



THE

COLLIER STAR

SHERIFF KEVIN RAMBOSK

FALL 2017

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Pilot Dennis DeRienzo waves to beachgoers from the cabin of a Vietnam-era Huey during a recent flight training exercise. The helicopter has been retrofitted for search-and-rescue missions at the CCSO. Photo by Cpl. Efrain Hernandez/CCSO

New Helicopter Lands At CCSO

On a breezy October afternoon, a small flock of white shore birds raced across the Gulf of Mexico, chased by the inky black shadow of a mechanized bird above.

Pilot Dennis DeRienzo sat on the edge of the open cabin, waving at beachgoers dotting the coast who had looked skyward at the sound of something huge.

Casting the shadow was the newest aircraft to join the Collier County Sheriff's Office fleet, a Bell UH-1H. More commonly known as a Vietnam-era Huey.

The aircraft will be used in a variety of search-and-rescue missions as well as wildfire battles. The need for this kind of aircraft with the ability to carry and dump water was highlighted earlier this year when Golden Gate Estates saw a rash of wildfires damage homes and properties. The Huey has been outfitted with a 240-gallon bucket that will be used to scoop and dump water onto raging fires.

When it comes to search-and-rescue missions, the Huey will do the job of several aircraft and personnel.

In the past, when a hiker was reported missing in the

Everglades, a pilot would have to search the swamps with thermal imaging cameras and spotlights before radioing the location of a victim to deputies on the ground. Sometimes, deputies would have to wait while a helicopter from Miami-Dade Fire Rescue responded with a hoist.

"Instead of spending four hours directing people in, we'll be able to hoist them out ourselves," Lt. Sean Arthur, the Aviation Unit supervisor, said.

The massive chopper was originally built in 1968. In 1971, it reported for its first tour of duty in Vietnam where it was shot and damaged just one month later. It returned to the U.S. for repairs and entered the fray again first with the Federal Bureau of Investigation, then with the U.S. Border Patrol and finally with the U.S. Customs and Border Protection Air and Marine Operations office.

Eventually, the helicopter was sold and the CCSO bought the surplus craft for \$400,000. The agency spent an additional \$350,000 to retrofit the craft and train

deputies to fly it. The upgrades included new floors, upholstery, intercom system, hoist, cargo hook and video cameras as well as a new paint job sporting the green, gold and white found in the CCSO's logo.

The craft can safely carry eight to 10 people and up to 4,000 pounds. Lt. Arthur expects it will be used frequently to aid local agencies in similar search-and-rescue missions.

From the ground, you can hear and see the power of the Huey.

Poised to take off from its launch pad outside the CCSO hangar at Naples Municipal Airport one afternoon in October, a deafening thrum filled the air. The propeller spun with such a force that the craft seemed to be begging to take off; a dog wagging its tail at a ball that has not yet been thrown.

"Checklist is complete," Pilot Edward Henderson said as the craft lifted upward and slid to the left, shoots of grass flattening in its wake.



Dear Friends,

While there is no doubt that Hurricane Irma was a tragic event for many, this storm illustrated that the strength of our community is derived from the many partnerships that exist here in Collier County. Our community - its residents, its businesses, its civic groups, its law enforcement and the rest of its public safety providers - came together and worked together to get through the storm and help restore normalcy. This came as no surprise to me because our community has a history of working together.

Disasters are challenging for any

community and there are still many residents who need help to rebuild their lives in Collier County. In our community we have experienced the best of what can be done by working in partnership with one another.

I also could not be more proud of the dedication and commitment our deputies demonstrated in serving and keeping our community as safe as possible. They displayed bravery, compassion, leadership and persistence throughout the storm event as they worked to keep our community and its residents safe. This was true "service to others before self."

On behalf of the men and women of Collier County Sheriff's Office I would like to thank everyone in Collier County for supporting our agency members and all first responders before, during and after Hurricane Irma.

Yours in a safe community,

Kevin Rambosk
Collier County Sheriff

CCSO Facebook Page Offers Calm in the Storm

"What would we do without you?"

"I just want to say what an awesome job CCSO has done keeping us updated."

"Thanks for all the updates CCSO! Way to go above and beyond!"

These are just a few of the many compliments posted on the Collier County Sheriff's Office Facebook Page in the wake of Hurricane Irma.

Leading up to, during and after the Sept. 10 storm the CCSO Media Relations Bureau members worked around the clock to provide the community with accurate and reliable information in a reassuring tone. And Facebook fans took notice. Between Sept. 8 and Sept. 14, the agency's page had a reach of just under 2 million. In addition, the page received an average of 70 direct messages on Facebook

daily, and some of the individual posts reached more than 200,000 people.

