



**Benton County Sheriff's Office (BCSO)  
HISTORICAL SYNOPSIS**

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*The history of the Benton County Sheriff's Office pre-dates Oregon statehood. The following synopsis lists some of the important events that have helped shape the Office. Information on this list has come from several sources including "A History of Benton County" by David Fagan (1885), work by Mark Phinney, a WPA archivist in 1936, the Benton County Sheriff's Office Annual Reports and local newspaper accounts. While we try to be accurate, not everything is verifiable with contemporary documentation. We believe this is the best information available.*

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**THE 1800's...**

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- 1840** Because there was no formal government in Oregon Country, law enforcement was performed by the Hudson Bay Company.
- 1841** A "High Sheriff" was chosen by the people living in the Willamette Valley.
- 1844** The Oregon Provisional Government, using the laws of Iowa Territory as a guide, made the Office of Sheriff mandatory.
- 1847** Benton County was created from Polk County. The original boundaries extended from Polk County on the north, the Willamette River on the east, the California border on the south and the Pacific Ocean on the west.
- 1848** The first Sheriff of Benton County, D. W. Hofins, was elected on June 5th. Less than a year later he left office to join the gold rush in California.
- 1849** Abraham Nelson Locke was elected Sheriff in October. That term lasted until 1851, but Locke came back in 1860 to serve a second term.
- 1851** Samuel F. Starr took office as Sheriff in July.
- 1852** Silas M. Stout followed Starr as Sheriff.

The first homicide on record in Benton County was committed by Nimrod O'Kelly when he shot Jeremiah Mahoney for trespassing. On June 29th, O'Kelly was convicted and sentenced to hang, but the Governor commuted the sentence. When O'Kelly became the expense of the county, the Legislature appropriated \$630.00 to the county for expenses incurred in guarding and keeping prisoners after conviction.

- 1853** T.J. Right followed Stout as Sheriff, serving until 1855.
- 1855** John B. Congle served one of the shortest terms as Sheriff, only two months, before he resigned and was followed by James A. Bennett.
- 1856** Sheldon B. Fargo was elected sheriff.

The first jail was constructed while Sheriff Fargo was in office.

- 1858** When Sherriff Fargo could not get a bond, James Bennett was appointed Sheriff again and served from July through September when he resigned. James P. Stewart was



appointed Sheriff but resigned only three months after taking office. George P. Wrenn was appointed to take Stewart's place.

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## **OREGON BECOMES A STATE...**

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**1859** Oregon was granted statehood. The Oregon Constitution named the Sheriff as ministerial officer of the circuit and county courts. Sheldon Fargo once more became Sheriff and served from April 1859 through July 1860.

The first known jail break in Benton County occurred when Moses Milner pushed past his jailer at mealtime. He was recaptured three hours later.

**1860** Abraham Nelson Locke was re-elected Sheriff after a 10-year hiatus and served for two years.

What is believed to be the only execution in Benton County occurred on June 22nd when convicted murderer Philip George was hanged. He had been convicted of murdering his boarding house partner, John Clark, whom he hit over the head with a board.

**1862** Joseph C. Alexander was elected Sheriff. He later served in the State Legislature.

**1864** Julius Brownson was elected Sheriff and served until 1868.

**1868** Judson S. Palmer was elected Sheriff and served until 1876.

**1873** Two prisoners named White and Jones broke through the north wall of the jail and escaped. They were caught the same day and returned to jail by Sheriff Palmer.

**1876** Solomon "Sol" King was Sheriff until 1886, one of the longest terms served. King was one of the more colorful sheriffs characterized as "*taller and bigger than most men of his time.*" Sheriff King did not run for re-election in 1886.

**1886** William Mackay served as Sheriff until 1892.

**1888** Construction of the present day courthouse began. A Benton Republican meeting resolved that \$50,000 would be enough to fund a new Courthouse and jail.

