

NASSAU COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE



Ribbon Cutting Ceremony March 27, 2017

Behind the Badge Newsletter



**January—March
2017**

SHERIFF'S MESSAGE

As we have entered into the new year, we have accomplished a great deal by moving into our new Sheriff's Administration Office facility. We began moving our personnel and divisions into the new building the first week of January. Most of our divisions have moved into the building, but we still have a few more to complete.

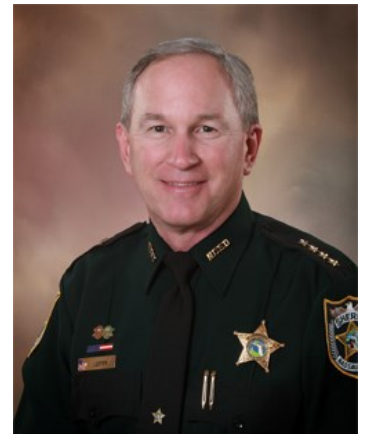
It is a great facility that will allow us to continue our goals to further professionalize this organization. It will also be the first stand-a-lone Sheriff's Office ever built in Nassau County. The official ribbon cutting ceremony was held on March 27th with a great crowd in attendance.

As we close out 2016, I want to thank everyone for your continued support and dedication to serve and protect our citizens in a courteous and professional manner. Preserving freedom and democracy, in a society as complex as ours, is not easy and it takes dedicated professionals to carry out our duties and responsibilities. Over the past year we have experienced and gone through a lot together. We've ex-

perienced setbacks and disappointments, sickness and death, storms and rain, divorce and despair, and heartbreak and heartache. Going through all that together just makes us stronger as an organization made up of individuals who strive to be our best and do our best for the benefit of our community. As an agency we have also accomplished a great deal this past year, but 2017 promises to be even bigger and better.

Please stay safe!

Sheriff Bill Leeper



RIBBON CUTTING CEREMONY



On Monday, March 27, 2017, a ribbon-cutting ceremony was held to open the Nassau County Sheriff's Office new administration building at the Nassau County Public Safety Complex.

The facility is the first ever stand-a-lone Sheriff's Office Administration Building ever constructed since Sheriff's Office was founded in 1827. NCSO has always been housed in either a courthouse or jail facility.

This new sheriff's office had been talked about since at least the 1990's when the courthouse and jail were being planned and then eventually built in the early 2000's. Several former sheriffs developed plans and worked on committees, but it seemed the money just wasn't there after the courthouse was finished.

In 2013, a committee comprised of then County Manager Ted Selby, District 3 County Commissioner Pat Edwards, and Sheriff Bill Leeper worked closely together to get this project finally started and completed. We developed a new set of plans that lowered the costs, worked with the Florida legislature to get \$500,000 dollars allocated for the project, even though it was vetoed by Governor Scott. This however, was the impetus to get the county commission to place the building on their capital improvement plan and allocate \$10 million dollars of reserve funds for the project in 2014.



Pictures:

County Commissioners Danny Leeper, Pat Edwards, Justin Taylor, George Spicer, and Steve Kelley along with County manager Shanea Jones join Sheriff Bill Leeper as he cuts the ribbon at the new Sheriff's Office Admin Building.

RIBBON CUTTING CEREMONY



This past May we cut the ribbon and moved in to our new state-of-the-art 911 Call Center across the street in the Emergency Operations Building, which allows our communications officers to serve our citizens with the latest technology and equipment available.

Cutting the ribbon on this new Sheriff's Office Admin facility is another major part of our continuing efforts of professionalizing NCSO and will serve the sheriff's office and the citizens of Nassau County for many decades to come, providing a safe & secure facility where our employees can deliver the best services possible for our citizens.

As for what is to come, we are very excited to start beginning the design phase of our next major project, which is a public safety (police & fire) training center, which will be built on 40 acres off of CR-108 west of I-95 in Sandhill. This center will allow Nassau County law enforcement officers and fire/rescue personnel to be some of the best trained around our state and our region. Our citizens deserve nothing less.

The American flag, state of Florida flag and NCSO flag fly over the new Sheriff's Office Admin Building for the first time.



RIBBON CUTTING CEREMONY



SHERIFF LEEPER ELECTED BOARD CHAIRMAN FOR FLORIDA YOUTH RANCH

Nassau County Sheriff Bill Leeper has been elected by the Florida Sheriffs Youth Ranches Board of Directors as their Board Chairman for the next two years. Sheriff Leeper has served on the Board for the past three years and most recently chaired the Finance/Human Resources Committee.

