

City of KEY WEST

December 2010

Police Athletic League Offers Fun and Learning



Kids participating in this year's PAL holiday

camp learned about the training and work that goes into a partnership

between an officer and a police dog. Sgt. Sean Brandenburg (in red), his partner Wind, and dog trainer Raul Hernandez showed kids the intense training involved and gave them a chance to meet future police dogs. Camp Coordinator Tez Waters made sure the kids enjoyed their break from school, including a day of caroling at City Hall.



CITY OF KEY WEST

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District 5: Teri Johnston

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District 6: Clayton Lopez

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Questions? Comments?

If you have information for the next City newsletter or would like to see something added to the publication, please contact Communications Manager Alyson Crean at acrean@keywestcity.com. This newsletter is a publication of the City of Key West.

Employee Service Awards

The City of Key West has a hard-working and dedicated group of people whose service ensures city residents and visitors a clean, safe community. The following City staff hit some important milestones in the month of December:



Valerie Barrera

Customer Service Supervisor

Finance/ Revenue

25 years

start date: 12/26/85



Alice Parker

Benefits Administrator

Human Resources

5 years

start date: 12/15/2005



Ian Willis

Network Administrator

IT

5 years

start date: 12/19/2005

Cadets Sworn in as Part of Graduation Ceremony

Key West Police Chief Donie Lee swore in four new officers in December. The ceremonial presentation of badges came at the end of the commencement ceremony of the Florida Keys Community College Institute of Criminal Justice. Thirteen cadets graduated this 42nd session of the Basic Law Enforcement Academy, and four of them were sponsored by the Key West Police Department.

Jennifer Lohman worked previously with two other law enforcement agencies - the Bay County Sheriff's Office and the Monroe County Sheriff's Office - as a civilian employee. She also served with the U.S. Air Force.

Nelly Diaz has been with the Key West Police Department since 2003 as a telecommunicator and property and evidence technician. She grew up in Key West.

Donavon Howanitz and Curtiss Richardson are also both Conchs. Richardson spent six years in the Army before becoming a cadet.

"We're proud to welcome these fine young officers to the Key West Police Department," said Chief Donie Lee. "Their enthusiasm and dedication to the community will be a valuable asset."

The graduation ceremony took place at Key West High School's auditorium, and was attended by many law enforcement officers as well as proud families. Monroe County Sheriff Bob Peryam delivered the commencement address, a particularly touching twist as his daughter Allison was one of the graduating cadets.

In the photo, Key West Police Chief Donie Lee swears in Jennifer Lohman, Nelly Diaz, Donavon Howanitz and Curtiss Richardson at last month's Law Enforcement Academy graduation.



Dancing Ambassadors

Key West Ambassador Lucy Carleton greeted nearly 400 dancers as they disembarked from the cruise ship Costa Atlantica. As an Ambassador, she presented the group a proclamation declaring November 29th as USA Dance Day in the City of Key West.



USA Dance is a national group overseeing the competitive version of ballroom dancing. It also supports programs for recreational ballroom dancing for all ages. Carleton and her partner Leon Williams teach ballroom dancing in Key West.

Carleton is one of the City's original Ambassadors, having graduated from the second Key West Ambassador Academy.

Class 16 begins on January 20th. Participants in the program take an in-depth look at the workings of city government during the 16-week program. The roster of Ambassadors reads like a who's who of Key West. The free program is based on the idea that an educated electorate is the bedrock of a well functioning democracy. It takes a look at everything from budget to how commissioners make decisions. Participants attend meetings, ride along with a Key West Police officer and participate in a round table with the entire City Commission.

Applications are being accepted for the upcoming class. They are available on the City's web site at www.keywestcity.com. For more information, call Alyson Crean at 809-1058.

In the photo, Key West Ambassador Lucy Carleton (center) presents a plaque to a group of 400 visiting dancers who arrived via cruise ship.

City Honors Homeless Deaths of 2010

A record number of local residents gathered this year at the Key West Cemetery to say a prayer for the homeless people who have died in Monroe County over the past year.

Dec. 21st is recognized nationwide as National Homeless Persons Memorial Day. The day was chosen for the symbolism of the longest night of the year. Mere survival can feel like unending darkness to those struggling with homelessness. The Florida Keys Outreach Coalition organizes the event locally. Mayor Craig Cates - along with City Commissioner Jimmy Weekley, who serves on the FKOC Board of Directors - proclaimed the local recognition during a commission meeting in December. Commissioners Weekley, Teri Johnston and Clayton Lopez spoke during the ceremony.

One of the goals of the event is to remember the many thousands of homeless people who die on our nation's streets or in homeless shelters. They die because of poverty, addiction, hypothermia, violence and disease. And many of them don't even have anyone to claim their remains. Others have family who have struggled alongside of them, battling mental illness and losing.

The non-denominational service included the reading of the names of 23 homeless men and women who died in Monroe County over the past year. Their remains will be added to those in a vault dedicated to Maurice "Bo" Smith who, through the recovery system available in Key West, was able to end his cycle of homelessness before he died in 2007. The vault is engraved "A final home for the homeless."



Lighted Bike Tour a Hit!



If there was any question whether Key West is a biking town, it was answered in December when several hundred cyclists young and old hit the streets for the Lighted Bicycle Tour. Some wore Santa hats, others covered their bikes with tinsel and lights, some just came as they were. But they had a wonderful time touring through the island city, enjoying the holiday displays at homes and businesses.

Tom Wheaton, who led the effort with the City of Key West's Bicycle Action Committee, said he was thrilled with the volunteers who helped keep the event organized and safe.

Above, volunteers were readying to register the oncoming crowd of participants. Left to right: Ty Symroski, Phillip Anderson, Christine Russell, Tom Wheaton, Cynthia Buccanan, Beth Pellicier, Alyssa Sawyer, Christina Lindley and Karen Frank-Noll. The photo on the right proves that everyone in the family participated!

