

BENTON COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE



ANNUAL REPORT 2023

BENTON COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE



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BENTON COUNTY SHERIFF'S FOUNDATION

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BENTON COUNTY SHERIFF



Tom Croskrey
Sheriff
31 Years of Service

Benton County was established in 1905 and in 2023 had an estimated total population of 214,997. The unincorporated population of Benton County represents approximately 45,820 and in its entirety covers a total of 1760 sq. miles. The Benton County Sheriff's Office has 85 hardworking and committed employees. These employees include 73 commissioned police officers and 12 civilian staff.

Mission Statement

The Benton County Sheriff's Office is committed to collaborative partnerships, safeguarding the community by protecting their rights, while building and maintaining trust.

Vision Statement

The Benton County Sheriff's Office commits to providing the highest standard of law enforcement services for the people who live, work, and visit Benton County. We will effectively use our resources to build a culture that recognizes and enhances the skills and efforts of our employees.

We will foster strong relationships with our community and our regional law enforcement partners to professionally investigate and solve crime. We will protect our community with integrity and compassion while combating criminal activity.

We will honor the trust placed in us by our community, while diligently working to improve public safety.



Core Values

- Teamwork:** Collaborating with each other, the community, our partner agencies, and anyone seeking an advocate for public safety.
- Integrity:** Holding one another to uncompromising principles while performing the duties of the office in the pursuit of truth and justice, while protecting the innocent.
- Commitment:** Through our actions, we remain dedicated to valuing our employees and ensuring we are providing the best public safety services to our community.

MESSAGE FROM THE SHERIFF

2023 was the first year of my term as your Benton County Elected Sheriff. It was a year that was filtered with change and progress throughout the agency. The major goals of the agency were the following:

- Establish a Pro-Active Unit that would aid in combating the increase in crime
- Create a sustainable Wellness Program for Officers & Staff
- Develop & Provide innovative training & reliable equipment for employees
- Continue to fill vacant positions with the agency

The year began with some organizational structure changes that brought a new position to the Office. The Accreditation Coordinator is a position that took on purchasing, accreditation as well as inventory. This freed up time for our Training Coordinator to focus solely on training. We have also received grants from the Criminal Justice Training Commission that helped add funding to our training budget.

One of the cornerstones of my role as Sheriff is protecting our community. I believe proactively and aggressively pursuing criminals is one way to help our community become a safer place to live and raise our families.

In support of my aggressive on crime stance, I instituted a multi-detective proactive team. Proactive policing yields numerous benefits in enhancing community safety and trust. By preemptively addressing potential criminal activities, we deter crime, reduce its occurrence and foster a sense of security among residents. Through targeted patrols, intelligence gathering, and community engagement initiatives, proactive policing not only prevents crime but also builds positive relationships between police and the community. This approach enables deputies to address underlying issues, such as drug trafficking or gang violence, before they escalate. Ultimately, proactive policing promotes proactive problem-solving, contributing to safer neighborhoods, improved quality of life, and strengthened bonds between law enforcement and the community we serve.

With continued legislative changes and demands, we review our current practices and identified a need to begin outfitting additional vehicles with Pursuit Intervention Technique (PIT) Bars and provide the proper training for their use. PIT bars gives us one viable option to slowing the trend of criminals fleeing from law enforcement and endangering the public.

