Slow Down . . .
It’s Manatee Season
See page 6
Many of us in Florida are approaching the holidays in a somber mood.

Communities in parts of our state are still struggling to recover from the rash of hurricanes. Other families are feeling the effects of not having their sons and daughters with them, as these brave men and women are away, defending our country and our freedom in the war in Iraq.

Still other families of law enforcement officers who were killed in the line of duty this year are facing their first Christmas without their loved one.

As much as the holiday season has turned into a time full of activity – shopping, eating and family gatherings – we must not forget those who are preoccupied with the bigger things of life.

In that light, this issue of The Sheriff’s Star includes a special tribute to our fallen officers of 2004 as well as a K-9 named Vasko.

For years, FSA searched for an appropriate way to honor those Sheriff’s Office employees who were killed in the line of duty. Today, we have a large memorial wall behind our headquarters that, we believe, serves as a means of recognizing those who paid the ultimate price.

I’d like to extend an invitation to those who have not yet visited this memorial to include it in your next trip to the Capital City. Our offices are centrally located – just a few miles from both downtown and Interstate 10 – so you won’t be going too much out of your way. The bronze statues that depict a Sheriff, partner and surviving family members are amazingly lifelike and the entire memorial is one that can stir emotions and patriotism in even the most stoic of hearts.

Yet another tribute in this issue is an article on K-9 Vasko of St. Lucie County, who died in the line of duty this year. For those who might be surprised by the community-wide participation in his memorial service, it’s important to know that K-9 officers share an unusual bond with their four-legged partners. Most K-9s live with the officer’s family, and it’s truly like losing a blood relative.

Human officers also recognize the heroism demonstrated by these K-9s and many men and women in law enforcement will tell you that they owe their lives to the work of a K-9.

The end of an era

I’m happy to report to you that Florida closed a chapter in its history with this recent election. For the first time in nearly 50 years, a county in Florida has a female Sheriff.

We’ve included a photo of Lt. Susan Benton, who takes over as Sheriff of Highlands County in January. Our congratulations to her in this historic win. We’ll be including full biographical information on Lt. Benton as well as her fellow Sheriffs, lawmakers and governmental officials in our “Annual Guide to Government 2005,” which publishes at the end of February.

The staff here at FSA is grateful for the opportunity to get to know our 24 new Sheriffs and welcome back two who served previously, along with their incumbent winners, through our Sheriffs Office Basic Institute.

In case you’re wondering who our chief law enforcement officers are in Florida, see our election wrap-up on page 10.

Spreading Christmas cheer

Of course, it wouldn’t be a December issue if we didn’t include a few holiday topics. If you own a retail business, be sure to consider the information in our Crime Trends on the opposite page. The Volusia County Sheriff’s Office also warmed our heart with a story about deputies collecting gifts for kids. Read more about that on page 9.

Finally, we want to let you know that we’ve updated our FSA Overview, a 24-page booklet that gives the full story of this organization. If you would like a copy, please give us a call at 800-877-2168, or send an e-mail to: info@flsheriffs.org.

On behalf of our staff and the 67 Sheriffs of Florida, I’d like to wish you a safe and happy holiday season.

Gary Perkins, Executive Director
Shoplifting... A Case for Prosecution

By: Sgt. Rick Hord
Public Information Officer
Okaloosa County Sheriff’s Office

The pre-and post-holiday seasons are the busiest times of the year for shoppers, merchants... and thieves.

Even though retail theft calls in our county are about the same as the other months of the year, the sad fact is that most retail thefts don't get reported. In fact, most don't even get discovered until long after the incident.

Shoplifting policies vary between merchants. Some stores actively detect, apprehend and prosecute every thief they can. Others catch few shoplifters and prosecute only if the merchandise isn't returned or paid for.

The decision is entirely up to the business. But, for the record, your friends in law enforcement do not recommend “no prosecute” policies. Here's why:

• It's sending the wrong message. Getting caught and facing the penalties should be a possible consequence of doing wrong.

That makes it more of a deterrent.

• Shoplifters are stealing from every other customer when they steal from you. Losses from retail theft add an estimated 7 percent to the price of everything we purchase. Eliminating retail theft would be like eliminating the state sales tax.

• The courts should be the ones to give second chances. Some shopkeepers will tell you that “everyone deserves a second chance.” The problem is: How do you know you're not the 10th merchant to give this thief a “second” chance?

• Shoplifting is a crime. Not prosecuting turns it into a game. If you don't get caught, play again. If you do get caught, play again anyway.

Florida law takes retail theft seriously, and it is written in a way to close most loopholes: Altering or removing a label, universal product code, or price tag or transferring merchandise from one container to another all count as retail theft under Florida law. Almost any intentional act that denies the merchant the “use, benefit or full retail value” of the property can be considered theft. That's why someone who reached into a jar and took one piece of candy was prosecuted for the retail value of the contents of the entire jar. The merchant uses a clean scoop, never a bare, unwashed hand, to reach into the jar. Stealing one piece made the entire jar unusable.

Theft of property worth $300 or more is a felony; less than that amount is usually a misdemeanor. For shoplifters working together, the combined total value can be counted against each suspect. If 10 teenagers, working together, each swipe two $15 CDs, each can be charged with a felony.

The same concept applies to an individual shoplifter on a spree. The combined total from different shops over a 48-hour period may be added together.

Businesses desiring more information about shoplifting, including advice on catching and apprehending thieves, should contact their local Sheriff’s Office crime prevention unit. Most SOs have specific programs geared toward protecting your business.

