

Quarterly Report of the HIGHLANDS COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

INTEGRITY QUALITY SERVICE PROFESSIONALISM

Sheriff Susan Benton



Oct. — Dec. 4th 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.

Highlands County Sheriff's Office Detention Facility Recommended for Re-Accreditation



Jacksonville Sheriff's Office Sergeant Joshua Griffis, Okaloosa County Dept. of Corrections Accreditation Manager Tammy Matthews, FCAC Re-Accreditation Team Leader, and Alachua County Sheriff's Lieutenant Donald West, Sr. conducted the On-Site Assessment at the Highlands County Sheriff's Office Detention Facility in October.

In February, 2011, the Highlands County Sheriff's Office Detention Facility attained accreditation status with the Florida Corrections Accreditation Commission. This status is valid for three years therefore this coming February the status must be renewed. As a part of this re-accreditation process the Detention Facility conducted a mock assessment in September in preparation for the actual, on-site assessment which occurred in October. In both the mock and actual assessments, three assessors reviewed all aspects of the Detention Facility including but not limited to a review of files, interviews with inmates and members, review of general orders, and checking posted signage and safety protocols throughout the facility. We are happy to announce that the assessment went very well and the Highlands County Sheriff's Office Detention Facility has been recommended for re-accreditation. The Commission will meet in Jacksonville during the first week of February 2014 to make the formal re-accreditation presentation to Highlands County.

According to the Florida Accreditation Commission website (www.flaccreditation.org), accreditation is recognized as a means of maintaining the highest standards of professionalism. It is defined as the certification by an independent reviewing authority that an entity has met specific requirements and prescribed standards. Major Booker Johnson, Detention Bureau Commander, was very proud of the work of the Detention members to attain re-accreditation status. He said "It's through the hard work, dedication and professionalism of all of the Highlands County Sheriff's Office Detention Facility members that we were able to gain our re-accreditation. This is the first time we have been through the re-accreditation process and our success in this endeavor is a testament to their work ethic and attention to detail on a daily basis."

Another Successful Operation Medicine Cabinet

On Saturday, October 26, 2013, the Highlands County Sheriff's Office and the Sebring and Lake Placid Police Departments participated in Operation Medicine Cabinet. Sponsored by Drug Free Highlands and the U.S. Department of Justice Drug Enforcement Agency, the event resulted in 1368.7 pounds of unwanted or unused prescription medications being dropped off for safe, lawful disposal.

This total exceeded the 1143.9 pounds of medications that were collected in April of this year by almost 125 pounds. Together the two events allowed for the proper disposal of over 2500 pounds of prescription medication from Highlands County residents.

Sheriff Susan Benton was very pleased with the turnout of these two events. "I want to thank the citizens for their effort in helping address the problem of prescription drug abuse as well as keeping a clean environment by turning in their expired and unused prescription medications during Operation Medicine Cabinet events."



Over 1300 pounds of unused or unwanted prescription medicine is unloaded at the Highlands County Sheriff's Office after the Operation Medicine Cabinet event.



Highlands Sheriff's Office Public Information Officer Inducted into Kenilworth Care Center Hall of Fame



Tony-Luis Rodriguez of the Kenilworth Care Center, Nell Hays and Lisa Rodriguez of All About Aging, LLC,

On November 1, 2013, HCSO Public Information Officer Nell Hays received the surprise of her life, courtesy of the Kenilworth Care Center and some planning by Sheriff Benton. On this night, Sheriff Benton arranged for Nell to present a crime prevention presentation to Kenilworth Care all the while knowing that the staff at Kenilworth was going to honor Nell instead. As requested, Nell came prepared with materials and speech in hand. However once Nell arrived at the care center, she was relieved of her materials and whisked into the activity room where she was greeted with quite a celebration! It turns out she, and three other people, were being inducted into the Kenilworth Care Hall of Fame!

