

# City of KEY WEST

January/February 2011

## Mounted Unit Struts its Stuff in Tampa



*Officer Alberto DeVelasco and Smoke show off their ribbons*

The Key West Police Mounted Unit came home in February sporting several ribbons after participating in the 2011 Hillsborough County Sheriff's Office & Tampa Police Department Law Enforcement Mounted Training & Critique which took place in Tampa.

Key West's Mounted Unit was represented by Officer Alberto DeVelasco, Officer Chris Delsante, Officer Matthew Johnson, retired Lt. and Reserve Officer Alan Newby, and certified volunteers Pam Kolonia-James and Taylor Moran.

The first few days of the event included intensive training in some of the specialized skills that police horses must master. These horses must deal with all sorts of obstacles that might spook a horse with a normal lifestyle. That's why they learn about obstacles - day and night. They need to ride in formation and know what to do with a crowd. They must even be able to pursue a fleeing felon.

The competition events included 49 horses from

various mounted units throughout the state of Florida. The results are as follows:

Equitation - Alan Newby 3rd place, Pam Kolonia-James 5th place.

Night Obstacle - Ofc. Alberto DeVelasco 2nd place, Alan Newby 5th place

Fleeing Felon - Ofc. Alberto DeVelasco 3rd place

Day Obstacle - Ofc. Alberto DeVelasco 5th place, Alan Newby 4th place

"The Mounted Unit represented the Key West Police Department professionally and with equine expertise by placing in four out of five events and bringing back seven ribbons," said Officer Alberto DeVelasco. "As a new unit from a small department we did better than many of the larger, long established units from other departments."



*Pam Kolonia-James and Cajun with their 5th place ribbon*

## CITY OF KEY WEST

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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](mailto:acrean@keywestcity.com). This newsletter is a publication of the City of Key West.

# Fire Department Announces New Hire and Promotions



Key West Fire Chief David Fraga was proud to announce this month the hiring of a new firefighter and the promotion of two members of the fire department.

Christopher Mendizabal is the newest member of the Key West Fire Department. This newest firefighter is a graduate of Key West High School. He participated in the Key West High School Fire Academy and was a member of the Key West Fire Explorers. He is a certified Paramedic.

Driver/Engineer Michael Budde was promoted to Captain. Budde earned a gold watch last November, honoring the 20 years he has served with the Department. He is a member of the HAZMAT team as well as the Urban Search and Rescue team. In addition, he is an instructor for the Department, a team leader for the dive team, and an emergency medical technician. He also teaches first aid and SCUBA.

Chief Fraga also announced the promotion of firefighter Tyrone Cervantes to Driver/Engineer. Cervantes has been with the Department since 1998. He, too, is a member of the Urban Search and Rescue team and a certified emergency medical technician.

*In the photo (above): Newly hired firefighter Christopher Mendizabal, Fire Chief David Fraga, Division Chief of Operations Michael Davila, Captain Michael Budde, Driver/Engineer Tyrone Cervantes, Division Chief/Fire Marshal Craig Marston, Division Chief/ Fire Marshal Marcus Del Valle.*

*Twelve candidates participated in agility testing (right) as part of the screening to become a Key West firefighter.*



# 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 months of January and February:*



**Peter Malott**  
Capt. Inspector  
KWFD  
25 years



**Sue Snider**  
Purchasing Agent  
Finance  
20 years



**Robert Currul**  
Officer  
KWPD  
15 years



**Brendon Cunningham**  
Senior Planner  
Planning  
5 years



**Daniel Jones**  
Officer  
KWPD  
5 years



**Jason Bogoeff**  
Firefighter  
KWFD  
5 years



**Jean Bernard**  
Fleet Vehicle Helper  
Community Services  
5 years



**Luis Gonzalez-Vazquez**  
Maintenance Worker  
Community Services  
5 years



**Jimmy Valdes**  
Officer  
KWPD  
5 years



**Karl Wagner**  
Firefighter  
KWFD  
5 years



**KA Wanciak**  
Officer  
KWPD  
5 years



**Nicholas Revoredo**  
Officer  
KWPD  
5 years

The Key West Fire Department In February hosted CPR training for a group of residents who volunteer their time to a variety of children's programs through the 5th Street Baptist Church. Firefighter Sheldon Goodman instructed the class, which was held at Fire Station #3 on Flagler Ave.

