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His commitment and dedication to the Burleson Police Department are unquestionable. And his connection to the namesake of the Ofelia Blair Outstanding Character Award, which Commander Chris Havens accepted at the police department's annual awards banquet, makes the honor bittersweet.

The Ofelia Blair Outstanding Character Award is named in honor of the former clerk for the department's criminal investigations section who lost her battle to cancer in 2003. Prior to being appointed commander, Havens was the sergeant over the criminal investigations section.

"I was very touched and very humbled to receive Ofelia's award," Havens said. "This is very special to me because of the close working relationship that we all had in criminal investigations and the special relationship that still exists today with her family. Ofelia was a saint. Her character was impeccable. She would always brighten your day and she was a pure joy to work with. This award was named for her because we didn't want her to be forgotten and because she always displayed the highest character in her personal and professional life."

Havens has more than 20 years of law enforcement experience. He started his career with the Dallas Police Department in 1988 where he worked patrol, auto theft and with the street level narcotics task force. Havens was hired by the Burleson Police Department in 1994. He made the move to Burleson because "I wanted to work where I lived and be more involved with the community."

The award winner is currently the operations commander over patrol, bicycle patrol, Citizens Police Academy, Citizens On Patrol, Community Resource Officers, hostage/crisis negotiators, police explorers, honor guard, SWAT and traffic. Before he became one of the department's three commanders, Havens served on the SWAT team as entry team member, assistant team leader and team leader. He worked in patrol, as a field training officer and as an undercover narcotics investigator. 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.

According to the nomination, "he has proven his commitment and dedication to the employees of the Burleson Police Department as well as to the citizens of Burleson. He devotes an untold number of hours to assure that the needs of the

department are met. He makes himself available 24 hours a day, seven days a week to the citizens of this city and is always available to answer a question, make a decision or just listen. He has proven to be a great mediator as well as counselor. He is a true leader in every sense of the word and a true friend. His presence will long be felt on this department and community.”

Havens was named the department’s Officer of the Year in 2000 and again in 2006. He is a graduate of the FBI National Academy. Havens is a TCLEOSE (Texas Commission on Law Enforcement Officer Standards and Education) state instructor and has his master peace officer certification.

The honoree is married with one son.