

Quarterly Report of the HIGHLANDS COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

INTEGRITY QUALITY SERVICE PROFESSIONALISM



Sheriff Susan Benton

Jan—Mar 1st 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.

First Forensic Technician



Jason Dionne Forensic Tech

When Jason Dionne analyzes evidence in a Highlands County Sheriff's Office case, he doesn't examine fingerprints, hairs, fibers or other such physical evidence. He typically works with cell phones, computers, video cameras and other electronic devices. "In my world, I care about your computer fingerprints," said Dionne, who recently became the Sheriff's Office first forensic technician.

When Sheriff Susan Benton began working in law enforcement in the '70's the investigative world was a far cry from what exists today. Sheriff Benton states, "At that time, a deputy went to work with a five-shot Smith and Wesson, handcuffs and a baton. They had no cell phones, portable radios, standard issued bulletproof vests, fingerprint readers or the possibility of having DNA analyzed to find a suspect. Today, deputies have cellphones, portable radios, bulletproof vests, breathing masks and computers in their cars."

In previous years, Sheriff Benton said, deputies had partners. If they were outside of their vehicle and faced a dangerous situation they couldn't immediately seek

re-enforcements. They relied on their communications skills in some cases to reduce the threat. Improvements in communications between deputies on the road and their supervisors and dispatchers have helped law enforcement. Not only can they communicate by cell phone or portable radio, but with global positioning system information. We can look on a map and tell where every patrol car is located.

In today's world, social networking on the Internet has become a tool for law enforcement Dionne says, "Even with new advances, law enforcement officers, forensic technicians and others involved in solving crimes can't be successful as quickly as what people see on TV. It's much more intensive than what they do on television. While TV police can immediately call up surveillance video and quickly find what they are looking for, in reality it takes hours to do that."

One of Dionne's most important tools, he said, is a computer that prevents him from making any changes to download evidence, such as video. This protects against challenges to the validity of the evidence.

Some of the evidence he's dealt with has been child pornography. According to Dionne offenders often try to hide the illegal files, but he's able to find them.

He says, "Most cases never go to trial. In some property theft cases, criminals deny they've ever used the stolen items, but a forensic examination shows otherwise."

Highlands County Chief Deputy Mark Schrader said even with all the advancements, the basics of hard work and following correct procedures remain.

"None of these basic things have ever changed," he said. "We just have a lot more tools."

Deputy of the Year



Deputy Sheriff Ken Jorgensen

On Tuesday, March 5th, during the regular meeting of the Highlands County Board of County Commissioners, representatives of the Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 4300 presented Highlands County Sheriff's Deputy Ken Jorgensen with their Deputy of the Year Award. Deputy Jorgensen was nominated for the award by his supervisor, Lt. Sean Casey.

In his letter of nomination, Lt. Casey noted that Deputy Jorgensen became a member of the Highlands County Sheriff's Office in 2010 following a previous career as a Trooper with the Florida Highway Patrol. This previous experience made Deputy Jorgensen especially valuable to the Highlands County Sheriff's Office in the areas of traffic enforcement and traffic crash investigations. During his employment with the Sheriff's Office he has made himself available to other deputies by assisting them in completing traffic crash forms and helping to streamline the completion and filing of Driving Under the Influence (DUI) paperwork.

Since January 1, 2012, Deputy Jorgensen has made 153 arrests including 30 for DUI, 19 other traffic related arrests, 64 for various property and personal crimes and he has served 40 arrest warrants. Lt. Casey noted that Deputy Jorgensen continually upholds the Mission of the Sheriff's Office by protecting life, property and individual rights while maintaining peace and order. He also pointed out that Deputy Jorgensen has an excellent attitude and seriousness toward his position as a deputy sheriff however his humorous side makes people at ease and comfortable.

Congratulations Deputy Jorgensen on this memorable recognition of your service!



Dental Hygiene Students Provide Services



SFSC Dental Hygiene Students (from left) Megan LaBelle, Candy Velez and Randie Williams work on dental hygiene with a JASA participant in the Highlands County Jail

Students in the Dental Hygienist Program at South Florida State College recently provided dental health education and services for female inmates in the Highlands County Jail who are enrolled in the Jail Alternative to Substance Abuse (JASA) program. Dr. Deborah Miliken, Director of the Dental Hygienist program at SFSC and Sueelen Williams, Community Dental Instructor collaborated with Highlands County Sheriff's Major David Paeplow and the medical staff at the detention facility to provide dental hygiene education and services to female JASA participants. This is the first year of this partnership and it serves to give the Dental Hygiene students exposure out of the traditional private dental practice and into the public

health sector to address community needs. Students came once every two weeks over a six week period and presented educational materials on dental health and how it relates to overall physical health and wellbeing. In addition, the dental hygiene students taught JASA participants how to remove plaque buildup by proper and frequent brushing.

