



# THE EPITAPH



Serving the law enforcement community of Cuyahoga, Geauga, Lake, Lorain, Medina & Northern Summit Counties

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## MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

**Joe Mannion** | President/Member of the GCPOMS Executive Board / Board of Directors

Welcome to the GCPOMS *The Epitaph*. The official publication for the Greater Cleveland Peace Officers Memorial Society®.

This year is our 36th Anniversary of The Greater Cleveland Peace Officers Memorial Society® (GCPOMS®). I hope everyone is doing well and staying safe. This has been a trying past 12 months. This time last year we had to cancel our 35th Memorial Service and Police Week activities. We have come a long way, and it looks like there is light at the end of the tunnel. COVID had made all of our lives change. Even though the restrictions were in place, we still kept “*Our Promise to Never Forget*”® our Fallen Heroes. GCPOMS® volunteers still placed grave markers at the graves of the Fallen Officers whose names are inscribed on the Memorial Walls. We held a virtual reading of names of all Fallen Officers from the United States, Canada and those of the greater Cleveland area on Friday of Police Week last May.

Restrictions that were put in place are now being lifted little by little. One restriction being lifted is the 6 foot fence that has been around the Memorial site since June of 2020. I want to again thank Mike Eli and Great Lakes Fence Company, for the donation of the fence. I also want to thank all of volunteers who helped install and take down the fencing. The Memorial will be open starting March 14th.

This year we will have our Police Week events starting with our Grave Marker Ceremony on Saturday, May 15, 2021. Our Candle Light Vigil will be held on Monday, May 17, 2021. The Greater Cleveland Peace Officers Memorial Society Memorial Service will be on Friday, May 21, 2021. Sadly this year we will be adding and honoring Detective James Skernivitz, Cleveland Division of Police (E. O. W. September 3, 2020), to our Memorial. Look to our website for more information. At this time social distancing will be in place for everyone involved.

I want to offer my deepest sympathy to the family of Donald Hass, surviving son of Patrolman Forney Haas, Cleveland Police Department (EOW: 12-08-1951). Donald passed away on December 30, 2020. Donald was a strong supporter of



GCPOMS. GCPOMS received many memorials in honor of Forney Haas at the family's request. Keep the Haas family in your prayers.

Prayers also go out to the family of Tom Dean, surviving father of Police Officer Jarod M. Dean, Boston Heights Police Department (EOW: 01-19-2009). Tom passed away unexpectedly this past September. Tom along with his son Sergeant John Dean, Hudson Police Department, was instrumental in the creation of the Grave Marker Project for GCPOMS. Tom designed the grave markers and supervised their manufacture. Tom was there every year to start off Police Week on the Saturday mornings with John to distribute the grave markers to the volunteers who would place them on each individual grave of our Fallen Officers. Tom was present at every Memorial Service on the Friday of Police Week. Tom will be missed.

I am looking forward to seeing everyone at this year's Memorial events and Memorial Service. Please remember to keep doing the safe practices, washing hands and social distancing so we can all be together in May.

Stay safe and God Bless.

**Joe Mannion, President**

# SURVIVORS' CORNER

**Louise Palermo** | Daughter of Lorain County Deputy Sheriff John P. Palermo (EOW 1/21/1964)

Being a Survivor is all I've really known since my Dad was killed in the line of duty just after I turned 5. I've come to understand his identity through stories from relatives, articles on line and in the newspaper, and from a scrapbook my Mother prepared for me. My Mother never really talked about him much since it was too painful to relive the memories of the past without reliving the horror of his death. Yet the identity as a Survivor is also very new. It's only been in the last 8 or 10 years that I've begun to come to terms with this part of my life on an adult level.

I raised my family, a daughter and a son, in Colorado and have three grandsons and a granddaughter. The Pikes Peak Region Peace Officers Memorial family welcomed me into their hearts as a Survivor, even though my Dad isn't honored on the Memorial. They accept that we all share something much deeper than geography. Connecting with them began a journey that's taken me places I never would have imagined.

