









City Manager James R. O'Connor

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#### **City Council**

- Mayor Harry Howle
- Vice Mayor Lange Sykes
- Councilmember Laura Moss
- Councilmember Tony Young
- Councilmember Val Zudans

#### **Directory**

#### David E. Currey

Chief

The Vero Beach Police Department's 2017 Annual Report and Statement was designed and produced by the Professional Standards division.

#### **Editor**

Lt. Matt Monaco

**Assistant Editor** 

Ofc. Megan DeWitt

**Photographers** 

Sgt. D. Puscher

CSI Jennifer Lohman

CSI Robert Skoglund

#### **Communications Center**

**Emergency Dial 9-1-1** 

1055 20th Street, Vero Beach, Florida 32960

Non-Emergency (772) 978-4600

Office of the Chief of Police

1055 20th Street, Vero Beach, FL

(772) 978-4609

**Recruitment Division** 

(772) 978-4620

**Human Resources** 

1053 20th Place, Vero Beach, FL

(772) 978-4909

# VERO BEACH POLICE DEPARTMENT



**Annual Report** 

2017

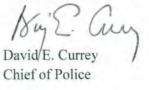
Dear Mr. O'Connor, Mayor Howle, City Council Members, and Citizens of Vero Beach

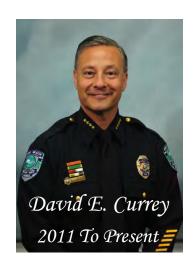
As Police Chief of our fine City I proudly lead the dedicated men and women of the Vero Beach Police Department. We are committed to providing a professional police service while engaging and partnering with our community. The following are a few notable occurrences from 2017:

- We introduced the first law enforcement E-Commerce Exchange Safe Zone in Indian River County. After making an online purchase we recommend safely completing your exchange/transaction at our police department. Come inside our lobby or park by our E-Commerce Safe Zone sign. Each location is monitored by a surveillance camera.
- A number of our officers participated in the "Beards for Babies" campaign. We allowed our officers to grow a professional beard as long as they donated to the March of Dimes. This was a fun, worthwhile event which led to allowing our officers to have a beard on a permanent basis.
- In March, St. Lucie County Sheriff's Deputy and Indian River County resident Milton Rosario became our first ever volunteer chaplain.
- Our VBPD App was launched in our continued efforts to communicate and share information with our community members.
- In June, Officers Richard Chimenti and Kyle Eder saved a man as he tried to jump off of the 17<sup>th</sup> Street Bridge.
- Officer Chris Vasquez and K-9 Asco were introduced as our second K-9 Team.
- In September, Hurricane Irma visited Vero Beach. Our city was well prepared and fortunately we only had to deal with some flooding, power outages, and debris removal. The men and women of VBPD worked long hard hours during this event in maintaining order and keeping our community safe.
- In October we were able to regain our second Motor Officer position. This position allows us to increase our traffic enforcement efforts throughout the city.
- During the month of October the University of Florida requested statewide law enforcement assistance to ensure the safety of their students, and faculty while a notable white nationalist spoke on campus. Our Critical Response Team responded to Gainesville, and together with other law enforcement agencies provided a safe and incident free environment.
- Violent crime offenses were reduced by 34.4%
- •In addition to RADKIDS we also presented our RAD Women program. These programs teach children and women how to defend themselves and to increase their confidence level.

We remain committed to our residents, business owners, and visitors!

Respectfully submitted,





### **COMMAND STAFF**









Cpl. Brian Kerensky



**Cpl. Darrell Rivers** 



Cpl. Sean Toole

#### **SWORN OFFICERS**

#### Chief David Currey Captain Kevin Martin Lieutenant Daniel Cook Lieutenant Matthew Harrelson Lieutenant Jerry Karchefski Lieutenant Matthew Monaco Lieutenant John Pedersen Sergeant Frank Adamski Sergeant Chris Cox Sergeant Phil Huddy Sergeant William Offutt Sergeant David Puscher Sergeant Christopher Roberts Corporal Brian Kerensky Corporal Oscar Dominguez Corporal Darrell Rivers Corporal Sean Toole Detective Kennis "Chip" Brock Detective Dennis Deacetis Detective David Farquharson Detective Michael Gasbarrini Detective Brian Hesse Detective Bradley Kmetz Detective Mark Vandhuynslager Officer Eric Brashears Officer Matthew Brooks Officer Daniel Brumley Officer Anna Carden Officer Richard Chimenti Officer Sean Crowley Officer Jose Delgado Officer Megan Dewitt Officer Kyle Eder Officer Lee Evans Officer Giovanny Fonseca Officer Brian Green Officer Chayse Hatfield Officer Ashley Jenkins Officer Jason Jones Officer Kyle Kuehn Officer Russell Lachowicz Officer Charles McFarland Officer Casey Myers Officer Greg Plumb Officer Robert Skoglund Officer Randall Slattery Officer Eduardo Somoza Officer Chris Vasquez

