

FLORIDA SHERIFFS ALL POINTS BULLETIN

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A fire started at the Florida Sheriffs Association headquarters in Tallahassee early Tuesday morning, April 15. The Tallahassee Fire Department was called out at 6:30 a.m., and firefighters from five different stations had the fire under control within 30 minutes. No one was injured in the blaze, but the 6,700-square-foot building was a total loss. The cause of the fire was classified as "undetermined."

According to reports, the fire started in the northeast corner of the building, where the break room and kitchen were located. But the fire spread so quickly through the wooden structure and did such extensive damage, investigators could not determine a cause. Foul play is not suspected.

Several Sheriffs had meetings scheduled in Tallahassee the morning of the fire and became eyewitnesses to the disaster. They consoled the staff, then proceeded on to the Capitol building to assure lawmakers the work of the Sheriffs would not be deterred.

Rising from the ashes

At the time of this writing, FSA staff had limited telephone access and had been without e-mail for up to two weeks after the fire. Twelve of FSA's 16 employees lost all contents of their offices. Gratefully, a separate annex building on the back of the property, where membership records and computer backup resides, was not burned. The association is working from this location temporarily and will be moving into nearby office space in the coming weeks.

A week after the fire, FSA's Board of Directors held a special meeting to discuss options. The Sheriffs agreed to pursue construction on a new build-

Fire Destroys Florida Sheriffs Headquarters



Firefighters arrived quickly, but the wooden structure of FSA headquarters was a total loss. The association plans to re-build on the same site. Top photo compliments of Tallahassee Fire Department.

ing at the same location as soon as possible.

During the "Florida Sheriffs Day" at the Capitol on April 24 (see related story on page 8), FSA President, Baker County Sheriff Joey Dobson, recognized the Fire Chief, firefighters and investigators for their quick response, thorough effort and compassionate assistance during the emergency and the aftermath. According to FSA Executive Director Gary Perkins, firefighters went above and beyond the call by helping them preserve memorabilia from the association's 115-year history. Precious artifacts would have been lost if not for their efforts, he said.

The outpouring of support from the community also was humbling, according to Perkins. "It came from every direction – including sister law-enforcement organizations and state agencies," he said. "The Leon County Sheriffs Office was an anchor for us, providing clean up and security in the aftermath."

Since much of FSA's work is ser-



vice to others, especially in times of disaster, he admitted it felt awkward to be on the receiving end of assistance. "It really brought home how much this association means to the community and the state. The outreach was sincere."

FSA staffers are currently assessing the costs of re-building. We will continue to provide updates on our Web site (www.flsheriffs.org), in this publication and The Sheriff's Star. Thanks to all who have offered resources and provided assistance. We are grateful.

Commission for Florida Law Enforcement Accreditation Conference Highlights

By Peg Gant
CFA Executive
Director



Peg Gant

The Florida Accreditation winter conference was held February 18-22 at the Belleview Biltmore Resort and Spa just outside of Clearwater. In addition to business meetings and networking during the conference, the Commission for Florida Law Enforcement Accreditation, Inc. (CFA) reviewed and accredited one new agency – the Ocala Police Department – and reaccredited 14 agencies.

A major topic of conversation during accreditation week was the passage of Amendment 1 and its impact on public safety organizations within Florida. A new task force was formed as a result. The Process Review Task Force will review all the accreditation processes, from onsite assessment to final report, to ensure the accreditation community is getting the most efficient, cost-effective state accreditation program possible. Commissioners from Florida Corrections Accreditation Commission (FCAC) and CFA will join staff in this review. The FLA-PAC Executive Board also is reviewing possible changes to its format with the same goal in mind. Florida Accreditation represents a community of professionals who are anticipating a future with fewer resources. We believe in the value and relevance of accreditation and will demonstrate the cost effectiveness as well.

Also at the meeting, the Standards Review and Interpretation Committee (SRIC) introduced its new members: Dianne Hill, Chris-

tine Goracke, Wendy Bentzley, Capt. Steve Willis, Capt. Tony Taylor, Assistant Chief John Dean and Lt. Steve Harrelson. The chair of this committee, Putnam County Sheriff Dean Kelly, did a great job in moving the committee through the standards for discussion. The Change Notice for standard changes approved at February's meeting is available on the Web site. Programmers are working on updating the Accreditation Manager program, as well.

Other Commission business included an update on the accreditation program in Inspectors General (IG) Investigations function accreditation program – the IG standards committee submitted the first draft of standards to be reviewed. CFA hopes to roll out this program by late 2008.

There is a new feature called "Innovations" on the Web site. It serves as a repository for innovative ideas from agencies. It will include a description of the innovation or exemplary project and a link to the agency to obtain more information.

Our legal advisor, attorney Steve Brady, proposed a change to the accreditation and reaccreditation agreements that would eliminate the indemnification paragraph. The reason for this change is that statutorily, agencies are forbidden from entering into indemnification and hold harmless contracts by Florida Statute 768.28(19). Also supporting this change is Attorney General Opinion 90-21. This change goes into effect immediately.

CFA presented outgoing Commissioner Chuck Rinehart with a plaque for his years of dedicated service to the Commission and Florida's accreditation process. Chief Rinehart retires in June. Osceola County Sheriff Bob Hansell and Hernando County Sheriff

Rich Nugent were introduced as the newest commissioners, replacing Leon County Sheriff Larry Campbell and Citrus County Sheriff Jeff Dawsy.

