

Solace paid to GPD's fallen

Written by By Bernie Dotson Sun Correspondent
Friday, 03 June 2016 06:25



Close to 100 attend annual memorial service

They came as if to their own funeral.

Law enforcement and personnel from the Gallup Police Department, the Gallup Fire Department, the McKinley County Sheriff's Office, and generally, officials from Gallup City Hall – their brethren killed in the line of duty years ago – took their places at a May 20 tribute titled “The Gallup Police Annual Fallen Officer’s Memorial Service.”

“This is to pay tribute to our brothers who sacrificed for their fellow man with honor,” Interim Police Chief Franklin Boyd said. “They will never be forgotten.”

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Boyd, a career city police officer, introduced family members of John Arviso, Richard Madrid, Larry Brian Mitchell, Ronald Baca, Barney Montoya and Louis Silva. "We remember them and they will always be honored," Boyd told the gathering of nearly 100 people. "The city of Gallup Police Department will forever hold great respect for them and you," Boyd said to the families of the fallen officers.

A few of the family members gave short remembrances.

Chief of Detectives John Arviso was shot and killed in 1965 while conducting a stakeout at a motor company.

Officer Richard Madrid was struck in the head in 1958 while attempting to make a protective custody pickup in downtown Gallup. Madrid completed the protective custody pickup and continued with his shift despite the injury.

Cpl. Larry Brian Mitchell was shot and killed in 2001 while responding to a barricaded person in a mobile home.

Officer Ronald Baca was hit by a motorist in 1986 while returning to the police station. The motorist had run a red light and Baca was returning to the police station.

Sgt. Barney Montoya was hit by a drunk driver in 1977 as he was ending his shift.

Officer Louis Silva was shot and killed in 1930 while questioning someone about a burglary suspect. The suspect was never apprehended.

Mitchell's assailant, Robert Kiro, gave himself up to police. He was found guilty of second degree murder and two counts of attempted murder. Kiro was sentenced to 34 years in prison.

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Boyd served with Mitchell. Sgt. Matt Wright said he was one of the officers who responded to the scene with Mitchell. "It was a chaotic scene," Wright recalled. "They were all good men."

Boyd noted that the tribute to the fallen officers occurred during National Police Week.

***By Bernie Dotson
Sun Correspondent***