

Crisis Leadership: Rising to the Challenge

*The Punta Gorda Experience Involving the
Shooting of a Police Citizen Academy Attendee*

Howard Kunik, City Manager
City of Punta Gorda, Florida



Focus Areas

- Role of City Manager
- Role of Media
- Role of Police Department
- Communication and Transparency

Timeline

August 9, 2016

- City Manager receives call from Police Chief stating shooting occurred at citizens' academy...City Manager places two calls to City Council Members – one to inform them of the incident and second to inform them of the passing of the community demonstration participant...Florida Department Law Enforcement (FDLE) takes over scene and investigation at request of Police Chief...Officer involved in shooting placed on paid administrative leave...Police department (PD) initiates Critical Incident Stress Management...PD alerts media via press release and conference reporting tragic accident during simulation presentation

August 10, 2016

- PD provides additional information on incident and notifies State accreditation agency of incident...PD Public Information Officer takes over as central point of contact...Grief counseling availability announced...City Council and City Manager issue letter to Punta Gorda community

August 11, 2016

- PD Chief accepts full responsibility for actions of the department and officers in letter to community...general order issued regarding use of firearms and ammunition

Gold for women's gymnastics
The U.S. women's gymnastic team won the gold, making it the second straight Olympic triumph for the U.S. SEE SPORTS

Lawsuit against Clinton
The parents of two American killed in the Benghazi attack have filed a lawsuit against Hillary Clinton. SEE USA TODAY

CHARLOTTE SUN
August 18, 2015

LIVE LIKE A TOURIST

Give yoga a chance
A 10-minute yoga class is held at the Charlotte Civic Center. The class is held at the Charlotte Civic Center. The class is held at the Charlotte Civic Center.

Report: Cop shoots woman during Citizen's Academy
A woman was fatally shot during a Citizen's Academy training exercise. The woman was shot during a training exercise. The woman was shot during a training exercise.

to hug or not to hug

Government closes Goodwill investigation
The U.S. government has closed an investigation into the death of a woman. The investigation was closed. The investigation was closed.

MEMORIAL SERVICE FOR SLAIN WOMAN'S SON
A memorial service will be held for the son of the slain woman. The memorial service will be held for the son of the slain woman.

Expert: Police violated 'every single rule of firearm safety'
An expert on police procedures says the officers involved in the shooting violated every rule of firearm safety. The expert says the officers violated every rule of firearm safety.

IF YOU GO
A list of events and activities in the Charlotte area. A list of events and activities in the Charlotte area.

INDEX
A list of classified ads and other information. A list of classified ads and other information.

Initial news coverage

News broke very close to paper's deadline; sketchy details in first story.

Following day, the public begins to learn particulars of incident.

CHARLOTTE SUN
August 17, 2015

What went wrong?

Unthinkable tragedy at citizens police academy

Expert: Police violated 'every single rule of firearm safety'

Slain woman's son: 'Remember the person she was'

MEMORIAL SERVICE FOR SLAIN WOMAN'S SON

INDEX

The Charlotte Sun newspaper page featuring the headline "What went wrong?" and several sub-headlines. The page includes a photograph of a person in a hoodie, a photograph of a woman, and a photograph of a man. The page also includes several columns of text and a small advertisement for a memorial service.

Timeline

August 12, 2016

- PD purchases 2 additional simunition training guns as other live training guns are removed from service...Assigns light duty employee to assist with social media related duties

August 14, 2016

- PD issues General Order prohibiting use of less lethal shotguns and munitions, reorganized armory to prohibit comingling of lethal and less-lethal ammunition, and called for inspection of every vehicle for any unauthorized ammunition

August 15, 2016

- City Manager initiates formation of Internal Affairs (IA) Investigation Team

August 16, 2016

- Chief submits proposed new accreditation standard related to prohibition of use of firearms during scenario-based training and prohibition of comingling of lethal and less lethal weapons and ammunition to both state and national agencies...Council, City Manager and PD Command Staff attend funeral...City pays all funeral-related expenses

Timeline

August 17, 2016

- PD begins Internal Morale Initiative whereby 3 supportive letters, emails or cards per day sent out to department employees to highlight community support to move forward...Grief counseling group meeting held for community members and witnesses of incident

August 18, 2016

- City secures services of communication firm to assist in public information and put together plan of action...PD creates webpage to act as repository and communications method to public...PD cancels plans to host regional canine trials in Punta Gorda...PD reviews all applicable standard operating procedures, amends where needed, adds section for scenario based training and responsibilities of Community Services Program Supervisor

August 22, 2016

- City Manager appoints IA Investigation Team to consist of Police Department Lieutenant (not in attendance at incident), Labor Attorney and former Police Chief in Southwest Florida...Team findings, when completed, to be provided to CM for final disposition...City Council notified of team members

August 23, 2016

- PD holds moment of silence and prayer service with those Chamber members who were in attendance at night of incident

Media descends on our small town, newspaper



READER ADVOCATE

What's your credit score?

