



Western States Sheriffs' Association

2022

From the President

March 17, 2022

**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



Sheriff Brett Schroetlin

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 be-

ing 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. ■



Keynote Speaker

William Perry Pendley, former Director of the Bureau of Land Management, opened the Western States Sheriffs' 2022 annual conference as the Keynote Speaker.

Director Perry spoke to the membership about his love for the American west and the failed policies of the federal land managers to manage the land effectively and appropriately.



With a passion for the land and a recognition of the role of the Sheriff in rural America, Pendley acknowledged there is an immense amount of work to be done to recognize the responsibility of the federal government and local authority as it relates to the rule of law and the protection of our natural resources.

We are grateful for Director Pendley's presence. We recognize him as a true partner in the protection of the public lands of the west. ■



Author Address

Craig Johnson, author of the book series that sparked the Longmire episodes, addressed our membership at the annual meeting.

Johnson told the story of how the idea for his books was born and the work he did to authenticate his writings.

Johnson entertained the membership with his humor and kept us riveted in our desire to learn about how "Walt Longmire" was created.

A Wyoming native, Johnson utilized the knowledge of a local Sheriff to better understand the processes law enforcement might go through to investigate a crime. This knowledge was then inserted into the stories so to make them seem more real.

In honor of Johnson and the character of "Longmire" a movie night was sponsored complete with popcorn, Ranier beer (Longmire's favorite). 2 episodes of Longmire were shown to those in attendance.

WSSA salutes Craig Johnson for keeping the Spirit of America's western Sheriff alive! ■

WSSA Seeks Additional Funding for Sheriff's Patrols on Public Lands

The Government Affairs Committee of the Western States Sheriffs' Association reaffirmed a 2021 Resolution which stated the top five priorities for the committee.

Those priorities are as follows:

1. Monitoring activities occurring pursuant to the Biden Administrations 30 x 30 plan to ensure no negative economic impact to counties.
2. Work closely with public land managers to coordinate activities conducted under the Great American Outdoors Act are prioritized
3. Work to increase funding levels for Cooperative Law Enforcement contracts with the BLM and USFS.
4. Work with Public Land agencies to draft and implement public education addressing ethics on Public Lands
5. Monitor all Federal Legislation to stay current on those bills that seek to erode the Office of Sheriff and or restrict public access to public lands.

After a brief discussion with the Committee members, it was decided that these priorities remain in place and that the committee recognize **Cooperative Law Enforcement Funding as its number one priority over the course of this next year.**

Work has already begun toward that end. Committee co-chairs, Sheriff Matt English, Hood River county Oregon and Sheriff Tracy Glover, Kane County Utah are working on congressional letters and language to further the issue of increasing federal dollars available to Sheriffs.

Our membership should be prepared to assist with this effort in the coming months.

Help will be needed in contacting your federal representatives and convincing them that support for the increased funding for cooperative law enforcement contracts is past due and action is necessary now. ■

Western States Sheriffs' Leadership Academy

After a near year long process, WSSA rolled out its first in house produced and delivered Leadership Training. With a focus on providing training in subject areas specific to Sheriffs in the western United States, four 2-hour blocks of training were provided at the 2022 annual conference in Reno, Nevada.

The subject areas chosen for the training were centered on Border Sheriffs, Jail Management, Public Lands Law Enforcement, and the History of the Office of Sheriff.

The months long development involved input from several Sheriffs and others all who shared the desire to create a leadership training course for Sheriffs, taught by Sheriffs.

Presenting the pilot project to our members at the annual conference provided the best opportunity to receive the critical and necessary feedback and allow us to refine the course content and delivery style.

The survey results for each of the four blocks of training were overwhelmingly positive with some constructive feedback on how to improve.

As the leadership academy grows, we hope to expand the training topics and create the ability to deliver the course material throughout the 17 members states. Parallel to that, we are working with an outside company to add core leadership training on a more administrative level.

Eventually, we hope to have each of the WSSA training blocks available in an online format.

