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Animal control officer in Muskegon recognized

(Courtesy, MLIVE)

Tiffany Peterson is one of those behind-the-scenes law enforcement officers who, as an animal control deputy, is dealing with more furry friends than humans.

From rescuing stranded dogs, injured birds and even corralling loose horses, Peterson is almost always on the go — but a lot of time the vast majority of the public doesn't see the action.

It was on Tuesday, April 28, that the longtime Muskegon County Sheriff's Office deputy went from behind the scenes to front and center at the Muskegon County Board of Commissioners meeting.

The commission recognized her efforts at the meeting, specifically referencing an incident in January where Peterson assisted in rescuing two dogs from West Lake.

Muskegon County Sheriff's Office Sgt. Todd Dunham said Peterson, one of three animal controls for the county, is a hard worker who deserved the spotlight Tuesday.



"We constantly receive calls on her on how well she does from the citizens. She does an excellent job, excellent," Dunham said.

During the January call on Dalton Township's West Lake, two large male dogs — a younger German Shepherd and an older dog that appeared to be a German Shepherd mix — had gotten loose in the Twin Lake neighborhood and run out onto the mostly frozen lake

off Lake Avenue and Duff Road.

Near the middle of the lake, at least 200 feet from shore, they hit a soft spot and fell in. Peterson assisted fire and rescue personnel on that call.

Peterson said on Wednesday, April 29, that she feels she was just meant for the position she is in now.



"My long-term idea was to go into law enforcement. I did it for five years, and this opened up and it just fit. I have everything I need. I'm certified and I have the qualifications. I really like my job. It's rewarding," she said. "When you're working with people, it's not always as rewarding. I've realized now how compassionate people really are and how important animals are to the community."

Peterson has met "so many amazing people" in the field who also want to bring attention to the animal issues in Muskegon County.

Peterson herself has a knack for finding lost pets and reuniting them with their owners.

"I just take the time and pay attention. I look at the pictures and try to familiarize myself with the area and the posts on Facebook. Everyone is on there talking about it and sharing it. That helps get the word out there," Peterson said.

Peterson said she has no intention of leaving the position anytime soon. "I'm not going anywhere," she said. "I like my job." •



"Honoring Your Journey"

At Harbor Hospice it is our privilege and passion to honor each patient's journey. We are invited into each patient's home at a critical, intimate time. It is during these times we learn who each patient really is and we hear their stories. We use our skills to meet their needs, their wishes. We honor their journey.

In the spirit of one man's journey, let me introduce Nancy and Kenneth. Nancy is one of our social workers. She specializes in the care of our facility based patients, bringing an extra level of care when it is needed the most. It is Nancy who listens to their stories and walks along each patient on their journey. Using her love of writing, Nancy frequently writes stories, poems, or keepsakes for her patients and families. She honors their journey.

While just a small boy going to Spaniola's to buy a nickel's worth of flour for his mother, Kenneth Miszewski (now 91) determined that he would do everything that he could to help others. Hence, when WWII began, after finishing high school he enlisted in the military. Initially denied, due to poor eyesight, Kenneth persisted and was eventually accepted into the Army Corps of Engineers where he served as a driver of heavy equipment to rebuild the bombed roads and bridges. Today in frail health after a stroke, Kenneth lives in a local nursing facility and receives care from Harbor Hospice. As his social worker, I was privileged to hear his courageous story. Hospice programs are pleased to honor veterans for their service to our country, and as a Level IV We Honor Veterans Program, Harbor Hospice has conducted Veteran Pinning Ceremonies for over 200

veteran patients since becoming a We Honor Veterans program.

Like most WWII vets, Kenneth downplays his service, but his work placed him directly in harm's way. At the Pinning Ceremony recently held at the facility, his nephew, Dennis John Phelps, himself a Navy veteran, reported that Kenneth was the youngest in his company. Driving the heavy equipment, Kenneth was often subjected to gunfire and was strafed by enemy planes, including some of the first jet fighters. Kenneth recalled that more than once he had to dive under his bull dozer for shelter. He volunteered for this duty since he was not married and most of the other men had families waiting for them. After returning safely to Michigan, Kenneth never drove again, walking to work daily until his retirement. Harbor Hospice Veteran Volunteer, Steve Allen presented a commemorative pin and a certificate of commendation at a special ceremony where family, facility and Harbor Hospice staff had gathered. He was presented with a poem written in his honor, Bridges to Freedom.

His niece, Nora Phelps Radel has his many medals and scrapbooks filled with photos. Kenneth proudly wore his medals to lunch following the ceremony. The poem and the commendation hang in his room on proud display for a soldier who served his country well.

Bridges of Freedom

When just a youth of nineteen years,
You heeded duty's call.

The Army Corps of Engineers

Was where you gave your all.

To rebuild bridges Hitler bombed,

You drove a diesel lifter

Across the span, above the waves

To bring supplies much swifter.

The older soldiers worked below,

Beneath protecting steel,

But you drove fearlessly above

Despite the dangers, real.

You faced the daily spinner bombs,

Stuck bravely to your task,

And built bridges for our freedom,

Beyond what we could ask.

Two Bronze Stars commemorate

The valor you displayed.

We humbly give our gratitude

For the difference that you made.

Written by Nancy K. Abiade,

Harbor Hospice Social Worker

March 11, 2015

For Kenneth Miszewski

In Honor of your service in WWII

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