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SFPD Medal of Valor Awards Ceremony 17-174

November 16, 2017 | 3:06 PM

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On Wednesday, November 15, 2017, the San Francisco Police Department presented awards and certificates to eighteen officers at the Medal of Valor Awards Ceremony at Scottish Rite Masonic Center in San Francisco.

The Medal of Valor is bestowed on officers for exceptional bravery in the line of duty.

One officer received the Gold Medal of Valor, seven received the Silver Medal of Valor and ten received the Bronze Medal of Valor.

“Despite the dangers they face every day, our officers are steadfast in their sworn duty to protect the people of San Francisco and keep our neighborhoods safe,” said San Francisco Police Chief William Scott. “The outstanding hard work, sacrifice and bravery shown by the officers honored tonight are the hallmark of our City’s law enforcement officers.”



Gold Medal of Valor

On July 8, 2016 at approximately 11:24 PM, off-duty Officer Riley Bandy had just finished working out near Lake Merritt in Oakland. Officer Bandy observed a male pointing a rifle at another male on the 1800 block of Lakeshore Avenue. Officer Bandy approached the two males and heard the gun wielding suspect yelling at the victim, demanding his cell phone. Officer Bandy, who was unarmed, approached the suspect, identified himself as a San Francisco Police Officer and ordered the suspect to put the rifle down. The suspect turned towards Officer Bandy, pointed the rifle at him and then fled the scene. Officer Bandy told the victim to call 911 and began to chase the suspect on foot. As he pursued the gunman, the suspect pointed the rifle at him several times, prompting Officer Bandy to take cover behind parked vehicles. Despite the danger he faced, Officer Bandy continued to chase the armed suspect for several blocks until Oakland Police officers arrived. Officer Bandy identified himself to the officers and told him he was in pursuit of the suspect. Officer Bandy and the Oakland officers caught up with the suspect, who threw the rifle (later determined to be a BB gun) into some bushes. Officer Bandy tackled the suspect and assisted the Oakland officers, who took the suspect into custody.

Silver Medal of Valor

On November 19, 2016, Sergeant Matthew Mason, Sergeant Thomas Maguire, Sergeant Patrick Griffin, Sergeant Eric Batchelder, and Officer David Goff were conducting plainclothes surveillance of suspects in the "Green Glove Bandit" robbery series, so named due to the green gloves worn by suspects. At 9:45 PM, the surveillance brought them to a gas station located on the 2100 block of Orchard Avenue in San Leandro. Sgt. Mason observed one of the suspects drive to a gas station, park his vehicle behind the station and approach the cashier, while wearing gloves. As the cashier opened the cash register, the suspect pointed a firearm at the cashier and removed US currency. Sgt. Mason advised his team that the suspect was armed and had just committed a robbery. As the suspect exited the store, Sergeants Mason, Griffin, Maguire, Batchelder, and Officer Goff confronted the suspect, who was holding a firearm in his gloved hand. Despite their commands to stop and drop the gun, the suspect fled. Sgt. Griffin ran directly at the gun-wielding suspect and tackled him to the ground. The rest of the team jumped on the suspect, who fought to escape. Eventually, the officers took control of the suspect and Sgt. Maguire secured the firearm.

On June 8, 2016 at approximately 2:20 PM, Officer Joel Hornstein and Officer Kevin Gil were patrolling in the area of San Jose Avenue and Randall Street when they noticed flames and thick black smoke emanating from buildings on the 3300 block of Mission Street. The officers observed approximately twenty people fleeing the building where the flames were largest and the smoke was thickest. The officers then observed an elderly woman having difficulty descending the stairs of the burning building. The officers immediately ran up the building stairs into the thick black smoke and located the woman. With assistance from Ofc. Gil, Ofc. Hornstein picked her up and carried her over his shoulder down the smoke-filled staircase to exit the building. After the officers moved the elderly woman a safe distance away, they directed firefighters to the building that was the source of the flames. Ofc. Gil then used his handcuffs to secure a metal security gate to ensure the firefighters would not be trapped inside the burning building.

Bronze Medal of Valor

On April 16, 2016 at approximately 8:42 AM, Officer Anthony Yang was searching a building on the 1300 block of Pacific Ave. for a hot prowler suspect when he came face to face with a burglar who pointed a gun at him. The burglar fled from the officer to a building rooftop, where he began to jump from roof to roof with Ofc. Yang in close pursuit. The burglar eventually fell from a rooftop onto a sidewalk, where he was taken into custody.

On May 25, 2016, Officer Scott McBride, Officer Nicholas Zerga and Officer Anthony Tallerico were in search of a dangerous fugitive known to have a history of using violence and reckless actions to escape law

enforcement. At approximately 2:41 PM, the officers encountered the wanted felon in the area of Ellis and Fillmore Streets. The fugitive immediately fled and ran into a crowded shopping mall, pursued by the officers. The suspect fought the officers and pulled out a firearm from underneath his clothing. After a violent struggle, the officers arrested the suspect and took control of the loaded handgun that the suspect had used in a previous shooting incident.

On June 24, 2016 at approximately 3:23 AM, a thirty-two year-old man with a history of using extreme violence used a firearm to hijack a MUNI bus in the area of San Bruno Avenue and Dwight Street. The bus operator immediately alerted the police through a silent alarm, which prompted the response of the entire midnight watch of Bayview Station. The hijacked bus was located and stopped on the 300 block of Bayshore Avenue, where the armed suspect exited the bus. Sergeant Timothy Davis and Sergeant Joseph Kavanagh tried to talk the suspect down from his violent, agitated state using Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) tactics. During the confrontation, the suspect blurted, "I ain't afraid to be shot...I've been shot before." The suspect refused to surrender and continued to put his hands into his pockets where his gun was likely being concealed. The location of this confrontation was a safety concern because it was only a few yards away from a restaurant with vulnerable bystanders sitting in their cars. The officers kept a safe distance and maintained cover, which made containment of the gunman a challenge. The suspect began sprinting for a fence which he started to climb. Officers Lauro Baca and Colin Patino and Sergeants Davis and Kavanagh ran from their cover and caught the suspect who was still on the fence. During the struggle, the officers heard the unmistakable clank of a gun hit the ground. The suspect continued to resist arrest, which caused an officer to get injured, but eventually the suspect was subdued and taken into custody.

On April 7, 2017, Officer Warren Ng and Officer Gordon Lee were on duty in the early morning hours when they spotted a burning building on the 400 block of 23rd Avenue. The officers immediately summoned fire personnel to the location. With the fire quickly spreading and the smoke getting thicker by the moment, the officers feared that the building was not completely evacuated. Residents who were watching the scene of destruction unfold stated that the building was still occupied. Knowing the full severity of the circumstances, Officers Ng and Lee entered the burning building, alerted the remaining occupants and told them to evacuate. The officers then came upon a detached building adjacent to the fire and alerted the residents to evacuate, but the exit through the main building became inaccessible due to molten tar and embers falling from the burning roof. While searching for an alternate escape, Officer Lee found a ladder in a neighboring backyard. The officers used the ladder to help the remaining residents who were trapped next to the burning building escape unscathed.





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