



stjohnsheriff.org

Dear friends,

Welcome to our annual report.

Please allow me this opportunity to share with you some of the advancements made by your sheriff's office as part of our ongoing efforts to provide you with the highest quality of service.

But first, a few words about a fallen comrade.

A short 30 years ago, when I first pinned on my badge as a St. John the Baptist Parish Sheriff's Deputy, I knew the job had hazards. Law enforcement officers deal with the fact that every day can be their last, but we take an oath and take the responsibility very seriously.

As all of us in law enforcement, our late brother Captain Octavio "Ox" Gonzalez took an oath to protect the people of our parish. In the early morning hours of June 16, his unwavering dedication to his job and to the men under his command cost him his life. It was that same measure of dedication that put Detective Monty Adams in harm's way when he was shot in the leg while initially investigating the two suspects now charged with these crimes.

We can't bring Ox back. But we can make a big difference in a law enforcement officer's day by taking a few seconds and thanking them for what they do. Teach children that we are the good guys and that they can always approach a deputy. Don't wait until it's too late.

In this issue you'll find stories about our efforts to keep traffic moving on parish roads, stepped-up litter enforcement, a new rescue vehicle and an often overlooked but vital part of our operation — our civil department. Our "Cop of Tea" program is highlighted with a report on our work with senior citizens.

I hope you enjoy this report. Please fill out and return the survey on the last page to give us your important input on how we can better serve you.

Don't hesitate to contact me personally to let me know how I or this office can help you. In any emergency, dial 911.

Very truly yours,

**WAYNE L. JONES**  
*Sheriff, St. John the Baptist Parish*

### Need A Speaker For Your Next Meeting?

If your organization would like to have a representative of the St. John the Baptist Parish Sheriff's Office address your group, let us know. We have experts on a variety of topics from law enforcement to search-and-rescue to the latest in crime-fighting technology. We would be glad to visit with you!

## St. John the Baptist Parish Sheriff's Office Survey

We want to hear from you!  
Please complete and return this survey. Your answers will help us continue to meet your needs and work to keep our parish safe. Thank you.

During the past year, did you call the sheriff's office for assistance?

☐ Yes ☐ No

In your neighborhood, what's the most important issue we can address?

What services currently provided by your sheriff's office would you like to see enhanced?

Do you have any suggestions on how we may better serve you?

How long have you lived in St. John the Baptist Parish?

What is your zip code? \_\_\_\_\_

Please fill out the form below if you would like to be contacted to discuss public safety in our parish.

Name

Address

Phone Number

E-mail

Please return to:

St. John the Baptist Parish Sheriff's Office  
Wayne L. Jones, Sheriff  
Harold A. Klibert, Chief Criminal Deputy  
1801 West Airline Highway • LaPlace, Louisiana 70068  
985 652-9513 Fax 652-7916  
Reserve/Garyville/Mt. Airy • 985 536-4176  
Edgard/West Bank • 985 497-3435

