

# President's Message

Spring 2018



In December of 2012, I was invited to the Oregon State Sheriffs' Association Annual Conference as a Sheriff-elect. I was immediately in awe that I would soon be part of this organization. Very quickly, I realized that it would be in my best interest and the best interest of my county to take advantage of the numerous offers of help, support, and knowledge being thrust at me.

Over five years later, I am still in awe at what this group of dedicated public servants is able to accomplish both as a collective and individually for their constituents. Your sheriffs are at the forefront of solving the day-to-day public safety issues that affect not only you but residents and visitors across our state.

In 2018, the Oregon Legislature was in session, and OSSA was at the table, ensuring that the leadership our association brings with it, was used to garner the results our constituents expect. During the session, we worked on issues relating to domestic violence as well as fixes to other legislation that ultimately related to victims of crime, ensuring they have a voice and the laws of the state properly serve them.

For several years, OSSA has been a leader in the area of school violence, an issue that continues to rock our nation. Sheriffs from every corner of the state have been actively involved, working together with leaders in education and other stakeholders, to find innovative solutions that not only protect our kids and educators, but reduce violence and address mental health.

OSSA is working to address issues related to wolf depredation in the east and southern portions of our states. We are at the table with federal agencies, working towards solutions surrounding access and management of our federal lands, collaborating to find solutions. Sheriffs are currently working on issues like boating impacts on waterways that affect area residents or the impacts of tourism on our recreational safety programs.

Recently, I had the opportunity to attend a statewide meeting on marijuana in the State of Oregon, hosted by our partner, US Attorney Bill Williams. At the table were my peers from central and southern Oregon, ensuring that the voices of their constituents were heard, trying to find solutions to the livability and enforcement issues related to legalized marijuana.

The OSSA recognizes the value and necessity of training our people in the myriad of disciplines and services that Sheriff's Offices provide. Annually, OSSA hosts the Command College, recognized as perhaps the best leadership training in the State of Oregon. We also provide opportunities to line staff through the Deputy Sheriffs Academy, which for the first time in 2018 will feature both enforcement and corrections personnel. The Sheriffs' Association is finding innovative ways to bring up-to-date training to every office, despite the location, partnering with a company that will allow us to distribute the same resources across our state.

In January of 2016 we saw sheriffs from every corner of the state, agencies large and small, flock to the aid of one of our counties in Southeastern Oregon to an unprecedented event that pitted citizens against citizens and local authorities dealing with federal policies. In the summer of 2017, the same need for aid came from several counties in the path of the eclipse and again the sheriffs of Oregon answered the call. We have seen unparalleled collaboration and assistance from within our respective offices around the state. To me, it is a real testament to what the Office of Sheriff stands for and the foundation of what the Oregon State Sheriff's Association champions on a daily basis.

I think I can speak for my fellow sheriffs when I say that a day doesn't go by that I don't think about the great responsibility that has been entrusted to me by the residents in my county. Every program we implement, the solutions we find and the overall scope of services we provide are measured against the expectations and needs of our constituents.

There is a saying among sheriffs that relationships are primary, everything else is secondary. OSSA employs that creed on a daily basis, working towards solutions, remaining on the forefront of safety and livability issues across our state.

I am honored and proud to serve as the President of the Oregon State Sheriffs' Association for 2018. ★

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'M. English', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Sheriff Matt English  
President, OSSA