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TOM REEL/treel@express-news.net

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**Poignant farewell to GI**

Friends and family recall Army 1st Lt. Andres Zermeño as a leader and a friend. 3B

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An endangered beetle sparks a school dispute. 1B

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**No feast for butterflies**

Migrating monarchs face dearth of food in Texas. 7A

**Termination order**

Approval for killing a radical was tailored for case. 20A

# San Antonio Express-News

Sunday, October 9, 2011 | [mySA.com](http://mySA.com)

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**SUNDAY FOCUS**

## Little donated cash goes to aid troopers

**Texas Highway Patrol Museum** is telemarketing operation that has raised millions but passed along just thousands



EXPRESS-NEWS FILE PHOTO

U.S. Rep. Lloyd Doggett says, "I'm finding many people across San Antonio who want someone to scream and yell about all the wrong that is happening in Washington."

## 'Lonesome Lloyd' seeking new friends

Rep. Doggett runs for re-election in a newly drawn district.

BY BRIAN CHASNOFF  
[bchasnoff@express-news.net](mailto:bchasnoff@express-news.net)

His voice swelling from a lawyerly lilt to an angry yell, U.S. Rep. Lloyd Doggett railed from the House floor last December against a deal President Barack Obama had just reached with Republicans that extended tax cuts for the wealthy.

"This is not fair," Doggett shouted, "and it will not encourage significant economic growth."

He has not since quieted his displeasure. Running against state Rep. Joaquín Castro in a new congressional district that includes parts of San Antonio, the liberal Democrat from Austin is displaying many of the same traits that have defined him for decades.

One is a zeal for broadcasting his principles, even if it means criticizing his colleagues. In nearly four decades of public service, such fierce independence has earned him admiration.

It also has earned him a nickname: Lonesome Lloyd.

"Lloyd Doggett is a fearless defender of basic rights and fairness for working people, and he should get enormous credit for that. He will stand up and speak when others won't," said

See DOGGETT /18A

**Previous coverage**

A profile of U.S. Rep. Lloyd Doggett's challenger, state Rep. Joaquín Castro, ran in last Sunday's Express-News. Read it online at [mySA.com](http://mySA.com).



KIN MAN HUI/kmhui@express-news.net

The Texas Highway Patrol Museum is housed in this single-story brick building at South Alamo and St. Mary's streets.

BY JOHN TEDESCO  
[jtedesco@express-news.net](mailto:jtedesco@express-news.net)

From the outside, the Texas Highway Patrol Museum doesn't look like a multimillion-dollar telemarketing operation.

Based near downtown in a single-story brick building at South Alamo and St. Mary's streets, the small museum offers exhibits that honor Texas Department of Public Safety troopers.

But it draws few visitors, and people who work nearby have wondered how it stays in business.

"I have yet to see one person inside that place," said Scott Cates, a waiter and lounge singer at La Focaccia Italian Grill next door. "Matter of fact, I was wondering why it's even there. What's the point?"

Records show the museum actually is a telemarketing operation that employs hundreds

of workers across the state who generated nearly \$12 million in revenue from 2004 to 2009.

The museum is one of 25 organizations registered in Texas that raise funds in the name of supporting law enforcement. Helping police officers and their families is the kind of cause that makes donors open their pocket-books — especially when an officer dies in the line of duty.

See MUSEUM/10A

## Legal treatment may be worse than drug cartel plague

Osiel Cárdenas Guillén of the Gulf Cartel was among the criminals brought to the U.S. to face legal proceedings in 2007.



DRUG ENFORCEMENT ADMINISTRATION PHOTO

Shipping kingpins to U.S. for prosecution could be setting off more violence in the long run.

BY JAZMINE ULLOA  
[julloa@express-news.net](mailto:julloa@express-news.net)

MEXICO CITY — There were 15 of them, some in tan jumpsuits, all in shackles. It took three flights and throngs of law enforcement officers to transfer them.

