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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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**Montgomery County Fallen Hero Plaque Dedication Honoring Norristown
Borough Police Officer THOMAS M. BARONE**



On October 11, 2012, Montgomery County District Attorney Risa Vetri Ferman dedicated a plaque in memory of our fallen hero Officer Thomas M. Barone of the Norristown Police Department. Barone was killed in the line of duty on October 11, 1992 when he and his partner responded to a domestic disturbance. This is the

nineteenth plaque dedicated in Montgomery County recognizing a police officer who gave his life in the line of duty.

On October 11, 1992, Norristown Police Officers Thomas Barone and Louis Zbyszinski responded to a domestic disturbance. Once inside the home, as Officer Barone reached the top of a flight of stairs, Walter H.G. Baker ambushed him, firing two shots from a .38 caliber revolver which struck Officer Barone in the head and chest area. Officer Zbyszinski tried to rescue his partner by pulling him away from the danger. Baker then fired more shots, one striking Officer Barone and another striking a female in the home.

According to the April 15, 1993 edition of The Inquirer, on the third day of his trial, William H.G. Baker cut off his defense and pleaded guilty to murder saying, "I want to get it over with." He was convicted of first-degree murder in April, 1993 and sentenced to death. Baker died in prison at 54-years-old of natural causes.

Thomas M. Barone was born and raised by his parents, Charles and Antonia, on Whitehall Road in West Norriton Township, with his brother Michael and sister Rosemary. As a child he had a love for life and an infectious personality that endeared him to many. He graduated from Norristown High School and West Chester University, excelling in both academic and extracurricular activities. An extremely well-rounded individual, his varied interests included music, sports, reading and weightlifting, and his love of automobiles was widely known. His many cars, like the man himself, were always clean, sharp, and finely tuned. He was a caring person and had great pride in himself and his family. He possessed a tremendous work ethic and was diligent in striving to achieve his many goals. Barone served as a Police Officer in Limerick Township and Tredyffrin Township just before joining the Norristown Police Department in 1990. His professional manner and sense of fairness earned the respect of both his fellow Officers and the citizens he served. Barone was thirty-two when he was killed.

The Hero Cops Program was founded in 2007 by attorney James Binns, with the purpose of honoring the men and women in Philadelphia law enforcement who have been killed or died in the line of duty. In 2007, this program was extended to Montgomery County, and honors the 27 Montgomery County Police Officers who have made the ultimate sacrifice in giving their life to protect others. Officer Thomas M. Barone will receive the 19th plaque dedicated in Montgomery County. The order of the Montgomery County Plaque dedications to date is as follows:

1. Sergeant James R. Miller, Upper Dublin Township Police. EOW: 04/20/2004.
Dedication: 09/06/2007.

2. FBI Special Agent Charles L. Reed. EOW: 03/22/1996.
Dedication: 09/24/2007.

3. Officer Edward Setzer, Lower Merion Township. EOW: 9/30/1988.
Dedication: 10/01/2007.

4. Trooper Stanley E. Wesoloski, Pennsylvania State Police. EOW: 05/26/1986.
Dedication: 10/25/2007.

5. Chief Robert E. Reilly, Norristown Borough Police. EOW: 09/09/1959.
Dedication: 06/17/2008.
6. Edgar L. Peterson, Cheltenham Township Police Officer. EOW: 03/03/1946.
Dedication: 04/13/2009.
7. Officer Richard Lawn, Jr., Lower Gwynedd Police. EOW: 07/28/2003.
Dedication: 06/01/2009.
8. Sergeant John M. Thomas, Pennsylvania State Police. EOW: 05/08/1927.
Dedication: 10/13/2009.
9. Patrolman Andrew W. Miller, Pennsylvania State Police Highway Patrol. EOW:
04/01/1928. Dedication: 10/13/2009.
10. Trooper Francis M. Tessitore, Pennsylvania State Police. EOW: 10/02/1960.
Dedication: 10/13/2009.
11. Corporal Leo M. Koscelnick, Pennsylvania State Police. EOW: 08/15/1977.
Dedication: 10/13/2009.
12. Officer David Hancock, Montgomery Township Police. EOW: 12/11/1976.
Dedication: 09/21/2010.
13. Patrolman Michael J. Saulin, Upper Merion Police. EOW: 03/04/1975.
Dedication: 10/26/2010.
14. Sergeant George F. Opelski, West Norriton Township. EOW: 09/13/1986.
Dedication: 06/23/2011.
15. Officer Thomas Mathews, Abington Township Police. EOW: 06/29/1949.
Dedication: 09/27/2011.
16. Police Officer Thomas W. Corum, Pottstown Borough. EOW: 01/20/1964.
Dedication: 10/25/2011.
17. Officer Eugene "Chic" Lucas, Conshohocken Borough. EOW: 10/30/1922.
Dedication: 06/26/2012.
18. Officer Francis "Buck" Roy, Lower Merion Township. EOW: 07/03/1924.
Dedication: 09/27/2012.

The dedication ceremony was held at the Marshall Street Elementary School where Barone attended school as a child.

For more information about the Hero Cop Program, please visit the "Awards/Honors" section of the District Attorney's website: www.montcopa.org/da.





