2014
Patrolman Thomas Novak

Fairport Harbor Police Department

It has been said that police work can be described as 99% boredom and 1% sheer terror.   Officer Timothy Novak experience that 1% of police work on April 23, 2014 at about 2:30 P.M, a time of day when the 1% rarely occurs.

Fairport Harbor officers were dispatched to a felonious assault call where a male was allegedly beating another male with a sledgehammer.   Subsequent information was dispatched, that the suspect had left the scene and a vehicle description was given.

Officer Novak quickly located the vehicle and tried to initiate a traffic stop.   In an effort to evade the officer, the suspect pulled off the roadway, and then drove through grass back onto the roadway.   The suspect then pulled into another factory parking lot, drove through more grass, and then intentionally ran head on into Novak's cruiser.   The violent collision caused the patrol car to careen off   the road, onto a tree lawn.   The vehicle was disabled and the air bags activated.   The suspect vehicle also ran off the roadway and into a field, with the suspect exiting his vehicle, and running away to escape.

Officer Novak had suffered injuries due the collision (including a closed head injury and neck strain).   In spite of this, he was able to force open his door, get loose from the discharged air bag, and go after the suspect.   He apprehended the male, and held him until back up officers arrived.   He was subsequently transported to the hospital for treatment of his injuries.

The suspect would later state that he collided with the officer in an attempt to end his own life.

Chief Mark Kish nominated Novak for the award, noting that in spite of his injuries, he continued his efforts to keep maintain the safety of the citizens of Fairport Harbor, and apprehend the suspect.   He further stated that Officer Novak's actions were an "outstanding act of heroism in the line of duty at imminent personal hazard to his own life.

For his actions, Novak was presented with the 2014 Jorge Medina Award.