It's important to check your credit score regularly to make sure it's accurate. There are a number of ways to check your credit score, and you can get a free credit report from the three major credit bureaus: Equifax, Experian and TransUnion. You can also get a credit score from your lender or a credit monitoring service. If you're not sure what your credit score is, you can get a free credit report from AnnualCreditReport.com. This website provides a free credit report from the three major credit bureaus. You can also get a credit score from your lender or a credit monitoring service. If you're not sure what your credit score is, you can get a free credit report from AnnualCreditReport.com.

Many questions. Few answers.

PCPD officer's troubled past follows him

BY JIM HAYES

It's a familiar story: A man who has been in the news for a while, and now he's back in the news. This time, it's about a police officer's troubled past. The officer, who has been in the news for a while, is now back in the news. This time, it's about a police officer's troubled past. The officer, who has been in the news for a while, is now back in the news. This time, it's about a police officer's troubled past.



Photo credit: Charlotte Sun

AMING THE MOST QUESTIONS POLICE WANT

BY JIM HAYES

Police officers are often asked a lot of questions. Some of the most common questions are about their training, their equipment, and their duties. Police officers are often asked a lot of questions. Some of the most common questions are about their training, their equipment, and their duties.

to be a student for the first time. I was in the news for a while, and now I'm back in the news. This time, it's about a police officer's troubled past. The officer, who has been in the news for a while, is now back in the news. This time, it's about a police officer's troubled past.

Hard look at facts begins

Reporters look into employment history of officer and chief

QUESTIONS

FROM PAGE 1

office, which he says, sounds like a typical day. The New York Times' article didn't mention any of the details of the investigation. The article also didn't mention that the officer was a former police officer. The article also didn't mention that the officer was a former police officer.

COUNSELING OFFERED

FROM PAGE 1

The officer was offered counseling by the police department. The officer was offered counseling by the police department. The officer was offered counseling by the police department.



Photo credit: Charlotte Sun

The officer was offered counseling by the police department. The officer was offered counseling by the police department. The officer was offered counseling by the police department.

LADY

FROM PAGE 1

The officer was offered counseling by the police department. The officer was offered counseling by the police department. The officer was offered counseling by the police department.

MEMORIAL FOR MARY KNOWLTON

FROM PAGE 1

The officer was offered counseling by the police department. The officer was offered counseling by the police department. The officer was offered counseling by the police department.



Photo credit: Charlotte Sun

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OFFICE

FROM PAGE 1

The officer was offered counseling by the police department. The officer was offered counseling by the police department. The officer was offered counseling by the police department.

NEW CSO ENGLEWOOD STATION

FROM PAGE 1

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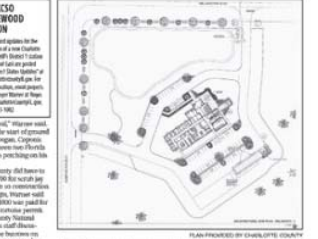


Photo credit: Charlotte Sun

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DAVID

FROM PAGE 1

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Timeline

August 24, 2016

- City Manager discusses incident impact at Council meeting...Chief meets with Charlotte Sun regarding open conversation on topics that can be discussed without interfering with FDLE and internal investigations

August 25, 2016

- Chief rolls out dedicated online resource for information to general media...Names of IA Investigation Team placed on City website

August 26, 2016

- City Manager and Police Chief address Chamber Board regarding investigation process and thank them for their continuing support

August 29, 2016

- City Attorney provides opinion that FDLE report is not public record until State Attorney's Office (SAO) reviews and determines prosecution...City receives another legal opinion that video of incident is exempt from public disclosure...PD distributes new policy requiring safety officer be assigned to all scenario-based training and scenario-based community demonstrations

October 13, 2016

- PD completes inspection of all primary, secondary and off-duty firearms to ensure compliance with agency policy

Timeline

October 18, 2016

- City notified by Charlotte Sun (while requesting comment) that FDLE released their investigative report to SAO...PD calls FDLE and confirmed that report was released to SAO...PD issues public statement

November 2, 2016

- PD sends grief counseling reminder to Police and Fire personnel as well as members of Chamber who were in attendance

November 2, 2016

- City Council approves settlement agreement with Knowlton Family...City Manager participates in settlement process with family representatives, family legal firm and City's insurance carrier attorney prior to placement on Council agenda

November 10, 2016

- City Manager appoints fourth member of IA Investigation Team (Southwest Florida Public Service Academy Director) and team member background placed on website

Elephant in the room
The Sun's boardroom was filled with the air, tension, from early morning to late evening. The meeting was held in the Sun's boardroom, and it was a long one. The meeting was held in the Sun's boardroom, and it was a long one. The meeting was held in the Sun's boardroom, and it was a long one.

