

05-31-2003 Y City AR – Cody Carpenter– LEO Flood Boat Attempted Rescue



OFFICER DOWN MEMORIAL PAGE

REMEMBERING ALL OF LAW ENFORCEMENT'S HEROES

<http://www.odmp.org/officer/21790-sheriff-cody-don-carpenter>



Bio & Incident Details
Age: 42
Tour: Not available
Badge # Not available
Cause: Drowned

Sheriff

Cody Don Carpenter

Scott County Sheriff's Office, Arkansas

End of Watch: Friday, May 31, 2013

Sheriff Cody Carpenter and Wildlife Officer Joel Campora drowned while assisting victims of an overnight flash flood along the Fourche Lefave River near Y City, Arkansas.

They had responded by boat to a 911 call at a home in the flooded area along the river. They both exited the boat and entered the home to assist two female victims who were trapped inside. At some point the officers, victims, and boat were swept away by the rising water. Sheriff Carpenter's body was located the following morning while Officer Campora's body was recovered three days later.

Sheriff Carpenter had served as sheriff for 11 years and had served with the Scott Sheriff's Office for a total of 16 years.

Arkansas weather woes kill 3, including county sheriff

<https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/nation/2013/05/31/arkansas-flood-kills-shelby-county-sheriff/2376269/>

May 31, 2013 The Associated Press

Y CITY, Ark. — An Arkansas sheriff was among three killed when a flash flood swamped Scott County while he and a wildlife officer were checking on reports that residents of a home might be in danger from the rising waters, a spokesman for the state Game and Fish Commission said Friday.

Separately, a man died after strong winds toppled a tree onto his car in Tull, just west of Little Rock. Authorities also are attributing the death of a woman in Scott County to the flooding, though they have released no information other than her body was found in her car.



(Photo: Arkansas Sheriff's Association)

The body of Sheriff Cody Carpenter was recovered Friday morning, Game and Fish spokesman Keith Stephens said. The wildlife officer, Joel Campora, was still missing.

"We are still in a search-and-rescue mode for our wildlife officer," Stephens said.

Carpenter and Campora were responding to a 911 call at a home in the Y City area near the Fourche La Fave River, authorities said. The two then got out of the boat and went inside a home to help two female victims. Authorities can't confirm or deny if the women have been found.

Authorities have recovered the boat and motor, both had received substantial damage. They also found one life jacket. Stephens says he's certain Carpenter and Campora were wearing their life jackets.

Around 6 inches of rain fell Thursday night and early Friday in Scott County, on Arkansas' western border about 150 miles west of Little Rock. The Fourche La Fave River, which cuts through steep terrain, rose sharply, swamping U.S. 71 for a time. "The water just comes off that hill like someone is pouring a bucket in there," said Danny Straessle, a spokesman for the Arkansas Highway and Transportation Department. "This was an incredible amount of water."

Data from the National Weather Service show the Fourche La Fave jumped 23 feet overnight to 26 feet at Gravelly, 24 miles downstream from Y City. A crest was expected Friday afternoon at 26.5 feet, 2½ feet above flood stage.

Highway crews shut down U.S. 71 between Mena and Waldron from 1:30 a.m. Friday until late morning. Initially after the water went down, the road was kept closed to let first responders search for the missing.

Bridge inspectors were dispatched to the area. The U.S. 71 bridge was built in the 1980s and is expected to be in good shape, but will be inspected anyway, Straessle said. Inspectors will also look at the Arkansas 28 bridge over the Fourche La Fave near Parks and the Arkansas 88 bridge over the Ouachita River east of Mena, he said. Those bridges were built in the 1950s.

Inspectors had reviewed photos of the bridges after the flood and determined they could remain open.

Scott County Judge James Forbes said this is the worst flood he's seen in the 21 years he's lived in the county.

Carpenter had been with the Scott County Sheriff's Office since 1997 and was elected sheriff in 2004.

Contributing: Lindsey Tugman, KTHV-TV, Little Rock, Ark.

