



# THE BLUE LIGHT



THE HONORABLE BOB RILEY  
Governor

COLONEL J. CHRISTOPHER MURPHY  
Director

LT. COLONEL F.A. BINGHAM  
Assistant Director

MAJOR JERRY CONNER  
ABI Division

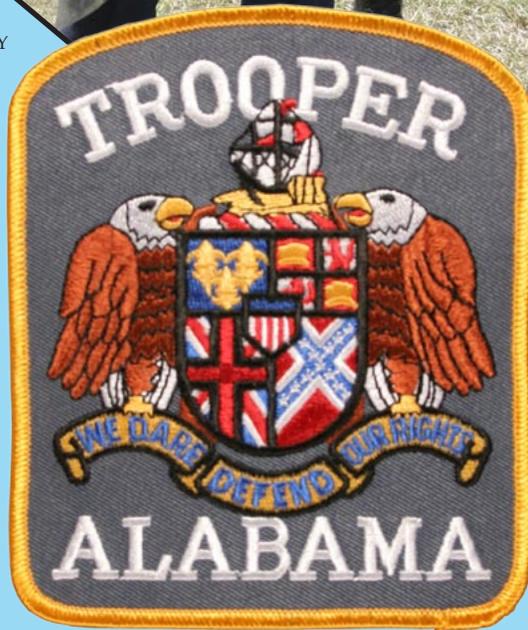
MAJOR JAMES LYONS  
Administrative Division

MAJOR HUGH McCALL  
Driver License Division

MAJOR ROSCOE HOWELL  
Highway Patrol Division

MAJOR HERMAN WRIGHT  
Protective Services Division

MAJOR CHARLES ANDREWS  
Service Division



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# Thompson Named Examiner of the Year

Driver License Examiner I Reba Thompson of Region A was honored as the Department of Public Safety's Examiner of the Year at a special awards luncheon Oct. 21 at the RSA Plaza Terrace in Montgomery. In its 13th year, the award is given to recognize and reward the exemplary work of examiners in promoting public safety through testing and in detecting fraudulent and other criminal activity in the licensing process.

Thompson has been with the department for seven years, first working in the Decatur office, and then moving to the Guntersville office in 2002. In those seven years, Thompson's performance has been nothing but exemplary.



***McCall presents the award at the luncheon.***

While this is her first award presented by the department, Thompson is a two-time winner of the ARA examiner award presented in the spring, winning in 2003 and 2006. She consistently is a top performer in the state.

Also nominated for the award was Angra Coachman of Region B, Louie Monfee of Region C, and Deanna Williams of Region D.

"Attention to detail is vital to the job we do," said Driver License Division Chief Maj. Hugh McCall. "I am extremely proud of Thompson and of all the nominees and the entire division for all their hard work. We have a tough job, but we do it well."

"You are all winners," added Driver License Division Assistant Chief Capt. Terry Chapman. "It's really unfortunate that we have to narrow this award down to

