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Polk County Sheriff's Office



1891 Jim Keene Blvd
Winter Haven, Florida
33880

Greetings!


I am pleased to report there were 733 fewer crimes in 2010 than in 2009 in our jurisdiction, a 6.8% reduction. There were 11,378 crimes in 2010, as compared to 12,111 crimes in 2009. Our crime rate is now nearly 1/3 less than the state crime rate.

We are enjoying historically low crime rates in Polk County. This great crime report is a tribute to our proactive crime fighting and crime prevention efforts and the diligent and dedicated work of our members in partnership with the community.

Another reason for the low crime figures is we have insisted that convicted criminals go to prison for a minimum of 85% of their sentence since the mid 1990s. This has been one of the most successful criminal justice reforms in our history. Crime goes down when you put more criminals in prison where they belong. Incapacitation works. If the people predisposed to prey on innocents are in jail or prison, they can't hurt us.

I am concerned about the recent calls for "prison reform." Some of us who have been around a while know that when we become less serious about justly punishing criminals, people end up getting hurt and our property that we work hard for gets stolen. The Florida Legislature and the Governor need to tread carefully, so any proposed 'reform' doesn't end up balancing the state's budget on the backs of innocent citizens. Florida's highest priority is public safety. The state's funding priorities must reflect this truth. The bottom line: Prison 'reform' must be focused on public safety, crime reduction, victim's rights, and personal responsibility (negative consequences for breaking the law). People who break the law should be punished-fairly, swiftly, and without apologies. The more our criminal justice system does just that, the better-and safer-our communities will be.



863.298.6200 **Sheriff Grady Judd**

Distracted Driving

According to the US Department of Transportation, "Distracted driving is any non-driving activity a person engages in which has the potential to distract him or her from the primary task of driving and increase the risk of crashing."

There are three main types of distraction: Visual, Manual and Cognitive.

Distracted driving is taking your eyes off the road - Taking your hands off the wheel - Or taking your mind off what you're doing.

Those distractions can be:

- Using a cell phone
- Eating and drinking
- Talking to passengers
- Grooming
- Reading, including maps
- Using a PDA or GPS system
- Watching a video
- Changing the radio station, CD, or Mp3 player

While all of the distractions mentioned can endanger drivers' safety, texting is the most alarming because it involves all three types of distraction.

According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration:

- In 2008, nearly 6,000 people died in crashes involving a distracted driver and more than half a million were injured.



- Drivers who use hand-held devices are four times as likely to get into crashes serious enough to injure themselves. (Source: Insurance Institute for Highway Safety)
- Using a cell phone while driving, whether it's hand-held or hands-free, delays a driver's reactions as much as having a blood alcohol concentration at the legal limit of .08 percent. (Source: University of Utah)

Don't be next. **Put it down, pay attention. Please.**

Polk County Sheriff's Office Mounted Enforcement Units Recognized at Florida State Competition

The PCSO teams took first place in the Fleeing Felon Course; second in the Team Ride; third and fifth in Equitation; second, third, and fourth in Day Obstacles; and second, third, and fourth in Night Obstacles.

The PCSO Mounted Enforcement Team is a group of skilled riders who, along with their trained mounts, assist the PCSO Department of Law Enforcement in search and rescue, crowd control and patrol operations. Mounted deputies can easily travel terrain otherwise inaccessible to deputies in vehicles or on foot.

The Mounted Enforcement Team is also involved with local children's reading programs, attends community events upon request and often provides the Fallen Officer escort for Law Enforcement funerals and Memorial Services.

The Polk County Sheriff's Office Mounted Enforcement Unit, and Mounted Search and Recovery Team, participated in the Florida State Fair Training and Critique, from February 14, through February 18, 2011.



School Crossing Guard Appreciation Luncheon

The Polk County Sheriff's Office recently hosted its annual School Crossing Guard Appreciation Luncheon on February 5, 2011.

Guards were recognized for 5 and 10 years of service, as well as, perfect attendance.

Special recognition went to Doris Connell with 30 years as a PCSO School Crossing Guard.



School Crossing Guards are placed in areas where it is unsafe for elementary children to cross alone. The primary goal of the guard is to assist and educate elementary students in safe crossing at busy streets and highways as they travel to and from school. Guards encourage students to use safe crossing habits, by reminding them to stay in the crosswalk, walk and not run, and always look left right left, before entering roadway. Monday through Friday, morning and afternoon, and often, in inclement weather, you will see school crossing guards assist students across busy streets and highways.

School crossing guards utilize gaps, and as needed, create gaps, in traffic ensuring the children's safety. Often motorists view this break in the traffic flow as an annoyance, and all too frequently, motorists fail to heed the school crossing guards' signals. This increases the risk of an accident and endangers the children.

When you see a guard, this is a reminder you are near a school and children are in the area. Be alert for posted school zone speed; reduce your speed, or stop, if necessary. Do not stop in a crosswalk. Obey signals from the crossing guard, and remember children are unpredictable. Please do your part to make our school zones safer for the children as well as the guards assisting them.

For further information regarding the School Crossing Guard Program, please contact 863.298.6211 or 863.298.6212, during normal business hours.

Second Annual "Bustin' Clays With Sheriff Grady Judd"

The Second Annual Polk Sheriff's Charities, Inc. "Bustin' Clays with Sheriff Grady Judd" event will be held Saturday, March 5, 2011, at Tenoroc Sporting Clays in Lakeland.

The public is invited to join Sheriff Judd, PCSO members, and our many gracious sponsors at this charity event - all proceeds raised will go to Polk Sheriff's Charities, Inc., a non-profit organization created to assist family members of agency members who have lost their lives in the line of duty, and which also helped fund the Polk County Sheriff's Office Law Enforcement Memorial.

The memorial, which was dedicated on January 18, 2011, honors those members of the



Polk County Sheriff's Office who have made the ultimate sacrifice for our safety and freedom.

WHEN: Saturday, March 5, 2011

REGISTRATION: 7:00 a.m.

SHOTGUN START: 8:30 a.m. at Tenoroc Sporting Clays, located at 3755 Tenoroc Mine Road in Lakeland

FOR MORE INFORMATION: 863.298.6604 

Lunch, Ammo and Gift Bags are included with each registration!

TO REGISTER ONLINE:

<http://www.polksheriff.org/PSCI/BustinClays/Pages/default.aspx>

"We all had a great time participating in this event last year, and we hope for an even better turnout this year," said Sheriff Grady Judd. "Come on out, shoot some clays, and help honor our fallen heroes. We hope to see you there!"

Please note, the April 2011 newsletter will have a different title.
Instead of Cyber Star, you'll receive the
PCSO E-Star!

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