

## 2014 Valor Awards — Officer Down

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On Wednesday, February 27, Officer Frank Powers responded to a call for a report of a disorderly subject at a local business. He arrived at the scene and spoke with the caller who told Officer Powers that a male subject had been in her store two times the day before without making a purchase. She said the subject made her uncomfortable and stood so close to her that she could feel his breath on her neck. The caller described the subject as a Middle Eastern man in his late 20s, approximately 5'6" with short black hair. She added that she had seen the same subject driving a yellow cab #168 earlier that day. As Officer Powers was gathering this information from the caller, she pointed to a cab on the street and said, "There he is, that's him."

Officer Powers quickly ran out of the business in an attempt to stop the cab. He yelled at the driver to pull over to the side of the road. Instead, the driver drove away. Officer Powers got into his police cruiser in an attempt to follow the cab. However, by the time he started driving the cab had disappeared from view. Officer Powers broadcast a lookout stating that he had a suspicious person he wanted to speak with.

Upon hearing this lookout, Officer Peter Laboy advised over the radio that he was in the area and spotted the cab. He advised that he was initiating a traffic stop. Just minutes later a dispatcher came over the radio and told Officer Powers to respond to the intersection of South Royal and Wilkes Streets for trouble unknown, possibly involving the same yellow cab. Officer Powers was moments from the location. He arrived on the scene and was met by a mailman waving his arms frantically and pointing west on Wilkes Street. Officer Powers followed the mailman's direction and went to the intersection of South St. Asaph and Wilkes Streets. Here, he discovered a police motorcycle lying in the middle of the intersection. Officer Laboy lay on his back next to the motorcycle. Officer Powers immediately broadcast that there was an officer down. He quickly approached Officer Laboy and attempted to ask him what happened. Officer Laboy was unresponsive and bleeding profusely from his head. Realizing his injury was critical, Officer Powers flagged down Alexandria Fire Engine 201, who just happened to be driving in the area on South St. Asaph Street.

Upon hearing the fire engine arrive, Officer Laboy attempted to roll over and sit up. The crew of Engine 201 immediately knew that Officer Laboy's blood loss was extensive. They rushed to him and stabilized his head and neck while attempting to keep him calm. Due to the obvious extent of his injuries and the lack of knowledge surrounding their circumstances, a medical helicopter was requested to transport Officer Laboy to a trauma center and additional Fire Department resources were requested.

With Officer Laboy's head and neck stabilized, the crew from Engine 201 quickly assessed his injuries. They found a large open wound to the front of his head. Normal care would call for his motorcycle helmet to be left on due to possible spinal damage. However, Engine 201's crew recognized the life-threatening extent of the head wound and immediately removed the helmet and dressed the wound while maintaining stabilization and providing oxygen. Medic 202, Medic 205 and other Fire Department personnel arrived and began assisting. The medics and firefighters

worked together to protect Officer Laboy's airway and sedate him to prevent further injury and prepare him for the helicopter ride.

While rescue workers continued their efforts to save Officer Laboy's life, transmissions on the radio indicated that the cab had been located and was traveling at a high rate of speed on South Washington Street into Fairfax County. Officers were authorized to pursue the cab as witnesses had indicated that the driver had possibly struck Officer Laboy's motorcycle resulting in his injuries.

Upon hearing these transmissions, Officer Kammy Stern moved in the direction of the pursuit. She was familiar with the area of Fairfax County. As she reached the area of Fort Hunt, Officer Stern realized the cab was headed directly towards her. She immediately did a U-turn and as the cab passed by she activated her emergency lights and sirens and became the lead vehicle in the pursuit. The cab driver was driving recklessly at a high rate of speed. He ran a red light, swerving to avoid oncoming traffic. Officer Stern slowed her vehicle to ensure it was safe to enter into the intersection and advised over the radio that she had the cab in sight. A Fairfax County police cruiser joined Officer Stern at the front of the pursuit and took over as lead vehicle. Suddenly, the cab crashed into another vehicle and then into a guardrail where it came to a stop.