Officer Thomas Waters Officer Jeremiah Willis Officer Robert Young

#### **CIVILIAN STAFF**

#### Communications Division

Communications Supervisor IV: Kari Ryan

Master Communications Officer II: Cindy Carter

Senior Communications Officer II: David Schrier

Senior Communications Officer II: John Dube

Communication Officer II: Rhianna Fincher

Communications Officer I: Amanda Abers

Communications Officer I: Mary Wolf

Call Taker II: Ashley Powers

Call Taker II: Alison Stewart

#### Parking Enforcement

John Makolin

#### **Animal Control**

Scott Lee

#### Fiscal Specialist

Terri Barcelona

#### **Records Division**

Helen Bolling Jennifer McKinnon Rosa Ana Lake

#### **Information Systems**

Jon White

#### Crime Scene Unit

CSI Jennifer Lohman CSI Robert Skoglund

Evidence Tech. Terri Dillon

#### Secretarial Staff

Julie Poteat, Sr. Executive Sec.



#### PATROL DIVISION

The Patrol Division is commanded by the Captain and is the largest division in the police department. It consists of the uniform patrol division and traffic/motor, K-9, CRT, animal control, and parking enforcement units. Members of the Division are also responsible for field training operations.

A staff of two lieutenants and four sergeants provides additional command and leadership duties within the division. Staff members ensure personnel levels are maintained, daily operations are conducted, and special projects are completed. Projects include, but are not limited to directed patrols in response to specific crime problems, general patrols for overall crime deterrence, traffic watches for motor vehicle safety, and foot patrols for increased contact with the public.

#### TRAFFIC AND MOTORCYCLE UNIT

The mission of the Vero Beach Police Department Traffic Unit is to provide a safe, efficient environment for travel on the streets within the city limits of Vero Beach by reducing accidents and maintaining as efficient traffic flow as possible. The Traffic Unit has demonstrated an earnest commitment to the enforcement of laws relating to driving under the influence, vehicle seatbelt and child restraint usage, and other safety-related matters.

The Traffic Unit consists of one Traffic Officer, one Motor Officer, and one Parking Enforcement Officer. Traffic Unit focuses 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 the schools and at critical intersections.

The Traffic Unit also seeks to educate the public on traffic laws through various avenues such as: "Click it or "Ticket" Campaign, "Aggressive Driving" Campaign, "Over the Limit, Under Arrest" D.U.I. Campaign, Social Media, and usage of the radar equipped speed trailer and electronic message board.

In 2017, VBPD officers investigated 878 crashes, 180 of which were injury related. One fatal crash occurred during the year. In addition, 3 pedestrians and 9 bicyclists were injured in crashes. Distracted driving was noted as a key factor in 58 crashes. Officers issued 542 speeding citations, 174 seat belt citations, 221 careless driving citations, 94 red light citations.

#### **UNIFORM PATROL**

The Uniform Patrol Division contains four patrol shifts that work in twelve-hour increments. The sergeant and corporal supervise each shift. Members of the uniform division patrol geographic zones to prevent and detect crime and respond to, or initiate calls for service. They conduct preliminary and follow up investigations, enforce traffic laws, and make arrests as necessary to protect and serve the citizens of this community.

In 2017, the Uniform Patrol Division answered 46,731 calls for service, and is credited for making 676 misdemeanor arrests, 206 felony arrests and 88 DUI arrests.



#### INVESTIGATIONS

The Detective Division is staffed by a Lieutenant, four general crimes Detectives, one financial crimes Detective, and two narcotics-vice crimes Detectives. Reports generated by the Patrol Division are forwarded to the Detective Division and assigned the following day to ensure cases are handled according to state statute and VBPD policy. Once the cases are assigned for follow-up, detectives pursue all leads to increase the likelihood of bringing each case to a successful conclusion. This division reports directly to the Captain.

