

ALL POINTS BULLETIN



Volume 10, Number 2, 2000

Monumental changes to the Florida Retirement System are on the way.....

By Sheriff Guy M. Tunnell,
President of FSA

Back on May 2, I wrote a letter to all sheriffs regarding the changes to the Florida Retirement System that were passed by the legislature and that awaited the signature of Governor Bush. Despite all efforts, it remains extremely hard to get this information to all persons that work in sheriff's offices across the entire state. That's not surprising, since it involves 31,000+ persons stretched over the 840 miles from Pensacola to Key West.

A lot of you were originally tracking House Bill 191 and the companion Senate Bill 1026. When Online Sunshine showed that those bills died on the vine, many of you called FSA with a broken heart, mistakenly thinking that it was the end of the line for the retirement bills. Fact is, although those bills did die, retirement issues were actually rolled into Senate Bill 2393 that later passed both houses.

So, here is a recap. If you want to read the entire text of HB 2393, pull it up on the Online Sunshine website. On June 1st, Governor Jeb Bush signed HB 2393 in ceremonies held in West Palm Beach, Tampa and

How does the 3% reinstatement affect me?

This change does not affect you at all if you entered FRS Special Risk Class on or after December 31, 1992.

But, if you were a member of the Special Risk Class before December 31, 1992, each of you will be affected a little differently, depending on which and how many years you were a member of Special Risk Class in the period between 1978 and the end of 1992.

To begin, here are the accrual rates that were in effect in specific years BEFORE THE 3% REINSTATEMENT takes place for individuals that retire on or after July 1, 2000:

- a. Two percent of the member's average final compensation for all creditable years prior to October 1, 1974;
- b. Three percent of the member's average final compensation for all creditable years after September 30, 1974, and before October 1, 1978;
- c. Two percent of the member's average final compensation for all creditable years after September 30, 1978, and before January 1, 1989;
- d. Two and two-tenths percent of the member's final monthly compensation for all creditable years after December 31, 1988, and before January 1, 1990;
- e. Two and four-tenths percent of the member's average final compensation for all creditable years after December 31, 1989, and before January 1, 1991;
- f. Two and six-tenths percent of the member's average final compensation for all

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Panama City. The changes are:

1. For those individuals that were members of the Special Risk Class (law enforcement officers, correctional officers and firefighters) of the FRS during part or all of the period between 1978 and 1992, your pension benefit will be restored to a full 3% benefit for each of the years that you were a qualifying member. Thus, if you happened to be a Special Risk member during all those years, your final pension benefit upon retirement will increase by a little over 12%. However, those Special Risk members who are already retired, or those

who are in the DROP Program are not eligible for this increased benefit at this time. FSA plans to lobby the legislature during the 2001 session to extend this same benefit, retroactively, to members of DROP and other retirees. **(CAUTION:** For those of you who are imminently planning to file for retirement or those who are planning entry into the DROP Program in the near future, I would urge you to wait until final word is published as to the effective date of this change. Assuming that you worked during the affected

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period, anyone that retires or enters the DROP Program before July 1, 2000 will lose this added benefit. Please consult with FRS before filing for retirement or DROP.)

2. The vesting period for all FRS members (sworn and civilian) will be six (6) years instead of the current ten (10) years, effective July 1, 2001. So, individuals with less than ten years but more than six years in FRS that are thinking about retiring should consult with FRS before filing for retirement. Also, individuals that have left FRS after working six or more years but less than ten years will not become vested unless they re-join FRS and work for an additional one-year period. After working that additional year, they will earn their total time in FRS and become vested.

3. FRS disability retirement has changed and will earn you 65% of average final compensation per year, instead of the current 42% of average final compensation. Effective date of this provision is July 1, 2000.

4. Beginning in the year 2002, any member of FRS will be allowed to switch over from the defined benefit plan that is currently in effect, to a "defined contribution" system. You will be able to learn more about this option in the next 12-18 months as FRS plans to use that period of time to educate FRS members on the inner workings, and pros and cons of defined benefit vs. defined contribution.

