

Man's Facebook post about traffic stop goes viral

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TUCSON, Ariz. — A man's Facebook post about a recent traffic stop is going viral.

Steven Hildreth Jr. says he was pulled over by the Tucson Police Department for a broken headlight. When the officer asked if he had any weapons, he told him he is a concealed carry permit holder and had a gun on his right hip.

Because his wallet was in his back-right pocket, the officer needed to disarm him to check his ID. Hildreth wrote about his experience with the officer and posted it to his Facebook page.

Hildreth's Facebook post has been shared more than 325,000 times.

So, I'm driving to my office to turn in my weekly paperwork. A headlight is out. I see a Tucson Police Department squad vehicle turn around and follow me. I'm already preparing for the stop.

The lights go on and I pull over. The officer asks me how I'm doing, and then asks if I have any weapons.

"Yes, sir. I'm a concealed carry permit holder and my weapon is located on my right hip. My wallet is in my back-right pocket."

The officer explains for his safety and mine, he needs to disarm me for the stop. I understand, and I unlock the vehicle. I explain that I'm running a 7TS ALS holster but from the angle, the second officer can't unholster it. Lead officer asks me to step out, and I do so slowly. Officer relieves me of my Glock and compliments the X300U I'm running on it. He also sees my military ID and I tell him I'm with the National Guard.

Lead officer points out my registration card is out of date but he knows my registration is up to date. He goes back to run my license. I know he's got me on at least two infractions. I'm thinking of how to pay them.

Officers return with my Glock in an evidence bag, locked and cleared. "Because you were cool with us and didn't give us grief, I'm just going to leave it at a verbal warning. Get that headlight fixed as soon as possible."

I smile. "Thank you, sir."

I'm a black man wearing a hoodie and strapped. According to certain social movements, I shouldn't be alive right now because the police are allegedly out to kill minorities.

Maybe...just maybe...that notion is bunk.

Maybe if you treat police officers with respect, they will do the same to you.

Police officers are people, too. By far and large, most are good people and they're not out to get you.

I'd like to thank those two officers and TPD in general for another professional contact.

We talk so much about the bad apples who shouldn't be wearing a badge. I'd like to spread the word about an example of men who earned their badges and exemplify what that badge stands for.

#BlueLivesMatter #AllLivesMatter

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