



The official publication of the Alabama Department of Public Safety



THE BLUE LIGHT

Fall 2012

THE HONORABLE ROBERT BENTLEY
Governor

COLONEL HUGH B. McCALL
Director

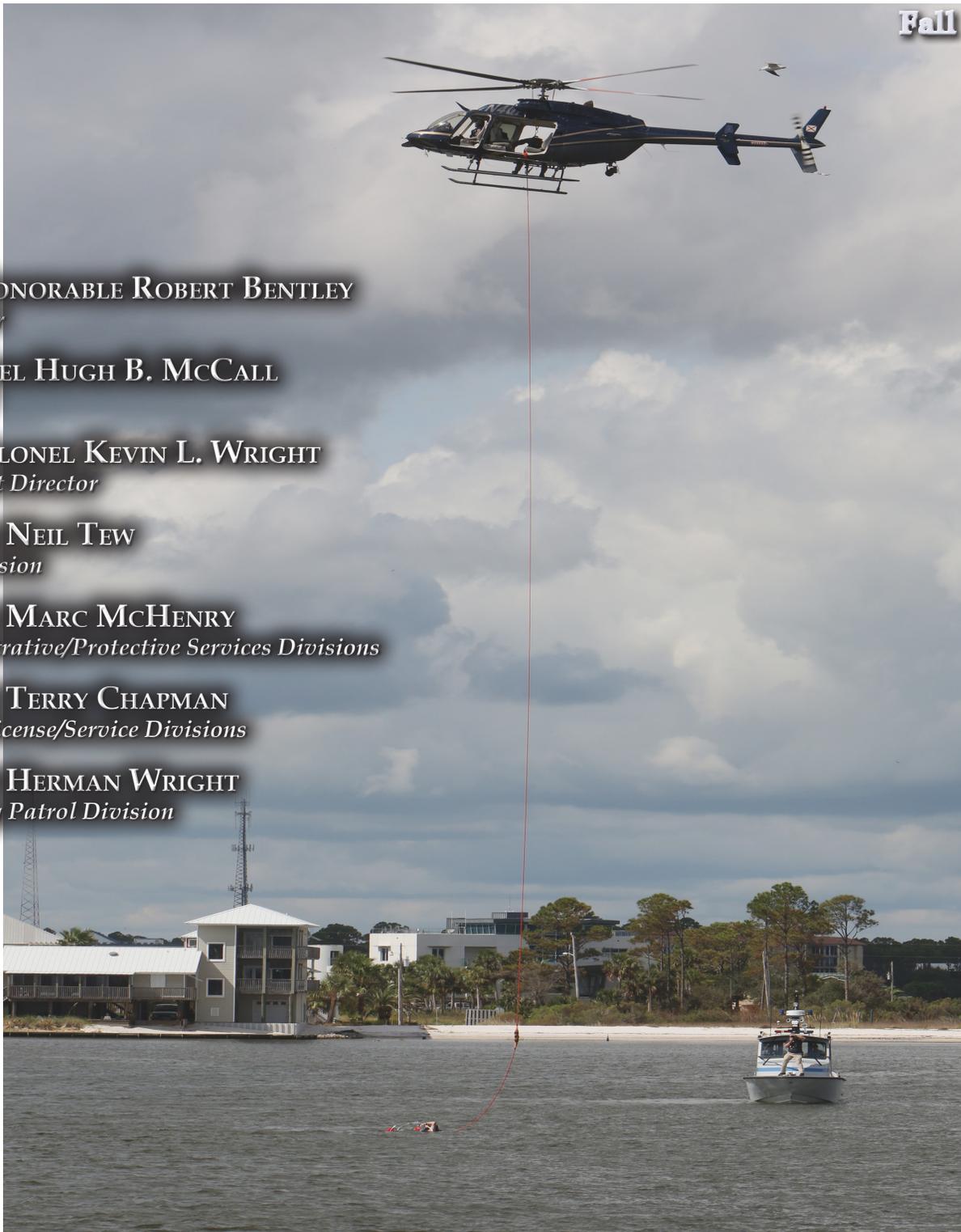
LT. COLONEL KEVIN L. WRIGHT
Assistant Director

MAJOR NEIL TEW
ABI Division

MAJOR MARC McHENRY
Administrative/Protective Services Divisions

MAJOR TERRY CHAPMAN
Driver License/Service Divisions

MAJOR HERMAN WRIGHT
Highway Patrol Division





Operation Raging Winds

Details on Page 3



DPS Coordinates Hurricane Prep Exercise

It was a perfect September day along Alabama's Gulf Coast -- sunny and breezy with relatively low humidity.

