

FWC Division of Law Enforcement



Weekly Report ***July 8 through July 14, 2016***

This report represents some events the FWC handled over the past week; however, it does not include all actions taken by the Division of Law Enforcement.

Patrol, Protect, Preserve

NORTHWEST REGION

CASES

BAY COUNTY

Officers Basford and Wicker were patrolling St. Andrews Bay and stopped a vessel to conduct a resource inspection. When the officers asked the boat captain if they had caught any fish, he replied, "No." There were five other people on the vessel and one of the other five subjects held up his fingers indicating that they had caught two fish. Upon inspection of the vessel's fish box, the officers found two short king mackerels. The officers' investigation revealed that this was actually a chartered fishing trip and the other five subjects were paying customers. The vessel captain did not have a charter license and was issued a citation for no charter fishing license and a notice to appear for possession of undersized king mackerel.

CALHOUN COUNTY

The Calhoun County Sheriff's Department requested assistance from Officer Baber in apprehending a suspect who had exposed himself to swimmers along the Chipola River. When deputies arrived, the suspect jumped into the river and swam away. Officer Baber arrived with his patrol vessel, located the suspect and took him into custody. The suspect was charged with indecent exposure and resisting arrest without violence.

ESCAMBIA COUNTY

Officers Manning and Allgood arrested a subject on a warrant for failure to appear in court on a recent fisheries case. Earlier this summer, Officer Allgood arrested the subject for interfering with an FWC officer. The individual threw red snapper out of the boat when Officer Allgood attempted to check his catch. This was the second time the individual was charged with the same violation this year.

Lieutenant Hahr was working enhanced patrol in the Perdido River Wildlife Management Area (WMA) when he observed a truck drive off of the road and enter a muddy area. The driver intentionally spun the vehicle's tires and created deep ruts in the mud. The driver was charged with damaging state lands with a motor vehicle.

JACKSON COUNTY

Officers Guy and Baber assisted the Jackson County Sheriff's Department in apprehending three suspects who were robbing tubers at gunpoint along the Chipola River and Spring Creek. The suspects were in a vessel and robbed five different victims. The three suspects were charged with aggravated assault, grand theft and numerous other charges.

Lieutenant Allen and Officers Burkhead and Forehand assisted the Jackson County Sheriff's Department with a detail along Spring Creek targeting drug and alcohol violations. Numerous citations and arrests were made related to drug and alcohol violations.

OKALOOSA COUNTY

Officers Bartlett and Molnar conducted a vessel stop after observing an occupant throw a beer can into the water. When they made contact, the operator showed signs of impairment and admitted to consuming alcohol throughout the day. After field sobriety tasks were completed, Officer Bartlett arrested the subject for BUI. The subject was transported to the U. S. Coast Guard Station (USCG) where he refused to provide a breath sample. The subject was booked into the Okaloosa County Jail and charged with BUI and refusal to submit.

Officer Jarvis conducted a fisheries inspection at Rocky Bayou State Park Boat Ramp. After the inspection, a total of 23 king mackerel fillets were located in the subject's vessel. The captain was issued a criminal citation for failure to land king mackerel in whole condition.

SANTA ROSA COUNTY

Officer Lewis was on patrol in the Blackwater River WMA at a primitive campsite when he observed 11 juveniles on a sandbar. He approached the group and could smell cannabis amongst the group. He observed that one of the subjects in the group appeared to have recently smoked cannabis. The subject admitted to smoking cannabis and removed a glass smoking pipe containing cannabis residue and a clear plastic baggy containing cannabis. Officer Lewis cited the juvenile with possession of cannabis not more than 20 grams and possession of drug paraphernalia.

WALTON COUNTY

Officers Bartlett, Basford and Molnar responded to a single vessel boating accident with injuries on the Choctawhatchee River near Live Oak Landing. Upon arrival, Officer Bartlett located the vessel upside down in the bushes and out of the water. The operator had a broken finger and bruising to her face. The only other passenger was uninjured. It was determined the vessel struck the river bank at a high rate of speed and rolled upside down. Throughout the vessel accident investigation, the operator was displaying signs of impairment. Officer Molnar conducted a BUI investigation. Once field sobriety tasks were completed, Officer Molnar arrested the subject for BUI. The subject was transported to the Walton County Jail where she provided a breath sample of .102 and .106 Breath Alcohol Content (BrAC).

DIRECTED CONSERVATION PATROLS

ESCAMBIA COUNTY

Officers Manning and Allgood patrolled federal waters this week. Together they documented 21 federal violations. Some of the cases included possession of red snapper and triggerfish during closed season, failure to land king mackerel in whole condition, and possession of undersized and over-the-bag limit of vermilion snapper.

GULF COUNTY

Lieutenant Castaneda and Officers M. Webb and H. Webb patrolled federal waters this week. They checked 45 vessels and 130 users. Six resource citations and four warnings were issued for illegal possession of red snapper, greater amberjack and gray triggerfish.

OKALOOSA COUNTY

Lieutenant Hollinhead, Officers Brooks, Tison, White, H. Rockwell, and Reserve Officer Hahr worked a boat ramp detail at Joe's Bayou, Liza Jackson Park, and Hog Town Bayou. The emphasis of the detail was on enforcement of marine fishery rules and regulations and boating safety. The officers inspected 103 vessels for compliance and contacted 318 users. Numerous violations were documented for vessel registration, fish size limits, and boating safety equipment.

COMMUNITY ORIENTED POLICING

CALHOUN COUNTY

Officer Baber spoke to a group of students at Kid's Kingdom in Blountstown. He displayed an alligator during the presentation. Approximately 50 students and faculty were in attendance.

ESCAMBIA COUNTY

Officer Manning attended the American Water Company Safety Day. He set up a booth and discussed boating safety with 55 employees.