According to state budget experts, reinstating the 3% for the lost years alone will cost somewhere between \$600 and \$800 million.

There have been times when there has been full-scale political warfare here in Tallahassee over a "mere" one million-dollar allocation. So, please know that successfully lobbying for over a half-billion dollars is nothing less than a **monumental milestone** in the history of lobbying the Florida legislature.

Continued from page 1

- creditable years after December 31, 1990, and before January 1, 1992;
- g. Two and eight-tenths percent of the member's average final compensation for all creditable years after December 31, 1991, and before January 1, 1993
- h. Three percent of the member's average final compensation for all creditable years accrued after December 31, 1992.

The legislation that goes into effect July 1, 2000 raises the accrual rate for all the years from September 30, 1978 through January 1, 1993 when it was anything less than 3% per year, to a full 3%. Conceivably then, if you were a member of Special Risk Class for that entire period, your final monthly retirement benefit will be more than 12% more than what it would have been, had this law not passed.

(Disclaimer: The information provided herein is provided as a courtesy for general calculation purposes only. The staff of APB does not claim to be experts in the field of retirement planning. We urge you to contact a professional retirement planner and/or FRS to make an official determination about your personal situation and how changes in the law may affect you.)

Just three weeks before the end of session, after meetings with the Governor and House leadership, the 3% issue was all but dead. My point is that restoration of the 3% did not just happen by itself.

We thank all of you that came to Tallahassee, made phone calls, or wrote letters to assist us. However, special thanks belongs to FSA leadership, with specific thanks to the legislative committee and their staffers that worked tirelessly to bring us to where we find ourselves today.

Thanks also to the Florida Police Benevolent Association, the Florida Fraternal Order of Police and the Professional Firefighters of Florida, all of whom joined forces with us and our lobbyists to assist in the passage of this bill. This effort provided proof positive that when it's in everybody's best interests and for a common cause, we can work in harmony on bills that are of interest to all of us.

There is a risk that comes with naming specific individuals to thank, because no matter how many you list, there will always wind up to be somebody that deserves note that inadvertently gets left off the list.

But, there is a group of people that devoted the better part March and April trying to make this all happen. I express my personal thanks to Sheriff Jeff Dawsy, Sheriff Kevin Beary, Sher-

iff Phil Williams and Sheriff Lee Cannon for the leadership they have shown as hands-on members of the legislative committee. Thanks also to Mr. Joe Saviak of Orange County S.O. and Mr. Scott Wilder of Polk County S.O., both of whom were in Tallahassee for the entire legislative session.

A special word of thanks also belongs to Buddy Phillips, the executive director of FSA, along with Tom Berlinger and Carol Bishop of FSA staff. Each of them devoted every day (and sometimes nights and weekends) for the last two months to our legislative causes.

And, a heartfelt "Thank You" to Mr. Frank Messersmith, FSA's Lobbyist. Frank's guiding hand, insight into the legislative process and personalities of the legislators, and the many friends he has in the legislature and in all of state government have afforded us an "open door" virtually every where we went during legislative session. His ability to gain "access" where we had little or none before is unmatched.

In prior years, FSA has enjoyed success in crime-fighting bills of all sorts with things like 10-20-LIFE, and the 85% of sentence rule for violent offenders. But, if all of us live to be a hundred years old, we will never be able to surpass what we've accomplished for YOU, our agency members, during this legislative session!

EDITOR'S CORNER

By Tom Berlinger



May is the month that law enforcement agencies across America renew their memory of the men and women that once wore the uniform, but died while in service to their community.

According to statistics compiled by the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial, Florida ranks #7 of the 50 states in the number of officers killed in the line of duty since 1900. According to their records, Florida lost a total of 528 officers in the line of duty during that period. California is #1 with an unbelievable total of 1,216 fallen officers since 1900.

As representatives of FSA, our executive director and I always attend the annual memorial service hosted by FOP in the Capitol courtyard in Tallahassee.

If you've never been in attendance, you need to come at least once. From a religious aspect, the service is non-denominational. And from a political aspect, it doesn't matter for whom the decedents worked, whether it was a sheriff's office, a police department, one of the state law enforcement agen-

cies or the Department of Corrections.

