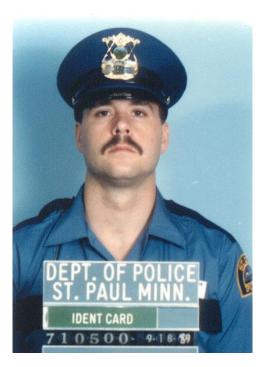
SERGEANT GERALD DENNIS VICK

August 22, 1963 – May 6, 2005 Saint Paul Officer September 18, 1989 – May 6, 2005





1989 1996

Reflective interviews conducted in 2007 and 2012 by Kate Cavett of HAND in HAND Productions This is a collection of reflections from officers who worked with Jerry Vick and still remember.

These Saint Paul Police memorial books are created for the families of officers who have lost their lives in the line of duty.

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All pictures are from the Saint Paul Police Department collections and the personal files of Matt Toupal.

Gerald Dennis Vick

Appointed September 18, 1989 End of Tour Friday, May 6, 2005 Saint Paul, Ramsey County, Minnesota

[Minnesota Death Certificate No. 2005-MN-013828]

Fatally injured by gunfire while working in an undercover capacity.

At 0220 hours (2:20 a.m.) on Friday, May 6, 2005, Sergeant Gerald Dennis Vick,¹ Badge No. 186, was shot and killed while conducting an undercover human trafficking investigation in the vicinity of E. Seventh and N. Forest Streets in the City of Saint Paul. Vick was shot twice through the chest and once in the back during the fatal incident.

Sergeant Vick and his partner, Sergeant Joseph Michael Strong,² were working on a prostitution case in several Eastside bars when they encountered two men, Harry Jerome Evans and Antonio Alexander Kelly, near Erick's Bar, 949 E. Seventh Street. The two men were talking with departing bar patrons, possibly in an attempt to set up a personal robbery. Vick and his partner spoke with the men and told them to move along. The investigators then separated and went to their respective cars. When Sergeant Strong encountered the men near his car, they exchanged a few words before both men fled into a darkened alley. Both investigators pursued the suspects into the alley. One of the subjects, Evans, pulled out a .38 caliber handgun and opened fire, fatally wounding Sergeant Vick. Both subjects were apprehended later in the day and the man who shot Sergeant Vick was charged with first degree murder. He was subsequently convicted of same and sentenced to life in prison in January of the following year.

¹ Gerald Dennis Vick was appointed police officer September 18, 1989; promoted to sergeant July 31, 1999; and was fatally injured by gunfire while working in an undercover capacity on Friday, May 6, 2005. He received the Medal of Valor in 1991, 1997, and 2005.

² Joseph Michael Strong was appointed police officer January 30, 1984; promoted to sergeant April 21, 2001, and retired May 28, 2010.

Born on August 22, 1963, and raised in Ramsey County, forty-one-year-old Gerald Dennis Vick had been with the Police Department since September 18, 1989 (sixteen years), and was, at the time of his death, the agency's only three-time Medal of Valor recipient. Vick had worked his vice assignment for several years and was well known in the social service community for the caring way he dealt with the victims he encountered. He was survived by his wife Connie and two children, Clayton and Amanda. Sergeant Vick's funeral was held on Wednesday, May 11, 2005, at Gustavus Adolphus Lutheran Church, and he is buried at Saint Mary's Catholic Cemetery, North Saint Paul, Minnesota.

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 listen to 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 corroboration. 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 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
www.oralhistorian.org

Chief John Mark Harrington

I'm Chief John Mark Harrington.3

I was awoken just after 0200 hours in 2005, May 6th with a call advising that one of my officers had been shot. Mike Morehead,⁴ Watch Commander that day, said in that brief fragment of conversation that it didn't look good. And it was Jerry Vick.

On that night, one of Saint Paul's legendary and most outstanding officers was murdered while



working undercover as one of the supervisors of the Saint Paul Police Department's Vice Unit.⁵ Jerry Vick was murdered that morning over on the East Side not far from my home. This forty-one-year-old officer had already built a solid reputation as an excellent police officer and a great detective, a fine SWAT team member, and as a supervisor.

He's the only officer in the 150-year history of our department to have received two Medals of Valor in recognizing his bravery.

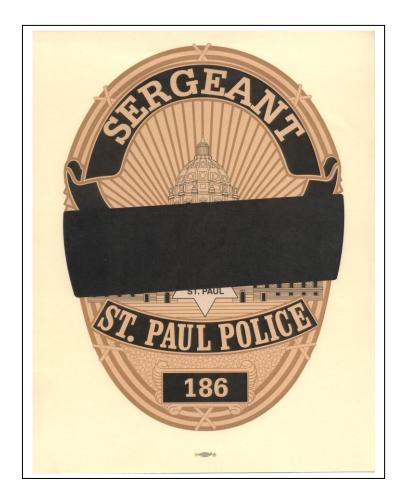
³ **John Mark Harrington** was appointed police officer July 11, 1977; promoted to sergeant September 7, 1983; acting lieutenant January 4, 1997; lieutenant November 1, 1997; title changed to commander January 1, 2000; senior commander July 1, 2000; assistant chief May 8, 2004; chief July 1, 2004; and 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.

⁴ **Michael Robert Morehead** was appointed police officer July 11, 1977; promoted to sergeant May 6, 1981; lieutenant April 25, 1990; title changed to commander January 1, 2000; and retired November 30, 2005.

⁵ The term *VICE* is often used in law enforcement and judicial systems as an umbrella for crimes involving activities that are considered inherently immoral, regardless of the legality or objective harm involved.

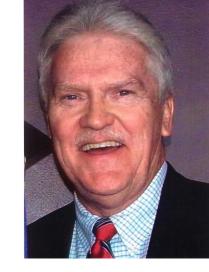
This is a collection of reflections from officers who worked with Jerry. Everyone that knew Jerry still loves him, and we all miss him. These oral history interviews were conducted in 2007 by Oral Historian Kate Cavett of Hand in Hand Productions. I hope that as you read these reflective oral histories, you will be as moved by Jerry's stories as we were moved by him in life.

Interviewed 2007



John DeNoma

My name is John DeNoma.⁶ I retired as a Commander for the Saint Paul Police Department. I came on the police department on January 23rd of 1971 at the age of twenty. I retired September 6th of 2000. Twenty-nine years, nine plus months. I had many different experiences and assignments.



2007

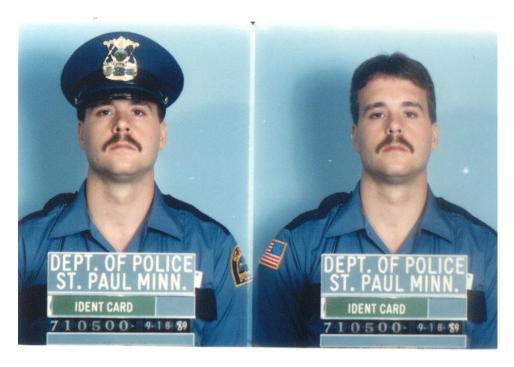
One of them, I worked in the training unit as a sergeant. That's where I first met Jerry Vick. He was a

Student in the academy at the time. I was one of the training sergeants, and John Vomastek⁷was in charge of the academy, and I was in charge of the other programs in the training unit. One of my roles was as the pusher in the academy. In that role, you were kind of like a drill sergeant, so you inspected the recruits in the morning. Also, part of your role was to incur in them the transition from civilian lifestyle, or a lifestyle as a student, into a semi-authoritarian military lifestyle where they have to respond to orders and such.

⁶ **John Jay DeNoma** was appointed patrolman March 9, 1971; promoted sergeant August 30, 1981; lieutenant March 30, 1996; title changed to commander January 1, 2000; and retired September 8, 2000.

⁷ **John Edward Vomastek** was appointed police officer March 13, 1978; promoted to sergeant June 1, 1988; acting lieutenant August 2, 1990; return to sergeant November 4, 1990; acting lieutenant August 14, 1994; return to sergeant September 29, 1994; title change to inspector sergeant January 8, 1995; return to sergeant July 13, 1995; lieutenant July 14, 1995; title change to commander January 1, 2000; title change to senior commander April 28, 2001; return to commander June 29, 2002; title change to senior commander June 12, 2004; and retired August 31, 2011.

Anyhow, Jerry – sharp kid. And he had a lot of confidence. When we'd go down the line, young men would kind of shake and quake, but not Jerry. He had a smirk on his face, and he kind of knew the game. I got to know a little about him, and he was an all conference football player. He exuded that confidence that you have from having that experience in your youth. He had that confidence. It wasn't a cocky smirk. It was like, "I know this game. I can get through it." He was a big kid and, like I say, he exuded that confidence. A handsome kid. A mustache. He did well. He always had a great sense of humor and always excelled and had a sense of maturity.



Jerry Vick September 18, 2989

He also had a friend in the academy right from the start: Matt Toupal.⁸ Jerry had come from working in the corrections system, and there were a couple of other guys in the class that had worked in corrections. Tom Smith⁹ was one of them. They had, just the maturity and a real knowledgeable group of young men.

Jerry and Matt always were just so funny together. Whenever they were around, it was like a comedy team. You never knew what would come out of them. You always had an expectation of: "What's next? What humor are they going to bring? How are they going to explain a situation?" Even if they mucked it up a little bit, you knew they were going to have an explanation that if you weren't going to laugh at it when they told it, you knew you were going to go back to the conference room and laugh until you cried.

As a police officer, I got to know Jerry a little bit when I was a sergeant on the Eastside. He worked midnights, I worked days, which had an overlap of about three hours. He and Matt would come in at midnight, so I'd spend a little time on the street with them in the morning, but mostly at check out time. They started a pattern of behavior. I'd been the authoritarian guy for them in the aacademy, they played a game. Matt would always come and he'd say, "Oh, Sarge." He'd say, "We need a little favor. Maybe we could get out early." He said. "Maybe I can wash your car. Or maybe you need your shoes shined." Jerry would play the straight man and he'd say, "Sarge, I apologize. Matt is such a big suck. He kisses up to authority." He said, "I just don't know what to do with him." So this was a constant routine they would do with me.

⁸ **Matthew Louis Toupal** was appointed police officer September 18, 1989; promoted to sergeant February 12, 2000; commander January 15, 2011.

⁹ **Thomas Smith** was appointed police officer September 18, 1989; promoted 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.

Every time they saw him, you never knew what was coming, but you knew it was going to be fun. He was a joy to be around.

Probably one of the most significant things is he was one of the first investigators to arrive at the scene of Officer Ron Ryan, Jr.'s¹⁰ murder. Ron Ryan was killed August 1994 at Arcade and Sixth Street at Sacred Heart Church¹¹ in the parking lot by Guy Harvey Baker, a verminous dog who came up from Mason City, Iowa. It was a slumper call. The way Jerry explained it, he said he got the call, and Ron took the call and said words to the effect: "I'm closer. I'll take it." He went, and Guy Harvey Baker laid in wait with a plan to kill a police officer, and as Ron approached the car, Guy Harvey Baker shot him. As a result, Ron died from the wounds inflicted by Baker.

Baker later in the day as he fled – he ditched his car and fled on foot – Officer Timothy Jones¹² and his canine partner Lazar tracked him. They came upon him in a fish house. As Tim and Lazar approached, Guy Harvey Baker shot him and killed him and Lazar on the same day. At any rate, we were able to take Baker into custody that day, and he was convicted for the murder of both officers.

Again at the scene, they set up a search for witnesses. They set up to contact everyone and every unit at the apartments across the street from the scene. And I had Jerry do that. He was assigned to the apartment building across the street. He immediately came back with a cab driver who had picked up a man with a gun under his t-shirt at the time of the incident. As a result of his excellent police work and talking to this guy and getting the story, we ended up doing a separate search warrant from the

¹⁰ Ronald Michael Ryan, Jr. was appointed police officer January 23, 1993; fatally injured by gunfire while responding to a "slumper" call August 26, 1994.

¹¹ Sacred Heart Catholic Church at 840 E. Sixth Street (at Arcade), Saint Paul, MN 55106

¹² **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.

scene. Jerry was involved in the search [for Ryan's killer] afterwards, too. [He'd worked all night and he worked all day.] He was never a quitter.

I worked in the Watch Commander's¹³ office. When you're in the role as a Watch Commander, you would screen the arrests as the officers brought them in. They would tell you what they had and what they were arresting them for. And sometimes you'd correct them. You'd say, "Well, okay. You think you're arresting them for a robbery. Well, you know, there was no force involved. It was really a theft. It's a felony theft," or whatever. Anyhow, they would come in. And anytime they would come in, again, they'd just light me up, because you knew it was going to be interesting. Or they'd play the game: "Gee, Sarge. I don't know what Matt's up to, but he wants something from you. Big sucks going to come." And they'd play their game.

Or Jerry would come in, and he'd look like a hobo and he'd have a wig on and make-up, because they're working vice. He'd be in his costume or, of course, the story of how he was on a prostitution detail, and he had the prostitute write everything on pads of paper that she'd do and what the price would be. So she wrote the whole thing down – the price, the acts, and everything was right there. Or he had another one where he was dressed and he went up to a prostitute. She said, "I know you. You're Sergeant Vick, and I recognize you," and that kind of got his goat. As the story goes, he went back and he changed clothes. He put on a different wig and a different jacket, and he got on a bicycle, and he went back. And this is minutes later and she propositioned him.

¹³ The Saint Paul Police **Watch Commander** provides nightly and weekend/holiday supervision, being responsible for reviewing arrests and monitoring on-going police activities in the City, and is the main source for notifying departmental administrative personnel regarding issues and incidents occurring throughout the City.

And this guy's 6'5" and distinctive features, but he pulled it off. He looked at it as a challenge and *The Game's Afoot* from Arthur Conan Doyle, ¹⁴ you know, *The Game's Afoot*.

Creative! Smart! Funny!