The next conference will be in Coral Springs, June 9 – 13, where the Accreditation Manager and Assessor of the Year will be announced in a special celebratory luncheon sponsored by FLA-PAC.

Be sure and check our Web site, www.flaccreditation.org, for more information on training opportunities and other pertinent information about CFA and FCAC.

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Publisher Gary E. Perkins
Executive Director
Florida Sheriffs Association

Editor Julie S. Bettinger
E-mail: jbettinger@flsheriffs.org

Graphic Design Frank J. Jones

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FSA's by-laws prohibit the association's endorsement or guarantee of any product, service or company represented in the articles or advertisements in this publication.

We welcome articles and topics of interest to the law enforcement and corrections practitioner. To request writing guidelines or information on advertising, please e-mail the editor (address above) or contact us at the address below.

Florida Sheriffs Association
P. O. Box 12519, Tallahassee,
FL 32317-2519
Web site: <http://www.flsheriffs.org>
Toll Free: 800-877-2168
Local: 850-877-2165



By Julie S. Bettinger



Photo by Larry Cothran

"Disaster strikes and a call is received. Deputies are on the scene in minutes. The law enforcement response is like clockwork: carefully planned and flawlessly executed."

Those are the words that help introduce the work of the Florida Sheriffs Association to the general public. The description goes on to tell how local Sheriffs' Offices are able to accomplish their work, day-in and day-out, with help through affordable training and other services offered by FSA.

Yes, those of us in law enforcement are used to be on the giving end of services, not on the receiving end. That's what made it even tougher a few weeks ago when a fire broke out at our administrative offices and destroyed the main building.

As the news traveled to staff members, most getting ready for work, disbelief and shock turned to sorrow for what was lost.

The Florida Sheriffs Association enjoys an unusually low employee turnover rate, and many staffers have more than a decade of service – several beyond 25 years. You can imagine that this office was like their second home...it was a very personal loss.

When our phone rings

As an organization that represents the interests of 67 Sheriffs' Offices, we are the ones people call when any part of Florida is being affected by hurricanes, wildfires or a host of man-made threats. We make sure that Sheriffs' Offices have everything they need to do their jobs during the emergencies, especially

when their own offices and employee homes are being threatened.

Between emergencies, we help network Sheriffs and their command staff, so all can benefit from information and resource sharing. We organize special task forces and committees to work through challenges affecting law enforcement and public safety, oversee purchasing programs that save Sheriffs' Offices money and help on the Corrections level, too.

Again, I emphasize giving...

So when the word spread quickly the morning of the fire and staff members started fielding calls, from a wide variety of concerned people, including Florida Chief Financial Officer Alex Sink and representatives of the association industry, there was only one thing to do: Get to work. This time, to help ourselves.

Though still in a state of shock, Executive Director Gary Perkins and staff members huddled up and started making a game plan. The first thing Gary did was make a commitment not to disrupt the day-to-day operations or cancel any events, including the "Sheriffs Day at the Capitol," that would take place the following week. True to that commitment, the Sheriffs' Day went on as scheduled, and it was a great success.

Preserving 115 years

As Gary mentions in our cover story, through their extra efforts, firefighters helped preserve many historical artifacts, and archive specialists did their part as well. They got them into storage PODs, starting the drying process quickly, then cleaned off the soot and deodorized them.

Gratefully, the Sheriffs who were in town for their rotation to visit legislators that day, stuck to their schedule and went to put out their own fires with lawmakers. They also were able to carry the message that, while the fire might cause a few challenges, it would not be a fatal blow to the work of the Florida Sheriffs.

Yes, the wheels are turning a little slower at your professional association, but please know that we will continue to represent the interests of law enforcement and public safety – statewide and nationally. And on behalf of the staff, I'd like to ask you to keep this association in your prayers. God is answering!

Julie



Florida Sheriffs Association Calendar of Events 2008

- FSA Small County Jail Management Workshop, Leon County Sheriff's Office/Tallahassee, June 23
- National Sheriffs Association 2008 Annual Conference & Exhibition, Indiana Convention Center & RCA Dome, Indianapolis, Indiana, June 27-July 2
- FSA Annual Summer Conference, Rosen Shingle Creek Hotel, Orlando, July 27-30
- FSA Small County Jail Resource Management Workshop, St. Johns River Community College Criminal Justice Academy, St. Augustine, October 22
- FSA's Annual Car Evaluation and Fleet Management Training Conference, date, city and location TBD

Please check the FSA Web site for the latest dates and locations: www.flsheriffs.org.

How Are You Preparing – Daily – For Your Job?

By Capt. Jim Polan
Broward Sheriff's
Office



There was a time, many years ago, when groups of individuals wore armor, carried a shield and wielded various weapons. They joined a team and agreed to protect their kingdom at any cost. They took an oath, prepared for battle and were willing to give the ultimate sacrifice. Those days are long gone.