The event is always well-attended by folks from all corners of the state, and this year, the honored guests included Governor Bush, Lt. Governor Brogan, General Milligan, Attorney General Butterworth and a hoard of other state officials.

This year, Gulf County Sheriff Frank McKeithen also invited me to be a guest at their memorial ceremony for fallen officers. Despite the fact that Gulf County has a relative few deputies and has not lost any of them in recent memory, their service was well-attended. It was a real testimony to the respect that this close-knit community has for their local law enforcement officers.

In calendar year 1999, there were a total of seven officers killed in the line of duty in Florida (preliminary reports indicate that there were a total of 134 killed in the United States in 1999, with 47 of them being felonious murders and 87 being accidental deaths). You will see from the list below that six of the seven that were killed worked for a sheriff's office, including one from Miami-Dade Police Department which is the "sheriff's office" in everything but name in Miami-Dade County. The seventh was a police officer in Jasper, a community located not far from where I-75 crosses the Florida/Georgia line.

If there is a silver lining in this black cloud it would be that there were no law enforcement officers feloniously murdered in Florida last year. In all seven cases, the death of these men occurred in motor vehicle crashes of some sort.

That fact alone may speak volumes about where more of our training needs to be focused in the years to come.

See poem on page 5

Florida LEO's Killed in the Line of Duty in 1999

Steven W. Roberts
St. Lucie County S.O.
March 3, 1999

Rudy Dimas
Collier County S.O.
May 24, 1999

Don C. Johnson, Jr.
Bay County S.O.
July 11, 1999

Steven M. Agner
Madison County S.O.
July 26, 1999

Calvin J. Powell
Jasper P.D.
Sept. 25, 1999

Roberto Calderon
Miami-Dade P.D.
December 7, 1999

Michael C. Doane
Broward County S.O.
December 24, 1999

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LAKE CO. SHERIFF NOW BUILDING ROADS

*(Excerpted from
The Orlando Sentinel
May 6, 2000)*

The sheriff's office soon will be making inroads in Lake County – literally.

Saying deputies and other emergency workers can't reach some areas of the county because of poor road conditions, Sheriff George E. Knupp recently bought a road grader so his department can make its own road repairs.

It's a job traditionally done by the county Public Works Department, but Knupp said the county has failed in its duty to ensure proper access to all residents, leaving him no choice but to have his department pick up the slack.

"This isn't a sheriff's function. The county should be doing this but they aren't and there are homes out there that we can't get to," Knupp said. "People are paying taxes for police and fire service but they can't get it because we can't get to them. It's a safety issue so it has become our function. In fact a house burned to the ground last year because fire trucks couldn't reach it."

Knupp said he asked the County Commission several times to repair problem roads. The county declined, saying it can't maintain all roads, especially the soft sand roads that Knupp will target in the county's northeast fringes "We just don't have the funds," Public Works Director Jim Stivender said. "We have 200 miles of clay roads and 1,000 miles of paved roads to maintain. We're spread too thin with existing roads to maintain dirt roads, too."

Knupp paid \$18,000 for the 20-ton grader last month. A new grader of comparable size and capability costs more than \$100,000, Stivender said. The sheriff's office plans to spend another \$6,000 on mechanical repairs, paint and to add an air conditioner to the cab.

Knupp said he bought the grader from



Sheriff Knupp

a military surplus sale with money from drug seizures. The 25-year-old grader is in good condition with 1,900 operational hours on it, Knupp said. Typically, graders can operate up to 10,000 hours.

Stivender agreed that the roads aren't accessible without a 4-wheel drive vehicle.

"It's like driving on the fluffy part of a beach. There's no structure to the roads up there," he said.

Most of the roads in question were part of old subdivisions that were dedicated to the public decades ago but were never brought into the county's maintenance system.

In the past few years, more and more homes have been built and more and more residents have complained, Stivender said. But few have been willing to join a county program that would pave the road. Property owners are reluctant to take part in the program because of the cost, which can reach \$1 million. The county currently is paving a subdivision near Lake Mack for \$700,000 under the program.

