

Congratulations Weld County! Crime statistics covering January to November 2007 show a decrease in crime of more than 16 percent compared to last year. This is on top of the 15 percent decrease in 2006 from 2005.

Policing is a community effort. Without the help and support of residents, the Sheriff's Office cannot be successful in promoting safety, lowering crime rates and catching criminals.

At this time of year, the Sheriff's Office reflects upon some of our accomplishments and set goals for upcoming year.

One of my goals since I first took office was to reduce the response times for priority one calls. In 2002 the average response time for the highest priority call was 22 minutes. Every year since then we have strived to lower that average. At the end of 2006 the average response time was 17.5 minutes. The Sheriff's Office showed up two and half minutes faster in 2007 bringing the county wide average down to 15 minutes. Not too bad for a county of 4000 square miles. District 4, which includes the greater Greeley area, response times dropped to 11 minutes compared to more than 16 minutes in 2006.

The Sheriff's Office vision is "to be a nationally recognized benchmark in community law enforcement". We are well on our way to reaching this vision.

Technology allows us to be more efficient. Patrol deputies employ a "speech to text" program when completing their police reports. While in their patrol cars a computer program uses speech recognition to convert the deputies' voice into a typed police report instantaneously. This has greatly reduced the amount of time it takes to process a report and have it available for other officers as they continue to investigate the case. It also provides accurate and timely crime analysis information. Since implementing this process several other law enforcement agencies throughout the United States have contacted Weld County to inquire about the program.

In 2007 a blue ribbon task force was established by Governor Ritter to decide the future of collection and preservation of DNA evidence. The procedures established by this committee will likely become law and apply to all law enforcement agencies in the state. Governor Ritter appointed state legislators, district attorneys, the director's of the Sheriff's Association and the Police Chiefs Association plus several other high ranking officials from state agencies. Only two people from local law enforcement agencies were appointed; Jan LeMay from Weld County was one. Deputy LeMay, who is recognized as an expert in crime scene investigations, gave vital input to the committee.

Our jail too has received national recognition for training, officer selection, and use of technology. Examples: 1) Recently the Federal Bureau of Prisons, National Institute of Corrections (NIC), was so impressed with a training video developed by Weld County on exposure prevention of infectious diseases in a jail setting that they asked for a copy to keep in their library. The video is now available to jails nationwide. 2) NIC also brought in staff from other jails from all parts of the United States to learn about effective jail

overcrowding management. 3) Ergometrics, a private company, has partnered with the Sheriff's Office to film scenarios which will be used in correctional officer testing and hiring by jails throughout the country.

A source of pride and commitment to our community and county, the Sheriff's Office Honor Guard has performed at many functions throughout the state. Most recently on December 9th they presented the colors at the Denver Broncos game against the hated Kansas City Chiefs.

In 2008 we have set some lofty goals. We will be working on ways to reduce crime by an additional 12 percent.

2007 saw 46 traffic fatalities compared to 42 in 2006. In 2008 our goal is to reduce fatalities by at least 15 percent. We will work aggressively to enforce traffic laws, conduct DUI checkpoints, and enforce seat belt laws.

Regarding the jail, one of our goals is to become fully staffed at the new jail wing. This wing will allow us to house inmates more safely and securely.

The Sheriff's Office accomplished a lot in 2007 but with your help and support, 2008 will be an even bigger success! Have a safe and happy New Year.

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