



# THE RANCHER®

PUBLISHED BY THE FLORIDA SHERIFFS YOUTH RANCHES, INC.®

*Fall 2019*

## Remembering Mr. Harry K. Weaver

See Page 4



# President's Perspective

Bill Frye,  
President, Florida Sheriffs  
Youth Ranches, Inc.

**“I am somebody, cause God don’t make no junk.”**

**– Ethel Waters**

**“God doesn’t love some future version of you, he loves you now.”**

**– Matt Chandler**

**W**hat’s wrong with you? Are you being stupid or are you just plain dumb? You will never amount to anything! You are a waste of time! I cannot understand why you were even born!”

How sad it is that so many children and even adults have heard these types of exclamations throughout their lives. I cannot tell you how many times I have heard these words in grocery stores, shopping malls, public parks, and even while walking out of a church after hearing a very positive and uplifting message. I have heard parents, grandparents, and others hurl these hurtful words at their young children in frustration because a child was not listening or was misbehaving—not realizing that demeaning words expressed in anger can cause just as much damage as a brutal punch or kick. The damage, while not physical, is just as serious because it is emotional, and sometimes emotional damage takes longer to heal.

Have you ever felt worthless? Have you ever been in a place where you too have wondered why you were even born? If these questions ring a bell, you are not alone as many others including myself have had some of these very same thoughts. Low self-esteem can almost be a natural occurrence, especially in children and young adults, but it can seriously intensify if adults heap hurtful words onto the feelings of self-doubt and low self-



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confidence. Especially if those adults are family. Such words often lead to negative actions when an emotionally abused child begins to search for some type of identity and acceptance. In the worst-case scenario, suicide becomes the escape, leaving behind other damaged lives in the process.

I love the quote by Ethel Waters, “I am somebody, cause God don’t make no junk.” It is a beautiful quote and to me has great meaning. Over the years, I have seen so many children and adults who struggled with their identities and longed for acceptance. For some it was associated with being born into poverty, others with health issues and other forms of disabilities. In many cases, their feelings were intensified by the insults and hateful words hurled at them by classmates, neighbors and even family. For many, it was being excluded from social gatherings because they did not fit into someone’s social group or were viewed as flawed in a certain way. Whatever the reasons, they all had something in common: they felt like a “nobody.”

So many of our children who come to us, whether it be in our residential communities or in one of our summer programs, often share the same feelings of being “nobody special.” Throughout their lives, they have been beaten down by hurtful words and asked questions like “What’s wrong with you?” and “Are you stupid or just plain dumb?” Some have even been told that they were a “waste of breathable air” and much worse. They come broken, with low self-esteem and even lower self-confidence—never realizing that they are a “somebody” because God created them and he loves them here and now!

We are so fortunate to be able to share that simple message with thousands of children and young adults each and every year. This summer, thousands of children will have participated in one of our many camping programs. They will have experienced and learned new things, made new friends, and found out that they do fit in with others. They will have been told repeatedly by our camp counselors and

volunteer deputies that they are special! They returned home with improved social skills and higher levels of self-confidence and self-esteem. With these new thoughts, they will no longer feel “stupid” or “dumb,” but rather unique and special in their own way.

As many of our kids leave our residential campuses to go on to jobs, college or even military service, they will do so knowing that they are loved and that their Ranch family is cheering for their success. For the children being reunited with their families, they too will know that we remain in their corner, ready to support and care for them if things do not work out. But most importantly, in every case, they will know that they are now and will always be “somebody special” in the eyes of others!

Thank you for being a supporter and a member of the Youth Ranches family. Thank you for giving us the opportunity to help so many children who need to know now more than ever that they belong, that they fit in and that they are loved no matter the flaws.

God Bless,



Bill Frye



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★ *Special Section — Harry Kinnis Weaver, Sr.*

# Harry Kinnis Weaver, Sr.

August 28, 1928-June 23, 2019



®

By Sue Lamb



No better tribute can be given to Harry K. Weaver than the following poem written by his close friend, the late Hillsborough County Sheriff R. Ed Blackburn, Jr., who was a co-founder and dedicated supporter of the Florida Sheriffs Boys Ranch/Youth Ranches.

## The Winner

*It's every boy's hope  
To reach up his hand  
And find there a grip  
That he'll understand.*

*In every boy's heart  
There's a burn running deep  
For a friend tried and true  
Whose love he will keep.*

*And should the boy win  
The goal of his life,  
His soul soon will lift  
From its moment of strife.*

*But finally when passed  
A trophy from above,  
The real winner will be  
Him who gave love!*

We will honor “Mr. Weaver” (as he was called by the boys and girls of the Florida Sheriffs Youth Ranches) as a husband, father, grandfather, great-grandfather and mentor/father figure to Ranchers who came through the gates of the Florida Sheriffs Boys Ranch during his tenure. Because of Harry K. Weaver, the Florida Sheriffs Boys Ranch, and later the Florida Sheriffs Youth Ranches, the lives of all those kids desperate for someone to show them love and discipline were forever changed for the better. Under Weaver’s watchful care, the mission of the Florida Sheriffs Youth Ranches has always been to prevent juvenile delinquency and develop

lawful, resilient, and productive citizens. The challenge was great, the choices clear. Weaver quietly and determinedly walked the walk, met the challenges, and provided a warm welcome to every boy and girl as they became part of the Youth Ranches Family—that includes every past, present and future staff member, every past, present, and future boy and every girl who were and are being served by the Youth Ranches.

A man who shunned any recognition of himself throughout his more than 33 years at the Youth Ranches, Weaver was a former federal probation officer who stood over 6 feet tall. Former Ranchers from the early days at the Boys Ranch say that his

## ★ Special Section — Harry Kinnis Weaver, Sr.

height and demeanor provided a father figure to them that included discipline they tried to avoid at all costs. Today as they laugh together and tell stories about their teenage escapades at the Boys Ranch, these same boys, now men, understand how much Harry K. Weaver and the Florida Sheriffs Youth Ranches cared for them and gave them the great opportunity to grow up and become the men they are today, contributing to others in their communities. They are truly grateful for that chance and try to honor it every day.

Former Florida Sheriffs Boys Ranchers of all ages from all over the US, as well as former sheriffs, elected officials, staff, and donors, traveled to Live Oak, Florida, to visit with the Weaver family in June. For those who watched as this dedicated man carefully worked to build a ranch home on the banks of the Suwannee River where boys, and later girls, in need of a better life could thrive and become contributors to their communities, it was clear the right man had been chosen to serve the Florida children in need five years after the Boys Ranch opened.

