

# N N S O

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# ON THE INSIDE

**Newport News Sheriff's Office**—Committed to Making a Difference

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## RAISED SPIRITS AT END OF 2006

Deputies with the Newport News Sheriff's Office ended 2006 with reason to celebrate.

City Council approved a raise. The raise came just in time for the holidays. And because it was retroactive to July, each employee opened their December 15 paycheck to a good chunk of change. When it came to buying Christmas presents, the lump-sum helped put cash in staff pockets instead of on "plastic."

Sheriff Morgan reminded the mayor, city manager, council members that, "These men and women are among the lowest paid civil servants in the area, and working under some of the toughest conditions in the city."

The raise will bring the starting salary to \$28,645. It brings our pay more in line with our peers in other local cities.

It's no secret that we were losing good people to other agencies. Deputies would quit and use their training and experience from here to land a better paying job across the street (literally and figuratively).

Now with a bump in income, we should be less of a training ground and more of a place where employees choose to come and stay.

*(continued page 3 RAISE)*

## NNSO Wins VLEPSC Stamp of Approval

It took the Newport News Sheriff's Office only ten months to do what has taken other departments years to accomplish.

The Virginia Law Enforcement Professional Standards Commission, or VLEPSC, has accredited the Newport News Sheriff's Office. "We prepared. They came. We earned their stamp of approval," said Sheriff Gabe Morgan. "It is a real testament to the dedication of the deputies."

It is safe to say that everyone got well acquainted with Sgt. S. Humphrey during the preparation process. As the Accreditation Manager, Humphrey interviewed a lot of staff as he wrote policies and procedures in a manner dictated by VLEPSC. Humphrey remained focused and detail oriented. But he wasn't alone. "This kind of undertaking requires everyone's cooperation. It was awesome to watch things come together," complimented Humphrey.

Auditors spent three days going through files, randomly interviewing deputies to test their knowledge, and examining the physical plant itself. The Newport News Sheriff's Office complied with all 180 standards set forth by VLEPSC. With a 100% score, the office became a Virginia law enforcement accredited agency.

What does it mean to be VLEPSC accredited? Bragging rights – that's first and foremost. We have risen to a new level of professionalism. The public benefits because we are more streamlined and proficient in the way we go about our day-to-day business.

*(continued page 3 VLEPSC)*

## Call Me "Mr. Cole"



Cole accepts retirement gift from Sheriff

It is clear that Leonard Cole is enjoying retirement. When Sheriff Morgan called him "Lieutenant," Cole didn't hesitate to correct him with "Mr." Cole.

Sheriff Morgan used the 2006 company Christmas Party to congratulate Cole on his retirement. "I'm trying to convince him to return part-time," said Morgan, "but with no luck." Cole started with the NNSO on September 1, 1995 and retired on July 31, 2006. Best Wishes! ♦



Cole reminisces with Lt. R. Coleman and Sgt. C. Wilberg at 2006 Christmas Party.

## EMPLOYEE OF THE QUARTER 4th Quarter, 2006

Congratulations to Master Deputy Gregory Robertson. He was selected by peers as the 4th Quarter Employee of the Quarter. The award is presented in appreciation for outstanding service in or above the call of duty. It is based on an individual's character, integrity, and enthusiasm — among other attributes. ♦



## HOLIDAY SPREAD

THE PARTY CONTINUED!!!

ARAMARK SUPPLIED THE SPREAD.

STAFF BROUGHT THE APPETITIES.





## The Newport News Sheriff's Office complied with all 180 standards set forth by VLEPSC.

Being VLEPSC accredited means we meet the same professional standards as other accredited agencies across the Commonwealth of Virginia. Following strict policies and procedures will make it easier to defend lawsuits.

The Police Department is no longer the only accredited law enforcement agency in the City of Newport News. Having a seal of approval from a recognized accreditation authority could translate into leverage in local government decisions. That is not to say it will. However, the possibility is there. We are watching how other accredited law enforcement agencies are viewed by their localities. We are seeing that, in some cases, it does make a difference in how they are treated.

