



# THE EPITAPH



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

VOL 7, NO 3 • October 2024



## MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

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

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

This year's Police Week started on May 11th with the tragic killing of Euclid Police Officer Patrolman Jacob Derbin, End of Watch May 11, 2024. Patrolman Derbin was shot and killed while responding to a disturbance call. He was ambushed by a subject after he arrived at the location. Patrolman Derbin was honored throughout the week. His family members attended the GCPOMS Candlelight Vigil and Memorial Service. There were police officers from all over the United States and Canada who attended Patrolman Derbin's funeral on Saturday where the Church was filled to capacity with family, friends and his classmates in attendance. Patrolman Derbin will be honored next year during the GCPOMS Memorial Service.

A few weeks later, tragedy struck again on July 4, 2024. Cleveland Patrol Officer Jamieson Ritter was shot and killed while attempting to arrest a wanted subject on the east side of Cleveland. The man exited the home when police officers arrived and attempted to leave on a bicycle opening fire on the officers. Patrol Office Ritter also will be honored next May during the GCPOMS Memorial Service.

On May 17th, we honored Deputy David C. Willis, End of Watch 10/18/1960, Cuyahoga County Sheriff's Department and Constable Franklin Stone of the Oberlin Police Department, End of Watch 6/04/1881. The family of Deputy Willis and both departments were presented with plaques honoring the officers.

I want to thank all of the volunteers, participants, Survivors and supporters who attended this year's Memorial Service. You were there in numbers, showing your dedication to making sure the Officers on our Memorial are not forgotten. It was rainy and cold, but you remained through it. Thank you!

This year's Tattoo was held at Cleveland Public Hall. It was great to see our friends from Ottawa Police Service Pipes and Drums and dancers make a return after a few years due to the pandemic. Murphy's Irish dancers also returned this year. I want to thank the Red Hackle Pipes and Drums, United States Army Silent Drill Team, US Air Force Band, North Coast Pipes & Drums



Greater Cleveland Peace Officers Memorial Society

*Keeping Our Promise to Never Forget Our Fallen Heroes*

and the Cleveland Police Pipes & Drums. This was Cleveland Police Pipes & Drums third event on the day of the Tattoo. They were instrumental and participated in the funeral service and cemetery service for Euclid Patrolman Jacob Derbin earlier in the day. They made Cleveland proud.

The Cleveland Guardians held an event on May 19th to support GCPOMS. It was a great turnout supporting GCPOMS. This was a private event ticket purchased using a special code when purchasing tickets. The event included a unique experience which included a food buffet, Pepsi products, cash bar and our own seating area to watch the game. We are already working with the Guardians office for next year's date.

On July 28th, the 16th annual COPS Ride was held. Over 400 riders attended the event that started from the Greater Cleveland Peace Officers Memorial with a brief ceremony and prayer. Proceeds from the event were donated to GCPOMS and Ohio COPS (Concerns of Police Survivors). I want to thank John "Kiks" Kikol for his continued support of GCPOMS. *(continued on page 4)*



# HONOR OUR FALLEN: WE WILL NEVER FORGET THEIR HEROISM AND COURAGE

Mary A. Lentz | Survivor / Editor of The Epitaph

## Patrolman Jacob J. Derbin | Euclid Police Department

Patrolman Jacob J. Derbin, Badge No. 14 (EOW: May 11, 2024) was twenty-three years of age and completing his first year as a Euclid Police Department law enforcement officer. Patrolman Derbin was killed in the Line of Duty by gunfire from a violent felon. Immediately after he was shot, Patrolman Derbin saved the lives of his fellow officers alerting them to the danger and to take cover. Patrolman Derbin's death, occurred at the beginning of National Police Week, while he was investigating an aggravated menacing complaint call made to the Euclid Police Department by a woman who told the responding Police Officers the father of her child had threatened to shoot her and her mother during a domestic dispute.



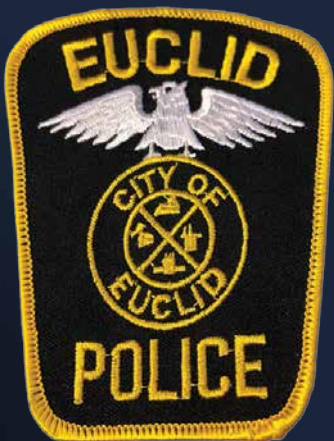
Patrolman Derbin sought to question a family member who was too terrified to exit the house to speak with him. The killer, who was dressed all in black, was sitting in the dark on a neighbor's deck and opened fire on Patrolman Durbin who was checking the backyard of the victim's home.

