

*Transcript of a Saint Paul Police oral history interview with*

# **Sergeant Curtis Sandell**

Saint Paul Officer

1983 – 2010



1989



2009

This oral history shares the stories of the creation of Saint Paul's  
**Mounted Unit in 1995 and**  
**Motors Unit in 1998/1999**

December 5, 2009

By  
Kateleen Cavett  
at

HAND in HAND Productions Office in Saint Paul, Minnesota

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*This project has been made possible by the Arts and Cultural  
Heritage Fund through the vote of Minnesotans on November 4,  
2008. Administered by the Minnesota Historical Society.*

All pictures are from the Saint Paul Police Department  
collections and the personal files of the Sandell family.

## ORAL HISTORY

Oral History is the spoken word in print.

Oral histories are personal memories shared from the perspective of the narrator. By means of recorded interviews oral history documents collect spoken memories and personal commentaries of historical significance. These interviews are transcribed verbatim and minimally edited for accessibility. Greatest appreciation is gained when one can read an oral history aloud.

Oral histories do not follow the standard language usage of the written word. Transcribed interviews are not edited to meet traditional writing standards; they are edited only for clarity and understanding. The hope of oral history is to capture the flavor of the narrator's speech and convey the narrator's feelings through the timbre and tempo of speech patterns.

An oral history is more than a family tree with names of ancestors and their birth and death dates. Oral history is recorded personal memory, and that is its value. What it offers complements other forms of historical text, and does not always require historical collaboration. Oral history recognizes that memories often become polished as they sift through time, taking on new meanings and potentially reshaping the events they relate.

Memories shared in an oral histories create a picture of the narrator's life – the culture, food, eccentricities, opinions, thoughts, idiosyncrasies, joys, sorrows, passions - the rich substance that gives color and texture to this individual life.

Kate Cavett  
Oral Historian HAND in HAND Productions

## **Curtis Mark Sandell**

appointed police officer March 27, 1983  
out of title sergeant October 13, 2001  
promoted sergeant December 15, 2001  
voluntary demote to officer March 14, 2003  
reinstated sergeant August 30, 2003  
retired November 3, 2010.

CS: Curtis Sandell

KC: Kate Cavett

CS: My name is Curtis Sandell. I'm a sergeant at the Saint Paul Police Department. I work currently in the Vice Unit.

KC: Tell me about how you came onto Saint Paul.

CS: I joined the Saint Paul Police Department in November of 1982.

KC: What made you want to be a cop?



Larry Sandell  
2000

CS: That's kind of an interesting story. I have two brothers that are police officers. They were police officers at the time. I worked at the Ford Motor Company. I absolutely hated my job and my older brother Larry,<sup>1</sup> who was on Saint Paul, had advised me that they were giving the last test that didn't require any college to come onto Saint Paul. And it was all civil service tests. It was given at the old Civic Center down in the basement of the auditorium. I actually took the test twice. The first time I took the test, I passed the written test and I went on to the physical. Then I got promoted at

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<sup>1</sup> **Larry Roy Sandell** was appointed police officer September 8, 1975; promoted sergeant September 12, 1998; and retired September 26, 2008.

Ford to management. So I stopped the testing process and they stopped. Well, Ford Motor Company back then, they made some cuts like they normally do. I went from management, and I went back to working the line. I ended up back on the line and, again, hated my job. Larry called me up and says, “Curt, this police work is a great job. You should give it a try. Just one more time. You’ve got your last chance to test for Saint Paul.”

So I took the test down at the old Civic Center again, and I believe there was almost 2300 people taking the test. It was the old civil service. They didn’t require any college or law enforcement background to get in then. I passed the written test again and I went on. I believe it was twenty-one or 2300. 250 went on to the physical. I went on to the physical, I passed the physical, then we went into the oral boards and I actually ended up – I think my number was 186 after all the testing. But I’m a veteran<sup>2</sup> of the Air Force and I lived in the City of Saint Paul. It gave me ten points. Those added ten points moved me up to number twelve. They hired twenty-three recruits. They hadn’t hired in three years. And so they hired twenty-three recruits, and I got hired. So I went through the Academy. Back then we had a twenty-three week academy.

KC: Do you remember how many women were in your academy?

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<sup>2</sup> **Veteran’s Preference.** Since the time of the Civil War, veterans of the Armed Forces have been given some degree of preference in appointments to government jobs, recognizing their sacrifice. Veteran’s preference recognizes the economic loss suffered by citizens who have served their country in uniform, restores veterans to a favorable competitive position for government employment. Veteran’s preference laws have changed over the years. After WWII, Minnesota had the strongest veteran’s preference law in the USA with absolute preference; no non-veteran could be appointed to a first class city – Duluth, Minneapolis, or Saint Paul. In the early 1970s, veteran’s preference laws changed relating to promotions, no longer discriminating against females, who could not join the military at the time.

CS: One. Deb Linder<sup>3</sup> was the only woman that was in our academy. Matt Bostrum<sup>4</sup> was in our academy, Brian Coyle<sup>5</sup>, there was quite a group of us. There were people that did pretty good in the academy.

Having my brother Larry, who was a patrolman here, and then my brother Todd,<sup>6</sup> who was also a patrolman over in Richfield, so I pretty much got talked into police work by them. It wasn't like I had this lifelong dream to be a cop. It was just, yeah, "Oh, this is a great job. You're going to love it." So that's how I got into police work. [Now my nephew, Scott,<sup>7</sup> Todd's son, has joined Saint Paul, too.]



Richfield MN Chief  
Todd Sandell  
2013

KC: Have you loved it?

CS: I have. I love coming to work every day. I really do.

KC: We're here for you to tell me the story of the two important departments that you started in Saint Paul.

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<sup>3</sup> **Deborah Linder** was appointed police officer March 27, 1983; resigned December 20, 1985.

<sup>4</sup> **Matthew Daniel Bostrom** was appointed police community service officer June 28, 1981; police officer March 27, 1983; promoted to sergeant April 17, 1994; lieutenant March 27, 1999; with a title change to commander January 1, 2000; senior commander June 26, 2004; and assistant chief April 8, 2006; elected Ramsey County Sheriff January 1, 2011.

<sup>5</sup> **Brian George Coyle** was appointed police officer November 1, 1982; promoted to sergeant December 11, 1987; lieutenant March 27, 1999; title changed to commander January 1, 2000; senior commander May 19, 2012.

<sup>6</sup> **Todd Sandell** was appointed police officer March 27, 1978; promoted to sergeant October 18, 1984; lieutenant March 24, 1997; deputy chief November 5, 2008; chief July 11, 2012; and retired May 31, 2014.

<sup>7</sup> **Scott Sandell** was appointed police officer August 13, 2011.



Rookie Curt Sandell  
1983

CS: It's kind of a very interesting story. My first few years on the job, I worked in different areas. I was working at Patrol. I worked Patrol in the Hill District.<sup>8</sup> I worked generally all over the place. In '91, I went to the Traffic and Accident Unit as a traffic car – an unmarked traffic car. I did traffic enforcement throughout the city. They're city wide, primarily doing that.



Young Officer Curt Sandell

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<sup>8</sup> **Cathedral Hill neighborhood** spans the area roughly from the John Ireland west to Lexington, between I-94 [Old Rondo] to Summit Avenue. It encompasses what remains of the "Rondo Neighborhood" (Rice/John Ireland to Marshall, to Lexington, to University) – a former diverse, but predominately Black after WWII, neighborhood of the city. Rondo was the center of Saint Pauls' Black community since the Civil War, but was nearly obliterated by the construction of Interstate 94 in the 1960s.

# MOUNTED

Where this all started, there was an old motorcycle. I'm an avid motorcycle lover. I've loved them all my life. There's an old three-wheel motorcycle that used to be parked in the back part of [headquarters at] 101 East Tenth Street<sup>9</sup> by the radio shop. It was actually right near the stairway that went up to the gym. It was just dusty and dirty. It was an old Harley. I believe the actual age of it is 1964 or something, although I was told at one time it was 1954 Servi-Car.<sup>10</sup> That unit is now sitting up in West Team,<sup>11</sup> in their lobby.



Public Safety Building - 101 E. Tenth Street

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<sup>9</sup> **Public Safety Building** at 101 E. 10th Street was occupied in 1930. All administration was centralized in the new building that also housed the Fire and the Health Departments. The Health Department moved out in 1958 to 555 Cedar Street. In 1985, the building was gutted for a new interior configuration. The main entrance was moved from south to north side of the building. The building was given a new address of 100 East Eleventh Street. Police headquarters operations moved to 367 Grove Street in 2004. The new building was named The James S. Griffin Building for the deceased deputy chief, who was the first Black officer to achieve high rank.

<sup>10</sup> The **Harley-Davidson Servi-Car** was a three-wheeled utility motorcycle manufactured by Harley-Davidson from 1932 to 1973. The Servi-Car was designed during the Great Depression when Harley-Davidson was desperate to expand its product base to increase sales. The Servi-Car was popular as a utility vehicle for small businesses and mobile vendors. They proved to be particularly popular with police departments, some of which still used Servi-Cars into the 1990s.

<sup>11</sup> **Western District Office** is located at 389 North Hamline, Saint Paul, MN 55104



And it was parked back in there, and I used to see it all the time when I went to the gym. So Sergeant Jessen<sup>12</sup> was in the Fleet Division back then, and Fleet worked out of the same office as we did. So one day I went in and asked him, I said, "What's the story on that old motorcycle? Why is it here? What's it for?" And Jessen says, "You want to ride it?" I said, "I'd love to ride it. I think it'd be great." He says, "Do you have an endorsement?" and I go, "Yeah." He says, "Okay." So I says to him, "Wouldn't it be really great to take that out and lead parades?" It was no good for patrol, but you could take it out and lead parades. He says, "Yeah. I'm pretty sure it runs." And he says, "You want to do it?"



KC: What's an endorsement?

CS: Am I endorsed to ride motorcycles? And I was.

So, I remember I lived out in Woodbury at the time, and I drove it home and I cleaned it up. It was all dusty and dirty. So I just really cleaned this thing

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<sup>12</sup> **Mark Harold Jessen** was appointed patrolman September 3, 1968; promoted to sergeant October 14, 1972; and retired July 2, 1999.

up. And the first parade I ever went to was Cinco de Mayo over on the West Side.

I showed up at the parade. I just wore my uniform. He bought me a helmet. It was like eighty dollars. It was this white helmet and I showed up at the parade. And I go, "What are you doing here?" and he says, "I'm going to lead your parade." I said, "Well, we don't have you on the list." He says, "That's because I'm the leader. I'm the first one. I'm going to lead this parade." [Kate laughs]

I'm not understanding, so they let me. So I led the parade, and I did this on my own time. I didn't get paid to go do this. So I lead the parade in Cinco de Mayo. And then I think I showed up for the Rice Street Parade. I showed up for several parades. And usually they were on the weekends when I was off. I'd just go down and get this bike, and I'd show up at these parades.

And then when Ryan<sup>13</sup> and Jones<sup>14</sup> were killed in '94, I got a call. My brother was actually on the detail with the funeral, and he called me and he says, "Somebody wants you to lead the procession on that motorcycle." So of course I agreed to do that. So then I lead both of their processions on their funeral processions. I went from the church to the cemeteries on both these parades. It was just really great.

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<sup>13</sup> **Ronald Michael Ryan, Jr.** was appointed police officer January 23, 1993; fatally injured by gunfire while responding to a "slumper" call August 26, 1994.

<sup>14</sup> **Timothy J. Jones** was appointed police officer October 31, 1978; fatally injured by gunfire while searching for the suspect of Officer Ron Ryan's murder August 26, 1994.

So it was shortly after that that [Chief] Finney<sup>15</sup> – I was in for Dick Wachal's<sup>16</sup> promotion down at the chief's office. And Chief Finney come up to me and he says, "I understand you're taking that bike out on your own, and I really appreciate you doing that." And I said, "You know, Chief, it's a fine little motorcycle for parades and stuff. But I'm in traffic, and we really should have two-wheel motorcycles for traffic enforcement." Finney says, "No. They're unsafe. Curt, I just can't bring myself to get motorcycles. I just think it's putting people in danger." [Kate laughs]

KC: That's a riot because he's a motorcycle lover. He [shared in his oral history that] he bought a motorcycle behind his mother's back when he was eighteen.

CS: Yeah, I know. And actually he was a motorcycle lover back then, but he says, "There's just too many stats that people get hurt on motorcycles." He says to me, "What do you think about horses?" I go, "Horses?!" He goes, "Yeah. I just got back from a chief's convention in Omaha, and they had a mounted patrol."<sup>17</sup> And he says, "Have you ever thought of horses?" "Chief, my brother and I used to own horses years ago." I says, "I love horses." He says, "You look into horses. I'll look at horses. I just won't look at motorcycles."

I went back to my office. It was even that afternoon, and I'd heard about that Chicago had mounted. U.S. Park Police had mounted. I knew Omaha had mounted. So I sat in the office and I called all these different agencies and started asking questions about mounted police. "How do you get your horses? How do

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<sup>15</sup> **William "Corky" Kelso Finney** was appointed patrolman January 4, 1971; promoted to sergeant April 1 1978; the first Black male promoted to lieutenant March 8, 1982; captain February 23, 1987; and Saint Paul's first Black chief July 17, 1992; and retired June 30, 2004.

<sup>16</sup> **Richard Louis Wachal** was appointed police officer November 1, 1980; promoted to sergeant May 29, 1994; and retired November 30, 2007.

