From the Desk of the Sheriff

I would like to start by saying how proud I am of each and every one of our Sheriff’s Office employees!

You have all amazed me at how you have continued to take care of the day to day business and remained steadfast in keeping our Community safe!

I am hopeful and continue to pray that soon COVID-19 will be behind us and once again, we will look back at how Sheriff Strong we were!

God bless, and may He keep you and your families safe and healthy!

Sheriff Ed

In This Issue
- Cover—Sheriff Ed McMahon
- From the Desk of the Sheriff
- Division Highlights (pgs. 3—5)
- Chaplains — Keeping the Faith (pg. 6)
- Sheriff’s Citizen Academy (pg. 7)
- Covid-19 Scams (pg. 7)
- Covid-19 Impacts on Crime (pg. 8)

Websites and Social Media
- www.newhanoversheriff.com
- www.facebook.com/newhanoverso
- twitter.com/newhanoverso
- nhsonews@nhcgov.com
- www.facebook.com/teamvipr
- https://www.flickr.com/photos/newhanoverso/

Contact Information
- Emergency 911
- Sheriff’s Office 910-798-4200
- Animal Services 910-798-7500
- Non-Emergency 910-452-6120


Photography courtesy of: Lt. Jerry Brewer, Detective Division, Patrol Division, Detention Division, Sheriff's web site, Angie Yelverton
DETECTIVE DIVISION  By:  Captain Jonathan Hart

- What has been the biggest challenge to your mission since COVID-19 arrived in our area?  
  *With respect to the Detective Division – Interviewing in our office and the increased level of juvenile offenses and runaways as school is out.*

- What are some of the ways your division has adapted to state and county restrictions?  
  *With respect to the Detective Division – We have adjusted schedules to create equal distribution of resources.*

- Do you have a big success story?  If so, please describe.  
  *With respect to the Detective Division – We have located numerous missing persons to include children.*

- Who in your workforce has really stepped up and/or exceeded expectations?  (Please describe)  
  *With respect to the Detective Division – The Admin Tech’s have provided continued support and kept the area sanitized to do our job safely.*

- What changes in equipment, supplies or scheduling have you implemented to make things work?  
  *With respect to the Detective Division – The personal protective equipment issued and the equal distribution of resources.*

- What is the biggest “take away” for readers to know about your division’s status?  
  *We are still investigating crime during the pandemic.  We have been using new tools/approaches to complete interviews in the field to stay safe when possible but still getting the same results.*

VICE & NARCOTICS DIVISION  By:  Captain Leslie Wyatt

- What has been the biggest challenge to your mission since COVID-19 arrived in our area?  
  *The biggest challenge to the mission of the Narcotic Division has been making adjustments to protect ourselves as well as the citizens against Covid19 and still maintain some normalcy within the Division. Overcoming the precautions and restrictions was another challenge by the Narcotics Division while continuing to investigate drug crimes within the County.*

- What is the biggest “take away” for readers to know about your division’s status?  
  *The biggest “take away” would be that the Narcotic Division has not stopped investigating drug and related crimes in the County as a result of Covid19. The Narcotics Division will continue serving the citizens of New Hanover County as we all push forward through these trying times.*
By: Major Doug Price

- What has been the biggest challenge to your mission since COVID-19 arrived in our area?
  We have been forced to change a large number of operational functions and develop a multitude of new protocols in order to protect the Staff, Inmates, Vendors and the Facility from this virus.

- What are some of the ways your division has adapted to state and county restrictions?
  Out of an abundance of caution and care, we have taken all recommendations from the CDC, Governor and County Commissioners very seriously, thus implementing these recommendations to fit a Detention Facility environment.

- Do you have a big success story? If so, please describe.
  The men and women of the Detention Facility have continued to report for duty, work hard and maintain a high level of motivation during the entire duration of this difficult time.

- Who in your workforce has really stepped up and/or exceeded expectations? (Please describe)
  The Detention Officers, the Deputy Sheriff’s, the Civilian Employees, Summit Food Service Staff, Wellpath Medical Staff, Property Management Staff. These men and women have worked very hard and demonstrated a high level of dedication in order to maintain the safety, security and nearly normal operations within the New Hanover County Sheriff’s Office Detention Facility.

- What changes in equipment, supplies or scheduling have you implemented to make things work?
  We have had to be fit tested for masks and have had to order more masks.

- How has the public reacted to you during the past few weeks? (Please include examples, if possible)
  They have been very understanding to the changes that we have made for visitations and visitors entering the building.

- What have you done to keep your workforce informed and motivated?
  We have sent out all Protocol changes, all health and safety information as well as provided personnel with the essential protective and sanitation supplies.

