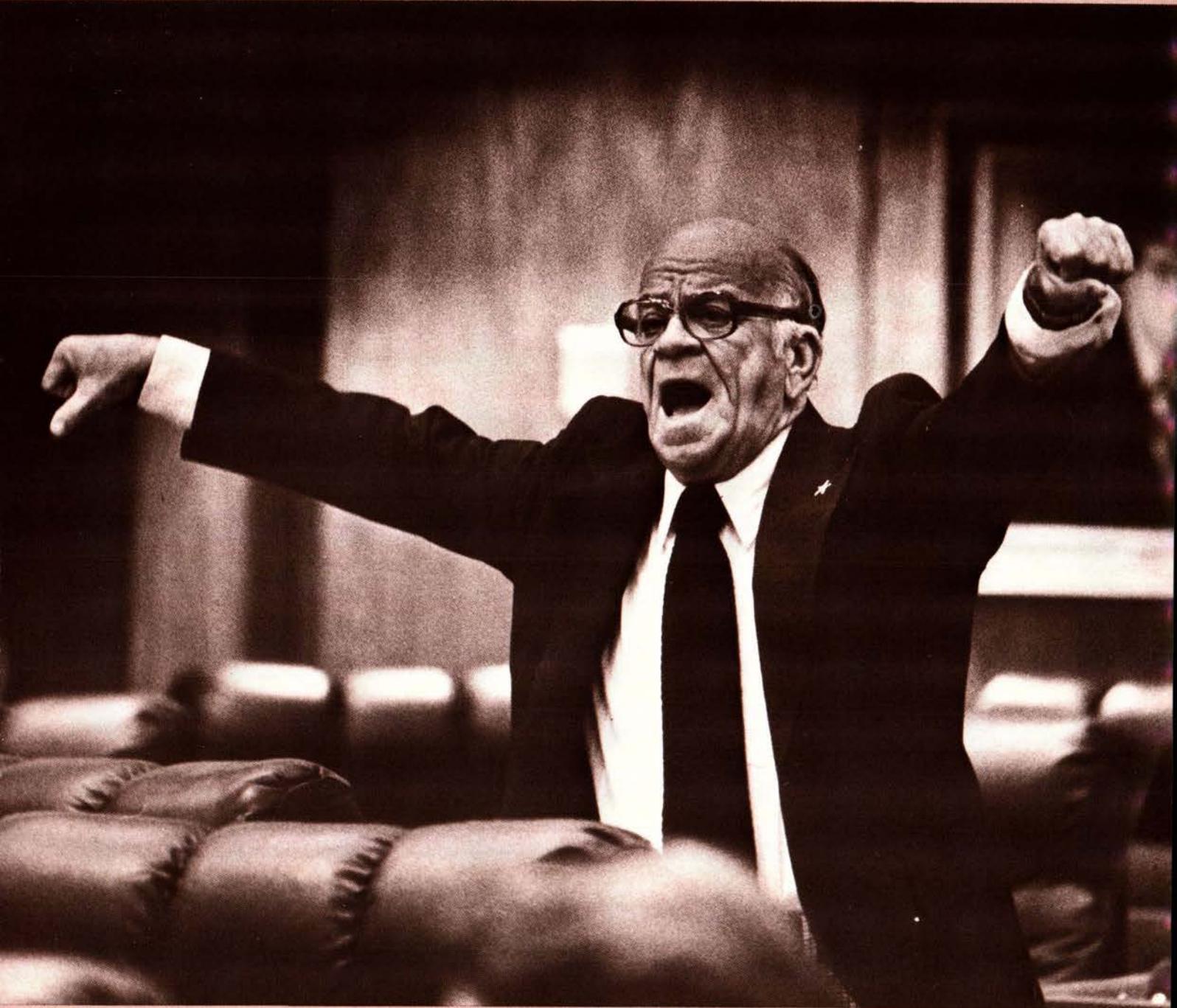


THE SHERIFFS' STAR

PUBLISHED BY THE FLORIDA SHERIFFS ASSOCIATION July-August 1978



Ed's thumbs were really thumbthing!

(see story inside cover)

Ed's thumbs were really thumbthing!

TAMPA — A lot of people are saying a lot of nice things about Ed Blackburn now that he is packing up his laurels and preparing to retire from the Florida Legislature.

A Tampa newspaper famous for skewering politicians gave him an editorial pat on the back. Colleagues are sadly calculating what his departure will do to the power structure in the lawmaking arena. High government officials are reciting a litany of his good deeds -- but for some reason no one has mentioned his thumbs.

Someone should, because it was his eloquent thumbs -- the right one especially -- that enabled him to acquire his reputation as a tough hombre with a flair for shooting down bad bills.

And it was these same dynamic digits that shaped his image as a mover and sponsor of good bills. Thumbs up, and a good bill gathered momentum. Thumbs down, and the death rattle of a bad bill could be heard in the top row of the spectators' gallery.

Since Ed is a former Sheriff, and still thinks like a Sheriff, his thumbs were often seen semaphoring around at the cutting edge of some maneuver orchestrated by the Florida Sheriffs Association. Is it any wonder then that Sheriffs have a special affection for his thumbs? Are they serious when they talk about having Ed's thumbs immortalized in bronze?

If they are, they are overlooking the fact that Ed is a man of many parts, and any partiality to the thumbs may stir up a strong public campaign to enshrine all of him.

There would be quite a clamor in Tampa -- a pitched battle perhaps between the aging crooks who remember him as a Sheriff who couldn't be corrupted (and, of course, want no part of him), and the citizens who owe him a debt of gratitude for creating an image of integrity in a Sheriff's office formerly riddled with charges of corruption.

The folks in Ybor City, to whom Ed is more of a Latin than a real Latin, would insist upon an equestrian statue on a public square -- unarmed, of course, since Ed's lack of marksmanship is legendary.

Any move to immortalize the titan of the thumbs would also cause the criminal justice community to demand a piece of the action, since Ed has been identified in one way or another with practically every progressive law enforcement attainment in recent decades.

He is, after all, a past president of the Florida Sheriffs Association. He was a founder of the Florida Sheriffs Bureau, a moving force behind the Florida Law Enforcement Academy, and Vice Chairman of the Criminal Justice Committee in the Florida House of Representatives. He casts a long shadow across the criminal justice landscape, but this is a tribute to the tough, plucky, hard nosed side of Ed Blackburn, and there is another side -- a soft side that is seldom in the public eye.



Ed Blackburn was shouting down an amendment in the Florida House of Representatives when this picture was taken, but his thumb, rather than his voice, carried the most potent message.

Ed is capable of tears and sentimentality. He also writes poetry, and a homeless child with a hard luck story can turn him into a toothless tiger. He and the late Don McLeod, former Director of the Florida Sheriffs Bureau, have been credited with proposing the Florida Sheriffs Boys Ranch to the Florida Sheriffs Association.

When the Association approved their proposal to establish a home for needy youngsters, Ed became a trustee and the first Executive Director of the Ranch, a position that was all prestige and no pay.

That was around 1958, when he was Sheriff of Hillsborough County and the Boys Ranch was nothing more than an impoverished dream. Nevertheless, Ed had visions of the dream becoming a reality, and as he traveled around the state at his own expense, buttonholing prospective donors and making emotional luncheon speeches, the news media got to calling him "Mister Boys Ranch." He liked it, and today, although his wall sags with honors conferred by certificates and plaques, this is still his favorite title.

Apparently his soft side is the side Ed likes best -- at least that's the message a friend got when Ed was telling him about the annual Boys Ranch Alumni Association banquet.

