

Donald Cudmore

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Chasing Crooks, Chasing Dollars

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Master Patrolman Donald Cudmore's name has been popping up more often than usual lately. Not only a newly minted School Committee member, Cudmore is also the Georgetown Police Department's resident grant writer, authoring the paperwork that has brought such additions as a school resource officer and traffic calming devices to town.

Not that Cudmore takes the credit for these grants. Assigned to the task during last year's reshuffling of department duties, Cudmore says "anybody could do it," with the right mindset.

"It takes good organizational skills. Some departments let these grants slip by," he said.

He is concerned about the next fiscal year, however, as fewer and fewer grants appear to be available to police departments. Already it has been announced that no money has been allocated at the state level for community policing grants, one of Georgetown's strongest points.

Cudmore will reach the two-decade mark with the department this year. Working as a reserve officer in college, he attended Salem State College and worked for Travelers Insurance Company as supervisor of the fraud unit after he graduated. His primary job was dealing with accident investigations.

When Travelers was sold, Cudmore's duties changed and he instead pursued work in law enforcement. He had continued to work as a reserve officer after college, and so the transition to full-time officer in Georgetown was an easy fit.

Not that he abandoned his previous skills. Cudmore continues to run his own investigation business, SHS Services, LLC, which focuses on accident recreations and investigations.

"We're more on the technical side of things," said Cudmore, who said the company works exclusively with insurance companies rather than handle surveillance cases.

Because of his background, Cudmore also handles the majority of Georgetown's accident investigations, specifically those in which there are serious injuries or fatalities.

"Anything in traffic seems to come my way," he said.

There is an ever-growing intensity surrounding automobile accidents, adding to the level of responsibility for every police department.

"It's a litigious society, and because of that we're held to a high standard to determine what happened," said Cudmore.

Cudmore, a lifelong Georgetown resident, lives in town with his wife RuthAnn and their daughters Devin, 8, and Danielle, 6. RuthAnn is a teacher's assistant at Perley Elementary School. With a family this involved in the schools, it is unsurprising the grant Cudmore is most proud of working for is the recent school resource officer grant, which will put a full-time officer in Georgetown's schools. Georgetown was one of only five municipalities to receive this grant in the first round this year.

"Other departments have asked to see the proposal, to see why we got this grant," said Cudmore.

While Cudmore has a variety of administrative tasks on his plate, the highlight of the job for him comes when the whole department is being seen in a good light by the town.

"I've seen highs and lows for this department," said Cudmore. "When we're up ... it makes being an officer and living in town that much better."