

THE FIVE POINT PRESS

A publication for the employees of the Travis County Sheriff's Office

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Building Bridges: Brick By Brick

TCSO Hosts National Crime Prevention Council Conference

By Barbara Cilley, Planning Manager



visits coordinated and interviewed a cross-section of fifty community leaders, faith-based leaders, and law enforcement officials.

From the beginning, four key themes emerged from the interviews with law enforcement staff from across the community and community leaders:

1. The need to “cross the I-35 divide;”
2. Fear and lack of trust that African American and Latino/Hispanic residents feel in the presence of law enforcement officers;
3. The need for systems and institutions to protect the safety of police officers while ensuring the safety of Travis County residents; and
4. Ongoing and reliable education and prevention strategies.

Using this information, the Sheriff's Office and NCPC developed a one-day conference that had a goal of helping to develop strategies for an action agenda to help solve problems identified through the interviews and a structured community dialogue. The structured-community dialogue was the mechanism for beginning serious and creative discussions around how law enforcement and the minority community could break down communication barriers and begin working in partnership.

NCPC Conference *continued on page 9*

Community leaders, representatives from local law enforcement agencies, religious leaders - all came together for a working day of problem-solving and brainstorming to address the issue of “crossing the divide.”

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The National Crime Prevention Council (NCPC) conference, Building Bridges Brick by Brick, started with the Sheriff submitting the winning bid in August of 2005. The Sheriff's proposal identified Travis County's and Austin's problems in clear language that led NCPC to believe that their organization could bring to the table a process that would provide ideas and solutions to improve the I-35 divide. In advance of the conference, the team of Monica Palacio, Fabienne Brooks, and Sarah Godshall visited Austin and Travis County several times. The Sheriff's Office and the NCPC team during these

SHERIFF'S SPOTLIGHT

During the year and a half that I have been in office I've witnessed a number of employees who have personally experienced a catastrophic event in their life or that of a loved one. Because the Travis County Sheriff's Office (TCSO) is family oriented, employees often host small events to raise money for others in time of need. A lot of energy is put into these events but unfortunately the end result is not always as successful as hoped.

Recently, my personal awareness was heightened by the illness of Reese Klaerner, the child of Officer Brad Klaerner and his wife Laura. I went to visit the family at the hospital at lunch time, and the family was out of the hospital at the time. The hospital allowed me to go into the intensive care unit (ICU) to visit baby Reese. When I went into the room I saw a helpless little bundle connected to numerous tubes and machines, it was baby Reese. Seeing Reese's helpless state was more than one person's heart can bear and made me realize that we, as an agency, needed to do something to assist the Klaerner family. My next step was to approach Tim Henry, President of the

Travis County Sheriff's Officers Association (TCSOA) to seek assistance in implementing a plan of action. Henry began organizing fundraising efforts, such as a BBQ and bake sale, as well as teaming-up with the Travis County Sheriff's Law Enforcement Association (TCSLEA) for additional planning. I then issued a personal challenge to TCSO employees to go beyond just purchasing the food, but to contribute from their hearts to the Klaerner family. The Associations were able to assist during this time of need; but I wanted to do more for this family, as well as for other TCSO families who are experiencing or may experience a personal crisis in the future.

I then contacted Roger Wade, President of the Sheriff's Memorial & Benevolent Society (SMBS), and told him that a monetary fund needed to be created to assist employees in time of personal crisis. My goal for the proposed fund is to raise \$100,000.00 by the end of the year. With that said, I have committed to suspending my future campaign fundraising efforts until we have reached the \$100,000.00 goal for the SMBS specifically for TCSO

employees who are experiencing catastrophic events. My campaign contributors have been contacted and encouraged to join our efforts in raising funds for the SMBS.

Just recently, the first step in raising these funds was accomplished. Several TCSO employees and various business donors came together to orchestrate a dinner and silent auction at the beautiful Wild Onion venue and a golf tournament at the Star Ranch Golf Club. These two events grossed approximately \$30,000.00. An upcoming event will be a concert facilitated by the management of Antone's, as well as a raffle drawing which will include a 50" flat screen Samsung television, a Dell notebook computer, and a Harley Davidson motorcycle.

In conjunction with the fundraising efforts, TCSO is researching and developing a proposal to present to the Commissioner's Court allowing employees to donate their vacation and/or sick-time hours to other departmental employees, experiencing catastrophic events, who are without

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THE FIVE POINT PRESS

The newsletter of TCSO for TCSO

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Thanks to these employees who contributed articles, pictures and ideas.

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photo submitted by M'Lisa Dalley

Sharing the 21 year tradition of an entry in the Elgin Western Days parade with "the Moonriders," is a sampling of officers representing Travis County Sheriff Greg Hamilton and the county's Corrections Bureau. Braving the raindrops that wilted starched uniform shirts, these three horsepersons proudly carried the Texas colors for all to see and admire. Left to right they are: Ruth Sanchez, Danny Voights and M'Lisa Dalley.

