

NEW SHERIFF, SAME STRONG COMMITMENT TO COMMUNITY

Annual Report of the Pennington County Sheriff's Office



20/23

TABLE OF CONTENTS

3	Sheriff's Message
4	Chain of Command
5	About Us
6	Year in Review
9	Awards
10	Patrol
12	Boat/UTV Patrol, Sturgis Motorcycle Rally
13	Central States Fair
14	Contract Communities
15	Reserve Deputies
16	Investigations
18	Internet Crimes Against Children
19	Unified Narcotics Enforcement Team
20	Victim Specialists
21	School Resource Officers
22	Special Response Team
23	Civil Division
24	Warrants
25	Transport/Security
26	Jail
28	24-7 Sobriety Program
29	IGNITE Jail Initiative
30	Care Campus
32	Human Resources
33	Explorer Program
34	Juvenile Services Center
36	Wellness
37	Chaplains
38	Training
39	Academy Graduates
40	Search and Rescue
41	Water Rescue Team
42	Out in the Community
45	Community Support
46	Retirements
47	Looking to the Future



SHERIFF'S MESSAGE

I am honored to serve as your Sheriff, drawing on my 28 years of experience to address community challenges. The top priority is the safety of citizens, families, businesses, and visitors. We have increased law enforcement proactivity, strengthened partnerships, and maintained high professional standards.

Our dedicated staff are the best in the business. We have worked hard to keep their pay and benefits competitive. While public safety staffing remains a challenge, we are committed to hiring the best.

In my first year, we enhanced transparency with quarterly crime reports, an online patrol log, and community engagement events. More are planned for 2024.

We launched the fourth in the nation, IGNITE (Individual Growth Naturally and Intentionally through Education) at the jail, juvenile center, and Care Campus to provide education, job/life skills, and pre-treatment for substance abuse to break the cycle of recidivism.

Joining the City of Rapid City's efforts to reduce homelessness, we emphasize compassion with accountability, promoting a "hand up, not a handout" philosophy. We are building in volunteer requirements and incentives to increase accountability at the Care Campus.

In December, the Pennington County Commission unanimously approved the final design for adding 148 beds to the Pennington County Jail, addressing critical infrastructure issues and providing the foundation for a long-term solution to secure the county's inmate housing needs for the next 20 plus years.

I remain grateful for our community's unwavering support!

Sheriff Brian Mueller



ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE



*Sheriff Brian Mueller
Chief Deputies Willie Whelchel, Mark Hughes*



COMMANDERS: Joe Gutierrez - Western SD Juvenile Services Center, Rob Yantis - Pennington County Jail

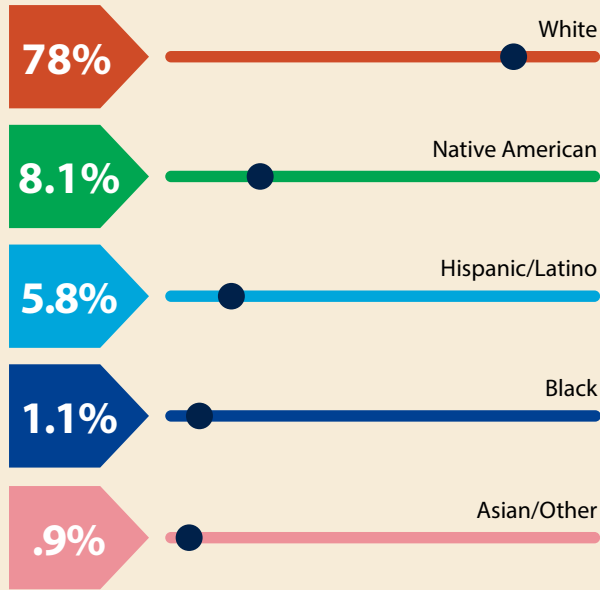


CAPTAINS: Taylor Sperle, Dustin Morrison, Chris Hislip - Law Enforcement Division, Wade Anderson, Casey Munsch - Pennington County Jail



*PROGRAM MANAGERS: Deanna Nolan, David Oster - Care Campus
Nikki Farrar - Human Resources*