While the Media Relations Bureau was responsible for writing, posting and managing the social media content, they didn't do it in a vacuum. The agency's Aviation Bureau and drone operators provided multiple videos that gave residents an up-close look at damage from the air. This was especially helpful for evacuees and winter residents concerned about their property.

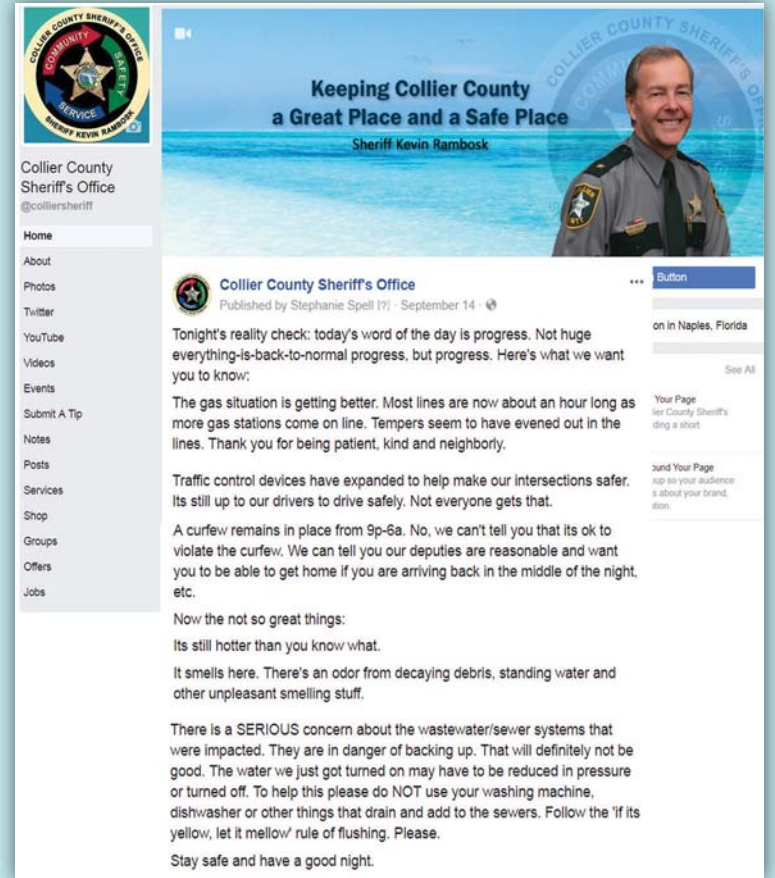
And at the close of each day following Hurricane Irma, CCSO Chief of Community Engagement Stephanie Spell posted a "Reality Check," summarizing the day's storm-related developments in a conversational and witty tone. These daily updates ended up being the most widely read storm-related content on the page. Chief Spell was gratified to

see that the "Reality Check" posts were so well received.

"Sheriff Rambosk believes in being transparent and straightforward with our community," she said. "In this case I knew that our community was under a considerable amount of storm-related stress and that a little lighter tone might be a good thing."

Some local media outlets also took notice, including Florida Weekly, which featured Chief Spell's "Reality Check" in its Sept. 28 issue.

"In a style that was decidedly atypical for anything coming from a public office, post-Irma reality checks provided important information that was succinct and peppered with a good dose of common sense so that people would know exactly what to do. And they would also know they were cared about," the article read.



Cpl. Ashby Earns Distinguished Public Service Award

Since starting her law enforcement career with the Collier County Sheriff's Office in April 2014, Cpl. Natalie Ashby has distinguished herself through her wisdom, courage, leadership, and dedication to the job and community she serves.

Cpl. Ashby was recognized with a prestigious Distinguished Public Service Award For Law Enforcement from the Greater Naples Chamber of Commerce in association with the Naples Daily News. She accepted the award at an Oct. 11 breakfast ceremony at the Hilton Naples attended by many of her CCSO colleagues, including Sheriff Kevin Rambosk.

The Distinguished Public Service Award is given annually to recognize and publicly thank emergency personnel for their extraordinary efforts in keeping Collier County residents safe.

"I cannot tell you how honored I am to receive this award," Cpl. Ashby said. "I just went into work that day and it so happened I was put in a situation but I have to thank the Collier County Sheriff's Office and Kevin Rambosk, our Sheriff, for the amazing training that we get and the support. They're my second family; I've had an immense amount of support from them, and I could not be happier to work for the agency that I work for."

Cpl. Ashby was recognized for her brave efforts the night of Jan. 31, 2016.

