



ILLINOIS SHERIFFS'
ASSOCIATION

Protecting Our Communities,
HONOR • SAFETY • SERVICE



DEC 2025

The inside stories for you!
**SHERIFFS, LAW ENFORCEMENT
& MEMBERS NEWS & UPDATES**



Wishing you a joyful holiday season and a New Year
filled with health, peace, and prosperity.

As we celebrate, we also hold in our hearts and prayers
those we have lost.

God Bless You and Yours!

Jim, Teri, Lynn & Megan



Veto Session Update From ISA Executive Director: Jim Kaitschuk



Just when you think things can't get weirder.....think again! The 2025 Veto Session was one for the record books. In my 30 plus years of doing legislative work, I cannot recall a time that caused such consternation during a veto session as this one was able to accomplish. The session brought about discussions, once again, about the actions of law enforcement and specifically the actions and perceived actions of ICE.

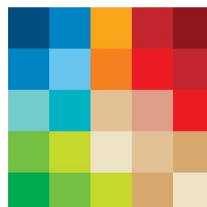
As you are likely aware Illinois law enforcement officers are PROHIBITED from participating or aiding in ANY civil immigration activities. Whether we agree with that prohibition or not, it is the law in Illinois until either the courts or the Federal government take action to supersede. The ISA and Sheriffs have consistently opposed efforts that restrict our interaction and support of our federal partners, and this Veto Session was no different.

Governor JB Pritzker signed legislation that is intended to preclude immigration enforcement actions by creating 1000 foot set back from Court Houses, limit their interaction in hospitals and childcare and require that universities establish policies for those seeking to perform immigration activities on their campuses. Additionally, the new law outlines steps to provide for civil action for individuals who believe they were harmed by law enforcement agents who knowingly violated Constitutional rights during civil immigration enforcement operations.

We, aided in huge part by our supporters in the General Assembly, were able to curtail a number of changes that would have again further perpetuated the challenges in the law enforcement community on retaining and recruiting officers.

With all of that said, 2025 is coming to an end but all of us here at the ISA feel truly blessed for all the support that we have received from all of you. While the year may have had its fair share of challenges, we were able to successfully traverse those and find new and even better paths for all of you and the law enforcement community moving forward. Thank you for continued support and blessings to all of you as we embark on the excitement of a new year.

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Altria

2026 ISA Get to Know Your Sheriff Series

January | Randolph County



GET TO KNOW YOUR SHERIFF - St. Clair County

1.

What first made you get involved with law enforcement?

During my college years, I had the opportunity to meet Sheriff Mearl Justus. I engaged in a conversation with him and several judges at a social gathering. By the conclusion of the evening, they persuaded me to test for the Cahokia Police Department.

2.

Describe your role as Sheriff in your Office and throughout your County:

My primary responsibility is to oversee all facets of my office, encompassing the jail, patrol, drug unit, investigations, and auto theft unit. Concurrently, I serve as the public face of law enforcement throughout the county.

3.

What is your favorite part about being St. Clair County Sheriff?

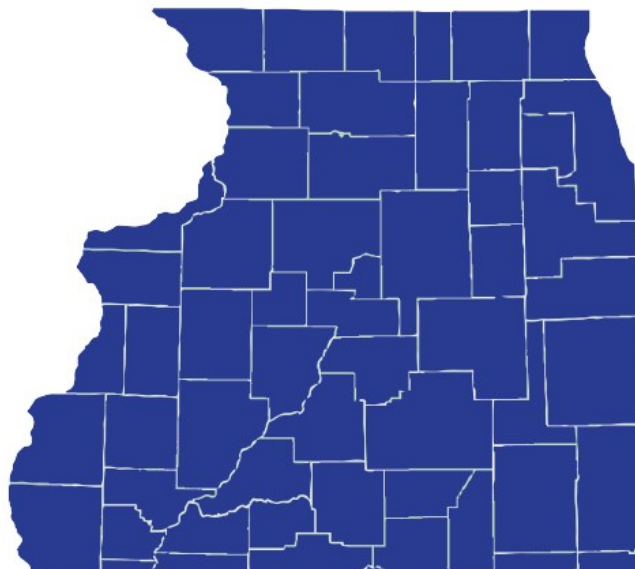
I am committed to advancing efforts to eliminate dangerous drugs and weapons from our neighborhoods. During my tenure, we have modernized the Sheriff's office by incorporating cutting-edge technology, thereby enhancing our crime-fighting capabilities.



