

AJ Officer Attends Schechterle Charity Ball

Charity helps families of public safety personnel

Apache Junction Police Officers Association Vice President Thom Parker attended the 100 Club's second annual Jason Schechterle Scholarship Ball held September 20 at the Arizona Grand Resort in Phoenix.

"It was an honor to attend this event and see Jason again, Jason has come a long way and is a man who has inspired us all within public service," said Parker, who was representing the AJPOA and Mesa FOP Lodge 9.

The 100 Club is a charity helping families of public safety personnel who die or become injured in the line of duty.

Schechterle sustained severe injuries as the result of an on-duty crash in which his patrol vehicle was rear ended and exploded in 2001. This collision resulted in numerous surgeries.

However, Schechterle remains strong and positive and continues to help others through his public speaking and charity events. He remains a full-authority police reserve officer with the Phoenix Police Department:

Schechterle attributes his drive to succeed to the ongoing support of his wife, Suzie, the public and the Phoenix Police and Fire departments.

As a testament of Schechterle's success, he has helped the 100 Club by creating the scholarship ball. Thanks to the ball, several scholarships were rewarded to children of public safety personnel with each scholarship being given in the honor of fallen police officers who were killed in the line of duty.

In addition, the 100 Club recognized several public safety personnel throughout the state of Arizona who have went above and beyond their duties this past year. It resulted in the saving of people's lives and the development of better programs in resolving crimes.

"This was an excellent event. Everyone who contributed to saving Jason's life was in attendance from the Phoenix firefighters and police officers who pulled Jason out of the car that horrible day, to the surgeons, doctors, friends and family members that have remained along Jason's side this

entire time," Parker said.

"It was certainly an emotional event," he added.

Schechterle, who addressed the audience, told his story from how his life was before the collision to the horrible day and how the collision changed his life. His story was filled with pictures and humor as Schechterle stated, "Humor is what got me through this."

In fact, most people remember the day when Schechterle was just beginning to walk again and was able to carry the Olympic torch during a portion of the run in 2004.

"The person who gave me the torch told me to watch out for the flame as it could burn me," Schechterle said.

He added with a laugh that he was the last person on Earth who needed to be told that.

"It was nice to see so much community support for the men and women who protect our community and it is nice to have the 100 Club helping those families who have been affected by unfortunate incidents where public safety personnel became injured while doing their jobs," Parker said.





Apache Junction Police Officers Association Vice President Thom Parker (right) meets with Jason Schechterle at his second annual ball.

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