

Partners in Policing

Euleless Citizens Police Academy Alumni Association Monthly Newsletter

Volume 14 Issue 2 | FEBRUARY 2010

2010 Officers

President: Pete Jones

1st Vice President: Jerry Goad

2nd Vice President: Lou Baum

Secretary: Sandi Jones

Treasurer: Leah Benoit

Coordinator EPD: Sgt. Eric Starnes

Bereavement: Sharon Finnegan

Hospitality: Sharon Finnegan and
Helen Wagner

Newsletter: Leah Benoit and
Rosemarie Stevens

Submissions Welcome!

Do you have any funny stories, e-mails, or photos to share with our members?

Please e-mail your police-related submissions to
eulelesscpa@sbcglobal.net

Submissions are due the first day of each month.

Link to ECPAAA Web Page

<http://www.ecpaaa.org/>

Link to ECPAAA Calendar

<http://www.ecpaaa.org/cal.htm>

Link to ECPAAA Events List

[http://www.ecpaaa.org/
event.htm](http://www.ecpaaa.org/event.htm)

February Speakers

Assistant Chief Harland Westmoreland and Nita Westmoreland

On April 4, 1986, Harland was shot while answering a call at a local convenience store. Come to the February 16th meeting to hear Harland tell us about the incident and Nita will discuss the impact it had on her and their family. Read a little more about Harland on page 5.

Recycling Reminders

Bring your aluminum cans and printer cartridges to the monthly ECPAAA meeting to recycle.

Help support the PALS Summer Camp by recycling your old cameras, cell phones, laptops and other small electronics.

Thanks to all of the members that have been bringing items to recycle.





Sgt. Eric
Starnes

The Dilution Dilemma: Making Your Messages Matter

By Mark Sanborn, CSP, CPAE

As a leader, do you ever feel your important messages fall on deaf ears?

Are your carefully constructed and communicated strategies always get implemented?

Are you often frustrated by the difference between the results you ask of others and what you actually get?

Leaders agonize when developing vision, mission and strategy. They carefully choose words and phrases. They painstakingly craft spoken and written communication to explain these important concepts. They communicate these messages in countless conversations and presentations.

Yet if you asked the typical employee what their leader's message is-what is truly important and how it should shape their decisions, actions and interactions-they'd be hard pressed to provide more than a vague summary.

Why?

The answer: The Dilution Dilemma. By the time the message is passed down or through the organization, the clarity, effectiveness and impact are dramatically diluted. What can you do to minimize or eliminate this costly dilution?

The antidote can be summarized by these four words: constant, clear, catchy and compelling.

Constant. The best messaging loses effectiveness when it changes. The more often messaging changes, the less believable future messaging becomes.

Repetition is the mother of both retention and understanding. When followers hear the same messages repeatedly they realize there must be a reason, and the reason is *importance*. Often the first time a message is heard it is ignored or discounted. Why? Employees assume they'll hear it again if it really is significant. They are used to fleeting ideas and concepts and have learned to tune out those that aren't emphasized.

Constant communication of the same messages can be a crazy maker for leaders but it is necessary nonetheless. You need to stick to you messaging until you are sick and tired of repeating it. Only at the point of near nausea can you safely assume the message has been both heard, understood and believed to be important.

The messages you send as a leader will be repeated with less frequently as they move through the organization. That's why you need to front-load the system with constant repetition. A few mentions by leaders at the top get diluted to a miniscule amount of information at the bottom of the org chart.

Clear. Ambiguity is the enemy of success. When people aren't clear on what you mean, they fill in the blanks, and usually incorrectly.

There is a scene in the movie Philadelphia where the character played by Tom Hanks is doing an initial consultation with a lawyer played by Denzel Washington. Although I saw it over twenty years ago, I still recall how the lawyer communicated with the potential client about his situation. He said, "Explain it to me like I'm a second grader." Despite his intellect and skill, he knew only a complete and thorough explanation would provide the information he needed.

And that is clarity. You must cut through the superfluous to find the substantive and communicate it in such a way that there can be no misunderstanding.

Leaders build their messages on irreducible minimums. They know that if they can't succinctly explain what they mean, they won't be understood by others. Recall the childhood game of telephone where a statement is passed by

Continued on Page 12

From the President – Pete Jones

It's hard to believe that the first month of 2010 is already over. There was a lot done this first month.

