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REMEMBERING ALL OF LAW ENFORCEMENT'S HEROES

<https://www.odmp.org/officer/22194-senior-deputy-jessica-laura-hall-hollis>



Bio & Incident Details

Age: 35

Tour: 7 years

Badge # 4413

Cause: Drowned

Senior Deputy

Jessica Laura Hall-Hollis

Travis County Sheriff's Office, Texas

End of Watch: Friday, September 19, 2014

Senior Deputy Jessica Hollis drowned after her patrol car washed away as she checked roadways for high water during a period of heavy rain at 1:50 am.

She was driving in the area of Fritz Hughes Park Road and Low Water Crossing Road, upstream of Lake Austin, when her patrol car was washed into the river. She was able to radio dispatchers that her vehicle was being swept away.

Her patrol car was located approximately 15 minutes later but she was not with it. The patrol car was recovered from the water later in the day. Deputy Hollis' body was recovered from Lake Austin on September 19th, 2014.

Senior Deputy Hollis had served with the Travis County Sheriff's Office for seven years and was a member of the agency's Dive Team. She is survived by her husband and 12-year-old son. Deputy Hollis' husband serves with the Austin Police Department.

Deputy Jessica Hollis' body found in Lake Austin

<http://kxan.com/2014/09/19/missing-deputy-jessica-hollis-body-found/>
September 19, 2014 By [Eric Janzen](#) Updated: January 27, 2015,

AUSTIN (KXAN) – Rescue crews recovered the body Friday of Travis County Senior Deputy Jessica Hollis from Lake Austin. The seven-year veteran of the sheriff’s office was killed after she was swept away while checking a low water crossing shortly before 2 a.m. Thursday in the [3400 block of Fritz Hughes Park Road](#).

“I told (Hollis’ family) we would bring her home,” Travis County Sheriff Greg Hamilton said as his eyes filled with water, “but we wanted to bring her home alive.

She had been out there in that water for a while. She’s back home now and not out there by herself anymore.”

Hamilton said Hollis was swept out of the creek she was inspecting and into Lake Austin. Crews located her vehicle shortly after it went into the water, but not her.

“I know a lot of folks are asking why (this happened), I’m asking why,” he said. “But the good Lord doesn’t make mistakes.”

Hamilton said Hollis was a strong swimmer and member of the dive team, but could not compete with the fast moving water. Divers found her body about 2 p.m. along Long Bow Trail across from Fritz Hughes Park.

“I’m pretty numb,” the sheriff added, “I’ve been numb for the last two days...she was special to each and every one of us.”

Several officers lined the street holding American flags in a show of respect as Hollis’ body was driven away in a police escort.



“She was just one of the guys and fit in good,” Hamilton said of Hollis’ character.

"She was a good role model for all the females who wanted to get into law enforcement."

Hollis was married to an Austin police officer and also leaves behind a son. She started her career with APD as a cadet in 2005 and became a commissioned officer in June 2006. She resigned later that year and started working for Travis County.

Crews searched from the air, on the ground and in the water through the day Thursday for the deputy and suspended their search for the 35-year-old when darkness fell. About 80 people continued their search at 7 a.m. on Friday before her body was pulled out of the lake later in the afternoon.

"Travis County was already extremely close, but they have gotten just that much closer because of Jessica and because of this particular incident," Hamilton added. Counseling will also be made available to officers and others working in the sheriff's office.

Austin-Travis County EMS spokeswoman Lisa Block said earlier Friday the terrain and conditions made the search difficult, forcing crews to search some of the same areas more than once. Officials say the area around the creek is surrounded by dense cedar brush, making it challenging for crews to get through. However, Thursday's rain may actually have helped in the search for Hollis near Bear Creek. Travis County Sheriff's Office spokesperson Roger Wade said the new rainfall made the creek clearer.

Officials from the Travis County Sheriff's Office, Texas Department of Public Safety, Austin Fire Department, Austin-Travis County EMS, Texas Game Warden and Texas Search & Rescue aided in the search.

Obituaries

http://www.gammagefh.com/fh/obituaries/obituary.cfm?o_id=2711973

Jessica Laura Hollis

(April 21, 1979 - September 18, 2014)

Senior Deputy Jessica Laura Hollis, age 35 of Austin, Texas passed away on Thursday, September 18, 2014 in the line of duty.

