



Official State Historical Center of the Texas  
Rangers law enforcement agency.

**The Following Article was Originally Published in the  
*Texas Ranger Dispatch Magazine***

The *Texas Ranger Dispatch* was published by the Texas Ranger Hall of Fame and Museum from 2000 to 2011. It has been superseded by this online archive of Texas Ranger history.

Managing Editors

**Robert Nieman** 2000-2009; (b.1947-d.2009)

**Byron A. Johnson** 2009-2011

Publisher & Website Administrator

**Byron A. Johnson** 2000-2011

Director, Texas Ranger Hall of Fame

Technical Editor, Layout, and Design

**Pam S. Baird**



Funded in part by grants from  
the Texas Ranger Association Foundation

Copyright 2017, Texas Ranger Hall of Fame and Museum, Waco, TX. All rights reserved. Non-profit personal and educational use only; commercial reprinting, redistribution, reposting or charge-for-access is prohibited. For further information contact: Director, Texas Ranger Hall of Fame and Museum, PO Box 2570, Waco TX 76702-2570.


[Rangers Today](#)
[Visitor Info](#)
[History](#)
[Research Center](#)
[Hall of Fame](#)
[Student Help](#)
[Family History](#)
[News](#)

★ [Click Here for  
A Complete Index  
to All Back Issues](#)

★ [Dispatch Home](#)

★ [Visit our nonprofit  
Museum Store!](#)

★ [Contact the Editor](#)



## 20th Century Shining Star:

### **Captain Jack Dean, United States Marshal**

Since the formation of the Texas Rangers in 1823, only six Rangers have also served as United States Marshals — Ben McCulloch, Dick Ware, John Rogers, Bill McDonald, Clint Peoples, and Jack Dean. Only Peoples and Dean have become marshals since the formation of the Department of Public Safety in 1935.

Jack Dean is the eldest child of William Hershel and the late Juanita Day Dean. He was born in the Green Valley community, just north of Denton, Texas, on June 16, 1937. Jack graduated from Fort Worth's Diamond Hall High School and then attended Tyler Junior College in Tyler and TCU in Fort Worth. While a Ranger several years later, he attended Pan American University in Edinburg.

Over the years, Jack has had to make many decisions, but the best one he ever made was marrying Janie Hill forty-eight years ago. Through thick and thin, she has been Jack's most loyal supporter. They have one daughter, Kelly, and two sons, Cody and Kyle. Jack and Kyle are one of the few father-son combinations in Ranger history. Kyle has been in the DPS for twenty-one years—ten as a Highway Patrolman in Crockett and eleven as a Ranger in Denton and Kerrville.

In 1960, Jack applied for and was accepted into the DPS. Like all new recruits, he attended the DPS Academy in Austin. He began on December 7, 1960, and graduated on March 31, 1961. In those days, school was five and a half days a week—and no overtime.

For the next nine and a half years, Jack worked as a Highway Patrolman. He was first stationed in Pecos in West Texas until the opportunity presented itself four and a half year later to get closer to Fort Worth. He transferred to the East Texas city of Tyler. He remained in Tyler until he was accepted into the Rangers in 1964.

Reflecting on his Highway Patrol years, Jack said, "I loved every moment of it." And why not? He was doing a job he loved—serving the people of Texas. As an added bonus, he had four great partners. His first was Charlie Bolinger, a veteran who was a fine teacher for the rookie patrolman. Two other partners, Dale Bryce and Kelly Whitehead, would join Jack in the Texas Rangers. [Tragically both Dale and Kelly died much too young of cancer.] Another partner, Orville Shepherd, is currently the sheriff of Titus County in East Texas.

When Jack transferred to Tyler, the flame to join the Rangers was lit. He recognized that there were some great Rangers in that area: Jim Ray\*, Red Arnold\*, and Glenn Elliott\*.

In 1968, Jim Ray left Tyler to become the Ranger sergeant of Company "E" in Midland. Bob Mitchell\* became the Ranger in Tyler. It didn't take Jack long to realize what anyone who comes into contact with Bob Mitchell knows: he is someone very special. Jack explains, "I always say that he [Mitchell] is my hero. [He] became my mentor but, most of all, he became my friend. Now thirty-five years later, he still is."

There was another man who greatly influenced Jack's career: Ranger Captain Bill Wilson. Wilson and Bob Mitchell encouraged Jack to apply for the Texas Rangers. Fortunately for the Rangers and the citizens of Texas, Jack became the newest Ranger on September 1, 1970. He was stationed along the banks of the Rio Grande in the Deep South Texas city of McAllen.

### The Suspect Who Never Goes Away

When Jack became a Ranger, he inherited the case of a hired killer named Charles Harrelson. When Jack arrived on the scene, Harrelson had been tried in Palacios, Texas, and found not guilty on a murder for hire case in Houston. But Harrelson's troubles were not over. He was transferred to the Hidalgo County Jail in Edinburg, just a few miles north of McAllen. He had been charged in Edinburg for the hired murder of a Hearne grain dealer named Sam Degilia. The case had originally been worked by Rangers Skippy Rundell and Tol Dawson. By the time Jack made Ranger and was stationed in McAllen, Tol had transferred to Pecos, and Skippy had been promoted, so Charles Harrelson became Jack's problem.