Our socials will kick-off on February 23rd at Freddy's on Hwy 121 at 5:30-9:00 PM. Kay Stinneford told us about their fund raising plan and we decided what better way for us to make money than with our favorite pastime, eating. We will receive 15% of the money from everyone eating there on the 23rd if they say that they want to support the ECPAAA. We will be sending out fliers later this month to bring with you to the restaurant to show when you place your order. This is a fun event and everyone is encouraged to come and bring your family. This is not a required event. But if you want to have fun and meet your fellow ECPAAA members socially, come on down.

We need to get the committees rolling again this year. At the meeting on the 16th we will be asking for people to continue their existing commitment to serve and for those who haven't volunteered to think about where they want to help.

Remember 2010 dues are \$20.00 and should be given to Leah Benoit.

Thanks to Chris Shanahan for all the hours given re-doing the ECPAAA Web Site. Everyone



CPAANT - February 6, 2010

Roanoke, Texas

By Geri Sorg

CPAANT's host for February was Roanoke CPAAA. We were greeted by Chief Gary Johnson; our speaker was Kathleen Murray (with guests) from the Fort Worth Anti-Trafficking Unit. Human Trafficking continues to grow; they gave us information and answered many questions. We had 43 at the meeting with 12 Representatives present. Please check the CPAANT website (www.cpaant.org) for additional information on this topic. The March 6th CPAANT Meeting will be held in Lewisville.

FROM THE CHIEF

Sorry I missed last month!

It was a great night when I got to swear in the new officers for the Alumni Association in January. I am looking forward to a very productive and exciting year. It's always great to come to the meeting and have to search for a chair to sit in. What a great testament to each of you who continue to give your time and talents in the service of this department.

In the coming year we will face many challenges, some we know about and are prepared for, some we have no idea what they will be or when we will run across them. But it's the great foundation we have that will allow us to weather any storm, face any challenge and succeed in the face of any adversity. We all know the great tragedy our brothers in Arlington faced this last month. As I asked you in the last meeting, I will ask you again to remember our officers in your prayers as they go about their daily duties and fulfill their commitment to serve this community.

I always carry in my uniform pocket the Police Officer's Prayer to St. Michael. St. Michael is the Patron Saint of the Police Officer.

Saint Michael, heaven's glorious commissioner of police, who once so neatly and successfully cleared God's premises of all its undesirables, look with kindly and professional eyes on your earthly force.

Give us cool heads, stout hearts, and uncanny flair for investigation and wise judgment.

Make us the terror of burglars, the friend of children and law-abiding citizens, kind to strangers, polite to bores, strict with law-breakers and impervious to temptations.

You know, Saint Michael, from your own experiences with the devil, that the police officer's lot on earth is not always a happy one; but your sense of duty that so pleased God, your hard knocks that so surprised the devil, and your angelic self-control give us inspiration.

*And when we lay down our night sticks, enroll us in your heavenly force, where we will be as proud to guard the throne of God as we have been to guard the city and all the people.
Amen.*

As you read this prayer you will note that Police Officers believe their mission continues even after their earthly lives have passed.

Upcoming Events

- Feb 9 – City Council Meeting, 7 pm, City Hall
- Feb 13 – Heritage Park Tours, 1-5 pm, 201 Cullum Drive
- Feb 16 – ECPAAA General Meeting, 7 pm, Police Station
- Feb 23 – ECPAAA Social, Freddy’s, 6:30 pm
- Feb 23 – City Council Meeting, 7 pm, City Hall
- March 6 – CPAANT Meeting, Lewisville (location & directions can be found on www.cpaant.org)
- March 9 – City Council Meeting, 7 pm, City Hall
- March 12-13 – Eules Revitalization Blitz Weekend – for more information, you can visit <http://www.eulesstx.gov/er> or call Ken Rawlinson at 817-685-1636
- March 15 – Tarrant Area Food Bank, 8 am to 12 noon, if interested contact Jerry Poteet at 817-685-1449 – need 20 people