JACKSON COUNTY

Officer Burkhead attended a public outreach event at Wal-Mart in Marianna with the Jackson County Sheriff's Office and Jackson County Fire Department. Officer Burkhead provided literature and answered questions from the public.

NORTH CENTRAL REGION

CASES

ALACHUA COUNTY

Officer Schulz was given a complaint from the Wildlife Alert Hotline in reference to publicly posted video of a man catching a hawk and caging it. Officer Schulz reviewed the video and identified the subject in the video along with the address to where he lived. Officers Schulz and Willis found the hawk still caged in the subject's back yard and identified it as a red-shouldered hawk. After making contact with the subject, charges were filed for taking/possession of the red-shouldered hawk protected under the Federal Migratory Bird Treaty Act. The hawk was seized by the officers and released to the wild without injury.

CITRUS COUNTY

While conducting boating safety inspections at Pirates Cove in Ozello, Investigator Thomason was approached by a concerned citizen informing him of a vehicle accident that had just occurred close by. Investigator Thomason drove to the scene of the accident where he found a subject still seated in the driver's seat of the wrecked car. A strong odor of an alcoholic beverage emanated from the driver. After the driver of the vehicle insisted that he was not injured, he submitted to several field sobriety tasks. After failing a few of the tasks, the driver stated that he was under the influence of alcohol. At that time, Investigator Thomason concluded the tasks and placed the driver under arrest for driving under the influence (DUI).

While on vessel patrol, Investigator Thomason observed a vessel underway with two five-gallon buckets containing scallops on the vessel's bow. After a resource inspection on the vessel, the operator of the vessel was found to be over the bag limit of scallops. Investigator Thomason issued the operator of the vessel a notice to appear for over the bag limit of scallops and returned nine gallons of scallops back to the waters of the state.

COLUMBIA COUNTY

Officer Johnston received information from a Columbia County deputy regarding a "shots fired" call the deputy responded to involving possible poaching. The responding deputy was told by the suspect that he fired his rifle a couple of times to get his dogs to quit barking. The deputy relayed the information to Officer Johnston, including the suspect's suspicious response. A subsequent interview with the suspect by Officer Johnston revealed a doe deer was killed at night. The suspect allowed his 9-year-old son to go outside at night unsupervised with a loaded .22 rifle. The father heard two shots and was told by his son that he just shot a deer. The father dumped the deer in whole condition on the side of a public road in Lake City. No meat was harvested from the deer. Officer Johnston will be filing charges for principle in the first degree to taking deer during a closed season, knowingly allowing a minor to be unsupervised with a firearm, and wanton and willful waste of wildlife.

Officers McDonald and Yates were on patrol in Itchetucknee Springs State Park when they observed a vehicle with two occupants pull into a parking place near them. The passenger of the vehicle had what appeared to be a marijuana cigarette in his mouth. The officers made contact with both subjects. Officers located and seized 4 marijuana cigarettes and over 4 grams of loose cannabis. Each subject was issued a notice to appear for the violations.

DUVAL COUNTY

Lieutenant Arkin and Officer McGregor were dispatched to the Jacksonville Beach Fishing Pier in reference to a complaint of several subjects keeping undersized spotted sea trout. Lieutenant Arkin conducted a fisheries inspection on two subjects leaving the pier. They were in possession of a total of 14 spotted sea trout. One of the subjects also took 4 of the undersized spotted sea trout and tossed them in a trash can to avoid being charged. Both subjects were issued notices to appear by Lieutenant Arkin and Officer McGregor for possession of undersized spotted sea trout and over the bag limit for spotted sea trout. One of the subjects was also issued a written warning for interference with an FWC officer.

While on patrol, Lieutenant Arkin checked on a vehicle parked at the end of a dead-end street along the St. Johns River, a popular fishing spot for locals. The vehicle had an expired tag from November 2015. Lieutenant Arkin then noticed four subjects sleeping on a private dock that was gated with "no trespassing" signs. The four subjects were issued written warnings for trespass. One of the subjects was the owner of the van. This subject had a suspended Florida driver's license with habitual traffic-offender status. Lieutenant Arkin directed the owner of the van not to drive because of the driver license suspension. The subject stated that she was aware of the suspension and was waiting on a licensed driver. About an hour later, Lieutenant Arkin witnessed the van being driven by the driver with the suspended driver license. Lieutenant Arkin arrested the driver for driving while driver license suspended/revoked (habitual traffic offender status), which is a 3rd degree felony.

Officer Culbreath was investigating an alligator complaint when he discovered one of the possible suspects had an outstanding warrant issued by the Jacksonville Sheriff's Office for driving while license suspended or revoked. The subject was arrested in compliance with the warrant and transported to the Duval County Pre-Trial Detention Center. The alligator investigation is still ongoing, and possible additional charges pending.

LEVY COUNTY

Officer Schulz was on night patrol at the end of hunting season when a vehicle passed him with no trailer lights. Officer Schulz pulled over the vehicle for the traffic violation and looked in a cooler on the trailer finding deer meat with no tag or sex identification. The driver also told him that the meat was from an illegal buck and then changed his story to it being a legal buck. A sample was sent to the FWC forensics laboratory for

analysis. The FWC forensics laboratory later confirmed the deer killed was, in fact, a doe deer. Charges are being direct filed for possession of untagged meat without sex identification and for taking doe deer out of season.

TAYLOR COUNTY

While on patrol in Steinhatchee, Investigator McMillan noticed a vessel returning from a day of scalloping in the Gulf. Investigator McMillan recognized the vessel as one that had already met their daily bag limit of scallops. After he made contact with the vessel, he found them to be in possession of seven gallons of scallops. A notice to appear was issued for taking over the bag limit of scallops.

While on patrol in Steinhatchee, Investigator McMillan and Officer Wilcox noticed a vessel returning from a day of scalloping in the Gulf which had already met their bag limit of scallops earlier in the day. Investigator McMillan and Officer Wilcox made contact with the vessel and found them to be in possession of 20 gallons of scallops. A notice to appear was issued for taking over the bag limit of scallops.

