

Mason City given awards for Guard, Reserve support

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MASON CITY — The Mason City Police Department and the city of Mason City were honored Tuesday by the Iowa Committee for Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve and the United States Department of Defense.

The Police Department received the “Above and Beyond” award for its efforts in going above and beyond the requirements of the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act when a police officer was deployed overseas.

The city also received the State Chariman’s Award for its support of employees serving in the National Guard and Reserve.

The Police Department was nominated by Mason City Police Officer and SPC 4 Edwin Walthall.

Walthall is back home in Mason City following a deployment.

“I have been given extra time off to spend with my family prior to my deployment. Since leaving, several officers of the department have been checking in on my family. Every snow storm my driveway has been cleared by someone from the department. Employees of the department have given my family a care package that included various gift cards and even \$100 in cash. The support of my employer has made this deployment easier on me and my family,” he wrote in the nomination.

Capt. Dennis Bengston accepted the award on behalf of the Police Department.

“We’re just trying to take care of our own,” Bengston said.

Mayor Roger Bang accepted the award on the city’s behalf.

“I think its great recognition. North lowans really are supportive of our military and the Guard. We’ve shown that over and over,” he said.

Twenty-one Iowa employers were selected.

“In Iowa I think we treat our public employees very very well but some people even go above and beyond that by sending care packages to the troops, keeping in contact with them by e-mail, helping to handle family issues back home while the spouse is deployed whether it’s a male or female soldier,” said Al Enright, executive director for Employer Support for the Guard and Reserve for the Iowa Committee.

“They did things that were not required by the law, so our committee said we need to recognize those folks.”



Al Enright, executive director for Employer Support for the Guard and Reserve for the Iowa Committee (left), presents awards to Mason City Mayor Roger Bang (center) and Capt. Dennis Bengston of the Mason City Police Department. PEGGY SENZARINO/ The Globe Gazette