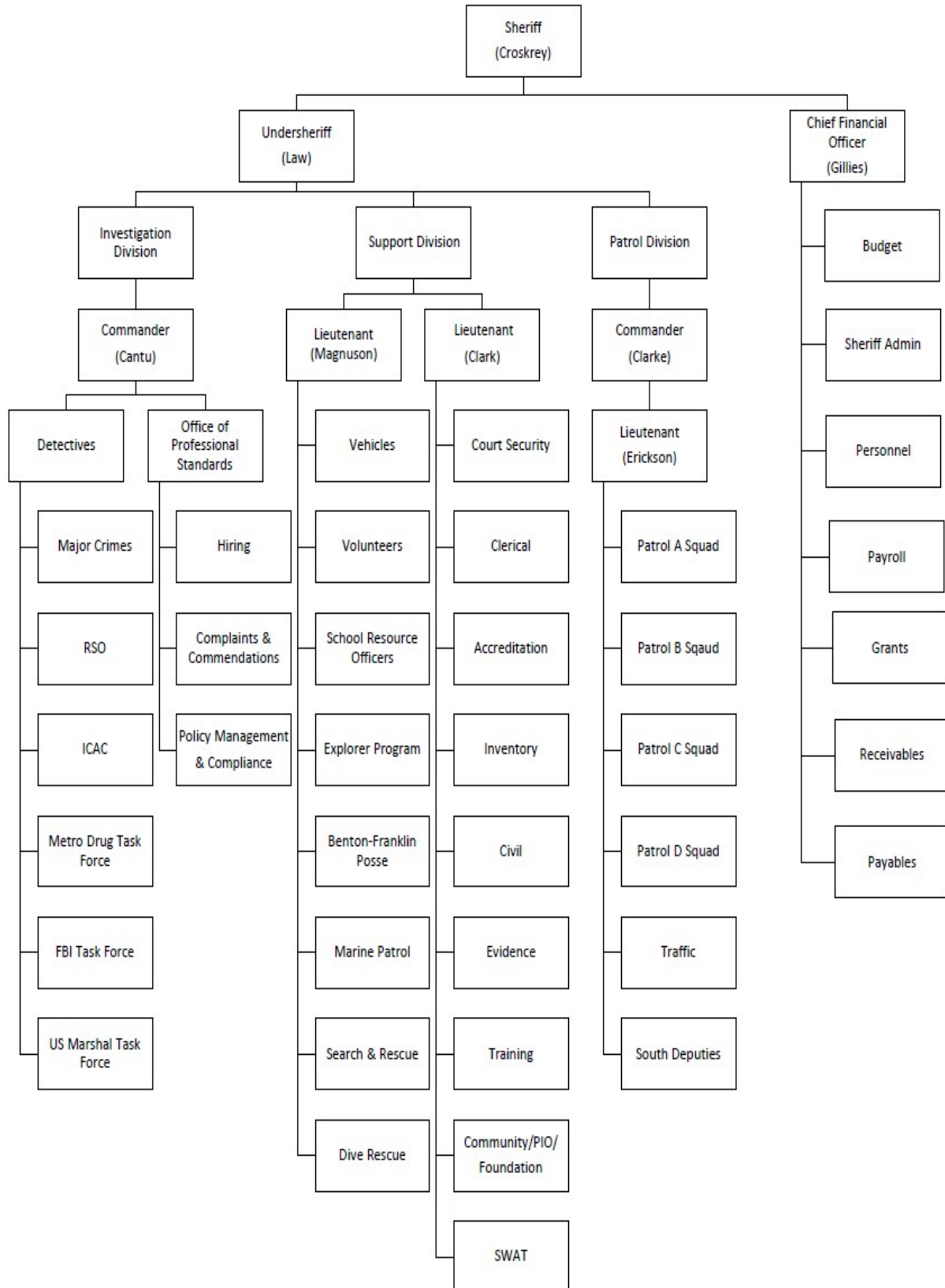
At the end of 2022, we had a group come in and complete a wellness assessment on our agency and identify areas of improvement. This year we held two conferences, with the assistance of the BC Sheriff Foundation, for employees and families that related to employee wellness. This has been the building blocks to the start of our employee wellness program.

Washington state has had a record number of law enforcement retirements and departures to other states. BCSO is already faced with some of the lowest deputy to per 1000 inhabitants ratios in the nation, so keeping our vacancies to a minimum is vital to public safety. We have been successful in hiring, training and deploying new deputies and have been successful in keeping our positions filled.

Thank you for your continued support of local law enforcement,

Sheriff Tom Croskrey

ORGANIZATIONAL CHART



5 YEAR CRIME COMPARISON

Benton County Sheriff's Department: 2023 Annual NIBRS Threshold Analysis

(National Incident Based Reporting System)

NIBRS OFFENSES	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	AVERAGE	2023	% CHANGE
Murder and Non-Negligent Manslaughter	2	2	1	2	8	3	5	67%
Forcible Sex Offenses	15	8	11	11	16	12	9	-25%
Robbery	6	5	5	4	6	5	8	60%
Aggravated Assault	60	60	92	67	60	68	79	16%
Simple Assault	325	343	343	270	350	326	424	30%
Intimidation	39	41	56	43	43	44	50	14%
Non-Forcible Sex Offenses	33	24	29	36	18	28	24	-14%
Kidnapping	9	11	14	9	11	11	16	45%
Human Trafficking	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0%
Burglary/Breaking and Entering	114	86	189	103	161	131	104	-21%
Arson	5	5	4	6	6	5	9	80%
Larceny	344	276	463	357	473	383	297	-22%
Motor Vehicle Theft	47	47	65	75	125	72	107	49%
Extortion/Blackmail	2	1	7	1	4	3	3	0%
Counterfeiting/Forgery	14	10	14	3	6	9	4	-56%
Fraud	17	8	8	8	6	9	4	-56%
Embezzlement	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0%
Stolen Property Offenses	46	32	44	26	54	40	35	-13%
Destruction/Vandalism of Property	229	197	272	245	263	241	270	12%
Drug/Narcotic Offenses	218	145	101	45	85	119	83	-30%
Pornography/Obscene Material	9	1	9	6	5	6	3	-50%
Gambling Offenses	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0%
Prostitution Offenses	0	3	1	0	1	1	0	-100%
Violation of No Contact Order	125	103	139	108	80	111	106	-5%
Bribery	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0%
Weapon Law Violations	41	27	27	22	27	29	39	34%
Animal Cruelty	12	10	9	5	5	8	1	-88%
TOTAL	1713	1445	1904	1452	1813	1665	1680	1%
VIOLENT CRIME TOTAL	83	75	109	84	90	88	101	15%
PROPERTY CRIME TOTAL	818	662	1066	824	1098	894	833	-7%

