

DPS Chaparral

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December 1999

Public Safety Commission names new Director, Assistant Directors

Thomas A. Davis Jr. was selected as the next Director of the Department of Public Safety Nov. 10 by a unanimous vote of the three-member Public Safety Commission.

Davis, 58, will become the tenth director of DPS since its creation in August 1935. He will replace **Dudley M. Thomas**, 61, who retires Feb. 29, 2000, after more than 39 years service to DPS. Thomas served as director of the agency for three years.

"The Public Safety Commission has great confidence in Col. Davis," said Commission Chairman **James B. Francis, Jr.** of Dallas. "Col. Thomas has been a great director, and we will miss him."



Col. Davis

For the first time in the department's history, two assistant directors will help guide the agency. DPS Sunset legislation this year provided the DPS Director authority to create a second assistant director position. Named assistant directors were **Frankie Waller** and **David McEathron**.

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Y2K: It's not the end of the world

Public education efforts dealing with Y2K readiness are in full swing, including radio and TV announcements in both English and Spanish. Various agencies across the state have united under the DPS Emergency Management Service umbrella to spread the word and combat misinformation. Several ads end with the tag

line: "Relax, it's a new millennium, not the end of the world."

A Y2K checklist and other information can be accessed on the

Please see Y2K on page 3



Dear Fellow Employee:

As you all know by now, I announced on Oct. 27 that I would be retiring from the DPS effective Feb. 29, 2000.

I've had a great career, from Trooper to Director. But I'm not retired yet. I'll save my formal goodbye for later.

I ask you to join me in congratulating Lt. Col. Davis as my successor and the two people selected to replace him—Chiefs Frankie Waller and David McEathron. When they become Lieutenant Colonels on March 1, it will be the first time in the history of this agency we have had two assistant directors. All I can say is, and I'm sure Col. Davis will agree, it's about time. The work load has grown as this agency has grown. No one will have any shortage of work.

Between now and the day I leave, I'll be working with this new leadership team to make the transition as smooth as possible. I know they want your support and very best efforts as they guide DPS into the next century.

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The DPS will be keeping alert for any public safety problems that might arise, but I'm confident that our agency is well prepared for any Y2K issue. Still, this is a good time to remind you to be careful as the New Year approaches. Regrettably, a lot of drunk drivers are going to be out on the road, creating hazards for you and your family.

My best to you and yours. Happy Holidays.

David M. Thomas

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

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

Awards

Sgt./Inv. **David Eldridge** and Sgt./Inv. **Juan Francisco Saldivar** of Garland were awarded Director's Citations for an undercover narcotics investigation that led to the dismantling of a large Mexico-based methamphetamine distribution organization in North Texas. The two-year multi-agency effort included extensive surveillance and wiretap activities. "Operation Cal-Tex Meth" and related investigations led to the indictment of 96 suspects in Texas, California and Georgia. Seizures totaling \$200,000 in cash, 400 pounds of methamphetamine and numerous other drugs also are credited to the investigation. This is Eldridge's third Director's Citation.

Cpl. **Jimmy Jay Schroeder's** drug interdiction instincts and skills have earned him a Director's Citation. During a recent one-year period, Schroeder seized more than 55 pounds of cocaine, nearly \$133,000 in cash and more than 521 pounds of marijuana while on routine patrol in the Austin area. He made 21 DWI arrests, arrested eight wanted felons and successfully shared his knowledge as a Field Training Officer.

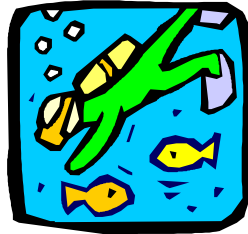
Texas Ranger Sgt. **Drew Carter** was named Texas Law Enforcement Officer of the Year by the Texas Attorney General's office on Nov. 15. The award was presented by Attorney General John Cornyn and *Walker, Texas Ranger* star Chuck Norris. General Cornyn said that Carter's performance during the Railroad Killer investigation was "a great piece of police work."

Short Shots

Divers wanted

The dive recovery team is now accepting applications for team members. Interested commissioned officers who have completed an all-service recruit school should contact

Lt. Lynn Dixon for qualifications and application procedures. He can be reached at 512-424-5789. The application deadline is January 15.



