

From the Sheriff

Wayne County Sheriff Rob Milby

In January of this year, I was at the New York State Sheriff's Association Winter Conference, an event that occurs annually, where our NYS Sheriffs gather to discuss, learn, and carry on the business of the Association.

The Association is designed to assist all NYS Sheriffs in serving their counties to the best of their abilities. That is where I met Sheriff Kieran Donohue, from Canyon County Idaho. Sheriff Donohue will be entering his fourth term as Sheriff on January 1, 2025. He is also the National Sheriff's Association President. He was our guest speaker that presented on what is happening at the U.S. southern border.

I had heard that what was going on in the south, a high number of migrant crossings, was beginning to shift to our northern border, mostly the Swanton Sector. A sector is how the United States patrols its borders. It is not by city, it is by geographical areas. The Swanton Sector begins at Alex Bay in NY and includes northern New York, Vermont and New Hampshire.

I was also hearing that bodies were being found at/near the northern border. Those bodies were immigrants trying to cross into the US from the north, in the winter weather. Was this true? As a member of the National Sheriff's Association who already sat on the School Safety Committee, I decided that I should get myself educated on all that was going on at our borders, so I submitted to become a sitting member of the Border Security Committee.

In the meantime, I would learn what I could from those who would tell me the truth, our American Sheriffs.

In February, I attended the NSA convention in Washington D.C. (my trips are sponsored by the New York State Sheriff's Association) where I continued to learn about all that is going on at our borders that is not being told to our public.

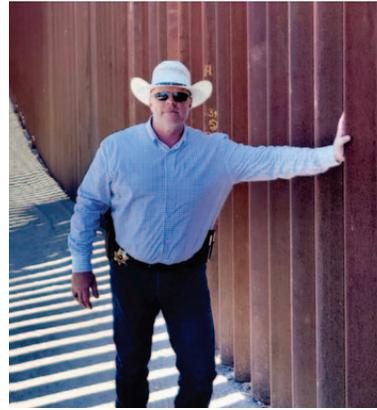
The information that I was learning wasn't being told on the news. It was alarming to learn the number of crossings, who exactly is crossing, and why they are coming?

I wasn't hearing from politicians or slanted media. I was hearing from those who were dealing with the issue, Border Patrol Officers and the Sheriffs that sat on the committee.

It was then that I decided that I would certainly join this effort if it meant that I could get ahead of things that were to come for Wayne.

In June, I attended the National Sheriff's Summer Conference in Oklahoma City, where it was announced that I had been appointed to the committee.

At this conference, I learned more about the crossings, how the Mexican



Sheriff Milby at Winterhaven, California, near the Andrade Port of Entry at the Mexican Border

cartels are involved, and what is driving the numbers. The violence, the death and the exploitation of humans for profit and power is almost overwhelming.

Is this going to make its way into Wayne County? I needed to see this for myself. On September 3, at the invitation of Sheriff Donohue, I travelled to Winterhaven, California. The purpose of my trip was two-fold. I am a skeptic at heart, so I wanted to see the front line for myself, and speak with those who are dealing with the border issues. I also needed to see how it all related to Wayne County, and if this was a safety and security issue for our county.

I needed to learn what could I do to keep our citizens safe, if they were in danger. I was introduced to southern border Sheriffs like Sheriff Mark Dannels of Cochise County, Arizona, Sheriff Leon Wilmot of Yuma County, Arizona, and Sheriff Eddie Guerra of Hildago County Texas. These men are on the front line.

There were so many others, all solid men and women, with interest in doing right by their citizens, and working together to get the word out to the people that this issue was much more than refugees that were escaping poor conditions in Mexico and looking for work.

This was going to be a border tour and it was going to be a meeting of the Southwestern Border Sheriff's Coalition and Texas Border Sheriff's Coalitions. I was the Sheriff who travelled the greatest distance, and they referred to me as their 'friend from New York.'

Was my trip to the southern border vindicated? Absolutely. I saw the landscape, and I took a tour of our southern border, the Yuma Sector, and was educated by two Border Patrol Officers. While everyone piled into a small bus for the tour, I opted for the front seat of a new van, and my own AC vent, as it was 115 degrees outside! The three of us spoke for the entire two-hour tour. I asked questions, and they held nothing back.

Next week I will tell you about what I learned from the Border Patrol Officers, as well as my southern colleagues.