But those same warriors exist today, and they are the men and women of American law enforcement – the modern-day warrior. You wear armor, carry a shield or star on your uniform and train with various weapons to protect the “kingdom,” which is now called a community. From the first day you wore the uniform and took the oath of office, you knew that there were people who would want to hurt or kill you...but you accepted that challenge, anyway. The only question that remains is: Are you truly *prepared* for battle?

Preparation is vital, not just to protect the community, but yourself and your family. You can be replaced at work, but never at home.

Ongoing practice

I want to ask you a simple preparation question that I use while instructing various courses. When you go home at night, do you practice drawing your firearm? I usually receive approximately 10 percent who acknowledge they do. For whatever the reason – family security or practice – it must happen. You may work all day, or even a few days, and never draw your firearm. And if that's true, you failed to practice.

During a deadly force encounter,

without hesitation, you must break leather to survive. You may never get a second chance to draw for the first time; prepare, so it works the first time.

When world-class athletes prepare for game day, they practice their plays and maintain a high level of physical fitness. Some say those athletes prepare for battle, but there is a tremendous difference between the athlete and the modern-day warrior. The athlete only loses a game; the warrior may lose life.

During a “fight or flight” situation, the body reacts with the Sympathetic Nervous System (SNS), which can and will create many distractions and block your ability to function.

Vision and hearing are affected, the heart begins to race, blood pressure rises and you may lose fine-motor skills. Those fine-motor skills are too valuable to lose, and one quick example would be the failure to focus on the front sight and squeeze the trigger.

Survival performance consists of three important functions:

1) **Sensory Perception.** During a low-light building search, you sense and realize that a shadow has just crossed the T-intersection in front of you. SNS begins!

2) **Cognitive Thought Process.** Now that you have sensed a potential problem, you must now have the ability to reason and provide an answer for your response.

3) **Motor Response.** You have sensed a problem, thought of a response and now it's time to react.

The problem is that if you're not prepared, SNS will win and your response time may increase by up to four times under stress, and you could be harmed. The solution: practice and prepare!

A recent study on SNS revealed

that training is the key to effective survival response. And to be effective, the activity must be challenging, realistic and followed by a strong review.

How do we prepare?

You and I must prepare by following the “Art of Law Enforcement,” the industry standard on what works and what doesn't. Read magazines that will have a direct impact on your pursuit of safety; subscribe to the various police Web sites that provide up-to-date articles on training and news that occurs around the country.

Most important, we must learn from the past to prepare for today. When a warrior is injured or gives the ultimate sacrifice in the line of duty, let's learn from it; don't hide it and be afraid to talk about it. Embrace it, use the positive and learn from mistakes.

If the errors of the fallen warrior save lives of many more LEOs, then that very well may be the purpose of his or her life. Learn from it.

The errors of these LEOs can be shared with new recruits to prepare them for the real world and, more important, remind the veterans who are complacent about the true dangers. Law enforcement in America is under attack; we must follow and learn why. As of this writing, and according to the National Memorial Officer Down informational page, law enforcement has lost 158 LEOs this year – 59 of them by gunfire.

Training is the key to preparation and that training must be dynamic, realistic and conducted on a repetitive basis for muscle memory. The muscle memory is so important that your reaction is instinctive – without hesitation. Remember during an SNS reaction, your skill level is diminished and your reaction time may be increased four times.

The training must provide you with an experience that you won't forget. Use role players in a relevant training area with some type of marking cartridges for force on force. Ba-

sic, fundamental training is *required*. Remember: Being advanced means mastering the basics, and there are only a few, if any, who have mastered the basics.

SWAT teams train on a continual basis, yet each week they practice the same basic skills with firearms and tactical movements to master the basics.

Whether it's a local, county, state or federal enforcement agency, we hear the same complaint, "We never get any training." Years ago, that might have been true – traditionally it was the agency's responsibility to provide you with the tools and knowledge. However, in today's world, training belongs to *you*.

Do it to survive

Has your agency ever had you draw your firearm from the holster with your weak hand, or practiced one-handed strong and weak draw, one-handed shooting, one-handed reloads and one-handed malfunction clearing?

If so, great. But how frequently? If not, have you taken it upon yourself to do it?

Either way, it's your responsibility to prepare and go home every night.

If your agency is not going to provide you with the training you need to survive to ensure that you go home every night to your family, then you must invest in training on your own.

Most families have made personal financial investments for the future, whether it's college tuition fund, deferred compensation or additional 401K. But what if your future comes to an abrupt stop because you didn't invest in your ability, skill and knowledge?

Yet most LEOs won't invest in a pistol or rifle course if, individually, they were financially responsible. Most LEOs won't purchase a couple of boxes of ammunition and go to the range and practice if they're not on the clock.

I observe the same errors while on the range – a slow draw, terrible trigger control, poor reloads and horrific malfunction clearing. You can practice these drills at home with minimal cost by purchasing dummy rounds for your pistol. But, of course, the most important issue is to ensure that your firearm and magazines are empty (checked twice) and all ammunition is stored in another location. With this minor investment you can practice the majority of fun-

damental firearm skills.

Practical training vs. mental visualization

If for some reason you are unable to conduct scenario-based training with vehicle stops, building clearing or other related tasks, you can still conduct valid training.

Mental visualization is a true training method. Once you learn the proper way of performing a task and you've had the opportunity to practice, you can then continue with the rehearsal.

Training your mind to complete a specific task will reduce the surprise in the heat of battle.

