

Transcript of a Saint Paul Police oral history interview with

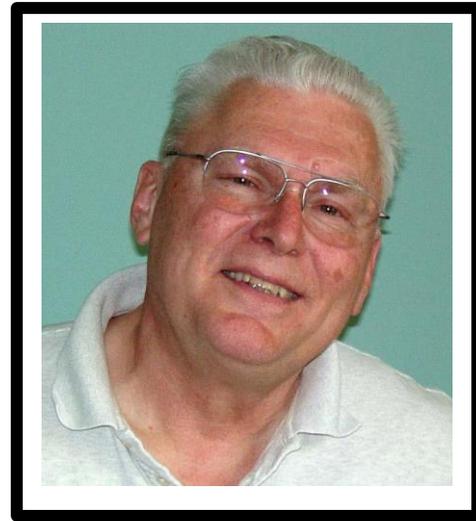
Sergeant Glen Kothe

Saint Paul Officer

1967 - 1997



1972



2008

Interviewed on

May 23, 2008 and February 6, 2009

at HAND in HAND Productions' Office

in Saint Paul, Minnesota

by

Oral Historian Kate Cavett

© Hand in Hand Productions

2015

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

All pictures are from the Saint Paul Police Department collections.

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

Kate Cavett Oral Historian
HAND in HAND Productions
Saint Paul, Minnesota
651-227-5987
www.oralhistorian.org

Glen Kothe

was appointed patrolman November 13, 1967

promoted sergeant November 14, 1982

and retired June 30, 1997

GK: Glen Kothe

KC: Kate Cavett

Interview May 23, 2008

GK: My name is Glen Kothe, I'm a retired Saint Paul Police Officer. I came on the job November 13th, 1967. During my time on the job, I was promoted to Sergeant, November 14th, 1982, and I retired June 30th, 1997. During my time on the job I worked in various parts of the police department. I was on the K-9 Unit for ten years. I was in the Communications Center, which is a whole nother story how I ended up there. I worked as the investigative coordinator in the Detective division, I worked in the Traffic and Accident Division, I worked patrol, and that's basically my career in a nutshell.

I went through four chiefs before I retired. [chuckles] And when I came on the job in 1967, Lester McAuliffe¹ was the chief at that time and he was one of the—I was twenty-two years old. Actually, my seniority date was the day before my twenty-second birthday. I came on November 13th, 1967, that's how I can remember my seniority date all the time. Anyway, he was an old-time, Irish,

¹ **Lester E. McAuliffe** was appointed patrolman March 24, 1936; promoted to sergeant December 16, 1947; detective March 16, 1948; detective lieutenant December 1, 1949; assistant chief November 15, 1955; and chief May 23, 1961; and retired March 31, 1970.

tough cop type, you know. He'd been on the department in the 1940s and '50s and worked his way up, and an old-time detective and you know all that stuff,



Chief Lester McAuliffe
1963

just one tough guy. He had huge hands. He had a hand like a catcher's mitt. If he slapped you upside the head, it'd cover your whole head. I couldn't believe it, you know, and the man terrified me. I don't know why, he just—you know. And of course, I'm young guy and you know, and big shot, big Chief of Police and everything. And of course some of the old-timers and everything on the job—or what I referred to as the old-timers at the time. These guys probably had ten, twelve, fourteen, fifteen years on, you know, and some of

them had more. Some of them had twenty-plus. They knew Chief McAuliffe before he was chief and during his time as chief and everything, so there was all these little stories floating around and everything that just scared the hell out of me. [chuckles]

In fact, the one thing that always sticks in my mind is, I come into work one day and this is shortly after I got out of the Academy, so I'd only been on the job three, four months, five months at the tops. I come walking in—and back then a rookie was kind of a floater. You'd have to—you'd come in one day, you'd work on this squad, the next day you come in, you work on a different squad, the next day you come in, you'd be a different squad. It just depended on where they needed you, because at that time we were two-man cars. So if some guy's regular partner was on vacation, day off, or whatever, they slid you in there to double up with them. So anyway, I come walking in to roll call at my time, and the

lieutenant looks at me and he goes, "Chief's office, now." I thought, "What the hell did I do? I only been here five minutes. I haven't done anything yet." You know, so I go up to the chief's office and I walk in, and the only one in that department that was scarier than McAuliffe was his secretary. I walked in there, and she kind of looks at me over the top of her glasses and she says, "What do you want?" And I says, "I'm Kothe and I was told to come up here by the lieutenant." "Oooh, you're him." And I went, "Okay? What the heck is going on here?" She says, "Go on in." Well, I open the door and I go in there, and there's the chief behind his desk, and there sits all three of the deputy chiefs and the captain in charge of the Homicide Division. And I go, "What the hell did I do?" I'm thinking, "This is the board! They're going to fire me!" And I don't even know what I did, okay? So by this time, I'm just completely baffled, scared out of my mind, and don't know what I get to do or anything else like that. All it turned out to be was that the captain in charge of the Homicide wanted to ask me a question about a report I'd written on an incident that happened like three days before that. And it turned out to be nothing, but you know, when I opened the door and I walked in and I see the top five guys in this police department sitting there and they're all looking at me, it's like I'm dead meat. I don't know what I did, but I'm dead meat. I just lost my job, I'm out the door. Anyway, that's all it turned out to be, but you know, for a while there I was sweating bullets and everything.

There was an old rumor floating around about McAuliffe that he'd walked down the hall—and he always smoked Lucky Strikes, I remember that. And he'd walk down the hall and he'd kind of stroll and shuffle along and everything, smoking on his cigarette, you know, like he was in thought, stuff like that, and he'd walk by. And the thing was, he walked by me a couple times and

he said, "Hi, son, how ya doin'?" "Good, Chief." That kind of stuff. I happened to talk to one of the older guys that I was working with, and I said, "Hey, the chief said hi to me." And he says, "How did he say hi to you?" And I said, "Well, he said, 'Good day, son. How ya doin'?'". He says, "Oh, that's good." And I says, "Really?" And he says, "Yeah. If he calls you Mister, kiss your ass goodbye, because you know he was mad." [chortles] And he says, "And if you ever get sent to the chief's office and he tells you to sit down," he says, "don't sit in the first chair. There's two chairs in front of the chief's desk. One is a little farther back than the other one." He says, "Don't sit in the first chair. Sit in the second chair." I says, "Why?" He says, "Because he can't reach you." And apparently more than one officer had been knocked out of that chair by him.

But you know, that was the way they did things back then. I mean, you didn't have lawyers, you didn't have all this other stuff going on and everything. You know, you screwed up, the chief went and smacked you upside the head and sent you on your way, and that was the end of it. I thought, "Well I ain't gonna do that again." It reminded me of my dad. You know, I screwed up, I got a smack, and I thought, "Well, that was stupid. I ain't gonna do that again." And it was kind of the same thing. Man scared the hell of me though. He just was a terrifying guy. He just looked that way.

He was a cool chief. He stuck up for you if there was an incident. Some lawyer came in and wanted to interview a couple of us on an incident that happened. You know, some defense attorney was going to sue the city or whatever it was. I don't even remember what the incident was. And the chief was sitting behind his desk and everything, and we're all sitting there and this lawyer says, "Well, I just want to ask a few questions." And the chief very calmly, very level voice, says, "Advise them of their rights." And this lawyer

says, "They know their rights." He said, "Advise them of their rights." "Okay." So he did that. Then after this guy went to start to ask the questions and everything—what they referred to ask the Corporation Council, which was the city's lawyer, said, "I'm going to advise my clients not to talk to you." [snickers] The guy says, "Well, they have to talk to me and everything." The chief says, "No, they don't. Get the hell out of my office." [laughs] And that was the end of it. You know, that was just the way it was.