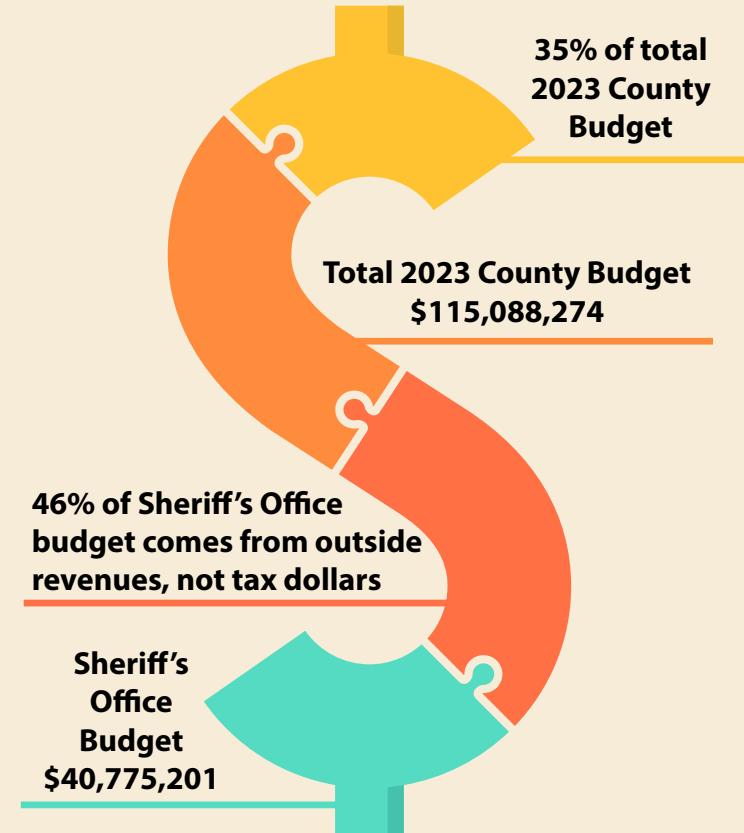
RACIAL DEMOGRAPHICS



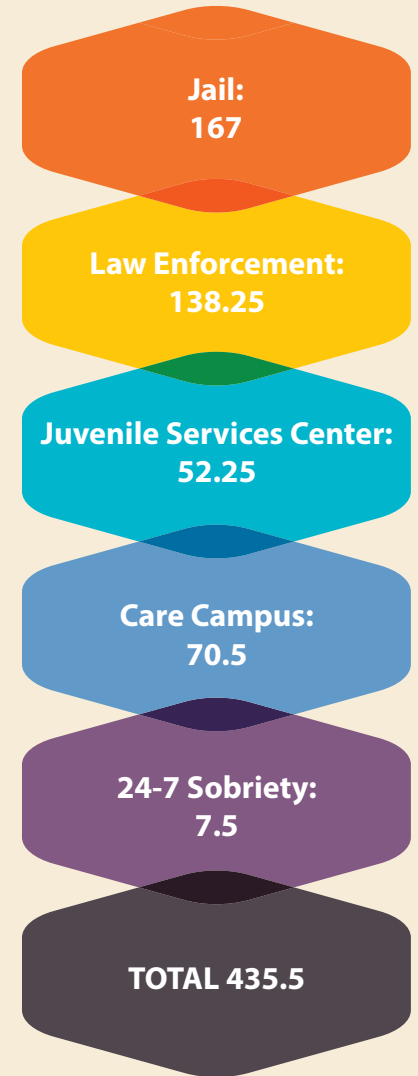
Pennington County

Population:	111,806 (Census) 154,887 MSA (Elevate)
Area:	2,784 square miles
Median Age:	40 years
Individual Median Income:	\$34,062
Median Household Income:	\$67,823
Median Home Price:	\$449,103 (Aug 2023)
Persons in Poverty:	12,143 or 11%
Education:	95% high school diploma 36% bachelor's degree or higher

* Source: US Census Bureau, 2021 American Community Survey 1 Year Estimates, Elevate Rapid City



Employees by Division



YEAR IN REVIEW 2023



January 3, all sworn personnel take the oath of office under Pennington County's 31st Sheriff, Brian Mueller



In May, Pennington County Sheriff's Office joins National Sheriff's Association to launch IGNITE, a jail education/training program



Common Sense Parenting course is available to inmates from Catholic Social Services



Memorial service for former Pennington County Deputy Kaitlin Leising killed in a roadside shooting, May 6, in St. Croix County, Wisconsin. A group from the Pennington County Sheriff's Office joined more than 1,500 law enforcement officers who paid their respects.



Multi-agency response to July 4 protest in downtown Rapid City

YEAR IN REVIEW 2023



Former Correctional Officer David Henry is memorialized in May in Washington DC for his line-of-duty death from COVID-19 in 2021



Joint resolution in October to reduce homelessness in Rapid City and Pennington County



*Julius Morris
National Outstanding Technical Student*



*Randy Harkins, Catlyn Cordell, Jack Thomas
Sheriff's Commendation Medals*



*Adam Mooney
Jay Evenson Leadership Award*



*Thomas Mossman
American Legion Law
Enforcement Award*



*Pennington County Search & Rescue
Helpline Center Spirit of Volunteerism*



*Alix Whittle
Respect for Law Optimist Award*



*Brandon Dirksen, Aaron Cox, Austin Sorensen
Meritorious Service Award*

PATROL



CAPTAIN CHRIS HISLIP In recent years, COVID-19 presented many challenges. The primary concern was our ability to engage with the community we serve. This year we focused on a community-centric approach with renewed proactive enforcement to effectively respond to emergencies and crime, with an emphasis on preventing crime when possible. In 2023, we delivered with increases in both community engagement and proactive enforcement activities.

The Patrol captain, two lieutenants, seven sergeants and 34 deputies were out day and night, every day of the year, working to promote safety and improve the quality of life in our community.



Field Training Officer Thomas Mossman mentors Deputy Janae Olson



Deputy David Riley works back-to-school speed enforcement

CALLS FOR SERVICE

Calls for Service

Citizen Initiated	26,548	Warnings	5,712
Deputy Initiated	27,856	DUI	238
Arrests	3,751	Community Policing	2,620
Case Reports	4,859	Drones Deployed	22
Vehicle Stops	10,199	Warrants Served (by Patrol)	2,155
Citations	979		
Coroner Calls	363		

Fatality Accidents

Car/Pedestrian	4	Motor Vehicle	4
Motorcycle	5	UTV/ATV	1



Traffic enforcement and vehicle crashes are a significant part of the job for those in the patrol division.



Straight line winds created havoc on September 4 on Country Road in the Elk Vale area. Roads had to be blocked during the clean up. Communities were left without electricity while companies worked to restore power.



Black Hills Life Flight was called to the scene of a serious rollover accident with injuries near Highway 244 during the Sturgis Motorcycle Rally.

BOAT/UTV MOTORCYCLE RALLY

Boat/UTV Patrol

Deputies enjoy summer months patrolling Sheridan Lake, Pactola Reservoir and Black Hills trails, helping when needed and ensuring citizens follow the laws on land and water.

We spent over 435 hours this summer patrolling trails and lakes in Pennington County.

These patrols helped support incidents such as missing persons, special events, and organized enforcement operations. The overall goal is to ensure citizens and visitors are safe while enjoying the beauty of Pennington County.

156 Contacts made
10 Warnings
1 Citation



Deputy Cody Rhoden and Reserve Deputy Thad Fitch patrol Pactola Reservoir

Sturgis Rally Recap (August 4-12)

Pennington County Rally Tally	2021	2022	2023
Calls for Service	1,506	1,242	1,188
Motorcycle Accidents	27	13	29
Injury	21	9	23
Non-injury	6	4	6
DUI Arrests	11	4	3
Fatalities	2	1	1



Traffic control is especially difficult near motorcycle accidents, especially when road closures are necessary for the landing of the air ambulance, Black Hills Life Flight



Sergeant Jesse Fagerland, Deputy Catlyn Cordell and Sheriff Mueller enjoy the annual summer event

The 2023 Central States Fair was a well-attended, family friendly and largely incident-free event. Calls for service during the fair were up significantly, but this can be attributed to the increased law enforcement presence and the fact that many calls were self-generated through proactive policing. Partnerships were also key with significant contributions from the Rapid City Police Department, Court Services and Central States Fair staff and security.