TCSO Training Academy

Promoting Professionalism & Realistic Preparation

By Mark Sawa, Lieutenant

The Travis County Sheriff's Academy is committed to increasing the professionalism of law enforcement and corrections throughout the Sheriff's Office and Travis County. One critical component of that professionalism is quality training for personnel of the law enforcement and the correction communities. We can contribute to that professionalism by providing quality training courses.

Our training calendar currently offers a variety of training opportunities for the many diverse functions and services within law enforcement and corrections. The courses in this training calendar benefit both seasoned officers and deputies, as well as officers and deputies with less experience.

While all officers and deputies can benefit from courses related to officer safety topics, such as Use of Force in a Jail Setting, Weapon Retention, Edged Weapon Defense and Two-man Tactics, newer officers can build on their basic skills by taking some of our newly offered courses such as Family Violence, Prison Rape Elimination Act, Report Writing, and PC affidavits and Interpersonal Communications Skills.

The courses in our training calendar are available for Travis County Sheriff's Office employees, officers from all municipal and county agencies in Travis County, as well as any law enforcement or correction officer from around the state. Regardless of an officer's past training and experience, the courses offered in this training calendar provide many opportunities to learn and apply new skills, or build on existing skills to improve the quality of service to the communities we serve.

Two of the very newest additions to the Training Academy are the Advanced Interactive Systems (AIS) PRISim™ Firearms Simulator and the Doron's 550LE interactive driving simulator.

AIS PRISim™ simulators provide highly realistic use-of-force training that develop the skills required for personnel armed with both lethal and non-lethal weapons. Flexible deployment options allow training to be delivered at fixed facilities or at any off-site location such as the command centers or show-up areas throughout the county.

The PRISim™ platform produces exceptionally realistic video-based environments for all aspects of firearms handling, including marksmanship, decision-making, and tactical strategies. PRISim™ utilizes broadcast-quality DVD technology to create vivid digital environments that are as close as you can get to the real thing. PRISim™ delivers all the hard realities of a real operational encounter. The judgment calls, indecision, sudden fear, partial understanding, blindside surprise, and eye-blink response are all part of the training experience that conditions the trainee for survival. Our integrated ShootBack™ and video capture technologies add a vital intensity level and the training discipline to record student performance.

Realistic Interaction

The goal of the Training Academy in simulated training is to make the experience "as real as it gets" - to mentally challenge the participant and create the physical conditions similar to a real-world event. It becomes the job of the instructors to ensure that every

Training Academy continued on page 10

New Regional Radio System

By Robin Osborn, Lieutenant

The Travis County Sheriff's Office (TCSO) is now completely utilizing the Regional Radio System (RRS) for radio and IP mobile communication. This project was initiated by the City of Austin who formed a partnership with Travis County to address the inability for local agencies to communicate effectively with each other over the radio. The RRS covers approximately 1,200 square miles and is used by over 80 departments. There are over 9,600 portable radios and mobile devices on the RRS. The coverage areas and agencies on the system are being expanded to include Williamson County and part of the Texas Department of Public Safety.

The TCSO currently has over 700 radios and mobile data computers running on the RRS. Radios for the RRS were purchased based on a one new radio for one old radio exchange, with the exception of 40 additional radios that went to Corrections. These extra radios were purchased with money from Travis County Emergency Services.

The TCSO Law Enforcement Bureau went live on the RRS during the summer of 2003. The mobile data computers in use by deputies access the RRS for computerized aided dispatch (CAD) data along with state and federal data (TCIC/NCIC). The RRS is also the network used by automatic vehicle location (AVL) devices which allow for the visual tracking of vehicles.

The Corrections Bureau went live with the RRS in May 2006. The original go-live date was delayed due to issues concerning signal penetration inside

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Direct Supervision Strategies: Back to Basics

By Bucky Eacret, Lieutenant and Mark Maxwell, Sergeant

We recently had the privilege of attending the “How to Run a Direct Supervision Housing Unit—Train the Trainers” class at the National Institute of Corrections (NIC), in Longmont, Colorado. The class was great, the accommodations and food were excellent, and we even got to see some snow. We would like to share a small portion of the information we learned in this article. We will also be teaching the material to supervisors and officers over the next few years.

Here are a few highlights:

1. The direct supervision housing unit officer must be proficient in using their interpersonal skills to accomplish their daily objectives, as well as and maintain control using the least restrictive means available.

2. In a direct supervision housing unit, officers should start at the lowest level supervision technique as possible. Then if needed, you have a full range of escalating options that are available and staff will have the flexibility in dealing with inmate behavior.

3. Direct supervision is a state of mind, rather than a state of jail construction. You should not let the physical plant be an excuse for failure. The overall goal of direct supervision is to achieve the active and continuous supervision of inmates in a safe and clean environment at all times. Several jails have successfully implemented direct supervision strategies even in podular or linear housing units. While direct supervision works best when coupled with appropriate jail design, the concepts are the most important.

