Seneca County

SHERIFF'S OFFICE

2020 ANNUAL REPORT

Sheriff W. Timothy Luce

Robert W. Hayssen
Chairman
Waterloo, New York

Dear Chairman Hayssen,

Seneca County Board of Supervisors
Seneca County Office Building
1 DiPronio Drive

It is with great pleasure that I submit the 2020 annual report regarding the activities of the men and women of the Seneca County Sheriff's Office. On behalf of the sworn and civilian staff, I would like to thank you and the members of the Seneca County Board of Supervisors for the support you have shown to the Seneca County Sheriff's Office throughout the year.

2020 was a year with unprecedented challenges. The Sheriff's Office remained fully functional during the COVID-19 pandemic even though we faced many dangerous circumstances previously unimagined. Sweeping police reform was initiated pursuant to law as well as a Department-Wide response plan to address any future epidemics.

Unfortunately 2020 also saw the first Officer suicide and incarcerated individual death for our agency in over 25 years. The men and women of the Sheriff's Office met these challenges with courage and tenacity. To say that I am proud of them is an understatement.

I would be remiss if I did not thank and recognize the citizens of Seneca County during this trying year. Seneca County was spared the destruction and civil unrest violence that occurred in other areas of our Country. Although many Seneca County citizens exercised their right of protest and activism they did so lawfully with respect to the rights of others.

I would like to thank the Board of Supervisors again for the support you have shown the members of the Seneca County Sheriff's Office and helping us prevail despite the daunting obstacles of 2020.

Respectfully

W. Timothy Luce
Seneca County Sheriff

DEDICATION

TO THE 372 POLICE & PEACE OFFICERS WHO GAVE THEIR LIVES IN THE LINE OF DUTY DURING 2020. 235 OF THESE DEATHS WERE DUE TO THE COVID-19 VIRUS. THEY CONTINUED TO DO THEIR DUTY WHILE IN HARMS WAY…

National Officer Down Memorial, Washington D.C.

GOALS & ACHIEVEMENTS FOR 2020

During 2020 the Sheriff's Office responded to 13,461 calls for service and made 622 arrests for violations, misdemeanors and felonies. Some highlights for 2020 include:

- **Generated $460,254.22 by in-boarding Federal and out of County inmates into the Correctional Facility during 2020. This was a remarkable accomplishment by Corrections in light of the COVID19 challenges.**

- **Successfully complied with annual NYS Accreditation certification requirements covering over 460 best practice standards in the Law Enforcement, Corrections, Civil and Court Security Divisions.**

- **Trained and certified a new D.A.R.E. Officer.**

- **Successfully developed a Criminal Justice Police Reform plan after holding local forums and conducting a county-wide survey.**

- **Successfully concluded the Karl Karlsen murder case by assisting Calaveras County California with the investigation and prosecution of the 1991 murder of Karlsen's first wife.**

- **Developed and implemented emergency COVID 19 protocols for Law enforcement and Corrections.**

- **Developed a department wide Pandemic Policy.**

- **Launched a new wellness program in Corrections where jail inmates raised baby pheasants for later release in the wild.**

- **Implicit bias training was implemented for all personnel.**

- **The Sheriff's Office hosted a multi-agency training for Crisis Intervention Team development.**

- **Corrections adopted 27 families with children at Glove House to provide Christmas gifts from Santa.**

- **Deputies and Correct ions Officers conducted the "Shop With a Sheriff" program for Christmas.**

- **Implemented "reality Base Training" for Officers.**

- **Obtained electronic tablets for deputies to link citizens in need to Mental Health professions.**

- **Obtained and deployed a new K9 unit to replace a retired unit.**

ADMINISTRATION

The Sheriff's Administration Division is comprised of the Office of Sheriff, Undersheriff, Chief Deputy, Fiscal Services, Payroll, Records, Training and Administrative Support Staff.

The Sheriff is the Chief Executive Officer and is responsible for the overall management and command control of the Seneca County Sheriff's Office. The Sheriff is duly elected by the registered voters in Seneca County, serves a term of four years and is charged by the State Constitution to maintain the peace.

Assisting and empowered to act in the Sheriff's absence is the Sheriff's appointee, the Undersheriff. The Undersheriff is second in command of the Seneca County Sheriff's Office and has the responsibility of operational oversight of all Sheriff's Divisions.

