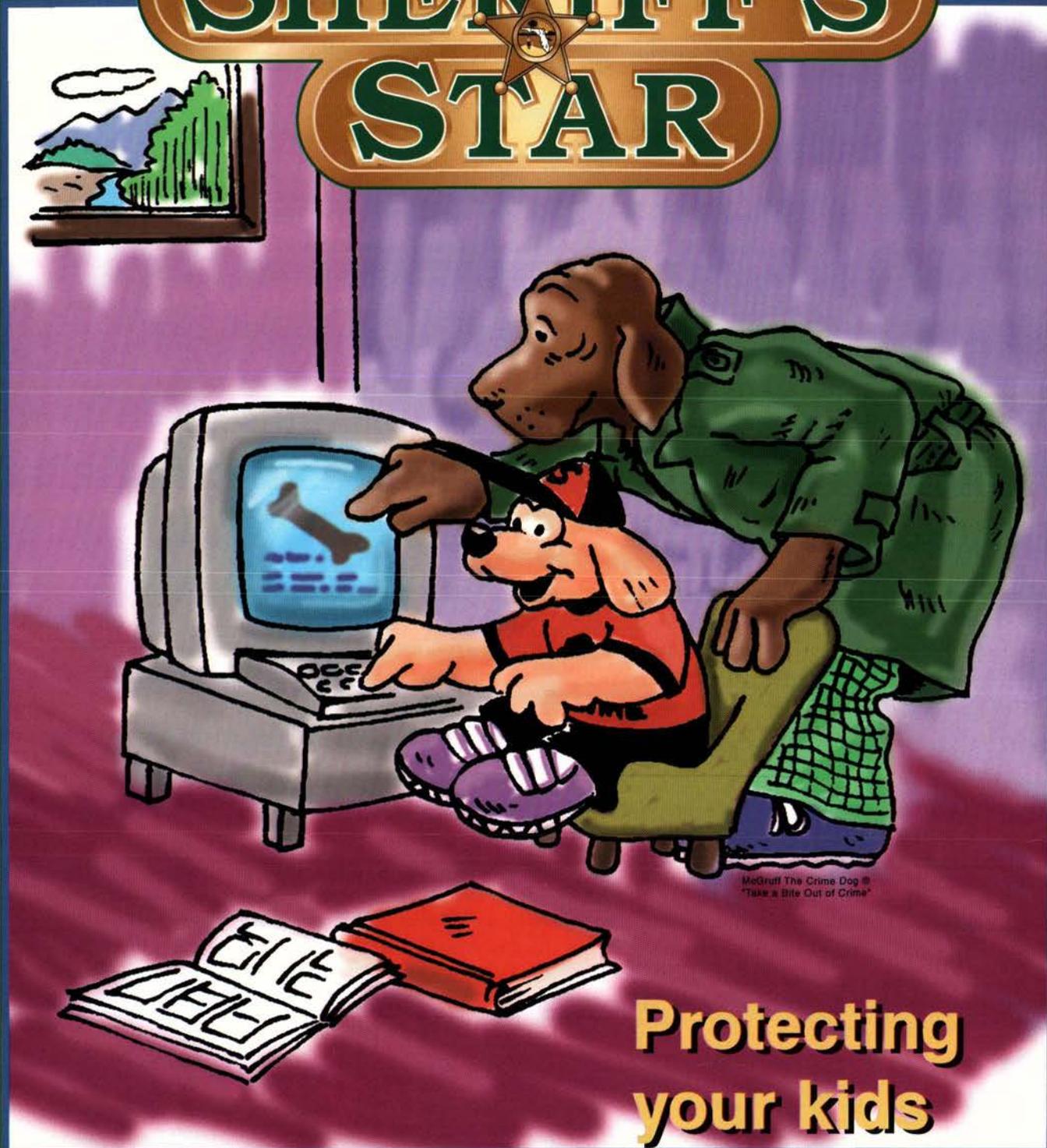


# THE SHERIFF'S STAR



McGruff The Crime Dog ©  
"Take a Bite Out of Crime"

**Protecting  
your kids**

**Building a Safety Net for  
the Internet:**

**from crime  
online**

See page 3

## From the desk of . . .

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



When someone has a question about law enforcement in Florida, where do they turn? Well, if the e-mail received from our website is any indication ([www.flsheriffs.org](http://www.flsheriffs.org)) — it's right here: your Florida Sheriffs Association. We've received requests including everything from "Where can I get a Sheriff's badge for my law enforcement collection?" to "How do I get a concealed weapons permit?" to (a little more questionable) "Where can I get an online list of the current arrest warrants for a selected county?" I can tell you that as a career law-enforcement officer, this last one raised my suspicion.

Yes, FSA is considered a resource for people who might not know where else to turn to get their questions answered. But besides being a resource, we very often take action following a simple request. If it falls in our mission to "enhance law enforcement through educational and charitable purpose," we will do our best to serve the need.

Just last year, FSA was called to a special assignment that was a result of legislation passed years ago allowing consideration of early release of inmates serving "life terms." FSA was concerned about those who were originally sentenced for either assaulting or murdering a law-enforcement officer.

The Sheriffs Association does not take these types of crime lightly, and I'm happy to say that since our involvement — not one in more than 50 prisoners has been allowed early release, and in many cases, the release date is delayed sometimes by as much as 20 more years.

It's not a glamorous job, as you'll read in our story about parole hearings on page 11, but it's necessary and very rewarding. Tom Berlinger, our director of operational services, told me that even though it's a grueling task — researching cases, then sitting in a witness room for the better part of a day every week — it's so satisfying, he would consider volunteering for the job in his retirement.

Considering the headlines of recent news reports, we want the message to be heard loud and clear: If you commit a crime against a police officer, you'll be paying for it for many, many years to come.