"I try not to miss those banquets," Ed said. "I get a special charge out of seeing former Ranchers return as successful citizens, husbands and fathers. They gave me their 'Our Friend Award' in 1976, and, of course, I really treasure that.

"Well, this year when the banquet was over a young man walked up to me, a former Rancher, and said, 'Thanks for what you did to change my life.' That's all he said, just 'Thanks for what you did to change my life,' but I'll tell you what, those few words mean more to me than all the plaques on my wall."

THE SHERIFFS

STAR

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The Swap Shop had a deserted look after its real identity was disclosed.



Sheriff Frank Wanicka, Capt. Don Schmitt and State Attorney Joe D'Alessandro (left to right) with stolen property recovered through the Swap Shop.

The sign said: "WE BUY ANYTHING"

Next Door Was a Fish Market,
but the Biggest Fish were
Being Caught at the Swap Shop

FORT MYERS — "We Pay Cash -- We Buy Anything" the sign said, and business was brisk at the Swap Shop on Palmetto Street.

Printed flyers announcing the opening had been handed out in taverns around town. The word was out that the sign meant what it said. The guys running the shop seemed like the kind that could be trusted -- a little scruffy looking, perhaps, but they didn't ask a lot of embarrassing questions when somebody brought in a bicycle or a television set to sell.

The shop operators didn't act nosy, but naturally some of the customers felt like bragging a little, even if no one asked them anything. At times the shop was almost like a neighborhood club -- guys standing around talking about jobs they had been involved in, places they had ripped off.

One character showed up with a 1968 Chevrolet truck and offered to sell it for \$75. Anyone could have guessed it was stolen, but the swap shop operators forked over the \$75, no questions asked.

It seemed strange this place hadn't been knocked off by the police or the Sheriff's office, because the operators were taking a lot of chances -- buying hard drugs and travelers checks. Anyone who buys travelers checks from a guy who walks in off the street couldn't be on the up and up.

No he couldn't, and the truth came out after three months of booming business. The Swap Shop had been set up by Sheriff Frank Wanicka and State Attorney Joe D'Alessandro as an "undercover sting operation," and the day after it closed down the Lee County jail began to fill up.

Armed with evidence obtained in the shop with the aid of a two-way mirror, video camera and recording equipment, Wanicka and D'Alessandro processed arrest warrants for 20 people, and announced there would probably be further arrests on a variety of charges.

Wanicka said the undercover deputies in the shop spent about \$2,000 to purchase stolen property worth about \$20,000

and also obtained valuable evidence about crimes other than burglaries.

The person who sold the traveler's checks was found to have been involved in armed robberies at local motels.

Two individuals who came into the shop to sell a stolen television set talked freely about their involvement in burglary and armed robbery cases.

The sign at one end of the building said "Fish Market," but it seemed that all the fish were being caught at the Swap Shop located at the opposite end.

Six cases were made involving sale of drugs, including heroin, cocaine and "speed." Wanicka and D'Alessandro said they also expected to seize several vehicles as the result of Swap Shop evidence that the vehicles had been used in transporting illegal drugs.

At times the Swap Shop operation became rather "sticky." On one occasion a thief and his victim came in at the same time, and the victim was demanding the return of property the thief had stolen and sold at the Swap Shop. The owner threatened to have the shop operators arrested, but didn't follow through.

An irate citizen complained to Capt. Don Schmitt about the failure of the Sheriff's office to solve a burglary and recover stolen jewelry stolen from the citizen's home. Schmitt, who was in charge of the Swap Shop, could not disclose until later that the stolen jewelry had been purchased in the shop and evidence had been obtained to solve the burglary.

Wanicka and D'Alessandro said the success of the undercover sting operation could be credited to careful planning and organization, plus close cooperation among all law enforcement agencies.

They pointed out the Swap Shop project revealed once again the "close relationship between burglars, thieves and narcotics dealers and users."

REPORT '78

The Legislature and Law Enforcement

*Summaries and photos by Al Hammock,
Florida Sheriffs Association*

On this and following pages are brief summaries of new laws having to do with the criminal justice system and thought to be of interest to readers of THE SHERIFF'S STAR.

CONSERVATION

Chapter 78-173
Senate Bill 321

A new section of the Florida Statutes is created making it a third degree felony to kill a Florida panther which is on the endangered species list. Another addition declares that keeping illegally killed deer or wild turkey for sale or actually selling it is a third degree misdemeanor. Effective October 1, 1978.

Chapter 78-252
Senate Bill 557

The manatee or sea cow has long been protected by Florida law, but passage of the Florida Manatee Sanctuary Act provides more protection for the docile and harmless mammal. The whole state is declared a refuge and sanctuary for the manatee, the state's marine mammal. Molesting, hunting, injuring, killing or capturing a manatee was a misdemeanor of the second degree — it is now a misdemeanor of the first degree. The new law provides for the confiscation of any equipment or vehicles used in violation of this law. The Department of Natural Resources (DNR) is directed to adopt procedures to regulate the operation and speed of motorboat traffic between November 15 and March 31 (wintering dates for the manatee in Florida) in nine specific locations. Six of the channels of water are where power plants discharge warm water into rivers or other bodies of water. The DNR is also given authority to add to the list of protected areas if other warm water areas are created or found which attract a concentration of sea cows. Effective July 1, 1978.

CORRECTIONS

Chapter 78-318
House Bill 73

Everyone has read news stories about robberies, rapes and murders being committed by people placed on parole after having served only a fraction of the time for which they were sentenced. This bill places a limit on the authority of the

(The Senators and Representatives pictured on these pages serve on the Senate Judiciary-Criminal Committee or the House Criminal Justice Committee.)



Rep. Curt Kiser, Clearwater (left); Rep. Ed Blackburn, Jr., (center); Rep. Joseph M. Gersten, Miami

Parole and Probation Commission to release prisoners who have committed serious crimes in the past. A trial court judge can now retain jurisdiction over a prisoner who is convicted of murder, robbery, aggravated assault, aggravated battery, kidnapping, sexual battery, arson or any felony involving the use of a firearm or the use of violence. The judge is only allowed to retain jurisdiction during the first one-third of the prisoner's maximum sentence, but if the Commission believes the person should be paroled within that period, the judge can review the Commission's parole decision and either approve or reject the parole. Effective upon becoming law, June 19, 1978.

Chapter 78-417
House Bill 936

In an effort to be sure the Parole and Probation Commission (PPC) would be free of political influence in the granting of paroles, the Commission was originally given wide authori-

ty to grant parole to inmates almost any time during their prison sentences. Parole release decisions have not been subject to either judicial or internal review so the Commission has not often been held responsible for its decisions. The effect of this law will be to require the Commission to put in writing the guidelines to be used in determining when an inmate is ready to be placed on parole. In the future, the Commission will be held accountable for all release decisions, including those made outside its own guidelines. Tentative release dates for prisoners are to be established with the offender's first year in prison. Later, fixed release dates are to be set. The organizational structure of the Commission has been criticized in the past and has been changed by this law and the Commission Chairman has been given additional administrative responsibilities. The seven members of the Commission presently serve 6-year terms and are appointed and reappointed by the Governor and Cabinet. To provide more accountability, PPC members will be evaluated at the end of their terms by the Parole and Probation Commission Qualifications Committee and recommendations given to the Governor and Cabinet as to whether the member should be retained, considered along with other eligible persons or replaced. Effective date is July 1, 1978, except that the Commission is given up to two years to implement all the changes.