<sup>17</sup> **Mounted police** are police who patrol on horseback (equestrians).

pay for them?" Etcetera, etcetera, etcetera. And I put a paper together and I sent that to Finney. I still don't even have a copy of this paper, but I remember writing this thing up for Finney.

And then I continued working traffic. And then one day, the boss came in and he said, "Go see Al Singer. You're going to Omaha." "Oh, really! What am I going to Omaha for?" He says, "I don't know. Go down and see Singer." Al Singer was the Deputy Chief. So I go down to Singer's office. He says, "The chief wants you to look further into this mounted patrol stuff. He liked your paper, and he wants you to look into more into mounted patrol." So he says, "You're going down there with Dick Iffert<sup>18</sup> and a female officer. You can either take Connie Bailey<sup>19</sup> with you or you can take Mabel Schereme.<sup>20</sup> I didn't know Mabel



Connie Heine Bailey  
1999

at all, but I knew Connie. So I says, "Yeah."

So Connie, Dick Iffert, and myself got in the car and we drove down to Omaha, and we met up with Deb Campbell, who was the sergeant of the Omaha Mounted Police. Now, we had no idea. Dick Iffert was the naysayer. Both Connie and I thought, "What a great idea this would be. Can you imagine having horses in the City of Saint Paul?" And Dick Iffert was, "This is the dumbest idea the chief has ever come up with. I can't believe he's sending me down here." So he had to have somebody with a negative [attitude].

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<sup>18</sup> **Richard Joseph Iffert** was appointed patrolman January 16, 1967; promoted to sergeant November 20, 1976; lieutenant August 5, 1984; and retired September 30, 1999.

<sup>19</sup> **Constance Adair Heine Bailey** was appointed police officer November 1, 1980; resigned September 9, 1982; reinstated August 15, 1983; promoted to out of title sergeant November 20, 1999; returned to police officer February 12, 2000, retired December 31, 2010.

<sup>20</sup> **Mable Scheremet Jesinoski** was appointed police officer July 11, 1977; and retired April 14, 2005.

So going down there, I remember I took a video camera with me and we showed up and this Deb Campbell – I don't even know if she's still with them any more – was just great. She says, "Yeah, we're going to go, and we're going to go downtown. And do you guys know how to ride?" Both Connie and I had had horses and we go, "Yeah."

There's actually kind of a funny little sidelight to this, because I had just had a vasectomy about three weeks before. So I remember telling this to Deb, and she was so amazed that I would actually tell her that, and I says, "You know, I can ride, but I'm not going to run or anything because –" [Kate laughs] So she picked on me about telling her about it. I says, "I better tell you," you know.

So they took us to downtown Omaha, into old Omaha, and we kind of sat on corners, and Connie and I were in our glory, and we were sitting there with these two Omaha officers sitting on horses, and everybody's coming up and talking to us. And I remember Dick coming up to us. He did not ride a horse. He was walking around with their lieutenant, and he says, "I can see some advantage to this, but we don't really have an old Omaha in Saint Paul." So I turned to Deb and I said, "Deb, do you ever take these out into your hard crime areas?" I says, "You know, if the city's going to look at it, they don't want just a touchy feely thing. They would like to see do these things actually fight crime?" "Oh, yeah. We do it all the time." I says, "Tomorrow night when we come in, could we possibly go out to the worst part of Omaha and then ride the horses out there?" "Oh yeah, sure. It's no problem."

So the next night we come in. We go to the barn and we pick up the horses. Dick Iffert and the lieutenant follow us in the squad car, and we go out into one of the housing projects in Omaha. It was really interesting, because as we pulled the horses out, there was nobody out. It was real quiet. It was very

similar to our [Mt. Airy<sup>21</sup>] housing projects up on the hill behind the Capitol.<sup>22</sup> That type of a deal. And we rode the horses from this little shopping area, and we rode into the first parking lot and, literally, people came running out of their houses towards these horses. Little kids, adults. “The horses are here. Oh, the horses are here.”

Now, Dick Iffert has got my video camera, and he’s videoing this. I didn’t know much about mounted policing, but I remember watching kids on one side of the horse and all of a sudden they pop up on this side. Well, they were actually running under the horses belly to get to the other side. And I didn’t know you shouldn’t let them do that. You know, we didn’t know.



Lt. Dick Iffert  
1984

I took the camera from Dick, and then we rode through the area and I would videotape, like, the inside of cars. I could videotape – I think I still have that tape. In fact, I’m pretty sure I do somewhere. I’d have to really find it. And then I’d show people running out. And then Dick Iffert totally changes his whole [attitude]. He said, “We got to get going on this. This is incredible.” He said, “These kids –” And it’s true. The kids had probably never even seen a horse live except for one on TV. It was so true that we were so big on those horses that we were just bigger than life to this area.

So we went back to the barn, and then all the way back Dick kept saying – he started making phone calls to like, “Who can we get? Who has had this

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<sup>21</sup> **Mt. Airy Family Development** includes 298 townhouses and 153 units in a ten-floor hi-rise that was built in 1959 and remodeled in 1985. Located north of the Capitol, east of I-35E with streets that include Arch, Mt. Airy, L’Orient, Jackson, Linden, and Wales. This public low-income family housing project is run by the Public Housing Agency of the City of Saint Paul.

<sup>22</sup> **Minnesota State Capital** at 75 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr Boulevard, Saint Paul, MN 55155

before?” And then there was a report done years ago by some other sergeant who really nay-sayed things. “No, this is a dumb idea.” And Dick Iffert had a way with words and stuff, so he wrote up the report up pretty good. So he changed.

Oh, and the other thing we found out down there. We said, “How do you fund this? How do you pay for all this?” And there’s an organization down there called The Friends of the Mounted Police, and there was an old guy and – I’m sorry, I just don’t remember everybody’s names. There was an old guy. He owned the Dehner Boot Company,<sup>23</sup> which is a boot company which makes all the tall boots for the highway patrol and mounted units. The tall boots. And this company works out of Omaha. And he was telling us how people will donate things to this nonprofit, and then the nonprofit actually pays for the mounted. They don’t pay for the officer’s salaries, but they pay for all the equipment, the building. They had a beautiful set up there, and they were actually at the Ak-Sar-Ben Race Track,<sup>24</sup> which is a horse racing track. The Friends of the Mounted pay for all that. They took in donations from whoever – corporations or whatever who wanted to see the mounted go. So this was in our report to the chief, too.

Shortly after that trip, the chief was very impressed, and he’d watched the video. Then he calls me in and he says, “You know, Curt, you guys did a great job down there. I really want to look into this, but I’ve talked to the city council about it, but they won’t fund it. So can you find a funding source?” So my cousin

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<sup>23</sup> **Dehner Boot Company** (3614 Martha Street, Omaha, NE 68105) was founded in 1875 in Junction City, Kansas, creating boots that would grow to be known worldwide for their incredible fit and fantastic look.

<sup>24</sup> The **Ak-Sar-Ben Race Track** and Coliseum was an indoor arena and horse racing complex in Omaha, Nebraska. Built to fund the civic and philanthropic activities of the Knights of Ak-Sar-Ben, the thoroughbred race track was built in 1919, and the Coliseum was built in 1929. The racetrack closed in 1995 and the arena in 2002; the facility was demolished in 2005.

Roger Schulz owns Dunn Brother's Coffee<sup>25</sup> and Northwest Opticians on Fifth and Wabasha. Back then, he was in a group called the Kiwanis.<sup>26</sup> Well, the Kiwanis is still around. And the timing was perfect on this. He was a very active member in the Kiwanis, and he said Mark Lindgren had just been elected a new president. Lindgren was president of Shaw Lumber, the old Shaw Lumber that had a yard on Como Avenue. And Roger says, "Presidents, when they come in, they like to change things. They like to come in and kind of leave a legacy." And normally the Kiwanis support the Kiwanis camp up on the Saint Croix River, but they were looking for something new. So Roger and I arranged a meeting with the Kiwanis, and we met at a place down on Seventh Street which is no longer there. It was the old Bingo Hall. And Minneapolis had had their mounted up and running for a year. So we had Minneapolis bring their horses over.

And even before that, what happened was after the thing the chief told me how good I did in Omaha and he says, "But Curt, you're an officer. You need a sergeant." And I says to him, "Well, Dan Harshman."<sup>27</sup> I had put this feeler out to people who'd be interested in doing this. I just sent out a bulletin and Dan Harshman had put in. And so I said, "Well, Dan Harshman. He's a sergeant and he's interested in doing this." He goes, "Oh, Dan. He's one of my boys. Yeah, Dan would be great." So then it was Dan and I, so I can't take all the credit for

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<sup>25</sup> **Dunn Brother's Coffee** and **Northwest Opticians** 367 Wabash Street, Saint Paul.

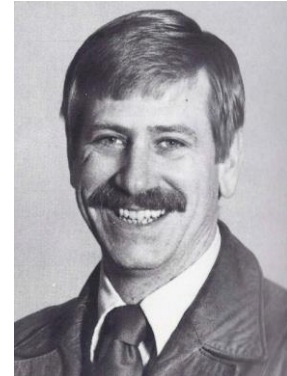
<sup>26</sup> **Kiwanis International** (kih-WAH-niss) is an international, coeducational service club founded in 1915, with clubs found in more than eighty nations and geographic areas. Its family of clubs annually raises more than US\$100 million and report over 18 million volunteer hours to strengthen communities and serve children.

<sup>27</sup> **Daniel Dwight Harshman** was appointed patrolman March 23, 1970; promoted to sergeant April 1, 1978; and retired November 30, 1999.



this thing, because it was Dan and I that made the arrangement with the meeting with the Kiwanis.

Sgt. Dan Harshman  
1984



So we went down to the Kiwanis and we met with them. And I remember us telling them – there were a lot of questions and answers, you know. “Why do you want to have horses? And who’s going to clean up after horses?” And all these type of questions. And I remember calling Minneapolis and not telling them the touchy feely part of it, how you’re a ten-foot tall police officer and people can see you from a distance and the kids in Omaha and how they came running out of their house. I remember I turned to Dale Burns and he was a sergeant over in Minneapolis and he comes up and he grabbed the microphone and he says, “And boy, can you kick ass from on top of these horses!” And I went, “Huh!” That’s not what we want to hear, but this is Saint Paul, not Minneapolis. [Kate laughs]

So the Kiwanis decided to take us on as a project from that meeting. Then Dan and I had to have meetings with the neighborhood groups. So it was just Dan and I. Then we pulled Connie Bailey into it. Then shortly after that we got Eric Anderson<sup>28</sup> involved.

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<sup>28</sup> **Eric Charles Anderson** was appointed police officer November 1, 1980; promoted to sergeant September 15, 2001; commander May 19, 2012.



Eric Anderson  
1999

The council wanted us to have community meetings and see how the community felt. We had them down at the old 101 East Tenth Street. Sometimes you'd have like five people show up. You have these community groups, but sometimes they're just not interested. And everybody was, "Yeah." And the Kiwanis said they would take this on, so we started doing fundraisers.

Some of the things that were done [to raise money] was we had that Taste of Saint Paul down at the Landmark Center where different restaurants donated food, then guests paid [to attend]. In fact, who is it that does the food? Eleanor Ostman ran an article back then in the paper about us doing this. I remember bringing a horse down there, and the chef was holding food, and the horse's head was right here. It was cute.

KC: Now, what year was this?

CS: 1994/1995. Because originally I was put into what's called a Mounted Patrol, Mounted Police Directed Enforcement.<sup>29</sup> Once we had the Kiwanis, then we set up a 501(c)3.<sup>30</sup> We could start taking in donations.

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<sup>29</sup> **Mounted Patrol Unit.** Saint Paul's first Mounted Patrol Unit was disbanded in 1928. The second unit trained between June 1994-June 1995 and officially began July 1, 1995 with three year trial supported by the Saint Paul Kiwanis and a non-profit, Friends of the Saint Paul Mounted Police. The first unit had one sergeant and five officers who were assigned to beats, to visit school and block clubs, to special events and to conduct trainings with other mounted units.

<sup>30</sup> A **501(c) Organization**, is an American tax-exempt nonprofit organization. Section 501(c) of the United States Internal Revenue Code (26 U.S.C. § 501(c)) provides that twenty-nine types of nonprofit organizations are exempt from some federal income taxes.

## **DINING FOR DOLLARS//TWIN CITIANS TURN OUT IN A BIG WAY (AND SPEND BIG MONEY) FOR GOOD CAUSES AND GREAT FOOD.**

BYLINE: By Eleanor Ostman, Staff Writer

The annual spring bouquet of charitable social events has food-committee members struggling to create menus worth the sometimes steep ticket prices and meals that make men willing to put on tuxedos but won't drip all over party dresses.

Patti Soskin, in charge of planning the Symphony Ball dinner, says it best: "These people need to be treated very special, because they spend a lot of money to support things like the [Minnesota Orchestra]. A great dinner is the committee's way of saying thanks."

Parties during the next few weeks range from the St. Paul Chamber Orchestra benefit in an airplane hangar filled with vintage aircraft, to the Symphony Ball, set in a "Mystical Pavilion" (actually, a tent) erected within the Metrodome.

A less formal eating occasion allows the public to put on the feed bag in support of the St. Paul Mounted Police Patrol. A gourmet gallop through the spread of restaurant fare costs only \$20, compared to \$185 a person for the Symphony Ball and \$135 at the Chamber Orchestra gala. But no matter the cost, menu planners want people to leave feeling they got their money's worth at the party table.

