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December 2023

Texas Ranger Hall of Fame Newsletter

Department the City of Waco
Official State Repository of Texas Ranger Memorabilia
Home of Texas Ranger Bicentennial 1823-2023



On Thursday, Oct. 26, 2023, the Texas Public Safety Commission and Texas DPS Director Steven McCraw honored DPS personnel with awards for exceptional meritorious service. These included a Commissioner's Medal of Valor, two Purple Hearts, five Director's Citations, nine Lifesaving Awards, and two Unit Citations. Texas Rangers received a posthumous Medal of Valor, a Life Saving Award, and a group Unit Citation.

Director McCraw expressed his admiration and the gratitude of the department and people of Texas to the recipients, stating, "These awards are a testament to the courageous acts that take place every day by the men and women who serve Texas. To hear their stories and know the actions they've taken in order to save a life and put others first is truly remarkable."

Commissioner's Medal of Valor - Thomas Arnold



Texas Ranger Thomas E. Arnold

The Medal of Valor, the highest honor of the Texas Department of Public Safety, is awarded for exceptional acts of gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of one's life. Since its inception, the Medal of Valor has been awarded only 30 times, with six of these to Texas Rangers. Retired Ranger John Aycock was awarded two Medals in two separate incidents for saving child hostages. [The Texas Ranger Hall of Fame page on the Medal of Valor can be viewed here.](#)

The Commissioner's Medal of Valor was awarded posthumously to Texas Ranger Thomas E. Arnold in recognition of his courage and the exemplary skill he demonstrated during a life-threatening situation.

On October 13, 1971, a fugitive fleeing an attempted murder of a police officer entered a home in Bedford and took a family hostage. A 15-year-old child was able to escape and notify authorities. The suspect forced the family into their vehicle and ordered the mother to drive. The kidnapped family were in the front seats and the suspect was behind them with his sawed-off shotgun pointed at the father's head. When the ensuing pursuit came to an end, Ranger Arnold parked directly behind the hostage vehicle to communicate with the suspect. After many unsuccessful attempts to negotiate, Ranger Arnold realized the kidnapper intended to kill the hostages.



In the photograph above are left to right: Michelle Arnold (Ranger Tom Arnold Sr.'s Daughter-in-law), Martha Owen Arnold (Wife), and Tom Arnold (Son).

As the situation deteriorated, the suspect momentarily moved the shotgun from the father's head. Ranger Arnold seized this opportunity and fired one round from his scoped rifle through the rear windshield. He then moved toward the vehicle, drawing his sidearm to protect the hostages.

Texas Ranger Thomas Arnold's professional reaction and unselfish devotion to duty reflect much credit upon himself, the profession of law enforcement, and the Texas Department of Public Safety. We extend our appreciation and honor to the recipients of all divisions of Texas DPS.



Life Saving Award - Jesse Perez



Jesse Perez

On May 2, 2023, Texas Ranger Jesse Perez was assigned to support the Texas Rangers Special Operations Group in the Eagle Pass rail yard. Ranger Perez heard radio traffic from a US Border Patrol agent regarding an undocumented female that had been struck by a northbound train and her leg had been amputated. Perez immediately responded, and upon arrival, began providing first-aid until EMS arrived. Due to the rural area and lack of a level one trauma center, Ranger Perez requested a medical air evacuation.

SRT-5 members arrived on the scene and developed a plan to safely transport the injured subject from the elevated bridge, down a steep embankment, and across a field to a waiting EMS unit. The subject was flown to a hospital in San Antonio in critical condition. Ranger Perez later learned from medical staff the subject was alive and in stable condition.

In recognition of his decisive and professional response to a life-threatening situation resulting in the saving a life, Texas Ranger Jesse Perez is hereby honored with the Life Saving Award.



Unit Citation Award - Joshua Mason



Joshua Mason

On the morning of October 9, 2020, a woman was found murdered in her home in New Boston, TX. The pregnant victim's baby had been removed from her womb. The New Boston Police Department requested assistance. DPS Criminal Investigation Division Lieutenant Andrew Venable assembled his personnel and coordinated with Texas Rangers Josh Mason and Chris Baggett.

