

# Wood River Police Department to hold raffle in honor of those killed in the line of duty

November 6 2018 8:47 AM

WOOD RIVER - The Wood River Police Association will be holding a raffle to honor those who have died in the line of duty and to raise funds for an Officer Down Memorial in front of the new Wood River Police Department. The facility is nearing completion and is expected to be open in early 2019.

Eight winners of the raffle will have the privilege of being the “First Inmate’s” at the new Wood River City Jail. Before the building is opened, for public business, the winner’s will meet at the new police department with officer’s. The winner’s will be given a tour of the building and the new city jail. The winner’s will have a mugshot which will be framed. The winner’s will then be given the “First Meal.” The meal will be pizza with Wood River Police Personnel.

Two officers have died in the line of duty in the City of Wood River. The Officer Down Memorial will be built to honor their sacrifice.

Chief of Police Samuel Thompson, age 54, was shot and killed, on December 6, 1912, while attempting to arrest a man. When Chief Thompson encountered the man, near Ferguson Avenue and Second Street, the man opened fire with a shotgun, striking Chief Thompson. Despite being mortally wounded, Chief Thompson returned fire and killed the suspect. Chief Thompson had served with the Wood River Police Department as chief for nearly two years.

Village Marshal John Phipps, age 58, succumbed to rabies, on January 25, 1916, after being bit by a rabid dog. The dog had bitten a young girl. Marshal Phipps attempted to capture the dog and was also bit. After showing symptoms of the disease, he was taken to St. Joseph's Hospital in Alton, Illinois, where he later died.

The Officer Down Memorial will also honor other officers who have died in the line of duty.

Wood River Police Officer Aaron Burns' brother, Officer Evan Burns, was killed in the line of duty while working for the Caruthersville (MO.) Police Department, on August 16, 2011. Patrolman Evan Burns was struck and killed by a stolen vehicle while attempting to deploy spike strips during a pursuit. Deputies from the Pemiscot County (MO.) Sheriff's Office had started pursuing a stolen SUV on I-55 that was being driven by a man wanted for an assault. The vehicle exited at Highway 84 and started driving towards Caruthersville.

Patrolman Burns and another officer began to setup spike strips on the roadway. When the stolen vehicle approached, the driver struck the first police car, injuring the officer, and then rammed the SUV broadside into Patrolman Burns' vehicle, killing him. Patrolman Burns had served with the Caruthersville Police Department for two years. He is survived by a son, who was one year old at the time of Officer Burns' death.

Raffle tickets are \$10.00 each. The tickets can be purchased at the Wood River Police Department, 111 N. Wood River, Ave., Wood River, Illinois, 62095. Officer's with the police department will also have tickets.

The drawing will be held at the Wood River Police Department, at noon, on January 10, 2019. Winners will be notified. The event will take place at the new police department at 6:00 p.m., on January 16, 2019.