

Seminole County Sheriff's Office
2019 ANNUAL REPORT



Sheriff's Message

Dear Seminole County residents and supporters,

I am pleased to present to you the 2019 annual report of the Seminole County Sheriff's Office (SCSO).

For the third year in a row, the most serious crimes that affect our quality of life dropped 3% in unincorporated Seminole County. That continues decreases totaling 20% the two years previous. I am honored to share with you that the crime rate in Seminole County is the lowest it has been in our 107-year history. That is a testament to the hard work and dedication of the men and women of the SCSO and our citizens.

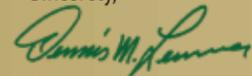
In 2019, the SCSO took on major challenges; many are highlighted in this report. We helped bring justice to families in two homicide "cold" cases, both of which were more than thirty years old. In addition, our innovative approach to gathering electronic evidence brought the successful prosecution of the suspect in the Amato Family murders.

Our holistic approach to the opioid epidemic is saving lives. Since we began our ACTT program in the John E. Polk Correctional Facility, more than 100 inmates, both men and women, have received life-changing, medically-assisted treatment and learned life skills towards recovery. Our new continuum of care includes rapid response detectives who bring services to those in crisis sometimes just hours after non-fatal overdoses. Additionally, partnerships with businesses, civic organizations, and citizens allow us to continue to implement innovative programs for those on their recovery journey.

We recognize that community-based relationships are a center point of effective policing. Once again, you helped us engage in this philosophy, by participating and assisting us in new ways with the community events we cherish. Events like Shop with the Sheriff ensure our underserved children receive clothing and school supplies they need, and Christmas Village fulfills Christmas wishes for the most vulnerable children in our community. Our 2nd annual Halloween Spooktacular brought thousands out to engage in a safe alternative to trick-or-treating. These interactions with our community help keep us all safer.

Thank you all for your continued partnership and support. Together, we will continue to achieve great things.