4. Inmates generally can be “informally” classified into three simple categories:

22 Direct Supervision Housing Unit Strategies

- Think like a good supervisor (a supervisor of inmates),
- Expect the best: The self-fulfilling prophecy,
- Set clear expectations with inmates,
- Use positive reinforcement techniques,
- Hold inmates accountable for their behavior,
- Treat inmates with respect and consideration: The Golden Rule,
- Be just and fair,
- Rely on the least restrictive supervisory techniques necessary,
- Manage the unit by walking and talking,
- Identify and address inmate concerns,
- Be a source of information and services,
- Encourage inmates to take responsibility for themselves,
- Plan and supervise unit activities,
- Develop and measure personal goals for the unit,
- Apply policy and procedure appropriately to achieve unit goals and objectives,
- Take the initiative to keep your supervisor and co-workers informed,
- Take the initiative: just do it,
- Take calculated risks,
- Be creative in managing the unit,
- Be flexible in managing the unit,
- Be a role model for the unit, and
- Be yourself.

- ◆ Aggressors (most likely to attack or take advantage of others),
- ◆ Vulnerables (most likely to be victimized), and
- ◆ Situation Normals (average inmates who do their time and cause very few problems).

5. Officers supervising direct supervision housing units often need to change housings within the unit in order to manage the unit more safely and securely.

6. Officers need to establish their leadership, management style and supervisory expectations with the inmates the first time they work the unit,

and then continuously reestablish it as the composition of the unit changes.

It is very important to establish a successful and positive supervisory relationship early in the unit. In order to establish a management style within a direct supervision unit, officers need to be assigned to a unit for an extended period of time, not to exceed 90 days.

We are grateful for the training opportunity, and we look forward to teaching the concepts.

What is E-Citation?

By Barbara Cilley, Planning Mgr.

On June 15th the Commissioner's Court approved new E-Citation technology for Travis County law enforcement. The first phase of the project will equip 35 officers with hand-held devices that will be used to give citations to the public. This phase equips all officers who are focused on traffic enforcement with the devices. When all phases of the project are implemented, Travis County will be able to eliminate the need to enter citations manually into the Records Management System and the Justice of the Peace case management system.

Here's how the technology works. The Officer will swipe driver's licenses through the hand-held device. The device will read the magnetic strip on the back of the license and populate all the data fields in the hand-held device. The officer will enter other fields such as miles over the speed limit. The officer then hands the device to the citizen for their electronic signature. A clearly readable citation that is also smudge proof is printed out on a compact printer mounted in the officer's vehicle. At the end of shift, the officer will take the hand-held device and wirelessly transmit the citation information into a cradle that will upload the information electronically into RMS and then later into the JP system.

This project will have advantages for both the Sheriff's Office and the Justices of the Peace. Instead of having to interpret officer's handwriting on a citation, clerks will have a clear electronic version of the ticket. The citation will be available for collection within 48 hours. Over time, this process will help to remove ticket backlogs because ninety percent of the data entry process has been eliminated.

Although the project is designed to make the system more efficient, it is clear that there will be other benefits to implementing this system. In the past, citizens have complained they have been given a ticket and had a hard time paying the ticket because it was not entered into the system. With E-Citation implementation, there should be little delay in getting the citation into the system. Citizens will be able to use their credit cards to pay their tickets two days after they have been issued. Another side benefit of the project is that citations will be rarely lost in the process. Studies have shown that two percent of the citations are lost in this process. With this new system of technology, the lost rate should disappear.

This new technology should make the entire citation process more manageable for both the public and officers. Storing and retrieving information will be faster and more efficient. New electronic reporting requirements to the State on commercial driver's license can easily be achieved. E-Citation is a technology project that will help the Justice System pipeline for citation issuance.

Radios

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some of the jail facilities. Corrections waited until all of the RRS towers were in place to prevent the unnecessary purchase of hardware to amplify the radio signal. Additionally, the personal alarm functionality on the radios did not meet operational needs.

The RRS allows for any user on the system to communicate with another user on the system. This allows for the TCSO to communicate with any other TCSO user in addition to several other departments including Emergency Medical Services, Austin Fire Department, Austin Police Department, Aviation Police Department and the University of Texas Police Department. There are also channels on the system dedicated to use in an emergency or designated event that allows for communication between local RRS users and state and federal agencies. In such an event, all applicable users would be informed which channel to go to so everyone can communicate on the same channel or set of channels.



photo submitted by Roger Wade

Partnering with the Easter Bunny Foundation, Sheriff Hamilton and the Bunny Team provided toys and smiles for about 150 children at the Children's Hospital. Pictured L-R, Jeff Givens, Derrick Taylor, Cristina Warren, Colleen Stark as the Easter Bunny, Kimberly Geddis-Torres, Sheriff Hamilton, and Roger Wade.