Deputies and agency partners ensured a safe, family-friendly Central States Fair

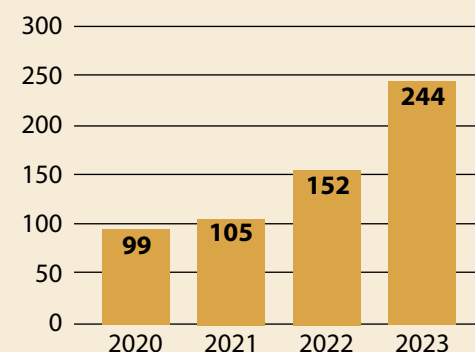


Captain Dustin Morrison joins evening briefing at the command post

Central States (August 18-27)

Calls for Service	244
Disturbance	36
Alcohol/Intoxication	29
Subject and vehicle stops	43
Lost child/missing person	16
Suspicious behavior	16

Comparison Calls for Service



CONTRACT COMMUNITIES

Four towns in Pennington County partner with the Sheriff's Office to staff and maintain law enforcement services:

- Hill City
- New Underwood
- Keystone
- Wall



From left: Deputies Keith Fenner (Hill City), Jim Waldrop (Hill City), Doug Kimball (Hill City), Chris Lindquist (Keystone), Sergeant Randy Harkins, Jeff Jones (New Underwood), Catlyn Cordell (Wall) and Josh Fresquez (Wall)

RESERVE DEPUTIES



Michael Goering



Levi Woodward



Ian Bridge



Jonathon McCary



Kyle McSherry



Caleb Willard



Thad Fitch



Jason Lind



Donald Lampert



Jonathan Zamora



Nicholas Kollias



Mark Bartik



Kevin Sosa



Timothy Montgomery



Devin Cherry

Fifteen men volunteered to serve as reserve deputies. Most have full-time jobs and still find time to give back to the community by serving and assisting the mission of the Pennington County Sheriff's Office. Reserve deputies provided 1,461.5 hours in 2023 including patrolling our lakes and trails, Central States Fair and the Sturgis Motorcycle Rally.

INVESTIGATIONS



CAPTAIN DUSTIN MORRISON: I am proud of the men and women in the Criminal Investigations Division (CID). 2023 was a busy year for crimes against people and property. Our team stepped up in big ways.

For example, we assisted the Rapid City Police with two back-to-back murders over a summer weekend and by Monday, all suspects had been arrested. Since most scams go unsolved or untraced offshore, we celebrated a big win with an arrest in a \$100,000+ warrant scam.

The CID team consists of a lieutenant, four sergeants, 15 investigators, two victim specialists, a crime intelligence analyst, a computer forensic examiner, an investigative assistant, three Rapid City Police Department detectives who assist with domestic violence and sexual assault cases, and a staff assistant.



From left:
Jose Romero,
Damon Baker,
Santee Clemons,
Rio Shearer,
Josie Frank,
Jake Fredericksen,
Alix Whittle,
Joe Lupher,
Jason Mitzel,
Dustin Morrison,
Paul Stevens,
Kylie Kintigh,
Trent Nelson,
Rick Arlaud,
Karen Olson,
Anthony White,
Scott Hultgren,
Brittney Vogel,
Scott Sitzes

Pennington County Sheriff's Office crime

	2021	2022	2023
Murder	0	1	2
Sexual Assault	55	51	71
Aggravated Assault	83	82	70
Robbery	2	1	2
Burglary	78	55	77
Theft	445	333	316
Stolen Vehicles	40	46	47

Overall Crime Data in Pennington County

	2021	2022	2023
Murder	16	9	7
Sexual Assault	213	263	260
Aggravated Assault	584	601	578
Robbery	85	70	104
Burglary	612	538	531
Theft	2,906	3,054	3,157
Stolen Vehicles	524	537	541

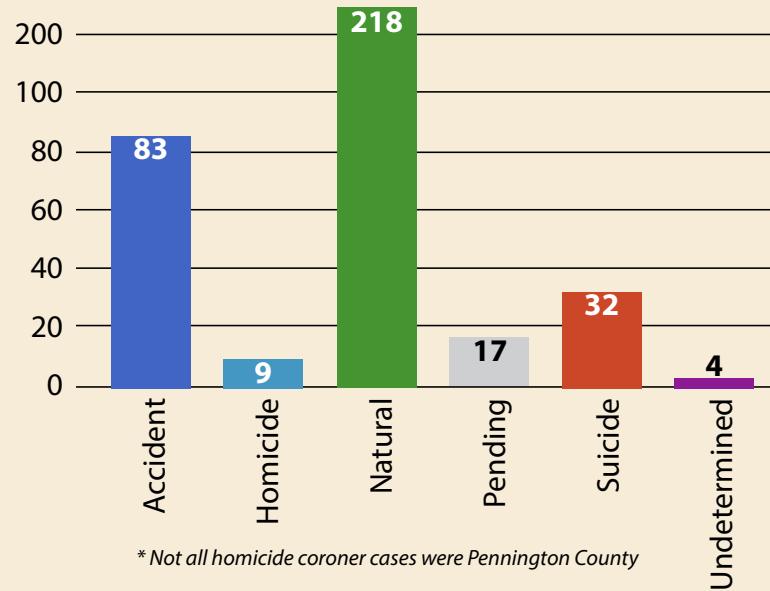
(includes Box Elder, Rapid City and Pennington County combined)

Domestic Violence

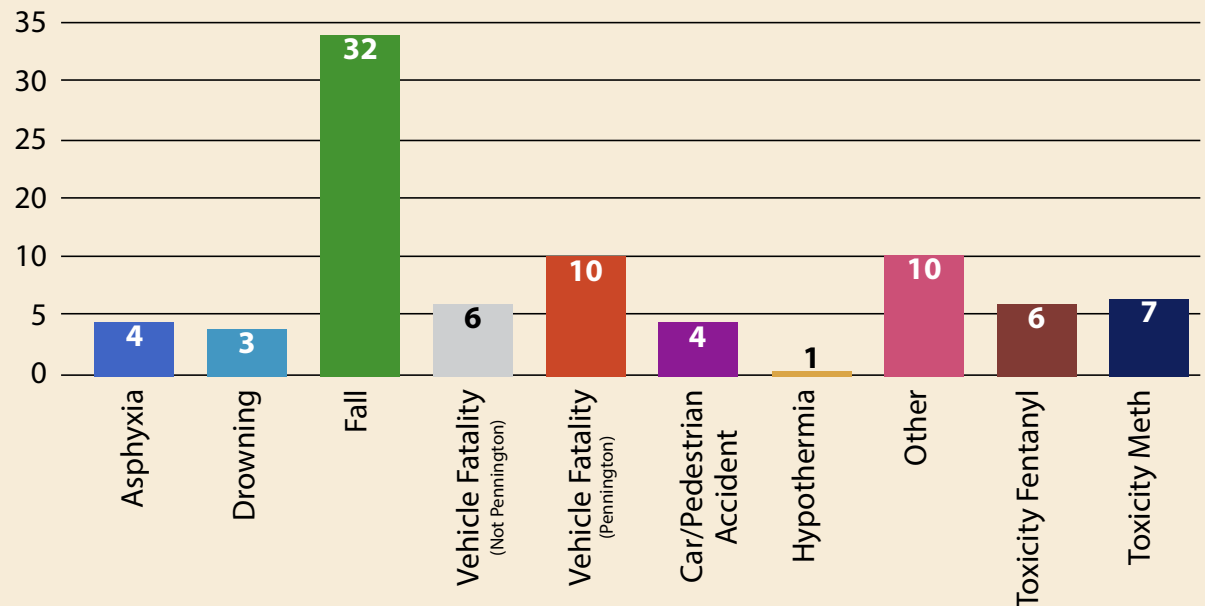
2021	2022	2023
1,643	1,854	1,690

(Single cases including Box Elder, Rapid City and Pennington County)

Coroner Cases by Types*



Accident Types



INTERNET CRIMES AGAINST CHILDREN



SPECIAL AGENT BRIAN FREEOUF The caseload has grown exponentially over the last few years. Locally, Internet Crimes Against Children (ICAC) handles more than 100 cases with a four-person investigative team. That's a lot of work for a small team!

