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Special Crimes' TSAAC goes 24-7: center tracks terrorism threats, info

The Texas Security Alert and Analysis Center (TSAAC), run by DPS Special Crimes, is the central repository for multi-jurisdictional criminal intelligence information that relates to terrorism activities in Texas. The facility, which is located in the Emergency Operations Center, had been operating 16 hours a day; as of August 29, it is operating 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

"We are pleased that the TSAAC is fully operational," said Col. **Thomas A. Davis Jr.** "Terrorist attacks do not occur in a vacuum. Someone, somewhere is bound to see something that just doesn't make sense, or doesn't seem logical. They should contact TSAAC as soon as possible."

TSAAC personnel have access to many computer databases that allow them to receive and evaluate information from various sources and assist other agencies from across the nation that request help. They also respond to Internet and telephone inquiries from other law enforcement agencies and the general public.

Law enforcement officers and other DPS employees should be aware of their surroundings and report activities or circumstances that seem unusual. Examples could include:

- Someone showing unusual interest in utilities, government buildings, historic buildings or similar infrastructure. Pay particular attention to someone photographing, videotaping, inquiring about security, drawing diagrams or making notes about such facilities.
- Suspicious or abandoned packages, luggage or mail in a crowded place, such as an airport, office building or shopping center.
- Suspicious rentals of storage facilities, residences, apartments, hotels/motels and/or vehicles.
- Theft or large cash purchases of baby formula, uniforms, weapons or identity documents.
- Open or broken doors and windows at a closed business or an unoccupied residence.
- Someone tampering with electrical, gas or sewer systems without an identifiable company vehicle and uniform.

Anyone who sees suspicious activities or persons should call 911 immediately or contact TSAAC toll-free at 1-866-786-5972. Reports may also be made online at <https://www.texasalert.tx.gov>.

Dear fellow employee:

Please take a moment to read the article to the left of this column. It discusses several issues that are important to everyone at DPS, whether commissioned officers or non-commissioned employees. All of us at DPS need to pay attention to what is happening around us.

In the past few years, driver license technicians across the state have seen suspicious persons or activities and have reported them. Special Crimes investigators have cracked baby formula theft rings that were financing terrorism. Highway Patrol troopers have pulled over people who were later found to have suspicious items in their possession.

My point is this: Pay attention. Keep alert. You never know when you might see something important.

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As I write this, we still have several employees serving in the military reserves overseas and here in the States. Please keep them and their families in your prayers.

Thomas A. Davis Jr.

Awards

Five people received Director's Awards for their efforts in helping save a woman after she crashed her car into a creek in Tyler County. The woman was trapped in the upside-down vehicle with a small air pocket. At one point during the rescue effort, the car shifted, and the woman lost her air pocket. Jason Shirley, Ron Lewis, Roy James, Ray McKee and Gary Hall—directed by Tr. **Richard Nelson**, HP Lumberton—reacted quickly.

Ignoring the frigid January waters, the rescuers used chains, straps and a pickup to maneuver the vehicle so that a window could be broken, and the woman was pulled out of the car. She coughed up water and regained consciousness after she was brought ashore. Cpl. **Brad Prince**, HP Woodville, also assisted. The five men were nominated by Sgt. **Steve Holloway**, HP Woodville.

Short Shots

CODIS gets their man

The CODIS (Combined DNA Index System) database played an integral role in solving an 18-year-old murder in Bexar County—and not a moment too soon. The suspect, already in jail for robbery, was days away from release. The case was cracked when the Bexar County Criminal Investigation Laboratory submitted a DNA profile obtained from evidence in the 1986 crime. The profile was entered into the CODIS database in Austin and it identified the suspect, who had been

required by state law to provide blood for DNA workup in the Austin CODIS lab. The suspect now faces a capital murder charge in the death of the 28-year-old woman.

Welcome Aboard

Congratulations to the newest additions to DPS—92 troopers, who graduated in August from the 128th DPS Training Academy in Austin. The recruits, including 10 women, were mostly assigned to HP, with 4 drawing CVE assignments.

“We expect them to perform with courage and integrity,” DPS Director Col. **Thomas A. Davis Jr.** said of the new troopers.

Things won't stay quiet long at the Training Academy. The 2004-B Recruit School reports for duty next month.

Also, applications are still being accepted for a January 2005 recruit

school. Help spread the word!!! Direct interested applicants to call 1-866-TXTROOP, contact the nearest DPS office or visit the DPS Web site, www.txdps.state.tx.us.

