

Dear Editor,

As the Sheriff of Van Zandt County, I often have the opportunity to experience the kindness and support of the great folks of our county. Recently, an extraordinary example of that support and kindness occurred. I would like to share what happened with your readers.

Your Sheriff's Department is tasked by state law to handle astray livestock calls on our public roads. We pick up horses, donkeys and cattle which are loose on the highway to return them to their lawful owners and to keep them from being hit by vehicles. Due to lack of resources, our deputies have been handling this important safety task using their own personal vehicles.

I am well aware of the financial struggles our county is experiencing in this weak economy. In spite of the tight budget, on December 9th, Judge Kirkpatrick and the Commissioners' Court graciously allocated \$2500.00 for our department to purchase a used livestock trailer to handle these stray livestock calls. I am very appreciative to the court for attempting to meet our needs.

Your paper reported the results of that Commissioners' Court meeting, and this is where the story gets really interesting. After the story appeared, I received a call from Mr. Bill McKinley, who, with his family, own and operate Triple M Trailers of Texas (Sundowner Trailer) located in Canton on IH-20. Mr. McKinley advised me that he, and a group of Van Zandt County business owners, would like to explore the possibility of assisting our department in acquiring a livestock trailer to use in picking up strays. Before lunch that same day, Mr. McKinley called me back and said the group of Van Zandt County business owners had obtained the resources necessary to provide the Sheriff's Department with a new CM livestock trailer to be used to keep our roadways safe from the dangers of wandering livestock. I was shocked, humbled and elated at the kindness and generosity of these concerned citizens.

Even though they sought no publicity from this generous act of public service, I would like to recognize and thank those individuals and businesses who are

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helping keep our roadways safe. They include the McKinley family of Triple M Trailers in Canton; Johnny Brewer of The Muffler and Hitch Shop in Canton; Ted Deen of Deen Implement in Wills Point; Tommy Clark of the Tractor Ranch in Canton; Don Gilchrist of Door Controls, Inc. in Ben Wheeler; Ricky and Sue Ragle of Canton Paint and Body; Ja de Webster of the Whataburger in Canton; Trent Bright of Van Zandt Glass and Mirror in Canton; Kyle Norman Excavation in Canton; Kevin Derbert of Mr. D's Oil Change and Shamrock 1&2 in Canton; and Bob Reese of ReMax, Landmark and Rose Realty in Canton and CM Trailers.

We see so much unrest in our country today and so many instances of deep divisions between law enforcement and the citizens of various communities. However, in Van Zandt County, it is with great pride and deep gratitude I report that the Van Zandt County Sheriff's Department enjoys broad support from the law abiding citizens of our county. I am blessed to serve as your Sheriff and am profoundly grateful for the support our citizens show to your Sheriff's Department.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael Lindsey Ray
Sheriff, Van Zandt County