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Sally Ellertson  
Public Information Officer  
141 West Renfro  
Burleson, Texas 76028-4261  
817-426-9622  
F: 817-426-9390  
[sellertson@burlesontx.com](mailto:sellertson@burlesontx.com)  
[www.burlesontx.com](http://www.burlesontx.com)

Burleson Police Commander Chris Havens was tapped for the Byron Black Character Award at the Burleson City of Character Luncheon in November. Dale Dexheimer, the 2011 winner, presented the honor to Havens.

Burleson Police Chief Tom Cowan said that Havens “can always be counted on to do whatever he is asked to do. He has a true servant’s heart and is willing to volunteer for department-sponsored and community-sponsored events. He lives by a high moral standard and practices what he believes. He is a man of great integrity and character.”

Havens is the sixth City staff member or City official who has been honored with the award, which is named after former Mayor Byron Black. Black received the award the inaugural year. Fire Marshal Stacy Singleton, Chief Tom Cowan, former councilmember Jim Wadlow and Dale Dexheimer, who serves as the president of the City of Burleson Library Board and the Burleson Heritage Foundation, have also received the honor. Other Byron Black Character Award winners include Gloria Gillaspie, Joann Smith, Ann Heberle, Patsy Dumas, FA Schad and Dan-O Strong.

Havens graduated from South Grand Prairie High School in 1984. He is currently working on his bachelor’s degree. He is majoring in criminal justice and minoring in psychology. Havens has his master peace officer certification.

The commander has been in law enforcement for 24 years. He began his career with the Dallas Police Department in 1988. There, he worked as a patrol officer as well as with auto theft and the street level narcotics task force. In 1994, Havens was hired by the Burleson Police Department. Here, he has worked as a patrol officer, field training officer, and in undercover narcotics. While in criminal investigations, the award winner worked cases involving property crimes, crimes against persons, and crimes against children. Havens is one of the department’s public information officers.

In 2000, Havens was promoted to sergeant/detective over the department’s criminal investigations section. In October 2006, he was promoted to commander of the operations division. That division includes patrol, the bicycle unit, Citizens Police Academy, Citizens On Patrol, community resource officers, crisis negotiation, police explorers, honor guard, SWAT, the traffic unit, the

department's holding facility, intoxilyzer operations, special events, off-duty security, the ride-a-long program, court liaisons, fleet and radio maintenance, Homeland Security, warrant service, vacation/business checks, and directed patrols.

Havens is one of the original members of the SWAT team. In the last 13 years he has served as an entry team member, assistant team leader, and team leader. Havens is currently the commander over the SWAT team and crisis negotiators.

Havens is a TCLEOSE (Texas Commission on Law Enforcement Officer Standards and Education) state instructor.

The police commander is no stranger to awards. His peers voted him the Burleson Police Department's Officer of the Year in 2000 and again in 2006. Also in 2009, Havens was recognized by his peers with the Ofelia Blair Memorial Character Award, named in honor of the criminal investigations clerk who lost her battle with cancer in 2003.

In March 2009, Havens graduated from the 236<sup>th</sup> session of the FBI National Academy. He is also a graduate of the 126<sup>th</sup> session of the Texas Police Association Law Enforcement Administrator Conference, the Bill Blackwood Law Enforcement Management Institute INCOSIT, the Institute for Law Enforcement Administration, and the West Point Military Leadership Course sponsored by the Texas Police Chiefs Association.

Havens serves as third vice president on the executive board for the Texas Police Association. He is a member of the National Tactical Police Officers Association, Texas Police Association, Texas Association of Hostage Negotiators, International Association of Chiefs of Police, Texas Police Chiefs Association and FBI National Academy Associates. Havens is also on the Burleson Independent School District's educational improvement council and assists the district with emergency management plans. In addition, he is a member of the Burleson Lions Club. The Byron Black Character Award winner lives in Burleson with his wife, son and niece.

The City of Character is a program involving the City of Burleson, Burleson Independent School District, Burleson Ministerial Alliance and the Burleson Area Chamber of Commerce.