



# THE BLUE LIGHT



THE HONORABLE BOB RILEY  
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Director

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Driver License Division

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Highway Patrol Division

MAJOR HERMAN WRIGHT  
Protective Services Division

MAJOR JERRY CONNER  
Service Division



## FEBRUARY 2010 INSIDE THIS ISSUE...

<i>Academy: Centers of Excellence</i>	2
<i>Boy's Bottled Message Found</i>	3
<i>Progress at the new ACJTC</i>	5
<i>Buckle Up for Valentine's Day</i>	6
<i>People You Know!</i>	7
<i>Heading Toward 75</i>	8

# Academy: Our Centers of Excellence

Commonly referred to as the trooper academy, or simply “the academy,” amongst the DPS community, the Alabama Criminal Justice Training Center in Selma is actively working to



*Above, Maj. Marc McHenry leads a discussion at a Civilian Leadership Institute in December.*

broaden its image of simply being known as a place to train trooper recruits.

The ACJTC is a lot of things to many people, and not just those within DPS. As the largest law enforcement training facility in the state of Alabama, a total of 2,086 students passed through its doors to attend 138 different courses in FY 2008-09. Of those students,

only 58 were new trooper recruits.

“We are the face of law enforcement training in the state,” said Lt. Damon Summers, ACJTC assistant commander. “From the 480-hour Basic Police course, to courses on management leadership, instructor development, e-Crash training, and Special Weapons and Tactics training, we are dedicated to provide superior law enforcement training to develop the finest peace officers.”

In addition to the new facility set to open in the fall, the ACJTC is constantly working on new ways to improve law enforcement training. Recent courses added at the academy include Advanced Law Enforcement Rapid Response Training, which focuses on addressing and stopping the threat of an active shooter. Leadership institutes were recently implemented to provide training to develop better supervisors at all levels of command, from captains to first-line and civilians in a supervisory position.

“Effective training is the lifeblood of law enforcement,” Col. J. Christopher Murphy said. “It defines service and safety, it promotes mission fulfillment, and it ensures the long-term health and viability of law enforcement agencies.”

“We are working hard, not just to build a better academy, but to better inform the public of the academy’s capabilities,” said staff instructor Grant Williams. “Obviously, we are available for use by our troopers, but we also offer training to non-

[Continued on page 4]

# Boy's Bottled Message Found in Florida

By Alvin Benn

Courtesy of the Montgomery Advertiser

**D.J.** Holifield entered the world three months early, so that could be the reason he can't seem to wait to learn, explore and find out what's around the next corner.

Take last July, for instance. The 10-year-old Bullock County honor student and his dad were on a cruise, but, instead of spending all his time eating or playing games on deck, D.J. decided to try an experiment.

First, he wrote a short note and inserted it into the plastic top of a ballpoint pen. Then, he carefully protected it in a wrapper and placed it into an empty bottle.

At just the right moment, he reared back as he would when tossing a ball to first base for his youth league baseball team and "chucked" it into the Gulf of Mexico.

Would the bottle ever reach land? If so, how long would it take to get there? And, would the finder contact him before he's old and gray?

Those were some of the questions he asked himself and his dad, state Trooper Darin Holifield, as they watched the bottle bob in the waves on that bright moonlit night



*In this Dec. 6, 2009 photo, D.J. Holifield, 10, of Fitzpatrick, points to the part of the Gulf of Mexico where he tossed a bottle with a message from a cruise ship this past July. It was found two months later in Florida.*

before finally slipping from sight.

Two months later, Jacqueline Lind was walking along the beach in Melbourne, Fla., when she saw a seaweed-covered object stuck in the sand.

It was, of course, the bottle D.J. had tossed into the briny deep only a few weeks before. And, just like the boy who was born three months

early, it didn't take long to arrive either.

Darin Holifield, a pilot who is well aware of time and distance, figured the bottle had traveled about 600 miles in just 60 days.

"Our ship was due north of Cozumel," Holifield said. "There

[Continued on next page]

# *Boy's Bottled Message Found in Florida (continued)*

was a hurricane during those two months, and it may have pushed the bottle through the Florida Straits to Melbourne.”

Whatever the reason, it's obvious the bottle wasn't wasting any time before reaching land and Lind's hand.

She and her husband took it home, pulled D.J.'s note out of the wrapper and read it.

A newspaper reporter took it from there, and an elderly woman who read the article then wrote D.J. to tell him the good news.

