

FLORIDA SHERIFFS All POINTS BULLETIN



VOLUME 14, NUMBER 3, 2004

FSA Names 2003 Deputy and Corrections Winners



Deputy Christine Thomason

Manatee's Christine Thomason Wins Deputy Sheriff of the Year

With her firearm drawn, Manatee County Sheriff's Deputy Christine Thomason peered into the patio door. It was every law enforcement officer's worst nightmare...A 13-year-old boy, eyes wide with terror, was staring at his father, who was sitting on a bed with a gun in his hand.

Thomason could hear the man crying and telling the child, "I am sorry for what I did," or "am going to do." She believed the father was about to kill his own son.

As she moved quietly inside the door, the boy looked in her direction.

Deputy Thomason's 12 years in law enforcement training and four years of military police experience would dictate her next move...and it's one that no officer would ever want to chance.

Prelude to a shooting

On September 1, 2003, at approximately 7 p.m., K-9 Deputy Thomason was called away from one domestic disturbance to respond to what was reported as a violent domestic disturbance involving a firearm in a middle class neighborhood home.

A female had called 9-1-1. Most of the woman's words were unintelligible. Communications had heard her screaming, pleading, "Don't! Please...I love you...don't!"

A male voice could be heard in the background telling the woman not to call or use the telephone. He was yelling over and over, "Don't make me do this!" Communications recordings indicate scuffling sounds, muffled cries and continued pleading between the man and woman.

It was clear that the woman was begging the man not to shoot her and that the violence was escalating. She was able to confirm that he had a gun. As deputies arrived at the residence, dispatchers told them that a shot may have been fired.

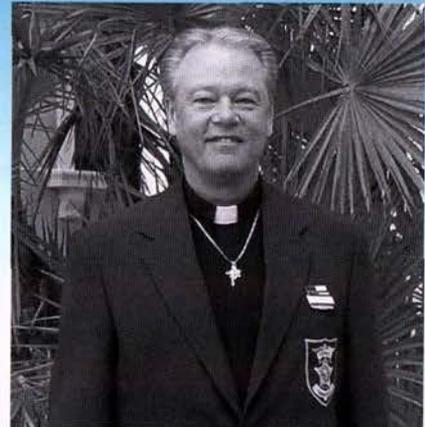
When Deputy Thomason arrived, she noted deputies positioned at the front of the house and at the side. So she went to the back of the residence. Walking across a darkened patio and pool area, she came to double French doors.

Because they were tinted, she could not see in, but she could hear talking.

Facing the danger

Deputy Thomason bravely placed her face against the darkened glass...and that's when she saw the boy backed

Continued on page 2



Skip Ritter, Sarasota Jail Chaplain

Sarasota's Jail Chaplain "Skip" Ritter Wins Corrections Officer of the Year

Past winners of the Correctional Officer of the Year have been heralded for saving the lives of inmates or fellow staff members, for saving their agency substantial amounts of money through cost-effective programs and for an overall lifetime of exemplary service.

This year, the awards committee saw something very special in the life, activities and accomplishments of one of those seemingly "invisible" employees that most jails have on their staffs, but few hear about – the jail chaplain of Sarasota County.

"Skip" Ritter has been a Corrections Chaplain since 1998 and became the Senior Chaplain and Program Director of the Sarasota County Jail in 2000. He manages six employees and oversees more than 28 programs and services in the jail.

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Thomason Wins Deputy Sheriff of the Year

against the far wall of a bedroom. She opened the door and entered.

After moving to the bedroom door, the boy's eyes met hers.

Holding out her arms, Deputy Thomason yelled, "Run to me!" He sprinted toward her. She grabbed him, as he cleared the doorway and guided him to safety. Simultaneously, she kept her weapon fixed on the gunman, identifying herself as a Sheriff's Deputy and ordering him to drop his gun.

The startled man did not change his position, but started yelling profanities. Then, turning his face towards her, he pointed the gun over his left shoulder and fired one shot at Deputy Thomason. The bullet missed her head by inches and she fired back – one shot – to stop the threat of imminent danger.

The man fell back on the bed, still holding the gun.

Deputy Thomason continued giving orders for him to drop the gun, but he slumped off the bed and fell the floor, crawling toward a doorway leading to a hall. She could hear other deputies, who had entered through the kitchen, and were coming toward the man.

She quickly noted the gun, which remained on the bed. But she let her fellow officers know that it wasn't clear if he had other weapons.

The man kept crawling and using profanities, yelling, "finish me off."

A deputy was able to get to the man safely, and they awaited rescue personnel. He later died, despite efforts to save him.

Remnants of the night

Walking through the residence, Deputy Thomason could see evidence of the events that had occurred prior to her arrival. The man's wife, also the boy's mother,

was lying dead in the kitchen. She had a gunshot wound to the back of the head.

Deputy Thomason later learned that the boy had tried to intervene in the violence between his parents and had struggled to take the gun away from his dad. The boy saw his father murder his mother and then stood in the bedroom while his father decided whether or not to kill himself – or possibly his son and then himself.

While the boy lost both parents that day, he is alive and well because this deputy reacted immediately and appropriately, risking all to save him.

A U.S. Air Force Sergeant, and 12-year law-enforcement veteran, Deputy Thomason was well trained to respond to the violence. However, she says late at night, she can still see the face of a boy, terrified by the violence of a father he loved.

Deputy Thomason's heroic efforts to save the boy and her selfless courage in standing strong in the face of danger are exemplary of law enforcement professionalism and bravery. For this reason, the Florida Sheriffs Association chose her as the 2003 Deputy Sheriff of the Year.