It may take a little effort, but it can save your customers money, and, in the long run, that might just mean saving your business, too.

Send your crime prevention and personal safety questions to Rick Hord, c/o Okaloosa County Sheriff’s Office, 1250 Eglin Parkway, Shalimar, FL 32559-1234 or via e-mail: rhord@sheriff-okaloosa.org.
St. Lucie County Mourns a Hero: K-9 Vasko

Officials and citizens pack county civic center to honor K-9 Vasko, who paid the ultimate price while capturing an armed carjacker.

By Mark Weinberg
Public Information Officer
St. Lucie County Sheriff’s Office

As a six-mile-long motorcade made its way to the St. Lucie County civic center, hundreds of area residents took their seats for the funeral of St. Lucie County Sheriff’s K-9 Vasko.

Vasko, a German shepherd, died of gunshot wounds he received while subduing an armed carjacking and kidnapping suspect and protecting his partner, Master Deputy Michael Colton.

The funeral, held June 30, filled the civic center with an estimated 800 members of law-enforcement agencies and the public, in addition to 70 police K-9 teams from as far away as Bay County, Florida.

“Of course, Vasko’s heart will never stop,” said Sheriff Ken J. Mascara in his eulogy. “It beats within every person whose life Vasko touched. It beats within each police service dog. And it beats within each of us.”

In recognition of K-9 Vasko’s heroic sacrifice, Sheriff Mascara posthumously awarded Vasko the Sheriff’s Office Medal of Honor and Life Saving Award.

Master Deputy Colton, flanked by two of his children, Courtney, 8, and Mark, 11, read the well-known poem “Guardians of the Night” and pledged to remain a K-9 Deputy.

The memorial service included a 21-gun salute by a multi-agency honor guard, a “missing man” formation fly-over by the Sheriff’s Office Aviation Unit and a touching four-minute video produced by St. Lucie County media specialists.

Punctuating the service were the pants and occasional barks from six-dozen police service dogs.

“Let them make a little noise,” said Master Deputy Colton from the rostrum, obviously comforted by the presence of the animals. “That's what they’re here for.”

The incident that claimed Vasko’s life was his 91st apprehension and the first line-of-duty death of a St. Lucie County Sheriff’s Office police service dog since the K-9 Unit’s creation in 1985.

The incident began the night of June 24 when 18-year-old Bernard Levy and 19-year-old Clemon A. Sneed, both from Fort Pierce, stole a white-over-blue Cadillac from...
Ramon Gandy of Sheraton Plaza as he sat in front of his home listening to his car radio. The two forced Gandy into the trunk of his car and sped off.

Emergency 9-1-1 dispatchers sent deputies to the area because neighborhood residents heard gunshots. Shortly after deputies spotted the car, Levy and Sneed abandoned it and tried to run away. Master Deputy Colton and Vasko were nearby and ran after Levy, who was carrying a .22-caliber revolver, recovered later by deputies.

When the suspects wouldn't stop, Master Deputy Colton released Vasko.

As Vasko neared Levy, he fired the gunshots that later claimed Vasko's life. Vasko protected his partner and other deputies and managed to apprehend Levy, holding his leg in the grip of his jaws and keeping him on the ground until Colton recalled him.

When Levy raised his gun in Colton's direction, the deputy fired several gunshots to defend himself, incapacitating Levy.

Colton, a 16-year Sheriff's Office veteran, has been with the Sheriff's Office K-9 Unit for eight years.

After doctors performed leg surgery on Levy at an Orlando trauma center, deputies took him to the St. Lucie County jail. Shortly after the shooting, deputies found Sneed at his north county home and took him to jail.

In addition to facing charges of attempted murder of a police officer and murder of a police dog, armed carjacking and kidnapping, Levy also faces attempted kidnapping-with-a-firearm and sexual-battery charges from the Fort Pierce Police Department and charges of carjacking with a deadly weapon and kidnapping from the Indian River County Sheriff's Office.

Master Deputy Colton is now training with his new partner, K-9 Pino, a 2-year-old German shepherd. ♦

FSA Pays Tribute to Fallen Officers of 2004

The Florida Sheriffs Association's Law Enforcement Memorial was dedicated in 2002. Artist Sandy Proctor, who created the bronze sculptures (see inset), is nationally known. His primary residence and studio are in Tallahassee.

The Florida Sheriffs Association initiated a special appeal to its members in the year 2000 in order to create a Law Enforcement Memorial. FSA members responded generously, and for that reason we are now able to honor Sheriff's Office deputies and other officers killed in the line of duty, by including their names on our Law Enforcement Memorial wall.

This year, FSA updated its signage, which fronts a major highway in Tallahassee. We included an invitation for the public to visit our memorial wall.

With their families, we grieve the loss of law-enforcement personnel, but we will continue to assure they receive recognition for paying "the ultimate price" while making our communities safer and protecting our families.

We would like to recognize the seven officers who died in the line of duty in 2004. Listed below are those whose names have been engraved on the memorial, as well as those whose names will be engraved in April 2005 (designated by an asterisk). May they receive their reward in heaven for such a great sacrifice.

February 7, 2004
Deputy Brian Lutz
Marion County
April 22, 2004
Deputy David A. Abella
Hillsborough County
April 24, 2004
Deputy Brian Andrew Haas
Hendry County
May 2, 2004
Deputy Joshua Edwin Blyler*
St. Johns County
May 15, 2004
Deputy Patrick J. Healey*
Lee County
August 19, 2004
Detective Todd M. Fatta*
Broward County
October 9, 2004
Deputy/Agent Lucille Ross*
Brevard County
Winter is Here... So Are the Manatees

The Broward Sheriff's Office Marine Unit would like to remind all boaters that November 15 marked the start of manatee restrictions on the Intracoastal Waterway (ICW).