Students Megan LaBelle, Candy Velez and Randie Williams along with intern Lyndsey Edgemon shared excitement about the program and were very pleased with the results. Candy Velez said, "One of the participants had 100% plaque at the start of the program and today she tested at zero! That was fabulous, and we hardly ever see this in private practice." Megan LaBelle related, "We helped them understand that whole body health begins with the oral health and they were very responsive to our suggestions on how to improve their oral health."

SFSC Dental Hygiene students take Community Dental in their second year of the program, in the spring. They hope to continue this partnership with the Highlands County Sheriff's Office for years to come. In addition to interacting with JASA participants, the students provided packets containing dental floss, a toothbrush and toothpaste to be included in the personal belongings of the inmates which they will receive upon their release from detention. This will give them the materials to continue their newly attained oral health habits once they are released from jail.

New Rapid ID Technology in Highlands County

Rapid ID is a hand held fingerprint scanner that utilizes modern wireless technology to verify identity. This system searches the databases of known Florida criminals and the FBI's Repository for Individuals of Special Concern (RISC). This unit captures forensic quality fingerprints for identification, however when time permits and upon booking into the jail, a ten print submission is still the best and most thorough identification using fingerprints. The Highlands County Sheriff's Office is fortunate to have 9 of these units in operation at this time. The north and south patrol Sergeants on each of four squads has one and the Sergeant in the Safe Neighborhoods Unit accounts for the ninth device. At a cost of just over \$2000 each, they were purchased using Forfeiture Funds, monies seized and forfeited from criminal enterprises. In use for the past several months, Deputies are very pleased with this new tool for law enforcement. "It works very well. I have positively identified several subjects and made an arrest on a subject who attempted to hide his identity during an investigation," said Sgt. "Mickey" Cloninger. Sgt. Anthony McGann commented, "I find this to be a useful tool and have been able to use it successfully." When members of his squad came upon a Hispanic male who was unconscious and lying in an orange grove, Sgt. McGann used Rapid ID to identify the man and was able to get his family to respond to assist him. Sgt. Jamie Davidson related that, "Another subject who attempted to hide his identity when he was served a warrant was convinced to provide the correct name when informed the Rapid ID unit was enroute. Even when subjects provide their correct names but they have no identification on their person, Rapid ID can confirm their identity on the spot."

Sheriff Susan Benton is also pleased with this new technology, "Anything we can do to provide our deputies with current accurate information on subjects they are dealing with on the street increases their chances of going home at the end of their shift. The well-being of our deputies is paramount as they uphold our mission day in and day out to protect life, property and individual rights while maintaining peace and order."



Highlands County Sheriff's Office *CRIME PREVENTION NEWS*

April 2013



Neighborhood Watch Groups Hold Annual Meetings



This past quarter has been record-setting with the number of Neighborhood Watch groups scheduling their annual meetings! With Easter so early this year, many mobile home communities and subdivisions moved their meetings earlier to be able to accommodate those people who were returning to their northern homes in March instead of April. Crime Prevention Specialist and Neighborhood Watch Facilitator Nell Hays visited Erin Park, the Estates of Sebring Park, Meadowlake, Fairmount Mobile, Whispering Pines, Tijuana Villas, Frances II, Oakridge, Francis I, Leisure Lakes and The Bluffs from January through March. Thanks to everyone who came to these meetings and who works every day within their communities to make the

Neighborhood Watch concept a reality. Watching out for one another really does work, as most communities with active Neighborhood Watch groups saw a decrease in crime over last year. Congratulations!

More Communities Begin the Neighborhood Watch Process

Forming a Neighborhood Watch group in your community is really a simple process. It just takes a call to Nell Hays, Crime Prevention Specialist, to get started. There are three meetings required to attain official Highlands County Sheriff's Office Neighborhood Watch status. It begins with a meeting of a few key people within the area who will be the "go to" people to get the project started. Nell explains what Neighborhood Watch is and what it is NOT, and the consensus is reached to proceed with the process. The second meeting is with

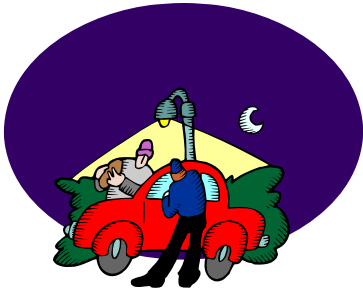


all interested parties within the community and Nell explains to everyone basically the same message as in the first meeting. It is important that citizens realize that Neighborhood Watch is not INTERVENTION! It is simply being aware of what is normal and what is not normal in your community, and to reporting what is not normal. The final, third meeting is actually a training so that people feel confident in their abilities to report suspicious persons, suspicious vehicles and incidents to the Highlands County Sheriff's Office. After the three meetings are complete, the group is considered a Neighborhood Watch community. In order to maintain that status, the group must hold at least one meeting per year and invite a Sheriff's Office member to address the group.

