



Joshua Bessex/The Daily Astorian

Sgt. Jason Goodding's memorial service last year at the Seaside Civic and Convention Center. Scores of law enforcement officers and state and community people attended.

Chief Ham: 'Officers did what they were trained to do'

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Q: What were you feeling at that time?

A: It was a certain amount of disbelief. Very scared, very much concerned for Davidson. My first contact was actually with Officer Davidson to try to make sure he knew we were there for him.

Q: He hadn't been struck?

A: No. That's when I started to make my way over and saw the many medics attending to Jason.

Q: You had Ferry there, too.

A: Yes.

Q: Were you angry?

A: Well, you know, that's one of those things. Over this whole thing ... I haven't been angry. My biggest concern was for my friend and co-worker Jason.

Q: Did you go to the hospital?

A: Once he got transported, I went and picked up Amy (Goodding) and the kids and brought them to the hospital.

Q: Who made that call?

A: I did.

Q: What did you say?

A: What do you say? I just let her know that there had been ... that Jason had been hurt and we needed to get to the hospital. Trying to do it quietly without the girls hearing exactly what was going on but ... just brought them to the hospital.

Q: What was Amy's reaction?

A: Again concerned, scared, kept her composure pretty well. We didn't know the severity — I didn't even know the severity of it. I knew they were working on him. I knew it was very serious, but we didn't know at that point he had passed away.

Q: How did you react when you learned of his death?

A: It hit very close to home. We were all grieving and it was all very raw — and is to this day, to be quite honest with you. I was close family friends with the Gooddings and still am, so there was a very personal side to this. It was very difficult to try to separate.

Q: Did you sleep that night? Did you go home?

A: I don't think I slept. I went home and probably the



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Seaside Police Chief Dave Ham looks at a wall full of gifts from the community in remembrance of Sgt. Jason Goodding at the Seaside Police Station.

next morning laid down for a couple of hours, but it was well into the next morning.

Q: And what was happening overnight?

A: It's hard to say or recall. Those next 12 hours were very ... I don't know how to really even answer that one. It's just, to a certain degree things kind of stopped. We had officers from other agencies that were filling in — taking our calls for service, and it's just ...

Q: Did you call a meeting?

A: We did. We had a department meeting within a couple of days where spouses were invited. It was a time to get everybody together and give them the rundown of everything that we knew up to that point, whether it was the criminal investigation, what was happening with our shifts, what we're responsible for. It was a face-to-face time for them to console each other and know the city was with us, and we had the support of really anybody whether we reached out to them or they reached out to us.

Q: Were you surprised by the avalanche of support that came from the country?

A: To a certain degree, yes. The community support, and I mean Clatsop County, Seaside — it doesn't surprise me, but it was overwhelming to see it.

I've got a box right here filled with cards, letters, trin-

kets, notes. It is from families, nationally and even internationally who have no reason to know we're on the map. It is from families who have lost officers before. It is from agencies that have never lost an officer in the line-of-duty; it is from agencies that have lost officers in the line-of-duty.

It is amazing how much has come in, the overwhelming support that I didn't really expect in a situation like this.

Q: What has this meant for you as a department?

A: I think as a department it's just really nice to see that so many people are out there. You're supported; you're loved.

For me it has been very emotional, grieving a co-worker, grieving a very close personal friend. And so the thing about coming up on the one-year anniversary for this interview, it dredges up so many emotions. Everybody here has been affected by that. We're very close knit and it's been very emotional to say the least.

Q: Let me shift gears here. In terms of policing, did this provide any lessons?

A: Yes. From the time officers come on they're taught a sense of officer safety. You're taught certain skills and ways to handle people, to talk to people and to ask for certain things that may include "we need to see your hands."

Unfortunately hands are what kill people oftentimes in our line of work and in this particular case, the lesson reaffirmed and reinforced just that.

The officers did what they were trained to do. They did what they could do to keep this safe for everyone. It's just an example of even when you do the right thing, bad things can still happen.

Q: How can we prevent this kind of incident from happening again?

A: In this particular situation and with this murderer's background, I think he should have been in custody and not released from previous charges leaving him to be on the streets to make his decisions that led to the death of and the murder of Sgt. Goodding.

Q: How are Amy and her daughters doing now?

A: They are doing pretty good. They seem to be adjusting and they're very resilient. They have good family support. The girls are doing well in school. Amy is doing well, as far as I can tell.

Q: Sherwood, where Jason Goodding attended high school, named a field



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Seaside Police Chief Dave Ham points to a donated plaque in memory of fallen Seaside Police Sgt. Jason Goodding that hangs on a wall at the station.



Joshua Bessex/The Daily Astorian

Seaside Police Chief Dave Ham hugs Sgt. Jason Goodding's wife, Amy, at Goodding's memorial service last year.

after him. What are some of the highlights of the tributes that have come in?

A: One of the things we're all very proud of is the local Seaside High School scholarship program that got started up in Jason's name. That was kicked off last June. There's a benefit concert coming up on the 11th at the Elks Lodge and their funds are going toward the Oregon Fallen Badge Foundation. On May 2, Officer Davidson, Sgt. Nofield and myself will be representing the department at the Oregon Fallen Law Enforcement Memorial Ceremony in Salem.

Then we'll be going to Washington, D.C., for National Police Week the week of May 15.

This community is very

good about donating to many different things and this has been no different, and at the very least, if anything goes out from my lips, it is a thank you to them, to this community. This community is amazing.

Q: Anything else you want to add?

A: The tone of the department is positive, people are upbeat. We had some vacancies in this last year and we're settling down. We've got bodies hired, but we're still waiting for them to get through the police academies and trained. We're starting to get to the point where we can keep our head above water, so to speak.

From what I can tell the morale of the department is good and we're excited about the future. We just never want to forget our friend.

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