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STABBINGS IN BEIJING: NAPLES HOMEOWNER KILLED, WIFE INJURED

OLYMPICS TRAGEDY

Man attacks couple at tourist attraction

BY CRAIG HANDEL
chandel@news-press.com

The shock waves from a fatal stabbing that rocked the Olympics on Saturday reached all the way to Naples.

Todd Bachman was killed and his wife, Barbara, is fighting

for her life after they and their Chinese tour guide were attacked while sightseeing at a tourist attraction.

Todd Bachman, 62, was CEO of one of the most successful family businesses in Minnesota, but when he was in Naples, he and Barbara were

ordinary people.

Neighbors in condominiums at The Vistas expressed shock at what had happened just hours after the games began and wondered how such a thing could happen to people they considered so nice.

"They belonged to everyone," said Lola Costache. "It doesn't matter if you're poor, doesn't matter if you're rich."

"He's the nicest gentleman as can be. He never passes without

■ See STABBINGS A2
■ Also see More details A2



BACHMAN
Killed on opening day of Olympics

"It's hell. It's terrible. What could be worse than to have your son killed in China and his wife in the hospital?"

■ Margaret Bachman

news-press.com

■ **Photo gallery:** Tragedy at the Olympics

■ **Download:** Learn more about victim Todd Bachman

After teen vandalism, questions

Victims, suspects unsettled

BY MARY WOZNIAK and PEDRO MORALES
mwozniak@news-press.com, pmorales@news-press.com

THE \$77,000 IN GOODS REPORTED STOLEN

In the heavy heat of July, when boredom can hit with the force of an afternoon thunderstorm, a band of teenagers crossed the cool, cut grass of a private golf course, crossed a yard to the back door of an empty home and then crossed the law.

At least eight teens, ages 14 to 17, used the two-story home as their personal party house and in the coming days summoned other friends to share the spoils they took, Lee County Sheriff's Office deputies say.

They cruised the streets in a stolen truck and traded a stolen dirt bike for marijuana. They stole liquor and jewelry. They trashed the house.

When it was done, 2½ weeks later, the interior of the house nestled in front of a golf course and surrounded by a lush preserve in Estero's Stoneybrook community had been ripped apart.

■ See ARRESTS A17

- A 2008 Ford truck (recovered)
- Four Suzuki dirt bikes (recovered)
- A 9 mm Smith & Wesson handgun (recovered)
- \$20,000 to \$30,000 in jewelry, including watches, necklaces, earrings and bracelets
- Two computers, one laptop
- Media player
- Canon video camera
- GPS
- Portable DVD player
- Two wireless routers
- Two iPods (one recovered)

Even the wealthy lose their homes

BY MARY WOZNIAK
mwozniak@news-press.com

The list of the top 10 foreclosures on single-family residences in Lee County brings home the fact that if you live big, you can also lose big.

County public records reveal the top homes have loan balances from a high of \$3 million to a low of almost \$1.3 million.

The list shows that even savvy businessmen, longtime homeowners who have resided in their properties for decades, mortgage brokers and Realtors have succumbed to the wave of foreclosures still flooding the country.

Of the Lee County top 10, four homes are in Cape Coral, two in Fort Myers, two in Estero, one on Sanibel and one on Fort Myers Beach.

These are not the modest abodes of middle-class homeowners who are the usual highlights in news reports.

Many are sumptuous, over-the-top mansions in the nouveau-Italian style so popular in Southwest Florida. The largest has 12,811 square feet.

The newest was built in 2006 and the oldest in 1972.

Nine of 10 are on the water, whether it is the Caloosahatchee River, a canal or a lake.

No. 1 is 5807 Staysail Court in Cape Coral, owned by Anthony Leeb Jr. and Diane Leeb.

Leeb Jr. has an array of active businesses and has had his share of financial ups and downs.

■ See HOMES A9
■ Also see more details on the Top 10 A9

news-press.com/realestate

■ **Database:** Search foreclosures in Lee County.