Chapter 78-441
House Bill 1990

This might be called the Financial Disclosure Law for State Prisoners because it requires prisoners to disclose all revenue or assets as a condition of parole eligibility. From such funds prisoners are to make payments to the victims of their crimes in an amount equal to the cost of housing and feeding the prisoner. Effective October 1, 1978.

CRIMINAL LAWS

Chapter 78-36
Senate Bill 101

A revision of the "bookmaking" statute to: broaden the definition of bookmaking to cover almost any type of betting situation; increase the penalty from a first degree misdemeanor (up to one year in jail) to a third degree felony (up to five years); eliminate the possibility of the sentence being suspended or withheld; make it a third degree felony, instead of a second degree misdemeanor, to engage in bookmaking on the grounds of a horse track, dog track or jai alai fronton; and require track and fronton owners to display warnings against bookmaking. Effective upon becoming a law, May 11, 1978.

Chapter 78-92
House Bill 1305

The Florida Computer Crimes Act was passed because computer-related crime is a growing problem in government and private business; because computer-related crime losses tend to be much larger than losses associated with other white collar crime; and because there are so many opportunities for criminal acts in the fast-growing area of computerization. The law provides that offenses can be committed against intellectual property (stored data and programs), computer equipment or supplies or against computer users. Punishment for violations of the various sections of law ranges from a mis-

demeanor of the first degree to a felony of the second degree. As an example, someone altering the information stored in a computer, without authorization, would be guilty of felony of the third degree, but if the alteration were done with the intent to defraud or obtain property, it would be a felony of the second degree and carry a stiffer penalty. Effective August 1, 1978.

Chapter 78-172
Senate Bill 186

Declares that any place unlawful, obscene materials are sold or obscene performances are viewed is a public nuisance and is prohibited. Also declares it is unlawful and a public nuisance for anyone connected with a drive-in theater to knowingly show any motion picture depicting nudity, which is harmful to minors, if the movie is visible from any public street or public place outside the drive-in theater. Public nuisances are misdemeanors of the second degree and can be removed and suppressed based upon the verdict of 12 householders. Such verdicts are carried out by the Sheriff of the county. Effective October 1, 1978.

Chapter 78-202
House Bill 415

The Florida Litter Law was passed in 1971 and this revision distinguishes between a little and a lot of litter. Prior to the effective date of this law, anyone convicted of littering was guilty of a second degree misdemeanor, punishable by up to a 60-day jail term and/or a fine not to exceed \$500. That jail term and/or fine still applies if the amount of litter weighs 5 pounds or more. When the total amount of litter weighs less than 5 pounds the violator is guilty of a non-criminal violation and is to be fined \$25. The act further provides a judge can impose civil penalties such as picking up litter from along the roadside. The fines collected are to be used by the counties and cities for litter control. Effective upon becoming law, June 14, 1978.

Chapter 78-210
House Bill 1487

Defines "organized fraud" as "a scheme or operation by fraud or misrepresentation whereby any person obtains any property of an aggregate value of \$50,000 or more from five or more victims." Any person committing such a crime, and convicted of it, is guilty of a felony of the first degree. Effective October 1, 1978.

DRIVERS LICENSES and MOTOR VEHICLES

Chapter 78-111
Senate Bill 408

If you ever have trouble getting parts for your car, you will be glad to know the vehicle inspection law has been amended to allow up to 90 days for correction of a defect if a part cannot be ordered and the defect corrected within the normal 30 days. You'll need the inspection receipt and the statement as to what needs to be corrected along with a dated copy of the order for the necessary part. Together, they will serve as a temporary valid inspection permit. Effective July 1, 1978.

(continued on next page)

REPORT '78

Drivers Licenses and Motor Vehicles *continued*

Chapter 78-112 Senate Bill 439

This law cracks down on motor vehicles whose "continued operation would probably present an unduly hazardous operating condition." Law enforcement officers can now require such vehicles to be "immediately repaired or removed from use." However, if the missing or unrepaired part does not constitute an immediate hazard, the officer is to give the owner or driver written notice to require proper repair and adjustment within 48 hours, excluding Sunday. Effective July 1, 1978.

Chapter 78-353 House Bill 261

All moped operators must now hold either a restricted operator, operator or chauffeur license. This means the youngest moped operator has to be at least 15 years old and is limited to riding during daylight hours until 60 days before his 16th birthday when he can start preparing to take the examination for a regular driver's license. After January 1, 1979, mopeds must display a special moped tag. Effective July 1, 1978.

Chapter 78-363 Senate Bill 416

Exempts ancient motor vehicles (35 or more years old) from the requirements of the motor vehicle safety equipment inspection law, as long as they are operated primarily for the purpose of historical exhibition. Another section requires every county to have at least one vehicle inspection station open on Saturday, while permitting that station to close on a weekday. Counties with a population of less than 25,000 or privately-run inspection stations are exempt from the requirement. The definition of an antique automobile or truck (20 or more years old) is changed so that the engine also has to be 20 or more years old or manufactured to the specifications of the original engine. Also requires that the engine of an ancient motor vehicle be 35 or more years old. Effective July 1, 1978.

Chapter 78-412 House Bill 829

Increases the penalty for counterfeiting license plates and revalidation stickers from a misdemeanor of the second degree to a third degree felony. To facilitate the locating of stolen vehicles, the investigation of titling and registration of vehicles and to inspect vehicles wrecked or dismantled, this law gives any law enforcement officer the right to, "inspect any junkyard, scrap metal processing plant, motor vehicle salvage yard, licensed motor vehicle dealer's lot, motor vehicle repair shop, parking lot, public garage or any other establishment dealing with salvaged motor vehicle parts." Increases from a second degree misdemeanor to a third degree felony the penalty for obtaining custody of a motor vehicle through fraud or deceit. The same increased penalty applies to the person who rents a car with no intention of paying. Effective October 1, 1978.



Sheriffs Association Assistant General Counsel Jack Skelding (left), attending a meeting of the Senate Judiciary-Criminal Committee.

JUVENILES

Chapter 78-84 Senate Bill 165

The Florida Youthful Offender Act revises the sentencing and correctional handling of first time felony offenders between the ages of 18 and 21 committed to the Department of Corrections (DOC). The law attempts to fill the gap between juvenile training schools operated by the Department of Health and Rehabilitative Services and the state prisons of DOC. Courts are given three options in dealing with the youthful offender: (1) placement in a local probation program for supervision in the community and possible performance of public service activities and/or assistance to the crime victim; (2) commitment to DOC for up to five years; (3) shock probation or incarceration for up to 60 days with subsequent modification of the sentence by the court. On the one hand the law seeks to "improve the chances of correction and successful return to the community of youthful offenders sentenced to imprisonment by preventing their association with older and more experienced criminals" while giving the courts additional alternatives to use "when dealing with offenders who have demonstrated they can no longer be handled safely as juveniles and require more substantial limitations upon their liberty to ensure the protection of society." Effective October 1, 1978.

Chapter 78-273 House Bill 571

Makes it a misdemeanor for a merchant to have on display and within the reach of minors any book or magazine which on the cover "depicts nudity which is harmful to minor." Such magazines can be sold and displayed if they are covered in a manner that conceals the nudity and if they are not in the reach of minors. Effective July 1, 1978.

Chapter 78-326 Senate Bill 250

Makes it unlawful for anyone to bring into or send out of the state any photograph, motion picture, show or other presentation which depicts sexual conduct, sexual excitement or



Senator Edgar M. Dunn, Jr.,
Chairman, Senate Judiciary-
Criminal Committee



Rep. Barry Richard, Coral Gables



Senator David McClain, Tampa

sadomasochistic abuse involving a minor. It was already illegal for anyone to have such materials in their possession and this law adds a provision that possession of three or more photographs or movies is evidence of an intent to sell or otherwise distribute such material. The penalty for violation is increased from a felony of the third degree to a second degree felony. This law really cracks down on people who get minors involved in obscene and indecent acts or arrange for them to be photographed or filmed. The penalty used to be a misdemeanor of the second degree; now it's a felony of the second degree. Effective October 1, 1978.

