



The official monthly publication of the Alabama Department of Public Safety

THE BLUE LIGHT



DECEMBER 2009 INSIDE THIS ISSUE...

THE HONORABLE BOB RILEY
Governor

COLONEL J. CHRISTOPHER MURPHY
Director

LT. COLONEL F.A. BINGHAM
Assistant Director

MAJOR HUGH McCALL
ABI Division

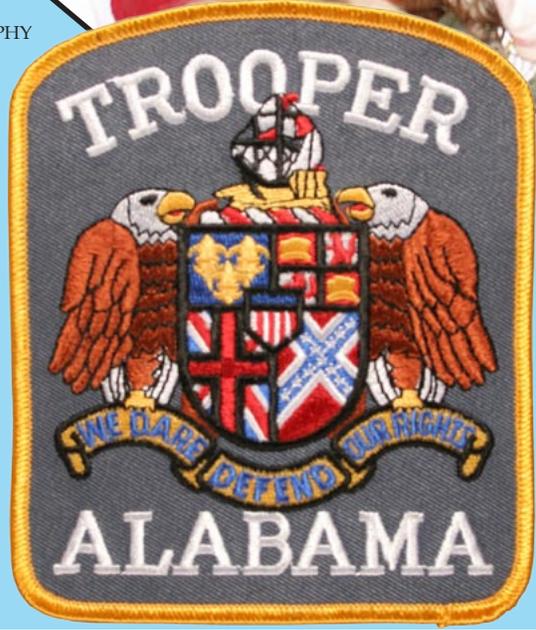
MAJOR MARC McHENRY
Administrative Division

MAJOR CHARLES ANDREWS
Driver License Division

MAJOR ROSCOE HOWELL
Highway Patrol Division

MAJOR HERMAN WRIGHT
Protective Services Division

MAJOR JERRY CONNER
Service Division



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Right, Vonderau presents Booker the Weight Detail Trooper of the Year award. Below, Scott is named Inspector of the Year.

Below, Kesler accepts his plaque naming him Compliance Inspector of 2008.



Motor Carrier Awards Most Outstanding in 2008

The Motor Carrier Safety Unit handed out awards for outstanding service to the unit in 2008 at its unit meeting, held at the offices of the Alabama Trucking Association Nov. 30.

Receiving the award for Weight Detail Trooper of the Year for 2008 was Tpr. Robert Booker. The award for Compliance Inspector of the Year for 2008 was given to Tpr. Mike Kesler, and Tpr. Greg Scott was named 2008 Inspector of the Year.

“In determining the winners, a point system was established using a formula where points were awarded for arrests or stopping out-of-service vehicles,” said Lt. Mike Junkin, MCSU assistant commander. “After establishing a rubric for the number of inspections or arrests, points were tallied, and that is how we arrived at our winners.”

Highway Patrol Chief Maj. Roscoe Howell opened the ceremony by congratulating troopers for their hard work on Alabama’s roadways.

“We are down nearly 100 fatalities from this time last

year, and that is simply incredible,” said Howell. “As proud as I am of that, I am even more proud of this: Thus far in 2009, there have been 88 days where a trooper hasn’t had to knock on a door to tell a family member that someone has died on the highway; that for nearly three months this year, a trooper hasn’t had to do the worst thing he will ever have to do.”

In attendance for the awards ceremony were Judy Van Luchene of the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration, and Gene Vonderau and Frank Filgo of the Alabama Trucking Association.

“I am extremely proud of what Motor Carrier is doing,” said Van Luchene. “You all do a tremendous job, and I am so happy that you all take safety so seriously. Even though negative comments seem to dominate the news and you deal with unhappy drivers daily when you pull people over, as a whole, the industry supports you and everything you do.”

The Alabama Trucking Association sponsored the ceremony.

DPS on 'ALERRT' for Active Shooters

*This file photo shows
TAC Team training in
Cullman Oct. 14, 2008.*



Advanced Law Enforcement Rapid Response Training, or ALERRT, is a program designed by Texas State University to combat the threat posed by active shooters. The program was developed as a direct response to the Columbine High School tragedy in Littleton, Colo., in 1999. The Columbine tragedy identified several weaknesses in outdated tactical response strategies that forced emergency responders to rethink the techniques used to engage and stop an active shooter.

