

Melissa Schampers

Generally the hours between 0500-0600 are quiet and non-eventful. Melissa Schampers has come to know this during her eight year tenure on the midnight shift. She has also learned not to be complacent. As she worked BMAIN during the early morning hours of June 5th, 2011 the pattern seemed to be holding. Only two alarm calls had been sent for her to dispatch in the first 37 minutes of the 5 o'clock hour. Both unfounded, the false alarms were quickly cleared. The next two minutes, however, altered the quiet of the early morning hours.

In rapid succession, two calls were sent reporting "shots heard" in the area. The first call was non-descript as the complainant did not see anything to provide details. Ms. Schampers dispatched units to the area within seconds. The second caller advised they witnessed a silver Grand Prix speeding from the area where the shots had been heard. This information was relayed to responding units as soon as Ms. Schampers received it. As several units were converging on the area, the first unit on scene advised of a body lying in the front yard. The subject was in fact shot. Ms. Schampers immediately requested Tampa Fire Rescue and made sure the street supervisor was aware of the victim. She kept up with numerous updates and sent out an alert to the other sectors, making sure all units were advised of the situation and the description of what was now a vehicle of interest.

As several additional units arrived on scene, one relayed that a second shooting victim was inside the residence. Again, Tampa Fire Rescue was given the update within seconds. Units requested the entire block to be closed off from traffic. Assignments coordinated by Ms. Schampers quickly accomplished this task. As the investigation continued to unfold, a vehicle tag was gathered. The tag was added to the call and run through F/NCIC where the response revealed it was attached to a silver Pontiac. Ms. Schampers advised the on-scene supervisor and noticed the registration came back to a county address. She broadcast her intent to the street supervisor to have HCSO conduct an attempt to locate on the suspect vehicle at the address of the registration. A request was then initiated to Hillsborough County. All this was completed while the officer's shift change was going on. Ms. Schampers ensured the on coming squad was up-to-date with this incident and that units were being relieved as needed. Within several days, detectives were able to affect an arrest on the subject responsible. This subject was indeed the driver of the silver Pontiac Grand Prix that was seen fleeing when the call was first dispatched.

Events such as these can alter rapidly and take us by surprise. It is a prime example that this profession is not one of complacency. It is up to the individual to be ever vigilant and remain calm, cool and collected to effectively take care of what needs to be done.

For her steadfast determination to produce quality work and her timely performance during this event, Ms. Melissa Schampers is named the Communications Bureau Employee of the Month for June 2011.

*Communications Bureau
Employee of the Month
June 2011*