



MULTI-JURISDICTIONAL EFFORT TO MINIMIZE DANGER OF SEX OFFENDERS

by Texas Attorney General Greg Abbott

LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS WITH THE Office of the Attorney General (OAG) recently joined Gov. Rick Perry, State Representative Senfronia Thompson and Department of Public Safety Director Steve McCraw at an event announcing a new initiative to crack down on the State's most dangerous sex offenders.

Under the plan, the OAG, Texas Department of Public Safety (DPS), Texas Department of Criminal Justice (TDCJ) and local law enforcement will create joint Sex Offender Parole Violation Apprehension Teams, which will locate and arrest high-risk sex offenders who have violated the terms of their parole. These teams will also coordinate with local law enforcement agencies to conduct additional registration compliance checks on high-risk sex offenders.

The State's new, multi-jurisdictional approach continues our Fugitive Unit's traditional approach of working with the TDCJ and other law enforcement agencies to locate and arrest fugitives who have a history of sex crimes against children – specifically those offenders who have violated parole or sex offender registration requirements. Parole vio-

lations include failing to report to parole officers or being present in areas that might allow offenders access to young children. Since our Fugitive Unit was launched in August 2003, it has arrested more than 1,900 fugitives.

The initiative announced last month builds on the success of recent initiatives, like the Texas Ten Most Wanted Sex Offender list. In September, the Fugitive Unit, the DPS and the U.S. Marshals Service successfully located and arrested one of the State's Ten Most Wanted Sex Offenders: David Ross Baxley. Baxley had been wanted in Texas since 2003 and in New Mexico since 2006. Investigators discovered Baxley had been living in Texas under an assumed name since 2006. State and federal law enforcement officials arrested Baxley in Vidor, Texas.

Baxley's arrest marked the third time our Fugitive Unit helped secure the arrest of a Top Ten Most Wanted offender in the last six weeks. Earlier in September, the Fugitive Unit located and arrested Michael Brian McCollum in Hurst. Fugitive Unit investigators also recently located Joel Burt Thompkins in New York. After investigating and

discovering the fugitive's location, our officers provided logistical assistance to the New York Police Department, which arrested Thompkins on Aug. 20. Both McCollum and Thompson were on DPS' Top Ten Most Wanted Fugitives list.

Our recent successes follow a restructuring effort at the OAG. In August, we established a separate, independent command structure for the agency's more than 140 peace officers. As a result, the OAG's peace officers and the staff assigned to the Criminal Investigative Division now report to a fellow peace officer – rather than to a prosecutor.

To achieve this, we created a new senior-level position, the Director of Law Enforcement, and recruited a 30-year law enforcement veteran to fill the position. Our first-ever Director of Law Enforcement is Clete Buckaloo, a lifelong peace officer and 20-year Texas Ranger.

Director Buckaloo first received his commission as a DPS Trooper in April 1978. A little more than three years later, he became a DPS Narcotics Agent and six years after that joined the Texas Rangers at the age of 30. Although he retired from the Department as a Captain in 2007, he rejoined

the Rangers earlier this year with the same rank. A graduate of Sul Ross State University, Director Buckaloo was honored by his alma mater as a distinguished alumnus in 2002.

As the OAG's Director of Law Enforcement, Captain Buckaloo oversees the Fugitive Unit, the Cyber Crimes Unit, the Special Investigations Unit, the Facilities Security Unit, the Criminal Litigation Unit and the Professional Standards Unit. Director Buckaloo will also coordinate the Fugitive Unit's work with DPS, TDCJ and local law enforcement as they create the new Sex Offender Parole Violation Apprehension Teams.

Perhaps more importantly, after three decades as a commissioned peace officer, Director Buckaloo has a long history of working with law enforcement agencies across the state to help protect Texas families. With his arrival, there is an even greater focus on cooperation and collaboration with local law enforcement – because all Texans benefit when local, state and federal agencies join forces and combine our resources to protect the communities we serve.

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