Founded in 1957, the Florida Sheriffs Youth Ranches has been improving the lives of at-risk children through several Florida locations and comprehensive programs. The Sheriffs Youth Ranches is credited with helping more than 136,000 children and families in Florida.

By utilizing the Boys Ranch/Live Oak, Youth Villa/Bartow, Youth Ranch/Safety Harbor and Youth Ranch/Bradenton-Sarasota, the Youth Ranches trained and devoted staff are well-equipped to nurture needy, neglected boys and girls, and provide a warm sense of security, guidance and tenderness. Youth are cared for by “cottage parents” who help develop a strong work ethic, sense of responsibility, teamwork and respect in each child making sure they are given the same opportunities to attend school and participate in extracurricular activities as their peers. Ninety percent of the youth participating in the Florida Sheriffs Youth Ranches graduate from high school.

The mission of the Florida Sheriffs Youth Ranches is to prevent delinquency and develop lawful, resilient and productive citizens.

For more information about the Florida Sheriffs Youth Ranches, please visit their website at www.youthranches.org.



Picture:

Madison County Sheriff Ben Stewart passes the gavel to Nassau County Sheriff Bill Leeper after he was elected Chairman of the Florida Sheriffs Youth Ranches Board of Directors

NEWS CORNER



Pictured left to right: Dennis Sebelist, Susan Sebelist, Sheriff Bill Leeper, Carol Kwaak, Norma Storms, and Kim Grubbs

Members of the Order of the Eastern Star from Fernandina Beach came by and presented some gifts for all of the employees at the Sheriff's office. Inside the "goody bags" was a variety of candy to show everyone how much they appreciate all we do for our community.

Lifesaver: To remind you of the many times you've been one

Smarties: To give you wisdom for those split second decisions

Hershey Kisses: To show our love for you

Gum: To help everyone stick together

Tootsie Roll: You have to roll with the punches

Peppermint Patty: Helping you keep your cool

Mounds: For the mounds of courage you show

Laffy Taffy: To remind you that laughter is a great stress reliever



Lieutenant Renee Graham met with Ms. Struys who is the new PIO for FDOT. Lt. Graham escorted Ms. Struys on a tour of Nassau County so that she would be more familiar with our area when concerns or issues arise. It helps to be able to visualize an intersection or a roadway when trying to address queries or mediate between agencies. Ms. Struys has been helpful to answer questions about the FDOT projects on SR 200 and conducted a community meeting at FSCJ on February 23rd regarding Phase 3, also known as the Diverging Diamond Interchange (DDI) that has begun on SR 200 at I95.

NEWS CORNER



Lieutenant Jon Slebos recently had the opportunity of a lifetime as he held a swearing-in ceremony for J.R., the puppet, at Yulee elementary School. Dr. Terry Horn (Also known as Uncle Sam) a ventriloquist presented a program to the kids on a variety of safety topics, as well as law enforcement appreciation. At the end of the program Lt. Slebos was called up on stage to swear in J.R. as an “Honorary Deputy.”

CAMP CADET

Applications are being accepted for the Northeast Florida Camp Cadet Program. If you know of a child between the ages of 12 to 15 who needs to get off the couch and do something or would like for them to experience a mini-boot camp experience, check out the Camp Cadet program!

The program develops self-esteem and a positive attitude of accomplishment for the child. Your child will get a hands on instruction on subjects that will last a lifetime. Learn about courtroom settings, CPR, life-saving training and making good decisions in their young lives. BEST PART OF ALL—TUITION IS FREE!



Promotion Ceremony

On February 3, 2017, Sheriff Bill Leeper held a promotion ceremony for three NCSO corrections officers and their families at the Nassau County Sheriff's Office. Melissa K. Godbold who has been employed at NCSO for the past 15 years, Brian K. Higginbotham who has been employed at NCSO for the past 6 years and Nicolas E. Thornton who has been employed at NCSO for the past 4 years were all promoted to the rank of corporal in the Nassau County Jail/Detention Facility. Please congratulate each of these individuals and wish them well on their new assignment of authority.



Promotion Ceremony

NCSO Communications Officer Briana Crews was promoted to Shift Supervisor after scoring the highest on the promotional exam. Sheriff Bill Leeper presented Briana with a certificate of promotion and her gold badge. A few of Supervisor Crews' co-workers in the 911 Call Center were on hand to witness her promotion.



ANNUAL EMPLOYEE AWARDS

The Nassau County Sheriff's Office held their 2016 "Employee of the Year" awards ceremony on Wednesday, March, 29, 2017 in their new Administration Building classroom. Several employees were recognized for their outstanding efforts during 2016. "Their dedication and commitment to our community, have placed themselves in harm's way to keep citizens from being harmed; who through their experience have saved a life of a citizen; or through their exceptional and outstanding service have ensured the quality of life all of us have come to expect living in Nassau County," said Sheriff Bill Leeper.

