Highlands County Sheriff’s Office Bulletin

4th Quarter
Oct.-Dec., 2021

Sheriff Paul Blackman

OUR VISION
Our vision is a safer Highlands County where citizens and law enforcement are joined together; the rights of all persons are respected; and community values are reflected.

OUR MISSION
The Highlands County Sheriff’s Office is committed to protecting life, property, and individual rights while maintaining peace and order.

OUR PROMISE
Our promise is to deliver ethical and effective services to all of Highlands County in a professional and responsive manner that demonstrates our commitment to honoring the public trust.

K-9s awarded custom-fit ballistic vests

Christmas came early for our K-9s Dec. 16 thanks to Vested Interest in K9s, Inc. Travis Russell, president of Coastal Protective Products, delivered brand new ballistic vests for our four-legged deputies.

The vests were manufactured by Survival Armor and are custom made for each of the dogs to offer the maximum coverage. They are lightweight and made from the same material used in the vests of their two-legged partners.

Since 2009, Vested Interest in K9s has donated:
- More than 4,481 K9 ballistic vests

K-9s Gentry (left) and Hooch show off their new ballistic vests.

See VESTS, page 3

Albritton retires after 51-year career

It’s not very often you get to talk about someone who has been a deputy for as long as the Sheriff has been alive, but that’s just the case with Keith Albritton.

Keith finally hung up his uniform for the last time on Dec. 8, working the final day of a 51-year career that spanned the administrations of six sheriffs.

After a few years working for the Department of Corrections, Keith was hired by Sheriff Joe Keene in 1970. When he came to work here, there were 13 people in the Sheriff’s Office. Not 13 deputies ... 13 people, total. Today, there are more than 350 HCSO members.

Keith’s first assignment (back

See ALBRITTON, page 3

Parker graduates from Leadership Academy

Congratulations to Sgt. Mike Parker, who has one of the 41 first-line supervisors to graduate from the Florida Criminal Justice Executive Institute's Florida Leadership Academy, Class 49 in November. The graduates serve in leadership roles representing 35 criminal justice agencies throughout the state.
# Quarterly Statistical Information

## Administration and Court

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>New Member Hires</th>
<th>Information Services requests</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Civilian ..........</td>
<td>7</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sworn ...........</td>
<td>0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Part-time civilian</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Part-time sworn</td>
<td>0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Applications received</td>
<td>55</td>
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<tr>
<td>Applications processed</td>
<td>18</td>
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<tr>
<td>Payroll transactions processed</td>
<td>2,514</td>
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<tr>
<td>Payable checks processed</td>
<td>525</td>
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<tr>
<td>P-card purchases</td>
<td>940</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Court-Related Services</th>
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<tr>
<td>Cases in court ..........</td>
<td>4,975</td>
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<tr>
<td>Inmates taken to court</td>
<td>1,267</td>
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<tr>
<td>Arrests by bailiffs</td>
<td>28</td>
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<tr>
<td>Persons through security</td>
<td>8,795</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Judicial/Civil Process Services</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Received</td>
<td>903</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Served</td>
<td>1,406</td>
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<tr>
<td>Active</td>
<td>9</td>
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## Law Enforcement

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Administrative calls ...</th>
<th>43,648</th>
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<tr>
<td>911 calls</td>
<td>13,593</td>
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<tr>
<td>Offense reports</td>
<td>3,210</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Computer Aided Dispatch</th>
<th>33,040</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>HCSO (60%)</td>
<td>19,713</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPD (15%)</td>
<td>5,286</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HCFR (15%)</td>
<td>5,321</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LPPD (7%)</td>
<td>1,739</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SCFD (1%)</td>
<td>532</td>
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<tr>
<td>APFD (2%)</td>
<td>449</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Warrants</th>
<th></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Received/Processed</td>
<td>169</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Served</td>
<td>269</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Active</td>
<td>1,753</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Items into evidence</th>
<th>2,567</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Evidence items disposed</td>
<td>708</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K-9 searches/reviews</td>
<td>148</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arrests by patrol</td>
<td>456</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Traffic citations issued</td>
<td>1,468</td>
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<tr>
<td>DUI arrests</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
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## Investigations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Investigations Assigned Cases</th>
<th>64</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Investigations open (total)</td>
<td>219</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOU narcotics arrests</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crime Scene call-outs</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crime Scene lab cases</td>
<td>92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cell phones/computers processed</td>
<td>76</td>
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<tr>
<td>SVU cases from DCF</td>
<td>212</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SVU cases open</td>
<td>161</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Active ICAC cases</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current sex offenders/predators</td>
<td>196/20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Career offenders</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Juvenile sex offenders (incl. in total)</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sex offender/predator arrests</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Offender registrations</td>
<td>260</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COPS Unit offense reports</td>
<td>188</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COPS Unit arrests</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business/Residential security surveys</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crime Prevention presentations</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SafetyNet contacts</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crime victims served</td>
<td>157</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Victims’ Advocate Services</td>
<td>695</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Animal Services calls</td>
<td>1,244</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Animals impounded</td>
<td>698</td>
</tr>
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</table>

