

Springfield
News Leader
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This secrecy based on privacy seems illogical, wrong

In almost three decades in journalism, I've had my share of battles for information. Never one like this, though.

The United States Marshals Service and the U.S. Department of Justice say they do not have to name deputy marshals who shot and killed Lance Anderson.

Which probably means I will never know. Which probably

bation violation, he was suspected in other crimes and had allegedly shot at a Bolivar officer the night before.

Our paper's attempts to learn and report the names through calls, letters invoking the federal Freedom of Information Act and an appeal of a FOIA request that was denied have now all failed. Pushing the request further will take either a lawsuit or negotiations through "mediation services" offered by the Office of Government Services National Archives and Records Administration, College Park, Md.

Why have these names been kept secret? Why is this so differ-

means I will not be able to tell you.

The two deputy marshals, as you might recall, used deadly force against Anderson, 23, in Springfield, during a traffic stop. The marshals, one of whom is also a Greene County deputy sheriff, fired at Anderson after he exited a pickup truck and shot himself twice. Wanted on a pro-

ent from what happens when other officers use deadly force?



Dave
ISEMAN

According to the Justice Department, a law enforcement exemption under FOIA allows the withholding of records "the release of which could reasonably be expected to constitute an unwarranted invasion of the personal privacy of third parties."

Like I said, never ran into this. It's illogical.

How can an officer of the law, in this country, have an expectation of "personal privacy" in doing his very public job?

Unfortunately, cops sometimes have to kill people, or hurt them or chase them until they kill





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themselves. Officers know it's part of the job. From my experience, they expect their names to be publicized when they get involved in situations serious enough to make news.

To be clear, I'm not after the names because I suspect wrongdoing. They should be released for the simple reason that this run-in along a Springfield street turned deadly and all the facts must be shared publicly, unless they're part of an ongoing investigation. It's that simple.

Told about this issue, one Missouri expert on federal records said: "The U.S. Marshals have taken an indefensible position here, legally and morally, in my opinion."

Charles Davis, associate pro-

fessor at the School of Journalism at the University of Missouri, former executive director of the National Freedom of Information Coalition and longtime scholar and advocate for openness in government, continued: "A man is dead, and the government's position is that we have no right to know who uses deadly force in our names? That's ridiculous."

"And here I thought secret police were the stuff of banana republic authoritarians."

Nope. Unless something shakes loose in this case, they're here. In Springfield, in America, today.

By the way, this shooting happened 264 days ago. Names of Springfield police involved in similar situations have been released in less than a week.