



Official State Historical Center of the Texas
Rangers law enforcement agency.

**The Following Article was Originally Published in the
*Texas Ranger Dispatch Magazine***

The *Texas Ranger Dispatch* was published by the Texas Ranger Hall of Fame and Museum from 2000 to 2011. It has been superseded by this online archive of Texas Ranger history.

Managing Editors

Robert Nieman 2000-2009; (b.1947-d.2009)

Byron A. Johnson 2009-2011

Publisher & Website Administrator

Byron A. Johnson 2000-2011

Director, Texas Ranger Hall of Fame

Technical Editor, Layout, and Design

Pam S. Baird



Funded in part by grants from
the Texas Ranger Association Foundation

Copyright 2017, Texas Ranger Hall of Fame and Museum, Waco, TX. All rights reserved. Non-profit personal and educational use only; commercial reprinting, redistribution, reposting or charge-for-access is prohibited. For further information contact: Director, Texas Ranger Hall of Fame and Museum, PO Box 2570, Waco TX 76702-2570.



Senior Ranger Captain

C. J. Havrda

by Robert Nieman

©2001 Texas Department of Public Safety

On September 1, 2001, new Senior Ranger Captain C. J. Havrda and Assistant Senior Ranger Captain Earl Pearson took command of the Texas Rangers when the former commanders, Bruce Casteel and Gene Powell, retired after many years of dedicated service. All who know Captains Havrda and Pearson will attest that the new commanders will continue the “can do” attitude that they have inherited.

Captain C. J. Havrda was born on August 23, 1948, in Lavaca County, about midway between Houston and San Antonio. One of five siblings, C. J. grew up on a farm, where he lived until he was fourteen years old and his family moved to Corpus Christi. After graduating from a local Corpus Christi high school, C. J. attended Del Mar Junior College before moving on to Corpus Christi State University, where he received his Bachelor of Science degree. After graduation from Corpus Christi State University, C. J. was drafted into the United States Army. He proved to be as good at soldiering as he would later be at Rangering. He quickly rose in rank, and by the time he finished his tour in Vietnam, he was a platoon sergeant with the 11th Mobile Infantry Brigade.

Seeing heavy combat, Sergeant Havrda was awarded the Army Commendation Medal, the Air Medal, a Bronze Star for bravery under fire, and a Purple Heart for action in combat. Even if he had not become a Texas Ranger, C. J.’s place as an honored American hero was secure.

In October 1969, C J was accepted as the newest recruit trainee in the Texas Department of Public Safety. After completing his training, he was stationed as a Highway Patrolman in Rockport, followed by duty stations in Victoria and then Sinton.

After more than a decade as a Highway Patrolman, C. J. became Midland’s newest Texas Ranger on December 1, 1981. For nine years, he built a

reputation as a hard-working, effective Ranger. In January 1990, his superiors recognized his outstanding work and leadership when they promoted him and sent him to San Antonio as Company D's lieutenant. Two years later, Jack Dean retired as Company D's leader, and C. J. was promoted to captain to replace him.

