



# Skamania County Sheriff's Office

*Partnering with the Community to Continually Improve Public Safety.*

**JUNE 2011**



**Sheriff Dave Brown**

***We are in the midst of some very difficult times in this country.***

The future seems more unpredictable and uncertain than at any time in our history. All of us have been impacted in one fashion or another by the events unfolding around us daily. There seems to be very little good news at any level; local, State or Nationally.

For those who have chosen a career in law enforcement our profession can compound these issues. There can be no question that all of us encounter these issues daily as we put on the uniform, and re-commit ourselves to public service.

These past few years have proven to be horrendously sad times with the tragic loss of law enforcement officers here in Washington State and across the Nation.

## From the Sheriff

The Skamania County Sheriff's Office has been one of the most fortunate law enforcement agencies in the region over the course of the past several years. We are blessed with a team of highly intelligent, hardworking, ambitious people who understand the oath of office to protect and serve. We have also been supported fiscally with adequate resources that allow us to safely perform at a very high level.

I offer my gratitude for the sacrifices made by law enforcement officers here and across this country to promote our important mission, and wish them safety in the days that come.

There has been a noticeable awakening across this country in the past couple of years and a renewed concern and regard for the future of this great nation. Many Americans appear to have rediscovered what our government's responsibilities are and are active in working to realign our local, state and federal governing principles. The processes and activities underway are important in reaffirming our guiding principles and preserving a future that maintains the strengths and ideals the majority of Americans have come to appreciate.

As we move forward in 2011 and beyond, I feel it is imperative that we continue to stand guard against those who are intruding upon the civil liberties

of the Citizens we serve, and as law enforcement officers, reaffirm our oath to uphold the Constitution to meet the expectations of it's founders, and create a positive, safe future for those who follow in our footsteps.

Our task is difficult and there is no short-term solution. It will require persistence and commitment and most of all it will demand a focus on the future and a desire to re-acquire the reality that we are, without question, a part of the greatest Republic on earth.

Historically our Nation's greatest strength has always been our ability to come together and face challenges locally as communities. It is that strength we must tap into in these difficult times, here at home, and across this nation.

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# Skamania County Sheriff's Office 2010 Officers of the year

## Road Deputy Gary Manning

Deputy Gary Manning has been with our patrol division since 2007. He currently serves as our Marijuana Identification Expert and Portable Breath Test technician. Gary is also a member of the Sheriff's Office Honor Guard and is a certified Field Training Officer and Search & Rescue Coordinator. Deputy Manning completed these peripheral duties while maintaining his Patrol Deputy status. His ability to multi-task is evident and he is a well respected member of this office and in good standing with all the agencies we work with. His efforts are appreciated and his hard work and dedication to this office does not go unnoticed.

*Congratulations  
to the 2010  
Officers of the Year!*



## Civil Deputy Cindy Hull

Cindy Hull began working for the Skamania County Sheriff's Office in 1999. This is Cindy's 4th time in the past 12 years that she has been recognized by her peers and supervisors as the officer of the year for her division. Cindy is recognized for her everyday efforts in the civil division and her attention to detail with regards to warrant entry, protection orders and managing the sex offender registration program. Cindy truly enjoys her work and it shows in her interaction with the public. She strives to be a resource to both the corrections and patrol divisions and is appreciated for her efforts.

## Corrections Deputy Steve Minnis

During 2010 Steve Minnis has been a stand out employee. He is constantly looking for more to do to improve our office as a whole. He took the initiative to take trustees outside the facility on nights and weekends, as time allowed, to weed flowerbeds around the entire facility. He has also ensured the floors within the facility were cleaned and waxed on a more regular basis. In 2010 Steve attended an active shooter for dispatchers training. After he completed the course he brought back the material and put together a great training for his peers. He also worked with a couple other team members to complete a new bail book for all to use. He compiled building layouts for not just the schools but some large facilities within our county based on the active shooter scenarios. Steve put this together for all to have on their mobile computers. He has really shown a great deal of interest in building the professionalism of the Sheriff's Office this past year.



