



# ***Park County Sheriff's Office***



## **2015 Annual Report**

**Scott A. Steward, Sheriff**

***"Service, Safety, Security"***





**A MESSAGE FROM  
SHERIFF SCOTT A. STEWARD**



To the citizens of Park County:

Each year the men and women of the Park County Sheriff's Office face new and defining challenges as they strive to provide service, safety and security for our citizens and 2015 was certainly no exception. Our personnel experienced their share of triumphs and tragedies; from the apprehension and arrest of several homicide suspects, to the investigation into the shooting death of a former military service dog, to the recovery of the victims of a commuter plane crash and two separate drownings. And as always, our personnel continued to perform at an exceptionally high level with compassion, professionalism and commitment.

The investigation of the Little Sand Coulee homicide culminated with the arrest of three suspects who are currently awaiting trial on homicide charges. Our deputies also apprehended a suspect wanted in connection with a murder near Prior, Montana just hours after the crime. The suspect in this case ruthlessly shot and killed two good Samaritans and wounded a third who had stopped to render him aid. We also spent many hours thoroughly investigating the shooting death of a military service dog that had attacked a passing bicyclist. The dog was considered a hero due to its two tours of duty in Iraq sniffing out explosives and chasing down enemy combatants. The case drew national attention because the dog had returned home and served as a service dog to a local military veteran. Despite the intense scrutiny, our personnel continued to perform admirably and professionally.

Our Search and Rescue volunteers also performed at an exceptionally high level in 2105 under the most difficult of circumstances. They were tasked with not only recovering two separate drowning victims, including a teenager in Crandall but also the recovery of the victims of a horrific twin engine commuter plane crash in the back country west of the Moon Crest Ranch.

Through all this, our personnel remain committed to our mission to "promote public trust and provide service, safety and security to those we are sworn to serve." In 2016, we will continue our promise to keep you informed regarding criminal investigations, safety programs, community outreach and general information regarding Park County and the activities of your sheriff's office.

Sincerely,

Scott A. Steward  
Sheriff, Park County, Wyoming



# PATROL DIVISION

**MAJOR INCIDENTS** - For the Park County Sheriff's Office Patrol and Investigative Divisions, the year 2015 saw a major victory in one of our most sensationalized cases. Charges were filed on March 26th against three suspects in connection with the murder of Juan Antonio Guerra-Torres whose decapitated body was found on January 9, 2014 on Little Sand Coulee Road, near Clark. Two of the suspects were taken into custody in Effingham County, Georgia by investigators from the Park County Sheriff's Office, Effingham County Sheriff's Office, Georgia Bureau of Investigations and the Wyoming Division of Criminal Investigation. A third was arrested in Bonham, Texas by members of the Texas Department of Public Safety, and Texas Rangers. The suspects are charged with murder in the first degree, conspiracy to commit murder in the first degree and aiding and abetting murder in the first degree. All are currently being held in the Park County Sheriff's Office Detention Facility awaiting trial.



Another high-profile event that occurred in 2015 was the apprehension of Jesus Deniz Mendoza, wanted in connection with a double homicide on the Crow Indian Reservation in Big Horn County, Montana on July 29. Shortly after a description of Mendoza's vehicle was broadcast statewide; a Park County Sheriff's deputy spotted it southbound on Highway 120 at milepost 68 which is just north of the Stage Stop. The deputy immediately turned and began following the vehicle. The initial reports were that Mendoza was armed and to be considered dangerous, therefore the deputy made the decision not to attempt apprehension until he had backup officers available. A trooper from the Wyoming Highway Patrol was nearest to the location and was immediately dispatched to assist. Eventually, the suspect vehicle turned northeast on County Road 3LE commonly referred to as the Burlington cut across with the deputy continuing to follow for approximately 12 miles. Upon arrival of the Wyoming Highway Patrol trooper, a traffic stop was initiated and Mendoza was taken into custody without incident.





Also in 2015, sheriff's deputies investigated the shooting death of a retired military service dog on October 10th in rural Park County. The dog, named Michael belonged to a retired Army veteran with whom the dog had served two tours in Iraq sniffing out explosives and chasing down enemy combatants. Michael was shot and killed after he attacked a local resident who was bicycling past the owner's residence. After a complete and thorough investigation, no charges were filed. The case received

extensive media coverage from as far away as Washington, DC due to the military service aspect and the fact that Michael had been allowed to retire as a service dog for its owner. The case was also the topic of thousands of social media threads expressing both sympathy for Michael and outrage towards the shooter.

**PERSONNEL** - Patrol deputies are primarily responsible for providing public safety by maintaining order, responding to emergencies, protecting people and property, enforcing motor



vehicle and criminal laws, and promoting good community relations. On February 5, 2015 Deputy Rob Cooke was reassigned to the Powell Patrol Division. Deputy Cooke had been with the Park County Sheriff's Office since 2005 where he served as a first line supervisor in the detention facility. He is a 20-year veteran of the United States Army where he completed tours in Operation Desert Storm as well

as deployments to Kuwait and Bosnia. While in the Army he attended Military Leadership School and was trained as an Anti-Terrorism Advisor.

