

Darren Mark Popkin

Montgomery County Sheriff

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Q. What are your top three priorities for the next four years, if elected?

- Assure the continued operation and program expansion of the Montgomery County Family Justice Center, which was created in May, 2009, as a multi-disciplinary facility to assist victims of Domestic Violence. The FJC serves as a model training facility for the expansion of the concept to other jurisdictions.
- Maintain a high level of quality and cost effective law enforcement services for the residents of Montgomery County with lower available budget resources.
- Develop cooperative partnerships with related agencies to more effectively share our law enforcement resources.



Darren Mark Popkin

Residence: Olney, Maryland

Party: Democrat

Education: Robert E. Peary High School, Montgomery County, Md., University of Maryland, College Park, BA in Criminal Justice

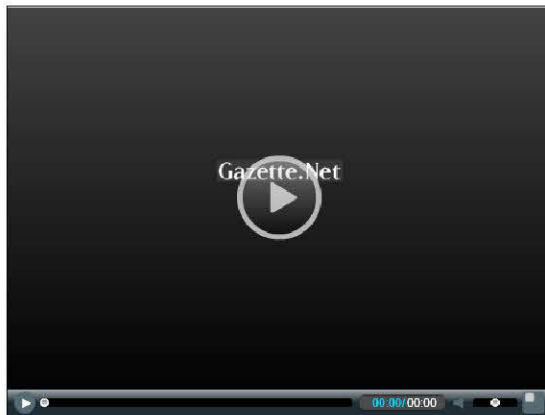
Work experience: 1998 to present, Chief Deputy Sheriff, Montgomery County Sheriff's Office

1985 to present, Montgomery County Sheriff's Office

Family: Wife, two daughters in college and son in 8th grade in Montgomery County Public Schools

Top three issues: Enhance Domestic Violence prevention services; Provide effective services with budgetary restraint; Cooperative Law Enforcement Partnerships.

Campaign funds: Received contributions of



Q. How would you rate the job performance of the current sheriff: excellent, good, fair or poor? Why?

Excellent! As a 25 year member of the Montgomery County Sheriff's Office and the second in command for the last 12 years, it is fair to say that by any objective standard Sheriff Raymond M. Kight has made the Sheriff's Office a universally respected professional member of the law enforcement community. While many aspects of the Sheriff's Office work are not highly visible or glamorous, it is critical and often dangerous work that our society needs to have done. It is a credit to Sheriff Kight that our organization has the quality and diversity of staff that make the office a

reflection of our community.

Sheriff Kight has provided steady, high quality professional leadership to an organization that has grown and evolved into a nationally accredited law enforcement agency. He has made important long term commitments to support professional leadership and management. The Sheriff has fostered an open participatory management style that has encouraged full and frank

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discussions of all policy issues. He has delegated decision making to the lowest appropriate level and supported educational and career development activities for employees.

Working with County Executives and County Councils over a long period of time he has developed and nurtured quality relationships of trust and respect which have resulted almost universal support from both and he has been asked to take on additional responsibilities because of the high regard the political leadership has in his ability to deliver quality cost effective programs. Sheriff Kight sought and received national accreditation for the office and positioned the office to adapt to the changing community and financial environment.

Q. What qualifications would you bring to the sheriff's office?

I have been second in command of the Montgomery County Sheriff's Office from 1998 to the present and have a total of 25 years experience as a deputy sheriff. I earned a B.A. in Criminal Justice from the University of Maryland, graduated from the FBI's Law Enforcement Executive Development School, and have participated in annual Sheriffs' Association professional and management training seminars. Currently I am a vice president of the Maryland Sheriffs' Association.

I believe I have substantial expertise for the position of Montgomery County Sheriff. I have the requisite education, professional law enforcement experience, and law enforcement management experience, which positions me to provide exceptional leadership for the Sheriff's office.

My law enforcement experience has been in the Sheriff's Office, rising through the ranks and serving in almost every capacity and area of the Office's responsibilities over the years. As second in command in the Sheriff's Office, I have been responsible for the day-to-day management of the Office including a staff of 148 deputy sheriffs and 35 civilians. My responsibilities include the allocation of resources, priorities of the office and staff assignments within the Sheriff's Office areas of responsibility.

