

Behind the Badge: About the new radio system

Published: Monday, July 26, 2010 11:18 AM CDT

I have a couple of quick items that I would like to cover; and even though there are only two items, they are very important.

The first is the new 800 mg hertz radio system. I want to let everyone know that this is by far the best radio system the Council Bluffs Police Department has ever had available to its officers.

The officers on the street have confidence in the system and know it's going to work when needed. The digital sound quality is great and really benefits the officers. The features of this system assist the officers daily in the performance of their duties.

This project was started several years ago under Chief Keith Mehlin and Capt. Jerry Roth. They worked with several people from the county to ensure that the needs of the public safety agencies were met.

As this project grew, Sheriff Jeff Danker had the foresight to assign Lt. John Reynolds with the sheriff's department as project coordinator. This is when the project took shape and results were evident. Reynolds' leadership and coordination skills became apparent as he became the bridge between the different public safety groups throughout the county.

This was not an easy task as several entities were involved. Pottawattamie County is a large county with several police and fire departments. His sole motivation was to ensure that Pottawattamie County, including the city of Council Bluffs, had true radio operability. I believe this, too, was the intent of the political figures behind this project.

This system allows the officer on the street to communicate in real time with others agencies throughout the metro area.

We also have the option to communicate with all the public safety agencies and other departments that show up at a major scene. We will be able to communicate with other city or county departments that respond to emergency situations. In short, we will operate more efficiently thanks to the equipment that was purchased. We have entered a new era of public safety communication. I want to personally thank every individual who has made this possible.

The second item I need to tell you about is a police officer who will receive the Department Life Saving Medal. Officer Jackie Loghry responded to a call in which he was instrumental in saving the life of an individual who needed help.

Lt. Robert Brietzke stated, "Officer Jackie Loghry was faced with a life-threatening situation that, because of his professionalism, calm demeanor and compassion for another person, resulted in the saving of that person's life."

Earlier this summer, Loghry was dispatched to the Interstate-29 overpass over North 25th Street when the 9-1-1 Center received a report at approximately 11 p.m. of a woman sitting on the overpass railing. When Loghry arrived, the woman threatened to jump to the pavement below. Loghry was able to talk the woman into climbing down.

I don't know if the woman would have been killed, but she certainly would have been seriously injured had she jumped. It was a dangerous situation with all the traffic on the interstate.

The purpose of our general order is to establish recognition of exemplary and meritorious conduct by officers of the Council Bluffs Police Department in the line of duty. The policy of this department, when deemed appropriate, is to acknowledge an officer's performance in excess of the normal demands of police service, where the officer was fully aware of an imminent threat to his or her personal safety or another person.

The "Police Lifesaving Medal" is awarded to members of the department who rescue or endeavor to rescue any person from drowning, fire or hazardous material incident, or other extremely dangerous situations.

Command staff informed Officer Loghry that he met the criteria set forth in our policy and will receive the award.

These awards are not given lightly as they signify the best of the best. Every day police officers of this department make decisions and do things that affect the lives of individuals.

Officer Loghry will be publicly recognized in May of 2011 during our memorial service. He will be awarded this medal at a shift briefing on Aug. 9.

Chief R. O'Donnell