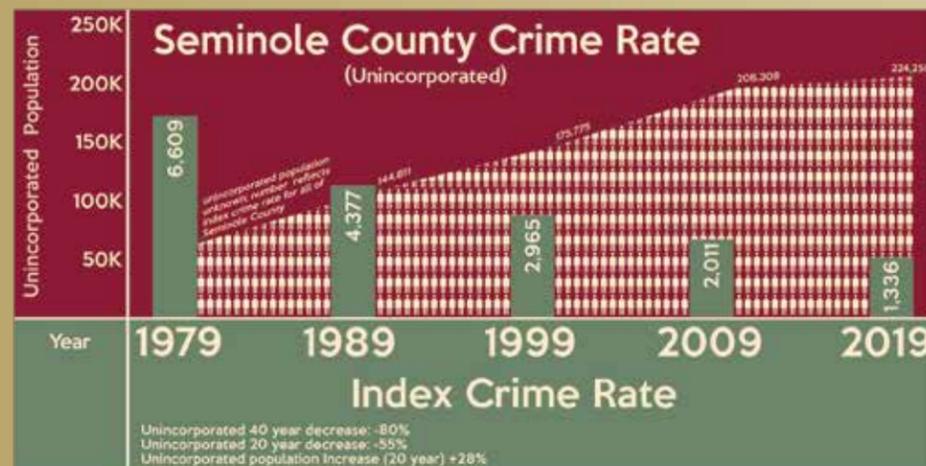
Sincerely,



Dennis M. Lemma
Sheriff

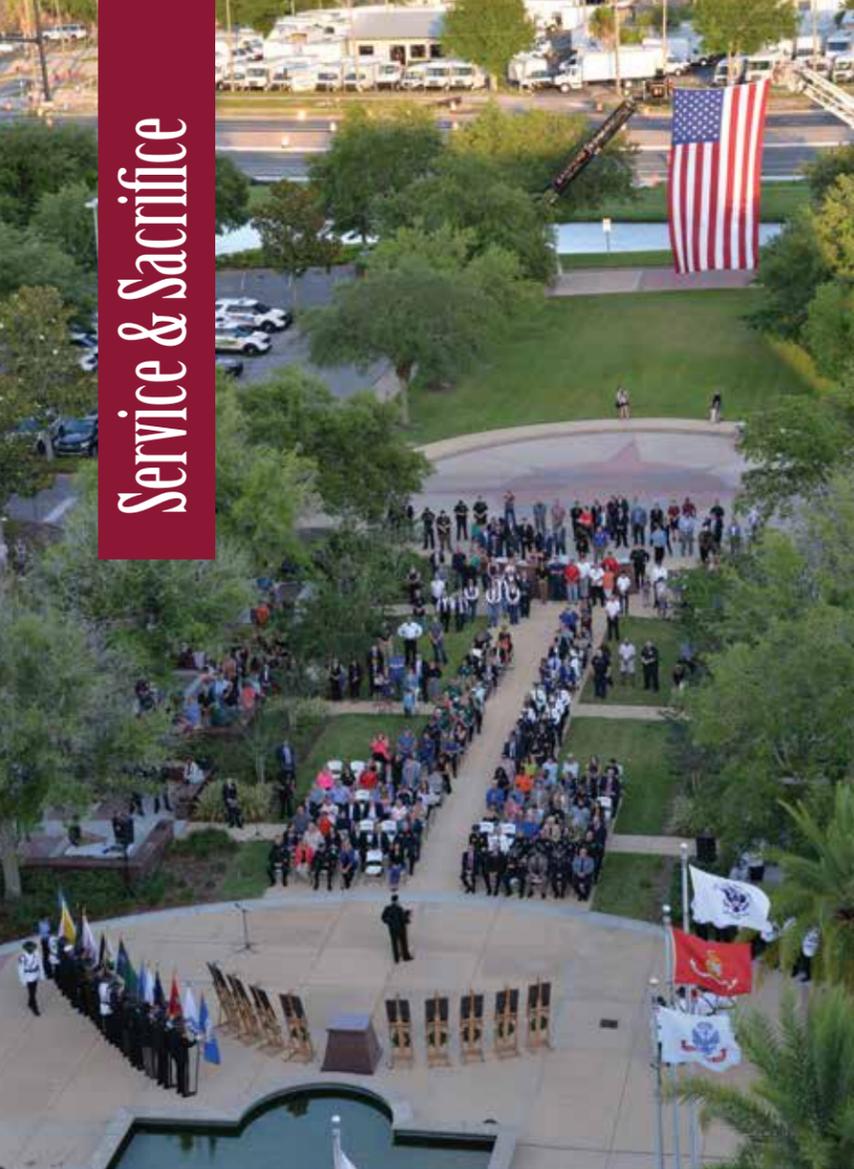


I am honored to share with you that the crime rate in Seminole County is the lowest it has ever been in our 107-year history.



2019
3% DROP
IN PART 1
INDEX CRIMES
Seminole County



SCSO honors fallen heroes at our Annual Memorial Ceremony

All Seminole County law enforcement agencies, Seminole State College's Center for Public Safety, along with state and national partners, gathered together in May to pay tribute to the fallen law enforcement heroes of Seminole County who have made the ultimate sacrifice. We were honored to have Florida's Attorney General, Ashley Moody, as the keynote speaker. The ceremony included remarks by Sheriff Lemma and guest speakers from other Seminole County law enforcement agencies. The following law enforcement officers were honored at the event:

- SCSO Deputy Cleveland Jacobs
End of Watch (EOW) 1922
- Florida Highway Patrol Trooper Leroy C. Bender
EOW 1947
- SCSO Deputy Robert Moore
EOW 1975
- SCSO Deputy George Pfeil
EOW 1977
- SCSO Deputy Hugh Thomas
EOW 1989
- SCSO Deputy Eugene Gregory
EOW 1998
- Longwood Police Sgt. Karl Strohsal
EOW 2007
- SCSO Deputy Matt Miller
EOW 2011
- Windermere Police Officer Robert German
EOW 2014



