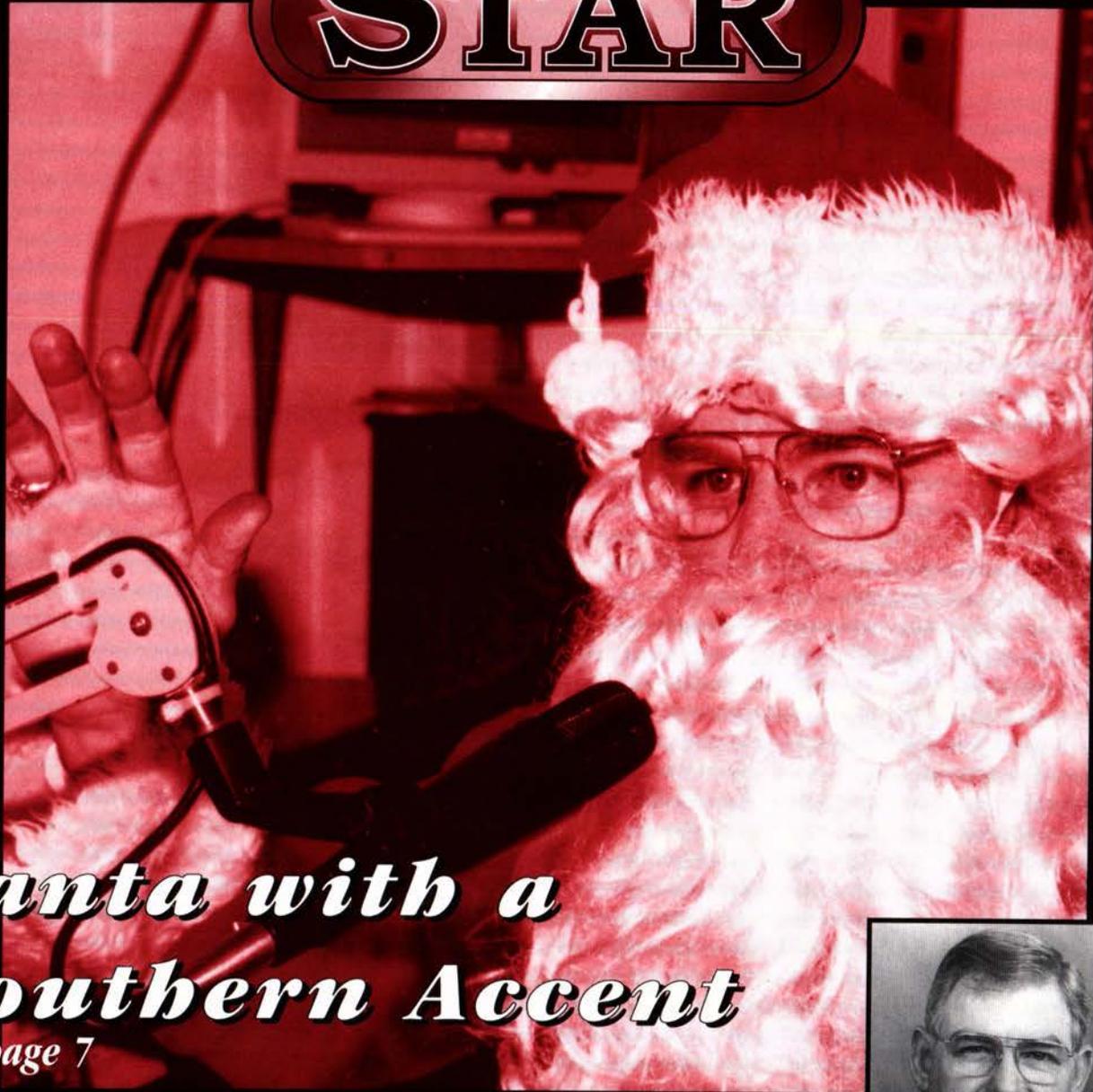


# THE SHERIFF'S STAR STAR



## *Santa with a Southern Accent*

*see page 7*

**INSIDE: Is there a sexual predator  
in your neighborhood?**

*see page 3*

**What you need to know about  
charitable contributions**

*see page 14*

*Many of the parents  
don't know it's  
Columbia County  
Sheriff Frank Owens  
behind the jolly voice  
on the radio.*



# From the desk of . . .

*J.M. "Buddy" Phillips, Executive Director  
Florida Sheriffs Association*

This time of year, the spirit of the holidays often takes over and convinces us to reach out to those who are less fortunate.

At the Florida Sheriffs Association, I'm proud to say that our members support those in need all year long. Through the Florida Sheriffs Youth Ranches, that is.

As you probably know, "Florida's Charity for Florida's Children" concentrates on the prevention of juvenile delinquency by operating four residential child-care campuses and two camping programs. Additionally, Youth Ranches provide community-based services, family counseling, targeted case management, foster care and other delinquency-prevention programs.

I keep one of the Youth Ranches Annual Reports in my desk and refer to it often, as FSA members often ask me for details about the Ranches' purpose, programs and accomplishments.

But as a parent and a newly commissioned grandparent, I'd have to say the stories and photographs of the children mean more to me than the charts, graphs and numbers in that report.

Like many of our Sheriffs in Florida who come in contact with Youth Ranch residents while sponsoring barbecues, road races and other fundraising activities on behalf of the Youth Ranches, I am reminded what our effort is all about: the children.

*This Sheriff lives the Christmas spirit.*  
In this issue of *The Sheriff's Star* maga-

zine, we bring you stories that focus on bringing children happiness during the holiday season, the way the Youth Ranches do all year long.

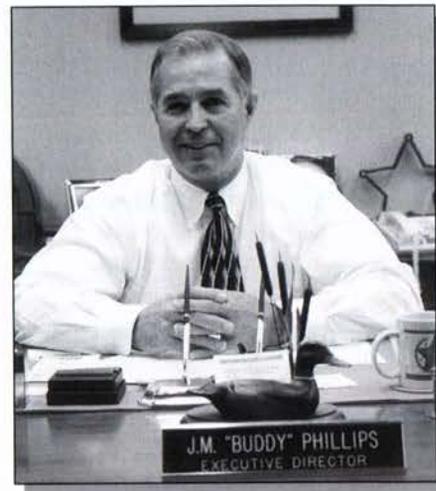
Columbia County Sheriff Frank Owens plays Santa Claus on the radio, calling children on the telephone and building their hopes for the Christmas to come.

Sheriff Owens told our magazine editor, Julie Bettinger: "It's something I enjoy doing. When you hear the kids — that's the whole thing right there."

In another story, we tell about how Bay County Sheriff Guy Tunnell's entire office has found a way to create a Christmas for those who, because of finances or a difficult home life, might not realize there was anything special about December 25.

