

# Polk County Sheriff's Office

## 2003 Annual Report





## from the Sheriff

As I look back over the year 2003, I can't help but feel extremely proud of this agency and its members. Through hard work, perseverance, and determination, our members have created one of the most professional, progressive, and well-respected law enforcement agencies in the nation. Please take a moment to read through these pages highlighting our many successes and accomplishments.

Perhaps one of the most evident signs of our success has been the significant drop in the crime rate. Crime has dropped nearly 40% since 1997. This significant decrease in crime can be attributed in large part to the success of the PROCAP (Proactive Community Attack on Problems) program, which began in January of 1998. The crime rate — that is, crimes per 1,000 residents — for 2003 was 3.6%. The crime rate has not been that low since 1972, when it was 3.35%.

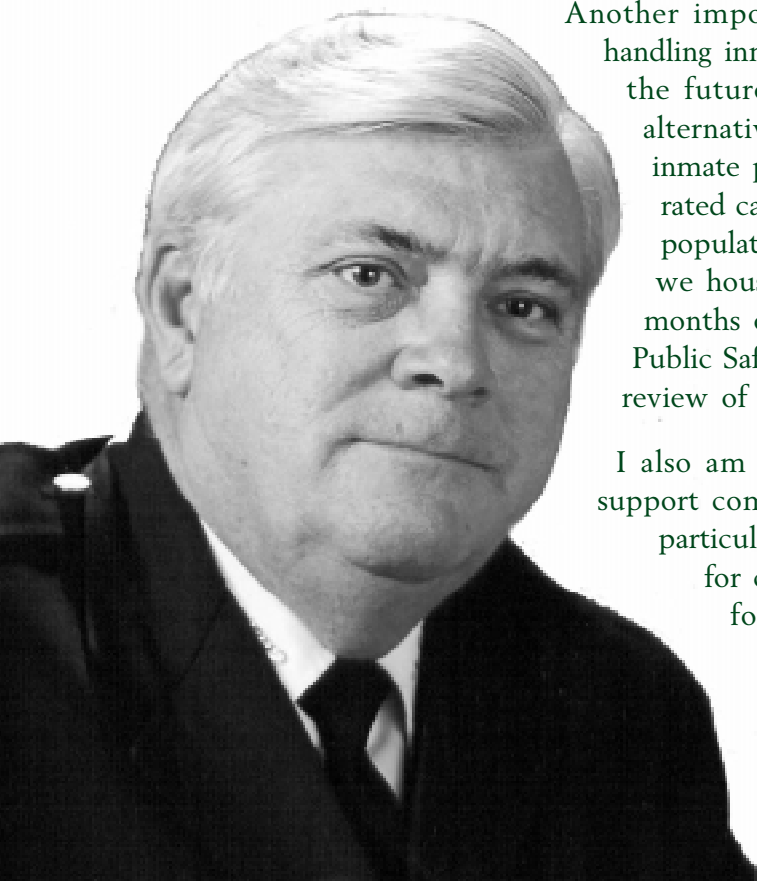
Another important development in 2003 was the challenge of handling inmate overcrowding at our jail facilities. It is vital for the future of the county that jail expansion and increased alternative incarceration programs occur. The average daily inmate population in 2003 was 2,425, which is 34% over the rated capacity of 1,808. And this dramatic growth in inmate population shows no sign of slowing down: at a high point, we housed an average of 2,689 inmates during the last two months of 2003. After extensive research and a vote by the Public Safety Coordinating Council to support an architectural review of an expansion, we moved forward with the project.

I also am inspired by this agency's ability to encourage and support community involvement and strong partnerships. I am particularly proud of our members' outpouring of compassion for citizens in need. Our members raised over \$106,000 for various charitable causes in 2003, making a true difference in the lives of those we serve.

As we embrace a new year, I trust our past successes will serve as a springboard to propel this agency to an even brighter and promising future

### About Sheriff Crow

*Sheriff Lawrence W. Crow, Jr. was born in Glen Dale, West Virginia. He received his Associate Degree in Police Science in 1973 from Polk Community College, and his Bachelor of Science Degree from Rollins College in 1975. Sheriff Crow's career began in 1962 with the Lakeland Police Department, starting as a Police Cadet and ending as Police Chief from 1980-1987. He was appointed Sheriff of Polk County by the governor in 1987, elected Sheriff in 1988, and re-elected in 1992, 1996 and 2000. Sheriff Crow will be retiring at the end of his term, January, 2005.*



# Office of the Sheriff

Sheriff Lawrence W. Crow, Jr.

## Office of the Undersheriff

### Office of Public Affairs

Public Information Office

Administrative Investigations

General Counsel

### Dept. of Law Enforcement

East Region

West Region

Criminal Investigations

Special Operations

### Dept. of Administration

Fiscal Services

Human Resources

Staff Services

Technical Support

Planning, Research

Internal Auditor

### Dept. of Detention

Security

Support

## what's inside

## 2003 Annual Report

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# 2003 Annual Report

The Polk County Sheriff's Office is a 6-star accredited, full service law enforcement agency serving Polk County, Florida. The Sheriff is an independent constitutional officer and by function is statutorily charged with the responsibility of providing all primary law enforcement services within the unincorporated areas of the county. PCSO also provides related law enforcement services to the entire county, including: civil and criminal process, assistance to municipal agencies, crime prevention and education programs, victim assistance services, and school crossing guards for the Polk County School system. The Sheriff also is responsible for the administration and day-to-day operation of the county jail system and boot camp facilities.

