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The Hoover Area Chamber of Commerce this afternoon named the police department's public safety workers of the year during a luncheon at the Hoover Country Club, Birmingham News reporter Val Walton tells us.

Detective **Mark Tant**, who has been with the Hoover Police Department for nearly 23 years, took the title of 2008 Police Officer of the Year. Tant was nominated for his work as a crime scene investigator and a leader with the department's new Automated Fingerprint Identification System. The AFIS technology allows a print examiner to do a computer fingerprint search in minutes that previously could have taken years. Chief Nick Derzis noted that Tant's work has helped solve crimes, including a 1993 robbery case.



Hoover's Detention Officer of the Year is **Kevin Driver**, Walton reports. Driver, who has been with the department for seven years, was recognized for, among other things, his good work ethic and in serving as training officer for new officers.

Caleb Pittman was chosen as the 2008 911 Operator of the Year, in part for helping to calm a suicidal Vietnam veteran. Pittman, a Marine veteran who was hired by the city of Hoover in 2007, also played a pivotal role in sending emergency workers to the scene of a Jan. 5 accident in which a Spain Park High School senior survived critical injuries.



Hoover Police Department's public safety officers of the year for 2008

Detention Officer Kevin Driver (left); Detective Mark Tant (center); Communications Officer Caleb Pittman (right)

