CRIMINAL JUSTICE UPDATE

SUMMER 2015 Vol. 7 | No. 3

MIKE DEWINE
OHIO ATTORNEY GENERAL

COVER STORY

Mental-health professionals ride along with police

As a dad, Officer Michael Coleman cares deeply about the training that law enforcement receives in regard to dealing with disturbance calls – especially those involving a person in the midst of an apparent mental-health crisis.

His 23-year-old daughter, "Kitty," is severely autistic and functions at the level of a toddler. She has had some close calls and can be a handful, he said.

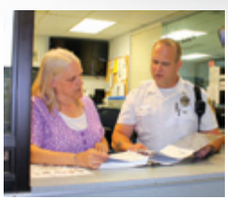
One time, she unfastened her seat belt and jumped out of her grandma's car as it came to a stop. Grandma couldn't get her back in the car, and Fairfield Township police and fire departments responded to the scene.

"When she's hurting, she can't communicate that and her behavior escalates," he said. "Thankfully, they were able to get her in the squad and talk to her until I arrived."

For such a crisis, police need to be well-prepared, he said. "I want officers to understand how to respond because my daughter might be the one they're approaching."

In Butler County, officers and mental-health professionals team up to handle such situations.

Officer Michael Coleman of the Hamilton Police Department and Kathy Becker, a registered social worker assistant, often respond to calls together.



Kathy Becker, the CEO of Transitional Living, a multi-faceted mental-health agency with main offices located in Hamilton, rides frequently with police from the Hamilton, Fairfield and Middletown departments.

The agency is a resource for all Butler County law enforcement and is also the provider of mental-health services in the Butler County Jail as well as a resource to the Middletown City Jail.

As a registered social worker assistant, she became interested in working with law enforcement in the early 1990s after attending a workshop featuring Linda Boyd of the Los Angeles Department of Mental Health. Boyd talked about her work with the Los Angeles Police Department, a pioneer in the co-responder model of handling disturbance calls related to mental health.

"I thought, 'Oh, my gosh, why are more people not doing this?'"

Becker approached the police and offered her help.

Soon, she put together biannual in-service trainings for officers and began conducting regular roll-call training – short sessions at the beginning of each shift.

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Agencies, CIT officers find answers together in Delaware

When the same seven citizens were repeatedly having mental-health crises requiring law enforcement intervention in 2011, the officers at the Delaware Police Department knew something needed to be done to stop the cycle.

"I went to the chief and asked him to help gather the directors of various agencies to meet and see what could be done to help those people," said Officer Rita Mendel (left).

From the meeting, Delaware County's Multi-Agency Intervention Crisis Team was born, with Mendel as the Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) coordinator for the police department.

Health officials wanted to help law enforcement, but were bound by the rules of the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPPA), which prevents health-care providers from talking about patients. The solution was asking the individual or a guardian to sign a waiver allowing the exchange of information among law enforcement, mental-health professionals and various county agencies.

For their part, officers complete 40 hours of CIT training.

"Our goal was to have 25 percent of the road officers trained as CIT officers, so if there's a behavior-health call, we could have on the scene a CIT officer trained to deal with such a crisis," Mendel said. "We've surpassed that goal. ... We have

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FROM THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

After the tragic, fatal police shootings in Ohio and across the nation last year, I convened an advisory group to take an in-depth look at the state's system for peace officer training.

The group consists of 16 community leaders with diverse personal and professional backgrounds to review how Ohio trains its law enforcement officers and to make suggestions for improvement. In April, the group, led by Reginald A. Wilkinson, former director of the Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction, completed its report and issued several recommendations regarding standards for those interested in entering an academy, basic training and certification, continuing education, and innovations to improve the law enforcement profession.

I discussed the advisory group's findings with the Ohio Peace Officer Training Commission, which then voted to require peace officers to have a diploma or GED and also lifted the cap that limited basic training to 605 hours. In addition, Reps. Tim Derickson (R-Hanover Township) and Nathan Manning (R-North Ridgeville) have introduced HB 204 based on the group's recommendations. The bill would lift the cap on the number of hours of basic training required for peace officers and would require all newly appointed peace officers to receive a high-school diploma or GED.