New Technology: Digital Video

By Rick Whitehead, Captain

Mobile video first came to TCSO in the early to mid '90's. These systems used a standard VHS tape with a vault mounted in the trunk and the camera and controls mounted in an overhead console. These systems have evolved somewhat over the years and despite advances in other technologies, are still widely used today. Cost has remained around \$3,400 a unit. Another system from the late '90's was the Hi 8 mm units and we also have some of these. The success of the Hi 8 was very short lived. During our "test drive" they showed lots of promise but failed in the long term application and we are replacing them as rapidly as we can.

Much like your cable TV at home, digital technology has continued to evolve in the mobile vision arena. We first looked at them about 3 to 4 years ago, but found \$6,000+ a unit to be too expensive. However, in recent months that price has come more in line with the VHS units.

Recently we have considered these units:

EyeNx – LawVision – has been specifically designed for use in vehicles by utilizing existing analog or new digital equipment by running the video through the MDC's. It eliminates the VCR, increases the space in the trunk, and reduces installation costs; however, with it tied to the MDC, if you lose it you lose everything.

Panasonic Toughbook Arbitrator– uses digital recording and data-compression technologies to achieve a reliable and easy-to-query incident documentation system. Since we already employ the Toughbook as our MDC this seemed like a logical fit but since it uses the MDC as its storage

device it causes us the same concerns as previously mentioned.

Integrian–DigitalPatroller– technology is not based on or derived from consumer technology but rather designed from the ground up as a tool for use in the harsh environments of public safety. What is unique about this solution is that it has separate, independent dual hard drives that store up to 40 hours of video.

Through our test and those of other agencies (San Antonio PD and Dallas PD) we've locked in on the DigitalPatroller.

The standard DigitalPatroller solution consists of three tightly integrated subsystems characterized by where each part of the system is located: The DigitalPatroller In-Car System (cameras, video screen, hard drives, etc.) will be installed in each new vehicle. The Data Transfer System will be located in the parking lot of either the sub stations and/or fuel pumps. The Data Storage & Retrieval System (server) will be located in the Gault building.

Perhaps one of the most important advances related to DigitalPatroller is the fact that users may now wirelessly stream video from the vehicle to remote locations using either public (i.e. cell phone) or private networks. The implications of this are enormous. The first officer on a scene of a major incident can now transmit video information back to a command post. During a pursuit a shift commander can view the pursuit live and make related decisions based on what he or she is seeing versus the radio traffic.

These units are being installed in our newest units beginning in mid-June.

Digital Video Q&A:

1. What are some problems inherent in analog videotape systems?

While analog videotape has been a relatively efficient and inexpensive way of storing video signals, analog recording has distinct drawbacks: Analog signals stored on magnetic tape degrade over time. Recording, playback, and the life span of stored tapes can be negatively impacted when ambient temperature and humidity are not maintained within relatively narrow parameters.

2. Analog systems are substantially cheaper than any digital system. Why should we pay more to purchase a digital system?

If price was our only concern, analog videotape systems would do the job. However, what may be saved in the initial purchase price of the system can easily be spent in operational compromises and significant unforeseen costs needed to adequately support an analog videotape system.

3. What is the difference between analog and digital recording systems?

Digital video has become the modern standard in policing for a number of reasons: Evidentiary integrity: digital files are far more secure than analog VHS tapes, which can be tampered with, lost or damaged over time. Far superior search and storage mechanisms: countless digital files can be searched and retrieved in moments. Clips are easily downloaded to DVD to take to court. Searching analog archives is extremely labor-intensive and time-consuming.

4. Are there any technical issues with digital recording systems?

Yes, converting video from a camera into digital form creates massively large computer files. Even today's fastest business and personal computers cannot hope to compress and decompress video in real time. If degraded quality levels can be tolerated, this method of digital capture, storage, and retrieval has been possible for some time (a good example is streaming video over the Internet).

New Program Brings Healing to Inmates and Victims

By Charyl Naron, RAVE Program Director

Bridges to Life is a faith-based program which started in the Texas Department of Criminal Justice (TDCJ) system. Miraculously it began as a victim's path to healing. John Sage, a successful businessman in Houston, Texas comes from a large family. As is often the case, he and the sister closest to his age became fast allies, pledging to fight for each other unto death.

On June 30, 1993, Marilyn, John Sage's sister was brutally murdered by two offenders burglarizing her home. Throughout the apprehension, trial, and eventual sentencing of the offenders to death by injection, John received no peace and continued into a spiral depression in which his business, family, and spiritual relationships began to suffer. Through the TDCJ Victim Services Division he was able to begin participating in victim programs designed to assist the victim in healing, as well as to assist the offenders in making positive spiritual changes in their lives. John Sage was not only able to reach such a place of spiritual healing, but from that place was able to start a faith-based program that has been in the TDJC system since the year 2000. That program is the Bridges to Life.

