

Ward County Sheriff's Department 2006 Annual Report

It is the mission of the Ward County Sheriff's Department to serve all people within our jurisdiction with respect, fairness, and compassion. The men and women of the Ward County Sheriff's Department are dedicated to provide our citizens and visitors with a safe environment to live, work and play. We are committed to the protection of life and property; the preservation of peace, order, and safety; the enforcement of local, state, and federal laws; and the defense of the Constitution of the State of North Dakota and the Constitution of the United States of America in a fair and impartial manner. We strive for excellence by providing our employees with a positive, supportive and professional environment, which promotes innovative and creative thinking. The Ward County Sheriff's Department shall continue to provide service of the highest quality to its citizens and build partnerships to resolve community problems.



2006 Ward County Sheriff's Department Annual Report to the Ward County Commission

As Chief Deputy of the Ward County Sheriff's Department, I have been tasked with summarizing the events of 2006. The annual report is traditionally a time to reminisce over the past year's accomplishments and tribulations and also a time to look to the future. In looking back over 2006, my first full year as Chief Deputy, I see the good work that is being done by the staff of the Ward County Sheriff's Department.

I chose the Ward County Sheriff's Department patch and mission statement as a cover for this annual report as they both are symbolic of the work done by the staff of the Sheriff's Department. Our mission statement speaks of respect, fairness and compassion; qualities that are exemplified by our staff on a continual basis. The mission statement talks about dedication, another area in which as a commission, you should be proud of your Sheriff's Department employees, both sworn and civilian. And finally the mission statement lists providing service to the citizens of Ward County. The sense of service to these citizens is the main reason that our employees continue to do the demanding work that they do.

The Sheriff's Department is comprised of the following divisions and division heads:

Administration	Sheriff Vern Erck
Corrections	Jail Commander Penny Erickson
Investigations	Captain Todd Keller
Civil Process	Lieutenant Brent Renaud
Patrol	Lieutenant Bob Roed

As Chief Deputy, I find it easy to talk about the divisions within the Sheriff's Department in a rewarding manner. We have good people heading these divisions and they have good people working under them. I will not go into detail about each division other than to say that they continue to perform at a level above and beyond what is asked of them. They perform at these high levels without complaint and with personal sacrifice, often working long hours in adverse conditions. These people respond to all types of calls in all types of situations.

I have asked each department to complete a summary of their divisions activities for the year 2006 and those reports follow. As you read the individual reports, bear in mind that along with achievements listed for the year 2006, each member of our staff has worked as a team member and assisted every other division as necessary. There are many accomplishments that are not reflected in these reports, but that should not diminish their importance.

It has been a pleasure to prepare this annual report to the commission and on behalf of the entire staff of the Ward County Sheriff's Department, we look forward to bigger and better things in 2007 and we look forward to serving the citizens of Ward County in the manner they deserve.