To read the report from the Advisory Group on Law Enforcement Training, visit **www.OhioAttorneyGeneral.gov/PoliceTrainingReport**.

One major area that the advisory group examined is how law enforcement deals with people who are mentally ill. One in four Ohioans has a diagnosable mental-health disorder, making critical training for law enforcement in how to interact with this population. In this issue of *Criminal Justice Update*, our cover story examines three areas of Ohio, and how law enforcement and social services have worked together to interact with people who have had, or are at risk of having, mental-health crises. For example, in Butler County in southwestern Ohio, community mental-health professionals often ride along with law enforcement officers during their shifts. In addition, Ohio law enforcement officers who have taken Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) training are able to draw upon de-escalation techniques to deal with the person experiencing a crisis and can defuse the situation instead of having it potentially spiral out of control.

Peace officer training is crucial for both officers and the public. For the men and women who put their lives on the line to serve and protect us, we owe it to them to ensure that they have the best training possible.

Very respectfully yours,

Mike DeWine
Ohio Attorney General

Agencies use grants to stop revolving door of jail

The Ohio Attorney General's Task Force on Criminal Justice and Mental Illness reported last month on the status of programs that received about $400,000 in grants awarded by Ohio Attorney General Mike DeWine in an effort to provide ongoing support for the mentally ill and their families.

"Those who are not getting the help they need can end up in a nonstop cycle of run-ins with law enforcement," he said.

An update on the recipients:

Ohio Housing Finance Agency: The agency received $215,250 to pay for housing for those identified by the Hamilton County Common Pleas Mental Health Court as homeless or at risk for homelessness. With the funding, 18 people have been placed by the agency's "Home for Good" rental-subsidy program into housing linked with Hamilton County services.

Ohio Department of Youth Services: The department received $82,500 to help pay for a mental-health screening program for the state's juvenile detention facilities and staff training.

Veterans Courts Peer Mentoring Program: The program received $31,000, which paid for the development of an interactive Veterans Court mentor screening tool and training website, which is expected to be available this month.

Ohio Department of Veterans Services: The department received $21,238, which paid for Crisis Intervention Team training for employees in Ohio Veterans Homes. The training teaches techniques to defuse anxious, hostile or violent behavior.

Mercer County Sheriff's Office: The sheriff's office received $25,000 to pay for a counselor and a program at the Mercer County Jail to help mentally ill inmates find services, jobs and housing after incarceration.

Hancock County Alcohol Drug Addiction and Mental Health Services Board: The board received $25,000, which paid for a case manager to help identify Hancock County Justice Center inmates who have mental illnesses, and to provide stabilization and discharge-planning services.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE UPDATE

Criminal Justice Update is typically published four times a year by the Ohio Attorney General's Office.

To offer story ideas, contact Editor Julia Brinksneader at **614-995-0328** or **Julia.Brinksneader@OhioAttorneyGeneral.gov**. Sign up for the electronic edition at **www.OhioAttorneyGeneral.gov/EmailUpdates**.

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VANTAGE **POINT**

Q&A

Matthew J. Donahue, Section Chief, Attorney General's Special Prosecutions Section

These attorneys are often asked to act as lead prosecutors in cases where there are conflicts of interest, or to serve as assistant prosecutors where specialized knowledge is needed.

The Matthew J. Donahue File

Current position: Chief of the Special Prosecutions Section

Previous jobs: Assistant Attorney General in Special Prosecutions, Assistant Meigs County Prosecuting Attorney

Education: Matt earned his juris doctorate from the University of Dayton, and a bachelor of science degree from Bethany College in Bethany, W.Va.

Hobbies: He enjoys running, walking his dog, and spending time with his new wife, Jill.

Contact Info: 614-644-7233, 150 E. Gay St., 16th Floor Columbus, OH 43215; Matthew.Donahue@OhioAttorneyGeneral.gov

What does Special Prosecutions do?