Sheriff addresses jail controversy with press
By GREGORY WYSE
The Sheriff's Office is addressing the controversy surrounding the jail. The Sheriff's Office is addressing the controversy surrounding the jail. The Sheriff's Office is addressing the controversy surrounding the jail.



Watching ... waiting ...
The waiting game is on. The waiting game is on. The waiting game is on. The waiting game is on. The waiting game is on.



Allegiant adds Dayton route
Allegiant Air is adding a new route to Dayton. Allegiant Air is adding a new route to Dayton. Allegiant Air is adding a new route to Dayton.

YouTube prankster banned from Lemon Bay High
A YouTube prankster has been banned from Lemon Bay High. A YouTube prankster has been banned from Lemon Bay High. A YouTube prankster has been banned from Lemon Bay High.

Police chief gets loud support at 'Coffee' event
The police chief received loud support at a 'Coffee' event. The police chief received loud support at a 'Coffee' event. The police chief received loud support at a 'Coffee' event.

More flooding woes
Deep Creek in deep water. More flooding woes. Deep Creek in deep water. More flooding woes. Deep Creek in deep water.

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SPORTS 10-12

CHARLOTTE 13-14

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86 74 **COUPON** **MAKES \$146.131** **CALL US AT 770-777-1234**

Elephant in the room

Some want to hold Chief responsible...

... public support for Chief seems to grow

LIVE LIKE A TOURIST
Meet an astronaut
Wanna be an astronaut? Meet an astronaut. Meet an astronaut. Meet an astronaut.

Police chief gets loud support at 'Coffee' event
By GREGORY WYSE
The police chief received loud support at a 'Coffee' event. The police chief received loud support at a 'Coffee' event. The police chief received loud support at a 'Coffee' event.



Charlotte cycling guide
The Charlotte Cycling Club is offering a cycling guide. The Charlotte Cycling Club is offering a cycling guide. The Charlotte Cycling Club is offering a cycling guide.

More flooding woes
Deep Creek in deep water. More flooding woes. Deep Creek in deep water. More flooding woes. Deep Creek in deep water.



Special for Charlotte teachers
A special offer for Charlotte teachers. A special offer for Charlotte teachers. A special offer for Charlotte teachers.

Hermine leaves two properties 'unsafe'
A Hermine has left two properties unsafe. A Hermine has left two properties unsafe. A Hermine has left two properties unsafe.

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SPORTS 10-12

CHARLOTTE 13-14

CALL US AT 770-777-1234

86 74 **COUPON** **MAKES \$156.310** **CALL US AT 770-777-1234**

Timeline

December 13, 2016

- PD finalizes purchase of less lethal launchers to replace less lethal shotguns

December 13, 2016

- PD donates less lethal shotguns to another law enforcement agency to eliminate possibility of using shotguns in less lethal or training situation, and having ammunition confusion

January 12, 2017

- PD sends reminder of grief counseling availability to employees as well as Chamber attendees

January 25, 2017

- PD completes training with all sworn officers in safety officer responsibilities

ONLY IN TODAY'S SUN
State ups up case in murder trial

The state called its first witness in the state murder trial of a man accused of killing a woman in 2011. Her relatives were held in the north in the following page.

SEE PAGE 2

Tip down monetary law for WII veterans

Overseas mission...
SEE PAGE 3

TOP STORIES FROM LEA TOWN & SPINETS

- Walkers along the light rail
- Riding along the light rail
- Reviews of family law

SEE PAGE 1 & 2

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6 months, still no answers

The public's interest in the investigation of the shooting of Mary Knowlton has faded, but the state's Attorney General says the case is still under scrutiny.



MARY KNOWLTON
Knowlton's shooting still under scrutiny

THE BOTTOM LINE

2016 APRIL
Car theft down 10% from 2015

2016 SPRING
Car theft down 10% from 2015

2016 OCTOBER
Car theft down 10% from 2015

2016 JUNE
Car theft down 10% from 2015

2016 AUG. 9
Car theft down 10% from 2015

2016 OCTOBER
Car theft down 10% from 2015

2016 OCT. 17
Car theft down 10% from 2015

2016 NOVEMBER
Car theft down 10% from 2015

2016 DECEMBER
Car theft down 10% from 2015

2017 JANUARY
Car theft down 10% from 2015

2017 FEB. 9
Car theft down 10% from 2015

GOOD MORNING

Don't be too embarrassed to cough it up

What if you have a cough that won't go away? It could be a sign of a more serious condition. The good news is that there are many treatments available to help you get back to normal. Call us today for more information.