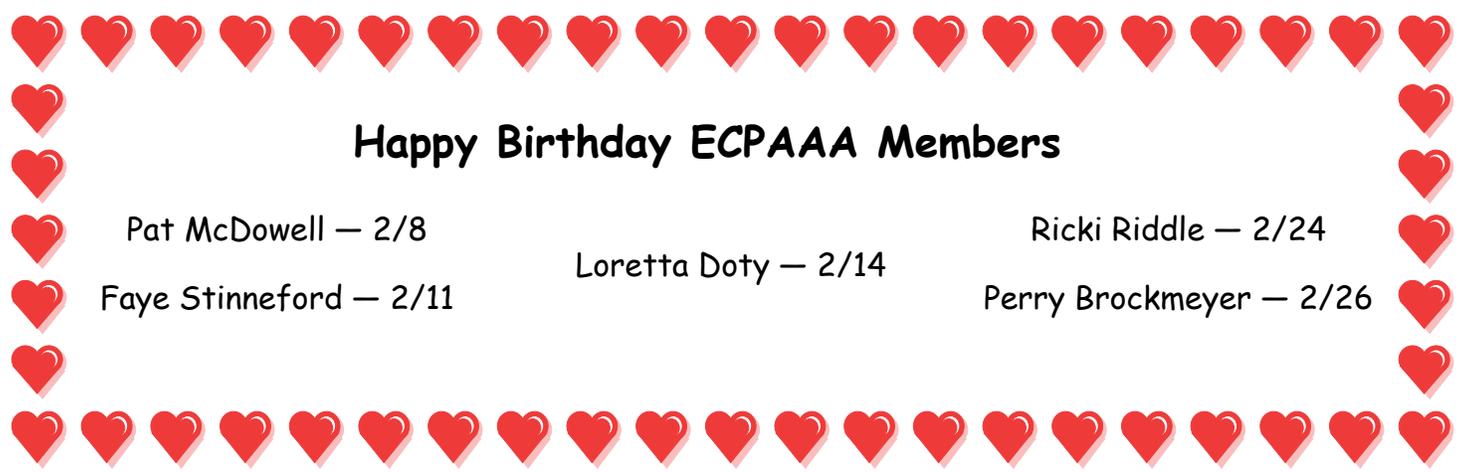
January 2010 Volunteer Hours

- CID Clerical - 9 Hours 30 Minutes
- Citizens On Patrol - 62 Hours 30 Minutes
 - Number of Handicap Citations Issued - 0
 - Number of Handicap Warnings Issued - 0
 - Number of Junk Vehicles Written - 0
- Courts - 7 Hours 0 Minutes
- CPA/CERT Class - 0 Hours 0 Minutes
- Crime Victims Assistance Program - 8 Hours 30 Minutes
- Jail - 29 Hours 0 Minutes
- Meetings/Training - 132 Hours 0 Minutes
 - Includes the following:
 - CPAANT Regional Meeting - 20 Hours 0 Minutes
 - ECPAAA General Meeting - 47 Hours 0 Minutes
 - CERT Sky Warn Class - 65 Hours 0 Minutes
- Miscellaneous - 7 Hours 0 Minutes
- Speed Trailer - 17 Hours 30 Minutes
- Vehicle Maintenance - 32 Hours 30 Minutes
- Watering of Plants - 9 Hours 0 Minutes

Total – 314 Hours 30 Minutes

Value of Volunteer Time – \$6,368.63
 Year-to-Date Value of Volunteer Time – \$6,368.63

January Meeting – 42 Alumni Members Present



Happy Birthday ECPAAA Members

- | | | |
|------------------------|---------------------|-------------------------|
| Pat McDowell – 2/8 | Loretta Doty – 2/14 | Ricki Riddle – 2/24 |
| Faye Stinneford – 2/11 | | Perry Brockmeyer – 2/26 |

Officer Biography

Harland C. Westmoreland

Date of Biography: January 22, 2010

Current Title with EPD: Assistant Chief

Year started and history with the EPD: Began July 4, 1974 as a Reserve Officer and on October 6, 1975, became a Police Officer.

Where were you born? Gorman, Eastland County, Texas

In what city do you currently live? Watauga

Tell me a little about your family, spouse, children (ages), grandchildren, pets, etc.

