



The official monthly publication of the Alabama Department of Public Safety

# The **BLUE LIGHT**

July 2006

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Director

**LT. COLONEL GLENDA DEESE**  
Assistant Director

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ABI Division

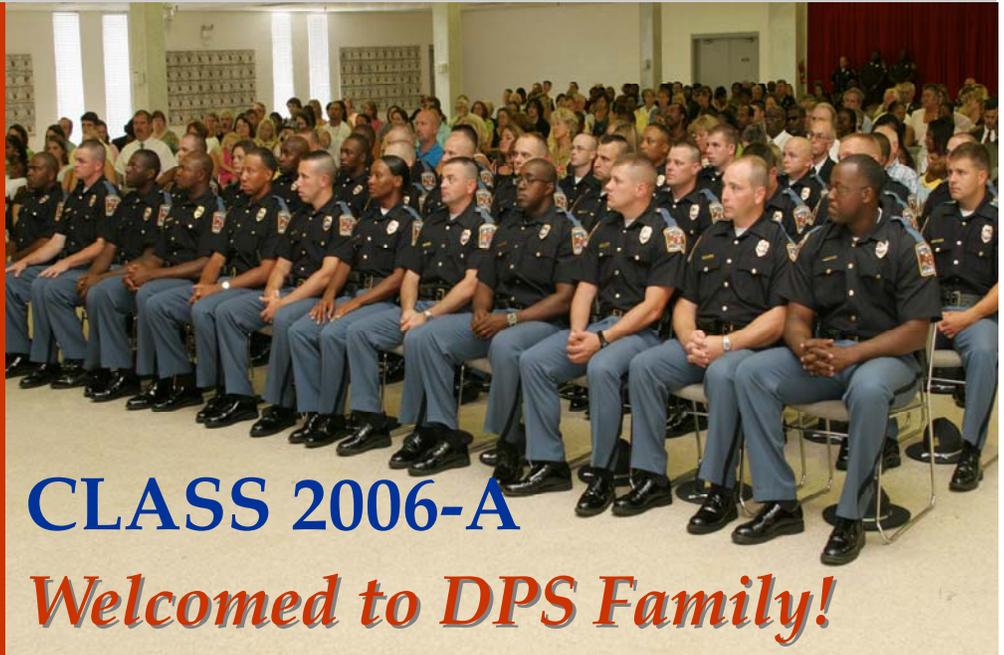
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**MAJOR ROSCOE HOWELL**  
Driver License Division

**MAJOR PATRICK MANNING**  
Highway Patrol Division

**MAJOR F.A. BINGHAM**  
Protective Services

**MAJOR CARY SUTTON**  
Service Division



## CLASS 2006-A

*Welcomed to DPS Family!*

"The rollercoaster ride is over!" That sentence was sweet music to the ears of the 37 recruits who were commissioned into the trooper ranks June 22 in Montgomery. Following 24 weeks of strenuous, physically challenging and mentally taxing instruction, graduation day for the 37 was filled with a pride and elation that made the journey worthwhile.

Capt. Greg Jones, commander of the Alabama Criminal Justice Training Center, greeted those in attendance for the morning occasion, including proud family members and friends, Chief Alan Benefield and Lyle Mitchell of the Peace Officers Standards and Training Commission, DPS direc-

tors and staff, and representatives from other law enforcement agencies.

Class coordinator Cpl. Gary Hetzel presented awards recognizing outstanding achievement among class members. Gary D. Mobley earned the Academic Award for achieving the highest overall grade point average and the Highway Response and Driving Award for demonstrating a high level of knowledge and ability in defensive and pursuit driving. The Firearms Award went to Jeffrey A. Reaves for exhibiting the highest level of knowledge, skill and safety in firearms training. Fitness Awards went to James Shadrick for attaining the

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## The Colonels' Corner

*Col. W.M. Coppage, Director*



I was scanning my calendar and clearing my desk, when I realized that the Fourth of July is rapidly approaching. I also realized that, like most holidays, a lot of you will be working instead of enjoying time off with your families.

I am reminded of an old adage that I once heard in a speech, "Sacrifice is the price we pay for the position we occupy." No one forced us to take this job, and we can find 10 thousands of reasons why we can let someone else do it. After all, it seems that everyone we come in contact with on the highways and byways of this state can give us advice about how we can better do our job and catch the "real violators," not the person we are talking to on the side of the road.

On July 4, 1776, 56 men pledged their lives, their fortunes, and their sacred honor by signing a document we now call the Declaration of Independence. But did you ever wonder who those men were or what happened to them after that day?

Twenty-four were lawyers and jurists, 11 were merchants and nine were farmers and large plantation owners. Each signed the Declaration of Independence knowing full well that the penalty would be death if they were captured.

