

Four Shelby County Correctional Officers Receive Awards from Illinois Sheriff's Association



Left to Right CO David Meyers, CO Bradley McReynolds, Sheriff Mike Miller, CO Timothy Apple and CO Nicholas Hutton

For most folks dedication to duty in their job would mean a pat on the back or possibly a raise in salary. However, when four Shelby County correctional officers (C.O.s) went above and beyond the call of duty their quick thinking meant a difference between life and death. For that reason, Shelby County Sheriff Michael Miller is extremely proud to announce that correctional officers: Timothy Apple, Brad McReynolds, Nicholas Hutton, and David Meyers have been chosen "Correctional Officers of the Year" by the Illinois Sheriff's Association.

Miller said the incident in question happened in late May, 2013. Two individuals, a male and a female, were arrested for public indecency and resisting arrest. Both individuals were intoxicated, and the male subject became irate and began screaming obscenities in a holding cell demanding to be given a phone call. The inmate was told he would be given an opportunity to make a phone call for bond after the female had been processed and he had calmed down. Although there are phones in the holding cells they must be turned on by the correctional officers after the booking process has taken place.

This did not satisfy the male subject and he continued to scream and bang on the cell door. Periodically the correctional officers stopped by the door to check on the subject as his behavior continued for 45 minutes before falling silent.

During their routine cell check C.O.s Hutton and Meyers went to the holding cell to check on the male inmate. They found him with a phone cord around his neck in a sitting position slumped against the wall. Dispatch contacted an ambulance and the correctional officers with help from McReynolds removed the cord from the subject's neck and placed him on his back on the cell floor. Immediately C.O. Apple, a paramedic, checked the subject's vital signs and noticed his breathing was labored. Apple then positioned the inmate's head to allow for normal breathing and stayed with him until the ambulance arrived to transport the subject to the hospital.

Sheriff Miller said this incident may sound like correctional officers just doing their job, but it is not that simple.

"Unhappy inmates demanding to post bond or use the phone is not uncommon and their screaming and banging can easily be ignored until they calm down and begin to cooperate. On this night had these correctional officers ignored this subject becoming quiet the outcome could have been fatal."

Sheriff Miller then submitted the necessary paperwork to the Illinois Sheriff's Association (ISA) to nominate the four correctional officers for the "Correctional Officers of the Year" award. ISA awards "Deputy of the Year", "Correctional Officer of the Year", and "Telecommunicator of the Year" in recognition of exemplary performance in all aspects of their law enforcement duties.

"These four correctional officers' quick thinking and rapid response to the needs of an inmate in danger resulted in saving a life," said Miller.

On February 3, 2014, the four correctional officers were awarded the "Correctional Officers of the Year" award at the Winter Training Conference in Fairview Heights, IL.