

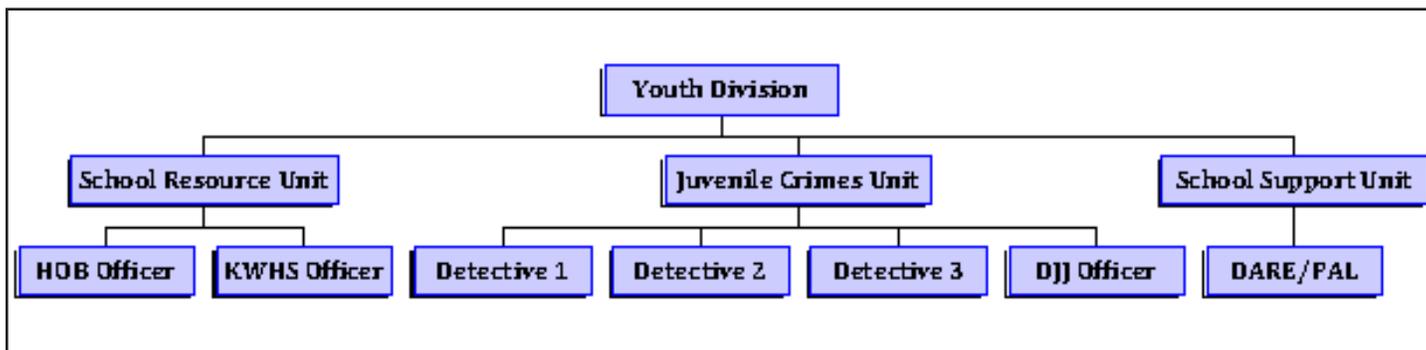
# KEY WEST POLICE DEPARTMENT

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Protecting Paradise

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## Department launches Youth Division



KEY WEST — In a proactive move to curb juvenile crime throughout the city, the Key West Police Department, in partnership with the Florida Department of Juvenile Justice, is creating a new Youth Division to specifically address the issues surrounding local juvenile crime.

“We’ve decided to create this division primarily because of the problems we’re having with juveniles,” said Police Chief Bill Mauldin.

“We see a definite need to put an emphasis on juvenile

crime, and this is our effort to be proactive in that arena.

“We’re hoping to address specific juvenile issues and hopefully get to the cause of some of the problems we have with some of our youth.”

The new division, which will be based out of the police department’s substation at 800 Emma Street, will consist of a Juvenile Crimes Unit, a School Support Unit and a School Resource Officer Unit.

Additionally, a DJJ Officer will be assigned to the division.

“By grouping all these units together we will greatly enhance our communication and coordination efforts,” Chief Mauldin said. “We are taking all of our youth units and putting them under the same roof, which will improve the exchange of information.”

The Juvenile Crimes Unit will consist of three juvenile detectives who will focus on crimes committed by juveniles and will address truancy and curfew issues. DJJ Officer Frank Fernandez will be teamed with the Juvenile Crimes Unit.

The School Support Unit will consist of the Police Athletic League and DARE programs, and the School

Resource Unit will be made up of the officers at Key West High and Horace O’Bryant Middle School.

Lt. David Smith will be the commander in charge of the division.

“It’s important to note that we have found these positions in-house, despite the fact that we have seen reductions in our force due to budget cuts,” Chief Mauldin said.

“We feel that this division is that important that I am willing to reallocate some of our assets to specifically address the youth of Key West.”

A Grand Opening ceremony for the new division will be held August 20, 2007, which coincides with the first day of the school year.

DJJ Regional Director Perry Anderson and Deputy Regional Director Alfred Campbell will be in town to attend the event, to be held at 800 Emma Street at 1 p.m. The community is encouraged to attend.

“I’m glad we’re getting this division up and running,” Chief Mauldin said. “In my opinion, if we don’t attempt to save our youth, our future is doomed.” □



Lt. David Smith, formerly in charge of the Patrol Operations Day Watch, will head the new Youth Division.



Photos by Christie Phillips  
The Youth Division will be housed in the KWPD’s substation at 800 Emma.

# Five new officers join the ranks of the KWPD

KEY WEST — The Key West Police Department welcomed five new officers to its force this summer after the recruits successfully graduated from the Basic Law Enforcement Academy at Florida Keys Community College.

The new recruits are now in field training with experienced officers to get the hands-on experience they will need to serve and protect the City of Key West.

Here's a brief history of each new officer to help you get better acquainted with the new men in uniform:

Richard Wang was born in Taiwan and came to the United States to join his family in 1985, becoming a U.S. citizen in 1993. Richard has lived and worked in the Florida Keys since 1995.

