

Black Hawk County Sheriff's Office

2023 Annual Report

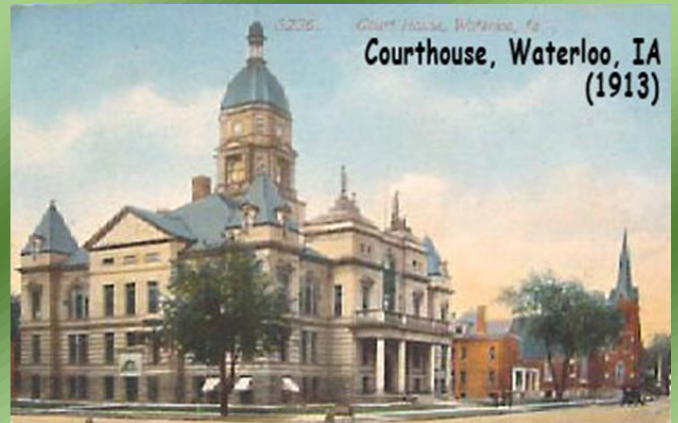
170th Anniversary (1853-2023) Edition



(Black Hawk County Jail circa 1870)



(1st Waterloo Courthouse-1857)



Current Black Hawk County Courthouse- 1964



Current Black Hawk County Jail- 1995

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"Excellence In Law Enforcement"

for over 170 Years

Black Hawk County Sheriff's Office

225 East 6th Street

Waterloo, Iowa 50703

Sheriff's Welcome:

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SHERIFF

BLACK HAWK COUNTY



Citizens of Black Hawk County:

What an absolute honor to lead this organization during our 170th anniversary year of service to our citizens. Throughout this year's annual report, we will be sharing photos, stories and reflections on our robust and proud history. We will also share the data and productivity from our last 12 months. As we consider where this county has been and how our agency has supported its growth, its maturation, and the next evolution of Black Hawk County's story, we are so proud to be here serving in our own way to the betterment of our communities and our citizens' way of life.

Over our 170 years of existence, this agency has only had 17 sheriffs. Starting back in 1853 first Sheriff John Virden didn't even have a jail. The first courthouse construction wasn't completed until 1857; two years after his first and only term expired. In 1861, and under our 4th sheriff of Black Hawk County, Sheriff W.H Brown, the Board of Supervisors voted to create the first Black Hawk County Jail in that courthouse basement and allocated \$400 for the renovation and construction of 2 cells and an outer room.

My how times have changed... I now have the privilege of overseeing the operations of a 272 bed jail and 143 staff members, who function with and manage a nearly \$19 million budget. That staff is no less committed and certainly no less focused on our duties to our citizens than our early sheriffs, however. And, I am so very proud of this staff and this agency. I am proud of our rich tradition, our heritage, our history and our "service before self" attitude. It is pervasive within this organization.

Within these next several pages you will see and digest the data, but you will also get a taste of that history and I hope you will be able to detect that sense of service in all that we do and all that has been done in our rich history. As always, as you review this annual report, if you should have questions, comments or concerns, please do not hesitate to reach out to me. Thank you for taking the time to learn more about your outstanding sheriff's office.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Tony Thompson".



Mission Statement:

It is the mission of the Black Hawk County Sheriff's Office to provide professional, high quality, and effective law enforcement, correctional and court support services in partnership with the communities we serve. We, the members of the Black Hawk County Sheriff's Office, believe that our work has a vital impact on the quality of life in our county. To demonstrate our commitment to our profession, on and off duty, we subscribe to the following **values**:

PRIDE

The office recognizes that its employees are the vital component to the successful delivery of law enforcement, corrections and court support services. We believe we can achieve our highest potential by actively involving our employees in problem solving and outwardly demonstrate our support for and pride in our staff.

INTEGRITY

Integrity is defined as being honest, moral, upright and sincere. Public trust can only exist with our integrity and respect for one another. At the very foundation of the Black Hawk County Sheriff's Office is the expectation of the highest level of integrity in its employees.

