



VOL 7: ISSUE 11



MESSAGE FROM SHERIFF HERNANDEZ

When you think of what it takes for Brown Santa to be successful each year, you probably think of toys, food, wrapping paper, volunteers, and logistics; and you're right. There's one more integral component, and without it, the program almost didn't have a chance to even get started this year. That integral first step - a warehouse.

Brown Santa literally cannot function without a secure facility to house all the toy and food donations, not to mention the hundreds of volunteers who sort, wrap, assemble and prep all the packages for delivery. The warehouse Brown Santa used the last two years became unavailable, and for months, the search was on for a new location. In this booming county, warehouse space simply isn't easy to come by and doors of opportunity kept closing. The situation became dire.

It was time to rally everyone we could think of, and we did. Judge Andy Brown and your Travis County Commissioners joined the effort, making calls to their contacts, trying to connect us to possible locations. The leads were promising, but a location simply couldn't be secured. We knew that if operations couldn't begin in earnest by November 8th, the program wouldn't be able to happen this year.

That's when a true blessing happened. Richard Suttle of Armbrust & Brown came through with an idea and set in motion a team effort that literally saved Christmas for Brown Santa. I'm pleased to tell you that Brown Santa has a warehouse! You can find them in the Austin American-Statesman building at 305 S. Congress Ave.

Thanks to Armbrust & Brown, Endeavor, Higginbotham, the Cox family, Texas Disposal Systems, AusTex Towing and LAZ Parking, all the legal documents are signed, volunteers have a place to park, there's easy access to clean restrooms, and six trailers of equipment were safely delivered and loaded in.

Now, we're operational and the fun part has begun. Volunteers, both adults and children, are working hard to get all the gifts wrapped and food boxes packed. When you see the Brown Santa barrels, I hope you'll fill them up. But you don't need a barrel to give. You can shop on Amazon and the toys will be delivered straight to the warehouse! You can find more information on the program here. Thank you for supporting this great cause. It's going to be a wonderful year!



WELLS BRANCH TOWN HALL



On November 16th, TCSO East Command hosted a community town hall for the Wells Branch Neighborhood Association. We had an engaging and informative dialogue on topics such as patrol presence, noise ordinance, home security and traffic. We extend our thanks to Travis County Precinct One Commissioner Jeff Travillion for joining the discussion.

If your neighborhood is interested in a community meeting and/or a neighborhood safety presentation, please contact our Community Outreach Unit.



HONORING VETERANS



To commemorate Veterans Day, several members of the TCSO family participated in an annual tradition honoring past veterans at the Texas State Cemetery. On November 8th, dozens of volunteers made certain to place a flag at the grave sites of every single veteran laid to rest at the East Austin cemetery, which is the final resting place of former governors, senators, legislators, congressmen, judges, and other legendary Texans who help shaped Texas into what it is today.

TCSO proudly employs more than 180 veterans in both sworn and civilian positions. We sincerely thank them for their service to our nation, and for the many ways they continue to serve here at home.



Carols and Cocoa with Cops. Tuesday DEC 19 6-7 PM. THE DOMAIN near Santa by the tree in front of Macy's on Esperanza Crossing. Join Us! for an evening with local law enforcement as they sing carols while you sip on hot chocolate.

PUBLIC SAFETY COMMISSION



On November 3rd, Sheriff Hernandez was honored to attend the Central Texas Public Safety Commission's 26th Anniversary Luncheon. Recently renamed from the Greater Austin Crime Commission to reflect its broader focus across the region, the group met to celebrate first responders and thank them for their service. Sheriff joined Admiral Bobby R. Inman, USN (Retired) and his wife, Nancy, and keynote speaker Matthew McConaughey who emphasized that public safety is a collective responsibility critical to the prosperity of our area. The lunch was a wonderful opportunity for first responders to be reminded of how much the community supports them.

LE EXPLORER COMPETITION



On November 11th, TCSO Public Safety Cadets 1099 competed in four scenarios at the 7th Annual John Sartain Memorial Competition hosted by the Corpus Christi Police Department. There were over 30 teams from across Texas participating. The cadets performed very well, especially in the Hostage Negotiations, Active Assailant and Crime Scene Investigation categories. They look forward to attending more competitions in 2024, and will continue to learn and train hard at their weekly meetings. Great job, cadets!



WELLNESS CONNECTION



This year, TCSO began the important work of integrating a trauma informed approach agency-wide, benefiting staff, those in our custody, and the people we serve in the community. With this in mind, Wellness Connection, a complete list of wellness resource options to encourage and support a healthier staff was launched. A QR code for staff takes them directly to the webpage that provides both internal and external low-cost and no-cost wellness resource options. TCSO will be promoting Wellness Connection and encouraging staff to bookmark the link for easy access when they need to connect to resources.