He had worked with Breaking Free,¹⁵ which is a group in Saint Paul. It's run by Vednita Carter, and their role is to help women get out of prostitution, women and young girls. And Jerry worked with them closely. And Jerry would – with young girls oftentimes if they're in prostitution, if he couldn't make an arrest, or even if he had an arrest at times, he would do an alternate approach. Instead of arresting them, he might take them to the grocery store and take his money and buy them food and take them to their children, try to talk them into going back to the straight life, going back to their parents and getting out of the life and going into the program of Breaking Free. So he did this out of his heart, just an incredibly compassionate approach. He was a man of huge compassion.

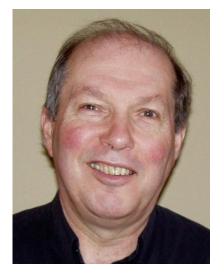
Interviewed 2007

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¹⁴ **Sir Arthur Ignatius Conan Doyle** (22 May 1859 – 7 July 1930) was a Scottish physician and writer who is most noted for his fictional stories about the detective Sherlock Holmes, which are generally considered milestones in the field of crime fiction.

¹⁵ **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.

Thomas Walsh



2005

My name is Tom Walsh. ¹⁶ I am fifty-eight years old. I retired at age fifty-five after thirty years. I retired as a sergeant, although I was an acting commander.

When I was the central day boss, I worked with Jerry Vick. It was a great experience because he was a wonderfully funny man, and I miss him even now. He and I were the two FTO [Field Training Officer]

coordinators for the district. Jerry was just diligent about making sure that people had skills. He wanted to make sure that, "Okay, this is something that we can't document that this person's going to be able to do. So let's go do it." We'd do training exercises. We'd do mock robbery calls and felony car stops and made sure that everybody had everything that they needed. We'd just set things up. We'd go off in a parking lot someplace and go do it. We had a young officer who had never made a felony car stop, and we were getting toward the end of his training period.

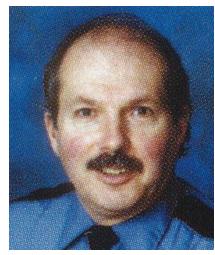
So Jerry, who always had a wig—he had this little baseball cap with a wig attached—he could transform himself. He had the whole spectrum, he could be the 3M executive in the three-button suit or he could be a meth-head. He could be anybody you needed. Anyway, he had this little wig and baseball cap on, and he had a grungy old

¹⁶ **Thomas Michael Walsh** was appointed patrolman May 22, 1972, promoted to sergeant February 11, 1983; acting lieutenant April 15, 1984; reinstated sergeant May 19, 1984; acting commander February 3, 2001; reinstated sergeant May 19, 2001; acting commander January 19, 2002; and retired commander June 28, 2002. Commander Walsh scored number one on all tests he took for the department for police officer, sergeant, lieutenant, and commander. He was rehired as public information coordinator in July 2006 under Chief J. M. Harrington.

car, and he was speeding down Rice Street. We had the squad follow him into the parking lot and make a felony car stop. The kid did okay.

Jerry could be so contrary. He could just be as difficult as anybody, as non-compliant. He was very careful to make sure that every officer had at least the opportunity to find out if they had the skill that was going to be needed.

Oh, there are dozens, dozens of Jerry Vick stories. We had an arsonist over on the Westside, and it was our job to go find him. So Jerry took one group, and I took another group, and we'd break it up. We put them on bikes. It's late at night, and you can get places quietly, quickly on bikes. So Jerry would get very tired. He's a big guy, and it's all hills over there. He thought it was nuts because of this project with the – eventually we found the guy. Jerry would do anything.



1999

He was an adventurous kid. Younger, by like twenty years. Very close anyway, you know? You didn't build the rapport with him. It just happened. You'd have to meet him just once. He was one of the most affable, likeable, just fun people to be around than you'll ever encounter. At the same time, he was very diligent, and he was very meticulous about making sure things were done.

Jerry was good at every aspect of being a police officer. He worked in street crimes for quite a while, and the stories that came out of there about his work and his ability to cause dopers to trust him! He had that kind of face that people responded to him. They trusted him. They believed him. He was a big guy. He would stand out. Once you knew who he was, it was hard to forget.

We had a series of robberies, purse snatchers and muggings at bus stops in downtown Saint Paul. Jerry took out his trusty baseball cap and wig, and he'd sit in bus stops pretending to be drunk, hoping someone would try to assault him, and we'd have a couple of guys close by. It did. It cleaned up the problem. He was very creative. He was not afraid of trying something different.

Interviewed 2005

Shawn Campbell:

I'm Sergeant Shawn Campbell.¹⁷ I've been with the police department now going on fifteen years. Before that, I was with Eden Prairie for a couple of years. My dad was on the police department, and I always wanted to work in Saint Paul, so I came here. Second generation.

I met Jerry Vick after I got out of the Police



2000

academy. I was assigned to the Eastern District where he was already working with Matt Toupal. They worked midnights, and I was assigned the afternoon shift two or three. [chuckles] The two of them were two peas in a pod. You didn't just meet one. You met them both, you know, when you first came on. I believe they were Squad 315. They were known right away as real hard workers, that they always worked together. They were partners. I guess the funny thing that came about that real quick is that they both chewed tobacco. And if you used their squad, you would notice that right away. [laughs] And you would. They must not have used a spitting cup. They just would spit out the driver or passenger window, and we were just transferring from blue squads to white squads, so it wasn't too bad when they still had the blue squads; it was harder to notice. But once they went to the white squads, you could see that clearly Matt and Jerry had been chewing tobacco the night before, and you were using that squad.

I had a partner, so we'd work very closely with Jerry and Matt. You know, kind of the same area or stuff like that. We were very similar in our days off. And when you meet people and they have kind of the same work ethic or you like to work around them or it's just that busy, which Eastside was, you just worked hand in hand with a

¹⁷ **Shawn Campbell** was appointed police officer December 13, 1993; promoted to sergeant November 27, 1999.

pretty tight group of people. They were obviously in that group. They were kind of leaders of the midnight shift, and I was fortunate to work with some great partners on the afternoon shift, late starts. So we intertwined quite often. We got off work at – I think we used to work until five in the morning and they got off at eight. There's just a couple of hours there that you weren't working the same time.

Then through off-duty jobs, I'd work with Jerry quite a lot. Probably the funnest was Club Cancun where we'd work all the time together. It'd get pretty wild, but we had a lot of fun. Well, this was a few years after knowing each other and becoming friends and stuff like that. We were both assigned to the Central District and this club, Club Cancun, was on the north end of Rice Street, and the owner, because of some of the problems and the big crowds he had, he had known Jerry previously and wanted some off-duty officers to work up there. Jerry said, "Yeah" and he came to me and said, "Hey, Rich, the owner of the Club Cancun wants off-duty officers. Will you help me schedule it? Do you want to do this with me?" I said, "Yeah, absolutely." So from that point, it was getting other people we thought would work out good up there, because it was a unique environment and he had a lot of rap music up there. And he had a lot of people from Minneapolis. So he had to kind of hold the line, but with there being six, sometimes eight hundred people there a night leaving, you had to be very diplomatic at times. [laughs].

So we had a few scrapes up there and, of course, I became known as The Big Macer. I'd get this big fog can, and Jerry would see me going to pull it out of the car, and he'd be like, "All right, now make sure you know which way the wind's blowing so you don't spray the rest of us." And, of course, you think you know which way the wind's blowing, and next thing you'd know, see Jerry and some other people coughing and blowing their nose because sure enough, my macing got them. [laughs] After it was all done, we'd clear the whole parking lot and all the little fights that would break out would be over and the mace would be flying. And he'd come up and say, "You shot it

right at us." And I said, "Well, I told you I was going to get the mace out. You weren't downwind before." Aw, jeez, he'd be coughing and blowing his nose. So I got the reputation of being the macer, and Jerry got a pretty big kick out of it every time that thing came out unless he was downwind. [laughs]

I'm sure he learned it from so many people. The one thing about Jerry that's just – you think of his name, you just think of happy. You know, he never really talked bad about people. He'd maybe be upset with different things in the department that he wished would change, but he accepted them, you know, if it was a policy or someone doing something wrong. He just was an accepting person that would sure give an opinion, but not a boisterous one, and just kind of roll with it. He just approached the job as a very unique opportunity and fun and made the best of it. So that kind of personality is infectious to other people, and I think a lot of the people that surrounded themselves with Jerry were those kinds of people. It'd just be little things. [laughs]

I worked the Eastside with him for many years, and then he got promoted and I got promoted, and it was all pretty much in the same time frame of the year, and then Matt got promoted. A good group of us who'd all worked together got promoted. And I went to the Juvenile Unit first for a year. Jerry was out in Central District, and when I found out I was going out to Central with Jerry, it was just a great thrill. He was really pushing for me to come out there, and after talking to him, I really wanted to be out there. And he had this great group of young guys on the midnight shift that he just kind of said, "Here. Here's how you take care of them." Gave me the pointers because I hadn't worked patrol as a supervisor yet. "Help these guys out. Be there for them."

And here we are seven years later in that same group that Jerry started to school and help out. I have them now still today here in Central, and every single one of them has got nothing but fond and wonderful memories of being around and, as a young rookie, being supervised by Jerry. I always tried to, from the minute Jerry sat me down and said, "Oh, this is how you can take care of them and stuff," I just grabbed that

advice he gave and the advice of other great bosses that me and Jerry had and just ran with it. I think that was great advice, and he had this great way with people, and it's really been an honor to grab that same group of people and work with them today.

You know, when I got out to Central, we'd sit around for a long time and talk and stuff, and then we started getting into this little goofy stuff where we'd say, "Come on, big guy. Give me a hug," Jerry'd say. You'd go over like you were going to hug him, and he'd say, "Get away from me, you goofball. Like I'm really going to hug you." Then he got into his—you'd be sitting there and Jerry would take his hand and he'd have it down by his crotch area and he'd have his thumb sticking out [laughing] and kind of wiggle his thumb and you'd look down and he'd go, "Ah, you meat gazer!" He got me again. And you know he's always going do that. He'd be sitting at his desk and put his hand between his crotch, you know, kind of secretively, kind of low key, and he'd just start moving his thumb. Something would catch your eye and you'd look down, "Meat gazer! I told you! I gotcha!" [laughs] To this day whenever someone does that, I just start cracking up. It's little elementary school stuff as adults and policemen, but it breaks the ice from some of the other stuff that the job brings. And you need to laugh. He was definitely the king of laughter. I love laughing, so it was natural that we become friends outside of the job and stuff like that.

The Central Christmas parties, they were never bigger, and they have not been as

big ever since. We are still up on the North End, our station house was. We had become rather social with the owner at Club Cancun through working off-duty. He said, "Hey, if you're going to have your Christmas party, it's a big place. Do it up! You can use the place any night." So Jerry was

brainstorming with us. He said, "I want to have a really big Christmas party, because we just don't have big Christmas



Central District Office 1441 Rice Street 1985 -2003

parties anymore. The cops just seem to be not as united." Well so, that's a great idea. He said, "You like to talk, so you're going to be the MC." I said, "Well, wait a minute. If I'm MCing, you like to talk, too. You're going to MC with me." He said, "Oh, no, no, no. I'll help you out. I'm not MCing." I said, "No, well, you're going to be up there with me."

So we bumped heads, and we were going to get it catered in. And we were going to get gifts. Jerry said, "Well, I'm going to hit up some restaurants and businesses." And I'd worked out to get some liquor stores. He said, "You can go to these liquor stores and they'll donate for gifts." It wasn't long after 9/11, so people were really giving to police and fire. And I think that Jerry knew how to capitalize on that. [laughs] So we had this great – gifts, raffles we were going to do. And we had another officer, Mike Reuvers, and his wife was into catering, so her company catered it. And it was the biggest turnout of any of the districts, and it was just smiles and laughter and tell jokes. We were trying to get good jokes to tell when we were up there. So we had the raffle and everyone's name, and we'd raffle off a prize, and then like I would say, "Okay, this raffle goes to Jane and John Doe. Here's a nice bottle of wine and blah blah." And Jerry would have this tall stack of KQ[RS Radio¹9] bumper stickers, "And a KQ bumper sticker to go with that wine!!" People would be laughing because here you get this nice bottle of wine and this stupid KQ bumper sticker. [laughs]

From that party, me and Jerry had this picture from the 9/11 party at O'Gara's that the two of us were having some cocktails at the party and someone took this picture of us. We were trying to think of some gag gifts to give out, and the idea came that we were going to take this picture and make it into a 5x7, autograph it, and give it

¹⁸ **Michael Thomas Reuvers** was appointed police officer March 20, 2989; and retired January 25, 2013.

¹⁹ **KQRS Radio**, a classic rock station out of Minneapolis, MN

to the commanders at our district, which was Colleen Luna²⁰ and Tom Smith.²¹ We had it in a nice frame. We had two 5x7s. Autographed them, got a frame. That was going to be their raffle prize at the end.

Then we heard the chief was coming. Chief Finney²² was the Chief of Police. We thought, "Well, hey. We got to get him something." So we made his picture an 8x10, the same picture we got for Colleen and Tom Smith. And we autographed that one and we were going to be a little more secretive about this prize. Just after we gave Tom and Colleen their pictures, we said, "Oh, it looks like Chief Finney's shown up. Jerry, I think we have something from Santa for him." So we call the chief up, and of course we'd wrapped the 8x10 picture that we'd just given out. And we give it to him, and of course, he opens it up and sees it's a Shawn and Jerry picture, autographed to the chief. [laughs] And of course, someone took a picture of that. And this story as it moves on, you'll see where it's going. They take a picture of the chief holding a picture of Shawn and Jerry. So it was confirmed, just for the record, that the Chief of Police actually had that picture in his office until he retired. The 8x10 Shawn and Jerry picture sat in his office from 2002 till—

²⁰ **Colleen Marie Luna** was appointed police officer May 20, 1984; leave of absence February 16, 1989 to April 3, 1989; leave of absence July 12, 1991 to September 3, 1991; promoted to sergeant June 26, 1994; lieutenant March 27, 1999; title change to commander January 1, 2000; senior commander February 3, 2001; acting assistant chief February 1, 2003; reinstated as senior commander June 21, 2003; reinstated commander October 29, 2005.