While on patrol in Keaton Beach, Investigators McMillan and Sharp observed an individual come ashore by kayak from a day of scalloping in the Gulf. Both investigators observed the operator pass a large bag to another person who took the scallops to their vehicle. Investigator McMillan made contact with the person to inspect the catch and found seven gallons of scallops. A notice to appear was issued to the kayak operator for taking over the bag limit of scallops.

While on patrol in the area of Hagans Cove, Investigator McMillan noticed a vessel returning from a day of scalloping in the Gulf which had already met their bag limit of scallops earlier in the day. Investigator McMillan conducted a resource inspection and found them to be in possession of five gallons of scallops. A notice to appear was issued for taking over the bag limit of scallops.

COMMUNITY ORIENTED POLICING

SUWANNEE

Officer Mobley participated in the Century 21 Program held at the Suwannee Elementary School. Officer Mobley brought an American alligator and taught the kids about the alligator and the importance of not feeding wildlife. Officer Mobley also brought whitetail deer antlers and taught the kids about the whitetail deer and our role in managing them. There were approximately 65 kids in attendance.

Officer Mobley did a presentation for approximately 40 kids at a summer camp in Suwannee County. Officer Mobley brought an American alligator and taught the kids about alligators. He discussed boating safety, the importance of life jackets, FWC law enforcement and the role law enforcement plays within the FWC.

NORTHEAST REGION

CASES

OSCEOLA COUNTY

Officer Mendelson was on water patrol on East Lake Toho when he observed a boat leaving one of the boat ramp areas. The vessel did not display a vessel safety sticker and after activating his blue lights more than once to get the attention of the operator, Officer Mendelson conducted a vessel stop to complete a boating safety inspection. During the inspection, the operator showed signs of impairment. Officer Mendelson had the operator conduct field sobriety tasks and based upon the officer's observations, he determined that the operator's normal faculties were impaired. The operator of the vessel was placed under arrest for BUI. He was booked into the Osceola County Jail and charged with BUI and refusal to submit to a lawful breath test.

Lieutenant Trusley observed a car stuck in a ditch next to a piece of private property that is regularly used to illegally access Shingle Creek property. After making contact with the two subjects in the vehicle, they admitted to jumping the fence to get to the property. While in contact with the subjects, Lieutenant Trusley observed the distinct odor of burnt cannabis. The subsequent investigation revealed two containers with cannabis in each one, a glass pipe with burnt cannabis in it, and other paraphernalia. The subjects were both issued a notice to appear for the violations, and the cannabis and paraphernalia were seized and entered into evidence.

SEMINOLE COUNTY

While on ATV patrol in Little Big Econ State Forest, Officer Tavano observed some individuals swinging from a rope swing into the Econ River. Once the three individuals were up on shore, Officer Tavano could smell the odor of burnt cannabis coming from their location. One of the individuals was in possession of a large glass pipe and another had more than 20 grams of cannabis, a scale and a grinder. The individual with the glass pipe was issued a notice to appear for possession of paraphernalia and the other individual was booked into jail for felony possession of more than 20 grams of cannabis, possession of cannabis with intent to sell and paraphernalia.

SOUTHWEST REGION

CASES

LEE COUNTY

Officer Bell attended the Change of Command Ceremony at USCG Station, Fort Myers Beach, for the USCG Cutter *Diamondback*. For the last three years, USCG Cutter

Marlin has assisted FWC with enforcement of state and federal fisheries. The *Marlin* will be undergoing renovations, and the *Diamondback* will take her place.

PASCO COUNTY

Officer Williams was on water patrol in the area of Anclote Key Preserve State Park when he saw a vessel that was traveling towards the boat ramp. He stopped the vessel to conduct a boating safety inspection. During the stop, Officer Williams could see the tail of a large fish sticking out of a cooler where the operator was seated. Officer Williams inspected the cooler and found an oversized snook. The operator was cited for possession of the snook, and the fish was seized as evidence.

PINELLAS COUNTY

While on foot patrol at Blind Pass, Officer Bibeau observed three individuals cleaning fish at a nearby cleaning table. Officer Bibeau made contact with the individuals, and conducted a fisheries inspection. At the conclusion of the inspection, Officer Bibeau found the subjects to be in possession of 34 mangrove snapper. All three subjects admitted to catching more than the daily bag limit of five mangrove snapper. Officer Bibeau wrote the subjects' misdemeanor citations for being over the daily bag limit of mangrove snapper and warnings for possession of undersized mangrove snapper.

POLK COUNTY

Officer Tyer was on land patrol when she observed a vehicle pulling a trailer with more than 50 waste tires. The vehicle did not display a placard issued from the Department of Environmental Protection indicating it to be a permitted waste tire collector. Officer Tyer conducted a vehicle stop and determined the operator was transporting 67 waste tires without a permit. The operator was issued a notice to appear for failure to obtain the required permit.

Officer Tyer was on land patrol when she observed a vehicle parked in an area that has received several complaints for trespass. From a concealed location, she observed several subjects inside the fenced property. She made contact and asked the subjects if they knew they were trespassing. The subjects stated they did not know, while standing next to a "No Trespassing" sign. The subjects were issued appropriate citations for trespass on property other than structure or conveyance.

While on land patrol, Officer Young saw a woman and small child near the edge of a busy roadway. Fearing for their safety, he decided to make contact and conduct a welfare check. Before Officer Young could turn around, he witnessed a vehicle strike the child. Officer Young positioned his patrol vehicle to protect the child from further injury and quickly notified dispatch. When he got out of his vehicle to administer aid, the child's mother attacked him. Officer Young administered aid while protecting the child from oncoming traffic despite the woman's hostility. The woman continued to be combative, attacking other law enforcement officers as they arrived on scene. The child

was later airlifted to a local hospital for treatment. The woman was arrested and charged with several felonies including battery on law enforcement officers and negligent child abuse with great bodily harm.