These restrictions are in effect on weekends until March 31. Regulatory signs are posted at the beginning and end of restricted zones. While there is a lot of regulatory information on the signs, the most important message is: “Slow Speed Minimum Wake, Weekends November 15 through March 31, 7 AM, to 7 PM.” This means to proceed with the vessel fully settled in the water, producing minimum or no wake. When proceeding at “slow speed,” a vessel's bow is not plowing. Another message posted in some areas, “Slow Speed 50' From Shore” is designed to help you avoid collisions with manatees that frequently travel along the sea walls as they move north and south along the ICW.

Remember that these signs are for your protection, as well as the manatees. Consider what would happen if a vessel was speeding along the seawall at 25 miles per hour, and at the same time a second vessel (in this case, a manatee) entered the ICW from a smaller side canal. Both vessels are not likely to see each other before a collision occurs.

Also, be aware of the potential dangers caused by being distracted while boating. Reviewing the latest boater safety guidelines can help. Feel free to ask any marine unit deputy for the “2005 Safe Boating Guide” published by the Marine Industries Association of South Florida. Inside this
pamphlet you will find important safety information and contact information for organizations that teach safe boating courses recommended for all new vessel operators.

As a reminder, boat operators under 21 years of age are required to attend one of these courses and obtain a Boater ID card before operating any vessel with a motor over 15 horsepower. Persons under 21 are required to carry the boater ID card and a picture ID when operating any vessel in the state of Florida.

If you need more information, please look for the BSO Marine Unit at the Alsdorf Park boat ramp located at NE. 14 St. and the ICW in Pompano Beach, or flag us down while out on the water patrolling. You can also contact the Broward Sheriff’s Office District 11 Marine Unit at 954-786-4200.

Gentle Giants Are Endangered

Save the Manatee Club (SMC) encourages residents and tourists in Florida to consider visiting some of the better known manatee viewing areas to learn more about these giant endangered creatures.

"It's a popular activity for residents and one of the reasons many visitors come to Florida," says Nancy Sadusky, SMC Communications Director. "I think people are especially attracted to manatees because they are big, slow moving and gentle."

What's unique about manatees is that, in spite of their size, they have relatively little body fat. They are also herbivores (plant eaters), so their metabolic rate is low. These factors may account, in part, for their susceptibility to cold temperatures. Water temperatures below 21° C (70° F) usually cause manatees to move into warm water refuge areas. In the winter months, generally from November through March, they gather near natural springs or warm water effluents of power plants.

If you're interested in seeing manatees, the SMC recommends visiting locations that have education programs and are dedicated to manatee protection.

A popular area on Florida's east coast is Blue Spring State Park in Orange City, between Orlando and Daytona Beach. Locations on Florida's west coast include the Manatee Viewing Center at Tampa Electric Company in Apollo Beach and Lee County Manatee Park in Fort Myers.

There are also facilities where manatees live in captivity year round, including the Homosassa Springs Wildlife State Park and the Lowry Park Zoo in Tampa. For more information, directions and other locations, visit the Save the Manatee Club website at www.savethemanatee.org.

Biologists at the Florida Fish and Wildlife Research Institute in St. Petersburg are dedicated to the effort of protecting this endangered species. They compare cuts to propellers to determine the types of boats that caused the wounds. In their lifetimes, manatees often suffer from a series of injuries. And while the propellers leave the most noticeable marks, manatees often die from the internal bleeding or infection as a result of the impact of the boat. For more information, visit: www.myfwc.com/manatee/.
Roy's "Kountry Citchen" Feeds Workers in Hurricane Aftermath

By: Indian River County Sheriff Ray Raymond

This fall, category 2 Hurricane Frances came through Indian River County, putting us in the northeast quadrant of the storm, which caused major devastation and knocked out power to our county. Our deputies, who were working 12-hour shifts, along with county workers, city workers, emergency service workers, National Guard and all others who had come to assist in restoring some normality to our community, found themselves without anywhere to get a meal. There were no restaurants open...there were no grocery stores open; there was nowhere for these people to eat.

I put a call out and almost immediately received a refrigerated tractor-trailer, professional-sized propane tanks and barbecue grills. The local businesses – which without electricity would have lost their perishable foods – donated meats, vegetables, dairy products, sodas and so much more to what became known as “Roy's Kountry Citchen.”

The county loaned us their huge steel building at the fairgrounds. This building not only was the “Kountry Citchen” but soon also became home to about half of the Indian River County Sheriff's Office staff, when the Sheriff's Office complex lost its roof and suffered severe water damage. The spirit of cooperation and generosity by our community's businesses to support and assist the Sheriff's Office during these difficult times was greatly appreciated.

Volunteers make the grade
One extremely important ingredient in the “Kountry Citchen” was our volunteers. Many of these people arrived at 4 a.m. and did not go home until late in the evening after everyone had eaten, the dishes were done and the building swept clean. There were people working who had suffered serious losses of their own, but then came out to help others anyway.

Little did we know that just three weeks later, Category 3 Hurricane Jeanne would follow Frances' exact same path and do more destruction to our already devastated county.