Paul "Bear" Bryant once said: "The will to win compares little with the will to prepare to win."

The question remains: Are you prepared?

Broward Sheriff's Office Capt. Jim Polan, a 26-year veteran of law enforcement, is currently assigned to Specialized Operational Services at BSO. He also is an adjunct instructor for the University of North Florida, Institute of Public Safety and Miami-Dade Community College. Contact him via e-mail: James_Polan@sheriff.org/.

Escambia SO Saving Big Through 1122

Many state and local government agencies in Florida are discovering the benefits of tremendous savings through the state of Florida "Counter Drug Procurement Program." Also known as the "1122 Program," it's operated on behalf of the state by the Florida Sheriffs Association.

The Escambia County Sheriff's Office has been a registered user of the 1122 Counter Drug Procurement Program since 2002. The program has saved the agency and the Air Operations Unit over \$120,000, according to Von Daniels, the Aviation Logistics Specialist for ECSO.

"Because we operate ex-military OH-58 aircraft, this program has allowed us to take advantage of the large government procurement buys of aircraft parts and associated material," Daniels says. "This equates to a substantial savings versus buying at commercial civil aircraft material prices." The agency has saved an average of 58 percent off retail prices over the last six years.

Currently, more than 50 state agencies, Sheriffs' Offices and Police Departments in Florida are enjoying substantial budget savings through 1122. The majority of savings on purchases has ranged from 50 to 75 percent, and one agency saved as much as 86 percent.

Some of the more popular types of equipment that have been ordered are body armor, field clothing, boots, tents, sleeping bags, target systems, helmets, communications equipment, surveillance systems, boats, generators, cameras and even canine handling equipment.

If your agency is interested in the Florida Counter Drug Procurement (1122) Program, contact: Glenda Travis, Florida Sheriffs Association, 850-877-2165, or e-mail: gtravis@flsheriffs.org/. You can also visit the Web site: www.flsheriffs.org, and choose "Federal 1122 Program" link.

Early Identification and Intervention Systems: A Proactive Approach to Organizational Integrity

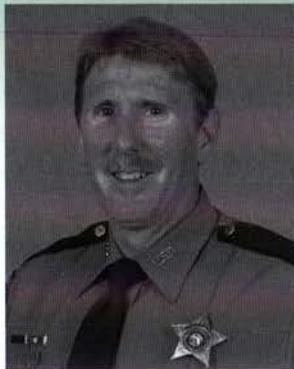
By Lt. Charles Balderstone
Pasco Sheriff's Office

One of the most pressing issues for police administrators is the identification and prevention of officer misconduct. Left unchecked, issues involving misconduct can destroy community trust, cause professional humiliation and lead to civil litigations which drain valuable agency resources. Studies indicate that in most cases, officers who become involved in a serious act of misconduct have displayed an easily identifiable escalating pattern of less-serious misconduct, that if discovered, may have presented the opportunity for intervention. Faced with such issues, law-enforcement administrators must be committed to identifying officers with performance problems and intervene appropriately with training, counseling, mentoring or other methods to maintain a high level of organizational integrity.

The implementation of an early identification and intervention system can assist agencies in identifying officers with performance deficiencies, paving the way for intervention and prevention of a serious incident.

The concept of early intervention

An early-warning system is a data-based management tool designed to identify officers with performance issues that do not warrant formal disciplinary action, but sug-



Lt. Charles Balderstone

gest that a form of intervention is needed to correct the identified performance issue. Early-warning systems allow an agency to spot patterns of performance and to intervene before problems lead to serious incidents such as lawsuits, citizen complaints over-

excessive force, or other high-liability issues involving the department. These systems are designed to send an informal, but clear message to the officer that his or her performance needs improvement. It then becomes incumbent upon the agency to provide

“(Through early-warning systems) use-of-force incidents dropped in some cases by over 60 percent.”

counseling, training and/or mentoring designed to correct the deficient performance identified. This concept is separate from any formal disciplinary system, although officers may be disciplined for one of the behaviors or actions that lead to their identification within the system.

This model represents a significant departure from traditional police evaluation and disciplinary practices that have generally failed to deal successfully with problem officers. Historically, law-enforcement agencies have been punishment-oriented bureaucracies. In other words, agencies focused on developing rules and regulations used to punish an officer, but gave little attention to establishing procedures designed to reward

good conduct or assisting officers in need. Not unlike employee-assistance programs designed to address substance-abuse problems or family-related issues, the early-warning system provides a way for the department to offer non-disciplinary guidance and training to an officer before he or she becomes a liability to citizens, the department, or him- or herself.

When administered properly, early-warning systems appear to have a positive effect on reducing citizen complaints and modifying the behavior of problematic officers subject to intervention. These systems have not only proven reliable at identifying negative behavior, but also may recognize conduct worthy of praise. A study conducted by the Department of Justice on three police agencies with early-warning systems in effect for approximately four years, revealed the systems had a dramatic effect on the community and the agencies involved. In all three departments, both citizen complaints and use-of-force incidents dropped in some cases by over 60 percent. This information clearly supports the idea that a successful early-intervention system can benefit the entire agency, the community and the problem officer.