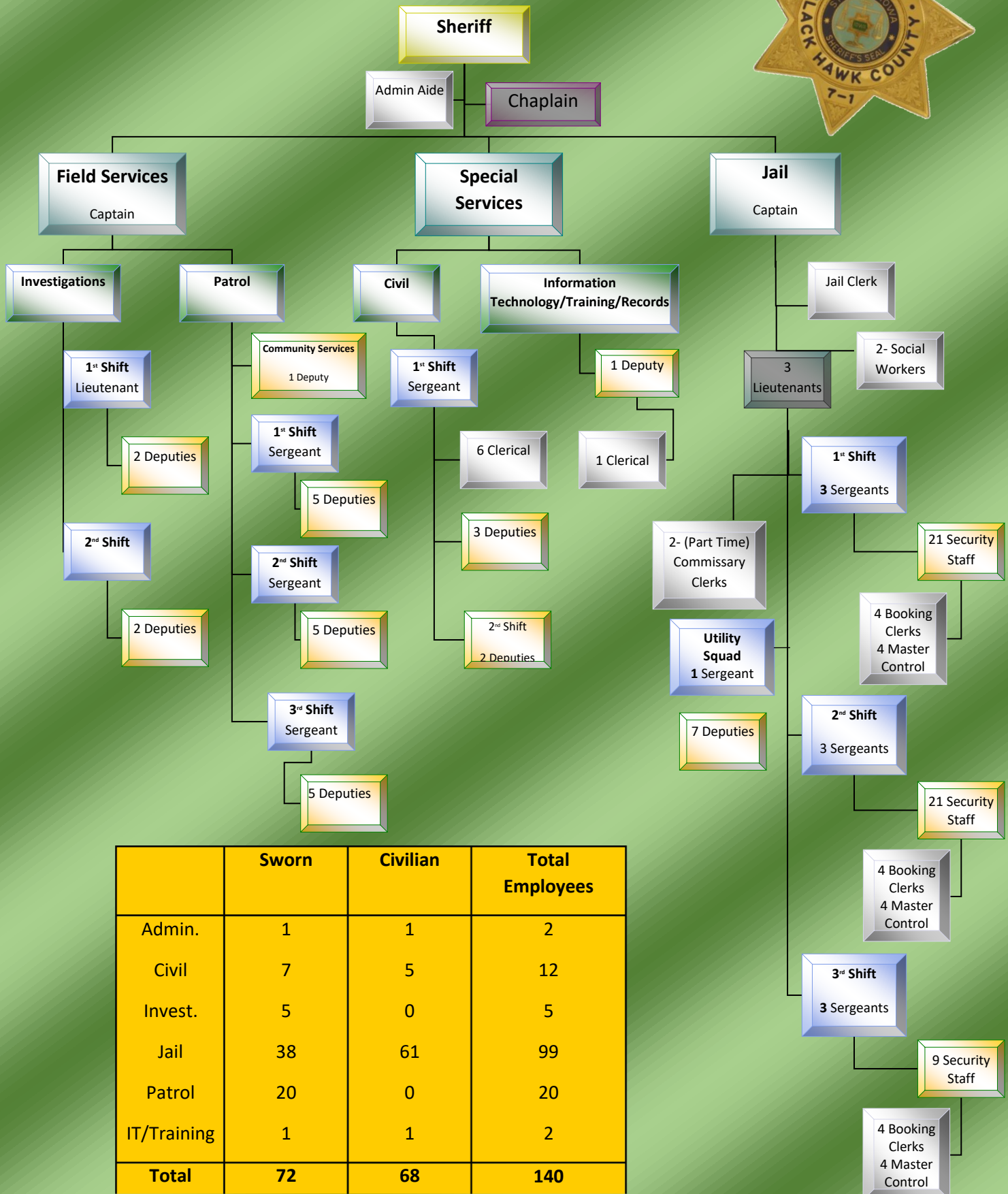
PROFESSIONALISM

Recognizing the changing and diverse needs of the communities we serve, the Black Hawk County Sheriff's Office promotes and encourages a policy of professional individual excellence, which is passionately delivered and enhanced by continuing education, training, and administration support. This commitment is evidenced by the expected outward demonstration of that professionalism to our citizens.

FAIRNESS

Sheriff's Office members shall uphold laws in an ethical, impartial, courteous, and professional manner while respecting the rights and dignity of all persons. We shall strive to achieve a balance between enforcement and community needs which reflects both the spirit and the letter of the law. We support an organizational climate of mutual trust and respect. We endeavor to always be fair and impartial in our decisions and responses to issues which fall within the confines of our assigned duties.

Sheriff's Office Organizational Chart:



	Sworn	Civilian	Total Employees
Admin.	1	1	2
Civil	7	5	12
Invest.	5	0	5
Jail	38	61	99
Patrol	20	0	20
IT/Training	1	1	2
Total	72	68	140

Historical Review:

Why Black Hawk County?

Before the Europeans came, the valley of the Cedar River was almost completely covered in dense timber. Yet at a point about seven miles below the falls of the Cedar, unwooded prairie grasses covered both banks of the river for a stretch of about a mile. The river itself at that point fell in a swift rapids. Underneath the rapids, the riverbed was solid bedrock.

When the region was opened to white inhabitants, after the Sac and Fox Indians lost their hold on it following the Black Hawk War of 1832, the falls were an attraction to entrepreneurs who saw their potential for water power. One such, William Sturgis, made plans for a dam and lent his name to the early gathering of cabins.

