

# Memorializing the Past

DOCJT dedicates names of 35 law enforcement officers killed in the line of duty / **Jamie Ball**, Public Information Officer

**B**eneath a clear, blue sky and an American flag gently furling in the breeze, the state's Department of Criminal Justice Training paid tribute September 19 to 35 Kentucky law enforcement officers who were killed in the line of duty by dedicating their names on the Kentucky Law Enforcement Memorial monument.

More than 400 family members, law enforcement officers, law enforcement recruits and others attended the ceremony at which DOCJT also rededicated the memorial at its new, more prestigious location at the agency. The memorial is now located in front of the John W. Bizzack Law Enforcement Training Complex.

Brig Gen. Norman E. Arflack, former secretary of the Kentucky Justice and Public Safety Cabinet, was the keynote speaker at the event.

"There is no ceremony that can pay absolute tribute to those among us who have fallen in the line of duty, but this is surely a wonderful day of remembrance for those individuals," said Arflack, who is a former law enforcement officer. "These are brave officers who placed the needs of others before those of their own – selfless individuals who went out daily doing what they thought was right, providing safety and security for all of us to live, work and raise a family. These individuals exemplify the dangers of our chosen profession."

Of the 35 names that were added to the monument this year and dedicated at the ceremony, three were officers killed in 2006.

Constable Elmer Kiser of Carter County died September 27, 2006 from wounds he received when a reckless driver he had been following assaulted him. Kiser was in his personal vehicle when the driver passed his and another vehicle on a curve, forcing the other vehicle off the roadway. The constable radioed a local police officer for backup as he followed the driver. Minutes later, a passerby reported to 911 that a wounded man was lying on the road. The man was Kiser. Kiser was transported to a local hospital and then to a trauma center, where he remained until he succumbed to his injuries.

Kentucky State Police Trooper Jonathan Leonard died December 19, 2006 from injuries he sustained in a vehicle accident in Pike County. His cruiser and another vehicle collided as he was on his way to respond to a domestic violence call. He was pronounced dead at the scene of the accident.

Bowling Green Police Officer David Whitson was shot and killed October 31, 2006 after he and two other officers responded to a call.

Whitson became engaged in a struggle with the suspect, who was armed with two knives. The other officers used deadly force against the suspect, and Whitson and the suspect suffered fatal gunshot wounds.

The Kentucky Law Enforcement Memorial Monument is the only monument in the commonwealth that recognizes all Kentucky peace officers who have been killed in the line of duty. This year's additions bring the total number of names on the monument to 382.

Two Kentucky law enforcement officers have been killed in the line of duty this year, and their names will be added to the memorial in 2008. Barren County Constable Ronnie K. Jones was killed April 2 when a vehicle struck his patrol car. Clay City Police Chief Randy Lacy was shot and killed June 13 by a prisoner he was transporting.

The monument, which was dedicated in 2000, was moved this year from in front of the Funderburk Building at DOCJT to its new location in front of the Bizzack complex, which is near the previous site. The monument had to be moved because it had reached its capacity for names, so the Kentucky Law Enforcement Memorial Foundation decided to give the monument a bigger and more fitting location in the move. The monument is now set in a grassy area with amphitheater seating.

The memorial foundation was established in 1999 to build the unique memorial. Once the memorial was completed in 2000, the organization expanded its efforts to include an ongoing financial endowment program, which helps Kentucky peace officers and their families with educational, medical and emergency needs. 🇺🇸



/Photo by Elizabeth Thomas