Several local businesses also partnered with the Sheriff's Office to recognize the award winners as well. They are: The Seaside Amelia Inn, Omni Resort Amelia Island Plantation, The Fairbanks House, Amelia Hotel at the Beach, Hampton Inn & Suites, the Residence Inn Marriott, and the Ritz Carlton Amelia Island.



ANNUAL EMPLOYEE AWARDS

Communication Officer of the Year Joyce Fisher



In addition, Sheriff Leeper recognized Deputy Chauncey Mason for saving the life of an individual who suffered a heart attack.

The Medal of Honor ranks as the highest award bestowed by the Nassau County Sheriff's Office and is awarded posthumously to a member who loses their life in the performance of duty under honorable circumstances. This award was presented to Deputy Eric Oliver's family as he gave his life in an attempt to apprehend a criminal in Yulee on November 22, 2016.



EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT ACTIVATION

On the afternoon of March 31, 2017, a fire was started about 2 p.m. by a man who was burning paperback books. The fire engulfed 693 acres that forced 150 residents to be evacuated from their homes.

Nearly 200 first responders from different agencies — Nassau County Sheriff's Office, firefighters from Nassau County, Clay and St. Johns County, Jacksonville police and fire, Florida Highway Patrol and Florida Forest Service — spent Wednesday and Thursday battling the blaze.

Nassau County Emergency Management Director Billy Estep described the forest fire as a "tragedy," stressing that the changing weather conditions and winds were significant factors in the fire rapidly spreading from five acres to nearly seven hundred acres -- an area about a half-mile wide by two miles long.



Just before 5 p.m., residents in the vicinity of County Road 121 and County Road 119 were ordered to evacuate. About an hour later, Nassau County Emergency Management said winds had driven the wildfire toward Countryside Acres, and residents in that area were also told to evacuate immediately.



As always, the Nassau County Emergency Management and the Nassau County Sheriff's Office staff went into action. Despite being evacuated from their homes, residents also jumped in to help first responders by bringing water and snacks to them.

Detectives Kelley and McConnell with horses that were rounded up during the fire.

SAFETY TIPS...



Florida Wildfires

READY → SET → GO



Be Ready – Be Firewise.
Prepare Before the threat of a Wildfire Occurs.

Get Set – Have Situational awareness
when a wildfire starts.

GO! – Leave early knowing that you
prepared your family and home.

ADAM H. PUTNAM, COMMISSIONER



DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE & CONSUMER SERVICES

SET

Be Prepared to Act

Prepare Your Family: Evaluate Your Situational Awareness

- ✓ Be ready to evacuate as soon as you are set!
- ✓ Monitor local news coverage for latest wildfire information
- ✓ Have a portable battery operated radio with you
- ✓ Load your car with emergency supplies and park facing outward
- ✓ Gather pets and their supplies, identify locations of pet-friendly shelters
- ✓ Alert family and neighbors, notify them of designated meeting location



Precautions for inside the house

- ✓ Close all windows and doors
- ✓ Remove lightweight curtains
- ✓ Shut off gas at the meter and turn off pilot lights
- ✓ Turn off air-conditioning
- ✓ Leave lights on



Precautions for outside the house “If time allows”

- ✓ Turn off propane tanks
- ✓ Leave on exterior lights
- ✓ Seal attic vents with pre-cut plywood if time allows
- ✓ Have a ladder, hose and garden tools available
- ✓ Gather flammable items in yard and place them inside or 30 feet away from house



Welcome OUR NEW TEAM MEMBERS



Austin Cone
Patrol Deputy



Traci Belz
Detention Deputy



Deborah Chaplausek
Dispatcher



Amanda Clemons
Dispatcher



Brent Constantine
Dispatcher



Kenneth Norton
Control Room Operator



Richard Wright
Control Room Operator



Jacob Tolosi
Detention Deputy



William "Sonny" Ryals
Bailiff



Jeffrey Witt
Detention Deputy

Farewell

We have two employees to honor as they retired from the Nassau County Sheriff's Office.

Ms. Dell Hodges who served as the Evidence Specialist in the Property/Evidence Division retired with 16 years of service.



