

The Call Box



Official Publication of the Retired Seattle Police Officers Association

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ELSTERS CONTINUE “THE FAMILY BUISNESS”

Ret. SPD Major Clark Elster, Ret. SPD Sergeant Ty Elster & New SCSO Deputy Jessica Scheer

Retired Major Clark Elster, his son, retired Sgt. Ty Elster and his granddaughter, SCSO Deputy Jessica Scheer were all interviewed for this article by the Call Box Editor.

Major Clark Elster: #2025, Hired: 2-8-60, Class# 41, Retired: 8-20-86. Clark Elster grew up on a farm in Central Oregon, attending school in Redmond before setting out into the world with a work ethic shaped by rural life. His early years were a patchwork of rugged jobs and big ambitions. While attending Lewis & Clark College in Portland, he worked wherever he could — in a commercial laundry, as a choker setter in a floating logging camp near Ketchikan, and even as a gandy-dancer for the Alaska Railroad, resetting frost-heaved telephone poles near Talkeetna in the shadow of Mt. McKinley. Eventually, he made his way to Seattle and secured a draftsman position at the Boeing Flight-Test Center, working on the 707-80 prototype just before the economic downturn of 1958–59. Newly married to Dorene and facing uncertain job prospects, he found himself at a crossroads. His father-in-law, SPD Lieutenant Wesley Moore, offered a suggestion that would change the course of his life: join the Seattle Police Department, build a stable career, and save the art for retirement. So in early 1960, Clark



Sergeant Ty Elster: #4864, Hired: 2-15-85, Class #180. Retired: 3-31-17. Ty Elster grew up in Seattle but spent most of his childhood and teenage years in Bellevue, graduating from Interlake High School in 1980. After school, he split his time between community college and working as a glass glazer — first with Edmonds Glass, then Bellevue Paint and Glass. He was well on his way to becoming a journeyman when everything changed with a single phone call. Late on a Friday afternoon, as he was wrapping up work, SPD called to ask if he could be in the academy the following Monday. He accepted on the spot and walked away from the glass business without hesitation. Law enforcement had always been in his blood. As the fourth generation in a family of Seattle police officers, he grew up hearing his grandfather joke that policing was the “family business.” But the moment that truly sealed his fate happened when he was just four or five years old. His mother had driven him and his brother to the old Public



Snohomish County Deputy Jessica Scheer: #1839, Date of Hire: 4-1-25, Class #926. Jessica grew up in Lynnwood, Washington, though her school days were spent across the lake at Inglemoor High in Kenmore, Class of 2007. Even then, her interests were already pulling her in two directions — medicine and criminal justice — a combination that would eventually shape her future in ways she couldn't yet imagine. After high school, she headed south to Vancouver, Washington, where she focused her college studies on paramedicine and criminal justice, unaware that her career path would take a long, winding route before circling back to those early passions. Her first professional chapter was anything but traditional for someone destined for law enforcement. She spent nearly a decade as a marketing executive at a private tech company, traveling the world, collaborating with influential leaders, producing videos, and managing creative projects. During show seasons, she worked alongside Snohomish County Sheriff's deputies hired as temporary staff — her first real introduction to the agency outside of the Seattle Police Department, where her own family roots ran deep. Then



The Call Box



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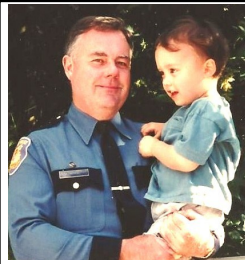
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President's Message

By John Nordlund, President, RSPOA



Let us get right to it. After several failed attempts, the politicians in Olympia were finally able to successfully attack the LEOFF 1 pension system through the passage of ESSHB-2034. The final vote was close. In the House, the vote was Yeas 50 – Nays 46. In the Senate, the vote was Yeas 25 – Nays 22. On April Fools Day, the governor signed the bill into law. They just could not leave a pension plan that was working alone. Thanks to all who sent messages to their legislators voicing opposition to the bill. And to those that used the “Tony Soprano Method”, think before you hit the send button. If you have not read the bill, let me quote language directly from the bill to give you an idea of what politicians are thinking: “The supreme court of the State of Washington, in the 1972 decision Weaver v. Evans, established that the firefighters and police officers, active and retired have a constitutionally protected contractual right to a secure retirement benefit, funded on a systematic basis. The legislature recognizes that the State of Washington is the ultimate guarantor of the LEOFF plan 1 retirement benefits. While members have a constitutionally protected right to the pension benefits that are provided as part of their contract of employment, individual members and beneficiaries do not have a right to assets beyond the amount needed to completely satisfy all liabilities under the plan. As the plan sponsor, the state retains the inherent power to terminate a retirement plan and is entitled, upon the satisfaction of all liabilities under the plan, to a reversion of the surplus assets. The restatement of LEOFF plan 1 shall include the transfer of actuarially sufficient resources to ensure satisfaction of all liabilities under LEOFF plan 1. The legislature has determined that, in order to accomplish the foregoing goals and objectives, it is in the best interest of the members and beneficiaries of LEOFF plan 1 that the plan be terminated and that a restated retirement plan be created.” It is nice that they know what is in our best interest. This bill will be challenged in court. Your RSPOA along with the LEOFF 1 Coalition, the Retired Firefighters of Washington and support of the Washington Association of Firefighters have retained the services of attorney Steve Berman. A complaint has already been prepared and the lawsuit will be filed in May. Dave Reichert is now the secretary of the Coalition and will be the spokesperson for the lawsuit.