RESCUES

LEE COUNTY

Officers Salem and Furbay responded to the Webb WMA to assist the Lee County Sheriff's Office in locating a suicidal man. Officer Salem recalled seeing the vehicle in the WMA earlier that day but had no interaction with him. When they arrived on scene, the Sheriff's Office negotiator was on the phone with the man and convinced him to drive out and meet them at the check station. The man drove out and was secured safely without incident or injury. A loaded pistol was recovered from the man's vehicle.

PASCO COUNTY

FWC Dispatch received a report of an individual at Anclote Key Preserve State Park's north sandbar that was injured by an outboard engine propeller. Officer Balfour responded by vessel to the sandbar, where multiple Good Samaritans were tending to the injured person. Officer Balfour received help from multiple individuals, and they used a makeshift stretcher to load the injured person onto the FWC vessel. After the person was loaded, Officer Balfour transported him to Anclote River Park Boat Ramp where emergency medical services (EMS) personnel were waiting. While the individual was in route to the hospital, Officer Balfour returned to the sandbar to conduct an investigation. Officer Cocke responded to the hospital to check on the status of the injured person, and to obtain a statement. Officer Cocke was waiting at the hospital when the vessel operator and other witnesses arrived. He obtained information from the persons involved, which will assist with the completion of the boating accident report.

MAJOR WILDLIFE ASSISTANCE

HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY

Officer Phillippi responded to a call that someone was in possession of baby alligators. Upon inspection on the residence, Officer Phillippi found ten baby alligators in the backyard. After further investigation, one of the occupants of the residence admitted to collecting the alligators. He was cited criminally for possession of alligators and will have to appear in court. The alligators were released alive.

LEE COUNTY

Lieutenant Frantz and Officers Salem, Morrison and Norris responded to an injured manatee call. The officers coordinated with local biologists and gathered the appropriate equipment in order to attempt a rescue. However, rescuing the mammal turned into

quite the task. After several hours, the team was able to successfully capture and rescue the manatee which was transported for treatment.

DIRECTED CONSERVATION PATROLS

LEE COUNTY

During a panther zone enforcement, Officer Price performed 7 vehicle stops, issued 4 traffic citations and 3 written warnings. The highest speed was 102 in the 45-MPH zone. The female driving the car had two small children in the back seat. When asked why she was driving so fast, the woman said she just wanted to get home. A mandatory court date was issued for the violation.

Over a three-day period, Officers Wilkenson and Collazo participated in a targeted enforcement off the Daniels Parkway Panther Zone. Contact was made with 55 people; 20 citations, and 30 warnings were issued for violations of speed, including a 90 MPH in a 45 MPH zone at night, racing on the highway and illegal tint. Officers Wilkenson and Collazo also targeted the Corkscrew Road Panther Zone. Contact was made with 15 people; 3 citations and 4 warnings were written.

SOUTH A REGION

CASES

BROWARD COUNTY

Officers Matthews, Gamage, Brock, Delatorre, Coker and Lieutenant Laubenberger were dispatched late at night to Mizell /Johnson State Park in reference to an individual who was possibly suicidal. The FWC Officers teamed up with Hollywood Police Officers at the park and started searching for the individual. During the search of the park, the Hollywood Police Department was able to locate the individual at his home.

While patrolling in the area of Lauderdale-By-The-Sea, Officer Strader observed two subjects beach diving. Once they exited the water, Officer Strader conducted a marine fisheries inspection. Upon inspecting their harvest, he observed two live queen conch which are prohibited from harvest. Both queen conch were returned to the water alive and the subject was issued a misdemeanor citation for possession of queen conch.

Officers Vacin and Strader were patrolling the area of Dania Beach Pier where they encountered a subject who had been spearfishing walking quickly through the parking area. Officer Vacin made contact with the individual and upon conducting a marine fisheries inspection, the subject was found to be in possession of an illegally harvested, out-of-season snook. The subject was issued two misdemeanor citations for out-of-season snook and the illegal method of harvest of a snook via spearfishing.

MARTIN COUNTY

Officer Willems was on patrol at Allapattah Flats WMA when he observed a vehicle that was driving erratically and could not maintain its lane. A traffic stop was conducted and the operator displayed signs of impairment. The operator failed all field sobriety tasks and was placed under arrest. The operator was then searched and found to have a bag of marijuana in his pocket. The vehicle was searched and an open, partially full can of beer was found next to the driver seat. A metal marijuana pipe was also found in the vehicle. A records check showed that the operator had three previous DUI convictions. The operator's vehicle was towed and the operator was transported and booked into the Martin County Jail. The operator was charged with felony DUI (4th DUI), refusal to give a breath sample(second refusal), possession of under 20 grams of cannabis, possession of drug paraphernalia, open container in a moving vehicle, and failure to maintain lane.

Officer Willems was on patrol at Dupuis WMA when he discovered an illegal campsite at one of the picnic areas. There was a tent set up approximately six feet away from a sign that states "camping is prohibited." There also was an unattended campfire with fish being cooked on it. There was a cabbage palm next to the tent that had been chopped up, and pieces had been used to skewer the fish in the fire. Since the campsite was vacant, Officer Willems positioned his patrol truck to observe the site and wait on the camper. About 15 minutes later a vehicle pulled up to the campsite and Officer Willems made contact with the driver who admitted to camping at the site the night before. It was explained to him that he could not camp here, campfires were not permitted, and the cutting/destruction of natural resources within a WMA is illegal. When Officer Willems asked about the fish, the individual stated that he had caught it, but could not produce a fishing license. The individual was issued a citation for illegal camping, and will have to go to court to resolve it. He was also issued four written warnings for illegal fire, cutting/destruction of natural resources in a WMA, no freshwater fishing license and expired vehicle tag.