The combination of open space and a solid river bottom at the rapids made a safe, and hence a popular crossing for the Indians and for the early white visitors. The site inevitably became a settlement, initially named Prairie Rapids Crossing by first settlers George and Mary Hanna. Thus, Sturgis Falls, and Prairie Rapids, later renamed to Cedar Falls and Waterloo, became in 1845, the first settlements in Black Hawk County, and between them at the end of the year, they boasted the county's entire white population of thirteen pioneers.

Prior to the establishment of permanent homes, Black Hawk County, first created in 1843 and named for the Sac war leader who lost the war that bears his name, had been under the administration of Delaware County. Responding to the gradual western trend of white expansion, Benton County officials took over in 1845, the year before Iowa's statehood, followed by Buchanan County in 1851. By act of the Iowa legislature, Black Hawk County was allowed to organize its own government and elect officers in 1853. At the same time, the counties of Bremer, Grundy, and Butler were administratively attached to Black Hawk County. The first election of county officials was held on August 17th.

The legislature also called for a commission to locate the county seat in the same year. Sturgis Falls, with its thriving mills, was the leader in commerce at the time, and got the nod. Waterloo boosters, unwilling to acquiesce, convinced the legislature to call for an election, and by a vote of 388 to 260, the more centrally-located Waterloo became the county seat in 1855. It was already vying with Cedar Falls in the milling industry, a dam having been constructed in 1854, the year the city was platted.

Many eastern Iowa settlements moved swiftly from frontier outposts to civilized cities in the beginning of the last half of the nineteenth century. Surrounded by some of the richest farmland to be found anywhere on the globe, the cities of Black Hawk County became important centers for the agricultural community. Despite a brief period of high water, which allowed the steamboat Black Hawk to make twenty-four round trips between Cedar Rapids and Waterloo in 1859, the Cedar River was not destined to provide a transportation advantage.



The Wild West!

This story is an illustration of the mettle of our early settlers and the complications of the early criminal justice system:

In 1895, the State vs. Adams illustrates the judicial system of the day. Charles Adams was tried for murdering Stephen Howard on his farm in Lester Township. They were relatives and lived on adjoining farmsteads. There were constant disputes between the two regarding cattle destroying the other's crops and trespassing of other stock. On January 3, 1895, Howard went over to the Adams farm and got into an altercation with Charles. He then walked a quarter mile home with over 72 broken bones, puncture wounds to the face and head consistent with a pitch fork...

Howard later died from his wounds and Adams turned himself into (then) Sheriff W. M. Law. It should be noted that Howard was 80 years old and Adams was a comparatively young man. Adams claimed self-defense and was given a short 4 year sentence due to the extenuating circumstances that Howard was "as strong as Hercules" even after being stabbed in the face with a 4-pronged pitchfork, he continued to fight.



Serving Double Duty

In the early years, it was tough finding public servants and at least two sheriffs served in multiple elected roles according to county records:

- Sheriff John Elwell (1857-61) also served as County Treasurer (1866-1867)
- Sheriff George W. Hayzlett (1873-83) was also elected as State Representative (1884-87)



The Longest Serving Public Official:

Sheriff H. T. (Cap) Wagner started his law enforcement career in 1910 when he became a member of the Waterloo Police Department. He was promoted to the rank of Sergeant and later to the rank of Captain. He was the first man in the city to be elevated to such a rank. It was through this promotion that his moniker "Cap" stuck. He was serving as Assistant Chief in 1917 when he was selected by Sheriff Dave B. Henderson to serve as his Chief Deputy. He was appointed Sheriff in 1920 when Sheriff Henderson resigned.



"SHOOT TO KILL" ORDERS THIS SHERIFF!

Taken from the Jackson Sentinel, November 15, 1932

Sheriff H. T. Wagner of Waterloo, launched a campaign recently to put an end to the series of recent holdups in that locality. He deputized 50 former service men into the army of vigilantes equipped with pistols and sawed off shotguns. Wagner stationed them at 50 outlying drug stores, filling stations and grocery stores throughout that city.

Sheriff Wagner is offering a \$100 reward to every vigilante who kills or wounds a man in the act of staging a holdup or burglary, and a \$25 reward for information leading to the arrest of a holdup man.

The armed men will continue on guard until bandits are cleaned out. Hardly a week has passed in the last few months without a robbery in Waterloo, some of them netting as much as several hundred dollars.