Background of Early-Intervention Systems

Early-warning systems originated from a growing amount of research that indicated a few officers were responsible for a disproportionate number of problematic incidents within their agencies. Specifically, this research suggested that 10 percent of police officers are often responsible for causing 90 percent of the problems in a law-enforcement agency. Documentation provided by investigative journalists revealed in some agencies as few as 2 percent of officers were held responsible for 50 percent of the citizen complaints. In 1981, the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights recommended

that all police agencies create early-warning systems to identify problem officers. The aftermath of the Rodney King beating in Los Angeles, in 1991, added further justification for early-warning systems.

Reports such as the U.S. Civil Rights Commission, "Who is Guarding the Guardians?" and the Christopher Report on the Rodney King incident sparked a major push for agencies to develop early-warning systems. By 1999, 27 percent of local law-enforcement agencies serving populations of 50,000 or more had established an early-warning system and another 12 percent were planning on implementing a program. In 2001, the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies (CALEA) adopted standard 35.1.15 requiring a Personnel Early Warning System. Moreover, by 2001, early-warning systems had emerged as a recognized best practice in police accountability and viewed as critical component by the U.S. Department of Justice, federal courts and civil-rights agencies.

How it works

An early-warning system consists of four basic components: performance indicators, identification and selection process, intervention and post-intervention monitoring. Although no specific standards have been established for identifying officers to be selected for early-warning programs, most systems will employ the same basic components, depending on the specific goal of the agency. Most agencies agree that relying on a single indicator such as citizen complaints is not a recommended. The use of a combination of several performance indicators to include citizen complaints, firearm discharge/use of force reports, civil litigation, resisting arrest incidents and high-speed pursuits are all significant measuring devices of potential problem employees.

Once a problematic officer has been identified, the basic intervention strategy involves a combination of deterrence and education. In ad-

dition, these systems require the monitoring of the officer's subsequent performance after the initial intervention. This monitoring is generally informal and conducted by the officer's immediate supervisor. There is no specified timeframe for this follow-up period. Many agencies monitor officers on a case-by-case basis, and some indicate they require a specific time period, such as 36 months.

Issues to Consider

With any data-based system, the quality of the information entered is paramount to the success of program. The information entered into the system should be based on a needs assessment for the organization that clearly identifies the mission and goals the agency is attempting to achieve. Once these are identified, an agency can design and implement hardware and software to meet the specific goals.

Agencies must keep in mind that in addition to tracking complaints, they also must track case findings. This becomes important in preventing false positive findings. Moreover, when tracking complaints, it is critical to have some type of disposition on any findings. Documentation should include if the officer was correct in the action taken, or if not, that some type of remedial training or discipline was afforded to the officer. Other considerations such as the shift worked, area worked, and the accepted norms of the department also are critical to making an informed decision.

For example, an officer may have several felony arrests, with five that resulted in some use of force. If each case was within agency guidelines and the officer has no other indicators, the officer's actions were probably a result of a busy zone and a strong work ethic. In contrast, an officer with one use of force that was not within agency policy that exposed the department to civil liability should be a red flag. Thus, administrators must rely on a *qualitative* analysis in addition to the *quantitative* analysis en-

suring a review of the circumstances of each case.

Early-warning systems are designed to augment the role of supervision, not replace it. Supervisors must be held accountable to assume responsibility for mentoring and monitoring all subordinates' performance in the field, not just those selected to the early-warning program. Total reliance on the early-warning system with no independent observations or input from line supervisors could work to defeat the preventative approach of the system with identification of the problematic officers surfacing only in the acute stages. With this in mind, it becomes critical also to invest in strengthening leadership skills of the line supervisors and discouraging total reliance on the early-warning system.

In conclusion, early-warning systems are a proactive approach to identifying and reducing police misconduct. A properly administered system will not only control officer misconduct but will also promote standards of accountability within a police department. To be effective, administrators must identify the specific needs and goals of the agency and tailor the system to meet those variables. Careful attention must be given to the data entered into the system to ensure that managers are not making decisions based on inaccurate information. When early-warning systems are implemented and analyzed properly, they have proven to be an effective tool to police management.

A 23-year law-enforcement veteran, Lt. Charles Balderstone currently serves as District Commander of the Pasco County Sheriff's Office Uniform Patrol Division. He also has worked as a patrol officer, a detective and supervisor in criminal investigations, and more recently as a commander of the Field Training Program. He can be reached via e-mail: cbalderstone@pascosheriff.org, or phone: 352-518-5060

SHERIFFS DAY AT THE CAPITOL

Though the event took place a week after their headquarters burned to the ground, the Florida Sheriffs Association hosted a very successful "Florida Sheriffs Day at the Capitol." Hundreds of people mingled the courtyard, marveling over the Sheriffs' Office equipment, then enjoyed a fresh seafood lunch from Tallahassee's Seinyard Restaurant. As is their tradition, deputies and other personnel from the Leon County Sheriff's Office served the crowds.

"It was important that we show lawmakers a united front, in spite of the challenge of the fire," said FSA Executive Director Gary Perkins. He and FSA President Baker County Sheriff Joey Dobson used the time to thank firefighters, state officials and others for their support.

Said Perkins, "You were there in our time of need and we appreciate it."