## Detention

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Inmates booked</th>
<th>700</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Inmates released</td>
<td>709</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average daily jail population</td>
<td>478</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alcohol breath tests</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instructional program hours</td>
<td>1,045</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inmate transport miles</td>
<td>22,206</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transports to state prison</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CMP participants</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dollars saved in labor</td>
<td>$13,120.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dollars collected in fees</td>
<td>$150.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Net commissary earnings</td>
<td>$31,504.66</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Inmate meals served</th>
<th>132,002</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Avg. food cost per day per inmate</td>
<td>$2.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical fees charged</td>
<td>$161,330.36</td>
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<tr>
<td>Medical fees collected</td>
<td>$4,410.43</td>
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<tr>
<td>Subsistence fees charged</td>
<td>$71,642.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subsistence fees collected</td>
<td>$16,455.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inmate per-diem charged</td>
<td>$14,460</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inmate per-diem collected</td>
<td>$6,910.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inmate labor hours at SO</td>
<td>30,528</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inmate labor hours other</td>
<td>1,808</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Labor costs saved (total)</td>
<td>$325,162.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
VESTS
From page 1
- 1,800 K9 opioid reversal NARCAN Kits
- More than $218,000 of K9 medical insurance premiums through our Healthcare for K9 Heroes program
- Over $93,000 in K9 medical first aid kits
- Three Chevy Tahoes custom fitted for a K9 Unit valued at over $50,000 each
- One Advanced Canine Medical Trainer (K9 Diesel) a full-body, state-of-the-art skills trainer for canine first responders that simulates active breathing, audio queues and over 28 different features and medical intervention sites at $62,000

All of their programs are made possible with funds raised through contributions, grants and fundraising events. For more information, visit www.vik9s.org.

ALBRITTON
From page 1
line to Josephine Creek by himself with just a 1970 Chevy Impala, a .38-caliber revolver, handcuffs and a nightstick. He had no bulletproof vest, no Taser, no walkie talkie and his closest backup was a long way away.

Over his career, Keith has been the first ever agriculture detective sergeant and was a lieutenant at his highest rank, serving as patrol supervisor under Sheriff O.L. Raulerson. His son, Kyle, now holds the same rank and also held the title of patrol shift supervisor for a while before taking over the School Resource Unit in 2021.

Keith was a full-time deputy until going part time during the term of Joe Sheppard in the 1980s and has spent the last several years working part time as a bailiff in the courthouse under Sheriff Paul Blackman. Join us in thanking him for all he has done for our community and wishing him well on his well-earned retirement!

Tagtmeier retires after 29 years
Fred Tagtmeier retired in October after a 29-year career with the HCSO. Fittingly, we held his retirement party out in the woods and near the airboat launching point on Lake Istokpoga. We will miss you, Tag!

New Years Prayer for Protection of Law Enforcement Officers

Lord, we don’t know why you have implanted in the hearts of brave men and women to choose a profession that requires them to walk into danger and put their own life on the line to stop lawlessness and crime. You’ve given them a willingness to enforce the law to protect the communities where they serve. Are they fearless? Unintimidated? Thrill seekers? Or do they truly love their neighbor more than themselves, and want to do their part in justice for all?

Only you know for sure, Lord, what motivates them, but we do know they need a band of angels surrounding them with a hedge of protection. Lord, they face evil and the tough parts of life every day. They see the worst of people and people at their worst. Their work tools are weapons.

