Quarterly Report of the

HIGHLANDS COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

INTEGRITY QUALITY SERVICE PROFESSIONALISM

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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.

MISSION

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

Goal 1:

Create safer neighborhoods by reducing criminal activity and conditions that foster crime and fear within the community.

Goal 2:

Enhance vehicular and pedestrian safety of Highlands County roadways through education and enforcement.

Goal 3:

Assure accountability by effective and efficient use of personnel, equipment, and technology.

Goal 4:

Provide a professional work environment that attracts and retains a diverse group of quality applicants, rewards employee excellence, and promotes leadership through education and training.

Goal 5:

Assure effective Judicial and Detention processes and services.

Crime Index Rates Continue to Fall Throughout Florida

With the economy still reeling and unemployment continuing to drop, one might expect that there would be an increase in crime. However, we continue to see a slow and steady drop in the crime index. The uniformed crime reporting system tracks only seven categories called index crimes; murder, rape, robbery, aggravated assault, theft, burglary, and auto theft. The first four categories are the violent crimes, and the last three are property crimes. The drop may be explained in part since some categories may go up, such as burglary and domestic related issues that may be tied to the weak economy, while a decrease in other categories such as a surprisingly large drop in the number of stolen vehicles, along with other areas may make the total crime index fall county and statewide. The index volume presented in Florida's 2009 Annual Crime in Florida report showed a decrease of 6.7%, while the Highlands County Sheriff's Office which covers nearly 80% of the county depicted a 6.9% decrease in total index offences. Proactive law enforcement coupled with maintaining an adequate level of deputies is just a few factors that help keep these crime indexes down, but neighborhood watches are often the frontline in a bad economy. Since the year 2000, population has risen 14.1%, yet Highlands County Crime rate per 100K has dropped 16.5% in comparison county-wide. Total index crime since 2000 is 4.7% less.

UCR 10 year Analysis: ***UCR is the National Uniform Crime Report ; Data Located On The FDLE Website***

Year	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	% +/-
Population	87,366	88,212	89,038	90,393	92,057	93,456	96,672	98,727	100,207	99,713	14.1%
Statewide Crime Rate per 100K	5,604.3	5,579.9	5,398.4	5,164.2	4,855.3	4,677.2	4,632.0	4,694.7	4,699.8	4,397.5	-21.5%
Highlands County Crime Rate per 100K	3,810.4	3,763.7	4,437.4	3,574.5	3,544.5	3,441.2	3,477.7	3,343.6	3,238.3	3,181.1	-16.5%
Highlands County Crime Index #'s of Crimes	3,329.0	3,320.0	3,951.0	3,231.0	3,263.0	3,216.0	3,362.0	3,301.0	3,245.0	3,172.0	-4.7%

Drug Free Highlands Wins Award:

Debbie Lees of the HCSO and John Varady

The Drug Free Highlands Community Coalition received its graduation certificate from the Community Anti Drug Coalitions of America (CADCA) National Coalition Academy on March 10, 2010. Members of Drug Free Highlands participated in a yearlong intensive institute, including 3 one week sessions spent at the National Guard Drug Reduction Task Force base in Fort Indiantown Gap, Pennsylvania. By completing the certification requirements Drug Free Highlands has demonstrated the capacity to employ research based prevention initiatives to make community wide environmental changes in reducing underage drinking and drug use.

National Crime Victims' Rights Week 2010

Every April across the nation, communities participate in the annual observance of National Crime Victims' Rights Week. This year one of Highlands County Deputies, Deputy Sheriff Robert "Bobby" Burch was selected to receive the ***Distinguished Victim Services Award of 2009*** in conjunction with the state's celebration in Tallahassee. Deputy Burch went above the call of duty showing compassion, devotion and diligence in his work to change the life of one Sebring youth. When they first met, Deputy Burch was investigating an abuse allegation which was unfounded. Instead he found that this boy was taking care of his terminally ill father. The boy's mother had passed away earlier in his life, soon after his father passed leaving him with no family willing to care for him. Deputy Burch immediately got with the Florida Sheriff's Youth Ranches and the Department of Children and Families and secured him a new, safe home at the Youth Ranch. The boy has thrived since moving there and has since received the most improved academics award at the Live Oak Youth Ranch. Congratulations Deputy Sheriff Bobby Burch for your continued service to Highlands County Citizens.