## about pcso

## new district lines drawn

New Sheriff's Office district map lines went into effect during January 2003. The boundary map lines were redrawn and new names established to better identify each area and to achieve a more balanced level of patrol calls for each district. The county was divided into quadrants or districts, with each area receiving approximately 25% of all calls for service from the community. Each district features a substation command center from which patrol deputies and detectives work.

### Northwest

substation is located at 4500 U.S Highway 98 in North Lakeland, and can be reached by calling 863-815-6515.

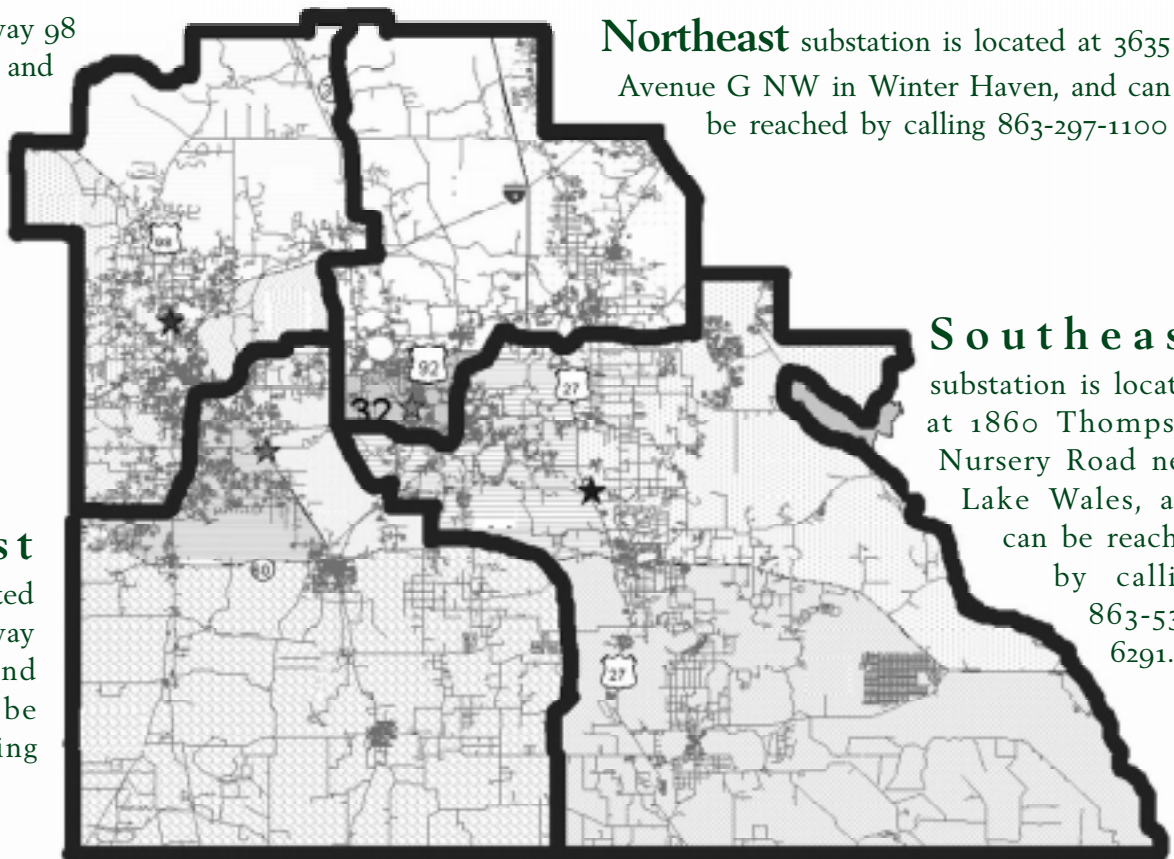
**Northeast** substation is located at 3635 Avenue G NW in Winter Haven, and can be reached by calling 863-297-1100

### Southeast

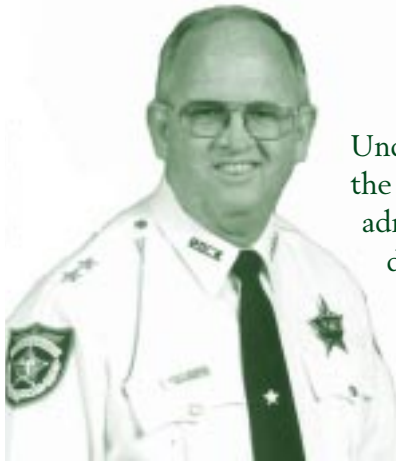
substation is located at 1860 Thompson Nursery Road near Lake Wales, and can be reached by calling 863-534-6291.

### Southwest

substation is located at 4120 U.S. Highway 98 near Highland City, and can be reached by calling 863-499-2400.