In acknowledgement of this heroic act, Deputy Thomason received a handsome plaque and a check for \$1,000 at the FSA Summer conference in Hollywood, Florida.

Two Finalists Also Named

The Florida Sheriffs Association would also like to recognize two other Deputies who were named by the awards committee as finalists. Lee County Sheriff's Office **Corporal Frank Glover** is being recognized for his hand-

to-hand combat with a man who had exhibited bizarre behavior, resisted arrest and led deputies on a car chase. The suspect punched, kicked and stabbed Glover's K-9 partner, Alko, killing him. Glover himself received multiple stab wounds.

Brevard County Sheriff's **Deputy Brett Moore** is being commended for saving another deputy's life, following a confrontation with a suicidal man. After a hands-on struggle, trying to wrestle a weapon away from the man, Field Training Officer Mitch Boshnack was injured. The suicidal man, who was also injured, recovered the gun and held it to Boshnack's head. Deputy Moore fired in defense of himself and Boshnack. The man later died at the hospital. ☺

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Support Florida Sheriffs
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By: Julie S. Bettinger



I was recently reviewing some brochures that highlighted law-enforcement educational degrees and certificates. The pamphlets will be used to guide high school students who might consider a career in law enforcement. Some also targeted current officers looking to advance their current position – such as moving into a specialty like crime scene investigation or corrections.

The statistics were what captured my attention. For instance, did you know that entry-level pay can vary from \$20,000 to \$40,000 annually depending on the size of the agency and whether it's local, state or federal government?

Quoting a national source, the brochure indicated that Police and Sheriff's patrol officers had median annual earnings of \$42,270 in 2002. The median annual salary of correctional officers and jailers was \$32,670.

Of course, those are just "reported" salaries. As we know, with off-duty assignments and overtime, total earnings frequently exceed salary figures.

According to the brochures, there seemed to be good news in the area of benefits, too. In a relative sense, that is.

If you have never worked for a small business or in a non-government position, you probably aren't aware that paid vacation, sick leave, clothing (uniform) allowance and medical and life insurance are not the norm, as they are in law-enforcement jobs.

These are perks that shouldn't be overlooked. And let's not forget the pension plans...especially with Florida's DROP system. The brochure stated that many law enforcement personnel retire at 50 to 75 percent of

pay after 20 or 25 years of service – although with DROP, those figures are probably considerably higher.

Opportunities increasing

The job outlook is relatively rosy, according to the brochures. They state, "Employment of police and detectives is expected to grow faster than the average for all occupations in the coming years. A more security-conscious society and concern about drug-related crimes should contribute to the increasing demand for police services. Job opportunities for correctional officers are expected to be excellent." By the way, the source cited for employment information was the United States Bureau of Labor Statistics' Occupational Outlook Handbook, which is online at: <http://www.bls.gov/oco/>. America's Career InfoNet is another good source and it is also online at: <http://www.acinet.org/acinet/>.

What every prospective cop wants to know...

As can be expected, a "Frequently Asked Question" in the brochure addressed a very real concern: *Can I get injured or killed on the job?*

The answer was intriguing: "Jobs in the Criminal Justice field are actually less dangerous than many other professions like construction work. The difference is, with other jobs, injuries and deaths are usually accidental. But in Criminal Justice, injury or death may be the result of an intentional act by a citizen or group of citizens."

Gives you something to think about, doesn't it?

A real eye opener for me was the choices of degrees and certificates. If you plan to pursue higher education, it would be wise to do a little research and determine which one best suits you – a terminal degree or certificate from a community college, or coursework that leads to a Bachelors or Mas-

ters. Also, you need to make sure the courses you take will transfer to the university of your choice for full credit.

Enhancing your skill and improving your career choices through education seems to be much easier these days because of online technology. Community colleges and universities have partnered to make it possible to take nearly 100% of your course credits via distance learning (using the web).

A quick search on the worldwide web reveals numerous other "virtual university" opportunities, as well.

Raising the bar in terms of academic degrees is a stated priority of the Florida Sheriffs. If your resume is weak in this area, you may want to consider the ever increasing options.

See you in the fall,

Florida Sheriffs Association Calendar of Events 2004



- **FSA's Southeast Car Evaluation & Fleet Management Training Conference, Crowne Plaza Sabal Park, Tampa. Emergency Vehicle Technician Training September 28; Conference dates September 29-October 1.**

- **Newly Elected Sheriffs Basic Institute, Ramada Inn & Conference Center, Tallahassee, December 5-10.**

Calendar of Events 2005

- **FSA Annual Mid-Winter Conference, Sandestin Golf & Beach Resort, Destin (hosted by Okaloosa County Sheriff's Office), January 23-26.**

- **FSA Jail Administrators' Workshop, Sandestin Hilton, Destin, February 14-16.**

- **FSA Administrative Management Training Seminar, Sanibel Harbor Resort, Sanibel, June 7-9.**

continued from page 1

Ritter Wins Corrections Officer of the Year

He is an ordained minister who attended Bethel Seminary prior to his work in Sarasota County Jail. He served as an associate pastor in Vista, California and Sarasota and as Senior Pastor in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Perhaps most distinctive, he also served as a pastor for the Pittsburgh Pirates.

Aside from his ministry credentials, our winner graduated from the Sarasota Criminal Justice Training Academy, and he continues to maintain his certification as a correctional officer in the state of Florida.

