

NEWS

From the Office of

Brad Mitzelfelt

Supervisor, First District
San Bernardino County

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For information, contact
David Zook (909) 387-4830
www.sbcounty.gov/mitzelfelt

Supervisors Fund Memorial for Sheriff's Volunteers

SAN BERNARDINO – To recognize Sheriff's volunteers who give their lives in the line of duty, the San Bernardino County Board of Supervisors this week contributed \$3,000 for a permanent memorial to be located in the Sheriff's headquarters.

"We have a dedicated group of citizens who donate their time to protect the public through various volunteer units in the Sheriff's Department, from Search and Rescue to Citizens on Patrol to reserve deputies," said First District Supervisor Brad Mitzelfelt. "They often go into dangerous situations and sadly, two of our Search and Rescue volunteers were killed in recent years. This memorial will serve to remind County residents of the sacrifices our volunteers make on their behalf."

The Sheriff's Department has more than 2,000 volunteers in various programs who contribute 500,000 hours each year.

In July 2004, two members of the San Gorgonio Search and Rescue Team were participating in the search for a lost teenage hiker in Joshua Tree National Park. Philip Calvert, 58, of Mentone, and Scott Johnston, 30, of Redlands died when a drunken driver crossed the center line on Highway 62 and crashed into their vehicle head-on.

The memorial will be black granite, 4 feet by 6 feet, with bronze features, including a volunteer badge. The names of Calvert and Johnston will be etched on the plaque and should any other volunteers make the ultimate sacrifice, their names will be added.

The Inland Empire Search and Rescue Council joined the Sheriff's Volunteer Forces to create the Citizen Volunteer Memorial Committee, which decided on the design and location for the memorial and worked on fundraising for the past two years. The group raised \$5,000 and the contribution by the Board of Supervisors allows the purchase of the memorial to go forward.

"On behalf of all 2,000 volunteers in San Bernardino County, I would like to thank the Board of Supervisors for their contribution," said Dave Nicolet, director of the Inland Empire Search and Rescue Council.

The group hopes to dedicate the memorial early next year.

"I'm proud the Board of Supervisors is supporting this effort to honor these two brave men and any other volunteers who may fall in the line of duty," Supervisor Mitzelfelt said.