



Thurston County Sheriff's Office

"Creating a Safer Community Together."

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QUARTERLY NEWS

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Sheriff Dan Kimball

As this year winds down, I thought it would be timely to recap some of the programs we have implemented over the past two years and then talk a little about what we are focusing on for 2009. I firmly believe that even though we all face some tough economic times and tight budgets, it is also critical that we continue to develop practices that best utilize our limited resources. My goal as your Sheriff is to always try to continue to reduce crime and improve public safety throughout our community.

I believe that in order to effectively reduce crime, it is important to embrace a policing philosophy that is comprised of three pieces, namely **prevention, intervention and suppression**. Prevention consists of such things as educating the public on crime safety tips and helping to keep our youth out of trouble and on the right track; intervention is best exemplified by such programs as Drug Court and Mental Health Court that have been proven to be more effective and less expensive than more traditional approaches; and suppression is what law enforcement does to apprehend people perpetrating crimes and to thereby maintain the general safety of the public. Each of these components is important, and I believe that if we fail to do each of these then the real threat exists that crime rates will increase in our community. None of us want that to happen.

Since I have been Sheriff we have created the position of "Community Outreach Dep-

uty" in an effort to improve our response to the need for better community education. We have created electronic (e-mail) alerts on pertinent crime related matters and done numerous community talks on safety related matters. We have enhanced our crime analysis capability, thus enabling us to better see and understand crime trends throughout the county. We have brought back the Explorer Post Program which helps to keep our young people involved in a positive activity that assists the Sheriff's Office in fulfilling its mission. We just recently commenced our first ever Citizen's Academy in an effort to better educate the public on the duties and actions of the Sheriff's Office. These are just a few examples of useful, cost-effective programs that we have implemented.

In 2009 we will begin to put in place a new program called "WIN." This stands for "Working to Improve Neighborhoods." The intent

of this program is to take the various resources (prevention, intervention and suppression) we have within the office and to use them in a more targeted and coordinated effort to address specific neighborhoods that are experiencing higher than normal crime rates. As we develop and fine-tune this effort, I am very optimistic that this will be a program that we can replicate in different neighborhoods throughout the county. This program will hopefully reduce crime and improve feelings of security for our citizens in those targeted neighborhoods.

In 2009 we will be working on numerous other matters and projects that will improve our response to crime and also help to save more of the taxpayer's money. I want to thank each of you for helping us by doing your part to create a safer community for all!

Thurston County Sheriff's First Citizens Academy

By Deputy John Snaza

The Thurston County Sheriff's Office held its first Citizens Academy. This academy was a five-week course held Thursday evenings. The goal of the Sheriff's Office was to introduce citizens to the Sheriff's Office, give insight to a deputy sheriff's duties and responsibilities, and to educate citizens on how to be more proactive in their community.

The first class provided an overview of the Sheriff's Office, introduction of administrative staff, and a tour of the jail. The proceeding classes provided information on registered sex offenders, narcotics, fraud, patrol duties and responsibilities, the K-9 Unit, criminal law, disaster preparedness, our Community Outreach Program, and included a tour of our Communications Facility (CAPCOM).

I would like to thank all the individuals who participated in the academy and look forward to many more classes.

Line of duty death: David Morrell

By Lieutenant Greg Elwin

Thurston County Sheriff's Deputy David Morrell was killed in the line of duty 105 years ago. This marks the only time a TCSO Deputy has been killed in the line of duty, but it serves as a stark reminder to all of us how dangerous and unpredictable this job can be. As the years and decades have passed since Deputy Morrell's death, society has changed drastically, and the dangers we face daily have become more sinister. This is just but one reminder for all of us to "... be particularly careful out there."

Deputy David Morrell was assigned to the jail, and on the day of his death was assigned to take inmates to their cell after an afternoon meal. As Deputy Morrell lead the prisoners to their cells, one of

them, Christ Benson, armed with a lead pipe, snuck up behind Deputy Morrell. Benson was awaiting transport to Walla Walla State Penitentiary to serve a one-year sentence for robbery. The lead pipe he was armed with had been wrenched from the sink in his cell, which he had secreted until this opportunity presented itself.

