



Newsletter published by the Community Relations Division of the Monroe County Sheriff's Office, for Monroe County Sheriff's Office employees.

April 2003 Edition

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Sheriff's Report

Health insurance and budget issues are the current concerns for our agency. I want to let you all know, up front, where these issues stand.

Health insurance is the issue of the day for most of our employees, now that the county has opted to reduce benefits and increase both the percentage employees pay overall, as well as the yearly deductible and dependent care costs. I won't tell you I'm happy about the decision - this reduction in employee benefits will definitely cause many problems for our agency when it comes to retention of current employees, and the hiring and retention of new employees.

The Sheriff's Office already has a very high employee turnover rate - 18.23% for last year. In 2002, we lost 93 people: 28 deputies, 32 Corrections Officers, and 33 Support staff . Much of this turnover is due to the high cost of living in the Keys - the highest cost of living in the state of Florida. Additionally, we are losing the fight when it comes to salaries: our starting salaries are lower overall than other law enforcement agencies in the county as well as compared to Dade County, Broward County and Palm Beach Counties, our main competitors for employees. Now, we are seeing our benefits decrease.

The problem is, I'm not sure there is an easy solution to any of this. The cost of health insurance across the country

continues to rise. Our county is not alone in that. In some places government agencies have chosen to continue subsidizing insurance for their employees, raising taxes to cover the increased costs. They know that a good benefit package is essential to the retention of good employees. Monroe County has chosen a different goal: holding the line on taxes.

If the goal of county commissioners is to hold the line on taxes, then we may have very little choice with these matters. Right now, our health insurance is tied to the County insurance pool. We are looking at all possible options when it comes to alternative insurance, but for now, it appears our employees will see increased insurance costs and decreased benefits.

When it comes to raises, and our efforts to maintain competitive salaries, we are also between a rock and a hard place. The county has asked us to hold the line, and keep any overall budget increase to 2.4%. Our basic expenses for running the jail can be counted on to increase on a yearly basis. We're going to ask for a 2.4% salary increase along with the increases for contractual services.

If we were to hold our budget increase to 2.4% as requested, the only option left would be cutting services we provide to the citizens of the county. We've really reached a point where it is difficult to identify any "non-essential" positions to cut. We may, by necessity, be forced to begin cutting some of our law enforcement related programs. Reducing some programs will, without a doubt, affect our ability to prevent crime, and keep people safe on our roadways, in our schools and in our neighborhoods.

I wish I could paint a rosier picture, but I think it is more important to tell it like it is so you can make appropriate plans for yourself and your family. Rest assured, I am keeping a close eye out for alternatives to these stern measures. If we find a better option for insurance, or find a better way to hold the line on our budget, I will let you know.

General News

Health Insurance Changes

The County Commission recently approved changes in the Health Insurance Benefits for County and Sheriff's Office employees. The breakdown is this:

- Deductible will increase to \$400.00 per individual or \$1,200 per family.
- Employees are covered for 75% of medical costs up to \$30,000.00. After \$30,000.00 it is 100% coverage.
- Dental and Vision benefits will no longer be covered, but will be available at a cost to the employee. The current cost for these benefits is not yet available.
- The Employee Assistance Program doesn't change. It is free to employees and members of their household with a limit of 8 visits per year. Visits beyond 8 can be submitted for a 50% co-pay.
- Prescription drugs will be covered with a \$10 co-pay for generic drugs, a \$60 co-pay for preferred brands and a \$90 co-pay for non-preferred brands. Drugs determined to be a medical necessity will be looked at on a case by case basis.
- Dependent coverage will be: Spouse only - \$203.00 per pay period; Each child - \$67.00 per pay period; Family cap - \$304.00 per pay period. Note that a minimum rate of \$110.00 per pay period applies.
- Retirees will pay \$100.00 per month for coverage, or 100% of the department rate (\$720.00) if the rule of 70 was not met at retirement.
- Visits to the Chiropractor will be limited to 12 per calendar year.
- Massage therapy and acupuncture are no longer covered under the plan.

FSA Scholarship time again

It is once again time for the Florida Sheriff's Association to begin accepting scholarship applications for dependent sons or daughters of full time Sheriff's Office employees.

