

Pins Are Petty



On August 28, 2008 several of our members were presented with a crime suppression award at the convention center. Prior to having his award photo taken in uniform, one of our 3rd shift recipients was told by Assistant Chief Tracy Montgomery that he was in violation of policy. It was crucial enough for Montgomery to order the officer to remove his 9-11 memorial pin because, as she explained, it was only authorized for wear from 2001 to 2002. The officer explained that he had received this pin from his commander. Montgomery maintained her order to remove the pin and explained to the officer that it would look nice in a shadow box.

This is another classic example of management's focus on style instead of substance. Pins are petty. Pins are not the problem. Perhaps there are more pressing issues for 3rd shift patrol officers who receive awards for suppressing crimes. Instead of making sure officers are in compliance with pin policy, how about making sure they have access to personally owned rifles, are kept warm with winter knit watch caps, are protected from facial cancer with "boonie" hats, are freed up from long jail times through a civilian wagon/booking process, or have access to a load bearing tactical vest and the comfort and functionality of a utility patrol uniform. In other words, how about we focus on the major instead of the minor. Let's pay attention to the needs of rank-and-file.

In addition to this current management practice of "majoring on the minor" is a picture of double-standards. Look at the current Phoenix Police Chiefs/Public Safety Manager group photo. Two of the chiefs, Anderson and Pena, are clearly in violation of Montgomery's pin policy. Seeing that Pena was promoted in November 2004, he's been out of policy for almost 4 years. As can be expected, when pettiness takes priority over practicality, expect low morale and inconsistency.

