



Mount
Vernon Police Department
IOWA

Douglas J. Shannon, Chief of Police

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2018 Annual Report

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Chief's Message



I am pleased to present the 2018 Annual Report. The officers of the Mount Vernon Police Department work diligently to carry out the mission of the police department with integrity, fairness, and professionalism.

Public Safety in our community is not possible without the dedicated service of the police officers, along with the strong support from our elected officials, city staff, city administration, and the community. I am thankful for this support and community partnership to ensure Mount Vernon remains a safe and vibrant community.

As police chief for the city of Mount Vernon, I invite you to review our annual report and learn about the services we provide to the community, and better understand the challenges and tasks the officers of the Mount Vernon Police Department face daily while serving our community.

Having served with the Mount Vernon Police Department for 26 years, I am honored to serve alongside the dedicated officers of this department and am proud of the integrity and dedication they demonstrate in service to the community.

Our department believes strongly in partnering with the community to solve problems. We prioritize community engagement and build trust with the community by being educated, professional, transparent, and involved in the community.

I want to thank our community members, elected officials, and staff for the continued partnership and commitment to public safety. I look forward to continued successes and partnerships for years to come.

A handwritten signature in dark ink that reads "Doug Shannon" with a small number "268" at the end.

Douglas J. Shannon
Chief of Police

Assaults by Type for Year

2018

CRIMES AGAINST PEOPLE

Crimes against people are defined as offenses or crimes against an individual. These offenses are broken down into several categories determined by the seriousness of the offense. (i.e. Simple Harassment to class B Felony of Sexual Abuse 2nd) Included is a table detailing number of offenses for the year.

Assault Type	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Harassment	11	5	10	13	11
Simple Assault	9	11	3	9	7
Assault with Injury	2	4	1	0	0
Aggravated Assault	0	1	1	3	0
Court Order Violations	1	2	2	2	1
Child Endangerment	1	2	1	1	1
Interference W/O Acts	7	9	6	11	2
Domestic Abuse (no assault)	10	7	4	1	1
Simple Assault-DA	3	5	2	2	1
Domestic-with Injury	2	1	2	2	10
Child Abuse/Fondling	1	1	1	1	3
Statutory Rape	1	1	0	0	0
Sexual Abuse	3	2	4	3	1
Armed with intent/weapon	0	1	0	1	0
Robbery	0	0	0	0	1
Extortion	0	0	0	0	2
Total	51	52	38	49	41

This table includes those offenses reported to MVPD for investigation. It is important to mention that police officers responded to numerous other disturbances involving assaults of some type. However, no charges were filed at the victim's request or the parties were gone prior to officer arrival.

Property Crimes for the Year 2018

Theft Related Crimes

Theft related crimes covers a variety of incident types. This group of crimes includes: *burglary* (defined as forced entry with theft, or criminal mischief of property within that building); *forced entry to a vehicle* is also classified as a burglary; *theft from a building*, *motor vehicle theft*, *theft from a vehicle* (which includes unlocked vehicles in which property is taken), *shoplifting*, *forgery*, *fraud*, *identity theft*, *theft by check* (either NSF or against a closed account) and

miscellaneous theft (which includes theft of yard ornaments, street signs, bicycles, and similar items that do not fit into one of the other defined categories).

Crime	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Burglary	3	12	21	5	4
Forgery/Counterfeit	2	5	12	8	6
Theft from vehicle	7	28	5	11	1
Theft from building	17	7	3	4	3
Identity theft/Fraud	2	9	9	29	8
Stolen Vehicle	1	4	2	2	4
Theft by check	2	1	3	1	0
Theft of vehicle parts	4	1	0	0	1
Shoplifting	7	5	1	2	3
Miscellaneous Theft	17	21	22	19	13
Total	62	93	78	81	43

The total number of property crimes in Mount Vernon decreased with a total of 43 theft related crimes in 2018, compared to 81 in 2017 and 78 in 2016. Mount Vernon experienced the lowest number of reported theft crimes in 2018, the lowest rate in 5 years. The police department worked with residents, businesses, and local financial institutions to ensure proper security measures were in place to prevent theft related incidents. The police department continues to assist our local businesses & residents with theft prevention efforts.