I pray Lord for their safety as they walk up to a car or house or unknown situation never knowing what danger awaits them. If they know you Lord, remind them to say their own prayer of protection and ask you to intervene against any foe. Perhaps something like David prayed, “I come to you for protection, O Lord my God. Save me from my persecutors— rescue me!” (Psalm 1:7 NLT).

And when they emerge safe and victorious, Father, as David did when he was rescued from Saul, give them a heart to give you the glory. If they don’t know you as their Savior, become real to these officers. Let them know you took the bullet for them.

I ask this in Jesus name, Amen.

— Chaplain Bill Trucano

Congratulations to Detective Tevin Toney, who was honored Dec. 16 by the ATF in Miami for the work he put in during Operation Triple Play, a multi-agency effort which resulted in the arrest of more than 70 drug dealers in 2020.
Employment Anniversaries

**JANUARY**

Stacy Andrews 31  
James Brimlow 14  
Michael Brown 17  
Estevan Carranza 3  
Angela Dettman 1  
Richard Scott Dressel 5  
Nancy Duvall 15  
Jennifer Edwards 12  
Derrall Escobar 2  
Manuel Gonzalez 21  
Calvin Wayne Gunn 23  
Lynsey Hendrix-Tilley 2  
Jayme Keefe 15  
James Lethbridge 3  
Dorothy Marrero 15  
Michael Morse 13  
Michael O'Malley 4  
Joseph Perez 3  
Robert Prendergast 4  
Robin Reed 10  
Bryce Smith 2  

Roberta Sodrel 3  
Stacy Andrews  31  
Jore Stanberry 2  
William Keith Starling 33  
Roger Stephan 8  
Candy Svendsen 18  
Benjamin Toney 5  
Tevin Toney 5  
Richard Todd Turner 21  
Rebekah Tyson 15  
Jeannine West 11  
Brittany Whittington 4  
Meghan Williams 4  
Michael Kevin Williams 3  
Darlene Young 14  

**FEBRUARY**

Darren Bevan 1  
Dustin Campbell 11  
Teresa Crooks 3  
Jason Dionne 16  
Allie Edmondson 2  
Faith Hammortree 21  
Bret Hinkle 12  

Brian Kramer 33  
Neal McDaniel Jr. 3  
Tabitha McHargue 15  
Paul Miller 2  
Sharon Pidgeon-Fennell 25  
Sarah Richardson 8  
Garrett Roberts 5  
Sheila Roper-Kane 32  
Scott Rowe 2  
Katelynn Smith 2  
Crystal Smith 4  
Wendi Spaulding 21  
Jessica Stephan 4  
Kimberly Wise 23  
Thomas Wishart 6  
William Wolvin Jr. 3  

**MARCH**

Seth Abeln 7  
David Andress 4  
Daniel Baker 6  
Mark Brackett 27  

Michael Brod Sr 26  
Tyler Bumby 5  
Sean Casey 23  
Yvrose Charles 11  
Christopher Cloud 6  
Julio Cruz 3  
Michael Delaney 24  
Richard Dick 12  
Teri Dosil 5  
Richard Emerson 10  
Joel Fay Jr. 6  
Jeffrey Fennell 24  
Kiley Fort 5  
Bradley Freimuth 6  
Michael Todd Harris 5  
Cecilia High 23  
William Jones 7  
Jacquelyn Jones 21  
Alexandria Kling 6  
Bonita Lammie 14  
Tristan Lanier 4  
David Lightsey 16  
Mary Lyall 16  

Promotions & Transfers

**NAME**  
Jacquelyn Jones  
Jillian Kingery  
Amber Bass  
Cyril Wright  
Robert Roe  
Faith Hammortree  

**DATE**  
10/13/21  
11/03/21  
11/03/21  
11/17/21  
11/17/21  
12/01/21  

**MOVE**  
Transferred to Administrative Support Officer within Administration  
Promoted to Telecommunicator II in the Consolidated Dispatch Unit of Communications Division  
Promoted to Telecommunicator II in the Consolidated Dispatch Unit of Communications Division  
Transferred to Detention Deputy FTD in the Detention Bureau  
Transferred to Detention Deputy FTD in the Detention Bureau  
Transferred to Training Specialist in the Training Unit within the Specialized Services Division of LEB