As we spotlight these stories and provide recognition for what these individuals are doing to make a difference, we would be short-sighted if we didn't also recognize you — our members — for what you're doing to make a difference as well.

Because of your generosity, the Florida Sheriffs Association is able to continue offering programs that make a difference not only in the lives of children, but in every chief law-enforcement agency in our 67 counties. Your support helps provide programs such as affordable training, special task forces, crime prevention and legislative and legal services that have an impact in virtually every community throughout Florida.



The Florida Sheriffs Association is your association for better law enforcement in Florida. And the fact that you are receiving this magazine means you are demonstrating your commitment to improving public safety.

I hope you realize that through your membership, you are making a direct impact on law enforcement and providing hope for the future of our youth in Florida. Thank you for being there this year, and we know we can count on you for many years to come.

As this magazine goes to press, it is with great sadness that I must report of the death of a man who I have always referred to as "our 68th Sheriff," Ed Blackburn.

A former Hillsborough County Sheriff, Ed helped create the Florida Sheriffs Boys Ranch — forerunner to the Florida Sheriffs Youth Ranches. We included a tribute to Ed, an article authored by one of his close friends — our editorial consultant, Carl Stauffer. I hope you will join us as we pay our last respects to someone who will always be remembered as a true statesman. We'll miss you, Ed.

*Buddy*

J. M. "Buddy" Phillips  
Executive Director

## Crime Prevention Tip:

# Is There A Sexual Predator In Your Neighborhood?

A 28-year-old mother of two who works in a Tallahassee, Florida hair salon was incensed. She had been preparing her soon-to-be third grader for the day when she would be able to walk home from the bus stop all by herself — into the world of a latchkey kid.

The woman and her husband had talked through the whole plan. They instructed their daughter that she was not to talk to any strangers on the short walk to her house. She would let herself in the door, immediately lock it behind her and phone the salon to say she was home safely. It would only be a couple of hours before Dad got home from his state job, and she was to stay inside and not answer the door for anyone until he arrived.

At least that was the plan *before* the couple learned that a sexual predator had moved into their neighborhood. Since then, they've taken even more precaution than before. Their 4-year-old son is not allowed to play unattended in the yard, or even in the garage if the door is open. And the latchkey plan is on hold — at least for now.

How did the couple learn about this sexual predator's presence? They called the Florida Department of Law Enforcement's Sexual Predator Hotline (1-888-357-7332) to request a local search of the database for offenders in their area. They received the information by mail a few days later.

Florida has one of the most aggressive Sexual Predator Registrations and Community Notification laws in the country. And thanks to a recent expansion of the law, the public is now allowed access

to the files of sexual offenders.

Many local law-enforcement agencies are taking proactive steps to inform residents including distributing flyers in neighborhoods where predators live, providing information to community newsletters and notifying parents of students when a predator has taken up residence within the vicinity of a school.

The media is also playing an active role in the notification process. A local access cable channel in Hillsborough County, for instance, is broadcasting information about predators and offenders living in the county. Weekly newspapers are publishing photos of local predators.

The Florida Department of Law Enforcement (FDLE) has taken a proactive approach by providing ways for the public to obtain information about sexual predators and offenders. For the most comprehensive information regarding the whereabouts of predators and offenders, visit the FDLE website at [www.fdle.state.fl.us](http://www.fdle.state.fl.us). You can personalize a local search by specifying either county, city, zip code or last name. You'll then be able to view a summary listing of all predators/offenders and their ad-



resses. In addition, individual offender pages are available which contain a current photo, last known address, complete physical description and a description of crimes they committed.

Several predators have landed back in prison after concerned parents searched the predator database and discovered a predator working with children in an organized youth activity.

If you have children, grandchildren, or are concerned about the safety of children in your neighborhood, find out if a sexual predator lives in your area. Call the hotline at 1-888-357-7332, or visit the FDLE website: [www.fdle.state.fl.us](http://www.fdle.state.fl.us). Help assure your neighborhood is safe for children.

## SHERIFF'S STAR

Volume 41, No. 6, Nov. / Dec. 1997

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*The Sheriff's Star* is published six times per year: January/February, March/April, May/June, July/August, September/October, and November/December, by the Florida Sheriffs Association, a non-profit corporation, P. O. Box 12519, Tallahassee, Florida 32317-2519 (street address, 2617 Mahan Drive). The subscription rate is \$5 per year and the publication number is USPS 493-980. Second class postage paid at Tallahassee, Florida and at additional mailing offices. POSTMASTER Please send address corrections to *The Sheriff's Star*, P. O. Box 12519, Tallahassee, Florida 32317-2519. Copyright © 1998 by Florida Sheriffs Association. ISSN 0488-6186

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# Sheriff's Office Provides Gifts to Needy Children

By: Lt. Jerry L. Girvin  
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Bay County Sheriff's Office

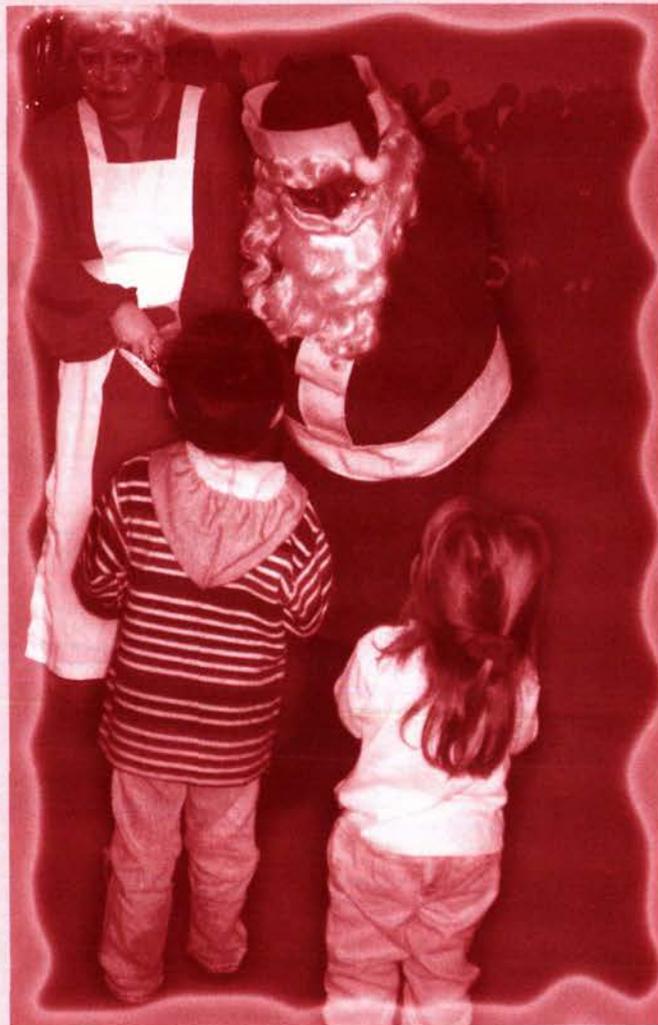
**S**eventeen years ago, a deputy, whose name has been lost to history, was responding to a suspicious person call. It was Christmas Eve, 1981, and the call was in reference to some people camping out in a wooded area on the outskirts of a community in Bay County.