While serving as administrator and then president from 1961 to 1994, Mr. Weaver was involved in expanding the organization into the Florida Sheriffs Youth Ranches, which has now served more than 159,000 kids all over Florida. While he and his wife, Jacky, and their children lived at the Boys Ranch for many years, he did everything from sweeping floors to gathering donations in order to build the Youth Ranches into what it is today. He met and worked with donors such as Elvis Presley, Florida Sheriffs, millionaires, governors, politicians,

and everyday people right down to folks who lived as though they didn't have a dime but who had saved bountiful amounts they donated to the Boys Ranch/Youth Ranches because they cared.

From the time he was a young man, Harry cared for others— especially those less fortunate. He was born August 28, 1929, in Bristol, Florida, where his father, Eugene Weaver, was the US Postmaster. As soon as Harry could reach the pedals and see over the dashboard, he was driving the delivery car carrying mail and packages.

He didn't have a license and was too young to be driving, but it was a different time and he was one of those kids you could trust with a vehicle. He didn't just deliver packages. He checked on people. He delivered their medications. He brought them meals. He drove them in town to shop, to their doctors' appointments or really anywhere they needed to be. Sometimes he was paid and sometimes not. Always friendly, extroverted, outgoing (and probably a little nosy), it was natural for him to know everyone on the mail route and anyone who might need extra attention.

He always enjoyed people and loved caring for them. The town remembered the devotion of Harry and his father many years later when they found and restored the vehicle that he drove so many miles over the Florida Panhandle countryside. That restored vehicle is on display in Vernon, Florida.

Harry lost his mother, Suzie Harrell, at a very young age. His father then married a woman who would have a profound influence on Harry's life. He called his stepmother "Miss Sally." She was kind and



Mr. Harry Weaver



generous but most importantly treated Harry like her real son. Harry always exemplified the work ethic, courage, deep faith, and sense of responsibility his father and stepmother instilled in him. It should also be noted Miss Sally taught Harry to cook – and his family will really miss his Southern cuisine. Miss Sally would have been proud of his fried chicken.

It was a brave step for a boy from a poor family but he decided to apply to Florida State University. Once he was accepted, one of his older brothers, Louie, strapped his desk to the trunk of his car and drove him to Tallahassee to start school. Harry worked his way through college at the university agricultural center. To earn additional tuition money, he developed skills in woodworking and sold hand-crafted wood products. He graduated in 1951 with a Bachelor of Science in Education.

Harry did not wait to be drafted into the military. Shortly after graduation from college he enrolled in the US Army. He was stationed in Wachenheim, Germany in the US Army Security Agency. At the time, he was dating Jacky, who was able to find a position as a civilian employee managing a service club and joined him in Germany. They continued their romance and in 1954 married while still in Germany. Harry was stationed in Germany from 1952 to 1954.

Most would say his most important career achievement and legacy was his tenure as administrator, and later President, of the Florida Sheriffs Youth Ranches, but his interest in serving young people had been long established. Weaver held several positions, always in service to people, such as a teacher at the Marianna Boys Home and as a federal probation officer.

Weaver's influence extended beyond the child care programs developed in Florida. He was a founding member of the National Association of Homes for Children and from 1975 to 1977 served as the first president for the organization.

Weaver would never personally take credit for any of the Youth Ranches accomplishments. When talking about the Youth Ranches, he would always give credit to the amazing team of people dedicating their lives to serving children. He never used "I" but would rather use "we" when talking about the Youth Ranches achievements.

Weaver is survived by his wife of 65 years, Jacquelyn; his three children, Gayle (Stephen) Crespo of Lake City, Florida, Roth (Brad) Weaver of Galena, Illinois, and Kin Weaver (Virginia) of Live Oak, Florida; three grandchildren, Hal (Taylor) Weaver of Live Oak, Jabe Weaver of Reno, Nevada, and Lee (Kris) Weaver of Raleigh, North Carolina; and 2 great-grandchildren, Kaden and Reese Weaver of Raleigh.



Jacky and Harry Weaver.

*A version of this tribute originally appeared on the Daniels Funeral Home website. After Mr. Weaver's retirement, he shared that at the time of his passing, if there were any way to raise money for the Ranches that we should make sure we did just that. His family felt the same, as the Youth Ranches had been his primary concern for the majority of his lifetime. We have an endowment that was established years ago in Mr. Weaver's honor and the Weaver family has asked that any contributions made be put forth in the Harry K. Weaver Endowment Fund. ★*



From left to right, current Youth Ranches President Bill Frye, former President Harry Weaver, former Youth Ranches Vice President of Program Development and Youth Services/Special Projects Jim Strayer, and former President Roger Bouchard at Mr. Bouchard's retirement party.

## Remembering Mr. Harry K. Weaver

By Bill Frye

*"A great man does not seek applause or place; he seeks for truth; he seeks for happiness, and what he ascertains, he gives to others."*

*— Robert Green Ingersoll*

I first met Mr. Weaver in 1985 when I began my career with the Youth Ranches as a Family Social Worker. By that time, Mr. Weaver had risen from Boys Ranch Administrator to President, having begun his own career in December 1961. Now I must tell you, upon arriving at the Boys Ranch for two weeks of hands-on training I was introduced to many people but was only told of Mr. Weaver. In fact, I was told that Mr. Weaver was a very

important man who traveled throughout Florida meeting with Sheriffs and other important individuals on behalf of the Youth Ranches. I was told that Mr. Weaver had been recruited by Sheriffs and the Executive Director of the Florida Sheriffs Association when the Boys Ranch was still in its infancy. Like any new program, it was struggling to educate the public about the type of services it offered. I was told that Mr. Weaver, before he was recruited, had





served as a federal probation officer and he had given up his secure benefits as a federal employee to bring his young family to Live Oak, Florida. He was convinced that what the Sheriffs had created was a wonderful opportunity to change the direction of many wayward, abused and, at times, homeless boys. To some individuals, it might have appeared to be a difficult road but Mr. Weaver saw, as did those early Sheriffs, a real opportunity to positively change the lives of children. As I was going through our archives recently, I found that everything I was told about how Mr. Weaver came to the Youth Ranches is well documented and preserved. I was then told that the Youth Ranches I knew in 1985 was a direct result of Mr. Weaver's commitment and desire to serve the Sheriffs while meeting the needs of children.

Talk about an introduction and a history lesson—all within my first two weeks of training. It made sense when I was told that while I might encounter Mr. Weaver, to not expect too much of his time as he was always extremely busy. I was also warned that Mr. Weaver could be somewhat critical or even harsh at times and that he guided the Youth Ranches with a strong will and a fierce determination. Since Mr. Weaver's office was across the street at the "Central Office," the chances of encountering him during my training and then later with my once-a-week visits to the Boys Ranch were somewhat slim. After hearing his story and all the warnings from others at the Boys Ranch, that was okay with me!