The next ranking member of the Sheriff's Administration is the Chief Deputy. The Chief Deputy occupies a competitive civil service position

and is authorized to act in the absence of both the Sheriff and the Undersheriff. The Chief Deputy handles special assignments, assists with internal affairs and oversees hiring and employment matters.

Left to Right: Sheriff Luce, C.D. Goodman & U.S. Cleere

ROAD PATROL DIVISION

The Sheriff's Office runs a twenty-four hour uniform patrol 7 days a week and is the primary law enforcement for Seneca County. Patrol zones are split into 3 areas: North, South and Central. There are about 330 square miles to cover in Seneca County not counting the waterways. Deputies patrol alone and often depend on their sergeant for back up.

Standard patrol equipment includes emergency medical supplies. All officers are trained in C.P.R. and carry A.E.Ds and medical trauma kits. Deputies are trained and equipped with a Taser, Pepper Spray, Service Pistol and Rifle.

Deputies also use robust, laptop computers to complete accident and other various crime reports without having to return to the office. Several Deputies are equipped with "body cameras" to record live video of their activities. These cameras have been invaluable in obtaining clear and convincing evidence for the courts.

Today's Deputy Sheriff is a highly trained professional. Police Basics Academy is now over 1000 hours of intense training plus several months of field training. Training is a constant at the Sheriff's Office as each year Deputies complete schooling in a variety of topics including Mental Health, De-escalation Techniques, and Reality Based Training.

CANINE DIVISION

Within the uniform road patrol division is the canine unit. This unit is comprised of a uniform sergeant and deputy that are certified canine handlers in addition to their regular patrol duties. Each dog has one particular area of expertise. K9 "COSKI" is a German Short-haired Pointer who is trained to sniff out narcotics. "BEN", is German Shepard who specializes in detecting explosives. The canine units are utilized for routine patrol work and answer calls for service during their scheduled tours of duty. Both canine teams are available 24 hours a day--7 days a week for call out response to any law enforcement agency in Seneca or surrounding Counties.

Sgt. Fowler & K9 "Ben"

Dep. Nelson & K9 "Coski"

CRIMINAL INVESTIGATIONS DIVISION

The Criminal Investigation Division—(C.I.D.) is staffed by 4 Investigators and is supervised by a Lieutenant. The C.I.D. is made up of several sub-units that handle the major crimes, special victim crimes, and other specialized functions. The members of this division all serve on these sub-units as well as handling general investigative work as needed.

The sub-units of the C.I.D. are: Narcotics Unit, Family Services Unit, Juvenile Unit and Sex Offender Unit. Each of these sub-units requires specialized training. All major crimes and cases that require significant follow up work are turned over to the C.I.D. so that the Uniform Patrol members are free to be first responders in the field.

Investigators in the C.I.D. are all trained as crime scene photographers and evidence technicians. This eliminates the need for a separate crime scene unit. In addition investigators receive training over and above a Uniform Officer such as: Interview and Interrogation, Search Warrants, Homicide Investigation, Arson, Elder Abuse, Crimes Against Children and Sexual Abuse.

Members of the Criminal Investigation Division including the Family Services Unit.

FAMILY SERVICES UNIT

The Family Services Unit—(F.S.U.) is a respected, highly trained asset to the Sheriff's Office and the citizens of Seneca County. The F.S.U. handles Domestic Violence, Missing Persons, Child Abuse and Elder Abuse cases.

Two investigators within the Criminal Investigation Division are assigned to the F.S.U. They continue to complete, specialized training and have become leaders in their field. Both are certified Forensic Interviewers of Children and Advanced Youth Officers. The F.S.U. played a key role in developing policies and procedures for implementation of "Raise the Age N.Y." legislation in Seneca County.

The F.S.U. reviews all Domestic Violence reports and conducts follow ups and referrals as needed. The unit has formed partnerships and works closely with Social Services, Child Advocacy Centers, Schools, Victim Advocates and The District Attorney's Office.

The F.S.U. handled several noteworthy child abuse cases in 2020. Of particular note were child sexual abuse cases and extreme domestic violence cases.

