



THE SHERIFF'S POST

JULY 2021





HI EVERYONE,

Welcome to our second issue of The Sheriff's Post. We are more than half-way through the year and there has been so much happening here at the Sheriff's Office. We are undertaking a number of initiatives to better serve you, the public.

If you've driven by our campus – or visited – you might have noticed some construction happening. We are working hard to improve the security of our campus to better protect our employees. When the work is complete, our campus will have a single point of entry at the main administration building. New lighting in the employee parking lots, fencing around the perimeter, and security cameras are all included in what will ultimately be a four-phase project. (Read more about the security project on page 5.)

As you might have noticed on the cover of this edition, the agency has established a new Bike Patrol Unit under Community Affairs. The Bike Patrol Unit will be out and about this summer, participating in such events at the Fourth of July Parade and similar community gatherings.

Since the last issue of The Sheriff's Post, we have launched our Real Time Crime Center. The new division has, in part, been tasked with analyzing data and sussing out patterns so we can adjust our patrols accordingly. The analysts in the Real Time Crime Center also dig up pertinent information when an emergency call comes into Public Safety Dispatch. While the dispatchers are dealing with the immediate

needs, the analysts are able to search for historical information on the site or the people involved and forward that information onto the responding deputies. (Read more about the Real Time Crime Center on page 10.)

Also in this issue is a profile on the pilots and mechanics in our Aviation division stationed at the hangar. The crew there maintains and operates four helicopters – we call them Hawk. And they have seen it all. They have assisted in pursuits along the Interstate and through residential neighborhoods. They've been instrumental in finding suspects who flee from the scene – as well as help find those who have gone missing or gotten lost while out for a stroll. (Read more about the Aviation unit on page 6.)

There is still so much more to come from this agency, especially this summer. We are finalizing training and protocols to bring body-worn cameras to all sworn law enforcement officers here at the agency.

We are also finalizing plans for license plate readers, which would be installed at each entry point into the county. The plate readers will give our deputies an alert if a target license plate comes into our area.

The agency, too, is moving forward with Operation Be More Fit, an in-house initiative aimed at getting - and keeping - our staff physically, mentally, and emotionally strong.

This is just the tip of the proverbial iceberg. Stay tuned for more news as the year progresses.

YOUR SHERIFF, ERIC FLOWERS



LT. JOSEPH ABOLLO AND DEP. ANTHONY MURACA PREPARE FOR PATROL AT SEBASTIAN RIVER HIGH'S GRADUATION.

NEW BIKE TEAM SUPPORTS COMMUNITY PATROL ON 2 WHEELS

They first rolled out at the Vero Beach and Sebastian River high school graduations. Then, the Downtown Friday Vero Beach event. Over the summer, the newly formed Bike Patrol Unit will be found pedaling through various communities and participating in fun events, including the Fourth of July parade.

Under Sheriff Eric Flowers, the agency has re-established its COPE division – Community Oriented Police Enforcement, and as such, has created the Bike Patrol Unit.



DEP. ANTHONY MURACA

Lt. Joseph Abollo, who heads the unit, was tapped to create it, quite literally from the ground up.

He himself was not well-versed on bicycle units, only having some recreational experience riding

beach cruisers and mountain bikes with the family.

“Part of the job is learning,” Lt. Abollo said. So he turned to Orchid Island Bikes & Kayaks in Vero Beach for their expertise in cycling. He also reached out to a number of law enforcement agencies with their own bike units – Seminole and Orange counties, along with Orlando and Sanford police departments were among those researched.

“It’s not a matter of buying a bike and hopping on it,” Lt. Abollo said. Each member of the unit had to go through training and earn their certification through the Law Enforcement Bicycle Association.

The training course was 40 hours, which taught them safety tactics, how to ride effectively, and how to patrol properly.

“We cannot shoot or Taze from a bike,” Lt. Abollo said. “We don’t jump from the bike to tackle.”

Much of what is portrayed on TV shows is purely cinematic.

Currently, the unit has seven members and five bikes with plans to grow the unit over time.

“I’m not much of a bike rider,” said Dep. Anthony Muraca, a School Resource Deputy who joined the bike

cont’d on next page

(CONT.) BIKE PATROL UNIT

unit as a part-time member. After going through the training, though, he's hooked. "I actually enjoy" riding.

He was one of the deputies tapped to roll out for high school graduations.

