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South Florida Business Journal

Crime prevention

Nonprofit's members work to educate civic groups and schools

Premium content from South Florida Business Journal by Jim Freer

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James DePelisi, president of of the Broward County Crime Commission, checks a building and the surrounding area.

James DePelisi and his colleagues are taking some new steps to get businesses involved in projects to help local police.

DePelisi is in his second year as president of the **Broward County Crime Commission**. The nonprofit organization and its 125 members work with the Broward County Sheriff's Office and other enforcement agencies to organize anti-crime educational programs for civic groups and schools, raise funds for those agencies and help them prepare programs such as anti-terror training.

This fall's biggest fundraising event is the inaugural Broward County Crime Commission Golf Classic, Oct. 15 at Palm-Aire Country Club in Pompano Beach.

The commission will use proceeds for its donations to police forces. Police programs that combat child predators and help businesses prepare disaster recovery plans are among the commission's priorities.

"There is so much more that businesses and individuals can do," to help police forces on those and other issues that are consuming more of their time, said DePelisi, president of LDV Capital, a Sunrise-based financial advisory firm.

Annual commission dues are \$50 for members and \$250 for directors.

The commission's advisory board comprises of state and federal judges, police chiefs and acting Broward Sheriff Alfred Lamberti.

Former Secretary of State and retired Gen. Alexander Haig, a Boca Raton resident, is a senior adviser to the commission. He uses his military contacts to help the commission recruit former members of the armed forces for police forces.

Anti-terror protection a priority

DePelisi joined the commission in 2004, after he met founding Chairman Frank Pinter at a civic event. He has made anti-terror, hurricane preparedness and post-hurricane fraud protection priorities for the commission.

The commission coordinates meetings for Broward police forces and South Florida FBI officials on anti-terrorism. Paul Rubino, a commission director and retired Jersey City, N.J., police captain, is a coordinator for those programs.

In September 2001, Rubino was among retired New York-area police officers who worked in clean-up efforts following the attacks on the World Trade Center. Later that year, Jersey City hired him to direct a new anti-terror program using a grant from the **U.S. Department of Homeland Security**.

Rubino and several other retired police officers are advisers to U.S. Public Safety & Management, a for-profit company that DePelisi helped start last year.

"After Hurricane Wilma, more cities and businesses put in requirements for safety features," said DePelisi, the company's president.

He and several other members of the crime commission began hearing concerns that work in that construction and purchase of equipment could be ripe for fraud - similar to some repair work after Wilma.

U.S. Public Safety screens and monitors companies that install elevators, generators and other hurricane-related equipment.

The city of Hallandale Beach, which has several new ordinances for apartment buildings, and several local business and churches are clients of the company.

Pinter, who passed away in August, was U.S. Public Safety's chairman. Richard Wierzbicki, a BSO commander and former Wilton Manors police chief, is the company's VP.

DePelisi wears multiple hats in finance, as well as public safety. He is president of the Stock & Bond Club of South Florida and host of "Investor's Business" each weekday on WSBR-740 AM.

THE DETAILS:

- Getting businesses involved in projects to help local police.
- Organizing anti-crime education programs for civic groups and schools.
- Helping prepare programs on anti-terrorism training.
- Raising money.

LESSONS LEARNED:

- Having retired and active police officers gives credibility.
- Keep recruiting top advisory board members, such as Al Haig.
- A golf tournament is a good fundraiser.
- Nonprofit roles can lead to a business.

BROWARD COUNTY CRIME COMMISSION

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