About Cap Wagner's Career:

- He was elected 18 consecutive times to the office of Black Hawk County Sheriff, and served a total of 36 years in office, a record unmatched in Iowa history.
- Sheriff Wagner also served as executioner at the state penitentiary (an obligation of all Iowa County Sheriffs at the time) by springing the trap on the gallows for capital punishment cases from the county. One such case was the murder of Deputy Sheriff W. F. Dilworth.
- Deputy Dilworth and Deputy H. M. Mitchell were attempting to serve a warrant of arrest on Elmer Brewer for rape. He was hiding at a house with his criminal partner, Pat Griffin. A gun fight ensued between the four and Deputy Dilworth and Mitchell were both shot. Mitchell was shot in the back and survived, but Dilworth's injuries were too severe. He died at the age of 39, leaving behind a wife and two children.
- Sheriff Wagner was the executioner for the convicted Brewer and Griffin at Fort Madison Penitentiary where they were hanged in 1932. Sheriff Wagner continued to serve until age 73 when he retired after nearly 37 years as Sheriff and 47 years in law enforcement.
- After Cap Wagner, (since 1957) the county has only seen 5 more sheriffs (Elmer Hightower, Bob Aldrich, Wendell Christensen, Mike Kubik, and Tony Thompson).



Grant helped Integrate Black Hawk County Sheriff's Office February 23, 2007

WATERLOO — In the midst of riots and racial unrest in the late 1960s and early 1970s, a group of 10 black residents took up the badge to project the image of blacks as authority figures and attempt to integrate minorities into law enforcement.

"It gave us an opportunity to understand the department and gave the community the opportunity to adjust to having blacks as deputies," said Jesse Loveless, 66, of Waterloo.

Although the Black Hawk County Sheriff's Office already had black deputies, Loveless and the others were hired to be part-time deputies as part of a federally funded grant.

"I did it because I was interested. Those times were terrible times because terrible things were happening," Loveless said.

Some of the part-time deputies hired under the program, like Rex Bell and Ernest Carr Jr., had military backgrounds. Most had full-time jobs elsewhere.

Loveless worked at John Deere. When he was done for the day at the farm equipment plant, he put on the badge and tended to the tasks of serving civil papers and transporting prisoners.

"Although I was just a little girl at the time, I was so proud of him," his daughter, Tracie Loveless-Hill, remembers. "When he would walk through the door in his uniform, to me he stood 10 feet tall," she said.

The sheriff's office program was part of a larger affirmative action push in the community to break down color barriers, said John Kincaid, a City Council member who was a full-time deputy hired before the program.

The program lasted three or four years, and then the grant ran out. Those involved didn't pursue law enforcement careers and opted to continue with their day jobs, Loveless said.

Loveless stayed on at John Deere for 32 years and retired in 1993 as a supervisor. Even Kincaid eventually left the sheriff's office when he became the first African-American to graduate from John Deere's pattern making apprenticeship in Iowa.

Despite that, Loveless and Kincaid said the project was a success. "It made a big impact on the community back then. It was something to see that many minorities riding around in deputies' cars and going to a lot of the smaller communities ... and on patrol," Kincaid said.

Minorities still are sparse in local law enforcement. Sheriff Michael Kubik said few try out for openings — a problem shared by Waterloo police.

When Kubik first applied to join the sheriff's office more than 30 years ago, some 300 people also were interested. More recently only 46 people expressed an interest, and the numbers are whittled away during physical and other tests.

He doubts a similar program to hire minority officers would work today because of the civil service process and unions.

Jeff Reinitz is a reporter for the *Waterloo-Cedar Falls Courier*, a *Lee Enterprises* newspaper. Contact him at (319) 291-1578 or jeff.reinitz@wcfcourier.com.



Black Hawk County's First Public Jail

On December 10, 1855, the first courthouse of Black Hawk County was ordered to be constructed after an act from the state legislature created a county named Black Hawk back in 1843. The courthouse was to be placed in the village of Waterloo at the Public Square (which is today Lincoln Park), but that location fell through. It was later erected between East 10th and East 11th Streets along the banks of the Cedar River. Prior to its construction, all county business was conducted in rented rooms.

The county's boundaries were established by an act of the Territorial Legislature of Iowa and it was attached to (what is today) Buchanan and Delaware Counties. This large county was established for judicial, election, and revenue purposes. While the courthouse was being constructed, a general election was held to support the construction of a sheriff's office and jail, but the matter was defeated at the polls.

On April 14, 1846, an election was held amongst the locals to name three people as Justices of the Peace. This was due to the great distance needed to travel to the closest and nearest one in Benton County to the south. These three Justices would administrate legal disputes throughout the territory until April 28, 1851, when George Hanna was named Black Hawk County's Justice of the Peace and John Melrose and Norman Williams were both named Constables for the court.

As the county continued to grow in population and its cities grew in size, a formal vote was taken in August of 1853 and John Virden was named the county's first sheriff. Two years later, Benjamin Thomas ran against Edward Butterfield and won election with 314 votes cast for Thomas, 272 votes for Butterfield. And so began the terms of all 17 of the county's elected sheriff's.