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*Lt. Col. Glenda Deese, Assistant Director*



Recently I have attended several funeral services for family members of our DPS employees. I am reminded how precious and short life really is. Our families are one of the most important things in our lives, and we should celebrate and embrace life to its fullest.

With the summer in full swing, we are admonished to continue to set the example while driving to and from destinations in our summer travels. We should always buckle up and certainly not drive our motor vehicles while under the influence of alcohol or drugs.

Maj. Patrick Manning and his staff in Highway Patrol work diligently to reduce the number of fatalities that are on the rise on Alabama roadways. I am ecstatic and so grateful when our employees who are involved in car crashes can walk away with minor or no injuries. Three employees who come to mind immediately are Lt. Keith Kelly of the Birmingham Post, Tpr. Andre Roper of the Selma Post, and Kennesha Richardson of the Administrative Division. Fortunately, all of them were able to survive severe crashes and give testimony to further strengthen our safety efforts.

I can recall just a few short years ago when my son, who is now 19, first began driving at the age of 16. He flipped, rolled and totaled his first vehicle. He walked away with a burn on his neck from the seat belt holding him in place while he was upside down. I am proud to say that he was wearing his seat belt. His passenger, who was not wearing his seat belt, received a punctured lung, bruised ribs and other injuries from being slammed around and ultimately ejected from the vehicle. Safety precautions were instilled in my son at an early age. He was always taught to buckle up, and thank God he listened!

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*Courtesy, Service, and Protection Since 1935*



**Class 2006-A, continued from Page 1**



DPS, we do," said Coppage. He cited the importance of aggressive pre-employment screening and training "before we let you come into our family."

Coppage underscored the importance of family, not



**A young recruit-in-the-making confers with dad, new Tpr. James B. Snyder.**

**Lt. Col. Glenda Deese welcomes Tpr. Jennifer Jacobs to the ranks.**

highest level of physical fitness and Adriel J. Carr for achieving the greatest improvement in physical fitness.

In his graduation address, Col. W.M. Coppage talked to the new troopers about the importance of family. "The difference between the normal family and the DPS family is that you don't get the chance to pick your relatives. At



**"I, (state your name), do solemnly swear ..."**

tion ceremony, but was highlighted in the colonel's address. "This is the choice you made," said Coppage. He said sacrifice is a concept with which the new troopers will become all too familiar. Preparing for the unexpected, the absence of holidays, emergencies



**Capt. Greg Jones accepts plaque from Class 2006-A.**

only among trooper ranks, but also emphasized that troopers' families, too, become a part of the DPS family. "What can you do? The answer is quite simple: be there," said Coppage, as he encouraged the large congregant of families present for the special day. The colonel asked family members to be a sounding-board when the new troopers need an ear to listen and offer the much-needed support system that will be required to ensure them success in their career.

and answering disaster calls are all a part of that sacrifice. Despite the level of personal sacrifice to be made in their careers, the colonel assured the new troopers that their DPS family would be available. "Welcome to our family," said Coppage.

The theme of "sacrifice" resounded throughout the gradua-

The new troopers have received their initial assignments in the Highway Patrol Division and now look forward to 10 weeks of field training under the supervision of veteran state troopers.



## Increased Safety Goal of New *Fatality Victims Memorial*

The Department of Public Safety has launched a new public Web page designed to improve driving safety by sharing the stories of those killed in motor vehicle crashes on Alabama's roadways.

Gov. Bob Riley and DPS Director Col. Mike Coppage announced the Fatality Victims Memorial Web page at Montgomery's June 29 Traffic Safety Summit.

The Web site recognizes the victims of fatal traffic crashes on Alabama's roadways and invites surviving family members to share stories of their loved ones. "Our hope is that by sharing the stories

of motor vehicle crash victims, we can help other motorists become safer drivers and spare others the anguish of losing a loved one," Coppage said.

Coppage emphasized that the site is not a venue for discussing the circumstances of crashes or crash investigations. "It's simply a means of communicating the tragedy of motor vehicle fatalities, and by doing so, help protect Alabama motorists and save lives," he said.

Riley said, "When we hear that more than 1,000 people die on our roadways each year in Alabama, there is a tendency to reduce

this problem to mere numbers. We must get out of that habit. We need to remind ourselves and the rest of the public that there is a person, a face and a story connected with each one of those numbers and also a grieving family. That way, hopefully, we'll have a greater impact and make people stop and think about safety each time they get behind the wheel."

DPS is inviting the families of those killed in motor vehicle crashes to submit a written tribute and photograph for the Web page. Seven families responded initially, and more tributes will be added. To view the site, go to [www.dps.alabama.gov](http://www.dps.alabama.gov) and click on "Fatality Victims Memorial" in the DPS links section.