Also on May 19, 2015, Sheriff Steward reassigned Deputy Patrick Geraghty to the department's Cody Patrol Division. Deputy Geraghty has been with the Park County Sheriff's Office since 2012 where he served as deputy in the detention facility. He is a veteran of the United States Marine Corps where he completed tours in Operation Iraqi Freedom as well as other deployments in Southeast Asia. Originally from Cleveland, Ohio, he relocated to the Cody area in 2009.



He attended Kent State University where he earned a bachelor's degree in Biology. Deputy Geraghty also served with the Wyoming Division of Game and Fish prior to becoming a deputy. Both Deputy Cooke and Geraghty were reassigned from the Park County Detention Facility replacing retiring deputies.

**TRAINING** - In December of 2015, law enforcement officers from the Wyoming Highway Patrol, Park County Sheriff's Department, Wyoming State Park Police, and Greybull Police



Department participated in an 8-hour training course titled "The O'Donnell Continuous Control System". The OCCS, as it is known throughout the country, is a method of weaponless defense and control for law enforcement that is designed to provide officers with the skills to physically control combative subjects without causing serious injury to the subject or the officer. The system was developed by Aikido Master and Cody Police Officer, Stephen P.

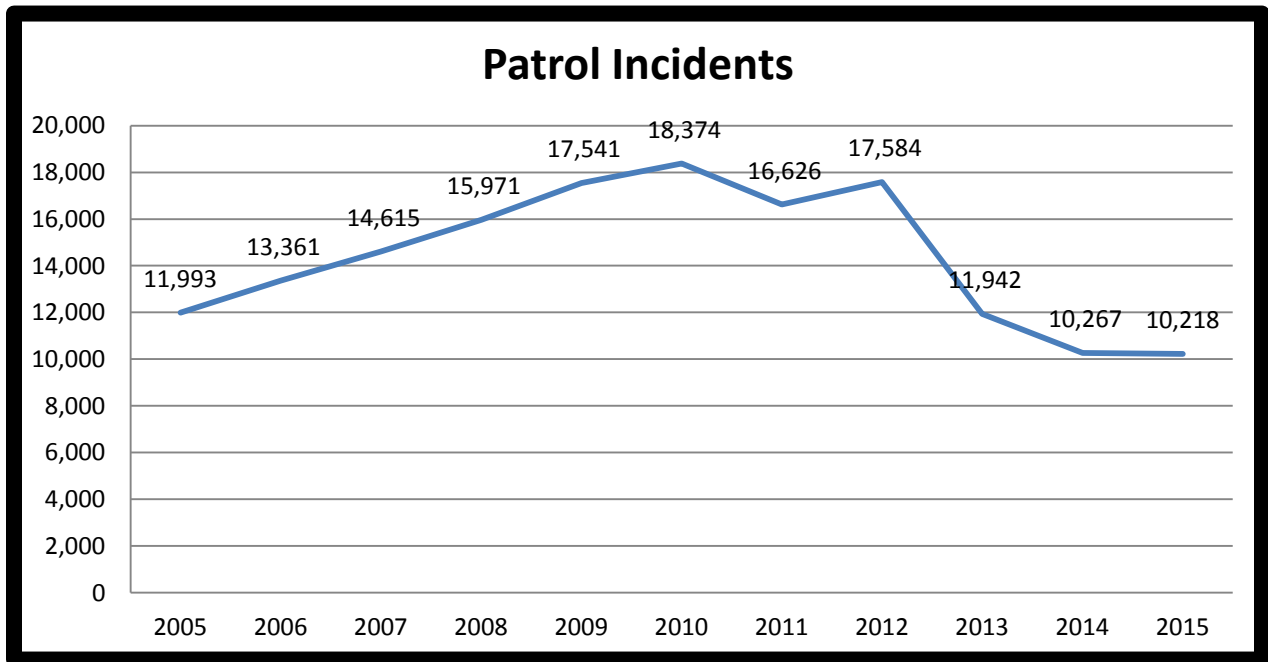


O'Donnell Sr. in 1996. His system is used by thousands of police officers throughout the country because of its simplicity and effectiveness. In fact, The O'Donnell Continuous Control System has been standard recruit training for every police and detention officer in the state of Arizona for over 18 years. The system has drawn heightened interest and increased popularity as law enforcement agencies nationwide have been drawn into the spotlight with numerous high profile uses of force incidents.



**PATROL ACTIVITY** - Patrol deputies continue to serve the citizens of Park County in the manner to which they have come to expect; with pride, compassion, and professionalism. In 2015, the patrol division responded to 10,218 calls for service. These included 2,564 motor vehicle inspections, 1,710 civil paper services, 746 traffic stops, 757 animal calls, 312 warrant service

attempts, 306 felony and misdemeanor arrests, 136 motor vehicle crash investigations, 238 criminal investigations and nearly 1,028 non-criminal investigations. All of this activity was accomplished by 14 full-time patrol deputies who are responsible for patrolling nearly 7,000 square miles of rural Park County. That equates to an average of 730 calls for service handled by each deputy during the year. In fact, our patrol deputies traveled nearly 361,000 miles in the calendar year 2015 performing their sworn duties. That equates to 40 trips around the perimeter of the continental United States, 45.5 trips around the earth's equator, or a trip to the moon and half way back to earth.



