

2017 Annual Report

# Bluffton Police Department



COMMITTED TO THE COMMUNITY

# 2017 Annual Report - Bluffton Police Department

|       |   |
|-------|---|
| 3     | Chief's Welcome   |
| 4     | Department History  |
| 5     | Town Government   |
| 6     | Mission Statement, Vision, and Values   |
| 7     | Command Staff   |
| 8     | 2017 By the Numbers   |
| 9     | Organizational Chart  |
| 10    | Department Budget   |
| 11-18 | Department Divisions <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Patrol</li><li>Investigations</li><li>Support</li><li>Emergency Management</li></ul> |
| 19-20 | Department Programs   |
| 21-22 | Department Events   |
| 23    | Department Accomplishments  |
| 24    | Important Phone Numbers   |



## 2017 Annual Report - Bluffton Police Department

Welcome to the 2017 Bluffton Police Department annual report. Each year we strive to provide safety and security to all that reside, work, and visit the Town of Bluffton.

In 2017, the Bluffton Police Department underwent several staffing changes with the July retirement of Chief Joey Reynolds. This allowed me the honor of becoming the next Bluffton Chief of Police. With my promotion came the promotions of Captain Epstein and Captain Babkiewicz. Bluffton continues to grow and therefore, so does the police department along with our duties and responsibilities.



Throughout this annual report you will read how we are involved in the community, what officers and employees do behind the scenes, and what crime occurred throughout 2017.

On behalf of the 88 staff and volunteer members of the Police Department, I thank you for your continued support and look forward to serving you in the coming year.

Sincerely,

Chief Joseph Manning

## DEPARTMENT HISTORY

The Bluffton Police Department was created in 1903 with one officer who also acted as the Chief of Police. At that time, the Town covered one-square mile which is now known as Old Town. For decades, the Town remained the size of one-square mile with only one officer and a reputation of being a speed trap for those traveling to Hilton Head Island. This didn't change until the late 90's when another officer was added to the payroll. By the early 2000's, there were seven officers. Today, there are 52 sworn-officers who patrol and protect Bluffton.



In 2009, when there were approximately 30 officers with the department, the Chief decided he wanted to have an agency that was CALEA certified. CALEA stands for the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies and is the highest accreditation a law enforcement agency can achieve. The purpose of having this accreditation is to improve the delivery of public safety services, primarily by: maintaining a body of standards, developed by public safety practitioners, covering a wide range of up-to-date public safety initiatives; establishing and administering an accreditation process; and recognizing professional excellence. The Bluffton Police Department was first accredited in 2009 and has been reaccredited twice since then.



# 2017 Annual Report - Bluffton Police Department



Town Manager Marc Orlando

Front row: (L-R) Mayor Lisa Sulka, Councilman Fred Hamilton, Councilman Dan Wood  
Back row: (L-R) Mayor Pro Tempe Larry Toomer, Councilman Harry Lutz

The town of Bluffton was established in 1825, incorporated in 1852 and adopted a Council-Manager form of government in 1999. The Council-Manager form of government consists of an elected Town Council, which is responsible for policy making, and a professional Town Manager, appointed by the council, who is responsible for administration.

The Town Manager provides policy advice, directs the daily operations of town government, handles personnel functions and is responsible for preparing the budget.

Town Council is comprised of a mayor and four council members who serve overlapping four-year terms. Town council members serve at-large, which enables all voters the opportunity to vote on a candidate for each seat. Town elections occur every two years.

In July 2017, Town Council adopted a \$36.8 million consolidated budget while reducing property taxes by two mills for the second year in a row. This budget meets emerging programmatic, public amenity and infrastructure needs by allocating \$15.7 million to the Town's Capital Improvement Projects Program. This program includes replacing aging septic systems with public sewer, Streetscape improvements, public facility and open space enhancements, public infrastructure installation at Buckwalter Place Commerce Park and developing Historic District properties recently acquired by the Town for public use.

# 2017 Annual Report - Bluffton Police Department

## Mission Statement:

“The mission of the Bluffton Police Department is to provide the highest quality of police services to our community and its visitors by promoting a safe environment through a police-citizen partnership, with an emphasis on mutual trust, honor, professionalism, and dedication to duty.”

