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Streamlining police work

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Computer program would aid officers in the field

Linnea Brown

JUPITER - Jupiter resident John Landry wants to take the guess work out of arresting someone.

A retired law enforcement lieutenant, Mr. Landry, 42, has developed the Criminal Statute Identification program: a new computer program that allows police to quickly determine which criminal statute is appropriate for any situation.

"I designed it to replace these," he said, displaying two heavy criminal law books that police typically keep in their patrol cars and refer to when determining a reason for an arrest.

Police must link a crime or violation to a statute to arrest someone, and the charge is often dropped if an officer



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chooses the wrong one.

Besides the added time it takes an officer to search for a statute, the books are impractical because laws are written by lawyers, but navigated each day by police, most of whom do not have bachelor's degrees, he said.

"Police work is more technical than academic," he said. "Would you want to go through this (book) in the middle of the night? That's why police make mistakes; because they have to try to interpret the law."

Mr. Landry, who is currently completing his doctorate degree in education from Capella University in Minnesota, said he initially came up with the idea two years ago as part of his studies.

"I wanted to develop something that teaches law enforcement, but also something that (police) can use," he said. "I began thinking (that) officers are so computer-literate now, and virtually every agency has a laptop in each patrol car. Why not use technology to help them?"

Designed to be as accessible as possible, an officer using the software does not actually have to type anything at all.

Instead, the program is controlled by mouse, with the officer responding yes or no to a series of questions that become increasingly specific until the appropriate charge is identified.

"This delivers the exact same information that the criminal law books do, just in a different format," he said. "It actually helps officers learn by breaking down questions and prompting the officer to do an investigation relevant to the crime."

The software is custom-built, compatible with any computer and updated annually to reflect specific state criminal laws.

Less costly than traditional statute books, a software subscription for the program would cost an average local police department - such as Jupiter or Palm Beach Gardens - between \$2,000 to \$3,000. That would outfit every officer's computer, priced at about \$25 per person.

Mr. Landry started his full-time law enforcement career with the Tequesta Police Department, serving as a police officer from 1994-97.

He also worked as a detective and trainer for the Juno Beach Police Department, and recently retired from his work as a

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lieutenant and criminal investigator for the Florida Department of Financial Services' fraud division.

Two months ago, Mr. Landry formed Ten-8 Software Solutions with a business partner to develop and launch the product.

"'Ten-8,' is a (police) term for 'on duty,' or 'ready to go,'" Mr. Landry explained.

His partner, an active-duty narcotics agent with a local police department, asked to remain unnamed due to the nature of his work.

The first complete version of CSIP for Florida law enforcement agencies is scheduled for release in October. The Boca Raton Police Department will begin testing it in May.

"We've had a tremendous response, and this is only the beginning," Mr. Landry said.

The company, which is currently seeking funding for additional growth, plans to present its software at the Florida Police Chief's Association Conference in June in Jacksonville.

As a long-term goal, Mr. Landry hopes to have a version of CSIP custom-built for every state in the U.S. within five years.

"I want to help police. They get bogged down looking things up," Mr. Landry said.

It is also designed as an educational tool.

Mr. Landry has already donated CSIP to the Palm Beach County School District for use in its high school criminal justice magnet program, and said he will give a free subscription to any high school or college library that wants it.

For college students, Mr. Landry has also developed an academic version to supplement a criminal law textbook, contracted through Thomson/Wadsworth publishing company.

Attorneys may also soon start using the program, and the West Palm Beach-based Garcia law firm has already ordered it, Mr. Landry said.

The company is currently finalizing another program for traffic-related infractions.

"Between the two programs, we deliver more than 1,000 individual statutes. Everyone benefits from it, because it helps

police do their jobs faster and more efficiently," he said.

Mr. Landry, who has a master's degree in criminal justice administration, is also an adjunct professor at Palm Beach Community College in Palm Beach Gardens. He specializes in criminal justice, crime scene investigations, homeland security and counter terrorism.

A longtime Palm Beach County resident, he lives with his wife - a PBCC English professor - his mother-in-law, and son, 7.

For more information, call (561) 352-1922 or go to www.ten-8software.com.

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