

Quarterly Report of the HIGHLANDS COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

INTEGRITY QUALITY SERVICE PROFESSIONALISM

Sheriff Susan Benton



July-Sept 3rd Qrt 2016

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.

Southwest Florida Region V1 SWAT Challenge



On Saturday, September 17th beginning at 8:00AM, some of the finest Special Weapons and Tactics officers took to the Highlands County Sheriff's Office's Obstacle Course in the 14th Annual S.W.A.T. Challenge. Ninety-six competitors representing 12 agencies in the Southwest Florida region participated in this event. Teams from the following agencies participated in the competition: Desoto County Sheriff's Office, Sarasota County Sheriff's Office, Charlotte County Sheriff's Office, Lee County Sheriff's Office, Collier County Sheriff's Office, Collier County Sheriff's Office CERT, Highlands County Sheriff's Office - two teams, Cape Coral Police Department, Ft. Myers Police Department, Sarasota Police Department, and Bradenton Police Department.

This was the first time the S.W.A.T. Challenge was held in Highlands County and the members of our S.W.A.T. team along with Becky Tyson of the Purchasing Department worked very diligently over several months to make sure this event went off without a hitch. They recruited vendors, got sponsorships, arranged for food vendors and even had a bounce house for the children! Prizes for the event were combinations of donations from vendors and local businesses as well as trophies for the top finishers.

Prior to the Challenge itself, participants met for dinner at Don Jose's Restaurant in Sebring where they were presented with the agenda and rules for the competition. The next morning, members of the three local high school's R.O.T.C. units were on hand to direct traffic and control parking at the event. These students also manned the T-shirt booth selling T-shirts to spectators and interested

persons throughout the very long day at the range. They also assisted vendors with setting up and taking down their booths, which was very much appreciated!

During the day, teams participated in shooting, obstacle course and tactical events gaining points for their finishes in each. At the end of the day, all points from each event were totaled to determine the overall winners. Cape Coral Police Department was the overall winner, bringing their special competition squad to the Challenge. Second and third places were captured by Highlands County Sheriff's Office teams participating on their home turf. Sheriff Benton said, "The outcome was outstanding not only for our Office but for the participants and our County economically. The county Tourist Development folks provided help with funding to get hotel beds. Don Jose's did an outstanding job with the pre-event dinner and get together. On top of it all, our two teams finished second and third behind a very specialized, competitive SWAT team. This was a great job by all concerned!"



Final Standings for all participants:

Cape Coral PD SWAT
Highlands SO Gold SWAT
Highlands SO Green SWAT
Lee Co. S.O. SWAT
Collier Co. S.O. SWAT
Charlotte Co. S.O. SWAT
Sarasota PD SWAT
Sarasota Co. S.O. SWAT
Collier Co. S.O. CERT
Desoto Co. S.O. SWAT
Ft. Myers PD SWAT
Bradenton PD SWAT

Blue Line Stitchers



D/S Dusty McGee

Blue Line Stitchers is a Facebook group of embroidery friends, family members, and fellow officers (currently over 1,100 members) that are supporters of Law Enforcement. They joined together to use their talents for the purpose of Backing The Blue. When an officer or canine dies in the line of duty, their mission is to memorialize the officer and be supportive of their Brothers and Sisters in Blue. Members from across the nation pull together to make specific items as a show of support for the department of the fallen. It is a small token of their appreciation for those who lay their lives on the line daily and to pay tribute to those who make the ultimate sacrifice in the line of duty. Cari Henley of Texas created the group 6 months ago and oversaw K-9 Billy's tribute. Anne-Marie Middleton of Kissimmee, Florida volunteered to present the items to Deputy McGee at the Highlands County Sheriff's Office.



Florida Sheriffs' Youth Ranch Summer Camp



SUMMER CAMPERS

So what did YOU do on your summer vacation? Forty Highlands County teenagers can answer that question with the fact that they went to the Florida Sheriff's Youth Camp! This year the 39 campers and one Leader-in-Training along with nine school resource officers departed from Sebring High School on Sunday, July 10th for a week of summer fun. Parents and siblings gathered to give a great send-off to the campers as they completed last minute paperwork and boarded the Annett bus for the trip to Inglis, Florida.

Activities during the week included canoeing, bike riding, group activities, and in general, enjoying the outdoors while making new friends! The activities emphasize team work and comradery with campers; even got a visit from two Highlands County K-9 deputies and their partners during the week!

Campers returned early Friday afternoon and reunited with family and friends. They excited to share their new experiences yet ready for a good night's sleep! That thought held true for the School Resource Deputies and Officers that accompanied the students to camp!

Annett Bus Lines provided busses for the trip to and from camp. David Annett,

co-owner of Annett Bus Lines, graduated from Sebring High School in the same graduating class as Deputy Ross Porter – 1989. Mr. Annett's parents started Annett Bus Lines in 1976 and they currently have four locations across Florida. David and his brother Brian took over the company in 2002 from their parents. Deputy Porter was very thankful for the donation of bus transportation for the kids. "Annett Bus Lines provided our transportation to and from the camp this year. It was fantastic, and everyone had an enjoyable and relaxing trip. We certainly appreciate their contribution to our youth and hope we can maintain this partnership for many years to come!"



