

DPS WEEKLY

February 14th, 2022



Help us welcome these new members to the DPS Family:

Sonja Burns-Easley

Position: Arkansas State Police
Criminal Investigation Admin. Analyst



Sonja is not new to working as a state employee, as she has served 28 years within the Division of Community Corrections. She is excited to learn a new area of state government, and be down the hall from her husband of 16 years, Charles, who works in the Fusion Center!

Anna Walley

Position: Arkansas State Police
Driver License Examiner



Anna is looking forward to being a part of the team at ASP, and excited for new opportunities! Anna says family is everything to her! In her off time you can find Anna enjoying activities with her husband, Cody, and their daughter, Layton!

HAPPY
Valentines
DAY

The first heart-shaped box of chocolates was introduced in 1861. It was created by Richard Cadbury, son of Cadbury founder John Cadbury, who started packaging chocolates in fancy boxes to increase sales. He introduced the first heart-shaped box of chocolates for V-Day in 1861, and today, more than 36 million heart-shaped boxes of chocolates are sold each year!

James Gillespie

Position: Arkansas State Police
Driver License Examiner



James is looking forward to a new challenge while interacting and meeting new people. As a former state representative in the General Assembly, and with a professional background in poultry and cattle farming, James is excited to continue to serve his state in a whole new and different role.





THIS WEEK'S WELLNESS TIP!

Make sure you get fresh air and sunshine:

Feeling “cooped up” is completely natural as we continue to battle the stress of Covid-19. To help combat that feeling, it is important to take a break and go outside to get some fresh air and sunshine. It may look a little different now, but the benefits remain the same. Here are a few reasons to soak up the fresh air and sunshine while we can.

The outdoors can provide a beneficial distraction from the computer and rest for your eyes. Better to look at nature as too much screen time can contribute to eye strain, headaches and blurred vision. If the weather is particularly good it offers you an opportunity to do some yard work, a home repair project or clean-up project that you previously did not have time to tackle.

Vitamin D, known as the sunshine vitamin, is essential for optimal health and has many functions in the body. Spending a lot of time indoors and living in a colder climate can affect our ability to get Vitamin D from the sun alone. This vitamin plays multiple roles such as assisting in promoting healthy bones and teeth, supporting immune, brain, and nervous system health, regulating insulin levels and supporting diabetes management to name a few.

Last but not least, getting outside can help to spark creativity. For example, we can hit roadblocks when working on a project. Taking a break from intense thinking and relaxing our mind can help us to generate new ideas and have a new perspective on things, thereby making us more productive. Remember, getting outside even if it is for 5 minutes can be very important as a way to re-energize, focus and spark creativity. Build it into your routine just as you would fit in a lunch break.

DID YOU KNOW?

**The Arkansas State Crime Laboratory has
been accredited in Forensics since 2004!**



Accreditation is a certification by an accreditation body that an institution is conforming to a body of standards. This is based on a full assessment of a laboratory –including on-site observation, document review, interviews, proficiency testing, and on-going monitoring. Accreditation is the best way to openly demonstrate to the public that these professionals are operating properly and providing reliable results to its customers.

The Arkansas State Crime Laboratory first achieved accreditation in 2004 and has maintained it since. It is currently accredited by the ANSI National Accreditation Board (ANAB) in the field of Forensic Testing, conforming to ISO 17025:2017, ANAB AR 3125:2019, and the FBI QAS standards for DNA Testing and Databasing Laboratories.

DPS Mission:

The Department of Public Safety’s mission is to enhance the safety and security of all Arkansans through ethical, character-driven behavior that promotes professionalism, clear communication, and accountability while serving as the state’s premier public safety agency.

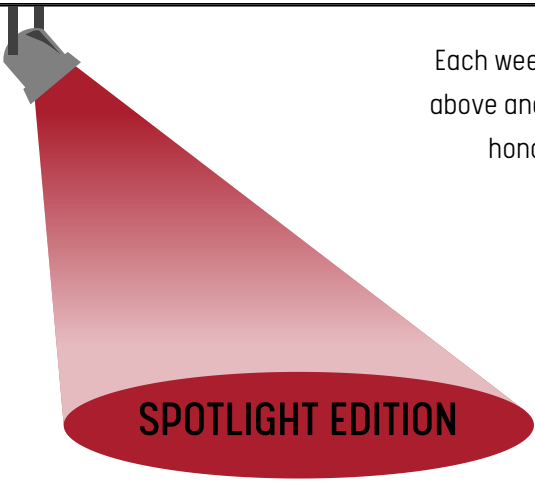


DPS Core Values:

- **Respect** for everyone
- **Integrity** in everything we do
- Providing **excellence** in customer service
- Performance through **teamwork**
- Commitment to **servant leadership**
- Pursuit of **continuous improvement**

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Each week our Mission Moment celebrates DPS employees who reach above and beyond the mission of the Department of Public Safety. We honor these individuals for their hard work, dedication, and commitment to public service.



MISSION Moments

Name: Joseph Hof, Ph.D.

Division: Arkansas State Crime Lab

Length of employment: 14 years

The Arkansas State Crime Laboratory not only serves the State of Arkansas, it also contributes to the field of forensic science as a whole. One good example is Joe Hof, the technical lead of the DNA and Databasing Sections of the laboratory. Since 2020, Joe has worked with the lab operations committee of SWGDAM, the Scientific Working Group on DNA Analysis Methods.



SWGDAM is an organization made up of scientists from forensic DNA labs and guests representing academia and Federal agencies from all over North America. They recommend revisions to the FBI QAS standards that accredited DNA laboratories follow. They also develop new forensic biology methods to expand the reliability and capability of forensic DNA analysis.

The Laboratory Operations Committee is tasked to identify, evaluate, and research issues related to the efficient generation of high-quality DNA testing data by forensic laboratories. They meet every other week to work on revisions to the many guidelines and recommendation documents for which they are responsible. The rapid and ongoing growth in DNA testing technologies ensures that this committee is one of the busiest in SWGDAM.

In the past, ASCL Director Kermit Channell chaired the US committee and served as the US representative for ISO/TC 272, helping to draft ISO 18385, which is an international standards document designed to minimize the risk of DNA contamination in products used for forensic purposes.

It’s through activities like these that the Crime Lab helps improve the field of forensic science—not only for Arkansans, but for everyone.