The weather may have been ideal for beachgoers, but it also afforded state-level emergency responders an opportunity to prepare for not-so-ideal conditions presented during and following hurricanes and other natural disasters along the coast.

On Sept. 18 and 19, personnel from the Alabama Department of Public Safety, the Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources' Marine Police Division, the Alabama Department of Homeland Security and the Alabama Emergency Management Agency reported to Orange Beach, near the Perdido Pass Bridge, for Operation Raging Winds. They were joined by several local emergency agencies.

Equipped with helicopters, boats and all-terrain vehicles, the two-day exercise

included simulated long-line helicopter rescues, beach patrol and other training activities to prepare for hurricanes and other emergencies along Alabama's coastline.

The first day, DPS's Col. Hugh B. McCall and Lt. Col. Kevin Wright attended the exercise and observed DPS's Aviation Unit troopers and equipment in action.

During his opening remarks to those gathered to train, McCall said, "No matter what agency we work for, we have a mission to serve the citizens of Alabama."

The need for training exercises is a constant in law enforcement response. It is also important for agencies at all levels to prepare jointly before disaster strikes. Such training exercises ensure response teams are ready, working effectively and efficiently when called upon.

Training was funded by a grant from the state's Department of Homeland Security.



Above: Watching a simulated rescue from shore are, from left, Col. Steve Thompson of Marine Police with DPS's Lt. Col. Wright and Col. McCall.

Below: Team coordinators discuss plans.



Department Loses Former Colonels during the Summer



Col. Mark Peevy

Since August, the Alabama Department of Public Safety has lost two former directors:

Col. Mark Peevy, who joined the department in 1966, was appointed an Alabama State Trooper in 1970 and assigned to the Highway Patrol Division in Montgomery. Beginning in 1971, he served for eight years with DPS's Executive Protection Service, working on protective details for former Gov. George C. Wallace and the Executive Mansion.

He then served in the Driver Improvement Unit of Public Safety's Driver License Division from 1979 to 1984. In 1984, he joined the department's Intelligence Unit, where he served as an investigator until 1987, when he was assigned again to Executive Protection.

In February 1991, Gov. Guy Hunt appointed Peevy assistant director, where he served until March 1993. He then was named director of Public Safety. In June of that year, after more than 27 years of service to the state, Col. Peevy retired.

Col. Michael Sullivan joined the department in 1966 as a trooper cadet. Two years later, when he was promoted to trooper, he was assigned to the Investigative and Identification Division (now the Alabama Bureau of Investigation) in Montgomery. In 1971, Sullivan was transferred to the Highway Patrol Division, Dothan Post, and then to Executive Security in 1977, where he served in the Criminal Investigation Unit.

In 1983, Sullivan was promoted to lieutenant and assigned to the Polygraph Section of ABI. He served in that capacity until 1988, when he was promoted to captain and assumed command of the Auto Theft Unit. In 1994, he was promoted to major as chief of the Driver License Division, where he served until his transfer to ABI the following year.

In 1996, Sullivan was named assistant director of Public Safety under Gov. Fob James. He served in that capacity until January 1999, when Gov. Don Siegelman named him acting director of the department. Sullivan retired in January 2000.



Col. Michael Sullivan

Alabama to Integrate Law Enforcement

State-Level Agencies Working to Consolidate, Streamline Effort

A patchwork of navy, gray and khaki uniforms filled the front of the Alabama Criminal Justice Training Center's auditorium Aug. 29 as members of state law enforcement agencies congregated to prepare for possible deployment following Hurricane Isaac.

The Law Enforcement Disaster Coordination Group comprises 67 individuals from the Alabama Department of Public Safety, Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, Alabama State Fire Marshal's Office, Alabama Beverage Control Enforcement, Alabama Public Service Commission, Alabama Department of Revenue and Alabama Securities Commission.

This special operations platoon arrived fully equipped and prepared to spend up to 10 days in a hurricane-devastated area.

DPS's Col. Hugh B. McCall said that it is during such events that Alabama's agencies can pull together, pool resources and serve the people of Alabama and across the Southeast in an effective and efficient manner.



In September, Alabama State Troopers and law enforcement officers from other state agencies came together to prepare for Hurricane Isaac at the Alabama Criminal Justice Training Center. While this multi-agency special response team was not deployed, the exercise gave team members a chance to work together.



State Troopers Promote School Bus Safety

Although the school year began weeks ago, school bus safety remains a priority, and it is important to remind motorists who come into contact with school buses on a daily basis.

