

**Blueberry Township Residents**

**By: Sheriff Michael D. Carr**

I would like to first thank you the voters of Blueberry Township for your strong support this last year in my election for Wadena County Sheriff. Our family has had a cabin on Stocking Lake for the past 24 years, the Menahga area is very special to the Carr Family. There are a lot of good memories that I have had growing up in Blueberry Township during the summers and now hope to have many more as my wife and three daughters spend a lot of time on weekends at the cabin in the summer months.

Blueberry Township is the third largest township out of a total of 15 townships in Wadena County. Blueberry Township is a steadily growing township and I believe this is because this is where the lake country begins, the baby boomers are retiring and returning back home to the North country.

I have two areas that I would like to talk to you about;

1. Methamphetamine
2. Burglaries & Thefts.

**What is Methamphetamine?**

Methamphetamine is a homemade form of amphetamine made from common, easily accessible materials: antifreeze, white gas, ether, starting fluids, freon, lye or drain openers, paint thinner, acetone, and ephedrine or pseudoephedrine cold pills.

Methamphetamine can be made almost anywhere, homes, fish houses, vehicles and hotel rooms.

### **What Makes Methamphetamine So Bad?**

One recurring theme was that the drug is easy to make, this is why it is so popular in rural areas, if you can make chocolate chip cookies, you can make meth. The drug is easy to make therefore more prevalent in rural areas versus metropolitan areas.

Methamphetamine is associated with thefts, burglaries, violence and domestic abuse.

Crime increases as the usage increases.

As a previous deputy and your current Sheriff of the Wadena County Sheriff's Office I have seen first hand the affects meth has through my work as a SWAT Team leader and Child Protection Officer. As a member of the child protection team I have been involved with numerous child protection interviews resulting from parental neglect from meth usage. A majority of SWAT team call outs within the last three years have involved methamphetamine drug lab busts. In my career I have dealt with a mother so paranoid from the usage of methamphetamine that she enlisted her 12 year old son into using methamphetamine as well so that he would become addicted and would not turn her in. Methamphetamine makes the user very paranoid and dangerous, unfortunately the drug is so powerful that parents commonly are choosing methamphetamine over their children.

### **Signs to look for:**

1. Late night or odd activities.
2. High volume of traffic.

3. Numerous vehicles coming and going from residence (similar to fast food joint traffic).
4. Garbage related to manufacturing of methamphetamine – see above information.
5. Paranoid people.
6. Houses with dark shades, blankets covering doors and windows.
7. Guard animals – dogs.

If you see any of these warning signs do not approach these individuals as they may be dangerous resulting from the paranoia methamphetamine causes. Do not hesitate to call our agency at 218-631-7600 or in case of an emergency dial 911.

We are happy to see a recent trend in the decrease of methamphetamine labs, due in part to legislation passed a law that requires strict rules when purchasing pseudoephedrine products. Minnesota has seen a 76% decrease in labs over the 2006 year. Wadena County has not had a meth lab since 2004. Meth that we are seeing now is transported in from Mexico and Canada.

#### **Burglaries and Thefts:**

A majority of our burglaries and thefts are a result of methamphetamine use. Blueberry township is not a high report area for thefts and burglaries, however the areas of vulnerability in Blueberry Township are normally seasonal properties on the lakes and hunting shacks.

Stolen items are generally items that are easily pawned items, that are hard to be traced such as power tools, boat motors, air compressors, fuel tanks, ice augers and stereo

equipment. These type of items should be marked by yourself with some type of identifier and serial numbers to these items should be wrote down.

It is important to know your neighbors and their vehicles so that you may help one another in deterring burglaries and thefts. Keep your eyes open for strange vehicles or any suspicious activity. It is helpful to Law Enforcement if you can safely obtain a license plate from a suspious vehicle. If you have a fish house on a lake, do not keep valuable property in it as burglaries are reported to our agency regarding valuables stolen from fish houses.

When you are gone, lock your doors and remove any keys from your cars and recreational vehicles. If you plan on taking a vacation, contact the Sheriff's Office and let us know you are gone. Our agency will conduct a property watch during the time that you are gone at no cost.

Blueberry township has not been a high crime area for our county as other townships have been. I feel that Blueberry Township is a community with hard working people that care about their neighbors and friends.

I want to leave you with this last bit, If you **HEAR IT, SEE IT, REPORT IT!!**

**Please feel free to call me with any questions or concerns that you may have at 218-631-7600.**

Thank you again for your support and time.

Wadena County Sheriff

Michael D Carr