If you were wrong, he took care of it himself. If you were right, nobody, and I mean nobody, would come near you. They had to go through him first and that's the way it was. And he drew a lot of respect. There was a lot of guys that didn't like him personally, which is just because he's the boss. I mean not everybody likes the boss, but we had respect for him. And a lot of people in the city had respect for him.

I can remember one Saint Paddy's Day, [sighs] I kind of felt sorry for this guy, and this was when Saint Paddy's day first started out and it was just Wild West type stuff. I mean we were running from call to call downtown and trying to keep up with all the drunks and the bar fights and one thing after another. And of course Gallivan's² was the place to be on Saint Paddy's Day. Everybody wanted to go to Gallivan's and they had a line going in and out of that place like crazy. They let one out, one in, one out, one in, and that was what it was and that was the way it was, unless you were somebody. You know, the mayor showed

² **Gallivan's Bar and Supper Club** opened in 1962 and was located at 354 Wabasha Street North, Saint Paul, Minnesota. Gallivan's had a history of being the stopping-off spot for many downtown businessmen, including judges, lawyers, and City Council members. Legend tells that many a plot and ordinance were conceived at the bar inside the wood-paneled establishment on the first floor of the Victory Parking ramp. The establishment was closed by 2009.

up, he could walk right in. And obviously the chief of police shows up, you always let him in, because he ran the license inspection, which means he could jerk your license if he wanted to. He could close any bar in town if he felt like it, because at that time it all came under the police department.

He just walked up to the door, this guy comes up and is half-drunk and said something, and one of the guys went to get the guy out of the way and the chief says—and the guy wanted to talk to the chief about something. I don't even know if he even knew that it was the chief. Anyway, he was just being totally obnoxious and everything, and the chief says, "Hey, pal, why don't you go home and sober up." And then the guy spit on him. Ooh, that was a really bad move. The chief hit him so hard that I think his grandchildren would be born with manners. [laughs] In fact, two uniforms—I was standing about ten feet away and there was two uniforms closer, and they grabbed the guy and shoved him into a squad to get him out of there before the chief killed him [laughs], because you spit on—you know, those old time coppers, you didn't do that. Back then, there were certain ways to do things. Of course, in today's day and age, you know, rules have changed over the years and stuff like that, but back then, there was a way to do things and that's the way they were done. And spitting on the chief was a really, really bad idea, particularly that chief.

There was story—now I didn't witness this, because this happened long before I was on the police department, but back when he was a detective— and I had heard this story from a couple different sources, guys that I had worked with over the years and stuff like that. Apparently there was a—I don't even remember the guy's name, but they were looking for him. He was involved in a robbery, and during the robbery an officer was shot, didn't get killed. Anyway, they went after the guy, and they got a tip that he was in this hotel or boarding

house or someplace, anyway, and they go up the stairs to get to the guy's apartment. One thing leads to another. Anyway, there's a shootout, okay. They shoot this guy, six, seven times, whatever it is. And he's shooting back. Luckily nobody else got hurt, except this guy. Anyway, when he falls, he falls right near the top of the stairs. The story—now like I say, I wasn't there, this is just a story that heard. McAuliffe walked up and says, "You're not shooting any more cops," and he kicked the body and it rolled down the stairs. [laughs] And then when he walked out and stepped over him and walked out. [laughs] I think that's what scared the hell out of me more anything else was that. But that's just way it was back then.

That's when contempt of cop was a felony [chuckles]. He just felt that you guys aren't being paid to get beat up shot, killed, stabbed, anything else. Somebody tries to hurt you, you stop them by whatever means necessary. I learned the philosophy back then that I'm going home tonight and I don't care what you want to do, you will not stop me from going home tonight. And I think that's probably what kept me alive for thirty years on the police department, because I had that attitude. And I didn't care, you know. I'm not going to sit and worry about what some lawyer or some judge is going to think when my life is the one on the line. Now if they want to criticize me, fine and dandy, but I'm still going home at night and that's just the way it was. I think that was the attitude of the whole police department, and it was partly I think because of the way press before him and McAuliffe and everything, those old-time coppers brought things up. You know, because you look at the history of Saint Paul and it goes back and I mean, this is a pretty wild town. There was a lot of stuff that happened in this town that nobody else around this country can attest to. They talk about Chicago and Detroit, you know, all this other stuff and Al Capone and everything and a

lot of these people don't realize that, you look at the history of Saint Paul, all those people used to live here.

KC: You were partners with Jim Sackett³. What kind of an officer was he?

GK: Well, Jim and I became partners in late 1969. We worked together until his death. First of all, Jim was a few years older than I was as far as age went. I came on the job at twenty-two, I think he was like twenty-seven or something like that when he came on the job. So I suppose you want to say that he was probably a little more mature age-wise, and he had—well, in fact, his



Officer Jim Sackett
1968

fourth child had been born three weeks before he was killed. We kind of hit it off when we were teamed together, because we both ended up on what was called the power shift at that time. We started at seven at night and went until four in the morning. And we were always assigned to special details and doing special things and stuff like that, and we worked together pretty well. There was a number of stories, but we had a lot of fun.

KC: Tell me.

GK: Well, there was one where we got involved – well, the department put out a list. It was a warrant list and some of these were very old warrants. They were a couple or three years old, and they hadn't been cleared yet. They were felony warrants. So they put this list out just in case anybody came across it. Of course,

³ **James Thomas Sackett, Sr.** (September 29, 1942- May 22, 1970) was appointed patrolman September 3, 1968, and fatally injured by a sniper while responding to an emergency call May 22, 1970.

back then we didn't have computers and high speed stuff or anything like that. Everything was manual.

So we had these lists, so Jim and I decided we were going to work on these warrants. So we were doing stuff on our own time and everything. We were bugging our way into different organizations, getting into their files and everything. First, we ran them through our files to get whatever information we could on these individuals. Then we even went down to the Draft Board. We even ran the list through the Draft Board. We got into the Insurance Commission. This was a long time before they had all this data privacy stuff. Got into the Insurance



Jim Sackett

Commission and ran them through the insurance companies to see who had insurance, where they lived, addresses. We went down to Saint Paul Ramsey, or Regions Hospital now. We ran it through the medical records division down there. We were finding people all over the place. We ended up clearing, I think it was nineteen. We made nineteen arrests. We both got a commendation for it.

It was funny some of the stuff that we pulled. We'd find out names, addresses, places, and everything. When we ran the list through the data base down at Saint Paul Ramsey and everything, we found out that one of them had an appointment to see a doctor the next day. So we were sitting in the office waiting for him. When they called him in, we went and arrested him. We had

another one we found that had joined the Navy. So we called the Navy and reported that we had a felony warrant for this guy, so Navy arrested the guy. Or FBI or whoever. We found two or three other guys that had gone to other states, so we notified the FBI, and they were picked up for unlawful flight. Many of them we arrested ourselves.

It was a lot of fun. We had a lot of fun doing this, and we were laughing and joking all the time. Doing stuff to get into places that today are absolutely not allowed. You know, I mean the data privacy thing and everything. It's



Officer Kothe
1972

completely different now and stuff like that. But we were checking records every place to find out where these people were. And we'd just go in there and say, "We're looking for some people. Could you help us out?" "Well, what do you need?" And we'd hand them the list and they'd run the whole list and say, "Oh, yeah. We've got information on this one, this one, this one, and this one." And they'd go on and on, and we just used to have a lot of fun doing that stuff. And of course, playing a joke on each other once in a while here and there. It's all part of the job and stuff like that.

KC: Any jokes you remember?

GK: Well, there was one – because at the time we used to switch off driving. At the first half of the shift, one guy would drive, and at the second half, the other guy would drive. And whoever was the passenger was the one that had to write all the reports. Okay. We'd go on a call some place or respond to a thing and, of course, that was back then they had one set of keys for the car. And they didn't have all these electric door locks or anything like that. Anyway, Jim was driving.