Several months into my new career, I received a phone call at home one evening. I was told that I would be picking up Mr. Weaver in Jacksonville, where I lived, and would bring him back to the Ranch

the next day. I was to meet him at 7 the following morning at the car repair shop across town. When I asked, shocked, about what was I to say to Mr. Weaver, I was told to not worry as Mr. Weaver would choose the topics for conversation. Now I will tell you that I was more than a little scared, as I was picking up the President of the Youth Ranches, a hero to many, a man I had never met and only heard about in somewhat reverent conversations.

Upon my arrival, there was Mr. Weaver, waiting, almost like he expected me to be early. As he got into my car, he asked, "Have you eaten breakfast yet?" My reply was, "Mr. Weaver, I have not even had a cup of coffee because I wanted to be here on time." He chuckled at that and said, "Let's get something to eat," and directed me to a local restaurant. We drove in silence. Once settled in our booth, he unfolded



Mr. Harry Weaver

a newspaper and handed me the sports section to read and then began reading the front page. Now, I will tell you that I am not a fan of the sports page. I would have rather read the front page, but there I sat in silence, looking at the sports page, waiting for the waitress to come and take our orders. I really needed that cup of coffee

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by that time! Once the coffee had arrived, conversation began. It was during the breakfast and the remainder of the morning that I discovered what a remarkable man our President Mr. Harry K. Weaver really was.

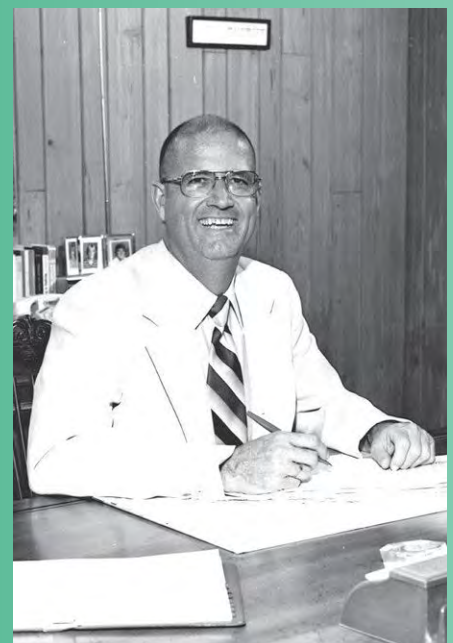
My admiration began after breakfast as we proceeded to a residence, in not the best section of Jacksonville, to meet with a man who had sent a rather harsh letter to Mr. Weaver. As Mr. Weaver explained, the

**He shared his belief in what we call our four cornerstones of Work, Study, Play, and Pray, and explained to me that at the Youth Ranches, he saw everyone as being important in the life of a child.**

man was a donor who had become angry with the direction of the Youth Ranches. Mr. Weaver felt it was important to meet with the gentleman in person, as he was a supporter. He explained, “If we are asking people to support us financially then we need to provide them every courtesy, even when they become angry”—and in this case a little hostile. He believed in customer service and remaining positive and respectful at all times. As we arrived at the home, which was somewhat rundown, Mr. Weaver double-checked the address. After determining it was correct, he knocked on the door. After several attempts, he called out but still no response. It was then that I realized that this was the home of a man I had investigated during my earlier career as an Adult Abuse Investigator. I asked Mr. Weaver to step back. I hit the door loudly and yelled out to the gentleman to open the door. When he did so, Mr. Weaver saw for himself why this gentleman had been investigated for self-neglect and other health-related issues. However, what I

witnessed during their meeting was warmth and compassion for another human being. Mr. Weaver gently explained the necessary changes taking place at the Youth Ranches, all the while asking the gentleman questions about his own needs. Mr. Weaver later remarked that we would not take this man’s resources as he clearly needed them for his own daily needs. His concern over the well-being of this gentleman was evident and his love for children would soon be discovered as well.

As we drove from Jacksonville to Live Oak, I asked Mr. Weaver many questions and he shared his thoughts and his beliefs about the Youth Ranches and our caring for children. The prevailing theory at this time in caring for children was to begin with tight restrictions, then lessen them as the child demonstrated responsibility and compliance with rules along with honesty and integrity. Not so with Mr. Weaver; he shared with me that he believed that when a child first arrived at the Youth Ranches, he needed to be given plenty of space, and the restrictions, or “fences” as he called them, needed to be expansive. His belief was that you needed to give each boy or girl all the respect and trust that you yourself would desire. It was only after this trust was violated that you



Mr. Weaver at his desk



would begin narrowing the size of the fence. However, once trust was restored, you would widen the fences again because building trust with our children, many from broken and abused homes, was most important. With trust came acceptance of love and then change in behavior would begin in earnest. He shared his belief in what we call our four cornerstones of Work, Study, Play, and Pray, and explained to me that at the Youth Ranches, he saw everyone as being important in the life of a child.

To this day, I remember fondly my first of many, many conversations with Mr. Weaver throughout my career. Even the ones that were at first not very pleasant but educational, as even my own fences needed to be narrowed at times, especially in my earlier years. This can be said by anyone who had the honor of working with or around this remarkable man. Like the time when I and another employee became entwined in a dispute over our so-called “turfs.” Since the other employee was in a higher-ranking position, I reached out to Mr. Weaver for some direction, and he decided to bring all of us together and work through the issue. In the end, Mr. Weaver sided with me but it did not close there. He shared with me after the meeting that the other employee was a good person who had simply made a mistake and it would now be up to me to either hold on to my anger or to forgive and rebuild the bridge. Once again his wisdom held true and my friendship with the other employee has remained strong and true for over 30 years. Mr. Weaver was like that himself—quick to forgive and move forward, building stronger relationships with employees, Sheriffs, donors, and others as he guided the Youth Ranches toward greater success.

There are many stories I and others

could share about Mr. Weaver, but if you want to truly glimpse the greatness of the man, all you have to do is listen to the stories told by the boys and girls who grew up under his guidance. You can hear in their voices and see on their faces the love and respect they have held for this man. Even when talking about being disciplined for an inappropriate action, they talk about it with affection because they knew Mr. Weaver truly cared about and loved them unconditionally!

In closing, my office is located in the



Former Hillsborough County Sheriff R. Ed Blackburn and Harry Weaver at the 37th Annual Boys Ranch Open House in 1993.

Harry K. Weaver Administration Building. It was named in his honor after 33 years in dedicated service to children in need. It was not something he sought, because Mr. Weaver did not seek personal glory, but rather cherished his time spent helping children achieve a better life. However, I think the name is appropriate because this remarkable man left a legacy that continues to live each year as thousands of children are being served by the programs and services created under his watch! Of course, without our Sheriffs, donors and supporters none of this would have ever been possible. ★



One nervous but brave camper begins his climb onto the high ropes course after shouting the safety commands to his belay team.