## INCIDENTS

|                                  |        |
|----------------------------------|--------|
| Total Patrol Incidents           | 10,218 |
| Calls for Service Incidents      | 6,001  |
| Officer Initiated Incidents      | 4,217  |
| Traffic Stops                    | 746    |
| Business/Building/Vehicle Checks | 22     |
| Other Incidents                  | 3,449  |



**ARRESTS**

|                     |     |
|---------------------|-----|
| Total Arrests       | 306 |
| Misdemeanor Arrests | 215 |
| Felony Arrests      | 91  |

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**CASE INVESTIGATIONS**

|                                 |       |
|---------------------------------|-------|
| Total Case Investigations       | 1,408 |
| Vehicle Accident Investigations | 136   |
| Criminal Investigations         | 238   |
| Non-Criminal Investigations     | 1,027 |
| Unclassified Investigations     | 7     |

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**WARRANTS**

|                       |     |
|-----------------------|-----|
| New Warrants Received | 568 |
| Warrants Closed       | 416 |

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**VIN INSPECTIONS**

|                                 |             |
|---------------------------------|-------------|
| Total VIN Inspections           | 2,564       |
| VIN Inspection Fees Collected * | \$25,640.00 |

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**CIVIL SUMMONS**

|                                |             |
|--------------------------------|-------------|
| Total Service Attempts         | 1,710       |
| Total Served                   | 681         |
| Total Attempts with No Service | 1,029       |
| Civil Service Fees Collected * | \$24,385.36 |

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**CITATIONS**

|                                |     |
|--------------------------------|-----|
| Total Citations Issued         | 268 |
| Misdemeanor Criminal Citations | 87  |
| Traffic Citations              | 172 |
| Unclassified                   | 9   |

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\* Fees collected are returned to the county general fund

## PATROL INCIDENTS BY TYPE

| INCIDENT TYPE              |       | INCIDENT TYPE                |     |
|----------------------------|-------|------------------------------|-----|
| 911 HANG UP CALL           | 73    | MISCELLANEOUS ASSISTANCE     | 413 |
| ABANDONED VEHICLE          | 74    | MOTOR VEHICLE CRASH          | 169 |
| ADMINISTRATIVE DUTY        | 2     | NCIC WARRANT ENTRY           | 216 |
| ALARM-INTRUSTION/HOLDUP    | 106   | NOTIFY CITY DEPARTMENTS      | 106 |
| AMBULANCE-DEPUTY ASSIGNED  | 7     | NUISANCE COMPLAINTS          | 3   |
| ANIMAL-BITE                | 18    | OPEN DOOR/WINDOW             | 4   |
| ANIMAL-DECEASED            | 8     | OTHER ACCIDENT               | 13  |
| ANIMAL-LOST                | 160   | OTHER LAW VIOLATIONS         | 28  |
| ANIMAL-NOISY               | 6     | PARKING PROBLEM              | 12  |
| ANIMAL-OTHER               | 141   | PATROL-EXTRA                 | 141 |
| ANIMAL-ON ROADWAY          | 189   | PERSON LOST                  | 2   |
| ANIMAL-STRAY               | 235   | PHONE RELATED COMPLAINT      | 9   |
| ASSIST OTHER AGENCY        | 577   | PRISONER TRANSPORT           | 24  |
| ASSAULT                    | 15    | PROBATION VIOLATION          | 3   |
| ATTEMPT TO LOCATE          | 26    | PROPERTY DAMAGE              | 43  |
| AUTO BURGLARY              | 6     | PROPERTY FOUND               | 64  |
| BARWALK                    | 58    | PROPERTY LOST                | 74  |
| BODY FOUND                 | 27    | PROTECTION ORDER             | 29  |
| BUILDING BURGLARY          | 21    | PROWLER                      | 5   |
| COUNCIL COMMUNITY SERVICES | 2     | REDDI REPORT                 | 72  |
| CHILD WELFARE              | 19    | ROAD HAZARD/BLOCKAGE         | 76  |
| CITIZEN/BUSINESS CONTACT   | 41    | RUNAWAY JUVENILE             | 8   |
| CIVIL ATTEMPTS             | 1,714 | SEARCH AND RESCUE CALL       | 26  |
| CIVIL DISPUTE              | 66    | SECURITY CHECK               | 18  |
| CIVIL STANDBY              | 51    | SEXUAL ASSAULT               | 9   |
| COMPUTER CRIME             | 2     | SEXUAL OFFENDER NOTIFICATION | 1   |
| CUSTODY DISPUTE            | 8     | SEXUAL OFFENDER RECORD       | 20  |
| DISTURBANCE                | 53    | SEX OFFENDER REGISTRATION    | 52  |
| DOMESTIC                   | 45    | SEX OFFENDER REPORTING       | 124 |
| DRILL/EXERCISE             | 5     | SPECIAL INCIDENT- Undefined  | 9   |
| DRUGS RELATED              | 17    | STOLEN VEHICLE               | 4   |
| EXTRA PATROL REQUEST       | 39    | SUICIDE ATTEMPT/THREATS      | 20  |
| FIRE CALL-DEPUTY ASSIGNED  | 17    | SUSPICIOUS ACTIVITY          | 135 |
| FIREWORKS COMPLAINT        | 4     | SEARCH WARRANT               | 1   |
| FLAGDOWN OF DEPUTY         | 44    | THEFT                        | 56  |
| FOLLOWUP INVESTIGATION     | 91    | THREATS                      | 30  |
| FRAUD RELATED              | 61    | TRAFFIC COMPLAINT            | 75  |

