

Family First

Volume 5, Issue 1
Spring 2003



John and James.
**The twin apostles
of East Texas
law enforcement**

Family First

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Spring 2003

cover story



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Honored by Texans
May 5, 2003

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The Combined Law Enforcement Associations of Texas offers a Family of Benefit and Insurance Plans to protect officers and their families. At CLEAT, we are proud to put families first.

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CLEAT, POMF: Inspiring Texas to honor her fallen peace officers...one hero at a time

**By Ron DeLord
CLEAT President**

In May, services will be held in cities across the country as law enforcement officers and their families come together to pay tribute to their fallen.

In every odd-numbered year since 1987, CLEAT has proudly organized a memorial service honoring Texas peace officers. The service is indeed a labor of love as CLEAT staff work closely for many months with volunteers

from across the state planning and coordinating a tribute that has become a model for other states.

CLEAT Finance Director Susan Collins has coordinated the service since the beginning. Over the years, she has touched so many families, many of whom continue to play an

active role in memorial projects.

Our Executive Board, local presidents and even non-members contribute money and time, and peddle our commemorative pins and wares to help raise money for the service.

While those officers who participate in the ceremony, leave changed in some way, CLEAT wants the thousands more who have to stay home and work their shifts to know that we stood in your place and did the

right thing by those who have fallen in the line of duty.

We know we can't ever put the pieces back together for the families left behind, but we do all we possibly can to make sure that the grieving families are put in a place of honor and respect.



Legislative Assistant Kristi Hill pours over each memorial resolution and follows its progress through the Capitol. She makes sure the legislator's staff working on the project knows how much CLEAT appreciates their hard work.

Throughout the year, the Peace Officers Memorial Foundation hosts motorcycle runs, golf tournaments and other benefits to raise money for the biennial service. Rebecca Harkrider works on the details of these events with Susan and others to put the memorial at the front of any charitable event that law enforcement officers are involved with. CLEAT does more for those whose names are on the wall than all other organizations combined. The concept behind the memorial wall was ours and we cherish our role in protecting it.

But, we do more than try to raise money. One day recently, I saw uniformed officers walking past the CLEAT Building with Assistant General Counsel H.L. O'Neal. I discovered they had been to an appeal hearing on behalf of an officer who had been killed in the line of duty

but the state had refused to pay a death benefit.

In spite of all we have to do in the Capitol as we protect jurisdiction, officers rights and pensions, and push forward on labor issues, there is nothing more precious to us than the issues surrounding the death of an officer.

CLEAT worked for years to raise the death benefit for police survivors, and Legislative Director Charley Wilkison continues to watch any bill that touches benefits for widows and families of slain officers. In budget cutting years, we get very nervous because the state could easily decide to stop funding for education benefits or some other needed benefit.

CLEAT's website is constantly kept up to date when there is a death of a law enforcement officer. Chris Jones is meticulous and quick when announcing the death of an officer regardless of whether he or she was a CLEAT member.

In this edition of *Family First*, you will also read about Doug Hudson and David Freytag. They've
(Please see CLEAT, Page 5)



Look for complete coverage of the 2003 Texas Peace Officers Memorial Service in the summer issue of Family First.

Addison officer becomes first to benefit from Biles disability law

By Shelly Wilkison

Addison Police Lt. Mark Raines has spent most of the past three years in his living room recliner. He starts almost every day at 4 a.m. with 60 milligrams of morphine, and will take up to 80 milligrams more before the day's end.

"I was a successful cop for many years, and I could handle most things by myself," he said. "But for the last three years, I've been stuck in a recliner and I can't do for myself like before."

Lt. Raines, now 53, has come a long way since his last night on the street three years ago. At 215 pounds, the former SWAT lieutenant ran five times each week and was the picture of good health.

"I guess it is a little unusual for a lieutenant to work the street, but I didn't like being cooped up in an office. I enjoyed what I was doing," he said.

But it all came to a grinding halt on February 1, 2000. Lt. Raines, a 28-year law enforcement veteran, was the second officer to respond to a robbery call at an Addison liquor store. In his escape, the suspect had discarded gloves and a ski mask in a trail to an adjacent self storage area that was protected by a 12-foot wall.

Lt. Raines and another officer scaled the wall hoping to find the suspect on the other side.

"I was at the top of the wall when I lost my footing and fell to the asphalt. Because it was so dark and I couldn't see the ground under me, I couldn't time

my landing with bent knees to absorb the shock," he said.

"I went back to work after it happened, and for two weeks took handfuls of ibuprofen thinking I had just sprained my back," he said.

When he realized he wasn't getting any relief, he went to a doctor and an MRI revealed the extent of the damage.

Because he landed on the asphalt with his legs straight, the ligaments in both knees were torn and three disks in his back were jammed.

Since that time, he's had two surgeries to repair the damage to his

knees, but back surgery is far more risky. Doctors say a triple disk fusion procedure could result in paralysis; and at best, the surgery would likely not go far enough to eliminate the pain. Within eight months after his injury, he had lost 62 pounds because the morphine depleted his appetite.

Doctors say Lt. Raines will never be whole again and can't return to his job as a police officer.

"Although it took some time, I've gotten over the psychological aspects of that and have accepted the fact that I'm homebound," he said.

When Lt. Raines discovered more than a year ago that the City of Addison would not continue to carry his insurance when he took medical retirement because he was two years short of age 55, the long-time CLEAT member called Staff Attorney Michael Rickman in Mesquite.

"I'd been a member of CLEAT for years, but I never called on them for anything. I've never been a big union person. I guess I was kind of from the old school in that I just took my licks without calling for help (from CLEAT)," he said.

Mr. Rickman told him about the Bill Biles Act that CLEAT passed through the Legislature in 2001. The law provides officers disabled in the line of duty as a result of a criminal act

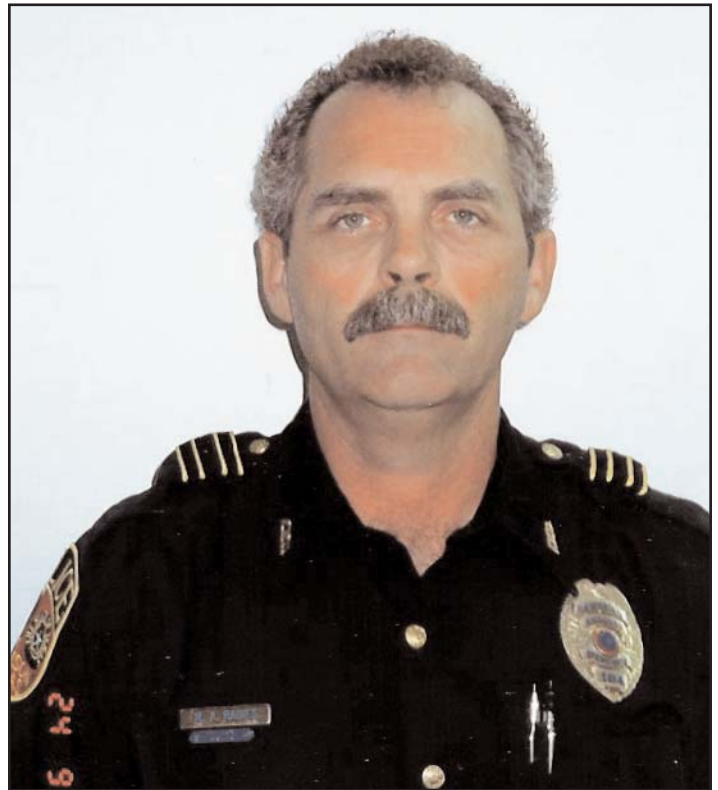
"Of course the first thing we had to do was see where we could cut back. My wife asked me if I still wanted to be a member of CLEAT, and I said yes. I thank my lucky stars for that, that I had a resource to go to for help."

