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Gurnee Announces Police Officer and Civilian of the Year

Gurnee –The Gurnee Police Department recognized two of its finest at the Village of Gurnee Board meeting on Monday evening, April 18, 2022. The annual award for Police Officer of the Year and Civilian of the Year were presented before a crowd of friends, family, and colleagues.

Detective Matthew Bendler was selected as the 2020 Police Officer of the Year by an Awards Committee of his peers. Detective Bendler has been a police officer with the Village of Gurnee since 2001 and has held several designations during that time. In addition to being a patrol officer, he has helped other officers further the development of their careers through training. Detective Bendler is a department instructor for Emergency Vehicle Operations, Use of Force and Defensive Tactics, Rapid Deployment, and the Citizen's Police Academy. He also served nine years as a Containment and Marksman for the Northern Illinois Police Alarm System (NIPAS), from 2008 to 2017. Detective Bendler has served as a detective for the Gurnee Police Department for over three years conducting and leading multiple investigations of various crimes.

Detective Bendler was nominated as Officer of the Year for being an invaluable resource and always willing to lend a hand to fellow officers. Detective Bendler was the lead investigator on two critical incidents and coordinated resources, interviewed suspects, and gathered the necessary information and evidence to successfully close the cases.

Previously, recognitions received by Detective Bendler from the Gurnee Police Department include the Medal of Valor, Crime Control Pillar Award, Traffic Enforcement Award (three-time recipient), and DUI Enforcement Recognition Award.

Traffic Safety Technician Earl Tuckman was selected as the 2020 Civilian of the Year. In 2018, he joined the Gurnee Police Department after retiring from the Kenilworth Police Department, serving four years as a dispatcher and twenty-four years as a police officer. Earl is a dedicated and valuable member of the Gurnee Police Department and works on many projects for the police department and village. Earl has played a vital role in securing grants to further improve traffic safety within the Village of Gurnee. In addition to conducting research on traffic patterns, accidents, and red light camera effectiveness, he submits reports to the State of Illinois to secure funding for various grants that allow officers to further

focus on traffic enforcement such as DUI Enforcement, speeding violations, seat belt violations, and distracted driving violations.

During 2020, Earl played a significant role in assisting the Records Division with catching up on data entry. Earl took time to learn how to enter field contacts and review supplemental narratives to aid the division with entering hundreds of supplements and field contacts. This allowed records to spend time on more complex entries and tasks required each day.

The Gurnee Police Department is proud of the work and dedication displayed by Detective Bendler and Earl Tuckman. Join us in congratulating them on their accomplishments.