"They thought it was really cool," Dep. Muraca said of the students he knows from the school he's posted to. He likes that the students get to see a different side to the agency – see the School Resource Deputies is a different setting.

For Dep. Scott Burke, joining the agency's bike unit was a no-brainer. "That really piqued my interest," he said. "I really wanted to get back on the bike."

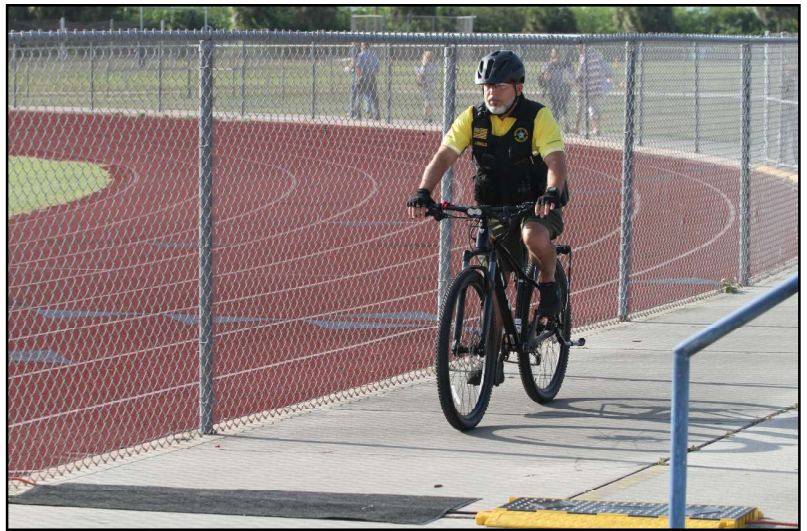
Dep. Burke previously served with the Seminole police department, on their bike unit. Often, he'd patrol parking lots at night, catching people doing things they ought not to.

"They don't even realize you're there," he said – the bike is silent and has a low profile, unlike a patrol car.

There are plenty of differences between patrolling on a bike and in a car. "You definitely hear a lot more," Dep. Muraca said. You also have a nearly 360-degree view on a bike.

Comfort is a bit lacking, though. You're at the mercy of the weather – and temperatures – on a bike, rather than the A/C-controlled vehicle. "But it's still pretty comfortable," Muraca said.

While patrolling and crowd monitoring are the main purposes for the unit, building rapport and establishing relationships within the community is another.



LT. ABOLLO PATROLS THE SCHOOL GROUNDS AHEAD OF GRADUATION.

Dep. Burke said he hopes Indian River County's residents will want to join them on their rides. "That would be awesome."

While with the Seminole Police Department, Dep. Burke often found residents would ride along and chat, sometimes sharing information about trouble-spots in their community.

The unit, too, can help educate the public on bicycle safety laws – not just talking to fellow riders, but drivers as well.

Ideally, COPE's bike unit will grow to 10 certified members, each with their own bicycles. This would allow the agency to deploy multiple teams at the same time if needed.

Our thanks goes to Orchid Island Bikes and Kayaks for their continued support of our Bike Patrol Unit.



DEP. MURACA PATROLS THE PARKING LOT AS FAMILIES ARRIVE FOR GRADUATION.



MAINTENANCE UNIT SUPERVISOR CHARLES WILLIAMS INSPECTS THE RENOVATIONS THAT WILL BECOME THE NEW VISITATION BUILDING.

CAMPUS SECURITY BETTER PROTECTION & SERVICE

Construction is underway on the Sheriff's Office campus. Multiple phases are occurring at the same time, all of which with the aim to improve security.

"Upon taking office, one of my main concerns was the safety and security of our employees," Sheriff Eric Flowers told the Board of County Commissioners earlier this year when he approached them with the project.

The County had been socking away money in the Capital Improvement Fund for what Commission Chair Joe Flescher called a "grand plan" – a replacement facility, not just renovations.

"It wouldn't be prudent for the taxpayers," Sheriff Flowers said of tackling such an endeavor in the post-Covid era.

Instead, hardening the perimeter, visitation and the front lobby will be done with renovations rather than new construction.

Among the tasks being undertaken, is better lighting around the campus and new key card readers and system for security.

By mid-June an 8-foot tall chain link fence topped with barbed wire was going in around the campus's perimeter and gates were being installed to allow employee access to certain areas.