### **Keeper of the history**

Supporting the law-enforcement purpose has been our mission since the founding of FSA. Because the association is Florida's oldest law-enforcement organization, we are also the best choice for documenting the history of policing in our state. We are currently working with several noted historians on a book about the history of the office of Sheriff in Florida. And we need your help. If you or anyone you know has photographs or other memorabilia related to the office of Sheriff (our researchers are going back more than 100 years), we'd like to consider including it in this book. To have it considered, call me direct: 850-877-2165, or e-mail me describing the items: [buddy@flsheriffs.org](mailto:buddy@flsheriffs.org).

Though researching and writing a book is a huge undertaking, we plan to provide previews of the content in upcoming issues of *The Sheriff's Star*. And when it's available, we'll be sure to notify our members first.

We look forward to hearing your colorful stories about the history of Sheriffs' offices in Florida.

*Buddy*

J. M. "Buddy" Phillips  
Executive Director

## Crime Prevention Tip:

# Building A Safety Net for the Internet

Call it your worst nightmare. A single mom, we'll call her Kathy, was using her computer late at night for the bookkeeping business she ran from her home. Remembering that she needed to download a new software program from the Internet, she opened her browser and decided to take a short cut by using the "history" feature which kept a list of sites recently viewed.

There were some keywords she didn't recognize on the list, so she clicked on them. As the mother of 10-year-old, nothing could have prepared her for the images that immediately appeared on her computer screen: children in sexually explicit positions. Some costumed, some not. Many were being sexually molested by adults. You could see the innocence — and the fear — in the children's eyes.

Where could her little Tommy have gotten these web addresses, she wondered? Kathy opened her e-mail program and checked the trash. She found notes, lots of them, from a person with the coy name of "Your Robot," and the same URLs (web addresses) from her "history" file. A cyber predator was targeting her son!

Fortunately, Kathy caught on to the scheme before it was too late. She contacted her local Sheriff's Office and learned that if she had not intervened, it could have been just a matter of time before the predator had requested an in-person meeting; perhaps even sending a plane ticket for the child to meet them at some destination across the country.

### Build your own safety net

While law enforcement is policing the Internet and working to make the streets of the information highway safer, the primary responsibility for protecting children is in the hands of the parents.

Though even a year ago, parents' only defense against a crime like this



one was to monitor the child's use of the Internet, many online services are now available to help. Use these tips to safeguard your child against online sexual predators:

- Start by making some rules for home computer use. Tell the child to never give out identifying information in a public message, such as one posted to a chat room or bulletin board. Tell them that even giving it out via e-mail can be dangerous, and explain that they are never to arrange a face-to-face meeting with another computer user without your permission.
- Consider a "parent/child agreement" which provides rules that, if broken, are a means for appropriate punishment.

- Make sure access to the Internet at your child's school is monitored by adults. Pay an unannounced visit to assure yourself of this fact.

- Keep up to date on tips for protecting your child on the Internet. SafeSurf ([www.safesurf.com](http://www.safesurf.com)) offers "Tips for Safer Surfing," as does Netparents.org ([www.netparents.org](http://www.netparents.org)).

- Use the parental controls and screening tools available on the commercial online services. You can find a list of them at: [www.netparents.org/isps/](http://www.netparents.org/isps/)

- If you use the Netscape browser, update it with the new "NetWatch" feature — a tool that allows parents to utilize a "SafeSurf Rating Standard" within your Netscape browser to set content levels according to your individual standards. SafeSurf is a free parents organization formed to protect children on the Internet, as well as the rights of parents through technology and education.

- And, finally, if you suspect a cyber predator of targeting your child, call the CyberTipline, a service of the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children: 1-800-843-5678, and report it to your local law enforcement.

## THE SHERIFF'S STAR

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E-mail: [fsa@flsheriffs.org](mailto:fsa@flsheriffs.org) Web site: <http://www.flsheriffs.org/>

Phone (850) 877-2165 Fax (850) 878-8665

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# Operation Thunder Road :

# The Largest Crime Fighting Machine Ever

67 Sheriffs,

municipal,

state, and

federal

agencies

FSA's statewide Task Force made U.S. history this past spring by organizing "Operation Thunder Road," the largest statewide multi-agency operation in the nation.

During the week of May 11, 1998, a total of 101 local, state and federal law-enforcement agencies, working side by side, executed operations in each of six Statewide Task Force zones. A total of 3,748 criminals were arrested and \$6,540,423 in seizures of drugs, currency, vehicles, vessels, firearms, property and equipment were seized. These were above and beyond the routine enforcement taking place during the intense two-day effort.

It was Task Force Chairman and Pinellas County Sheriff Everett Rice's dream to form the largest cooperative crime-fighting machine ever organized in this state. He asked FSA Task Force director Tom Tramel to test a plan that would bring law-enforcement agencies from all levels together, united by a common theme.

Though it was a year in the making, Sheriff Rice said, "Operation Thunder Road proved that Sheriffs and agencies at all levels can work together for a common cause. It proved that while each of us has specific duties to perform as law-enforcement agencies, our overall mission is the same — to combat crime and protect the citizens of our state."

This statewide effort involved an impressive list of operations including: Highway, Bus, Parcel, Mini-Storage, Hotel/Motel, Train, Car Rental, Marine and Airport Interdiction; Search Warrants, Reverse Drug, Institutional Drug, Fugitive Apprehension, Street Level Drug, Crack Cocaine Reverses, Marijuana Eradication, Prosti-



FSA Task Force Chairman and Pinellas County Sheriff Everett Rice reports on the success of Operation Thunder Road



Maj. Ken Howes of the Florida Highway Patrol said the operation sends a clear message to criminals: Their crimes will not be tolerated in Florida.



Lee County Sheriff John McDougal, at podium, said that Operation Thunder Road proved "beyond a shadow of a doubt" that law enforcement agencies can cross boundaries and work together to fight crime. "This is about the future of Florida," Sheriff McDougal said. "We cannot afford to operate in a vacuum."

tution Reverses, Buy-bust Drug, Marine Theft, Robbery Intervention, Robbery Warrant, Criminal Gang, Non-Support, Nightclub Investigation, Violent Felon Apprehension, Commercial Vehicle, Alien Apprehension, and Drivers License Check.