Knupp said he will cut down the cost by asking property owners to pay for the clay, the least expensive part of the grading process.

Regular operation and maintenance costs should be low, Knupp said. Upkeep, storage and diesel fuel is estimated at a couple thousand dollars a year.

Knupp plans to hire someone to run the grader in the next few months, but a deputy who is licensed to run heavy machinery will fill the spot until then. Inmates will be assigned to road crews to assist.

Sheriff's Major Claude Gnann admits road repair is an unusual task for his office to take on, but he said it is a safety issue.

"Communities want government employees and departments to provide services and it doesn't matter which department it comes from as long as it's provided," Gnann said. "The sheriff has a constitutional responsibility to ensure citizen's safety."

"Normally, the sheriff's office wouldn't provide lights and generators to residents during a hurricane, but we do because we have the equipment and we're always here," Knupp said. "It's all about the safety of the community and if the sheriff's office is the only department in the county that is willing and able to do it then we will."

THANKS FROM SHERIFF VOGEL



Sheriff Vogel

DAYTONA BEACH —

*During the weekend of
March 31 – April 2,
more than 100,000*

youths visited the Daytona Beach area for the Black College Reunion 2000 event. Words cannot possibly express our gratitude for the personnel and equipment sent by various sheriffs' offices throughout Florida. Without their assistance, our local resources would have been overwhelmed and we could not have adequately handled the event or the crowd that attended.

This year, 27 sheriffs' offices sent 123 deputies to help with staffing. Although the hours were long and the working conditions less than ideal, these deputies displayed the dedication necessary to ensure the successful conclusion of this event. With the bulk of the event jammed into a seven-block area and temperatures in the high 80's, these deputies worked tirelessly and never complained. I am truly grateful for their commitment.

The Florida Sheriffs Statewide Task Force has established the unique ability to collectively bring together each of the 67 sheriff's offices to face insurmountable challenges affecting one county. Without the cooperation of the other agencies, Black College Reunion would be one of those insurmountable challenges.

Please accept my sincere appreciation for your efforts in responding to our need. As always, the Volusia County Sheriff's Office stands ready to assist whenever or wherever the need arises. Please do not hesitate to call whenever we can be of service.

Sincerely,

Sheriff Robert L. Vogel, Jr.

“ THE FINAL INSPECTION ”

*The policeman stood and faced his God,
Which must always come to pass.
He hoped his shoes were shining,
Just as brightly as his brass.*

*“Step forward now, policeman.
How shall I deal with you?
Have you always turned the other cheek?
To My church have you been true?”*

*The policeman squared his shoulders
and said,
“No, Lord, I guess I ain’t,
Because those of us who carry badges
Can’t always be a saint.*

*I’ve had to work most Sundays,
And at times my talk was rough,
And sometimes I’ve been violent,
Because the streets are awfully tough.*

*But I never took a penny,
That wasn’t mine to keep.....
Though I worked a lot of overtime
When the bills got just too steep.*

*And I never passed a cry for help,
Though at times I shook with fear.
And sometimes, God forgive me,
I’ve wept unmanly tears.*

*I know I don’t deserve a place
Among the people here.
They never wanted me around
Except to calm their fear.*

*If you’ve a place for me here, Lord,
It needn’t be so grand.
I never expected or had too much,
But if you don’t, I’ll understand.”*

*There was silence all around the throne
Where the saints had often trod.
As the policeman waited quietly,
For the judgment of his God.*

*“Step forward now, policeman,
You’ve borne your burdens well.
Come walk a beat on Heaven’s streets,
You’ve done your time in hell.”*

Author Unknown



TAMPA – Governor Jeb Bush (L) proudly joins former Hillsborough County Sheriffs Malcolm Beard (1965-78), Walter C. Heinrich (1978-92) and current Sheriff Cal Henderson (1992-present) at a recent memorial service for fallen law enforcement officers.

National Police Week

is celebrated in May of each year to honor law enforcement officers across America, particularly those that have made the ultimate sacrifice.