In 2018, reported financial losses totaled \$63,129.98. Loss included \$34,000 in vehicle and parts related theft, \$18,710.81 in cash or fraud related theft, \$1,270.18 in shoplifting/merchandise theft, and \$9,148.99 in other/property theft. In 2017 fraud & identity thefts crimes caused the largest dollar loss. In 2017 our department received fraud reports with financial loss in excess of \$200,000.00 to residents. The cases often involve fraud scams where residents are manipulated and transfer money to individuals overseas or have their credit card information stolen. These cases require large amount of investigation time by officers, networking with other agencies to identify those responsible. These cases are rarely solved or prosecuted, as many of the offenders remain unidentified or are determined to have originated overseas.

Criminal Mischief (Vandalism)

Criminal mischief includes those incidents most people would call vandalism. These types of crimes are the result of damage done to private or public property that results in damage of property, resulting in the loss of use or expense to repair the property. Types of incidents that fall

into this include, but are not limited to, damage to signs, vehicle damage (i.e. scratched down the side, windows broken out, tires cut, antenna damaged), spray paint incidents and damaged bikes.

Offense	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Criminal Mischief	18	22	22	21	10

Drug Related Crime

Drug related crime covers those incidents where the primary case is drug related. (i.e.: traffic stop for speed and drug paraphernalia is observed in the vehicle, resulting in an arrest report as a result of the drug paraphernalia). In 2018 Drug crimes were the most reported crime category for our department. Other drug related crimes may be included in other incidents, such as a traffic stop for OWI during which an illegal substance such as marijuana is discovered. In this case, the primary offense is an OWI and the marijuana possession (PCS) charge would be a secondary offense.

Charge	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Possession of Controlled Substances (PCS)	24	30	25	22	26
Possession of Drug Paraphernalia (PDP)	29	29	26	20	25
Disorderly House Violations	4	2	1	1	0
OWI While Drugged	0	1	1	2	0
Total	57	62	53	45	51

Alcohol Related Offenses

Alcohol related offenses are comprised of OWI, Possession under the Legal Age, Open Container, Liquor License violations, Public Intoxication, and .02 Violations. A .02 violation refers to the law suspending driving privileges of those under the legal age of 21 who are stopped while driving a vehicle and have a blood alcohol level of .02 or greater but less than .08. In 2018 Mount Vernon experienced the lowest rate of drunk drivers in the past 5 years, showing the benefit of our partnership with the Governors Traffic Safety Bureau and directed overtime for OWI enforcement.

Offense	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
OWI	23	20	19	24	16
.02	2	0	0	0	1
Liquor Law Violations	10	11	18	14	9
Public Intoxication	21	25	25	10	10
Totals	56	56	62	48	36

Police Activity Summary for the Year 2018

Officers had 6,741 calls for service in 2018. This is a slight decrease from 2017 with 7,247 calls for service. In 2018 Officers had 1,948 dispatched trips (1,987 in 2017) & 4,793 observed trips (5,260 in 2017). (Dispatched trips are requests for services; Observed trips are officer-initiated contacts such as traffic stops, building checks, parking tickets, house checks, etc.). The department completed 263 incident reports resulting in 87 arrests for the year.

Our department responded to 125 motor vehicle crashes. Officers completed 83 collision reports. Collisions occurring within the city limits of Mount Vernon included 1 fatality collision, 1 major injury collision, 8 minor injury collisions, and 73 property damage only collisions. Total estimated property damage value for 2018 was \$362, 203.00 with an average of \$5,659.42 per crash. The most reported major cause for the collision in 2018 was “Failure to Yield Right of Way from a yield sign”. Most of the reported collisions occurred between 10 a.m. and 8 p.m. during daylight hours on clear days with dry road conditions.