|                       |    |                               |               |
|-----------------------|----|-------------------------------|---------------|
| HARASSMENT            | 28 | TRAFFIC STOP                  | 746           |
| HAZARD TO SAFETY      | 10 | TRAINING/ INSTRUCTION         | 6             |
| INCORRIGIBLE JUVENILE | 12 | TRESPASS COMPLAINT            | 50            |
| INFORMATIONAL CASE    | 93 | UNKNOWN CALL TYPE             | 5             |
| INTOXICATED SUBJECT   | 14 | US FOREST SERVICE PATROL      | 123           |
| LIQUOR LAWS - OTHER   | 1  | VIN INSPECTIONS               | 2,568         |
| LITTERING             | 5  | WARRANT SERVICE               | 312           |
| MEDICAL TRANSPORT     | 1  | WEAPONS OFFENSE               | 7             |
| MENTAL PROBLEM        | 7  | WELFARE CHECK                 | 98            |
| MESSAGE DELIVERY      | 10 | <b>TOTAL PATROL INCIDENTS</b> | <b>10,218</b> |

## COMMUNICATIONS

The Park County Sheriff's Office Communications Division handles calls for the Park County Sheriff's Office, Cody Police Department, Park County Search and Rescue, West Park Ambulance, and the Cody, Powell, Meeteetse and Clark Fire Districts. In 2015, eight total dispatchers handled 24,490 calls for service which is a 7 percent increase from 2014. This equates to over 3,061 calls per dispatcher. Park County 911 dispatchers play many roles: therapist, doctor, lawyer, teacher, weatherman, guidance counselor, psychologist, priest, secretary, supervisor, politician, and reporter. And few people must jump through the emotional hoops on the trip through the routine of one caller's request for a phone number, to the fear of another caller's burglary in progress, to the anger of a neighbor blocked in their drive, to the sorrow of a caller who lost their pet, to the stress of an officer's request for help, and back to the phone number request all in a five-minute time frame. But Park County dispatchers accept these responsibilities and handle them with expertise and confidence.

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### COMMUNICATIONS DIVISION CALLS FOR SERVICE (% Change from 2014)

|                                |                         |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Park County Sheriff's Office   | 10,218 (-00.48%)        |
| Cody Police Department         | 11,724 (+10.69%)        |
| Cody Fire Department           | 365 (-05.19%)           |
| Clark Fire Department          | 55 (+44.74%)            |
| Powell Fire Department         | 267 (+35.53%)           |
| Meeteetse Fire Department      | 28 (-26.32%)            |
| West Park Hospital Ambulance   | 1,833 (+54.95%)         |
| Park County Search and Rescue  | 26 (+00.00%)            |
| <b>Total Calls for Service</b> | <b>24,490 (+06.53%)</b> |

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### Controlled Burn Permits

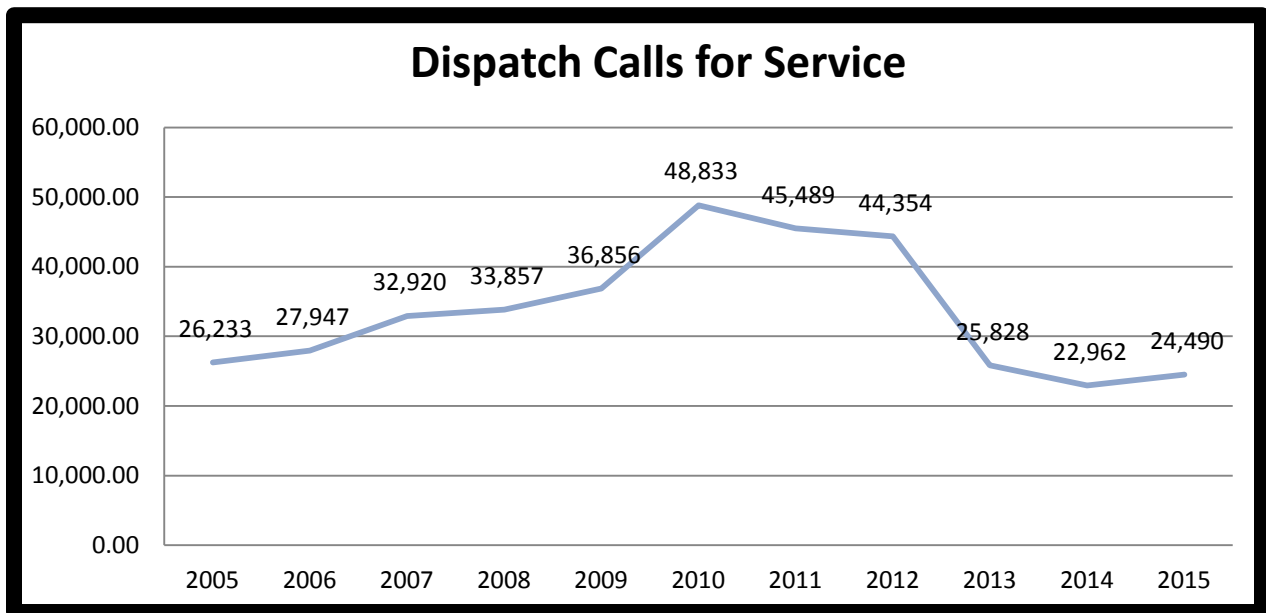
|                                   |       |
|-----------------------------------|-------|
| Total Permits Issued              | 4,601 |
| Cody/Meeteetse Area               | 1,979 |
| Powell/Garland/Ralston/Clark Area | 2,622 |