This quarter a group of concerned citizens of Oak Park Avenue in Avon Park began the Neighborhood Watch process in response to some burglaries, a robbery and some suspicious incidents in the area. Similarly Woodhaven Estates decided to continue with their process, begun last year. Most recently, Ohrt's Mobile Home Village, located off US 27 and Sparrow Dr., under new management, has also started the three meeting process. Spring Lake Communities has renewed their interest in the Neighborhood Watch program as well and is once again going through the three meeting process. We welcome these new communities and wish them great success as they learn to watch out for one another!

If you want more information or would like to begin the process for Neighborhood Watch, please contact Highlands County Sheriff's Crime Prevention Specialist Nell Hays at 863-402-7369. She can walk you through the process and have you up and running in no time!

Vehicle Thefts Prevalent



The Highlands County Sheriff's Office has fielded numerous complaints of theft from vehicles during recent months. These thefts occur in neighborhoods and usually there are five or more occurrences in the same time frame. Items stolen include GPS units, I-pads and I-pods, wallets, purses and cash. In almost every case there is no sign of forced entry to the vehicles which means they were not locked at the time.

In light of this activity, we encourage everyone to take valuables out of vehicles when they are parked at your home and please lock your vehicles! It has been our experience that vehicle burglary is a crime of opportunity. Typically burglars go through a neighborhood and try car doors to see if they are locked. If they are locked, the thieves simply move on because they know there will be other cars that are NOT locked! We are actively working these cases however we have only made a few arrests. Please be pro-active and take valuables out of your vehicle when you arrive at home, then lock it. Thank you !

Protect Your Highlands County Home During the Summer

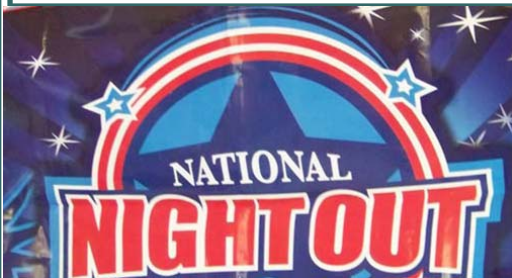
As many seasonal residents prepare to return to their northern homes, here is our annual guide for protecting your investment in Highlands County:

- Give your home a lived in look while you are away. Instead of turning the power off completely, simply unplug the appliances you will not be using such as the refrigerator and freezer. Select a couple of lights in different rooms and connect them to timers. Setting timers to different days and times allows for lights to turn on in different rooms which gives the impression that someone is present.
- Ask a trusted neighbor to keep an eye on your home. Giving them a key would allow them to replace light bulbs in the fixtures mentioned above. If storm damage occurs, you can be contacted and arrange for repairs before the situation deteriorates further. If a burglary should occur, having someone available to report the crime as soon as possible increases the chance of catching the criminals.
- Have a neighbor put his trash out for pickup at your home from time to time to give the impression that someone is living in the house.
- Parking a car in your driveway is also a good way to give the impression that someone is home.
- Please keep your lawn service active while you are away. A well kept lawn is a sign that the homeowner cares about his property, and is watching what is going on. It's worth the investment to prevent a crime from taking place.
- Don't forget to stop your mail and paper deliveries. Ask that trusted neighbor to remove any fliers that accumulate in your driveway or on your door while you're away.



We hope you have a safe trip to your northern destination and look forward to your return in the fall!

National Night Out Information



Tuesday, August 6, 2013

Save the Date!

QUARTERLY INFORMATION—ADMINISTRATION & COURT

New Member Hires:	Court Related Services:	
Civilians	2 Cases In Court	7,890
Sworn	2 Inmates Taken to Court	1,097
Applications Received	70 Arrests by Bailiffs	94
Applications Processed	58 Persons thru Security Station	31,934
Payroll Transactions Processed	Judicial/Civil Process Services:	
Payable Checks Processed	2,073 Received/Processed	2,121
P-Card Purchases	502 Served	2,025
Citizens Fingerprinted	460 Active	96
Information Services Requests	670	
	578	

