

Law Enforcement Memorial Day pays tribute to 4 - Patriot-News, The (Harrisburg, PA) - May 7, 2019 - page 010

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State leaders and family members honored the service Monday of a deputy U.S. marshal killed during a shoot-out that followed a police raid in Harrisburg last January.

Deputy Marshal Christopher Hill and two other Pennsylvania law enforcement officers who died while on duty were remembered during the Pennsylvania Fraternal Order of Police's 26th Annual Law Enforcement Memorial Day Service at The Forum.

Other officers honored during Monday's ceremony were:

York City Officer Alex Sable, 38, a SWAT team member who suffered a fatal heart attack during a water rescue training exercise in Dundalk, Maryland last May 6.

New Castle Detective Sgt. Brian Cuscino, 44, who suffered a fatal heart attack last April 19 while in training for a special response team there.

Philadelphia Police Officer Raymond Diaz Jr., who died Sept. 9, 2016, as a result of complications from injuries sustained when his patrol car was struck by another vehicle while Diaz was responding to a burglary. Diaz was 47.

Survivors of the fallen officers received a "medal of ultimate sacrifice" from Gov. Tom Wolf, and were invited to place flowers representing their slain family member on the FOP's memorial wreath.

In his remarks, Wolf said the service is a good time to pay tribute to all police officers serving in Pennsylvania.

"To serve the public is to face a fear of the unknown each day. You don't know what will happen when you knock on the door with a warrant, or pull over an errant driver during a traffic stop, or respond to a domestic violence call," the governor said.

"It takes a unique bravery to run toward danger, and I thank you from the bottom of my heart for having the bravery to do this job. And, for your strength to carry on when your brothers and sisters fall into harm's way."

Les Neri, president of the State Lodge of the Fraternal Order of Police, said the memorial ceremony is an important show of support for police officers and those who love them.

"We take pride in honoring the lives of these courageous men who were dedicated to making our citizens safe," Neri said. "The individuals we're honoring today as heroes, their families are going to

miss them as husbands, fathers, sons, brothers, nephews, and that stays with them every day.”

Hill, 45 years old and a York resident, was killed during a multi-agency raid to arrest Shayla L. Towles Pierce at a home in the 1800 block of Mulberry Street.

He was hit by friendly fire after Pierce’s boyfriend, **Kevin Sturgis**, surprised officers who were taking Pierce into custody by opening fire from the second floor of the home. Members of the task force returned fire, and bullets penetrated an interior wall, striking Hill, who was clearing a back room.

Hill was wearing a bullet-proof vest, but the bullet hit a gap near his armhole and penetrated his chest.

A married, father of two, Hill was a U.S. Army veteran and had served with the U.S. Marshal’s Service for 11 years.

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