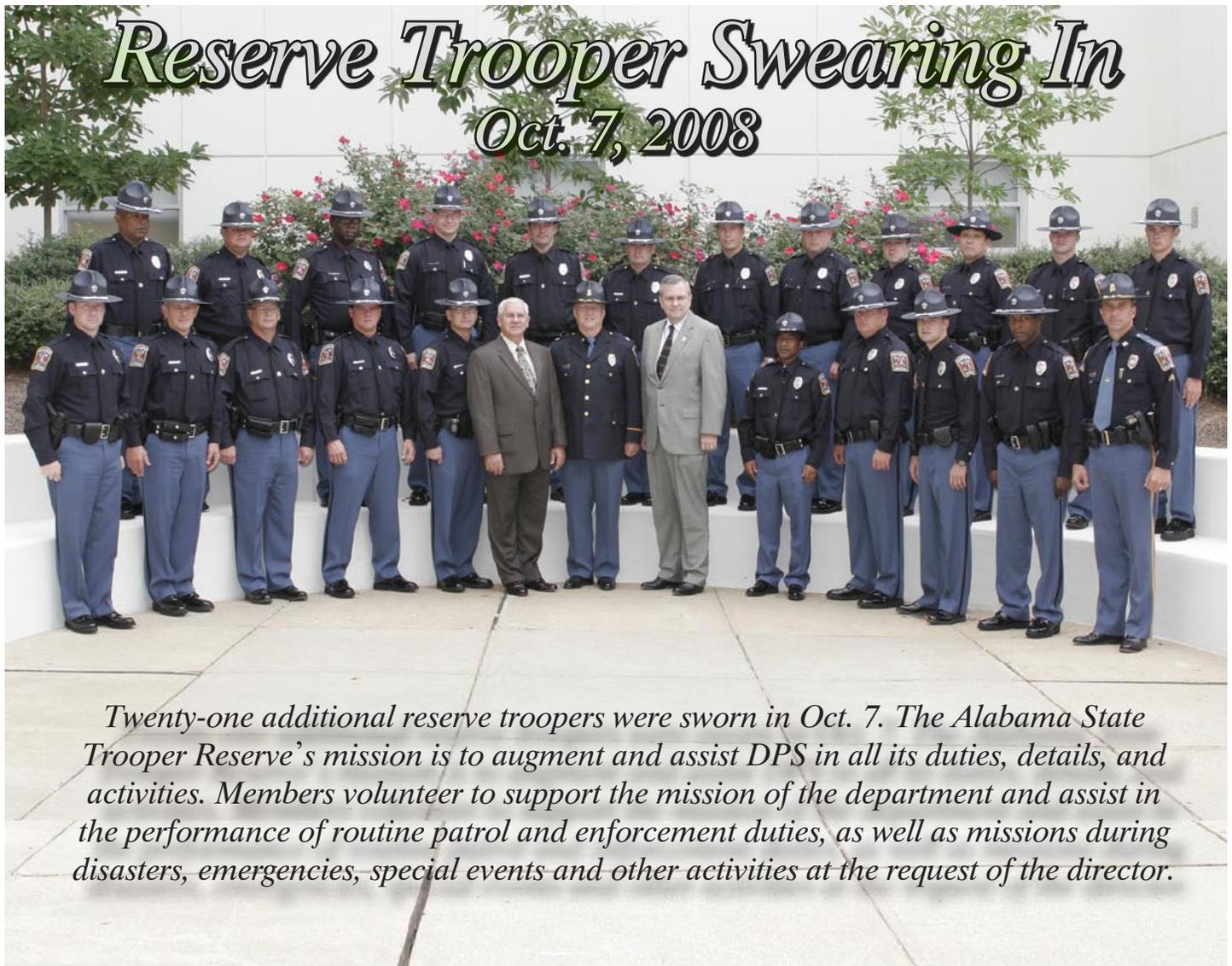
one selection, because there are so many of you who are deserving of this award for your excellence in what you do. Our division shines because of the many hours you all put in, and I thank you all for your efforts.”

Thompson was chosen from among the nominees by an outside selection committee. The process began with a supervisor from each district nominating one individual from each office. An essay was written explaining why each person nominated deserved the award, and the essays were all judged by the committee. Serving on the committee were Gene Vonderau, Alabama Trucking Association; Robert Patterson, R.E. Garrison Trucking; and Dave Lemaster, Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration.

Sponsoring the program were Frank Filgo and Gene Vonderau of the Alabama Trucking Association, Jenny Openshaw of L-1 Identity Solutions, and the Alabama State Trooper Association.



*Thompson with her husband, Joe.*



*Twenty-one additional reserve troopers were sworn in Oct. 7. The Alabama State Trooper Reserve's mission is to augment and assist DPS in all its duties, details, and activities. Members volunteer to support the mission of the department and assist in the performance of routine patrol and enforcement duties, as well as missions during disasters, emergencies, special events and other activities at the request of the director.*



## *DPS Combat Veterans Honored*

### *Riley and Blalock Applaud Employees for Serving State, Country*

**P**ublic Safety employees who are combat veterans in the Global War on Terrorism were honored for their service at a news conference announcing the recognition program Oct. 20 at DPS Headquarters.

Joining Public Safety Director Col. J. Christopher Murphy in honoring the DPS employees were Gov. Bob Riley and Alabama Adjutant General A.C. Blalock. Murphy said, "It is a privilege to recognize these special individuals who have gone beyond serving the state of Alabama, to serve this nation in combat in the Global War on Terrorism."