UPDATED: Scott County sheriff and 1 other dead, 3 missing in flooding

<http://www.odmp.org/officer/21792-wildlife-officer-joel-lee-campora>

May 31, 2013 By [Max Brantley](#) Channel 4 and Fox 16 Arkansas Blog

The Department of Emergency Management is reporting a search is on for a sheriff and Game and Fish officer in a flooded portion of **Scott County**. The National Guard is sending people to help in water rescues.



SHERIFF CODY CARPENTER: Dies during flooding.

UPDATE: No identities as yet, but the State Police is reporting that there have been fatalities as a result of the storm and flooding in Scott County.

Flash flooding early this morning in the Waldron area trapped people in homes and prompted rescue efforts, **Channel 4 says.**

UPDATE II: The news grows far worse [in this updated from KFSM](#): The body of **Scott County Sheriff Cody Carpenter** has been found, but a Game and Fish officer and others are still missing. He apparently drowned attempting to rescue others.

Highway 71 South from Y City to Mena remains closed Friday morning after heavy rain and severe weather Thursday night.

Eyewitnesses said families are displaced and Scott County dispatchers said swift water rescues have taken place throughout the night.

At mid-morning, officials were fearing at least three fatalities — the sheriff, the missing officer, Joel Campora, and one other unidentified body, a woman already found. Questions remain about those living in low-lying areas that led authorities there in the first place.

Scott County Sheriff Found Dead During Severe Flooding

<http://5newsonline.com/2013/05/31/scott-county-sheriff-found-dead-after-major-flooding/>

MAY 31, 2013, BY LEAH SEITER, ALICIA AGENT, KATIE KORMANN AND MEREDITH BALDWIN, UPDATED AT 11:29AM, JUNE 1, 2013

The search for Joel Campora, an Arkansas Game and Fish Warden concluded after river boats pulled onto shore.

The body of Scott County Sheriff Cody Carpenter was found around 8 a.m. Friday (May 31) after [a major flooding event in Scott County](#), according to Arkansas Game and Fish spokesman Keith Stephens.



Photo Courtesy Red Cross Arkansas Twitter

Law enforcement officials and volunteers with the Red Cross in Arkansas lined the road as Carpenter's body was escorted back from where he was found.

[Joel Campora, an Arkansas Game and Fish game warden is still missing.](#)

Officials believe Campora and Sheriff Carpenter were working together on rescue efforts at a home off Highway

71 as storms moved in overnight.

"As they approached the residence, they noticed that flooding waters were rising rapidly and other deputies on scene heard a loud crash," Sebastian County Sheriff Bill Hollenbeck, whose office is helping with the efforts, said Friday afternoon during a news conference.

Hollenbeck said the house imploded due to rising flood waters in Mill Creek. Carpenter's body was found a mile downstream from a home where they received a 911 call.

"He was the best sheriff I've ever seen and that's as far as I'll go," said Scott County Judge James Forbes.

The boat the two men used was found with all of its contents. The two women who were in the home that Sheriff Carpenter and Campora attempted to respond to are unaccounted for.



State Rep. Terry Rice, R-Ark., who’s known the sheriff’s family for many years, says the Sheriff Carpenter was always eager to reach out to people their time of need.

"He wasn't satisfied behind the desk, and that was Cody," Rice said. "He's hands on, and that's what he was doing in the early morning hours this morning is trying to help people."

U.S. Senator John Boozman, R-Ark., issued the following statement on the sheriff's passing: "Sheriff Carpenter, a dedicated public servant, gave his life trying to save those trapped by the terrible flooding in Western Arkansas. A leader who was never content sitting behind a desk, Sheriff Carpenter bravely put the safety of others before his own to protect those in harm's way. My thoughts and prayers go out to his family and the community during this difficult time. We continue to pray for those missing as a result of the flooding. Please keep them and their families in your thoughts and prayers."



Flags were lowered to half-staff in Waldron as the community mourned the loss of the sheriff.

