

http://www.enidnews.com/oklahoma/news/barwick-honored-with-congressional-badger-of-bravery/article_238f066b-97ce-5a3c-9664-e11d881029ec.html

EDITOR'S PICK TOPICAL ENTERPRISE TOP STORY

Barwick honored with Congressional Badge of Bravery

By James Neal | Staff Writer Apr 11, 2017



The State and Local Law Enforcement Congressional Badge of Bravery was awarded posthumously to former Pond Creek Police Chief Tim Barwick on Monday. (James Neal / Enid News & Eagle)

Family, friends and members of area law enforcement, fire and EMS services gathered at Enid Woodring Regional Airport on Monday to honor the late Pond Creek Police Chief Timothy "Tim" Barwick.

Barwick was posthumously awarded the State and Local Law Enforcement Congressional Badge of Bravery, which was presented to his family Monday by U.S. Sen. Jim Inhofe.

The Congressional Badge of Bravery was established by Congress in 2008 to be awarded by the U.S. Attorney General "to honor exceptional acts of bravery in the line of duty by federal, state, and local law enforcement officers."

Barwick was awarded the medal for actions of "extraordinary bravery above and beyond the call of duty" during a 2015 incident in which Barwick was shot twice while attempting to protect a fellow law enforcement officer, according to the award citation.

At about 6 a.m. Sept. 13, 2015, the homeowners at 18533 U.S. 81 in Pond Creek called police about a man trying to get inside their home. Barwick, a Grant County deputy and two Medford police officers arrived on the scene and began speaking with the man.

Clifford Butler, 67, of McAlester, reportedly was acting erratically, claiming people were in the bushes trying to hurt him, according to Oklahoma State Bureau of Investigation.

Butler fired at officers, hitting Barwick, and a Grant County sheriff's deputy returned gunfire, killing Butler, according to OSBI.

The citation read at Monday's ceremony states Barwick placed himself in harm's way when Butler opened fire.

"Immediately, Chief Barwick left his position of cover and advanced under the direct line of fire of the subject in an attempt to render aid to his fellow officer. Before reaching the officer, Chief Barwick was struck by the subject's gunfire, and sustained life-threatening wounds to his hand and abdomen," according to the citation. "The actions of Chief Barwick demonstrate extraordinary bravery and a willingness to save the lives of others, without regard to his own personal safety."

Barwick subsequently lost a leg as a result of his injuries. He died Dec. 14, 2016, after a battle with lung cancer.

About 10 members of Barwick's family were present Monday for the award ceremony. Sally Barwick served as representative for the family and accepted the medal on behalf of her late uncle.

"It's an honor to receive this on his behalf," she said. "I know he's looking down on us, proud to receive this. I just wish he was here to receive it."

She said she appreciated Inhofe making the stop to honor her uncle and spend time with the family.

"It's an honor to meet the senator, and to have him come here and meet the family," she said.

Inhofe said he was pleased to meet Barwick's family, and to honor a man well-known for his public service.

"To see this crowd turning out — it seems a life of service isn't something everyone has," Inhofe said. "It seems this is the way he would want to be remembered, ultimately: to be in the line of duty, helping people."

Dawn Read, Barwick's niece, said her uncle would have been honored to receive the award.

"To me, it's very humbling, and I think he would have been very proud," Read said.

Read remembered her uncle as a man dedicated to service. She said he was one of five brothers, all of whom served in the military.

According to Barwick's obituary he enlisted in the Navy in March 1979 and served until March 1983. After military service, he worked for his father at Harley Produce and was hired by Pond Creek Fire Department in September, 1983. He went to work for the Pond Creek Police Department as city marshal on July 1, 1994, a post he maintained until his death last December.

Art Curl, Pond Creek city business manager, said Barwick's devotion to service made him well-known and loved in Pond Creek.

"He was great guy and a great chief of police," Curl said. "He knew everyone, and everyone loved him. The kids in town all knew him and loved him."

Curl was first introduced to Barwick when they played football against each other in high school: a time in Barwick's life that earned him the nickname "The Bull."

Mike Peterman, Pond Creek city superintendent, said that nickname stuck with Barwick for the rest of his life — and for good reason.

"He was a bull when he came through, in football and everywhere," Peterman said.

Peterman has fond memories of playing paintball with Barwick — a favorite pastime the two men shared.

"He was a nice guy and an honest man," Peterman said. "He's very much missed as a police officer and as a person."

Pond Creek Mayor Steve Stinson also remembered Barwick as "a man of service."

"Tim always gave everything he had to people," Stinson said. "He was very generous, very brave, and as long as I've known him he would give his shirt off his back to anyone."

"He meant the world to the community," Stinson said. "You didn't call the 'cops.' You just called Tim."

Grant County Sheriff Scott Sterling said Barwick was a selfless public servant who was always there when his fellow law enforcement officers needed him.

"He was always willing to come out," Sterling said. "He always showed up, even if he was off duty."

"Tim had a sense of humor, he liked to laugh, and he also liked just seeing the citizens of Pond Creek," Sterling said. "It was just his home, and therefore the job meant a lot to him."



Pond Creek police chief dies