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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Date: May 9, 2014

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National Police Week Starts May 11

National Police Week honors officers killed in the line of duty

(Woodland, CA) – May 9, 2014 - Yolo County District Attorney Jeff Reisig announced that the week of May 11th is National Police Week, which honors officers who have been killed in the line of duty. National Police Week has evolved over the last 30 years. What began as a Memorial Service attended by 120 survivors and supporters of law enforcement has evolved into a week-long event that gives survivors and other supporters an opportunity to come together and honor those law enforcement officers who have died in the line of duty. Originating in 1962 with President John F. Kennedy signing a proclamation designating May 15th as Peace Officers Memorial Day, the week-long event held in Washington D.C. hosts thousands of law enforcement officers from around the world, and offers several events that serve to honor those officers who have died and provide support and supportive services to the families and friends.

The National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial is the nation's monument to law enforcement officers who have died in the line of duty. Dedicated on October 15, 1991, the Memorial honors more than 19,000 federal, state and local law enforcement officers who have made the ultimate sacrifice for the safety and protection of our nation and its people since the first known Line of Duty death in 1791. As of April 2011, the State of California has 1,487 names of officers who paid the ultimate sacrifice engraved upon the National Law Enforcement Memorial. The California Peace Officer Memorial located at 10th Street and Capitol Mall in Sacramento was unveiled on May 13th 1988 as a memorial for these California officers who have paid the ultimate sacrifice. Locally, the Yolo County Retired Peace Officers Association spearheaded the effort to get a memorial erected for fallen Yolo County law enforcement officers. This effort led to the unveiling of the memorial last year on the Yolo County Superior Courthouse grounds.

According to the National Law Enforcement Officer Memorial Fund (NLEOMF) in the past ten years 1,794 law enforcement officers have died in the line of duty. This is an average of 163 officers killed per year, or one line of duty death every 53 hours. Additionally, FBI records indicate an annual average of 59,069 assaults on officers with 16,041 injuries.

Yolo County has endured the loss of 11 of its community protectors since 1912. Most recently, the murder of Yolo County Sheriff's Deputy Tony Diaz occurred on June 15, 2008. Deputy Diaz's murder occurred just three days after the killer of local CHP Officer Andy Stevens was sentenced to death in Yolo County Superior Court for his murder on November 17, 2005.

In addition to the District Attorney's role in prosecuting these murders and all other state and local crimes that occur within Yolo County, the District Attorney also employs law enforcement officers within its Investigations Bureau. Currently the District Attorney's office has 13 full-time and six part-time sworn peace officers working as criminal investigators. There are also ten non-sworn investigative staff. The core work performed by the District Attorney's peace officers is to provide investigative services and support for cases pending trial, both to prosecutors and to the local law enforcement agencies. Additionally, some of the investigative staff is assigned to specialized areas of investigations including auto theft, narcotics, gangs, child sexual abuse, elder abuse, insurance fraud, child abduction, high tech crimes and consumer fraud and environmental protection.

The following is a known list of the Yolo County Peace Officers who have died in the line of duty, the date of their End of Watch (EOW) and how they died.

California Highway Patrol

Officer Andrew Stevens	EOW: November 17, 2005	Gunfire
Sergeant Gary Wages	EOW: March 15, 2001	Vehicle Collision
Officer William Freeman	EOW: December 22, 1978	Gunfire
Officer Roy Blecher	EOW: December 22, 1978	Gunfire
Officer Ivan Casselman	EOW: August 24, 1935	Motorcycle Collision

Yolo County Sheriff's Office

Deputy Jose "Tony" Diaz	EOW: June 15, 2008	Gunfire
Deputy Walter Leinberger	EOW: November 18, 1943	Gunfire

Winters Police Department

City Marshall William Rice	EOW: October 18, 1912	Gunfire
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West Sacramento Police Department

Officer James McKnight	EOW: June 16, 1990	Gunfire
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Davis Police Department

Officer Douglas Cantrill	EOW: September 7, 1959	Gunfire
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Woodland Police Department

Officer Lawrence Sills	EOW: June 13, 1945	Motorcycle Collision
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Yolo County law enforcement and the Yolo County Retired Peace Officer Association is sponsoring a Peace Officer Memorial "Walk to Remember" on May 15, 2014 at noon. The walk will start at the Yolo County Peace Officer Memorial located on the grounds of the courthouse at 725 Court Street in Woodland.

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