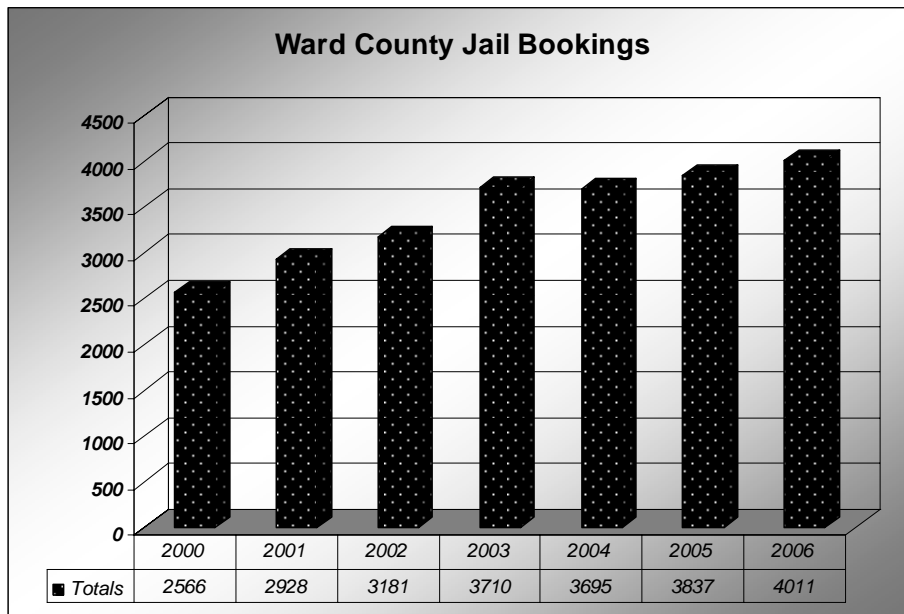
Ward County Jail

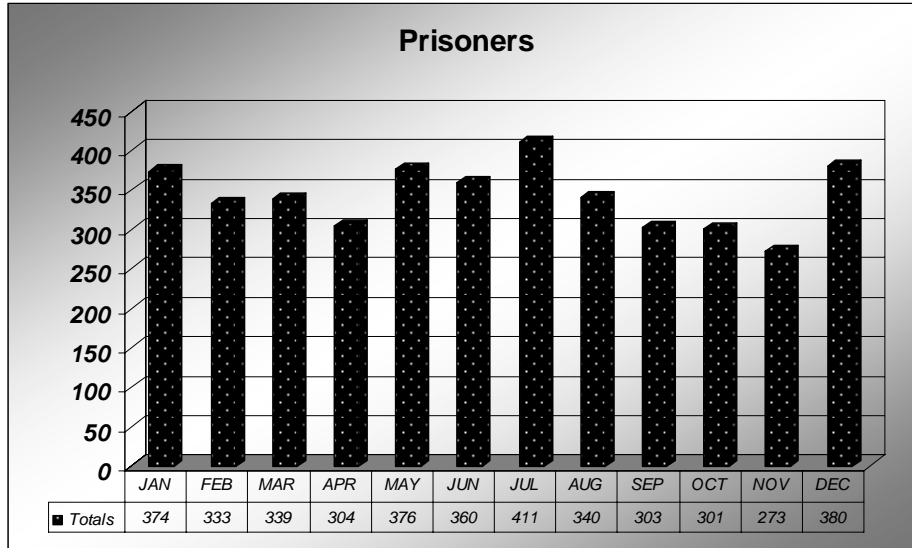
The Ward County Jail Staff is charged with the care, custody and control of individuals brought into the facility for criminal, civil and/or mental health proceedings. In 2006 there were two much needed full-time positions added to the staff bringing the total to 21 full-time officers.

In 2006, there were some changes within the Jail staff. Paul Olthoff was promoted to the rank of Lieutenant, filling the vacant Senior Shift Supervisor position. Correctional Officers Brent Johnson and Kristi Dump were promoted to the rank of Sergeant, filling the role of Shift Supervisors. Among the correctional officer staff, both full time and part time, there were numerous changes. Turnover of staff continues to be a challenge and along with that, the continual training of new employees.

