

Behind the Star

Alexandria Sheriff's Office Quarterly Newsletter
Third Quarter 2012



Youth Academy Offers Fun and Knowledge

This summer, 18 young people participated in the Sheriff's Office Youth Academy, an annual program coordinated by Community Relations Deputy Valarie Wright that educates students about the work of the Sheriff's Office. Students, ages 11 through 17, took part in demonstrations, hands-on activities, tours and discussions from Monday, August 6 through Thursday, August 9.

On the first day deputies demonstrated emergency vehicle equipment and operation, so students (above) could firsthand see how the radio, lights and sirens worked. Deputies also showed how inmates are restrained and transported and how mobile computers, often used inside the cruisers, allow them to easily access critical information.

That same day, students visited the William G. Truesdale Adult Detention Center (ADC) and observed the Sheriff's Emergency Response Team (SERT) which handles potentially dangerous situations involving inmates. SERT deputies demonstrated techniques to safely remove and restrain combative inmates and those who pose a serious threat to deputies or themselves.

The next day, they toured the ADC and ate lunch in the staff cafeteria. They also learned about firearms safety and use of force policies and then each participated in scenarios where each had to make split-second decisions about whether or not to use (more inside)

Kamp Kappa Visit

The Sheriff's Office welcomed 46 young men from Kamp Kappa on Tuesday, July 24, as part of the Street Law program led by U.S. District Judge Gerald Bruce Lee. Kamp Kappa, organized by local alumni of the Kappa Alpha Psi fraternity, provides positive outdoor and educational experiences for to males, ages 10 to 16. Sergeants Candra Callicott and Mike Neebe (below) led tours of the Detention Center and campers also met Deputy John O'Hara and his K-9 partner.





Message from the Sheriff

The Sheriff's Office has remained involved in important outreach efforts, like the annual National Night Out events that emphasize the importance of strong partnerships between the community and public safety agencies. The Office also had the opportunity to educate and assist residents at special events like First Thursday in Del Ray, the Drug Take Back Day and Inova Alexandria Hospital's Emergency Management and Safety Fair.

But a lot of what we do may be less visible to the public yet is extremely important. For example, the Office's accreditations and certifications must be maintained. Over the summer, the Commission on Accreditation of Law Enforcement Agencies did an on-site assessment and re-accredited our Office for another three years.

Then in late September the Virginia Department of Corrections conducted its annual inspection of the Detention Center. This unannounced inspection lasted two days and covered more than 30 points. I'm very proud — and I hope that you'll share in that pride — to report that the Detention Center was found to be in full compliance on every point.

Thank you for your continued support and confidence.

Sheriff's Office Turns out for National Night Out

The Sheriff's Office joined the Alexandria Police Department, Fire Department and other agencies in celebrating National Night Out on Tuesday, August 7. Sheriff Dana Lawhorne and more than 30 deputies and civilian staff attended community events in 26 neighborhoods across the City. Residents hosted block parties, cook-outs and other social activities to emphasize the importance of partnerships in the fight against crime.

Mayor William D. Euille, members of City Council and City Manager Rashad Young joined Sheriff Lawhorne, Police Chief Earl Cook, Fire Chief Adam Thiel, and staff from the Commonwealth's Attorney's Office, City Manager's Office, City Attorney's Office, Code Enforcement, Community and Human Services, Recreation, Court Service, Substance Abuse Prevention Coalition of Alexandria, and Virginia Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control at neighborhood events in Old Town, Del Ray and the West End.

Police officers and deputy sheriffs distributed crime prevention information, provided K-9 demonstrations and exhibited motorcycles and specialized equipment.



City leaders often credit the strong working relationship between community groups and criminal justice agencies in making Alexandria a safe place to live, work and visit, and National Night Out remains an important part of this public safety partnership.

National Night Out falls on Tuesday, August 6 in 2013 so mark your calendars and save the date!



