

# St. James Parish Sheriff's Office

**Annual Report 2020**



# St. James Parish SHERIFF'S OFFICE 2020



Dear fellow citizen of St. James Parish,

Please allow me this opportunity to present to you this report on some of the many outreaches and activities of your sheriff's office. Our entire staff remains dedicated to our mission of keeping you, your family and our parish safe.

Law enforcement is not just a career, it is a calling. The men and women of this department work hard, train hard and try their best to be of service to the people of St. James. There are far too many instances of our people 'going the extra mile' to help someone than I could list here. Please, help us back by dialing 911 if you see something suspicious and provide information to us if you witness a crime. After all, this is OUR community and we all play a role in making it an even better place.

As part of our COVID-19 response, we have changed how we handle some calls for service, interact with the public and house prisoners in our jail. Training programs have been strengthened to provide the absolute best instruction possible. Deputies and command staff routinely undergo rigorous instruction in the latest law enforcement techniques and crime-fighting technology.

We continue to sponsor events to raise awareness of distracted driving and the seemingly ever-present telephone scams that target citizens, particularly the elderly. Our self-defense classes for women remain popular.

There is hardly an endeavor created by humans that cannot be improved in some way. Although I think we do an outstanding job of protecting you and meeting your needs, I welcome your input on how we can do even better. Please fill out and return the survey on the back of this report or contact me or any member of my staff with your suggestions. We welcome your input.

Finally, thank you for the honor of allowing me to serve you for another term as your sheriff. I have witnessed tremendous changes in law enforcement and incredible progress by our department since I first took office in 1992. Your continued support of this department is greatly appreciated.

Please let me know if I or the St. James Parish Sheriff's Office can ever be of service to you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Willy J. Martin, Jr.".

**WILLY J. MARTIN, JR.**  
Sheriff, St James Parish  
willy.martin@stjamessheriff.com

*On the cover: Deputy Dewayne White works in his patrol unit.*

#### **Our Mission**

*The St. James Parish Sheriff's Office is committed to providing quality law enforcement to the residents, businesses and visitors of our parish. We strive to establish safe and secure communities so that our residents can live, prosper and have peace of mind.*

*Our primary goal is to serve and protect while exhibiting honesty, integrity, fairness and concern to all. By committing ourselves to the citizens of St. James Parish, we recognize the importance of our duty to make our parish a safe and secure place to live and grow.*



## Training to Better Serve You

The SJPSO spends a great deal of time and resources on our training programs. We take them very seriously as part of our ongoing effort to provide you with the best service possible.

Deputies have completed numerous classes on “de-escalation” techniques – things they can do to calm a situation – rather than immediately trying to end it.

“Years ago, a deputy arriving at a disturbance would instantly try to break it up, often putting himself in danger,” Sheriff Martin said. “Now we train to use correct words and actions to get the situation under control with physical force being a last resort.”

All command staff personnel have completed Racial Sobriety Training to ensure sensitivity for people of different backgrounds. Each shift has at least one person certified in Crisis Intervention Training to properly handle calls involving mental health and depression. “Local people make up the bulk of our employees, giving them a unique familiarity with St. James’ people and culture,” Sheriff Martin added. “That helps tremendously when dealing with residents.”



*SJPSO personnel are trained to use the latest crime-fighting technology. Deputies use laptop computers, license plate recognition equipment, radar and other electronic devices to help keep our parish safe.*

SJPSO officers complete 20 hours of continuing education each year. Courses in ethics and preventing sexual harassment are mandatory. Other topics include domestic violence, sexual assault, search and seizure, defensive tactics and legal updates. Homicide investigators are certified by the state.

“As the techniques and technology used in law enforcement continue to evolve, so will our department,” Sheriff Martin said. “One thing that will never change is that when you call, we respond.”

## Lending a Hand

(L-R) On behalf of the SJPSO, Lieutenant Steven Brignac, Captain Dustin Tomlinson and Deputy Rickey Macklin present a check to St. John the Baptist Parish Sheriff’s Office Deputy Keith Duronslet, (second from right) who recently lost his home in a fire.