## Vision Statement:

“Committed to Community”

## Values:

“We provide service with understanding, response with compassion, performance with integrity, and law enforcement with vision.”



# 2017 Annual Report - Bluffton Police Department

## COMMAND STAFF



Chief Joseph Manning



Lieutenant Kelly  
McCauley  
Investigations



Captain Sheldon Epstein  
Operations Commander



Joy Nelson  
Community Relations



Captain Joe Babkiewicz  
Emergency Management  
& Internal Affairs



Dana Smith  
Executive Assistant



Lieutenant Scott Chandler  
Patrol



Lieutenant Joe George  
Patrol

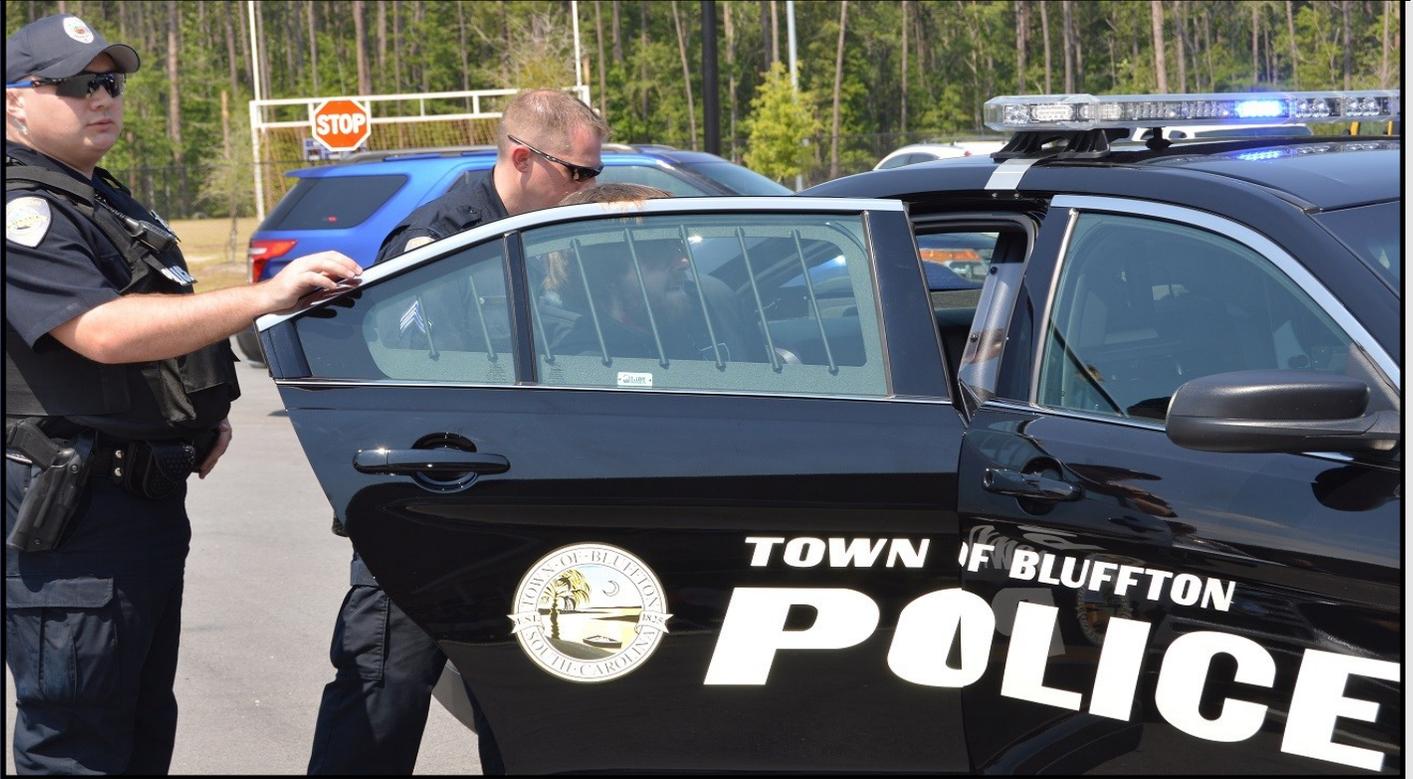


Lieutenant Christian  
Gonzales  
Support Services

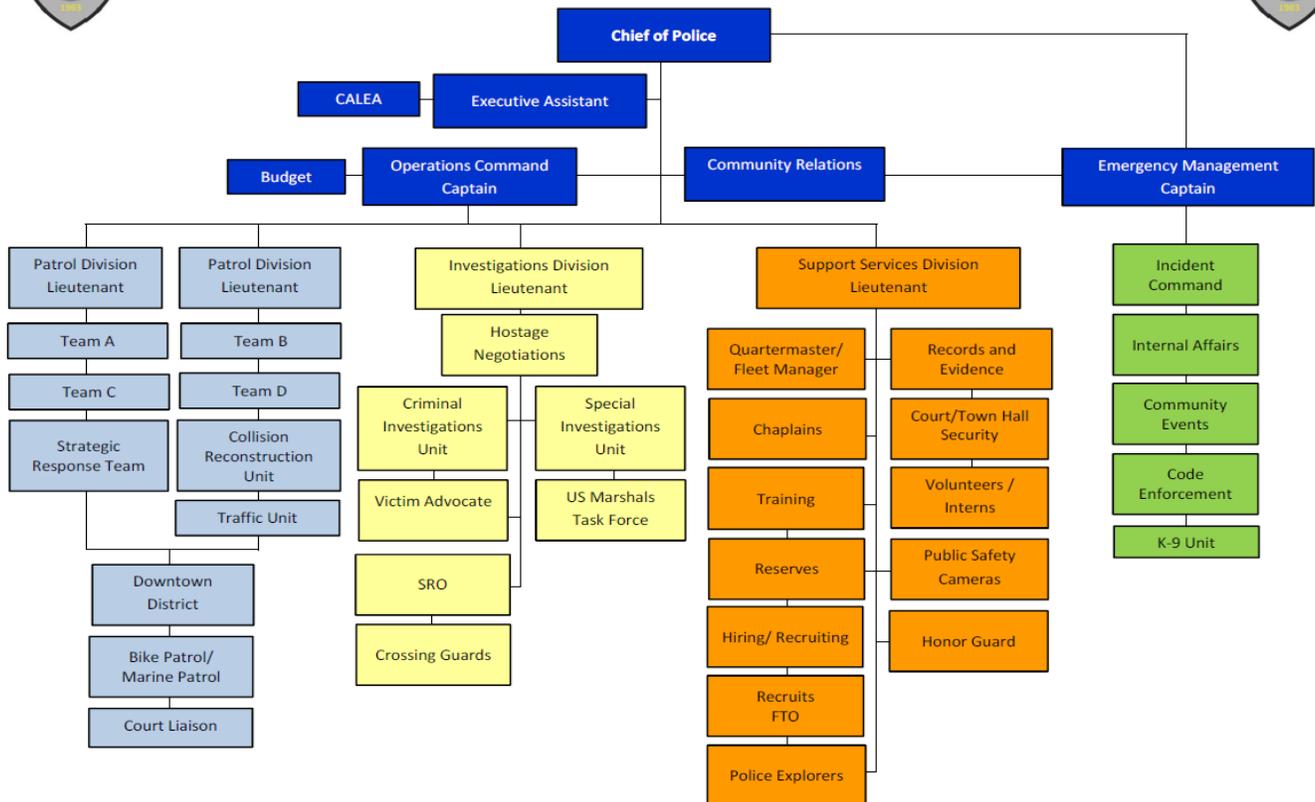
# 2017 BY THE NUMBERS

|               |                                |
|---------------|--------------------------------|
| <b>21,414</b> | Estimated Town population      |
| <b>52</b>     | Sworn Officers                 |
|               | <i>1 Chief</i>                 |
|               | <i>2 Captains</i>              |
|               | <i>4 Lieutenants</i>           |
|               | <i>10 Sergeants</i>            |
|               | <i>35 Officers</i>             |
| <b>3</b>      | K9s                            |
| <b>6</b>      | Non-sworn officers             |
| <b>15</b>     | Volunteers                     |
| <b>6</b>      | School Crossing Guards         |
| <b>6</b>      | Chaplains                      |
| <b>1</b>      | Victim's Advocate              |
| <b>1</b>      | Code Enforcement Officer       |
| <b>51,945</b> | Total police calls for service |
| <b>747</b>    | Traffic Collisions             |
| <b>6</b>      | Fatal Collisions               |
| <b>227</b>    | Driving Under the Influence    |