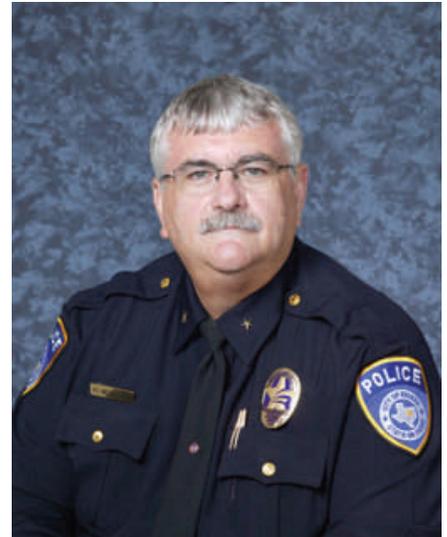
My wife of twenty-six years, Nita, and I have 4 kids: Scott - 39, Tracey - 37, Travis - 35, and Clay - 33. We have 10 grandkids ranging in age from 18 to 2 and they are God's reward to us for not killing our Kids. We have two Daschunds and Nita has two cats.

What are your hobbies? Traveling/Camping, Reading, Playing with the Grands, Photography and TV

What is your favorite part of being an Officer? Helping others; knowing that at the end of the day I've made a difference.

Who is your favorite celebrity? John Wayne and Harrison Ford

What is your favorite food? Tossup between Nita's spaghetti and her gumbo.



2010 ECPAAA Dues

It's time to renew your membership! You can either pay your dues, which are \$20, at the February meeting or you can mail your dues to:

ECPAAA
Attn: 2010 Dues
1102 W. Eules Boulevard
Eules, TX 76040

ALUMNI CORNER



Spotlight on Rosemarie Stevens

by Rosemarie Stevens

This month the biography is about yours truly. Trust me, ego does not enter into the equation. With the tax season upon me, I just had no time to follow up with anyone else. Let's see, where do I begin.

I was born and raised in Columbus, Ohio. After a field trip to The Ohio State University campus while in elementary school, I had my heart set on attending that University. I earned a degree in Business Education from there, but I did not teach high school until after I retired from IBM.

I moved to Yonkers, New York, one month after my graduation to work for IBM, and IBM moved me to Texas 30 years ago. It's hard to believe I've been here that long, but I have.

As for my family, you and my other friends make up most of my family. I had a sister who died when I was 16 and a brother who died when I was 21. My nephew, my sister's son, lives in Irving, Texas, with his wife and two daughters. The oldest daughter is a freshman at the University of North Texas, and the youngest one entered middle school last fall.

A friend of mine talked me into attending the 10th CPA class. Actually, he didn't really have to talk me into it; I wanted to deal with my prejudice against the police. In my lifetime, I had been given too many reasons to dislike and distrust them. I have come to respect the police force in general and have been often reminded that humans are made up of good and bad people, some of whom become police officers. The police officers in Euless, however, have given me ample reasons to set aside my distrust and to abandon my prejudice, and I wish I could do a better job of serving them.

I plan to remain an active member of the Alumni Association, assuming I survive this year's tax season.



**If you would like your bio to appear in the newsletter, please contact
Rosemarie Stevens at (817) 540-0127 or email her at
stevens.r@sbcglobal.net.**

**EULESS CITIZENS POLICE
ACADEMY
ALUMNI ASSOCIATION**

GENERAL MEETING MINUTES

January 19, 2009

Meeting called to order at 7:02 PM.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Lou Baum, Leah Bennett, Byron Benoit, Leah Benoit, Renee Bierschenk, Perry Brockmeyer, David Brown, Bobbie Davis, Clarence Davis, John Deithloff, Loretta Doty, Steve Doty, Sharon Finnegan, Joseph Forgione Jr., Jerry Goad, Marian Goethe, Marian Holden, Loren Johnson, Pete Jones, Sandi Jones, Jerrie Keller, Sue Kosec, Helen Lightbody, Pat McDowell, David Mishkin, Gena Natho, Betty Overstreet, Renee Potter, Betty Priddy, Wayne Priddy, Judy Rick, Richard Rick, Chris Shanahan, Thomas Scott, Wanda Siebern, Al Simmenroth, Barney Snitz, Rosemarie Stevens, Faye Stinneford, Susan Vest, Helen Voss, and Helen Wagner.

INVOCATION & PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: J.R Goad

Past President Rosemarie Stevens opened the meeting and welcomed Chief Brown who introduced the new board.