Beam me up

The latest addition to the Headquarters' landscape is a large satellite dish surrounded by a concrete wall behind the main DPS complex in Austin. This 5.4-meter dish will serve as the hub of the new satellite-based network for the Texas Law Enforcement Telecommunications System (TLETS). Information will soon be bounced off the Telstar V satellite instead of being transmitting through the existing telephone line system.



About 1,000 smaller dishes will be placed at DPS and other law enforcement facilities across the state, allowing high-tech access to criminal histories, NCIC, TCIC, vehicle registration and driver license information. The main satellite dish will be operational in January and the new

statewide network should be complete by August 2000, including phone backup.

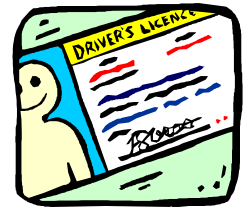
Immediate benefits include reduced cost, increased reliability and a larger gateway for information.

Once compatible systems are in place in about three years, the new network will allow transmission of graphics, photos, video images and increased volumes of information. In addition to law enforcement data, such as fingerprints and mug shots, long distance video training also will be possible. Hughes Network Systems is handling the contract.

Moving up

The evolution of the Driver License Division continues with the creation of two new Austin Headquarters positions. **Major Rhonda Fleming** becomes the first major in the DL Division and the highest ranking female DPS officer ever. The 15-year DPS veteran will report to **Greg Gloria**, the Assistant Chief of the DL Division Field Service. Fleming was the DL captain in Garland.

Meanwhile, 22-year DPS employee **Judy Brown** has been promoted to the newly created position



*On the
mend...*

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

Tr. Kenneth Rushing, L&W Conroe
Tr. Dub Gillum, HP Granbury

of Deputy Administrator. Brown, the former manager of the License Issuance Bureau, will oversee the six Headquarter DL bureaus and report to DL Assistant Chief of HQ Service **Frank Elder**.

The two high-level positions were created to facilitate continued improvements in the DL Division, which was created in July 1998.

Bull's-eye!!!

The DPS shooting team hit the mark at the National Police Shooting Championship in Jackson, Miss.

D P S scored a first place in the master two-man team category with **Tr. Clinton Pirtle**, HP Canton, and **Tr. Odie Hitt**, HP Marshall. The DPS high master four-man team of **Tr. Dan Butts**, HP Bandera; **Tr. Keith Simmons**, L&W New Braunfels; **Lt. Dan Walker**, Training Academy Austin, and retired **Col. James Wilson** pinned down a second place finish.

Law enforcement personnel from across the U.S. and several countries attended, including about 50 entries in the team competition.

Dress Code: Casually Speaking

DPS dress code now calls for "business casual" dress during normal work hours. Exceptions would be for business situations calling for more formal attire.

Extra, Extra!!!!

The special millennium edition of the *Texas Almanac* pays homage to

the storied past of the Texas Rangers with a Ranger badge on the front cover, a six-page story about the Rangers by Chief of Media Relations Mike Cox and more Ranger information on the back cover.

SES Honoree

Tr. Gary Pflughaupt, SES Pierce, has been honored as the Wharton County DPS Officer of the Year by the local 100 Club.

Fellow DPS troopers in Wharton County voted on the award and the 100 Club presented Pflughaupt with an engraved stainless steel Colt .45-caliber semiautomatic handgun.

Abilene blood drive

The Abilene District Office will hold a blood drive Tuesday, December 21 from 2 to 6 p.m.

Quarter Century Club looks to new millennium

The next annual meeting of the DPS Quarter Century Club is set for Friday, March 31, 2000 at the Doubletree Hotel in Austin.

Y2K, contd. from page 1

Web at www.readiness2000.com.

The State Emergency Operations Center, located at DPS Headquarters in Austin, will be activated during the New Year holiday period as a precaution and central clearinghouse for information. EMS is just one segment of DPS that will be on standby status as the new millennium rolls in. All available troopers will already be working because of the New Year Operation Motorcade.

Mile Markers

Texas Ranger Promotion

Jay Reginald Womack, Sgt./Inv., Narcotics Svc. Houston to Sgt., Texas Ranger Division Houston.

CLE Promotions

Keith Paul Barbier, Sgt./Inv., Special Crimes Service Houston to Lt., Special Crimes Service Houston; **Gilbert Lloyd Durochez**, Sgt., Texas Ranger Division Conroe to Lt., Special Crimes Service El Paso.

TLE Promotions

Todd Michael Early, Police Comm. Opr. III Garland to Supr., Police Comm. Facility McAllen.

