

# 2009 Annual Report

of the

# Clark County Sheriff's Office Custody Branch



*It is the mission of the Clark County Jail, in partnership with our community, to provide safe, secure and constitutional detention facilities in the most respectful, professional and fiscally responsible manner possible.*

## ***Chief's Message***

We all knew that 2009 would be a challenging year as we all witnessed the ripple effect of the global financial crisis and the implications that followed. These impacts created a “new normal” for our business community, our neighbors and how government services are provided.

In order to weather the storm we looked at maximizing our current bed space. We worked with internal and external partners to mitigate obstacles related to managing special need offenders, programming, and medical and mental health treatment. I remain committed to finding ways to reducing recidivism and slowing down the revolving door of the jail as the hotel of last resort.

Recognizing that the turbulent financial times is still before us, we looked at areas to mitigate expenses whenever possible. On December 29th we finalized a new contract for inmate medical services that permitted us to save nine custody officer positions and a jail food service coordinator position that was slated for layoff. The County and the Custody Officer's Guild came to an agreement to save five custody officer positions by deferring a 3.25 percent cost-of-living raise until 2011.

These two agreements saved 15 positions for the 2010 budget year and prevented the closure of 100 additional jail beds. We started out in 2009 with the loss of H POD, 2 Sergeant Positions and 6 Officer Positions. At the end of 2009 we lost an additional four more budgeted positions. The loss of ten budgeted positions was significant, however losing another fifteen would have been devastating and would have severely impacted our ability to meet our mission.

The year 2010 will not be easy, nor do we know where we will be fiscally on December 31, 2010. As we manage the “New Normal” I ask that we all focus on safety and security and not cut corners for the sake of expediency. I am proud of the sacrifices and contributions made by all my staff throughout this past year. What makes an organization special is the relationship and dedication that you have all displayed under difficult conditions. I thank you all and say, “Job Well Done.”

*Chief Jackie Batties.*

Washington State law requires Sheriff's to operate a jail to lodge adult pre-trial and sentenced offenders. Jails do much more than simply house prisoners, and housing prisoners requires much more than just providing a bed and meals. In Clark County, jail staff are responsible for: inmate admissions, court security, transports, and oversight of programs, work release, transports and additional support unit work groups.

Not only was the running a smooth jail operation accomplished, the Custody Branch employees affected the public's business with honor and distinction. While the annual report will provide statistics, lists of accomplished goals, and facts; it needs to be noted that none of this would be possible without the dedication, professionalism, knowledge, skill, and ability of the Clark County Custody staff. In this annual report the Custody Command staff acknowledges and commends the outstanding public service consistently accomplished by the men and women of the Clark County Sheriff's Office Custody Branch.

In 2009, the Clark County Jail processed 16,589 intakes and 16,629 releases. While population was down from 2008 figures, 740 to 714, workload increased in terms of additional intakes and releases,



263 and 237 respectively. Length of stay was also down from 2008, 16 days for 2009 as compared to 17 days from the previous year.

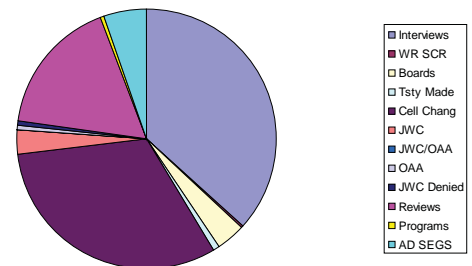
These numbers might appear to notate a lessening of workload, yet the opposite was true. For even though total numbers were down, the segment of the population requiring intensive supervision increased. Almost 31 percent of the inmate population required special housing by being classified into a category requiring added safety, security and monitoring measures. This changing inmate demographic shows increases in; the mentally ill, geriatric, substance abuser and extremely violent inmates who require no less than two, three or sometimes four officers to move them within the jail or to court.

These special needs individuals also have exacerbated space issues within the facility. Often these individuals need to be placed alone using cells that are outfitted for two or three inmates. Previous countywide budget reductions had an impact on staffing levels, which necessitated removal of posts and thus availability of beds, as H pod was mothballed. This further skewed the reality of a lower population; there were fewer inmates but more of the population segment requiring specialized housing creating less availability of beds.

The classification unit is charged with managing offender placements: balancing and weighing the inmate risk, criminal history and other internal factors to safeguard the public, inmates and staff. The intensity and workload in this unit has increased dramatically.

From 2007 to 2009, the unit realized a 28% increase in workload; 9,618 interviews were conducted in 2007 and 13,486 in 2009.