Benson dealt Deputy Morrell a horrific blow to the back of his head, disorienting but not disabling the deputy. As Deputy Morrell drew his service revolver and turned to face Benson, he was again struck by the lead pipe. A struggle for the weapon ensued, resulting in Deputy Morrell lying nearly unconscious on the floor and Benson being armed with the revolver. Benson used the

revolver to shoot Deputy Morrell three times before securing the deputy's keys and escaping from the jail.

Deputy Morrell was a civil war veteran and served in the army for several years after the war. He also served as a warden in a territorial prison and a deputy warden in a state penitentiary before becoming a deputy sheriff for Thurston County. He was survived by an adopted son, who was only 11 at the time of Deputy Morrell's death.

Although times have changed, there is one constant that remains from that era— Law Enforcement is a challenging and often dangerous profession. The fate that was dealt Deputy Morrell is one that deputies and officers nationwide face daily. These

days, however, the criminal element is armed with guns, not lead pipes. As each of us don our uniform for the daily tour of duty, we all should take a moment to reflect on the fates of those who have passed before us. Their sacrifices serve as lessons and reminders to us all.

Deputy Morrell is memorialized at the National Law Enforcement Memorial in Washington, DC. The Thurston County Sheriff's Office also maintains a memorial that can be viewed at the front desk lobby area.

Some information for this article was provided by: The Olympia Weekly Capital, Friday May 6, 1903

Employees Making a Difference

By Chief Dave Pearsall

On a beautiful, hot August day, the Thurston County Deputy Sheriff's Association held its first annual Poker Run to benefit a local charity. The charity chosen this year was the Rochester Middle School Booster Club. Detective Steve Hamilton and Deputy Ben Elkins spearheaded the event that raised \$2,500 for the booster club. Both spent numerous hours soliciting businesses for sponsorships and prizes while organizing the event.

The "RIDE AROUND THE MOUNTAIN" kicked off at the Rochester Middle school with a rider's briefing on August 23rd. More than 125 motorcyclists participated in the fun-filled event that stretched from Rochester to Mt. Rainier and back. The "Poker Run" theme allowed riders to compete for prizes and bragging rights. Along the way riders stopped at designated locations to draw cards for prizes and try to get the best poker hand.

Once back in Rochester, the Rochester Middle School Booster Club staffed the barbecue and prepared and served the food. The best poker hand won a Weber barbecue and many more prizes were awarded. Prizes and event support were donated by local business and regional motorcycle shops.



Planning is already under way for the 2009 event. You can look for more information in upcoming newsletters. If you are interested in participating or providing sponsorship, please contact Detective Steve Hamilton at (360) 754-3343.

Thurston County Jail Gets Blocked Sewer Line

By Chief Todd Thoma

Early morning on Friday, September 26th, the Thurston County Corrections Facility experienced a severe sewage back-up. The problem directly affected the basement level, inmate worker unit/dormitory, which houses 50 inmates in addition to custody and program staff. Because this was a main sewer line with connections from upper level lines, it also affected a number of inmate housing units on the main jail level.

Problems such as this have been on-going for several years due to the age of the facility, the exceeded occupancy and the multiple remodels/up-grades to increase overall capacity. In the past, Central Services/Facility staff has been able to locate and clear blockages in the sewer lines which have caused similar back-ups. However, in this particular instance they were not able to do so and had to

call in outside contractor assistance. When these attempts failed, it was determined that the only other alternative was to unearth the sewer lines to clear the blockage. Because of the magnitude of the operation and issues relative to safety and security, the entire unit had to be evacuated and closed pending the completion of the project. These inmates were dispersed and absorbed throughout the facility and through the use of contract housing with Lewis County.

On Friday afternoon, Corrections and Central Services Staff briefed the County Administrative Officer (CAO), Don Krupp, on the situation. CAO Krupp in-turn approved the emergency funding necessary for the project and subsequent repairs. That evening Central Services staff were able to contract out with a local

contractor to accomplish the work. The contractor and his crew worked throughout the night and by Saturday morning were able to expose and cut the pipes thereby, allowing them to clear the affected sewer line. The blockage was caused by several items of inmate clothing and other debris which are not intended to be flushed.

Although the blockages were cleared, it was determined that there were additional problems in the pipes that would continue to cause sewer back-ups in this area if not repaired properly. It appeared to make sense to complete this additional work while the pipes were already unearthed and the unit already evacuated. The additional work included; replacing approximately 100 feet of problematic sewer line which ran outside of the affected unit and into an

open corridor, the replacement of a cluster of pipes in the main restroom which had a number of 45 and 90 degree angles, and the installation of additional clean-out traps.