He gets in the car. He doesn't unlock the door for me or anything, and he drives off! Leaves me standing there! And of course, we didn't have portable radios then. So I was standing there cussing and swearing at him and throwing things at the cars that's going by. And goes about a quarter block down and stops and laughs out the window and says, "Come on. Let's go." And everything. And I says "No, back up." He says, "No!" We're standing there hollering at each other about a hundred feet apart. Then he'd start to back up. I'd reach for the door and he'd drive away. "You no good son of a..." and everything. And people are looking out their windows. [laughs] Finally, we got going. Yeah, we used to have a lot of fun.

KC: Any other memories like that?

GK: Well, of course, then pay back. You got to have pay back. There's always payback. I'd do things like hide his ticket book. He'd be out on a traffic stop, and I'd drive away and leave him standing there talking to the guy with no ticket book. [laughs]

We used to pull stuff like that all the time and everything. And then there was some things like when they first started issuing the pepper spray, we used to take some and smear some on something and someone would touch it and happen to scratch their face, and pretty soon their eyes are watering. Oh. Squirt gun fights. We'd carry squirt guns, which would graduate into pails of water. [laughs] Fireworks and – oh, there was a lot of jokes we used to do on each other. Not just against each other, but against other people and stuff like that. It was just a fun time. We used to enjoy ourselves a lot.

I can remember just before he was killed, his number four, Jared, was born, and Jeanette was in the hospital. We went down and we were both there,

you know. And we're sitting there and we're laughing and she is laughing. We had her laughing and we were joking and – I can't even remember what we were talking about, but we were laughing so hard and had her laughing and, if I remember right, she'd had a C-section. So she was pretty sore. And of course, she's trying not to laugh and we're making her laugh, and it was just incredible. And that's a fond memory. And then, of course, three weeks later he was killed.

We both lived on the East Side, but he lived on the north end and I lived on the south end. And there were times where we had gotten families together, but it was mostly just him and I. I'd been to his house, he'd been to my house and stuff like that, but the families weren't really that close. Because we hadn't been together that long to really – we had guys on the job that had been together for ten years. So they were like brothers and everything. Jim and I had only been together for a few months and stuff like that. We got to know each other personally pretty good and everything, and we got to know how each other thought and how we operated and everything else like that. We worked well together.

He was a very conscientious guy. He believed, right and wrong. That was it. Here it is, you know. You break the law, you go to jail. Simple as that. I kind of believed the same thing. There were times when it was a situation where we had to question: "Are we doing the right thing?" Such as we'd get a situation where it's a domestic assault type thing, you know. And we're beginning to wonder, the woman wanted the guy arrested, and as near as we could tell, he really hadn't done much. She actually attacked him and he pushed her away; she fell down. Got hurt in the process and everything, and it was more or less a self-defense reaction type thing. But she was demanding that he be arrested, and we really didn't want to, but we had to type thing. And it was things like that every

once in a while bothered him. But most of the time, when we'd get involved in something, it was like right and wrong. That was it. That's the way we handled everything.

There was a couple of hairy instances over the timeframe we were together. You know, high speed chases, things like that, that got a little bit scary. Oh well, there was a few times we had to pull our guns and threaten. Actually, we did fire a couple of shots a couple of times at different things. Tried to shoot out the tires. Of course, this is all things that you're not allowed to do anymore.

Anytime you get into a chase, there's always that unknown. But what was funny is that when you work together with somebody for a long period of time, you get to the point where you don't think about a lot of stuff. Jim would be driving, we were going to do a traffic stop, and the next thing you know, the chase is on. He's rolling down the road and I'm on the radio and we're going east here, west here, da da da da da da, giving directions and everything like that. And, of course, neither one of us are wearing a seatbelt. You didn't wear seat belts then.

KC: Glen, can you tell me about the night [of the ambush]?

GK: Jim and I were working an unmarked car. In fact, the car that we were using was a brand new vehicle. It had just been delivered that day from the garage. It was a burnt orange Plymouth 440. It was a traffic car, that's what it was.



It had a badge on the right hand door and that was it and nothing external. It was burnt orange in color. That was one of the big colors for the hot cars back then. We had this car, and we were working traffic. We were parked up in front of the capitol building, and we were working traffic. Finally, a call came up. They

gave us a call to the address, and they said it was an OB which is, you know, a pregnant lady. We told them, we said, "We're a traffic car," which traditionally were two door sedans. They said, "Well, you're the only one we got. Everyone else is tied up." Because it was right close to shift change. So okay, we take off and we head up that way.

And we come down Victoria from University, and we get to Hague and we take a right turn and realize we've gone the wrong way. Well, because we took the right turn, you couldn't see that right hand door. Jim backed up across Victoria and parked in front of the place. Anyway, we get out, and he was



driving. We get out and we walk around the car, and he's standing to the right of the door as you're facing it, and I'm standing to the left of the door. He tries the door, and it's one of those enclosed porches like used to be on the older houses. And he tries it, and it's locked. He says, "What the heck?" And there's no lights on the

place. And so I look down the side of the building and I says, "Oh, there's a back door back down here. I'll go check it out." So I walked down and went around to the back, and there's like two steps up on a little cement portico, porch thing. And I'm standing there, and I knock on the door, and a big dog starts barking. I lean over the railing, and I holler down and I said, "Watch it, Jim. They got a big dog." And about that time, the intersection lit up and a loud bang. And the first thing that popped into my mind was an M-80, because this was May and we were starting to get some firecracker calls and everything and stuff like that. And that's the first thing that popped into my mind was an M-80.

Anyway, I heard somebody holler. And I run around the front, and I get there, and he's down. And there's a pool of blood like three feet across under him. And I crouched down over him, and I'm looking at him. And to this day, when I looked in his face and everything, I knew he was dead. You know. Even though I never took a pulse or anything. I just looked at him and I knew he was dead. And then out of the corner of my eye, I catch something. Well, when I saw the amount of blood and everything, the next thing that popped into my mind was a shotgun, that somebody had shot him with a shotgun from inside the house, because of the way he was laying. And I caught this movement out of the corner of my eye and instinct took over. Survival instinct took over. And I thought, "Uh-oh, my turn. Here it comes." And I turned, drew my service revolver as I'm going away, and I fired two shots at the door. And I literally dove over the squad and landed in the street. And I came up, and what I didn't know at the time is that I had actually exposed myself to the shooter who was actually across the street, behind where I was now. Anyway, then somebody from inside hollers, and I said, "Come on out!" And it didn't happen and he didn't come out. And he said something. I couldn't understand what he said.

And then I reached in and popped open the door and I grabbed the radio and, "327! It's an ambush! Get me some help!" My exact words. And then, of course, all hell broke loose. Cars were coming from every direction. Then I got on and I said, "My partner's down. I need a stretcher car." Of course, they're coming from everywhere then. And I can hear the sirens coming.

And you know how time and stress situations, time goes away. To this day, I can remember being there. And I can see everything like it happened twenty minutes ago. And it seemed like it took forever for anybody to get there.

The closest squad was three blocks away. And they were there in virtually nothing flat, but it seemed like an hour. Because time was gone. It was just gone!

When the guy didn't come out – I hollered for him to come out, then he didn't come out – then I ran back up to Jim and everything, and then the first car pulled up and it was Ed Steenburg⁴ and John Labossiere⁵ were the first two guys there. And John went to Jim and everything, and Ed's asking me what happened, and I'm explaining it. In the meantime, other squads are starting to arrive left and right.

And then pretty soon, the stretcher car comes up. Bob Patsy⁶ was driving that, and they took Jim and headed for the hospital, but in my mind, I knew he was already dead. And later on, I was told where he'd been hit, he was dead before he hit the ground because of where the bullet hit. It actually hit just above his badge and it went through at an angle and cut the main aorta going into the heart and then ricocheted off his right shoulder blade and exited his right shoulder and stuck in the wall on the building that we were standing in front of. I was not allowed to be part of the investigation. I suppose it was probably considered conflict of interest, so that I didn't—so nothing could be—you know the investigation wouldn't be tainted in any way. They didn't want to give any of the lawyers any information.