Their statistics for success with violent offenders speaks to the depth of change for which the program serves as a catalyst. The latest recidivism statistics for the Bridges to Life program include:

- 2,005 inmates have completed Bridges to Life since 2000
- 1,706 released from prison
- 218 returned to prison- this is a 12% recidivism rate thus far with 137 new convictions (8%); & 81 technical violations (4.9%)

Only 1% of released offenders have returned for violent crimes.

From the Bridges to Life program a second program was designed which is more intensive. This program includes more individual reading and writing assignments, as well as personal journaling. The program was written by Kirk Blackard, a long time friend of John's and an advocate of the Bridges to Life. Restoring Peace involves the same faith-based concepts of healing provided by Bridges to Life and is a tribute to the courage of all who participate in the program.

One beneficial part about Restoring Peace is that it provides the reader/participant access to the same reconciliation process we have witnessed inside the prison walls. The problems and circumstances may not be as serious as those of the offenders and victims involved in Bridges To Life, but the journey to restore peace in their lives can be much the same.

The principles of Bridges to Life discussed in Restoring Peace are both simple and complex. A "willing heart" is essential in understanding and absorbing this book and program. This can begin by simply reading Restoring Peace with an open mind. After reading its concept, stories, questions and then adapting them specifically to your life, change can occur more often than not; most especially with the help and guidance of mentors and facilitators. Restoring Peace allows the participants to focus on the spiritual concepts that may be broken in their lives, such as faith, forgiveness, confession, and/or restitution. Participants in Restoring Peace are typically shown the answers to questions in their lives that have haunted them and seemed unanswerable.

When I approached John Sage about starting Restoring Peace at the TCCC as a component of the Resolve to Abolish Violence Everywhere (R.A.V.E.) program he expressed hesitancy. However, I was able to reassure him that the officers of this facility are dedicated individuals, much different than what he may have experienced elsewhere. I assured him of our professionalism and the desire to assist others in making positive changes. I encouraged him to visit our facility and meet us before making a final decision. John came to TCCC in November of 2005 and was very impressed with the facility and the professionalism of those he met. It is with pride that I am able to share with you that the Travis County Sheriff's Office is the first county jail in the State of Texas to implement either Restoring Peace or the Bridges to Life program. We have successfully graduated two classes of 15 since its inception. All participants, community volunteers, victims of crime, offenders and staff facilitators agree that the program has been life changing for them. While we do not look for perfection in each other, we are able to recognize the often deep changes that have occurred. We celebrate with all the restoration of peace, and know the likelihood for violence in our community and the lives of the offenders will be reduced.

A quote from Ernest Hemingway's Farewell to Arms best sums up the truth of healing we see in all those touched by the Restoring Peace program: offenders, victims, volunteers, even staff.

"The world breaks everyone, and afterwards, some are strong in the broken places."

Upcoming Alzheimer's Association's Memory Walk, September 30th

By Kelly Page, Community Relations Outreach Director

Well, it is that time again – time for the Alzheimer's Association's Memory Walk! Sheriff Hamilton will serve as Honorary Chair for the 2006 5K Memory Walk. He is urging you all to join him on September 30th at Austin High School and to 'Maintain Your Brain'. Proceeds from the walk will improve services and care offered by the Alzheimer's Association.

Did you know, increasing evidence shows that managing your numbers – your blood pressure, cholesterol, and

blood sugar levels, as well as your body weight – contribute to healthier aging and may help decrease your risk for Alzheimer's? Debbie Hanna, President of the Alzheimer's Association – Capital of Texas Chapter said that it is her hope that "the community is motivated to get involved in Memory Walk and that they will continue to increase their understanding of the disease."

In the near future you will be receiving information from Travis County Sheriff's Office team leaders asking you to join

Put Your Best Foot Forward

Alzheimer's Association
memory walk 5K
Nationally presented by
Genworth Financial



Austin Temple

Highland Lakes Killeen

the Sheriff on September 30th. Our agency's goal is to exceed 300 participants for the Sheriff's team, as well as be successful with our fun-filled opportunities to raise money for this worthy cause!

To learn more about the Memory Walk visit the chapter website at www.alz-austin.org.

Spring-Summer 2006 Police Games

By Bryan Whoolery, Sergeant

I recently had the opportunity to participate in the 2006 Police Games which were held in South Padre Island and hosted by the Brownsville Police Department. I had not competed in the Police Games since 2001 and was extremely impressed with the level of organization of this year's event. The firearms range, obstacle course, track facilities and other venues were first class and well structured. It was refreshing to see some familiar faces

from the Sheriff's Office at registration and at some of the events, as well as acquaintances from other agencies.

For those of you who are not familiar with the games, they are competitive events ranging from bowling to Texas Tough Cop that enables commissioned police officers the opportunity to compete against fellow Police Officers from around the State. The idea of promoting physical conditioning, through competitive athletic events, originated in California. The games have served to enhance physical fitness among police officers, an essential and integral part of police work. They have provided a means for the effective exchange of experience and ideas in a competitive yet congenial atmosphere. The games have also enabled the public to see their police officers in a new and different perspective, to learn more about them through their performance and accomplishments in friendly but highly competitive sporting events.

