



TEXAS STATE TROOPER

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TSTA REPORT ON LAW ENFORCEMENT

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The Ramons of South Texas: Five officers in close family who have struggled hard

L to R: Wally, MVT; Diana, HP (ret.); Ray, Texas Ranger



Ray Ramon is a 12-year veteran Texas Ranger stationed at Kingsville. Jesus Ramon, Jr. is a Hurst PD veteran officer and a "rehire" in the Hurst Warrants Division. Diana Ramon is a recently retired DPS officer with years on the highway patrol. Her husband Johnny (Garza) is a sheriff's office reserve deputy with past years as a constable. Youngest brother Wally Ramon is a DPS MVT (Motor Vehicle Theft) officer with past years with the DPS highway patrol. How the Ramons became successful law officers is a story of struggle, sacrifice and close love between each other in a very large family.

In the beginning there were eleven children in the Ramon family: six boys and five girls, and they were trying to grow up far from Texas. It was in the small town of Bono, Ohio, near Toledo. Their father Jesus Ramon worked in a steel mill in Toledo. They lived in a one-bedroom house. All the kids slept in the bedroom; their mother and father converted the living room into an all-purpose living room/bedroom. The house had no air conditioning. In hot weather, they just opened the windows.

All the Ramon children were bussed to school in Bono; the same bus dropped each off at their different schools – elementary, middle school and high school. The bus stop was close to the house. When it snowed, they would go to the bus stop and play in the snow until the school bus came. With 13 mouths to feed, their mother and father struggled hard to put enough food on the table. Sometimes their mother Jacinta would buy a 25 lb. sack of flour and make tortillas. With careful planning, it would last five days. In addition to his GM job in Toledo, their father was buying and working a 20-acre farm.

The Ramon children's grandparents lived in Texas. Fol-

lowing one season of harvest from their little farm, their grandfather got very sick. Their father made the long drive to Texas several times to be with the grandfather at Orange Grove, population 1200. After several trips, he decided to move his large family to Texas, and the little town of Orange Grove. Moving his family of 13, with children ranging in age from very young to the teens, was a momentous task for Jesus Ramon.

Using his 1970 Ford pickup he and mother Jacinta bundled the children into the truck along with as much of their belongings as they could carry. Larger items such as furniture were packed into a larger truck to be delivered later. It was snowing when they pulled out. It was a long trip from Ohio to South Texas, about 1100 miles. Most of their clothing and belongings were destroyed during the trip due to mold. When they arrived at the grandparents little two-room house in Orange Grove, Texas, the family had to start all over as to household furniture and belongings. It was a terribly crowded situation as the little house had only a living room/bedroom combination and a kitchen.

In Orange Grove, Jesus Ramon soon got a job at the Corpus Christi Naval Air Force Base, and moved his family into a slightly larger house: a two bedroomer. It had a

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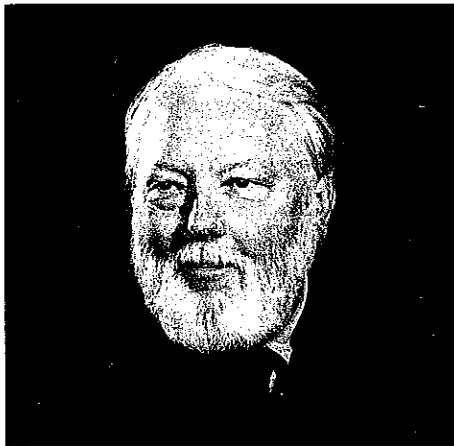


**TSTA wishes a
HAPPY NEW YEAR**
to the DPS family and its friends
in the Texas Judiciary system!

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Court's In Session

By Judge Larry Gist



My Gun

Certainly everybody is aware of the raging debate over what rights, if any we have to own and keep a firearm. Most countries in the world either prohibit or significantly restrict gun ownership. But we have our Constitution.

The Second Amendment provides that: "A well regulated Militia, being necessary to the security of a free state, the right of the people to keep and bear arms, shall not be infringed."

Folks see this provision differently and in basically one of three ways. The first group believes that the Second Amendment does not apply to individuals at all. Rather, they believe it merely recognizes the right of a state to arm its militia. This "state's rights" or "collective rights" interpretation has been embraced by many federal courts.

The second group believes that the Amendment recognizes some limited individual rights. But those rights only exist while those individuals are part of an organized state militia.

Finally, the last group thinks that the Amendment recognizes the right of individuals to keep and bear arms in their private and personal capacity. Most federal courts have expressly rejected this view.

Let's examine the history of weapon ownership and how this provision found its way into our Constitution.

Where did the founders of our constitution get this idea in the first place? As early as 690 AD, English law required Englishmen to possess weapons that they could use in military service or in protecting the villages from criminals.

One scholar wrote way back then that "to rule well, a king requires two things; arms and laws." Then along came the seventeenth century where it was believed that the people rather than the king were the real sovereigns. And then came the idea that a ruler's power actually came from the people, something inherent in our law today.

In 1689, the English Parliament sought to codify the individual rights to keep and bear arms as one among many

of the people's ancient rights and liberties. A provision declared that "our subjects may well have arms for their defense suitable to their conditions." Clearly, Parliament was doing its best to see that all citizens should have the right to bear arms for both their personal defense as well as defense against an oppressive government.

In Blackstone's English Commentaries, he asserted that the "liberties of Englishmen are reducible into three principal rights: the right of personal security, the right of personal liberty, and the right of private property."

Blackstone also believed that these rights were meaningless unless the people had the means to assert them when necessary. People had the auxiliary rights to apply to the courts and petition the King or Parliament. But if neither of these was successful, then the people had the right to have and use arms for their defense and self-preservation "when the sanctions of society and laws are found insufficient to restrain the violence of oppression and attack by a tyrannical government."

