

# Sheriff Darnell's Six Months in Office Report November 2006 to May 2007



Sheriff Darnell was elected into office on November 7, 2006.

The report that follows is a "Six Month Accomplishment" report and reflects the changes, additions and expectations of the Alachua County Sheriff's Office. The report, while quite detailed, only highlights some of the more significant accomplishments she has incorporated as the new leader of this five "C" Criminal law enforcement, Court security, Civil, Communications, and Corrections agency. The men and women of the Alachua County Sheriff's Office have contributed in many ways to each of these accomplishments and are being acknowledged for their professionalism, dedication and loyalty to serving all citizens of Alachua County.

This report as well as future reports will be published on the Alachua County Sheriff's Office website at [www.alachuacountysheriff.org](http://www.alachuacountysheriff.org)  
Copies are also available by contacting the Public Information Office at 352-334-4050.

## **“MODEL THE WAY”** (National Sheriff’s Institute, (NSI) - 2007)

*“The task of the leader is to get his/her people from where they are to where they have not been.” – Henry Kissinger*

### **Guiding the Transition...**

- **The Sheriff met individually with all command staff on the 5 most important issues they are facing and the 3 most important issues on which they believe the agency should focus. (November 2006)**
- **The Sheriff also met individually between November 06 and January 07 with:**
  - **All Board of County Commissioners**
  - **County Manager**
  - **Most of the Local Police Chiefs (Gainesville Police Department, University Police Department, Waldo)**
  - **Fire Chiefs (Alachua County Fire Rescue and Gainesville Fire Rescue)**
  - **Resident Agent in Charge for the Florida Department of Law Enforcement**
  - **Resident Agent in Charge for the Drug Enforcement Agency**
  - **Resident Agent in Charge and Special Agent in Charge for the Federal Bureau of Investigations**
  - **Major and Captain for the Florida Highway Patrol**
  - **City Manager and Mayor, City of Newberry**
  - **City Manager City of High Springs**
  - **City Manager City of Archer**
  - **City Manager and Mayor City of Alachua**
  - **City Manager and Mayor City of Waldo**
  - **City Manager and Mayor City of Micanopy**
  - **City Manager and Mayor City of LaCrosse**

*“People do not follow uncommitted leaders. Commitment can be displayed in a full range of matters to include the work hours you choose to maintain, how you work to improve your abilities, or what you do for your fellow workers at personal sacrifice.” – Stephen Gregg, Chairman and CEO of Ethix Corp.*

**Leadership Education Starts at the Top but is Shared with the Employees...**

- Sheriff completed handgun and shotgun qualifications (December 18, 2006 and January 2, 2007)
- Sheriff attended the Florida Sheriff’s Association (FSA) Mid-Winter Conference (January 28-31, 2007)
- Sheriff attended meetings with the FSA as a Legislative Lobby for FSA, Tallahassee (March 12-14, 2007)
- Sheriff attended the National Institute of Sheriff’s Academy in Boulder, Colorado, along with a group of first term Sheriffs from around the nation. (March 18-25, 2007)
- Sheriff was appointed chair by Chief Judge Fredrick Smith to two subcommittees of the Public Safety Coordinating Council re: jail overcrowding.
- Cpt. Mike Fellows was selected to attend the next FBI National Academy Class
- Lt. Lybarger and Lt. Swallows were selected to attend the St. Leo Command School
- Lt. Debra Hill and Lt. Joel DeCoursey were selected to attend the NOBLE Conference and to become agency representative members.

## **“ENABLE OTHERS”** (NSI – 2007)

*Change is the law of life and those who look only to the past or present are certain to miss the future.” – John F. Kennedy*

### **The Organizational Restructuring...**

The Sheriff implemented Phase 1 of the Reorganization in February 2007. The restructuring was limited to the Law Enforcement side of ACSO and the Combined Communications Center reorganization. Some Division and Bureau names were changed to reflect the new organization. The most significant changes were:

- **Eliminated Acting positions – Acting Major of the Department of Operations and Acting Captain of the Office of Professional Standards, and Acting Lieutenant of the Public Information Office**
- **Assigned additional personnel to the Narcotics Unit and working to finalize a formal combined unit (currently co-located) with the Gainesville Police Department (GPD), University Police Department (UPD) and the Florida Department of Law Enforcement (FDLE). This represents the first time in nine (9) years that GPD and ACSO have formally worked together.**
- **Created a new Bureau –Trauma Intervention and Special Services Division, to expand crime victim service and advocacy; to create services for employees who are subjected to trauma as a course of their work and to enhance community based outreach programs, especially to underserved populations, i.e., elders, crime victims, minorities and youth, etc.**

## **“INSPIRE A SHARED VISION” (NSI – 2007)**

*“In the last analysis, what we are communicates far more eloquently than anything we say or do.” – Stephen Covey*

