

DOUGLAS COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

CHRIS BOICE TIM FREEMAN TOM KRESS

1036 SE Douglas Ave., Room 217 ↗ Roseburg, Oregon 97470

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
February 7, 2024

Commissioner Freeman, Undersheriff Frieze, and Lt. O'Dell Honored with Four Chaplains Awards

(Douglas County, Ore.) Douglas County Commissioners Chris Boice, Tim Freeman, and Tom Kress, along with Douglas County Sheriff John Hanlin are excited to recognize and congratulate Douglas County Commissioner Tim Freeman, Douglas County Undersheriff Jeff Frieze, and Douglas County Sheriff's Lieutenant Brad O'Dell as the latest recipients of [Four Chaplains Legion of Honor](#) awards.

The **Four Chaplains Legion of Honor Awards** are presented each year across the United States and are given in the spirit of the Four Chaplains (often referred to as the Immortal Chaplains), who, without hesitation gave away their life jackets during the attack and eventual sinking of the United States Army Transport Ship Dorchester on February 3, 1943, during World War II. The Four Chaplain Lieutenants who sacrificed themselves so that others could live that day were Reverend George L. Fox (Methodist), Rabbi Alexander D. Goode (Jewish), Reverend Clark V. Poling (Dutch Reformed Church in America) and Father John P. Washington (Roman Catholic). The Dorchester was one of three ships in an American convoy that was moving steadily across the icy waters from Newfoundland toward an American base in Greenland when it was torpedoed by an enemy German U-boat submarine. 672 young men and women paid the ultimate sacrifice in the attack that day. The **Legion of Honor Awards** recognize a select group of individuals who embody the giving spirit and unconditional service to their community, their nation and to humanity. This year marks the eighty-first anniversary of the sinking of the USAT Dorchester.

Commissioner Tim Freeman was awarded the very prestigious [Four Chaplains Legion of Honor Bronze Medallion](#) award. The **Bronze Medallion** is a national level award and is the second highest honor given by the Chapel. It is presented annually to a very select group of individuals in the United States by the Four Chaplains Memorial Foundation. The medallion is bestowed only to individuals who have made extraordinary contributions to the well-being of others at the State, Regional or National level, and whose very life epitomizes the spirit of the sacrifice of the Four Chaplains. Freeman was nominated for this award by two local veterans, United States Navy retired Chief Warrant Officer Jim Little and United States Marine Corps retired 1st Sergeant Jim Barnett.

"The story of the Four Chaplains is a remarkable testament to human kindness and sacrifice. The idea of serving others sacrificially is the basis for what public service is all about. I am humbled and honored that Jim Little and Jim Barnett chose to recognize me for the work that I do to help veterans and the veteran community. That work is my passion and is work that I love to do out of my sincere appreciation for the service and sacrifice made by every veteran who has served the United States of America." - Commissioner Tim Freeman

Commissioner Freeman grew up in Douglas County. He worked as a field mechanic for Don Whitaker Logging to put himself through school at OIT where he studied computer systems engineering technology. In 1991, Freeman and his wife purchased their own business, Freeman's Garden Valley Shell, and operated it for 26 years. He became involved in serving his local community when he was appointed to the Roseburg Budget Committee in 2001. In 2003, Freeman was elected to the Roseburg City Council and thus officially started his career in public service. He went on to be elected to the Oregon House of Representatives serving the constituents of House District 2 from 2009 to 2015. Freeman currently serves as a Douglas County Commissioner (2015 to present). Freeman is most proud of his leadership in implementing cost-saving initiatives, managing budgets, and supervising financial planning for Douglas County department operations; insuring consistent and reliable in-person County operations without disruption of County services throughout the pandemic; the refurbishment of our Douglas County Veterans Memorial; working with local veterans to save the Roseburg VA and establish a Veterans Home in Roseburg; working to preserve & protect our valuable timber lands; helping to win two O&C Federal Land Management lawsuits; local wildfire response efforts including Archie Creek and Tyee Ridge; emergency response for the 2019 Snowmageddon weather event; his membership and work with the Douglas County Veterans Forum, honored guest speaker for numerous veteran events, and presiding as President of O&C Counties for the 8th consecutive year. He is also proud to serve on the Douglas Forest Protective Association Board, Douglas Public Health Network Board, Umpqua Health Alliance Board, Community Cancer Center Board, State Forest & Trust Lands Committee, NaCO Western Interstate Region Board, Governor's Wildfire Council Mitigation Subcommittee, and the Oregon Criminal Justice Commission.