²¹ **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.

²² **William "Corky" Kelso Finney** 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.

KC: [laughs] And I've been in his office. He also had pictures of himself shaking hands with President Clinton and many dignitaries.

SC: Yeah, so we were proud. We were very proud once we had heard that the picture was in there as confirmed by many sources and then it was there for a long time. And Tom Smith and Colleen Luna still have their pictures up from that year.

And to jump ahead, the following Christmas party was equally as big, equally as fun. I think the prizes might have went down a little bit, because it wasn't so close to 9/11, but the following year, we made an 8x10 for the chief of him getting the picture and holding the picture of the Shawn and Jerry picture. And that's the picture I wish I had on my desk here to show you and I don't.

There's a picture of the picture on my desk, but Chief Finney actually ended up with two pictures of Shawn and Jerry. One was of just us and one was him holding the picture of the picture was his following Christmas present. I don't know. We'd have to flip a coin as to whose idea that was. I tend to think it was both us boneheads coming up with that.

So that was a great time. And Jerry was the janitor also at the party. Some people had vomited,, and there's a picture of Jerry with a mop cleaning up vomit with a smile on his face. [laughs] He didn't mind being the janitor guy and doing his duties.

So those two Christmas parties back to back were by far the biggest successes probably in at least Central's history of Christmas parties because they were very large. And the following year, he went to the Vice Unit, so he was not involved in the Christmas party, and I stepped down, too. I didn't have my right hand man and I wasn't going to do it again. It was Jerry's idea, so he gets the credit for the great success. And everyone had a wonderful, wonderful time. I'll have to dig up those pictures, because there are some great pictures that we actually took from the podium looking out over the crowd. Great tables, and they did a nice job of decorating them. There was

well over 140 people there which was a very good turnout. We were the envy of the police department for those two Christmas parties.

And that's why when you have people with personalities like Jerry, it makes the job easier to deal with during those tough times and keeps everyone going and marching strong and keep doing what they have to do. There's not a lot of people like that, unfortunately, as you may think in this world or in the police department, you know. There are just a handful of people that can touch other people like that. And when they do, boy, you got to be lucky that you were able to get touched by that person.

You know, a lot of the stories that come up with his work with Vice and the young ladies, or not so young at times. People were doing that and him trying to take care of them to get them out of there. And of course, I saw it all the time. We would help him out and stuff. You could just see the care. He just had a different view about women, prostitutes, in that he really did feel they were victims. That didn't mean he didn't get mad at them. Didn't mean he didn't throw the law in their face now and then. But after that, it's like the hockey coach that yells at you after you screw up, and then after the game will say, "Hey, you played hard. Just next time make sure you do this." And Jerry was obviously an athlete, and we've heard all the stories about him in high school. And I think people like that, they take some of those experiences. I think he just viewed – I'm going to work Vice and try to help these people. And I don't know for a fact that – talking to him before he was going to Vice, I don't think he looked at it and went, "Oh, they're all victims. I'm going to do something here." I think once he got there, in my opinion, that's when he saw things in a different light.

And that was just Jerry's open personality in understanding there's a very big gray area in life. I think that's when he started to go, "You know what? There's something more here than just women out there being a nuisance to the citizens.

They're victims." And you know, I'd talk to him – we'd be at Club Cancun, which was

sometimes not the most pleasant job to work for the hours or what not, but you know, there was always going to be Jerry up there. You just sit up there for three hours. You'd laugh and talk about families and work. A half hour you'd have to really work hard at the end. But I believe that just from talking to him, when he was deciding if he wanted to go to Vice and then decided to go to Vice, once he got there, he just saw it in a different light, differently than people just driving by and yelling for them to get off the street.

And he had a very hard working ethic. He always had a hard working ethic. He really believed that when you are there to work, you're being paid. You're working for the citizens and you're not going to slough calls. You're going to go out there and work. And yeah, your boss maybe is going to let you off early and stuff like that. To not do nothing is a waste. That always was his mentality was to go out and work and do a good job. And have fun, but make sure you're working: backing up your partners, taking your calls. No milking your calls out so someone else has to take them. And that just always followed through. That was from day one, knowing Jerry, until the end. Whether it was Vice or the Force Unit or the street/patrol officer, it was like, go out and work.

I think that was one of his motivations to go into Vice, because he wasn't happy with the Vice Unit as it was. The person that – not that they were a bad person – but they'd been in there a long time and their level of productivity, should we say, was dropping. And so they weren't really fulfilling what the citizens wanted. I think that's what got Jerry's energy going towards going in there. "I'm going in there. I'm going to do it different. And I want to be productive." And that's how he spoke going in there. "Because I want to do something different. They're kind of stagnant." He never ripped on anybody that was up there. He just said, "They've been up there a long time, and they're just not rediscovering a new way to do things." That's what was the drive, and you could see that.

It was hard to leave Patrol, because it was something he loved to do and everyone loved him to be around and do. It was something different. He did like that undercover stuff in the Force Unit. Dressing up for Jerry was putting on one of them old shirts and a wig. [laughs] I have a great story about that.

When he was in the Force Unit and when we were on the Eastside, I wasn't promoted yet. I pulled over this red junky pick-up truck and, lo and behold, the driver—what no one else would recognize as a wig, but I just thought, "This is really weird." As I'm at the door – you're taught early on, if you think you recognize someone as an undercover officer, you never give that away. So I'm asking this person for their driver's license and, of course, I kind of figure out – I'm pretty sure this is Jerry who I'm talking to. And there's a female in the passenger side. And he's got this long hippie wig on with a baseball hat. And I think he had those fake teeth – I forget what they called those things. Those buck teeth. He did not look very attractive. He looked very goofy. I go back to my squad and, of course, people are getting ahold of me on the air saying, "Hey, you know that's Jerry. He's working Force. He's undercover, so don't –," and I'm like, "Yeah, I figured it out now."

But I'm thinking of a way to mess with Jerry. One of my other partners who wasn't in the squad with me at the time, we're talking on the phone. I'm like "Yeah, I got Jerry stopped. I think he's either got a hooker or crack dealer with him or something." I said, "I should pull him out of the car, and we should pretend like we're wailing him." [laughs] And scare the crap out of the gal. But we decided, "Let's not do that, because then his wig will fall off." And so I go back up to the car and, of course, he's looking at me out the window where she can't see and he's making faces at me. So this is really helping me to keep my composure.

I decide I'm really going to go with this, so I started asking him about the passenger, and he's not coming up with a lot of answers. So I ask her to step out of the car to the back of the vehicle. I can tell he's looking at me like, "Where are you going

with this?" And I get out and pretend like I'm reaming her. "This guy's a bad guy! He's got a warrant! It's just a misdemeanor, but his record is long. You should not be in a vehicle with this kind of guy." And you could tell he's looking in the – you can see his eyes in that rear view mirror. And he can hear, because the windows are down and I'm, "I don't even want you to go back in that car with him, but you're an adult and I can't tell you what to do." So I go back and I go, "Here's your license. If I hear – if this lady calls the police on you about anything, I'm going to take you on that warrant, and I just think this is wrong." And I'm going on and he's looking at me like, "Get the hell out of here, will you?" He's making that goofy face because the hair's blocking her and he's like— Oh, God, we laughed about that after. That goofy wig with that stupid baseball hat and them teeth. That was the first time I'd ever seen him dress up undercover. What a treat that was, boy. That was a pretty good one. I really dragged it out, and he was just like, "Oh, man. Why'd it have to be you that stopped me?" [laughs] Once I figured it out I'm like, "Now we're going to mess with you, Jer." We did.

So Jerry just brought that smile with him. Not only just on the job, but in life. To be around someone like that is a great feeling, and it brings out the best in a lot of different people. That's why when you just stop and you think of that name, you immediately have a smile on your face, you know? It's just that good loving nature, big guy that he was. He was just a great human being and a great family man. Truly very missed. You can't replace a Jerry. Not in your heart, not in your soul, not in your work. Only just in your memories.

Interviewed 2007

Todd Axtell



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My name is Todd Axtell,²³ and I'm a commander in the Western District Patrol. I came on the job September 18, 1989, and that is when I did meet Jerry for the first time, because he was a classmate of mine in the same academy. My assignments throughout the year since my eighteen years on the Saint Paul Police Department have been Street Officer on the Eastside where I worked with

Jerry. Then I went to the Force Unit in 1994. A short time after that, Jerry Vick came to the Force Unit a few years later, I believe it was. Later on, I worked in the Chief's office for awhile. From there, I went to Vice: Narcotics and Special Investigations as the Commander, promoted in 2003 to Commander. That's where I got to work with Jerry again, because he was assigned as a sergeant to the Vice Unit at that time.

I don't know if you have enough tape to know all the personal stories, but I would be honored to tell you a few of the memories and characteristics that Jerry possessed that I'll always have. And they're all fond memories. Jerry was very creative, not only as a street officer working Payne Avenue finding different creative ways to connect with the community, build trust with the community, and also catch the bad guys. He had a good way of connecting with different elements of society, whether it be business people, residents, moms, dads, teachers, firefighters, regular citizens all the way down to the most desperate segment of society – prostituted women, hardened

²³ **Todd Douglas Axtell** was appointed police officer September 18, 1989; promoted to sergeant March 14, 1998; commander January 24, 2003; senior commander July 24, 2010.

criminals, felons, the people that are at their lowest point of their lives. He had a way of connecting with them as well and that was, I believe, was one of the most unique characteristics Jerry possessed. And that characteristic assisted him in investigating crime, solving crime, and building trust in the community.

He cared. He cared, and he wasn't the kind of guy who would ask you how you're doing just to ask you. He would always wait for a response. And in my opinion, a lot of people lose that angle. So he did care. He listened to people's concerns, what was bothering them, how he could be of better service. And he followed through on that.

There's other characteristics that Jerry possessed. He was very determined. He was compassionate. If you're a criminal and Jerry was on your tail, you knew it was a matter of time before he was able to apprehend you, build a case on you, and put you where you belong. And so in many ways, he's very determined and strong in that way, but also the other end of his compassion was identifying victims of crimes. He was really on the cutting edge in this area of grasping the concept that, for instance, prostitution has been an issue for many years. One of the oldest professions, if you will, as we've all heard. But we've always as a police department just arrested the prostituted women on the street, and it was a revolving door in the court system. Jerry saw that and decided that he was going to start treating the women involved in prostitution for the most part as victims. When that occurred, we saw a drastic change in prostitution in Saint Paul. Women were being diverted to treatment to treat their addictions, whether they were on narcotics or they were making money to support a family that they couldn't support. And he would steer those women in the right direction to get treatment and resources to get their lives back on track. There's many success stories. Solving the issue rather than pushing the issue through the court system is very important in law enforcement, and he really got that.

Some of the creative and fun things that I remember that Jerry would do when investigating crime. He always had a new costume when he worked undercover. He would wear wigs. He would wear beards. He would dirty himself up. He'd play in some dirt to make sure he looked like he was a construction worker if that was, in fact, what he was going to come across as. He would always pay attention to the little details.

I saw Jerry on a couple of occasions working undercover with a fake hook arm. He would disguise himself as somebody driving down the street looking to purchase narcotics or pick up a prostitute, and he had this device on his arm that he would hide underneath his jean jacket that actually looked like it was a fake arm. It had a hook on the end of it. And he'd pull his arm out and the hook would open and close with a strap that he had attached to his body, and that was unique and fun, and it certainly threw the criminals off ,because they would never expect that it would be a police officer.

Other ideas he had come up with is getting an undercover car and putting a pizza delivery sign on the side of it. Or a cab. He would come up with a fake cab company, go to a graphic artist, and have stickers put on the side of the car. So those are some of the things he went above and beyond what normally we would do to get the bad guy. He'd go that extra mile, and it really did pay off.

Jerry was so determined relating to prostitution and dealing with women who were being trafficked that he was the first person in Saint Paul, in the Saint Paul Police Department, to start pursuing women that are being trafficked. And as I mentioned earlier, he had a lot of compassion for people that are in a desperate state. And a lot of the women that are being trafficked are just that. They are forced into situations that they don't want to be in. They're being abused physically, emotionally. And he started to dig into that and go after the people that were trafficking. That ultimately led to a federal grant that the Saint Paul Police Department got. It's now named the Jerry Vick Human Trafficking Task Force. And there was several hundred thousand dollars that

came with that as a result of his work, and to this day it's being used for good purposes to make sure we get out in front of the human trafficking.

He approached Chief Harrington back in 2004. We were working in Vice together. He wanted to go to Las Vegas to check out the prostitution capitol of the world, if you will, to see techniques, new ways, and network with some of the detectives in Las Vegas. Jerry and I went down there after being approved by Chief Harrington. We spent a few days with their Vice Unit down there. And by the time we were done, after those three days, they were offering Jerry a job in Las Vegas. They wanted to keep him, because he was by far ahead of the curve, if you will. And I'll never forget that when the lieutenant down there asked if they could keep Jerry down there. We got a chuckle out of that but, needless to say, he came back to Saint Paul.

He would make anybody laugh. He loved jokes, practical jokes. He was good at disguising his voice, so often he would call up and pretend like he was somebody else and get you going on the phone until he would start laughing and you'd notice his laugh. You'd recognize his laugh, and you'd realize that you'd been had. And it really didn't matter.