Violent Crime Includes: Homicide, Robbery, Aggravated Assault, Forcible Rape, Forcible Sodomy, Forcible Fondling and Sexual Assault with an object

Property Crime Includes: Burglary, Arson, Larceny, Motor Vehicle Theft, Forgery, Fraud, Embezzlement, Stolen Property Offenses and Vandalism

*Crimes with lower numbers overall (such as murder) can appear to have drastic changes when looking strictly at percent change

UNDERSHERIFF



Jon Law
Undersheriff
25 Years of Service

The day to day operations of the Benton County Sheriff's Office is managed by Undersheriff Jon Law. This includes all but the Administrative Division of the office and includes the Patrol, Investigations, and Support Divisions. The Benton County Sheriff's Office is comprised of 71 commissioned law enforcement officers and 15 non-commissioned support staff for a total of 86 employees. The biannual budget that supports the operations of the Sheriff's Office is \$36 million and is split amongst the different divisions within.

The following staff report to the Undersheriff:

- * Patrol Commander Mat Clarke
- * Investigations Commander Lee Cantu
- * Support Lieutenant Erik Magnuson
- * Support Lieutenant Mike Clark

SUPPORT DIVISION

The Support Division is comprised of two Lieutenants and provides support for all other units within the agency.

Support Division Lieutenant– Michael Clark, 16 Years of Service - Records/Civil Unit, Court Security, Training, Inventory, Accreditation, Evidence, Community PIO/Foundation and SWAT

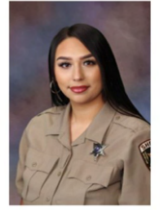
Support Division Lieutenant– Erik Magnuson, 16 Years of Service - School Resource Officers, Explorer Program, Marine Patrol, Search & Rescue, Benton-Franklin Posse and Volunteers

Records Unit

- ◆ 1,781 Public records requests processed (7% increase from 2022)
- ◆ 2,625 Concealed Pistol License's were processed (1.4% increase from 2022)
- ◆ 1,607 Weapon transfer applications were processed (37.3% decrease from 2022)
- ◆ Countless citizen contacts
- ◆ Selected as the division/squad of the year by members of the Sheriff's Office

Civil

The Civil office processed 1769 papers for service in 2023. There were 3181 attempted contacts for the 1769 services. Examples of these services are protection orders, Subpoenas, and court writs.



Marine Patrol



In 2023, the Marine Patrol Unit helped our community by conducting boater education. They spent 24 hours on 4 separate marine search and rescue missions. Additionally they spent over 88 hours conducting vessel inspections at the boat ramps and spent over 1087 hours patrolling our waterways.

Search and Rescue

The team is made up of volunteers who selflessly spend their time training and preparing to serve the community. The teams goals include becoming deployable to other communities, having more than 100 trained members, and maintaining a selfless servitude to the community.



Explorers



The Benton County Explorer Program has numerous young adults who attended the State Explorer academy's in July and December of 2023. They meet every week and learn various skills they can apply to their lives. The explorers currently consist of 17 members and 6 advisors. They are currently working on recruiting and equipment. The explorers help our office with in training and community events and prepare themselves for future opportuni-

Community Relations

During 2023 the Sheriff's office continued to build relationships within our community. We partnered with other local LE agencies during some of these events to demonstrate the cohesiveness and support that all of our local agencies have within our region. Some of our 2023 events included:

- **BCSO Kids Day**, an event hosted in collaboration with the Garden Church. Lunch is provided to all the families and kids are provided the opportunity to tour different emergency vehicles, interact with first responders and view K9 demonstrations.
- **Faith and Blue** which is a nationwide program in which we partnered with KPD to participate in. This event provides a safe place for the community to come out and interact with local first responders, enjoy some refreshments and snacks which were provided by the foundations and help foster strong relationships within the community.