There is growing belief that Blackstone's comments significantly influenced the colonist's understanding of this right under the common law and led them to incorporate it into the Second Amendment as they pursued the Revolutionary War.

Then along came John Locke. In his view, along with the right of the people to defend themselves against oppression, they had the right to establish a new government which would better protect the people and their rights in the future.

Thomas Jefferson apparently relied heavily upon Locke to justify our Revolution. Originally, the English government lured immigrants to America with a pledge that they and their children would continue to possess all of the rights of Englishmen. And one of those rights was clearly the right to keep and bear arms.

Ironically, it was England's attempt to violate that very right that was the last straw in causing the Revolutionary War. But the colonists resisted and Parliament passed a law banning all exports of muskets and ammunition to them. Then English General Thomas Gage planned to prevent war by removing all means of violent resistance. Those efforts to disarm resulted in the Minutemen and their historic battles at Lexington and Concord.

And on July 6, 1775, the Continental Congress specifically mentioned the disarmament of the citizens of Boston as one of the reasons to take up arms against the British. It is indisputable that "the shot heard 'round the world" was in part, fired to protect the right of the people to keep and bear arms.

Later our Declaration of Independence provided that "whenever any form of government becomes destructive, it is the right of the people to alter or abolish it and to institute a new government."

It became clear that the founders of our nation believed an armed populace would serve as a check and balance against the possibility of the federal government ever using a standing army to oppress the people.

Well, what happened after we won our independence? In 1939, the United States Supreme Court decided the case of United States v. Miller. The defendant has been

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The Ramons of South Texas...Continued from front page

twin-size bed, a queen-size bed, and a baby crib, which was needed. This time, the five girls slept in one bedroom, the boys slept in the other, and mother and father slept in the living room. Shortly after the family became settled, with frequent "care-visits" to the grandfather and father Ramon doing well at the Naval Air station doing helicopter maintenance work, the grandfather died at age 91.

The children grew up in Orange Grove. Family closeness, school and church became their life. Jesus Ramon worked long hours. The kids attended all the schools. The Ramons were Catholic, and conveniently for them, the Catholic Church was nearby. Jesus, Jr. and Ray were the oldest brothers, and the parents looked to them and the two oldest daughters to help with the younger ones. As the older ones advanced in Orange Grove high school, most got involved in athletics.

With their father getting home late after long workdays, the children's mother became the disciplinarian. If some of the kids "acted up," all eleven of them were lined up and punished. And when their mother punished them, it was reported to their father and he also punished them when he got home. Thus, the house full of Ramon children learned right from wrong.

TSTA editor Jack Lawler had the privilege of visiting with three of the now adult Ramon children recently, all of them DPS officers (one recently retired). The following are their recollections of their earlier struggling days, and some events that got them into law enforcement.

Jesus Ramon, Jr.

Jesus, Jr. had grown up in Ohio watching "The FBI" on television. He liked what he saw. He also saw Ohio State highway patrolmen in his hometown of Bono, admired their uniforms and liked the professional way they conducted themselves. He aspired then to become an Ohio State trooper, but the family's move to Texas altered that plan.

From their new life in Orange Grove, Texas, Jesus, Jr. the oldest of the Ramon children, was the first to leave home. He traveled to San Antonio in 1972 and enrolled in a business college. He also worked for EMS. The next year he decided to join the Air Force. There, he worked in security police as a canine handler. He served three years. After discharge in 1979, he joined the Hurst, Texas Police Department, starting as a patrolman. After a successful 25-year career, he retired, then "re-hired" with the Hurst PD in 2004 as a Warrant officer.

Jesus, Jr. was unable to be present when TSTA editor Jack Lawler met with the other law officers of the Ramon family.

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Texas Ranger Ray Ramon

In Orange Grove High School, Ray played basketball and baseball and was involved in UIL drama and public speaking. The latter training, he says, came in handy later when he had to give a five-minute speech about himself in DPS recruit school. Being next to the oldest, he was always aware of his parents' desperate financial struggle to support such a large family. "We were very poor in money, comforts and basic needs," he says, "but not poor in family love for each other. It was always there."

After high school graduation in 1975 Ray worked at a local restaurant in Orange Grove as a dishwasher. He remembers one day while walking to the store a DPS trooper had a rowdy drunk driver stopped on the side of



Ranger Ramon

the road. The drunk driver refused to go to jail and was quickly handcuffed after a short struggle with the trooper. Ray Ramon watched it all, and was impressed by the trooper. Later, troopers came into the restaurant for coffee and Ray also admired them. It was his first exposure to DPS troopers. In the months ahead, Ray graduated from high school and by being extremely frugal, saved enough money to pay one semester's tuition at Del Mar College in Corpus Christi. He had decided he wanted to be a DPS trooper and knew that he needed college credits to qualify.

One day, while in his second semester, his car broke down. It needed a mechanic. Neither Ray nor his father had repair money. Ray dropped out of college and looked for work. He had a friend named Oscar Rivera (who today is a fellow Texas Ranger) who was a deputy sheriff in Orange Grove. Oscar told him there was a job opening with the Jim Wells County sheriff's office as a dispatcher and jailer. Ray got the job. He was 18. "I didn't like the jailer work," Ray recalls today. "It was like being a babysitter."

Six months later, there was a deputy sheriff job opening. He was offered the job, and took it. So, Ray Ramon became a commissioned law officer at 19. There was one drawback. The county did not provide a weapon. Ray wasn't old enough to buy a handgun, so his father had to buy it for him.

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The Ramons of South Texas...Continued from page 3

With a steady paycheck and more careful money management, Ray again took college courses, attending class and studying during off-duty hours. He liked being a deputy sheriff but the thought of becoming a DPS trooper never left him. He worked and studied for 5 ½ years to earn the two years of college he needed. During these years he married his high school sweetheart, Elizabeth Ortiz who was a high school classmate of his sister Diana.

