detention Center, Sheila Gillespie-Buckman, as our 2021 Detention Officer of the Year. Her submission was based upon her response to the COVID 19 pandemic, implementing safety procedures from the onset, which undoubtedly saved lives.

Sheila was instrumental in obtaining supplies such as sanitizer and masks from many different sources with whom she has contacts, in spite of how difficult it was to locate and procure these supplies early on. She was able to keep not only our jail, but also our sheriff's office supplied with these necessary items until the market was able to catch up with demand.

In addition to securing these critical supplies, Sheila was able to quickly implement procedures to isolate and quarantine incoming inmates until they could be medically cleared to go into population. She organized COVID testing and implemented limited inmate

movement directives in our facility before DHEC even produced guidelines to address these matters.

As a result of Sheila's ingenuity and actions, our detention center remained COVID free for several months. When we did eventually see our first cases of the virus, Sheila put together protocols for safely caring for infected inmates, containing the outbreak to one pod.

While every detention facility faced these same challenges, Chesterfield County, located in a more rural area, did so with very little guidance or assistance from state and federal agencies. Director Gillespie-Buckman's efforts undoubtedly saved lives.



Chief Deputy Chris Page, left, with Detention Officer of the Year, Sheila Gillespie-Buckman, center, and Sheriff James Dixon.



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