Hollenbeck said Friday during an afternoon news conference that the **body of one woman was found in her car**. She has not been identified.

Lt. Col. Keith Moore with the Arkansas National Guard said a Blackhawk helicopter was deployed around 8 a.m. from Robinson Air Force Base in North Little Rock to Scott County to assist in the rescue mission.

More than 200 officers from Sebastian County Search and Rescue, Logan County, the Arkansas National Guard and Arkansas Game assisted in the search.

Friday evening, Arkansas State Highway and Transportation Department officials announced Highway 28 is closed to traffic from Parks to the Yell County line. Highways 270 and 71 were reopened to traffic near Y City earlier that afternoon. Arkansas Governor Mike Beebe declared Cross, Montgomery, Poinsett, Polk, Scott and Van Buren Counties state disaster areas due to damage caused by tornadoes, strong storms and flooding Friday.

Two Killed, Three Missing in Scott County Flash Flooding

<http://www.nwahomepage.com/around-arkansas/two-killed-three-missing-in-scott-county-flash-flooding>

May 31, 2013

SCOTT COUNTY, AR - A search and recovery operation continues in Scott County after flash flooding claimed the lives of Sheriff Cody Carpenter and an unidentified woman early today. Three other people are still missing in the incident.

Carpenter, Arkansas Game & Fish Game Warden Joel Campora, along with some sheriff's deputies had answered a 911 call as flood waters rose quickly on the Fourche La Fave River around a house overnight.

The details about what unfolded next were revealed this afternoon during a news conference near the scene.

Sebastian County Sheriff Bill Hollenbeck told reporters that

Carpenter and Campora were in a boat, both wearing life jackets, when they tried to make their way to the home surrounded by rising and rushing waters. Before the rescuers could reach the home, it imploded, sending debris everywhere, damaging their boat and tossing them into floodwaters.

The body of Sheriff Carpenter was found about a mile downstream shortly after eight o'clock this morning. Emergency crews also found the body of an unidentified woman inside a car.



An Arkansas National Guard helicopter is helping with the search, as well as officers from several sheriff's offices across the state and the Arkansas State Police.

[Click here](#) to visit a Facebook page created in honor of Sheriff Carpenter.

Arkansas sheriff dies in flood rescue try

<http://www.cnn.com/2013/05/31/us/arkansas-storms/>

June 1, 2013 **By Joe Sutton and Greg Botelho, CNN**

An Arkansas sheriff died early Friday during a rescue attempt at a home deluged by floodwaters, officials said.

Scott County Sheriff Cody Carpenter apparently drowned in the swiftwater rescue bid, according to Keith Stephens, spokesman for the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission.

Two people at the home and a state wildlife officer who had been with Carpenter are missing, Stephens said.

Scott County is about 150 miles west of Little Rock, near the Oklahoma border. Western Arkansas was hit hard Thursday by a powerful storm that also delivered blows to parts of Oklahoma and other states.

The National Weather Service noted reports of tornadoes in at least seven communities in western Arkansas -- as far west as Polk, as far south as Garland County, and as far north as Oden.

At least nine people statewide had suffered injuries as of Thursday night -- before the

death in Scott County -- state emergency management spokesman Tommy Jackson told CNN. That figure includes four minor injuries in Oden, three in Clark County and two hurt by a lightning strike in Benton County.

Two homes were destroyed in Oden, about 50 miles west of Hot Springs, according to Jackson. The weather service noted, too, that power lines were knocked down and Highway 88 was blocked at one point.

Three houses were reportedly damaged and three people were injured around the small Clark County town of Amity, according to the same agency. Flooding was a problem in many places.



In Coffeyville, Kansas, police rescued people from 16 vehicles in a 1½-hour stretch on Thursday afternoon after they got trapped due to intense flooding, fire department Capt. Wayne Joplin said.

Water in the streets went up to cars' headlights, if not higher, after "torrential rain" fell on ground already saturated by storms the previous night. "The gutters and our storm system couldn't handle it," the captain said.