PHILIP DEE
PHARMACY

Very few answers

Paper keeps asking for updates, Highlights the natural struggle between the press and these situations

Challenges are nothing new for police chief

By CHRIS GARLAND
Special to the Sun



Tom Lewis
Police Chief

Tom Lewis, Charlotte's 10th police chief, has spent the first 100 days of his tenure in the job, and he says he's facing a number of challenges. Lewis, who has worked for the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police Department for 25 years, was named chief in January 2016.

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SHOOTING



PHOTOGRAPH BY

The Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police Department is investigating the shooting of a man in the city. The police are looking for a suspect who is believed to be involved in the crime.

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7:00pm showtime

Timeline

February 22, 2017

- City Manager receives phone call from State Attorney advising charges to be brought against Police Chief and Officer involved in shooting...City Manager informs Council Members of charges...Two hours later State Attorney announces Officer charged with first degree manslaughter (felony) and Chief with second degree misdemeanor (culpable negligence)...City Manager meets with PD staff to address questions, offer support and encourage continuance of high standard services...City Manager solicits for public information services from communication firm

February 23, 2017

- City Manager issues media statement and hold press conference announcing Officer issued notice of pre-disciplinary hearing before Human Resources Manager and Labor Attorney to determine future employment status...Chief placed on administrative leave with pay pending further review

February 27, 2017

- City Manager attends grief counseling session with academy attendees and provides update on personnel actions and investigative process

POLICE CHIEF, COP CHARGED IN DEATH

ONLY IN TODAY'S SUN

The future of solar is in young hands
 Duke Power is lighting up a new generation of solar power for its customers before an auction of electricity in Charlotte County today.

Bygone residents charged with manufacturing cocaine
 A federal judge has charged two men with manufacturing and trafficking cocaine, according to the Charlotte County Sheriff's Office.

TOP STORIES FROM USA TODAY & SPORTS
 1. Maryland's record of 13 consecutive wins ends with a 7-6 loss to Virginia Tech.

SEE PAGE 9



Knowlton investigation yields manslaughter charge for Coef; Lewis faces negligence charge

By ANNE DESERL, Staff Writer

PLANTA GORDIA — In a surprise move, Charlotte Police Chief Tom Lewis and Officer Gary Knott have been charged in the manslaughter death of a 22-year-old man, known as Robert Knowlton, who was shot and killed by Officer Knott on Aug. 9, 2016.

The charges were announced in a press conference at the Charlotte County Courthouse on Monday.

Chief Lewis is charged with negligent homicide, while Officer Knott is charged with manslaughter.

The charges were announced in a press conference at the Charlotte County Courthouse on Monday.

Timeline
FEBRUARY 22, 2017
 Police chief and officer charged

AUGUST 11, 2016
 Police chief accepts blame

AUGUST 9, 2016
 Police officer shoots citizen

AUGUST 9, 2016
 Planta Gordia citizens academy



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 Classified ... 14

GOOD MORNING

Early fishing trips born from tradition



A tradition of early morning fishing trips has been passed down through generations in the Charlotte area. The tradition is rooted in the love of the outdoors and the joy of spending time with family and friends.

The tradition is rooted in the love of the outdoors and the joy of spending time with family and friends.

Officer & Chief charged

Officer's charge was expected. Chief's was a bit of a surprise.

POLICE CHIEF 1

Knowlton, who was shot in the chest, was taken to a hospital where he died. Lewis, who was charged with negligent homicide, and Knott, who was charged with manslaughter, were both charged in the death of Knowlton.



Chief Lewis, who was charged with negligent homicide, and Officer Knott, who was charged with manslaughter, were both charged in the death of Knowlton.



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ROBERT

The title of main man in the film 'The Way, Way Back' is a bit of a surprise.

The title of main man in the film 'The Way, Way Back' is a bit of a surprise.

Community members show support for Lewis

By ANNE ESKER
Staff Writer

Support for Francis Lewis' retention as chief of the Charlotte Police Department is growing, with community members gathered for a rally in front of the police station on Tuesday.

problems with him," he said. "I'm not saying he's a bad person, but I think he's got to go."

He said Lewis' retention is a popularity contest, and he wants to see a change in leadership. "I don't think we need a chief who's just there to keep the peace," he said. "We need a chief who's going to lead us through these tough times."



Community members showed support for Chief Lewis last night outside of City Hall in Friday.

Community members showed support for Chief Lewis last night outside of City Hall in Friday. The rally was held in front of the police station, and participants held signs that said "KEEP CHIEF".

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COMMUNITY NEWS BRIEFS

| | |
|---|---|
| Free community seminar The Charlotte County property appraiser will hold a free seminar on property appraisals. | 2013 property tax exemptions The Charlotte County property appraiser will hold a free seminar on property appraisals. |
|---|---|

CHARITY 5K RUNS
The Charlotte County property appraiser will hold a free seminar on property appraisals.

