



# Sharing Ohio's Best Program

Recognizing Outstanding Community Policing



Agency of the Month

## Van Wert Police Department

February 2023



### ***Donut With A Cop***

On National Donut Day the Van Wert Police Department hosted a Donut with a Cop public event. The idea for this event was brought up and organized by one of the officers. Several officers volunteered throughout the day to attend and meet the public. Officers were taking on push up challenges and discussing issues with the public.

### ***Coffee With Cop Program***

The Van Wert Police Department participated in Van Wert's first ever Coffee with a Cop. Coffee with a Cop is a nationwide program. The Van Wert Police Department and the Van Wert Sheriff's Office hosted this event. Officers were able to talk to the residents about any issues that may be concerning. Most of all it gave the community an opportunity to get to know the officers on a personal level. By hosting with the Van Wert County Sheriff's Office, both departments sent a strong message to the community we would be working closer together in the future.

### ***Active Shooter Training***

The Van Wert Police Department conducted an active shooter training. The Van Wert Fire Department and the Van Wert County Sheriff's Office also attended the training. Not only did they concentrate on any threats, but also worked with the Fire Department on Rescue Task Force Training (RTF). They were able to have the advantage of an old school that was scheduled to be demolished. Van Wert Citizens volunteered for scenarios. Van Wert School Staff were invited to watch.

### ***Design the New DARE Vehicle Competition***

The Van Wert Police Department was able to acquire a new DARE Vehicle. They organized a competition with the Art teachers at Van Wert City Schools to have students draw a design for the new truck. After a friendly competition a design was chosen. The winning student was recognized and taken for a ride in the new vehicle.

### ***Appreciation Dinner***

The Van Wert Police Department conducted it's very first appreciation dinner for all the department's employees and spouses. The meal was catered from a local business. Service Awards, Peer Chosen Awards, and different "hat" appreciation gifts were given out.

### ***Career Connections with Van Wert County Schools***

Van Wert Police Department was invited to attend a Career Connections Day with students from the 5th grade. The students were able to see the different features of the cruiser, and some were even able to activate the lights and sirens. The officers were able to show the kids the equipment they carry and what it is used for.



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## ***Christmas with the Kid's Program***

The Van Wert County Sheriff's Office asked the Van Wert Police Department to help this year with the Christmas with the Kids Program. The in-need families were given a spending amount for their children. The children were allowed to pick out clothes and toys. It was an extremely gratifying experience for the officers who attended.

## ***DARE Golf Outing***

The Van Wert Police Department has a long-lasting tradition of partnering with the Van Wert County Sheriff's Office DARE Program to host a DARE Golf Outing. The public comes out to play 18 holes of golf. This year we had the max number of teams play in the event. Food and prizes were given out. A significant amount of money was and is always raised for both DARE programs.

## ***DARE Pancake Breakfast***

The Van Wert Police Department hosts a DARE Pancake Breakfast each year. Officers and employees volunteer their time to cook and serve the public. It is another great way for the officers to meet the public and raise money for the DARE program.

## ***Van Wert Police Department Tours***

The Van Wert Police Department hosts tours for children's groups throughout the year. The children get to meet the officers and see several pieces of equipment used by officers. The Van Wert Police Department renovated almost all its rooms this year, so we will be excited to show off their new department in 2023.

## ***Wellness Challenge/Weight Loss Pledges***

The Van Wert Police Department is very excited about expanding the Wellness Program. On January 1<sup>st</sup>, they started the very first Wellness Challenge. They are divided up into two teams. There are two goals in the competition: Weight Loss and Time Spent Exercising. They publicized the event on their Facebook Page and asked the community to vote on who they believe will win the challenge. After several votes, they were challenged by the employees of Van Wert Municipal Court.

Since this post, the Van Wert Police Department has received pledges from businesses and citizens on the weight loss challenge. Each pledge is a dollar amount per weight lost by the entire Van Wert Police Department. Each business or citizen will decide what local charity they will give the pledged amount to. Several letters have also been sent out asking other businesses to pledge support for the department.

## ***Local Academy Use of Indoor Range***

The Van Wert Police Department has an indoor range. Vantage Vocational School hosts a Police Academy. The commander of the academy is Lt. Rob Black of the Van Wert Police Department. The department gives them access to the range for training and qualification.

## ***CEO Program with High School***

Their policy now allows High School aged kids to participate in ride alongs. This has opened the door to allow the Van Wert Police Department to partner with Van Wert High School CEO program. They now have a student that comes to the department 3 times a week for a couple of hours each day. The student has the opportunity to ride in the cruiser, observe dispatch, and interact with the officers that are on shift when they are here.