NEW BOARD: Chief Brown swore in the new board: President, Pete Jones; 1st Vice President, JR Goad; 2nd Vice President, Lou Baum,

Treasurer, Leah Benoit; and Secretary Sandi Jones.

POLICE NEWS: Chief Brown talked about our Euleless Honor Guard.

APPRECIATIVE PLAQUE: Lou Baum called Rose-Marie Stevens to the front and awarded her with a Past President's plaque, thanking her for a job well done.

MINUTES/TREASURER'S REPORT:

Faye Stinneford made a motion to accept the December minutes, second by Helen Voss. Motion passed. David Brown made a motion to accept the December Treasurer's Report, second by Joe Forgione, Jr. Motion passed.

OLD BUSINESS: President Pete Jones brought up the discussion to continue using a CPA to do our books or whether we should have a committee of members do it. Consensus was to continue having the CPA do our books.

NEW BUSINESS: New dates for upcoming events:
CERT Weather School – Jan 30th
CRUD DAY – March 20th
TRASH OFF – April 10th
ARBOR DAYS – April 24th and 25th

We want to start a campaign to "Get Em Back". Too many old members are no longer active. Let's go out and invite them back.

Socials will be put into place every quarter or so. Maybe just meet for dinner someplace. A committee will be formed to plan these outings.

Need to get more people active in our committees. If you are interested in joining one, let us know. If you are on one and have no desire to still belong, take your name off the committee listing.

Dues of \$20.00 a person are due now. Please make checks to ECPAAA and send to Leah Benoit.

David Mishkin is available to drive out with anyone interested.

A Citizens on Patrol class is being planned. When the date is confirmed, it will be published in the monthly newsletter and on the ECPAAA web site.

Warrant Round-up will be held twice this year.

CELL PHONES: We are moving the cell collection sites from apartments to businesses, so if you know of a business that would be willing to allow us to put a collection box in their lobby, let Lou Baum know.

PRESIDENTS AWARD PROGRAM: Lou Baum – We have more than 20 people receiving an award this year for volunteering over 100 hours each.

Pat McDowell made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:00 PM, second by David Brown.

January 2010 Treasurer's Report

INCOME	Carry Over	January	YTD Income	Annual Budget	Over/Under Budget
12/31/09 Balance in Checking	\$13,459.87				
Afghan Fundraiser			\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
BBQ Dinner/Silent Auction			\$0.00	\$4,000.00	-\$4,000.00
Brick Sales			\$0.00	\$200.00	-\$200.00
CRUD Day			\$0.00	\$1,200.00	-\$1,200.00
Donations/Outside Income		\$510.00	\$510.00	\$0.00	\$510.00
Grocery Care Cards		\$27.17	\$27.17	\$100.00	-\$72.83
Membership Dues		\$780.00	\$780.00	\$1,200.00	-\$420.00
Member Merchandise			\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Recycle Program (Cans & Cartridges)			\$0.00	\$200.00	-\$200.00
Recycle Program (Electronics)		\$100.00	\$100.00	\$500.00	-\$400.00
Note: Funds from the Electronics Recycling Program are allocated to the PALS Summer Camp.					
Warrant Roundup			\$0.00	\$1,300.00	-\$1,300.00
Total Income		\$1,417.17	\$1,417.17	\$8,700.00	-\$7,282.83
Total	\$13,459.87	\$14,877.04	\$14,877.04		
EXPENSES	Carry Over	January	YTD Expenses	Annual Budget	Over/Under Budget
9-1-1 Day			\$0.00	\$250.00	-\$250.00
Audit - Treasurer's Records			\$0.00	\$150.00	-\$150.00
BBQ Silent Auction			\$0.00	\$1,300.00	-\$1,300.00
Bricks			\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Checking Account Expenses			\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
CPANNT Dues		\$25.00	\$25.00	\$25.00	\$0.00
Expenses Not Categorized			\$0.00	\$125.00	-\$125.00
Honorarium Awards and Gifts		\$67.00	\$67.00	\$200.00	-\$133.00
Member Merchandise Items			\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Memorials and Gifts			\$0.00	\$100.00	-\$100.00
Office Supplies			\$0.00	\$150.00	-\$150.00
PALS Summer Camp			\$0.00	\$1,000.00	-\$1,000.00
Police Appreciation Week			\$0.00	\$400.00	-\$400.00
Police Chief Wish Projects			\$0.00	\$2,875.00	-\$2,875.00
Police Clown Program			\$0.00	\$300.00	-\$300.00
Police Officer Christmas Meals			\$0.00	\$200.00	-\$200.00
Postage/Envelopes for Newsletters			\$0.00	\$200.00	-\$200.00
President Awards		\$93.00	\$93.00	\$50.00	\$43.00
Social Events			\$0.00	\$300.00	-\$300.00
Water by the Gallon			\$0.00	\$1,000.00	-\$1,000.00
Web Site/Domain Name			\$0.00	\$75.00	-\$75.00
Total Expenses		\$185.00	\$185.00	\$8,700.00	-\$8,515.00
Funds Available in Checking			\$14,692.04		