## Jumping the Hurdle

Camp is a time for overcoming obstacles. Whether those obstacles are physical, like a high ropes course; internal, such as an inability to communicate with others; or even emotional, such as the case with a child whose home life prevents them from opening up to others—camp is when children and dedicated staff come together to overcome these hurdles.

This year, we heard many stories of boys and girls overcoming their own personal roadblocks. One example is a young man who was terrified of the high ropes course at Youth Camp. Encouragement from his team, reassurances from the group leader, and his cabin belaying for him prompted the camper to give it a try. He strapped

into his harness and called out the safety commands before ascending the ladder. At the top of the ladder, he continued up a



Baker County Sheriff's Deputy Keith Parker helps a camper prepare his bow on the archery course.

series of metal pegs before arriving at the tight rope strung between two solid wooden poles. Despite his fear and slow, careful steps along the rope, his team continued to shout encouragement up to their friend. They laughed when he laughed, reassured him when he hesitated, and patted him on the back when his feet were back on solid ground.

Another encouraging story happened at Caruth Camp. A very shy young man was able to make his way through camp without speaking a single word. His guardians explained that our group leaders should expect this; he never spoke. However, toward the end of the week, this young man opened his mouth and began to talk! Our group leaders and his fellow campers were absolutely shocked. The excitement over this young man's achievement trickled all the way down to the administration level of the Youth Ranches across Florida. Everyone was proud of his success!

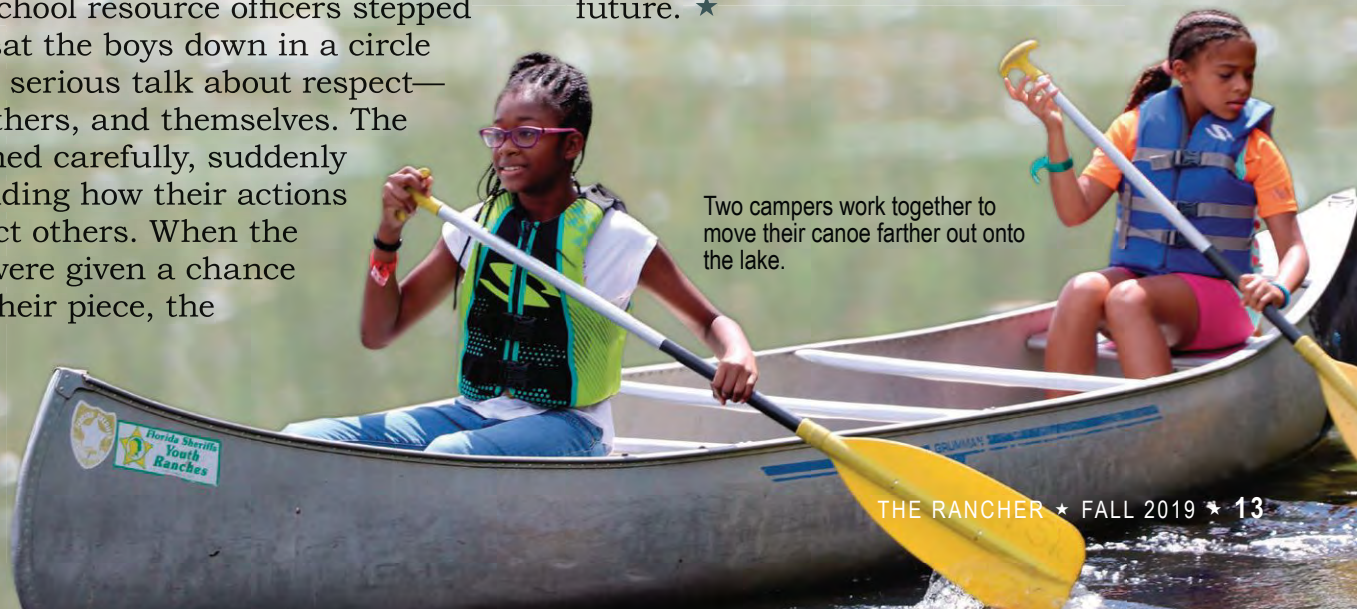
Perhaps the most common story is that of a group of children who are almost too unruly to manage. Different backgrounds and experiences come together in a contest to see who can be heard the most out of the group. Despite their extensive training, sometimes our group leaders hit a wall. During one such situation in an over-energized session of arts and crafts, a group of school resource officers stepped up. They sat the boys down in a circle and had a serious talk about respect—both for others, and themselves. The boys listened carefully, suddenly understanding how their actions could affect others. When the campers were given a chance to speak their piece, the

deputies listened and explained a better way to handle the situation. The group left arts and crafts with less tension and more appreciation for their group leaders, the deputies, and other campers.



A camper makes his way across the high ropes course, using hanging supports to guide himself from one pole to the other.

The camping programs at the Youth Ranches are built on the model of four C's: Communication, Cooperation, Concentration, and Commitment. Every activity, interaction, and conversation is designed to help these boys and girls stop and consider how their actions affect the world, their loved ones, and their future. We are excited to see the progress these boys and girls have made this year, and your support is the reason many of them can even attend camp! Thank you for all that you do for Florida's children and their future. ★



Two campers work together to move their canoe farther out onto the lake.



## *Growing Up as a Rancher*

Children are often a product of their environment. Despite the potential that lives within their personality, an unhealthy or intimidating environment can suppress that light until the child appears withdrawn and unremarkable.

At the Florida Sheriffs Youth Ranches, we understand that there is no such thing as an unremarkable child. Over and over again, we see boys and girls living with us come alive in a way that surprises everyone around them. One such example is a young man named Shia, who lives at our Safety Harbor campus.



Shia (second from left) poses with his Little League team, holding his President's Sportsmanship award. He was the only player in the Safety Harbor Recreation League to receive this honor.

Shia's church knew he and his mom were in a desperate situation. Members of the church volunteered at the Ranch and they suggested his mom reach out for help. His first reaction to the Ranch was distaste. "I was just scared," Shia remembered.

Almost a year later, Shia has completely turned his attitude, and his life, around. "It's been a pretty good process for me," Shia said. "It's become more of a home." The philosophy of the Youth Ranches includes four pillars: Work, Study, Play, and Pray. Shia has managed to check every single one of these areas off as if they were a "to-do" list.

When Shia arrived at the Ranch, his grades were so low that he didn't believe it was possible to catch up. Finally, he decided to buckle down and begin working on the huge pile of make-up work that had been assigned to him. He realized that he was a quick study, and the work wasn't as intimidating as he had always feared. "I was worried when I went to school because I felt like I'd start failing. The work started piling up. But I realized it was all easy and I could get it done." Shia is now a straight-A student and has finished a full year of school for the first time in his life. He will be starting his first year of high school in

August.

