



THE CIRCUIT TIMES

NEWSLETTER OF THE 20TH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT

SUMMER 2017

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Lee County Criminal Division Receives Dual Accreditation



Criminal Division Director Liza Flecha and staff at the FLA-PAC Conference

Lee County’s Probation has become one of the first probation departments to receive accreditation status in the state. The county’s Criminal Division was reviewed by the Florida Corrections Accreditation Commission on Tuesday, June 20th, 2017 at the FLA-PAC Conference in Orlando, FL. The Commission unanimously approved the division for accreditation and also commended them for being a model organization. This was Pretrial Services’ third re-accreditation and County Probation’s first accreditation.

The Florida Corrections Accreditation Commission began accrediting pretrial agencies in 2008 and was seen as a means to increase judicial confidence in the use of pretrial release programs by providing standardized, accurate information for release/detention decisions. Probation standards were added in 2016. Accreditation covers eight sections: Personnel Practices, Organization and Management, General Safety, Communication and Conduct, Reporting, Investigations, First Appearance and Jail Management, Release and Supervision and Probation Monitoring.

In 2016, there were approximately 5,627 individuals ordered on probation. The average success rate is approximately 62%. Success rate is defined

as satisfactorily complying with all conditions set forth by the court. During fiscal year 2015 – 2016, there were approximately 2,800 defendants placed on Pretrial Supervision. The average success rate is approximately 80%. Monitoring may take the form of home contacts, drug testing, making sure the probationer attends counseling sessions and helping to find suitable housing and employment. Officers also supervise probationers using electronic monitoring equipment which requires expert knowledge of newer technologies while reducing costs to the tax payers.

“As I have known for a very long time, our Criminal Division staff is a professional body of persons all seeking to be accountable for complying with the highest standards of excellence within the Pretrial Services / Probation industry, as well as being transparent for all stakeholders, justice partners, local community leaders and citizens to view how our “practice meets policy,” said Trial Court Administrator Scott Wilsker.

Lee County celebrated our Pretrial and Probation Departments during the week of July 16 through the 22nd. Commissioners signed a resolution naming it Pretrial, Probation and Parole Supervision Week.



Lee County Justice Center amps up security

The Court Security Department at the Lee County Justice Center Complex is taking steps to make the Justice Center one of the safest buildings in the county.

Sixty-three HD security cameras were recently installed in the Justice Center Proper (JCP) on the 5th floor and in stairwells. Cameras were placed inside and outside of courtrooms, giving court security officers the ability to surveil the entire floor. Cameras will soon be placed on the 4th floor, as well.

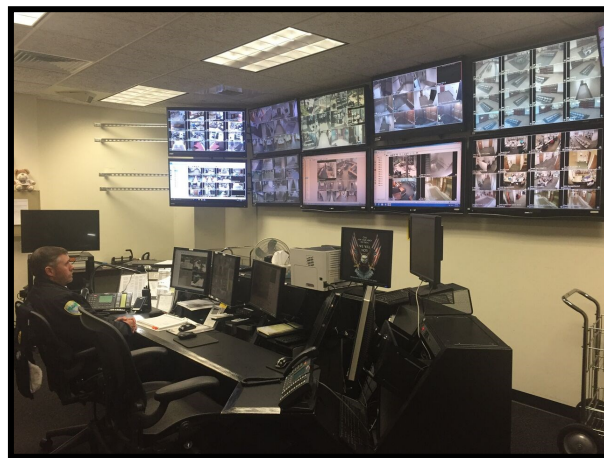
The Justice Center Tower (JCT) has had cameras on each of its 10 levels since it opened in 2008. Adding cameras to the 4th and 5th floors of JCP addresses a longstanding security risk, and improves safety and security conditions for employees, litigants and visitors to the Complex.

In an emergency situation, the idea is to have the ability to

follow individuals from the moment they enter the courthouse. Court security officers watch the stairwells, elevators, courtrooms and corridors to quickly detect situations that pose or potentially pose a safety or security risk.