When he arrived, the deputy saw a faint light coming from the woods. As he moved closer, he saw that a rough shelter of old boards and boxes had been thrown together as a shield from inclement weather. He pulled aside an old blanket that served as the door and stepped in. A kerosene lantern lit the interior, casting shadows on a man, his wife and four small children. In the center of the cardboard floor, a limb from a pine tree had been stuck in a can of dirt and "decorated" with bits of colored paper and festooned with strips of tissue. It was apparent from the family's clothes that they had nothing, and probably had not eaten in a while.

While the deputy talked with the parents, a little girl clutched her mother's leg and stared wide-eyed at the deputy. The deputy advised the family that while he wasn't taking any action then, they would have to move on the very next day.

Returning to his patrol, the deputy thought more of the little girl and her brothers — and of his own family in a warm house anticipating Christmas morning. He responded to calls, still thinking of the cold, hungry family and the little children, and what their Christmas would be.

At the end of his shift, the deputy cornered some of



Santa and Mrs. Claus offer a glimpse of the magic of Christmas to two children, who might not have known this special day, if not for the Bay County Sheriff's Office.

the other officers, and between them they came up with a pot of money. A local discount store manager received a call from the Bay County Sheriff's Office in the wee hours of Christmas morning and was asked to come down to his store to handle a problem. Arriving there, he found a couple of Bay County deputies who asked if he would open the store and let them buy some toys and groceries for a special project.

As the light of Christmas morning broke, the deputy — laden with toys and groceries — returned to the woods and the makeshift shack. By his own words, "When I left there, the parents were crying, the kids were crying and I musta got something in my eye, 'cause I was crying (too)."

On that morning, Project 25 began — a program run by deputies that provides toys to kids who otherwise

wouldn't have a Christmas.

Each year since 1981, the number of children who have benefited from Project 25 has grown. Traditionally, a local department store will set aside a night when the Sheriff's employees and their families could shop for the specific needs of families and children. Then the gifts, all wrapped in holiday paper, were delivered by deputies on Christmas Eve. As the numbers of children grew, though, some gifts weren't delivered until late at night. So in 1995, a local automobile dealer offered his showroom for a Christmas party for the children to receive their gifts.

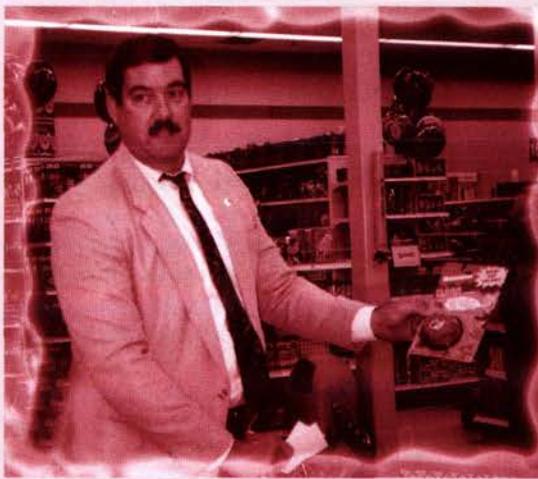


**Project 25 takes the unique approach of having volunteer families shop for each individual child's needs, instead of buying gifts in bulk for distribution.**

### **A party you won't soon forget**

As the children and their parents enter, a disc jockey plays music. Hamburgers, hot dogs and the trimmings are provided by a local bank. Games are played while children anxiously await the arrival of Santa, while eyeing the bulging plastic bags stacked around his chair.

A siren sounds, and all eyes turn to see a Bay County Sheriff's Office patrol car rolling into the room, complete with lights and sirens. Following the patrol car is a candy-apple red convertible driven by Bay County Sheriff Guy Tunnell, with Santa and Mrs. Claus in the back seat.



**Bay County Sheriff Guy Tunnell participates in the shopping spree for Project 25**

And the party officially begins.

After making his rounds at the party, visiting with children and parents, Santa sits on his chair and deputies begin lifting bags of toys and calling out names of children from the tags.

Later, as they leave, the parents and their ecstatic children

stop to speak to some of the deputies just to say "thanks." In many cases, the officers know the parents and it's a good feeling, as the children can see that the guys in green suits are really good guys.

Around 11:00 p.m., the families and children have all gone and deputies and their families are standing around in little groups rehashing the evening. The Sheriff is making the rounds, thanking everyone for taking part — and off in a corner, sitting on Santa's chair, Capt. "Butch" Leonard, who heads up the project, is talking with his folks about the future. "Now next year we've got to do double this," he says "cause there are still some younguns out there we're not getting to!"

Ask folks in the Bay County Sheriff's Office about Project 25 and they'll tell you that it sets the tone for Christmas. They'll tell you that the whole thing — the shopping, the party, seeing the looks on the children's faces

*continued on page 6*



**Santa and Mrs. Claus offer the traditional warm lap to needy children so they can share their hopes and dreams at Christmas time.**



**One of less fortunate children among those adopted in Bay County Sheriff's Office Project 25 receives a bag of toys and gifts that have been selected specifically for her.**

*continued from page 5*

when they get their bags of toys — is the best part of the year.

### **Making it work**

Around October of each year, a form is sent to local schools asking for teachers to provide a list of children who they know probably won't have a Christmas. Those lists are checked carefully to assure that every child in the family — from infant to teenager — is on the list. Then comes the hard part — getting the money together.

Through the years, almost every conceivable fund-raising gimmick has been used, including just plain begging. The Sheriff's Office has sold baked goods, sported bruises and sore muscles from athletics and even raffled off prizes.

The first big event was a football game between the Bay County Sheriff's Office and the Panama City Police Department. Bay County won, but those police guys are a lot younger. Then, Bay County tried something that took more skill and less muscle — basketball. A local high school loaned its gym, and teams of various area law-enforcement agencies squared off against each other and the media, which also fielded a team.

Two years ago, Cook-Whitehead Ford and People's First Bank stepped forward and offered to underwrite the whole gift list. That year, the program had \$25,000 to buy

gifts for children. Last year, the same sponsors came forward and Project 25 provided gifts for 1,200 children with each child getting about \$55 worth of presents.