## *Bridging Law Enforcement Across State Lines*



From left, Cols. Bill Hitchens (Georgia) and Gerald Nicely (Tennessee) join Maj. Pat Manning at Hands Across the Border event.

To emphasize interagency cooperation in promoting safe highways, the North and Northeast Alabama Highway Safety offices recently hosted a regional Hands Across the Border checkpoint and press event.

Kicking off the Event in May, the North Alabama HSO scheduled a seat belt checkpoint on Alabama Highway 251 in Limestone County. This detail was hampered by severe thunderstorms, which ultimately forced the event to be canceled.

The following day law enforcement officers from Alabama and Tennessee met at the Tennessee Welcome Center on Interstate 65. Some 75 officers from both states were in attendance. After meeting and exchanging pleasantries, the officers convoyed to the Alabama Welcome Center for a scheduled press event. Every patrol car displayed emergency lights, which made for a highly visible presence to highway motorists.

Speakers for the press event included the chief of the Tennessee Highway Patrol, director of the Tennessee Governor's Office on Highway Safety, and the special prosecutor for the Tennessee Attorney General's Office, who oversees the enforcement of state traffic safety programs.

A scheduled press event at the Georgia Welcome Center on Interstate 75 was held, including troopers from the tri-state area.



Independence Day is the celebration of sovereignty of this country, and Public Safety employees are not about to miss out on celebrating what has become America's biggest birthday party.

Whether your plans include soaking up some sun on the beach or relaxing at the lake, family reunions, the excitement of fireworks, or the taste and aroma of mouth-watering barbeque, you can count on your DPS co-workers to find the perfect way to spend the day.

If you work in Highway Patrol, however, you find another day to celebrate, because the Fourth of July inevitably means work.

"Those of us in the HP plan to continue our tradition of working long hours through the holiday period, writing tickets, arresting drunk drivers, assisting stranded travelers and investigating motor vehicle crashes," says Sgt. James Patterson of the HP Traffic Homicide Unit. "We are hoping someone will save us some barbeque. We will take our holiday off when traffic thins out."

Cpl. Daniel Dean of the Alexander City Post echoes the sergeant's sentiments. "I have to work on July 4<sup>th</sup> .... Imagine that!" he says. "If I were off I'd be on Lake Martin at the Wind Creek State Park. Either way I'd spend this time with family." And as for the corporal's barbeque advice? Let's just surmise cooking is not his passion. "If I could cook, I'd give some BBQ tips," says Dean. "Well, I could give you one tip:

Don't eat anything I cook!"

Count ABI's staff also among DPS employees who frequently spend their holidays on the job. "I will be celebrating the Fourth 'on call' at my residence," says Cpl. Thad Snyder of ABI's Investigative Operations.

Sandranetta Young, who works in Financial Services, Administrative Division, has an added reason to celebrate. "I will be celebrating my 50<sup>th</sup> birthday on July 6, so my Fourth of July celebration will include a birthday celebration for me," said Young. "I will be traveling to Mobile and Biloxi, Miss., visiting one of my girlfriends and having a great time," says the birthday girl.

Also looking forward to his own birthday celebration is Titus Ashley of the Supply Unit, Service Division. "The next day is my birthday and I'll be 24. So I'll have twice the fun and reason to celebrate," says Ashley. "I plan to celebrate by having a barbeque and go out of town."

Richard Williams of Information Services, Driver License Division, plans to stay close to home during the holiday. "I expect to spend the holiday hanging out with the cats and doing what I can to keep people from damaging the property with fireworks," says Williams. "I may take a moment to wonder if the roof structure will stop the bullets that come down after the local nutcases finish their celebratory gunfire. That and a few organizational tasks should be about it."

Spending the Fourth at area lakes is a favorite among DPS staff members. "I will be cooking out with friends at Lake Martin and finishing off the evening sitting in a very large boat looking up at the stars and fireworks at the lake," says Cindy Smith of Motor Carrier Safety, Highway Patrol Division. "As usual, my friends like to float right up under the fireworks so it is a spectacular sight to behold," says Smith.

Nowhere will you find a more dedicated group of individuals than the professionals of DPS, especially those charged with ensuring Alabama's safety during Independence Day. As we salute this nation, we also tip our hats to you for your loyalty and dedication. (And, yes, we'll save you some BBQ, Sgt. Patterson!)

*Courtesy, Service, and Protection Since 1935*



## Kids in Tow Subject to New Child Restraint Law



Beginning July 1, children through age 14 must be restrained when riding in motor vehicles in Alabama, under provisions of the state's new child restraint law. The new law applies to passenger cars, pickup trucks, vans (with seating capacity of 10 or fewer), minivans and sport utility vehicles.

