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### EW police officers receive awards

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EAST WINDSOR — Resuscitating a lifeless baby, preventing suicides, thwarting burglaries, and breaking up an organized crime ring were some of the actions six police officers and one police dog were recognized for Thursday.

Family, friends, and officials gathered at Scout Hall to celebrate the police officers' receipt of nine awards and commendations for service above and beyond the call of duty.

"We are here to recognize the hard work of the staff," Police Chief Edward J. DeMarco Jr. said. "They make this a better place to live."

DeMarco said Officer Jeffrey Capen questioned two individuals at Nonna's Pizza restaurant on Route 5 who said they were heading to the airport. Capen noticed there was a vehicle with a smashed window behind the restaurant, which turned out to have just been stolen, with suspected stolen items inside the vehicle. Both men were charged with felonies.

DeMarco said that for police officers, the most difficult situations they respond to are those involving children.

Officer Byron Smith arrived at a scene where there was an unresponsive 3-month-old baby, DeMarco said. He was able to revive the baby, however the infant died several days later.

Officers Paul Ostrikis, Andrew Tudryn, Smith, and Capen were all involved in preventing attempted suicides, DeMarco said.

Officer David McNeice along with police canine Mack were able to apprehend suspects believed to have been involved with an attempted car theft at Olender's Body Shop on Route 5, DeMarco said.

Detective Matthew Carl worked on a multi-agency investigation involving an "organized criminal enterprise," resulting in nine arrests and numerous felony convictions, DeMarco said.

"I respect the work you do," DeMarco said to the officers. "I am proud to be a police officer because of you."

Police Commission Chairwoman Linda Sinsigallo presented the commission's Circle of Merit award for service to the community to Ostrikis.

Sinsigallo said that a few years ago she and other Police Commission members visited the police academy and she was impressed by all the work that it takes to be a police officer.

"We appreciate all that you do," Sinsigallo said.

First Selectwoman Denise E. Menard, who also spoke at the ceremony, said, "We have a wonderful police force."

She added, "It is in times of emergency that you see the professionalism of this Police Department."

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