

Time for change.



Good day, ladies and gentlemen.

I hope this letter finds you all well. As some of you may have heard, I have left the Sheriffs Office and have taken another job. I would like to explain my reasoning why. For the last nearly 10 years, I have worked for Spartanburg County Sheriffs Office. And while I fully appreciate the opportunities given to me, I have seen good deputies come and go. Our recruiter has hired more new deputies this year, than any other years past. But somehow we have the fewest amount of deputies working now, than we've had for the last 20 years. Some of these deputies have left in order to work for other agencies, while others chose to get out of law enforcement completely. Why is this??

The morale of the office has been on the decline for the last few years. Many deputies are leaving Spartanburg County over outdated policies, as well as the deplorable pay. In my opinion, this is unacceptable as it is completely avoidable. There is a large discrepancy in pay between Spartanburg County and other competing agencies. Not to mention the discrepancies within the office between deputies. There are senior deputies making less than junior deputies, despite having less time and experience. And there are junior deputies not getting paid what they deserve. This too is unacceptable and not being corrected by the administration. The administration has not publicly spoken out and has failed to get the raises and/or bonus' that you ladies and gentlemen truly deserve. These issues can easily be fixed if someone cared enough to be a vocal advocate for the men and women of Spartanburg County. Why have they not gone to the local news agencies to address the pay? It's never been an issue for the Sheriff to ask the public for donations for other events, and "Special Services". So why is the pay not being properly addressed? In addition to the lack of pay, there is a lack of respect by administration for the jobs that you all do. In case you have not been paying close attention, the perks of staying at the Sheriffs Office have slowly dwindled away. Are promotions celebrated? Career achievements? Take a Deputies Retirement for example; if you spend 28 years with Spartanburg County, how are you recognized or rewarded? The answer is that you are not. In years past, you were honored with a retirement party. Then it was reduced to a combined retirement party periodically. Then it was further reduced to the deputy having to send an email to have a shadow box made. All you had to do is simply stop by the front desk to pick up your shadow box on the way out the door. Mind you, without the courtesy of a handshake and a job well done. Fast forward to present day, and you are not recognized with any formal recognition. Maybe, you will get a "congratulations" text or phone call - maybe. This is shameful and disrespectful for the many years of hard work and dedication to the office.

Updating policies on the little things, such as beards and a comfortable working uniform can make a huge difference in morale. However, these things are not being allowed, because "Our team will look like the police" without beards. Administration is not taking into consideration, the voices of the Sheriffs Office employees, as everyone he talks to is "Perfectly happy the way things are." As the Sheriff, yes you should stand firm, but there is also a need to be approachable and open to new ideas. There should be a comfort to speaking the truth, without the fear of penalty. A Sheriff should not only hear the things being said but he should listen as well. Listen to those he has put into position of authority. No good comes of those who speak only what you want to hear. The voices of reason are currently being drowned out by the disguise of "It's how we've always done it." or because I am "The policy maker." Please, do not misjudge me, as this is not a personal attack against Chuck Wright. This is not me saying that he is not a good man. This comes from a place of genuine concern for the future of Spartanburg County Sheriffs Office. It is simply business. The business of Spartanburg

County. Happy employees make a happy place. I live in this county and I depend on you men and women to keep my family safe; as do the remaining citizens of this county.

For these and many other reasons, I want you all to be the first to know, that I am formally announcing my intentions to run for Spartanburg County Sheriff. I will be the first to admit that officers of the law do not like change. But change can be good! It is time for change! I have not come to this decision lightly, as I have thought, researched and prayed over this decision for well over a year. I do not take for granted the hard work that it will take to correct the many tasks needed to better Spartanburg County Sheriff's Office. I invite each of you to go to the websites and Facebook pages of Greenville, Richland, Charleston and York Counties. Look and compare. Is Spartanburg County Sheriffs Office as great as it can be? Are Spartanburg Deputies honored and celebrated as they should be? Are they paid what they should be? Is the community involvement as it should be? If the answer is no to any of these questions, then what can make it better? The answer lies within each of you. The Sheriff may be the face of the Sheriffs Office, but the Deputies are the voice! Maybe I don't stand a snowballs chance in winning this election. Then again, if you all have had enough, then maybe I do. Regardless of the outcome, I can promise you that I will listen closely, and address all the grievances and concerns that every one of you have. I will fight tirelessly to make a change for the better! There will no longer be any acceptable excuses for the ignorance of the issues, or the lack of exceptional leadership that should ensue. Additionally, there will be no excuse for the further disrespect of the employees of Spartanburg County Sheriffs Office. I will be a Sheriff that you can be proud of. I will conduct exit interviews on all voluntary resignations to help determine shortcomings, and have any recurring issues addressed. I promise that I will make Spartanburg County Sheriffs Office a place that you can take pride in working for! If you are genuinely happy working in the same conditions for the next 4 years, OR MORE, then by all means vote for "how you've always done things". But if you want betterment and are willing to take a chance on me, then I promise that I will be your biggest advocate to get the money, training, equipment and most importantly, the respect that each of you deserve. My door will always be open, as I will be approachable and willing to listen to any issues at hand. I look forward to working with you, and for you! Many of you already have my contact information, if you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact me.

Be encouraged as change is coming. As always, y'all stay safe!

It's time for change!

Nick Duncan for Spartanburg County Sheriff