

The South Carolina SPECIAL EDITION

Winter 2022

Medal of Valor Issue

from your South Carolina Sheriffs' Association

SCSA 2022 Medal of Valor Recipients

Charleston County

Deputy Nicholas Vecchione Deputy Micah Cox TEMS Operator Meredith Leventis First Sergeant Henry McClellan, Department of Natural Resources

Chester County

Patrol Sgt. Richard Branham
Patrol Cpl. Jordan Brown
Deputy Sydney Canipe
Deputy Marcus Beasley
Deputy Quentin Eley
Deputy Dashaun Boyd
Deputy Johnny Arcilla
Narcotics Sgt. John "Trey" Hunter

Florence County Lieutenant Johnny Hicks

Greenville County

Deputy Mark Harden
Deputy Colin Price
Sgt. Patrick Swift
Master Deputy Matthew Broad
Deputy Kyle Alexander
Deputy Ryan Humber & K9 Nikos

Lancaster County

Deputy Leonard Jesuele

Newberry County
Sgt. David Earl Lawson

Spartanburg CountyCorporal Kenneth Wayne Hancock

Sumter County
Corporal Matthew Barwick
Corporal Bradley Hynes



Executive Director's Perspective:

Recognizing Valor in Our Midst

Jarrod M. Bruder, Executive Director South Carolina Sheriffs' Association

elcome to our 2022 Medal of Valor issue of The South Carolina Sheriff.

At a time when every action of law enforcement officers is being publicly scrutinized and the profession itself is under vicious assault, we are very proud to present our annual **Medal of Valor** issue.

The men and women we honor here are among the very best and brightest of our state's law enforcement officers and first responders. While we recognize and celebrate their bravery, their stories offer a glimpse into the very real and terrifying risks South Carolina's finest encounter each and every day while serving us and keeping us safe.

The routine is never routine: A traffic stop can turn into a life-and-death struggle; a domestic call can turn into a hostage situation; a scheduled interview can turn into an hours-long, deadly standoff—you can never know what to expect when you put on your shield and start your shift.

These men and women came face-toface with life-threatening situations and rose above and beyond in serving and protecting South Carolina's citizens. Their conduct and actions in the performance of their duties qualifies them to be Medal of Valor recipients. We are pleased to honor each of these tremendous public servants.

As you read this issue, I hope you'll consider making a generous donation in honor of those who serve us so diligently, and so well. It is thanks to the support of members like you that your SCSA is able to provide the very latest in education, state-of-the-art training and critical support to the men and women of South Carolina's 46 Sheriff's Offices. We couldn't do what we do without you. *They* couldn't do what *they* do without you.

I hope you will enjoy this special issue of *The South Carolina Sheriff*. Please join us in recognizing the valiant men and women who put their lives on the line to serve and protect the communities and the people we love.





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Heroism: Distinguished Courage, Brave Deeds, and Noble Qualities

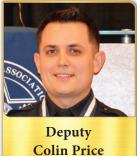
Deputy Mark Harden, Greenville County Sheriff's Department Deputy Colin Price, Greenville County Sheriff's Department

"The dictionary defines 'hero' as 'a person of distinguished courage or ability, admired for his or her brave deeds and noble qualities. It is without question that both Deputies Harden and Price meet this definition of 'hero' and that their actions bring great credit to our chosen profession and reflect the highest ideals of the Greenville County Sheriff's Office and law enforcement throughout this great state."

~Hobart Lewis Greenville County Sheriff n April 18th, 2021, at approximately 2340 hrs., Deputy Mark Hardin and Deputy Colin Price responded to a multi-vehicle accident. Upon their arrival, they encountered a chaotic situation that spanned nearly a football field in length. Initially they determined that two vehicles were involved, including a male that was ejected and deceased. While working to bring the scene under control, they were alerted to a third vehicle that had left the roadway and ended up at the bottom of a twenty-foot embankment.

