



## River Valley Tactical Team

SOTA Board Members,

It is my honor to nominate Paul Hagen, of the River Valley Tactical Team, for the Lifetime Achievement Award.

Paul has been a member of the River Valley Tactical Team for 25 years and has been our Team Commander for the past 17 years. Paul recently retired from the team on January 1, 2019.

Due to Paul's persistence and vision, our team has grown extensively over the years in all aspects related to tactical operations, including personnel, equipment and tactics.

There are too many to list but a few of Paul's accomplishments as Team Commander include, writing our current policy manual. This was no easy task considering we have six agencies who all must agree on the policies that are put into place.

Paul petitioned our Board of Directors to add Le Sueur County to our multi-agency team. This addition strengthened our team to twenty-two members, not including our Tactical Paramedics, Negotiators and Communication Specialist. It also increased the jurisdiction we cover to three counties.

Paul worked relentlessly to acquire equipment that would make us and those we protect, safer. No matter how many times he was told "no" or how long the process took, Paul refused to give up. His persistence paid off and has resulted in the purchase of several types of tactical equipment, which include an ICOR Robot and his pride and joy, a Lenco BearCat. Thanks to Paul, we are one of the better equipped Tactical Teams in Southern MN.

Paul is currently a Sergeant with the St. Peter Police Department. He is a respected supervisor, who leads from the front and by example. He never asks anyone to do something he wouldn't do himself. Paul is also a well-known and highly regarded trainer for area departments and the Hibbing Law Enforcement Skills Program.

What truly makes Paul unique, however, is that after 25 years in Law Enforcement and Tactical Operations he has not lost his compassion for those he serves or his sense of duty for those he serves with. I believe this is a direct reflection of Paul's strong values and dedication to his family and faith.



I can honestly say, I do not know of a more devoted husband, father, or man of faith, than Paul. His compassion and commitment have carried over to our team. I think every member would agree that Paul treats each of us like his immediate family.

Paul keeps his priorities in perspective and often reminds us that "Family comes first."

It has been said that a true leader shines during the darkest hours.

On December 23, 2006, our team was involved in an incident in which two of our teammates were shot, leaving one severely injured which resulted in the loss of his right eye.

On January 17, 2013 our team was involved in another incident in which deadly force was used on a suspect who exited his residence and began to fire at officers.

These events shook our team and affected all of us in different ways. In the days and weeks that followed each incident, Paul reached out to everyone. He kept a close watch on how we were doing. He supported and reassured us. Paul shielded us as much as possible from the second guessing and "Monday morning quarterbacking" being done by the media and other so called "law enforcement experts." Paul didn't stop there, he reached out to our families, who are often overlooked during these traumatic events but are also directly impacted.

Little did we realize at the time, Paul was probably more affected than anyone, but he continued to put his team before himself.

We have all heard the debate within Law Enforcement on whether we are Warriors or Guardians. Paul has proven throughout his career that we can, and should be, both.

The River Valley Tactical Team will always be indebted to Paul for his leadership, dedication and friendship.

There is no one better.

Thank you for your consideration of this nomination,

Dan Forster  
River Valley Tactical Team-Team Commander