In March of 2017, officers responded to 848 19th Street in reference to a physical disturbance. Officers located an adult male whom had been stabbed in the back. A suspect was also detained. When interviewed by Detectives, the suspect admitted to stabbing the victim with a large hunting knife. The suspect was arrested and charged with aggravated battery with a deadly weapon.

In April of 2017, officers responded to 3755 A1A in reference to three separate incidents of vandalism to multiple stained glass church windows; the damage was estimated at \$15,000.00. No suspects were observed during the offenses and a neighborhood canvasses yielded negative results. Through investigative means, Detectives identified a potential suspect. When confronted by Detectives, the juvenile suspect admitted to causing all of the damage. The suspect was charged with felony criminal mischief to a church.

In May of 2017, officers responded to 1436 Old Dixie Highway in reference to a "shots fired" call. Responding officers learned that two suspects had been involved in a physical disturbance, pointed a firearm at a victim, and had fired five shots into the air before fleeing in a vehicle. A vehicle matching the suspect vehicle description was stopped a short time later. Two firearms were observed in "plain view" inside the vehicle. The two suspects were identified and arrested. Detectives obtained a search warrant for the suspect's vehicle and seized two firearms and other evidence. Detectives charged one suspect with battery. The second suspect was charged with aggravated assault with a deadly weapon, possession of cocaine, discharging a firearm in public, and battery.

In November of 2017, officers responded to 2 Royal Palm Pointe in reference to a theft. An employee of the City of Vero Beach Recreation Department reported that an unknown suspect had stolen approximately 100 bronze fountain grates from Royal Palm Pointe. Upon researching recent records for scrap metal recyclers, Detectives learned that one suspect had "scraped" multiple pieces of bronze. Detectives responded to three scrap metal recycling businesses in Saint Lucie County and Indian River County. A total of 127 bronze grates bearing the stamps and markings of the stolen fountain grates were identified as COVB property. The suspect was arrested and charged with grand theft in addition to multiple counts of dealing in stolen property and multiple counts of providing false information to a scrap metal/recycle dealer.

In December of 2017, due to the increasing number of opiate related overdoses in Vero Beach, the Detective Division applied for a grant to obtain one hundred and twenty (120) free doses of Narcan (Evzio) from a Virginia based pharmaceutical company. Once the Evzio grant was approved, Detectives wrote a Narcan policy which was implemented. All VBPD sworn officers were trained in the use of the Evzio auto injector; the possession and administering of an opioid antagonist (Evzio) by law enforcement personnel during an opioid emergency is authorized by Florida law.



#### CRIME SCENE UNIT

The Crime Scene Unit currently consists of one Sergeant, two investigators, and one evidence custodian. The responsibilities of the Crime Scene Unit include the processing of crime scenes as well as the detection, collection, preservation, packaging, and transportation of evidence.

This is accomplished, in part, by the examination of a scene for latent fingerprints, and performing forensic photography by means of DSLR cameras and other digital systems. The investigators must prepare comprehensive written reports for each scene. They testify as expert witnesses in court and serve as the evidence custodians for the department. In each arrest made by the department, they prepare and submit current arrest fingerprint cards for the adults and juveniles, respectively.

When called out to assist at a crime scene, their duties may include crime scene survey, documentation and diagramming, crime scene photography, collection and preservation of evidence, detection, recovery and examination of footwear and tire wear impression evidence, use of alternate light sources, composite sketching and latent print detection and development using various chemical and powder techniques.

The evidence custodian has a primary responsibility for receiving, logging, storing, retrieving and disposing of property and other materials collected as evidence in police investigations. The custodian assures proper packaging of evidence; preserving its integrity. Subpoenas are frequently served on this position to bring evidence to court and to testify as needed. They transport evidence to the Indian River Regional Crime laboratory and FDLE laboratory for analysis and pick up evidence after analysis is completed. Additionally, the custodian responds to inquiries from victims, suspects and attorneys regarding personal property taken in by our agency. They also arrange for the auction of abandoned or confiscated bicycles and unclaimed property after a given period of time. As needed, confiscated drugs and contraband are destroyed in accordance with Florida State Statutes.