- **Bikes for Tikes** is a local event hosted in our region that helped to donate bikes to children in need. The Sheriff's office helped during their build day, where thousands of bikes were assembled so they could be passed out to children in need. The Sheriff's office was given 20 bikes for us to donate to the community. We gifted these bikes to needy children during Christmas time to help those less fortunate families to have gifts for their children.

- Riverview Career Day
- Pack the Patrol Car
- National Night Out
- Trunk or Treat
- Turkey Trot
- Shop with a Cop
- Christmas Adopt a Family

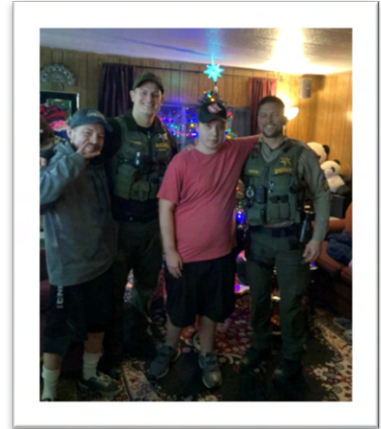




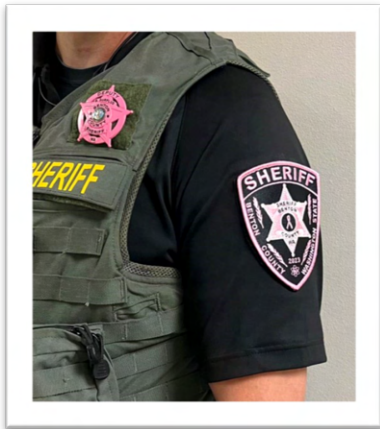
Foundation

During 2023 the Benton County Sheriff's Foundation continued to grow and raised approximately \$85,000 in donations, making 2023 its largest year yet. 2023 also marked the first year the Foundation was able to branch out its support of the Sheriff's Office. In addition to the Community Care Fund, the Foundation assisted in bringing multiple guest presenters in support of our developing wellness program.

The Community Care Fund allows our deputies to provide assistance to those citizens they come in contact with that may need just a little extra help. In 2023 we were able to use these funds for instances that ranged from replacing a victim's windows, putting victims up in a hotel room for the weekend, to just simply purchasing gas for stranded travelers.



Several divisions within the Sheriff's Office participated in adopting families around the Christmas season. Funds from the foundation allowed us to purchase, wrap, and deliver gifts to those families in need.



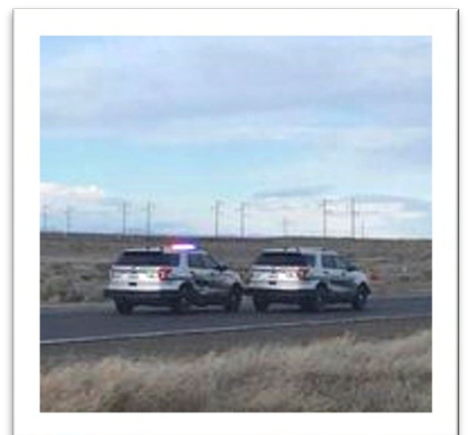
The Foundation's patch project helped raise over \$30,000 from patches in 2023. These donations go directly to the Foundation to



support its missions. In 2023 our office participated in the annual Wishing Star Foundation "Send a Friend a Goat" event. During this event, Benton County Sheriff's Foundation was able to make a donation and the Sheriff's Office helped in designing a Wishing Star patch.

Training Accomplishments

The goal for 2023 training was to diversify training topics into 2-hr blocks during department training days and increase overall department training hours. This was accomplished by implementing multiple training blocks during each of the trainings and beginning quarterly squad level trainings, which were conducted at the squad level by those cadre instructors. During 2023 the sheriff's office implemented Pursuit Intervention Technique into our training. For the first time the entire department has the ability to use this technique to safely end pursuits, continuing efforts to better serve our community.



Total Department Training Hours for 2023: 5,379 hours

ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES DIVISION



Katie Gillies
Chief Financial Officer
4 Years of Service

The Administrative Services Division is the smallest division in the Benton County Sheriff's Office but has the most influence on the organization. The complexities of police administration specific to budget, purchasing, grant management, payroll, personnel matters and requires attention to detail and forethought.

The division Chief Financial Officer manages administrative operations for the department and oversees matters related to a \$36M budget.

Administrative Staffing

Administrative Assistant -
Rachel Miller

Records Clerk - Alan Stone

They support all Administrative functions to include payroll, payables, receivables and travel



Budget Management

The Chief Financial Officer is tasked with tracking monthly expenditures and excess budget to provide funding for operational needs that arise throughout the budget biennium.