He has been married 21 years and has three children with his wife. Richard has said that he always wanted to be a police officer and when the opportunity arose to serve with the KWPD, he eagerly took it.

Michael Chaustit was born and raised in Baltimore, MD. He graduated from the Culinary Institute of America in 2001 and moved to the Keys in 2003. Michael got married in 2004. He says he has always been interested in law enforcement and that he took this

opportunity to finally meet a lifetime goal.

John Gallo grew up in New Jersey and moved to Key West a year and a half ago. He has a Bachelor's of Science in Social Science from St. Thomas Aquinas College and has worked for the Wayne, New Jersey, Police Department as a certified Emergency Medical Dispatcher and 911 Operator.

Jason Fernandez was born and raised in Miami and moved to Key West in January of this year. He is currently taking a break from college at Florida International University where he is working on a Bachelor's degree in criminal justice.

Thomas Stutz is originally from Niagra Falls, New York. He and his wife moved to Key West in 2006 with the goal that Thomas would become an officer with the Key West Police Department. Previously in the U.S. Army, Thomas served as a civil defense team sergeant and also as the Senior Intelligence Sergeant for his battalion. Thomas is grateful for this opportunity to serve with the KWPD and is looking forward to working closely with this community. □



## Night shift saves turtles

KEY WEST — Thirty baby sea turtles found their way to the ocean instead of dying on land this month thanks to the efforts of two Key West Police officers on the midnight shift.

Officer Lee Lovette and his trainee Officer Wang (see story at left) rescued the turtles from South Roosevelt Boulevard and neighboring properties after they hatched on Smathers Beach and mistakenly headed inland instead of into the ocean.

Baby sea turtles instinctually head towards light after they hatch. On a natural beach, the brightest light comes from the moon reflected off the ocean, but in developed areas, artificial lights on land can confuse the turtles and lead them astray.

Officers Lovette and Wang took the time to look through bushes and under cars for these new hatchlings in the hopes of saving as many as possible.

"Ofc. Wang and I were able to successfully release 27 of the sea turtle hatchlings back into the wild," Ofc. Lovette wrote in his report. Three others were taken into special care to be taken to the Turtle Hospital the next morning.

"Ofc. Lovette's quick action and diligent searching for these hatchlings deserves commendation," said his supervisor Sgt. Sean Brandenburg. "His actions had a direct impact on the survival of a group of hatchlings from an endangered species, and in doing so promoted a positive image of the Key West Police Department as a whole." □



Photo by Christie Phillips

From left, Chief Bill Mauldin with the new recruits: John Gallo, Michael Chaustit, Richard Wang, Jason Fernandez, Thomas Stutz.

# Boxed lunch earns \$5K for Susie Solares

KEY WEST — When news spread that the Key West Police Department's beloved Susie Solares, Executive Assistant to the Chief and good friend to all, had cancer, everyone in the department was shocked.

"Susie is the heart and soul of this department," said Chief Bill Mauldin. "I was just so shocked and heartbroken when I got that news."

Susie learned in late April that she had glioblastoma, an aggressive brain tumor. She immediately contacted the Mayo Clinic in Jacksonville for surgery. After brain surgery, Susie has continued on a grueling schedule of chemo and radiation therapy.

"She hasn't lost a bit of her fire or spirit in all of this, which is just so amazing," said Sandy Velasco, one of Susie's closest friends and the Administrative Assistant who has been filling in for her during her medical leave of absence. "She's an angel."

In an effort to raise some fast money for Susie to help with her mounting medical bills and the cost of having to temporarily relocate to Jacksonville, Velasco, along with Mary Canalejo, Crystal Bravo and Officer Steve Torrence, decided to have an impromptu fundraiser in her honor.

The group sold tickets and sent flyers around town for two weeks advertising a boxed lunch fundraiser, with all proceeds going directly to Susie.

Great Events Catering donated ziti, cuban bread, salad and cookies for the luncheon, and KWPD staff boxed and deliv-



Photos by Christie Phillips  
From top, Ellie Barker, Mary Canalejo, Lt. Jim Benkoczy, Kim Malott, Chawana McDowell, Megan Wilcox, Angie Rodriguez, Crystal Bravo and Sandy Velasco with Susie on her recent visit to the department; Diggy Chavarria and Ofc. Steve Torrence setting up for the lunch; Angie Rodriguez, Crystal Bravo and Kim Malott preparing lunches; and Ofc. Steve Torrence with cookies donated by Great Events.



ered over 300 meals. Other incidentals for the fundraiser were paid by the KWPD Love Fund.

In all, the lunch raised over \$5,000 for Susie.

"You feel so overwhelmed in a situation like this, so it was nice to be able to do something for Susie," Velasco said. "We all just wish there was so much more we could do." □