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Hospitals, Law Enforcement Team Up to Save Lives

By Jim Kindrig, Director of Corporate Security Health First/Holmes Regional Medical Center In Melbourne, FL and Sgt. Wayne Butler, Supervisor Court Security Services Brevard County Sheriff's Office

Recent statistics from the American Heart Association point out that law enforcement officers who can apply life saving techniques in the field increase the survival rate of critically injured people – especially those in cardiac distress. Such intervention helps support local hospitals and their missions by removing some of the burden on emergency room personnel. As medical technology continues to advance, the Automated External Defibrillator (AED) has become the miracle tool for first responders treating cardiac emergencies.

Statistics show that three people have died of cardiac arrest in Brevard County courthouses in as many years. At the same time, a local sales representative for AED's said that approximately 1,400 lives have been saved nationwide in the past five years using AED type devices.

By their very nature, judicial proceedings are stressful in several ways, especially for individuals in poor health. As a result, a higher-than-normal number of individuals may suffer heart problems. Unfortunately, even immediate CPR, while summoning emergency service personnel is not an adequate or timely solution. Although the use of AED's is not new to law enforcement, collaborating with local community hospitals for financial support along with a medical director liaison is new.

With a solution in mind, the sheriff's

office approached Health First/Holmes Regional Medical Center and began a dialogue. When an attorney experienced a heart attack, court deputies began CPR immediately and summoned emergency medical services. Still, the attorney died, demonstrating once again the need for a quicker, more adequate solution.

Soon thereafter, Health First approved the sheriff's office request for funds, a request that also included matching funds from other area hospitals. Approximately four weeks after the AED's were deployed in local courthouses, a juror experienced a heart attack during jury selection. While summoning emergency service personnel, court deputies were also able to use an AED immediately. As a result, the juror survived. Judges, attorneys, and the local press took notice.

The AED project has been so successful in Brevard County that other sheriff's offices throughout the state have begun discussions with their local hospitals.

"In an era where fiscal limitations are ever present in public agencies," Butler said, "finding common goals among private and public service agencies can put resources in the right hands to make a difference. This has been a win-win program."

For further info contact:

*Sgt. Wayne Butler
at (407) 617-7252*

Ethics Instructor Certification offered

The National Institute of Ethics is offering a 5-day course to certify instructors on the topic of Ethics. Once certified, instructors will be certified to offer up to 16 hours of ethics instruction within their own agency. FSA has used their instructors and found that they do a wonderful job of presenting a very difficult subject with ease. The course is to be held in Cocoa, FL on June 26-30, 2000. For further information, call the National Institute of Ethics toll-free at 1-800-273-2559. You may also check out their website at: www.ethicsinstitute.com

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MADD honors officers, legislators and prosecutors involved in stopping DUI offenders

by Julie Bettinger

During an awards ceremony at the state Capitol in March, Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD) Florida honored officers who have made over 100 DUI (Driving Under the Influence) arrests. A candlelight vigil to honor all of those killed by drunken drivers followed the presentation.

Drinking and driving continues to be a problem in Florida. In 1998 alone, there were over 22,000 alcohol-related crashes, in which 862 people lost their lives.

MADD credited officers involved in the arrests with helping to spare lives by keeping impaired drivers off the streets.

Mothers Against Drunk Driving is a non-profit organization that specializes in helping victims of drunk driving crashes and their families. The group also introduces legislation to help keep impaired drivers off the streets and away from their vehicles.

In addition to the Florida Highway Patrol and Municipal Police Department officers, the following Sheriffs' Office deputies and officers were recognized for 100 or more arrests:

Brevard County:

Deputy Robert Wagner
Deputy Susanne Ravn
Deputy Pat Deen
Deputy Linda Murray
Deputy Rodney Crawford

Broward County

Deputy James Herbert
Deputy Charles Grady
Deputy Garry Martin
Deputy Terence Hanstein
Deputy Scott Bures
Deputy Ignacio Vila
Deputy Samuel Sirico
Deputy Dennis Dempsey

