

Columbia County Sheriff's Deputy Ryan Dews received the Oregon Peace Officers Association's (OPOA) Medal of Valor last week in a ceremony held in Newport November 19.

Deputy Dews received his medal after risking his life to save a man who was the passenger in a stolen vehicle involved in a pursuit on Scappoose-Vernonia Road July 4.

The crash occurred when the driver of the stolen car attempted to avoid a spike strip, lost control of the vehicle and left the roadway, where it burst into flames. Deputy Dews and Vernonia Police officer Shawn Carnahan reacted quickly to the burning vehicle and were able to pull Robert Regan, St. Helens, from the flames. The car quickly became engulfed, making further rescue attempts impossible, and the driver of the stolen vehicle--Brooks Anderson of St. Helens--died at the scene. Though the passenger later died from his injuries, the two officers were awarded the Medal of Valor for the risks they took to rescue him.

"Ryan will tell you he was just doing his duty the night he and Officer Carnahan risked their own personal safety to pull Mr. Regan from the flames," said Sheriff Jeff Dickerson, "but this award recognizes the effort demonstrating such a high level of devotion to duty. I join the OPOA in recognizing the exemplary efforts of both Deputy Dews and Officer Carnahan."

Also on November 19, the Sheriff's Office celebrated the graduation of its four newest members from the Oregon Public Safety Academy, when Deputies Carolyn Townsend, Ivan Johnson, Brandon Yon and Sean Moore finished their course of study. The four deputies fill vacancies in the Corrections Division and will bring relief to shifts in the jail once they complete their field training program. Deputies Yon and Moore were recognized by their class as the Class Leaders and received special recognition from the academy for that standing.

Deputy Yon was also named the top shooter for his class.

## **Deputy Receives Medal of Valor; 4 Graduate from Academy**

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"We are so pleased with this current group of corrections deputies," the Sheriff said. "They are bright, multi-faceted and dedicated to the mission of the sheriff to conserve the peace by providing excellence in ensuring the safety and security of our jail. Once they are cleared for solo patrol on the floor, we hope to reduce the overtime and stress on our current staff."