At the press conference, Riley recognized the dedication and hard work of DPS's citizen-soldiers. "All law enforcement personnel take risks every single day, just by doing their jobs. I want you to know that these risks are not taken lightly by me or by the citizens you protect," said Riley. "We should do everything we can to honor your dedication and professionalism."

Blalock echoed the governor's remarks. "I am proud of our soldiers and airmen of the Alabama National Guard for their heroic service to our nation in time of war, ensuring our freedom prevails and lasts. It is important for our members to know that their service and sacrifice are appreciated by their fellow citizens," said the adjutant general.

All sworn and nonsworn DPS staff members who have seen combat service overseas in this conflict were heralded for their service to the state and nation. Sworn officers – troopers and Capitol Police officers – will receive specially designed decals for placement on their vehicles or framed decals for personnel with unmarked vehicles. Nonsworn staff will receive a special departmental certificate of recognition.

Present at the ceremony were Montgomery-area DPS employees who are combat veterans, representing all those to be honored. Murphy thanked them for their service and hailed them as



“true patriots and modern-day heroes.” Additional ceremonies will be held regionally to recognize employees throughout the state.

“As you perform your daily duties in service to our state, you will carry with you this small token of our appreciation and a public reminder of your outstanding service and sacrifice to your state and country,” said Murphy.

The specially designed gold and blue decals sport a “flying wheel” – an historic symbol of the Highway Patrol – and wording that distinguishes the holder as a combat veteran in the Global War on Terrorism. The decals appear on the rear quarter panels of marked patrol units. ABI agents, who drive unmarked vehicles and serve in plain clothes, receive framed images of the decal. The certificates presented to nonsworn personnel bear a similar design.



Following the press conference at Headquarters, Gov. Bob Riley took the opportunity to tour the Director's Crisis Center. The center provides a central location for the director, assistant director, all division chiefs and assistants to monitor situations and carry out orders in an emergency. In addition, the crisis center will serve as a safe command location for the governor to monitor events as they unfold during an emergency.



Equipped with multiple outlets of information – from various local and national news channels to Virtual Alabama access – the center allows DPS to be continuously updated and to function seamlessly in the event of a crisis.

Riley said he appreciated his tour of the facility and commended Public Safety for initiating the center. He noted that the technology available in the crisis center is an asset to both DPS and to the citizens of Alabama.

After viewing the modern gadgetry of the Director's Crisis Center, Riley also seized the opportunity to walk back through time and view the rich history of DPS on display at the E.C. Dothard Safety Education Museum, also at Headquarters.

# DL Fraud Investigators Led to Ohio in I.D. Theft Case

*Morgan faces 26 felony charges and at least seven misdemeanors after assuming brother's identity.*

Following a six-month investigation into identity theft and fraud, DPS Driver License fraud investigators flew to Ohio in October to arrest Ricky Joe Dean Morgan and return him to Alabama to face multiple felony charges after Morgan assumed his brother's identity.

Tprs. Paul Mashburn and Jason Osborne, with the assistance of Tpr. Pilots Lee Hamilton and Shane Hobbs, flew to Washington County, Ohio, to pick up Morgan and transport him back to Colbert County to face identity theft and driver license fraud charges in Alabama.

The investigation began in May 2008, when Morgan fraudulently obtained an Alabama driver license in his brother's name.

"The Digimarc Portait Validation System alerted us that the same individual had been issued two different cards with two different names," said Mashburn.

In an effort to separate the offender from the victim, both names were researched carefully, consulting several databases. Based on the preliminary evidence, the perpetrator tentatively was identified as Morgan, and further investigative work later confirmed Morgan's true identity.

Working with the Department of Corrections, DL fraud investigators were able to determine that Morgan was wanted for escape, fleeing a house arrest in Marion County in 2007, following release from prison. It was then that Morgan obtained a driver license and assumed his brother's identity, in an attempt to elude authorities. After obtaining a driver license, Morgan then opened several credit accounts and wrote several worthless checks using his brother's identity, all the while becoming the subject of many active criminal cases.

The chase to track down Morgan led investigators to several law enforcement and licensing agencies throughout the nation, including Alaska, Texas, and New Mexico. The investigation eventually led to Ohio, where Morgan was wanted for writing worthless checks under his brother's identity.

