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Missouri Medal of Valor Awarded to David Crank

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Submitted by Dee Loflin, SMT Manager/Editor

State's highest public safety award is reserved for officers who bravely risk their own lives to protect their fellow Missourians

Jefferson City, Missouri - In a ceremony today at the State Capitol, Gov. Jay Nixon awarded the Missouri Medal of Valor to nine public safety officers from across the state for their exceptional bravery and heroism in efforts to save lives

and protect the public during 2012. The officers represent Missouri's fire service, a rural sheriff's department, urban and suburban police agencies, and the Missouri State Highway Patrol. They responded to a variety of challenges and threats: rescuing people from burning buildings and vehicles, and stopping deadly threats posed to others by armed criminals.

"These nine brave men and women represent the highest ideal of the commitment of Missouri's public safety officers to public service," Gov. Nixon said. "The circumstances of each heroic, life-saving act were different, but in every instance the officers had to take swift, decisive and courageous action that was focused entirely on protecting the public. They faced dangerous gunmen, went into burning buildings and vehicles, and in one instance even mustered the herculean strength to raise an SUV off a motorist who was perilously close to dying."

Family members and the officers' colleagues were on hand for the presentation of Missouri's highest public safety award during a ceremony in the Governor's office in the Capitol. Gov. Nixon was joined at the ceremony by Department of Public Safety Director Jerry Lee.

David W. Crank, Missouri State Highway Patrol – On the night of March 10, 2012, Trooper Crank initiated a traffic stop of an SUV on I-55 in **New Madrid County**. There was a strong odor of raw marijuana in the SUV, which had four occupants. The driver was cooperative and exited the vehicle and accompanied Crank to his patrol car.

Crank returned to the SUV to obtain IDs from the three passengers, but they denied having IDs. Crank then requested backup. When Corporal Jeremy Stewart arrived, he and Crank approached the SUV and requested the passengers exit the vehicle one at a time. One did so. The passenger in the front passenger seat refused to comply and immediately locked the door. Crank saw the front seat passenger reach between the seat and center console. Crank alerted Stewart and drew his service weapon. Stewart opened the driver's side door and the passenger fired a single shot, striking Stewart in the neck. To protect Corporal Stewart and himself, Trooper Crank fired repeatedly at the passenger, killing the gunman. On a dark highway, in a perilous situation, Trooper Crank acted swiftly to eliminate a deadly threat and protect his wounded colleague. Corporal Stewart underwent surgery, made a full recovery and returned to duty.

“Each of these exceptional public safety officers represents the highest ideal of dedicated public service and courage under life-or-death conditions,” Gov. Nixon said. “They not only proved their willingness to put their own lives in jeopardy to protect and save others, they considered it part of their duty. I am pleased to present them with this high honor on behalf of the people of Missouri.”

About the Medal of Valor

The Medal of Valor was first awarded in 2008 and is bestowed annually based on recommendations submitted by the Medal of Valor Review Board. Recipients must serve a public agency, with or without compensation, as a firefighter, law enforcement officer or emergency personnel. The nominating form states the Medal of Valor is awarded "to a public safety officer who has exhibited exceptional courage, extraordinary decisiveness and presence of mind, and unusual swiftness of action, regardless of his or her own personal safety, in the attempt to save or protect human life."

Nominations are now open for acts performed during 2013 and must be received by March 31, 2014. The nominating form is available on the Missouri Department of Public Safety Web site at
<http://www.dps.mo.gov/documents/MedalofValorForm.pdf>.

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