



GRAND COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

BRETT D. SCHROETLIN
SHERIFF

WAYNE SCHAFFER
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Dear Fellow Sheriffs, Deputies and Support Staff:

Last week we completed our Western States Sheriffs' Association (WSSA) annual conference in Reno, NV. I appreciated the opportunity to speak with many of you at the conference but recognize that several Sheriffs were not able to attend this year. I know that while the Sheriffs were attending this conference, the work within our agencies by each of our staff continues. Our work is essential in each of our communities and has a direct impact on our nation as a whole.

I want to take a moment to introduce myself to those of you I have not met, and extend my appreciation for the dedication, commitment, and overall great work you all do. At the conference, I had the distinct honor to be sworn in as the next President Sheriff for WSSA for 2022-2023. I am truly humbled to lead such an incredible organization and represent each of you. I have been involved in law enforcement since 1992, as a volunteer Explorer Scout, as a limited commission Park Ranger, and as a sworn Colorado Peace Officer since 1999. During my career, I have served as Officer/Deputy, Investigator, Sergeant, Lieutenant, and Commander. I am currently in my second term as the elected Sheriff in Grand County, CO. Grand County is about 1,850 square miles nestled in northwest Colorado, about 90 minutes from the Denver area. We are home to about 15,000 year-round residents, nearly 35,000 second homeowners, and visited by over 2 million people annually: mainly for our outdoor recreational activities.

My passion, which is likely shared with many of you, is law enforcement and serving my community. I am excited for us to work together and channel our drive to support our communities and commitment to law enforcement to tackle several critical issues. During our conference, I highlighted the key points for my vision of 2022-2023 and I want to share them here with you so we can work together to make a difference.

Advocate for the Office of Sheriff. This is our Core and without this, all the goals and focus of WSSA is irrelevant.

Support the Sheriffs of our association and each of your teams. Incredible work is being done by our Sheriffs across the West, as well as our Deputies, Correctional Staff, and support personnel. It is important to know that our association, your communities, and I see and value your individual and collective dedication and commitment.

Advance two-way communication between WSSA and each of you. A first step to fostering better communication is completing the WSSA "What's important to WSSA" google form. This enables your Executive Board to know what's important to each of you, and how WSSA can help. Increased communication = WSSA success!

Increase WSSA membership and unite our voices. We are facing some questionable and concerning legislation at both the state and national levels. Decisions that are being made are having a significant impact on the ways we police our communities - putting our Deputies and law enforcement at a disadvantage and most importantly creating unnecessary danger in an already dangerous profession. The Rule of Law is paramount. We must educate and communicate this to our Legislators, so they understand the dangers of their decisions. Through our organization and communities, we need to hold the people who are creating these laws accountable. Equally important, we must hold those who commit criminal offenses accountable because our citizens rely on us, their law enforcement leaders, to lead this charge. We at WSSA can be a powerful united voice to affect the necessary changes and accountability.

Play a key role in border security. The crisis at our southern border is chaotic and out of control. Our current administration has chosen to not make this a priority; in fact, has basically chosen to take no action at all. This impact is not just isolated to our border states/counties. Our brothers and sisters at the local, state, and national level are fighting the good fight at the border, but the problem is spiraling out of control and impacting all communities. Over the years, WSSA has become a pivotal player and voice to national issues and now more than ever is the time for us to play a key role in this crisis. With Sheriff Del Bosque and Sheriff Dannels on the WSSA board, we are blessed with direct accounts from the border, and I look forward to us helping them navigate this challenge. Border security is national security.

Foster collaborative efforts with federal land management partners. We have made incredible strides over the years with our federal land management partners. The fact that the Directors and Senior Staff at the Forest Service and BLM are only a phone call away and participate in our meetings is a benefit to all our agencies and is instrumental in continuing these partnerships. To be successful as Sheriffs of the west, we need their cooperation and collaboration and in turn to accomplish their missions they need us.

There is no doubt that 2022-2023 will be another challenging year for our law enforcement profession, but I know, without hesitation, that if we work individually within our respective counties, and collectively as the incredible 17 state organization that we are, we can tackle any challenge that lies ahead.

Sheriffs- I thank each of you for serving your communities as an elected official and leading your teams in these ever-changing and ever-challenging times.

Command Staff- Thank you for supporting your Sheriffs and assuming all the vital and necessary functions that keep our agencies going, which allow your Sheriffs to work directly with your citizens.

Deputies, Correctional Officers, and Support Staff- You are truly the heroes in each of our counties, the work you do every day, the lives you impact, and your representation of the badge within our communities does not go unnoticed.

As your WSSA President Sheriff for 2022-2023, I vow to spend the next year working towards the visions I have outlined and representing each of you and our incredible organization to the best of my ability. Join me in building the strength and prestige of WSSA.

Respectfully,



Brett D. Schroetlin
Grand County Sheriff (CO)
President, Western States Sheriffs' Association