

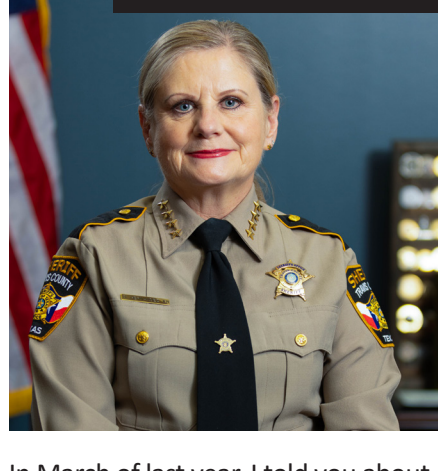


MAR 2025

TRAVIS COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

NEWSLETTER

WORDS FROM THE SHERIFF



In March of last year, I told you about my friend Ronnie Erwin and "Stars Over Texas", the incredible three-volume set of books he and his wife, Lynn wrote about the history of all Texas sheriffs.

Remarkably, exactly one year after I introduced him to you, I get to share with you that Ronnie completed the goal he and Lynn set decades ago. Sadly, Lynn passed away before the journey was complete, but Ronnie kept the promise they made together. He traveled to every single one of Texas's 254 counties and got every current sheriff in the state (and some retired ones too) to sign their page in the books.

March 25 was Sheriff's Day at the State Capitol. Ronnie was welcomed by the Sheriff's Association of Texas and Governor Abbott to present the signed books into the Texas Archives. I was honored to be there to witness this achievement and count it a blessing to know Ronnie as a dear friend.

This month, TCSO also made history, securing its first successful State prosecution by for an overdose death prior to HB6, which classifies fentanyl deaths as "poisonings" and allows murder charges to be filed against the person/s responsible for distributing the drug to the decedent.

TCSO detectives diligently worked the case of a double overdose in which one party survived, and a 30-year-old woman died. They were able to obtain evidence and develop a case that resulted in enough probable cause to arrest a suspect and bring charges. On March 25, the suspect pled guilty and accepted a plea deal. You can read more about it in this newsletter.

We care deeply for victims and their families and it's our agency's goal to amplify their voices. We strive to give them their very best shot at successful prosecution through the court system. I'm so very proud of the work done by our Criminal Investigations Division and our VICE Unit.



COBRA 113 GRADUATION

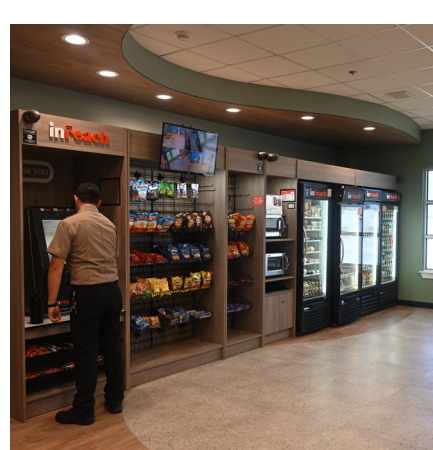
The TCSO Training Academy offers a Corrections Officers Basic Recruit Academy (COBRA) for all new-hire Corrections Officers. Corrections Officers attend the COBRA course while on duty within their first year of employment; Texas Commission on Law Enforcement (TCOLE) provides a one-year, temporary Corrections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

Congratulations to the following officers of COBRA Class 113 who graduated on March 7: Zachary Aguirre, Tanaka Chatindo, Kevin Diaz, Makayla Diaz, Kody Fietz, Dujuan Goodlow, Jose Hernandez, Axel Hernandez-Carcamo, Tereso Jasso, Tanner Joyce, Daniel Limas, Tyler Molina, Patricia Randall, Noe Vega and Makayla Webber.



On March 25, Ronaldo Renee Rodriguez pleaded guilty to Delivery of a Controlled Substance (Felony 2) in connection with the fentanyl-related death of 30-year-old Tiffany Baker from Austin in 2022. For months, CID and VICE, in collaboration with the DEA and the Travis County DA's Office, worked tirelessly to ensure every detail of the case and every avenue for prosecution was attended to. Their heart and tenacity are a testament to the caliber of TCSO professionals who dedicate themselves fully to serving victims and their families. Well done!

Although this incident occurred before the 2023 HB6 law that allows fentanyl overdoses to be prosecuted as Murder, this marks the first successful State prosecution by TCSO for an overdose death prior to the new law.