**Lt. Mark Raines
Addison Police Department**

with a monthly stipend from the Texas Crime Victims Compensation Fund to help make up for their lost income.

Lt. Raines was the first officer to inquire to the Texas Attorney General's Office about the benefits. It was September 2001, and the law had just taken effect. Lt. Raines said employees advised him they had no application form yet. So he waited five months and called back.

Three weeks after his first phone call in January 2002, he received a call back. However, there was still no application form and apparently no process in place for handling officer



Addison Police Lt. Mark Raines is the first Texas peace officer to benefit from CLEAT's Bill Biles Act passed in 2001 that provides disability income to officers disabled in the line of duty as a result of a criminal act. (Courtesy Photo)

disability claims.

"So, they told me to get a Crime Victims Compensation form from the police department and just write 'Police Officer' at the top," he said.

Several more weeks passed, and still no one from the Attorney General's Office followed through, so he called Mr. Rickman again.

"I understood that CLEAT would carry my banner if I'd been denied something, but I couldn't even get that far," he said.

This time, Mr. Rickman referred him to Rebecca Harkrider in the Austin CLEAT office, who had recently been assigned to family assistance in the Peace Officers Memorial Foundation.

Lt. Raines said Mrs. Harkrider came immediately to his aid.

"It couldn't have worked out any better for me," he said. "She championed my cause and she wouldn't give up."

Mrs. Harkrider said she quickly realized the Attorney General's Office wasn't prepared to handle officer disability.

"They had no clue how to process these claims," she said. "It took con-

stant calling and meeting with the heads of the agency, and even still there are things to be worked out."

But after months of persistence, Mrs. Harkrider was able to help the agency create a mechanism to process the claims. And once the process was established, Lt. Raines started receiving the benefits.

"I'll get a check every week from the State of Texas for the rest of my life," he said. "And this puts me back financially right where I was when I left the department."

Lt. Raines said when he retired, he took a 50 percent cut in pay.

"Of course the first thing we had to do was see where we could cut back. My wife asked me if I still wanted to be a member of CLEAT, and I said yes," he said. "I thank my lucky stars for that, that I had a resource to go to for help."

Lt. Raines had disability coverage through the City of Addison that pays up to 60 percent of his base pay. The state made up the difference of 40 percent.

"Thanks to Rebecca's tenacity and (Continued on following page)

(Continued from previous page)

vigorous work, we got everything squared away and we don't have to worry about how to make ends meet anymore," he said.

Mrs. Harkrider said the battle isn't quite over yet. In recent weeks, the City's insurance company has threatened to cut the benefit it's paying, claiming that it is "the payer of last resort." But according to the law passed by CLEAT, the State is the payer of last resort.

Mrs. Harkrider explained that the law caps the amount an officer may receive in his or her lifetime to \$200,000. If the State has to pay out more so that insurance companies can hold onto their profits, an officer will reach the limit sooner depriving him of needed assistance later in life.

"The big concern is to make sure an officer is taken care of the rest of his life. We have to make sure the money doesn't run out too soon," she said.

"This was such a big fight to get this law passed, that I think it's become our duty as well to help protect these funds. If it means going up against an insurance

company to make sure they're paying their part, then that's what we'll have to do," Mrs. Harkrider said.

"I have never met Rebecca, but I'd hate to have her working against me," Lt. Raines laughed.

Mrs. Harkrider said the Attorney General's Office is first filing all officers' disability claims through the regular Crime Victims Compensation

to work as a peace officer again, the claim carries over to the Bill Biles side of the Fund.

Mrs. Harkrider said officers qualify for CVC benefits if they were injured on duty as a result of a criminal act. The disability may be either temporary or permanent, and benefits may cover the officer's regular salary as well as any income normally earned through

ue the claim.

Mrs. Harkrider said she has been unofficially appointed to be a liaison between the agency and police officers, regardless of their affiliation with CLEAT. The Attorney General's Office has invited her to participate in training to find out how the Crime Victims Compensation Fund is administered and how claims are processed.

Since she first started working with Lt. Raines, four other officers have been referred to her for assistance.

"The AG's Office has come a long way in developing this process," Mrs. Harkrider said. "At first, they were making no attempt to distinguish officers from the general public, and now they're making big steps to accommodate them."

"The AG's Office will be better off for what she's done," Lt. Raines said. "And I think that shows the strength of an organization like CLEAT."

The officer disability legislation was named for Waco Police Officer Bill Biles, who survived multiple gunshot wounds while responding to a disturbance call in 1996. The injuries left him permanently disabled.

Officer Biles, who each year at budget time had to beg Waco city leaders to continue paying him, worked closely with CLEAT Legislative Director Charley Wilkison to pass the law, which was authored by State Sen. Gonzalo Barrientos, D-Austin. It took two sessions of the Legislature before it was finally adopted in 2001.

"When Mr. Rickman first told me about Bill Biles, I went back through my old *Family First* magazines and found the story about him. I'm glad CLEAT was willing to keep fighting for people like us," he said.



Rebecca Harkrider is the Fundraiser and Family Assistance Coordinator for the Peace Officers Memorial Foundation, a 501(c)(3) charitable organization of the Combined Law Enforcement Associations of Texas. (Photo by Chris Jones)

Fund. When the officer reaches the maximum benefit of \$50,000 there and he is permanently disabled and unable

extra-duty assignments. Every six months, officers must provide the state with medical documentation to contin-

CLEAT committed to families of the fallen

(Continued from Page 3)

worked tirelessly over the years to make sure every detail of each memorial service is just right. Texas peace officers owe a debt of gratitude to these two men.

Why does CLEAT do all of this?