In the summer of 1981, while still a sheriff's deputy, he applied with DPS and was accepted. In October of that year he graduated from the DPS Recruit Training Academy and was assigned to the highway patrol at Port Lavaca. After a year, he transferred to Sinton in San Patricio County. In his 14 years in this coastal country so near the Gulf of Mexico, Ray had his share of highway stops involving speeders, DWIs and drug smugglers. He patrolled alone and also with partners. Today, as a Ranger looking back at his HP days, he has vivid memories of one special night that was both dangerous and fearful.

He and his highway patrol partner, Jeff Hudson, had stopped a motorist for a minor traffic violation. Jeff was the lead trooper who was talking with the driver; Ray talked with the passenger in the right front seat. He saw a white car pass them with only one headlight burning.

Ray noticed three Hispanic males in the vehicle as they drove by. This would have been a normal "stop" for them had they not already been involved with a roadside stop. After completing their "business" with their offending motorist, they reversed their direction and headed in the direction of the "one-eye" vehicle. Unknown to the partners at the moment, another HP trooper, Andy Lopez, had already stopped the car with the faulty headlight.

Also unknown to them, Lopez's "stop" involved a trio of drug-runners in a 4-door Hyundai. One had pulled a pistol and opened fire on Andy. A full-blown shoot-out occurred, Andy was hit, but he returned fire and nailed his assailant. During this time, Ray's sister, HP trooper Diana Ramon, was also on patrol nearby. Trooper Ray Ramon heard the dispatcher call Diana's number and he quickly called the dispatcher for details. "Trooper is down," he was told, and learned the location. A chill of fear for Diana went through Ray. Arriving quickly at the location, they learned that the "down" trooper was Andy Lopez, that he was wounded but not critically. A crowd of officers – plus an ambulance – had arrived. Among these were Ray's old friend from deputy sheriff days, Oscar Rivera, plus Texas Ranger Casey King and other DPS troopers.

When Diana arrived, Ray gave her a relieved hug. It was a "big brother" hug reminiscent of their childhood. Both agreed it was a "what-if" shooting scenario that both missed by minutes. Trooper Lopez recovered quickly and was soon back on patrol. Today, he's a veteran Texas Ranger with Ray Ramon.

After many years on the highway patrol, Ray decided to take the test for Texas Ranger. He had the qualifications. In 1994, he took the test. The numerical competition from among trooper ranks was large, with over 200 testing for only about ten Ranger positions. Ray was not selected. Remaining strongly interested and determined, he tried again the next year, and was accepted, which, in "trooper world," was a huge promotion. What did his wife Elizabeth think of his becoming a Ranger? "She was 100% supportive," Ray says. "She has always been that way about my law enforcement career."

Today, Ray is a 12-year veteran Ranger. He and Elizabeth have two grown children, a son Matthew; and a daughter, Jennifer. Ray was asked if he had to travel much. "Not too much," he says. "I have traveled to places such as Colorado to testify in a murder case, to New Orleans to pick up fugitives."

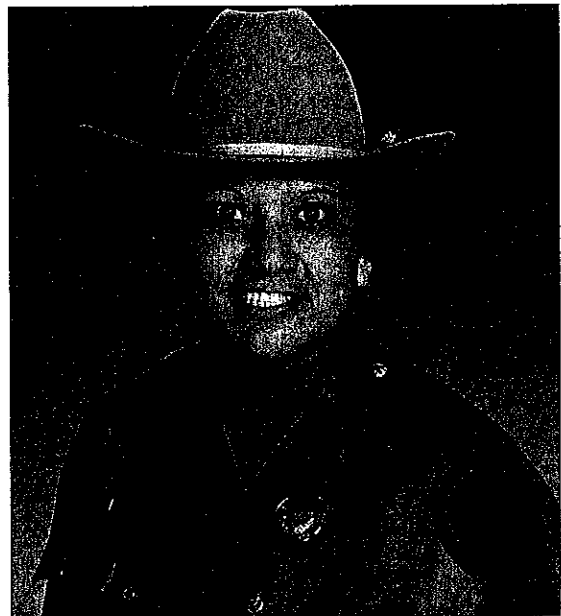
He works many murder cases, which, he says, can be both frustrating and rewarding. "One involved a murdered man I had gone to school with," he said. "I had seen him at church shortly before he was killed. His little son had been at home with him when it happened. We had no leads at all for a long time, and it was discouraging. Then, we got a 'break' in the case through an informant and arrested the killer. It was a real 'closure' for the victim's family. They expressed their appreciation to us, which was a 'high moment' for the Rangers.

Ray works with many other law enforcement agencies to solve cases. He stresses that there are too many egos in police work, and these have to be put aside in order to achieve success.

How does Ray feel about the danger factor in his Ranger occupation? "We have an advantage over DPS highway patrol and other troopers," he says. "We usually know the history of the suspect, whereas troopers usually stop people without knowing anything about them."

Ray's "wrap-up" analysis about his job, "I have the best job DPS has to offer."

Trooper Diana Garza



Most of Diana's growing-up years were in Texas. She was not troubled by the fact that she had lots of brothers and sisters. She assumed all families were large. She knew she was loved. She especially looked up to her older brothers, who got into law enforcement early. When she was in the third grade, a man in the U.S. Army visited her school and spoke to her class. He was immaculate, trim, with shiny brass buttons and shiny black shoes. Little girl Diana was greatly impressed and decided that she wanted to become someone who wore a handsome uniform.

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In high school she was a successful athlete, playing basketball, volleyball and running track in Orange Grove's small school. She graduated in 1977 and got a volleyball scholarship to Coastal Bend Community College in Beeville and started college there. She was still interested in law enforcement. A scheduling conflict developed between her criminal justice study hours and her volleyball practice. She made a tough financial decision; she dropped her volleyball scholarship.