"This investigation required a lot of patience, determination and follow-through on the part of several people," said

Mashburn. "Honestly, I did what anyone else in the department would have done, but I am thankful for having worked it, as it was definitely rewarding for me. By far, the most satisfying part was being able to assist the victim by clearing multiple criminal charges against his name, and providing him with a point from which to rebuild his own life that has been disrupted by his own brother's wrongdoing."

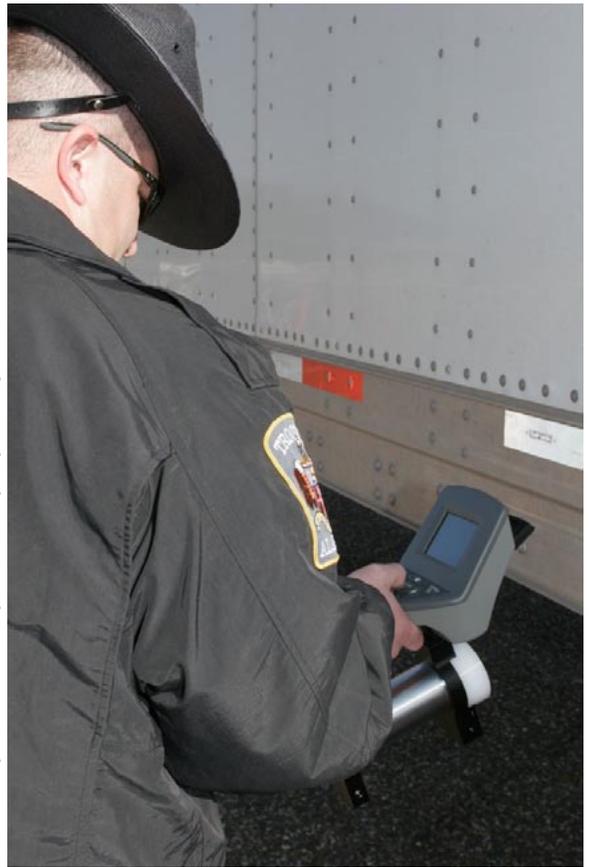
**"I did what anyone else in the department would have done."**

~Tpr. Paul Mashburn

# 'Southern Exposure' Prepares DPS, Public Health for Major Radiological Threat

In conjunction with the U.S. Department of Homeland Security and the Alabama Department of Public Health, DPS recently participated in Southern Exposure, a full-scale exercise run by the Domestic Nuclear Detection Office. The exercise, held in Montgomery, was intended to demonstrate the Southeast Region's capabilities to respond to, adjudicate and communicate a possible radiological/nuclear threat on the nation's interstate highways. It is designed to evaluate detection, data sharing, training, and connectivity components, both individually, and as part of an integrated system.

"This training is all about information exchange," said Sgt. Charlton Martin. "We are testing to see not just how prepared we are in case of a radiation threat, but how we respond and react to such a threat."



The training scenario involved the traffic stop of a commercial vehicle emitting radiation from an unknown source. It was the job of all participating in the training to first identify the source and then appropriately evaluate and respond to the potential radiological threat.

"The equipment in use here is incredibly advanced," said Martin. "All people involved have safety pagers that personally alert their users to potential danger when in close proximity to a major radiological source. The mobile radiation command center has equipment that is even more sensitive. It is said to be able to detect even an individual who has recently undergone a stress test or chemotherapy, where the radiation level is minimal."



In addition to Martin, also participating in the Southern Exposure training exercise were Cpls. Kent Smith and Chris Woodard, and Tprs. Mike Griffies, Winston Harbison, Jason Knapp, Devolyn Williams, and Johnny Williams.



# DPS Awarded Grant to Combat Sexual Predators

*Funding to Enhance Department's Ability to Locate and Arrest Offenders*

The U.S. Department of Justice has awarded the Department of Public Safety a grant of nearly \$500,000 to boost Alabama's efforts to locate and arrest child sexual predators and exploiters and to enforce sexual offender registration requirements under the Community Notification Act.

***Canary announces DPS as the recipient of a U.S. Department of Justice grant to boost the state's efforts in locating and arresting sexual predators.***

Leura Canary, U.S. Attorney for the Middle District, and Col. J. Christopher Murphy announced the grant at a Montgomery news conference. Joining the two were U.S. Marshal Jesse Seroyer; Randy Hillman, executive director of the Office of Prosecution Services; ABI's Capt. Marty Griffin and Lt. Karl Youngblood; and representatives of the Alabama Board of Pardons and Paroles.