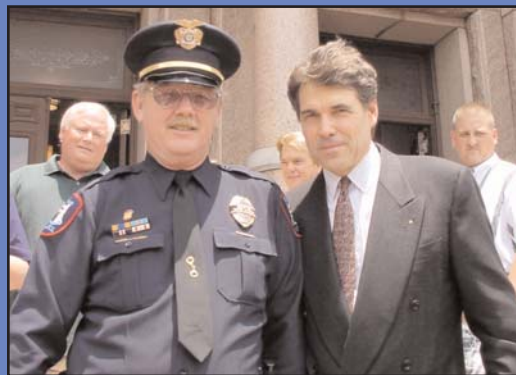
CLEAT is an organization staffed by people who deeply care about how we can make your life better. Whether you call our insurance agency or log on to our website to monitor pending legislation, you will find that the people here are deeply dedicated to taking care of your needs.

And when we hear the terrible violent news that someone has been killed, our lawyers, our support staff, our lobbyists, our field organizers, our negotiators, our insurance staff -- all of CLEAT feels the loss and pain, and vows anew to continue the fight to make things better.

To find out more about benefits available to Texas peace officers, go to www.oag.state.tx.us.

or contact POMF's
Rebecca Harkrider
800-252-8153

Waco Police Officer Bill Biles with Gov. Rick Perry at the 2001 Texas Peace Officers Memorial Service.





HONORING THE FAMILIES OF THE FALLEN

When Todd, Doug and David aren't on patrol, they are working to honor the sacrifices of Texas peace officers. They are among the many who make

UNSPOKEN
PROMISES
TO THE FALLEN

by shelly wilkison

Doug Hudson and David Freytag were patrol partners in Houston for so long that sometimes a simple look between them will substitute for an entire conversation. And in the hectic days preceding the Texas Peace Officers Memorial Service, their version of telepathy often comes in handy.

Since the Combined Law Enforcement Associations of Texas organized the first statewide memorial service in 1987, the partners have been at the helm of the ceremony working tirelessly to give the families of their fallen colleagues a tribute they will always remember.

"Some accuse us of being obsessed with this, and I guess in a way, we really are," said Officer Freytag, a 40-year veteran patrolman with the Houston Police Department.

Harris County Deputy Doug Hudson, who serves as State Coordinator for the Memorial Service, says he and his former partner spend months and months of every odd-numbered year organizing the event. With staff support provided by the Peace Officers Memorial Foundation, a CLEAT charitable organization, event organizers contact every law enforcement agency in Texas encouraging officer participation.

"We've come a long way since that first memorial service in 1987," Deputy Hudson remembers. "We started with only seven flag teams and this year we're expecting 42."

Deputy Hudson and Officer Freytag were charter members of the HPD Honor Guard when it formed in 1972. Since that time, the officers say the unit has participated in about 600 police funerals across Texas. In 2002 alone, the Honor Guard attended 40 police funerals.

CLEAT President Ron DeLord, who came up with the idea of a statewide police memorial service in the mid-1980s, said because of its expertise, the HPD Honor Guard under Hudson's direction volunteered to take the lead role in coordinating the first ceremony. And although he retired from HPD years ago and went to work for the sheriff's office,

Deputy Hudson has continued to coordinate the event.

“With all the different agencies that have become involved in this over the years, the task of organizing the ceremony itself has become kind of like herding cats,” said Mr. DeLord. “Doug and Dave have worked hard to encourage agencies to participate, and then they perform the tedious task of making sure the ceremony flows with the crispness of a military service.”

Mr. DeLord said he admires the officers for their unwavering commitment to the families of Texas peace officers.

“Sometimes it’s hard to explain to those outside the police family the need that we feel to honor those who willingly sacrifice their lives to protect others. We’ve learned over the years that no one is going to bring honor to these people if we don’t do it ourselves,” he said. “Doug and Dave are among those who have such a deep appreciation for the sacrifice that they’re willing to do whatever it takes to make sure that sacrifice is honored.”

A Calling to Honor The Fallen

For Deputy Hudson and Officer Freytag, honoring the fallen is a calling and they spend untold hours preparing for memorial events and funerals. Organizing the statewide service involves months of preparation as the officers work with POMF staff to contact the various participating agencies, plan the program, mark off the parade route with Austin law enforcement officials, make arrangements to transport family members to the State Capitol, and much more.

Deputy Hudson says in the early years of the state memorial service, Texas police departments were not as conscious of the need to honor their fallen officers as they are today. Many departments would not permit officers to take off work to attend the service. But, as survivor groups like COPS (Concerns of Police Survivors) have become more active, police administrations have become more permissive on the issue.

He said in 1987, only about 500 officers attended the statewide service, compared to almost 10,000 in 1999 when the Texas Peace Officers Memorial was dedicated on the Capitol grounds. In May, organizers expect upwards of 250 police motorcycles, some 300 bicycles and dozens of mounted patrolmen. All participate in a solemn parade that starts on Congress Avenue and makes its way north to the south steps of the State Capitol.

The involvement of COPS has significantly improved the state service, Officer Freytag said. COPS volunteers like Stephanie Duplantis of the Metroplex Chapter play a significant role in the event by staying in close contact with surviving family members during this emotional time.

Mrs. Duplantis’ husband, Haltom City Police Officer Gary Hires, was killed in the line of duty in 1993. Since that time, she has become a vocal advocate for other survivors across Texas and has helped to bring their needs to the forefront of public discussion.

“The enthusiasm COPS brings and the network they have to work with survivors is incredible,” said Officer Freytag. “Bringing in COPS may be the most important thing we’ve done to improve the quality of the service. Now, we have organized care for the survivors -- that’s what COPS brought to the service.”

He said it was during one of the many parking lot conversations that he and Deputy Hudson have regularly that they decided to invite COPS to participate in the service.

“Doug and I were sitting on the parking lot at I-10 (Interstate Highway 10 in Houston) when we decided to invite COPS, and that’s when this service moved away from the ‘Doug and Dave Show,’” he said.

He explained that in the early years of the service, some were critical that the two officers’ tight reign on the event discouraged the involvement of other departments and state agencies.

In 1999, the Texas Commission on Law Enforcement Officer Standards and Education was statutorily given control of the service for

(Please see MEMORIAL, Page 9)

(TOP) Houston Police Officer David Freytag moderates a portion of the 2001 Candlelight Service at the Texas Peace Officers Memorial. (RIGHT) Harris County Sheriff’s Deputy Doug Hudson is the coordinator of the statewide memorial service. (Photos by Paul Buck)



It all happened so fast. It seemed to Darrell Clayton that one minute, his 18-year-old son was the picture of health - running marathons and travelling the world. And a moment later, he was rushing him to an emergency room two hours from home, praying that he wouldn't slip into a coma.

"There's just no words to describe how incredibly frightening this is," said Det. Clayton of the Jefferson County Sheriff's Office.

Jared Clayton was taking some time to see the world before starting college. He was in Mexico last fall working as an extra in a movie when the headaches started.

"He didn't tell anyone about them, he just took aspirin or something when they would hit," Det. Clayton said. "In January (about two months later), the headaches got bad enough that he came home and made his own doctor's appointment."

