



YAKIMA COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

ROBERT UDELL, Sheriff

DETECTIVE DIVISION

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*****For Immediate Release*****

Media Release

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First Annual Awards Ceremony

Yakima – On the evening of June 13, 2019, the Sheriff's Office held their first annual awards ceremony to recognize employees, volunteers, and citizens for their past outstanding performances and extraordinary feats. The ceremony was long overdue and well received.

2018 Employees of the Year

Deputy of the Year – Joel Panattoni

Dispatcher of the Year – Tasheena Tellez

Records Specialist of the Year – McKenzie Woodkey

Reserve Deputy of the Year – Mike Daniels

Block Watch Volunteer of the Year – Henry Furtner

Search and Rescue Volunteer of the Year – Rex Reed

Promotions Under Sheriff Udell

Carl Hendrickson to Chief Criminal oversees almost all criminal functions of patrol and detectives

Ed Levesque to Chief Civil oversees all administrative functions of records, dispatch, and finance

Aaron Wuitschick to Lieutenant oversees patrol sergeants

Jason Pepper to Sergeant

Candy Kampert and Matt Sharp to Lead Dispatcher



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Virginia Conway to Records Supervisor

Life-Saving Medal

Flaviano "Bobby" Miranda – On April 25, 2017, Deputy Miranda saw a couple on the sidewalk near the intersection of Hwy 97 and Fort Rd. A man was on the ground and a woman appearing to be doing chest compressions. Deputy Miranda used his newly issued AED(Automated External Defibrillator) to restore the man's heartbeat. His quick actions that day made all the difference in that man's world.

Justin Swale – On February 25, 2015, Deputy Swale saw a vehicle that collided with a concrete barrier on Hwy 97. The driver was unconscious, slumped over, and the back end of the vehicle was fully engulfed in flames. Deputy Swale had to use a fire extinguisher to keep the flames from the victim and himself. The vehicle became completely engulfed in flames immediately after Deputy Swale pulled the man from the burning vehicle saving his life. Deputy Swale is commended for his bravery and persistence in putting another's life before his own.

Sergio Reyna, John Duggan, Adrian Garcia, and Justin Paganelli – On May 8, 2018, a family called 911 to report their 2-year-old son had been missing for 10 minutes near a residence on E. McDonald Rd. Deputies and WSP troopers searched a nearby canal for nearly ¼ miles. Trooper Southards and Campbell saw a small hand sticking up from the water near a dam with considerable debris. The deputies formed a human chain and retrieved the boy from the fast flowing water. Troopers started CPR and the heartbeat was restored. The swift actions of the deputies and WSP troopers gave the child, young Aaron, another chance at life. Detective Duggan, Detective Reyna, and Trooper Campbell continue to have contact with Aaron and his family.

Robert Tucker – On October 28, 2018, deputies were called to a residence on Pioneer Way for an intentional opiate-based drug overdose. Sgt. Tucker found an unresponsive female with a male performing CPR. Sgt. Tucker administered NARCAN and took over CPR until an aid unit arrived. Breathing was restored and the woman was taken to the hospital. Sgt. Tucker commended the victim's son for acting quickly and telling the son he likely saved his mother's life. While Sgt. Tucker was driving the son to the hospital, the son admitted he was depressed and considered suicide the previous day. Sgt. Tucker compassionately talked with the young man and perhaps saved two lives that day.

Sheriff's Star



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Derek Artz - On February 14, 1993, Deputy Artz arrested a man for multiple crimes when he found him passed out in a vehicle. The man woke up in the back of the patrol vehicle and started to kick out the partition and rear window in an attempt to escape. Back up was several minutes away. The suspect ignored all verbal commands and attacked Deputy Artz even with his firearm drawn. The suspect managed to shoot Deputy Artz twice, once in the ballistic vest, and once in the shoulder. The fight for life continued resulting in numerous cuts and abrasions. Deputy Artz managed to retrieve his shotgun using it to wound the suspect. Deputy Artz's actions that night demonstrated uncommon bravery and gallantry and continued to fight despite being wounded to an extent he did not know at the time.

Derrick Perez – On May 22, 2017, a drive-by shooting occurred on McCoy Rd. Deputy Perez and the Yakama Nation pursued the suspect in a fleeing vehicle. The suspect fled from the car and Deputy Perez chased him down. The suspect pointed a firearm at officers and Deputy Perez fired two rounds at the suspect, incapacitating him immediately. Deputy Perez then started life-saving measures and maintaining the suspect's life. He was assisted by Yakama Nation Officers until an ambulance arrived. Deputy Perez showed significant bravery when faced by an armed suspect and after acting with appropriate force to defend himself and others, saving the suspect's life.

Matt Steadman – On November 5, 2014, Deputy Steadman located a suspect vehicle in a theft case. A pursuit ensued and the suspect vehicle crashed at Hwy 12 and Ackley Rd. The suspect attempted to run over Deputy Steadman with the vehicle. Deputy Steadman fired several rounds at the driver stopping the driver; however, Deputy Steadman was still struck by the vehicle. His extraordinary bravery despite the extreme risk to his personal safety prevented the vehicle from re-entering the roadway and significantly endangering the lives of Yakima County citizens.

Chad Peterschick, Carl Hendrickson, Judd Towell, Jim Frye, Justin Swale, Jason Pepper, and Nate Boyer – On January 3, 2014, deputies along with Selah officers and an agent from the FBI went to a residence on S. Rushmore Rd to serve a search warrant. They were met with intense rifle fire from the suspect at the home. Deputies and officers returned fire, but limited their shots due to the suspect remaining hidden. They were pinned down for nearly two hours until the Yakima SWAT team arrived and utilized their armored vehicle. Deputies and officers performed with professionalism and bravery in the face of a determined and violent suspect and acted properly while under extreme pressure.

Injury in the Line of Duty Medal



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Flaviano "Bobby" Miranda – On July 20, 2009, deputies responded to a drive-by shooting near Outlook. While collecting evidence of the shooting, they were shot at by a male suspect. Deputy Miranda was shot in the upper leg. The deputies were able to find cover behind their vehicles while more shots were fired at them. Deputies were unable to see their assailant and thus did not return fire. Deputy Miranda and Deputy Stearley were ambushed and the results could have been much worse. Deputy Miranda came close to sacrificing all for the citizens of this county.

Citizen Hero Award

Jeremy Parrish – On June 25, 2018, Jeremy was traveling on Hwy 12 when he came upon a vehicle that crashed into the Tieton River. The vehicle was some distance from the bank and was occupied by a woman and three children. Deputies arrived and determined the family to be at very high risk due to a swift current and helpful resources being a long distance away. Jeremy was able to use his tree trimming equipment consisting of ropes, pulleys, and harnesses to rescue each person one at a time. It is people like Jeremy who make our communities a better place to live.