We have one dedicated computer forensic examiner, but others continue to work cases and do forensic examinations. This year our lab processed around 1000 devices with 60 terabytes of data on computers, cell phones, hard drives, and other media storage devices.

The team works daily with the goal to keep kids safe in our communities.



ICAC team from left: Brian Freeouf (DCI), Elliott Harding (RCPD), Matt Almeida (RCPD), and seated Hollie Strand (PCSO)

ICAC Case Examinations

1,000+ devices
60 terabytes data
15 arrests
200+ years sentenced in federal court

Solicitation of a minor

10 cases

Possession of Child Pornography

150 cases

Community Outreach

53 presentations
approximately 4,000 attendees



Forensic Computer Analysts download computers and hard drives to investigate cases

UNIFIED NARCOTICS ENFORCEMENT TEAM



Confiscated meth, heroin and mushroom candy bar

SERGEANT THAD MASON

Methamphetamine continues to be the most common controlled substance on the streets. A large influx of fentanyl-laced counterfeit pills have been associated with a significant increase in fatal and non-fatal overdoses in our community. Working hard to hold drug dealers accountable, Unified Narcotics Enforcement Team (UNET) has successfully obtained federal indictments against several suppliers linked to these overdose cases. Recent changes in South Dakota law have assisted in prosecuting and holding dealers accountable.

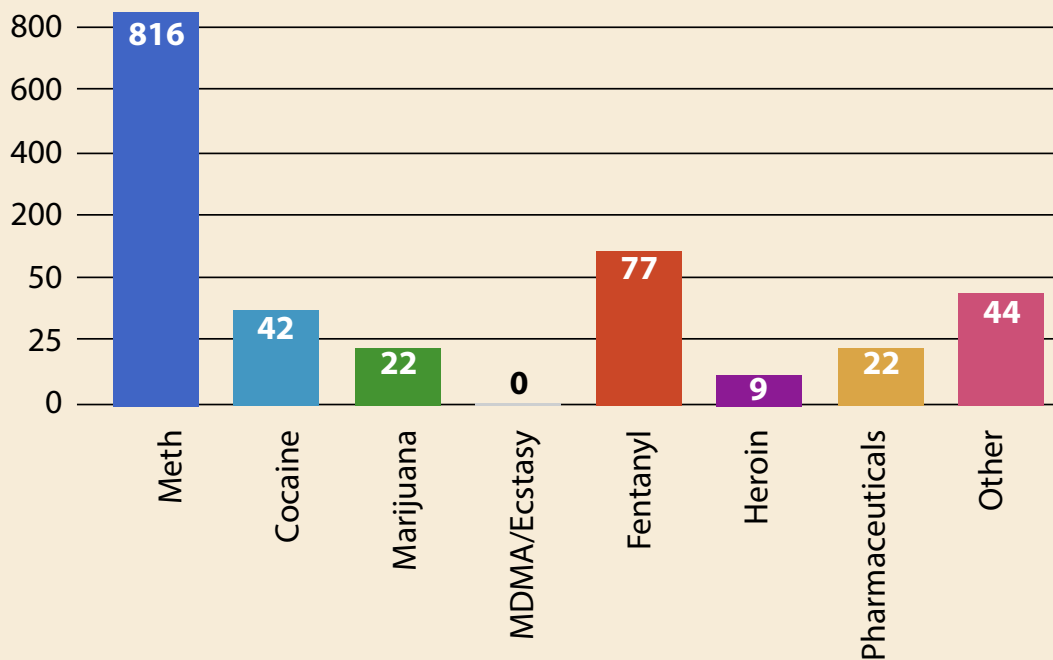
Telegram is a newer phone application widely used to

distribute items including tobacco, THC products and even illicit drugs to a wide range of users including grade school children. We put extra effort into identifying those who target our youth.

Most large-scale drug trafficking organizations operating in our community tie back to Denver or California, but the source of the drugs is Mexico. Our primary objective is to tackle the main sources in the local area and then expand investigations to take down sources in Denver and beyond.

Search warrants executed	198
Cash seized	\$191,125
Firearms seized	54

2023 Arrest by Drug



Confiscated meth and heroin

VICTIM SPECIALIST PROGRAM

THE PENNINGTON COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE and the Rapid City Police Department established the joint Victim Specialist Program in 2016. Victims and their families suffer, grieve and seek justice, and are often overwhelmed with feelings of terror, confusion and anger. The Victim Specialist Assistance Program strives to ensure every victim is treated with fairness and respect. A *Victims of Crime Act* grant funds these two full-time positions to help crime victims and families cope with crime and navigate the criminal justice system. They have strong relationships with state and community agencies.

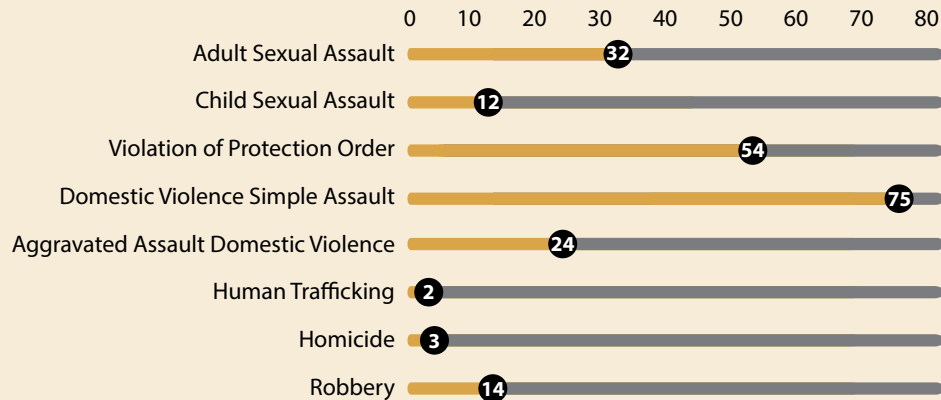
VICTIM ASSISTANCE PROVIDED TO INDIVIDUALS

- Crime victim compensation applications
- Emotional support and safety services
- Emergency assistance: food, clothing
- Transportation and housing needs
- Criminal/civil justice court system advocacy
- 911 cell phones and security cameras
- Community presentations

299 TOTAL VICTIMS

972 unique services

VICTIM SPECIALIST CASES 2023 (YTD)



Denim Day and Victim Rights Week, April 2023



Victim Specialists Scott Hultgren and Becky Elger are members of the South Dakota Victim Services Mobile Assistance Response Team

SCHOOL RESOURCE OFFICERS



SERGEANT JESSE FAGERLAND supervises the Sheriff's Office School Resource Officer (SRO) program. SRO's are an integral part of Rapid City, Douglas, New Underwood and Hill City schools, working with each district to protect, educate, and be a positive role model. In addition to their normal duties, online safety and social media issues have become an increased area of concern.