Youth Academy Offers Fun and Knowledge

(continued from front) deadly force. The following day, Academy members went on a public safety walking tour and scavenger hunt in Old Town that included stops at the old city jail site, historic fire houses and current and former courthouse locations.

The students spent their final Youth Academy day at the Alexandria Courthouse where the Sheriff's Office is responsible for security. In the morning they saw a demonstration by Deputy John O'Hara and Sherman, his K-9 partner who is trained to detect explosives.

Then they toured the Courthouse, visiting public and staff areas as well as secure areas where prisoners are kept while awaiting court proceedings. With assistance from the Commonwealth's Attorney's Office, Public Defender's Office and Probation and Parole, Academy members saw a sentencing exercise which helped them understand the components of the judicial role in the criminal justice process.

The four-day Academy ended with a special graduation ceremony in a courtroom with parents and other family members in

attendance. Sheriff Dana Lawhorne presented each Academy graduate with a certificate and the students spoke about what they had learned.

Photos: (upper right) Deputy Michael Cole shows Academy members how his mobile computer is useful in his warrant service duties.

(center right) Deputy Isidro Battle, a member of SERT, explains how his gear protects him when dealing with combative inmates.

(below) Youth Academy members celebrated their graduation at the courthouse. Front (l-r): Jacob McVicker, Delilah Morritz, Diondre Charlton, Marcus Rodriguez, Khayri Lucien, Crystal Davis, Jailen Staten, Aba Morrison, Sheriff Dana Lawhorne, and Assistant Commonwealth's Attorney Bryan Porter. Back (l-r): Councilman Frank Fannon, Mieron Asfaha, Elijah Robinson, Jomar Bonilla, Peter Laboy, Kayla Pierce, Tamiya Johnson, Madison Ignacio, Bryce Roper, Lorenzo Lipscomb, and Ryan Thaxton.





Connect with Social Media

This summer the Sheriff's Office extended how it communicates with the community and its public safety partners by launching new social media initiatives. The Office is now using Facebook and Twitter to connect with residents, civic groups and others to share public outreach efforts, staff achievement and Detention Center news, and employment opportunities. On Facebook, users can find and "like" the Sheriff's Office page at www.facebook.com/alexandriavasheriff and through Twitter, users can find and "follow" the Office at www.twitter.com/alexvasheriff.

Deputies Deliver School Supplies

The Sheriff's Office distributed back-to-school supplies collected by the Community Partners for Children (CPC) to all Alexandria City Public Schools (ACPS) on Wednesday, August 29.

CPC organized the annual drive for supplies, like backpacks, notebooks, binders, paper, pencils and markers, for students in need and collected supplies throughout the summer.

The week before school reopened, CPC volunteers headed by Kendra Chambers met inside the gym at Charles Houston Recreation Center to organize and bundle the supplies for specific schools. Sheriff's Office staff then picked up the supplies and delivered them in teams to schools throughout the City so ACPS social workers could to distribute them to eligible students.



Remembering September 11

The Sheriff's Office participated in special events to commemorate the eleventh anniversary of the September 11 terrorist attacks. On Tuesday, September 11, Undersheriff Tony Davis joined Mayor William D. Euille, Police Chief Earl Cook, Fire Chief Adam Thiel and other City leaders at a ceremony at Market Square.

The combined public safety honor guard presented the colors and Deputy LaTonya Covington (right) joined City Manager Rashad Young and Police and Fire representatives in the Return to Quarters bell-ringing tribute to fallen heroes.

A few days earlier on Saturday, September 7, eleven members of the Sheriff's Office participated in the annual Arlington Police Fire & Sheriff 9/11 Memorial 5K. Proceeds from the 2012 race benefitted the Wounded Warrior Project and Segs4Vets charities. The Sheriff's Office was proudly represented by Rose Abilmona, Rose Barnes, Cindy Catlett, Tim Honig, Georgianna Howard, Dexter Mason, Hafsa Munir, Earlene Pierre, Deborah Vaughan, Wendy Webb, and Valarie Wright.



