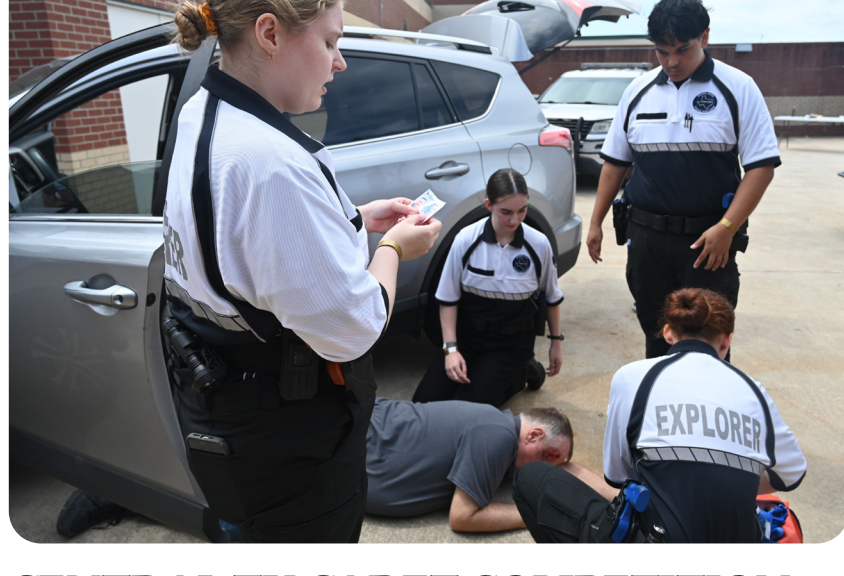




Public Safety Spotlight



CENTRAL TX CADET COMPETITION

On May 30, TCSO hosted the [4th Annual Central Texas Public Safety Cadet Competition](#), a one-day event testing the knowledge and skills of cadets with challenging scenarios based on current Texas law enforcement standardized training. 24 teams from across Texas – and even out of state – competed for top honors. A huge thank you is in order for all the scenario actors, judges, event staff and volunteers who dedicated their time to ensuring the cadets had a great experience. It was an amazing day of friendly competition, teamwork and learning opportunities for everyone involved.

Congratulations to the Harris County Sheriff's Office for earning the Top Overall Team award, as well as to all of the other award recipients.



CONGRATS AKINS GRADUATES

The Akins High School Correctional Services Internship (CSI) class of 2026 graduated on May 13. This partnership with TCSO gives students the unique opportunity to go to the Travis County Jail downtown and the Travis County Correctional Complex in Del Valle to learn directly from current corrections officers. The goal of the internship is to prepare students for a career in corrections.

Several former graduates of the program now call TCSO their home and are thriving in their career paths.



40TH ANNUAL TJA CONFERENCE

More than 35 TCSO employees attended, and some served as instructors, at the 40th Annual [Texas Jail Association](#) (TJA) Conference held May 4-8 in San Marcos.

The association's founder and first president, Jerry Baggs, had a vision for collaboration with other Texas jails. Bringing together detention officers and jail administrators from county jails across the state has fostered countless innovations and accomplishments since its founding on June 4, 1986.

Congratulations to the award winners from TCSO:

- Hall of Fame - Capt. Edwardo Jackson
- Detention Officer-Professional Service - Sgt. Tilsa Booker
- Service as TJA President - Lt. Frances Dembowski
- Jail Standards Showdown, Second Place - Lt. John Young and FTO Isaac Harper
- Shooting Simulator, First Place - FTO Noe Vega

Lt. Frances Dembowski officially concluded her term as president of the association. Passionate about creating opportunities for women in corrections, she was instrumental in developing specialized events that brought together respected leaders from across the state, including Sheriff Hernandez.

Her leadership and dedication strengthened the Association's commitment to training, networking and professional growth for members throughout Texas.

Capt. Jonathan Ede was officially sworn in as the second vice president of the association. He is the first member of TCSO to hold an elected position on the national board.

Throughout his career, Capt. Ede has demonstrated a strong commitment to advancing the corrections profession nationwide. He also played a key role in streamlining the process for TCSO staff to obtain their Certified Jail Officer, Certified Jail Supervisor and Certified Jail Manager designations through partnership with the American Jail Association.

In the Community



CLEANUP TAKES A DIVE

During dive team training on May 13, members of the Sheriff's Underwater Recovery Team (SURT) demonstrated their commitment to operational readiness and community service by conducting a group trash cleanup effort on Starnes Island. While participating in scheduled training activities, team members took the opportunity to improve the condition of the area by removing litter and debris from the island, helping preserve one of the lake's frequently visited recreational locations.



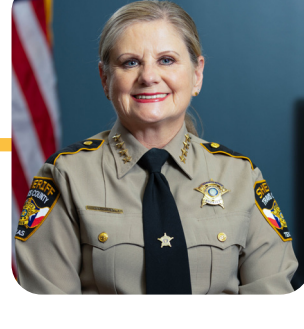
WELLS BRANCH TOWN HALL

On May 15, TCSO hosted a community town hall in Wells Branch, where residents met with deputies and Travis County partners to discuss local concerns and learn about public safety initiatives. The event strengthened community connections and highlighted TCSO's ongoing commitment to serving the area. Communities interested in hosting a town hall can contact TCSO's [Community Outreach Unit](#) to coordinate.