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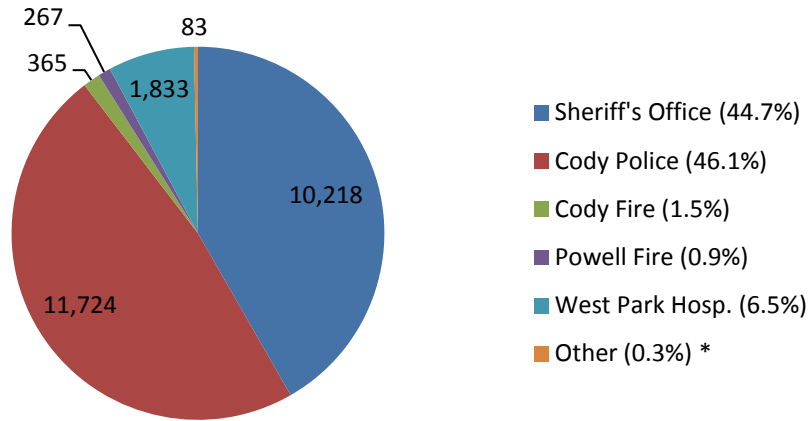
### Fire Calls Dispatched

|                           |     |
|---------------------------|-----|
| Cody Fire Department      | 361 |
| Clark Fire Department     | 55  |
| Powell Fire Department    | 261 |
| Meeteetse Fire Department | 28  |
| Total Fire Calls          | 705 |

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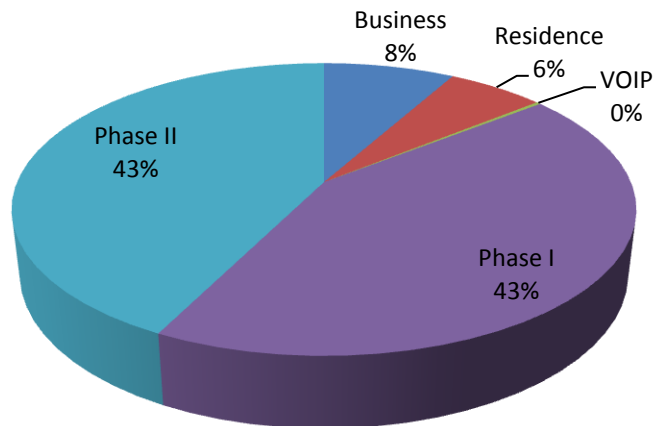


## Calls for Service by Agency



\* Clark Fire / Meeteetse Fire

## 911 Calls by Type of Phone Used



Phase I = Calls originating from a cellular telephone, unable to map location

Phase II = Calls originating from a cellular telephone, able to map location

Business = Call originating from a business landline, able to map location

Residence = Call originating from a residential landline, able to map location

VOIP = Voice Over Internet Protocol, internet-based phone service, able to map location

