

Letter: El Dorado sheriff recaps 2012

To the citizens of El Dorado County,

The year 2012 is wrapped up, and so is my second year as your sheriff. This year end update is to provide you, the community we serve, with information outlining some of the achievements by the men and women that make up the sheriff's office. I believe it is my obligation to keep you, as the taxpayers of El Dorado County, informed as to the direction, and accomplishments of this office.



John
D'Agostini

To recap all of the accomplishments of the last year would take up more space than I have, so I will simply highlight some of the more significant accomplishments. Please know that the accomplishments were a result of teamwork, leadership, and actions taken by all levels of employees of the sheriff's office.

Employees and statistics

Your sheriff's office employs 369 full-time staff members, including deputy sheriffs, correctional staff, Dispatchers, and professional staff. Our current approved budget is approximately \$54 million. Your tax dollars support many service programs including operation of two correctional

facilities, patrol of over 1,700 square miles, the Office of Emergency Services, coroner services, civil services, courts, bailiffs, transportation services, dispatch, radio communications, criminal records, boat patrol, public administrator, investigations, and property and evidence.

We are proud to have so many citizens who volunteer their time to make our county a better place. Our volunteer programs consist of over 600 volunteers supporting programs including search and rescue, S.T.A.R.S., Explorers, air squadron, and reserve deputies.

Concealed weapons

Our concealed weapons policy continues to increase the number of permits being issued.

I am a strong believer in the constitution and more specifically the Second Amendment regarding our right to keep and bear arms.

	2010 2012	2011 percent change	percent change
Issued	225	514	
128%		728	42% increase
Renewed	n/a		
530			
188			43% decrease

Community outreach

In order to be better informed of the issues facing our county, and informing our citizens of the hard work accomplished by our staff, in this last year I attended and/or took part in hundreds of individual meetings with citizens, service clubs, schools, and other community events. This year we will be having community meetings in each supervisory district.

In 2011 we published the first Sheriff's Annual Report, which includes statistics and information concerning operations, services, and accomplishments. The statistics are eye-opening, but they also display the hard working being done every day by sheriff's office employees, and frankly it highlights the services you – the taxpayer are receiving for your tax dollars. The 2012 Annual Report has been released and can be found online.

Community patrol

		2010	2011	%
2012	%			
Reports:		12,157	11,637	-4%
11,520	-1%			
Service calls:		74,141	70,203	-5%
67,007	-5%			
Info reports:		225	209	-7%
325	56%			
Adult arrests:		3,651	3,507	-4%
3,685	5%			
Juvenile arrests:		501	415	-17%
431	4%			
Total arrests:		4,152	3,922	-6%
4,116	5%			
Jail bookings:		7,226	6,889	-5%
6,858	0%			

Internal processes

Working with the county Board of Supervisors, this last year we were able to secure two additional deputy sheriff positions. One position created an elder abuse detective. This

detective working closely with adult protective services will concentrate on financial, physical, and emotional abuse of those who cannot care for themselves. The second position has been designated for a resident deputy to live and work in the Georgetown divide area, improving our level of service in those communities.

This last year we had many personnel changes. In our continuing goal to reach full, allocated staffing levels we processed 1,295 employment applications and hired 54 new employees to fill vacant positions. We had 12 employees retire at various levels and positions which resulted in many promotions including sergeants and lieutenants. I am confident that our new supervisors and managers will perform at a high level now and in the future.

Budget

Regarding the budget, my goals from day one have been to avoid employee layoffs and no reduction in public safety services in El Dorado County. We have made many changes in order to reduce costs, last year we ended the year in the black and actually returned \$2.7 million as surplus funds to the county as a result of cost saving measures we have taken.

We have had to review each and every function we provide and decide whether it is something vital, important or just nice to have. We are focusing on our core functions and services. We continue to make significant reductions in overtime organization-wide, by changing schedules in our custody, patrol, and dispatch areas. We have continued weekly overtime reporting and justification, and have reduced non-mandated training.

Last year an outside management firm was hired to conduct a staffing and workload study of our 911 dispatch center. We had noticed a high amount of overtime being used on a regular basis. The study revealed that we needed to change the shift

hours and fill vacant positions. A reorganization of the center was done, and we worked hard to recruit and fill vacant positions. This resulted in a significant reduction in overtime.

In order to improve effectiveness and efficiency in our property and evidence section, we contacted the California Commission on Peace Officers Standards and Training, and requested a study on our procedures and facility. The study revealed that we could improve in many areas, and that our property and evidence storage areas are at or near capacity. We have implemented many of the suggested procedural changes to improve effectiveness.

In addition to significantly reducing costs, we have brought income into the county. In the last year we noticed that the impact of state realignment, regarding state inmates was less here than in other counties. We discovered that we regularly have vacant beds in both of our jails. We started the process of contracting with other counties and currently contract with Alpine, Shasta, and Amador counties to house some of their overflow inmates. Since starting the contracts in late 2012 we have received approximately \$160,000 in funds. These funds are used for unanticipated maintenance at the jails, unanticipated emergencies, and toward the costs of moving forward in planning and construction of a new headquarters facility.

The future

As you may be aware the state passed AB109, which will forever change the criminal justice system in this state. The state has passed on to the county their responsibility for housing certain inmates and supervising those released from custody. This is not a good thing for El Dorado County. Of most concern is that the state is not covering the actual costs of housing and supervising the inmates, and this has morphed into an unfunded or under-funded state mandate. It is very possible that at a point in the near future we will reach capacity at

both of our custody facilities and be forced to release inmates before their sentences are completed, impacting public safety in our county. With the cooperation of the district attorney, courts and probation, we are continuously working to lengthen the time frame of this reality.

The sheriff's office needs a new home. We are currently spread out in five different locations and spend over \$300,000 a year on leased space for our staff. We are in the process of evaluating space needs with the goals of reducing or discontinuing the use of leased space, and housing most or all sheriff's office employees within a new facility in the future. The sheriff's office has outgrown the current facility, which was built over 40 years ago. This situation not only increases costs for leased property, but it reduces our span of control, fragments our operation, has a negative impact on morale, and requires that our staff work in less than ideal conditions. A new facility will reduce county costs, increase our level of customer service, and create one location where all of our public services will be available to our citizens.

As we move into a new year, your sheriff's office is committed to providing you with high quality public safety service and we will be responsive to your concerns and safety needs.

I speak to many people in our great county, and I consistently hear that what people like most about living in El Dorado County is our quality of life. Public safety is the bedrock of our quality of life, and we take our responsibilities to you seriously. The hard working men and women of the sheriff's office are on duty 24 hours a day, seven days a week to serve you.

As sheriff, I commit to work with you and faithfully honor my oath of office to support and defend the Constitution of the state of California and the Constitution of the United States. We must continue to work together to improve El Dorado County

and to ensure we live a in a safe community. If you have community or public safety issues, or suggestions on how we can improve service, please do not hesitate to schedule a meeting with me or my staff.

In closing, I want you to know that I consider it a privilege to serve as your sheriff and I thank you for your continued support.

John D'Agostini, El Dorado County sheriff