

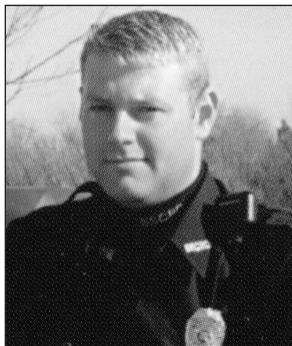
to ask Schmiedt why cops have such bad reputations. He explained, "It seems to me that when I meet or am introduced to new people, a majority seem to remember the *one time* when their speedometer was off and they received that *unjust* citation. People fail to realize, sometimes, that we're out there to protect the public and keep everyone safe." When I ask about those officers that do seem to have that token chip on their shoulder, Schmiedt says, "It doesn't do anyone any good to have an attitude. These are people you have to interact with in society outside of your job."

The evening proceeded with a routine stop for a headlight out and a lesson in where to park if you want to catch people speeding. Then at 8:14 p.m., we hit the jackpot when an errant driver ran a red light. The driver was thoroughly intoxicated from alcohol and that's when the evening really became interesting. Officer Christopher Goodrich showed up to provide assistance while Schmiedt ran the standard battery of testing for sobriety. The driver tried to consciously maintain his balance while the officers had him walk "the notorious straight line" and recite various alphabetical sequences to score his simple cognitive faculties. The kiss of

death came with the The Breathalizer. Long story short, he failed. He was arrested and placed in the back of our squad car for transport to the Dakota County Jail. Prior to that, the driver decided to volunteer the information that marijuana was present in his vehicle. After securing him, Schmiedt and Goodrich searched the vehicle for controlled substances and other legal infractions. They combed through the vehicle like two ants looking for sugar, and after a matter of minutes emerged with the infamous "cellophane sack" of *chronic*.

Working in tandem, the officers cleaned up the legal details on the scene. Soon after, Schmiedt, the perpetrator, and one fascinated journalist ended up at the Dakota County Jail for the extensive booking procedure. It was a routine that consumed the rest of the evening.

The driver was given a second breath test on a more complex piece of machinery when we arrived at the jail. Schmiedt administered the test, making sure it was calibrated properly before taking the reading. This was followed by a seemingly endless trail of paperwork used to document the offense and provide evidence for the



Christopher "Goody" Goodrich



court system where the defendant will eventually be arraigned. The gentleman was actually quite cooperative and seemed to

be familiar with the procedures. One interesting thing I noticed is the reciprocal effect attitude has on the officers. Offenders who are obedient and willing to work with them tend to get more courteous and respectful treatment, whereas those who are difficult and aggressive get the same behavior in return.

After leaving the jail at 10:30 p.m., we returned to the Law Enforcement Center. I asked Schmiedt if it helps to have a sense of humor in a career like this, and he responded by saying, "I believe you do. If you don't enjoy what you do you're going to burn out and be unproductive. Day after day you deal with some type of negative situation, and if you don't laugh about it sometimes, it might get the better of you."

Schmiedt carries a sharp wit along with his Smith & Wesson when he says, "That thing about us eating donuts all the time just isn't true, with the exception of Officer #223. He taints the rest of us with that image." This writer can personally testify in all honesty that I did not see one donut in the South Sioux Law Enforcement Center. However, the Dakota County Jail, well, that's another story... **S**

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