In February, an MRI revealed that Jared was suffering from a brain stem tumor that was malignant.

"It was a grade 4 glioblastoma, which is the worst cancer there is. It's hardest to treat and frequently comes back after treatment," he said.

Three days after the test results revealed the tumor, Det. Clayton had to rush his youngest son to the emergency room at Houston's M.D. Anderson Hospital, about two hours from their home in Groves.

By the time they arrived, Jared was almost in a coma.

During emergency surgery February 27, doctors discovered the tumor was pressing against a drain that helps circulate spinal fluid around the brain and into the spine. So before they could do anything about the tumor, surgeons had to create a drain to remove the spinal fluid that had collected on

the brain.

One week later, they did another surgery to try to remove the tumor.

"But it was so deep in the thalamus, which is the region of the brain that controls just about everything, that they couldn't get all of it," said Det. Clayton. They were, however, able to get the cyst, which is the worst part of the tumor.

A week later, the radiation treatments began. Det. Clayton said because the cancer is the fastest

growing type, there was simply no time to lose.

had been donated to a special account established for Jared's medical expenses.

The local newspaper also published a story on the family's situation.

Det. Clayton says like him, his

son has been amazed by the outpouring of support from the community.

"No words can explain what this has meant to our family," he said.

"This has been overwhelming, and I am very humbled by the support we've received from friends and family, and even complete strangers."

Mr. Watts knew Det. Clayton's father, who was a union activist and business agent for the Boilermakers Union in the Golden Triangle for many years. Lige

Clayton was always willing to take up the fight of CLEAT members in the Triangle whenever he and his union could help.

"I personally feel gratified in knowing that we have been able to come to his son's aid in some small way," said Mr. Watts.

He said he was proud to know that CLEAT members across the state have come to the aid of a father and his son.

"I heard that one of our locals saw the web posting and respond-

A father's heartache soothed by support from fellow officers, community

by Shelly Wilkison

"It's hard to put into words what it's like to see your child have to go through something like this. But, Jared has stayed positive the whole time, and that has made all the difference."

**Det. Darrell Clayton
Jefferson County Sheriff's Office**

ed with a \$500 donation. In the end, having the honor of assisting, however little, in situations like this is at the root of what CLEAT is all about," said Mr. Watts.

As a father and grandfather himself, Mr. Watts said he was especially concerned for Det. Clayton and his son.

"As I talked to Darrell, I could sense the helplessness of a father wanting to help his child and not having the total ability to do so," he said. "We who have the privilege of being parents know there is heartache in raising our children, but the most agonizing of those heartaches are medical situations that a parent can't change. Instead, we can only pray for recovery and make sure our children have the best professional care available."

Det. Clayton said he contacted the county's insurance company, Southeast Texas Government Employees Insurance, to see if he could get some relief.

In addition to relief from the high prescription co-pay, he said he has also been concerned about his ability to cover his son once he turns 19 this summer.

He said the policy calls for a dramatic increase in the premium for a non-minor dependent, unless he or she is enrolled full-time as a

(Continued from previous page)

college student.

"So, on his 19th birthday in August, his insurance premiums will triple," Det. Clayton said. "I may be forced to take him off my insurance."

He said after one or two conversations, the insurance company seems sympathetic to his situation, and representatives said they would try to find a way to reduce his out of pocket expenses.

In the meantime, he has been able to secure some financial assistance through M.D. Anderson Hospital.

"This is an extremely tedious process. The paperwork is very hard to understand, and there are tons of it," he said.

"This whole experience has been like a nightmare, and it's only been two months since it all started," Det. Clayton said.

The 21-year officer, who is currently assigned to the Criminal Investigations Division of the Sheriff's Office, took a month off from work to stay with his son in the hospital in Houston.

"It's hard to put into words what it's like to see your child have to go through something like this," he said. "But, Jared has stayed positive the whole time, and that has made all the difference."

He said his son trained himself to be a marathon runner, and had even won some medals. In high school, he was active in cross country track.

After Jared's surgery, surgeons

warned his parents that their son might never walk again. Although he did lose some use of his left side, he is able to walk with a cane and doctors are calling that a miracle.

His son spends weekdays with an aunt in Houston so that he can receive daily radiation treatments at M.D. Anderson Hospital. On weekends, Det. Clayton brings him home to Groves. Jared's mother lives nearby and on weekends, he sees them both.

The radiation treatments will continue a few more weeks, and then Jared will come home for one

To help Jared's family pay for his medication, send a contribution to:

**Gulf Employees Credit Union
Account # 52603-00 (Jared Clayton)
5140 W. Parkway
Groves, TX 77619**

month during which time he will be taken off all of the cancer medication. At the end of that month, doctors will re-examine the tumor and determine whether continued oral chemo treatment is necessary.

Since the surgery, Det. Clayton said his son has only felt really bad for two days. He isn't in any pain, but he's still weak from the experience.

"Today he called and said two handfuls of hair had come out in the shower," Det. Clayton said. "Since it hadn't happened yet, he was thinking he wasn't going to lose his hair.

"Jared had some big dreams,



Jared Clayton, 18, was a marathon runner before a tumor was discovered in his brain this year. He is the son of Jefferson County Sheriff's Deputy Darrell Clayton. This photo was made about one month before the diagnosis. (Courtesy Photo)

but for now, things are on hold, and we're just trying to get through this one day at a time," he said.

Jared was interested in acting, and since he graduated from high school last May, he landed a couple small parts.

When he first became ill in Mexico, he was working as an extra in a movie with Russell Crowe, "Master and Commander -- the Far Side of the World," scheduled for release in November.

Jared had been selected to play a soldier in the movie "Alamo" that

is currently being filmed in Texas. He was chosen to be a soldier in Sam Houston's regiment fighting at San Jacinto.

It was a role he was especially looking forward to, but now he isn't physically able to play.

"He's been upbeat the whole time, and not once has he gotten upset or asked 'why me.' He says he's going to beat this. He says he's going to run again," Det. Clayton said. "And I believe him."

Memorial service is a labor of love for organizers

(Continued from Page 7)

the dedication of the Memorial. That same year, a candlelight service was added to the memorial agenda for the evening prior to the noon memorial service.

Because TCLEOSE is a state agency, it didn't have the resources to "act out the rituals of the ceremony," said Officer Freytag. "I believe the memorial service has to belong to rank and file officers."

In 2001, the services returned under the auspices of the POMF, the officers and volunteers.

This year, 201 names will be added to the Memorial. Among those, 30 officers who made the

ultimate sacrifice in 2001 and 2002, will receive special recognition during the service. Many of the others have been uncovered through POMF-backed research. Deputy Hudson is one of about a dozen researchers who volunteer their time to track down information about officers of the distant past who were killed in the line of duty.