Attorney General Bill McCollum, Robert, Deputy Burch, Sheriff Benton and Governor Charlie Crist

D.A.R.E Day Celebration 2010

Deputy Ross Porter, School Resource Officer for Lake Placid High School, lead the event

The 16th annual D.A.R.E Day Celebration took place, for the first time, amidst the newly remodeled South Florida Community College Auditorium. The auditorium, now with its spacious floor seating and brand new balcony boxes, filled quickly with the sound of screaming fifth graders for the event. The kids were ready to break in the new space with their celebration for yet another successful year of the D.A.R.E program in Highlands County. The D.A.R.E programs fundamental purpose is to help kids, at a young age to make sound decisions when it comes to drugs and alcohol. While part of the program served as a pep rally of sorts with plenty of music and dancing, the other half was a reinforcement of the drug enforcement education. Approximately 1000 area 5th graders were pumped up by the California Toe Jam Band, who provided the entertainment for the event. Also in attendance was none other than Highland's County's own American Idol contestant Shelby Dressel. Shelby added to the event by performing two songs for the kids, of which her rendition of Taylor Swift was a huge hit with all the kids filling in the lyrics at times. However, the core purpose for the program remained at the forefront of the entire audience with intermittent plugs reinforcing the notion of encouraging our younger generation to make decisions that will help, rather than hinder their future. One of the keynote speakers was Grace Bible Youth Pastor, Dustin Woods. Woods made quite an impression on the audience with his urge for the children to be '*difference makers*' of their generation. The idea was to be role models in a time of conformity, and do something substantial with the lives they live. The show wouldn't have been complete without the numerous D.A.R.E Role Models representing all of the county high schools. With each student introducing themselves some went as far as to "dare" the upcoming generation to do more than just the mediocre status quo. Instead they challenged them to be better than the rest and strive to achieve their best, in hopes of standing in their very shoes one day. Seeing the role models solidifies the efforts that law enforcement officials strive for with the D.A.R.E program. To give kids the tools they need to deter from becoming involved with drugs and alcohol. The program is science based and evaluations have concluded that kids who complete the D.A.R.E program have better decision-making skills and significantly decrease the chance that they will experiment with illegal substances. Kudos to the D.A.R.E program and all involved that have made it such a wonderful success!

The 5th graders enjoying the live entertainment!

CHIEF EXECUTIVE SEMINAR PROGRAM GRADUATE

Major Mark Schrader, Law Enforcement Bureau Commander, graduated on April 22nd from The Florida Criminal Justice Executive Institute's Chief Executive Seminar. The goal of the Chief Executive Seminar is to prepare Florida's criminal justice leadership for the challenging and changing demands of the future. Class participants study trends and events that affect criminal justice professionals and the state, and develop new leadership skills to address and manage change. Graduates completed classes on such topics as succession planning, demography, budgeting, managing generations, ethics, and implementing strategic change. All of which ensures the future of the Highlands County Sheriff's Office and the advancement of our vision.

QUARTERLY INFORMATION—ADMINISTRATION & COURT SERVICES

New Member Hires:	
Civilians	4
Sworn	2
Applications Received this Qtr.	73
Applications Processed	17
Payroll Checks Processed	2,075
Payable Checks Processed	701
P-Card Purchases	573
Citizens Fingerprinted	593
Information Services Requests	533

Court Related Services:	
Cases In Court	7,336
Inmates Taken to Court	1,109
Arrests by Bailiffs	90
Persons thru Security Station	50,917
Pre-Trial Release Services:	
First Appearance Attendance	520
Pre-Trial Release Cases	72
Inmates Referred for Treatment	27
Cost Effectiveness Savings	$58,562.00

QUARTERLY INFORMATION—LAW ENFORCEMENT

Administrative Calls	37,427
911 Calls	12,348
Computer Aided Dispatch	36,577
HCSO	18,823
SPD	5,033
LPPD	1,170
APPD	5,706
FIRE	2,002
EMS	3,843
Offense Reports	1,982
Traffic Citations Issued	1,292
K-9 Searches	183
Warrant Numbers:	
Received/Processed	678
Served	644
Active	3,992
Number of Arrests By Patrol	249

Number of DUI's	14
Items into Evidence	2,438
Judicial/Civil Process Services:	
Received/Processed	2,650
Served	2,565
Active	85
Crime Scene Lab Cases	122
Criminal Investigation Unit Cases	203
Investigations Open (Total)	144
Special Investigations Unit Cases	49
SIU Narcotic Arrests	35
SVU Cases Received from DCF	358
SVU Cases Open	26
Business Security Surveys	0
Neighborhood Watch Presentations	45
Crime Victims Served	126
Victim Advocate Services	414