Shopping is an event the entire office and their families take part in. It has become a community event with people from the sponsoring companies pitching in as well as senior citizens from the local Council on Aging RSVP program. Each year, a department store offers its site for shopping and usually extends a generous discount which results in about 10 percent more for each child. A shopper is given a card with the child's name, age, gender and interests. Then they are free to shop for that child as an individual. It's nothing like the "give me a hundred of those and fifty of those" type of shopping. One little boy may wind up with one huge red fire truck and his brother may receive an armload of smaller trucks and games.

At the check out line, a crew and truck from the sponsoring bank is on hand to load and transport the bags of toys to a storage area. They later reload and haul them to the party.

### **Continuing the tradition**

So why does Bay County Sheriff's Office do this when there are so many other agencies and groups out there doing something like it? Probably because there are still a lot of children out there who won't have a Christmas. And each of us, sworn or civilian, has been to their houses. We've seen the looks on the children's faces when they walk through the malls and take in the sight of things they won't get and wonder if Santa will find their house this year.

It's especially touching when families that have benefited from Project 25 in the past come by the office and leave \$5, \$10 or \$20 and say that Project 25 helped them and now they'd like to try to help someone else.

It feels so good to let those kids and their parents know that there is another side to those of us in green and that we've added one more purpose to the law-enforcement motto: To Serve, To Protect, To Share!

This year, if it's like most others, the phone will ring sometime Christmas Eve with news of a family burned out or stranded and another deputy will be meeting a store manager in the wee hours for a special project. . . . Project 25.

# Santa With A Southern Accent

By: Julie S. Bettinger

Around this time of year, you're more likely to hear Sheriff Frank Owens of Columbia County saying "Ho-Ho-Ho" than "You're under arrest."

For nearly 20 years, 12 years in Lake City, Sheriff Owens has been dressing up in red and white and doing his best Santa imitation over the telephone — broadcast live on radio station, Power Country 102 WQLC.

It all started when the Dublin, Georgia, Parks & Recreation Department invited Owens, who was then Chief of Police, to play Santa for a Christmas program. The agency had parents fill out forms giving details about their children which included the child's Christmas wish list. Then Owens, a.k.a. Santa, would telephone the children and talk to them about the big event coming on the 25th.

In 1986, Owens and his family relocated to Lake City, where he had been hired as Chief of Police. He contacted a radio station and they took the same concept — Santa phoning kids — and did it live on air.

"The newspaper publishes a form for parents to write down the kid's name, information about them and their pets' names," Sheriff Owens says. "The forms come from three or four surrounding counties, and sometimes we have to make long-distance calls."

He estimates that they average around 80 calls in one night, and the show's not over until everyone who signed up has heard from Santa.

He says the radio station donates the air time and its support. The newspaper runs the registration forms for free in print, and then collects them at their offices for Owens.

One of the radio station employees makes the calls, under the guise of being the "Operator for the North Pole."

"It's a three or four person operation," Sheriff Owens says. Then adding with his best elfish tone, "I've got all the little elves, my operator from the North Pole, and the entire spirit of Christmas working for me."

## A night of anticipation

Parents make sure the children are already listening to the radio show when the call comes. In past years, they've told radio station officials how their children were saying, "I wish Santa would call me," when the phone rang.

"It makes it more real and believable," Sheriff Owens says. "Some of them might be 10 or 12 years old and have decided not to believe. After the call, they believe."



Sheriff Frank Owens



Parents give details about the child's wants for Christmas, and Owens says, "I can tell you what's gonna sell that year. For instance, last year it was Elmo."

Being safety minded, Owens also uses the call as an opportunity to reinforce good behavior and discourage bad behavior. "I talk to them and ask them what kind of good things they've done. Their parents usually tell me if it's school work or cleaning their rooms. I'll caution the kids about riding their skates on the street, or tell them they need to be nice to their sister. Things like that."

"Every year I try to get geared up and get into my character," Sheriff Owens says. "Once I get the first call over, the other 79 or 80 are really fun. I usually start with a younger one before going on to the more difficult ones."

Sheriff Owens' own children are now age 26 and 28, and he has two grandchildren. But he says he wouldn't even try to play Santa for his oldest grandchild who is now 2 and a half. "I couldn't fool her," he says. "She'd know it was Paw-paw."

Many of the parents don't know it's Sheriff Owens behind the jolly voice. "A lot of the adults will say, 'Who is that — he sounds familiar,'" Sheriff Owens says. "But kids accept the voice. For them, that's Santa."

## Benefits of the job

Owens recalls one year asking a child, "What does Santa like under the tree?" and the child answered, "Milk and cookies." Owens asked, "What kind of cookies?" The child replied, "Chocolate chip."

The next morning, he arrived in the office to find a big plate of chocolate chip cookies and a pitcher of milk waiting for him. It was supplied by all the believers on his staff.

He recalls calling a child who was terminally ill, and for whom this would be the last Christmas. Then there are those whose puppy just got run over and died, or whose granny is sick.

Even when dealing with magic, things can go wrong, and Sheriff Owens says he always leaves time after they've gone off the air, or the next day to make any calls that might have gotten missed. As time consuming and as exhausting as it might seem, he says, "It's something I enjoy doing. When you hear the kids — that's the whole thing right there."



## Real Life Heroes:

# Sheriffs' Offices Honor The Brave

### Citizens Lend Strength to Save Man's Life

On Friday, October 3, 1997, a Chevrolet Lumina went out of control and jumped a curb, striking 19-year-old Kevin Halpin and pinning him underneath the vehicle.

Seminole County deputy Mark Stanley, one of the first to arrive on the scene, organized six bystanders into a group to lift the vehicle off the ground in hopes of freeing the man. Deputy Brenda Sonafelt was then able to pull Halpin out from underneath.

Halpin suffered severe fractures to both his legs. Though he still cannot walk and has undergone skin grafts, doctors expect him to make a full recovery.

Deputies Stanley and Sonafelt were presented with Seminole County Sheriff Don Eslinger's Life-Saving Ribbon for their actions. The six citizens who assisted were presented with the Sheriff's Office Community Service Award.

### A Young Girl's Lessons In CPR, Bravery, Save Her Cousin's Life

Many of us wonder if CPR training is really worth it. Would we ever be able to recall the steps in an emergency?

Well, 12-year-old Samantha Breunig would answer this with an enthusiastic Yes! and her actions are proof. Samantha was recently given a Florida Sheriff's Association Distinguished Service Award, which was presented by St. Johns County



Pictured left to right: Deputy Mark Stanley, Pierce Cotter, Jason Sellers, Michael Callin, Deputy Brenda Sonafelt, John Huffer and John Ciannella. In the foreground is Kevin Halpin. Not pictured: Kenneth Times, Jr.