SCSO named official Purple Heart Agency

The Seminole County Sheriff's Office joined other Seminole County agencies and organizations in becoming a Purple Heart Agency in December. Over the past few years, we have taken on initiatives to recognize those who currently serve, have been discharged or retired, as well as the family members of those who have supported their loved ones throughout their military careers. A proclamation was presented by the Military Order of The Purple Heart Chapter 400 Commander Mr. Ernie Rivera, National Adjutant for the Military Order of the Purple Heart. This additional step shows the support of those who have given the ultimate sacrifice in times of war. As a Purple Heart Agency we provide community support, employment opportunities, and inclusion of veterans of all levels. The Seminole County Sheriff's Office is proud to be the second Sheriff's Office in Florida, and one of the few nationally, to become a Purple Heart agency.

99-year-old Tuskegee Airman Colonel Charles McGee speaks at Veteran's Appreciation Day ceremony

In June, Seminole County veterans were honored at an appreciation luncheon for their service in the United States Armed Forces. Colonel Charles E. McGee, a retired 99-year-old United States Air Force fighter pilot, delivered the keynote speech. Colonel McGee flew 409 missions throughout his 30-year career as a Tuskegee Airman, including combat tours in World War II, Korea, and Vietnam. We were pleased to present a commemorative challenge coin and lapel pin to each veteran in attendance. The event also included a military flyover, a 21-gun salute, and an honor guard presentation.

Pictured below from left: Undersheriff Lou Tomeo, Senior Administrator Bob Cortes, Colonel Charles McGee, and Chief Dan Purcell.





Shop with the Sheriff gives kids a boost

Each August, the Seminole County Sheriff's Office joins with the Boys and Girls Clubs of Central Florida to help students in need prepare for the new school year with confidence and increased self-esteem. This year's Shop with the Sheriff event, presented by Addition Financial, began with breakfast and was followed by a trip to several local Walmarts where a total of 288 children were paired with Sheriff's Office personnel to shop for critical items such as shoes, uniforms, and clothing. The experience provides an essential mentoring opportunity and helps children see deputies as positive role models and friends.



2nd Halloween Spooktacular a huge success

Our 2nd Annual Halloween Safety Spooktacular was presented by The Hartford and held on October 30th. This is a free community event that encourages children and their families to enjoy a safe, fun, and festive Halloween. Over 3,000 community members and their families were treated to outdoor trunk or treating in the parking lot of the Public Safety Building, where we were joined by the Seminole County Fire Department and other community partners.



K9 Trading Cards launched

In August, we launched a new community outreach tool on National Dog Day. Our K9 handlers were given trading cards of their dogs to give to kids at schools, community events, and other functions across the county. A single donor to the SCSO Community Foundation wanted to do something unique with our dogs in memory of her son, a lover of dogs himself. We are grateful for this Seminole County resident and donor, and we knew that children of our community would love collecting all 16 of our cards. The cards have been soaring in popularity, and for a limited time we offered full sets of the trading cards for a donation to the SCSO Community Foundation. The trading cards have raised over \$2,000 to support programs like Shop with the Sheriff, Christmas Village, Snow Patrol, college scholarships, and the Washington DC trip for Safety Patrol.

National Night Out builds community

Each October, neighborhoods throughout Seminole County are invited to join forces with thousands of communities nationwide for the annual National Night Out (NNO) crime prevention and community partnership event. Many neighborhoods throughout Seminole County hosted a variety of special events such as block parties, cookouts, parades, flashlight walks, contests, youth activities, and anti-crime rallies. This year, the Seminole County Sheriff's Office partnered with Sanford and Oviedo Police Departments to host large community events at Ft. Mellon Park and Center Lake Park. The events focused on promoting community involvement in crime prevention activities, police-community partnerships, and neighborhood camaraderie.



Christmas Village spreads holiday joy

Each December, the SCSO teams up with community care providers and business partners to make the holiday season special for children who are victims of abuse or neglect, children in foster care, and other underserved youth. Volunteers secure donations and raise funds to obtain thousands of toys and then set up a festive Christmas Village, complete with games, cookie decorating, crafts, and visits with Santa. While the children enjoy the activities, their parents and caregivers secretly shop for toys, which are then hidden in car trunks to be transported home for Christmas morning. Community members and businesses also participate by having toy drives, making a toy donation, or giving monetary donations. The 2019 Christmas Village event, presented by The Hartford, was a huge success. Together, we were able to fulfill Christmas wishes for nearly 400 children.