■ **Photo gallery:** View the interior and exterior of homes in foreclosure.

The top 10 foreclosures

The top 10 foreclosures on single-family residences in Lee County, their locations, assessed value and loan balance.



SOURCE: LEE COUNTY CLERK OF COURTS

THE NEWS-PRESS

LEE COUNTY SHERIFF'S RACE



Rod Shoap	Candidate	Mike Scott
2001-05	Term	2005-present
	Budget	
\$64.9 million	FIRST-YEAR BUDGET	\$111.6 million
\$95.9 million	FINAL-YEAR BUDGET	\$158.4 million
47.7%	THREE-YEAR INCREASE	42.0%
	Staffing	
1,043	FIRST-YEAR WORK FORCE	1,303
1,217	FINAL-YEAR WORK FORCE	1,543
16.7%	THREE-YEAR INCREASE	18.4%
	Salaries	
\$35,534	FIRST-YEAR AVERAGE SALARY	\$41,980
\$40,439	FINAL-YEAR AVERAGE SALARY	\$47,377
13.8%	THREE-YEAR INCREASE	12.9%
	Crime rate	Per 1,000 residents
41.7	YEAR ONE	37.6
39.7	YEAR TWO	38
35.7	YEAR THREE	40.6
37.9	YEAR FOUR	N/A

SOURCE: LEE COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

THE NEWS-PRESS

Tale of the tape for a title fight

BY DAVE BREITENSTEIN
dbreitenstein@news-press.com

In one corner, there's Rod Shoap, the former sheriff who claims department spending is out of control while Lee County's quality of life deteriorates.

In the opposite corner stands Mike Scott, the incumbent sheriff, who says higher budgets provide extra manpower to combat the county's growing criminal element.

The gloves came off long before their scheduled rematch, an Aug. 26 Republican primary. Shoap and Scott have sparred on business issues — budgets, staffing and crime rates — and personal issues, like Shoap's alleged affair and whether Scott's secretary urinated in public.

That's politics.

■ See SHERIFF A16

INSIDE /A16

■ **Comparison** A breakdown of sheriff's employees' salaries during the candidates' terms.

■ **Annual budget** Learn how the Lee County Sheriff's budget has risen 144 percent in eight years.

■ **Crime statistics** A look at how the number of larcenies, burglaries and vehicle thefts has changed from 2001-08.

WORLD RECORD FOR PHELPS

Michael Phelps sets a world record to win his first gold medal of the Beijing Olympics, beating rival Ryan Lochte in the 400-meter individual medley. **SPORTS, C1**

TODAY ON TV

■ **What:** United States vs. China in men's basketball

■ **When:** 10 a.m.

■ **TV:** **NBC**

Beijing 2008

news-press.com/olympics

■ **Photo galleries:** See athletes, coaches, fans, coverage of the competitions and images from around Beijing.

■ **Video:** Watch interviews, profiles, features and more. ■ **Blog:** Southwest Floridian Lin Bochette checks in from the games. ■ **Trivia:** Answer the question of the day. ■ **Interactive graphics:** Click on 10 things to watch and play a Chinese tile game. ■ **TV listings:** A complete guide to what is on and when.

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Tenants wanted

Landlords hope to fill vacant spaces in plazas, malls, offices and industrial buildings across Lee County.

■ **BUSINESS, D1**

Made in the shade

Clyde Butcher exhibit to display black-and-white environmental photography of Florida and "America the Beautiful."

■ **TROPICALIA**



Comedic actor dead

Bernie Mac, a co-star in "Ocean's Eleven," dies from complications of pneumonia at age 50.