WSSA is poised to truly expand as an organization and we can clearly see the value added benefit of utilizing the knowledge of our more seasoned members to articulate the role, authority and duty of America's Western Sheriff. ■

Vice President Kamala Harris “No Confidence”

The Western States Sheriffs' Association Border Security committee brought a resolution forward to the general membership in March pointedly claiming “No Confidence” in Vice-President Harris related to her lack of leadership on the Southwest Border.

Harris was appointed by President Biden to oversee the disaster on the border well over a year ago. To date, Harris has yet to show any leadership in curbing the massive numbers of illegals crossing the southwest border.

The humanitarian and economic impacts are felt at the border and are coupled with rising crime and importation of drugs into the interior of the country.

Border Sheriffs have expressed the desire to work with the administration to solve the problems associated with the lack of federal enforcement of immigration laws. These plea's have fallen on deaf ears for the past several months.

Recognizing the need for change, members of WSSA are seeking new leadership at the federal level to curb the influx of illegals immigrants and resources to address the needs of local communities.

To read the entire resolution click on the hyperlink below.

<https://www.westernsheriffs.org-content/uploads/2022/03/Signed-WSSA-Resolution-22-01.pdf> ■

Washoe County Sheriff Above and Beyond



Once again, the Washoe County Sheriff's Office went above and beyond in supporting the 2022 WSSA annual conference.

WCSO staff and CERT volunteers provided security, assisted with credential verification, and maintained a high level of visibility in the conference hall area.

These dedicated individuals kept a vigilance to ensure the safety and security of attendees throughout the entire week. Often in the shadow of a conference of 300 attendees, the WCSO staff stand out when it comes to friendliness and a willingness to be involved in the moment.

The WCSO staff represented the Office of Sheriff with dignity and professionalism, and it was very obvious they represented the communities of Reno-Sparks with pride.

The WSSA is grateful for the continued support of the WCSO! ■

Mission Statement

*The mission of the Western States Sheriffs' Association
is to assist Sheriffs and their Offices with Federal and State
legislative issues, address policy and procedural matters,
develop guidelines to promote uniformity in matters
that are important to Sheriffs of the Western United States
and to work together to keep the Office of Sheriff strong.*

WSSA Staying Home!

The Western States Sheriffs' Association has long felt at home at the Peppermill Resort and Casino. Our base of operations for the past 8 years. Prior to a brief stint in Las Vegas,

WSSA held its annual conference at the Peppermill. Now, after a successful 8 years at the Peppermill, WSSA is proud to announce that we have entered another 3-year contract with the Peppermill which will keep us home through 2026.

The quality of the facility coupled with the friendly and helpful staff has always been second to none. Our members have grown accustomed to the resort and surrounding opportunities.

After a thorough review process and visits to competing facilities last December, WSSA staff



recommended to the Executive Board that we continue the long-standing relationship with the Peppermill and extend our commitment to remain in Reno.

Reno is fortunate to have several great venues available for a conference of the size of WSSA. While much consideration was given to each of them that bid for our conference, the Peppermill continued to stand above.

We are excited to be returning in 2023 for our 30th anniversary as an organization and look forward to working with the Peppermill staff to make it both successful and memorable.

Shown above: Left Debbie Cotter, Catering & Event Manager, Center Daniel Rosa, West Coast Regional Sales Director, Right Victoria Hudman, Convention Services Manager. ■

Did You Know?

- The Western States Sheriffs' Association has several active committees. These committees are critical to accomplishing the work of the association and communicating the needs of our membership. If you are a member of WSSA, you are asked to join any or all of the committees and to have your voice heard on issues of mutual concern.
- The committees meet annually at the conference and periodically throughout the year. Most all of the meetings held outside of the conference are conducted via a web-based format.
- Your participation is welcome in the work of these committees and in all cases, your input is needed.
- Please take the opportunity to become active in this aspect of your association.

Fight Crime Invest in Kids



Sheriff Leo Dutton, Lewis and Clark County Montana with Martha Brooks, Montana State Director for Fight Crime Invest in Kids.

Sheriff Dutton was recognized by Fight Crime Invest in Kids as the "2022 Champion for Children and Youth."

The Western States Sheriffs' Association salutes Sheriff Dutton for his outstanding work with Children throughout the communities of Lewis and Clark County, Montana. ■



Western States Sheriffs' Association (WSSA)

Where we have been?