“The history of the active shooter really goes back to the 1960s, and Charles Whitman at the University of Texas tower,” said Cpl. Edward Bennett of the Alabama Criminal Justice Training Center. “Techniques to deal with active shooters have evolved over the years since, but the incident at Columbine really displayed a true need for several changes to protect innocent victims and save lives that would unnecessarily be lost.”

Thus far, six troopers have completed the 16-hour ALERRT certification for practical use, according to Bennett.

“The goal for DPS is to certify all arresting officers on ALERRT training in 2010, by implementing the class at all in-services next year,” Bennett said.

ALERRT training features hands-on, fully dynamic exercises designed to prepare patrol officers and

SWAT personnel to cope with violent assaults in schools, workplaces, commercial establishments, and other locations where local law enforcement may be unexpectedly forced to deal with deadly rampages. The class is broken into two components, with four hours devoted to the classroom, and 12 additional hours of active, hands-on training.

“We estimate it will take 30 weeks to get everyone on board,” said Bennett. “With in-service beginning in March, most, if not all, arresting officers should be ALERRT-certified by the close of next year.”

In addition to Bennett, already trained on ALERRT strategies are Cpls. Chad Blankinchip and Terry King, and Tprs. Kevin Cook, Charles Dysart, and Gregory Estes.

Funding for ALERRT training kits is provided by a grant from the U.S. Department of Homeland Security.



Hard at Work:

Retirees Locate 140 Missing Sex Offenders

While most people think of retirement as a time to relax, five retirees working part time in ABI's ICAC/Cyber Crimes Unit are doing exactly the opposite, busily working as DPS liaisons to update the status of sex offenders whose current whereabouts are labeled as unknown.

In three months' time, Tommy Cheatham, Buddy Mesaris, James Jackson, Jim Holder, and Lamarr Kelley have been able to locate and update information on 140 sex offenders. In addition, the unit has made 10 arrests with assistance provided from these retirees in finding these offenders.

"Our retirees have been a tremendous help," said Special Agent Brooke Walker. "These five guys are doing our legwork, and their efforts are really showing."

The five retired employees working with ICAC/Cyber Crimes coordinate with local police, sheriffs' offices, and the U.S. Marshals Service to issue warrants and make arrests.

"We are very proud of the work our unit has done recently," Walker said. "Both I and Agent Mary Griffith have located multiple sex offenders that have been on the run for well over a decade, and we wouldn't have been able to do that without our five retirees or Sherry Barfoot's help. Our unit may be small, but we all work extremely well together."

The project is funded by a 2008 grant from the Office of Sex Offender Sentencing, Monitoring, Apprehending, Registering and Tracking, or SMART, and the U.S. Department of Justice.



Welcoming Maj. McCall

ABI served a surprise up to Maj. Hugh McCall when employees held a luncheon in his honor Nov. 9.

The surprise luncheon was a warm, belated welcome to their new chief. Sgt. Charles Huggins documented the occasion, and judging from the photographs, fun and good food were shared by all in attendance.



Trooper Pilot Reserves Alleviate Strain on Aviation Unit

For the first time ever, the Department of Public Safety swore in four Reserve Trooper pilots Nov. 10.

The new program parallels the Reserve Trooper program in Highway Patrol and answers the need for additional manpower in the Aviation Unit, said Chief Pilot Lee Hamilton.



“We are very excited about this new program,” Hamilton said. “These reserve pilots will be used as force multipliers and will better help us meet demands, particularly when one of our pilots is sick or on vacation.”

The four inaugural trooper pilot reserves include retired Chief Pilot Kris Helton; Bo Andrews, a commercial pilot from Birmingham; Leighton Greenlee, a Secret Service agent with more than 1,000 flying hours; and Norman McAllister, a current Baldwin County reserve trooper moving from HP to Aviation.

“While not taking the place of our full-time pilots, the Trooper Pilot Reserve program helps us respond to our need for co-pilots,” said Hamilton. “Whether it is for long trips or having another hand in combating weather issues, our workload is effectively cut in half with their help. Their assistance with overnight flights and prisoner transport duties means more full-time pilots are readily available to fly emergency or rescue missions, and that is definitely a big help to our unit.”