After months of planning and preparation, Hamilton Hall and Central Booking are back in action! The staff break room at the Travis County Correction Complex is fully renovated with upgraded vending machines, a comfy reading nook, and a custom-built meeting table crafted TCSO's Marketable Skills team. We send our sincerest thanks to everyone at TCSO who was instrumental in bringing this vision to life, giving our staff an exceptional space to relax and regroup.

Central Booking also received much-needed upgrades including new counter tops, desks, protective glass barriers and fresh paint selected with a trauma-informed approach to create a calmer atmosphere. The enhancements make a noticeable difference, reflecting our ongoing commitment to maintaining a high standard of operational readiness and workplace safety.

NATIONAL K9 VETERANS DAY March 13, 2025



Happy K9 Veteran's day to our four-legged friends who served Travis County and are now enjoying retirement. K9s play a vital role at TCSO. They're keenly able to detect narcotics, find missing people, track dangerous suspects and calm the anxiety of troubled students.

- Reya | Corrections
- Ricky | Patrol/Narcotics
- Maverick | School Resource Officer
- Roki | Patrol/Narcotics
- Dakota | School Resource Officer
- Vito | School Resource Officer

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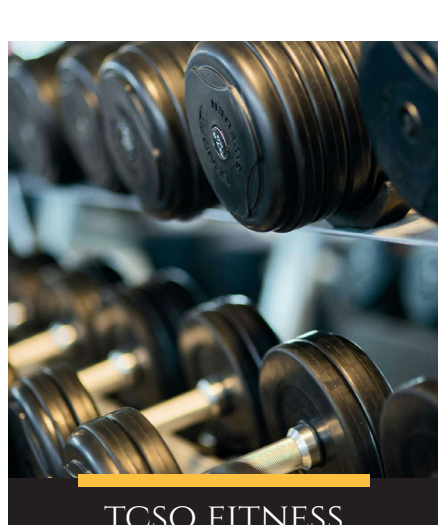
Congratulations to our recent retirees! Thank you for your dedicated service to this agency and the citizens of Travis County. We wish you the best of luck in your new adventures.

- Graciela Cano – 35 yrs. of service
- Myrna Ruiz – 30 yrs. of service
- Bernard Hamilton – 28 yrs. of service
- Alero Walker – 27 yrs. of service
- Patrick Mele – 26 yrs. of service
- Angela Neidlein – 23 yrs. of service
- Kevin Miller – 20 yrs. of service
- Janis Morgan – 15 yrs. of service
- Amy Davis – 14 yrs. of service
- Calvin Howton – 8 yrs. of service

SHERIFFS' DAY



March 25 was Sheriffs' Day at the State Capitol. It's a day when the Sheriff's Association of Texas gathers and takes the opportunity to meet with law makers, offering their insight and influence to matters that impact their communities.



A 2025 goal for TCSO is to encourage and motivate a collective focus on health and wellness by improving fitness and nutrition. In an effort to find the best way to inspire and provide fitness plans that work for everyone from the beginner to the athlete, Sheriff Hernandez gathered a committee of employees, recommended by their peers. The team is hard at work and will present their ideas in the coming weeks.



March 10-14 was Read Across America, which aims to motivate children to read through events, activities and resources, fostering a love for reading and literacy. This year's theme was "Cultivating Growing Minds." TCSO always looks forward to participating in this annual event at Hillcrest Elementary, and this year, K-9 Jira joined in for a fun day of reading too!



On March 27, TCSO partnered with Meals on Wheels and brought our Price Is Right game out to the seniors at the Travis County Community Center at Del Valle. This group brought a lot of enthusiasm! We're grateful to Target and Walmart for providing the great prizes. Additionally, Travis County Office of Emergency Management joined in the fun, providing a much desired prize - an emergency preparedness bag. We look forward to hosting more games with our senior community throughout the year.

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COMMUNITY LEADERS



TCSO was honored to offer presentations to community leaders this month. On March 13, the Lake Travis Chamber of Commerce's Leadership Lake Travis class met at the Training Academy, where command staff provided an overview of agency functions and tour of the Correctional Complex. On March 27, Sheriff Hernandez shared information about TCSO and the Drone Unit demonstrated how new technology helps on critical incident scenes for Westlake's Chamber of Commerce's Public Safety Day. It was a pleasure to share some of the amazing work TCSO does every day to protect and serve our community.



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