PRSRT STD  
US POSTAGE  
PAID  
SCBI

St. John the Baptist Parish Sheriff's Office

# Annual Report

2006

# CRIME SCENE



stjohnsheriff.org



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

# Annual Report

2006

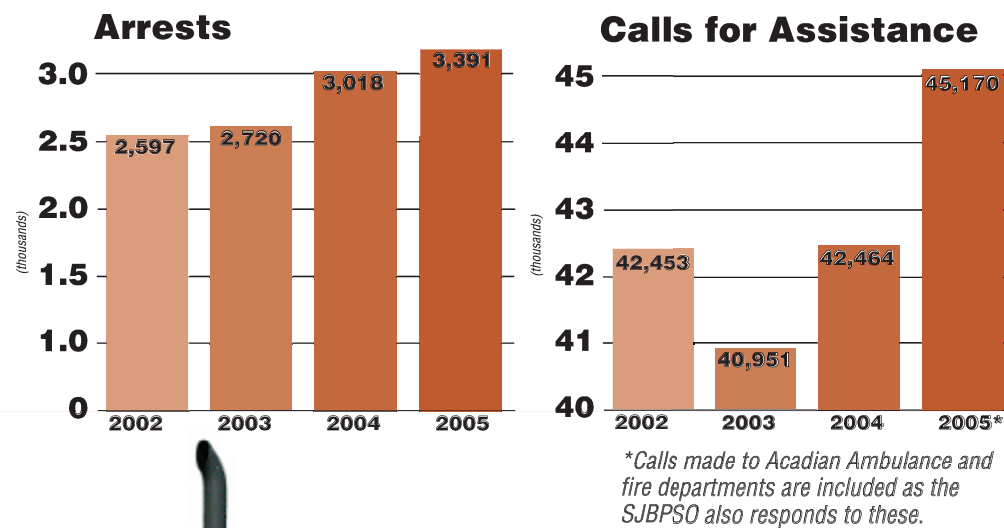
### Godzilla

No, it's not the fire-breathing, mutant dinosaur from late-night, science fiction movies, but it seems to be just about as big!

Godzilla is the name of the newest vehicle in the SJBPSO's rescue fleet. Totally refurbished by using inmate labor at the parish prison, the huge, five-ton vehicle was a military troop carrier in its former life. A vital tool for rescue operations, Godzilla is equipped with a special snorkel attached to its engine and exhaust system, allowing the ten-wheeled vehicle to easily pass through water as high as six feet.

The SJBPSO Search and Rescue Team employs various trucks, boats, four-wheelers and other special equipment for its operations. A rigorous maintenance schedule ensures that each vehicle is ready for use at a moment's notice.

Sheriff Jones and Major Mike Boudreaux, Director of the SJBPSO Search and Rescue Team inspect "Godzilla."



stjohnsheriff.org

### Civil Department

Perhaps the first things that come to mind when you think of the SJBPSO are our crime-fighting capabilities or vital role as first responders in an emergency. There is another, maybe lesser-known side to our operation; the civil department.

Headed by certified public accountant Jeff Clement, the civil side of the SJBPSO oversees all noncriminal matters handled by the sheriff's office.

"In each parish in the state, the sheriff is the chief ex-officio tax collector," said Clement. "Our biggest job is to collect those taxes."



Cutline: Chief Civil Deputy Jeff Clement looks over tax collection reports with Rachel Mitchell while Debbie Catoire (seated) and Toni Flynn take care of paperwork for the department.

Clement said that in fiscal year 2005-2006, "We took in revenue of about \$14.5 million. Some of that is used to run the sheriff's department, but we also provide money to the parish to fund their services."

Fees for traffic tickets, fines and bonds are gathered by the civil department, which also coordinates subpoenas and court order documents and the issuing of licenses for all businesses operating in St. John. The civil side also helps put together sheriff's sales of repossessed property and handles the accounting and payroll for the office.



### Captain Octavio Gonzalez

We called him "Ox," partly because he was a big guy, but mostly because we loved him.

On June 16, Captain Octavio "Ox" Gonzalez became the third SJBPSO deputy to be killed in the line of duty. That same morning, Detective Monty Adams was seriously wounded when he was shot in the leg by the same suspects who are charged with murdering Captain Gonzalez.

A criminal justice graduate of Nicholls State University, Gonzalez had worked with the Lafourche Parish Sheriff's Office before a 14-year career with the SJBPSO. Most recently he served as commander of the narcotics unit and is credited with putting together the Special Operations Response Team, or SORT. Captain Gonzalez was scheduled to attend the FBI Academy in 2007.

"He can never be replaced, but he will always be remembered," said Sheriff Jones. "Whenever I think of what a true law enforcement professional should be, I will think of Ox."

Captain Gonzalez, 40, leaves behind a wife and two young sons.

The last SJBPSO deputy killed in the line of duty was Barton Granier in 1996. Deputy Sherman Walker was killed in 1984.

Captain Octavio Gonzalez, with arm raised, addresses SJBPSO personnel before a recent narcotics raid.



