

# The INFORMANT

The Kansas City Missouri Police Department

## Group aids 1st responders on scene

When the Kansas City Royals made it to the World Series last year, hundreds of police personnel were needed at Kauffman Stadium to assist with security. Given that the Royals hadn't made it to the big event in 29 years, the expense wasn't exactly budgeted for (the City later reimbursed the department for the overtime incurred).

What certainly wasn't in the budget was feeding those hundreds of officers, who had to stay at the stadium for lengthy shifts. Jackson County Sheriff Mike Sharp's deputies were assisting with the security detail, too, and he called a man known for helping and feeding the homeless in Kansas City: Scott Lamaster, and his organization known as Taking It to the Streets.

"He brought a food truck down there for us all four nights of home games for free," said Major James Connelly, who was the incident commander for the World Series and is serving in that role again this year. "He came in absolutely demanding nothing. He had it set up within two hours of the Sheriff's phone call, and he fed all the police."

Scott Lamaster is now even better equipped to serve first responders at the World Series this year with a new emergency response trailer. Funded by donors, he designed the trailer himself. It features two bathrooms, a small kitchen and food service area and video monitors.

The trailer had its first big test the night of October 12, when a large retail and apartment building went up in flames at Independence and Prospect avenues. The blaze killed Kansas City Firefighters Larry Leggio and John Mesh, devastating the community. The investigation into the deadly fire was long and painstaking. Taking It to the Streets volunteers manned the trailer on scene for 13 days, serving more than 2,000 meals to firefighters, police and federal investigators, as well as 2,000 bottles of Gatorade and 1,000 bottles of water.



**Scott Lamaster's Taking It to the Streets emergency response trailer assisted investigators, including KCPD Bomb and Arson Det. Lowell Lacy, who sifted through the rubble of the Oct. 12 blaze that killed two firefighters.**

Scott Lamaster's brother-in-law was a firefighter who was killed in the line of duty, so it's his passion to serve first responders who must be on scenes for long periods of time. He said first responders are OK for the first two hours of an incident, and most calls take less than that. But a larger critical incident, like a stand-off or lengthy investigation, can keep officers at a scene for hours or days.

"After about two hours, you start to dehydrate," Lamaster said. "And you probably need to use the restroom. Within about four hours, you really need food. It's just the way humans are made."

He said most of the public will never understand what it's like for those first responders in such situations. While they may be able to afford their own food and drink, they can't get to it. They're under a great deal of physical and emotional stress, with no access to something as simple as a toilet. He said he created his trailer with nice, spacious bathrooms, including one just for women. He wants first responders to feel appreciated for what they do, and he wants to offer a small respite amid chaos.

"When people see that trailer rolling down the highway, I want them to see help is on the way, that hope is here," Lamaster said.

Taking It to the Streets is a 501 (c)3 non-profit. It also serves single moms and widows, provides disaster relief and does international missions work. It operates with volunteers. If you'd like to make a donation, send it to:

Taking It to the Streets  
P.O. Box 404  
Greenwood, MO 64034

After Lamaster served officers at last year's World Series home games, they took up a surprise collection for Taking It to the Streets. But Lamaster and his volunteers would have come regardless.

**Pg. 2** Heartland Police Canine Training

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**Pg. 4** Officially Speaking Upcoming Events

# Regional K-9 training comes to KC



**K**ansas City played host to a large regional training event and competition for canine officers in October.

The Canine Unit attended and helped coordinate the 2nd Annual 2015 Heartland Canine Training and Trials from October 6 to 10, sponsored by the National Police Canine Association (NPCA). The NPCA is dedicated to providing the best training and support for NPCA members, along with those who work hand-in-hand with their members.

The week was filled with a variety of training courses. In the classroom, officers were trained in the Dutch language. A majority of police canines come from the Netherlands and receive their initial training in Dutch, so handlers need to learn Dutch commands. The canine-officer duos also trained in hard-surface tracking, such as following a scent on cement. They also did stair and car bite training, in which dogs worked on going upstairs when obstacles were placed or thrown in their way and jumping on cars, which can be quite slippery for them.

“All of these drills are purposeful and important for the canine officers,” said Lenexa Police Officer Ryan Sumner, who is North Central Regional Director for NPCA. “These drills help the dogs build confidence within them and help them realize that they can, indeed, do it.”

The dogs and officers also trained in newspaper bites and muzzle work. Newspaper bites emulate to the dog what a real bite feels like. Handlers wrap newspapers around their arm to engage the dogs. And the muzzle training allows for training without a bite suit and challenges the dog to still want to engage the “suspect” without that suit.

The training brought together 32 handler/dog teams that represented ten separate police agencies throughout the North Central Region. At the end of the training week, three separate competitions took place on Saturday, Oct. 10, in the categories of patrol, narcotics and explosive detection. Many members of the community came out to watch.