The Alabama Department of Public Safety is working with the Alabama Department of Education to remind motorists of the law and what is required in an effort to prevent crashes, injuries and fatalities.

Motorists may be aware that the law requires all traffic from both directions on a two-lane roadway to stop when school buses stop for passengers, but there are also rules to ensure safety in other situations.

Traffic from both directions must also stop for school buses on:

- Roadways with two lanes and a center turning lane
- Roadways with four or more lanes

- and a center turning lane
- Roadways with four lanes and no median separation

The rule, however, differs for traffic on roadways with four or more lanes that have a median separation. On such highways, only traffic following a school bus must stop. Traffic traveling in the opposite direction should continue moving. For more on school bus safety, please visit www.alsde.edu.

FAP's Martin Receives National Honor

As a Drug Interdiction Assistance Program (DIAP) instructor, Sgt. Charlton Martin was aware of the national organization's Officer of the Year award, but he had never given any thought to being honored.

"I had no idea I had even been nominated," said Martin, who served for seven years with the Opelika Police Department before becoming an Alabama state trooper 16 years ago. He is assigned to the Felony Apprehension Patrol Unit of the Alabama Department of Public Safety's Highway Patrol Division.

Martin has specialized in criminal interdiction for more than 10 years and was recently named "The United States 2011-2012 'Bob Thomasson' Criminal Interdiction Officer of the Year" during a national conference in Little Rock, Ark. According to his nomination, Martin is "a driving force behind the implementation of his department's highly successful criminal interdiction program."

A FAP Unit supervisor, Martin is the K-9 instructor, and he manages the unit's 17 K-9 teams (14 narcotic teams and three explosive teams). He also has served in numerous leadership positions in DIAP, both for his state and his district.

Martin's list of significant seizures includes 3,290 pounds marijuana, 36 pounds heroin, 121 pounds cocaine, and \$2 million in U.S. currency.

What most impressed Martin about the honor was the fact that the selection committee comprising past winners blindly chooses each year's recipient based on accomplishments. Once nominees are collected, names and other identifying elements are removed, and the nominees are assigned a number. Their nomination files are then reviewed by their peers.



Martin and his K-9 partner, Ringo, are eager to protect and serve.

So what is the secret to winning such awards and having such an accomplished career in law enforcement? For Martin, it's simple. "It's just a strong work ethic. That's all it is," he said. "It's really on the individual. Whatever you do, you just try to do it well. I don't look for recognition."

Martin is self-motivated and finds helping others satisfying. Recently, during a traffic stop, he discovered that the vehicle's driver and passenger had more than \$100,000 of gold jewelry in their possession. At that point, the robbery had not even been reported, but there was Martin, retrieving a woman's lifelong collection of gold pieces, sentimental items that truly were priceless to her. And knowing he helped to give someone her life back was a good feeling, he said.

"We (law enforcement) are not going to put somebody in jail every day, but

Credit for Success

"Other team individuals have been recognized as well as the unit. The unit's success is the reason I received the award. It bears my name but belongs to them," Martin says. "Of course, the ultimate glory goes to the Creator, who gives us the daily breath of life and sacrificed His Son, my Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ."

Other FAP Unit Winners

Top "Cold Stop" Seizure Award Winners: 2001, Jessie Peoples, 841 pounds cocaine; 2007, Ed Ryan, 5.8 pounds crack cocaine; 2007, Charles Anderson, 86 pounds Ice (meth).
"Cold Stop" means no information was known prior to the traffic stop where contraband was recovered.

DIAP/EPIC Instructor of the Year Award Winners: Will Barnes, Robbie Autery and Charlton Martin.

More about Award:

Known as the "DIAP Award," it is sponsored by and in recognition of U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration; and U.S. Department of Justice through the Drug Enforcement Administration and the El Paso Intelligence Center.

we're going to *help* somebody on a daily basis," he said.

In addition, he said, "protect" is an action verb, and troopers and other law enforcement officers must seek out deception and be able to see and hear it. Always being prepared to take a routine traffic stop to the next level is key.

"'Criminal patrol tactics' are nothing special," Martin said. "Every officer -- if you have a badge or a gun -- should be doing criminal patrol. Every stop. Our job is to *discover* crime, not *respond* to it. We've got to be observant."

Such skills become second nature, he said, adding, "Some people go hunting; some go fishing. I go out on the interstate for an adult game of hide and seek -- with serious consequences for individuals and society."