Undersheriff Jeff Frieze and Lt. Brad O'Dell were inducted into the **Four Chaplains Legion of Honor** as recipients of the Legion of Honor Award. They were nominated by Douglas County Sheriff John Hanlin and were bestowed the honor for their selfless work in supporting, volunteering, and serving our local communities.

Undersheriff Frieze has been in law enforcement for 26 years and was appointed as the Douglas County Undersheriff in 2018. The position of Undersheriff is one of, if not the most, difficult, and demanding positions within a sheriff's office. The Undersheriff is expected to oversee and run the day-to-day operations within the Sheriff's Office whenever the Sheriff is gone or unavailable. That includes overseeing the Patrol Division, the Corrections Division, the Investigations Division, Civil and Records Division, Search and Rescue, Animal Control, 9-1-1 Communications, and the

Sheriff's Administrative offices. In addition to these responsibilities, Undersheriff Frieze has always been engaged with the community outside of his work obligations. He has been recognized for his service on the North Douglas School Board, the Oregon Parks & Recreation ATV Advisory Committee, the North Douglas Sports and Recreation Board, and helped coach youth sports. Undersheriff Frieze currently volunteers countless hours as the Sheriff's Office Tactical Response Team commander. His leadership with the tactical team and commitment to providing the best public safety services possible plays a critical role in the tactical team's training, readiness, efficiency, and overall mission success.

Lt. O'Dell has been with the Douglas County Sheriff's Office for 18 years. He is currently the Special Services Lieutenant, and his position involves being the primary Public Information Officer, as well as overseeing several other units like the Sheriff's Office Marine Patrol, Forest Patrol Deputies (which include Deputies at Diamond Lake, BLM Patrol, and private timberland patrol through the Douglas Timber Operators), Douglas County Search and Rescue and the operations of the Douglas County Emergency Communications (9-1-1) Center. Lt. O'Dell is currently the President of the Oregon Homicide Investigators Association and Vice Chair for the Search and Rescue Advisory Committee of the Oregon State Sheriff's Association. His commitment to making our community better does not stop with his duties within the Sheriff's Office, he dedicates a lot of his personal time to doing much more. He is very active with the local non-profit Friends of the Umpqua Valley Police K9 Program, serves as a Board Member for the Mercy Foundation, Chair of the Umpqua Community College Criminal Justice Advisory Committee, and is a member of the Emergency Medical Services Advisory Committee. He participates in various community events such as Shop-with-a-Cop, Coffee with a Cop, Tip A Hero, Operation Prom Night, and at numerous safety fairs. Lt. O'Dell is an active member and the current Commander of the Sheriff's Office Honor Guard. In addition to providing local leadership, Lt. O'Dell is also an active member of the Oregon Fallen Badge Foundation and serves on the Line of Duty Death Response Team. The Oregon Fallen Badge Foundation was founded in the spring of 2011 by several law enforcement honor guard members and police survivors from within the state of Oregon to provide support for the planning and execution of law enforcement memorial services throughout the state to ensure fallen officers are given full honors for their ultimate sacrifice.

“Both of these individuals (Frieze and O’Dell) reflect the level of dedication, commitment, and service to our community that not only I expect, but the public has come to expect. They both possess the traits and qualities the Legion of Honor seeks to acknowledge. I am very pleased that they were recognized and given this honorable award.”
– Sheriff John Hanlin

The 12th Annual Roseburg Four Chaplains Legion of Honor Award Ceremony was held on Saturday, February 3, 2024, at Westside Christian Church in Roseburg. United States Navy retired Chief Warrant Officer Jim Little and United States Marine Corps retired 1st Sergeant Jim Barnett, co-organize and host the event. They were joined by co-master of ceremonies, United States Army retired Chief Warrant Officer Dan Loomis. All three are past Legion of Honor Awardees and Little and Barnett are also recipients of the prestigious [Legion of Honor Bronze Medallion](#).