We exist to assist local prosecutors when conflicts arise or to handle complex or unique litigation at no cost to the local prosecutors.

If a local public official has committed crimes, for example, a county could pay a private attorney to act as a special prosecutor, which is often very expensive, or have an adjacent prosecutor add the workload to his or her office's staff. We, however, can come in and handle it for free, without impacting a regular assistant prosecutor's trial docket. Sometimes, the size of a case can put stress on a local prosecutor's office. If there is a huge drug-trafficking organization, for example, the influx of 50 to 75 defendants could shut down a docket for a while, but our folks can come in and handle a case like that.

We are sometimes called upon because the case is unique. Matters we might see frequently statewide, such as securities fraud, might be rare in another jurisdiction.

Who should seek help from Special Prosecutions?

The only people who can seek help from special prosecutions are the chief prosecutor of a jurisdiction – a county elected prosecutor or the designee – or, if it's a municipality, the city law director or the chief prosecutor. We can also be appointed by courts if the court determines there is a conflict and seeks a special prosecutor.

How many people work in the Special Prosecutions Section?

We have four support staff members, 12 line attorneys spread out over three offices – Cleveland, Columbus and Cincinnati – as well as Assistant Section Chief Angie Canepa and me. All of the attorneys in special prosecutions had extensive experience as trial prosecutors prior to coming to the Attorney General's Office. All but one of our attorneys was an assistant prosecutor at the county level in Ohio; the one person who wasn't served in the Army Judge Advocate General's Corps as a trial prosecutor. Our prosecutors are from large, medium and small jurisdictions from throughout Ohio.

What challenges does your section face?

Because we're a conflict unit, we are not interacting with local law enforcement on a daily basis. We don't get to have those relationships that are built over years.

We deal by and large with unique cases so, generally speaking, our cases are not your typical drug- possession cases, or your typical assault cases. They have unique and challenging aspects. A lot of times, the defendants are folks who, because of the conflict, have ties to the criminal justice system or the legal system.

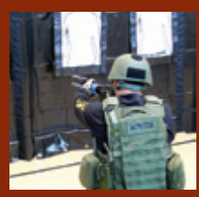
READ MORE: *Read an extended interview with Matthew Donahue at* ***www.OhioAttorneyGeneral.gov/CriminalJusticeUpdate****.*

LEGISLATIVE **INITIATIVES**

Sexual Assault Statute of Limitations
House Bill 6
Sponsors: Reps. Sarah LaTourette, Stephanie Kunze
Status: Passed by House; passed by Senate

Senate Bill 13
Sponsors: Sens. Shannon Jones, Jim Hughes
Status: Passed by Senate; pending House floor vote

Attorney General Mike DeWine supports House Bill 6 and Senate Bill 13, which both would extend the statute of limitations for beginning a prosecution for rape or sexual battery against a suspect who is implicated by DNA analysis.



Police Training
House Bill 204
Sponsors: Reps. Tim Derickson, Nathan Manning
Status: Passed by House; pending in Senate committee

House Bill 204 would lift the cap on the number of hours of basic training required for peace officers and other positions. The bill also requires all newly appointed peace officers to have a high-school diploma or GED.

Firearm-Prison Terms
Senate Bill 97 (Violent Career Criminal Act)
Sponsors: Sens. Jim Hughes, Frank LaRose
Status: Passed by Senate; pending in House committee

The Attorney General's Office is a proponent of Senate Bill 97, which would increase the mandatory prison term by 50 percent for an offender convicted of a firearm specification and who has been previously convicted of a firearm specification. It would also prohibit violent career criminals from acquiring, carrying or using any firearm or dangerous ordnance.

Foster Care-Adoption Assistance Age
House Bill 50
Sponsors: Reps. Dorothy Pelanda, Cheryl Grossman
Status: Pending House floor vote

House Bill 50 would extend the eligibility age for federal foster care and adoption assistance payments to 21, provide a ward's bill of rights, and require that a guardian receive the Ohio Guardianship Guide.