After he uncovered information about an officer killed about 100 years ago, he was asked by the officer's 83-year-old daughter, "Why did you do that for my daddy?"

"If it deserves to be there, it's going to be there," he responded.

"To me, to see an officer's name get to where it belongs on the Memorial is a big reward."

Mr. DeLord, who has become the leader of the Texas movement to bring recognition to the sacrifices of fallen peace officers, said our state continues to rank among the top three states for the number of officers killed here each year.

"Over time, I think we've come to the realization that the public should see that a lot of people are hurt when an officer is killed. It's not just the officer's family who grieves, the extended police family also feels the pain," said Mr. DeLord. "These memorial services help them see the pain and dev-

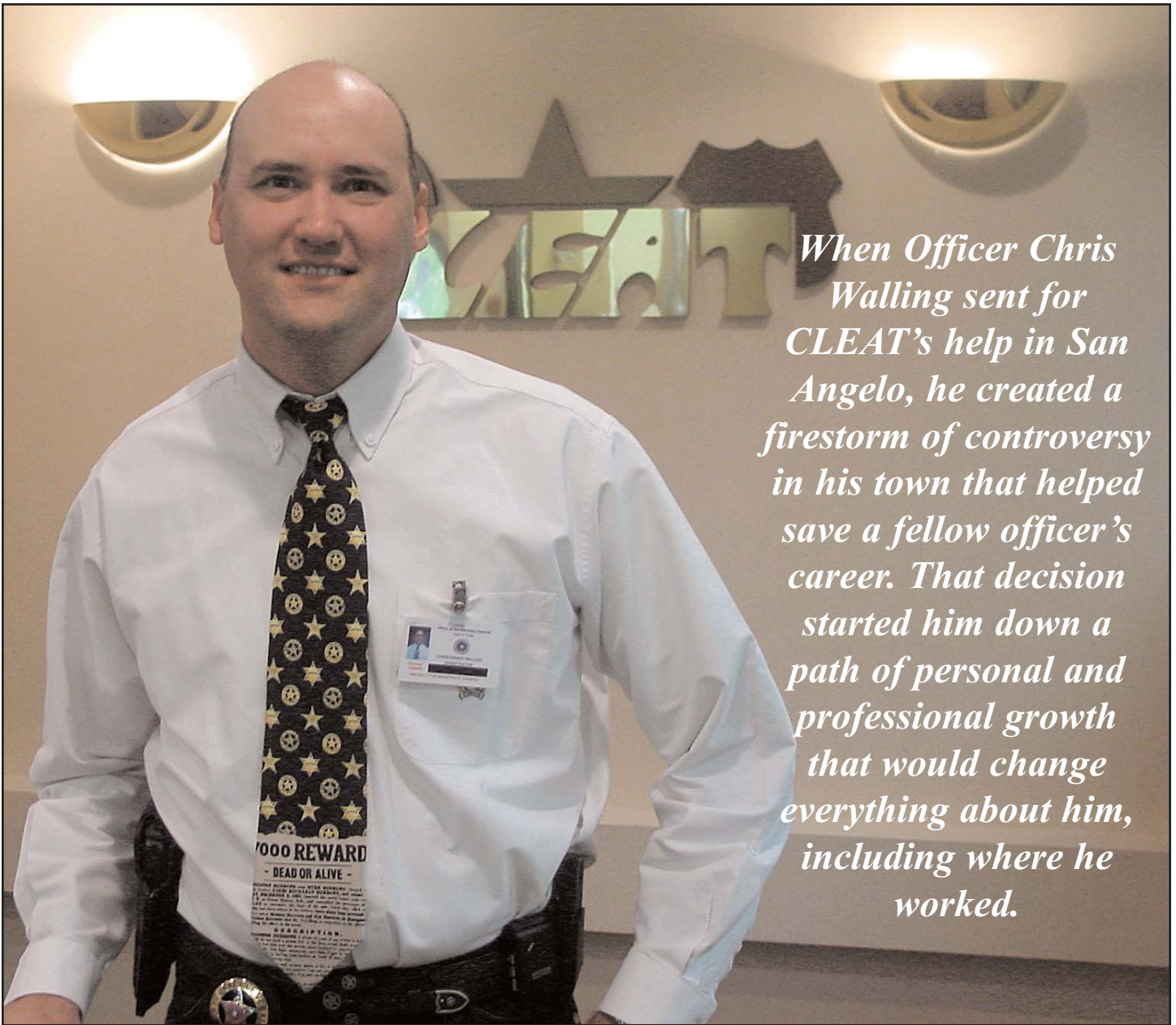
astation that's left after an officer is killed."

Mr. DeLord said the service was purposely planned for odd-numbered years when the Texas Legislature is in session because politicians especially need to be aware of the sacrifices officers and their families make every day.

Mr. DeLord recalled the first state service in 1987. Ross Perot, who was the guest speaker, gave Mr. DeLord some important advice after the event.

"He told me I should move the dignitaries (elected officials) off to the side and move the families to a place of more prominence," said

(Please see SERVICE, Page 14)



When Officer Chris Walling sent for CLEAT's help in San Angelo, he created a firestorm of controversy in his town that helped save a fellow officer's career. That decision started him down a path of personal and professional growth that would change everything about him, including where he worked.

Former union activist now concentrating on his own career

One day this month, Officer Walling left his office in the Price Daniel Building in downtown Austin, walked down to 14th Street and walked a few hundred yards to CLEAT headquarters.

Officer Walling says it's strange to have CLEAT so close by when a short time ago, it seemed so far away. He made sure his dues were paid, his new address and contact numbers were recorded, and then he asked for some membership applications for his new friends in the Texas Attorney General's Office.

He had his photo snapped and met

some old friends in the hall for a chat. Yes, he likes the new job. His wife is expecting next month and they are looking forward to building a new home. His three-year-old son is looking forward to having a little brother or sister, and all has turned out well.

Working as a detective inside the investigative unit of the Texas Attorney General's Office is the latest milestone in Officer Walling's journey toward bettering himself and his law enforcement career. He will tell you straight that his affiliation with CLEAT has impacted his journey.

Officer Walling had been a CLEAT

member for years before he attended his first CLEAT Convention in 2001. Like many of the officers in the San Angelo Police Department, Officer Walling had made a decision to join CLEAT in a department that had been with another statewide group for years.

"I was part of a group of officers who wanted more than just a card in our wallets," he said. "I wanted reassurance that while I worked and did my job protecting the public, that I could count on something more than fraternity and professionalism as my backup. I wanted an organization that would do its very best to back me

legally and politically."

Officer Walling was warned by some of the old timers in the department about joining CLEAT because the organization was too radical and too political. Officer Walling's family had always been involved in politics in West Texas and he didn't see the problem.

"Even though I was a serious, hard-nosed Republican, I liked the political side of CLEAT even when I didn't agree with all their endorsements," he said. "The radical part was okay as long as they were being radical on

(Continued on following page)

(Continued from previous page)
behalf of me or some other cop.”