Running to the vehicle, they realized it was on fire and a female was still inside. Without hesitation they traversed the slope and began attempting to extract the female from inside. Discovering the victim's feet were pinned beneath the pedals, both deputies worked to free her, despite the fact that the vehicle was now almost fully engulfed in flames. After continuous effort and determination, in the face of nearly unbearable heat and flames, Deputies Hardin and Price were finally able to free her and pull her from the vehicle and carried her up the embankment to arriving EMS and fire personnel.





The actions of Deputies Harden and Price undoubtedly saved the life of this young woman, a feat accomplished through their persistence in the face of tremendous personal risk.

Bravery During a High-Speed Pursuit Saves Lives

Sgt. David Earl Lawson, Newberry County Sheriff's Office



Sergeant

David Earl Lawson

n August 16, 2021, a 911 call quickly turned into a 45-mile vehicle pursuit. The end result was a suspect placing hundreds of innocent motorists on a busy interstate highway in jeopardy and a law enforcement officer having to make a split-second decision that ended in the suspect losing his life.

Sgt. Lawson observed the Black Jeep Cherokee approaching at a high rate of speed. Sgt Lawson relayed information to dispatch and other units that he had the vehicle in sight and was attempting to stop the suspect with activated blue lights and siren. The suspect displayed his determination that he did not intend to stop, ramming several vehicles.

Sgt. Lawson continued to pursue the vehicle traveling into Lexington and Richland Counties before getting off Interstate 26 in Chapin. At this interchange, the suspect attempted to get back on Interstate-26, traveling West in the East bound lane. Sgt. Lawson took action not to allow the suspect back on the Interstate

heading the wrong direction.

Without concern for his own safety, Sgt. Lawson was able to get in front of the suspect. The suspect rammed Sgt. Lawson's vehicle in the rear, disabling the suspect's vehicle. After wrecking the vehicle, the suspect fled on foot. Sgt. Lawson and a Highway

"By hitting, ramming, and pitting 18 vehicles, including two law enforcement officers, this suspect demonstrated his lack of regard for the lives of innocent civilians. Sgt. Lawson's actions in following his training, policy, procedures, and by disregarding his own safety, saved many citizens in South Carolina."

~Lee Foster Newberry County Sheriff

Patrol Trooper engaged the suspect verbally and with a non-lethal weapon (taser).

The suspect had made several forceful and threatening moves toward Sgt. Lawson before dropping his head, concealing a hand behind his back, and charging Sgt. Lawson. Sgt. Lawson attempted to create distance between himself and the suspect, but the suspect continued to advance. Sgt. Lawson fired his service weapon, hitting and eliminating the threat to himself and the public.



Without their Courageousness and Valor this Situation Could Have Ended Much Differently

Sgt. Patrick Swift, Greenville County Sheriff's Office Master Deputy Matthew Broad, Greenville County Sheriff's Office Deputy Kyle Alexander, Greenville County Sheriff's Office Deputy Ryan Humburg & K9 Nikos, Greenville County Sheriff's Office

n the evening of September 29th, 2021, GCSO responded to a call from a woman who had been shot by her son during a dispute. The woman had escaped the house to dial 911. Responding deputies were not able to make contact with the suspect, as he had barricaded himself inside the home. SWAT was requested.

Multiple attempts were made to contact the suspect via loudspeaker and telephone, all without success. An entry team made their way to the front door and a K9 was deployed. The suspect shot the K9 several times.

The decision was made to try and apprehend Hawthorne with a small element of SWAT operators. Led by Sergeant Patrick Swift, Master Deputy Matt Broad and Deputy Kyle Alexander entered the home. The plan was for Deputy Alexander to provide cover

with a ballistic shield while Sergeant Swift utilized a taser and Master Deputy Broad provided lethal cover.

