

July
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2011

Behind the Star



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Message From The Sheriff

The Alexandria Sheriff's Office is winding down from an event filled year and gearing up for holiday festivities. I am delighted to deliver our newsletter with announcements, recognitions, awards, successes of our Office and our continuous involvement in the community.

As we fulfill our core responsibility, *to protect, serve and educate our community*, our expectation is to rise above the call of duty. This newsletter strives to illustrate our zeal to serve Alexandria residents at the highest level. I am particularly proud of our support of Alexandria's youth, displayed by our annual Youth Academy, volunteerism with the Charles Barrett Elementary Mentorship Program and partnership with Community Partners for Children in their annual school supply project. We also provided extra security during the summer holidays, served at the City's special events and assisted the Police Department maintain the City safely for the anniversary of 9/11.

The Alexandria Sheriff's Office is dedicated to excellence and to remaining on the cutting edge of progress in law enforcement and corrections technology, operations and best practices. We are honored to serve you.



A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Dana Lawhorne".

Dana Lawhorne, Sheriff

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Youth Academy

The 2011 Youth Academy, held August 16-18, was deemed a rousing success by the participants, parents and Sheriff's Office staff! Twenty-one students graduated from the three day academy, which focused on making positive choices and gave the youth a first-hand education of life at the Sheriff's Office. The event's activities included demonstrations by the Sheriff's Emergency Response Team (SERT) and Sherman, the Office's bomb-sniffing canine, tours of the jail and courthouse, an afternoon exploring the Office's emergency vehi-



Captain Clarke Stearns



Deputy Poarch and three Youth Academy participants

cles, and culminated in a mock sentencing hearing exercise and graduation ceremonies held at the Alexandria Courthouse.

The youth enjoyed their three days so much that all agreed the academy should be expanded to five days. Watch out! The 2012 Youth Academy will be coming again next year!

Delivering School Supplies

On August 30, 2011, 25 Office staff utilizing 12 vehicles fanned out across the City and delivered school supplies to all 17 public schools. The supplies were collected by the Community Partnership for Children (CPC), an Alexandria non-profit that sponsors the annual event, and sorted at the Charles Houston Recrea-

Sergeant Kelly, Deputy Pitts, and Mr. Baldwin



tion Center, where they were picked up by Sheriff's Office



Chief George and Deputy Burnham at CPC school supply delivery project

staff and delivered to the City's schools. The supplies were given to under resourced students. This is the third consecutive year the Sheriff's Office has worked in partnership with CPC to display their commitment to serving Alexandria.

Fourth of July



On the Fourth of July while most people were out enjoying the sparkling fireworks or spending time with loved ones at festive cookouts, 14 Deputies from the Alexandria Sheriff's Office were busy providing security in our Nation's Capital. Over 200,000 people flooded the District of Columbia for the firework extravaganza. Deputies were strategically deployed to provide security and conduct necessary searches. This event was a booming success and an opportunity for security staff to assist neighboring law enforcement agencies achieve their goal. In addition, the city is reimbursed by the Federal Government.

Hurricane Irene

The Inmate Work Detail (IWD) was utilized on August 26 and 27, 2011 to assist the City with filling several thousand sand bags in support of flood preparation for Hurricane Irene. Once the hurricane passed the area, the IWD was utilized again on Sunday, August 28 to clear fallen tree limbs and debris along the city's entire waterfront, to include five parks. The IWD contributed 135 hours to this effort. A representative from the Office was assigned to the Public Safety Branch of the City's Emergency Operation Center from stand up on Saturday evening until break down Sunday afternoon. The Sheriff's



Sheriff's Office Inmate Work Detail (IWD)



Office staff worked the Call Center and provided EOC security during this period. Two Deputies were also assigned to each of three sandbag distribution sites for security. The Office also assigned six Deputies along Eisenhower Ave. to assist the Police Department with flooding associated with Tropical Storm Lee a week after Irene, controlling vehicle and pedestrian traffic after Cameron Run over flowed.

The Veronica Mitchell Scholarship



Sergeant Chris O'Dell, President of the Alexandria Sheriff's Association, presented the Veronica Mitchell Scholarship to five deserving students, Joshua T. Barnes, Alexis Simone' Pitts, Nattachat Srikongyos, Taylor R. Wise and Alexis J. Herring. This scholarship is named in honor of Chief Deputy Veronica Mitchell, who retired after 30 years in 2009, and in memory of Accreditation Manager, Marleen Venter, who died on January 7 of this year. The committee selected the recipients based on a 500-word essay, their planned collegiate course of study, and community involvement. The Scholarship Committee is composed of Chief Tony Di Cesare, Chief Deputy Tim Gleeson, and Sergeant Deborah Vaughan. The Alexandria Sheriff's Office is proud to support higher education of our youth.