**1892** David A. Osburn was elected Sheriff and served until 1896.

**1893** A salary was first paid to the Sheriff.

**1894** The jail underwent a major renovation. The interior was gutted, a concrete floor put down and windows were added on the sides in the cell area. Wood from the renovation was used to repair sidewalks and bridges or used as firewood.

**1896** Peter Rickard was elected Sheriff and served until 1900.



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## THE 1900's (1900 – 1950) ...

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- 1900** M.P. Burnett was elected Sheriff and served until 1908.
- 1904** Chester “Peg-Leg” Keady went on a drunken rampage that ended in the death of Benton County Deputy Sheriff and former Corvallis Police Chief James W. Dunn and the wounding of Deputy (and former Sheriff) David A. Osburn. Keady was fatally shot by Sheriff Burnett.
- 1908** William A. Gellatly was elected Sheriff and served until 1920, He had eight children, including two daughters who were deputies with the Benton County Sheriff's Office.
- 1911** On June 2<sup>nd</sup> Eliza A. Griffin was found dead in Benton County and no one could tell if it had been a murder or suicide. Nine months later the mystery was solved when George Humphrey was arrested in Washington County and confessed to the Griffin murder.
- 1920** The Sheriff's term of office was extended from 2 to 4 years. Samuel N. Warfield was elected Sheriff. He died in office in 1925.
- 1925** Emery J. Newton was appointed Sheriff in 1925. He was elected in 1926 and served until 1935. Before he was appointed Sheriff, Newton had also served as County Recorder and County Clerk.
- 1926** Prisoners were transferred on a regular basis to the Multnomah County Jail for at least five years to work on a rock pile crushing rock. Reasons cited for the transfer included inadequacy of the jail and cost benefits.
- 1929** The jail built in 1856 was torn down. It had stood for 73 years.
- A second jail was built on the north side of the courthouse.
- 1935** William M. “Bill” Harper was elected Sheriff and began service in 1935. In 1946 he resigned to become the Campus Marshal at Oregon State University.
- 1939** The Grand Jury recommended a new air conditioning unit for the jail.
- 1946** Clifford N. Lilly became Sheriff when Harper resigned. He served for 17 years which is one of the longest terms as Sheriff.
- 1949** William Haynes broke into the front of the jail through a window, stole guns and other valuables, then freed prisoner Richard Hall. The two men fled to New Mexico but were later re-captured.



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## **THE 1900's (1950 – 1999)...**

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- 1955** On October 24th, while trying to escape authorities after stealing a car, Martin B. Reyes shot and killed Jim Applegate, a member of the Benton County Posse. Reyes was convicted of second degree murder and sentenced to life imprisonment.
- 1961** Sheriff's Office deputies started wearing dark green uniforms.
- 1963** C.E. "Ed" Ream, a former captain with the Los Angeles Police Department, was elected Sheriff and served until 1971.
- 1967** The legislature adopted brown as the official color for uniforms in Sheriff's Offices.
- 1971** John T. "Jack" Dolan was elected Sheriff and served 18 years before resigning. To this date, he is the longest serving Sheriff at 18 years, 5 months.
- The Benton County Sheriff's Office Marine Patrol began.
- 1973** Tax collecting was removed as a Sheriff's Office responsibility by a home rule charter.
- 1974** Sheriff Dolan was named "Oregon Sheriff of the Year" by the Oregon State Sheriff's Association (OSSA).
- 1975** Construction began on a new jail. Whiskey bottles were found buried underneath cells removed from the old jail. A temporary jail was set up on the courthouse lawn so the new jail could be built in the same location as the existing jail.
- The Benton County Correction Facility started a volunteer program.
- 1976** Construction on the present day County correctional facility was completed.
- The Joint City/County Law Enforcement Center was completed from federal grant monies. The Sheriff's Office had previously been located in the county courthouse.
- 1977** The Sheriff's Office started a ride-a-long program for any citizen 14 years and older.
- 1978** The Misdemeanant Parole and Probation Office began as a unit within the Sheriff's Office.
- 1979** The Sheriff's Office joined the Regional Automated Information Network (RAIN), which allowed computer access to local and national criminal information.
- 1981** The Sheriff's Office received a police dog from the Oregon State Sheriff's Association and the first Benton County K-9 patrol was created.