The firefighters are already asking for donations from their members. We are not at that point. If further down the road, it becomes necessary to ask for support, I am certain that our members will be generous in their contributions. There is language in the bill stating that any legal challenges will go directly to the Washington State Supreme Court to settle any constitutional issues. Steve Berman will decide if it is best to file the lawsuit in state court or federal court. A note of interest. This November five state supreme court seats are up for election. King County Superior Court Judge Sean O'Donnell has filed for position four, the seat currently held by retiring judge Charles Johnson. Please lend your support to Judge O'Donnell. He is a commonsense judge that will be on our side.

Now on a lighter side. Cloyd Steiger was elected president of R.A.P. replacing outgoing president Pepper Pramhus who did an excellent job during her tenure. The Thursday's R.A.P. meetings at the Nile are always enjoyable. I would encourage everyone to attend. R.A.P. is too important to let it fade away.



Retired Deputy Chief Eric Barden was guest speaker at the March meeting. Eric spoke candidly about his time on the department. In April, Brenda Donner and Leslie Barber from Concerns of Police Survivors were the guest speakers. They spoke of the many ways COPS supports survivors of those killed in the Line of Duty.



(CLARK) entered SPD Academy Class #41. He remembers classmates like Ernest Dietrich, George Pavlovich, and Noreen (Kimmerer) Skagen — names that still echo in his memory. Over the next 27 years, he worked nearly every corner of the department: the jail, Patrol in Precinct 1, Juvenile, R&D, Traffic as a sergeant, Internal Investigations and the Grand Jury as a lieutenant, and later as captain and major in Patrol, Narcotics, Detectives, and Traffic. Somewhere along the way, he also earned a BS degree from the University of Puget Sound. He retired on his 50th birthday in 1986, but certain assignments still stand out as favorites. As a patrolman, he loved the independence and the trust placed in officers to use common sense. In Juvenile, he and Al Wilding became known as the “Copper Boppers.” As a captain in Patrol, he founded the Horse Patrol. In Traffic, he launched the short-lived but memorable DWI Checkpoint program. The most challenging assignment, he recalls, was Narcotics — especially while serving as Chair of the Seattle/King County Substance Abuse and Alcoholism Treatment Administrative Board. During his early years on the force, he also drew monthly cartoons for *The Call Box*, poking fun at SPD culture with a sharp eye and a sense of humor that never left him. He remembers colleagues with deep fondness: Lt. Ernie Dietrich, his first patrol partner; Dick Kurtilla; Sgt. Neil Swenson; Sgt. Joe Sanford; Capt. Herb Swindler; Maj. Harry Schneider; Maj. Herb Johnson; and Maj. Paul Knapp. Among the chiefs he served under, Frank Moore and Bob “Swede” Hanson stood out — one for his capability and humility, the other for his hands-off leadership style. The best advice he ever received as a young officer was simple: “*Keep your eyes open and your mouth shut.*” It served him well.

Retirement didn’t slow him down. Still strong and energetic at 50, he launched into a second life filled with home remodeling, grandparenting, and — finally — art. What began as a childhood talent became a 30-year career as a self-taught, award-winning artist. He became a signature member of several prestigious art societies, sold paintings worldwide, and taught workshops throughout the Northwest. Now at 90, he has eased his pace, but still picks up a brush now and then to paint a landscape. What brings him the most pride today is watching his family continue the policing legacy. His granddaughter Jessica, newly sworn in as a Snohomish County Deputy Sheriff, represents the fifth generation to wear the badge — following SPD Capt. Marshal Scrafford, Lt. Wesley Moore, Maj. Clark Elster himself, and SPD Sgt. Tyler Elster. Three great-grandchildren are already “standing in line,” as he puts it, waiting for their turn. To Jessica, beginning her field training, he offers the same advice he once received: “*Keep your eyes open and your mouth shut.*” And one more: “*Rely on your common sense and don’t lose your sense of humor.*” Looking back on his long career, he carries countless memories — good stories, good people, and a lifetime of service. But one thing he doesn’t miss?.....The paperwork!

