

Law enforcement concludes missing man is not in Coke County

Members of Texas Search and Rescue and various law enforcement agencies began arriving last Wednesday evening for Thursday's massive search for Brandon Lawson.

This latest search stems from an incident which occurred just before 1 am Friday, August 9, 2013. It began with a 911 call about a stranded motorist just south of Bronte on Highway 277. The driver was not at the vehicle when Chief Deputy Brandon Neal arrived just after 1 am. However at this time, investigation has revealed that Brandon Lawson was hiding in the brush (due to an outstanding felony warrant) watching Deputy Neal while speaking to his brother, Kyle Lawson, on his cell phone. According to Ladessa Lofton, no one has heard from Lawson since this time.

The Coke County Sheriff's Office, in conjunction with DPS and the Texas Rangers, had already conducted an aerial search and a ground grid search without revealing any clues to his whereabouts.

To rule out the possibility that Lawson had become lost in the brush and died, Coke County Sheriff Wayne McCutchen approved a search using cadaver or human remains (HR) dogs. The search was scheduled for Thursday, October 24, 2013.

Members of Texas Search and Rescue provided six HR dogs, handlers and flankers in addition to numerous support and logistics personnel for this search. According to Greg Pyles, TexSAR Chief Executive Officer and Incident Commander, TexSAR expended approximately \$25,000 for this search. TexSAR is a non-profit organization completely supported by private and corporate donations. The group only conducts law enforcement approved searches.

TexSAR uses "math and science" based upon information provided by the family to determine the size and area to be searched. The organization has a great track record with a 95% success rate. Their findings and reports have proven accurate and have stood up under scrutiny when used in court cases.

TexSAR's team included officers with Texas Division of Emergency Management, Cen-Tex Search and Rescue and the Lewisville Police Department. They also



Everyone associated with Thursday's search gathers at the old Coke County Juvenile Justice facility for a morning briefing before heading out into the field.

brought in two game wardens with Texas Parks and Wildlife. Incident Commander Greg Pyles' resume lists several law enforcement positions, two of which include the US State Department operating overseas with diplomat security and following 9/11, a time with the US Transportation Security Administration.

The TexSAR canines are highly trained. These HR dogs will not "hit" on varmint carcasses. However, dead hogs sometimes prove a distraction to HR animals. Each handler wears a gps device which provided Brandon Goering, Operations Section Chief, an extremely detailed analysis of all area covered.

The search was extended to the northeast following

one HR dog showing slight interest. However even with the extension, the search revealed no sign of Brandon Lawson - no remains, no clothing, no wallet, no cell phone, and no keys.

Following a conversation with Sheriff McCutchen and Ranger Nick Hanna, the investigation will turn elsewhere and will not include any further searches unless new detailed information arises.

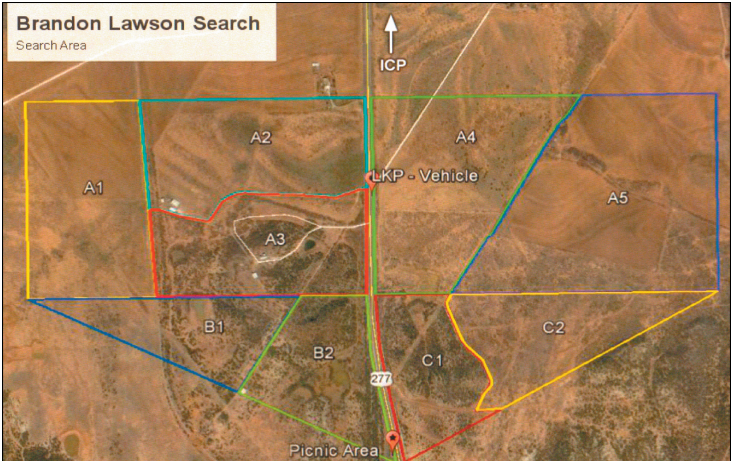
For more information on TexSAR or to make a donation, visit their website at texasar.org.



Not Just for Working Sheep! Border Collies are famous for their abilities to herd livestock, but who would have realized how wonderful they would be as HR dogs? These are three of the HR canines brought in for last Thursday's search. The other HR dogs used that day included a Doberman, a Standard Poodle, and what appeared to be a Husky cross.



As each sector was cleared, the dogs, their handlers and flankers, would return to the Coke County Juvenile Justice facility to rest and to discuss and report any findings.



First Baptist Church Bronte will be hosting a Teen Challenge women's choir Sunday Nov. 3rd at 11:00 A.M. These women are working to overcome an addiction and are with us to share their testimonies and sing. We will also be having a fellowship lunch afterwards. Everyone is invited to join us.

Editorial & Advertising Deadline is 12 noon on Tuesday preceding publication.

