



Police Foundation: Funding Vital Equipment and Programs

by Tom Murphy

A goal of the Palm Beach Gardens Police Foundation is to fund the vital equipment and training needs of the Police Department which are not available through the city budget.

Working with the Chief of Police we identify those items which he feels will enhance the effectiveness of the Department, but are not currently funded through tax dollars. Using monies raised through our various annual appeals and projects we then administer grants to the Police Department for the purchase of that equipment. One hundred percent (100%) of donations go to furthering the mission of the Palm Beach Gardens Police Foundation.

Our most recent grant was for the purchase of a **new high-tech communications system** for the Hostage / Crisis Negotiation and Tactical Teams.

The system is designed to allow on-scene incident commanders to communicate more easily with hostage takers, barricaded subjects or persons threatening suicide by using either a home phone service or cellular phones - and to do it from a position of safety. The system incorporates bluetooth wireless technology thus eliminating the need to find a landline equipped home in the middle of the night. Modularity, upgradeability and ease in setup and operations were key evaluation criteria.

Earlier grants to the Department have allowed for the purchase of Thermal Imaging equipment, video capture and clarification software, high-tech data collection recorders, mobile blue-tooth fingerprint identification systems, tactical light and holster systems as well as a police canine dual-trained in patrol and substance detection.

The Foundation has also provided funds for officer training, trauma kits, video playback equipment and specialized tracking equipment to assist in locating individuals suffering from Alzheimer's or other forms of dementia.

A further goal of the Foundation is to provide funding for crime prevention programs as well as police related community outreach programs. Youth programs are a major focus area and the Foundation has over the years given generous support to the

Department's Police Explorer Post. We have partnered with the *National Center for Missing and Exploited Children* and helped fund their awareness programs. We have provided funding to the *Palm Beach Gardens Youth Athletic Association* and the *Florida Special Olympics*. Most recently the Foundation made an equipment grant to Camp Tanah Keeta Scout Reservation in Tequesta where our Police Explorers, along with other Explorers from Palm Beach County, participate annually in a Law Enforcement Academy.

There are of course many more worthwhile projects that the Foundation would like to be able to support. It is only through the generous donations and support of our residents and businesses that we are able to make further grants. Each year we reach out to the community with a city-wide mail appeal. In 2013 we established the Palm Beach Gardens Police Foundation Carnival to be held each year at the Amara Shrine Center on RCA Boulevard. We have also been named as the ongoing beneficiary of the Legacy Place Food and Wine Festival held each year in Legacy Place on PGA Boulevard.

We are committed to the idea that an educated, well-trained, and modernly equipped Police Department leads to a safer community for all. Through our alliance with business and civic leaders, as well as local residents, our mission is to strengthen the already strong relationship between the Palm Beach Gardens Police Department and the citizens it serves.

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.