

SHERIFF JOHN L. SCOTT HONORS LOS ANGELES COUNTY SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT HEROES

On Thursday, October 2, 2014, Sheriff John Scott presented 25 members of the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department with highest honors during the annual Valor Awards Ceremony. These medals are awarded annually to Department members who perform acts of great bravery or heroism, above and beyond the call of duty, to save the lives of others while placing their own lives at risk.



As part of a special presentation, private citizens Mr. John A. Ramirez, Mr. Richard A. Frederick III and Ms. Gale D. Smith, were presented with the Sheriff's Department Humanitarian Medal for their fearless and courageous actions when rendering aid to Department personnel.

The awards ceremony, sponsored by Galpin Motors and the Commerce Casino, was held at the Quiet Cannon in the city of Montebello. Baseball legend, Mr. Tommy Lasorda, was the Master of Ceremonies. KABC 7 anchor, Mr. John Gregory, narrated the awards, recounting the heroic actions of each award recipient before an audience of nearly 600 Department personnel and their guests.



The 2014 award recipients are as follows:

Deputy Sean Robert Caples
Deputy Patrick James Ince
Santa Clarita Valley Station

On September 30, 2013, Santa Clarita Valley Station personnel received a call of a residential structure fire. There are numerous two-story condominium structures on Claudette Street with a high number of families living in a compact area.



Deputies Sean Caples and Patrick Ince were the first to arrive at the scene. Local residents were in a panic, frantically requesting assistance for someone who was trapped inside a second floor residence. Deputies Caples and Ince ran around the structure to the front, where again they were met with panicked individuals. They saw the right side of the second floor balcony was engulfed in flames. Again, they were told that someone was inside the residence. Without hesitation, they immediately ran to the second story residence where the front door was open and the fire had spread into the

living room. They noticed dense, thick smoke which filled the room and extended down to waist level. Because Deputy Caples had previously responded to numerous calls for service to the condominiums on Claudette Street, he was familiar with the floor plans.

Both deputies crouched down underneath the smoke and heat and made their way toward the bedrooms. When they looked into one of the bedrooms, they saw a lone female adult. They immediately told her she had to leave, but she refused and stated her sister was still inside. The female was scared and reluctant to move. Deputies knew they had to react quickly due to the spreading fire and unbreathable smoke. The female again refused to leave and deputies took hold of her arms, crouched down, and guided her out of the residence to safety.

Deputies Caples and Ince inquired as to the whereabouts of the female's sister and confirmed that she had made it out to safety on her own. Within thirty seconds of their escape, the second story condominium erupted into flames and explosions of propane tanks shook the complex.

Even though Deputies Caples and Ince were suffering from smoke inhalation, they continued with their efforts by coordinating assisting units with evacuations of the other

condominium units, traffic control and attending to individuals. Fortunately, no one sustained injuries as a result of this incident.

For their great courage and bravery, placing themselves at risk in the immediate life-threatening fire danger to save the life of the female, Deputy Sean Caples and Deputy Patrick Ince are awarded the Meritorious Conduct Medal, Gold.

Deputy Christopher Gomez
Deputy Laura Perales
Century Station

On January 8, 2013, at approximately 5:44 P.M., Century Station Deputies Laura Perales and Christopher Gomez were patrolling on Long Beach Boulevard. They heard approximately ten gunshots south of their location. They drove towards the gunshots and saw a male running with an assault rifle. The suspect entered a vehicle and fled the location.

Believing the suspect had just shot someone, Deputies Perales and Gomez attempted to stop the vehicle. The suspect refused to yield and the deputies initiated a vehicle pursuit while advising area units of their status.



Shortly after, a male leaned out of the front passenger window and fired approximately five rounds from an AK-47 assault rifle in the direction of Deputies Perales and Gomez. Despite being shot at, the deputies continued pursuing, providing area units with updated information. A short distance later, the passenger suspect exited the vehicle and fled into the surrounding neighborhood with the assault rifle. The driver of the suspect vehicle fled the scene at a high rate of speed and out-of-view.

Deputies Perales and Gomez terminated their pursuit and concentrated on the suspect who had fled into the residential neighborhood with the high power rifle. A containment of the area was initiated and the suspect was soon apprehended. The AK-47 rifle was found in a nearby gutter concealed beneath a parked vehicle.

Meanwhile, the suspect driver continued to flee, driving recklessly, ignoring several stop signs, and eventually colliding with another vehicle. The suspect still drove a short distance, but due to front end damage, the vehicle came to a stop. The suspect exited his vehicle and attempted to run. Deputies cut off the suspect's escape route with their patrol car. The suspect dropped to his knees, put his hands up and was taken into custody.

After further investigation, the driver suspect was identified by witnesses as the man who had run up to an SUV and shot the driver, striking that victim multiple times.