Mark Knight, left, preparing for the TX Toughest LE Officer competition.

Congratulations to all those who participated in this year's event, and I would like to urge everyone to make a concerted effort to participate in next year's games which will be held on Galveston Island.

Mark Knight, participated in Shooting and TX Toughest LE Officer; Bernardo Rivera, Bronze Karate; Kimberly Orts, Silver 100M Sprint and Silver 200M Sprint; Bryan Whoolery, Gold Obstacle Course, Gold TX Toughest LE Officer; Rodney Blackmon, participated in Salt Water Fishing; Robert Frederick Bronze Saltwater Fishing; Kelly Franks, Gold Women's Softball, Silver Coed Softball; Shane Dembowski, Bronze Archery 300 event; Mike Negus, Bronze Straight Pool, Bronze 8 Ball, Bronze 9 Ball; Mary Jo Gilbert, Silver Golf-Individual Handicap, Gold Golf-Individual Age; Mary Jo Gilbert-Joy Mooney (APD Commander), Gold Golf-Team Handicap, Gold Golf-Team Age; Stan Roper-Scott Parker, Gold Bowling Doubles; TCSO Semi-Autos (Bob Lawson, Robert Jones, Jason Hall, Scott Parker, Stan Roper) Bronze Bowling Team event.



Spotlight

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leave. This proposal is encountering some resistance due to complications experienced in a similar past county effort. However, I am committed in pursuing this proposal with the support of the TCSOA and the TCSLEA.

I must confess that I am saddened and troubled by the lack of commitment by many TCSO employees to volunteer their time to participate in these important fundraising efforts. These efforts are for you and your colleagues, those who work side by side with you everyday. The people who will benefit from these efforts are individuals that you assist during a work-related call for help, that you share lunch with, that you congratulate on the birth of a child, or that you mourn along with when they have lost a loved one. I don't believe that everyone fully comprehends the importance of extending your hand and time to a fellow co-worker.

All fundraising events take time to organize. These events need you - I am asking you to step forward and volunteer. Moreover, I challenge all supervisors to consider allowing employees, if the workload permits, to participate in TCSO fundraising and Community Outreach efforts during work hours. Furthermore, I want to thank those supervisors who have already answered our requests for help, as well as thank the TCSO employees who have consistently volunteered their time for this agency and others.

In closing, I want to share a quote with you from former President Bill Clinton, "Volunteering is an act of heroism on a grand scale. And it matters profoundly. It does more than help people beat the odds; it changes the odds."

NCPC Conference

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Two hundred and fifty were invited to the conference and over 116 people attended the all-day facilitated conference at the Mount Zion Baptist Church on Tuesday, February 28th. The tone for the event was set through an evening gospel musical held at the church the day before the conference. The gospel musical event featured a wide variety of church choirs and gospel stars. The concert was designed to use music as the first bridge to bring the community together.

The conference began with the first round of dialogue focused on relating a personal success story that challenged the stereotype of the divide. The personal stories were summarized in the conference proceedings and included comments such as, "being accepted as an Austin Police Department (APD) narcotics officer in spite of being black, meeting 'Hollywood' Henderson and being told you can do anything, not reacting to a racial slur, took a Hispanic boy home when he was seven years old, overcoming fear of difference to help those in need." The stories were all related in an atmosphere that encouraged the participants to expand their horizons and think outside of the box.

The second round of discussion was concentrated on sharing a direct experience that related to working with law enforcement. The intent was to lay the foundation for the lessons these experiences exemplified. It was designed to reinforce that there are positive experiences with law enforcement that can be repeated and expanded. Comments from this round



photo taken by David Hughes

Our own Deborah Higgins sings a solo with the Metropolitan A.M.E. church choir during the gospel musical held the evening before the conference.

ran the gamut of, "get to know officers before a situation, talk to officers who patrol an area; this helps both sides, law enforcement officers are human too in stressful situations, build law enforcement relationships with young people through tutoring and mentoring, realization that as an officer you can be wrong at times."

The third and final round was devoted to recommendations for improving police-community relations. It was intended to help provide the basis for going forward from the conference. These suggestions will help frame the starting point for a newly formed Building Bridges steering committee. This committee met for the first time on July 6th to work with the national NCPC team and the Sheriff's Office. The Steering committee makeup reflects the wide variety of participants who contributed to the conference. Their agenda will be based on the thoughts and reflections of the conference. Over the long-term the committee will help to achieve the goal of bringing law enforcement and the community closer together so that the community can get beyond stereotypes that are held by all sides of the dialogue.