D/S Ross Porter and David Annett

Highlands County Sheriff's Office *CRIME PREVENTION*

October—November—December 2016



SIGN UP NOW!!



National Night Out Brings Smiles!

On Tuesday, August 2nd, Highlands County Sheriff's members participated in National Night Out events at eight locations in Highlands County. A tradition in Highlands County for the past several years, this year the events drew approximately 860 people to enjoy hot dogs, chips and refreshments while they interacted with Deputies and Administrative personnel. Of course the K-9 demonstrations were fabulous as usual, and everyone enjoyed being able to meet the dogs! This year marked the 33rd anniversary for National Night Out which is a program sponsored by the National Association



K-9 Deputy Jeff Turner and his partner Maverick chat with a Hickory Ridge resident during National Night Out.



Major "Booker" Johnson dons gloves to serve the hot dogs prepared by Captain Bobby Green with encouragement from a Leisure Lakes resident.

hot dogs and did presentations on crime prevention in our communities. We want to thank the communities of Reflections in Avon Park, Tanglewood, Oakridge, Hickory Ridge, and Buttonwood Bay in Sebring and Leisure Lakes, Tropical Harbor and Camp Florida in Lake Placid for allowing us to present this event in their neighborhoods. Without the cooperation of the Neighborhood Watch and National Night Out chairpersons, we could not put on this event each year. Thank you to everyone involved!

See next page for more pictures!

of Town Watch (NATW) and co-sponsored by the Highlands County Sheriff's Office. According to a news release from the NATW, "...it is designed to heighten crime and drug prevention awareness, generate support for and participation in local anti-crime efforts, strengthen neighborhood spirit and police-community partnerships and send a message to criminals letting them know neighborhoods are organized and fighting back against crime."

Each of the eight chairpersons of the events in Highlands County complimented our members on what a positive impact they made as they cooked



Lieutenant Kenny Johnson, standing, makes sure everyone else is fed before taking his place at the table, across from Captain Tim Lethbridge, presenter at Tropical Harbor.

National Night Out (continued)



At left, Hickory Ridge National Night Out Chairman Richard Sheridan enjoys an iced tea and at right, Camp Florida resident Bruce Ridley takes a savory bite out of one of the fabulous hot dogs! Below, the residents of Tropical Harbor presented US with a cake! What a great night it was!



Neighborhood Watch Annual Meetings



Please don't wait until the last minute to schedule your annual Neighborhood Watch meeting! Each Neighborhood Watch group is supposed to schedule one meeting each year with law enforcement. During that meeting we will discuss the property crimes that have occurred in your area over the past year and give you a snapshot of what's going on around the county. We will also let you know about the latest frauds and scams and give you some information on how to prevent becoming a victim. To schedule your meeting, please contact Nell Hays, HCSO Public Information Officer and Crime Prevention Practitioner, at 863-402-7369. If Nell is not available to answer your call, please leave a message and she will get back to you as soon as possible. Meetings can be any day of the week and any time of the day, whatever works best for your community. Thank you in advance for all you do for keeping your neighborhood safe!

What Will They Think Of Next!

During the month of September our front desk deputy has taken numerous calls about phone scams. The common threads among these calls have been that the call is from a local or Florida area code, the caller is asking about credit card fraud and requests verification of the numbers on the card, the caller is calling about a computer or internet issue. Others ask for donations to veterans, police, fire, paramedics or members of the military. When we contacted Century Link and Spring about these calls they advised that there are programs for phones that spoof phone numbers. In addition, callers can use the call forwarding feature on their phone to forward the calls from the main number to whatever number they choose. The phone companies advise victims should call their service provider to have all calling features removed from their phone and restore only the features that the customer actually wants. Please do NOT call the phone numbers that appear on these scam calls. The scammers will then call you continuously! Report any spam calls to the Federal Trade Commission, and the Florida Department of Agriculture (which is the state department that handles most all frauds). If you have lost money to these scammers, please be sure to contact your local law enforcement agency and make a report. Best advice—JUST HANG UP!



New Cell Phone Number

Nell Hays has a new agency cell phone number! The new number is 863-446-3031. Please make a note of it! Thank you!



QUARTERLY INFORMATION—ADMINISTRATION & COURT



New Member Hires:		Court Related Services:	
Civilian	1	Cases In Court	6,526
Sworn	7	Inmates Taken to Court	1,204
Applications Received	34	Arrests by Bailiffs	44
Applications Processed	38	Persons thru Security Station	28,693
Payroll Transactions Processed	681	Judicial/Civil Process Services:	
Payable Checks Processed	2,335	Received/Processed	1,774
P-Card Purchases	794	Served	1,664
Citizens Fingerprinted	218	Active	110
Information Services Requests	1,080		

Safety Tips

Before Halloween

- Choose bright costumes, and have children carry flashlights or glow sticks so they are easily visible. (Hint—Try adding reflective tape to costumes and candy bags!)
- Plan a trick-or-treating route in familiar neighborhoods with well-lit streets.
- Make sure children know
- your cellphone number, their home telephone number, and address in case you get separated. Consider giving them a cellphone so they can reach you easily.
- Teach children how to call 911 in an emergency.
- Teach children to say “NO” in a loud voice if someone tries to get them to go somewhere accept anything other than a treat, or leave with them. Tell them to try everything they can to escape, including yelling, hitting, and kicking.