Levy County Implements "Ag Watch"

By Lt. Evan Sullivan
Public Information Officer
Levy County Sheriff's Office

Last fall, Levy County Sheriff Johnny Smith and Florida Cattleman's Association President-Elect Bo Hobby were discussing the future of agriculture and law enforcement. The meeting resulted in a program to unite the two industries. The "Agriculture Watch Program," launched by Sheriff Smith and his staff, will assure that food, farm safety and asset protection are kept on the forefront of peoples' minds.

The primary objective of Ag Watch is to identify farms and farm equipment in an efficient manner for the safety and betterment of all Levy county citizens. The Sheriff's Office begins the process by accepting applications, at no cost, from farm owners and issuing them an Owner Applied Number (OAN). This number is printed on a



Levy County Sheriff
Johnny Smith

high-quality reflective metal sign to mark the entranceways to local farmlands and leased property. The signs can be moved from field to field,

without the farmer re-registering with the Sheriff's Office. The same Owner Applied Number also can be etched on the farmer's equipment, so if it is stolen, it can be traced back to its rightful owner.

When riding through the county, deputies or citizens may see a fence down and cattle on the roadway. All they have to do is make note of the correct Owner Applied Number on the Ag Watch signs and call the toll-free number provided. Ag Watch contact files are available 24 hours a day in the Levy County Communications Center, and the correct farmer can be notified.

The Levy County Ag Watch Program is a hybrid that originated from ideas borrowed from other counties,

including the land watch program from the Polk County Sheriff's Office and an equipment numbering program from Palm Beach Sheriff's Office.

Hobby says he would like to see other counties in the state consider adopting a similar program; Levy County provides a good template for others to follow.

In these tight budget times, some agencies may wonder where to get funding for such a program. Sheriff Smith says he used monies seized from drug dealers and other criminals to fund it.

Ag Watch is open to any industry in the agriculture community by just completing a simple registration form. The 400 signs that have gone up around Levy County are a tribute to the program's success. Sheriff Smith says he looks for this to be the first of many agricultural-based programs increasing faster communications while increasing farm safety.

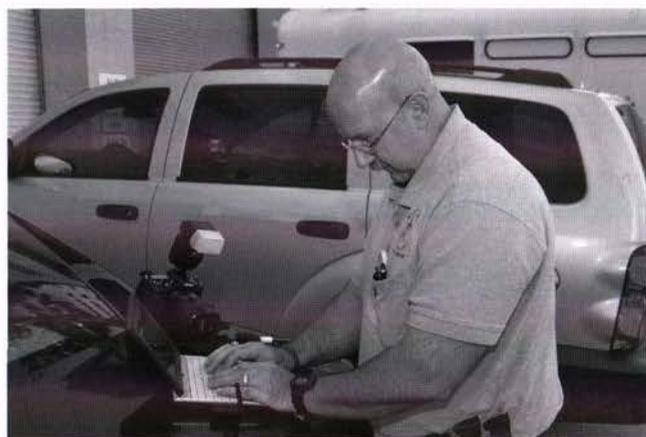
Says Sheriff Smith, "I believe the Ag Watch Program is a win-win situation for the agricultural community, citizens and law enforcement."

Contact Levy County Sheriff's Office Public Information Officer, Lt. Evan Sullivan via e-mail: esullivan@levyso.com/.

Broward Sheriff's Crime Scene Technology Beats the Clock

By Dani Moschella
External Affairs Department
Broward Sheriff's Office

As soon as investigators get to a crime scene, the clock starts ticking. Fingerprints, blood spatter, weapons and other clues await. Every minute counts. But it can take hours to find that evidence, drive it to a lab for analysis and wait for the results, all



while the trail to the perpetrator gets cold. So the crime-scene unit from Broward Sheriff's Office found a faster way.

Using new technology developed

in-house, BSO has become the first agency to transfer and download secured, real-time digital images and data files directly from crime scenes. That means a fingerprint could be linked to a suspect or reveal a victim's identity before the crime scene tape is down. Detectives can

instantly compare notes with agencies nationwide using high-quality photos, fingerprints, diagrams and other information.

"That's huge because it saves

time," says Broward Sheriff Al Lamberti. "Saving a lot of time will help solve those cases."

The old way required investigators to process and clear a crime scene, drive back to the office – sometimes in heavy South Florida traffic – before any real analysis could begin. The investigation came to a halt as evidence was moved from Point A to Point B. Often, analysis had to wait until the following day. What once took hours and days, now takes minutes.

Another key is that the encrypted photos can't be altered once they're sent. Say a bloody fingerprint is lifted from a murder scene and Crime Scene Investigators don't find a match in Florida's Automated Fingerprint Identification System. Before they ever leave the scene, an encrypted image of that print can be sent nationwide.

"Believe it or not, we can send an image to a point of contact at a crime lab in each state to search each state's database instead of sending 50 FedEx," said BSO Crime Scene Sgt. Stewart Mosher. "Now, can every state receive it? Not yet."

But the agency is trying to come up with a way other agencies could access a one-time use Web site to view those photos and files.

Idea borne from frustration

One particularly difficult case for BSO prompted the idea for the new technology. After BSO deputy Brian Tephford was shot and killed during a traffic stop, Mosher was frustrated by the inability to quickly get information back to the lab.