Two facial recognition cameras have also been added to the video surveillance system. This capability allows for immediate identification of persons who may pose a security risk. Persons with this designation have their photo and information maintained in a secure database. When the person passes through the camera view, an alert is activated in the control room and the appropriate notifications are made.

The department plans to continue to use technological advances in physical security systems to enhance its ability to monitor and control public spaces.



Crime Stoppers Kiosks Installed to bring awareness to crimes

Southwest Florida Crime Stoppers hopes new crime-stopping kiosks will help generate leads or even solve open murder cases in Southwest Florida.

One of the kiosks can be found at the Monroe Street entrance of the Lee County Justice Center. There are videos and pictures of wanted fugitives, missing people, and information about unsolved homicides.

The program allows citizens to anonymously report individuals who are known or suspected of committing criminal acts in the community. If you have a tip, the Crime Stoppers Hotline is 1-800-780-TIPS. If your tip leads to an arrest or recovery of stolen property, you are eligible for a reward up to \$1,000.



2nd District Court of Appeals Judges visit for Oral Arguments

Three Judges from the Second District Court of Appeals made their annual visit to the Lee County Justice Center on May 9th, 2017. The visit is coordinated by Judge John Carlin and Lee County schools in hopes of educating and engaging students in the area of law. Approximately 75 students attended from six area schools.

Before arguments began, Judge Edward LaRose, Judge Anthony Black, and Judge Susan Rothstein-Youakim answered questions from students. Topics included the difference between circuit and appellate courts, the importance of oral arguments, and the process to become an attorney or judge.

Three cases total from Collier County, Lee County, and Sarasota County were heard by the panel. Following Oral Arguments the judges attended the Law Week Awards Luncheon.



Students with Judge LaRose, Judge Rothstein-Youakim, Judge Black, and Judge Carlin.

Naples recognizes Drug Court Month

In honor of National Drug Court Month, Naples City council signed a proclamation on May 17, 2017 to honor the great things Collier County Drug Court does for the community.

More than a dozen Drug Court participants as well as staff attended the council meeting as Mayor Bill Barnett read the proclamation.

“Today you are all to be commended for being here and we all appreciate you being here and for what you’ve done,” said Mayor Barnett. “The city urges all citizens to support the organization’s efforts to reduce crime, save resources and facilitate rehabilitation for the addicted.”

Collier County Drug Court was started in 1999 by Judge William Blackwell. Currently, County Judge Janeice Martin oversees Drug Court. She is actually a second generation Drug Court judge. Her father, Lawrence Martin, handled the program’s duties after Judge Blackwell.

Currently, there are approximately 65 members in the Drug Court program. Defendants who plea into Drug Court are placed on a period of probation to include two years of Drug Offender Probation, a requirement of which is compliance with a highly structured, court-based treatment program lasting a minimum of 12 months. Participants attend Drug

Court regularly, where their progress in treatment is discussed with the entire Drug Court Team, including the Judge.

“These men and women know how fortunate they are to have the opportunity and I cannot express fully enough how proud I am to bring a few of them here,” said Judge Martin. “What they are doing is so much harder than doing time... and I am so proud.”

Collier County also signed a similar proclamation at their Board of County Commissioners meeting on May 9, 2017.



Collier Drug Court participants at Naples City Hall

Longtime Human Resources employee retires

At the beginning of June of 2017, the 20th Judicial Circuit said farewell to Assistant Human Resources Manager, Ginny Wegis. Ms. Wegis started with the Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) as a Secretary I in AOC's Probation Office department in December 1991. From there she briefly worked in AOC's Fiscal department and in March of 1992 she transferred to the Executive Office working as Court Administrator William "Doug" Wilkinson's assistant. She then transitioned to the HR department.

