



NEWSLETTER
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IN THIS ISSUE ...

VSI Launches Anti-Identity Theft Campaign	2
Pet Theft on the Rise	2
"Move Over" — It's the Law..	3
New Sheriffs Orientation	3
Computer Monitoring Program for Parents	3
VSI Scholarship Application Available	4
Message from John W. Jones	4

**5 QUICK TIPS
TO AVOID**

**IDENTITY
THEFT**

**The Fastest Growing Crime
IN AMERICA**

GET YOUR FREE GUIDE NOW!

Prepared by the *Virginia Sheriffs' Institute*

**VSI LAUNCHES
NEW ONLINE
CAMPAIGN
TO COMBAT
IDENTITY THEFT**



2011-2012

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VSI LAUNCHES CAMPAIGN TO COMBAT IDENTITY THEFT

Identity theft is the fastest growing crime in America. In fact, in a recent two-year period, nearly 12 million Americans were victims of identity theft. Oftentimes victims of identity theft do not realize they are victims until they are notified by a debt collector — and that's when the real nightmare begins.

That's why VSI is leading the charge in our state to educate citizens on the growing dangers of identity theft, and inform you on what you can do to protect yourself and your family members from identity thieves.

As you know, Virginia Sheriffs are the only law enforcement officials elected by the people of Virginia, and with the support of citizens like you, Virginia Sheriffs and Deputies are fighting identity theft and nabbing the perpetrators. If you suspect you may be a victim of identity theft, file a police report, cancel your credit cards, and immediately notify your financial institutions. To receive an immediate, free electronic copy of VSI's report on how to avoid becoming a victim of identity theft, please visit the News & Info section of our website — where you'll find specific information for Virginia residents. Or call VSI's office at (804) 225-7152 to request a free brochure.

As always, I urge you to contact my office directly if you have any further questions about identity theft or want to express any other concerns about crime prevention efforts in your community.



To receive your free report go to www.vasheriffs.org

Dog-Napping on the Rise — How to Protect Your Pet

According to the American Kennel Club (AKC), we're experiencing a "sharp rise" in dog thefts nationwide. In the first seven months of 2010, there were 150 reported dog thefts; in 2011, there were 224 in the same period — nearly a 50 percent increase.

Here's what you can do to protect your pets: Keep dogs inside when not at home. Don't leave dogs unattended in cars or tied up outside. Microchip your animal so they have permanent identification. And if you suspect your dog has been stolen, immediately call local law enforcement and local shelters.

MISSING!



REMINDER: "MOVE OVER" IS THE LAW

As a result of numerous fatalities associated with law enforcement officers enforcing traffic laws and removing and identifying dangerous drivers from our state roads, Virginia enacted the "Move Over" law. This law, amended in 2010, is aimed at protecting emergency personnel while they make our highways safer and aid citizens in distress.

Virginia Sheriffs would like to remind drivers that this law mandates that motorists change lanes, if it is safe to do so, when approaching emergency vehicles are displaying red or blue lights; or tow trucks, motorist assistance vehicles, and highway maintenance vehicles are displaying amber-colored flashing lights. This action provides room for law enforcement and emergency personnel to do their jobs safely.



VSI is pleased to report that these efforts have made a difference. In fact, for two consecutive years, we have had historically low numbers of highway traffic fatalities in our state.

As always, Virginia law enforcement officers need your help to continue to improve the safety of our roadways. Here's what you can do:

- Drive drug-free and alcohol free
- Buckle up
- Avoid distractions, such as hands-on cell phones and texting
- Share the road and stay in your lane
- Move over for emergency vehicles
- Obey speed limits.

Newly Elected Sheriffs Receive Training

New County Sheriffs were elected in November. Training seminars for all newly elected Sheriffs are offered by VSI each year that new Sheriffs are voted into office.

The program includes a detailed review of current legal issues facing Sheriffs; a review of applicable laws, regulations and policies affecting newly-elected Sheriffs; introduction of newly-elected Sheriffs to members of state administrative agencies and agency leaders with whom Sheriffs will be dealing during their tenure as Sheriffs; introduction and review of Virginia Sheriffs' Association and our related not-for-profit corporation, the Virginia Sheriffs' Institute, Inc.; and introduction to experienced Sheriffs in leadership positions in both organizations.

The orientation program for new Sheriffs was held November 29-December 1.

Fairfax County Sheriff's Office Helps Parents Monitor Kids' Online Activity

The Fairfax County Sheriff's Office is offering parents Internet monitoring software to help them quickly and easily assess what their children are doing online. The ComputerCOP software scans the computer for potentially objectionable images and text associated with pornography, drugs, weapons, or violence.

"The Internet is a valuable resource for connecting us with information and people around the world," said Sheriff Stan Barry. "But online predators and cyber bullies pose a real threat to our children. Running the ComputerCOP software is a proactive step toward protecting your children from being victimized."

The ComputerCOP software will be available free of charge for Fairfax County residents at child identification/fingerprinting events sponsored by the Sheriff's Office. Please visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/sheriff/news/fingerprint.htm or www.facebook.com/fairfaxcountysheriff for a list of upcoming events.



Don't forget to Join Us on Facebook!—
Where we'll keep you updated on breaking news, including legislation that could impact law enforcement efforts in Virginia. And feel free to post your feedback on ways we can improve our programs that benefit Virginia Sheriffs, Deputies, and citizens like you.

PERSONAL MESSAGE FROM VSI EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR JOHN W. JONES



On behalf of all of us at the Virginia Sheriffs' Institute, I hope you and your family are enjoying this holiday season. If you choose to stay close to home for your upcoming holiday plans, I'm sure you won't be disappointed by all the festive events Virginia has to offer.

As you know, the holiday season is an especially busy time of year on

Virginia's roadways and in crowded parking lots when everyone's vying for limited space, so it's important to practice patience. Speeding, distractions, and alcohol contribute to the increased number of accidents this time of year. If you are attending a holiday celebration and plan on drinking alcohol, designate a driver or take a cab. Virginia state has a zero tolerance policy for drunk drivers and will be out in force to ensure all of our roadways are safe.

The men and women of the your local Sheriff's office are committed to keeping our residents and visitors safe during this holiday season. To continue to be effective at combating crime, we need your help. That's why I'm asking you to report crimes and suspicious activity when you see them so that we can do our very best to keep this community a safe place to work, play, live, and raise our families.

As Executive Director of VSI, I deeply appreciate your continued support and I look forward to working with you in the New Year to help your community be all it can be.

Happy Holidays,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "John W. Jones".

John W. Jones, Executive Director
Virginia Sheriffs' Institute
701 East Franklin Street, Suite 706
Richmond, VA 23219

Scholarship Applications Now Available

One of the many benefits the Virginia Sheriffs' Institute offers is our scholarship program. This award — which is funded by generous VSI supporters like you — is granted to full-time or part-time students majoring in criminal justice and attending a Virginia state college or university. Last year alone, our Scholarship Committee awarded 64 scholarships to Virginia's youth.

Scholarship applications may be downloaded from our website or picked up in your local Sheriff's office after January 31, 2012. In addition to the application, students must submit SAT scores, transcripts, and an essay. A full list of application materials can be found at <http://vasheriffsinstitute.org/scholarship/>. Applications are due May 1, 2012.

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.

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 does not solicit donations by telephone.