### **Communicating the Sheriff’s message...**

- Held an introduction meeting with all staff support (December 11, 2006)
- Met with ASO, Courthouse, DOJ, Uniformed Patrol, Detective personnel through shift changes and their staff meetings
- Began immediately posting all Command Staff meeting minutes at ASO headquarters and the DOJ for all employees to have access to the decisions and information discussed at these meetings.
- Held Employee Open Forums at ASO Headquarters and the Department of Jail (February 20<sup>th</sup>, 23<sup>rd</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup>)
- Created Civilian and Advisory Teams, 10 members each that will meet quarterly to discuss issues in an informal setting (1<sup>st</sup> meetings, March 1<sup>st</sup> and March 8<sup>th</sup>)
- Due to potentially large budget cuts reference possible property tax reforms, the Sheriff provided a “Fiscal Statement” to all employees. Included in that statement was information on recent and upcoming disciplinary issues that will continue to make it necessary to be fiscally responsible in every aspect of our service to the citizens. This Fiscal and Office of Professional Standards (OPS) message was delivered personally by the Sheriff and Chief Deputy in 13 shift briefings held throughout a five day period.

*“Leadership must be based on goodwill. Goodwill does not mean posturing and least of all, pandering to the mob. It means obvious and wholehearted commitment to helping followers.” – Admiral James B. Stockdale*

### **A Commitment to the Community...**

The Sheriff established the Children’s Alliance on November 16, 2007, after being approached by a number of children advocates. This Alliance’s vision is to create a community that values all children and families by supporting agencies which provide services which nurture the family environment so that children grow up to be healthy, productive citizens. The charge of the alliance is to identify gaps and surpluses within Alachua

**County and to serve as a collaborating force to focus efforts on behalf of families and youth of our communities.**

**Much of the role of Sheriff, by its very nature, is seen as continuous political campaigning. However, the Sheriff has been an advocate for communities in Alachua County for a career lifetime. Personal involvement in the events listed below are simply a reinforcement of that commitment to serve the people of her community.**

- **NAACP Panelist at Town Hall Meeting** 12/06
- **Alachua Parade** 12/9/06
- **Newberry Christmas Parade** 12/16/06
- **Exchange Club Speech** 12/21/06 & 3/7/07
- **Operation Santa Drop for Children** 12/22/06
- **Sheriff's Youth Ranch Christmas ASO Host** 12/22/06
- **Rotary Club Speech** 1/3/07
- **Gainesville Builders Association Speech** 1/9/07
- **Chamber of Commerce Executive Board** 1/11/07
- **MLK March** 1/15/07
- **Newberry Chamber Banquet and Speech** 1/18/07
- **Lions Club of Alachua** 1/25/07
- **Speaker at Spring Forest NCW** 2/8/07
- **Hosted Meridian Behavioral Cirque Event** 2/9/07
- **Speech to SALT Seniors Group** 2/15/07
- **Strut Your Mutt Animal Fundraiser** 2/23/07
- **Jr. League Tour of Kitchens Fundraiser** 2/24/07
- **Ebony Appreciation Banquet** 2/25/07
- **India Fest Annual Event Speech** 3/3/07
- **AG's Crime Prevention Class Welcome** 3/5/07
- **Youth Baseball Opening Ceremonies Alachua** 3/17/07
- **SFCC Women's History Month Speech** 3/27/07
- **FL Council on Crime and Delinquency Speech** 3/30/07
- **Hats, Hearts and Handbags Girls Club Fundraiser** 4/13/07
- **FL Commission on the Status of Women Speech** 4/28/07
- **Career Day at St. Francis High School** 5/3/07
- **Pilot Club Fashion Show for Project Lifesaver** 5/5/07
  
- **In cooperation with UPD and GPD, we successfully managed crowd control during two National Championship Celebrations.**
- **We have made significant donations to the following charitable organizations: Child Advocacy Center, House of Hope, Gainesville Commission on the Status of Women, Corner Drug Store and Fishing for Success (UF).**
- **\$5,000 donation to Crime Stoppers award for the Radcliffe homicides (Gainesville Police Department case)**

## **“ENCOURAGE THE HEART”** (NSI – 2007)

*Before you are a leader, success is all about growing yourself. When you become a leader, success is all about growing others.” – Jack Welch*

**Our employees and agency morale make us what we are...**

- Agency Oath of Office Ceremonies format was revamped to include a more formal ceremony with invitations to all law enforcement, public officials, retirees, family members; an Oath of Ethics is now included and certificates are presented to the recipients at the time of the Oath. Jail staff Oaths are now also held in the ASO headquarters to bring agency awareness and participation with both law enforcement and corrections.
- Employees solicited and selected to be agency representatives for: Quarterly Blood Drives, March of Dimes Team Captains and United Way Chairs
- Sworn and Civilian Employee Advisory Teams were formed from solicitation of employees interested in serving on these Sheriff teams
- “Serving Since Pins” ordered for uniformed personnel to replace uniform service stripes.
- The first Compensation and Salary Survey in the history of ACSO was conducted in February 2007, with results anticipated in late Summer.
- Certificates of Completion for all employees who successfully complete their probationary period of employment were created.
- Wellness Programs enhanced through County programs (Sheriff was also selected as the County’s Wellness Champion). Walking Paths have been completed inside and outside of the ASO headquarters facility. Walk at Work event days will be scheduled throughout the year.