Beef - tenderloin, filet, or in its younger veal version - is almost universally at the center of the plate, even at the American Heart Association gala.

Here's a look at the coming fund-raising parties and their menus:

### **Tastes of Saint Paul**

When: May 15

Where: Landmark Center

For: Friends of the St. Paul Mounted Police

### **Menu:**

The Minnesota Club: Roasted Smoked Pork Loin with Apple Slaw, Poached Salmon Quenelles with Roasted Garlic Rosemary Cream Sauce

The University Club: Whole Poached Salmon, Cooked-to-Order Smoked Chicken and Spinach Linguine with Roasted Red Pepper Sauce

Leeann Chin: Lemon Chicken, Chinese Chicken Salad

Gallivan's: Barbecued Ribs, Caesar Salad

Dixie's on Grand: Jambalaya and Beef Jerky

Awada's on Plato: Bourbon and Maple Glazed Ribs, Mediterranean Salad

Pig's Eye Grill: Baja Rolls, Special Meatballs

Billy's on Grand: Jerk Wings, White Bean Chicken Chili

Shannon Kelly's: Beer Cheese Savory with Soda Bread

Great Northern Supper Club: Jamaican Jerk Chicken Kabobs, Pasta

Roger Schultz, when he's not examining eyes at the downtown St. Paul office of Northwest Opticians, is treasurer of the Friends of the St. Paul Mounted Police, sponsor of Tastes of St. Paul.

Schultz says participating restaurants are "very eager and supportive. They didn't even think twice about doing it."

As many as 700 people are expected to attend the second annual affair, he said. Members of the Mounted Police will get to enjoy it, but their horses won't.

"People can't feed the horses, but they sure can come out and mingle with them," Schultz promised.

Reservation information: Tickets are \$20 per person, available by calling the St. Paul Kiwanis Club, 293-0408, or Northwest Opticians, 224-5421. They are also available at the door of Landmark Center.

The event is from 5 to 9 p.m. A silent auction will be from 5 to 8:30 p.m.

We actually borrowed a horse trailer, borrowed a truck, and our first two horses were taken in from Canterbury Park.<sup>31</sup> They were donated thoroughbreds. Neither one of them were even fit for riding, let alone for mounted police, but we didn't know. So we took these horses.

We had an attorney that was working with us, Lori Parks. And I guess people, if they donated their horse, no matter what the value of the horse was, they could take a \$5000 tax deduction. They could value the horse at that unless they could prove that the horse was worth more than \$5000. We put out articles asking for donations and we got two right off the track. Larry Koss. You know who Larry Koss is. Larry Koss used to be the CEO of Green Tree Servicing.<sup>32</sup> Green Tree was a company that did a lot of loans on trailer homes and stuff like that. Larry Koss is very much of a millionaire.

John Nasseff<sup>33</sup> was also very involved in this. These were some people we actually contacted through Chief Finney. Or Roger Schulz knew them. Roger knew this Larry Koss. So they gave us some money just to kind of get rolling. In fact, our first two horses, we took them in. We took them to a place that Larry Koss owned. It was a farm he owned south of The Cities. So we had no place to house them either. Technically, we really weren't supposed to take them in, but we did.

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<sup>31</sup> **Canterbury Park** is a horse racing track located in Shakopee, MN. The track itself features a one mile oval dirt track and a seven furlong turf course. Outside seating is available along with several indoor seating options. Canterbury Downs was founded by Walter Brooks Fields, Jr., and other investors. It held its first race on June 26, 1985.

<sup>32</sup> **Green Tree Servicing LLC**, 345 St. Peter Street, Saint Paul, MN 55102

<sup>33</sup> **John Nasseff** retired as a vice president of West Publishing and is a well-known Minnesota philanthropist.

Linda Wilson<sup>34</sup> ended up with one of those horses. We could take horses in; they could take their deduction. If it didn't work for us, they could either take the horse back or we could give the horse to somebody. We couldn't sell it for a profit and we had no equipment, we had no trailers, we had no saddles. Everything that we raised we put towards [getting the unit set up.]

The other fundraisers that were done was we had a gathering up on the third floor of Town Square. There used to be a bar up there. We had Minneapolis bring their horses over and they actually took them up through the skyway and they took them up on the third floor. John Nassetth donated a 1958 Cadillac that he had. It was an un-restored Cadillac and we raffled that off. We took that around. Roger and I took it around the most. We took it to Taste of Minnesota, Grand Old Days, any event we could find, back to the Fifties out at the fairground. And we sold these raffle tickets for this car, and that raised a lot of money. I couldn't tell you exactly what the breakdown was, but we ended up raising about \$350,000.

Then we started taking in donated horses. And we hired a professional horse trainer. Dick Kiesner is his name. And Dick lived out in [Rockford. I drove to a barn in Delano to train with Dick.] He was just west of Delano. I had owned horses, but I didn't know how to ride a police horse. So the chief actually sent me out to Delano. I went to Delano every day for two weeks, and Dick trained me how to do the basic riding. The basic walk, trot, cantor, side pass, and all the different techniques. The way Dick did that was he put me on – he was a professional horse trainer, and he put me on the horses he was training. And

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<sup>34</sup> Linda Wilson was appointed police officer March 20, 1989; promoted to sergeant May 30, 1998; and retired August 31, 2011.

then the horses knew what they were doing, but I didn't. So then I worked the horses with him, and then he showed me how to do that.

And then Dick evaluated all the horses that we took in. And then there was a vet at the University of Minnesota, Dr. Tracy Turner. He was a well-known vet at the U of M. So the way we set this up is that somebody would offer us a horse. We'd go out and we'd take a look at a horse, and we'd give it our first evaluation. Is it something that's going to fit us? Is it too big, too small? Then we'd take it to Dick. Dick would look at it. Dick would do some tests on it like throw ropes under its legs or over its back and see how spooky it would get. And if Dick gave us the okay, then we took it out to Tracy out at University of Minnesota, and he did a vet check on them to make sure they were sound and healthy. [He donated his services to us in the beginning.]

We really didn't have any problems getting horses. I bet we looked at sixty, seventy horses to get our initial ten or eleven horses. Some of them were knuckleheads. Some of them were pretty sound mentally and physically, but then once they got throwing stuff at them, they weren't so solid. So we got our first horses and the first horses were housed at Spruce Street Farms, which was out on Military Road in Woodbury.

I remember Dick showed up to give us our basic training out there, and the first day we did a selection process. And the way we did our selection process is Dan and I had people come out to the barn and get on the horses and ride them. And then we just did a, "You're going to fit, you're going to fit, you're going to fit." Or "You're not going to make it, you know." Sam Ballard<sup>35</sup> was in that original group. Eric Anderson was in that original group. Connie Bailey, myself, Dan. I don't remember everybody else.

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<sup>35</sup> **Samuel Clifford Ballard** was appointed patrolman May 22, 1972, and retired October 31, 2006.

And Dick Kiesner came out the first day and we'd gotten our saddles. We'd gotten our basic saddles. We all got helmets through Super Seer Helmets. The first day was a train wreck. Dick says, "Okay, just ride your horse" and they were kicking at each other and we were falling off. And it was a train wreck. I remember Dick standing in the middle of the arena going, "Okay, we're going to have some work to do here." And the horses were rearing up and kicking at each other. It was just something else.

It was a six week school and Dick worked with us for about – I think it was like three weeks. And then Deb Campbell came up from Omaha and spent two weeks with us and taught us the basic police work: how to arrest somebody, wow you should carry your gun when you get off of a horse. What to do – that kind of stuff. How to ride in formation.

We had gotten a couple of trailers donated. The equipment we had – we had the old beat up trucks. Our equipment wasn't very good. And the other thing we did through the Kiwanis or through the Friends because we had the 501(c)3 because we needed so much equipment. To equip the horse, I should say, is \$2000. We came up with an idea of having people donate the saddles in memory of somebody or if they just wanted to donate. Connie Bailey's parents donated one, and then Connie used that one. I had real good friends that owned

the Hart Ski Company<sup>36</sup> – I don't know if you remember Hart's Skis, but that was a big ski company – and a good friend of mine there back when I was going skiing was killed in a traffic accident over in Germany. His name was Jack. So the Bjork family donated \$2000 which bought a saddle and the reins and the headset and all that for a horse. And on the back of each of those saddles we put a plaque on the back of the saddle in memory of so-and-so. In fact, my first horse was a four-year-old thoroughbred that came off of Canterbury Downs and his name was Make Mine Bourbon. A terrible name for a police horse, you know. So I named him Jack, because Jack was a big loving guy and Jack had been killed in this car accident. So I named the horse Jack, and they were very honored to have Jack named after Jack Bjork. And then I rode a saddle with that plaque on it.

The first day we hit the street was the Taste of Minnesota. [Kate laughs] And we had no clue what we were doing. I remember we took six horses out there. It was a train wreck. The horses weren't used to the crowds, and we were

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<sup>36</sup> **Hart Ski Company.** In 1943, Hartvig "Hart" Holmberg opened a carpentry shop in Saint Paul, Minnesota, specializing in designing and manufacturing customized cribbage boards, chess sets, and wood or metal card games. Word of Hartvig's ability to create fine crafted goods quickly spread. Soon, the shop began to take on custom jobs using a variety of commercial manufacturing techniques, primarily custom painting and sheet metal work. Hartvig's brother Harry worked as a ski engineer and designer for Gregg Skis in Saint Paul. Knowing that the addition of a seamless metal edge would revolutionize ski design, Harry called upon Hartvig's manufacturing skills and together, they began working on a prototype. After three years of creating and refining, Hartvig, Harry and friend **Ed Bjork** were ready. In 1955, the first "Hart" metal-edged ski was introduced. By the mid-1960s, Hart Skis dominated the ski market with an overwhelming U.S. market share and global brand recognition. At its peak in the late 1960s, Hart shipped 144,000 pairs of skis a year, achieving revenues in the tens of millions. It also was during the 1960s that freestyle skiing became a global phenomenon. In 1968, the three original partners sold the company to Beatrice Foods, a conglomerate. Beatrice cut back on R&D, falling behind the competition as fiberglass skis were introduced. With sales plummeting, Beatrice sold Hart Ski in 1980 to an investor group, one of at least three groups that tried to revive the business in the next 18 years. By 1998, only 5,000 pairs of skis were shipped and the line was abandoned, until 2003, when another investor group led by the grandson of Hartvig Holmberg, Bill Holmberg, Jr., resuscitated the label with a goal of resurrecting the Hart name. The company was refinanced and restructured, and corporate headquarters were moved to Ogden, Utah in 2010.



kind of keeping them around the edges. And the first night of the Taste when the fireworks went off, we weren't quite sure what to do with them because loud bang and, you know. And I remember we all hid them under the Sears overhang of their auto deal. And when those fireworks went off, it was like a rodeo. Every horse was bucking and kicking.

So the next night we decided, let them watch them and see what happens. And it was true, if you went out and just let the horse watch the fireworks, the first couple of times would startle them, but then they'd go, "Okay. It's fireworks." And they'd put their head down. They didn't care. So we learned a lot in that. But the response was so good from the public on it. I mean everybody loved them. The kids would surround us. So the PR factor was huge.

The thing we had to fight with is that they were not just for PR. They were actually working horses, and we were going to make arrests and we were going to write tickets and involve with crowd control and stuff. We spent a long time, and then we finally got the horses to where we could take them out into crowds.

KC: Talk about your first arrest.

CS: I remember one of my first arrests was during Saint Patrick's Day. Dan and I were working down by Sixth and Wabasha. Saint Patrick's Day back then, there were all kinds of drunks running all over the place. We were just standing on a horse outside this very active bar. I can't remember what the name of it was. It's now called Pop, but it was something else. And the guy comes out of the bar. He's drunk and he's walking along, and he's punching out the mirrors on cars as he's walking down the street. And I look at him, so I just put Jack into a slight little canter and I catch up to the guy, and he looked at me and he started to run and I just – a couple of steps and I reached down and I grabbed him like this. His feet were still moving. He was still kicking.

KC: You like grabbed his back?

CS: Yeah. Grabbed the back of his shirt like this so that I lifted him up. When you're sitting on a horse, you're very strong this way.

KC: And what you're doing is your just doing an upward motion from your elbow.

CS: An upward motion of your arm from your elbow. I remember holding him and his feet are still running and he doesn't realize that he's not going anywhere. And the foot soldiers – there were a bunch of foot cops around, you know. They came and they grabbed him and we arrested him for criminal damage to property.

I made some arrests. There was once, down by the old Civic Center during the Festival of Nations and I was working downtown. And a call came out about a big gang fight going on at Seven Corners, which was right across from the Holiday Inn. I ran around and there was a group of Asian kids. There had to have been seventy-five of them, and they're fighting all over the place. I come charging in on this galloping horse and they all quit. And they started running all different directions, but there was one kid was sitting on top of a girl and just hitting her on the back of her head. He never looked up. So I get most the group running off and the canine was behind me. So I see him and I go, "You! Stop! Stop!" He jumps up and he starts running, so I start running after him. And as I'm chasing him, I just about to grab him. The horse tripped him – hit his leg and tripped him – and jumped over the top of him. So then I pull the horse and I say, "You! Stay there!" And he goes, "I'm not going nowhere, man. Man, I'm not going anywhere," he goes.

I made two DWI arrests on horses over on the East Side. [Kate laughs] They were in cars. One was a guy coming down the street and he had one of those real loud boom boxes. It went bom bom bu bu bom, like that. So I just put the horse out in front of him. In fact, I wrote quite a few tickets on horses, because everybody looks at you. I don't care where you're at. Can be anywhere.