QUARTERLY INFORMATION—DETENTION

Inmates Booked into Jail	1,476
Inmates Released from Jail	1,312
Instructional Program Hours	2,189
Inmate Transport Miles	32,039
Transports to State Prison	67
ICE Picked Up	27
Detainer's Placed	37
CMP Participants	69
Dollars Saved in Labor	$68,962
Dollars Collected in Fees	$5,945
Inmate Meals Served	100,790
Average Cost per Day Per Inmate	$1.69
Inmate Farm Produce (lbs)	806

Inmate Farm Eggs Harvested (Doz.)	1,268
Alcohol Breath Tests	37
Average Daily Population	371
Net Commissary Earnings	$5,619
Medical Fees Charged	$177,705
Medical Fees Collected	$12,897
Subsistence Fees Charged	$53,155
Subsistence Fees Collected	$14,428
Inmate Per-Diem Charged	$23,438
Inmate Per-Diem Collected	$11,089
Labor Hours by Trusties S/O	29,160
Labor Hours by Trusties Other	3,758
Dollars Saved in Labor	$211,410

Peace Officers' Memorial Day 2010

As the precursor to the nation's week long salute to fallen officers, Highlands County held their own salute to those officers near and far. This year's **National Peace Officers Memorial Week** fell during the week of May 9th – 15th. The Highlands County Sheriff's Office held a program for law enforcement as a local 'Salute to Peace Officers,' in Sebring on Thursday, May 6, 2010 in the Board of County Commissioners board room at the Highlands County Government Center. Representatives from all the major branches of our local law enforcement agencies gathered in one room to pay tribute to those who have given the ultimate sacrifice in the name of public safety. Members of the Highlands County Sheriff's Office, Sebring Police Department, Avon Park Police Department, Florida Highway Patrol, Lake Placid Police Department, Florida Wildlife Commission and Avon Park Correctional Institution were in attendance to acknowledge those comrades fallen in the line of duty. Numerous community members including the VFW and Nam Knights also attended in support of our local law enforcement community.

STEPS TO CONTROL INMATE HEALTH CARE COST SHOW DRASTIC SAVINGS

Inmate health care costs have continued to rise over the last several years due to national medical cost inflation and inmate population. Faced with the unusual increases, Detention staff instituted several cost containment measures including staffing initiatives, and service contracts that have begun to realize savings. For the second year in a row, our average savings is about 55% of the actual costs billed. Staff is currently working on strengthening and expanding our contracts procurement and monitoring practice to assure best value and adequate care. All this comes on heels of the bad news that legislation to control inmate hospital emergency care died in session and hospitals retain the ability to tap into the county tax dollars for those services. For years Counties and hospitals have tussled over how much should be charged and this was a major loss for Counties. Locally, we do have contractual relationships with numerous providers including hospitals that allow the Sheriff's Office to negotiate the cost down, thus realizing the continuous savings of 55% per year. Last year inmate health care costs billed were over 1.6 million dollars with the county paying for less than $725,000 of those bills due to the diligence and responsible oversight of our Detention staff. Currently, it appears the costs, payments, and savings for this fiscal year are still in line. Although it is difficult for the public to understand why inmates are provided health care when others within our community cannot afford such service, a Federal Court has ruled in Costello v. the State of Florida that inmate health services are a constitutional right. Quite often inmates arrive in our jails and prisons with an array of medical problems, infectious diseases, mental health conditions, and substance abuse or alcohol disorders. It them becomes the burden of the facility to deal with these issues that require medical attention.

LAW ENFORCEMENT TORCH RUN 2010

In 1981, thanks to Wichita, Kansas Police Chief Richard LaMunon, the Law Enforcement Torch Run began. The apparent urgent need to raise funds for and increase awareness of Special Olympics was the motivation for the event. At its most basic level, the Torch Run is an actual running event in which officers and athletes run the "Flame of Hope". Every two years, law enforcement officers from around the world gather to carry the "Flame of Hope" in a Law Enforcement Torch Run in honor of the Special Olympics. Funds are raised through "Adopt-A-Cop" runner sponsorships, local fundraising events, corporate sponsorships and Torch Run T-shirts (more than 400,000 sold). In 2008 alone, $34 million was raised for Special Olympics around the world. The Sheriff's Office participated in this event on April 28th with over 30 law enforcement, correctional and emergency management participants from agencies throughout Highlands County.