Snow Patrol serves cool treats throughout the community

The Snow Patrol is fully funded and donated to SCSO through private donors to the SCSO Community Foundation, the agency's 501c3 non-profit, who wanted to create a fun way for kids of the community to interact with deputies and other law enforcement personnel. Since it rolled out in June of 2018, it has been a popular draw at numerous events. This year, volunteers served over 10,000 snow cones and 130 hot chocolates.



Youth Explorers

The SCSO Youth Explorer program promotes community service and law enforcement career exploration through training and hands-on interaction. In 2019, the Explorers completed 4,937 hours of community service, and their Competition Team achieved impressive results at the State Competition in June, bringing home numerous awards including first place Color Guard, first place Marksman, and Best Scenario In Progress. Congratulations, team!



Red Ribbon Drug-Free Art Contest

Seminole County celebrated Red Ribbon Week the last full week in October and during this time, all 5th through 8th-grade students were invited to design posters illustrating the importance of healthy, drug-free living. This year, 39 participating schools submitted 151 posters, and we were pleased to recognize 37 students in a ceremony held at Lyman High School. The grand-prize winner received her artwork displayed proudly on the back window of her school resource deputies' patrol vehicle. This year's overall champion says she plans to follow her "Live Drug-Free" slogan, and she hopes other students will too!



SCSO hosts 6th annual Youth Academy

This year marked the sixth year of SCSO's Youth Academy, a unique educational program designed to give middle school students a behind the scenes look at Sheriff's Office operations. During the months of June and July, dozens of students participated in week-long classes, learning about internet safety, bullying, decision-making, and substance abuse. Class members toured the John E. Polk Correctional Facility, the 911 Communications Center, and the Criminal Justice Center. They saw demonstrations from the Forensics and Special Operations Units, participated in an exercise in the Emergency Operations Center, performed basic Honor Guard techniques, and even served as jurors in a mock trial hosted by the State Attorney's Office.



School Safety Patrol group travels to Washington, DC



The Seminole County Sheriff's Office School Safety Division hosted the Second Annual School Safety Patrol Trip to Washington DC in June. Seminole County School Resource Deputies, along with School Resource Officers from Lake Mary and Longwood Police Departments and Seminole County Public School teachers, escorted almost 200 students and 100 adults to our nation's capital. Through Educational Tours, the students, parents, teachers, and law enforcement were able to explore Washington DC's major historic landmarks including the Capitol, Arlington Cemetery, Mount Vernon and more. No doubt that this will be a trip these students will remember forever.

Juvenile Assessment Center



- arrestees **614**
- runaways **39**
- remanded by the court **84**
- total youth referred to the JAC **1,641**

Juvenile Detention Center

721 Youths Housed

Average length of stay **12** days

Evidentiary Data



Examined by Digital Forensics

Financial Crimes

- Identity theft **500**
- Credit card fraud **251**
- Counterfeit checks & currency **178**
- Information cases **447**
- All other cases **631**
- Total criminal cases **1,565**
- Total cases assigned **2,012**

Forensics Lab



- 12,514** items of evidence & property received
- 1,972** latent print evaluations
- 209** crime scenes processed
- 470** latent print processing cases
- 110** NIBIN entry cases received
- 34** DNA biological screening exams
- 33** testified in court
- 13** pieces of impression evidence examined (footwear & tire tracks)

Prohibited Items



- 406,382** Items scanned at courthouses
- 1,331** Prohibited items intercepted by deputies as they ensured safe passage for
- 380,445** visitors to Seminole County's three courthouses



67,785 hours of training delivered to employees and agency volunteers

Victim Advocates



8,150 victims and families assisted

Aviation Section



- 900** responses to calls for service
- 157** arrest assists
- 29** stolen vehicles secured
- 19** lost or missing persons found

