



# The Informer

Wausau Police  
Department

The Informer  
December 2015

## December News

We all have days when the harshness of our profession starts to dent the armor a little bit and we start questioning why we do what we do. Last year at this time I wrote about "Rising above the noise." The noise is still present. We hear or see it nearly every day when watching the news. It seems like every police shooting is criticized to a degree that makes us wonder, when does the public believe force is justified? Do people care about police lives? Do people think we should have to take a bullet first before we can respond with deadly force....if we are still able to? This is all complicated by protestors who chant, "pigs in a blanket, fry em like bacon" or when a community/Government allows the local police station to be held hostage by protestors.

Just when we start doubting the value we bring to our community, our "Super Hero," Don Ryder, comes strolling in like John Wayne and puts everything into perspective for us. For the younger officers, insert Captain America, for you probably won't know who John Wayne is. I've always known how lucky we are to have Don's presence at the PD, but during tough times, leaders shine.....and that's what Don does....he shines like a beacon of light in the depth of darkness. Don makes a difference with us in the same way that you make a difference in our community. Don recognizes the efforts of our officers and lets us know our efforts are making a difference.

Since Don spends a lot of time at the PD, I asked Don if he would be willing to share his thoughts and experiences with us. Below is what Don submitted. We are very blessed to have Don around. Don, thanks for sharing your thoughts and for being our emotional shield.

## The Inside Story of the WPD: Unseen faces of those who serve us...

Yes, the Wausau Police Department is here to protect and serve our community. They truly partner with us. In doing so, they cooperate with our law enforcement neighbors in the greater Wausau area, Marathon County and throughout the state. They



are peace keepers. They are bridge builders. They respond daily to the numerous 911 calls placed to them. They also answer an untold number of questions put to them each day.

It begins with the WPD employees serving the many customers at the front window across from the Community Room at the Safety Building. It continues with all those services our community has come to appreciate, such as; School Resource Officers, Community Policing, the Special Investigative Unit, the Dive Team, the SWAT Team, Suicide Prevention, Traffic Patrol, Community Resource Officers, the Detective Bureau, and the list goes on. We most often hear about the services these groups perform through the media.

Then there are the unseen and most often unreported things done by these dedicated and humble servants. Let us catch a glimpse of the unseen faces of these heroes. They are our neighbors, our friends, our relatives, our sisters, our brothers, our spouses, our parents, our fellow citizens. They do things within their job and outside their job that make a real difference for our community.

They hear of a neighbor, friend, or relative faced with a personal challenge to do with health, relationships, job loss, grief, etc., and they respond by preparing and delivering a meal to the family or some other act of kindness.



The officer going through a McDonald's drive-thru late at night and pays for the person behind him. Other officers who have also reached into their own pocket to buy a meal for a person in need or they pay for a motel room when a person had no place to stay for the night.

And to boot, give them money for a meal the following day. This is the deeply compassionate side of the women and men of the WPD





**The Inside Story of the WPD: Unseen faces of those who serve us... (Continued)**

How about the Captain who goes to school in uniform to read books to the school kids. There are those in uniform who team up with their WFD comrades to walk to school with the school kids. Some teach CCD, or Sunday School and are very involved with their church. Others teach various law enforcement courses in area colleges and tech schools. One officer is developing, coordinating, and doing some teaching for a Criminal Justice Program at a local university. There is an individual who is a member of an area Voluntary Fire & Ambulance service on their off time.



Remember the officer who spotted a homeless person with no shoes and purchased a pair of boots for him. And the officer who gives of time, talent, and treasure to the Monk Gardens. Numerous employees are coaches for area teams in wrestling, football, baseball, soccer, etc. There are those involved with the Boys & Girls Club as well as those involved with the Special Olympics.



After responding to a home break-in and burglary, the officer empathized with the elderly person who could no longer lock their door and felt vulnerable. The officer returned a short time later with tools to repair the door well enough to be able to lock it for the person. Another officer responded to a home owner who had fresh cement vandalized. The officer returned with a trowel soon enough to be able to trowel the writings out of the cement for the homeowner.



Two officers respond to a domestic disturbance. They get the situation under control. While one officer talks more with the distraught female, the other officer shovels the woman's walkway. These activities go far beyond the call of duty. These activities also build bridges with the community. They build relationships with individuals. Often times officers encounter the same individuals more than once and these people remember how they were treated with respect.

