

Chatham

SHERIFF  
JOHN T. WILCHER

2017 & 2018

# ANNUAL REPORT

Chatham County Sheriff's Office





SHERIFF

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Cpl. Javier Vaides of the Chatham County Sheriff's Office K-9 Unit - Photo by Bunny Ware

# From the Sheriff

In this publication, you will find the annual reports for the years of 2017 and 2018. As you will see, the Chatham County Sheriff's Office has had a prosperous and productive two years. We have come a long way since 1732 when we were founded as the first law enforcement agency in the State of Georgia. Today, we employ just over 600 deputies, officers, civilians and contract employees who help me run Chatham County's 794,000-square-foot facility on an annually adopted budget of \$59,117,338 for fiscal year 2017 and \$59,506,978.93 for fiscal year 2018.

In particular, 2018 was a huge year for us. I secured raises for our officers, opened up new K-9 and Internal Affairs buildings funded by the Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax (SPLOST), renovated Unit 5 of the Detention Center, completed a smoother road around the Sheriff's Office complex, added a light making getting on Chatham Parkway easier and also underwent major improvements to the gun range.

Looking ahead in 2019, one of my top priorities will be continuing to advocate for a new facility to house those arrested in the community who are suffering from mental illness. We must stop criminalizing the mentally ill and do our parts to help these individuals become productive citizens. Additionally, another top priority will be getting the Sheriff's Office fully staffed. The Chatham County Board of Commissioners has helped tremendously by allowing us to make salaries more competitive for our deputies, but we still have a long way to go. To aid in this, I have hired Gary Taylor, the new Training and Recruiting Director, as well as Brittany Denney, the new Public Information Officer, who both come with a wealth of knowledge and expertise in their respective fields.

I hope that you find this publication helpful and informative and as always, feel free to come to me with any questions or concerns. My door is always open, so no appointment is necessary and I'm always just a phone call away at 912.660.1012.



Sheriff John T. Wilcher participating in the 2018 Savannah Veterans Day Parade - Photo by Angel Hernandez

W A L K I N G

## OUR MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Chatham County Sheriff's Office is to enforce state law and provide the finest public safety services to the people of Chatham County, which includes protecting the judiciary, executing orders of the courts, supporting our law enforcement partners and providing for the care, custody and control of legally incarcerated inmates.



# T H E T A L K

68%

PERCENTAGE OF INMATES IN THE CHATHAM COUNTY JAIL THAT ARE FELONS WITH PRIOR ARRESTS IN CHATHAM COUNTY

\$70

APPROXIMATE COST TO TAXPAYERS TO HOUSE AN INMATE IN THE CHATHAM COUNTY DETENTION CENTER

15,948  
15,491

NUMBER OF MEN AND WOMEN BOOKED IN THE CHATHAM COUNTY DETENTION CENTER IN 2017

NUMBER OF MEN AND WOMEN BOOKED IN THE CHATHAM COUNTY DETENTION CENTER IN 2018

1,785  
1,695

AVERAGE DAILY INMATE COUNT IN 2017

AVERAGE DAILY INMATE COUNTY IN 2018

812  
828

REGISTERED SEX OFFENDERS LIVING IN CHATHAM COUNTY IN 2017

REGISTERED SEX OFFENDERS LIVING IN CHATHAM COUNTY IN 2018

368

NUMBER OF INDIVIDUALS ARRESTED BY THE CHATHAM COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE BETWEEN JANUARY 1, 2017 AND DECEMBER 31, 2018

# THE BENEFITS OF COLLECTING BOND FORFEITURES

In 2017 and 2018, \$146,009 in bond forfeitures was collected by the Chatham County Sheriff's Office and turned over to Chatham County.

**B**ond forfeiture is the encashment or enforcement of a guarantee by its beneficiary under the terms of a guarantee agreement. Generally, bond is an amount set by the court, in either cash or property that is posted to ensure the arrestee/defendants appearance for court actions. Bail bond forfeiture results when a court appearance is missed and the company or person who put up the bond is required to pay the defendant's outstanding bail amount. A forfeited bond becomes the property of the jurisdiction overseeing the case and it cannot be refunded.

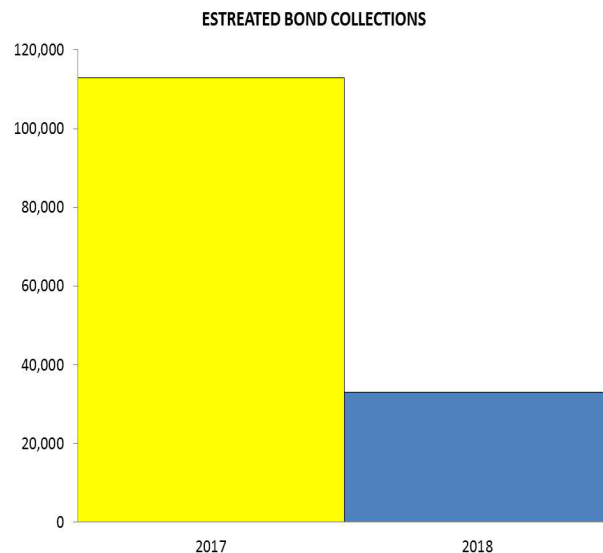
In criminal cases, bail bond forfeiture arises when a defendant, whose appearance in court has been guaranteed by the posting of a bond, fails to appear. In civil cases, forfeiture of bond is the deprivation or destruction of a right as the consequence of the non-performance of some obligation or condition.

In 2017, the Chatham County Sheriff's Office collected \$112,922 in bond forfeitures that was then turned over to Chatham County. In 2018, \$33,087 in bond forfeiture was collected and turned over to the county.

While collecting bond forfeitures is the law, there are also several benefits to doing so. The majority of bond forfeitures go into the county's general fund, which is money that

can be used to fund various things without placing an extra burden on the taxpayer. Additionally, the enforcement of bond forfeitures, as demonstrated in the collection figures between 2017 and 2018, allows for a greater chance that defendants will show up to court, helping to keep court dockets from being backlogged.

"The collection of bond forfeitures is something that I take very seriously because not only is it my legal obligation to do so, but it is also a great service to the tax payers of Chatham County," said Chatham County Sheriff John T. Wilcher.







The Chatham County Sheriff's Office rolled out a new version of their badge in 2018.

# CORRECTIONS

The Chatham County Detention Center budget for fiscal year 2017-2018 was \$48,143,311 and for fiscal year 2018-2019 was \$48,698,425.63.

The facility has eight units that are direct supervision and one that is lateral supervision.

74 percent of corrections' employees are minorities, with 43 percent of them females.

The average daily corrections' staff is 50-60 officers.

The average daily inmate count in 2017 was 1,785 and 1,695 in 2018.

