



# The Sheriff's Report

Official newsletter for citizens served by the Pasco Sheriff's Office

February 2008

[www.PascoSheriff.com](http://www.PascoSheriff.com)

*From the Sheriff's desk*



**Bob White,  
Sheriff**

**“My Deputy Sheriffs took quick, decisive action that I believe saved lives that morning..”**

**In this issue:**

- **Temporary jail facility reopens**
- **Beware telemarketing scams**
- **State praises deputies action**

**You can now sign up to receive the Sheriff's Report via email at [PascoSheriff.com](http://PascoSheriff.com)**

## Volunteers help cut costs and help deputies at the same time

When I started the Citizen Service Unit (CSU) in November of 2004, I knew the program had potential but I never imagined it would balloon into such a mature program so fast. The Sheriff's Office has been fortunate to have great volunteers and leaders take part in the program. Starting in March, another group of civilian volunteers will be working their way through the Citizen Service Unit Academy held at the Land O'Lakes jail.

The civilians who volunteer for this program are probably our most visible volunteer unit at the Pasco Sheriff's Office. I imagine you've already seen them helping stranded motorists along the side of the road, directing traffic at a crash scene, or assisting deputies with crime scene investigation support. The volunteers can be most easily identified by the yellow flashing lights they have affixed atop of their marked vehicles. They are often helping out someone along the road with a flat tire or a mechanical breakdown.

The volunteers are trained to handle a variety of duties including: traffic crashes, citizen assistance calls, disabled motorists calls, parking complaints, lost and found property cases, and other calls that do not require law enforcement or regulatory authority. They can even hand out parking warnings and tickets, and can investigate specified non-criminal calls for service we receive everyday.

Their benefit to the Sheriff's Office and taxpayers is huge. Since the unit started, they have contributed more than 34,000 hours of time. This is time they are not paid for, but time they have donated to make this county a safer place to live. I estimate the value of this volunteer effort at more than \$660,000 since the program started. That is what it would cost

to pay salaries for these individuals if the volunteers did not donate their time.

In 2007, their statistics continued to increase at an impressive rate. The CSU handled 7,700 patrol calls, logged in more than 13,000 hours of service, and assisted at the scene of more than 4,500 traffic crashes. If you went to a major event (i.e., the county fair, the steeple chase, or the Chasco Fiesta) in Pasco County last year, chances are the CSU helped with traffic control.

This is so important to me personally, because for every hour these volunteers help out in the community, it is an hour my deputies can spend investigating more serious crimes. In essence, our volunteer program serves as a force multiplier for the Sheriff's Office and helps us manage unprecedented growth and demands for service with fewer resources. Volunteers help the Pasco Sheriff's Office increase responsiveness, service delivery, and information input. The CSU is just one of the reasons the Pasco Sheriff's Office has one of the lowest cost per citizen in the state of Florida. That translates into lower taxes to you. I challenge anyone to find a law enforcement agency that can provide the services we do for less, and the CSU is a big part of why this is possible.

This new class of volunteers and the 34 existing members of the unit are extremely motivated and eager to help the community. You might even personally know of one of them. I would like to say how thankful I am to live in a community with such motivated citizens who are willing to give up their personal time to help. If you are one those people who would like to

**Continued on back page**

# Tornado hits Land O'Lakes Jail Facility Sunday, December 16, 2007 at 5:14 a.m.



Trees snapped by the tornado line the dirt road leading to the PSO hydroponics unit.



Hydroponics unit destroyed by tornado



Female jail facility completely destroyed

## State praises Pasco Sheriff's Office for evacuation

*(The tornado destroyed the temporary jail structure on December 16, 2007. Within 45 days of the disaster the debris had been cleared and a new temporary jail structure had been put up. The new building passed final county inspection on January 31, 2008. Pasco inmates sent to other jails throughout Florida returned on February 1, 2008. The following is taken from a letter written by Florida Division of Emergency Management.)*

Dear Sheriff White,

On behalf of the State of Florida, Division of Emergency Management and your colleagues on the State Emergency Response Team, I want to personally congratulate you and your law enforcement and correction teams on the heroic response efforts to the residents, inmates, and employees under



Hydroponics Unit (closeup)

your care during the recent tornado event this past Sunday morning.

According to the National Weather Service Office in Ruskin, at approximately 5:20 a.m. on Sunday, December 16, 2007, an EF-1 tornado made a touchdown 6.2 miles north of Land O'Lakes, Florida. Because of the proactive efforts of Pasco County

Sheriff's Office Captain Ed Beckman and shift commander Lieutenant Thomas Perron and staff, some 225 inmates housed in two temporary structures at the County Jail, and detention center employees, were safely evacuated as the storm impacted the facility, destroying the structures and causing damages in excess of \$1,000,000 dollars.