Birmingham Post Raises Money for Thanksgiving Mission

Troopers, PCO’s, ABI personnel, office staff, and Trooper Reserves from the Birmingham Post all contributed to make a \$350 donation to the Jimmy Hale Mission to help feed hungry families this Thanksgiving holiday.

Representatives from the mission arrived at the Birmingham Post Nov. 23 to accept the donation.

The Birmingham Post is also currently sponsoring a coat drive that will conclude at Christmas.



Keeping DPS Well-stocked: Spotlight on the Monthly Supply Run



On the first Monday of every month, a semi-truck filled with office supplies, auto parts, car tires, batteries, janitorial equipment, printed materials, uniforms, furniture, and office mail departs Montgomery, venturing north to visit area posts to drop off needed inventory and pick up un-needed materials. Two weeks later, another run is made, canvassing all posts south of Montgomery.

The all-day affair might at first appear mundane, but for those in need of the truck's contents, the day of the supply run might just be the most exciting day of the month.

"The supply run is coordinated among four units," said Equipment Maintenance Supervisor Alan Mobley. "In addition to the role the auto shop plays in the run, materials are gathered from Supply, the print shop, and the DPS mailroom. It all comes together efficiently, and the whole process runs like a well-oiled machine."

Preparations for each month's supply run begin the moment the previous run is complete. The Supply Unit works diligently to fill all supply requests in a timely manner, ensuring that everything to go on the truck is boxed and ready for transport.

"We don't wait for the supply run," said Supply Officer Anthony Howard. "We fill all supply requests as quickly as possible. Sometimes a trooper will be in Montgomery on business, and will come by to pick up something that can't wait for truck day. We know some things just can't wait, so neither do we."

"For items that cannot be picked up or are too large to be transported by car, the supply run is your best bet," Mobley said. "Our department burns through a lot of car tires, batteries and oil filters, and it is far more economical for us to bring it to you, than for you to try to get to us every time you need a new car tire or battery."

"Alabama is a big state," Mobley added. "Getting to Montgomery just isn't in the cards sometimes, and thanks to the supply run, you don't have to worry about how or when your supplies will get to you."

"We may be behind the scenes, but that does not make our job any less important to the success of this department," said Howard. "It is our responsibility to make sure everything is ready to go when the truck leaves Headquarters. We have a small unit to fill such a big role, but we do it well, and I am very proud of the role our unit plays in carrying out the department's mission."



Newly promoted Maj. Marc McHenry smiles as his father, former director Col. Ned McHenry, pins the oak leaf insignia to the collar of his uniform. McHenry was formally named chief of the Administrative Division on Dec. 1.

DPS is Host Agency for Easter Seals Senior Community Service Employment Program

The Department of Public Safety is partnering with Easter Seals to help senior citizens gain needed skills to compete in today's job market.

and one in Motor Carrier. The program has great potential, and we are currently exploring the possibility of placing many more candidates all over the state."

The Easter Seals Senior Community Service Employment Program is federally funded through the U.S. Department of Labor, and provides temporary manpower to unskilled senior citizens looking to acquire on-the-job training to move into a permanent job in the near future.

"This is a great program to acclimate senior citizens to today's workforce," said Ernestine Wigfall of DPS's Personnel Unit.

"Since becoming a host agency to Easter Seals in October, we have placed three temporary employees: one in Driver License, one in ABI,



Participants in the Easter Seals program are placed primarily in clerical environments, answering telephones and filing documents, working 20 hours per week. Workers employed through the program are paid by Easter Seals for one year.

"Many of these participants are more than capable of doing the work, if only they had the experience to do so," said Wigfall.

"DPS is thus equipping these people to get better jobs, while also receiving useful services from their efforts. It's a real win-win."

Chili Warms the Heart and Soul

The children of Eastern Hills Academy provided chili, crackers, and dessert for DPS employees at the Montgomery Post Nov. 19.

