



NEWSLETTER

WINTER EDITION 2015



John W. Jones
Executive Director
701 East Franklin Street, Suite 706
Richmond, VA 23219
(804) 225-7152

IN THIS ISSUE ...

Tackling Virginia's Growing Heroin Problem	2
Virginia Sheriffs Ready for New Legislative Assembly	2-3
Scholarship Applications Now Available	3
D.A.R.E. Officer of Year Announced	3
When the Weather Outside Is Frightful	4
Message from John W. Jones	4



Tackling Virginia's Growing Heroin Problem



2014-2015

President

Sheriff Anthony W. Roper
Clarke County

Immediate Past President

Sheriff Steven L. Dye
Russell County

First Vice President

Sheriff C.O. Balderson
Westmoreland County

Secretary

Sheriff Javier J. Smith
Charles City County

Treasurer

Sheriff James R. Edwards, Jr.
Greensville County

Board Members

Sheriff Barry E. Letterman
Appomattox County

Sheriff Shannon B. Zeman
Floyd County

Sheriff Michael S. "Mike"
Mondul, City of Danville

Executive Director

John W. Jones

TACKLING VIRGINIA'S GROWING HEROIN PROBLEM

Following a dramatic surge in the number of heroin overdose deaths in Virginia, Attorney General Mark R. Herring recently announced a series of aggressive new initiatives aimed at fighting the abuse of prescription drugs and heroin. In fact, heroin overdose deaths nearly doubled from 103 in 2011 to 197 in 2013. This is a widespread and growing problem that is affecting all of our communities.

Opiate and heroin addiction isn't just a problem in Virginia. Over the past several years, there has been a disturbing and growing national trend in heroin use. As a result of prescription drugs becoming less available and more expensive, users are turning to more easily accessible street drugs like heroin.

The Attorney General's new initiatives aim to focus on prioritizing heroin and prescription drug cases to ensure that drug dealers are held accountable. In addition, the Attorney General's office is working to identify legislative solutions to this crisis by providing a "Good Samaritan" provision for overdoses;

implementing more effective "drug induced homicide" statutes, to make it easier to prosecute drug dealers whose drugs lead to a fatal overdose; and expanding the Naloxone pilot project to allow certain jurisdictions to use naloxone, a prescription that can reverse the effect of an opiate overdose nearly instantly.

Other efforts include: holding accountable those professionals who make prescription drugs illegally available, promoting prevention and education to ensure that young people, especially, never start using in the first place, and organizing a summit of law enforcement leaders, prosecutors, and health professionals to determine what legislative or tactical changes may be needed to reduce the usage of and fatalities caused by prescription opiates and heroin.

We will continue to monitor this alarming trend, and ask for your support in reporting any suspicious activity to your local law enforcement officials.

VIRGINIA SHERIFFS READYING FOR 2015 SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

The Virginia Sheriffs' Association's (VSA) legislative committee has met and established priorities for the upcoming session. At the top of the list is the continuing issue of salaries and career development for the Sheriffs and deputy sheriffs. In most counties and cities, deputy sheriffs are "supplemented" by the local government to provide a livable wage; however, in about 25-30% of the localities, deputy sheriffs are only provided what the state reimburses for salaries. Currently, that is "food stamp" wages if the deputy is at the bottom

of the salary scale with a non-working spouse with a family of four. That is why turnover is hovering around 25-30% in some localities.

While getting these deputies off food stamps has been a campaign issue for Governor McAuliffe, it also very much requires the support of the General Assembly. Accordingly, the VSA has approached the leadership of the General Assembly and Governor McAuliffe to address this critical issue. All state

(Continued on page 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!](http://www.facebook.com/vasheriffsinstitute)

General Assembly (Continued from page 2)

supported salary raises were deleted from the 2014 budget because of lost revenue. The budget has to balance, and it is a more difficult issue than many realize given the pressure on the state budget.

Other legislative priorities include funding for the state code provision which provides one deputy sheriff for each 1,500 population in all 86 counties in which the Sheriff's office is the primary law enforcement agency; funding for localities to run the local and regional jails as required by the Appropriations Act and optional fee increases for localities for courthouse and courtroom security.