For displaying bravery and courageous performance during a brazen attack, Deputies Laura Perales and Christopher Gomez are awarded the Meritorious Conduct Medal, Gold.

Deputy Jesus Fernandez
Deputy Javier Flores
Compton Station

On October 12, 2013, Deputies Jesus Fernandez and Javier Flores, assigned to Compton Station, responded to a structure fire call, indicating someone was trapped inside. Upon their arrival, they saw a male attempting to use a shovel to break through a wooden exterior wall of a detached garage that was fully engulfed in flames. They learned he was attempting to rescue a female who was trapped inside the burning garage.



Deputies quickly evacuated the male to a safe area and then, without regard for their own safety, moved into the heavy smoke coming from the burning garage. Deputy Fernandez used the shovel to pry loose some of the garage's exterior wooden slats while Deputy Flores used his bare hands to remove the loosened slats, as flames whipped out at them from the engulfed garage.

As deputies created a hole large enough to rescue the female, another deputy reached into the burning garage and pulled the incapacitated and badly burned female to safety. The female suffered burns over the majority of her body and was subsequently transported in critical condition. During the rescue, Deputy Flores sustained minor burns to his right hand and was treated for his injury.

For their heroic and selfless actions to save the life of a trapped female, who would have perished in the fire without their quick-thinking and bravery, Deputies Fernandez and Flores are awarded the Meritorious Conduct Medal, Silver.

Sergeant Clayton Marion
Sergeant Steven Owen
Deputy Curtis Foster

Deputy Erik Jepson
Deputy Lewis Orantes
Deputy Larry Pico IV
Lancaster Station

On November 26, 2013, at approximately 9:21 p.m., Deputies Erik Jepson and Larry Pico were patrolling in the city of Lancaster when they received information that known gangsters were in the area, possibly carrying handguns and wearing bullet proof vests. The deputies searched for the suspects and located a vehicle matching the description given.

After gaining further vehicle information via Sheriff's communications, the vehicle returned with a missing person hit and deputies initiated a traffic stop. Deputy Pico began walking toward the right side of the vehicle and Deputy Jepson ordered the occupants to show their hands. At that time, Deputy Pico observed that the driver was holding a handgun and yelled a "417" warning to his partner, the Department code for a gun. The driver sped off and a pursuit was initiated.



Deputies Jepson and Pico radioed in their situation and requested assistance. The pursuit continued for a couple of miles with the suspect failing to obey several stop signs and traffic lights, at one point narrowly colliding with a bicyclist. Sergeant Owen joined the pursuit and after a short time, the suspect vehicle came to a stop in a cul-de-sac. The suspect driver immediately exited the vehicle and ran into a nearby apartment complex. The suspect passenger exited the vehicle, laid on the ground and was taken into custody without incident.

A containment was established in order to locate the suspect driver. Deputies Jepson and Pico searched the apartment complex and as they approached a nearby street, they observed a vehicle slowly coming to a stop near the driveway. They observed two males in the vehicle and as they approached, Deputy Jepson saw that the driver was frantically pointing at the passenger. Deputy Jepson realized that the passenger was the suspect, drew his duty weapon and ran toward the vehicle. The suspect leaned heavily on the driver, taking the driver hostage and using him as a human shield.

At this point, deputies noticed the suspect was wearing a bullet proof vest and was pointing a handgun at the victim's chest and head area, making it impossible for deputies to end the threat with a clean shot without risk to the victim. Deputies Jepson and Pico repeatedly ordered the suspect to put his gun down, but the suspect continued to ignore the commands.

Sergeant Owen immediately assessed the situation, considered requesting the Department's Special Enforcement Bureau, but realized he did not have the time it would take SEB to respond. He considered other force options, keeping in mind that the victim's safety and the safety of his deputies must be weighed with the risk of successfully ending the situation. He then decided it was best to attempt using a Taser on the suspect based on previous experience with this effective tool. Sergeant Owen directed Deputy Orantes to step toward the open passenger window and when a moment of opportunity arose, Deputy Orantes deployed his Taser, striking the suspect on the right arm, resulting in neuromuscular incapacitation. The victim quickly exited through the driver side door and ran to assisting deputies.

Sergeant Owen saw that the suspect was clenching his handgun and feared he still posed a threat. He then directed an assisting unit, Sergeant Clayton, to use the taser a second time from the open driver side window. One of the Taser darts penetrated the suspect's bullet proof vest and made contact with his skin, causing the suspect's body to remain incapacitated.

Deputy Foster stepped forward and quickly snatched the handgun out of the suspect's grip and secured it. Deputies then pulled the suspect out of the vehicle, directed him to the ground and handcuffed him.