His note wasn't different from most inserted in bottles and tossed into the ocean. He listed his name, address and other basics.

When D.J. told his fifth-grade classmates at Macon-East Montgomery Academy, the first reaction from most of them was “wow,” he said.

Other than that, they weren't all that impressed and that kept D.J.'s feet firmly on the ground. His friends didn't even ask him for an autograph.

Father and son were on the cruise as part of a reward for D.J. for once again doing so well in class, making the honor roll again.

“We always try to take trips together, and the cruise was just one of the things we've done,” said the state trooper, who is divorced and looks forward to having his son stay with him as often as possible.

“We're already planning our next trip,” he added.

Next spring or summer they'll travel to Florida to visit the Linds and take a look at their bottle, which is being kept at the couple's house.

D.J. may only be 10, but he's got his future mapped out already. His goal is to become an astronaut one day, after getting his degree from “Vandy.”

“I've always wanted to go there,” he said, referring to Vanderbilt University, which often is referred to as “Ivy League South.”

In the meantime, he'll continue to play baseball, do his homework and maybe even begin to enjoy poetry.

Longfellow once wrote “I shot an

arrow into the air, it fell to earth I knew not where.” D.J. isn't into arrows that much, but his mighty toss into the Gulf of Mexico did have a successful conclusion, unlike Longfellow's effort.

He also believes his bottle could wind up as a Guinness World Record. He said the record for the longest time one floated around before being discovered was 92 years and 229 days.

D.J. hasn't ruled out the possibility of contacting the “Guinness people” to see if his bottle might set a different kind of record.

“Mine might be the shortest,” he said, flashing a big grin. 🌀

## *Academy: Our Centers of Excellence*



*An artist's rendering of the new ACJTC, scheduled to open fall 2010.*

sworn personnel, and as a fully certified APOST training academy, we are available to the entire law enforcement community.”

Last year, the ACJTC trained 80 basic police students in three separate 12-week classes. With no new trooper classes currently slated, academy staff are hoping to offer even more basic police courses and other specialized training classes to law enforcement outside DPS. A brochure explaining courses offered was recently produced to inform outside agencies about training at the academy. 🌀

# PROGRESS AT THE NEW ACJTC



Heavy machinery, welding machines and other equipment continued to echo a tune at the site of the new academy all throughout the month of January.

This latest set of photographs, taken by Tommy Giles Feb. 1, clearly show the construction of a new academy entering its final phases.

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



*Show Your Loved Ones  
You Care this  
Valentine's Day*

**BUCKLE UP!**





# People You Know!

## *New Employees*

April Ahmann	01.04.10	Criminal Intelligence Analyst	ABI/Fusion Center
Lula Barnes	01.04.10	Clerical Aide	DL/Medical Unit
Joshua Dixon	12.16.09	Clerical Aide	DL/Medical Unit
William Hipps	01.15.10	Capitol Police Officer	PS/Capitol Police
David Gallew	12.16.09	Criminal Intelligence Analyst	ABI/Fusion Center
James Phillips	01.15.10	Capitol Police Officer	PS/Capitol Police

## *Promotions*

Jason Black	01.01.10	Sergeant	HP/THI
Deborah Hall	12.16.09	ASA III	HP/Motor Carrier Safety
Andy Pike	01.01.10	Sergeant	DL/Quad Cities Examining
Anthony Riley	01.01.10	Sergeant	ADM/Director's Office
Frank Williams	01.01.10	Corporal	HP/Birmingham Post

## *Transfers*

Jerry Allen	12.16.09	Trooper	HP/Houston County
Kenneth Day	12.16.09	Trooper	HP/Autauga County
Steven Dixon	01.01.10	Captain	ADM/Assistant Division Chief
Erik Hunt	12.16.09	Trooper	HP/Colbert County
James Lewis	01.01.10	Capitol Police Officer	PS/Dignitary Protection
Thomas Lolley	01.01.10	Corporal	ABI/Investigative Operations
Jeffrey Jordan	12.16.09	Corporal	HP/Tallapoosa County
Keith Mickle	01.01.10	Corporal	HP/MCSU-Tuscaloosa
Terry Nelson	12.16.09	Trooper	HP/Geneva County
Branta Wheeler	01.01.10	Capitol Police Officer	PS/Dignitary Protection
Terry Windham	01.01.10	Lieutenant	HP/Tuscaloosa Post