The first Board of Supervisors met on January 7, 1861, at the office of the Clerk of Court. The board consisted of a representative of each township in the county. The first matter of public importance was a petition that had been presented by C.D. Gray and others requesting that a county jail be built not because of the number of prisoners (there were actually very few), but due to the expense of sending prisoners to neighboring counties for safe-keeping. At this first supervisors meeting, \$600.00 was allotted for the jail. It was located in the basement of the courthouse, and on September 3rd of that same year, it was reported to the board that two cells and another room had been built at a total cost of \$301.00.

In 1868, another \$1,000 was voted to construct a house for the sheriff near the jail. The house was built on the northeast corner of the courthouse grounds and was completed in December of that year. Sheriff W.H. Brown was overseeing jail and sheriff operations at this time, and the two cell "dungeon", as his jail was becoming lovingly nick-named, due to the damp and moldy confines was becoming less and less accommodating. It was decided a new facility was needed and in the early 1870's a new wooden structure, about 22 foot by 32 foot was constructed on the courthouse grounds. One-story in height, it contained a steel cage with 4 cells. Almost immediately though, this structure was in need of having its roof replaced with corrugated steel, after several angry citizens tried to burn the structure down with a Cedar Falls banker inside who was accused of fraud and theft. (It may be interesting to note that this same steel cage was eventually transported to the next county courthouse, which was erected in 1902 and served as the basis for the new jail constructed in that facility as well.)



2023 Annual Statistical Review:

Part 1 Offenses

Offense	2021	2022	2023
Arson	0	0	1
Aggravated Assault	1	1	1
Domestic Assault	19	11	12
Simple Assault	14	18	14
Burglary	51	24	15
Criminal Mischief	19	20	26
Drug Violations	494	157	206
Kidnapping	1	0	0
Robbery	0	0	0
Murder	0	0	0
Sexual Offense	19	11	10
Thefts	52	34	42
Larceny of Motor Vehicle	13	6	6
Entice/Exploitation of a Child	1	1	1

Total Yearly Arrests

	2021	2022	2023
Arrests	2,807	2,548	2,579

Part 2 Offenses

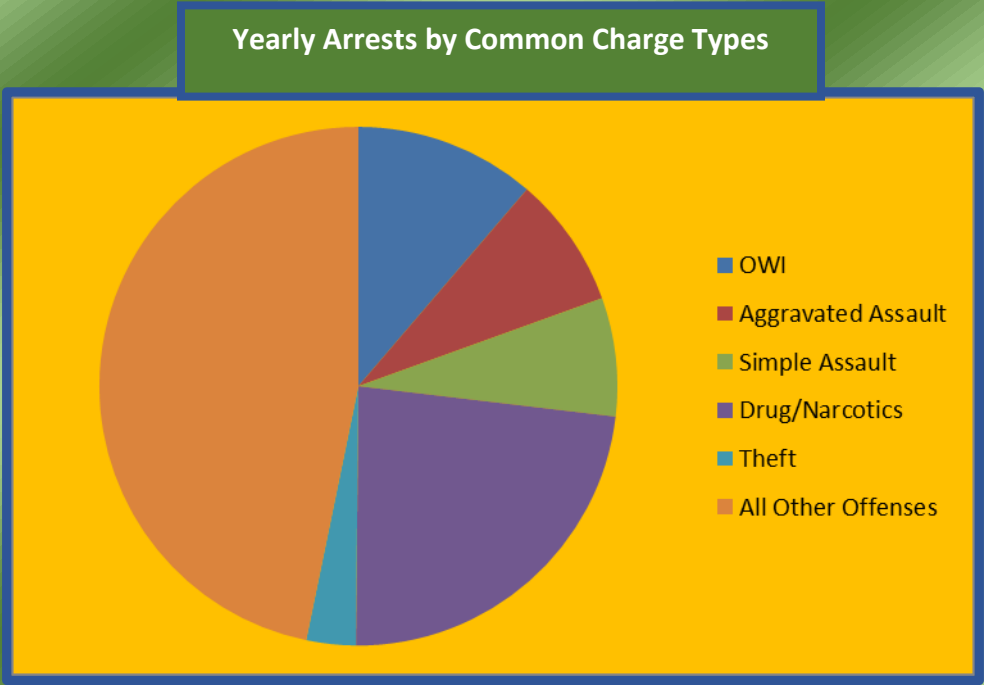
Offense	2021	2022	2023
Liquor Law Violation	0	0	0
OWI	302	172	111
Public Intoxication	10	9	4
Family Offenses	6	2	2
Runaway	10	11	4
Suspicion	0	0	0
Bad Checks	21	9	3
Trespass	4	2	6
All Other Offenses	12	3	3