The child restraint law, §32-5-222, was amended during the 2006 regular session of the Legislature to specify appropriate restraint systems by child age and weight. The new law also provides that violators will have points assessed against their driver record, in addition to incurring a fine of \$25.

Public Safety Director Col. Mike Coppage said using the proper restraint and installing it properly are vital to protecting the safety of child passengers.

"Many motorists – child passengers and adults – survive crashes or escape serious injury because they're buckled up," said Coppage.

The law requires the following size-appropriate restraint systems:

- ⊙ Infant-only seats and convertible seats used in the rear-facing position for infants until at least 1 year of age or 20 pounds.
- ⊙ Convertible seats in the forward position or forward-facing seats until the child is at least 5 years of age or 40 pounds.
- ⊙ Booster seats until the child is 6 years of age.
- ⊙ Seat belts until the child is 15 years of age. Alabama's seat belt law, §32-5B-4, requires that all front-seat occupants, regardless of age, be restrained.

Alabama's old child restraint law required an "appropriate child restraint system" for children age 5 and younger riding in motor vehicles registered in Alabama, with seat belts allowed beginning at age 4. The old law also excluded trucks and buses with a tonnage rating of one ton or more.

The text of the law is located on the Public Safety Web site, [www.dps.alabama.gov](http://www.dps.alabama.gov).



## READY, AIM, FIRE !!!

**In-service is under way, and the last scheduled dates are:**

**September 7-8, 2006**

**Please check with your supervisors to attend on one of the scheduled dates.**

*No make-up dates are scheduled due to the level of commitment for the increased number of recruit classes being conducted this year.*



# ABI ERADICATION

## *Weeds Through the Season for Home-grown Marijuana*



In addition to hot weather, late afternoon thunder storms and the occasional vacation, summer in Alabama reliably brings the Domestic Marijuana Eradication Program, whose staff braves scorching temperatures to combat one of Alabama's more lucrative crops: home-grown marijuana.

*The BLUE LIGHT* took to the road — or perhaps the sky — again this issue to get a glimpse of the cooperative efforts of the ABI and Service divisions in destroying the illegal crops. The eradication program depends upon ABI ground crews — working with local law enforcement agencies — to cut and destroy the marijuana plants after eagle-eyed trooper pilots spot the carefully concealed plots from the air.

With Tpr. Pilot Mike Manley at the stick, we soared to south Alabama, where we were joined by ABI agents on the ground. The reality of eradication set in quickly as we trampled through thickets, brush, dust, rocks and mud in the near 100-degree heat.

The Domestic Marijuana Eradication Program began in 1979, as a Drug Enforcement Administration-assisted program designed to locate and destroy marijuana plants being covertly cultivated in Alabama. Today the DEA continues to promote its efforts by providing resources to support the 102 state and law enforcement agencies that actively participate in the program.

The ABI was tapped to coordinate the program in Alabama. Three agents serve as team members and set out to accomplish this mission by directing eradication activities in the field. Leaders are tasked with visiting all counties in the state to look for

**ABI eradication teams and trooper aviation key to success of marijuana eradication program.**

and eradicate marijuana plants. Daily communications with all involved and intelligence analysis are conducted by Air National Guard intel analyst Linda Crook. The DCE/SP coordinator is Robert L. Greenwood.

Pilots from the DPS Trooper Aviation Unit and the R.A.I.D. of the National Guard Counter Drug Unit conduct aerial canvassing of the counties looking for the plants and relay finds to the team leaders on the ground. These team leaders take their teams to the plants and gather them for eradication.

Arrests and prosecution of suspected growers are among objectives of the program. If it is determined by the team leaders that surveillance of a location could lead to an arrest, appropriate measures are taken. Team leaders are equipped with vehicles and gear that augment their efforts to deter marijuana growth, including ATVs, machetes, trailers, high-powered four-wheel-drive vehicles, hydration systems, etc. In addition to outside growing operations, agents and pilots keep an eye trained on clues leading to indoor marijuana operations.

Persistence and braving the heat have paid dividends for the program. The first week out, seasoned Tpr. Pilot John Trimble located an outdoor growing operation between two tractor-trailers in Choctaw County that netted more than 100 plants. The grower had the plants covered during the cooler months, using a green-house type setting, but had left just enough exposed to allow

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## ABI Eradication, continued from Page 7

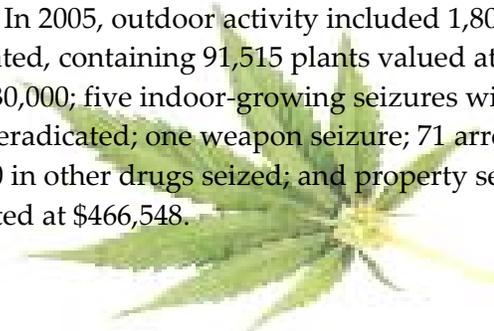
Trimble to spot the plants from the air.