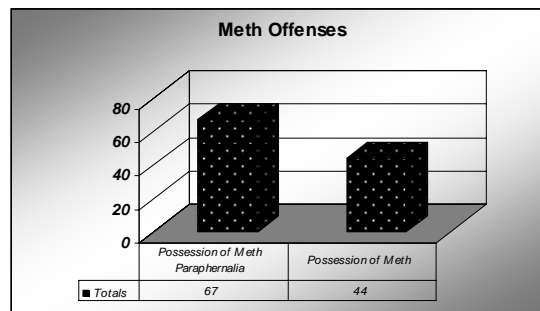
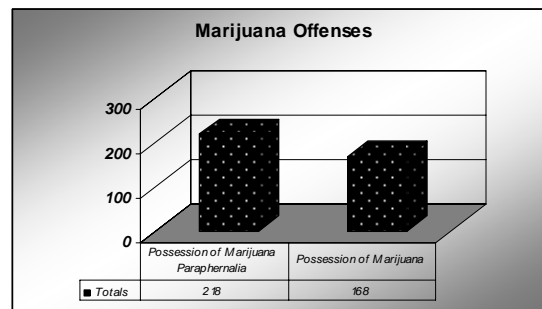
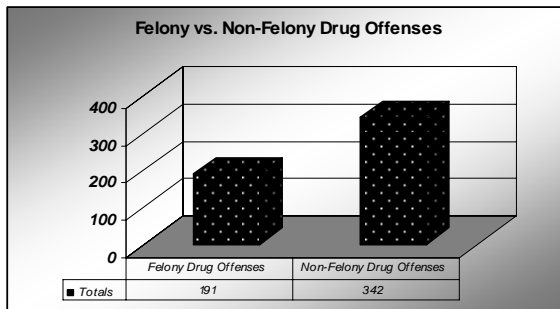
Jail Commander Penny Erickson continues to oversee a crew of 20 full time correctional officers and between five and nine part time correctional officers. These staff members are split into four crews, each working 12 hours shifts. There seem to be new challenges daily for the staff at the jail and by working together as a team, our staff continues to rise to the challenge. The jail population, although fluctuating, continues to be high and the workload for our officers continues to grow.

The jail population, as exemplified in the graphs below, continues to rise and the work load for the officers has grown every year. The first graph showing the number of bookings at the Ward County Jail for the past seven years and the second graph detailing the number of bookings per month for the year 2006





One of these challenges is the continued high level of illegal drug activity. As laws pertaining to illegal drug use are addressed by the legislature, local jails are the first line of defense. Housing drug addicted inmates presents special challenges to the staff of the Ward County Jail, again a challenge that our staff has risen to meet. The following charts are an indication of the number of inmates coming into the jail for drug related activity.



In closing, the Ward County Jail continues to provide a challenging work environment for a staff of dedicated employees. The staff will continue to provide for the level of care, custody, and control that is expected by the citizens of Ward County.

Investigations

The Investigations Division is primarily responsible for conducting investigations of felony and lengthy non-traffic misdemeanor cases. There are 6 deputies assigned as investigators in the division; one Captain, one Lieutenant, two Sergeants, and two Deputies. The investigators are assigned a variety of criminal cases in the areas of crimes against persons or crimes against property. One investigator is designated to research and serve criminal warrants as well as work criminal cases assigned for follow-up. The investigators primarily work 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday. Each investigator is also on call one weekend a month and holidays on a rotating basis.

Two investigators from this unit are assigned to the Ward County Narcotics Task Force and work primarily drug related cases. The Ward County Narcotics Task Force is comprised of officers from the Ward County Sheriff's Department, Minot Police Department, the North Dakota National Guard, Immigration and Customs Enforcement and it is managed by the Bureau of Criminal Investigations.

The Investigations Division receives and reviews all incident reports generated by the public and deputies. In 2006, the division received 935 incident reports, an increase of 291 reports from 2005. The division received 644 incident reports in 2005. This increase is partially due to a change in the reporting procedure. In 2006, deputies were required to complete a Uniform Incident Report on all arrests. This change was done to ensure that all incident reports and arrests are accurately reported to the Bureau of Criminal Investigations for the Attorney General's Crime in North Dakota Report and the national FBI Report on Crime in the United States.

In 2006, the four investigators were assigned a total of 419 cases for follow-up. Investigators are assigned an average of 8 to 10 cases per month. 202 of these cases were cleared by arrest, exceptionally cleared, or unfounded. 217 cases are still open and unsolved. The case clearance rate for the investigations division is 48%.