After graduation she worked as a secretary for DPS in Sinton and was around several uniformed troopers each day. By then, her brother Ray had become a trooper and she sometimes got to ride with him on patrol. Diana was interested in the DPS highway patrol. After five years working with the Sinton DPS office, she decided to apply with DPS. Her mother was strongly opposed to it but finally gave her consent. Diana applied in the spring of 1984 but was not accepted. In March of that same year, her mother died.

Diana, a devout Catholic Christian, believed (and still does) that God had a hand in her not being accepted by DPS in April, 1984, as her mother had just died the month before and she was in grief. She reapplied in January, 1985, and was accepted. In her recruit class, A-85, 120 men and women started, with 10 of them female. Eighteen weeks later, only 85 of them graduated. Of the 10 females, six graduated. Diana Garza and the other five females comprised only 14 female troopers in the state of Texas that year. But Diana's childhood dream had been realized.

She always feared she would be assigned to the Driver License service. She wanted to be a highway patrolman, like her brother Ray. Her wish came true. She was assigned to the highway patrol in Refugio. She was the first DPS female trooper assigned to Refugio County. There she served 17 years on the highway patrol then was transferred to CVE. She liked HP. She had known she would like it. Big brothers Jesus, Jr. and Ray were proud of her and always encouraged her. Her father, who lives near Robstown, was also proud of her.

Trooper Diana Ramon Garza did a lot of night patrols. She drove Mustangs and Camaros and liked the smaller cars. She's pleased that she was able to help many people – motorists with engine trouble, lost travelers and getting people to hospitals. She once encountered an elderly man at roadside who was struggling to change a tire. She changed the tire for him. One year later, she received a plaque of appreciation from the gas company where the older man worked. Soon after this, the man died. "It was one of many enriching experiences I had," she says.

One night she made an "intuition" highway stop of a car with New York license plates. There were two occupants. Her radio call revealed the car to be stolen. She was 18 miles north of Refugio on a lonely dark highway. It was decision time. To call for back-up and wait – or call for back-up but make an arrest alone, with the numbers against her. She decided to make the arrest. She got them in a bar ditch, cuffed the first one. During a scuffle with the second one, Diana had to pull her pistol twice. She overcame him, got him cuffed and made the arrest alone. When the "back-up" officers arrived, the situation was under control.

Diana also vividly remembers the same night her

brother Ray remembers – the night when Ranger Andy Lopez (then Trooper Lopez) was in his dangerous shoot-out. She was also on patrol nearby, involved in a traffic stop, when she heard Andy call a deputy about the drug-runner's car, but the wrong location was given. She was heading the wrong way when she saw trooper patrol cars going the other way. She quickly got the dispatcher and got the right location. Later, she and her trooper brother Ray realized that, had she not been tied up with her "stop", she might have been the trooper to stop the dangerous car that Andy stopped – and she could have been shot instead of Andy.

"That's the way things go down," she recalls. "My brothers and I have been very fortunate."



During her later highway patrol days she met a law officer named Johnnie Garza (above) who was a Refugio County Constable. It was love at first sight. Garza proposed to her on his police radio. Three months later on Nov. 11, 2000, they got married. With Johnnie in the family, it's five law officers!

Trooper Diana (Ramon) Garza retired on July 31, 2007. She served her last five years in the Commercial Vehicle Enforcement (CVE) service. She is enjoying retirement in Refugio with her husband Johnny and their five-year old daughter. Johnnie now works for a chemical company in Green Lake, and is still a Refugio County reserve deputy. She is proud of her large family of brothers, sisters and father, and notes that several of them are still on duty."

DPS Sgt. Wally Ramon, MVT

Wally is the baby brother in the Ramon family. His brothers and sisters "babied" him a lot, and sent him on errands. He was only two when the family moved to Texas, so he remembers little about Bono, Ohio. Like his brothers and sisters, he grew up in Orange Grove and attended all its schools. At 14, he started riding on patrol with his sheriff's deputy brother Ray, and was "hooked" early on law enforcement. In high school, he played football (tight end), basketball and ran track. He also got involved in drama. After high school graduation in 1984, he took an Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) course and became an ambulance attendant. He was 18. After two years, he promoted to ambulance driver.

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It's February 23 in Galveston:

LAST CHANCE TO MAKE RESERVATIONS FOR TSTA CHRISTMAS PARTY 2007!

Each member is allowed one guest at no cost (except for room cost)

January 23, 2008 is the deadline! It's going to be another great dinner/dance and party! If you haven't made your reservations you better do it fast! It's your special once-a-year opportunity to have an elegant, romantic weekend away from work, home and the kids. Remember, it's at the beautiful San Luis Resort Hotel on the Galveston beach. And you must call the San Luis at 1-800-392-5937 (if it's not too late!) and be sure to tell them you are with TSTA to get the special rate.



If the cut-off date is past, go ahead and call the San Luis and see if there are any rooms available and negotiate the best deal you can. If no rooms are available or you don't want to pay their rate, ask them for information on properties adjacent to theirs and try them.

Be sure, if you are planning on attending but not staying at the San Luis, to call TSTA at 1-800-289-8782 to make reservations for the dinner. Only those making reservations will be allowed in. Please cancel if you are unable to attend. The Association has to pay for those who have made reservations whether they show or not!

WE HOPE TO SEE YOU IN GALVESTON ON FEBRUARY 23!

TSTA Membership Advantages

*** Free Last Will & Testament * Free AD&D Insurance * Legal Assistance * Recreational Facilities * Legislative Representation * Personal Counsel**

Another financial gift to TSTA arrives from deceased donor estate

Several months ago TSTA got a pleasant surprise when a North Texas attorney, who was managing an estate, notified TSTA that a deceased California man had left the association thousands of dollars in his will. A large check came, but that was not the full amount. Just before last Thanksgiving, a final check arrived in the amount of \$994.40, the final payment.