The first Memorial Service I attended in Colorado, I went by myself without telling anyone beforehand. I wanted to be a quiet presence, take it all in, and test the waters. I sat in the very back trying to be invisible. For the record, this was NOT one of my smartest decisions. By the next year's Service, I had joined the Pikes Peak Region Memorial Planning Committee and admitted to a few people why I was there. That year and each year thereafter, I'm seated in front with the other families and have never felt alone in my grief again. It gave me the strength to visit the National Memorial with my children and the courage to see my Dad's name on the Memorial there. In 2014, at the local Memorial Service, God brought another blessing into my life. For the first time I met another "kid" who has become my newest best friend. When he was 7, his police officer Dad was shot and killed in the line of duty. Here we were, 2 middle-aged adults and complete strangers. Neither of us had ever met someone else like us.

The month after my 5th birthday I was told my Daddy was "away." A couple of days later, my Mother asked if I knew what happened to President Kennedy. That's how the conversation began to tell me he wasn't coming back. Because I was so young, I retained almost no direct memories of him. To honor him here, I reached out to cousins who were teens when Dad died 57 years ago. Their stories and recollections painted a similar picture. They remembered him as handsome, smart, kind, and a snappy dresser. The same personality appeared in many newspaper articles published after he died. Dad encouraged others to pursue higher education. He was a strong supporter of one of my cousins becoming a nurse and bought her medical textbooks for her high school graduation. Dad also coached another cousin for interviews as a teacher and drove him to the one that hired him into a lifelong career. Several cousins relate to him as their friend or older brother.

My Dad was one of 6 children. He loved running track in high school. At age 21 he felt a strong desire to serve his Country during WW2 and joined the Army to help support his family. He spent his 10 Army years as a medical technician mostly in the operating room and ended his service at Walter Reed Army Hospital. During the war he was stationed in the Philippines where he saw much loss of life. Unfortunately, his military records were lost in a fire at the Military Personnel Records Center, so I will never know how he earned 3 bronze stars or the many other recognitions and commendations.

Whether the military suited his personality or he acquired military behaviors, Dad was described as liking "spit and polish," being neat and meticulous with his possessions. After discharge from the military, he sold insurance and then began working at the Fruehauf plant in Lorain when his cousin Joe, a Lorain Police Officer, suggested a law enforcement career. This surprised Dad's family because they expected him to continue his medical career. At Thanksgiving in 1953, Dad met my Mom, Betty. They were introduced by Joe and his wife Anita, one of my Mom's best friends. After a whirlwind courtship, Mom and her Johnny were married the following July 4.

Dad liked hunting and was a successful bow hunter. My granddaughter recently learned archery and enjoyed showing her younger brothers using my Dad's wooden bow. *(continued on next page)*



*Removal of the protective fencing around the Memorial by off duty Cuyahoga County Deputies who volunteered to help others who also gave their time to Remember Our Fallen.*



*The US and GCPOMS flags flying at Mary Queen of Peace Church where CPD Chaplain Father Douglas T. Brown is Pastor*



*Louise and her Dad*



*Daddy and Uncle Joe*



# SURVIVORS' CORNER

(continued from previous page)

## Louise Palermo | Daughter of Lorain County Deputy Sheriff John P. Palermo (EOW 1/21/1964)

One of my cousins remembers the first time Mom's family met my Dad. He drove from Ohio to NJ in his VW Beetle and brought them venison via a dead deer strapped to the car – as if the VW itself wasn't unusual enough to see in the 1950's. The 1st Beetle arrived in the U.S. in 1949, and my Dad already had one by 1952. That car figured in several stories. On a trip to PA, because of how uncommon these cars were, people honked and waved the whole way there. He honked and waved back to everyone. Mom drove VW Beetles exclusively until the 1980s. His VW legacy continued through my time in high school as a yearbook picture from Lorain High shows my Mother's car parked in front of the main entrance, having been driven up the stairs. I like to think he would have found it amusing. Mom was slightly less amused, as I neglected to mention it until she saw the published picture.