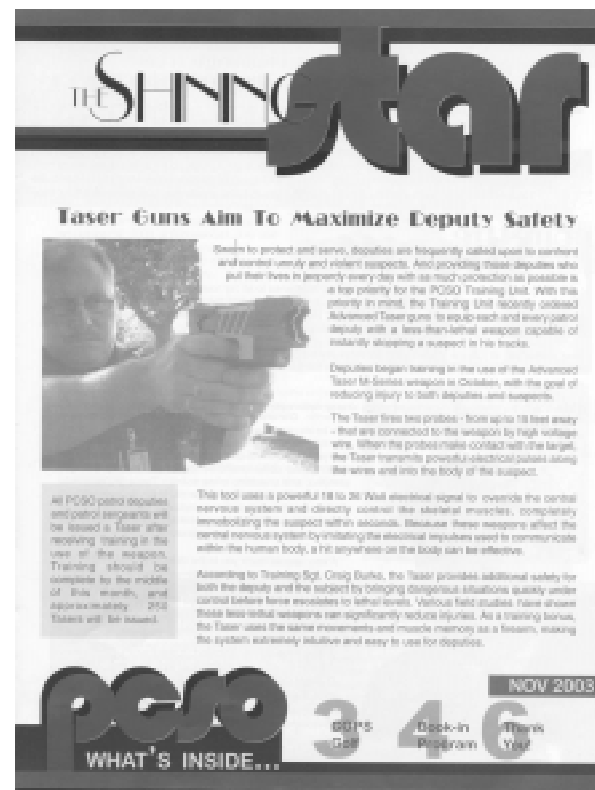
# Office of the Undersheriff



Undersheriff Paul F. Alley - second in command at the Sheriff's Office - assumes the duties and responsibilities of the Executive Officer, handling the day-to-day administration and operation of the Polk County Sheriff's Office. All three agency departments - law enforcement, detention, and administration - fall directly under his command, as do Public Affairs, General Counsel, and Administrative Investigations. He is a graduate of the FBI National Academy, the Law Enforcement Executive Development Academy, and has completed 3 years of study at Florida Southern College. After serving with the Lakeland Police Department for 21 years, he began his PCSO career in 1987.

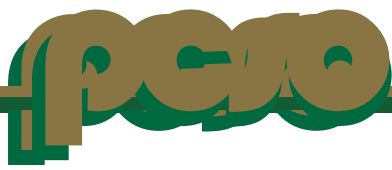
## spreading the word

A top priority in 2003 was to spread the word about the many exciting accomplishments and successes happening at the Polk Sheriff's Office. To help reach this goal, The Shining Star, an 8-page newsletter, was distributed each and every month to all agency members. To help keep the community informed, monthly issues of the Shining Star also are placed on the PCSO website [www.polksheriff.org](http://www.polksheriff.org) for convenient viewing. This professional publication has been a great success, providing agency members and the community with important information and serving to highlight the many positive and exciting accomplishments and activities of the PCSO. The Shining Star is produced by the Public Information Office, which experienced a challenging period of growth and success during 2003. Under the supervision of Scott Wilder, Director of Public Affairs, the two PCSO PIOs serve as a liaison between the Sheriff's Office, the media, and the public, working together to forge a strong relationship with media representatives and the citizens of Polk County. In another effort to help keep the media and the public informed, the PIOs continually update the cyber "news room" on the PCSO website with the latest breaking news and photos.



## high marks for PCSO

Once every quarter of 2003, the Administrative Investigations Section randomly contacted citizens who had called the Sheriff's Office for help. These contacts are an important part of ongoing efforts to provide the best customer service possible to the public. The citizen contact surveys conducted during 2003 marked the highest ratings ever since these surveys began in the mid-90s. Over 99% of all citizens contacted during the surveys were satisfied with the service they received. Citizens reported overwhelmingly positive experiences and high satisfaction during their encounters with PCSO members. The Administrative Investigations Section also works with citizens who may have complaints or allegations of misconduct by agency members, helping to ensure that the citizens of the community are being well-served and protected.

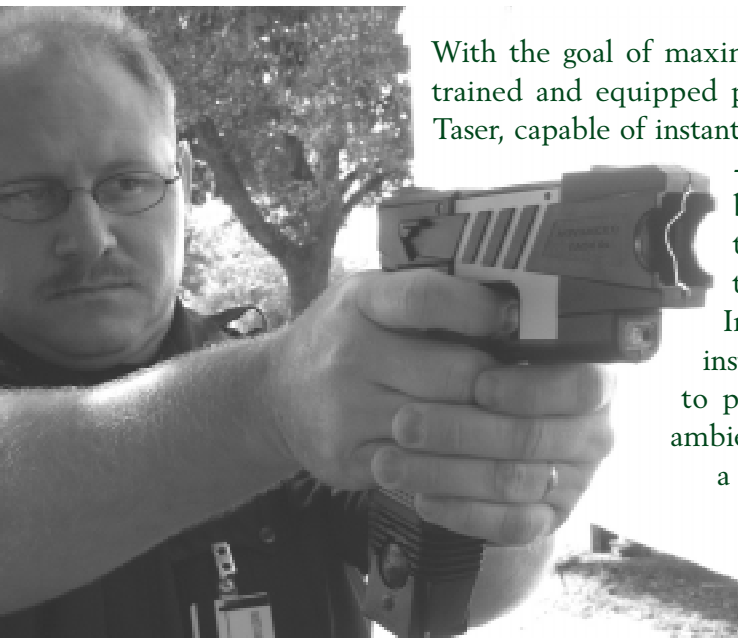


# Department of Administration

Colonel Grady Judd commands the Department of Administration, which supports law enforcement and detention through planning, fiscal, human resources, research, training, communications, maintenance, and other support functions. The Department of Administration includes four divisions: Fiscal Services, Human Resources, Staff Services, and Technical Support. Colonel Judd holds a Masters Degree in Criminal Justice, Bachelor of Science Degree in Criminal Justice, and an Associate of Science Degree in Police Science. Colonel Judd joined PCSO in 1972, and is a graduate of the FBI National Academy. He graduated from the FBI Executive Development Seminar in July of 2003, and has been recognized by Polk Community College with a Distinguished Alumni Award.