On Halloween

- Make sure older children take friends and stay together while trick-or-treating.
- Ever send younger children out alone—they should be with a parent, guardian, or another trusted adult.
- Always walk younger children to the door to receive treats.
- Don’t let children enter a home unless you are with them.
- Be sure children do not approach any vehicle, occupied or not, unless you are with them.

www.missingkids.com/families



Look for sex offenders in your area our website www.highlandssheriff.org

QUARTERLY INFORMATION—LAW ENFORCEMENT

Administrative Calls	58,650	Items into Evidence	2,811
911 Calls	14,623	Evidence Items Disposed	1,904
Computer Aided Dispatch	31,759	Crime Scene Lab Cases	109
HCSO (59%)	18,382	Crime Scene Call Outs	142
SPD (16%)	5,031	Criminal Investigation Unit Cases	189
LPPD (7%)	2,259	Investigations Open (Total)	106
FIRE (6%)	2,229	SOU Cases	66
EMS (12%)	3,858	SOU Narcotics Arrests	154
Offense Reports	2,546	CST Arrests	19
Traffic Citations Issued	398	SVU Cases Received from DCF	423
K-9 Searches	208	SVU Cases Open	35
Warrant Numbers:		Business Security Surveys/Residential	1/0
Received/Processed	509	Neighborhood Watch Presentations	21
Served	474	Crime Victims Served	156
Active	1,600	Victim Advocate Services	943
Number of Arrests By Patrol	671		
Number of DUI’s	78		

QUARTERLY INFORMATION—DETENTION

Inmates Booked into Jail	783	Average Daily Population	424
Inmates Released from Jail	732	Net Commissary Earnings	\$19,142.23
Instructional Program Hours	1,174	Medical Fees Charged	\$143,130.51
Inmate Transport Miles	25,705	Medical Fees Collected	\$3,246.61
Transports to State Prison	31	Subsistence Fees Charged	\$58,092
ICE Picked Up	1	Subsistence Fees Collected	\$9,975.51
Detainer's Placed	3	Inmate Per-Diem Charged	\$15,672
CMP Participants	14	Inmate Per-Diem Collected	\$7,512.95
Dollars Saved in Labor	\$16,422	Labor Hours by Inmates S/O	1,988
Dollars Collected in Fees	\$1,275	Labor Hours by Inmates -Other	12,190
Inmate Meals Served	117,001	Dollars Saved in Labor	\$115,742.90
Avg Food Cost per Day Per Inmate	\$1.85		
Alcohol Breath Tests	37		

Governor Rick Scott Recognizes “Young Hero” at Missing Children’s Day



FDLE Commissioner Rick Swearingen Sgt. Mike Brod, D/S Dewayne Proctor, First Lady Ann Scott, HERO Ayanah Castillo and Governor Rick Scott

On September 12, 2016 in Tallahassee FDLE Special Agent-in-Charge Donna Uzzell introduced a Highlands County young hero, Ayanah Castillo. Ayanah was awarded as “Special Young Hero” at the Florida Missing Children’s Day Celebration, her recognition was presented by Governor Rick Scott and First Lady Ann Scott. Sheriff Susan Benton submitted Ayana for this award following her action on the afternoon of October 21, 2015 when a Highlands County School Resource Deputy received a telephone call from Park Elementary School reporting they had a six year old special needs kindergarten student missing from campus. While on the way the deputy was contacted by dispatch

and told a small child had been located in the area of East Adams Street, Avon Park. School Resource Deputy Dewayne Proctor went to East Adams Street and quickly learned the missing child from the school had been located. Ayanah Castillo, who is a fifth grade D.A.R.E. student at Park Elementary School, said that while she was walking home from school she saw a child standing alone in the parking lot of the Avon Mini Mart. Ayanah said the child was crying and visibly upset. Ayanah went on to say that other children walked by the little boy and no one appeared to know the child or have any concern for the child’s safety. Ayanah also added her concerns grew when she neared the child and confirmed the child was not in the company of an adult. Ayanah approached the child who continued to cry and appeared unable to communicate with Ayanah. Fearing for the child’s safety, Ayanah quickly took the child to her residence and made contact with her parents who called 911. Due to Ayanah’s quick thinking and selfless act of kindness the missing child was recovered and returned to the his parents unharmed. Without Ayanah’s involvement there is no telling how this situation could have turned out. It is Ayanah’s caring attitude, awareness, and putting others before herself, which demonstrate everything it means to be a D.A.R.E. Role Model.



HIGHLANDS COUNTY SHERIFF’S OFFICE

Sheriff Susan Benton

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**For tips on how to keep our kids safe see the Florida Sheriffs Association Child Safety Page
@ www.flsheriffs.org/child-safety**