The kidnapping victim who had been forced to drive later stated that he had pulled over to the street curb line after noticing patrol cars traveling with their lights and sirens. The suspect entered his vehicle through the open passenger window and pointed a handgun at his chest, ordering him to drive or risk being shot. When the victim saw the approaching deputies, he removed the ignition keys from his vehicle and threw them. When the deputies tasered the suspect, he used this opportunity to escape from the suspect and ran out the driver side door.

During the investigation, it was discovered the suspect vehicle had been stolen a day earlier. A second firearm was found in this vehicle along with ski masks, confirming the suspects were likely involved in illegal activities. The suspects admitted they were headed out to conduct a home invasion robbery.

Throughout this ordeal, the sergeants and deputies' actions were courageous and nothing short of heroic. For their tremendous bravery and determination to save the victim, placing themselves in immediate life-threatening peril, Sergeant Clayton Marion, Sergeant Steven Owen, Deputy Curtis Foster, Deputy Erik Jepson, Deputy Lewis Orantes and Deputy Larry Pico are awarded the Meritorious Conduct Medal, Gold.

Deputy Carlos Cueva
Century Station

On April 9, 2013, Deputy Carlos Cueva assigned to Century Station was conducting a patrol check due to a recent rise of burglaries in the area. Deputy Cueva became suspicious when he noticed a male dressed in large, bulky clothes on a hot day. The male seemed startled by Deputy Cueva's presence and immediately began to walk



away. Deputy Cueva exited his vehicle and asked the suspect if he could talk with him. The suspect refused to stop, reached into his waistband, and produced a handgun, firing one round towards Deputy Cueva. Deputy Cueva unholstered and returned fire.

The suspect staggered away with Deputy Cueva following him. The suspect fell to the ground and told Deputy Cueva he had been shot in the leg. The suspect then pointed his handgun at Deputy Cueva and fired several more rounds. Deputy Cueva returned fire a second time, again striking the suspect.

The suspect was transported to a hospital where he was pronounced dead. A .40 caliber semiautomatic pistol was recovered from the scene along with eight shell casings.

For displaying great bravery and decisiveness under the pressure of an aggressive assault, Deputy Carlos Cueva is awarded the Meritorious Conduct Medal, Gold.

Sergeant Sean Banks
Deputy Rafael Cardenas
Deputy Jaime Fernandez
Deputy Carlos De La Torre
Deputy Michael Solis
Deputy Michael Coberg
Deputy Nikolai Vavakin
Deputy Ernesto Castaneda
Deputy Bradley Johnsen
Deputy Edward Martinez

Deputy Jesus Rubio

Deputy Christopher Zimmerman

Century Station and Operations Safe Streets Bureau

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Deputy John Marquez Temple Station

During the morning of September 2, 2012, Deputy John Marquez, assigned to Temple Station, was patrolling the area of South El Monte. His attention was drawn to a female who crossed the street by jaywalking and who then walked into a convenience store. Deputy Marquez turned into the parking lot of the store where he also noticed a parked vehicle missing its front headlight. He checked the vehicle's license plate and received information that the vehicle was associated with a felony armed and dangerous suspect.



Deputy Marquez, believing the vehicle was empty, exited his radio car to further investigate. A male suspect exited the passenger side door with a shotgun and pointed it directly at him. Deputy Marquez immediately fired at the suspect and the suspect returned gunfire. Deputy Marquez quickly took cover behind other parked vehicles, allowing him to radio for assistance.

Deputy Marquez maintained visual surveillance as the suspect ran across the street. The suspect again pointed the shotgun directly at Deputy Marquez and then fired an additional round. Fearing for his life, Deputy Marquez fired back at the suspect. After a short intense gunfire exchange, Deputy Marquez realized he had been shot. Unaware of the extent of his injuries, Deputy Marquez maintained his composure and continued to broadcast pertinent information to responding units, such as suspect description and direction of travel.

Deputy Marquez observed the suspect enter the 7-11 convenience store and exit moments later with the female he saw jaywalking moments earlier. Both suspects ran across the parking lot while in possession of the shotgun.

Although wounded from injuries sustained during the gun battle, Deputy Marquez displayed a tremendous amount of courage and tenacity in his pursuit of the suspects.

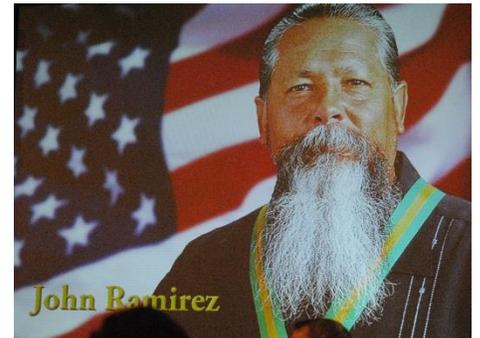
For his perseverance and tremendous bravery, Deputy John Marquez is awarded the Purple Heart Medal.