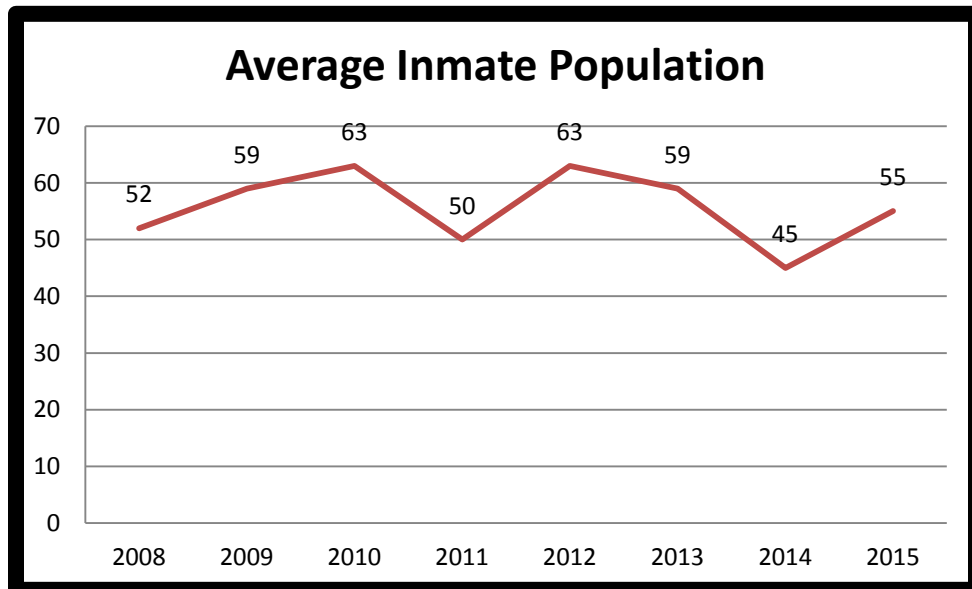
# DETENTION

In 2015, the Park County Sheriff’s Office Detention Division booked a total of 962 prisoners into the holding facility. This number represents a 15 percent decrease in total bookings from 2014. However, the average inmate population increased from 45 in 2014 to 55 in 2015, a 22 percent increase.

## TOTAL DETENTION BOOKINGS BY YEAR (Including the percent change from previous year)

|                              | 2011        | 2012        | 2013        | 2014        | 2015       |
|------------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|------------|
| Park County Sheriff          | 302 (+10%)  | 270 (-10%)  | 256 (-5%)   | 265 (+4%)   | 244(-8%)   |
| Cody Police Dept.            | 580 (+7%)   | 429 (-26%)  | 480 (+12%)  | 474 (-1%)   | 400 (-16%) |
| Powell Police Dept.          | 187 (-24%)  | 195 (+4%)   | 278 (+43%)  | 331 (+19%)  | 264 (-20%) |
| Wyoming Highway Patrol       | 51 (+51%)   | 52 (+2%)    | 47 (-10%)   | 44 (-6%)    | 43 (-2%)   |
| Division of Criminal Invest. | 4 (-475%)   | 14 (+250%)  | 9 (-36%)    | 6 (-33%)    | 3 (-50%)   |
| Probation & Parole           | 5 (+20%)    | 4 (-20%)    | 8 (+100%)   | 8 (0%)      | 2 (-75%)   |
| New Bookings on New Charges  | 859 (-13%)  | 947 (+10%)  | 833 (-12%)  | 920 (+10%)  | 784 (-15%) |
| Total Bookings *             | 1,131 (-6%) | 1,145 (+1%) | 1,083 (-6%) | 1,132 (+5%) | 962 (-15%) |

\* Includes “weekender” bookings, where someone comes to serve time on weekends only. Also includes 6 bookings by other agencies.



**USE OF FORCE** - The Park County Detention Center also tracks the use of force incidents against inmates within our care and protection. These incidents are created whenever a detention deputy has to utilize force against a non-compliant inmate. This can be in the form of compliance holds such as a wrist-lock up to and including the use of non-lethal weapons such as

a Taser or pepper spray. We continually strive to keep these incidents to a minimum by providing the best possible training to our deputies in methods to mitigate situations prior to resorting to physical force. Assaults by inmates against officers and each other increased from 2 to 5 in 2015, however our use of force incidents decreased 68 percent, from 19 to 6. As with use of force incidents, we continually strive to minimize inmate assaults through training. All inmates who assault officers or other inmates are prosecuted under state law.

|                          | 2011 | 2012 | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 |
|--------------------------|------|------|------|------|------|
| Use of Force Incidents * | 13   | 13   | 21   | 19   | 6    |
| Inmate Assaults          | 4    | 7    | 7    | 2    | 5    |

\* Force is used to gain compliance only

**PERSONNEL** – In 2015, the detention facility hired five new deputies: Deputy Royal Duneman in February; Deputy Jeff Tucker in May; Deputy Kris Herrmann in June; Deputy Clayton Creel in July; and Deputy Tom Toohey in August. All hires were the result of resignations and reassignments therefore there was no increase in personnel levels. Pictured: Deputies Herrmann, Toohey, Tucker, Creel and Duneman.



Detention deputies take great pride in their responsibilities which include the care and well-being of the inmates. In February of 2015, two detention deputies performed life-saving cardio

pulmonary resuscitation (CPR) on an inmate. Sgt. Joe Colegrove (pictured left) and Deputy Rob Cooke (pictured right) were alerted by inmates in a communal area of the jail that a fellow inmate was having a seizure. Upon their arrival, the deputies discovered inmate victim slumped over in a chair. He was being propped up by fellow inmates. The two deputies immediately placed the victim on the floor and propped his head with a blanket. The victim was unresponsive; his face was turning purple and his breathing was labored. Upon checking several times, neither deputy could locate a pulse. Eventually, the victim let out a long breath and then stopped breathing entirely. Deputy Cooke immediately summoned an ambulance from West Park Hospital while Sgt. Colegrove began CPR on the victim. After 30 chest compressions, the victim began to breath and regained consciousness. The victim was eventually transported to West Park Hospital and then to St. Vincent Hospital in Billings, Montana where he underwent surgery to have a pace maker implanted. The deputy's quick thinking and immediate actions no doubt saved the life of an inmate under their care.




