

# St. John the Baptist Parish Sheriff's Office



Annual Report 2017



## St. John the Baptist Parish Sheriff's Office **Annual Report 2017**

Dear fellow citizens,

Speaking on behalf of the entire staff of the St. John the Baptist Parish Sheriff's Office, welcome to this report on some of the many activities we undertake to keep you and our parish safe.

I often read and keep in mind quotes attributed to famous people or words that have become renowned with repeated use through generations. For instance:

*"An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure."*  
– Benjamin Franklin

*"It is better to try to keep a bad thing from happening than it is to fix the bad thing once it has happened."*  
– Proverb

*"If our American way of life fails the child, it fails us all."*  
– Pearl S. Buck

In all of these well-known phrases, there is an admonition: "Fix it before it breaks." This is the focus of so much of our work geared toward steering the youth of our parish away from a life of crime. In this issue, you'll see summaries of just a few of the things we do to engage young people in positive ways and settings. Yes, we can always do more, but so can you. Let us know how we can become even more involved in your club, civic organization and school. Together, we can make a real difference in stopping criminal activity before it starts.

Also in this report are stories about our continual war on illegal drugs, a new Internet exchange area, school intruder training and certifications for our deputies. You'll also see our newly-created Blue Santa – symbolizing the color of law enforcement – making his rounds during the holidays, summaries of sports and outdoor recreation programs and a story about our new Citizens Academy where residents get an insider's view of our operations.

Law enforcement is a calling and ours is a simple, yet complex job. The simple part is our continual work to keep the people of St. John the Baptist Parish safe while doing all we can to ensure their continued well-being. The complex side is that ours is a profession where every day we must be prepared mentally and physically to save a life, take a life or give your own for the citizens we serve.

I strongly encourage you to help us keep St. John safe. If you or someone you know is interested in a career in law enforcement, contact us. Please, use our 9-1-1 system and call in to report ANYTHING that looks or even sounds suspicious. We'll take it from there and respond.

Let me know if there is ever anything I or this office can do for you.

Sincerely,

**MIKE TREGRE**  
Sheriff, St. John the Baptist Parish  
sheriff@stjohnsheriff.org

On the cover:  
Sheriff Tregre serves  
as a fishing guide to a  
couple of parish youth  
at the 40th Judicial District  
Fishing Rodeo.



*The first graduates of the SJBPSO Citizens Academy.*

## Citizens Academy

To further strengthen the relationship between our office and parish residents, we have started a Citizens Academy so residents may learn about the vital role we play in keeping St. John safe.

Meeting weekly for nine weeks, participants get overviews of our work including patrols, K-9, traffic, fleet management, tax collection, criminal investigations, firearms, crisis management, administrative duties and more.

“Citizens get detailed looks at the difficult jobs we have,” Sheriff Tregre said. “They get an insider’s view of our operations and what we face each day.”

This free program is open to anyone 21 or older who lives or works in St. John.

## School Intruder Training

The SJBPSO, in partnership with other emergency response agencies, helps educate students and staff on what to do if an intruder or gunman enters their school. Videos are shown, brochures given out and question and answer sessions conducted.

“Regrettably, the world we live in requires us to prepare students and staff for the threat of violence in our schools,” Sheriff Tregre said. “But, by letting people know what to do in such a situation, we can save lives.”

A training exercise conducted at LaPlace Elementary School that simulated an active shooter scenario was videotaped and critiqued to hone deputies’ and other emergency personnel’s response skills.



*Sheriff Tregre and Deputy Leroy Victoriano donate blood at the recent SJBPSO Employee Health/Benefits Fair.*

## Employee Health/Benefits Fair

The SJBPSO hosted its first Employee Health/Benefits Fair, giving personnel and retirees free health screenings and visits with companies that provide advice on maintaining a healthy lifestyle, insurance, money management and topics dealing with their well-being.

Numerous vendors provided gifts for attendees while discussing how their services and products can benefit employees.



## Come work for us!

For information about a career in law enforcement, contact our office or go to our website, [stjohnsheriff.org](http://stjohnsheriff.org), and click on the “career opportunities” box to download a job application.