Public Invited to Enjoy Progress at Babcock Ranch During Founder's Festival & Sun Run March 11th and 12th

Babcock Ranch is a premier resort located in the heart of the Charlotte region. The resort features a variety of amenities, including a golf course, tennis courts, and a spa. The founder's festival and sun run are held annually in March, and are a popular event for residents and visitors alike.

The divide continues

Community split between retaining or replacing Chief

The Charlotte Police Department is facing a significant divide over the retention of Chief Francis Lewis. While some community members support his continued leadership, others believe a change in leadership is necessary. The debate is ongoing, with both sides presenting their arguments.

Widower: 'Do the right thing' Says chief, officer issue should not be a popularity contest

By ANNE ESKER
Staff Writer



The widower of a Charlotte Police Officer says that the department's decision on whether to retain Chief Francis Lewis should be based on merit, not popularity.

The widower, who is a former police officer himself, expressed his concerns about the current leadership and the future of the department. He believes that the department should focus on the quality of its leadership and the well-being of its officers.

Charlotte County to fund new hangar

Charlotte County is planning to fund a new hangar for the county's emergency services. The hangar will be used for the storage and maintenance of emergency vehicles and equipment. The project is expected to be completed in the next few months.

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Miracle Ear is a leading provider of hearing aids in America. The company offers a variety of hearing aid options, including behind-the-ear and in-the-ear models. Miracle Ear is committed to providing high-quality hearing aids and excellent customer service.

Timeline

March 1, 2017

- City conducts pre-disciplinary meeting with Officer and his Attorney

March 3, 2017

- State Attorney releases FDLE information to City in order for internal review team to begin process...Police Lieutenant informs IA Investigative Team that review process/investigation is underway

March 8, 2017

- State Attorney furnishes discovery disclosure to Defendant Attorney

March 9, 2017

- City Human Resources Manager terminates Officer's employment with the Police Department

March 15, 2017

- City publishes FDLE information on website and informs Knowlton Family Pastor and Chamber prior to its publication

March 16, 2017

- Officer notified City of intent to appeal termination

ONLY IN TODAY'S SUN

Last call at the Bly
Bly town manager and his staff performed at the Bly town manager's last call on Tuesday, March 14, 2017. Bly's mayor is Tom Zamboni. **SEE PAGE 16**

3 TOP STORIES FROM TODAY'S SUN

1. Bly's top stories from fellow officers
2. Bly's top stories from fellow officers
3. Bly's top stories from fellow officers

SEE USA TODAY

4. Bly's top stories from fellow officers

SEE SPORTS

5. Bly's top stories from fellow officers

CLASSIFICATION: The Florida
Self-reported to be a member of the Bly town manager's staff. Bly's top stories from fellow officers.

THE WIN: Bly's top stories from fellow officers

6. Bly's top stories from fellow officers

SPORTS: Bly's top stories from fellow officers

7. Bly's top stories from fellow officers

CLASSIFIED: Bly's top stories from fellow officers

8. Bly's top stories from fellow officers

SPORTS: Bly's top stories from fellow officers

9. Bly's top stories from fellow officers

LETHAL MISTAKE



Last call at the Bly
Bly town manager and his staff performed at the Bly town manager's last call on Tuesday, March 14, 2017. Bly's mayor is Tom Zamboni. **SEE PAGE 16**

FDLE: Ammo came from fellow officer. Coel used own gun during fatal police demonstration

By Amy Roberts
A Florida Department of Law Enforcement (FDLE) report says that a fellow officer provided the ammunition for a fatal police demonstration in Charlotte on Aug. 3, 2016. The report, released on Tuesday, says that the officer used his own handgun to shoot and kill a man during the demonstration.

The report, which is confidential, says that the officer used his own handgun to shoot and kill a man during the demonstration. The report also says that the officer used his own handgun to shoot and kill a man during the demonstration.

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FDLE report released by City

State agency provides the details

Honoring the women in my life, now and then

Robert Lee

It was a beautiful day in the heart of the city. The sun was shining brightly, and the birds were singing. I was standing in front of a large crowd of people, and I was feeling a sense of pride and accomplishment. I was about to make a speech, and I was feeling nervous. But when I started to speak, all of my fears went away. I was honoring the women in my life, now and then.

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POLICE

FROM PAGE 1

Charlotte, who was chosen as a volunteer for the program. Coel, who was chosen as a volunteer for the program, was a police officer who was working for the Charlotte Police Department. He was a member of the Charlotte Police Department's Reserve Force.



The photo, taken at the scene by Charlotte Police, shows a group of the City's Reserve Force members, including Coel, on Aug. 3, 2016.

