

Palatka Police Department



2013 Annual Report

“Together We Can Make A Difference”

Gary S. Getchell
Chief of Police

The background of the page features a large, faint watermark of the Palatka Police Department badge. The badge is shield-shaped with a laurel wreath border. At the top, it says 'POLICE' and 'PALATKA'. In the center, there is a circular seal with a figure and the text 'GREAT FLORIDA'. At the bottom, it says 'FLORIDA'.

Palatka Police Department

Vision

The Palatka Police Department in cooperation with the citizens of Palatka is dedicated to making our community safe and free of crime.

Mission

The Palatka Police Department will develop partnerships with our citizens to solve problems, reduce crime, the fear of crime and enhance the quality of life, always treating everyone with fairness and respect.

Values

- Service:** Providing quality service and protection to all people in an efficient, competent and courteous manner. Responsiveness to the needs of the community.
- Integrity:** Honesty in all our actions to foster an atmosphere of mutual trust, cooperation and accountability.
- Respect:** Treating all persons in a fair and equal manner, upholding the rights of all.

Message from the Chief...



It is my pleasure to present the 2013 Annual Report for the Palatka Police Department. This past year was filled with many exciting changes and challenges. This report is intended to provide an overview of the department, its organization, and our accomplishments over the past year.

Over the last year the combined efforts of the men and women of this agency, volunteers, and citizens has yielded a slight **decrease** in overall Part I crimes; with property crimes such as burglary. The City of Palatka has obtained a 44 year low in index crime and a 62.8% reduction of the City's crime rate from the highest year of 1990. Although this is wonderful news, I would caution everyone to remain vigilant; the current recession has created many desperate people which resulted in the fear of crime being extremely high. We need the help of every member of the community.

I want to personally thank the men and women of our department for their professionalism, loyalty, and dedication that has been displayed throughout 2013. This past year proved to be challenging; however, our staff worked through the adversity and demonstrated their commitment to excellence in overcoming every situation they encountered.

All of the men and women of the Department join me in thanking our community for its ongoing support and in pledging to continue providing the highest possible level of police services.

"Together, we can make a difference"...

Gary S. Getchell

Chief of Police

Organization

Authorized Positions

FY 2013

Law Enforcement Officers

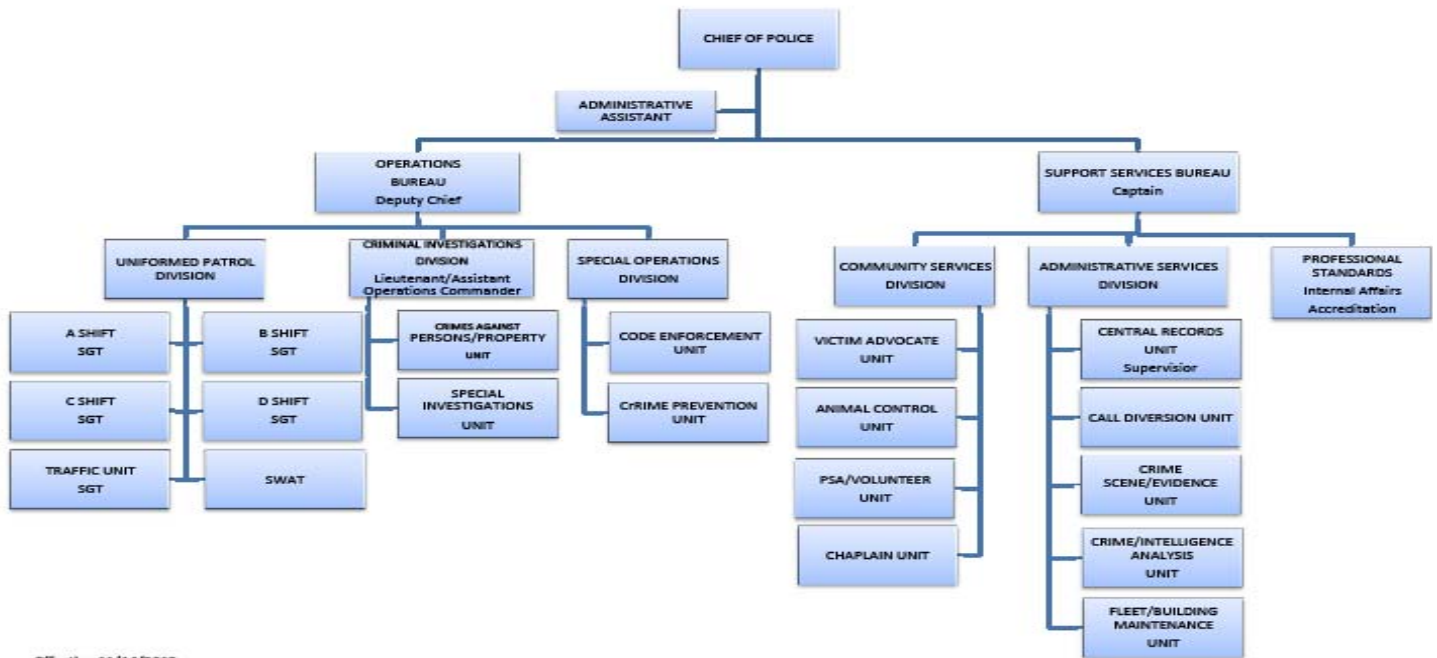
Chief of Police	1
Deputy Chief	1
Captain	1
Lieutenant	1
Sergeant	5
Corporal	3
Patrol Officers	20
Detectives	4
Police Total	36

Civilian

Administrative Assistant	1
Records Division	2
Duty Desk	1
Animal Control	1
Victim Advocate	1
Administrative Clerk – part time	1
Maintenance – part time	1
Civilian Total	8

The Palatka Police Department is a full service police department employing high-tech equipment and well trained personnel. We have a total of forty-five authorized positions and provide law enforcement services to a full time population of 10,522 and a daily population of around 60,000.

