



Public Safety



Georgia State Patrol Trooper William Bowman eulogizes his close friend Georgia Ports Authority police Cpl. William Solomon during Solomon's funeral service at Live Oak Church of God in Hinesville on Tuesday. (Lewis Levine)



Former Liberty County deputy is laid to rest

By Lewis Levine
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A large group of family, friends and fellow law-enforcement officers said goodbye Tuesday to a Georgia Ports Authority police officer and former Liberty County sheriff's deputy, Cpl. William Solomon.

The hour-long service was held at Live Oak Church of God in Hinesville. Tears flowed freely as those who came out to honor the fallen officer listened to inspirational songs sung by the church choir.

“Have you ever met somebody, that when you saw them, you knew they were doing exactly what they were supposed to be doing?” Ports Authority Chief Operating Officer Griffith Lynch told the mourners. “I have. His name was Cpl. William Solomon, and he served on the Georgia Ports Authority Police Department.”

Solomon, 43, of Midway, was struck by a tractor-trailer in March while directing traffic at the port in Garden City. He had spent several months at Memorial University Medical Center in Savannah before being transferred to the Shepherd Center, a private, not-for-profit hospital in Atlanta that specializes in brain and spinal-cord injury rehabilitation. He died there Nov. 19.

Robert Lee Turner, 56, of Riceboro, who was driving the big rig, has been charged with DUI in connection with the incident.

Before beginning with the Ports Authority, Solomon was an Army sergeant. He arrived in the area after being stationed on Fort Stewart. He joined the Sheriff’s Office on March 23, 2005, immediately following his Army career.

Lynch recounted Solomon’s time at the Ports Authority, saying he started there July 29, 2013, and was promoted to corporal “just a short eight months later,” on March 17, 2014.

“Along with 120 other fine men and women, his mission was to protect the Ports Authority, its employees, the customers, the goods 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year,” Lynch said of Solomon. “Cpl. Solomon was doing exactly this on March 3, 2015. He was looking out for the safety of others, putting their well-being first and foremost. And he did a superb job.”

Kevin Doyle, head of security at the Ports Authority, holding a handkerchief, was visibly shaken as he paid tribute to Solomon.

“I’ve thought about Will a lot the last couple of days and what I was going to say up here,” Doyle said. “And I had the great pleasure of working with him for 18 months. I understand how he was beforehand based on the people that are here, based on all the wonderful things I’ve heard. All I know is this: Our actions on Earth — they light our path for eternity. So we know where Will is. God bless him, and God bless his family.”

Georgia State Patrol Trooper William Bowman was a close friend of Solomon’s. He supported the family throughout the time Solomon was hospitalized after being injured.

“Will was a very strong and powerful man,” Bowman said. “And I loved him.”

The service was attended by a large number of law-enforcement officers, some from as far away as Bibb County.

Solomon’s wife, Aida Solomon, at one point became distraught, leaning into her lap while covering her ears had to be comforted by her sons.

When the service ended, the flag-draped casket was led by the pallbearers, which included Solomon’s eldest son, Alfredo Castro.

A GSP bagpipe player played as the pallbearers carried his casket toward the white hearse.

As they left the church, a long procession of law-enforcement vehicles helped lead the way to Solomon’s final resting place at the Georgia Veterans Memorial Cemetery in Glennville.