- What things has NHC or NHCSO leadership done to help you keep you going?
  We have close relationships with the Health Department, Emergency Management, County Commissioners and the New Hanover County Sheriff’s Staff. This ensures that we have the most up to date information and the resources that are needed to remain safe.

- Who would you like to thank for their support?
  The line troops, boots on the ground, men and women that work the Housing Units and other areas of the Detention Facility in order to maintain, Sheriff Ed McMahon’s mantra and expectation of Professionalism, Responsibility, Accountability and Integrity.

- What is the biggest “take away” for readers to know about your division’s status?
  That we try our best to run a safe, clean and family oriented Detention Facility even in the very face of adversity.
Deputies from the Uniform Patrol Division, School Resource Section working at the local New Hanover Regional Medical Center campuses. They are assisting NHRMC Special Police with maintaining security at the hospital’s entrances while the enhanced entry procedures are in effect due to COVID 19.

K-9 Trials Challenge Coins By: Sergeant Justin Stegall

It is tradition that each National Patrol Dog Trial have a challenge coin to commemorate the event. And ours were just delivered! The K9 Unit is selling these coins for $10.00. The money will be put towards funding our event. You can purchase these coins from any NHSO K9 Handler.
Everyone is facing new risks and challenges during the COVID-19 pandemic. But consider the challenges facing the NHCSO chaplains as they carry out their duties.

On any given day, the NHC Detention Facility may hold over 500 confinees from New Hanover and Pender counties. Some are in pre-trial confinement while others are serving court-imposed sentences.

Add to this the confinement officers and support staff who handle the extraordinary responsibilities of safeguarding the confinees and the community at large.

Finally, there are the deputies, detectives, senior leaders, and support staff carrying out the operations of the NHC Sherriff’s Office (NHCSO). Every employee must consistently meet the highest standards of conduct and professionalism, even in dangerous situations.

These three diverse groups make up the “congregation” of a handful of designated chaplains, who are asked to bring spiritual help to anyone struggling with the demands of their position or pressures of confinement.

The NHCSO Chaplains Program is led by Rev. Pat Hall, who is the first full-time chaplain. He is assisted by a dedicated group of nine volunteer chaplains. Three of them — Pat Hall, Angie Yelverton, and Atwell Brookshire — minister at the detention facility. Pat and Angie also serve “on call” every six weeks with the other chaplains: James Jamison; Doug Faulk; Jeff Nichols; Greg Page; Kyle Sullivan; and Karl Tilly. Chaplain Hardy Temoney serves on-call every weekend.

The Chaplains Program falls under the Support Services Division, headed by Major B.D. Blackmon. When serving in the detention facility, the chaplains work with Detention Branch staff, headed by Major D. H. Price.

The only female chaplain in the program, Angie Yelverton, has served with the NHCSO since 2017. She was on staff at a church for 11 years but started her chaplain’s training in 2013 with North Carolina Baptists. She became a Rapid Response Team chaplain and a Law Enforcement chaplain through the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association. She is a member of the International Fellowship of Chaplains. Her continuing education is through ICISF (International Critical Incident Stress Foundation), North Carolina Sheriffs’ Chaplains Association and Piedmont International University.

Before her religious training, she graduated from Virginia Technical University and worked in the government and private sector.

Angie explains: “Chaplains are ministers of presence. And we minister to all denominations and communities of faith.”

Angie primarily ministers to those at the detention facility. “I am here for the officers and to provide religious material and spiritual guidance to the inmates.” In terms of ministering, Angie says she offers emotional and spiritual first aid. “I mainly listen and encourage. We all have problems but knowing someone cares and is willing to listen and to pray goes a long way to helping people get through the difficult times in their lives.”

“We provide death notifications to inmates, ride-along with deputies, and serve as the on-call chaplain every six weeks. When there is a death in the county, the on-call chaplains respond to support the family. Pat and I attend the sheriff’s office staff meetings, award and graduation ceremonies, and any other event where we’re asked to pray or offer a word of encouragement to those present.”

In 2019, Angie volunteered over 800 hours of ministry service, which equates to two days every week. When asked why she devotes this much time to the program, Angie replies that she feels called by God to do it.

“I love what I do and it is a joy to serve at the sheriff’s office. I also enjoy going to the different offices at the sheriff’s office and talking to the employees to find out how they are doing and praying for their specific needs. I know what God has done for me and what He can do for others. Even in the hard times, He is there for us.”

So if you seek a textbook example of challenging, yet rewarding service, consider the work of the NHCSO chaplains. Their ministry serves a large segment of the law enforcement community, as well as those charged with crimes. But most importantly, they try to ensure that no one has to fight their spiritual battles alone.
Citizens Academy Rescheduled for Fall 2020

The 20th Class of the Sheriff’s Citizens Academy, which started on March 3, 2020, was postponed shortly thereafter when the COVID-19 emergency required cancellation of activities throughout the county.