Training Academy

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trainee focuses on the task at hand, and not the artificial constraints of the simulator. As part of every training environment, the instructors can integrate scenario branching to alter outcomes based upon trainee decisions and interactions. Based upon the trainee's verbal responses, the instructor can alter the scenario outcomes. This means that every situation has multiple endings, thus making it practically impossible to memorize the enactments.

With PRISim™ as our training platform, we can choose from a wide variety of firearms and accessories to meet our specific training needs. PRISim™ firearms options range from full-duty firearms with laser-firing variations to handguns and automatic weapons. In addition, trainees can also interact with the PRISim™ platform using OC spray and flashlights.

The second addition is the Doron's 550 LE interactive driving simulator. The 550 LE is designed to provide a dynamic training environment for a wide variety of law enforcement and

corrections situations. Each 550 LE is a single operator unit that allows the driver to interact with computer-generated vehicles in a realistic environment. Multiple 550 LE units can be linked to create real-time scenarios, thus enabling the development of team-based skills and essential agency policy training.

The Doron's Scenario Developer is a powerful tool that enables driving simulator instructors to easily and quickly create unique training scenarios to meet their specific training objectives. With Doron's Scenario Developer, the instructor simply selects objects and a vehicle, places them into the Virtual World™ and then the students "drive" the vehicle where they want it to go. The system automatically records and saves the vehicle and its path.

Because the Scenario Developer is so easy to use, new or special scenarios can be rapidly developed, crash situations can be recreated quickly and easily for use in training, re-training or other job-related needs.

The Training Academy looks forward to providing you with the best training that we can.

Deputy UBI Reporting

By Roger Wade, PIO

Texas has more counties (254) than any other state. Forty one counties in Texas are each bigger than the state of Rhode Island. Rockwall County is the smallest county at 149 square miles. Brewster County is the largest 6,204 square miles. Angelina County is the only one named for a woman.

There are more than one-quarter million miles of roads in Texas, the largest road network in the nation.

The longest highway in any one state is US83. It runs 903 miles from Brownsville to the Panhandle.



The shortest highway in Texas is Loop 168 in downtown Tenaha in Shelby County. The road is 0.074 miles long, or approximately 391 feet.

About 1.6 million gallons a year of white and yellow paint are used to stripe the highways of Texas.

Facts gathered from "The Great State Of Texas Almanac 2006"

The Sheriff's Memorial and Benevolent Society (SMBS) is organizing several fundraising opportunities. This organization is working to build a resource for all TCSO employees and their families. Funds are used for immediate expenses following catastrophic events, memorials, scholarships, other educational programs and the support of any public safety project or program. There are lots of ways you can participate - and you might even have fun along the way! Contact Roger Wade or one of the other SMBS board members for more information on how you can participate.



5 Day Western Caribbean Cruise, February 5 - 10, 2007, from Galveston on Carnival's Ecstasy. For more information check the SMBS website, www.tcsosheriff.org/smbs_cruise.htm.

Cook Book: Recipes are still being collected. If you have a favorite recipe, please share it for inclusion in this project. And be sure to purchase copies for family & friends once they are published.

TCSO Calendar for 2007: This is an opportunity to have fun, and promote fitness, while raising funds for a great cause. Both males & females from all sections of TCSO are encouraged to participate. This will be a terrific gift idea once released, so watch for it December 2006.

Teen Dating Violence Campaign is Launched

By Kelly Page, Community Relations Outreach Director

On June 7th Sheriff Greg Hamilton launched a proactive community-wide effort to address Teen Dating Violence by collaboratively joining with Carolyn Mosley, mother of the late Ortralla Mosley, a victim of teen dating violence; SafePlace-Austin; Women's Advocacy Project-Teen Justice Initiative; Sherry Matthews Advocacy Marketing; Austin Graphics, and the Austin Film Festival.

The Travis County Sheriff's Office (TCSO) and its partners are committed to raising awareness of teen dating violence through:

- Public Service Announcements (PSA) – “Violence is Not a Sign of Affection” and “Help the Healing Begin,”
- Print Campaign – “If he hurts you, he loves you not – Violence is Not a Sign of Affection,”

- Providing free training opportunities for local law enforcement and school personnel by utilizing the Center for Disease Control's “Choose Respect” curriculum, and conducting activities with collaborative partners and local youth.

Additionally, in October, in recognition of National Domestic Violence Awareness month, an initiative with the Austin Film Festival (AFF) will be announced. At that time we will disclose details of an upcoming contest for Travis County teens to create a PSA on Teen Dating Violence. AFF will be facilitating filmmaking training seminars, at no charge, for students and will be hosting panels during the AFF for students. The top three selected PSAs will be announced in February during Teen Dating Awareness and Prevention week.



photo taken by Joseph Flores

This TCSO vehicle will help spread the message that Violence is Not a Sign of Affection. Austin Graphics donated the materials to wrap this unit and Sherry Matthews Advocacy Marketing donated the graphic design.

TCSO would like to thank Travis County Media Services, Eagle High School – Eagle, Idaho, and local teens Nicci Avey, Katra Harris, and Juan Ramirez for their contributions in creating the PSAs utilized in this campaign.