*East St. John High School students listen as Lieutenant Freddie Young talks about what to do in a school intruder situation.*

*Lieutenant Chip Wale instructs SJBPSO personnel prior to a school intruder drill.*

# *“It is easier to build strong children than to repair broken men.”*

– Frederick Douglass, 1818-1895

Children are indeed our future. We continue to work to have as many positive interactions with parish youth as we can. These visits increase our abilities to establish relationships with mutual respect and understanding. Here are some of our many youth outreaches.



## **Fishing Camp**

The SJBPSO helps sponsor the annual 40th Judicial District Fishing Camp where area youths spend time with law enforcement and parish officials in a friendly environment. Rod and reels are given away as well as prizes for special catches. “It’s an opportunity to reinforce to young people the fact that we are the good guys, they can trust us and we are here to protect them,” Sheriff Tregre said. “And, it’s a load of good, clean fun.”



## **Superheroes Visit Preschoolers**

Costumed SJBPSO deputies joined little superheroes, angels, fairies, pirates and other characters at local preschools for a Halloween visit. McGruff the Crime Dog, Spiderman, Superman and Batman spent the morning with children at St. John Child Development Center in Garyville and St. Timothy’s Preschool in LaPlace. The superheroes visited with students and offered trick-or-treat safety tips.

## **CRIMESTOPPERS**

offers cash rewards for tips that lead to arrests and convictions of criminals. You can remain anonymous and still claim your reward. Call 504.822.1111.



## **Pledge Against Gun Violence**

John L. Ory Magnet School students take the Pledge Against Gun Violence, a national program that fosters conversations with young people about firearms and crime. Since 1996, more than 10 million students have signed the pledge.



## **U.S. Flag Program**

Through a program sponsored by the Rotary Club of LaPlace, Sheriff Tregre visits every elementary school in the parish to teach good citizenship and respect for our flag.



## **Career Day**

Lieutenant Christie Chauvin speaks during Career Day at Riverside Academy, informing students of the many different employment opportunities available in law enforcement.



## Distinguished Gentlemen

Our new Distinguished Gentlemen's Club, a mentoring program for high school juniors, is impacting youth in a positive way. The club allows SJBPSO officers to instill good character traits in these young men so they may become productive citizens and positive influences in our community. For more information, please telephone Lieutenant Vernon Bailey at 985.359.8775.



## D.A.R.E.

Drug Abuse Resistance Education, D.A.R.E., was founded in Los Angeles in 1983 and is in use by law enforcement agencies across the world. The program visits schools and groups, encouraging youth to resist drugs, alcohol and violence. "We want to help young people make good decisions," Sheriff Tregre said. "The overwhelming majority of crime is drug-related and, by educating youths to these dangers, we can make a real difference."

To schedule a D.A.R.E. visit, contact Sergeant Darlinta Garrison at 985.359.8746.

**Our anonymous tip line is available 24/7.  
If you see something suspicious or witness  
criminal activity, call 985.359.TIPS (8477)**



## Kids on the Move

Sergeant Stephen Hefler and K-9 officer Titus visit with children at the 14th annual Kids on the Move day camp at New Wine Christian Fellowship in LaPlace. Campers also toured the SJBPSO's BearCat, the armored vehicle used for emergencies and transporting our Crisis Management Unit.



## Visiting Hours

Sheriff Tregre greets students as they tour the Sherman Walker Correctional Center. "Any group is welcome to visit our jail, in particular young people," Sheriff Tregre said. "We let them see for themselves this vital part of our criminal justice system."



## Community Helpers

Lieutenant Denise Bertrand visits with a young girl at Caring Strategies Early Intervention Play Group at First Baptist Church of LaPlace. Besides handing out coloring books, crayons and wrist bands, deputies taught children that police officers are community helpers and to try and find a law enforcement officer when they feel unsafe.



## Punt, Pass and Kick

The SJBPSO partnered with the parish to host and serve as coaches for an NFL Punt, Pass and Kick event at Joe Keller Stadium in LaPlace. Some 70 parish youths aged 6-15 took part, learning the importance of teamwork as well as the fundamentals of punting, passing and kicking a football. Top local winners had the opportunity to advance in the national competition.