"I've lived here since CNN.1979, and I've never seen that much rain that quick," Joplin told

Grace Under Pressure: Sheriff Cody Carpenter

<https://jonathanturley.org/2013/06/01/grace-under-pressure-sheriff-cody-carpenter/>

1 June 1, 2013 jonathanturley Society

Author's Note: Grace Under Pressure is an on-going series of posts honoring everyday people who courageously make positive differences in their own lives and consequently in the lives of others. It is my own personal affirmation that unexpected heroes reside among us and that they serve as quiet but unshakable proof that virtue really is its own reward – and ours, too.

By Mark Esposito, Guest Blogger

On the blog, we justifiably point out the civil rights abuses we see committed by our law enforcement. Clothed with police power and enormous discretion to affect our lives and the lives of our family and friends, we expect more from them than the average citizen in terms of sensitivity to our wellbeing. When pointing out those abuses we do well to remember there is another side, too, when we get much more than we expect.

Scott County, Arkansas is a hardscrabble place with a population just over 11,000. That's a little less than the number in 1900 and the 3000 or so families that live there trace their community's roots back to the times of President James Monroe. The terrain is rugged as you'd expect from the land smack dab in the middle of the Ouachita Mountains (derived from the bastardized Choctaw words for "large buffaloes"), and the folks there are as independent, hardy, and proud as you would expect from people whose closest neighbor is often a mile or so away. The hollers, crags, and slopes of the Large Buffaloes Mountains are crisscrossed with little streams and runs that give the scene a bucolic vista that attracts painters and photographers. Those streams form the Fourche La Fave River which runs about 150 miles through some of Arkansas' most undisturbed, idyllic countryside. It may not be Heaven, but to outdoor enthusiasts it's close.

Cody Carpenter was a "lifer" in law enforcement terms as well as in Scott County terms. Born and raised in the county seat at Waldron and knowing most everybody and every place in this highland community, he was a natural for public service. Starting with the Scott County Sheriff's Office in 1996 he rose through the ranks enforcing traffic laws, investigating burglaries, rounding up loose livestock, and checking door knobs late at night in his hometown. In 2004, he was elected sheriff

and then kept the job in four subsequent elections all with a very simple idea about what his job was about. "It's (about) caring for the people and earnestly trying to improve the county we live in for the better," he said when asked.

Early Friday morning, the people of Scott County would see just how much Cody Carpenter cared. Thursday night a storm moved through western Arkansas, and the skies opened up. Rain fell in torrents on the slopes of the Large Buffaloes and those bucolic streams and runs became flash flooding gushers. "The water just comes off that hill like someone is pouring a bucket in there," said Danny Straessle, a spokesman for the Arkansas Highway and Transportation Department. "This was an incredible amount of water." About six inches of rain fell in eight hours in the lampless blackness of Scott County and the Fourche La Fave jumped 23 feet.

Distress calls came pouring in to the Scott County Sheriff's Office. One call from two women trapped in their home by the rising waters on Mill Creek was particularly alarming. Sheriff Carpenter and Arkansas game warden Joel Campora jumped in the patrol SUV with boat in tow and took off towards the swamped home. Carpenter and Campora were the first to arrive at the house and saw the flood waters engulfing the residence. Unhitching the boat, they made their way towards the man-made enclave in the rushing torrent. "As they approached the residence, they noticed that flooding waters were rising rapidly. [Within moments], other deputies on scene heard a loud crash," Sebastian County Sheriff Bill Hollenbeck explained Friday afternoon during a news conference. The tiny house had imploded from the overwhelming force of the water. Despite heroic efforts to save them, all four bodies were swept away.

Sheriff Carpenter's body was found downstream on Mill Creek on Friday morning around 8:00 a.m. As his gurney passed, law enforcement officials and volunteers with the Red Cross in Arkansas lined the road in silent tribute as Carpenter's body was escorted back from where he was found. As of yesterday, the two women and Joel Campora were unaccounted for. Flags were lowered to half-staff in Waldron as the community mourned the loss of its heroic native son and his equally heroic companion.