Troop D Commander Receives Award

In August, Amelia Boynton Robinson celebrated her 101th birthday by presenting her 2012 Legacy Award to a member of the Alabama Department of Public Safety's family for her role in furthering civil rights.

During a presentation in Tuskegee, Boynton Robinson presented the prestigious award to Capt. Agatha Windsor, commander of Highway Patrol's Troop D (Selma and Tuscaloosa). It was a special day for both Boynton Robinson and Windsor.

As she accepted the honor, Windsor said she was sincerely grateful, but admitted that she was a bit stunned when she learned that she was to be a recipient. "I feel that other leaders are also worthy of this award," she said, adding that it was a humbling experience.

In her remarks at the presentation, she said, "This special award will deeply serve as a reminder to me of the long and difficult moments, days, years and lifelong struggle endured to make a better life for my generation, those behind me and for the future generations

to come. My career as a troop commander with the Alabama State Troopers and this award could not have been achieved without the inspiration I have received from such people as the students who 'sat in' at the lunch counters, four little girls of the Sixteenth Street Baptist Church, Rosa Parks, the sanitation workers, Phillip Paradise, the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., the unknown and unsung heroes -- and the event's honoree, Mrs. Amelia Boynton Robinson. Thank you, Mrs. Robinson, for your vision and labor to make a better world for all people."

Windsor went on to say, "Who would have thought in 1965 that the Alabama State Troopers would have an African-American and female assigned to the same territory of the famous and internationally known Edmund Pettus Bridge? Thanks to the foot soldiers!"

In closing, Windsor recognized her parents, Harold and Agnes Windsor, who have selflessly and lovingly supported her during the 32-plus years she has devoted to a very demanding but rewarding profession.



Capt. Agatha Windsor, shown here with 101-year-old Amelia Boynton Robinson, was delighted to receive the centenarian's 2012 Legacy Award.



Windsor poses with Boynton Robinson, seated, and her very proud parents.

Association Memorial Ride Raises Money, Awareness

The Alabama State Trooper Association's Memorial Ride on Aug. 18 drew about 85 motorcycle enthusiasts and raised about \$7,000. This year's group congregated at the Back Alley in downtown Montgomery for an afternoon of food and fellowship, which wrapped up with a program featuring Alabama's Attorney General Luther Strange.



New Insurance Law Goes Into Effect in January

The Mandatory Liability Insurance Law goes into effect Jan. 1, 2013, in Alabama, which ranks sixth worst in the nation for uninsured motorists. From that day forward, troopers and other law enforcement officers will use Alabama's new Online Insurance Verification System during traffic stops, crash investigations and when issuing or renewing driver licenses.



Sgt. Steve Jarrett, right, commander of Public Safety's Public Information/Education Unit, attended the news conference at Wetumpka High School to promote 'The Last Text.' Here, he poses with four students from the school and Jim Bolte, far left, of Toyota, and Mickey Harbin, second from left, of AT&T.

'The Last Text' a Powerful Warning for Teens

The Department of Public Safety is involved in a new video that has the power to save lives.

"The Last Text," released officially during an Oct. 2 news conference at Wetumpka High School, is designed to educate the motoring public – particularly teenagers – about the dangers of texting from behind the wheel.

Sgt. Steve Jarrett, commander of the Department of Public Safety's Public Information/Education Unit, participated in the news event, which also included officials from Toyota, AT&T, the Department of Education and several driver education students.

"Alabama Don't Text and Drive" is an outreach program designed to educate the public. As part of the outreach, approximately 450 driver education programs at high schools across the state are receiving copies of the video to show to students. Distribution of this video came shortly after a new law went into effect in Alabama, making texting while driving illegal.

Gov. Robert Bentley and DPS's director, Col. Hugh McCall, recorded an introduction for the video, urging viewers to heed the warnings not to text and drive.

"There is no text message that's so important that it's worth risking your

Watch the video:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mofGWZj7hF8&feature=youtu.be>.

life," the Governor said. "And it's not just your life that could be put at risk. Think about your friends, and think about other drivers. If you're texting while driving, you're more likely to cause a crash, meaning you're more likely to harm someone else."

The Colonel agreed and said, "Texting while driving is a distraction, and distracted driving is impaired driving. In fact, research indicates that the level of impairment caused by texting is similar to that of alcohol and drugs. The Department of Public Safety urges drivers of all ages to avoid texting and anything else that takes the focus off the road."

"The Last Text" is part of an AT&T campaign designed to educate drivers about the real dangers of texting while driving and features candid comments from people who have been directly affected by this issue.

