

Collin County Going the Extra Mile (GEM) Recognition Form

Honoree's Name: Ella Even
First Name Middle Initial Last Name

Honoree's Job
Title: SCORE Detention Officer

Department: Sheriff's Office Detention Facility

Nominated By: Lt Diana LeBron

Years of Service with the County: 26 years

Why the Honoree is receiving a GEM Award including dates:

Beginning in 2020 Sheriff Jim Skinner initiated a new initiative for the Collin County Sheriff's Office with the creation of the Collin County Sheriff's Office (CCSO) Bee Program. The CCSO entered into this program with limited experience and knowledge and as such Officers Yeager, Coffey, Crow and Even quickly adapted to meet the challenge. Officers Yeager, Coffey, Crow and Even, who are assigned to the Minimum Security facility, took on ownership and responsibility for the Bee Program by identifying suitable SCORE/VALOR inmates as the target group to participate in the Bee Program and self-educating themselves.

Since the Bee Program is a new program and had to be developed with little guidance and oversight, Officers Yeager, Coffey, Crow and Even immersed themselves in the nuances of bee keeping and spent multiple hours and days learning the process of creating a bee Apiary and how to sustain a bee colony.

Starting in January 2020 Officers Yeager, Coffey, Crow and Even obtained guidance from Texas Bee Supply on how to construct a suitable Apiary for the Bee Program. Taking the initial plans and adjusting the plan to suit the physical constraints of the surrounding area, the officers set about constructing six hive stands that would be suitable for the initial startup year and expandable for future years and hive growth.

Due to the rainy weather we received in the beginning of the year there were very little flowers. Officer Even and her crew planted blooming flowers in 10 big clay pots around the perimeter on the Apiary. This was in preparation for the bee's arrival so they would have pollen to harvest for honey production.

Using their own ingenuity and skill sets, the Apiary was marked and construction began on the Apiary. Officers Yeager, Coffey, Crow and Even went above and beyond in the construction of the Apiary by securing equipment to dig the post holes for the perimeter fence, leveling all posts and constructing a robust fence which included gates. Not satisfied with the existing structure, additional panels were placed on the fence to insure the integrity of the structure. Railroad ties were chosen to surround the structure to ensure the crushed rock stayed in place and was leveled to ensure the bee hives remained stable.

The Apiary project was completed on time and ahead of schedule primarily due to Officers Yeager, Coffey, Crow and Even working through lunch and breaks and sometimes on their days off to ensure the Apiary was ready for the introduction of the bees. Officers Yeager, Coffey, Crow and Even worked off duty to learn and educate themselves on beekeeping and how to successfully manage a beekeeping program and expand the Apiary.

Since the delivery of the bees on April 29, 2020 Officers Yeager, Coffey, Crow and Even have successfully motivated the SCORE/VALOR inmates to take a keen interest in the Bee Program. This is evident each week as the inmates tend to the Apiary as it expands and grows. The inmates have shown a keen interest in learning bee keeping and their excitement when working in the Apiary is obvious. Officers Yeager, Coffey, Crow and Even are to be commended for their creative thinking in not only developing the beekeeping program but also for the creation of the Apiary. Each officer had taken it upon themselves to learn and become proficient in beekeeping and to ensure that knowledge is passed on to the SCORE/VALOR inmates assigned to the CCSO Bee Program.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Jim Skinner". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized "J" and "S".

Signature of Elected Official
Or Department Head

The name "Jim Skinner" printed in blue ink. The letters are in a simple, sans-serif font.

Printed Name