Another first in his life was joining an organized sports team. Before coming to the Ranch, Shia had never even thrown a baseball. Now, he is on a Little League team in Safety Harbor. At the end of this past season, Shia was awarded the President's Sportsmanship award—an honor that, out of the entire Safety Harbor Little League program, Shia was the only one to receive. His positive and helpful attitude is praised



Shia receives the Program Director's award at the Safety Harbor annual award ceremony. This award is presented to a Rancher who has shown outstanding personal growth in the previous year.

not only by his teammates, but his cottage parents, too. "He just has a very helpful spirit," Mom Sara said. "He's really come a long way since he first came here."

Shia's first set of cottage parents, Mom and Pop Rzengota, had a profound influence on him as they watched an angry, scared boy become a helpful and influential young man.

Mr. Rzengota, who is now the chaplain at

the Boys Ranch, was a big part of building Shia's faith. "He led me more toward God," Shia recalled. "And I got baptized.

Now that Shia is doing well in school and feels comfortable with his family at the Ranch, he's ready to focus on planning for his future. "I want to go to college. I'm not sure for what, but I want a real paying job." His first step as a freshman in high school is to get a job at Publix. As an incentive to earn their own money, the work program at the Youth Ranches offers a small paycheck to boys and girls who work. Publix also has a college scholarship program, which is a big motivator for Shia. "Not only will I make money there, I'll make money working on campus and I could be put through college."

After considering all the changes he's been through since coming to the Ranch,

Shia concluded that the biggest change he's seen in himself is his personal maturity. He's learned to listen and be empathetic, and this has helped him deepen his relationships with everyone he encounters. "When I came here, I didn't have any social skills. I didn't know how to talk to people, how to fit in. Now I can start conversations, I can get on peoples' levels."

His favorite part about living at the Ranches is the relationships he has developed here. "They're like two different bonds. To me, all my male friends are like my brothers, and my female friends are like my sisters. And then my cottage parents are somewhat like a mom and dad, but I only have one mom in life." While Shia is proud of his progress, he notes that there is someone's opinion he values more: "My mom is proud of me. That's what I care about."

As someone who didn't understand what the Youth Ranches was at the



Shia opens the Safety Harbor Open House ceremony with a prayer.

beginning, Shia believes everyone should take a second look before forming their opinion. "A lot of people judge a book by its cover and they'll say that this place is just for troubled kids, when it's really not. It's a place to mature, make friends, and heal yourself. And to look forward to a better future." ★

# BACK TO SCHOOL

## BECAUSE OF YOU!

When Jada came to live at the Ranches, she was significantly behind in school. The Donald Ralph Cooke School at the Boys Ranch was able to help her catch up using an online program designed to help teenagers graduate high school with supplemental coursework. Even though the amount of courses Jada needed would normally take three years to complete, **Jada studied hard and caught up in one year!**

When Jada graduated, she moved to the Youth Villa campus in Bartow. **This campus is home to the Polk County Sheriff's Charities Scholarship House—a program designed to support recent high school graduates as they enter adulthood and attend college.**

The Scholarship House is staffed by a life coach who is available at any time for help. Whether it's opening a bank account for the first time, learning how to cook for themselves, or getting a ride to school, the

Scholarship House is designed to ensure students have the means to become independent, responsible adults while completing their college degree.

A safe and encouraging atmosphere, online education programs, the Scholarship House—**all of this is possible because of you!**

*Thousands of at-risk youth throughout the state of Florida only know how to get from day to day; their grades suffer and they don't know how to get back on track.*

**Because of you and your generous support, we are able to provide a warm and stable home, regular healthy meals, and all the supplies and support they need to do well in school.**



Our program is dedicated to the success of our youth, and it is possible with YOUR help. **Please join us in our efforts to help young men and women achieve their full potential!**



**Please help boys and girls like Jada become a success!**  
**YES! I want to ensure a child receives a good education!**

Here is my gift of  \$50  \$25  \$10 Other \$\_\_\_\_\_

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE \_\_\_\_\_ EMAIL \_\_\_\_\_

Use this form to make certain your gift is properly identified and return it in the enclosed envelope. Please send your gift in the enclosed envelope or mail your gift to Florida Sheriffs Youth Ranches, P.O. Box 2000, Boys Ranch, FL 32064.

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR CARING AND TIMELY GIFT!**





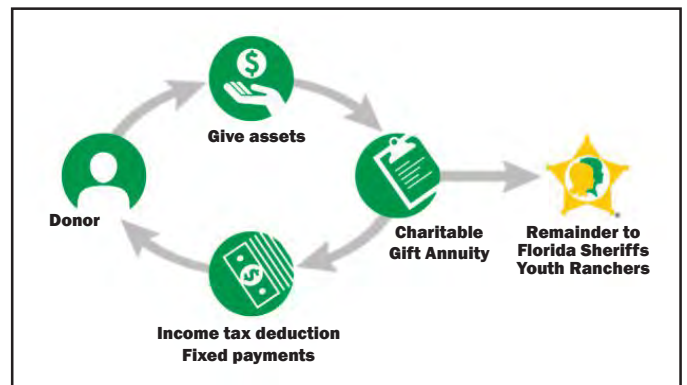
## NEED MORE RELIABLE INCOME?

Convert your assets into a stream of guaranteed income and be sure the remainder goes to help our kids.

Your gift of \$10,000 or more in the form of a Gift Annuity (cash or stocks) can help deserving youngsters while securing a reliable future income for you or someone you love. This irrevocable agreement is backed by the assets of the **Florida Sheriffs Youth Ranches, Inc.**

A portion of your charitable gift annuity is immediately tax deductible. In addition, a portion of your annuity payment is tax free during normal life expectancy. The amount of the payment is based on the amount of the gift and the age of the annuitant. These rates are consistent with the recommendations made by the American Council on Gift Annuities.

If you have cash, stocks or property that you would like to transfer into a Gift Annuity with the Florida Sheriffs Youth Ranches and want to lock in this annual payment rate, please contact Debbie Parnell at 1-800-765-3797 for a free, personalized example. Joint rates can also be given upon request. Available to Florida residents age 65 or older.



## Schedule of Annual Payments\*

AGE	RATE	ANNUAL PAYMENT
65	5.1	\$510
70	5.6	\$560
75	6.2	\$620
80	7.3	\$730
85	8.3	\$830
90+	9.5	\$950

RATES EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2018  
Please call us at (800) 765-3797 if you have any questions.

\*Schedule of Annual Payments for Single-Life Charitable Gift Annuity at indicated ages based on a \$10,000 agreement.