The law-enforcement agencies involved in this operation included all 67 Sheriffs, municipal, state, and federal agencies. Among them: Florida Department of Law Enforcement, the Drug Enforcement Administration, the Attorney General's Office state departments including Agriculture, Alcoholic Beverages & Tobacco, Environmental Protection, Transportation, Marine Patrol, Highway Patrol; the National Guard, the Salvation Army; U.S. Coast Guard, Customs, Immigration & Naturalization Service, Border Patrol, Secret Service; and numerous municipal police departments. A total of 3,000 law-enforcement officers participated and more than 4,600 volunteer hours were logged by law enforcement auxiliary and reserve personnel.

Sheriffs' zone and agency coordinators, along with the agency coordinators of the state and federal agencies, were in charge of developing goals to

address specific crime problems and putting the plan into action.

Sgt. Bob Diemer of the Florida Sheriffs' Association Statewide Task Force and Lt. Marty Duncan of the Florida Highway Patrol led the coordination of this entire operation and headed the command center for communications and reporting at the FSA offices in Tallahassee.



Sgt. Diemer

Though significant for a 48-hour period, Sheriff Rice said, "This operation goes beyond just the arrests and seizures, or even the amount of drugs and contraband confiscated. It has to do with communication, education, appreciation, cooperation and partnerships — all of which help us to do our jobs more effectively."

Perhaps one of the most valuable accomplishments to come out of the operation was that the agencies learned from each other. "Because of the efforts of these law-enforcement agencies," Rice said, "the state of Florida is, and will continue to be, a safer place for everyone to live."

# Small sheriffs' offices often face big-city problems

By Tom Berlinger  
Director of Operational Services  
Florida Sheriffs Association



**MACCLENNY** - It's 3:05 a.m., and most everybody in Baker County is fast asleep.

A young dispatcher's voice breaks the silence, and the message is heard in police cars across the entire county: "Baker County to any unit available. . . we have three men fighting in the front yard of the red house at the edge of the east city limits of Macclenny. . . shots have been fired. . ."

The first baritone voice to respond to the radio plea states in a matter-of-fact tone, "I'll be 10-51 (enroute), and I will be 10-97 (on the scene) in about six to eight minutes. . ."

Nothing unusual here except for one thing: It's the middle of the night and the voice of the responder is Joey Dobson, the first-term Sheriff in this rural community a short distance west of Jacksonville.

"I keep a police monitor at my desk, and at my bedside, and that's probably a big mistake," notes Sheriff Dobson, with a grin. Dobson is an affable giant of a man who's as likely to respond to any type of call — day and night -- as any one of his deputy sheriffs.

"In fact, one day last week, I had just gotten back home at about 4:30 a.m. to go back to sleep when I accidentally awakened my wife. She's used to me leaving at all hours, but this time she sat up in bed with a blank, puzzled look on her face and asked, 'Are you coming or going?' I couldn't help it, but I just busted out laughing."

Citizens living in cities like Tampa, Fort Lauderdale and Orlando may live through an entire lifetime and never see or meet their elected Sheriff face-to-face. Their primary knowledge about this important elected official comes from newspaper, radio or television coverage of a major event, or during political campaigns.

"In our close-knit community, more often than not, I can recognize the faces and call the names of a large portion of our residents, and I can probably tell you how many kids they've got, and who their parents are as well," Dobson notes.

Joey Dobson started as a uniformed deputy sheriff in Baker County in 1973. At the time, "There were



Sheriff  
Joey Dobson

about a half-dozen deputies to patrol 588 square miles that comprises Baker County," he says. "And I don't mean a half-dozen at a time, I mean a half-dozen to cover all the bases, seven days a week, 365 days a year."

As a Sheriff in a relatively small community, he's far from being alone as the chief law-enforcement officer who is expected (by his constituents) to be personally involved in such a hands-on way in both criminal investigations and responding to calls for service. In fact, there are 19 counties in Florida with a population of less than the estimated 20,700 who live in Baker County.

Dobson suggests that there are some good points and some bad points about having to be so personally involved with certain aspects of policing.

"To be sure, it's great to get to know and meet all the local folks I get to deal with, but as a person who holds elective office, I can tell you first-hand that assisting in someone's arrest does not endear you to the average person, or their family," he says, alluding to the political implications of such a hands-on style.

"Sheriffs in much larger counties enjoy the luxury of only having to administer and oversee their office. They can delegate the day-to-day operations to others, and sometimes, they'll go through an entire four-year term without being personally involved in an arrest."

"While that style of police administration would be nice, it will never be the case in Baker County," he added. "At least not in my lifetime."

*Post script: To gather information for this article, I recently visited with Sheriff Dobson and spent an entire day with him in Baker County. While we were sitting in his office, one of his investigators knocked at the door and said, "Sheriff, the suspect is here."*

*Dobson asked me to leave the room and wait for him in the lobby.*

*Ten minutes later, he gingerly walked the suspect past me and on to his detective division. He handed the suspect over to the same investigator and told the young man, "Just tell this deputy what you told me."*

*In the brief meeting with the sheriff, the youth had just confessed to setting fire to a local school.*

*All in a days' work.*

## Carrying the FSA Message — to England

For the past 30 years, Stanley Pack has been collecting law-enforcement memorabilia. Well, now he can add two more items, this time with a personal twist: An article about himself that appeared in an England police publication, and this one in our very own *Sheriff's Star*.

Pack's brother, Tom, was the Chief of Police in Spencerport, New York, and he influenced his brother to begin collecting police badges and insignias. He also encouraged him to join the Florida Sheriff's Association more than 10 years ago.

