



CITY OF OAK FOREST

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Oak Forest Police Department

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Officer Paul Kocek #173
Oak Forest Police Department
15440 South Central Avenue
Oak Forest, IL 60452

November 4, 2011

LETTER OF APPRECIATION

Officer Kocek,

Sgt. D'Ambrosio advised me of outstanding police work done by you in reference to a burglary on Diane Ct. on October 25, 2011. According to Sgt. D'Ambrosio:


Officer Kocek had been on an unrelated assignment, but made himself available to patrol after being notified of the need of a K9. After it was determined that the suspect was not in the attic, Officer Kocek and K9 Pitt were directed to the basement crawl space to conduct a search. This area was only approximately 3 feet in height and boxes and other items created "tunnels". A search of the crawl space by officers would have been extremely dangerous. Immediately upon Pitt's entry to the basement, his actions were evident. Even to the non K9 handler officers. His attention was clearly drawn to the crawl space as indicated by his body language and barking. As the front portion of the crawl space was visible, it was likely that a suspect would be barricaded behind the boxes and other items in the rear portion of the large area (the crawl space was approximately ½ the size of the residence.

Although it was his first encounter of an incident of this nature (outside of training), officer Kocek correctly followed case law, national K9 standards, and department policy by exercising restraint and seeking a non injurious outcome. He gave three warnings to the suspect even though it was unknown at this time if a suspect was actually present. After the third warning, the suspect verbally indicated that he was in the crawl space and that he would come out. Due to the K9's presence, and Officer Kocek's proficient handling, officers were able to develop a plan to safely apprehend the suspect while he crawled out from the boxes.

The actions of the officers on scene brought a potentially violent incident to an end quickly and peacefully. As with all domestic violence situations, the above described incident was serious in nature.

A Letter of Appreciation is given to an individual for the performance of an act that brings credit upon him and the entire Department. Sgt. D'Ambrosio advised that you displayed a high level of professionalism and your actions directly lead to the apprehension of a domestic abuser/burglary suspect.

I want to congratulate you on outstanding law enforcement services.


Gregory J. Anderson
Chief of Police