# JOIN THE FLORIDA SHERIFFS ASSOCIATION

The Florida Sheriffs Association is one of the largest and most successful state law enforcement associations in the nation — unifying Florida sheriffs in purpose and voice for the protection of Florida’s citizens and visitors. A not-for-profit corporation, FSA membership is made up of the 67 sheriffs of Florida and 80,000 private citizens and business leaders throughout the state who support local law enforcement.

<b>HONORARY MEMBER</b> <i>For individuals who want to support law enforcement in our state, but are not in the field</i>	<b>HONORARY</b> \$25	<b>SILVER</b> \$50	<b>GOLD</b> \$100
Membership card	✓	✓	✓
Two exclusive window decals	✓	✓	✓
One-year subscription to <i>The Sheriff's Star</i> and <i>The Rancher</i> quarterly magazines	✓	✓	✓
Access to FSA's Weekly Insight eNewsletter	✓	✓	✓
One automobile tag in your first year of membership	✗	✓	✓
One lapel pin in your first year of membership	✗	✓	✓
One tag frame in your first year of membership	✗	✗	✓

<b>BUSINESS MEMBER</b> <i>For businesses that want to support law enforcement to help create safer and stronger communities</i>	<b>BRONZE</b> \$50	<b>SILVER</b> \$250	<b>GOLD</b> \$500	<b>PLATINUM</b> \$1,000
One year subscription to <i>The Sheriff's Star</i> and <i>The Rancher</i> quarterly magazines	✓	✓	✓	✓
Access to FSA's Weekly Insight eNewsletter	✓	✓	✓	✓
Membership card	✓	✓	✓	✓
Two exclusive window decals	✓	✓	✓	✓
Plaque displaying membership level	✓	✓	✓	✓
Plaque displaying company name	✗	✓	✓	✓
New member plaque presentation by your sheriff and photo published in <i>The Sheriff's Star</i>	✗	✗	✓	✓
One automobile tag in your first year of membership	✗	✗	✗	✓

<b>LAW ENFORCEMENT MEMBER</b> <i>Open to all Sheriffs' Offices as well as local, state and federal law enforcement agencies' sworn and non-sworn personnel, auxiliary and retired officers</i>	<b>LAW ENFORCEMENT</b> \$25
Membership card	✓
Two exclusive window decals	✓
One year subscription to <i>The Sheriff's Star</i> , the <i>All Points Bulletin</i> and <i>The Rancher</i> quarterly magazines	✓
Access to FSA's Weekly Insight eNewsletter	✓

### Our Vision

Florida's sheriffs, united in purpose and voice, for the protection of Florida's citizens and visitors.

### Our Mission

The mission of the Florida Sheriffs Association as a self-sustaining, charitable organization, is to foster the effectiveness of the Office of Sheriff through leadership, innovative practices and legislative initiatives, education and training.

Visit [flsheriffs.org/membership](http://flsheriffs.org/membership) to learn more.





**FLORIDA SHERIFFS  
ASSOCIATION**

# MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

*Join or Renew Today*

## MEMBERSHIP DUES

*Please select one membership per form.*

### Honorary

- \$25 Honorary
- \$50 Honorary Silver
- \$100 Honorary Gold

### Business

- \$50 Business Bronze
- \$250 Business Silver
- \$500 Business Gold
- \$1,000 Business Platinum

### \$25 Law Enforcement

New Membership

Renew Membership

Member Number from Magazine Label \_\_\_\_\_ Last Paid Thru Date \_\_\_\_\_

## Member Information

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Mailing Address \_\_\_\_\_

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Email \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

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Business/Agency Name \_\_\_\_\_

Staff Title/Position \_\_\_\_\_ Status \_\_\_Active or \_\_\_Retired

*Join or renew online at [www.flsheriffs.org/membership](http://www.flsheriffs.org/membership)  
to purchase member-only items.*



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Mail the completed form and United States check or money order payable to:

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Tallahassee FL 32317-2519

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Receive an instant confirmation by joining or renewing online at [www.flsheriffs.org/membership](http://www.flsheriffs.org/membership).

*Thank you for making a difference through your generous donation.*

*Last Revised July 2019*

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# Program Director's Award

The Program Director's Award is given to students who have excelled in all of our major areas of recognition. The winners are students who are doing well academically, showing great character and leadership skills, making a diligent effort to work on their behavior and personal relationships, and are ambassadors for the Youth Ranches.

## This year's winners

- Takaya at the Youth Villa
- Evan at the Boys Ranch
- Shia at the Youth Ranch Safety Harbor
- Tyrique at the Youth Ranch Bradenton/Sarasota



Takaya and Youth Villa Program Director Robin Sumner



Evan and Boys Ranch Program Director Jeff Fletcher



Shia and Safety Harbor Program Director Shannon Veronesi

Not Pictured: Tyrique and Bradenton Program Director Ron Serpliss

## Personal Growth Award

Whether you call it Most Improved or Personal Growth, it means a change in your outlook on life, your engagement in your future, and a positive attitude. Personal Growth is driven by our Ranchers and their commitment to working on their education, relationships, behavior, and planning for their future. This year the following students were recognized for significant improvement in their personal growth:



Mikey and Safety Harbor Unit Director Scott Halbach



Andrea and Youth Villa Program Director Robin Sumner



Tony and Boys Ranch Senior Youth Care Assistant Alan May



Janessa receives the award for exhibiting the Best Character at the Youth Ranch Safety Harbor from Unit Director Scott Halbach

Not pictured: Jeremiah and Bradenton Therapist Debbie Swearingen.



## Academic Achievement Award

Academics are an important part of life at the Florida Sheriffs Youth Ranches. We recognize students who have shown the most academic growth or are in the best academic standing for their campuses.



Isaiah and Safety Harbor Unit Director Scott Halbach



Trinity and Youth Villa Unit Director Tom Pichette



Thomas and Boys Ranch Director of Education Dana Drawdy

Not pictured: Kitana and Bradenton Unit Director Doug Gillam

## Additional Awards

We recognize students for character traits and behaviors that are positive and useful, whether they live with us at the Youth Ranches or at home with family and friends.



Lexi was recognized for her empathy and care for others by Safety Harbor Cottage Parents Mom and Pop Goyzeta.



Lilli received the award for Best Room from Boys Ranch Cottage Mom Flannigan.



Evan was recognized for his success in the agriculture program by Boys Ranch Farm Manager Jeff Parker. Winners of this award must display a strong knowledge of the farm program, be dependable, and responsible. This award is earned through hard work!



## Miracle Garden

**N**estled against a chain-link fence that wraps around the Boys Ranch pool is a raised flower bed teeming with life. Green overflows every brick barrier as spinach, tomatoes, onions, and peppers thrive under the Florida sun. The Miracle Garden is a one-stop-shop for a fresh, organic salad for the boys who look after it.