KCPD officers and canines performed admirably at the contest. Officer Jason Brungardt took first in explosive detection, Officer Kenneth Davis took second and Sergeant Catherine Kozal took third. Sergeant Bill Brown took second in narcotics, and Officer Brungardt took fifth in patrol.



# As fraud increases, investigators adapt

It's not just a new name.

The Economic Crimes Unit is handling increasingly complex cases with increasingly larger losses involving victims and suspects from all over the world. Known for generations as Fraud and Forgery, the Unit changed its name to Economic Crimes six months ago to better reflect the kind of work they're doing.

"The Unit's actually responsible for over 16 different crimes," Economic Crimes Unit Supervisor Sergeant Rob Rickett said.

For years, the four Forgery-side detectives investigated bad checks and counterfeit money, while the four Fraud-side detectives investigated pretty much everything else related to financial crimes, Sergeant Rickett said. But recently, the forgery caseload has remained steady while the fraud caseload has grown and grown. Right now, there is a 4-to-1 ratio of fraud to forgery reports in Kansas City.

So when Sergeant Monica Blackmore got moved from Forgery to oversee the new Cold Case/Missing Persons Unit earlier this year, Rickett said it just made sense to consolidate the squad and cross-train the detectives in all fraud and forgery crimes and bring a unified approach to them.

The main driver of the increase in fraud cases is the internet, Sergeant Rickett said. And victims are losing more money than ever before.

"Because of technology and the ability to scam somebody with it, we find people quickly incur huge losses," Sergeant Rickett said. "It used to be just a couple times a year we'd handle big losses, and that was usually because of embezzlement. But now our victims routinely lose at least \$10,000 and up. And we very frequently carry cases of \$100,000 losses and above."

That's why he said the Economic Crimes Unit is focusing on prevention and education like never before. Lately, they've been doing presentations to financial advisers and investor groups on preventing identity thefts. Sergeant Rickett also has presented to many senior



**Sergeant Rob Rickett of the Economic Crimes Unit, upper right, has been educating seniors in urban-core nursing homes about current scams. It's part of a broader public education effort by members of the revamped unit.**

citizens at nursing homes in the urban core the last three months to make them aware of scams that typically target the elderly.

Prevention is the key to protecting one's self from getting scammed out of money because it's getting increasingly difficult to track down suspects and get reparations. And those suspects can have hundreds of victims or more.

"It used to be that almost all our suspects were local," Sergeant Rickett said. "Now, hardly any of them are. They're all over the world."

The Economic Crimes Unit works frequently now with a variety of federal agencies from the FBI to the U.S. Department of Treasury to pursue some of these national and international suspects.

Some of the Unit's upcoming projects include monitoring for and investigating counterfeit tickets to the World Series, a crackdown on food stamp fraud and creating a public safety announcement on preventing holiday identify theft.

## Saying good-bye to the old East Patrol



The East Patrol Division hosted a farewell picnic and reunion for the station located at 27<sup>th</sup> Street and Van Brunt the evening of October 15. (Officers and staff are expected to move into the newly constructed East Patrol Station at 26<sup>th</sup> and Prospect in mid-November.) The picnic was open to all department members, retirees and invited community guests. More than 100 people came and enjoyed a barbecue dinner, reminiscing and stories of the old EPD. See p. 4 for information on the grand-opening celebration for the new East Patrol Division and Crime Lab campus.

## Upcoming Events

November 9  
**Awards Ceremony**

November 17  
**Board of Police Commissioners Meeting**

November 17  
**Citizens Academy Graduation**

November 20  
**Awards for Valor**

December 1  
**East Patrol Division/ Crime Lab Grand Opening**

December 15  
**Board of Police Commissioners Meeting**

The Informant is a publication of KCPD's Media Unit  
(816) 234-5170  
[www.kcpd.org](http://www.kcpd.org)

## Officially Speaking

### Awards

**Life-Saving Award**  
Sergeant John Bryant

**Meritorious Service Award**  
Fiscal Administrator Jennifer Emery

**Certificate of Commendation**  
Dispatcher Kimberly Hueser  
Officer Mary McCall

**Retirements**  
Major Floyd Mitchell

**Obituary**  
Civilian Donnie Bonner

The mission of the Kansas City Missouri Police Department is to protect and serve with professionalism, honor and integrity.

BE OUR SPECIAL GUEST

Please join the City of Kansas City, Missouri and the Kansas City Missouri Police Department to celebrate the opening of the new  
**Leon Mercer Jordan Campus**  
East Patrol Division and Regional Crime Lab

## RIBBON CUTTING & DEDICATION CEREMONY

**TUESDAY, DECEMBER 1, 2015**

**1:00–6:30 P.M.**

**2640 PROSPECT AVENUE  
KANSAS CITY, MISSOURI**

Campus Tours: 1:00–3:00 p.m. & 4:30–6:30 p.m. / Program: 3:30–4:30 p.m.  
Light hors d'oeuvres will be served.



Kansas City Missouri Police Department  
1125 Locust  
Kansas City, MO 64106