



NEWSLETTER

SUMMER EDITION 2014



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RICHMOND REVIEW: Looking at Recent Legislation from Virginia's Capitol



2014-2015

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RICHMOND REVIEW: LOOKING AT RECENT LEGISLATION FROM VIRGINIA'S CAPITOL

Three important new bills concerning privacy and crime have passed through the House of Delegates and Senate, and have been signed into law by Governor McAuliffe this spring. HB 326, introduced by Delegate Robert Bell and encompassing the earlier **HB 49, makes it a Class 1 misdemeanor for a person to distribute or disseminate images of another person for malicious intent**, and updates terminology to keep pace with the increasing vulnerability of privacy to widespread use of personal electronics devices. In an era when cell phones with photographic and filming capabilities and internet communications are widespread and subject to abuse, **the new law seeks to safeguard the privacy of Virginians.**

HB 1251, introduced by Delegate David Ramadan, requires that individuals registered with the Sex Offender and Crimes Against Minors Registry **must re-register in person with local law enforcement within three days following a change of the**

offender's name. It also requires that an incarcerated or civilly committed person must notify the Registry within three days following a name change. Previously, there was no specified time period for when offenders had to re-register. The bill also requires that during the period for which an individual is required to be included in the Registry, any former name must also be included. Registered offenders who have changed their name prior to July 1st of this year who have not already re-registered following a name change must register within three days of July 1, 2014.

Similarly, HB 233, also introduced by Delegate Bell, **requires a circuit court to find good cause before accepting name change applications from certain individuals**, including probationers, sex offenders, and those incarcerated. With the obvious danger of concealing the person's accurate profile due to the name change, these measures are hoped to reduce the likelihood of criminals using name changes to avoid compliance with the law.

VIRGINIA'S SHERIFFS ARE PROUD TO ANNOUNCE 2014 VSI SCHOLARSHIP AWARDS



Smyth County Sheriff David Bradley presents a scholarship award to Dustin Wayne Tilson

great source of pride for us all and a vital step in ensuring our safety. VSI is the only organization in Virginia helping the state's law enforcement students with Criminal Justice scholarships.

One of our most recent scholarship award recipients is Benjamin W. Rupert, of New Kent County, Virginia. Benjamin is planning on attending Virginia Commonwealth University where he will be pursuing a course of study in Criminal Justice.

With the help of supporters like you, VSI secures the critical funding needed to continue providing desperately needed scholarships to Virginia citizens to pursue Criminal Justice degrees — a

(continued on pg.3)



LIKE THE VIRGINIA SHERIFFS' INSTITUTE ON FACEBOOK!

Do you have a Facebook account? So do we! The Virginia Sheriffs' Institute has set a goal of reaching **500 "likes"** on our Facebook page, and we'd really appreciate your "electronic approval" as well! Please visit our Facebook page today and help us reach 500 likes at www.facebook.com/vasheriffsinstitute!

VIRGINIA LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS' MEMORIAL SERVICE HELD AT CAPITOL

On the evening of Tuesday, May 27th, Governor Terry McAuliffe presided over the 2014 Virginia Law Enforcement Officer's Memorial Service at the Virginia State Capitol in Richmond. While gathering to remember and honor all Virginia law enforcement officers who have given their lives in the performance of their duties, this year's ceremony was dedicated to the memory of Virginia State Police Sergeant J. Michael Phillippi and Greensville County Deputy Sheriff Percy L. House, III.

Sergeant Phillippi, a native of Gate City, was a 42-year veteran of the Virginia State Police who served in the Martinsville, Henry County and Patrick County region.

He was involved in an early morning traffic accident on January 11th of this year which caused his death. Later that month, on the last day of January, 52-year old Greensville County Deputy Sheriff Percy House was also killed in an accident blamed on icy road conditions while responding to a call in his patrol car.

Losing both of these dedicated officers and valued colleagues to wintry road conditions underlines the many sources of danger which law enforcement personnel face on our behalf. The grateful thanks, thoughts and prayers of the entire Virginia law enforcement community are with their families -- they will not be forgotten.



U.S. SUPREME COURT HEARS ARGUMENTS ON CELL PHONES AND SEARCHES

Cellular phones and other handheld communications devices have become a ubiquitous feature of modern society, with over 90% of American adults possessing one. They've had a remarkable impact on our lives, allowing the sharing of information quickly and easily from virtually any location, and helping us record and enjoy our experiences. As we saw in the Spring 2013 Newsletter, however, the widespread use of cell phones creates new issues of concern as well (see "Tough New "Texting While Driving" Legislation Moving Through Virginia General Assembly").