Unsung Heroes

Several DPSers were nominated for the Texas Public Employees Association Unsung Heroes awards. Tr. **John Forrest**, CVE Weatherford, was one of four DPS employees to win the award. He was recognized for his proficiency in drug interdiction and enforcement action. Analyst Supervisor **Lori Pagel**, Special Crimes Austin, was honored for her role in implementing the Texas Security Alert and Analysis Center, which is now responsible for various intelligence and information crucial to the state's counter-terrorism effort. Another DPS “Unsung Hero,” Lt. **John Pelath**, HP Austin,

Drug bust sets record

A July 16 seizure of nearly six tons of marijuana in Bee County is believed to be the largest traffic-stop marijuana seizure in DPS history.

The 11,921 pounds of contraband was confiscated on U.S. 181 near Skidmore after an 18-wheeler was stopped for speeding by Tr. **Clayton Cohea**, HP Beeville.

Suspicious behavior by the driver led to a search of the trailer and the discovery of 292 bundles of marijuana mixed with a load of mangoes.

The driver—a Pharr, Texas resident—was arrested.

The 11,921 pounds of marijuana (packaged weight) sets a DPS record for a marijuana seizure that occurred after a routine traffic stop.



was recognized for his readiness efforts in the Capitol Region and for working to show the need for legislation to assist troopers. Field Analyst **Charlene Walsh**, MVTEl Paso, was lauded for her work in helping “make the big arrest go down” and assisting other agencies with auto theft prevention.

Other DPS employees nominated were: Tr. **Brad Cook**, HP Waco; Tr. **Scott Folmar**, DL Jasper; **Frank Galvan Jr.**, Police Communications Operator Kerrville; Examiner **Sylvia Garcia**, DL Austin; and Tr. **Jason Matthews**, HP Temple.

FBI Academy

Lt. **Clifford Joe Babbitt**, MVT Lubbock, and **Kenneth Lee Plunk**, CVE Waco, are the most recent graduates of the FBI National Academy in Quantico, VA.

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Mile Markers

Promotions

CLE

Kent Weir Mawyer, Asst. Chief, CLE Austin to Chief, CLE Austin; **Gary Stone**, Major, CLE Austin to Asst. Chief, CLE Austin; **Jeffrey Alan Laird**, Tr. II, HP Brenham to Sgt., Spec. Crimes Midland;

Jerry Glen Lesikar, Cpl. II, HP The Woodlands to Sgt., Spec. Crimes El Paso; **Phillip Travis Fuller**, Tr. II, HP Mt. Pleasant to Sgt., MVT Laredo.

THP

Clifford Allen Federwisch, Tr.

II, HP Waco to Sgt., HP Odessa; **Chris Lynn Lalonde**, Tr. III, HP Orange to Sgt., HP Eagle Pass; **Joe Robert Dennett**, Tr. II, CVE Ft. Stockton to Sgt., CVE Laredo; **Bryan Ray Miller**, Oper. III, Comm. Sherman to Supv., Comm. Laredo.

DL

Epharm Herring, Tr. II, HP Waco to Sgt., DL Midland.

Retirements

Donald Leon Johnson, Sen. Cpl., HP Borger, 27 yrs., 22 days; **Isabel A. Luna**, Application Tech., HR Austin, 25 yrs., 9 mos., 25 days; **Michael Glen Mabry**, Sen. Tr., DL Waco, 22 yrs., 21 days;

Joseph Tecson Birt, Sen. Tr., HP Tyler, 25 yrs., 5 mos., 20 days; **James Doyle Lasater**, Sen. Tr., CVE Big Spring, 24 yrs., 5 mos., 21 days; **Lydia A. Guerra-Borrego**, Field Tech., MVT McAllen, 11 yrs., 9 mos., 20 days; **Carl Frank Scheuermann**, Sec. Worker IV, HP Austin, 10 yrs., 6 mos., 15 days;

Bobby Ray Tucker, Lt., DL Waco, 33 yrs., 8 mos., 8 days; **Robert William Keller**, Systems Analyst IV, IMS Lufkin, 28 yrs., 10 mos., 21 days; **Steven Lee McKinney**, Sen. Cpl., HP Waxahachie, 22 yrs., 11 mos., 21 days; **Hersel Edward Brantley**, Lt., Narcotics Svc. San Antonio, 27 yrs., 4 mos., 10 days;

Thomas Paul Haas, Chief of Finance, Accounting Austin, 23 yrs., 11 mos.; **Nolan R. Thaler**, Database Admin. IV, IMS Austin 23 yrs., 10 mos., 16 days; **Earl Weldon McNiell, Jr.**, Asst. Cmdr, Narcotics Svc. Lubbock, 29 yrs., 5 mos.,

19 days; **Shelby Ann Bolls**, Secr., HP Abilene, 23 yrs., 10 mos.;