FULL SERVICE K9



HANOVER HOUNDS
responses to requests for assistance both in and out of Seminole County

- 195** deployments
- 80** detection deployments
- 115** patrol deployments
- 42** apprehended subjects without bite
- 4** apprehended subjects with bite

Domestic Security Division



3,848 arrest warrants served

53,977 Hours Of Service



Given by agency volunteers (Citizens on Patrol, reserve deputies, chaplains, jail volunteers and administrative volunteers)
These hours are equal to the value of **26** full-time positions and **\$908,271** in salaries

Civil Section



- 35,879** SUBPOENAS
- 4,705** CRIMINAL SUMMONS
- 2,115** INJUNCTIONS FOR PROTECTION
- 1,603** WRITS OF POSSESSION
- 346** EX-PARTE ORDERS
- 28** RISK PROTECTION ORDERS
- 21** WRITS OF EXECUTION
- 10** WRITS OF REPLEVIN

Communications Center



Total calls for service **905,037** from citizens and field units

190,405 calls to 911

John E. Polk Correctional Facility

12,374 inmates booked

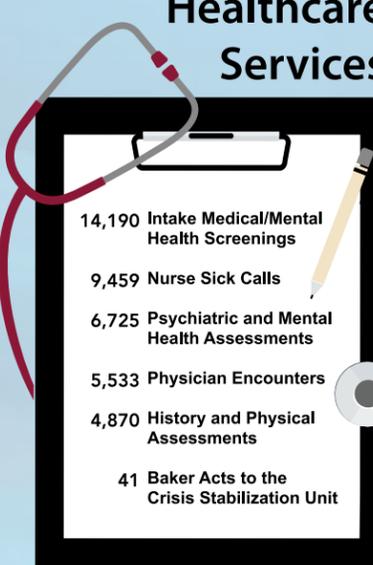


Average Daily Population **940**

Inmate Education

- 1,021** re-entry seminars
- 5,384** GED testing sessions
- 21,000** religion & faith based hours
- 47,798** classroom hours

Inmate Healthcare Services



- 14,190** Intake Medical/Mental Health Screenings
- 9,459** Nurse Sick Calls
- 6,725** Psychiatric and Mental Health Assessments
- 5,533** Physician Encounters
- 4,870** History and Physical Assessments
- 41** Baker Acts to the Crisis Stabilization Unit



Attorney General selects Sheriff Lemma to chair statewide opioid dependency group

In January, the then Attorney General-elect, Ashley Moody, selected Sheriff Dennis Lemma as chair of her Transition Advisory Committee Working Group on Opioid Abuse. As chair, Sheriff Lemma worked closely with AG Moody and a team of experts from across the state, gathering information on best practices for stopping the influx of deadly opioids, increasing treatment options, raising awareness, and reducing overdose deaths. The group provided recommendations to the Attorney General, which included the creation of the Statewide Task Force on Opioid Abuse. Not only was Sheriff Lemma asked to serve on this group, but he was also elected as its Vice-Chair by Task Force peers. The holistic approach of both the working group and task force in combatting the opioid crisis resulted in a seemingly immediate impact, including a 26% decrease in fatal overdoses in Seminole County in the first six months of 2019, compared to 2018.



First Lady appoints Sheriff Lemma as chair of new drug abuse panel

In July, Sheriff Lemma was proud to welcome Florida's First Lady Casey DeSantis during her visit to the Seminole County Sheriff's Office. First Lady DeSantis came here for a listening session on the fight against Florida's opioid crisis and to share her agenda on mental health and substance abuse initiatives. Sheriff Lemma accepted her invitation to serve as chairman of a new panel tasked with determining best practices and innovative solutions to fighting drug abuse in Florida. The panel serves as one aspect of the First Lady's holistic approach to assist those struggling with mental health or drug dependency issues.



City County Investigative Bureau Seizures



Opioid Forum held at Seminole State College

In 2019, 82 people died in Seminole County due to opioid overdoses. While SCSO is taking steps and becoming a leader on treatment, recovery, and education, we know it takes an entire community coming together and serving as advocates for change. This special town hall-style event was put on through the partnership of the Seminole County Sheriff's Office, Seminole State College of Florida, and AdventHealth. Those personally affected by the crisis shared their stories on how opioids and addiction are affecting our community and what we can do to face the epidemic head-on.