Local Boxing Star Returns

On September 22, 2011, the William G. Truesdale Detention Center was filled to capacity with eager and excited inmates. Tony Suggs, a local boxing star who fought his way to become an Olympic contender in 1998, and through a persistent drug addiction that found him in and out of the Alexandria Detention Center, returned to encourage and inspire the inmates to follow their dreams through positive choices. Tony Suggs delivered a powerful and uplifting message to current inmates urging them to change their habits



Tony Suggs and two sons



and to get their lives back. He shared his story without shame, with a few in the crowd chiming in on some of his memories. He also answered personal questions that were specific to the lives of the inmates. Even more heart-warming, Tony Suggs' two sons were in attendance to hear their father's story. Mr. Suggs admits that he hopes that his sons will learn from his mistakes. Suggs stated "...I realized if I don't want my sons to go through the same cycle my dad went through, I went through; I had to break the cycle...."

Charles Barrett Elementary Mentoring Program



Deputy Mark Jessup and his mentees

two Deputy Sheriff's dedicate their spare time with the mentorship program, often surprising the children with lunch visits from their Mentors and additional spare time outside of school. Ana Bonilla even finds creative and spicier ways to make this program such a success by organizing group trips to the bowling alley and the opportunity to have an IMAX experience at the Cinemas with their mentors. Now this is the right way to get involved!

Ana Bonilla, a dedicated Social Worker at Charles Barrett Elementary, received \$1,300 to kick off a new mentorship program pairing elementary students with adult mentors from the Alexandria Sheriff's Office, Police Department, and Fire Department. The program is designed to build and develop the child's character and strengths and assist each child involved to improve academically, emotionally, physically and socially. Currently

A Press Briefing: The Vice President Comes to Town

On September 29, 2011, the Alexandria Police Department hosted Vice President Joseph Biden at their new facility on Wheeler Avenue. Vice President

Biden voiced his enthusiasm and support for the American Jobs Act. The American Jobs Act includes \$5 billion to support the hiring and retention of first responders. Eight Deputy Sheriffs assisted the Alexandria Police Department with the Vice Presidential visit to the new Police Department Headquarters, providing traffic services and on-site security.



Vice President Joseph Biden and Chief Tim Gleason

Employee of the Quarter

The Alexandria Sheriff's Office honored Local Inmate Data System (LIDS) Technician **Brenda Gray**, with the Employee of the Quarter Award. With adjectives like "impressive", "accurate" and "high-functioning", it seems appropriate to award Brenda Gray with this honor. Brenda has been employed with the Sheriffs Of-



*Local Inmate Data System (LIDS)
Technician Brenda Gray*

years. She is responsible for auditing all inmate release files in accordance with established LIDS requirements. Her work requires a high degree of accuracy and attention. While her work requires accuracy and attention, she handles the data entry of all systems with integrity through her actions. Brenda's actions are greatly appreciated, since her efforts are directly responsible for the Sheriff's Office's successful passing of a recent LIDS audit by the Virginia Department of Corrections. The Sheriff's Office extends a great *thank you* to Brenda Gray and congratulations on your award.

office for more than eight years. She is responsible for auditing all inmate release files in accordance with established LIDS requirements. Her work requires accuracy and attention. While her work requires accuracy and attention, she handles the data entry of all systems with integrity through her actions. Brenda's actions are greatly appreciated, since her efforts are directly responsible for the Sheriff's Office's successful passing of a recent LIDS audit by the Virginia Department of Corrections. The Sheriff's Office extends a great *thank you* to Brenda Gray and congratulations on your award.

Stepping Up



George Baldwin, in the eyes of all staff at the Sheriff's Office, stands in high regard and earns the respect of his colleagues for his tireless efforts as Acting Commander of Administrative Services. Mr. Baldwin has been employed with the Sheriff's Office for twenty years and climbed his way to the rightfully claimed position as Human Resources Manager. His stellar performance resulted in his recent promotion to Acting Commander. Mr.

Baldwin is temporarily filling the position in the absence of Commander Michelle McCarty, who is undergoing recruit training at Northern Virginia Criminal Justice Training Academy. Commander Baldwin is currently overseeing the rigorous Sergeant promotional process and was an active member of the 2011 Employee Awards Committee. We acknowledge Commander Baldwin's exceptional hard work and take this time to recognize one of our very own shining stars.

Commendation Award



Sergeant Michael Neebe

On August 23, 2011, the Eastern coast of the United States was shaken by a magnitude 5.9 earthquake. To the residents and staff members of the William G. Truesdale Detention Center, the experience once again demonstrated the professionalism of our jail staff and highlighted our operations in the best possible light.

Sergeant Michael Neebe was assigned as the Acting Watch Commander at the Detention Center that day, where his leadership skills were tested and proven. Sergeant Neebe rose to the occasion and distinguished himself for his professionalism and precise, sharp thinking skills on displayed that day. He remained calm throughout the incident and was instrumental in placing the facility on a lock down status in a orderly and safe manner.

Sergeant Neebe's demeanor was not only reassuring to staff around him, but was an example of how to respond when faced with a crisis that has never been experienced.