"We would have gotten a clue in minutes that took us five hours to get," Mosher said.

So he went to Alex Rodriguez in

BSO's Bureau of Information Resource Management.

"I said, 'I'm sick of this. Why can't we do this?' He said, 'Sarge, you can.' Alex made it work. Now every idea out of this man's mouth, we jump on," Mosher said.

After a year and half, Mosher's and Rodriguez's ideas have come to fruition. The challenge for Rodriguez was not so much the file transporting technology, but finding something that would protect the files and stand up in court. They decided to use a program so secure, it's also used by the U.S. Department of Defense.

"The U.S. Army is their biggest customer," Rodriguez said. "That was a plus for us."

BSO also has implemented technology at crime scenes that knits together several photographs taken with a 180-degree fisheye lens to cre-

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Why Are We Not Using Psychological Screening to Select Florida Child Protective Investigators?

By Sherri Reaume, M.S.
Manatee County Sheriff's Office

The condition of the child-welfare program in the state of Florida has often been criticized for inefficiency. The recruitment and retention of applicants for child protection team member positions has become a major issue for the Florida Department of Children and Families and designated Sheriffs' offices that employ the investigators of child abuse and neglect. The turnover of child abuse investigators not only reduces the quantity but also the quality of the services provided and negatively affects the program's ability to provide social services to the citizens of Florida.

The media periodically report on situations involving children under

state care who are murdered or seriously injured by their caregiver(s). Often the young, under-trained caseworker or investigator (or both) become the scapegoat for a social-welfare program that simply does not work. As a result of such sensationalized media coverage in Florida, mandatory reporting of child abuse by health and welfare professionals has been implemented,

and the Florida Abuse Hotline and state legislation have made it a second-degree felony for falsifying



Sherri Reaume, M.S.

documents concerning children under state care. Unfortunately, reform driven by media attention is only reactive and does not yield a balanced and flexible system for protecting children.

"In the past, psychological screenings were utilized primarily to screen out bad applicants who were deemed undesirable. Now, based on new personality models and improved testing, it is possible to screen in applicants with the best chance of success based on personality traits that are job related."

A career in child welfare has long been recognized as a demanding and difficult vocational path. With the brutal workloads and inadequate resources to take care of the needs of abused and neglected children, inexperienced investigators are overwhelmed and burn out quickly. Turnover ranges from 30 to 60 percent for child protective investigators in a typical year. What constitutes excessive turnover will vary from job to job. However, generally anything over 20 percent poses a clear threat to the spheres of econom-

ic, human and social capital. Many occupational-stress models emphasize the point that two people who experience the same work environ-

ment may interpret the environment differently. Different responses occur secondary to the intricate relationship between characteristics of the environment and individual personality traits.

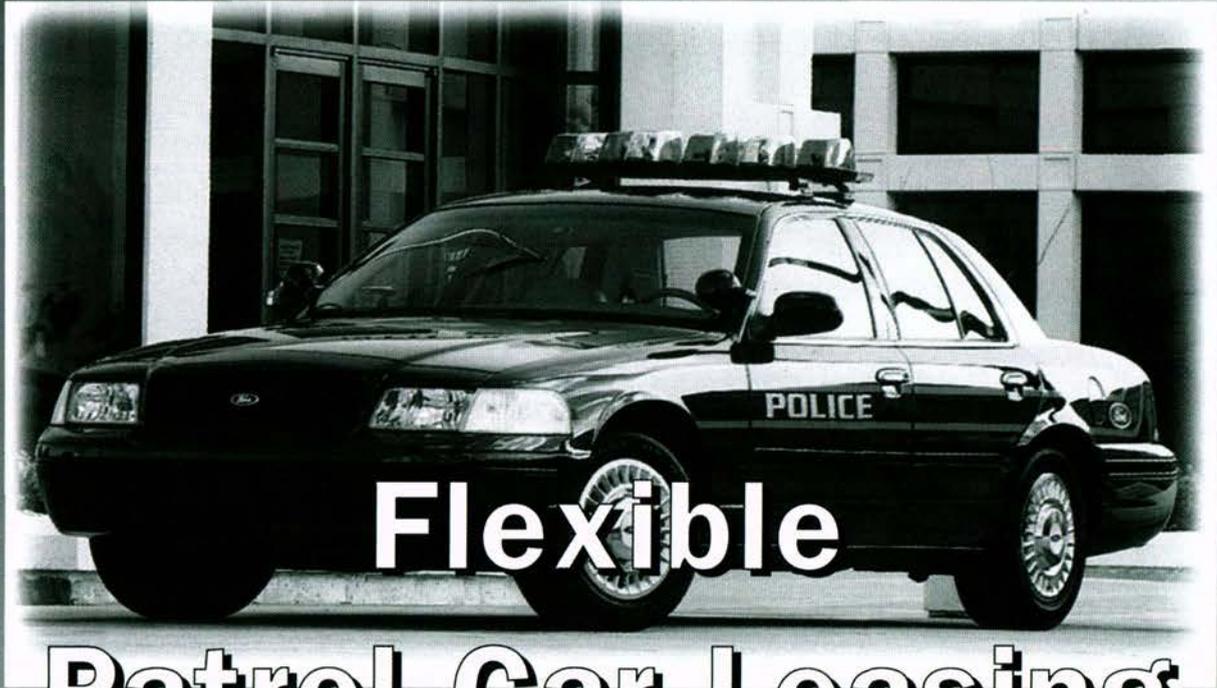
An estimated 1,500 children died of abuse or neglect in the United States in 2003, according to a 2005 report by the U.S.