F.S.U. Investigators Chris Felice & Melinda Marquart

NARCOTICS DIVISION

The Narcotics Unit—"Narco", is staffed by an Investigator and a Deputy Sheriff. The C.I.D. Lieutenant supervises the unit. C.I.D. members provide added manpower as needed.

NARCO Officers have special training and equipment to help protect them against exposure. The potency of certain drugs is strong enough to be absorbed through the skin or inadvertently inhaled

The scope of drug abuse stretches into many areas. Addicts often commit other crimes as the drugs gradually consume their lives. Many steal and burglarize to fund their habit. Child abuse and neglect in drug houses are common. Even sex trafficking is resorted to in some cases.

The Sheriff's Office is committed to doing our part in combating the Narcotic drug issues facing our County. We have received outstanding support from our Board of Supervisors and have partnered with treatment and counseling agencies for a multi-faceted approach to this challenge.

In 2020 the Narco Unit handled 66 cases and made 72 arrests.

D.H.S. FRAUD UNIT

A part time deputy is assigned to work with the Seneca County Division for Human Services to prevent services fraud. In 2020 this Officer investigated over 200 cases of fraud and recouped over $240,000 of taxpayer monies. The DHS Fraud Unit works closely with the Criminal Investigation Unit when criminal warrants are issued.

CORRECTIONS DIVISION

The Corrections Division is the largest of the Sheriff's Office Divisions and is responsible for the care and housing of all inmates committed by the Courts to the Custody of the Sheriff. Within the Division are the Food Services, Medical and Mental Health units which complement and support the overall mission of the Corrections Division. The Mental Health Unit alone had over 3000 contacts with inmates in 2020 even though challenged by COVID19.

To help offset operating costs the Correctional Division boards in inmates from the federal government and other Counties when we have empty cells. On 2020 this practice was continued despite difficulties. In-boarding of inmates from all sources during 2020 generated over 450,000 dollars which was deposited directly into the County General Fund.

In 2012 the Corrections Division continued to run a highly regarded Corrections Academy to train our new Officers and Officers from other agencies in the Finger Lakes.

The average daily inmate population in 2020 was 43.

Corrections Officer with Adult Pheasant

Sheriff with Reluctant to Leave Pheasant

CIVIL DIVISION, RECORDS & PISTOL PERMITS

The Seneca County Sheriff's Office Civil Division, Records and Pistol Permit Units occupy an office off the main lobby of the Law Enforcement Center. This office is a center of constant activity. The employees in this office often cover for each other during days off and activity peaks.

The Civil Unit is staffed with a Uniform Sergeant who is responsible for the day to day operations of the Division. Assisting the Sergeant in charge of the Civil Division is one full time clerk/typist and two part time Deputy Sheriffs. The Civil Office handles all legal service of summonses, evictions and income executions. All revenue collected by the Civil Division is forwarded to the Seneca County Treasurers' Office.

In 2020 the Civil Division handled 491 summonses, 266 Income Executions and 53 Evictions. Total money handled by the Division was over $642,000.

The Pistol Permit Unit is staffed by 1 full time clerk who handles pistol permit applications and amendments. She processes about 200 applications a year for new permits and over 400 amendments per year. The Pistol Permit clerk is also a valued resource to the public for permit questions, instructions and updates

The records division is staffed by a clerk who handles the copious amount of records created by the Office of the Sheriff. Every single call an Officer handles creates a report. Some investigations can create hundreds of pages and hours of video.

Another duty of this clerk is the handling of FOIL—(Freedom of Information Law) requests. In 2020 there were over 400 of these requests.

L to R Facing: Danielle O'Mara—Records, Tanya Tyler—Civil, Katie Anastasio—Pistol Permits