As a top member of the Sheriff's management team I participate in all major management decisions for unique and special circumstances and situations, development of organizational priorities and budget decisions, collective bargaining negotiations, and inter-agency coordination and cooperation. I represent the Sheriff's Office as a member of the Montgomery County Criminal Justice Commission and hold a major leadership role in the creation and operation of the Montgomery County Family Justice Center, our major initiative to deal with domestic violence.

I am an active member of numerous professional organizations including the Maryland Chiefs of Police Association, State and national Sheriffs Associations and the International Association of Chiefs of Police.

I participate in the development of critical policies for the Office, both internally and externally. In this role, I have had an opportunity to learn and develop a set of skills that position me to excel at the next level as the final decision-maker. I have the advantage of knowing why and how decisions are made and observe the operational impact of the decisions.

Because of our office's open management style and the opportunities I have been afforded through professional development, I have a keen understanding of the conventional and unpredictable issues we face on a daily basis. My insights into the way other organizations handle similar responsibilities are part of my philosophy and approach to learning and adapting to the changing law enforcement environment. I am interested in learning from others how they perform similar tasks, specifically, how they prioritize and make decisions on resource allocation, technology, budgeting techniques, performance measures, and professional benchmarking. I believe I am uniquely qualified to be the next Sheriff of Montgomery County, Maryland.

Q. In succeeding a six-term incumbent, Sheriff Raymond M. Kight, what changes would you introduce to the Sheriff's department?

The question of change is an important one, because there will be new leadership in the Sheriff's office after the November election. I do not have a specific list of dramatic changes that I think need to be accomplished. I will perform a top down review of what we do and how we do it. This is an important and sensitive issue. Change is threatening to people. It is also a challenge for people. Change for the sake of change, second only to no changes at all can be incredibly counterproductive.

I will be required to look at our organization with a fresh eye, if for no other reason than the financial and service needs we face. For example, we have seen enormous growth in one service area, evictions. Obviously, we need to look at the way we are doing things, reach out beyond our local borders and see how other jurisdictions are handling this responsibility and see whether we can improve the efficiency and effectiveness of this aspect of our responsibilities. There are other areas in which we need to assess our performance. We need to look at the use of additional technology.

approximately \$30,000 since the start of my campaign for Sheriff.

Previous political experience: (none)

Other affiliations: Vice President and Board of Directors, Maryland Sheriffs' Association, Inc.

Member, Montgomery County Criminal Justice Coordinating Commission

Member, Maryland Chiefs of Police Association

Member, Montgomery County Deputy Sheriffs Association

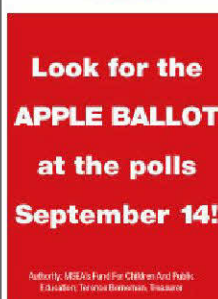
Member, National Sheriffs Association

Member, International Association of Chiefs of Police

Member, Fraternal Order of Police, Lodge 35

Volunteer, youth athletic league coach

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In almost every single area of Sheriff's Office responsibility we interact with other organizations, whether it is the court clerk, prosecutor, corrections, and private organizations. It is highly unlikely that I can make unilateral changes without impacting other groups and organizations. I will assess our role as part of an overall system in these various services. I will coordinate and negotiate with the other stakeholders in the process. My knowledge of the operations and key members in other agencies and organizations is an important asset in my ability to undertake cooperative efforts that will improve service and reduce costs.

While this is a general answer to the question, I do not want to lay out unrealistic and unrealizable goals and objectives. This does not serve the interests of taxpayers, residents, nor associates.

Q. How would you deal with budget restraints? How do they affect the sheriff's department's responsibilities, such as transporting prisoners? What savings can be achieved in the department?

The current downturn in the economy is clearly one of the most urgent problems facing the residents of Montgomery County. Loss of income and jobs has led to an increase in foreclosures and evictions. Reduced tax revenues have required more economical management of our limited resources in order to maintain essential law enforcement services. Governmental resources will need to be shared using cooperative partnerships with related agencies to more effectively maintain service levels.