Inmates Earn GEDs, Special Certifications

On Thursday, July 19, the Sheriff's Office hosted a graduation ceremony to honor the educational accomplishments of 14 inmates at the William G. Truesdale Adult Detention Center. Sheriff Dana Lawhorne addressed the graduates and congratulated them on investing in their own futures.

Education Coordinator Krista Sofonia presented Alvin Bell, 54, Stephanie Schwab, 27, and Richard White, 21, with certificates of achievement for passing their General Educational Development examinations. They wore caps and gowns and were cheered by visiting family members invited to attend the ceremony. Four other inmates who were released before the ceremony also passed their GED exams. Ms. Sofonia acknowledged the work of GED volunteers, including Sarah Goshorn, a Marymount University graduate student who did a summer internship at the Detention Center.

Seven other inmates were recognized for earning their ServSafe® Food Protection Manager Certification, a locally and national recognized certification which will make them more competitive candidates for restaurant and food service employment opportunities. The eight-hour program, administered by ORS Interactive of Falls Church, covered food safety regulations and concepts, including time and temperature control, preventing cross-contamination, cleaning and sanitizing, safe food preparation, receiving and storing food, and methods of thawing, cooking, cooling and reheating food. This was the first time the Sheriff's Office offered this type of training to its inmates.

Officials from ORS joined Sheriff Lawhorne in congratulating Tamer Castle, 35, Eric Elder, 33, Eric Hawkins, 41, Marcel Washington, 24, Rashaud Westbrook, 20, and another inmate who did not want his identity publicized. The seventh ServSafe® graduate was released prior to the ceremony.



Above: Education Coordinator Krista Sofonia and Sheriff Dana Lawhorne congratulate Richard White, Stephanie Schwab and Alvin Bell for passing the General Educational Development examinations.



Above: (l-r) Mauricio Carvalho and Joseph Weeks of ORS Interactive present Marcel Washington, Rashaud Westbrook, Eric Elder, Tamer Castle, and Eric Hawkins with their ServSafe® Certifications. Some of the inmates were able to put their newfound knowledge to immediate use through work in the Detention Center's kitchen and cafeteria.

Alexandria Sheriff's Office:



Members of the Sheriff's Office, Police Department and Fire Department, including Chief Earl Cook and Sheriff Dana Lawhorne (above), enjoyed delicious food and live music when Clyde's at Mark Center hosted its annual Tribute to First Responders on Wednesday, September 19.



When Del Ray turns out for First Thursday, so does the Sheriff's Office! On the first Thursday of each month between May and September, Deputy Valarie Wright sets up an information table and offers fun freebies to kids of all ages. This summer, Deputy Andrea Diaz (above left) joined her in distributing helpful safety information to passers-by, and young ones were especially excited to meet members of the Office's new Motor Team, like tCaptain Clarke Stearns (above right).

In Touch With Our Community



Deputy Cassandra Branch (left) staffed the Sheriff's Office booth with Deputy Valarie Wright at Inova Alexandria Hospital's Second Annual Emergency Management and Safety Fair on Saturday, August 25. Those attending the fair learned ways to keep themselves and their families safe and prepared for emergencies. The deputies provided safety tips for seniors, Project LifeSaver information, activity books for kids, and free "Files of Life," an easy way to provide first responders with important details in case of an emergency.



In August, Community Relations Deputy Valarie Wright (above) spread the word about traffic safety by distributing posters and giveaways for AAA's annual "School's Open Drive Carefully" campaign. She visited libraries and recreation centers around the City, asking them to display the poster and share stickers, rulers, pencils and other back-to-school items with young people and their parents as a safety reminder.

Chief Deputy Retires



Chief Deputy Lenny George retired from the Sheriff's Office on Friday, August 31 after an extended career in Alexandria public service.

Chief George had previously served for 24 years at the Alexandria Police Department where he retired as a Deputy Chief. He then began teaching criminal justice at T.C. Williams High School with a new curriculum he developed.

