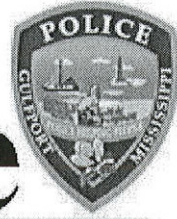


City of Gulfport News Release



Police Department PIO

www.gulfport-ms.gov/police

Chief Alan Weatherford today announced that:

Today, the Gulfport Police Department awarded Officer George H. Payne, III the Life Saving Medal during the Gulfport City Council Meeting.

The medal was earned by Officer Payne on November 20, 2009 when he responded to assist in the search of a missing elderly female in the area of Nunnally Street. Both the Gulfport Police Department and the Gulfport Fire Department were searching based upon a call from family members.

During the search, Officer Payne broadened the area he was searching by exploring the banks of the Brickyard Bayou. He observed an object in the water and investigated. He quickly discovered that it was the top of the elderly woman's head; she was submerged in the cold water. Officer Payne immediately entered the water and rescued the lady. He then summoned medical help for the lady to address hypothermia.

"Officer Payne's diligence and attention during the search lead to the best conclusion to a very serious situation. His actions demonstrate the absolute core of service to the public. We are all proud of him," said Chief Alan Weatherford.

Approved for release by: _____

Date: January 19, 2010

"Building a safer Gulfport together"