Jerry was connected, like I said, to all different segments of society. And that was not just in public. It was also in the police department. Regardless if you were the chief of police or a clerk in the property room, he treated everybody the same. He wasn't intimidated, but yet he didn't act like he was better than anybody else. And that's why people connected with Jerry. He would joke with you, like I say, regardless if you're the chief or not. So that was always fun. I enjoyed sitting back and watching when Jerry would start giving somebody a hard time. I enjoyed it because it wasn't me. We had a lot of fun and a lot of fond memories.

Jerry really loved his family. I remember that about him. He was very committed to his family, and he often felt guilty that he worked such long hours. I remembered him talking about that. That always bothered him a bit, but he'd always also talk about

how much he did love his family. But he was a very hard worker and those are some of the fun things I remember about Jerry.

And, you know, you miss him terribly. We all do. I find myself often when I'm driving back and forth to work, you think of little situations that we've come across that Jerry was involved in and, yeah, there's certainly a grin that appears on your face when you think of those things.

Interviewed 2007

Thomas Smith



My name is Thomas Smith.²⁴ I came on the Saint Paul Police Department in September 1989, so I've been with the department – in fact, starting next month, it'll be starting our nineteenth year. I have worked my way, if you can believe it or not, up the ranks up from patrol officer and have had many assignments and now I am the Assistant Chief of the Operations Division. [appointed chief in 2010.]

I first met Jerry Vick, I believe it was 1985. Before I came to work for the Saint Paul Police Department, I worked at Oak Park Heights Correctional Facility. ²⁵ Actually, I helped to open that facility up in 1982. I became a trainer there, and they had a small law enforcement unit that worked inside of the prison. I was a part of that team. The first time I met Jerry, actually, I was teaching self defense to the new correctional officers, and I met Jerry and we became good friends.

²⁴ **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.

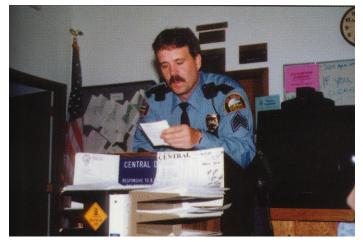
²⁵ **The Minnesota Correctional Facility-Oak Park Heights**, 5329 Osgood Avenue North, Stillwater, Minnesota 55082, opened in 1982, receives offenders transferred primarily from other adult male institutions who are classified as maximum custody or extreme risks to the public. The level five, maximum-security institution has nine self-contained complexes that can operate independently. Six are designed to house fifty-two inmates each. Inmates participate in highly-structured programming including industry, education, and institutional housekeeping. The remaining three complexes contain the mental health, transitional health care, and administrative control units that serve adult male offenders department-wide.

In 1989, we both were told we were going to be hired and get to come in the Saint Paul Police Academy, and we were both excited. We actually worked with each other in the State of Minnesota Department of Corrections for four years, and then we transferred and actually came into the police academy together.

Oh, God. The first thing I have to say, and I want people to know that listen to this, that I love Jerry. Jerry is like a brother to me. And it's hard, and I still feel Jerry every day. And as you can see, I have a picture of Jerry in my office and before – I just moved here, I haven't put them all up – I also have another larger picture that I've always had in my office. And you see his badge which is on my cabinet. That's because I believe that you just never

forget.

But the reason I say that is because Jerry Vick was full of life. He was the person that, if Kate came in and was feeling down today or feeling blue, he made you smile. He was a person who liked to needle you. There's many stories but when I was a



Jerry Vick at Central Roll Call

commander in the Central District and Jerry worked for me as a supervisor, he loved it. He knew how to get under my skin and he'd do it, kind of in a good purposeful way. He would come in my office and rile me up and I'd say, "Get out of here, Jerry! Get out of here!" And then he'd look at me and say, "I gotcha!"

He just had this way about him. I'd be the watch commander, because you had to rotate down to be the watch commander, and so when he finally left midnights as a supervisor and went to days, that was a big change. It was a change that his family wanted and Connie wanted. So Jerry had to live kind of a regular lifestyle then, and he

still worked a lot of off duty, but he would come to work about six in the morning and get ready for roll call, and the Watch Commander used to work until eight in the morning. So I would call him up about six and I would tease Jerry. "Jerry, are you awake?" I won't even get into some of the things I teased Jerry about, but it was –

Again, I just want to say one thing. What about Jerry Vick? He was someone who had a purpose in life, and he just was alive. Because I'm kind of high energy person.

Jerry was a high energy person. And I'm going to tell you one funny story for sure.

When Jerry and I were first partners after the police academy when we graduated and went through our field training officer process, we worked the midnight shift. First we worked the afternoon shift just for a month. Then they throw all the rookies on midnight. So we worked the midnight shift twelve at night until 0800 in the morning. Chief McCutcheon²⁶ was the chief at the time in the Northwest District.

We had issued some traffic citations to an individual and we were given a court notice and had to go to court. So we show up at the Ramsey County Court House, and the defendant, the traffic violator, decided to waive his rights to a jury trial to fight this and just be heard in front of the judge. But he did have an attorney with him. So it's kind of interesting dynamics. So the judge at the time, who was a very strict judge and I still remember what his name was, called us all up to his bench so that he could hear the arguments from the defendant on why this traffic ticket should be dismissed. Obviously this defendant felt pretty strongly about this traffic ticket because most people don't go that far. They're taking time out of work to fight this.

So as we all got up there and stood there – of course, as police officers we kind of stand at attention, and we're right in front of the judge's bench and he's looking down at all of us. All of a sudden someone passed some gas very loudly. Or, for better lack of

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²⁶ **William Wallace McCutcheon** served the Saint Paul Park Police 1948 to 1954, appointed patrolman January 4, 1954; promoted to sergeant August 22, 1960; lieutenant December 12, 1965; captain June 20, 1969; deputy chief February 4, 1972; chief April 1, 1980; and retired July 15, 1992.

a term, they farted. And as soon as it happened, I knew it was Jerry. Jerry was standing right next to me. But Jerry didn't miss a beat. He looked right at me right after it happened, and the judge and the defendant and his attorney looked right at me. And I looked at the judge and said, "I didn't do it, Judge." And the judge says, "Remember, you're under oath." And everybody laughed, and by the time we were done, we didn't even care about the traffic citation. And by the way, Jerry was the one that passed the gas, and it was one of the funniest things that ever happened. And, by the way, I just told Matt Toupal.²⁷ He forgot about that story. We were joking about that yesterday. He didn't believe it, but it was true.

So that's one small just funny story with Jerry. But there's just a lot of stories about Jerry. When we were riding together one night – and this was probably more serious, but we were riding together as we usually did. And we had an old squad car, and there were some real old squad cars, and we took an unmarked squad, because we thought that was cool. Each team house had a traffic car, so we could do more traffic, because your supervisors wanted you to really work traffic, especially on midnights.

So we took this, and it had been a busy night earlier, and about 0300 to 0400 to 0500 in the morning, it was Jerry's turn to drive, and we didn't hear anything on the radio for a long time. And I'm like, "Boy, Jerry. This is a really quiet night." And he goes, "It sure is." Well, what we didn't understand, Kate, is that we also had a very old radio that was in that squad car, and if you didn't push the toggle switch all the way up, then it wasn't all the way on. It appeared on because the light came on, but it was not transmitting or receiving. So we drove for two hours having the radios off in our squad car just driving around and around. No calls. We thought it was just a really quiet night, and then we're like, panic.

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²⁷ **Matthew Louis Toupal** was appointed police officer September 18, 1989; promoted to sergeant February 12, 2000; commander January 15, 2011.

It just set into both of us, because we figured out – we started to play with the radio. "Oh, my God. We missed it." I was pretty feeble on the radio, and I got on and I said, "This is Squad 116. We had some radio problems. Are we in the clear?" "116, you're in the clear, but your supervisor wants to see you at the Northwest Team²⁸ immediately." Needless to say, you can probably figure out that when we went to go see our crusty old sergeant at the time, we got what you would call a chewing, and I'll leave out some of the words that preface that. And Jerry and I never drove that squad car again because we – and we checked our radio every time. That's all we do is play around with the radios in the squad car.

And there's just so many stories with Jerry, it's hard to tell. Jerry Vick and Shawn Campbell²⁹ both worked for me as Patrol supervisors. I had a great group of people, and we were all very close. And we had worked together, and it was very easy for me to be a commander in that district, even though they played practical jokes on me all the time.

Well, here's the worst one. Boy, we're going to get into passing gas again.

Once a month, every community district has a community meeting open to the public for all the public that come from that district. I wish you wouldn't have asked me this question. But anyway, I'll tell you this because all the jokes are on me. So we have a community meeting at the old Rice and Arlington Station.³⁰ I had a very good relationship with a lot of people, so we had like thirty people there in that old dingy building. And Jerry was there. And Jerry was sitting in the sergeant's office, which was

²⁸ **Northwest District Office** was located at 558 West University Avenue, Saint Paul 1984-1993.

²⁹ **Shawn Campbell** was appointed police officer December 13, 1993; promoted to sergeant November 27, 1999.

³⁰ Central District Office was located at 1441 Rice Street 1984 to 2004.

just adjacent to the roll call room, because we didn't have a community room, so that's where we'd meet.

So I get up to the podium and I'm getting ready to start the meeting, and people kind of socialize in there. And as soon as I start to say welcome to everybody, this loud noise comes out and it goes "THTHTHTH....THTHTHTH" And everybody in that room started to snicker and looked at me and said, "Oh, Commander. Are you okay?" And all I could say was, "JERRY!!" And he's sitting in the other office, and Jerry and Shawn had purchased what they call a fart machine. So they had the machine under the podium, and they were hitting the remote button to make it go off from the office. And the oldest gal, Vivian Klausen, is known as the Queen of Rice Street and the oldest known person to be living on Rice Street. I just talked to her yesterday. She's ninety-four years young. She's amazing. She was there and sat closest to me, and she's the one that said, "Oh, Tom. I think you've got some tummy problems." And to this date, she laughs. And I had to bring Jerry out and finally show everybody this machine so they didn't believe that I was behind that podium really passing gas. That's the last story. All this stuff about farts and passing gas, but that's the type of fun that we had, because this is a stressful job.

We were officers together, and then I ended up being Jerry's boss on a couple of occasions. And he was a great boss, because he was really, again for the emotions even that are coming out just talking about this, I still have a smile on my face. All I have to do is look at that picture behind you. All I have to do is think about all the fun things we did together and funny things. But when it came down to business, Jerry was one heck of a cop, and people seem to forget one thing. He's the only officer ever in this department's history, over 150 years, that's won two Medal of Valors. And I know what it takes to win that.

I remember when he won his first. It was one of those off nights. I felt so guilty. When you're partners, you want to be together when things happen. You live for doing

good things and just putting bad guys in jail, but there are times other things happen. And that night, by the old Northwest team on Sherburne Avenue when I was off, there was a horrific fire that took the life of two or three people on Sherburne Avenue right off of Kent. And Jerry Vick risked his life and went inside and saved an eight-monthold baby who now is a teenager, or older than that by now, because that was back in the 1990s. Jerry risked his life. He took some of his gear off. They put him through a window. This house was completely engulfed in flames and smoke, Kate, and he brought two small children out – one that was saved, one that wasn't. That's the type of guy Jerry Vick was.

Nobody could get in there, but he said, "I'm going in anyway." They break a window – Doug Holtz³¹ who's now a commander in this department. They actually tied some ad hoc rope or something to Jerry, because that's kind of what firefighters do. But we're there before the firefighters. And that's exactly what he did. And he won the Medal of Valor for that. He won the Medal of Valor for a deadly force situation. Why he had one of his recruits on the Eastside on some apartments in Westminster. So, the only officer ever to win two. That's just the type of person that Jerry was.

And, you know, I've been in fights with Jerry with suspects. We've done a lot of things together. He was a great cop with a lot of passion. He always wanted to help people.

There's just too many stories to tell. So I just told you some funny ones and kind of internal ones, but there's just many things about Jerry Vick that still make me smile today.

In closing, when you asked about Jerry Vick, what do I tell other people? You know what? No matter how bad things were, Jerry always had a smile. That's what I've

³¹ **Douglas Alan Holtz, Sr**. was appointed police officer December 10, 1984; promoted tosergeant October 7, 1995; commander November 18, 2006; and retired June 30, 2010.

always tried to do, too. We really complimented each other. I try to be really positive. And, you know, I've told people that Jerry would want us to take something positive away from what happened to him. You know, he was there to help somebody else. Another sergeant asked him for help. So who's the first one there? Jerry. Regardless of all the other things surrounding that incident, Jerry was there because he'd be there for anybody that called for help, regardless if it was the smallest thing to some guys that are trying to hassle you out in the street. That was the type of person he was. I mean, he saved babies. He saved women from a life of prostitution. He could have locked everybody up, but he didn't. That's the type of person he was.

So I take positively, number one, that Jerry would want us to take something positive from a terrible situation. And in the end, when my mind processes things, I believe we have to do that no matter what it is. I just miss him and I love him. I don't know what else I can tell you.

Interviewed 2007

Officer Gerald Vick

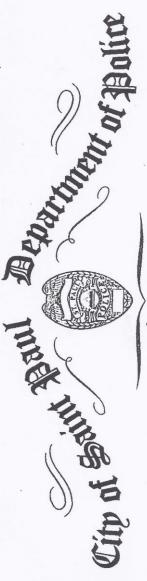
For his actions of bravery beyond the call of duty

his police duties when responding to a house fire at 562 Sherburne. Without hesitation, he entered Realizing others were trapped, he continued his search until the smoke and intense heat drove him On December 16, 1990, Officer Gerald Vick distinguished himself by courageously performing the dangerous, smoke-filled house, where he located and brought to safety a one year old child. from the house.

This commendation is awarded for Officer Vick's actions above and beyond the call of duty.