It is the responsibility of the Sergeant to ensure all procedural protocols, both State and agency mandated, are met. The Sergeant also acts as an investigator, performing on-call rotation with the unit. Further, he must be the evidence custodian's dual control partner in the event of the custodian's absence.

The Crime Scene Unit is also responsible for the retrieval of stored electronic evidence in certain patrol cars where digital based video systems are mounted to a fixed hard drive in the car itself. These case files must be downloaded in a forensically sound method and turned over to the evidence custodian until the respective case's disposition. Further, these digital case files must be reproduced for attorney hearings and court presentations.



In 2017, the Crime Scene Unit investigated a total of 786 separate cases for processing in one form or another. Some of these cases included: five sexual batteries, thirteen deceased persons, six traffic crashes and related fatality, two robberies, four recovered stolen vehicles, forty burglaries (7-auto, and 33 business / residential), two robberies, one home invasion, five weapons related crimes, four search warrants and six other criminal complaints. Over 1,783 items were submitted as evidence, and 9,941 evidence transactions were completed during the year. Also, more than 289 fingerprints were performed for the public on a front lobby walk-in basis for purposes ranging from job applications to child care workers. In routine processing of incoming prisoners and case suspects, over 1000 individual latent fingerprints were classified and coded into our agency's databases.

#### **CRITICAL RESPONSE TEAM**

The Critical Response Team (C.R.T.) currently consists of nine members who receive advanced training in the use of special weapons and tactics. New members must complete an approved S.W.A.T. Basic Operators Course. C.R.T. members receive additional training in defensive tactics, firearms proficiency, less-lethal weapons, rappelling, hostage rescue, and building searches. The C.R.T. can be activated to respond to barricaded suspects, hostage situations, threatened suicide incidents, active shooters in buildings, sniper incidents, special investigations, service of warrants, and protection of V.I.P.'s.

#### RECRUITMENT

The recruiting division routinely interacts with police academies, on-line employment services, state and local law enforcement agencies, state testing sites and colleges both locally and throughout the state, to obtain the best possible qualified applicants. All applicants that qualify and meet our hiring pre-requisites are required to successfully pass a five-member oral review board, polygraph, physical and psychological assessment as well as a thorough and meticulous background investigation. The Vero Beach Police Department hires Florida State certified police officers. From January through December 2017, 8 individuals were hired to fill patrol officer vacancies. This supports the departments' roster of 52 sworn officers.





#### K-9 UNIT

The Vero Beach Police Department Canine Program has been in existence since 1989. The Canine Unit is comprised of two Canine Teams. The canines are German Shepherds imported from Europe. Prior to working as a K-9 team the canine and handler must complete an extensive school lasting 10-12 weeks. In school the team learns to work together and trust each other. Both must past several tests to become certified and able to work in the community. The K-9 teams train weekly and obtain State certification annually. The K9 teams may also certify at least once a year regionally and nationally in the areas of Patrol and Detector Dog for the United States Police Canine Association.

The Canine 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 addition to their normal duties the Canine Unit performs demonstrations for schools and community groups around the county.

#### **TRAINING**

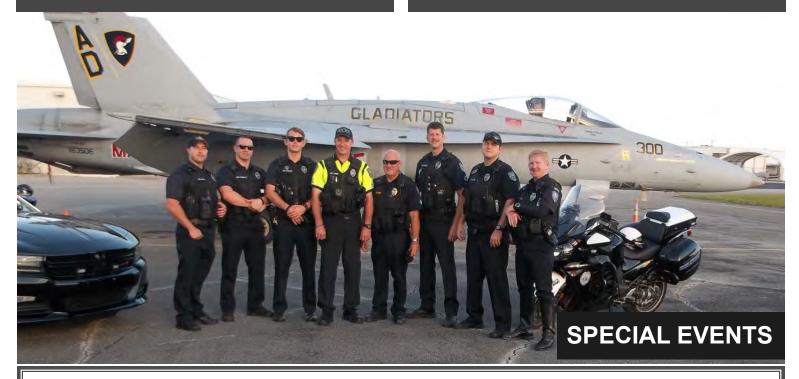
The training division establishes regular in-service training to all sworn officers based on the training requirements and standards of the Florida Department of Law Enforcement (F.D.L.E.). Classes include, active shooter, firearms, blood borne pathogens, vehicle operations, discriminatory pro-filing, handling the mentally ill and tactical patrol procedures to name a few. All courses of instruction range from high liability to general criminal justice issues, as well as current topics instructed by other agencies and criminal justice professionals. This division also assists department personnel with locating, registering, and attending career development, incentive and college degree courses. The majority of our officers are in the process of, or have completed their Associate, Bachelor and/or Masters Degree programs.

