

# Quarterly Report of the HIGHLANDS COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

INTEGRITY    QUALITY SERVICE    PROFESSIONALISM



Sheriff Susan Benton

2014 April-June 2nd Qrt

## 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.

## Florida Sheriffs' Risk Management Fund (FSRMF)

Practice, practice, practice! Athletes do it; musicians do it; so why wouldn't deputies do it? Well the truth is, they do and they do it for more than just to improve their performance. They do it to save lives and reduce liability risk. Being a Deputy Sheriff is by its nature, a dangerous profession. When average citizens are frightened, threatened or being harmed, deputies are the people called to the rescue. Over the past 30 years this program grew and today the Florida Sheriffs Risk Management Fund focuses specifically on protecting Florida Sheriffs and their employees. Governed by a Board of Managers made up of current Sheriffs, including Highlands County's Susan Benton, this group protects the interests and exposures of Sheriffs Office members throughout the state. On May 7th the Highlands County Sheriff's Office was pleased to host 25 insurance representatives from the northeast United States, Germany, England, Bermuda, Switzerland and Denmark at the Highlands County Sheriff's Office Training Facility in order to demonstrate the training and tools that are available to reduce the risks involved with law enforcement activities. One way is through the accreditation process. The Highlands County Sheriff's Office is accredited both in Law Enforcement and Corrections thus has met and continues to meet high standards of professionalism in daily activities, hiring practices and training. It also strengthens the agency's defense against law suits when practice matches policy. In addition to accreditation, the Highlands County Sheriff's Office recently instituted a Physical Ability Test for sworn members. Training Coordinator Deputy Sheriff Nick Kent ran the PAT course for the observers to demonstrate the conditioning required to pass the test. The demonstrations for the insurance underwriters were scenarios that are not uncommon to our daily business. The SWAT Commander, Lt. Jack Bailey explained and demonstrated the various equipment, its uses, and the qualifications and training for a SWAT member. SWAT conducted a simulated barricaded suspect and a school bus hostage

scenario. Our visitors participated in these exercises. Broken into groups, half to the classroom and half on the firing line. The classroom session demonstrated all of the gear that is assigned to a deputy, including the Taser, how and why we train with the equipment and which general orders and accreditation standards apply. All of which improve deputy and citizen safety and mitigate and minimize risk. Additionally, other elements of training, such as "Below 100" were discussed. The firing line group were introduced to all of the weapons that are used in law enforcement. The handgun, shotgun, rifle, sniper rifle, and other specialty weapons. Each visitor had the opportunity, under the watchful eye of a training specialist to fully examine and fire these weapons. For many of our visitors this was the first time they had ever held a firearm. K-9 teams demonstrated the various uses for our K-9's; emphasizing the constant training and detailed record keeping involved to utilized this special tool while managing the risk. According to Dan Condon, Chief Operating Officer of Florida Sheriffs Risk Management Fund, the attendees represent large insurance companies from around the world who pick up the balance of the risk insurance obligation for the Florida Sheriffs. The Sheriffs are self insured, these folks pick up the balance on large claims. Having the opportunity to see and participate first hand that deputies are highly trained and efficiently equipped for safety, the companies are more willing to participate in providing the liability coverage. "We had a great day, says Sheriff Benton, besides the opportunity to educate the participants, everyone had fun and went away with a new appreciation for the specialized liabilities of law enforcement."



Lt. Jack Bailey  
With Insurance  
Underwriters

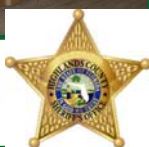
## Operation Medicine Cabinet

April 26, 2014

On April 26, 2014, members of the Highlands County Sheriff's Office, the Sebring and Lake Placid Police Departments and Drug Free Highlands worked together to put on Operation Medicine Cabinet at several locations throughout Highlands County. This event offered an opportunity for citizens to turn in unused or expired prescription medications for safe disposal.

Collections from this event filled 43 boxes and weighed 890 pounds according to Highlands County Sheriff's Lieutenant Manny Gonzalez, who as the Lieutenant over the Evidence Unit, is responsible for holding these items for safe disposal. Four locations throughout Highlands County were drop off points for the medications – The Sebring and Lake Placid Police Departments and the Highlands County Sheriff's Offices at both Liberty Star Plaza and the North District Office in Avon Park.

"We appreciate the cooperation of Highlands County residents in these events," said Lt. Gonzalez. "This is a safe, legal way to dispose of unused or expired medications so they don't harm the environment or cause a child or pet to become sick or even die." Drug Free Highlands partners with law enforcement in prescription take back events throughout the year in an effort to keep our county safe. We thank everyone for their cooperation in yet another successful event!



