



## Wisconsin State Patrol Alumni Association Winter Newsletter

***\*\*\*\*\*Mark your calendars for Sept. 8, 2023  
Retiree luncheon at the Academy\*\*\*\*\****

### PRESIDENTS MESSAGE



Happy New Year. I hope this finds you all in good health. I am looking forward to brighter things in 2023.

One thing I wish would get brighter is more involvement from the membership. The Board consists of 11 fantastic people, but it should have 15. I know you have heard what I'm about to say many times, but we need two southeast regional representatives, one northcentral regional representative, and a membership coordinator. Anyone interested please contact one of these 11 fantastic board members. Mary Sander - [mamabear6615@gmail.com](mailto:mamabear6615@gmail.com), Phil Wenzel - [philw423@gmail.com](mailto:philw423@gmail.com), Kim Hurley - [kimwspaa@gmail.com](mailto:kimwspaa@gmail.com), Linda Woldt - [wspaa2011@gmail.com](mailto:wspaa2011@gmail.com), David Collins - [Dlcco0@gmail.com](mailto:Dlcco0@gmail.com), Paul Matl - [pmatl2234@gmail.com](mailto:pmatl2234@gmail.com), Lyle Sconzert - [lastflite2012@gmail.com](mailto:lastflite2012@gmail.com), Joseph Jakubicz - [joseph.jakubicz@gmail.com](mailto:joseph.jakubicz@gmail.com), Ray Sondelski - [sondel@mtc.net](mailto:sondel@mtc.net),

Keith Young – [keithyoung625@gmail.com](mailto:keithyoung625@gmail.com), Ruth Tiry – [rdl8486@hotmail.com](mailto:rdl8486@hotmail.com).

I have been president since 2018 and I believe some good things have happened during this time like starting the scholarship program, setting up an account for donations to the scholarship fund, having merchandise available to buy-found on our website, and financial support of the WSP Honor Guard. I recently formed a history committee to help preserve our past. The Board and I have worked hard to improve our relationship with the current administration, and we have worked with the Academy to plan and put on our annual retiree day. These were all accomplished by the 11 board members, but we need your help. We currently have 252 members. Ok, maybe you don't want to be on the Board, we still welcome ideas and suggestions from you the other 241 members! I have had some complaints recently from members who are not renewing their membership because they haven't received the emails that are sent out. This makes me sad because I had no idea until I got the nasty note. I wish they would have let me know by phone or email so we could hopefully resolve the issue. If you move, get a new phone number, or your email has changed, please let us know. We can't fix what we don't know is broken. Hey, we'd even appreciate an email telling us how we are doing, good or bad.

Be well until we see you again.

Mary Sander – WSPAA President

**Financial Report** – Our checking is at: \$10,999.58 and our scholarship fund is at: \$6,953.42. A sizeable scholarship donation was received from the Stromings during the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter. Thank you very much to the Stromings. Also, profits from merchandise sold at the Retiree luncheon were put into the Scholarship fund.

**Secretary's Report** – We ask that if members move they provide Mary Sander, Kim Hurley or Linda Woldt of the new address. We also ask that if members change their email address to notify Kim at [kimwspaa@gmail.com](mailto:kimwspaa@gmail.com). Often times those who are not receiving news from the association have changed their postal or email address without notifying us.

We lost several members in 2022 due to their passing away. We are currently down to 9 snail mail members.

**Merchandise Report** – We have plenty of stock on all items.

Please visit our website at [wspalumni.org](http://wspalumni.org) to see your choices.

**Scholarship Report** – The committee is finalizing the details for the 2023 scholarships. Stay tuned for the details. We hope you will help us get the word out about these great scholarship opportunities.



### **Russell honored for heroic work as state trooper**

Fennimore, Wis – Briant Russell, a master trooper with the Wisconsin State Patrol and adjunct instructor for the Law Enforcement Academy at Southwest Wisconsin Technical College, doesn't consider himself a hero. Many people would disagree. Russell was honored by his Wisconsin State Patrol peers during their annual awards program recently when he was presented with the Meritorious Service Award for his act of bravery on Sept. 26, 2020.

On that date, Russell was dispatched to the scene of a crash on Highway 18 in Iowa County. The initial call was that of a driver driving the wrong way on the highway. "On the way, I was thinking, if I meet this vehicle do I take him head on?" said Russell. "Do I let him hit me to keep anyone else from getting hurt? In my mind I have it made up...that's what I was preparing myself for. As I'm getting closer I could see the black smoke. Two vehicles had collided head-on in the passing lane of Highway 18."

