

## **Agencies Partner to Elevate Local Community**

Fort Myers, Florida, 6/23/10—Operation Elevation launched its first campaign to improve the local community on June 23, 2010 in the Tice community. The project is a partnership between the Lee County Sheriff's Office, Fort Myers Police Department, Lee County Domestic Animal Services, Lee County Code Enforcement, Fort Myers Code Enforcement, Keep Lee County Beautiful, Inc., and Nations Association Charities, Inc.

The project began in response to concerns from Tice residents regarding the area's unsightly appearance; including deteriorating overgrown vacant lots and homes; gang-related graffiti; stray and aggressive animals; burglaries; and other possible illegal activities. Tice is just the first area the agencies intend to elevate during the course of the ongoing project.

On the first day of Operation Elevation the agencies canvassed the area from Glenwood Ave. south to Scott Ave for a four hour period. All participants were encouraged by the results.

More than 40 code enforcement violations were identified with citations issued. Animal related issues resulted in 21 citations for failure to license and vaccinate animals, failure to register a guard dog, and animal cruelty. Law enforcement received information relating to wanted persons and identified several homes with suspicious activity possibly related to drugs and narcotics. More than 1,000 lbs. of trash was collected by volunteers, residents, and the inmates from the Lee County Stockade. Youth members of the Nations Association passed out anti-drug program information and details about Operation Elevation. The Lee County Department of Solid Waste distributed information on waste collection and recycling.

Anyone with information related to illegal activity should report it to Crime Stoppers at 1-800-780-Tips. Animal related concerns should be reported to Lee County Domestic Animal Services at 239-533-7387 (LEE-PETS).