Grants

- ◆ 2022 Grants
Awarded - \$41,479.50
- ◆ 2023 Grants
Awarded - \$196,430.40

2023 Budget Purchases

- ◆ Rebranding & Uniform Purchases - \$30,000
- ◆ Outfitting PIT Vehicles - \$20,000
- ◆ Officer Wellness - \$15,000
- ◆ Patrol Sergeant Training - \$5,250
- ◆ F350 Upfitting - \$25,000
- ◆ Faraday Locker - \$5,000
- ◆ SWAT Comms - \$3,000
- ◆ Vehicle Repairs Q1 - Q3 - \$49,734.88

Grant Funded Purchases

- ◆ Drones & Drone Storage - \$60,000
- ◆ Flock Subscriptions - \$30,000
- ◆ Virtra Training Simulator - \$39,000

Capital Purchases

- ◆ LTE Motorola Radios - \$645,575.50

Public Safety Tax Purchases

- ◆ Mobile Police Radios - \$135,000
- ◆ Lexis-Nexis Online Reporting - \$54,000
- ◆ Bomb Squad X-ray - \$32,035
- ◆ SWAT Secure Storage Boxes - \$25,000
- ◆ Crime Scene Vehicle - \$325,000
- ◆ Forensic Software Programs - \$85,500

PATROL DIVISION



Mat Clarke
Commander
18 Years of Service

The Patrol Division is the largest division within the Benton County Sheriff's Office and is led by Commander Mat Clarke. Patrol is responsible for providing the majority of law enforcement services to the citizens and visitors of Benton County 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days per year. The Division is structured with 4 patrol shifts (Day, Night shifts), a Traffic Unit, K-9 Unit and personnel assigned to the rural southern farm land in our county (zone 7).

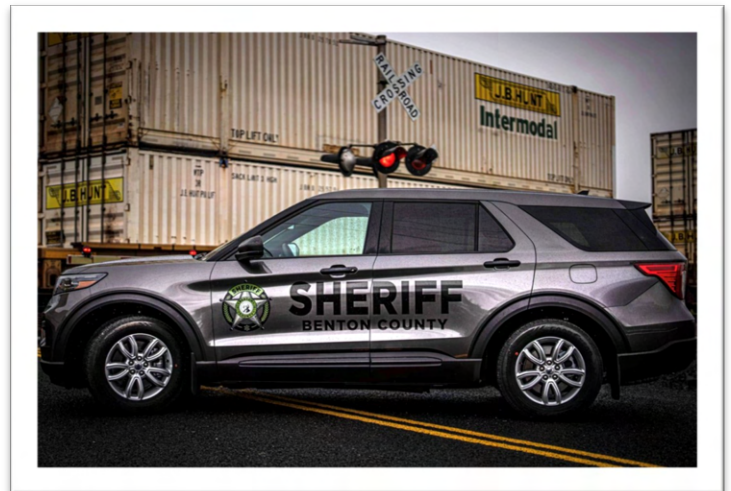
As the largest division, the Patrol Division is focused on providing the best public safety for the citizens of Benton County.

Patrol Lieutenant– Jason Erickson, 16 Years of Service

The Patrol Lieutenant oversees the Patrol Division, which consists of 38 deputies. The deputies comprise four patrol squads; each squad under the direction of a Sergeant and Corporal, respectively. The division is responsible for 24-hour coverage of all areas within Benton County jurisdiction.

Patrol

34,039	Calls for Service
4,747	Traffic Stops
1,066	Notice of Infraction
374	Criminal Traffic Infraction
53	DUI's
280	Vehicle Accidents
1	Fatality Accident
360	Misdemeanor Arrests
99	Felony Arrests
237	Warrant Arrests



K-9 Unit / SWAT

K9

- 85—K-9 Calls for service.
- 18—K-9 Tracks
- 50—K-9 Apprehensions
- 15—K-9 Building Searches
- 4—K-9 Area Searches
- 3—K-9 Article Search
- 58—K-9 Assists (outside agencies)

SWAT

The Benton County Sheriff's Office is a member of the Tri Cities Regional SWAT Team. The team is comprised of 33 team members, with seven of the members from Benton County Sheriff's Office.

