

# Local teen 'Sheriff for a Day'

## Miramar youngster's day includes helicopter and harbor patrol boat rides

By **Chris Guanche**  
STAFF WRITER

Fifteen-year-old Tolbert Bain recently saw his home county from an entirely new perspective — inside a Broward Sheriff's Office helicopter.

The Miramar teenager saw that and more as part of his time as "Sheriff for a Day." While the eight-hour day was packed with activities, the helicopter tour of Fort Lauderdale and Port Everglades came out on top.

"I've never been in a helicopter before," he said.

Tolbert also rode out to sea in a harbor patrol boat stationed at Port Everglades. The day also included a trip to Sheriff's Office headquarters, with an inside look at the 911 dispatch center and ballistics testing at the crime lab.

"There was a lot of new stuff I'd never done before," Tolbert said. "It opened my eyes up."

"Sheriff for a Day" events started in April 2008 as a charity auction item, said Deputy Alan Barnes. The original intention was to do it a few times, but Barnes said the program's popularity quickly grew, and the office did about 18 the first year.

"If you can put a smile on someone's face, it makes you feel good," he said.

Activities can vary. Barnes said the helicopter and harbor patrol boat sometimes aren't available, so instead they'll take an airboat trip in the Everglades. Barnes said the goal is to show what deputies do during a work shift.

"People watch *CSI* and see that we can't solve crimes in one hour, but this is the real deal," he said.

Tolbert received his "Sheriff for a Day" package as a gift from the non-profit Jessica June Children's Cancer Foundation. The foundation's main work is to provide financial assistance to underprivileged families with children fighting cancer, so acquiring the gift package was a bit out of the norm, said founder Sandra Muvdi.

Muvdi named the organization after her daughter, who died from leukemia in 2003. Many of the children that the foundation assists are on Medicaid or receive other forms of government assistance.

After Tolbert was diagnosed with non-Hodgkin's lymphoma in 2008, his mother, Shawn Singleton, turned to the foundation for assistance. The founda-



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Tolbert Bain, 15, of Miramar, rides in a Broward Sheriff's Office helicopter as part of his "Sheriff for a Day" experience.

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tion provided Singleton with assistance in paying utility bills.

"They can't make ends meet because their parents have to become a full-time caregiver for their child with cancer, which eliminates their ability to make money," Muvdi said.

As a single mother, Singleton has experienced that.

"It was much needed and very helpful," Singleton said of the financial assistance.

Now that Tolbert's can-

cer is in remission, it's back to life as normal for the sophomore from Everglades High School who regularly plays basketball.

"He took it hard then, but now you wouldn't even know that he had it," Singleton said.

Tolbert's daylong experience was capped off by a meeting with Sheriff Al Lamberti, himself a cancer survivor. Like much of the rest of the day, it was a new experience for Tolbert.

After high school, Tol-

bert said he plans to either play basketball professionally or become a lawyer. While he was already interested in law before, Tolbert said his day as a sheriff increased his level of interest. And the day's experiences are something he wouldn't mind repeating.

"If I could do it again, I would," he said.

For more information, visit [www.jjccf.org](http://www.jjccf.org).

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