

## **OUR MISSION**

***HONOR and REMEMBER the officers who have paid the ultimate price as we approach National Police Week by holding an annual multi-agency event to support the strengths of our communities.***

## **OUR GOALS**

- I. Provide a "one on one" POSITIVE law enforcement experience for kids of all ages.***
- II. Allow the community and the citizens we serve an opportunity to see the resources used to protect them.***
- III. Exhibit a unified effort of law enforcement to our community.***

## **Event "History"**

In the fall of 1993, a discussion was initiated in the Houston Northwest Chamber of Commerce Crime Awareness Committee, chaired by Larry Lipton, about creating an event for the public to meet and learn more about law enforcement and the local agencies serving the 1960 area.

Spring ISD Chief of Police Alan Bragg informed the committee that a similar concept was ongoing in the Spring Independent School District for the students at elementary schools coordinated by Houston Police Department officer Tim Galligan. Chief Bragg volunteered to chair the event and coordinate the first event for the public with assistance from Officer Tim Galligan, Harris Co. Pct.#4 Captain John McClure, and Larry Lipton.

In the spring of 1994 the coordination of 15 area law enforcement agencies began and the first event was held on the parking lot of Grundy's Club & Restaurant on Kuykendahl Rd. (now Texas Tumbleweed and through the generosity and support of local real estate businessman Fred Grundemeyer) on Saturday, May 20<sup>th</sup> and was a tremendous success.

The vehicles and displays filled up the parking lot and the indoor space of the building. The remainder of the parking lot was full the rest of the day with visitors to the event. It became clear we had outgrown our event space the first year.

In 1995, Champions Village Shopping Center on FM 1960 agreed to host the event and offered additional parking lot areas, parking for event visitors and some vacant retail space for our heat/light sensitive indoor exhibits.

On Saturday, May 11<sup>th</sup>, approximately 26 agencies coordinated their displays, exhibits and officers for our second annual event and again it was another success but again we had outgrown the space allocated for the event.

In 1996, Willowbrook Mall, 249 & FM 1960, agreed to host and co-sponsor the event on the west parking lot of their mall complex. About that same time a decision was made to more closely tie the event to the start of National Police Week activities (May 15<sup>th</sup> each year) and show honor and remembrance to the men and women in law enforcement who paid the ultimate price and lost their life in the line of duty the previous year. The event was formerly named "Salute To Law Enforcement".

Since 1996 the event has been held at Willowbrook Mall on the Saturday in May before National Police Week and the event has grown each year and now includes helicopter air support static displays from the various law enforcement agencies and the military.

During the 2002 event, approximately 80 agencies, including city, county state, federal, school district, colleges, universities, railroad police, metro police, participated in the event with over 120 displays and exhibits and approximately 225 officers staffing the event.

In 2003 the event drew 86 agencies and 125 exhibits with agencies participating from the entire Houston metro area and as far away as Austin, Dallas and San Antonio. A permanent website was created to promote the event, show photos of previous years, and to make appropriate forms and information available to agencies, organizations and exhibitors. [www.SaluteToLawEnforcement.org](http://www.SaluteToLawEnforcement.org)

In February of 2004, the Houston Northwest Chamber of Commerce announced the creation of the "Chief Alan Bragg Salute To Law Enforcement Criminal Justice Scholarship". This \$1,000 scholarship will be given to a deserving senior who wishes to pursue a criminal justice career and will be awarded during the opening ceremonies each year on

the stage.

The event is not only dependent on the many agencies and men and women in law enforcement, but also on the generous sponsors who provide services and monetary support for "Salute To Law Enforcement"

Some of these sponsors included Sweet Tomatoes, Culligan Water, Coca-Cola, Waste Management, Willowbrook Mall, HP/Compaq Computer, Houston Chronicle, Tents of the Southwest, Safety Lights, A.J. Foyt Cycles, Ford Motor Co., Kwik-Kopy #117

Willowbrook Mall estimates that between 10,000 and 15,000 persons go through the exhibits and mall area during the 4 hour (11 a.m. - 3 p.m.) event.

In 2004 we continued our tradition of including a military representation at the opening ceremony to show our thanks to the men and women serving in the armed forces during the Iraq War and other recent world conflicts.

A commemorative 10th anniversary pin was created and was distributed to all officers and volunteers who participated in the 2004 Event.

The 2004 event was "A Day For Ducks"!! Torrential rains, high wind and tornados in the area forced the cancellation of many of the outdoor activities and exhibits. Many outdoor exhibitors moved indoors and most of the agencies with indoor exhibits arrived and continued as scheduled.

The first annual "Salute To Law Enforcement Criminal Justice Scholarship" was presented to Christine Roberts and she plans to attend Baylor University in the fall.

The names of all law enforcement officers who lost their lives in the line of duty in the Houston metro area since 1995 were read aloud by members of the "Concerns of Police Survivors" (COPS) followed by a period of silence and then the singing of "Amazing Grace" by our featured annual soloist, Ms. Carmen Goodwin.

Our 2005 event was attended by over 100 law enforcement agencies and support organizations.

The traffic count from the mall indicated that approximately 37,000 people were at the mall & event when it started at 11 a.m. and approximately 50,000 had been counted at the end of the event at 3 p.m.

Agencies from Tarrant County, Red Oak, Austin, Rockwall, Galveston, Cleveland and a Lieutenant from the University of New Orleans were represented and traveled the greatest distance to attend!

**In the spring of 2006 the Cy-Fair Chamber of Commerce joined our efforts to support the event along with the Houston NW Chamber of Commerce!**

The event in 2006 was the largest to date with over 100 agencies participating and over 50,000 persons at the mall during the event.

Proclamations from President George Bush, U.S. Congressman Ted Poe and Texas Governor Rick Perry were read at the opening ceremony. The National Anthem was sung by Ms. Megan Bouchan.

The names of the local fallen officers were read by Ed Hill, a member of the Greater Houston Area Concerns of Police Survivors and father of fallen Harris County Sheriffs Department Deputy Barry Hill. This was followed by a stirring rendition of "Amazing Grace" performed by members of the St. Thomas High School Bagpipers & Drum Corp.

The annual "Chief Alan Bragg Salute To Law Enforcement" criminal justice scholarship was awarded to Brandon Cook, a senior in Cy-Fair ISD.

At 12 noon, skydivers dropped into the event unfurling the American flag to help salute the event and show remembrance to our fallen brothers and sisters.

Two officers from the Wichita Falls Police Department were present and traveled the greatest distance to attend this year.

**In the fall of 2006 the Board of Directors of the Houston Northwest Chamber of Commerce voted that they no longer wished to support many local community events such as "Salute To Law Enforcement", an annual "Health Fair" and "Airport Appreciation Day" because according to their consultant, those events no longer serve their mission statement.**

**Although we are disappointed that a Law Enforcement and Public Safety event for the community and kids of our area is not important to them, several other organizations, corporations and individuals disagreed with their decision and have come forward and pledged their support to ensure that "Salute To Law Enforcement" *WILL CONTINUE for many more years into the***

**future!!**

**NOTE: Since the "Salute To Law Enforcement" was born in the Crime Awareness Committee (now Public Safety Committee) of the Houston Northwest Chamber of Commerce in 1993, it will be interesting to see what project(s) they do decide to support for Law Enforcement, Public Safety and the betterment of our community.**

**The date of the 13th annual event in 2007 is scheduled for Saturday, May 5th!!**