Dad is remembered for never raising his voice or saying a cross word. Others attributed his "take it easy" calm demeanor to wartime medical experiences. Lorain County Sheriff Vernon Smith said he was "a gentle man and conscientious person." My Mom's scrapbook even contained a letter from a prisoner Dad met in jail waiting for trial who wrote a letter in which he stated, "He really treated me swell and more than once went out of his way to be kind." The letter told

Mom he asked the jail chaplain to say a Mass for Dad.

I am grateful to so many who have helped me make their memories of Dad my memories too. Thank you to the Greater Cleveland Peace Officers Memorial Society for asking me to write this tribute to my Dad. It allowed me to learn more things about my Dad and compile it for my children and grandchildren. Support from people I've met at the Lorain County Sheriff's Office and GCPOMS has been significant beyond words during the journey to bond with my Dad. They made our family feel part of their family, and I cherish the connection. I also want to thank the Pikes Peak Region Peace Officers Memorial Foundation in Colorado. The friends I made there gave me the courage to come to term with Daddy's death and become a part of this beautiful Blue Family.

I also want to thank the other family members for supporting their loved ones who work in law enforcement. No one but another family member can understand their sacrifice of never knowing what the end of day will bring. Lastly, I want to thank the men and women in all facets of law enforcement. They show more courage each day they put on their uniforms than most people do in a lifetime. Without them the world would be a cold and ugly place. I hope you feel appreciated by someone every single day. Be safe, be blessed and be loved.

## BADGES OF COURAGE: HEROES AMONG US

### Mary A. Lentz | Survivor / Secretary / Member of the GCPOMS Executive Board / Board of Directors / The Epitaph Editor

Lorain County Sheriff Phil R. Stammitti was born and raised in the City of Lorain, the third oldest of nine children. He has five sisters and three brothers. Following his graduation from Lorain High Schools, Sheriff Stammitti joined the United States Navy where he proudly served for four years. After being honorably discharged, he enrolled at the Lorain County Community College in Police Science. After taking the Lorain Police Department examination in 1972, he was hired as a Patrolman in 1973 and proudly served the citizens of Lorain for thirteen years as a Lorain Police Officer.

Former and retired Sheriff Martin J. Mahony asked Officer Stammitti to join the Lorain County Sheriff's Office. Following his promotion to Lieutenant, Sheriff Stammitti was placed in charge of the Detective Bureau. In 1981, he was promoted to Captain in charge of Personnel / Administration.

In November 2000, the citizens of Lorain County elected him to serve as their Sheriff, and he has been re-elected four times and is currently serving his fifth term as Sheriff of Lorain County.

Sheriff Stammitti is happily married to his wife Mary Jo and is the proud father of four daughters – Toni, Monica, Valerie and Jessica (deceased) and grandfather of three granddaughters and one great-grandson.



## The Lorain County Sheriff's Office

The Lorain County Sheriff's Office was founded in 1822. Its law enforcement jurisdiction spans 432 miles with a population of 301, 356. Lorain County is the ninth largest of Ohio's 88 counties. The Sheriff's Office has a staff of 233 members consisting of Deputies, Corrections Officers, civilian employees, maintenance staff, and medical and administrative personnel. By law the Sheriff's Office has charge of the jail, a 24 hour-a-day full service correctional facility.

The Deputies patrol over 357 square miles of township roads providing law enforcement services to over 63,000 residents in 18 townships. Seven sub-stations are strategically placed throughout the county for access by Deputies on patrol. Deputies use the stations to write reports, conduct interviews, and follow up on investigations. The Sheriff's Office also provides reinforcement services, security, and crowd control for special events such as county fairs, concerts, and sporting events.

The Sheriff is also required to maintain a secure court system, including the transportation of prisoners to and from state correctional institutions, holding facilities, court appearances and extraditions from other states. The Sheriff's Office is also responsible for maintaining the sex offender registry for all sex offenders residing in Lorain County's cities and townships, as well as verifying each sex offender's addresses and conducting neighborhood notifications regarding offenders with a sexual predator of Tier III offender classification. The Sheriff further provides D.A.R.E., Neighborhood Watch and the Child ID program.

