



Public Safety Health and Wellness

Serving Those Who Protect Our Cities, Homes, and Lives

By the numbers...

96,200

Number of fires attributed to cooking equipment in 1999

67

Percentage of murders in 2002 that were committed with firearms

25

Percentage of deaths in 1999 attributed to smoking materials (cigarettes, cigars, etc.)—the leading cause of fire deaths

170

Number of minutes between home fire deaths in 2002

Sources: NFPA, Bureau of Justice Statistics

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Featured Department

First-Year Sheriff Seeks Tops in Health and Communication

by Christopher M. Costlow, M.S.

Noblesville, Indiana –

When Doug Carter became the new Sheriff of the most rapidly growing county in Indiana last January, he took on some significant challenges. Hamilton County features four medium-sized, fast-growing cities and annexation has become a common reality of late. When land is annexed, it requires the department to give the new municipality complete attention and support as well as continue to provide services to existing municipalities. “The services to newly annexed areas need to be seamless,” states Carter.

Communication is Paramount

Good service requires good communication. Sheriff Carter believes that communication is one of his biggest community challenges. He makes an ongoing concerted effort to communicate with others, share ideas, and be proactive. With three communications centers in the county, information isn’t always shared effectively between them. Blending them into one center is one solution he is working on. Communication with his peers is also very important. He holds a deep appreciation for his peers in public safety and has regular contact with both the law enforcement and fire service communities. “Public service comes from all of us in this community. It is paramount to share ideas and suggestions with others,” emphasizes Carter.

Departmental Challenges and Goals

Providing measurable police service to his customers is the nucleus of all that his department does. Sheriff Carter places high

importance on sharing resources with other departments to better serve the citizens of the community. “It is an obligation to society that we do all we can do to prevent other victims. The bottom line is that the job gets done, not who has the most toys,” shares Carter. The Department has identified the high crime areas



in the community, has implemented plans, and analyzed the results. High recidivism rates have led to new inmate programs that include faith-based programs, decision making and consequence programs, and educational opportunities.

Most Significant First-Year Accomplishment

One of Sheriff Carter’s proudest accomplishments in 2003 was the implementation of a wellness program to help his personnel take steps towards good health. The Sheriff was first introduced to such a program when he was serving with the Indiana State Police. He saw and experienced the many health benefits the program provided to himself and his peers, including improved morale. “If we can’t respond physically, there is a problem,” says Carter. He has found that healthy employees are more

satisfied, productive, and appreciative.

Healthy Habits Pay Off

When Sheriff Carter began his service with Hamilton County, the wellness program was non-existent. Wellness benefits were available, but personnel weren’t taking advantage of them.

Then, a 49-year-old officer died suddenly from a heart condition. “People began soul searching and realized that they are not immune to a similar fate,” says Carter. The wellness program was almost met with open arms. They saw that it was designed to help them become healthier employees. All of his personnel now receive a complete physical and fitness evaluation. “We all need to take personal ownership for the agency and our families,” says the Sheriff. “The consensus has been amazing” and his personnel have bought into the program and have begun making lifestyle changes.

“It is the absolute responsible decision to provide a wellness program. Just like spending money on body armor can save a life, a physical examination can do the same,” concludes Carter.

Fast Facts on the Hamilton County Sheriff's Department

Sheriff:	Doug Carter
Pop. Served:	210,000
Area Protected:	400 square miles
# Personnel:	239
Special Teams:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Crash reconstruction team • Shooting response team • Canine tactical team • CERT



Public Safety Psychology News

What to Do About Candidates Who Test Repeatedly

by Jeffrey C. Savitsky, Ph.D., JD

Very few candidates, whether they are applicants for hire or for promotion, are successful on their first try. At IPSP, we track applicants who repeat hiring processes and we have found that many applicants apply as many as a dozen times. Similarly, every department knows about incumbents who repeatedly participate in promotion processes.

The fact that applicants may repeatedly apply for hire or promotion is certainly not surprising given the scarcity of openings for entry-level or supervisory public safety positions. Also, the fact that applicants must sometimes repeat an application process is not all bad since we only want to hire or promote

people who are motivated enough to overcome the hurdles needed to achieve success. But, the fact that applicants for hire or promotion complete testing procedures on several occasions does raise problems about the validity of test results.

Validity of Retesting

Numerous studies have shown that applicants who test again and again will achieve higher and higher testing scores. This is not because the applicant has changed in any fundamental way. Rather, the increase in test scores occurs because the applicants gain a greater familiarity with the testing process itself and have learned how to take the test. Also, the increase in test scores sometimes reflects the fact that

public safety departments utilize the same test more than once. This means that applicants who test on more than one occasion will recognize some of the test questions. Tests takers are particularly likely to remember those questions that they missed or found to be difficult when they first took the test.

