

## Early 1970's—A Candid Story About Early Jupiter



Back in the early 1970's when I was newly employed with the Town of Jupiter; there were many things that I had to adjust to. After living in the prosperous community of West Palm Beach, there were many striking differences. Jupiter was still largely undeveloped with many roadways that were dirt roads.

It was nothing to drive through the residential area and see many yards with horses, goats, cows, chickens, geese and pigs. It was common to see residents on horseback, enjoying the natural areas. Geese were some of the best watchdogs in the residential area. They would sound off and come after any stranger that entered their territory. A lot of these areas were fenced off to keep the livestock in.

U.S. Highway #1 was the major roadway through Jupiter with A1A to the east and Alternate A1A following the F.E.C. Railroad tracks. Alternate A1A was a two-lane roadway for a very long time with a bridge crossing the Loxahatchee west of U.S. #1. Two Cadillac's would have a hard time passing one another on this bridge. There was a flashing light at Center St. along Alt. A1A and a red light at Alt. A1A along US#1. There were two more lights in Jupiter; these were on Indiantown Rd. at US#1 and Loxahatchee Drive. Indiantown Road was also a two-lane road and Toney Penna Drive



would dead-end just west of Jupiter High School. Military Trail came to an end just south of Whitehaven's Trailer Park. Jupiter was a quaint and quiet community enjoyed by the old time families that originally settled here.

The police department was very small when I first came aboard. The department had just moved to 103 4th Street in January of 1975. They were stationed originally in a two room office at the Old Town Hall located on the 900 block of Town Hall Rd. Glynn Mayo (deceased) was the Chief. Next in charge was Bill Reichert (retired) who was a sergeant on the road. There was also Sergeants Bill Kianka (deceased) and Jim Woodard (deceased). There were a great group of officers on the road at the time. These included: Jay (Irving) Lloyd (deceased), Tom Harden, Ray Hopper (deceased), Jim Ellis (went to PBCFD), Motor Officer Billy Hall (deceased), Motor Officer Marty Harn (retired), Dennis Silver and Det Sgt. Hank Koder (retired) and Det Sgt. Tom Gleason (retired), Jim Neigh (part-time), Steve Jones (part-time) and myself (retired). I used to laugh and make jokes with then Sgt. Bill Reichert because I was trained for the road in Jupiter in 4 hours, given a map and hit the road. I was the midnight shift. As time went on and they hired more personnel as Jupiter began to have its growing pains, I finally had a partner. Two of my long term partners on the road were Officer Jimmy Ellis (retired from Palm Beach County Fire Department) and Tim Furey (currently retired from Martin County Sheriff's Office).

The police department operated the majority of the time on a CB radio. We used channel 3. Most of the Town folks knew we were there and would listen to the calls or call in emergencies as they occurred. They would even follow bad guys and call locations out to the responding officers as bad guys were absconding. We worked with CB handles and were well known to local folks. My CB handle at the time was the DDM that stood for "Dirty Dingus Magee". We also had a handheld radio so that we could contact the Sheriff's Office if we needed additional assistance. Our dispatch center operated in the morning and afternoon and the Palm Beach County Sheriff's Office took over at 11:00 pm at night.

It would be nothing for Jupiter to back up the County Law Enforcement as far South as 45th Street (If other agencies were not available) and as far North as the County Line. Jupiter would on rare occasions back up Martin County Sheriff's Office as far west as Indiantown and as far north as Monterey Rd. (If Stuart PD was not available). Palm Beach Gardens and Tequesta PD were not allowed by their chief's to leave their immediate jurisdictions to give aid, unless we made a stop within their jurisdictions. Most of the call types during this time were responding to domestics, loose animal complaints (dogs, horses, and cows), loud noise complaints, juvenile complaints, theft, residential and industrial burglary, wild animal complaints, occasional gun fire complaints and bar fights. Jupiter was really a quiet place to work and live.

Jupiter changed at night. The township largely closed after 6pm because it was still



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largely undeveloped and filled with Wildlife. It was not unusual to see bobcat, fox, bats, owls, raccoons, possum, weasel, otter, deer, wild pig, panther, alligators, box turtles, snakes (both venomous and non-venomous), rare salt water crocodile, and I had heard but never saw the Florida black bear. Fishing was plentiful too without legal limits on a Snook catch or other fish species limits. Dolphins and manatees could be seen up and down the Intracoastal Waterway and in the Loxahatchee River.

There was always a lot of hunting and fishing sports activities in and around the Jupiter area, except for hunting fowl. Jupiter was a bird sanctuary. Most of your vehicles were pickup trucks with gun racks on the back window with some type of shotgun or rifle hanging off it. As small towns go, everyone kind of knew what everyone else was doing. Good or Bad.

When I-95 was finished and there was an entrance/exit built onto Indiantown Rd., the town began to go through a growth spurt. The Town annexed a lot of property and has just about built up everything that has been annexed. Now the concerns of the Town have greatly changed with an increase in police activity as well. Crimes of a more serious nature are committed on a greater increase as compared to 1975. We have experienced gang activity at our schools, an increase in police service calls, increase in growth of the population, increased traffic on the roadway and waterways, increase business and housing boom, and public transportation.

Police equipment has become high tech and the Town has joined other townships in E-Commerce. Jupiter's old agricultural and ranch style life has all but disappeared. Wild life that we once observed within the confines of the township is very rarely seen even on the out skirts of town, any longer.

Having been part of old Jupiter has made it difficult to let it go and accept some of these changes. But progress looms ahead with more future plans for growth and industry.