ABI's Cybercrimes Unit will use the grant to employ additional special agents, criminal analysts, investigative technicians and computer forensics experts to identify, track down and arrest those who prey on and exploit Alabama's children. The Cybercrimes Unit — working in partnership with local, state, and federal law enforcement and prosecutorial agencies — will locate and arrest sex offenders who have not registered their whereabouts as required by state and federal law. Grant funds also will be used to purchase additional software and equipment necessary to support these efforts.



***Murphy comments on DPS's dedication to protecting Alabama's children from sexual predators.***

“Under Col. Chris Murphy’s leadership, Public Safety has shown its commitment to making Alabama safer for our children by tracking down and arresting unregistered sex offenders, dangerous child predators and persons who sexually exploit children through the possession, distribution and production of child pornography,” said Canary. “This grant will provide the necessary resources for Public Safety to hire additional investigators and support personnel and acquire the technology needed to work these cases.”

Murphy expressed DPS’s appreciation for the grant, saying, “Thanks to Leura Canary and her staff in the U.S. Attorney’s Office, Public Safety will dedicate staff to track and apprehend noncompliant sex offenders and child exploiters threatening the safety of our children.” He pointed to the success last year of an initial collaborative sex offender round-up and added, “This grant will provide invaluable support for our work to locate and bring into compliance every unregistered, noncompliant sex offender in Alabama.”



Members of a new working group, which includes the Alabama Computer Forensic Laboratories and the Cybercrimes Unit, will work closely together using grant funds to help reduce child endangerment. The working group’s efforts include establishing a digital evidence protocol to help ensure successful prosecutions. The ACFL was founded by the Office of Prosecution Services to provide expert analysis, consultation and support to the criminal justice community.

Canary said the grant issued to DPS was among 23 such grants totaling nearly \$10 million. The grants were awarded in 20 states by the Department of Justice Office of Community Oriented Policing Services, through its Child Sexual Predator Program. The DPS grant application was submitted pursuant to the recommendation of the U.S. Attorney’s Office, Middle District of Alabama, in collaboration with the U.S. Marshal’s Office.

Seroyer said, “We want to thank the Department of Justice COPS office for making this grant opportunity available to law enforcement. This grant will enhance the Department of Public Safety’s ability to investigate matters of child exploitation and track sex offenders in this state.”

## Davis Awarded Trooper of the Year for Escambia County



Tpr. Wes Davis was awarded Trooper of the Year for Escambia County Oct. 14 by that county’s local chapter of the American Legion.

Davis was nominated for the award by his peers for his strong work ethic and dedication to the department. Earlier in the year, Davis was also selected as the Trooper of the Year for the Evergreen Post.

*From left, Cpl. Chris Woodard, Capt. Tim McGlothlin, Davis, and Lt. John Malone.*



# Eradication Roundup '08

**Y**ear in and year out, Alabama's Domestic Marijuana Eradication Program is among the best in the nation. Since 1982, the eradication program, funded entirely by the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration and administered by ABI, is responsible for scores of arrests and thousands of plants destroyed.

Budget cuts of 16 percent this year had an effect of shortening the flying season by six weeks. Despite this shortage in flying time, 8,424 more plants were discovered this year compared with last, bringing totals for 2008 to 36,796 plants. "We are, in effect, doing more with less," said Sgt. Gary Whitaker.

"With less money, we are forced to fly less and use fewer of our resources in searching for the plants. Instead of three teams, we now have two. Instead of sending out four or five pilots at a time, we now only use two. We've grown to

accommodate these changes, and are now actually finding more per flight hour than we have in previous years. We're now much more efficient and are doing better detective work," said Whitaker.

A good example of this detective work can be seen when glancing at the arrest statistics. In the banner year of 2005, ABI discovered 91,515 plants and tallied 71 arrests. This year, ABI made 86 arrests, despite finding less than half that many plants.

"Our teams are better able to link the plants to people now," said Whitaker. "Several of our arrests are backyard growers, but some of it is just genuine good police work. The reason our overall numbers are down is because several operations were pressured to move indoors to intentionally avoid our pilots. Thirteen of these indoor plots were still busted by our pilots this year, because the grower had a favorite plant that he wanted to get some sunlight."