(TYLER) Safety Building on 3rd Avenue to pick up their father. As they parked on G-deck, squeezed between patrol cars — a prisoner suddenly sprinted past their vehicle, chased by an officer shouting, “Stop or I’ll shoot!” Ty and his brother ignored their mother’s frantic pleas to get down and instead pressed their faces to the dashboard, mesmerized. The officer stopped directly in front of their car, took a firing stance, and repeated the command. The suspect was caught moments later, but the impression on young Ty was permanent. From that day on, he knew exactly what he wanted to be. When he entered the academy in 1985, he did so alongside two other Seattle recruits. One didn’t make it through FTO, and the other left the department after a few years — leaving Ty to carry the torch forward. Over his long career, he held many assignments, but several stand out as favorites. Serving ten years as a Guild board member was among the most meaningful. Having once been accused of sporting an “aggressive mustache,” he took pride in representing officers facing misconduct allegations. Helping fellow officers — the very reason he entered the profession — brought immediate and lasting satisfaction. He also cherished his time as Honor Guard commander and his years in the Mounted Patrol Unit, both of which allowed him to travel throughout the Northwest and Canada representing SPD. One of his favorite stories from that era involves his horse being spooked by a bear — a tale he still swears is true. Being an FTO was another highlight, and he fondly remembers training officers like Nick Carter, Wayne Johnson, and Steve Matheson. Ty worked for many chiefs, but his favorite was Herb Johnson, who served as interim chief between Norm Stamper and Gil Kerlikowski. Johnson was the only chief who ever backed him on a call at 1 a.m., telling Ty immediately that he was just there to support him. “A cop’s cop,” Ty says — someone who understood what it meant to stand behind the troops. Throughout his career, Ty worked with countless partners, supervisors, and commanders who shaped him. He remembers people like Paul Pendergrass, J. Moyer, TJ Havenar, Clayton Powell, Gary McNulty, Jerry Harris, and Randy Ward — all of whom, he says, saved his career, life, or backside at one point or another. His first partner, Duane Chinn, became a lifelong friend and mentor. They spent more than 40 years hunting, vacationing, target shooting, and laughing together before Duane’s passing in January. He also enjoyed working with Ian Polhemus and Jace Pirak, who kept the job fun and unpredictable. His list of favorite sergeants includes Denny DeLorm, Bob Martinson, Roger Dixon, Rich O’Neill, and Bob Valor — leaders whose styles he tried to emulate throughout his career. Among lieutenants and acting lieutenants, he admired Sim Tamayo, Fred Hill, Ken Conder, Paul Pendergrass, Roger Dixon, Carol Minakami, and Diana Freese. He says he would “walk through fire” for any of them. In upper command, he respected Nik Metz, Ron Leavell, Dan Oliver, and Mark Garth-Green. Ty also remembers his favorite FTO from his rookie days: Rich O’Neill, who was supervising him when he received his first IIS complaint. He and another rookie, Alvin Little, had responded to a disturbance in a downtown bar and drew accusations of racism — a claim Ty still finds as absurd as the complaint about his mustache. The best advice he ever received as a young officer was simple: never promote above sergeant. He heard it

FROM THE PENSION OFFICE

BY STEPHANIE COLEMAN, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

1. Moving and or a Snowbird? Remember to let us know where to send your US Mail to. All mailings are sent to the current address you have on file. If you move, we need to know. Please contact Lisa Porter at 206-256-5127 or Lisa.Porter@seattle.gov

2. Annual Reporting Forms – Have been mailed out as of April 1. Please be sure to get these back to us as soon as possible. We plan to be at the Nile the first three Thursdays of the Month to notarize forms for you if you attend. Please bring completed forms with you to the meeting.

3. UMR Fax Line for Simple Reimbursement Form Submission - UMR has been trying to fix the fax issue for the last three weeks. They apologize for the inconvenience and have provided a temporary fax number to use for now: **1-855-651-2331**. We will keep you updated but for now, please use this number for any fax submission to UMR.

4. Election – Nominations - The Seattle Police Pension Fund is accepting nominations for one Member-Elected Trustee position, in accordance with RCW 41.26.010. The nomination period runs April 15–May 15, 2026, with the election (by mail ballot) from May 20–June 22, 2026. The selected candidate will serve a term from July 1, 2026, through June 30, 2029, on both the Seattle Police Pension Board and the LEOFF 1 Disability Board. Nomination forms have been mailed to all LEOFF 1 members and must be received by May 15, 2026 (close of business). Eligible candidates include active or retired sworn SPD members under LEOFF 1 or Pre-LEOFF, with nominations endorsed by at least five members. This is a non-compensated position. Contact the Pension Office if you need a form, and return completed nominations to the Pension Office.

5. Are you waiting for a UMR Reimbursement? - If you mail or fax in a reimbursement request to UMR and you do not get your reimbursement check back in 30 days (allowing a week for the mail), please give Jan a call at 206-256-5126 so she can investigate it.

6. Hearing Aids - If you need a hearing aid provider referral in the greater Seattle area, let me know. If you need to check your eligibility for hearing aids, please call UMR 1-800-207-3172 and check with them. They have all the past claim information and can advise you. Your benefit is 6,000.00, every 3 years. **You must see a licensed audiologist and receive your hearing aid from them.**

Medical Bill is showing Balance Due - If you get a medical bill that is showing a balance due, please look at the bill to make sure both Medicare & UMR have been billed and have paid their portion. If there are no payment or remarks from the insurance, you should call the provider and give them your Medicare **and** UMR ID information. If you are unsure, you can always call Jan or send her the bill so she can look at it. Jan 206-256-5126.

7. Busy Office Time – Thank you for your patience during our busiest season. If you leave a message, we will return your call as soon as possible. Due to meetings and overlapping calls, there may be occasional delays. Please rest assured that when a team member is out of the office, others are available to assist. To help us respond as efficiently as possible, we kindly ask that you leave only one message and refrain from leaving multiple messages, as this can create confusion and delay response times. You may also refer to the blue 4 x 4 magnet included with your Annual Reporting form for our contact information.

