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We are paying forward your support and generosity.

Between the tip donations and a portion of the nightly proceeds from Grumps Burgers, the Burleson Citizens Police Academy Alumni Association (BCPAAA) brought in \$4,600 at the Sept. 21 Tip A Cop fundraiser.

The BCPAAA, a 501©3 non-profit organization, is using the funds raised to not only maintain the police department's bicycle unit and honor guard, but also to kick start a new program, Operation Helping Hands, which supplies officers with gift cards to hand out at their discretion.

"The officers can use the cards, as needed, when they come upon someone who the officer believes is truly in need," Sgt. B. O'Heren, coordinator of the department's Citizens Police Academy and Citizens On Patrol program, said. "These officers often spend their own money buying someone gas or food or finding a place for them to stay to get them away from a bad situation."

Each Burleson patrol officer, traffic officer, and community resource officer will be assigned two meal cards, two \$10 gift cards, and a \$20 gift card. The cards are tracked and replaced when needed.

Through Operation Helping Hands, the BCPAAA and Burleson Police Department also made arrangements with a local hotel to provide a room if the need arises.

"We, as an organization, are hoping to lessen the financial burden of these officers by supplying the gift cards," Amy O'Heren, president of the BCPAAA said.

The purpose of the BCPAAA is to continuously present and promote a positive image of law enforcement, the Burleson Police Department, and their constitutionally mandated functions; and, to promote public awareness by serving as ambassadors in supporting the Burleson Police Department.

How do you become part of the BCPAAA? Sign up for the annual Citizens Police Academy, a free 10-week academy each year, June-August, at the Burleson Police Department, 1161 S.W. Wilshire Blvd.

The topics include the department's organization, recruiting process, Texas Penal Code, criminal investigations, search and seizure, building searches, traffic law enforcement, narcotics investigation, SWAT, patrol procedures, and more. The classes are as "hands on" as possible. Instructors demonstrate techniques used to search a building for an intruder, and then participants practice what they've learned. Participants also solve a homicide scenario by identifying evidence, using investigative techniques, and interviewing witnesses. Students ride along with an officer or monitor the communications office.

For more about the Citizens Police Academy, go to www.burlesontx.com/citizenspoliceacademy. To see the fun had by all at the Sept. 21 Tip A Cop event at Grumps Burgers go to the City of Burleson Texas Facebook page, <http://bit.ly/TipACop2015>.