

TRAVIS COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE



**AUG**  
**2024**  
**ISSUE 08**

### WORDS FROM THE SHERIFF



In September of last year, I shared our commitment to breathe new life into cold cases by presenting case information we've gathered and developed throughout the investigation process. At TCSO we never give up on finding justice for victims and their families.

What I didn't share was that I know how it feels to be one of those families. In 2015, my brother-in-law was assisting a customer in his coin shop in a small Wyoming town when someone came into the store and killed both my brother-in-law and the customer.

The case remained unsolved, or cold, for nearly nine years. After all this time, a suspect has been arrested and our family is starting to experience the relief that comes with having answers to the unknowns. The reality that the person who killed them will face justice means so much to all of us.

It's that passion that drives me to ask you to please take the time to learn about the murder of Wilbert "Willie" Vazquez-Lopez. He was shot to death while sitting on the front porch of his family's home. Willie died at 12:10 am, just 10 minutes into his 18th birthday.

His family feels the profound loss and is desperate for answers. I know there's someone out there who holds that one piece of information that will be the pivotal difference in solving the case. No detail is too small.

You can watch a video about Willie's case in this issue. If you know anything about what happened that night or who might be involved, please give us a call. I hope Willie's family can experience the relief that comes from finally knowing what happened, even though it's difficult to hear.



### SEEDLING MENTORS

TCSO is proud of its longstanding partnership with [Seedling Foundation](#), an Austin nonprofit providing school-based mentoring for Central Texas children who are without one or more parents at home due to incarceration. Last year, Seedling served 495 children with a mentor, and their goal is to serve 550 children during the 2024-25 school year. You can [apply online](#) to be a mentor for the current school year.

### COBRA 110 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 110 who graduated on August 23: Shawn Boutte, Aaron Castro, Anjelo Cortina-Jones, Ryan Crawley-Gonzales, Gilberto Diaz-Rios, Anthony Guth, John Howard, Jim Humphrey, Treyvonne James, Joshua Landon, Meleseini Moala, Michael Moore, Virginia Perez, Stephen Prevatte, Benjamin Price, Nicholas Ramirez, Natalee Riggan-Brown and Priscilla Sammons.



### COLD CASE UPDATE

On August 15, TCSO hosted a press conference regarding the 2022 murder of [Wilbert Vázquez-Lopez](#). The teenager was shot and killed on his front patio, passing away the following day which happened to be his 18th birthday. Two years later, those responsible for his murder remain unidentified.

By hand selecting a number of cases every year, our Cold Case Unit hopes to shine a new light on older cases in hopes of reaching the right person at the right time who might have a critical piece of information that will help solve the case.

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### COMMUNITY TOWN HALL

On August 28, TCSO Law Enforcement hosted a town hall for the residents of Whisper Valley. This neighborhood is located off SH 130 in the eastern part of our jurisdiction. We really appreciated the conversations and questions about crime statistics and neighborhood safety as well as the "meet & greet" opportunity between TCSO personnel and residents.

If your community is interested in hosting a town hall, please contact our [Community Outreach Unit](#).

### WELCOME BACK TO SCHOOL



TCSO was busy this month with a variety of back-to-school events. We hosted our annual supplies drive, and our employees and the community really came through with tremendous support. We'd like to thank [Covert Auto Group](#), [Gale Partners](#), [Gartner Digital Markets](#), [McCarthy Building Companies, Inc.](#), [Elite Wellness Chiropractic](#) and [Hensel Phelps](#) for their generous donations. With all the support, we were able to donate to more schools than in previous years. The benefactors were Delco, Del Valle, Govalle, Lago Vista and Oak Meadows Elementary Schools.

Earlier in the month, we joined [Academy Sports + Outdoors](#) for a [Shop-With-A-Cop](#) event where 20 kids received a \$250 gift card to shop for items needed for the new school year. Additionally, we partnered with [Covert Auto Group](#) and the [Texas YES Project](#) to host our Fresh Start event on August 17 which provided hygiene kits and school supply boxes to the community. Thanks to everyone who donated or volunteered to help us send our local kiddos off into a successful school year!

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National Night Out enhances the relationship between neighbors and law enforcement while bringing back a true sense of community.

TCSO invites you to join us on Tuesday, October 1, as we safely gather to celebrate. Neighborhood block parties generally occur between 5:00-9:00 pm. The deadline to register your party is September 17.

[REGISTER ONLINE](#)



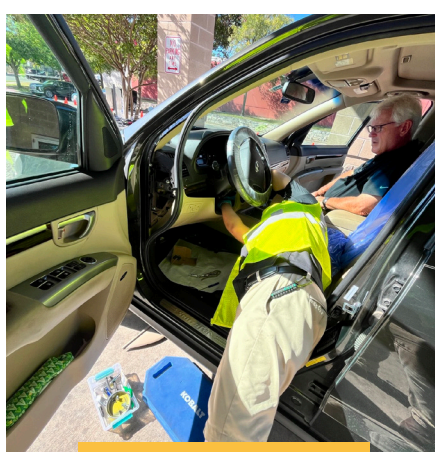
This month, TCSO said goodbye to two very good boys. Law enforcement K9s Bodie and Roki both hung up their collars for retirement.

With a combined 10 years of service, these hardworking pups were credited with numerous apprehensions, narcotics seizures and firearm recoveries. Both K9s will live out their retirement adopted by their handlers. Thank you for your service!



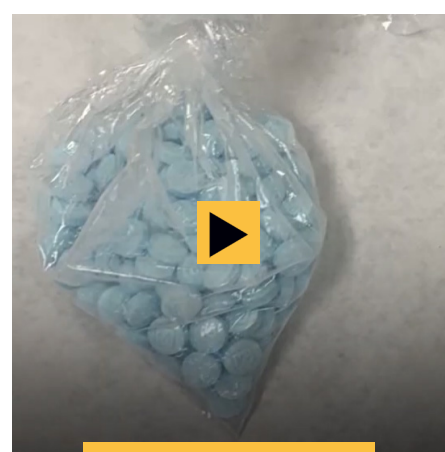
### AUSTIN CLUBHOUSE

Sheriff Hernandez and TCSO Trauma Informed Care Program Administrator Karen Ranus engaged meeting and collaborating with [Austin Clubhouse](#). The organization offers programs that enable adults living with mental health diagnoses to secure jobs, pursue education, make new friends and live healthier lives. TCSO strives to offer the best care possible to people in our care and custody who have mental health issues and to set them up for the best outcome possible once they're released. We look forward to the partnership!



### AUTO THEFT EVENT

Earlier this month, the [Sheriff's Combined Auto Theft Task Force](#) teamed up with Hyundai to host an anti-theft software upgrade event. Throughout the day, Hyundai technicians offered free upgrades to eligible vehicles, providing an added level of protection against auto theft. Thank you to the Travis County Community Center in Pflugerville for providing your facilities which allowed guests and staff to cool off during the event.



### FENTANYL AWARENESS

August 21 is National Fentanyl Awareness and Prevention Day. This year, we sat down with the sergeant of TCSO's Vice Unit to learn more about the deadly drug. He shared information regarding what fentanyl looks like, why it has become so prevalent in our community, why it is so dangerous, and the warning signs to look out for.

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EMPLOYEE MASTHEAD (L TO R): Sr. Corrections Officer Carean Hunter, Sergeant Rueben Garcia & Administrative Assistant II Chaney Goff



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