Pack proudly promotes his membership in the Florida Sheriffs Association among his international neighbors, but decided to take it one step further. He managed to get a mention in the Sussex Police magazine, *Patrol*, including a photo of him sporting an FSA hat and showing off his official FSA auto tag. He then submitted the photo to FSA for publication consideration.

Pack says FSA's support for the Youth Ranches is important to him, and one of the many reasons he con-



Stanley Pack, a 10-year member of the Florida Sheriffs Association, poses here with Sussex Police officers Rachel Mundy and Peter Bidmead in England.

tinues his membership. For many years, he and his wife were involved with the Boy Scouts and he served as International Advisor at one point.

"I always have been interested in the youth of today, as they are our future," he says. Although he is now disabled, he says he and his wife are still very involved in their community.

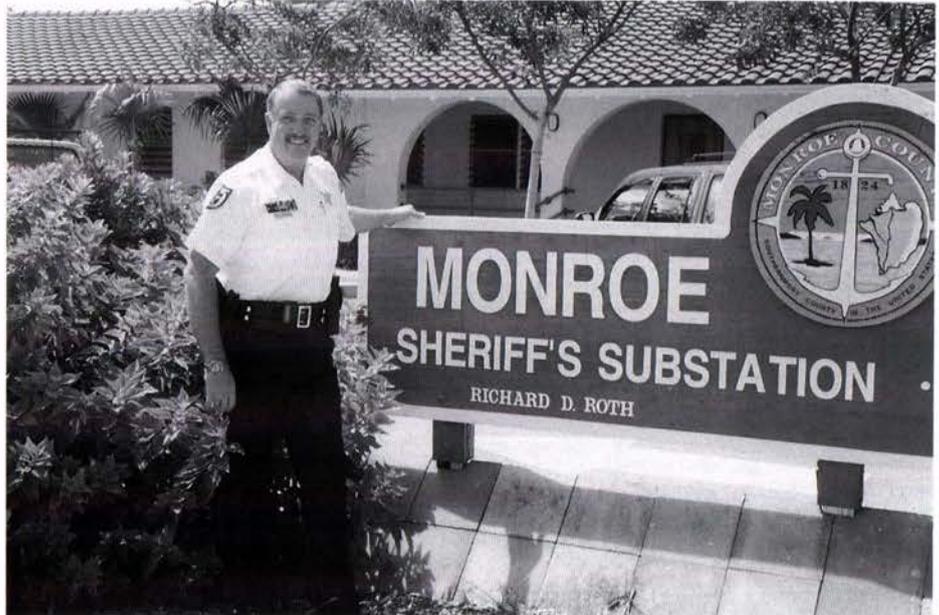
Thank you, Stanley, for helping to keep FSA's message in the spotlight in the U.S. and abroad.

## A Leader Among The Ranks

Leadership Florida, sponsored by the Florida Chamber of Commerce, is widely known in business circles for tapping business and community leaders to participate in its program.

Monroe County Sheriff's Office Capt. Robert Peryam recently became one of only a handful of law enforcement officers — including two Sheriffs — to graduate since the program's inception in 1982. Of the 706 who have been through the program, only six were from law enforcement agencies, including Martin County Sheriff Bob Crowder and former Monroe County Sheriff J. Allison DeFoor.

Acceptance in the program alone is an honor, only those well-advanced in their careers and with proven leadership traits are included among the 50 candidates annually. Once chosen, candidates participate in a 10-month educational process including lectures, tours and discussions with representatives from religious, environmental, and social service groups. They also engage in lively debates with business and political experts and

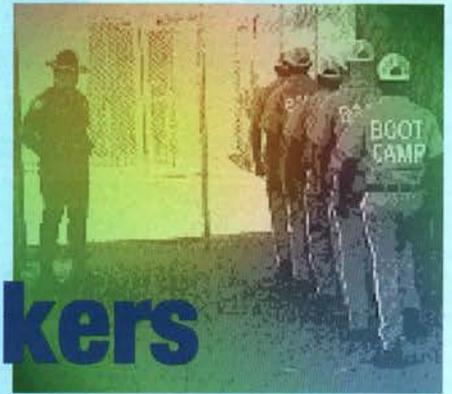


their hands-on training may include holding a crack baby or meeting with delinquent teenagers who are incarcerated for serious felony offenses.

Leadership Florida strives to develop leaders of tomorrow who can help Florida confront serious issues, build a shared vision and create a common agenda among its citizens. The Florida Sheriffs Association congratulates Capt. Peryam for earning the honor to be included in this elite group of Florida leaders.

# Legislature 1998

## Boot Camps Gain Attention of Lawmakers



Rep. Mark Flanagan



Rep. Stan Bainter



Senator  
Charles Williams

***For a legislative session that was predicted to “not be a crime session,” the Florida Sheriffs sure did a lot of work.***

The 1998 Florida Legislature brought many of the 67 Sheriffs to the state Capitol in Tallahassee to support juvenile justice issues and defend against what could have been very damaging police-union legislation, said FSA general counsel and legislative director, Maury Kolchakian.

The Police Benevolent Association’s “bill of rights” had the union and Sheriffs waging a pretty bloody battle. HB 3949 and SB 346 would have imposed criminal penalties on internal affairs investigators. Fortunately for the office of Sheriff, and the protection of citizens of the state, it was defeated.

FSA, however, took the side of the other major police union when it backed the Fraternal Order of Police on HB 3161 and SB 2012 which gives reasonable law-enforcement officers rights when under investigation.

The biggest news for the Sheriffs, though, was successfully pushing the boot camp bill which gives the Sheriff more control over their management, and winning increased funding for boot camps of \$10 per day, per juvenile offender. The funding alone will prevent several boot camps from shutting their doors, and will hopefully lead to the successful establishment of other camps, Kolchakian said.