There will be three \$1,000.00 scholarships awarded for the school term beginning in the Fall of 2003. The person applying must:

- Be a dependent son or daughter of a full time Sheriff's Office employee
- Be attending a college or community college that is regionally accredited and be enrolled in a degree seeking program, in the school term beginning Fall 2003
- Certify within the application that they are planning a career in law enforcement, corrections or a related criminal justice field.

[Click here to download a copy of the application in Adobe Acrobat format.](#) If you cannot use this option, contact Deputy Becky Herrin and she will send you a copy in the courier.

Bureau of Operations

Islamorada Update

By Lieutenant Thomas W. Brazil

During April we said goodbye to Deputy Mike White who transferred to the Traffic Enforcement Unit. We are not really losing Mike, as he is assigned to a position in the Upper Keys and will be working between Sector 6 & 7. Mike we wish you the best of luck in your new position and please be careful on that motorcycle.



Cadets who participated in Relay for Life, with SRO Deputy Bev Brazil

On April 11th and 12th the Islamorada District and Explorer Post 905 participated in the annual American Cancer Society Relay for Life held this year at Founders Park. We sold rib and turkey leg plates and raised approximately \$1,200 during the event. The Explorers won the award for most laps walked (3,028) taking the award from TIB Bank who has held it for the past several years.

We took delivery of our new patrol boat a 25ft Nautica RIB Cat. The boat gives some unique capabilities to the marine patrol function in Sector 6. The boat is capable of operating in very shallow water and has a forward hydraulic door that opens to become a dive platform for rescue and recovery operations.



Islamorada Sector's new Nautica patrol boat.

On April 6th members from the sector attended the annual meeting of the Plantation Key Homeowners Association at the community park in the Colony. About 30 people were in attendance and citizens expressed some minor concerns mainly related to traffic issues. Deputy Emil LaVache gave a talk on crime prevention and Deputy Sanchez gave a short presentation on the marine unit.

The sector held a community meeting on April 8th at the Community Room of the Islamorada Public Library. We mailed out 50 invitations and advertised the meeting on local radio and in the newspapers. We had 26 people in attendance plus members of the local media. The meeting was organized to discuss law enforcement related community concerns. Much of the audience was from Lower Matacumbe and they expressed concerns about speeding and golf carts in various neighborhoods. In addition residents of Lower Matacumbe Beach wanted to reestablish their citizens crime watch. Emil LaVache gave a good presentation on crime prevention issues and Sgt. Gene Williams presented a bicycle patrol program we are attempting to establish.

On April 17 I traveled to Key West to address the Monroe County Commission on the issue of our health benefits. For those of you that have not heard, the Commission gutted our health benefits in this meeting, which combined with the very minimal pay raise this year is going to have dire consequences on our ability to recruit and retain quality employees. I would urge each and every one of you to write or call you commissioners and express your thoughts on this issue before the final budget hearings in September.

Sector 7 Report

By Lt. Bill Moran

I think someone should invent paper longer than "Legal" size. Who came up with that descriptor anyway? After a recent attempt to re-organize my personal files, all of which are in "Letter" size folders, contained in a "Letter" size filing cabinet, I realized just how many "Legal" size papers I have. Needless to say, to fit the "Legal" into the "Letter," you are gonna do some folding. Now of course, you have one end of the folder twice as thick as the other end. If the "Legal" were made twice as long, the folders would end up nice and even. Even better..... do away with the "Legal." Problem solved.

I have to apologize for missing last months Rap Sheet. I have developed what is technically termed an "Etch-a-Sketch Memory," or E.S.M. One shake of the head and what ever was there is immediately erased. I am adding an expansion program to my Outlook calendar to hold the massive amount of "reminder" entries.

We have some terrific new and returning members of our Sector 7 team. I'd like to welcome Deputy E.B. Askins, who grew up here in the Upper Keys and was just recently Honorably Discharged from the United States Marine Corps. We also want to welcome back Deputy Greg LaRoche who decided the M.C.S.O. is way better than anywhere else. Joining us again, after a tour in the U.S. Army; then being discharged, and then recalled to active duty is Deputy Emilio Rodriguez. Emilio is also a Certified Bomb Tech, S.W.A.T. member and worked in our S.I.D. Unit for a while before the military stole him. I don't know if I formally welcomed Deputy Eric Christensen when he joined us a couple of months ago, (Etch-a-Sketch moment), so I will now. Eric comes to the S.O. with considerable law enforcement

experience, from North of the 112 Mile Marker, including being a former S.R.O. Eric breezed through the Field Training Program so quickly, the paperwork hasn't caught up yet. And finally, on May 5th, we will be welcoming Deputy Ray Jodlowski; also a former deputy in North Florida.

