



County manager's
column

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County Line

July/August 2013



County employees take part in emergency training

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Multiple shootings at Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University.

Grandstand collapse at Daytona International Speedway.

House fire in DeBary.

These and other scenarios were simulated during a four-day integrated emergency management course at the FEMA training center in Emmitsburg, Md., in June.

Twelve Volusia County public protection employees and information officers took part in the training exercise along with 53 of their counterparts from cities, colleges, hospitals and other agencies from the county.

FEMA training experts spent hundreds of hours building this exercise to make it relevant to

Volusia County. The federal government paid for the course, travel and lodging.

The training activity placed the personnel under realistic crisis situations within a structured learning environment.

Ryan Williams, operations coordinator for Volusia County Emergency Management, said the course encompassed each of the critical preparedness efforts – training, planning and exercises.

“As a result of this course, key emergency management and response personnel from across Volusia County will be better able to respond to emergencies and disasters, and that’s what training is all about,” Williams said.



EMMITSBURG CLASS – First row, from left: Pat White, Joanne Magley, Tammy Marris, Pat Kuehn and Claudine Boring. Second row, from left, Ryan Williams, Rick Karl, George Recktenwald, Al Hill, Jeff Smith, Larry LaHue and Ray Almodovar.

Emergency preparedness is a top priority



Jim Dinneen

The Boston Marathon bombings, Sandy Hook Elementary shootings, and Oklahoma tornadoes are graphic reminders that all communities, big or small, rural or urban, are vulnerable to catastrophic events. We need only to look back at the wildfires of 1998, the 2004 hurricanes, and this year's injuries in the Speedway stands to remember that Volusia County has had its share of emergencies.

Recently, 12 of our employees participated in an

integrated emergency management course (IEMC) at the National Emergency Training Center in Emmitsburg, Md. They spent close to a week working through the decisions following a mock campus shooting at Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University. Overall, more than 60 responders from a variety of Volusia County

agencies went through the drill. Obviously, incidents of magnitude require interagency response.

Volusia County places a high priority on emergency management. Our participation in this recent IEMC is just the latest in many years of attendance at the National Emergency Training Center for schooling in emergency responsibilities.

Earlier this year, the community celebrated the opening of our new emergency operations/sheriff's communications center. This state-of-the-art facility integrates our emergency managers and 9-1-1 telecommunications in one structure and provides the space and capabilities for emergency responders from multiple agencies to work side-by-side should we have a countywide threat.

Jim Judge, an experienced emergency responder, has joined our organization as our new emergency management director; and **John Zaragoza**, equally as experienced, is our new EVAC ambulance system director. These seasoned professionals are valuable additions to the leadership in our Public Protection

Department and enhance our public safety capability.

I chose emergency management as the subject of this column because this is the time of year when we are the most vulnerable to tropical events. This is predicted to be an above-average hurricane season. It's worth noting that public safety is job one for all county employees, not just those who wear a uniform.

During emergency threats to our community, all county employees play an important role in our government's response to our citizens. It's especially important all county employees have a personal preparedness family plan should a storm come our way. Call-outs for storm duty should be expected, so it's important your plans include

care for your children, spouses, parents and animals and provisions for other special needs.

I am confident we are prepared, trained, equipped and ready to respond should we face an emergency. I appreciate your dedication.

— **Jim Dinneen, County Manager**



County Line

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The County Line, published bimonthly by Volusia County Government, an EEO/AA employer, is dedicated to county employees and things that affect county employees. News items or correspondence should be addressed to: The County Line, Community Information, Volusia County Government, 123 W. Indiana Ave., DeLand, FL 32720-4612.

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Open enrollment for benefits begins Aug. 22

The open enrollment period for employees will run from Aug. 22 through Sept. 27. During this period, employees may review, select and complete their 2014 benefit elections and submit employee wellness forms.

Get familiar with ESS

To get ready, review your current benefit elections by accessing Employee Self Service (ESS). You can update beneficiary information, verify your address, print pay information, obtain downloadable forms, and more. It's vital you make sure this information is accurate. You can use ESS at any time to browse through your pay, leave and past benefits information.