And for his heroic action engaging a violent felon armed with a shotgun, engaging him on two separate occasions, Deputy John Marquez is awarded the Meritorious Conduct Medal, Gold.

JOHN ANDRE RAMIREZ

On June 22, 2014, Pico Rivera Station received a service call of a possible assault. As Deputy Evelia Michel neared the location, she contacted a female on a street corner who matched the victim's description. The female appeared to be under the influence of alcohol and was displaying erratic behavior. Without warning or provocation, the female physically assaulted Deputy Michel and threw her to the ground. The female overpowered the deputy by positioning her body on top of Deputy Michel, putting her in a control headlock and landing a barrage of strikes to Deputy Michel's head.

Upon observing the female's violent actions, Mr. John Ramirez quickly came to the aid of Deputy Michel and pulled the female off the deputy. The female continued her assault while Mr. Ramirez helped Deputy Michel gain control of the female until assisting deputies arrived.



After the incident, a witness stated she saw the female attempt to grab Deputy Michel's firearm during the struggle. Deputy Michel sustained minor injuries to her hand, knee and lower back. The incident had the potential to turn deadly. Due to Mr. Ramirez's actions, the female was controlled and taken into custody without further injury to Deputy Michel.

For displaying great courage, compassion and placing himself in danger while coming to the aid of a deputy sheriff, Mr. John Ramirez is awarded the Department's Humanitarian Medal.

DOCTOR GALE D. SMITH

On January 31, 2012, Deputy Kimberly Boissier of Lancaster Station, was responding to investigate an attempt carjacking. Deputy Boissier saw the alleged suspect, stopped her vehicle and exited her patrol car. As she approached the male, he turned

and lunged at her. The suspect tried to push her into oncoming traffic, continued to attack her and attempted to take her gun.

At the same time, Doctor Gale Smith was driving by when she noticed a male sprinting, but not wearing appropriate jogging clothing. She saw a patrol car with its lights on and stop behind the male. She slowed as a precaution and observed a female deputy exit the patrol car and contact the male. In disbelief, she saw the male turn and begin to attack the female deputy.

Doctor Smith believed the officer's life was in danger. She immediately stopped her vehicle, got out and ran to help the deputy who was viciously being attacked. She told the suspect, "Son, you really don't want to do this." The suspect glanced at her and continued his violent attack on the deputy. Ms. Smith saw the suspect's hand on the deputy's weapon and immediately grabbed the suspect from behind and put her arm around the suspect's neck, putting him in a head lock. She took control of the



suspect's hand so he wouldn't take the deputy's gun. Dr. Smith and Deputy Boissier struggled to subdue the suspect at which time two men ran up to help and assisting units arrived on scene.

Prior to attacking Deputy Boissier, the suspect had gone on a rampage which included the assault of a pastor, theft of the pastor's cell phone, and tried to carjack two different vehicles.

Doctor Smith was the first person to come to the aid of a female deputy who was being attacked on the side of the road. Doctor Smith said her faith gave her strength and that God had put angels around her. It is without a doubt that Doctor Smith was Deputy Boissier's guardian angel on that January afternoon. Doctor Smith's willingness to become involved in this dangerous situation by physically engaging the suspect most likely saved the deputy's life.

For her heroic actions, Doctor Gale Smith, a 66 year old grandmother, former correctional officer and Air Force veteran, is awarded the Department's Humanitarian Medal.

RICHARD A. FREDERICK III

On August 15, 2014, Lakewood Station deputies responded to a possible domestic violence incident at the local mall. It was determined that no crime had occurred and both parties voluntarily left the location. A short time later, Deputy Brandon Love saw

the same male suspect walking through the mall. Deputy Love asked the male to leave because he was very loud and emotional, stating he was going to kill himself.

Deputy Love was escorting the suspect out of the mall, when he dropped his keys. The suspect, seeing an opportunity, struck Deputy Love from behind. Deputy Love was knocked unconscious and fell to the ground where he laid with no sign of life. The suspect kicked the deputy in the head and stomped his neck in an apparent attempt to kill him.

At this point, Mr. Richard Frederick ran towards the deputy, as the male was about to strike Deputy Love again, and knocked the suspect away from Deputy Love. Another responding deputy ran inside the mall with his gun drawn and ordered the suspect to surrender. The suspect complied and was handcuffed without incident.

Mr. Frederick undoubtedly saved Deputy Love's life. Since the incident, Deputy Love has described Mr. Frederick as his "guardian angel." For his willingness to become involved in a vicious attack of a deputy sheriff, without regard for his own safety and for his courageous actions, Mr. Richard Frederick is awarded the Department's Humanitarian Medal.



Photo Gallery of 2014 Valor Awards Ceremony and Luncheon

