



# LAKE COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

**DONALD R. BELL**  
**SHERIFF / CORONER**

**BEN WOODS**  
**UNDERSHERIFF**

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August 27, 2020

Chad K. Killorn  
82820 US Hwy 93  
Ravalli, MT 59863

Re: Sheriff's Citizen Lifesaver Award

On August 16, 2020, at around 1:10 pm, there was a two-vehicle, highway-speed crash, at mile marker 41, on US Hwy 93. A Dodge truck, leaving Eagle Pass Trail, failed to yield to oncoming traffic while turning south onto Hwy 93. A southbound Chevy Suburban pulling a camper collided with the rear end of the Dodge causing the entrapment of the driver of the Suburban. The rest of the family in the Suburban were able to escape the Suburban as it caught fire.

A bystander, Leslie Martin, of Polson, began recording this incident with her cell phone. What can be seen on the video is a very harrowing and rapidly developing emergency. Minutes prior to the arrival of any emergency services, a group of citizens were attempting to utilize fire extinguishers to tamp down the fire. Others were trying to open the door of the Suburban to extricate the trapped driver to no avail. All of this while increasing amounts of smoke and flames became present.

One of these citizens was later identified as Chad Killorn of Ravalli, MT. Chad and another unidentified man were able to pry the door of the Suburban enough to get a strap looped through the window opening. Chad is then seen on the video quickly retrieving his large flatbed truck and pulling up to the burning vehicle. The strap was attached to the front of Chad's truck and he attempted to pull the door open. An initial attempt failed but a replacement of the strap proved successful on the 2<sup>nd</sup> attempt. As the vehicle became fully engulfed in flames and smoke, Chad and others quickly removed the driver from the Suburban and dragged him away to safety. There was not a single second to spare for this motorist's life with the Suburban blazing with fire and smoke as the driver was removed.

Though it was a team effort by many Good Samaritans that saved this motorist's life, the quick and assertive actions of Chad Killorn stand out among this effort as exemplary by all measures. Chad took a leadership role in directing the effort and put in place the old-fashioned Montana ingenuity necessary to solve a problem that was not going to wait for emergency services.

It is for these reasons, Chad is being awarded the Lake County Sheriff's Citizen Lifesaver Award

Donald R. Bell – Sheriff