There is the officer who enters a drug house behind the SWAT Team and finds an infant crying. He tenderly picks the child up, goes outside and walks around carrying the infant, speaking softly, rocking the little one back and forth like a loving parent.



Three officers responding to a home where a man took his own life also find his 10 year old son who witnessed it. They comforted the crying son who in turn had the inner strength to actually thank the officers for their help before they left. This occurred shortly before Christmas of that year. Each of these officers were deeply impacted and touched by this young boy. When reporting to their next shift, each of these officers, independent of each other, had purchased and wrapped a Christmas gift for the boy. Later on their shift, these three officers returned to see the young boy and to present their gifts to him.

Yes, there is a tough side to every police department. But Wausau citizens are most fortunate in that the Wausau Police Department balances the tough side of police work with compassionate love. WPD is truly a model for the entire nation. Members of the WPD have first been hired for their character and then are supported in their continuous professional development to become the best they can be.

There is creativity about the members of our police department. This creativity serves our community well as evidenced by the various approaches and efforts in providing service. This creativity is possible because the Police Chief and Command Staff have confidence in and believe in the members of the department. They recognize the unique gifts of individuals and give them support. This is what great leaders do!

As the Christmas season approaches, we, the citizens of the Wausau area, are grateful for the dedicated women and men who have chosen or perhaps have been chosen to serve with the Wausau Police Department. We see the unseen in your faces ... we see the great compassion and love with which you serve our community. Each of you are a gift to the community. Keep on doing what you are doing... there is no greater love!



**The Inside Story of the WPD: Unseen faces of those who serve us... (Continued)**

## No Greater Love

In gratitude, we offer a community prayer for you:



*Loving Creator God, please watch over, guide, and protect the women and men You have chosen to serve the citizens of Wausau through the Wausau Police Department. Help them in their efforts to fulfill their mission of striving for excellence in policing by partnering with the community to enhance the quality of life, as they embody their core values of; Professionalism, Accountability, Integrity, and Respect, with compassionate love. They are family. They work together, they suffer together, they cry together, they heal together, they eat together, they laugh together, they celebrate together, they have each other's back, they are ONE. We thank you God, for bringing them together to serve the citizens of the greater Wausau community.*





## New Officer Swear-In

Submitted by Captain Hagenbucher

Today I attended the Law Enforcement Academy Graduation of Officer Ross Austin, Officer Peter Fish, and Officer Shawn Meyer, at Northcentral Technical College in Wausau.

The guest speaker, Captain Ben Bliven asked every recruit to reflect on why they wanted to be a police officer. He spoke of law enforcement being a challenging career, dealing with the worst society has to offer and the tremendous scrutiny that officers will have to endure throughout their career. On the other hand, he spoke of the rewards the job has to offer and this profession being a higher calling. He reminded the recruits that every contact they have with people is an opportunity to increase our trust level with the community. He shared some citizen letters that praised our police officers and the compassion these officers displayed when dealing with community members and victims of crimes. His words should serve as a reminder to all of us in law enforcement.

After all of the officers received their graduation certificates an awards ceremony followed. Hence, I am very pleased to announce that Officer Peter Fish received the award as the **Top Academic Recruit**, and the Kampmeyer Award for the **Most Valued Officer**. The most valued officer is an award given by the recruit's peers as the officer most would choose as their backup.

In addition, Officer Ross Austin was given the most inspired physical fitness award, for the officer that made the greatest strides in fitness from the beginning to end of the recruit class.

Please join me in welcoming Officer Shawn Meyer, Officer Ross Austin, and Officer Peter Fish to the police department and congratulating them on their awards.

Thank you,  
Captain Greg Hagenbucher



Ross Austin, Peter Fish, Chief Hardel, Shawn Meyer



### Congratulations to Nathan Cihlar and Matt Van Lieshout Promoted to Lieutenants

Please join us in congratulating our newest lieutenants, Detective Lieutenant Nathan Cihlar and Patrol Lieutenant Matt Van Lieshout!