Some Vero Beach police officer's serve as instructors at Indian River State College (I.R.S.C.) Criminal Justice Center; instructing both Basic Recruit classes, advanced and career development courses and academic classes for degree seeking students.

#### FIELD TRAINING PROGRAM

Due to the complexities of modern policing, when the Vero Beach Police Department hires a new sworn officer after a very selective hiring process; he or she is assigned to a Corporal or Senior Officer for several months of on the job training. Field Training Officers must go through specialized training and a selection process.

The primary responsibility of a Field Training Officer (FTO) is to make every effort to ensure the new officer completes the FTO program and is qualified to work as a solo police officer. The FTO is also responsible for seeing that the new officer has the opportunity to be trained in all areas required for succeeding as a police officer. Areas of training include police department and patrol procedures, traffic stops, report writing, court procedures, and traffic crash investigations.



From January through December 2017, police officers worked a total of over 5,000 hours of pre-arranged overtime. Throughout the calendar year the department handled numerous special events to include sporting, dignitary protection, airport flight security, cultural, seasonal and private overtime assignments, such as the annual Christmas and St. Patrick's Day Parades, July 4<sup>th</sup> Celebration, Sunset Saturday and Downtown Friday Street Parties and musical events; utilizing the officers' training and expertise to provide a fun, safe environment.

#### **Social Media**

The Vero Beach Police Department regularly transmits crime prevention information, crime alerts and police department related information via social media.

The following social media sites are utilized by the Vero Beach Police Department: Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Media-Alert, and VBPD website www.vbpd.org.

In addition, the Vero Beach Police Department maintains an e-mail list of city residents involved in the Neighborhood Watch program and transmits regular Neighborhood Crime Alerts to the residents participating in the program.

#### **COMMUNITY SERVICES DIVISION**

The Community Services Division provides training in home security, personal safety, active shooter training, bank robbery awareness, scams, con games, and other crime prevention and awareness topics. This endeavor is furthered by a partnership with service clubs, Neighborhood Watch groups, and special presentations for senior citizens, schools, and churches. Community Services represents the department in many other organizations in the community, to include the Boys and Girls Club of Indian River County, United Way of Indian River County, Rotary Club, and the Samaritan Center.

The Community Services Division, in conjunction with Code Enforcement, is responsible for the enforcement of violations of the City Code of Ordinances. Many of the code enforcement violations have a direct correlation with crime prevention.



#### R.A.D. Systems

R.A.D. Systems stands for Rape Aggression Defense System. R.A.D. Systems is not associated with R.A.D. Kids.

R.A.D. Systems is a program of realistic self-defense tactics and techniques for women. The R.A.D. Systems program is a comprehensive, women only course that begins with awareness, prevention, risk reduction and risk avoidance, while progressing on to the basics of hands-on defense training.

R.A.D. Systems is a nationally taught program with over 7000 certified instructors. Since the program began in 1989 over 300,000 women have been trained.

R.A.D. Systems is the only existing program of its kind that is free and offers a lifetime return and practice policy.

The Vero Beach Police Department hosts two R.A.D. Systems classes per year. Each class lasts for five days, two hours each day.

#### radKIDS Program

radKIDS is a Personal Empowerment and Safety Education Program that provides children with hope, options, and practical skills to RECOGNIZE, AVOID, and, if necessary, ESCAPE violence and danger.

Unlike many programs that show videos or tell children what to do, radKIDS actually shares plans and strategies, while practicing realistic physical skills to escape violence. Through radKIDS training, children become empowered, learning to replace the fear, confusion, and panic of dangerous situations with confidence, personal safety skills and self-esteem. Through this hands-on educational program the lives of children are being saved all over the nation and now, the world. In the U.S. over 75,000 children between the ages of 5 to 12 years old have been empowered through this program.

The Vero Beach Police Department hosts radKIDS classes every year during spring and summer breaks. Each class runs Monday through Friday for 90 to 120 minutes each day, depending on the age group. The classes are, and always will be, offered free of charge.