"He was the best sheriff I've ever seen and that's as far as I'll go," said Scott County Judge James Forbes. State Rep. Terry Rice, R-Ark., who's known the sheriff's family for many years, said of his Democratic friend: "He wasn't satisfied behind the desk, and that was Cody. He's hands on, and that's what he was doing in the early morning hours this morning is trying to help people."

Imagine climbing into a tiny boat in the face of a rushing wall of water whose roar you can clearly hear but that you can only see by the light of your flashlight. Then imagine doing that only because your neighbors have pinned a badge to your chest and placed their safety in your hands. The words "grace under pressure" don't capture half of that kind of courage.

Cody leaves his wife Amie and his four children, Garren, Christian, Douglas and Irelynn. Even amid their grief, they must be very proud.

Source: KFSM News 5

~Mark Esposito, Guest Blogger

Children of sheriff who died in floods graduate high school

<http://www.4029tv.com/article/children-of-sheriff-who-died-in-floods-graduate-high-school/4952268> Scott County Sheriff Cody Carpenter died trying to save two women in May 2013
May 13, 2014 | by Brett Rains

High school graduations typically happen on Friday night, but students in the Waldron School District are graduating Tuesday evening.

Two graduating seniors are the children of the late Scott County Sheriff Cody Carpenter, who died in last year's floods. The Waldron School District moved the graduation ceremony to Tuesday evening so Carpenter's children could participate before they traveled to Washington, D.C., to see their father's name placed on the Fallen Officers Memorial.



**Christian Carpenter, left,
and Amie Carpenter**

"Well, I'm definitely excited, but I'm going to miss that smiling face there. I mean I miss him, that's for sure, it's definitely hard going on without him," Christian Carpenter said.

Christian Carpenter and her brother Garen graduated from high school Tuesday. Christian Carpenter said she knows her father would be proud.

"He's going to be there, definitely. I know he will be," she said.

"We talked about how it would be, us sitting there side by side watching our babies get their diplomas, something they worked for," said Aime Carpenter, who was appointed Scott County sheriff to fulfill her husband's term in office.

Cody Carpenter and wildlife officer Joel Campora died while trying to rescue two women from flood waters in Scott County last May.

After Tuesday's graduation the Carpenter family will travel to Washington, D.C., where Cody Carpenter's name will be added to the National Law Enforcement Memorial honoring officers who died in the line of duty. It's a trip that Amie Carpenter said they wanted to take as a family for years, but now it will be in Cody Carpenter's honor.

"He wanted to take the kids to see that, and the changing of the guards, but we never got the chance to go," Amie Carpenter said.

"He wouldn't want us to sit here and dwell on things, he'd want us to go on, live our lives," Christian Carpenter said.

Cody Carpenter's name, as well as Joel Campora and Sebastian County Deputy Terry Johnson, will be added to the memorial.

Monday Matters: Scott County Jail Renamed For Fallen Sheriff

<http://www.swtimes.com/news/monday-matters-scott-county-jail-renamed-fallen-sheriff>

Jun 30, 2014

WALDRON — On the heels of the one-year anniversary of deadly flooding that claimed the life of former Scott County Sheriff Cody Carpenter, the county renamed its detention center in his honor.

WALDRON — On the heels of the one-year anniversary of [deadly flooding](#) that claimed the life of former Scott County Sheriff [Cody Carpenter](#), the county renamed its detention center in his honor.

County Judge James Forbes asked the Quorum Court for permission to rename the facility in the late sheriff's honor, and it agreed.

"He worked quite a few years on trying to get this jail built, as our previous jail was substandard," Forbes said. "He was dedicated to law enforcement and the safety of the people of this county, so I think it's appropriate to rename it after him."

The county purchased and engraved a 6-foot-long-by-4-foot-wide slate of rock bearing Carpenter's name, forever etching his name in stone outside of the county's jail facility.