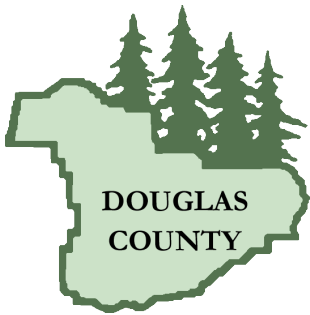
The ceremony featured a special showing of the documentary [The Four Chaplains: Sacrifice at Sea](#); a tribute candle lighting; recitation of the heroic story of the Dorchester and the U.S. Coast Guard cutter Escanaba; the ringing of the ship's bell by United States Marine Corps, Air National Guard, and Army National Guard veteran Gwen Best; the playing of “Amazing Grace” on the bag pipes by Heidi Wood and ‘Taps’ on the cornet by United States Air Force retired Master Sergeant, Ron Dukes, all in remembrance of the 672 soldiers and civilians who perished on that cold icy day over eight decades ago. Joining them in faith were United States Air Force retired, Chief Master Sergeant Pastor Rick McMichael of the Westside Christian Church in Roseburg; Father José Manuel Campos Garcia of St. Joseph and St. Frances Xavier Catholic Church; Chaplain Dwayne Brown from the Roseburg VA Medical Center, and former United States Marine, Rabbi Russell McAlmond from the Center for Human Equality in Grants Pass.

Following the recitation of the heroic narratives and the candle lighting presentation, Little and Barnett announced and honored five local recipients with an induction ceremony for the **2023/2024 Four Chaplains Legion of Honor Award**. In addition to Frieze and O'Dell, the other newly inducted members of the Legion of Honor were United States Army retired William Duncan, Thomas Nelson, and Barbara Herscher. Then in a surprise presentation they awarded a [Legion of Honor Humanitarian Award](#) to Dr. Fredrick L. Herscher. The **Humanitarian Award** is a national level award and is the third highest honor given by the Chapel. Dr. Herscher was presented with the Humanitarian Award in recognition of his lifetime commitment to selfless service and societal advancement, which has positively affected the quality of life in our community. Dr. Herscher is a family practice doctor in Sutherlin. He received his medical degree from Kansas City University of Medicine and Biosciences College of Osteopathic Medicine and has been in practice for more than 40 years. The Humanitarian Award presentation was followed by a presentation of Four Chaplain Appreciation Awards. Those awards were presented to Chaplain Dwayne Brown, Father José Manuel Campos, Rabbi Russell McAlmond, Pastor Rick McMichael, Elias Minaise, and Shelley Johnson. Assisting with the ceremony and presentation of awards were Roseburg Sea Cadets Roman Trask and Damien Bratcher, Sheriff John Hanlin, Neil Hummel, Elias Minaise, Barbara Herscher, and Angelia Freeman.

The Four Chaplains Legion of Honor award is an honor awarded to persons based on documented acts of selfless service. Nominations for the Four Chaplains Legion of Honor award must be submitted to and approved by the special Four Chaplains Memorial Foundation committee in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania each year. Some notable recipients of this award are Presidents Truman, Eisenhower and Reagan; Luminaries Bob Hope, John Glenn, James Michener and Marian Anderson, as well as many other military veterans, and civilians from all walks of life. Previous recipients from Douglas County government include Commissioner Tim Freeman, Sheriff John Hanlin, Veterans Service Officer, Mary Newman-Keyes, Heidi Wood and Douglas County Clerk, Dan Loomis. Additionally, Four Chaplains Appreciation Award recipients include Douglas County employees Tamara Howell and Kellie Trenkle. Since 2012, our local Four Chaplains Chapter has awarded 3 Legion of Honor Bronze Medallions, 2 Legion of Honor Humanitarian Awards, 46 Legion of Honor Awards, and 8 Appreciation Awards. To learn more about the Four Chaplains Memorial Foundation and the Legion of Honor Award program, [click here](#).

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