SALUTE TO THE FALLEN

Officers gather to honor those who sacrificed all

Retired officer Rob Winebrenner has been to many police memorials through the years, but he will never think of them the same way again, he said, after attending the 2015 Ohio Peace Officers' Memorial Ceremony, which honored his son.

HONOR & REMEMBER

OHIO PEACE OFFICERS' MEMORIAL CEREMONY

Officer Justin R. Winebrenner of the Akron Police Department was shot and killed on Nov. 16, 2014, while off duty. The 32-year-old was enjoying a night out at a pub with friends and his fiancee, Tiffany Miller, when a disgruntled patron, who had been asked by management to leave, returned with a gun. When the patron began firing, wounding four others in the bar, Winebrenner forced the man outside but was shot twice in the process. The suspect was arrested a short time later.

"Ultimately, he did exactly what he was trained to do," Rob Winebrenner, formerly of the Barberton Police Department, said after the May 7 ceremony. "He ran toward, instead of away. And I'm proud, very proud."

In reflecting on that night, Miller said, "I'm here today because of him."

To Miller, the most touching part of the ceremony was seeing her fiance's patrol car in the motorcade.

"I loved seeing his police car come through in the line," she said. "It brought a smile to my face to replace the tears."

Hundreds of law enforcement officers and their families gathered to pay their respects at the memorial service, which is conducted each May at the Ohio Peace Officer Training Academy in London.

In the keynote address, Ohio Attorney General Mike DeWine celebrated the life of Officer Justin R. Winebrenner (above) and spoke of his commendations for breaking up a burglary ring and rescuing a man from a burning vehicle.

"Today, we remember this courageous, selfless peace officer who joins 766 others who have died in the line of duty since 1823."

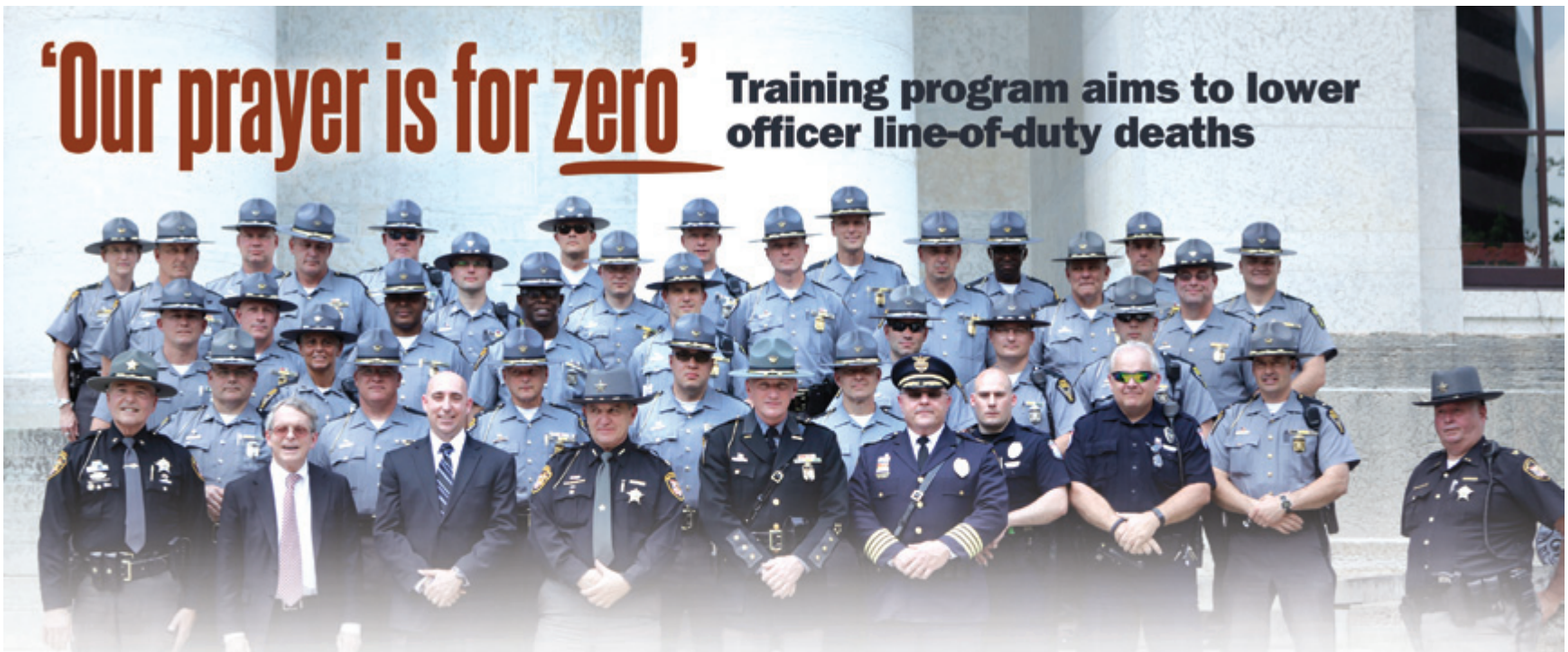
Winebrenner's name and the names of three law enforcement officers nominated for historical induction were added to the Ohio Fallen Officers' Memorial Wall.