■ **NATION & WORLD, A4**

MAC

SINGLE FAMILY HOMES LEHIGH ACRES MID \$100's

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2008 LEE COUNTY
SHERIFF'S RACE:

MIKE SCOTT
VS. ROD SHOAP

news-press.com/election

■ Searchable databases: Search crime statistics, staffing and budgets during the years when Rod

Shoap was sheriff and for Sheriff Mike Scott. ■ Local candidate search: Check out where these two candidates stand on key issues. ■ Video: Watch our editorial board interview with Shoap and Scott. ■ Story chat: Want to share your views on this story? You'll find it on our Web site, where you can log in, speak out and be heard.

Top-tier employees paid well in both reigns

Low-rung employees' raises improved with time

BY DAVE BREITENSTEIN
dbreitenstein@news-press.com

Rod Shoap and Mike Scott take good care of their highest-paid employees.

Real good.

As a whole, the top 100 earners for the Lee County Sheriff's Office — predominantly majors, captains and lieutenants — received average annual base salary increases of \$3,857 during Shoap's administration, and \$3,462 yearly under Scott.

Meanwhile, the lowest 100 earners — mostly clerks, office assistants and communications operators — saw their base salaries increase \$168 annually during Shoap's tenure, but rise \$1,318 a year with Scott at the helm.

That data, culled from payroll reports provided by budget director Bill Bergquist, show base salary information as of Sept. 20 of every year. It does not include overtime and income supplements, or list salaries of part-time employees who didn't work any shifts during that pay period. Salaries are in constant dollars, not adjusted for inflation.

The numbers are group averages, so the same people are not in the top or bottom every year. But shaving off the top 100 and bottom 100 earners provides an indication of how the two Republican sheriff candidates, who face off in the Aug. 26 Republican primary, treat their upper- and lower-level employees come payday.

Under Shoap's administration from 2001 to 2004:

■ The top 100 earners saw their base salaries increase 18.6 percent, from an average of \$62,280 in Shoap's first year to \$73,851 in his fourth year.

■ The bottom 100 earners received a 2.3 percent bump, from \$21,578 to \$22,082.

Shoap said top earners tend to be longtime employees whose pay raises reflect merit and cost-of-living adjustments. Those on the lower end often are newcomers at entry-level positions, but employees who show some initiative don't stay at the bottom for long.

"People do advance quickly," Shoap said. "The real sign of it is how they develop themselves. When I'm in an assessment center, one of the questions I always



SCOTT
Lee County
sheriff



SHOAP
Challenges
Scott

ask is, 'What have you done to prepare yourself for this challenge, this promotion?'

"What I'm looking for is not what the department did for them. I want to know what you did for yourself."

With Scott at the helm from 2005 to 2008:

■ The top 100 earners had a 13.2 percent average base pay raise, from \$78,707 in Scott's first year to \$89,094 this year.

■ The bottom 100 earners had an 18 percent jump, from \$22,031 to \$25,987.

In the transition year between Shoap and Scott's terms, the top 100 employees earned a 6.6 percent increase, while the bottom 100 saw their pay drop by 0.2 percent.

Last year, Scott scrapped standard merit and cost-of-living increases, doling out smaller

than normal percentage increases to upper administration. That way, he could spread more money among lower-wage employees and deputies. They put their lives on the line each shift, he said, while administrators sit in air-conditioned offices and head home when the 5 o'clock whistle blows.

"They're not out there at 2 a.m. answering domestic disturbance calls or pulling over drunk drivers," Scott said.

The sheriff's office employs 1,483 individuals in a variety of capacities. When benefits, overtime and supplements are added to base salaries, employee expenses account for 75 percent of the budget, Bergquist said.

They moved up

In 2000-01, Shoap's first year in office, 48 sheriff's employees earned base salaries greater than \$60,000. This year, 245 employees crossed that threshold.

In 2000-01, only Shoap commanded a six-figure salary, earning \$123,451, an amount set by state guidelines. In 2007-08, the office had 16 employees earning six-figure base salaries, with Scott leading the way at

SHERIFF

■ Continued from A1

Numbers, though sometimes confusing, aren't political. Numbers tell it like it is.