Officers Carroll and Koch were conducting water patrol at Sandsprit Park Boat Ramp in Stuart. The officers witnessed a vessel in the Manatee Pocket and it navigated towards the ramp. The officers witnessed the vessel had incorrect navigational lights. The officers identified the operator and made contact with the vessel occupants at the boat ramp. While making contact, the six individuals on board the vessel were hostile and uncooperative. Officer Carroll conducted field alcohol tasks on the operator while Officer Koch controlled the other subjects. Captain Schaeffer arrived on scene for backup, and assisted controlling the subjects. Officer Carroll arrested the operator for BUI and issued him a citation for not displaying the required navigational lights. Officer Koch operated the intoxilizer, which revealed the subject had a 0.131 breath alcohol level.

PALM BEACH COUNTY

Officer Gouveia received information that individuals had entered private property where poaching has been taking place. Officer Church also arrived on scene and they positioned themselves across the street in a wooded area, where they ended up finding

a truck parked that belonged to the suspects. Approximately 2 hours later, by the use of night-vision goggles, Officer Gouveia witnessed 5 individuals and 3 dogs climbing over the locked gate and exiting the fenced property. These individuals crossed the street and came into the wooded property where the officers were concealed. The subjects admitted they didn't have permission to be on the property and they were issued citations for trespassing.

Officers Matthews, Gamage and Lieutenant Laubenberger were on late-night patrol in the Boca Raton area. They conducted marine fisheries inspections on individuals near the Boca Inlet Bridge. One individual was cited for not having a fishing license and another individual was given a citation for possession of over the bag limit of gray snapper. The individual possessed a total of nine gray snapper. One gray snapper was returned alive to the water and 3 dead gray snapper were seized as evidence.

Officers Cobo and Morrow conducted a quality control and resource inspection of a restaurant in central Palm Beach County. Upon inspecting the onsite seafood and invoices, the officers realized there was seafood that was not accounted for with a purchase invoice. After questioning the business owner, it was determined that he had purchased the seafood from an unlicensed seller and had no documentation for the sale. In addition, the restaurant had signs which read, "Today's Local Catch" and listed available seafood; however, the seafood which was advertised was found to be imported seafood. The business owner was issued a misdemeanor citation for purchasing seafood from an unlicensed dealer, a warning for misleading the public, and a warning for transporting seafood without an invoice.

ST. LUCIE COUNTY

Officer Miano was on beach patrol when she observed a subject diving off of the beach. When the subject exited the water, she observed the subject carrying a spear gun and a catch bag. She made contact and proceeded to conduct a license and resource inspection. The inspection revealed multiple violations including harvest of spiny lobster out of season, landing a lobster not in whole condition (wrung tail), possession of undersized sheepshead, hog and mutton snapper. The subject received four misdemeanor citations, with a mandatory court appearance for the violations. He also received one warning. All harvested resource was seized as evidence.

Officer Shermetaro responded to a vessel fire in Fort Pierce occurring at Taylor Creek and Harbor Point Park. Upon his arrival, he observed an 80-foot tug boat with smoke coming out of the port holes. The fire department was on scene and was actively attempting to put out the fire. The tug had been donated to the county's artificial reef program and was slated to be towed out to sea within the next few months and be submerged to create a new reef and dive attraction. County personnel and volunteers had been cleaning out the tug, removing oil, combustibles, wood products and any other environmental hazards in preparation for the deployment. However, it was determined that the fire was caused by vandals placing wood inside the engine compartment and

setting it on fire. The investigation was turned over to the fire marshal's office. No leads have been developed as to who vandalized the vessel.

RESCUES

PALM BEACH COUNTY

Lieutenant Russo was patrolling A1A north of Marcinski Road in Jupiter when he observed several people running to a wooded area on the west side of A1A. A subject had fallen from a motorized parachute dropping more than 100 feet to the ground. Lieutenant Russo assisted Jupiter Police and local fire rescue with removing the injured subject. Amazingly, the injured person is expected to recover.

SOUTH B REGION

CASES

COLLIER COUNTY

Officer Arbogast was on land-based water patrol on Marco Island when he saw four individuals standing alongside a sea wall. One individual was using a large dip net to scrape oysters off of the side of the sea wall. He had two 8 ½-gallon buckets with him full of oysters. The individual explained that he comes to this location to harvest and consume these oysters. Officer Arbogast explained to the individual that he was harvesting in the closed season of July 1–September 30. He was also harvesting in an unclassified, prohibited area due to bacteriological and sanitary surveys, according to the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services. The individual was told how much of a health risk it is to consume these oysters. The individual was also unable to produce a fishing license. After measuring each oyster, Officer Arbogast seized, as evidence, 69 oysters which were less than the required 3 inches in size; the rest were returned back to the water. Officer Arbogast charged the individual for harvesting oysters in an unclassified, prohibited area, harvesting them out of season, harvesting undersized oysters, and not having a fishing license.

Officer Osorio-Borja was on land patrol at Delnor-Wiggins Pass State Park when he exited the park and observed a vehicle parked with its hazard lights on at the top of a nearby bridge. He pulled over to offer assistance and found that four subjects had left the vehicle there while they were attempting to load their vehicle after a day of fishing. Officer Osorio-Borja let them know that leaving the vehicle there was not safe or appropriate. The officer also spoke with them about their day of fishing and proceeded to conduct a fisheries inspection of their catch. One of the subjects was found to have five undersized gray/mangrove snappers and was cited accordingly.

Officers Barringer and Johnson were on water patrol in Naples Bay when they responded to an individual's distress call heard over their VHF radio. Once on the

scene, Officer Barringer noticed the vessel had possibly run aground and the operator displayed signs of impairment. A tow company was able to assist the vessel into open water. After entering the deeper water, Officer Johnson stopped the vessel to conduct a boating safety inspection and the officers found more signs of impairment from the operator. The operator refused to perform field sobriety tasks and to submit a breath alcohol sample. He was subsequently booked into jail for BUI. The operator also received citations for not having a vessel registration and missing safety equipment on board his vessel.