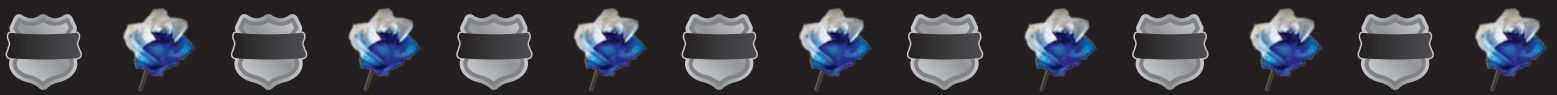
Patrolman Derbin was a graduate of Cuyahoga Heights High School where he played football and met his high school sweet heart. She was soon to become his wife a few weeks a after his Line of Duty death. He was a member of the United States Army National Guard and served a tour of duty overseas when he was deployed to Kuwait before joining the Euclid Police Department. He graduated from the Kent State University Police Academy. Patrolman Derbin was regarded as an incredible person and a dedicated law enforcement officer who loved public service.

A Candlelight Service at the Cuyahoga Heights High School, organized to honor Patrolman Derbin by his former classmates, was attended by family, friends, fellow police officers, and community. At the service, flowers were placed next to his high school football jersey in remembrance and to celebrate his life and his dedication to the protection of others. The Euclid Police Department posthumously awarded Patrolman Derbin the Departmental Medal of Honor. He was the first recipient.

Patrolman Derbin is described as a phenomenal and special young man who protected his family, his community and his country as a police officer and as a member of the military. He was known for his "enormous smile" and for being kindhearted and selfless. He looked forward each day to reporting for his shift of police duty.

Family, Euclid Police Officers, Police Officers from across Ohio and Canada filled the Church of St. Columbkille in Parma for the funeral Mass in his memory attended the funeral Mass at St. Columbkille Church, Parma, Ohio.





# HONOR OUR FALLEN: WE WILL NEVER FORGET THEIR HEROISM AND COURAGE

Mary A. Lentz | Survivor / Editor of The Epitaph

## Patrol Officer Jamieson Ritter | Cleveland Division Of Police

Cleveland Police Department Patrol Officer Jamieson Ritter, Badge No. 1176 (EOW: July 4, 2024) was twenty-seven years of age when he was killed in the Line of Duty by a subject wanted for felonious assault which became an aggravated murder when the victim was removed from life support. The subject attempted to escape the home on the east side of Cleveland and fired numerous shots, killing Patrol Officer Ritter. The firearm used to kill Patrol Officer Ritter was taken from the shooter's previous victim. It took several police officers to subdue the killer who struggled to continue his escape. Patrol Officer Ritter served the residents of Cleveland for four years with distinction as a law enforcement officer. He was a native of Webster, New York and a graduate of McQuaid Jesuit High School. He always expressed a strong desire to serve his country and his community.



Patrol Officer Ritter was a graduate of the Cleveland Police Academy where he was recognized early in his law enforcement career as a leader who was well-liked by his fellow Academy classmates. Following his Line of Duty death, members of the 147th Cleveland Police Department Academy graduating class organized a Memorial Run in his honor which began at the CPD Headquarters on Ontario Street and proceeded to the Greater Cleveland Peace Officers Memorial at West 3rd Street and Lakeside Avenue, ending at the Third District where Patrol Officer Ritter was assigned.

Patrol Officer Jamieson Ritter was recognized for numerous acts of heroism during his service as a Cleveland Police Officer. The month prior to his Line of Duty Death, he was named Co-Officer of the Month for saving the lives of two people and the life of another on two separate occasions.

In 2019, prior to his enrollment in the Cleveland Police Academy, Patrol Officer Ritter graduated from Syracuse University where he was a member of the Reserve Officers' Training Corps and the Syracuse University Officers' Training Corps. He was a Quartermaster in the New York Army National Guard, and in 2020 he moved from Rochester, New York to join the Cleveland Police Department. Patrol Officer Ritter was commissioned as a 2nd Lieutenant in the Army National Guard where he served in the 134th Field Artillery Regiment. He was a member of the Ohio National Guard and had been deployed to Syria in 2020 with his Unit. He returned from the Middle East in 2023 to serve as a Cleveland Police Officer.