For the public, access to the campus is via the main road – 41st Avenue – where the Administration building is. All visitors to the Sheriff's Office are to check in there

and then be escorted to their destination.

The exception will be for those coming to visit an inmate or update their sexual offender information. They will be able to access a newly renovated building immediately south of the main Admin building.

The agency has been allocated \$750,000 this year from the Law Enforcement Impact Fee fund.

Secure Fence and Rail, of Titusville, is installing the fencing around the campus. The County's Road and Bridge department is assisting with roadwork. Todd Thompson Construction is handling the Visitation building's work.

The front lobby will be renovated with bullet-resistant glass, a new exterior walk-up window, a secure space for fingerprinting, and a deputy's office for taking statements from the public.



CHAIN LINK FENCING WILL LINE THE CAMPUS PERIMETER.



AVIATION UNIT

OUR HAWK EYES IN THE SKIES

When we need a bird's eye view of what's going on, we send up one of our Hawks – our helicopters. A pursuit runs through a residential area – send Hawk so our patrol cars can back off. A child has wandered off into the nearby woods – send Hawk, infrared cameras can pick up the heat signature. A suspect has bailed out of the car and is trying to flee on foot – send Hawk, the aerial crew can see farther and call out locations.

“Since I was young, I loved helicopters,” said Deputy Pilot Chase Gomez. He knew he wanted to be a helicopter pilot and pursued that goal while in high school. Upon graduating high school, he immediately went to the police academy, the youngest in his class.

He was hired as soon as he completed the academy.

“It's been nothing but fun,” Gomez said, though safety is critical and at the forefront of all he and his fellow crew members do. “It plays a huge role. I'm their eyes up there.”

But it's not without its challenges. Earlier this year, our pilots were hit at night with

a high-powered laser – not your typical run-of-the-mill presentation laser or cat toy.

Gomez was flying Hawk 3, searching for a missing juvenile. Wearing night vision gear, the green colored laser lit him up. “You can't see,” he said.

“It can cause the aircraft to crash,” said Lt. William





MECHANIC IAN HANES INSPECTS ONE OF THE HAWKS.

Luther, from the Special Operations division which oversees Aviation. “It’s like shooting at them.”

People might point a laser at an aircraft at night, not expecting or realizing the beam can actually reach the helicopter – but it can, and it does. The results can be catastrophic.

Other challenges include air traffic, power lines and other such obstacles. The pilot’s job is to maneuver the helicopter, keeping it and its crew safe. Another deputy mans the cameras and other equipment, serving as the ground crew’s eyes. That deputy is responsible for calling out hazards and locations while in pursuit, or keeping a sharp eye out for someone fleeing a scene or someone lost in the woods or marsh.

Currently, the agency has four helicopters, all of which are maintained by the mechanics at the hangar. The birds can sport a \$6 million price tag – if bought new. Instead, the agency buys them as surplus from the military, paying pennies on the dollar.

“We won’t spend that much (\$6 million) in its lifetime,” Luther said of fixing up and maintaining each helicopter.

David Massey and Ian Hanes are the mechanics in the hangar keeping the birds in good repair. They

understand that the deputies’ lives – and the community’s lives – are in their hands.

“We are ultimately responsible,” Massey said.

Helicopters, by their very nature, vibrate greatly, which can cause parts to wear out or crack. Massey and Hanes are adept at finding the slightest sign of damage and getting the part repaired or replaced.

“You need to have the eyes and ears” for the job, Massey said. “You can’t just pull over and change a tire.”

Hanes said having two guys in the hangar means double the eyes and ears checking all the parts. One might catch something the other missed.

Deputy Pilot Shawn McGinnis has been in the Aviation unit for more than 24 years, coming in when the unit was still very much in its infancy. He started as an observer – the term then-used for the deputy responsible for watching the camera and manning the radio.

In 2015, he got his pilot’s license – “It seemed like a promotion,” McGinnis said of becoming a pilot. Given a choice between being the observer or the pilot, though, he said he’d rather be the observer.

McGinnis said anyone interested in getting in the helicopter should spend time with the Road Patrol unit first and get to know the county from the ground.

“Then stop over here and we’ll show you the ropes – see if you’re interested and can handle it,” he said.



MECHANICS IAN HANES (LEFT) AND DAVE MASSEY WORK ON ONE OF THE HAWKS.

