

## ACCEPTANCE STATEMENT BY MULTNOMAH COUNTY SHERIFF

DAN STATON

November 5, 2009

I am humbled by the attendance today and your support as the Multnomah County Sheriff. There are many people here whom I wish to recognize and thank. First I would like to thank my family in particular my wife Kim, as well as the many friends who have joined me during this occasion.

I would like to recognize and extend my appreciation to the Multnomah County Sheriffs, current Sheriffs from other counties, County Commissioners, Judges, the District Attorney, other locally elected officials, police chiefs and leaders of the public safety system who have taken time out of their day to join the Sheriff's Office in writing a new Chapter in the history of this agency.

Thank you, Mr. Schrunk for honoring me by swearing me in as the Sheriff of Multnomah County. Since 1854 only 35 other people have served as the Multnomah County Sheriff and I am humbled and very proud to carry forward the great tradition of law enforcement previously provided by such people as William L. McMillen, Multnomah County Sheriff before Oregon achieved Statehood, Penumbra Kelly, a two term legislator in the Oregon Legislature, and your own Dad, Terry Schrunk, who also served as mayor of the City of Portland.

The office of Sheriff is one filled with tradition. Three former Sheriff's have later served as Portland's Mayor. One served as Mayor of Houston, Texas. Don Clark was a County Commissioner and Multnomah County Executive. Fred Pearce was the Director of the Oregon State Corrections. Three served in the Oregon Legislature, and numerous Sheriffs have served as County Treasurers, Assessors, and Coroners. But the Sheriff I admire the most has served us for the past 18 months with great dignity and grace. Sheriff Bob Skipper is a man of integrity; a man of honor; and a man of his word. Noted commentator and political humorist, Will Rogers was known for comments that, while simple in nature, spoke volumes about life.

Statements such as “Even if you are on the right track you’ll get run over if you just sit there”; or “Live in such a way that you would not be ashamed to sell your parrot to the town gossip” encouraged and entertained his followers across the nation. Those of us who know Bob Skipper could easily imagine similar words of advice flowing from his mouth in his quiet, casual way. His Will Rogers-like wit and uncomplicated view of life inspired the Sheriff’s Office to achieve new heights. Sheriff Skipper, it has been my privilege to serve with you and I am humbled by your confidence in me to carry on the tradition as the Multnomah County Sheriff.

Unfortunately, the challenges facing Multnomah County and the Sheriff’s Office don’t also retire with the Sheriff. The Sheriff’s Office plays an important role in the smooth operation of the court system through the services of its process, delivery of offenders to court, and protecting the facilities so the judicial process can operate safely and efficiently.

Adequate jail space that is safe, efficient, and provide opportunities for offenders to receive treatment and recovery services will be high priorities during my tenure as Sheriff. It is unacceptable that our failures in caring for those with mental health problems has resulted in the Sheriff’s Jail system becoming one of the largest mental health facilities in the State. It is unacceptable that lack of alcohol and drug treatment services in the community has made the Sheriff’s Jail system a revolving door of offenders cycling in and out of jail driven by their addictive behaviors. And it is unacceptable that we have turned the Sheriff’s Corrections system into a big box warehouse limping by with a minimum amount of treatment services all in the name of “Fiscal Crisis in Corrections”. The men and women of the Multnomah County Sheriff’s Office have the desire, the passion, and the skills to make a positive difference in the lives of those detained in our jails. I am committed to working with the Chair, the Board of County Commissioners, and the treatment community to find reasonable solutions to offender management that places the Sheriff’s Office in partnership with treatment opportunities.

I am committed to maximizing the availability of treatment services to those inmates while in our custody to disrupt the cycle of their addictions. But ultimately, I am committed to ensuring that the safety of our community is assured by maintaining a sufficient number of jail beds to protect our citizens from predatory behavior when it threatens the livability of our neighborhoods.

The Sheriff's Office is not just a jail system. We must provide safety to those communities that lack adequate police protection. We must protect and closely guard our transportation systems, highways, waterways, and natural resources to ensure economic development, environmental sustainability, and recreational opportunities. And we must apply the law in such a manner that ensures all citizens are treated fairly and impartially and is respectful of their ethnicity, cultural backgrounds, and lifestyles for it is the multicultural diversity of Portland and its people that makes the Pacific Northwest such a great place to live.

Thank you for your support. Thank you for your confidence in me. I will do my very best to retain your confidence and support. Now there is much work to do. We have many things to accomplish as we enter the next decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Economic turmoil has eroded our public safety systems. The citizens of our community cannot live in fear of victimization. The elderly, poor, and vulnerable must feel safe in their homes and communities. I did not accept the appointment of Multnomah County Sheriff without giving it a great deal of thoughtful consideration. Nor did I accept the appointment to be a short-term caretaker. Therefore, I will be a candidate to the upcoming election for the unexpired term of Sheriff as well as the full term for Sheriff beginning January 1, 2011. With your support, we will continue the outstanding work begun 155 years ago by Sheriff McMillen and continued on by so many able statesmen. Join me as we write the next chapter of history together.