

1983

Lieutenant Charles Caldwell
Sergeant S. Dale Flood

Lake County Sheriff Department

Why do they do it? Someone wants to commit suicide. No one is in danger but the person threatening to end their own life. So why do members of our safety forces regularly put themselves in harm's way to intervene? Maybe because the victim is just another human being. Maybe because they realize that the threat is really a call for help. Maybe because they know, more than the person himself does, that his life has meaning, and that to family and friends, their life is important.

On September 19, 1983, the Lake County Sheriff's Department responded to a call of a man threatening suicide. Lieutenant Charles Caldwell and Sergeant S. Dale Flood arrived at the home in Perry Township, and found the man to be holding a .38 caliber gun to his head.

Caldwell and Flood entered the home and began speaking to the man in an effort to get him to accept help. For over three hours, they spoke with him, having no protection and being only a few feet from him. They carried on a "running conversation" during which the male on at least three occasions, cocked the weapon and threatened to kill himself. They were able to talk the man into surrendering the weapon without any shot fired, and accepting help. Chief Deputy Richard Amriott stated that "we used the resources instead of calling in the SWAT team. You have to have the ability to communicate on all levels."

Caldwell, who had served for 17 years at that time, and Flood, an 18 year veteran, were nominated for the award by Sheriff Edwin H. Cunningham.

Caldwell served as Chief Deputy at the Lake County Sheriff's Department, then was appointed Chief of Police for Hunting Valley, where he served for 16 years. After retiring, he rejoined the Sheriff's Department and was a Major in command of Central Communications.

Both Caldwell and Flood have now retired from law enforcement.