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VIEWPOINT

OUR VIEW

Taking responsibility for Police Department failures

BY STEPHEN P. FOSTER
 Chief Tom Lewis has done a lot to make the police department a better place to work for its members. He has done a lot to make the police department a better place to live for the community. He has done a lot to make the police department a better place to live for the city.

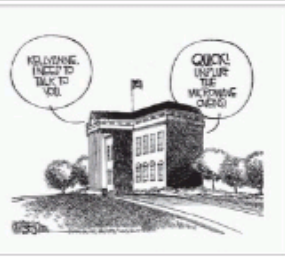
But when it comes to the police department's performance in the case of the Mary Knowlton shooting, the community and the city are looking for a different answer. They are looking for an answer that takes responsibility for the failures of the police department and the city.

Editorial — Robert E. Lee
Executive editor — Jim Conaway
Editorial page editor — Stephen Reinhardt
Community Editor — John Heilbrunn
Staff writer — [unreadable]

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

More Tax Dollars for the Police

The police department is the backbone of our city. It is the only agency that is responsible for the safety of our citizens. It is the only agency that is responsible for the protection of our property. It is the only agency that is responsible for the enforcement of our laws.



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Police Chief Tom Lewis

Chief Tom Lewis has done a lot to make the police department a better place to work for its members. He has done a lot to make the police department a better place to live for the community. He has done a lot to make the police department a better place to live for the city.

But when it comes to the police department's performance in the case of the Mary Knowlton shooting, the community and the city are looking for a different answer. They are looking for an answer that takes responsibility for the failures of the police department and the city.

Credibility of Congress

The credibility of Congress is at a low point. The public has lost faith in the government. The public has lost faith in the leaders of the government. The public has lost faith in the institutions of the government.

People need jobs

People need jobs. People need jobs. People need jobs. People need jobs. People need jobs. People need jobs. People need jobs. People need jobs. People need jobs. People need jobs.

Don't abandon poor children

Don't abandon poor children. Don't abandon poor children. Don't abandon poor children. Don't abandon poor children. Don't abandon poor children. Don't abandon poor children. Don't abandon poor children. Don't abandon poor children. Don't abandon poor children.

Police officers need, white, blue

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HOW TO SUBMIT A LETTER TO THE EDITOR
 Letters should be typed, double-spaced, on one side of the page. They should be addressed to the Editor, San Francisco Chronicle, 400 California Street, San Francisco, CA 94104. Letters should be accompanied by a return address. Letters should be submitted to the Editor at least two weeks before they are to be published. Letters should be submitted to the Editor at least two weeks before they are to be published.

Paper calls for Chief to resign

“Like many in Punta Gorda, we find Chief Tom Lewis to be a likeable, open and sincere leader. The community and his staff seem to admire and respect him as chief and boss. His work outside the police department is exemplary for any department head or person of higher rank in a community. He has always been available to discuss issues with both the media and the community. We respect that. The community respects that. But, as the chief executive of the department responsible for public safety, in the case involving the accidental shooting of Mary Knowlton, Lewis failed. There is no softer way to put it. It was a failure of departmental planning, procedures and operations, with a death resulting. Ultimately, the chief law enforcement officer bears responsibility for this tragic failure. . . .

. . . . Chief Lewis must shoulder the responsibility he placed on himself. He must face the fact his department didn't conduct itself properly and that he can never regain the credibility necessary for the Punta Gorda Police Department to function as it must. We mean Chief Lewis no ill will. He has many strong attributes and many friends in the community. That bodes well for his future — whatever that might be. But, the honorable and proper thing for Tom Lewis is to resign from his position and spare the city and the people charged with a decision on his future even more agony as the process plays out.”

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Timeline

April 3, 2017

- Independent review team publishes review & analysis of Punta Gorda Police Involved Citizens' Academy Shooting

April 20, 2017

- Appeal hearing for Officer conducted

May 24, 2017

- City Manager upholds Officer's termination...City Manager conducts roundtable discussions with representatives of business sector and residential neighborhoods regarding police department paradigm, culture and service level

May 26, 2017

- Police Community Services Lieutenant resigns

June 2, 2017

- Police Operations Captain resigns

June 23, 2017

- Trial start date for Police Chief

June 27, 2017

- Formal Internal Affairs Investigation, promulgated under Police Bill of Rights, initiated

June 29, 2017

- Police Chief found not guilty of culpable negligence

Jury: Boater guilty of BUI, not manslaughter

By BLAINE ALLEN
Charlotte, News Column

PLEASANTON, Va. (AP) — A jury ruled Tuesday that a boater was guilty of boating under the influence but not guilty of the manslaughter charge that had been leveled against him earlier in the trial.

The jury of five men and five women deliberated for about 12 hours before reaching its verdict. Juror No. 1, who presided over the trial, said he was confident in the jury's decision.

