

# Essex County Sheriff's Office

## 2019 Annual Report



Sheriff David E. Reynolds

Undersheriff Thomas W. Murphy II

Major Michael Blaise - Major Peter Feeley

On January 1, 2019, newly sworn in Sheriff David Reynolds, began the year with appointments of Undersheriff Thomas Murphy and Major Michael Blaise as Chief Deputy. Later in the month Major Peter Feeley and Captain Christopher Bikowitz were appointed Jail Administrator and Assistant Jail Administrator. The Sheriff's Office is responsible for numerous functions throughout the county and is broken into three categories; the county jail, civil office and road patrol.

The County Jail is a required function by New York State and is regulated by the New York State Commission of Corrections. The Civil Office is also required, this office handles evictions, orders of protection to name a couple. The Road Patrol division of the Sheriff's Office is the most visible, deputies are out in the communities responding to emergency calls, working in the schools and providing support for community functions.

The information following will provide a greater breakdown of each of the divisions of the Essex County Sheriff's Office.

### **~2019 RETIREMENTS~**



Harvey Putnam  
Head Cook

Started the kitchen well the new facility opened in 2007.

Michele Hommes  
Correction Officer

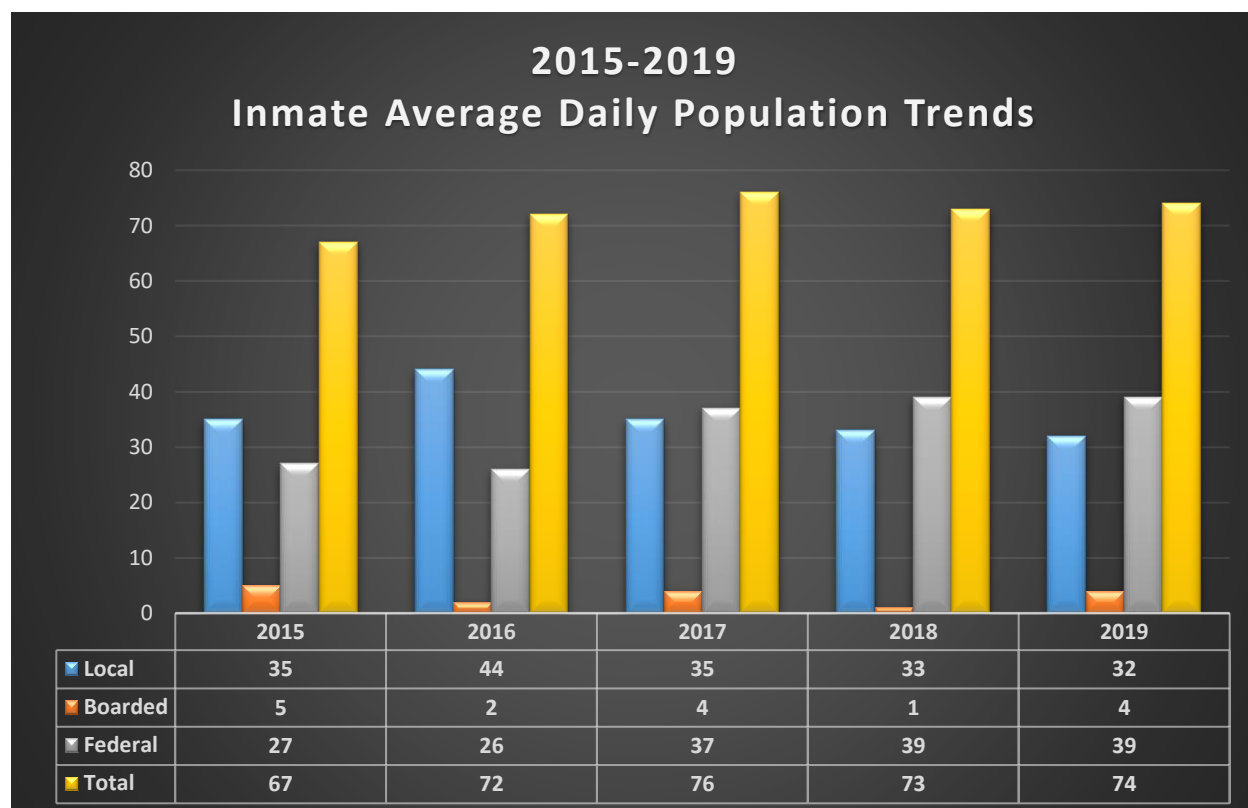
Was one of the first correction officers the county hired.  
Michele was a trainer as well, instructing new officers.

Paul Benway  
Deputy Sheriff

Paul served as a deputy sheriff for just over 31 years.