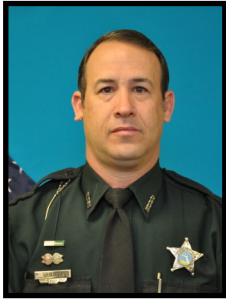
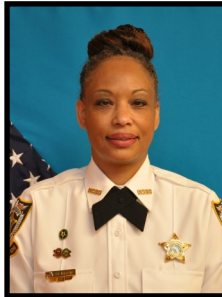
Deputy Kenneth Homan recently retired after more than 13 years with the Nassau County Sheriff's Office. Deputy Homan last served as a Bailiff at the County Courthouse in Yulee. Sheriff Bill Leeper presented Deputy Homan with a retirement plaque.



We wish both Dell and Ken a happy and fulfilling retirement! Thank you both for the many years of service that you dedicated to the community of Nassau County!

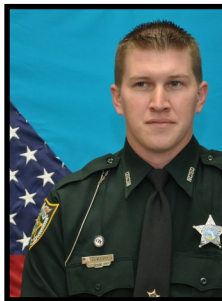
FIRST QUARTER AWARDS

SUPERVISOR OF THE
QUARTER
TRACY WILLIAMS



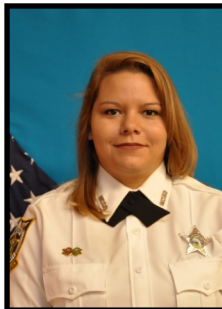
DEPUTY OF THE QUARTER
RALPH DEMPSEY REVELS

DETENTION DEPUTY OF THE
QUARTER
JONATHAN MCCRACKEN



INVESTIGATOR OF THE
QUARTER
THOMAS KELLEY

COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER
OF THE QUARTER
DANIELLE RUBIO



CIVILIAN OF THE QUARTER
CELESTE HADDOCK

SERVICE ANNIVERSARIES

20 YEARS

LINDA OTTINGER, COMMUNICATIONS

10 YEARS

MIKE GOODBREAD, INTERNAL AFFAIRS

5 YEARS

BRANDON SCHMIDT, PATROL

NEVER STOP
DOING YOUR BEST
JUST BECAUSE
SOMEONE DOESN'T
GIVE YOU CREDIT.

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EMPLOYEE BIRTHDAYS

April

Traci Belz	04/03
Gwen Jones	04/04
Scott Bratton	04/05
Jeffrey Witt	04/05
Jerry Cockerham	04/10
Matthew Morgan	04/16
Hope Herrin	04/20
Scott Gearis	04/25
Sidney Beckom	04/26
George Lueders	04/26
Ryan Schmidt	04/27
Ken Norton	04/29

May

Kathy Hall	05/04
James Drury	05/07
Kyle Morgan	05/08
Christian Copher	05/10
Leecie Dennard	05/10
Helen Horne	05/10
Martha Wagaman	05/14
Marc Campbell	05/17
Ken Davis	05/18
Ronnie Jewel	05/20
Bubba Reynolds	05/20
Carl "Trey" Zehler	05/22
Mike Goodbread	05/23
Beth Bell	05/24

June

Larry Wyant	06/01
Austin Cone	06/03
Lindsey Patterson	06/05
Brandon Austin	06/05
Sharon Conway	06/05
Cassandra Floyd	06/05
James Ennis	06/05
Josh Patterson	06/12
Jesse Shook	06/19
Kyle Tholl	06/20
Asa Higgs	06/21
Connie Johnson	06/22
Don Brewer	06/22
Michael Rowe	06/28
Mike Reynolds	06/29
Marty Amos	06/30



Fallen Florida Police Officers 9463 - 2017 State Ride

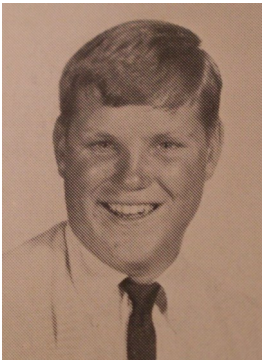
The State Ride is an annual, week long motorcycle ride that visits every Florida police department who lost an officer during the previous year. You will have the rare opportunity to meet the family, friends and co-workers who were a part of the Fallen Officers everyday life. This is a way to express ourselves in a one-on-one basis with those who were closest with that officer.

They honored Deputy Eric Oliver by presenting gifts to Shelby Oliver, his daughter.



Answers on page 20

Guess who?



1



2



3



4



BEHIND THE BADGE

Newsletter



Answers:

1. Undersheriff George Lueders 2. Sgt. Paul Hinson / Corrections 3. Director Connie Johnson/ Corrections 4. Sgt. David King

We hope that you have enjoyed this issue of the Nassau County Sheriff's Office *Behind the Badge* Newsletter! If you have articles or information for the next newsletter, please contact Diana Crigger at 904-548-4063 or by email at dcrigger@nassauso.com

As always, please stay safe!