OR
Day One
You Decide.



To go to jail and to get this kind of help was a godsend. I was lost, and now I'm found.

Annual holiday poster contest showcases inmates' creativity

In December, we challenged each of the housing units in the John E. Polk Correctional Facility to our annual Holiday Poster Pod Challenge. The housing units competed to create the best holiday poster using provided materials, and they were judged on creativity, originality, and festivity. The winner received bragging rights and a candy prize for the entire housing unit.



O-Pod and A-Pod fight the opioid crisis



In 2019, two pods inside the John E. Polk Correctional Facility were added, dedicated exclusively to those trying to break the cycle of drug dependency. O-Pod for men opened in April, followed by A-Pod for women in August. Both rigorous programs are part of Sheriff Dennis Lemma's overall plan to create a holistic continuum of care to fight the opioid epidemic. "Fighting this crisis is my number one public safety priority," the Sheriff said. Shortly after the program got under way, multiple inmates petitioned the court to allow them to stay incarcerated longer to complete the programs. One inmate named Heather successfully petitioned a judge to increase her sentence by three weeks so she could be in the first A-Pod graduating class. "To go to jail and to get this kind of help was a godsend," she told us. "I was lost, and now I'm found."



Dependency recovery center announced

In October Sheriff Dennis Lemma, alongside representatives from AdventHealth and Seminole County EMS/Fire Rescue, announced the establishment of a short-term drug dependency recovery center. Housed in the former Probation Division building across from the John E. Polk Correctional Facility, this new center will eventually house a total of up to fifty men and women in separate wings. "People with opioid issues have been caught in a cycle of catch, treat and release," said Sheriff Dennis Lemma. This new medical facility will offer up to 30 days of secure, overnight care in addition to mental health and medically-assisted treatment. A new substance abuse coordinator, to be based out of AdventHealth Altamonte Springs ER, will help navigate care for patients. Renovations are expected to be complete and the facility open for accepting patients by mid to late 2020. Sheriff Lemma states, "We're continually looking to engage our private partners in strategies to benefit the growing number of our citizens in need of these kinds of services."



We never stopped pursuing justice on behalf of these two innocent women and their families.



Pamela Cahanes



Evelyn Aguilar



Garner



Emitt

Genealogy DNA arrests solve two thirty-year-old cold cases

One of our proudest accomplishments in 2019 involved the resolution of a pair of homicide cold cases, each dating back more than thirty years, thanks to the painstaking work of Major Crimes Detectives and our recently formed Cold Case Unit. Detective Jennifer Spears leads the Cold Case Unit, which is comprised of a team of volunteer retired law enforcement officers. The unit is a unique and novel prospect that offers significant cost savings to the citizens while providing fresh eyes and perspective to review cold case homicides and missing persons cases. Within a two-month period, arrests were made in the murders of Naval Recruit Pamela Cahanes (1984) and Evelyn Aguilar (1986). Detectives employed a method of tracing DNA submitted to a family genealogy website by a relative of the suspect in Cahanes's death, her former Navy boot camp classmate, 59-year-old Thomas Lewis Garner. Lab tests confirmed that DNA collected from trash outside Garner's Jacksonville apartment matched evidence found near the victim's body. The second cold case involving Evelyn Aguilar's death was solved as a result of our investigative team matching evidence found at the scene to DNA submitted by Danny Lee Emitt after he was arrested in connection with another crime. Emitt had not been previously considered a suspect in her murder. "We never stopped pursuing justice on behalf of these two innocent women and their families," said Sheriff Dennis Lemma. "We're glad to see the two suspects behind bars where they belong."



Safeguard Your Home

Want to reduce your risk of a break in? SCSO's certified crime prevention practitioners can visit your home and provide you with recommendations on how to better protect your residence. Our free, 45-minute home security assessments involve a review of entry and exit points, locks, lights, and landscaping.