For the next four years, Jack spent time gathering evidence, finding and guarding witnesses, and investigating attempted jail breaks by Harrelson. [Jack still has a .25-caliber, automatic pistol that he took from Harrelson's jail cell in a Hidalgo County jail.]

Harrelson hired high-priced, flamboyant, Houston attorney Percy Foreman for his defense. Just when it looked like the case was going to be brought to a successful conclusion, Foreman sprung a surprise witness on the prosecution. A nightclub singer with a questionable background claimed that she had been with Harrelson at the time of the murder. To almost everyone in the courtroom, it was obvious she was lying. Unfortunately, the only opinion that counted was that of the jury. Eleven of them didn't believe her story, but

one did. The trial ended in a hung jury—eleven for conviction, one for acquittal.

Harrelson was retried in 1974 in nearby Brownsville. Jack sat in the courtroom waiting for the nightclub singer. If she showed up, she had a big problem: Jack had a perjury warrant for her in his pocket. Regrettably, she had learned that the Rangers were waiting to arrest her, and she decided she would never have a better reason to relocate. The next time Jack heard of her, she was in Aruba, an island in Caribbean.

Without the help of the singer's testimony, there was no hung jury. Harrelson was found guilty. Incredibly, he was sentenced to only fifteen years in prison. With good time, he was out in five years.

Jack had no more business with Harrelson until 1979. When they crossed paths again, Jack was the captain of Company D in San Antonio, and the case would make national headlines.

Federal Judge John Woods had been assassinated in the parking lot of his San Antonio condo with a shot in the back by a high-powered rifle. The local FBI office asked the Rangers to help. Contrary to what many would think, the FBI, at least at that time, had minimal experience in working homicides. Jack dispatched his sergeant [today this would be a lieutenant] Lefty Block to work with the FBI team. Lefty later became the Senior Ranger Captain.

A few days after the murder, Jack was in his office when he received a strange phone call. Ginny Goss, his secretary, rang through and said there was man on the phone who wanted to talk to him. He wouldn't give his name or what he wanted.

Jack answered the call and a male voice said, "How are doing, Jack?"

"Who is this?"

"You know who this is," the voice replied.

"I don't think so."

"Charles Harrelson was in San Antonio the day Judge Woods was killed."

Jack asked, "Did Charlie kill the judge?"

"Charles Harrelson was in San Antonio the day Judge Woods was killed."

With that, the anonymous caller hung up. Who was the caller? Jack could only guess, but he was never sure.

Jack passed this information on to the FBI. A few days later, he was in Austin when he received a call from the San Antonio FBI office asking him to come by as soon as possible. When he arrived, he met with the SAC (Special Agent in Charge) and an assistant director of the FBI. They wanted to know everything that Jack could provide them about how Harrelson operated. Of course, Jack cooperated in every way possible. In return, he was told that his assistance was no longer needed—or wanted!

Several years later, Jack Lawn was promoted to SAC and came by Jack's

office. He thanked Jack and the Rangers and admitted that Rangers made the case. Lawn also said the same thing to the DPS Director Colonel Pat Spier and his successor, Colonel Jim Adams. [Lawn was not the SAC at the time of Harrelson case.]

Fast forward seventeen years to 1996. Charles Harrelson had been serving a life sentence for the assassination of Judge Woods. Meanwhile, Jack had retired from the Rangers and was the United States Marshal for Western District of Texas. Harrelson's son Woody was a major television star with many dollars. He used a lot of this money to hire high-caliber lawyers in an attempt to get his father's conviction overturned. Jack traveled to Denver, Colorado, twice to appear before two different federal judges in separate hearings. Woody spent no telling how many dollars trying to free his father, but to no avail. Today Charles Harrelson is still sitting in a federal prison serving a life sentence.

Jack has visited several times with Harrelson. Jack says that he is an easy man to talk to and he always got along well with him. During one of their conversations, Harrelson said that he liked Tol Dawson but didn't like Skippy Rundell. After Harrelson's first arrest, Skippy was transporting him back to Texas from Florida by plane. Harrelson liked to talk, and Skippy became irritated. He told Harrelson to shut up or he would throw him out the plane. Ed Gooding\* partnered many times with Skippy. In his book, *Ed Gooding: Soldier, Texas Ranger\**, Ed said that Skippy didn't mind confrontation.

The last contact Jack had with Harrelson was through a note. Harrelson thanked Jack for letting him see his grandkids for the first time.

Jack says, "Charlie is like the battery bunny in my life. He just keeps on coming."