You can access ESS from your home computer at volusia.org/personnel or at work from the ENN home page under the Employee Self Service link. To access ESS, you must have your user name and password. If you need to reset your password or have forgotten your user name, please call the help desk at ext. 15222.

Employee wellness form

Employees can submit completed employee wellness forms to the Personnel Division. The form is available on Personnel's ENN page under "Personnel forms" or from

the "Downloadable forms" section of Employee Self Service.

Employees who are on the county's health plan can use the annual/routine benefit to schedule a physical exam and have their personal physician complete their employee wellness form.

Employees also can have these screenings performed at the annual Health and Wellness Fair Aug. 23, 26 and 27.

More information on this year's fair will be available soon.



County receives AHA award

The American Heart Association has given Volusia County a gold-level Fit-Friendly Worksite Award for promoting employee health and fitness in the workplace. Wellness Coordinator **Celene Cone** accepted the award.



FUNDRAISERS – Volusia County Fire Services raised more than \$1,200 for the Orange City/DeBary Relay for Life and helped to fill 50 gift bags for cancer survivors. From left to right are Mark Edgil, Interim Fire Chief Jeff Smith, Howard Bailey, Nick Castelli, Kate Lind, Sarah Darby, Gracie Kelly, Becca and Suzie Darby, Becky Perryman and Connor Darby.

Around the County



BEST IN THE STATE – Environmental Management employees Tom Craft, left, and Dale Peterson, center, accept an award from NAHMMMA President Bob Madden.

Environmental Management program recognized

A county program that inspects hazardous waste generated by local businesses has been named the Small Quantity Generator Program of the year by the Florida chapter of the North American Hazardous Materials Management Association.

County employees **Tom Craft** and **Dale Peterson**, who oversee the program for Volusia County's Environmental Management Division, accepted the award during the state conference in May.

The Small Quantity Generator Notification and Verification Program was established to identify hazardous waste generators, notify them of their responsibilities to store and dispose of the waste, and verify compliance. County staff also provides technical assistance with industrial wastewater issues and pollution prevention strategies.

Businesses that are considered small-quantity generators typically produce 25 to 250 gallons of hazardous waste a month.

The North American Hazardous Materials Management Association, founded in 1993, is dedicated to preventing pollution and reducing hazardous materials entering municipal waste streams from households and businesses.



Environmental Management



WOMAN ON A MISSION – Julie Walters gives clothing and supplies to children in Nicaragua.



Lending a helping hand

Julie Walters spent her last vacation bashing walls, hauling cement, and making new friends.

The New Smyrna Beach library assistant was part of a 16-member mission group that spread goodwill – and concrete – in impoverished Estelí, the third-largest city in Nicaragua. The group, sponsored by the Port Orange Presbyterian Church, visited the city in July 2012 to enlarge a youth assembly building, deliver supplies and lead youth bible camps.

They also offered group counseling sessions to women to help them take on greater leadership roles with their families and society.

"It was a real eye-opener," Walters said. "I learned about Nicaraguan culture, saw incredible poverty, and realized how good we have it in the United States."

She plans to return to Estelí next summer.

"I couldn't imagine spending my vacation doing anything else," she said.



BEST ON THE BEACH – Volusia County lifeguards recently won their third consecutive Battle of the Beach in Jacksonville, defeating 43 other teams. Our six-man team swam a half-mile; did two 50-yard-military crawls; and completed 1,000 push-ups, 1,000 sit-ups and 500 pull-ups. Pictured from left are Cameron Janelle, Anthony Skinner, Derek Taylor, Jonathan Buckman, Marc Rodriguez and Arnold Kramer.

In the spotlight



Name: Scott Bowen

Job: As an Information Technology section manager, he manages the county's DeLand data center with more than 260 installed servers. Scott also is responsible for server strategy and associated equipment acquisitions and is overseeing the renovation of the old Emergency Operations Center into a new eastside data center.