In 1993 a small group of Sheriffs from 7 western states decided enough was enough. Recognizing the National Sheriffs Association lacked the interest and the knowledge of law enforcement issues in the west, they formed this Association and began to tackle the various issues associated with public lands, Indian lands, infringement on our 2nd amendment right and many other relevant issues. What started as 7 member states has now grown to 17 western states with one specific mission.

"To assist Sheriffs and their Offices with Federal, State legislative issues, address policy and procedural matters, develop guidelines to promote uniformity in matters that are important to Sheriffs of the Western United States and to work together to keep the Office of Sheriff strong."

With membership spanning the entire western U.S. our numbers and our collective voice have been and are being, heard.

There have been recognized times in our history when tumultuous relationships with public land managers and federal law enforcement partners and much conversation was required to work through to an understanding of the role of the County Sheriff.

America's Western Sheriff remains at the forefront of what a full-service law enforcement agency is and should be. Urban growth has impacted the Office of Sheriff in many ways and in some cases, it has threatened the very existence of the elected Office of Sheriff. Consistent with our mission statement, WSSA has fought to maintain this traditional and highly respected elected Office of the people. Additionally, WSSA has argued to maintain the supremacy of the Sheriff as it relates to the provision of law enforcement services on public lands. Success in this area has been realized through established relationships with federal law enforcement entities and work continues. The fact that the Association has grown to 17 member states is testament to the effectiveness of the organization and its value to our members.

Our support from business partners has

been tremendous over the years and continues to grow. Without this very important relationship, we would not have realized the overall and continuing success of this organization.

WSSA certainly felt growing pains and at one point several years ago, we were forced to consider dissolution for lack of the appropriate levels of financial resources to continue. After the necessary changes were made in management and leadership, we were able to realize great success, both financially and in the membership participation over the past 8 years. We continue to grow, are building strength in numbers, and taking stances on issues that we believe are important to safety and security of the Western United States. So, you might wonder as we approach the milestone of 30 years as an organization,

Where are we going?

We are forging ahead at a rapid pace. As we continue planning for the 2023 conference in Reno, Nevada there are a number of actions happening behind the scenes.

In recognition of our substantial growth over the past 5 years, the WSSA Executive Board has moved to add additional help to alleviate the day-to-day workload of the Executive Director. In addition to relieving some of the workload, new projects are underway to build membership, improve membership communication and create a marketing plan to showcase the value and effectiveness of WSSA. These projects are all consistent with the WSSA Strategic Plan and in concert with our mission as an organization.

Expanding our outreach through the use of web-based platforms, increasing our involvement in regional and national issues, and standing strong for the Office of Sheriff will continue to be priorities as we move forward.

The WSSA recognizes the tremendous time constraints placed on today's Sheriff and their staff. Through the creation of a leadership academy, WSSA is now providing relevant training to our new members as well as long standing members looking for refresher training and information of

western issues. This academy is moving toward an online format with additional web-based leadership course opportunities. We are excited to see growth in this area and look forward to providing it not only at the annual conference but at the click of a mouse. We continue to partner with NIJO for legal based jail standards training and those courses are offered regionally throughout the year.

The committee work for WSSA remains a critical component of our success. The committees of WSSA are instrumental in shaping and forming positions for the membership to consider and in providing guidance in the shaping of federal and state policy. Building committee participation is viewed as vital to the continued success of the organization.

Marketing of the organization stands to provide WSSA with increased resources to effectively carry out the mission. Creation of an online marketplace for members and the general public to shop for items coupled with the opportunity for honorary membership opportunities for the public, will provide WSSA additional revenues necessary to support the many facets of the operation of the organization. This project will be a focus over the course of the next several months.

Finally, WSSA staff along with the Executive Board and Board of Directors will continue to maintain strong communication links to stay ahead of the ever-changing dynamics of the organization. The flow of information between staff, E-Board and Board of Directors will certainly be the catalyst to increased communication with the membership as a whole.

Our first 30 years brought trials and tribulations; our next 30 years will reap the benefit of those difficult times. By maintaining a clear focus on our mission and our strategic plan, we stand to accomplish our greatest work yet.