Jessica grew up in San Antonio, Texas, and graduated from Churchill High School in 1997 where she was a varsity cheerleader. She attended Texas A&M at Corpus Christi and Southwest Texas State University studying Marine Biology.

Jessica met her future husband, Ricky Hollis, while they were serving as EMTs in San Antonio. They then served together as Paramedics for Calhoun County for 5 years. The couple moved to Austin after being accepted into the Austin Police Academy, and had the distinction of being the 2nd married couple ever to graduate from the academy. Jessica served with the Austin Police Department and the Travis County Parks Department, before being recruited by the Travis County Sheriff's Department.



Jessica served Travis County in the Sheriff's Department for the last seven years, earning the distinction as Senior Deputy Sheriff. Jessica served as a Patrol Officer, Field Training Officer and Vice Officer. She loved diving and worked hard to become a member of the prestigious Travis County Dive Team. She had just become a Certified Master Scuba Diver and received the Unit Citation Award for her work with the Dive Team. Jessica and son Mason, shared their love of diving; and, they were very proud of Mason's recent Dive Certification.

March 2010, the American Legion nominated Jessica as Officer of the Year. Her Lieutenant stated, "Jessica was a shining star and would advance far with Travis County". Although slight in size, she was fearless and always ready to respond when duty called. Her strong desire to serve was evident in all she did, and she died bravely serving others. She was loved, respected, and admired by family, friends, and peers.

Jessica loved spending time with Mason. This summer they traveled to Georgia to join her Hall family for a week at the lake. After the week, she and Mason drove back to Texas; but, stopped for several days exploring New Orleans together. She was very sentimental about her family heritage, saving and collecting family treasures, such as her Dad's Bible, the 1951 Pontiac Chieftain restored by her family, and her late Grandmother's piano. She had hoped Mason would learn to play the piano, but football and diving won out.

She is survived by Ricky, her husband of 12 years, their 12 year old son Mason, her father Rick Hall and wife Dale Freeman, mother Vicki Wright, stepfather Bill Wright, and siblings Crystal Fulfer and husband Weston, Katherine Lively and husband Billy, Taylor Hall and wife Bianca, Wade Wright, and Grandmother Jessie Hall.

The Hall family was overwhelmed by the amazing support of the Travis County Sheriff's Department and the Austin Police Department during the heart wrenching search and recovery, and preparation for Jessica's funeral in Austin. Multiple agencies and over 80 deputies and officers, including her own Dive Team searched

thru extremely dangerous conditions. When the search had to be suspended Thursday night due to darkness and thunder storms, Travis County Sheriff Greg Hamilton came to the house and declared, "We will bring Jessica home!" The family's heartfelt thanks goes out to all the brave people that diligently searched long hours for Jessica.

In lieu of flowers donations may be made to a special fund which has been set up for Mason's future. Checks may be made payable to: "Edward Jones For Mason Hollis" and mailed to Edward Jones, 514 N. Main Street, Cedartown, Georgia.

A celebration of life for Jessica will be conducted on Saturday, September 27, 2014 at five o'clock in the afternoon in the chapel of the Gammage Funeral Home with Dr. Ed Wadsworth and Chief of Police Jamie Newsome officiating.

The family of Jessica will receive family and friends on Saturday, September 27, 2014 from four o'clock in the afternoon until five o'clock in the afternoon at the Gammage Funeral Home.

Special thanks to all our family and friends who overwhelmed us with love and support during this most difficult time.



Obituary

http://www.bccourier.com/Archives/Obit_detail.php?contentId=18196

Jessica Wright Hollis **2014-09-25**

Senior Deputy Sheriff Jessica Laura Hollis, 35, of the Travis County Sheriff's Office died tragically while on duty Thursday, Sept. 18, when her patrol vehicle was swept away in a low water crossing during a period of heavy rainfall and flooding. Her never-ending desire to help everyone was evident in all she did. Jessica left this earth living her passion - serving others.

She grew up in San Antonio, graduating from Churchill High School in 1997 where she was a varsity cheerleader. Jessica attended Texas A&M in Corpus Christi and Southwest Texas State where she studied marine biology.

Jessica met her future husband, Ricky Hollis, while both served as EMTs in San

Antonio. They also served together as paramedics for Calhoun County for five years.

After being accepted into the Austin Police Academy, the couple moved to Austin and became only the second married couple to graduate from that police academy. Before being recruited by the Travis County Sheriff's Department, Jessica served with the Austin Police Department and the Travis County Parks Department. Ricky has served with the Austin Police Department for nine years.