103 — Total team missions

15 — Missions in Benton County jurisdiction

South County (zone 7)

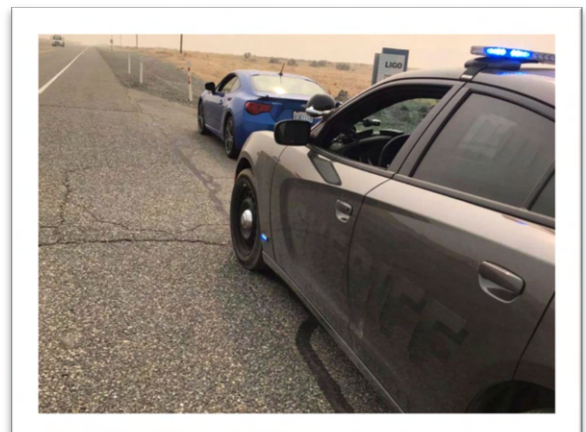
The South County encompasses the towns of Paterson and Plymouth to include the surrounding farming communities and businesses.

The South County has two permanent deputies cross-commissioned with the Klickitat County Sheriff's Office. The South County deputies have a strong working relationship with Oregon when it comes to investigations and sharing of criminal information.



Department of Energy / Hanford

In 1993, the Benton County Sheriff's Office entered into a Law Enforcement Service Contract with the United States Department of Energy. The contract is a cost recovery model that provides expenses necessary for the Sheriff's Office to extend state and local law enforcement services onto the federally owned and operated site.



CRIMINAL INVESTIGATIONS DIVISION



**Lee Cantu
Commander
33 Years of Service**

The Benton County Sheriff’s Office Criminal Investigations Division (CID) is comprised of fourteen (14) professional individuals assigned across multiple specific assignments. CID is divided into two Department specific detective units and five cross-functional collaborative efforts. The two detective units are Crimes Against Persons / Property Crimes / Registered Sex Offenders (sergeant; seven detectives); and the Pro-Active Unit (sergeant; 3 deputies). The five local, state, and federal collaborative teams include: Tri-Cities Metro Drug Task Force; FBI Safe Streets Violent Gang Task Force; Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) (detective); US Marshals’ Pacific Northwest Violent Offender Task Force (detective); and the Internet Crimes against Children (ICAC) (detective).

The Investigative Division is comprised of three Sergeants who manage the day to day operations.

Major Crimes Division - Sergeant Horacio Gonzalez, 32 Years of Service - Major Crime Detectives, ICAC, FBI, US Marshals, Metro Drug Task Force, DEA, RSO

Office of Professional Standards - Sergeant Justin Gerry, 17 Years of Service - Complaints, Commendations, Internal Investigations, Policy and Procedures Manual

Pro-Active Unit - Sergeant Scott Surplus, 19 Years of Service - 3 Detectives, 1 K-9 Detective

Major Crimes Unit

<u>Cases</u>	<u>Persons</u>	
	<u>Property</u>	
Cases Assigned	285	
Active	24	8%
Cleared - Arrest	101	35%
Cleared - Exceptionally	26	9%
Cleared - Leads Exhausted	30	11%
Cleared – Unfounded	22	8%
Cleared - Information	66	23%

There were three (3) homicide investigations during the 2023 calendar year. Two of the investigations were cleared by arrest of the offenders, and one is an open, ongoing investigation.

Currently, 2 suspects are in custody for two of the homicides, and ongoing efforts are being conducted on the open homicide investigation.

Pro-Active Unit

The Pro-Active Unit was deployed in September 2023. Caseload data will be provided in the 2024 year-end report. This unit is comprised of one sergeant and three (3) Detectives and one (1) K-9 Detective that have had a major focus on vehicle and property thefts and combating crime trends.

Metro Drug Task Force

The Metro Drug Task Force (MDTF) investigates mid-level criminal organizations linked to narcotics and illegal weapons trafficking. Detectives are assigned to the Metro Drug Task Force from local agencies including Kennewick, Pasco, Richland, and West Richland Police Departments as well as Benton and Franklin County Sheriffs' Offices.

The Metro Drug Task Force is co-located with the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA). The shared space allows MDTF detectives to work cooperatively with DEA agents collaborating to hold criminal narcotics offenders accountable through cases filed in either State courts, or Federal courts.

Case Volume

	2022	2023
Total incidents / cases	84	54
Total arrests	44	134
Total search warrants	26	56
Total body wires	48	14
Assist Incidents / Cases	62	118

Narcotics Seized

	2022	2023
Heroin (grams)	2.85	0
Cocaine (grams)	1,263.43	116.27
Methamphetamine (grams)	13,212.95	24,830.98
Fentanyl (pills)	63,792.00	197,972.00
Prescription (pills)	0	0

Property Seized

	2022	2023
Vehicles seized	8	15
Vehicles forfeited	3	13
Currency seized	\$27,712.00	\$35,202.00
Currency forfeited	\$69,039.00	\$36,180.00
Firearms seized	59	41
Auction proceeds	\$7,258.05	\$44,018.05

Special Investigations Unit (SIU)

SIU is a cooperative effort of local law enforcement agencies in Benton, Franklin, and Walla Walla Counties. SIU is tasked with the objective criminal investigation of officer involved shooting incidents or other similar incidents. The Benton County Sheriff's Office has several members of the Investigations Division assigned to SIU including a commander, sergeant, and several detectives. In 2023, SIU conducted five (5) investigations, in accordance with the requirements of state law.