The theme for her retirement party was "travel." She and her husband Howard will start their first trip in September. For seven weeks, the pair (along with their camper) will head west with stops in Washington, Oregon, California, and Wyoming. Ms. Wegis looks forward to hiking through the tallest trees on Earth at the Redwood State Park in Northern California and the majestic mountains at the Grand Tetons in Wyoming.



Natalie Naut, Tina Swilley, Lois Milazzo, Ginny Wegis, Sharon Suhar, and Dawn Whittington

Good Luck in Retirement to...

- ◆ Sandra Jimerson, Administrative Assistant in Mediation in Lee County since June of 1996.
- ◆ Carolyn Miller, Secretary III in Probation in Lee County since August of 2006.
- ◆ Judy Ryckman, Administrative Assistant in Lee County Probation since March of 2003 (will retire on October 31, 2017).

Deputy Trial Court Administrator retires

At the end of August 2017, the entire 20th Judicial Circuit congratulated Deputy Trial Court Administrator Jim Sullivan on his retirement. Mr. Sullivan began with the Administrative Office of the Courts in 2000 as a case manager in Lee County. He then became a Court Program Specialist four years later followed by a Pretrial Supervisor. Before becoming the Deputy Trial Court Administrator, Mr. Sullivan was the Court Operations Manager. He held the position of Chief Deputy since June 2013. We wish Mr. Sullivan the best on his retirement.



Mr. Sullivan and his wife.



Trial Court Administrator Scott Wilsker presents Mr. Sullivan with commemorative clock.

More than 1600 hours donated in Lee County Teen Court

Lee County Teen Court completed another successful school year with a total of 1,624 hours donated by Teen Court members. The student with the highest amount of volunteer hours was Nikki Park with 201 hours for her entire Teen Court membership. The average number of hours per volunteer per session is about 70-80. Permanent members of Teen Court must maintain good grades and must volunteer at least one session per month. They are also awarded community service hours.

At the end of the program each year, Teen Court participants gather for their "End of the Year Celebration." Participants include adult attorneys, volunteers, students, LCSO Explorers, and Program Coordinator Stacey Lowe. The group shares stories and students receive awards for their efforts. The program had 41 members in Teen Court last session, with seven of them graduating. This year, Lowe says she has already signed up five new members.

The purpose of the yearlong program is to get at-risk youth back on track. Similar to adult court, the teenage defendants will appear before a jury of their peers. The jurors are also teens themselves, as are the attorneys, clerks, and bailiffs. The only adult is an attorney who serves as the Judge. Teen Court is a Diversion Program, designed to keep first-time, non-violent Juvenile offenders out of the mainstream or formal Court system. Some examples of cases heard are: Petit Theft, Marijuana/Paraphernalia, Loitering and Prowling, and Resisting Officer without Violence. Lowe says she has seen an uptick in Domestic Violence cases (predominantly violence against a parent/sibling).

Juvenile offenders must admit their guilt in order to qualify, as the Teen Court session is actually a Disposition/ Sentencing hearing. The teenaged defendants are given sanctions by the jury and must complete the sanctions successfully. One sanction given to the defendants is to attend Teen Court for anywhere between two and five sessions (based on jury recommendations), and act as jury members for new defendants. Once the defendants complete their sanctions, the State Attorney's office is notified and their case is closed.

Teen Court begins at 6:00 pm on each Thursday of the month. Our website has more information on how to join.

We would like to thank Oasis II for their generosity of hosting the celebration.



Lee County Courthouse Updates

Court Operations continues to update carpeting and courtrooms in the Lee County Justice Center. Courtrooms 5-H, 2-B, and 3-D have had a full carpet replacement. 3-D and 5-H were both in dire need of replacement due to continued foot traffic and several spots and spills. The carpet was last updated in the early 90's. Courtroom 3-D, where first appearance is held, will also see continued improvements in the coming months.