## Sheriff Honors Florida Sheriff's Association

### Long-Time Donors

The Florida Sheriffs' Assoc. was founded in 1893 for the protection of Florida's citizens and visitors, according to their website, [www.flsheriffs.org](http://www.flsheriffs.org). Through the years it has grown to be one of the largest and most successful state law enforcement associations in the nation. Through the association Florida Sheriffs communicate with lawmakers on public safety issues as well as providing training, task forces and legal services. With the

goal of preventing delinquency among Florida's youth, the Florida Sheriffs' Association also establishes and funds the Florida Sheriffs' Youth Ranches throughout the state. These facilities help prepare boys and girls to be contributing members of Society through their youth development programs. Today approximately 3500 business leaders and 70,000 citizens support the association through various levels of Honorary Membership. Beginning at \$25.00 per year, citizens can show their support for the Florida Sheriffs' Assoc. and the projects and initiatives they stand for. Recently several Highlands County residents were honored for their long-time support of the organization. On April 23, 2014 at the Highlands County Sheriff's Office Quarterly Recognition Ceremony, Dorothy "Dee" Gray was honored with a plaque signifying 25 years of FSA membership. Other citizens not in attendance at the ceremony were Pauline Dorman who was honored for 40 years of FSA membership, Valery Keene for 35 years membership and Earl F. Wilkins for 25 years membership. Additionally, Lisa Hicks Waggoner of Hicks Oil Co., Inc. received recognition as a business member for their outstanding support



Dorothy "Dee" Gray

with their donation of \$500 to the Florida Sheriffs Association making them a Gold Business Membership. Sheriff Susan Benton presented 95 year old Avon Park resident Arthur Mellor with a plaque commemorating 25 years of support through his honorary Florida Sheriffs Association membership. "It's through the consistent support of people like Mr. Mellor here in Highlands County and throughout the State of Florida that the Florida Sheriffs' Association can continue

to provide support and serve the Sheriffs and their members that only improve our ability to assist our local citizens," said Sheriff Benton. "We really appreciate what our citizens do to support the various endeavors of the FSA."



Arthur Mellor

*For more information on the Florida Sheriffs Association please visit their website at [www.flsheriffs.org](http://www.flsheriffs.org)*

### Donation of Bikes for the Florida Sheriff's Youth Ranch Summer Camp

Members of the Lake Placid High School Student Government Association have worked throughout this past year to collect and refurbish used bicycles for donation to the Sheriff's Youth Camp in Inglis, Florida. On Friday, May 23, 2014, School Resource Deputy Mike Brod and Highlands County Sheriff's Major David Paepflow joined the students to present the bicycles to the Camp. Over 30 bicycles were donated and will be enjoyed by youngsters in activities at the camp this summer. Many thanks to the members of Lake Placid High Student School Government Association for their diligence in this effort!





# Highlands County Sheriff's Office *CRIME PREVENTION*

July—September 2014



## Neighborhood Watch



Now's the time to plan for National Night Out 2014! As you may remember, this is the event that takes place the first Tuesday in August and is a celebration of the efforts of Neighborhood Watch participants to prevent crime in their communities. National Night Out was founded in 1984 and is facilitated through the National Association of Town Watch. NATW is a non-profit organization dedicated to the development and promotion of various crime prevention programs, all devoted to making communities safer. The date of this year's event is August 5th and festivities begin between 5:00PM – 6:00PM in various neighborhoods throughout the county. Members of the Highlands County Sheriff's Office Command Staff will visit each event and cook hot dogs for the residents. Potato chips, iced tea and lemonade will also be provided. Any additional food or entertainment is left up to the imagination of each community. So far the communities of The Knoll in Avon Park and Leisure Lakes in Lake Placid have plans to stage events for their residents. Other communities that historically participate include Tanglewood in Sebring and Tropical Harbor in Lake Placid. "We can accommodate up to 6 communities so if you would like to be included in National Night Out celebrations please contact me at 863-402-7369 by July 16th," said Nell Hays, HCSO Crime Prevention Specialist and Public Information Officer.