Boys Ranch Recreational Director Tony Dodd got the idea to plant a garden on campus when a few Ranchers became curious about the salads Mr. Dodd ate for lunch every day. Scott, one of the Ranchers who helped build and maintain the garden, commented, "We all wanted to do it because he showed us the salads he made. He let us eat some of it and it was really good." The other three boys—Jeremy, Jason, and Tyler—were also interested in the project.

"Some of us wanted to eat better, get in shape and get healthy," Tyler said.

Before there was a garden, the small

patch of earth was an island of landscaping that was lost amid the concrete expanse of the campus pool.

"After we cleaned it out, we spent like a whole week scooping cow manure," Tyler said, laughing.

"Dried cow manure," Jeremy corrected. "We went to the field and scooped up a lot of dried cow manure. We put it into barrels, put it into the trailer and then unloaded it into the garden. Got some shovels and broke it all up, and then we got a bunch of soil and put it on top of that."

The hard work involved in putting their garden together wasn't a deterrent for these Ranchers. They listened when Pop Dodd explained why they layer the manure and



then the soil and how to pull weeds and water the plants.

“He said it would look really nice. Now it looks more than really nice,” Jeremy said.

Once the soil was properly layered in the bed, the boys had to decide what plants they wanted to include in their garden. They looked to Mr. Dodd for help, remembering the delicious salad they had all sampled.

“Some of the plants we bought, and some of the plants Pop Dodd had at his house,” Scott explained.

One of the most important aspects of this garden is the lack of chemicals used to fight off pests.



“We didn’t use any pesticides,” Jeremy said.

“No chemicals at all,” Scott added. “It’s all natural. Organic.”

Right now, the Miracle Garden consists of Seminole pumpkins, an assortment of spinach, moringa (God’s Tree), yardlong beans, Egyptian walking onions, cherry tomatoes, purple tree collards, mushroom herb, and peppers.

Now that they can see the fruits of their labor, all four boys are excited to



expand their garden across the Ranch.

“I would definitely like to see an apple tree,” Jeremy said.

“Yeah, somewhere on the Ranch,” Scott agreed. “Because fruit, when it’s hot and everything, it hydrates you and you feel better.”

“We could also do raspberries and blackberries,” Tyler said. “And blueberries and watermelons.”

“I’d like to plant some Japanese plums,” Jason added. “It’s small, like the size of a grape, and orange. Like an orange cherry.”

The boys aren’t shy about picking out a snack from their garden. Often times they’ll pick a stack of various types of spinach, forgo a bowl and salad dressing, and eat what Mr. Dodd calls a “leaf sandwich.”

“It’s better than Skittles!” Jeremy said. ★



# ★ AWARDS, EVENTS & PRESENTATIONS



Moose Legion 227 raised funds through a motorcycle poker run in support of the Florida Sheriffs Youth Villa. Pictured left to right are Governor of Sanford 1851 Roy Dannelly, Past Governor John Pinder, Governor Allen Hagood, Jr., Secretary Mike Davis, FSYR Donor Relations Officer Debi Girard, FBMA Outer Guard and Moose Legion Incoming President Scott Kern, Star Recorder and College of Regent Debbi Baker, and FBMA State President Bobby Baker.



Mrs. Tina Walker from Liberty Tax in Spring Hill, Florida, shown here with FSYR Director of Development Wayne Witzcak, presented gifts from clients who had their taxes prepared free after making a \$50 donation to the Youth Ranches.



Palm Coast Lodge 2577 & Chapter 2240 held a Chili Cookoff to raise funds for the Florida Sheriffs Youth Ranches. This special gift was presented by Administrator Al Sanfilippo to Youth Camp Assistant Camp Director Daniel Phillips, with Governor James Skellion Jr., Prelate Todd Langon, Past Governor Steve Reber, and Stand Governor Bart Cipolla.



Mary Ann "Nik-Nik" Aquilano presents an annual gift to FSYR Board Chairman Charlotte County Sheriff Bill Prummell. We are grateful for the support of our donors!



Anthony Delleani presents a gift to FSYR Director of Development Wayne Witzcak for the children living at the Youth Ranches. Thank you for caring and sharing!



# AWARDS, EVENTS & PRESENTATIONS



Columbia County Sheriff Mark Hunter presents Boys Ranch Program Director Jeff Fletcher with the proceeds from the 8th Annual Fins and Pins Fish Fry and Bowl-A-Thon. This event engages community members in a unique fund - and friend-raising activity.



Boys Ranch Alumni President Cody Pressley presents the Boys Ranch Alumni Association's annual gift for awards to FSYR President Bill Frye. The Alumni Association supports the awards banquet and other activities at the Boys Ranch throughout the year.



In recognition of her generous donations to the Youth Ranches, Dr. Linde Katritsky receives the Golden Star Award from FSYR President Bill Frye and Alachua County Sheriff Sadie Darnell.



Special gifts were brought to the campers at the Florida Sheriffs Caruth Camp. Sumter County Sheriff Bill Farmer (back row center), Florida Bermuda Moose Association President Tom Burnam (back row center right) and FSYR Volunteer Frank Kenny (center left) visited camp to deliver Tommy Moose dolls to the campers.



Mrs. Nancy Bliitch accepted the "Helping Hand" statue on behalf of her mother, Dr. Ruby McGlynn Beal-Fitzgerald, from FSYR President Bill Frye and Alachua County Sheriff Sadie Darnell. Dr. Beal-Fitzgerald supports the Youth Ranches in memory of her son, Joe Frank Beal, Jr.



# MEMORIAL GIFTS

## Helping Our Children through a Memorial Gift

Contributions to the Florida Sheriffs Youth Ranches are listed in alphabetical order by name of the deceased. Donors are listed after the name of the person in whose memory they contributed.

**Memorial Gifts from  
April 1, 2019 -  
June 30, 2019**

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Mr. and Mrs. Headley White

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**Howard M. Jenkins  
William C. Webb**

*The Sheriffs of Florida and the Board of Directors of the Florida Sheriffs Youth Ranches, Inc., would like to extend their sincere appreciation for the gifts received between April 1, 2019, and June 30, 2019, from estates and trusts.*