March 19, 1991



Hicer Gerald D. Vick

Medal of Valor

For actions of bravery beyond the call of duty

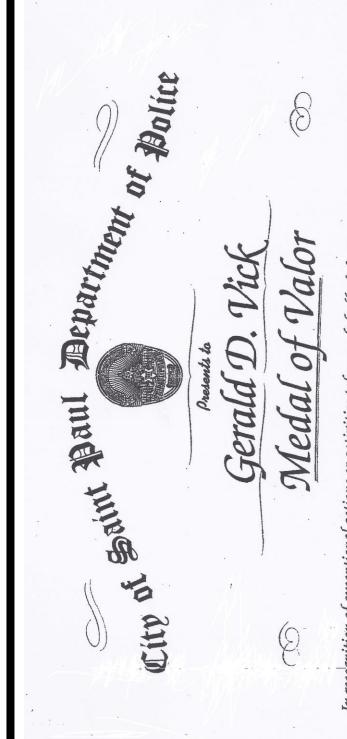
During a search of the building you confronted the suspect in a rear stairwell. When the suspect pulled a silver handgun from his waistband and started to raise it towards you, you assessed the situation, evaluated the threat and responded On April 28, 1997, at 0016 hours, you responded to a robbery at 1335 Westminster. After an initial investigation you broadcast a felony pick.up for the suspect who was armed with a silver semi-automatic handgun. with deadly force. You then called for medics and for assistance with the crowd that was forming.

This Medal of Valor is presented in recognition of your courage, professionalism and dedication under the most dangerous conditions an officer must face.

William &. Finnep, Chief of Bolice

May 29, 1997

Date of Board Action



On May 6, 2005, Sengeants Gerald Vick and Joseph Strong were working undercover at Erick's Bar on East Seventh Street in Saint assistance. Both got out of their vehicles and pursued the individuals down an alley across the street from Erick's Bar. As Sergeant Paul. Around 0200 hours, they had a verbal confrontation with two males outside the bar. Sergeants Vick and Strong left in their In recognition of exceptional actions or activities taken on behalf of the Department and City of Saint Paul approached Sergeant Strong's vehicle as it was stopped for a red light near the bar. Sergeant Strong called upon Sergeant Vick for separate vehicles after the encounter with the intention to return to headquarters to complete their shifts. One of the individuals Vick approached one of the males, he was shot. Although CPR was performed on Sergeant Vick, his wounds were fatal. Sergeant Gerald D. Vick gave the ultimate sacrifice that police officers can give in service to the citizens of Saint Paul. Hispactions displayed the dedication we admire in our police family, and are certainly deferring of this recognition.

May 13, 2009

Date of Board Action

own M. Harrington, Chie of Police

Donald Winger



1999

My name is Don Winger.³² I was with the Saint Paul Police Department from 1972 to 1999. During that time, I had the opportunity to work with Jerry. I was a district commander on the Eastside of Saint Paul starting in December of 1992. Jerry and Matt Toupal transferred in shortly after I started.

What I remember about Jerry and Matt is they brought a lot to the table. They were hard working. They got a lot of results. They kept busy. And they had a great sense of humor, the two of them. As a district commander, you always worry about the officers on the job. There was always kind of a calming feeling when I knew Jerry and Matt were working – that they'd watch out for the newer officers, that they'd take care of business, and that they would be there. Just class acts, both of them.

And when I talk about Jerry and I think about Jerry, I always think about Matt, because they were connected at the hip. And sometimes I cannot separate what one did and what the other one did. They were just a good set of partners, among the best that Saint Paul has ever produced, I think.

³² **Donald Stuart Winger** was appointed patrolman May 1, 1972; promoted to sergeant May 20, 1976; lieutenant May 26, 1985; captain September 23, 1989; Commander of East team December 1992 to December 1997; leave of absence in August 1998; and resigned December 17, 1999 as senior commander. He served as chief of Maplewood Police Department August 1998 to August 2002, going on to become Dean of Professional Program at Saint Mary's University in Minneapolis.



I remember the day that Ron Ryan³³ and Tim Jones³⁴ were killed. It was about three o'clock in the afternoon, and the day was still going on. Maybe it was even earlier than that. Jerry and Matt had been working all night and I told them, "Okay, guys. It's time to go home now." They looked at me and said, "We want to stay." I said, "No, it's time to go home." And they said, to the effect, "We won't be able to

sleep anyway. Let us stay." And they stayed, and they worked well into the night. They were back again that night and the next night and the next night again.

As many of the officers – almost all of the officers – people forget that we had a tough time staffing during there, but there always people you could count on, and Jerry and Matt were among those. One of the definitions I like to use about leadership is being there when you're needed most. And they just became leaders. I can remember conversation that I told them one day. I said, "You guys have to be the big kids now." It was a role they accepted and they went on with, and I think that they liked the reputation of having fun, but they were just tremendous leaders on that young midnight shift.

The point about always feeling good when they were there is what stands out in my mind because they took care of business, they watched out for each other, and they watched out for the other officers working.

Interviewed 2007

³³ **Ronald Michael Ryan, Jr.** was appointed police officer January 23, 1993; fatally injured by gunfire while responding to a "slumper" call August 26, 1994.

³⁴ **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.

Matthew Toupal

My name is Matt Toupal. I'm a Sergeant with the Saint Paul Police. I'm currently assigned to Central Investigations.



2000

I met Jerry September 1989 when we started the academy. First day of the academy, I met Jerry. I remember he came in with a Oak Park Heights Prison guard uniform – that's where he used to work at a prison – and he sat by me. I think it had to do with alphabetical order. We had to buddy up with somebody, because the first day at the academy, we were all going to take turns to kind of run it, so we had to team up with somebody. Jerry and I teamed up. That was the first time I met him.

I know that we hit it off right away. I just think our personalities were a lot alike. I sat by him for the academy because it went in alphabetical order, but I got in trouble a lot quite a bit, and he would yell at me, we clicked, and we became friends there.

He was a very likeable guy, very easy going, funny, somebody that for me personally, I was kind of drawn to him because he seemed like a real nice guy. Honest. Yeah, honest. He just didn't seem like he was the type of guy that would – he just seemed like a pure-hearted guy. That's what I picked up on.

I know that before we got out of the academy, Jerry and I, Mike Brach, Tom Smith, Jeff Hutchinson – we all went to West. Then that's where Jerry and I started to work together. The pranks started taking off. I think from day one, just horsing around. Made the job easier and go smoother.



Officer Mike Brach, Officer Matt Toupal, Officer Jerry Vick December 1990



Officer Brad Schultz, Officer Matt Toupal, Officer Jerry Vick December 1990



Matt Toupal, Mrs. Brach, Mike Brach, and Jerry Vick kissing Officer Brach

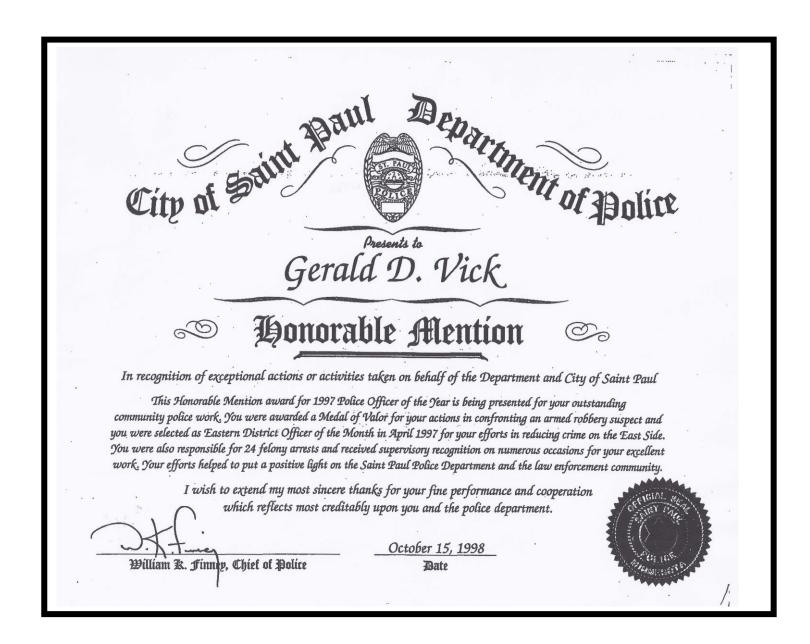
I remember him and I were nominated for Officers of the Year, and we were at the Holiday Inn and we were the first team, two person car, that was nominated for this Officer of the Year. And there hadn't been a two person team nominated before, and



Nominated for Officer of the Year Vick and Toupal October 15, 1998

Jerry and I were the first. There were three finalists – Jerry and I were one, and then there was two other people that were up for Officers of the Year. We didn't get it. We got Honorable Mention, but I remember having to go up and we had to give a speech. So

we had to go in front of this large crowd, and Jerry and I had talked about it. We had talked about what we were going to say and who was going to talk. We really didn't have a plan. And then when Jerry walked up there, he walked up there with a mission to say something. It kind of took me back, because I had no idea what he was doing. So we walked up there, and he said, "We'd like to say thank you, and we can turn it over to Matt Toupal." And everybody started laughing. So, he got me there.



We had so many laughs after the fact. After the fact when we would have a hellacious situation – you know, something we'll never forget for the rest of our lives or for the rest of our careers. And then afterwards, we'd be kidding about it because of our reactions and how we reacted to it.



Matt Toupal and Jerry Vick July 1999

An example might be that there was a guy that had died. He was an older man, and he'd lived a full life. I remember it was at a gangster house, and everybody was there, and these are not good people, these are people that are dangerous. And we were all in there, and it came time to get the guy down from upstairs, and the guy from the funeral home shows up, and Jerry gets stuck helping this old man from the funeral home carry the body down the stairs. And the guy from the funeral home was so old that he had a hard time lifting him, and they almost fell down the stairs. It's not funny. At the time, it's not funny, but afterwards, it sure was hilarious talking about it.

I remember some of the chases that we were in. One in particular a guy went down Cypress 100 miles an hour, and he ended up crashing into the barrier between Old Hudson and the freeway. And he goes up and he crashes through this barrier and lands on I-94. Jerry and I run out there, and we're kidding each other, hugging each other ,and it turns out when we got up there, the guy is running across the freeway. His car was totaled out, but— Afterwards, we got a good chuckle out of that.

Some laughs – I don't know why the department let us do this, but we had the oldest squad car on the department., We had a Chevy and everybody else switched to Fords, but they let us keep the Chevy. It was an old boxy Chevy and we loved it. It was great. We took care of it. They said we could keep it and keep using it until they couldn't find parts for it anymore. Then one night, Jerry and I were going to an "officer needs assistance" call and Jerry was driving. I remember we went over I-94 and somebody pulled out in front of us, and we were screaming and yelling as we crashed into a light pole. We were both okay, but he totaled out the squad car. So we got some laughs out of that. The frame of the car was buckled. We got some good laughs out of that. I still have the squad key to that car today. It's kind of funny. Squad 920. I remember that. But we babied it, and we got some laughs out of that 'cause yelling back and forth.

We even had some laughs when Jerry shot and killed a guy up on Westminster. Jerry was in plain clothes, and he had to shoot and killed a guy. [On April 28, 1997] we got sent on a robbery, and there was a guy that had told us that he was robbed by somebody that he knew and that he lived in the apartment building and that the guy had taken jewelry – his watch, necklace, and what have you – and that he'd pulled out a gun and that he'd pulled the trigger on this gun. He said he heard a click. After the guy pulled the trigger, there was a click. It just didn't fire.

So Jerry had a recruit at the time, and I was supposed to have a recruit at the time, but he was off. So we went on this call together and what ended up happening is

that I ended up sitting outside, and Jerry ended up sitting inside with his recruit stationed on some side of this apartment building waiting for this guy to come in. Well, they guy did come in, and we didn't catch it. And Jerry was inside waiting for him, and he stopped him. The guy reaches in his pants in his waistband and pulls out a gun and then Jerry had to shot him.

When I got in there, I told Jerry to leave, because I didn't want him to deal with this because he'd just shot a man, and I was going to try to do what I could for him. So I ended up telling him to leave. He stepped outside. And then I ended up yelling at him to get back in, because the family of this gentleman had come up, and it was really, really ugly, and I needed help.

We ended up finding out the gun that they guy had, it was a – what kind of gun was it? I'll think of it. But when you pull the trigger with the safety on it, the hammer would come down, but it would catch the safely, so you'd hear a click just like the guy was telling us. So it was metal on metal. And that would explain why – [the shooter,] he didn't know how to figure out the safety. That's what the problem was with the gun, but ah! That was a trying time, you know?

Laughing at our reactions and laughing at the stress that we went through and at our facial expressions, just some real tough, ugly times together and then being able to joke about it. Oh, we had a lot of laughs.

I think it was extremely difficult for him initially, because he took the life of somebody, but he and I talked at length about it. He felt bad for the family, and he felt *really* bad for the family, but he did what he had to do, and he didn't regret what he had to do. Not one bit. It wasn't his doing. It was Demetrius Hill doing. He created that. It's unfortunate, but that's what happened.

I remember after this happened, they had to actually bring investigators out to work the street because there were so many death threats. This family was so upset and how I had planted this gun. It was my extra gun and I had planted it, and they made up

all these stories and the police and how they did this. It was absolutely absurd. It was, but he handled it as well as you could. He got an award for it. He had a problem with getting an award for killing somebody. He accepted the award, but he declined a ceremony. He declined it just because typically for those ceremonies where you get a Class A [award], they put it on the news and they make a big deal about it. He thought it was wrong to glorify the death of somebody, so he refused to do it. That's how he saw that. I agreed with him. I agree under that circumstance. I believe he deserved the award, wholeheartedly, but I don't believe that the way they made it seem – it was just too much.

Very honorable. He was also a type of man that could do no wrong. An example would be – if it was me, I would get in trouble for it, but he got stopped on traffic and he showed the officer a letter that he'd gotten from Chief Finney. It was basically a getout-of-jail-free card. It was all typed up. And it was not good. It did not look good, and it made Finney look really bad. But somehow it ended up in our hands, this letter. And Jerry had put this letter on the bulletin board, and people started reading it. And then the next thing you know, somebody took it and faxed it to the news. And it was on the news, and they were calling the chief on the carpet because of this. It was really bad for the chief. And the chief was very, very upset that somebody would do this to him.

