

“I have been a police officer for 12 years but now I think this is truly what I was suppose to do,” stated Charlestown Police Patrolman Tim Wolff. “I love it, I love developing relationships with the kids and I love coming to work! I love hearing the kids’ stories and learning about the kids, learning about their future and what they want to do.” Walking into the first grade class of Mrs. Blaydes at Jonathan Jennings Elementary School in Charlestown last week, you can tell Officer Wolff is exactly where he is suppose to be.

The 26 students immediately stopped what they were doing and directed their attention to their new friend. The lesson of the day was about gun safety and Eddie Eagle gave the students a new song to remember if they ever come in contact with a gun. The students watched intently a video where Eddie Eagle taught them the rhyming song, “If you see a gun: “Stop! Don’t Touch. Leave the Area. Tell an Adult!” Officer Wolff led the students in the song during the lesson several times before the program was over.

The gun safety lesson of the day ended with Officer Wolff handing out an Eddie Eagle coloring/ activity book about gun safety, a pamphlet for parents and a sticker for the kids. Anxious students were coloring and looking through the new workbook before Officer Wolff even had time to walk out of the classroom. Happy students who learned about gun safety in a way they will remember forever as students were heard reciting the “Stop! Don’t Touch. Leave the Area. Tell an Adult!” motto as they were coloring the workbook.

Officer Wolff’s new position as the School Resource Officer (SRO) at Jonathan Jennings Elementary School and Charlestown Middle School began on August 1. He spent the summer training and learning what a SRO does and what programs he would teach the students including the ever popular DARE program.

Wolff attended DARE School in June and graduated as the top student. He is hoping on attending the NASRO (National Association of School Resource Officers) training next summer.

“Next summer I hope to be able to attend the NASRO training. I believe they have a beginner, intermediate and advanced course. I would love to complete all three of them,” Wolff stated.

He continued about the two week DARE School training held in Fishers, Indiana, “This summer I attended DARE School. It was absolutely the hardest two weeks of my Law Enforcement training, and I have been through SWAT training and the Academy! It was hard but it was worth it.”

Wolff, a 1997 graduate of Charlestown High School, knew he wanted to be a police officer as a young kid.

“I always had respect for law enforcement and what they did. I idolized them as a little kid,” Wolff explained.

Although Wolff wanted to be a policeman as a young child after graduation from high school law enforcement is not the first career path he chose to take.

“When you are a kid it is just something you want to do. Once I graduated high school and worked at Jay C and at a copy/repair job, I just didn’t feel fulfilled. I kept thinking about law enforcement. I had a friend in the Reserves and he just told me to try it out, if you don’t like it, then you will know,” Wolff explained.

Wolff applied for the Charlestown Police Reserves and was hired a year later in 2002.

“The moment I got on and started doing the work, I knew this is it! It wasn’t until I started doing stuff I didn’t like that I realized I need to get in law enforcement and do what I want to do, what I was meant to do,” he added.

The career path for Wolff finally turned the way it was meant to be as he was hired as a full time police officer for the Charlestown Police Department in January 2004. He is a member of the Indiana Law Enforcement Academy Class 2004-159. Wolff graduated from the Academy with Honors, the first Charlestown Police Officer to have this distinction.

“As a kid I wanted to go to IU and be a State Trooper. You know, as a kid, you are riding on the interstate and see the State Trooper get out of their cars putting on their hat. It just leaves an impression, but this makes sense to serve the community I grew up in. I go into Circle K or go eat and kids come up to me and say ‘hi Officer Wolff’ or someone speaks to you even out of uniform. I know I am where I am suppose to be,” Wolff explained.

Currently Officer Wolff is teaching the 10 week DARE program to fifth and eighth graders. He has the Eddie Eagle Safety Program for kindergarten through second graders and is hoping to do more DARE curriculum with the third and fourth graders.

When asked what he wanted the students to know about their new SRO, Wolff was quick to answer.

“I want them to know I’m approachable, that I am there to serve them,” Wolff added. “I want to be able to bridge the gap between the school, community and the police department. I want them to know they can come and talk to me about anything and if I don’t know the answer, I can point them in the right direction. I want to be able to show them that the police don’t always show up when it’s bad and that we really are the good guys and we are here to help them and protect them.”

Wolff took a second longer to answer when he was asked what he wanted the parents and guardians to know about him.

“My goal is to maintain the safety of the school first and foremost. I am not here to take every kid to jail but I will take police action when needed. My ultimate goal is to teach the kids that I will be there for them. I will be a friend when they are having a bad day. I will be there to take a walk with them and let them talk if that is what they need to do,” Wolff stated. “Now I go into the middle school and go play some basketball with the eighth graders and talk with them. I am trying to bridge that gap.”

Wolff concluded, "I love being in plain clothes and have one of the kids come up to me and say 'hi Officer Wolff' and have them talk to me about what they have been doing. I just love this job. I know this is where I am suppose to be!"

Editor's Note: Clark County Sheriff Lt. Bob O'Keefe is still the School Resource Officer for Pleasant Ridge Elementary School and Charlestown High School.