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Mr. Reed G. Rue

Gifts from April 1-June 30, 2019



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Mrs. Helga Menke  
BETTY MERI-AKRI  
Mr. Alexander Meri-Akri  
MICHELLE  
Mr. Norman Fields  
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PRESENT  
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EDNA MAE MOORE  
Mr. and Mrs. Bill Liles  
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Lieutenant R. D. White, Jr. and  
Linda White  
ANTONIO "TONY" MUÑOZ  
Dr. Sarro  
KYLE G. MUNROE  
Mr. David H. Munroe  
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Mrs. Pat B. Munson  
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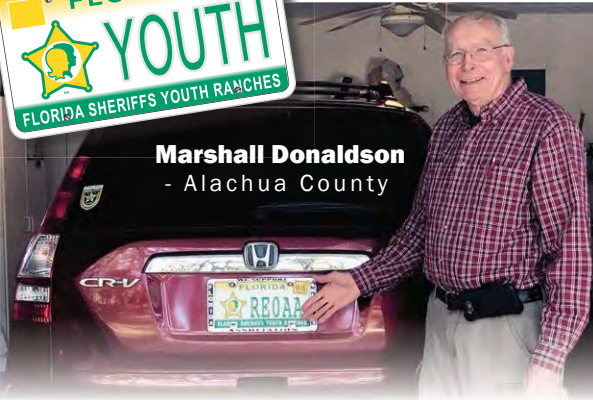
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Johnny Leverock's

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Formerly Leverock's Fish Fry

**November 4-7, 2019 | 11:00 a.m. – 9:00 p.m.**

Your ticket entitles you to a generous portion of fried fish, hush puppies, fries, coleslaw and a soft drink.\*

Tickets are \$10 and valid the dates of the event. They can be purchased from Youth Ranch Safety Harbor, (727) 725-4761, or Debbie Parnell at the Youth Ranches Main Office, (800) 765-3797.

**Tickets: \$10 Only 600 available!**

Proceeds benefit the

**Florida Sheriffs Youth Ranches**



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**Leverock's Seafood House ★ 840 Pasadena Ave. South ★ St. Petersburg, FL**

\*Tickets are valid for the Dine Out Days offer or \$10 worth of food off of the menu.

Does not include tip and no change is given. Dine in or take out. Ticket expires at 9:00 p.m. November 7, 2019.



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**Honor Gifts from  
April 1, 2019 -  
June 30, 2019**

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Join "THE ROUNDUP"

Join "The Roundup" email newsletter to receive monthly updates from the Florida Sheriffs Youth Ranches. Visit [www.youthranches.org](http://www.youthranches.org) and sign up in the "Join the Roundup" pop-up window.



# MOVING?



Please fill this form out and return promptly if you're moving, even temporarily.

Use the envelope enclosed in the center of this magazine.



Florida Sheriffs Youth Ranches, Inc.  
P.O. Box 2000  
Boys Ranch, FL 32064  
fsyr@youthranches.org  
www.youthranches.org

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## Mark Your Calendar

### Shooter's World "Targets for Charity" Tournament

**September 1-30** – Show your support for the Youth Ranches by purchasing a special target at Shooter's World in September. Participating locations include: 116 E. Fletcher Ave in Tampa; 4988 Co Rd 44A in The Villages 32163; and 4850 Lawing Lane in Orlando.

### Hillsborough County Sheriffs Office Ranch Run

**September 14** – The Ranch Run will be held at Temple Terrace Elementary School, located at 124 Flotto Ave in Temple Terrace. This year's theme is a Hawaiian Luau Party. Come dressed in your favorite family-friendly luau gear and do the 1 Mile Fun Walk or the 5K, 10K, or 15K.

### Pinellas County Sheriff's Office Golf Tournament

**September 23** – This event will be held at the Belleair Country Club. For more information, contact Captain Sean McGillen at (727) 582-6200.

### Fall Ranch Ride

**October 11-13** – Located at the Florida Sheriffs Boys Ranch at 1813 Cecil Webb Place in Boys Ranch. Enjoy a Murder Mystery Weekend with camping, riding, a dinner mystery and good fellowship. For more information, contact Janet Sampson at (386) 688-4336.

### Buick-Olds-Pontiac-Cadillac (BOPC) Car Show and Swap Meet

**October 26** – Located in downtown Auburndale from 9:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. The cost to participate in the show and/or swap meet is \$25. Spectators are free! Contact Pat Whissel at (727)781-7774 or patwhissel@gmail.com.

### Bruce Rossmeyer's Destination Daytona Police Motorcycle & K-9 Skills Challenge - Senior Deputy Frank Scofield Memorial Challenge Ride

**October 30 - November 2** – Bruce Rossmeyer's Destination Daytona will take place at 1637 North US Highway 1 in Ormond Beach. For more information, contact Richard LeCates at (386) 566-3549. Spectators welcome!

### Leverock Fish Fry Dine Out Days

**November 4-7** – Located at 840 Pasadena Ave South in St. Petersburg. Tickets available at Leverock's Seafood House, Florida Sheriffs Youth Ranch – Safety Harbor or the Florida Sheriffs Youth Ranches Main Office. A limited number of tickets are available. For more information call Kayla Bianchi at (386) 362-9603.

### Safety Harbor Ranch Roundup

**November 9** – Located at the Youth Ranch Safety Harbor campus at 3350 Enterprise Road in Safety Harbor. This is a combination motorcycle poker run and arts & crafts event. For more information, contact Kim Adams at kimadams.agent@gmail.com.

### Caruth Camp Challenge

**December 6** – The tournament will be held at Plantation Inn and Golf Resort, located at 9301 W fort Island Trail in Crystal River. For more information, contact Jody Farmer at the Citrus County Sheriff's Office at (352) 795-4709.



Join us for our special events!

For additional information, visit [www.youthranches.org](http://www.youthranches.org), or contact the Florida Sheriffs Youth Ranches Donor Relations Department at (386) 842-5501 or the Sheriff's Office sponsoring the event.

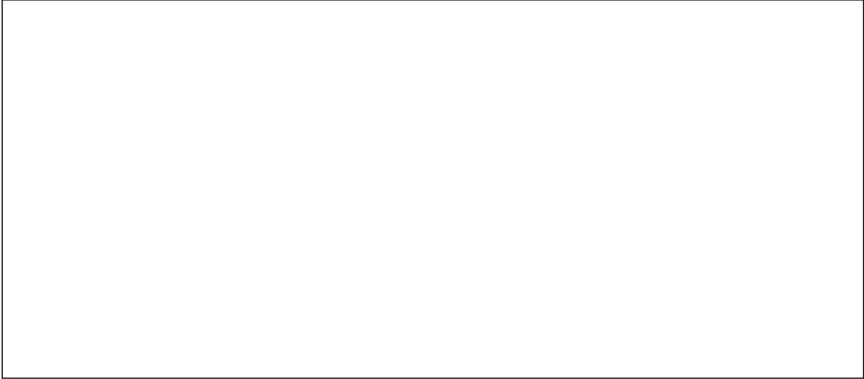
# Florida Sheriffs Youth Ranches

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Boys Ranch, FL 32064

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current happenings!**

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Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) Law Enforcement Officer Morrow shows off a small gator to a fascinated group of campers from Youth Camp. The FWC came to camp to teach the boys and girls about respecting the environment.



Florida Sheriffs Youth Ranches®