When asked if there was a memorable find in this year's eradication season, Whitaker responded, "The one that is the most painful is always the most memorable. Of course you're often battling the severe Alabama heat, but some areas chosen by growers are nearly inaccessible, and those that are accessible are almost always surrounded by heavy bush that makes getting there just plain nasty."

Some 80 percent of this year's haul came from only three counties in the northeast corner of the state. Cherokee, Cleburne, and Dekalb counties are particular favorites for marijuana growers, according to Whitaker. "Growers love that area of the state because it is so rural, has several wide-open spaces, and the perception is there is a lack of law enforcement to regulate it. We bust them every time they try it, too."

## Eradication Fast Stats

Year	Plants	Value	Arrests
1996	91,665	\$183,330,000	64
1997	73,905	\$147,810,000	62
1998	58,147	\$116,294,000	97
1999	48,700	\$97,400,000	145
2000	42,618	\$85,236,000	262
2001	37,484	\$74,968,000	100
2002	60,378	\$120,756,000	144
2003	51,184	\$102,368,000	90
2004	54,956	\$109,912,000	89
2005	91,515	\$183,030,000	71
2006	48,117	\$96,354,000	78
2007	28,372	\$56,750,000	76
2008	36,796	\$73,592,000	86

# K-9 Unit Increases by Four

## *Dog in Opelika Named 'Roscoe' after Howell*

**T**he Department of Public Safety's K-9 Unit added four handlers and dogs to its ranks during October, bringing the total number of details up to 14 statewide and further increasing unit capability.

First organized in 1988 with four dogs, the K-9 Unit quickly became a major component of the Highway Patrol's Felony Awareness Patrol efforts. The dogs play a vital role in the department by performing what is known as a "free-air search," that is a search of a vehicle when reasonable suspicion has been determined and consent to search has been denied.



*Snyder with his K-9, "Roscoe."*

"We call a free-air search part of standard procedure when we are refused consent," said Sgt. Charlton Martin, "but there's really nothing 'standard' about it. What these dogs can do is amazing. They've uncovered so many hidden compartments, helped us seize so much currency, and helped us rid untold amounts of narcotics from the streets."

The primary dogs used by DPS are not German Shepherds, but a close relative, the Belgian Malinois. "Really, if you didn't know it was a Belgian Malinois, you would think it was a Shepherd," said Martin. "The breeds look almost identical, but there are distinct advantages the Malinois has, most notably longevity and health. These dogs rarely slow down later in life, and their personality and spirit make them more useful to us longer than a German Shepherd."

Martin said he was both thankful and excited to be adding four additional K-9 teams to the department. "These troopers have worked hard in handler training school, getting to know the characteristics of their dogs. The K-9 is a powerful tool to the department, but only if the handler knows how to interpret what the dog is saying."



The four weeks of handler training accomplishes just that. A major focus of the training is obviously understanding the dog's sense of smell. Handlers are taught the "painting" technique; dragging their hand along a surface for the dog to follow with his nose. If the dog detects anything, it will sit down, what is otherwise known as a "passive alert." Additional handler training centers on discipline and care for the dog, both day-to-day, and in emergency situations.

"We are extremely proud of our K-9 Unit, of FAP, and of the support and direction given to us by our chief, Maj. Roscoe Howell," said Martin. "And in acknowledgement of his support for our unit, we are extremely proud to announce that one of our new dogs, handled by Tpr. Tim Snyder of the Opelika Post, has been named 'Roscoe,' in honor of our major."

In addition to the K-9 teams of Martin/"Kas" and Snyder/"Roscoe," other K-9 teams are Cpls. Charles Anderson/"Luca," Jason Burch/"Nero," and Jeremy Lett/"Jack-o," Tprs. Jerry Allen/"Belle," Robbie Autrey/"Suzu," Tommy Averette/"Justice," Tony Fleming/"Arco," Mike Harris/"Bud," Justin Jones/"Little E," Richard Pittman/"Ringo" Darrell Seymour/"Brim," and Andy Sutley/"Leo."