The gentleman was Mr. Bruce Y. Howorth. TSTA was unable to learn the reason for Mr. Howorth's generous gift. But his attorney revealed that the will specified that **the money was to be used for monuments to slain DPS troopers.**

Limited TSTA conversation with a California niece (estate executrix) revealed that Mr. Howorth died at age 91 and was a WWII veteran. He was concerned about military and law officer deaths, and had a nephew on the California highway patrol. Also, he had traveled a lot after his retirement as a U.S. postal employee. Could it be that this gentleman admired the Metcalf monuments and realized their purpose? And had compassion for our many DPS grieving survivors of fallen DPS officers?

Whatever Mr. Howorth's motivation, TSTA remains permanently grateful for the gift, and vows to use it to continue to support the memorial monument program for DPS officers killed in the line of duty. Troopers and Rangers, be encouraged with this proof that people in the civilian world notice your work, and care about you.

OOPS! Did you forget to renew your TSTA membership? All is not lost, you can still renew! The deadline has been extended through JANUARY 31st. Renew now! For you and your family's sake - don't lose your TSTA member benefits!

Words to remember

- "When you reach the end of your rope, you can find the hem of His garment."
- You should not confuse your career with your life.
- Never lick a steak knife.
- A person who is nice to you but rude to a waiter is not a nice person.

At age 21, he joined the Air Force in 1987, serving in Hawaii in electronic and Morse code security. He joined because he already knew he wanted to become a DPS trooper and knew that DPS recruiters valued military service. His tour in the Air Force lasted almost five years. After his discharge he applied with DPS but was not accepted. Then he enrolled in Beeville Community College in 1992, 18 miles from Orange Grove. After two years, he got a job as manager of a dry cleaning shop. There he met a pretty girl named Delores and later began dating her. In 1997 he applied with DPS and this time was accepted. Within DPS, there are recruiting review boards



Sgt. Wally Ramon, MVT-Corpus Christi

that meet and study recruits carefully in the different regions, and Wally Ramon underwent these reviews. But a funny thing was happening in Region 3 (Refugio area), his trooper sister Diane was on Wally's review board.

She solved this awkward scenario by recusing herself each time Wally's review came up. After DPS acceptance, soon Wally Ramon started recruit training in January, 1997, survived the department's grueling 26 weeks training and graduated in July. He and Delores got married soon after graduation. He was assigned to the highway patrol in George West, which was within 100 miles of the duty station of his trooper sister and his Ranger brother. Although duties kept them all busy, they were able to visit frequently. It had always been a Ramon family tradition to stay close, emotionally and geographically, whenever possible.

In his seven years at George West, Trooper Wally Ramon worked several bad accidents. One involved a wreck that left a rolled-over car and a woman inside. Wally worked desperately to get her out of the car and had to break a window to pull her out. He cut his leg in the process – but the lady was dead. He had several car chases, won them, and got his man each time. In his eighth year, he became interested in transferring to the DPS Motor Vehicle Theft (MVT) service. A special event triggered this desire.

One day he and his wife Delores went to Laredo and decided to go across the border into Nuevo Laredo to do some shopping. When they returned, they discovered that their car had been stolen from their U.S. parking lot.

They were stunned. "It gave us a helpless and frustrated feeling," recalls Wally.

His car was never found. But the incident stimulated a desire to work for DPS/MVT. He was soon successful in transferring to it. In his vehicle theft work, whenever he and his fellow officers recovered a stolen car, Wally would call the owners and announce, "We found it." The relief and gratitude of the owners always gave him a "lift." He often wished that he could have gotten a law enforcement message like that after his car was stolen. He still remembers his "empty" feeling at finding his car gone.

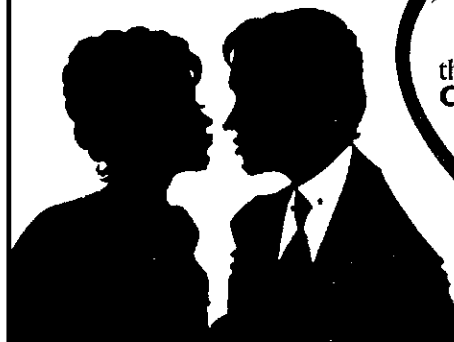
Wally has lots of paperwork in his MVT job. He inspects homemade trailers (to see where the parts come from), vehicle VIN plates, salvage yards and auto dealerships. He says that organized crime is their biggest "enemy". Lots of Ford F-250's and 350's are stolen and taken to Mexico. He travels some. DPS once sent him to Detroit to tour GM plants and observe how cars were built. Sometimes he goes to nearby cities like Kerrville for a conference.

Sgt. Wally Ramon is stationed at the Corpus Christi Regional office, along with one other MVT sergeant. They cover 10 counties. The Ramons live in Corpus and have two daughters and a grandson. Wally likes MVT work. "Better hours," he grins. Delores likes the better hours, too.

The four officers in the Ramon family – plus Johnny Garza who married into the family – all remember the lean childhood days, the sacrifice of their parents with so many children, the step-by-step struggle upward in law enforcement. They are grateful to many people who helped them upward – especially each other. They stay close, and are proud of each other.

Other Ramon family members are, *Sisters:* Maria (San Antonio), Helen (Agua Dulce, TX), Angela (Corpus Christi), Esmerelda (Port Aransas); *Brothers:* Robert (San Antonio), August (Las Vegas, NV). Another brother, Joe, passed away in 1987.

Guys... Valentine's Day is near. Better clean up your act with her! Here's a suggestion:



reservations deadline is Jan. 23!