Officer Lugg was on land patrol on State Road 29 near Everglades City when he observed a large group of individuals fishing from shore into the Barron River. After completing a thorough marine fisheries inspection, one individual was found to be in possession of three undersized mangrove snapper and one oversized red drum. Also, the individual could not produce a valid saltwater fishing license. All violations were cited accordingly

MIAMI-DADE COUNTY

Officers Almagro and Dinu were part of a detail set up to check various boat ramps in Miami-Dade County for illegal PWC livery operations. Officers wore plain clothes for this detail and acted as tourists wanting to rent PWCs for the day. After arriving at Watson Island Boat Ramp, the officers began walking through the parking lot of the marina. While walking, the officers noticed a woman sitting in a chair under a tree, next to several life jackets stacked one on top of another. The officers approached closer and noticed what appeared to be a transparent container with papers, clipboards and office supplies. The officers asked about renting PWCs and daily rates. After speaking to her, the officers walked to the other side of the parking lot and talked to another PWC rental company. Shortly after, they returned to the female under the tree. The officers negotiated to pay \$75 for 30 minutes and a \$100 deposit for two PWCs. The officers were asked for identification, and then advised they had nothing but cash on their persons. After she handed them paperwork to fill out, she told the officers that she was going to speak to her husband about making the exception of having no identification. The husband said he would take them, no problem. After they exchanged money, the officers were given life jackets (without sound-producing device), and got on each individual PWC. The man showed them how to turn the PWC on and off and how to accelerate. He then told the officers to follow him out of the marina into the ICW, which they did. The officers were never shown any insurance paperwork, nor given any instruction for proper handling of a PWC. The officers did not observe any displays of boating safety procedure placards anywhere near where the woman was sitting or by where they docked the PWCs. While riding on the ICW just south of the Venetian Causeway, FWC Officer Lopez initiated a vessel stop and advised the undercover officers and the man who rented them the PWCs to return to the boat ramp for an inspection.

Officers Padilla responded to Oceanside Elliot Key in southern Miami-Dade County regarding a missing diver. The FWC officers along with surrounding agencies assisted

the USCG helicopter with the search of the area. After nearly two hours of searching, the deceased diver was found on the ocean floor in approximately 25 feet of water.

Officers working the Oleta State Park observed a female driving at a high rate of speed, without wearing her seatbelt. As officers approached the driver, she was holding an open beer bottle. When contact was made, the driver was unable to produce a driver license. A computer check revealed the driver to be a habitual traffic offender with no license. She was arrested and transported to jail.

MONROE COUNTY

Resource Protection Officers Garrison and Munkelt were on foot patrol along the shoreline of Bahia Honda Channel. They observed a subject enter the water with mask, snorkel, fins and the shaft of his spear gun without a dive flag displayed. The subject came out of the water with a queen conch and proceeded to hack at it with a knife. The officers identified themselves as law enforcement officers, showed their badges and advised the subject not to throw anything. The subject immediately tossed the queen conch into the water and still held the knife. Once the knife was secured, Officer Garrison proceeded to inspect the subject's cooler. A plastic bag was found in the cooler. Officer Garrison requested a second subject to hand the bag over. The second subject continued to pull items out of the cooler except for the bag. Officer Garrison advised the subject not to discard the plastic bag and proceeded to make his way around the guard rail in order to inspect the bag. The second subject then threw the bag into the water. The officers instructed the two subjects to come from behind the guard rail. Officer Munkelt dove into the water and retrieved the queen conch and plastic bag from the water. The bag contained 8 wrung, out-of-season spiny lobster tails. Five of the tails were undersized. During this time, the second subject fled the scene on foot. The first subject began to walk from around the railing, but advised he needed his phone first. He then began to walk around the railing again. Once he neared the end of the railing, he threw his phone in the water, sprinted, and jumped into the water. He advised that he was not coming with the officers and that if the officers wanted him to come, they needed to come in the water and get him. The subject was finally talked out of the water by the officers a short time later. Lieutenant Robison and a uniformed Monroe County Sheriff's Deputy arrived on scene as Officer Garrison was detaining the subject. Lieutenant Robison and Officer Garrison searched the area with night vision and were unable to locate the second subject. Lieutenant Robison transported the first subject to jail. All law enforcement vehicles left the scene while Officer Garrison stayed behind and hid in the bushes to await the return of the second subject. The four remaining individuals in the subjects' group loaded up their car and attempted to locate the fleeing subject, but were advised if they assisted their friend they also could be arrested for aiding and abetting a criminal. After approximately three hours, the second subject emerged from the mangroves and went back to his truck parked near the original scene. At that time, Officer Garrison jumped out of the bushes and apprehended the subject and transported him to jail. The second subject advised that he was on felony probation. The total charges for the subjects were 1 felony, 12 misdemeanors, and 4 infractions. The queen conch was returned to the resource alive. The lobster tails were submitted

into evidence. Subject #1 was charged with possession of prohibited queen conch, possession of 8 out-of-season lobsters, possession of 8 wrung lobsters, possession of 5 undersized lobsters, no measuring device, interference with an FWC officer, resisting arrest without violence, no dive flag, no saltwater fishing license and littering. Subject #2 was charged with felony violation of probation, possession of 8 out-of-season lobsters, possession of 8 wrung lobsters, possession of 5 undersized lobsters, interference with an FWC officer, resisting arrest without violence and littering.