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**1984** Under the State Community Corrections Act, the Sheriff's Office assumed the administrative responsibility of all adult parole and probation programs within Benton County.

**1985** The Sheriff's Office asked local high school students to design a new shoulder patch. Forty-seven drawings were submitted and Peter Erni, a 17-year-old senior at Corvallis High School received \$100.00 for designing the new BCSO patch. It was multicolored with Marys Peak in the background and the historic courthouse in the foreground.

The Detective Division began a polygraph program with the purchase of a polygraph instrument and the training of the deputy.

The tactical CERT team was created (Civil Emergency Response Team) later known as the Benton-Linn SWAT team (Special Weapons and Tactics).

**1986** The Benton County Corrections Facility was the first jail in Oregon to receive accreditation from the American Correctional Association.

**1988** Parole and Probation started the Home Detention Program.

**1989** Sheriff Dolan retired and David S. Cook became Sheriff by appointment of the Board of Commissioners.

**1990** Twice the citizens of Benton County voted down an Adult Correctional Restitution Center Ballot Measure.

David S. Cook was elected to his first four-year term of office.

The juvenile diversion program was instituted within the Sheriff's Office.

The Major Traffic Accident Investigation Team began operations.

**1991** The Drug Abuse Resistance and Education (DARE) program was adopted for implementation by the Sheriff's Office.

The Valley Interagency Narcotics Team (VALIANT), a multi-jurisdictional task force, was created. It was comprised of six sworn officers, serving Linn and Benton Counties.

The Benton County Emergency Management Council was formed.

**1992** The Sheriff's Office obtained \$80,000 from a drug and money laundering forfeiture and purchased its first set of personal desktop computers to write incident reports.

**1993** The jail increased its capacity from 27 to 40 beds.

The Forest Patrol was started with a public-private partnership with Starker Forest.



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**1994** Benton County received a federal grant for community policing, funding four deputy positions.

Benton County Emergency Manager Jim Swinyard received the Oregon Emergency Program Manager of the Year - Urban.

**1995** Stan Robson was elected Sheriff.

The Sheriff's Office took over the responsibilities for animal control.

**1996** The first BCSO Web page was created to list the "most wanted" and provide sex offender notification.

February flooding resulted in a Benton County Presidential Disaster Declaration. Significant flooding also occurred in late December and early January 1997.

**1997** The Day Reporting Center was started.

The Sheriff's Office and Emergency Services prepared for Y2K.

**1998** Automated Fingerprinting Information System (AFIS) was installed in the jail.

**1999** Emergency Management Council received FEMA's Outstanding Federal Task Force Award.

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**The 2000's (2000 – 2009)...**

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**2000** Stan Robson was named "Sheriff of the Year" by the Oregon State Sheriff's Association.

The Home Detention program ended with the passage of the jail bed rental levy.

Federal monies were received under the COPS grant that funded two positions.

**2001** Jim Swinyard was appointed Sheriff by the Board of Commissioners.

The Sheriff's Office started using VisionAire Records Management System.

In July, the Transition Center opened to provide a safe, alcohol- and drug-free transitional housing to indigent offenders being released from prisons and local jails.

In November, Parole and Probation entered into a multi-agency partnership to begin the Benton County Drug Treatment Court.

**2002** The Sheriff's Office changed their uniform to black and gray with a new monochromatic shoulder patch.

Jim Swinyard was elected as Benton County's 28th Sheriff.

A windstorm resulted in a Benton Small Business Disaster Declaration.

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**2003** In January, the first Employee Awards and Recognition program was instituted. Corporal David Scott was named the BCSO Employee of the Year for 2002.

**2003** The Day Reporting Center was closed in May due to statewide community corrections budget reductions.

In November, New Beginnings Treatment Center opened to provide substance abuse treatment services for parole and probation clients and Drug Treatment Court participants.