The following is a comparison by month of *all* incident reports received from the past four years:

	<i>Jan</i>	<i>Feb</i>	<i>Mar</i>	<i>Apr</i>	<i>May</i>	<i>Jun</i>	<i>Jul</i>	<i>Aug</i>	<i>Sep</i>	<i>Oct</i>	<i>Nov</i>	<i>Dec</i>	<i>TOTAL</i>
<i>2003</i>	47	51	70	55	88	73	98	83	81	71	51	63	788
<i>2004</i>	46	41	45	49	43	61	76	73	46	37	51	39	608
<i>2005</i>	34	36	45	46	55	56	81	70	66	57	30	58	644
<i>2006</i>	79	68	90	96	67	59	143	80	64	62	60	67	935

In 2006, the investigations division worked a variety of criminal cases. The following is a brief summary of a few of the more serious felony cases that occurred in 2006.

On January 12 an auto-burglary was reported by Frito Lay, Inc. in which a Frito Lay truck was entered and several boxes of snack items were stolen. The case concluded on January 27 with the arrest of four adults and one juvenile for Unlawful Entry into a Motor Vehicle. Several boxes of the stolen snack items were recovered during a search warrant conducted on January 24.

On January 15 two residents of Imperial Manor trailer park reported vandalism to their vehicles in which the tires to the vehicles were slashed. The Minot Police Department also had numerous reports of tire slashing during this same period. The two agencies completed a joint investigation into the vandalism and resulted in the arrest of one adult on March 28 for the Ward County cases. The Minot Police Department cases were also resolved with arrests.

On May 23 an investigation into the suicide of Leigh Cowen was conducted at the Upper Souris Wildlife Refuge. Leigh Cowen was also suspected of abducting 3 year old Reachelle Smith from Minot on May 16. Four extensive searches were conducted at the Upper Souris Wildlife Refuge and the Northeast area of Ward County. Hundred of volunteers were used for these searches which included air, water, and land searches.

The Minot Country Club reported burglaries on July 14, August 14 and September 8. The Wildwood Golf Course reported a burglary on September 1. Two adults were arrested on September 8 after one of the department's Varda burglar alarms was activated at the Minot Country Club. The two individuals were linked to the other golf course burglaries and arrested for them as well.

On June 3 a female reported being raped in rural Minot, ND. An adult male was arrested for Gross Sexual Imposition for this incident.

On September 20 a burglary was reported at the Hacienda in Burlington, ND. On October 24 burglaries were reported at the Farmers Union in Ryder, ND and the Makoti Café in Makoti, ND. The investigation revealed two adults were responsible and the case cleared burglary cases in 10 other counties.

On November 3 a report was received indicating two individuals broke into a trailer in Holiday Park trailer court and threatened the residents with a handgun and an ax. The incident was an extension of a fight earlier in the evening in a Minot bar. After an investigation into the incident two adults were arrested for Terrorizing and Burglary.

The research and service of criminal warrants is the responsibility of the investigations division. A Sergeant manages the warrants department and receives all criminal warrants for Ward County and assists other counties or states in the service of their warrants if the subject is found to be in Ward County. This Sergeant was also responsible for coordinating 14 extraditions in 2006. Although only one deputy manages the warrants department it is the responsibility of all the deputies to serve criminal warrants.

The warrants department received a total of 1,645 new warrants for service in 2006. This was an increase of 206 warrants received from 2005. 314 were felony warrants and 1,331 were non-felony warrants. The Sheriff's Department served a total of 1,617 warrants in 2006 leaving only 807 total active warrants.

TOTAL WARRANTS END OF 2005	779
NEW WARRANTS RECEIVED 2006	1645
WARRANTS SERVED IN 2006	<u>1617</u>
TOTAL REMAINING WARRANTS	807

The investigations division is responsible for registering and tracking Sex Offenders living in Ward County. As of January 1, 2007 there were 18 offenders registered in Ward County. 12 are **Low** risk offenders, 5 are **Moderate** risk, and 1 is a **High** risk offender. In 2006, the investigations division investigated 5 cases where an offender failed to register resulting in three arrests. An offender verification check was also completed on two separate occasions on all offenders registered in Ward County. One community notification was completed for the one high risk sex offender who moved into Ward County.