| <b>1,723</b>  | Speeding Citations             |
| <b>262</b>    | Larceny Thefts                 |
| <b>35</b>     | Burglaries                     |
| <b>17</b>     | Assaults                       |
| <b>0</b>      | Murders                        |

# 2017 Annual Report - Bluffton Police Department



## BLUFFTON POLICE DEPARTMENT ORGANIZATIONAL CHART



February 8, 2018

# BUDGET



**\$6,228,545**

**PATROL**



**\$2,502,290**

**INVESTIGATIONS**



**\$836,880**

**EMERGENCY  
MANAGEMENT**



**\$951,760**

**SUPPORT  
SERVICES**



**\$1,937,615**

## 2017 Annual Report - Bluffton Police Department



**Chief Joseph Manning** joined the Bluffton Police Department in 2013 after serving 27 years with the Pinellas County Sheriff's Office in Florida. He served as the department's Deputy Chief until July 2017 when he was promoted as Chief of Police.

During his time at the Pinellas County Sheriff's Office, Chief Manning supervised units within the Patrol Operations, Criminal Investigations, Internal Affairs, Narcotics, and Intelligence divisions. He was a Pinellas

County SWAT member which allowed him the expertise to start the Bluffton Police Department Strategic Response Team in 2015. Major Manning holds a Bachelor's degree in Human Services from Springfield College and a Master's Degree in Criminal Justice in Public Administration from Liberty University. He is also a graduate of the Florida Criminal Justice Executive Institute, the Senior Leadership Program and the FBI Police Executive Fellowship Program where he served in the Counterterrorism Division, National joint Terrorism Task Force. He has also graduated from the Northwestern University, School of Police Staff and Command, Class 379.