## **“CHALLENGE THE PROCESS”** (NSI – 2007)

*“Desire is the key to motivation, but it’s determination and commitment to an unrelenting pursuit of your goal – a commitment to excellence – that will enable you to attain the success you seek.” – Mario Andretti*

### **Improving our services...**

- Established an Interagency Agreement with the Gainesville Police Department, University Police Department and the Florida Department of Law Enforcement and created a Multi-Agency Narcotics Unit where all agencies are housed.
- Signed Memorandum of Agreement as Partner with HIDTA (High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area)
- Implemented Monthly Municipal Reports that are presented by Command Staff and the Sheriff at designated City Commission meetings for Alachua, Archer, Hawthorne, LaCrosse, Micanopy, Newberry and Waldo. This will be an ongoing process throughout the Sheriff’s venue but may be amended reference Municipal Services Taxing Unit (MSTU) participation.
- Implementation of a new automated pawn shop reporting system.
- Policy Directives that have been reviewed and/or amended during this first six month period include:
  - 1) Uniforms and Personal Appearance
  - 2) Funeral Escorts
  - 3) First Appearance Visitors and Jail Procedure for Courtroom
  - 4) Disciplinary Suspension and Termination-Receipt of Department Equipment
  - 5) Rescission of Sheriff Star Vehicle Decals from Personal Vehicles
  - 6) Comp Time
  - 7) Attendance Recording (requires command staff documentation of work week)
  - 8) Physical Agility Test (currently under review-moratorium placed until review complete)

#### **Purchases made in the past six months include:**

- 1) 25 Digital wireless in-car video systems (replacing old analog)
- 2) 178 laptops
- 3) New Glocks (firearms replacement from forfeiture funds)
- 4) 51 replacement vehicles
- 5) New AFIS (Automated Fingerprint System) \$70,000 from law enforcement contraband forfeiture trust fund monies

***“Motivation is the art of getting people to do what you want them to do because they want to do it.” – Dwight Eisenhower***

**There is no limit to what can be achieved...**

- Since November 2006, we have sworn in 17 Detention Officers, 7 Detention Deputies and 9 Deputy Sheriffs and hired 26 civilians and 7 Telecommunicator positions.
- We have made a total of 38 internal promotions during this six month period.
- We are actively recruiting at minority colleges for the first time in over a decade to include FL Memorial, FAMU, Bethune Cookman and Edward Waters colleges.
- For the first time in the history of the ACSO, the Police Benevolent Association ratified a union contract to represent Deputies, Sergeants and Lieutenants.  
Note: The Sheriff does not oppose a union environment, as long as the union represents the constituency it serves. The Sheriff will work for employee rights, benefits and programs, however, fiscal responsibility to the citizens must be a part of all decisions.
- Our message is clear to the employees and to the public - we are and will remain an agency of utmost ethics and integrity. The Sheriff expects the best from employees and will accept nothing less.
- The number of terminations for this six month period is 3.
- The number of resignations in lieu of terminations is 4. Resignations during investigations is 1. Terminations due to failure to make probation requirements is 2.
- From November 2006 through April 2007, we have answered over 60,000 Calls For Service.

## **“CHALLENGE THE PROCESS”** (NSI – 2007)

*“People make history and not the other way around. In periods where there is no leadership, society stands still. Progress occurs when courageous, skillful leaders seize the opportunity to change things for the better.” – Harry Truman*

**Change is growth and a necessary part of improvement...**

- A moratorium was placed on the Physical Agility Course pending review of accidents, resignations, etc., to ensure a process that balances wellness, flexibility and strength without causing undue injuries and/or ending a career prematurely.
- A Sheriff’s Order was implemented to cease issuance and display of Sheriff Star Vehicle Decals.
- The Uniform Policy was amended to allow more flexibility for personnel in a less restrictive, yet professional directive.
- A funeral directive created to ensure equity and fairness to the citizens who request law enforcement escorts, while being fiscally responsible to all taxpayers in the use of our resources.
- The agency banking services RFP was awarded to Florida Citizens Bank after a competitive process to ensure the best return on taxpayers’ investment. Bids were limited to local, Alachua County based, banks.

*“Determine that the thing can and shall be done and then we shall find the way.” – Abraham Lincoln*

**The future will bring...**

- Continue efforts to deal with Jail Overcrowding
- Future growth of the city through annexations
- Improved partnerships
- Phase 2 Organizational Structure at ASO and the Jail
- FBI Safe Street Task Force (Violence/Gangs)
- Cold Case Grant/Falsetti Lab
- EOC Computer Station CCC tot Jail
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Wave of Laptops (additional 113 laptops needed)
- Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) On Line