## training a top priority



With the goal of maximizing deputy safety and reducing injury, the Sheriff's Office trained and equipped patrol deputies in 2003 with a less-than-lethal weapon, the Taser, capable of instantly stopping a suspect in his tracks. The Taser fires two probes - from up to 15 feet away - that are connected to the weapon by high voltage wire. When the probes make contact with the target, the Taser transmits powerful electrical pulses into the body of the suspect, safely bringing him/her under control. In other training news, a state of the art lighting system was installed on the firearms range, offering deputies the opportunity to practice in diverse shooting conditions from bright light to ambient street light settings. Also developed was a curriculum for a web-based training initiative that will cover FDLE mandatory recertification requirements and will be available to deputies by remote access via computer at the various districts county-wide.

## proven accountability

During 2003, the Professional Standards Unit prepared and led the agency through the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies (CALEA) and the Florida Corrections Accreditation Commission (FCAC) on-site assessments. CALEA reaccreditation was granted in November of 2003, and FCAC reaccreditation was granted in October of 2003. Both processes were virtually seamless, and the outcome was a reaccredited status for the Polk County Sheriff's Office until 2006. Continued accreditation provides accountability to the public and demonstrates our commitment to excellence.

## focus: raising the bar

The year 2003 was a period of "raising the bar" within the agency to promote member growth and satisfaction, resulting in the best possible customer service to the community. The Human Resources Division led the way with a reorganization designed to focus on training and member development. Overall employee satisfaction is evident with the agency experiencing the lowest job vacancy rate in all areas since 1996, with a total turnover rate of only 6.6%. Not only is the Sheriff's Office keeping the brightest and the best, but is proactively recruiting top candidates from across the state to join our highly successful team.

## efficient services

During 2003, the Fiscal Services Division successfully met the agency's highest fiscal priority: to continue law enforcement services to the community at current exceptional levels without adding any new county-funded positions. The agency remained committed to "doing more with less," successfully increasing productivity despite limited funding. **For the fourth year in a row, the Sheriff's Office prepared a budget containing no new county-funded full-time positions.** The only operating increases were limited to wireless technology airtime, formerly subsidized by grant funding, and inmate medical premiums. The capital budget decreased slightly.

PCSO is proud to provide cost-effective law enforcement services, and is rated among the ten largest policing jurisdictions in the state. We are committed to doing more with less - increasing our productivity despite limited funding. Based on figures collected for 2003, the Polk County Sheriff's Office provides law enforcement services at \$178 per capita - which is 23% below the average cost (\$232) of the other agencies on the "top ten" list. Overall, the Sheriff's Office successfully oversaw a \$90.2 million FY 02-03 budget and an \$8.8 million Special Revenue Fund budget. The following chart shows the current 03-04 budget numbers.

FY 03-04 budget total: \$94,456,429



The chart below breaks down the budget numbers for FY 02-03 and FY 03-04:

	FY 02/03	FY 03/04		
Law Enforcement	55,849,579	58,767,326	+2,917,747	+5.22%
Detention	31,387,442	32,630,169	+1,242,727	+3.96%
Judicial	2,946,445	3,058,934	+112,489	+3.82%

## grants

In keeping with the agency's commitment to draw as much of the taxpayer's money back home for use in Polk County, the Grants Unit managed \$8.8 million in grants and special revenues in 2003. Two new grants were established: one will fund a project to reduce gun violence, and the other will provide substance abuse treatment for female inmates.

## cost savings

During 2003, \$218,701 was collected from inmates for medical care, hygiene items, and per diem charges. These collections directly offset the costs the taxpayer would otherwise have to pay. Also, Fiscal Services worked with the Social Security Administration to identify inmates receiving deposits for which they were not eligible. As a result, the Sheriff's Office was awarded \$91,000. Donations of commodities and equipment totaling \$82,735 and an inmate farm harvest valued at \$19,170 also reduced costs by over \$100,000. Additionally, PCSO saved \$215,980 through enhanced procurement processes, such as a qualified products list, an increase in formal competitive bids, use of total buying power and negotiations. At the end of fiscal year 02-03, an unspent total balance of \$1.8 million was returned to the county.

## inmate labor

Inmates were put to work at the Sheriff's Office and in the community to save taxpayers over \$3.7 million (at minimum wage).

# building partnerships



Reaching out into the community to form partnerships and help build safer and better neighborhoods is the top goal of the PCSO Crime Prevention, Child Safety and Victim Services Section. During 2003, the Crime Prevention Unit initiated several new programs, including the Citizen's Assisted Patrol (CAP) program, and a partnership with the Attorney General's Office to provide services for seniors through the Senior Sleuth's Volunteers' program.

Additionally, equipment was acquired to provide a photo and fingerprint identification card for children at no cost



to the parents. The unit also welcomed a new member - "PC" a remote controlled miniature patrol car - that interacts with children. Specialists presented nearly 500 presentations to the community, participated in 25 parades, conducted 28 Sheriff's leadership tours, and delivered over 150 ATS messages and 37 cell phones to seniors for use in a possible emergency. In another service to the community, victim advocates worked with victims of crimes in 2003 by making 362 home visits and 767 telephone contacts, and completing numerous other helpful tasks for victims.

## the cutting edge

### innovative advances

The PCSO Central Services Bureau implemented several new programs in 2003. One such program, which also serves to benefit at-risk youth within the state, is the donation of property and evidence items that are ready for disposal to the Sheriff's Youth Ranches. This procedure also eliminated the local auction process, which required numerous hours of preparation by agency members, therefore resulting in a significant savings in personnel cost to the agency. In another innovative program, the Fleet Section purchased and refurbished 33 GM certified used unmarked vehicles, as opposed to new, at a cost savings of \$129,000. The fleet section also implemented a mechanic apprentice program through a local vo-tech center.