The class of 52 students was recently notified by the Citizens Academy Coordinator, Corporal Gene Moore, that the class has been postponed until this fall, when it will start over from the beginning session.

The new start date is Tuesday, August 4th and graduation is scheduled for Tuesday October 13th. A new course itinerary has already been distributed. Although current students do not have to reapply, it’s undetermined whether new applications will be accepted.

The Citizen’s Academy lasts for eleven (11) weeks. Classes are usually three (3) hours per session, beginning at 6:00 pm and ending at 9:00 pm every Tuesday. The location for each class varies, depending on the week’s highlighted activity.

According to Corporal Moore, the Academy is a popular community outreach program that invites citizens from all ages and backgrounds to learn about the wide-range of Sheriff’s Office operations. Every student gains unique insights into the ways the Sheriff’s Office prevents crime, safeguards the legal system and responds to emergencies throughout the Cape Fear region. Live demonstrations are a weekly occurrence and are especially popular to participants.

Anyone interested in obtaining more information on the Fall 2020 Citizens Academy may contact Corporal Moore directly at 910-798-4132.

FBI Warns of COVID-19 Scams

By Jane Love

While some crimes have plunged across the country in light of the COVID-19 pandemic, other types of crimes have greatly increased.

The Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) warns that one of the areas generating increased reports are cyber crimes. They warn that with more people working from home on computers, scammers are out in full force to trick us out of personal information or money.

According to a recent FBI Press Release, many scams are operating from websites that advertise fake vaccines and cures and fraudulent charity drives. Once accessed, they deliver malware or computer viruses, or generate a host other types of scams. To attract traffic, these websites often utilize domain names that contain words such as “covid19” or “coronavirus.” In some cases, the fake sites purport to be run by, or affiliated with, legitimate public health organizations or agencies. So to the casual observer, they appear to be official, but they are fake.

Given the substantial increase in phishing schemes utilizing e-mails, letters, texts and links, the FBI reminds us that neither the IRS nor any other federal agency will call you, text you, e-mail you, or contact you on social media asking for personal or bank account information—even related to economic impact payments. When visiting a website or when receiving an email containing a link, pay special attention to any web address you are directed to in order to ensure it is from a legitimate source.

If you fall victim to fraud involving COVID-19, call the National Center for Disaster Fraud Hotline at 1-866-720-5721. If the fraud involves a cyber scam, you may also submit a complaint through the FBI’s website https://www.ic3.gov.
COVID-19 Impacts Crime and Criminals  
by: Jane Love, with permission from WBJ and the DA’s Office

The rapid spread of COVID-19 has forced every aspect of society to adjust to life-threatening impacts of the highly-contagious disease. This includes operations of our criminal justice system and confinement facilities. In North Carolina, the reaction by law enforcement officials has been both unprecedented and practical.

Because statistics on an area’s crime rates are collected over time, the impact of COVID-19 on local crime is still playing out. But in a recent interview with The Wilmington Business Journal, local District Attorney Ben David offered insights into how law enforcement officials are reacting to individual and community threats posed by the epidemic.

Mr. David says emphatically: “Courts have never closed — not for a day — and that’s because crime doesn’t take a vacation and we can’t either. Pleas, motions, first appearances, bond hearings, probation violations — all of those have continued. The officers that I advise — and there’s over 1,000 of them in 20 different agencies — they’re not taking off either.”

Mr. David said that some types of cases are way down and others are up. He noted there are fewer offenses involving the roadways. For example, Wilmington police typically respond to an average of 15 traffic accidents each day. Recently, they’ve been down to less than one per day. As a result, officials are seeing fewer fatalities through impaired driving. Another positive impact is fewer “breaking and entering” crimes, as the criminals know most houses are occupied.

On the other hand, sheltering in place has increased reports of domestic violence. Mr. David notes an uptick in some of the gang violence and shooting cases. But he says: “We’re trying to send a strong message that we are not ‘taking off’ in law enforcement or the court system — we continue to be ‘all over’ the worse cases.”

State law enforcement officials, prosecutors and judges are also trying to slow the pace of people placed into confinement. “We have reduced the jail population by almost 100 people [in April] to make way for the violent and career criminals who are committing these types of offenses, and with those, we’re fighting to put them in,” said Mr. David. This doesn’t mean that offenders are getting a better deal because of the pandemic.

Instead, those with minor offenses (e.g., panhandling, petty shoplifting) are less likely to be incarcerated while waiting for a court appearance. Bond hearings are still held every day and only those facing lesser charges are likely to avoid pre-trial confinement. Mr. David notes: “We’re very strategic in who is in our jails and why. But, we are keeping people who are known risks to our community or flight risks in confinement.”