### **The lawmakers behind the law**

State Sen. Charles Williams said the boot camp legislation was originally intended as a tough love bill. Rep. Mark Flanagan, along with co-sponsor Rep. Marjorie Turnbull, managed to get a version out of the House, which the Senate side modified, adding language to assure that supervisory jurisdiction of boot camps go to the Sheriffs in the county in which the boot camps are located. It also stated that the Department of



Maury Kolchakian  
FSA Legislative Director

***View FSA’s complete summary of Criminal Justice legislation on the web. From our welcome page ([www.flsheriffs.org](http://www.flsheriffs.org)), choose “Legislative Update.”***

*continued on page 10*



State Senator Charles Williams, at center, holding a plaque, is in good company among 14 Sheriffs, one retired Sheriff and friends. He was guest of honor at an appreciation barbecue last month which was attended by nearly all of the Sheriffs from his district — which includes Baker, Dixie, Gilchrist, Hamilton, Lafayette, Nassau, Taylor and parts of Alachua, Bradford, Citrus, Columbia, Jefferson, Leon, Levy, Madison, Marion, Suwannee and Union. Union County Sheriff Jerry Whitehead, fourth from right, was host.

Following the 1998 Legislature, the Florida Sheriffs of State Senate District 4, held an appreciation barbecue for Sen. Charles Williams to thank him for all of his work on behalf of Sheriffs' issues including boot camp legislation and other juvenile justice issues. The dinner, held at a farm owned by Union County Sheriff Jerry Whitehead and his uncle, Marvin Pritchett on June 11, brought 16 of the 18 Sheriffs in his district.

Senator Williams said it was one of the most humbling experiences he's ever had and the most gratifying. The relationship between Sheriffs and their state lawmaker can't be overemphasized, he said.

"I know no group has a stronger influence in the legislative process when it comes to law and order issues than the Sheriffs in Florida," Williams said. "There's no way to describe the impact they have when they meet with their individual legislator," he said. "It's powerful."

He returned the appreciation they showed for him at the June event: "The Sheriffs are politically the strongest constitutional officer in our various counties. They are well respected and obviously liked by their constituents or they would not be elected. I think most legislators have the same attitude I do — I welcome their help and their ideas because they're on the front line."

## FSA Thanks Lawmakers for Support

Each year, the Florida Sheriffs Association gives legislative awards to Florida state senators and representatives who were instrumental in assisting the Sheriffs on Criminal Justice legislation. This year, more than 25 lawmakers will receive a hearty handshake from their local Sheriff and a plaque in appreciation of their valuable work on behalf of public safety in our state. We'd like to give them special recognition, and ask that our members thank the legislators in their districts who are on this list:

Sen. Charles Bronson	Rep. Randy Ball
Sen. Ginny Brown-Waite	Rep. George Crady
Sen. Locke Burt	Rep. Mark Flanagan
Sen. Fred Dudley	Rep. Sandra Murman
Sen. Jim Horne	Rep. Mark Ogles
Sen. President Toni Jennings	Rep. Jeff Stabins
Sen. Tom Lee	Rep. John Thrasher
Sen. John McKay	Rep. Allen Trovillion
Sen. Ron Silver	Rep. Carlos Valdes
Sen. Donald Sullivan	Rep. J. Alex Villalobos
Sen. Charles Williams	Rep. Tom Warner
Rep. Joe Arnall	Rep. Victor Crist
Rep. Stan Bainter	

# Legislature 1998 continued . . .



Juvenile Justice was required to place adjudicated juveniles into a facility in or closest to the county in which they were adjudicated.

"The idea here was to stop the shipping of juveniles all over the state," Williams said, which not only strained budgets, but also made after-care programs nearly impossible.

It helped that both Sheriffs and the Department of Juvenile Justice were in support of the bill, Williams said.

"I got very strong support from Sheriffs across Florida," he said. "They were there for me every time I needed them." Department of Juvenile Justice Secretary Calvin Ross and his staff supported the bill, as well, which made it much easier to navigate through the House and Senate.

Senator Williams said boot camps are a critical link in the process of deterring juveniles from a life of crime at an earlier age. It's a "tough love" approach, and he added, "Tough love is better than no love."

## Facts help melt the opposition

Representative Flanagan also supported the get-tough approach to juvenile justice. "For too long, the Department of Juvenile Justice has treated (the boot camp contracts) as just another of the thousands of contracts they manage," he said. "And in our minds, the boot camps are an extremely important part of the system — they're not just another provider, but an integral part."

He said just as important is that the Sheriff be the supervisor of the boot camp instead of someone calling the shots for the boot camp from a Tallahassee-based state agency.

In the beginning, Rep. Flanagan said the opposition to the boot camp bill was mainly because of

misinformation. "They didn't know that the average youthful offender had failed four other programs before being sent to the boot camp," he said.

By taking a tougher stance, he said, they hope to save billions of taxpayer dollars in the future — by preventing the juvenile from becoming an adult offender.

Rep. Stan Bainter, chairman of the House Juvenile Justice Committee, was credited with helping out in all areas

of juvenile justice, including the Sheriff's boot camp bill. Because the Department of Juvenile Justice is so new, though, he said there's a lot of fine tuning to be done.

"What we're really trying to do is get a handle on all the different programs involved and beef up those working and eliminate those that aren't," he said. "Our task for the next two years is to streamline the system."

Though lawmakers heard many explanations and proposed solutions to the juvenile crime problem, Bainter said, "I can tell you after two years, nobody knows. They just keep surprising us." That makes boot camps even more critical because it's one solution that seems to be working, he said.

The additional funding of \$1 million, which represents an increase of approximately \$10 per diem for each juvenile, should make it possible for more counties to have boot camps, he said.

## Looking ahead

Tort reform, considered landmark legislation that would limit how much Sheriffs' offices and other "deep pockets" could be sued for damages, managed to get through the Senate and House only to be vetoed by Florida Gov. Lawton Chiles.