**WHEN THE NEED IS GREAT
TSTA IS THERE**

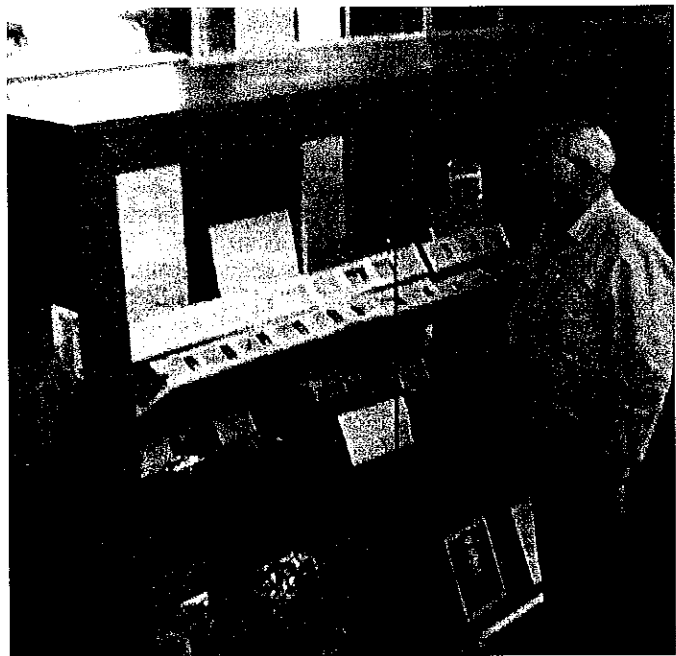
A dream of DPS "old-timers" now a reality!

The DPS Historical Museum and Research Center is here!

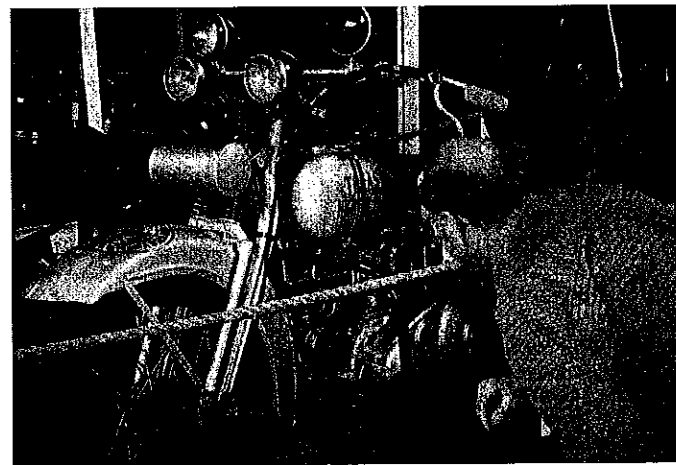
A 1951 Ford highway patrol car, DPS uniforms and patches of yesteryear, DPS handguns of different past eras, a display of early driver licenses, a huge display room of artifacts – it's all together and here at last! Where is it? In Austin DPS. Right inside the entrance of the DPS administration (central) building, where driver license applicants once entered.

The large, high-ceiling lobby area that DPS people know so well will still be a greeting point (by a uniformed trooper) but has museum "biggies" in it to impress visitors. Turn left after you enter and greet the troopers and you'll enter a spacious tourist-friendly display room (560 sq. ft.) of authentic old artifacts that truly dramatize the history of the Texas Department of Public Safety.

The large items in the lobby feature the old patrol car and also an old Harley Davidson motorcycle that DPS highway patrolman rode 1935-1940. You'll see the foot starter, the little generator, the "lunch bucket" type box behind the seat for carrying a fire extinguisher, first-aid kit and traffic ticket book. (It's engine was loud!) The '51 patrol car has a V-8 "flat-head" engine. Its limited equipment was siren, three-channel radio and red light (no heater). Reports are that it was assigned to the Central Texas area when it reached "turn-in time". It was sold to a strong law enforcement supporter in East Texas. With approval of a past DPS Director, it was allowed to retain



Capt. B.C. Lyon (retired and re-hired) checks items.



the equipment for use in parades and public displays to advertise the DPS.

In the display case for handguns, visitors, DPS officers and civilian employees can see sidearms that span decades of "pistol-toting" by DPS officers: These include the Colt semi-automatic model 1911, Colt .38 revolver, the Smith and Wesson .357 and the semi-automatic Sig Sauer of today.

One unique museum display item is a guitar with signatures all over it. There's a special story behind this musical instrument qualifying for the DPS Historical Museum. The late Trooper Randy Vetter, HP-San Marcos, who was shot and killed on the highway in 2001, was a Country & Western music enthusiast who played the guitar. It seems that Randy, one day, being a little short of money sold his guitar. After his death a Central Texas contractor who was saddened by Randy's demise, bought another guitar to give it to Trooper Vetter's widow Cynthia.

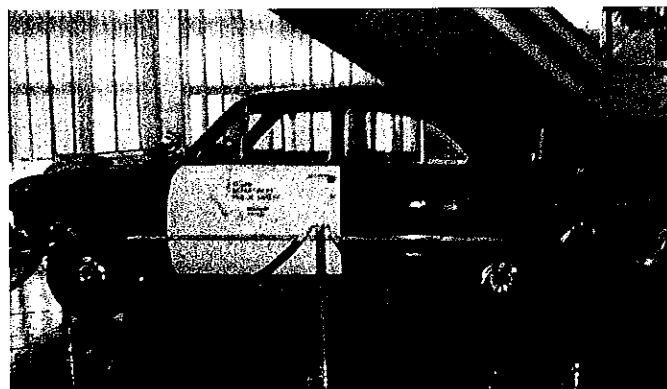
Before he presented it, he spent a considerable amount of time getting famous people to sign the guitar. There

