

Quarterly Report of the HIGHLANDS COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

INTEGRITY QUALITY SERVICE PROFESSIONALISM

Sheriff Susan Benton



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.

Volume 7 Issue 2

July 2011 - 2nd Qtr

CONGRATULATIONS ON OUR FIRST RE-ACCREDITATION



On Thursday, June 30, 2011 the Highlands County Sheriff's Office law enforcement operations formally received re-accreditation by the Commission of Florida Law Enforcement Accreditation. There were approximately 25 agencies being reviewed during the state-wide meeting for their initial re-accreditation along with our Sheriff's Office. Your Sheriff's Office had a "flawless" report, not only on our initial accreditation 3 years ago, but again on the re-accreditation and on-site visit with file review. The Commissioner covering our agency expressed how unusual it is to obtain two flawless reports; and applauded our Sheriff for this achievement. Of course, we know that without our dedicated accreditation manager, Kim Ketchner, who does an exceptional job; we could in no way become accredited nor re-accredited without the members who daily demonstrate our core values and embrace the accreditation process. According to Sheriff Benton, this process of "saying what you do and doing what you say" is part of our internal culture of accountability. The professional standards required of an accredited law enforcement agency is the way we do business; through this process and that of following our strategic plan, we stay committed to our *Mission* of protecting life, property, and individual rights while maintaining peace and order.

U. S. Army PFC Joshua Jetton

Annual Inspection Jail Facility & Jail Medical

The Florida Model Jail Standards inspection team arrived at the Highlands County Jail on June 23, 2001. The team conducted the annual jail inspection. This inspection team consists of certified inspectors from DeSoto, Okeechobee, and Glades Counties. The inspection team was most complimentary of our jail operations, especially our medical division. The jail was certified to be in compliance with all of the Florida Model Jail standards. Our detention deputies and members are very professional and this reflects during inspections such as this one. Congratulations Detention Bureau for demonstrative our core values.

Behavioral Health Deferred Prosecution Program

The Highlands County Sheriff's Office and the Office of the State Attorney has kicked off our Behavioral Health Deferred Prosecution Program. Persons arrested who have significant documented mental health problems may now be eligible for a deferred prosecution of their charges, of course, given certain circumstances. The charges can not be serious felonies or crimes of violence to say the least. These offenders, once they agree and are accepted into the program, will be monitored by mental health professionals to help them adhere to their medication regiment, counseling and treatment, thus not returning to jail.



Highlands County citizens welcome home a hero! The Highlands County Sheriff's Office coordinated the welcome home of our "fallen hero", PFC Joshua Jetton. We would like to thank all of the public safety agencies who assisted; the Polk County Sheriff's Office, the local police departments, the fire departments and EMS. It was a sad day when our young soldier lost his life in pursuit of our freedom. But what an honor it was to be able to help bring him home to his family! For those who were unable to witness the escort; it would have made you feel proud and bring tears to your eyes, to see so many patriotic citizen's standing along side U.S. 27 with American flags. Starting from inside Polk County, all the way to the Sebring Parkway, hundreds of citizens paid tribute. There were more citizens gathered at U.S. 27 and the Parkway where the fire departments' ladder trucks displayed the greatest flag on earth flying over our fallen soldier as he passed under it. As Capt. Fane said, "What an honor." Please keep our fallen soldier's young wife, and family, in your prayers; as they will need it.

Rapid ID Update



In 2009 the Florida Legislature mandated the expansion of DNA collections to include persons arrested for all felony and some misdemeanor crimes. Without a technological solution to improve the sample submission process, the increased volume of submissions would have resulted in further backlogs at the DNA database. Now as soon as you check a

subjects fingerprint on the Rapid-ID computer, within seconds the deputy knows whether or not to collect a new sample. The installation of the Rapid-ID systems has been completed here in Highlands County. They are located at the Highlands County Courthouse and in the Highlands County Jail. Members have received training on the implementation and operation of the systems. Rapid-ID eliminates the need for handwritten forms and duplicated submissions of an individual's DNA. The funding for these systems were provided by a grant through the Florida Department of Law Enforcement for all Sheriff's Offices and the second unit within the jail was funded through our local forfeiture fund. These are monies identified and collected from offenders who profit from their crimes.