On Monday, the jury had found the defendant guilty of manslaughter. That verdict was based on evidence that the defendant had been drinking alcohol while operating the boat. The jury also found that the defendant had been driving the boat while intoxicated.

The defendant, George Williams, 45, had been charged with boating under the influence and manslaughter. Five hours after the verdict, Williams' attorney said he was pleased with the outcome.

Williams was arrested after a boating accident in the Chesapeake Bay in 2015. He was charged with boating under the influence and manslaughter. The charges were based on evidence that Williams had been drinking alcohol while operating the boat.

POLICE CHIEF FOUND NOT GUILTY

By HANE IASER
Punta Gorda, News Column



Punta Gorda Police Chief Thomas Lewis walked out of the courtroom Thursday after his jury verdict. Lewis was acquitted of manslaughter charges in the death of a woman whose car he was driving when it was struck by a truck. Lewis was charged with manslaughter after a fatal crash in Punta Gorda in 2015. The jury found Lewis not guilty of manslaughter but guilty of boating under the influence.

VICTIM'S FAMILY REACTS TO VERDICT

'I knew we weren't going to get justice'

By HANE IASER
Punta Gorda, News Column



Several family members of the woman killed in the crash reacted to the verdict. One family member said, "I knew we weren't going to get justice." The family was devastated by the verdict. They had hoped for a conviction, but the jury found the police chief not guilty of manslaughter.

Ray Kowalski, brother of the victim, says he knew the verdict was coming.

INSIDE

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 Sports: **12**
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CLASSIFIED

DEALS: **12**
 Real Estate: **12**
 Classified: **12**
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Credit scores more important than you think

By [Name]

As the banks of the region work to help you understand your credit score, it's important to know that your credit score is a key factor in many financial decisions. A higher credit score can help you get better interest rates on loans and credit cards. It can also help you qualify for better job opportunities and even housing.

There are several ways to improve your credit score. First, make sure you pay all your bills on time. Second, keep your credit utilization low. Third, check your credit report for errors and dispute them if you find any. Finally, use credit responsibly and avoid opening too many new credit accounts.



Acquitted

Internal affairs investigation can now get started

VIEWPOINT

Our View
Moving on, one year past Knowlton tragedy

Editorial page editor — Jim Givens
Commentary Editor — John Rockwell
Send letters to viewpoint@charlottesun.com



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Health care flex possible
 By [Name]

Streamline media trolling president
 By [Name]

Are our own killers
 By [Name]

Be careful what you wish for
 By [Name]

Trump brought shame on Souths
 By [Name]

Health care flex possible
 A response that has been previously used in a health care bill, the flex clause, would allow states to opt out of the Affordable Care Act. This would give states more control over their health care systems.

Streamline media trolling president
 The constant stream of media reports about the president's actions is becoming a nuisance. Streamlining these reports would allow the public to get the news without the constant interruptions.

Are our own killers
 The recent wave of mass shootings in the United States is a tragedy. We must ask ourselves if we are our own killers. We must take steps to prevent these attacks.

Be careful what you wish for
 The recent election results have surprised many people. We must be careful of the consequences of our actions. We must be prepared for the future.

Trump brought shame on Souths
 The recent election results have brought shame on the South. We must stand up for our values and our way of life. We must not let the South be defined by the actions of a few people.

Lee's syphilis surge not as rampant in Charlotte

By ANNE HANSEN

Charlotte, N.C. — A surge in new syphilis cases that nearly tripled in Lee County in recent months has not led to the same vigilance and scrutiny common to Charlotte and nearby cities, according to a report by the Florida Department of Health.

In Lee County, the number of new syphilis cases rose from 10 in 2015 to 29 in 2016, according to the report. In Charlotte, the number of new syphilis cases rose from 10 in 2015 to 29 in 2016, according to the report.

One year later



Mary Knoelton was named and killed by the Punta Gorda police officer Lee Gaid during a Citizens Academy ceremony on Aug. 18, 2016.

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Punta Gorda: Internal affairs investigation ongoing

By ANNE HANSEN

Punta Gorda, Fla. — An internal affairs investigation into the death of a woman shot by a Punta Gorda police officer is ongoing, according to a report by the Florida Department of Health.

The investigation is ongoing, and the Florida Department of Health is working to determine the cause of the death.

Mary Knoelton's widow: 'Life will never be the same'

By ANNE HANSEN

Mary Knoelton's widow, Mary, says that her life will never be the same since the death of her daughter. She is struggling to cope with the loss and the circumstances surrounding the death.

Walking historic streets in Ybor City

In the early 1980s, the best time to visit Ybor City was in the winter. The weather was perfect, and the streets were lined with historic buildings and shops.

Today, Ybor City is a vibrant neighborhood with a mix of historic and modern architecture. It's a great place to visit and explore.