While working as a Patrol deputy assigned to Immokalee, Cpl. Ashby responded to a call in a parking lot to investigate an unverified 911 call. Cpl. Ashby observed two men who appeared to be having a dispute. As she began to approach them, she observed one of the men (suspect) push the other one (victim) up against a parked vehicle. The suspect raised his right hand and struck the victim in the chest. Cpl. Ashby yelled at the suspect to stop and identified herself as law enforcement. She then observed the victim fall and the suspect strike him again. She then observed the victim slowly move toward her. He slowly lifted his shirt, revealing two large stab wounds on his abdomen. As the victim moved toward her he yelled, "Ayuda me," which she knew meant "Help me" in Spanish.

Cpl. Ashby then observed a knife in the suspect's right hand. She drew her weapon and ordered the suspect to the ground and to drop the knife. The suspect ignored her commands and charged at her in an aggressive manner as she repeatedly ordered him to stop. Despite these warnings the knife-wielding suspect continued to close the distance between Cpl. Ashby and the victim. At this time, in fear for her life and the life of the victim, she fired at the suspect, ending the threat.

At this time, other deputies arrived and Cpl. Ashby began to render aid to the victim. Backup deputies secured the suspect in handcuffs and began to render



From left, Cpl. Natalie Ashby, Sheriff Kevin Rambosk and Chief Jim Williams are shown following the Distinguished Public Service Awards ceremony at the Hilton Naples on Oct 11. Photo by Kristine Gill/CCSO

aid to him. The victim was transported to the hospital, where he underwent major surgery for his injuries and was later released.

"If she had not intervened and stopped the suspect the victim would not be here today," Bill Barker, Naples Daily News publisher and presenter said. "Cpl.

Ashby's actions were courageous, to say the least, in the face of extreme personal risk with disregard for her own personal safety and to protect the life of the victim."

At the time of the shooting, Cpl. Ashby had been on the job for a little over a year.

"The way she handled this situation displayed wisdom way beyond her years," said Sgt. Thomas Orr, her supervisor in the sheriff's North Naples District

Earlier this year, she received a Medal of Valor, the agency's highest award, for her bravery that night.

Chief Williams Earns Lifetime Achievement Award

A Collier County Sheriff's Office Chief has been recognized for a lifetime of service by the Greater Naples Chamber of Commerce.

Chief James "Jim" Richard Williams received a Lifetime Achievement Award during the annual Distinguished Public Service breakfast at the Hilton Naples on Oct. 11. He was joined by Cpl. Natalie Ashby, who was also recognized for her work with the agency.

The two CCSO agency members were recognized alongside winners in the EMS and firefighter categories.

This is the first time the Chamber has presented a Distinguished Public Service Lifetime Achievement Award.

Vicki Tracy, a longtime friend of Chief Williams and the executive director of sales and marketing for The Arlington, nominated him for the award. She said his selfless nature and can-do attitude earned him her praise and this much deserved recognition.

"He just exemplifies leadership and service in my book," Tracy said. "He's just one of the greatest guys. I think our town

is a better place because of his service."

Chief Williams joined CCSO in June of 1996, fresh off of a military career. He served in the United States Marine Corps from 1966 to 1996, retiring at the grade of Colonel.

His assignments included two combat tours of duty in Vietnam and tours in command, staff, education and training. He served also as the Deputy Inspector General of the Marine Corps and the Secretary of the Navy's Senior Investigator for Marine Corps Matters.

Once with the CCSO, Chief Williams attended the Southwest Florida Criminal Justice Academy where he graduated with honors. He served as the class president and also earned the Bennett Award for outstanding leadership.

Following the academy, he obtained his certification as a law enforcement officer. Two years later Chief Williams was named the agency's inspector. In 2000 he was promoted to captain and began overseeing the newly formed Professional Responsibility and Training Division.

He assumed his current duties as Chief of Investigations in 2006. His responsibilities now include criminal investigations, vice and narcotics, intelligence, homeland security and acting as liaison with federal agencies.

"Chief Williams goes above and beyond to support our community and is often found in the roles that are not part of his professional service," said Naples Daily News Publisher Bill Barker, who presented him with the award. "He will help anyone who needs it no matter what time of day or night. A wonderful asset to this community, for sure. Chief Williams' humbleness and sincerity makes him a fantastic first responder, resident and friend in our community."

Upon accepting his award Wednesday, Chief Williams addressed the crowd briefly.

"It is truly a pleasure to be able to live here and it is absolutely a privilege to be able to serve, and that's the driving factor behind all of it," he said. "Thank you."