**PALATKA POLICE DEPARTMENT
ORGANIZATIONAL CHART – FY 2013**



Effective 11/14/2013

OPERATIONS BUREAU

The Operations Bureau is commanded by the Deputy Chief. It is the largest bureau in the police department. It consists of the Uniformed Patrol Division, Traffic Unit, Criminal Investigations, and Special Operations Division, which includes Code Enforcement and Crime Prevention.

Uniformed Patrol Division

The Uniformed Patrol Division is the backbone of the police department delivering emergency and non-emergency services to the public 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. The division is comprised of four patrol shifts which work in twelve-hour increments. Each shift is directly supervised by a sergeant and corporal with four to five officers completing the shift. To better handle the unique demands on

modern-day law enforcement, the Patrol Division is enhanced by several specialized units. They consist of the Traffic Unit, CRT Team, and K-9 Team.

The Patrol Division conducts preliminary and follow up investigations, enforce traffic laws, and make arrests as necessary to protect and serve the citizens of this community. They patrol geographic zones to prevent and detect crime and respond to, or initiate calls for service.

The Patrol Division also helps prevent crime and provides a visible presence to the public, instilling confidence and security within the community. These officers are the first responders who take charge of situations that require immediate action to resolve or mitigate safety issues or concerns. Our community partnerships, flexibility, and use of intelligence data remain vital to the Patrol Division's relentless crime fighting activities. Being proactive remains the key to successful law enforcement in our community.

During 2013, Patrol Division personnel logged 363,381 miles patrolling the City and answered 32,300 calls for service. Every time an officer interacts with a person or property in an official capacity, we document that activity in a computerized log. Each of these logs is referred to as a call for service, even if it doesn't come from a call at all. Activities such as traffic stops, business checks, and citizen contacts are included in this category just as 911 calls for emergency response.

The Patrol Division personnel are highly trained and receive in-service training in various patrol techniques and disciplines on a regular basis. This training helps personnel keep abreast of current crime trends, crime reduction techniques, and also ensures compliance with all Florida Police Standards Commission and Accreditation requirements. A well trained police department is essential to providing quality law enforcement service to the community.

