

# Alton Pizza with the Police is big success

by Cory Davenport, Contributing Writer  
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**ALTON** - The Alton Police Department provided free pizza to the community Thursday night through its Pizza with the Police event.

More than a dozen of the city's police officers shared pizza and conversation with scores of people from the community at Senior Services Plus (SSP), located at 2603 N. Rodgers Ave. Members of the community were able to sit with officers, ask questions and share their concerns. Children were also able to take a look inside police vehicles and even play with the sirens and talk through the loudspeaker. Alton Police Chief Jake Simmons said the event was part of the department's community policing initiative. Other such initiatives have included [Shop with a Cop](#), [Coffee with a Cop](#), Ballin' with a Cop and the holiday season's [Summons of Joy](#), during which errant motorists were sometimes given a gift card to a local shopping center instead of a ticket.

The Pizza with the Police measure was a method to bring people who may have later schedules to meet with police. Such people may not be able to attend Coffee with a Cop sessions, which are held during normal working hours.

"We wanted to do something in the evening to get people out after work," Simmons said.

Like several other community initiatives, Simmons said the night was designed to show the community how officers are people just like them.

Pizza with the Police is not directly related to the [Community Policing Program](#) currently being championed by the Alton Community Relations Committee, but it is something the Alton Police Department developed in-house. Simmons also takes several ideas he has learned from meeting with stakeholders in North St. Louis County.



Simmons has been attending those community and police relations meetings since the Ferguson riots.