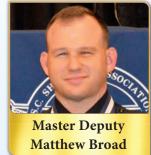
The taser was successfully deployed, but the suspect turned a rudimentary flame-thrower (an aerosol can and butane lighter) towards officers. Without hesitation, Deputy Alexander, using the shield as cover, jumped on top of the suspect,

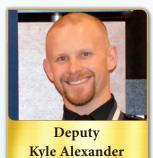
"These deputies risked their lives to apprehend a suspect that was refusing all other attempts to be arrested. Without their courageousness and valor, this situation could have ended much differently."

~Hobart Lewis Greenville County Sheriff

smothering the flames and allowing Sergeant Swift and Master Deputy Broad to apprehend him without further injury to anyone.



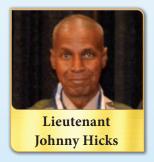






Exemplary Bravery, Preventing a Violent Suspect's Escape

Lieutenant Johnny Hicks, Florence County Sheriff's Office



n September 17, 2021, Lieutenant Johnny (Jolly) Hicks was on patrol in Florence County when a Lake City Police Officer was struck and killed during a vehicle pursuit. Lt. Hicks spotted a vehicle matching the description near Olanta, SC and attempted to stop the vehicle,

but the driver refused to stop and led Lt. Hicks on a vehicle pursuit near the town of Olanta.

At one point, the suspect got out of the vehicle, and Lt. Hicks continued his pursuit on foot. The suspect then reentered

the vehicle and Lt. Hicks followed, resuming the vehicle pursuit. Lt. Hicks initiated a perfect Pursuit Intervention Technique (PIT), which forced the suspect vehicle into a ditch, ending the pursuit. Lt. Hicks exited his vehicle and placed the suspect driver under arrest. Lt. Hicks was transported

"Lt. Hicks, a 27-year veteran of the Florence County Sheriff's Office exhibited exemplary bravery and expert application of the PIT maneuver to prevent a violent suspect from escaping or further harming the citizens of Florence County."

> ~TJ Joye Florence County Sheriff

from the scene to an area hospital where he received medical treatment for injuries sustained in the incident.

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The Lives of Citizens and Responding Law Enforcement Officers were Saved

Deputy Nicholas Vecchione, Charleston County Sheriff's Office

"As a result of Deputy Vecchione's quick thinking and resolute actions, the lives of citizens and responding law enforcement officers alike were saved. Deputy Vecchione's heroic actions and exceptional performance are clearly keeping with the values held and expected of all members of the law enforcement community."

> ~Kristin R. Graziano **Charleston County Sheriff**

n September 18, 2021, at approximately 0728 hours, the Charleston County Sheriff's Office and Charleston Police Department received reports of a suspect actively discharging a firearm in a subdivision of Charleston City. Initial complainants stated the active shooter was firing his handgun while threatening and assaulting a female subject. The suspect reportedly continued to fire his handgun indiscriminately in the neighborhood with many of his shots impacting occupied residences.

Upon arrival, responding deputies and officers encountered a subject actively firing a handgun. As the deputies exited their

vehicles, the suspect turned and fired in their direction, striking the vehicles they were taking cover behind. As the incident



continued, the suspect repeatedly engaged the responding deputies and officers. As the suspect continued to maneuver into position to fire at law enforcement personnel, Deputy Vecchione, utilizing his issued agency rifle, took up a position of cover and fired at the suspect from approximately 400 feet which neutralized the threat.

Decisive Action to Save and Protect Human Life

Corporal Kenneth Wayne Hancock, Spartanburg County Sheriff's Office



n July 01, 2021, Spartanburg County Sheriff's Office Narcotics Investigator Ken Hancock responded to a shooting in the City of Spartanburg as he was close to the location when the call went out. Upon arrival,

Investigator Hancock encountered a Spartanburg Water Works employee who had been shot.

It was determined this location was not the original crime scene. Proceeding to that location, Investigator Hancock met Spartanburg City officers who advised him they believed another wounded victim was inside with the suspect.