The following are the number of the major incidents reported to the Sheriff's Department for investigation along with arrest statistics for the Sheriff's Department.

Property Crimes Reported:	
Burglary	48
Theft of Property	82
Theft from a Motor Vehicle	25
Unlawful Entry into MV	8
Illegal Use of Credit Card	11
Theft of Services	13
Theft of a Motor Vehicle	1
Unauthorized Use of MV	10
Identity Theft	8
Forgery	7
Criminal Trespassing	18
Criminal Mischief	85

Personal Crimes Reported:	
Simple Assault	35
Simple Assault (Domestic Violence)	41
Simple Assault on Correctional Officer	3
Simple Assault on Peace Officer	2
Aggravated Assault	5
Aggravated Assault (Domestic Violence)	1
Disorderly Conduct	39
Terrorizing	9
Gross Sexual Imposition	8
Violation of Protection/Restraining Order	14
Harassment	15
Suicide	1
Suicide Attempt	4
Unattended Death	13

Ward County Sheriff's Department Arrest Statistics

Alcohol Related Arrests:

DUI / APC	94
Minor in Consumption/Possession	126
Underage in Bar	3
Delivery of Alcohol to Minor	4

Criminal Traffic Arrests:

Driving Under Suspension	91
Driving W/O Liability Insurance	35
Fleeing in a Motor Vehicle	13
Leaving Scene of Accident	6
Unlawful Use of License Plate	3
Fail to Register MV upon Employment	1
Abandoning a Motor Vehicle	1
Reckless Driving	3
Possession of Loaded Firearm in MV	1
Unlawful use of License	4

Assault Arrests:

Aggravated Assault	2
Aggravated Assault (Domestic)	1
Disorderly Conduct	23
Simple Assault	15
Simple Assault (Domestic)	27
Simple Assault on Police/Correction Officer	5

Theft Related Arrests:

Burglary	14
Forgery	4
Identity Theft	1
Possession of Stolen Property	1
Theft by Deception	1
Theft of Property	14
Theft of Services	1
Theft from Motor Vehicle	3
Unlawful Entry into Motor Vehicle	1
Unauthorized Use of Motor Vehicle	2

Drug Related Arrests:

Ingesting a Controlled Substance	1
Possession of Cocaine	2
Possession of Meth	2
Possession of Marijuana	31
Possession of Drug Paraphernalia	37

Criminal Arrests:

Contributing to Delinquency of Minor	1
Child Abandonment	1
Contact by Bodily Fluids	3
Criminal Trespassing	7
Criminal Attempt	2
Criminal Facilitation	3
Criminal Mischief	20
Escape	4
Fleeing on Foot	12
Interference w/ 911 Call	1
Felonious Restraint	1
False info to Law Enforcement	10
Failure to Register as Sex Offender	3
Gross Sexual Imposition	2
Harassment	2
Mistreatment of Animals	1
No Contractor License	1
Runaway Child	28
Reckless Endangerment	4
Preventing Arrest	7
Stalking	1
Terrorizing	6
Unruly Child	4
Violation of Protection/Judicial Order	3
Violation of Burn Ban	3

Civil Process

The Civil Process Division is responsible for many different duties. Those duties include but are not limited to the service of civil process and criminal process, executing court orders and judgments, executing the eviction process, assisting landlords and tenants with disputes, collecting delinquent personal property taxes, conducting foreclosure sales for the county, maintaining an impound lot for abandoned vehicles, conducting public sales of those abandoned vehicles, dealing with mental health persons regarding involuntary committals, escorting prisoners to and from court, transporting prisoners to various facilities throughout the state, and handling numerous calls for service which are generated through dispatch and/or calls to the Sheriff's Office.