On Monday, September 29th, the Board of County Commissioners approved the funding for the additional work/up-grades. The work continued and was ultimately completed on Wednesday, October 22nd, at which time the unit was reoccupied. Because the contractors were required to work during the evening hours, the entire unit was repainted using an inmate work crew and several needed repairs were made during the day.

All personnel involved were commended for an excellent job in dealing with the impacts of such an extensive project.

Thurston County Corrections Deputy Takes GOLD

By Deputy John Snaza

Corrections Deputy Jack House entered the Washington States Police and Fire Games this summer. Deputy House participated with law enforcement athletes from the Western United States, Hawaii and Alaska.

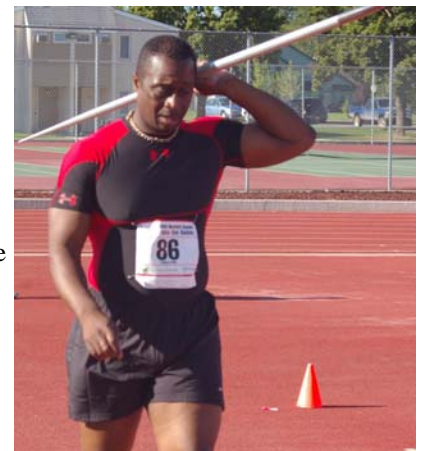
Jack competed in several events in his age division taking home gold in the 200 and 1500 meter dash and weightlifting. He also

took silver in the javelin and discus throw.

Jack completed his 20 plus year career with the United States Army in 2001 as a First Sergeant. He was hired by the Sheriff's office the same year. He is active in his community participating in several plays at the Lakewood Playhouse that include: "One flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest", "A Raisin in the Sun"

and "Once on This Island".

Jack frequents several gyms depending on what type of work out or body part that he wants to focus on. He attributes his good health to exercise and a health philosophy, **"If you can't smile while working, stop working"**



Third Quarter Awards Ceremony

Citizen Commendation

Awarded to any citizen who performs an act that jeopardizes their own safety while assisting the Sheriff's Office in the performance of a hazardous task, or performs an act of exemplary service in support of the Sheriff's Office goals and objectives, or performs an act that jeopardizes their own safety while attempting to save the life of another person.

The recipients of this Award are: Scott Ferris, Jose Roja-Torres, and Lief Cofield

On May 07, 2008, at approximately 1721 hours, Dispatch advised of a small motorboat that had overturned in Totten Inlet with two men in the water.

While deputies were en route, Scott Ferris was on his deck with his family when he heard faint calls for help. Using his binoculars Mr. Ferris scanned the waterway and found debris floating in the water with two men bobbing in the choppy water. Mr. Ferris immediately called 911 and advised Dispatch of the situation. He then retrieved his kayak and paddled to the capsized boat. He was able to get one of the men to hold onto his kayak. He paddled his kayak, with the man holding on, back to shore and safety.

Jose Roja-Torres and Lief Cofield, who were also in the area geoduck fishing, observed what had happened and responded to the scene. The second man in jeopardy was pulled from the water and rescued by Mr. Roja-Torres and Mr. Cofield.

During this incident, Scott Ferris, Jose Roja-Torres and Lief Cofield all demonstrated courage and bravery in their selfless act of heroism. Without concern for their own personal safety, Scott Ferris, Jose Roja-Torres, and Lief Cofield placed themselves in harms way to rescue the two fishermen who were in jeopardy of losing their lives in the cold Puget Sound waters.

Certificate of Commendation

Awarded to office members in recognition of a high degree of competence and professionalism in the performance of

their duties. This includes exemplary conduct during a field incident or operation, outstanding administrative work, the effective handling of a criminal investigation, the organization of a new and beneficial office program, designing and conducting a course of training, and commendable participation in any other activity that improves the office's functioning or brings credit upon the office in any way.

The recipients are: Nancy Castro and George Vanbuskirk

Nancy filled out her volunteer auxiliary application for this office on September 11, 1985. She has been coming



in faithfully every Thursday since to help in the Records room. Nancy has logged more than 2,000 hours with us, for a savings to the taxpayers of this county of \$40,490. Nancy is always upbeat and diligent in her work for us.

