

Terrell County Sheriff's Office end of the Month Report July

The month of July began with a two-day celebration of the annual Terrell County Fourth of July Celebration. The celebration was a total success for the county with local and out of town people coming to the celebration, as well as local families having reunions. The Sheriff's Office reports no serious problems or issues occurring during or after the celebration.

Terrell County Sheriff's Office (TCSO) continues to see illegal alien (IA) crossing and being apprehended in the surrounding Terrell County area. Our office dispatch continues to receive 911 calls for assistance from IA's or groups of IA's out in the field. The Sanderson Border Patrol Station reported a total of 433 apprehensions and 493 Got A ways for the month of July. Department of Public Safety (DPS) Troopers also continue to apprehend, identify and deter potential smugglers in the Terrell County area. The following dates below will show what TCSO, DPS, and Border Patrol are encountering in the area.

June 5 Border Patrol advised of suspected smuggling load vehicle travelling north of Dryden on Hwy 349. Border Patrol advised that they were unable to catch up to the vehicle and relayed the information to TCSO, DPS, and Pecos County Sheriff / Sheffield, TX. The vehicle was encountered, by DPS, at the intersection of Hwy 349 / Hwy 2400. DPS attempted to stop the vehicle, the vehicle refused to stop and continues north at a high rate of speed. Approximately 8 miles south of Sheffield the vehicle lost control crashed into the highway rock wall, rolling over several times, and ended up in the middle of the highway. The vehicle caught fire, 11 illegal aliens were thrown out of the vehicle, with several trapped inside the vehicle. On scene DPS and Border Patrol were able to rescue those trapped inside, ambulances from four different counties responded to assist, first responders were able to triage the injured illegal aliens and transport them to Irran, Fort Stockton, Rankin, and San Angelo Hospitals. The driver of the vehicle, a 17-year-old from Houston, was arrested and charged with 11 counts of smuggling and evading. The subject was magistrate in Terrell County, and jailed in Pecos County Jail. The subject bonded out the next day.

June 9 DPS attempted to stop a vehicle north of Dryden Hwy 349 near the Gas Plant Rd. The vehicle refused to stop and continued going north. After a brief

chase the vehicle stopped and 15 illegal aliens jumped out and ran into the brush, only 2 were apprehended and 1 driver. Both apprehended subjects claimed injury TC EMS was dispatched, after evaluation only 1 subject was transported to Irran Hospital, only to be released into Border Patrol custody a few hours later. The driver was cited and released by DPS, due to no jail space and TCSO jail being closed.

June 20 DPS preformed a vehicle stop and apprehended 6 illegal aliens and 1 driver, south of Sheffield on Hwy 349.

June 22 DPS preformed a vehicle stop on a Recreational Motor Vehicle (RV) travelling north on Hwy 349, near Gas Plant Rd. Before the vehicle can come to a complete stop the RV door opened up and 6 illegal aliens jumped out and ran into the brush. The RV came to a stop and a total of 23 illegal aliens were apprehended plus 1 driver (Legal Permanent Resident) and 1 female passenger (USC). The illegal aliens were from various countries, Peru, Ecuador, and Mexico, all were turned over to Sanderson Border Patrol. The driver and passenger were charged with 23 counts of human smuggling, but were cited and released due to all jail facilities being full. It was noted that there was one illegal alien in the group wanted for Homicide (stabbing) in Houston, TX. He was turned over to Harris County by Border Patrol.

June 26 DPS performed a vehicle stop on Hwy 285 north of Sanderson, and apprehended 6 illegal aliens and 1 USC driver. All the illegal aliens were turned over to Sanderson Border Patrol, the USC driver was cited and released due to no jail space being available.

June 27 DPS identified a scout smuggling load vehicle travelling south on Hwy 349. The vehicle was occupied by 1 male and 1 female both USC, they were transported to the Terrell County Sheriff Office for interview. During interview it was discovered that they were in the area scouting for law enforcement, and to deliver food to a group of approximately 30 illegal aliens. Once they successfully dropped off the food they were to report to Ozona, TX where three pick up trucks were staged ready to travel to a designated pick-up location. Both subject cooperated with investigators and provided valuable information regarding their organization and were released for further surveillance.