Number of years with the county: 33

Hometown: Daytona Beach

What he likes about his job: "Information Technology exposes me to all the departments," he said. "I enjoy the resulting challenges, technologies, facility planning, working with a variety of people, and above all else, my team."

How he spends his spare time: Scott is a skilled woodworker and an able electrician, metal worker and plumber. He and his wife, Vicky, enjoy fishing and cruising on their boats. In fact, they've spent 445 nights on their boats in the last 12 years! They also ride Harleys together.



Around the County



FIRST-CLASS STAFF – Corrections Director Dr. Marilyn Chandler Ford, left, congratulates Mary West, Officer D. Belton and Officer J. Foss.

Corrections Division honors top staff

Working for Volusia County's Corrections Division is one of the most demanding jobs in the county, requiring capable, committed and patient staff and officers.

The 300-plus employees are tasked with controlling inmates while encouraging them to develop the skills and attitudes necessary to become law-abiding and productive citizens after their release.

Twice a year, the Corrections Division honors its own by presenting awards to outstanding employees.

In May, top honors went to:

- Inventory Control Specialist **Mary West**, employee of the shift
- Officer **J. Foss**, officer of the shift for the Volusia County Correctional Facility
- Officer **D. Belton**, officer of the shift for the Volusia County Branch Jail
- **Bennie Askew**, contract employee of the shift

"We appreciate the efforts of all our correctional officers and staff," said Corrections Director **Marilyn Chandler Ford**. "They truly serve the community by protecting the public and making a difference in inmates' lives."



Retirements

April

Jack Driskell, Beach Safety – 36 years
Wanda Edwards, Corrections – 24 years
Craig Kenyon, Sheriff's Office – 24 years
Anthony Lombardo, Sheriff's Office – 10 years
Charles Lyons, Property Appraiser's Office – 14 years
Frederick "Marty" Roberts, Sheriff's Office – 25 years
Valerie Thompson, Sheriff's Office – 21 years

May

Marie Edwards, Corrections – 23 years
Mary Gaspary, Library Services – 39 years
Raymond Gray, Corrections – 14 years
Larry Jacobs, Road and Bridge – 33 years
Thomas McAllister, Corrections – 20 years
MaryMichel Rovniak, Building and Zoning – 34 years
Paul Thomas, Sheriff's Office – 24 years
Sue Whittaker, County Manager's Office – 23 years

June

Harold Cram, Sheriff's Office – 10 years
Sheryl Fritinger, Corrections – 11 years
Timothy Herring, Sheriff's Office – 34 years
Larry Lewis, Sheriff's Office – 18 years
Gary Muench, Road and Bridge – 35 years
Gary Stephan, Property Appraiser's Office – 40 years



WATERMELON ROYALTY – Florida Watermelon Queen Brandi Harrison, left, and National Watermelon Queen Amber Nolin, right, help Extension Agent Karen Stauderman celebrate Watermelon Day at the Volusia County Farmers Market. The event, coordinated by the Extension, was fun for kids of all ages as locals took part in watermelon-eating and seed-spitting contests.



LIFESAVERS – Sheriff Johnson is pictured with Sgt. Michael Odgers, left, and Deputy Bryon Poteralski after presenting them the Medal of Valor for saving a baby from a burning house.

Two deputies awarded medals for saving baby

To Sgt. **Mike Odgers** and Deputy **Bryon Poteralski**, they were just doing their jobs and had the good fortune to be in the right place at the right time. But to everyone else, the two deputies who risked their lives to save a baby from a burning house are bona fide heroes.

During a recent awards ceremony, Sheriff **Ben Johnson** bestowed the agency's second highest honor, the Medal of Valor, upon Odgers and Poteralski in recognition of their quick and brave actions that saved the life of a 1-year-old girl. It was the morning of March 12, and the house on Bath Street in Deltona was engulfed in smoke and flames. Another couple of minutes without intervention, and the child almost certainly would have perished.