## Sheriff's Youth Ranch Camp News

It's camp time once again and through the generosity of many Highlands County residents, 45 young people will be enjoying a week at the Sheriff's Youth Ranch in Inglis, Florida. Members of the Tanglewood Golf Association worked diligently throughout the season to provide duffel bags complete with all the supplies campers will need for their trip. In addition, School Resource Deputies participated in fund raisers throughout the year so that additional financial support could be provided. School Resource Deputy Mike Helms spearheads the Youth Ranch initiative and he is ecstatic over the support the camp has received from the community. "This has been fantastic! We will be able to send over 40 kids to camp this year and also provide them the articles they need for their trip." In addition, the monetary donation from the Tanglewood Golf Association to cover expenses for the campers is allowing us to bring additional kids to camp this year. We really appreciate what everyone has done to make this possible," said Helms. Pat Nelson and Corey Welbes, representatives from the Inglis camp, travelled to Tanglewood to meet with the golf association members, the School Resource Unit and Sheriff Benton and accept the check. They too were overwhelmed at the generosity of the group. Campers will depart on Sunday, August 3rd from the Highlands County Sheriff's Office parking lot and will return the following Friday. Transportation assistance is being provided by the School District with the use of a school bus and driver.



*Tanglewood residents, School Resource Unit members and Sheriff Benton present the donation check to Sheriff's Youth Camp representatives at Tanglewood Clubhouse.*

## Trustees Make A Difference In the Community

**M**ason's Ridge is a relatively new housing development located in Sebring and sponsored by Habitat for Humanity. Residents must meet eligibility requirements and Habitat often needs some of the hard labor to maintain these properties. Recently a group of trustees from the Highlands County Jail spent day in this community to assist

**BEFORE**



with lawn care needs. Pictured above is one home that was in dire need of landscaping. After a long day of working not only on homes but also cleaning up public play areas and vacant lots in the community, you can see they made a tremendous difference. Below is the same house after the lawn was cut. Detention Lieutenant Mike Gilliam said, "We are happy to be able to assist this community and make their neighborhood look better. It's good for the men to see something positive." Thank you

**AFTER**



to the Detention Staff for bringing the trustees to Mason's Ridge and thanks to the men for doing such a good job!

## K-9 Members Get Operations Vests

**T**his past month our K-9 Patrol dogs got just a little safer through the generosity of the Retired Law Enforcement Association of Southwest Florida. This group paid for K-9 body armor for each of the four patrol dogs in the Canine Unit. Sheriff Benton greeted three representatives of the association, President Ray Hubbert, Bob Flor and Bob Marron who were on hand to present the vests. Deputy Steve Worley and his partner Ozzie, Deputy Corey Tomblin and his partner Remco, Sergeant Kyle Albritton and his partner Mico and Deputy Dan Danley and his partner Varik were very thankful for the added protection provided by these vests. According to the Point Blank Body Armor website, the K-9 tactical vests were designed by a Police K-9 handler for his own service dog. The vest is fully adjustable and may be deployed for searches, tracking, extractions and more. The vests are made of a durable, abrasion resistant outer shell with adjustability at the chest for a secure fit. They will deflect stabs and bullets as well as protect the K-9's from injury from vegetation.



**Heartland**  
**CRIME STOPPERS**  
Polk • Highlands • Hardee

**1-800-226-TIPS (8477)**

HOTLINE

Webtips

Submit a tip On-Line



Text A Tip: Text "TIP196" plus your information to "CRIMES" (274637)



**QUARTERLY INFORMATION—ADMINISTRATION & COURT**

<b>New Member Hires:</b>		<b>Court Related Services:</b>	
Civilians	4	Cases In Court	7,664
PT Civilian	0	Inmates Taken to Court	1,072
Sworn	4	Arrests by Bailiffs	125
Applications Received	12	Persons thru Security Station	29,724
Applications Processed	11	<b>Judicial/Civil Process Services:</b>	
Payroll Transactions Processed	2,328	Received/Processed	2,076
Payable Checks Processed	426	Served	1,906
P-Card Purchases	544	Active	170
Citizens Fingerprinted	442		
Information Services Requests	494		



The CyberTipline receives leads and tips regarding suspected crimes of sexual exploitation committed against children. More than 2.3 million reports of suspected child sexual exploitation have been made to the CyberTipline between 1998 and March 2014.

The CyberTipline is operated in partnership with the FBI, Immigration and Customs Enforcement, U.S. Postal Inspection Service, U.S. Secret Service, military criminal investigative organizations, U.S. Department of Justice, Internet Crimes Against Children Task Force program, as well as other state and local law enforcement agencies. Reports to the CyberTipline are made by the public and Electronic Service Providers. ESPs are required by law to report apparent child Pornography to law enforcement via the CyberTipline (18 U.S.C 2258A).