Part of the Signature Health Care network, Kenilworth Care, like other facilities in the network, has a Hall of Fame to honor local personalities who have made significant contributions to their communities. Sheriff Benton, for example, was inducted in 2011 for her service to Highlands County throughout her law enforcement career. In total there are approximately 2000 people in Halls of Fame within the Signature Health Care's 77 facilities in the United States.

Nell was honored for her personal achievements in sports including her recent induction into the Ladies Professional Golf Association's Teaching and Club Professional Hall of Fame as well as for her public service through her duties at the Highlands County Sheriff's Office. Nell was overwhelmed by the presentation and said, "I am humbled to be included into such prestigious company as is demonstrated at the Kenilworth Care Center Hall of Fame. Thank you so much for

SWAT Team Competes in International Roundup



Highlands County Sheriff's Office SWAT team members, left to right, are Sgt. Dave Stewart, Sgt. Mike Delaney, Deputy Wayne Gunn, Deputy Ernie Gelinis, Lt. Jack Bailey, Deputy Mike Brod, Sgt. Kyle Albritton and Detective Chris Gunter.

The Highlands County Sheriff's Office Special Weapons And Tactics (SWAT) team recently competed in the 31st Annual SWAT Round-Up International held at the Orange County Sheriff's Office Gun Range, Orlando. The competition, hosted by the Florida SWAT Association, Orange County Sheriff's Office, Orlando, Maitland and Winter Park Police Departments and the Criminal Justice Institute at Valencia College, included 57 teams from all over the world. International competitors included teams from Hungary, Sweden, Kuwait, the Netherlands, Romania, Hungary, Sarajevo and Estonia, Bayamon City and UNIPOL. Out of state competitors included New Mexico State Police, Boston (MA) Los Angeles (CA) Plano (TX) and Statesboro (GA) Police Departments. The Round Up started 31 years ago as a way for SWAT

teams around the world to train together and share experiences. The competition includes events such as hostage rescue, officer rescue and the obstacle course. In addition to the competition, there is a training and education component to the week-long activities.

The Highlands County team finished a respectable 29th position in the competition. "Our members are regular Deputy Sheriffs first, and train for SWAT as a specialty activity," said SWAT team leader Lieutenant Jack Bailey. "Some of these teams are specifically trained for special tactics and that is their full-time job. Our guys work regular shifts and train additional hours for their SWAT duties. We are extremely proud of our finish in this event and look forward to participating in future round-ups to improve on our training and networking."

For further information on the SWAT Round-Up International, visit www.swatroundup.net.

Highlands County Sheriff's Office *CRIME PREVENTION*



Neighborhood Watch

Congratulations to our newest confirmed Neighborhood Watch, Sebring Lakes! This community is situated off US 27 just north of Josephine Creek on Grand Concourse. Due to its rural nature, residents are challenged with traffic issues especially with four wheelers and off road vehicles. Deputies have responded to increased calls for service and now also make documented watch orders in the area. While the problem is not solved, working together we hope to make the situation manageable for all concerned. The Highlands County Sheriff's Office is thankful for the cooperation of the residents in this community and their efforts to keep their area safe from annoyances! William Rissmiller and Connie Burton are the Captains of Neighborhood Watch and all residents are welcome to join the cause!



The Sebring Lakes Neighborhood Watch members pose by their official Neighborhood Watch sign during their third meeting last September.

Annual Meetings Held



Three Neighborhood Watch groups held their mandatory Annual Meetings in this quarter. Adelaide Shores RV Park in Avon Park led the way, holding their meeting on November 18th. Over 150 people attended the morning coffee and heard great news from PIO Nell Hays regarding their criminal activity during the past year. They were incident free! Thanks to everyone in the park for their vigilance but especially to Donna Capone who leads their efforts. Following close behind, Golf Hammock held their annual meeting the day after, November 19th. This group is coming together nicely under the leadership of Russ Danser and his co-captain John Stewart.

