

Biography

About Terry

Terry Lawson is a native Arizonan, having lived and worked in northern Arizona for more than twenty years. Terry attended Arizona State University, where he studied Fine Art and Graphic Design. After college, Terry was employed by the Arizona Department of Corrections for more than two years. Terry graduated from the Correctional Officers Academy and worked in a variety of assignments at the maximum-security prison in Florence, Arizona.

In 1983, Terry was hired by the Coconino County Sheriff's Office as a Deputy Sheriff and attended the Arizona Law Enforcement Training Academy in Tucson, Arizona, where he graduated with honors to become a certified Peace Officer. Subsequent to his basic training, Terry has served in a variety of assignments with the Coconino County Sheriff's Office for nearly 21 years. As a Deputy Sheriff, Terry initially worked in the Jail and later received assignment to the Patrol division, where he provided public safety services throughout Coconino County, working in the Williams, Grand Canyon and Flagstaff patrol districts. Terry has also served in a supervisory capacity as a Sergeant, handling assignments in the Jail, Flagstaff Patrol and Criminal Investigations Divisions, over a period of nine years. In 1988, Terry was selected as Coconino County Supervisor of the Year for his work as a Sergeant in the Jail Division.

In 1997, Terry was promoted to Lieutenant and given command of the Flagstaff Patrol Division, an assignment he held for more than one year, when he was promoted to the rank of Captain. In his position as Captain of Operations, Terry was responsible for the management and supervision of the Sheriff's Office Patrol and Criminal Investigations operations throughout the entire county. During this period, numerous community-oriented programs were implemented or expanded to better serve our citizens. These initiatives included the civilian volunteer patrol, a horse mounted unit, a bicycle patrol program, a unified Citizens Academy co-sponsored with the Flagstaff Police Department and hundreds of hours of advanced training for the Deputies of the department.

Terry has also participated in numerous specialty assignments during his career. He has been a member of a multi-agency helicopter rescue team, working with the Department of Public Safety Ranger Air Rescue unit, Flagstaff and Sedona Fire Departments and Coconino County Search and Rescue. Terry has also trained with and been assigned to the Technical Rescue team, working closely with the outstanding volunteers of the Coconino County Search and Rescue unit to provide emergency response in mountain rescue incidents. Terry is also a certified Arizona P.O.S.T. instructor with a specialization in firearms and tactics training. Terry served as the Sheriff's Office chief firearms instructor for several years and has participated in the development of this training program for more than a decade.

As Captain of Operations, Terry served the community in other capacities as well. Terry participated as a member of the Victim Witness Board of Directors for three years, serving as interim President of the board for about one year during this time frame. Terry is a strong supporter of this victim advocacy group and the services it provides to the victims of domestic violence and abuse. Terry has also participated in numerous committees tasked with addressing the needs of domestic violence victims within our community. Under his command, the Sheriff's Office developed a pro-active Domestic Violence unit, consisting of two Detectives assigned to investigate and prosecute violent offenders. Agency wide protocols and training were implemented to address the issue of domestic violence within our community.

Terry has also served on the Interagency Council for Children, a group of community stakeholders tasked with the investigation and prosecution of cases involving victims of child sexual abuse. Terry participated on this council for nearly three years, and held the co-chair responsibilities until August of 2002. This collaboration was beneficial to the development and adoption of standardized investigative protocols, training and coordinated prosecution of perpetrators of child physical and sexual abuse. The group also strongly advocates for the development of a centralized Family Advocacy Center within our community, with the mission of providing vital investigative and support services to the victims of family violence.

In the fall of 2000, Terry had the privilege and opportunity to attend the Federal Bureau of Investigation National Academy in Quantico, Virginia. The FBI National Academy is a Law Enforcement executive development course, consisting of 11 weeks of study and enrichment programs designed to further the educational and leadership capacities of police managers throughout the world. During the course, Terry attended classes, conducted research, prepared papers and presentations on a diverse array of subject matter areas centered on the principles of leadership and management of public safety agencies. Terry received 15 credit hours from the University of Virginia for this coursework and developed a network of friends and professional colleagues that circles the globe.

In September of 2002, Terry was promoted and assigned as the Deputy Chief in command of the Jail Division. This division employs 160 personnel and is responsible for the management of the Flagstaff Jail and a holding facility operated in Page, Arizona. The Flagstaff Jail has 562 beds and houses approximately 500 inmates each day. The Page Jail serves the needs of this northern Arizona community, housing about 30 persons daily. The Jail Division is charged with the care, custody and control of all persons arrested and incarcerated within Coconino County and serves the needs of the Criminal Justice system within our community.

During his tenure as Deputy Chief, Terry made the management of the financial assets of the Jail District a top priority. The bond-funded Jail District, under previous administration, had not been financially solvent, having operated in a deficit spending mode during the first two years of operation, to the tune of nearly \$2,000,000 in repair and replacement reserve funds. During the first year of his command, Terry, in collaboration with an innovative Jail staff, implemented numerous internal operational policy changes, geared toward improving services, saving money, generating revenue, and enhancing staffing levels within the facility. Transportation and overtime costs were cut, the medical unit was completely revamped, staffing vacancies were reduced from 50 personnel to twenty-five, which had the effect of improved security and better morale.

An audit conducted at the end of Fiscal year 2002/2003 indicated the Jail District held surplus revenues of \$156,000, the first time since the opening of the Jail that revenues had exceeded expenditures. Although the Jail District is currently on improved financial and operational ground, there remains much hard work ahead to continue the process of innovation and enhancement in the future.

In February of 2004, Terry announced his intention to retire from the Sheriff's Office after nearly 21 years of service to the citizens of Coconino County. Terry selected this course of action, so that he could dedicate his time and energy to a campaign for the office of Sheriff of Coconino County. Terry considers the Sheriff's Office to be a quality public safety agency, staffed with outstanding, dedicated people and great organizational potential; however, the future holds many challenges that must be addressed. Terry is strongly committed to creating an agency that manages in a pro-active and progressive manner, geared toward anticipating issues and seeking creative, effective solutions for the concerns facing our community.