

the case. No press release was ever sent to the *Keizertimes* regarding Batsell's incident.

When press releases are sent to media outlets, they are sent at the same time the information is posted on social media.

"Why not be in front of it, write your own narrative? Because if you allow somebody else to write the narrative for you, you know as well as I do, it's so much more difficult," said Wenning. "You write the narrative for the police department based on your opinion, your training experience and your companies ... your way of doing business."

By posting the information first, Wenning said it's much easier to get out in front of statements that might be made later on.

"It would be a lot easier to post these things up front and say look at what this unit did. Look what we're doing at Keizer Station, we're protecting you. Versus waiting until somebody is victimized, who might be that special person, whether that be a legislator or somebody that's vocal or high profile in the community. You know darn well they're not gonna keep their mouth shut," said Wenning.

Batsell said that the department's post about her lacked context and left out details that created a false narrative. According to Batsell, she crashed into the parked car after swerving to avoid an animal, which was not

included in the post.

Batsell also added that the post made it seem like she was drinking at 8 a.m. before driving her kids to school, which she said wasn't the case.

"To me there's a clear difference between a conscious decision like that and you know, making that mistake the next day after I'd been drinking the night before," said Batsell.

Thompson, the Salem lawyer, said that misinformation on social media can even make its way into the courtroom at times.

"Sometimes it actually infects the investigation. It infects the integrity of the statements

that are being made and sometimes it might even hurt the state's case," Thompson said.

"If you have people out there saying things that are just inherently not true and other people start making things up and thinking that, 'Oh, this case is about this.' But that was not what the case ever was about," said Thompson. "Then it starts like detracting from the credibility of maybe what the original allegations really were all about."

Thompson said that he's never understood why police departments "put fuel on the fire" by posting on social media, and in the case of booking photos, legislators didn't either.

Wenning said that while the department has had conversations, they plan on continuing to post the arrest incidents and to not regulate the comment section. Wenning added that much like the booking photos, the department would "absolutely" change their ways if legislators mandated it.

"I would say that the public should know when the police have taken an action against someone. However, we know that it's merely an accusation and if it's a very serious accusation, the law provides for that," Bynum said. "But if it is a minor accusation, that can have far greater implications than what they're accused of long term."

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— **LT. TREVOR WENNING,**

SPOKESPERSON FOR THE KEIZER POLICE DEPARTMENT



News tip? Contact reporter Joey Cappelletti at editor@keizertimes.com or 616-610-3093.

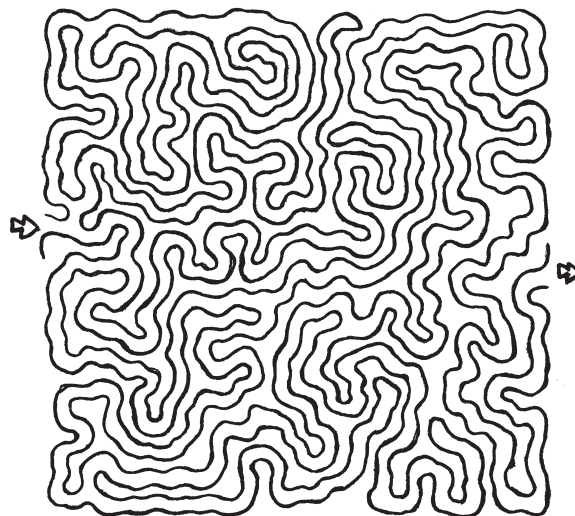
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sudoku

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Enter digits 1-9 into blank spaces. Every row must contain one of each digit. So must every column, & every 3x3 square.

sudoku answers pg A9



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