



SPOKANE POLICE DIVISION

CHIEF OF POLICE

CRAIG N. MEIDL

To: Officer Cory Lyons and Officer Holt Widhalm
From: Craig Meidl, Chief of Police
Date: January 31, 2017
Re: Medal of Merit Award

Major Kevin King recently nominated you for the Medal of Merit Award. The Medal of Merit is awarded to members of the Spokane Police Department who distinguish themselves by meritorious achievement or meritorious service. The meritorious actions must clearly surpass that which is normally required or expected. This service or achievement need not be unique but must be exceptional and superior. When the Special Awards Committee reviewed the nominations, it was clear that you are most deserving of this recognition. Excerpts from the nomination:

"On November 7th, 2015, at approximately 12:34 pm, Officer Cory Lyons and Officer Holt Widhalm were dispatched to a call of a male standing in the middle of the North 800 block of Division Street with a knife trying to stop and steal vehicles. Both Officer Lyons and Widhalm arrived on scene at approximately the same time, locating the suspect still in the middle of Division, attempting to stop southbound traffic, and still armed with a knife.

Officer Lyons made verbal contact with the suspect, imploring him to drop his knife and surrender. These de-escalation techniques did not work and the suspect instead ran away, still armed with the knife. Officer Lyons chased him on foot. The suspect then ran into the gas station lot at Division and Cataldo. Officer Lyons was still in foot pursuit and Officer Widhalm ran westbound to cut off the suspect in the lot.

The armed suspect attempted to gain entry into the store, but a quick thinking clerk had just locked the door. The suspect then moved to a vehicle at a nearby pump that was occupied by a mother and her young son. Officer Lyons and Widhalm closed in on the suspect. There were numerous civilians on foot and in their vehicles at the gas station. As the armed suspect attempted to enter the occupied vehicle, both officers acted immediately to the threat he posed to the victims inside, firing their duty handguns. The suspect was hit multiple times and went to the ground, and still continued to maintain control of the knife but tossed it away when commanded. After handcuffing the suspect for safety, both Officer Lyons and Widhalm then immediately began applying life-saving measures to the suspect until other officers and rescue personnel arrived.

Officer Lyons was wearing his body camera during this event. When the video was released to the public, an internationally renowned police training company hailed it as the "gold standard" of police response to an armed suspect." They especially highlighted both officer's ability to transition from calmly and tactically dealing with an armed hostile suspect, to then rendering life-saving first aid.

Officers Lyons and Widhalm were faced with what can be truly categorized as a "tense and rapidly evolving" situation. They were faced with a suspect armed with a knife, acting irrationally, and jeopardizing the lives of those nearby. After being forced to use their handguns to stop the immediate threat the suspect posed to the lives of others, both officers then rendered first aid to the suspect. They did so calmly, tactically, and compassionately in such a manner that it brought local and national credit to the Spokane Police Department. It is for these reasons I have nominated Officer Cory Lyons and Officer Holt Widhalm for the Medal of Merit."

Officer Lyons and Officer Widhalm, you have certainly distinguished yourselves in the area of meritorious achievement and I am proud to recognize you with the Medal of Merit Award. You will be given the Medal of Merit at our annual Employee Awards Ceremony in 2017. A copy of this document will be placed in your department personnel files.

Craig Meidl
Chief of Police

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