Chapter 78-414
Senate Bill 119

The Florida Juvenile Justice Act is an extensive revision of Chapter 39 of the Florida Statutes having to do with the handling of juveniles in the criminal justice system. For law enforcement officers, some of the most important changes are in the duties and responsibilities of the intake officer who in the past has made many judge and jury decisions about what is to be done with a juvenile who has been arrested by police officers. Police officials have complained that juveniles who commit felony crimes are often back on the street before the police officer or deputy sheriff can fill out a report. It will be up to a judge, not an intake officer, to decide if a juvenile is to be held in custody. The state attorney is given greater authority to file a case against a juvenile. Many law enforcement officials feel the way to get to a juvenile is through the parents. With this in mind, it will now be possible to publish the names of juveniles arrested. It used to be a game for juveniles to escape from juvenile detention facilities, now it will be a felony of the third degree. There is to be greater control by the circuit court over traffic offenses committed by juveniles. The law gives judges more alternatives to choose from in dealing with delinquents -- the court can require the juvenile to attend a traffic school, pay a traffic fine, render a public service or work in a community service project. Effective October 1, 1978.

MISCELLANEOUS

Chapter 78-46
House Bill 617

In 1972 the Florida Legislature designated the month of May of each year as Law Enforcement Appreciation Month "in honor of the officers who perform a very necessary and dangerous service to the citizens of this state." This year the Legislature set aside May 15 of each year as "Law Enforcement Memorial Day" so the citizens of Florida will "pause in memory of those law enforcement officers who have given their lives" in the performance of their duty. Effective upon becoming law May 18, 1978.

Chapter 78-124
Senate Bill 1279

The Law Enforcement Funds Act is a new law which seeks to regulate groups and organizations raising money in the name of some law enforcement agency or group. The Department of State is given responsibility for administering the law which is closely patterned after the Charitable Funds Act. It became necessary to have such a law when certain groups invoked the words "police," "Sheriff" and "law enforcement" to raise large sums of money with as much as 80 per cent of all income being spent to raise more money. This law requires: professional solicitors to register with the Secretary of State; certification of organizations wishing to raise money; a listing of the names and addresses of officers; a copy of a financial statement, along with a detailed report on the amount of money raised and the cost of raising it. Professional solicitors must identify themselves as such, and their fee can be no more than 25 per cent of the amount of money raised. Organizations registered under the provisions of this law can spend no more than 25 per cent of their gross contributions for fund raising. Every form of solicitation must disclose the organization is not a charity. Effective October 1, 1978.

Chapter 78-178
Senate Bill 806

Automated telephone systems which select and dial tele-

(continued on page 8)

Kids, Cops and Lollipops



Deputy Sheriff Tom Savage with Julie Platt.

SARASOTA — Cpl. Tom Savage, an ordained Unitarian minister, who is also a Sarasota County Deputy Sheriff, is known to thousands of school children as “Officer Friendly” — a title he used when he visited the lower grades of public schools to establish good rapport between youngsters and law enforcement officers. He gave the kids rides in his patrol car, took them on field trips to the county jail and other points of interest in the criminal justice system, and talked to them about vandalism and child molesters. The program had many good results. It stressed safety, good citizenship and respect for the law; and it also produced an unexpected fringe benefit: hundreds of amusing and touching “fan mail” letters from school children to Deputy Savage. Quotes from a number of these letters have been selected at random and printed here with the permission of Deputy Savage and Sheriff Jim Hardcastle. “All I ask,” said Deputy Savage, “is that you change the names to protect those kids who are so magnificently innocent.” We did, and we also asked Cartoonist Sandy Dean to add a few appropriate drawings. This is the first of two installments.

Dear Deputy Savage

Thank you for all the pictures you brought to our school. Some were good. Some were ugly. The ugly ones were best.

Jane

My dad said you were his teacher in drunk school. I can't tell you what else he said.

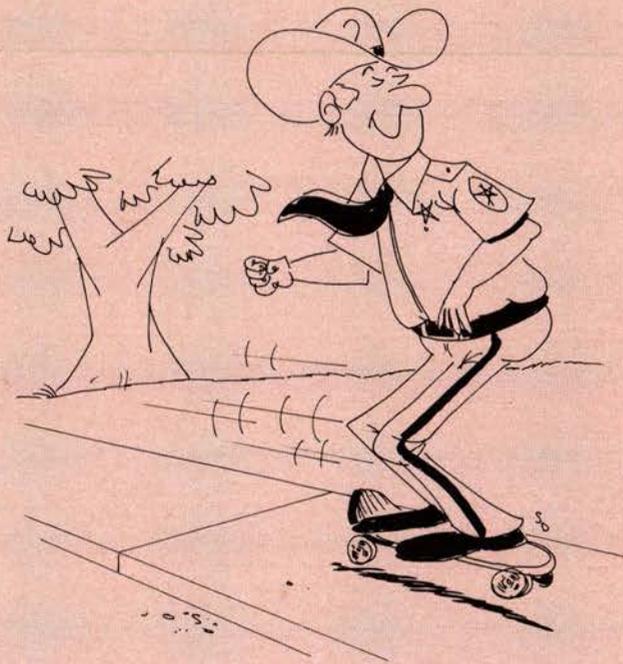
Williene

What did the policeman say to the patient?
You in for a rest? Get it?

Lori

I like the patrol car and the siren. When the bus driver sees you he gets mad. I think you gave him a ticket once or made him go to jail. I figure he probably doesn't like us either.

Lyle



Please patrol in my neighborhood. You can stop and ride my skateboard if you want to.
Wayne

Today we learned about road signs. Road signs have different shapes and different colors. Some are big and some are small. Who needs them.

Shawn

I can drink two cokes and not breathe. My brother can too, but he faints. We both plan to be policemen. Can you get us in?
Boyd



What is the problem with a dirty old man? Get a rope, tie him in the tub and clean him up.

Darla

I am a sixth grader and especially enjoyed the big trial where I got to be on the jury. He was guilty. I mean, I have seen guilty people in my time, but he was so guilty I couldn't wait to vote.

John

Come back and talk to us in code. I know that 10/4 means yes, and that 10/54 means no. What is the code for maybe?

Ivan

Today we learned not to tease alligators or talk to strangers. The alligator might bite you and the marshmallows. And keep away from the ditch where the alligators like to sit and swim because that is his home. Don't feed strangers anything.

Jesse

Seeing all the policemen working in the office made me understand why people act so bad on the streets. What we need are more police walking around and less typing.

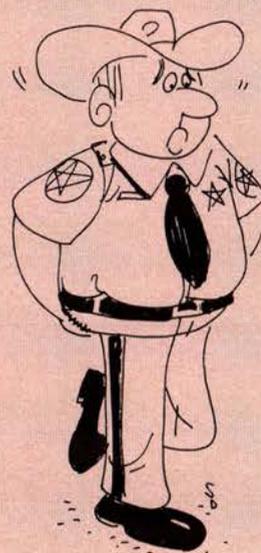
Nina

Thank you for a good introduction to crime. I want to be a deputy when I grow up and I needed to know what to expect. Lots of trouble.

Bernard

Our teacher is going to come back and see you if you want to. She keeps us quiet most of the time and will do anything you want.