## *Resignations*

Robert Applin	12.31.09	Retired State Employee	SER/Photographic Services
Karen Doyle	12.31.09	Retired State Employee	ADM/Personnel
Roy Smith	12.31.09	Retired State Employee	SER/Photographic Services
Jeanette Wilson	12.31.09	Retired State Employee	HP/Gadsden

## *Retirements*

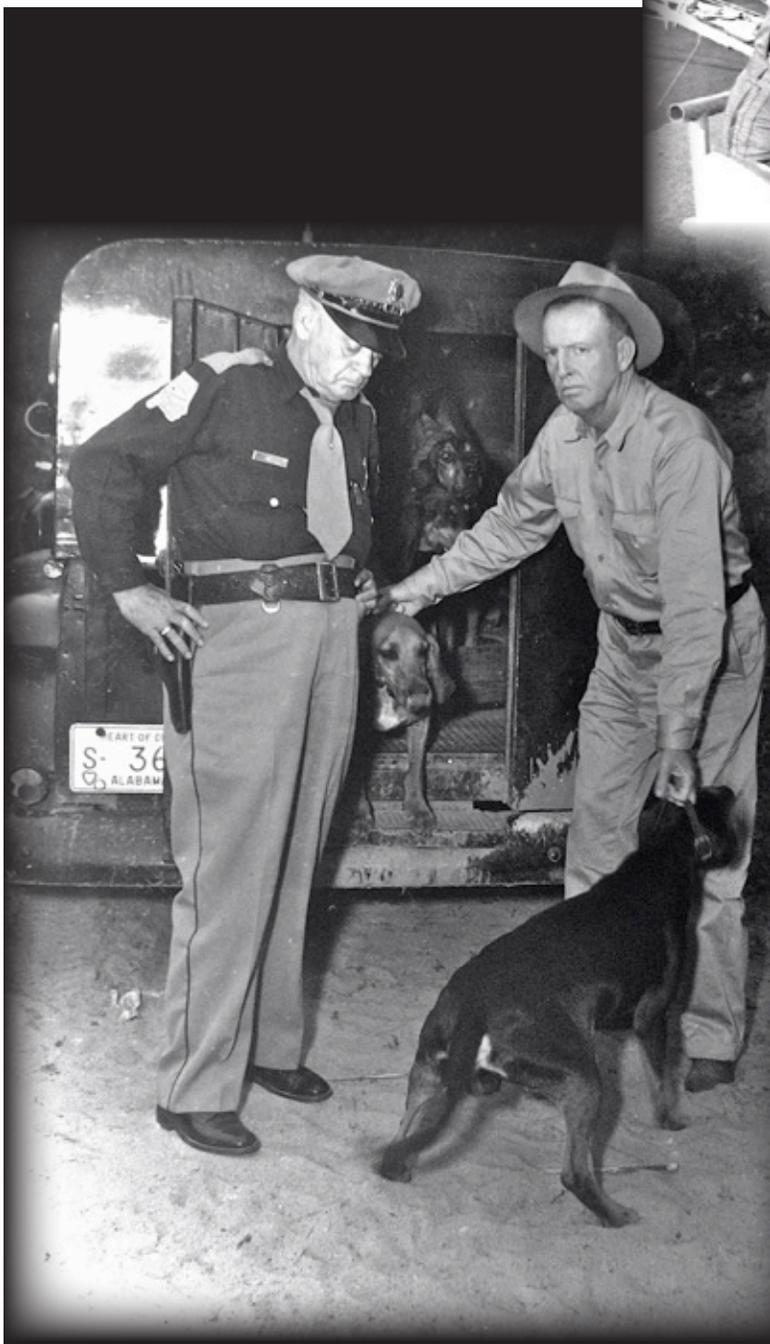
Jonathan Benison	12.31.09	Trooper	HP/Tuscaloosa
Daryl Brown	12.31.09	Trooper	HP/Tuscaloosa
Wesley Clark	12.31.09	Lieutenant	ABI/Criminal Intelligence
Emmitte Goodwin	12.31.09	Stock Clerk II	SER/Communications Engineering
Billy Smith	12.31.09	Executive Security Officer	PS/Dignitary Protection

# 75 Heading Toward

1935 - 2010



*Above: From left, Tpr. Pilot Jerry Hatfield, Tpr. Everett "Bunny" Green, and Tpr. Pilot Joe Pritchett are seen looking over plans for an air and ground search in 1974 or '75. Hatfield would later become chief pilot.*



