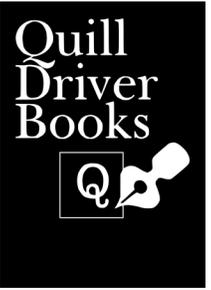


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Media Contact: Jaguar Bennett  
Quill Driver Books  
Publicity@QuillDriverBooks.com  
(800) 345-4447  
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## A 50-year-old rookie cop's career switch leads to a violent showdown with a cop killer in the explosive new police memoir *Apprehensions & Convictions*

**“Exciting, absorbing, and unflinchingly honest” —Joseph Wambaugh**

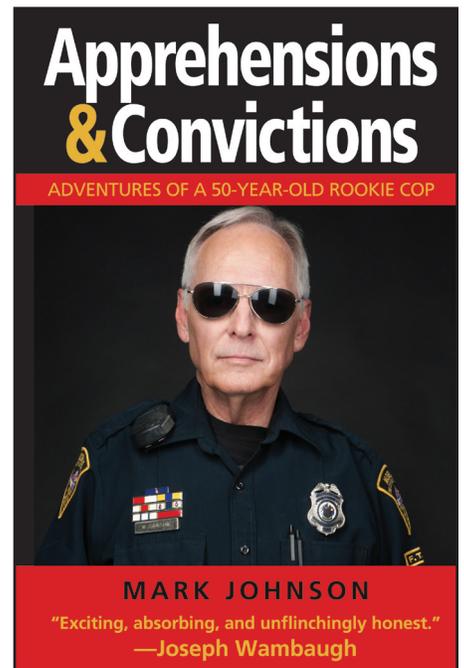
At age 50, Mark Johnson wanted a career change. What he got was an entirely new life — a life filled with danger, violence and stark moral choices. Johnson tells the story of his unlikely midlife transformation from charity executive to street cop in the explosive new police memoir *Apprehensions & Convictions: Adventures of a 50-Year-Old Rookie Cop* (Quill Driver Books, February 2016).

As the executive director of the United Way of Mobile, Alabama, Johnson had stability, a decent salary and a respected position in the community. What he didn't have was a sense of purpose. Disillusioned with the day-to-day compromises of charity work and looking for a way to make a real difference, Johnson at age 50 became the oldest rookie in the Mobile Police Department.

Defying the skepticism of his wife, the derision of the younger cops who called him “Pawpaw,” and his own self-doubts, Johnson rose to become a detective and a highly decorated officer. But it wasn't a smooth ascent. A civilized man whose first instinct is to help people, Johnson learned the hard way that some men can only be subdued with brute force and some chronic criminals refuse to be redeemed.

In a crisp first-person narrative that is by turns action-packed and contemplative, Johnson writes frankly of the experiences, challenges, disillusionments and dangers that transformed him from a social worker to a cop.

Going from fund-raising with socialites to patrolling Mobile's most violent neighborhoods, Johnson found



that poverty, crime, addiction and domestic abuse were no longer abstract social issues, but the daily realities of the public he served. Not a natural warrior, Johnson had to overcome a lifetime of avoiding confrontation to learn that he must sometimes use violence, because a cop cannot afford to lose a fight — a lesson dramatically hammered home on a cold Christmas morning when a scuffle with a car thief turned into a life-or-death struggle over possession of Johnson's service weapon.

*Apprehensions & Convictions* chronicles Johnson's gradual transformation from social worker to detective, along with his occasional relapses into compassion for the unfortunates he arrests. In salty, slangy language that crackles with the energy of the streets, *Apprehensions & Convictions* presents vivid portraits of the addicts, dealers, prostitutes, pimps, thieves, murderers, crime victims and ordinary citizens of Johnson's city. With the eyes of both a social worker and a cop, Johnson surveys the murderous intersection of drugs, crime and dysfunction that plagues the inner city and offers some no-nonsense opinions about the roots of crime.

*Apprehensions & Convictions* also tells a deeply personal story of how Johnson overcame his own demons to find a new sense of purpose and identity in midlife. From a troubled, drink- and drug-fueled youth, to dealing with both his birth and adoptive parents, to struggling to find a steady career path, Johnson's story is of a man who found his courage and changed himself.

*Apprehensions & Convictions* comes to a climax in a dramatic confrontation between Johnson and an escaped cop killer that left Johnson wounded, the suspect dead, and Johnson wondering how to make sense of the violence he tries to contain.

A fascinating story that sweeps from the frustrations of an overprivileged youth to the dysfunction of the Mobile ghetto *Apprehensions & Convictions* is a compelling new memoir of a remarkable life.

**About the Author:** **Mark Johnson** is a retired detective with the Mobile Police Department, where he was decorated several times for service and bravery. Prior to his police career, Johnson spent twenty years as a public relations director and local executive director for the United Way.

