

# THE LAKELAND BEAT

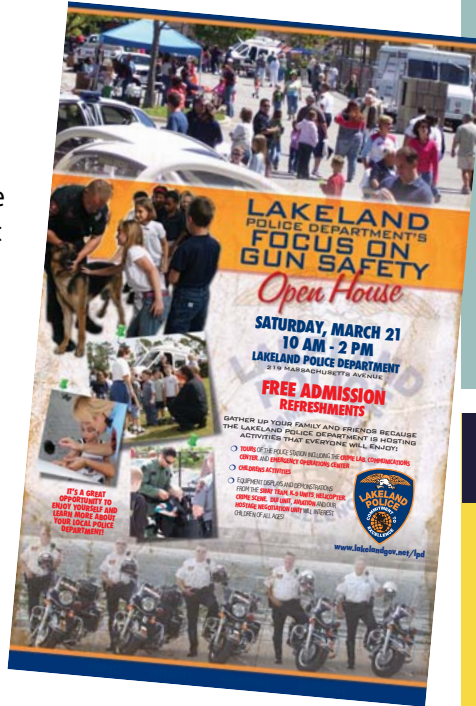
March 2009

www.LCPAAHome.org

Issue 49

## Lakeland Police Department's OPEN HOUSE to focus on Gun Safety!

On Saturday, March 21st the Lakeland Police Department will open its doors to the public for their annual Open House. This free event gives citizens the opportunity to go behind the scenes with Lakeland's finest. Tours will be given of the police station including the crime lab, communications center and the emergency operations center. Equipment displays and demonstrations from the SWAT Team, K-9 units, DUI unit and Hostage negotiation will be on hand, just to name a few. There will be lots of fun and educational activities for the kids.



So come out and support one of the communities greatest assets. It is a great opportunity to get a first hand experience of what the Lakeland Police Department does everyday to help keep Lakeland a safe and attractive community.

### UPCOMING MEETINGS

**March 10th:**  
CPAAA General Membership Mtg  
LPD 2nd floor @ 7pm

**March 24th:**  
CPAAA Board of Directors Mtg LPD  
3rd floor @ 7pm

### 2009 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Stan Martin  
834-6906

**Vice President**  
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604-5450

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688-8787

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Clarence Willard  
868-7312

LPD Liaison  
Captain Harry Katt  
834-6908

## LakelandPD is now on Facebook

- Asst Chief Bill LePere

As part of our efforts to enhance communications with the public, LakelandPD is now on Facebook! You can search for us as LakelandPD (not Lakeland PD or Lakeland Police Department). The page is new and fairly simple at this point. Be patient while I attempt to master the Facebook process and increase the content.



In the mean time, we are always open to comments, ideas, suggestions, or general feedback about what people want to see or hear from us. Post something on our Facebook Wall or send me an e-mail at bill.lepere@lakelandgov.net.

[www.facebook.com](http://www.facebook.com)

**LOOK WHAT'S INSIDE**

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# Lakeland Crime Down in 2008

- Asst Chief Bill LePere

We completed our annual Uniform Crime Report for 2008 and are pleased to report overall crime was down 3% from the previous year AND both violent crimes and property crimes declined as well.

Violent crime decreased by 11% last year and property crime was down just over 2%. These are significant results during our current economic challenges.

To anyone who was a victim of a crime last year, it was a bad year. The numbers show 6.17 people out of 100 residents were victimized last year, according to the crime numbers compared to our population. That figure is down from 6.39 the year before. Just over five people out of 100 were the victim of a property crime and less than one out of 100 was the victim of a violent crime. We think those numbers are pretty good overall.

While the overall news is good, we analyzed the data in great detail to develop a deep understanding of crime trends. Homicides increased from 6 to 10 in 2008. We also had a spike in violent crime late in the year where a gun was the weapon used to commit the offense. That resulted in a 9%

increase in gun-related violence. Suffice to say we are getting aggressive in dealing with this violent crime trend, and results for 2009 are looking promising so far in the new year.