# Tact Team I Wins ATOA Competition



Alabama State Trooper Tact Team I of north Alabama walked away from the Alabama Tactical Officers Association 2008 Conference and Team Competition with first-place honors. In addition to “bragging rights,” team members received a plaque and the opportunity to compete in the World SWAT Challenge, to be held in 2009 in Little Rock, Ark.

Joining Team I from Public Safety was Team II, which also competed with other law enforcement tactical teams from around the state. The competition, held Oct. 19-24 in Montgomery and Prattville, provided an opportunity for training and sharing of information among the tactical team members.

The competition consisted of four separate challenges: an obstacle course, a sniper event, a run and gun event, and a sniper-initiated entry event. After all four challenges, Team I was tied for first place with a tactical team from Lee County. This forced a tie-break, a shoot-off between Team I leader Cpl. Jimmie Fordham and the team leader of Lee County’s team. “Luckily, I came out on top,” said Fordham.

“Winning is a tremendous accomplishment,” said Fordham. “It’s an honor to receive the recognition, but really there were no losers at the ATOA Competition. Everyone competing did a great job, and everyone benefitted from going because we all shared tactics and training, helping each other out.”

In addition to Team I leader Fordham, Team I comprises assistant team leader Cpl. Shannon Gates, Cpl. Michael McBrayer, and Tprs. Shane Fleming, Jonathan Gregg, Jeff Harris, Glen Odom, Billy Pruitt, and Josh Taylor. Congratulations to all!

## Special Operations Training Held

Special Operations training for the First Platoon was held Oct. 14 at the Cullman County fairgrounds in Cullman. Capt. Johnny Henderson conducted the training and inspection of equipment for the platoon, which comprises nearly 50 troopers from Quad Cities, Hamilton, Huntsville, and Decatur posts.

“These training sessions are vital,” says Sgt. Michael Payne, “because several members of the team may be new and haven’t been deployed yet. For those seasoned veterans, training is still crucial to ensure you have the proper equipment and that it is functioning as necessary.”

Topics of discussion at the training were first aid, proper equipment utilization, and use of force policy.

Sgt. Allan Battles emphasized the importance of training. “Working over formations is always a major component of any special ops training,” said Battles. “Your four main formations need to be rehearsed to function properly. Diamond, wedge, and left and right echelon patterns work, but only if everyone on your team is on the same page.”



# People You Know!

## *New Employees*

Justin Byrd	10.01.08	DL Examiner I	DL/Mobile
Lila Childree	10.01.08	Inventory Control Officer	SER/Montgomery
Edward Gibson	09.16.08	DL Examiner I	DL/Opelika
Corey Jackson	09.16.08	Custodial Worker	HP/Quad Cities
Cynthia Price	10.01.08	ASA I	SER/Supply
James Walker Jr.	10.01.08	PCO I	HP/Dothan

## *Promotions*

Jeffrey Jordan	10.01.08	Corporal	HP/Baldwin County
Myrlene McCaster	10.01.08	ASA II	DL/Safety Responsibility
Richard Suttle	10.01.08	Corporal	HP/Colbert County

## *Transfers*

Kyeonna Barrett	09.16.08	DL Examiner I	DL/Morgan Examining
Billy Brown	10.01.08	Sergeant	HP/Montgomery County
Jeffrey Christian	09.16.08	Trooper	HP/Tuscaloosa County
Cameron Fillingim	09.16.08	Trooper	HP/Escambia County
Tashanna Garcia	09.16.08	Trooper	HP/Calhoun County
Sheila Hutton	09.16.08	DL Examiner I	DL/Covington Examining
Tyler Kane	09.16.08	Trooper	HP/Baldwin County
Randall Lee	09.16.08	Trooper	HP/Barbour County
Bruce Little	09.16.08	Trooper	HP/Lowndes County
Charles McCord	09.16.08	Trooper	HP/Barbour County
Terry Nelson	09.16.08	Trooper	HP/Barbour County
Darrell Newman	09.16.08	Trooper	HP/Coosa County
Gary Peek	09.16.08	Trooper	HP/Butler County
Robert Pettit	09.16.08	Trooper	HP/Morgan County
Adam Robinson	09.16.08	Trooper	HP/Butler County
Adam Thomas	09.16.08	Trooper	HP/Mobile County
David Tyner	09.16.08	Trooper	HP/Dallas County
Justin Vann	09.16.08	Trooper	HP/Butler County
April Walker	09.16.08	DL Examiner I	DL/Butler Examining
Kenneth Ware	10.01.08	Trooper	DL/Montgomery Fraud
Charles Ward	10.01.08	Captain	PS/Assistant Division Chief
Jacob Zimmerman	09.16.08	Trooper	HP/Macon County

