



Chief Wells Discusses Story Behind Colton's Lawn Care Collaboration

by Dalton Brown, News Reporter
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WOOD RIVER - Wood River Police Chief Brad Wells recently provided more insight into the story behind his department's collaboration with a local 14-year-old business owner - a story that has proven popular both locally and beyond, and has led to increased business for the teen entrepreneur.

Chief Wells said Wood River resident J.T. Thompson reached out to him asking if he would meet with Colton Wilkins, the 14-year-old owner and founder of Colton's Lawn Care who was looking for work. He set up a meeting with Colton and his mom shortly after.

"This kid doesn't look 14 years old, but he's a teddy bear - just a good, good kid," Wells said on [a recent episode of Our Daily Show! on RiverBender.com](#). "He says, 'Look, I

just want to work . I've got a lawn care business and I would just like to know if there's something I can do for you.'



“I said, ‘Look, I think if I put this on Facebook, we’ve got enough community support, we’ve got a great community - I think the community will rally around you.’”

His prediction came true, to say the least.

With his mother’s permission, Wells featured Colton and his story [in a post](#) on the Wood River Police Department Facebook page on April 17 which reached over 2,000 likes. This would be the first, but definitely not the last, appearance Colton would make on their Facebook page.

“We put the story out there and it just exploded,” Wells said. “Then the next day, Scott Slayden who owns Slayden Glass, called and said, ‘Look, I saw that ... I want to give this kid a riding lawn mower.’”

Slayden also donated a trailer for Colton to pull his other lawn equipment behind the mower, and completely fixed the mower before donating it so Colton would have to do less maintenance on it.

[The next Facebook post featuring Colton](#) on his newly-gifted riding lawn mower reached over 9,000 likes, including some from way outside the local area.

“There’s a pub over in the UK that actually ‘liked’ that, so that’s how far that story has gone,” Wells said. “And all over the country ... it covered just about every state in the union, just a really good story.”

Earlier this week, he said Special Tees Owner Mike Roper printed up some custom “Colton’s Lawn Care” t-shirts and [donated a big box of them to Colton](#) one morning before school. After taking one for himself and one for his mother, he took the rest of the shirts to school and handed them out to students.

“just a great kid,” Wells said. “I look forward to my relationship continuing with him and seeing how it goes for him.”

The full interview with Wells can be watched at the top of this story or on [RiverBender.com/video](#) - he begins discussing Colton’s story around the 4:15 mark.