⁴ **Edward James Steenberg** was appointed patrolman November 2, 1964; promoted to sergeant July 19, 1971; lieutenant November 22, 1976; captain April 11, 1983; deputy chief August 16, 1992; reinstated commander 1995; and retired July 2, 1999.

⁵ **John Cameron Labossiere** was appointed patrolman January 16, 1967; promoted to sergeant October 14, 1972; and retired September 8, 2000.

⁶ **Robert Richard Patsy** was appointed patrolman November 2, 1964; promoted to sergeant September 6, 1975; and retired December 30, 1994.

KC: Did they give you information about how the investigation was going?

GK: Mostly it was roundabout, hearsay stuff that I would get. You know, somebody would say, "Oh, well, they found this, they found that, they did this, they did that." And I'd hear the names, you know, Ronnie Read,⁷ Larry Clark⁸ and Diane Hutchinson⁹ and stuff like that, and I'd hear that. And then I can't remember how far back after the incident when they arrested Connie Trimble¹⁰ as the one that made the phone call. In fact, one of the unique things about this particular case is that was the basis for the Supreme Court to make a ruling that voiceprints¹¹ were legal identification. Now a lot of people I don't think know that that's where voiceprints became like fingerprints, was based on this particular case. And anyway, then we went to the trial, and of course, I actually

⁷ **Ronald Reed**, a former member of the Black United Front, was convicted in 2006 of the 1970 shooting of Saint Paul police officer, James Sackett. Reed was arrested and convicted of first-degree murder and conspiracy to commit first degree-murder. He is serving life in prison.

⁸ In 2006, **Larry Larue Clark**, a former member of the Black United Front, was found guilty of first-degree premeditated murder while aiding and abetting in the 1970 shooting death of Saint Paul Police Officer James Sackett in. In 2008, the Minnesota Supreme Court ordered a new trial for Clark, because of an error in jury instructions. Clark entered an Alford plea in 2009 to charges of conspiracy to commit murder. [Alford guilty plea: the defendant in a criminal case does not admit the criminal act and asserts innocence. In entering an Alford plea, the defendant admits that the evidence the prosecution has would be likely to persuade a judge or jury to find the defendant guilty beyond a reasonable doubt.]

⁹ **Diane Hutchinson** was Larry Clark's girlfriend in 1970.

¹⁰ **Connie Trimble** was Ronald Reed's girlfriend in 1970 and the mother of his child. She acknowledged she had placed the maternity call of to 911 the night of May 22, 1970. Trimble was tried for the murder in 1972 and acquitted.

¹¹ A **voiceprint** is a set of measurable characteristics of a human voice that uniquely identifies an individual. These characteristics, which are based on the physical configuration of a speaker's mouth and throat, can be expressed as a mathematical formula. The term applies to a vocal sample recorded for that purpose, the derived mathematical formula, and its graphical representation.

caught her in a couple of lies and I mentioned it to Ted Collins,¹² who was the prosecutor and everything. Anyway, they never really did anything about it, I mean, because she said she didn't know about it until the next day, and I said, "Well, that's a lie. I saw her across the street. And I saw Ronnie Reed standing there," because I recognized their pictures and stuff like that, when I had seen through the investigation and everything. And of course, Ronnie Reed was known around the neighborhood and Larry Clark and everything. In fact, I think was involved in an arrest with Larry Clark at one time, the year before that or something like that. And they were regulars around the neighborhood. And of course they had the Inner-City Youth League,¹³ which supposedly had guns stored in the basement, you know, and all this other stuff that was going on.

And I really don't blame her, but [Jim's wife] Janette took it really, really hard and she kind of had a lot of animosity towards me, you know, the fact that I survived and her husband didn't and so on. And consequently we didn't talk for a lot of years. In fact, the first time we talked in a long time was at the trial [in 2006]. It kind of softened up and we sat and talked for a little bit. Shortly after the incident, we had talked and she asked me some stuff and there was things in there that I felt that she didn't need to know, as to how he died and what happened and stuff like that. We had some conversations, and then all of the sudden, she developed a lot of animosity and everything, and I suppose held me responsible. And of course I held myself responsible. I was the senior officer and it was my responsibility and he was still technically a rookie, I guess you might say, because he did a short time on the job, even though he was senior to me as far as age. And there's certain things that come to play.

¹² **Theodore Collins** served as Special Assistant County Attorney for Ramsey, Washington, Dakota, and Sherburne Counties at various times from 1971 to 1983. He was the prosecutor at Connie Trimble's trial.

¹³ Inner-City Youth League: previous location at 851 Selby Avenue, at Victoria, in Saint Paul.

KC: How were you responsible?

GK: Well, there was actually nothing I could have done about it. I think it's commonly referred to as survivor's guilt, which I know now. At the time, I didn't know that. I mean, the entire incident was such that there was no way to expect it, there was no way to look at it, there was no way to— you know, it was a total, complete ambush. There wasn't nothing that we were going to do that was going to change anything. The only thing that may have changed it is, due to unforeseen circumstances, I was not in the line of fire. It's as simple as that. I got lucky. Period.

KC: It was just designed differently.

GK: Yep. Yep.

KC: Do you think having gone through the Sackett execution affected your family life? Affected your marriage?

GK: Yes. I'm sure it did. I'm sure it did, because— Well the way I grew up—now as I said, my parents had been divorced and they're both remarried, and this incident and the fact that like I said, my dad was a pretty hard-headed German, gruff type. And I grew up under the aspect that, you know, men don't cry, that kind of upbringing. I had to learn things the hard way, so to speak. I'm sure it affected the relationship that I had with my first wife. She started taking care of handicapped children and we had a couple of them living at the house, plus she did daycare for other kids and stuff like that. She kind of went in one direction and I kind of went in another direction, and it just ended up to the point where we just ended up getting divorced. Well, I mean, we're cordial with each other and everything. It's not like we talk to each other a lot, but at family functions,

the birthday parties for the grandkids and things like that, you know. Really, I mean, we're cordial, stuff like that. But I figure that's just the way it is.

I learned how to cope with me, but I don't think I learned how to cope with everybody else. Did I become pretty hard? Yeah. No doubt about it. I joke about it and everything, but I think it's true to a certain extent: I have no mercy. When I see a bad guy get shot, I don't care. He had it coming. See, when they talk about all this terrorism and they talk about all this other stuff going on in the world and everything and the bad guys get blown up and everything, I don't care. Good. Whatever. I have no mercy. In fact, I joke about it all the time and says, "If the president asked me how to handle it, I got two words, nuclear fission." [snickers] You know, that's my answer, because I don't care, I have no mercy. Evil is evil, right is right, and that's the way I look at things. Is it healthy? Maybe not. But I'm working on it.

KC: You were there with Sackett in 1970 and you talked about the healing that took place, but that would have been in 1997, when Ryan¹⁴ and Jones¹⁵ were killed. So that's twenty-seven years later.

GK: Ryan and Jones were killed. And of course it was approximately, oh, not quite a year later that the chief and everybody decided that you know we got to do something to help the department deal with this.

KC: Denny Conroy.¹⁶

¹⁴ **Ronald Michael Ryan, Jr.** was appointed police officer January 23, 1993; fatally injured by gunfire while responding to a "slumper" call August 26, 1994.

¹⁵ **Timothy J. Jones** was appointed police officer October 31, 1978; fatally injured by gunfire while searching for the suspect of Officer Ronald Ryan's murder August 26, 1994.