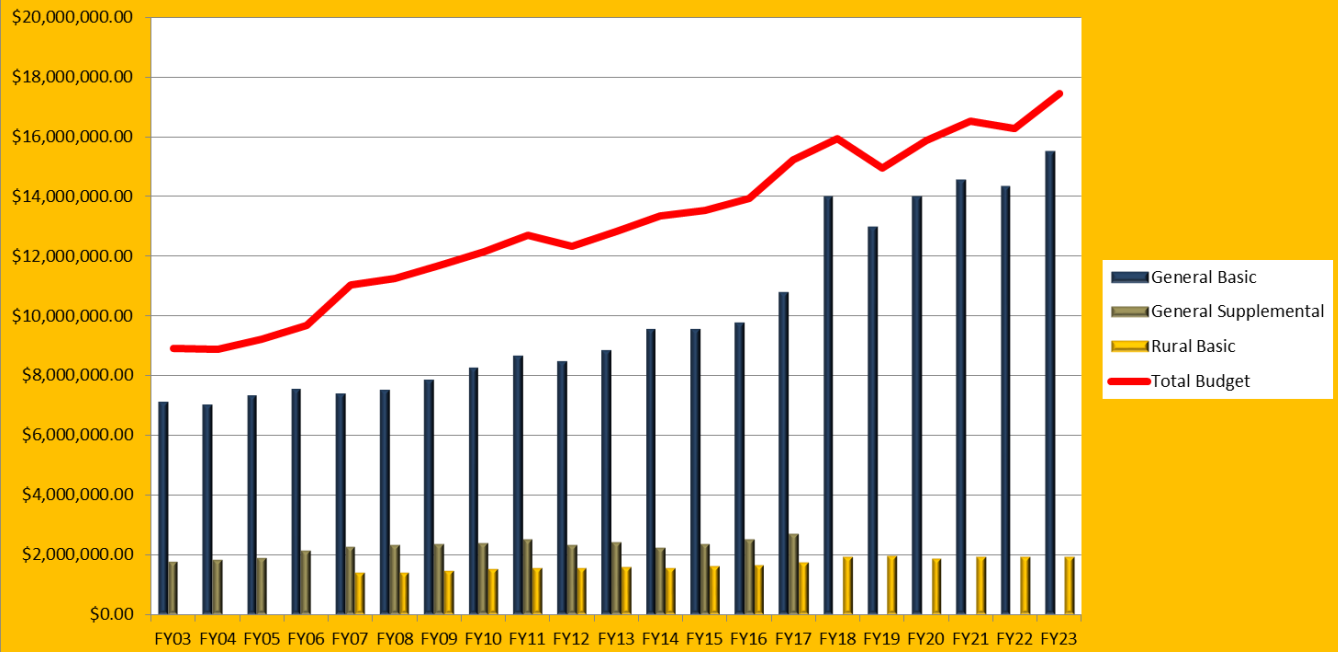
Calls For Service			
	2021	2022	2023
Total CFS in Black Hawk County	105,309	104,667	111,887
Total CFS for the Sheriff's Office	8,230	6,888	13,202

Traffic Stops			
	2021	2022	2023
Total Stops	2,353	2,600	5,448
Total Citations Issued	2,804	3,045	3,343

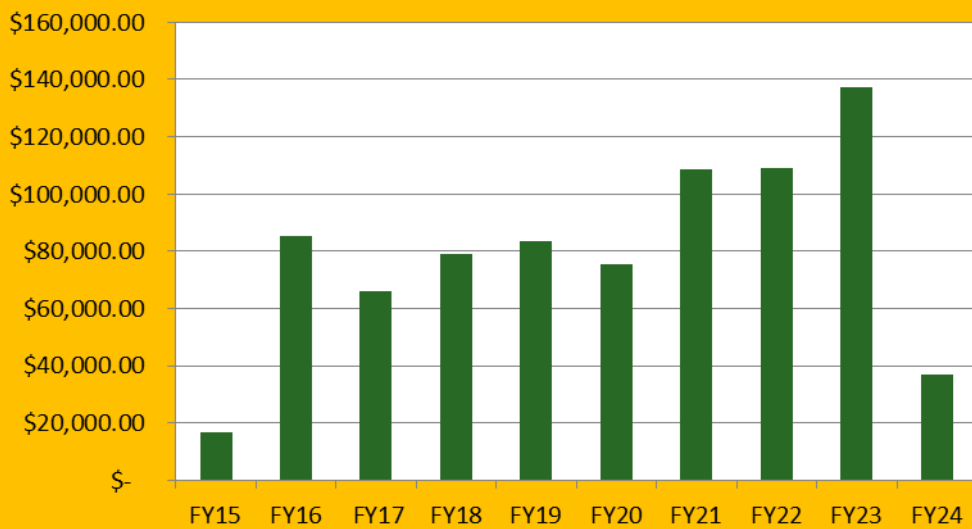
In 2023, the officers of the Black Hawk County Sheriff’s Office made 1,546 Warrant Arrests. They conducted 632 criminal transports, and they performed 910 mental health transports across the state of Iowa.



