

September
2009

PORTSMOUTH SHERIFF'S OFFICE

Community Advisor



Stormwater drainage ?

South Fairview Heights and Loxley Place in Portsmouth have a serious flooding problem every time it rains. Sheriff Watson was at a South Fairview Heights Civic League Meeting last week and heard the complaints of some citizens. The subject is all too familiar to us, who live in some low lying areas of Portsmouth, with poor stormwater drainage. The Sheriff was told that S. Fairview Heights has been going around with the City's red tape in reference to this problem for the last seven years. The City came out several times with a pipe pressure washer truck to clear the drains, but they never blew out all the pipes, going down the street to the main drain ditch. This did not resolve the problem, still left some of the pipes clogged up, and the neighborhood badly flooded during the recent rains. When the sheriff found out that a family with a special needs child lives there and the emergency medical unit would not have made it through the high water, he made several calls to the City. Sheriff Watson's statement was; those people pay for stormwater drainage and they should have it. He arranged for an inmate work crew to be out there at the same time as the pipe pressure washer truck. The inmates cleared all the brush and made it easier for the city workers to do their job. The city employees came back after lunch to finish blowing all the pipes. The PSO inmates will dig out the ditches all the way down Marlboro Road to the main ditch and then the Sheriff will call the City's truck back to blow the pipes once again to ensure good drainage. We already heard back from the neighbors and Civic League and they are extremely happy about the outcome. Kudos to the work crew, those guys worked hard and did a really good job. However, the flooding is still on going and the Sheriff walked the whole ditch. He found that it drains into Bide-A-Wee Golf Course as an overflow. There is no actual drainage for this ditch. Sheriff Watson will take this issue to the City and in front of City Council.

If you have an issue in your area, please do not hesitate to contact our office, or call Sheriff Watson. Invite him to your meetings. He will always lend a helping hand and his motto is: "The people put me in office to work for them. However, if I do not know about a problem, I cannot eliminate it."

Wilson Ward Civic League brought an issue to the Sheriff's attention. He was informed they have tried for three years to get a sign for their neighborhood, with no avail from the City. Sheriff Watson is currently working on getting a sign to identify the Douglass Park Community.



PSO inmates hard at work digging.

Children's Performance Workshop

Children's Performance Workshop is a United Way agency and a non-profit organization fighting child abuse. These people are going around in elementary schools, with the marionette production "Simon Says, Just Tell" teaching children how to recognize, avoid and disclose sexual abuse to trained professionals, or their parents. The puppet show is handled in a very sensitive way, but the message comes out loud and clear. The main character is a little green guy (Simon) and he represents children's innermost feelings and instincts. Simon will show up at the right time to help children in their most difficult times. He let's the children know it is their body to say "NO" and it is okay to tell. Nothing bad will happen to them, their friends, or family, if they confide to their parents, school counselor, or teacher. I visited the puppet show a couple of weeks ago it was very entertaining, had some very catchy tunes for kids, and a very strong message. It has the promise to be effective.

Statistics show that...1 in every 4 girls and 1 in every 5 boys will be sexually abused before the age of 18.

New York Life insurance is a sponsor of this and they have kicked off a campaign to raise funds to eliminate global child abuse. The campaign is called "Simon says..... donate \$1".

If you are interested in learning more about this, please visit their website at: www.stopabuse.com.



Cowboy R. A. Strickland



If you have been recently at a parade or PSO event, you may have seen Mr. Roscoe Strickland. He is a little elderly man, who is full of good spirits and stories. He has committed his whole life to being a LEO and created a small museum in his backyard, which is dedicated to Law Enforcement and his long career. The Sheriff and the staff of the PSO have adopted him and he became a honorary Deputy. Mr. Strickland was born in 1921 and joined the Sheriff's Office in Manatee County Florida as a young man. He worked as a Mounted Patrol Deputy until he got married in 1968. His bride wanted to move back to Virginia and so they did. He hired on with the →

Portsmouth Police Department as an Auxiliary Officer for the mounted patrol and remained there until former Chief Boone retired. Mr. Strickland moved to Wilson, NC, where he trained horses and riders for the County Sheriff's Office and their Police Department for 10 years and also helped out in Charlesburg with their Police Department. In his long (45 years) career in the LEO community, he has been a dutiful servant of the public. He has a lingering love for the profession and horses up to today. If you see him around, stop to say hello to him. When in conversation with him you will find out soon, what a wonderful, colorful man he is. I have submitted his story to WTKR and they have aired a segment on him, in People Taking Action. He was very pleased, and I truly believe that so much dedication deserves recognition.