Several attempts were made to breach the door and Investigator Hancock took the lead of a stack of officers ready to enter. At this point, the suspect opened fire, striking Investigator Hancock as other officers took cover. After an intense gun battle with SWAT, the suspect was killed. By the time police reached him, the victim inside had died from his wounds.

Investigator Hancock was rushed to the hospital by a Spartanburg City patrol car. He underwent surgeries on his left arm and elbow. As a result of the surgeries, Investigator Hancock suffered a mild stroke which, after his being released from the hospital, sent him to a rehabilitation facility for several weeks. As of today, Investigator Hancock still undergoes weekly physical therapy and has not yet returned to work.

"Investigator Hancock's actions this day responding to a call he didn't have to respond to, making a decisive decision to attempt to save and protect human life, back up Officers from another jurisdiction and placing himself in harm's way goes above and beyond the call of duty and deserving of the 2021 Medal of Valor Award."

> ~Chuck Wright Spartanburg County Sheriff

Exceptional Performance and Quick Thinking Saved Lives

Deputy Micah Cox, Charleston County Sheriff's Office First Sergeant Henry McClellan, Department of Natural Resources TEMS Operator Meredith Leventis, Charleston County Sheriff's Office Special Weapons & Tactics





First Sergeant Henry McClellan



TEMS Operator Meredith Leventis

n April 24th, 2021, deputies with the Charleston County Sheriff's Office attempted to serve arrest warrants on a suspect in McClellanville. While approaching the residence, the deputies encountered gunfire from the suspect requiring they retreat to a position of cover. As a result, additional officers, including Deputy Micah Cox and Department of Natural Resources First Sergeant Henry McClellan responded to the scene. Throughout the incident, the suspect fired his shotgun from the residence, presumably in an attempt to injure or kill the deputies on scene.

Upon arrival at the scene, Deputy Cox and First Sergeant McClellan took up a position of cover behind the suspect's residence as a part of the perimeter. While in this position, they observed the suspect exit the rear of the residence and move towards the position of Deputy Cox and First Sergeant McClellan. At this time, after having given the suspect verbal commands to surrender, the suspect failed to comply

and fired in the direction of First Sergeant McClellan and Deputy Cox who returned fire.

The suspect, seriously wounded in the exchange with First Sergeant McClellan and Deputy Cox, retreated into the residence. Deputy Cox, who was wounded by the suspect's gunfire, and First Sergeant McClellan maintained their

"As a result of quick thinking, resolute action, and exceptional performance of Deputy Cox, First Sergeant McClellan, and Operator Leventis, lives were saved."

> ~Kristin R. Graziano Charleston County Sheriff

positions of cover until relieved by responding SWAT members.

Paramedic Crew Chief Meredith Leventis is currently a member of the Charleston County Emergency Medical System. Assigned to the Charleston County Sheriff's Office Special Weapons and Tactics team as a Tactical EMS operator, she operates in a tactical environment providing medical care during critical incidents.

TEMS operators generally stage at the team armored personnel carrier and wait to be escorted inside if needed. Recognizing time was of the essence, Operator Leventis agreed to join the stack and make entry immediately to address the suspect's condition. While the scene was still active, Operator Leventis, without concern for the suspect's previous violent acts towards law enforcement officers, immediately began treatment of the suspect. Once the scene was deemed secure, Operator Leventis coordinated transporting the suspect to the local hospital.

Courage Under Fire

Deputy Leonard Jesuele, Lancaster County Sheriff's Office



n October 8, 2021, Deputy Lee Jesuele and several other deputies responded to an apartment in Lancaster County regarding a missing person investigation.

Investigators had been searching for a person who suffered from mental health issues. After exhausting all options, deputies were eventually forced to enter the missing person's apartment to check on his welfare. The subject was located in the bedroom of the

home. He was armed with a firearm and appeared to be in mental distress. Deputies attempted to negotiate with the subject to no avail.