Highlands County Sheriff's Office

CRIME PREVENTION

Insert for Volume 7 , Issue 1



Neighborhood Watch Groups News



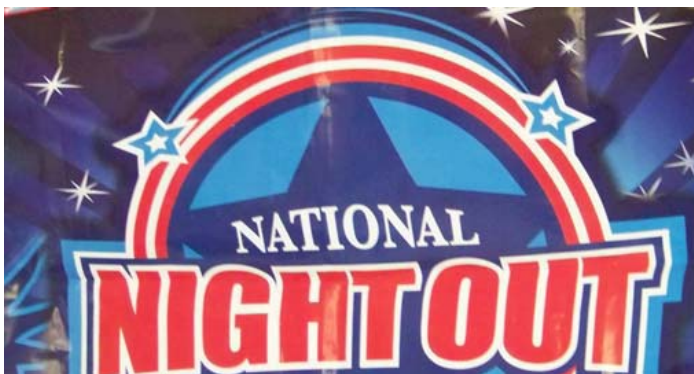
Erin Park Neighborhood Watch

This quarter was still active with Neighborhood Watch Groups even though many of our residents have gone north for the summer months. Erin Park residents conducted their third meeting and have now attained official Neighborhood Watch status. They are proud of their new signs and are looking forward to participating in Neighborhood Watch functions throughout the year. Groups having their annual meeting this quarter included the following: The Knoll, Golf Hammock, Highlands Park Estates (attempting to re-organize), Bass Watchers, Tropical Harbor and Tanglewood. There is one new group to announce – Highland Palms Apartments is working on their three meeting requirement. Under the coaching of Facility Manager Ruth Lopez, this new apartment complex is working diligently to come into the Neighborhood Watch fold. I want to thank Mrs. Lopez for her tireless efforts to get Neighborhood Watch off the ground and we will continue to work with this community in hopes to have a successful program there by next quarter.



Tropical Harbor's Annual Meeting

National Night Out



The National Association of Town Watch (NATW) is presenting the 28th Annual National Night Out crime prevention event. Last year we had two communities who participated and we had a great time! If you would like to have an event in your area, please contact Nell Hays at 863-402-7369 for details of our local plans. For more information on the National Night Out concept, please visit the website at www.natw.org.

Upcoming Event Tuesday, August 2nd, 2011

FCPA



Southern States Crime Prevention Conference Announces First Ever Community Track

The Florida Crime Prevention Association is excited to announce their 2011 state crime prevention conference; Southern States Crime Prevention Conference. The Conference will be held October 17th – 21st at the Cocoa Beach Oceanfront Hilton.

For the first time ever, the FCPA is inviting members of the community to join the Conference in their own educational track. This three-day community track, running October 19th – 21st, will highlight several important and current trends that are essential for business owners, community association presidents, neighborhood watch participants, police volunteers, condominium boards, community and school leaders.

This community conference track will provide tips on how law enforcement and members of your community can work together to help fight crime and how to understand what tools are at your disposal to help safeguard your community.

There are a limited amount of spaces available for citizens interested in attending the community section of the conference. Attendance will be awarded on a first come, first-served basis. There are two ways to register for this education:

1. On the Web

www.conference.FloridaCrimePrevention.org

2. Fax Registration to:

772 220-7159

Attn: Laura Passanesi

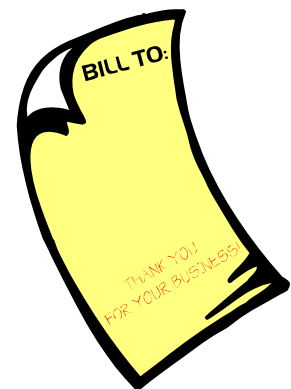
The cost to attend the conference is only \$30 which includes the Thursday Night Awards Dinner (NOTE: attendee is responsible for hotel accommodations which can be booked through the website and will be available at the discounted conference rate.)

Join us October 19 - 21, 2011 at the Cocoa Beach Oceanfront Hilton for the best educational seminar in the state for members of the community! For further information, please call FCPA Region 6 Board Representative Nell Hays at 402-7369.

Credit/Debit Card Fraud

Check That Statement!

Many Highlands County residents have been victims of credit and/or debit card fraud during the past quarter. Card numbers have been stolen in Highlands County and fraudulent charges have shown up in the Orlando area a month or more later. The good news is that cardholders have not been held responsible for these fraudulent charges as long as the breach is reported in a timely manner. Be assured we are doing everything we can in order to find the people responsible for this problem. The situation is being investigated on a multi-county basis with the hopes that arrests can be made in the near future. Meanwhile residents are encouraged to check their credit and debit card statements on a regular basis and report any charges that you did not make to both your bank and your local law enforcement agency.



QUARTERLY INFORMATION—ADMINISTRATION & COURT

New Member Hires:		Court Related Services:	
Civilians	3	Cases In Court	7,874
Sworn	3	Inmates Taken to Court	1,103
Applications Received this Qtr.	118	Arrests by Bailiffs	115
Applications Processed	109	Persons thru Security Station	39,414
Payroll Transactions Processed	2,385	Pre-Trial Release Services:	
Payable Checks Processed	1,553	First Appearance Attendance	541
P-Card Purchases	554	Pre-Trial Release Cases	152
Citizens Fingerprinted	359	Inmates Referred for Treatment	34
Information Services Requests	557		

