

City of

Key West

February 2012

Firefighter Honored by Chamber



Key West Fire Captain Kenneth Wardlow was named Firefighter of the Quarter by the Key West Chamber of Commerce. Capt. Wardlow has been with the Key West Fire Department for 18 years, and says he practically grew up in the department. Dickie and Billy Wardlow - Capt. Wardlow's uncles - both served honorably with the Department and both served as Fire Chief. Even as a child Kenneth knew that he wanted to follow in his uncles' footsteps, protecting Key West's citizenry.

"He has been a valuable addition to the Fire Prevention Bureau," said Division Chief Michael Davila, "moving us into a more productive phase of Life Safety Inspections."

In the photo, Division Chief Michael Davila, Capt. Kenneth Wardlow, and Key West Chamber of Commerce President Jim Wilson celebrate the Chamber's recognition of the Firefighter of the Quarter.

New Officer Sworn In



Key West Police Chief Donie Lee swore in the Department's newest officer in February. Officer Isaac Helfner is a recently certified officer who holds a bachelor's degree in criminal justice from Florida International University as well as the Miami Dade School of Justice.

In the photo below, Officer Helfner's father admires his son's first badge.



CITY OF KEY WEST

Mayor
Craig Cates

ccates@keywestcity.com

Commissioners

District 1: **Jimmy Weekley**

jweekley@keywestcity.com

District 2: **Mark Rossi**

mrossi@keywestcity.com

District 3: **Billy Wardlow**

bwardlow@keywestcity.com

District 4: **Tony Yaniz**

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District 5: **Teri Johnston**

johnston@keywestcity.com

District 6: **Clayton Lopez**

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City Manager

Jim Scholl

jscholl@keywestcity.com

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 February:



Robert Malone

Captain
Key West Fire Dept
2/25/87
25 years



David Fernandez

Assistant
City Manager
2/11/87
25 years



Mark Sellers

Shift Commander
Key West Fire Dept
2/25/87
25 years



Hollis Wood

Sergeant
Key West Police Dept
2/24/97
15 years



Jerry Farrell

Heavy Equipment
Operator
Community Services
2/06/07
5 years



David Ray

Building Inspector
Building Dept.
2/15/07
5 years



Elizabeth Mann

Bus Driver
Key West DOT
2/26/07
5 years

Share the Road

The Key West Police Department, with the help of a grant from the Florida Department of Transportation, is rolling out a program aimed at improving the safety of bicyclists and pedestrians on the island.

Recent studies have shown that Key West, when compared to cities of equal size, rank #1 for bicycle injuries and #4 for incidents involving pedestrians.

"We don't like these rankings, but it's certainly not surprising when you see every day, first hand, the disregard and disrespect across the board by motorist, cyclists and even pedestrians - for each other and themselves," said Chief Lee. "Police officers can't be everywhere all the time. It's the responsibility of every individual on the road, whether you're in a car or on a bike or scooter, to watch out for others and drive safely.

"In order to take action when a violation occurs, an officer must actually witness the infraction," Lee continued. "We can't be everywhere all the time. This grant is a way to increase our dedicated presence to help reduce these statistics."

The program is an effort to educate motorists as well as cyclist and pedestrians. Anyone driving a vehicle needs to be aware of cyclists and respect their right to share the road. At the same

time, cyclists need to obey the rules of the road. The goal of the grant is shows real reductions in injuries and fatalities by changing behaviors.

This new push comes on the heels of a 2010 safety initiative that focused on ensuring that bicycle riders obey the law. That means that bikes, when travelling in the road, must go with the flow of traffic, stop at all lights and stop signs, and use lights at night. It's also illegal for a bicyclist to pass a car on the right, especially through an intersection. Bicycles may ride on sidewalks, however they must yield to pedestrians and give an audible signal when passing someone on foot.

"It's time for all of us to take an active role in making our streets safe," said Lee.

Vehicles, bikes, and pedestrians are not the only issues. For example, roller skates and skateboards, are not allowed on any roadways except while crossing a street on a crosswalk; and when crossing, that person has all the rights of a pedestrian. Roller skating and skate boards are also prohibited from Duval Street sidewalks, according to city ordinance. For a complete understanding of the state's laws, google Florida Statute 316.2065.

Stats Show Drop in Crime

The Key West Police Department's end of year report to the Florida Department of Law Enforcement shows a significant drop in crime in Key West. In 2011 crime was down a full 18 percent. Over the past few years, the trend has been a gradual drop in crime. In 2009 it dropped by 1.6 percent; in 2010 it dropped by 6.4 percent. But the 2011 number actually show quite a precipitous drop in crime at 18 percent.

Key West Police Chief Donie Lee attributes several factors while acknowledging that there is always a certain random element in the statistics. Community policing, he says, has played a part. Officers are building relationships with the community which in turn helps us prevent and solve crimes. The Department has also stepped up efforts to target repeat offenders.

The clearance rate - the number of cases that are solved - is a strong 27.2 percent, up from 21.9 percent in 2010. The state average hovers right around 25 percent. Chief Lee attributes this increase to the professionalism and dedication of our officers to go the extra mile to see cases through to arrest.

Unfortunately, there was a slight increase of 1.6 percent in violent crimes. The increase is attributed primarily to aggravated batteries/assaults. Burglaries of structures and larceny from vehicles dropped dramatically.

In an email to the department, Chief Lee said, "I would like to thank each of you for your continued diligence and dedication. Let's continue to work on preventing crime and targeting known offenders to make 2012 a safer and more enjoyable community for our residents and visitors."

According to the UCR Report issued by FDLE's Uniform Crime Report System, Key West showed some of the following crime stats:

OFFENSE	2010	2011
Murder	1	2
Rape	19	11
Robbery	60	54
Aggravated assault	101	120
Burglary	639	443

Fast Action Protects Neighborhood



A Catherine Street conflagration was out within ten minutes of the Key West Fire Department's arrival on the scene in late February.

When the call came in at 9:52 p.m., two engines and a ladder truck, as well as a commander, fire prevention and several police units arrived to find the front of the house fully engulfed in flame.

The house - 907 Catherine Street -- is just across the street from El Siboney restaurant. The structure is connected to a house on one side, and extremely close to the other houses that surround it. However, no other structures were damaged by the fire.

Fire officials estimate it was \$150,000 loss. The sole resident of the house was transported to the hospital for smoke inhalation and later released. No one else was injured.



Key West Mayor Craig Cates and City Commissioner Clayton Lopez took a moment at the beginning of the Feb. 6th commission meeting to commend Peggy Ward-Grant and Warren Leamard, two devoted members of the Bahama Village Redevelopment Advisory Committee, for their dedicated service. The commendation expresses the gratitude of the City Commission and the Planning Department for their "outstanding service and commitment to alleviate blight within the Bahama Village Community Redevelopment Area through the responsible and thoughtful appropriation of the Tax Increment Fund."

In the photo (left): Pictured left to right: Warren Leamard, Commissioner Clayton Lopez, Peggy Ward-Grant, Mayor Craig Cates.

Two former members of the Key West Historic Architectural Review Commission (HARC) were honored during February's HARC meeting. Architect Carlos O. Rojas and hotel manager George Galvan were commended for their outstanding service to the city. Both men served on the volunteer board for approximately five years.

Because the city's Historic District is listed in the National Register of Historic Places, changes to structures within that district must be vetted by the HARC board. Both Rojas and Galvan brought to their tenure with HARC a unique professional insight that balanced the desires of property owners with a respect for historic preservation.

In the photo (right): Current HARC Chairman Rudy Molinet and former board members George Galvan and Carlos Rojas.