★ STAR SCENE



JOHN WALSH OF AMERICA'S MOST WANTED (AND VERO BEACH RESIDENT) VISITS THE SHERIFF'S OFFICE AHEAD OF FILMING VIDEO PIECES HIGHLIGHTING THE AGENCY'S 'FUGITIVE OF THE WEEK.'



DEPUTY MICHAEL DAUGHTREY COLLECTS UNWANTED PRESCRIPTIONS AT A LOCAL WALGREENS DURING THE DEA NATIONAL TAKE BACK DAY.



OTG LIQUIDATION AND OUR COMMUNITY AFFAIRS SECTION ASSISTED A LOCAL FAMILY WHO LOST BOTH THEIR HOME AND VEHICLE TO A FIRE. NO ONE WAS INJURED AND THE FAMILY WAS SAFELY EVACUATED FROM THE BURNING HOME.

(BELOW) STUDENTS AND TEACHERS AT CITRUS ELEMENTARY CELEBRATE LAW ENFORCEMENT WITH CARDS AND POSTERS. LT. ROSS PARTEE, SGT. MIKE PIERCE, SRD SGT. RODERICK SMITH, DEP. JOHN LOZADA AND SRD PAAVO MINUSE CONDUCTED A BRIEF Q & A SESSION WITH 2ND GRADE STUDENTS AND HAD A GREAT TIME.





SHERIFF ERIC FLOWERS UNVEILS PARKING FOR MILITARY VETERANS AT THE INDIAN RIVER COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE VETERANS COUNCIL, WHICH DOES GREAT WORK ON BEHALF OF THE COUNTY'S VETERANS. INFO: WWW.VETERANSCOUNCILIRC.ORG



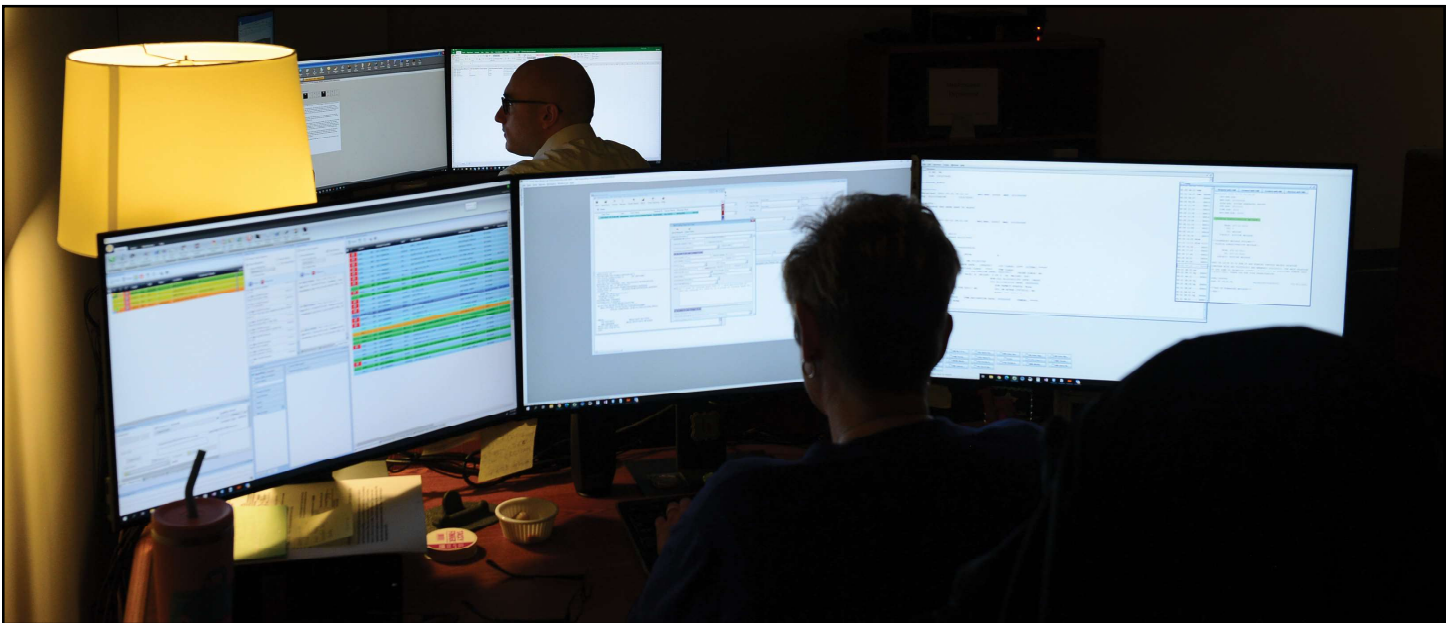
IN MAY, DEP. MICHAEL KACHELE WAS INDUCTED INTO THE FLORIDA BAR AS A DULY SWORN AND LICENSED ATTORNEY IN THE STATE OF FLORIDA AFTER HAVING EARNED HIS JURIS DOCTORATE DEGREE LAST YEAR.