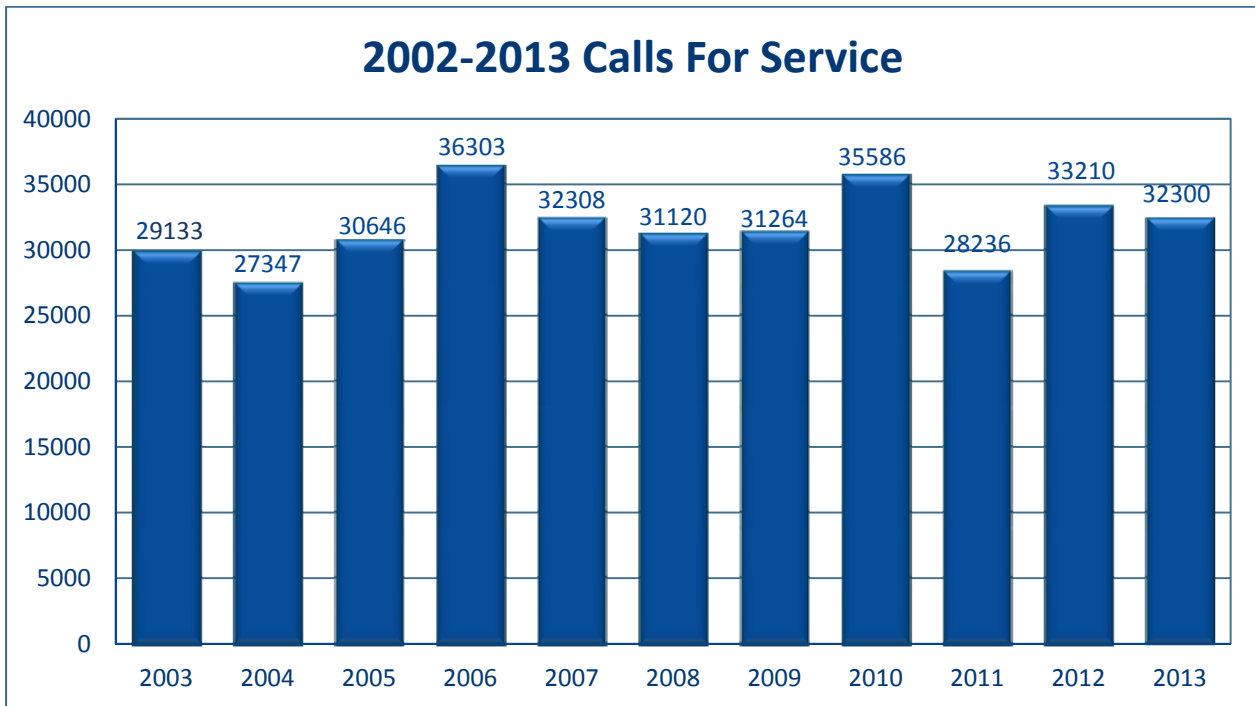
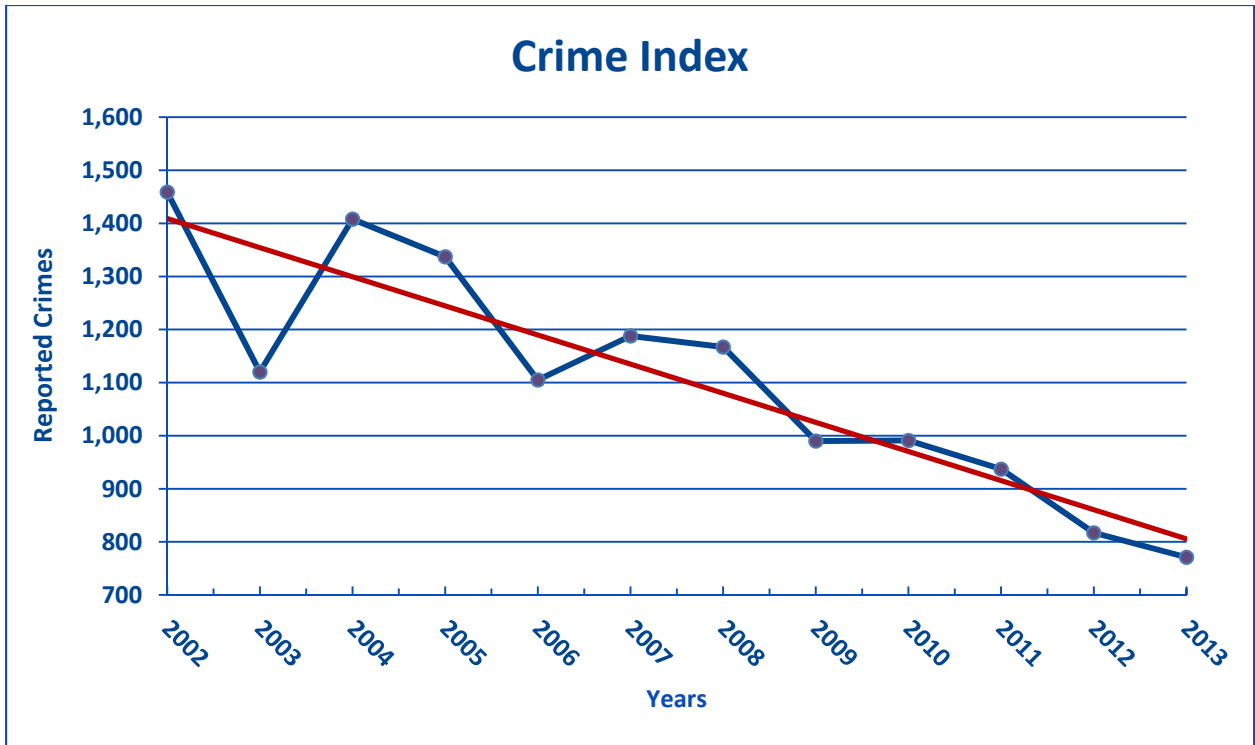