## High Fives

Students at St. Peter Chanel School sent our office some ‘high fives’ made from their handprints as a ‘thank you’ for our work. We thank you right back!



## Body Cam Update

Since their deployment last year, body cameras have recorded and archived interactions between the public and SJPSO patrol deputies.

“More law enforcement agencies are using body cams to virtually eliminate situations where it is one person’s word against another’s,” Sheriff Martin said. “We are accountable for our actions and people are responsible for theirs as well. These cameras protect everyone.”



## Hurricane Help

The SJPSO sent a contingent of deputies to assist residents and fellow sheriffs’ offices in Southwest Louisiana after the area was battered by Hurricanes Laura and Delta.

“Our people stayed in the area for the better part of three weeks and took on tasks outside normal law enforcement duties,” Sheriff Martin said. “Among other services, deputies helped clear roads, remove debris and place tarps on damaged roofs. We’re happy to have helped our neighbors as they would certainly do the same for us.”



## Four Wheelers/ATVs

Four-wheelers, ATVs and other off-road vehicles are very familiar to St. James Parish, but operating them on public roadways is illegal. We don’t want to issue a citation and possibly impound your vehicle, so please obey the law and in particular don’t allow young children to operate these machines or golf carts.





## R.A.D. Training

A large group of participants recently completed our Rape Aggression Defense course, R.A.D., which teaches women situational awareness and self-defense without tools or weapons. A special 'thank you' goes out to First Community Antioch Baptist Church for hosting the training. For more information on scheduling or attending a free session, please contact Captain Julie Scioneaux at 225.562.2507 or Deputy Lacey Minor at 225.562.2374.



## Health Care Workers Salute

As part of National Hospital Week, SJPSO personnel take part in a show of support at St. James Parish Hospital for the doctors, nurses and medical staff who are the front line workers in the fight against COVID-19.



## Dangers of Distracted Driving

To promote traffic safety, St. James High School recently hosted an event to demonstrate to teens the danger of driving while distracted. Using a specially-equipped simulator, students were shown how their driving was adversely affected when they were not paying attention. Sponsored by the South Central Regional Safety Coalition and State Farm Insurance, the event was part of Teen Driver Safety Week.



## SJPSO Precautions

Numerous safeguards are being followed to limit the spread of the virus between our department, the public and our jail. Masks, gloves, protective glasses and hand sanitizer are used, especially by deputies who interact with the public daily.

"We still respond as quickly as possible when you call for assistance, but new protocols are in place," Sheriff Martin said. "We avoid going into a residence unless necessary, maintain safe distances during traffic stops and are disinfecting units after they are used to transport someone."

The number of inmates in the parish jail has been reduced from a maximum capacity of 125 to about 40 and the facility is routinely disinfected. In-person visits have been stopped and are now conducted virtually. Any mail to an inmate is scanned off-site and provided for viewing on a computer monitor.



## COVID-19

Parish officials continue to work together to provide updates to St. James residents on COVID-19. Here, Parish President Pete Dufresne, CEO Mary Ellen Pratt of St. James Parish Hospital and Sheriff Martin give out information via an Internet meeting.



## Helpers Week

SJPSO personnel enjoyed a visit with students and staff at St. Louis Academy during Community Helpers Week. We urge you to teach children that we are the 'good guys' and they can feel safe in approaching a member of law enforcement at any time.



## stjamessheriff.com

Visit us online at [stjamessheriff.com](http://stjamessheriff.com). While there, sign up for E-mail and text alerts by clicking on the 'Nixle' tab. You'll get updates on our activities, road closures and other public safety information. You can also submit an anonymous tip to help stop crime. Our Facebook page is "St. James Parish Sheriff's Office" and you can also find us on Twitter @StJamesSO.

# People News

## Four More Years

Judge Thomas Kliebert administers the oath of office to Sheriff Martin as he begins his eighth consecutive term as St. James Parish's chief law enforcement officer. 110 members of the SJPSO were also sworn-in. Sheriff Martin and Lafourche Parish's Craig Webre share the distinction of currently being the longest-serving sheriffs in Louisiana.