To our membership, both present and past, we salute the great work you have all accomplished and we look forward to working with you together as we forge ahead. ■

—Sheriff Dave Brown, Skamania County, WA

Vice President



Sheriff Corey Helton

I was born and raised in Wyoming and graduated from Riverton Highschool in 1986. I entered the United States Army in 1988 and served two tours and was Honorably discharged in 1994 where I began my career with the Hobbs New Mexico Police Department the same month.

I spent 22 years with the police department and held numerous positions including Swat, K-9, Gang Unit, Detective, and Internal Affairs Investigator. In 2018 I ran for Lea County Sheriff where I currently serve.

I have been the Lea County Sheriff for almost four years and serve on many boards such as the New Mexico Sheriff's Association as well the Executive Board of the Western States Sheriff's Association. ■

Immediate Past President



President



Sheriff Brett Schroetlin

Brett D. Schroetlin is the Sheriff of Grand County, Colorado. He is a 4th generation Colorado native, and started his law enforcement journey as an Explorer Scout in 1992, and has served as a sworn Peace Officer since 1999 as a Police Officer/Deputy, K9 Handler, Investigator, Sergeant, Lieutenant, and Assistant Chief.

Sheriff Schroetlin was sworn into office in January 2015 and is now in his second term serving the citizens and tourists of Grand County, in addition to his collateral duties within the State of Colorado and through the Western States Sheriffs Association (WSSA).

Sheriff Schroetlin has been involved in WSSA since 2016 and currently is serving as the President. ■

Past President



Sheriff Fred Lamphere

I started my career in Belle Fourche SD as a police officer in January of 1990, in 1993 I was promoted to Sergeant. I left Belle Fourche and took the Chief of Police position in Newell SD. Both communities are in Butte County.

In 2002 I ran for Sheriff and have been the Butte County Sheriff since August of 2002. I was President of the Western States Sheriffs Association in 2020-2021.

My wife Kathy and I have owned and operate a big game outfitting business in South Dakota since 1997 and together we have 5 children and 11 grandchildren. I am currently seeking my 6th term as Butte County Sheriff. ■

Sheriff Leo Dutton

Sheriff Leo Dutton is originally from Sand Springs, Montana, where he graduated from Garfield County High School in 1978. Leo married his best friend and partner, Luci, in 1983. In December of that year, they moved to Helena. They have three wonderful children, Luke, Levi and Logan.

Leo attended the University of Montana-College of Technology's Airframe and Power Plant program, graduating as a certified Airframe and Power Plant Mechanic in 1985.

In 1984, he began his law enforcement career as a reserve deputy for Lewis & Clark County.

Leo was sworn in as Sheriff of Lewis & Clark County on September 2, 2008. He strives to lead others in a combined vision to meet a common mission and uphold the core values established by the Lewis & Clark County Sheriff's Office. ■

Secretary



Sgt. at Ams



Treasurer



Sheriff Gary Bettencourt

Sheriff Gary Bettencourt was born and raised in Gilliam County. He was born in Condon and raised on a ranch on Rock Creek. After graduating high school Sheriff Bettencourt spent nearly eleven years in Silverton, Oregon working as an auctioneer and managed a seed processing facility.

In 1994 Sheriff Bettencourt returned to Gilliam County and for seven years owned and operated two businesses. In 1999 Sheriff Bettencourt became a Reserve Deputy for the Gilliam County Sheriff's Office and was hired as a full time Deputy in 2001. After moving to Condon in 2003 Sheriff Bettencourt was promoted to Undersheriff and then became Sheriff in 2005. He is running unopposed for his fifth term.

In 2021 Sheriff Bettencourt joined the Executive Board at WSSA and currently serves as Secretary. For the year 2019-2020 he was recognized as Sheriff of the Year for WSSA. ■

Sheriff Mark Dannels

Since 2012, Sheriff Mark J. Dannels has been elected by the good citizens of Cochise County to serve as their 26th Cochise County Sheriff since 1881. I continue to be Humbled, Honored and Dedicated to my oath of office for this incredible opportunity to serve you all with my personal commitment to sustain your Quality of Life as you would expect, and your Freedoms and Liberties as scribed in the United States and Arizona Constitutions.