One significant change for our division is the way in which prisoners make their initial court appearances. In the past, a Sheriff's Deputy would escort all inmates to one of the court rooms in the Ward County Courthouse in order for them to make their initial appearance before a District Court Judge. The utilization of interactive television/video between the jail and the court room has begun. This interactivity allows jail inmates to make court appearances without ever having to leave the secure walls of the jail. The system is still quite new to our agency and we are still becoming accustomed to its use. Along with maintaining a higher level of security for both the public and the inmates, this system has also altered the workload of the court officer. There does seem to be more paperwork involved and more trips to the court for the court officer, but keeping the inmates in a secure setting greatly outweighs the paperwork aspect.

The Civil Process Division received 4,082 pieces of civil process for service during 2006. That figure has fluctuated between the approximate range of 4,000 and 5,000 over the last seven years. The division received 922 criminal subpoenas, an amount which has remained consistent over the last three years. The Ward County States Attorney's office generated the great majority of the criminal subpoenas. The Civil Process division received 208 pieces of criminal process. That figure has declined for the last two years in a row. Nineteen foreclosure sales were conducted in 2006, the same number of sales as in 2005. Two impound sales were conducted in 2006 with a total of 29 abandoned vehicles being sold to the public.

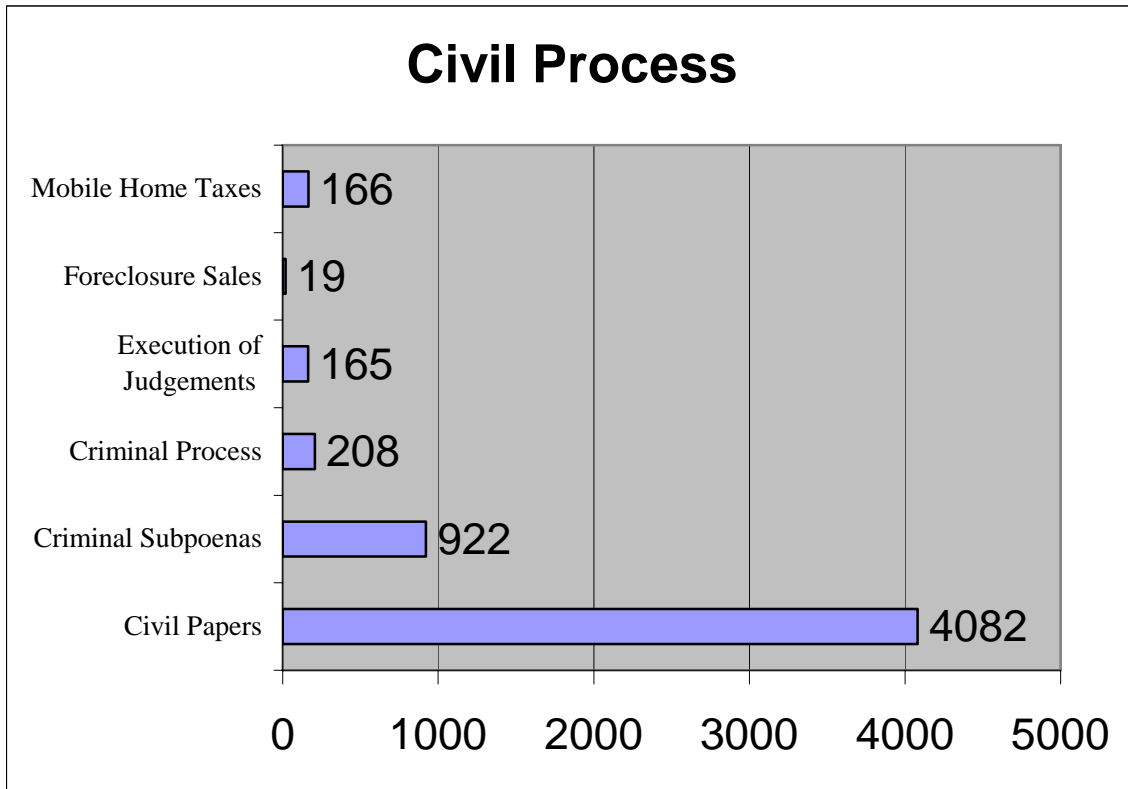
In 2006, the Civil Process division generated approximately \$62,000.00 from the service of process. The 2005 total was approximately \$47,000.00, with the difference being mainly attributed to a change in civil process fees that became effective July 1, 2005.