Other related activity: (2018 Daily Log records)

Theft	61	Parking Violations	194
Burglary	17	Alarms/Open doors	110
Assault	20	Felony Arrests	3
Criminal Mischief	20	Misdemeanor Arrests	68
Juvenile	56	OWI Arrests	16
Motor Vehicle Collisions	125	Towed Vehicles	27
Public Assists	5657	Assist Agency	587
Warnings	664	Suspicious Vehicles	141
Moving Violations	194	Animal	65
Non-Moving Violations	12	Disturbances	162
Administrative Time	1,737 hrs.	Investigative Time	279.9 hrs.
Cornell Related	61.8 hrs.	Lisbon	521.4 hrs.
Medical	92.15 hrs.		

Department Staffing / Community Growth

The police department operates within City Hall at 213 1st Street NW in Mount Vernon. Due to growth and increased need for space, our department also uses two other structures for evidence, records and property storage. One of the two structures being used is the old Fire Station located

to the west of City Hall. The old station is being used primarily as garage space for our patrol units, school car, and City equipment. The structure provides a secure/temperature-controlled environment that has helped to reduce costly vehicle repairs and damage to electronic equipment within each of the three patrol vehicles. Items include mobile data computers, printers and AED's (Automated External Defibrillators).

When City Hall was built in 1988 the department consisted of four fulltime officers and four reserve officers and was designed to house four officers. The department currently consists of six full time officers and six reserve officers. The staff consists of one Chief of Police, three Patrol III Officers, one Patrol II Officer, one Patrol I Officer, and six reserve police officers. The department has been at the current staffing levels since 1997, while our community has grown considerably both in geographically patrolled area and population.

In 2000, the census for Mount Vernon reflects a population of 3,390 compared to the 2010 census that shows our population at 4,506. The 2000 census included 987 Cornell College students and the 2010 census included 1191 Cornell students. This is an overall increase of 1,116 individuals during the 10-year period, including Cornell students.

During that time period Mount Vernon experienced growth in residential developments in several areas of town, including:

- 1) Stonebrook – located west of the Mount Vernon High School in the South West quadrant (Approximately 100 homes)
- 2) Wolfe Martin addition – located in the NE quadrant of our community (approximately 47 homes)
- 3) Candlestick Drive – Addition that includes about 13 homes NE quadrant
- 4) Hill View Drive – the extension of Oak Ridge Estates – SE quadrant (approximately 29 homes)
- 5) Meadow Brook addition – located in the SW quadrant (approximately 35 dwellings)
- 6) Cornell College has added two significant housing facilities – Russell Hall and Smith Hall dorms located in the SW quadrant on the campus of Cornell College.

Additional developments are now underway with the Stonebrook, Spring Meadows, and Hickory Acres Developments. Additionally, with Iowa DOT expansion of the four-lane portion of Hwy 30 and related corridor developments, our department is preparing for an increase in calls for service and police service. Increased office space is the primary immediate need for our department to ensure professional police services continue to meet the needs of our growing community. This need is critical for efficient & professional operations. The addition of administrative office personnel and hiring additional officer(s) are other current needs to be addressed soon (1-5 years).

While many considerations determine an appropriate staffing level, in 2017 the FBI reported a Nationwide rate of 2.4 sworn officers per 1,000 inhabitants and a rate of 3.4 full time law

enforcement employees per 1,000 inhabitants. Based on the National rates and the 2010 Census, Mount Vernon would equate to having 10.8 sworn officers and 15.3 FTE's. Given our current staffing of 6 sworn officers and zero administrative support staff we operate well below the national rates for law enforcement agencies. (<https://ucr.fbi.gov/crime-in-the-u.s/2017/crime-in-the-u.s.-2017/topic-pages/police-employee-data>)

28E POLICE SERVICE

In November of 2016 Mount Vernon Police entered into a 28E Agreement with the City of Lisbon to provide 20 hours of police coverage per week to supplement their police coverage provided by the Lisbon Police Department. Lisbon agreed to pay Mount Vernon \$40 per hour for police services. Mount Vernon Police Department provides Lisbon with police services during times when a Lisbon Officer is not on duty. This partnership has mutual benefit for both communities and is a great example of sharing resources to enhance public safety while being fiscally responsible. In July 2017 Lisbon reduced the amount of contract time to 10 hours per week, after their department returned to full staff (3 officers).