The PCSO Technical Support Division stayed on the cutting edge of technological advances during 2003, making great strides to update and improve information services and equipment. New additions were added to the polksheriff.org website, such as a judicial process search where viewers can query eviction/repossession status by first and last name; a new monthly Crime Prevention Newsletter; and under the "Customer Service" heading is a new Home Security Survey. The polksheriff.org website received 30,351,995 hits during 2003. In other technical support news, the Telecommunications Section (dispatch center) received a total of 470,411 calls from citizens. Of those, 188,679 were 9-1-1 calls for emergency help. The Sheriff's Office responded to a total 213,303 calls for service in 2003.

# giving to the Community

Polk County Sheriff's Office members demonstrated their commitment to philanthropic giving in 2003, voluntarily raising over \$106,000 for various worthy charities and organizations. During numerous fundraisers held in 2003, PCSO members pulled out all the stops to make sure that heart research and education advanced, that the search for a cancer cure continued, and that less fortunate families had access to the programs and services they needed. They funded education scholarships, and made the holidays memorable for many kids and elderly in need. Enthusiasm and creativity hit a high mark during the American Heart Association's Heart Walk fund drive. Members raised more than \$9,000 over a 3-month period for the Heart Walk. Each and every year, PCSO members show their continued commitment to the community by supporting the United Way's annual fund drive, and 2003 was no exception. Members renewed their personal support through paycheck deductions, and team members competed in Campaign Kick-Off games, raising more than \$28,200 for the cause. On a more personal level, agency members raised over \$26,000 through the COPS Golf Tournament in order to make the holidays special for local needy children, families and elderly. And the girls at the Youth Villa near Bartow were treated to a special Christmas party and gift certificates because of members' compassion and commitment. Additionally, members raised funds for the American Cancer Society: deputies ate mountains of donuts and members held bake sales and barbecue lunches. All this netted the Cancer Society almost \$43,000 in funds to continue their important cause.



## chaplain program

Seven volunteer chaplains from around Polk County were sworn in to form the first-ever Chaplaincy Program for the Polk County Sheriff's Office in 2003. These chaplains hail from all over Polk County, and will serve agency members and the community on an as-needed and on-call basis, for counseling needs, spiritual needs, and overall support. There are agencies all over the U.S. who have similar programs, and it has long been a dream of Sheriff Crow's to provide this valuable service to agency members. The chaplains will fall under the direction of retired Major Marvin Pittman, the agency's contracted chaplain, and they will share on-call duties of responding to major or stressful crime scenes. They have all been administered a special oath of office by the Sheriff.

## numbers to know...

**PCSO main: 533-0444**  
**PCSO toll-free: 1-800-226-0344**  
**crime stoppers tip line: 1-800-226-TIPS**  
**crime prevention unit: 534-6677**  
**drug hotline: 533-3784**  
**graffiti eradication program: 298-7574**  
**gang suppression unit: 298-7574**  
**adult protective services: 1-800-342-9152**  
**child abuse hotline: 1-800-96-ABUSE**  
**domestic violence program: 413-2700**  
**injunction for protection info: 534-4000**  
**support group battered women: 413-2700**  
**senior crime hot line: 1-800-535-0060**  
**sexual abuse, treatment center: 519-3744**  
**suicide, crisis center: 519-3744**

# Department of Detention



Colonel Willie E. Hall serves as the commander of the Department of Detention. The Department of Detention includes administration of the Sheriff's Office detention facilities, including the main jail booking center, the new South County Jail in Frostproof, Central County Jail in Bartow, Juvenile Boot Camp, and the bailiffs. Detention is tasked with the housing, custody and care of all persons arrested in Polk. Colonel Hall, a certified jail manager, AJA, is a 22-year veteran of the PCSO, and graduated from St. Leo University with a BA in Criminology. Most recently, Colonel Hall graduated from the Florida Criminal Justice Institute Chief Executive Seminar in April 2003.

## increasing security



A new fingerprint identification system was installed in the PCSO central booking center in 2003 that will prevent inmates from trying to escape by booking out using another inmate's name. The program works like this: during book-in, an inmate's fingerprints are scanned into the system using ultrasound technology, and the inmate's specific identification information is entered into the system. When it's time to be booked out, the inmate's fingerprints are scanned into the system once again. The program then confirms if the correct inmate is being released via fingerprint match. If an inmate were to try to escape under a false name, the new program would instantly notify booking personnel that the fingerprints do not match. In other security improvements, additional security window bars were installed at South County Jail.