When we say hello and welcome to so many new and returning members, we must also have to say farewell and good luck to those who have moved on. In the last few months, we waved goodbye to Jim McGlaughlin, Jose Rodriguez, and Brooks Bateman. For a while there, we had so many open positions and unassigned cars, we looked like an F.H.P. Station. (That's a little inter-department humor there.)

It's finally going to happen! The new P.K. Sub-station is about to get underway. The final steps in permits, the contractor, the timetable and Ground Breaking is right around the corner. The target is May, of this year, and we can't wait. The principle indicator is Capt. Bell-Thomson shopping for interiors; like furniture, colors, tile patterns, etc. There was one small bump in the road however. Since we have to commit a certain amount of money to "Art of the Keys" stuff, like wall murals, paintings for walls or on walls, and the like, an artist was bound to get involved. While I really don't have article space to be specific; suffice it to say the sketches of what was proposed for our new station were.....well, less than acceptable to those of us who would inhabit the building on a daily basis. In fact, those of us who saw what was planned considered taking the rest of the day off.....or transferring. Fortunately, it's all been worked out and we won't have to wear sun glasses inside the new station.

As I am sure most of you know, our Community Relations Unit, headed by Greg Artman, sends out Citizen Survey forms every month; asking Monroe County residents about the quality of law enforcement service they receive from us. This is done for each of the seven sectors. When the surveys are returned, Greg sends each of the sector commanders the survey and a copy of the Call for Service it relates to. Each month, I am proud to say, our Sector 7 deputies shine like stars. Last month was no exception. Not a single negative comment and tons of praise for a job well done. I want to add my personal congratulations to each of our deputies and supervisors for outstanding performance in service to our community. WELL DONE !

On a sad note, we bid farewell to Doris Kemp who passed away Sunday, April 20th. I know many of you never knew her, but those of us who have lived in the Upper Keys since the 80's, and before, knew her as the driving force in the Key Largo Volunteer Ambulance Corps. and it's founder. When anything bad happened, and the medics were needed, Doris was there.

Doris was a leader, a teacher, and worked tirelessly to make emergency medical response in the Upper Keys the very best it could be. Doris Kemp will be missed and remembered always

Well, I have finally run out of stuff to write; so I'll close for now. Be well and stay safe.

Sector One Report

By Captain Rick Ramsay

Deputy Natalie Mashburn recently organized the annual KIDS FISHING TOURNAMENT on Big Pine Key. The event was on Sat. April 19th at the No Name Key Bridge. This event is a big event for Big Pine Key and it requires a lot of hard work. The event is made possible through sponsors and volunteer time.

We had one hundred and twenty kids show up to fish for fun and prizes. After it was over the kids were given pizza and sodas while the judges determined the various winners. The children had a wonderful time thanks to the hard work of everyone.

From Sector One we had Natalie Mashburn, Tom Peteck Jr., Daryl Hull, Colleen Carter, Diane Mimosa, Jay Fisher, and myself. From Sector Four we had Tom Peteck Sr. From traffic we had Kevin Mimosa and John McGee. I hope that I did not leave anyone out as there were many people from our agency there to help out.



Pictured is Sgt. Hull who had to wade out under the bridge to measure the second place fish, a small shark. The fish was too heavy to try to reel in as the line would have broken so he waded out to measure the fish so the line did not break. The shark took second place, which got the young fisherman a new bicycle.

Community Relations

By Director Greg Artman

Some of you may not be aware that one of the things the Community Relations Division does is send out Community Response Cards to members of the public who have had contact with Sheriff's deputies. The cards ask people to rate their experience with the Sheriff's Office, asking the resident to rate phone procedures, response time, officer's demeanor and ability to handle the circumstance. There is also a section for comments.