Lt. Nathan Cihlar and Lt. Matt Van Lieshout





### K-9 Mabel Retires

Submitted by Officer Dave Jordan

I became a dog handler in the USAF in May of 1984 and was first assigned a patrol dog named Lucas. He was a strong willed male and the patrol dog class lasted 6 weeks at Lackland Air Force Base in San Antonio, TX. It took about 3 weeks before Lucas and I began working well, but once the class was completed he was sent to an AB in Korea. After completing that class I was stationed at Incirlik AB in Turkey where I was assigned a female K9 named Chula. It was through my interactions with both of these dogs that I preferred to work with female dogs. Although Chula appeared to be a social dog, she excelled at handler protection. The military said the main use of a MWD was the “Psychological Deterrent” they provided. While in Turkey I witnessed this first hand and would have to agree. After leaving Turkey, I was assigned to K.I. Sawyer AFB in Michigan. Not long after that assignment began I was selected to attend a K9 Explosive Detection class that lasted 9 weeks, this was also at Lackland. This experience allowed me to several times work with the Secret Service in the protection of then VP George H.W. Bush as well as Pope John Paul II on his visit to America in 1987.

My career as a K9 handler with the Wausau P.D. has been very fulfilling and I would recommend this to everyone who loves dogs. You will never have a stronger bond with a police partner than you will with your K9. My two partners, Dajana and Mabel were close members of our family the entire time and often came on family vacations. Dajana was a German Shepherd and Mabel a Belgian Malinois. These breeds are vastly different in temperament, but both work well in the field and at home.

The saddest part of being a handler is knowing that your partner is aging so much faster than you and that at some point you will watch them become weak and die.

My family and I have truly enjoyed our experiences with both dogs and have many amusing stories that we often talk about and I am grateful to both Chief Brandimore and Chief Hardel for allowing me to hold this position.



Officer Dave Jordan and K9 Dajana



Officer Dave Jordan and K9 Mabel



Mabel, August 2013



### Breakfast with the Police and Fire Departments

On Monday, December 14, 2015, Wausau Police Supervisors and Wausau Fire Supervisors cooked and served breakfast for 40-50 public safety employees in the Wausau Fire Department kitchen and dining room.

Thank you to everyone who participated in these few hours of camaraderie. We had a great time socializing and mingling with our public safety partners.

Happy Holidays,  
Don Ryder





## Holiday Heroes

The Wausau Police Department strives for excellence in policing by partnering with the community to enhance the quality of life. We are always looking for new opportunities in which we can impact our community in ways that strengthen our partnership, especially during a time when tensions between public and police are on the rise. The Wausau Police Department is proud to have announced a new initiative entitled “Holiday Heroes” during this holiday season.

Police officers are known for making arrests and delivering tickets; however, with Holiday Heroes, police officers have delivered some holiday cheer by providing gifts to families in the City of Wausau during this holiday season. We have had the joy of impacting 7 families and 19 children; gifting the children both items of need and items of want. Our hope is that our efforts would usher joy into their lives while creating an atmosphere of trust as we engage one another in this unique way.

A sincere thank you to all who helped make this year’s Holiday Heroes a great success.





### Gifts of Appreciation Tis the Season!

Each year the police department receives numerous gifts of pastries, cookies, cupcakes, chocolates, & of course donuts. This year is no different. The Wausau community continues to show us appreciation with notes, cards, emails, and treats. These are just a few samples.



HELLO -  
JUST WANTED TO SAY TO ALL OF YOU "THANK YOU" FOR ALL YOUR HARD WORK & DEDICATION TO SO MANY PEOPLE FOR THEIR NEEDS & WANTS. PLEASE ENJOY THE CHRISTMAS GOODIES. SORRY THERE WASN'T MORE TO GIVE. TAKE CARE & STAY SAFE.

Get wrapped up in the Season!  
MERRY CHRISTMAS & HAPPY & SAFE NEW YEAR!  
GOD BLESS YOU ALL.

SUE D. "U"



Lt. Heindel accepting cupcakes from a little citizen



Midwest Dental



Whitman's Sampler From Mary Doyle



The donuts are from Shirley Hoff and Rita Blowczynski



### Christmas gifts for our K9s

This year we received gifts for our police K9s. The card and wrapped gifts came from Marathon Town & Country and the stockings below came from a grateful citizen.

Hope you have a great Christmas and I take full responsibility for the Pink Figured Jayla needed some special wrapping paper.  
-Kassie ☺

(Arrest her, we were not involved..... Merry Christmas Happy New Year!)