Sarah



When you came to our class you ripped your pants. This was the best program this year.

Gino

REPORT '78

Miscellaneous *continued from page 5*

phone numbers and then play recorded messages are prohibited under the terms of this law when used to sell any goods or services. Automated answering devices are not affected. Anyone violating this law is guilty of a misdemeanor of the second degree. The Florida Attorney General or any telephone company is authorized to seek an injunction to halt the use of such devices. Effective upon becoming law, June 8, 1978.

Chapter 78-281
Senate Bill 649

Provides for the Department of Health and Rehabilitative Services to certify spouse abuse (wife or husband beating) centers for the prevention, care, treatment and rehabilitation of persons who are abused and those who do the abusing. Outlines duties of the Department to regulate centers and report yearly on the status of spouse abuse in the state. Where centers are available, law enforcement officers are encouraged to advise the abused spouse of any nearby center. Effective October 1, 1978.

Chapter 78-308
House Bills 1140 and 2093

This law relates generally to the state retirement system, but only those provisions having to do with special risk retirement are summarized here. Special risk refers to law enforcement officers, firefighters and correctional officers who participate in the state retirement system. This classification was created to allow these certain groups of employees to retire at an earlier age or after fewer years of service because of the physical and mental demands placed on the individual, due to the nature of the job. Special risk has now been redefined so that some people who may have been eligible for the classification before are now clearly no longer qualified. A law enforcement officer is now defined as a person engaged in the pursuit, apprehension and arrest of criminals or the supervisor of such officers. Eliminated are officers who started out in special risk type duties, but were later transferred to strictly administrative positions. Because a person in special risk can retire earlier than people in the regular state retirement system, more money has to be contributed over a shorter period of time. Because of legislative changes four years ago, not enough money has been going in to make the system actuarially sound, so additional funds are going to be contributed to the fund, but all contributions are paid by the employer and employees are not affected. These House bills were opposed by members of the special risk classification because the retirement benefits were reduced to further insure the fiscal soundness of the system by reducing the benefit from 3% to 2% for all years after October 1, 1978, the effective date. (Editor's note -- The Florida Sheriffs Association is presently involved in a law suit contesting the constitutionality of some of the changes contained in this law. The Association contends the state entered into a contract with members of the special risk classification and promised to provide certain benefits upon retirement, and this new law effectively violates the terms of the contract by reducing benefits.)

Chapter 78-338
Senate Bill 1272

This law provides that if a special risk member of the Florida Retirement System (deputy sheriff, highway patrolman, firefighter, etc.) is killed in the line of duty, any dependent child is entitled to a full waiver of undergraduate fees at a state university, community college or vocational-technical school until age 25. Effective upon becoming law, June 20, 1978.

Chapter 78-413
House Bill 1237

Establishes the Controlled Substances Therapeutic Research Act so that cannabis, or marijuana, can be distributed to patients suffering from the ill effects of cancer chemotherapy and glaucoma. Because recent research has shown marijuana may be useful in alleviating such ill effects, "the Legislature ... finds there is a need for further research and experimentation with regard to the use of cannabis under strictly controlled circumstances." A Patient Qualification Review Board, of doctors, is to be appointed by the Secretary of the Department of Health and Rehabilitative Services and the Board must certify a patient for inclusion in the program. The marijuana will be distributed through state-operated pharmacies. Effective July 1, 1978.

POLICE POWERS

Chapter 78-195
Senate Bill 782

Amends the Florida Comprehensive Drug Abuse, Prevention and Control Act by adding approximately 10 drugs to the list of controlled substances. Two of the better known drugs now regulated by state law are valium and librium. With the addition of these several drugs, the lists of federal and state controlled substances are almost identical. The importance of this change is that now local law enforcement officers can charge people with violating a state statute if they are caught abusing the new drugs, while before, they had to be charged under a federal statute, which meant a trip to federal court. Effective upon becoming law, June 12, 1978.

Chapter 78-227
Senate Bill 588

Authorizes state attorneys to employ municipal or county police officers or sheriffs' deputies as investigators for the state attorney's office to serve on a special task force investigating organized crime. The salaries of such officers will be paid by the city, county or sheriff, and such officers will have full powers of arrest throughout the judicial circuit, but only in relation to their assigned duties as part of a task force, and only with the consent of the city, county or sheriff. The law also requires each state attorney to report on January 1 of each year to the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House on the number of local law enforcement officers utilized under the terms of this law and the estimated number to be used for the upcoming year. Effective July 1, 1978.

Chapter 78-246
Senate Bill 193

Basically a clarification of the fresh pursuit or "hot pursuit" section of the law which allows a state, county or municipal

CRIMES, PUNISHMENTS and FINES

Penalties for crimes committed in Florida fall into seven categories:

Capital felony — life imprisonment with no parole for 25 years or the death penalty (no fine provided for)

Life felony — life or a term of years not less than 30; a fine not exceeding \$15,000

Felony of the first degree — a term of imprisonment not exceeding 30 years; fine not to exceed \$10,000

Felony of the second degree — a term of imprisonment not exceeding 15 years; a fine not exceeding \$10,000

Felony of the third degree — a term of imprisonment not exceeding 5 years; a fine not exceeding \$5,000

Misdemeanor of the first degree — a term of imprisonment not to exceed one year; a fine not to exceed \$1,000

Misdemeanor of the second degree — a term of imprisonment not to exceed 60 days; a fine not to exceed \$500

These are not the only penalties — additional time may be given to persons found to be habitual felony offenders and the use of a weapon to commit a crime may cause it to be reclassified from, for instance, a felony of the third degree to a second degree felony.

There is also a provision that the use of a gun to commit, or attempt to commit the crimes of murder, sexual battery, robbery, burglary, arson, aggravated assault, aggravated battery, kidnapping, escape, breaking and entering to commit a felony or aircraft piracy will be punished by a minimum sentence of 3 years in prison with no provision for parole. But 3 years is the minimum, and convicted felons may receive up to, and including, life or the death penalty.

law enforcement officer to arrest a person outside the officer's jurisdiction. Fresh pursuit is defined for the first time as "pursuit of a person who has committed a felony or who is reasonably suspected of having committed a felony." The next line of the definition almost needs its own definition — "It shall also include the pursuit of a person suspected of having committed a supposed felony, though no felony has actually been committed, if there is reasonable ground for believing that a felony has been committed." Fresh pursuit also covers the pursuit of a person who violates a city ordinance or commits a misdemeanor. When an officer makes a fresh pursuit arrest outside his jurisdiction, he is required to immediately notify the officer in charge of the jurisdiction and together they are to take the arrested person before a judge. When an officer must travel into another jurisdiction to make an arrest, the law provides his agency

shall be liable for all his actions. (This bill was opposed for several years by the Florida Sheriffs Association because earlier versions permitted law enforcement agencies to conduct complete investigations outside their jurisdictions which would have resulted in an overlapping and duplication of effort.) Effective upon becoming law, June 14, 1978.

Chapter 78-258
Senate Bill 599

Within the Department of Insurance the Division of Fraudulent Claims has been renamed the Division of Insurance Fraud and the Division's investigators have been given the power to "make arrests for criminal violations established as a result of investigations only." Investigators also have the authority to execute arrest warrants and search warrants, serve subpoenas in connection with their investigations and arrest, without warrants, any persons found in the act of violating laws under their jurisdiction. These investigators are not permitted to carry firearms or other weapons, and it is unlawful for anyone to resist an arrest by one of them. Effective July 1, 1978.