Deputies Abraham Wheeler and Jayson Herra with Elder Police Officer Jason Brown at Douglas schools



Deputy Chaz Foss, Hill City



Deputy Stephen Stewart, East Middle School



School Resource Officer Abigail Pi is the rover between schools



Deputies Joshua Kunde and Kelsey Schwartz at Stevens High School



Deputy Cody Rhoden, New Underwood



Deputy Thad Schmit returns to Stevens High School after 9-month deployment

SPECIAL RESPONSE TEAM

THE SPECIAL RESPONSE TEAM was on standby numerous times but only was activated two times in 2023, down from four call-outs in 2022. The team's mission is to safely resolve dangerous situations with as little force as necessary.



The Special Response Team includes members of the Pennington County Sheriff's Office (PCSO), Rapid City Police Department (RCPD), Rapid City Fire Department and Emergency Services Communication Center. They work closely with the South Dakota Highway Patrol SWAT Team. RCPD Captain Andy Becker is the team's commander and PCSO Captain Taylor Sperle is the team's Deputy Commander.



Multi-agency response and teamwork resolves dangerous situations as safely as possible



2023 Pistol Permit Applications

Received	1,598
Denied	71
Regular Permit	1,223
Enhanced	253
Gold	10

South Dakota continues to reimburse counties for concealed carry pistol permits, making it cost-free for citizens to apply. The application must be filled out in person at the Sheriff's Office. Citizens are encouraged to research the South Dakota Secretary of State website for full details on how to obtain a concealed carry pistol permit.

Papers Served

2021	9,816
2022	7,424
2023	8,046

Protection Orders

2021	864
2022	1,631
2023	2,035

No Contact Orders

2021	1,484
2022	1,305
2023	1,517

Money Collected:

Executions	
2021	\$296,797
2022	\$310,625
2023	\$312,503

Tax Warrants

2021	\$80,530
2022	\$104,234
2023	\$83,459

Civil Fees

2021	\$176,573
2022	\$215,831
2023	\$227,428

Sheriff's Sales on Executions

2021	4
2022	4
2023	4

CAPTAIN TAYLOR SPERLE supervises the Civil Division. Civil deputies are tasked with notifying individuals when they face legal action in a court of law or administrative court. These delivered documents may include summonses, complaints, subpoenas, writs or other legal paperwork from the courts, attorneys or citizens. Fees brought in by the Civil Division support the Sheriff's Office budget.



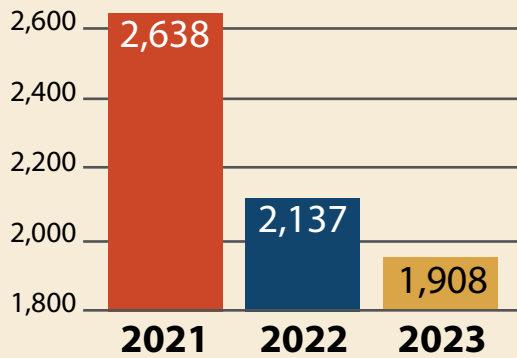
From left: Tammy Ellison, Eric Bangayan, Niki Kruse, Lisa Bellew, Sergeant Ed Schulz, Dave VanDenHemel, Dave Douma, Bob Sanders, Rusty Schmidt

WARRANTS

2023 Warrants Processed

Felony	3,486
Misdemeanor	7,275
Domestic Violence	1,690
City	10,761
Other	337
Felony Drug Warrants	1,908
Received	10,961
Served by Patrol	2,155
Served/Cleared	10,924
Fees Collected	\$127,154
Self turn-ins (people)	778
Self turn-ins (warrants cleared)	965
Extraditions	19

Felony Drug Warrants



The Warrants Division focuses on arresting suspects wanted for violent crimes in the community. The deputies and sergeant are members of the US Marshals Federal Task Force which allows our agencies to combine resources to safely and efficiently arrest wanted suspects in the region. Staff assistants processed 10,163 felony and misdemeanor warrants into federal and local databases. They also manage the Northwest Shuttle which transports inmates throughout the Western United States back to Pennington County to face criminal charges at a minimal fee for taxpayers.



From left: Dustin Meyer, Natalie Bailey, Sergeant Jeromey Smith, Nichole Dubbs, Adam Mooney, Abbee Griese, Brandon Akley, Robin McCool-Deneke

TRANSPORT

Local Inmate Transports _____	5,352
Juvenile Inmate Transports _____	151
Inmates Transported by bus _____	6,032
Round-trips to Sioux Falls _____	97
Trips to Health and Human Services Center _____	5

Deputies and Transport Officers transfer adult and juvenile inmates to court appearances, medical appointments, and to and from the South Dakota State Penitentiary in Sioux Falls. This is also a service to other counties, offering a cost-effective method of moving inmates across South Dakota.



Front row from left: Mark Brooks, Christian Raby, Thomas Mossman, Kent Holland, Caleb Dirksen, Brett Casey, Skye Rowe, Jane Cheesman
Second row: Sgt. Keith Carlson, Sgt. Billy Davis, David Ricke, Austin Sorensen, Brandon Dirksen, Shawn Stalder, Matt Chalk, Neal Hofer, Christine Heying
Back row: Bruce Seumanutafa, Nick Novak, Eric Petersen, Aaron Cox, Dean Misiewicz, Glenn Miller, Eric Mendez

