



PALM BAY POLICE DEPARTMENT

NEWS RELEASE

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CRISIS NEGOTIATION TEAM RECOGNIZED AS FLORIDA'S TEAM OF THE YEAR

(Palm Bay)—The Florida Association of Hostage Negotiators (FAHN) awarded PBPD's Crisis Negotiation Team (CNT) its top honor on Thursday, recognizing it as Florida's 2013 Team of the Year. The award was presented at the FAHN's annual conference which was held this week in Cocoa Beach. Critical Incident Commander Capt. Nelson Moya, CNT Team Leader Lt. Jim Richmond and CNT Officers CJ Woronka and Mike Roberts presented details of how they worked jointly with patrol units, SWAT personnel and more than half a dozen other responding agencies to peacefully resolve a situation where a suspect who shot at police officers and wounded one, surrendered after a 7-hour standoff. "It was truly a team effort that demonstrated the importance a unified response during a crisis," said Lt. Jim Richmond who was the lead negotiator in the incident. "Our first priority is always a peaceful resolution."

On July 14, 2012 Officers James Bearden and Shane Carroll responded to 1789 Seagrape St to arrest a suspect wanted for aggravated assault. The day earlier the suspect, identified as Mark Clark, (DOB 07/02/1957), was threatening his family and any law enforcement officer who intervened. When the two officers arrived they located the suspect outside the home in the porch area. After a brief verbal exchange, the suspect went inside and immediately began shooting at the officers. The officers retreated, sought cover and continued their attempts to subdue the active shooter. Officer Bearden was treated and released from the hospital after being shot in the jaw. Officer Carroll was also injured during a fall while he sought cover, but the injury was not serious. The SWAT team responded along with the CNT. Over the course of approximately 7-hours, the suspect was convinced to surrender four times but changed his mind. The negotiator continued talking with him and ultimately convinced the suspect to exit the residence a fifth time where he ultimately surrendered without additional violence.

“We are so proud of the entire team for their response in this critical incident which was magnified by the fact that one of our officers was shot,” said Chief Doug Muldoon. “Everyone who responded that day demonstrated great patience, professionalism and dedication to the overall safety of the public during this crisis. Our CNT deserves this recognition.”

The CNT began in 1989 and currently has 12 members. The team regularly trains for critical incidents involving hostage situations, barricaded suspects, suicidal individuals and other incidents that require a trained negotiator. The team works closely with the SWAT team and is available to respond whenever needed.

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