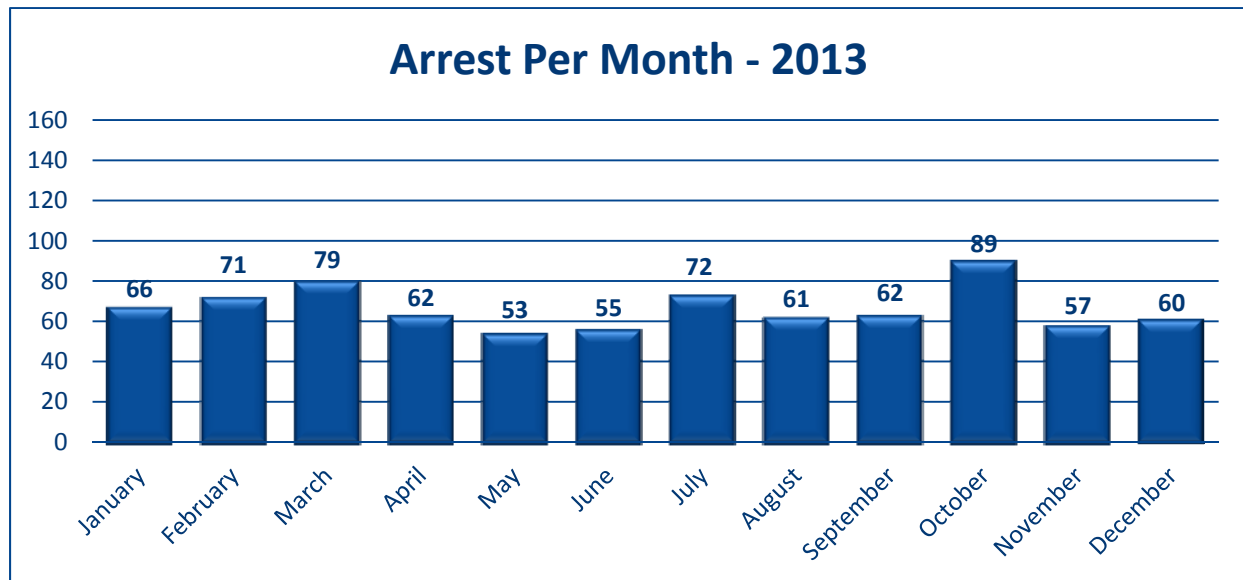
Crime Statistics

The Palatka Police Department has always strived to represent excellence. One way we do this is by staying one step ahead of the criminals. We strive to anticipate trends so we can be proactive in all areas, and take action before we have to react to a crisis. One way to do this is by utilizing crime data, community information, and systematic analysis to provide timely information on crime trends and patterns. The police department utilizes an intelligence lead analysis to provide direction for deployment of resources.

The following charts reflect the offenses which are reported on the Uniform Crime Reports (UCR) Part I crimes, which must be submitted by every police agency in the U.S. and are typically the most serious type of crime that a community experiences. During 2013, there was a slight decrease in Part I Crimes. The following charts depict the crime history for Palatka:

CRIME	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Murder	0	1	1	0	3	0	2	1	1	0	0
Sex Offenses	9	11	15	10	13	4	5	16	10	10	7
Robbery	33	37	12	44	33	38	39	29	29	22	26
Aggravated Assault	128	148	219	138	141	114	136	112	105	98	64
Burglary	116	261	180	157	218	145	159	189	143	143	181
Larceny	794	891	841	713	739	824	620	634	621	530	496
Vehicle Thefts	40	59	69	43	41	42	29	10	28	14	26
Total	1120	1408	1337	1105	1188	1167	990	991	937	817	800





Traffic Unit

The Traffic Unit is made up of one sergeant and one corporal who are specifically assigned to work selective traffic enforcement and investigate traffic crashes.

This specialized unit utilizes two 2011 Harley Davidson Motorcycles and conducts both routine and directed traffic enforcement. These officers focus on reducing the rate and severity of traffic collisions by concentrating efforts on speed reduction, high-risk violation enforcement, impaired drivers, and the monitoring of traffic around critical intersections.

For the benefit of those using our public roadways, Palatka officers take an aggressive stance against traffic violators. We employ several tools in this effort, including unmarked patrol cars, RADAR and various laser speed measuring devices, regular enforcement details, photo enforcement technology, and public education campaigns.

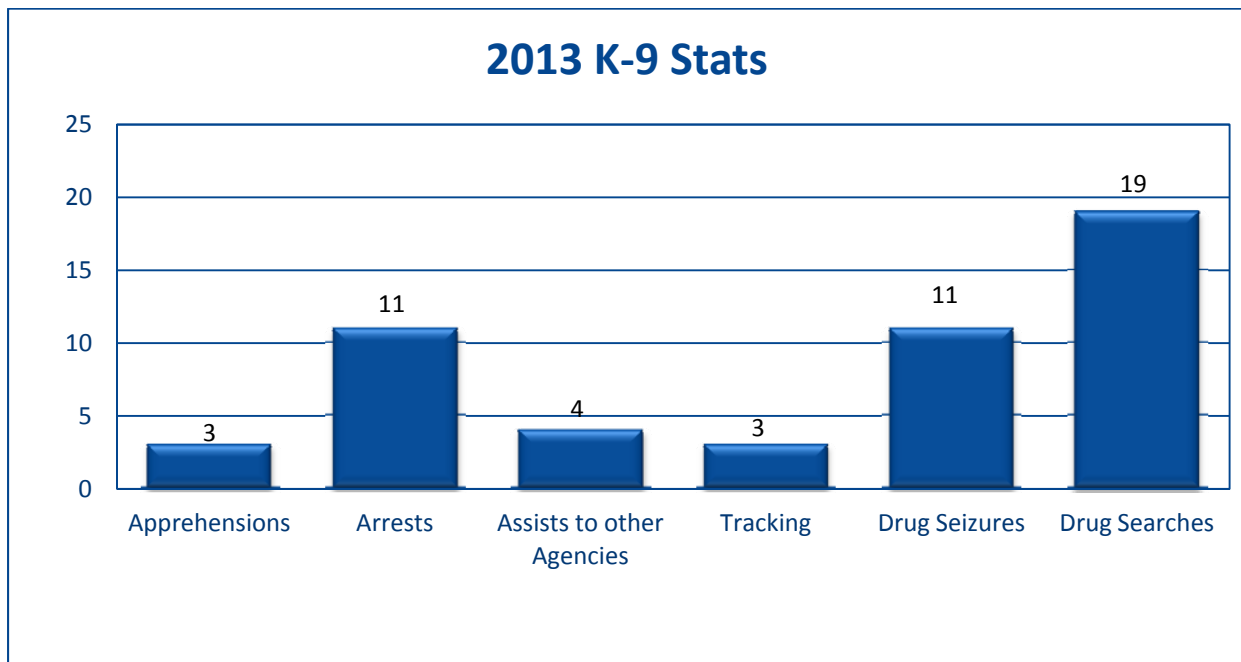
The City currently has six intersections which are photo enforced. These intersections have seen an overall decrease in traffic crashes since the cameras have been installed. Currently there are no specific plans to increase the number of intersections which are photo enforced.