It's obvious the deputies, detectives, communications officers and staff of the Sheriff's Office are doing a great job. During the latest reporting period (January, February, March 2003) we sent out 266 letters containing stamped response postcards. Citizens filled out and returned 72 response cards, which is a pretty good rate of return for a survey. Sixty-nine of the responses indicated that citizens were satisfied with the actions of the Sheriff's Office. Only three respondents stated that they were dissatisfied. That is an overwhelmingly positive response. Also, a number of the respondents went out of their way to compliment individual officers for their performance. Here are some of those comments:

- **"Deputy Craig Sparrow**...was everything one could hope for in a professional law enforcement officer. He was knowledgeable, courteous and interested in our situation and highly responsive to our concerns."
- **"Detective Ben Lowe** was very helpful and professional."
- **"Deputy Kohout** was outstanding."
- **"Sgt. Ryan** was very concerned and helpful even though it was not a clear cut solvable issue."
- **"Officer J. Madnick** was very courteous, professional and helpful with our problem."
- **"Officer Badman** is always a pleasure to deal with."

Other positive comments that didn't name anyone specifically included:

- "Quick response, every officer efficient, courteous, informative"....
- "911 operator very professional. As an ex-law enforcement officer, I was very happy with the Monroe County Sheriff's Office."

Great job everyone. Keep up the good work.

Patrol and Operations Events

Law Enforcement Special Olympics Torch Run 2003

The 2003 Law Enforcement / Special Olympics Torch Run began in Key West, Friday April 11th, 2003. Participating runners from all Law Enforcement Agencies wound thru the streets of Key West, stopping at HOB School, Key West High School, Poinciana School and finishing up at the Monroe County Sheriff's Office Headquarters building on Stock Island. The run continued in Marathon. The final destination for the state-wide run was Tampa Florida on the 25th of April where Law Enforcement Agencies from around the state ran into the stadium to begin the 2003 Special Olympics Games.



Participating runners in Marathon:
Kneeling: Dep. Greg Korzen, Capt. Hintzen U.S. Border Patrol, Kerry Heck U.S. Border Patrol, **Standing:** Dep. Linda Kohout, Chief Bill O'Brian Ret., Capt. Bob Peryam, Det. Dep. Alesha Ensminger, Dep. Andrew Ensminger. Dep. Korzen is a reserve and expects to be called up by the Marines soon.



Participating runners in Key West, as they run through Key West High School.

Cadets Raffle Boat

[Click here to see a flyer with more information](#)

The Sheriff's Office Explorer/Cadet Program is raising money by raffling off a 22 foot center console Sea Cat boat. The boat is valued at \$42,000.00, and is powered by 2 **Suzuki** 115 4 Stroke Engines. They are only selling 6000 raffle tickets for just \$10.00 per ticket. People can purchase a ticket from any Sheriff's Office Cadet, or they can call (305)292-7116 or toll free 1-800-273-COPS (2677) and a ticket will be delivered in person, or mailed to you depending on your location. The drawing will be held June 2nd. The raffle is sponsored by **Portside Marine of Key Largo**.

Students win Contest

Students of Ms. Adeeb's 6th grade class at Plantation Key School were winners of the Bulletin Board Contest for the National Child Passenger Safety Week, which was in February. The Bulletin Board urges students to "Buckle Up your sweetheart or else be brokenhearted". The contest was promoted by the Monroe County Sheriff's Office Islamorada District. Ms. Adeeb, received a dinner for two from Islamorada Fish Company and the class received a Pizza Party from Pizza in the Mangroves.



Students of Ms. Adeb's 6th Grade class, Plantation Key School.

Diversion Program kids participate in Quilt Project



Kids in the Juvenile Diversion Program participated with students at HOB School in putting together a quilt to show support for our troops in Iraq. The students all signed the quilt with their good wishes for the troops. In the picture, Ira Goldstein talks with HOB students working on the quilt.

Bureau of Corrections



Three Detention Deputies were called to duty in the military recently. Sgt. Jonathan Crane was in Iraq during the

recent conflict. D/D Kevin McElroy was just sent to Iraq two weeks ago and D/D Joshua England is currently awaiting orders. The above pictures show some boxes which are being sent to Sgt. Crane. Boxes are also being assembled for McElroy and England as well.

Support Services

Family and Medical Leave Act

If you are an “eligible” employee, you are entitled to 12 weeks of leave for certain family and medical reasons during a 12-month period.

Eligibility:

Employees are eligible to take FMLA leave if they have worked for their employer for at least 12 months, and have worked for at least 1,250 hours over the previous 12 months, and work at a location where at least 50 employees are employed by the employer within 75 miles.