“Each year, just before Thanksgiving, we provide food as a way for us to give back and show appreciation to those that give so much throughout the entire year,” said Brenda Curenton, an administrator at Eastern Hills. “What troopers do for our community is a true blessing to all of our school families. Thank you all.”

This marks the sixth year Eastern Hills has provided a holiday chili meal for the Montgomery Post.



Just before Thanksgiving each year, the children of Eastern Hills show their thanks for all troopers do by feeding everyone at the Montgomery Post.

Parris Trades in Patrol Car for Santa's Sleigh

Even though retired Alabama state Tpr. Rick Parris doesn't spend a whole lot of time at the North Pole, there is little doubt in many northeast Alabama children's eyes that Parris is the real Santa Claus.

This 2008 graduate of the International University of Santa Claus was bitten by the Santa bug during the Christmas season of 1991. That year, while at his grandmother's nursing home in Heflin, he was called upon as a last-minute substitution when the Santa scheduled to make an appearance at the Christmas party was a no-show.

“I guess the smiles and joy I brought to the children that night just got to me,” said Parris.

That next year, Parris set out to make a custom Santa suit, complete with real leather Santa boots, and a custom brass buckle made to his exact specifications. Parris retired from DPS in 2008, and immediately began growing a mustache and beard, to complete the ensemble and replace the wig and faux beard.



MOVE OVER



FOR YOUR SAFETY ... AND OURS

Emergency personnel risk their lives every day to keep roadways safe. Alabama state law, Act 2009-577, helps protect law enforcement officers and other emergency responders by requiring motorists to move over when approaching emergency vehicles that are stopped with their flashing emergency lights activated.

THE LAW REQUIRES:

4 or more lanes:

- ▶ Move over one lane,
Or, if it's unsafe to move over:
- ▶ Slow down to a speed at least 15 mph below posted limit

2 lanes:

- ▶ Move over as far as possible without leaving lane,
And
- ▶ Slow down to a speed at least 15 mph below posted limit if speed limit is 25 mph or higher, or slow down to 10 mph if speed limit is 20 mph or less



MOVE OVER. IT'S THE LAW

Fresh off the presses, Public Information/Education recently designed two new posters to educate the public on the dangers of driving ATVs on roadways and provisions of the state's "move-over" law.

The posters were each commissioned out of necessity. The "move-over" poster was made to help alert the public about recent changes in the law, and the ATV poster was created in response to the increase in fatalities involving all-terrain vehicles on Alabama's roadways.

New Posters Educate Public about Law, Threats to Safety

ATVs



BELONG ON THE DIRT NOT THE PAVEMENT

ATVs are designed for off-road conditions. They are difficult to control on paved roadways and are not legal for roadway use. Collisions with cars and other vehicles can be deadly for ATV operators. To help ensure safe operation, Alabama State Troopers provide these safety tips:

- ▶ Get trained
- ▶ Wear a helmet
- ▶ No children on adult ATVs
- ▶ Don't ride tandem
- ▶ Don't ride on pavement
- ▶ Don't ride under the influence





Above: Alabama Highway Patrol motormen in the 1960s. Pictured from left are Gordon McGriff, J.W. "Chuck" Franklin, M.F. Gothard, and Jim Bryant. McGriff would later retire as a major, Franklin as a captain, and Bryant as a sergeant.

Below: Four Alabama Highway Patrol officers are shamed as their post is "awarded" the dubious White Elephant prize. The dishonor was presented to the patrol post with the most traffic fatalities the previous year.

Department of Public Safety

75 Heading Toward

1935 - 2010





Above: The former headquarters for the Department of Public Safety at 711 High St. in Montgomery. This building was the former Methodist hospital. DPS moved to 500 Dexter Ave. in 1964.

Department of Public Safety

75 Heading Toward

1935 - 2010

Below: In May 1978, Alabama state troopers were joined by the Mississippi Highway Patrol in a massive manhunt for two prisoners that fled to Alabama after escaping from an Oklahoma prison. One man was killed when his vehicle was hijacked by the escapees. Once the escapees entered Alabama, both Tpr. Joe Christenberry and Officer Dean Roberts from Butler Police Department were injured when fired upon. The duo went back to Oklahoma after killing an elderly woman in Sumter County. The 34-day trail of terror across six states ended in Oklahoma on May 26, 1978, in a massacre in which three Oklahoma Highway Patrol troopers were slain in a gun battle, also killing the two escaped convicts.