85 percent of the men and women housed at the Detention Center are awaiting court appearances. The remaining 15 percent have been convicted and are awaiting transfer to the state system.

The Sheriff's Office is the first jail in the United States to be accredited for mental health services, as well as the first to achieve dual accreditation in mental health and health services from the National Commission on Correctional Health Care (NCCHC).

The Detention Center is also accredited by the Medical Association of Georgia (MAG). MAG has developed standards for evaluating healthcare in jails and prisons that are used by the National Commission on Correctional Health Care.

Because of staff attrition in 2017 and 2018, there was a shortage of deputies in corrections. Because of this shortage, there was a total of 64,851 hours of overtime recorded in 2017 and 78,687 hours recorded in 2018.





Adoption Day on Feb. 3, 2018 - Photo by Angel Hernandez



Sheriff John Wilcher with previous handlers and graduates, as well as Program Coordinator Jennifer Messer (top right) - Photo by Angel Hernandez

# OPERATION NEW HOPE

## Saving Two Lives With One Program

Operation New Hope began in 2012 with the goal of finding shelter dogs homes and released inmates jobs. Since then, nearly 600 dogs have been trained and adopted out to their forever homes.

The program selects inmates through an application and interview process. If selected, they are paired with a dog and stay with them 24-hours-per-day. In four weeks, inmate handlers potty train the dogs, as well as teach them basic obedience.

The dog training experience that the inmates receive, as well as the interaction with rescues and potential adopters, gives inmates skills

they can use to get a job at a shelter, kennel or vet's office once they have served their sentence.

Every dog in the program comes from a shelter where they are at risk of being euthenized. In 2017, the program trained and adopted out 48 dogs. That number nearly trippled in 2018, with the training and adoption of 141 dogs.

The program, which is funded entirely by donations, does not cost taxpayers any money and provides a huge service to the community. To learn more, visit Operation New Hope on Facebook.

# Inmate Programs

- Alcoholics Anonymous
- Barbering Services
- Chaplaincy
- Computer Skills
- Conflict Resolution
- G.E.D.
- HDH Addiction Services
- Inmate Worker
- Law Library
- Life Skills
- Operation New Hope
- Substance Abuse
- Veterans Program
- Work Release

## PROGRAMS

The mission of the Program Unit is to reduce recidivism by providing quality programs and services to the inmate population to assist them with a successful re-entry into society. The objective is to establish a firm transitional bridge for the detainees; and to help them re-enter the community with the least number of barriers impacting a person with a criminal history (employment, housing, education and treatment).

The Programs Department has more than 95 volunteers and contracted service providers that teach, mentor and counsel inmates. In 2017, the Programs Department received over 20,896 requests for service; the most popular being chaplaincy and substance abuse. In 2018, the Programs Department received over 20,896 requests for service; the most popular being chaplaincy and substance abuse.

No taxpayer money is used to pay for inmate programs or for the Work Release Program. Programs are paid for through the inmate welfare trust fund.

In 2017, 102 inmates participated in the work release program, helping to recover \$82,170.38 in child support and \$20,643.93 in work release fees. Throughout 2018, the work release program continued to operate through the facility's community transition and re-entry program. That year, \$30,345.82 in child support was recovered, along with \$7,380.20 in work release fees.

# VIDEO VISITATION

Visitation without security risks.

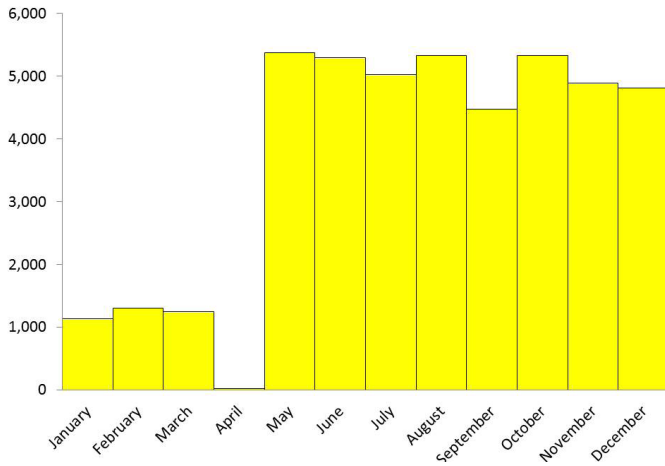
In 2012, the Chatham County Detention Center built a video visitation center adjacent to the jail. Inmates are able to visit with loved ones without the security risks associated with face-to-face visits. Inmates remain in their housing units and conduct their visits from the visitation area.

The video visitation center is open seven days a week, from 9 a.m.- 6 p.m. The inmate visitation schedule is posted on the Sheriff's official website at [www.chathamsheriff.org](http://www.chathamsheriff.org).

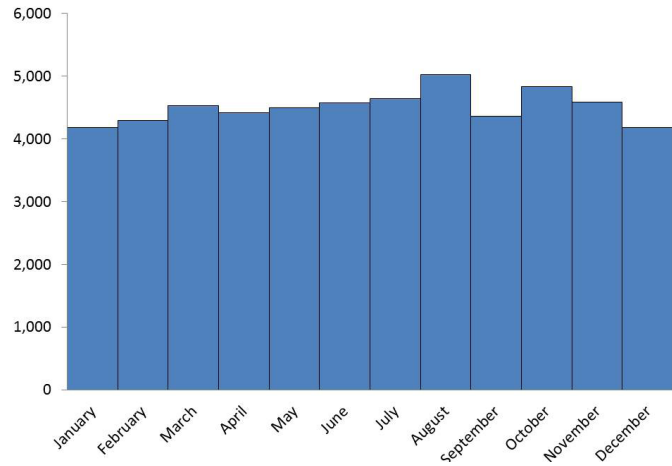
In 2016, the Sheriff's Office began offering video visitation from home. This new feature allows family and friends to conduct video visitation with an inmate using a smartphone, tablet or home computer. This feature can be utilized by visiting [www.mticonnex.us](http://www.mticonnex.us).

In 2017, there was a total of 44,231 video visits and that number rose to 54,129 in 2018.

**TOTAL VIDEO VISITATION 2017**



**TOTAL VIDEO VISITATION 2018**

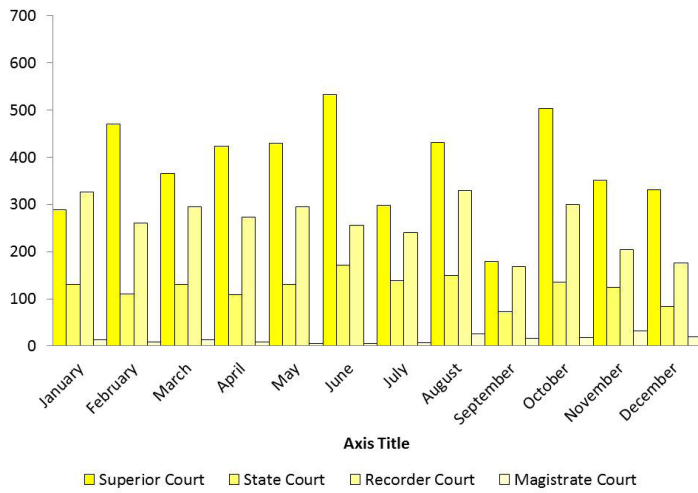


# TRANSPORT



A new Chatham County Sheriff's Office transport van.