Previous accolades

This is not the first time that Rev. Ritter has been recognized. He received the "Meritorious Achievement Award" last year from the Sarasota County Sheriff for his exemplary work on inmate programs. And the Florida Correctional Accreditation Commission recognized him for his work on inmate programs.

Chaplain Ritter is currently president of Florida Chapter 18 of the Blue Knights, a law enforcement organization for motorcycle enthusiasts that raise money for various charities, and he is on the Board of Directors for Evangelism

Explosion, a national prison ministry that works in over 200 prisons across America.

Some other highlights of Ritter's accomplishments:

He continues to manage and update "Success 2000," a program created by the late Chaplain Bob Vance that is designed to build self-esteem and help integrate inmates back into the workforce.

He also administers "Addicted to Christ," a 12-step addiction recovery program for inmates that is similar to Alcoholics Anonymous, however, it is focused on a "higher power" – namely Jesus Christ – as the only true helper in their lives.

In 2003 alone, Ritter initiated other programs to help inmates gain control of their lives with the goal of making them better citizens.

In July 2003, Rev. Ritter played a crucial role in the formulation of a cooperative effort between the Jail, First Step Rehabilitation and Substance Abuse Centers and Sarasota United for Responsibility and Equity, a community faith-based organization, to create a drug rehabilitation program for inmates, designed with an eye towards stopping recidivism due to drug usage.

In addition, the 6-week "Dad's Program" helps fathers who are in jail become true "Dads" to their children through teamwork

with their spouses. It helps incarcerated fathers learn proper parenting skills and helps ease the transition back into their families upon their release from jail.

The Dad's Program is supported by Children First, and attracted funding from Florida's Commission on Marriage and Family Support Initiatives.

Finally, Chaplain Ritter implemented an Anger Management Class, which is designed to help inmates manage and resolve their anger in socially acceptable ways.

Sarasota County Sheriff Bill Balkwill says there's not a day that goes by that Ritter is not taking a step back and assessing a situation, determining a need and working toward a solution to fix the problem.

For these, and many other untold victories in which he is credited, we congratulate Sarasota County Jail Chaplain Skip Ritter for winning the Florida Sheriff's Association 2003 Correctional Officer of the Year.

In recognition of his efforts and accomplishments, Ritter received a handsome plaque and a check for \$1,000 at the FSA Summer conference in Hollywood, Florida. ✪

Retail Federation Seeks Nominations

The Florida Retail Federation (FRF) is seeking nominations for its 2004 Law Enforcement Officer of the Year (LEOY) award, one of the oldest and most prestigious in the state.

Started in 1974, the LEOY awards \$3,000 in cash to the winner, along with a medallion designating the honor. The recipient's name will also be added to a plaque listing each LEOY designee since the award's inception, which can be displayed in the winner's agency headquarters for one year.

Nominations are being sought from Police Chiefs, Sheriffs, FDLE, the Florida Highway Patrol, and the Florida Fish & Wildlife Conservation Commission.

To be eligible, nominees must be line-duty officers, up to and including the rank of sergeant. Nominations, which

must be postmarked no later than Thursday, September 16, 2004, should be based on overall performance from July 1, 2003 through June 30, 2004. Nominations should be limited to one officer per department or agency.

"FRF is proud to continue its 30-year tradition of recognizing the efforts of some of Florida's finest law enforcement officers," says FRF Chairman of the Board Wogan S. Badcock, III, of Badcock Home Furniture & More, Mulberry. "Not only the retail industry, but all of Florida's citizens benefit greatly from outstanding police work."

A selection committee comprised of representatives from education, retail security, the media and government will select a winner from the eligible nominations. The officer deemed the best representative of Florida law enforcement will be named the "2004

Florida Retail Federation Law Enforcement Officer of the Year." The award winner will be honored as a guest of the Florida Retail Federation at the group's awards banquet on Tuesday, November 9, at The Ritz Carlton Golf Resort in Naples, Florida.

For more information regarding the LEOY program or to request a nomination form, please contact Elaine Carpenter, Vice President of Operations at the Florida Retail Federation at 1-888-357-3824 or elaine@frf.org.

The Florida Retail Federation is a statewide trade association with more than 9,000 members, and representing an industry that contributes 75 percent of Florida's gross domestic product. Visit them on the web at: www.frf.org. ✪

The “Culture” of a Successful Correctional Facility



By: Jeanne L. Phillips
Health Services Inspector
Pinellas County Sheriff's Office



Jeanne L. Phillips

When we hear the word “Accreditation” many of us think of interference, rules & regulations, “red-tape,” and extra work. That’s understandable, considering that we at the Pinellas County Sheriff’s Office – including the Law Enforcement components, Detention and Corrections Bureau and the Boot Camp Programs – together must comply with over 1,750 national and state accreditation standards.

But having served on both sides of the fence, as an auditor and the one being audited, I have come to think of accreditation more as a virtuous way of life.

Creating a standard

It amazes me how many prisons, jails, holding and juvenile facilities in the United States are either not accredited, or are accredited but just “getting by” doing the least they can possibly do to maintain the distinction. We all know the horror of going through with the inspection team and having the auditor find something out of place. In most cases the deficiency would be corrected immediately or a process initiated to get it fixed, if it needed more effort.

I remember inspecting a jail and finding a rubber glove turned inside out lying on the floor of a main corridor. I was aghast to find that we actually stepped over that glove four times during the tour without a staff member picking it up. Of course, the inspection went downhill from there....

