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Lt. Jake Walker (left, top) and CSD Jake Walker appear for an on-camera interview with Media Relations Specialist Kristine Gill for a Father's Day video. Watch the video on our YouTube channel www.youtube.com/colliercountysheriff. Photo by Cpl. Efrain Hernandez/CCSO

It's ALL IN THE FAMILY At CCSO

Every so often, Community Service Deputy Jake Walker gets a call from a deputy out in the Everglades asking about an assignment or where a supervisor needs to be stationed.

"I get a lot of questions I don't have answers for," he said.

And so the 21-year-old CSD will cut the caller off and explain that it's really his dad they're after.

Lt. Jake Walker is a 25-year veteran of the Collier County Sheriff's Office. He started off working as a patrol deputy in the Immokalee District and then spent time as a supervisor,

a sergeant in Golden Gate and, later, an investigator before eventually becoming District 5 lieutenant.

His son, CSD Walker, has been at the job just two and a half years but has plans to finish his criminal justice degree at Florida Southwestern State College before completing an LEO academy.

"The plan is to hopefully carry the torch of the legacy he's currently in and will leave behind," CSD Walker said of his father. "I hope I can do that."

Law enforcement is a family

business for many here at the CCSO. Sons follow their fathers into the agency. Daughters follow their mothers. And sometimes, siblings find themselves working side by side. The agency employs dozens of relatives, and that's not including husbands and wives.

Many "kids" say exposure to a service-oriented field is what first sparks an interest in law enforcement. From there, it usually just makes sense to work for an agency that is respected in the community and has provided career opportunities for their parents for years.

Both Walkers appeared on camera together recently for a special CCSO Father's Day video on what it's like working together in law enforcement.

"Our society always has to have people who are willing to step up and enter service-oriented fields," Lt. Walker said. "And I'm very proud of (Jake) for doing that."

Brothers Sgt. Steve Macera and Cpl. Matt Macera grew up in New York but both wound up working in the Sunshine State. Sgt. Macera works in the Financial Crimes Bureau. Cpl. Macera is on the SWAT Team.

"It's nice because there's an opportunity for me to see the difference in our roles as law enforcement officers," said Sgt. Macera, who has been with the agency since 1996. "Plus it's good to have my younger brother around because I'm proud to see his accomplishments."

Cpl. Macera started his career with CCSO in 1999, a few years later.

"Working in the same agency as my brother has its advantages and disadvantages," he said. "For some reason people always tell me Steve has better hair. I say Steve is the smart one and I just ride his coattails."

For Jessica Guth, working in the same building as her mother has a huge benefit.

"I get to see her frequently and raid her office for snacks!"

Chief Stephanie Spell started working at CCSO when Guth was just 2 years old. At the time, working in dispatch was just a job that allowed Chief Spell to spend her days with her daughter at home, while putting in hours at night.

"What I found here at CCSO

was not a job, but a wonderful career serving our community," she said. "Fast forward 31 years and it's so rewarding to see my daughter here at CCSO in her great career – and knowing she got here on her own merit and ability."

Guth, a legal assistant, said watching her mother climb the ladder at the agency from dispatcher to Chief of Community Engagement set a precedent for her own work ethic, fortitude, persistence and so much more.

"I saw just how much she enjoyed working at the agency and I wanted that for myself, too," she said. "I feel so lucky that she and I have worked in the same building for the past 16 years."

Lt. Rene Gonzales and his wife Yolanda both worked at CCSO while raising their daughters.

"They used to hear us talk about our jobs amongst ourselves and with other members of the CCSO," Lt. Gonzales said. "They got to see me work in patrol and then in narcotics, and would always ask me about my job and seemed really interested in what I did."

As they got older, Erika Gonzales became interested in the Explorer program, wanting to learn more about law enforcement and later Yvette Gonzales became a student clerk for Crime Prevention. Surrounded by the career, each went on to join the Air Force after high school, later applying for jobs at the CCSO.

"As their father, I could not be more proud that they decided to follow in our footsteps," Lt. Gonzales said.

Cpl. Erika Gonzales works in the Immokalee District and Deputy Yvette Gonzales works

Dear Friends;

The Collier County Sheriff's Office has a lengthy and rich history of serving our schools, and we stand behind that commitment.

We have had Youth Relations Bureau deputies in our schools since the 1970s. These dedicated professionals mentor students and work daily to enhance school safety. We work closely with Collier County Public Schools and have a detailed safety plan in place. I can also tell you that our deputies train regularly and are prepared to respond to any situation they may encounter.