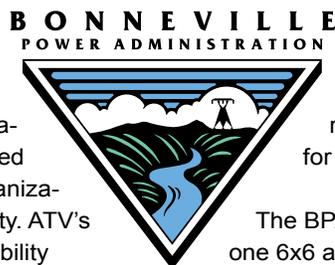
Skamania County's rural nature and over 1600 square miles including Mt. St. Helens and a portion of Mt. Adams, creates an opportunity for year round recreation in the gorge and on the forest.

The demands for service, such as search and rescue continue to increase as outdoor enthusiasts become more active. The rugged and remote nature of these areas often calls for the use of ATV type vehicles to effectively carry out a search or rescue scenario.

## Bonneville Power Administration Provides Generous Donation.

These past few years Skamania County has experienced an increase in marijuana grow operations conducted by large drug trafficking organizations within Skamania County. ATV's have allowed deputies the ability to quickly deliver both personnel and equipment to these areas. In the past we had to borrow other agencies equipment for this purpose and have at times had to wait for their arrival. This wait time creates a greater officer safety risk and adds to the time and effort it takes to eradicate these illegal grow operations.

Thanks to a very generous donation from the Bonneville Power Administration the Skamania County Sheriff's Office has



acquired the equipment needed to more effectively respond to backcountry calls for service.

The BPA donated three 4x4 and one 6x6 all terrain vehicles. These will be utilized to assist us in search and rescue, illegal marijuana grows as well as many other functions of the Sheriff's Office. In addition to the donation of the vehicles a flatbed trailer, large enough to haul this equipment, was also donated. We are excited with this new opportunity to work with the BPA in a manner that will help provide a better public safety service.

# Skamania County Sheriff Explorers

## Post #910

By: Explorer President Ciara Griffiee

The Skamania County Sheriff's Explorer Program consists of a group of Skamania County youth currently ranging in ages from 14 to 19. Most of the explorers are looking to acquire a career in law enforcement, investigation, or dispatching. The program allows teens to explore their career options while receiving hands on learning. The Explorer Program is designed to train explorers to assist in search and rescue events as well as assisting officers with everyday tasks such as traffic control. The Explorers commit to being involved with and helpful to the community in positive ways. This is an overall great way for students in high school, and those who just graduated to explore and learn about the many career options in law enforcement while giving back to the community.

When the program began in June 2010, the main focus was to get us involved with search and rescue. The group attended several classes and presentations that gave us an introduction into the SAR field. During the winter, the explorers took a trip to Lone Butte Snow Park to learn snow survival skills. Skamania County emergency management coordinator, John Carlson, showed the group how to build a shelter out of natural materials and how to get a fire started in the rain or snow. After the training, the Explorers enjoyed a small BBQ, snow fights, a little sledding trip, and a ride on the Skamania County Sheriff's



Office snow cat. In the last two months, the program has taken a turn away from search and rescue in order to focus on the Law Enforcement Field.

The Explorers are planning on attending a weeklong academy during the summer. The academy is a place for different explorer groups from other counties to compete against each other in various tasks. Our program advisors are preparing us for the academy by setting up mock scenarios that teach us more about the law enforcement field. Most of the explorers have done several ride alongs with different deputies. It has been a great way for the group to learn how traffic stops are conducted as well as how other cases like domestic violence are handled.

When the program was first coming together, some of us were quiet at the first few meetings. Now everyone seems to feel comfortable with sharing their ideas and trying new things. Each individual has their own reason for joining the Explorers and their own goals and direction they'd like to go in the program. I think, as a whole, right now our goal is to learn as many skills as we can to get ready for the academy and to attend as a group. As President of the Skamania County Explorer Post #910, I would like to help make the program a fun but productive learning experience for everyone. I would like to see us be positively known in the community



and to help out when needed. I also think it would be good to see us get involved with SAR once we are ready and have time to focus on it. I am interested in learning new things and many new skills with the group of Explorers that we have now.