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**REVENUE GENERATED BY THE PARK COUNTY DETENTION DIVISION \***

|                                    |                    |
|------------------------------------|--------------------|
| Jail Housing from the City of Cody | \$11,430.00        |
| Fingerprint/Notary/Record fees     | \$ 8,397.52        |
| Inmate Phone system                | \$14,463.28        |
| Medical Reimbursement              | \$ 3,538.75        |
| Court Restitution                  | <u>\$ 3,902.10</u> |
| <b>Total</b>                       | <b>\$41,731.65</b> |

\* All revenues are returned to the Park County General Fund

## SEARCH AND RESCUE

The Park County Search and Rescue Unit is comprised of 25 to 30 volunteers, from all walks of life who are ready at a moment's notice to sacrifice their time and put themselves in harm's way



to serve the citizens of Park County. They are trained in various skills including but limited to first aid and CPR, wilderness search, aircraft search, urban rescue, swift water and ice rescue, mountain rescue, canine search, avalanche search, land navigation and critical incident stress management. In 2015, the Park County Sheriff's Office Search and Rescue Unit (SAR) participated in 26 calls for service including several high-profile rescues.

On Saturday afternoon, July 18 at 12:20 p.m., a small twin engine Cessna 310 aircraft with four occupants crashed in an area along Big Tree Creek, approximately 1.5 miles west of the northern end of Rattlesnake Creek Road. There were no survivors. The aircraft left the Sheridan County



Airport Saturday morning, July 18th sometime after 11:00 a.m. bound for Billings, Montana. According to Salt Lake City air traffic control, shortly after takeoff, the plane deviated from its scheduled flight path and headed to Yellowstone National Park. After circling the park, the pilot radioed Salt Lake City and requested a new

IFR (Instrument Flight Rules) heading to Billings. Salt Lake City approved the new flight plan and advised the pilot to climb to 14,800 feet. The pilot responded correctly to the instructions given, however shortly afterward the plane suddenly turned due east towards Cody and immediately went into a steep descent. No further voice contact was made as the plane dropped below radar at 11:56 a.m. and crashed. Members of the Park County Sheriff's Search and Rescue Unit spent countless hours at the crash scene recovering the bodies of four occupants; two male and two female in order to bring a measure of closure for the families. Later on, SAR members also assisted in removal of the wreckage.

On August 1, 2015, a Montana teen drowned while recreating on the Clark's Fork of the Yellowstone River in the Crandall area. The victim was floating on the river with family and friends when he overturned and disappeared. The family had rented cabins in the Crandall area for a summer vacation. The victim and his brother, both of whom were not wearing life jackets

were in small, inflatable pool rings in a section of the river known to local kayakers as “Day Stretch.” The area is approximately one mile up river from the Hunter Peak Campground just below the junction of Muddy Creek. At some point near the rapids known as “The Jet,” the boys overturned. The brother was able to surface and make it to shore however, the victim disappeared under the water and was never seen again. Members of SAR began their search shortly after 8:00 p.m. on Saturday. The initial search was suspended due to darkness but SAR members stayed on



scene throughout the night at various locations along the river. The search resumed the next morning. SAR members were assisted by several local, experienced kayakers who were familiar with the area. At 10:48 a.m., SAR members located the victim submerged in 20 feet of water.

A Connecticut teen camping in the Beartooth Mountains with his mother was found safe on Sunday, August 9, 2015 after the two became separated, forcing the teen to spend a night in the mountains alone. The teen was camping with his mother when the two became separated. They



were camping southwest of Becker Lake which is approximately 3.5 miles north of the Beartooth Campground off Highway 212. The mother had emerged from the wilderness at the Beartooth Campground, apparently suffering from hypothermia. She reported that her son was still at their camp but could not give an exact location.

She thought it to be near Wall Lake which is due east of Becker Lake. A SAR ground team entered the wilderness to begin their search shortly before 11:00 p.m., Saturday night. They made their way toward the reported location of the camp at Wall Lake. At 1:44 a.m. Sunday morning, the team reached Wall Lake but found no sign of the victim or the family’s camp. The

team then decided to spend the rest of the night at Wall Lake and begin their search again at first light. At 6:30 a.m., Sunday morning the SAR team met up with the teenager on the trail from Wall Lake to Becker Lake. He was concerned for his mother who had not returned from her hike, so he was hiking out to report her missing. The family was reunited at the Island Lake Campground. Neither the teen nor his mother was injured.