## *Resignations*

Kyle Moore	09.19.08	ASA I	DL/Safety Responsibility
Jonathan Shell	09.30.08	IT Systems Technician	DL/Information Services
Deborah Stearns	09.18.08	PCO I	HP/Tuscaloosa County

## *Retirements*

Kenneth Manlief	09.30.08	Captain	HP/Tuscaloosa County
Eligha Whigham	09.30.08	Trooper	HP/Mobile County



# Scenes from 'Dega

Alabama Department of



Public Safety

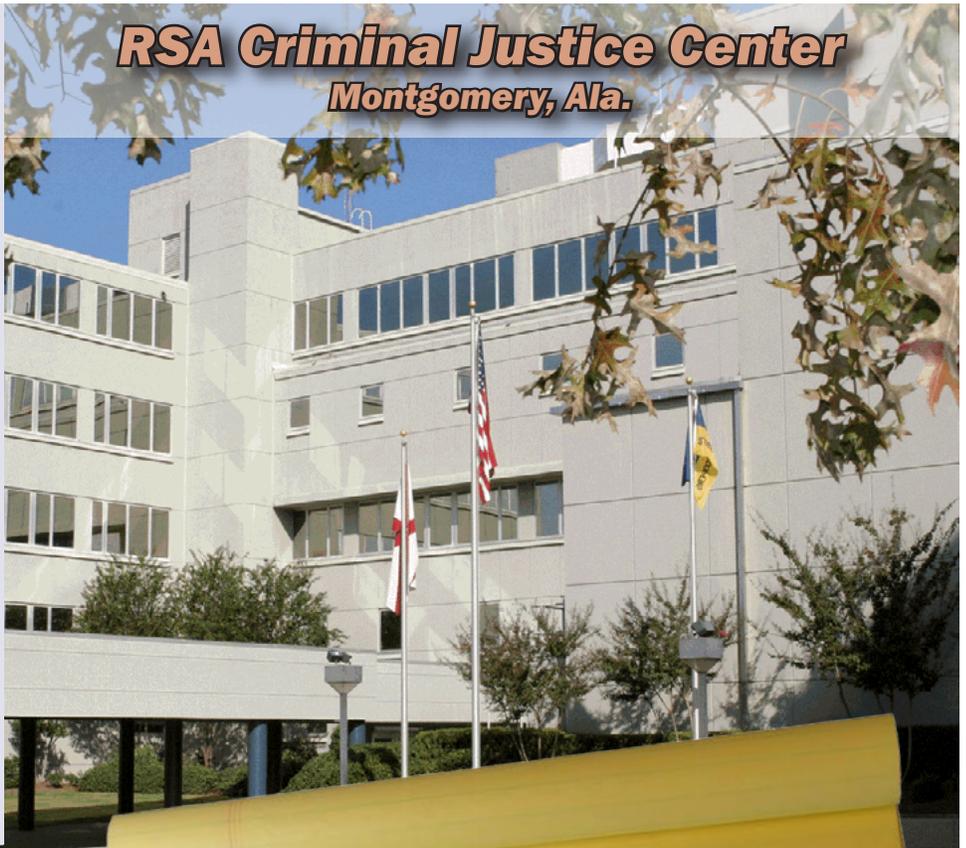
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Montgomery, Ala.**



**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**

Tuesday, November 11

*Veterans Day*

Thursday, November 27

*Thanksgiving*

Friday, November 28

*Day after Thanksgiving*

Thursday, December 25

*Christmas Day*

To Whom it May Concern:

About a month ago, Trooper Faulkner came knocking on my door between 11:30 pm and midnight.

He had the hardest job anyone in law enforcement ever has to do. That night, he came to my house to tell me that my son Jack had died in an accident on Riverton Rose Trail in Colbert County.

I am writing this letter because I really would like to thank Trooper Faulkner. His kindness and understanding during my breakdown will never be forgotten.

Sonya Lee Arnold  
Athens, Ala.