

Rebecca J. Smith

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My name is Becky Smith and I have been married to Jeff Smith for 28 years. During the last year, we have heard many people say "it's going to be busy now that it's "election time"". What many people do not know is that this is not "election time" for us. This is just another year for us. This is what Jeff has worked toward for the last 30 years.

You see: I remember going to his graduation from the police academy and him working for the Fort Plain Police Department while we were dating; I remember him getting hired full time as a Corrections Officer when we were married; I remember him working second shift (4pm – Midnight) in the old jail on Park Street when we had just had our son; and moving to Road Patrol Deputy when we had our daughter - he worked 3rd shift (Midnight to 8am), imagine how hard it was to keep two toddlers quiet while their daddy tried to sleep during the day. I remember being so excited when he got 1st shift - days...the "normal life"; but after a while he was promoted to Sergeant and he went back to nights; he went away to Ohio to meet his new K-9 partner; his new partner became part of our family, not just a "work dog"; then came the time when the County decided to get rid of the K-9 program; they even tried to get rid of the Road Patrol. I remember this – I remember how hard Jeff and his fellow employees fought to hold on to our county's sheriff's patrol. He weathered the storm, along with all of the dedicated employees. Then, on the way to work one night – our life changed. A drunk driver hit him head on. I always worried when he went to work, every partner of a first responder does; but I never imagined this could happen. The doctor said "you'll never work again in law enforcement". For Jeff, this wasn't an option. His life was dedicated to being a first responder; to being a member of the Sheriff's Office. He persevered, he went back to work; he worked hard and he was promoted to Lieutenant. He was nominated and had the opportunity to attend and graduate from the FBI National Academy. Again, he was gone away from his family. He was then appointed Undersheriff.

Throughout this journey; Jeff has always been fair, respectful, open-minded and always had the welfare of others in mind. Not only through his work in law enforcement, but also as a volunteer firefighter. You may wonder, why is she telling us their life story...that's just it...this is our life, this is just another year, this is not "election time". Jeff has not "just decided" to run for Sheriff. It is something he has worked for, sacrificed, and dreamed of. We have been through the sleepless nights, the interrupted dinners, the missed birthday parties and holiday celebrations. It's all part of the life of a first responder. It's not always an easy life, but it's an honest life. Jeff has taught our children to help others first; to be selfless; to look for the good in those around you; and to always treat people fairly and with respect. I couldn't ask for a better role model for our children or a better partner to share this journey with.

So when you cast your vote on November 6th, please remember that the position of Sheriff is not a job to Jeff; it is a lifestyle that affects everyone around him and requires a supportive team both at home and in the community; it is a commitment that should not be taken lightly; and it is a position he has worked toward for 30 years. Thank you for your support.