St. Johns County Sheriff Neil Perry presents an award for recognition to Samantha Breunig. Samantha used CPR to save the life of her 4-year-old cousin Karrie West (front). Karrie's mother, Darlene West, is also pictured.



Sheriff Neil J. Perry, for her fast thinking and quick response in rescuing her 4-year-old cousin, Karrie Wise, who nearly drowned at Matanzas Inlet this past July. Samantha performed cardiopulmonary resuscitation she learned in school, and Karrie was successfully revived. Congratulations, Samantha. You are an inspiration to children throughout Florida.

### **Braving the Flames to Save A Neighbor**

On July 27, 1997, Naval Commander Norman Fitzpatrick discovered a vehicle that was totally engulfed in flames. Several people were standing nearby, frozen in horror. Fitzpatrick ran to the car and fought the heat of the blaze to get the door open. Then, reaching in, he was able to pull the driver to safety.

When paramedics arrived, they life-flighted the man, who had extensive burns, to the hospital. In an ironic twist of fate, Commander Fitzpatrick later learned that the man he saved was his neighbor. They've remained friends ever since.

### **Citizen Helps Law Enforcement Chase Down Armed Bank Robbers**

Sandra Tillis was sitting at the drive-through window of a Barnett Bank in St. Augustine when she noticed several men acting suspicious. Without regard for her own safety, she followed one man who had gotten into a car and gone to the back of a mall where she saw all three get into another car.

She called the Sheriff's Office to describe what she had observed, and continued to follow the men, relaying details about them, their vehicle and their tag number. Deputies were able to confirm a bank robbery had actually occurred and picked up on the pursuit in neighboring Duval County.

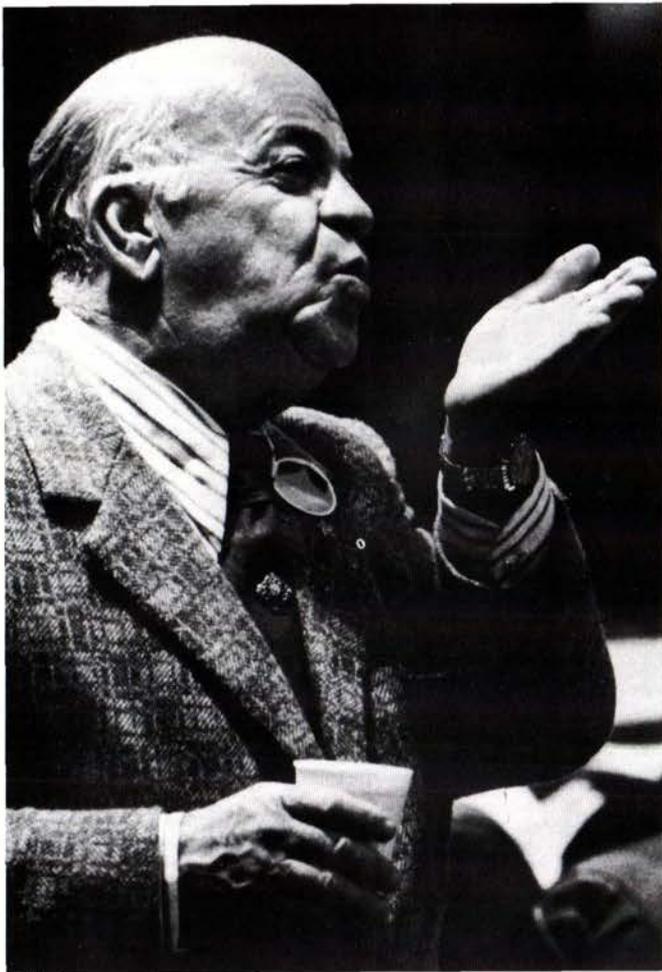
Gunfire was exchanged between the deputies and the suspects and one of the men was wounded. Because of Sandra Tillis' actions, law-enforcement officers were not only able apprehend the suspects, but also recover the stolen money.



*Naval Commander Norman Fitzpatrick receives recognition from St. Johns County Sheriff Neil J. Perry for his actions in braving a vehicle fire to save a neighbor's life.*



*Sandra Tillis, center, shows off the award she received from St. Johns County Sheriff Neil J. Perry, for helping law enforcement capture three armed bank robbers.*



*One of the photos former Hillsborough County Sheriff Ed Blackburn was best remembered for is this one, where he stands on the Florida House of Representatives floor blowing a kiss to a delegation of Hillsborough County school children.*

# Ed Blackburn Remembered

*By: Carl Stauffer  
Former Editor, The Sheriff's Star*

**I**f there is such a thing as a law enforcement gene, former Hillsborough County Sheriff Robert Edward Blackburn, Jr., must have had it. Perhaps he inherited it from one of his distinguished forebears, U.S. Marshall Elias Blackburn from Jefferson County, who was a frontier lawman during Florida's territorial days. I also suspect it was the driving force that enabled him to become one of the outstanding leaders and innovators in Florida's Criminal Justice system.

Born in Tampa, and elevated to Eagle Scout rank at age 13, Ed attended the University of Florida and Tampa

University before beginning his law enforcement career in the 1940s as a charter member of the Florida Highway Patrol. Policing Florida's highways on a motorcycle in all kinds of weather was rigorous duty. Sixty hour weeks were commonplace. Nevertheless, Ed treasured fond memories of the time he spent "in the saddle" of a Highway Patrol two-wheeler.

Five decades later, when he was in a nursing home, he made light of his debilitating illness by describing his three-wheeled, handlebar-equipped walker as his "Harley."

After turning in his Highway Patrol badge and uniform, Ed continued his law enforcement career as a Deputy Sheriff in Volusia and Hillsborough Counties, then took a career detour by turning his talents to the produce business. He also operated a supermarket and sold real estate. However, law enforcement was in his blood, and he returned to it spectacularly in 1952 when he was elected Sheriff of Hillsborough County. This gave him an opportunity to demonstrate his ability as a progressive administrator, a zealous reformer, and a tough crime fighter.

## **Fee system irked him**

One of his early projects as Sheriff was to mount a crusade against the corrupt system which required Florida Sheriffs to finance the operation of their agencies by collecting fees. Periodically they billed the county various set amounts for the arrests they made, the prisoners they transported, the warrants they served and the many other duties they performed.

Theoretically, the system was designed to encourage aggressive crime fighting, but unfortunately it merely stepped up the volume of arrests, without providing any incentive to solve serious crimes. Sheriffs received the same small fee for arresting a drunk and disorderly vagrant as they did for tracking down and arresting a murderer. Consequently, when operating funds were running low, they were practically forced to concentrate

on revenue producing minor crimes while giving second priority to serious crimes that were time consuming but produced little revenue.