Reports are continuously triaged to help ensure children in imminent danger get first priority. Analysts review reports and:

- Examine and evaluate the content
- Add related information that may be useful to law enforcement
- Use publicly available search tools to determine the geographic location of the apparent criminal act
- Provide all information to the appropriate law enforcement agency for investigation

The CyberTipline reporting mechanism assists law enforcement and prosecutors in their detection, investigation and prosecution of child sexual exploitation crimes. The cyberTipline helps make law enforcement's efforts more efficient and maximizes the limited resources available in the fight against child sexual exploitation. the value of The Cybertipline as a source of leads for law enforcement has been greatly enhanced by collaboration with ESPs.

If you have information regarding possible child sexual exploitation, report it to the CyberTipline.

<http://www.missingkids.com/CyberTipline>

**QUARTERLY INFORMATION—LAW ENFORCEMENT**

Administrative Calls	45,123	Items into Evidence	3,450
911 Calls	12,376	Evidence Items Disposed	2,130
Computer Aided Dispatch	31,788	Crime Scene Lab Cases	161
<b>HCSO (62%)</b>	19,839	Crime Scene Call Outs	122
<b>SPD (16%)</b>	4,958	Criminal Investigation Unit Cases	134
<b>LPPD (4%)</b>	1,396	Investigations Open (Total)	156
<b>FIRE (6%)</b>	1,889	SOU Cases	74
<b>EMS (12%)</b>	3,706	CST Arrests	229
Offense Reports	2,725	SVU Cases Received from DCF	402
Traffic Citations Issued	804	SVU Cases Open	52
K-9 Searches	224	Business Security Surveys/residential	0
<b>Warrant Numbers:</b>		Neighborhood Watch Presentations	0
Received/Processed	750	Crime Victims Served	139
Served	629	Victim Advocate Services	639
Active	3,256		
Number of Arrests By Patrol	891		
Number of DUI's	35		

**QUARTERLY INFORMATION—DETENTION**

Inmates Booked into Jail	1,155	Average Daily Population	404
Inmates Released from Jail	1,121	Net Commissary Earnings	\$8,139.75
Instructional Program Hours	1,756	Medical Fees Charged	\$111,664.32
Inmate Transport Miles	33,353	Medical Fees Collected	\$8,857.83
Transports to State Prison	58	Subsistence Fees Charged	\$109,644.00
ICE Picked Up	15	Subsistence Fees Collected	\$35,635.70
Detainer's Placed	13	Inmate Per-Diem Charged	\$20,320.00
CMP Participants	9	Inmate Per-Diem Collected	\$9,476.62
Dollars Saved in Labor	\$7,993.44	Labor Hours by Inmates S/O	40,430
Dollars Collected in Fees	\$630.00	Labor Hours by Inmates -Other	2,150
Inmate Meals Served	110,277	Dollars Saved in Labor	\$337,675.26
Avg Food Cost per Day Per Inmate	\$1.90		
Alcohol Breath Tests	37		

## Drug Abuse Resistance Education (D.A.R.E.) 2014

On Tuesday, May 12<sup>th</sup>, over 1000 fifth grade students enrolled in Highlands County public and private schools converged on the South Florida State College Theatre for the Performing Arts for the annual D.A.R.E. celebration. Included for the first time attendees from Lakeview Christian School in Lake Placid and St. Catherine's School in Sebring. With the California Toe Jam band performing throughout the ceremony, students and their teachers danced to rock and roll music, listened to public service announcements performed by D.A.R.E. role models from each high school and enjoyed performances by local singers Cammie Lester and Nala Price along with an inspiring testimony by Grace Bible Youth Minister Dustin Woods. The Avon Park Diamond Steppers once again showed their talent for step-dancing which was very popular with the students. As in past years, the Highlands County Sheriff's Office Special Operations Unit performed a drug takedown skit including participation from K-9 and detective representatives.

Sebring High School cheerleaders also performed for the enjoyment of the crowd. Students got a chance to do shout outs for their respective School Resource Officers throughout the event. In a fitting finale, School Resource Deputy Andy Spires, who is retiring at the end of this school year after a 30+ year career, performed God Bless America for the group. In all it was a special day for Highlands County fifth graders signifying their commitment to be drug free!

**D.A.R.E.**



## **HIGHLANDS COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE**

**Susan Benton, Sheriff**

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

For tips on how to keep our kids safe see the Florida Sheriffs Association Child Safety Page  
@ [www.flsheriffs.org/child-safety](http://www.flsheriffs.org/child-safety)