A snow storm late in the year resulted in a Benton County Presidential Disaster Declaration.

Mike Morrow was named the BCSO Employee of the Year for 2003.

**2004** Just before Memorial Day, Brooke Wilberger was abducted, resulting in a major collaboration between the Benton County Sheriff's Office, Corvallis Police Department, Oregon State Police, Federal Bureau of Investigation, and other agencies assisting in the search and subsequent criminal investigation into her disappearance. Emergency Services Search and Rescue conducted numerous searches following up on tips and resulting in countless hours contributed by volunteer searchers.

A jail Facility Program Coordinator position was created with funding through Benton County Community Corrections. Parenting classes for inmates began.

In September, the first BCSO Citizen's Academy was conducted.

Deputy Jim Weikel named BCSO Employee of the Year.

**2005** BCSO assumed responsibility for Courthouse Security. Two Corrections Deputies were assigned to the Courthouse Security Program; one funded with County General Funds and the other with Court Security Funds.

In April, a community survey was conducted to assist in strategic planning and to gauge the community's opinion of the Sheriff's Office.

Mitchel Ryan Miller was charged in the Alsea double homicide of Jesse Reesman and Shane Buckley.

A low crop yield resulted in a Benton County Agricultural Disaster Declaration.

In December, the Law Enforcement Division obtained their first narcotics detection canine, "Bus" handled by Deputy Jim Weikel.

Late in the year, flooding results in a Benton County Presidential Disaster Declaration.



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Gina Harris, Executive Secretary for Parole and Probation, named BCSO Employee of the Year.

- 2006** Diana L. Simpson was elected Sheriff, becoming the first woman in Oregon's history to be elected Sheriff.

The third OSSA Jail Standards Inspection for Policy and Practice completed with a 100% compliance rating.

Sgt. J. Scott Jackson, AIC Lt. Corrections, named BCSO Employee of the Year.

- 2007** The Sheriff's Office and the Corvallis Police Department completed a number of co-location initiatives to improve efficiencies.

The Sheriff's Office dropped 24/7 patrol operations due to county budget cuts.

The BCSO Annual Report was shifted to fiscal year reporting to better align with county budget reports.

Inmate uniforms are changed to black and white stripes to reduce loss of uniforms which was occurring as a result of frequent inmate transports to contract beds in other counties.

Street Crimes deputies collaborated with other agencies around the state on a major drug ring investigation code named "Operation Ice Breaker."

In September, Lt. Greg Ridler, Law Enforcement Commander, graduated from the FBI National Academy in Quantico, Virginia.

In September, deputies conducted a raid of a marijuana grow located near Alsea Falls on Bureau of Land Management property. The raid resulted in the seizure and destruction of 7,951 marijuana plants, the largest seizure to date in Benton County history.

In October, the Oregon State Sheriff's Association jail inspectors completed their audit and inspection of BCCF. The jail passed the inspection with a 99% compliance rate on 400 standards.

In November, voters passed the Levy to Restore Limited Public Safety and Health Services. BCSO began recruiting to restore law enforcement positions.

Sgt. Shawn Spevacek, Corrections, was named Outstanding Supervisor of the Year by the OSSA Jail Command Council.

Sgt. Loretta Robinson, Law Enforcement Division, named BCSO Employee of the Year.

- 2008** The Sheriff's Office updated their uniform shoulder patch. A group of volunteers sew the new patches onto uniforms saving the agency close to \$3,000.00.



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In February, the day room at the jail was officially dedicated as the Steven J. Oldenstadt Inmate Program Room. Oldenstadt served as Chief Corrections Deputy with the BCSO from 1984 until his retirement in 2003. He passed away in July 2007.

Lt. J. Scott Jackson, Jail Commander, was promoted to Undersheriff.

In April, a team of deputies from both the Law Enforcement and Corrections Divisions transported Joel Courtney from New Mexico to Oregon where he was being extradited on charges of kidnap, sexual assault and murder of Brooke Wilberger. The transport mission was completed without incident.