Types of Classification Interviews Conducted



The jail is often the hotel of last resort for individuals who commit crimes and are a risk to themselves and the community. It is not uncommon for staff to have to use physical force to subdue a violent inmate and a day later try to protect that inmate from harming him or herself. There is a continual exploration of and work with community partners for treatment and housing options for special need offenders so that they may be safely transitioned at the completion of their jail sentence.

After two rounds of budget reductions and cuts in 2009, there were initial proposals for still larger reductions in 2010. Initial projections estimated a loss of 19 positions, approximately 4 posts, necessitating the closing of approximately 100 beds. It was decided by jail administration that this reduction, should be realized at the minimum security Jail Work Center.

During the last part of 2009, a great deal of time was spent planning for the effects of this bed reduction. A plan was established to combine the inmate

populations from the work release building and the in-custody building. The combined population was to be housed in the in-custody building. This move would have allowed the dormitories in the work release building to be mothballed.

Fortunately, layoffs in the custody branch were averted (although four vacant positions were lost) due to a reduction in medical costs and agreement with labor to defer a cost of living adjustment. As a result, the number of jail beds were not reduced in 2010.

The Administrative team has identified strategic current and future goals. The four strategic goals are: Maximizing the use of current cells and beds, Mitigating obstacles faced by inmates released into the community, Providing essential medical and mental health services to inmates while incarcerated and upon release, Mitigating the current economic situation's impact on the Custody Branch. This strategic plan is a living document, modifying to encompass the changes in the economy, legal system and direction given to the branch by the Sheriff and Board of Clark County.

Item one is to maximize the use of current cells and bunks in the Main Jail and Jail Work Center. Classification practices have been reviewed. Special needs populations are housed in individual cells, when available and when the unique needs of the inmate dictate. Also, H pod has been evaluated for a number of different uses, including Medical and Re-Entry.

Item two is to mitigate obstacles faced by inmates released into the community. Work continues toward this through a perpetuated partnership with Lifeline and by supporting the numerous initiatives already in the community to help the homeless, mentally ill and veterans.

Item three is to provide essential medical and mental health services in the jail and upon release. This continual item was addressed with the release of a new Request for Proposal for inmate medical services. The new proposal asked for different processes and vision. The successful proposer has agreed to work with the Sheriff's Office toward this goal.

Item four is while acknowledging current difficult economic times, determining more methods to stretch the current bed space. This is an attempt to stall the reality and high priority of increasing the number of jail beds as previously identified in the Custody 2007-2015 strategic plan. Since population has dropped the immediacy for stretching jail beds is not the emergency it was. However, bed number is not a sufficient "peaking factor," as not all beds available may be used because of classification issues. Also, as the economy recovers and with national foreign policy changes on the horizon it is expected that high population numbers will return.

# Operations

## Jail Administration

The Custody administration support staff is a talented group of individuals. They are responsible for all supply orders for the jail and work center, gathering information and data required for law suits and public disclosure requests, facility and transport statistics, jail clearances, program coordination, database management, construction/remodel coordination, contract monitoring, budgets, medical billings, authorship of inmate handbooks, website maintenance and myriad other duties. In 2009 they made it possible for 20,124 professional visits and thirty-nine tours, encompassing 423 individuals from the community. Most of these tours were to individuals interested in a law enforcement career, through such partner programs as Leadership Clark County, College of Legal Arts and the Clark County Skills Center Criminal Justice Program.

## Classification

This unit is responsible for classifying inmates and determining housing assignments based upon current charges, past charges, behavior, and risk. Sergeant Jack Huff provides oversight for this unit staffed by Custody Officers Schubach, Bjorkman, Gentry, and Baldwin. These officers worked closely with the Medical Unit to manage inmate population.

## Medical

Clark County contracts with a vendor to supply all the medical and mental health services for those persons held by the Sheriff's Office or Juvenile Detention. The vendor for 2009 was Wexford Health Sources, Inc. headquartered in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. This is a serious undertaking felt keenly by the Sheriff's Office as an area that is consistently and constantly monitored for quality, quantity and ease of accessibility. Detainees are afforded the opportunity to request a medical visit at any time. Those persons requiring specialty care, or a level of care exceeding what can be provided at the facility, are transported to local providers while being guarded by Custody personnel.

## Transport

15 officers and one sergeant staff this specialized unit. Inmate movement to all courts and to most outside medical appointments is coordinated through this unit. While that seems succinct and relatively simple it is actually only through carefully orchestrated and detailed plans that this functions smoothly and safely. These officers ensure the safety of the inmate, the public and themselves while moving individuals outside of secured facilities. It is a testament to their diligence and industriousness that court times and medical appointments are kept with no injuries or successful escapes.