PEOPLE YOU KNOW



New Employees

Angel Beazley	10.16.09	Clerical Aide	DL/Medical Unit
Nicholas Johnson	10.16.09	Clerical Aide	DL/Medical Unit
Kayla Kelly	10.16.09	ASA I	ABI/CyberCrimes

Promotions

Audrey Cain	11.01.09	PCO II	HP/Jacksonville Post
Linda Cagle	10.16.09	PCO III	HP/Quad Cities Post
Tommy Horton	11.01.09	Corporal	HP/Headquarters
Steve Jarrett	10.01.09	Sergeant	ADM/PI/E
Eric Morris	11.01.09	PCO II	HP/Jacksonville Post
Byron Piggott	10.01.09	Sergeant	HP/Mobile Post
Larry Prestwood	1.01.09	IT Systems Specialist	DL/Information Services
Brandi Simpson	10.16.09	PCO II	HP/Decatur Post
Ashley Taylor	11.01.09	PCO II	HP/Jacksonville Post
Philip Taylor	10.01.09	Sergeant	HP/ MCSU

Transfers

Bobby Abbey	10.01.09	Trooper	HP/Calhoun County
Charles Anderson	11.01.09	Corporal	HP/Mobile Post
Donald Blackmon	10.01.09	Trooper	HP/Dale County
Billy Brown	10.01.09	Sergeant	HP/FAP
John Fields	10.01.09	Sergeant	ABI/Investigation Operations
Jason Burch	11.01.09	Corporal	HP/FAP
William Burks	11.01.09	Trooper	HP/MCSU
Donald Byrd	11.01.09	Corporal	HP/Mobile County
Raymond Garrison	10.01.09	Trooper	HP/St. Clair County
Christopher Gibson	10.01.09	Trooper	HP/Washington County
Valerie Givan	10.01.09	DL Examiner I	DL/Montgomery County
Michael Griffies	10.01.09	Trooper	HP/MCSU
Bryan Hamrick	10.01.09	Trooper	HP/MCSU
Jimmy Harrell	10.01.09	Trooper	HP/Calhoun County
Tommy Horton Jr.	10.01.09	Trooper	ABI/Investigative Operations
Steven Kelley	10.01.09	Trooper	HP/MCSU
Christopher King	10.01.09	Trooper	HP/Hale County
Robert Knapp	10.01.09	Trooper	HP/MCSU
Joseph Lathers	10.01.09	Trooper	HP/Calhoun County
Darrell Linder	10.01.09	Trooper	ABI/Investigative Operations
Charlton Martin	10.01.09	Sergeant	HP/Headquarters
William Mink	10.01.09	Trooper	HP/Etowah County
Carl Mitchell	10.01.09	Trooper	HP/Franklin County
Tavarus Moore	11.01.09	Trooper	HP/MCSU
James Moss	10.01.09	Trooper	HP/Limestone County
Jessie Peoples	10.01.09	Sergeant	HP/Headquarters

PEOPLE YOU KNOW

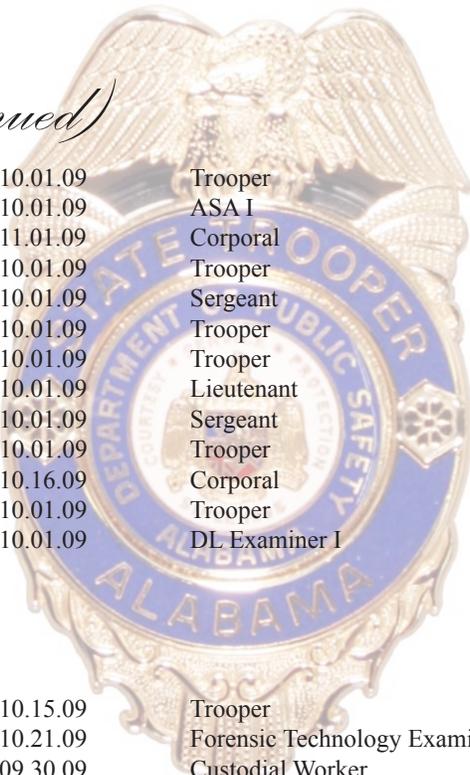


Transfers (continued)

