



Key West

POLICE DEPARTMENT

February 2008

Volume 3, Issue 2

Longtime officers show dedication to KWPD

KEY WEST — Several members of the Key West Police Department have recently received recognition for the sheer number of years they have been with the department.

Most recently, Marine Patrol Sergeant Robert Allen and Community Services Unit Sergeant Frank Zamora were honored at a City Commission meeting this month for their 20 years of service each.

“I feel like a rookie with 20 years of experience,” Sgt. Allen laughed. “No, but seriously, I have seen many unfortunante and sad things, but I’ve always maintained a positive attitude and I wouldn’t change some of those experiences for the world.”

Sgt. Allen was involved in a shootout with a narcotics dealer in his second year with the KWPD, at the tender age of 21. In that incident, Sgt. Allen was seriously wounded by a gunshot.

After a month of recovery and physical rehabilitation, Sgt. Allen was back on the streets protecting the citizens of Key West.

“I am a lucky guy to have grown up in Key West and to have served as a Police Officer in this city,” Sgt. Allen said. “I

come to work, see old friends and make new ones every day.”

Sgt. Zamora came to Key West from Cuba. He spent seven of his 20 years in the KWPD as a member of the Street Crimes Unit, and also served as a Field Training Officer, a Basic Law Enforcement Academy instructor and has specialized in defensive tactics.

“Twenty years is a long time,” Sgt. Zamora said. “I love Key West because my friends and family are here. And I truly enjoy police work.”

Sgt. Zamora is now the sergeant in charge of the department’s new Community Services Unit, an expansion of the former Youth Division.

“In this line of work, every day is different,” Sgt. Zamora said. “When you’re out on the streets, you never know what’s going to happen, which is exciting.”

Sgt.s Allen and Zamora have seen many changes within the department in the past 20 years.

“I think it’s gotten better,” Sgt. Zamora said. “We have better equipment now, and more training.”

Captain Frank Sauer



Photos by Christie Phillips

Above, Capt. Scott Smith, center, congratulates Sgt. Robert Allen, left, and Sgt. Frank Zamora, right, on their 20-year service awards.

At right, Capt. Frank Sauer, left, accepts his 25-year service award from Chief Bill Mauldin at a City Commission meeting.



has seen even more changes in his 25 years with the department.

“This town has changed a lot since I first came here,” he said. “It’s not the same town.”

After serving in a variety of capacities within the department, from

Detective Sergeant and Lieutenant to Night Watch and Administrative Lieutenant, Capt. Sauer is now the Captain in charge of the Support Operations Division.

“The key thing I’ve learned over the years is that this community comes first,” Capt. Sauer

said.

“I feel like every day I make a contribution to a community that has been very good to me,” Capt. Sauer said. “And I will keep doing this job as long as I feel like I’m making that contribution.” □

Officer confiscates counterfeit money

KEY WEST — Key West Police arrested an 18-year-old man with passing counterfeit \$20 bills downtown this month.

Robert Lee Lopez, of Key West, was arrested around 2 a.m. on a recent Saturday night, shortly after he had entered a bar in the 200 block of Duval Street and paid for a drink with a fake \$20 bill.

Officer Eric Biskup was called to the bar, where he examined the bill and determined it was indeed counterfeit, noting that it did not possess a security strip and that the texture

was not consistent with regular money.

The manager of the bar then pointed out Lopez, who was now on the street, as the man who had passed the bill off as legit.

Officer Biskup approached Lopez, who said he hadn't been in the bar, even though he had the bar's entry stamp on his hand.

Officer Biskup asked Lopez if he had any cash on him, and he turned over \$495 in real cash from his front pants pocket, saying that was the only money he had on him.

While speaking with Lopez, security staff from another bar approached Officer Biskup and said they just discovered two more fake \$20 had been used in their bar. The bills were consistent with the original counterfeit bill passed at the first bar.

Based on the bartender and manager's statements, Lopez was placed under arrest. Upon search, officers found 10 more counterfeit bills in Lopez's right rear pocket.

The Key West Police Department has recently been doing outreach efforts to teach people how to recognize counterfeit money.

In addition to a Community Affairs Division release to the media about counterfeit money, Ofc. Steve Torrence also recorded a Public Service Announcement about it this month. That PSA will run on Comcast Channel 5 and be featured in spots during the Mayor and City Manager's City Beat television show, which airs on Tuesday and Wednesday nights.

Counterfeit money is fairly easy to spot. First of all, people should consider the texture of the bill. Real money is made out of special paper that has a



Photos by Christie Phillips
In both pictures, the confiscated counterfeit bill is on the bottom. Though difficult to discern in a picture, the texture of the counterfeit bill compared to real money is quite noticeable.



high linen content, which is very difficult to reproduce, therefore counterfeit money will not feel like regular money does.

If the paper doesn't feel right, look at the bill itself. The note should contain very distinct security features, including an inscribed security thread noting the bill's denomination and 'USA,' a watermark of the presidential face on the bill and a

color shifting ink number in the bottom right corner matching the denomination of the bill.

If you come across a bill you think is counterfeit, call your local authorities immediately and, if you can, write down a description of the person trying to pass the fake money.

For more information on counterfeit money, go to www.secretservice.gov. □

STAR night planned for Feb. 29

The Key West Police Department is conducting a Strategic Traffic Accident Reduction, or STAR, night Friday, February 29, 2008.

Key West Police officers will be out in force, with help from the Monroe County Sheriff's Office, the Florida Department of Transportation, and even the U.S. Border Patrol.

The main focus of this STAR night will be a DUI checkpoint at the corner of Palm Avenue and North Roosevelt Boulevard.

Officers will be monitoring that area for traffic infractions, enforcing basic traffic laws and specifically looking for people who are driving under the influence of drugs or alcohol.

The STAR night will be held from 5 p.m. until 3 a.m. As always, please be safe and elect a sober driver. □