Request House Watch

Going out of town? The House Watch program adds an extra layer of security to your home while you're away. At your request, deputies will check on your home, driving by to look for anything that might be unusual, and will walk around the property to ensure it is secured. Before you leave on your trip, contact us at 407-665-6650 to request the service.

Sign up for our S.T.A.R. self-defense class

In 2018, SCSO launched the Safety Tactics and Awareness Response program, a women's self-defense initiative that was designed from the ground up by SCSO deputies. The class is offered free of charge once a month and focuses on teaching women in Seminole County how they can defend themselves against an aggressor. Since the new program began, we have served over 3,000 participants and established many long-term community partnerships.



Join our Community Law Enforcement Academy (CLEA)

Get a firsthand look at the operations of the Sheriff's Office through our exciting 15-week educational academy. Taught by Sheriff's Office personnel, the academy is offered three times per year and includes presentations on topics such as neighborhood policing, investigations, child protective services, and forensics. Class participants also see demonstrations from the Special Operations Unit (SWAT, Range and Water, K9, and EOD), have the opportunity to fire Sheriff's Office weapons at the gun range, and drive a patrol car. The academy classes are held once a week in the evening and are offered at no cost to participants.



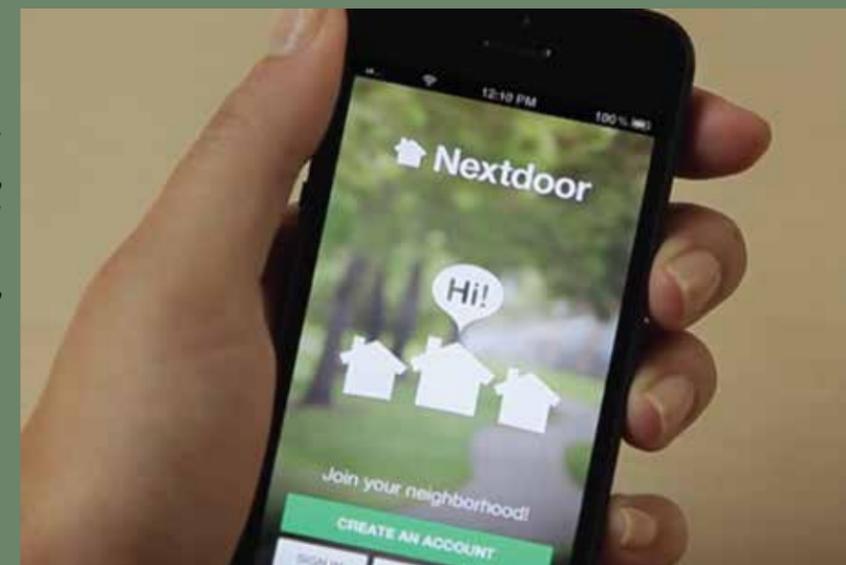
Secure Your Business

Modeled after Neighborhood Watch, Business Watch takes the "neighbors looking out for neighbors" concept to the commercial level, creating a partnership among businesses, law enforcement and others that represent business interests. Each business is provided with a Sheriff's Office decal that warns criminals that the business is part of an active watch community, and is used to contact business owners in case of an after-hours emergency. SCSO also provides free on-site security assessments, safety training for employees and site-specific safety tips on how to reduce the risk of robbery or burglary.



Follow us on Nextdoor

Nextdoor.com allows neighbors the opportunity to create a trusted, private neighborhood website where they can interact by asking questions, exchanging local advice, making recommendations, and discussing their community concerns. The Sheriff's Office often uses Nextdoor to update residents about crime trends in their neighborhoods, and share information on events and programs. Learn more and register at www.nextdoor.com.