Jerry felt terrible about it. I remember; he had no intentions of it harming the chief in any way, but he didn't think it was going to go like that. But it did. He felt so bad about it he went up and told the chief what had happened, and the chief commended him for bringing it to his attention and what an honorable guy he was for stepping forward. And I'm thinking, "Man, if that was me, I'd be looking at thirty days off or I'd be transferred." And I knew that the chief regretted it, and I don't think the intent of the chief – personally, I don't think it was intended for the use that this guy had, but it did not look good for him. But he did and he admitted it. And he admitted he made a mistake. We got some chuckles out of that, too. Yeah.

He's the type of guy that'd get in the squad car, turn a corner, and apprehend somebody we'd been looking for for a long, long time. He had a knack and could be at the right place at the right time. It just seemed like all the time.

I think it was intuition. I think mostly it was intuition. I think some of it was luck. He was a good cop, and I think a trick to being a good cop – and if you take a look at the really good cops, they're the ones that have good memory, because you can remember faces and names and "Oh, I dealt with that guy a while ago." I think that's all part of it.

We worked together in West nights, and then we ended up going and working

East on nights, and eventually we went into the force unit together and worked as a team. And then he got promoted and then I got promoted. And that's how we ended up losing our little team there. We were together for about ten-and-a-half years. He was a good friend of mine. He was my best friend. We were real close. We spent a lot of time together. After we got promoted, the only thing that changed – it was kind of hard, because

there was a separation. I wasn't with him all day long, you know. We got used to it. We ran our offduty jobs together. We talked all the time. We talked at least – if it wasn't every day, it might



Back of Vick Congratulating Toupal at Promotion ceremony February 12, 2000

have been every other day, you know. We kept in touch.

He talked to me about a lot of things. He actually wanted me to go down to where he would go down to the river and he would get the gay men to solicit him. So he wanted me to come down there, because they were getting to know him down there

and it wasn't working for him, so he tried to get me to do it. We had some laughs over that, but I never did. I actually also wanted to do it just to see, because I had a hard time believing this. He'd go down there. People would give him so much crap for being down there and doing that, but he really firmly believed that families should be able to go down to Crosby Park³⁵ and go for a walk and do whatever they wanted to without being harassed or solicited for sex.



He was so compassionate that he would actually get a hold of some of these groups – you know, the gay and lesbian groups – and talk to



Crosby Farm Park

³⁵ Crosby Park at 2595 Crosby Farm Road, Saint Paul, MN 55116 is named after Thomas Crosby, an English immigrant who staked out 160 acres in the valley southwest of the present-day junction of Shepard Road and Interstate 35E in 1858. Before Crosby's death in 1886, the farm became one of the largest and longest running in the West End and Highland Park area. A succession of families farmed it between 1902 and 1962. The Saint Paul Port Authority purchased the land in the early 1960s and leased it to the City for park use. There are 6.7 miles of paved trails that run along shady, wooded bottom lands next to the Mississippi River, along the marshes of Crosby Lake, past scenic picnic areas, and connects to the Mississippi River Boulevard, with fishing available in Crosby Lake..

them about it and try to work with them to put out the word for men not to come down there. You know, it kind of went hand in hand, because it's kind of a hot topic, political topic. He actually worked with these groups and I give him credit. It worked out well for him, and actually, they were happy that he was willing to do that.

And the prostitutes -- I didn't like working the prostitutes. I had done a little of that in the Force Unit. I didn't care for it at all. Jerry would – and I'm sure you've heard this story before where he would actually play the role of a deaf person and a deaf mute. He'd go and he'd have these women believing that he was exactly that. And he would write down on a piece of paper the elements of the crime, and they would confess right on the paper. He actually got so good at it, he did it while he was buying drugs. He'd write down what he was looking for and how much, and they would write it down on paper.

When we did the drug thing together, you know, buying drugs together, and I remember there was a couple of people that would buy drugs in the unit,, and him and I were like two people that would do that. In order to continue to buy drugs you'd have to mix things up a little bit whether it's your clothing attire. I remember Jerry got creative, and we'd put beards on, fake beards. And Jerry was really good at it. He'd go around and keep talking to the same people but he'd change his looks and they didn't have a clue. He'd help me. We'd help each other to make sure we looked good enough to be presentable. You know, if it's at night, you can't see the glue. He took it to another level where – some of the wigs. Some of them are very obvious. Some of them you get wigs that are in hats. You know, they're stuck to a baseball cap. He actually invested a little bit of time and money into this. It paid off. It paid off.

I know that he literally was one of the best at buying drugs. I kind of worried about him a couple of times, but he really could play the role, a very good job at it. He did things that I honestly don't think I've seen this department do since. To go as far as they have with these narcotics purchases or allow somebody to do what he did, or he

and I did. The chances – I don't want to say the chances that we took, but how far they would allow us to go with an investigation. I remember going into drug houses and buying crack from people. They typically don't let people do that, you know. I think they felt we could pull it off and we had enough common sense to be able to back out when necessary. Couple of white guys going into some of these neighborhoods where there's minorities, you know, it was a little risky. But, you know what, some of it was really ugly, but for the most part we did really well.

To have that balance in our lives we used laughter. I think laughter. We worked out a lot, but laughing and horsing around. We were both family oriented. We always talked about things. We always talked about if we had to do things what would we do differently to better ourselves. Just laughing and joking. Finding the funniness in things and just bringing out and laughing. It was fun. It was fun, and if I had to go back and do it all over again, there's not much I would change.

He and I – we had one yelling match at each other, and that's when we first started working together. Ten-and-a-half years and we just started yelling at each other, going back and forth and fighting over some stupid things, but that was the end of it. Ten-and-a-half years. It's pretty good. Yeah. We had a lot of good times together. You know what, Kate? There's so many stories. There really are. There's so many stories of great police work by Jerry. Just great police work.

I remember the day that Jerry died. For whatever reason – it's probably happened once in my life – I left my cellphone in my car. Nobody could get a hold of me. Got up in the morning and the cellphone was lit up like a Christmas tree. What the heck is going on? I had one guy saying, "Jerry got hurt. You need to go down to the hospital." "How's he doing?" "He's doing fine" One guy told me he was okay, just to go down there. I said, "Okay." Next phone call a guy told me that he's dead. It was really in your face. So I drove down to Region's Hospital. Had a hard time finding Region's Hospital. Hmm-mmm. I'd been there literally hundreds of times. I was afraid

to go in there, because I didn't want to see Connie, and I didn't want to see Clayton and Amanda. I remember going into that room and seeing him lying there. I remember that. I'll never forget that. That's where it all became real to me.

Interviewed 2007



Jerry Vick and Matt Toupal receiving Class C Award for delivering a baby

The Stork Award from Chief Finney

June 29, 1995

Joseph Strong



2012

I'm Retired Sergeant Joe Strong.³⁶ I joined Saint Paul January of 1984, and retired May 2010. I went to Vice. That's when I wanted to work with Jerry. I thought Vice would be—what is it? Not a fear, but uncomfortable with the role of the Vice officer. It's not natural for me to pretend and act and all that. So it

was a hurtle I wanted to get over. There's nothing fun about driving up on a street corner and having a girl come in there and having a conversation with her, and then going through a certain series of sentences to make sure you're doing the right thing. And then trying to act and have the girl say the right thing so you can arrest them. Plus, you've got "nasty" all over you. It's just not a good thing. So that was a barrier for me. I knew I could do it, and with Jerry Vick teaching, it was pretty simple.

Jerry was also getting into trafficking.³⁷ That's when I think he really figured out something ain't right here with the age of the girls. So they'd set up an apartment, have it wired, start calling these girls and checking out who they were and—our main focus was to get under-eighteen girls—and then getting them into that program on University, Breaking Free. That was his main focus and that sounded good to me. The other ones were just illegally using papers and what-not, selling their services—issue a

³⁶ **Joseph Michael Strong** was appointed police officer January 30, 1984; promoted to sergeant April 21, 2001; and retired May 28, 2010.

³⁷ **Human Trafficking** is the illegal trade of human beings for the purposes of commercial sexual exploitation or forced labor.

citation, "You can go," after we figure out who they really are and if anybody actually showed up with them. We got a lot of information, a lot of good names. I think we might've got one or two that were what we were looking for and that was the under eighteen. "How'd you get involved?"

And then it just ended up skyrocketing from there, the trafficking part. Ten, twenty times more than what we were even aware of at the time. That's where Jerry's focus changed. That was his baby. He worked on all of that and then I had my other areas, but whenever we were focused on working, that's what we would do.

We would use this apartment and fake IDs and just try to get a lot of information. We didn't care about the gal that showed up. We'd always make sure that the guy drove them there and we would get his information. Then that normally led to an arrest right there, because there's always something illegal in the car, or he had a warrant—a lot of good information and then Jerry would follow up on all that. We were arresting the people, but really looking for who were behind those people. We made it very clear. We were issuing citations to the gals, and if



2000

they didn't want to say anything, that's fine. We understand. But anytime they were with somebody, we'd definitely go in there. We were looking for the main guy, always trying to get bigger names. And a lot of times, Jerry did.

He had a really good style in talking to these gals. Again, "We don't feel sorry for you," but you need to have a way of saying, "You're in the wrong field here. We want to know who got you here and how old were you when you got in here?" How did this develop? How did that develop? Just getting information, more information, on how everything panned out for this one girl. We'd sit and he'd probably talk to her for

thirty, forty minutes if she was solo and, if not, we'd make sure that we got the guy outside where we wanted him. He'd just soak this all up and every gal, unless it was attitude right away, then you kind of know well, "We can't help you." But some of the girls that'd come in, Jerry would talk to them, and all the sudden, they'd be crying and telling stuff, and then he'd follow up on it. And that's how we got a lot of good arrests out of that. He showed compassion, caring. He knew exactly where he was going, and that's what they're working on now.

On May 6, 2005, we had heard word that the bar on Rice Street—the pull tab person, guy or gal, was selling drugs out of the pull tabs. And because it was pull tabs, Dave Sohm³⁸ was the investigator, because he worked for licensing. He was our liaison officer there. From there, Jerry and I were going to go try to pick up some hooks—hookers at bars, so we went to this place, and all three of us tried to go up there. We got pull tabs and, "Hey, blah blah blah." No hits. We were probably there for an hour, hung out, Dave went home.

Then Jerry and I just started hitting the regular bars out there to see if any women made eye contact. That's what it was normally. Boy, we worked hard! We thought we had two set up. It ended up—we were at Erick's Bar at East Seventh and Forest. They were going to meet us there, and we thought, for sure, it was going to be a transaction taking place, and it ended up being this one girl who just happened to be dumped by her boyfriend. We're sitting there playing pool and she's telling us her life story, and we're like, "Oh, my God." We'd put like five hours of work into this deal, and we said, "Well, we've got to go."

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³⁸**David Atlee Sohm** was appointed police officer April 2, 1990 and retired April 19, 2011.

Undercover you can't wear vests. You had to look the part, you had to be the part. So you had to have the beer in front of you, you had to drink it, and you had to act stupid—act, act, act! Not that we acted stupid at that point.

And that's when we were leaving the bar—it was just before closing—and we're going out, and Evans and the other guy were being loud. They're drunk, obvious drunk, swaying back and forth, got into it with some people. We're telling them to be quiet, confrontation at the car. We said, "Get out of here before you go to jail," so right away, they know we're cops. Maybe Jerry flashed a badge—we probably had them tucked inside our belt—but it was made quite clear that they'd go to jail if they continued. And it was, "F— you," and "Okay, f— you back," and even the girls were there. We had people all around. So all right, it's one o'clock or whatever, and we're done. Kind of dejected a little bit. Jerry gets in his car, I get in my car. I have to go back down Seventh; he's going to go over to Woodbury.

Then, sure enough, the two guys are in front of my car, slamming on it. "Jerry, they're in front of the car. They're slamming." "All right, be right there." Jerry's probably down three, four blocks. He gets up real quick. He ends up pulling up on the sidewalk, and then I come over, and again, "Get the fuck out of here." "Fuck you." We said, "We're going to call a squad." And then, again, these guys are walking away, "F you" this and that. Turning, staring at us. So Jerry makes a move at them. You know, running [using hands to make a running sound]. And Jerry's probably forty feet in front of me, and he's just trying to shag these guys—you know, you chase after them and you just want to scare them and go.

And that's when Evans pulls out a gun and starts shooting. A lot of shots going. And then Jerry went down. And then the guys ran. And then I shot at them. I could tell Jerry was hurt. He said, "Yeah, they got me good." I could tell. So I think I have to dial my phone 911, and I say over the phone to get them there.

Amanda Heu³⁹ was the first one to show up, poor girl. So we're working on Jerry. She ended up getting the mouth end and I'm pumping. And she comes up and I can see her taking a breath. She had blood on her, and I'm like, "Oh, boy." Just working, working, working. He died when we were pumping him, ain't no doubt about it. There was something official that came to me, but you could tell right there that he was—he took everything to the chest.

I'm hanging out. Dennis Jensen⁴⁰ shows up. He gets the call, and he's there within

thirty minutes, I bet. Bobby Jerue,⁴¹ he was there hanging out with me a little bit. There were a ton of guys. Anyhow, Dennis hung out with me. I'm just sitting back watching these guys search. Well, I was crying that whole night. I do all the time.

And then you get everybody— a good response. Boy, within a minute of Amanda getting there, we had thirty cops around there! First it was the officers. Billy Beaudette⁴² was there, for sure—he's a SWAT guy—and I don't know who exactly was coordinating everything, because we were still working on Jerry. It took a couple of minutes for the medics to get there. By that time—Johnny Wright⁴³ was there, got everything just cornered off. We even thought we were short, so they extended, which

³⁹ **Amanda Kaonouchi Heu** was appointed Community Liaison Officer January 7, 2002; police officer February 21, 2004.

