

The last couple months have been quite eventful for the Pima County Sheriff's Department, as you have undoubtedly heard. Beginning with the shooting at the Safeway that killed six people and injured several others, including Congresswoman Gabrielle Giffords, and ending with the tragic helicopter crash Northwest of Tucson that killed pilot Loren Leonberger, January was one of the toughest months this Department has ever had to endure. Out of disaster and heartache, however, came a collective uplifting of the Tucson community toward those in need. I felt very proud to be a part of an organization with such professional and dedicated employees that truly shined when they were tested to their limits. From the deputies who provided life-saving first aid to the shooting victims, to the Sergeant who ran up mountains to reach the downed helicopter, individuals in this Department proved that they truly care about this community and will do everything they can to help others.



It is truly an honor to be associated with the men and women of this Department, to include all of you who volunteer your time and talent in an effort to make the community of Green Valley a better place. We have welcomed ten new members into the SAV academy that started a couple weeks ago. These folks are already knee-deep in the "nifty fifty" quizzes and have participated in some ride-alongs and hands on experiences in the classroom. Graduation is March 18, and it is hard to believe how quickly the time will fly from now until then. Please plan to attend the graduation ceremony and show support for your new co-workers and the training staff who work so hard to organize and provide such high-quality training.

I have to thank all of those who mobilized in the cold and dark hours of February 2 and 3 when the lights went out in Green Valley and many homes and businesses were without heat or electricity. A plan was set in motion to provide shelter for those who had no place to go, and members of the ERT were made to direct traffic in below-freezing temperatures at intersections with no lights. This type of response is so rare in our part of the country, and the willingness to respond as volunteers in such harsh conditions is a testament to those who braved the elements. I think back to doing Code 9s in the height of summer. While you may have a preference of hot versus cold, one thing is for certain. Tucson/Green Valley is a land of extremes, and yet there is never a shortage of people willing to face those extremes to get the job done.

I am looking forward to seeing all of you at the annual dinner being held on March 5 at the Desert Diamond Casino. The evening promises to be filled with good food and several great performances by your friends and co workers. Many thanks to Lou Sampson, Wilma Ludwig, Joanne Crouch and all those who are working so hard to make this event such a success. I just cannot wait to see what they have come up with!

Finally, if you have a moment and want to take a ride to Tucson on Thursday, February 24, you are all invited to the Deputy of the Quarter ceremony at 1400 hours at the Sheriff's Administration Building. Deputy Gary Halkowitz and Deputy Jonathon Rupp are being honored as the Patrol Division Deputies of the Quarter for their amazing work in building, and making a success of, the Green Valley Directed Patrol Unit. If you do not know Gary and Jonathon, this is a great opportunity to get to know them, and other commissioned members of the organization. Once again, thank you for everything you have done over the last several months. I look forward to many positive things for this organization, and community, in the rest of 2011.