Procedures:

1. Request leave under FMLA 30 days prior to taking the time. If this is not possible, then the member must give as much notice as is practical.
2. Pick-up FMLA paperwork from Human Resources
3. Return completed FMLA request stating dates of absence
4. Provide Doctors certification within 15 days.
5. Record time on timesheet as FMLA leave.
6. Upon return provide medical certification from doctor (if leave is related to employee)

Any questions regarding this policy please contact Kristie Hernandez at 292-7044.

Retirement Update

Employees who worked for Wackenhut Corrections Corp. in 1990-1991 will not be allowed to purchase retirement credit for that period of time. That is the decision by the Benefits Administrator, Department of Management Services, Division of Retirement for the State of Florida. For those who are new to the Sheriff's Office, in March of 1990 the Sheriff's Office entered into a contract for Wackenhut to operate the Monroe County Detention Center, then located on Fleming Street in the city of Key West. At that time many employees transferred to Wackenhut employment. In March of 1991 the facility was returned to Sheriff's Office control and many employees returned to work for the Sheriff's Office.

New Hires:

LAST NAME	FIRST NAME	JOB TITLE
Alia	Joseph	DD Auxiliary
Arnold	Karen	DD Auxiliary
Askins	Edward	Deputy Sheriff
Brown	Debra	DD Auxiliary
Christensen	Michael	Deputy Sheriff
De La Cruz	Julio	DD Auxiliary
Hernandez	John	DD Auxiliary
Hernandez	Kristie	H. R. Specialist
LaRochelle	Greg	Deputy Sheriff
Lockwood	Vicki	DD Auxiliary
Nathan	Cynthia	DD Auxiliary
Perdomo	Federico	DD Auxiliary
Reis	Geoffrey	DD Auxiliary
Rodriguez	Emilio	Deputy Sheriff

Awards and Commendations

- Susan Sanders wrote to Sheriff Roth to thank one of our dispatchers, "**Kathy**", and an unknown deputy who helped to notify family members when there was a sudden illness. She says, "Please convey our gratitude and appreciation, both to Kathy and the deputy who not only took the time to go to the unit, but also took the extra step of leaving a note. You must be very proud to have such responsible and caring people working in your department."
 - Bill Horne wrote to the Sheriff: "If someone had told me that one of the highlights of my week in Key West with friends would be lunch at the Monroe County jail followed by a wonderful tour, I would have laughed in their face." He goes on to commend **Lt. Tammy Clark**, and all the Sheriff's staff. "It's reassuring to know there are quality people like you and your staff to handle the job that you do."
 - Lt. Larry Kelley commended **Deputies Jeremy Davy and Chuck Meier** for their handling of a crash with an unconscious person trapped inside a burning vehicle. While Deputy Meier attempted to control the fire, Deputy Davy, with the assistance of Mr. Karl Wagner, pulled the victim from the car to safety. About three minutes after they removed him, the car "erupted in a fireball". He said, in part, "Their decisiveness, courage, discipline and presence of mind during this dangerous and life threatening episode embody the finest traditions of the Monroe County Sheriff's Office and it is my recommendation that they each be awarded the Sheriff's Medal for their meritorious actions."
 - Sgt. Daryl Hull wrote to Captain Rick Ramsay, commending a number of officers for their part in the handling of a difficult traffic incident which occurred on March 29th. During the incident, **Deputy Joe Cortner** spotted a woman in a convertible traveling the wrong direction on the Bahia Honda Bridge. **Deputy Manuel Cuervo** spotted the same car driving recklessly on Big Pine Key and began following. Other deputies set up stinger spikes, which failed to stop the car. The mentally ill driver veered off the roadway, between two patrol cars, hitting a pickup head on. It continued on, hitting a small compact car, then becoming airborne, crashing and catching fire. The driver was pulled from the flaming wreckage by Deputies Cuervo and Cortner, who were recommended to receive a Sheriff's Medal for their actions.. **Deputies Diane Mimosa, David Simons and Chris Duncan** assisted others injured at the scene and were commended by the Sgt. for their quick response and assistance.
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What's Happening

- Police Memorial Day ceremonies will be taking place May 23rd, 7 p.m. at Bayview Park in the city of Key West.
- For information on upcoming training classes, visit our [Training web pages](#).



Isaac Williams, born in September 2002 is the son of Boyd and Cynthia Williams. Isaac made his parents proud recently by sitting up! Here he is - Great job, Isaac!