

Sugarmill Woods Bulletin

March 14, 2011

Dear Residents,

I want to bring your attention to a Special Project initiated by the Florida Attorney General. Although the project has been in existence since 1989, it may not be widely known. It is called **Seniors vs. Crime**.

Seniors vs. Crime

*In 1989, some of Florida's most effective crime fighters were unleashed through the creation of the **Attorney General's Seniors vs. Crime Project**. The Project allows seniors to be actively involved in their own and their younger citizens' protection. The volunteers, known as Senior Sleuths, (1) serve as eyes and ears to inform the Attorney General's office of current issues affecting seniors, (2) educate the public about scams and frauds, (3) provide on site help for seniors making large purchases, (4) assist law enforcement as actors with undercover operations and (5) manage consumer cases referred by my office or requested of the Project by other sources. These crime fighters are responsible for recovering millions of dollars for seniors who were intentional or unintentional victims of con artists or honest businesses.*

Volunteers work throughout the state in locations known as Offices. More than 3,000 Senior Sleuth volunteers provide important assistance to the state's crime fighting effort from those Offices or from the comfort of their homes.

Unethical businesses and individuals may believe that their senior target is helpless, when, in fact, the "target" may be working for the Attorney General or local law enforcement in an undercover role. Few volunteer opportunities permit this level of involvement for seniors in their own protection.

I am proud to be a partner with these outstanding citizens. Please give the Seniors vs. Crime Project a chance to help with your consumer related complaints.

Pam Bondi
Attorney General

Here in Citrus County, **Seniors vs. Crime** is a joint project of the Citrus County Sheriff's Office and Florida Attorney General's Office. It is designed to assist people in the community who have been scammed or taken advantage of.



The **Seniors vs. Crime** office can also review proposals, documents and other “offers” to verify their validity before you proceed. Since the program’s inception, the all volunteer staff has recovered over 1 million dollars in money and services for residents of the community and has prevented some people from being victimized in the first place. A trained staff works out of the Senior Store Front office located at 4093 North Lecanto Hwy in Beverly Hills. Anyone wishing to file a complaint should bring all paperwork and documents, including receipts and copies of checks if applicable. This program is free and you do not need to be a senior citizen to take advantage of their services. If you live near Inverness and / or Homosassa, we do have staff that can meet you at another Sheriff’s location but by appointment only.

For more information, please contact the Citrus County Office listed below:

Seniors vs. Crime Project

**Citrus County Office
4093 N. Lecanto Hwy.
Beverly Hills, FL 34465
Open: Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday
Hours: 8:30 a.m.- 1:30 p.m.
Phone: 352-249-9139
Manager: **Don Moran**
dmoran@sheriffcitrus.org**

On a related point, some residents have received calls from people pretending to be authorized charitable organizations asking for donations in support of EMTs / Critical Care Providers / etc. for Fire Rescue and Nature Coast EMS in Citrus County. I have talked to Fire Rescue Chief Larry Morabito and Nature Coast EMS President / CEO Michael Hall. Neither one of these organizations have contracted with any outside organization to do fund raising for them. Please challenge the caller, ask where they are calling from and who authorized them to call requesting donations. Please don't give these people any money and don't pledge to give them any money. Then report these calls to the Sheriff's Office. I received one of these calls and when I asked the caller the above questions, they immediately hung up the phone. Please be careful and do not give any money to these callers.

Sincerely,

Duane Dueker, President, Sugarmill Woods Civic Association

cc: Cypress Village POA, Oak Village Association, Southern Woods POA