Another notable adjustment was to increase the supervised release of selected prisoners from the 55 state-run correctional facilities. Mr. David chairs the commission for the State on behalf of the District Attorneys that collectively worked with the Governor and Department of Corrections officials to identify the most vulnerable prisoners. The DA’s then helped to determine if they could legally be released from confinement.

The assessment identified the prisoners who were 65+ or 50+ with an underlying medical condition, with non-violent offenses, and within a year of their release. From over 33,000 current prisoners, around 500 prisoners met the criteria and may obtain release. The Department of Public Safety notes that these cases are not an “early” release, but a highly-supervised service of sentence outside a confinement facility.

Mr. David explains: “This action not only releases the pressure valve...but also ensures that hospital beds are available for those who most likely will have lesser symptoms and need non-emergency care instead of ventilators. Only one person on that list of 500 came from this area. That says to me we are putting the right persons into the system — the violent and career criminals. I’m proud of our state for getting on top of that at an early stage.”

For more information on state confinement, see the NC Department of Public Service website: www.ncdps.gov/our-organization/adult-correction/prisons/prisons-info-covid-19.

Ben David Speaking to Sheriff’s Citizen Academy
PROFESSIONALISM, RESPONSIBILITY, ACCOUNTABILITY AND INTEGRITY

Mission Statement
To serve and protect the citizens of New Hanover County with integrity and enforce the laws of North Carolina and the United States of America.

Goals, Objectives & Outcomes

Goal #1: Lower Part I crimes for a safer community
Objectives:
1. Reduction in Part I crimes by the use of intelligence-based predictive policing
2. Reduction in Part I crimes through information sharing/relationships with other law enforcement agencies in an effort to successfully identify and prosecute perpetrators of crimes
3. Reduction in Part I crimes by continued efforts in building relationships within our community with an emphasis on crime prevention and education

Goal #2: To hold ourselves to the highest standards of Professionalism, Responsibility, Accountability, and Integrity.
Objectives:
1. In addition to mandatory in-service training, supervisors will complete additional hours of supervisory training with an emphasis on leadership and management skills
2. Enhanced efforts in community relations by increasing the number of community outreach contacts and/or volunteer opportunities from the previous calendar year
3. Provide training opportunities, mentorships, and succession planning for deputies and detention officers desiring to further their careers and personal growth

Goal #3: Promote professional growth within the Sheriff’s Office.
Objectives:
1. Identify and implement growth within the Sheriff’s Office through technological advancements to better enhance our capabilities
2. Promote growth and professionalism within the Sheriff’s Office through best practices and peer review in the form of attaining and maintaining accreditation’s
3. Reduce inmate recidivism by continuing and enhancing the personal growth of those housed within the Detention Facility by providing assistance in education, healthcare, and community re-entry

Goal #4: To ensure and enhance a safe learning environment for our schools.
Objectives:
1. To facilitate the constant presence of School Resource Officers in the public schools
2. To facilitate and educate the training to all staff and students for active shooter response
3. To educate and raise awareness of gang and drug activity through continued outreach programs
4. To continue to educate students and staff on their personal safety

Goal #5: To ensure and enhance proper animal care within our county.
Objectives:
1. To increase the number of animal adoptions
2. To increase the number of rabies vaccinations
3. To reduce animal law related violations through enforcement and education

Outcomes:
1. Increase relationships with the community to build trust and improve quality of life
2. Maintain an open and professional organization of trust with the community
3. Develop strategies to recruit and retain high-quality employees, enhance employee satisfaction, and staff development
4. Identify technology based investigative tools to improve case closure rates
5. Improve the efficiency and effectiveness of our delivery of police services by expanding the use of technology
6. Increase professional development programs for rank & file employees
The NHCSO Newsletter Team sincerely hopes this publication has served to increase transparency and deepen the citizen’s awareness of the activities of the New Hanover County Sheriff’s Office. This publication can be accessed on the Sheriff’s Website at https://www.newhanoversheriff.com/citizens-academy/ page, but we welcome you to join our electronic distribution by sending your name and email address to NHSONews@nhcgov.com. Your comments and suggestions are always greatly appreciated, and can also be directed to NHSONews@nhcgov.com. We would love to hear from you! If you wish to unsubscribe please send your request to NHSONews@nhcgov.com.

COVID-19 mass testing site in downtown Wilmington. Over the past month it has been operated by the following agencies: County Health and Human Services, Emergency Management, Sheriff’s Office, County Communications Office, County Fire Services and County Finance.

Master Deputy Gordon and Corporal Moore spent some time yesterday in the Tidalwalk Community doing some community policing with these beauties!

This little one turned 3 yesterday and since he loves cops cars and fire trucks, Off. Genda put together a small parade for him with the help of Cpl. Alip and MDS Sellers! During a time of crisis, it is nice to see depts working together to make his birthday dream come true!