

From the Sheriff's Desk . . .

by Jeff Dickerson, Sheriff
Columbia County



"There never is a cop around when you need one." There have been a number of off-duty opportunities even for me to utter that familiar phrase.

But it also underlines the importance of being prepared for the times when you must act either to defend yourself or assist responding law enforcement in apprehending a perpetrator or someone who has bro-

ken the peace in our county.

The best way to be prepared for the unexpected is to visualize your actions in any number of potential conflicts that come your way. I'm not talking about fantasies of what you'd "like to do to someone" who threatens you, but reasonable, self-preservation techniques designed to defeat aggression and limit your vulnerability.

Law enforcement members train incessantly for the unexpected by running through countless scenarios in their mind. You can do the same thing, with a goal of protecting yourself and your loved ones.

Taking a self-defense course and learning how to use a firearm in self-defense are also good ways to

prepare for the unexpected. I am a firm believer in the second amendment's guarantee of the individual right to keep and bear arms. I believe our founding fathers understood that the right to self-determination is only as secure as your ability to defend that right.

There are other times where your personal safety is not threatened, but events happening around you are placing others in danger, or victimizing people and/or their property. Even then, your preparation for the unexpected can help law enforcement catch up with the perpetrators.

Your prior preparation should also include training on how to be a good witness. When something bad

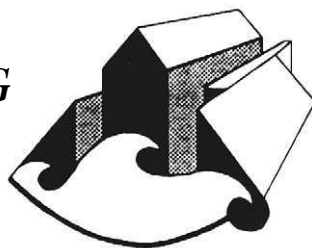
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