TOTAL TRANSPORTS 2017



## Moving Over 10,000 Inmates Per Year

The Transport Unit is responsible for shuttling inmates to and from the state prison systems, other county jails, courts, hospitals and mental health facilities.

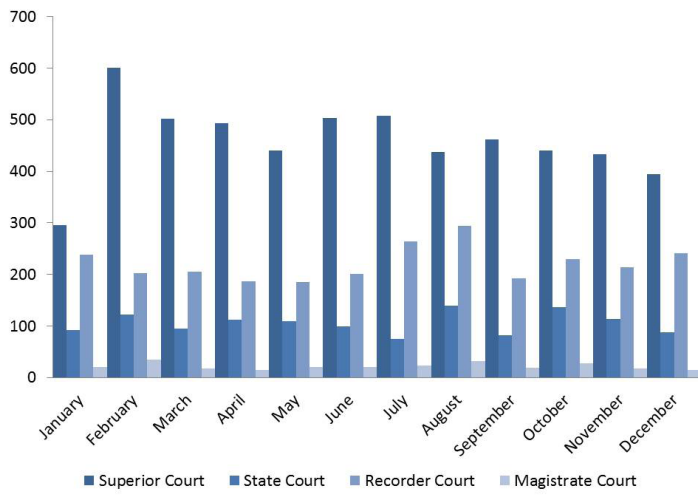
The unit logs thousands of miles each year driving the five mile stretch of Interstate 16 transporting inmates from the jail to the Judicial Courthouse in downtown Savannah.

The unit is comprised of 10 deputies and 12 vehicles.

The Transport Unit can transport inmates on commercial airlines if the inmate is traveling a long distance and there is a time constraint on getting them to court.

In 2017, in addition to court transports, transports were also made to state correction facilities, medical and mental health facilities, juvenile court, funerals and other locations, for a total of 11,905 transports. In 2018, that number rose to 12,103.

TOTAL TRANSPORTS 2018



# RECEIVING & DISCHARGE

The first and the last impression.



Lt. Ronald Cason and Pvt. Josephine Santiago - Photo by Bunny Ware

**T**he Chatham County Sheriff's Office Receiving and Discharge Unit is responsible for booking every individual who is brought to the Chatham County Detention Center, storing the inmate's property and handling all video arraignments with the courts.

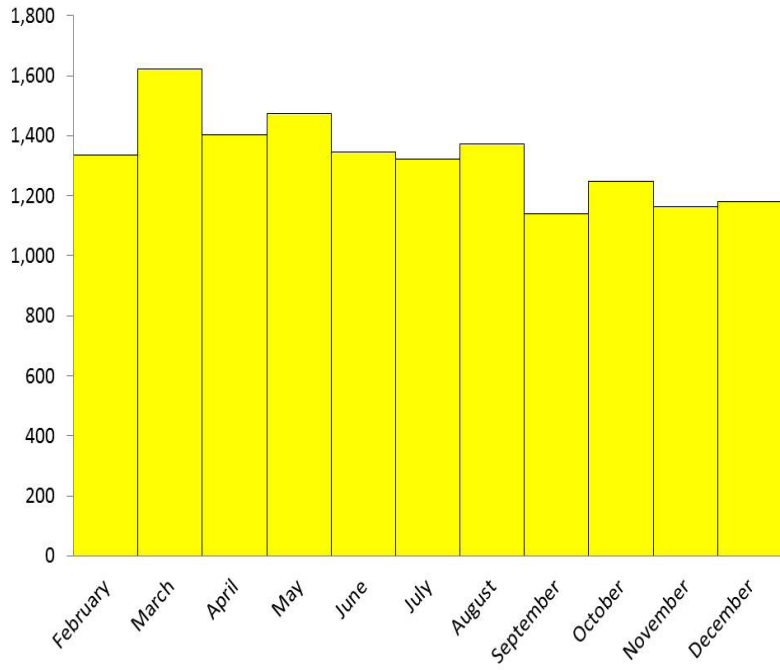
In 2017, 15,948 people were booked into the Detention Center. On average, that's roughly 1,329 bookings per month. In 2018, 15,491 people were booked into the Detention Center. On average, that's roughly 1,290

bookings per month. For both years, the month of March saw the highest amount of bookings. These numbers are impacted by St. Patrick's Day celebrations in downtown Savannah.

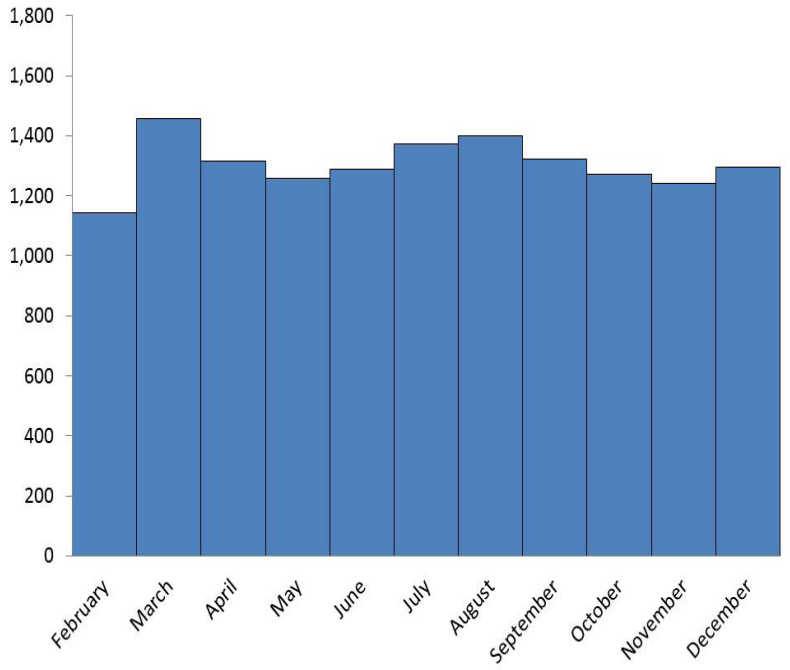
Booking photos are taken of everyone who has been arrested and is brought to the Detention Center. Since the inception of House Bill 845, mugshots are no longer available to the general public, however, the news media still gather and distribute them.