In 2018, Lisbon paid the City of Mount Vernon \$21,254.80 for contracted police services. In 2018 Mount Vernon Officers responded to 119 calls for service under this agreement and provided approximately 446 hours of patrol coverage and 11.5 hours of administrative time to the City of Lisbon.

COMMUNITY POLICING

DARE

In 2018, Officer Todd Gehrke facilitated both the 5th and 7th grade D.A.R.E programs at Mount Vernon Community Middle School. In 5th grade, Officer Gehrke provided instruction to approximately 106 students on core topics including consequences of drug use, self-esteem, decision making skills, and peer pressures students encounter and how to deal with that pressure. It also includes conflict resolution, how to refuse drug offers, alternative choices to drug use and other skills needed to live a drug and violence free lifestyle.

The focus of the Mount Vernon 7th grade D.A.R.E. program is like that of the core program used in 5th grade. During 7th grade classes, Officer Gehrke taught approximately 112 students. The curriculum acts as a refresher to aid students in preventing or postponing the first, or future, use of drugs or alcohol by the student. These lessons cover many of the same areas as the core program, however they are more in-depth and give the students an opportunity to discuss real situations they may have encountered.

RAD (Rape Aggression Defense Program)

Officer Gehrke is a certified RAD Instructor. Officer Gehrke partners with Cornell College staff to provide self-defense training to female students. This training provides the students with awareness, skills, options, and confidence to take action to ensure their safety. Additionally, Officer Gehrke was requested to provide women's self-defense presentations in the community.

SAFE KIDS – National Child Passenger Safety

In 2018, our department partnered with Linn County Safe Kids Coalition and Lynch Ford & Chevrolet to host a Child Safety Seat inspection event at Lynch Ford. In 2018 there were 7 inspections occurring during this event.

Officer Gehrke is certified as a Seat Belt Technician trained in the proper usage and installation of child safety seats. The department conducts safety seat belt checks as requested and partners with Lynch Ford to hold an annual Child Safety Seat Inspection Event highlighting proper safety seat installation and use. Members of the community can call anytime to set up an appointment with Officer Gehrke to assist them in proper child seat installation and usage.

BOOTS vs. BADGES BLOOD DRIVE:

Mount Vernon Police Department and the Mount Vernon Fire Department again participated in the annual “Boots vs. Badges” Blood Drive. During this event, there were 32 donations, providing 128 products for patients in need.

CANINE PROGRAM

In 2018 Mount Vernon Police Department implemented a full-time Police K9 Program. Officer Moel attended a K9 handlers’ course through Canine Tactical in Chariton, Iowa. Officer Moel and K9 Monster successfully completed K9 Certification on September 21, 2018. Officer Moel and K9 Monster continue to receive training at Canine Tactical every month to ensure skill development and competency as a professional K9 team. Officer Moel and K9 Monster tested and received second layer certification on December 5, 2018.

During 2018 Officer Moel and K9 Monster assisted conducted approximately 93 vehicle sniffs, assisted with 1 vehicle pursuit, 1 missing person, 1 fleeing suspect, searches at Cornell College, Mount Vernon Community Schools and assisted LCSO with school searches in Linn County. Officer Moel and K9 Monster has attended multiple public demonstrations including the Community Leaders Breakfast, a City Council Meeting.

RC RAIL

RC Rail is based at the Mount Vernon Community School District but works closely with other communities in Linn County that are part of the DFC Grant. The police participate with in-kind contributions by providing school training, attending meetings and holding Community Drug Drop off events.