**Captain Sheldon Epstein** is currently the Operations Commander of the Bluffton Police Department and second in command of the department who oversees the day-to-day operations.

Captain Epstein came to the Bluffton Police Department in 2013 after retiring from the Pennsylvania State Police where he served 29 years. He holds a Bachelor's degree with honors in English and German from Carnegie-Mellon University. Captain Epstein is also a graduate of the FBI National Academy 207th session.



## PATROL



The Patrol Division is the most recognizable part of any law enforcement organization. It is led by Lieutenants Scott Chandler and Joe George. The Bluffton Police Department Patrol Division is made up of four teams that work rotating shifts and cover the 54-square-miles of the town 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. The officers who work in Patrol are the backbone of the agency, and they are the men and women most likely to interact one-on-one with the community. In 2017,

patrol conducted 51,945 calls for service. This number includes all emergencies and non-emergencies that officers were dispatched.

There are several different areas of the Patrol Division. The officers working the road are dispatched to various calls from traffic accidents, alarms, robberies, and murders. In addition to the calls these officers are dispatched, they also patrol neighborhoods and businesses regularly. These checks are referred to as Extra Patrols. In 2017, officers conducted 14,570 extra patrols to businesses and 10,058 extra patrols in neighborhoods and subdivisions.

Other parts of the Bluffton Police Department that make up the patrol division include, marine patrol, bicycle patrol, Traffic Team, the Collision Reconstruction Unit and the Strategic Response Team.