During this time, Deputy Jesuele remained calm and professional. The subject eventually opened fire, striking Deputy Jesuele in the leg. Even after being struck by gunfire, Deputy Jesuele showed tremendous courage by returning fire and ultimately stopping the threat.

"Under extreme lifethreatening circumstances, Deputy Jesuele maintained his composure and reacted quickly to defend himself and his co-workers."

> ~Barry S. Faile Lancaster County Sheriff

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Because of their Actions, This Man is Alive Today

Corporal Matthew Barwick, Sumter County Sheriff's Office Corporal Bradley Hynes, Sumter County Sheriff's Office

"Being a law enforcement officer is one of the toughest jobs because we are forced to know the unknown, see the unseen, and make split-second decisions. It was because of Corporal Barwick and Corporal Hynes actions that this man is alive today."

~Anthony Dennis Sumter County Sheriff n May 16, 2021, Corporals Matthew Barwick and Bradley Hynes responded to a call concerning a man attempting to commit suicide by hanging.

Arriving at the scene, Hynes and Barwick exited their vehicles and ran to the backyard where they saw the subject standing on a small stepladder with a rope around his neck, tied to the limb of a tree. When the subject saw the deputies, he kicked the stepladder out from underneath himself.

Corporals Hynes and Barwick ran to the subject's aid, Corporal Barwick holding him up while Corporal Hynes tried to untie the rope. Corporal Hynes eventually cut the rope, the two deputy's fast actions saving this man's life.

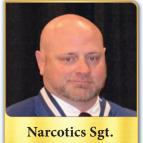


Corporal Matthew Barwick



Corporal
Bradley Hynes

Actions, Above and Beyond the Call of Duty, Saved Lives Narcotics Sgt. John "Trey" Hunter, Chester County Sheriff's Office



John "Trey" Hunter

ohn "Trey" Hunter, III, serves as the Narcotics Sergeant and Special Response Team (SRT) Commander for the Chester County Sheriff's Office. He is a United States Marine and 15-year law enforcement veteran who stared death in the face as he courageously protected Chester County from a fleeing armed fugitive.

On Sunday, January 3, 2021, while sitting down for dinner with his family, Sgt. Hunter received a call informing him of a high-speed chase that began in Lancaster County involving a suspect who had fired shots at Lancaster County Deputies. During the chase into Chester County, the suspect wrecked in an area on Highway #9 and fled into the woods near an industrial business, while still armed.

Sgt. Hunter contacted his team and instructed them to respond to the scene, as he departed his residence driving his issued undercover Toyota Camry. As Sgt. Hunter approached the scene, he noticed a silhouette of a man jogging down the middle of the highway towards his vehicle.

As Sgt. Hunter slowed, he realized the man was attempting to stop his vehicle. Sgt. Hunter noticed the subject's right hand clenched in his hoodie pocket; the outline of a gun visible from the short distance between them. With little time to act, Sgt. Hunter placed the vehicle in park, which automatically unlocked the car's doors. The subject removed the firearm from his hoodie and moved towards the passenger side of the vehicle. Sgt. Hunter exited the driver's side door as the subject opened the passenger's door and attempted to enter.

The subject, now less than five feet from him, pointed the gun at Sgt. Hunter and pulled the trigger. The suspect's gun misfired, and no bullet was discharged. Fearing for his life, Sgt. Hunter fired back as both

"Sgt. Hunter distinguished himself by the performance of his courageous acts, which involved the risk of imminent danger to his life, with the knowledge of that risk. Sgt. Hunter's actions, which were above and beyond the call of duty, directly saved the lives of the public and other law enforcement officers, by removing the threat of a dangerous felon."

~Max Dorsey II Chester County Sheriff

parties sought cover. The suspect ran for the tree line, turning to fire at Sgt. Hunter multiple times. Sgt. Hunter returned fire until the suspect turned and disappeared into the woods. Shortly thereafter, the suspect was found deceased in the wooded area.