Police officers meet with coalition members to discuss various community safety, prevention and substance abuse related issues. These grant projects have funded officers attending out-of-state law enforcement trainings in Texas, California and Washington DC.

GENERAL INFORMATION

The Police Department has a broad area of responsibility within the community and responds to a variety of calls for assistance. During 2018, the department responded to 1,948 dispatched calls for service and 4,793 officer-initiated contacts in Mount Vernon or the surrounding area.

Officers respond to all types of calls, including medicals, fire emergencies, disturbances, domestics, civil issues, drug violations, suspicious persons, car & house unlocks, child & animal abuse or neglect complaints, parking problems, traffic violations and many other community safety needs.

In 2018, Mount Vernon experienced numerous community events requiring additional police resources to ensure public safety. These events included Chalk the Walk, Heritage Days, Antique Extravaganza, Memorial Day Parade, Cornell Commencement, Mount Vernon & Cornell Athletic Events, and many other events in the community.

Police officers respond to fatal incidents/accidents or other deceased individuals. Initial response involves officers checking for signs of life and rendering aid if possible. If a person is deceased, officers begin investigating & assist the coroner in determining the cause of death. In these situations, officers have the unwanted task of making many of the notifications to friends and family. Mount Vernon police officers respond to serious highway vehicle crashes in and around Mount Vernon which result in serious injury and occasionally death.

Police officers assist the Mount Vernon Fire Department at fire-related calls by handling traffic control, evacuations and providing any other assistance requested. Additionally, Mount Vernon police respond to medical calls and are the first responders on scene to assist with medical care as needed. Officers are trained in CPR and AED use. AED's are standard equipment in each patrol vehicle. In 2018, Officers were trained to administer Naloxone (Narcan) and began carrying this in response to the opioid epidemic being experienced across the United States, including Iowa.

The Department responds to calls to assist those who have locked keys in a vehicle or have been locked out of their home, assisting whenever possible. Additionally, the Department performs regular house checks for those leaving town for extended periods of time. Officers perform regular building checks of business locations and school buildings.

Police officers respond to domestic disturbances. Domestic disputes are one of the most hazardous calls law enforcement officers encounter. Additionally, officer may be required to assist young children who may be present in the home and may have witnessed violence.

Other police department activities include:

- Conduct training for schools, businesses & organizations in various topics including Active Threat Response, Fraud, NSF/Closed account checks, drug & alcohol training, and tobacco & alcohol sales, fingerprinting, impaired driving, texting, internet safety and many other topics;
- Making recommendations, when requested, about security features for home and businesses;
- Helping with animal related problems within the community;
- Assisting with the identification of lighting, signage and other safety issues and forwarding those concerns to City Hall for repairs or installation;

Additionally, the Department performs routine patrol around schools, businesses and homes to reduce crime and a deterrent to those wishing to commit a serious crime. Officers issue traffic citations to correct inappropriate driving behavior, as established by society, to reduce the chance of injury or death associated with vehicle crashes, and to reduce costs incurred during those crashes.

The police department is a resource for those individuals who have been victimized by crime. Officers investigate criminal activity, identify those associated with it and charge those individuals involved (when certain criteria are met). The department becomes the agency responsible for forwarding charges and reports to the County and City Attorney when necessary, to resolve an incident.

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS TRAINING:

Mount Vernon Police Department spends a great deal of time training and coordinating with community partners and emergency services organizations to ensure we are prepared to respond in the event of a major disaster. This training is ongoing and our department routinely partners with Mount Vernon Community Schools, Cornell College, Mount Vernon Fire Department, Lisbon Fire Department, Lisbon-Mount Vernon Ambulance, Lisbon Police, Linn County Sheriff's Office, Linn County Emergency Management and local businesses. Various training exercises allow inter-agency cooperation and networking to build relationships that are critical to the successful management of a critical incident.

DRUG TAKE BACK EVENT:

Mount Vernon Police participated in the National Drug Take Back event on April 28, 2018. Unwanted drugs may also be turned in at the police department or placed in the drug drop box at City hall. Mount Vernon Police collected over 128 pounds of unwanted medications in 2018.