Chapter 78-347
House Bill 847

In 1974 the Legislature reorganized the Department of Law Enforcement and renamed it the Department of Criminal Law Enforcement. In 1978 the same department was reorganized very slightly, and it was renamed the Department of Law Enforcement. In this five page bill the word, Criminal, is removed 27 times. Effective October 1, 1978.

TRAFFIC

Chapter 78-52
Senate Bill 227

School buses were already required to stop at railroad grade crossings, but they did not have to stop if there was a traffic control device or police officer directing traffic. This amendment to the law requires any school bus carrying any school child to stop at all railroad crossings, unless directed by a police officer to proceed. In other words, school bus drivers are not to trust traffic control devices, but they can trust police officers. Effective July 1, 1978.

Chapter 78-355 Chapter 78-238
House Bill 1200 also Senate Bill 804

In an effort to protect and manage Florida's wildlife environment, this law gives the Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission authority to regulate and prohibit motor vehicles on public lands. Provides that anyone damaging public lands by the use of a motor vehicle is guilty of a misdemeanor of the second degree. Public lands include trees, plants, sand dunes or other environmentally sensitive land. Anyone operating a motor vehicle on state land can be held civilly liable for the actual damage done. The registration of off-road vehicles is also provided for in this law. Owners of off-road vehicles must obtain from the Commission a registration license number, a certificate of registration and a registration decal. The annual registration is not to exceed \$10. Anyone operating an off-road vehicle on public lands without a registration can be fined \$25. Effective October 1, 1978.

HONOR ROLL of Lifetime Members

Generous friends who contribute \$1,000 or more to the Florida Sheriffs Youth Fund for the benefit of the Florida Sheriffs Boys Ranch, Girls Villa or Youth Ranch, qualify as lifetime honorary members of the Florida Sheriffs Association. This entitles each donor to receive a plaque, a lifetime identification card and a lifetime subscription to The Sheriff's Star. This month we are honoring the following lifetime members:



Mr. and Mrs. Clifford Jackson (left), of St. Petersburg, former staff members at the Florida Sheriffs Boys Ranch, received their Lifetime Honorary Membership plaque when they attended the annual Boys Ranch Alumni Association reunion in May. Former Rancher Leonard Russek, who is President of the Alumni Association, presented the plaque.



Marion County Sheriff Don Moreland (right) presents a Lifetime Honorary Membership plaque to C. Joseph Franklin, of Days Inn, Ocala.



Pinellas County Sheriff Bill Roberts (right) presents Lifetime Honorary Membership plaque to Gene Sells, of Seminole.

MRS. ANNE BALLARD FOGLE
Winter Park
GOURMET COFFEE SERVICE
Jacksonville
GRANT H. GRAVITT
Miami
MR. & MRS. JAMES E. KIKER
Dunedin
MR. & MRS. HARRY J. MASON
Belleair Bluffs
ALJA MORRISSETT
North Ft. Myers

MR. & MRS. HAROLD A. RILEY
Hillsboro Beach
RICHARD ROSS
Clearwater
MR. & MRS. FRANCIS G. SLACK
Stuart
H. L. SPAUNBURG
Venice
MRS. LOIS I. VOGEL
Brooksville
WEEKI WACHEE SENIOR
CITIZENS CLUB, INC.
Brooksville



Lee County Sheriff Frank Wanicka (on left, holding plaque) presents Lifetime Honorary Membership plaques to Bayside Kiwanis Club, Fort Myers Beach; and to Mr. and Mrs. Edwin R. Herrick, of Bonita Springs.



Donors attain Builder status

Through substantial gifts to the Florida Sheriffs Boys Ranch, Girls Villa, Youth Ranch and Youth Fund, the following persons have qualified to receive Builder Certificates:

MRS. HARVEY E. ALLCUTT Port Charlotte	MRS. BETTY CAVE Belleair Bluffs	I. E. FALES St. Cloud	MRS. H. R. JONES West Palm Beach	MRS. MARY L. REEFER Daytona Beach Shores	MR. & MRS. H. C. TERRY Tallahassee
LUIS R. ARANA St. Augustine	CHARLES CHARBONNIER Port Salerno	MRS. PAUL R. FATIC Sarasota	MRS. ALEX B. JORGENSEN West Palm Beach	MR. & MRS. CARL RIEGER Venice	LEO B. THOMAS Sarasota
MRS. C. R. BARTON Daytona Beach	MR. & MRS. WILLIAM G. CHASE Punta Gorda	MR. & MRS. H. E. FERGUSON St. Petersburg	MISS CHERYL KEMPTON New Brunswick, N.J.	MR. & MRS. CLEMENS P. ROE- THER Altamonte Springs	STEWART THOMAS Naples
MAJOR GEN. W. P. BATTALL Sun City Center	CLEARWATER JAYCEES Clearwater	CHARLES FINEGAN Clearwater	WILLIAM R. KING Jacksonville	H. SATTERLEE Belleair Bluffs	MR. & MRS. GEORGE R. TROG- DON Wauchula
MR. & MRS. DONALD L. BAX- TER St. Petersburg	CLEARWATER & NORTHWEST TELEPHONE PIONEERS GENERAL TELEPHONE CO. Clearwater	CHARLES F. HARRINGTON Gainesville	KIWANIS CLUB OF CAPE CORAL Cape Coral	SAVANNAH WATER DEVELOP- MENT CORP. Jensen Beach	MRS. WILLIAM T. VIANT Lehigh Acres
MR. & MRS. JOHN P. BLAIR Naples	ROBERT S. CLINE Bradenton	MRS. LAURA M. HENSON Treasure Island	LIONS CLUB OF KISSIMMEE Kissimmee	MRS. THORNDIKE SAVILLE Alexandria, Va.	WILLIAM H. VICKERS Clearwater
DR. & MRS. C. MARKEL BECKER Clearwater	MRS. LUTHER L. COLTON Palmetto	MRS. SUDLER HOOD Belleair	MR. & MRS. JOHN O. McCOY Palm Bay	MR. & MRS. CHARLES A. SHA- FER St. Petersburg	WALDEN'S BOOK STORE Clearwater
JOHN H. BENTON Bushnell	ED DAVID Dunedin	HOUSE OF PLENTY Clearwater	MRS. McGRATLEY Winter Park	MR. & MRS. JOHN W. SHIELDS St. Petersburg Beach	MR. & MRS. ALTON WATSON Tallahassee
FREDERICK E. BOND Vero Beach	DR. & MRS. CARL HENRY DAVIS Miami	DAVID HOUTZ Pahokee	LESTER McMULLEN Clearwater	JACK SIMPSON Clearwater	MRS. MARY B. WEBER Dunedin
MRS. FLORENCE BON DURANT West Palm Beach	JAMES Y. DEUPREE Naples	WARREN P. HUNNICUTT St. Petersburg	PEARL W. McNEE Clearwater	FARRELL L. SIMS Tice	KENNETH M. WILKINSON St. Petersburg
VERNA B. BRADER Lady Lake	MRS. RUBY L. DOUGLAS Tampa	MR. & MRS. LAWRENCE D. JAMES Melrose	MR. & MRS. BRUCE MARGER St. Petersburg	MR. & MRS. LOWELL R. SMITH Clearwater	MR. & MRS. EDWARD J. WILLIAMS Naples
MR. & MRS. D. NEWTON BROWN Clearwater	LEON DUGOFF Tampa	LORENZO JAMES, M.D. West Palm Beach	MRS. DORIS J. MELTON Largo	DANNIS SOWELL Tallahassee	MR. & MRS. THOMAS P. WINN Naples
MS. DOROTHY BUMBALOUGH Auburndale	EMPLOYEES OF GENERAL TELEPHONE CO. Clearwater	JIMMY JOHNSON Largo	MR. & MRS. STEVE MICKLO Clearwater	MR. & MRS. JOSEPH SPENARD Clearwater	G. WOOLF Tampa
		MR. & MRS. MARTIN A. JOHN- SON Longwood	MR. & MRS. SHELBY MULLINS Ocala	MR. & MRS. STANLEY STARR Largo	PAUL YOWELL Clewiston
			MRS. CATHERINE SOPHIE NAGEL Largo	MR. & MRS. CHARLES D. STID- HAM Lake Placid	MR. & MRS. CHARLES F. ZIEG- LER Belleair Bluffs
			MRS. DORIS NAVE Belleair	EDWIN H. STITELER, JR. Lakeland	
			MRS. W. J. OFFUTT St. Petersburg	MRS. MARGARET P. STRATTON Okeechobee	
			MS. GERTRUDE M. PHELPS Sarasota		
			MR. & MRS. JAMES E. RARICK Delray Beach		

Nabbing pot smugglers has been profitable

Nabbing marijuana smugglers is turning out to be a profitable business for Sheriffs.