Everybody looks at you, so I just put the horse in front of him. He stopped his car. I pulled the horse around to the side, and he had beer cans all over the floor and he had a beer between his legs. An open one. From a horse you can see so much inside those cars. So I have him exit the car, and then I called for a back up squad to come. So then the squad came, and so I got off the horse and I did the DWI thing on him and put the horse away. I put him in jail.

KC: Describe your physical stature. A big horse and you're a big man. How tall are you?

CS: I was actually much thinner back then. I'm 6'2". And back then I weighted right around 200 pounds. 210 pounds. So yeah, I was very big. And I've got a very obviously loud voice, too. I actually had an internal affairs complaint on me once because they said I yell at them. I really wasn't yelling at them, but when you're on top of a horse and you're trying to tell them to do something, they always think you're yelling at them.

Overall, the horses were tremendous. Chief Finney made me the trainer of the unit. Or Dan Harshman made me the trainer. So when somebody wanted out – a few people came in – I put on the schools. We needed a manual because we'd never had horses here before. Or they haven't since 1928. My manual – Dan Harshman gave me two weeks and I got manuals from U.S. Park Police, Omaha Police, Cincinnati Police, Chicago Police. And I did it at home on my home computer, and I laid all the manuals out and then I went through each chapter of their manuals, what was required in the manual. And then I re-wrote. I picked the best things I could find from each. So I never copied anybody's, but I took little bits from everybody. Plagiarism is a wonderful thing. And I've never reinvented the wheel. So I wrote the manual, which included the training manual and the daily ops and the formations. It took me about two weeks to do that. It has since been rewritten by Connie Bailey, because this boy is not good at

grammar and that stuff. So she's gone through and rewritten. Basically it's still the same manual.

KC: That's called the creative person writes and then you use an editor.

CS: Yeah, she edited. I could talk forever on mounted. You got to remember how this all started back with I wanted motorcycles. Now I've got horses. We have nine officers in there. They've done a tremendous job. I remember in the beginning, a lot of people would say, like these commanders of these different units, "What the hell are we going to do with those horses?" After a while, it was, "You got to get me those horses. Those horses just do great." Especially in crowd situations. They were phenomenal.

KC: Were there ever any accidents? I mean you just talked about this one time where the horse jumped over a kid – tripped the kid and then jumped over the kid. Were there ever any scary times?

CS: Yeah. There was one time I was on a horse called Bob. We were over on – the first thing this came out bad. We had the Payne Annual Harvest Festival Parade. Bob was solid as a rock. Drums could go by and he didn't care. We actually thought he was deaf for a little while. He wasn't. While we were over there, there was a lot of commotion going on in the group. Dan or Eric and I rode down through the crowd to break up the little fight that was going on. There were two little kids there. One of them got their foot stepped on.

Now, it wasn't terrible, but it did step on his foot because the little kid was sitting on the curb and as we were bringing the horse – you know, that's the scary time that anyone would get hurt. And when you're in some of these situations like that you worry about that part. That's huge. The kid was fine. We ended up writing a report on it and sending him to the hospital, and he was fine. I remember the parents. We were so worried we were going to get sued on it, but the parents had called like two weeks later. "You know, you kind of wrecked his

shoes. Any chance we could get a new pair of shoes?" "Absolutely!" [Kate laughs] "We'll buy those shoes!"

KC: Does the department then buy the shoes?

SC: No, they did. They bought the shoes. The people love those horses. They do.

There's a couple of people got arrested for slapping the horses. We actually worked with the legislature to make that illegal to hit a police horse, because nothing in the crime laws that said anything against hitting or striking a police horse.

KC: A slap, a touch could spook the horse?

SC: We had to work through a legislative liaison that was a Minneapolis PD Lieutenant named Shirleen Hoffman. It was brought to the MN legislature in the spring of 1995 to criminalize assaulting a police horse. I know Dan was very involved in getting this put into law. If somebody just slaps a horse, it can be considered a misdemeanor. Somebody slaps the horse and somebody gets hurt as a result of it, like if you slap a horse and it steps on somebody because you slapped it or you hit it. Or you willingly strike out at the horse, it could be considered gross misdemeanor. If the rider of the horse comes unseated or somebody gives demonstrable harm, terrible harm, then it becomes a felony. And that was put into legislation because of the Saint Paul Mounted to protect us in these different events that we were working.

And I got to arrest two over in Cinco de Mayo two years in a row for somebody slapping the horse when I'm standing there with a group of people. Now the horses were actually trained not to respond to that. There's a lot in the training of the horses that people didn't realize. So you could go up all day and I could sit on Norman or any of those horses and you could slap them all day long. They're not going to go anywhere because I've got such good control of

them. But it's because the two times they were done, they were done in times where I had a crowd of people in front of me and had the horse reacted that way.

One of the funniest ones was the second one I got. It was on Norman and they were waiting on Robert Street for everybody to cross and some idiot from the other side comes over and whacks, "Giddy up, boy!" Well, the horse didn't do anything, so I turn around and I grab him, and I'm putting the handcuffs on this side. And when I'm putting the handcuffs on on this side, some lady comes up with three kids and says, "Can we pet your horse?" "Yeah, go ahead." [Kate laughs] And I'm putting the handcuffs on this guy, and he's arguing with me. He's drunk and cops are coming to help me and, "Yeah, go ahead. Pet him." And they don't even know what I'm doing on the other side of the horse. They had no idea. So you had those.

We had a thing where Connie and I stood up. There was a group that was in that was anti-abortion and then there was a group that was pro-abortion. They had this big candlelight vigil up at the Cathedral<sup>37</sup> and Brian Coyle was the commander of the incident. He wanted two horses there. This was fairly new in the unit, and they were very afraid that we were going to stomp horses or run into people, because that would show up on the media. They didn't want to make a big media thing out of this, although it was.

So Connie and I sat in front for four-and-a-half hours watching the pro-abortion group harangue the people that were in the church, and harangue them. And then as they came out, they did this candlelight vigil, and we had to kind of parallel them as they walked down the street and all the anti-abortion people were yelling. But at one point it was funny, because we were told not to – because we could have busted the crowd and grabbed anybody, but we were

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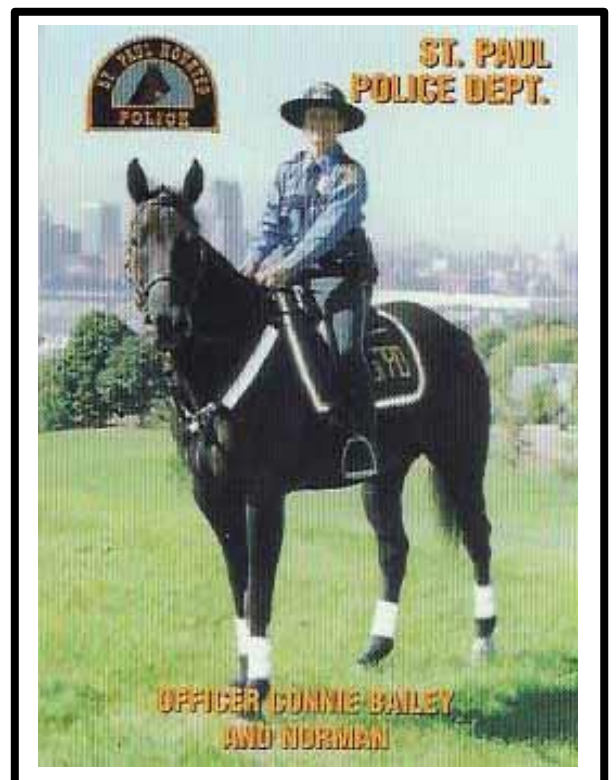
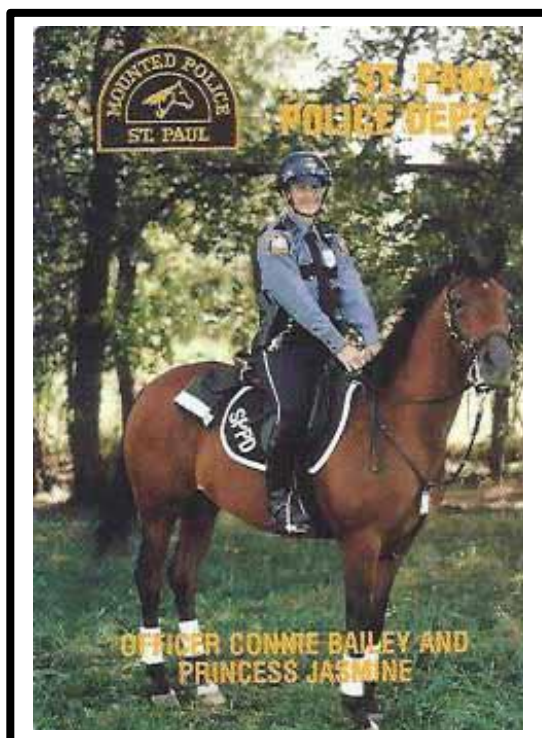
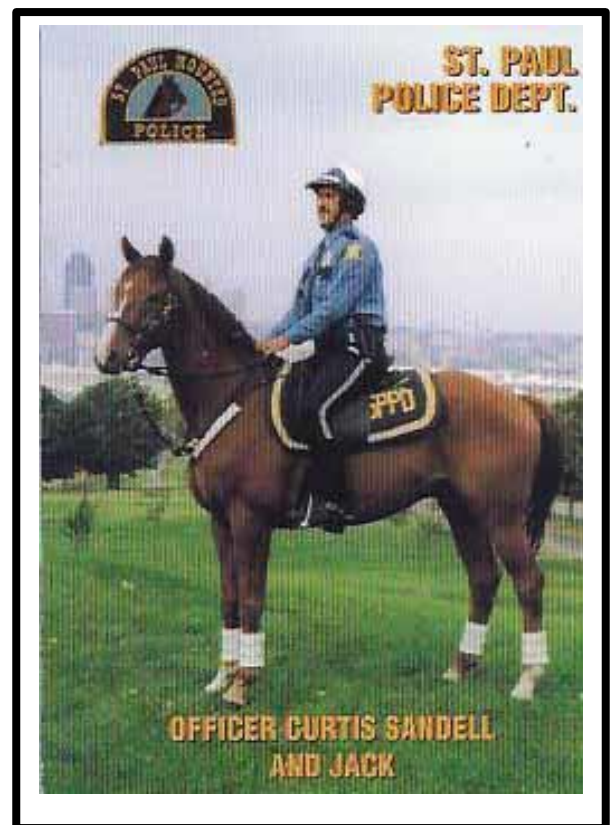
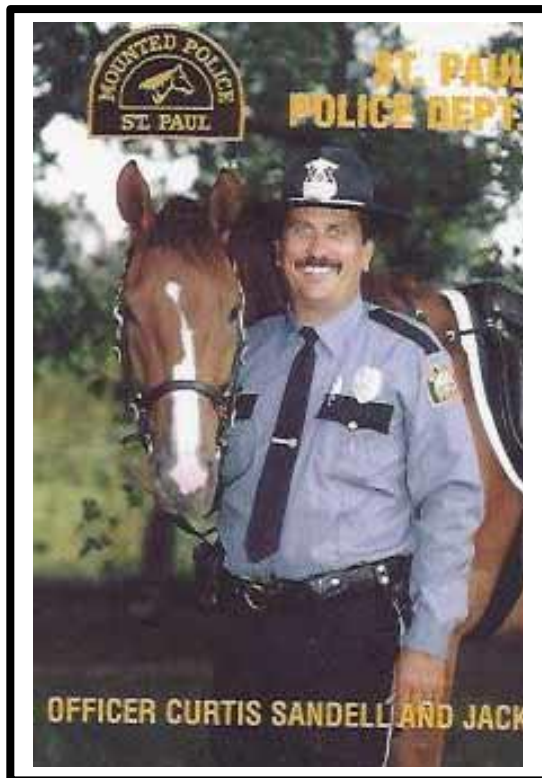
<sup>37</sup> **Cathedral of Saint Paul** is located at 239 Selby Avenue at Summit Avenue, Saint Paul, MN 55102

observers. So we sat there, and when they came out, somebody was throwing dinner rolls at them, so we just pointed them out [to officers on foot]. "Hey, there's a guy over there. He's on the right side. He's wearing a blue jacket. He's throwing dinner rolls at people." So they went and they grabbed him and they arrested him.