June 29 DPS performed a traffic stop on a vehicle on Hwy 349 (Sheffield) that resulted in the apprehension of 10 illegal aliens and 3 USC 's. The illegal aliens were turned over to Fort Stockton Border Patrol. During the traffic stop DPS Troopers encountered 2 weapons in the vehicle, one in the driver side and the other in the passenger side. All three USC 's was taken into custody, the significance of this stop is that the illegals were picked up in the Dryden area, and that weapons were located and seized.

TCSO Deputies have also had encounters with illegal aliens or preformed traffic stops that have resulted in smuggled illegal alien loads.

June 6 TCSO Deputies performed a traffic stop on a pick up truck at the intersection of Hwy 90 and Hwy 285 which resulted in the discovery of 5 illegal aliens and 1 illegal alien driver. All subjects were turned over to Sanderson Border Patrol and the vehicle was impounded.

June 9 TCSO Deputies responded to a call of 6 possible illegal aliens north of Dryden on Hwy 349. Deputies were able to locate the group and turn them over to Border Patrol. TCSO assisted with the transport of the group to Sanderson Border Patrol Station.

June 17 TCSO Deputies preformed a vehicle traffic stop north of Dryden on Hwy 349 which resulted in locating 5 illegal aliens, 1 male driver and 1 female passenger, both USC 's from the Dallas, TX area. The 5 illegal aliens were turned over to Sanderson Border Patrol, driver and passenger were cited and released. The driver was an admitted gang member belonging to the Latin King Street Gang. This is the second or third Latin King Gang member encountered in Terrel County, Brewster County has also seen an increase in Latin King Gang member encounters, Terrell County has also seen Tango Blast Gang members, this gang is from Rio Grande Valley area. All gang member encounters have been as drivers of illegal alien load vehicles.

June 25 TCSO Deputy encountered 10 illegal aliens in the far east end of the county on Hwy 90 / Lozier Canyon area. Subjects were just walking the highway, the Deputy detained the group for Border Patrol, and assisted with transport to the Border Patrol Station.

TCSO Deputies also recovered two smuggling vehicles in the area to pick up illegal aliens on June 26 a red Silverado pick up truck was left abandoned on Hwy 90 west of Cedar Station. The vehicle was observed during the night by Border Patrol attempting to pick up a group of illegal aliens. The vehicle was unsuccessful in its attempt and was left behind on Hwy 90. The vehicle was recovered as an abandoned vehicle. On June 28 a Silver Silverado pick up truck attempted to flee from Border Patrol east of Dryden on Hwy 90. The vehicle travelling at a high rate of speed jumped the rail road tracks west of Dryden near Indio Calzada Building and broke through the fence on the north side of Hwy 90. Several illegal aliens jumped out of the vehicle and ran from the area. Due to darkness hours Border Patrol and TCSO was unable to locate the pickup truck. Several illegal aliens were located and taken into custody. During day light hours TCSO, riding adv.'s, were able to locate the break in the fence and the vehicle. Arrangements were made to take the vehicle out of the pasture and transported to Sanderson for storage.

The TCSO dispatch has received several 911 calls this month for lost illegal aliens or groups of illegal aliens needing assistance. We continue to receive calls from the Dryden / Hwy 349 area, Deputies are dispatched to the area, but are unable to locate these subjects. Our office is still unable to establish contact with these callers, so we wait for them to call back sometimes they do and sometimes we do not hear from them anymore. Our 911 system is able to ping their phones sometimes which leads to successfully locating the individual. This month we were able to locate one such individual at the far east end of the county. Our office also received the first 911 call from Mexico, a group of 10 subjects from the Mexican State of Guerrero contacted TCSO Dispatch and advised that they needed help. The group stated that they were at the Rio Grande River crossing located south of Hwy 90 / Cedar Station and that the group could no longer continue their journey, were out of travel supplies, and that there were minor juveniles in the group. TCSO contacted the Mexican Consulate in Del Rio, Tx and provided all the information regarding the group's location, GPS Coordinates and a group members cellphone number for future contact was provided. The group called continuously for assistance, and all our office could do was provide the group with the Mexican Consulate number for them to call and explain to the group that since they were still in Mexico, we could not help them. The Mexican Consulate advised our office that they had passed on the information to the