Major players in the Mexican underworld, they landed on U.S.

soil Jan. 20, 2007, to face charges from Texas to New York, from Colorado to California. Among them was Osiel Cárdenas Guillén, one of the most ruthless and feared drug lords in the Western Hemisphere.

The handover was swift, unexpected and unprecedented in number; lauded as a "clean sweep" across drug cartel ranks

and a triumph for President Felipe Calderón, who only a year earlier had pledged to use extradition in his all-out offensive against Mexico's drug trafficking organizations.

Yet as 2012 presidential elections loom for both Mexico and the United States, analysts are taking a closer look. Shipping Mexican cartel leaders to U.S. judges might score immediate hits and headlines. But it might

See CARTELS/6A

Weather HIGH 80 LOW 70

Thunderstorms Full report, 18C

Index

Books 6K Drive 1F Movies 3K S.A. Life 1K  
Classified 1E Editorials 8B Puzzles 11K Sports 1C  
Deaths 5B Metro/State 1B Real Estate 1D Travel 6K

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“When Texas Highway Patrol Association telemarketers call you to ask for money for slain troopers’ families, or to ask for money for their museum in San Antonio, you may expect that the money you donate will go toward helping troopers’ families. Or, you may expect that their museum in San Antonio is a world-class museum representing a world-class organization. You would be wrong on both counts.”

FROM A TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY WEB PAGE

## MUSEUM

CONTINUED FROM 1A

But state officials warn that many organizations, including the highway patrol museum in San Antonio, spend most of the donations on fundraising costs and overhead. The museum collects donations in the name of honoring and helping DPS troopers — even as DPS, the state agency that employs those troopers, warns donors to avoid giving the museum money.

The San Antonio Express-News reviewed five years of tax returns filed by the nonprofit museum and a related organization, the nonprofit Texas Highway Patrol Association. The two groups share the same board members. The museum raises funds through telemarketing efforts, and the association provides benefits to DPS troopers.

From 2004 to 2009, the association reported to the IRS that it gave \$65,300 to troopers and their families. The association says it gives \$10,000 apiece to the families of troopers who die in the line of duty, and it offers other benefits such as dental insurance and scholarships. A brochure says it provides troopers with “the finest benefits possible.”

But for every dollar that was donated to the museum, less than a penny was actually spent on troopers and their families, according to tax records.

The museum’s telemarketing arm raised \$11,973,000 from 2004 to 2009. Most of the money was spent on the museum’s telemarketers who work at call centers in El Paso, Austin and Houston, said Ruben Villalva, the museum’s director of marketing.

Donations also went to executive pay. In 2009, the museum and a related company that publishes Texas Highway Patrol Magazine spent \$400,000 on salaries for two executives: Villalva and Tim Tierney. In previous years, the museum has listed assets that included a Land Rover, a Lexus and a Mercedes.

Villalva said the museum offers a vital service for DPS troopers and their families, but he acknowledged there are overhead costs with any telemarketing effort. He said the museum tries to save money by hiring its own telemarketers, not outsourcing them.

“You may think \$2 million is a lot of money,” he said, referring to the museum’s total revenues in 2009. “But we have to hire people to call people. Nobody wants to do the work. It’s hard work.”

### DPS warning

Villalva said the museum’s \$10,000 death benefit is a benchmark for nonprofits that support peace officers. The amount is set by the organization’s board, which includes DPS troopers.