Captain Octavio "Ox" Gonzalez



Detective Monty Adams



Special Operations and Response Team members on a training exercise.

### Cop of Tea

Sharing a cup of tea is a great way to catch up on what's going on with a friend. That's the idea behind the SJBPSO's "Cop of Tea" program, which allows deputies to check on elderly St. John residents.

Started in 2004, the Cop of Tea program serves some 700 people and strengthens the relationship between the sheriff's office and senior citizens.

"Besides looking in on people, deputies keep an eye out for repairs that we can make in their homes," said Sheriff Jones. "Often, we fix plumbing, windows and doors and even build ramps to help people get in and out of the house."



Deputy Walter Chappel and Sheriff Jones visit with LaPlace resident William Mitchell. Deputies check on older St. John residents as part of the "Cop of Tea" program.

The program is a real lifesaver. Recently, Deputy Monica Swinney was checking on an older citizen on the West Bank. When the person didn't answer the door, Deputy Swinney investigated and discovered that the resident had suffered a fall and couldn't get up. "Had Deputy Swinney not been making that visit, this person might not be here today," said Sheriff Jones.

"Our senior citizens are a treasure and should be respected and cared for," said Sheriff Jones. "We're grateful for the opportunity to serve them."

### Litter Law Enforcement

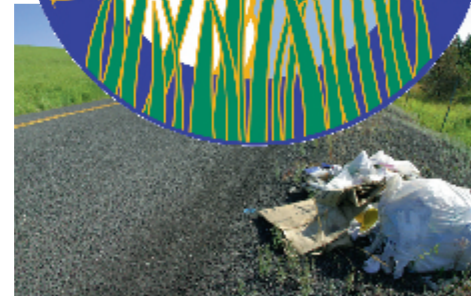
Think twice before throwing something on the ground in St. John the Baptist Parish because litter law enforcement is serious business.

"Litter laws not only apply to people who throw trash out of the window of their vehicle," said Sheriff Jones. "Illegal dumpers can be charged under anti-litter statutes. The fines and penalties are substantial, going all the way up to \$5,000 and a prison term."

According to Keep Louisiana Beautiful, the state spends more than \$14 million a year to clean our highways. In 2004 alone, state and sheriff clean-up crews picked up an estimated 450,000 bags, that's 20,000 miles of trash in our state. In St. John, an inmate work program stays busy trying to keep roads clean.

"This \$14 million could certainly be put to a better use," said Sheriff Jones. "If a deputy witnesses someone littering, that person will get a ticket. Let's all take pride in our parish and state and don't litter."

For more information about local efforts to fight litter, contact SJBPSO Captain Greg "Za" Maurin at 985 652-7058.



## Don't put it down



Keep Louisiana Beautiful



KeepLouisianaBeautiful.org

Fines for littering range from \$50 to \$5,000. A conviction can also bring jail time, community service and suspension of a driver's license for one year.



T stands for traffic. In addition to wearing a T on their uniforms, deputies in the SJBPSO traffic division use specially marked vehicles.

### Traffic Division

Since Hurricane Katrina, the streets of St. John have swelled with more vehicles. The SJBPSO Traffic Division is working hard to keep things moving.

"Through grants awarded by the state, we have increased the number of personnel and hours worked by our traffic unit," said Sheriff Jones. "Speeding is still a big concern and automobile accidents add to the problem. Most of these could be avoided if people would pay attention to what they are doing."

Sheriff Jones said distracted drivers cause accidents and pointed to a recent university and department of transportation study\* that lists the top ten reasons for automobile accidents. In order, they are:

- Rubbernecking - (looking at a crash, vehicle or traffic)
- Driver fatigue
- Looking at scenery or landmarks
- Passenger or child distraction
- Adjusting radio, changing CD or tape
- Cell phone use
- Eyes not on the road
- Not paying attention, daydreaming
- Eating or drinking
- Adjusting vehicle controls

**Let's be careful out there!**

\*Source: Virginia Department of Motor Vehicles and Virginia Commonwealth University study of more than 2,700 crash scenes and 4,500 drivers