*Back row left to right: firefighter Jason Bogoeff, Sherri Boyer, Crystal Depoo, Mia Gonzalez, Dana Cortor, Ryan Mclean, Kristen Byrd, Kristi Lopez, Karla Mendez.*

*Kneeling, left to right: Alice Parker, Elda Davila, Jennifer Henriquez, Robyn Romanoff.*



Photo courtesy of Sheldon Goodman

## Trophia Foundation Greens Key West



The Trophia Foundation has taken another step toward creating in Key West a cool canopy of native trees to shade our historic streets.

The newest plantings are along Whitehead Street. These new trees are the latest in a long list of accomplishments that are beautifying the community. The generous foundation has planted trees along Duval Street, White Street and in Bayview Park. The dedicated board has begun replacing lost canopy at Key West High School, planted a butterfly garden at the Senior Center, and donated butterfly books to schools throughout the county. The foundation has placed new sabal palms in the cemetery and planted trees along Truman Avenue.

But it's about more than a canopy. The foundation's goal is to restore and preserve butterfly populations by sustaining the habitat vital to their survival. And it's working!

Within days of planting bulnesias and cassias along Whitehead Street, sulphur butterflies, drawn to only these particular species of tree, were dancing in the air among the new branches.

*In the top photo: Key West Community Services's Tony Boza, former Trophia Foundation President David Bray, Community Services Director Greg Valiz, and the City's Urban Forestry Specialist Cynthia Domenech-Coogle. At the left, City Commissioner Jimmy Weekley shows his true colors, hugging the newly planted cassia on Whitehead Street.*

# Police Chief Names Officer and Civilian of the Year

Key West Police Chief Donie Lee awarded Sgt. Areaka Jewell the honor of Officer of the Year for 2010.

Sgt. Areaka Jewell has served with the Key West Police Department since 2002, starting her career as a city-sponsored cadet at the FKCC Institute of Criminal Justice. Her exemplary career with the Department culminated with her promotion to Sergeant in January of last year.

“Her professionalism and dedication to the Department resulted in something the entire Department can share with pride,” said Lee, “the reaccreditation by the Commission of Florida Law Enforcement Accreditation.”

He noted that Jewell took over the role of interim accreditation manager and used her excellent skills to accomplish reaccreditation.

“She brought to the task her excellent organizational skills, attention to detail, a relentless work ethic and,” said Lee, “a well-honed leadership ability.”

Chief Lee named Chawana McDowell the Civilian of the Year Award for 2010.

McDowell has been a clerk in the records section of the Key West Police Department since 2005. She brings to the job an outstanding level of knowledge of the community, discretion and courtesy. In her role as clerk, she interacts with the public as well as members of the Department, and she brings a level head and courteous demeanor to each and every one of those interactions.

Sgt. Jewell and McDowell were each awarded a check by Renee Travis, Marketing Director for Keys Federal Credit Union. The Credit Union sponsors the annual award.



*Left to right: Keys Federal Marketing Director Renee Travis, Records Clerk Chawana McDowell, Sgt. Areaka Jewell, Chief Donie Lee*



The Key West City Commission Chamber was filled with families as Mayor Craig Cates proclaimed February 1st U-14 Boys Soccer Day. The state champion team came to the podium to accept the proclamation.

The Travel Team of kids under 14 years of age earned a stunning victory, winning the state AYSO championship in mid January.

“I am very proud,” said Cates. “These kids show there's a lot more to this town than Duval Street.” This the first team to ever bring home to Key West the U-14 Boys AYSO championship.

“The City of Key West recognizes the positive sportsmanship displayed by the entire U-14 boys soccer team throughout the entire tournament, which other teams and parent throughout the state of Florida were witness to the exceptional character of Key West Youth,” read the proclamation.

It also recognized Head Coach Mike Bravo and Team Manager Shawnda Renner for their tireless efforts.