

Also, this brief appeared the day after the November 1996 election:

Incumbent Sheriff Pierce Clegg was holding a solid lead in early returns Tuesday over Democrat opponent Karl Thompson in the race to be Kootenai County's top cop. Republican Clegg, 43, had 5,720 votes with about 17 percent of the ballots counted. Thompson, 49, had 3,978.

Clegg has held office since 1988, when he defeated Floyd Stalder, who was embroiled in a scandal. Thompson, who works as a juvenile detention officer, was a sheriff's captain then and helped Clegg to victory.

Clegg has been credited with cleaning up the department, implementing better training and fairer hiring practices. Thompson has criticized Clegg as being out of touch with his department and said he wanted to bring innovative ideas - like hiring an advocate for crime and domestic violence victims.