DEP. RON ADAMSON REVIEWS THE SAFETY GEAR NEEDED WHEN OPERATING A BOAT ON OUR WATERS, INCLUDING PERSONAL FLOATION DEVICES AND AIR HORNS.



(RIGHT) ALWAYS WILLING TO GET OUT AND LEND A HAND. OUR FINEST, IRCSSO, HELPING A CITIZEN AT SR60 AND 58TH WITH HER DISABLED VEHICLE.



THE REAL TIME CRIME CENTER MONITORS MANY AVENUES OF INFORMATION TO HELP DEPUTIES EN ROUTE TO CALLS.

REAL TIME CRIME CENTER MORE TOOLS TO CATCH CRIMINALS

They are the operators behind the scenes. They collect data, plug it into their systems, analyze it. They can predict when and where the next hot-spot of criminal activity might be – especially auto burglaries.

The Real Time Crime Center is a new addition to the Sheriff's Office, starting with just a few hand-selected employees from various departments in a room armed with large-screen televisions and computers with multiple monitors attached.



PATRICK HAAS AND BARBIE SPAULDING DISCUSS INFORMATION.

"It's such a new thing for us," said Senior Analyst Kim Poole.

The idea is to provide deputies with comprehensive information as they respond to calls – giving them info if the location has been the site of previous calls, if the subject has violent tendencies.

"It is not Dispatch in any shape or form," said Analyst Carrie Gardner. Instead, the Real Time Crime Center bolsters the information the Public Safety Dispatch team relays to deputies. Where Dispatch is most concerned about what is happening in the moment, the RTCC is able to dig deeper and find information from the past that might have relevance in the present.

Along with assisting Dispatch, the RTCC tracks trends and maps calls for service, providing intelligence-based policing. Already, their work has helped the Road Patrol plan and execute patrols of areas predicted to be hit by auto burglars. Armed with information about past burglaries and locations, Road Patrol was able to modify its movements accordingly.

"There are still a lot of irons in the fire that haven't been flattened yet," Poole said, explaining the Sheriff's Office is working to roll out body-worn cameras as well as get license plate readers at entry points into the county.

"It's going to be pivotal," she said of the body-worn

cameras once they're operational. The Real Time Crime Center will be able to watch the activated cameras – as situations dictate – which will be a boon for the command post. They will be able to see in real time what is happening.

“It’s a matter of time for us,” Poole said. The average response time is 3 minutes – that’s all the time they have to find pertinent information and relay it to deputies responding to a call. The more tools they have, the more information they can provide.

The members of the RTCC team include analysts Barbie Spaulding, Patrick Haas, Sydnie McKay, along with Poole and Gardner.

Spaulding has been with the Sheriff’s Office for three decades, coming from the Warrants division. With that background, Spaulding is able to quickly determine if a subject does or does not have active warrants – which could affect the way a deputy might approach. “It’s another layer of information,” she said.

Spaulding said that after spending 20-plus years at the Courthouse, she was ready to learn something new. “I was excited,” she said of having the opportunity to move to the Real Time Crime Center.

They issue a lot of bulletins, attempts to locate, missing persons and vehicles. They work with detectives on subpoena requests.

“Every day’s been crazy in here,” Spaulding said. “Everything changes minute by minute.”

Haas transferred from the Investigations Division,



KIM POOLE CONSULTS WITH CARRIE GARDNER IN THE REAL TIME CRIME CENTER.

where he had worked to catch sex offenders. But using his knowledge of Internet-based research, Haas is able to do similar work within the RTCC and teach the other analysts how to do the same. He also works to make data digestible and maps it for analysis.

“I enjoy that – visualizing crimes and finding patterns,” Haas said.

