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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)

A supervisor who has dedicated his life to the Burleson Police Department was humbled and honored Jan. 29 when he was announced as the 2014 Supervisor of the Year.

“There are so many outstanding and dedicated people who serve the community at the police department who are all deserving of awards and recognition,” Deputy Chief Doug Sandifer, the honoree, said.

Sandifer guided the department during the transition after Police Chief Tom Cowan retired in December 2013 and Police Chief Billy Cordell took over the reins in June 2014.

“Doug was instrumental in making numerous police projects the success they were during his time at the top,” according to the nomination. “He has proven his worth over and over again as someone who can be counted on when he is needed. Doug single handedly completes and monitors the department’s annual budget of more than \$9 million. This undertaking each year is very labor intensive and must be monitored throughout the year as each dollar is spent.”

The 30-year journey with Burleson began in the 1980s when Sandifer was working at John Peter Smith Hospital and met several officers from Burleson. They encouraged him to take the police test. Sandifer did, and was offered a job in the city of what was then 12,000 people (the population is now 40,000).

Sandifer started as a reserve police officer with Burleson in January 1984, and then was hired as a full-time officer in August 1984. He was promoted to corporal in 1986, sergeant in 1988, and captain in 1993. His title changed to commander in 2007, then to deputy chief in 2013.

Sandifer earned an associate’s degree in criminal justice from Tarrant County College in 1989 and a bachelor’s degree in applied arts and sciences from Dallas Baptist University in 1996. He is certified as a master peace officer and licensed police instructor. The honoree isn’t the only law enforcement officer in the family. Sandifer’s brother-in-law is a captain with the Fort Worth Police Department.

As deputy chief of administration, Sandifer oversees the communications section, criminal investigations section, property and evidence, records section, and the recruitment and hiring of new employees at Burleson.

“I am blessed to have an outstanding group of dedicated supervisors and employees who work in the administrative services division,” Sandifer said.

The honoree was born in Houston, lived in seven states and even lived in England for three years. His mother was a stay-at-home mom. His father, John Sandifer, spent 21 years in the United States Air Force, 25 years working for the United States Army, and his last assignment was at the Pentagon in Washington, D.C. His father died in 1998.

“My father was my mentor. He was a man who lived out his Christian faith and demonstrated integrity in everything he did,” Sandifer said.

The honoree’s constant cheerleader was his wife Cheryl, who lost her battle with brain cancer in January 2013. They were married 28 years.

“You cannot do this job for 30 years without the strong support of your family,” Sandifer said. “She put up with the demands of this job – shift work, long hours, holidays spent working and the associated stresses of police work – and never complained. She understood how difficult it was to work in law enforcement and she loved and cared deeply about the people who worked at the police department.”

Sandifer and his wife raised two children – daughter Katie and son Adam. Katie and her husband Brian live in Indianapolis where she works as a provider relations representative with Indiana University Health Plans. Brian is an emergency medicine resident at Indiana University. Adam lives in Cleburne and works for the railroad system. Adam is father to the honoree’s two-month-old grandbaby, Paisley. Sandifer’s sister, Cindy, and her family live in Lapeer, Michigan.

Sandifer made the right career choice.

“I believe that public safety is a profession that is truly a calling from God, and we need to always be servant leaders within our community,” he said.