Resource Protection Officers Munkelt and Garrison were on unmarked vessel patrol in the area of the Love Canal in the Lower Keys when they observed 4 subjects in 3 kayaks. One of the subjects rolled into the water with mask, snorkel and fins. The subject then reached up and grabbed a spear gun. The officers remained in the area to observe. The subjects went around a mangrove point and out of the officers' clear sight. After the subjects departed the area, the officers went to the area and observed a fresh carapace of a spiny lobster. The carapace provided a feeding frenzy for mangrove snapper and a nurse shark. Officer Munkelt dove into the water and retrieved the carapace from the water which had a large puncture hole in it and some meat still inside. The officers soon caught up to the subjects. Upon inspection, the spear gun had a whole speared spiny lobster on the tip of the spear and a wrung lobster tail was found in one of the kayaks. One subject was charged with possession of lobster out of season, speared and wrung spiny lobster on the water.

Officer Wagner was on land patrol at night in the area of Rockland Key near Key West when he observed two individuals fishing by a culvert. When Officer Wagner approached on foot, he noticed one individual scaling a mangrove snapper next to a large mesh bag full of fish and the other individual actively fishing right next to him. The two men said they were the only two fishing and the bag of fish belonged to them. An inspection of the bag revealed 36 mangrove snapper, 6 schoolmaster snapper, grunts, and pin fish. There were 31 mangrove snapper and 6 schoolmaster snapper which were all undersized. Officer Martino arrived to assist during documentation of evidence and issuing of citations. A total of 10 criminal citations were issued and infractions for no fishing license to both subjects.

Lieutenant Robison and Officer Adams observed two separate individuals using pole spears at the Quay Boat Ramp in Marathon. Using their night-vision equipment, both subjects were observed stabbing what appeared to be spiny lobster, removing them from their spears and hiding them. Once the officers approached the individuals, one male informed the officers he was harvesting lobster, showing his hidden cooler under some dead palm fronds. The officers found 11 whole lobster, all of which had been speared and 5 were undersized. The second individual denied that he was not doing anything and would not comply with Officers or tell them where he hide his lobsters. The first individual helped the officers locate the second subject's pole spear and a plastic bag containing 11 lobster tails, one with a puncture hole, with 6 being undersized. Officers issued the first diver citations for Lobsters out of Season, Possession of Speared Lobsters, and Possession of Undersized Lobsters. The second diver was charged with the same violations along with Interference with an FWC officer, no valid

fishing license or lobster endorsement, as well as a littering citation for throwing his cigarette into the water. He then was transported to Monroe County Jail.

Officers Wagner and Rubenstein responded to a call of people harvesting lobster out of season in the Lower Keys. Upon arrival, Officer Wagner observed an individual cleaning a large parrotfish behind the residence. When approached, he said they were only fishing. An inspection of the cooler next to him revealed 35 more parrotfish and an undersized schoolmaster snapper. Officer Wagner then heard a splash in the canal on the vacant lot next to the residence. When he approached the area, he found another individual in the water snorkeling with gloves, net, tickle stick, and an undersized lobster in his net. The individual claimed he had two more onshore but only caught them to show his kids. When he went to show Officer Wagner where the lobsters were the other individual explained he had thrown them back. Officer Rubenstein arrived on scene and they searched the area. The officers found many freshly broken off lobster antennae and legs throughout the area. Both individuals claimed they caught the parrotfish illegally by hook and line that morning and the night before. Parrotfish are not to be harvested for food. Parrotfish under 12" can be caught with nets or slurp guns and kept alive for aquariums. A total of 10 misdemeanor citations were issued.

Officer Hein was on land patrol in the Islamorada area after midnight when he noticed a car parked on the side of the road near a bridge. Officer Hein assumed the occupants to be fishing and decided to investigate it further. Upon walking under the bridge, he noticed an individual getting out of the water with a spear gun and a head lamp and another individual stabbing at the water with a frog gig and also holding a large white bag. Officer Hein identified himself and the individual holding the bag and frog gig dropped the items and began rushing Officer Hein away from the scene. At the conclusion of the resource inspection, both individuals were found to be in possession of oversized speared angelfish and oversize speared parrotfish. Both individuals were cited for spearfishing in the upper keys, possession of oversized angelfish, possession of oversized parrotfish, failure to land marine life alive, restricted fishing gear for harvesting tropical fish, and spearfishing within 100 yards of a bridge. Both individuals were placed under arrest and transported to a detention facility.

Officer Hein was on water patrol in the Islamorada area when he noticed a vessel with multiple fishing poles displayed on the vessel. Officer Hein stopped the vessel to conduct a resource inspection. Officer Hein conducted a resource inspection as well as a boating safety inspection on the vessel. Throughout the inspections, Officer Hein detected signs of impairment from the operator. At the conclusion of the vessel stop, the operator was placed under arrest for BUI and transported to a detention facility.

Lieutenant Haney and Officer Hein were on water patrol in the Islamorada area when they noticed a vessel displaying multiple fishing rods coming in from offshore. The officers stopped the vessel to conduct a resource inspection. At the conclusion of the inspection, it was determined the operator was in possession of undersized lane snapper, undersized gray/mangrove snapper, and undersized dolphin. The operator was cited accordingly for all violations.

Officer Plussa concluded his week-long environmental investigation into multiple criminal captive wildlife, public health, animal cruelty, and derelict vessel charges on two subjects in Boot Key Harbor. The first subject was charged with two felony counts of threatening and attempting to corrupt a public official (FWC Officer Plussa and Monroe County Sheriff's Deputy Buxton who was investigating him), stalking, and 77 misdemeanor charges relating to Officer Plussa's environmental investigation. The second subject received a total of 73 misdemeanor charges for the same in addition to derelict vessel charges. The first subject's total bond was set at \$53,500 by both judges on his arrest warrants and the second subject's bond was set at \$36,500 by the judge who signed her arrest warrant. Their public health hazard and derelict vessel is pending seizure and removal from state waters. All 19 of their seized animals are in the care, custody, and control of the Monroe County Animal Control and Florida Keys SPCA.