We are all wishing you a very happy spring and plenty of sunshine ahead.



OUR PENSION OFFICE SUPER HEROES



LAST RING



Michael Hagler #3397, retired Seattle Police Patrol Officer, passed away on January 22, 2025, at 78 years of age. Hired: 4-17-70, Class # 64, Assignments: Patrol Central District, Narcotics, East Patrol, Field Training Officer, Retired: 1-20-84 (after an injury) with 12 years of service. Mike is survived by his wife of 47 years, Sue; his eldest granddaughter, Alyza; Brayden; Richard; and Betty Sue (Kevin's children), as well as Magdalena (Lindsay's child) who is now being raised by Sue. He is also survived by his son, Michael D. Hagler Jr. Mike was predeceased by his children, Carrie, Kevin, and Lindsay.



Timothy Perry #2602, retired Seattle Police Patrol Officer, passed away on January 4, 2025, at 86 years of age. Hired: 8-24-66, Class #52, Assignments: Patrol King Sector, Officer of the Year in 1975, State Academy Instructor, 1986 promoted to Detective, Narcotics, Homicide, Robbery, Mayor's Security. Retired: 12-30-89 with 23 years of service. Tim also served as Clyde Hill Chief of Police, and Undersheriff of Jefferson County. Sadly, Tim's wife of 52 years, Sherry, passed away just nine months after he did. Tim and Sherry are survived by their children Joe, Brian, and Heidi. Their son, Rick, predeceased them. They are also survived by four grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.



Gone But Not Forgotten
May They Rest In Peace

Writing a Last Ring takes time, particularly in gathering information. If you can help honor our friends and co-workers by sharing a memory-whether it's good, difficult, funny or historical-please reach out. Your contributions are invaluable. Contact me at 206-348-8018 or email

stephanie.coleman@seattle.gov to share your stories. Note that some submissions may be edited for brevity. Thank you!

RECENTLY DECEASED

Paul Weamire #2746, retired Seattle police officer, passed away February 27, 2026, at 87 years of age.

Helen Hendrickson #2444, retired Seattle radio dispatch sergeant, passed away March 20, 2026, at 89 years of age.

Ralph Whitney #2536, retired Seattle police patrol officer, passed away March 24, 2026, at 83 years of age.

William Taylor #2183, retired Seattle police captain, passed away April 1, 2026, at 85 years of age.

Donald Yeowell #2162, retired Seattle police sergeant detective, passed away April 10, 2026, at 92 years of age.

Michael Henning #3229, retired Seattle police patrol officer, passed away April 12, 2026, at 80 years of age.

Merv Henderson #4221, retired Seattle police Patrol officer passed away April 18, 2026, at 72 years of age.

Legal Beneficiaries:

Mattie Krachunis Shepherd, spouse of deceased retired Seattle Patrol Officer Jan Paul "JP" Krachunis #2538, passed away February 19, 2026, at the age of 80.

Joanne Turpin, spouse of deceased retired Seattle police patrol officer Robert Turpin #836, passed away March 11, 2026, at the age of 93.

Gloria Short (Gustin), spouse of deceased retired Seattle police assistant chief Anton Gustin #1349, passed away March 18, 2026 at the age of 94.

Betty Holder, spouse of deceased retired Seattle police lieutenant Larry Holder #1622, passed away April 5, 2026 at the age of 95.

Marjorie Larson, spouse of deceased retired Seattle police detective John Larson #2060, passed away April 10th at ninety-nine years of age.

Spouse:

Sharon Davis, spouse of retired Seattle police patrol officer Robert A. Davis #3007, passed away March 3, 2026 at the age of 72.

Judy Chartrand, spouse of deceased retired Seattle police patrol officer Michael Chartrand #2556 and mother of retired lieutenant Eric Chartrand #5968, passed away April 17, 2026, at the age of 83.

War Stories

By Detective Cloyd Steiger,
SPD Retired, #4313

I stood at the door of Café Racer on Roosevelt NE, near Ravenna Boulevard. It was Wednesday, May 20th, 2012, around 11AM. I looked in. The coffeeshop floor was blood-soaked. Bodies lay on the ground and shell casings were scattered about. Behind me, a cacophony of noise as dozens of police cars, medic units and fire engines filled the street.

That morning, I was at the Medical Examiner's office. Suddenly, my phone blew up with reports of an active shooter here, drawing me into the unfolding chaos. My sergeant, Bob Vallor, approached me.

"There was just a shooting at 8th and Seneca. They're calling for Homicide. Can you go there and see what's going on?"

With everyone already engaged at the Café Racer scene, I quickly jumped in my unmarked detective car. For the second time that morning, I raced—lights and siren—over to Seneca Street. Upon arrival at Seneca Street, I was met by Assistant Chief Mike Sanford, who briefed me. A woman was on her way to a meeting at Town Hall. Witnesses said she parked, exited her car, and was shot in the head by a man who said nothing. She was taken to Harborview. The man stole her car and fled. I went to where she was shot. Blood stained the ground; one spent .45 casing. I knelt, lit the head stamp, then called Vallor.

