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Polk County Sheriff's Office

## PCSO One of Four in Nation With Exceptional Professional Accreditations!

In Bethesda, Maryland, on Saturday, March 26, 2011, the Polk County Sheriff's Office received the CALEA (Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies) **Public Safety Communications Accreditation Program** prestigious **Flagship Agency** designation.

The award was presented to us at CALEA's reaccreditation ceremony which is held three times a year.

According to CALEA, our agency has "met the requirements of a highly regarded and broadly recognized body of public safety communications standards."

In order to be nominated as a Flagship Agency, a Sheriff's Office or Police Department must have had three on-site assessments which demonstrated that the agency is the *best of the best*. The PCSO has exceeded that requirement with **four** accreditation on-site assessments.

The agency obtained its first PSCA accreditation in 2002, and then the agency was reaccredited three more times: in 2005, in 2008, and this year.


PCSO was also named a Flagship Agency for CALEA in 2006 and 2009, and with this second designation as a Flagship Agency for Public Safety Communications, the agency is one of only four law enforcement agencies in the nation with both the CALEA and PSCA Flagship designations (there are three police departments in the nation who have also earned them).

Accreditation is a voluntary process and is a highly valued recognition for any agency. We are an eight star accredited agency which consists





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of:

- Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies, Inc
- Public Safety Communications Accreditation Program
- Commission for Florida Law Enforcement Accreditation, Inc.
- Florida Corrections Accreditation Commission, Inc.
- National Institute of Governmental Purchasing, Inc.
- National Commission on Correctional Health Care
- Public Safety Training Academy Accreditation Program
- National Academy of Emergency Medical Dispatch

Being awarded with another Flagship designation is quite an honor, and is just a snapshot of the great work that the men and women of the Polk County Sheriff's Office do every day. I am so proud of our agency members - they truly *are* the best in the business.

Sheriff Grady Judd

## PCSO Deputy Mike Braswell Nominated for AMW All-Star Award

During the early morning hours of June 25, 2010, Deputy Sheriffs Mike Braswell and Paul Fairbanks were patrolling their area of responsibility in west Lakeland when they noticed a young man riding a bicycle down the road; they would not have been suspicious, however, the young man was riding late at night in the dark in a high-crime area.

The poster features a group of law enforcement officers in uniform, including a police officer, a sheriff, a firefighter, and a paramedic, standing against a blue sky background. The text 'AMERICA'S MOST WANTED ALL STAR' is prominently displayed at the top, with 'sponsored by Sprint' below it. A large black banner across the middle reads 'VOTE FOR OUR ALL-STAR!'. Below this, a yellow banner contains a portrait of Deputy Sheriff Mike Braswell and his name. At the bottom, a black banner provides voting information: 'Vote now at www.amw.com/allstar' and 'Voting ends April 10 at midnight EST.'. Logos for 'AMW and Sprint Honor the Network of Heroes Among Us' and 'Sprint' are also present.

What happened next would change the lives of all three men, and is the basis for Mike Braswell's nomination for a very prestigious award.

The following is an excerpt from the award submission to America's Most Wanted (AMW) nominating Deputy Sheriff

### Braswell for their national All Star Award:

*The deputies' suspicions grew when the individual quickly crossed the street and later jumped off his bike upon realizing that they were law enforcement officers.*

*"It was the look on his face when we pulled him over...the wad of cash that fell from his pocket...I've seen it 100 times and every time its drug related," said Deputy Braswell.*

*After pulling him over to ask if everything was alright, Braswell and his partner attempted to build a rapport with the young man. Shortly after the suspect agreed to allow the deputies to search him, he gave them his ID and headed toward the patrol car for his pat down. Braswell was following behind him when out of nowhere the suspect turned and fired several shots at Deputy Paul Fairbanks.*

*Mike Braswell watched his partner stumble backwards and fall to the ground; he had been shot. "He was only five to seven feet away...I fired my weapon from my hip and then I felt myself getting hit twice in the vest, once in the hand, and then again in the leg as I fell to the ground," recollected Braswell. According to Braswell, he, the suspect, and his partner were all lying wounded on the ground and his partner was fighting for his life.*