The News-Press analyzed 1,000-plus pages of data from Shoap's years and Scott's years in office, paying close attention to three hot-button issues that repeatedly surface in their debates:

■ Annual budget: The sheriff's budget has risen from \$64.9 million to \$158.4 million in eight years, a 144 percent increase. About 98 percent of the budget comes from property and sales tax revenue.

■ Hierarchy: Each candidate claims the other's administration was top-heavy, but neither agrees how many individuals constituted their opponent's leadership team. In any case, the sheriff's work force rose from 943 to 1,483 employees in eight years, a 57 percent increase.

■ Crime rate: Burglaries have risen from 2,762 to 4,414 in seven years — a 60 percent increase. Robberies have jumped from 348 to 555, a 59 percent increase.

Granted, population growth has exploded during Shoap and Scott's administrations, expanding from 291,190 in 2001 to 377,070 in 2007 for the sheriff's jurisdictional area: unincorporated Lee County, Bonita Springs and Fort Myers Beach.

However, the combined inflation rate and population growth doesn't match the growth spurt seen by the sheriff's office.

With three weeks before the primary, Shoap and Scott are jockeying for position. Both have stacks of paperwork meant to prove each is the better candidate. Both have campaign platforms based on snippets of data they've collected. Both want your vote in the primary, and again Nov. 4 when the winner faces Christian Meister, who's running with no party affiliation.

"I can lower your crime and lower your budget at the same time," promises Shoap, Lee sheriff from 2001 to 2005. "I can make your response times faster. You'll get prompt, courteous service."

Scott's sales pitch carries a different tone.

"We'll continue to do more of the same with traffic enforcement, marijuana grow houses and drug addictions," countered Scott, who defeated Shoap in 2004. "And we'll continue to do that while avoiding the negative, scandalous headlines that address ethics and integrity."

Shoap and Scott do not see eye to eye.

That's politics.
Here's the tale of the tape:

Asking for cash

It's seemingly a rite of spring: the sitting sheriff lobbies Lee County commissioners for more money. A lot more money.

Annual budget increases for the sheriff's office range from 9 percent to 18 percent.

The department's fiscal year begins in October and ends in September.

So, what are Lee County residents getting for their money?

■ **Rod Shoap says...**

Between Shoap's first and

fourth years, the budget increased 47.7 percent. Yet, Shoap said he rarely heard complaints about bigger budgets because commissioners and citizens knew they were getting more bang for their buck. Residents could feel safe in their community, knew deputies would rush to their aid when summoned and trusted law enforcement, he said.

As for his opponent's budget increases, Shoap believes Scott wastes money on boats, aircraft, 62 SUVs, excess patrol cars and a mobile communications command unit with a whopping \$1 million price tag.

"They are buying lots of toys and a lot of crap," said Shoap, 54.

■ **Mike Scott says...**

Under Scott's watch, the budget rose 42 percent from Year 1 to Year 4. There also was a 16.4 percent increase in the transitional year between Shoap and Scott's administration, a spending plan proposed during Shoap's tenure but carried out with Scott at the helm.

Budget growth is inevitable, Scott said, because of Southwest Florida's population growth. The county needs more law enforcement, just like it needs more schools, hospitals and roads to handle more people.

"The question isn't the budget itself; it's what the money is being spent on," said Scott, 45.

And no, that's not toys, Scott counters. Big-ticket purchases like helicopters and the mobile unit are tools law enforcement needs to carry out its mission of serving the public and making the community safer.

■ **The numbers say...**

The 144.1 percent budget increase in eight years far outpaces inflation and population growth. Financial Trend Forecaster, a national publication, reports a 25 percent total inflation rate from January 2001, when Shoap took office, to the present.

Population also plays a role in setting budgets. The Florida Department of Law Enforcement put the 2001 to 2007 population increase at 29.1 percent for the Lee County sheriff's jurisdictional area; 2008 data will be released next spring. More people means more crime; more crime means more deputies; and more deputies means more money to run the department.