"What's the caliber of the casings there?" I asked. He said they were .45.

"Same with this one. I wonder if they're related. That's a lot of violence for a morning on a weekday."

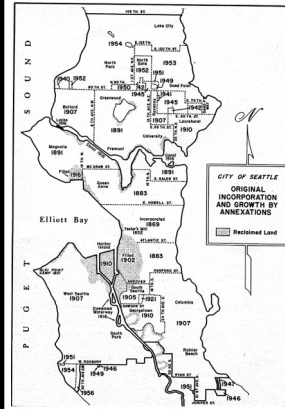
Café Racer had video surveillance inside, which captured the entire shooting. The shooter, Ian Stawiki, a regular who had been 86'd days before for erratic behavior, entered armed with two .45 pistols and shot almost everyone in the café. After some time at Seneca, reports said the victim's car was abandoned on Delridge Way SW. I joined other detectives there. The driver's door was open, and a .45 pistol was on the seat. The West Seattle area soon filled with officers and detectives searching for Stawiki.

A few hours after searching Delridge Way, Detective Scotty Bach from Intelligence was driving on a residential street a few miles south. He spotted Stawiki walking down the sidewalk. Bach notified patrol units. When an officer attempted to stop him, Stawiki knelt down, put the gun in his mouth, and shot himself.

From the Police Museum

By Officer Jim Ritter, SPD Retired, #4710,
President: Seattle Metropolitan Police Museum

Seattle has experienced significant periods of growth since its establishment as a small town in the middle part of the 19th Century. This map was published by the city for its employees in 1959 and is an excellent example of how Seattle's various neighborhoods came to be. It also demonstrates the massive land acquisitions of former jurisdictions the city has annexed over the past 157 years, including the former independent municipalities of Ballard, West Seattle, Georgetown, and Columbia City.



Annexation of City Limits
Your City, Your Job handbook 1959

What is not described on this map is that Seattle leaders were woefully unprepared for many of these land acquisitions, especially regarding public safety. The most historically documented example of this is the city's annexation of the areas from north of N. 85th Street to N. 145th Street from 1950 to 1954. This procurement contained the largest geographic land area, with the largest population density, in the shortest span of time.

As a result, several of the SPD's chiefs, including Chief James "Jimmy" Lawrence, continually complained to city leaders that these annexations did not consider Seattle's inability to police these areas. Historically understaffed, SPD's low wages, poor working conditions, increasing crime, and no budget to approve the hiring of new officers were all concerning oversights that city leaders had failed to address.

These naïve and negligent political decisions were the main impetus behind the formation of the Seattle Police Officers' Guild, which put extreme pressure on politicians to increase staffing, wages, and working conditions during this era.

If you have any police related artifacts, uniforms, badges, equipment, or other historic items of interest, please contact me at Jamesritter@gmail.com or at #206-949-9143.

MEET THE NEW SPOG PRESIDENT, KENT LOUX

Q. Congratulations on being elected as the 23rd President of the Seattle Police Officers' Guild. What did you do before joining the Seattle Police Department?

Prior to joining the Seattle Police Department, I was a Network Engineer after briefly serving in the US Army. After the military, I thought I wanted to be behind a desk, but apparently, I was wrong and finally decided to pursue this career path. I had visited the PNW years prior and loved the area and applied. Long story short, my adventure panned out.



Q. What made you want to become a police officer?

I was caught in an unfortunate situation where I happened upon a family member that unexpectedly passed away. Seeing the officers arrive really stuck with me and encouraged me to pursue this career. I was inspired by the officers responding and considered this to be a very fulfilling career path. I was excited about the challenges and each day being a little different than the last.

Q. When were you hired and what was your academy class number?

I was hired in July of 2014, graduation BLEA Class 706 in December of 2014.

Q. After FTO, what were some of your assignments?

Upon successful completion of FTO I was assigned to 2nd Watch West to the King / Queen Relief Squad. A few years later I was recruited to West bicycle patrol and eventually to the Seattle Center.

Q. What assignment did you enjoy the most and why?

West Bicycle Patrol was a ton of fun! I enjoyed working with units like the anti-crime teams, gangs, making narcotics arrests, retail theft operations, and patrolling on a bike. It was great getting out of a patrol vehicle and riding into situations you might have missed otherwise.

Q. When did you get involved with SPOG and what motivated you to join the board?

My attention to SPOG grew following 2020 with the riots and COVID, but I was eventually convinced to run for a board position shortly thereafter. Being voted on the Board of Directors was exciting, as I was a bit worn out following the riots and Covid. Assisting officers in OPA and having greater involvement in the direction of SPOG was the boost I needed.

Q. Tell us about your involvement on the SPOG board?

Upon joining the SPOG board, I quickly got involved in representing as many members as I could in OPA and EEO. I enjoyed walking them through process. I joined the discipline review committee and the negotiations team to assist with our current contract.

Q. What motivated you to run for SPOG President?

I contemplated this run for several months before finally committing to it, as I could see what a large job it is. Ultimately, I realized the importance and necessity of the role. It is an honor to serve the membership in this capacity.