DEBBIE

FROM PAGE 1



Debbie was shot in the back by a police officer during a traffic stop.

Debbie was shot in the back by a police officer during a traffic stop. The incident occurred on a highway near Charlotte, N.C.

The police officer involved in the shooting is currently on leave. The investigation is ongoing.

LIFE

FROM PAGE 1

The investigation into the death of a woman shot by a Punta Gorda police officer is ongoing, according to a report by the Florida Department of Health.

The investigation is ongoing, and the Florida Department of Health is working to determine the cause of the death.

INVESTIGATION

FROM PAGE 1

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MAIN LOBBY

FROM PAGE 1

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IF YOU GO

Left: The 11-page report on the shooting of a woman by a police officer during a traffic stop. The report details the circumstances of the incident and the actions of the police officer.

Right: A photograph of the Punta Gorda police officer involved in the shooting.

THE LINE

Aug. 31, 2017: A report on the death of a woman shot by a Punta Gorda police officer. The report includes details about the investigation and the actions of the police officer.

Sept. 1, 2017: A report on the ongoing investigation into the death of a woman shot by a Punta Gorda police officer.

INSIDE

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Sept. 1, 2017: A report on the ongoing investigation into the death of a woman shot by a Punta Gorda police officer.

Report details police failings

By ANNE HANSEN

Charlotte, N.C. — A report by the Florida Department of Health details the failings of police officers in Charlotte and nearby cities. The report highlights the lack of oversight and accountability for police officers.

Suspect named in Grove City shooting death

By ANNE HANSEN

Grove City, Ohio — A suspect has been named in the shooting death of a woman in Grove City, Ohio. The suspect is a 21-year-old man who was arrested on charges of murder and aggravated battery.

Confederate statues a contentious topic

By ANNE HANSEN

Confederate statues are a contentious topic in many parts of the United States. Some people believe that the statues honor the fallen soldiers, while others believe that they glorify the Confederacy and its role in the Civil War.



The statue of Confederate Gen. Robert E. Lee is a controversial symbol in many parts of the United States.

REPORT 1

Aug. 31, 2017: A report on the death of a woman shot by a Punta Gorda police officer. The report includes details about the investigation and the actions of the police officer.

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REPORT 2

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Timeline

August 25, 2017

- Internal Affairs Team completes its Professional Standards Investigation findings and conclusions...City Manager provides Chief and Lieutenant – Training with report and discusses preliminary disciplinary actions

August 27 and 28, 2017

- City Manager meets with City Council members to discuss IA report findings

August 28, 2017

- City Manager meets with Chief and requests resignation or he will be terminated...City Manager meets with Lieutenant and informs him of disciplinary action

August 30, 2017

- City Manager discharges Police Chief from employment

August 31 and September 1, 2017

- City Manager meets with business owners, neighborhood representatives, incident attendees from Chamber of Commerce, and Do The Right Thing Board members to have more in depth conversations regarding decision-making process and solicit feedback...recruitment for new Police Chief initiated

Locals help Texas storm victims

By BERNARD BROWN
Over 100 volunteers gathered Tuesday...

Police Chief Lewis says he's fired; city denies

By ANNE KIRK
Punta Gorda Police Chief Tom Lewis says he was fired...

Locals continue Hurricane Harvey help

By BERNARD BROWN
Over 100 volunteers gathered Tuesday...

Punta Gorda Police chief Tom Lewis officially fired

By ANNE KIRK
Punta Gorda City Manager Howard Kunk announced the official resignation of Police Chief Tom Lewis Wednesday...

Waterfront Resort will be 'one of a kind'

By JENNIFER HANCOCK
Allegiant Airline CEO Executive Vice President...

Local officials, boosters tout project

By GARY WATSON
Charlotte County Local government officials and high-profile boosters...

Hitting pause on body cameras

By ANNE KIRK
Punta Gorda Police Department has an exceptional record of safety protocols...

Despite call for more cameras, some police question cost, benefits

By LINDSEY COYNE
Southwest Florida agencies use the most body cameras in use...

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Prowling around the Naples Zoo at Caribbean Gardens

With the vibrant new season of fall, we were first here...

The true confessions of a former smoker

As a former smoker, I'm understanding of those who are trying to quit...



City Manager Howard Kunk announces the termination of Police Chief Tom Lewis at a press conference Wednesday.

CHIEF FROM PAGE 1

"Overall, the report demonstrates a commitment to citizen safety...

My decision: Tom Lewis could not stay

Based on this information and other careful deliberation, I did not feel I could justify...

GOOD MORNING
Prowling around the Naples Zoo at Caribbean Gardens

GOOD MORNING
The true confessions of a former smoker

She's! for PORT CHARLOTTE
English Bulldog, English Bulldog, English Bulldog

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