Courtroom 3-D



Courtroom 5-H



Courtroom 2-B

Collier County Probation changes with the times

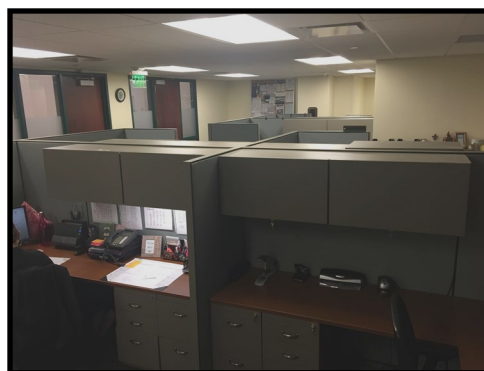
Written by: Barb Andrews and Juan Ramos

Socrates said it best, “The secret of change is to focus all of your energy not on fighting the old, but on building the new.” Collier County identified the importance of change to enhance the function of its probation department and knew it needed to take action.

The department was established in 1987 and employed four probation officers and four clerical staff. At its inception, the department served two County Judges (Judge Turner and Judge Trettis) and supervised approximately 700 individuals. Clerical staff was responsible to prepare all warrants, pleadings, and letters; which they did by manual typewriter. The office was located in Building A, which was also the original jail facility. Deborah Offutt led the department that also employed Charles Crews and Charles Rice. Mrs. Offutt retired as the Criminal Division Director in 2015 before returning to the Courts where she now works as a civil case manager. Mr. Rice also served a stint at the helm of the of the department before being promoted to his current position as Administrative Services Manager of the Twentieth Judicial Circuit in Collier County. Mr. Crews continues to be employed with the department as a Senior Probation Officer.

In 1990, the department relocated to the Courthouse. Personnel and caseloads continued to grow and in 1992, staff was relocated throughout the building to accommodate both employee and offender needs. In 1993, a satellite probation office was opened in Immokalee and in 1994 Juan Ramos started as a Probation Officer assigned to work in that office. Mr. Ramos eventually was promoted to Deputy Criminal Division Director. In June of 2016, Jeff Nichols returned to Collier County as the Criminal Division Director (he started in 1995 as a probation officer for Collier County). One of his first responsibilities when he returned was to oversee the construction of the new probation office. This new space would bring the entire criminal division back together in one work area. During the expansion project, 17 probation staff shared a 2,300 square foot of office space.

The new office space, which opened for business in February, 2017, is located on the first floor of the Courthouse in place of the former Traffic Department. The new space provides offices for each probation officer, both felony case managers, and also houses the Deputy Criminal Division Director and Criminal Division Director. It also has three interview rooms, a break-room, semi-private cubicle for each secretary and a comfortable waiting room for the public we serve. There is also plenty of space for future growth.



Administrative Services Manager moderates session at national conference

Hendry/Glades County Administrative Services Manager Dawn Oliver served as a moderator during one of the sessions at the National Association of Court Managers conference. It was called “Managing a High-Profile Case in You Case – Lessons Learned from the Prince Case.” Oliver assisted Judge Kevin Eide and Court Administrator, Kristen Trebil of Carver County, Minnesota. The session taught people how a small courthouse dealt with coordinating all the delicate issues of processing the court proceedings and paperwork of not only a celebrity, but also an estimated \$200 million dollar estate. She helped the speakers prepare the conference room for their presentation, presented biographical information on each speaker, and distributed the microphone for questions.



Lee County Court Security Officers Recognized



L to R: CSO Lafata, CSO Hall, CSO Schilke, CSO Snyder, and Director Torain.

To thank Lee County Court Security Representatives for their years of service, Director Jeff Torain presented four employees with certificates commemorating their years of experience.

Lee County Court Security is proud to recognize and acknowledge those who dedicate their time in keeping the Justice Center safe.

Those recognized were: Harry Lafata for five years, William Hall for ten years, Ron Schilke for ten years, and Kevin Snyder for fifteen years of service.