To learn more information about this campaign link to: www.tcsosheriff.org/tdv-campaign.htm

Granny's House

By Derrick Taylor, Senior Deputy



We met Geneva Houston, affectionately known as Granny, in February 2006. Granny bought a house in

East Austin in 1961. She and her husband planned to fix up the old house, but tragedy struck and Granny's husband died before they could build up the house. That did not stop Granny's drive to help others despite her own needs. Over the last 40+ years, she raised dozens of children in the small 675 square foot house. She fed and still feeds the poor, as well as neighbors in her area. Granny has been a pillar in the community despite being 76 years old and handicapped. She currently takes care of her 59-year-old handicapped nephew. Granny does a lot of wonderful things for others despite being on a fixed income and driving a

1976 Cutlass, her only vehicle since she first drove it off the showroom floor in 1976. She makes frequent trips to the laundry mat and takes her nephew to routine doctor's appointments.

When we first met Granny, she was in her backyard digging, unclogging her sewage system. At least twice a month that was one of her chores. She also had to nail, tack and or staple linoleum, cardboard and tile to her ceiling to cover holes. She had poles holding up parts of the ceiling where patchwork was not enough. She had no central air or heating, only box fans and a dangerous space heater. Her floor caved in years ago and was unsteady. There was exposed wiring, separated boards in the walls and leaks in the toilet and bathtub. The pier and beams were cracked.

Granny's House continued on page 12

EMPLOYEE PROFILE: Richard Taylor

by Chris Wallace, Communications Manager

On August 13, 1991, Rick Taylor, a tall skinny young man, walked into the TCSO Dispatch office for his first day of work as a Dispatcher. He wore our issued uniform, a tan shirt and dark brown polyester pants. Back then, the dispatch office was located in the basement of the Courthouse. We had a total of four workstations and our dot matrix printer was so loud, we had to have a sound proof cover over it so you could hear the radio when it was printing.

August 13th wasn't Rick's first experience with the Sheriff's Office. He joined the Explorers in 1985 while attending Travis High School. He has fond memories of ride-outs with Tip Birdwell, Stan Roper, Tommy Blackwell, and [then] Sgt. Scott Parker. He also had ride-outs with [then Deputy] Jim Sylvester – and says he has stories. How *did* that trash can full of water get in Rick's locker? After high school he worked as a dispatcher at Lakeway PD before joining the Sheriff's Office.

Over the years, Rick has received numerous letters of appreciation and commendation for his work in Communications. He's always loved



“tinkering” with things and from the moment he began his employment, he was very interested in the workings of the Computer Aided Dispatch System (CAD). You could always count on Rick to trouble shoot problems with the equipment or to program a new code. In April 2001, this initiative was rewarded when he was assigned to work on the Combined Transportation Emergency Communications Center (CTECC) CAD Project. Rick was instrumental in developing and programming the highly advanced CAD system we use today. In April of 2002, Rick was promoted to 911 Telecommunications Specialist Supervisor. With over 15 years of service, Rick's fondest memories are of the various shift parties, get-togethers and of the many close friends he's made. By far, his most difficult day was Feb 15, 2001, when Deputy Keith Ruiz was

killed in the line of duty. Rick was working the radio during the incident and continues to feel the effects to this day.

When Rick is not working, he enjoys watching movies, listening to music and spending time with his family at their exotic game ranch. He also has fond memories of his trips to France to visit family as well as visits to England – where he saw Madonna in front of her hotel. His favorite movie is “Jurassic Park” and his favorite musical group is “Dead or Alive” - long live the 80's!

To my knowledge, no one has worked in TCSO Communications as long as Rick. He recalls that when he received his 10-year Service Award, Sheriff Frasier announced that all ten years had been spent in Dispatch and that explained why he's so “crazy.”

During his time here, Rick has many different experiences, taken all types of calls, and dispatched countless incidents. He draws on this experience and knowledge to assist our newest team members. Occasionally, we'll take the time to reminisce about the “old days” and marvel at all of the new technology that has been introduced in Communications over the years. His ability to adapt to these changes has made him a valuable asset to our Office.

Granny's House

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photo submitted by Derrick Taylor

Demolition of Granny's House, May 24th.

There were electrical cords running across the ceiling to provide electricity to different parts of the house. Granny still pushed on without complaining while helping others.

The Sheriff's Office has teamed with local builders to tear the house down and rebuild it. The house was demolished on May 24th 2006. Chasco Construction agreed to oversee the project. Many local businesses and volunteers have stepped up to be part of this project. Target has donated

items for the house to almost furnish it completely. Landscape, cabinet door, countertop and cement companies have also committed their resources. Ultimately, Granny will have something we all hope for, a safe place to call home.

Completion date of the house has not been determined because volunteers who have regular jobs are building it. We are hoping to hand her the keys 45-60 days after the foundation is poured.