Q. What are SPOG's main challenges now and how do you plan to address them?

The political stage is ever changing and will be challenging. One of my main concerns is business flight within the city. I am beginning to connect and work with businesses to be a supportive partner and advocate for a robust, business friendly city.

Q. What do you like to do when you are away from work?

In my free time (which sometimes is short) I like to spend time at home with my wife and our two golden retrievers.

(TYLER) from so many people that it stuck. A close second was the reminder that writing traffic tickets reduces crime — “because criminals don’t walk to a bank robbery.”

When he retired in 2017, Ty stepped into a new life where he now answers to “a higher authority” — his wife of 34 years, Katie. Together, they stay busy chasing their two grandsons. He also serves as chairman of the Kittitas County Civil Service Commission, working alongside fellow SPD retirees Erik Allen, Eric Dupliech, Laurie Pendergrass, and formerly Jim Ritter. He remains active in his church, maintains three acres along the Yakima River, tinkers with his 1930 Model-AA truck, and often relaxes with his neighbors — and fellow SPD retirees — Paul and Laurie Pendergrass. Today, Ty watches with pride — and a little nervousness — as his daughter, Jessica becomes the fifth generation in the family to enter policing. Now in her second month of field training, she’s taking to the job naturally. Ty often tells her he wishes he were as good with people as she is. He also enjoys hearing that some things in policing never change — like suspects claiming, “These aren’t my pants,” or insisting they drove around a roadblock because “this is how I drive home.”

His advice to Jessica, and to any young officer starting today, is straightforward: retire as soon as you can, stay in an assignment you love for as long as possible, and above all, maintain your support network — church, family, and friends. When asked what he misses most about SPD, Ty doesn’t hesitate. He misses the people — though many remain in his life. But the one thing he truly misses?.....His horse.

(JESSICA) the pandemic hit. Like so many others, she found herself laid off and suddenly reevaluating everything. She moved back to Washington from Texas and decided to finally explore her long-standing interest in medicine. She accepted a scheduler position at Yakima Memorial’s Vascular Surgery Clinic — a significant pay cut, little experience, and a complete restart. But within six months, she was essentially running the small department alone. When that clinic closed, she was quickly hired as a Cardiac Implant Device Specialist in the Electrophysiology Department, where she programmed, monitored, and troubleshot pacemakers and defibrillators for her own panel of patients. She trained in the Cath Lab, adjusting device algorithms to help regulate heart rhythms — a role that demanded precision, calm, and deep trust. Despite her success, something still felt misaligned.

Challenges in the medical field — ones that clashed with her values and her family’s needs — made her reconsider her long-term future. Her husband, a deputy with the King County Sheriff’s Department, encouraged her to look toward law enforcement, a field deeply connected to her upbringing and academic background. When she finally made the leap, the Snohomish County Sheriff’s Office welcomed her with genuine enthusiasm. At the police academy, she joined Class 926 — only the second class to graduate from the new Arlington Police Academy. Several instructors were retired Seattle Police officers who had known her father, turning the academy into an unexpected reunion of sorts. Her favorite training was the virtual reality program taught by retired SPD Officer Jim Morgan, where she practiced taser deployment, mental health response, and shoot/no-shoot scenarios through immersive simulations. Now, as a deputy with SCSO, she works twelve-hour shifts from Thursday to Saturday, plus every other Wednesday. The fixed schedule — no rotating days and nights — has been a gift for her family life and her health. Jessica is already looking ahead, eager to become a detective and explore the many paths the sheriff’s office offers. She hopes for a career full of growth, camaraderie, and unforgettable experiences.

The best advice she’s received so far has been simple but essential: find peer support. Having a “battle buddy” — someone who understands both the job and the strain it can place on family — has made all the difference. The second piece of wisdom was just as important: have a life outside of law enforcement. Keep hobbies and maintain friendships with people who aren’t in the field. Don’t let the badge consume everything.

Her connection to policing runs deep. Though Jessica wasn’t born when her grandfather retired, she remembers her father’s career vividly. One summer, she worked at the Mounted Unit, mucking stalls, feeding and washing the horses and learning the gritty, behind-the-scenes work that keeps a specialty unit running.

Throughout her childhood, the Seattle police community was like an extended family — camping trips, vacations and lifelong friendships formed among the kids who grew up together.

Today, when she’s not working, music fills her home. It’s woven into her daily life — playing through headphones, speakers, or drifting through the house as she dances with her two sons. Live music is her favorite, but every era of her life has its own soundtrack, each song tied to a memory, a moment, or a chapter she’s lived through.

Jessica’s journey to law enforcement wasn’t linear, but every twist prepared her for the work she does now — work rooted in service, resilience, and a deep sense of purpose.



Elster Family Business: Ty, Clark & Jessica

RINGING IN

By Nick Bulpin, RSPOA Secretary-Treasurer

(This article originally appeared in 2007, but is very relevant as to what is going on with pensions)

LEOFF ONE, How Did It Happen?

Early in the 1950's a group was formed to protect the interests of the Law Enforcement Officers of the "Ten First Class Cities" of the State of Washington. This group would eventually become The Washington State Council of Police Officers. (WSCPO). The cities were Seattle, Spokane, Everett, Tacoma, Vancouver, Aberdeen, Yakima, Bellingham, Bremerton and Richland.