Although the program was started almost a year ago, it is still a trial and error process. We are learning what works, what doesn't, and what we as Explorers want to learn and do. Because the program is still new, we Explorers basically get to create it. We are going to get to learn most of the things that we want to learn from it. The program is set up where members of the explorers hold elected positions on the board of directors and are overseen by the program advisors. I think it is a great way for all of us to explore our interested career fields in our own ways while still having a good time. I also think it helps create great personal skills as an individual and as a group. I am glad to see that this program was created. Thank you to all the deputies who put their personal time and effort into making this program a success. We would also like to thank the members of the community who have given us many great donations and support. The program is open to any input from the community and it is appreciated.



### Skamania County Emergency Management

**Mitigation:** to lessen in force or intensity, as wrath, grief, harshness, or pain; moderate. To make less severe.

Skamania County recently received official word that FEMA has approved our recently drafted Natural Hazards Mitigation Plan.

This plan resulted from a great deal of work and cooperation from our Local Emergency Planning Team (LEPT).

The LEPT was a multi-disciplinary Skamania group, consisting of representatives from local government, junior taxing districts, private sector and the public

The LEPT worked community by community, and involved all junior taxing districts in the county to develop specific hazard analy-

sis, prioritize those hazards, and then work to identify specific preparedness efforts and mitigation strategies for the hazards.

Recovery efforts were identified for each hazard. Values for critical infrastructure, key assets in Skamania County were assessed

Finally, a process was put in place to keep the plan reviewed, updated and maintained annually.

# School Resource Officers:

**What We Know, What We Think We Know,  
What We Need To Know.**

By Deputy Steven Rasmussen

**WHAT WE KNOW:** One of the ways communities are tackling the problem of school related issues involving violence, drugs / alcohol, theft, and the many forms of bullying is by placing a full time commissioned law enforcement officer in their schools. My main focus is to enhance the safety of the learning environment for the students while they are at school. The Skamania County Sheriff's Office implemented a full time school resource officer "SRO" program at the beginning of the 2010-2011 school year. The "SRO" is specifically trained to perform three roles: law enforcement officer, law-related counselor, and law-related education teacher.

**WHAT WE THINK WE KNOW:** Is it working? To be honest, I could go on forever with what I think I know. The program of "SRO" across the country is constantly being upgraded to meet the ever-changing issues facing our young people today. I guess the best judges are the students at our local schools. Ask them if they have had a positive interaction with their "SRO" while at school and what they think of the program. I always try and remember accomplishments, as an SRO can be hard to measure in terms of tangible results.

**WHAT WE NEED TO KNOW:** We first need to know if what we think we know is true. I believe it is. The constant threats facing our students today do not evaporate once they walk through the entrance of their school. The statistics, duties of the SRO, programs and laws are too numerous to list. However, one positive program implemented this year includes senior high school students educating younger middle school students on the negative effects of cyber stalking and bullying. The SRO program is working. Positive steps are being made.

I would like thank you for the opportunity to work with your students. I was reminded when I accepted this position, "a School Resource Officer is the toughest job you will ever love."



## 35 Years Ago

# St. Helens-area security extended 1976

By TED VAN ARSDOL  
Columbian Staff Writer

STEVENSON — The Skamania County Sheriff's office is starting year-around law enforcement for the Swift Reservoir area this week, and will supplement the summer law enforcement at Spirit Lake with part-time service in the winter.

Sheriff Bill Closner also announced that repeater equipment will be installed to improve communications between the sheriff's office in Stevenson and patrol cars in the Spirit Lake area, and a small portable radio will be provided at the base of Mt. St. Helens for emergency use.

Details concerning the radio have to be worked out, but one suggestion has been that it be manned by a volunteer from mountain-climbing groups.