Coaches needed!



COED FLAG FOOTBALL and CHEERLEADING is sponsored by Church and Community in Action and organized by some community activists. Mr. Tyrone Hines, Corey Blizzard, and some others, pounded the pavement to get donations and sponsors for the teams. All this is being put together in hopes to keep children off our streets, by giving them access to constructive after school activities. So far they have collected enough money for 14 teams. Several local officials, businesses, churches, and citizens have donated generously.

Now they are looking for men and women to coach and mentor those kids. The Children are between the ages of 5 and 12 years and for the cheerleading the age range is from 3 to 12 years. They have two age groups for Flag Football. First group are children between 5 to 8 years, and the second group is going to be 9 to 12 years of age. If you are interested in some volunteer coaching, please contact: Corey Blizzard at 320-7815 or Tyrone Hines at 483-8271.



Civil Process Division



The Civil Process Division (CPD) is responsible for the service of all court papers, evictions, levies, and repossessions. Nevertheless, the deputies in this division are multitasking, as they are trained in the many different aspects of duty to the community, and in the last year and a half they have also executed seizure warrants for the Portsmouth City Treasurer's Office. The collection of these outstanding debts are the responsibility of the locality (City collections, Police Department) and do not fall under the duties of the Sheriff's Office. The City Treasurer contacted the Sheriff and asked if our agency could assist with our resources to recover those otherwise lost funds. Those seizures are the response for delinquent property taxes and in collecting those outstanding balances, we are bringing money back into the City's revenues. The deputies will visit the debtor to give notice and to retrieve the outstanding balance. —————>

If the party does not make any arrangements with the City Treasurer's Office, the deputy will return and put a boot on the vehicle in question. This makes the vehicle inoperable and will not allow the debtor to use it. As you can imagine, it does bring the desired response. They will arrange to settle their debt, or pay. Nobody likes taxes, but if we have to pay them, so should everybody else. The debtor can make payment arrangements or make payment in full. I would like to give you an example.

During the time period of February 19, 2009 through August 6, 2009 the CPD has received seizure warrants in the amount of \$144,074.72 and was able to recover \$112,939.99. This is money which would be not be available to city finances, if it was not for the efforts of Sheriff Bill Watson, and the Portsmouth Sheriff's Office.

Portsmouth City Jail



The Portsmouth City Jail as so many other correctional institutions in our Country, faces serious over crowding. The Jail was built in 1969 to house 198 inmates and started operating in 1970. Over the past decades, as crime has increased, so has the population in our jails. We house on average 510 to 560 inmates with the numbers fluctuating daily. Portsmouth also has a contract with the Hampton Roads Regional Jail to house an additional 250 inmates for our City. When Sheriff Watson took office in 2006, he had our jail painted pink and gray. This was humorous to some of us and a joke amongst deputies. Our Sheriff's reason for this was aggression control in our jail population and it works. A study was performed on this subject and it involved

several young men lifting weights. They were in a room with white walls and given the task to lift 100lbs. and 140lbs. of free weights. All the men were able to lift the amount of weights with ease. Then they were taken in a room with pink painted walls, most of them struggled to lift the 100lbs. weight bar. It has a physiological effect and it is supposed to be soothing. The Sheriff has made believers out of us and we have very few incidents in the jail population. The inmates have just repainted some of the floors in the jail and however unusual the color of choice may be, it has the desired influence on our inmates.



