



Flagler County Sheriff's Office

Donald W. Fleming, Sheriff

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Flagler County Youngsters Shop With FCSO Deputies

The Palm Coast Target store was packed with Flagler County Sheriff's deputies Thursday evening, but they weren't there because of any criminal activity.

More than 50 Flagler County youngsters were doing their holiday shopping with the volunteer deputies as part of the third annual "Christmas With a Deputy" event.

The youngsters met up with their assigned deputies about 5:30 p.m. in a bank parking lot on Belle Terre Parkway near Town Center. Shortly before 6 p.m., a caravan of more than 40 patrol cars, escorted by the Sheriff's motorcycle units, with lights and sirens, pulled out and headed south on Belle Terre Parkway before turning into the Town Center Shopping Center.

The youngsters, ranging in age from two to 15-years-old, paused outside the store for a few photo opportunities with Target management and Santa Claus before heading inside to fill their shopping lists.

Flagler Palm Coast High School graduate and professional football player Marty Gilyard made a surprise appearance and donated \$400 to the event.

"I want to be involved in something like this. It's for the kids," he told Sgt. Jones. Gilyard then was assigned a "little shopper" and spent the evening browsing the aisles for special gifts.

The event began three years ago when Sgt. Larry Jones organized the funding through community donations. The first year there were 11 youngsters, last year there were 26 and this year, enough donations were made to fund 51 youngsters. The youngsters received \$120 in gift cards.

Target was a major sponsor this year. The department store chain awarded the program a \$2,500 grant.

“This is absolutely a great thing for these kids,” said Sgt. Jones. “We couldn’t do this without all the donations. A lot of the deputies have donated to make this a success.”

Target hosted the event and offered the young shoppers cookies and juice before they began their march toward the toys and electronics section. The smiles were contagious as deputies joked with their young shopping partners and debated about which items would make the better gifts.

The youngsters were given gift cards to make their purchases. As they walked through the aisles, some were making purchases for themselves and a brother or sister or their Mom or Dad.

“This community continues to give generously during these tough times. These kids are going to have a great Christmas,” said Flagler County Sheriff Donald W. Fleming.

Anyone wishing to donate for the 2012 “Christmas With A Deputy” program may donate at the Intracoastal Bank of Palm Coast. Checks should be made payable to “Christmas With A Deputy, Inc.”. Anyone with questions should contact Sgt. Jones at (386) 437-4116 or through email at ljones@myfcsos.com .