Craig Maddy  
 Karen May your holidays blossom with joy!  
 Terri Megan  
 Tanya Sarah  
 Tyler T. Tyler M.



These gift bags contained toys and treats for the K9's and chocolates for their partners.

Our K9's will be having a wonderful Christmas!





**Department Appreciation  
Email from Michael Loy - North Central Health Care**

I wanted to take a moment to tell you that the informer is still a must read for me as it comes into my email each month. Thank you for spreading the good word of the WPD actions and activities. It helps me stay connected to the fond memories I had working with all of you on a daily basis. As I reflected on my appreciation for the WPD this morning the thought think globally, act locally came to mind. It is so evident that the Wausau PD addresses global issues effectively at the local level. I am so thankful for the lives of those who have chosen to protect this community and their families for their unwavering commitment to excellence. I've long believed that the first role of government is to provide safety for their citizens and the WPD delivers on that principle admirably. From the handling of the officer involved shooting to this morning's article about the WPD buying body cameras. The body cameras specifically is a move that truly exemplifies your core values because instead of shunning increased calls for transparency and accountability, you are embracing it by saying we are unafraid to have the world to see what we do because we are doing things the right way. Ben's comments and the culture you have worked to develop are truly something to be proud of.



November 23rd, 2015

Wausau Police Department  
515 Grand Avenue  
Wausau WI 54403

**Department Appreciation  
From Rib Mountain  
Lutheran Church**

Dear Police Chief Jeffrey Harde,

I would like to thank you and your whole department for incredible work that you do to protect and serve our community. Each day, your officers put their lives on the line and I wanted to you to know that it is noticed and appreciated.

Specifically, I would like to thank you all for a small but meaningful service that you provide to our community and our churches. The service of escorting a funeral procession through town has to be low on the great list of things that your officers do each day and I can imagine at times it is an annoyance and a hindrance to your more important duties. Yet, I wanted to make sure that you knew that this small task is always greatly appreciated by the families who are traveling to lay a loved one to rest. It means a lot to those who have lost much, that vital public servants would take time out of their day to escort them to the cemetery.

Thank you again for all that you do as you serve and protect our community.

Yours in Christ,

Tim Swanson  
Pastor  
Rib Mountain Lutheran Church



**Department Appreciation  
Email from a Traffic Violator**

So, I don't know if this is read often or who ends up reading it but I'd like to just send this anyways. A week or so back I was pulled over. I am 19 years old and have never had so much as a warning so I was really nervous due to the fact I couldn't afford to pay a fine and I didn't know what I had immediately done wrong. The officer came up to my car introduced himself and was really friendly and professional which really helped me calm down. He told me I had been speeding, asked where I was going and stuff and I told him I was in my way to the UWMC. Overall he was very cool about everything and let me off with a written warning. Honestly, he has no idea how much that helps me, going to school and living expenses drain my finances so the idea of a ticket and raised insurance is a nightmare. So I just wanted to say thanks to your friendly officers and I hope that they continue to carry great community relationships.



**Department Appreciation  
Email from a Wausau Citizen**

As I shared with you, my wife and I, as citizens of Wausau, wish to commend your officers for keeping us safe on a daily basis, and doing so in such a professional AND personable manner!

We were eating at Blue Willow on Merrill Avenue this past Sunday afternoon, and there appeared to be a stop and arrest across the street; a fairly significant one, I imagine, as 3 squad cars showed up. However, from what I could see, even the person taken into custody was treated with respect and dignity, and the whole situation was handled quickly, and with no disruption to the people in the restaurant, which I was very impressed by as well!

I have had several contacts with your officers, as we live on top of East Hill, and they are frequently monitoring traffic in the morning hours when we leave for work. We always make a point of rolling the window down and thanking them for their service. Even when we run into one of the officers out in the community - sometimes at the gas station - they are always so accommodating and pleasant, as well as being gracious when thanked for a job well done.

With all the recent, and, I'm sure, future news reports on police forces in other communities that are quite negative, I can say without hesitation that the Wausau Police Department is extremely professional in their day-to-day work in the community. However, equally as important, they are personable, and it is evident that they continue to build relationships with the citizens they service. That, I believe, is at the core of any organization's strength and ultimate success. My wife and I are involved in customer service in our jobs, and continue to be impressed with the degree of service your officers deliver.