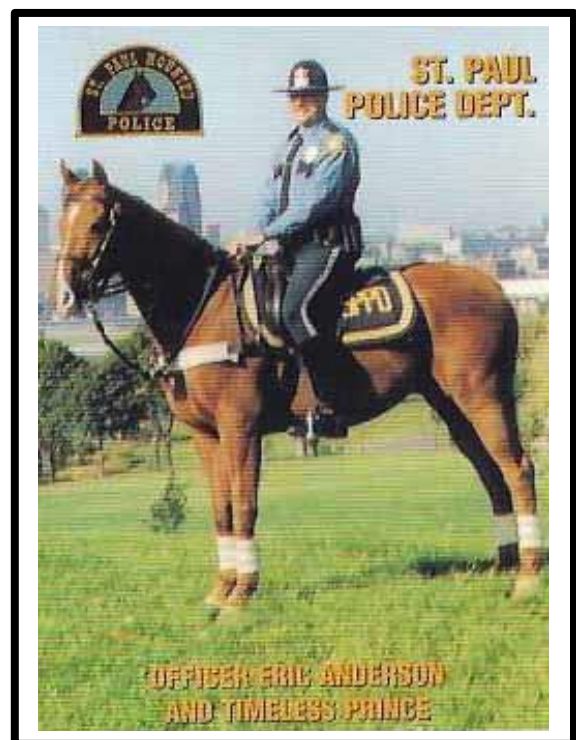
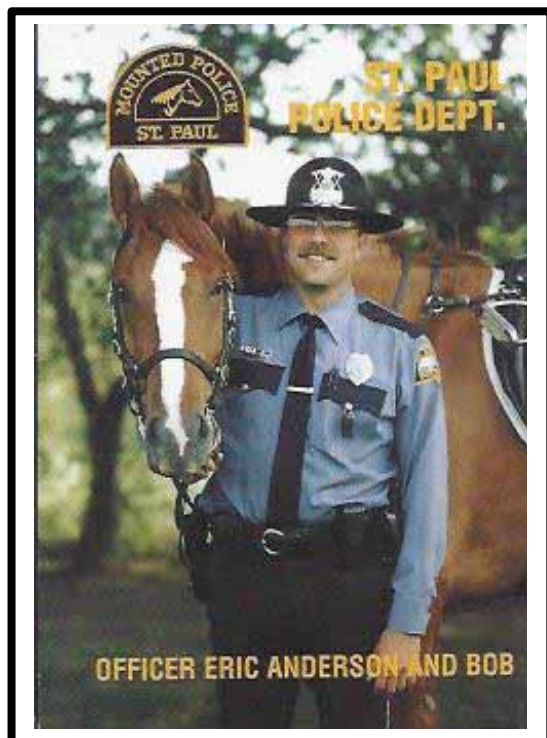
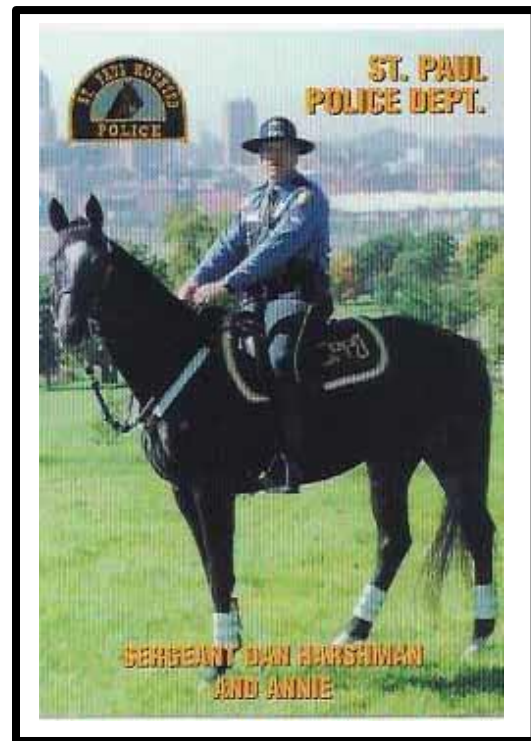
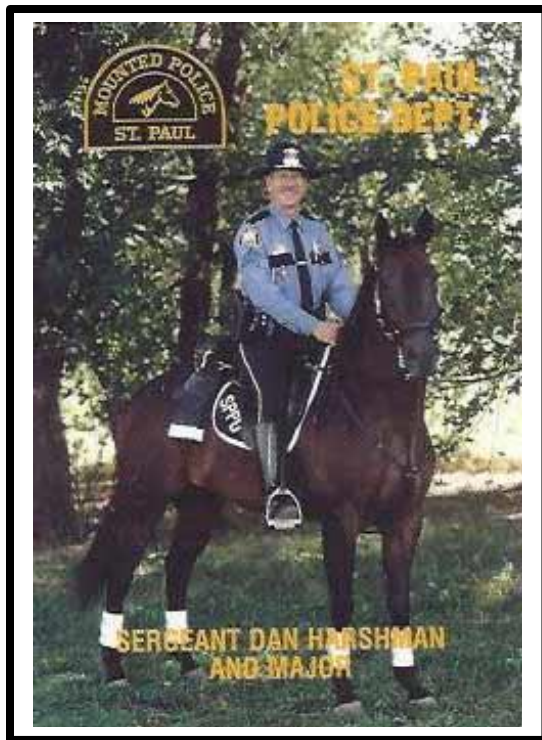
But the best part of this whole thing is as we're walking this crowd and they're going to walk up to the Capitol with their candles. The protesters are on both sides and Connie's on one side and I'm on the other side, and the one gal kept yelling obscenities over one of these megaphones, you know. You say, "Don't fuck. We say fuck you," is how it was going. And they were screaming it. But the thing would back and squeal every once in a while. You know how they get that feedback? And I'm on one side and Connie's on the other side, and Connie's horse, every time it would squeal would dance around a little bit. So I rode up to the gal and she goes, "What's the matter with that horse?" and I said, "I think it's afraid of your megaphone." "Oh, I'm sorry." Now this is an anti-abortion protester who's trying to get the – she says, "I won't use it anymore," and she quit using it. And I said, "Where else do you get that kind of response from somebody who's yelling? 'We don't – fuck you!'" And she goes, "Okay," and she quit using it. It was great. You got to think about that. That's pretty amazing. Were the horses valuable? You bet they were. I could talk forever on mounteds.

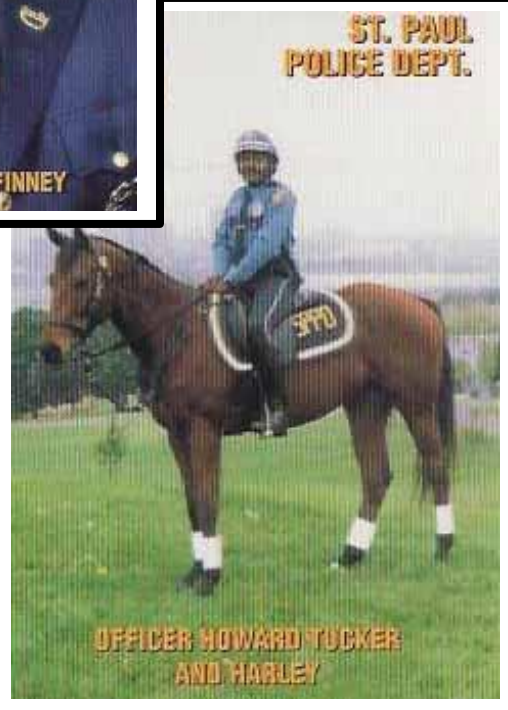
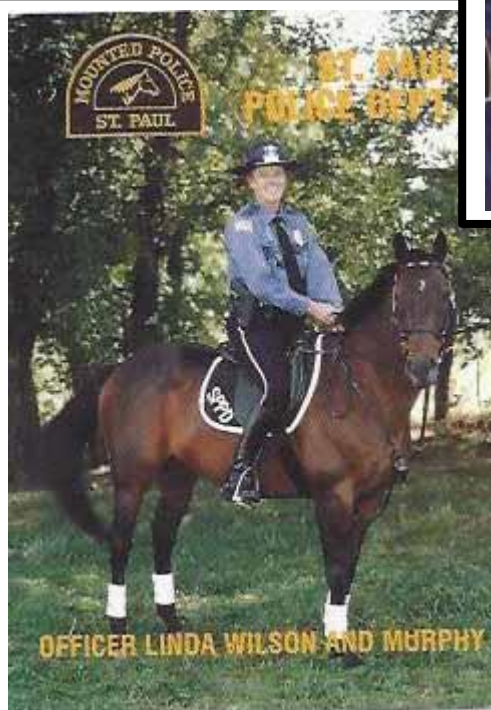
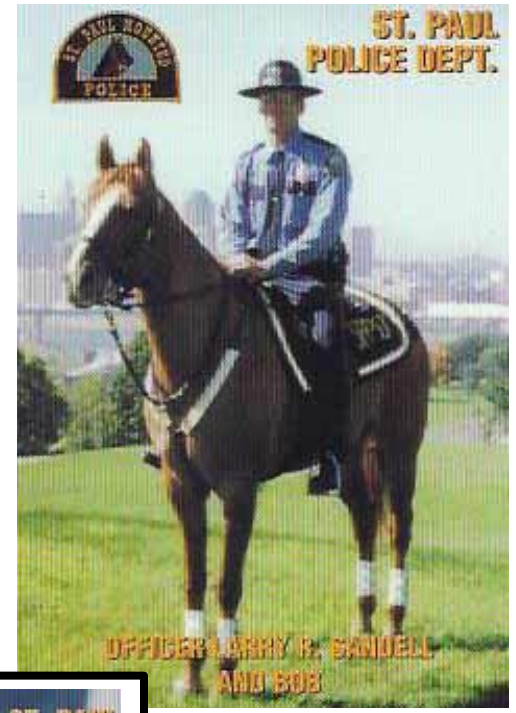
How did we get motorcycles? You got to remember how this all started – back with I wanted motorcycles. Like I said, I have got a million horse stories. We could spend six hours talking horse stories.

## Cards that were handed out to youth











# MOTORS

So how did the motorcycles happen?

KC: You're a sergeant now?

SC: Nope. Still a patrolman.

KC: Okay. Too busy having fun to take the sergeant test.

SC: You know, Finney talked to me multiple times about taking the sergeant's test, and I told him, "You know, I really like what I do. I like being responsible for me and the horses and that kind of stuff and the trainer." I didn't really feel the need to be a sergeant.

So I'd gotten wind – somebody had told me that there were two police motorcycles out at Saint Paul Harley and Chief Finney was looking at them. And in fact, he put something in his bulletin about training people to ride these two motorcycles. I went, "You got to be kidding."

And actually I literally went up to the chief's office, asked to speak to him, and I walked in in my mounted uniform. I had my boots and breaches on. I remember walking in and he said, "Hi, Curt. What can I do for you?" I said, "Chief! You're looking at motorcycles." He goes, "Well, yeah." I says, "Well, you told me five years ago they're too dangerous." He says, "Well, you know. The State Patrol had ordered these two bikes. They weren't going to take them. I went out and I took a look at them and I think it's worth giving it a try." "Chief! That's what I wanted to do was motor--. Don't get me wrong, Chief." He says, "Curt, you've done a tremendous job with the mounted." "I understand that, Chief, but remember, the original thing we talked about was motorcycles. I've always wanted to be a motor cop." He goes, "Well, Curt, you've been doing so much with the mounted, I can't really let you out of there right now." And I was the trainer. I was training all the new horses as they came in and all the riders.

And I said, “How about if I get somebody to replace me? Will you let me at least train with the new guys?”

He called me up actually at home. He says, “Okay, Curt. I’m going to let you go through the training, but you can’t be one of the first two officers. I need to have a couple of other guys do that, but you can be trained.”

This is great. So right away I started working with Connie Bailey to get her to take over the training position, which is something she actually kind of wanted for a long time anyhow.

I went through the initial school [for Motors]. There were six of us went out to Century College<sup>38</sup> and went through a motorcycle school. We brought a guy in. His name was Nick Pierce<sup>39</sup> from Harley Davidson.<sup>40</sup> They gave us six ratty old Harley Davidsons from Saint Paul Harley. They were old escort bikes. They didn’t have windshields on them or bags, and it was colder than heck. I remember us driving out there every day to Century College and ride these motorcycles through the toughest course I’ve ever done in my life. It was work. It was hard work. It was a two-week course that they condensed down to seven days.

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<sup>38</sup> **Century College** at 3300 Century Avenue North in White Bear Lake began as 916 Vo-Tech, an Area Vocational Technical Institute in 1969, and in 1996 was merged with Lakewood Community College to create Century College. Century College provides post-secondary education in technical and occupational areas, including adult extension programs to prepare for or upgrade employment skills.

<sup>39</sup> **Nick Pierce** retired Wisconsin State Trooper, working for corporate Harley Davidson and Northwestern University.

<sup>40</sup> **Harley-Davidson Inc** often abbreviated H-D or Harley, is an American motorcycle manufacturer. Founded in Milwaukee, Wisconsin during the first decade of the 20th century, it was one of two major American motorcycle manufacturers to survive the Great Depression.



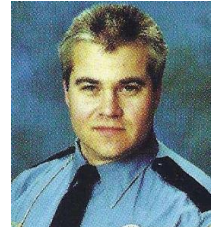
James Eastlee  
1999



Jon Loretz  
1999



Trip Noll  
1993



Chris Stark  
1999

It was Jim Eastlee,<sup>41</sup> Jon Loretz,<sup>42</sup> myself, Trip Noll,<sup>43</sup> Chris Stark.<sup>44</sup> It was actually 1998 when I did the training. I was still in the Mounted. They came out – Trip Noll and Jim Eastlee were given the positions as motorcycle riders. The downside I saw about that is Jim Eastlee didn't like it. It wasn't what he had cracked it up to be. Jim Eastlee was a motorcycle rider for years. He raced motorcycles and everything. He didn't really like it. Trip Noll thought it was great.

The way it was set up, we were called part-time riders. We could go in anytime. We could be let go to take the bikes out and do whatever we had to do with them. Trip Noll and Jim Eastlee rode them on a daily basis. Jim Eastlee was the highest ranking. He wasn't a sergeant. He was a patrolman, but he had more seniority. His job was to get the proper helmets together and get it up and running.

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<sup>41</sup> **James Lester Eastlee** was appointed patrolman May 22, 1972 and retired June 20, 2001.