GK: He was one of the promoters behind it. Anyway, they brought in this psychologist. If I remember right, I think his name was Sullivan. I don't remember his first name though. But anyway, they brought him in and they would do—because of the nature, they had to go through almost five hundred people, and so they would have to do it in segments. So they would set up training days where people had to come in for the day and he would do this. And part of the thing was is that he wanted me to come in and discuss how I handled my situation, because a lot of coppers have been killed in the line of duty, but it was usually things where it was taken care of right away. This one hung over the department, because it had not been resolved, and I think that is one of the aspects why they had me come in. They also had some other guys come in and talk about their involvement in various things, where they ended up shooting somebody and how they dealt with it and everything. But the big thing was is how do you deal with the loss of a partner and stuff like that. And particularly with the aftermath, when nothing happened, it did not finish, the bad guys did not go to jail, and I think that was one of the things they wanted to know was how it was addressed. And part of the process was they brought me in to talk about my experience, so I gave twenty-four lectures on this [laughs]. And then, of course, he did some psychological thing with me, because I was talking about—he was the same psychologist that did all the ATF agents in the aftermath of Waco, Texas.

KC: Oh!

¹⁶ **Dennis Lee Conroy, PhD**, was appointed patrolman May 22, 1972; promoted to sergeant June 6, 1978; and retired November 29, 2002. He was awarded a Doctor of Philosophy in Psychology degree, September 5, 1987.

GK: And he was asking me about the thing, because we were out for lunch, and he says, "Do you still have dreams about it?" I says, "Oh, yeah." I says, "But the only thing is that when I see it, in my mind, it's black and white. There's no color." And he said, "That's a standard psychological thing." He says, "Because," he says, "that's the thing that you end up doing to block out certain things, because it's a natural safety mechanism." And the reason why I'm blocking out the color is because when I came around and I found Jim on the ground, he was in a pool of blood about this big around you know, which is bright red. So if I see it in black and white, you can't see the blood. So he did a process with me over the period of time, when we were doing all these interviews, he did this process—I can't remember what he called it, but anyway, this process when he got all done, then I could see everything in color. So it kind of like took away some of the pain, so to speak, so it was an interesting process, so I just—

KC: What was the process like? Do you remember?

GK: Well what he did was is he'd say, "Okay," he says, "now I want you to look at me." And then he'd just take his finger and he'd going back and forth towards my face and my eyes would follow it, and he'd just keep going back and forth and then all of the sudden he'd go, "Okay. Exhale." And then he'd go down like that. And then he'd say close your eyes, and he'd say, "Okay." And then he'd do it again and then he'd say, "Close your eyes." And he'd say, "What do you see?" You know and we did that over maybe a total of three sessions and everything, and when he was all done, all of the sudden I could see everything in color, and I thought that now, that was really weird.

KC: It's called EMDR¹⁷ or Rapid Eye Movement.

GK: That's what it was, yeah. And at the time, it was a relatively new theory. At least that's what he told me. And I found it real interesting, so I'm always curious. I've always been a very curious person and everything, particularly when I watch a movie or something, I go, "How did they do that?" And I got to figure out how they do that. I'll watch the mysteries on tele—it drives my wife crazy. We'll go to a movie or something like that, we'll sit there and watch it, and I'll go, "I know who did it," because I figured it out. And it drives her nuts, "Well, shut up and don't tell me." [both laugh] That's a lot of the stuff that I've gone through. So anyway, I think there was twenty-four, twenty-six sessions that we had to do this and then so it was getting to the point where I was repeating it every time.

KC: That was effective for you in letting it go.

GK: That was helping me, because part of the thing when we used to do the critical incident, particularly with post-traumatic stress syndrome, we would talk about things. You know, an officer would be involved in a shooting or something like that, or a major incident, and a bunch of us that had been involved in these incidents would all get together with him, like within two days after the incident, and we'd sit down, we'd tell our story, we would talk about how we felt and all this other stuff, and then we would let that person talk about it. And the more you talk about it, the better it gets and the easier it gets. Sure you feel pain, sure

¹⁷ **EMDR** (Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing) is a psychotherapy developed around 1989 that enables people to heal from the symptoms and emotional distress that are the result of disturbing life experiences/traumas. Repeated studies show that by using EMDR, people can experience the benefits of psychotherapy that once took years to make a difference. It is widely assumed that severe emotional pain requires a long time to heal. EMDR therapy shows that the mind can in fact heal from psychological trauma much as the body recovers from physical trauma

you feel how you're handling the situation and you miss them or you feel bad that you had to kill somebody, things like that, but you deal with it. You learn to live with it. And that was part of the premise on that.

Because mine was an unresolved situation, the more I talked about it, the better and better it got. Even though I knew who was responsible, but there was no way to put them in jail. Oh, I dreamed about sniping them and I dreamed about doing this and doing that, all this other stuff and everything, but I never took it up on it, because I figured why should I put my life and my family in jeopardy of being ruined over these dirt bags?

When I happened to run into a guy—very strange thing, after Jim was killed. I was working an off-duty job at the Grand Avenue Bank,¹⁸ the first bank on Grand Avenue there, or U.S. Bank or whatever it's called now. I was working security there and I'm sitting out in the walk-up outside. You know, they used to have a walk-up space outside, and I'm sitting in there watching the parking lot, and a guy comes in, a really weird looking guy, you know long, gray hair, older guy. I'd say at the time he was probably fifty-ish, long, gray hair, scraggly looking, heavysset—not real heavysset, but kind of heavysset. He had on a sport coat that was obviously about two sizes too small for him, and he had his pants tied up with some kind of rope instead of a belt and everything, and I thought, “Oh, is this guy a weird looking guy.” Anyway, I got to talking to the guy. He talked me into going to Stillwater Prison and read poetry. [both laugh] I'm still trying to figure out how the hell he did that. [laughs] I actually enjoyed it. Anyway, I got to know this guy really well, and after spending some time with

¹⁸ U.S. Bank, Grand Avenue Branch, 1071 Grand Avenue, Saint Paul, MN.

him, I was able to address a lot of things regarding Jim. And I think that probably got me through a lot of stuff as far as how to handle it.

KC: Tell me more. So this guy would ask you about Jim and talk to you about Jim —

GK: We would talk about it and we'd continue to talk about it and everything and he—I guess to you'd call him a far-left liberal, okay. He was an ex-Marine. He'd been in the Marine Corps. He'd been in battle in Korea. He became a lay minister and he would start an organization that dealt with chemical dependency actually. He would address a lot of different things. His name was Ralph Windor. He's been dead for a long time now and everything. His past finally caught up to him, so to speak, health-wise, because he'd been a junkie, he'd been everything, and he finally ended up getting cured. He then decided that he's going to try to help others. So he created this organization and it was called we the people. And actually I ended up being on the Board of Directors for his organization. It was based up around here originally, and then they moved out and then the Colonial Church¹⁹ out in, I think it's Edina. We used to go out there and have meetings out there once in a while and a lot of people would come.

I can remember one time he asked me to do a speech, so I thought okay, so I got up on the pulpit, because it was a real high pulpit I remember, and everybody else would sit down on floor level and everything. I thought, "No, I'm going for effect here," so I went up on the pulpit up there. I started out—because you know it was promoting racial equality. I mean, everybody's the same. I started out and I said, "Nigger, Spik, Kyke," and I went on and on like that and everybody went— and I says, "What are they? They're names. Nothing more, nothing less. Are they hurtful? Yes. Only if you let them. And the people that use

¹⁹ Colonial Church at 6200 Colonial Way, Edina, MN 55436

them don't understand." And that was the end of my speech. And everybody just stood there, dumbfounded during the whole thing and I thought, "Where the hell did I come up with that?" [laughs] But it just came in there and I went with it. I learned a lot of stuff from this guy.

KC: So did he approach you knowing that you had been Sackett's partner.