The other names are:

- **Assistant Marshal Albert Schmitt** of the Cheviot Police Department died May 29, 1921, after a motorcyclist he was pursuing intentionally collided with his bike causing him to crash.
- **Sheriff Forest S. Hager** of the Union County Sheriff's Office died on Sept. 23, 1927, when his vehicle was struck by a train.
- **Trooper Michael A. Paris Sr.** of the Ohio State Highway Patrol died on Aug. 1, 2012, when he suffered a heart attack after making a traffic stop involving a belligerent motorist.

'Our prayer is for zero'

Training program aims to lower officer line-of-duty deaths



On the eve of the Ohio Peace Officers' Memorial Ceremony, deputies, officers and troopers gathered on May 6 at the Statehouse for an event to recognize a training initiative to reduce law enforcement line-of-duty deaths nationwide to less than 100.

The Below 100 campaign reminds officers to mind their personal safety.

Since last August, officers throughout Ohio have been receiving the training.

Capt. Dennis Valone (left) of the Alpharetta (Ga.) Police Department is a core instructor and incoming chairman for Below 100. The program, he said, started in 2011 when a group of law enforcement trainers became concerned about the grim statistics.

"We started looking at the numbers, and surprisingly, we've had over 100 law enforcement officers killed in this country every year since 1943," he said. "And then, we started looking at why they were killed: traffic crashes, not wearing their seat belts, speed, not wearing body armor, complacency. We can reduce that number to well below 100. We can cut out 30 to 40 deaths per year."

The program is already making a difference, Valone said.

"If you go back 10 years, we were averaging 170 law enforcement officers killed in the line of duty every single year," he said. "Since Below 100 has been implemented, in the last three years, we've averaged 125."

Ohio Attorney General Mike DeWine reiterated his support for more training for law enforcement.

"Police officers who die in the line of duty die for principally two reasons: They are in auto accidents or they are shot. And if we can give law enforcement officers more training and more focus on how to protect themselves, we need to do that. Our prayer is for zero."

Westerville Police Chief Joseph Morbitzer, president of the Ohio Association of Chiefs of Police, called the program "absolutely the best initiative in law enforcement I've come across in 33 years."

The goal, he said, is to put every officer in Ohio through the course.

Staff Lt. Morris L. Hill Jr. of the Ohio State Highway Patrol has been through the Below 100 training and calls it "practical stuff."

"It's a matter of living it out," he said.

To sign up for a training session, or learn more about the initiative, visit **below100.org**.

Honor One crew pays respects in London

A rolling memorial to law enforcement officers paused on May 9 at the Ohio Fallen Officers' Memorial Wall at the Ohio Peace Officer Training Academy in London.

The Honor One Vehicle, a project conceived by the San Diego Police Department, was traveling from California to Washington for the 34th annual National Peace Officers' Memorial Service on May 15.