## Command and Staff College/Magnus Training

Four veteran SJPSO officers have completed the prestigious Magnus Training Program in Leadership and Law Enforcement, bringing to ten the number of graduates on our staff. Magnus is Latin for "greatest." The National Command and Staff College oversees the fourteen-week, concentrated course with online and in-person instruction. Participants work on case studies, write research papers and assess various situations affecting law enforcement.

"This course further enhances the professionalism of our command staff," Sheriff Martin said. "These graduates will share their knowledge with other employees."



Sheriff Martin with Magnus graduates (L-R) Captain Anthony Joseph, Lieutenant Steven Brignac, Lieutenant Dustin Jenkins and Sergeant Cody Hoormann

## Bear Donation

Thank you to Doris Brignac (holding bear) for donating numerous stuffed bears in memory of her daughter Raini for our department to use in its Barran's Bears program. Deputies keep the fluffy animals in their units and give them to children as a coping mechanism to help youngsters manage emotions when involved in car accidents or other traumatic events.



# Safety Coalition Awards

SJPSO deputies have been honored by the South Central Regional Safety Coalition, an organization representing public safety agencies from six local parishes. Deputy Ben St. Pierre (L) was named Traffic Enforcement Officer of the Year and Sergeant Patrick Hall received the Earl Geason Zero Tolerance Award, named for the late SJPSO Patrol Division Commander for his commitment to highway safety.



### Milestone

30 Years of Service  
Chief Deputy Colonel Sid Berthelot

### Moving Up/SJPSO Promotions



Latanya Sterling  
Lieutenant/Assistant Warden



Anthony Joseph  
Warden



John Falgoust  
Sergeant/Corrections  
Shift Supervisor



Quenneshia Flot  
Sergeant/Corrections  
Shift Supervisor

### Moving On

With 95 years of combined service and dedication to keeping St. James safe, several SJPSO employees have retired. Thank you and enjoy your well-earned time off!



Dederie Steib  
32 years



Joanne Nassar  
32 years



Allen Stark  
17 years



Doris Fluence  
15 years

## Join Us

Help yourself and your community by considering a career in law enforcement with the St. James Parish Sheriff's Office. We offer a competitive salary, paid vacation, a retirement plan and great benefits including health, dental, vision and life insurance. Download an employment application at [stjamessheriff.com](http://stjamessheriff.com).





St. James Parish  
Sheriff's Office

@St.JamesSO

stjamessheriff.com

## St. James Parish Sheriff's Office Survey

In the last year, did you call the sheriff's office for assistance?      Yes  No

If yes, did you dial the office number or 911?      Office  911

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

---

---

What programs currently sponsored by the SJPSO would you like to see expanded?

Any suggestions on new community outreach efforts we could undertake?

How long have you lived in St. James Parish and what is your zip code? \_\_\_\_\_

If you would like to be contacted personally to discuss law enforcement issues in our parish, please provide your contact information.

---

Name	Address	Telephone	E-mail
------	---------	-----------	--------

Please return to:

**Sheriff Willy J. Martin, Jr.**  
St. James Parish Sheriff's Office  
5800 Louisiana Highway 44

Post Office Box 83  
Convent, Louisiana 70723  
225.562.2200 Fax: 562.2380

Post Office Box 27  
Vacherie, Louisiana 70090  
225.562.2510 Fax: 562.2512

**Don't Fall For It**

**SCAM ALERT**

Criminals never give up trying to separate you from your money. People impersonating government officials may phone and claim to need your bank account and social security numbers in order to electronically deposit COVID-19 stimulus payments. Don't give this information to a stranger. In another scam, someone calls and says your utilities are going to be cut off unless you phone a number they give you to provide a credit or debit card number. If you suspect a scam, hang up and then call us.

# Emergency Dial 9-1-1

**Submit an anonymous crime tip at [stjamessheriff.com](http://stjamessheriff.com).**