But he returned to public safety work, joining the Sheriff's Office in 2007 where he headed the Administrative Services Bureau. He successfully oversaw several initiatives including development and implementation of the Youth Academy and the dedication and renaming of the Detention Center for fallen Deputy William G. Truesdale who was killed in 1981.

Current and former colleagues from the Sheriff's Office, Police Department and City Schools attended a potluck luncheon for Chief George in the Roll Call Room during his last week. Then on his last day, a combined motorcade of Sheriff's and Police motor officers escorted Chief George from the Public Safety Center as his colleagues waved and wished him well.

Congratulations and best wishes, Chief George!

Deputies Earn CIT Honors

Congratulations to Lieutenant John Kapetanis for being named Deputy of the Year by the Alexandria Crisis Intervention Team (CIT). On Thursday, September 6, CIT held an awards program and cookout at Alexandria Police headquarters where Sheriff Dana Lawhorne presented Lieutenant Kapetanis with a plaque (below) in recognition of his outstanding CIT service and outreach.



Lieutenant Kapetanis, a 32-year-veteran of the Sheriff's Office, is the Operations Commander of the Judicial Services Division based at the Alexandria Courthouse. He was recognized for his ability to notice when someone is exhibiting signs of stress and/or mental illness and for his efforts to engage them in ways that are supportive and non-confrontational but firm and clear. He also follows through to ensure that other CIT agencies are able to assist and provide necessary services. This is especially critical because of his contact with the public at the Courthouse. Lieutenant Kapetanis has been a CIT member since June 2010, after graduating from Alexandria's first CIT academy.

Then on Friday, September 21, Deputies Angel French, Sandra Ubiera and Dawn Jefferies (right) were the newest deputies to



become CIT members when they graduated from a week-long training academy with ten colleagues from the Police Department, Fire Department, and Probation and Parole.

Through their 40 hours of training, CIT members learn skills such as suicide intervention and verbal de-escalation techniques. They also learn about the role of the family in caring for a person with mental illness, and they receive legal training in mental health and substance abuse issues. CIT members also participate in role playing exercises based on real-life scenarios and spend a day visiting mental health and substance abuse inpatient and outpatient treatment facilities where they have the opportunity to engage in one-on-one dialogue with mental health consumers.

Since the program began in 2010, more than 50 deputies have completed CIT training and are able to use their specialized skills in the Detention Center, Courthouse and community.



Office Joins in Drug Take Back

The Sheriff's Office joined the Alexandria Police Department and the Substance Abuse Prevention Coalition of Alexandria (SAPCA) by participating in National Prescription Drug Take Back Day on Saturday, September 29. From 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., local law enforcement officers, with support from the DEA, collected potentially dangerous unwanted prescription drugs.

Community Relations Deputy Valarie Wright, a member of the SAPCA board, staffed the drop-off site outside the Del

Ray Pharmacy (below) while police staffed another at their headquarters. Approximately 165 pounds of medication were turned in between both locations for safe disposal.



ASA Awards Scholarships

The Alexandria Sheriff's Association (ASA) awarded scholarships to children of some of its members during a ceremony on Wednesday, August 1. Deputy Andrea Diaz, Vice President of the ASA, presented the Veronica Mitchell Scholarships to four college students selected for essays they wrote about the value and influence of the work their parents do for the Sheriff's Office and about their own service to the community.

The 2012 recipients are Joshua Barnes, son of Deputy LaTonya Covington, who is in his

sophomore year at Chowan University; Amber Jones, daughter of Deputy Nora Jones, who is in her senior year at Virginia Commonwealth University; Alexis Pitts, daughter of Deputy Marvin Pitts, who is in her sophomore year at the Savannah College of Art and Design; and Taylor Wise, daughter of Records Director Rony Wise, who is in her sophomore year at Radford University.

The scholarships, endowed by members' dues, are named for Chief Deputy Veronica Mitchell who retired from the Sheriff's Office in 2009 following 30 years of service.