GK: No, no, he just approached me because I was a cop sitting there, and we got to talking. He thought it would be a good idea to have a cop go up to Stillwater and get in his poetry sessions. He'd go up there like once a week on Thursdays for about an hour and they'd meet in the auditorium in Stillwater prison, and there was maybe fifteen, sometimes twenty people involved, you know, inmates. And there was a bunch of other people that came along also, some women, people that were involved in his organization, people that he knew, and there'd maybe be, oh, eight or ten of us, and we'd go up there and everybody would kind of do stuff. What was funny is I'm walking down the hallway, Main Street in Stillwater [prison]—I mean, you come in the front gate and you go down there and the cell blocks go off from Main Street [main hall in the prison].

KC: Yeah, I've been in Stillwater a number of times.

GK: Yeah, anyway, you go into the auditorium and you got to walk down Main Street to get there, right? Well, I walk through and all of the sudden I hear somebody yelling, "Kothe, you son of a bitch." And I go, "Oh, no, I'm going to get shivved, because it's somebody that I put here." And I turn around and it's a guy by the name of Terry Dillard, from the neighborhood here. And he's the one that, he used to do it—I don't know if—he probably doesn't do it anymore, but

he used to be a Mr. T²⁰ imitator after he got out. Anyway, I was one of the responsible for him being there for a robbery. He used to tell everybody that I was slowest cop on the job, and I said, "Why the hell do you think I wanted K-9 Unit? I didn't want to chase after you guys." [both chuckle] Anyway, it turned out to be a really good thing. Of course, thirty seconds after I walked in the place, the whole prison knew that there was a cop in the place.

Anyway, we're in the auditorium and we're doing our thing there and one guy that was relatively new to the group starts giving me a little bit of a hard time, and I just let it go off. I thought, "Okay, you know, the guy's got some problems. He doesn't like cops. And I can understand it. He's in Stillwater prison." So I just let it roll off and let it go and didn't pay much attention about it. And Ralph even mentioned. He says, "That wasn't nice. He shouldn't have done that." And I says, "Well, hey, the guy's got to address whatever." Then the next week when we came back, come to find out that some of the other people involved there gave this guy a little bit of a blanket party. They didn't like the fact that he was creating a problem in this group, because they liked being able to go to this group. If it was going to create a problem, the prison was going to stop the group, so they didn't like that, so they had a little tay-to-tay with the man. He was pretty nice the next week. [laughs] Of course, that's prison mentality. That's the way they deal with stuff.

²⁰ **Mr. T** (born Laurence Tureaud; May 21, 1952) is an American actor known for his roles as B. A. Baracus in the 1980s television series *The A-Team*, as boxer Clubber Lang in the 1982 film *Rocky III*, and for his appearances as a professional wrestler. Mr. T is known for his trademark African Mandinka warrior hairstyle, his gold jewelry, and his tough-guy image.

I was kind of surprised one day when I got a call from Tom Dunaski.²¹

KC: What year was this?

GK: Maybe six years ago now. So around 2002.

Anyway, he just gave me a call and I said, "Hey Tom, what's going on?" And he says, "I'd like to talk to you about Jim Sackett." And I said, "Why? What's going on?" He says, "Well," he says, "We working on some things" and he says, "I need some information that only you have." "Oh, okay." So we met for breakfast or something like that, Scotty Duff²² was there, we talked probably for an hour. I told him what I had remembered and everything, which was pretty vivid and everything. Then I didn't hear anything for a long time. Then I got a call again and Scotty wanted to talk to me and I met him for breakfast and we talked for a while and I gave him whatever it was he was looking for. And then all of the sudden I walked into the restaurant one day and everybody says, "Hey we saw you on the news." "What the hell did I do now?" They said, "Well, the arrest." And I'm going, "I wasn't arrested. What are you talking about?" And they mentioned that they arrested somebody in the Jim Sackett case and I hadn't seen the news, so I didn't know anything of what was going on. And I said, "Really?" They said, "Yeah, it was all over Channel Five. You know, they arrested him in Chicago and they arrested another guy in Saint Paul." I said, "Really? I knew nothing about it." So anyway, I get home and there are phone messages from every TV station, the newspapers, and everybody wants an interview. And I

²¹ **Thomas Francis Dunaski** was appointed patrolman October 26, 1971; promoted to sergeant October 10, 1979; and retired September 30, 2008. He was named officer of the year 1977, and received the Chief Richard Rowan Award in 2006.

²² **William Scott Duff** was appointed patrolman January 8, 1972; promoted to sergeant March 14, 1998; and retired September 26, 2008.

thought, "I ain't got time for this right now." So anyway, I go down to the dog school,²³ I'm talking to one of my instructors about something, and I did some repair work down there. Anyway, I go in my truck and I'm on the way home. Anyway, she calls me on my cell phone and says, "CCO²⁴ is here and wants to talk to you at the dog school." And I thought, how the hell did they find me at the dog school? I own property, but that's the only connection between me and the dog school, because basically it's my wife's [Sue Mills-Kothe] operation. She's the primary on that. I talked to the guy and I says, "Well, I got an appointment at two o'clock today down in headquarters, because I was qualifying. That was the first year that we did the qualification for retired police officers for concealed carry. "Well, I got an appointment for my scheduled annual certification, down in headquarters." "What time?" "Two o'clock." "I'll meet you there." They showed up. They were standing there when I got there and everything, so I did an interview with them there and then I did an interview with Channel 11²⁵ and an interview with Channel 9²⁶, and then I talked to a couple reporters on the phone. That was a nonstop thing going there for a while. It was like, for crying out loud, these people are relentless.

KC: What did that feel like for you?

GK: Well actually it was—it felt really good you know, because they had actually—in fact, I am very surprised that they—because you know, I've been retired and so on. Now I don't care what I say. You know, before when you're working the job,

²³ **Total Recall School For Dogs**, 17285 Forest Blvd. North (Hwy 61), Hugo, MN 55038

²⁴ **WCCO Channel 4 TV**, a CBS affiliate in Minnesota

²⁵ **KARE Channel 11 TV**, a NBC affiliate in Minnesota

²⁶ **KMSP Channel 9 TV**, a FOX affiliate in Minnesota.

you got to play by the rules, you got to watch your mouth. You know, you can't do certain things. But since I was retired, I didn't care anymore. So when I'm giving these interviews and he says, "What do you think about this?" I says, "It's very simple. You can run, but you can't hide." And they used it! It really surprised me. Usually they don't want to—ooh, they don't want to offend anybody. And me, I don't care. If I offend you, tough; bounce, live with it. This is me, take it or leave it, I don't care. You know I'm too damn old to worry about it now. [chuckles] I'm really surprised that they actually used that quote [chuckles], but they did. And I actually felt good. I thought, "Well, it's about time."

Tom Dunaski and Scotty Duff, they worked their tails off on this thing. They went way above and beyond. And Tom says that he absolutely refused to retire until he clears this case. And you cannot believe the files involved in it. There was literally boxes and boxes and boxes of files regarding this thing, that I—well, I saw some of the stuff in there, but there must have been at least fifteen boxes of interviews and you name it was in these boxes that they had found out. And of course the trial, everybody knows what happened at the trial and—

KC: You testified both at the trial for Reed and for Clark.

GK: Yes, I did. In fact, at the first trial, the defense attorney gets up and he says, "Sergeant or Mister," he says, "What do I call you?" I said, "Well, you can call me any damn thing you want except late for lunch." And it gave the jury a laugh, the judge laughed. And my wife was sitting at the back of the court room and one of the captains is sitting next to them and he says, "Don't you just love our boy?" [both laugh] "And he's all yours," he said to my wife. I mean, what do I care? What are they going to do? Put me in jail? Hold me in contempt of court? I already got that.

KC: But I have the illusion this department means a lot for you and you get to be flip and not worried and yet you probably wouldn't do anything that would hurt the department.

GK: No. The department meant a lot to me. It's one thing I learned from Bill McCutcheon²⁷ was that—he was an excellent chief in my opinion. A lot of people don't like him. Personality wise, he was a jerk. He'd walk down the hallways, sometimes he'd say hi to you, sometimes he'd walk by you like you were air. And that's just the way he was. Thing is, I do know that he really loved that police department and I did, too.

