

Shelby police host annual awards ceremony

BY SARAH WOJCIK

swojcik@candgnews.com

SHELBY TOWNSHIP — On March 30, the Shelby Township Police Department honored many of its members and several residents for quick thinking, heroic actions and professionalism.

“This is a very exciting day for many of our officers,” Police Chief Robert Shelide said during the annual awards ceremony at the township municipal building. “Our heroes are acknowledged on this day.”

Shelide said the decision-making process about who would receive which award — especially the officer, command officer and non-sworn employee of the year — was difficult for him and Deputy Chief Mark Coil because many department members were very

deserving.

Leslie Heisler won the 2015 Police Officer of the Year award for her work establishing the Police Department’s presence on social media. The department’s Facebook page especially took off, and Shelide said residents are always coming into the building with gifts and food to show their appreciation.

“Now these people have a channel to contact us and touch us and reach out,” he said. “Leslie keeps them updated on everything that goes on in the Police Department on a daily basis. She took a vision of mine and took it to the next level. The results are astounding.”

Shelide also praised Heisler’s efforts as the department’s Drug Abuse Resistance Education (DARE) officer, and he highlight-

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ed an instance in which she established a healing connection with a girl who had lost her baby sister in a car accident.

“(Receiving the Officer of the Year award) took me by total surprise, and it was an amazing honor,” Heisler said. “There’re so many people that do so much stuff around here. The chief is so into being in touch and transparent, and we’re lucky to have him here because he’s really made things happen that should’ve happened 10 years ago.”

Sgt. Gregory Neubacher won the 2015 Command Officer of the Year award not for any particular act, but for his ongoing professionalism, high moral character and exemplary behavior in all areas of police supervision, Shelide said.

Administrative Secretary Marian Carmignani won the 2015 Non-Sworn Employee of the Year award for her attention to detail and work ethic, as well as her coordination of training, ceremonies and programs.

“Marian is a tremendous asset in the day-to-day operation of the department,” Shelide said. “I’ve never seen anyone in my life and 30 years on the job work like this

woman does. In any profession, she would have been a superstar.”

Shelide presented Heisler, Neubacher and Carmignani with a Chief’s Coin of Excellence award. He said he had the coins commissioned and gives them out sparingly for exceptional performance.

The department gave out a total of six civilian awards, eight letters of commendation, three communication technician letters of commendation, five unit meritorious awards, 11 unit letters of commendation, one meritorious award, two commendation awards, eight unit meritorious citations and two second-degree lifesaving awards.

- Energeta Jenna Quinn received a civilian award for ensuring the safety of a child she observed crossing a congested portion of 23 Mile Road alone at dusk.

- Michael Carver received a civilian hero award for calling 911 and waking up a couple he knew to be hearing impaired when he noticed smoke coming from their front porch area on his way to work.

- Jennifer and Bryan Wright received a civilian award for assisting an elderly man with dementia who was distraught and found himself in their backyard. The couple took the man into their home and gave him fluids and emotional support until EMS and police arrived.

- Officer Kevin Bailey received a letter of commendation for tracking down, arresting and eliciting a confession from a credit card fraud suspect. Bailey also recovered the stolen credit cards and merchandise.

- Communication technicians Richard Janness and Victoria Vicari received a comm-tech letter of recommendation for dispatching officers to a home that was on fire. Officers Bradley Ferguson, Jason Hansen, Paul Fox, Albert O’Neal IV and Dennis Washburn received a unit meritorious award for extinguishing the fire and getting a woman with multiple sclerosis to safety.

- Sgt. Troy Tichenell and detectives Robert Heisler and Ronald Lehman received a unit letter of commendation for investigating a suspected drug trafficker and recovering more than 35 pounds of marijuana and more than \$10,000 in cash and jewelry.

- Officer Robert Veprauskas received a letter of commendation for observing a suspect stealing \$1,000-\$2,500 in tires from Discount Tire and apprehending him.

- Officer Terrance Hogan received a meritorious award, and Sgt. Gregory Neubacher and officer Brian Bunch received a commendation award for diffusing a tense situation in which a gun owner aimed a loaded handgun at Neubacher. Hogan slapped the gun out of the suspect’s hand, tackled him and took him into custody.

- Lt. William Wiley received a letter of commendation for locating a reckless driver at an apartment complex who matched the description of a suspect in a nearby strong-

arm robbery. Wiley detained the suspect after a traffic stop and obtained the location of the stolen property.

- Lt. Jason Schmittler, Sgt. Beth Walth, officer Leslie Heisler and detectives James Malczewski, Charles Johnson, Scott Simpson, Ronald Weiss and Robert Heisler received a unit meritorious citation for working with multiple law enforcement agencies to shut down a narcotics operation. They arrested four individuals and seized 12 pounds and 200 jars of marijuana, 993 edible narcotics, four vehicles, several guns and more than \$100,000 in assets.

- Officers Chris Killop and Daniel Kammerzell received a second-degree lifesaving award for retrieving a combatant subject from a second-story apartment window after the subject’s family reported that they feared he might commit suicide. They detained him and transported him to a medical facility for evaluation.

- Victoria Vicari received a comm-tech letter of commendation for dispatching police to the location of an armed robbery, despite being given erroneous information. She calmly relayed critical information that enabled officers to take the suspect into custody.

- While off duty, Victoria Vicari received a civilian award for her actions to help a woman in duress who appeared to be having a medical emergency in her vehicle in a parking lot on Hall Road. Vicari helped the woman turn her car off, called her husband and waited with her until an ambulance arrived.

- Sgt. David Taylor and officers Brian Bunch and David Treworgy received a unit letter of commendation, and fleet coordinator Ronald Mix received a civilian award, for their efforts to save a dog that had fallen through the ice on a retention pond by forming a human chain.

- Victoria Vicari and Richard Janness received a comm-tech letter of commendation, and Lt. William Wylie, Sgt. Gregory Neubacher and officers Brian Bunch, Scott Phelps, Mark Benedettini, Bradley Ferguson, Paul Fox and Jason Hansen received a unit letter of commendation for their efforts during an armed robbery at Subway on Hall Road. Police arrested the suspect and obtained confessions to the robbery along with a bank robbery the previous week.