## Security Response Team

The Clark County Custody Branch maintains a Security Response Team (SRT) comprised of specially selected, trained, and equipped Custody Officers. The SRT is utilized in situations when conventional detention center resources are unable to maintain or regain control, or when circumstances present the potential of posing such a high risk that the skills and equipment of the team are the most effective option available. Team members are required to be available for contact and response at all times. SRT officers must also maintain above average performance evaluations and fitness levels. To assist with this goal the team meets on a monthly basis for training and/or to conduct strikes to ensuring proficiency of essential skills and critical incident readiness.

Following two hostage situations, one in 2007 and the other in 2008, the SRT team in 2009 was allowed to procure additional equipment and additional training. Team members then set out to better prepare their fellow co-workers for unusual occurrences and/or high liability incidents. In the winter of 2009, the SRT team conducted fire drill training for all squads at the main jail resulting in increased knowledge, skill, and proficiency by all involved.

## Jail Work Center

The Clark County Jail Work Center (JWC) is a minimum-security center located at 5197 NW Lower River Rd. – Vancouver, WA 98660. This site has three buildings surrounded by a cyclone fence and one trailer outside the fence that is currently mothballed. The three buildings in the fenced area are designated as follows: the In-Custody building; the Work Release building; and the Kitchen / Laundry / Warehouse building. This facility was managed by Commander Joe Barnett.

## In Custody Building

Staff in this building monitor and supervise the non-work release minimum-security inmates. Most of the inmates in this building are trustees, or inmate workers. The inmate workers from this building are dispersed to various work locations: kitchen, laundry; jail industries, grounds crew, and downtown campus car wash.

## Work Release Building

The Clark County Sheriff's Office operates a work release facility out of the jail work center. These are inmates referred by local courts to work at normal jobs while being housed in a jail to fulfil their sentence obligations. There is currently a contract with the State of Washington Department of Corrections (DOC) to house up to 30 state inmates.

## Food Services

The Food Services unit services the main-jail, jail work center, and the juvenile detention facility. Using inmate labor,

they cook and distribute meals to the listed facilities three times per day, seven days per week.

During 2009, \$78,617.63 of revenue was generated and returned to the Clark County general fund, in the form of reimbursements from the State of Washington, for the school lunch and breakfast programs.

The County Public Health Department inspects the Food Services Unit annually; it consistently achieves very high ratings.

## Laundry Services

Similar to Food Services, this unit services the main-jail, jail work center, and the juvenile detention facility. Using inmate labor, this unit collects, washes, folds and delivers clothing, bedding, towels, and sandals to the listed facilities, five days per week. This also includes the processing of any bio-contaminated linens.

In 2009, approximately 494,804 lbs. (or approximately 247 tons) of laundry was processed. Here is the breakdown based on facility: (a) 40,248 lbs from Juvenile Detention Hall; (b) 187,950 lbs from the Jail Work Center; and (c) 266,606 lbs from the main Jail.

## Janitorial

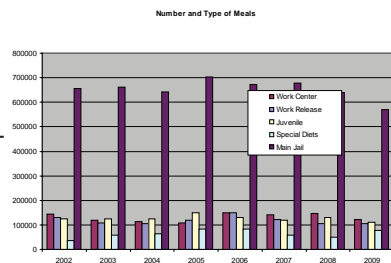
The inside areas of the secured portion of the main-jail are cleaned utilizing a crew of working inmates (trustees). They clean, wax, and buff the floors; and clean walls as well as the booking and pod control areas. Royal Qualey supervises this crew of trustees.

## Main Jail

Two Commanders manage Main Jail Operations. For 2009, those were Commander Mike Anderson (days) and Commander Kimberly Beltran (nights). Commander Ric Bishop managed operation support.

## ICE

A continued partnership exists with the Department of Homeland Security, Immigration Custom Enforcement (ICE). A satellite office is located within the main jail and is staffed by a local agent. This agent has developed a close working relationship with custody staff facilitating the identification of foreign nationals who have violated federal immigration laws. During 2009 ICE Agents placed 263 detainees on foreign nationals who were determined to have questionable legal status to reside in the United States.



## Staff Awards

It is always a pleasure to honor staff, especially those whose performance is above and beyond the high expectations set for the Custody Branch. The following staff were proudly recognized and honored in 2009:

### Custody Officer of the Year

Custody Officer Drew Smetana was selected as the 2009 Custody Officer of the Year for his innate ability to gain compliance with mentally ill inmates. As a transport officer, Officer Smetana has been instrumental in getting several mentally ill offenders to comply and get through the various court proceedings. He was also tasked with the organizing and planning of high profile and high risk inmate court proceedings and transports. Officer Smetana continuously demonstrates his ability to communicate in a professional and calm manner and energize the Transport Unit as a team.