Those interviewed include friends of a girl who was killed in a texting-related crash, a driver who caused a fatal texting-related crash and a man who was severely impaired in another texting-related crash.

Spearheaded by the Alabama Ortho-

paedic Society (AOS), the "Alabama Don't Text and Drive" program is to further educate the public through the statewide distribution of the video.

AOS executive director Mike Merrill said, "The American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons and the Alabama Orthopaedic Society have a special interest in this project because so many of our orthopaedic surgeons are the ones treating these injuries."

Toyota sponsored the production and duplication of the video, which is being distributed to Alabama schools through the Department of Education.

Jim Bolte, president of Toyota Motor Manufacturing Alabama, said, "In the same way Toyota takes a safety-first approach in our plant, we want to do the same in our community by supporting education on the dangers of texting while driving."

He added that learning to drive is an exciting time for teens, "but it's important to learn how to be a safe driver. This documentary from AT&T sends a clear message about the dangers of texting and driving; and at Toyota, we think that's a message every young driver in Alabama needs to hear."

Sept. 11 Survivor Honors ‘Super Heroes’

A few minutes before 9 o’clock the morning of Sept. 11, 2001, Sunel Merchant of Auburn was chatting with co-workers on the 49th floor of one of the World Trade Center’s two towers in New York City.

He and other employees noticed the low-flying airliner headed toward the tower, but they had no idea that within seconds, terrorists would be crashing it into their building and bringing it and its sister tower to the ground.

While the images of that terrifying day are still fresh in Merchant’s mind, the Auburn resident refuses to give in to negativity. He prefers to focus on the positive and to continue to show his appreciation for those who serve in law enforcement and public safety.

He was unable to thank those who helped him and others from the tower that morning, so he has chosen to do something for the officers in the Auburn area, which is now home for Merchant, his wife and their son and daughter.

“When I woke up this morning (Sept. 11, 2012), I woke up with a feeling of hope,” said Merchant, who invited law enforcement officers from the Auburn area to enjoy a free meal at his restaurant, Philly Connection. He was



Sunel Merchant, second from right on front row, now owns the Philly Connection in Auburn. He poses with: back row from left, Trooper Craig Finney, Cpl. Tommy Horton and Trooper Chris Williams; and front row from left, Sgt. Steve Jarrett, Trooper Joe Smith and Sgt. Gary McWaters.

eager to spend the day meeting his “super heroes” and thanking them for all they do to ensure public safety. Officers from a number of Auburn-area law enforcement agencies accepted Merchant’s offer and joined him for a meal. The lunch crowd included several members of the Alabama Department of Public Safety.

Sgt. Gary McWaters of Highway Patrol’s Opelika Post said such a gesture means much to those who are called to serve the public. It is not uncommon for troopers and other law enforcement officers to meet members of the public in less-than-pleasant situations, so a thank-you is not always offered.

“But things like this show us that some people really do appreciate what we are doing in public safety,” he said. “He (Merchant) understands because

of what happened to him.” Merchant and other people who worked in the tower -- the first one to be struck -- slowly made their way from the 49th floor to the 25th floor, where they encountered the first firefighters. It struck Merchant that while he and others were trying their best to escape the building, individuals lugging heavy equipment were working their way up into the tower, risking their lives to serve others -- making the ultimate sacrifice.

It was a humbling sight and one that he will never forget. And, now, as he continues to build a life in Alabama, Merchant said that it is his mission to remind people in the community just how important a simple thank-you means to those who are willing to put their lives on the line to serve the public.

Trooper PIO promotes safety, earns scholarship to MADD conference

Trooper Charles Dysart, one of the Alabama Department of Public Safety’s four public information officers and assigned to central Alabama, was one of 75 individuals across the nation to be awarded a scholarship (covering all expenses) to an Ignition Interlock conference in Arlington, Va., sponsored by MADD and NHTSA.



Here, Trooper Charles Dysart uses the rollover simulator at a recent National Night Out event in Prattville. The simulator shows what can happen when a vehicle overturns and its occupants are not using seat belts or child restraints.



A Season of Giving

DPS Comes Together for Annual Campaign

Have you given to this year's State Combined Campaign?

You can't afford *not* to pledge, said Lt. Anthony Frost, who is DPS's campaign coordinator for 2012.

"The organizations that participate in the campaign are non-profit, which means that in order for them to continue their existence, they need the support of the public," said Frost, who

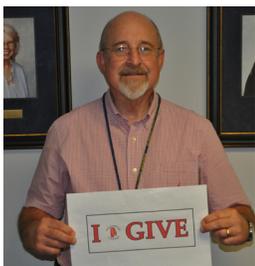
is assigned to the Alabama Department of Public Safety's Driver License Division.