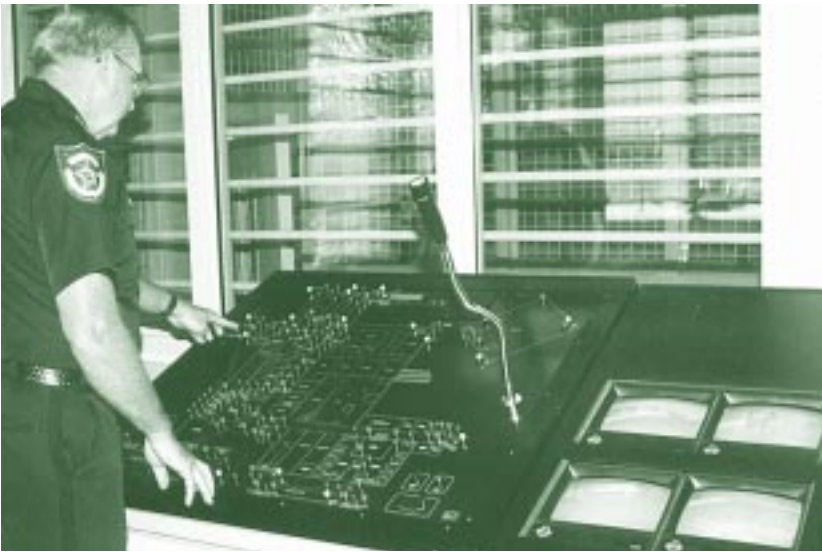
## jail growth

### proven accountability

During 2003, a team of assessors from the Florida Corrections Accreditation Commission (FCAC) conducted an on-site audit of the Department of Detention during a three-day inspection. Detention passed with flying colors, achieving 100% compliance and a 3-year accreditation status. The FCAC assessment examines all aspects of detention, including booking, classification, housing, sanitation, food service, personnel issues, fiscal activities, security, training, and medical. Detention also received accreditation from the National Commission on Correctional Health Care in 2003. The PCSO Juvenile Boot Camp also was awarded "Deemed Status" in 2003 during an annual review by the Dept. of Juvenile Justice Bureau of Quality Assurance.

The Department of Detention began exploring the possibility of a major expansion at the South County Jail in Frostproof during 2003. The expansion would address the ongoing challenge of prolonged inmate overcrowding in the two PCSO jail facilities. In November 2003, the Public Safety Coordinating Council voted to support an architectural review regarding a possible South County Jail expansion and to move forward with the project. A current proposal requests an expansion that would house up to 1,024 additional inmates. It is vital for the future of the county that jail expansion and increased alternative incarceration programs occur. The average daily inmate population in 2003 was 2,425, which is 34% over the rated capacity of 1,808. The PCSO booking center booked in 28,175 inmates in 2003. Visitation also increased, with 58,999 inmates receiving non-contact visitation over the course of the year.

# advanced facilities



**South County Jail** in Frostproof is the largest, newest, state-of-the-art facility in the PCSO detention system. In a move to improve and increase the monitoring of inmates at SCJ, a new closed circuit TV video system went online in 2003. The video camera system features 180 cameras located throughout SCJ, both inside and out, that offer 24-hour digital recording of the facility. The cameras feature zoom capabilities that allow detention deputies to closely monitor and record inmate activity. A video system also was installed at the **Central Booking Center** in Bartow, and one courtroom and one holding cell in the court house basement were wired with video technology so a trial could be conducted without the defendant being present in the actual courtroom. **Central County Jail** in Bartow was constructed in the mid-1980s and is designed to house 800 inmates. CCJ features a courtroom with video capabilities for first appearance and other hearings. During 2003, visitation hours were expanded to seven days a week at the Central County Jail in Bartow to help handle increased visitation needs.



## new programs

In 2003, a grant for a JASA (Jail Alternatives to Substance Abuse) Program was approved and started up at CCJ for female inmates. JASA has proven to be a successful drug treatment program. In another grant, a full-time teacher dedicated to helping inmates prepare to take the GED was hired thanks to a Polk County School Board Adult Education grant.

## inmate labor

Inmates who attain trustee status are allowed to work in the jail facilities. Inmates plant, maintain, and harvest crops at the jail farm to supplement jail food and cut costs. During 2003, inmates harvested 16,017 pounds of produce, and spent a total of 20,768 hours of labor on the farm. Inmates also performed a variety of tasks throughout the jail facilities, for a total savings of \$2,888,246 in 2003. In another program - the Weekend Work Release Program - participants perform tasks such as picking up trash on roadways, mowing, laying sod, tearing down abandoned buildings, and cleaning out lake systems. In 2003, weekend program participants worked 99,837 hours. They collected a total of 54,066 bags of trash and 8,647 tires, and they cleaned up 3,659 miles of roadway.

## detention academy

In a joint project between PCSO and Polk Community College, PCSO Detention Sgt. Gary Casini was named in 2003 to serve as the Detention Academy Coordinator for the college. In his new role, Sgt. Casini was put in charge of coordinating the PCC detention certification program, which PCSO detention recruits attend in order to receive certification.

## DNA database

Since September 2003, PCSO Bailiffs have been collecting DNA samples from all suspects convicted of certain felony crimes. These DNA samples are sent to the FDLE where the information is gathered in a database.



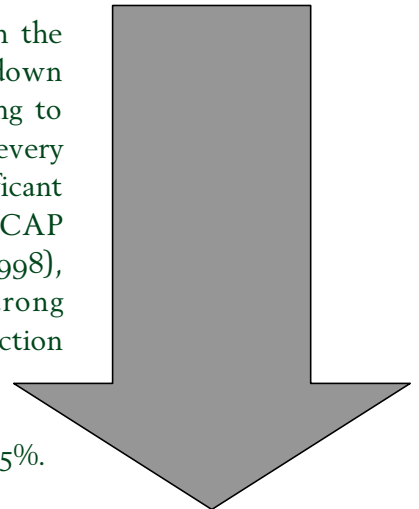
# Department of Law Enforcement

Colonel Gary Hester serves as the commander of the Department of Law Enforcement. The Department of Law Enforcement includes patrol deputies, detectives, and support operational unit personnel. Colonel Hester is a 24-year veteran of the PCSO. He has an Associate of Arts degree from St. Leo University; a Bachelor of Arts degree in Criminology, Summa Cum Laude, from St. Leo University; Master of Science degree in Criminal Justice from the University of Alabama; and is a graduate of the Southern Police Institute, 97th Administrative Officers Course. During 2003, his Master's Thesis on law enforcement officers and use of force was published in a national journal, The Journal of Criminal Justice.