7th Floor of the PSO Jail



The Sheriff's Office and Charities

A lot of citizens may not know this, but the Sheriffs Office is involved amongst other things, for the community, with many different charities throughout the year. We have raised literally thousand upon thousands of dollars over the years, for the March of Dimes, Special Olympics, Muscular Dystrophy Association, United Way, and the American Cancer Society. Our latest venture is Making Strides Against Breast Cancer. →



Portsmouth Sheriff's Office and the Public Defender's Office Would like to invite you to join their Team "PINK JUSTICE" in MAKING STRIDES AGAINST BREAST CANCER

We are planning several fundraising events and have established a website. To visit the website, please type Making Strides in your search engine and then click on the link. Once the homepage for Making Strides comes up, select the State of Virginia, then click on the 2009 Hampton Roads event (Oct. 3rd.). Select sign up, then Join a Team. Type in the Team Name box "Pink Justice" and then search, scroll down to Pink Justice and click on that.

Cancer is a horrible disease which doesn't discriminate against age, race, sex, religion, or nationality. We can all be invaded by those still deadly cells, or be touched by cancer, through family, friends, or co-workers, who are fighting the disease. Here is your chance to become an activist against cancer and for cancer research. With your help we can raise funds, educate others on the importance of early detection, and help the American Cancer Society further their research. We can go out and talk about the importance of annual mammograms and self examinations, share our/your stories with others, and motivate people to help and speak to others, as we have with them. This could start a chain reaction and involve more people each year for the good cause of finding a cure. Think about yourself, your children, and all the loved ones in your life, and take the first step toward Making Strides.



We have invited **Sentara's Mobile Mammography** Unit to come to Portsmouth. It will be in the parking lot of the **Walmart Store on Frederick Boulevard, September 18, and October 12, from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.** Screenings, such as mammograms, support early detection and, often, more successful treatment of breast cancer. **Appointments can take as little as 15 minutes and can be made by calling 1-800-Sentara. Please have your insurance card with you at the time of your appointment.** The personnel of the Mobile Mammography Unit can screen 15-24 patients per day.

If you are interested in participating in a true team effort, please call Lt. Karin Johnson (449-7631) or Sgt. Darryl Johnson (449-7167). We will be on site representing our team and selling t-shirts.

If you would like to support us with the purchase of a t-shirt please call Lt. Johnson at 393-5461. These t-shirts are \$12 each and all the proceeds will go to the American Cancer Society for the Making Strides Campaign. They come in light grey and white, with sizes ranging from medium to xx-large.



Front view of grey T-shirt.



Back view of white T-shirt.

Griff's Restaurant and Sports Bar

We all know about the joke on law enforcement professionals. They like donuts....., oh, well, some of us do! What we do know, is value and good food! We spend a lot of time working in the community, which means, we eat on the go, or stop in a restaurant to eat. This makes us very familiar with the establishments in our City. For most of us, value is the key, because we do not make a lot of money. Just like everyone else we want a lot for our penny, especially in today's economy. However, it has to taste good too, or we will not be back! With this said, it brings me to a little place on the corner of Victory and Portsmouth Boulevard. Griff's Restaurant is one of those jewels in our City. They offer a great lunch menu, huge portions, low prices, and it is good ole home cooking. Their daily specials are so good, that they literally sell out quickly. So if you get there at 1:30, you may have to order from the menu. On any given day, you can drive by there and you will see a lot of police and sheriff's cars there for lunch. The personnel are friendly, remember you, and the service is fast. That is one more thing we are looking for, as we can't spend a lot of time away from our jobs and have to be on the go! The owner of the restaurant is working on a second Griff's Restaurant to open in the 500 block of High Street. He told me recently that he is looking for a grand opening toward the middle or end of September of this year. It will be a wonderful addition to the downtown corridor. I am also told, that it is a good place in the evening, to watch a game on tv and to have a beer with friends. The place has two pool tables and a total of 22 televisions. All in all a great place to come to. Check it out !

They like donuts....., oh, well, some of us do!