Part of the job is working with detectives and field training officers to determine what they need and how the Real Time Crime Center can help.

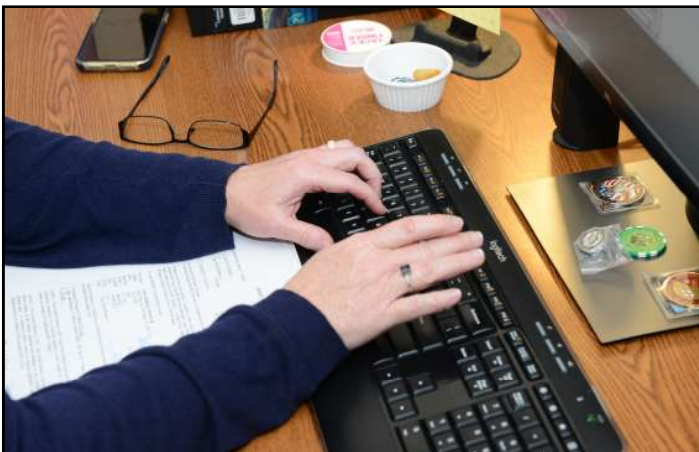
Gardner is new to the Indian River County Sheriff’s Office but has spent more than 30 years in Public Safety Dispatch at other agencies. She is able to pull her knowledge of Dispatch-speak and databases to quickly ascertain what is needed.

“It never stops,” Gardner said. “We’re busy all day.”

McKay currently splits her time between Dispatch and the RTCC and will bring a wealth of knowledge and experience when she becomes a full-time analyst in the near future. Currently our analysts work a regular administrative schedule and are on-call for after-hour incidents. Eventually, the RTCC will expand to some evening and weekend shifts and will likely grow to be a 24/7 operation in the future.

“There is no downtime,” Poole said, especially during the day.

“We’re biting at the bit to be up and running fully,” Poole said, noting that it’s best to go slowly and absorb each new challenge singly. “Great things are going to come out of this room.”





NOW HIRING GOT WHAT IT TAKES?

Come join our team of amazing professionals. We are hiring numerous civilian positions within both the 9-1-1 dispatch center and the county jail, among other divisions and departments.

Dispatch hires can expect a starting salary of \$31,000, which increases to \$40,000 upon the completion of training. Civilian Corrections Assistants can expect to start at \$27,450.

Both posts are great entry points into a lifelong law enforcement related career. Want to be a first responder without having to go out in the field? Consider 9-1-1 dispatch. Interested in working in the jail but not up close with the inmates? Then apply for the Civilian Corrections Assistant position.

Interested applicants may apply online at www.ircsheriff.org. For additional information, applicants may call (772) 978-6355.

Telecommunicator

This position is responsible for screening, entering and relaying/routing calls for service for emergency and non-emergency calls for service in a 911 dispatch center, including dispatching of Fire-EMS and Police Calls for service.

Applicants for this position must have excellent computer skills, capable of working under stress, and be able to react quickly and calmly and make sound decisions in emergency situations.

Starting salary of \$31,000; Salary increased to \$40,000 upon completion of training.

Qualifications / Prerequisites

- Excellent background.
- High school diploma or GED.
- Must be 18 years of age or older.
- Must be able to work 12 hour shifts including days, nights, weekends and holidays.
- Must be able to work any required shift.
- Advanced computer skills are required.
- This position requires that you take a typing test and receive a score of 38 words per minute with a 92% accuracy rate.

Civilian Corrections Assistant

The position of Civilian Corrections Assistant performs a variety of duties, including the following assignments: Security and maintenance of Control Rooms, Booking area and Visitation Center.

A competitive starting salary of \$27,540 per year.

Qualifications / Prerequisites

- Excellent background.
- High school diploma or GED.
- Must be 18 years of age or older.
- Must be able to work required shifts including days, nights, weekends and holidays.
- Basic knowledge of computers is required.

Other Positions Available

- Law Enforcement Deputy - starting \$45,000
- Deputy Trainee - starting \$29,802
- Corrections Deputy - starting \$45,000
- Classification Specialist - starting \$30,600
- Information Technology Technician - starting \$41,820
- Registered Nurse - starting \$61,200
- Maintenance Technician - starting \$37,740



STARWORTHY MILESTONES

RETIREMENTS



Dep. Ella Goodman

Nov. 9, 1988 - April 30, 2021
Over the course of her 32 years, Dep. Goodman served with distinction within Corrections. She was named Corrections Deputy of the Year, received multiple Going the Extra Mile awards, Exceptional Duty, and numerous thank you cards and letters of appreciation.