The Lorain County Sheriff's Office has a variety of division all working separately and together to accomplish the duty of being the guardians of society's laws. These divisions include the S.W.A.T. Unit, Explosives Unit, Drug Task Force, Records Division, Court Services Unit, Sheriff's Auxiliary, Environmental Crimes Unit, K-9 Unit, Correctional Emergency Response Team, Honor Guard, Civil Division, and Sex Offender Enforcement Unit.

# FALLEN HEROES OF THE LORAIN COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

Mary A. Lentz | Survivor/Secretary/Member of the GCPOMS Executive Board/Board of Directors/ The Epitaph Editor



**Lorain County Deputy Sheriff  
Franklin Strohl** (EOW 6/13/1930)

Deputy Franklin Strohl began his law enforcement career with the Lorain County Sheriff's Office on January 9, 1929. He was described by Sheriff Mahony as one of the most valuable men on the force.

On June 11, 1930, Deputy Strohl was responding to the scene of a serious traffic accident in North Ridgeville. As he was passing a street car near the intersection of Cleveland Street and Olive Street, a car made a left hand turn directly in front of him. As a result of the impact, Deputy Strohl was taken to the Elyria Clinic where he passed away two days later on June 13, 1930.

*(Written by Sheriff Phil R. Stammitti)*



**Lorain County Deputy  
Kenneth M. Tomaszewski** (EOW 7/3/1979)

Deputy Kenneth Tomaszewski pulled over a teenager on a traffic violation on July 3, 1979. The fifteen year old told the Deputy that he did not have his driver's license with him, but if the Deputy would follow him home, he would get it. When Deputy Tomaszewski and the traffic violator arrived at a house on a rural road southwest of Wellington, they both went inside. The

teenager grabbed a .22 caliber rifle and shot Deputy Tomaszewski in the chest. The Deputy returned fire, but did not injure the shooter. Deputy Tomaszewski collapsed at the scene and was taken to Wellington Community Hospital before being transferred to Elyria Memorial Hospital where he was declared dead upon arrival.

After a search by police and deputies, the teenage shooter was found hiding in a field near his home.

Deputy Tomaszewski attended Lorain Community College for two years and graduated cum laude from Kent State University. He was a member of Alpha Phi Sigma, the Nation Criminal Justice Honor Society. He was survived by his Mother, Theresa; his sister, Debbie; brother Michael; and his maternal grandfather.

**Lorain County Deputy  
Michael J. George** (EOW 1/9/1961)

On January 3, 1961, Lorain County deputies were towing one cruiser with a tow chain attached to another cruiser. When the engine of the troubled cruiser started, Deputy Michael J. George got out of the cruiser to unhook the tow chain. As he was exiting the cruiser, an approaching car struck the rear end of the cruiser pushing it forward. Deputy George was crushed and suffered critical injuries. He was taken to Memorial Hospital where he died of his injuries on January 9, 1961. Deputy George was Vice-President of the Lorain Chapter of Aid to Leukemia Stricken American Children. His Survivors included his son Dennis, his Mother, three brother and three sisters.

*( Written by Norm Drew, GXPOMS)*



**Lorain County Deputy  
John P. Palermo** (EOW 1/21/1964)

Deputy John P. Palermo, accompanied by an Auxiliary Deputy, was on a routine pick-up of mental patient pursuant to an order by the Lorain County Probate Court. The warrant for commitment to Tiffin State Hospital had been signed by the patient's father. Arriving at the home, Deputies were

met at the door by the son, who immediately began screaming his intention not to be transferred back to a facility in Summit County where he had previously been transferred multiple times. Deputy Palermo tried to convince him that he was not going to return to the Summit County facility and assured him no one was going to hurt him. The subject of the warrant reached into a bedroom where he armed himself with a revolver and fired two shots, both striking Deputy Palermo and then fired five more shots. Deputy Palermo died at the scene.

