



# Department of Justice

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Southern District of Iowa

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## **FORMER POLICE CHIEF OF PARKERSBURG, IOWA** **RECEIVES VICTIM SERVICE AWARD**

DES MOINES, IOWA – On Thursday, April 14, 2011, the United States Attorneys for the Northern and Southern Districts of Iowa, Stephanie M. Rose and Nicholas A. Klinefeldt, presented the 2011 Law Enforcement Victim Service Award to Chris M. Luhring, City Clerk and former Police Chief of Parkersburg, Iowa from 2004 to 2009.

Mr. Luhring was nominated by B.J. Franklin, Director, Horizons Survivors Program, Cedar Rapids, Iowa, based upon the following:

On June 24, 2009, Mr. Luhring responded to a reported shooting at the make-shift weight room at the Aplington-Parkersburg High School. When Mr. Luhring arrived on the scene, approximately 22 frightened students were screaming and crying that Coach Ed Thomas had been shot. Coach Thomas was a friend, a mentor and a surrogate father to Mr. Luhring. Mr. Luhring addressed the immediate medical needs of Coach Thomas, assured the safety of the students, secured the crime scene and gathered information about the shooter. His professional response was extraordinary and a true example for all law enforcement. Under extreme pressure, Mr. Luhring was cognizant that the wife of Coach Thomas was on the ambulance team responding to the scene. Mr. Luhring had the difficult task of telling Jan that her husband had been critically shot.

Following the shooting of Coach Thomas, Mr. Luhring was available night and day to assist the family members of Coach Thomas, help the students who witnessed the shooting and protect a hurting community.

Mr. Luhring was later involved in the arrest of Mark Becker, who was later found guilty of first degree Murder, and sentenced to life in prison for the murder of the beloved football Coach Ed Thomas. The investigative process, the trial, and the sentencing was a long process under constant national media attention, but Mr. Luhring was unwavering in his protection of the victims and the entire community of Parkersburg.

Mr. Luhring exemplified the best qualities of a law enforcement officer addressing the needs of the people in his community who were still recovering from the 2008 tornado that took the lives of seven people from Parkersburg, Iowa and two from Hartford, Iowa.

The Law Enforcement Victim Service Award is the highest federal honor in the State of Iowa for victim services provided by law enforcement. This award is presented to certified law enforcement officers who go beyond the call of duty to show compassion and caring for victims of crime. This award was created by the Federal Law Enforcement Victim Task Force of the Offices of the United States Attorney for the Northern and Southern Districts of Iowa. The task force consists of representatives from victim service agencies as well as representatives from local, state, and federal law enforcement agencies.

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