New Hires

**NAME**  
Denise L. Sanders  
Jeisa M. Colon  
Tracy L. Turnage  
Fisher K. Miller  
Makenzi J. Durban  
Michael G. Jordan  
Jose Alemjandreo Lazo Jr.  
Lorian L. Shaffer  

**HIRED**  
10/13/21  
10/20/21  
11/03/21  
11/17/21  
11/18/21  
11/18/21  
11/29/21  
12/01/21  

**POSITION**  
OPS Registered Nurse  
Central Records Specialist  
Telecommunicator  
Food Services Shift Leader  
Detention Support Officer  
Detention Support Officer  
Detention Support Officer  
Crime Scene Technician

Animal Services hosted the Merry Pawsmas event Dec. 4, where 8 dogs found new forever homes and a lot of money was raised for Saunders Second Chances.
Lt. Manny Gonzalez and Deputy Brian Giguere, you made a little boy from the county side of Columbia, South Carolina very happy. You both embraced him with your words of encouragement, especially about your careers and even gave him some unknown background about Columbia, S.C railroad. He was pinned with a badge and his mother has shared that he wants to be a sheriff when he grows up. He was so excited to meet some deputy sheriffs during his Florida visit. At the age of 6, Cameron Williams carries an “A” average in the private academy that he attends in Columbia. Thank you for your very kind hearts, but it’s no surprise, it’s just who you both are. Cameron is still talking about the both of you, what an heartfelt inspiration for a kid. Way to go! I believe this photo is on his vision board.

— Shirley Johnson

I would like to acknowledge the great job that Tekesha Augustine is doing in Purchasing. She was put into a new position several months ago. She has, with little or no training, handled everything, by herself, that has been added to her. She has done an outstanding job, always has a smile on her face and it has not gone unnoticed. Great team player!

— Christi Williams

Congratulations to Lt. Mike Delaney who was selected to be the new Highlands County Sheriff’s Office SWAT Team “Team Leader” and congratulations to Sgt. Wayne Gunn who selected to be the new SWAT Team “Assistant Team Leader”. Congratulations on your new positions and Thank you for your dedication to the SWAT Team.

— Capt. Kenny Johnson

How do you put into words the incredible work that went in to beautifying a historic landmark? You start by honoring those who saw a need and jumped into action. Captain Pendarvis spearheaded a community project that was so astonishing to the community of Avon Park. With so much conversation and interest at the round tables throughout many states about historic African American cemeteries, it’s great to see that it didn’t take a round table meeting for Highland County Sheriff’s Office Detention Bureau members to see a need to extend a hand to make a difference. Captain Pendarvis, looking around the entire Highlands County, discovered some historical cemeteries; and began to put together a plan to lend a helping hand by getting them cleaned up. With that being said, Lakeside Historical Cemetery (which is probably far more than two hundred years old) was on their radar, therefore Pendarvis and Ritenour jumped into action with a plan. In-person, they went to the cemetery, sketched out the means of execution by clearing land shrubs, bushes, rotten trees, and cleaning this cemetery to enhance the beautification of this Historic landmark being a final resting place of the remains of loved ones from all over Highlands County. A date was set to start, and it was accomplished. It took two days of sweat and more sweat, but with DD Joseph Lezama and DD Kevin Worth joining the team it was a wrap. The citizens of Avon Park and cemetery volunteers were very pleased with the marvelous work that was done at the Historical Cemetery, and with caring hearts, sends a huge Thank You to the HCSO Detention Team that was involved. Way to go HCSO Detention!

— Shirley Johnson

I would like to personally thank Det. Velez, DS Finneran, DS Wells, DS Green, DS Ragoodial, Lt. Tyson, Becky Tyson, Britney Jones, PIO Dressel and DSO Jessica Stephan for their assistance with our agency specific Christmas Toy Drive. Each of these individuals spent countless hours to make this toy drive happen and in the end, many families in need were able to provide gifts for their children on time for Christmas. Thank each of you for all of your hard work and dedication, because without each of you as a whole, this wouldn’t have been possible.

— Sgt. Jason Mulligan

Records would like to welcome Jeisa Colón to our Records Team. Jeisa has already proven to be a welcomed addition to our staff. Jeisa is hard working, friendly and a pleasure to work with. Jeisa has tackled many job tasks and I believe she has a bright future here at the HCSO.