He attended local association meetings and became involved in recruiting new hires, as well as veteran officers, to join CLEAT. Later, he would be elected Vice President of the San Angelo Coalition of Police.

When Alfred Rios, a well-respected officer in the department and in the community, came under fire from the Chief for warning two convicted felons not to be hanging out together, Officer Walling believed it was time to act and called CLEAT.

One of the paroled felons had murdered Officer Rios' brother years earlier. The convicted murderer complained to the Chief that he had been harassed by the officer, and the Chief chose to take the side of the killer. He placed Officer Rios under house arrest, stopping his work on extra jobs and nearly bankrupting his family.

CLEAT Attorney Michael Rickman was assigned to Officer Rios' case.

“The climate inside the department and in the community was one of growing disbelief that an officer could be treated like this,” Officer Walling remembered. “So at the CLEAT Convention, I made a point to talk to Dwight Tiller (Director of Membership Development) and Charley Wilkison (Political and Legislative Director) about bringing the situation to the public's attention.

“A few days later, we were setting up an interview for Alfred, who was also a military reservist, with CLEAT's *Family First Magazine*,” he said. Officer Rios' story appeared in the November 2001 edition of the magazine.

One week after the interview, CLEAT held a news conference to defend the officer's honor. Dozens of police officers and their families held homemade signs and posters supporting Officer Rios.

“All along the sidewalk outside the police department, there were kids and families waving American flags and holding signs. As Charley spoke about the injustice of what had happened, there were lots of tear-filled eyes among the media, the crowd and even the officers,” he said. “The pressure inside the department was mounting as the political heat was being applied outside on the sidewalk. I gained an even greater amount of respect for CLEAT that day because of their willingness to stand and deliver.”

Although Officer Walling and his fellow members in San Angelo had to fight other political battles after that involving accusations against the entire department of racism, murder, and other false charges, the terrain had changed for him. He began to re-examine himself and his future in law enforcement.

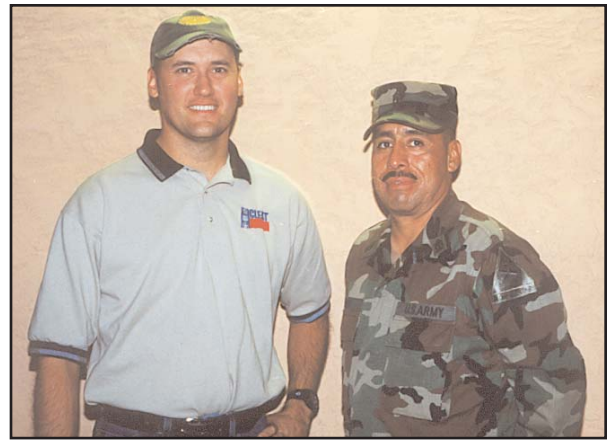
“The officers who were helped by the events touted me as the hero of the

day for helping to bring in CLEAT and make things better. Those who wanted to garner kudos from the Chief looked at it differently,” he said. “I began to see a bigger world.”

Working for a state law enforcement agency was exactly what Officer Walling wanted. He wasn't interested in the highway patrol or a boring desk job, however. Instead, he wanted to investigate crimes and wanted to

(Please see **WALLING**,
Page 16)

Former San Angelo Police Officer Chris Walling (left) and Officer Alfred Rios had their photo taken after an interview with Family First Magazine in November 2001.



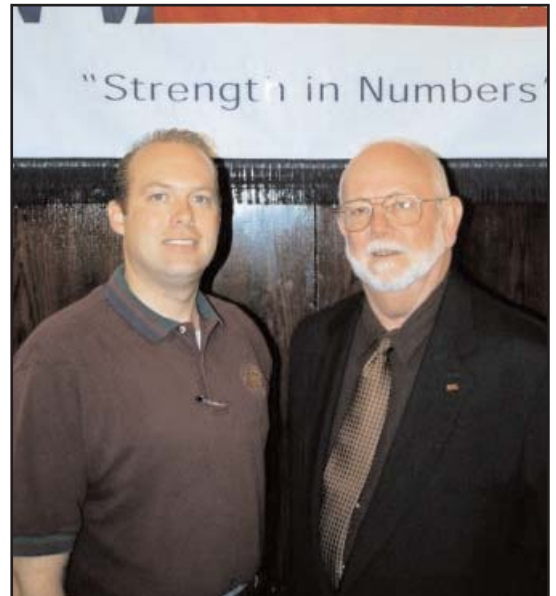
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TWINS IN POLICING



Gregg County Deputy John Mathis (left) and Longview Police Officer James Mathis (right) have been wearing guns since age 5 (far left) when their mother dressed them as cowboys.

For Longview's law breakers, Mathis brothers mean

DOUBLE TROUBLE

There's a story of a hard-working East Texas cop who puts in a full day's work at the police department, then changes uniforms and patrol cars and goes to work in the sheriff's office. The town drunks shake their heads in admiration for him for his dogged dedication and his willingness to work all the time, 24/7, with no sleep.

"People get us mixed up all the time, and most times we don't bother correcting them," laughs James Mathis. "We just go along with it."

"He sure gets more than his share of the hugs that way. All those hugs he gets -- most of them are intended for me," his brother John Mathis quickly interjects.

Their mother named them James and John after her favorite apostles,

but instead of growing up to lead the church, the twins are making a difference on the streets of their home county in deep East Texas.

"The ones causing trouble say, 'don't let the Mathis get on your back.' But the rest of them know that when

they have a problem they can come to us and we'll try to help," said John, a sergeant in the Gregg County Sheriff's Office.

Sgt. Mathis and his brother, Officer James Mathis of the Longview Police Department, were born and raised in

*Everybody in Longview knows the Mathis brothers.
They just don't always know who's who.*

While the 52-year-old twins have been known to take advantage of that on occasion, James and John say they're so much alike they don't bother correcting most people anymore.

by Shelly Wilkison
Photos by Paul Buck

Longview and have lived their entire lives in service to their community.

"Our grandfather was a police officer in Cleveland, Ohio. I guess we got our interest in law enforcement from him," said James.

But instead of going into police

work full-time when they finished school, the two brothers made a detour at the Stroh's Brewery and Can Plant where they worked for years until massive layoffs in the 1980's. That's when they traded in their reserve status for full-time positions in the sheriff's office and police department.

"Job wise, Stroh's was supposed to be the better job to support our families, and this was supposed to be the stand-by," said James. "But 62 percent of the company was laid off when I was and Longview was hurt real bad."

John, who boasts being the eldest by saying he finally got tired of his brother and "kicked him out of there," also claims to be the wisest of the two. He has served the past 25 years in the sheriff's office -- 16 of which he spent serving warrants.

