



C.R.P.O.A.

California Reserve Peace Officers Association

ARPOC 2003 Awards Banquet



During ARPOC 2003 in San Diego, the California Reserve Peace Officer's Association honored a number of incredible individuals at the Annual Awards Banquet. This year's recognition began on a solemn note with a tribute to Anaheim Reserve Officer and Marine Corps Gunnery Sergeant Edward Smith who lost his life during a battle in Iraq while serving his country. Stirring musical solos were performed by Palomar College student Erin McKenna and Anaheim Reserve Officer Brad Howard with Anaheim Police Captain Steve Walker and CRPOA Director Kim Kelly offering heartfelt words in celebration of Edward Smith's life. For his selfless dedication to law enforcement and to his country Edward Smith's wife, Sandy and his three children were presented with a Medal In Memoriam.

This year's program was especially honored to have celebrated author Joseph Wambaugh host the awards presentation.

Reserve Coordinator of the Year

Deputy David Smail

Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department, San Dimas Station

For the past eleven years, Deputy David Smail has been a Reserve Coordinator for the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department. Several years ago, when the Walnut and San Dimas Stations separated their duties, Deputy Smail assisted with the transition process by organizing the reserve unit for the San Dimas Station. With over forty reserves, Deputy Smail's responsibilities include the Uniform Reserves, the San Dimas Mountain Rescue Team and the Mounted Posse Unit.

Deputy Smail has developed an extraordinary amount of expertise in the search and rescue field earning a reputation of being one of the most knowledgeable mountain rescue coordinators for the Sheriff's Department. The Mountain Rescue Team has achieved much success and recognition for their many hours of volunteer service performed during the two major destructive brush fires experienced late last year. As a result of their rapid, evacuation deployment team efforts, no fire related injuries or loss of life occurred in the fires that destroyed many structures and burned more than 55,000 total acres combined. Last year, Deputy Smail responded to nearly all the Mountain Rescue Team callout missions taking on the role of incident commander. Most of the callouts occurred during his days off or after his normal work hours. With the responsibility for the Uniform Patrol Reserves, Deputy Smail acts as the Field Training Officer for reserve recruits. In addition, he was chosen to represent the Los Angeles Sheriff's Department at the State Office of Emergency Services. The function of this unit is to coordinate statewide search and rescue operations and mutual aid requests.

Deputy Smail has consistently performed his reserve coordinator duties at the highest level possible, and he has earned the respect and admiration of his supervisors and the reserve deputy's assigned to San Dimas Sheriff's Station. It was a distinct pleasure for the California Reserve Peace Officer's Association to honor Deputy David Smail of the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department as Reserve Coordinator of the Year.

Distinguished Service

Reserve Officer Robert Ayres

Santa Ana Police Department

Robert Ayres is a Reserve Officer with the Santa Ana Police Department and has contributed over 5000 hours in his 14 years of service to the department and community. As a Level II Reserve, he provided valuable support to fulltime officers in the field enhancing officer safety and improving response time. Over the years, Reserve Ayres as earned the respect and confidence of his peers with his abilities and professionalism.

One evening in November, 2002, Robert had his skills and training tested during a not so routine vehicle stop. As Reserve Officer Ayres and his partner initiated a vehicle stop they were notified by Communications that the vehicle was stolen. A foot pursuit ensued with Ayres and his partner chasing after the driver. As the suspect was fleeing, he turned toward the officer's brandishing a weapon which he fired in their direction. Gunfire was exchanged between the suspect and the officers with the driver surrendering only after his weapon malfunctioned. The suspect was taken into custody and he was determined to be a parole violator.

Although there was an immediate threat to Reserve Ayres and his partner, Robert disregarded it in order to protect the community from a violent and dangerous felon.

The California Reserve Peace Officer's Association commended Reserve Officer Ayres of the Santa Ana Police Department for his bravery in the apprehension of an armed and dangerous felon with a Distinguished Service Award.