**Book Details:**

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# About Mark Johnson

## Author of *Apprehensions & Convictions*



**Mark Johnson** grew up in Luling, Louisiana, and St. Louis, and graduated from the University of Colorado in 1974. Armed with a bachelor's degree in English, he worked as a carpenter, cement finisher, short-order cook, bartender, cabbie, trucker, sales rep, and freelance writer (columnist and features for the *ProRodeo Sports News*, and *Colorado Springs Sun*, among others) until he stumbled into his first career with United Way.

Johnson served as campaign and public relations director for Pikes Peak United Way, executive director of United Way of Waukesha County, Wisconsin, and CEO of the United Way of Southwest Alabama. After working for United Way for over two decades and raising a career total of over \$100 million for nonprofit health and human services, in 2002 Johnson chucked it all for a badge and a gun and 13 bucks an hour with the Mobile Police Department. He was 50.

As a sworn officer — six years in uniformed patrol, six years as a detective — Johnson received numerous Chief's and Commander's citations for meritorious arrests, and was decorated for Excellent Police Duty (three times, for initiatives resulting in a 33 percent crime reduction in targeted area, apprehension and conviction of a burglary ring responsible for 83 residential burglaries, and for solo arrests and convictions of those responsible for over \$50,000 in commercial thefts), Chief's Unit Medal (for highest local and regional case clearance), Meritorious Service Medal (exceptional service involving grave danger: the apprehension of an escaped cop killer) and the Wounded in Service Medal (for wounds received while engaged in personal combat with an armed adversary in a manner reflecting courage and honor). He also received a handful of "performance observations" and citizen complaints, usually related to inappropriate radio traffic, car wrecks and demeanor issues.

Johnson and his wife Nancy have been married for 40 years; they are the parents of two and the grandparents of five. They live in Fairhope, Alabama.



For more information on *Apprehensions & Convictions* (Quill Driver Books, February 2016) or to arrange an interview with author **Mark Johnson**, please contact Jaguar Bennett at Quill Driver Books, (800) 345-4447, [Publicity@QuillDriverBooks.com](mailto:Publicity@QuillDriverBooks.com).

# Advance praise for *Apprehensions & Convictions*

“This unique and entertaining memoir by a former national charity executive, who finds himself policing dangerous inner-city streets as a 50-year-old rookie cop, is exciting, absorbing, and unflinchingly honest.”

—**Joseph Wambaugh**, bestselling author of *The New Centurions*, *The Blue Knight*, the *Hollywood Station* series, and numerous other crime novels

“Part police procedural, part contemplative memoir, Johnson’s *Apprehensions & Convictions* is all true, and a revelation. His story is by turns hair-raising, hilarious, and heartfelt. It should take its rightful place in the colorful Southern tradition of storytelling.”

—**Winston Groom**, author of *Forrest Gump*, *Kearny’s March*, and *The Aviators*

“F. Scott Fitzgerald claimed there were no second acts in America. He was wrong. Mark Johnson proves it. He’s into his third act now, from social worker to cop, and now to writer, and in *Apprehensions & Convictions* he leaves little doubt that he’s mastered that third incarnation. You’ll be grabbed by the seat of your pants on the first page and he won’t let go till the very last word.”

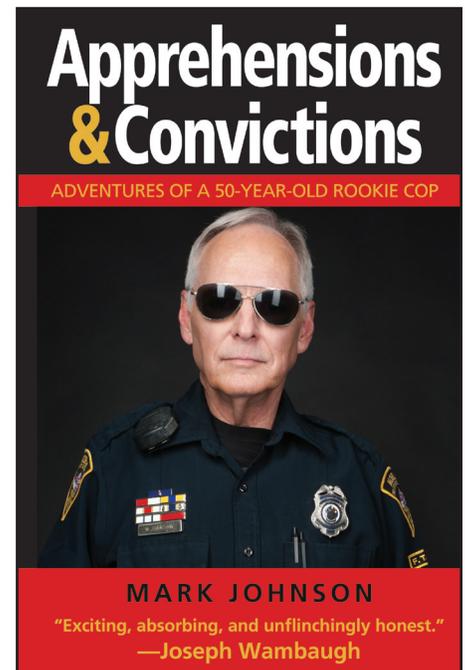
—**Charles Salzberg**, Shamus-nominated author of *Devil in the Hole* and *Swann’s Lake of Despair*

“Gritty, thoughtful, and harrowing. Johnson gives you unvarnished insight into a world in which few dare to tread. He’s the real deal and so is this book.”

—**Sgt. Adam Plantinga**, San Francisco Police Department, author of *400 Things Cops Know*

“*Apprehensions & Convictions* is a thoroughly enjoyable and compelling read, chock-full of authenticity and soul. Mark Johnson’s book is not only motivational, but, in a way, an excellent anthropological study of police culture and human behavior. Definitely essential reading.”

—**David Swinson**, author of *The Second Girl*



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