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Resident deputy enjoys the small town



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Palo Verde People

Palo Verde - Imperial County resident Deputy Sheriff Justin Hectich, 25, states that he has enjoyed working in the town for the past two and half years.

Deputy Hectich started his law enforcement career three years ago in El Centro after graduating from the academy.

"I was lucky enough to be stationed in Palo Verde a few months after I became a deputy," he said.

He grew up in San Diego, where he lives when he is not on duty in Palo Verde.

Before going into the academy he attended college in San Diego.

After being hired on by the Imperial County Sheriff's Department, he still continues to study at Southwestern University in San Diego. He is completing his general studies degree with an eye on police science.

He is unmarried, as his full career, studies and hobbies do not give him much time.

He enjoys sports and his favorite team is the San Diego Padres.

Between patrolling the area and manning the substation in Blythe, he keeps a close eye on crime in the area, which he says is minimal.

The substation has a holding cell, which serves to lock up those who may have broken the law. Later the deputy transports the criminal to the El Centro jail facility.



Imperial County resident Deputy Sheriff Justin Hectich

Before the substation was built, deputies had to contain lawbreakers in their vehicle until they could be taken to El Centro, thereby leaving the town without an officer in charge.

The substation serves many purposes for the residents and a place for deputies to make out reports. Before the station was built, deputies had to write tickets and reports either in or on their vehicle or wherever they could find a place.

Deputy Hettich was recently installed as president of the Fort Gaston Historical Society and Museum. He states that he has enjoyed the position so far.

"It's great to be a part of the community and also to enjoy so much of the town's past history," he said.

Deputy Hettich also appreciates the help the Neighborhood Watch is doing.

"If we all work together it makes everything related to crime work much better," he said.

The Fort Gaston Historical Society and Museum recently held a rummage sale, which was successful, however, so many items were donated, Fort Gaston Historical Society officials decided to donate all that was left over to the Neighborhood Watch. They are contemplating a rummage sale soon in order to pay for signs to put up in the area.

Thanksgiving has come and gone but many remember the Thanksgiving feast held at the Lagoon Lodge. Many folks enjoyed the food and the companionship.

Do not forget tomorrow, Nov. 27, as the date the annual poker run will be held. To sign up, get to the Lagoon Lodge by 8 a.m. The run will prove to be as interesting as last year's. After the poker run is complete, contestants are asked to enjoy hamburgers and hot dogs at the Lagoon Lodge.

Many people who enjoy traveling to the sand dunes are still making their way to this sandy retreat.

Jim and Nora Walters held a family reunion at their home on the river south of Palo Verde. There were 52 relatives and friends in attendance. There were four turkeys, two hams and much food enjoyed at the event.

The Palo Verde Improvement Association did not hold any event during the thanksgiving holidays, however, board member Winnie Barrett, reported that many exciting events are being planned for the upcoming Christmas holidays.

Roberta Brandenburg, is still making big plans for the annual youth program. She reminds locals to be aware that the Christmas tree will be in the foyer of the post office in Palo Verde for residents to pick the person's picture they want to buy a gift for.

For more information, contact Brandenburg at the post office daily.

A craft sale will be held on Nov. 27-28 at Mac's Bait & Tackle. A town poker walk will be held on Nov. 28.