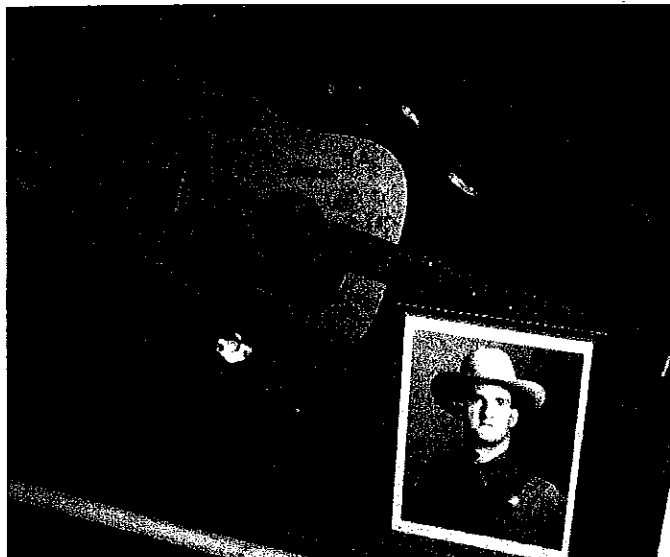
Continued on page 9

There are no routine stops.



DPS lobby team admire "old-time" trooper.





were many. These included Willie Nelson, Clint Black, George and Laura Bush and many more high profile people. Through arrangements with DPS and museum leadership, the compassionate contractor got it placed behind display glass in the museum, to be held there until Trooper Vetter's little son (now about age 5) becomes an adult and decides what he wishes to do with the guitar.

How and why did this Historical Museum and Research Center come into being? A small group of DPS retirees conceived it in 1994, believing it was needed – needed to tell the story of “Great Generation” people who pioneered DPS and laid the foundation for making DPS the leading state police organization it is today. Most prominent in that great generation was, of course, Col. Homer Garrison. Among the 1994 visionaries are past DPS directors and Col. Garrison's widow, Mary Nell Garrison.

Executive Director of the Museum is retired DPS Captain B.C. Lyon, a Korean War era veteran who joined DPS in 1962, served 34 years in highway patrol, narcotics and administration. He retired in 1996, but rehired this year as CLE supervisor, Narcotics administration and Motor Vehicle Inspection technician. He credits this huge historical milestone, not only to the support and efforts of the Museum's Board of Directors, members and Board of Trustees, (all DPS retirees) but to the strong support and cooperation of DPS Director Tommy Davis and Chief Burton Christian.

Everyone connected with the Museum's planning wants the civilian world to visit the museum and learn DPS history. They extend a special invitation to the hundreds of “rookies” and other young troopers and Rangers to come see it – and bring their families.



A huge part of DPS history,
the late
COL. HOMER GARRISON
DPS Director for 3 decades

His widow, Mary Nell Garrison,
serves on the museum advisory
board, and remembers much
DPS history.

Court's In Session...Continued from page 2

convicted of violating the National Firearms Act by possessing a shotgun having a barrel of less than 18 inches. The court upheld the conviction, saying that Congress had the right to prohibit possession of such a weapon, as there was no showing that having it was necessary to insure a “well regulated militia.” In effect, the court held that the Second Amendment granted people the right to keep and bear arms for the sole purpose of serving in the militias for the common good. Thus, people had the right to own a weapon only if it had a “reasonable relationship to the preservation of a well-regulated militia.”

Because the Supreme Court failed in the Miller case to make a complete and accurate historical analysis of the origins and substance of the right to bear arms, there is much confusion and debate today over what the Second Amendment actually guarantees.

After the Miller opinion, a number of lower court federal cases reached the same conclusion. Some decisions held that the federal government could limit the keeping and bearing of arms by individuals as long as it did not infringe upon a state's right to have a militia. Others held that the Second Amendment does not grant an individual right but rather a “collective” right of the states to form an armed militia.

Over the years, litigants have argued that particular federal and state statutes as well as local ordinances regulating weapons were on their face a violation of the Second Amendment. The courts, continuing to take a very restrictive view, rejected these claims in almost every instance.

However, the Federal Fifth Circuit, which includes Texas, recently held on Oct. 16, 2001 in U.S. v. Emerson that the Second Amendment does indeed protect individual rights, and people do have a fundamental and protected right to own arms whether or not they are part of a state militia or performing active military service or training. The court further held that the government could impose “narrowly tailored specific exceptions or restrictions that are reasonable and not inconsistent with the right of Americans generally to individually keep and bear their private arms as historically understood in this country.” This holding stands virtually alone and in direct conflict with virtually all of the other federal court rulings around the country.

The next step is up to the Supreme Court to revisit their Miller case conclusions which, by the way, were made without any historical examination of the reasons behind adoption of the Second Amendment.

But until or unless that happens, we still face the uncertainty of knowing just what individual protections our Constitution gives us. The debate will rage on because it appears at the moment that each side of the debate has as sufficient basis for its view. Stay tuned.

So until next time, you'll be careful out there, you hear.



There is a very fine line between “hobby” and “mental illness.”

* Kuempel's Korner *



COW POKES

By Ace Reid



"Jerk the backstrap, cut the hams into steaks, the rest into chili, and have the head mounted!"

Eagles don't flock: you have to find them one at a time.

One of the nicest things about Christmas is watching those visitors' tail lights leave your driveway and fade into the distance.

Luck is when preparation meets opportunity.

Even a blind hog, rooting around in the mud, can find an acorn sometime.

Why does it take so little time for a child who is afraid of the dark to become a teenager who wants to stay out all night?

Experience is what you have left when everything else is gone.

If you don't pay your exorcist, do you get repossessed?

A lone amateur built the Ark. A large group of professionals built the Titanic.

How did they hang a horse thief with a wooden leg back in the old west? With a rope, just like everybody else.