CCSO Holds Weeklong Safety Celebration

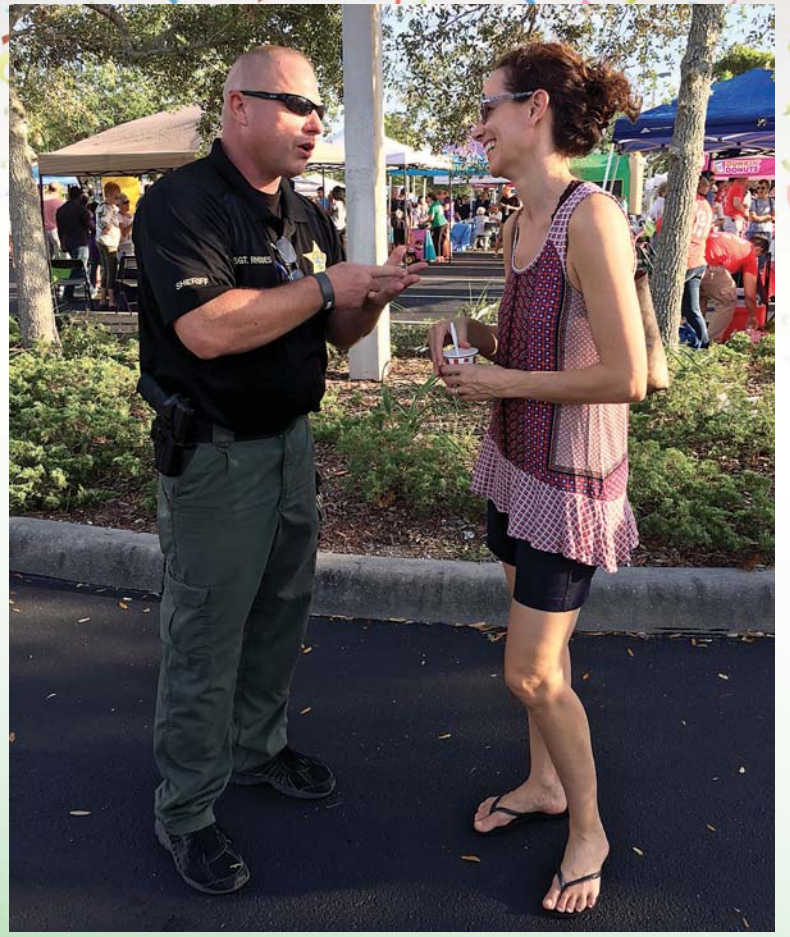
Thousands of people came out in force to attend community celebrations held in observation of the Collier County Sheriff's Office's "Celebrating Safe Communities" initiative Oct. 9-13.

The family-friendly events were designed to heighten crime prevention and drug prevention awareness, generate support for and participation in local anti-crime efforts, and strengthen neighborhood spirit and police-community partnerships.

Events were held in the CCSO's East Naples, Golden Gate, North Naples, Golden Gate Estates, and Immokalee patrol districts. Deputies who patrol these areas made stops to introduce themselves and participate in demonstrations and activities.

The festivities included cookouts, bounce houses, wall climbing, and refreshments. Informational kiosks and demonstrations by representatives from area emergency services and county government agencies were also featured. There were also bike helmet giveaways and appearances by McGruff the Crime Dog.

All of the events were free and open to the public.



CCSO First In Fla. To Map Heroin ODs In Real Time

Deputies are using software developed by a federal agency to create a real-time map showing where drug overdoses are occurring in Collier County in an effort to pinpoint locations and trends.

In April, the Collier County Sheriff's Office became the first agency in Florida to use the Overdose Detection Mapping Application Program (ODMAP). The program was developed by the federal Office of National Drug Control Policy High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area (HIDTA).

Currently, CCSO is using it solely to track suspected heroin overdoses.

"In addition to the Collier County Heroin Task Force which began in 2015, we are now implementing technology to provide real-time data for determining trends necessary for short- and long-term operational planning," Sheriff Kevin Rambosk said. "More importantly, it will alert law enforcement and public safety officials to overdose spikes caused by a bad batch of drugs, or a new and growing supply of drugs entering our community."

Every time deputies respond to a suspected heroin overdose, they enter information collected into a database via computer or a mobile device. The information immediately pops up on an electronic map with color-coded dots indicating a general location where the victim overdosed, whether the overdose was fatal and whether Narcan, the drug that revives individuals after an overdose, was administered.

The map shows where the hot spots are, thus allowing deputies and first responders to mobilize resources to those areas of concern.

"If you can't see it, you can't stop it," Sheriff Rambosk said.

CCSO has mapped 50 suspected heroin overdoses, including seven that were fatal, since April 14 when the agency went live with the program. The figure, however, represents only the overdoses that CCSO deputies responded to.