Distinguished Service

Reserve Deputy Gene McMillan *Kern County Sheriff's Department*

Gene McMillan began his law enforcement career as a Reserve Deputy with the Kern County Sheriff's Department in 1974. During his 29-year career, Gene has donated thousands of hours of service and was promoted several times until achieving his current rank of Reserve Commander.

During the past five and a half years, Gene has worked 20-40 hours a week locating wanted suspects. This activity requires many tedious hours researching department records for suspect information in order to locate them in the community. His tenacious efforts have been extremely effective, resulting in one thousand warrant arrests as of January 2003. This dedication and effort has gained him respect and recognition from the department and his peers.

In 2002, Gene was recognized as the Sheriff's Department's Outstanding Reserve of the year for his sacrifice and commitment to the Department and citizens of Kern County.

The California Reserve Police Officer's Association was proud to recognize Reserve Commander Gene McMillan with the Distinguished Service Award.

Distinguished Service

Reserve Chief Michael R. Leum

Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department, Crescent Valley Station

Michael R. Leum has been a Reserve Deputy for the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department Crescent Valley Station for 9 1/2 years. Mike is currently the Search & Rescue Reserve Chief for the Department and he also participates in the "Montrose Search and Rescue Team", one of the busiest Mountain Search and Rescue Teams in the Nation.

On February 28, 2003 Mike was parking his personal car at an L.A. branch office of Cathay Bank when he observed a man running from the bank with an employee in pursuit yelling, "He robbed me!" Mike had a large amount of cash to deposit so he did not pursue on foot. Instead, he followed the robber in his vehicle as he directing LAPD officers to the suspect's location via cell phone. Arriving officers chased after the man and it appeared his capture was imminent. However, a short time later, Mike saw the suspect running toward him with no officers in sight. To prevent his escape, Mike drew his off-duty weapon, confronted the suspect and subdued him until LAPD officers arrived to take custody.

Because of Reserve Deputy Mike Leum's courageous arrest as well as distinguished service during his career, the California Reserve Peace Officer's Association was pleased to present him with the Distinguished Service Award.

Meritorious Service Award

Reserve Sergeant Lester Esparza

Clovis Police Department

Lester Esparza has been with the Clovis Police Department for 9 years and is currently holds the rank of Sergeant. His is known as the reserve who donates the most hours for his department, frequently working 20 hours a week. Reserve Sergeant Esparza is currently assigned as an assistant squad sergeant and is a field training officer. Lester regularly works patrol, is a member of both the bicycle unit and SWAT teams.

His experience in the United States Air Force and Air National Guard as an instructor for combat tactics, combat arms training and maintenance and being a range master have more than qualified Lester to be the only reserve trained and assigned to the SWAT team. Lester recently returned from the war with Iraq while serving with the United States Air Force.

He was recently been recognized with a Medal of Merit by the City of Clovis for his service and contribution to the community.

The California Reserve Peace Officer's Association was honored to present Reserve Sergeant Lester Esparza with the Meritorious Service Award.

Meritorious Service Award

Reserve Officer Joseph Dean Vargas *Garden Grove Police Department*

Reserve Officer Joseph Dean Vargas has been with the Garden Grove Police Department for 12 years. After completing his initial training in patrol, he showed enthusiasm for service in other areas. He completed the required training and became a member of the very first Reserve Bicycle Patrol unit. Officer Vargas was one of several reserve officers who were trained as Background Investigator and now assists in the hiring process for his unit.

Dean has been very involved in Community Events and has utilized the bike patrol unit at festivals, parades, and other celebrations. The bicycle patrol has proven to be an effective crime fighting tool. In fact, Dean received a commendation for his law enforcement action in a densely populated apartment complex where crime was a major concern.

Over the years, Dean has received multiple commendations and letters of appreciation from his department and the community for his hard work and dedication to duty.

It was a pleasure for the California Reserve Peace Officers Association to recognize Reserve Officer Joseph Dean Vargas with the Meritorious Service Award.