If you are a parent in Collier County you have probably noticed a heightened law enforcement presence at your child's school since the Feb. 14 shooting at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland. Soon after the shooting Gov. Rick Scott signed sweeping legislation requiring enhanced security measures in Florida schools. Here in Collier County, our longstanding partnership with our schools aligned with the Marjory Stoneman Douglas legislation and now we will have even more deputies assigned and security measures in place when school is back in session in August.

We are also working toward allocating even more resources to our public, private

and charter schools by the beginning of the 2018-2019 school year in August. In addition, CCPS is installing access-control systems to ensure that schools are locked during the school day. There is no greater priority than the safety of our schools.

We are currently hiring Youth Relations Bureau deputies. To find out more, go to colliersheriff.org and click on the "Careers" button. If you want to learn about the rewarding work our Youth Relations Bureau deputies do in our schools, check out the profile of Cpl. Alison Disarro on Page 2. Cpl. DiSarro is assigned to Naples High School and was recently named CCSO Law Enforcement Officer of the Quarter.

You can help keep schools safe by reporting any suspicious or unusual activity to law enforcement. Anyone with information should call 239-252-9300 or to remain anonymous and be eligible for a reward contact Crime Stoppers at 1-800-780-8477.

Yours in a safe community,



Kevin Rambosk
Collier County Sheriff

Making A Difference: Cpl. DiSarro Enjoys Working With Young People

Cpl. Alison DiSarro was working as a road patrol deputy in the Collier County Sheriff's Office's Golden Gate district 14 years ago when she decided it was time for a change.

She transferred to the Youth Relations Bureau because she wanted to make a difference in the lives of students in Collier County.

"I like being with the high school kids," she said. "They're at an age where they know right from wrong. They're also at a major turning point in their lives."

At Naples High School, where Cpl. DiSarro is assigned, and at other Collier County Public Schools, youth relations deputies, or YRDs, are certified law enforcement officers charged with providing a range of security and crime prevention services. YRDs do more than patrol school grounds and break up fights.

Last year, Cpl. DiSarro put her investigative skills to work when she started to notice trends of suspicious activities on campus and through social media outlets involving the same group of students. During a months-long investigation in cooperation with the Street Gangs Unit, Cpl. DiSarro's investigations and detailed knowledge of the student body led to gang members and affiliates being removed from Naples High, creating a safer environment.

She also led the Youth Relations Bureau in criminal

arrests during the fourth quarter of 2017. She has also assisted other departments in the agency in arrests. All of which recently helped earn her recognition as Deputy of the Quarter.

"Cpl. DiSarro is a special kind of deputy who can seamlessly change hats between apprehending fleeing suspects and greeting elementary students as they enter the bus at the end of the day," Youth Relations Bureau Sgt. Michael Butcher wrote in his letter nominating Cpl. DiSarro for the honor. "This ability is priceless to modern law enforcement efforts where deputies are tasked with community outreach and suppression of criminal activity in the same shift."

Cpl. DiSarro embraces her role as a mentor and role model. She recalled running into a former student at a music festival not long ago.

"It's because of you that I'm a good person now," she recalled the student, now an adult, telling her.

Cpl. DiSarro pointed to her encounter with the former student when asked what she would tell someone who might be considering becoming a youth relations deputy. CCSO is actively recruiting more YRDs.

"These kids need us for many different reasons," she said. "They deserve the opportunity to have good, strong role models because we're finding many of them don't have that at home."



Youth Relations Cpl. Alison DiSarro has been assigned to Naples High School for the past three years. Photo by Cpl. Efrain Hernandez/CCSO

► FAMILY continued from page 1

in Corrections. Each said it was an easy choice to apply at CCSO — and not just because their parents had.

"It was just an amazing career move," Cpl. Gonzales said, adding that her father always encouraged her and her sister when they had doubts about working in a male-dominated field.

"My dad liked to use the line 'but you're a girl,' knowing that was the push we needed to conquer any obstacle," she said. "To this day that little saying still works."

Deputy Gonzales said starting her career at the CCSO felt like joining the family business.

"I can't imagine not working together because I never have to explain how I'm feeling," she said. "We've all had one of 'those' days, and we all know what is expected of us."



Chief Stephanie Spell (left) and her daughter, legal assistant Jessica Guth.



Brothers Cpl. Matt Macera (left) and Sgt. Steve Macera.



Summerfest 2018 Lines Up Another Fun Season For Collier Students

The Collier County Sheriff's Office's popular summer youth activities program returns for the ninth year in a row.

Summerfest 2018 promises to deliver a wide range of fun and free activities for all grade levels in a safe environment at various locations around Collier County.