The \$5.5 million, 76-bed, 20,500-square-foot county detention center next to the courthouse in Waldron has a long, difficult history.

County voters agreed in 2006 to levy a temporary 5/8-cent tax to build the facility, but in the same election they rejected a 7/8-cent tax to staff and operate the facility. As a result, the jail was built but did not open.

Voters eventually approved a 1 percent tax in May 2009, with half dedicated to jail operations and half to the county's general fund, reducing the county's real estate and personal property taxes by one-half.

As part of an effort to promote the importance of passing the tax to open the facility, in the days preceding the May 2009 election, Carpenter toured residents through the empty structure and answered questions about it. Perhaps that work compelled voters to support the tax after seeing the new building going to waste.

That sort of dedication to his county made the renaming seem a natural fit, Forbes said.

"There is not enough that I can say about him," Forbes said. "We were good friends and he was a dedicated public servant and one of those guys who always treated everyone with respect and kindness, and he did the best he could to serve public."



Justin Bates * Times Record / Scott County Sheriff Amie Carpenter speaks about a monument in front of the county's detention center bearing the name of her late husband and former Scott County Sheriff Cody Carpenter. Carpenter, along with five others. Was killed attempting to rescue stranded residents in heavy flooding last year. The county renamed its detention center in his honor for giving his life to the residents of the county. SUBMITTED PHOTO / A commemorative slate bearing the name of late Scott County Sheriff Cody Carpenter is seen outside of the county detention center. The county in May renamed the jail facility in Carpenter's honor. Cody Carpenter

He did a lot of things people didn't know he did. You could always depend on him to help."

The flooding of [May 31, 2013](#), killed Carpenter, 41, Arkansas Game and Fish Commission wildlife officer Joel Campora, 32, Cathy Ann Holder, 41, of Dallas and Vivian Sue Reimer, 65, and Regina Kay Shearn, 60, both of Y City.

Last year, the Quorum Court [appointed](#) Amie Carpenter, Carpenter's widow, to serve the remainder of her husband's term as sheriff.

Having the facility renamed for him is an honor for Amie Carpenter and her family.

"He worked so hard to get the jail built and it took another couple years to get it open, which was a very stressful time for Cody and something he worried about constantly," Amie Carpenter said. "Through his entire career, he was always

dedicated to the people of the county. We are honored by the gesture. This jail wasn't for him and his department; it was for the county and for the safety of the county."

The private dedication ceremony, open only to the Quorum Court, [Sheriff's Office](#) deputies and staff and Carpenter's close friends and family, was emotional, Amie Carpenter said.

"It's been a hectic and stressful year with everything being so public, so I'm glad they did it that way," Amie Carpenter said. "It's not often you get a jail named in someone's honor, and when they took the cover off (of the monument), I just cried."

Amie Carpenter said her husband would have appreciated the gesture.

"I was thinking back on all those years of him worrying about what they were going to do to get it open and his emotions about it. ... I went through all of that with him," Amie Carpenter said. "It was a very special gesture, and he would be tickled and grinning from ear-to-ear. His name will be etched in stone here forever, no matter who comes in here as sheriff."

Carpenter's colleagues at the Sheriff's Office say they feel honored as well.

"We are very honored that the name was changed," Chief Deputy Terry Staggs said. "We're honored his name will be attached to this jail from now. Not only was he my boss and our sheriff, but he was my best friend. He was very respected within the department and other agencies in the state. He wasn't your normal sheriff, as he was very hands-on and wouldn't have guys do anything he wouldn't do. That ultimately cost him his life."

Staggs, who overwhelmingly [won](#) the Democratic nomination for sheriff in the May 20 primary, will face Republican nominee Julie Evans in the November primary. Staggs said if elected, he would try to build on the foundation Cody Carpenter left behind.

"Those are some hard shoes to fill; I'm not Cody," Staggs said. "He set an example of how the office should be run, and if elected, we'd try to follow those plans he set out as best we can."