Other "hot button" issues that Sheriffs will weigh in on include keeping concealed carry permits local (not administered through a state agency). VSA (along with the Virginia Court Clerks' Association) is favoring keeping the current system as is and not increasing the fees for citizens to carry concealed handguns to \$100.00. The Sheriffs will be assisting in the legislation addressing special conservators of the peace and so called "private police departments" and legislation that will allow law enforcement agencies to use drones if necessary to provide public safety in emergencies. Some organizations have painted the use of drones as anti-American attempting to limit the use of drones in all circumstances.

The VSA is the voice of Virginia's Sheriffs and deputy sheriffs and currently has nearly 9,000 members in all of Virginia's counties and cities, including your community of Grayson County. The VSA Executive Director, John W. Jones, also serves as the registered lobbyist for the Virginia Sheriffs Association.



SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATIONS NOW AVAILABLE

One of the many benefits the Virginia Sheriffs' Institute offers to Grayson County 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. In fact, with the help of loyal members like you, we've awarded 110 scholarships for 2014-2015 to Virginia's youth.

Scholarship applications are currently available to be downloaded from our website or they may be picked up in your local Sheriff's office after January 31, 2015. In addition to the application, students must submit SAT scores, transcripts, and an essay. A full list of application materials can be found at <https://vasheriffsinstitute.org/scholarship/>. Applications are due May 1, 2015.

LOUDON COUNTY SHERIFFS' DEPUTY NAMED D.A.R.E. 2014 OFFICER OF THE YEAR

The Virginia Sheriffs' Institute would like to congratulate Loudoun County Sheriff's Deputy Joe Heydens on being awarded 2014 Virginia State D.A.R.E. Officer of the Year. He was nominated by his supervisor and selected by the D.A.R.E. Officers Association to receive the Bentowski/Eanes D.A.R.E. Officer of the Year Award, named for Chief Mike Bentowski and retired Virginia State Trooper Bill Eanes.

Senior Deputy Heydens joined the Loudoun County Sheriffs' Office in 2002 as a deputy assigned to the Corrections and Courts Services section. He previously served as a corrections officer with the Virginia Department of Corrections and as a security policeman with the U.S. Air Force. Since 2006, Heydens has been a certified D.A.R.E. law enforcement officer providing instruction to students on how to prevent drug abuse and violence among our youth.

The D.A.R.E. (Drug Abuse Resistance Program) has been taught by members of the Loudoun County Sheriff's Office to fifth-grade students in Loudoun County schools since 1987. It is an important collaborative effort between law enforcement, educators, and students.

PERSONAL MESSAGE FROM VSI EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, JOHN W. JONES



On behalf of everyone here at the Virginia Sheriffs' Institute, I hope you and your family had a joyous and safe holiday season, and that you're eager to kickoff the New Year.

With the prospect of wintry conditions for the next several months, I urge you to take extra care and caution when traveling on Virginia's

roadways. I've included some tips on how to prepare for winter conditions, including some essentials for your vehicle's emergency kit.

With your continued strong support, VSI will work to promote crime prevention and public safety efforts in your community and all across Virginia, during this winter season. At the same time, we are focused on bringing much-needed attention to improving the working conditions of our hardworking deputy sheriffs, and enhancing the criminal justice system to deal with the ever-increasing challenges faced by law enforcement, the courts, and correctional system — including the growing abuse of heroin and prescription drugs, which I address in this issue.

To continue to be effective at combating crime in our communities, 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 our Commonwealth a safe place to work, play, live, and raise our families.

Thank you again for all you do as a loyal supporter of VSI — and Happy New Year!

Sincerely,

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

WHEN THE WEATHER OUTSIDE IS FRIGHTFUL



Winter weather has arrived in Virginia. Here are a few quick tips from the Virginia Department of Emergency Management to keep you and your family — and pets — safe this winter. If winter weather hits:

1. Stay indoors.
2. If you do have to go outside, dress in layers and keep dry.
3. Check on family and neighbors.
4. Know symptoms of hypothermia or frostbite.
5. Keep pets warm, inside, with unfrozen water.
6. Keep a flashlight, ice scraper, and blankets in your vehicle's emergency kit.

Commonsense and preparedness will go a long way toward ensuring a safe winter!

We Want to Hear from You ...

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



701 East Franklin Street - Suite 706
Richmond, Virginia 23219



(804) 225-7152 phone



(804) 225-7162 fax



vsavsi@virginiasheriffs.org

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.