I have audited sites that cut and paste the entire standards manual into their policies without adding so much as an exclamation point, let alone making them site-specific. These are probably the same facilities that maintain their procedure books in administrative offices (assuming they have written procedures) with management staff that rarely, if ever, enter the “bowels” of the institution unless the media is trailing close behind.

Occasionally I come across a breach of what I consider to be Core Professional Ethics (never mind basic moral upbringing). For instance, a facility containing youthful offenders was staffed with some who felt it necessary to instigate aggressive behavior by thumping the youth in the forehead. If this didn’t bring on the desired behavior other intimidation techniques were used. I never quite figured out what form of remedial therapy was in practice, but apparently it wasn’t very successful. And last, but certainly not least, the site that allowed suicidal inmates access to razor blades and unobserved “potty breaks.” I won’t go into detail, but suffice it to say that it wasn’t a pretty picture.

A culture that’s working

I have the rare opportunity to work in a facility that really internalizes the very nature of the accreditation process and

reflects the practice on a daily basis. There will always be those who choose to overlook opportunity, but when the majority seizes the challenge required to change their culture for the good, few can hinder progress.

It’s truly a rare culture at the Pinellas County Sheriff’s Office. I see a much more professional, knowledgeable and caring staff here than in other correctional facilities I’ve visited. We don’t blindly “follow the leader.” Change is imminent, yet we don’t sit back and wait for it to happen. We are proactive and technologically at the forefront of our industry. We are encouraged to be involved at every level, which is how we differentiate ourselves from others in our field.

Every facility’s inmate population is diverse, depending on demographics. Some have primarily quiet and low maintenance detainees, while many of us are fortunate enough to hold the more obnoxious, sickly or just plain “mean” clientele. No matter what the constitution of the inmate population, I feel the truest test of a successful facility is not in its receipt of national and/or state accreditation status, but in its ability to transform a historically stressful environment into a safe, pleasant experience – both for staff and detainees. And its ability to deal fairly, consistently and humanely with those in its charge.

Jeanne L. Phillips is a Certified Correctional Healthcare Professional. She received her MBA from the University of South Florida. Phillips can be reached via e-mail: jpbear01@hotmail.com ✪

Bloopers

In our last issue, we ran a story on transporting prisoners. We learned that convicted child killer and molester Kyle Bell was actually recaptured. The story indicated otherwise. Also, an incorrect date was given for the FSA car conference. The correct information appears on page 3. Our apologies.

Anti-Terrorism Tool: TUACAN

By: Lorelei Bowden
Hillsborough County Sheriff's Office

Since September 11, 2001, the Hillsborough County Sheriff's Office has embraced new responsibilities to provide additional anti-terrorism protection for the citizens we serve.

We've added positions, acquired equipment and participated in numerous training exercises to dramatically improve the domestic security within our jurisdiction.

But successful interdiction requires more than new equipment, military might and improved response capabilities. What's absolutely vital is information sharing.

Terrorists are among the most mobile, organized and determined of all criminals. To defeat them, law enforcement must not only share their information, we must begin to use it in new ways.

Integration is key

In the aftermath of 9/11, federal, state and local jurisdictions recognized that the absence of integrated criminal justice information systems created vulnerability against future attacks. The skillful acquisition, intelligent harnessing and systematic sharing of information was identified as essential to providing homeland security.

In an effort to fill this void, the Hillsborough County Sheriff's Office researched vendors and determined that COPLINK offered law enforcement the best solution. We managed to receive federal grant monies to not only bring it to our agency, but to our region. The system is called the Tampa Urban Area COPLINK Analytic Network (TUACAN).

It's important to note that COPLINK

is not just another prototype system – it is a fully-functional crime fighting technology developed at one of the world's leading Artificial Intelligence University Labs and backed by more than 10 years of testing and over five years of solid proof in the field.

COPLINK links databases within and outside of a law-enforcement agency to allow investigators to search any or all connected databases for information during an investigation. COPLINK technology is designed to join and search multiple and disparate data sources and to find hidden connections among people and events almost instantly. It provides unparalleled analysis and decision support to identify criminal suspects, relationships and patterns that can help solve and prevent terrorism.

And COPLINK technology is more than a tool to use in the war against terrorists - it is a tool that we can use every day in the other wars we face against drugs and crime.

The first phase of TUACAN harnesses the informational power of the FDLE and the five law enforcement agencies within the Tampa Urban Area that serve populations of greater than 100,000 people.

The Network will eventually allow participating agencies to use a standard

web-browser to conduct queries on persons, organizations, locations, documents, vehicles, weapons and property currently stored within more than 12 distinct information-storing sources.

Targeted data systems that may be linked through the project include arrest records, traffic citations, sex offenders, mug shots, fingerprints, drivers' licenses, motor vehicle registration, field interviews and pawn broker records.

Implementation of the network has already been started. It's our goal to have the TUACAN operational by fall of this year.

Within the next six months, crime analysts, detectives, deputies and officers in our region will have at their fingertips a tool that is among the most progressive yet easy to use technologies available for crime fighting. Through the use of this technology, we'll gain efficiencies in investigation that will: reduce the time between a criminal's offense and arrest, give our deputies more time to be on the streets and help solve crimes that might otherwise remain unsolved.

For more information, visit the COPLINK WEBSITE: www.coplink.net/index.htm. ☆



Jefferson County Sheriff Ken Fortune's office seized a 1967 Plymouth Barracuda from a drug dealer and is now using it as a deterrent to young people considering a life of crime. The auto is a classic and after the court forfeited it to the Sheriff's Office, they asked local businesses for help in its restoration. It's now used in parades and in local schools to send a message that crime does not pay. Pictured above: Sheriff Ken Fortune (left) and Undersheriff Mike Joyner.