K-9 UNIT

The K-9 Unit is a valuable resource to all the officers in the field because of their ability to search buildings and track areas more effectively for persons suspected of committing a crime. The canine is trained to use his keen sense of smell to detect narcotics in vehicles and buildings.

In October, K-9 Lucky was retired due to health issues. He was first placed into service in July 2007. Lucky served not only the Palatka Police Department, but the Putnam County Sheriff's Office and the Florida Department of Law Enforcement during his career with the Palatka Police Department. He was utilized as a drug detection dog, a tracking dog and a protection dog.

In December, through donations from the community, K-9 Wilson was purchased and placed into service. Wilson is an eighteen month old German shepherd. He is currently undergoing training to become a full service dog.

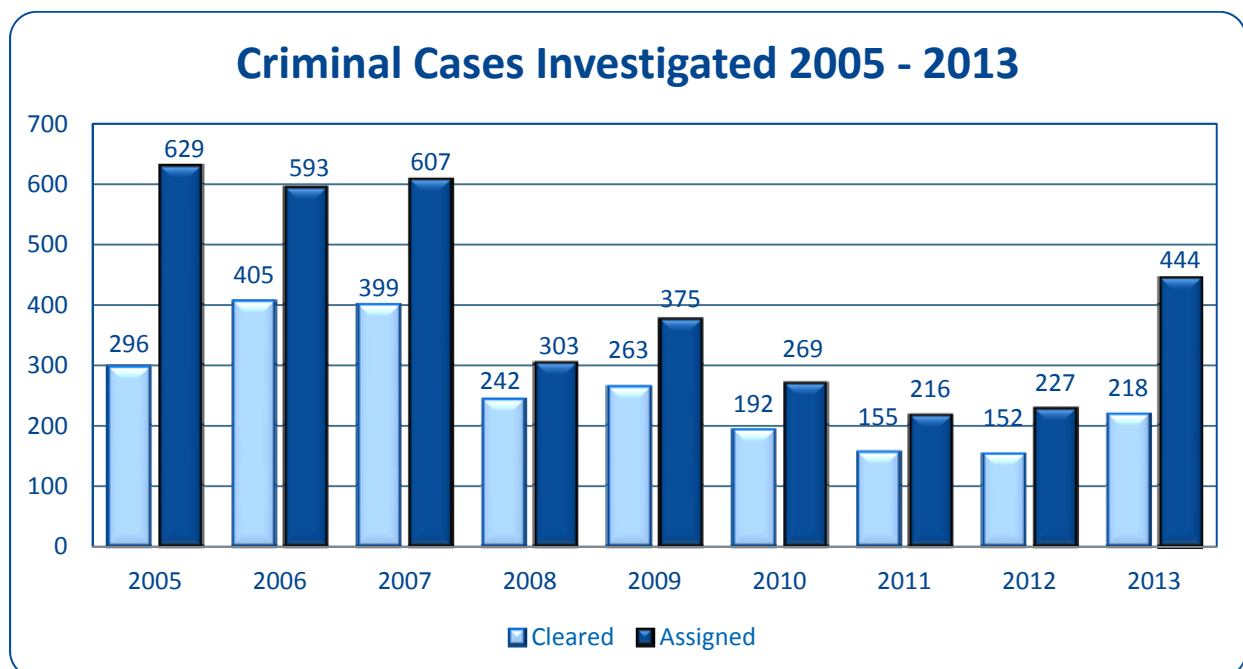


Criminal Investigations Division

The Criminal Investigations Division is directly supervised by a Lieutenant with two detectives investigating crimes against persons and property, two detectives investigating drugs and vice crimes, and one evidence technician. This division reports directly to the Operations Bureau Deputy Chief.

Reports generated by the Patrol Division are forwarded to the Detective Division and assigned according to State Statute and PPD policy. Once the case is assigned for follow-up, investigators pursue all leads to increase the likelihood of bringing each case to a successful conclusion. The Detective Division investigates both misdemeanor and felony crimes ranging from petty theft and trespassing to burglary and homicide.

The evidence technician is responsible for receiving, logging, storing, retrieving and disposing of property and other materials collected as evidence in police investigations. Subpoenas are frequently served on this position to bring evidence to court and to testify as needed.



Highlights from the Criminal Investigation Division

- ❖ Narcotics Investigation – On February 14, 2013 after a lengthy narcotics investigation, a search warrant was executed on a home on Diana Drive. During the search detectives located a purse containing multiple pills packaged for sale. The pills were identified as follows; 56 Roxicodone, 23 Dilaudid, 1 Xanax, 2 Loritab, and 11 Tramadol. Detectives also located 28 grams of Cannabis in the bedroom of the house. An arrest was made for trafficking in prescription drugs.