Curfew and Truancy

Under the orders of Sheriff Bill Watson, the Community Enforcement Unit (CEU) has started to enforce the curfew for minors. The CEU is working with the Police Department on these issues. Minor's will be picked up and taken to their homes, if they are out in public, without an adult or written permission from a parent, between the hours of 11:00 p.m to 5:00 a.m.. We are hoping to reduce juvenile delinquency, encourage parents' responsibility, and we are in general, concerned for the welfare and safety of minors on our streets at nights.

State law references: Authority to adopt curfew for minors, Code of Virginia, § 15.2-926; violations disposed of as provided in Code of Virginia, §§ 16.1-278.4, 16.1-278.5.

Section 15.133.4 of the Code of Virginia authorizes any city or town to "prohibit minors who are not attended by their parents from frequenting or being in public places whether on public or private property at such times as the governing body deems proper."² The authority delegated to a town pursuant to § 15.133.4 must, of course, be exercised within constitutional bounds.

Code of Ordinances, Portsmouth, Virginia: Sec. 24-3. Curfew for minors.

With school starting, the Sheriff's Office will also enforce the Truancy Laws and will pick up minors, who are wandering the streets, when they should be in school. These children will be delivered to the school and left with the principal of the institution. **Records will be kept on the school's and offenders.**

State law references: Law-enforcement officers and truant children, Code of Virginia, § 22.1-266; (Code 1950, § 22-275.11:1; 1976, c. 692; 1978, c. 215; 1980, c. 559; 1999, cc. 395, 1023; 2001, cc. 688, 820.)



Community Service Unit

The Community Service Unit (CSU) heads most programs which benefit the citizens of Portsmouth, such as Project Lifesaver, Crime Prevention, Ident-A-Kid, Security Surveys, Elderly Watch, Meals on Wheels support, Operation H.E.A.T. (Help Eliminate Auto Theft), Scared Straight and is active with TRIAD/SALT Council. The Deputies in this Unit are scheduling events throughout Portsmouth with churches, civic leagues and community groups to educate children and adults in these fields. Major D. Clemons is in charge of this division and can be reached at 757-686-2565. The CSU is very active in the Community and is attending as many events as possible. For information on any of these services, please do not hesitate to contact our office. These programs were designed with the citizens in mind and you are welcome to take advantage of them. Especially the Senior Watch, Scared Straight, and the Ident-A-Kid are sought after and praised by many residents of our City.



Winter is coming soon!



Sheriff Watson started to offer FREE FIREWOOD last year, to seniors on fixed incomes, veterans, and people who have lost their employment, due to the economy and downsizing of businesses. We will do this again this year and will hopefully help out some people in need. The wood comes from downed trees throughout our City. The Sheriff's Office has cut and hauled those trees away. Now this wood is at the work center and is ready to be delivered to anyone who needs assistance. The wood is mostly oak and good for all wood burning stoves, or fireplaces. If you would like to receive some of this wood, please call Captain Ashberry at 393-5280, he will make arrangements with you. We will bring it to your house and even stack it for you.

Rainy August

This years August was the rainiest month on record for the last three years. There are many areas in Tidewater which will flood with heavy rains. Norfolk, Virginia Beach, Chesapeake, and Portsmouth, have a lot of low lying spots. Downtown Portsmouth is horrible, when it comes to flooding, but sometimes you just

have to approach certain issues with a little humor. The areas of City Hall, Courts, P.P.D. and the Jail is also suffering with rising waters. This sparked the humor of Sgt. Lew Williams, who works for the Portsmouth Sheriff's Office, and is a very talented cartoonist. He is an instructor in our training academy and draws cartoons for our monthly departmental newsletter. This newsletter is not for public dissemination, but keeps our staff informed on the more personal and departmental issues of our personnel. The cartoon he did for our September issue was very funny and fitting, this is why I chose to share his talent with you in the Advisor.



Lieutenant, I really hate making rounds in the basement when it's raining!!!

Compliments of : *Sgt. L. Williams*

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