Sheriff's Office Annual Budget



Inmate Commissary Revenue



Special Services:



FROM THE COMMANDER:

Seems like it just started, but the year 2023 is already gone and in the record books. I continue to work with my staff in the Special Services Division. This division of the Sheriff's Office includes the sub-divisions of Civil, Clerical, Training, Records and Information Technology.

Civil deputy sheriffs serve the documents and execute the court orders which they receive from the courts and from you. In 2023, they served and executed a total of 12,600 of these documents. This total is up nearly 12% from the previous year.

Our clerical staff is stationed near our front counter. They support all of our agency's divisions and assist you when you have business to take care of with us. They prepare the civil documents for service, among many other duties.

Virtually all staff training takes place at our Raymond Range Training Facility, which is a regional hub for many of our law enforcement partnering agencies. This facility is a source of great pride for us and a very unique training facility for this area. It is also where our community engagement event took place last fall.

Records staff continue to maintain our data and provide you with the open records you request. Laws governing the release of this information can get tricky and limit what can be released for differing reasons.

Information technology is literally ever-changing. Before we know it, systems are obsolete and in need of replacement. This can be challenging with limited budgets, but is a must when expectations are such that we provide citizens with a certain level of service. Again, one of our main focuses this past year has been the replacement of a county-wide records management system. You may have already noticed our new and improved website.

One of our biggest challenges this past year has been keeping staffing levels where they need to be. We are currently under-staffed and are in need of qualified applicants. If you know of somebody who would make a good law enforcement officer or jailer, please encourage them to apply with the Sheriff's Office.

Our Sheriff's Office recently surpassed the 170 year milestone. We commemorated this special occasion by creating an agency photo album as well as decorating our newly renovated front lobby with historical information on the walls. I welcome any questions or comments you have, and thanks for your continued support. Happy New Year!

Captain Reinhard Boeschen
Special Services Division Commander



Civil Processes

	2021	2022	2023
Executions	1,270	1,673	2,185
Real Estate Sales	61	87	89
Condemnations	7	3	4
Writ of Attachment	0	0	0
Garnishments	1,268	1,676	2,197
1.1020.1 Levy	3	0	0
1.1020.2 Levy	1	1	0
Cash Register Levy	0	1	1
Demand	6	4	1
Security Lien	0	1	0
Temporary Protective Order	149	162	152
Writ of Ejection	329	488	514
Writ of Possession	2	1	0
Writ of Replevin	21	18	19
Papers Served	9,792	10,318	11,533
Papers Un-Served	956	953	1,067
Total Processes	10,748	11,271	12,600

12% Increase
over 2023

Jail Services:



FROM THE COMMANDER:

Jail staff remained busy in 2023 as the number of people booked in increased for the fourth consecutive year. 6,699 people were booked into the jail while 6,451 were released. Our average daily population (ADP) mirrored that of 2022 at 250, but a strange trend from 2022 repeated itself. The jail has historically seen lower headcounts during the winter months with larger ones during the summer. For the past two years, however, January, February, and March have had the highest ADP while June, July, and August have been the lowest. It will be interesting to see if this trend continues.

With the switch to video visitation in 2020, the need for a front desk “receptionist” became obsolete. This allowed for a more efficient use of staff, and it also created an opportunity to make improvements to the front lobby of the Sheriff’s Office that will improve the safety of the public, inmates, and staff alike. Upon entering the Sheriff’s Office, visitors will notice a clean, updated space that will help streamline the workflow for the clerical staff as well as for any jail related business.

In the 2022 report I mentioned that we were on the verge of implementing the use of a recently purchased body scanner. It was put into use in January of 2023 and shortly thereafter jail staff were able to “see” narcotics an arrestee had hidden inside a body cavity prior to entering the jail. Thanks to this new tool, we were able to not only stop the contraband from entering the jail, but also prevent a possible medical tragedy if the drugs’ packaging had broken open inside the body. This incident exemplifies why we strive to provide our staff with the best possible equipment and training possible!

When fully staffed the jail employs 68 security staff which is comprised of sworn and civilian officers, 12 master control technicians, 12 booking clerks, two commissary clerks, and one licensed social worker. Many of these positions require them to work nights, weekends, overtime, and holidays. It takes a special person to take on such a stressful endeavor, and I appreciate each one of them for their willingness to do so. The service they provide the citizens of Black Hawk County is all too easily overlooked, but we couldn’t function without them!

Captain Nathan Neff
Jail Administrator
319-291-2587 ext 5128
NNeff@bhcsso.org



Inmate Demographic Summary

Race	Male	Female
Black	1,931	702
White	2,652	1,271
Asian	91	19
Indian	11	11
Total Inmates	4,694	2,005
Hispanic		
Yes	347	
No	6,352	



Booked a total of 6,699 inmates in 2023



Daily Activity

Averages	2021	2022	2023
Average Population	262.7	249.9	250.1
Jail Bookings	5,743	6,130	6,699
Jail Transports	494	591	632

Field Services:



FROM THE COMMANDER:

The Patrol and Investigative Divisions provide the emergency response and the criminal investigative functions of the Sheriff's Office to the citizens who live in and visit Black Hawk County.