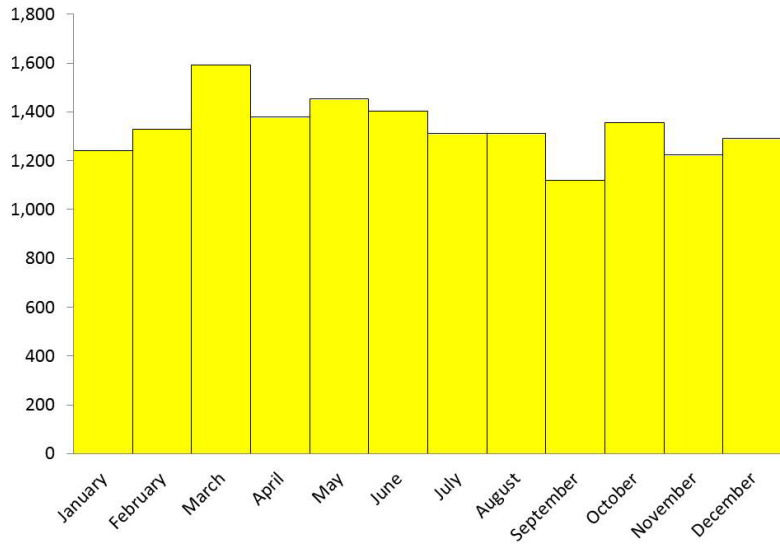
**TOTAL BOOKINGS 2017**



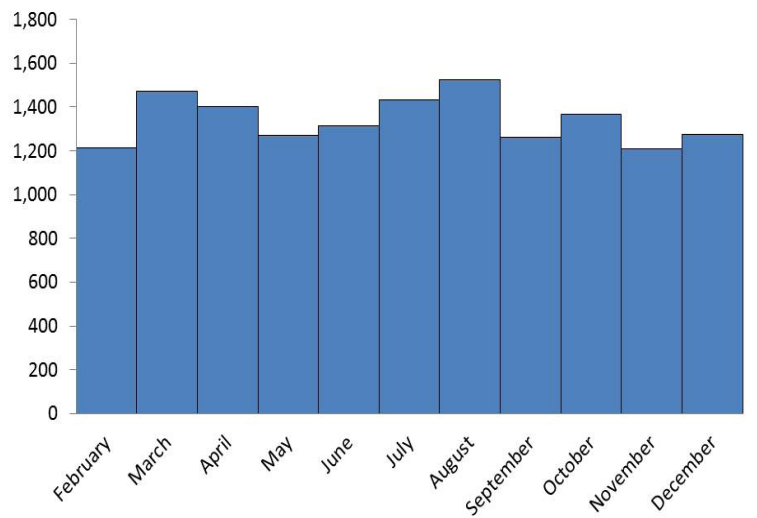
**TOTAL BOOKINGS 2018**



**TOTAL DISCHARGES 2017**



**TOTAL DISCHARGES 2018**



# STREET OPERATIONS

Serving civil processes, subpoenas and criminal warrants.

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Did you know that the Chatham County Sheriff's Office Street Operations Division has the highest second arrest rate in Chatham County?



SORT Officer, Dep. Nikki Meyers - Photo by Bunny Ware

**T**he Street Operations Division of the Chatham County Sheriff's Office is responsible for the service and execution of civil processes, subpoenas, FiFa's/Levy's, extraditions, affidavits and 10-13's, Project Lifesaver and criminal warrants that are received from Recorders,

Probate, Magistrate, State, Juvenile and Superior Courts. In 2017, Street Operations had 26 sworn officers and eight civilian, full-time personnel. In 2018, that number dropped to 22 sworn and nine civilian, full-time personnel. Deputies are assigned full-time to the Sex Offender Registration and

Tracking Team (SORT) and the Chatham Narcotics Team (CNT).

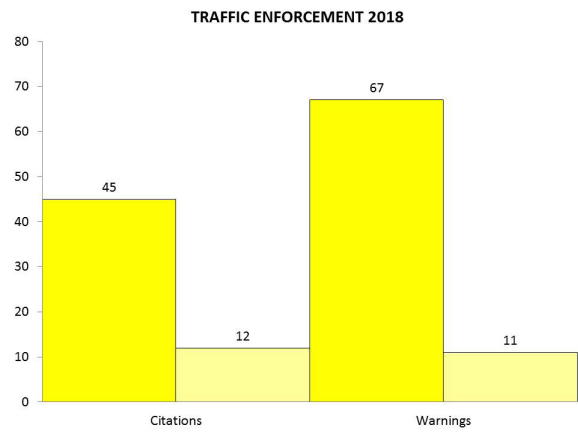
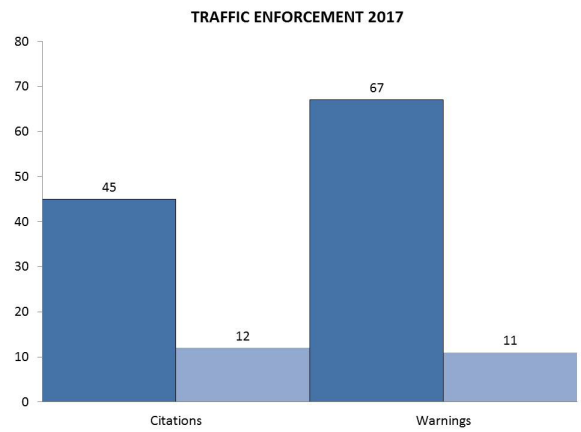
Street Operations is also responsible for coordinating extraditions. In 2017, there were 160 wanted persons picked up from other states on Chatham County warrants. Additionally, there were 170 individuals arrested in Chatham County on out-of-state warrants. Extraditions were conducted with the assistance of 33 states. In 2018, there were 216 wanted persons picked up from other states on Chatham County warrants. Additionally, there were 214 individuals arrested in Chatham County on out-of-state warrants. Extraditions were conducted with the assistance of 41 states.

In 2017, the division had a significant number of achievements, including advancements such as receiving a new vehicle fleet, new MDT and secure radios for the vehicles and new Body Worn Cameras with tasers and vehicle driver door triggers. In 2018, advancements included a new Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) system that was

purchased in February and went live in March.

Street Operations remained highly dedicated to the community at large throughout 2017 and 2018, providing assistance with events such as the Chatham County Drug Turn-In Project, Orange Crush on Tybee Island, the Savannah Rock-n-Roll Marathon, A.B.A.T.E. Annual Toys for Tots Motorcycle Ride, Pooler Tanger Outlets 5K Foot Pursuit, Georgia Blue Knights Ride to Remember, Buffalo Soldiers Motorcycle Ride, Feed the Hungry in Forsyth Park, the Asian Festival at the Georgia Southern Armstrong Campus, Stand Down for Veterans at the Savannah Civic Center and many more.