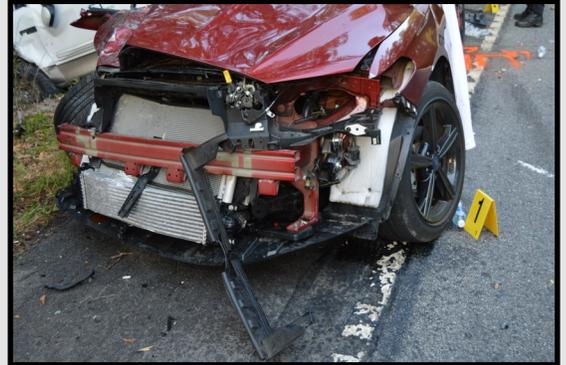
Marine patrol is used each weekend between Memorial Day and Labor Day to ensure the safety of those on the May River for recreational and commercial use. Bicycle patrol is used in the Old Town area which primarily includes the original one-square mile of the Town. It is also utilized during parades and festivals.



# 2017 Annual Report - Bluffton Police Department

## PATROL

The Collision Reconstruction Unit was created in 2016. It consists of five officers who investigate why crashes occur when a death or serious injury is involved. These officers have undergone extensive training in areas to include, identify, collect and analyze tire marks, pavements scarring, vehicle damage and debris patterns. In 2017, the unit investigated a total of six accidents that had more than one car involved. Of those accidents, there were five serious injuries and six deaths.



The Traffic Team is an important part of the Bluffton Police Department and is possible due to a South Carolina Department of Public Safety (SCDPS) grant awarded to the department in 2015 for a two-officer unit. The Team spends its entire 12-hour shift looking for traffic offenders. In 2017, the Team added a third officer through a second SCDPS grant, specializing in identifying those who are driving under the influence. Through pro-active traffic enforcement and safety checkpoints, 227 DUI arrests or citations were carried out in 2017. In addition, the Traffic Team officers are all certified child car seat inspectors and offer free car seat installations and inspections to the community.

|                    |       |
|--------------------|-------|
| Reports Taken      | 4,130 |
| Traffic Collisions | 747   |
| Traffic Citations  | 4,402 |
| DUI                | 227   |
| Speeding           | 1,723 |

The Strategic Response Team is a specialized unit made up of eight officers who are trained to respond to a variety of extreme situations. The unit was created in 2015 to handle call-outs like demonstrations, hostage situations, and armed suspects. They train monthly with one another, and other local law enforcement departments with similar units.

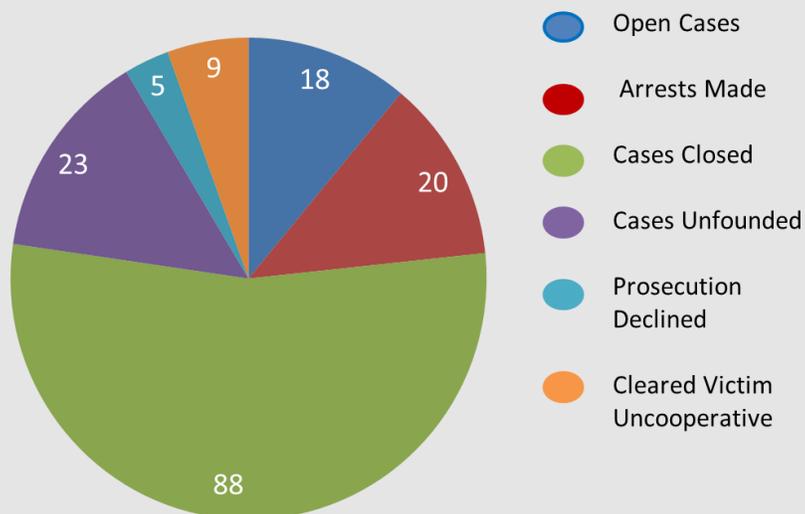
## INVESTIGATIONS

The Investigations Division is led by Lieutenant Kelly McCauley who is responsible for overseeing the investigations of crimes committed against persons, property, and serious or unusual incidents after the initial response is made by patrol. She manages the Criminal Investigations Team, the Special Investigations Unit, the Victim's Advocate and the School Resource Officers.