- ❖ Cold Case Solved - On March 12, 2013, Lucas Wilkinson was indicted for first degree murder. After six plus years of investigation, a cold case homicide was concluded. Although Wilkinson had been a person of interest from the beginning, there was little evidence and a total lack of cooperation from witnesses. Perseverance and dedication finally paid off in solving this case.

- ❖ Traffic Stop – On May 29, 2013, a traffic stop was conducted on a vehicle after because the front passenger was not wearing his seat belt. Upon the vehicle stopping, all occupants exited and attempted to flee from the scene. The driver barricaded himself inside a residence for a short while, then exited through a rear door and attempted to flee the area. After a brief foot chase, the driver of the vehicle was arrested. 47.5 grams of cannabis and a 25 caliber handgun were found on him. He was arrested and charged DWLSR and possession of cannabis with intent to sell. We also seized \$1,250.

- ❖ Counterfeit Currency Seized – On July 18, 2013 contact was made with two suspects in reference to purchase counterfeit currency. At that time, \$260 in counterfeit currency was purchased for \$100. A traffic stop was conducted immediately following the purchase. The individuals involved were arrested for DWLSR, child neglect, and for possession of US counterfeit currency. A total of \$1,180 in counterfeit currency was seized during this investigation.

Code Enforcement

In February 2013, the City of Palatka moved the Code Enforcement functions from the Building and Zoning Department to the Police Department. This decision was based on a need to assign more personnel to code enforcement activities and an opportunity to utilize the Police Department's visibility and expertise in solving problems through the use of 'Community Policing,' "Problem-Oriented-Policing" and "Broken Windows Theory" models.

Officers are already out in the field so with additional training on how to respond to and investigate code violations, the City is provided a more cost effective means of strengthening the code enforcement activities by adding more personnel at the lowest possible cost.

Under the direction of the Police Department, the code enforcement functions have been undergoing many changes to staffing, procedures, and City Ordinances to include, but not limited to:

- ❖ Code violation complaint intake has been expanded
 - All Police Department personnel are accessible to respond to emergency code violation complaints, twenty-four (24) hours a-day,
 - Police Department Records personnel are able to receive code complaints during regular business hours,
 - Citizens may email as a mechanism to file a code complaint,
 - Citizens may utilize the Police Department's web-based complaint reporting system to report code violations.
- ❖ As part of the change process, the Police Department conducted a series of public workshops to solicit input pertaining establishing code enforcement priorities.
- ❖ Three (3) police officers have been trained and certified as code enforcement officers to assist in managing the code enforcement case load. Nuisance properties have been identified and have been elevated to priority status.
- ❖ City ordinances are being reviewed for needed adjustments that will streamline the code enforcement process and length of time required to resolve code complaint.

SUPPORT SERVICES BUREAU

The Support Services Bureau is under the command of the Support Services Captain. He oversees the functions of the Victim Advocate, Animal Control, Records Division, Crime and Intelligence Analysis, Professional Standards and the Volunteer Program.

Victim Advocate Services

The Victim Advocate program provides crisis intervention to victims of all violent crime, including domestic violence, battery, and homicide. This program helps victims with the ability to make significant changes and solve problems, increase a victim's ability to make a successful transition from victimization to independence and to connect the victim to both short and long-term community resources that provide support, encouragement and assistance. Domestic violence can happen to anyone and in most cases, goes unreported.

Funding for this program is provided through a grant by Florida's Office of the Attorney General with federal Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) dollars. VOCA funds are secured from criminal fines, forfeited bail bonds, penalty fees and special assessments on offenders, NOT from taxpayers' dollars.

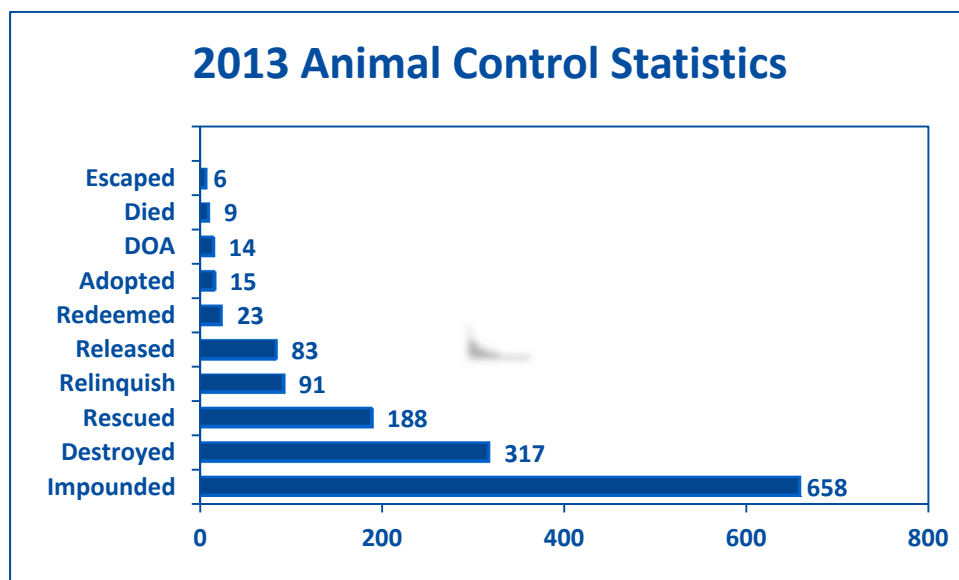
In 2013 our victim advocate assisted 1,336 victims with the crimes that affected their lives. Crisis counseling, criminal justice support, emergency legal advocacy, and safety planning services were also provided. Our victim advocate is on call 24 hours-a-day to provide immediate on scene crisis intervention and support and works closely with officers and detectives to care for victims of crime.