Along the way, the officers – K-9 Sgt. Mike Pidgeon, Det. Sgt. Mike Shiraishi and Police Chaplain Chuck Price – were highlighting the heroes who work to keep communities safe.

"Honor One is a mobile tribute for all fallen officers and their survivors," said Pidgeon, the program coordinator. "It's our commitment that their sacrifice will never be forgotten."

Accepting the plaque from K-9 Sgt. Mike Pidgeon, center, are Fayette County Sheriff Vernon Stanforth, left, and London Police Chief David Wiseman

The Honor One crew presented a plaque for Ohio officers who made the ultimate sacrifice.

The plaque was presented to Fayette County Sheriff Vernon Stanforth, chairman of the Ohio Peace Officer Training Commission, and London Police Chief David Wiseman.

Officer killed in shootout

Officer Sonny Kim, a decorated 27-year veteran of the Cincinnati Police Department, was shot to death on June 19 when he responded to a call about a man with a gun in the Madisonville neighborhood.

When Kim arrived on the scene, the suspect engaged him in a gunfight, police Chief Jeffrey Blackwell said in a press conference. Other officers arrived, and the suspect was shot and killed.

As it turns out, the shooter was the one who called in the threat, Blackwell said, and the incident is being called a "suicide by cop."

Kim, 48, served with the department for 27 years. He is survived by a wife and three sons.

2 Days in May Conference Recap:

A police lieutenant who has made it her mission to teach others about domestic violence was among those honored at the Ohio Attorney General's 2015 Two Days in May Conference, which drew more than 1,000 victim advocates to the Hyatt Regency Columbus.

This year's honorees:

The Robert Denton Special Achievement Award:

Lt. Deena Baker, a 19-year veteran of the Elyria Police Department, was recognized for her commitment to serving crime victims.

While presenting the award, Attorney General Mike DeWine said, "One of the great things about the job of attorney general is meeting inspirational people like Lt. Baker. Her contributions are helping law enforcement protect Ohio's families."

Baker, who has been a member of the Lorain County Domestic Violence Task Force for more than 10 years, worked with a domestic violence shelter to develop a training program for law enforcement.

"If you don't understand the cycle of abuse, it can be hard to go forward with an investigation," she said.

The Promising Practice Award:

The Providence House in Cleveland is a crisis nursery that serves as a temporary shelter for children from birth to 10 years who are at risk of abuse or neglect.

At Providence House, children find safety and comfort while efforts are being made by the Crisis Intervention and Family Preservation Program to stabilize the rest of the family. Last year, Providence House provided services to 251 children from 112 families.

Additional resources: For more information or to see videos from the conference, visit **www.OhioAttorneyGeneral.gov/TDIM**. To learn about trainings and services provided by the Attorney General's Crime Victim Services Section, visit **www.OhioAttorneyGeneral.gov/Victims**.

BCI fellow to share DNA recovery findings

A touch can say so much, and no one knows that better than the scientist who spent the past year pulling DNA from weapons at the BCI lab in Richfield.

Dennis DeLuca, who on July 1 concluded his fellowship at the lab, spent much of his time coming up with a new way to recover "touch" DNA. He will submit his findings for publication in the *Journal of Forensic Sciences*.

A touch leaves cells behind. "People vary in how many cells they leave," DeLuca said.

One project was particularly concerned with handguns. If a gun is thought to have been used in a crime, or is believed to have been in the hands of a felon, it can be checked for fingerprints and DNA. Checking for DNA on a gun can be tricky because more than one person may have held it, and if those people are related, there might be genetic overlap.

"If I found a better swabbing technique or extraction technique, then you could recover more of the DNA," he said.

DeLuca, who has a doctorate in molecular/regulatory biology from Cleveland State University, is an associate professor of biological sciences and director of the Forensic Biology Program at Ohio Northern University.

This year in the BCI lab, he worked on several projects – one was to improve the collection of evidence from duct tape, which is often found at crime scenes.

He also conducted research on techniques for collecting blood evidence and DNA from knives that have been submerged in water.

