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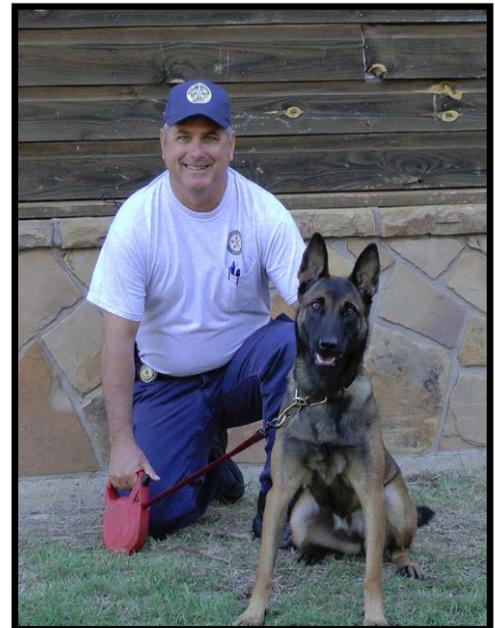
ATAC Honors SFMO Canine Handler

State Fire Marshal fire/arson investigator Tommy Pleasant has been honored by A Texas Advisory Council on Arson (ATAC) with its 2013 Fire Service Special Award. Pleasant received the award at the 58th Annual IAAI Fire and Arson Investigators Seminar in Austin.

Pleasant has 26 years of law enforcement experience and 23 years as a canine handler. “Pleasant may be the most experienced canine handler in the country when it comes to arson investigations,” said State Fire Marshal Chris Connealy. “His years of training and developing accelerant detection programs are truly remarkable.”

Pleasant’s qualifications include Master Peace Officer, TCFP Advanced Arson Investigator, TCLEOSE Instructor and Accelerant Detection Canine Instructor. Over his 16 years with the State Fire Marshal’s Office (SFMO) Pleasant has certified 10 SFMO canines and taught six new canine handler courses. Pleasant works out of Corpus Christi and his territory covers most of south Texas.

Canines are used to detect possible accelerants such as gasoline or lighter fluid at the scene of fires which may have been intentionally set. In addition to his duties as a canine handler and instructor, Pleasant has worked as the lead investigator on many fires including fatality fires.



Tommy Pleasant and Gabby

Pleasant developed the SFMO Accelerant Detection Handlers Program as well as certifying every year canine teams from around the country at the Dallas Fire Department Canine Conference. He was the first civilian to be dual certified at the U.S. Border Patrol National Canine Facility.

ATAC funds the state Arson Hotline. Its members include fire, police, industrial and insurance representatives. The Arson Hotline is answered seven days a week, 24-hours a day and every caller remains anonymous. Calls that lead to legitimate arrests may result in a reward. The Arson Hotline number is 1-877-4-FIRE-45 (1-877-434-7345).

The Insurance Council of Texas (ICT) provides the administrative support to keep ATAC operational on a daily basis. ICT staff members also publish and distribute the ATAC newsletter and work closely with the State Fire Marshal's Office in responding to calls from the Arson Hotline.

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