



## **Pasco Sheriff's Office**

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## **New Pasco deputy is Boy's Ranch alum**

**NEW PORT RICHEY** -- Interacting with troubled youth is often part of a deputy's job. Having a way to help young boys straighten out what can be a confusing time in their lives was the reason a group of Sheriffs got together in 1957 to found the Florida Sheriff's Boys Ranch. Then-Pasco Sheriff Leslie Bessenger was one of those Sheriffs who helped get the Ranch up and running.

Over the years, different Pasco Sheriff's have recommended a number of boys and girls to attend the youth ranch programs. In what is believed to be a first for our agency, a new Pasco deputy is a former member of the Boy's Ranch program.

Dep. Kelly Endricks joined the Pasco Sheriff's Office in May. His move into his law enforcement uniform took many years and, according to the new deputy, had its roots with his time spent at the Boys Ranch in Live Oak.

"I was an angry teenager who had an abusive step-father," Dep. Endricks explained. "In 1989, a Pasco deputy responded to a domestic dispute call at my house between myself and my step-father and he mentioned to my mother that I might be helped by attending the Boys Ranch."

The 16-year-old Endricks agreed to attend the program for four months. "I told my mother that at the end of four months, if I didn't like it, I would come home. She agreed. Well, at the end of the four months, I was ready to come home. However, she told me that that wouldn't be a good idea right now, and that I would have to stay a little longer."

## **ALUM**

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That didn't sit well with Endricks, who had a "blow-up" and became angry at his situation. But that was the beginning of his path toward maturity.

"My cottage pop, Pop Raymond, took me aside and talked to me one-on-one and got me to open up about my problems. That is when I began to see that both of my cottage parents really cared about me and what I did with my life." Before this episode, Endricks was resistant to the rules and chores that are mandatory in the cottages. That included doing his own laundry and cooking, something he never had to do before. He now realizes that structure gave him the support to begin working towards goals in life.

"Teamwork and accountability are factors in everything you did at the Ranch," Endricks said. "You had to work for everything but there was always someone there to help you do it." He learned this firsthand when he saw boys riding bikes around the expansive Ranch grounds.

"I found out where the bike shop was and went down there to get a bike. The attendant said, 'Sure, you can have a bike.' He then pointed to the frame, the handlebars, the pedals, and wheels that were there for me to put together. I said, 'You're kidding me, right?' But, of course, he wasn't, and if I wanted to ride bad enough, I would build one, which I did."

Endricks didn't know it at the time, but his mother was also required to attend counseling while he was at the Ranch. She says that counseling helped her and when she got to see Kelly on weekends or holidays, she could tell a difference in her son's attitude.

"At first, she thought I was putting on a show, just so I might be able to come home sooner," Endricks said. "But she soon realized that I was actually growing into a responsible young adult."

Although Endricks spent only two years at the Ranch, his mother credits his time there for a lifelong change. "She tells me even today that I am the same now as I was then, due to what I learned there."

## **ALUM**

### **3-3-3**

After leaving the Ranch program, Endricks returned to Pasco County where he has since lived his entire life. He worked at a construction materials business for 14 years, becoming a plant manager. When the construction industry began its recent downturn, Endricks began to consider other career options, and his mind always returned to how he was helped so many years ago by a Pasco deputy. So he entered the police academy while simultaneously working on completing his GED degree. He was hired by the Dade City Police Department and served there a year before being hired by the Pasco Sheriff's Office.

Endricks still remembers what it was like to be an angry teenager, and advised a mother about the Youth Ranch option during a domestic violence call he was on recently. He told the young girl that he had been there before, just like her. She was asking a lot of questions about the Ranches and although Endricks doesn't know if she will attend, she had an excellent role model of what the experience can do standing right in front of her in a law enforcement uniform.

Pasco Sheriff Bob White is the vice chairman of the youth ranches enterprise board and knows first hand the good work the program can do for children. "It shows you what these young children can do if provided a nurturing home environment and the opportunity to excel with the proper guidance and hard work."