In October of 2006, the collection of delinquent personal property taxes on mobile homes was begun. The Tax Equalization Office turned over 166 cases for our department to collect. That number is believed to be a record high. The collection and/or distraint process took three months this year, normally it takes about two months. This delay was due to the large number of properties involved this year.

The division received 165 executions of judgments from the clerk of court. That figure has been consistently declining over the last several years. One explanation for the decline is that

executions are not used anymore for the collection of delinquent taxes. The substantial increase in execution fees seems to have affected some of the smaller judgments that we do not see anymore. The difficulty in locating assets of value could possibly have a factor in the declining numbers also.

The following chart gives a brief overview of the numbers and types of civil papers that came to our office this year.



PATROL

The Ward County Patrol Division consists of nine officers. The division falls under the command of the Captain of Investigations and is comprised of a Lieutenant, a Sergeant and seven patrol officers. One of those deputies is stationed in Makoti and another is stationed in Kenmare. Those out-posted deputies are primarily assigned patrol duties in the area of the county in which they reside. This division is tasked with patrolling the county between the hours of 4:30pm and 7:00am. Officer's schedules are spread out in six and seven day work weeks, so that they can cover 16 hours a day on Monday through Thursday, and 24 hours a day on all weekends and holidays.

The main duties of the Patrol Division are traffic enforcement, responding to calls for assistance, traffic crash investigations, extraditions, crime scene investigations, prisoner transports, serving civil papers and subpoenas and responding to alarm calls. Additional duties can be assigned, and deputies from all divisions often combine to work special events during the year. Some of those events are the North Dakota State Fair, Norsk Hostfest, and high school hockey games, Click it or Ticket and Alcohol Saturation campaigns.

In 2006, patrol division deputies participated in two programs for overtime hours with good results. Both of these programs were fully funded by grants obtained from the State of North Dakota. The results for each event are as follows:

-Click it or Ticket	74 hrs	55 contacts	29 arrests/ citations
-Alcohol Saturation	188.5 hrs	129 contacts	66 arrests/ citations

The patrol division made up 68% of total arrest for the Ward County Sheriff's Department. The arrests were made in a variety of different areas. Calls for service and arrest numbers are up from last year. The following examples show numbers that reflect arrests made by patrol division deputies only.

Alcohol related offenses are up by 36 arrests over last year. The patrol division made up 96% of all DUI arrests for the Sheriff's Department.

Alcohol related arrests in 2006

-Driving Under the Influence of Alcohol	87
-Minor in Consumption/Possession of Alcohol	101
-Detoxification	16
-Total Alcohol Related Arrest	204

Arrests related to illegal drug activity were also up. We saw an increase of 21 drug arrests made by patrol officers in 2006.

Drug related arrests in 2006

-Misdemeanor	49
-Felony	7
-Total drug related arrests in 2006	56

Deputies are called on to respond to and investigate traffic crashes on a regular basis. In 2006, we responded to a very similar number of accidents as last year. These accidents can be broken down into four different categories.

Traffic accidents in 2006

-Property damage	192
-Injury	41
-Hit & run	31
-Fatality	2
-Total traffic accidents for 2006	266

Deputies also check buildings at night for possible burglaries and respond to alarm calls. Last year, deputies responded to a number of alarm calls, which included two at the Minot Country Club. Deputies were able to respond in time to interrupt both burglaries, which resulted in the arrest of three suspects. Two of the suspects were later linked to other burglaries by Ward County investigators.

Just into 2007, calls for service are already surpassing the numbers from the same time last year. We look forward to another busy year and will continue to do our best to serve the county in 2007.