**~COUNTY JAIL~**

The Essex County Sheriff’s Office is state mandated to operate a county jail. The new facility was opened in the Fall of 2007. In 2014, the local inmate population was a daily average of 56. In 2019, that daily local inmate population dropped to 32. The Sheriff’s Office has been able to relieve some of its mandated budget items by housing inmates from other county jails and the US Marshall Service. The housing of other county jails and federal inmates including transporting federal inmates generated over \$1.4 million in revenue for the county, in 2019. With over \$14 million in revenue since 2008.



The County Jail is operated by 67 dedicated men and women and is a 24/7 operation. With a minimum staffing per shift set by the New York State Commission of Corrections. These individuals are charged with the operation of the jail. They maintain security and safety of the staff, inmates, facility and the community. 504 inmates were processed into the county jail for 2019.

Once an individual is remanded to the custody of the Sheriff, it becomes the Sheriff’s responsibility to transport that inmate to court and medical, if needed. In 2019, corrections staff safely completed almost 600 inmate transports over 45,000 miles.

The facility is self-sustained; all meals are prepared in the facility kitchen by civilian staff with some assistance from inmate workers. In 2019; 78,677 meals were prepared and served.

Most medical needs are handled by the jail nurse, with the assistance from a contract with Elizabethtown Community Hospital for additional nursing staff for nursing coverage 7 days per week from the hours of 7:00am until 10:00pm. A doctor or a physician's assistant come to the jail to see inmates and care for their medical needs.



All new officers are given on the job training, before attending the basic corrections course outlined by DCJS. This course is a 5-week basic training conducted in-house by our own instructors, covering security and supervision, effective communication, defensive tactics, including being exposed to pepper spray to name a few of the courses taught. Since conducting our own basic correction training, we have successfully trained approximately 150 new officers in the last

15 years. In-service training is also conducted in house; this is done in classroom style training as well as online training seminars. 2019, in-service training conducted: 1500 hours.

The goal is to keep inmates' safety and secure, but also to help them not recidivate. With this goal several programs are offered within the facility:

**A. Care Coordinators**

Coordinate the needs of individual inmates upon release. Coordinate with several agencies to help ensure the individual does not re-offend criminally, thereby reducing recidivism. Examples of these agencies are, but not limited to: Department of Social Services, Mental Health Services, Housing, Substance Abuse Counseling, etc. Two part-time coordinators are available four days a week and are grant funded.

**B. Adult Education**

Helping adults, older than 20, to achieve their High School Equivalency, OSHA Certifications, life skills. One part-time educator, which is grant funded.

**C. Substance Abuse and Addiction Counselors**

Individual counseling sessions, as well as group counseling sessions. Counselors and volunteers are available five days per week. Counselors are also able to coordinate with the inmate's attorney for the appropriate treatment plan. Two part-time counselors, and several volunteers.

**D. Mental Health Services**

Provide needed crisis and maintenance counseling services to assist the inmate population. Mental Health Services are a one-on-one session at this time, but preparing to expand services so group counseling sessions can take place.