<sup>42</sup> **Jon Joseph Loretz** was appointed police officer November 13, 1995; promoted to sergeant July 3, 1999.

<sup>43</sup> **William Theodore "Trip" Noll** was appointed police officer April 5, 1993 and retired March 24, 2000.

<sup>44</sup> **Christopher Wayne Stark** was appointed police officer October 7, 1996.

I rode at every opportunity I got. If I had a day off, I'd come in. I rode it on my day off. I just thought being a motor cop was way cool, you know? I remember I'd take it out off of Snelling and I'd write some tickets. I'd watch intersections and I'd write some tickets. I was an old traffic guy. Actually, I think I was out-riding the two officers that were actually on full time. I think I was writing more tickets than they were.

KC: On your time.

CS: On my time. It was either my time or once in a while Dan would let me go, and then I'd take a day off for when I'd do, you know. But I could only ride them when those guys weren't riding them. That went on for a while.

Then Connie pretty much took over the training of the horses. I remember I had to go through one more winter on the horses. The horses tremendous asset – the toughest part a mounted cop has is the winters. It's cold. You're out. I remember times when you're out there sitting on that horse, and the people in the skyway don't even want to come out and talk to you. They'll wave at you from the skyway, because it's too cold and you're sitting down there. So winters were really hard. I remember I was trying to get the chief to get me out just before the winter but he said, "No, you've got to endure one more winter."

So it was the following spring he transferred me. It would have been 1999. He transferred me to the traffic unit. All they had was those two motorcycles. They didn't really have a Motor Unit yet.

The chief decided he liked what they did with it, even though Jim Eastlee I thought did a – I don't have his paper, but I did eventually see it. I didn't think he did a very good job. He kept saying it was a terrible police car. Well, that isn't the purpose of it. The purpose of a motorcycle is traffic enforcement. Outside of traffic enforcement tool, it is not a great police car. You can't carry anything. You can't carry prisoners. You can't carry equipment.

The transferred me into there, and now John DeNoma<sup>45</sup> was the commander in the Traffic and Accident Unit. So they transferred me back into the Traffic Unit from the Mounted Unit for the sole purpose of helping to put the Motor Unit together. Frank Foster<sup>46</sup> was also chosen to be the sergeant.

I was just a patrolman and I think I was there two weeks and DeNoma calls me and says, “You’re going down to Florida to learn to be the trainer.” Because I had been the trainer of the mounted, so the chief wanted me to be the trainer of the Motor Unit, which meant going down to Palmetto Beach, Florida for three weeks in March. [Kate laughs] They put me up in an ocean front hotel and school was every day. It was a very hard school. I still contend to this day that the motor officers have got the toughest school of any school in the police department. It’s mentally challenging and very physically challenging. So I went down there and I trained to become a trainer, which I thought was—Chief Finney thought was a great idea, because he was still concerned about the safety aspect of it. So he decided he wanted to train his own people internally rather than send us all to these schools which are available. They’re still available across the country. You can send to these schools. So I went down, I trained, I came back.

He had convinced the City Council that motorcycles are a good idea. And he put out a bid process. I trained on Harley Davidsons and I wanted Harley

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<sup>45</sup> **John Jay DeNoma** was appointed patrolman March 9, 1971; promoted to sergeant August 30, 1981; lieutenant March 30, 1996; title changed to commander January 1, 2000; and retired September 8, 2000.

<sup>46</sup> **Frank Samuel Foster** was appointed patrolman May 22, 1972; promoted to sergeant May 4, 1989; retired August 30, 2002, and passed away August 2007.

Davidsons, but they put it out for bid, and Kawasakis<sup>47</sup> came in lower. Kawasaki made a police motorcycle. Actually the only two that were making them back in that time was Kawasaki and Harley Davidson. BMW was just starting to get into it. They were starting them but –



KC: What's the difference of a police motorcycle?

CS: They're specifically designed for police work. The Kawasakis were geared a little differently. They had a lower gear ratio, so they were a little quicker off the line but not as fast on the high end. They had specific saddle bags that fit them. Harley Davidson had been making motorcycles since 1903. Harley Davidson, they add a tachometer to it. They put different equipment on it. Were they any faster than the civilian bikes? No. Not really. The bid was put out and the Kawasakis won the bid. The Harley Davidsons, even these two motorcycles that we'd used the year before, they wanted like \$16,000 each for them. And

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<sup>47</sup> **Kawasaki's** Aircraft Company began the development of a motorcycle engine in 1949. Kawasaki Heavy Industries produces motorcycles, ATVs, utility vehicles, jet ski personal watercraft, and general-purpose gasoline engines.



Kawasaki came in at \$7500 or something. So obviously the city took the Kawasakis. So we ordered six Kawasakis.



My job was to equip them, to make sure they had red lights and sirens. They don't come with that stuff. You have to buy that stuff. We were told that we were kind of tight on the budget so, you know, the city's always been tight on the budget. So some of the equipment we bought – I met a guy from my school who was selling helmets out of Colorado. So I called him and he gave us the best price on the helmets. The breeches that we wore – I had that information from the Mounted Unit, so we ordered our breeches through another company. Boots, because of the Friends of the Mounted, I found out we could get our boots

through Dehner Boot Company out of Omaha. So we got our boots through that. John Nasseff – I remember the first helmets we got were like three quarter shell helmets, but they were extremely hot in the summer. We would actually sweat on people. So then they thought you were spitting on them. So if you're sweating so hard and you're talking— So John Nasseff actually went out and bought us half shell helmets which were really nice. So there was a lot of people who did input into this, too, into the motors.

You know, designing the first decals, what they looked like. So then I put on the very first Motor School. And then Frank Foster and all the rest of the officers – Trip Noll and Chris Stark were two that trained with me originally, but they'd also put in for the unit. Jeff Dick<sup>48</sup> and Chris Byrne<sup>49</sup> didn't train for us originally, but they put in for the unit. So I trained all those guys on the Kawasakis.

And then we initially came out – and that would have been in 1999 is when we actually hit the road. And there was five of us and Sergeant Foster. We wrote so many tickets. We were very hard charging, dedicated. We had to prove this. It brought back memories of the horses, how we had to prove the horses. Now we were proving motorcycles. We were proving that they work.

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<sup>48</sup> **Jeffrey Scott Dick** was appointed police officer June 30, 1986; and retired September 28, 2007.

<sup>49</sup> **Christopher Michael Byrne** was appointed police officer December 13, 1993; promoted to sergeant December 15, 2012.



#### SPPD Motors Unit 1999

Sergeant Frank Foster, Officers Curt Sandell, Officer Chris Byrne,  
Officer Jeff Dick, Officer Chris Stark, and Officer Trip Noll

I can't tell you what the numbers are, but I know the five of us wrote more tickets. It was just incredible, the numbers. We went out. Sometimes we worked in pairs. Usually we worked alone and we just hit the city. And we hit high traffic spots, high visibility spots a lot. What was happening was the people were calling the Traffic Unit, which yields all the complaints. Instead of asking for the unmarked traffic cars, now they're asking, "Can we get those motorcycles in our neighborhood, because people really slow down when they see those motorcycles?"

Well, this all went really well. So the next year, the chief went back to the City Council and said, "Now can I have my Harley Davidsons?" So the next year we got rid of the Kawasakis. We were having some mechanical problems with them, too, and we got the Harley Davidsons.

KC: But you leased them.

CS: We leased them. The original lease offered by Saint Paul Harley was – you know, Kate, I don't remember what the amount was. It was quite a bit. It was so much per month per motorcycle. We had six of them. We got six of them from Saint Paul Harley. Now this would have been in 2000 and they were called Road Kings.

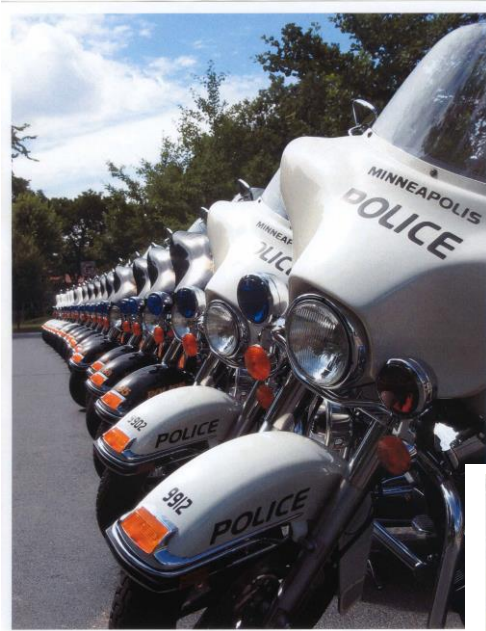
In 2001, we went to the Police Memorial<sup>50</sup> out in Washington D.C. I had a mounted friend of mine that I met up in Canada at a Mounted School that had sent me some information about this Police Memorial Week. So I contacted him, and then he gave me a contact in the Park Police that handled motorcycles, and he was saying how we should go out to this Police Memorial. I arranged for all of us to drive out there. In fact, the chief got us a motor home to use, and we took a truck—a truck that Saint Paul Harley gave us. We hauled out eight motorcycles out there. And Chief Finney came with and the owner of Saint Paul Harley came along. I had also trained the owner of Saint Paul Harley how to ride.

We went to the Police Memorial and we made an imprint out there. Because of my mounted experience, we trained to get on and off motorcycles like we did on the horses in formation, to park in formation. So I remember going out there and Chief Finney just absolutely loved it. He loved being there in the first place, but people would come up say, "Man!" because we would ride in, we'd park our bikes in line and then we'd all get off at the same time. And then when

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<sup>50</sup> Peace Officers Memorial Day and **Police Memorial Week** is an observance in the United States that pays tribute to the local, state, and Federal peace officers who have died in the line of duty. The Memorial takes place on May 15, and Police Week is the calendar week in which the Memorial falls. The event is sponsored by the National Fraternal Order of Police and is implemented by the National FOP Memorial Committee. Other events of National Police Week include the Annual Blue Mass, Candlelight Vigil, Wreath Laying Ceremony, National Police Survivors Conference, Honor Guard Competition, and the Emerald Society & Pipe Band March and Service. The events draw 25,000 to 40,000 law enforcement officers and their families to Washington, DC every year.

we'd do whatever activity we did, when we went back we all formally mounted onto the motorcycle and then exited like that. In fact I can tell you to this day there are some units that are doing that now that didn't do it back then.



Police Memorial Week  
Washington DE  
2000



Foster was the sergeant of the unit, but I was kind of the equipment man. It's actually caused a lot of tension between Foster and I, because the chief would call me directly on things and chain of command that shouldn't have been going that way. So Foster and I, we did not get along real well there for a little while.

Then shortly after, it was in the fall of 2001 then something, and I have no idea what it is so I'm not going to speculate, but something happened between Foster and Chief Finney where they were not getting along at all. So Finney

started pressing me to take the sergeant's test again. I'd actually gone to Florida in the spring with Finney and Commander McNeely<sup>51</sup> on a motorcycle training thing with them two. A whole week of them talking to me about "I need you as a sergeant." I go, "I don't really want to be a sergeant. I like being a patrolman, Chief. I love being a Motor Officer." And so I agreed to take the sergeants test as long as he understood that if he offered me something like Sex Crimes or an Investigator of Burglary, then I would turn it down. I says, "I don't want it to go against my record or anything, but seriously, Chief, I do not want to be a Motor Sergeant."

KC: And as a sergeant, he can put you any place he wants and you have to take it.

CS: Right. And you have to take it. And I said I didn't want to lose that control. I love being in the motor. I love being a trainer in the Motor Unit. He used me like a sergeant anyhow and I didn't mind that. That was fine. It kind of got to the point, I think it was in the summer of 2001, every time I saw him, "I'm serious, Curt. I don't want to order you, but I need you to take the sergeant test." "You know, Chief, I haven't taken one in years. I might not even pass the thing." He says, "I just need you to take it and try." So I went and I took sergeant's test, and I passed sergeant's test.

KC: Of course. You're smart, you're creative.

CS: No, it's not that I'm that smart. I think I'm lucky at taking tests, because I look back at all the tests I've taken over the years. I've been very fortunate.

KC: Curt. You're smart. You're creative. Because it takes intelligence and it takes a creativity and a way of thinking to put a unit together and to develop training.

CS: It takes an imagination and I had a good imagination.

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<sup>51</sup> **Timothy Kevin McNeely** was appointed police officer March 27, 1983; promoted to sergeant June 26, 1994; lieutenant October 16, 1999; title changed to commander January 1, 2000; and resigned June 30, 2006.



KC: Yes. Yes.



Officer Curt Sandell  
c.2000

CS: So I took sergeant's test, and after I took the sergeant's test, I came out number eleven on the list and so a little while later I get a call. A month after that, I think it was in October of 2001, it was after September 11th, or 9/11. It was like a week after that. I'm at home and Chief calls me at home and he says, "Are you ready to take over that unit? I got to put Foster in this special unit. I'm going to make you an acting sergeant. You're taking over the Motor Unit." "Okay." I mean what are you going to say? "Okay."

So I started out as an acting sergeant. I didn't get my actual promotion to a hard stripe sergeant until December of '01. Then I got my hard stripes. So he did hold true to the fact that he was going to keep me on Motors, which I really appreciated.