Scott County sheriff, wildlife officer who died in flood to be honored

<http://www.swtimes.com/news/20161215/scott-county-sheriff-wildlife-officer-who-died-in-flood-to-be-honored>

Dec 15, 2016 By Special to the Times Record

Wildlife Officer Joel Campora and Scott County Sheriff Cody Carpenter will be honored with two memorial mile signs in an unveiling ceremony at 11 a.m. Saturday at Chant Pentecostal Church in Y City.

The two men died during a swift-water rescue attempt in western Arkansas on May 31, 2013. The two women they were trying to rescue also perished in the flood.



Scott County sheriff Cody Carpenter, left, and Arkansas Wildlife Officer Joel Campora

Campora had been a wildlife officer with the AGFC since 2007. He was assigned to Scott County and lived in Waldron with his wife and two children. He worked closely with city, county, state and federal law enforcement agencies in Scott County. He was instrumental in developing information that assisted the Federal Bureau of Investigation in arrests of people involved in a large international drug distribution network that was operating within the state.

“Joel was much more than a model officer, he was part of the AGFC family,” said Col. Pat Fitts, chief of the AGFC’s Enforcement Division. “The single selfless act that cost him his life was only one of many times when he put himself in harm’s way for the people of Arkansas.”

Carpenter began serving in the Scott County Sheriff’s Office in 1996 and became sheriff in 2004. He had been re-elected to his fifth term in November 2012. Then-Arkansas Attorney General Dustin McDaniel said in a news conference that Carpenter was a friend and that he “Demonstrated his professionalism, courtesy and dedication to the people of Scott County every day.”

Who is the hero?

<http://www.baxtercountysheriff.com/message.php?id=22>



The word hero was coined in 1387 and finds its roots in the Greek word heroes. It refers to characters who, in the face of danger and adversity or from a position of weakness, display courage and the will of self-sacrifice.

Being a sports fan, it is easy for me to think of David Freese in the 2011 Major League Baseball Playoffs or Michael Jordan's shot at the buzzer to beat the Cavaliers in 1989. We casually use this term, hero – whether it be a great sports moment or for someone at the office when they've helped us meet a deadline. In some respects, I think the term has become watered down.

My own thoughts about the definition of a hero is someone who without thought of their own personal safety, does whatever it takes (including willingly giving their own life) to protect or save another human being. Recently this hit home on a personal note when I attended the funeral of a good friend and fellow Sheriff, Cody Carpenter. Scott County Arkansas Sheriff Carpenter and Game and Fish Officer Joel Campora drowned while trying to save the lives of two women who were trapped in the raging flood waters of Mill Creek. Both men gave their life attempting to save two people they did not even know personally. These men embody the true definition of hero.

I am sure you can imagine the spouses' somber faces of each of the Sheriffs who came to honor Sheriff Carpenter. One of them remarked that had the flood been in their own county, it could have easily been their spouse for whom they would be grieving. She was right -- and not just about it being a fellow Sheriff. Any law enforcement officer, whether City, State, County or Federal, would have willingly put themselves in the same situation.

Our law enforcement and military personnel go out every day and place themselves in harm's way to protect people they do not even know – and every day, their spouse, children and loved ones wonder if they will return home safely. Let's not wait until someone makes the ultimate sacrifice of their life before honoring them with the term, hero. Let's make it a point to recognize and honor all of the brave heroes who walk amongst us every day and keep us safe.

To the families of Sheriff Carpenter and Officer Campora, I pray that you will find healing and peace. To my friend, Sheriff Carpenter, I know Heaven has a special place reserved for all of the brave heroes like you.

Sheriff John Montgomery



Sheriff Cody Carpenter and Officer Joel Campora.

<https://www.facebook.com/SheriffCodyCarpenter/photos/a.592437234119991.1073741828.592433204120394/594120070618374/?type=3&theater>

Both gave the ultimate sacrifice on 5/31/2013 during a severe flood in Scott County, Arkansas. [Heroes Memorial Foundation Remembering Officer Joel Campora AGFC, EOW 5/31/2013](#)