United States Marshal's Fugitive Task Force

The US Marshals' Pacific Northwest Violent Offenders Task Force tracks and arrests violent offenders evading arrest and prosecution in Eastern Washington. The USMS Task Force is another example demonstrative of our cooperative efforts working with local, state, and federal agencies to hold offenders accountable.

The Benton County Sheriff's Office has one detective assigned to the US Marshal's Fugitive Task Force, and work under the direction of the USMS Pacific Northwest Violent Offenders Task Force. This Task Force was instrumental in locating and arresting multiple violent fugitives who attempt to evade arrest and avoid prosecution.

Total number of arrest warrants cleared in 2023 by the USMS Task Force

338 Total Arrest Warrants Cleared

52 Tri-Cities, 186 Spokane, 100 Yakima

Property & Evidence Unit

Evidence Processed in 2023

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	YTD
In	257	115	244	162	252	292	151	129	210	154	96	133	2195
Out	23	22	60	108	315	54	22	264	38	74	572	40	1592
Firearms	29	3	2	15	5	31	8	13	27	8	8	5	154

STAFFING

Deputy New Hires for 2023

Liam McMillan
Nathaniel Murillo
Efren Morfin
Ricardo Espindola
Joseph Geil
Jennifer Couch
Alexandra Hebert

Administration New Hires For 2023

Charles Glasscock

Clerical New Hires for 2023

Michelle Kenney
Vernice Orozco
Jordyn Clark
Alan Stone
Elida Jennings

SIGNIFICANT ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- ◆ Implementation of new policy manual
- ◆ Integration of inventory software
- ◆ Increased our civil deputy staffing to manage the increased number of civil paper service (from current staff)
- ◆ Pro-Active Squad formed (from current staff)
- ◆ Restructure to allow for accreditation manager and intelligence detective
- ◆ Leadership training hosted for first line supervisors (grant funded)
- ◆ Wellness program instituted for deputies
- ◆ Permanently assigned deputies to Hanford site
- ◆ Assigned a second deputy to serve the horse heaven hills area (from current staff)
- ◆ Instituted Office of Professional Standards (OPS)
- ◆ Department PIT maneuver certified
- ◆ Reallocated resources to add a detective to help manage violent crime investigations (from current staff)

HONORS & RECOGNITIONS



Kenton Childers
Medal of Valor



Erik Magnuson
Sheriff's Medal



Elias Perez
Medal of Valor

Years of Service Recognition

Detective Sergeant
Horacio Gonzalez
30 years

Commander
Lee Cantu
26 years

Undersheriff
Jon Law
25 years

Lieutenant
Erik Magnuson
25 years

Sergeant
Carlos Trevino
21 years

Commander
Mat Clarke
20 years

Lieutenant
Mike Clark
20 years

Detective
Douglas Hollenbeck
20 Years

Detective
Jorge Garcia
20 years

Sergeant
Dan Korten
20 years

Congratulations to all award recipients!

