



Police Foundation: *Reflecting on our Quality of Life*

by Tom Murphy (January 2015)

As we begin the New Year, and the Police Foundation begins its 8th year, we look back on the quality of life that we enjoy here in Palm Beach Gardens. We have a very professional and highly trained Law Enforcement agency that is dedicated to serving the residents, business owners, students, employees and visitors to our City. The men and women of our Palm Beach Gardens Police Department provide us with the same level of commitment that they would want a member of their own family to receive, if they were in need of police assistance. They provide us a secure atmosphere conducive to our daily lifestyles and proactively build and strengthen the community partnership. We are very fortunate.

The Palm Beach Gardens Police Foundation is engaged in an effort to leverage private resources to fund high-priority needs of our Police Officers. We are extremely pleased by the support that we have received over the years from our residents and businesses... and proud of the grants that the Foundation has therefore been able to provide to our men and women in blue.

Looking back over the past few years, the Foundation has made a significant number of grants, amounting to over a quarter of a million dollars.

Most recently the Foundation funded the purchase of advanced technology software, known as ATAC-Raids (Automated Tactical Analysis of Crime – Regional Analysis and Information Data Sharing), that allows the Department's Crime Analysts to visualize crime patterns and trends in the North County, pinpoint crime hotspots and generate very customized predictive analytics spanning multiple jurisdictions. It allows our officers to stop responding to where crime *has happened* and start deploying resources to where *crime will happen*. The system even allows the Department to share crime data with the public through online crime maps and an analytics dashboard (<https://www.raidsonline.com>). This helps the public get a better idea of the crime activity in their neighborhood so they can make more informed decisions about how to stay safe.

In 2014 we also made a grant to the Department for the purchase of their fourth K9 officer. The grant included the purchase of the K9 and all the training necessary for both the dog and the Officer selected as his handler. K9 Dexter is a German Shepherd cross trained in both patrol and explosives detection. Along with his handler, Officer Rich Pearce, he is now finished with his training and on the street helping to keep us safe. Officer Pearce and K9 Dexter join Officer Shane Burns and K9 Czeph, another K9 team funded by the Police Foundation back in 2008. K9 Czeph is cross trained in both patrol and drug detection. In the not too distant future the Foundation foresees the need to fund another K9 as one of the other K9 handlers is about to retire.

In 2014 the Officers of the Palm Beach Gardens Police Department all got new ballistic vest covers designed specifically for the high temperatures of South Florida. The Police Foundation funded these items in our ongoing efforts to insure that those who protect us daily... are themselves well protected.

And with our seniors in mind, the Foundation made a grant to the Department for the purchase of specialized tracking equipment designed specifically for individuals with Alzheimer's, Autism and other forms of cognitive impairment. The individual wears a specially designed bracelet that emits a signal on a channel used by law enforcement for tracking people at risk.

Over the years the Foundation has made numerous grants for equipment and technology to ensure that Palm Beach Gardens remains the safest place to live, learn, work and play in South Florida.

The Foundation also provides various different grants aimed at the youth of our community. They are the future of our City and our Police Department works very hard to ensure that they are given the opportunities and guidance to develop into law-abiding, productive citizens. Each of the last 3 years the Foundation has provided scholarships to local youth and once again in 2015 we will award two \$1,500 grants to successful applicants on their way to earning a college degree.

And as we begin the New Year, the Police Foundation is about to fund a local study on body worn cameras. Technology is changing the role of law enforcement on a daily basis and this new tool may actually reduce exposure to litigation and unwarranted citizens' complaints. But before implementation there are a number of issues that must be addressed such as how the video will be stored, who will have access to it and how public records requests will be handled. This study will help the Department determine policies and procedures and the issues associated with both an implementation and a retention plan.

So the New Year brings with it new programs, new projects, new equipment and new technology for our Police Department... and for us, the knowledge that we live in one of the safest and most secure cities in South Florida. Thank you for your support

Tom Murphy has been president of the Palm Beach Gardens Police Foundation, Inc. since its inception in 2007. Before helping to form the foundation he was a marketing executive with the IBM Corporation and earlier a member of the Nassau County (NY) Police Department.