Our people were physically and mentally tired and had not recovered from the first storm, but within hours of Hurricane Jeanne passing through, the “Kountry Citchen” was put back together and in full operation. No one needed to be asked to help and no one complained – they just went to work to help feed the people who were here to help us.

A total of more than 18,000 breakfasts, lunches and dinners were served during these two hurricanes. I hope we do not have another hurricane season like this one, but should even one storm come in our direction, we stand ready to not only protect and serve the residents of Indian River County, but to keep the workers fed.

Polk County Detective Finalist in Retail Award
Congratulations to Polk County Sheriff's Office Detective Louis Giampavolo who was one of three finalists for the Florida Retail Federation Law Enforcement Officer of the Year award. He was recognized for his tenacity and professionalism, which have helped solve numerous heinous crimes.

In particular, as a member of the Homicide Unit Cold Case Squad, Det. Giampavolo helped bring closure to the March 1998 death of a Haines City Police Officer. After years on the case, Giampavolo identified a suspect who confessed to participating in the killing. Thanks to Giampavolo's perseverance, a police officer slain in the line of duty can be remembered as a hero.

Sheriff Roy Raymond (front right) and Captain Paul Fafelta (two down from Sheriff) pose with deputies from the Sarasota County Sheriff's Office, who came to assist Indian River County in the height and aftermath of Hurricane Frances and had to leave when Hurricane Ivan came calling on their own county.
Planning for Christmas Year Round

By: Gary Davidson
Public Information Officer
Volusia County Sheriff’s Office

It all began quite humbly in 1989. That’s the year a few Volusia County Sheriff’s deputies got together and decided to spread some holiday cheer to a handful of disadvantaged local children who were facing a bleak Christmas due to family financial woes.

The program was so well received that it grew the following year, with about 100 deputies joining in. And just like that, the burgeoning program was named: 100 Deputies/100 Kids.

Now in its 15th year, the all-volunteer program has long outgrown its moniker. On December 11, 2003, the Volusia County Sheriff’s Office, through its 100 Deputies/100 Kids charity, hosted 312 children during a gala party that included everything from food and holiday gifts to pony rides and a visit from old St. Nick, himself.

Amazingly, 25 percent of the department’s sworn force – 121 deputies – sponsored families.

While the event itself is enormous, including transportation for the children and their families in green-and-whites, the efforts behind it have actually birthed a nonprofit organization.

100 Deputies/100 Kids is a year-round charitable program that raises money through car washes, donut sales and individual and corporate contributions. It’s run by a volunteer committee of deputies and civilian Sheriff’s Office employees, headed by Judie Edwards, a management specialist in the Volusia County SO Public Information Office.

Each fall, the program collects back-to-school supplies that are distributed to students who attend schools in low-income neighborhoods. But the centerpiece of the charity is the annual holiday party.

Based on financial need and personal circumstances, families are nominated to attend the party by deputies, school crossing guards and local school officials. The program was launched by the previous administration, and Sheriff Ben Johnson has enthusiastically carried on the tradition, now in his fifth year.

“For many of the children, the 100 Deputies/100 Kids party is their only holiday. The joy on their faces just warms your heart,” said Sheriff Johnson. “Positive contact with law enforcement can make a big difference in a child’s life. This is our way of strengthening bonds and bringing joy to young lives. It’s a truly wonderful program that does a lot of good in the community.”

While planning for the party goes on throughout the year, the pace picks up considerably in the last week. Six days prior to the party, the 100 Deputies/100 Kids committee goes on a massive shopping spree, filling up baskets to overflow with age-appropriate games and toys for more than 300 children ranging from 3-months-old all the way up to 18. The shopping tab runs about $8,400, financed with money collected through fundraisers.

Then, local sororities help the committee with the mammoth task of sorting, wrapping, tagging and bagging the hundreds of presents. Next is decorating the party room with balloons and festive décor and coordinating arrangements for food and drinks for more 500 people – the children along with their parents or caregivers and their deputy hosts.

The party kicks off at 7 p.m., but the deputies and their families begin arriving much earlier so the kids can mingle and take turns on the pony ride. Once the party is in full swing, volunteers shuffle about the room with incredible efficiency, serving up a dinner full of kid favorites - pizza, chicken wings, chips and holiday treats.

The evening ends after about 2 1/2 hours with a parade of blue lights and sirens as the families and deputy escorts depart en-masse.

But that’s not all. As a surprise, 50 of the youngsters awoke on Christmas morning to a new bicycle under their Christmas tree. The bikes were donated to 100 Deputies/100 Kids and surreptitiously delivered to the homes.

With the party over and the decorations taken down, the children and families return home and the deputies return to their enforcement duties. But the kinship doesn’t end. Many of the deputies continue to befriend their families long after the party ends, dropping in on them from time to time throughout the year to maintain the bonds, check on their welfare and even treat them to an occasional outing to a movie, ice cream parlor, local park or sporting event.

“I look forward to participating in this event every year,” said Deputy Avis Burrows, a foster parent of three. “I know first-hand what a child and the family feels when others take the time to recognize them; what a difference it makes just to know that others are thinking of them.”

Event chairperson Judie Edwards agrees. “It’s extremely rewarding to be able to assist families in need, not just during the holidays but throughout the entire year. I enjoy being able to bring the deputies and children together for the Christmas party and see the bright smiles on all of those young faces. It’s a truly memorable event for all of us.”