"We are doing this because in some evidence-collection handbooks for water recoveries, the guidelines are to collect the weapons in the same water," he said. "If you have a knife involved in a stabbing, you want to get it out and dry it out so you don't lose the DNA," he said.

Before the collection guidelines can be changed, researchers have to prove why the change is needed.

Toiletry kits bundled for domestic violence shelters

A bottle of shampoo, some lotion, a toothbrush and a bar of soap are basic items, but to a victim of domestic violence seeking refuge in a shelter, such items can bring a measure of comfort.

At the 2015 Two Days in May Conference, Ohio Attorney General Mike DeWine and his wife, Fran, joined volunteers in assembling toiletry kits of personal-care items to donate to domestic violence shelters in Ohio.

"When they get here, many times, they don't have anything. They've left an abusive situation. They've left, literally, with the clothes on their back," he said. "So we put some toiletries together for them, and they were donated by some great companies in the state of Ohio,

and we're going to send them out."

Five hundred kits were assembled during the conference on victim assistance, which took place May 4-5 at the Hyatt Regency Columbus.

An additional 600 pre-assembled kits were donated by Thirty-One Gives, a charitable initiative of Thirty-One Gifts, a direct-sales company based in Columbus.

The project was conducted in partnership with the Ohio Domestic Violence Network.

Ride along

from page 1

"We train all of our police officers about de-escalation, signs of mental illness, how to respond to people with developmental disabilities and Alzheimer's," Becker said.

Later, she and case workers from Transitional Living began riding along with police during second shift.

"A crisis never happens during 9 to 5," Coleman said. "If there's a person whose behavior is scaled up, if we aren't able to help them, and we need help, we'll ask: 'What is the best approach?'"

Once a person is engaged in services with Transitional Living, the client or a guardian signs a waiver so Becker or her staff can disclose relevant information to law enforcement or others.

In Butler County, there are 13 contract mental-health agencies of the Butler County Mental Health Board as well as several substance-abuse treatment agencies. There are five homeless shelters and two hospitals in the county that offer in-patient mental-health services. More than 100 churches and social-services agencies offer other aid.

"We try to involve all the agencies," Coleman said. "It's all a networking thing. If you can't figure it out, call somebody."

For those individuals who end up in the Butler County Jail, Transitional Living has added a case coordinator through additional funding through the Butler County Mental Health Board. The case coordinator works with inmates who are being released to help them connect with appropriate services in the community, be it mental-health or substance-abuse treatment.

"Even though mental health is our focus, we want to keep people from coming back to jail," Becker said.

Coleman said the Butler County Model (also known as the Hamilton-Fairfield Model of Police Training and Intervention) works for them.

Having a case worker along for the ride is advantageous for the police and the public, he said.

"A case worker can advocate for that person and be with them," Coleman said. "If we need help arranging something, they are an extra hand." "The mentally ill don't get passed off or ignored."

When out on calls, Becker said, it's most important to listen and offer help.

"Do they need a new living situation? Sometimes people are homeless and need help getting back on their feet. Maybe they need a residential program," she said.

For those who are interested in the Butler County method, but don't think they have the resources, Becker said some reallocation might be in order.

"As a mental-health system we need to be out there anyway," she said. "They are investing money in jails. This is just a more practical approach to dealing with people who need help. If these were your loved ones, what would you want?"

Two approaches to a crisis

Law enforcement agencies have embraced specialized responses:

Crisis Intervention Teams:

The concept, pioneered by the Memphis (Tenn.) Police Department, relies on officers who are trained to identify mental illness. Their goal is to de-escalate situations involving an individual who seems to have a mental illness, and to connect that person to treatment.

Co-responder Model:

The idea, conceived by the Los Angeles Police Department and San Diego County (Calif.) Sheriff's Department, pairs officers with mental-health professionals to respond to calls.

Gallia, Jackson, Meigs counties unite to find solutions

In the tri-county area of Gallia, Jackson and Meigs, the Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) has had to be creative to meet the needs of the community.