Thanks also to country club owner and operator Jason Laman for his participation in the group. Jason and his family live in the Golf Hammock community and they have been a great addition to this team. Finally, on December 9th, the residents of Tomoka Heights in Lake Placid had Nell speak to their morning coffee and complete their Annual Meeting requirement. They too have been incident free during the last 12 months under the leadership of Al Rowe and George Boucher. *Please remember to call Nell Hays, Crime Prevention Specialist and Public Information Officer for the Highlands County Sheriff's Office, to schedule your annual meeting. She is the only one doing these meetings and her schedule fills up fast! You can reach her at 863-402-7369.*

Speakers for Homeowners Association Meetings

Have you been contacted by a group from outside Highlands County that wants to address your Homeowners Association or public service group? Do you know who these people are? And who pays their expenses to come to Highlands County? It's likely that you don't want your members to be subjected to high pressure sales tactics, but how else are the speakers going to justify their expenses if they don't sell something? Possibly they are funded by sponsors, however especially in the area of crime prevention, it's been common practice for groups from outside the county to address meetings here and then deliver a sales pitch for products. There has also been some history of phone solicitors representing these entities that will lead you to believe you are contracting for a speaker from the Highlands County Sheriff's Office when in actuality you're not doing that at all.

The Highlands County Sheriff's Office can provide speakers on many subjects relating to crime trends and crime prevention strategies. Please feel free to contact Crime Prevention Specialist and Public Information Officer Nell Hays at 863-402-7369 to request a speaker for your group. Nell attends primarily to these requests and crime prevention programs however she can also arrange for other speakers, with specific expertise, from the Sheriff's Office. One call shopping! And we don't sell anything!

If you have been contacted by a group from outside the county and you want to verify their history or check on their presentations, Nell may be able to assist you. Through her law enforcement contacts throughout the state, she has a working knowledge of many vendors who provide speakers around the state and may be able to tell you something about the group you have made arrangements with.



Crime Trends

This quarter has seen more than its share of violent crimes in our normally quiet Highlands County. There have been 5 armed robberies of convenience stores, most in the area of Avon Park. Highlands County Sheriff's Detectives have made an arrest in one of these cases, the robbery of the M&H Convenience Store located on SR 17. Suspects in the other convenience store robberies are still being sought.

In the south end of the county, Detectives recently made an arrest in a shooting incident that occurred on December 16th in the area of the Highway Park neighborhood in Lake Placid. In this case the suspect has been charged with attempted 2nd degree murder and possession of a weapon by a convicted felon. Additionally there was a home invasion in the Sun 'N Lakes South area of Lake Placid where detectives arrested 7 subjects. It is possible these subjects will be tied to other home invasions that have occurred throughout the county. All these cases continue under investigation.

Our detectives are doing an outstanding job working on these cases, but we can always use your assistance! If you have any information on crimes that have occurred in Highlands County, you are encouraged to take advantage of our partner, Heartland Crime Stoppers. You may also be eligible for a cash reward for your information! The number to call is 1-800-226-TIPS (8477). You can text a tip by typing "Text "TIP 196" plus your information to "CRIMES" (274637), leave a tip via email at www.heartlandcrimestoppers.com or simply scan the QR code shown below to access the site. Anonymity is guaranteed!



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

New Member Hires:

Civilians	6
PT Civilian	1
Sworn	0
Applications Received	24
Applications Processed	20
Payroll Transactions Processed	494
Payable Checks Processed	2,318
P-Card Purchases	506
Citizens Fingerprinted	502
Information Services Requests	599

Court Related Services:

Cases In Court	8,721
Inmates Taken to Court	925
Arrests by Bailiffs	118
Persons thru Security Station	39,529

Judicial/Civil Process Services:

Received/Processed	2,221
Served	1,992
Active	229



Basic Internet Safety

The internet has drastically changed the way that children interact with the world. They have access to in-depth knowledge, tools to express their creativity, and people from all over the world. Yet along with offering a fascinating, new way to connect with the world, the internet also offers new risks.