THE SHERIFF’S STAR ★ NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2004 9
**Dust Settles on 2004 Election: Now, Who's Sheriff?**

This was a very big year for law enforcement, related to the elections. As we mentioned in the last issue of *The Sheriff's Star*, even going into the primaries, we were assured of new faces. A relatively high number (14) had decided to retire, and two counties had governor appointees. Typically, Florida experiences about a one-third turnover of Sheriffs during an election year, even without those circumstances.

In the Florida Sheriffs Association tradition, we will be including biographies of all Sheriffs in our Annual Guide to Government, which publishes in late February. Until then, we wanted to provide a summary.

It's interesting to note that Florida now has its first female Sheriff in nearly 50 years and one of only two who won through election. All others secured the post initially after their husbands - an incumbent Sheriff-died in office. Elected in Highlands County, Lt. Susan Benton will be the only the twelfth female to serve the office of Sheriff in the history of the state.

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<td>ALACHUA</td>
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<td>STAR</td>
<td>Sheriff Susan Benton</td>
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Highlands County voters elected the first female Sheriff of Florida in nearly 50 years. Sheriff's Office Lt. Susan Benton is pictured at center among friends, as she reacts to the news of her victory. When she's sworn in January 3, she'll be the first female to receive the title of Sheriff on her own, without following a husband who had the title first.
### ELECTION RESULTS

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<th>Osceola</th>
<th>St. Johns</th>
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<tr>
<td>(incumbent winner) Sheriff Dennis Lee</td>
<td>(incumbent winner) Sheriff Peter C. Bucher</td>
<td>(Sheriff-elect) Robert E. Hansell</td>
<td>(Sheriff-elect, incumbent retiring) David B. Shoar</td>
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<td>Palm Beach</td>
<td>(incumbent winner) Sheriff Ken J. Mascara</td>
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<td>(incumbent winner) Sheriff John P. McDaniel</td>
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<td>Sumter (incumbent unopposed) Sheriff William O. Farmer, Jr.</td>
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<td>Miami-Dade</td>
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<td>Nassau</td>
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<tr>
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<td>(incumbent winner in primary) Sheriff Wendell Hall</td>
<td>Wakulla</td>
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### STAR BRIEF

**On Top — Two Years in a Row**

It's one thing for a company or organization to earn the distinction of "Best Place to Work" in their community. But two years in a row? The Indian River Sheriff's Office recently received word that it had won the super distinction — again.

Representatives from Treasure Coast Human Resource Association, Inc., Sebastian River Area Chamber of Commerce, Indian River County Chamber of Commerce and the Workforce Development Board of the Treasure Coast made the award to Sheriff Roy Raymond on November 30. Sheriff Raymond immediately credited his staff, saying, "It is the outstanding employees of the Sheriff's Office who have made this the "Best Place to Work," and my thanks goes out to each of them for their support and dedication to our agency and the citizens of our county."

Congratulations, Sheriff Raymond. To you and your staff!
Women for Ocala Taking Care of SELF

By: Susan Livoti
Public Information Office
Marion County Sheriff’s Office

In October 2002, SELF magazine released its findings of the best and worst places for women to live. The city of Ocala in Marion County was listed as the seventh unhappiest place for women, the third unhappiest place for women and the least safe place for women to live.

Thanks to a group of concerned women, this sow’s ear was turned into a silk purse. A meeting was held by a group of prominent female members of the community and they initiated the “Women for Ocala” group. Research was conducted based on the SELF magazine article and determined that many of the facts reported were misleading. The ranking was based on FBI crime statistics and the number of vehicular fatalities for a city the size of Ocala. Local officials pointed out that Marion County has a lower crime rate than state and national averages and the traffic fatalities are skewed due to Interstate 75 running through the county. Further research showed that most of the fatalities were male victims. The group realized that in spite of these positive numbers, change still needed to take place. Women of the community needed a way to voice their concerns and learn ways to improve the areas the article reported as negative.

With this information in hand, a day-long conference was planned and held on September 6, 2003, at Central Florida Community College’s Webber Center. Organizers made it easy to attend by keeping the conference to one day from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. at a cost of $15 that included a box lunch and continental breakfast. Scholarships were made available to assist those who needed financial aid. Local churches and businesses were encouraged to provide the registration fees for those women in their organizations who would benefit from the program. Free child care was also offered.

Sponsored by businesses such as the Marion County Sheriff’s Office, Munroe Regional Medical Center, Ocala Regional Medical

More than 400 women of various ages and backgrounds attended the event. With such topics as financial health, stress relief and dealing with difficult children and relationships, the attendees were exposed to an abundance of resources designed just for women. After each presentation, breakout sessions were offered to allow women to get very specific on their needs and to talk with others in the same situations.

Featured speakers were Mary
Alice Dwyer-Dobbin, executive in charge of production for “As The World Turns” and “Guiding Light,” and Kathleen Baty, a stalking victim, who wrote the book “A Girl’s Gotta Do What A Girl’s Gotta Do.” At the end of the conference, the consensus was that this was helpful and should be continued. One of the main issues that seemed to be brought up the most was safety. A lot of women live alone, work during nighttime hours and travel unescorted through the county.

The community responded with new programs to assist every resident of Marion County. The Marion County Sheriff’s Office initiated a self-defense class for women. Using deputies who are trained instructors for d-tac (defensive tactics), women were exposed to a condensed version of self-defense moves that are used in law-enforcement training.

On November 4, 2003, a group of approximately 30 women attended the first class at the Sheriff’s Operations Center. The class is scheduled twice monthly and to date, there have been 611 students who attended the class at the Sheriff’s Operations Center and 148 individualized sessions at various community centers throughout the county. The class has now expanded to include a Level II session.