A Memorial Service at St. John the Evangelist Cathedral in downtown Cleveland was held in memory of Patrol Officer Ritter and attended by an overflow of mourners including family, friends, community members, and Police Officers from the Cleveland Police Department, from across Ohio, Metropolitan Cleveland, nationally and New York.

Following the service at St. John Cathedral, New York State Troopers escorted Patrol Officer Ritter's body home to New York where a Memorial Service was held in his memory.

Patrol Office Jamieson Ritter was known for his community policing skills, his leadership abilities, involvement with residents who lived in the Third District where he was assigned, and for his humility and commitment to protect and serve.

**EDITOR'S NOTE:** The names of both Police Officer Jamieson Ritter and Patrol Jacob J. Derbin will be added to the Walls of the Greater Cleveland Peace Officers Memorial during Police Week in May 2025 joining the names of 194 Fallen Heroes who made the ultimate sacrifice protecting the communities they so heroically served. Both Police Officers may have never met one another, but they shared the qualities of Officers killed in the Line of Duty.

Both Officers were cherished, loved, and respected by their families, colleagues, friends and the communities they served. Both were military veterans who served overseas. Both were in their twenties. Both are remembered for their positive attitudes, dedication to their law enforcement duties, and their pride in

wearing the uniforms of their police departments. Both Patrolman Derbin and Patrol Office Ritter were willing to face dangers to protect others while also protecting their fellow officers. Both had a deep concern for the safety of their families and individuals of the communities they served. The fathers of both Officers are retired or current law enforcement officers.

Both Officers arrived for their police shifts in good spirits, had unwavering commitment and dedication to the protection of others, served with honor and heroism, and were loyal, steadfast and faithful friends to many.

We are grateful for their courageous service and honor their memories. Their heroic courage will never be forgotten.



THE  
**EPITAPH**



P.O. Box 6207  
Cleveland, OH 44101



Mary A. Lentz | Survivor / Editor of The Epitaph  
[www.HonorOurFallen.us](http://www.HonorOurFallen.us)



## MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

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

*(continued from page 1)*

Thanks to Mr. Angelo Alesci and his staff from County Line Saloon located on SR 82 and Riverview Road in Brecksville, Ohio. Angelo and his staff met with GCPOMS Board Members and asked to sponsor a spaghetti fundraiser for the family of Patrolman Derbin. On August 10th the fund raiser at the County Line Saloon. The family of Patrolman Derbin were in attendance and were overwhelmed by all of the people who attended showing support and making sure Jacob will not be forgotten. The event raised \$7,600 for the family. It was a great event. Thank you to all who attended and supporters who donated prizes and baskets.

The Greater Cleveland Peace Officers Memorial Society is already planning next year's events for our 40th Anniversary events. Police Week will be May 10-17, 2025. Please visit our website at [www.HonorOurFallen.us](http://www.HonorOurFallen.us) or [GCPOMS.org](http://GCPOMS.org) for a schedule of events.

In closing, I want to thank all the Survivors, Police Officers, Firefighters and supporters who attended Memorial Services for Patrolman Jacob Durbin, Euclid Police and Patrol Officer Jamieson, Cleveland Division of Police. It was gratifying to see all of the support for these Fallen Heroes. Patrolman Ritter was laid to rest in his hometown of Webster, New York following services in Cleveland where St John Cathedral was filled with family, police, colleagues and community members. The support shown for his family in Webster was incredible.

I ask that all of you say a prayer tonight for all Fallen Peace Officers, Fire Fighters, Safety Personnel and First Responders who have made the ultimate sacrifice doing what they loved – protecting you.

Stay safe and healthy,  
**Joe Mannion, President**



Copyright © 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024 by the Greater Cleveland Peace Officers Memorial Society. All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, copied, transcribed, or otherwise distributed in any form, format, or by any means without the prior expressed written permission of the Greater Cleveland Peace Officers Memorial Society, the copyright owner. Greater Cleveland Peace Officers Memorial Society, P.O. Box 6207, Cleveland, Ohio 44101 | Greater Cleveland Peace Officers Memorial Society is a non-profit, charitable 501(c)(3) volunteer-based organization. Your donation is tax deductible.

***“Keeping the Promise to Never Forget our Fallen Heroes”®***