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Member:



Editor's note: The following letter is from the mother of Prince William County police Officer Ashley Guindon, who died in the line of duty on Feb. 27, 2016.

- ONE YEAR ANNIVERSARY -

In Loving Memory of Officer Ashley Marie Guindon

One year ago, my daughter, Officer Ashley Marie Guindon, beloved niece and granddaughter, passed away on February 27, 2016. The entire Guindon family and I would like to thank the many, many people who supported us following her death. Your many acts of kindness and expressions of sympathy have been a great comfort to me and my family during this past year.

As we write this thank you letter, we want to take this opportunity to offer each and every one of you our deepest and most sincere appreciation for your magnificent support. As we quickly realized, Ashley's death was not only a family tragedy, but a community tragedy, as well, as it was felt throughout your own and many more communities, far and beyond.

We cannot thank Jeff Carrera enough for rushing to INOVA Fairfax Hospital to be with Ashley as a representative on behalf of Sharon Guindon and her family. Ashley was the Carreras' nanny, and she developed a strong and loving relationship with the children and the parents. Jeff was met by the hospital police and directed to speak with the Fairfax County Detective along with Former PWC Police Chief Steve Hudson. He stayed with Ashley as they moved her from the hospital to the hearse, and he made sure Ashley had her last rites. As Jeff rode in the back part of the motorcade from the hospital to the Medical Examiner's office, he stood off to the side as a line detail moved her from the hearse to the office. The Detective from Fairfax played "Taps" on his bagpipes.

Within a few hours, they moved Ashley into the hearse en route to Mountcastle Funeral Home in Dale City, where they were greeted by the Funeral Director, Gary Maxwell, and Jim Zalewski, the Manager from Everly Funeral Home, Fairfax (Ashley worked for Jim and Gary at Everly Funeral Home in 2011 -2012). We cannot thank Gary and his staff at Mountcastle Funeral Home enough for handling all the arrangements with professionalism, kindness and grace, considering the magnitude of the memorial service.

We would like to thank Dr. Jennifer Lauren Rodriguez, Dr. Eugene Kim Lee and ALL the incredible emergency department staff at INOVA Fairfax Hospital for their valiant effort in trying to save Ashley's life. As I was thrust into a whole new world; stunned and grief stricken with the immeasurable loss of my only daughter, their heart-felt expression of sympathy and support goes beyond words.

The next day my sister Deb and I were met at the airport by Lt. Tara Van Horn, and Ashley's dear friend from the Police Academy, Officer Kristin Sims. I knew at that moment we had become a part of a very special family; the police family. As Tara and Kristen escorted us into the cruiser and sped us to the funeral home to see Ashley, we felt their incredible warmth and unsurpassed compassion. They took care of us and guided us through the entire process, and most importantly, handled all aspects of what needed to be done for Ashley. A few days later, I met Dave McKeown and Jesse Hempen, the two seriously wounded officers who were with Ashley that fateful night, as well as their families. The road ahead seemed daunting



Ashley Guindon, second from left, poses with friends at her graduation from the Prince William Police Academy in June 2015. SUBMITTED

to us-as they had to begin the healing process, not only of their injuries, but also rebuilding their lives.

We are grateful to the thousands of people who attended Ashley's funeral, including police officers from Woodbridge/Dale City and across the country, our family, friends and colleagues, some of whom came great distances. We are indebted to those in the community who did not know Ashley personally, but who came to pay their respects to my daughter and their police officer. To all those wonderful people who stood in solidarity on the side of the road holding signs and waving flags during the Memorial Mass and outside the Hylton Memorial Chapel. We sincerely thank all those who stopped by the Prince William County Police Department to view Ashley's cruiser and pay their respects by dropping off handwritten cards of sympathy, pillows, stuffed animals, flowers, and other tokens of appreciation. From the bottom of my heart, thank you all for the kindness and generosity you poured upon me and my family during the most difficult time of my life.

We have a great deal of gratitude to Governor Terry McAuliffe, Secretary of Public Safety and Homeland Security, Brian Moran, many of their staff members for graciously supporting our family and helping provide the means to host Officer Ashley Guindon's memorial service. When I think back on the event, I am still awe-struck with all those who were commissioned to be a part of Ashley's service.

Last, but not least, we would like to thank the Prince William County Police Chaplain Denny Glusko for his unwavering support, spiritual guidance, and heart-felt love as me and my family tried to make sense of Ashley's death.

We hope this personal "thank you" reaches everyone, near and far, as we are so very grateful for the support and love you so unselfishly and willingly provided us.