Circuit employees attend ethics training

As part of the Administrative Office of the Courts' (AOC) ongoing commitment to train the AOC's team members in a variety of areas aligned with the AOC's overall training plan, the Human Resources office offered seven 4-hour training workshops in April 2017. The hands-on workshops included identifying and discussing definitions of law, norms, values, and ethics; identifying organizational factors which can potentially block ethical behavior; examine and discuss the standards of conduct for Florida public employees and the functions of the Florida Commission on Ethics; and relate whistle-blowing to ethical decision making.

Participants gained a better understanding of the overview of the Code of Ethics, contained in Florida Statute 112.313. Each workshop featured group activities to further develop participants' abilities to protect the integrity of government, while also avoiding the creation of unnecessary barriers to public service.

The workshop was facilitated by Ben Green who is the Director of the Florida Center for Public Management and is responsible for overall management of the Center, including marketing, staffing, scheduling, and contract management. Prior to becoming the Director, Ben was a Senior

Management Trainer for FCPM for many years. He has an extensive background in training and consulting for public and private sector organizations.



American Legion Attorney of the Year Honored



Magistrate Ed Larsen, Kelley Price, and Judge Jim McGarity

On May 2, 2017 Attorney Kelley Geraghty Price, Esq. received the American Legion Attorney of the Year award. Ms. Price was the first recipient of this award. Magistrate Ed Larsen and Collier County Judge Jim McGarity presented the award.

Judge McGarity is a retired U.S. Army Lt. Colonel having led the 101st Airborne. Magistrate Larsen serves as the Judge Advocate for the American Legion.

The American Legion has a long standing relationship with the legal community in Collier County. For many years the American Legion's veteran outreach program has supported

Written by: Magistrate Ed Larsen

the efforts of the Collier County Bar Association and Legal Aid to provide free legal services to veterans and their families in need. In this respect, time and again Ms. Price has been central to these efforts. Each and every time that veterans and their families have been in need of legal assistance in Collier and Southern Lee Counties, Ms. Price has been there to assist.

During the recent recession, when hundreds of local veterans were being foreclosed upon, Ms. Price brought together the Collier County Bar and Legal Aid to form a "Foreclosure Task Force." This Task Force provided legal advice to hundreds of veterans which kept many in their homes and / or helped them avoid deficiency judgments. Ms. Price also initiated the joint Collier County Bar and Legal Aid "Wills for Heroes" endeavor in Collier County which provided free estate planning advice and documents to our veterans and their spouses. Moreover, Ms. Price has volunteered many hours and personal resources to assist the veteran community. It was for these tremendous efforts on behalf of veterans and their families that the American Legion was pleased to honor Ms. Price as the 2017 Attorney of the Year.

Lee County Employees Receive NAPSA Certification

Please congratulate Enrique Rosario for obtaining the Certified Pretrial Diversion Professional Certification through the National Association of Pretrial Services Committees on Education and Training. Mr. Rosario qualified in experience and education and passed an examination on both general legal issues and issues specific to pretrial diversion/intervention. This demonstrated a basic understanding of historical and legal underpinnings of pretrial diversion, national standards, current and best practices in pretrial diversion.

The Certification Program is designed to advance the overall knowledge level of practitioners in the pretrial diversion field, and help ensure that they are aware of the most current information and best practices. Further, it promotes the capabilities of pretrial professionals—both within the program and to the public in general—by demonstrating their adherence to the NAPSA Code of Ethics, and enhancing their public image thereby aiding in the recruitment and formation of new and talented staff.

Mr. Rosario is the first in our department to study and test for the "Diversion Certification."

Please also congratulate Maria Gamboa for obtaining certification as a Pretrial Services Professional through the National Association of Pretrial Services Committees on Education and Training. Ms. Gamboa qualified in experience and education and passed an examination on both general legal issues and issues specific to pretrial investigation and release. This demonstrated a basic understanding of the pretrial movement and the history upon which it is based.