## drop in crime

For the fourth year in a row, crime in unincorporated Polk County (over which the PCSO has jurisdiction) has dropped dramatically. In 2003, overall crime went down 4%, compared to the same time period in 2002. Even more astounding, according to Uniform Crime Report (UCR) statistics, PCSO has seen a decrease in crime in every category compared to 1997, for an overall decrease of an incredible 40%. This significant decrease in crime can be attributed in large part to the success of the PROCAP (Proactive Community Attack on Problems) program (which began in January of 1998), encouraging and supporting community involvement, and continuing a strong partnership with the Board of County Commissioners. Thanks to this drastic reduction in crime, people are safer today than they have been in the last 31 years in unincorporated Polk County. The crime rate (crimes per 1,000 residents) for 2003 was 3.6%. The crime rate has not been that low since 1972, when it was 3.35%.



## solving crimes

Three PCSO Crime Scene Technicians received International Certification from the International Association for Identification and Forensic Certification Program in 2003. The Crime Scene Technicians successfully completed the certification process, which included an extensive review of volumes of study material and wrapped up with a 200-question exam. The study focused on both forensic and criminal investigation issues.

The PCSO Bureau of Criminal Investigations is tasked with the responsibility of investigating major crimes, and is divided into a number of specialized units which focus on certain types of crimes, such as homicides, robberies, and sex crimes. The PCSO Homicide Unit continues to be among the best in the country. Among the Homicide Unit's many other noted accomplishments is the homicide clearance rate (number of cases solved). From 1999 through 2003, there have been 91 homicides and only 5 are currently unsolved. This gives the Homicide Unit a clearance rate of 94.5% during this period., which is far more successful than that in other major cities, such as Boston with 68%, New York with 77%, and Dallas with 65%. In one of the most high profile cases of 2003, the Homicide Unit successfully solved a double homicide in which victims Jeremy Jarvis and Allison Sousa were violently stabbed to death in a business complex in the Winter Haven area. On a positive note, the family of Allison Sousa honored her memory with a donation to purchase a new dog - named "Bolt" - for the PCSO K-9 unit. All BCI investigative units had a successful year, with detectives clearing cases and making numerous arrests.

## focusing resources

The Bureau of Special Investigations is responsible for investigating, apprehending and successfully prosecuting suspects involved in the use, delivery, and manufacturing of dangerous drugs. BSI undercover detectives focus on vice crimes, auto theft, street gangs, and internet crimes. Detectives work with local, state, and federal agencies through task forces and other cooperative efforts to successfully reduce the level of crime in the community. They also work closely with Polk County Crime Stoppers to encourage the community to call in tips about drug activity and crimes in their areas by offering cash rewards. During 2003, detectives seized 13 meth labs, 94 pounds of meth, 34 pounds of cocaine, and a mix of numerous other drugs. They made 1,256 drug arrests.

## sharing info to combat crime

Also in 2003, Intelligence Unit detectives investigated several cases where suspects exhibited extremely bizarre and violent behavior during their contacts with deputies. The Narcotics Intelligence Coordinator researched the issue and determined that the symptoms were consistent with cocaine-induced psychosis. This information was published in the Florida Criminal Activity Bulletin, distributed by the Florida Department of Law Enforcement to help spread the word to other agencies that may encounter similar cases. Also during 2003, the Florida Department of Law Enforcement notified PCSO detectives that they had performed an analysis on unknown pills seized by Polk County Sheriff's Office detectives and determined that the pills contained the illegal drug Fentanyl. This was the first seizure of the pill form of Fentanyl in Florida. The Intelligence Unit published intelligence bulletins regarding this new trend, and these bulletins were published to law enforcement officers nationwide, as well as in Canada.

## homeland security

Intelligence Unit detectives also worked closely in 2003 with local, state, and federal authorities to investigate threats to homeland security. They completed comprehensive vulnerability assessments on several key locations within Polk County that might be attractive targets for terrorist attacks. Thanks to these efforts to increase security, citizens can be assured that law enforcement and other emergency operations agencies stand ready and well-prepared to respond to any future terrorist threats.



## “computer cop”

The Computer Crimes Unit worked with the Crime Prevention Unit to start a new program in 2003 called “Computer Cop.” The program’s goal is to educate parents on how to protect their children from predators on the Internet. The program includes a Power Point slide presentation on Internet safety and a free copy of “Computer Cop” software that allows parents to monitor their children’s activities on the Internet.

## RxPatrol

During 2003, the Intelligence Unit established contact with the National Association of Drug Diversion Investigators (NADDI) and became involved in the RxPatrol program. This program features an information clearing that enables law enforcement officers, pharmacies, and pharmaceutical companies to share information on pharmaceutical related crimes. RxPatrol is an effort to combat the theft and illegal trafficking of prescription medications.

Special Operations Division members work in a number of specialty units that offer specialized training to better serve a variety of needs in the community.

## safe schools

School Resource Officers are assigned to local schools to help ensure the safety of students. In 2003, SROs made 556 arrests, including 78 drug arrests. They also removed 38 weapons and one firearm from school grounds.