Working through the Florida Sheriffs Association, Ed launched a sustained campaign against this undesirable situation, and he began to see results when the Florida Legislature was persuaded to abolish the fee system in Hillsborough and four surrounding counties. A budget/salary system was created for the Sheriffs of these counties and it eventually went into effect statewide. This was often described by Ed as one of the Sheriffs Association's greatest accomplishments in an era when the Association was involved in numerous progressive ventures. These included founding the Florida Sheriffs Boys Ranch, a home for neglected pre-delinquent youngsters; and the Florida Sheriffs Bureau, forerunner of the present Florida Department of Law Enforcement.

### **Boys Ranch was his idea**

Ed played a prominent role in creating these projects and in helping to make them successful. In 1957, he persuaded his colleagues in the Sheriffs Association to establish the Ranch after he heard about a Texas prototype. Then he served as its first executive director (without pay), campaigned statewide for donations of livestock, served on the Ranch Board of Trustees and had a residence cottage named in his honor.

His literary talent surfaced in the 1950s when he sat at his dining room table and composed a poem that begins like this:

It's every boy's hope  
To reach up his hand,  
And find there a grip  
That he'll understand.

Almost 40 years later that poem is still being used in promotional material for the Florida Sheriffs Youth Ranches, the statewide anti-delinquency agency which evolved from the Boys Ranch.

When Ed's funeral service was held in Tallahassee on December 12, 1997, a printed memorial tribute offered this benediction: "We give thanks for special people like Ed Blackburn, whose care and support for

troubled boys and girls made the Youth Ranches what it is today."

Ed was a tough-on-crime Sheriff, but his long involvement with the Boys Ranch and Youth Ranches revealed that a tough crime fighter can become a sentimental "softie" when confronted with the problems of needy and neglected youngsters.

The compassionate side of his personality was not hidden. Neither was the tough, tenacious attributes that earned Ed a bulldog image while serving as a Highway Patrol trooper, Deputy Sheriff, Sheriff, State Representative and Interim Commissioner of the Florida Department of Law Enforcement.

He was proud of that image, and frequently wore a bulldog tie pin. For many years he also had a bulldog statue prominently displayed on his front porch, but friends knew Ed's bark was worse than his bite. They preferred another image created by a widely distributed picture that was taken when he was a member of the Florida House of Representatives. It showed Ed standing on the house floor blowing a kiss to a delegation of Hillsborough County school children.

### ***In Charge 'Til The End***

*After Ed Blackburn died in a Tallahassee nursing home on December 9, 1997, his friends and colleagues were not surprised to learn that he had begun planning his final rites months before his demise. They knew he had always been a "take charge" kind of man.*

*In a memorial leaflet presented to mourners in St. Paul's United Methodist Church, Tallahassee, on December 12, Barbara Cook, his daughter, revealed that the planning process had begun in September when he called her from his nursing home suite to announce that he was under the care of an "exclusive club" called Hospice.*

*Facing death as he had faced life — head on — he had the first of many conversations with his only child about what she should do and who she should call. During ensuing months, favorite hymns and Bible verses were chosen, plans were made to have Ed's ashes strewn at the Florida Sheriffs Boys Ranch, the home for needy and neglected youngsters that he had persuaded the Florida Sheriffs Association to establish near Live Oak.*

*During final rites, the church bulletin described them as "A Service of Remembrance and Celebration." Later, when Ed's ashes were being distributed, precisely according to plan, someone in the large group of friends and relatives was overheard to say "Ed's loving this." And of course, he was. He always expected his orders to be carried out explicitly.*



# FLORIDA SHERIFFS ASSOCIATION HONOR ROLL

This honor roll gives special recognition to individuals who have demonstrated their commitment to progressive law enforcement by supporting the Florida Sheriffs Association as honorary members for 25 years or more. Some receive 25-year certificates. Others qualify for 30-year certificates. Others qualify for 30-year certificates.



Margaret Cannady

BAY COUNTY - 30-year certificates presented by Bay County Sheriff Guy Tunnell to Margaret Cannady; and Anne Marshall.



Anne Marshall



ORANGE COUNTY - 30-year certificate presented by Orange County Sheriff Kevin Beary (far right) to Jerry and Elizabeth Kinsley.



PASCO COUNTY - 30-year certificate presented by Pasco County Sheriff Lee Cannon to James W. Mitchell.



MONROE COUNTY - 25-year certificate presented by Monroe County Sheriff Richard Roth to Arlene Simoes.



BAY COUNTY - 25-year certificate presented by Bay County Sheriff Guy Tunnell to Henry Hilton-Green.



Mary J. Orr



Dick Dombro



Jeanne M. Partrick



Bert E. Gruters



SARASOTA COUNTY - 30-year certificates presented by Sarasota County Sheriff Geoffrey Monge to Mary J. Orr; Dick Dombro; Jeanne M. Partrick; and Bert E. Gruters.

SUWANNEE COUNTY - 30-year certificate presented by Suwannee County Sheriff Alton K. Williams, Jr. (second from right) and Youth Ranch Development Officer Linda Crews (far right) to Mr. & Mrs. Rosy Henry Law.



HIGHLANDS COUNTY - 25-year certificate presented by Highlands County Sheriff Howard Godwin (far right) and Youth Ranch Financial Development Officer Bill Brown (far left) to Mr. & Mrs. David Wooster.



Mr. & Mrs. Joseph Mordente



Mr. & Mrs. Charles Mountain



Mr. & Mrs. Dewey Stewart

CLAY COUNTY - 25-year certificates presented by Clay County Sheriff Scott Lancaster to Mr. & Mrs. Joseph Mordente; Mr. & Mrs. Charles Mountain; and Mr. & Mrs. Dewey Stewart.



Harry and JoAnn Grauberger



Charles & Betty Helton

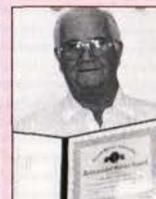
ORANGE COUNTY - 25-year certificates presented by Orange County Sheriff Kevin Beary to Harry and JoAnn Grauberger and Charles & Betty Helton.



Dr. & Mrs. William C. Morgan



Malcolm B. Tennent



Abe C. Kennedy



Anne M. Otvos

SARASOTA COUNTY - 25-year certificates presented by Sarasota County Sheriff Geoffrey Monge to Malcolm B. Tennent; Abe C. Kennedy; Anne M. Otvos; and Dr. & Mrs. William C. Morgan.