"This child's life would have been gone," remarked Sheriff Johnson. "I just can't say enough good about both of you for the job you did." And the assembled audience of co-workers obviously agreed, giving the two deputies a rousing standing ovation.

Odgers and Poteralski were among the first to arrive at the scene of the fire. They were initially told that all the occupants had made it out of the house. But suddenly, horror gripped the scene as the family realized their 1-year-old niece was still inside. Without a moment to spare, Odgers rushed through a rear door, but was forced to retreat after being overcome by extreme heat and heavy smoke. That's when Poteralski broke out a bedroom window, climbed in,

felt his way around the smoke-filled room and found the baby's crib with the child inside. He scooped up the seemingly lifeless baby and shielded her from the smoke while passing her out the window to Odgers. Covered in soot and mucus, the motionless baby was rushed to awaiting paramedics for medical treatment for smoke inhalation and minor burns and has since recovered.

"Sergeant Odgers and Deputy Poteralski acted with exceptional courage and bravery," read the citation that accompanied the medals. "Their actions reflect great credit upon themselves and the Volusia County Sheriff's Office."

Sheriff Johnson capped off the ceremony by thanking the deputies for a job well done, chalking up their actions to a combination of bravery, humility and good training.

"Thank you very much," Sheriff Johnson told the deputies. "Thanks from the bottom of all of our hearts."

— **Gary Davidson, Volusia County Sheriff's Office**



MOVIN' ON UP – Sheriff Ben Johnson poses with three deputies he recently promoted. From left to right are Sgt. Richard LeCates, Lt. Joseph Gallagher, Sheriff Johnson and Sgt. Brodie Hughes.

Movers and shakers



John Zaragoza, who has 35 years of experience in emergency medical services, has been named director of EVAC, the county's emergency medical services transport division. EVAC, which has 46 ambulances and 233 employees, responds to more than 75,000 calls a year. Previously, Zaragoza directed the Emergency Medical Services

Division in Greenville, S.C., and was the manager of pre-hospital care services for the South Hills Health System in Pittsburgh. He has a bachelor's degree in business administration from Robert Morris University in Coraopolis, Pa.



Brent D. Schlapper, D.O., MRO, FACOPF, the occupational health physician in the Personnel Division for 13 years, recently requalified as a certified medical review officer. Dr. Schlapper was certified by the Medical Review Officer Certification Council, an independent physician-based certifying body that conducts an extensive application process and

written examination to identify licensed physicians with the highest professional standards of medical expertise and practical skills necessary to evaluate drug and alcohol test results in public and private sectors of the workplace.



Jim Judge is the county's new emergency management director. On a year-round basis, the division addresses preparations for evacuations, mass casualties, terrorism, natural disasters, shelters and recovery efforts.

Judge has worked in emergency medical services for 41 years, most recently as executive

director of Lake Emergency Medical Services in Mount Dora. He has a bachelor's degree in public administration from Barry University, Miami, and is a certified emergency manager.



Jennifer Coto, the former Central Florida business development manager for Visit Florida, has joined the Ocean Center as sales manager. Her 30 years of tourism sales experience includes working locally at the LPGA Headquarters, the Plaza Resort and Spa, and the Daytona Beach Convention and Visitors Bureau. In her new job, Coto is

responsible for securing convention business from association groups.



Community Assistance Director **Dona DeMarsh Butler** has been elected to the 33-member Board of Governors of the United Way of Florida. DeMarsh Butler has worked for Volusia County for 22 years and has been volunteering with the United Way since 1991. She has a bachelor's degree in American studies from Stetson University

and a master's degree in public administration from the University of Florida.



Jamie Fish is now a certified administrator of public parking, having completed a rigorous program developed by the International Parking Institute in partnership with the University of Virginia. This is the industry's premier professional credential. Fish, a six-year county employee, manages the Volusia County Parking Garage in Daytona Beach.

Do you know a mover and shaker?

Please contact Pat Kuehn in Community Information at pkuehn@volusia.org with the details.