



Much like every year that ends, we often find ourselves looking back. Not only in the year that has passed but even further to those holding poignant memories of both

good and not so good days. We often wonder if we could have done a better job at this or that and had a better outcome. I suppose this is part of life's learning process. We can't change an outcome, but we can certainly learn from our experiences.

Looking back is brief as our minds generally steer us to the new year and the hope and promise of maybe something better or something new. There can be no argument that something new is coming in the transition of political power in this nation. Many will assert this is going to be something better, and others might argue it will not.

In the true spirit of optimism, I believe it is certainly going to be something different. I know it holds the promise of change and in so many of the issues we here at WSSA have been working on, this change stands to be very positive. I am excited at the possibilities of significant improvements in the safety and security of our nation's borders. I am equally optimistic in the belief the incoming administration will once again engage with the nation's Sheriffs on the issues affecting the safety and security of the communities of this great country.

Now is not the time to sit back and feel accomplished. Now is the time to put our foot down on the accelerator and push even harder to gain speed and momentum on the issues we believe are important to WSSA and our members.

As I enter the last couple of months of my term as your President, I can assure you I

will continue our efforts directed toward border security and our attempts to fight back at increased federal law enforcement encroachment on our public lands. These issues, coupled with the overreach of OSHA and the emergency response standards rule must be rectified to the satisfaction of the law and to our organization's membership as well as the people of the western United States.

I encourage all of you to join with me and the entire leadership team of WSSA to continue striving to meet our mission and vision in assisting our membership on federal and state legislative issues and keeping the Office of Sheriff strong.

I wish you all a Happy New Year and look forward to seeing you all in Reno March 9-13th for our annual conference.

Sheriff Gary Bettencourt
Gilliam County, Oregon
President, WSSA