SAVINGS ACCOUNT

Savings Account		\$10,003.63	\$10,003.63
Interest from Savings Account		\$0.31	\$0.31
Funds Available in Savings			\$10,003.94

Total ECPAAA Funds

\$24,695.98

The article below appeared in The Dallas Morning News on December 28, 2009 in the Tarrant County Community News section. (Thanks to Linda Martin for sharing this great article.)

For the record, Euless police chief can sing
By DIANE JENNINGS / The Dallas Morning News

Michael Brown works hard to keep his two lives separate. Euless Police Chief Michael Brown jokes that he turned to music 'to keep me off the streets and out of trouble.' By day he's police chief in Euless, heading up a department of 85 officers; by night he's a singer/songwriter.

"Most musicians don't like hanging out with police officers," he explained. "And most police officers don't like hanging out with musicians." "I don't have posters in the office or anything," he stressed. What he does have is a CD of songs he has written and recorded called *The Summit Ridge Session*. But don't think he's signed with some big recording label. "Summit Ridge is the name of the street I live on," he said. "I did it at the house - complete do-it-yourself project."

The reaction around the department has been low-key, he said. "I'm the boss, so they're not going to come in and tell me it's horrible," he said. "You're not going to know what they really think of it, but they all tell me it's good."

Brown has been playing guitar for years, and began writing songs about five years ago. "I decided, 'Well, this is kind of fun,'" he said. "And I needed something to do to keep me off the streets and out of trouble."

At 54, he said, he's not interested in changing careers. "I'm too old," he said. "I would like to stay with what I'm doing unless they run me off." Brown has been a law enforcement officer for more than 30 years, spending 26 years in Euless, followed by four years as chief of the University of North Texas Health Science Center police department in Fort Worth. He returned to Euless as chief three years ago.

Brown said he has no formal musical training. "I play by ear until my ears get sore." And his performance track record is thin. "My biggest claim to fame was I played at Poor David's one time in their B.W. Stevenson songwriting contest. That was the big time for me." But he knows what he likes, and he doesn't find a lot of it in popular music. "I'm a storyteller," he said, describing his music as "on the folk side of country."

Brown isn't pushing his CD hard, having produced only about 200 of them. But, "If I could trick somebody into buying one, I'll sell 'em," he said. "My wife's charging \$10 apiece." Potential customers can listen to a sample on the Web site of the music magazine nodepression.com. The address is nodepression.com/profile/MichaelBrown.

His favorite song from the CD is called "The Case." And no, it's not about a criminal case. "It's a song about a haunted guitar," he said. "There are just not enough haunted guitars out there."

