



## **Community Service Officer Vicky Chavez**

*End of Watch: July 9<sup>th</sup>, 1992*

On July 9<sup>th</sup>, 1992, Farmington Police Department Community Service Officer Vicky Chavez was slain in the line of duty while conducting a property check.

On the morning of Thursday, July 9<sup>th</sup>, 1992 at approximately 1115 hours, Officer Chavez arrived at a residence on West 27<sup>th</sup> Street to conduct a residential property check for a vacationing family. This residence was that of a single story average size family home, located in a heavily populated neighborhood.

Within moments of calling out at the residence, Officer Chavez advised dispatch "I need another officer to 87 with me here." Within seconds, Officer Chavez repeated this transmission a second time. This was instantaneously followed by her final transmission, "No, he's got a gun." Immediately following this broadcast officers were dispatched and/or responded to her location. Although dispatch attempted to repeatedly raise Officer Chavez, their attempts went unanswered.

As officers began to arrive on scene, Officer Chavez's unit was observed parked along the curb facing eastward, directly in front of the residence. During their approach, responding officers were unable to acquire visual contact with her. Tragically, Officer Chavez was discovered lying across the front seat of her vehicle, deceased. She had suffered massive trauma as a direct result of multiple gunshot wounds.

The investigation itself revealed that prior to Officer Chavez's arrival, the estranged adult son of the homeowners was found to have forcefully entered the residence. As Officer Chavez began to exit her vehicle, the male subject came to the front door; most likely believing she was a police officer responding to the break in. At the time of this incident, the subject was wanted for failing to appear on a mental health competency hearing pickup order.

According to witnesses, the male subject approached Officer Chavez's vehicle with a shotgun in hand and began firing. Officer Chavez was killed instantly.

At Officer Chavez's funeral she was described by then Chief of Police Richard Melton, as "Well rounded and self-confident." She was honored with a funeral procession which consisted of twenty marked police vehicles, while her hearse was flanked by motor units. The streets were lined with firefighters, all of which stood at attention with flashing emergency lights gracing their backdrop. To honor her further, they each saluted as she passed by.

Upon arrival at the church, Officer Chavez was greeted with bagpipes playing the soulfulness of "Amazing Grace." During the memorial service Chief Melton commented, "We try to hire people with a lot of Vicky's characteristics, with Vicky we hit a homerun." To conclude the service, members of the Farmington Police Department saluted her white cloth draped casket with each placing a single flower upon it as a final display of respect and appreciation for her service.

Officer Chavez' memory is honored through the Vicky Chavez Special Service Award, which is issued to those employees who diligently perform a law enforcement duty that exceeds the normal service requirements while assigned to a specialty unit.

Officer Vicky Chavez, sadly, became the third Farmington Officer to fall in the line of duty. She was survived by her husband and two children.