Collier County

Corporal Darrel Kehne
Sgt. Chanyng Cunningham
Corporal Sam Ivey

Escambia County

Deputy Harold Pool

Hillsborough County

Deputy William Hill
Deputy Greg Williams
Deputy Don Sarginson
Deputy Brian Brown
Deputy Richard Roebuck
Deputy Jackie Brock
Deputy Dale Hyder

Jacksonville

Officer Keith O. Barron
Officer Gary W. Ellis
Officer Clarence E. Jarrell
Officer Hermandes J. Muse
Officer Robert D. Williamson
Officer Wayne J. Woolery
Officer D.B. Edmonds
Officer B.W. Thomas
Officer M.E. Garza
Officer B.C. VanNelson
Officer D.R. Hamlin
Officer S.H. Mullen
Officer J.P. Morgan
Officer B. Selzer
Officer J.D. Ricks.

Marion County

Deputy Bill Schneider
Deputy George Primm
Deputy Karl Nelson
Deputy Rick Parks
Deputy Ryan Grimsdale

Miami-Dade

Officer J. Davenport
Officer W. Milian
Officer R. Closius
Officer E. Gonzalez
Officer P. Terry

Orange County

Deputy Beth Marlow

Palm Beach County

Deputy Gregory Croucher
Deputy Larry Wood
Deputy Troy Snelgrove

Pasco County

Deputy Ben Barrington
Deputy George Winton
Deputy Steve Sickles
Deputy Matt Denney

Pinellas County

Deputy Robert Haimes
Deputy Howard Skaggs
Deputy Adrian Arnold
Deputy Michael Anthony
Deputy James Vickers

Sarasota County

Deputy Charles Stellwagen
Deputy Christopher Butler
Deputy William Miller
Deputy Bryan Ivings

Seminole County

Deputy Mark DiBona
Deputy William Morris, Jr.
Deputy David Kohn

St. Lucie County

Deputy Richard Ziarkowski
Deputy Bill Hardman

DEPUTIES' MEDICAL DETAILS ON TAPE

When a Hernando County sheriff's deputy was seriously injured last year in a car accident, emergency medical workers were unable to talk to him and get important medical information.

Deputy James Stegner eventually recovered from the head injuries and broken bones he received from the accident, but the incident highlighted a void, Hernando County Sheriff Tom Mylander said.



Sheriff Mylander

Mylander hopes to address this void by requiring all certified sheriff's office personnel to wear medical

modules – tiny recording devices that carry emergency medical information, such as blood type — on their uniform belts.

"We can have the best cars, the best guns, but what matters most are our people," Mylander said. "Hopefully, we won't have to use these (devices), but if we do, it will be a benefit."

The sheriff's office has brought more than 200 of these modules, which cost about \$43 apiece. Mylander said officials were able to pay for the units with money from his budget.

The modules are about the size of a police badge and open like a wallet. Inside is a mini-recorder that can tape a 20-second message. The message, which can be recorded over indefinitely, will contain information such as a deputy's name, age, blood type, medical conditions, allergies to medications and physician's name.

Mylander said he believes that Hernando is the first county in Florida to use such devices, which he said are needed given the dangerous nature of police work.

"Certainly with the job we do and the miles we drive, we're at risk,"

Mylander said. He added that he thinks the modules are superior to the emergency cards many officers carry because they are less-easily lost, damaged or forgotten. For example, Mylander said several years ago a deputy was shot and the bullet went through his emergency papers.

Brooksville police Chief Ed Tincer, who equated the devices to high-tech dog tags, said he will be looking at how useful they are to the sheriff's office. He said he might consider letting his officers carry such modules as well.

*Courtesy of the St. Petersburg Times
– March 24, 2000*

Value of gun buy-backs questioned

Gun buy-back programs may get a large number of weapons out of circulation but they may not have much of an impact on street crime, according to firearms policy experts. In short, *USA TODAY* reports that gun buy-backs don't stop criminals from using guns.

Several months ago, at the same time that President Clinton was announcing funding for a \$15 million national program to buy back 300,000 weapons, the consensus among firearm policy experts is that buy-back programs reduce accidents and suicides at home, but don't seem to have the effect on street crime that the American public hopes they will.