"The Sheriffs worked for two or three years trying to get meaningful tort reform which would reduce the amount of lawsuits against Sheriffs' offices," Kolchakian said. Rep. John Thrasher and Sen. John McKay were instrumental in the legislation, and lawmakers said they expect to re-visit the issues next year, possibly with a very different make-up in the administration.

The Florida Sheriffs Association extends a special thanks to state Rep. J. Alex Villalobos, chairman of the Criminal Justice Appropriations Committee, for appropriating more than \$1 million to Florida's boot camps. Subcommittee Chairman Senator Ron Silver and Rep. Stan Bainter pushed the appropriation, which will raise the per diem rate from \$65 to \$75. The increase will assure continued operation of many boot camps which were threatened due to funding issues.

Rep. Villalobos was also instrumental in getting the Jimmy Ryce Act passed, which allows for the involuntary civil commitment of sexually violent predators and provides them with long-term treatment, keeping them away from society.

Marion County Sheriff Ken Ertle appeared on behalf of the Sheriffs in favor of the legislation, which allows the appropriate state attorney to petition the court seeking to have a serious sex offender determined to be a "sexually violent predator." The predator can then be committed to a Children & Family Services facility until the predator is determined to no longer be a threat to the public. The need for this classification must be proven beyond a reasonable doubt at a trial, which may take place before a six-person jury if the offender chooses.

A sexually violent predator's condition will be reviewed annually, and the victim or the victim's next of kin must be notified by Children & Family Services if a predator is to be released. The effective date is January 1, 1999.



Rep. Villalobos

By: Julie S. Bettinger

Just about every Wednesday morning in Tallahassee, Tom Berlinger prepares himself for what can be a very emotional, yet extremely rewarding part of his job: attending parole hearings for inmates who are serving time for assaulting or murdering police officers.

Thanks to Maj. George Aylesworth, chief legal counsel to the Miami-Dade Police Department, the Florida Sheriffs Association and Florida Police Chiefs Association are now representing the interests of deceased and injured officers at their perpetrator's parole hearing.

Last year, Aylesworth learned there was a parole hearing scheduled for a person who shot and killed a Dade County officer years ago, yet nobody was going to appear representing the law-enforcement community as a whole and speak in opposition to the impending release.

Aylesworth spoke with Ed Spooner, chairman of the Florida Parole Commission, and asked him if he would be willing to issue a standing order that whenever an individual who either killed or wounded a law-enforcement or correctional officer came up for parole, that FSA and the FPCA would be notified and invited to speak. Spooner, a former police chief, gladly agreed.

Ever since that date, Hal Robbins, the executive director of FPCA has appeared on behalf of the 300-plus Police Chiefs of the state; and FSA's own Tom Berlinger has appeared for the Sheriffs.

The results have been astounding: Since FSA and FPCA's involvement more than a year ago, the FPC has never set the perpetrator's presumptive release date earlier than it was before they testified, and in many cases the release dates were delayed — sometimes extended as much as 20 years.

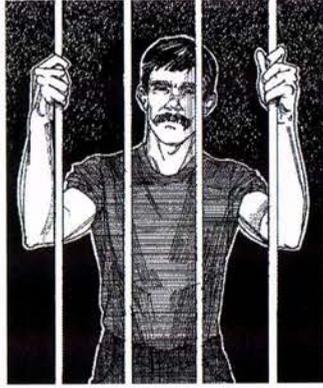
### "I thought a life sentence was 'for life'..."

With the change in the law in the early 1970s, many of the "lifers" serving 25-year minimum mandatory sentences are now moving into their eligibility period for parole consideration. For this reason, as many as five inmates who have either beaten, shot, stabbed or murdered a law-enforcement or corrections officer may be having their parole cases heard on any given Wednesday in Tallahassee.

Berlinger, FSA's director of operational services, usually begins his research early in the week, reviewing the case files which provide relevant data about the nature and extent of the crime, as well as the inmate's record of behavior while in prison.

Prior to the hearing, each inmate is interviewed by a hearing examiner who provides his or her recommendation. Berlinger says he must consider many factors: whether he believes they have paid a sufficient amount of time as punish-

## "You Killed a Police Officer, and You Expect Parole?"



ment; whether they have been adequately rehabilitated and have taken advantage of personal enrichment programs while in prison; and whether or not they've gone through drug treatment programs, joined Alcoholics Anonymous, Narcotics Anonymous, or taken other life skill programs.

Parole officials use records of any disciplinary action against the inmate as an indicator of their ability to adjust to the outside world. Disciplinary records, which are also included in the file, may include illegal drug use within the prison, assaulting other inmates or staff and even murdering another inmate while in prison.

It's Berlinger's and Robbins' job to remind the commissioners of the track record of the individual's behavior and relate it to the original charges.

"I go in and try to put myself in a position of speaking on behalf of, or for that dead officer,"

Berlinger says. "They aren't there to represent themselves."

Very often, Berlinger contacts the surviving family members of officers who were killed to get a feel for the person who was killed and the effect that this officer's murder had on the family. Sometimes the family members of the officers will even appear at the hearings. In one emotionally charged hearing, a severely injured officer from South Florida appeared in a video to tell how much his life had changed since being shot by the inmate who was being considered for parole. He had been taken off of police duty and put on light duty, but his health continued to deteriorate. On the video, the officer was hooked up to intravenous lines and was using a machine for assistance in breathing. He told of dying a slow death for 26 years.



Robbins

The entire audience was in tears, and many of the commissioners were choked up, according to Berlinger. "Those commissioners will never forget that video tape," he says.

After hearing testimony from both sides -- both law enforcement and the person or persons speaking on behalf of the inmate -- the FPC holds a discussion and then makes its official ruling. The inmate is notified of the decision shortly thereafter.

Though they are tough on most criminals, Berlinger says the circumstances determine how tough. For instance, one inmate, who had shot a police officer but had recently been diagnosed with terminal cancer, was allowed to go home, as doctors predicted he had only one month to live.