Willie Perry	10.01.09	Trooper	HP/MCSU
Shar'keia Renfro	10.01.09	ASA I	ABI/Investigative Operations
Darrell Seymour	11.01.09	Corporal	HP/Tuscaloosa County
James Shadrick	10.01.09	Trooper	HP/Blount County
John Smith	10.01.09	Sergeant	HP/Headquarters
James Springfield	10.01.09	Trooper	HP/Marshall County
Gary Stratton	10.01.09	Trooper	HP/MCSU
Damon Summers	10.01.09	Lieutenant	ADM/ACJTC
Robert Thornton	10.01.09	Sergeant	HP/Headquarters-FAP
Charles Trantham	10.01.09	Trooper	HP/MCSU
Jerry Ward	10.16.09	Corporal	SER/Aviation
Forrest Watson	10.01.09	Trooper	HP/Madison County
Gloria Whiting	10.01.09	DL Examiner I	DL/Autauga County

Resignations

Henry Cox	10.15.09	Trooper	HP/FAP
Eleanor Hudson	10.21.09	Forensic Technology Examiner	ABI/CyberCrimes
Corey Jackson	09.30.09	Custodial Worker	HP/Quad Cities
David Lawson	10.26.09	DL Examiner II	DL/Jefferson County
Tiffany McCleskey	10.15.09	DL Examiner I	DL/Morgan County



People You Know in Kuwait!

Sgt. First Class Glenn L. Furukawa and Staff Sgt. William "Chad" Mink, stationed at Camp Buehring, Kuwait.
Cpl. Furukawa has been deployed with the 151 CBRN, ALARNG, and Tpr. Mink has been deployed with the 403rd TTOE of Anniston.

PROGRESS AT THE NEW ACJTC



Heavy machinery, welding machines and other equipment seemed to be echoing a tune at the site of the new academy all throughout the month of November.

When Tpr. John Reese visited the site on Nov. 4, he was instantly reminded of a childhood poem. “A good thing to remember, and a better thing to do. To work with a construction gang, and not a wrecking crew.”

“We are witnessing the creation of something beautiful and exciting,” said Reese. “It’s much more than mere buildings. They are helping build a new future for DPS.”

Alabama Department of



Public Safety

CONTRIBUTING:

- Maj. Hugh McCall, ABI
- Capt. Charles Ward, PS
- Capt. Jack Clark, HP
- Sgt. Ricky Agerton, ABI
- Tpr. John Reese, ADM
- Tommy Giles, Photography

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WE'RE ON THE WEB!

DPS.ALABAMA.GOV

Questions? Comments? Concerns?

STAY IN TOUCH WITH *THE BLUE LIGHT*.
PLEASE E-MAIL ALL REQUESTS TO:

RYAN.GODFREY@DPS.ALABAMA.GOV

On Your Calendar

Friday, December 25

Christmas Day

Friday, January 1

New Year's Day

Monday, January 18

Martin Luther King Day

Monday, February 15

President's Day

ACJTC TRAINING SCHEDULE DECEMBER '09

Date	Event
Dec. 1-2	Civilian Leadership Training
7-11	CVE Diap
7-11	Patrol Rifle Training
8	LIDAR Recertification
8-9	Civilian Leadership Training
14-15	Critical Response Team

To Whom It May Concern:

I was recently driving my wife from Birmingham to Tuscaloosa to attend a Christian healing service, as my wife has terminal brain cancer. We were very lost on a back road when I saw a state trooper. I explained our dilemma to him and asked for directions. He told us to simply follow him. Trooper Clark took us directly to the location, approximately 25 miles from where we were. I cannot tell you how much this meant to both myself and my beloved wife. He was so very kind and considerate, and is a fine example of an Alabama state trooper that you should be so very proud of. We usually hear only negative comments about our heroes that risk their lives every day. Rarely do we hear about their humanity and caring. Please make sure that the proper folks see this letter.

God Bless,

John and Barbara Weldon