This year's campaign kicked off Aug. 29 and runs through Dec. 31, so it is not too late, he said, especially this year -- as the state as a whole is behind last year in contributions and number of participants for the same period.

Thus far, DPS members have pledged

more than \$5,000 toward the \$29,450 goal. "Our goal this year -- regardless of the amount raised -- is to have 100 percent participation," Frost said.

"You never know when a hurricane, tornado, fire or medical emergency will occur, and you or one of your loved ones will need the services of one of these organizations," he said. "Supporting them today is like paying it forward."



Troopers Compete in Events across Alabama

The Alabama Department of Public Safety was well-represented at various fitness events across the state during the past few months, including the 2012 Brett Robinson Triathlon at Gulf Shores/Orange Beach and the Warrior Dash in Warrior.

Three troopers took the triathlon challenge in early September: Lt. Gary Whitaker of the Alabama Bureau of Investigation in Montgomery and Troopers Robert Maclean and Joe Champion, both of whom are assigned to Highway Patrol's Montgomery Post. The competition along the coast consisted of a 1,500-meter swim, 40K bike ride and 10K run.

Sgt. David Steward, assigned to Highway Patrol at Headquarters, and his running buddy Shane Kinder of Tuscaloosa recently ran the Warrior Dash -- a cold and muddy race in the Birmingham area that attracted an estimated 8,000 people.

Steward has run for about 16 years. "Had to get ready for the academy," he said, laughing. Since then, Steward has run numerous 5Ks, 10Ks, half-marathons and one full marathon (in Maui!).



From left, Trooper Robert Maclean, Trooper Joe Champion and Lt. Gary Whitaker break after their event on Alabama's Gulf Coast.



Sgt. David Steward, above and at right with Dash pal, Shane Kinder.

DPS's CFO Earns New Certification

Fran Copeland, chief financial officer of the Alabama Department of Public Safety since July 1998, has the distinction of being one of the first individuals to earn a new national certification.

Earlier in October, Copeland received her Chartered Global Management Accountant (CGMA) certification, a new designation created this year by two of the world's leading accounting organizations, the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants (AICPA) and the Chartered Institute of Management Accountants (CIMA).

The CGMA designation is being given to voting members of the AICPA or CIMA who also meet financial management qualifications. It recog-



nizes individuals with years of experience in combining financial expertise and business acumen to achieve sustainable business success. CGMAs are committed to professional ethics and code of conduct, and have a consistent set of skills. Beginning in 2015, AICPA voting members who seek to obtain the CGMA credential will have to pass a new examination.

A Note from Copeland ...

It's an honor and a privilege to work for the Department of Public Safety.

Its mission, which includes enhancing the enjoyment of life and property, ensuring a safe environment, facilitating the safe movement of traffic, investigating criminal activities, issuing driver licenses -- all while respecting the rights and dignity of all persons -- makes me so proud to work here.

It is a dream job when there are sufficient funds to support operations, but it's a nightmare when scarce funds have to be allocated with acute prudence.

These guys and gals are the very best, and every time I hear something that one has accomplished, my heart swells with joy. I love the work I do, the people I work with and for, and the mission my job helps support.

Dothan Examiner Named DL Examiner of the Year

Driver License Examiner I Carolyn Patrick of Region D (Dothan) was named the Alabama Department of Public Safety's Examiner of the Year during the 17th annual awards luncheon Oct. 24 at the RSA Plaza Terrace.

The program honors exemplary work of examiners in promoting public safety through testing and in detecting fraudulence and other criminal activity in the licensing process.

Other nominees were DL Examiner I Teresa Moore, Region A (Huntsville); DL Examiner I Danita Davis, Region C (Tuscaloosa); and DL Examiner I Elizabeth Ferguson, Region B (Birmingham).

One of four nominees, Patrick has been with DPS for 30 years (19 years as a Police Communications Officer with Highway Patrol and 11 years as a DL Examiner). Patrick's husband, Lonnie David Patrick, was an Alabama State Trooper who retired as a lieutenant in 1995.

This year's winner has been praised



Lt. Col. Kevin Wright, left, and Col. Hugh B. McCall, right, congratulate this year's Driver License Examiner of the Year participants, who are, second from left, nominee Teresa Moore, winner Carolyn Patrick and nominees Elizabeth Ferguson and Danita Davis.



Patrick, left, with Major Terry Chapman.