The Certification Program is designed to advance the overall knowledge level of practitioners in the pretrial field, and help ensure that they are aware of the most current information and best practices. Further, it promotes the capabilities of pretrial professionals—both within the program and to the public in general—by demonstrating adherence to the NAPSA Code of Ethics, and enhancing the public image

thereby aiding in the recruitment and formation of new and talented staff.

Collier County Probation Officer Selected to Speak at State Training



Senior Probation Officer Danny Hornbeck (*pictured*) was asked to speak at the Florida Association of Community Corrections Annual Training Institute in St. Augustine on July 18, 2017. Mr. Hornbeck was one of three panelists selected from around the state. He was brought in to share the Collier County model for training new Probation Officers.

The Florida Association of Community Corrections was established in 1992 to provide a vehicle for county probation programs to come together to identify, develop and promote effective programs. The goal was to offer a high standard of training there by increasing the professionalism of personnel as well as increase public awareness of the benefits of these programs.

Danny is a native of Indiana who entered the U.S. Military after high school. While in the Army, Danny rose to the rank of

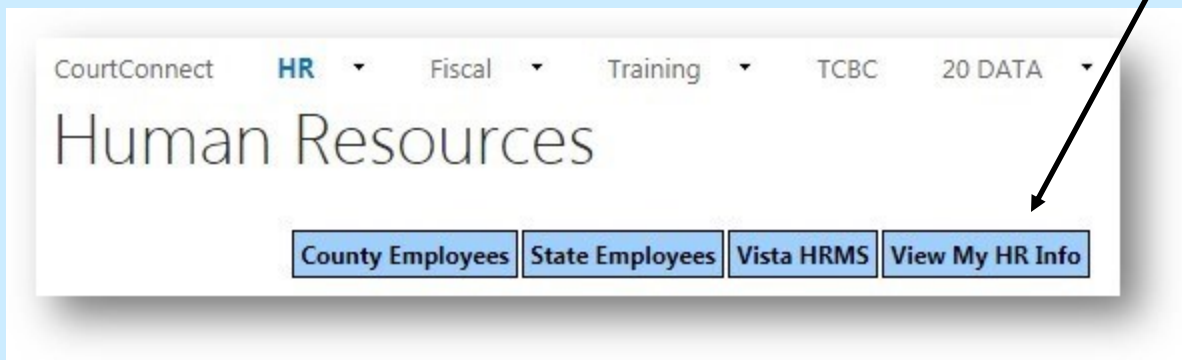
Tank Commander and his crew of three held the top score in tank gunnery two years in a row in a battalion of 64 tanks. Danny's also served 3½ years as a Field Recruiter where he taught "The Art of the Recruiter." It was during this time period that Danny obtained his Bachelor's Degree in Psychology and History. Danny's Command Sergeant Major nominated him to teach advanced leadership skills to midlevel Non Commissioned Officers (NCO's) at the NCO Academy. Danny co-authored a lesson plan that was adopted by all NCO Academies in the US Army. After leaving the Academy, Danny was reassigned to recruiting duty in charge of a large station in the Indianapolis area. He worked at two recruiting stations and at the Battalion HQ for the next 4 years until he left the service as a Sergeant First Class. At the Indianapolis recruiting battalion Danny was awarded the Recruiter Ring, an achievement earned by only .2 % of recruiters. After the service he worked as the Disabled Veteran Employment Specialist at the Naples, FL office while earning his Master's Degree in Public Administration (Summa Cum Laude) from Hodge's University. He then took a Probation Officer position with the Collier County Probation Department in 2001. His current duties include training new Officers and administering the Differed Prosecution Program. Danny is also a member of Sons of the American Revolution, Disabled American Veterans and The American Legion.

Update Your Information on Court Connect

It is now possible for employees to update their own home and mailing addresses in their employee record directly through CourtConnect. You may also update your emergency contact information on the same page.

To access the link see the blue tab titled **[View My HR Info]** on the Human Resources page of CourtConnect. This access is granted to help us all keep contact records current in the event of an emergency.

The link/button is found at the top of the HR home page next to Vista HRMS.



