



Food Drive Planned to Celebrate Late Police Officer Blake Snyder's Birthday

by Sydney Sinks, News Reporter
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ALTON - A local organization will celebrate the birthday of the late Police Officer Blake Snyder with a food drive to benefit Alton food pantries.

On Friday, Nov. 3 and Saturday, Nov. 4, 2023, you can stop by [Alton Physical Therapy](#), located at 3550 College Avenue, to drop off donations and participate in raffles, games and giveaways. The food drive, sponsored by Mustache March 4 PD (MM4PD), aims to honor Snyder and help the community by collecting 4,100 pounds of food to celebrate Snyder's 41st birthday on Nov. 7.

“After Blake was killed in the line of duty in St. Louis, there was a group of us that wanted to get a better connection with the community and the police officers,” explained Tina Bennett, vice president of MM4PD. “And Blake was the kind of person, the kind of police officer we hope all police officers are. He was very generous with his time, helping people, always a very good husband and father and churchgoer, family man. To have him be shot in the line of duty the way he was really took a toll on a lot of us.”

After Snyder, a St. Louis County Police Officer and Riverbend native, was killed in 2016, a few community members decided they wanted to increase support for the 13 police departments in the Riverbend region. Steve Schwegel, owner and physical therapist at Alton Physical Therapy, banded together with Bennett and 13 other committee members to form MM4PD in Snyder's memory.

The group regularly sponsors fundraisers to help local law enforcement, with money going toward items like office chairs for 911 dispatchers, basketballs for officers to play with local kids, and one department's K9 dog. It's important to the organization's committee members — most of whom knew and loved Snyder — to support the local police departments as much as possible.

“And when I say ‘support,’ I mean let's support them while they're alive, not after they're passed,” Bennett added.

MM4PD stays busy, but they also make a point to throw a birthday party every year “to keep Blake's memory alive and to help the community,” Bennett said. Snyder was known to buy groceries for unhoused people he encountered on the job, so with the rising prices of groceries and the holidays fast approaching, it was a natural decision to organize a food drive.

All donations can be dropped off at Alton Physical Therapy, and volunteers will be available on Nov. 3 and 4, 2023, so you don't even have to get out of the car. MM4PD is also accepting gift cards and donations over Venmo and PayPal. Donations will go to

the food pantry at the [Alton Boys and Girls Club](#), though Bennett hopes they will receive enough food to give to a few local pantries.

“We’re thinking big for this food drive, so that’s why we really want the community to get involved,” Bennett said. “It’s kind of just like a big birthday party that we’re going to have for Blake.”

Everyone is welcome to stay for the party, complete with raffles, games and birthday treat bags for the kids, including Snyder’s young son.

It’s important for MM4PD to not just mourn Snyder, but to celebrate him. Though there was an outpouring of support after Snyder’s passing, Bennett said that Snyder’s family was warned this support would likely fade over time as people moved on. MM4PD refuses to let this happen.

“You know, show the blue lights on their house for a couple of years and then all of a sudden when that light burns out, they put the normal one back in,” Bennett explained. “So they kind of expected his memory just to fade, but we’re not going to let that happen. He was too important in the community. This is our way of continuing to keep his memory alive.”

To donate or join in the celebrations, stop by Alton Physical Therapy at 3550 College Avenue in Alton. Volunteers will be available to collect donations from 3–6 p.m. on Friday, Nov. 3 and 9 a.m. to noon on Saturday, Nov. 4, 2023. You can also donate through [Venmo](#) or [PayPal](#). Check out the [official MM4PD website](#) or [Facebook page](#) for more information.

Fill The Pantry

**MM4PD IS COLLECTING
CANNED GOODS &
NON PERISHABLE ITEMS**

**IN HONOR OF
BLAKE'S
BIRTHDAY**



11.7.82 - 10.6.16

Alton Physical Therapy

3550 College Ave, Alton, IL 62002

**Friday, November 3rd
3 PM - 6 PM**

**Saturday, November 4th
9 AM - 12 PM**

MEET US IN THE PARKING LOT

Make a donation and get a chance to
participate in raffles, giveaways and games!

Thank you for all your Support!



Venmo



Paypal

#belikeblake