

COUNCILMAN WINS SOLICITOR'S AWARD FOR LAW ENFORCEMENT EXCELLENCE IN SPARTANBURG

David Councilman never met a stranger.

During the course of his 18-month career at the Spartanburg Public Safety Department he routinely went above and beyond the call of duty to get the job done as a patrol officer.

Coworkers knew him as a dependable teammate who volunteered for extra work, a person who enjoyed studying his profession and as someone willing to tackle any assignment.

Residents on the city's south side remember him as a friend who worked to keep their community safe.

Councilman's dedication earned him the recognition of being honored with the 2003 Solicitor's Award for Spartanburg County Law Enforcement Excellence less than two months after the 27-year-old Chatham County NC native died from a brain aneurysm. Councilman's wife, Laurin, and his infant son, Jackson, accepted the award during Solicitor Trey Gowdy's Law Enforcement Appreciation Dinner at Cleveland Park. David's parents, Larry Councilman and Trudy Walters, were also present at the ceremony.

Mrs. Councilman received a prize package that includes a commemorative plaque, a gift certificate to the Heights of Converse Day Spa & Salon, a digital camera and certificate that allows her to drive a new BMW for three days. David Councilman's name will be engraved on a plaque that hangs on the wall of the Spartanburg County Solicitor's Office. Fairway Outdoor Advertising also plans to unveil a billboard to honor David Councilman and Cpl. John McCraw, the recent winner of the Solicitor's Award for Law Enforcement Excellence in Cherokee County.

A committee of police officers from several police departments nominated and named Councilman the winner of the Spartanburg award.

"There is no better compliment than the recognition of your peers," Solicitor Trey Gowdy said. "David made a difficult job look easy. He touched the hearts of everyone who knew him."

Residents in his old patrol area will not forget him any time soon.

"The residents of the community always spoke very highly of Officer Councilman," said Jerline Stewart, a Highland neighborhood resident. "He knew the community well and the residents had a rapport with him. They were comfortable talking with him."

Councilman was a busy in the weeks prior to his untimely death. On Aug. 14, he arrested a bank robbery suspect after a foot chase started at a Marion Avenue house and concluded in the vicinity of Ridgewood and Union streets. Weeks earlier, he was commended by a supervisor for his efforts to do foot patrols around the CC Woodson Recreation Center. He was also cited for his efforts to serve arrest warrants during off-duty hours.

At the time of his death, Councilman had 14 criminal cases pending in the Solicitor's Office on charges ranging from armed robbery to kidnapping, forgery, domestic violence and drug cases.

Councilman's law enforcement career includes stints with the South Carolina Department of Probation, Parole and Pardon Services and the Spartanburg County Coroner's Office. He was a 1992 graduate of the South Carolina Police

Academy. He was a member of the South Carolina Police Benevolence Association.

“I think Officer David Councilman was a profound young man who loved the job that others couldn’t imagine doing,” Spartanburg Public Safety Lt. Sandy Kimbrell wrote in David’s nomination for the Solicitor’s award. “He did his job without complaint and was never discouraged. He tried to make a difference in the community he served.”

More than two dozen sponsors helped fund the dinner. The donor list includes Mr. David White, Mr. Steve Parker, Vic Bailey Auto, Farrell Chevrolet, Dr. John Foster, Hudson & Associates Construction and Real Estate, Gramling Brothers Inc., Kerns Business Solutions, The Heights of Converse Salon & Day Spa, Palmetto Galleries, The Big Country Foundation/Stephen Davis, The Palmetto Bank, First National Bank of Spartanburg, the Spartanburg County Police Chief’s Association and WestGate Mall.

“I appreciate the community’s willingness to support such a worthy cause,” Gowdy said. “Police officers and their families richly deserve a night of rest and relaxation for the many sacrifices they make to keep us safe.”

For more information, contact Murray Glenn at 596-3862 or 809-4892.