He said donors have the option of giving money to a bank account set up by the museum for troopers’

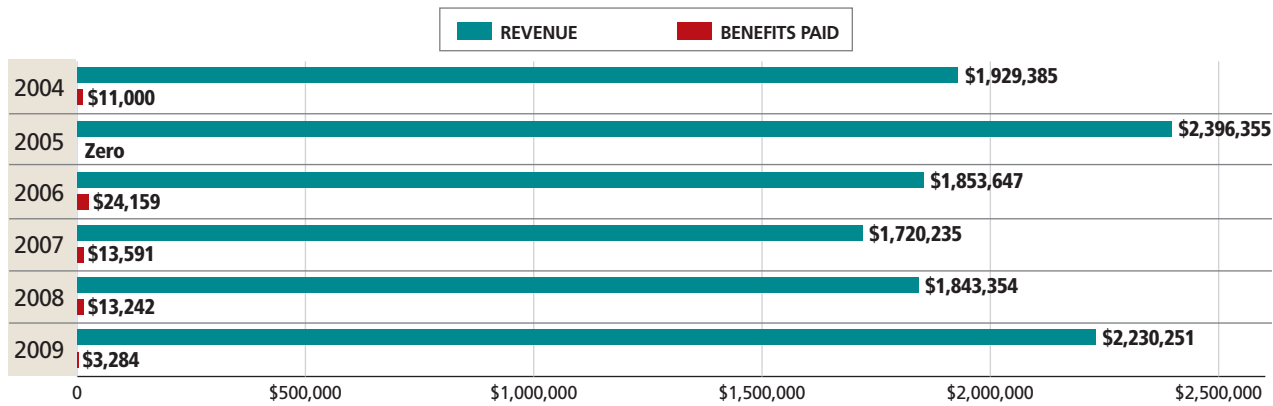


PHOTOS BY KIN MAN HUI/kmhui@express-news.net

Although the Texas Highway Patrol Museum is in San Antonio, its telemarketers work in El Paso, Austin and Houston.

### Few benefits paid

From 2004 to 2009, the Texas Highway Patrol Museum raised nearly \$12 million by soliciting donors through telemarketing efforts. During that same period, benefits paid to state troopers and their families were a fraction of that amount — \$65,300.



Sources: IRS, guidestar.org

EXPRESS-NEWS GRAPHIC

families. Since 1997, he said donors have given more than \$60,000 to that fund. The museum does not keep any portion of those donations, and the funds are not reflected in the museum’s tax returns.

Villalva said proceeds raised by the museum also go toward operating costs and public awareness programs, such as educating students about the dangers of drinking and driving.

A museum brochure describes how it partnered with the local chapter of Mothers Against Drunk Driving to produce an “award winning program” for students. The MADD chapter in San Antonio says it’s unaware of any partnership with the museum.

The museum has attracted the attention of officials at DPS. The agency set up a web page criticizing the quality of the museum and its exhibits, and warns donors to avoid giving the museum money.

“When Texas Highway Patrol Association telemarketers call you to ask for money for slain troopers’ families, or to ask for money for their museum in San Antonio, you may expect that the money you donate will go toward helping troopers’ families. Or, you may expect that their museum in San Antonio is a world-class museum representing a world-class organization,” the agency’s website states.

“You would be wrong on both counts.”

### Breaking down the expenses

The Texas Highway Patrol Museum is affiliated with the Texas Highway Patrol Association, which says it provides services to DPS troopers and their families. In 2009, the museum raised more than \$2 million through telemarketing. More than 99 percent of the expenses went to salaries and overhead. Only \$3,284 went to benefits for DPS troopers.

Revenue		\$2,230,251	
<b>Expenses</b> \$2,068,966			
Executive pay and wages	\$1,350,747	Office expenses	\$23,670
Occupancy	\$146,637	Depreciation of assets	\$20,277
Telephone	\$114,046	Accounting fees	\$19,623
Postage	\$103,898	Decals	\$12,682
Payroll taxes	\$99,725	Travel	\$11,703
Insurance	\$54,337	Auto expense	\$10,908
Printing	\$41,928	Loan interest	\$6,661
Conferences, meetings	\$24,118	Legal fees	\$4,112
Other expenses	\$23,679	Advertising and promotion	\$215
<b>Benefits paid</b> 0.15% of revenue		<b>\$3,284</b>	

Sources: IRS, guidestar.org

EXPRESS-NEWS GRAPHIC

Former state Rep. Lane Denton, D-Waco, founded the museum. In 1995, Denton was found guilty of stealing and misapplying money belonging to a different organization, the Texas Department of Public Safety Officers Association. Denton was sentenced to six years probation. He did not return messages for this article.