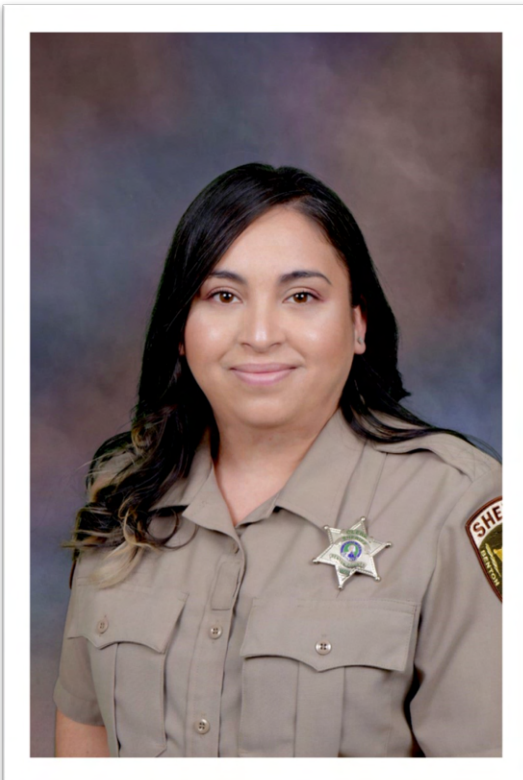
HONORS & RECOGNITIONS



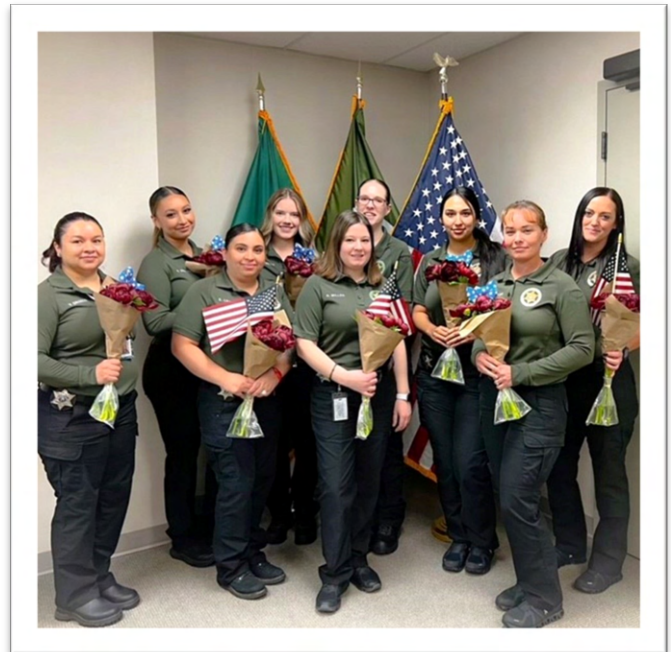
Bruce Surplus
Deputy of the Year



Branden DeMyer
Detective of the Year



Edith Cervantes
Clerk of the Year



Clerical Division
Division of the Year

PROMOTIONS



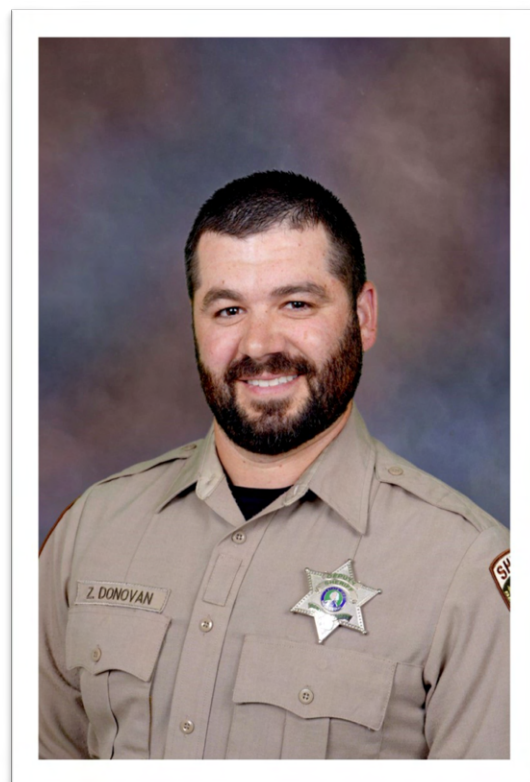
CJ Conner was promoted to the rank of Sergeant



JP Benitez was promoted to the rank of Sergeant



Abel Suarez was promoted to the rank Corporal



Zach Donovan was promoted to the rank of Corporal

PAST HONORS & RECOGNITIONS

Deputy of the Year

Dean Perry	2021
Elias Perez	2022

Detective of the Year

Antonio Martinez III	2021
Carlos Trevino	2022

Clerk of the Year

Madison Murphy	2021
Edith Cervantes	2022

Squad/Division of the Year

Detectives	2021
D Squad	2022

Sheriff's Medal

Horacio Gonzalez	2022
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Life Saving Medal

Brian Ohler	2022
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Employee of the Month

James Leingang	01-2023
Tanner Woody	02-2023
Tiffany Brink	03-2023
Kayla Mirus	04-2023
Zachary Donovan	05-2023
Charles Glasscock	06-2023
Mitchel Kroner	08-2023
Branden DeMyer	10-2023
Efren Morfin	11-2023
Cameron Boehning	12-2023

STAR Award

Mary Flink	Q1 2023
Aaliyah Valladares	Q2 2023
Rachel Miller	Q3 2023
Bob Showalter	Q4 2023

Benton City People's Choice Award

Mike McDermott	2023
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Toyota Extra Mile Award

Ashley Guillen	2023
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