Office of Protection and Grupo BETA, which is responsible for such cases. A follow up was done with the Consulate Office the next day in person, I went to their office and spoke with a Consulate Officer and the only information she could give was that Grupo BETA had gone out to the GPS Coordinates we provided and that they were unable to locate the group. Our office did not receive any more calls from the group.

Terrell County recorded three deceased subjects for the month of July, all three subjects were illegal aliens this brings the county total to thirteen deaths the most the county has ever recorded in any year. The recorded deaths were from the vehicle accident on Hwy 349 involving 11 illegal aliens, the subject was a female and her nationality was never established she died at the Irran hospital due to her injuries suffered during the accident. On July 7 and 8 TCSO spent the two days trying to recover a deceased illegal alien's body on the Rio Grande River. The body was located on the river vega and the river crossing was only accessible by ATV, once we arrived and climbed down to the scene it was determined that the body could not be brought up due to the climb up, the hot temperatures, the bodies weight, and lack of man power. It was determined that the next day we would take the necessary help to climb out with the body, and the next day with the assistance of Border Patrol, DPS, TCSO, and Terrell County Road and Bridge crew we were able to successfully retrieve the body. The female subject was from Guatemala, and identified by her family based on clothing. The Guatemalan Consulate assisted with locating the family for the identification. The final deceased subject was reported by Crockett County Sheriff's Office and was located on the far north east end of the county south of the Pecos River. TCSO and Justice of the Peace went out to the scene and were able to locate the deceased based on GPS Coordinates provided by Crockett County. The subject was a male his identification card showed he was a citizen of Guanajuato, Mexico. TCSO processed the scene and transported the body back to Sanderson. TCSO turned over only two deceased subjects to Fort Stockton Funeral Home this month, one subject died in the hospital.

The Sheriff's Office is still working on opening up the jail, we have been communicating with the Texas Jail Commission on trying to open up the jail to support Operation Lone Star. The Commission has advised our office that there is a possibility we could open the jail so DPS can begin to bring subjects that are

encountered in traffic stops involving illegal alien smuggling, as well as the drivers of these vehicles. We are currently waiting for more guidance from the Jail Commission.

The Sheriff's Office continues to prepare to open up the jail, we have been in contact with the Texas Jail Commission and they advise that we can open our jail once all the smaller repairs are complete, the emergency lighting work was completed the last week of July. The jail is currently in need of a vent blower to allow the air to circulate in the jail. The Jail Commission has advised that once our jail is open Terrell County will be supporting Operation Lone Star. This will mean that DPS will be able to jail any and all arrest that deal with border issues (illegal aliens, smuggling load drivers) as well as for state offenses. This will create over crowding conditions to our jail pretty quick, the border issue is currently the main cause of over crowding jails in the surrounding neighboring counties as well as the throughout the south Texas border counties. If we begin to receive arrested illegal aliens for the state charge of trespassing as Governor Abbott has instructed, Terrell County Sheriff's Office will be responsible for booking, magistrate, health screening, and transport of these arrested individuals to Val Verde County to the temporary processing center that has been set up in Del Rio. The county will need a new interlocal agreement for the use of the processing center.

The month of July has seen most of the activity occurring outside of town then here in town. We expect this trend to continue, our office will continue to be vigilant, in town and out of town. We will continue to assist all our law enforcement partners that are working in our county.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be the initials 'JOP' with a stylized flourish underneath.