Meritorious Service Award

Marc Barshay

San Jose Police Department

Reserve Lieutenant Marc Barshay has been a Reserve Officer with the San Jose Police Department since 1980. During his 23 years with the Department, he has worked a Patrol shift at least once a week and donated over 500 hours of service each year. He has risen through the ranks and currently serves as a Lieutenant supervising Level 1 reserves.

His previous assignments included training and supervising Level 2 officers, as well as participation in the Crisis Intervention Team, internal investigations, background investigations and radar traffic enforcement.

Over the years he has received 22 letters of appreciation from the community, 23 letters of commendation from the Department, and several other honors. One award recognized Marc's courage and determination in apprehending an armed and deranged suspect who had discharged a firearm while kidnapping his girlfriend. Reserve Officer Barshay pursued and caught the suspect, overpowered him after a physical struggle, and took him into custody.

In 1985, a DUI driver struck and pinned Mark between 2 cars. The impact crushed his lower leg requiring an amputation to save his life. Despite this debilitating injury, Marc persevered through intense physical therapy and resumed his reserve law enforcement career. He was awarded the Hazardous Duty Award and became a legend within the San Jose Police Department.

The California Reserve Peace Officer's Association was honored to present Reserve Lieutenant Marc Barshay with the Meritorious Service Award.

Meritorious Service Award

Alex Cuesta

National City Police Department

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Alex Cuesta, has been a Reserve with the National City Police Department for twenty-four years, and has successfully risen through the ranks and now serves as the Reserve Commander. As a commander, one of his duties involves planning and scheduling officers for special events. Despite the dwindling numbers of officers available, Reserve Commander Cuesta has been able to fill each position while maintaining morale within the unit. For the past fifteen years, he has been responsible for staffing at the Maytime Band Review, the largest parade of its type in the western United States. Nearly one hundred police volunteers are utilized from nearly a dozen agencies.

Reserve Commander Cuesta uses the teaching skills he has acquired, in a variety of areas. He ensures that the reserve training is current and within POST mandates, and takes an active role in the training of new reserve officers. On a regular basis over the last ten years, Reserve Cuesta has taught at the San Diego County Explorer Academy, and has been serving as a skills evaluator at the San Diego Sheriff's Academy.

As a member of the Department's SWAT team for the last ten years, Alex has made himself available for crisis situation callouts seven days a week, twenty-four hours a day.

Over the years, Reserve Commander Cuesta has been honored with National City Police Department Reserve Officer of the Year Award, and has been twice acknowledged by the Chamber of Commerce. Other recognition for his contributions to Law Enforcement has come from the Governor's Office as well as from Senators and Local assemblymen.

Meritorious Service Award

John Brooks

San Fernando Police Department

John Brooks holds the rank of Sergeant and is presently assigned as the Reserve Division Range master. He has completed instruction at a number of armourer courses and manages firearms training and range qualifications for the Reserve Division. Reserve Sergeant Brooks has received certificates of training for classes in

Community Relations, Conversational Spanish, and as an Emergency Medical Technician.

Over the years, he has worked a wide variety of assignments. They include the following units: Patrol, Detectives, Traffic, Subpoena and Warrants, Communications, Jail, the Explorer program, and in Special Events. To this day, Reserve Sergeant Brooks is often found working uniform patrol at Special Events.

The City of San Fernando as well as the San Fernando Police Department acknowledges John as having demonstrated outstanding performance as a Reserve Officer, with an extraordinary level of commitment to the community.

The California Reserve Peace Officer's Association recognized this exceptional level of dedication and longevity. We proudly honored Sergeant John J. Brooks, of the San Fernando Police Department, with the Meritorious Service Award.

Volunteer in Policing of the Year

H. James Price, III

Sonoma County Sheriff's Department

Jim Price has been a Volunteer in Policing with the Sonoma County Sheriff's Department for two years and is a founding member of the VIP program. Having donated more than 700 hours of valuable time, he has worked with both the Marine and the Helicopter Units. Jim has worked as a second person with the Marine Unit aboard their vessels and has been trained to operate the boats while a Deputy takes necessary enforcement or lifesaving action. Assistance to the Helicopter Unit has involved computer database construction and general maintenance projects.