The police officers worked for the Pension System identified as 41.20. The WSCPO worked to protect the rights of the Officers they represented and were instrumental in securing benefits through their lobbying efforts in Olympia. Some of the early legislative efforts resulted in on-duty disability benefits, survivors benefits, rank definition in civil service law, sick benefits just to name a few. Along with securing benefits the WSCPO was successful in defeating many legislative issues detrimental to police officers. Home Rule would have removed the legislative process in all matters dealing with pension and given that authority to individual cities. Another bill that was defeated would mandatory reduce pension benefits if the officer was gainfully employed after retirement. Other bills that were killed included civilian review boards, the combining of all state pension systems placing all members under Workmen's Compensation and Social Security, not to mention mandatory polygraph testing at the option of the employer.

One of the most important bills to come out of Olympia was Collective Bargaining. All of these efforts were made possible through the work of the WSCPO, Fire Fighters and the Legislature during the 1960's. During a Special Legislative Session in 1969, the LEOFF Retirement Act was adopted as law with the projected effective date March 1, 1970. The LEOFF Act was to guarantee the pension benefits of Sheriffs, Police Officers and Fire Fighters within the State.

The "Ten First Class Cities" represented by the WSCPO (as well as their counterpart Fire Fighters in a similar situation) were reluctant to join the LEOFF pension system as they had their own plan and were protected under 41.20. The proposed LEOFF plan had problems and the members of 41.20 could jeopardize their benefits, should the LEOFF plan fail. Political pressure was brought to bear by the Governor, lawmakers, the cities and counties. The then President of WSCPO, Charles Marsh, worked diligently for eight months with lawmakers and Fire Fighter representatives and other key individuals, to fine tune the LEOFF bill. The bill was enacted with emergency clauses and an implementation date of March 1, 1970. Much of the language in the new bill was taken from 41.20 and made applicable to all Law Enforcement and Fire Fighters. President Marsh has been called the "father" of LEOFF because of his efforts in the draft bill along with the most valuable input from organizations representing the Fire Fighters. The State refused to acquire anything beyond the funding of pensions, especially medical concerns. This is the reason the language that pertains to local pension boards and individual medical care for the member appears in the LEOFF law. There are many reasons for LEOFF. Members of the 41.20 plan were the "ten first class" cities which was no longer the case with the expansion of cities such as Bellevue. Bellevue and other cities being much larger than say, Aberdeen and the "Ten First Class Cities" law was not representative. Another problem was the ability of some of the smaller 41.20 cities not being able to meet their funding requirements. 41.20 was responsible for guaranteeing payments should the cities default. So, it became necessary to ensure funding and to bring the state law up to equal standards for all Fire Fighters and Law Enforcement Officers. When the LEOFF law was enacted in March 1, 1970, it was no surprise to members of the Law Enforcement or Fire Fighter communities throughout the State that were outside the 41.20 provisions.

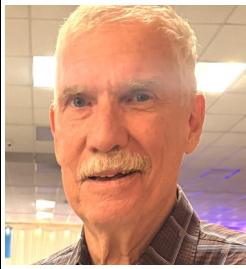
There were a number of those who postponed their retirements in order to enjoy the more lucrative benefits of the new LEOFF law. As a result, the state was literally hit with a mass exodus of Officers and Fire Fighters. It became what would be known throughout the State as an UN-FUNDED LIABILITY. Thus, LEOFF 2 was passed into law in 1977.



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RSPOA GRANTS HONORARY MEMBERSHIPS TO GARY BELL & DAVID ROSE

Both men have assisted SPD for many years!



Gary Bell began as a SPD Reserve Officer in 1971. He worked patrol out of the North Precinct and at the Seattle Center. He still has his reserve officer status today because of his forensic work and dedication to SPD. He is the longest running known SPD reserve in the Department's history at 55

years as of 2026. Most of his reserve time has been spent in the dental forensics area. Gary is very well known to SPD officers, detectives and staff. He rode motorcycles with the Blue Knights and served as their president in 1978. He also rode escorts for Washington Limo for 6 years with other off duty officers. Gary attended the University of Washington and graduated with a BA in Sociology in 1972. In 1976, he graduated from the UW School of Dentistry as a Doctor of Dental Surgery. His continuing education and resume for dentistry, forensics and contributions to the industry is absolutely incredible! Gary worked on POW/MIA cases for the DOD in Hawaii for the Joint POW/MIA, Accounting Command. He has advised or worked on forensic cases in just about every County and City jurisdiction in Washington State. Gary created programs attached to NCIS for dental identification in 2005 that continue to this day. He has educated and presented materials to numerous agencies regarding current computer aids for the resolution of Missing/Wanted and Unidentified Person cases files. He created State and Regional protocols, and trained FBI, CJIS and others on techniques for identification by coding. Gary Bell is a current consultant for forensic services with the Washington State Patrol, Missing/Unidentified Persons Unit and the Washington State Forensic Investigation Council. He is still working on SPD cases today through WSP and has never charged SPD for his service. He frequently sees SPD cases via the King County Medical Examiners Office. Many SPD officers have had Gary as their regular dentist over the years. One could always find another officer in his waiting room telling stories and laughing. It was a fun place to be under the circumstances. After retiring from his dental practice in Seattle at the end of 2021, Gary substituted for the new dentist while she took medical leave. Unfortunately, Gary had a stroke in the spring of 2022. Six weeks later, he was back working on forensics cases at home and has continued to this day with assistance from his wife Carolyn.