Deputies with Street Operations also drove various elected officials in the Martin Luther King, Jr. Day Parade, the Tybee Island St. Patrick's Day Parade, the Savannah St. Patrick's Day Parade, Port Wentworth's Stand Up for America Parade, the Savannah Veterans Day Parade and the Tybee Island Beach Bum Parade.



The above traffic statistics combine citations and warnings from Street Operations and Court Services that arise from daily enforcement, special events throughout the county and in support of other agencies. Throughout 2017 and 2018, the Chatham County Sheriff's Office wrote a total of 114 citations and a total of 156 warnings.

On the next page, you will see a breakdown of total Street Operations activities from 2017 and 2018. These activities include warrants, civil suits, subpoenas, red tags, temporary protection orders, evictions and more.

<b>Activity</b>	<b>2017</b>	<b>2018</b>
<b>Warrants Received</b>	6,326	851
<b>Warrants Served</b>	766	485
<b>Warrants Unable to Locate</b>	3,176	312
<b>Outstanding Warrants</b>	7,750	8,751
<b>Warrants Entered in Georgia Crime Information Center</b>	4,472	4,857
<b>Warrants Cleared by Georgia Crime Information Center</b>	4,167	4,443
<b>Civil Suits Received in Zones</b>	44,272	43,699
<b>Civil Suits Served</b>	11,947	8,772
<b>Civil Attempts</b>	15,061	14,279
<b>Civil Suits Unable to Locate</b>	5,595	6,309
<b>Subpoenas Received in Zones</b>	23,528	21,979
<b>Subpoenas Served</b>	18,687	17,742
<b>Subpoenas Unable to Locate</b>	2,963	2,870
<b>Red Tags</b>	3,113	2,979
<b>Temporary Protection Orders Received</b>	413	607
<b>Temporary Protection Orders Served</b>	272	384
<b>Temporary Protection Order Attempts</b>	817	827
<b>Evictions</b>	1,510	1,301
<b>Dispossessory</b>	25,465	24,012
<b>FiFa's Served</b>	15	14
<b>FiFa Attempts</b>	71	56
<b>Mental Patient Transport</b>	243	328
<b>Mental Patient Attempts</b>	323	348
<b>Mental Patient Out of County Transport</b>	0	0
<b>Sex Offender Residence Checks</b>	4,194	2,148
<b>Project Lifesaver Battery Changes</b>	276	239

Street Operations Annual Statistics for 2017 and 2018.

# PROJECT LIFESAVER

**P**roject Lifesaver falls under the Enforcement Bureau of the Street Operations Division and aids patients suffering from Alzheimer's Disease, demntia, Down's Syndrome and Autism.

Through the use of wristband transmitters placed on participating clients, children and senior citizens are monitored by radio tracking devices that help locate them when they become seperated from their caretakers. If a person wearing a tracking bracelet goes missing, caretakers notify the Chatham County Sheriff's Office and the search and rescue team immediately responds with an average recovery time of less than 30 minutes.

In 2017, the Sheriff's Office was monitoring 23 clients and conducted three searches for clients with three successful recoveries. In 2018, the number of clients rose to 27 and deputies conducted four searches with four successful recoveries.

Deputies began training for Project Lifesaver on May 19, 2009. Initially, instructors from the project's home-base in Virginia traveled to Savannah

for a three day training session with 13 deputies and two pilots with Chatham County's Mosquito Control (who provided the capability for in-air patrol). Today, the Chatham County Sheriff's Office conducts in-house training for deputies associated with the project. Chief Deputy Billy Freeman oversees the operations of the project, along with Project Lifesaver Director, Lieutenant Trey Leggett. There are currently 83 deputies and two Chatham County Mosquito Control helicopter pilots who are trained on how to use the Project Lifesaver tracking equipment.

To learn more about Project Lifesaver, contact Leggett at 912.660.7705 or [tleggett@chathamcounty.org](mailto:tleggett@chathamcounty.org).



Sgt. Hollinger changes the battery on a Project Lifesaver client.

Activity	2017	2018
Clients	23	27
Project Lifesaver Hours	110.25	162
Battery Changes	276	324
Searches	3	4
Successful Recoveries	3	4

# SORT

## Sex Offender Registration and Tracking Unit

The Chatham County Sheriff's Office Sex Offender Registration and Tracking Unit (SORT), which is a part of the Street Operations Division, is tasked by the State of Georgia to keep close tabs on the registered sex offenders who live in Chatham County.

In 2017, Chatham County had 812 registered sex offenders, 76 which were new and 35 sexual predators (a child molestor or a person who uses force to rape). In 2018, the number of registered sex offenders grew to 828, 152 which were new, and the number of sexual predators increased to 37.

For the past decade, the Chatham County Sheriff's Office SORT Unit has remained the top unit in the state for arrests, prosecutions and convictions. The unit has also continued to have a 100 percent conviction rate.

In 2017, the unit arrested three absconded sex offenders, 46 subjects for probation violations, five subjects for failure to register and/or monitor tampering, two subjects for contempt of court and nine subjects for other agencies.

In 2018, the unit finished the year with 27 Grand Jury indictments, was instrumental in over 176 Superior Court Probation Violation warrants being issued and partnered with multiple agencies on several prosecutions to include the U.S. Marshals, Savannah Police Department, Garden City Police Department, Pooler Police Department, Port Wentworth Police Department, Effingham County Sheriff's Office, Bulloch County Sheriff's Office, Bryan County Sheriff's Office, as well as many other agencies throughout the country.

A top priority for the unit continued to be sex offender residence checks. In 2017, 1,971 residence were checked and in 2018, 1,188 residence were checked.

For more information about the location of sex offenders in Chatham County, visit [www.ChathamSheriff.org/Enforcement/Street-Operations/SORT](http://www.ChathamSheriff.org/Enforcement/Street-Operations/SORT).



# HONOR GUARD

The Chatham County Sheriff's Office Honor Guard is a staple at events all across Chatham County and remains a superb representation of the high standards of the law enforcement profession.



The Chatham County Sheriff's Office Honor Guard served at the 2018 Police Memorial Ceremony at the Georgia Historical Police Memorial located outside of the Savannah Police Department downtown - Photo by Angel Hernandez

## Honor and Dignity On Display

The Chatham County Sheriff's Office Honor Guard began operating in August of 1992 and is currently comprised of 13 officers representing the Corrections Bureau, Enforcement Bureau, Street Operations, K-9, Courts Operations and Training. The unit is commanded by Maj. Torrey Mackey and assisted by Sgt. Joey Warezak and Sgt. L.D. Hollinger.