To me it was—give you an example, I was at a training thing and I got sent down to Franklin, Tennessee for a training seminar. It was actually a two week deal that I had to be down there and it was for accident investigation, because I was assigned to the accident division at the time. And I went down there and of course, naturally at these things everybody introduces themselves and stuff like that, and I says, "Well, you know, I'm Glen Kothe. I'm from Saint Paul Police Department and I'm currently assigned to the accident division." And the instructor says, "Well, what's new in Saint Paul?" I says, "Well, I don't know." And he says, "What? Saint Paul Police has nothing new?" And it—what the heck is he talking about? Well, apparently Saint Paul is known around the country as being very progressive, innovative, you know, and I worked there all the time. I don't think anything of it, I mean, because I'm used to that. But apparently other police departments see what we're doing and they start adapting it. And I never knew that until that particular point.

²⁷ **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.

For instance, our gym, which was started by Bill McCutcheon, was the most extensive—I mean, the Vikings would have loved to have a gym like that, and we were allowed to work out on duty, because he wanted to maintain a good physical condition for his police department. He wanted to eliminate the old, fat cop image, which was a good thing. And we all had to take stress tests. We all had to take, every year, had to take a stress test. In fact every year. A lot of guys owe their lives to this thing. There were guys that took the stress test, they were on the machine about five minutes and the doctor went, “Okay, what time do you want surgery?” Guys literally had their lives saved by these programs and everything. And I mean we had quit smoking programs. We had all kinds of stuff. So it was a lot of fun. It was a nice place to work. Sure there were bad times and there was hard times and stuff like that, but overall, when I look back over my thirty years and everything, I think it was worth it. It was a good time. As you said, I wouldn’t want to do anything that would harm the police department, because it still is my police department, even though I’ve been gone for a long time.

Interview February 6, 2009

Focus of interview is the re-creation of Saint Paul's K-9 Unit²⁸

KC: You're on the department about five years and we have not had a K-9 Unit since 1962. You wanted a K-9 Unit.

GK: Well, actually, I thought a K-9 Unit was good. Jim Cocchiarella²⁹ actually was trying to push it at the time, and I can remember one day we were in in-service training and we're all sitting there, and they're talking about helicopters and all this other stuff, and I says, "You know," I says, "a helicopter is fine and dandy to get at high chases, but if you're gonna spend money," I said, "it'd be more practical to spend money on a K-9 Unit, because you can't search a building, a warehouse, with a helicopter." I says, "Now if we go into a warehouse, you got six, eight officers, minimum, to search this building and even then you can't guarantee that you found anybody or that you will find anybody." So a K-9 made more sense financially and safety-wise. Anyway, Cocchiarella was in the same thing. He'd been talking to the chief—Rowan³⁰ was the chief in '72 and the deputy chief, I believe it was Bill McCutcheon who was the deputy chief at the time. He was one of the guys that was in charge of the budget, you know. He was the one that ran that.

KC: He was made deputy chief in '72.

²⁸ **K-9 Unit** was in Saint Paul 1958-1962 with Larry McDonald and Pal, Ed Buehlman and Baron, and Will Swiger and Champ. The unit was re-created in 1970 with Jim Cocchiarella and Jubal and Glen Kothe and Reggie.

²⁹ **James Michael Cocchiarella** was appointed police officer April 1, 1968; and retired April 28, 1995.

³⁰ **Richard H. Rowan** (1922-2005) was appointed patrolman October 13, 1947; promoted to detective June 20, 1955; deputy chief April 17, 1964; chief June 30, 1970; and retired December 31, 1979.

GK: Okay, yeah, yeah. But we used to joke about it because whatever rank he was, that was the rank that called for the guy in charge of the budget. And because of the budget, they were looking for ways to make things run more efficiently, and obviously a K-9 Unit, which had certain expenses additional over a normal squad, but was still a lot cheaper than a helicopter. So anyway, Cocchiarella was pushing to get the K-9 Unit started, and he was dealing with McCutcheon and Rowan and I don't know who else. Anyway, I make this statement in this in-service training, and the next thing you know, Cocchiarella approaches me and says, "You interested in being a K-9 handler?" I says, "Oh, yeah." I said, "I've had a dog all my life. I think a K-9 Unit would be a fantastic idea." So that's how I ended up being one of the first two. Cocchiarella and I were the first two, and it was because Coch knew I was really interested in it and he thought well, he needed somebody with enthusiasm for what he was trying to do. So we both ended up going to Minneapolis police, where we—Jim had his own dog and then I got my dog when I went to Minneapolis Police Department, to their K-9 facility for training. All the dogs were donated, and when I went to Minneapolis, they had a bunch of donated dogs and everything and they just passed them out to guys. One of the trainers in Minneapolis had been the breeder of the dog that I ended up with. He had sold it to a Minneapolis copper who had a bunch a kids and the youngest boy loved the dog. The only trouble is, he was allergic, so they had to get rid of the dog because he couldn't handle it. But the kid, even though he couldn't be around the dog, he said, "Well, the dog has to be a K-9," so his dad donated it to the Minneapolis Police K-9 Unit, and then I got the dog when I went over there for training and stuff.

KC: What kind of dog?

GK: It was a German Shepherd. He was named when I got him. His name was Reggie. It was funny because he was a very dark dog. In fact, the coloring almost looked like a Doberman, and people used to think that he was part Shepherd, part Doberman because of his coloring. Welton Copp was the assistant trainer for Minneapolis K-9, and he was also the guy that was the breeder for the guy that I ended up with. He gave me the dog's bloodline, and they could trace it all the way back to Germany. In fact, the dog's grandfather was Volker Von Shogronhaus (spelling unknown), which was the kennel name. He was one of the most well-known German Shepherds in Germany, Double German Seeger, and had all these titles and everything else like that. So Reggie had a heck of lineage behind him, which was unusual at that time. I mean he was basically a fairly valuable dog because of his lineage. I ended up with him and he was a good dog.

KC: Did you have other dogs in the home when you got Reggie?

GK: Yeah, I had a couple of personal pets and he didn't care. They got along fine and everything. Reggie used to follow me around all the time, and I can remember [chuckles] the house I lived in at the time was one of those—oh, it was probably maybe seventy, eighty years old, and it had those entryways where you come in the front door and then it had like a little breezeway thing that was maybe five feet across, where you hung your coats and everything and then you'd actually come into the living room from there. He used to lay in there because it was cool on the floor in there, and that's where he liked to lay. I had a furnace guy come over one day and Reggie, when he was at home, he had no aggression and of course, I promoted that and everything, because I had kids and they had their friends over and everything, so I couldn't have any accidents or anything, so he was even not allowed to show any kind of aggression at home. And anyway,

he's laying in the entryway and the furnace man comes over to check the furnace out, and he comes in and he sees the dogs and I say, "Eh, don't worry about him. Just step over him. He could care less." And he steps over him and walks down, goes down in the basement and goes back out to his truck and comes back in and goes back out to his truck, comes back in, and gets done doing what he's doing on the furnace and everything. Anyway, I write the check to pay for the furnace and the repairs and whatever, and he gets ready to leave and he says, "Hey," he says, "there's been a squad car parked out in front out here," he says, "since I got here." He says, "It's still there." He says, "Is there something going on around here?" I said, "Oh no, that's my take-home car." And he says, "You get a take-home car?" I says, "Yeah, I'm on the K-9 Unit, so all the K-9s get a take-home car." He says, "Well, where's the dog?" I said, "Well, that's him right there." He said, "Really?!" He says, "Can you have him move?" Now this guy's stepped over this dog four times already [chuckles] or six times, whatever and now all of the sudden he's afraid to go near him, and the dog is sound asleep. He could care less. [laughs] It's all perception, nothing but perception. Every time I think of that, it just—it's funny.