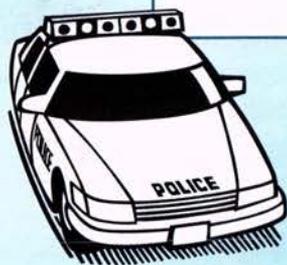


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Thieves Among Us



Detective Steve Menge
Polk County Sheriff's Office

A state worker steals information from personal records and sells it to identity thieves. An EMT steals and uses the credit cards from a deceased person's wallet. A police officer leaves personal information of a victim in clear view of the public, which gets copied and used to open various credit accounts.

Victims of identity theft are disgusted and frustrated as they attempt to clean up their credit files. The disgust is compounded when they learn their identity was compromised because of a public servant.

As a police officer, if you haven't already worked a case involving identity theft, you soon will. Identity theft is today's fastest growing crime, and it



has been increasing rapidly over the past several years.

Through the use of computers and other electronic devices, the abilities to commit fraud are endless. In 2003, the FTC received over 500,000 consumer fraud and identity theft complaints. With reported fraud losses in excess of \$400 million, this growing trend does not appear to be slowing.

Securing information, too

On a daily basis, officers are provided with personal information belonging to others. All of us should be alert to the risk of leaving completed citations, reports or an unsecured notebook on the seat of a patrol car, as

those with criminal intent could easily view it.

Another risk is leaving unshredded copies of reports in the office trash bin.

These examples may not be routine means for obtaining information, however, they should be kept in mind as identity theft continues to rise.

Officers not only have an ethical obligation to protect a victim's information, but we have a personal obligation to do so as well. Civil penalties could apply if we are found to be careless with the handling of personal data.

Don't be the cause for destroying someone else's credit and life. Take extra steps to not only protect yourself, but the citizens we serve.

Detective Stephen R. Menge is a 13-year veteran of law enforcement and has worked six years in investigations. He can be reached via e-mail: smenge@polksheriff.org ☆



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Video Re-Touch Technology, GPS Solving Crimes

By: Steve Olson
Public Information Officer
Seminole County Sheriff's Office

Technology will never replace tried and true investigative methods, but most people would agree that it sure is a great help in police work.

For the Seminole County Sheriff's Office, computer and satellite technology is doing everything from cleaning up fuzzy video images to tracking pre-trial release subjects' movements – all of which have been useful recently in building cases against defendants accused of crimes.

It is not uncommon to hear law enforcement personnel lament about the poor quality of video or still photography obtained from surveillance cameras that have captured images of crimes in progress. Now the Seminole County Sheriff's Office is using software that can actually clean up some of the garble and clutter, which makes the image more useful.

Video Focus software, originally designed to render high quality pictures for newspapers and magazines, is now being used by law enforcement. To our knowledge, SCSO is the only law-enforcement agency in Florida using this type of software to solve crimes.

With surveillance photography, it is common for cameras to record many images to one source. The problem with that is the final product ends up with 1/2 or 1/4 frames that may obscure vital evidence. Sometimes there are several pictures that are overlaid on top of each other.

Using this software, technicians can



Scott Slavin (left) and David Thompson specialize in using Video Focus software to make it easier to identify suspects in videotapes from banks, convenience stores and other crime scenes. The images below, taken from an actual bank robbery, show how a photo can be significantly improved using the cleanup tool.



BEFORE



AFTER

extract those images and get rid of the rest of the clutter. The software also allows the user to clean up fuzzy or blurry images. In addition, the user can increase the size of small images in a picture to get a better look. For example, a license plate may need to be blown up to be legible.

Case solved

The system was used recently in a bank robbery case by taking a series of inter-laced still shots and putting them in order of the activity to show the suspect running out of the bank. It also removed clutter found in still shots of the suspect as he approached the teller's counter.

In the past, the Seminole County

Sheriff's Office has had to rely solely on the assistance of banks and businesses to get useable videos and pictures from their systems. In some cases we were successful, but every system is different and the process was taking a lot of time.

With SCSO's use of Video Focus, it is hoped that most videos and pictures now can be opened, cleaned up and placed into the hands of investigators quickly. This is not to say the system will totally eliminate the need to reach out to business partners, but in most cases SCSO hopes to do more of this work in-house.

(continued on next page)

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GPS solving pre-trial crimes

Satellite technology used by SCSO recently helped solve a crime in the city of Sanford.

A man, who was on pre-trial release and monitored by our SO's EMPACT program, found himself behind bars after his movements were tied to a burglary.

EMPACT is the acronym for Electronic Monitoring Protection and Crime Tracking. It electronically monitors pre-trial release defendants as they await trial by tracking their whereabouts and matching it with reported instances of crime. Satellites and computers do the monitoring. The program uses a Global Positioning System (GPS) for tracking.

Seminole County was one of the first agencies in the nation to embrace the technology when it became available in August of 2002. Veridian/General Dynamics are partners in the EMPACT program.

After a burglary occurred on May 21, electronic monitoring data showed a defendant on pre-trial release was in that area. The data led to a search of pawn records and investigators found that items similar to those stolen had been pawned. A latent print, recovered at the scene, was then matched to the defendant and he was subsequently re-arrested. SCSO technology vendors believed the case was the first for the system, nationwide.

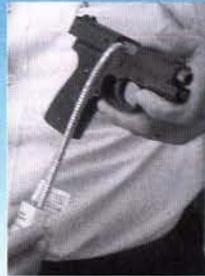
Seminole County Sheriff Donald Eslinger has always been a proponent of using new and advanced technology and he encourages all Sheriff's Office employees to embrace it, experiment with it and constantly think outside of the box.