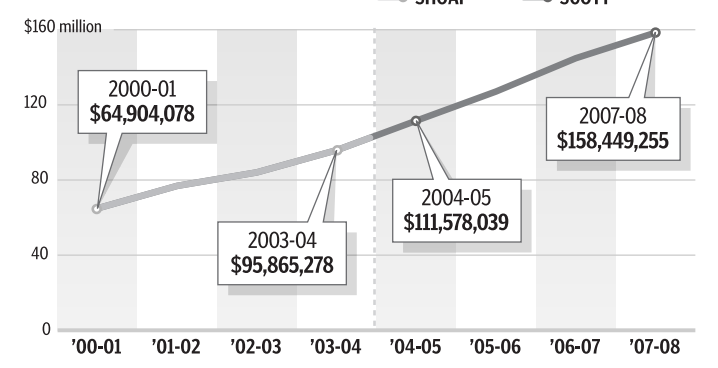
In neighboring Collier County, the sheriff's jurisdictional area grew from 227,722 to 294,932 residents in seven years, a 29.5 percent population boom nearly identical to Lee's rate. Collier's annual budget has shot up 121.4 percent, from \$69 million in 2000-01 to \$152.7 million this year.

If inflation was the sole factor in setting Lee's annual budget, Shoap's first-year budget of \$64.9 million would have risen to \$81.1 million, not the \$158.4 million it is today.

The era of double-digit budget increases for the sheriff's office is over, at least until the economy regains some traction. Scott proposed a 2.1 percent increase for 2008-09, the smallest annual gain on record, Scott said. His plan freezes salaries while cutting some services not deemed mission critical.

Annual budget

The Lee County Sheriff's budget has risen 144 percent in eight years, growing anywhere from 9 percent to 18 percent each year. Rod Shoap and Mike Scott each have lobbied commissioners for additional funds.



SOURCE: LEE COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

THE NEWS-PRESS

Crime statistics

Overall, some types of crimes are up, and others are down. Among the three most prevalent crimes, burglary has increased the most, followed by larceny. Statistics from 2008 will be available next spring.

	CALENDAR YEAR	LARCENY	BURGLARY	VEHICLE THEFT
SHOAP	2001	6,644	2,762	1,385
	2002	6,379	2,924	1,287
	2003	5,838	2,964	1,159
	2004	6,443	3,049	1,285
SCOTT	2005	6,614	3,185	1,407
	2006	6,870	3,670	1,295
	2007	7,602	4,414	1,287
	2008	N/A	N/A	N/A

SOURCE: FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF LAW ENFORCEMENT

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Organization structured

Like any business, sheriff's offices have clearly defined organizational structures.

An executive team, or cabinet, consists of upper-level management: the sheriff, chief deputy, colonel, bureau chiefs and sometimes majors, depending on which candidate you ask. The budget director and in-house attorney also partake in decision making.

The next level, mid-managers in the corporate world, include captains, lieutenants, sergeants and corporals.

Then there are deputies and corrections officers completing the work force. On the civilian side, the sheriff's office employs secretaries, dispatchers, records clerks and other clerical staff.

■ **Rod Shoap says...**

In his final year, Shoap defined his executive team as himself, four bureau chiefs overseeing administration, corrections, law enforcement and operations; and one lieutenant — six people in all. Shoap did not consider his six majors, attorney or budget director as cabinet members.

Job titles aren't as important to Shoap as job duties, and he said it took his entire four years to match employees' skill levels with appropriate positions and salaries.

"We had everybody at the right levels and the right pay grades," Shoap said. "The first year, he (Scott) comes in and brings in a bunch of guys and shot the whole thing out of the water."

Shoap believes his successor quickly elevated his cronies to high-paying positions even though they lacked adequate qualifications. Shoap already is planning demotions, if elected.

"They'll be better off going back to a rank where they know

they can do the job," he said. "I have to put people in there who can really do the job."

