

Jerseyville Police officer Rich Portwood takes talents to national 'Stop the Threat' TV show

by Dan Brannan, Content Director
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JERSEYVILLE - Rich Portwood is a law enforcement officer for the Jerseyville Police Department and has become a familiar face on cable television on the show “Stop the Threat.”

Portwood, a Carrollton native, is a sharpshooter and works with the **Illinois Rifle Association** providing classes for members.



“I love shooting,” he said. “Recently, I shot in a Marine Corps Championship and also a club match in Springfield. Right now, I will probably go back in January to film more episodes on the TV show. In addition to being a police officer, I am starting my own training company for police and conceal and carry owners.”

Portwood is in hopes of sharing his love of contest shooting with others through training and it seems that may be a supplement eventually to his career as a law enforcement officer he loves.

“You see a lot of small police departments who don’t have budgets for training and it is a way to offer low cost training for them,” he said.

“Stop the Threat” has been on both **the Pursuit Channel** and **the Sportsman Channel**. He said he has gotten notice in some strange places since he started appearing on the show.

“Last year, I went out on a motorcycle and got off on the sidewalk and a man saw me and started staring at me,” Portwood said. “He said, ‘you are Rich Portwood?’ I thought I had arrested him or something like that. Then he said, ‘I was just watching you on TV last night.’”

“I was in a Dallas airport a couple years ago and a couple approached me and said, ‘you are on Stop The Threat.’ I stopped and chatted with them. Every now and then, someone sends me something on Facebook. The feedback from the show has been pretty positive. **James B. Towle**, the host, started sending me e-mails he gets from fans all over the country and outside the country and that took me by surprise.”

"Stop the Threat" is hosted by **James B. Towle** and features a rotating round table of expert guest panelists as they offer an informed discussion aimed at armed citizens on legal gun ownership, use of deadly force, how one may avoid becoming a victim, or how to respond to a life or death situation.

Portwood first became involved in the show because of his participation in national shooting events. Towle and the others thought with his law enforcement background and his shooting and training abilities he would be perfect for the show when it launched in 2012 and he has been appearing ever since.

"It is all because of my shooting, that is how I got to know James," he said.

Overall, Portwood said he thinks gun owners get a pretty bad rap.

"It seems the media focuses on five to 10 people with camouflage pants or sporting Confederate flag shirts when through the competitive part of the sport, I have never been around people so gracious and willing to help me improve," he said. "Last year, a Marine Corps guy beat me by 1.5 seconds. He was a professional shooter and took the time with me on what I can do to improve and I beat him. You won't find too many people doing that in basketball or baseball."



Portwood loves his work as a Jerseyville Police officer.

"I have some great people to work with," he said. "We are a young and progressive department and trying to be more involved in the community."

After the Ferguson, Mo., tragedy, police have taken a lot of heat from the citizens and the media. Portwood works on the Jerseyville Police Department, which is less than an hour away from Ferguson.

"We are fortunate to be in Jerseyville where the Police Department is such an important part of the community," he said.

Those who would like to watch reruns of "Stop the Threat" can do so on You Tube, Portwood said. He encouraged people to watch the show when it returns on cable next season.