After four years as a field Ranger, Jack's outstanding leadership abilities had been recognized by his superiors, and he was promoted to sergeant [today this would be a lieutenant] on December 1, 1974. The gods that look over Rangers were watching over Jack. He found himself as one of the sergeants of Company F. Company F is the only Ranger company that has two sergeants (lieutenants). One is stationed in Austin, the other at company headquarters in Waco. Jack's station was Waco, and his captain was none other than his hero Bob Mitchell. He worked for Captain Mitchell until November 1, 1978, when he promoted to the captaincy of Company D in San Antonio. He held this position until his retirement on September 1, 1993. Since his retirement, Jack has been the United States Marshal for the Western District of Texas.

Jack says he learned many things from Ranger captains that he tried to pass on to his own men. From John Wood, the man he succeeded as captain of Company D, he learned that when you have a man doing a good job, leave him alone and let him get it done. Unless he asks for your help, don't offer him any. Bob Mitchell taught Jack to take care of his people. From Bill Wilson, Jack learned that if he took care of the little things, the big ones would usually take care of themselves. Good advise for anyone in a leadership position, not just a Ranger captain.

Obviously, Jack learned these lessons well. Three of his former sergeants/lieutenants advanced to the top. Bruce Casteel\*, Lefty Block, and C.J. Havrda\*



became Senior Ranger Captains. A fourth, Gene Powell\*, became the Assistant Senior Ranger Captain.

Not surprisingly, Jack says that he is really proud of the people he worked with during his Ranger years. Reflecting on his years as a Ranger, he says they were the most fun of his life. "The best is being a working [field] Ranger. Those were the happiest four years of my life, but it sure isn't bad being Bob Mitchell's sergeant or being a captain. In twenty-three years, the Rangers gave me a lot of enjoyment, some heartache, and friends that will always be in my heart."

In closing, Jack sums up what he is most proud of: "You get to be a Ranger, then your son (Kyle) becomes a Ranger. It doesn't get any better than that. Just ask Bob Prince, John Dendy, Richard Bennie, or Buster Collins."

Click the names below for articles on Texas Rangers mentioned in this Article

**Jim Ray**

**Red Arnold**

**Glenn Elliott**

**Glenn Elliott: Still a Ranger's Ranger**

**Bob Mitchell**

**Bruce Casteel**

**C.J. Havrda**

**Gene Powell**

**Ed Gooding**

**Ed Gooding: Soldier, Texas Ranger**

Texas Ranger  
**DISPATCH**



[Dispatch](#)

[Jr. Rangers](#)

[Corporate Club](#)

[Museum Store](#)

[Exhibits/Artifacts](#)

[Benefactors](#)

All rights reserved. © 2003, Texas Ranger Hall of Fame and Museum. [Contact Us](#)

The Hall of Fame and Museum complex is located adjacent to Interstate 35 in Waco, Texas (midway between Dallas/Fort Worth and Austin).




[Rangers Today](#)
[Visitor Info](#)
[History](#)
[Research Center](#)
[Hall of Fame](#)
[Student Help](#)
[Family History](#)
[News](#)

★ [Click Here for  
A Complete Index  
to All Back Issues](#)

★ [Dispatch Home](#)

★ [Visit our nonprofit  
Museum Store!](#)

★ [Contact the Editor](#)



## 21st Century Shining Star:

### Barry Caver

*In 1997, for the people of Texas, Captain Barry Caver commanded the DPS forces against the radical Republic of Texas extremists. Under the leadership of this Texas Ranger, the event had a far different ending than did the Branch Davidian confrontation at Waco a few years earlier. Barry has prepared an article for the Dispatch concerning this deadly encounter. It will appear in Issue 13 (Summer 2004).*

Barry and Tammy, his wife of nineteen years, have two sons in high school, a senior and a freshman. Barry also has an

older daughter from a previous marriage who recently received an associate degree in nursing.

Barry got law enforcement in his blood from his dad, who was a reserve deputy in Angelina County Sheriff's Office. In December of 1976, at the tender age of nineteen, Barry began his career as a peace officer when he went to work in that very same sheriff's office as a jailer-dispatcher.

Barry had just started this assignment when he met his first Texas Ranger, Charlie Neel. From that moment on, he knew that he wanted to wear the cinco peso badge of the Texas Rangers. But before anyone can even apply to become a Ranger, that person must have eight years experience in the Texas Department of Public Safety. Barry began working toward his goal.

In March 1978, this future Ranger Captain was certified as a Texas Peace Officer. He went to work as a patrolman with the Diboll Police Department, just south of Lufkin. He remained in that position until December 1978.

Barry applied for and was accepted into the Texas Department of Public Safety Training Academy. On January 9, 1979, he started Class A-79 for eighteen weeks of training. He graduated on May 11, 1979, and was assigned as a Highway Patrolman in Livingston, about midway between Lufkin and Houston. In 1981, he transferred back to Diboll. He remained there until an opening became available in Lufkin in 1984. On April 1, 1987, he promoted to Highway Patrol Sergeant and was stationed in Weatherford, just west of Fort Worth.

As soon as Barry's eight years of DPS experience was up, he applied for and was accepted into the Texas Rangers. On November 1, 1989, the career of one of the Rangers' brightest stars began. Barry was posted to Company "A" in