In 2017, the Honor Guard entered into its 27th year of operation and participated in 10 events. In 2018, the needs of the community increased and the Honor Guard participated in 23 events. Significant events for both years included the Savannah Martin Luther King, Jr. Day Parade, the Savannah St. Patrick's Day Parade, the Savannah Police Memorial Observance, the 200 Club Savannah Mile Observance, the Savannah Veterans Day Parade, Savannah's Memorial Day Observance, the Stand Up for America Day Parade in Port Wentworth and several others.

# K-9 UNIT

It is the mission of the Chatham County Sheriff's Office K-9 Unit to provide professionally trained and highly motivated K-9 teams to respond to critical incidents in Chatham County and beyond.

The Chatham County Sheriff's Office K-9 Unit was originally formed in 1989 and has grown from one narcotics dog to 10 handlers and 10 K-9's today.

Lead by Lt. Jason Livie, the Sheriff's Office has six dogs trained to detect narcotics and four trained to detect explosives. All of the dogs are either a German Shepherds or Belgian Malinois. Together, the teams of handlers and K-9's routinely perform school searches, security sweeps, execute search warrants, conduct traffic safety checks and respond to bomb threats.

In 2017, the the unit performed 911 narcotic searches, 531 explosive searches, 102 weapons searches and 177 school searches at 35 schools, totalling in 1,544 overall searches. Additionally, two handlers and their K-9's assigned to the Criminal Interdiction Unit seized over \$130,000 in U.S. currency and made numerous narcotics seizures with an estimated street value of \$7,000. Two teams assigned to the Drug Interdiction Unit seized nearly \$72,000 in U.S. currency and seized approximately \$706,000 of illegal narcotics.

In 2018, the unit performed 514 narcotic searches, 498 explosive searches, 175 weapons searches and 113 school searches at 37 schools, totalling in 1,214 overall searches. Two handlers and K-9's assigned to the Criminal Interdiction Unit seized \$58, 403 in U.S. currency and made numerous narcotics seizures with an estimated street value of over \$31,000. One team assigned to the Drug Interdiction Unit seized \$514,500 in U.S. currency and seized nearly \$30 million in illegal narcotics.

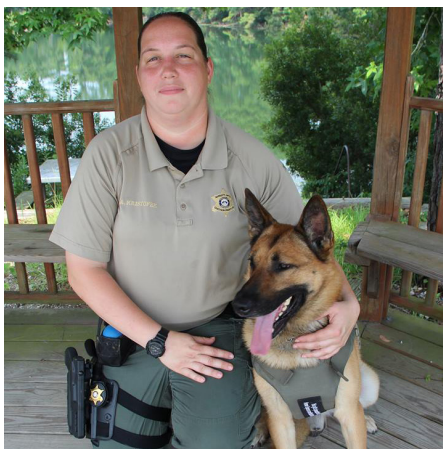




The Chatham County Sheriff's Office is home to a regional K-9 training facility with three general instructors. In 2017, 53 officers from 36 police agencies attended Narcotic/ Explosives Training and became certified K-9 handlers. In 2018, 55 officers from 33 agencies attended the training to become certified handlers.



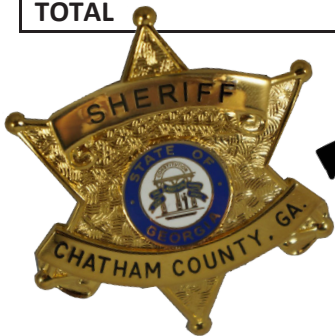
Did you know that handlers use Kong toys as a reward for the dogs performing their job well? It's all the dog wants at the end of the day!



# INTERNAL AFFAIRS

Internal Affairs is responsible for conducting all administrative investigations to include complaints, Prison Rape Elimination Act (P.R.E.A.) allegations and officer misconduct. The unit is also responsible for conducting all background investigations for the Sheriff's Office, as well as other assignments.

Unit Investigations	2017	2018
Agency Assist	1	1
Contraband	3	3
Death Investigation	1	1
Dissemination of Information	1	0
Employee Misconduct/Drugs	2	1
Failure to Perform	1	1
General Conduct	14	6
Negligence	1	1
Officer Misconduct	2	6
Use of Force	3	4
Work Rules Violation/Fraternization	8	7
Security	1	0
Inmate Complaint	7	2
Sexual Assault/Harassment	1	1
Information Only (Miscellaneous complaints, not needing actual investigation)	62	54
Social Media	1	0
Inmate Sexual Misconduct	5	2
PREA	5	44
Traffic Stop/Suicide	1	0
Workers Compensation	1	0
Theft	1	0
Inmate Attempted Suicide	1	2
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>123</b>	<b>136</b>



Protecting the validity of the badge

# COMPLIANCE

## Policies & Procedures

### Accreditations

Accreditation increases accountability, builds community trust and helps to protect organizations. The Chatham County Sheriff's Office is accredited by the Medical Association of Georgia (MAG) and the National Commission on Correctional Health Care (NCCHC). In preparation for the future, the Sheriff's Office is preparing to become state accredited by the Georgia Association of Chiefs of Police (GACP) and nationally accredited through the American Correctional Association (ACA) and the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement (CALEA). Upon receiving these additional national accreditations, the Sheriff's Office will be eligible to receive the National Sheriff's Association's (NSA) Triple Crown Award. This distinction is so rare that since the establishment of the award in 1993, fewer than 100 sheriffs' offices have qualified.

### Federal Programs/Reports

The Detention Center participates in the "Deaths in Custody" and "Sexual Victimization" surveys requested through the United States Department of Justice as well as the State Criminal Alien Assistance Program (SCAAP). SCAAP is a grant that provides federal payments to states and localities that incurred correctional officer salary costs for incarcerating undocumented, criminal aliens who have at least one felony or two misdemeanor convictions for violations of state or local law, and who are incarcerated for at least four consecutive days during the reporting period. For the 2017 fiscal year, the Sheriff's Office was awarded \$45,457. This was an increase of \$11,958 from the 2016 fiscal year. These funds were placed into the Chatham County General Operating Fund to help with some of the costs associated with providing for the care of legally incarcerated inmates.

### Policies

The foundation and first line of defense against risks in any organization is policies and procedures. Clear and well-drafted policies are essential to assuring constitutional practices. All of the policies of the Sheriff's Office are being re-evaluated for clarity, structure and consistency. The policies will reflect and express the department's core values and priorities; provide clear direction to ensure that all staff lawfully, effectively and ethically carries out their responsibilities; and be based on professional thinking, court decisions and national and regional standards. All of the Sheriff's Office policies and procedures have been published to SharePoint; a web based internal document management and storage software. This software is accessible by all employees. Policies and procedures are continually monitored and reviewed at least annually and updated as needed.