Gary was nominated by RSPOA Vice-President Terri MacMillan and approved by the board.

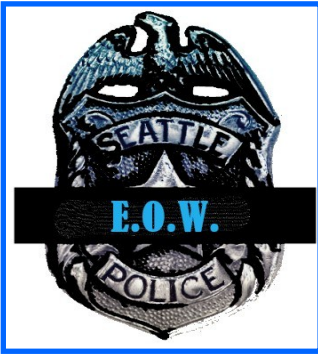


David Rose is a long time investigative reporter and anchor for KCPQ FOX 13 news in Seattle. For more than two decades, David Rose has built a reputation as one of the region's most respected journalists. He is particularly careful and persistent in his coverage of law enforcement,

public safety and criminal justice issues. Through his investigative reporting, Rose has consistently worked to present the facts fairly while also highlighting the difficult and often dangerous work performed by police officers. His reporting has helped the public better understand the realities of policing in the Puget Sound region and the commitment required of those who wear the badge. Over the years, Rose has developed a strong professional respect for the men and women of the Seattle Police Department and other law enforcement agencies throughout Washington. Known for his thoughtful interviews, balanced storytelling, and willingness to listen to officer's' perspectives, he has given both active and retired officers a credible voice in the community.

The Investigative reporting of David Rose has been extraordinarily valuable to the Seattle Police Department. By airing detailed stories about unsolved crimes and encouraging viewers to come forward, his broadcasts have generated a steady stream of anonymous tips that may otherwise never have reached detectives. Those tips have provided critical leads in many serious cases, including homicides, robberies and sexual assaults. Without public awareness created by his investigative segments, the department would likely have missed hundreds of pieces of information from community members that helped move investigations forward, and in many instances, brought suspects to justice. In addition to his news career, David Rose and Myrle Carner worked on Washington's Most Wanted for 14 years. This production helped law enforcement agencies capture more than 1,400 fugitives. Granting David Rose honorary membership in the RSPOA recognizes not only his long career in journalism but also his consistent effort to report on law enforcement with integrity, fairness and respect.

David Rose was nominated by Vice President Terri MacMillan and Myrle Carner and approved by the board.



Fallen SPD Officers who made the ultimate sacrifice in the months of April and May.

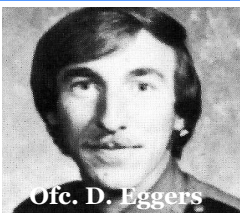


APRIL

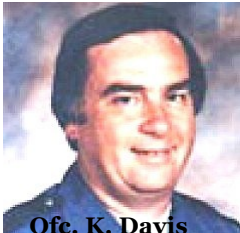
Thomas L. Roberts	4-10-1898
Dale Eggers	4-23-1985

MAY

Fred Ivey	5-10-1928
Robert D. Ward	5-15-1969
Kenneth L. Davis	5-11-1995

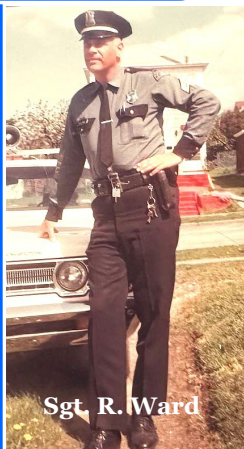


Ofc. D. Eggers



Ofc. K. Davis

May 15th
Peace
Officers
Memorial
Day



Sgt. R. Ward

Editor's Corner

By Rich O'Neill
SPD Retired

It's May and hopefully the warmer weather is coming! I invite everyone to read President Nordlund's article on the pension fight for important details. Quick facts: 1. This law does not go into effect until 2029. 2. We have teamed up with the firefighters and Leoff 1 Coalition. 3. We have retained an attorney. 4. The IRS rules are on our side! 5. We ARE fighting this and we will PREVAIL!

The RSPOA web site is being remodeled! It should go LIVE in June. Tickets for the upcoming banquet will be handled through our new website. It promises to be USER-FRIENDLY! (Details coming soon by email)

2026 BANQUET: Saturday, October 3rd at the SPAA Range. Preparations are already underway! We will be limiting tickets to 450 this year, so once ticket sales open (end of June), do not delay. We are still seeking sponsors and donations, so contact me if you have connections.

Have a safe start to summer!

John Patrick Sullivan Says Hello!



Rich O'Neill, Frank Kampsen & Roger Dixon recently enjoyed a visit with John Patrick at his assisted living facility. John wants to extend good wishes to everyone!

HAPPY 85th BIRTHDAY RICHARD HERRON



An 85th Birthday Celebration & "Mini-Reunion" was recently held at the Club at Snoqualmie Ridge.

(L-R) Glenn Rouse, Mike Hargraves, Larry Miller, Tom Harrigan, and Ray Lambe. Seated is the guest of honor, Richard Herron.

RSPOA

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