Because of those timely actions, carried out by the men and women who proudly serve under your leadership and command, I have no doubt many lives were saved early Sunday.

**(Right) Temporary structure that housed more than 100 female inmates completely destroyed, debris seen in the foreground. In the background of the picture, a second temporary structure that housed more than 100 male inmates was left standing but became uninhabitable.**



The residents of Pasco County can take comfort in knowing their Sheriff and his dedicated team of public servants, as demonstrated by their professional training and selfless actions, make a difference to the people of Pasco County and the State of Florida each and every day.

Again, I offer my sincerest thanks to you, and your teams for their ongoing commitment and dedication to public service.

Respectfully,

W. Craig Fugate, Director

# 184 male and female inmates evacuated. No injuries or deaths.



Fences needed to be replaced



Sheriff White addressing reporters



Truck overturned in jail parking lot.



Nearly 200 male and female inmates were evacuated before tornado hit.



Prisoner transport vehicle overturned.



Channel 8 (NBC) Claudio DoCampo



Tree uprooted in front of facility



Debris from temporary structure



Fence poles being replaced



January 31: Building passes final inspection

# Know your rights when it comes to telemarketers

The FTC's Telemarketing Sales Rule requires telemarketers to make certain disclosures and prohibits certain misrepresentations. It gives you the power to stop unwanted telemarketing calls and gives state law enforcement officers the authority to prosecute fraudulent telemarketers who operate across state lines.

The Rule covers most types of telemarketing calls to consumers, including calls to pitch goods, services, "sweepstakes," and prize promotion and investment opportunities. It also applies to calls consumers make in response to postcards or other materials received in the mail.

Keep this information near your telephone. It can help you determine if you're talking with a scam artist or a legitimate telemarketer.

- It's illegal for a telemarketer to call you if you've asked not

to be called. If they call back, hang up and report them to your state Attorney General.

- Calling times are restricted to the hours between 8 a.m. and 9 p.m.
- Telemarketers must tell you it's a sales call and who's doing the selling before they make the pitch. If it's a prize promotion, they must tell you that no purchase or payment is necessary to enter or win. If you're asked to pay for a prize, hang up. Free is free.
- It's illegal for telemarketers to misrepresent any information, including facts about their goods or services, earnings potential, profitability, risk or liquidity of an investment, or the nature of a prize in a prize-promotion scheme.
- Telemarketers must tell you the total cost of the products or services they're offering and any restrictions on getting or using them, or that a sale is final or non-refundable before you pay. In a prize promotion, they must tell you the odds of winning, that no purchase or payment is necessary to win, and any restrictions or conditions of receiving the prize.
- It's illegal for a telemarketer to withdraw money from your checking account without your express, verifiable authorization.
- Telemarketers cannot lie to get you to pay, no matter what method of payment you use.
- You do not have to pay for credit repair, recovery room, or advance-fee loan/credit services until these services have been delivered. (Credit repair companies claim that, for a fee, they can change or erase accurate negative information from your credit report. Only time can erase

such information. Recovery room operators contact people who have lost money to a previous telemarketing scam and promise that, for a fee or donation to a specified charity, they will recover your lost money, or the product or prize never received from a telemarketer. Advance-fee loans are offered by companies who claim they can guarantee you a loan for a fee, paid in advance. The fee may range from \$100 to several hundred dollars.)

## Exceptions to the Rule

While most types of telemarketing calls are covered by the Rule, there are exceptions. The Rule does not cover:

- Calls placed by consumers in response to general media advertising, except calls responding to ads for investment opportunities, credit repair services, recovery room services, or advance-fee loans.
- Calls placed by consumers in response to direct mail advertising that discloses all the material information required by the Rule, except calls responding to ads for investment opportunities, prize promotions, credit repair services, recovery room services, or advance-fee loans.
- Calls initiated by the consumer that are not made in response to any solicitation.

**REMEMBER!** Never give out any personal information such as credit card numbers, social security card numbers or bank accounts over the phone.

### Sheriff's Desk: FROM FRONT PAGE

become a volunteer in this valuable unit, I encourage you to contact Sgt. Troy Fergusson who does an excellent job overseeing the program. He can be reached at 727-847-5878, extension 7629.

While this class is currently underway, we will be happy to get you started with the application process.

It is one key that allows our agency to be what I believe is the best and most economical law enforcement agency in Florida.

I hope to keep expanding the Citizen Service Unit in 2008, it is a tremendous way of doing more with less in these tough economic times.

Pasco Sheriff  
Bob White