Overall, though, Berlinger says he hopes FSA and FPCA's actions are sending a message to the criminals of Florida: If a person injures or takes the life of a law-enforcement officer, it's not going to be taken lightly.

As for Berlinger, though the research can be tedious, the hours waiting prior to a hearing long, he says, "I consider it one of the most important responsibilities of my job."



Berlinger

# Racing Against Drugs

By: Joan Heller  
Public Information Officer  
Brevard County Sheriff's  
Office

What started out as a hobby for Brevard County Sheriff's Deputy Randy Davis has come to resemble more of a calling.

Deputy Davis has always loved race cars, but it wasn't until he created a stock car emblazoned with "Race Against Drugs" (RAD) that he found a way to merge this passion with another: keeping kids drug-free.

Roaring around the racetracks in a half-scale stock car, Davis and his RAD Race Team are capturing the attention of fans young and old.

"It's gone far beyond what we anticipated," Davis said. "We're out with the car at least two weekends a month. If we're not racing, we're showing the car at schools and community events. It's actually gotten to the point where we sometimes have to turn requests down."

His wife and partner, Debbi Davis, is an investigator for the Brevard-Seminole State Attorney's Office. After hours, she is public relations director for the RAD Racing Super Mini cup Race Team. Together, the Davises and their children, 12-year-old Gary and 2-year-old Brittany, traveled more than 5,000 miles with the team last year.

"We've traveled as far as the Indianapolis Speedway and the Myrtle Beach Speedway," Deputy Davis said.

Since 1994, the Davises have appeared at more than 80 community events, reaching more than 25,000 children and young adults.

The team members focus their 15-minute presentations on the need to stay drug-free and to stay safe by using safety belts and bicycle helmets. "We don't have a formal curriculum, it's open ended," he said.

During Red Ribbon Week last fall, the two Davises took vacation days from their jobs in order to visit three local elementary schools. "It was great," he said. "We took the car and our message around to 2,000 kids in two days."



**Brevard County Sheriff's Deputy Randy Davis shows off his stock car, which is not only popular with children and adults during exhibitions, but has a darn good record on the tracks: The car and team have won six and finished in the top five of more than 33 races.**

The Davises have received awards for their volunteer efforts from the National Child Safety Council, the FBI, the Drug Enforcement Administration, the Brevard County School Board and the National Crime Prevention Council. They were recently honored by the Titusville Area Chamber of Commerce as the community's 1997 "Couple of the Year" for their efforts in youth drug prevention and education.

Their volunteer spirit is a winning one, and so is their track record for actual competitions. Out of the 62 races in which they have competed, they've won six and finished in the top five 33 times.

Deputy Davis' passion for law enforcement started as a Police Explorer. He started his career with the Palm Beach Gardens Police Department, where he spent two years before moving to the Titusville Police Department. Eight years later, he joined the Brevard County Sheriff's Office. During his nine years with Brevard County, Davis has worked as a patrol deputy, motorcycle officer and field training officer. He is now assigned to the agency's Civil Division.

Brevard County Sheriff Phil Williams commended the Davises on their work with young people. "I'm very impressed that they've been able to accomplish so much while doing something that looks like so much fun," he said. Unable to resist the opportunity for making a pun, the Sheriff added, "Randy always goes the extra mile."

Having made a name for itself with its mini race car, the RAD team is ready to move on to bigger tracks and more power. The mini car will soon be replaced by a Ford S10 Ranger pickup built for speed.

"We'll be racing in the Southern Pro Truck Racing Series," Davis said. "The tracks are bigger — and so are the crowds."

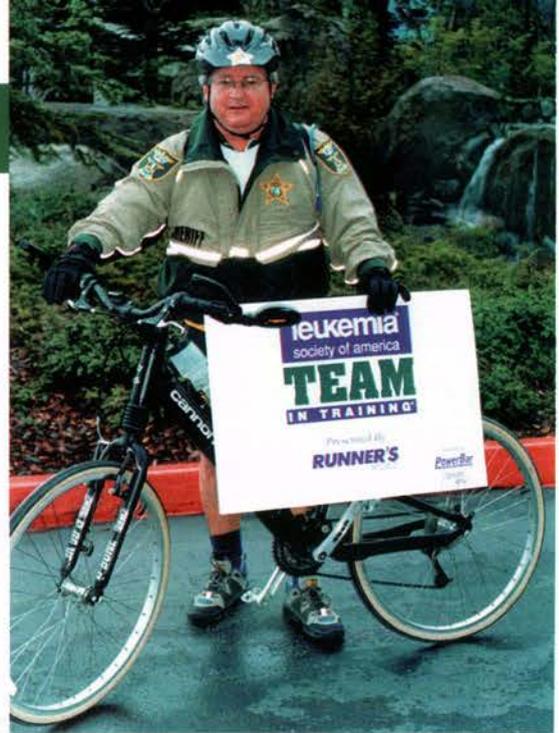
# Martin County Team In Tahoe

As our readers may recall, in our last issue of *The Sheriff's Star*, we ran a "pre-race" photo of the Martin County Sheriff's Office Century Ride team. Well, the group finished their race, which took place June 7 in Lake Tahoe, raising over \$21,000 for the Leukemia Society. Martin County Sheriff Bob Crowder wrote the Star to update our readers:

"We started about 6:30 a.m., Sunday, June 7, from the Zephyr Cove Park in Nevada on the southeast shore of the lake. It was around 40 degrees or so, but the rain they had been expecting spent itself during the preceding night, so we had pretty good weather most of the day except for a hail storm and a little rain early in the afternoon.

"This was the most challenging century ride the (Leukemia Society Team in Training) coaches had experienced. The course proceeded clockwise into California and around the lake. At the northeast corner of the lake we took a side loop up to Truckee, California, and then back over the Brockway summit and down to Lake Tahoe at Kings Bay. The Brockway climb was a steady uphill grind for about five miles (truly grueling). The finish was back at Zephyr Cove again. I had some tire trouble early in the ride and lost about an hour and a half. I still finished by 5:40 p.m., but was the last one of my group (of seven) from the Sheriff's Office to finish.