When Russell arrived, one vehicle was engulfed in flames and another vehicle, a severely-damaged SUV, contained a trapped driver. According to the State Patrol description, bystanders could not free the driver of the SUV because the airbags had deployed. The flames from the other vehicle were growing larger and hotter. The SUV was leaking flammable fluids nearby. Russell could feel the intense heat from the burning vehicle and knew something had to be done to save the driver trapped in the SUV. He returned to his cruiser and used his push bumper to move the SUV a safe distance from the burning vehicle.

"The doors (of the SUV) were locked and they wouldn't unlock," said Russell. "I broke the back window thinking I could reach in and manipulate the lock myself and I couldn't so we tried breaking the front window and we still couldn't get the doors unlocked. We couldn't get her out. So, I turned around and pushed her out of there (with my cruiser) and we were able to get the door open."

Once safe from the fire, Russell, an Iowa County deputy, and several bystanders forced the driver's side door open and were able to help the person out of the SUV. The driver was taken to the hospital and treated for two broken ankles. Russell sustained minor injuries on his hands from broken glass.

The driver of the other vehicle, a good friend of Russell's, died in the crash.

Upon presenting the award, the State Patrol noted, "by selflessly risking his own personal safety to help another, Trooper Briant Russell demonstrated high levels of bravery and dedication in the performance of his duties."

“I feel like I couldn’t save Jerry so it’s hard for me to accept this award, but I understand,” said Russell. “Realistically in my mind it was part of my job. It was what I had to do. I think any other officer in the same situation would have done the same thing. I’m honored to get the award, but I don’t like the spotlight.”

Russell, a native of Boscobel, Wisconsin, worked for the Grant County Sheriff’s Department before joining the Wisconsin State Patrol in 1994. He began as an adjunct instructor, teaching radar as part of the Law Enforcement Academy at Southwest Tech in 2014.

WSPAA member Mike Jennings shared the above article with me.



Above picture of Soren Sacia was shared by Dick Sacia.

What a cutie. Thanks for sharing Dick. What recruit class will Soren be part of?



My name is Jordann Meinhardt, and I am an undergraduate student at the University of Wisconsin Milwaukee. I will be graduating in the Fall of 2023 with a Bachelor’s Degree in Political Science and Minors in Spanish and Criminal Justice. I am currently the Vice

President of our Mock Trial Team and a Paralegal and Director of Personnel at our University Legal Clinic.

After completing my education, I will be taking a semester to work as a Paralegal to get a more hands on experience of the law and Criminal Justice System before attending Law School. My career goals include working as an Attorney in Criminal Law!

Jordann was one of our 2022 scholarship winners and is the granddaughter of Phil Wenzel.



### Network Engineering and Data Infrastructure

The Bureau of Network Engineering and Data Infrastructure provides:

- Engineering, installation, and technical maintenance for the statewide telecommunications network
- Engineering for all radio tower sites and voice transmitting equipment
- Engineering and installation of equipment in cruisers, such as radios, cameras, lights, sirens, and other in-car equipment both at the regional posts and Fleet Installation Center