■ **Mike Scott says...**

Scott assembled an executive team consisting of himself, one chief deputy, one colonel and six majors who oversee bureaus for administration, patrol, jail, prison, criminal investigations and special operations — nine in all. Scott also does not consider the attorney and budget director as cabinet members but believes Shoap erred in not including majors in his tally of executives.

"The number of people in my upper echelon are fewer," said Scott, adding that his management team should reasonably be larger because the department as a whole is larger.

Yet, arguments about whose administration is fatter isn't an issue on the voters' mind, Scott proclaims.

"Until they are affected by crime or have an encounter with the sheriff's office, they don't spend a lot of time thinking about that," he said.

■ **The numbers say...**

Shoap and Scott define their circle of trusts differently — and how many managers are let into closed-door cabinet meetings isn't the sole determination of a top-heavy administration. It's how many upper-level managers are employed, because along with a fancy title comes a big salary.

In Year 1, Shoap had seven executives at the major salary level or above: himself, four majors, one attorney and one budget director. Their base salaries in 2000-01 totaled \$619,328.

By Year 4, though, that blossomed into 13 executives: Shoap, plus four bureau chiefs, six majors, one attorney and one budget director. Their base salaries

\$148,825, an amount also set by the state. Additional employees can cross that mark with overtime and supplements.

Chief Deputy Charles Ferrante is right behind Scott at \$140,800. While market demand drives salaries, Scott said it won't thrust anyone's earnings above his pay.

"It's possible, but it's not prudent, and I don't see that happening as long as I'm sheriff," Scott said. "You need to have some type of delineation between positions."

In Shoap's first year, there was a \$29,513 gap between the sheriff and the No. 2 earner, major Dave Bonsall.

C.O.s make less

On the uniformed side of operations, the sheriff's office features two sets of employees: deputies, corporals, sergeants and lieutenants who oversee general county operations, and those in corrections with similar titles but work in the prison or jail.

Despite having the same rankings, corrections employees earn less than their patrol counterparts.

"Corrections is not as glam-

orous of a job as patrol," said Shoap, rattling off a list of TV shows focusing on police officers.

Despite a pay difference, Shoap said, "I treated them fairly. I was the first sheriff that put them all in the same uniform. My corrections officers were deputy sheriffs."

Shoap's deputies earned \$400 more in base salary than corrections officers during 2003-04. This year, the gap is much larger as Scott's deputies earn \$3,813 more, according to data provided by the sheriff's office.

Scott's 2008-09 budget proposal freezes all salaries. The sheriff's office once had to inflate starting salaries and offer above-average pay raises to prevent employees from eyeing jobs in other jurisdictions, Scott said, but he believes concerns with turnover have subsided.

"When the economy was booming, we had much more difficulty with recruitment and retaining," Scott said. "Now people are desperate for a job. They're not as inclined to say, 'Why am I making \$38,000 a year instead of \$41,000?' It's 'Thank God I'm making \$38,000.'"

Hierarchy

A look at the final years of Rod Shoap's and Mike Scott's terms shows a rise in the number of uniformed personnel, as well as administrators, working for the sheriff's office.

JOB TITLE	SHOAP '03-04	SCOTT '07-08
Chief Deputy	0	1
Colonel	0	1
Bureau Chief	4	0
Attorney	1	1
Budget Director	1	1
Major	6	4
Corrections Major	1	2
Captain	18	20
Corrections Captain	7	8
Lieutenant	31	53
Corrections Lieutenant	9	13
Sergeant	62	106
Corrections Sergeant	30	36
Corporal	246	129
Corrections Corporal	61	17
Deputy First-Class	54	50
Deputy	60	272
Corrections Officer	129	222

SOURCE: LEE COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

THE NEWS-PRESS

equaled \$1.3 million in 2003-04.

Like Shoap, Scott also restructured his administration, downsizing to eight executives in 2004-05: himself, plus one chief deputy, one attorney, one budget director and four majors. Their base salaries totaled \$954,357.