Once again, CCSO Youth Relations deputies will be assigned to the summer youth program instead of patrol duties. This reallocation allows CCSO to expand its summer youth offerings without additional cost to the community.

Make sure to mark these events down on your calendar for a summer full of safety and fun:

Hot Summer Nights

These weekly family fun nights run from 6-9 p.m. and allow youngsters to jump around in the police car bounce house, go rock wall climbing and play Wii games on a giant inflatable screen.

Hot dogs, snow cones and popcorn are also available.

- Friday, June 8: Sun-N-Fun Lagoon at North Collier Regional Park, 15000 Livingston Road, North Naples
- Thursday, June 14: Corkscrew Middle School, 1165 Oil Well Road, Golden Gate Estates
- Thursday, June 21: Eagle Lakes Community Park, 11565 U.S. 41 E., East Naples
- Thursday, June 28: Immokalee High School, 701 Immokalee Drive, Immokalee
- Thursday, July 12: Mackle Park, 1361 Andalusia Terrace, Marco Island
- Thursday, July 19: McLeod Park, 208 S. Copeland Ave., Everglades City
- Thursday, July 26: Max A. Hasse Jr. Community Park, 3390 Golden Gate Blvd., Golden Gate Estates

Open Gym

The following school gymnasiums will be open for basketball and supervised by CCSO Youth Relations deputies Mondays through Thursdays starting June 11:

Middle-School Students

Oakridge Middle School, 14975 Collier Blvd., 8 a.m. to noon

Corkscrew Middle School, 1165 County Road 858, 1 to 4 p.m.

East Naples Middle School, 4100 Estey Ave., 12:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m.

High-School Students

Oakridge Middle School, 14975 Collier Blvd., 1-4 p.m.

Both middle and high school aged students are welcome to attend the open gym at Immokalee High School, 701 Immokalee Drive, from 12:30 to 3:30 p.m.

No open gym at any location on July 4.

This activity is for currently enrolled middle- and high-school students. Contact the Youth Relations Bureau office at 239-252-0144 for information.

Build-a-Boat

This program is an opportunity for high-schoolers ages 14 to 18 to accomplish the task of building a boat while staying active and earning their boating safety certificate. The following sessions will be offered this summer:

- I-Tech Center in Immokalee, June 25-29 – 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.

- Lowe's, 6415 Naples Blvd., July 9-13 – 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Build-a-Chair

Students ages 10-13 will learn to work with tools and together to build a chair at I-Tech Center in Immokalee (June 18-19), Palmetto Ridge High School in Golden Gate

Estates (June 20-21), Youth Haven (closed registration) and Everglades Recreation Center in Everglades City (July 18-19), Sessions run from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Teen Driver Challenge

The Teen Driver Challenge provides students ages 15 to 19 with the knowledge and hands-on experience to reduce the chances of being involved in a crash. The driving skills they will learn are the same techniques used by driving professionals, including NASCAR.

The class consists of two training days. The first day is a four-hour block of instruction and the second day is an eight-hour block of vehicle operations at Barron Collier High School.

Students will be operating their own vehicle and MUST BE A LICENSED TEEN DRIVER.

Contact the Youth Relations Bureau for more information at 239-252-0144.

Middle-School Summer Camps

CCSO is partnering with Corkscrew Middle School and Immokalee High School to offer students ages 11 to 14 a free day camp Monday through Thursday beginning on June 11. Campers will participate in athletic activities including basketball and soccer as well as have the opportunity to go on field trips.

There will be no camp on July 4.

Contact the Youth Relations Bureau office at 239-252-0144 for information.

Community Partnerships

CCSO will bring Summerfest fun directly to the children currently residing in Youth Haven or attending the Boys & Girls Club of Collier County facilities in Naples and Immokalee. Once a week, deputies will visit each organization and host fun summer activities.

And Even More Summer Fun!

D.E.P.U.T.Y. Club and Teen Academy will also return.

D.E.P.U.T.Y. Club is for students in first through fifth grades and takes place June 4-June 8. Students will go on field trips to local fun spots including Sun-N-Fun Lagoon as well as learn how the Sheriff's Office keeps Collier County a great and safe place. D.E.P.U.T.Y. Club is also available for students in Everglades and Immokalee.

The Teen Academy is a 40-hour program designed for high-school freshmen and seniors who are leaders in their schools. Academy members spend the week going on field trips and taking part in activities designed to teach them more about Collier County's environment, economy and government.