The second week of the season, Manley observed more than 4,000 marijuana plants in an area near the edge of Hale County. An arrest was made with that find. Two weeks later Tpr. Pilot Lee Hamilton was en route to Baldwin County from Montgomery and located 2,000 plants growing in a clear-cut area on the edge of Butler County.

The program consistently shows impressive numbers. In 2004, outdoor activity included 1,064 plots eradicated, 54,376 cultivated plants eradicated,

78 persons arrested, and \$72,500 in assets seized. Indoor activity included eight indoor seizures, 577 plants eradicated, 11 persons arrested, \$1,500 in assets, and nine weapons seized.

In 2005, outdoor activity included 1,805 plots eradicated, containing 91,515 plants valued at \$183,030,000; five indoor-growing seizures with 136 plants eradicated; one weapon seizure; 71 arrests; \$21,200 in other drugs seized; and property seizures estimated at \$466,548.



## ABI's SEX OFFENDER REGISTRY Implements New Database

On Oct. 1, 2005, a new sex offender law was enacted requiring registered offenders in cases where the victim was younger than 12 to verify their address twice a year, as opposed to annually, and to register the offender's place of employment. In order to track the information electronically, in April 2006 ABI implemented a new database to capture additional information on these offenders.

The database, designed and maintained by DPS personnel, has added many new search features, as well as capturing new data. In addition to the name, address, identifiers, employment information and contact information for each offender, the unit now gathers vehicle information and data on any scars, tattoos or other marks associated with the offender.

The new database is a great tracking tool that is useful in managing sex offender data from previous convictions, and a useful investigative tool in new investigations. The information can be queried when an officer is investigating any new sexual assault cases to determine if ABI currently has information on the suspect in the database. After all the old files are entered into the system, an officer will be able to search for offenders by age or gender of the victim, as well as numerous other criteria. When investigating

new cases, officers also may contact ABI Sex Offender Unit personnel to check the database for suspect information.

The ABI sex offender registry currently contains information on 7,528 offenders residing within Alabama. The complete database contains approximately 1,500 more entries than are available through the DPS public Web site because many offenders are juveniles, youthful offenders or out-of-state offenders who have not yet been verified.



**Investigative Technician II Lesia Baldwin searches new sex offender registry database.**



# People You Know!

## ◆ *New Employees*

Renee Stewart	5/1/06	Senior Accountant	ADM/Financial Services
Arvie Tew	5/18/06	Retired State Employee	ABI/Investigative Services
Carla Bond	5/22/06	ASA I	ABI/Huntsville
Johnny Davis Jr.	5/22/06	Clerk	DL/Microfilm/Telephone Unit
Betty Nowden	5/22/06	Clerk	DL/Safety Responsibility
Cindy Powe	5/22/06	DL Examiner I	DL/Tuscaloosa
Eddie Ward	5/22/06	Custodial Worker	ACJTC

## ◆ *Promotions*

Mattie Hinson	6/16/06	Fingerprint Classifier I	ABI/Montgomery
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## ◆ *Transfers*

		<i>From</i>	<i>To</i>
Charles Ellis	5/16/06	Aviation/Montgomery	Aviation/Marshall
Daniel Hamilton	5/16/06	Aviation/Morgan	Aviation/Montgomery
Michael Manley	5/16/06	Aviation/Morgan	Aviation/Cullman
Russell Rowland	5/16/06	Aviation/Montgomery	Aviation/Baldwin
Michael Summers	5/16/06	HP/Jefferson	HP/Blount
John Trimble	5/16/06	Aviation/Montgomery	Aviation/Baldwin
Regina Williams	5/16/06	ABI/AFIS/Montgomery	ABI/Imaging/Montgomery

## ◆ *Retirements*

Beverlee Brown	March	Fingerprint Classifier I	ABI/Identification
Charles Leach	March	DL Examiner I	DL/Jacksonville
Emma Smith	March	Custodial Worker	SER/ACJTC

## ◆ *Resignations*

Bryan Hamrick	5/11/06	Trooper	HP/Montgomery
Sheila Williams	5/31/06	ASA I	DL/Dothan

## ◆ *Births*

John-Charles Lee Willis, born 6/5/05 to PCO II Brandyn Willis and wife Suzanne  
 Ethan Kent Smith, born 6/8/06 to Tpr. Steve Smith and wife Therena  
 McKenzie Renea Claybrook, born 6/17/06 to Tpr. Chad Claybrook and wife Suzanne  
 Emiley Madison Hughes, born 6/24/06 to Tpr. Randy Hughes and wife Emiley  
 Ethan Thomas Morgan, born 6/29/06 to Tpr. Tracy Morgan and wife Mary



## Examiners' Efforts Engender Thanks of Grateful Applicant

Day in and day out, Alabama's driver license examiners go out of their way to assist driver applicants. And while their efforts may go unrecognized all too often, two Mobile-based examiners recently received an unexpected "thank you" from a grateful applicant.