Sergeant Daniel Pang, Officer Jon Hartle, Officer Mark Yawornicky and Officer Stern ran towards the cab. They grabbed the suspect, who continued to struggle. Working together, the officers were able to gain control and arrest the driver.

Officer Laboy was flown to Medstar Washington Hospital Center on a U.S. Park Police helicopter, with a medic from Alexandria and a flight medic on board. At the trauma center, extraordinary team of doctors and nurses worked tirelessly to save Officer Laboy's life. The fact that Officer Laboy is alive today is nothing short of a miracle.

While officers initially believed they were dealing with a felonious hit and run accident, it was later discovered that Officer Laboy had been shot in the head. The motive for this shooting is unknown. What we do know is this: Officer Laboy spotted a taxi driver and cab matching the description Officer Powers had broadcast. When he attempted to initiate a traffic stop, the driver opened fire shooting Officer Laboy in the head.

The driver then led police on a high speed chase before he was apprehended and taken into custody. The suspect has been charged with the Malicious Wounding of a Police Officer. He is currently awaiting trial.

Although Officer Laboy was wearing his motor helmet, the bullet struck him in the temple, pierced his skull and penetrated the portion of the brain that controls speech and motor skills.

Officer Laboy has endured a long recovery, including intense therapy.

There were numerous officers, detectives and surrounding agencies involved in the effort to save Officer Laboy's life and, ultimately, apprehend the suspect. Several are especially deserving of recognition.

- Officer Peter Laboy is awarded a Gold Medal. Officer Laboy responded to and located the vehicle involved in a suspicious event. He sustained critical injuries while attempting to make a traffic stop.
- Officer Frank Powers with is awarded a Certificate of Valor. Officer Powers communicated a lookout for the cab driver and was the first one on the scene of Officer Laboy's incident. He recognized the injuries he observed were critical. He knew not to move Officer Laboy to avoid increasing the risk of further injury. His quick thinking to flag down a passing fire engine helped save Officer Laboy's life.
- Captain Philip Perry, Firefighters Christopher Smith, Dale Barr and Timothy Curley, who are all Firefighters of Engine 201, began live saving measures on Officer Laboy and all are awarded Life Saving Awards.
- Medics Fredrick Koerner Jr., Michael Kohrt, Tracy Earlenbaugh, Jason Cage, Robert Honaker, who provided advanced life-saving care, are awarded Life Saving Awards. Without their quick actions, Officer Laboy may not have survived.
- Fairfax County Police Sergeant Pang and Officers Yawornicky and Hartle, and Alexandria Police Officer Kammy Stern are awarded Silver Medals. These officers apprehended a dangerous suspect, identified at the location of the arrest as Kashif Bashir, in a difficult situation. Their actions prohibited the suspect from endangering additional lives.
- United States Park Police Officer Sergeant Kevin Chittick is awarded a Bronze Medal. Sergeant Chittick piloted the helicopter transporting Officer Laboy. His skills allowed the medic helicopter to land at Lyles Crouch Elementary, which is not an approved landing site. His determination to land as close to Officer Laboy as possible saved precious time and prevented Officer Laboy from having to be moved further.
- United States Park Police Medic Sergeant Tim Ryan and U.S. Secret Service Agent Jennifer Anderson are awarded Certificates of Valor. Both individuals were instrumental in providing support while transporting Officer Laboy by helicopter to Medstar Washington Hospital Center.



Peter Laboy



Frank Powers



Philip Perry



Christopher Smith



Dale Barr



Timothy Curley



Fredrick Koerner Jr.



Michael Kohrt



Tracy Earlenbaugh



Jason Cage



Robert Honaker



Sergeant Pang



Officer Yawornicky



Officer Hartle



Kammy Stern



Tim Ryan