The Y.O.R. (Youth On the Rise) Club will resume its second year of activities. The Y.O.R. Club is a weeklong program focusing on reaching out to middle-school age students in need of positive mentorship. Attendees listened to motivational speeches, participated in team building exercises and went on field trips that taught them about different careers. The goal is to provide participants with unique experiences. The field trips required students to work hands-on to better understand what is involved in different walks of life.

Registration for both D.E.P.U.T.Y. Club and Teen Academy is already full and closed. Contact 239-252-0144 for information about Y.O.R. Club participation.

Note: The dates, time and availability of the above mention events are subject to change. Please visit www.colliersheriff.org to view the Summerfest calendar of activities.

CCSO Crossing Guard Named Best In Florida

For the past 16 years students at Avalon Elementary School have relied on crossing guard Becky Beatty to get them across the street without harm.

But they will tell you she does much more than that.

"Becky loves our students," said teacher Donna La Grange. "She encourages them when they are sad or worried. Many students come to school earlier than needed just so they can stand and talk with her before it's time to cross the street and come into school."

Teacher Maribel Gonzales said Beatty "goes the extra mile" to protect the students while bringing a positive attitude.

"She doesn't go home until the last student crosses her street," Gonzales said "She brings joy into the hearts of our community. We need more citizens like Becky in our society today. Becky is the angel of Avalon."

La Grange and Gonzales were among more than two dozen people ranging from teachers to deputies whose nomination letters led to Beatty being honored as 2017 Florida School Crossing Guard of the Year Award by the Florida Department of Transportation.

School crossing guards play an important part to insure the safety of students as they cross highways and roadways, said Sgt. Robert Bredwell of the Collier County Sheriff's Office's Youth Relations Bureau, which oversees the crossing guard program.

"To have one of Collier County Sheriff's Office own school crossing guards being selected is such an honor," Sgt. Bredwell said.

Beatty joined the Sheriff's Office in 1998, starting in the Civil Process Bureau doing data entry. She applied for a crossing guard position on the recommendation of her predecessor at Avalon.

"To me it's not a job," Beatty said. "The first week I worked and got my first paycheck I felt guilty taking the money for doing this."



Her commitment goes beyond the crosswalk in front of the elementary school on Thomasson Drive in East Naples. She offers safety tips during the school's morning news program. She is a fixture at after-school functions and events. She used her own money to purchase the 6 foot dragon, the school mascot, made out of blue, yellow and white paper cups that adorns the fence in front of the school to instill pride in the students.

Beatty shrugged off the accolades and said she is humbled to have been chosen for the award.

"I just like to do it," she said. "The people are so nice. People stop and tell me I'm doing a good job. I love the kids and I learn a lot from them."



Hurricane season starts June 1 and ends Nov. 30



Hunker Down For Hurricane Season

Hurricane season starts June 1 and ends Nov. 30, and making a hurricane plan ahead of time and stocking up on vital supplies will go a long way toward helping you and your loved ones stay safe in a storm.

The Collier County Sheriff's Office offers these basic tips to help you before, during and after a storm:

BEFORE A STORM

Stock up on essential supplies

and secure all important documents in an accessible location. Use CCSO's suggested supply list and make sure to include anything else that may be important for you and your family.

Develop a family disaster plan that meets the specific needs of your family by visiting www.floridadisaster.org. Don't forget to also develop a pet disaster plan by micro-chipping your pet, keeping current on vaccinations and determining how to keep your pet safe during the storm. Contact Collier County Domestic Animal Services at 239.252.PETS (7387) for more information.

The CCSO and Naples Police Department have implemented the Smart911 database that allows citizens to create a secure safety profile of vital personal and household information, including medications, medical conditions and even photographs of each member of the household. Information about family pets can also be entered. The safety profile will be displayed to 911 call-takers immediately when that citizen places an emergency call. This safety profile provides much richer information than is currently available on incoming calls and can contain the specific details that first responders need in order to save lives.

Smart911 is free and 100 percent private and secure. Safety profiles can be created by visiting www.smart911.com.

DURING A STORM

Keep telephone numbers of local emergency responders readily available. Collier County Bureau of Emergency Services can be reached at 239-252-3600 for a wide variety of public concerns including shelter, weather updates and disaster recovery information. The Sheriff's Office non-emergency hotline can also be reached at 239-252-9300. Only call 911 if you are faced with an immediate, life-threatening emergency.

CCSO will also provide updates throughout the storm through its website, www.colliersheriff.org; its Facebook page, www.facebook.com/colliersheriff;

and its Twitter account, www.twitter.com/colliersheriff. CCSO will also send out push notifications as necessary on its iPhone and Android app, CCSO2go, which is free and available in the iTunes and Google Play app stores.