QUARTERLY INFORMATION—LAW ENFORCEMENT

Administrative Calls	45,123	Items into Evidence	2,271
911 Calls	10,371	Evidence Items Disposed	2,737
Computer Aided Dispatch		Judicial/Civil Process Services:	
HCSO	17,737	Received/Processed	2,281
SPD	4,713	Served	2,197
LPPD	1,827	Active	84
APPD	5,891	Crime Scene Lab Cases	143
FIRE	1,661	Criminal Investigation Unit Cases	230
EMS	3,335	Investigations Open (Total)	173
Offense Reports	2,960	Special Investigations Unit Cases	72
Traffic Citations Issued	1,143	SIU Narcotic Arrests	22
K-9 Searches	167	SVU Cases Received from DCF	420
Warrant Numbers:		SVU Cases Open	35
Received/Processed	624	Business Security Surveys	1
Served	618	Neighborhood Watch Presentations	41
Active	3,684	Crime Victims Served	142
Number of Arrests By Patrol	694	Victim Advocate Services	613
Number of DUI's	11		

QUARTERLY INFORMATION—DETENTION

Inmates Booked into Jail	1,463	Average Daily Population	411
Inmates Released from Jail	1,294	Staff Meals Purchased	\$7,418
Instructional Program Hours	1,904	Net Commissary Earnings	\$9,593
Inmate Transport Miles	40,673	Medical Fees Charged	\$158,678
Transports to State Prison	59	Medical Fees Collected	\$11,405
ICE Picked Up	25	Subsistence Fees Charged	\$59,539
Detainer's Placed	34	Subsistence Fees Collected	\$17,142
CMP Participants	44	Inmate Per-Diem Charged	\$22,336
Dollars Saved in Labor	\$31,900	Inmate Per-Diem Collected	\$10,187
Dollars Collected in Fees	\$2,750	Labor Hours by Inmates S/O	31,286
Inmate Meals Served	113,535	Labor Hours by Inmates -Other	1,040
Avg Food Cost per Day Per Inmate	\$1.57	Dollars Saved in Labor	\$234,364
Alcohol Breath Tests	27		

Defending Childhood

Last September, Attorney General Eric Holder launched an initiative to combat a national epidemic: children's exposure to violence. Defending Childhood to prevent children's exposure to violence when possible, mitigate the negative impact of exposure when it does occur, and to develop knowledge and spread awareness about this issue. The Highlands County Sheriff's Office Special Victims Unit is just one of the initiatives locally that not only protects our vulnerable victims, holding offenders accountable; but they are able with all of the other resources available at the Champion for Children Advocacy Center offer prevention efforts and to mitigate further exposure to violence. As Attorney General Holder told the Defending Childhood grantees, that is takes an extraordinary collaborative effort to help children". We here in Highlands County are doing just that! Our teams at the Advocacy Center are working not just case by case or incrementally by neighborhood but are "Defending Childhood" seeking systemic change: the fundamental overhaul of broken social patterns that are threatening the safety—and limiting the prospects—of our children." More information about Defending Childhood is available [online](#).

Teen Driver Challenge

The next Teen Drive Challenge class is scheduled for Thursday evening, September 22, 2011 from 5:30pm-9:30pm and all day Saturday, September 24th, 9:00am-5:00pm. Students that wish to attend need to pick up their applications from their School Resource Officer. This is a great opportunity for kids and for parents. The course teaches defensive driving techniques.

SHERIFF SEEKS ALTERNATIVE FUNDING FOR EQUIPMENT & SYSTEMS UPGRADE

The Sheriff's Office has been notified that they will receive additional funds to upgrade the E-911 Consolidated Communications Center Equipment. Faced with difficult economic times, we must stay creative in funding for equipment that is a vital lifeline when an emergency occurs. The notification that the two E-911 projects were approved by the State came just in time to keep our Communications Next Generation ready. The funds will provide for a complete Viper Systems upgrade for digital services. The second award will provide for the replacement of a digital recording system equipped with the ability for redactions for compliance with statutorily mandates for exempt and confidential information. The Sheriff states that "we must continue to show our unwavering commitment to provide quality communications to our public safety partners and the community; using every financial resource available that will decrease the need for locals fund expenditures." The Sheriff's Office has also been awarded funding for the replacement of in car computers that are beginning to reach their end of life. The Sheriff's Office expects more grant awards are forthcoming.

TRAINING OBSTACLE COURSE DEDICATION-APRIL 20, 2011



This training site is made possible by the generous contributions of local businesses and regional law enforcement. The Highlands County Sheriff's Office would like to thank:

A.D. Morgan Corp.
Home Depot
Trinity Development Corp.
Lee County Sheriff's Office
Scosta Supply Corp.
Ram Jack Foundation Solutions
High Reach 2
Lowe's
HTFL, Inc.

Bagwell Lumber Co.
Triangle Hardware
Carl Cool Engineering
Tampa Electric
Somers Irrigation
Ridge Equipment Co.
Highlands Co. BOCC
Artistic Frames, Graphics & Signs
Arnold Sod



HIGHLANDS COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

Susan Benton, Sheriff

434 FERNLEAF AVENUE
SEBRING, FL 33870
OFFICE: (863) 402-7200

Provide your kids protection Take 25 minutes a day with them: <http://www.take25.org>