The Criminal Investigations Team is made up of one Sergeant and two Investigators. They respond to various calls and investigate a wide variety of crimes from domestic violence, robberies, and murders. While these investigators conduct most of their time to felony crimes against persons, they do investigate criminal acts involving the loss of, or damage to, property such as burglary, arson and larceny. In addition, investigators with CID also act as a liaison with representatives from federal, state, other municipal agencies, and exchanges information concerning known criminals and criminal activity. They also coordinate information with the Fourteenth Circuit Solicitor's Office for upcoming court cases.



### 2017 Criminal Investigations Statistics



## INVESTIGATIONS

The Special Investigations Unit is made up of one Sergeant and two Investigators. They develop intelligence relative to narcotics and gang activity within the Town. They develop informants, execute search warrants, make arrests, and initiate counteractive measures to combat illegal activity. SIU also partners with the State Law Enforcement Division to conduct alcohol compliance checks to ensure local establishments aren't serving minors alcohol.

|                        |   |
|------------------------|---|
| Total Arrests          | 140   |
| Currency Confiscated   | \$10,470.00   |
| Weapons Confiscated    | 28  |
| Alcohol License Checks | 20  |
| Drugs Confiscated      | Cocaine, Crack Cocaine, Marijuana, Heroin, Meth, and 750 units of Schedule I-IV drugs |

The Victim's Advocate is a part-time position. She assists victims of crimes with information, emotional support, finding resources, filing out paperwork and often times will attend court with the victims.

The School Resource Officers complete the Investigations Unit. There is one Sergeant and five school resource officers who are located in one K-8 school, two middle schools, and two high schools. Each officer located in the schools works

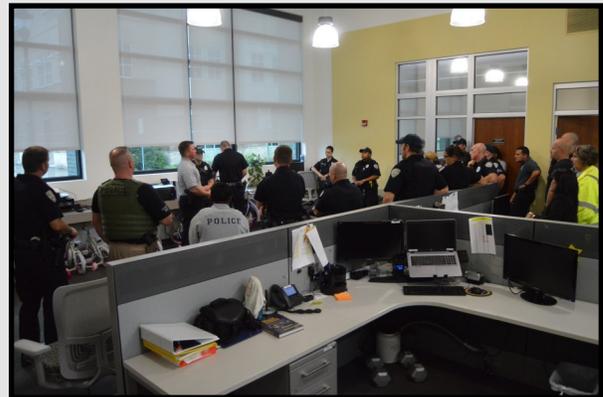


closely with Administration to ensure laws are being followed by the students, in addition to providing security and crime prevention services. The SRO Sergeant also oversees the department's six paid Crossing Guards.

# EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

The Emergency Management Division is comprised of the planning and execution of all emergencies or disasters that occur within the Town, Internal Affairs, Code Enforcement, the department's K9 Program, and Community Events. Captain Joe Babkiewicz manages the Division with one Sergeant, three officers, and two non-sworn personnel.

The primary purpose and concern of Emergency Management is the responsibility of the entire Town when and if an emergency or disaster strikes. Since 2015, when the Bluffton Police Department was assigned the Emergency Management Division, numerous plans have been created to address natural disasters and traffic or environmental emergencies. In 2017, the Emergency Management Division responded to and assisted at the scenes of deadly traffic accidents as well as coordinated the response and recovery of Hurricane Irma.



The Internal Affairs section investigates incidents and plausible suspicions of lawbreaking and professional misconduct attributed to all employees who are employed with the Bluffton Police Department. The Internal Affairs section reports directly to the Chief of Police. In 2017, there were four investigations completed into questionable actions of officers at the Bluffton Police Department. Of those, one was unfounded and three were founded leading to the resignation of two officers and one officer leaving on his own accord.

The Code Enforcement unit's mission is to insure the ordinances of Bluffton, set forth by the Town Council, are complied with by all citizens. The unit's main function is to issue building permits and inspect new construction and improvements to all buildings located within Bluffton Town limits. Code Enforcement works a variety of cases ranging from junked vehicles, placement of signage, home occupations, outdoor storage, as well as trash and junk zoning/violations.