SECURITY

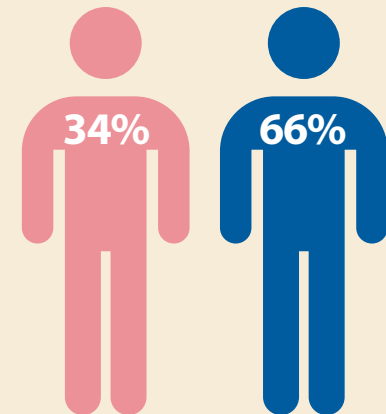
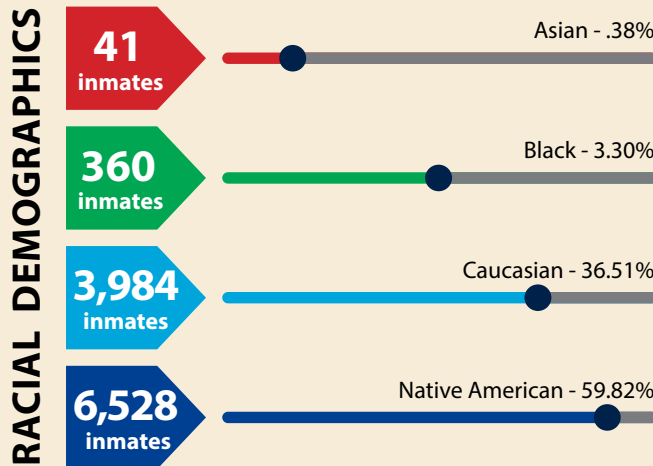
Personnel from the Transport Division also perform security duties at the Pennington County Courthouse, Jail and Administration Building. Their mission is to provide a safe environment for employees, inmates and the public. It includes a screening location to ensure weapons don't enter the courthouse or the jail. They also provide a presence inside and outside the courtroom and courthouse to deter and detect criminal activity in the area.



JAIL

COMMANDER ROB YANTIS Jails symbolize the commitment of a society to uphold the rule of law and maintain order. A jail is a reminder that among neighbors, criminal behavior will not be tolerated. Tools are available to prosecutors and courts to increase accountability in our community and protect victims.

While jail staff maintain internal order and discipline, and secure the institution against unauthorized access or escape, they also diligently rehabilitate those placed in custody to the extent that human nature and resources allow. Correctional officers are mentors, counselors, and role models. Pennington County Jail staff are committed to ensuring incarceration includes giving individuals a chance to grow. They work tirelessly to help their neighbors turn their lives around by providing education, vocational training, and guidance. Our goal is to rebuild the lives of our neighbors so that they can be successful members of our community.



GENDER

Female:	Male:
3,688 inmates	6,528 inmates



Correctional Officer Tim Malone trains newly hired correctional staff



Captain Casey Munsch
supervises support operations including medical/mental health, facility maintenance, electronically monitored work release, inmate trustees, inmate programs and volunteers, inmate communication services, laundry and food service.



Captain Wade Anderson
supervises facility security, maintains internal order and discipline with the direct supervision philosophy, and oversees staff development and accreditation.



Crucial support staff at the Pennington County Jail



Lieutenant Kathy Houston
supervises daily housing and classification operations, staff and inmate safety and security, and adherence to policy and procedures.



Lieutenant Ken Wilson
supervises inmate intake and release, control functions, and is the liaison with courts and law enforcement.

24-7 PROGRAM SOBRIETY



PROGRAM DIRECTOR LUCAS OYLER The goal of the 24-7 Sobriety Program is to hold people accountable while reducing the jail population. The program promotes accountability for its clients and allows them to maintain jobs and family relationships while working towards their sobriety.

It is staffed by two full-time county employees and nine part-time employees. They provide a variety of testing that includes breath tests, urine tests and remote monitoring. The program has been successful since its inception and in 2023 maintained a 94.7% passed test rating for those involved in the program.

ALCOHOL BREATH TEST

Status	Count
Passed	69,766
Missed	913
Failed	383

DRUG URINE ANALYSIS

Status	Count
Passed	20,578
Missed	2,892
Failed	320



Twice a day, every day of the year, techs are available to help clients stay sober



SCRAM Continuous Alcohol Monitoring ankle bracelets provide mobile options



People line up morning and evening for daily testing



Rapid City Police wellness coordinator Sean Hollearn offers health coursework



Certified teachers from the Pennington County Sheriff's Office help inmates master coursework and obtain a general education degree

COORDINATOR JESSICA AFRANK

Individual Growth Naturally and Intentionally Through Education (IGNITE) was introduced in the spring. By year-end, programming included a robust GED program, Consumer Credit Counseling, addiction services, parenting, relationship and health courses, and even yoga.

We continue to look for community partners to provide job skills training and link inmates to employers.



Volunteer certified yoga instructor Sharlene Schreter offers weekly sessions for male and female inmates

CARE CAMPUS



CHIEF DEPUTY WILLIE WHELCHER We celebrated the fifth anniversary of caring for Rapid City and Pennington County's most vulnerable populations. Like in the past, a high percentage of individuals voluntarily use the facility, accounting for 66% of admissions.

A significant milestone was reached in February with the opening of the Assessment Center at Pivot Point, the result of a successful public/private partnership. Formerly known as the Crisis Care Center and operated by West River Mental Health, the facility relocated to a building across the alley from the Care Campus. In July, this stabilization unit also opened its doors, offering community members access to mental health care for up to five days. These developments mark a significant step in improving care coordination for individuals requiring mental health care and substance abuse treatment.

Regular bi-weekly meetings continue to convene with representatives from various partner agencies to devise solutions for individuals who frequently access services in our community. This collaborative effort has yielded positive outcomes for numerous individuals, addressing both their immediate needs and long-term care options, including medical assistance and housing.



CARE CAMPUS

22,873 Total admissions*



DETOX

Detox admissions 6,465

SAFE SOLUTIONS BEDS

Safe bed admissions 16,016
(beds turnover multiple times each day)

ADDICTION TREATMENT SERVICES

Individuals in 12-hour DUI class 92
Treatment assessments 887
Admissions for residential treatment services 363

** some clients use more than one service*

West River Mental Health PIVOT POINT

Total intakes/clients assessed 764
Released w/outpatient plan 535
Admitted to Stabilization Unit (from July 31) 229



Clients transferred to Human Services (Yankton) 4
Phone calls 2,917



Deanna Nolan
Clinical Director



David Oster
Program Director



Care Campus facility-wide annual meeting



Detox Techs help with intakes

HUMAN RESOURCES

HUMAN RESOURCES DIRECTOR NIKKI FARRAR AND GENERALIST YOVANA ESTRELLA JOHNSON 2023 was another challenging year marked by department change. We worked to attract and retain employees across all four divisions amidst a challenging regional workforce shortage.

We launched a social media marketing campaign, broadened the applicant pool, removed barriers, visited schools and colleges, and worked smarter to fill vacancies, especially in corrections.