#### D.A.R.E.

The Vero Beach Police Department's Drug Abuse Resistance Education (D.A.R.E.) program continues to educate the children of Vero Beach about the effects of tobacco, alcohol, other drugs, and violence. Over 200 fifth graders in three elementary schools along with 28 seventh graders from St. Helen's middle school participate in the ten week D.A.R.E. curriculum. D.A.R.E. is a police officer led series of classroom lessons that teach children how to make good choices, including resisting peer pressure and living productive drug and violence free lives. At the culmination of the ten-week program students graduate from the D.A.R.E. program with a graduation ceremony and a pledge to remain drug, alcohol, and violence free.



#### **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.

The Vero Beach Police Department has been accredited by the Commission for Florida Law Enforcement Accreditation (CFA) since February of 2002. The initial accreditation is valid for three years and we have completed the reaccreditation process in 2005, 2008, 2011, and 2014., and 2017

#### NATIONAL NIGHT OUT



Every year on the first Tuesday of October the Vero Beach Police Department and the Indian River County Sheriff's Department join together to host the annual National Night Out event. However, in 2017 the event had to be rescheduled to November 1st, due to Hurricane Matthew. Despite the date change, and the new location - the beautiful Ocean Drive - the event drew its biggest crowd to date and was deemed most successful.



The event is held to increase awareness about police programs in the community, such as drug abuse prevention, neighborhood watch programs and other anti-crime efforts. The event also allows residents to mingle with law enforcement personnel and examine a large amount of law enforcement equipment static displays. Free hotdogs, chips, and drinks are provided courtesy of our sponsors.





#### COMMUNICATIONS CENTER

The Communications Section is under the direction of the Professional Standards Lieutenant. The dispatch center serves as the focal point for information coordination between various operational units of police department and citizens. One supervisor and nine communications officers provide 24-hour dispatch coverage for the City of Vero Beach. Dispatchers are responsible for answering incoming telephone calls, dispatching police units where needed, receiving, relaying, and recording information to and from field units and contacting other resources which may be needed to provide service. Vero Beach operates one of three enhanced 9-1-1 communications facilities within Indian River County. In 2017, the center received 46,731 calls for service complaints.

## Records Management and Purchasing

The Records Management section consists of an Administrative Assistant and a Clerical Specialist. Traffic citations, crime reports, and crash investigations are among the many items archived and processed by the records section personnel. These documents are correlated and disseminated to various agencies and divisions throughout the department, county, state, and country.

The Vero Beach Police Department's Fiscal Specialist is responsible for all accounts payable and for obtaining and distributing equipment and supplies.



#### **Information Technology**

The Information Technology section consists of a Systems Administrator. The department's dispatch and records management are computerized, which requires specific skills and certifications from the State to be able to handle the private data that flows through a Law Enforcement Agency. In addition to the data, keeping all of the officers connected while on the road is another large responsibility. Systems Administrator addresses everyday computer issues that the 76-person department encounters 24/7. Information Technology sections is also responsible for maintaining the department's security in regards to online social media presence.

#### **Promotions**



Det. Brian Kerensky was promoted to Corporal Aug. 20, 2017

# Employees of the Quarter 2017

Jan-Mar Tom Ramsey & Melody Sanderson

Apr-June Rhianna Fincher

July-Sept Helen Bolling

Oct-Dec Jennifer Kelly

## Officers of the Quarter 2017

Jan-Mar Ofc. Ryan Eggers

Apr-June Ofc. Casey Meyers

July-Sept Ofc. Greg Plumb

Oct-Dec Ofc. Richard Chimenti

#### Employee of the Year 2017



# Officer of the Year 2017 POLICE POLICE POLICE PROBLEM POLICE

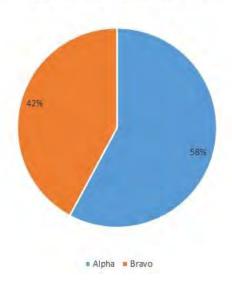
Ofc. Richard Chimenti

#### **STATISTICS**

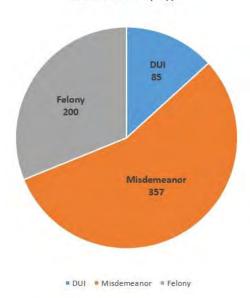




2017 Calls for Service by Shift



2017 Arrests by Type



#### **STATISTICS**



