

SAGINAW POLICE OFFICER BRIAN WILSON

When an armed man attempts to smash his way into an occupied house, then chooses to turn his gun on a police officer rather than save himself by simply giving up, it's obvious that he is a deadly threat to anyone in his path. This describes the suspect Saginaw Officer Brian Wilson confronted last April 10 when he responded to a complaint of a home invasion in progress.

Dispatch informed Officer Wilson that the 911 caller was hiding in his bedroom, watching a man trying to break through a window near his back door with a handgun. When he reached the location, Officer Wilson approached the house on foot and moved down the driveway toward the rear. Officer Wenger arrived and took another route around the residence toward the back door.

The subject was being directly observed in the midst of committing a felony and was in an extremely vulnerable situation, but he didn't yet know the reality of his circumstances. He was peering into the house through a window adjacent to the back door, totally focused on making an entry.

Officer Wilson, who had moved into a position of cover behind a pickup truck in the driveway, could not be sure at the moment whether the man was holding a weapon. He was facing the back of the suspect, whose hands were out of sight in

front of his body. This was, of course, a crucial question because the answer would determine how officers had to proceed in order to bring the incident to a close.

Officer Wilson suddenly shouted “Police! Show me your hands!” Just as suddenly the subject pivoted to face him, took a firing stance and raised a handgun. Whether he was motivated by desperation to escape or a false bravado – somehow confident he could shoot his way out in a gun battle against a professional police officer – the man decided his own fate in that instant.

Officer Wilson fired several rounds from his service pistol and the subject fell to the ground. When Wilson, Wenger and another Saginaw officer who had responded approached the man they found he was deceased. The handgun was still in his grip.

Officer Brian Wilson, in the line of duty you engaged an armed suspect who was brazenly attempting to invade an occupied home. Uncertain whether he was holding a gun when you identified yourself as a police officer, you ordered him to show his hands, thereby giving him an opportunity to end the confrontation without bloodshed. However, instead of saving his own life he attempted to take yours.

The subject’s actions clearly showed the immediate threat he presented to the homeowner, the community at large, you, and your fellow officers. By ending that threat, at your own considerable risk, you protected and served both known and unknown innocent individuals.

We are proud to pay tribute your bravery, dedication to duty, and outstanding service in this dangerous incident by naming you POAM 2013 Police Officer of the Year.

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