



**Thomas E. Brown, Sheriff**

## **NEWS RELEASE**

DeKalb County Sheriff's Office  
4415 Memorial Drive  
Decatur, GA 30032

**October 8, 2009**

### **DEPUTY TO BE PRESENTED WITH MEDAL OF VALOR FOR RESCUE OF ALLEGED CHILD MOLESTATION VICTIM AT STONE MOUNTAIN PARK**

DeKalb County Sheriff Thomas Brown presented the Sheriff's Medal of Valor to Lt. Ruth Stringer Wednesday, October 7, 2009, at 10 a.m. at the DeKalb County Courthouse in Courtroom 5B. The Medal of Valor acknowledges an extraordinary act of bravery, coupled with great personal risk to the employee's life.



On September 20, 2009, Lt. Stringer, while off duty and on one of her regular jogs at Stone Mountain Park, entered a women's restroom where she saw the legs and feet of a man "sticking from under the first stall." She also heard what sounded like the muffled cries of a child coming from the stall. Stringer, who was unarmed, says she yelled more than once in her most commanding voice to release the child, and the suspect let the child – a 13-year-old girl, go. While attending to the victim, Stringer yelled, "Call 911." She and the victim's father made the suspect sit and remain seated on a bench immediately outside the restroom. Off-duty GBI agent Sara Thomas, who had finished a climb up the mountain, heard the yell to call 911 and was already headed in Stringer's direction. She was able to detain the suspect until Stone Mountain Park police arrived.

The suspect, Patrick Paul Leithead, 36, is charged with Aggravated Child Molestation and is being held in the DeKalb County Jail without bond.

Lt. Stringer is a 17-year veteran of the DeKalb County Sheriff's Office and is currently assigned to the court division.

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