The changes Closner were spurred to a considerable extent by climber fatalities last year and early this year at Mt. St. Helens. The deaths emphasized the problems of trying to provide quick response to emergency and rescue calls in northwestern Skamania County.

Concerned officials met in Kelso earlier this year to discuss the situation, and Closner then met with Forest Service personnel and Skamania County commissioners regarding the annual law enforcement contract between the county and the Forest Service.

Closner said one change under the contract for this year is that a deputy sheriff now will be stationed in the Swift Reservoir area full time. In the past this service was provided full time in the summer and part time in the fall.

The Swift Reservoir deputy will

continue to provide service to the Mt. Adams area — in the summer and fall.

The deputy will spend three days a week in the Spirit Lake area during the winter.

This is in addition to the usual summer service at Spirit Lake provided by another deputy.

Closner said an application has been filed with the Forest Service for a special-use permit for installation of repeater equipment on Mt. St. Helens.

The county has received a federal Law Enforcement Assistance Administration grant of \$15,950 for the repeater. Bids will be sought on the equipment, and the sheriff hopes it can be installed by late August.

The repeater will pick up conversations between the Stevenson dispatch office and cars in the Spirit Lake area and rebroadcast them. The mountain is a barrier to communication, on the frequency used by the officers.

Closner said the small portable to be left at the base of the mountain, probably in August, may be an all-year service. Persons with information on emergencies can call the dispatch office in Stevenson.

Earlier discussions indicated the main problem in emergency communications is in the colder months of the year, when the Forest Service fire network is not in operation.

The Skamania sheriff still is working with the Cowlitz County sheriff's office on mutual aid to be provided by the Cowlitz deputies into northwestern Skamania County. The Cowlitz personnel are able to provide quicker response to emergency calls in some instances.



## Corrections Officer Shayne Cross



Shayne Cross is a lifelong resident of Skamania County. He began working at the Sheriff's Office in March of 2010 in a temporary position.

Shayne's enthusiasm and work ethic impressed his supervisors and co-workers so much that he was offered a permanent position. Shayne attended the Washington State Corrections

Academy in the fall of 2010. Like all of our corrections team members, Officer Cross works effectively and efficiently as a communications officer where he is responsible for call taking and dispatching of emergency services.

When asked what he likes most about working in the law enforcement field, Officer Cross stated, "I enjoy working with people." Shayne has been married for 14 years to his wife Grace, who works for the Skamania County Clerks Office.

When he is not working, Officer Cross likes to hunt and fish, and he says that he actually enjoys cooking, too.

Chief Deputy David Waymire says, "Shayne is a hard worker and catches on quickly. He grew up in this area and his knowledge of the area is a great asset."

Officer Cross stated that his short-term goal is to "learn all that I can."

*By Char Hartley*

## Deputy Brian Salwasser



Deputy Brian Salwasser was hired by the Sheriff's office in March of 2010 and he graduated from the Washington State Law Enforcement Academy in October of 2010. Deputy

Salwasser put in numerous hours with Field Training Officers Sgt. Jay Johnston, Deputy Manning and Deputy Garcia to become properly oriented with the standard operating procedures of the Skamania County Sheriff's Office. Sgt. Johnston considers Deputy Salwasser to be a "sharp, quick learner".

Deputy Salwasser has been married to his wife Julie for almost four years and

they were blessed with their first child around the same time that he graduated from the academy.

When asked if there is something about himself that people may be surprised to discover, Deputy Salwasser revealed that he weighed "...just under 250 lbs during his junior year of college." That is surprising, considering that he is now very physically fit and health conscious. However, with that being said, it is interesting to note that one of his personal, short-term goals is to "finish a food challenge". In particular, he advises that Saylor's Country Kitchen in Portland has a 72 ounce steak that he has "had my sights set on for a couple of years now." He advises that if someone can finish it in under an hour, then the steak is free! Keeping true to his organized and determined personality, he advises that as a prelude to the

steak, he will attempt to polish off a Fatty Patty's pancake that is so huge; it has to be flipped with a snow shovel!