HIGHLANDS COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

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Learn about the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial at: www.nleomf.org

Highlands County Sheriff's Office

CRIME PREVENTION

Insert for Volume 3 , Issue 5

NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH UPDATE

It's never too early to start Neighborhood Watch! This lovely young lady came with mommy to the Hampton Woods Neighborhood Watch meeting on April 8th and had a really good time! More from ***Hampton Woods*** *next quarter.*

Crime Prevention representatives attended 16 different Neighborhood Watch Annual Meetings this quarter throughout the county. Here's a summary of some of the action…

At **Sebring Park Estates** in Lorida we spoke about general crime prevention and observation skills to this veteran group. In addition we asked for and received two volunteers that we can call for assistance if we are doing search and rescue on Lake Istokpoga. Thanks so much! **Fairmount Mobile** in Sebring had approximately 200 attendees at their annual meeting who enjoyed a presentation from Lowanda Thompson of Central Dispatch on how to call 911 efficiently, and from Crime Prevention on Financial Fraud Prevention. At **Meadow Lake** in Lake Placid there was a small but enthusiastic group for their first annual meeting. New Chairperson Shawn Cruse got acquainted with everyone and he's looking forward to a great year of fellowship among the residents. **Tiajuana Villas**, on Roanoke and Barnum Streets in Sebring, had a nice turnout for their annual picnic and meeting as you can see from the pictures at right. Brenda Dane and Wainetta Holmes are taking good care of the area with help from Harry McQueen and Angela Hendry. Thanks, everyone! **Whispering Pines Mobile Home Park** in Sebring held their first annual meeting as well and heard a presentation about reporting suspicious incidents and persons. Chairperson Linda Sorenson will continue in that role for 2010 supported by her assistant Dixie Sturgell. **Hickory Ridge Mobile Home Park** off US 98 in Sebring has a new Chairperson. Long-time Chair Neal Ruonavar is turning over command to Joe and Lynda Fairfield. Thanks, Neal, for all your hard work and dedication through the years and welcome Joe and Lynda! **Fiestavillas**, at left, always has an enthusiastic, but small group! Janet Teets and Jim Gilbert keep great tabs on this group in the Baxter, Howze and Gould streets of Sebring. Thanks, Janet and Jim for your hard work over the years!

Neighborhood Watch Update Continued...

Placid Lakes in Lake Placid has a new chairperson in Board member Natalie Hastings. Nell is looking forward to working with Natalie to organize this large development into workable groups. **Tanglewood** Neighborhood Watch leader Mel Ridley addresses the Block Captains at the annual meeting in the picture at right. A larger, general meeting will take place later in the year. These key people are the backbone of this formidable Sebring group! Winona Garrett has done a great job with the **Frances 2** Mobile Home Neighborhood Watch in Sebring. Nell spoke to over 100 people at the annual meeting in February regarding crime activity in their area during the past year. Assistant Chairs Bertha Waterbury and Barbara Guthrie are helping Winona and everyone's pitching in to ensure the success! **Brenners Mobile Home Park** near Lakeshore Mall in Sebring has turned over Chairperson duties to Darlene Purk who is working on a reorganization of the group over the summer. She has a great group of residents to work with so we're sure she will be successful! **Leisure Lakes** Neighborhood Watch is still being led by Donna Leonard, a seasoned veteran of crime prevention. This large group in Lake Placid had about 50 people at their annual meeting despite being held on the 12 Hours of Sebring Race Day. Congratulations, Donna, on a job well done!

Congratulations to **Lake Placid Campground** in Lake Placid for attaining Neighborhood Watch status this quarter! This group has a wonderful breakfast during the season due to the hard work of the cooks pictured at left. Chairpersons Alvin and Sharon Roberts along with manager Vicky Tanabe organized this group in record time and are enthusiastic about continuing their efforts over the summer and into the fall. Welcome aboard!

Town and Country Mobile Home Community off Cooper Road in Sebring, **Hampton Woods** in Sun 'N Lakes and **The Palms on Lake Tulane** in Avon Park are all in the development process and we hope to hear more about them next quarter. For information on starting a Neighborhood Watch Group in your area, please contact CPS Nell Hays of the Crime Prevention Unit at 385-0024.

Thank You to the Women of the Moose Chapter 873

The Highlands County Sheriff's Office owes a debt of gratitude to the Women of the Moose Chapter 837 of Sebring. This stellar group of women so graciously donated $1000 to our organization to fund the purchase of two K9 puppies to add to our squad. We are so thankful for their generosity and will continually remember their thoughtfulness as these two additions join our efforts to make Highlands County a safer place for all. For more information on this incredibly community minded organization, check out their website at http://www.mooseintl.org/public/default.asp. To become a member of this local chapter call (863) 655-0097 and look for pictures of the puppies in next quarter's issue.