



From the Desk of
Chief James E. Getz Jr.

DECATUR POLICE DEPARTMENT

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The Decatur Police Department has seen an increase in gun violence since the beginning of the Coronavirus Pandemic. We are not alone as many other cities in this State and other States have seen the same pattern. I have heard many times in my Police career and in my over four years as Chief of Police, “the Police do not care about these shootings” or “they need to solve these cases.” These comments are not only frustrating but lack an understanding of the truth. The men and women of the Decatur Police Department care about the safety of the people involved and in the solving of these cases, often more so than those involved. The Officers and Detectives of this Department put more time and effort into solving these cases than any other issues we deal with in this City. We will continue to vigorously work these cases, arrest those responsible and seek the most severe punishment for the most dangerous gun offenders.

In the day of Detective shows filling our television, there is a falsehood that cases are solved in 30 minutes based on forensic evidence. This makes for good tv, but in reality, this is simply not true. Cases are supported by forensic evidence but are solved by victims and witnesses sharing accurate and truthful information. In some cases, witnesses are scared to share information and we certainly understand. However, in some cases, victims do not share information because they believe in “handling it themselves” which only adds to a continuation of the problem. We all have a responsibility to speak up and to keep our community safe; however, for those citizens who may be uncomfortable in doing so, we encourage them to make an anonymous report to Crimestoppers at 423-TIPS (8477) or they can make an anonymous call to our Investigations Unit at 424-2734.

For those who are victims and/or involved in these shootings, it is time for them, their family and friends to step up and end this culture of violence. Shootings lead to death, or prison and neither should be an acceptable resolution for the people involved. Three days ago, five people were shot in a single incident. Of those shot and interviewed, not a single individual shared truthful information as to what happened or who the shooters are even though they know. This is very frustrating and looks poorly upon our City. It is time for all citizens, neighbors, friends, family members and community leaders to be part of the solution and put an end to this unacceptable behavior. It is time for courage and change for the good of our community.

Truthfully, Chief Getz