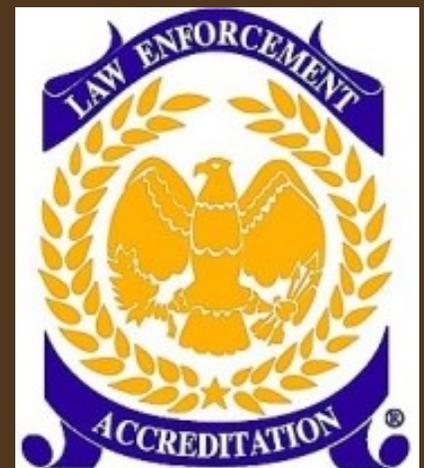
CALEA Reaccredits Office

Over the summer, the Sheriff's Office underwent re-accreditation from the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies, Inc. (CALEA). Between Sunday, August 19 and Wednesday, August 22, a team of CALEA assessors conducted its on-site assessment and visited the Alexandria Courthouse, Adult Detention Center and administrative offices.

The team examined aspects of the Office's policy and procedures, management, operations, and support services related to law enforcement. Specifically, the CALEA assessors evaluated the Office on its compliance with more than 300 standards related to law enforcement. Members of the community also shared their comments about the Office with the assessors during a public meeting and through a call in opportunity.

The CALEA team found the Office to be "a highly professional law enforcement agency that provides an impressive level of law enforcement services to the citizens of Alexandria" and "in compliance with all applicable standards, often electing to exceed the standards."

CALEA first accredited the Sheriff's Office in July 1990 and it has been reaccredited every term since then.



Partnering with Others

The Sheriff's Office continued to strengthen its partnerships with other agencies to enhance public safety in the City and around the region.

On Wednesday, July 4, a team of 15 deputies assisted the U.S. Park Police with security and traffic control during the nation's annual Independence Day celebration in Washington, D.C. Deputies spent the day and evening near the National Mall along 14th and 15th streets where they directed traffic, assisted visitors and checked bags for those entering the secured area to watch fireworks (below).

Later that month, the Sheriff's Office joined the Virginia State Police (VSP) in a sex offender verification effort. VSP are required to verify addresses of registered sex offenders on a regular basis and this includes visiting the addresses that sex offenders have provided to confirm that they are current and accurate. On Tuesday, July 31, deputies under the direction of Trooper J.M. Huntley attempted to verify the address of 12 sex offenders with addresses in the City of Alexandria and were able to confirm the addresses of seven.

Then in the fall, Deputy Mark Jessup and Deputy Myrna Juarez (above) were among the 180 area law enforcement officials who attended a conference on gangs sponsored by the Metropolitan Washington Council of



Governments. From Tuesday, September 25 through Friday, September 28, the deputies and other participants heard from experts who discussed "Gang Trends in the National Capital Region," "Social Media & Gangs" and other critical gang prevention and suppression topics. Deputy Jessup, the Sheriff's Office Gang Intelligence Unit Coordinator, helped organize the conference and served on a panel, and Deputy Juarez volunteered her own time to assist with registration.

These types of operations and opportunities benefit the Sheriff's Office, other law enforcement agencies and the general public by promoting cooperation and cost-effective partnerships.

Deputy Discusses Bullying

Soon after the school year began, Community Relations Deputy Valarie Wright spoke with 6th, 7th and 8th graders at Jefferson-Houston School about the dangers of bullying. Deputy Wright was invited by the school to an assembly on Monday, September 24, where she talked to students about the importance of reporting bullying to teachers and parents. She also brought an anti-bullying pledge that the school's social worker and counselor distributed to students and encouraged them to sign.



CREDITS

Photography by Sheriff's Office staff (unless otherwise noted)
Newsletter by Administrative Services Bureau staff

Dana Lawhorne, Sheriff
Alexandria Sheriff's Office
2003 Mill Road
Alexandria, Virginia 22314
www.alexandriava.gov/sheriff



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