Elected as
Sheriff 2012
46 Years in
Law Enforcement



Population
St. Clair County
254,777





Average
Household
Income
\$70,178

ST. CLAIR
COUNTY

4.

Describe what drives you to get involved within the community:

I have always wanted to see the right thing done no matter the situation.

5.

What's the best thing to happen to you because of your community or career in peace keeping service?

Earning the respect of the citizens. Respect is earned not granted.





6.

Tell us about someone or something that has influenced you:

For three decades, Sheriff Mearl Justus, a distinguished figure with a remarkable 50-year law enforcement career, served as my guiding light throughout my own professional journey. His mentorship and unwavering friendship have left an indelible mark on my life.

7.

What do you consider the biggest challenge in your community?

One of the most significant challenges we encounter is the disparity between rural and urban areas, which complicates the effective allocation of police resources.



8.

How do you think someone meeting you for the first time would describe you?

I am a friendly, outgoing, and caring individual who holds respect for everyone I encounter, regardless of the circumstances.

9.

What advice would you give young people?

Uphold your integrity and ethics at all times. Treat others with the same respect and kindness that you would expect to receive.



SHERIFF WATSON FUN FACTS:



IF YOU WEREN'T DOING WHAT YOU DO NOW, WHAT WOULD BE YOUR DREAM JOB?

Coaching college football.



WHAT DO YOU DO WHEN YOU AREN'T WORKING OR VOLUNTEERING?

Playing golf.



WHAT MIGHT SOMEONE BE SURPRISED TO KNOW ABOUT YOU?

I began my professional journey as a teacher and coach at Arthur High School in Arthur, Illinois.



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Scholarship Feature



2026 ISA Conference & Training Schedule



Sheriffs Winter Training Conference

February 7-10, 2026

President Abraham Lincoln Hotel,
Springfield

Chief Deputy & Jail Administrators Conference

April 22-24, 2026

Embassy Suites, East Peoria

Civil Process

June 2026, TBD, East Peoria

Sheriffs Summer Training Conference

September 12-15, 2026

Embassy Suites, East Peoria

Visit Our Website

We would not be able to put our training and conferences on without our Preferred Vendors! The Illinois Sheriffs' Association would like to thank your vendors listed below!

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NEWS FROM IL AND AROUND THE COUNTRY



Stateline politicians react to Illinois sheriffs' call for SAFE-T Act reform

By: Brea Walters | WIFR News

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Durbin, Grassley introduce laws to tackle rise in online child sextortion cases

By: KRISTINE FRAZAO | The National News Desk

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New laws: Gun storage, police background check changes take effect in 2026

By: Ben Szalinski | Capitol News Illinois

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Bill on Pritzker's desk could raise minimum detainment age for minors, create juvenile justice task force

By: Mike Miletich | WAND News

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2026 ISA K9 Hero: Meet DuPage County Sheriff's Office K9 Xena!

Hero - one who gives of themselves, often putting their own life at great risk, for the greater good of others...



**PRICE:
\$30 ea.**
includes
shipping



Your Donation Makes a Difference!

Every time you shop or become a member, you help ISA continue to provide support and training to Sheriff's Offices throughout Illinois.

This special DuPage County K9 HERO Xena plush is a DONATION ITEM, with a portion of proceeds going to the DuPage County K9 Unit in honor of K9 Xena. The ISA K9 Xena plush is fitted with a personalized camo tactical vest, embellished with the ISA logo, sheriff collar and Blue-Line Hero dog tag! Dimensions: 4" x 9"

...AND it comes with a K9 Xena Trading Card!!



SHERIFFS K9 HERO SERIES

Brought to you by the Illinois Sheriffs' Association

ilsheriff.org/k9-heroes

**Go to our site to read
the full story on Xena!**



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& FOLLOW**

**Invite
YOUR
FRIENDS**

f @illinoissheriffsassociation

Plan to LIKE, FOLLOW and SHARE posts from the ISA to help us spread the word about and educate others on public safety, policing and your rights that the ISA fights for!