The United States Supreme Court recently heard arguments on appeals involving individuals in California and Massachusetts who were convicted of criminal offenses involving drugs and gang activity on the strength of evidence obtained from their personal devices, such as contact phone numbers, texts, pictures, and addresses. At issue is whether law

enforcement must obtain a search warrant to access data on the personal cell phone of an individual under arrest — a classic instance of weighing an individual's right to privacy against reasonable concerns of law enforcement.

As new technologies present new opportunities — for both law-abiding citizens and criminals alike, our society grapples with how best to navigate the corresponding application of laws. As Virginia Sheriffs' Institute Executive Director John W. Jones puts it, "the use of cell phones is a public safety issue — we have been able to locate missing persons, solve crimes." But just as with texting while driving — the tool that can so quickly summon help to save lives can also, through irresponsible use, endanger them — there has to be a balance between privacy and protection of the public with regard to cell phone data and evidence. The VSI has not yet taken an official position on the cases before the Justices, but will monitor the situation closely as the Court deliberates this summer.

2014 Scholarship Awards (continued)

We're very pleased to announce that **110 promising Virginia students have benefited from your generous support this year** — 109 fulltime scholarships at \$1,000 and 1 part-time at \$500. That's over \$100,000 going toward education costs for some

great young people that will benefit everyone in our Commonwealth. It's all part of our effort to provide an opportunity for students across Virginia to pursue a career of service to community in law enforcement, to the benefit of all Virginia's citizens!

PERSONAL MESSAGE FROM VSI EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, JOHN W. JONES



From everyone here at the Virginia Sheriffs' Institute, I hope you and your family are looking forward to another busy summer season here in our beautiful Commonwealth!

With all the opportunities for recreation and enjoyment during the long, warm days of summer, there are also some important things to keep in mind to ensure this busy season remains safe for you and your family.

If you have plans for a summer getaway or other activities in and around your community, use discretion in making your plans known — don't "broadcast" when you are traveling away from home, when you are home alone, where your children are if they aren't with you, etc. These days, many people find social media tools such as Facebook or Twitter extremely convenient for keeping family and friends informed of their activities and whereabouts, but these applications may also provide information to individuals seeking easy targets for crime.

Also very important, now that school is out for summer vacation, is keeping tabs on your children — make sure you know who your children are with and know the parents of their friends.

Many of the suggestions for maintaining a safe, secure environment around your home which I mentioned in the spring issue continue to hold true for summer — remember to secure doors and windows when doing yard work, lock parked vehicles, and keep an eye on your neighbors' home while they are away, etc.

As always, I hope you'll continue to be an important partner in our efforts to keep your community secure by reporting crimes and suspicious activity when you see them so that your Sheriffs' Office can do their very best to keep Virginia a safe place to work, play, live, and raise families.

On behalf of everyone here at the Virginia Sheriffs' Institute, thank you again for your steadfast support — I hope you have a safe and happy summer!

Thank again for all you do to support us!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "John W. Jones". The signature is fluid and cursive.

John W. Jones, Executive Director
Virginia Sheriffs' Institute
701 East Franklin Street, Suite 706
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LOUDOUN OFFICERS COLLECT 1,000 POUNDS IN UNWANTED & UNUSED PRESCRIPTION DRUGS DURING NATIONAL TAKE-BACK DAY

As highlighted in our Spring issue, law enforcement agencies across Virginia participated in the National Prescription Drug Take-Back Initiative on April 26th (see "It's Time Again for National Drug Take-Back Day in Virginia").

In just one example of this effective partnership between federal and local law enforcement, Loudoun County agencies collected over 1,000 pounds of expired or unused pharmaceuticals which will no longer pose a threat to the public. Along with the Loudoun County Sheriffs' Office, officers from the Leesburg, Middleburg, and Purcellville Police Departments, and concerned citizens worked together to collect and dispose of the medications.

Loudoun County Sheriff Mike Chapman lauded the successful Take-Back Day's results, saying, "the Loudoun County Sheriff's Office is happy to work with our partners in law enforcement on the local and federal level during the take-back initiative. This year over 1,000 pounds of prescription drugs were handed-over to law enforcement in Loudoun, the largest amount ever collected in the county."

We Want to Hear from You ...

Drop us a note, give us a call, or send us an email.



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The Virginia Sheriffs' Institute solicits articles and comments from associate members of the Virginia Sheriffs' Institute for inclusion in this newsletter. Articles and comments should be directed to: John W. Jones, Executive Director, Virginia Sheriffs' Institute, 701 East Franklin Street, Suite 706, Richmond, VA 23219-2512, or phone (804) 225-7152.

The Virginia Sheriffs' Institute does not solicit donations by telephone.