Try to Reduce Advantages

Repeated exposure to the same testing materials gives some applicants an unanticipated advantage and public safety departments must take steps to minimize this advantage. For instance, departments should provide all applicants, whether they have tested previously or not, with the opportunity to become

familiar with the testing procedures. This means that every applicant should be provided with instruction and tutoring on testing procedures before the test is administered.

Another important way to cancel out the advantage that comes with repeated testing is to never use the same test on more than one occasion. This is particularly important for promotion processes since promotion candidates usually have the opportunity to review test questions during an appeal session and have the opportunity to learn the correct answers to test questions.

Dr. Savitsky is the director of the Institute for Public Safety Personnel, Inc. He can be reached at 1-800-892-IPSP or jeff@ipsp.net.



Your Health and Fitness

Persevering in 2004

by Darrell Mendenhall, M.S.

As we begin a new year, many of us will take introspection of our lives. We'll reflect upon and evaluate where we are in life, where we've been, and where we are headed. We then judge this analysis by the jury of our personal goals, dreams and aspirations. And from the verdict of that jury we are sentenced to varying degrees of satisfaction, fulfillment, disappointment, and frustration.

It is good for us to do this; it is what makes us better and keeps us on course. And as the New Year signifies new beginnings, we make new resolutions to refine, improve, and re-direct if necessary the actions of our lives so as to sway the balance of that jury to a more satisfying and rewarding verdict. And we begin the New Year resolute in our commitment for self-improvement.

Perseverance

Many factors go into successful, long-term behavior change. To cover them all is beyond the scope of this article. The one factor that we will focus on is perseverance. Webster defines perseverance as **"The action, condition, or an instance of persevering: steadfastness"**. Behavior change of any degree comes with a cost. The nature and severity of which varies for each of us. In order to persevere and to realize the desired outcome, the cost must be paid. In order for the cost to be paid, the cause must be greater than the cost. It sounds simple, but resolutions are often made without the foundation of deep conviction and then when the cost becomes uncomfortable, and time and business have faded our memory of the factors that led us to the resolution, that project gets deferred to a more convenient time in our

lives. It is easy to have intentions, but to transform intention into action requires conviction. In other words, we must clearly understand and deeply own the reasons behind our decisions.

Define Your Purpose

So what is your purpose? Have you ever taken the time to ask yourself and answer the deep questions of life? Having purpose in our lives is like having current in a stream. Just as the current keeps the water from becoming stagnant, likewise, being sure and clear of our purpose keeps our lives from becoming stagnant. Once we are comfortable in our purpose then we need to understand how the resolutions we make are going to help us fulfill it. When it comes to our health this should be an easy connection because all that we are and do is expressed through our physical bodies.

*"When health is absent,
Wisdom cannot reveal itself,
Art cannot become manifest,
Strength cannot fight,
Intelligence cannot be applied,
And wealth becomes useless."*

Herophilus

Physician to Alexander the Great

In order to keep our resolutions from digressing back to intentions they must be built upon purposeful convictions. History affords us many examples of people whose perseverance led to great accomplishments such as Abraham Lincoln, Thomas Edison, the Wright Brothers, and Mother Theresa. May you experience purpose driven success as you pursue your goals for 2004. Persevere!

Darrell is the director of fitness and health promotion for Public Safety Medical Services.



Public Safety Medical News

Goal Setting and Weight Loss in the New Year

by Ellen K. Walsh, P.A.-C

If weight loss is your goal in the New Year, you have a lot of company. Like everything else in life, making an informed plan of action can increase your chances of achieving your goal and maintaining your resolve, but the glut of diet regimens and self-help books can create confusion and frustration and get in the way of your success.

Goal Setting

What is it you want to achieve? Lower blood pressure? Improved cholesterol profile? Lower body fat? Take some time to figure out what it is you want to achieve and why. Most people trying to lose weight focus on just one goal: weight loss. But the most productive areas to focus on are the dietary and exercise changes that will lead to that long-term weight change. Choose one or two goals at a time to take on and make certain your goals are 1) specific, 2) attainable, and 3) accommodating. "Lose weight" is commendable, but not specific. "Lose 25 pounds of fat by reducing my daily

caloric intake by 500 calories a day and walking 30 minutes, five days a week" is specific, attainable and can accommodate changes in routine. Figure out what roadblocks are preventing you from achieving your goal. This can take some time and may be unsettling as you explore the reasons you cling to an unhealthy lifestyle. Weight loss isn't easy. A realistic and healthy goal is one to two pounds per week. In one year's time, that can translate up to a 50-100 pound weight loss!

The Plan

Once you figure out your goal and what it is that's keeping you from achieving your goal, it's time to develop a plan of action that will work for you. Research shows there is very little difference in the amount of weight lost between the current diet plans whether you follow a low-fat, low carbohydrate, or a balanced regimen. What is important is finding one that you can live with for the rest of your life. And keep in mind the 80/20 rule. If you make good choices 80% of the time, you can make

less ideal choices 20% of the time and still achieve success.

