



VOL 6: ISSUE 8



MESSAGE FROM SHERIFF HERNANDEZ

Last month I shared information with you about some of the challenges we're facing as we run your Travis County Jail in these unprecedented times. I'd like to take this opportunity to expound on the plight of the people in our jail population who are struggling with mental illness. Nearly 40% of inmates in our custody are battling some form of mental illness. 27% of them are diagnosed with moderate to severe symptoms. This includes symptoms such as psychosis, suicide ideation, delusions and manic or depressive mood.

One of the impacts on our jail population is a backup of people who have been deemed mentally incompetent to stand trial, waiting for admittance to a hospital. The state hospital system has put a limit on admittances, and the number of inmates in our custody who are waiting has significantly increased. These inmates have high mental health needs and wait up to two years to be transferred to a hospital.

Can you imagine being locked in a jail cell because you committed a crime based solely on mental illness? Many of these inmates don't know where they are or why they're there. They languish in a county jail, waiting longer for court ordered hospital treatment than they would have stayed in jail if found guilty of the offense they committed. This is a travesty!

We work closely with [Integral Care](#) and [NAMI Central Texas](#) (National Alliance on Mental Illness) for assistance in caring for this vulnerable population. Our team of mental health professionals works tirelessly to offer the very best care to these inmates. But let's be clear. A jail is not a hospital. It isn't designed to provide the kind of environment suited for acute mental health treatment. We need to do better, and I hope our state will step up during the next legislative session.



I'm grateful to the Austin American Statesman for taking note of the situation: <https://www.statesman.com/story/news/crime/2022/07/22/texas-hospital-not-accepting-inmates-as-travis-county-waitlist-grows/65377134007/>.

K9 TEAM LOCATES MISSING TEEN



On August 17th, deputies responded to a report of an emotionally disturbed teen who threatened to commit suicide and was missing. The teen had been missing for an hour-and-a-half, so time was of the essence. Deputy Seth Culver and K9 Radar were dispatched to the scene. Within 30 minutes, the two successfully tracked the teen. Assistance was offered to the family and tragedy was averted. Great job!



National Night Out enhances the relationship between neighbors and law enforcement while bringing back a true sense of community. Furthermore, it provides a great opportunity to bring police and neighbors together under positive circumstances.

TCSO invites you to join us on Tuesday, October 4th as we gather to celebrate. Neighborhood block parties generally occur between 5:00-9:00 pm. For more information on how to register your block party, please click the icon button below. Registration closes September 23rd.



MADD RECOGNITION



On Friday, August 19th, Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD) of Central Texas hosted their Travis and Williamson County Law Enforcement Recognition Event. Sheriff Hernandez was honored to be the keynote speaker and discussed the grave impacts of impaired driving on victims and their families across our community. TCSO is proud to announce Senior Deputy Dustin Rade achieved a Commitment Hero Award, for those who have gone beyond their normal duties in educating the community and expanding training. Senior Deputy Jan Eric Hendrix took home an Enforcement Hero Award, given to those with the most DWI arrests in the area. Congratulations to you both!

FRESH START BACK TO SCHOOL



Earlier this month, our Community Outreach Unit and [Public Safety Cadets](#) hosted the 3rd Annual Fresh Start back-to-school, drive-thru event which provided school supplies and hygiene kits for approximately 100 K-12 local kids. We would like to thank our sponsors [Austin YES](#) and [Jerry Dixon's Automotive & Classic Kars](#) for helping us send these kids off with a "fresh start" to the new school year!

COBRA GRADUATION # 103



The TCSO Training Academy offers a Corrections Officers Basic Recruit Academy (COBRA) for all new-hire Corrections Officers. Corrections Officers attend the COBRA course while on-duty within their first year of employment; Texas Commission on Law Enforcement (TCOLE) provides a one year, temporary Corrections Officer license. COBRA is 360 hours of specialized instruction that consists of the following:

- PHASE 1: Course satisfies TCOLE requirements for the Basic County Corrections course; topics include booking, identification, inmate rights, head-counts, emergency procedures, searches, classifications, health services, etc.
- PHASE 2: Course highlights those areas that are fundamental to normal and emergency operations of the Travis County Correctional system; topics include defensive tactics, firearms training, CPR, smoke-house safety, departmental policies, interpersonal communication, wellness, etc.

Congratulations to the following officers of COBRA Class #103 that graduated on August 26th: Jhan Blanco, Jessica Cabrera, Dominique Evans, Alexa Figueroa, Joshua Garcia, Brandon Goins, Dereon Kizzee, Francisco Marroquin, Amber M^cCarty, Taylan M^cMahon, Alma Olivares, Ricardo Romero-Rodriguez, Alberto Torres, Richard Valadez, Ashley Whaley and Bryce Williams.

SHOUT OUT



“ My teenage daughter, who just received her license last week, was driving in the left-hand lane of MoPac on Monday around 2pm with my son and myself in the car as well. The truck that had been driving in front of us suddenly swerved into the lane to our right, revealing a large mattress in our path. There were cars in the lane to our right blocking our ability to switch lanes, and my daughter came to a stop in her attempt to find a clear path around the road hazard. It was a scary experience, however within seconds the pulled up behind us with his lights on, checked on us, dragged the mattress out of our path and across the express lane, and hurled it into the median.

I would love to pass on our thanks- it was a very stressful situation for a new driver and the fact that he swooped in so quickly and saved the day was very much appreciated. ”

Thanks - Nora

Well done, Sergeant Aaron St. Clair!

TCSO CENTRAL WARRANTS



TCSO Central Warrants are essential personnel who provide 24/7/365 advanced level support to law enforcement, criminal justice agencies and the general public. In accordance with FBI and Texas Department of Public Safety (DPS) policies, as well as federal and state statutes, Warrants monitors, maintains, operates and relays information via state and federal (TLETS/NLETS) telecommunication network systems. To maintain that advanced level of support, our staff research, identify, enter and maintain orders and misdemeanor arrest warrants as well as protective orders within state and federal law enforcement databases.

Warrants also provides entry and information on Condition of Bonds, missing persons and stolen property. All staff must maintain the required level of certification via the vigorous testing system created and maintained at/by the DPS. We're proud to recognize our dedicated and hard-working staff who provide an exceptional level of service everyday.

WEIGHT LOSS CHALLENGE



Five TCSO staff in Central Command (Rashidah Williams, Julie Cullen, Stacy Perez, Linda Anderson and Dafina Naciadler) kicked off a weight loss challenge to conclude in November. Beginning in August, Sheriff Hernandez brought her competitive spirit to the initiative by encouraging everyone to stick with this worthy wellness goal through sponsoring the friendly rivalry each month. Let's go ladies - you can do it!

JUNIOR DEPUTY SUMMER CAMP



Earlier this month, we were so excited to host our [Junior Deputy Summer Camp](#) after a two-year absence due to Covid. During the four-day camp, campers experienced hands-on presentations from multiple, specialized units within the agency such as SWAT, K-9, Lake Patrol, Crime Scene Unit, Corrections Tactical Unit and Central Booking. We're not sure who had more fun - the campers or us? Follow us on social media to stay informed for next year.