Gary Max Rozzell, Sen. Tr., HP Mineral Wells, 20 yrs., 1 mo., 18 days; **Anthony Joseph Wolpman**, Sen. Tr., CVE San Marcos, 20 yrs., 1 mo., 18 days; **Mark C. Kennedy**, Capt., HP Austin, 17 yrs., 6 mos., 11 days; **John Craig Ferguson**, Tech., DL Arlington, 8 yrs., 1 mo., 9 days;

Dale R. Imig, Examiner, DL Houston, 5 yrs., 3 mos., 19 days; **Gerald Anthony Villalobos**, Sgt., Rangers Fort Stockton, 27 yrs., 9 mos., 15 days; **Guy Marshall Caskey**, Chief, CLE Austin, 26 yrs., 6 mos., 29 days;

Manuel Antonio Lozano, Sgt., MVT El Paso, 24 yrs., 19 days; **Laura Lee Clement**, Tech., DL Wichita Falls, 19 yrs., 10 mos., 29 days.

Deaths

Isom Alfred (Al) Chambers, ret. Tr. II, HP Abilene (Oct. 1954 – Nov. 1981) died June 7, 2004.



On the mend...

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

Tr. Kelly Helleson, Greenville THP, fractured ankle in a traffic crash.

Tr. John D. Reed, Corpus Christi CVE, lacerated tendon to thumb working on CVE trailer.

Tr. Travis M. Hounshell, Cross Plains HP, fractured elbow.

Criminal Law Enforcement gets new chiefs

Kent Mawyer, a 27-year veteran of the Texas Department of Public Safety, has been named chief of the Criminal Law Enforcement Division.

Gary Ray Stone, in his 25th year with the DPS, has been promoted to assistant chief of CLE.

The promotions followed the retirement of former CLE Chief **Marshall Caskey**.

"I look forward to the challenges in leading the many fine employees of the CLE Division," the 49-year-old Mawyer said. "They are without a doubt very dedicated to the tasks at



Mawyer

hand. I appreciate the confidence that the Director and Commission have placed in me to continue the respected legacy established by previous chiefs."

Mawyer, who becomes the ninth chief of CLE in DPS history, joined DPS as a trooper trainee in June 1977 and was first stationed in Houston as a Driver License trooper.

He joined the Highway Patrol in Humble in May 1979, transferred to License & Weight in Houston in February 1981, and then transferred to the HP in Humble in October 1981.

Mawyer promoted to Motor Vehicle Theft (MVT) investigator in April 1983 and was stationed in Baytown. He promoted to MVT

lieutenant in September 1989 and moved to San Antonio, where he promoted to MVT captain in December 1993. In September 2000, he was appointed MVT assistant commander. His next promotion was to CLE major in March 2001, and then assistant chief of CLE in July 2002.

He graduated from High School in San Antonio and received a Bachelor of Science from Southwest Texas State University and a master's degree in Public Administration from the University of Houston.

New Assistant Chief Stone, 45, joined DPS as a trooper trainee in May 1979 and was first stationed in Houston as a Driver License trooper.

The Austin native joined the Highway Patrol in Katy in October 1980.

He promoted to the Criminal Intelligence Service (Special Crimes) in Waco as an investigator in July 1986 and went to the Governor's Fugitive Unit in Austin as a lieutenant in February 1993.

He promoted to lieutenant in Houston in December 1993 and



Stone

to Special Crimes captain in Austin in September 1997.

Stone promoted to assistant commander of Motor Vehicle Theft in May 2001, to CLE major in August 2002 and assistant chief of CLE in July 2004.

Bicycle vehicle law and safety

Summer is over and children across the state are headed back to school. Many school children will be riding their bicycles to school.

In order to ensure their safety, it is important that we take the time to inform our school children that they must obey the traffic laws just like the drivers of automobiles. Information regarding bicycle-related laws and safety practices can be found in Chapter 13 of the Texas Drivers Handbook, entitled "Bicycle Vehicle Law and Safety."

The Department also oversees a statewide bicycle safety training program called the "Super Cyclist Safety Program" for children age 10 and under. For more information on bicycle safety or to acquire pamphlets, posters and videotapes used in the

Super Cyclist Safety Program, please contact **Bea Taylor**, Bicycle Safety Clerk at the Training Academy, at 512-424-2219; or by e-mail bea.taylor@txdps.state.tx.us or contact Sgt. **Harry Hoelscher** at 512 424-7236; or e-mail him at harry.hoelscher@txdps.state.tx.us.

Blood drive and fundraiser

*To all the great folks at DPS,
.....I know that my wife will get her new heart soon and this blood will be very important to the success of that operation.*

In the meantime, I know this outpouring of love and concern for her will help give her the strength to survive the ordeal of living on this heart pump machine.

Jim and Jackie Lievre