Abbey Russell, manager of forensic programs at Woodland Centers – a private provider of behavioral services for southeastern Ohio – serves as a co-coordinator for the Gallia-Meigs-Jackson Crisis Intervention Team with Maj. Scott Trussell of the Meigs County Sheriff's Office.

The team – made up of Russell, Trussell, Gallia County Sheriff Joseph R. Browning; Capt. Donnie Willis of the Jackson County Sheriff's Office; Robin Harris of the ADAMHS board; and Sabrina Morris of Hopewell Health Centers, a provider of community mental-health services in Jackson – plans two, 40-hour CIT training events a year to try to fit officers' schedules. The events in the spring and fall are rotated among the three counties.

"We don't have a lot of resources, so the presenters are volunteers," Russell said. "We look for places that will allow us to use facilities for free."

The trainings cover a range of topics including mental illness in society, developmental disabilities, drug addiction, suicide prevention and post-traumatic stress.

At the Meigs County Sheriff's Office, everybody has completed the course. At the Jackson County Sheriff's Office, about 60 percent have received the training. About half of the staff are trained at the Middleport Police Department and the Gallia County Sheriff's Office. At the Gallipolis Police Department, 30 to 40 percent are trained.

Trussell, who has been with Meigs for more than 28 years, said before the CIT, mental-health call subjects were picked up and taken to the psychiatric hospital in Athens.

Today, an officer responds and, using CIT training, de-escalates the situation and talks to the person. If the person needs treatment, he said, the officer asks the individual to submit to voluntary care at Woodland, which is closer than the psychiatric hospital, less expensive to the community and more flexible because it offers outpatient treatment.

Delaware

from page 1

99 percent of our officers trained."

For her efforts, Mendel was named the Crisis Intervention Team Coordinator of the Year by the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI). The Ohio Attorney General's Office has given NAMI $246,000 to increase the number of officers with CIT training.

Terry Russell, executive director of the National Alliance on Mental Illness of Ohio, said, "CIT training is important because it provides officers with the skills to recognize when someone is experiencing a mental-health crisis and how to de-escalate the situation. Not only does this reduce the chance of the person with the illness or the officer from getting hurt, it usually means that the person will be taken to a mental-health crisis facility rather than to jail."

When a person is in crisis in Delaware, a team - including the person in crisis, an officer and representatives from pivotal agencies - is formed to offer ongoing guidance.

Cheryl Smart of the Delaware County Board of Developmental Disabilities said the approach works.

"The connection has been transformative for individuals. They see that people care."

KEY EVENTS | 2015

Ohio Attorney General's Law Enforcement Conference

When: Oct. 8–9
Where: Hyatt Regency Columbus
For information: Visit www.OhioAttorneyGeneral.gov/LEConference or call 740-845-2684.

Reminder: Agencies urged to seek naloxone rebates

State and local agencies that purchased the anti-heroin drug naloxone, sometimes known by the trade name Narcan, are entitled to rebates due to an agreement reached by Ohio Attorney General Mike DeWine and Amphastar Pharmaceuticals.

The company will provide a $6 rebate for each naloxone syringe purchased by a non-federal public entity between March 2, 2015, and March 1, 2016.

REBATE AVAILABLE

Public entities interested in applying for the Naloxone rebate should visit www.OhioAttorneyGeneral.gov/NaloxoneRebate

Keeping watch

Information Technology Services staff from the Ohio Attorney General's Office handed out new computers, monitors and scanners to each of the state's 88 sheriff's offices to be used for loading information about sex offenders into the OffenderWatch system. The equipment was provided free to law enforcement thanks to a federal grant. The new equipment will replace outdated models.

OffenderWatch™

OffenderWatch is a national database and community-notification system used to keep track of sex offenders. It is kept up to date by law enforcement and can be accessed by the public through the websites of sheriff's departments.

Sgt. Michael E. Marion of the Miami County Sheriff's Office, left, gets help from Zach Spradlin of the Ohio Attorney General's Office while loading new equipment into his cruiser after an OffenderWatch and National Crime Information Center refresher course at the Buckeye State Sheriff's Association in Columbus.

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