



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Patrick M. Gallivan

## Senator Gallivan Presents Liberty Medal to Man Who Assisted Wyoming County Sheriff

JIM RANNEY January 3, 2019

| ISSUE: **NYS SENATE LIBERTY MEDAL**



Senator Patrick M. Gallivan (R-C-I, Elma) awarded the New York State Senate Liberty Medal to John Harzynski of Cheektowaga for his role in assisting Wyoming County Sheriff Gregory Rudolph in subduing a suspect along a country road last month. Mr. Harzynski, a 32-year employee of the U.S. Postal Service and a delivery driver for *The Buffalo News*, was honored Wednesday, January 2, 2019, for his heroic actions on the morning of December 11, 2018. While delivering newspapers along Route 238 between Attica and Warsaw, Harzynski came upon

an unmarked police car with lights flashing and noticed Sheriff Rudolph wrestling with a man armed with a knife. Mr. Harzynski grabbed the suspect, allowing Sheriff Rudolph to tackle the man and place him under arrest.

“John Harzynski’s quick and selfless actions were nothing short of heroic,” Senator Gallivan said. “His willingness to risk his own safety not only helped Sheriff Rudolph subdue an armed suspect, it helped prevent serious injury to those involved. I thank John for his bravery and his willingness to assist law enforcement. I also want to thank the State Police for their quick response to the incident.”

Sheriff Rudolph was on his way to work when a vehicle started tailgating him and the driver began flashing his headlights. The Sheriff pulled over to see if the driver needed assistance. The suspect then got out of his car and attacked Sheriff Rudolph, attempting to take his gun before pulling out a knife and threatening him. The men were wrestling when Mr. Harzynski arrived and pulled the man off Sheriff Rudolph.

“As soon as he turned his head, I knew I had to make a decision,” Harzynski told *The Buffalo News*. “I don’t know where I got all the energy and strength.”

State Police have charged Lynn Hall, 48, of Castile with attempted first-degree murder of a police officer, second-degree assault with intent to injure an officer, second-degree criminal possession of a weapon and other charges.

“I would like to thank Senator Gallivan and his Senate colleagues for recognizing Mr. Harzynski so appropriately with the highest honor bestowed by their chamber,” Sheriff Rudolph said. “Senator Gallivan’s background as a New York State Trooper and Erie County Sheriff make this presentation even more meaningful and special as no one in the Senate is more cognizant on how quickly critical incidents evolve and how even quicker actions can

avert disaster. Mr. Harzynski's character and courage epitomize the meaning of this medal and I couldn't be more grateful for his actions on December 11<sup>th</sup> that are so deserved of this recognition."

Senator Gallivan presented Mr. Harzynski with the Liberty Medal during ceremonies at the Wyoming County Government Center in Warsaw. Also present were members of the Wyoming County Board of Supervisors and other county representatives.

The Liberty Medal is one of the highest civilian honors that a New York resident can receive and is awarded to individuals who have merited special commendation for exceptional, heroic, or humanitarian acts and achievements on behalf of their fellow New Yorkers