— Director Bonnie Gregg
This quarter, we shine the Volunteer Spotlight on two incredible servants that enjoy teaching the word of God. Their hearts are humble and their spirits are illuminating when it comes to Bible Study at our Detention Bureau. I’m speaking of Mr. Gil Seddon (on the left in the photo) and Mr. Bruce Hendsbee. Both live in the Maranatha Village of Sebring and attend the Maranatha Baptist Church.

Mr. Seddon is a veteran of the United States Air Force and fought in the Korean War. He is married to the lovely Pat, and they have two adult children. Mr. Gil says he’s just a farm kid from Michigan, but he wrote a Gospel tract, which is his testimony, entitled “From the Plow to the Pulpit.” Mr. Seddon studied at Pillsbury Bible College and Central Seminary in Minnesota. He holds a BA in Religious Education, a Masters of Divinity, and an Honorary Doctor Degree of Divinity. He pastored for over 40 years and hasn’t stopped serving God by serving others.

He has been a volunteer for the HCSO since 2008 and also volunteers at the Avon Park Correctional Institution. When I ask Mr. Seddon if he has anything special to say, he said “It’s a great privilege to be able to continue serving Christ at the age of 89, soon to be 90 years old.”

Mr. Bruce Hendsbee was born in California but grew up in Canada. He lied about his age to join the Canadian Army as a teenager. However, Mr. Hendsbee is also a veteran of the United States Air Force (this was legitimate) and served proudly for 34 years. Mr. Bruce has been in so many countries that I can’t remember them all.

He is married to the lovely Betty and they have seven children. Ms. Betty was a volunteer at HCSO, she love teaching the word of God. Mr. Hendsbee holds a BA in Religious Education and attended Baptist Bible Seminary. He has pastored in Pennsylvania, Michigan and Indiana. He was also an EMT in Michigan. Mr. Hendsbee came to Florida for a Mission Conference and shortly afterwards moved to Florida. He volunteered at Avon Park Correctional Institution and has been a volunteer at HCSO for about 14 years. He and his wife both are on the Mission Committee at Maranatha Baptist Church. I asked Mr. Hendsbee if he had anything further to say and he said, “You will never be sorry with total commitment to Christ.”

The spotlight on these two gentlemen can shine on and on, but we would run out of space; they are so wonderful and have contributed so much for so many in serving God and country. It’s with honor that the Highlands County Sheriff’s Office Spotlight shines on Volunteers Gil Seddon and Bruce Hendsbee. Congratulations to you both!

Way to Go!

Records wanted to acknowledge the outstanding job of our front desk deputy DS Lars Kirkegard. Most have no idea what the front desk duty entails, but we do. We are taking message after message for him while he is already on another call or assisting a walk-in complaint. Oftentimes he has no time in between before taking the next phone call or walk-in complaint. DS Kirkegard is professional, informative, caring and helpful to our citizens and other employees. He steps up when needed without being asked. With him at the front we feel safer when someone comes in angry or upset. Not every DS is willing to handle the load of front desk duties however, HCSO can be proud of the outstanding job that our front desk deputy serves this office. It is a pleasure working with him and Records appreciates him more than we can express. Thank you, Lars.

— Director Bonnie Gregg

Medical would like to thank Angela Deremer for the Christmas presents and for her work ethic and dedication to the organization.

— Tim Thorton
5th Annual Bass Tournament
Saturday, March 12, 2022
Safe light until 1:00 pm
Istokpoga Park Boat Ramp, Lake Istokpoga

$125 Per Boat Entry Fee. Includes Big Bass Entries & Lunch
Each boat is allowed only two anglers, with at least one being an adult.
No Live Bait / 5 fish bag limit

Two fishing shirts will be given to The first 45 boats preregistered

Bass Tournament
Prizes
1st Place: $1500
2nd Place: $750
3rd Place: $600
4th Place: $500
5th Place: $400
6th Place: $300
7th Place: $200
8th Place: $150
1st Big Bass: $500 / 2nd B.B.: $250
13yoa & under Top Finisher: $150
Lady Angler Top Finisher: $150

Tournament proceeds send local children to the Florida Sheriff’s Youth Summer Camp!

Call Sgt. McGee at 863-381-6471 or see the Facebook event page for more information.
HCSO HANDS OUT HOLIDAY CHEER

**Halloween**

We had a blast handing out candy at Halloween events in Sebring and Lake Placid.