While recovering from an injury, Deputy Heather Skogen helped HR with the year's extraordinary hiring effort



Heather Courage, CNP-Psych, provides pre-hire mental health staff evaluations, peer support, counseling and other psychiatric services for the sheriff's office, Rapid City Police and Fire Departments and South Dakota Division of Criminal Investigation



Nikki Farrar and Yovana Estrella Johnson work to onboard all the newly hired employees



434 people were offered jobs in 2023. 145 accepted positions and started internal division-specific training process

EXPLORER PROGRAM



Explorers work community events like the Bicycle Fair, Mission 22 walk and Central States Fair



Deputies work with Explorers on techniques and safety with tasers

The Explorer Program gives young men and women exposure to a career in law enforcement. It builds character through physical fitness, leadership and community service.

We encourage youth and young adults between the ages of 15 and 21 to apply to be part of the Pennington County Sheriff's Explorer Program. Contact Lieutenant Dave Switzer for details: 605-394-6113.



Front row: Sgt. Amanda Swanson, Investigator Jorge Salas, Deputy Brian Burgner, Explorer Naveyah Lampert, Explorer Hailey Thompson, Explorer Brooke Kruse, Sheriff Brian Mueller
Back row: Sgt. Gordon Larsen, Deputy Brandon Spence, Explorer Braydon Spear, Explorer Nick Koehler, Explorer Talyiah Green, Deputy David Dross, Lt. Dave Switzer, Chief Deputy Mark Hughes

WESTERN SOUTH DAKOTA JUVENILE SERVICES CENTER



COMMANDER JOE GUTTIEREZ The Western South Dakota Juvenile Services Center (WSDJSC) continues to operate as one of the premier Juvenile Detention Facilities in the country. It has been nationally accredited by the American Correctional Association since 1999 and serves as a federal, state, and regional holding facility.

With a goal to change the trajectory of lives of the youth population, WSDJSC offers weekly programming to include corrective thinking, life skills, education, religious services, and vocational/ career development. Some detainees also receive mental health counseling, chemical dependency and sex offender treatment.

As an alternative to secure detention, the Juvenile Services Center continues to offer electronic monitoring. With approval from the courts, the juvenile may remain in the community while they await court or serve a sentence. Lutheran Social Services continues to run a reception, homeless and runaway shelter on campus as another alternative.



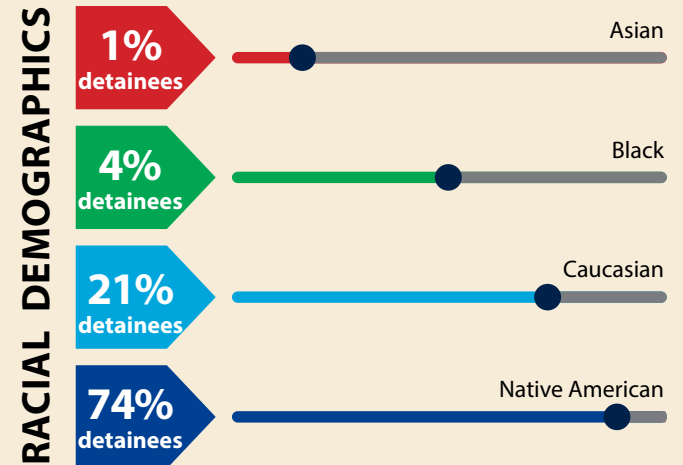
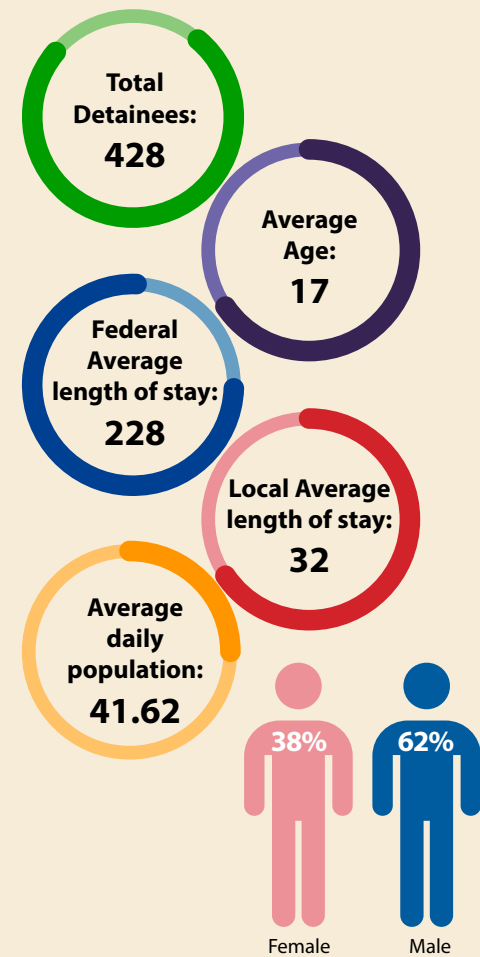
Lieutenant John Martin supervises security, staff schedules, community based electronic monitoring and is the court liaison.



Lieutenant Heather Wood supervises case managers, education, food service, detainee programs, volunteers, detainee and staff communication.



Administrative Assistant Melissa Reckling maintains the accreditation/compliance process, manages financial records/inventory, compiles statistical data



WESTERN SOUTH DAKOTA JUVENILE SERVICES CENTER



The Staff of the Western South Dakota Juvenile Services Center



2023 Employees of the Month



Correctional Officer Tara Bohlmann supervises a housing unit



Teachers Jenn McClain, Julie Callahan, Dustri Eisenbraun, Emily Wheaton

WELLNESS



COREY BRUBAKKEN WELLNESS COORDINATOR

Ensuring the well-being of our employees and their families remains a paramount concern. Each day, our team encounters individuals facing life-altering and challenging situations, compounded by the round-the-clock commitment to community service inherent in public safety careers.

Navigating a career in public safety comes with unique stressors that can gradually affect both

mental health and physical well-being. We cultivate a culture that encourages seeking help, aiming to eliminate any associated stigma. Through continuous education, robust peer support initiatives, and access to wellness-focused resources, we empower our team to recognize and address these challenges.

In 2023, our dedicated Peer Support Team engaged in over 157 confidential interactions with employees and their families.



Wellness Dog Harley celebrates his 3rd birthday with staff



Training manager Tony Verchio and team grill for the PCSO family picnic



The wellness team meets with all new employees and their families to offer support and services

CHAPLAINS



The Chaplains hosted another wonderful Christmas party for employees and their families

The mission of this unique group is simple: to serve the employees and families of the Pennington County Sheriff's Office. Over the past 10 years our Chaplains Program has put down strong roots and continues to grow.

Through generous financial contributions from donors, the Pennington County Sheriff's Office Chaplains provide special and fun opportunities for fellowship, support and guidance.