A few days prior to Mother's Day, the young man visited the Mobile Driver License office to apply for his driver license. The applicant, a 21-year-old working college student, had saved his earnings and purchased a new Cadillac for his mother. He planned to obtain his driver license so he could drive the new car to his mother's and present it to her as a surprise Mother's Day gift.

The applicant's plans were deflated somewhat early in the process when the car he was testing in did not pass the required inspection. As an alternative, the applicant and his aunt, who served as his licensed driver, returned in her vehicle. His lack of familiarity with her vehicle, however, presented another problem: he was unable to release the emergency brake once he had set the brake.

Throughout the application process, Driver License Examiners Kim Miller and Carolyn Nelson assisted the young man. After some time, the two examiners noticed that the applicant was still in the parking lot attempting to resolve his emergency brake dilemma. Miller and Nelson went to

offer their assistance and were able to resolve the problem with the brake release.

Is there a happy ending to this story? You bet! The applicant was able to complete the road test and obtain his driver license, and as a result, he personally presented his mother with her Mother's Day gift of a new Cadillac.

The applicant also went the extra mile to show his appreciation to Miller and Nelson for assisting him. He sent flowers and a note attached that said, "Thank you DPS for all your help - Happy Mother's Day." The card was signed from "The Cadillac Man."

"I wanted to cry. I thought how precious this was to wish us a happy Mother's Day. I thought this was really special," said Nelson.

"I thought how sweet it was for a customer to go out of the way to do something like that. Not everybody goes out of their way to say 'thank you.' He was very gracious," said Miller.

*"Thank you, DPS,  
for all your help!"*

*The Cadillac Man*



Mobile DL examiners receive floral bouquet from grateful customer in appreciation of courteous and professional service.

*Courtesy, Service, and Protection Since 1935*



## ABI and PI/E Partner to Educate Police Chiefs at Annual Conference

Members of the ABI's Criminal Information Center joined with Public Information/Education Unit staff in Mobile recently to share information with Alabama's police chiefs about AMBER Alert, Internet Crimes Against Children, the state's sex offender registry and other related matters.

The DPS staff members manned an exhibit at the Alabama Association of Chiefs of Police Annual Conference in the Port City in late May to familiarize the chiefs and their agencies with ABI's services and programs that address child safety.

ABI's Faye Hester and Lesia Baldwin and Public Information officers Cpl. Tracy Nelson and Tpr. Joe Piggot were on hand to increase awareness about missing and abducted children and sex crimes targeting children. They talked with the chiefs and provided resources emphasizing child safety, Internet safety for children, missing and abducted children, and sex offenders.

The three-day event attracted some 375 police chiefs and other law enforcement officers from throughout Alabama.



Alabama chiefs of police viewed new ABI display unit at Mobile conference.



A new Alabama law requires motorists on roadways with four or more lanes to move over one lane when approaching emergency vehicles stopped with their flashing emergency lights activated.

Known as the "move-over" law, the act requires motorists to change into a lane not adjacent to an authorized emergency vehicle that has stopped and is displaying flashing emergency lights. The law also stipulates that when changing lanes is unsafe or not possible, motorists instead should slow down and maintain a safe speed for the road conditions.

"Alabama state troopers and other emergency responders routinely stop their vehicles roadside, and that makes them especially vulnerable," said Col. Mike Coppage, director of the Alabama

Department of Public Safety.

"Changing lanes when possible, or slowing down and proceeding with caution, provides an extra measure of safety to law enforcement officers and other emergency responders," said Coppage.

Act 2006-546 was passed during the regular session of the Legislature and becomes effective July 1. The law's "move-over" provision applies to roadways with four or more lanes, with at least two lanes proceeding in the same direction as the vehicle being approached.



## Trooper Awarded Carnegie Medal For Heroism



Trooper  
JOHNNY SENN

The Carnegie Hero Fund Commission recently announced that Tpr. Johnny Senn is one of 20 recipients of the Carnegie Medal for extraordinary heroism. Senn, 41, of Elba, is assigned to the Dothan Trooper Post.

The honor is awarded to individuals throughout the United States and Canada who risk their lives to an extraordinary degree while saving or attempting to save the lives of others.

