



Written by [Steve Byas](#) on August 26, 2016

Police Officers Save Boy in OKC Apartment Fire — Just Another Day on the Job

“It came in as a ‘trouble unknown,’” Oklahoma City Police Master Sergeant Gary Knight told *The New American*, as he described how Oklahoma City police officer Anthony Glover and Sergeant Dave Hollis saved the life of a two-year-old boy, Tyree Polite, trapped in an apartment fire in Oklahoma City this week.



The call came about 3:00 a.m. through the 911 emergency system, and as Sergeant Knight said, “We didn’t even know it was a fire until they got there.” During many 911 calls, both police officers and fire fighters routinely respond, not knowing the exact nature of the emergency until they are on the scene.

But once arriving at the Brownstone Apartments, near N.W. 28th and May Avenue, Glover and Hollis ran to the back of the complex. There they encountered a privacy fence blocking their access to the burning building. Reacting quickly, Sgt. Hollis tore the fence open with his hands, allowing the two officers to make it to where a mother and her son were trapped on the second floor of the complex.

Firefighters were on their way, but had not yet arrived with the equipment needed in such perilous situations. The frightened mother yelled at the officers that she did not think they could escape by using the stairs, so Officer Glover told the mother to drop the boy, and he would catch him. He was standing on cushions that the boy’s mother, Takia Harding, and her mother, Lanetta Vick, had dropped to the ground. But it was 20 feet to the ground, and they were afraid to drop Tyree on them.

Police Lt. Jeff Spruill said that while Hollis and Glover shouted for the mother to drop Tyree, another officer had arrived and began knocking on apartment doors to inform residents of the need to evacuate the building.

“She makes what would be a terrifying decision for any parent to make,” Spruill said, adding, “She ultimately does, and Glover ends up being the one to catch him. What could have been an incredibly terrifying situation had a happy ending.”

“It was a relief he caught him,” Harding said. “His arms were open, and he held on tight.”

Moments later, fire fighters arrived, and they extended a ladder so Harding and Vick could make their exit as well.

One apartment complex resident was transported to a local hospital for smoke inhalation, while others were assisted by paramedics at the scene. No one was seriously injured in the fire, thanks to the combined efforts of several police officers, police lieutenants, fire fighters, and even some members of the media who had made it to the apartments.



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On the Facebook page of the Oklahoma City Police Department, someone posted, “Police officers throughout the nation perform heroic acts on a daily basis but, sadly enough, it seems the main focus of the media” is on the “negative actions of a select few.”

This is certainly true. In fact, a recent episode in San Antonio, Texas, remarkably similar to the Oklahoma City case, further illustrates this. There, officer Tim Bowen caught *three* children, as they jumped from a burning building.

In that case, Bowen and his partner saw smoke in the sky while they were on patrol. Upon arrival at an apartment building, they saw a child in the window of one unit, and quickly realized there were four children screaming because “they had no place to go.”

“It took a minute or so to try and calm [them] down and have them listen to me and have faith in me,” Bowen recalled. One child, a four-year-old, was too scared to jump the 16 feet, but he was rescued by fire fighters, who arrived a few minutes later.

These two stories illustrate that we are much more likely to hear about the bad things a police officer might do, on an isolated basis. Police misconduct does happen, and it is not justifiable, but the reality is that, police are much more likely to help people in distress on a daily basis. As another person posted on the OKC PD Facebook page, “I hope I’m never put in that mother’s position, but if I am I hope to have brave men like these guys there for me and my family. God is so good!”

Unfortunately, the isolated incidents where cops either do something wrong, or are falsely accused of doing something wrong, tend to make the news, and are then used by agitators with an anti-cop agenda. The agenda is ordinarily to promote the false narrative that *local* police are prone to brutality, racism, and the like, but that we need a *nationalized* police force instead, or at least increased regulations out of the federal government, monitoring local police.

Besides being unconstitutional (there is no authorization anywhere in the U.S. Constitution for a federal role in local law enforcement), it is also unwise. Certainly, a nationalized police force like that found in Hitler’s National Socialist Germany (the infamous Gestapo) is not the answer. The reality is that there exist *more* checks and balances on local law enforcement than that placed on federal law enforcement agencies.

That is why the constitutionalist John Birch Society has long championed the cause of “Support Your Local Police — and Keep Them Independent!”



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