

## Fresno County Sheriff Margaret Mims starts third term

By Jim Guy

The Fresno Bee January 5, 2015



Fresno County Sheriff Margaret Mims is sworn in by former Judge James Quaschnick as her mother, Shirley White, and husband, Gary Mims, look on.

JIM GUY — THE FRESNO BEE

Fresno County Sheriff Margaret Mims was sworn in for a third term Monday, saying that she was ready for both existing and new challenges that face law enforcement in the 21st century.

“At every challenge, we continue to step up and meet our mission,” the sheriff said at a deliberately no-frills swearing-in ceremony at 9 a.m. at the Sheriff’s Office headquarters in downtown Fresno. Mims said getting the ceremony over at the start of the work day would left deputies “get down to business.”

The sheriff was joined by her mother, Shirley White, and her husband, Gary Mims, at the brief event. She carried the badge of her late father, Adrian White, a former constable in Caruthers and later a sheriff’s sergeant, in her pocket during the ceremony, and was sworn in with a bible once belonging to her grandmother, Pearl Graves White Hallam.

Giving the oath was her long-time friend James Quaschnick, a former Fresno County Superior Court judge.

“Are you sure you want to do this again?” Quaschnick jokingly asked Mims.

In citing key issues facing her staff, Mims cited prison realignment, which keeps more prisoners in county jails; Proposition 47, which means more defendants will be convicted of misdemeanors instead of felons; and continuing efforts to control violence around marijuana-growing operations. In addition, the Sheriff’s Office will take over autopsy duties formerly handled by the Fresno County coroner, as that office was absorbed into her’s in a budget-cutting move by the Board of Supervisors.

Budget issues remain a constant, however.

“When I got into this business 35 years ago, guess what the number-one issue was for law enforcement?” she asked rhetorically. “It was budget issues. That’s not going to go away.”

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