This program relies heavily on volunteers from the community to help provide assistance to those in need. Almost 600 volunteer hours were utilized to help provide service to those who were victims of crime in our community in 2013.

2013 Summary of Activity	
Type of Incident	Number Assisted
Domestic Violence	483
Battery	169
Criminal Mischief	178
Burglary	239
Assault	28
Robbery	29
Child Sexual Abuse	11
Child Physical Abuse	30

Animal Control

The Animal Control Unit is comprised of one full time animal control officer and provides essential information and services to the citizens in reference to animal complaints and animal care. Within the year of 2013, the Animal Control Unit received 1,777 calls for service of which 26 were bite related. The total amount of fees collected was \$1,482. There were 249 dogs impounded and 349 cats impounded. The following charts depict other statistical information for this unit.

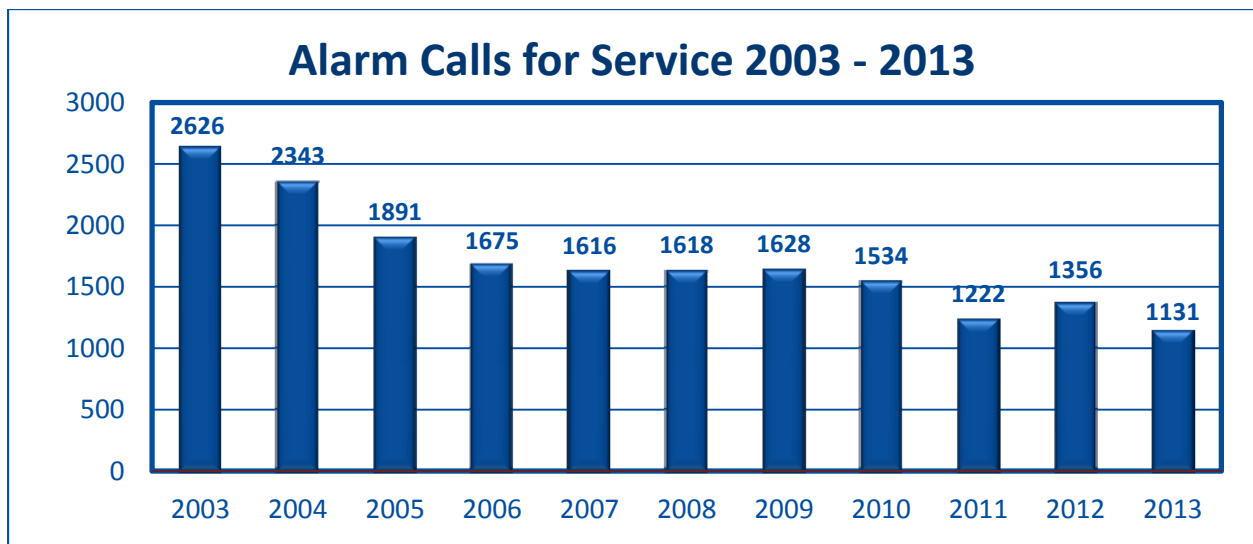


Records Division

The Records Division consists of two full time civilian clerks who respond to a broad range of questions and requests for information and assistance from members of the Police Department, City government, citizens and other agencies. They serve as the central repository for all police reports and maintain strict accountability not only for all police reports, but accident reports, citations and other law enforcement records as well. They are responsible for ensuring these records are retained and disseminated in accordance with state and federal laws. Vehicle files, including maintenance records, speedometer calibrations and vehicle registrations are also maintained by this office. This department also maintains and processes all purchase order requests.

Alarm Statistics

As part of the Police Department call-reduction program, the City of Palatka implemented Ordinance No. 04-1 (Alarm Systems) in 2004 in an effort to reduce the high volume of false alarm calls for service. The ordinance requires all businesses and citizens to register their security alarm systems and establishes duties and responsibilities of alarm users and alarm companies. It also imposes fines for false alarms and other violations after three false alarms per year. This has proven to be a useful tool in reducing the false alarm calls for service. Officers responded to 1,131 false alarm calls in 2013 or an equivalent of 258 man hours on these types of calls.



Professional Standards

The Office of Professional Standards ensures the department operates within the boundaries and guidelines of public trust and confidence. They are responsible for investigating allegations of misconduct against the department or any of its members. Complaints on employees of the Palatka Police Department were consistent for the last two years. Out of a total of twenty-three complaints, fourteen were citizen generated and nine were generated internally. Only four complaints were founded and resulted in disciplinary action.

