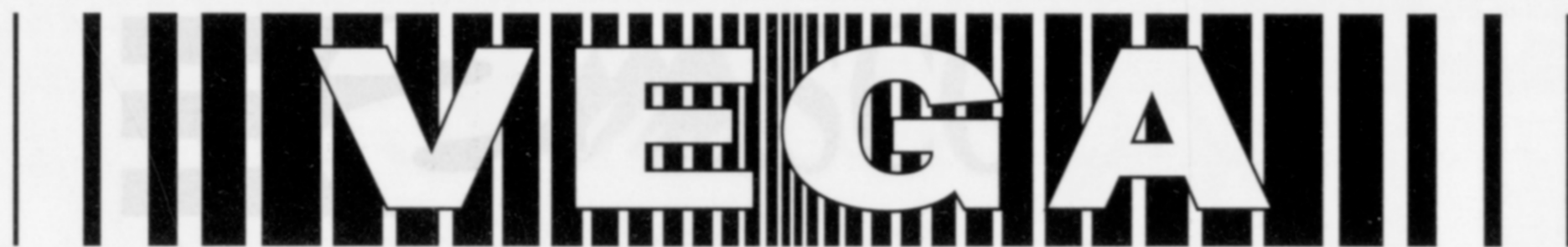


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## Telecommunicator a Card

From Page 61

special response team personnel, a diver, the sheriff's office employee of the year, and four school-crossing guards. VCSO Public Information Officer Cheryl Downs said a new group of cards featuring 80 VCSO personnel who were not in the inaugural group of cards will be printed. Groups of 80 will continue to be issued until all personnel have been included in the program, Ms. Downs said.

Mrs. Cantrell was nominated as Employee of the Quarter for the third quarter of 1992 in a letter submitted to Sheriff Vogel by Lt. Marvin Jones, Communications Commander. He cited her consistently superb job performance, especially that on July 6, 1992 when a number of severe thunderstorms moved through Volusia County, causing "a deluge of calls requiring Fire/Rescue responses." As Mrs. Cantrell worked the Fire Radio console that day, "call traffic reached an all-time high for the center, causing the CAD screen to split to a third level," Jones said. "She worked flawlessly throughout the unusually high call activity ... numerous compliments were received about her performance. These ranged from members of the Fire Service who found it difficult to keep up with their own station's traffic, let alone the multiple stations Patti had to deal with, to an anonymous citizen who, while listening to his scanner, noticed how calm and professional Patti sounded during such a stressful time..." Mrs. Cantrell was issued a Letter of Commendation for her performance. She was named Telecommunicator of the Month for one month in both 1991 and 1993.

The VCSO has held several Deputy Trading Card Days since the program was unveiled in October. The publicly-advertised trading days involve VCSO personnel setting up shop at a location with crime-fighting equipment such as the Air One helicopter and police motorcycles, plus equipment used by the dive team, K-9 units, mounted patrol and Special Response Team. SheriffStars are on hand to talk to the public and dispense their cards.

A local oil company is sponsoring the trading card program; no taxpayer funds are used. That same company provided food, beverages and balloons at the trading card days held so far, and for the services of a clown at at least one. It also funded the first print run of 2,000 cards-per-subject, and plans to fund future printings.

The bottom line is that the SheriffStars Card idea is a new angle on public-safety public relations. "Programs such as this are part of our commitment to community-based policing," Major Connie Locke, commander of the VCSO Community Services Division (under which the SheriffStars program was developed), said.

Mrs. Cantrell has some work to do before she exhausts her 2,000 cards — she had roughly 1,500 left as of January, meaning she had distributed roughly 500 of her cards in two months. Of all the children who have delighted in taking a signed, 1993 Patti Cantrell, however, one child's delight means more to Mrs. Cantrell than all the others' combined: that of her young daughter, Kristin. "Kristin loves my card! She's even distributed a number of my cards at her school," Mrs. Cantrell said. ■