

Dana Lawhorne is now serving in his fourth term of office as Sheriff for the City of Alexandria. A lifelong Alexandrian, Sheriff Lawhorne has dedicated his life to public service and building partnerships with the community and criminal justice agencies. At the end of 2021, he will be retiring following 43 years as an Alexandria law enforcement officer.

Sheriff Lawhorne began his career with the Alexandria Police Department in 1979 serving first in the Uniformed Patrol Division and then in the Criminal Investigations Division. During his 27 years with the Alexandria Police Department, Sheriff Lawhorne made significant contributions to the City's public safety that included working with youth and families as a Police Detective, serving on numerous public safety task forces and committees, to include serving as chair of the Police/Fire Pension Board; serving as team leader for the Hostage Negotiation Team, as a Field Training Officer for new police recruits and as a member of the Police Department's Honor Guard. His efforts were instrumental in drafting policy and procedures governing hostage/barricade operations, juvenile offenders, and violence prevention and response. He earned countless honors, awards and expressions of appreciation for his dedication to excellence and his compassion for people.

As Sheriff, he continued to exemplify this strength of character and his commitment to the City. Recognizing a need to improve the working relationship between the City's top two law enforcement agencies, Sheriff Lawhorne led the Sheriff's Office in forging a strong partnership with the Alexandria Police Department to improve the depth and quality of law enforcement services. Seeing an opportunity to better serve the City, Sheriff Lawhorne commissioned the Detention Center's Inmate Work Detail crew to clean and beautify neighborhoods and public areas throughout the City, resulting in saving the City hundreds of thousands of dollars in labor costs. Sheriff Lawhorne has effectively managed Sheriff's Office's fiscal matters to reduce costs to Alexandria residents.

During Sheriff Lawhorne's tenure, the Office implemented and supported new initiatives that serve young people and vulnerable adults, such as Project Lifesaver, a program to help rescue participating adults and children who wander due to Alzheimer's, Autism, Down Syndrome, and other conditions. The Office further expanded its work with youth by hosting graduating students from T.C. Williams during Senior Experience and partnering with the Substance Abuse Prevention Coalition of Alexandria for Project Sticker Shock and similar efforts to keep youth safe.

Under Sheriff Lawhorne's direction, the Sheriff's Office expanded educational opportunities for inmates. In 2012, the Office partnered with Northern Virginia Community College to launch Open Roads which allows inmates to take college courses for credit under the instruction of professors from NOVA. Eligible inmates can also earn professional certifications in food protection management and traffic flagging which makes them more competitive for employment in restaurants and food service and the road safety industry.

Sheriff Lawhorne was honored to see the local jail officially renamed the William G. Truesdale Adult Detention Center in 2011 in memory of the deputy slain in the line of duty 30 years earlier. Sheriff Lawhorne is also proud that the Sheriff's Office and the Detention Center have maintained their Triple Crown accreditations for achieving simultaneous accreditation from the American Correctional Association, the National Commission on Correctional Health Care, and the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies, as well as certifications from the Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services and the Department of Corrections.

Understanding the strength of partnership with his community, Sheriff Lawhorne continues to honor his commitment to strengthening the connection between the Sheriff's Office with the Alexandria community. Deputies and support staff have been a visible presence at community events such as First Thursdays in Del Ray and in supporting community partners who distribute food to those in need. Through his Community Liaison program, Sheriff Lawhorne brings Sheriff's staff up front and center to listen to and address the needs of Alexandria's residents through attendance at civic and homeowners' association meetings.

Sheriff Lawhorne earned praise for his continued involvement in the community in which he was born and raised, and which he has served for more than 40 years. His civic commitment is evidenced in his involvement with Alexandria civic associations, as well as his service on the City's Community Criminal Justice Board (CCJB), Northern Virginia Police Chiefs and Sheriffs Committee, and the board of Ivy Hill Cemetery. Further, as a parent of three daughters educated in the Alexandria City Public Schools, Sheriff Lawhorne has been a regular presence in our schools and remains deeply committed to supporting Alexandria's schools.

Sheriff Lawhorne is a native Alexandrian and a graduate of T.C. Williams High School. He earned his Associates degree in Administration of Justice from Northern Virginia Community College and also completed the Executive Leadership Institute offered by the FBI-Law Enforcement Executive Development Association. He is a lifelong resident of Alexandria's Del Ray community, where he currently lives with his wife, Linda.

It is my honor on behalf of the George Washington Chapter, Sons of the American Revolution to nominate Sheriff Dana Lawhorne for the Silver Good Citizenship Award.

John Blair, G.W. Chapter, VASSAR, Public Service Awards Chairman