The Newport News Sheriff's Office will undergo another review by VLEPSC auditors in 2007.

Once we pass, the accreditation remains in effect for four years. ♦



VLEPSC auditors comb through hundreds of files.

### Raise (continued from page 1)

## The raise will bring the starting salary to \$28,645.

Also as part of the negotiation, there will be a step increase for new personnel after six months and again after twelve. Previously, employees would only get a step-up after one year.

The real power in the agreement brokered between the Sheriff and City Manager, is that

the Newport News Sheriff's Office will come under the city pay plan. An analysis will be made of the various functions handled by deputies. Based on individual job descriptions, they will be classified along with other city employees.

This will provide a better way to get salary increases. Currently, to get a raise at the Sheriff's Office, you must be promoted. Based on the nature of law enforcement, there are only so many opportunities for middle management and management positions.

Under the new arrangement, which should be finalized by mid-2007, there will be a salary scale for each job classification. A deputy could earn his/her way up to the top of the scale without being promoted in rank.

Morgan puts it this way, "I am not fighting for crumbs. I want them (the City) to put slices of bread on the table." ♦

## AG Calls NNSO Into "CLASS ACTION"

Attorney General Bob McDonnell recognizes the value of the Newport News Sheriff's Office and has asked that we help with his expanded "Class Action" program. This is an anti-gang curriculum that is taught in Newport News Public Schools.

McDonnell reached out to the NNSO to teach the material to 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> graders. Gangs are recruiting younger and younger. It is up to law enforcement to try and counter their efforts. Children must learn that there are consequences to making bad decisions. "Class Action" offers lesson plans on how to pick the right friends.

Deputies see first hand what happens when people make poor choices. We have a jail packed with men and women who did wrong, and now they are paying the price.

McDonnell was in Newport News on December 7, 2006. He helped teach a class of students at Palmer Elementary School. His visit to Newport News coincided with the 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of "Class Action."

Menchville High School in Newport News served as the pilot in 1996. It launched statewide a year later. It continued to expand into high schools and middle schools.

Up until McDonnell's request to include the Newport News Sheriff's Office, "Class Action" has been taught by police department Community Resource Officers.

The "Class Action" program has enjoyed documented success in the Commonwealth. An independent study of "Class Action" in 2002 showed that

students gained a 42.5 percent increase in knowledge of Virginia's criminal code, 87 percent enjoyed the class, 92 percent rated the law enforcement instructor well, and 90 percent of teachers praised the strengths of the program.



Police Chief James Fox, Attorney General Bob McDonnell and Sheriff Gabe Morgan pose for pictures at Palmer Elementary School.

The lesson plan provides a basic understanding of Virginia Law. "Through our "Class Action" program, children learn more about the law than most of us learned in school when I was growing up," Attorney General McDonnell noted. "Students can make good choices for the rest of their lives, and enjoy learning at the same time. This new workbook will reach students and their parents in 87 localities across Virginia," continued McDonnell.

Students will learn socially acceptable behavior in the home, in school, and in the community. By educating young people about citizenship and the short and long term consequences of unlawful behaviors, we reduce crime, violence and substance abuse in Virginia.

The Gang Education and Prevention Program is a separate and voluntary component of the current "Class Action" model. The current phase of the program

includes a K-2 model which serves as a "get acquainted" lesson for the young students and introduces them to the law and law enforcement.

The upper elementary (grades 4-5) and the middle school programs focus on gang recognition and prevention tips, new gang legislation and decision making skills. Deputies with the Newport News Sheriff's Office will be trained and certified as instructors for the upper elementary school grades.

In addition to teaching children how to recognize gangs and the consequences of gang related activity, parents can gain from "Class Action," too. The program is a resource for parents on helping prevent gang involvement among their children. They will learn the warning signs of gang involvement, tips for preventing gang involvement, and facts about gangs and Virginia's gang related laws. ♦



Lt. B. Thomas with Attorney General and Sheriff.