An evaluation: "he has no enemies, but he is intensely disliked by his friends."

His first job was working in an orange juice factory but he got juiced. Then he tried working in a muffler shop, but it was too exhausting.

In the land of the blind, the one-eyed man is king.

The gray-haired man was bragging on his new hearing aid to his neighbor. "George," he said, "it's so good I can hear a pin drop a half-block away."

"What kind is it?" asked George

The talker looked at his watch.

"Oh, about three-thirty."

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Statement of Purpose

Texas State Trooper is an official publication of the Texas State Troopers Association. Should you have news you would like published, mail it to:

Texas State Troopers Association
 5540 North Lamar
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 E-mail us at TSTAMAIL@aol.com
 Website: www.texasstatetroopers.org

The Texas State Troopers Association is open to all first-line commissioned members of the Department of Public Safety, both current and former.

TSTA intends no indictment of those of supervisory rank through their exclusion as members of this organization. We do understand, however, that no association can be all things to all people. Therefore, we have chosen to represent those who need our services more: first-line troopers. This policy negates the probability of conflict of interest that stems from multi-class representation.

TSTA will work hard for the betterment of life for every member of the department.

FOR MEMBERSHIP: Complete the application below. Mail it and a check for \$25 payable to the Texas State Troopers Association to the address at the top of the application. Include your jacket size: M, L, XL, XXL or XXXL. Your cap and jacket will be mailed to you.

WILLS: Members are reminded that one of your benefits from TSTA is the free preparation of a last will and testament. This service is performed by Lee Johnson. He may be contacted at:

Lee Johnson
 Attorney-at-Law
 575 N. 7th Street
 Beaumont, TX 77702
 Telephone: 409/833-8911

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For fastest service, attach old mailing label in this space. If label is not available, print your old address in the box. Be sure to include your ZIP CODE.

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2008

**Application for Membership
 TEXAS STATE TROOPERS ASSOCIATION
 5540 NORTH LAMAR
 AUSTIN, TEXAS 78751**

for office use only

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DATE EMPLOYED	DATE OF COMMISSION	DATE OF TERMINATION (if no longer with DPS)		

HOME ADDRESS (street, city, zip code) HOME PHONE NUMBER (include area code)

OFFICE ADDRESS (street, city, zip code) OFFICE PHONE NUMBER (include area code)

DATE EMPLOYED DATE OF COMMISSION DATE OF TERMINATION (if no longer with DPS)

Membership dues paid to TSTA are not deductible as gifts or charitable contributions but may be deductible under an IRC Section other than Section 170 (c).

I, _____, request membership into the Texas State Troopers Association, and if accepted agree to abide by the Constitution and Bylaws of the Association, the rules and decisions of its officers. I also agree to pay annual dues of twenty-five (25) dollars for all of a calendar year or any part thereof.

I understand that any unreasonable failure to assist a fellow member of the Texas State Troopers Association will result in this membership being cancelled by the board of directors at their option.

I also understand this membership will terminate immediately if I am promoted to any supervisory rank of sergeant or above.

Signature of applicant _____

Date _____

TSTA MEMBERS!

Your TCLEOSE Hours Can Become College Credits, Enhance Your DPS Career

TSTA has been contacted by Mountain State University asking for our help in advising our members about their degrees in Criminal Justice through their distance learning program.

Obtaining your degree from a respected, nationally accredited institution is the key to advancing your criminal justice career. Earning a degree can boost your earning potential and increase your chances of getting a promotion. Employment for Criminal Justice professionals is expected to increase 36% or more through 2008. As more qualified candidates enter the field, the best opportunities will go to those with advanced degrees.

Finding time to study while maintaining your professional and personal obligations can, at times, be difficult. Mountain State University recognizes this challenge and has created their distance learning program specifically for busy criminal justice professionals like you. At MSU there is no wasted time with required in-class room meetings. Everything you need to complete your coursework is either delivered to your door or available anytime, anywhere through their online virtual classroom and live chat sessions.

There are several degrees to choose from. One undergraduate degree, a Bachelors of Science in Administration of Criminal Justice, allows students to transfer up to 54 TCLEOSE credits into the program so as to hasten progress towards a degree. Additionally, Mountain States also accepts certain TCLEOSE courses as substitutes for General Education requirements. For instance, a TCLEOSE instructor can substitute for speech. A certified accident investigator need not take college business math. Forty-eight hours of TCLEOSE Spanish can replace one course in humanities as can a 40-hour HazMat course replace a science course.

We have spoken with the Houston Police Officer's Union which has a significant relationship with Mountain State University and speaks highly of their program.

If you are interested, contact TSTA and we will mail you an information packet. For specific questions please contact Mountain State University as follows:

Sabriena Barnette, Enrollment Advisor
Mountain State Univ. /CJ-Direct, 1-866-312-9595 Ext. 441
sbarnette-admissions@adcj.com

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A New Year's reminder: TSTA's building and facilities are...

A recreational home away from home

For DPS/TSTA members new and old, for Texas police and sheriffs' department officers, and members of the Texas judicial system, TSTA extends this friendly reminder: TSTA's headquarters building in Austin has fine recreational facilities for you to use. Whether you are a DPS officer/member from Lubbock, a sheriff's deputy from El Paso, a district or county attorney from east Texas or a district judge from Austin, you are welcome to visit TSTA and use its modern health/recreation equipment when in Austin.

TSTA's facilities include a heated swimming pool, recreation room, exercise room, racquetball court, and refreshment area. It's a place where you can have fellowship with members of your own profession, a place to relax with friends.

You may be a veteran TSTA member who has forgotten about TSTA's facilities. So, next time you are in Austin for in-service schools or for other reasons and you have some spare time, visit TSTA and enjoy its facilities. It's for you - a warm welcome awaits you.



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