The Patrol Division is staffed 24/7/365 and stands ready to respond to any call for assistance within our jurisdiction and we proactively patrol the communities that we serve to enforce law infractions. Our investigators support the Patrol Division and acquire responsibility over the more complicated or serious investigations/incidents.

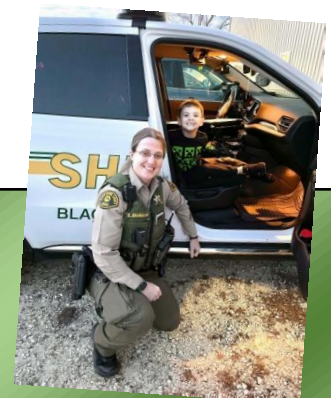
The Sheriff's Office, over the last year has escalated our commitment to community engagement and had made overt attempts to positively engage with our citizens. We hire and train employees who have a strong moral and ethical foundation and possess a commitment to selfless service; having the support and trust of our citizens is imperative to the success of our employees in their mission of public service.

The Sheriff's Office hosted an open house at the Sheriff's Training Facility in Raymond in September and we were ecstatic on the large turn out that we received from our citizens who were able to see our facilities, learn about specialized disciplines that we have in our capabilities, and join us for a lunch donated by Tyson's Fresh Meats and Starbeck's BBQ.

This past year we also decided to enlist the assistance of a community engagement canine and made application to a non-profit dog training organization to provide a trained canine to our agency. We were awarded this grant and we are receiving the dog for free. Our deputy and canine are currently in training and will be introduced to the public in the very near future.

Our deputies stand ready and prepared to assist those who are in need of our services and we look forward to the honor and privilege of serving our community in 2024.

Captain Mark Herbst
Field Services Division Commander

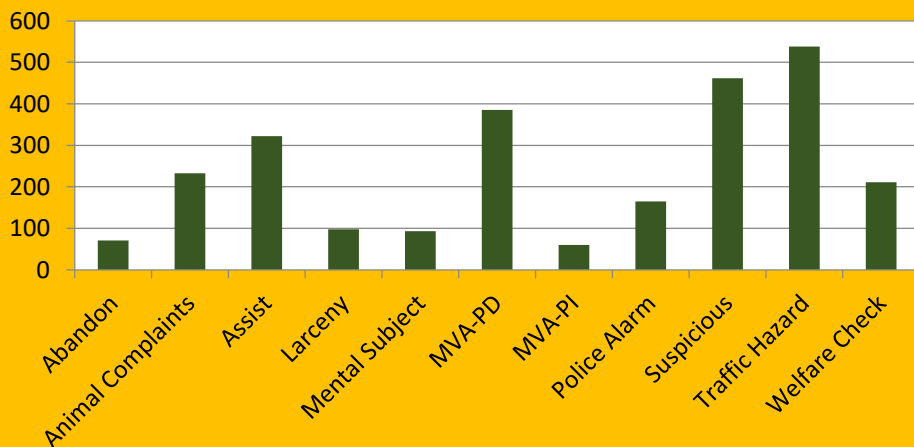


General Stats

	2021	2022	2023
Calls for Service	8,230	6,888	13,202
Arrests	2,807	2,548	2,579
Accidents			
Fatal	3	2	2
Property Damage	199	190	203
Injuries	55	47	40
Citations Issued	2,804	3,045	3,343
Warrants Served	1,507	1,579	1,546
OWI Arrests	220	166	110
Theft Arrests	52	34	31
Drug/Narcotics Arrest	494	363	233



Most Common Calls For Service



Administrative Services:

Siech and Skilling Identified as Deputy and Civilian of the Year for 2023

Josh Siech and Craig Skilling were announced as this year's deputy and civilian of the year at a brief ceremony during the Black Hawk County Law Enforcement Association's Annual Meeting and Christmas Party in December. Sheriff Thompson presented plaques, Certificates of Merit, and sheriff's coins for excellence in recognition of this significant accomplishment.

Siech was recognized for his outstanding performance in the Patrol Division, far surpassing his peers with over 240 arrests, over 200 citations and nearly 200 incidents worked in the year.

Skilling was cited for his unparalleled leadership in the master control room. He has trained several new controllers and was recommended for the award both from staff and supervisors alike. His calm demeanor, helpful and friendly approach, and extra effort on behalf of staff were indicated as huge impacts in the Jail Division.

Both employees demonstrate the very best that our agency has to offer and we are extremely proud of their contributions and their recognition this year.