So what caused the drop in crime? That is always a question we get asked by the media and the community during neighborhood meetings. It is difficult to point to a single cause for the reduction just as it is a challenge to point out a single reason when crime is up. Here are some thoughts though that may explain the drop in overall property and violent crime.

The community takes credit first and foremost for doing their part to keep our overall quality of life high. This has a direct impact on the environmental conditions that give rise to crime in the first place.

Weekly crime meetings and daily crime briefings give us the opportunity to analyze crime trends in real time. This emphasis on identifying hot spots and then deploying resources quickly to deal with these locations has proven to be an effective strategy.

A drop in the value of recycled metal, such as copper, makes stealing this commodity a less lucrative endeavor now. We saw a marked reduction in the theft of copper when its value dropped.

Crime is a social phenomenon that occurs for many reasons. It is the challenge of a free society to create a community where environmental conditions and the overall quality of life help prevent crime from occurring in the first place. The police also need to be ready to respond whenever a crime occurs. We view our responsibility to not only respond to and investigate crime after it occurs but to also help prevent crime from happening in the first place.

Working together, Lakeland had a pretty good year last year.



03/15 Michael Matlick

03/17 Neil Bare

03/28 Madge Cain

## Update on Red Light Cameras

- Asst Chief Bill LePere

We continue to move forward with the red light camera project for Lakeland. The cameras are expected to go live on June 1, 2009. Enforcement will begin at that point. An educational campaign to inform drivers of the cameras' locations is scheduled to kick off in April and May. We want drivers to know about the cameras in the hope that no violations will occur!

After much research into which intersections need the cameras and considering installation challenges at each location, cameras will be located at the following intersections:

- Northbound Socrum Loop Road @ E. Daughtery Road/Walt Loop Road
- Westbound E. Daughtery Road/Walt Loop Road @ Socrum Loop Road
- Southbound Socrum Loop Road @ E. Daughtery Road/Walt Loop Road
- Northbound Socrum Loop Road @ Old Combee Road
- Southbound Socrum Loop Road @ Old Combee Road
- Northbound N. Florida Avenue @ Memorial Blvd.
- Northbound S. Florida Avenue @ Beacon Road
- Northbound Cleveland Heights Blvd @ E. Edgewood Drive
- Southbound Cleveland Heights Blvd @ E. Edgewood Drive

We will keep posting updates as the project moves toward implementation with our goal still to save lives by reducing red light running in our community.

**SHOW YOUR PRIDE!**

**LCPAA T-SHIRTS NOW ON SALE ONLY \$5.00**



## THANK YOU

**TO ALL OF OUR MEMBERS WHO VOLUNTEERED THEIR TIME FOR THE KIWANIS PANCAKE FESTIVAL.**





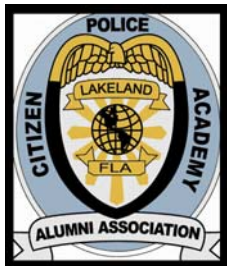
# Protect Yourself From Identity Theft

Identity Theft is America's fastest growing crime. Last year alone over 9.9 million people were victims of identity theft; a crime that cost them roughly 5 billion dollars! There are simple ways to minimize your risk.

- Protect your important personal information like your social security number. Do not give this information to anyone unless absolutely necessary.
- Shred financial records before throwing them away.
- Be alert for anyone calling you from your bank and trying to get your assistance in a bank investigation by asking for your personal information.
- Do not store your passwords or PIN numbers with your credit or debit cards. Commit passwords and PIN numbers to memory.
- Be suspicious of any e-mails from legitimate looking businesses that seek personal information. "Phishing" for information via e-mails is a rapidly growing trend in identity theft.



**Many thanks to David Waller**  
*of the FDLE who spoke at  
our February General Meeting  
about identity theft.*



Citizen Police Academy Alumni Association  
P.O. Box 1904  
Lakeland, FL 33802

**"Effective Crime Control is a Team Effort."**