Q. Should the sheriff's department handle more law enforcement duties?

All Montgomery County Deputy Sheriffs are certified as Maryland police officers. On a daily basis, the deputies have more than enough workload for their enforcement, prisoner transport, security, domestic violence, child support enforcement, fugitive warrant service, and civil enforcement duties. I have worked diligently to act cooperatively with the county police. Two very good examples are the canine and SWAT units. Each of our departments has requirements for both of these specialized units, and, if we did not coordinate our efforts, could end up duplicating coverage and competing for resources. Instead, based on our normal operating requirements, the Sheriff's highest demand for its canine explosive unit is weekdays during the day. The County Police's highest demand for its canine explosive unit is during evenings and nights. Therefore, through cooperative efforts with the police department, our current operational scheme is Sheriff Canines are first County responders during the day and the County Police are first responders during evenings and at night. Both departments also need SWAT team capabilities which require extraordinary levels of skill and training to be successful. Instead of each organization going it alone, we have a joint interchangeable team which has proven to be successful in reducing the risk of death and serious injury to personnel and residents, improves service, and is cost effective for taxpayers.

The handling of domestic violence cases in the County is a classic example of how the Sheriff and other agencies worked out operational policies that provide for an award winning integrated service program which provides an outstanding level of service and reduces risk of serious physical and emotional injury and death to women and children. The Sheriff's Office is the lead agency in this significant community service through the Family Justice Center. The community receives enormous benefits by leveraging the available expertise and local financial resources and grant funding opportunities.

This joint venture, like a number of other services discussed in this response, did not happen by accident or without substantial investment of time and energy.

My approach over the years has been to develop a strong working relationship with county police to support joint ventures, improve cooperation and training, use our expertise to supplement law enforcement activities, and effectively carry out our discrete, mandated legal responsibilities. Shifting resources without an overall strategy or plan is not cost effective or likely to bring long term improvements. It is critical to understand impacts of change are expected to be both positive and negative and lurking in the background are the unintended consequences.

We want to avoid duplication of effort, wasting of valuable human and financial resources, and most importantly for those in harms way or innocent bystanders, reduce the risk of inadvertent death or serious injury. We continue to look at ways to leverage the capabilities of our organizations to improve service and reduce costs. We believe this cooperative approach results in measurable improvements that residents, political leaders, financial overseers, and our own department management team appreciate.

I plan to build on these strong relationships and strategies because they are critical to those who pay the bills and those who benefit from our services.

Q. How would you characterize the sheriff's department's relationship with the police department? Are there areas for improvement? If so, what are they?

The Sheriff's Office senior staff has a superb working relationship with our colleagues in the Montgomery County Police Department. Our deputies are trained at the Montgomery County Police Training Academy with their counterparts in the police department and our staff is part of the instructor cadre in the Academy. This common recruit and in-service training program has served to enhance the street level working relationships between our organizations. Sheriff's Office members are periodically detailed to work with the county police on a variety of joint assignments as well as a working with the Rockville and Gaithersburg Police Departments and U.S. Marshals Regional Task Force.

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In order to maximize the value of our respective department's strengths, our two departments coordinate our canine operations; have joint SWAT teams, and a variety of other areas that have been very effective in reducing duplication of effort and potential areas of conflict. The deputies routinely back up and support MCPD when high profile events have strained resources. This has become a routine seamless transition that is the result of the commitment of leadership in both organizations to provide high quality, cost effective service to our community.

I believe that no matter how well we work together today, given the respective challenges our organizations face, we need to systematically reassess and reevaluate our current level of cooperation to seek more and better opportunities to improve service and find cost effective ways to serve the community. Currently there are no specific open issues between the departments and both organizations work very hard to keep it that way. Our philosophy is that cooperation and mutual support and not competition achieve the best results for the people we serve.

The quality of leadership fosters the extraordinary cooperative attitude which results in a high level of cooperation and that requires certain critical qualities; mutual trust and respect; and open, frank lines of communication. These cooperative efforts exist today because we have worked very hard to reach and maintain a quality professional working relationship that is deep, widespread, and exceedingly valuable to both organizations and the people we serve. Put in its most basic form, not only do we talk the talk, we walk the walk as a part of our regular mode of operation. This is important on a daily basis and critical in crisis management.

Q. Is transporting illegal immigrants an appropriate use of the sheriff's department's resources?

Yes. The Sheriff's Office is the county wide agency that, by law, is charged with the responsibility for transporting all incarcerated prisoners from the county jail to court for trial, to hospitals for emergency medical treatment, and to the State Department of Corrections for service of their sentences. To the extent that illegal immigrants are charged with a criminal offense and are incarcerated prisoners, it is necessary to use Sheriff's Office resources to assure their presence in court for trial, for emergency medical treatment at hospitals, or to take them for service of a sentence in the state system.

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