Collier County Probation Officer enjoys hunting hurricanes



Herrera (center) and his two friends during Charley

Each year as hurricane season approaches there is at least one Administrative Office of the Courts employee who finds themselves excited for the thrill of the storm and the power of Mother Nature.

That person is Ismael Herrera. He currently works at the Collier County Probation Department. But, you may also remember him from his time in Lee County Drug Court. Outside of his professional life, he has always enjoyed nature. He sees its potential for adventure and enjoys spending days at a time in the great outdoors. Hurricanes, in particular, have always fascinated him as far back as he can remember. Ismael recalls being 6-years-old and grabbing onto his living room window as he watched violent wind gusts colliding with the wooden fence desecrating his neighbor's yard. Never had he witnessed winds so powerful and fantastic. The rain contained within the winds blew in a fully horizontal fashion. Ismael was completely mesmerized by the brute force and the adrenaline that would stir up inside him. From this early age, he knew this weather phenomenon was something he wanted more of in his life. This same event prompted his first geography session where he recalls studying the map of Florida. He located Naples, Florida to better understand where specifically a storm out in the Florida straits needed to strike, so he could experience the full force of a hurricane.

Fast forward approximately 20-plus years to 2004. Ismael is now 26-years-old with several tales of tropical storm and hurricane chasing under his belt, but nothing was life-changing... until now. Ismael, along with three close friends, were looking at a once in a lifetime opportunity to chase and document one of the most intense daytime land falling hurricanes ever to strike Florida. Hurricane Charley was named a category four

Written by: Ismael Herrera



with 145mph sustained winds packed into a tight core around a tiny eye. With the help of his friend Jorge guiding them via the live radar loop from his living room, the group was able to experience Charley's violent inner core. They decided to face the full wrath of the storm from downtown Walmart parking lot in Punta Gorda, FL. Ismael says it was as if they were hunkered down at the base of a blender. They watched the world around them ripping and roaring in a full on violent rage that was terrifying, surreal, and spectacular all at the same time. Nothing Ismael has ever experienced comes close to the adrenaline overload that he experienced that day.

During the most intense part of Charley's eye wall, they took shelter under two loading trailers at the rear of the Walmart. The trailers themselves were lifting, slamming into each other, and then lifting again and again. Had they not been connected to the rear end of Walmart, they would have certainly blown away. Neither Ismael nor his friends will ever forget this event as it shook them to the core.

The authenticity of Mother Nature is unmatched and today Ismael's love of nature and the outdoors continues to provide a platform where he can unload and press the reset button when the stress of life feels too artificial. The adrenaline of timelines and deadlines can be exchanged for the adrenaline of a hurricane like Charley. Whichever the case, it's always good to know there is a life full of highs and lows awaiting us out there... the choice is ours.

Are You Hurricane Ready?

1. Be Prepared BEFORE the Emergency

- Develop a family disaster plan (see www.ready.gov).
- Develop a disaster supply kit (see www.ready.gov).
- Keep your contact information with Human Resources up-to-date.
- Keep your information in your division's phone tree up-to-date.
- Know your floor monitor.
- Be familiar with the Emergency Evacuation Plan for the court facility in which you work.