If you choose to evacuate your home and go to a shelter, it is recommended to bring any prescription medications, drinking water, snacks, bedding (ex: air mattress), entertainment items to help pass the time, and at least one set of clothing.

Follow local media reports about shelter openings.

A person with specific medical needs can qualify to go to a special needs shelter to ensure they receive any needed treatment during the storm. CCEM maintains a "Person's With Special Needs" registry. Persons with special needs must register prior to a storm.

AFTER A STORM

If you evacuate, make sure to bring along photo identification (ex: driver's license) and proof of residency (ex: copy of a utility bill) in order to re-enter your community.

Before re-entering your home after evacuation, emergency responders will have to ensure it is safe to return. Please be patient as emergency responders must take debris, flooding and other hazards into consideration.

If your property has endured significant damage requiring repair, make sure to hire licensed contractors. Unlicensed persons may try to solicit business immediately following a storm and will often ask for payments up-front and perform little to no repair work. The Federal Trade Commission works to prevent fraudulent, deceptive and unfair business practices. To file a complaint or learn more about contractor fraud, visit www.ftc.gov, or call toll free at 1-877-FTC-HELP (1-877-382-4357).

Deputy Honored for Work With Specialty Courts

As a child, Sgt. Leslie Weidenhammer dreamed of becoming a police officer but her parents thought it would be too dangerous and steered her away toward college to be a teacher.

She completed her degree and taught in Indiana before moving to Florida. She went to work for the Collier County YMCA and started an outdoor education program. But thoughts of being a police officer persisted. At the Y, a retired Chicago cop persuaded her to apply with the Collier County Sheriff's Office.

Twenty-six years later she's living her dream.

"Cliché I know, but I wanted to make a difference and help people," Sgt. Weidenhammer said.

And she has.

The Collier County Bar Association recently recognized Sgt. Weidenhammer for her work with the county's specialty courts and awarded her its Medal of Honor.

Sgt. Weidenhammer is a member of the Collier County Drug Court, Mental Health Court and Veterans Court Teams. In these roles she works with individuals with mental illness and substance abuse problems who come into contact with law enforcement while in crisis. These courts offer an alternative to the traditional court system better suited for some individuals in need of treatment services.

Sgt. Weidenhammer is also a trainer for the CCSO's Crisis Intervention Team and coordinator of the agency's Mental Health Unit. She serves as a volunteer board member for the National Alliance on Mental Illness where she focuses on youth programs.

Sgt. Weidenhammer has been recognized over the years by various county agencies for her role in mental health advocacy. She was nominated for the Collier County Bar Association's Medal of Honor by Andy Solis, Chairman of the Board of County Commissioners, and Judge Janeice T. Martin of the 20th Judicial Circuit.

"(Sgt. Weidenhammer's) collaboration with our Treatment Courts process has been nothing short of transformational," Judge Martin wrote in her nomination letter, adding that in the two years since joining the Treatment Courts Team she has educated fellow members and worked to connect with participants of the program.

Chairman Solis called Sgt. Weidenhammer a true public servant.

"Her professionalism and insight is of great benefit to our community," his nomination letter read. "She truly cares for those she serves, and conveys the message of help, hope and recovery in all that she does."

Sgt. Weidenhammer accepted her award and gave a speech on her work with the agency and specifically the county's specialty courts.

"I have to commend Sheriff (Kevin) Rambosk for his vision to recognize the needs of our community and citizens as it relates to mental health issues and substance use disorders, and then having the faith in me to develop a CCSO team focusing on prevention and intervention surrounding these issues," she said.





Community Snapshots



◀ Sheriff Kevin Rambosk addresses the crowd at the annual Law Enforcement Memorial Service at East Naples United Methodist Church on May 17.
Photo by Cpl. Efrain Hernandez/CCSO

▶ Gov. Rick Scott recognized agency members with military experience April 27. CCSO currently employs 249 veterans!
Photo by Media Relations Specialist Kristine Gill/CCSO



▲ The 35th annual Torch Run to support Special Olympics got underway outside CCSO headquarters April 13.
Photo by Cpl. Efrain Hernandez/CCSO

▶ Cpl. Jack Hazel holds a calf after responding to a call of a female cow that escaped its pasture to give birth.
Photo by Sgt. Dave Estes/CCSO



◀ Cpl. Tania Wroblewski and Sgt. Thad Rhodes hang a sign at a North Naples Chevron station May 22 reminding drivers to lock their cars and secure their valuables — even during a quick fill-up.
Photo by Media Relations Specialist Kristine Gill/CCSO