Retirements

James David Estes, Tr. V HP Atlanta, 25 yrs., 5 mos., 19 days; **Michael Lynn Price**, Tr. V HP Buffalo, 25 yrs., 5 mos. 19 days; **Thomas Wesley Jeanes**, Tr. V HP San Augustine, 24 yrs., 9 mos., 7 days; **Henry Collins**, Field Office Lead Custodian, DL Austin, 19 yrs., 1 mo., 12 days;

Verlyne J. Hosea, Purchaser II Acct.&Budget Control Austin, 17 yrs., 1 mo., 13 days; **Linda Carol Bray-Warner**, Word Proc. Coordinator Reg. 6 Staff Waco, 16 yrs., 4 mos., **Chester David Joslin**, Cap. Pol. Officer II Austin, 8 yrs., 3 mo.; **Ellis Eugene Ginn**, Tr. V HP Beeville, 27 yrs., 4 mos., 4 days.



Call
512-424-7777
for the
inside scoop!

Continued from page 1: New director, assistant directors appointed

“Appointing a second assistant director is one of the biggest changes for the agency in its history,” said Commissioner **Robert B. Holt** of Midland. “This is an exciting time for us here at DPS.”

Davis had been Assistant Director of the agency for three years before his appointment. He will take over as director on March 1, 2000.

“The citizens of Texas are in good hands with this leadership,” said Commissioner **Colleen McHugh** of Corpus Christi. “We had the best talent we could find anywhere in the country right here at DPS.”

Before serving as Assistant Director, Davis had been Chief of the DPS Criminal Law Enforcement Division. Davis joined the DPS on Nov. 18, 1964 and graduated from the DPS Academy on March 5, 1965. He attended high school in Houston and took college courses at the University of Houston.

From 1965 to 1967, Davis was a Driver License Trooper stationed in Houston. In 1967, he transferred to the Highway Patrol and remained in Houston until 1971, when he was promoted to the Criminal Intelligence Service. He continued to be stationed in Houston until 1983, when he was promoted to lieutenant and transferred to Austin.

In 1986, he was promoted to Assistant Commander of Criminal Intelligence, which was later renamed the Special Crimes Service. In 1988, he was named Assistant Chief of Criminal Law Enforcement. He served in that capacity until Oct. 1, 1993, when he was promoted to

Chief of that division.

David McEathron, 47, has been Chief of the DPS Traffic Law Enforcement Division since August 1996. He served as Assistant Chief of TLE from 1995 until his appointment as Chief.



McEathron

Joining DPS as a recruit in June 1977, McEathron graduated from the DPS Training Academy in October 1977. He served as a Highway Patrol Trooper in Rio Grande City, Corpus Christi and Cuero before promoting to Sergeant in 1983. He was a Highway Patrol Sergeant in Galveston and Victoria before making Lieutenant in 1986 and transferring to McAllen. He was stationed there until 1989, when he was named Captain and transferred to DPS Headquarters in Austin.

On Sept. 1, 1993 he was promoted to Major and on Sept. 1, 1995, became Assistant Chief of Traffic Law Enforcement.

McEathron was raised in San Antonio, where he graduated from John Jay High School in 1970. He served two years in the U.S. Coast Guard and then attended Southwest Texas State University in San Marcos, receiving a bachelor's degree in 1976.

Frankie Waller, 49, has served as Chief of Administration for DPS

since Feb. 8, 1993.

Hired as a Highway Patrol recruit in 1970, Waller was a Highway Patrol Trooper from June 1970 to April 1976 in San Antonio. After making Sergeant in May 1976, he was stationed in Houston through April 1977.

In May 1977 he transferred to Marshall, where he remained until August 1981. The following month he was promoted to Lieutenant and relocated to DPS Headquarters. In January 1985, he was promoted to Captain.

Waller served as a Captain until April 1987, when he was named Chief of Staff Services. On Feb. 8, 1993 he was appointed Chief of Administration, a division which includes the DPS Training Academy, Human Resources Bureau, Crime Records Bureau and Emergency Management Service.

Born in the East Texas community of Overton, he graduated from West Rusk High School in 1968. He attended Kilgore



Waller

Junior College and graduated from St. Edward's University in Austin in 1988. In 1992, he received a Master's Degree in Public Administration from Southwest Texas State University in San Marcos.