In September, a volunteer committee launched the first annual "Benton County Sheriff's Office Chili Cook-Off" to raise money for Benton County children. \$11,000 was raised for CASA – Voices for Children.

In December the Dragon sculpture atop Monroe High School's cupola was stolen. Through diligent investigation, Deputies Ben Drongesen and Greg Goller tracked the sculpture to a locked basement closet in Eugene. It was retrieved and returned to the school.

Sgt. Diana Rabago, Corrections, named BCSO Employee of the Year.

**2009** In January the Sheriff's Office developed a new mission statement: *"To provide professional service and protection with honor and integrity."*

In April local emergency managers and the Benton County Incident Management Team conducted a full scale exercise entitled "Cascadia Peril." This exercise assumed that a magnitude 9.0 earthquake had taken place.

In September the 2nd Annual BCSO Chili Cook-Off raised nearly \$14,500 for Strengthening Rural Families.

The Sheriff's Office created a Peer Support Team.

With increased staffing levels, the Sheriff's Office resumed 24/7 patrol coverage in the county.

The volunteer Auxiliary Team was formed. Projects included development of an electronic newsletter, radar trailer placement, help with vehicle inspections, management of the Neighborhood Watch and You Are Not Alone programs and a variety of other duties to support the agency.

The Sheriff's Office received state accreditation through the Oregon Accreditation Alliance.

Mary King, Emergency Services Program Manager, named BCSO Employee of the Year.



## The 2000's (2010 – 2020)...

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**2010** In March the Linn-Benton Alert System was activated. The mass notification system was designed to automatically send alerts to landline telephones in Linn and Benton counties in case of an emergency.

In May the BCSO held its first annual “Drug Turn-In Event” to allow the public to turn in unwanted prescription drugs and other medications to keep them from being misused.

The Benton County Correctional Facility was renamed the Benton County Jail to more accurately reflect the limitations of the facility.

The Sheriff's Foundation, a non-profit organization, was established to raise funds for items or projects not typically included in the regular Benton County Sheriff's Office budget.

Lt. Greg Ridler received State recognition as the 2010 Law Enforcement Commander of the Year by the Oregon State Sheriff's Association. He also was recognized as the BCSO Employee of the Year.

BCSO Search and Rescue volunteer Todd Shechter, President of Corvallis Mountain Rescue, was selected by the Oregon State Sheriff's Association as the 2010 Search and Rescue Volunteer of the Year.

Deputy Aaron Gevatosky was honored as the DUII Deputy of the Year and the BCSO was identified as the DUII Agency of the Year for its focus on making Benton County roads safe from impaired drivers.

Deputies Toby Bottorff, Christopher Dale, Christopher Duffitt, Adam Miller and Edward Nowak all received Medals of Valor for their actions in three separate incidents in which they had to confront suicidal subjects in extremely dangerous situations.

**2011** On January 3, 2011 Sheriff Simpson was sworn in as Sheriff of Benton County having been re-elected to her second term in November 2010.

On January 31, 2011 Corporal Jeff Wilcox passed away. The Sheriff's Office celebrated his life on February 4, 2011 with fallen officer honors.

In April BCSO detectives arrested Gustavo David Martinez-Aquepucho for the homicide of his girlfriend and their infant child. He later pled guilty to the double murder.

In September a body was discovered in a wooded area in south Benton County. An autopsy confirmed it was a homicide and the victim was identified as 22-year-old Giovanni Blancas-Fruero. BCSO deputies eventually arrested five individuals in connection with the murder.

In October deputies were called to the scene of a homicide when the body of 19-year-old Cody Myers was found in the Marys Peak area. Cody was the victim of Holly Grigsby



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and David Pederson's three-state crime spree that resulted in four known deaths. As the responding agency, BCSO secured the crime scene and assisted the Oregon State Police in this multi-state, multi-jurisdictional investigation.

The School Resource Deputy program was reinstated.