Jon S. Vernick, associate director of the Johns Hopkins Center for Gun Policy and Research, is among those questioning the value of these programs. He told *USA TODAY* that gun buy back programs do "reduce the household-level risk factors from gun death or domestic violence, suicides or accidental deaths." However, they are not very likely to be effective in reducing community rates of

violent crimes.

While the effectiveness of these programs has not been studied nationally, researchers have examined several local programs and reached similar conclusions. Vernick helped study a program in Sacramento that found that most of the people turning in guns were middle-aged, and that many were women – hardly the demographics of your typical armed criminal. Moreover, a quarter of the guns didn't work and many were not the kind of weapons that are normally used in violent crimes.

Another study funded by the CDC and published as far back as 1994 reported that two-thirds of those who turned in guns in a Seattle buy back program still owned other guns. Some even said that they would use the money they would receive for their turned-in gun to buy another better one.

More significantly, the CDC study found that the buy back didn't affect the rates of firearm injuries, deaths or crimes. The researchers surmised that the 1,700 guns turned in amounted to just 1% of the guns in Seattle homes. They concluded that, "even under the unlikely assumption that guns turned in during buy back programs are as likely to be used in a crime as the guns not exchanged, the effect of removing 1% of guns from the community on the rates of firearm crime is negligible."

(Courtesy of Crime Control Digest)

BLACKOUT?

When police in Roseville, Michigan went to the home of Suzanne Myers armed with an arrest warrant, she was at a loss. She didn't remember being cited for alcohol possession some 14 years before. "I've been wracking my brain, but I sure don't remember this," she said. "A warrant is a warrant," shrugged a police spokesman. "Who could have known that this happened when she was 16 years old?"

Police web sites provide all sorts of help

The Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA) within the US Department of Justice has launched a new website: www.ojp.usdoj.gov/BJA that makes the justice information and assistance that you need even easier to access.

BJA's mission is to strengthen the nation's criminal justice system by helping state and local government to combat violent crime and drug abuse. BJA accomplishes this task by providing funding, evaluation, training and technical assistance, and information to state and community criminal justice programs. Their web site showcases a comprehensive overview of these services.

The BJA web site features data-specific resources to help you locate the information that you need, when you need it. Visit their new Virtual Information Center (VIC) and see how easy it is to search their database. A comprehensive listing of publications, grant awards, training and technical assistance, evaluations and related links are as close as your keyboard.

They are also introducing their new online Law Enforcement Training Database that provides a complete and easily accessible listing of training programs available to state and local law enforcement agencies nationwide.

Check out their site, and be sure to add it to your "Bookmarks" of sites that you can find when you need it!

And in related WWW news...

There is a specialty website for police firearm instructors. The International Association of Law Enforcement Firearms Instructors has a website www.ialefi.com that has all sorts of information about their association, a schedule of regional and



national training conferences, and more.

And, another web site focuses on law enforcement trainers. The International Association of Law Enforcement Trainers (ASLET) has established a site www.aslet.com that contains information about their association.

Train on dealing with mentally retarded persons

We are finding that many local law enforcement officials are not aware of the fact that there is professional training available to local law enforcement officers on recognizing and dealing with mentally retarded persons.

In 1997, the Florida Legislature recognized the need for a training institute that would assist community members in the inclusion of persons with developmental disabilities in our communities. Since that time, several areas of need have been identified. One of these areas, law enforcement, has been the focus of the Leo Plotkin Training Institute for the past year.

The Leo Plotkin Training Institute offers training to local and statewide law enforcement agencies. The institute has worked to develop a curriculum that is relevant to the needs of local law enforcement officers. A two-hour course provides officers with the

basic tools to recognize someone who may be mentally retarded and assist them in determining whether or not they understand their rights. The Association for Retarded Citizens of Florida, is the Institute's parent organization, and the ARC provides a statewide network of resources that are available when an officer needs information.

If your agency is interested in training for their officers, please contact the Association for Retarded Citizens of Florida at 850-921-0460, and ask for Deborah Linton.