## K-9 training

In early 2003, four new canines joined the PCSO K-9 unit after the handlers and canines completed a 12-week school. Additionally, all PCSO K-9 teams assigned to patrol were trained in scent discrimination tracking during 2003. In other K-9 news, the PCSO bloodhound team received an honorable mention for the 2003 Florida Missing Children's Trailing Team of the Year award.

## the environment

The PCSO Environmental Unit received funding in 2003 for two additional deputies. In a high profile issue, the Southwest Water Management District advised Polk County that a \$500,000 fine was looming due to water over-pumping in northeast Polk. The Environmental Unit responded to the area and issued over 1,000 citations for water violations. This massive effort satisfied SWMD and helped the county demonstrate an attempt to reduce water usage.

## safe roads

In 2003, 28 red light enforcement lights were installed at 16 intersections identified as high crash locations. PCSO Traffic Unit members monitored these intersections, with numerous citations being issued for traffic light violations. The unit also conducted an aggressive driving campaign in 2003.

# COPS camp

COP (Community Oriented Policing) deputies pulled out all the stops the Summer of 2003 to create a memorable week for more than 100 kids in attendance at the COPS Silver Star Youth Camp. Acting as camp counselors and instructors, deputies taught kids archery, outdoor skills, water safety, fishing and so much more during the five days of fun-filled summer camp. The week-long youth camp served as a great opportunity to promote positive relationships between deputies and children. COPS and School Resource deputies operated the camp, with each deputy working as either a camp counselor or a program instructor.



## reaching neighborhoods

"Empowerment through information" was the focus of the second annual Neighborhood Problem Solving Conference held in 2003. In a joint effort, the PCSO, the Polk County Office of Neighborhood Revitalization, and numerous local municipalities and organizations hosted the one-day conference. The event was designed to empower residents through knowledge and information, and focused on providing information about all the vital services - law enforcement, fire, code enforcement, utilities, and more - available to Polk County residents. Additionally, PCSO helped sponsor the annual Spanish Neighborhood Problem-Solving Conference, or "Construyendo Comunidad," with the goal of helping Polk County's Spanish-speaking communities improve the quality of life in their communities and strengthen their relationships with local agencies. All of the activities and information, including the Sheriff's Office training curricula, was provided in Spanish.

# recognitions

## Deputy Sheriff of the Year - Detective John Conover

As an undercover detective assigned to the PCSO Auto Theft Task Force, Detective Conover's responsibilities have included investigating motor vehicle thefts, chop shops, vehicle identification alterations, as well as long-term investigations involving organized motor vehicle theft. Last year, John was solely responsible for recovering over \$1 million in stolen vehicles, and had a key role on the Task Force in recovering over \$5 million in stolen vehicles, resulting in nearly two hundred and twenty five (225) arrests.

## Detention Deputy of the Year - Detention Deputy Hjorth "Nick" Harville

Detention Deputy Harville has distinguished himself in several ways. First, as a member of the Detention Deputy Training and Evaluation Program, in addition to ensuring that new members are given proper training prior to assuming the responsibilities of a detention deputy, Nick took the initiative to track and monitor all his platoon's training needs. He also developed and implemented a training model, via a Powerpoint presentation of his own design, to help enhance the DDTEP. He also serves as a member of the Crisis Negotiation Team.

## Civilian of the Year - Steve Howard

Since joining the PCSO in 2001, Steve Howard has worked diligently to be the most cost-effective manager he can be, saving the Sheriff's Office an immeasurable amount of money. He has obtained designation as a Certified Professional Public Buyer, Certified Public Purchasing Officer and a Certified Purchasing Professional. And through his hard work, the PCSO is now noted as the first government agency in Polk County and the first law enforcement agency in the nation to achieve the honor of National Institute of Governmental Purchasing Outstanding Agency Accreditation Achievement Award.



## answering the call of duty

During 2003, a number of heroic PCSO members were called up to active duty in the military, and left to serve our country overseas or at various military bases throughout the country. Throughout the year, yellow ribbons were tied around trees at all agency facilities as visible evidence of the agency's support of our troops. Our hats are off to all our members who so willingly responded to serve their country and we recognize them for the heroes they are: Warrants Unit Detective Craig Powers, Northeast Deputy Nathaniel Mulkey, Administrative Investigation Detention Deputy Inspector Dan Hostetler, Northeast Deputy Deeann Dees, Special Operations Deputy Brian Hangar, Detention Sgt. Thomas Brabant, Telecommunicator Gerald Inoa, School Resource Officer Andrew Williams, Central County Jail Detention Deputy Sally Gardner, Southeast COPS Deputy Jason Dechenne, Northeast Echo COPS Deputy Benito Dominguez, Southwest COPS Deputy Paul Murray, Southwest COPS Deputy Conrad Case, Southwest COPS Deputy Jerome Borum, BCI Systems Technician Steven Riggall, Intake Detention Deputy Justin MacIntosh, Central County Jail Detention Deputy Stephen Supinger.

## honoring the ultimate sacrifice

**“Greater love hath no man than this  
that a man lay down his life for his friends.”**

The Polk County Sheriff's Office is involved in an effort to honor and recognize our fellow law enforcement officers who have fallen in the line of duty by supporting a Polk County Law Enforcement Memorial expansion project. We must make sure the memorial will have adequate space in the future to honor those who have made the ultimate sacrifice. Unfortunately, the current configuration has only four remaining unmarked pedestals. We all hope and pray we will never need these, but history tells us we will. We have an obligation to preserve the memorial - it is a small price to pay to honor those who have paid the greatest price of all. Please consider joining us in this important effort. Call 535-1951 to help.