# FLORIDA SHERIFFS YOUTH RANCHES HONOR ROLL

On these pages we give special recognition to generous supporters of the Florida Sheriffs Youth Ranches who have qualified for Lifetime Honorary Memberships in the Florida Sheriffs Association by giving \$2,500 or more in cash or \$5,000 or more in non-cash gifts to the Youth Ranches. Each Lifetime Honorary Member receives a plaque, a lifetime identification card and lifetime subscriptions to *The Sheriff's Star* and *The Rancher*. Under a regulation which became effective in 1984, those whose gifts total over \$5,000 will receive additional gold stars on their plaques – one for \$5,000, two for \$10,000, and so on, up to a maximum of five stars for gifts totaling over \$25,000.

## New Lifetime Honorary Members

- |                                          |                                    |
|------------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Mr. and Mrs. Ernest Abernathy            | Mrs. Mary J. Jones                 |
| Mr. and Mrs. Vincent Aiello              | Dr. and Mrs. William Kochenour     |
| Mr. and Mrs. Raymond L. Allard           | Mr. and Mrs. Woodward H. Lackey    |
| Mr. and Mrs. William Allen               | Ms. Marlene G. Lager               |
| Ms. Roberta C. Baker                     | Lawtrey Correctional Institution   |
| Bassett's Dairy of Live Oak, Inc.        | Mrs. Tarnecia Kirk Mack            |
| Mrs. A. W. Benedict                      | Mr. and Mrs. Robert Main           |
| Mr. and Mrs. Brian Biggane               | Mr. Ben W. McCardel                |
| Mrs. Friedel M. Borst                    | Mr. Harry C. McDonald              |
| Mr. and Mrs. Edward F. Brophil           | Miss Alice McGrath                 |
| Busch Gardens of Florida – Tampa         | Mr. and Mrs. James A. McMullen     |
| Mr. and Mrs. Nick Carsillo               | Mr. and Mrs. Maurice Meline        |
| Mr. Harold R. Childers                   | Mr. and Mrs. John Monacelli        |
| Sgt. David W. Christopher                | Mr. Roger Myers                    |
| Mr. and Mrs. Walter F. Cline             | Mr. and Mrs. Bernard O'Neil        |
| Mrs. Virginia Cummins                    | Mr. James J. O'Rourke              |
| Mr. and Mrs. Robert Denler               | Mr. and Mrs. Dominick Passalacqua  |
| Mr. and Mrs. Richard DeGhetto            | Mr. Calvin Patrick                 |
| Mr. and Mrs. Ellwood H. Dickinson        | Mrs. Marie J. Paulus               |
| Mrs. Lois S. Elledge                     | Mrs. Janet C. Pilkington           |
| Mr. John B. Faile                        | Mr. Warren Rainear                 |
| First United Methodist Church – Live Oak | Mr. and Mrs. Kenneth Rasmussen     |
| Ms. Edith M. Fisk                        | Mr. Wallace W. Reichelt            |
| Mr. and Mrs. John E. Fleming             | Mr. Steve Richardson               |
| Mr. and Mrs. Robert Flowers              | Mr. Phil Romanski                  |
| Ms. Bonnie Gabrielson                    | Mr. and Mrs. Ralph Rowe            |
| Mr. and Mrs. Henry A. Garrett, Jr.       | Mr. William H. Sawyer              |
| Mrs. Alice Gibbons                       | Dr. and Mrs. G. W. Schamback       |
| Mr. and Mrs. Paul Gibson                 | Mrs. Evelyn C. Sorkin              |
| Mr. and Mrs. Lowell Hall                 | Mr. and Mrs. J. Earl Steinhauer    |
| Ms. Rose Halper                          | Mr. and Mrs. Robert Stewart        |
| Mr. and Mrs. William Hampton             | Suburban Propane – Jasper          |
| Mr. Lyle Helmerick                       | Ms. Vivian Taylor                  |
| Mrs. Audrey M. Hickman                   | Mr. Elden C. Tetzlaff              |
| Mr. and Mrs. Clyde C. Hoey               | Mr. Stanley Vieachore              |
| Mrs. Audrey Howell                       | Warehouse Furniture – Jensen Beach |
| Mr. and Mrs. H. J. "Bill" Hutchinson     | Miss Marie C. Weir                 |
| Mrs. America Iglesias                    | Mr. and Mrs. Ed Willett            |
| Mr. Richard A. Jansen                    | Mr. Vernon Wilson                  |
| Mr. Roman Jarmula                        | Mr. and Mrs. James Winters         |
|                                          | Ms. Joan S. Wirig                  |



Robert E. Lee



Mr & Mrs. Carl W. Queen

HERNANDO COUNTY - Presented by Hernando County Sheriff Tom Mylander to Robert E. Lee and Mr & Mrs. Carl W. Queen.



Michael & Margaret Wheeler



Harold Hinton

ST. LUCIE COUNTY - Presented by St. Lucie County Sheriff Bobby Knowles to Michael & Margaret Wheeler and Harold Hinton.



Lt. Frank Fabrizio



Clarence Smith and Durwood Foshee



Cynthia Champion and Karol Coffee



Vic Abbey

ORANGE COUNTY - Presented by Orange County Sheriff Kevin Beary and Youth Ranch Development Officer Sandra Phillips, to Lt. Frank Fabrizio, president, Florida Gang Investigators Association, Inc.; Clarence Smith and Durwood Foshee of the BPOE Lodge No. 1079; Cynthia Champion and Karol Coffee, Women of the Moose Chapter; Vic Abbey, general manager of Sea World, Florida; Antoinette Shehee and friend, Charles Klotz.



Antoinette Shehee and Charles Klotz

Continued on page 15

# What You Need To Know About

# Charitable Contributions

You've just received a letter or phone call from an organization you believe is non-profit, and you are interested in providing support. The information they're giving you sounds legit, but there's a quiet voice whispering in your ear: "Am I sure my money will really go to help the cause, or is this part of a scam?"

Heeding the warning is wise, philanthropy advisors agree. Before making donation decisions, donors should check out a charity to ensure its accounting practices and charitable operations meet standards set by charity watchdog groups.

To start, don't assume the organization is a charity just because it has a charity-sounding name. Also, make sure you are aware of how the charity will spend your funds.

Many people are swayed by endorsements, but causes — not celebrities — should be your primary guide for donating to charities during the holidays and throughout the year. Remember, celebrity endorsements do not guarantee that a charity spends a majority of its income on the purpose for which it exists. It may, instead, have hefty administrative costs and fundraising expenses — including hiring the celebrity to make its pitch.

To help you make a more informed decision, the philanthropic advisory service of the Council of Better Business Bureaus (BBB) publishes free copies of the holiday edition of its *Give But Give Wisely* newsletter with basic information on 220 national charities.