Before entering law enforcement, Deputy John Palermo served in the United States Army Medical Corp for ten years at Walter Reed Hospital. Survivors included his wife Elizabeth, daughter Louise (age 5), and two sisters. *(Written by Norm Drew, GXPOMS)*





# IN MEMORIAM

December 1, 1853 – November 3, 1928

**John Osborne, Watchman**

Cleveland City Marshal's Office  
EOW December 1, 1853

**Michael Kick, Patrolman**

Cleveland Police Department  
EOW May 15, 1875

**George Brenner, Marshal**

Wellington Village Marshal's Office  
EOW July 18, 1883

**William Hulligan, Detective**

Cleveland Police Department  
EOW February 8, 1887

**Nicholas Sheehan, Sergeant**

Cleveland Police Department  
EOW September 5, 1894

**John Shipp, Patrolman**

Cleveland Police Department  
EOW May 6, 1900

**William L. Foulks, Detective Lieutenant**

Cleveland Police Department  
EOW September 29, 1900

**Louis D. Weick, Patrolman**

Cleveland Police Department  
EOW December 10, 1903

**James H. Stedman, Patrolman**

Cleveland Police Department  
EOW January 25, 1905

**Spooner C. Crapo, Marshal**

Rochester Village Marshal's Office  
EOW November 11, 1905

**Herman Reimer, Patrolman**

Cleveland Police Department  
EOW January 28, 1911

**Walter C. Chapman, Patrolman**

Cleveland Police Department  
EOW August 22, 1911

**Edward Parker, Patrolman**

Cleveland Police Department  
EOW June 19, 1912

**Leroy E. Bouker, Patrolman**

Cleveland Police Department  
EOW November 28, 1912

**Albert Miller, Patrolman**

Cleveland Police Department  
EOW December 3, 1913

**Robert Becker, Night Watchman**

Amherst Village Constable's Office  
EOW April 10, 1916

**John H. Gates, Watchman**

Medina Village Marshal's Office  
EOW April 18, 1916

**Charles H. Goetz, Sergeant**

Cleveland Police Department  
EOW May 6, 1916

**Henry Froelich, Sergeant**

Cleveland Police Department  
EOW September 25, 1916

**Edward M. Meany, Patrolman**

Cleveland Police Department  
EOW November 29, 1916

**Elmer P. Glaefke, Patrolman**

Cleveland Police Department  
EOW September 13, 1917

**William Brown, Patrolman**

Cleveland Police Department  
EOW September 29, 1917

**Alfred Ressler, Patrolman**

Cleveland Police Department  
EOW August 6, 1918

**Patrick Gaffney, Detective**

East Cleveland Police Department  
EOW December 19, 1918

**William P. Armstrong, Patrolman**

Cleveland Police Department  
EOW March 9, 1919

**Ernest C. Gray, Deputy**

Willoughby Township Marshal's Office  
EOW July 16, 1919

**Frank M. Moranz, Patrolman**

Cleveland Police Department  
EOW September 26, 1919

**William Isaac, Patrolman**

Cleveland Police Department  
EOW December 1, 1919

**Robert Shelton, Patrolman**

Cleveland Police Department  
December 7, 1919

**Thomas Cook, Detective**

New York Central Railroad Police  
Department - July 12, 1920

**David H. Barnes, Detective Sergeant**

New York Central Railroad Police  
Department - July 28, 1920

**John Vapenik, Marshal**

Maple Heights Village  
EOW August 28, 1920

**Edward Connolly, Captain**

Cleveland Heights Police Department  
EOW September 8, 1920

**Walter Preuhs, Patrolman**

Cleveland Police Department  
October 17, 1920

**Albert Block, Patrolman**

Cleveland Police Department  
EOW February 11, 1921

**August Dyke, Patrolman**

Cleveland Police Department  
EOW March 24, 1921

**Elmer Sprosty, Patrolman**

Cleveland Police Department  
EOW April 21, 1921