FIRST RESPONDERS DAY

On May 3, TCSO was honored to join other local law enforcement agencies at Shoreline Church for First Responders Sunday. It was a special day, as our agency enjoyed the fellowship and appreciation of this congregation. Thank you for having TCSO, Shoreline!



From the Sheriff

Summer is here and Texas is about to heat up in more ways than just temperature. For some, the summer months are a chance to take a little break from the fast pace of life and have some fun. For us, the summer months are very busy.

TCSO is ramping up for our Public Safety Cadet Competition, Jr. Deputy Camp, neighborhood parades, special events, home safety measures for folks who are traveling, and back-to-school drives to name a few.

We love the opportunities we have to be in the communities we serve and enjoy fellowship at events like Pops with the Cops (popsicles) or Town Hall conversations. I encourage you to reach out to our [Community Outreach Unit](#) if you're interested in having a TCSO event in your neighborhood.

In addition to the fun, we're also getting ready for peak activity on Lake Travis, heavier recreational traffic on roadways, intoxicated drivers and potential upticks in criminal activity.

Summer is when we warn everyone about dangers and encourage safety precautions. I'm sure sometimes it appears that your Sheriff's Office wants to take the fun out of things, but that's not the case. We want everyone to have a great time, but our top priority is to keep our community safe. All too often we are called to the scene of tragedies that could have been avoided.

As your sheriff, I sincerely hope you will not drink and drive a vehicle or a boat, make sure you and your passengers wear a life jacket on the lake, keep e-motos off public roadways, obey traffic laws – whether in a vehicle or on a bike – and do not street race, lock your vehicles at night and do not ever leave a gun in an unlocked vehicle. It's most important to me – and to TCSO – that you stay safe.

The Austin area is a beautiful place to enjoy a ton of summer activities. I wish you a great summer and look forward to seeing you at our events!

Wellness + Culture



A NEW THERAPY OPTION

Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing (EMDR) is an evidence-based therapy that helps people process and recover from traumatic experiences. In simple terms, EMDR works by helping the brain "unstick" memories that were not fully processed at the time of a critical or traumatic event.

When a law enforcement or corrections officer experiences trauma – such as a violent encounter, line-of-duty incident or repeated exposure to stress – the brain can store that memory in a raw, unprocessed state. This can lead to ongoing symptoms like anxiety, hypervigilance, sleep problems or intrusive thoughts. EMDR helps the brain reprocess those memories so they are stored more like normal life experiences – still remembered but no longer overwhelming.

In September 2024, TCSO launched the Professional Officer Wellness Reset (POWR) Program in response to staff requests for no-cost and anonymous access to therapeutic resources for addressing trauma and chronic stress. Through the POWR Program, all TCSO staff have access to 10 free sessions of acupuncture or therapy – including EMDR – in partnership with the [Samaritan Center for Counseling](#).



PEER SUPPORT

The newly launched TCSO Wellness and [Peer Support Team](#) facilitated its first quarterly Peer Support training for current and new volunteers. For more than a decade, the Peer Support Program has helped hundreds of sworn and civilian staff as they navigated work and life stressors or trauma. By providing confidential one-on-one support and resources for TCSO employees, Peer Support volunteers offer care to those who are dedicated to helping others.

Proud Highlights

During TCSO's first dive at Starnes Island (see left), Diver (and Dispatcher) Lenore Brady and Diver (and Detective) Tim Parrish were exploring the cliff side when Parrish found an Apple iWatch at a depth of around 50 ft.

The iWatch powered up when Parrish hooked it up to a charger. He was then able to find the owner's name through the emergency medical contact information and called the number listed. The owner said he lost it over the weekend while on a party barge and couldn't have been more grateful that TCSO found it. Nice work, Detective!



COBRA 119 GRADUATION

The TCSO Training Academy offers a Corrections Officers Basic Recruit Academy (COBRA) and all new-hire corrections officers attend the required course while on duty within their first year of employment. They receive 360 hours of education designed to fully prepare them for the role of corrections officer, and earn their Texas Commission on Law Enforcement (TCOLE) Jailer License.

Congratulations to the following officers of COBRA Class 119 who graduated on May 14: Mohammad Addi, Branya Argüello Oporta, Amadou Bah, Aaron Bourque, Joseph Branch, Michelle Castillo, Ernesto Charo, Ramiro Daniel, Bradley Dowdell, Coby Fontenette, Juan Fuentes, William Fuentes, Destiny Garcia, Aliyah Gutierrez, Aidan Hardin, Rachael Johnson, Cameron McMillan, Justin Nelson, Victor Oparinde, Ryan Ramirez, Jorge Reynoso, Tristan Rodriguez, Keinna Roney, Tavia Sanders, Abril Sierra Cervantes, Daniel Sustaita, Jesus Teran Pineda, Ashley Villalobos and Thomas Wilson.