James, who disputes the validity of his brother's claim to superior intelligence, recently transferred after many years on patrol and is now the school resource officer at Forest Park Middle School. He's been working full time for the police department since 1994.

"This is a great job," he said. "I enjoy working with the kids and every day there is something new."

The twins have fond memories of their own high school days. In fact, they haven't missed one class reunion.

And to hear them tell it, they frequently used their likeness to "explore" new possibilities.

Until they reached high school, James and John dressed alike every day. Each says he was ready to become more independent of the other, but the two remained virtually inseparable. They were both in the band -- James played saxophone and John played drums -- and they were both involved in baseball. During his senior year, James was named All-District Third Baseman.

"I was just the water boy," John laughed as he explained he had broken his leg playing football earlier in the school year.

The brothers have always been the best of friends, doing whatever it took to help each other out and bring a smile to the other's face.

John remembers the time his brother stepped in for him during a typing class.

"I couldn't type and he could. That teacher was a Miss Know-It-All, and she never knew the difference. We had a test that day and James passed it for me," he laughed.

But perhaps their favorite story of trading places happened on a high school band trip. After it got dark, the 16-year-old boys switched seats on the bus, and James' girlfriend didn't know until the next day that it was really John she had been smooching with the night before.

"I guess it was always hard for some people to tell us apart because we sure kept our girlfriends confused," John laughed. Today, John is married and has two daughters, ages 28 and 8.

"When we first got married, John told me he was going to sneak in my room one night and I'd never know the difference," laughed James' wife, Ruby. James and Ruby, who were high



John Mathis and his twin brother, James (foreground), have been best friends for 52 years. It's no surprise they would choose similar careers in law enforcement.

"The ones who call us 'Uncle Tom' when we're trying to do our jobs, are the same ones who call white officers 'racists' when they try to do theirs."

**Sgt. John Mathis
Gregg County Sheriff's Office**

school sweethearts, have two daughters.

"For a long time, I'd raise up in bed when he'd come in late just to make sure it was James," Mrs. Mathis said. "After all these years, they couldn't fool me now."

James' youngest daughter, Jennifer, says even though her uncle sounds just like her dad, she can always tell them apart. However, she can see how others get them confused.

She says her uncle has a shorter temper than her father. And she ought to know about that because she has

(Please see MATHIS, Page 15)



Law enforcement has become a family business for the Mathis family of Longview. Twin brothers John (left) and James (right) were role models for Jennifer Mathis (center), James' youngest daughter. Jennifer will graduate in December with a criminal justice degree from the University of Texas at Tyler. She is a past recipient of a Peace Officers Memorial Foundation scholarship.

Service is final tribute to Texas law enforcement heroes

(Continued from Page 9)

Mr. DeLord. "And that cut through me like a knife.

"He was right. This is the day for the families, and we've been doing it like that ever since," he said.

Officer Freytag says after years of participating in police funerals, they've come to understand the true significance of the ceremony and how many people are touched in some way.

"We can have an impact on how people perceive the police department," he said. "Even after just a few moments, they can know by our actions whether or not their loved one did the right thing by becoming a police officer.

"People don't like to be forgotten," he added. "And people are forever grateful for what we do to honor their loved ones. When we see the children of officers coming back to memorial services years later, that's our reward."

Harris County Deputy Todd Van Netter, a member of the sheriff's Honor Guard who assists Deputy Hudson and Officer Freytag with the events, says the memorial tribute creates a lasting bond between the participants and the survivors that is long remembered by both.

"There is a passion there, a feeling you develop toward the families and the children of these officers. And it doesn't matter how many services you do, each time you're moved by their loss," he said.

"If we can give them (survivors) the last good impression of the police, then we've done something good," said Deputy Van Netter. "Deep down, we do this because it makes us feel like we've done something good."

"There is a saying that goes something like, 'You haven't had a good day unless you do something for someone who can't pay you back,'" said Officer Freytag. "I think that sort of summarizes our contribution to this effort."

Deputy Hudson said this year's

memorial service came close to being moved from the Capitol grounds or postponed when the impending War with Iraq was announced last fall. For security purposes, state officials considered closing off the Capitol grounds to visitors. Deputy Hudson said some memorial arrangements were put on hold until confirmation was received in January.

A Lasting Impression

While the organizers participate in dozens of police funerals each year with their respective honor guards, each can vividly recall some services that have been especially memorable.

"Over the years, we've seen lots of grief," said Officer Freytag.

He becomes tearful as he recalls the funeral of Houston Police Officer James Boswell in 1989. Officer Boswell was shot on a traffic stop.

"I didn't know him (Officer Boswell), but I've come to know his parents in Mississippi. It was a cold day and there was a photograph

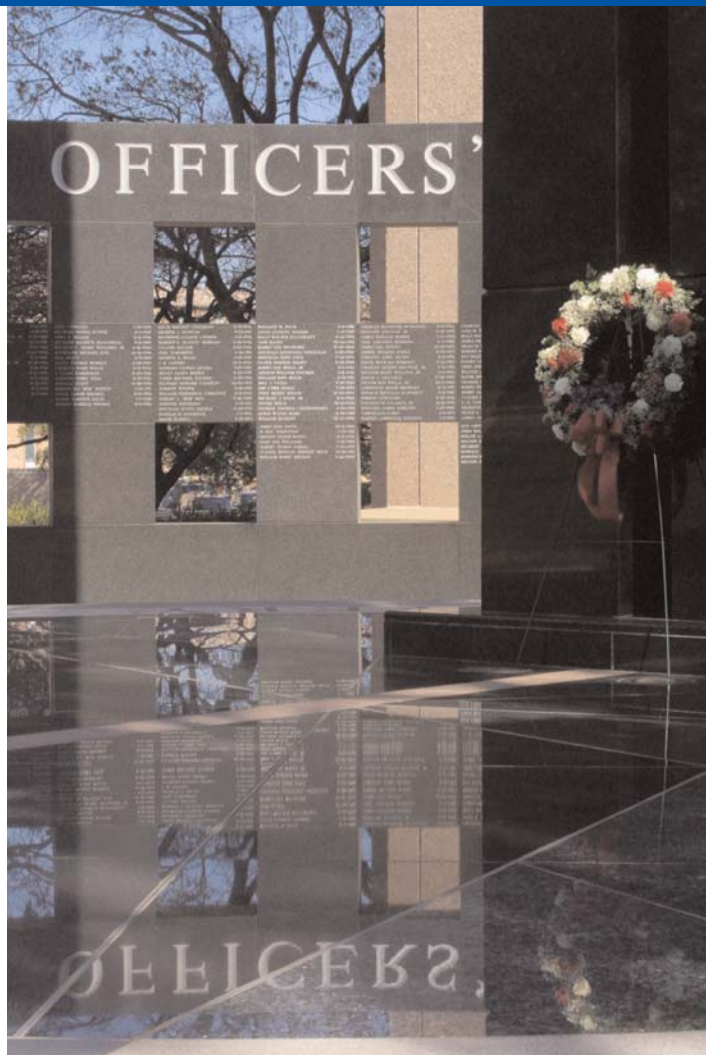
"There is a saying that goes something like, 'You haven't had a good day unless you do something for someone who can't pay you back. I think that sort of summarizes our contribution to this effort.'"

