



BACKING the BADGE
“Serving those that serve us.”

Newsletter Volume 6 Fall Edition by Gary M. Bush

Welcome to Volume 6 of the Backing the Badge Newsletter, Fall Edition. All previous editions are available on the Backing the Badge website at www.backingthebadge.com under the media tab. You can also find it on the Backing the Badge Facebook page. We hope that everyone had an enjoyable Summer, and I'm sure that many of you are glad that the kids are back in school.

Backing the Badge Participates in Recent Dr. Kevin Gilmartin Seminar

This past September, the Backing the Badge team had the honor of attending Emotional Survival for Law Enforcement held in Lansing, MI. The seminar was hosted by the Lansing Police Department and the Ingham County Sheriff's Office. Dr. Kevin Gilmartin, noted law enforcement speaker and author of a book by the same name, gave the presentation. In addition to having the opportunity to attend, Backing the Badge also sponsored 16 LEOs from surrounding agencies for the seminar. The day-long presentation was simply outstanding. I would urge any LEO to attend this seminar if you have the opportunity. It is well worth it. Dr. Gilmartin was even kind enough to pose for photos that you can see on our Facebook page.

Backing the Badge Participates in MSA Fall Conference

Alison Brown and I recently participated in the Michigan Sheriff's Association Fall Conference held at the Grand Traverse Resort and Spa in Acme, Michigan. There were many Michigan Sheriffs in attendance as well as many top administrators. Backing the Badge also sponsored one of the breaks. We had many interesting conversations and received many compliments on our work. Lt. William Tatrai of the Roscommon County Sheriff's Office was the winner of

our Backing the Badge drawing. He was the proud recipient of a set of Walker Electronic Ear Protectors.

How the Current Anti-cop Attitude Affects Me and How I Do My Job

By Detective Todd Tucker, Marion County Sheriff's Office, Ocala, Florida

I will admit that I'm looking over my shoulder these days. I do try to maintain a hyper vigilance in my surroundings. I see these new anti-cop groups as a lot like the ones in the 60's and 70's. During the 1970's over 200 cops were killed in the line of duty every year. I grew up in that time and remember how it seemed that a law enforcement officer was killed every other day.

But I will say, many more people of late have walked up to me and told me that they appreciate the job I do. I see in their eyes the concern for me and our nation. That gives me hope. I don't know what tomorrow will bring. But you can rest assured I will face that challenge leaning forward as all paratroopers do. I will continue to do the job I swore to do to the best of my ability. Stay frosty brothers and sisters and don't let the bastards get you down. Stay safe.

Backing the Badge LEO Spotlight

In each newsletter edition, Backing the Badge will spotlight an LEO and ask three questions. In this edition, our spotlight is on Officer Mike Wierenga of the Grand Rapids Police Department. Mike is a 23 year law enforcement veteran, and has worked nearly his entire career on Patrol with the exception of four years he spent in the Training Bureau. Mike currently works Patrol and is a team leader on his department's Peer Support Cop to Cop Team. Mike is co-founder of Two the Rescue Life Saving Training programs for law enforcement and other first responders and their families.

1. What influenced you to go into law enforcement?

I believe I had a calling to become a police officer. Growing up I always was impressed by police officers and the job they did. Right out of high school I became a reserve officer and enjoyed the interaction with people and helping them during their time of need. That experience brought me to the police academy and I have worked Patrol most of my career.

2. What are some key ways to stay healthy throughout your career? (both mentally and physically)

Staying healthy in law enforcement can be difficult if not managed by the officer with assistance from family and friends. I have been blessed by an amazing wife who keeps me balanced between the challenges of being a police officer and at home being the best father, husband and neighbor that I can be. I enjoy spending time with my family and friends around bonfires, pontoon boating, and taking small family vacations. Spending time with my family in the woods and walks along the beach is very rewarding and maximizes my time off from work with quality time at home.

3. What advice would you give to young officers just starting out?

Remember that 90 percent of society supports you. The majority of time law enforcement personnel deal with the same small percentage of society over and over again. Unfortunately, recently the small percentage is the loudest with the politicians and media. YOU make a difference every day in the lives of the communities you serve. Enjoy your good days and keep them at the forefront of your career so when you have the bad days you don't get down into the valley for too long. If you need help don't be afraid to ask. Revel in your accomplishments, smile at the colleagues you've taught, focus on the people you have helped, marvel at the lives you saved and share with the ones you love and this career will be very rewarding.

Remember; Backing the Badge on LinkedIn and Facebook

Don't forget, Backing the Badge is still on LinkedIn and Facebook. For those of you on LinkedIn, feel free to send me an invite to connect. Additionally, the Backing the Badge Facebook page is located at https://www.facebook.com/pages/Backing-the-Badge/1537650013166448?ref=aymt_homepage_panel. Feel free to stop by and "like" us.

Be a Part of the BACKING the BADGE Book!

How many times have you, as cop, said something like "with all the stuff on the street I've seen, I ought to write a book." Well, BACKING the BADGE and its' parent company, ENCOMPASS, LLC have decided to do just that. Actually, compile a book would be better. We are in the process of compiling stories from cops about a particular incident they were involved in or that a co-worker might have been involved in. Something that really affected them. How did you get through it? Did you have help or some type of support system? What advice would you give to young officers just starting out in the profession? I am soliciting submissions from any LEO. Each LEO's "story" will be its own chapter, and the submitter will get full credit for their story. I already have several great submissions. If you're interested, and have a story to tell, please email me for more information. gmbush@encompass.us.com let's do this. I look forward to hearing from you.

BADGE and BALANCE: Helpful Hints by Dr. Alison Brown

Don't let yesterday use up too much today. (*anonymous author*)

The Backing the Badge Team

Dr. Alison Brown, Executive Director and Co-Founder of BACKING the BADGE
abrown@encompass.us.com

Mike Ohren, VP of Organizational Development and Training for ENCOMPASS, LLC
mohren@encompass.us.com

Sara Eklove, LMSW, Chief Operating Officer and Employee Assistance Consultant
seklove@encompass.us.com

Jessi Zielinski, LMSW, Director of Organizational Development
jzielinski@encompass.us.com

Gary Bush, Senior Director and Co-Founder of BACKING the BADGE
gmbush@encompass.us.com

Jeff Baker, Senior Employee Assistance Consultant
jbaker@encompass.us.com

Michelle Kimmel-Fors, Executive Director, COMPASS
mkimmel-fors@encompass.us.com

BACKING the BADGE/ENCOMPASS

(800) 788-8630