

Vol. 1 Issue 3 2018

The Official Newsletter of **Operation Blue Shield**

THE SHIELD



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RUN WITH THE HEROES: SAN ANGELO

On the morning of Saturday, September 15, hundreds of San Angelo citizens turned out to participate in Operation Blue Shield's annual "Run With the Heroes" event. Runners had the option of undertaking the 5K relay or the 1 mile family walk. Overcast skies and looming rains did not deter runners and San Angelo citizens from the event. San Angelo Police Department, SWAT, the Tom Green County Sheriff's Department, the Texas Department of Safety and the San Angelo Fire Department all showed up to show their support and participate in a fun filled morning.

Younger runners had the opportunity to run with their favorite superheroes from OBS partner, Heroes, Cops and Kids. All runners had the privilege of participating in the event alongside San Angelo's first responders. Police Chief Frank Carter, who ran the 5K in full uniform, presented OBS Founder and CEO, Toni Brinker, with a special award, recognizing the organization's commitment to build trust and unity between first responders and communities. Events like these are crucial to creating unity in our neighborhoods.



Moments that bring all sides together lead to honest conversations based on mutual respect and trust helps create safer, healthier, resilient neighborhoods and a stronger America. OBS would like to thank everyone who participated in the San Angelo "Run With the Heroes" event and encourages everyone to keep the conversations alive. This is how we build #commUNITY!

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THE SAN ANGELO POLICE DEPARTMENT FULLY SUPPORTS OPERATION BLUE SHIELD'S MISSION OF UNITING FIRST RESPONDERS AND CITIZENS.

RECENTLY, OPERATION BLUE SHIELD AND TONI BRINKER, HOSTED A 5K RUN IN OUR COMMUNITY. IT WAS A HUGE SUCCESS. EVENTS SUCH AS THESE PROVIDE POSITIVE INTERACTIONS AND STRENGTHEN THE BOND AND TRUST BETWEEN CITIZENS AND FIRST RESPONDERS.

Chief Frank Carter, San Angelo Police Department



CEO'S CORNER

"One is not born into the world to do everything but to do something."

Henry David Thoreau

At Operation Blue Shield (OBS), one of the fundamental life lessons we try to emulate is 'Service for Others'. Throughout history, mankind has recognized the power of working together towards a common goal to make the world a better place. We have seen dramatic transformative changes within neighborhoods where first responders and community stakeholders strengthen their community via mutually beneficial strategic alliances. The results go far beyond the time they spend volunteering and serving. Lives are changed. Neighborhoods are stabilized and revitalized. There are simultaneous and integrated improvements in safety, health, education, housing, jobs and others. 'Cities of Opportunities' are created.

This month's newsletter is about two OBS community engagement programs which are part of a more comprehensive community development approach to significant and sustainable neighborhood improvements. Each program is different from the other yet the net results are the same. Instead of judgement, blame, criticism of a particular situation, everyone participating reaches a different level of understanding. Participants become acutely aware of the complicated situations we face as a society while striving to be positive change agents. Simply put, the purposeful strategic linkage or 'moments of time' when first responders and citizens work together helps reduce crime, creates opportunities of rebuilding trust, confidence and corporation between all parties. 'Service for Others' builds a stronger, safer America...for everyone.

Toni Brinker



BILL'S CORNER

After spending the past few years on the board of Operation Blue Shield and watching the progress and success, it is the right time for me to join the team. When I look at our community and country, I see a place where time is pressed, viewpoints are sharp and local government budgets strapped, more and more is expected of our first responders giving less time for them to build the relationships, trust and unity required when there is a shock. OBS understands that relationships are built over time through intentional actions that create a moment to build a positive relationship. Innovative programs like Beat the Heat, Kids and Kites, Power of One and Run with the Heroes create these moments. I look forward to working with the community and first responders to intentionally create these moments in the future.

Bill

CIELO RANCH LEARNING CENTER

In August 2016, community leaders Mrs. Edna Pemberton and Mrs. Cheryl Rischer, two of South Dallas' finest community leaders, saw their vision for an educational and mentorship program located in the 75237 zip code finally realized. Dropout rates like those found in 75237 are sure to intimidate even the most hardened educators. Where many might have seen a lost cause, Mrs. Pemberton and Mrs. Rischer saw an opportunity to help students and better their community. So they turned words into action.

Housed at the Cielo Ranch Apartments, the Learning Center is an after-school program that provides tutoring services and mentoring opportunities to young people, ages 5-15, who live in the community. From homework assistance to developing reading and math skills, the Learning Center is committed to curbing the dropout rates, one student at a time.

The Cielo Ranch Learning Center is staffed by Mrs. Rischer, Mrs. Lisa Pemberton Evans, and numerous volunteers. Students who participate in the after-school program have the unique opportunity to meet and engage with first responders from the Dallas Police Department, many of whom volunteer their time as instructors and mentors. Community efforts like those offered at the Learning Center address a student's character development as well as their intellectual skills. These programs afford students 'moments' to learn and to grow in safe neighborhoods.



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THEY SAID IT COULDN'T BE DONE, BUT WE DID IT ANYWAY.

Mrs. Edna Pemberton, Founder, The Learning Center

Upcoming Events:

October 23 - October 31: Red Ribbon Week

October 30: San Angelo, TX - Trunk & Treat with First Responders

November 10: Lake Highlands High School (9449 Church Rd., Dallas, TX) - Annual Kids Health & Safety Fair

November 21: Eastfield College PG Community Room - Family Financial Literacy Session
One @ 11:30 AM

December 28: Eastfield College PG Community Room - Family Financial Literacy Session
Two @ 5:30 PM

2019:

July 30 - July 31: Stop Violence Conference: Hurst Conference Center (Hurst, TX)

TBD: Camp DEFY

TBD: 2019 Run with the Heroes

NEIGHBORHOOD NIGHT OUT IN BUCKNER TERRACE

