



PRINCE WILLIAM COUNTY POLICE DEPARTMENT
NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**Two Police Officers are Honored for Pulling a Woman
from the Path of an Oncoming Commuter Train**

PRINCE WILLIAM COUNTY, VIRGINIA . . . Prince William County Police Chief Charlie T. Deane is pleased to announce the Officers of the Month for October 2008. Officer Cottrell Derrick and Officer Jessica Tacha were selected as the Officers of the Month and were recognized at a ceremony on February 4, 2009.

On September 3, 2008, in the early morning hours, Officers Derrick and Tacha were dispatched to check the area of Illinois and Alaska roads for a woman on a cell phone who called 911 stating that she needed help. The woman provided an incorrect address, and sounded distraught on the phone. The call was disconnected and repeated attempts to call her back were unsuccessful.

The officers checked the area thoroughly and Officer Derrick was able to locate a distraught woman standing on the CSX railroad tracks just off Featherstone Road in Woodbridge. The officer, who could see a train approaching, contacted Public Safety Communications and asked that they notify CSX to halt all rail traffic while he moved closer to the woman. Officer Tacha arrived moments later to assist Officer Derrick.

Before the officers could reach the woman, the train approached and the woman sat down on the tracks. Fortunately, the train passed on an adjacent track. However, another train approached on the tracks where the woman was seated. Officer Derrick and Officer Tacha reached the woman, who was distraught and inebriated. She refused verbal commands to move off the tracks so the officers physically removed her, but not without a struggle. They were able to pull her from the tracks moments before the second train passed by.

The woman continued to struggle with officers and ignore their commands but they were able to secure her in a police cruiser and take her to the Gar-Field (Eastern District) Station where Community Services Board personnel were contacted and arranged for the woman to be placed in a hospital for evaluation.

Their thorough checking of the area and their quick response upon locating the woman and removing her from danger saved the woman's life. It is for these reasons that they have been selected to receive this honor.

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