Strange News....

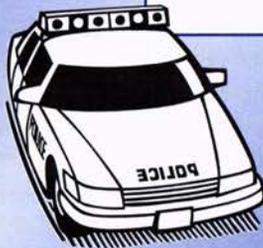
Lexington, NC – Suspicious police officers in this town pulled over Jose Guadalupe Pedro-Cruz, 33, after he picked up a package from the local post office. Cops asked if they could search his car and he said "sure." They looked in the package, arrested Cruz, and announced the "largest amphetamine bust" in local history. Cruz was held for 2 weeks while more tests were done. That's when they discovered that the "flour-looking" substance they seized was, in fact, flour, and that the "waxy-looking blocks" were Mexican candy made from squash. Pedro Cruz was released. Capt. Mike Brown said that field tests are "not 100% reliable," but added that "we have done everything in good faith."

Washington, DC – A study by the IRS finds that members of Congress and their staffs are \$10.5 million in arrears on their income taxes. As of the first of the fiscal year, 8.4% of the House of Representatives employees were late on paying taxes, and 7.5% of the Senate's. The IRS didn't just single out Congress. They also noted that 8.2% of the FBI staff was also late.



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BSO Crime Lab Recognized as One of the Nation's Best

By Kirk Englehardt

Months of hard work and dedication have paid off for the Broward Sheriff's Office Crime Lab in Ft. Lauderdale. The facility and its staff have achieved national accreditation from the American Society of Crime Lab Directors Laboratory Accreditation Board (ASCLD/LAB). This is the first time the lab has tried to achieve this national honor, successfully complying with 124 stringent standards. This latest mark of distinction makes the BSO, led by Sheriff Ken Jenne, the largest fully-accredited sheriff's office in the United States.

The accreditation process began in early 1999 and was officially attained on February 19, 2000, placing BSO's lab among the best in the nation. Hundreds of hours were spent reviewing policies and procedures, while maintaining a heavy caseload. An ASCLD/LAB site-visit team closely examined the lab in late October of 1999.

Accreditation is granted for a period of five years provided that a laboratory continues to meet the high standards set by ASCLD/LAB. Each year BSO will be required to submit an extensive self-evaluation to show the lab continues to meet the standards.

The BSO Crime Lab provides services



Sheriff Jenne

to federal, state, and local law enforcement agencies serving Broward County. The services include: DNA testing, ballistics and firearms examination, fingerprint analysis, controlled substance and trace evidence assessment and tool mark identification. The 18,000 square foot lab also contains a complete crime scene unit that processes an average of 900 crime scenes each year.

On November 20, 1999, BSO's Department of Law Enforcement was granted a three-year accreditation from the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies after

meeting or exceeding 439 standards. The American Corrections Association re-accredited BSO's Department of Detention for the first time in January of 1999. The National Commission on Correctional Healthcare granted accreditation to BSO in 1999, and the agency's Bureau of Finance and Budget also received its fourth consecutive award of financial reporting achievement from the Government Finance Officer's Association.

For more information please contact Kirk Englehardt in the BSO Public Information Office at 954-831-8300.

"Rocket Docket" clears juvenile cases in Tampa with record speed



Patterned after similar programs in other jurisdictions, a cooperative effort in Tampa that involves prosecutors, police, public defenders, juvenile court officials and judges is working to clear a massive backlog of juvenile cases, reports the *Tampa Tribune*.

By creating the "rocket docket" to accelerate minor cases involving first-time offenders, the program has enabled some judges to dispose of as many cases in a single day as others do in a week.

The bulk of the cases assigned to the program are misdemeanors and third-degree felonies, many of which have lan-

guished for up to two years. "Those minor cases are the ones that cause the backlog," said Chief Judge Dennis Alvarez, who devotes one day a week to the rocket docket.

In the first four weeks of the program, Alvarez disposed of more than 125 cases through guilty pleas, dismissals for lack of prosecution and non-jury trials.

Cases for the program are selected by the states' attorney and public defender working in harmony for the good of the system. Among the criteria they seek for are the less-complicated cases involving first-offenders.

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