Dep. Teddy Floyd

April 22, 1991 - April 30, 2021
Dep. Floyd began in Corrections and ended his 30-year career as a School Resource Deputy. During his tenure, he earned numerous commendations including multiple Going the Extra Mile and Exceptional Duty awards, as well as a Life Saving Award, and a Governor's Point of Light Award.



Candace Kaigler

Oct. 11, 1993 - April 30, 2021
In her 27 years, Kaigler served in a number of posts, including Investigations, Purchasing, and Evidence Custodian. She received a commendation from then-Sheriff Gary Wheeler for Exceptional Duty, several Going the Extra Mile Awards, and a Civilian Award Recognition.



Steve Renuart

Jan. 17, 1997 - April 1, 2021
He served 24 years, starting as a mechanic with the agency, later becoming a Deputy, and then Chief Aviation Mechanic. He received many awards, including Civilian Employee of the Quarter, Going the Extra Mile, and the Suggestions & Innovations Award.



Dep. Nora Simons

Dec. 4, 2000 - July 1, 2021
Dep. Simons spent her 20 1/2 years in Corrections. Over those two decades, she earned many commendations including Corrections Deputy of the Year, Exceptional Duty, Perfect Attendance, Going the Extra Mile, and Grand Cordon.



Christine Lekanides

April 1, 2002 - June 11, 2021
Lekanides spent the last 19 years as a False Alarm Specialist. She has received numerous awards for "Perfect Attendance." She has previously assisted with the Sheriffs Youth Ranches Annual BBQ.



STARWORTHY MILESTONES

The Indian River County Sheriff's Office congratulates its slate of employees who have served this agency with honor and dignity for at least 15 years.

An organization benefits from the longevity, stability and

wealth of knowledge and skill accumulated by its employees.

These are the Indian River County Sheriff's Office longest serving employees of the Second Quarter. Thank you for your continued service.



Jocelyn R. Lewis, 35



Jacqueline Craig, 32



Melissa A. Stewart, 31

Mark D. Birtel, 15
Judy A. Coull, 15



Colette M. Gautier, 15
Sheryl D. Granger, 15



Regina G. Jones, 15
Pamela Tankersley, 15



Indian River County Sheriff's Office

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STARWORTHY FEATS

'We are fortunate' to have such deputies



Dep. Terri Sweeting was recognized by a Barefoot Bay resident for going above and beyond in assisting with a vehicle's registration. The resident sent a letter to the Sheriff commending Dep. Sweeting, explaining the following:

"I recently purchased a car and received notice of car registration (temporary). In a rush to do things right, I confused registration information with the old and the new car. (Dep.) Sweeting quickly identified my problem and just as quick corrected same.

"As I drove home, I concluded that we are very fortunate to know that you have highly qualified people like (Dep.) Sweeting on your team."

Signed,
Thomas McAuliffe



A fine job is well appreciated

Just wanted to let all you men and women know that you are doing a fine job, and I appreciate your hard work. Thank you, nothing but professionalism.

Signed,
Brian Furst

Operation Green Light a success due to courthouse crew

Chief Deputy Clerk Cindy Carlsward sent a letter to Sheriff Flowers commending the crew at the Indian River County Courthouse for their hard work in late March on Operation Green Light.

"We would have not achieved such positive results without the assistance of your staff: Lt. Roger Harrington, Sgt. Greg Berg, Deputies Mike Korda, Jess Bair, Jerry Montanero, Andy Ballester, Thomas Lorentzen and staff, Miriam Salome.

"Dep. Mike Korda was placed in the Cashier/Traffic area and his organizational skills provided a smooth flow of moving people from one area to another. He always had his eye on both areas and all people. He did a phenomenal job for the five hours he was there.

"The staff at the lobby and front door did an exceptional job of cordoning off non-public areas of the courthouse, controlling the line...and social distancing within the lobby. They were so attentive to the customers and their needs. Because of their presence and good work they did, this event went off without any incidents.

"Our thanks go out to every one of them for a job well done."





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THE IRCSCO IS A NATIONALLY ACCREDITED AGENCY