Further investigation by SLED found the suspect had shot the vehicle of a Lancaster County Sheriff's Deputy earlier in the day, which began the initial chase from Lancaster into Chester County. Additionally, it was determined by ballistics tests that the subject had shot and killed another individual in Lancaster County a few days prior to this incident.

Life-threatening Pursuit and Eventual Capture of a Serial Killer

Patrol Sgt. Richard Branham, Chester County Sheriff's Office Patrol Cpl. Jordan Brown, Chester County Sheriff's Office Deputy Sydney Canipe, Chester County Sheriff's Office Deputy Marcus Beasley, Chester County Sheriff's Office Deputy Quentin Eley, Chester County Sheriff's Office Deputy Dashaun Boyd, Chester County Sheriff's Office Deputy Johnny Arcilla, Chester County Sheriff's Office

"The actions of the Chester County Sheriff's Delta Patrol Shift exemplify bravery, determination, and unselfish commitment to one another. These deputies, through their courageous actions, never giving up the fight, heroically distinguished themselves at the risk of their own lives, and while going above and beyond the call of duty."

~Max Dorsey II Chester County Sheriff

uring the late-night hours of Monday,
May 17, 2021, the Delta Patrol Shift of the
Chester County Sheriff's Office, consisting
of Sergeant Richard Branham, Corporal Jordan
Brown, Deputy Marcus Beasley, Deputy Quentin
Eley, Deputy Dashaun Boyd, Deputy Sydney
Canipe, and Deputy Johnny Arcila, entered a lifethreatening pursuit, with a then unknown serial killer,
to protect the citizens of Chester County.

Shortly before midnight, Deputy Canipe attempted a traffic stop of a vehicle in the Bojangles parking lot, on Highway #9 near the intersection of I-77. The vehicle failed to stop and left the area traveling west in the direction of the City of Chester. Deputy Canipe pursued as other members of Delta Shift moved into positions to assist.

The chase, rapidly approaching the city of Chester at a speed of 118 mph, became more dangerous when a male suspect leaned out of the vehicle, held a firearm with both hands, and opened fire on pursuing law enforcement. As the chase continued, the suspect fired multiple shots at law enforcement officers in pursuit.

Once the suspect's vehicle turned east onto Highway #9, Deputy Eley successfully executed a maneuver that caused the suspect's vehicle to wreck in the ditch on the side of the road. As deputies approached the now wrecked vehicle, two subjects climbed the embankment toward the woods. One subject, later identified as passenger and shooter Tyler Terry, ran into the woods and disappeared. The second subject and driver of the vehicle, Adrienne Simpson, was immediately taken into custody.

The end of the vehicle pursuit was the beginning of a weeklong manhunt for Tyler Terry in Chester County. The manhunt involved over 50 local, state, and federal law enforcement agencies, consisting of more than 600 personnel.

Law enforcement officers captured Tyler Terry without incident on May 22, 2021. As the investigation revealed, Tyler Terry and Adrienne Simpson were connected to numerous crimes, including murders in three states.



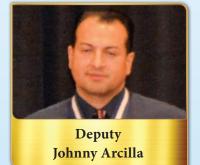
Sergeant
Richard Branham

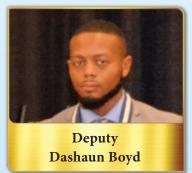


Patrol Corporal Jordan Brown

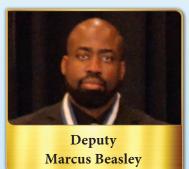


Deputy
Sydney Canipe











Diamond Corporate Partner McDaniel Supply Company

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Mediko

Moseley Architects

Trinity Services Group/Keefe Group United Badges Insurance Services

Silver Corporate Partners

Combined Public Communications OD Security North America Southern Health Partners, Inc. Summit Food Service

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ARC **ATIMS**

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