Training Instructors

The Mount Vernon Police Department continues to have department members trained as instructors for various applications. Instructors include: Officer Daniel Daubs & Officer Mehlert are department firearms instructors, Officer Daubs is a precision driving instructor, Officer Gehrke is a defensive tactics instructor, and Officer Blinks is the department Taser instructor.

Deadly force and the use of firearms are two of the biggest areas of liability faced in law enforcement. Having certified instructors provides the opportunity to perform additional training to officers. This ensures proper technique and response in high risk situations and ensures proper procedures are clear, helping reduce liability and injury to the suspect and officers. Weapon proficiency and safety improve with the increased number of hours spent in weapons-related training. This past year the department was able to train at the range to ensure firearms proficiency. Taser and Defensive tactics have been incorporated into yearly trainings to ensure officers are current on proper use of force and appropriate tactics when force is necessary.

Officer Daubs is the department's Precision Driving instructor, providing training to members of the department, other agencies, and police recruits at the Iowa Law Enforcement Academy. Officer Daubs also spends time with newly hired officers instructing them on vehicle operations

within the guidelines of department policy. Topics include non-emergency, emergency and pursuit driving.

Officer Todd Gehrke is a certified instructor for the R.A.D. (Rape, Aggression, and Defense) program. Officer Gehrke works with Cornell staff to provide training to Cornell students annually. Officer Gehrke has provided shortened classes on self-defense to members of the community wanting to learn more about self-defense.

Chief Doug Shannon and Officer Todd Gehrke are certified ALICE (Alert, Lockdown, Inform, Counter and Evacuate) instructors. The department conducts In-Service training with the Mount Vernon School District staff, Cornell College staff, and local businesses, regarding review of practices and procedures within the business or school and how to respond in an emergency.

National Incident Management System (NIMS)

Members of the department have completed the National Incident Management System (NIMS) ICS-100 (Introduction to Incident Command), ICS-200 (Basic NIMS for Operational First Responders), ICS-700 (Introduction to NIMS). Some officers have additional training in IS 200FW (Basic Incident Command), IS-800 (National Response Framework), and PER-340 (Active Threat Integrated Response).

Department Technology

The Court system requires departments to file paperwork, criminal charges, civil processes and other legal documents electronically. Officers use software provided by the State of Iowa to complete crash reporting, citations, criminal complaints, OWI processing and many other day to day reports. Officers use mobile computers, scanners and printers to complete these tasks in the field. Additionally, the mobile computers have improved officer efficiency and communication by using mobile computers to check databases and communicate directly with officers and dispatchers. This advancement, however, comes with a cost of hardware, software and support.

Body cameras and in-car video advancements also have added to the cost of providing service to our community. High profile incidents across the country have changed the way many departments report and document contacts with violators and others that we have contact with during patrol. The hardware and back end support are costs that have made an impact on our department budget however, I believe supporting this new technology is in the best interest of our community. The video has proven to be a necessary component of policing. Our department has used captured video to aid in criminal prosecution and assist with internal investigations when complaints against officers are brought forward. The video has also proven valuable in protecting the city against civil litigation claims.

In 2017 Mount Vernon Police Department established a Facebook Account and began using this Social Media platform to disseminate information to the online community.

SUMMARY

This report has outlined a variety of calls and services the Mount Vernon Police Department provides to the citizens of Mount Vernon. This report is not all-inclusive, but only a synopsis of what our officers experience. While much of law enforcement involves responding to incidents as they occur, mitigating them as safely, effectively, and efficiently as possible, the most important part of our profession is the relationships we form with the citizens we serve.

As the Chief of Police, I am hopeful this information will provide citizens with the insight to the department's activities for 2018.

All these activities are carried out or performed to maintain order, build positive relationships and provide a safe environment for everyone, whether residing in Mount Vernon or visiting our Community.