In the November 2003 issue of SELF, Ocala improved overall from 194 in 2002 to 147. The new rankings used different criteria and the health status of women was still high on the list. The main issues impacting women’s health were the number of cigarette smokers and the high rate of suicides.

The health community has been addressing these issues and providing programs to help people lose weight and live healthier. To address the suicide situation, a local suicide prevention task force was formed. Though the program is still being built, it promises to fill a void for those who see this act as the only answer. The survivors will also have specific programs to help them.

The “Women for Ocala: Taking Care of Self 2 Conference” was held on September 12, 2004. The setup remained the same with a box lunch and continental breakfast offered along with child care and guest speakers. Originally designed to address suicide and prevention, program administrators realized that a lot of the suicides were related to domestic violence issues. The conference was revamped to focus on this community problem, and a panel of advisors from the court system, law enforcement, a local hospital and the domestic violence center were asked to participate.

Since September 2003, there have been five women killed by their husbands in Marion County, including an administrator from

West Marion Community Hospital and a professor at Central Florida Community College. From July 2003 to June 2004, more than 6,000 people called the domestic violence center for help.

In response to these tragic events, the Marion County Sheriff’s Office and Ocala Police Department, as well as the courts and other community leaders, have established a task force to address the needs of women and their families who have been involved in domestic violence incidents. The program will include ways for friends and family to identify victims and get them the assistance they need.

The task force has joined with the Marion County Children’s Alliance program making this a family affair and offering all the areas of assistance to victims and their families at one venue. The group agreed that starting with children and the ability to change their perceptions of women and men’s roles would help alleviate future domestic issues.

Sheriff Ed Dean and the staff at the Marion County Sheriff’s Office are committed to ensuring that every citizen has the necessary assistance to live a healthier, happier, safer life in Marion County. Being proactive and involved in community issues lets the community know that the Marion County Sheriff’s Office will continue to live up to its mission of “Putting Citizens First.”

For more information, contact writer Susan Livoti via e-mail: slivoti@sheriff.marioncountyfl.org.
Take These Precautions For Safety’s Sake During the Holidays

The holidays are a time of warm reunions, good cheer and avoiding anything that bears the label “low fat.”

But all these things can have an unhappy ending if you find yourself a victim of someone else’s criminal behavior.

To keep crime from crashing the party, consider following these tips offered by the National Crime Prevention Council, home of McGruff the Crime Dog.

What to know while traveling...

• Pack the least possible amount and be sure your luggage stays under your control (or that of authorized personnel) at all times.
• Take only the credit and ATM cards that you will absolutely need. Carry traveler’s checks instead of cash. Record information on these cards and any valuable equipment (e.g., camcorders, cameras and iPod) that you take with you. Take a copy along (separate from your wallet) and leave one with a friend or family member.
• Keep a record of your itinerary with you and leave one with a family member or trusted friend, including lodgings.
• Be sure to check the locks at your lodging. Each door should have a sturdy key lock and a well-constructed deadbolt.
• Never open the door to someone you don’t know well and trust. If someone claims to be a hotel employee, call the front desk for verification.
• Never leave your room key out where it could be picked up.
• Never leave the room unlocked, even to go to the ice or vending machine.
• Don’t invite strangers to your room.
• Don’t give out your room number. Especially if you’re traveling alone, insist on being given your room number discreetly by registration staff. If you are nervous about someone inappropriately overhearing your room number, insist that you be relocated.
• Study up in advance on your vacation destination. Know where you want to go and how you want to get there. Ask hotel personnel about the safety of areas off the regular tourist path.
• Make sure everyone in your party—adults, teens, children—has the name, address, and phone number of the place you are staying and carries that information along at all times.
• Set up rules for each day’s outings on where and how you’ll link up if you become separated.
• Don’t leave rooms unlocked in your lodgings.
• Insist that everyone carry his or her key when outside the room.

How to secure your home and vehicle

• Be sure to lock all doors and secure the home (including that garage door), even if you’re only running to the store or visiting a neighbor “for just a minute or two.” That’s all the time a burglar needs, in many cases.
• Leave lights on timers and window shades or blinds in normal positions and deadbolts locked if you’re going away, even just overnight.
• Be sure to cancel all deliveries. Make sure they’re collected by a trusted neighbor who has your travel schedule and contact information.
• Keep presents out of view. The gaily-wrapped packages are a beacon to burglars if they’re on display near a window.
• Don’t leave valuables in view in the car—your own or a rental.
• Leave them in the trunk or, better still, in your room.
• And, finally, don’t drink to excess. Not only does it increase your chance of being in a car crash, it increases the odds that you might wind up a victim of crime.

For more information, visit the National Crime Prevention Council website: www.ncpc.org.
Correction on 2004 Legislation

We would like to apologize for some errors that appeared in the last issue of The Sheriff's Star. In the article titled, "Public Safety Legislation 2004: What You Need to Know," two bills were mislabeled and several were said to have passed in error.

The Florida Sheriffs Association's Legislative Consultant submitted a corrected report, which states: HB 431 and SB 650 (mislabeled in the article), dealing with interviewing witnesses in internal investigations, and HB 597 and SB 1966, dealing with a 180-day time limitation for filing internal investigation charges, did not pass as previously reported. Additionally, SB 94, dealing with restrictions on confiscated vehicles, but also died in the legislative process.

The Sheriff's Star would like to apologize to its readers for the confusion.