**Frank J. Koran, Patrolman**

Cleveland Police Department  
EOW November 26, 1921

**Carl Metta, Agent**

Federal Prohibition Enforcement Officer  
EOW February 19 1923

**Samuel Kilbane, Patrolman**

Cleveland Police Department  
EOW April 19, 1923

**Dennis Griffin, Patrolman**

Cleveland Police Department  
EOW May 14, 1923

**Fred J. Webber, Patrolman**

Lorain Police Department  
EOW December 22, 1923

**Roy Nightwine, Patrolman**

Cleveland Police Department  
EOW May 11, 1924

**Frank A. Sugan, Patrolman**

Cleveland Police Department  
EOW June 28, 1924

**Michael J. Hahnel, Patrolman**

Shaker Heights Police Department  
EOW October 20, 1924

**Peter Fromm, Patrolman**

Cleveland Police Department  
EOW February 13, 1925

**Henry Richter, Patrolman**

Cleveland Police Department  
EOW February 27, 1925

**Charles J. Frantz, Patrolman**

Cleveland Police Department  
EOW April 14, 1925

**Harvey A. Yoder, Marshal**

Bay Village Police Department  
EOW July 20, 1925

**Charles C. Deal, Patrolman**

Lorain Police Department  
EOW November 6, 1925

**John F. Saxton, Patrolman**

Cleveland Police Department  
EOW February 15, 1926

**Edwin A. Janes, Patrolman**

Shaker Heights Police Department  
EOW April 17, 1926

**William G. Borgman, Patrolman**

Cleveland Police Department  
EOW April 20, 1926

**Michael B. Beuerlein, Patrolman**

Parma Police Department  
EOW May 20, 1926

**George J. Buttermore, Patrolman**

Shaker Heights Police Department  
EOW May 24, 1926

**Clinton Wolf, Deputy Marshal**

Parma Police Department  
EOW June 28, 1926

**Lawrence R. Yaxley, Deputy Marshal**

Mentor Village Marshal's Office  
EOW January 30, 1927

**Richard White, Patrolman**

Cleveland Police Department  
EOW August 4, 1927

**Albert Flemke, Patrolman**

Cleveland Police Department  
EOW March 22, 1928

**Anthony Wieczorek, Patrolman**

Cleveland Police Department  
EOW September 13, 1928

**Ernest L. Ford, Patrolman**

Cleveland Police Department  
EOW September 19, 1928

**Carl Sherman, Patrolman**

Cleveland Police Department  
EOW March 6, 1929

**Edward Butler, Detective**

Cleveland Police Department  
EOW November 3, 1928

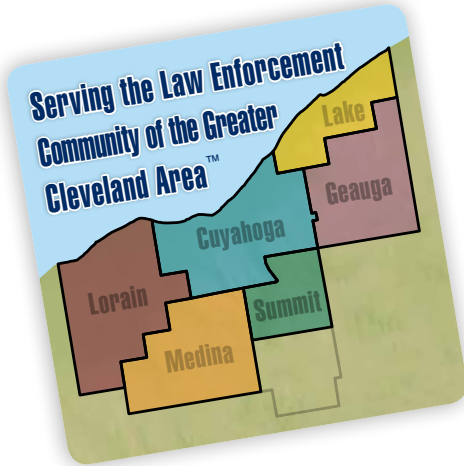
*To be continued in the next  
edition of The Epitaph...*



THE  
EPITAPH



P.O. Box 6207  
Cleveland, OH 44101



## Greater Cleveland Peace Officers Memorial Commemorative Paver

The Memorial in Downtown Cleveland honors Northern Ohio Peace Officers killed in the line of duty in Cuyahoga, Geauga, Lake, Lorain, Medina and Northern Summit Counties. This beautiful Memorial located on the corner of West 3rd and Lakeside Avenue (Huntington Park) features dark granite pillars inscribed with the names of Fallen Officers.

### Purchase a Paver to Show Your Support

You can choose your own **personalized message** to remember or honor a person, or even promote your business or organization. Your engraved paver will be on view permanently at the memorial where visitors will pay their tributes for generations to come.

#### Paver Sponsor Levels *(tax deductible)*

\$100 - 6"x 6"	\$250 - 6"x12"	\$1,000 - 12"x12"
Max 5 lines, 14 characters / line	Max 5 lines 28 characters / line	Max 5 lines 28 characters / line

**Greater Cleveland Peace Officers Memorial Society®**

P.O. Box 6207 | Cleveland, Ohio 44101  
(216) 337-3537 | [www.policememorialsociety.org](http://www.policememorialsociety.org)



*"Keeping the Promise to Never Forget our Fallen Heroes"®*