A Computer Forensics Lab was created to gather evidence against those who would use their computers or other digital equipment in the commission of their crimes.

The Oregon State Sheriff's Association recognized Lt. Clay Stephens as the 2011 OSSA Supervisor of the Year.

The BCSO Tracking Unit received the Volunteer of the Year Award for their outstanding performance in assisting the Sheriff's Office with two separate homicide investigations.

Parole & Probation Captain Gail Newman retired after 28 years on the job. She was also honored as the 2011 BCSO Employee of the Year.

**2012** During January Benton County experienced the most severe flooding since 1996 requiring the evacuation of a neighborhood due to landslides. Marine deputies rescued a woman trapped on top of her car as flood waters rose.

The Office was restructured from five to four divisions. To be more consistent with other law enforcement agencies, rank was also restructured and Division Commanders became Captains.

The BCSO earned re-accreditation through the Oregon Accreditation Alliance (OAA).

In August, a fugitive trying to elude law enforcement, opened fire on Benton County Sheriff's Office deputies and officers from assisting agencies. BCSO Sergeant David Peterson was hit by gunfire three times and Salem Police Corporal Andrew Connolly was shot in the leg before the suspect was secured. For their actions that evening, the BCSO awarded Sgt. Peterson and Deputy Greg Goller Medals of Honor, Deputy Adam Miller a Life Saving Award, Sgt. Peterson a Purple Heart and Salem Police Officers Verhaar, Gill, Smith, Hernandez and Connolly with special awards in recognition of their support during the incident. The actions of the deputies and officers were also recognized at the state level by the Oregon State Sheriff's Association (OSSA).

The Oregon State Senate voted unanimously to confirm Governor Kitzhaber's appointment of Sheriff Simpson to serve on the Board of the Department of Public Safety Standards and Training (DPSST). The DPSST Board sets the bar for the professionalism of Oregon's public safety professions.

Training and Recruiting Sergeant Leslie Pomaikai was named BCSO Employee of the Year.



**2013** In January, Deputy Aaron Gevatosky responded to a traffic crash. The front of the vehicle was engulfed in flames and a man was trapped inside. Unable to extinguish the flames, Deputy Gevatosky, with the aid of two civilians, pulled the driver out of the vehicle to safety. For his actions he was awarded the BCSO Medal of Valor.

The *Oregon Governor's Law Enforcement Medal of Honor* was awarded to Sergeant David Peterson. The medal honors those in the law enforcement profession who have performed their duties with exceptionally meritorious conduct.

In June, Sheriff Diana Simpson retired from the Benton County Sheriff's Office after 32 years of service. The Board of County Commissioners appointed Undersheriff Scott Jackson interim Sheriff.

In July, the Sheriff's Office launched its own Facebook page.

Sgt. Toby Bottorff was named BCSO Employee of the Year.

**2014** In January jail inspectors from the Oregon State Sheriff's Association audited jail operations against a set of 309 professional standards. The jail was 98.7% compliant.

New uniforms, in the traditional colors of tan and green, replaced the black, monochromatic uniforms.

BCSO staff developed new mission, vision, and values statements. Mission: "*We provide professional public safety services with integrity and accountability.*" Vision: "*To be a progressive Sheriff's Office that is the cornerstone of public safety in Benton County.*" Values: "*Duty, Honor, Courage.*"

The North Santiam River was particularly dangerous for recreationists and Marine Deputies saved nine lives. As a result, Deputies Eric Konzelman, Jessica Jones and Noah Lochner were honored by the Oregon State Marine Board for their life-saving efforts.

The Office acquired a new K-9, "Xander." The dog's name was subsequently changed to "Vader" when he was partnered with Deputy Eric Konzelman. The dog did not work out and was replaced in 2016.

To educate the public about the inadequate jail, BCSO offered "Open Houses" so citizens could tour the facility.

In November, Scott Jackson was elected Sheriff.