## Welcome Back Deputy Triche!

Nine months after receiving a new kidney and nearly five years after being shot in the line of duty, Deputy Jason Triche is back to work. Deputies Triche and Scott Boyington were wounded in August of 2012 during an ambush that claimed the lives of Deputies Brandon Nielsen and Jeremy Triche.

“Jason is a warrior,” Sheriff Tregre said. “After more than 30 surgeries, dialysis and a transplanted kidney from St. Tammany Parish Deputy Robert Ardeneaux, he’s back and is a living example of what a person can overcome if they refuse to give up.”

**Our body armor fund can always use your donation. Please telephone 985.652.9513 for information on how you can help protect those who protect you.**

## Deputy Injured in Crash

SJBPSO Deputy Staty Lewis was getting a medical kit from his vehicle during an early morning investigation of a traffic accident on I-10 near LaPlace when his unit was struck by another vehicle driven by a drunk driver. Deputy Lewis was airlifted to University Medical Center in New Orleans.

“Deputy Lewis’ unit was knocked across three lanes of I-10,” Sheriff Tregre said. “Fortunately, he is expected to make a full recovery and will soon be back protecting the people of our parish.”

The driver of the vehicle that struck Lewis’ unit was uninjured. He was arrested and booked into the parish jail on charges of DWI, First Degree Vehicular Negligent Injuring and Careless Operation of a Motor Vehicle.



## Sheriff Lloyd Johnson, 1929-2017

St. John the Baptist Parish said goodbye to former sheriff Lloyd Johnson in May of 2017. He was our chief law enforcement officer for more than 20 years and a deputy for six.

“Sheriff Johnson worked his entire adult life to make St. John a better and safer place,” Sheriff Tregre said. “We are moving forward to completing our new training facility which will be named for him as he contributed so much to our community.”

A resident of LaPlace for 70 years, Sheriff Johnson, 86, was a member and President of the Louisiana Sheriffs’ Association. He served on numerous national and state law enforcement advisory panels and was a member of many local civic organizations.

**P.O.P.S., Protecting Our Precious Seniors, is a free service provided by the SJBPSO where deputies check periodically on senior citizens and adults with disabilities to ensure their well-being. For more information, telephone 985.652.7058**

## Child Custody/ Internet Purchase Exchange Zone

A designated area for Internet transactions and child custody exchanges has been established in the parking lot of Dunkin’ Donuts at 1334 Airline Highway in LaPlace.



“Criminal activity can occur with Internet transactions that involve personal meetings,” Sheriff Tregre said. “Do not invite strangers to your home or meet them in unfamiliar areas. This spot is monitored 24/7 by video surveillance, making it a safe, public place for face-to-face encounters. It also provides a secure area for couples to meet when exchanging custody of their children.”

**The 2016 Numbers**  
Calls for Assistance 54,327  
Arrests 2,867  
DWI 201  
Drugs 603  
Traffic Accidents Investigated 1,737

# Fighting Illegal Drugs

*When citizens get involved, drug dealing stops.*

“During the past year, with help from residents who called in tips, our Special Operations Division recovered some \$600,000 in cash and the confiscation of more than 100 firearms from dangerous criminals,” Sheriff Tregre said. “These deputies also seized approximately \$2 million in narcotics and arrested more than 200 individuals.”



*We work to stop drugs whether they are hidden in a spare tire or in a pusher's house.*

A recent bust in Reserve resulting in nine arrests for stolen firearms and possession of marijuana, ecstasy and cocaine was a direct result of citizens stepping up and speaking up to help stop the drug trade in their neighborhood.

“If you are just as fed up as we are with drug dealing and violence, I implore you to get involved,” Sheriff Tregre said. “Pick up the phone and call 911, send a tip through our web site or call our tip line no matter the time or the day. We will respond.”

## Officer of the Year

- Sponsored by Raj Pannu of Pannu Enterprises

Congratulations to Detective Sergeant Douglas Buckler on being named the SJBPSO Officer of the Year. Known for outstanding work and putting in long hours, Detective Buckler helped lead a successful investigation into a network of individuals with violent criminal histories.