The suspect was quickly identified, and it was discovered that a Texas Highway Patrol Trooper had conducted a traffic stop of the suspect that same morning, shortly after the murder was committed. The suspect was in possession of the baby and claimed she had just given birth and was on her way to a hospital. EMS personnel transported the suspect and baby to a hospital in Oklahoma, which was the closest option. Law enforcement in Oklahoma were contacted to detain the suspect at the hospital.

While CID agents and local police officer continued to investigate in Texas, Ranger Mason traveled to Oklahoma to interview the suspect, during which, the suspect confessed to being involved in the mother's murder.

DPS CID remained involved in the remainder of the investigation, grand jury proceedings, court preparation and additional endeavors. The extensive and detailed evidence gathered by these personnel regarding the suspect's activities prior to, during, and after the crime all proved to be extremely invaluable contributions to the ultimate conviction of the suspect. The outstanding collaboration, teamwork and dedication exhibited by these officers and prosecutors is to be commended.



Those commended for their hard work and dedication include:

CID Lieutenant Andrew Venable
 Special Agents Briscoe Davis, Eric Estes, Dustin Estes, Chris Barker, Ben Allison
 Texas Ranger Josh Mason
 Bowie County Assistant DA Kelly Crisp, Lauren Rogers
 DA Investigator Lance Klein

They are hereby awarded the Unit Citation.

Compassion Waco Drive with Story Time & Craft Day



In the first two weeks of December, we will have a donation box for Compassion Waco in our lobby. Compassion Waco is a transitional home for families in Waco and is seeking gifts for children and parents as well as household supplies and toiletries for their apartments.

Our Story Time & Craft Days are wrapping up on Saturday, December 9th with Cowboy Holidays theme. The activities run 10am-1pm. Bring your donation to Compassion Waco that day to receive FREE admission to the exhibits and Craft Day. You may also purchase items from the Museum Store to donate upon arrival.

Learn more about Compassion Waco at <https://compassionwaco.com/>

TRHFM Trip Advisor Ranking



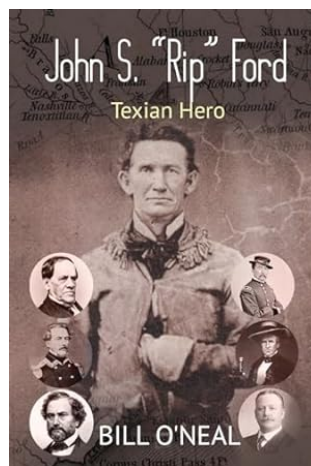
CW33/KDAF in Dallas and *Trip Advisor* released a list of the 30 most highly ranked museums in Texas by public acclaim, as per <https://cw33.com/news/local/highest-rated-museums-in-texas/>.

Four Waco museums, namely *The Texas Ranger Hall of Fame*, *the Waco Mammoth National Monument*, *Mayborn Museum Complex* and *the Dr Pepper Museum*, have made it to this coveted top 2% list. TRHFM was ranked #6 in the top 30 list.

There are over 1,314 museums in Texas, including more than 1,000 history museums. These four share the distinction with other much larger renowned institutions such as Space Center Houston, The Alamo, The Perot Museum, The George W. Bush & LBJ Presidential Libraries and the Kimbell Art Museum.

The long-term efforts of staff, boards, City of Waco and many categories of supporters made this achievement possible, and we thank them.

New Bicentennial Publication: John S. "Rip" Ford - Texian Hero



The 18th book accepted into the Texas Ranger Hall of Fame Bicentennial Publications Program is *John S. "Rip" Ford – Texian Hero* by Bill O'Neal. The program was opened to publishers in 2016 to recognize works on the Texas Rangers in the ramp up to the Texas Ranger Bicentennial this year.

