

OFFICER KEVIN KELLER



The Lifesaving Award is given to department personnel who, by their immediate actions, have saved a human life under unusual and/or extraordinary circumstances.



On May 5, 2005, at about 2:30 p.m., Officer Kevin Keller responded to a "suicidal subject" call near 3500 S. High Drive, where a man had driven his vehicle over the embankment. This location has an extremely steep incline for approximately 1,000 feet. The vehicle was perched precariously about 100 feet below the rim. Officer Keller placed himself near the vehicle and yelled at the man to jump out of the vehicle. The man refused, saying he was suicidal because he had violated his probation, and couldn't go back to prison. Officer Keller learned that the man was not wanted for probation violation and maintained that theme in calling out to him. There was no cover for Officer Keller as he talked to the man, until Officer Karl Thompson arrived and covered him with a long rifle.

The vehicle slid downward erratically in short distances and looked as though the man would not be able to stop his descent. The terrain was so steep that Officers Keller and Thompson had difficulty moving downward without losing their footing. Officer Keller was tenacious in following the vehicle, while yelling to the man reasons not to kill himself. He was able to keep the man calm enough to maintain control of the vehicle, repeatedly telling him to sharply turn his wheels while maintaining brake pressure. This tactic allowed the front wheels to start pushing dirt ahead, which ultimately was the only thing preventing the vehicle from an out-of-control descent. At over 700 feet below the rim, the man finally jumped out of the vehicle.

Officer Keller's skill, determination, and perseverance saved the suicidal man from serious injury or death. Additionally, there were people on the trails at the bottom of the slope, unaware of the crisis above them. Had the vehicle rolled uncontrollably, it is possible an innocent citizen may have been seriously injured or killed.

Along with this document, Officer Keller was issued the Lifesaving bar, to be worn on his uniform. He was also awarded the Lifesaving Medal at our annual Employee Awards Ceremony, in February 2006.

