Do you have travel plans this summer? Would you like to have someone check your home virtually every day while you’re away? And for free? No problem! Just call the Citrus County Sheriff’s Office at 746-3484 or 726-1121 after hours. Tell them you are a resident of Sugarmill Woods and would like to have security checks made of your home by Sugarmill Woods Crime Watch during your absence. You will be asked a series of questions, such as, who has a key to your house? Will there be a car parked in the driveway and other pertinent information so that the Crime Watch officer will know what to expect when checking your house. A form containing all this information is then sent to Sugarmill Woods Crime Watch and is placed in the daily security check log maintained by the organization. Any discrepancy encountered by a Crime Watch officer on patrol while performing a house check is immediately called in on the car radio and a Deputy Sheriff dispatched to investigate. One word of advice. It takes about two weeks from the time you place that call until the final information is received by our Crime Watch unit. So please plan ahead. Call the Sheriff’s Office at least two weeks prior to your departure to ensure complete coverage during your absence. Upon your return, please notify the Emergency Operations Center at 726-1121 so that we may cancel security checks of your home. A house check is a courtesy of the Citrus County Sheriff’s Office. Every effort will be made to check your home and we will report any unusual findings or crime. It does not preclude you from being a victim of crime and does not guarantee the safety of your home.

 Hurricane season is now upon us. If you are a citizen who qualifies for the Special Needs Program you should call 746-6555. People with special needs are those who due to physical, emotional, or sensory impairments, are not able to respond independently to an emergency situation, which requires that they evacuate their homes. Such persons may be blind or deaf; physically disabled requiring the use of a wheelchair or other adaptive equipment; health impaired requiring respiratory or other life sustaining equipment; or emotionally or socially dependent upon other adults for independent living. By calling the above number, you can register in the Special Needs Program so that in the event of an evacuation you will be provided transportation and shelter assistance.

 Sugarmill Woods Crime Watch patrols all of Sugarmill Woods six days per week from 8:00am until 6:00pm throughout the year. Residents may request that their homes receive security checks for up to a six month period. Donations are gratefully accepted. Volunteer drivers are always needed. Drivers are asked to commit to two 2-hour tours each month plus attend the monthly meeting. Interested parties should contact President Tom Okimoto at 352-503-2340. Crime Watch meetings are open to the public and often feature speakers of interest to our community. Meetings are held at the Homosassa Library on Grand March Ave at 3:00pm, the second Tuesday of each month and meeting notices are posted in the Citrus County Chronicle.