Reach Law Enforcement Readers

The Florida Sheriffs Association's sister publication, the All Points Bulletin, reaches law enforcement personnel where they live and work. To advertise, request our 2004 Advertising Rate Card. Call or e-mail Mary Beth Pridgeon, 850-877-2165, marybeth@flsheriffs.org.
Seminole County Inmates Raise "Beneficial Bugs" for Researchers

By: Charles T. Woods, Jr.

Inmates at the Seminole County Correctional Facility, who have been growing their own vegetables for more than 10 years, are now raising thousands of beneficial bugs that attack insect pests and feed on troublesome weeds in Florida.

The insect "farming" program - the first of its kind in the nation - will generate about $2,000 a year for the inmate welfare fund at the facility and help inmates develop marketable skills for future employment.

"The project is the result of a new partnership with the University of Florida's Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences to help inmates learn about biological control - raising good bugs that prey on bad bugs and weeds - and reduce the need for chemical pesticides," said Debra Taylor, a deputy who supervises the training program at the Seminole County facility. "These beneficial bugs not only help control pests on our own veggie crops, but we are raising thousands of insects for researchers at the UF and the U.S. Department of Agriculture."

Seminole County Sheriff Donald Eslinger helped broker the deal for the University of Florida to do the research project, which was funded by the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

Twelve women inmates participating in the biocontrol program received training and certification from UF, Taylor said. Training and certification as "insect scouts" - recognized by nurserymen and wholesale plant growers in Central Florida - could help the women find employment when they are released from the correctional facility.

Lance Osborne, a professor of entomology at UF's Mid-Florida Research and Education Center in Apopka who developed the concept, said the program was started because there are no commercial biocontrol insect producers in Florida.

"Raising insects for biocontrol is labor intensive and expensive, which makes the project ideal for inmates in correctional facilities," he said. "With the help of a grant from USDA's Animal, Plant Health Inspection Service, we launched the pilot project in cooperation with the Seminole County facility."

He said inmates in Seminole County are now producing two different kinds of beneficial insects. One is an insect predator that controls pests on ornamental plants in greenhouses, and the other is a beetle that feeds on the leaves of tropical soda apple, one of the most troublesome weeds in the state.

In order to manage the whitefly pest problem in greenhouses where vegetables, herbs and ornamentals are grown, Osborne developed a biocontrol system that relies on the production of "banker plants" for Central Florida growers.

"A banker plant is a plant that has been infested with both the target pest and its natural predator," he said. "For instance, papaya plants attract the papaya whitefly and a parasitic wasp that controls the whitefly on the papaya host plants as well as silverleaf whitefly on other greenhouse plants. As a result, an infested papaya plant becomes a bank of beneficial..."
insects that can be placed in greenhouses to control ornamental pests, such as the whitefly, without applying pesticides."

Osborne feels that the wasp is the "best natural enemy" of the silverleaf whitefly pest in greenhouses. But, the wasp was not being commercially produced in large numbers, which is one of the primary reasons for starting the banker plant system at the Seminole County facility.

He said there is a demand for the new banker plant technology, which is not being produced anywhere else in the nation at this time. Banker plants are grown in one- to three-gallon containers that sell for $10 to $15 per plant, and demand is rapidly rising.

Inmates also are raising thousands of beetles (Gratiana boliviana) that will be released in pastures across Florida to control tropical soda apple. The weed is so invasive that other plants cannot grow around it.

To combat the weed without using harmful herbicides, UF researchers traveled to South America where the weed originated and found a natural predator that feeds solely on the plant. After conducting extensive studies with USDA, UF researchers have begun releasing the beetles in pastures across the state to eliminate the weed.

"Despite positive test results, we do not have enough beetles available for release," Osborne said. "That's why we turned to the inmates in Seminole County to help raise these beneficial insects; their work will be an essential part of our program to control this noxious weed."

Taylor said the guidance and instruction offered by UF enhances the existing inmate agricultural program at the Seminole County facility, and the new biocontrol program has the potential to generate revenue that will benefit inmates and support additional training programs.

"If this USDA pilot project is successful, it could develop into a system where inmates could help society by reducing reliance on pesticides and save tax payers millions of dollars in the fight against new invasive pests," Osborne said.

For more information on this program, contact Debra Taylor, Seminole County Sheriff's Office, (407) 665-6694, Ext. 1329, or via e-mail: dtaylor@seminolesheriff.org.

Above and at left, Seminole County Sheriff Don Eslinger helped broker the insect farming deal, which involves the University of Florida doing the research, the correctional facility providing labor and U.S. Department of Agriculture providing funding.
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*. Those whose gifts total over $5,000 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**

Aaron's Sales & Leasing
Able Body Labor
Mr. Robert W. Arthur
Mr. Jack J. Attaway
Mr. and Mrs. Frank J. Avellino
Mr. Coy R. Barclay, Jr.
Mrs. Xiaomara Bermudez
Mr. and Mrs. Donald F. Blackburn
Cdr. Robert L. Blume USN
Mr. John J. Bouchard
Boulard & Smith, L.L.P.
Mr. and Mrs. Robert A. Bourke
Capt. Beverly Brame
Mr. George M. Brown
Mr. and Mrs. Armand Burko
Mr. Joseph Canova
Ms. Linda J. Carraway
Central Florida Auto Dealers Association, Inc.
Mr. Walter H. Corliss
Mr. William H. Davis
Mrs. Lois M. Dodd
Mr. Joseph W. Durner
Mr. Addison L. Evans
Mr. and Mrs. David C. Flagg
Dep. Kelly J. Gaul
Mr. Luis Gil
Mr. and Mrs. Steve Girard
Mrs. Mary L. Goebel
Mr. William G. Golden
Mr. and Mrs. William J. Goodacre
Mr. and Mrs. Robert N. Gowling
Mrs. Mary Frances Green
Mr. George J. Hadgopianos
Mr. Michael Herceg
Hernando County 10-13 Club, Inc.
Mrs. Gladys H. Hicks
Mr. and Mrs. Dyke Howell
Mrs. Ruby C. Jarosz
Ms. Judy Jasinski
Mr. Kyung N. Kim
Mr. Robert J. Labarge
Mrs. Gertrude LeVett
Ms. Ann Knight Lord
Ms. Viola T. MacFarlane

