



Trooper Anthony Stone. . .

The Gas Pump Guy

Anthony Stone keeps us honest. In gratitude, we draw mustaches on him. He glares at us from gas pumps throughout Florida, warning that gas theft can lead to a lost driver's license. An ex-Marine Corps sergeant from Homosassa Springs, he is a Florida Highway Patrol trooper in the Panhandle.

Q: So you're the guy on the gas pumps, huh?

A: That's a lot of ugly in one place, isn't it?

Q: When you go to the gas station, do people recognize you? What do they say?

A: Yes, they do, quite often. They say, "You look different without the mustache."

Q: What other things do people draw on your picture?

A: It would embarrass me to say.

Q: I heard someone drew you smoking a joint.

A: Is that right? I don't doubt it. I've seen much worse than that. A lot of things are being held in my hand.

Q: How were you chosen for the photo?

A: Our public information officer called me. He didn't tell me what was going on. His reasoning, I'm not sure. I spent a lot of time in the Marine Corps and I try to do a good job. I hope that was part of it.

If you have a driver's license, you've seen Anthony Stone. The state trooper's picture is on gas pumps throughout Florida!

The above article is a reprint from August 3, 2001 Tampa Tribune ~BAYLIFE Section by PATTY RYAN ~ "5 Minutes With"

During the above interview Ms. Ryan asked how Officer Stone got chosen for this photo shoot?

In summer of '99 the Director of Communications for Florida Petroleum Marketers and Convenience Store Association (FPMA), Rue Luttrell, called the Florida Highway Patrol's Chief Public Information Officer Major Ken Howes for help.

When Ms. Luttrell asked if the Major if he could "loan me a serious looking officer for a photo shoot" the Majors' silent response led Ms. Luttrell to quickly explain, "I just need to take a photo of a serious looking officer in front of a gas pump to produce Drive-Off decals - which we hope will help stop Drive Off thefts and help lower the crime stats for Florida."

With a clearer understanding of what Ms. Luttrell was requesting Major Howes said, "The Florida Highway Patrol is always happy to help lower crime." FPMA is very grateful to Major Howes for Officer Stone, the professional photographer and even helping FPMA set up a statewide press conference to announce the new Drive Off decals. To date, Ms. Luttrell of FPMA still doesn't know why Major Howes chose Officer Anthony Stone other then she remembers the Major saying, "Office Stone can look stone cold serious - if need be." Today we see Officer Stone on gas pumps looking a little less then serious – since he seems to be the favorite graffiti for many.

Q: Do you have copies of the picture at home?

A: Yes, I do. All the family members do, too, as well as a baseball card that we did for troopers across America.

Q: What was the hardest part about posing?

A: Posing.

Q: Have you ever been a professional model before?

A: No, ma'am. Not that I know of.

Q: Do you liken yourself to McGriff the crime dog?

A: No, ma'am. He's way more popular than I'll ever be.

Q: You're way up in Franklin County. I wonder how we could get a photo of you.

A: You could go to the gas pump.

Q: Whenever I get gas, I'm going to think of you.

A: As long as its petroleum gas, ma'am.

"In real life Officer Stone has a great smile - on the pumps he may have fangs – but whatever the condition of his smile - we appreciate his help and hope every time he sees himself on a pump with a "new look" that he knows that these decals have helped lower crime statistics throughout Florida", Rue Luttrell.

Jim Smith, CEO of FPMA says, "Since 1999 FPMA has mailed out over 32,000 Drive Off decals, which have proven to be a helpful deterrent to the ever-increasing crime stats throughout our Florida neighborhoods."

FPMA has been proudly assisting independently owned/operated petroleum marketers and convenience stores throughout Florida for over fifty years. The members of FPMA live and invest in communities throughout Florida and are very proud to be good "Neighbors Serving Neighbors."

Should you have any questions regarding Florida's Drive-Off law or other community outreach projects FPMA members are involved in (i.e.; "Buckle Up Florida", "Know When to Burn" and "Safe Place" programs) please contact Rue Luttrell, Director of Communications for Florida Petroleum Marketers and Convenience Store Association (850) 877-5178 - Website: www.fpma.org