Also note worthy is the fact that Deputy Salwasser is the only Deputy on our team who has a Master's degree in Theology, and he was actually ordained as a minister, prior to his career in the Law Enforcement field.

In addition to spending time with his family, and remaining highly involved in his church, Deputy Salwasser enjoys spending his free time reading, keeping fit, and he has a passion for coffee, even roasting his own coffee beans.

Deputy Salwasser's immediate supervisor Sergeant Arne Gonser speaks very highly of him and stated, "I am very pleased to have Deputy Salwasser on our team."

# Did You Know?

The Skamania County Sheriff's Office participated in the 2nd annual prescription drug take back effort on April 30th 2011.

This effort provides an opportunity for citizens to safely discard expired or unused prescription medications from their households. This year there was a total of 54 pounds of unwanted prescription medication collected in Skamania County. This is 3 times the amount collected in 2010.

Across the nation there were 188 tons (376,598 pounds) of medication collected. In collaboration with the Drug Enforcement administration, law enforcement agencies across the country look to continue this effort in hopes of curbing the illegal and dangerous use of prescription drugs by people who are consuming them without a prescription or selling them.

# “Every 15 Minutes”



The students of Stevenson High School have once again been visited by the grim reaper. The Every Fifteen Minutes program took place May 5th and 6th at Stevenson High School. This program is to help educate teens on the dangers involved in drinking and driving. When the program began, the statistic was that every fifteen minutes a person was killed from alcohol related traffic collision. The program must be helping as the number has dropped to every 22 minutes between deaths. The importance of educational programs like these for teenagers is without question.

However this program is not your run of the mill lecture. The students involved in the program are pulled from their classes one by one throughout the day by the Grim Reaper, given a robe, “death like” makeup and not allowed to talk to anyone. The students are kept overnight, away from their families and friends and their cell phones confiscated. Sheriff Brown and Prosecutor kick even made two mock death notifications to families of students involved in the program.

However the culmination of the program is the mock scene collision that happens on the second day of the program. The Sheriff’s Office was assisted in these efforts by Bob’s Towing of Carson, Carson, Stevenson, and North Bonneville Fire Districts, Skamania County EMS, Gardner’s Funeral Home, and Life Flight Network.

After the junior and senior classes watch a video showing the events leading up to the evening, they are taken behind the grandstands where two vehicles have been set up with students in moulage make up inside.

The scene becomes all too real when the responders arrive on scene, as they would at any collision. Students, teachers, and

parents wait with bated breath as they see their loved ones, family members, and friends cut out of the vehicles by the “jaws of life.” One student will make it, life flighted from the scene, but sadly the other does not, taken away by Gardner’s Funeral home. This is a devastating picture, a powerful image that we hope will be a sobering reminder anytime they think about getting behind the wheel.

The program this year was set the day before prom, with the idea that the program may resonate in their minds as they make their weekend plans. The Sheriff’s Office is happy to report that there were no alcohol related incidents on the night of prom regarding teenagers. This program is overseen by Chief David Waymire and takes about a year to plan in advance. However this is one program the Sheriff’s Office is more than happy to invest in, drinking and driving kills eight teens every day. If this program can stop just one teen from getting behind the wheel intoxicated, then the program is a success.

*By Jackie Mickel*



## 911 Public Education

During the months of May and June, Officers Purkeypyle, Minnis & Fritz will be attending our local schools to speak to students about the use of 9-1-1. Children are taught to know when it is ok to call 9-1-1, as well as what is expected of them while speaking with a 9-1-1 call taker.

The Skamania County Sheriff’s office has recently started using the “Cell phone Sally” program, put together by the state of Texas. It is our hope, that through our instruction, kids will be better prepared in the event they need to call 9-1-1.