On Sunday, January 25, an ice climber from Auburn, Washington was airlifted from the “Mean Green” ice flow near the Majo Ranch. The 40 year old victim was climbing with a friend on the ice flow which is located on the east side of the Shoshone River southeast of the Cabin Creek Trailhead parking area at the end of the South Fork Road. They had climbed the ice flow and just completed a decent to the

base when a softball size rock became dislodged and fell approximately 80 – 100 feet striking him on the left side of the lower back. The victim experienced extreme pain such that he could not move. Rescue personnel reached the victim at approximately



4:50 p.m. The victim showed no signs of paralysis; however he appeared to have several broken ribs. The Wilderness Rescue Team stabilized the victim on scene, however due to the steepness of the terrain and the fact that it was snow covered and slippery, the Search and Rescue personnel had to lower the victim to more stable ground by ropes utilizing a controlled decent maneuver. Once on stable ground, the teams carried the victim to the waiting helicopter where he was flown to West Park Hospital. As a result of this rescue, the SAR Team received this letter from the victim:

### **Thank You County Rescue Personnel**

Recently, I was the victim of an ice climbing accident on the “Mean Green” ice flow at the end of the South Fork Road, 40 miles southwest of Cody. We had finished the route and descended to the base by early afternoon. While we were packing up our gear for our hike back to our car, I was struck in the lower back by a large rock that had become dislodged and fallen 80-100 feet. The pain was such

that I could not move and had difficulty breathing. I had to be evacuated by deputies from the Park County Sheriff's Office as well as members of the Search and Rescue Unit and Wilderness Medical Team.

I don't know the names or the faces that assisted in coming to help me in my time of need. All I know is these selfless men and women jumped into action when my partner called in at about 3:00 p.m. on January 25<sup>th</sup> requesting immediate help. From the two officers who reached me first and gave up their jackets to keep me warm, to the numerous search and rescue folks that showed up with all the equipment, to the dispatchers that coordinated the rescue, and to all those involved in lowering me down the snow slopes....THANK YOU!!

I don't know the names of my rescuers....all I know is they had one goal in mind, which was to get me down safely. I am truly grateful for their efforts. Even more, I am grateful that none of them were injured trying to rescue me. I wish I can thank each of them personally but I know that's impossible. So I hope that this "Thank You" reaches all those that were involved. I am back home with my family resting....can't quite say comfortably yet as I am still in pain from the six broken ribs. But with time, I will heal.

Again, thank you for all the help. I will never forget you.

The mission of the Park County Search and Rescue is to train for, and respond to emergencies which regular department personnel are not trained, equipped or otherwise prepared to handle.



This mission is met by; 1) identifying hazardous areas, activities or situations and assisting in education of the public about these hazards and ways to avoid or minimize them, eliminating or minimizing the hazards if practical; 2) training all Search and Rescue team members in Basic SAR skills and

training special teams for more technically demanding SAR emergencies; and 3) responding to calls for assistance in searching for lost or missing persons and rescuing persons in distress within the training and performance capabilities of the SAR personnel.

# COMMUNITY OUTREACH

**PUBLIC AFFAIRS** - In 2015, the Park County Sheriff's Public Affairs Office remained active in promoting positive relations with the media and coordinate community involvement through proactive program implementation all while maintaining the goals and objectives of the

department. There were a total of 71 media releases issued during the year on a variety of topics including 57 news-related media bulletins. In addition, 6 safety-related media releases were issued on a variety of topics including safe driving, gun and fireworks safety and weather related safety advice.



There were also 10 media

releases of an informational nature. These include information on new personnel, new technology or how to avoid being the victim of a crime.

**FACEBOOK & TWITTER** - The Park County Sheriff's Office continued to utilize social media in 2015 to communicate directly with residents through the use of its Facebook page and

Twitter account. These social medium are used to inform and engage the residents of Park County on a variety of topics. Safety messages, emergency bulletins, and agency information are included, but also the accounts are used to distribute information on incidents reported to the sheriff's office that may be of interest to our residents. The



intent is to proactively distribute information that is both informative and safety-oriented in

content and when necessary, ask for assistance from residents in emergency situations. We are extremely pleased with the popularity of these accounts. In 2014, the Facebook page grew from 1,800 followers to nearly 3,000. Several postings received tens of thousands of “hits” nationally.

**COMMUNITY OUTREACH** – The Community Outreach Program insures that the Park County Sheriff’s Office is active in programs designed to serve the needs of county residents while promoting a positive image for department personnel. Examples of these efforts in 2015 included the department’s participation in the annual 4th of July parade and Halloween walk in downtown Cody. Deputies also participated in the Park County Special Olympics torch run through downtown Cody benefitting developmentally disabled children. The



Sheriff’s Office also participated in several Park County “family fun days” at local churches. Also, in 2015, we continued our “Stuff the Truck” program which challenged county residents to fill a sheriff’s pickup truck with non-perishable food items to benefit local food banks. The truck was parked at local grocery stores on Cody and Powell for a day. Thanks to their efforts,

department personnel, who all volunteered their time, delivered over a ton of food to local food banks in each city, benefiting those in need. Finally, the Park County Sheriff’s Office provided security and escort services for the world-famous Budweiser Clydesdales when they visited Cody for the 4<sup>th</sup> of July Stampede Parade.