For information on the Video Focus Software, contact SCSO Sgt. Ralph Wilson at rwilson@seminolesheriff.org. For information about EMPACT, contact Cynthia Joiner at cjoiner@seminolesheriff.org. Both can be reached at 407-665-6600.



Making Firearms Safety a Priority in Pasco

The Pasco County Sheriff's Office kicked off a new firearms safety program called "Project ChildSafe," by giving away 1,000 free firearm safety kits to local residents in July.



Part of the nationwide firearms safety education program by the same title, Pasco County Sheriff Bob White said the goal of the project was to help prevent a child from accessing a firearm by

encouraging parents to develop a gun safety plan.

The kits, which include a cable-style gun lock that will fit on most styles of handguns, rifles and shotguns, are being distributed through crime prevention officers and front-line deputies, as well as through a display at a local mall.

ChildSafe plans to distribute gun lock safety kits to all 50 states and the five U.S. territories and is partnering with law enforcement entities to do it. To find out how your agency can start a ChildSafe program, visit the group's website: www.projectchildsafef.org.

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Girl Meets Horse: Sheriff's Office Volunteers Make the Difference at Youth Villa

Many books and movies have highlighted love stories between little girls and horses. There's a special connection that occurs when a young person first encounters a large animal ...and the relationship just seems to blossom when a youth becomes responsible for the horse's care.

Recognizing the value of this relationship – including building self-esteem and a sense of responsibility – a dedicated group of Polk County Sheriff's Office deputies and civilians created a program that would help both lass and steed.

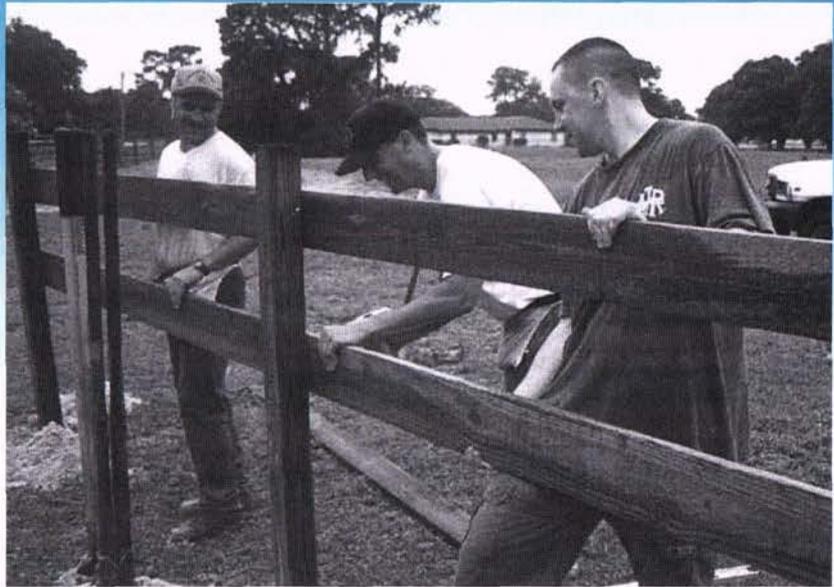
The volunteer project was designed to help teach the girls at the Florida Sheriffs Youth Villa in Bartow how to properly care for and ride horses.

The PCSO volunteers initiated the Horse project during the summer of 2003 after they recognized an opportunity to better connect the Youth Villa residents with the horses that are kept on the property.

Train first, then build

To get the project up and running, the PCSO volunteer team donated numerous personal hours to make sure the horses were well suited for riding and training. Once acquired, the volunteers taught the girls how to properly bathe, groom, feed and care for the animals.

After they had become familiar with the horses, and all the tools and equipment involved in caring for them, volunteers focused on teaching them to ride.



Volunteers made the difference in the lives of young girls and horses. The Polk County community collected \$1,000 to build a training arena for Florida Sheriff's Youth Ranch Villa residents to learn how to ride. Then Sheriff's Office deputies and civilians gathered to build it. The girls are now giving back: They're helping to care for needy horses that were seized in Sheriff's Office animal abuse case.

There was just one obstacle: there was no safe and appropriate arena to hold the riding lessons.

Not to be sidetracked, the PCSO team sought support from the community and managed to get \$1,000 donated to build a new arena. Supplies were purchased and the volunteers tackled the project – completing the 150 x 200 foot arena fence in just two days.

The Horse program offered another bright spot: The girls began volunteering time and their newfound expertise to help care for abused horses that were seized during a PCSO animal abuse case.

PCSO Colonel Grady Judd said, "Our volunteers saw a need in the lives of girls living in a local youth home, and took the steps necessary to fill that need. They gave of themselves, dedicating their personal time and labor, and have made a true difference in the lives of a number of young ladies."

Judd said the most encouraging aspect was to watch the girls turn around and volunteer their own time to help abused animals.

For more information on the Florida Sheriffs Youth Ranches Youth Villa in Bartow, visit the website:

<http://www.youthranches.org/youth.htm>. To find out how you can become involved in the Horse project, contact Polk County Sheriff's Office Public Information Officer Michal Shanley, 863-534-6631. ☛

Reach Law Enforcement Readers

Did you know that the *All Points Bulletin* reaches law enforcement personnel where they live and work? The Florida Sheriffs Association mails APB direct to the homes of FSA Law Enforcement members and distributes each issue to all 67 Sheriffs for distribution to their personnel.