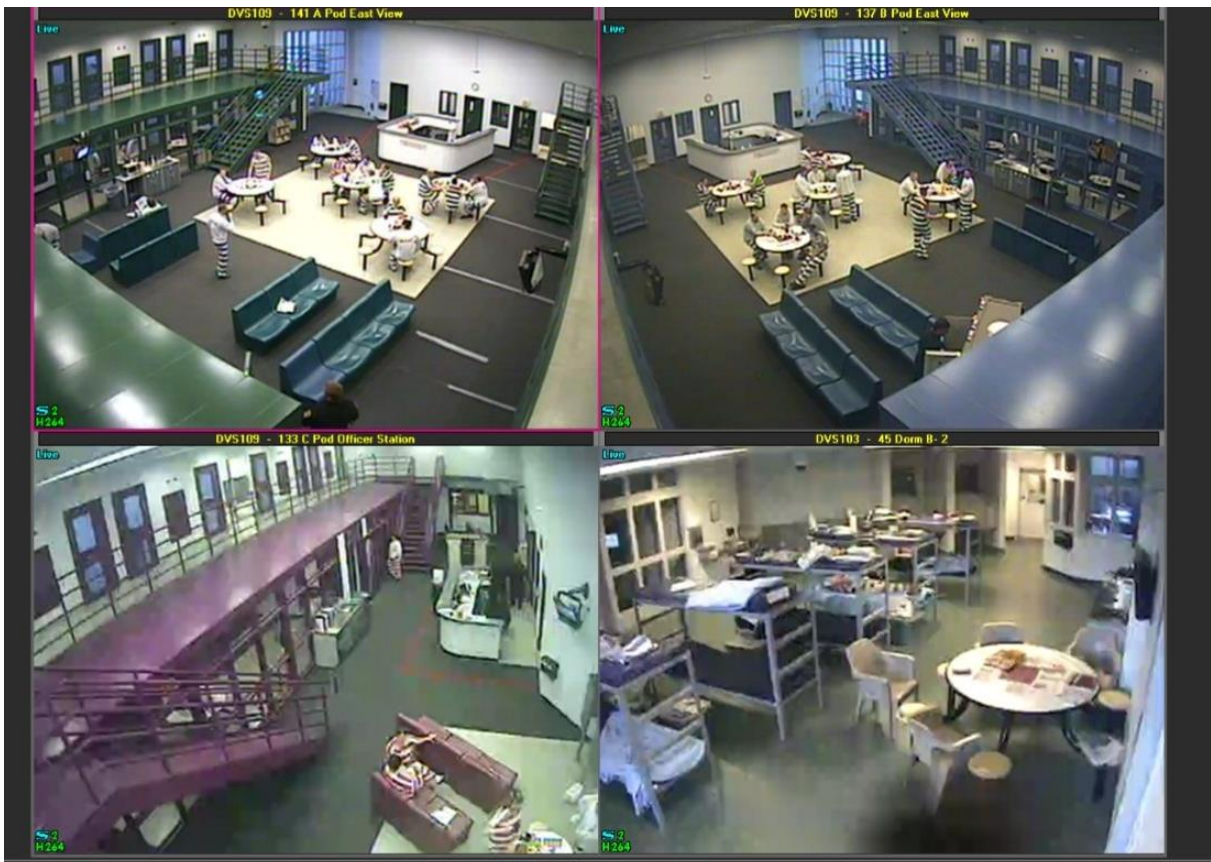
**E. High School Equivalency (TASK)**

The New York State Department of Education with the Commission of Corrections, requires all inmates between the ages of eighteen and twenty years of age and do not have a high school diploma attend high school equivalency class. One teacher is provided by the Boquet Valley Central School District and classes are in session everyday school is in session.

**F. Bible Study**

Two volunteers come into the facility once per week to meet with any eligible individual who would like to attend the session.

**Photo of the four housing units**



### ~CIVIL OFFICE~

The Sheriff's Office employees are public officers entrusted to serve and execute various legal processes for criminal and non-criminal courts. These services are legal notices about a legal action commencing involving the person being served. The civil office employees are also providing the civilian fingerprinting services for the county. In 2019, 908 legal services and execution were served via personal service or mail, if the law allowed. Total money handled by the civil office totaled close to \$600,000. This office is staffed with 1 deputy sheriff and 2 civilian clerks.

### ~ROAD PATROL~

The road patrol side of the Sheriff's Office is probably the most visible. It is made up of the Chief Deputy, 2 sergeants with 6 deputy sheriff's available for road patrol functions. An



additional, 5 deputy sheriffs are assigned as School Resource Officers. Deputy Sheriffs also work with the DEA Drug Task Force and the Adirondack Drug Task Force. Three deputies are certified police instructors; these instructors help with in-service training as well as assisting at the Zone 9 Police Academy.

The road patrol handles many different assignments, all with community safety coming first. The deputies assist with both IRONMAN events, marathons, fun runs, rugby tournament, lacrosse tournament, as well as the Essex County Fair. Deputies are always ready for response to assist when a natural disaster happens in the area.

In 2019, deputy sheriffs were dispatched to 2,811 calls, which generated 746 incident reports and 169 arrests. Plus, monitoring the registrations of 123 sex offenders. Registered offenders are required to

update and verify their address and any other changes with them. They report to the Sheriff's Office to make these changes or verifications. If they neglect to notify appropriately, criminal charges can be filed.

In addition to be ready to respond to a call, deputy sheriffs are trained in numerous specialties. Marine Patrol, Child Safety Identification Cards, 5 certified Child Safety Seat Technicians. Deputies have Crisis Intervention Team Training; this is a team of law enforcement and mental health case workers, working together to provide the appropriate assistance to the individual prior to arrest.

The Sheriff's Office has deputies assigned to the Tri-County Special Response Team. This team is made up of members from Clinton, Essex and Franklin Counties to provide a regional team for response to special situations. Deputies also are trained in the use of a program called Project Lifesaver. This program has 11, 5 kids and 6 adults, participants, these people using the program are persons with medical conditions which may lead to becoming lost. The person wears a small bracelet which helps searchers locate them.

A program which was started a few years ago, to help with the emergency medical coverage throughout the county, has led to 6 deputy sheriffs becoming certified Emergency Medical Technicians (EMT). These deputies have responded to 146 calls as EMTs assisting local fire and ambulance services.

School Resource Officers are assigned to the following schools:

- Boquet Valley Central School
- Crown Point Central School
- Minerva Central School
- Moriah Central School
- Schroon Lake Central School
- Willsboro Central School



**~COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT~**

Throughout the year the Sheriff's Office receives numerous requests to provide traffic control or just be present at an event in the county. Once in a while a request comes in to participate in the event. This is done by members of the Sheriff's Office volunteering on their day off to be part of a community event. Pictured below are just some of the events members participated in; Special Olympic Law Enforcement Torch Run, North County Honor Flight, Keene Run of Remembrance, Schroon Lake Polar Plunge and Capital Region Toys for Tots