"We're only responding to a fraction of the overdoses and we need other entities to get on board with us to give us a more complete picture," said Vice and Narcotics Bureau Sgt. Gary Gambino.

CCSO is currently one of more than 100 agencies in the U.S. and the only one in Florida actively using the program, said Jeff Beeson, deputy director of the Washington/Baltimore HIDTA, which operates the

program. Four other Florida agencies – Martin County Sheriff's Office, Miami-Dade State Attorney's Office, Jacksonville Sheriff's Office, and Polk County Sheriff's Office — have signed agreements, but are not yet actively inputting data, Beeson said.

A new law that took effect in Florida on Oct. 1 creates guidelines for EMS to report drug overdoses to the state Department of Health and provides immunity for persons who make reports in good faith. It also requires hospital emergency departments to develop policies to promote the prevention of unintentional drug overdoses.

"Working together to track heroin

overdoses in Collier County makes sense," said Debbie Curry, spokeswoman for the NCH Healthcare System. "This is a national issue and although the number of cases at our hospitals is minimal, we are happy to participate in this new tracking process which should provide additional data and insight into this growing problem."

Collier EMS will begin mapping overdoses soon, EMS Chief Tabatha Butcher said. It is important to track where overdoses are happening for EMS for several reasons, she said.

"One reason is for safety," Chief Butcher said. "If we know where there are a large number of overdoses, then our paramedics and emergency

medical technicians can be aware of their surroundings and ensure they take the proper precautions."

Knowing the types of drugs that are in certain areas is also important. There are drugs out now that can be absorbed through skin contact which could pose a risk for first responders, she said.

Chief Butcher said knowing that a certain area has drug problems could help paramedics stock certain ambulances with more Narcan so they are prepared, if needed. EMS may also target these areas for training family members of substance abusers on the use of Narcan and where to get it.

Annual Toy Drive For Kids In Need Launched

The community is invited to join the Collier County Sheriff's Office as we make the holidays merry and bright for some deserving Collier kids currently dealing with traumatic, life-changing events.

This year's "Celebrate With A Star" program will benefit children assigned to the 20th Judicial Circuit Guardian ad Litem program in partnership with Voices for Kids of Southwest Florida (VFK).

There are more than 270 children currently living in

Collier County who have been abandoned or are alleged to have been abused or neglected.

Guardian ad Litem volunteers advocate for these children in the courts, the child welfare system and the community. Children in the program range from infants to 19-year olds.

Visit www.voicesforkids.org to learn more about VFK.

Participating in "Celebrate With A Star" is easy. If you'd like to provide a gift for a child, just send an email to media@colliersheriff.org



colliersheriff.org and we will reply with a child's age and his or her holiday wish.

Or, if you prefer, you may stop by and select an ornament from the tree in the Human Resources lobby of the Sheriff's Office headquarters, 3319 U.S. 41 E., in the Collier County Government Center. Each ornament has a child's holiday gift wish.

VFK prefers for gifts to be wrapped, but will also gladly accept unwrapped gifts. Please make sure to securely attach the star provided to your donated gifts.

The drive will officially begin Wednesday, Nov. 15. All "Celebrate With A Star" gifts must be dropped off by Friday, Dec. 1. If you have any questions, call the CCSO's Media Relations Bureau at 252-0604, or email media@colliersheriff.org.

Gifts may be dropped off in the Human Resources lobby of the Sheriff's Office headquarters or at any CCSO substation.





COLLIER COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

Community Snapshots



◀ A 'zombified' Community Service Deputy Kristin Lewis chases runners during the second annual 5K Zombie Fun Run in October. Proceeds benefited the Susan G. Komen Southwest Florida chapter. Photo by Kristi Lester/CCSO



▶ Cpl. James Casey and his K9 partner Kerel show off Kerel's new ballistic vest donated by Protect the Paws. Based in Miami, the group has donated 102 vests to 23 law enforcement agencies across the country. Photo by Cpl. Efrain Hernandez/CCSO



◀ Deputies worked alongside road maintenance workers and citizens to help clear the roadways after Hurricane Irma. Photo by Cpl. Efrain Hernandez/CCSO



▲ Keeping everyone safe 24/7, rain or shine. Collier County experienced some unseasonably heavy rains long before Hurricane Irma's arrival. Photo by Cpl. Efrain Hernandez/CCSO



◀ Sheriff Kevin Rambosk was recently named district chairman for the Collier County scouting program. He attended Scout Information Night to raise awareness of local scouting efforts, which serves more than 1,700 youth and adult volunteers. Submitted photo.