The down side of that is you should never promote somebody within the unit. They should go somewhere else first and then come back, because one day you're working side-by-side with your guys, and then the next day, you're their supervisor. That was a very uncomfortable position to be in. So I came in very – I remember my brother, I told him, "Oh, my God. I'm getting promoted and they're putting me in charge of the same unit I've been working in for the last few years." He goes, "Low and slow, Curt." My brother has since been promoted. He says, "Just don't go in there making blanket changes. Frank did a nice job. The guys loved him. Just go in that way."

Part of the problem I think what happened with the chief and Frank, and a lot of this is speculation, is sometimes the chief would ask him to do some things with the motorcycles like put names on here or get this equipment, and Frank did not always follow through. So then he would call me direct and then I'd follow through. And that's kind of why I ended up where I was.

So I took over right after 9/11. I stayed in there for quite a while. And then as you see on here there was a demotion or lay-off it was called, voluntary demo.

KC: Yeah, we've got your personnel file. Voluntary demotion.

CS: Personnel file. What happened there, there was such a cutback on sergeants. So what he did was, and that was kind of uncomfortable too in a way, so the chief called me up and he said to me, "Curt, I need to--" They had to do this lay back because of these budget cuts. "Chief, I didn't mind being a cop. That's fine. Can I stay Motors?" "Yeah, you're going to stay in motors and you're going to still run it. You're going to run it the way you've been running it. Unfortunately, you're just not going to get paid for it." "Okay."



So I stayed in there. I still wrote the officer's emails, but now I couldn't sign them. I had to have Commander Martinez<sup>52</sup> sign them. I still ran the training. I did nothing different than when I was a sergeant in there. Only now I wrote more tickets, because I was a patrolman. And now I'm working next to the guys again which was, again, uncomfortable, because yesterday I was their boss and now I'm working next to them. And then he calls me up one day and he says, "I'm going to re-promote you, but I'm going to put you into fleet." "Ooookay." We had talked about this a long time ago. I love Motors, you know. I was a diehard CHIPS<sup>53</sup> fan and I wanted to be a motor cop. I said, "Well, Chief, whatever. I'll go wherever you want me to go."

Well, Dennis Jensen<sup>54</sup> was the commander over in East. Now I'd arrive in my same office and did all my same timesheets. I did everything I was doing. And so I remember Dennis came in and he says, "I need you to take your motors--" I says, "Dennis, I'm going to Fleet. The chief is re-promoting me and I'm going to be in Fleet." He says, "Well, who's going to supervise the Motors?" I said, "Well, the chief's looking at it that they haven't had a supervisor these past few months and it'll just run without one." "Well, we can't do that!"

So Dennis got a hold of the chief, and then the chief actually called me down to his house and he says, "Can these guys run without a supervisor?" and

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<sup>52</sup> **William Martinez** was a Minnetonka Police Officer 1984 – 1987. He was hired to work undercover through a lateral transfer to the Saint Paul Police Department October 5, 1987. Transferred to police officer November 5, 1988; promoted to sergeant June 19, 1994; lieutenant July 3, 1999; title changed to commander January 1, 2000; senior commander June 12, 2004; assistant chief May 29, 2012.

<sup>53</sup> **CHiPs** is an American television drama series produced by MGM Studios that originally aired on NBC from September 15, 1977, to July 17, 1983. *CHiPs* followed the lives of two motorcycle police officers of the California Highway Patrol. The series ran for 139 episodes over six seasons.

<sup>54</sup> **Dennis Lynn Jensen** was appointed police officer April 3, 1983; promoted to sergeant March 30, 1990; lieutenant January 18, 1997; commander June 26, 1999; assistant chief June 12, 2004; and retired September 29, 2006.

I go, "No, Chief. They can't." Motors can go anywhere in the city. I said, "Really Chief, they can't. You need to have somebody oversee them and patrol sergeants would have a hard time doing that," which is what his intention was. So he says, "Okay. I'll put you back in Motors." So then he put me back in Motors. [Kate laughs]

The one thing I got to say about Chief Finney, and I love the guy. I absolutely love the guy. And I know there's some people that just absolutely hate him, but he would always listen to reason. And the one thing I credited him for – you know he gave me a lot of credit for starting the Mounted and the Motors, but I couldn't have done any of that without his support. Without him being behind me and came up with ideas for things. He made it so easy to do.

KC: I want to back track. How did you design the Mounted uniform? How did you decide what the Mounted uniform was going to be, because it was different then? Mounted and Motors wear a different uniform.

CS: They wear different uniforms. Actually, believe it or not, they're both very traditional uniforms. Ours just came up -- that's what Omaha wore. That's what Chicago police wore. The boots and breeches. That was just always the Mounted way. When we bought our boots from Dehner Boot Company, we had to get leather on the inside of our boots. They weren't artificial because they rub against the horse so much. So it was pretty much designed just off of what other departments do. I can tell you kind of a funny story about the patch. Omaha had the patch on the right sleeve.

KC: The Mounted patch.

CS: The Mounted patch on the right sleeve. And I always thought that was really cool. I just thought it was neat that they had a specific patch for the unit. So I'd heard that the Ramsey County Sherriff's Canine had done a patch like that. So I got a hold of the Ramsey County Sherriff Canine guy and said, "Where'd you get

that patch?" They had a dog on their patch. They said, "Well, we got it from this gal over by the University of Minnesota off of Hwy 280. ITL Patch.<sup>55</sup> I think the company still makes our patches.

So I drove out to her house. I called her first and said, "Can I come out and see your patches?" So I drove over to her house and I says, "What's the deal with these patches? Omaha had one on the right sleeve." She says, "Curt, the best way to do this is I'll make you a sample. It won't cost you nothing. I'll just make you a sample." She had all these patches on her wall. She says, "You pick out what you want on it." So I found a horse's head and I said, "I just want Saint Paul Police with a horse head in the middle." You know, Saint Paul Mounted Police. So she made me up a sample. And she actually gave me the best idea. She said, "What you need to do is don't just walk in and throw it on the chief's desk. You need to put it on a shirt and then go into the chief."



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<sup>55</sup> **ITL Patch** was established in 1980 and moved to Savage in November 1997. They specialize in Law Enforcement Patches.

So she sent me a couple of samples. Dan and I put them on our shirts and we made an appointment with the chief. Al Singer<sup>56</sup> was also in there. And so he said, "What's up, boys?" And Dan and I walk in with our shirts and I remember us sitting there like this [Kate laughs] so you could see this patch. And Finney is sitting back at his desk and he's kind of looking at it and he's just listening. He was great at doing that.

And I says, "Chief, this is kind of industry-wide in mounted where they have a designated patch." And Al Singer is sitting next to me and he's going, "Chief, I think it's a bad idea. You're going to start precedent here. Everybody's going to want a patch. Think of the extra cost." So then I stopped Al and I said, "The actual truth of it is, Chief, we have to put a patch on both sides. This patch costs no more than the City of Saint Paul patch." I already had all my prices in a row. So I said, "There is no cost to it, because I have to order patches anyhow." I still remember the chief looking back and goes, "I like it. I think it's a great idea." And Singer all of a sudden goes, "Yep. I like it, too, Chief." Damn. This guy was just nay-saying it and now he's "I think it's good, Chief." Oh, okay, Al. So that started the patch thing.

So he says, "Curt, look into getting the Canines." So I remember putting a thing out to the Canines saying, "Do you want a patch like this?" and a lot of them didn't want it. They didn't want a specific unit patch.

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<sup>56</sup> **Albert Joseph Singer** was appointed patrolman March 2, 1964; promoted to sergeant October 14, 1972; lieutenant December 15, 1976; captain August 5, 1984; deputy chief January 20, 1996; and retired April 30, 1999.



So I got the Mounted patches made. Chief changed a couple of things about the wording on it. He wanted Police across the bottom and Saint Paul Mounted.

So when went to the Motors, we're standing in our formation when the chief's kind of giving the certificates. And he looks at me and I still have the horse head. "Will you get me a patch for those Motors?" "You bet, Chief. I'll get you one." So I went out to the same lady at ITL. She has now since moved out to Eagan. I drove out to her house and I said, "Give me some ideas for motorcycles." So she helped me design and she made me a sample one. I've actually got the original one, because the chief changed a few things on that, too.

The interesting part about the Motor patch was the red that's in it. My original patch had the sky blue just like the Capitol patch. And the chief kind of looked at it and says to me, "That's a nice patch, but it just doesn't stand out." So I had a couple of samples from other departments and Albuquerque had red in theirs. And I showed it to the chief. I said, "This one really stands out." He said, "Make it red and you can have them." So I did. I made them red. So I started

those patches. In the meantime, Canine got their patches together. It was kind of true. I kind of started the patch thing, too. Yeah. I forgot about that one.



KC: Tell me some Motor stories.

CS: Motor stories.

KC: Motors not only did traffic, but they also did parades. And you prepared. You did special trainings for motors for the RNC, the Republican National Convention.

CS: Oh, yeah. Big time. That was probably one of the bigger endeavors I took on was the RNC. When I got in charge of the Motors, one of the things I did was we started the PDI [Saint Paul Police's Professional Development Institute] program where we train other departments. You know, we have people can come and train here.

The problem a lot of departments have with putting motorcycle units together was the cost. The cost is pretty high.

We never even got into how we got into the dollar lease on the motorcycles, but we did that for awhile. That's kind of going back, but we were leasing them for a very long time, and for awhile they were a dollar a year. And Harley Davidson actually made out pretty good on that, because they got these

used motorcycles back. There's kind of a complicated way that works. They're only allowed so many motorcycles a year, but police motorcycles don't count against that, so they can lease out all the police motorcycles they want and they lease them out for a dollar. Then when they came back, they can sell them and they profited on them when they sold them. And they were motorcycles they couldn't otherwise get. So that's why the dollar lease. Some people just wanted old police bikes. "This was a police bike," you know.

Back to the training, and how we started it. So I developed – well, I shouldn't say I totally developed it, but I took the Northwestern<sup>57</sup> is who trained me and I put that into our PDI, our Professional Development Institute here, and I offered out the course. I had my first couple of courses I put on out at Century College. Then we put out a feeler out to other departments around here. Like I said one of the biggest costs is because the school is two weeks long. And a lot of people could afford to pay for the training of the school, but it's the per diem and the lodging and the transportation that costs so much. So all the schools were being put on in Florida and Texas and down south quite a way. And I know my school cost me a lot of money. It cost the department quite a lot. Back then it was like \$4500 to get me trained in those over three weeks.

When I came back, Finney wanted us to put a PDI course. So I wrote all the lesson plans and adapted everything to Saint Paul. And then we started putting on courses, and then Minneapolis got in. Because we got started here we were pretty much the first around here to have a Motor Unit. And we opened it up right away to these other agencies to come and train with us. They had to provide their own motorcycles. That was a problem for some of them, but some

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<sup>57</sup> Northwestern University Center for Public Safety in Evanston, Illinois

of them had bought them. Like North Saint Paul, Inver Grove Heights, and Northfield had bought motorcycles, and then we trained them.

The one thing I offered them was I said, "If you train with us with us initially and go through the school and pass the school, any additional training we do is totally free to you. You can come and train with us. We train every month. We have one day we'll set aside. Sometime we do over-the-road training. Sometimes we do cone work in the parking lot. But we always kept a variety and you guys are welcome to come in any time just by passing your school."

The advantage of doing that is when I need them for something, they've never hesitated to come. Like the Lightning Run for Diabetes every year that we escort 2,000 motorcycles on a thirty-hour trail through Saint Paul for diabetes. What I did was I had a list of all the motorcycles I'd trained and I'd send out to their supervisors and say, "We're putting on this ride. Is there any chance you guys could come and give us a hand?" Well, there were some years I had up to twenty-five or thirty motorcycles at these diabetes runs.

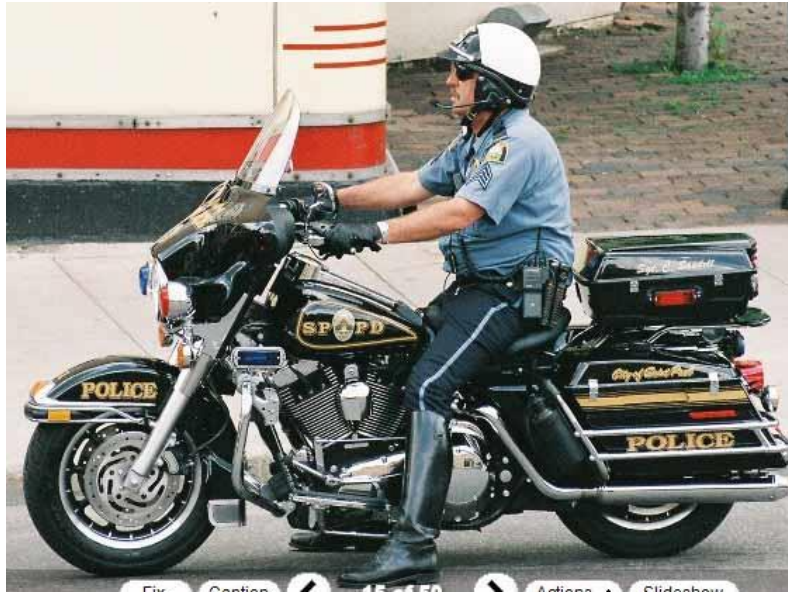
And then we did a thing out at the state fair called Bikers in Need: Motorcycle Safety Day at the fair. First time I did that, I think I had thirty motorcycles show up to that. And all it was, I just put out an email to their commanders or their chiefs because I had trained them all for free after the initial school they paid. They never hesitated to send their guys. It was tremendous.

KC: You created a Motors Community.

