

Lee County Sheriff's Office

Public Safety and Court Services Committee

January 14, 2025

In the months of November and December, the Lee County Sheriff's Office logged 750 and 641 calls for service respectively.

As far as notable calls over the two-month period, the following incidents occurred...

On November 4th at approximately 4:30 p.m., a female contacted the Lee County Sheriff's Office to report a domestic violence situation from the previous evening that involved a friend of hers. The incident had occurred at a residence in Franklin Grove. A deputy met with the victim at a residence in Amboy. The 29-year-old victim indicated that she got into a physical altercation with her boyfriend that led to her being choked to the point of her losing consciousness. The boyfriend was identified as 26-year-old Dalton Bautista of Franklin Grove. At the time of this incident, Dalton Bautista was currently out on conditions of pretrial release on the charges of Aggravated Domestic Battery – Strangulation and Aggravated Domestic Battery for two separate Lee County Cases of 2024 CF 2 and 2023 CF 265. The charges stemmed from other incidents of domestic violence that occurred in November and December of 2023. As a result of the new investigation, Dalton Bautista was taken into custody and charged again with Aggravated Domestic Battery – Strangulation. He is currently being detained at the Lee County Jail with his new case number being 24 CF 268.

On November 6th, the Lee County Sheriff's Office along with the Dixon Police Department and the Winnebago County Sheriff's Office – Bomb Squad executed a search warrant at the residence of Dalton Bautista at 416 East Lincoln Highway in Franklin Grove. Information had been obtained that Bautista was possibly in possession of bomb making materials and was purported to be involved in a reported explosion in Dixon on October 19th. As a result of the search, a number of items were taken into evidence, and additional charges may be pending.

On November 12th at approximately 10:45 a.m., investigators from the Lee County Sheriff's Office, the Dixon Police Department, the Illinois State Police – Zone 2 Investigations, and the Illinois State Police Digital Crimes Unit executed a search warrant at an apartment in the 900 block of Harmon Road in Harmon. The search warrant originated from a CyberTip received from the Illinois Attorney General's Office. The CyberTip reported an upload of child pornography on July 23, 2024. A number of search warrants were issued to track down the internet protocol (IP) address where the upload of child pornography originated from. As a result of those search warrants, John Mowery, age 42, of Harmon was arrested and charged with 5 counts of Child Pornography in Lee County Case Number 24 CF 274. He is currently being held at the Lee County Jail.

On December 14th, the deputies and telecommunicators took part in our annual Shop with a Sheriff Program. The Lee County Fraternal Order of Police – Lodge 220 recognizes that the holidays often create additional economical strain on many families. With the assistance of local area agencies, the FOP selected 38 children from the community to take part in their annual Christmas shopping program at Walmart. The Lee County FOP has partnered with the Dixon Police Charitable Association along with Walmart, McDonald's, and Angelo's III for the event. This year, the program served approximately 100 children this year that may not have been so fortunate. Each child is provided with \$175.00 to shop and a mentor to shop with.

On December 31st, K9 Nemo retired from service with the Lee County Sheriff's Office. K9 Nemo is a Dutch Sheppard who is almost eight years old. He started his career in May 2019. Nemo and his first handler, Corporal Josh Coward, graduated from a six-week Utility Canine and Narcotics Detection Course in Michigan and got right to work. Nemo found narcotics during a traffic stop on his first shift, which lead to the first of many arrests.

Nemo's second handler, Corporal Nathan Hollinger took over in 2021. Over the course of Nemo's six-year career, he made a significant impact on the community. Nemo and both of his handlers have been instrumental in seizing narcotics while also searching for and apprehending suspects.

Nemo has routinely demonstrated his skill and dedication at numerous public events and area school visits. In his career, he has assisted numerous law enforcement agencies while serving as an ambassador to the community and trusted partner to his handlers. Nemo will enjoy his retirement days living with his handler.

Staffing Update

From the Corrections Division, we are up to authorized staffing levels! Due to the contract with the Fraternal Order of Police, we were able to capitalize on the lateral transfer of a correctional deputy from another area county. This addition will save Lee County months of training and overtime expense since the new deputy will only need to learn the processes and procedures at our facility.

From the Patrol Division, we are currently three deputies short on the patrol schedule. One deputy is off for the next several months on active-duty service with the military. Corporal Nathan Hollinger resigned in December after 5 ½ years of service to pursue other ventures. He is leaving the sheriff's office to work for the Dixon Rural Fire Department. A new deputy has been recently hired to replace a vacancy that opened with a previous resignation that occurred in September. On January 5th, the new deputy began attending the 16-week Basic Law Enforcement Officer Academy at Sauk Valley Community College. The program is slated to graduate on April 24th when he will begin approximately 16 more weeks in the field training program. We are currently in the process of vetting an applicant pool to replace Corporal Hollinger.

From the Telecommunications Division, we are currently down two telecommunicators on the schedule. Telecommunicator Laura Enlow retired at the beginning of December after providing over 21 years of service. TC Enlow had provided ample notice of her retirement, so her replacement was hired early to begin the training process. In December, Telecommunicator Dylan Ehlers resigned and took another telecommunications position with the Marshall County Sheriff's Office. TC Ehlers was recently married, and he moved from the area to be with his wife. We are currently in the process of vetting an applicant pool to replace TC Ehlers.