Please extend our thanks to your staff, and ... thanks also to you for setting the "gold standard".



**Officer Appreciation for Officers Brady Copas and James Martin  
Customer Survey completed by an OWI Violator**

**RATINGS**

Concern: Excellent  
Helpfulness: Excellent  
Knowledge: Excellent  
Fairness: Excellent  
Solving the Problem: Excellent  
Putting you at Ease: Excellent  
Professional Conduct: Excellent  
Response Time: Excellent  
Quality of Service: Excellent

**NATURE OF CONTACT**

Answer: Arrested

**NUMBER OF CONTACTS**

Answer: One

**NEIGHBORHOOD PROBLEMS**

- 1: James Martin
- 2: Brady Copas
- 3:

**RECCOMENDATION**

No improvement could be made, both officers did an outstanding job. I was a uncooperative belligerent during an OWI arrest and both officers were composed professional, truly an asset to the police force in Wausau.

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**Response from Captain Bliven**

Feedback like this is always nice. It's especially great in this circumstance because the person you arrested is the person telling us how well you represented our agency. This person acknowledged you both as being "composed" and "professional" as they were uncooperative and belligerent. Excellent work with your professionalism and respect for all you encounter. Thank you for being outstanding examples of our core values in action. I'm grateful you are members of our department.



Officer Brady Copas



Officer James Martin



**Officer Appreciation for Officers Jurasin, Peterson, & Kurtzhals  
Email from Captain Barnes regarding assisting Everest Metro Police Department**

I received a call from Captain Schultz of Everest Metro PD and he was extending his appreciation for your assistance with a call near the Night Inn this morning. Clay mentioned how much he appreciates our ability to help each other out in high stress situations like this. Thank you for representing the department and the work you did.



**Officer Appreciation for Officer Phillips  
From the Daisy Troop 7034**

At times, upon request, we will give tours of the police department. This time, Officer John Phillips gave a tour to the Daisy Troop 7034. The troop was so pleased with the tour they presented Officer Phillips with a thank you card and treats.





### Cow-9 Handler?



What did you do on Thanksgiving day? Officers Dave Landretti, Maureen Pilsner, and Brent Tidquist were called out to 14th Avenue for a traffic hazard—a cow was walking in the road.

Officer Landretti was able to wrangle up the cow and is now our newest 'Cow-9' Handler.



### Jennifer Friday and K9 Bak

Be careful, Jennifer, teasing a Police K9 is not advisable!





### Officer Spotlight Officer Brady Copas

Hello everyone, I'm Brady Copas #157 and I started with the Wausau Police Department on June 22, 2015. I completed the field-training program on November 1, 2015 and have been assigned to night shift patrol.

I graduated from Edgar High School in May of 2012. After graduating I set my sights on the Criminal Justice Program at Northcentral Technical College in Wausau. While attending college in Wausau I started working at Best Buy. While working there I met Officer Jim Martin, #3153. Officer Martin and I became friends and he had a huge influence on my pursuit of a career in law enforcement, I cannot thank him enough.



Officer Brady Copas

While attending college I worked several security jobs including: BestBuy, Fleet Farm and Aspirus Wausau Hospital. In May of 2014, I was hired by the Wausau Police Department as a Community Service Officer. In that position I worked closely with the community while I rode a bicycle through the parks and downtown area. The CSO position energized my passion for working with the City of Wausau as well as the citizens of the City.

Each day I come to work I look at it as a blessing. The people I work with I think of as my family. One of the quotes that has stuck with me while working for the department was from Captain Bliven. He said people do not call the police on their best days; they call on their worst days. This statement has stuck with me since the day I heard it. My goal is to always try and help people turn their day around regardless of how big or small the issue is.

Some of my hobbies are spending time with family, watching sports and weight lifting.

I am honored to work with my coworkers and the citizens of Wausau.

Thank you.



Be safe, always appreciate your blessings, and never take things for granted.

**Jeff Hardel**  
**Chief of Police**  
**Wausau Police Department**

**Leadership Quotes:**  
*To add value to others, one must first value others.*  
**John Maxwell**

*The quality of a leader is reflected in the standards they set for themselves.*  
**Ray Kroc**