⁴⁰ **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.

⁴¹ **Robert Lawrence Jerue** was appointed police officer September 8, 1998.

⁴² **William Charles Beaudette** was appointed police officer April 5, 1993.

⁴³ **John Robinson Wright** was certified police officer December 10, 1984; resigned March 28, 1986; reinstated January 11, 1987; promoted to sergeant November 29, 1997; retired May 31, 2013.

thank God, we did. Wright was the midnight boss for the Eastside, and he was there for a couple years. He liked that. So more cops in, more cops in, a lot of SWAT guys were there. I think SWAT might even have been carrying their gear in their cars, too, which as probably not a bad idea at the time. They went off and just did searches, and the search took way too long.

It probably went on for—God, I've got to think an hour, which is a really long time. They hunkered down, and I think even some neighbors might've called in to say, "I hear something. Not really sure what it is." They ended up finding him after an hour, and then they ended up finding the gun.

And then after that, it was just a long night of interviews. Then I went right to Headquarters. At that point, procedure—I'm kind of isolated. I probably didn't get home until six in the morning and then got the okay to be gone, go to my cabin.

We were done for the night. You know, complacency and assuming. We let our guard down, no doubt about it. We assumed we're dealing with a couple of drunks. We weren't. It was EOT [End of Tour]. We want to get home, we were done, we let our guard down, both of us. And we suffered for it.

After that night, for another six months to a year, the whole Police Department was on edge and may have not made many friends and probably didn't please a lot of citizens. Because now, again, we're, "What are you doing? Stay there. Stop! Get your hands out of your pockets!"

"But I'm the neighbor—"

"Get your fucking hands out of your pockets!"

"What? Jesus Christ!"

Okay, so that's what you've got to be. Everybody said, "You've got to start scared," and then you can work up to that level of, "Okay, now I know who you are.

Now we can talk." We ended up there, when we should've still been scared. We should've been scared still, should have used a little more precaution. Shoulda, coulda, woulda, you know?

I knew it right away. It's a common mistake. Well, we do it all the time. Whenever you get hurt on the job, you're letting your guard down. Every time, guaranteed. If you get hurt on the job, you made an error, a tactical error that you should have overseen.

I like the process of the Police Department, but sometimes a guy will have so many complaints, because he's scared and doesn't come up to that level that the person he's talking to likes. Then the person is making a complaint, now we've got to write it down. You don't get the balance, but a guy's got to stick to his guns and be scared. Then the education part is for the citizen to say, "Look, cops get hurt all the time. Sorry I offended you, but now I can help you out." And we have a really hard time doing that.

Cops go into situations friend on friend, or cop on drunk when drunk has gun in belt, and we let our guard down, because we think we're just dealing with a drunk and we're not. We should come in scared and scareder, come in defensive. But again, we're worried about offending people. It happened all the time when I was a sergeant in Central.

I had a really hard time meeting [Jerry's wife] Connie after this, because I didn't know how she was going to react. I didn't know how I was going to react. You don't go to the family of your partner when they died when you were with them. Especially when I'm feeling like, "Oh, my God. We totally screwed this up by being so complacent." We did the first major thing wrong. You have to be on guard all the time and we let our guard down. But it worked out. They had a get together with tons of people there, and Connie and I talked a little bit. It worked out.

Interviewed 2012

The following is Chief John Harrington's Eulogy at the May 11th, 2005 funeral for Sergeant Jerry Vick:



2009

Sergeant Jerry Vick, street cop, peace officer. sergeant. detective. CERT Team member. undercover agent. And peacemaker. Jerry was a Saint Paul police officer who helped to keep the peace throughout his fifteen year career, whether it was crawling into a house fully engulfed in flames to save a baby or facing an armed bad guy in a dark alley. Where there was injury, Jerry helped create an environment of pardon. Jerry was that voice that got the suicidal guy to take that step back from the abyss.

Jerry's work with Breaking Free is legendary. He worked with ex-prostitutes, Johns, to find lasting solutions to their chronic problems. His words to a young woman out on the stroll that she was better than that speaks to a man of compassion, a man of empathy. Where there was doubt, Jerry created faith. Jerry had a light about him that made the young prostitutes believe him when he said that he was going to help them get the help they deserved. For those immigrant women that he helped, forced into a life of prostitution, thousands of miles away from their home, no one was bigger in taking their despair and giving them hope. Jerry was the light in the darkness.

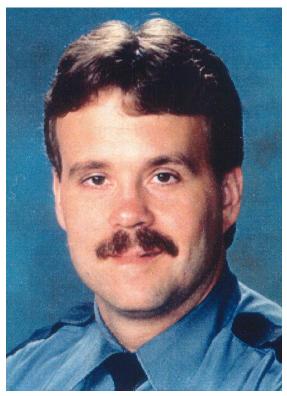
Sometimes that light was Jerry in a borrowed semi, dressed in a disguise, rolling down University Avenue, working his beat the way only Jerry could work it. He gave victims hope. Where there was sadness, he gave them and all of us who knew him joy. Jerry had great courage.

His life and times personifies a phrase that I learned just recently. Jerry was a guy that walked the point. You see there are some things that you just can't do without suffering. Today is one of them. Being a peace officer is one of them. You can't fight fires without getting burned and you can't have cops go out into the streets of a violent society without violent deaths. Those of us who go out into those streets everyday like Jerry say that we do it because love it. You can't be a cop just because you couldn't get some other job. You can only do it because you want it and Jerry wanted it. But wanting it has costs, and one of those costs is the lives of the men and the women who suit up for duty each and every day and don't ever come back. An old soldier who had spent time half a world away told me that he learned three rules that I should remember. Rule number one is young people die. Rule number two is you can't change rule number one. Rule number three is somebody has to walk the point. See, when the CERT Team kicks in a door at a crack house full of armed gangbangers, there's always somebody out there in front. When an undercover walks into a bar full of people who would just as soon take their life rather than go to jail, they're out there on the point. The point man's duty is look and listen, to sense that first contact. To spot the bad guy, to pinpoint an ambush, to fire that first shot sometimes. And as a consequence, sometimes they take that first shot. The idea of it offends our minds and our spirits. It denies the instinct for survival. It ages and it saddens us. And sometimes it kills us. It kills those who, like Jerry, take their turn walking the point.

Jerry knew that, despite the risks, the point has to be walked or there would be more bloodshed, more grief, and more innocent victims. Jerry on the night he was killed was walking the point. He was out there to save lives, even if it meant that he had to give his own life in exchange. Throughout our history, societies have recognized and revered the heroes, who, like Jerry, walked that point. They honored them for their heroic

actions, protecting the community and the weak, for their courage and their strength in standing firm against justice.

We stand together today, grateful for Jerry's heroism, for his service, and his sacrifice. To Connie and Clayton and Amanda and all the rest of Jerry's immediate family. To Matt Toupal and Joe Strong and Rice Street Matt [a community member that Jerry looked out for and protected] and all the other partners that Jerry had, as the chief of police of this city, I need to express my gratitude and thanks and deep appreciation of this city. I want to affirm to you that you are not alone. You are all bound together. We are part of a special family, the police family. It is a family that never, ever forgets its own.



1996

MEDIA COVERAGE

St. Paul officer shot dead May 6, 2005

Police were conducting a manhunt throughout the Dayton's Bluff neighborhood on the East Side of St. Paul after a vice officer working undercover was shot dead early this morning. Two suspects were at large.

Sgt. Jerry Vick was pronounced dead at Regions Hospital this morning, Chief John Harrington told reporters during a 6 a.m. news conference. Vick had been shot in an alley near Seventh and Forest Streets after exchanging shots with two suspects outside Eric's Bar around 2:20 a.m. The alleged gunmen fled on foot.

Witnesses said they had heard 10 to 12 gun shots; authorities said Vick was shot multiple times.

St. Paul police closed down city streets within 1 1/2 miles of the shooting site, although freeways remained open this morning. More than 100 officers were working with canines and heavy weapons support in carrying out a door-to-door search. St. Paul officials also had asked for aerial support from the National Guard, Harrington said.

Vick was a well known and highly respected officer, Harrington said.

"Jerry loved what he was doing. Being a cop was phenomenal for Jerry," Harrington said. "[The shooting] reminds us we are living in a violent society."

Mayor Randy Kelly and Fire Chief Doug Holton joined Harrington to speak with reporters this morning.

"I don't think that there is a greater tragedy to befall a community then the loss of a police officer," Kelly said. "As mayor...I know I speak for every citizen of St. Paul in expressing our greatest sorrow to Sergeant Vick's family and to his two children."

Vick, 41, was a 22-year veteran of the St. Paul force and was actively working with a partner on a prostitution detail at the time of his shooting, Harrington said.

Vick had received two medal of valor commendations: One was made in December 1990, for rescuing a child from a burning home. The other was awarded in 1997, after Vick shot and killed an armed suspect at a crime scene.

"I want to assure all the people of St. Paul that the police are actively engaged in pursuing and apprehending the two suspects in this shooting," Kelly said.

One man charged in police officer's death; another held

by Marisa Helms, Minnesota Public Radio May 9, 2005



Ramsey County Attorney Susan Gaertner, right, and St. Paul Police Chief John Harrington announce charges against a man arrested in the slaying of St. Paul Police Sgt. Gerald Vick. (MPR Photo/Marisa Helms) One suspect has been charged with first-degree murder in the Friday shooting of St. Paul Police Sgt. Gerald Vick. Vick was killed early Friday morning while working undercover on St. Paul's East Side. A second suspect is still being held as a "material witness," but has not been charged.

St. Paul, Minn. — Suspect Harry Jerome Evans made his first court appearance and was charged with first-degree murder. County Attorney Susan Gaertner says if convicted, Evans would spend the rest of his life in prison.

"If you kill an officer in the line of duty, and do so intentionally, we can charge under a particular provision of the law which is first degree murder of a peace officer, the punishment is life imprisonment without the possibility of release, according to Gaertner, who says there is no evidence that Evans and a second suspect knew Vick was a police officer.



City Hall memorial

Vick and his partner were working undercover in plain clothes at the time of the shooting, and may or may not have identified themselves as police.

"The charge against Harry Jerome Evans is an important first step toward seeking justice for the fatal shooting of Sgt. Vick. We will do everything in our power to obtain a conviction in this very sad and tragic case," she said. In addition to filing a first-degree murder charge against Evans, the County Attorney's office is holding Antonio Alexander Kelly, who was with Evans at the time of the shooting. Gaertner says the county does not have sufficient evidence to charge Kelly at this time, and is holding him as a "material witness." "He has given a statement... and that statement is reflected in some part in the complaint, which we think is valuable information for the case," she said.

The complaint says Kelly initially denied any involvement in the shooting. But, it says Kelly later identified Evans as having fired shots. Kelly also identified a porch where he and Evans hid after the shooting. Investigators went to the site and found a .38-caliber revolver within throwing distance of the porch. Investigators also found expended casings from the gun.

The case against Kelly and Evans is also bolstered by images of them on a security videotape. Gaertner says though the video does not show the crime in progress, it places suspects Kelly and Evans at the scene.



A brother reacts

"What we have is the two people who were there when the shots went off, including the shooter pictured on that tape. So, in other words, it helps us know we got the right guy," she said. The complaint says Evans has a long arrest record in in Illinois and in Minnesota. His criminal history includes Illinois convictions for attempted first-degree murder and attempted armed robbery, and a Ramsey County conviction for possession of cocaine. Gaertner says there is nothing in two suspect's arrest record that would have justified the two being behind bars on the day of the murder.

Police Chief John Harrington says his department is doing everything possible to aid Gaertner. "I want to continue to make sure we have all the parts of the investigation completely wrapped up so that Susan's office can do what they do best, which is bring this guy to justice and make sure we get the absolute longest sentence possible. Because I really do believe we have the right man, and we're charging him with the right thing," according to Harrington.

According to a criminal complaint, Vick, 41, and his partner, Sgt. Joe Strong were working in plainclothes when they had a confrontation outside Erick's Bar with the men. The sergeants then left in separate cars to return to headquarters, but Kelly walked into the street in front of Strong's car at a red light and confronted him, the complaint said. Strong called Vick, and the men pursued Evans and Kelly down an alley. Evans turned and shot Vick, the complaint said. Strong returned fire, missing the men, before calling for help and performing first aid on Vick. Vick was shot twice through the chest and once in the back, the complaint said. Witnesses told police they heard 10 to 12 gunshots.

Harrington says Sgt. Strong, is on administrative leave. Vick's brother, Ken Vick, read a statement thanking the public for the outpouring of support. Ken Vick said life has been "surreal" since he got a phone call at 3 a.m. Friday telling him to go to the hospital. Vick said his brother loved to help people. "We're all going to miss him very much. Very much. And we all respect what he did and we all loved him very much," he said.

Sgt. Gerry Vick's funeral is scheduled for Wednesday at Gustavus Adolphus Lutheran Church in St. Paul.

(The Associated Press contributed to this report)

St. Paul honors Jerry Vick

by Phil Picardi, Minnesota Public Radio May 10, 2005



A group of children waited for an opportunity to leave flowers for the Vick family. (MPR Photo/Phil Picardi)

The funeral for St. Paul Police Sgt. Jerry Vick is being held Wednesday. Vick was killed in the line of duty last Friday while working undercover outside a bar on the city's East Side. On Tuesday afternoon and evening, a long line of mourners and well wishers snaked several city blocks outside a Rice Street funeral home to pay their respects and show support for Vick's family.

St. Paul, Minn. — Sadness and anger were two prominent emotions among Vick's friends and fellow police officers. They were joined by hundreds of community members at a four hour visitation for the slain 15-year veteran. Some who were in line said they're mourning the loss of a friend, and many called for justice for what they said was a "senseless" shooting.