*The suspect, later identified as convicted felon Matthew Tutt, had dropped his weapon. "I told him not to move and that nobody had to die that night...but he continued to move for his gun and I was forced to shoot him," said Braswell. According to his supervisor, Mike Braswell refused to die; he had a wife and two sons at home. His supervisor shares his amazement at how Braswell remained so composed through the incident, that he managed to comfort his partner and radio the information to the department in spite of being shot. His instincts and his will to survive saved his and his partner's lives that night. Doctors told him that he was nearly fatally wounded and that the bullet in his leg was only one centimeter away from taking his life; however Mike Braswell was back to work in six weeks.*

**America's Most Wanted has hundreds of nominations from all over the country for this prestigious award. The "All Star" is chosen from the applicant with the most votes. We encourage you to go online and vote for Deputy Sheriff Mike Braswell -- [click here to vote now!!](#)**

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## Bustin' Clays A Fun Way To Raise Funds

Saturday, March 5, 2011, was a perfect day to bust clays. On this clear and sunny day, 227 registered shooters came out to Tenoroc



Sporting Clays on Tenoroc Mine Road in Lakeland to participate in the second "Bustin' Clays With Sheriff Grady Judd" charity event. Approximately \$28,000 was raised for Polk Sheriff's Charities, Inc., and many of the participants went home with trophies and items they won during the silent auction.

The first place team (seen here), **PBS&J and Atkins**, shot for a combined total score of 185 clays (out of 200) - team members were: Randy Larson, Bob Jones, Dan Harrison, and David Caudill.



The second place team, **Lakeland Rifle and Pistol Club**, closely followed with 181 combined points - team members were: Jack Martin, Mike Duncan, Jerry Watson, and Steve Hood.

Third place went to the **Brighthouse Networks** team, with 175 combined points - team members were: Brian Bierwagen, Steve Haas, Lyle Crawford, and Larry Finn.

*Individual trophies were awarded to:*

**Lash McCall** - Best Individual Shooter (Bartow Ford team)  
**Noah Jeffries** - Best Youth Shooter (CPS Investment Advisors team)  
**Nicole Cavaliere** - Best Female Shooter (CPS Investment Advisors team)  
**Major Larry Williams** - Best PCSO Shooter (Badcock team)

At the end of the day, everyone was safe, had a great time, and donated money to a worthy cause. Thanks for participating, and we hope to see you next year!

[Click here to view all of the photos from the Bustin Clays event!](#)

## Bubba the Love Sponge Presents Check to Mrs. Wes Whitmore

On  
 Wednesday,  
 March 16,  
 2011, radio



personality "Bubba the Love Sponge" came to the Polk County Sheriff's Operations Center in Winter Haven to present a check in the amount of \$16,000 to Sherry Whitmore, the widow of beloved PCSO Sergeant Wes Whitmore, who died in the line of duty on December 12, 2010.

Mrs. Whitmore was overcome with emotion during the check presentation ceremony, as she thanked Bubba, Sheriff Judd, and the community for their ongoing support.

"Bubba and his crew are real heroes," said Sheriff Grady Judd. "It is very humbling to be recognized for the sacrifices we make each and every day."

Bubba organized a motorcycle benefit ride earlier this year (January 29th) which started at the Wing House restaurant in Lakeland and toured southwest Polk County. Over 500 motorcycle riders from all over the central Florida area participated in the event - the check presented by Bubba in March was made possible through the donations of these anonymous riders and businesses such as the Wing House and Stingray Chevrolet.

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## Ice in Florida? Hockey!

Great news, hockey fans! The central Florida area has a hockey league!

The Orlando Firefighters Hockey Club was created years ago by a few firefighters who enjoyed the sport, and has grown to include first responders and law enforcement officers from the central Florida area.

Teams from the U.S. and Canada recently participated in the 8th Annual Public Safety Hockey Tournament - hosted by the Orlando Club.



On **Saturday, April 16, 2011**, two rival teams -- the Central Florida Enforcers (featuring some of our very own PCSO deputies) and the Orlando Firefighters -- will compete against

each other in the 2011 Guns and Hoses Charity Game. All proceeds will benefit the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation.

