

2005 Citizen Action Award Recipients, Ms. Linda Olson and Ms. Amber Deahn

On July 2, 2005 in Coeur D'alene, Idaho, more than six weeks after she disappeared from a home where family members were bludgeoned to death, 8-year-old Shasta Groene was reunited with her natural father after she was spotted by two Denny's employees, Ms. Linda Olson and Ms. Amber Deahn, as she was sharing a meal with a registered sex offender at the restaurant in her hometown. The joy of her return turned to sadness as it was later discovered the same man who had kidnapped her had also killed her 9-year-old brother, Dylan, who was taken with Shasta six weeks earlier.

Joseph Edward Duncan III, a registered sex offender from Fargo, N.D., who had already served 14 years in jail for past crimes was arrested and charged with kidnapping and later with the murder of her family. While in custody and under questioning, Duncan admitted to also killing young Anthony Martinez of Beaumont, California, eight years earlier. Anthony's body was later found in Indio, California, after an extensive search for him involving members of the community and police.

We don't know how many other young victims fell prey to Joseph Duncan but thanks to the heroic efforts of our award recipients, he will never be allowed to harm another child. Their actions were truly a "Grand Slam" as they not only returned a young child to her father but also helped bring an end to one man's violent crime spree.

The actions of Ms. Olson and Ms. Deahn embodies that of all Citizen Patrol Volunteers, to be the "Eyes and Ears" of Law Enforcement and good witnesses without taking direct action. We are honored to have Ms. Olson with us today and it is with tremendous pride that we present both women with the 2005 NACOP Citizen Action Award. We hope their actions will serve as a model for all citizens across our great nation and provide a call to action to help when needed.