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April 2000

Three receive Medals of Valor

Three Medals of Valor have been presented to DPS Troopers for their actions in trying to aid **Trooper Terry Miller** and Atascosa Sheriff’s Deputies Mark Stephenson and Thomas Monse on Oct. 12, 1999.

Trooper Miller and Deputies Monse and Stephenson were killed by a sniper when they responded to a possible domestic violence call in rural Atascosa County. The sniper was still shooting while rescue and recovery efforts were underway that night, and several people placed themselves in harm’s way while trying to assist the fallen officers.

Sgt. **Juan Rodriguez Jr.**, HP-Pleasanton, Cpl. **Robert K. Bratten**, HP-Pleasanton, and Tr. II **Scott Willeford**, HP-Pleasanton, were presented with Medals of Valor during a March 27 ceremony in Pleasanton. All three were cited for acting “with courage and disregard for his own safety when he risked his life to check on Trooper I Terry Miller’s condition.” All three left the safety of cover to go to Trooper Miller’s patrol car, which was in the sniper’s line of fire.

Seventeen Atascosa County residents received Director’s Awards for their part in the rescue and recovery of the bodies of Trooper Miller and Deputies Monse and Stephenson. Three of the responders to the scene were shot during the incident when they went to the aid of the injured officers: Pleasanton Police Officer Louis Edward Tudyk, retired Border Patrol agent Carl Fischer and Oscar De La Cruz.

Others who responded to the scene were Wendell Hollman Munson, Arthur M. Pena, Jaime J. Trevino, Victor Trevino, Ernest C. Trevino, David Sligh, Randy Broom, Jasper N. McDonald, Henry Dominguez, Rudy Ortiz, Jason Price, Ruben Z. Chapa, Donald F. Shaw and Rigoberto Trujillo.

“We truly appreciate everyone who came to the assistance of the fallen officers,” said **Col. Thomas A. Davis Jr.** “Their actions were truly courageous. And we appreciate the support of the Atascosa County community after the incident. Knowing that they cared so much about the sacrifices that had been made on their behalf was gratifying to all DPS employees across the state.”

Dear Fellow Employee:

Congratulations to the members of recruit class A-99! I was proud to preside over my first Training Academy graduation since becoming director on March 1.

Those of you who completed your training worked hard, but your job isn’t over yet. For the next six months, you’ll be riding with an experienced Trooper to continue your training in a real world setting.

To those of you who will be providing that training, I’ll remind you of its importance. There’s only so much you can learn from a textbook, a lecture or a training exercise. You will be shaping the future of this agency, and we’re counting on you.

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As we endeavor to recruit cadets for the next training class, set to begin Sept. 18, I want to thank everyone who responded to my request for recruitment suggestions. I’ve been getting up to a dozen suggestions a day.

With our present flush economy, getting qualified applicants, especially among women and minorities, is a real challenge. Your participation has been a real help. Please keep it up.

Awards

Texas Ranger Sgt. Sal Abreo received a Director's Citation for his participation in a task force that solved the brutal murders of four Austin teens. The case had been unsolved for eight years. The murders of the four teenage girls happened on Dec. 6, 1991, at the I Can't Believe It's Yogurt shop in Austin.

The task force, which was formed in August 1999, was composed of Austin Police Department homicide detectives, an ATF agent and Abreo. The task force identified and arrested four suspects on Oct. 6, 1999.

Austin Police Department detectives receiving Director's Awards for their work on the case were: Lt. Shauna Jacobson, Sgt. John Neff, Det. Bob Merrill, Det. John Hardesty, Det. Manny Fuentes, Det. Paul Johnson, Det. Doug Skolaut and Det. Ron Lara. Two ATF agents also received Director's Awards--the second for each: Special Agent Charles Meyer and Special Agent Byron SanMarco.

Two dentists received Director's Awards for free forensic odontology services provided to law enforcement. Dr. David Deuel and Dr. John Schilthuis used their expertise to help identify homicide victims and assist DPS Special Crimes, Crime Lab, the Texas Rangers and the Missing Persons Clearinghouse. Lt. **Rosanna Church-Abreo**, Special Crimes Austin, credits the two with identifying numerous murder victims and with advancing the cause of locating missing children and adults in Texas. Sadly, Dr. Schilthuis was killed in a crash last year.