Sheriff Dannels is married to Nickie, a Registered Nurse. They have three sons, Justin, a Police Officer/Corporal with the City of Sierra Vista, Ryan a Firefighter/Paramedic with the City of Sierra Vista, and Corey, a Lineman with the Sulphur Springs Valley Electric Cooperative. ■

***Below:** New WSSA Board is sworn into office at the Conference in Reno by Sheriff Leo Dutton.*



Sheriff Raymundo Del Bosque, Jr.

In 2012, Raymundo Del Bosque, Jr., was appointed by the Zapata County Sheriff, Alonso M. Lopez, as Chief Deputy of the Zapata County Sheriff's Office for his vision to protect and serve the community and citizens while abiding to the Oath as a Texas Peace Officer and enforcing the Law.

Committed to his family, Sheriff Raymundo Del Bosque, Jr., is a proud parent of five, who currently lives in Zapata, TX in the same town he grew up in, with his wife and children. ■

Executive Director

Sheriff (Ret.) Jim Pond



As the Executive Director I coordinate the Day-to-Day activities as well as projects, training and conferences, Legislative issues affecting the member states and assignments as directed by Western States Sheriffs Association Executive Board. I also coordinate membership and recruitment of members and keep all financial accounting of the Association.

Elected as Sheriff in 1998 I held the office for three terms. The Sheriff is directly responsible for the safety and security of all the people in Albany County. ■

Wester States Sheriff's Aassocation

Sheriff of the Year 2021-22

Sheriff David Black

Otero County, NM

Sheriff David Black has been the Otero County Sheriff for three years. He has spent his entire 26-year law enforcement career in Otero County.

Sheriff Black is well respected by his community, members of the Otero County Sheriff's Office, New Mexico Legislators, and our US Congress Woman, Yvette Herrell.

Sheriff Black is a current member of the Western States Sheriff's Association as well as the New Mexico Sheriff's Association where he currently serves on the Executive Board. Sheriff Black is in good standing with both Associations.

Sheriff Black over the last few years has been a strong voice for his community in terms of the extreme and dangerous legislation coming from legislators in Santa Fe.

Sheriff Black has stood with numerous Sheriff's including myself to fight back on additional gun laws that only effect law abiding citizens.

Sheriff Black is a border sheriff in New Mexico and an active member of the Border Sheriff's Association.

Sheriff Black established a clear best practices guideline for post critical incident procedure for the Otero County Sheriff's Office.



In the three years Sheriff Black has been the elected Sheriff of Otero County, he has implemented numerous positive changes to his office. Sheriff Black organized and implemented the White Mountain Drug Task Force (HIDTA) which works in cooperation with the Pecos Valley Task Force and the Lea County Drug Task Force.

New Mexico has seen a significant increase of Non-US citizens entering our country the last year. The flow of narcotics has also significantly increased as well. The White Mountain Drug Task Force has made numerous narcotic seizures preventing the narcotics from reaching the interior of the United States.

Sheriff Black is respected by his Deputies and the community for which he serves. He's often out with his Deputies taking calls when needed and fills in with man power when needed. Sheriff Black leads by example and would never require anything from his Deputies that he could not or would not do himself.

Sheriff Black's biggest achievement is his lovely wife Lorri Black of 39 years, their two children and five grandchildren. ■

*Left: Sheriff Corey Helton
Lea County, NM
Right: Sheriff David Black*



Executive Board

President

Sheriff Brett Schroetlin
Grand County, Colorado

Vice President

Sheriff Corey Helton
Lea County, New Mexico

Secretary

Sheriff Gary Bettencourt
Gilliam County, Oregon

Treasurer

Sheriff Ray Del Bosque
Zapata County, Texas

Sgt. at Arms

Sheriff Mark Dannels
Cochise County, Arizona

Immediate Past President
Sheriff Leo Dutton

Lewis and Clark County, Montana

Past President

Sheriff Fred Lamphere
Butte County, South Dakota

Executive Director

Sheriff Jim Pond (Ret.)
Albany County, Wyoming

Find us on the Web!

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