Advertising in APB reaches Deputy Sheriffs, Correctional Officers and civilian employees, as well as other members of the law enforcement and corrections community, including police officers, state law enforcement officers and state correctional officers.

If you have a message for these readers, request our 2004 Advertising Rate Card. Contact: Mary Beth Pridgeon, 850-877-2165 or e-mail: marybeth@fisheriffs.org

The Emotional Police Officer



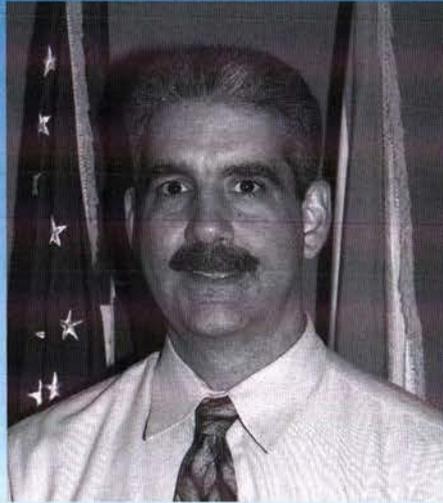
By: Gary Martin, Ph.D.
Homicide Detective
Palm Beach County Sheriff's Office

For the most part, police officers are a disciplined bunch. Unlike the public we serve, we pride ourselves on our capacity to moderate our emotions under all types of difficult circumstances. Rather than express our human feelings, we tend to disapprove of those among our ranks who can't keep their emotions in check. As an example, think back to the last time you overheard a police pursuit. By all accounts, these events are about the most stressful circumstances an officer can endure. Lives (the officers' included) are literally at stake as they tear down the roadway towards some uncertain future.

Remarkably, officers are generally able to communicate on the radio rather dispassionately during these chases. To the listener, fear and hesitation are somehow squeezed out of the pursuing officer's experience. If some indication of fear leaks out in the inflection of the pursuing officers' voice, others judge him or her as faint-hearted or unseasoned.

Trained to suppress

We learn early on in our careers that open displays of emotion are indications of weakness and inexperience. Consider the rookie who shows squeamishness, shock or distress at a death scene. He or she is likely to be chastised by a veteran with such phrases as, "geez kid, I've seen that stuff a million times" or "that's nothing, I remember the time that....." The not-so-subtle message to the recruit is, "You need to get control of your emotions if you want to be a cop." The unwritten policy in law enforcement is, "Real cops don't show how they feel."



Gary Martin, Ph.D.

Why such a distaste for natural human emotion or fear?

In my view, this intentional emotional restraint is an intellectually imposed defense to the lack of power officers have over their workdays. In most circumstances, we are not in control over when, where or under what circumstances we are dispatched. We are reactors. Regardless of how we feel at any particular time, when a dispatcher radios to us that "two men are fighting with knives" or "someone has shot themselves in the head" or "a child has been sexually molested" our response is simply, "I'm en route". There is no negotiation, no hesitation and no contemplation of whether or not we choose to participate. It is our job to just shut up, and go handle it.

Since we lack control over our working conditions, we take steps to control what we can – our emotions.

An alternate view explains that we control our feelings because of the emotional chaos we would experience if we did otherwise. If we allowed ourselves to express the worlds of grief, sorrow, revulsion, anger, fear and sympathy that accompanies our work experiences, we would be on Mister Toad's Wild Ride of Emotions during every work shift. To avoid the ride, we simply shut off the mechanisms that allow feelings to sneak in and emotions to slip out. Devoid of emotion, we become the "control freak." We take on the tough

guy or tough gal role that both the public and our fellow officers expect. This strategy makes some intuitive sense, but there are drawbacks.

What it costs the human side

I believe that both officers and their families pay the cost for this emotional stifling.

Evidence of the cost is apparent in elevated rates of suicide, depression and alcoholism within the police profession. In addition, research suggests that 60 to 70 percent of police marriages end in divorce and officers are two to four times more likely to become divorced than are members of the general population.

Good mental health and positive interpersonal relationships demand emotional expressions and exchanges. Unfortunately, many officers are unable or unwilling to turn the aforementioned mechanisms of emotions back on for their personal lives. Off-duty, we become cold, distant and detached with the very people we are working so hard to provide for. Emotional distance breeds frustration and alienation. As our families try harder to engage us, we retreat into isolation, alcohol, television or we immerse ourselves in the police culture where our "tough guy" mentality is understood and reinforced.

I grant you that emotions can be uncomfortable and the law enforcement path may very well be easier to walk without uncomfortable feelings getting in your way. But consider that restricting access to negative emotions will likely limit your experiences of positive feelings like joy, satisfaction, optimism, hope and love.

Rather than surrender to this fate, look for opportunities to offset the negative. Some suggestions:

- Express your feelings in writings, hobbies and in conversation



Receiving the First Place award were (from left to right) Pinellas County Deputies Fred Timms, Jennifer Olley, Jim Piper, Joni Holstein, Ken Euler, Sergeant Tim Pelella, (Jacksonville Sheriff J.G. Rutherford, who presented the award at center) Corporal Jim Bordner, Deputies Charles Skipper and Curtis Kindle and Corporal Ken Page.

- Establish relationships outside the law enforcement community
- Embrace your spirituality
- Display your feelings to your family and friends
- Allow others to be in control
- Let down your guard
- Discuss your feelings with a counselor or other good listener

I am aware these suggestions may sound pretty frightening, but remember that you were a human being before you became a police officer and you will want to return to the clan when your tour is over.