2023 Chaplains



Chaplains in the picture at left: Evan Fowler, David Piper & Chris Swarthout at annual pork butt challenge



Thanks to generous donors, the Chaplains had fun games and prizes at the annual party. From left: Chris Swarthout, David Piper, Todd Lynch, Evan Fowler and Becky Piper



Chaplains hosted a taco bar to show appreciation to correctional staff

TRAINING



PCSO Training Team: Jon Edwards, Tony Verchio, Tim Malone, Patty Garland

TONY VERCHIO TRAINING MANAGER The Training Office is responsible for providing pre-service and continuing education to all divisions of the Sheriff's Office. Our training is continually reviewed to make sure it complies with legal updates, changing times and industry best practices.

2023 was another busy year setting a record for the number of pre-service training hours as we worked to become fully staffed. This year we received an award for excellence in online training management from Lexipol, our online training platform and training records management system provider.

**TOTAL TRAINING
HOURS**
33,912 hours



Defensive tactics



Correctional staff on jail pod



Annual firearms training



Emotional intelligence training



Successful completion of the Deputy Training Officer program

LAW ENFORCEMENT BASIC ACADEMY

The Pennington County Sheriff's Office had 12 deputies graduate from the Law Enforcement Training Academy in Pierre over three 13-week sessions in 2023.



Spring 2023 class: Deputies Eddie Moua, Brennan Culverhouse, Heather Skogen, and Kyle Worden



Deputy Eddie Moua wins Class Inspiration Award



Fall 2023 class: Captain Chris Hislip, Deputies Jacob Mayberry, Cade Porch, Branden Spence, Kendrick Larson and Lt. David Switzer



Winter 2023 class: Captain Chris Hislip, Deputies Brian Harlan, Mandy Schmidt, Jared Doyle, Phil Rivera and Lt. David Switzer

SEARCH AND RESCUE



2023 CALLS

- 27 - Vehicle Extrication
- 24 - Search
- 15 - Carry-Out
- 5 - High Angle Rescue
- 20 - Water Rescue

Search and Rescue Team

The team deployed its unique skills and resources throughout a broad geographic area in 2023. Winter weather searches were conducted for lost or overdue snowmobilers on the Black Hills snowmobile trail system. Challenging and long-duration vertical rope rescues were performed throughout the darkest hours of the night. A popular hiking and swimming spot presented a greater-than-normal number of injured, dehydrated, lost, or exhausted individuals in need of rescue efforts to bring them to safety. We even provided a K-9 team and other assets to Weston County, Wyoming during a large search across the border.

Over the past several years, we are proud to have worked closely with other area responders to foster a free flow of information to share ideas and practices. This year, more than any other, we saw other agencies adopt techniques and technologies that Pennington County Search And Rescue has come to rely on. We are working with these groups to test cutting edge equipment and software that may someday make the difference between life and death.

The Rapid City/Pennington County Water Rescue Team was dispatched to more than 15 calls for service in 2023. The team includes personnel from the Pennington County Sheriff's Office, Rapid City Fire Department, and Rapid City Police Department. They provide local water rescue and recovery as well as a regional deployable response. In 2023, several team members were sent to a swift water class in Jackson, Wyoming. It took some time, but the team now has a new trailer and motor to complete the boat package ordered a year ago.



June drowning and body recovery at Pactola Reservoir



Multi-agency Rapid City/Pennington County Water Rescue Team



Water Rescue team annual ice training in Canyon Lake Park

OUT IN THE COMMUNITY



First Responder Night at Rapid City Rush Hockey



Joint Sheriff/Police team wins Police Week Softball game



Hooked on Hardwater fishing event



Annual Mission 22 Walk For Hope: a 24-hour walk to raise awareness about mental health challenges within the veteran community



Deputy McPherson brings donations to Rapid Valley family recovering from February house fire



Native American employees help recruit and host booth at Lakota Nation Invitational



Tip a Cop at Outback Steakhouse to benefit Special Olympics South Dakota



Deputy J. Marcus Isakson at Autism Society of the Black Hills annual Ice Cream with Officers



Cops on a Donut Shop fundraiser for South Dakota Special Olympics



Sergeant Randy Harkins enjoys the rally crowd in Hill City



National Guard Veteran Deputy Thad Schmit shared significance of Veteran's Day with Hill City students



Sheriff Mueller engages with South Valley Civic Organization to discuss public safety efforts

OUT IN THE COMMUNITY

Sergeant Vic Quick, Douglas School Resource Officers and staff, Box Elder Police Officers and other law enforcement officers joined the annual Shopping with a Sheriff event to fill the needs of families



Having fun with Santa and the Rockerville Volunteer Fire Fighters delivering gifts to youngsters at Black Hills Children's Home



Deputy Brian Harland and Sergeant Taylor Muhlbeier helped kids shop at the Badges N' Kids Christmas event



Retro Warrior Coffee provides coffee bar for employee breakfast



Badges for Hope lunch



Nerdy Nuts hosts lunch from Eddie's Tacos



Black Hills Autism Society hosts Ice Cream with Officers at Armadillos



Open Bible Church meals for all shifts on July 4th



Donut delivery from eXp Realty to all divisions

RETIREMENTS



Marc Boddicker, 30 years
Special Deputy



Ed Schulz, 26 years
Civil Sergeant



Gaylene Gibbons, 26 years
Detox Tech, EMT



Randy Harkins, 24 years
Patrol Sergeant



Dave Ricke, 21 years
Jail Sergeant



Kelly Braun, 20 years
Correctional Officer II



Chris Plawman, 17 years
Patrol Deputy



Don Lanpher, 8 years
Purchasing Manager

Staff Hiring/Retention

Public safety staffing provides the backbone that keeps our community safe. We continue to look for the best candidates to serve in all four divisions, give them the tools and training for success, and provide resources for long and fulfilling careers. This includes a full wage study in 2024 and adjustments if needed to stay competitive in the market and region.

Jail Updates

Pennington County is moving forward with the final design of an estimated \$28-\$32 million project to add a 25,000-square-foot expansion to the original jail on St. Joseph Street. The design will add approximately 148 new beds, begin to fix some critical infrastructure issues, and create a foundation to add four more stories to accommodate future needs for the next 20 plus years in Pennington County.

IGNITE Initiative

More initiatives are coming in 2024 to support the educational, job and life skills, and addiction services for those in all three of our facilities. Pennington County will continue to partner with community organizations and businesses to enhance these initiatives. Pennington County and Rapid City have partnered together to fund a 2-year pilot program for an in-house sentenced work release program intended to increase accountability and lower recidivism with repeat offenders in our community.



BRIAN MUELLER - PENNINGTON COUNTY SHERIFF

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