- Cyberbullying
- Exposure to inappropriate material
- Online predators
- Revealing too much personal information

Learning to recognize the warning signs of these risks will allow trusted adults to intervene and lessen potential negative impacts. By acting as a resource, parents and guardians can help make the internet a safer place for their families. As a parent or guardian, you should stay well-informed about current issues to understand what your children are experiencing on and off the internet. If they are social networking, instant messaging, using webcams or blogging, help them use these tools safely by learning how to use them yourself. Children whose parents and guardians regularly talk to them about personal safety are more likely to exhibit responsible behavior on their own. NetSmartz invites you to learn about the issues surrounding your children's online lives. Then use the discussion starters to help you begin a dialogue about safety with your children.

[www.netsmartz.org/Internet Safety](http://www.netsmartz.org/InternetSafety)

QUARTERLY INFORMATION—LAW ENFORCEMENT

Administrative Calls	45,719	Items into Evidence	3,430
911 Calls	11,716	Evidence Items Disposed	2,122
Computer Aided Dispatch	34,161	Crime Scene Lab Cases	183
HCSO (64%)	21,974	Criminal Investigation Unit Cases	168
SPD (15%)	4,978	Investigations Open (Total)	203
LPPD (6%)	1,960	SOU Cases	74
FIRE (5%)	1,717	CST Narcotic Arrests	160
EMS (10%)	3,532	SVU Cases Received from DCF	376
Offense Reports	2,769	SVU Cases Open	38
Traffic Citations Issued	1,016	Business Security Surveys/residential	0
K-9 Searches	93	Neighborhood Watch Presentations	39
Warrant Numbers:		Crime Victims Served	128
Received/Processed	645	Victim Advocate Services	601
Served	538		
Active	3,314		
Number of Arrests By Patrol	693		
Number of DUI's	19		

QUARTERLY INFORMATION—DETENTION

Inmates Booked into Jail	1,058	Average Daily Population	380
Inmates Released from Jail	943	Net Commissary Earnings	\$5,040.95
Instructional Program Hours	1,693	Medical Fees Charged	\$149,302.33
Inmate Transport Miles	33,022	Medical Fees Collected	\$8,254.12
Transports to State Prison	50	Subsistence Fees Charged	\$54,455.12
ICE Picked Up	13	Subsistence Fees Collected	\$17,304.28
Detainer's Placed	22	Inmate Per-Diem Charged	\$19,090.46
CMP Participants	11	Inmate Per-Diem Collected	\$8,339.18
Dollars Saved in Labor	\$5,982.72	Labor Hours by Inmates S/O	40,816
Dollars Collected in Fees	\$480.00	Labor Hours by Inmates -Other	1,653
Inmate Meals Served	105,120	Dollars Saved in Labor	\$330,833.63
Avg Food Cost per Day Per Inmate	1.97		
Alcohol Breath Tests	38		

Highlands County K-9 Team Finishes Well in National Competition October 28, 2013

Highlands County Sheriff's Sergeant Kyle Albritton and his K-9 partner Mico recently participated in the United States Police Canine Association National Field Trials near Washington, D.C. The Charles County (Maryland) Sheriff's Office hosted the trials September 30 – October 4th featuring the top K-9 team in the United States. Eighty teams from across the country competed in agility, obedience, evidence search, box search, apprehension and apprehension under gunfire during the competition.

Sergeant Albritton and Mico finished 15th overall in the event scoring 657 total points. Mico is a 2 ½ year old Belgian Malinois that competed for the first time in the USPCA Region I Field Trials, hosted by the Highlands County Sheriff's Office this past May. The team's finish in that event qualified them to participate in the National competition.

The team of Officer Ted Sealey and his partner Bruno from the Lakeland Police Department won the Top Dog Award in the event scoring 689.83 points out of a possible 700.



K-9 Mico



HIGHLANDS COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

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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**