

Comrade of Amer-I-Can Peter Elliott - Named U.S. Marshal's "TOP COP"



Left to right: Grace Deleon with Peter Elliott

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Peter Elliott, U.S. Marshal for the Northern District of Ohio, was presented the TOP COP Award by the National Association of Police Organizations (NAPO) at a ceremony in the Warner Theater in Washington, D.C. recently. Elliott unexpectedly handed his award to Grace Leon, the widow of a slain Cleveland patrolman whose tragic death during a fugitive pursuit led to the creation of the "Fugitive Safe Surrender" concept. Elliott was honored for helping launch this innovative program. Safe Surrender offers fugitives a chance to surrender at local faith and community – based organizations.

An emotional Grace Leon, widow of Patrolman Wayne Leon, accepted the trophy in honor of her husband. Also on stage were celebrities Richard Belzer of NBC's "Law and Order" and John Walsh, host of "television's "America's Most Wanted."

Elliott's efforts also were lauded by U.S. Representative Stephanie Tubbs Jones in the Congressional Record. "It is because of his commitment and remarkable innovation in law enforcement that I wish to acknowledge "TOP COP" Marshal Peter J. Elliott," said the Congresswoman. She went on to say: "Marshal

Elliott is an outstanding man who has greatly contributed to the safety of his district and the country."

"For each fugitive who peacefully and voluntarily surrenders, law enforcement officers and citizens face one less dangerous confrontation on the streets," said Elliott. He credited U.S. Marshals Director John F. Clark's efforts to fund the program and make it part of the agency's Adam Walsh Act operations aimed at protecting children from sexual predators.

TOP COPS Awards pay tribute to law enforcement officers for outstanding service to their communities. Nominations come from rank-and-file officers, and selections are made from hundreds of candidates. 20 officers from the top 10 cases of 2007 were chosen this year. NAPO, a national law enforcement group, represents 238,000 sworn law enforcement officers from 2,000 police associations and units across the country.

*****Editor's Note:** On behalf of Peter Elliott's dear friend, Jim Brown, who was invited but was unable to attend the award ceremonies, the Amer-I-Can Program heartily salutes and congratulates this consummate law enforcement professional and visionary, Peter Elliott.