*Left: Highway Patrolman Otto Dees and Kilby Dog Warden Clyde Carpenter unload bloodhounds prior to tracking an escaped prisoner from Kilby Prison in 1961. Dees was assigned to the prison system for security and prisoner transfers across the state.*



*Above: A 1954 Highway Patrol command meeting in the office of Gov. Gordon Persons. Front center left is long time Associated Press reporter Rex Thomas. Part of the governor's vast gun collection is displayed on the walls of the Governor's Office.*

*Below: Alabama was the site of several prisoner of war camps during World War II. The first camp in the state was built in Aliceville. Here, prisoners from Rommel's North Afrika Korps are brought through Aliceville by two unidentified Alabama Highway Patrol officers on their way to the internment camp.*

Department of Public Safety

# 75 Heading Toward

1935 - 2010





**A CHILD IS MISSING.  
DO YOU KNOW WHAT TO DO?**



**Free Seminar  
AMBER: Children in Jeopardy**

U.S. media perform many valuable public services and one of the most important is protecting our children through programs like the AMBER Alert.

To help the media better understand the nuances and sensitivities associated with these cases, the Alabama Broadcasters Association is hosting a free seminar for Alabama media (TV, radio, print and online), AMBER Alert Coordinators, LE, DARE officers, school officials and Public Information Officers (school or law enforcement).

Children in Jeopardy is a highly interactive, four-hour workshop. It uses scenarios derived from actual cases to help the media better understand how they can assist law enforcement to safeguard our kids as well as what to avoid that potentially could make these situations worse.

The seminar is taught by a three-person team from USC's College of Mass Communications and Information Studies. They are knowledgeable about law enforcement policies as well as the latest communication techniques. There is no cost to the participants.

The cost of the workshop is underwritten by Fox Valley Technical College through a grant from the U.S. Department of Justice. The sessions are an outgrowth of a series of more than 50 AMBER and the Media seminars held over the last four years in Newsplex, USC's newsroom of the future. Several hundred members of the media have participated and can attest to the value of the training.

- DATE & TIME:** March 20, 9 a.m. – 1 p.m.
- SPONSORING AGENCY:** Alabama Broadcasters Association - Sharon Tinsley, President
- LOCATION:** Cahaba Grand Conference Center  
3660 Grandview Parkway , Birmingham
- REGISTRATION LINK:** <https://www.fvtc.edu/apps/mytraining/Public/Home.aspx?1=65518>  
Login or create a new account (column on the left)  
Register for Class 65518
- INFORMATION/QUESTION/PROBLEMS:** Terri Moorer  
WAN-IFRA Newsplex Program Coordinator  
803-348-0445 [moorert@mailbox.sc.edu](mailto:moorert@mailbox.sc.edu)

**Special guest speakers Faye Hester and Sharon Tinsley will review the Alabama Missing Senior Alert law.**

**INTERESTED PERSONNEL SHOULD APPLY THROUGH CHAIN OF COMMAND**



Alabama Department of



Public Safety

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- Sgt. Ricky Agerton, ABI
- Tpr. John Reese, ADM
- Tommy Giles, Photography

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Ryan Godfrey

# RSA Criminal Justice Center Montgomery, Ala.



## 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

Monday, February 15

*President's Day*

Monday, April 26

*Confederate Memorial Day*

Monday, May 31

*Memorial Day*

Monday, June 7

*Jefferson Davis' Birthday*

## ACJTC TRAINING SCHEDULE FEBRUARY '10

Date	Event
Feb. 1-5	Patrol Rifle Training
1-12	NAS Motor Carrier
1-28	Basic Police Session 137
8-12	Patrol Rifle Training
9	CPO Testing
17	FMLA Training
19-20	Trooper Reserve Training
21-23	ABC In-service
26-27	Trooper Reserve Training

Jan. 16, 2010

To Whom It May Concern:

I wish to express my thanks and appreciation to Tpr. Tucker for his kind and considerate help this morning on the Upper River Road. I had car trouble on the bridge, in a very dangerous location. Tpr. Tucker offered his assistance, and kindly waited with me for my husband to arrive, and then stayed with us to ensure our safety until we got the vehicle moved off the highway. He was the very definition of a "trooper," and a true gentleman. Thank you again, Tpr. Tucker!

Doris Trosper