Losing Weight is All in the Math

A pound of fat is equivalent to 3500 calories. To lose a pound a week, you need to consume 500 fewer calories a day. To lose 2 pounds, consume 1000 fewer calories a day. More severe calorie restriction can accelerate weight loss in the short term, but not over months or years as your body interprets this as starvation and holds on to fat. Severely restricting calories often severely reduces nutrition as well. Keep a food diary for a week and figure out what you can cut down on or eliminate in your diet. You might be surprised to learn that the 3-ounce bag of corn chips you usually eat in the afternoon has 420 calories or the ½ cup of ice cream in the evening 270 calories (and does anyone only eat half a cup of ice cream?). Choose low-fat meat, poultry and fish, low-fat dairy products, dry beans and peas, whole grain products, whole wheat pasta, fruits and vegetables,

monounsaturated fats such as olive oil, sunflower oil, and canola oil. To assure an adequate diet, choose a variety of foods. And try to drink at least 6-8 glasses of water a day.

Get Moving

Physical activity is probably the most important part of a comprehensive weight loss program. Setting a long-term goal to include at least 30 minutes or more of moderately intensive physical activity on most, if not all days of the week is highly recommended. But just being more active in general by doing such things as taking the stairs rather than the elevator, parking your car farther away from your office, are things that help burn calories and reduce body fat. People who diet without exercise often get fatter with time.

The Payoff

Feeling better, living longer and looking your best are your ultimate rewards.

Ellen is a Physician Assistant for Public Safety Medical Services.



Odds and Ends

New Public Safety Products Introduced

by Mike Russell

Public Safety Health Systems (PSHS), the parent company of Public Safety Medical Services, recently launched its new products at the IAFF Redmond Conference in San Francisco.

We are pleased to announce that there was much interest in the products from all over the world, and we are looking forward to providing more information and implementing the products with customer departments in 2004. We will be featuring the PSHS product at several exhibitions and conferences in the coming months, and we are confident that the services provided will enable public safety departments

to provide high quality wellness services to their personnel at a cost-effective rate.

Services Include:

- Departmental Web Site (**at no cost**) – PSHS will provide you with your own department-specific health and fitness web site. The site will enable your department and its personnel to access several resources and information dedicated specifically to the health and well being of public safety personnel.

Your web site will also serve as an informational bulletin board for your personnel, your community, and to other clients of Public Safety Health Systems (currently 40+ strong).

Other services can be built into your departmental Web site at additional nominal costs. These include:

- Personal Health Web sites
- Internet-based behavioral support programs
- 24-hour Nurseline and Health Information Library
- Departmental Fitness Testing and Training Software



The services are packaged for effectiveness and to meet the budgetary constraints of each public safety department.

For more information, please contact our office at 877-972-1180, or visit online at www.publicsafetyhealth.com or www.publicsafetymed.com.

Mike is the director of operations for Public Safety Medical Services.

Quotable

“Always bear in mind that your own **resolution** to succeed is more important than any other thing.”

—**Abraham Lincoln**
(1809 - 1865)

Our Mission

Public Safety Medical Services seeks to provide public safety agencies and municipalities with expert medical, psychological, and fitness evaluations.

We inspire healthier and more productive lives through innovative programs delivered with pride, integrity, and dedication.

Public Safety Health and Wellness, a bi-monthly publication of Public Safety Medical Services, is committed to enhancing the well-being of public safety professionals.



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Happy New Year!

What's Happening Public Safety Calendar of Events

LAW ENFORCEMENT

February 4-6

Event: Indiana Chiefs of Police
Mid-Winter Conference
Location: Indianapolis
Contact: Indiana Association
of Chiefs of Police at
317.816.1619



February 2

Event: First Line Supervision
Location: Public Agency
Training Council, Indianapolis
Contact: PATC, 800.365.0119

March 17

Event: Criminal Case
Management
Location: Public Agency
Training Council, Indianapolis
Contact: PATC, 800.365.0119

FIRE SERVICE

March 3-5

Event: Wildland
Fire 2004
Location: Reno, NV
Contact: IAFC, 703.273.0911

April 26-May 1

Event: Fire Department
Instructors Conference (FDIC)
Location: Indianapolis, IN
Contact: FDIC, 973.251.5040



April 26-28

Event: Fire-Rescue Med 2004
Location: Las Vegas, NV
Contact: 800.934.1957



OTHER NEWS

Welcome New
Wellness
Clients!

Lawrence Twp. Fire Dept.
Portage Fire Dept.
Sullivan Fire Dept.

Visit our Web site and
click on the Education tab
to access dozens of free
resources.