Tickets are reasonably priced at \$10 each. Included in the cost is an open skate for the public from 2:00 to 3:45 p.m. on game day. Opening ceremonies for the actual game begin at 4:00 p.m.

For more information, visit: [www.firefighterhockey.com](http://www.firefighterhockey.com) and click on "Guns and Hoses 2011."

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## Don't Like Hockey? How About Softball Instead?

As you know, PCSO lost a great sergeant, mentor, and friend, on December 12, 2010, when Sgt. Wes Whitmore died in the line of duty during a traffic stop in Winter Haven.

Not only did Wes love serving his country (26-year veteran of the USAF) and his community (15-year veteran of PCSO), he also loved sports. If there was a sporting event, especially one that raised money for charity, Wes was there - either participating, or coaching, or playing referee. He is seen in the photo here pitching for his team "Lack A Daisicals" in November 2009.



Now deputies are organizing a softball tournament to honor Wes and to raise money for his family.

On **Saturday, April 30, 2011**, a charity softball tournament will be held at the Polk State College Diamondplex in Winter Haven. Cost is \$200 per team, and each team must have at least one female player. Each game will last 45 minutes or 7 innings, whichever comes first. Lunch will be provided. All proceeds will go towards the Whitmore family!

Deadline for entry is April 8, 2011. Contact Deputy Sheriff Joshua Sellers for more information at 512-1378 or [jsellers@polksheriff.org](mailto:jsellers@polksheriff.org).

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## Miranda Trail Dogs Available For Adoption April 9th

Last month we



told you about over 100 dogs that were rescued by PCSO Animal Control from a home on Miranda Trail in Lakeland.

These dogs will be available for adoption on **Saturday, April 9, 2011, at the PCSO Animal Control Section, 7115 De Castro Road, Winter Haven.** Doors will open to the public at 10:00 am, and close at 4:00 pm. Cats, kittens, and puppies five months and younger can be adopted for **\$40.00**. All dogs six months and older will be **\$70.00**. Animals will be spayed or neutered, vet checked, fully vaccinated, microchipped, and have a Polk County Rabies license tag valid for one year.

Don't miss this opportunity to help animals in need find loving and safe homes. To pre-qualify for adoption, please go to our website to download a prequalification questionnaire. For more information, on this adoption event and others, call the PCSO Animal Control Section at 863.499.2600, or visit us at [www.polkpets.org](http://www.polkpets.org), or [www.savehomelesspets.org](http://www.savehomelesspets.org).

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## PCSO Animal Control Named "Agency of the Year"

At the November Florida Animal Control Association (FACA) Educational Conference, the PCSO Animal Control facility was named the 2010 Agency of the Year.



From FACA's recently published 1st Quarter 2011 newsletter:  
"FACA's highest agency honor went to POLK COUNTY SHERIFF

ANIMAL CONTROL. If the sheer volume of the submission were a determining factor, this county would have won just on that. It helps that the materials presented were of excellent quality and offered a lot to be proud of and to share. This agency covers approximately 2,000 square miles with 585,000+ residents. They are proud of their partnerships with animal welfare groups, the county health department, Humane Society, Ridge Veterinary Medical Society, and approximately 90 not-for-profit 501(c)(3) agencies in their area.

Their inmate work program saved their county approximately \$ 250,000 in 2010. Year to date 2010, they have achieved 3,859 adoptions, held many local events and public presentations, to educate the public about responsible pet ownership and animal control laws. Programs include disaster preparedness, bite prevention, license compliance, and to accompany their programs they have created such documents as a 'pet owner's emergency guide,' a pet-friendly shelters FAQ, a bite prevention owners guide, and 'About Rabies' brochure, and more.

The Awards Committee was especially impressed with their internal ACO Training and Evaluation Program for new hires. Their eight-week program enhances the required certification with two weeks of classroom and strict supervision and evaluation in the field. This agency is a prime example of the depth and breadth of commitment to exceptional animal care and control."

Way to go, Animal Control!!

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