The agency has invested in PowerDMS; an external document management software to ensure transparency and accountability. This software helps to track and document policy amendments, revisions and additions, as well as offers an additional cost-effective platform for online training. It will allow staff to access policies and take training courses from any device connected to the internet. The software will be made available to all staff by the end of the 2018 fiscal year.



From left, Pvt. Roberto Martir, Reserves Coordinator Richard Pfister, Sgt. Jason Waterfield, Pvt. Joni York, Pvt. Ron Palefsky and the late Pvt. John Phillips at a Operation New Hope Adoption Day in 2018 - Photo by Angel Hernandez

## RESERVE UNIT

The Reserve Unit of the Chatham County Sheriff's Office operates as a division and supports all aspects of law enforcement by providing trained, qualified, state certified individuals to assist other divisions of the Sheriff's Office as well as in emergency situations as directed by the Sheriff. Hours worked as a Reserve Unit member are for no monetary compensation by the tax payers of Chatham County and is on a volunteer basis by individuals who feel deeply committed to the Sheriff's Office and the Chatham County community.

In 2017, the Reserve Unit contributed 4,629 hours to the Chatham County Sheriff's Office, the equivalent of 2.22 full-time deputies. The average hours contributed per member was 165, averaging 13.75 hours per month. In 2018, the unit contributed 4,217 hours to the Sheriff's Office, the equivalent of 2.02 full-time deputies. The average hours contributed per member was 222, averaging 18.50 hours per month. Reservists served in the areas of enforcement, K-9, U.S. Marshal's Service, jail, courthouse, dispatch and at special events.

In 2018, the Reserve Unit was taken under the leadership of Reserve Coordinator Richard Pfister, a former full-time deputy of the Chatham County Sheriff's Office with five and half years of experience.

In 2018, the unit started with 17 members. Two long time members retired, one member moved to full-time status with the Sheriff's Office and one left the unit due to an extended work assignment in another state. Six new members were added to the unit, bringing the total to 19, a net gain of three members for 2018.

Seven unit members were promoted in 2018, one to sergeant, one to corporal and five to private, in keeping with the unit's needs and Sheriff's Office policy.



Reserve Unit Coordinator Richard Pfister - Photo by Angel Hernandez

## In the Community

The unit exponentially increased their presence in the community in 2018. The Operation New Hope adoptions are now entirely staffed by unit members, eliminating the need for certified officers to be scheduled for overtime. Prescription Drug Turn-Ins were held for the general public and the unit even coordinated with senior citizen facilities throughout the community to coordinate a safe and ongoing way to dispose of unused prescription medication. In 2018, a total of 59 pounds of unused prescription medication was collected from throughout the Chatham County community. In August of 2018, several members of the unit attended National Night Out, patrolled the streets for safety on Halloween and patrolled polling places throughout the county on Election Day 2018.

## Training

Unit members completed all Georgia P.O.S.T. and Sheriff's Office requirements, as well as training in several specialty areas throughout 2017 and 2018.



Pvt. Jomi York hands out bags of Candy in Drayton Park on Halloween 2018 -0  
Photo by Angel Hernandez



Sheriff John T. Wilcher with Reservist Pvt. Lance Warren - Photo by Angel Hernandez

# COURT SERVICES & SECURITY

The first line of defense at the Chatham County Courthouse

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Did you know that you can view the items that were first confiscated in 1995 at the Chatham County Courthouse security screening point in the main lobby of the Chatham County Sheriff's Office? Its display of several weapons is exemplary of the importance of the security screening process.



From left, Dep. David Strobert and Blue Coat Stephen Darnstadt - Photo by Bunny Ware

**T**he mission of the Chatham County Sheriff's Office Court Services Division is to provide a safe and protected environment for county employees and visitors of the county courthouses, as well as the Pete Liakakis Government Building, and to protect the integrity of the court

process. This is accomplished through the use of technology, the deployment of well-trained deputies and security personnel, and by encouraging all occupants of the county buildings to move to a higher level of awareness and vigilance.

Courthouse security officers are the first

line of defense against security threats at three county courthouse buildings and the Liakakis Buildings. Officers are located at the Juvenile Courthouse on Carl Griffin Dr., the Judicial Courthouse on Montgomery St., the Administrative Courthouse on Bull St. and the Pete Liakakis Government Building on West Oglethorpe Ave.

Visitors and employees are carefully screened as they enter and pass through an x-ray machine while each visitor walks through a magnetometer. Individual screening with a hand wand is common when the magnetometer alerts an officer. Security checkpoints are also located on the second and fourth floors of the judicial courthouse.

Courthouse security officers play an important role during emergency evacuations and clearing the courthouse in the event of a bomb threat, lockdown or fire. Officers man the control room where they monitor by radio the movement of deputies transporting inmates within the courthouse. Control room

officers monitor up to 30 security cameras inside and outside of the courthouse. Courthouse security officers work hand-in-hand with court services deputies and supervisors in keeping the county buildings safe for employees and visitors alike.



From left, Dep. Sheldon Whiteman, Dep. Thomas Hurst and Dep. Norma Fabella - Photo by Bunny Ware

<b>Court Cases/Activity</b>	<b>2017</b>	<b>2018</b>
Judicial Court	114,339	119,472
Recorders Court	75,127	82,099
Magistrate Court	6,820	6,700
State Court	20,516	18,994
Superior Court	36,773	34,489
Juvenile Court	11,897	9,974
<b>Total</b>	<b>265,472</b>	<b>271,728</b>

<b>Facility</b>	<b>Visitors Screened 2017</b>	<b>Visitors Screened 2018</b>	<b>Contraband Seized 2017</b>	<b>Contraband Seized 2018</b>
Coleman Judicial Courthouse	439,383	421,840	1,037	1,051
Juvenile Courthouse	97,855	93,433	11	10
Liakakis Government Building	81,119	71,505	0	3
Detention Center Lobby	29,734	7,626 (discontinued in April)	1	0
Video Visitation	114,392	109,490	2	6
<b>Total</b>	<b>762,483</b>	<b>703,894</b>	<b>1,051</b>	<b>1,070</b>

# TRAINING & RECRUITING



Sheriff John T. Wilcher and Chief Deputy Billy Freeman stand with Basic Jail Officer Training (BJOT) Class 0918 graduated on Oct. 12, 2018 - Photo by Bunny Ware

It was a strong two years in 2017 and 2018 for the Chatham County Sheriff's Office Training and Recruiting Unit, in large part due to a personnel shift that included hiring new Director of Training and Recruiting Gary Taylor, as well as new recruiters and trainers to help with staffing shortages and bringing a new and more dynamic training program to current officers.