Department of Health and Human Services. Just how many of those deaths could have been avoided is not ascertainable, but a decline in those numbers due to improved hiring practices within the child-welfare system is long overdue.

Research has demonstrated that some individuals possess personality characteristics that place them at a higher risk for problems if employed in high-risk occupations. These include public-safety positions such as law enforcement, correctional officers, firefighters, air-traffic controllers, airline pilots and nuclear power plant operators.

Over the course of the past 25 years, there have been a number of personality tests used by psychologists to conduct pre-employment screenings on public-safety personnel. Psychological screening can minimize the hiring of inappropriate applicants and is consistent with the safeguards and precautions that the law and common sense dictate. The Pre-Employment Psychological Evaluation Guidelines was developed and adopted by the Police Psychological Services Section of the International

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Why Are We Not Using Psychological. . .

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Association of Chiefs of Police and contains the best practices in the specialty of police psychology. Research suggests that public-safety personnel possess certain emotional qualities and personality traits that differ from the general population. According to a 1991 study by R. E. Inwald and A. L. Brockwell (1991), administration of personality measures with cutoff scores specific to positions of public safety, reduces the rate of termination by half for all public safety personnel.

In the past, psychological screenings were utilized primarily to screen out bad applicants who were deemed undesirable. Now, based on new personality models and improved testing, it is possible to screen in applicants with the best

chance of success based on personality traits that are job related.

The children of America have a right to protection from all forms of maltreatment. Hiring child-protection investigators who possess the personality traits most consistently related to job performance is long overdue. Community-based services with competent, committed workers and sufficiently funded resources will provide child protective services with the means for fulfilling the state performance standards.

Contact Sherri Reaume via e-mail: Sherri.Reaume@manateesherriff.com, or call (941) 747-3011 ext. 2032.

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Tell the law enforcement community what's happening at your agency. E-mail stories and photos, or request writer guidelines, by e-mailing Julie Bettinger, Editor, *All Points Bulletin*, jbettinger@flsheriffs.org.

Broward Sheriff's Crime Scene Technology Beats the Clock

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ate 360-degree images of scenes, giving investigators who are not on site a unique opportunity to virtually walk through a scene. The technology is similar to what is used in a consumer setting (to take virtual tours online of real estate, for example), but BSO has expanded its use. When the case is done, the 360-degree photos can help jurors see exactly what investigators saw at a crime scene. Detectives also can transmit 360-degree crime scene photos to the medical examiner's office to visually compare pattern or tool marks to injuries on a victim.

For a complete view of a fixed object, the program can stitch together multiple images. For example, if crime-scene technicians placed a human skull on a spinning platform, the camera would shoot 36 images of the skull in 10-degree increments as it turns. When viewed, it looks like a video of the skull spinning.

BSO's lab, which is accredited by the American Society of Crime Lab Directors, is a busy place. The lab's 83 employees processed about 77,000 items for 33,000 cases last year. The new technology is a result of a collaborative effort between BSO's crime lab, crime-scene investigators, computer experts and detectives.

Rodriguez relied on senior network analyst Frank Killeen, and Mosher points to Digital Imaging Analyst Tom Hill and Detective Jim Kinney, "who have taken the 360-degree technology to the highest level for forensic applications" for the success of the new program. It's not just for BSO's use, either. Lamberti is making it available to other regional law-enforcement agencies.

That's good news for victims and good news for BSO. Says Mosher, "We won't ever have to wait again."

Contact Dani Moschella by e-mail: Dani_Moschella@sheriff.org, or call (954) 321-4676.

Sheriff Withdraws from Race for State Office

Bradford County Sheriff Bob Milner surprised many people when he announced his withdrawal from the race for Florida House District 12. He has served as Sheriff of Bradford County since 1993 and is plan-

ning to retire at the end of his term in December.

Although it was a difficult decision, Sheriff Milner said that the time commitment being away from his family and primary employment weighed heavily on his decision. The expectation that legislators must put in additional time to achieve leadership positions, "which the citizens deserve,"

was also a concern.

He plans to step outside of the spotlight and devote more time to his grandchildren, church and charitable causes, while being available to his parents and mother-in-law who are in failing health.

"I owe that to them after all they have done for Carol and me for so many years," Milner said.

Polk County Sheriff's Office Un- covers Major Retail Theft Ring

Congratulations to the Polk County Sheriff's Office for taking the lead and shutting down what was considered the largest retail theft ring in the state of Florida – perhaps in the nation. "Opera-

tion Beauty Stop," which involved multiple law enforcement agencies, uncovered the retail theft ring that used common street criminals to steal millions of dollars of merchandise from retailers throughout Central Florida, including Publix, Winn Dixie, Sweet Bay, Albertson's, Wal-Mart and

Target.

"I challenge all law enforcement agencies to look differently at retail theft from now on," said Polk Sheriff Grady Judd. "In this case, what first appeared to be a simple case of shoplifting turned out to be a web of clever thieves."

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