**Manatee Moose Legion 58**
Manatee Moose Legion 58
Mariners Club Bahia
Beach Resort
Mr. James W. McLennon
Mr. and Mrs. Warren N. Milks
Ms. Karin G. Nelson
Mr. Wayne D. New
Mr. and Mrs. Donald S. Pesano
Mr. William E. Powell
Dr. Sofia N. Preiss
Mr. Dennis R. Quinn
Mr. Charles R. Raulerson
Mr. W C. Ray III
Mr. Phillip L. Reed
Mr. Richard Sanders
SCG Companies
Mrs. Mabel M. Schaefer
Mr. and Mrs. Marcus A. Schidl
Ms. Suzanne G. Sheffield
Mr. and Mrs. Edward P. Sparks
Mrs. Lisa R. Stern
Ms. Judith A. Stetter
Dep. Sean M. Tice
Dep. Mark A. Tolzmann
Veterans of Foreign Wars Auxiliary
Mr. and Mrs. Avery L. Warner
Mr. Neil H. Wennerlund
Mr. and Mrs. Stanley H. Wisniowski
Withlacoohee River Race

**FLORIDA SHERIFFS YOUTH RANCHES**

**HONOR ROLL**

**Marion County**
Marion County Sheriff Al Williams to Marion County Sheriff Ed Dean for personal giving by him and his wife Sarah.

**Palm Beach County**
Palm Beach County Sheriff Ed Bieлуч to Rita Donnelly and Dr. Alfred Bowen.

**Duval County**
Five star plaque presented by FSYR President Roger Bouchard (right) to Todd Dennison and Mike Connolly of Keefe Supply Company.

**Escambia County**
Escambia County Sheriff Ron McNeely to Dr. Bob Kimball.

**Manatee County**
Manatee County Sheriff's Office Colonel Ken Pearson (left) and Capt. Michael Mayer to Louise Newman.

**Levy County**
Presented by FSYR President Roger Bouchard to Winnelle Home.
HENRANO COUNTY – 25-year certificate presented by Hernando County Sheriff Richard Nugent to Roche Mose.

HENRANO COUNTY – 40-year certificate presented by Hernando County Sheriff Richard Nugent to John C. Neff.

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. Many progressive business leaders are supporting the Florida Sheriffs Association and its anti-crime activities by enrolling as Business Members of the Association and becoming "partners against crime." The Florida Sheriffs recognizes those businesses that are making a difference in their communities. Gold members commit $500 annually, Silver members $250 and Bronze members $50 annually.

Thank you for Caring and Sharing.

FSA Helps Increase Safety with EVT Exam

Adding to its already successful fleet purchasing and management programs, this year, FSA introduced the first Emergency Vehicle Technician (EVT) Exam for Law Enforcement Technicians and Law Enforcement Vehicle Installers.

The objective is to increase the safety and strengthen the integrity of law enforcement vehicles by promoting sound equipment installation practices and procedures. The exam is administered through the EVT Certification Commission, Inc. of Dundee, Illinois and was developed in record time.

For more information on this and other FSA programs, please contact us by calling: (850) 877-2165 or via e-mail: info@flsheriffs.org.

Attention Members:

Has your address changed? Please send us . . .

. . . your new address so that you'll continue to receive The Sheriff's Star. And please remember to let us know when moving again.

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.

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E-mail: kcollier@flsheriffs.org
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THE SHERIFF'S STAR  ∙ NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2004
Rolling Road Sign Promotes Crime Prevention

By: Stan Nelson
Lee County Sheriff’s Office

Southwest Florida Crime Stoppers has taken its show on the road with a new advertising campaign. The popular crime-fighting program has enlisted LeeTran public transit to bring the message to the streets – literally. LeeTran has covered one of its buses with a full wrap for Crime Stoppers. The bus can be seen throughout Lee County.

Best of all: There is no cost to taxpayers, says Trish Routte, Southwest Florida Crime Stoppers coordinator. Any person convicted of a crime in Florida must pay a $20 fee. That money goes to the state Crime Stoppers Trust Fund, which paid the $25,000 cost of advertising for a full year.

“This is a test for us. Our goal is to reach a widespread audience,” Routte says. LeeTran provides more than 2.4 million rides annually.

The concept has worked well in other markets. The greater Orlando area has used advertising on buses, in bus shelters and on video monitors inside buses for several years. Bus wraps are considered an especially good buy because they are seen all over the county.

Southwest Florida Crime Stoppers, which serves Lee, Charlotte, Collier, Glades and Hendry counties, has a good record – and the more calls the better.

For the first 10 months of the year, area law-enforcement officers made 248 arrests based on more than 1,800 anonymous tips. All calls with information on a crime are completely confidential, and participants are eligible for a reward up to $1,000. Crime Stoppers approved almost $45,000 in rewards for 2004.