As a whole, the Training and Recruiting Unit works diligently to ensure that the Sheriff's Office hires and maintains the best possible officer candidates. In addition to working with the local State P.O.S.T. Academy and the American Correctional Association in all aspects of training, we also train all of our officers and civilians throughout their careers. Training and Recruiting also acts as a

regional training facility, training personnel from numerous counties throughout the state.

Courses taught by the unit throughout 2017 and 2018 included: American Jail Origins, Chemical Weapons, Self-Defense Tactics, Inmate Discipline and Grievance Procedures, Emergency Procedures, Ethics and Professionalism, Fingerprinting, Fire Safety, Jail Climate, Emergency Medical Services, Report Writing, Basic Jail Security Procedures, Inmate Medical Services, Supervision of Inmates, Searches and Security Inspections, Stress Awareness, Abnormal Behavior Suicide Prevention, Universal Precautions and the First Responder, Inmate Rights and more.



In 2018, the Training and Recruiting Unit conducted a total of eight Basic Jail Officer Training Classes with 56 graduating deputies. A total of 26 deputies attended the Georgia Public Safety Training Center's Peace Officer Academy and obtained their Law Enforcement Certifications.

The Sheriff's Office partnered with several other police agencies throughout 2017 and 2018. In 2018, we partnered with the Chatham County Police Department to provide training for both agencies after the City/County de-merger to teach policing in the unincorporated areas of Chatham County, which began in February of 2018.



Training and Recruiting Director Gary Taylor - Photo by Bunny Ware



### Sheriff Al St. Lawrence Memorial Range and Training Facility

The Training and Recruiting Unit is responsible for managing the Sheriff Al St. Lawrence Memorial Range and Training Facility which underwent a complete remodel that was completed in 2017.

During 2018, there was a total of 4,081 people who used the firearms facility from nearly 30 different police agencies.

Also in 2018, the Sheriff's Office partnered with CNT to purchase an incinerator that is housed on the Sheriff's Office property which allows for drugs and weapons to be destroyed internally and for other agencies for a nominal fee.

The Sheriff Al St. Lawrence Memorial Range and Training Facility - Photo by Angel Hernandez

Dep. Mitchell Mimick off the Training and Recruiting Unit teaching a civilian gun safety class in October 2017 - Photo by Bunny Ware





**APPLY TODAY!**  
**THERE'S A PLACE FOR YOU HERE.**



[ChathamSheriff.org/Careers/Career-Overview](https://ChathamSheriff.org/Careers/Career-Overview)  
Call Recruiting at 912.652.7795

# PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICE

An essential building block of any law enforcement agency is open and transparent communication.

The Public Information Office is headed up by Public Information Officer Brittany Herren. Herren, who started with the Chatham County Sheriff's Office in October of 2018, brought eight years of public relations, communications and marketing experience to the position. She has a B.A. in English and an M.A. in Professional Communication and Leadership.

The Public Information Office ensures that the community is kept informed about current events, programs and news. The office fields all media inquiries, as well as manages all marketing and communications materials, the website, social media accounts and more.

Between October and December of 2018, the Public Information Office sent out 21 press releases to local and regional media outlets, had 69 news stories run, attended 51 community outreach events and exponentially grew the office's Facebook and Twitter accounts.

To contact the Public Information Office, call 912.652.7606. Herren can be reached on her cell phone at 912.660.9571 or at [bdherren@chathamcounty.org](mailto:bdherren@chathamcounty.org).



Public Information Officer Brittany Herren - Photo by Katrina Barrow & Joanna Ng

October – December 2018 Accomplishments		Stats
Press Releases Sent		21
News Stories Ran		69
Community Outreach Events		51

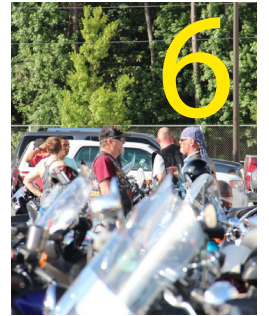
## Let's Get Social!

The Sheriff's Office is very present on social media in order to maximize lines of communication and transparency. Since October of 2018, the Sheriff's Office Facebook and Twitter pages have significantly grown in followers and engagement. You can get in on the action by liking our Facebook page at

[facebook.com/ChathamCountySheriff](https://www.facebook.com/ChathamCountySheriff) and following our Twitter Page @ChathamSheriff. Both of these pages contain up-to-date information on upcoming events, policy and procedure updates, general day-to-day happenings and more. Join the conversation today!

# COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Throughout 2017 and 2018, Sheriff John T. Wilcher and the Chatham County Sheriff's Office conducted a number of community outreach events.



1. In 2018, the Sheriff's Office raised over \$23,000 during the 16th Annual Poker Run benefitting the Georgia Sheriffs' Youth Homes.

2. Sheriff Wilcher with Savannah Hispanic Chamber of Commerce President Alfonso Ribot and Savannah Police Department Chief Roy Minter at the 2018 Savannah Hispanic Chamber of Commerce Annual Awards Gala.

3. Sheriff Wilcher hosted the first-ever Shooting with the Sheriff charity clay shooting event in December 2018, raising nearly \$26,000 for the Georgia Sheriffs' Youth Homes.

4. For Christmas 2017, Sheriff's Office staff travelled to the Georgia Sheriffs' Youth Homes in Hahira to deliver Christmas presents to the children.

5. For Christmas 2018, Sheriff's Office staff delivered presents to the children of the Georgia Sheriffs' Youth Homes in Hahira.

6. The Sheriff's Office raised over \$21,000 during the 15th Annual Poker Run in 2017 for the Georgia Sheriffs' Youth Homes.

7. In 2017, Sheriff's Office staff raised \$5,000 for the Nancy N. & J.C. Lewis Cancer & Research Pavillion in Savannah.

8. Sheriff's Office staff showed up in full force to the 200 Club of the Coastal Empire's Red, White and Blue BBQ in October of 2018.

9. For Thanksgiving 2018, Sheriff's Office staff delivered bags of food to families in need throughout the community.

10. In November of 2018, Sheriff Wilcher and our Honor Guard marched in the Savannah Veterans Day Parade, along with several other parades throughout 2017 and 2018.

11. In December 2018, Sheriff Wilcher wrapped Christmas presents with the Labor Council for military families struggling financially.

12. In November of 2018, the Sheriff's Office donated and smoked 30 turkeys to Savannah Feed the Hungry.



# COMMAND STAFF

The Chatham County Sheriff's Office Command Staff divides and manages all aspects of every unit and operational measure in the office.

Pictured from left, Major Torrey Mackey, Director Gary Taylor, Major Tommy Tillman, Commander Brian Counihan, Sheriff John T. Wilcher, Chief Deputy Billy Freeman, Major Lawrence Wright and Director Todd Freesemann.





Photo by Bunny Ware



Chatham County Sheriff's Office  
1050 Carl Griffin Dr.  
Savannah, Ga. 31405

