

# OFFICER DEAN DRAPER



The Medal of Merit is awarded to employees who distinguish themselves by meritorious achievement or service. Meritorious actions are those which clearly surpass that which is normally required or expected.



Officer Dean Draper set the bar when he responded to a “person with a weapon” call. The address was a care facility and officers were informed that one of the female clients had armed herself with a knife and had threatened one of the employees of the care facility. They were further advised that the suspect was on medication and was “over reactive.”

By the time Officer Max Hewitt arrived with Officer Kim Thomas; Officer Paul Taylor was able to update them on the situation. It was the officers' mutual decision to enter the house and search for the suspect, whom they believed was still armed with a butcher/kitchen knife of some sort.

Ofc. Thomas cleared the basement and then he regrouped with Ofc. Hewitt and Ofc. Taylor. They went up the stairs, towards the suspect in the planned formation. When Ofc. Hewitt opened the door to the second floor hallway, billowing smoke started pouring out. Ofc. Hewitt closed the door and advised the fire department of what had been found. Ofc. Hewitt then contacted the on scene fire personnel and asked to use one of their self contained breathing apparatus (SCBA). Ofc. Hewitt returned to the staircase wearing the SCBA. Officers Taylor, Thomas and Spiering stayed at the top of the staircase, holding their positions in order to keep the stairwell secure and if necessary deal with the armed suspect. Ofc. Hewitt and fire crews continued entry; the smoke was so thick that they were all feeling the way with their hands. Ofc. Hewitt and fire personnel were calling out to locate the suspect as the smoke filled environment would be fatal to an unprotected person. Ofc. Thomas attempted to follow Ofc. Hewitt to provide backup, but was forced back by the heavy smoke. While doing this, Ofc. Thomas was outside getting fresh air when he was advised that the suspect was at the north side, second floor window. Ofc. Hewitt was informed of the suspect's location. The suspect was found in the room she was in which was clear of smoke. The suspect was standing by the window with her hands up in such a way that he could see she was unarmed. Without her knowledge, Ofc. Hewitt moved up behind her and took her to the floor. As he was doing this, one of the fire personnel came in and assisted Ofc. Hewitt in securing the suspect. Ofc. Hewitt then walked the suspect to the top of the stairs where he handed her off to Officers Thomas, Spiering and Draper who escorted her outside to a waiting police car.

The actions of all the officers at the scene were consistent with the highest levels of performance and teamwork. On this day, Officer Dean Draper displayed exemplary acts of courage and bravery and for those actions, he was presented the Medal of Merit.