Martin County Sheriff Bob Crowder, pictured right, decided to compete in a 100-mile bicycle race after his wife, Debbie, completed a marathon earlier this year.



Sheriff Crowder and his wife Debbie

"Two of our seven were unable to finish due to severe muscle cramping and hypothermia. The total ride participants numbered in excess of 1,500, with about half that number being Leukemia Society of America Team in Training participants from all over the United States. We met folks from Georgia, New Jersey, Michigan, California, and a number of other locations. The total raised by these groups for Leukemia research and patient care at this event was between \$1.5 and \$1.7 million."

He concludes:

"The scenery was breathtaking, the ride was challenging, the cause was absolutely worthy, but would I do it again? Of course, but not in the next week or so!"

Our congratulations to: Martin County Sheriff Bob Crowder and his winning team!



Martin County Sheriff's Office Team In Training. From left: Deputy Sheriffs Greg Porter, Bill Scott, Dean Yingling; Sheriff Bob Crowder; Deputy Sheriffs Forrest Yingling, Dennis Hanner, Shawn Boorman.



# 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

A. C. Salvage  
Mr. and Mrs. Burt Adams  
Mrs. Betty Armantrout  
Automotive Remarketing  
Mrs. Benjamin Backford  
Mr. and Mrs. Arnold Baslow  
Ms. Sharon Bennett  
Mr. and Mrs. Jacob Berenson  
Mr. and Mrs. Irvin Berger  
Mr. and Mrs. John Bernard  
Sgt. James K. Bouffard  
Mr. and Mrs. William C. Bowen  
Mrs. Carol Burke  
Mrs. Ethel Callahan  
Mr. and Mrs. Frank Caplan  
Mr. Peter T. Carstens  
Mr. Irving Cohen  
Mr. and Mrs. B. Dean Corbett  
Mrs. Elizabeth F. Cowan  
David's Bridal – Tampa  
Mr. Don DeVane  
Division of Alcoholic Beverages &  
Tobacco – Fort Pierce  
Mrs. Mary L. Donner  
Mrs. Edna F. Estabrooks  
Miss Elizabeth Faver  
Mr. and Mrs. Paul H. Feakins  
Mr. Jim Ferns  
Florida International Air Show  
Mr. and Mrs. Richard Francis  
Mr. and Mrs. Nathaniel L. Funke  
Mr. and Mrs. Richard Garcia  
Ms. Sari S. Garshall  
Mr. and Mrs. Benjamin L. Ginns  
Mr. George Gleason  
Mr. and Mrs. John S. Goodson, Jr.  
Mr. David L. Greenberg  
Mr. Orrin D. Hajek  
Mr. and Mrs. Charles E. Hallock  
Ms. Genevieve Y. Hannan  
Harbor Federal Savings Bank –  
Fort Pierce  
Mr. and Mrs. Herbert Hickox  
Mrs. Rosalie Horne  
Mr. and Mrs. James Johnson

Ms. Betty J. Jones  
Mr. Rick Joyce  
Keefe Supply Company  
Mr. Harold R. Klievoneit  
Ms. Mary Kovalcik  
Mr. and Mrs. Harry Lance  
Mrs. Mary V. Lauke  
Mr. Edward Leali  
Mrs. Catherine Lerenman  
Mr. and Mrs. Leroy Dan Lewis  
Mr. and Mrs. John H. Lobdell  
Mr. Gwendolyn G. Mathews  
Mr. Sean Mathis  
Mr. Frank A. McAlister  
Mr. and Mrs. E. L. McDaniel  
Medallion Group International  
Mr. and Mrs. M. T. Melloy  
Mr. and Mrs. Gordon Millard  
Mr. Robert W. Mitchell  
Mr. and Mrs. Phil Monaco  
Mr. and Mrs. Richard W. Nash  
Mrs. Ed Nettles  
NDC Development Company  
Para-Marine, Inc.  
Mr. and Mrs. Frank Pastula  
Mr. Steven R. Patterson  
Mr. Selvy Peterson  
Mr. and Mrs. John G. Pierson  
Mrs. Helen Popko  
Ms. Fay C. Pritchett  
Mr. Albert W. Ray, Jr.  
Mr. George Renshaw  
Roger Dean Buick GMC  
Trucks, Inc.  
Mr. and Mrs. Arthur F. Rose  
Mr. and Mrs. Preston J. Searing  
Mr. and Mrs. William W. Shinn  
Mr. and Mrs. Marvin Smith  
Spring – Altamonte Springs  
Mr. and Mrs. David E. Swinford  
The Palm Beach Post  
Time Warner Cable – Lake City  
Mr. Frank T. Tobin  
W. G. Mills, Inc.  
Mrs. Irene Weiss



Elli and Wayne Jensen (center) received a 5-star Lifetime Honorary Member plaque from Harry K. Weaver, president of the Florida Sheriffs Youth Ranches, (right) and Mac Stones, development officer. The Jensens have made significant contributions toward an administrative building at the Youth Camp in Barberville.



CLAY COUNTY - Presented by Clay County Sheriff Scott Lancaster (right) to Clay County Deputy Margaret Emmert.



SEMINOLE COUNTY - Presented by Seminole County Sheriff Don Eslinger (right) to Mr. & Mrs. Kuch.



Robert Foster



Ronnie Williams

BRADFORD COUNTY - Presented by Bradford County Sheriff Bob Milner to Robert Foster and Ronnie Williams, on behalf of the Lawley Correctional Institute employees.



LEON COUNTY - Presented by Leon County Sheriff Larry Campbell to Roberta C. Baker.



SARASOTA COUNTY - Presented by Sarasota County Sheriff Geoffrey Monge to Bruce H. Mackie.