

Jackson County Missouri Mounted Sheriff Posse ...

WANTED: A Few Good Volunteers and their Mounts

by Teresa L. Neese

The Jackson Sheriff's Posse has been in existence for 65 years. This, all volunteer group of peacekeepers and ambassadors for Jackson County sheriff is Mike Sharp. Each member must have their own horse, equipment and transportation. A Posse member does not need to be a Jackson County resident. The Posse members receive no compensation from the taxpayers.

The Posse is structured as a Para-military organization with Mark Alford as this year's Captain. The Sheriff Posse is always ready to answer Mike Sharp's call; whether it is a search and rescue mission, parade duty, road clean-up, an egg hunt, or fundraising events where monies raised benefit local charitable organizations.

The criteria for being a Posse member are stringent. The volunteer must pass a background check with no criminal record, be at least 21 years of age and have a mount that will perform

quietly and quickly in many different environments. Some of the performance requirements of the potential new Posse member are: the horse and rider team must be able to easily traverse natural and man-made obstacles, tolerate loud noises like gunfire or sirens, be comfortable with traffic congestion including motorcycles and ATV vehicles, mingle within crowds, and exhibit patience and attentiveness in all situations. Each potential member is thoroughly assessed, and must be approved by the sheriff and the Posse leaders and membership. Each Posse member and their mounts are ambassadors of the sheriff's office, approachable and spreading good will to the public. Some of the Posse members are certified Jackson County Law Enforcement Officers who have completed and maintain the necessary training and range qualifications set forth as mandatory requirements by the state of Missouri. Within the Posse are specially trained members who assist in Search and Rescue missions.

Fundraising events like the Posse's annual horse show at Longview Horse Park June 9, 2012, feature a variety of classes open to all breeds: showmanship, gaited, western pleasure, costume, with many classes for young riders. This year's show is dedicated to the memory of Gary Fletcher, of J-Bar-S Western store. Gary was a longtime sponsor of the Jackson County Sheriff's Posse Horse Show. The proceeds of the show will benefit the PEHSC (Pony Express Horse Show Circuit) scholarship fund and many other charities.

Currently, the Posse has 25 members and the Posse would like to increase their membership. If you are interested in volunteering with your mount, give back to your community, enhance your life experiences, and like challenges go to:
www.jacksongov.org/MountedPosse
 or call: Captain Mark Alford at:
 816-739-4097. ■



Sheriff Mike Sharp greeting Posse member Shirley Jones (Photo: Tneese)



Posse member Dan Enlow
(Photo: Tneese)



Posse member Ed Adams
(Photo: Tneese)