



Officer, Guardian Angels honored

Quick action saved life of man whose throat was slashed

By Brian D. Crecente, Rocky Mountain News
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The last thing Thomas Forrest remembers on Sept. 3 is walking back to his home. It was dark, he says.

Eight days later, Forrest, 53, woke up in the intensive care unit at Denver Health Medical Center with a line of stitches across his neck from ear to ear.

He owes his life, he says, to his Guardian Angels. Tuesday, Forrest had a chance to give them each a hug and rasp out a thank you.

The roving band of Denver Guardian Angels came upon Forrest's crumpled body that September night and rushed to stanch the blood pouring from his slit throat. There, good timing and quick thinking likely saved Forrest's life.

Tuesday evening, the group of Angels and Denver police Sgt. Ken Johnson, who also assisted the man, were awarded a proclamation of heroism by the Denver City Council.

Later Tuesday, the group met up at the Gaddie Center Cop Shop in the 800 block of Santa Fe Boulevard to talk about that night.

Nicholas Ortiz-Trammell was leading a group of Guardian Angels on patrol near the cop shop when they came upon Forrest.

"We walked up on what appeared to be a pile of clothing covered in dirt, but then we noticed a pool of blood," Ortiz-Trammell said.

When they got closer, they realized the pile of bloody clothing was Forrest. Guardian Angel Elizabeth Brost dialed 911 on her cell phone while Mary Pinkas attempted to slow the blood coming from a horrific neck wound.

"It was just really bad," Pinkas said. "He lost a lot of blood, but he was fighting."

Johnson, who was on routine patrol in the area, noticed the group of Guardian Angels and rushed to their aid, calling for backup and an ambulance when he saw the downed man.

Johnson, a veteran police officer, said when he saw Forrest's slashed throat he didn't think the man could survive.



Denver Police Sgt. Ken Johnson listens to Thomas Forrest, middle, relate how speedy his recovery has been as local Guardian Angel Mary Pinkas listens. Johnson and Pinkas saved Forrest's life after Pinkas found him with his throat slit on Sept. 3. Johnson and the Guardian Angels were honored Tuesday at the Gaddie Center Cop Shop.

"I didn't think he was going to make it," Johnson said.

Standing a few feet away, Forrest smiles at that now.

He didn't find out until nine days later what had happened to him, that someone had sneaked up, slashed his throat, stabbed him under the left arm and left him for dead.

Police have no motive and no witnesses, and the attacker remains at large.

crecenteb@RockyMountainNews.com or 303-892-2811