

CAPITAL MARCH 6 2007

Deputies honored at ceremony

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Warrant sweeps aren't very sexy. Tracking down criminals wanted for failing to appear in court doesn't grab many headlines.

But recognizing how integral Lance Cpl. Michael C. Harris has been to serving warrants in Anne Arundel County — working hard and organizing sweeps — the Sheriff's Office decided to honor him Wednesday night as their deputy of the year.

"It's the way he goes about his job," said Deputy Harry L. Neisser, spokesman for the Sheriff's Office. "It's because of his hard work day in and day out."

Dozens of people gathered at The Rose Restaurant in Linthicum for the sheriff's department annual award ceremony.

Sheriff Ron Bateman handed out 11 awards, recognizing individual deputies and entire units for their hard work and dedication.

"I'm proud of all of the men and women of the Anne Arundel County Sheriff's Office for all of their dedication and hard work," Sheriff Bateman said through a spokesman. "These awards are letting them know how proud I am."

Deputy Sean D. Hill received the department's Medal of Honor.

Deputy Neisser said the deputy arrested two men Nov. 11 as they fled an armed robbery at the Marshall's in Parole.

He said Deputy Hill had just dropped off a prisoner at the Jennifer Road Detention Center when he heard about the robbery. He went over to help county police and ended up spotting the men running out the back and onto Medical Parkway.

Unable to get through all of the radio traffic, he ultimately pinned the two men down in the back of a pickup truck with his gun and signaled a passing police car with his flashlight.

Sheriff Bateman also recognized Deputy Brian Newcomer with the department's Bronze Star for saving a suicidal woman he came across while transporting a prisoner to jail.

Deputy Neisser said the deputy was transporting a prisoner on Interstate 97 July 20 when he noticed an SUV driving erratically. Deputy Newcomer pulled the vehicle over and found the driver bleeding from her wrists and speaking incoherently.

When the deputy called for backup, the woman drove off. Then she stopped in the middle of the road, got out and tried to run into northbound traffic.

Deputy Newcomer grabbed at the woman, leading the driver to start biting, scratching and hitting him. Deputy Neisser said Deputy Newcomer eventually handcuffed the driver and got her out of the road.

"You correctly weighed and evaluated the danger to this individual and to the motorists traveling on the highway that day," Sheriff Bateman said in a letter to Deputy Newcomer informing him he was getting the Bronze Star.

Five units inside the Sheriff Department received unit citations. Warrant Team Three, the K-9 unit, the Security Bureau, the Civil Process and the Domestic Violence units were honored for their continued hard work despite staffing shortages and increased workloads.