

December 12, 2014

Chief Michael C. Koval  
Madison Police Department  
211 S. Carroll St.  
Madison, WI 53703

Chief Koval:

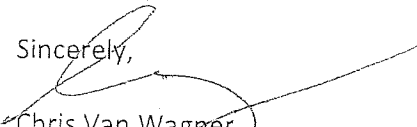
Three weeks ago today, my wife Peggy and I should have been calling funeral homes, our pastor and our family with tragic news. We should have been planning a Mass of Christian Burial at Queen of Peace, followed by a procession to an unwanted gravesite. And we and our other three children should have and would have been robbed of joy, stripped of the will to live, and forced to confront a Thanksgiving for which thanks would have been hard to muster, much less mutter. All this should have come to pass, but for the heroic, compassionate and life-saving efforts of one of your officers. You see, that morning, God sent Sgt. Jeff Felt to save the fast-fading life of our oldest child, Mollie, as she lay dying of a heroin overdose.

Today, and every day, we give thanks to God for sending Sgt Felt, who for us was an Angel in Blue. Mere words cannot begin to reveal our deep gratitude. Sgt. Felt will be forever in our parental prayers, until our own dying days.

Our oldest has long struggled with addictions, and will continue to do so. But she is alive today for that struggle, because of the quick and compassionate work of Sgt. Felt. He shows a deep, abiding compassion for people. Our daughter may not now, or ever, truly appreciate the chance she was given her that morning. But we do. We do, deeply. No parent should ever attend the funeral of his own child, yet the current heroin plague is a pox on our society, one that produces a daily item about yet another heroin-related tragedy. That is coupled with a long line of hurting, mourning parents. Sgt. Felt has spared us that carrion comfort, and allowed us a chance to hope & pray that this time may be the time, the chance, with which our oldest will turn a corner and succeed in her struggle, and someday begin to know a healthy, happy life.

We know that many of your fine officers toil in these same drug-addled trenches, day after day, night after night. But this one, Sgt. Felt, is the one who stood there in the line of fire for us. We ask you and your department to consider nominating Sgt. Felt for an appropriate Departmental Award or Citation. We would award him an immediate Medal of Valor, of course, but that decision is yours, not ours, to make. Know that we think Sgt. Felt deserves to be honored.

Sincerely,

  
Chris Van Wagner  
Peggy Kelly Van Wagner