Jim also undertook the substantial project of constructing a database for the VIPs which necessitated additional computer training, program writing and training of other VIPs and program administrators. The database programming for VIPs and the Helicopter Unit took over 100 hours of volunteer time. With experience as a CDF volunteer and a volunteer firefighter his assistance to the VIP program has proven to be invaluable. He also makes presentations at training meetings on a wide variety of topics. Because of the confidence the deputies have in him, Jim is regularly called upon by the deputies, who normally work alone, to accompany them when they are called out for searches. Jim received an award for outstanding county volunteer of the year from the Sonoma County Board of Supervisors in 2002.

It was a pleasure for the California Reserve Peace Officers Association to recognize H. James Price, III from the Sonoma County Sheriff's Department as Volunteer in Policing of the Year.

Reserve Officer of the Year

James Lombardi

Los Angeles Police Department

James Lombardi has served nearly 35 years of service to the Los Angeles Police Department. He has clearly demonstrated his commitment to the highest traditions of the law enforcement profession. His list of accomplishments is staggering, as is the recognition he has received for that service. Jim was named as the Reserve of the year in 2002 for both the Los Angeles Police Department and the Peace Officers of Los Angeles County.

As a reserve officer he works a patrol assignment at least once a week. Jim has worked both single officer patrol as well as two officer cars. He has worked foot beats as well. His peers and supervisors know that they can count on him to take charge at incidents where regular officers may back away from responsibility, but he never does. He has served as mentor for countless younger officers within his department, and as a valuable training resource. Most recently, when his departments reserve management structure was eliminated in a budget squeeze Jim put together a reserve management structure, appointed incumbents to the various positions created, and now assumes much of the responsibility for oversight of the reserve program. In addition to these efforts on behalf of his department, for the past 28 years Jim has served as a volunteer firefighter in his community. He is also a member of the California State College Chancellor's Public Safety Advisory Committee, and the Law and Legislative Committee of the California Peace Officers Association.

In this capacity he has both written and reviewed pending legislation of interest to peace officers in general and reserve officers in particular. Jim has become a highly respected member of the law enforcement legislative advocacy community, and as such is a valuable resource to CRPOA.

By one count, he is responsible for no less than 32 sections of California law affecting reserve police officers. This is more than some members of the legislature have

authored during their tenure in Sacramento. Just some of the laws which he has seen signed into law are the following.

1. Reserve officers injured in the line of duty are now entitled to workers compensation benefits measured at their outside earnings, or the highest rate allowed under state law.
2. Heirs of reserve killed in the line of duty are entitled to scholarship funds.
3. Reserves are considered employees for purposes of litigation defense.
4. Reserves can enforce alcoholic beverage control laws and fire control regulations, not previously allowed.
5. Reserves are protected against auto insurance increases, are exempt from reporting on-duty traffic collisions, and cannot be denied auto insurance because of an on-duty traffic collision.
6. Reserves can now operate emergency vehicles with "blue lights" displayed, formerly limited to regular officers.
7. Attempted murder of a reserve peace officer now constitutes a "special circumstance" in aggravation of the crime of attempt murder.
8. Reserves can now have CCW permits issued by their employing agency, even if living in another jurisdiction.
9. In 1994, with only one day remaining for bill filing in Sacramento, he was able to kill a bill requiring reserves to work only with regular officers, and replace that with a measure improving training for reserve officers.
10. Very recently a bill was approved by both houses of the legislature, and sent to the Governor for signature, when he has time, allowing reserve officers to enforce 9 sections of the Vehicle Code, previously limited to "full-time paid peace officers." This is not easy business, but with his perseverance the measure is now sitting on the Governor's desk awaiting signature.

For all of these achievements, and the time taken away from his wife of 39 years, his children and grandchildren, the California Reserve Peace Officer's Association was proud to award Jim Lombardi of the Los Angeles Police Department as the 2003 Reserve Officer of the Year award.