2. Stay Safe and Informed DURING the Emergency

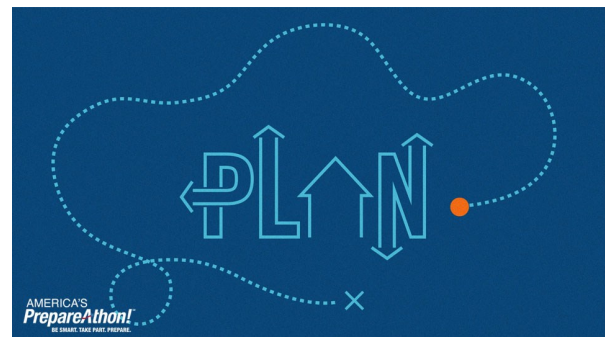
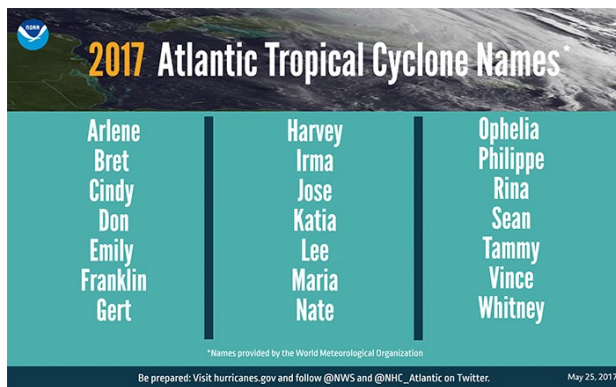
- Find a safe place—and stay there
- Say informed using:
 1. The 20th Judicial Circuit web site (www.ca.cjis20.org) or twitter (@SWFLCourts)
 2. Local Radio and television stations
 3. A NOAA weather radio
 4. Be ready to receive and forward information via phone
 5. Your work e-mail

3. Recover and Restore AFTER the Emergency

- Seek assistance for medical and other personal needs if necessary.
- Stay informed using the available means listed above.
- Follow instructions as provided.

4. Recover and Restore Court Operations AFTER the Emergency

- Complete step 3 and insure the safety of your family and property.
- Stay informed using the available means listed above.
- Follow instructions as provided.
- Report to your regular work location or alternate relocation site as directed.

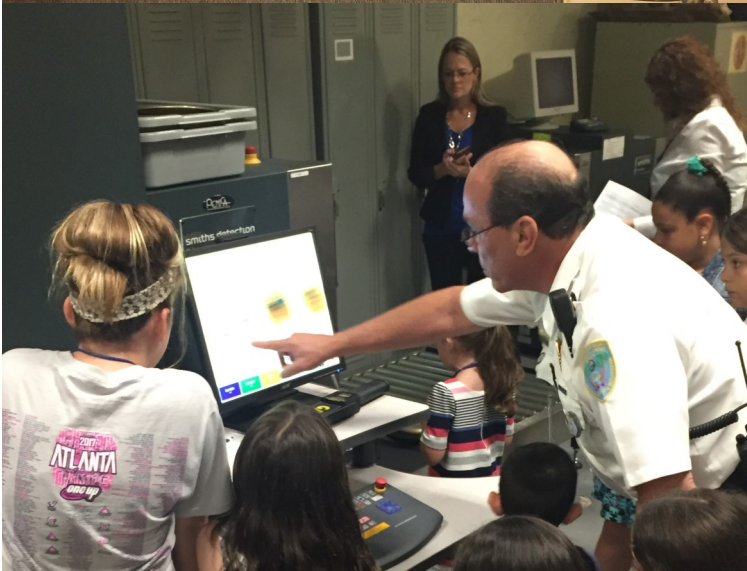


2017 Hurricane Outlook

For the upcoming Atlantic hurricane season, which runs from June 1 through November 30, forecasters predict a 45 percent chance of an above-normal season, a 35 percent chance of a near-normal season, and only a 20 percent chance of a below-normal season.

Forecasters predict a 70 percent likelihood of 11 to 17 named storms (winds of 39 mph or higher), of which 5 to 9 could become hurricanes (winds of 74 mph or higher), including 2 to 4 major hurricanes (Category 3, 4 or 5; winds of 111 mph or higher). An average season produces 12 named storms of which six become hurricanes, including three major hurricanes. These numbers include Tropical Storm Arlene, a rare pre-season storm that formed over the eastern Atlantic in April.

Pictures from 2017 Take Your Kids to Work Day in Lee County



Circuit Times Newsletter

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Barb Andrews

Sharon Suhar

Sgt. Sam Matos



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Circuit visit our website at www.ca.cjis20.org*



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