Winner with her husband, Lonnie David Patrick, a trooper who retired as a lieutenant.

for her work ethic, pleasant disposition and involvement in community activities. She is often responsible for finding warrants and remaining calm under pressure, and she has a professional working relationship with other law enforcement agencies and court officials.

This year's selection committee comprised Tim Frazier, Alabama Trucking

Association; Harold Hammond, AAM-VA Region II; Shane McMinn, R.E. Garrison Trucking; and Theresa Jones, Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration. Frazier of the Alabama Trucking Association and Dino Redmond of MorphoTrust USA sponsored the event. In addition, Sgt. David Steward and Danny Hester, both of the Alabama State Trooper Association, provided gifts for this year's participants.

DPS Pilots Recognize Project Lifesaver Donors



DPS's Chief Pilot Lee Hamilton, far right, reads a certificate of appreciation to the Alabama Power Energizers for their recent donation.

To make a tax-deductible donation to DPS's Project Lifesaver program, send checks (made payable to Project Lifesaver International) to Alabama State Trooper Association, P.O. Box 1286, Montgomery, AL 36102. For more about the program, call 334.242.4055.

Thanks to donors from across the state, the Alabama Department of Public Safety has raised more than \$30,000 to purchase transmitter bracelets and other equipment for Project Lifesaver.

The program is designed to locate lost individuals who have Alzheimer's disease, Down syndrome or other cognitive conditions that may lead to wandering. And with the Alabama State Trooper Aviation Unit leading the way, such groups as

Alabama Power Energizers (retirees), who are scattered across Alabama, and Montgomery's Jackson Hospital are making a difference.

On Oct. 24, the Energizers presented DPS pilots with a check for more than \$17,000. A few weeks ago, Jackson Hospital administrators contributed \$6,000 to purchase bracelets for individuals who live in the River Region.

Every dollar helps, said Lee Hamilton, DPS's chief pilot.

Beware! Nobody could say Capt. Windsor does not give fair warning before entering her office at the Selma Post.



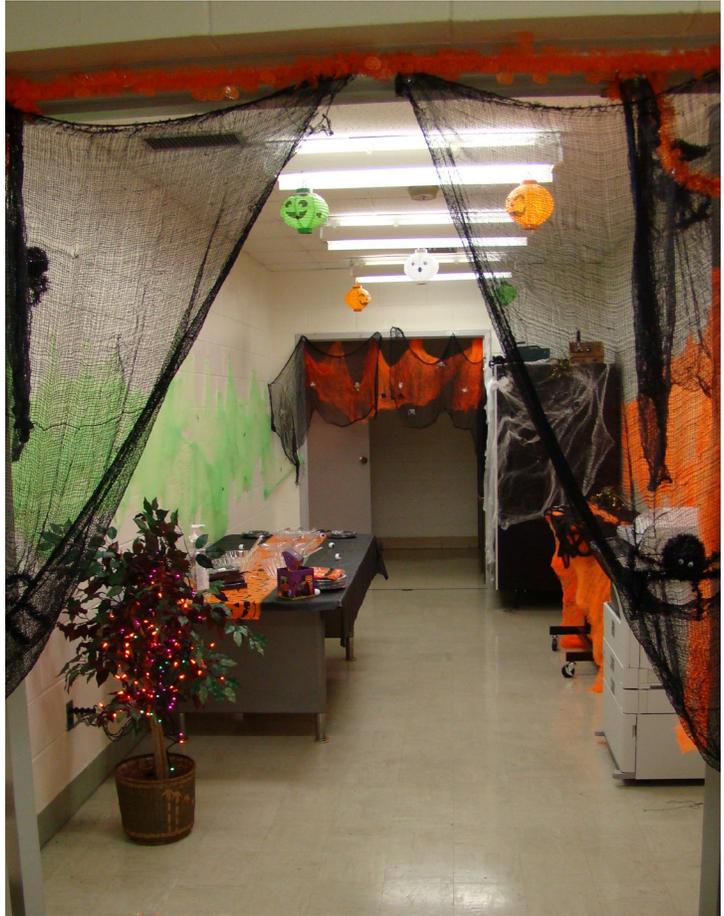
Selma Post Decks Halls for Halloween

The work Alabama Department of Public Safety employees perform is serious -- often dangerous.

Decorating for Halloween, Valentine's Day, Christmas and other special times of year is one way Capt. Agatha Windsor, commander of Troop D (Selma and Tuscaloosa Posts) lightens up the mood and boosts morale. In October, Windsor and her staff decked the Selma Post in assorted orange, black and neon green accents to add a festive touch to their post meeting/fellowship time.

