



# COUNTY OF KENOSHA

## OFFICE OF THE SHERIFF

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Over the past three weeks the nation once again saw Kenosha come into the spotlight with the Rittenhouse Trial. The Kenosha Sheriff's Department had been preparing security plans for the trial for months. Most of these plans had been developed many weeks before the trial started but were modified even as the trial was progressing towards the final verdict. We had several goals to achieve as we moved forward, but our major ones were:

- The safety of all those in the courtroom.
- The safety of the jury from the beginning to the end of the trial.
- The safety of those doing business in the Courthouse.
- The safety of those who wished to share their opinions during the trial.
- The safety of the City and County of Kenosha and all its citizens.
- The safety of the hundreds of media located in the vicinity of the Courthouse.

We worked closely with the Kenosha Police Department and many other local law enforcement agencies in southeast Wisconsin and across the state in preparation in case of civil unrest. We also worked closely with the Governor, State agencies, and the Wisconsin National Guard who had 500 soldiers on standby should they be needed. We also worked with Federal Agencies who were also waiting to assist if the need ever arose. Thank goodness it did not.

The media outnumbered any protestors by about 10-1. Throughout the mornings there were only a few protestors on the Courthouse steps. By around noon the numbers rose to 20-30 protestors. At peak, we may have had about 40 protestors who wished to get their message out just a little bit louder than someone else, but overall, those in attendance were peaceful. I am aware of one scuffle between two people in front of the Courthouse that resulted in an arrest.

The hundreds of media cameras seemed to make it appear that Kenosha was in turmoil, but we were not. Business as usual occurred just a few hundred feet from the steps of the courthouse. Our City and County were calm as the nation watched the trial and finally witnessed the verdict. The Citizens of Kenosha and the Nation watched to see if more unrest would occur in Kenosha, but it did not.

Some local leaders wondered if the National Guard was going to be called in to protect the City because some malicious agitators were spreading false information through emails and social media of impending chaos, but there was none. Our team monitored many false social media posts with the intention to scare our citizens and once again to create tension in our City. The Kenosha PD and Sheriff's Department investigated each one of them and found almost all the malicious posts... were unfounded.

I am incredibly thankful to all the media outlets that depicted what had accurately occurred during the trial process. These outlets realistically portrayed the small number of protestors as compared to what Kenosha faced in the 2020 riots.

The day before the verdict, which was also the peak of the protests, had me setting up a "Cookies for Peace" table with free cookies from Kenosha's own Paielli's Bakery along with Dunkin Donuts coffee. I personally handed out treats to everyone on the courthouse steps, whether they were protestors, media, spectators or law enforcement, with the help of members of the Journey Church Disaster Response Team.

For a few hours, we all stood side-by-side in the cold drinking coffee and sharing a sugar cookie. Even while the chants were echoing from the Courthouse steps, I walked through the 30-40 protestors and continued to hand out cookies a few different times. I learned, as I talked to those shouting out chants, where they came from and where their kids lived. They stopped, smiled and took a cookie as I walked through the various groups with opposing views.

I learned that even though the protestors numbers were small, the number of Kenosha residents' protesting were even smaller. Most of those that I spoke to were from outside Kenosha. Some were even from as far away as New Hampshire and California.

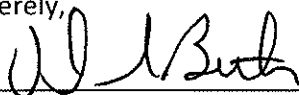
The Kenosha Sheriff and Police Departments' goal was to allow for peaceful protests, keep tensions low and our community safe without adding to the already high anxiety of the situation we faced as the nation watched. We also believed that if we could keep Kenosha's tensions to a minimum, it would also greatly benefit the entire nation. I believe we achieved our goal and I am very proud of all those who helped in this lofty ambition.

I would like to thank:

- The citizens of Kenosha, the State of Wisconsin and the entire nation who did not come to the Kenosha Courthouse to personally witness and participate, but watched from the comfort of their own homes.
- The members of County and City Government who trusted in the plan that was in place even though you did not completely know or understand what was involved in the security plan.
- The Governor, State Agencies and the Wisconsin National Guard who assisted us in the planning and development of the security plan along with remaining on standby for the duration of the trial.
- The Federal Agencies who assisted us with the development of the security plan and were on standby for the duration of the trial.
- Neighboring Law Enforcement Agencies along with agencies from throughout Wisconsin on alert if Kenosha needed your assistance as well as City and County Fire Departments.
- The Kenosha Police Department who helped in the coordination every step of the way in this process.
- The Pleasant Prairie, Twin Lakes and UW Parkside police agencies for your assistance.
- All media, but especially those who accurately depicted the events that unfolded during the trial.
- All the family members of the men and women who serve in law enforcement across this great nation, but especially those in Kenosha these past few weeks.
- I would especially like to thank the men and women of the Kenosha Sheriff's Department for all the work you have done in anticipation of the trial that gripped the world... and every other day of the year as well.

I would also like to share condolences and prayers to the families of Waukesha who had loved ones senselessly killed, injured or had joyful memories permanently destroyed at what should have been a wonderful start to the Christmas season. The hearts of the Citizens of Kenosha go out to all of you.

Sincerely,



David G. Beth  
Kenosha County Sheriff