Senn and his friend, co-honoree Wesley E. DeVane, rescued Justin A. Wilks from a well-engulfed vehicle fire in Spring Hill. Semiconscious, Wilks, 21, was trapped in the driver's seat of a burning pickup truck after a nighttime highway crash. Traveling together, Senn and DeVane responded to the scene.

After hearing Wilks' cry for help, the two went to the driver's door of the truck, where they found flames issuing from the vehicle's front end and gasoline leaking onto the pavement. DeVane forced open the door, then extended his upper body into the truck and released Wilks' safety belt. Senn reached into the truck and worked to free Wilks' feet from the pedals. Working cooperatively, the two men freed Wilks from the burning vehicle, one grasping the upper body and the other removing the lower body.

Just after they rescued Wilks from the vehicle, an explo-

sive rush of flames engulfed the truck and spread to a nearby vehicle also involved in the crash. Wilks was hospitalized for three days for treatment of injuries sustained in the crash, including a minor burn. According to Senn, Wilks has recovered completely from his injuries and is doing well.

Senn said he was unfamiliar with the Carnegie Hero Fund Commission and does not know who nominated him for the award. He added that he received a letter regarding the honor and several weeks later received the beautiful bronze medal.

"I thought it was extremely generous of the commission, and I followed up with a call to them expressing my appreciation for this award," said Senn. "I was just doing what I would hope someone would do for me."

The Carnegie Hero Fund Commission has awarded 8,981 hero medals since the fund's inception in 1904. The commission awards honorees or their survivors with grants of \$4,000. Established by philanthropist Andrew Carnegie, the fund has awarded \$28.5 million in one-time grants, scholarship aid, death benefits and continuing assistance.

### *The Colonels' Corner, continued from Page 2*

Mother Theresa was correct when she said "We cannot do great things on this earth, we can only do small things with great love." If we can set the example and encourage all of our family

members to buckle up and not drive under the influence of alcohol or drugs, then we do our part in reducing the number of accidents and fatalities in the state and that is certainly great love.

It doesn't matter who you are or where you come from, when — not if — you are involved in a crash, you will live through it or die from it. You decide.



## DL EXAMINERS SQUASH PLAN OF DECEPTIVE DUO

Don't you just love it when a plan comes together? Well, bragging rights for a deceptive duo of twin brothers were squashed when driver license examiners discovered an attempt by the twins to fraudulently acquire a CDL license by reversing their identities. Now these brothers are facing perjury and possible conspiracy charges.



**Driver License Examiners Kim Davis, Yona Reaves (Evergreen) and James Vanhoosen (Mobile) receive commendations for uncovering fraud attempt by twin brothers.**

The scrutiny of DL Examiners Kim Davis and Yona Reaves of the Evergreen CDL office prompted the probe when one of the brothers arrived to schedule a road test and presented the required medical documentation. Once the applicant's information was entered into the DL applicant screen, it was discovered that he had been to the Mobile CDL office two months earlier. Examiners noted one crucial difference, however. Interestingly, the subject's information revealed that he was an amputee on the initial application in Mobile, but the medical information presented in Evergreen failed to mention the applicant's amputation.

An investigation ensued, and the applicant was contacted and asked to return to Evergreen. It was then discovered that there was not one applicant, but two, and that they were twins. One of the brothers — not the twin with the amputation — had taken the second medical exam, explaining the discrepancy in the medical information.

The examiners contacted and briefed their supervisors on the attempted fraud. The Evergreen Police Department was called for assistance, and one of the brothers was arrested for perjury. Possible conspiracy charges are in process for the other brother.

## DPS SALUTES OUR FAMILY SERVING ON ACTIVE MILITARY DUTY

*Trooper Raymond Abrams*

Highway Patrol, Jacksonville

*Trooper Samuel Baker*

Highway Patrol, Decatur

*Trooper Lonnie Burns*

Service, Aviation

*Trooper Kevin Ingalls*

Highway Patrol, Selma

*Trooper Steven James*

Highway Patrol, Selma

*Trooper Dennis Ryans*

Highway Patrol, Selma

*DL Examiner Rhonda McCrummen*

Driver License, Dothan

*PCO II Teresa Fikes*

Highway Patrol, Selma





## ABI AUTO THEFT UNIT REACTIVATED



From left, ABI Auto Theft Agents Spencer Traywick, Angel Rodriquez, and Cpls. Jimmy Ray Ward, Scott Bartle and Pat Price.

trucks and SUVs, water craft, farm equipment, and other vehicles. “Essentially anything that has wheels or floats and is compromised by theft will be investigated by this unit,” said the major.

by retired Capt. Bob Wilemon and James Copeland, both of whom have extensive expertise in the area of auto theft.

