

TMYK Column – Honoring our fallen officers

Every day, thousands of men and women in blue kiss their families goodbye knowing it could be the last time. They faithfully protect their communities, even in the face of radical Democrat calls to “Defund the Police.”

This National Police Week, I want to honor some of our Alabama law enforcement who did not make it home by sharing their stories of heroism.

Last year, Officer Garrett Crumby and Officer Albert Morrin of the Huntsville Police Department were shot by a suspect when responding to a domestic violence attack on a woman and her two young children. Officer Crumby passed away and Officer Morrin faced critical injuries. Crumby had been an officer for over a decade, was known for his generous spirit, and wanted to become an investigator with the Financial Crimes Unit.

In 2006, Officer Mary Freeman Smith of the Fairfield Police Department was shot and killed while investigating a suspicious vehicle. She had served the Birmingham area for 21 years. In January 2004, Smith was honored as an officer of the month for talking a suicidal woman into admitting herself to the hospital.

That same year, Officer Keith Edwin Houts with the Montgomery Police Department was shot while making a traffic stop and passed away two days later. Officer Houts was a veteran who had served with the Montgomery Police Department for two years. While on active duty in Kuwait, Houts was recognized for developing a process to make armored convoy vehicles safer. This process remains in use today.

Fifteen years ago, Headland lost one of their own when Officer William Dexter Hammond responded to an officer down call. He was shot and killed when he arrived to help a Henry County Sheriff's Deputy who had been shot. Officer Hammond had been serving his community for sixteen years and operated Hammond's Tae Kwon Do in Eufaula in his spare time.

In 1994, Greenville Officer Gary Wayne Heath, who had been serving on the force for 10 months, was shot and killed while stopping at the Amoco station at the intersection of Highway 10 West and Interstate 65 to check on the store clerk. Officer Heath had been a high school football star for the Greenville Academy Tornados, nicknamed “Deep Freeze.”

Officer John Drew Seifert and Officer Charles Rafael Alcuri of the Ozark Police Department were shot and killed in 1987 when responding to a dispute between two neighbors. Officer Alcuri was survived by his wife and children. Officer Seifert's grandson says his “Paw” remains a guiding force in his life.

These heroes are some of the 627 law enforcement officers in Alabama who have given their lives to protect their communities. I hope that you will join me in praying for their

loved ones, and praying for our law enforcement and their families as they protect us each day.

If you need help from my office with the VA, IRS, or another federal agency, or if we can help you with a government service like processing a passport request, I hope you will reach out to us. We've resolved over 4,800 cases since I took office in 2021. Visit one of my offices in Wetumpka, Dothan, Andalusia, Troy, or Washington, call us at 334-478-6330, or visit barrymoore.house.gov to learn how we can help.