They destroy the marijuana they confiscate during arrests, but through appropriate legal channels they are often able to take permanent possession of trucks, cars, motor homes, airplanes, campers and boats used by the smugglers.

In Key West, Monroe County Sheriff William A. Freeman, Jr., has been trading confiscated smugglers' vehicles and boats to a local auto dealer in return for new patrol cars.

He recently took delivery of 10 patrol cars, and announced he expected to acquire more by the same method.

In Sebring, Judge Oliver Green gave Highlands County Sheriff Joe Sheppard possession of a 12-passenger, twin-engine airplane and a 1976 Dodge Power Wagon which had been confiscated in a marijuana case.

Sheriff Sheppard announced he was looking for an opportunity to trade the airplane on a smaller, more practical model for use by the Sheriff's Department. He assigned the Dodge Wagon to his fleet of Sheriff's Department vehicles.

Two smugglers' boats seized by Charlotte County Sheriff Alan LeBeau were sold at auction, and Sheriff LeBeau said the proceeds would enable him to purchase a new patrol boat for the Sheriff's Department.

LeBeau also had in his custody awaiting court action, a motor home and a B-25 bomber which were said to have been involved in smuggling operations.

Last year the Martin County Sheriff's office was given possession of a twin-engine Aero Commander plane that had been

used by smugglers. It had originally sold for \$80,000, but its operating costs and capabilities were not suitable for law enforcement work, so Sheriff Jim Holt sold it and purchased a more appropriate model as his "eye in the sky."



Another Gift From Burt Reynolds & Son

JUPITER — A gift of \$400 presented to the Florida Sheriffs Boys Ranch by Burt Reynolds, Sr., (left) represented the proceeds from autographed photos of Actor Burt Reynolds, Jr., which are on sale at the Reynolds Ranch. Pictured accepting the gift is Lt. W. E. (Chuck) Mulford, from the Palm Beach County Sheriff's office. The Reynolds family has made numerous donations to the Boys Ranch, and both father and son are Lifetime Honorary Members of the Florida Sheriffs Association.

Decal saves time - resists crime

BARTOW — When there is an emergency at a business establishment -- a fire or a burglary, for instance -- it is important for the Sheriff's office to get in touch with the owner or manager as quickly as possible; but getting the correct name and phone number is often difficult, and much valuable time is lost.

Businessmen usually object to posting their names, addresses and phone numbers on their buildings because this can lead to harassing phone calls at all hours of the day or night. There is also the threat of being kidnapped or held as a hostage.

They have a valid point, and Polk County Sheriff Louie Mims doesn't argue with them. Instead, he offers each businessman a numbered decal to be displayed in a conspicuous place such as the front door.

The number on the decal is entered in a special file in the Sheriff's office; and the name, address and phone number of the person to be notified in case of emergency is filed with the number.

Later, if an emergency occurs, the deputy at the scene can radio the decal number to the Sheriff's communications center, and a radio dispatcher there can quickly find the name and phone number of the proper person to notify.

The system saves valuable time, and protects the identify of business owners and managers. Furthermore, putting it into



Sheriff Louie Mims (left) presented the first business identification decal to Henry Jaeb, owner of the Shop & Go Convenience Store chain, and it was placed on the front door at the Mulberry, Florida, Shop & Go store.

effect is not creating any manpower problems in the Sheriff's office. Sheriff Mims is using his Crime Prevention Unit and his Explorer Post to distribute the decals, thus avoiding taking deputies away from their regular law enforcement duties.

The Explorers are young volunteers who are interested in law enforcement careers and serve without pay. They finance their activities with voluntary contributions, and many businessmen are showing their appreciation for the decal project by making donations to the Explorer Post. These are needed, and greatly appreciated, Sheriff Mims said.



Sheriff Burton "Outstanding"

BRADENTON — Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 9869 selected Manatee County Sheriff Thomas M. Burton, Jr., (center) as the "Outstanding Law Enforcement Officer of the Year" and presented him with a certificate citing him for his "modern and efficient methods, professionalism and effective results." The presentation was made by Post Adjutant Quartermaster James Carroll and VFW Auxiliary President Eva Andrews.



Sheriff Has Proof People Really Care

LAKE BUTLER — Citizens of Union County recently demonstrated their concern for the safety of their law enforcement officers by contributing hundreds of dollars to buy expensive bullet-proof vests for Sheriff John Whitehead and his deputies. In the picture above, Sheriff Whitehead is wearing his vest outside his shirt to show what it looks like; and Deputy Sheriff Gary Seay is wearing his the usual way, underneath his shirt. (Union County Times photo)



Frances Skipper, 27 years later

No place for a lady

LIVE OAK — A man stood in the doorway, frowning and staring, while Mrs. Frances Skipper struggled with a balky, old Underwood typewriter.

The puzzled look on the man's face made her nervous, and she finally asked, "Can I help you?"

The man lowered his eyes. "Do you work here?"

"Yes," said Frances, "I just started."

"Well," he replied, taking off his straw hat and scratching his head, "I been comin' in here about 40 years and I never seen a lady in here before."

It was 1951, and according to tradition the Suwannee County Sheriff's office was no place for a lady, but Sheriff Sim Howell had broken tradition and hired Frances as the first female deputy.

There was some grumbling at first, especially from the courthouse loafers who had been careless with their language, tobacco juice and cigar ashes, but Sheriff Howell was convinced the dusty, disordered Sheriff's office needed a woman's touch.

He was right. The passing years have vindicated him and now, 27 years later, Frances is the senior deputy sheriff in the Suwannee County Sheriff's Office in terms of years of service.

Sheriff Hugh Lewis, who succeeded Sheriff Howell, asked Frances to stay on when he took office. So did Sheriffs Duke McCallister and Buddy Phillips. Now she's employed as Administrative Assistant to Sheriff Robert Leonard, but she prefers to be called a "jack-of-all-trades."

Her routine duties are secretarial work and bookkeeping, but from time to time she has also been called upon to work in the courtroom as a bailiff; to assist with transportation of female prisoners; to maintain all-night vigils with sequestered juries; and to assist male deputies with difficult assignments requiring a woman's touch.

She has seen days of sadness, such as when she had to assist in forcibly taking two small children away from a mother who had been judged unfit to raise them; and days of laughter triggered by phone calls like this:

WOMAN'S VOICE --- "I want the law out here. A man tried to rape me twice last night."

DEPUTY --- "Do you know the man?"

WOMAN --- "I sure do. He's my husband!!"