The *Give But Give Wisely* newsletter

*Continued on back cover*

## Attention Members:

### Has Your Address Changed Due to 9-1-1 or Have You Moved?

Emergency management officials have been working to improve access for emergency vehicles in neighborhoods throughout the state. In cases where street names were similar, they have actually changed the residents' addresses.

Unfortunately, this also means that mail often gets rerouted by the Post Office, and in some cases is returned marked "No such number."

We don't want to lose you as a valuable member, but if your address has been changed, you may not be receiving your FSA mailings.

Please take a moment to check the mailing label on

the back cover of this magazine. If your address is different in any way, let us know. Just cut out the current label, paste it on the outline below, then write your new address next to it and return it to:

The Florida Sheriffs Association  
P.O. Box 12519  
Tallahassee, FL 32317-2519  
Or, if you prefer, fax it to: (904) 878-8665

OLD ADDRESS:

OLD MAILING LABEL FROM BACK  
OF MAGAZINE GOES HERE

NEW ADDRESS:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Area code/phone: \_\_\_\_\_

# YOUTH RANCHES HONOR ROLL CONTINUED . . .



Mr. & Mrs. A.L. Kolbe

CLAY COUNTY - Presented by Clay County Sheriff Scott Lancaster to Mr. & Mrs. A.L. Kolbe and Mr. & Mrs. Edward Shields.



Mr. & Mrs. Edward Shields



LaRay M. Warren

SARASOTA COUNTY - Presented by Sarasota County Sheriff Geoffrey Monge to LaRay M. Warren; Maureen Cestari, representing Comcast Cablevision of West Florida, Inc.; Ms. Giordano, representing the Women's Exchange Consignment Shop; and Eleanor C. Welsh.



Maureen Cestari



## Benefit for the Florida Sheriffs Youth Ranches

\$20,000 check presented to Youth Ranch representatives Tina, Mandy, Ryan and David (center) by (from left) Perry Doran, Wide Open Golf Tournament chairman and Walt Disney World director of security; Orange County Sheriff Kevin Beary; former Youth Ranches president, CT O'Donnell (second from right); and Orange County Sheriff Major Bill Knowles (far right).



Ms. Giordano



Eleanor C. Welsh



Bill Walsh



Tommy Smith

ORANGE COUNTY - Presented by Brevard County Sheriff Phil Williams (far left) and Orange County Sheriff Kevin Beary (far right) to Bill Walsh, Bellsouth Advertising & Publishing Corp. (Orlando); Tommy Smith, Jacksonville Firemen's Credit Union (Jacksonville); Walter Schwarznan, Precise Modl Corporation (Winter Haven); and John Szesnat, JM Family Enterprise, Inc. (Deerfield Beach). Awards presented at the Wide Open Golf Tournament benefit for the Florida Sheriffs Youth Ranches.



Mr. & Mrs. Greg Medla



Mr. & Mrs. Richard Hoar

OKALOOSA COUNTY - Presented by Okaloosa County Sheriff Charlie Morris to Mr. & Mrs. Greg Medla; and Mr. & Mrs. Richard Hoar.



Walter Schwarznan



John Szesnat



Mr. & Mrs. John Morton



Dir. & Mrs. Mike Cochran

ST. JOHNS COUNTY - Presented by St. Johns County Sheriff Neil Perry to Mr. & Mrs. John Morton; Dir. & Mrs. Mike Cochran; Sgt. Willis Capo; Ms. Betsy Coxie and Ms. Carole Barnett.



DIXIE COUNTY - Presented by Dixie County Sheriff Dewey Hatcher (R) to Allen and Kay Harden.



MARION COUNTY - Presented by Marion County Sheriff Ken Ergle (R) to Mr. & Mrs. Cornelius York.



Sgt. Willis Capo



Ms. Betsy Coxie (left) and Ms. Carole Barnett

# Charitable Contributions

Continued from page 14

ter notes whether a charity has disclosed information to the BBB and whether it met 23 standards set by the bureau's philanthropic advisory service. The newsletter also details those standards.

Consider the following tips to help avoid unwise donations:

- Look at the name carefully. Some charity names sound similar, and the organization soliciting you may not be the one you have in mind.
- Don't be pressured to give money on the spot. The charity that needs your gift today will also welcome it tomorrow or next week.
- Don't give your credit card number, checking account number or other personal information to an unknown telephone or Internet solicitor requesting a charitable donation.
- For security and tax purposes, make out a check or money order to the charity's full official name, not to an individual. Avoid paying cash whenever possible.
- Be wary of appeals that are long on emotion, but short on facts. The solicitation should include a clear description of the programs your gift will support.

## Try checking the charity out with the state

In most states, charitable organizations that solicit donations from the public are required to be registered with the attorney general or the secretary of state if it collects \$25,000 or more in direct public support, engages the services of anyone to raise funds for its organization or pays salaries or benefits to a member or officer of that organization.

Most state charitable organization divisions maintain a master list of its state-registered charities/ organizations and can provide information about the specific purpose of the charity, the amount of money the charity is raising, the percentage of the money collected that is used for charitable program services and the percentage that is used for the organization's administrative costs and fundraising.

If you have received an unsolicited phone call on behalf of a charity, heed these warning signs:

- Did the solicitor offer to send a courier to collect your pledge/contribution?
- Did the charity send you a written invoice or statement that indicates a payment due for a contribution you never pledged?
- Does the organization's name and logo closely resemble or sound like another "legitimate" charity with a similar charitable purpose?

To obtain a free copy of the *Give But Give Wisely* newsletter, send a self-addressed, stamped, business-size envelope to Holiday Giving, Council of Better Business Bureaus, 4200 Wilson Blvd., Ste. 800, Arlington, VA 22203. Another source of information on national charities is the National Charities Information Bureau. You can write that organization at NCIB, 19 Union Square, New York, NY 10003. Or, if you would like your name removed from approximately 80 percent of all national solicitation lists, write to: Mail Preference Service, Direct Marketing Association, Inc., P.O. Box 9014, Farmingdale, NY 11735-9014. Include your name, address and telephone number.

## Keep this checklist of questions by your telephone

A donor has the right to ask as many questions as necessary to make an informed decision before contributing. When you receive an unsolicited call from fundraisers, ask these questions:

- What is the full name, address and phone number of the charity?
- Is this a tax-deductible, non-profit public charity exempt from taxation by the IRS and under 501(c)(3) as a public charity.
- Do you work for the charity or are you a paid fundraiser?
- For what specific purpose will my contribution be used?
- Is my contribution "tax deductible?"
- Is the charity (and paid fundraiser, if one is used) registered with my state's charitable/solicitation authority?
- What percentage of its total income does the organization spend on its charitable purpose?

And remember: As a donor, you have the right to change your mind after having agreed to make a donation. A pledge to make a contribution is not a legally enforced agreement.