“Auto theft in Alabama by professional thieves has always been one of the most undetected crimes in the state,” said Hallford. “This is our effort to combat the problem. The intention is not for the joy-rider thefts, but for the true commercial auto thieves.”

Recent statistics indicate motor vehicle theft in Alabama is increasing, and according to the National Crime Information Center, a vehicle is stolen in the United States every 27 seconds.

Due to a shortage of personnel to investigate violent crimes against persons, the ABI discontinued the Auto Theft Unit in the 1990s. Reactivating the unit will allow a focus on curtailing professional motor vehicle theft organizations operating in Alabama and protecting vehicles from vulnerability to theft.

After a hiatus of several years, the ABI Auto Theft Unit has been reactivated, and five ABI agents have been assigned to its staff, according to Maj. Ken Hallford, ABI Division chief.

Hallford said unit members will concentrate on the theft of cars,

Members assigned to the Auto Theft Unit are Cpl. Scott Bartle, Birmingham; Cpl. Pat Price, Huntsville; Cpl. J.R. Ward, Dothan; Agent Dwayne Amos, Jacksonville; Agent Angel Rodriquez, Montgomery; and Agent Spencer Traywick, Mobile. The agents will be trained

### *The Colonels' Corner, continued from Page 2*

proclaimed traitors and tortured before they died. Twelve had their homes ransacked and burned. Two lost their sons serving in the Revolutionary Army, and another had two sons captured. Nine of the 56 fought and died from wounds or hardships during the war.

On June 22 of this year, 37 new troopers took an oath, or made a pledge, if you will, to uphold and defend that very same Constitution of the United States and to faithfully discharge the duties of an Alabama State Trooper.

We, who have gone before them, know what lies ahead and what is expected of them. It can be summed up in one word, “SACRIFICE.” Let us never forget the sacrifice of our forefathers, nor the sacrifice of those who patrol our highways to keep us all safe.

Freedom is never free!

*Courtesy, Service, and Protection Since 1935*



**Driver license applicant uses new automated testing kiosk.**

The month of July ushered in several new initiatives for the department, including the availability of automated driver license testing at every driver license examining site in the state. Examiners are touting the time they save not having to grade the traditional paper tests, which means more time to assist customers. Updating the testing process ensures the integrity of the tests and promotes both security and efficiency.

A grant from the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administra-

tion funded the purchase of new portable, lap-top testing devices and additional permanent testing kiosks. Col. Mike Coppage, Public Safety director, said the portable testing devices facilitate automated testing at part-time testing sites, where examiners must transport the equipment with them as they travel to various assigned locations during the week.

Coppage said FMCSA has provided a total of approximately \$1 million in grant funding since automated testing was initiated in Alabama in February 2003 at eight commercial driver license testing sites. He said automated testing expanded to 16 examining office locations in 2004, and this latest expansion provides statewide availability.

Automated testing is available to all applicants taking the driver license knowledge test, in-

cluding commercial driver license applicants, Class D or regular operator applicants, and motorcycle license applicants. CDL applicants may only take a single knowledge test at part-time stations, however. CDL applicants who need to take multiple tests must do so at a five-day licensing station.

The touch-screen system is user-friendly and helps applicants test more quickly. The tests can accommodate 13 foreign languages and offers headphones to those who prefer an audio test. Since questions are selected randomly from a database of more than 800 entries, no two tests are alike, insuring the security of the testing process.

A list of examining office locations and schedules is available on Public Safety's Web site, [www.dps.alabama.gov](http://www.dps.alabama.gov), under the Driver License Division link.

## Just the Stats, Please!

Source: Alabama Accident Summary, 2005

ROAD SURFACE CONDITION	Total Crashes	Fatalities	Injuries
Dry	115,336	949	36,016
Wet	26,959	179	7,773
Icy	161	1	38
Snowy/Slushy	14	0	6
Muddy	39	0	11
Other	31	0	10
Unknown	1,408	8	301
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>143,948</b>	<b>1,134</b>	<b>44,155</b>

*Alabama Department of*  
**Public Safety**



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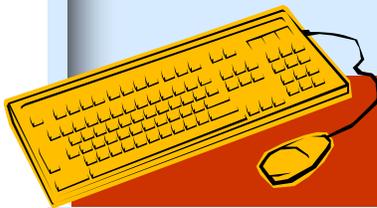
Capt. Loyd Arrington, ABI  
Capt. Danny Hall, Highway Patrol  
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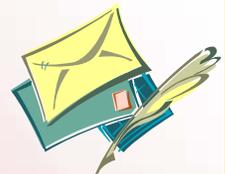
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