### Custody Sergeant of the Year

Sergeant Ken Clark was selected as Custody Sergeant of the Year for 2009 for his ability to motivate a team and be a consummate leader and mentor. Sergeant Clark is committed and dedicated to the Department goals and mission. He is actively involved in inter-agency relations, training opportunities, an SRT Sergeant and a Quality Review Team member of the Mental Health Advisory Board. Sergeant Clark excels in working relationships by helping people feel valued and supported. Sergeant Clark models diplomacy and tact in his verbal and listening skills. People feel connected to Sergeant Clark because he is approachable, helpful, genuine, and caring.

### Life Saving Awards

Custody Officer Donald Axmaker  
Custody Officer Ray Bettger  
Custody Officer Kurt Hollopeter

### Letters of Appreciation

Custody Officer Debbie Schmierer  
Custody Officer Robert Reagan  
Custody Officer Jared Beeks  
Custody Officer Pam Frisby  
Custody Officer Elissa Black  
Custody Officer Stephen Darling  
Custody Officer Barb Schubach  
Custody Officer Stephen Kersey  
Custody Officer Alva Songer  
Custody Officer Sgt Grant Austin  
Wexford Nurse Melissa Thierry

### Exemplary Performance Award

Custody Sergeant Ken Clark  
Custody Sergeant Grant Austin  
Food Service Manager Clark Campbell  
Food Services Supervisor Eddie LaPierre  
Food Services Supervisor Yvonne Williams  
Food Services Coordinator Robert Burke  
Food Services Coordinator Penny Davis  
Food Services Coordinator Ron Fricke  
Food Services Coordinator Oscar Gonzalez  
Food Services Coordinator Paul Hoffman  
Food Services Coordinator Vickie Jacobs  
Food Services Coordinator Jason MacDonald  
Custody Officer Stephen Darling  
Custody Officer Debbie Schmierer (2 Exemplary Performance Awards)  
Custody Officer Brandon Sciarretta  
Custody Officer Nick Jandreau  
Custody Officer Timothy McCray  
Custody Officer Elissa Black  
Custody Officer Paul Bond (2 Exemplary Performance Awards)  
Custody Officer Mitch Seagondollar  
Custody Officer Kurt Hollopeter  
Custody Officer Don Axmaker  
Custody Officer Ray Bettger

### *In Memoriam*

Custody Officer Dean Muth passed away suddenly on February 14, 2009 after serving 29 years with the Clark County Sheriff's Office. Dean showed that leadership is not about having a prestigious title or even an office, but how you connect with people; deeply, genuinely and passionately. On March 25, 2010 the Jail Industries Building will be re-dedicated in his honor; as the "Muth Building."

# 2009 Jail Statistics

## Jail Population

Average Daily Population	714
Average Length of Stay	15.83
Avg Monthly Bookings	1,382
Avg Monthly Releases	1,386

## Work Release Operations

Walk Away	1
Terminations	45
New Admissions	391

## Transport

Inmates to Court	19,113
Mini Chain	2,596
Medical	146
Western State Hospital	118
Inmates to Video Arraignment	4,580

## Inmate Discipline

Major Infractions	799
Minor Infractions	1,358
Top Three Major Infractions	
	603 - Fighting
	601 - Refusal or Delays
	503 - 3 minors equal a major

## Medical Unit

Inmates Seen by Staff	61,932
Seen by Mental Health	9,620

## Staffing

Administration	5
Custody Sergeants	18
Custody Staff	102
Support Staff	4
Food Service	14
Laundry/Industry	4
Medical Contract Positions	22.2

## Food Service

Total Meals Served	1,021,887
Restricted Diets	77,577
Cost Per Meal	\$1.80

## Jail Industry

Offender Hours	156,198
Kitchen	114,816
Laundry	26,817
Janitorial	5,006
Industry	158
Outside & Grounds Crew	7,746
Main Jail	1,167
Other	488

## Classification

Interviews	13,486
Screen for Work Release	77
Made Trustee	280
Cell Changes	11543

## Jail Operations

Escapes	1
Escape Attempts	2
Suicides	2
Suicide Attempts	14
Assaults on Staff	5
Officers Injured	4
Hostage Situation	0

## Office Information

Criminal Histories	1,157
Removed from Jail Access	960
Denied Jail Access	91
One Time Clearances	231
Medical Bills Processed	556
Medical Bills Paid	\$386,681.40