

Ft. Pierce Police Department

News Release

03/29/10

R. Sean Baldwin

Chief of Police



920 S. U.S. #1
Ft. Pierce, FL 34950

"Protecting the Community We Serve"

7-year Fort Pierce veteran named Treasure Coast law officer of the year

FORT PIERCE - Officer Daniela "Dani" Dreizehnter, the 2009 Treasure Coast Law Enforcement Officer of the Year, found it a little difficult today to donate the proceeds from her winnings.

Dreizehnter was selected as the first winner of the Fort Pierce Police Athletic League Treasure Coast Officer of the Year and received \$1,000 from the VanDuzer Foundation and a plaque from PAL. Scott VanDuzer, joined by members of the VanDuzer Foundation Board of Directors, made the announcement on March 27, 2010, during the 5th Annual Treasure Coast Police Officer's Ball held at the Pelican Yacht Club in Fort Pierce.

"I felt like I was at the Academy Awards," Dreizehnter said. "I faced some stiff competition and I told my husband there is no way I'm going to win."

"So often, law enforcement is defined by the number of people you put in jail or the number of tickets you write. Seldom is crime prevention or intervention when you are dealing with juveniles considered legitimate police work."

Before Saturday's announcement, Dreizehnter and her husband had decided that if she won the award and the money that came along with it, the money would be donated to local four charities that she volunteers for: Avenue D. Boys Choir, J.E. Sampson School, Kids At Hope and PACE Center for Girls. She attempted to complete the mission Monday to no avail.

"I was all excited, but it did not seem to work out as I had planned," Dreizehnter said. "The school was closed for spring break and I could not get in contact with the others."

"It's all about paying it forward and putting it where it counts," she said.

Dreizehnter, an officer since 2002, has spent much of her career serving the community by addressing issues facing the youth. In 2009, she was the driving force behind the development, coordination, and implementation of the Juvenile Arrest Monitoring or JAM program. The program, which targets juveniles on probation, is credited with decreasing juvenile violent crime by 29 percent, reducing overall juvenile crime by 17 percent and decreasing the number of repeat offenders by 8.8 percent.

"I did not do this alone. There are many spokes in the wheel," she said. "The credit goes to the officers who do the daily monitoring. I'm kind of behind the scenes."

While volunteering more than 15 hours a month to serve various nonprofit agencies, Dreizehnter manages to juggle the responsibilities of her job and duties as a foster parent.

"Officer Dreizehnter is passionate about protecting our community by working with children both as an officer and as a volunteer," Fort Pierce Police Chief R. Sean Baldwin said. "We're very proud of her accomplishments, and we thank the VanDuzer Foundation for recognizing her."

The other nominees included: Florida Highway Patrol Trooper Michael Coulter, Indian River County Sheriff's Deputy Chad MacConnell; Martin County Sheriff's Detective William Jones, Port St. Lucie Police Department Officer Robert O'Hara and St. Lucie County Sheriff's Detective Andrew Bolonka.

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Fort Pierce Police Officer Daniela Dreizehnter is presented with a plaque and a \$1,000 Scott VanDuzer, founder of the VanDuzer Foundation.