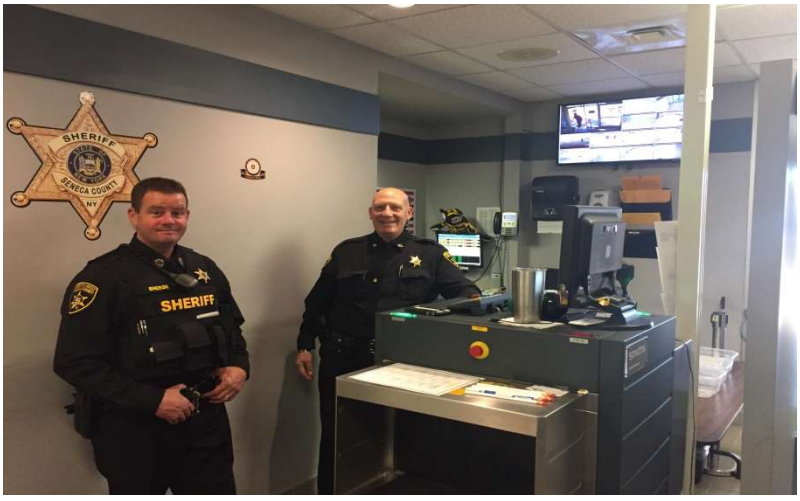
COURT SECURITY DIVISION

The Court Security Division provides all security related functions at the Seneca County Court House in Waterloo, New York. During 2020, Court Security personnel provided security services for all Criminal, Civil and Family Courts. A major function of the Division is to ensure the safety and security of not only employee's, but to all who transact business in the Seneca County Court Complex on a daily basis. During 2020, Court Security personnel enforced COVID protocols in addition to security functions.

Above: Court Security personnel at the entrance checkpoint.

COUNTY OFFICE BUILDING SECURITY

The County Office Building is staffed with one full time Deputy Sheriff and part-time Officers. The COB security unit provides security services throughout the Seneca County Office Building and staffs a security checkpoint at the main visitor entrance. The COB security unit provides services through the use of random foot patrols, video surveillance and the main visitor screening checkpoint. Over a hundred thousand persons pass through the main security checkpoint during the year. The checkpoint consists of an x-ray machine and magnetometer.



TRAINING

The Sheriff's Office is constantly training. Regular, annual trainings include: Legal Updates, Use of Force, Firearms, Crisis Intervention, Leadership, Investigations, Evidence Processing and many more. Training is considered crucial at the Sheriff's Office; we constantly strive to be better, safer and more effective at what we do.

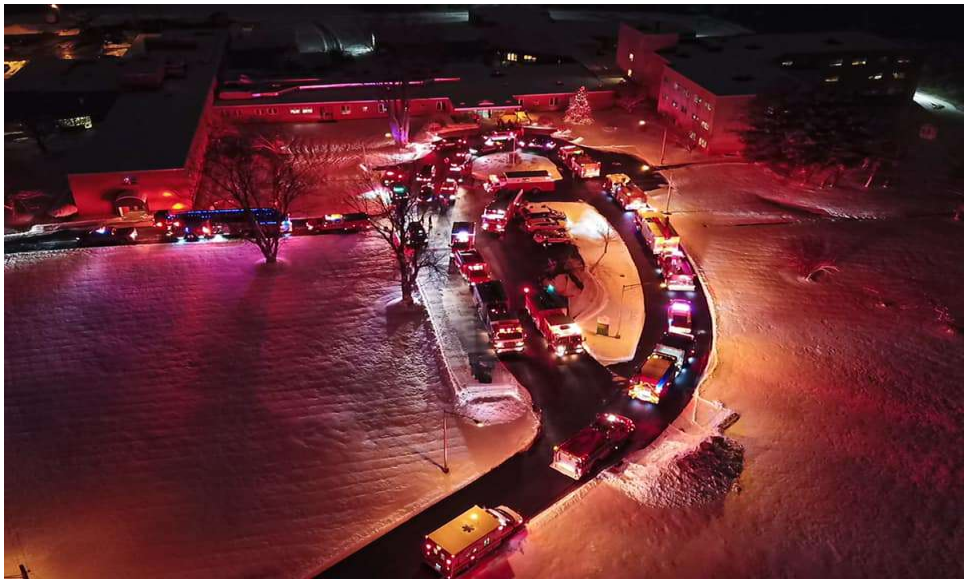
The Sheriff's Office boasts a state of the art training facility equiped with a Smart Board, Flat Screens and traditional teaching tools.

Crisis Intervention Team Training

COMMUNITY ORIENTED POLICING

"Coski" meeting a citizen

Sheriff Luce reading at Romulus School



First Responders in Seneca County light up the night to honor medical workers

2020 Citizen's Police Academy

Glove House Santa and Elf

Shop With a Sheriff

Police Reform Town Meeting om Waterloo

Inmate Garden Project

Levi and His Mother Christina at rest in CA.

"Coski" taking a break