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He has that “every guy” ability to relate with all facets of the community, and that sets people at ease. That’s important when your career field is law enforcement.

Burleson Police Department Investigator Larry Sparks was selected as the City of Burleson’s first Employee of the Quarter for 2015. He was one of 13 nominated from the public safety field, which includes the fire department, police department and fire marshal’s office.

The honoree’s work ethic was cited in the nomination.

“He has a schedule that I cannot begin to imagine trying to keep up with,” according to the nomination from a fellow police officer. “He makes himself available to every street officer and detective in Johnson County to answer questions, review arrests, or come to a scene and conduct interviews or investigations. It doesn’t seem to matter if it is 2 p.m. or 2 a.m., he is available.”

Sparks assists his fellow officers with everyday tasks and will jump in and back up an officer if a shift is shorthanded.

“I have watched him mentor young officers and take the time to teach them, step by step, as opposed to just doing the task himself,” according to the nomination. “Even though teaching is more time consuming, and the task could have been completed more easily if he had done it, Sparks understands that by teaching he is creating the officers who will lead tomorrow’s department.”

The Burleson Police Department hired Sparks as an officer in 1999. He worked for the STOP Narcotics Task Force, 2002-2005, and then was assigned to the STOP Special Crimes Unit where he has been the field supervisor since 2008. Sparks has also been a K9 handler since 2008. His previous experience includes serving as a magistrate court judge in North Carolina.

“His knowledge of narcotics and the ‘players’ within our area is second to none,” according to the nomination. “He is a vital and integral part of what Burleson Police Department does every day on the street. He strives to keep drugs out of our city and away from our kids. He is one of the most driven narcotics officers I have met.”