To those who played such an integral part of the evening when Ashley, Dave, and Jesse were shot while responding to a domestic call. The incredible effort to rescue their comrades, without getting harmed themselves, shows great personal risk they were willing to take to save another. We are so grateful to everyone for their heroic actions and professionalism in trying to save Ashley's life and to other agencies that assisted that evening:

- Fairfax PD

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- FFX County Peer Support Team
- PWC Fire/Rescue
- WC Fire Association
- PWC Fire Association
- PWC Peer Support Team
- FFX Sheriff's Department
- FFX Police Association
- FFX Fire/Rescue
- INOVA Fairfax Hospital
- Food donated by Park Valley Church – Haymarket
- Virginia State Police
- Capital Area Law Enforcement Fund (CALEF)

We would like to thank the Board of Supervisors Chairman Corey Stewart, Former PWC Police Chief Hudson, PWC Police Chief Barnard, Former First Sgt. Joe Dombrowski and Detective Robyn Hyatt and the various Police and Fire Departments who were present at the candlelight vigil, as well as the many, many caring people from ALL communities. We want to thank the various volunteers, organizations and companies that donated and assisted anyway they could:

- PWC Police Association (Colleen Grantham)
- Dunkin Donuts - Bristow
- Target – Manassas
- Red Cross - Manassas
- Fraternal Order of Police
- New Hope Bible Church - Front Royal

Thank you to all the local businesses and organizations that so kindly donated their services and food, and to the volunteers who served our family, Police Officers, and people of the community during the day of the reception at Hilton Garden Inn in Woodbridge.

- Walmart – Dumfries
- Confections – Woodbridge
- Mama Mia's – Gainesville
- Glory Be Cakes - Woodbridge
- Papa Johns - Dale City
- Hilton Garden Inn - Woodbridge
- Smokey Bones – Woodbridge
- Buffalo Wild Wings – Woodbridge
- Prince William County Police Association
- 1st Presbyterian Church - Woodbridge
- Prince William County Citizens Police Academy Alumni
- Mission BBQ - Stafford
- Prince William County Retiree Police Association
- Wegmans-Woodbridge
- Chik-Fil-A (Signal Hill, Sowder Village Square, Prince William Parkway, Dumfries, Gainesville)

Thank you to the businesses that organized various fundraisers (and continues to) on behalf of Ashley, Dave and Jesse:

- Wawa – Manassas
- Cross Fit of Woodbridge
- Tin Cannon - Gainesville
- California Tortilla - Dumfries
- 9-1-1 Racing – Stafford
- Shawn's Smokehouse BBQ – Warrenton

Thank you, Able Moving Company – Manassas, for donating your services to transport Ashley's belongings back to New Hampshire.

Thank you, Colgan Air – Manassas, for your generous donation of privately flying Ashley, Sharon, Deb, Lt. Tara Van Horn, and Officer Kristin Sims, to Massachusetts for Ashley's memorial service and burial.

Thank you for the extraordinary Memorial Service - Hylton Memorial Chapel, Woodbridge.

- Governor Terry McAuliffe, Secretary Brian Moran, and staff members.
- PWCPD – Incident Management Team and Special Operations
- Celebrant: Rev. Gerard Creedon
- Master of Ceremonies: Rev. Paul De Laudurantaye
- Cantor: Rayanne Gonzales
- Organist/Pianist: Janet Munford

Final Commendation:

- Remembrances – Former Chief Steve Hudson, Prince William County Police Dept.
- Chaplain Denny Glusko, Prince William County Police Dept.

Thank you to the many people, businesses and organizations that sent flowers to Ashley's Memorial Service at The Hylton Memorial Chapel, Woodbridge.

- Chief Keen and the Men and Women of the Manassas City Police Dept.
- Prince William County Bldg. Dept.
- Melissa Horan – Gals
- Brothers and Sisters from C Squad Central and East
- William County Department of Fire and Rescue Recruit Classes 15-2 and 16-1
- Embry Riddle Aeronautical Univ., Daytona Beach, FL
- VA ABC Alexandria
- VA State F.O.P. Brothers and Sisters
- Law Enforcement United
- Don Snyder and the Washington Redskins
- Co-Workers at CTS
- Prince William County Police Dept.
- Manassas City Police Assoc.
- Boyce, Leahy & Francescon
- Officers of Brothers before others
- Security Staff at Potomac Mills Mall
- Universal Protection Service
- The Commonwealth Attorney's Office
- Samantha Chambers and Rebekah Taylor
- Officer Kristen Sims
- Richard and Dawn Chapman
- Fredericksburg Police Dept.
- Adam, Brian and Lisa
- Chesterfield Police Dept.
- All the Brothers and Sisters Fraternal Order of Police Lodge #24, Charles County, MD
- George Washington Univ. Forensic Science Dept.
- Metropolitan Police DC – Recruit Class

Words cannot express our gratitude and sincere appreciation for such a wonderful, caring community of people that whole-heartily provided their friendship, kindness, sympathy, prayers, and generosity - all of which will remain with us forever.

With Love, Sharon Guindon and the entire Guindon Family: Dorothy, Mark & Stephanie, Tommy & Joanna, David & Mary Anne (Guindon) Scibelli, Deb & Richard B'Shara, Walter & Michele Nowak and Christine Munzert.