Stacy Erickson

A long line

"It's a sad, sad tragedy," said Stacy Erickson, who works at a St. Paul restaurant where she said Jerry Vick was a regular customer. "Vick was a wonderful guy. He did a lot for the city, for the people, he was just a great guy, very humorous, very loving. You can tell he's got wonderful kids. It's just unexplainable, unbelievable, I don't know what words to use."

Vick's supervisor in the department's vice and narcotics unit says Vick was able to connect with all kinds of people. St. Paul Police Chief John Harrington says Vick had "what it takes" to be a good undercover officer.

Bob Gunter was Vick's neighbor for five years when he lived in North St. Paul.

"He didn't have a bad streak in him. In all the time I'd known him I never heard him get into an argument with anybody, so, he's just one really nice guy. Someone that you wouldn't be afraid to approach, whether he was in his uniform or not," he said.

Vick wasn't in his uniform Friday when he was killed, and it's not clear whether the man accused of shooting him knew if Vick was a police officer.

Harry Evans, 32, of St. Paul, is charged with Vick's killing. Evans lengthy criminal history includes felony convictions, and Bob Gunter said he shouldn't be allowed to commit any more crimes.

"Much as people think about it in this state, it's really unfortunate that this is one thing where I think the death penalty should be involved. I really believe that strongly," he said.



"He didn't have a bad streak in him"

Prosecutors say Evans is facing a life sentence if he's convicted. Because the victim was a police officer, Evans would not be eligable for parole. Minnesota does not have a death penalty. St. Paul Mayor Randy Kelly has called Vick's shooting a "failure of the criminal justice system," and he says he plans to work toward public safety reforms.

The president of St. Paul's City Council, Kathy Lantry, said it appears law enforcement officials are being very careful with the Jerry Vick shooting investigation, and she's hopeful justice prevails.

At the visitation, Lantry, who was wearing a black ribbon on her blouse, said she's impressed by the response of St. Paul residents who've come forward in support of the police department.

"It doesn't surprise me actually. We have a very good relationship with our police department, I mean most of the people in the city of St. Paul. And this is a good way for us to show our respect," she said.

John Gelao, a retired police sergeant, was on the force for 36 years. He said it's too bad the public doesn't show more respect to living police officers. But, he said, it's natural to want to show support in a time of tragedy. He remembers a similar outpouring of support after the death of officer Ron Ryan, Jr. just over a decade ago. And, he said the possibility of injury -- or even death -- is just part of the job.



Impressed by support

Mourner Karen Blossum said she's known three co-workers who've been killed in her 16 years working for the St. Paul Police Department: Ryan, a secretary who was killed in a domestic dispute, and now Jerry Vick. Before entering the funeral home, Blossum said she wants Vick's family to know how much he'll be missed.

"Just try to show support for the family, try not to break down, just show them that we care and that we love him and that we wish he was back here with us. And we hope we can get them through it. That's the main thing. The family needs our support more than anybody," she said.

Jerry Vick's family, friends, and police officers from across the Midwest are expected to say goodbye to Vick at his funeral. The ceremony takes place at noon at Gustavus Adolphus Lutheran Church in St. Paul. He'll be buried at St. Mary's Cemetary.

St. Paul police officer laid to rest

by Tom Scheck, Minnesota Public Radio May 11, 2005



Pallbearers carry Sgt. Jerry Vick's casket into Gustavus Adolphus Lutheran Church in St. Paul Wednesday. (MPR Photo/Bianca Vazquez Toness) Several thousand people, including hundreds of police officers from across the upper Midwest, were in St. Paul Wednesday to honor one of their own. Funeral services for St. Paul Police Sgt. Gerald Vick were held at Gustavus Adolphus Lutheran Church on the city's east side. Vick was shot and killed in the line of duty last Friday.

St. Paul, Minn. — People started arriving for Jerry Vick's funeral more than two hours before the scheduled start. Under a gray sky, police cruisers, police motorcycles and other emergency vehicles flashed their red white and blue lights to honor Vick. A flag hung below two stretched out fire ladders in front of the church on Arcade St.

Below the flag, a procession of St. Paul police officers marched down the street as hundreds of other officers saluted. It was a sea of navy and powder blue.



Chief Harrington

During the service, St. Paul Police Chief John Harrington told the crowded church the city's lights were a little dimmer because of Vick's death. Vick was working undercover last Friday when he and his partner confronted two men outside of Erick's bar on St. Paul's East Side. Police say Vick pursued the men down an alley and was shot. Harry Evans, 32, of St. Paul, was charged with first degree murder. It's not clear whether Evans knew Vick was a police officer. Harrington said Vick should be remembered for doing what it took to protect the public. "Jerry knew that, despite the risks, that the point has to be walked or there would be more bloodshed, more grief and more innocent victims. Jerry, on the night he was killed, was walking the point," said Harrington. "He was out there to save lives, even if it meant that he had to give his own life in exchange."



A sea of blue

Harrington said Vick would be happy being simply remembered as a great cop. Vick received two medals of valor during his career. In 1990, he entered a burning building to rescue a child. In 1997, Vick earned the second medal for shooting and killing an armed suspect at a crime scene.

Most recently, Sgt. Vick was working with the department's vice squad. He took a particular interest in investigating child trafficking and child prostitution. Officer Paul Schnell said Vick was well known for his compassion for both criminals and victims. "The people that most of us have a tendency to write off or disregard had a place with Jerry," said Schnell. "Whether it was a drug-addicted woman in prostitution, a homeless person or a chronic alcoholic, Jerry did his job. And more than that, he cared."



Family and friends

Others eulogized Vick's life away from the police force. The Rev. Mona Anderson is the pastor at Vick's family church, St. Mark's Evangelical Church in North St. Paul. She spoke on behalf of Vick's family. Anderson said Vick was known as a practical joker and wonderful husband and friend to his wife, Connie. She said Vick loved his children deeply and was an avid supporter of their activities. His son, Clayton, 14, plays hockey. Amanda, 11, plays basketball and soccer. Anderson said many may struggle with Vick's death. But she said everyone needs to remember how he lived. "It is not the duration of one's life, but the fullness of it, that in the end matters most of all. Jerry lived his passion fully. And let us rejoice and be glad in the fact that his 41 years were filled with something that he found so very fulfilling," said Anderson.



Paying respects

Many of the people who attended the services didn't know Vick but wanted to honor the fallen officer. Jim Kielkopf was one of many who said they wanted to pay their respects. "From my point of view, it's the least I can do out of all of the service that Sgt. Vick has done for myself and for other people on the east side of St. Paul," said Kielkopf. "It really is the least I can to to come here and pay my respects to a really heroic life." After the service, hundreds of officers and friends started the eight-mile processional to Vick's final burial spot in North St. Paul. They walked past his boyhood home and two of the schools that he attended.

The St. Paul Police Federation has set up a memorial fund to help the Vick family.

[Letter to the editor]

'Sgt. Vick was the light in the darkness for many'

JOHN HARRINGTON POSTED: 04/22/2007 12:01:00 AM CDT

As an officer of the court I would hope that all members of the legal profession would live by the oath "we promise to tell the truth and nothing but the truth." Whether this oath was violated by an act of commission or omission in last Sunday's op-ed piece by Robin Magee, I will leave to others wiser and more objective to judge. Sergeant Jerry Vick was a street cop, a peace officer, a detective, a Critical Incident Response Team member, an undercover agent and a peacemaker. Jerry Vick was a St. Paul police officer who helped to keep the peace throughout his 15-year career.

Whether it was by crawling into a house ablaze with fire and smoke to save a baby, working with young prostitutes or facing an armed bad guy in a dark alley, Sgt. Vick was a man who never shrank from helping those who couldn't help themselves. Sgt. Vick was the light in the darkness for many. On Dec. 16, 1990, Jerry Vick entered a home engulfed in flames at 562 Sherburne in Frogtown. He went in despite the flames, despite the smoke, and despite the danger. Vick went in, and then, coughing and struggling for breath, he came out carrying to safety a 1-year-old black child. He again entered the home, continuing his search for more victims. Perhaps if Ms. Magee had wanted a picture of Sgt. Vick, she should have talked to that now 17-year-old young man whose future Vick carried in his hands that night.

Where there was doubt, Sgt. Vick created faith. Sgt. Vick had a light about him that made the teenage prostitutes believe him when he promised to get them help. He gave hope and encouragement to the immigrant women forced into a life of prostitution thousands of miles from home. Those women, so many of them women of color, lost a great ally the day that Sgt. Vick died. The legacy of Sgt. Vick lives on in the Human Trafficking Task Force and in the House of Hope, both named in his honor. Sgt. Vick was committed to protecting those who could not protect themselves. It's been said that you don't get to be a cop because you couldn't figure out what to major in. You can only do this job because you want it, and Sgt. Vick wanted it. Wanting it has costs, and one of those costs is in the lives of the young men and women who suit up for duty and don't go home that night.

An old friend told me there are three rules of keeping the peace that we must all remember. Rule No. 1 is: "Young people die." Rule No. 2 is: "You can't change rule number one." And Rule No. 3 is: "Somebody's got to walk the point." When an undercover officer walks into a bar knowing that all around him there are those who would be willing to take an officer's life rather than go to jail - that officer is out there on the point. Sgt. Vick was taking his turn "walking the point" on the night he was killed. He was out there to look, listen, spot the bad guy, and pinpoint an ambush - and as a consequence take those first shots. He was out there to save lives, even if it meant he had to give his. The idea of it offends the logical mind and denies the instinct for survival. It ages and saddens us - and sometimes kills those who, like Sgt. Vick, "walk the point." Sergeant Vick knew that despite the risks the point has to be walked or there would be more bloodshed, more grief and more innocent victims.

Where there was injury, Sgt. Vick helped create an environment of pardon. Sgt. Vick's work with Breaking Free is legendary. If Ms. Magee had wanted the truth and nothing but the truth, she might have talked to the women of Breaking Free about who Sgt. Vick was. The idea that Sgt. Vick's actions the night he was murdered could be compared to "the antebellum sport of Negro hunting" reflects either ignorance or prejudice and ignores the body of his work as a police officer and a man. Ms. Magee's column is more than just the rant of a person with an agenda of her own - it is a thoughtless, reckless exercise of the rights that Sgt. Jerry Vick worked so hard to protect for all of St. Paul's citizens. John Harrington is St. Paul Chief of Police.

Late Sgt. Gerald Vick awarded a record third Medal of Valor

By Mara H. Gottfried Pioneer Press

St. Paul police Sgt. Gerald Vick pulled a 3-year-old boy from a burning house in 1990 and crawled back to rescue a 15-month-old girl. Seven years later, a robbery suspect aimed a gun at Vick, and the officer fatally shot him. Vick was awarded the Medal of Valor for each act — the only person in St. Paul police history to twice receive the department's highest honor.

On Wednesday, Vick bested his own record. Police Chief John Harrington posthumously gave Vick a third Medal of Valor. Vick "gave the ultimate sacrifice that police officers can give in service to the citizens of St. Paul," said the commendation honoring Vick's actions May 6, 2005, when he was shot to death.

"We're very proud of him," said Ken Vick, Gerald Vick's brother. "We just wish he would have been here to see the third one."

The award was presented to Vick's family during the annual St. Paul police ceremony to honor the department's fallen officers. Mayor Chris Coleman said he was at police headquarters last Wednesday and saw a ribbon around the flagpole, which reminded him that it had been four years since Vick was killed. "For the families of the officers slain, you don't need ribbons to remind you," he said. "You remember because time froze on that day."

It was a somber ceremony. Officers wore black bands over their badges, a bugler played taps, and wreaths of flowers were presented. During the roll call of fallen officers, Harrington read the name of each officer who had been killed, an officer in the crowd responded with "Absent," and the department's Memorial Bell was rung.

Family members of seven of the 30 St. Paul officers killed in the line of duty — Vick, Timothy Jones and Ron Ryan Jr. (shot on the same day in 1994), John O'Brien (struck by a vehicle fleeing another police car in 1981), James Sackett Sr. (shot while responding to a fake emergency call in 1970), Alfred Sandquist (struck by a vehicle fleeing another police car in 1959) and Calbert Leedom (in a traffic accident in 1926) — attended the downtown ceremony. Betty Leedom never knew Calbert Leedom, but she married his son, and the annual memorial ceremony was important to him. Betty Leedom's husband has since died. She attended Wednesday's ceremony with 12-year-old Tommy Polzin, Calbert Leedom's great-grandnephew.

Harrington had long wanted to honor Vick with the Medal of Valor and felt it fitting to do so during National Police Week, a police spokesman said. Vick was working undercover at Erick's Bar when he was shot outside. Harry Evans is serving a life sentence for first-degree murder.

"Among the legendary heroes that have worn the St. Paul shield, there is one name that we have all come to equate with valor," Harrington said. "He was the guy you wanted next to you in a fight, he was the guy you wanted with you going through a door into the unknown. ... He is Sgt. Jerry Vick. When I talk about Jerry, I always tell the story of the lives he saved." Harrington recalled a young woman who told him at Vick's memorial service that the officer had saved her life when she was 19. Vick, who was working in the vice unit when he was killed, was known for trying to rescue girls and women from prostitution. Harrington read a letter from the teen's mother, Mary McCarthy. McCarthy, who attended the ceremony, asked her daughter not be named because she has turned her life around. In 2004, Vick arrested the teen. She was addicted to drugs and had fallen into

prostitution. "She said he was the first cop who ever talked to her and made her feel like he cared or treated her humanely," McCarthy said. "He continued to stay in touch with her, checking in every few weeks," McCarthy wrote. "He was like an uncle providing tough love. Cheering her on, but at the same time promising her that if she ever went back to that life, he would personally slap the cuffs on her." The woman, now 24, has been drug-free for five years, McCarthy said. She obtained a two-year college degree and works in the criminal justice field because she was "inspired by Jerry and what he did for her," McCarthy said.

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