# 2017 Annual Report - Bluffton Police Department

## EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

Community Events is a key component of Emergency Management. In the course of a year, the community events section managed 467 community events for the Town of Bluffton. This involves permitting, security plans, and coordination between public and private entities. Signature annual events Bluffton is recognized for and must be planned through the Community Events Coordinator is MayFest, Arts and Seafood Festival, Christmas Parade, and the weekly Farmer's Market.

The Community Events Coordinator also manages the rental of the Town owned Rotary Community Center and Oyster Factory Park. Both of these facilities are typically rented for multiple events during the week and on weekends.

|                                 |     |
|---------------------------------|-----|
| Total Special Events            | 99  |
| Rotary Community Center Rentals | 149 |
| Oyster Factory Park Rentals     | 85  |

|                                 |       |
|---------------------------------|-------|
| Officer Extra Duty Assignments  | 368   |
| Officer Extra Duty Hours Worked | 2,207 |
| Total Events                    | 467   |



The Bluffton Police Department K9 Program was started in 2017 with K9's Hunden and Teeko. Both German Shepherds were purchased in 2016 but didn't complete their training until March 2017. In September, a third K9, Frankie, was added to the Program. Each K9 is a multi-purpose dog trained in narcotic detection, suspect apprehension, person tracking, and building searches.



# SUPPORT SERVICES



The Support Services Division is a vital part of the police department due to it handling and managing the department's overall budget, records, evidence, hiring and training sections. Lt. Christian Gonzales oversees the division with the assistance of two Sergeants, and an Evidence and Records Manager. In addition to the above-mentioned responsibilities of Support Services, the division also manages court security, Town Council security, the

Quartermaster, the Chaplain program and volunteers.

Currently, there are six Chaplains who are from different denominations and local churches. They respond to accidents to console victims or family members of victims. The Chaplains also provide the officers with appropriate assistance, advice, comfort, and counsel.



The volunteers here at Bluffton PD are immeasurable and our daily duties wouldn't be able to be completed without them. Currently we have ten volunteers who do a variety of work from assisting our investigators with forfeitures, conducting clerical work, to assisting with community programs like the Keep Bluffton Beautiful program. These hardworking men and women also take a lead role in the department's C.A.R.E program in which they make phone calls and visit members of the community who live alone and don't have their own family here to check on them. In 2017, the Bluffton PD volunteers gave the department more than 2,000 hours of their own time.

# DEPARTMENT PROGRAMS



Community Policing - Engage the community through exhibits, tours, events, and service. This is the backbone of the Bluffton Police Department in which we create a police-citizen partnership to enrich the Bluffton community with the best services and people.



Automated External Defibrillator (AED) Program - Began in 2015 with a partnership between BPD, Arrhythmia Alliance & the Quance Family. The original campaign raised funds to equip all police vehicles with an AED. Today we continue the campaign to equip additional vehicles with AEDs and for pediatric pads. Officers have saved 5 lives with this piece of equipment.



C.A.R.E. Program - The Community Assistance Response Efforts is an outreach program in which Bluffton Police volunteers call disabled or homebound community members to check on their welfare.



Citizens Police Academy - In 2017, the Bluffton Police Department held its fourth Citizens Police Academy. It is a 10-week course open to full time community members who want to learn more about what it takes to be a police officer. Twenty-two students graduated from the 2017 class.

# DEPARTMENT PROGRAMS



Explorer Program - This is the opportunity for young adults to explore a career in law enforcement. This course involves weekly classes over a 5-month period.



Hispanic Hotline - This is a voicemail resource for Spanish-speaking citizens who need assistance from police. It was launched in fall of 2015 resulting in dozens of families being helped. 843-706-7806.



MyPD app - This is a community interactive tool in which police disseminate safety alerts via cell phone regarding weather, traffic and emergency situations.



Toy Drive - This annual program began in 2014 when an officer recognized the need of Bluffton families. More than 600 children have been served since the program began.

# 2017 Annual Report - Bluffton Police Department

## DEPARTMENT EVENTS

Each year the Bluffton Police Department participates, hosts, or provides security for events occurring in Bluffton. Some of the most notable events include National Night Out, the Town Christmas Parade, the department's annual Swearing-In and Awards Ceremony, Bluffton Safety Day, Keep Bluffton Beautiful, Blue Mass, and in 2017 we were able to assist with two unique events - the ABC television show "The Bachelorette" and the appearance of the Anheuser Busch Clydesdales.