BCSO partnered with Linn Benton Community College and County Public Works to switch patrol cars from gasoline to propane fuel. The fleet was updated from the classic "Crown Vic" which was no longer available, to the Chevy Tahoe PPV.

A new award, the Sheriff's Award, was initiated and awarded to both Captain Don Rogers and Sgt. Randy Hiner. Sgt. Hiner was also named the BCSO Employee of the Year.



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**2015** In January, Scott Jackson was sworn in to his first term as Benton County's 30<sup>th</sup> Sheriff.

The Office initiated an Honor Guard program. In their inaugural appearance, the BCSO Honor Guard participated in the line of duty memorial service for Coos County Deputy Gil Datan.

Retired Sheriff Diana Simpson was honored by the Board of Commissioners for her 32 years of service to the people of Benton County and her historic role as the first elected female Sheriff in Oregon. A plaque in her honor was installed at the Courthouse. In April, the Oregon Accreditation Alliance audited the Benton County Sheriff's Office. The Office was re-accredited.

The Sheriff's Office transitioned to a new logo and improved community outreach with an updated website and regular postings on social media.

In June, Forest Deputy Schermerhorn initiated a clean-up of a popular shooting area on Marys Peak. Partnering with the Bureau of Land Management and the US Forest Service, the event drew over 40 volunteers and was supported by numerous local businesses.

The Warrant Response Team was established.

Patrol cars were outfitted with GETAC tablets to facilitate better communication for Patrol Deputies while on patrol in the county.

Lt. Clay Stephens retired after 30 years of service. Corporal Brian Morrissette retired after 27 years of service.

In November, Jail Bond Measure 2-91 was narrowly defeated by Benton County voters.

Also in November the Sheriff's Office Mounted Posse sponsored a horseback ride for special needs children with a record-breaking turnout of nearly 100 youth.

BCSO Deputies investigated traffic crashes that resulted in five fatalities.

**2016** In January, detectives assisted the Corvallis Police Department investigate the homicide of Jason Scott Williams. Two people were charged with the murder and sentenced to prison.

The Jail passed the Oregon State Sheriff's Association audit.

In March, Animal Control captured a stray llama nicknamed "Roamin'." The animal was transferred to the care of an animal rescue organization and eventually placed in a permanent home.

In April the Oregon Department of Corrections did an assessment of two programs Parole and Probation facilitate for offenders. The programs were evaluated on their effectiveness and received a Very High Adherence category rating.



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On April 26, 2016, inmate Rory Holmes suffered an acute asthma attack and died while in custody. This was the first in-custody death at the Benton County Jail since 2004. Deputies responded professionally, performed CPR, and called for medical assistance, but Holmes was unable to be revived.

BCSO collected a record number of medications – 916 pounds – during the annual Drug Take Back Event.

In June, K9 Deputy “Bus” retired after 10 years of service to the community. After a diligent search to replace “Bus,” a new K9 was acquired. “Vortex” was partnered with Deputy Weikel and they began training together in July.

The BCSO sponsored its first Emergency Services Fair. Exhibitors and guest speakers showed fair goers how to prepare for emergencies.

Internationally renowned speaker, Dr. Lou Radja, gave a presentation to Deputies during the Office’s annual training in cultural diversity and inclusive leadership.

In September, Parole and Probation’s Work Crew Coordinator and Office Specialist Vicki Smith retired after 19 years of service.

The Jail partnered with Benton County Mental Health in a Jail Diversion program that works to connect mentally ill inmates with services that could assist them in staying out of jail.

Volunteer Todd Shechter, President of the Corvallis Mountain Rescue Unit, a unit of the BCSO Search and Rescue Program, received state-wide recognition. He was awarded the *2016 Volunteer of the Year* award by the Oregon State Sheriff’s Association.

Employees and volunteers of the Benton County Sheriff’s Office participated in a number of community service events including but not limited to: BCSO Chili Cook-Off, Posse’s Special Needs Ride, Parole & Probation’s Christmas Tree Giving Project, United Way Day of Caring, and Shop with a Cop.