2010 Calendar		Event	Time	Notes
January	2	CPAAANT		
	19	ECPAAA Monthly Meeting	7:00 PM	PD Training Room / Inauguration of Officers
	30	Sky Warn for CERT Members	8:30 - 12:00	TCU - Brown Lupton University Union Ballroom
February	6	CPAAANT		
	16	ECPAAA Monthly Meeting	7:00 PM	PD Training Room
	23	Social	6:30 PM	Freddy's in Euless (Hwy. 121 and Glade)
March	6	CPAAANT		
	16	ECPAAA Monthly Meeting	7:00 PM	PD Training Room
	18	CERT Class Begins	7:00 PM	
	19	Police Awards Banquet, TX Star	7:00 PM	
	20	CRUD Day (City Wide)	9-11 am	
	23	CERT Table Top, Bedford PD	6:30pm	
	25	CPR Class Bedford Admin Bldg	6:30pm	
	TBD	State Wide Warrant Round-up PD	6 - 9pm	
April	3	CPAAANT		
	20	ECPAAA Monthly Meeting	7:00 PM	PD Training Room
	24/25	Arbor Daze - City Hall Area		
	TBD	Social		
May	3	CPAAANT		
	10	Police Appreciation Week		
	20	ECPAAA Monthly Meeting	7:00 PM	PD Training Room
June	5	CPAAANT		
	7 - 11	Kids Summer Camp	9am - 1pm	
	15	ECPAAA Monthly Meeting	7:00 PM	PD Training Room
	21 - 25	Kids Summer Camp	9am - 1pm	
	TBD	Social		
July	3	CPAAANT		
	20	ECPAAA Board Meeting	6:00 PM	Small Meeting Room
	20	ECPAAA Monthly Meeting	7:00 PM	PD Training Room
August	3	CFPA Class Starts	7:00 PM	
	5	CPAAANT		
	11-13	TCPAAA State Convention		Bryan/College Station
	20	ECPAAA Board Meeting	6:00 PM	Small Meeting Room
	20	ECPAAA Monthly Meeting	7:00 PM	PD Training Room
	TBD	Social		
September	4	CPAAANT		Euless Hosting Meeting in PD Training Room
	11	9-1-1 Appreciation Week		
	TBA	Silent Auction / BBQ Fund Raiser		
	21	ECPAAA Monthly Meeting	7:00 PM	President announces 2011 Nominating Committee
	TBA	CRUD Day (City Wide)	9-11 am	
	TBA	Police Open House		
October	2	CPAAANT		
	5	National Night Out		
	19	ECPAAA Monthly Meeting	7:00 PM	PD / President announces 2011 Slate of Officers
	TBD	Social		
November	2	CPAAANT		
	16	ECPAAA Monthly Meeting	7:00pm	PD Training Room / Thanksgiving Pot Luck
December	4	CPAAANT		
	TBA	Parade of Lights		
	21	ECPAAA Monthly Meeting	7:00 PM	Pot Luck Dinner/PD Training Room / Elections and announcement of 2011 Officers

Sgt. Eric Starnes — Continued from Page 2

whispering to another which they in turn whisper to another. Within a few of these "transmissions" the content of the original message has completely morphed. This is yet another effect of the dilution dilemma.

Don't tell people you're explaining it like they're second graders, but be just as clear and thorough as if you were.

The end result you need as a leader is not mere acceptance and understanding but action. Be clear on what people must do as a result of what you're telling them. You can't insinuate what needs to be done; clarity requires a call to action.

Catchy. Your audience is bombarded with messages in every conceivable medium. Being catchy is about breaking through the clutter and being memorable.

What about your message will stick in the mind of the reader or hearer? Here's the test: will they be able to accurately convey what you've communicated? Your job as a leader is to make their job of understanding and repeating easy. More importantly, catchy messages make us want to repeat them. We all love the catchy and the clever and quickly tire of the mundane.

Stories, metaphors, analogies, mottos and even clichés are among the tools you can use. Spend as much time in the packaging of what you're trying to convey as you do developing the content of the message.

Remember, facts validate, but stories illustrate. The best statistical analysis in the world will be diluted to the point of nothingness if it isn't packaged in a catchy, memorable story or illustration.

Compelling. The ultimate guard against dilution is to make your important messages compelling. People can be clear and able to act on the information but they won't without reasons that make sense to them. That is the essence of creating compelling message: getting people to care enough to do something. Compelling ideas are powerful; they have the ability to induce action.

And that requires emotion. Take it from two experts in the field, Dan and Chip Heath, authors of Made to Stick: "A credible idea makes people believe. An emotional idea makes people care."

Leaders tend to have credible ideas but often stop short of compelling ideas. A leader knows why action should be taken, but that familiarity can prevent them from thinking through the reasons others need to follow through.

To avoid dilution, answer the question lingering in the listener's mind: why should I care? That is a more effective question than "Why is this important?"

Ideas must be robust to be strong and withstand the almost inevitable affects of the dilution dilemma. As a leader, the strength of your ideas and messages comes from constant and clear communication that is designed to be catchy and compelling.