

LEE



2012

Bushong

FOR LEE COUNTY SHERIFF

Dear Fellow Lee County residents:

Allow me to introduce myself. My name is Lee Bushong and I am currently running for Lee County Sheriff. As a Republican candidate, the primary election is August 14, 2012.

About two years ago, I was the Commanding Officer of the Lee County Sheriff's Office Investigative Intelligence Section. At that time, I was a principle investigator into an internal corruption investigation that eventually involved Sheriff Mike Scott – the current Sheriff. Because of my involvement in that investigation, and because of what I uncovered and my uncompromising integrity, he terminated my employment when questions involving an inappropriate relationship between him and a felon arose. I challenged the termination, and hours before I was to publically present my case at a civil service hearing, the Sheriff reversed the termination and reinstated me with back-pay. Many ask why? Well, that public hearing would have disclosed facts uncovered during the corruption investigation about the Sheriff's long term relationship and involvement with a convicted and violent Cali Cartel drug mobster. Perhaps that is the reason why.

I accepted the offer to be reinstated, but I remained concerned about the Sheriff's persisting relationship with the felon. Because I lost faith in the leadership and integrity of the Sheriff, I decided to run for Sheriff myself. In December of 2009, I resigned my position at the Sheriff's Office of my own free will and in good standing. I could no longer bear the thought of a man leading the Sheriff's Office who could not obey the same very laws he was sworn to uphold. It's not in me to allow justice to be adulterated.

I decided to place this article for many reasons. Since I announced my candidacy for Lee County Sheriff, I have received a tremendous amount of support and a lot of phone calls, e-mails and requests for meetings from all members of the community. Many residents, local government leaders, employees of the Lee County Sheriff's Office, and other local law enforcement and public service agencies have reached out to me, thanking me for running for Sheriff and to right a wrong. As I have not been able to

meet and or communicate with the public at large as of yet, I felt this letter would be a fair way to accomplish that.

You may not realize the internal failures associated with the current Sheriff. You may not realize how this affects you as a citizen, business owner, parent, or retiree. Normally, internal office politics don't affect you personally, but in this case they do. The Office of the Sheriff is staffed with wonderful hardworking men and women, but the current internal atmosphere is so rife with unjust agendas that these men and women are not willing to risk their jobs (and family's livelihood) for fear of an unjust vindictive response from the Sheriff. The Sheriff's failure in effective policing, personnel management and fiscal responsibility affects us all. How? Your neighbor hoods are not as safe. Your businesses are not as safe. Your winter home is not as safe.

I am fully aware of the past and present dishonesty by the Sheriff, the blatant corruption and his abuse of power. It is true it has led to the early retirement, resignation, termination, and mistreatment of many very qualified officers, including myself. These are why two groups have recently unionized within the Sheriff's Office and a third body is beginning to do so as well. Sheriff Scott will lead you to believe unionization at the Office is mostly related to pay raise and benefit issues. The truth of the matter is these men and women want protection from the Sheriff. Ask yourself why else would two groups of employees organize under the same Sheriff in less than a year?

The reasons I decided to run for Sheriff are many. I spent nearly my entire career at the Sheriff's Office as a professional detective. I specialized in conducting complex criminal investigations and I currently own a private investigative agency. During the last two years, I have devoted my time to gathering pertinent information about things you will find of interest in preparation of running for Sheriff of Lee County.

At heart, Mike Scott is a politician, not a law enforcement officer. He has outlined this very clearly lately in the media. Recent



articles concerning the Sheriff's feelings of his choice of political supporters, as well as turning his back on those who have helped him obtain office have become common-place. The media has documented this well.

The current Sheriff did not apply recent available taxpayer funds to effective enforcement operations or to address personnel issues. He used it, and continues to use, it for public service announcements starring himself. He spent \$225,000.00 to put his face on TV in just the past few months (Naples Daily News, September 2011). That's what politically driven people do.

I am not a politician nor do I wish to be. I have always been and wish to continue to be a member of the uniform services and above all a public servant.

As a decorated Non-Commissioned Officer of the United States Marine Corps, and a highly trained and accomplished deputy sheriff, detective, sergeant, and lieutenant/staff officer, I learned very quickly that wearing a uniform and making a commitment to the service of others must be unconditional. It is about respecting, honoring and caring for those around us that serve with a common mission aimed at a common goal. It is about having the compassion and commitment to those you have sworn to serve. It's about what I can do for you – not the other way around!

In the coming weeks I will be holding a press conference. All local media, as well as non-local media, will be notified of the date, time, and location. I will also post the date and time on my website at www.lee2012.com. During the press conference, I will display facts about the past and present corruption, dishonesty and malfeasance connected to the current Sheriff and those close to him. I will outline the negative effects and poor influences corruption has on the hard working members of the Lee County Sheriff's Office and how it impacts you as a citizen. Sheriff Mike Scott is invited to attend and I will allow the Sheriff an attempt to rebut

any of the facts, figures and documents that I provide. I will provide the facts, figures and documents to all media and citizens alike as well as placing them on my website at www.lee2012.com. I intend on submitting some of these facts and evidence to a competent criminal investigative agency for further review.

Additional conferences and debates challenging all Sheriff candidates will follow later. I have prepared many open forums where I can be asked anything by anyone. These forums will be provided on my website as well. I will display my future plans for fiscal and budget reform (resulting in taxpayer savings), how I will restructure the agency to reduce duplication of effort (resulting in taxpayer savings), our vision for effective and productive partnership with the International Union of Police Associations (the union that two categories of employees have voted in during the past year), and the overall investigative and enforcement strategies aimed at our community's most problematic areas and issues.

I am running for Sheriff based on the foundation of proven law enforcement experience (my evaluations and commendations are listed on my website and are publicly available) and high moral character. Most of all, I am a committed law enforcement officer.

I am not and will not run based on politically fueled promises, partnerships and agendas. I ask you - the taxpayer, the citizen, the parent, the retiree - to attend the press conference and the following debates and announcements. I ask you to listen, see the evidence I present and make a decision based on fact and not a smile.

I anticipate a challenging and exciting campaign over the next 11 months, as well as the greater challenges when you elect me as your Sheriff. I am committed to the challenge, hard work and dedication that lay ahead for us all as a community. Together, "Let's Make It Right!"

"Those who expect to reap the blessings of liberty must undergo the fatigues of supporting it."

-Thomas Paine

- Lee Bushong