Sergeant Neebe has been employed with the Alexandria Sheriff's Office since August of 1990 serving for more than 20 years. His career expands all aspects and sections of our Office and includes experience on all four Security Teams, service in Judicial Services, Training Section and in Transportation. Sergeant Neebe is commended for his fine work!

Patrolling on 9/11

On the tenth anniversary of the infamous 9/11, our explosive canine team, Deputy John O'Hara and Sherman was the Bomb Detection Unit on duty in the City. The pair diligently responded to all calls for service of this nature in the City. In addition to Deputy O'Hara, more than nine Deputies and a Sergeant also assisted in patrolling the streets and providing extra security for an art festival held that weekend. The team also visited several communities during National Night Out; conducted a sweep and provided security at the King Street Arts Festival; conducted a security sweep of City Hall prior to the 9/11 ceremony; conducted a demonstration for our Youth Academy participants; and conducted a search for contraband in the Detention Center.



Deputy O'Hara and K9- Sherman

An Annual Tribute to First Responders

Where else can the first responders of Alexandria go to get seafood, great music and a time to fellowship with other neighboring Public Safety peers...Clyde's Restaurant located at the Mark Center!

The Sheriff's Office was well represented with over (50) fifty staff members who showed their support at Clyde's 11th Annual Tribute to Law Enforcement. Sheriff Dana Lawhorne and Sergeant O'Dell, on behalf of the Sheriff's Association, presented a plaque to Clyde's General Manager Bart Farrell in appreciation for Clyde's annual show of appreciation.

Deputy Larry Richardson

Undersheriff Davis and Captain Milano

Sergeant O'Dell, Mr. Bart Farrell and Sheriff Dana Lawhorne



Milestones at the Sheriff's Office

Crisis Intervention Training Graduates

Crisis Intervention Training is designed to educate and prepare staff to recognize the signs and symptoms of mental illnesses and how to take the appropriate actions necessary when they come into contact with people who have mental health problems. Thirty-eight Sheriff's Office sworn and civilian staff have received this training. The training includes role playing, legal updates, and visiting facilities in the City of Alexandria where persons with mental illness may reside or reach out for resources. This training is very effective and receives great feedback from students after every session.



Milestones at the Sheriff's Office

The Northern Virginia Criminal Justice Academy Graduates

The Alexandria Sheriff's Office is proud to announce its most recent graduates of the Northern Virginia Criminal Justice Academy. Deputy Sheriff Robert Hill, Deputy David Barnickle and Deputy Terri Reed received their diplomas after successful graduating from the 124th session of the Training Academy on June 22, 2011, where they were certified in both Basic Deputy and Law Enforcement Skills. During the academy, Deputies experience a plethora of training and insight for their promising careers that lie ahead. Basic Deputy School consists of topics related to jail operations, court security and civil process. Basic Law Enforcement School consists of course work in Criminal Investigations, Legal, Patrol and Skill Modules. Some other major components that are performance based include First Aid, CPR, Defensive Tactics, Fire Arms Training and Driver Training.



Sheriff Dana Lawhorne with (left to right) Deputies David Barnickle, Terri Reed, and Robert Hill.

guished graduate of the Northern Virginia Criminal Justice Training Academy as a Deputy of the Alexandria Sheriff's Office. Deputy Hill was also honored for earning the highest academic record during the demanding six-month training. Deputy Hill says that he was determined to follow in his father's footsteps since childhood.

A Moment to Recognize and Reflect: There is always a time in a young man's life where he chooses a path; to build his own or follow family traditions. In this instance, Deputy Hill, followed his father's footsteps with a career in law enforcement. Twenty-two years after Alexandria Police Corporal Charles Hill was killed in the line of duty, his son Robert became a distin-



Deputy Hill and Mother, Virginia.

2011 Employee Awards



Deputy Marvin Pitts– Award for: Outstanding Performance– Line Staff

**Deputy George Burnham, Deputy Teneka King, Deputy Marvin Vaughan
Elevated to Deputy II**



**Deputy Vikas Ohri and Deputy Joseph Pankey
Received the Unit Spirit Award**

**Accreditation Manager, Debra Defreitas
Awarded for Outstanding Performance,
Civilian Supervisor**



2011 Employee Awards



**Chief Deputy Lennis George
Awarded for Best Idea**

**Sergeant
Melissa Josiah
Awarded for
Uniform Fit and
Physical Fitness**



**Captain Doug Schuler
Promoted from Lieutenant to Captain**



**Deputy Jeffrey Hunter
Elevated to Deputy Sheriff IV**



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The Alexandria Sheriff's office is responsible for the operation of the Detention Center, Courthouse, and Courtroom security, service of all court legal documents, execution of court orders, transportation of prisoners, execution of arrest warrants, and general public safety and law enforcement. All powers, responsibilities and duties of the Alexandria Sheriffs Office derives from common law, the Virginia Constitution, the Code of Virginia and Alexandria Charter.

www.alexandriava.gov/sheriff