George has been volunteering with the Thurston County Sheriff's Office since July 2007. Staff members have truly come to rely on George. When they have more tasks on their plate than they can handle, they know they can count on George.

George is willing to take care of anything that's left on his desk. He comes in early and stays late. He is a great example of someone who continually gives of himself.

Lifesaving Award

Awarded to office members who take specific action(s) at the scene of an event resulting in the saving of a human life.

The recipients are: Deputy George Oplinger and Sgt. Paul Johnson of Olympia Police Dept.

On July 9, 2008 at approximately 1512 hours, Deputy George Oplinger responded to the 1500 block of Judd St NE for a report of a male attempting suicide by hanging. Upon arrival,

Deputy Oplinger immediately began lifesaving efforts on the male by lifting and freeing him from the noose.

Medics arrived on scene and were able to stabilize the



subject. Without Deputy Oplinger's intervention, the individual would not have survived.

On May 22, 2008, deputies were dispatched to a Ft. Lewis property located off Rainier Rd. SE near Military Rd. to assist a soldier who had become entangled in a tree during a parachuting training mission. Upon arrival deputies and fire personnel located the soldier suspended in his parachute and harness approximately 100 feet in a tree.

Sgt. Paul Johnson of Olympia Police Department was contacted and requested to respond because he possessed unique skills and training in scaling and limbing tall timber with logging climbing gear. Sgt. Johnson responded to the Sheriff's Office request in an expedient manner and without question. Once Sgt. Johnson arrived on scene, he quickly assessed the situation and coordinated his ascent and rescue with the DIVE Team members. Sgt. Johnson began his 100 foot climb of the tree and with the assistance of the DIVE Team the soldier was released from his entangled parachute lowered to the ground. Without



the specialized skills possessed by Sgt. Paul Johnson and his commitment to help someone in need, this soldier may have become seriously injured due to a fall or exposure.

Present 20 Years of Service Award to:

PAT BROWN, PAUL COUNTS, JIM DOWNING, and KELLIE GUENZEL



Present 30 Years of Service Award to:

MIKE WARE



Present Certificate of Appreciation for 25 Years to:

STORME THOMPSON, District Court Probation.



A Few Holiday Tips

This holiday season do not let the spirit of giving lull you into giving burglars, muggers, and pickpockets a better chance to do their dirty work. Crooks love the holidays as much as everyone else but chiefly because it is an opportune time for crime.

Here are some tips on how to celebrate safely this holiday season:

If You Are Traveling:

- Purchase an automatic timer for your lights.
- Ask a neighbor to watch your home.
- Do not forget to have mail and newspaper delivery stopped.

If You Are Out For The Evening:

- Turn on lights and a radio or TV so it looks like someone is home.
- Be extra cautious about locking doors and windows when you leave, even if it is just a few minutes.

- Do not display gifts where they can be seen from the outside.

If You Are Shopping:

- Stay alert and be aware of what is going on around you.
- Park in a well-lighted space, and be sure to lock the car, close the windows, and hide shopping bags and gifts in the trunk.
- Avoid carrying large amounts of cash; pay with a check or credit card whenever possible.
- Deter pickpockets and purse-snatchers. Do not overburden yourself with packages. Be extra careful with purses and wallets. Carry a purse close to your body, not dangling by the straps. Put a wallet in an inside coat or front pants pocket.
- Shopping with children? Teach them to go to a store clerk or security guard if you get separated

If a Stranger Comes to the Door :

Criminals sometimes pose as couriers delivering gifts. And, it is not uncommon for people to try to take advantage of others' generosity during the holidays by going door-to-door for charitable donations when there is no charity involved. Ask for identification and find out how the funds will be used. If you are not satisfied, do not give. Instead, help your favorite charitable organization by donating to directly to them.

Do your part to make the holidays a safe and happy time for everybody except the criminals.

Community Alert

Please sign up for our COMMUNITY ALERT. The alert provides information on criminal activity occurring in your neighborhood.

You can sign up at our website

www.co.thurston.wa.us/sheriff

Community Outreach Deputy J. Snaza

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E-mail: snazaj@co.thurston.wa.us

<http://www.co.thurston.wa.us/sheriff>

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