CS: A Motors Community is exactly what it was.



So when the RNC<sup>58</sup> came up, I had twenty-seven motors assigned to me for the RNC which was tremendous. We had our eight and I had a couple of leased bikes, so there was ten or twelve. Then prior up to the RNC I had trainings. We did some escort runs and they all came to the trainings. So when RNC happened, we all reported out to Health Partners out in Bloomington.



All the motors would show up there every day at the beginning of our shift. Whatever time I'd send out to them. I'd hold a roll call. They'd all come in. We'd talk about what we were going to do. We'd divide it in different routes that we were covering. And our main job on the RNC was to make sure the buses got

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<sup>58</sup> **Republican National Convention**—RNC took place at the Xcel Energy Center in Saint Paul, Minnesota, from September 1, through September 4, 2008. The first day of the Republican Party's convention fell on Labor Day, the last day of the popular Minnesota State Fair. The week included approximately 10,000 largely peaceful protesters who marched against the war in Iraq and 2,000 people marched to end homelessness and poverty, as well as other peaceful, permitted marches. On the first day of the convention, anarchist groups engaged in property damage and violence in downtown, requiring unusually strong police response. Hundreds of arrests resulted in mostly dropped charges. All 600 SPPD officers spent much of the previous year preparing for the convention and hosting 850 officers from around Minnesota and the US.

through. Our job was to make sure the buses got through. And to run the routes to make sure there was no protesters on the route, because motorcycles were so versatile and they could get through heavy traffic.

The first Saturday and Sunday wasn't too bad. We did a lot of route running and we found out how everything. Well then that first Monday, they hit us so hard in Saint Paul we actually came to downtown Saint Paul. And we were not designed to be a Mobile Field Force,<sup>59</sup> but because I was worried about that. I did some training on Mobile Field Force with them because they're very effective. They worked out tremendous down there.

KC: Explain what that is.

CS: Mobile Field Force is moving crowds. You know, getting crowds moving around. We had multiple Mobile Field Forces on that first day of the RNC. Problem is they got tied up real fast in different areas. And there were some people who put down the line dragons<sup>60</sup> where they had blocked roads off, so we used our motorcycles to clear those roads.

KC: Just go in formation?

CS: Get in formation, line up, put the motors side by side, turn those sirens on and the protesters can't stand in front of it. It's just too loud. You've got nine motorcycles with all the sirens on and revving engines. Aahh! They were very effective. Plus, we could get – I never rode so hard and so fast with red lights and sirens so much as I did on that first Monday of the RNC. Because I was in charge

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<sup>59</sup> **Mobile Field Force** is designed to provide rapid, organized and disciplined response to civil disorder, crowd control, or other tactical situations.

<sup>60</sup> **Line Dragons** is a protest tactic in which protesters link arms with their neighbors. The more people who can link arms the better. The protester will link arms at the elbow and bring hands in front, taking a tight hold of their own wrists or elbows. The protester is now a bit harder to move. The police will need to break the grip before they can pick up and carry the protester away.

of Motors, they'd get a hold of me. We'd have "Bus stuck here" where the crowd would be stopping a bus here. So then I'd send Motors, and then I'd run them alternate routes and we'd bring them in different ways.

KC: The buses?

CS: The buses. We kept the buses rolling. I mean there were a couple of times we got involved in some of the skirmishes, but we backed out the Bike Cops a lot that were on the bicycles. And we'd come up and line up behind them just as a support to them. But Mobile Field Force did a tremendous job on their things. We were not involved in the arrests on the bridge, but when they shut down the bridge, we had to get our buses to go a different way. I loved it. I'll tell you what. It was twelve hours of hard work and hard riding and I was just in my glory. I just absolutely loved it.

KC: And then after this shining moment, you decided it was time to move on in November 2008.

CS: Yeah. Nothing – if you've started something or feel like you had a lot to do with starting it and if it can't go without you, then you did a lousy job of starting it, of getting it up and running. And I kind of felt that with Mounted, you know? I was very worried when I left Mounted. Is this going to hold together? Harshman so badly wanted me to get promoted because he retired and he wanted me to be promoted and take over the Mounted Unit.

Well, I was still in this mindset where I didn't want to be a sergeant. You know? I didn't do that. And I still wanted to be a Motor Cop. So I left Mounted and then I was in Motors for ten years.

The thing with the ten years in Motors, it actually started becoming Curt's Motor Unit. I mean I had cops – I've got contacts all over the country through the motors from San Francisco to – and absolutely wonderful people. I'd been out to three of the memorials [in Washington, D.C.]. I met all these other people. And I

even started hearing comments from people that– even some of my officers would say, “You know, Curt. This is not your personal unit. This is the department’s unit.” I go, “I understand that.” But it was starting to look that way especially after the RNC, because I ran things so tight during the RNC. And because I had done it for ten years, I thought I needed to do something different. I said, “Before I retire from this department, I need to do something different.”

Well, the Vice position came open, so I put in for the Vice position. I actually went up and met with Greg Pye<sup>61</sup> who was my boss, because he didn’t want me to leave. I went up and met with [Assistant Chief] Tom Smith,<sup>62</sup> explained to him why I was leaving because everyone was so shocked. “You’re the Motor!” I get jokes because some of my friends from out of town, they’ll send me emails says “To the Motor God of the Great Northwest.” Well, I really wasn’t, but do you understand what I’m saying?

I needed to know – and I felt like I put my heart and soul into both those units – I needed to know that they’d go on without me.

KC: You’d raised a child and you needed them to graduate.

CS: Now you’ve got to let them go. And the timing was right. Because of the RNC, we weren’t leasing motorcycles any more. We bought them. We actually had RNC funds. We bought them. Some of our lighting on the motorcycles was pretty poor. So I’d gotten enough money through the RNC, I put all new lights

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<sup>61</sup> **Gregory Robert Pye** was appointed patrolman March 23, 1970; promoted to sergeant October 10, 1979; lieutenant February 3, 1991; title changed to Commander January 1, 2000; senior commander April 5, 2003; return to commander September 25, 2010; senior commander December 4, 2010; retired December 31, 2012.

<sup>62</sup> **Thomas Smith** was appointed police officer September 18, 1989; promoted to sergeant April 17, 1994; lieutenant December 11, 1999, title changed to commander January 1, 2000; named senior commander February 3, 2001; returned to commander May 19, 2001; senior commander May 8, 2004; assistant chief December 23, 2006; chief June 15, 2010.

on them. The crew [Jeff Dick, Richard Beard,<sup>63</sup> Chris Stark, Chris Byrne, Billy Bremer,<sup>64</sup> Matt Webb,<sup>65</sup> Don Chouinard,<sup>66</sup> Jim Andersen,<sup>67</sup> Todd Bjorkman,<sup>68</sup> Armanda Abla-Reyes<sup>69</sup>], I had in that group the best crew I ever had. They were independent. They could go out and work on their own. There were days I'd come in there and I was bored stiff because I didn't need to supervise these guys anymore, because they were so good. So I thought, "What a better time to go than when I'm at a high? The unit is at a high. It's working the best." And my wife teased me about it. She says, "You've got things going so smooth. Why don't you just stay there?" Because I need—I wasn't doing anything different.

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<sup>63</sup> **Richard Beard** Richard Beard was appointed police officer May 1, 2000.

<sup>64</sup> **William "Billy" Bremer** was appointed police officer March 20, 1989, and retired May 31, 2006.

<sup>65</sup> **Matt Webb** was appointed police officer February 28, 2000; promoted sergeant August 10, 20.

<sup>66</sup> **Donald Richard Chouinard** was appointed police officer November 13, 1995.

<sup>67</sup> **James Edward** Andersen was appointed police officer May 5, 2001; promoted sergeant November 30, 2007; voluntary demoted to police officer December 1, 2007; reinstated to sergeant May 10, 2008.

<sup>68</sup> **Todd Bjorkman** was appointed police officer November 26, 2001.

<sup>69</sup> **Armando Abla-Reyes** was appointed police officer October 28, 1995.



Matt Webb, Chris Stark, Todd Bjorkman, Don Chouinard, Billy Bremer, Jeff Dick,  
Chris Byrnes, Rich Beard, Abe Cyr, Jim Andersen, Curt Sandell  
c. 2008

KC: You needed a challenge.

CS: I needed something challenging. It wasn't a challenge anymore. So I put in for Vice. I actually went up and met with [Chief] Harrington.<sup>70</sup> It wasn't to try to get the Vice position. I was trying to explain to him why I was leaving Motors. He said, "Curt! You started that unit. Why would you want to—" And I explained to

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<sup>70</sup> **John Mark Harrington** was appointed police officer July 11, 1977; promoted to sergeant September 7, 1983; acting lieutenant January 4, 1997; lieutenant November 1, 1997; title changed to commander January 1, 2000; senior commander July 1, 2000 ; assistant chief May 8, 2004; chief July 1, 2004; and retired June 14, 2010. Elected to the Minnesota State Senate from Saint Paul 2010-2012. Appointed Chief of the Metro Transit Police September 4, 2012.

them kind of what I explained. I said, “Chief, this has to run without me. Because if it doesn’t run without me, then I did a shitty job putting it together.” And I just wanted to make sure. And he understood that. He said, “Well, you know you’ve never really done undercover work before.” And he says, “You’re not very well known in the undercover community.” I go, “I know Chief, but how do we ever get a chance to do it if we don’t get an opportunity to go in there and try it?” Because I’d been in uniform for so many years. And very visible uniform positions. He agreed that he would not stop me from going there. So then I went through the selection process and I talked to [Vice Commander] Kathy Wuorinen.<sup>71</sup>

And there’s a lot of things in Vice that I like. I’d been the traffic cop for so many years that I’d played with numbers. You had to produce these numbers. It is part of it. “Okay, if you’re not producing numbers, then what the hell are you doing with your time?” Where Kathy kind of stressed to me that in Vice, it was more about the people than the numbers. It was more about – when I arrest a prostitute, we work with them to go to Breaking Free<sup>72</sup> to get out of the life of prostitution.

KC: What’s it meant to you to be a Saint Paul officer and have the opportunities to create important units that have made a difference in Saint Paul?

CS: I’m very proud of it. Yeah. There’s not a lot of guys that can say they did that, that they were involved in that. I used to actually be embarrassed with Finney,

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<sup>71</sup> **Kathleen Ann Wuorinen** was appointed police officer September 19, 1988; promoted to sergeant October 7, 1995; commander November 18, 2006; assistant chief July 3, 2010.

<sup>72</sup> **Breaking Free** was established in October 1996, by Vednita Carter, Founder and Executive Director, as a non-profit organization serving women and girls involved in systems of abuse, exploitation, and prostitution/sex trafficking.



because he used to point it out to everybody. "This is Curt Sandell. Do you know that he started two units in this department?" I remember when I went to sergeant's school, he had me stand up. I'm very, very proud of that fact. My biggest pride is that they're still there, that they're still working. You know that these two units – there's still motorcycles here. I think they're still a great asset to the department. I hope they never, ever get rid of it. And the Mounted are still out there riding and they're still making impressions on people.

Someday I can tell my grandkids, "Guess what? I did that." Kate, I have had a blessed career. I truly have. I love being a patrolman. I love working the street. I love being a traffic cop. As much as people say, "Oh, those stupid traffic cops." I felt I did a lot of good in there. I really did, you know.

I didn't write tickets because I was vindictive against people. In fact, Finney at one point said to a group, "This Motor Unit was put together to generate revenue." And I pulled him aside afterwards and I said, "You know, Chief, I want to be honest with you. I don't give a shit if they even pay a dollar fine. I do it to change people's driving behavior, because I don't want to see people get hurt." And he went, "Wow, yeah." And I said, "Chief, I don't think it really sounds good if you tell people that we're out there writing tickets to raise money, because then you get that kickback from 'Oh, I know why you got a quota.'" There was never a quota, but you do it to get people to change the way they drive. If you don't have it, they'll run amuck.

The horses were just tremendous. I can see with so many kids that we just changed their lives. They had an opportunity to see these horses and the smiles on their faces and stuff. So I've got great pride in all of that. Now, when I retire, I know it's going to take about a year and everybody will go, "Curt who?" That's okay. I know what I did.

KC: What's it mean to be a Saint Paul officer?



CS: You should always have great pride. I think Saint Paul Police Department is one of the – I gave you an example of Minneapolis and “Boy, we can kick ass from up here.” I think Saint Paul has got a very great relationship with the community. I know even when I deal with the prostitutes that I’m dealing with they’re going, “God, if I’d have got arrested like this in Minneapolis, they would have just thrown me in jail.” Yeah, they would have. I tell them that right off. “You’re dealing with a police department that wants to see the community get better, that wants to see the quality of life for everybody to be equal. It doesn’t matter what color you are, what race you are, or what religion. We just want the community to feel safe, you know?” And I think we do a great job of it. And I have been so impressed with Saint Paul cops and how they work. And there’s bad apples and everything. We know that. But I think we have less bad apples than some other people. It’s great.

KC: Thank you Curt, and thank you for making my city a better place.





Rich Beard, Don Chouinard, Spencer Etienne, Armando Abila-Reyes, Jeff Dick,  
Commander Greg Pye,  
Sergeant Curt Sandell, Jim Anderson, Bill Bremer, Matt Webb  
May 2006



Motor officers across the country have adopted this symbol to mean  
*Motor Officer*

This patch goes back to when officers first started working in cars (not all officers were in cars and very few back then were dispatched by radio).

The lightning rod in the patch meant the officer was radio dispatched.