By 2007-08, Scott's leadership team grew to nine individuals after he added one colonel position, No. 3 in the hierarchy. Their salaries now add up to \$1.2 million — \$100,000 less than Shoap's brass four years ago.

Counting crime

The Florida Department of Law Enforcement tracks criminal activity in jurisdictions across the state. Lee County's reports show data from the sheriff's office, port authority, Florida Gulf Coast University and police departments in Fort Myers, Cape Coral and Sanibel.

FDLE reports provide tallies in seven categories: murder, forcible rape, robbery, aggravated assault, burglary, larceny and motor vehicle theft.

■ **Rod Shoap says...**

Scott is a traffic cop turned traffic sheriff, who devotes far too much attention to nabbing bad drivers, while quality-of-life crimes such as burglary and theft have overwhelmed the community. Lehigh Acres is the matchstick of crime for all of Lee County, Shoap said, a spark able to fan the crime fire with its easy access to Colonial Boulevard and I-75.

"Lehigh Acres is killing us," Shoap said. "It's a war zone, and if we don't get control of it, we can't control the rest of the county. Real bad people have moved into Lehigh Acres."

"We have leadership that has deputies out writing traffic tickets instead of fighting crimes."

Shoap believes the current sheriff is doctoring crime statistics, underreporting incidents and downgrading offenses to create a crime state illusion that residents are safer under Scott's leadership.

"That's falsification of police

reports," Shoap said. "That's a felony in itself."

And that's one reason why Scott won't get 84-year-old Virginia Moore's vote. She calls Shoap a fine gentleman.

"You can trust him and know he'll do everything in his power to help you," said Moore, of Cape Coral. "I don't like all of Scott's mudslinging. The first thing he does is tear down Rod Shoap, and that's what turned me off."

■ **Mike Scott says...**

There is no evidence that Scott has directed deputies to not file crime reports or downgrade incidents, Scott said, yet Shoap keeps making that allegation.

"Rod has gone out and taken his case to everyone in the free world who would listen," Scott said. "Never has anyone given it any traction."

"I want crime to go down, but not at the risk of getting in trouble."

Deputies are writing more tickets this year and pulling over bad drivers for two reasons, Scott said: An increased road presence slows down motorists and decreases crashes, and deputies can spot weapons, drugs or nervous behavior by stopping a driver.

Scott agrees that Lehigh is ground zero for the county's crime. Since he was elected, local law enforcement has busted 178 marijuana grow houses, predominantly in Lehigh. The sheriff's office allocated \$6.7 million in 2007-08 to east district operations, compared to \$3.5 million four years ago.

"We started an unprecedented all-out assault on criminals in Lehigh," Scott said. "We'll throw them in jail, throw them in prison or throw them out of town."

■ **The numbers say...**

FDLE statistics break down criminal activity year by year, and that data is considered the official measuring stick for criminal activity and is subject to state audits. Robbery, aggravated assault, burglary and larceny steadily have increased over time, while murder, rape and motor vehicle thefts have bounced up and down.

The annual crime rate, a compilation of various offenses, shows the likelihood residents are a victim of crime. Annual crime rates under Shoap were 41.7, 39.7, 35.7 and 37.9 victims per 1,000 residents. Under Scott, it's been 37.6, 38.0 and 40.6 per 1,000 residents. Statistics from 2008 will be released next spring. FDLE reports show residents of unincorporated Lee County, Bonita Springs and Fort Myers Beach are no safer under Scott than Shoap, or vice versa. However, residents are less likely to be a victim of crime than they were a decade ago, before either candidate was voted into office. In 1998, the crime rate was 42.8 per 1,000 residents.

Despite the slight uptick in crime reported in 2006 and 2007, Bonita Springs resident Paul Van Valkenburg said he feels much safer than when he moved here from Colorado in 2003.

"It seems like law enforcement coverage in Bonita got better when Mike took office," said Van Valkenburg, 58. "I'm very happy with the way things are now."