**Thanksgiving**

Sheriff Blackman was joined by command staff and several deputies as we handed out Thanksgiving meals to families in need in conjunction with Big Brothers Big Sisters of the Suncoast and Nu-Hope.

**Christmas**

The COPS ADAPT Unit collected hundreds of toys with the help of several local businesses and handed them out to dozens of families in need this Christmas. They also helped distribute toys at the US Marine Corps Reserve Toys for Tots event. Explorers Post 2247 got in on the act, too, making Christmas decorations and handing them out at a local retirement home.
We always enjoy having the Leadership Highlands class every year. They toured the courthouse, the jail (where they ate an inmate lunch), and the crime scene lab before checking out some of our SWAT team gear on Oct. 21.

The HCSO was proud to sponsor and take part in the Walk Like MADD 5K at Spring Lake Dec. 4, where more than $15,000 was raised for Mothers Against Drunk Driving.

Thank you to the DeSoto Correctional Institution for giving us a load of surplus produce from their farm just before Christmas. We got tomatoes and cauliflower, which will be used to make some nutritious meals for our inmates.

School Resource Deputy Dwayne Proctor was voted PBIS (Positive Behavior Intervention and Support) Teacher of the Month for September by the students of Lake Placid Middle School.

Therapy Dog Stella and Victim Advocate Liz Fischer were featured in the American Kennel Club newsletter on Nov. 23.

Therapy Dogs Stella, Trey and Janie visited the SFSC main campus Dec. 9 to help students take a break during finals week.
Blue Line Bears, which uses uniform shirts and patches to make teddy bears for the families of fallen officers, presented bears to the families of Deputy William Gentry (EOW 5-7-18) and Sgt. Max Van D’Huynslager (EOW 1-26-19) Dec. 16. Megan O’Grady, who is just 19 years old, founded Blue Line Bears 5 years ago and has given out hundreds of bears worldwide. We would appreciate it if everyone who has the means would make a donation so she can keep her mission going at https://bluelinebears.org/donate/

Sheriff Blackman and several of our deputies were helping out at Highlands County Ag Venture Nov. 16. It was great to see all the kids having fun learning about all the agriculture industry does in our county after having to skip last year.

Good luck to Crystal Moore, who resigned Nov. 30 after more than 16 years with us. She served in Central Records, the front desk, HR and for the last six years as the Training Specialist.

A huge thank you to Bell Bank Mortgage for donating $1,000 to go toward upgrading the heat alarms for our K-9 vehicles. Jennifer Markham presented the check today to K-9 Deputies Jeff Turner (left) and Tyler Bumby, who brought Waylon along for the occasion.

K-9s Benji and Waylon made some new friends at Heartland Christian Academy Dec. 7. Little 3-year-old Mateo was very excited to meet Benji.

The Highlands County Sheriff’s Office inmate work crew and the Lake Placid HS FFA put in a ton of work trimming over 40 trees at Roger Scarborough Stadium over the course of two days in December.
RETIRE LEO HR 218 RANGE DAY

Thursday, Feb. 10, 2022
9 a.m. until noon

HCSO Range
12700 Arbuckle Creek Road, Sebring

For retired sworn LEOs with
minimum 10 years of service
and valid retirement credentials

HB 218 Firearms Qualification Course
(bring firearm and minimum of 40 rounds of ammunition)

Call Faith with questions or to RSVP 863-402-7258
During the course of the first few weeks of school, Lake Placid High School Resource Deputy Kevin Gentry began seeing an increasing amount of students not wearing their seatbelts.

“I began standing by the exit gates and reminded students to wear their seat belt, but knew as soon as they got around the corner they were taking them back off. I began to think enforcement would have to be the next step, however I knew that would cost the parents more than the students.

“After a little thought, I recalled a conversation with Principal Kevin Tunning where Paula Sapp, mother of Lindsey Sapp, who passed away last year from a severe car accident, had offered to share her loss as an educational tool that seat belts do in fact save lives and had Lindsey been wearing hers, she would be attending her senior year at LPHS,” he said.

It was determined a banner would be made reminding the students of how quickly life can change by not taking two seconds to buckle up.

“Learn from Lindsey” will be the school’s motto this year in efforts to remind students to buckle up. The banner will be moved around the campus and placed at other school events throughout the year to remind students to “Learn from Lindsey” and buckle up!