Villalva said he did not have annual attendance figures for the museum, but a reporter who dropped by the museum twice saw only two visitors. The exhibits are housed in a clean, well-lit room. They include mu-

a donation to aid the families of two DPS troopers who recently died. At first, the caller said he was with the Texas Highway Patrol Association — but didn’t make it clear he was not affiliated with DPS.

“I said, ‘You mean you’re with the Department of Public Safety?’” Henson said. “At first, he said yes.”

Henson said he grilled the telemarketer, who finally admitted he was calling on behalf of the museum in San Antonio.

“It pissed me off, I couldn’t believe it,” said Henson, who believes other donors are being tricked into thinking they’re giving money to DPS to help the families of fallen troopers.

“I don’t want to see families of troopers who die in the line of duty used as props in a scam,” Henson said. “No one does. It’s just grotesque.”

Villalva said the museum takes such complaints “very seriously” and tells its telemarketers not to misrepresent themselves.

In the past two years, the Texas attorney general’s office has received 37 complaints from the public about the Texas Highway Patrol Museum and the association. Most people complained about receiving unwanted phone solicitations.

A spokeswoman said the attorney general’s office does not comment on any open or past investigations. In 2008, a news report about the museum

that aired on Houston television station KPRC stated the attorney general investigated the association and its fundraising tactics, but closed its case in January 2007 without taking action.

### Trooper friend solicited

When a trooper dies, the \$10,000 death benefit comes quickly from the association in the form of a check. The grieving family of DPS trooper David Slaton, who died in a car accident last year, welcomed the gift.

Family friend Becky Pellizzari helped Slaton’s widow, Lynetta, after the accident and handled her affairs. She was unaware that the \$10,000 check from the highway patrol represented a fraction of the total donations made to the museum. Nevertheless, she said the money was appreciated.

“Kudos to them because they did send a check,” said Pellizzari, whose husband was a DPS trooper and served as Slaton’s partner for 13 years.

Pellizzari said her dealings with the highway patrol association were brief. Other nonprofit organizations stepped forward to help the Slaton family, and the 100 Club in Houston, which doesn’t rely on telemarketing to raise money, impressed her.

The 100 Club gave the family a \$10,000 check. Then its members returned weeks later and sat down with the family to figure out how they could help with unpaid bills, college expenses and anything else the family needed. They even paid to remodel the unfinished kitchen in the Slaton home.

“They are a totally awesome, amazing group,” Pellizzari said.

Rick Hartley, executive director of the 100 Club, said the nonprofit organization relies on donations from its 29,000 members, most of whom are civilians. The group gave more than \$1 million last year to the surviving family members of peace officers and firefighters.

Harley said the 100 Club doesn’t want to hurt its credibility by relying on phone pitches.

“Telemarketers take most of the money they raise, and give a very small percentage to the groups they actually work for,” Hartley said.

After receiving the \$10,000 check from the highway patrol association to help the Slaton family, Pellizzari said she had one more interaction with the group. A telemarketer for the museum called her at home. He wanted to know if Pellizzari could make a donation to help Slaton’s family.

It hit her hard. “It was extremely upsetting to me because they were using David’s name — you know, officer killed in the line of duty and all of this,” Pellizzari said.

“In their eyes, that’s the time to be doing it. Because it’s in the news, the name hits home,” she added. “And they use that to their advantage.”

Database Editor Kelly Guckian contributed to this report.

The Texas Highway Patrol Museum’s exhibits are housed in a clean, well-lit room. They include murals of DPS troopers, old news clippings, and a “Hall of Honor.”



A portion of the museum is dedicated to Texas Department of Public Safety Trooper Les Strawn, who was a founding member of the museum’s board of directors.