## 2022 Deaths

1. Richard Kort died at age on 1-10-22 at the age of 81. Dick was a member of the 17<sup>th</sup> recruit class, badge #562. Dick is survived by his wife Marlene, daughters Alicia, Michelle, Stephanie Dubrowski and Stephanie Vedvik.
2. Don Larson died on 2-3-22 at the age of 96. Don was a member of the 2<sup>nd</sup> recruit class, badge #135, Don is survived by his daughter Angela and son Steve.
3. Don Mayer died on 2-25-22 at the age of 71. Don was a member of the 29<sup>th</sup> recruit class, badge #921& #1480. Don is survived by his brother Pete and children.
4. Carol Heffernan died on 2-27-22 at the age of 84. Carol was the wife of Tim Heffernan and mother to John, Mary, Laura, Jennifer, Colleen, Joyce, and Nancy.
5. John Briggs died on 3-9-22 at the age of 90. John was a member of the 6<sup>th</sup> recruit class, badge #270. He is survived by his wife Joann and children Doug & Jacqueline.
6. Tom Puente, age 84 died on 4-29-22. Tom was a member of the 12<sup>th</sup> recruit class #407. Tom is survived by his wife Mary, son Steve and daughter Cheri.
7. Thomas Mackovich died on 5-13-22 at the age of 85. Tom was a member of the 15<sup>th</sup> recruit class, badge # 486.
8. Wayne R. Wilson died on 5-25-22 at the age of 79. Wayne was a member of the 19<sup>th</sup> recruit class, badge #645. Wayne is survived by his children Kelly & Patrick.
9. Neil McCallum age 95 died on 6-3-22. Neil was a member of the 3<sup>rd</sup> recruit class badge #175. He is survived by his wife – Patricia, son – David, Daughter – Nancy and step-son – Paul White.
10. James (Jim) Charles Deneen died on 6-28-22 at the age of 79. Jim was a facilities repair/maintenance worker at District 1 headquarters. Jim is survived by his sisters Janice Deneen and Sandra Gillis.
11. Brian W. McDonald age 71 died on 7-26-22. Brian was a member with the 25<sup>th</sup> recruit class, badge #803. Brian is survived by his wife-Patricia, daughter-Tracy, and son-Shawn.
12. Diane Blied died on 8-15-22 at the age of 87. Diane was the wife of Jerome Blied.
13. William Plendl, age 89, died on 8-21-22. Bill was a member of the 4<sup>th</sup> recruit class, badge #229. Bill is survived by his children; Steve, Kathy, Karen, Dan, Rich and Kevin.
14. Jeff Mengelt died on 9-10-22 at the age of 70. Jeff was a member of the 31<sup>st</sup> recruit class, badge #'s 977 & 1525.
15. Jerome Koenig died on 9-21-22 at the age of 80. Jerome was a member of the 9<sup>th</sup> recruit class, badge #331. Jerome is survived by his children Annette and Tom.
16. Paul Collins died on 9-22-22 at the age of 89. Paul was a member of the 4<sup>th</sup> recruit class, badge #204. Paul is survived by his children-Kathleen, Mary Beth, Brian and Patti.
17. William Doxrude died on 10-17-22 at the age of 82. William was a member of the 20<sup>th</sup> recruit class, badge #651. William is survived by his children timothy and Susan Parry.
18. Norman Kuderer died 10-19-22 at the age of 89. Norman was a member of the 17<sup>th</sup> recruit class badge #'s 567 & 1671. Norman is survived by his wife Shirley and children David, Steven, Kevin, Denise and Loren.

19. William Guess died on 11-4-22 at the age of 80. William was a dispatcher. He is survived by daughter Dawn, Son Bill and 5 grandchildren.
20. William G Humphrey's died on 12-9-22 at the age of 77. He was a member of the 17<sup>th</sup> recruit class, badge #556. He is survived by his wife Bonnie and his daughters.
21. Ron Wonders died on 12-9-22 at the age of 83. He is survived by his wife Marie and children Jeff, Jody & Julie.

Memories of Warren Holsbo- Warren was a troop mate of mine in northern Dane Co. Those of us who ate lunch with Warren knew we had to be at the restaurant by 10 am or Warren was calling us on the radio for being late. We ate at the 3 same restaurants depending on the day of the week. Also Warren knew how many patrol cars he had been issued in his career and how many oil changes & sets of tires he had on those patrol cars. Who does that? Is my question.

It was a pleasure being a troop mate with Warren. Kim H.

How I met Warren Holsbo was at Wisconsin State Patrol Academy [August 01, 1966](#), we were in the 15th class together. He was one of the biggest newbies by his size, a hand above most of us. As a man fresh out of the military, at 6 foot 200 lbs. I considered myself big, not compared to Warren.

After the academy we both came to District One, I was an Inspector and Warren was a Trooper with regular assignment to Sector 5 & 6, the Cottage Grove Weigh Station was in Sector 6 on I-94, when the scale was open, Warren would stop two or three times a day when he was in Sector 6.

Early on there was a lot of talk about the academy when Warren stopped. Then I moved to De Forest and we both lived there, also Trooper Ford lived in Deforest when he got out of the academy.

It was not unusual to see all three of us at Rider's Amaco on Cty. Hwy. V at I90-94 if we were working a day shift. It was away too start our shift.

But the one thing that stuck out was, when 127 was called to an accident and you arrived as backup, you knew it was in good hands and Warren always let you know what he needed. It was really an honor working with and next to Warren for 29 plus years.

Inspector Robert Gohre Sr. (1106)