## 2016-17 Officers of the Month

- Sponsored by the St. John Business Association

Deputy Kendel Harris, Deputy Amanda Tamplain, Deputy Cody Schmill, Sergeant Grant Pierre, Major John Gonor, Deputy Nicholas Wright, Corporal Anthony Grandolfo, Deputy Ashley Clement, Deputy Tiffany Richard, Deputy Javonna Cordova and K9 Deuce and his handler, Deputy Kendel Harris.

## Officers of the Quarter

- Sponsored by Becnel Law Firm, CN Railroad, Louisiana Federal Credit Union, Cool Concepts, Stein's Cleaners and Regions Bank

Special Operations Division Detective Douglas Buckler, Deputies Terence Calais, Christopher Toups, Sid Triche, Justin Williams and Bernell Charles.

## P.O.S.T. Corrections Certified

Two classes of SJBPSO deputies recently completed requirements to be P.O.S.T. certified as corrections officers. Members of other law enforcement agencies also took part in the training on correctional facility operations.



(Front, L-R) Deputies Tianna Hart, Shantel Bardell, Stacey Tassin and officer Xavier Ramirez of the Hammond Police Department. With the graduates are (Back, L-R) Lieutenant Jose Rel, Assistant Warden Gordon Jeffcoat and Warden James Oubre. Deputies Brian Kennedy, Valrie Macon and Damien Dinet with Assistant Warden Anthony Giovingo and the Reverend Ernest August.



(L-R) Warden James Oubre and Assistant Warden Gloria Tassin with graduates Sergeant Suetzetta Nelson, Deputies Evan Hughes, Lawrence Brue, Sadie Harper, Phifer Butler, Brian Bartholomew and Kollin Cox. Also pictured are Assistant Wardens Anthony Giovingo and Gordon Jeffcoat.

**Download our App!**

Go to your mobile device's app store and locate "St. John Sheriff." Once you download it, you're ready to receive emergency notifications, traffic updates, weather alerts and more.

## P.O.S.T. Certified

Pictured with Chief Deputy Steven Guidry (far left) and Sheriff Tregre (far right) are the SJBPSO's new P.O.S.T. – Peace Officers Standards and Training – certified deputies. (L-R) Deputies Anthony Gauthier, Raymond Breaux, David Samson, Brittany Layne, Trystin Williams, Jennifer DeFrisco, Justin Patterson, Mavis Kendrick, Michael Whitcomb and Brian Bartholomew

Deputy Michael Whitcomb received recognition as Salutatorian, Top Gun and Best Driver while Deputy Mavis Kendrick received the Sheepdog Award of perseverance. The 18-week program covers firearms, physical fitness, investigations and Louisiana law.



**St. John the Baptist Parish Sheriff's Office**

**Mike Tregre, Sheriff**

Post Office Box 1600  
1801 West Airline Highway  
LaPlace, Louisiana 70068  
985.652.9513 Fax 985.652.7916  
8-5 M-Th, 8-4:30 F



**Reserve/Garyville/Mt. Airy**  
985.536.4176

**Edgard/West Bank**  
985.497.3435

[stjohnsheriff.org](http://stjohnsheriff.org)



St. John the Baptist Parish Sheriff



@stjohnsheriff

**EMERGENCY: DIAL 911**

**We're with you!** The SJBPSO sponsors and participates in numerous community events. Let us know about yours so we may attend.



*Back to School Extravaganza*



*Blue Santa and his elves visit local schools*



*Head Start students sing the national anthem at inauguration 2016*



*Guns 'n Hoses charity fundraiser*



*Honor Roll Roundup*



*Mardi Gras at Twin Oaks*



*Thanksgiving lunch for Senior Citizens*



*SJBPSO Honor Guard*



*Polly the Easter Bunny visits schools*



*Neighborhood visits with the Sheriff*



*Torch Run to support Special Olympics*



*Red Nose Day for children's charities*

The mission of the St. John the Baptist Parish Sheriff's Office is to improve the quality of life in our parish. We will protect life and property through partnership with our communities. We respect the rights of all citizens by upholding the U.S. Constitution and the Law of Louisiana.

We will perform our duties by adhering to our core beliefs: **Integrity, Professionalism, Compassion and Fairness.**