QUARTERLY INFORMATION—LAW ENFORCEMENT

Administrative Calls	45,338	Items into Evidence	2,989
911 Calls	12,218	Evidence Items Disposed	1,893
Computer Aided Dispatch	36,832	Crime Scene Lab Cases	145
HCSO (50%)	24,233	Criminal Investigation Unit Cases	235
SPD (15%)	5,089	Investigations Open (Total)	231
LPPD (4%)	1,521	Special Investigations Unit Cases	24
FIRE (5%)	1,996	Safe Neighbor Units Arrests	168
EMS (9%)	3,982	SIU Narcotic Arrests	13
Offense Reports	3,256	SVU Cases Received from DCF	332
Traffic Citations Issued	1,157	SVU Cases Open	49
K-9 Searches	343	Business Security Surveys/residential	14/1
Warrant Numbers:		Neighborhood Watch Presentations	59
Received/Processed	668	Crime Victims Served	138
Served	580	Victim Advocate Services	634
Active	3,353		
Number of Arrests By Patrol	857		
Number of DUI's	27		

QUARTERLY INFORMATION—DETENTION

Inmates Booked into Jail	1,129	Average Daily Population	391
Inmates Released from Jail	988	Net Commissary Earnings	\$6,378.26
Instructional Program Hours	1,750	Medical Fees Charged	\$138,579.64
Inmate Transport Miles	35,176	Medical Fees Collected	\$7,167.34
Transports to State Prison	77	Subsistence Fees Charged	\$55,094.00
ICE Picked Up	39	Subsistence Fees Collected	\$15,901.05
Detainer's Placed	38	Inmate Per-Diem Charged	\$20,260.00
CMP Participants	15	Inmate Per-Diem Collected	\$8,445.63
Dollars Saved in Labor	\$12,824.24	Labor Hours by Inmates S/O	34,499
Dollars Collected in Fees	\$1,045.00	Labor Hours by Inmates -Other	1,019
Inmate Meals Served	105,175	Dollars Saved in Labor	\$275,914.01
Avg Food Cost per Day Per Inmate	\$2.00		
Alcohol Breath Tests	35		

Social Networking

Social networking sites (SNS) such as MySpace, Facebook, Bebo, and Twitter are popular with teens because they give them

- An easy way to share their lives with their friends and family
- The chance to try on different identities and explore new interests
- A semi-private platform on which to communicate outside of the supervision of adults

With these benefits, however, also come some risks. Teens on SNS may share personal information which leaves them vulnerable to people who want to harm them. They may also share inappropriate or illegal content which endangers future academic or employment opportunities. Understand the various ways content can be shared can help trusted adults talk to teens about ways to stay safer while using SNS.

SNS Basics

Although not every social networking site has all of these components, many of them add more and more features in an effort to keep users on their sites for longer periods of time. Instead of opening multiple applications, users can rely on one SNS to serve all their communications needs.

Blogs - These on-line journals or diaries are becoming a common part of many SNS.

Comment Walls - A popular feature of most SNS that allows users to communicate through comments left on each others' pages.

E-mail - Most SNS have an e-mail feature through which users can communicate privately or with select groups.

Friends Lists - These contact lists are usually comprised of people a child knows offline, but also include friends of friends and others they have only met online.

Instant Messaging - Some SNS, such as Facebook, have made chat features available to users.

Pictures and Videos - Most SNS allow users to post a profile picture. Many also allow users to post photos and videos to an online "album".

Status Updates - Users post these short sentences to let the people on their friends list know their actions, feelings, and thoughts.

School Officials Meet with Sheriff to Evaluate Security



Highlands County Sheriff's Captain Tim Lethbridge presents school safety information to Highlands County teachers.

Leaders vowed to address what improvements to school safety can be achieved and to coordinate procedures among all schools that will be needed should such an emergency arise. Captain Tim Lethbridge presented a history lesson of sorts on school shootings, outlining emergency response procedures over time up to the current active shooter response plans that are currently in place. Sheriff Benton offered the services of her members to help evaluate each campus to assist in creating such plans. Further, relative to Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED), formal site evaluations were offered; which take into consideration proper design and effective use of the environment to lead to a reduction in crime as well as traditional crime prevention tools such as fencing and locks. Additional meetings will be held as plans progress.

On Wednesday, February 6th, Highlands County Superintendent of Schools Wally Cox, Donna Howerton, a member of the Highlands County School Board, school principals and key staff met with Sheriff Susan Benton and her law enforcement team along with members of the Sebring Police Department to discuss school security issues. Particularly, the Sheriff wanted to discuss the Active Shooter General Order of the Sheriff's Office and what the schools could expect from law enforcement should we get into an active shooter situation. There was thorough discussion among the participants leading to many questions asked and answered.

Superintendent Wally Cox said of the meeting, "I'd like to thank Sheriff Benton for spearheading this collaborative process. It's obvious that the primary concern of the Sheriff's Office is the same as that of the School Board; the safety of our students and staff. We will schedule a meeting with the Sheriff's core staff to plan for individual school site surveys."

Sheriff Benton commented that, "our get together was extremely valuable; everyone was engaged and willing to put in the time necessary to ensure that we are all prepared to protect our kids should we be faced with such a serious event."



HIGHLANDS COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

Susan Benton, Sheriff

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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