**Officer David Freytag
Houston Police Department**

taken of Mr. Boswell after I handed him his son's hat. You could see the anguish on his face as he held it to his chest and looked up toward the sky," he said as the tears continued. "I kept that picture and I don't think I'll ever forget the pain of that moment."

"When you do a lot of (Honor) Guard work, you tend not to develop a hard heart," said Deputy Hudson. "But, you have to stay focused on the task at hand and remember that you're there to perform a service for the family.

"Sometimes, it's very hard to



keep your voice from cracking when you have to read the name of a friend," he said.

Deputy Hudson said the 1999 statewide memorial service held the most significance for him because it represented the culmination of many years of hard work to build a monument to the fallen. He and Officer Freytag had input into the design of the monument.

For Deputy Van Netter, the 1999 funeral service for three ambushed officers in Pleasonton was among the most memorable.

"I'll never forget the magnitude of the impact this horrible crime had on this small community," he said. "Thousands of people came to grieve. It looked like the entire town was there to support the families of these officers and the departments they represented. Seeing that makes you realize that citizens do care

about what happens to their police officers."

"You get involved with these families and they remember you year after year, and they always come back and hug your neck," said Deputy Hudson.

"It's so rewarding to see the children grow up. They come back to the memorial service and say, 'I know you because you came to my father's funeral,'" said Deputy Van Netter.

"All the funerals come back on memorial day," said Officer Freytag.

"In a way, it almost seems impossible that officers can stand so strong out there during such an emotional time. Of course, we don't know most of them (the officers being honored), but that doesn't matter. We really don't need to know them to understand," he said.

Mathis family has combined 54 years of law enforcement service to East Texas

(Continued from Page 13)

spent many hours in patrol cars with both of them riding along first as an Explorer and later as a reserve officer.

Jennifer, 21, who will graduate in December with a degree in criminal justice from the University of Texas at Tyler, was awarded a scholarship from the Peace Officers Memorial Foundation last year. She says she is proud to follow in her dad's and uncle's footsteps in law enforcement.

She is disappointed that nepotism rules in the Longview Police Department and Gregg County Sheriff's Office will prevent her from working alongside them as an officer in Longview. She will likely begin her professional career in neighboring Kilgore, about 10 minutes away.

James said his daughter, once named Most Outstanding Criminal Justice Student at Kilgore College, is a good police officer. His confidence in her training is what keeps him from worrying constantly about her safety.

The Mathis family has a combined 54 years of experience in law enforcement in East Texas. And in 2002, all three officers were nominated for awards from their respective departments -- James for Longview Police Officer of the Year, John for Supervisor of the Year from the sheriff's office, and Jennifer for Reserve Deputy of the Year for the sheriff's office.

John says he is proud of his niece's early accomplishments, and hopes she won't have to experience the same kinds of problems he faced when he began his law enforcement career more than two decades ago.

He said African-American officers were common targets of discrimination, and white supervisors regularly passed them over for the promotions they earned.

In fact, after 25 years with the sheriff's office, John was only recently promoted to sergeant. He said a previous sheriff directed him to train several white officers. Then, the former sheriff promoted them to positions that should have been available to him considering his experience and tenure.

"I was asked to train one guy, and two weeks later he was promoted to Captain," he said.

When current Sheriff Maxey Cerliano took office two years ago, John was finally promoted to Sergeant.

The Mathis twins agree that African Americans often have a tough time in East Texas law enforcement jobs, although they've noticed significant improvements in recent years. While occasionally they still face an internal struggle, it's more common to be pres-

sured by some in the minority community who often criticize them for arresting one of their own race.

"The ones who call us 'Uncle Tom' when we're trying to do our jobs, are the same ones who call white officers 'racists' when they try to do theirs," said John.

The Mathis brothers, who also have a younger brother, are very active in local politics. As an elected mem-

ber of the Longview Police Officers Association's Board of Directors for the past seven years, James has put his

interest in politics to good use for local police officers.

Seven years ago, he worked closely with association leaders and fellow officers to try to persuade Longview voters to adopt collective bargaining for police officers. Although the measure failed, the officers made great inroads into local politics and became known as a force to be reckoned with in Longview and Gregg County political circles. The police endorsement has become a top prize for campaigning politicians.

Some years ago, the Mathis brothers helped elect the first African-American woman to the Longview



John and James Mathis still count on each other for a good laugh from time to time.

(Please see AT 52, Page 16)

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At 52, brothers still depend on each other for all things good

(Continued from Page 15)
City Council.

Over the years, the twins have debated a run for office themselves. And recently, they have tossed about the idea of seeking the office of Justice of the Peace. But, don't expect them to run against each other for the position.

James says it's not in their nature to compete with each other -- they're partners.

"When we have to make a call together, I yield to his judgement when it's his call because I respect his knowledge and experience," he said.

From time to time, James listens to the police radio when he knows his brother is out working warrants.

James' wife said her husband flew out of the house one evening when he heard his brother report he was involved in a pursuit.

"He ran out the door saying he was going to check on his brother," Mrs. Mathis remembered.

Six years ago, James became worried another time when a nurse at the hospital where he was working an extra-duty job reported to him that it sounded like his brother had been shot.

"When I got there, it wasn't my brother, but it was our first cousin who had been murdered," he said. James and John searched all night until they tracked down the killer.

The officers say what bonds them together goes beyond the relationship brothers generally have with each other. Although at age 52 they don't have to talk every day, rarely do they let two days pass without a conversation.

Mrs. Mathis and her daughter, Jennifer, say the twins have come to count on each other for a regular dose of laughter. And those who spend any time with them at all can't help but walk away smiling. The conversation and story telling is addictive.

"They're always like this, laughing and cutting up," said Jennifer. "Being around them is a lot of fun."

"I got your back," they say in unison, and respond pointing one toward the other. "No, I got your back!"

Walling focusing now on family, new opportunities in AG's Office

(Continued from Page 11)

be part of something larger. He wanted to feel as though he was making a difference.

"The future I wanted for myself and my family was not in San Angelo anymore," he said.

Officer Walling says he believes he's in the right place now. Whether he is investigating a capital murder case in East Texas or pouring over documentation in Austin, he is at peace and pleased with his decision.

"Did CLEAT have anything to do with my decision?" he asks himself, laughing. "CLEAT is a part of every member's life. It's our organization. It belongs to us. And it's there when we grow and develop and become better officers and make monumental decisions."

What's in store for Officer Walling in the future? He pauses a moment and laughs, "Politics, of course."

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