RESCUES

COLLIER COUNTY

Officers Araujo and Osorio-Borja responded to a Marine Emergency Response Team call on Marco River for a subject that had been brought to the beach located at the Jolley Bridge with a head laceration. The subject had been on a PWC and had jumped a boat wake going about 40 miles per hour when he became airborne. He landed on his steering column and was ejected off of the PWC. He was wearing his life jacket and PWC lanyard at the time. Another person on a PWC saw him in the water and transported him to the beach area. He was transported to Naples Community Hospital and is expected to recover fully.

MONROE COUNTY

Officers Foell and Lopez were dispatched to a call near midnight regarding a disabled vessel in Turkey Basin near Key West. The vessel had five adults and two young children on board and had been stranded on the vessel for approximately six hours. The subjects on board called a local salvage company and also the USCG who stated the surrounding water was too shallow for their vessels to reach them. The subjects on the vessel had no food and a small amount of drinking water. Lieutenant Robison contacted the subjects via phone and retrieved GPS coordinates from them, and told the subjects when they see the blue lights from his patrol vessel to light a flare. Officers Foell and Lopez responded and found the subjects just before midnight. All the subjects were exhausted, but in good health. The officers transported the subjects safely back to shore and were very appreciative of the FWC officers' efforts.

Officers Willman and Adams worked a grounded vessel at Bethel Bank, bayside of the 7-mile bridge. The vessel was a 45-foot Carver Cabin boat which ran aground in the early morning. Due to the extensive damage and complexity of the grounding, it required four tow boats, multiple divers and a lot of equipment. The salvage operation is estimated to be between \$20 and \$50 thousand dollars, with the Florida Keys National

Marine Sanctuary citation added due to the damaged bay bottom requiring divers to assess the site.

Officers Adams, Plussa, Mason, Rubenstein, Pilot Willman, Lieutenant Robison, and members of the Monroe County Sheriff's Office and Fire Rescue Department responded by water to a medical emergency involving a female on a kayak suffering from an allergic reaction. During their response, they lost contact with the complainant who was with the victim and did not have an exact location. The officers commandeered a citizen's kayak from shore and Officers Adams and Plussa entered the water from their patrol vessels, and proceeded into the dense mangrove jungles surrounding Boot Key near Sister's and Whiskey Creek, with just a radio, two paddles, a line, and set of fins in hand. After some time, they located the missing and distressed persons. After completing some initial medical triage on the scene, the officers tied the victim's kayaks to theirs. Officer Plussa began to paddle his kayak with the victim's in tow while Officer Adams kicked from behind with fins to stabilize the victim and monitor her condition. The officers successfully transported them back to the three FWC patrol vessels waiting nearby who transported both parties to shore without issue. All officers on scene played a vital role in these victims being searched for, located, rescued, and recovered without loss of life or great bodily injury. The victim was taken to Marathon Hospital for treatment.

Officer Messier met with the owner and operator of the vessel "Mango Man" which was involved in a prior vessel grounding causing significant damage to the reef. Officer Messier issued the operator a federal notice of violation for operating a vessel in such a manner as to strike or otherwise injure seagrass or any other immobile organism attached to the seabed and an infraction for violation of navigation Rule 5, Look Out and Rule 6, Safe Speed. The operator was also issued a warning for not reporting the boating accident.

DIRECTED CONSERVATION PATROLS

MONROE COUNTY

Officers McKay and Trueblood teamed up to enforce the alcohol regulations inside of John Pennekamp State Park over the holiday weekend. Officer Trueblood walked the park in civilian attire and called in the violations to Officer McKay. Officer Trueblood noticed a particular group that was observed drinking on the beach. Officer Trueblood observed a pregnant female pouring the drinks, but she first drank from each cup before passing them out. When confronted by Officer McKay, she said she was pregnant and would not dare drink alcohol even though she had a cup of beer at her feet. When Officer Trueblood identified himself, she changed her story to say she thought only glass containers were prohibited in the park. Over 30 regulatory signs pertaining to alcohol consumption being prohibited have been posted throughout the park through a joint effort with FWC and the Park Service. This stop alone resulted in four alcohol citations. Several other park patrons were warned and/or cited over the weekend.

COMMUNITY ORIENTED POLICING

MIAMI-DADE COUNTY

Officer Veloz was guest speaker at Life Leaners Autism Academy, which is the largest Autism education group in Miami Dade County and also helps place their students with employment and college studies. Veloz spoke to all 75 high school students about FWC careers and FWC's mission. Officers Veloz also brought an alligator, a python and a tortoise for all the students to see and touch.

Officers Steinmetz and Veloz attended Congressman Carlos Curbelo's summer work fair expo in South Miami Dade. Over 50 different recruiters and law enforcement agencies attended the event as well as over 125 students from several high schools and colleges in Miami-Dade all attend the summer work fair expo.

MONROE COUNTY

Officer Dube was part of an FWC panel regarding the future of lobsters along with Tom Mathews of FWRI in Marathon. The scientists conducting research on lobsters in Florida are periodically able to meet and provide their research findings to commercial fishermen and the public. This year also including a more formal discussion panel which will include both scientists, fishery managers, and fishing industry members to discuss how the new lobster research, the world's changing weather, economy, and technology are affecting the lobster fishery.

Officer Dube gave a FWC presentation to the Upper Keys Rotary Club at a local establishment in Tavernier. There were approximately 40 members of the community in attendance. Officer Dube led the club in the Pledge of Allegiance and followed up with the new laws that came into effect July 1. He spoke about HB 703, Dive Flag and Careless Operation changes. At the conclusion, Officer Dube was asked several questions about the new changes and to speak at a few upcoming events in the community.

Officer Martino attended the Monroe Association Retarded Citizens (MARC) House Fishing Tournament over the weekend in Key West at the Hurricane Hole Marina. There were numerous vessels that fished in the tournament and countless volunteers that helped coordinate this annual event. Officer Martino made more than 40 contacts during the event and distributed dozens of pieces of literature, whistles, lip balm, and other items.