Rip Ford was a bold, fearless combat leader, an expert pistoleer, and a master tactician. Ford was a ferocious warrior against the enemies of his beloved Texas. During the 1850s, Rip Ford was called upon to lead Rangers in defense of frontier Texas. Usually, he campaigned against raiders and stock thieves along the Rio Grande, but in 1858, he planned and executed a dangerous attack north into Comancheria against horseback war parties.

He came to Texas from Tennessee as a young physician and would later practice law, survey work, and journalism. He held multiple political offices, including being a part of the Texas legislative bodies and serving as the mayor of Austin and of Brownsville. Ford wrote

a lengthy account of nineteenth-century Texas history, and he was a founding member of the Texas State Historical Association.

[Please click here to learn more about the 18 books in the program.](#)

In Memoriam: Thomas E. Almond



We are sad to report yet another retired Texas Ranger loss. Thomas Edward "Eddie" Almond, 81, passed away on November 10, 2023 at his home in Paris, Texas.

Born in Hugo, Oklahoma, Almond served in the Air Force before joining DPS in 1967.

Sergeant Almond served in Ranger Companies E and B, stationed in Big Spring, Garland and Paris. Almond specialized in SWAT and Blood Spatter Analysis. During his career, he received citations from Department Of Justice, FBI and ATF for his work on the Branch-Davidian Investigation.

Our condolences to his family and friends.

Beyond the Badge: The Work and Records of the Texas Rangers



Our friends at the Texas State Library and Archives Commission have an online exhibit, *Beyond the Badge: The Work and Records of Texas Rangers*.

Beyond the Badge highlights the official records and other resources about the Texas Rangers available in the State Archives. The exhibit features items dating back to the 1800s, when rangers were citizens hired on a temporary basis to protect the frontier, up to their current role as employees of the Texas Department of Public Safety.

[Please visit the online exhibit at www.tsl.texas.gov/beyondthebadge.](http://www.tsl.texas.gov/beyondthebadge)

Gift Shop Feature: Winter Mugs

We are already planning for the holidays with these two fun winter mugs. Perfect for apple cider, hot cocoa or your favorite winter drink.

- Snowman with Museum Sign \$14.95 + Tax
- Sweater Pattern \$12.95 + Tax



To shop more items available for purchase, please visit our [Gift Shop online](#) or in person 9am to 4:30pm daily. You never have to pay admission to shop. Sales from the Gift Shop benefit the preservation and education activities of the Museum. Please call (254) 750-8631 or email info@texasranger.org to order. We ship worldwide. Thank you!

Texas Ranger Hall of Fame and Bicentennial™ Support

Contribute to the TRHFM in honor of the Texas Rangers Bicentennial™ in 2023. With a \$100 contribution, you will receive:

1. A limited-edition enameled bronze pin featuring a Texas Ranger Bicentennial™ seal
2. A certificate signed by an active or distinguished retired Texas Ranger
3. Your name or family name on the online roster of Bicentennial Supporters™
4. A one-time-use family admission ticket (admits 4) to the Museum.

\$90 of the contribution qualifies as a charitable contribution. The Texas Ranger Hall of Fame is a 170(c) government-owned nonprofit.

Please [click here](#) to learn more about the program.



Texas Ranger Hall of Fame Bicentennial Pin

Trademarked by the Texas Dept. of Public Safety
Designed by the Texas Ranger Hall of Fame and
Museum



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**ENJOY
\$2.00 OFF**

Expires 1/31/2024

Save \$1.00 off regular adult admission for up to two adults. Coupon not valid on discounted senior or military admission. No cash value.

The museum is open 9am to 5pm with the last guest admitted at 4:30pm. The museum is located off I-35 and University Parks Drive in Waco, Texas. For more information, call (254) 750-8631 or visit www.texasranger.org.

Newsletter Compiled by Christine Rothenbush, Marketing & Development Specialist

Texas Ranger Hall of Fame and Museum | 100 Texas Ranger Trail, Waco, TX 76706

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