10 years in review

2011

2013

2015

2017

2019

2010



- **Social media first incorporated** (Facebook, Twitter, Youtube)
- **5.9% decrease** in Part 1 crime
- **In-Car Camera** installation begun
- **CPS** incorporated Documentum paperless system
- **Jail expansion project** approved
- Successful search and rescue of **Nadia Bloom**
- **Intake/Release Section** operational January 10
- **CPS** implemented Crisis Response Team



- **John E. Polk Correctional Facility (JEPCF)** opened new expansion facility and implemented direct supervision of inmate management
- Establishment of the **Seminole Financial Crimes Task Force**, a multi-agency team to improve our ability to investigate financial crimes
- **Pharmaceutical Diversion Unit (PDU)** created to combat growing problem of prescription drug abuse and misuse
- **Partnered with pawn shops** to use a web-based system to aid in recovering stolen property

2012



- **K9 Amber** donated by Jimmy Ryce Foundation; contest held to name her
- **4.4% decrease** in Part One crime
- **Added AEDs** to all patrol vehicles
- **Juvenile Detention Center** completion of renovations (March)
- **JEPCF** transitioned to a new electronic logbook system
- **New program began for youth** to divert first time misdemeanor offenders from formal arrest and to give them alternative sanctions and avoid arrest record



- **Pink Patrol vehicle unveiled** to support breast cancer research and survivors
- **George Zimmerman trial** became national news
- **New Neighborhood Services Unit added** to improve crime prevention
- Real-time **incident mapping** capabilities added to patrol units
- **JEPCF received ACA CORE accreditation** for the first time
- **Police Athletic League (PAL)** and **Department of Youth Services (DYS)** began mentoring program for at-risk females

2014



- **First weeklong Youth Academy program** began in July
- **7.5% decrease** in Part 1 crime
- **Body worn camera** pilot program implemented
- **Launch of "Sherlock" a web based application** developed by our IT team to map crime, help crime prevention and enhance law enforcement capabilities
- **First accreditation** from National Emergency Management Accreditation Program



- **SCSO makes cover of Ford's 2015 calendar**
- **GPS monitoring** technology introduced
- **Forensics lab** received international accreditation; nationwide reaccreditation for the 20th year
- **K9 Billie retired**; K9 Amber takes the lead as scent tracking bloodhound
- **City County Investigative Bureau (CCIB)** arrested 10 subjects from several stores throughout the county for selling synthetic drugs
- **Crossing Guard Program** claims top honors as best in the state by FDOT for third time in 4 years

2016



- **Sheriff Eslinger** retires after 26 years as Sheriff
- **Newly re-designed website** launched in January
- **SCSO** began issuing **Narcan** to deputies for effective opioid overdose reversal
- **Local Drug trafficking** organization dismantled; 9 arrested
- **School resource deputies** added to each elementary, middle and high school
- **Probation Division and Prosecution Alternatives for Youth (PAY) Program** acquired by SCSO



- **Sheriff Lemma sworn in as 10th sheriff** of Seminole County
- **All SO members take Oath of Office** from new sheriff
- **5% decrease** in Part I crime
- **Hurricanes Irma and Maria** – impact and response
- **Largest drug bust** in county history; 430 lbs. of marijuana seized
- **Heroin dealer charged** with homicide under new Florida law
- **First comfort dogs deployed** (Tootsie, Cooper, MJ and Shiloh) for local schools to help students with anxiety and stress
- **New 35,000 sq. ft. Professional Development Center** opened for training and events

2018



- **Thirty deputies deployed to panhandle** to assist with Hurricane Michael relief efforts
- **SCSO wins first Emmy** in 105 year history
- **15% decrease** in Part 1 crime
- **First Halloween Spooktacular** provides safe event for families to trick or treat
- **Snow Patrol introduced** to help deputies interact with kids in the community
- **Safety Tactics & Awareness Response (S.T.A.R.)** women's self defense program began
- **CCIB's Operation Sundown** dismantled large drug ring.; 19 arrest warrants issued



- **First Lady Casey DeSantis** appoints Sheriff Lemma to chair Opioid Task Force
- **Attorney General Ashley Moody** elects Sheriff Lemma to chair Opioid Advisory Panel
- **Two 30 year old cold cases solved** through Genealogy DNA arrests
- **Triple overdose NARCAN save** at gas station
- **SCSO becomes Puple Heart Agency**
- **Veteran Recognition Wall unveiled** at Bldg. 100 in December to honor those who have served in all branches of the military