To appreciate that phone call, Frances explained, it would be necessary to see the couple -- to realize she is a most unlikely victim and he is an extremely unlikely suspect.

There were also a few chuckles when the owner of a small country store reported someone had taken all the cash in his cash register.

"Did they leave anything in the cash register," a deputy inquired.

"I don't know," said the storekeeper, "because they took the cash register, too."

Later, the cash register was found in a field. It contained a residue of one penny and a check for \$1.

Frances has never been armed, and has never been injured through violence, but she has seen some grim and explosive situations. She was the matron in charge of a black woman on trial on a charge of murdering a prominent white Live Oak doctor, and for days threats of violence hung over the heavily guarded courthouse.

Looking back to her early years as a deputy sheriff, Frances finds amazing contrasts.

In 1951, the Sheriff had three employees: a jailer who lived in the jail, one deputy and one bookkeeper (Frances). Today there are 16 employees.

In 1951, salaries and other expenses were paid from fees collected by the Sheriff: \$5.25 for each arrest; 12½ cents a mile for travel; \$1.50 for committing a prisoner to jail; 50 cents for releasing a prisoner; \$2 for approving a prisoner's bail bond; and \$4 for escorting a prisoner during a court appearance.

If fees were sufficient, the Sheriff was allowed to skim off around \$4,000 a year as his own salary. Total fees collected in 1951 were around \$30,000. Six years later all Florida Sheriffs switched to a budget system that eliminated the old fee system, and the Suwannee Sheriff's budget was pegged at \$48,000. In the current fiscal year it is \$347,217.

One of the most dramatic changes has developed in criminal records -- dramatic because they were practically non-existent when Frances went to work in the Sheriff's office. Arrests were listed in the fiscal records, in chronological order, but the Sheriff usually depended on his memory to determine whether or not a suspect had been arrested before.

To go beyond memory meant rummaging through volumes of fiscal records searching for the suspect's name.

Frances put an end to this slipshod system by setting up an alphabetical criminal records system which could quickly reveal the past criminal history of any suspect.

Today, Sheriff Leonard has extensive criminal records on all persons arrested in Suwannee County. He is also linked by computer terminal to state and national crime information systems which clue him to arrests outside Suwannee County.

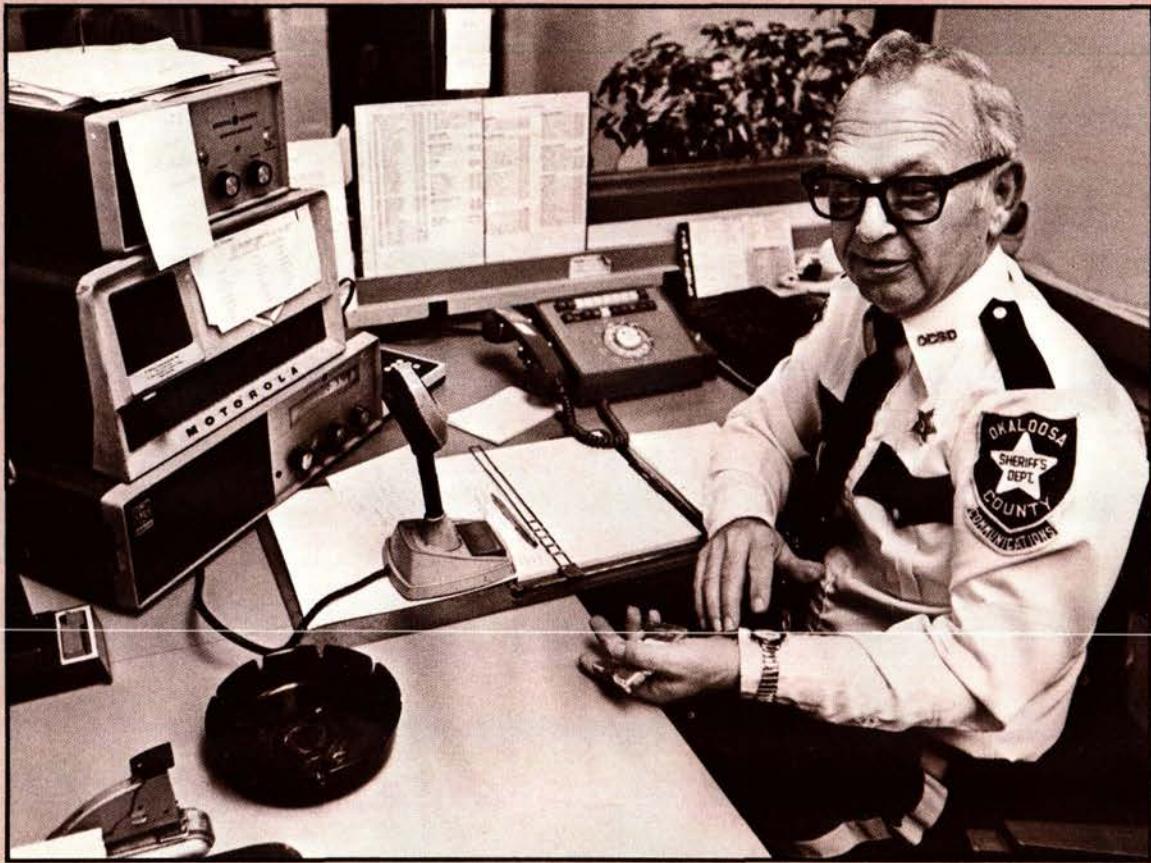
Frances was the first and only woman deputy in Suwannee County until 1965. Now there are three, and visitors are no longer startled to see a woman working in the Sheriff's office.

Would she do it again?

"Yes," she answered quickly. "This has been an ideal job for me. There have been no dull days and I have been fortunate to work for good men."

If she were starting over today, would she like to put on a uniform and go on patrol the way many women deputies are currently doing?

She shook her head and smiled. "You might call me old fashioned," she said.



John Broom, radio dispatcher for the Okaloosa County Sheriff's Department.

John Broom found the road to success IN THE DARK

SHALIMAR — John Broom is blind, but that doesn't prevent him from doing a good job as a radio dispatcher for Okaloosa County Sheriff Frankie Mills.

A computer-like memory helps him to overcome his handicap.

He also gets good moral support from a Sheriff who believes in encouraging people to reach their highest potential.

"We hired Broom because we thought he could become a valuable employee," said Sheriff Mills, "and because we wanted to set an example which might lead other employers to hire handicapped persons."

Broom is setting an impressive example, that's for certain. Although he can't see the telephone at his right elbow, he has memorized and can dial without hesitation almost 100 frequently called numbers.

His mind and hands work swiftly. When a radio message comes in, he checks the time on his Braille wristwatch, then records it on a log book along with other information about the call. A narrow metal frame that clamps on the side of the log book tells him by touch where to write the information.

In spite of his well oiled memory, Broom writes notes on a separate sheet of paper when an important incident is reported, or when there is a special message for him to deliver. He can't read his notes, but, as he explains, "When I write something down, its meaning is imprinted even more clearly in my memory."

Blinded by infectious hepatitis more than 10 years ago, Broom is the son of a Mississippi Sheriff. He served in the U. S. Army and Air Force and worked as a postman before he became handicapped.

Now it's difficult to consider him handicapped because of his many activities. He cuts his own lawn, and skeptical neighbors find it difficult to believe that he doesn't have partial vision.

He fishes, breaks 100 at golf as long as someone is around to line up his shots, and he can make points with a basketball from fixed positions such as the free-throw line or center court.

"One of the things that bothers a blind person is the fact that some people think we are helpless," Broom told an interviewer recently.

Well, John, anyone who thinks blind people are helpless has never met you.