Accreditation

An accreditation program has long been recognized as a means of maintaining the highest standards of professionalism. Accreditation is the certification by an independent reviewing authority that an entity has met specific requirements and prescribed standards. In 1993, Florida Statute 943.125 directed that the Florida Sheriffs Association and the Florida Police Chiefs Association create a voluntary law enforcement accreditation program.

Representatives from these Associations developed a process for accreditation which required compliance with more than 250 professional standards designed specifically for Florida law enforcement agencies.

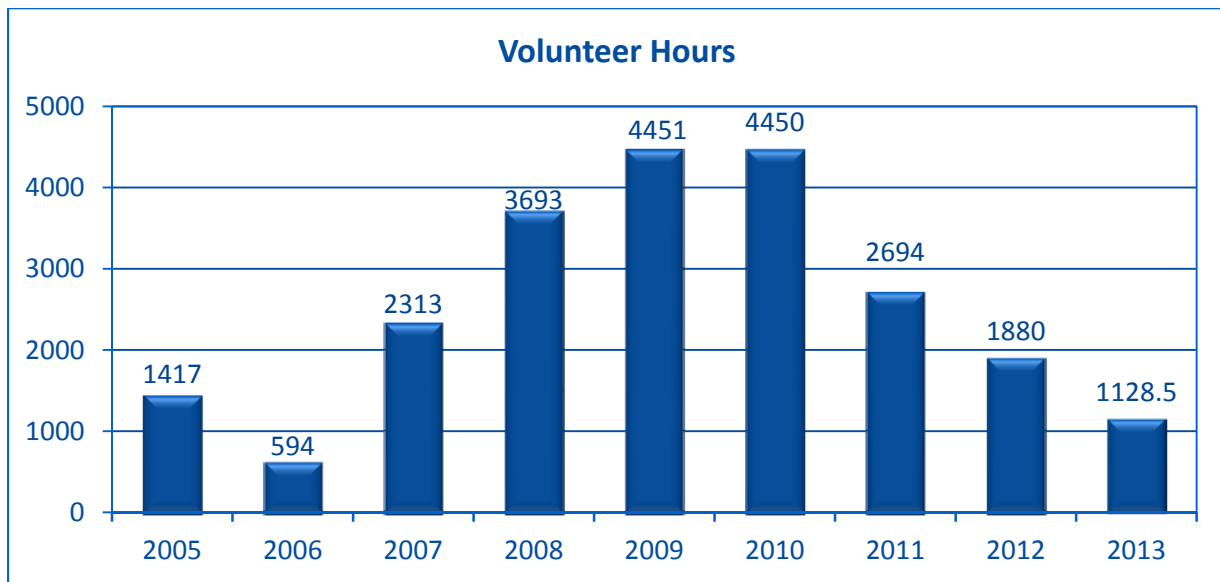
Our department first achieved accreditation by the Commission for Florida Law Enforcement Accreditation in 1999. A thorough assessment is required by the commission every three years and we were reaccredited in 2003, 2006, 2009, and 2012. Our next reaccreditation will be in 2015.

Volunteer Program

The generous contribution of volunteer services plays an important role in the overall operation of the Palatka Police Department. Their duties will vary from routine paperwork to business checks and routine neighborhood patrols depending upon the amount of training each individual has had.

PSA's or Police Service Aides, are required to complete a four week field training evaluation program before being allowed to perform any type of patrol duty. They also assist the department with community events such as National Night Out, gun safety classes and women's self defense classes.

In 2013, the volunteers provided over 1,100 hours of service. These service hours have saved thousands of dollars in both time and money to the citizens of Palatka. It is through the support from volunteers who unselfishly give of their time that we are able to make a significant impact in the community.



2013 Department Awards

Each quarter the department recognizes those individuals who have displayed outstanding service or commitment. The recipients for the yearly awards are chosen from the winners of the quarterly awards. The following is a list of individuals that received an award in 2013.

Also, in May, Lt. Jason Shaw was named Crime Stoppers 2013 Law Enforcement Officer of the Year for Putnam County. Lt. Shaw has been with the department since 1999 and is very involved with the community, particularly the youth of our community. He is the Executive Director for our local Police Athletic League and

the Sergeant at Arms for the State of Florida Police Athletic League. He has a positive attitude that keeps everyone under his command motivated to work.

1st Quarter Awards	Officer: Bruce Cline Detective: Danette Evey Unit : Traffic Unit Employee: Renae Hopkins Volunteer: Mike Tarter Citizen: Stephen Reece
2nd Quarter Awards	Officer: David Lazo Detective: Alex Egan Unit: Charlie Shift Employee: Cathy Anderson Volunteer: Debby Thompson Citizen: Deena McCamey
3rd Quarter Awards	Officer: David Lazo Detective: Danette Evey Unit: Employee: Nora Baker Volunteer: Debby Thompson Citizen:
4th Quarter Awards	Officer: Sean Tudor Detective: Mike Lassiter Unit: Detective Division Employee: Elizabeth Hearn Volunteer : Chance Baker Citizen: Tanner & Teyler Tipton
2013 Yearly Awards:	Officer: David Lazo Detective: Danette Evey Unit: Traffic Unit Employee: Renae Hopkins Volunteer: Debby Thompson Citizen: Tanner & Teyler Tipton
Rookie:	Sean Tudor