"I attempt to add creativity and fun to a very serious job and to let the personnel know that I care," Windsor said. "I try to promote the 'family' atmosphere within the troop."

One of the highlights of this Halloween has been the "Beware" tape and black netting across the Captain's door. *(Editor's note: Sgt. Jamaine Isaac mentioned the decor's sentiment definitely was befitting. The PCOs may want to check on him.)*



Selma Post staff and visitors were treated to a spooky but fun atmosphere.

Selma Post personnel also have collected items and filmed a short video to send to Trooper Tommy Smith, who is assigned to Perry County. Smith was deployed to Afghanistan this past summer. His friends at the Post wanted to send him a care package from home -- complete with a "Trooper flag."

Railway Safety: Stay Off, Stay Away, Stay Alive

Trains and motor vehicles don't mix. Operation Lifesaver, a national program designed to promote railway safety, offers the following tips:

* Freight trains don't travel at fixed times, and schedules for passenger trains change. Always expect a train at

each highway-rail intersection.

* All train tracks are private property. Never walk on tracks; it's illegal to trespass and highly dangerous.

* By the time a locomotive engineer sees a trespasser or vehicle on the tracks, it is too late.

* It takes the average freight train traveling at 55 mph more than a mile -- the length of 18 football fields -- to stop.

* Trains cannot stop quickly enough to avoid a collision.

Visit www.oli.org for more.

DPS Family Retirements

July

Debra C. Abbott, DL Examiner I, Driver License, Birmingham

Sgt. Chris E. Ellis, Service (Alabama Criminal Justice Training Center), Selma

Dorothy G. James, Docket Clerk, Legal Services, HQ

Trooper Raymond Norred, Highway Patrol, Dothan

Trooper John Allen Reese, Public Information/Education Officer, Administrative, west Alabama

August

Elston L. Henry, DL Examiner I, Driver License, Montgomery

September

Harry S. Cornett, Police Communications Officer II, Highway Patrol, Huntsville

Bruce G. Salmon, Program/Analyst Associate, Information Services, Driver License, Headquarters

October

Capt. Steven J. Dixon, Assistant Division Chief, Administrative, HQ

Trooper Sara L. Mosley, Motor Carrier Safety Unit, Highway Patrol, Mobile

Rhonda W. Atkins, DL Supervisor, Driver License, Birmingham



Engi Botros, an intern with the Alabama Bureau of Investigation in Mobile, spent some time with DPS's Aviation Unit in Fairhope. Above, Botros prepares to fly with Trooper Pilot II Russell Rowland. Botros currently attends the University of South Alabama and is working on a master's degree in sociology.

Notes of Praise for DPS members

"Hi. I want to show my appreciation for Officer Stephen Sprotte (Evergreen Post). I was lost going back to Pensacola, Fla., and was actually (unknowingly) exceeding the speed limit trying to get back on course to the highway, and the officer pulled me and my fiancée over. He was very observant, very understanding and very professional. He gave me a written warning, clearly explained the infraction and then went on to give us very detailed and most welcomed directions on how to get back on track. I also commend your force on the information that is included on the paperwork referring to "somewhere in America." It is very informative and makes one think.

Again, my thanks and respect to your outfit and Officer Sprotte for the help and guidance."

*Nick Lombardi,
Pensacola, Fla.*

"I would just like someone to know that Sgt. Ronni Fetty (Driver License Division) has to be the best person I have ever had to work with on any DOT issues I have ever dealt with. Hats off to her. She is most certainly one of a kind. Please congratulate her on a job well done. I have been fighting this issue for six years, and she solved it in one hour."

*Christopher Lee Robinson,
Gospport, Ind.*

Upcoming State Holidays

Nov. 12 -- Veterans Day
Nov. 22/23 -- Thanksgiving
Dec. 24/25 -- Christmas
Jan. 1, 2013 -- New Year's

Send story ideas and/or photos for The Blue Light to Robyn Bradley Litchfield at robyn.litchfield@dps.alabama.gov.

The Blue Light Contributors for Fall 2012

Highway Patrol

Capt. Agatha Windsor
Capt. Tim Pullin
Lt. Chris Brown
Sgt. Jason Black
Sgt. David Steward
PCO II Richie Spain

ABI

Lt. Charles Huggins
Lt. Gary Whitaker

Service

Tommy Giles
Ron Wright
Ret. Capt. Roy Smith
Karen Kimball

Administrative

Sgt. Steve Jarrett
Tpr. Charles Dysart
Mona Lisa Hall

Driver License

Morgan Wilson