For the last seven years, Jessica served with Honor and Distinction with the Travis County Sheriff Office, earning a promotion to senior deputy sheriff. She served as a patrol officer, field training officer and vice officer.

Due to her love of scuba diving, Jessica worked hard to become a member of the prestigious Travis County Dive Team. At the time of her death, she was a certified master scuba diver and had received the Unit Citation Award for her work with the dive team. Additionally, Jessica shared her passion for diving with her son, Mason, and was very proud of his recent diving certification.

The American Legion nominated Jessica for 2010 "Officer of the Year." Her lieutenant eloquently stated, "Jessica was a shining star and would advance far with Travis County."

Although slight in size, she had a vivacious personality, and was loved, respected and admired by family, friends and peers. Those who knew Jessica would say she never met a stranger.

Above all, Jessica loved spending time with Mason. Recently, they shared a special mother-son vacation to New Orleans and the Hall family lake vacation.

Sentimental about her family heritage, Jessica saved and collected family treasures - from the 1951 Pontiac Chieftain, which the family restored, to her late Granny Wright's piano that she hoped Mason would play - however, "football and diving were winning out." Jessica also loved "Mommy Me Time" with her mother, Vicki.

During this time, they helped animal rescue shelters and searched out vintage treasures.

Jessica is survived by her husband of 12 years, Ricky; her 12-year-old son, Mason; mother Vicki Wright; stepfather Bill Wright and his partner, Eva Lee; father Rick Hall and his wife, Dale Freeman; siblings, Wade Wright; Crystal Fulfer and her husband, Weston; Katherine Lively and her husband, Billy; and Taylor Hall and his wife, Bianca; grandmother Jessie Hall and mother-in-law Melody Hollis.

Jessica's funeral was Wednesday, Sept 24, at the Hill County Bible Church in North Austin. Interment followed at Cook-Walden/Capital Parks Cemetery in Pflugerville, with full law enforcement honors.

Deputies on Jessica's patrol shift and her brothers, Wade Wright and Taylor Hall, served as pallbearers.

In lieu of flowers, the family requests that donations be made in Jessica's name to the AY Chihuahua Rescue of Austin in honor of Ms. Olivia and Ms. Frida.

The family sincerely appreciates and gives their heartfelt thanks to all the brave people who diligently searched long hours for Jessica. They also greatly appreciate the tremendous support from the Travis County Sheriff Department and the Austin Police Department.

Jessica's memorial may be visited at www.cookwaldencapitalparks.com.

Pflugerville road to be named in honor of late Deputy Jessica Hollis

<http://www.mystatesman.com/news/local/pflugerville-road-named-honor-late-deputy-jessica-hollis/TjTlcPS745O8i7zb4NqazI/>

May 16, 2015 By Julie Chang - American-Statesman Staff

A two-mile stretch of road in Pflugerville traveled often by the family of the late Travis County sheriff's Deputy Jessica Hollis will be named in her honor.

On Friday, Gov. Greg Abbott signed the bill, sponsored by Austin lawmakers Sen. Kirk Watson and Rep. Celia Israel, to dedicate FM 685 between East Pecan Street and Texas 130 to Hollis.

Hollis, 35, drowned in September after her patrol car was swept away by raging floodwaters. She was checking a low water crossing in Northwest Travis County to make sure nobody was in danger.

Israel said that Hollis' family chose the stretch of FM 685 because it was close to their home.

"Whenever we lose someone who lost their life in public service, it's comforting for us to know that we respected what they did," Israel said. "We respected what their profession was and respected what their lives stood for."

"This is one way that the community can recognize the service that she gave to us," Watson said.

Travis County Sheriff Greg Hamilton testified in favor of the bill in March, saying that Hollis had touched many lives. It showed in the outpouring of support from the community during the two-day search for her body, he said.

"We were out looking out for her body, ... and the members of the community in which she patrolled and watched over came out and brought us water, brought us food," Hamilton said. "She left a mark on a lot of individuals."

Hollis had been with the sheriff's office for seven years. She was a senior deputy who had worked as a patrol deputy and in the vice unit. She was a master scuba diver, the highest certification after instructor. She left behind her husband, Ricky, who is an officer with the Austin Police Department, and her then-12-year-old son.

The Travis County Sheriff's Officers Association will pay for the cost of erecting the highway markers, Israel said. Because it's a dedication, businesses and residents on the stretch of road will not need to change their addresses.