In 2017 we hosted our 4th annual National Night Out which involved more than 20 local organizations and businesses as well as numerous local first responders. More than 2,000 community members attended the event.



The Town Christmas Parade has become a staple in Bluffton, occurring each year for more than 30 years. This year more than 150 floats participated and at least 15,000 spectators enjoyed the fun.



In August we held our annual awards ceremony where we named the officer of the year, as well as, highlighted different officers who exceeded what is expected of them on a day-to-day basis.



In May we held our first Bluffton Safety Day. It took place the weekend before Memorial Day weekend to remind the community to be safe throughout the summer months whether that be on the road or water. The U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Natural Resources, and Beaufort County Sheriff's Office partnered with us to spread the message about summer and safety.

# DEPARTMENT EVENTS

Keep Bluffton Beautiful was a campaign the police department and Town began in the spring by having the community involved in picking up trash on Bluffton roads and parks. For its inaugural event, approximately 100 community members arrived to pick up trash along May River Road.



For the third year, Bluffton had the honor of hosting the Anheuser Busch Clydesdales for a parade. As in past years, the Clydesdales are a huge attraction that brought close to 20,000 people to Old Town Bluffton. We provided crowd control and security for the animals and Anheuser Busch staff.



St. Gregory the Great Catholic Church hosts a Blue Mass each year and invites all local first responders. As in past years, several Bluffton officers attended the mass and not only appreciated the special prayers provided, but it was also a chance for us to speak to the children who attend the school about what we do for them and their families each and every day.



A unique event we provided security for in 2017 the ABC television show, "The Bachelorette". Thousands of fans flooded Old Town Bluffton to get a chance to see the star of the show and her date.



# 2017 Annual Report - Bluffton Police Department

## DEPARTMENT ACCOMPLISHMENTS

In 2017, there were many accomplishments the Bluffton Police Department and its officers achieved. Some accomplishments involved the department giving to the community while other accomplishments focused on how Bluffton officers excelled in specific roles.

The most exciting honor comes from SafeHome.org who named Bluffton the 5th Safest City in South Carolina. SafeHome.org is a professional review site dedicated to enhancing communities' safety. It determined its scores and ranking on several criteria including types of crimes occurring in communities, number of law enforcement compared to the population, crime trends, education level and unemployment rate.



New this year, was one officers idea to raise 100 turkeys allowing Bluffton families, who couldn't afford to buy one, have a turkey on Thanksgiving Day. Officer Oscar Frazier reached out to individuals and businesses to collect enough turkeys. By the last day, Officer Frazier beat his goal and took the turkeys to a local shelter and the Boys and Girls Club. Officer Frazier was also named Officer of the Year by the American Legion.



Lt. Scott Chandler graduated from the School of Police Staff and Command at Northwestern University. This is a 22-week program that provides upper-level college instruction in a total of twenty-seven core blocks of instruction.



Officer Jeb Fay graduated from Drug Recognition Expert school which made him the 25th DRE Instructor in all of South Carolina. Officer Fay was also honored by the SC Department of Public Safety as officer of the year for the number of DUI arrests he had made in 2016.



Officer Lauren Brown was named the Lowcountry Region School Resource Officer of the Year by the South Carolina Association of School Resource Officers.



Officer Mark Dorsey was chosen as the Military Citizen of the Year by the Omega Psi Phi Fraternity.



Officer Jeff Dickson was named Bluffton Officer of the Year for his leadership and professionalism in the arrest of a serial rapist just after the crime was committed and reported.

**IMPORTANT PHONE NUMBERS**

**EMERGENCY**

**9-1-1**

**NON-EMERGENCY**

**843-524-2777**

**BLUFFTON POLICE DEPARTMENT**

**843-7064550**

**CRIME TIP LINE**

**843-706-4560**

**HISPANIC HOTLINE**

**843-706-7806**