



JON PLUMER

STATE REPRESENTATIVE • 42nd ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

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Rep. Plumer Honors First Responders of the Year: Deputy Blake Brandner and Lieutenant Mark Smit

MADISON, WI – Today on the Assembly floor, Rep. Plumer honored Deputy Blake Brandner and Lieutenant Mark Smit from the Columbia County Sheriff’s Office as First Responders of the Year for the 42nd Assembly District. Their heroism and quick action saved the life of a little girl in Portage.

“We owe so much to the first responders in our communities for keeping us safe and saving lives. It was a tremendous honor to recognize Deputy Brandner and Lieutenant Smit in the Assembly,” said Rep. Plumer. “A little girl is alive and well today because these two officers sprang into action and administered lifesaving treatment.”

On Tuesday, September 19th, 2023, a 911 call came into Columbia County for a disturbance and the dispatcher only heard screaming on the phone. Lt. Mark Smit and Deputy Blake Brandner were the first two on the scene. Dispatch informed them that a 2-year-old had no heartbeat and was not breathing. Deputy Brandner found the lifeless child laying on the ground, and nobody was helping or doing anything for the baby. Deputy Brandner immediately asked questions on what happened and if the baby was choking. While doing this he started CPR simultaneously. Due to a language barrier and frantic scene, nobody was able to provide information. The child was a neighbor and the mother brought her over asking for help.

After doing CPR, Deputy Brandner noticed and felt a heartbeat. Lt. Smit assessed the baby and noticed signs of a drug overdose. They got Narcan from Portage Police and Deputy Brandner administered 2 doses to the baby. They continued providing medical care for the baby including oxygen, and were eventually joined by EMS and Fire personnel. The 2 deputies stayed with the baby and continued comforting her until the ambulance drove off to go to children’s hospital.

Through their calm, quick, and instinctive thinking and immediate actions, these deputies saved the child’s life. This was a great team effort with Portage Police, Portage Fire, and DSH Aspirus EMS also providing crucial support. In this medical crisis, seconds mattered and the deputies jumped right into action.

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