Homicide Detective Gary Martin is also Director of Counseling Services at Lynn University in Boca Raton, Florida. E-mail him at: marting@pbsso.org. ☺

Pinellas S.T.E.P. Places First In Statewide Challenge

The Pinellas County Sheriff's Office S.T.E.P. (Selective Traffic Enforcement Program) received first place in the Law Enforcement Challenge, a competition sponsored by the Florida Department of Transportation, which selects the "best of the best" in traffic safety programs within the state.

Law enforcement officers and traffic safety specialists from 82 agencies participated in the Challenge. Entries were judged on DUI, speeding and safety belt enforcement, as well as creative approaches to traffic management and public education.

All were judged by comparing to agencies of similar type and size.

Highlighted at a June 18 awards ceremony in Jacksonville, was PCSO's traffic signal confirmation light training (value of the lights to enforcement)

which was offered to all Pinellas and Pasco county court judges. Also noted was the Sheriff's Office educational brochure, which is distributed at sobriety checkpoints and at the 180-plus DUI enforcement operations in 2003.

The Pinellas County Sheriff's Office has been named in the top two for competitions in which it competed in the last few years.

In addition to the agency and its S.T.E.P. Unit being recognized at the Challenge, five members of the Pinellas County DUI squad were honored with the MADD 100 Awards during 2003.

As a first place Challenge winner, the Sheriff's Office will receive \$15,000 worth of equipment, including new in-car video cameras and educational tools such as a portable variable message sign. ☺

What Do False Alarms Cost Your Agency?

If your county hasn't jumped on the False Alarm Ordinance bandwagon yet, you may consider bringing some new statistics to commissioners' attention.

After years of rampant abuse, Lee County commissioners passed a False Alarm Ordinance in March 2003 that created escalating penal-

ties to ease the burden. The ordinance went into effect in July 2003.

In its first year, the ordinance has been a phenomenal success:

- Alarms declined 16 percent for 2003, following the ordinance adoption
- Alarms have fallen 28 percent in the first six months of 2004
- Alarm reductions represent a time-savings equivalent of nearly three full-time deputies

The accomplishments are even more remarkable when considering Lee County's rapid population growth. The county grew by more than 54,000 residents between 2000 and 2003.

Reaching a breaking point

Prior to the ordinance, the Lee County Sheriff's Office had responded to an average of more than 35,000 alarm calls annually between 2000 and 2002.

Continued on page 16

continued from page 15

More than 99 percent of those calls were false alarms that required no police action. False alarms were costing Lee County taxpayers more than \$1.5 million annually.

"We are projecting a 40 percent alarm reduction by next January, even with Lee County's continued growth," says Sheriff's Office Major Daniel S. Johnson, whose Planning and Research Division oversees the False Alarm Reduction Unit.

Education is essential to reducing false calls, Reno says. The agency regularly hosts free false-alarm reduction courses for both commercial and residential burglar alarm owners.

The alarm unit also employs a "problem solving specialist" to visit businesses or homes with chronic alarm problems. Specialist Frank Harris visited 87 sites in 2003 that were responsible for 3,583 alarms. After the site visits, the number of subsequent alarm calls declined 69 percent.

Lee County employs an annual registration fee. Penalties range from no fine for a first dispatch to \$400 for a 10th dispatch, before the offender's permit can be revoked. A non-permitted alarm system may be subject to a \$200 fine. If the user registers with the alarm unit manager within 10 days of the violation, the fee may be reduced to \$50.

For more information, contact Stan

Nelson, Lee County Sheriff's Office, 239-477-1066, or visit them on the web at: <http://www.sheriffleefl.org/> ☎

National HIV Testing Day

By: Hugh Graf
Public Information Officer
Broward Sheriff's Office

The Broward County Sheriff's Office hosted a kick-off for the National HIV Testing Day, June 24 at the main jail.

The BSO was chosen for the honor because it is the only agency in Florida offering the RAPID HIV testing program. RAPID, which stands for "Reducing AIDS Prevalence In Detention," is a new initiative sponsored by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

The goals of RAPID and BSO are to test at least 10,000 inmates by the end of 2005, identify those who are positive for HIV, and help them through treatment and prevention services.

Among the services offered is the Linkage Project. Founded by BSO and the Broward County Health Department's AIDS Program Office, the Linkage Project provides HIV-positive inmates a range of support including medical care, substance-use counseling and treatment, housing referrals, legal assistance and more.

"Using the RAPID program, we see HIV test results in twenty minutes instead of two weeks," said Broward

County Sheriff Ken Jenne. "The sooner we see test results, the sooner we can offer HIV-positive inmates programs to help them out –both in the jails and once they're released."

According to the Florida Department of Health, which is overseeing the RAPID program in Broward County, the BSO jails are ideal project sites because of a relatively high number of HIV positive results. HIV tests are offered to every inmate in BSO's jails, but only administered to those who wish to have the test.

In 2003, 4,581 BSO inmates were tested for HIV. Of those, 167 tested positive for the virus that causes AIDS. Since late January 2004, 1,530 BSO inmates have been given the RAPID test and 27 have been diagnosed with HIV.

The Broward Sheriff's Office operates the 10th largest local jail system in the United States – annually booking nearly 77,000 people into its five jails. BSO's Department of Detention and Community Control is accredited by the American Correctional Association, the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities and the National Commission on Correctional Health-care.

For more information, contact Hugh Graf via e-mail: Hugh_Graf@sheriff.org, or by phone: 954-831-8300. ☎

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