Two young children are alive today thanks to the actions of three men at a Comanche County lake. A 3-year-old girl and her 1-year-old sister went under while swimming with their mother. Once the little girls floated to the surface, Kenneth Hart, Joe Brown and Stanley Mayfield pulled them from the water and onto their boat, performing CPR until they regained consciousness. The three men, nominated by Tr. **Ryan McKittrick**, HP Johnson City, received Director's Awards for their life-saving actions.

Short Shots

Critical Response Team seeks members

The DPS Critical Response Team needs new members in parts of Texas. Applications are being accepted and training is scheduled for June 13-15 at the Training Academy in Austin. Any interested employee must receive a recommendation from their chain of command. Contact Cheryl Iselt in Psychological Services at 512-424-2211 for an application.

DPS spouses will be added to the team in 2000, and interested spouses should contact Cheryl Iselt directly.

Interviews will be conducted in April, so interested people should forward their paperwork as soon as possible.

DPS Memorial Service May 16

The annual DPS Memorial Service is set for 10 a.m. May 16 at the Training Academy in Austin. Lt. Gov. Rick Perry is scheduled to speak at the service, which kicks off Law Enforcement Week.

FBI National Academy news

Sgt. James Debrow, DPS Training Academy, graduated from the 200th Session of the FBI National Academy on March 24.

DL Division seeks retiree volunteers

Looking for ways to stay active in the community? DPS Headquarters plans to start a volunteer program and the organizers are interested in hearing from DPS retirees. Please contact Jana Doyle (Driver License) at 512-424-5539 or Eric Bell (Human Resources) at 512-424-5674.

DPS takes the bronze

DPS has earned the Texas State Risk Management Bronze Safety Award for FY1999. DPS improved its injury frequency rate by at least 10 percent over the past five years.

40-year service awards presented

Hal Dean Lorance, Inspector III MVIS Texarkana, and Robert Gilbert Taylor, Inspector III MVIS McKinney, received 40-year service awards in March.

DPS online: www.txdps.state.tx.us

DPS "on the air": 512-424-7777

Mile Markers

Promotions

Morris Allan Arnold, Capt., Cap. Pol. Austin to Major, TLE Austin; **Coy Wayne Clanton**, Capt., L&W Corpus Christi to Major, TLE Austin.

Retirements

Kenneth P. Gage, Mgr., Gen. Svc. Austin, 37 yrs., 6 days; **Tommy Doyle Brown**, Supr., Police Comm. Austin, 27 yrs., 8 mos., 17 days; **Russell Thomas Harry**, Tr. V, Veh. Insp., Houston, 27 yrs., 4 mos., 3 days; **Deanna Larue Tidwell**, Supr., Missing Persons Clearinghouse, Special Crimes Austin, 26 yrs., 3 mos., 22 days; **Billy Robert Manning, Jr.**, Tr. V, Veh. Insp. Houston, 31 yrs., 7 mos., 4 days;

Tracie Louise Svehlak, Supr., Cont. Substances Registration, Narc. Svc. Austin, 29 yrs., 10 mos., 22 days; **Sara Elizabeth Black**, Pol. Comm. Opr. IV, Tyler, 28 yrs., 12 days; **Burl Floyd Pipes**, Tr. V, DL Austin, 26 yrs. 1 mo., 26 days; **Thelma Georgene Moore**, Pol. Comm. Opr. IV, Tyler, 19 yrs; **Gloria Petrick Friedrich**, CCH Data Tech. II, Fingerprint & Records Austin, 29 yrs., 9 mos.; **Irene Fay Alexander**, Receptionist, VIR Austin, 25 yrs., 6 mos., 5 days;

Gregory Floyd Arthur, Sgt., HP Liberty, 23 yrs., 5 mos., 16 days; **Mary Watters Ryan**, DL Tech., Odessa, 22 yrs., 15 days; **Shirley Ann Murphy**, CCH Data Tech. II, Fingerprint & Records Austin, 10 yrs., 6 mos., 11 days; **Alfonso P. Lopez**, Maint. Worker, Bldg. Prog. Austin, 8 yrs., 5 mos.

Deaths

Hazel Hinson Buffaloe, ret. Admin. Tech III, Austin (March 1942 – December 1979) died March 2.



On the mend...

Best wishes for a speedy recovery from line-of-duty injuries go to:

Tr. Kenneth Rushing, L&W Conroe