KC: Now you started with two dogs. How long did it take before you started expanding and doing your own training?

GK: Well, let's see, Coch and I started in '72 and then in '73 I think they added three dogs. That was Donnie Martin,³¹ Don Bulver,³² and Larry Nevin.³³ Then I think it

³¹ **Donald Thomas Martin** was appointed police officer September 3, 1968; and retired February 10, 1995.

³² **Donald Frank Bulver** was appointed police officer November 13, 1967; promoted to sergeant August 26, 1987; and retired September 12, 1991.

³³ **Lawrence James Nevin** was appointed police officer March 23, 1970, and retired November 30, 1998.

was a year or two later, they added five more and they made Tom Burke³⁴ the sergeant. We were up to about eleven dogs and Tom Burke was the sergeant. And then of course we were pushing to get a kennel facility,³⁵ and of course we got the land out at the Saint Paul water department, the water works out there. It's actually in Maplewood, just on the other side of Rice Street, right off of Larpenteur, and they had a bunch of vacant land there. Not a bunch, but enough for what we needed. Gave us the land, and of course we got a federal grant. At the time, they were passing out federal grants to police departments left and right, so we got a grant to build a new building and a training facility and enough money to operate it. Of course, it expanded from there. Since that time, a lot of civilians, people, non-police officers, businessmen, business owners, they all got involved. They donated lots of money; they come up with fundraisers and stuff like that. And now instead of having to rely on donated dogs, which sometimes comes with their problems you know, and sometimes they work out, sometimes they don't, which a lot of guys can attest to. Jim Long,³⁶ for instance, ended up in the hospital, because one of the dogs he got just went nuts and couldn't take the pressure and just went crazy and just chewed him up.

You know, because we put a lot of pressure on these dogs to see how they're going to hold the pressure, because working the K-9 Unit, it's a constant thing and the dog has to be ready to go instantaneously. So a of times they ride and sit and sometimes they'll lay down, but as soon as there's a change in

³⁴ **Thomas Michael Burke** was appointed patrolman March 2, 1965; promoted to sergeant February 17, 1973; and retired August 6, 1993.

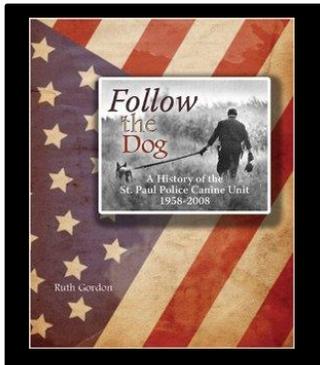
³⁵ **SPPD Kennel and Training Facility** was built at 1900 Rice Street. Maplewood, MN. In 1997, it was renamed The Timothy J. Jones K-9 Training Center

³⁶ **James Brooks Long** was appointed patrolman January 23, 1971, and retired August 14, 1998.

anything, bang, they're up moving. They go from sedate to on-guard instantaneously. Well, that puts a lot of pressure on a dog, a lot of mental pressure on the dog, and so we want to make sure that we have a dog that's really stable. At the time we had to rely on donated dogs and like I say, sometimes they worked out, sometimes they didn't.

KC: Were you involved in forming the Saint Paul Police K-9 Foundation³⁷?

GK: No, I didn't have anything to do with that. That happened after I was off the unit and everything. I was still on the job, but I wasn't part of the unit at that time. It



was a pretty good deal, because they started out basically with donations, and what these people wanted to do was get some decent dogs and everything. One thing led to another, and now they've got a whole complete thing where they're selling stuff at the fair, and now we've got the book that just came out.

Ruth Gordon just wrote a book. It's gone fairly large. Now of course when the department needs dogs, they buy them. They actually import them from Germany or wherever and stuff. And they cost up to ten thousand dollars apiece for one of these dogs.

KC: Because of the way they're bred?

GK: The way that they're bred specifically for this, and some of them even come partially trained depending on where you buy them from. So they end up with some really good dogs, but it's all strictly a business operation now, which is run separately from the police department.

KC: Tell me some stories about you and Reggie.

³⁷ Saint Paul Police K-9 Foundation at www.StPaulPoliceK-9Foundation.org

GK: Oh. [chuckles] There's one that—Don Bulver and I used to go to the same restaurant. The family that owned the restaurant were personal friends of ours, so if we were going for a bite to eat or a cup of coffee or something like that, we'd swing by. Well, Don and I had opposite days off. So one day a week we would overlap and we both basically had the same habit. I'd pull up and park in front and go in the front door, unless it was full, at which point I'd pull around in back and go in through the back door. Well, this particular day, we're both working and I was going to stop up to—it was Red's Pizza over on University Avenue, right near where Ron Saxon Ford used to be. I pull up in front. Well, it turned out Don was going to go there too. Well, he saw me pull up in front, so he parked around the corner. So anyway, we're in there, we're talking and having a cup of coffee, and we're talking with the owners. Anyway, Don gets a call. So without thinking, he walks out the front door, he goes over and he gets in my car. [laughs] Now these dogs are trained to go after anybody that comes in that car except the handler, you know. And of course, Linda, the owner's daughter, is making pizza, so she's right there in the window looking at this and she knows it's my car. And she sees Don going to go in it, and she's waving at him trying to stop him and he waves at her, you know, thinks she's just waving goodbye. Anyway, he gets in the car, closes the door.

And the next thing you know, my dog is up and he sticks his nose right in Don's ear and he starts sniffing at him, because it kind of caught him a little bit by surprise, like, "Well, it looks like the boss, but it doesn't smell like the boss." Anyway, he's sniffing at him and of course Don thinks it's his dog, right? The only difference is that, like I said before, my dog is really dark. His dog was kind of a light color. So the dog keeps sniffing at him and checking him out and everything and Don's going, "Oh, cut it out." And he goes like this to push him

away, and he got his hand up about this far, and he turns and he looks and he goes, "Oh, shit." [laughs] And of course, at that time when he raised his arm, that was the key and Reggie starts growling. Well now, Don does not dare move, because he's lunch meat. So he just sits there. [laughs] And of course, I don't know what's going on, right? All of the sudden, I look up and Linda is laughing and she's falling on the floor and I thought, "What, did she get into drugs or what happened to her?" Anyway, I'm talking to somebody there and somebody apparently walked by the car and the dog turned, because they came close to the car, and the dog turned to see what it was and as they did, Don popped the door and rolled out and kicked the door shut. And he happened to get out of the car without getting bit. He comes storming in and he hollers at me, he says, "Lock your damn car!" And turns around and walks out. And I thought, "What did I do?" You know, I had no idea what was going on and of course, then the story finally comes out and I find out what happened and stuff and that oh, every time I think about it—

And of course, the funny part about it—he wasn't the first one or he wasn't the only one that ever got into my car by mistake. John Nord³⁸—I think he was the lieutenant at the time. We were getting ready to go on a raid some place, so we were all gathering up behind Central High School, in the parking lot that was behind the building, so nobody could see us. I was parked there and we were all talking you know, "Okay, you take the front door, you take the back door, da da," you know, and we're setting up and getting ready for this raid. And on the K-9 Units we always used to leave the windows down about that far

³⁸ **John Clay Nord** was appointed patrolman August 27, 1965; promoted to sergeant December 21, 1968; lieutenant February 17, 1973; captain December 21, 1977; deputy chief February 9, 1984; and retired January 25, 1991.

for ventilation for the dog—the back windows, where the dog was. Anyway, John without thinking leans up against my squad, right next to that window and of course the dog bounces off, grabs his jacket—actually got ahold of a piece of his jacket. Of course, John jumps about eight feet and lands, and he got a rip in the back of his jacket, you know, because the dog caught part of the jacket. And the dog's just going wild, I mean, the car is rocking and all this other stuff and everything. I could just see he was totally pale. And from that day on, he was absolutely terrified of the K-9 Unit. [chuckles] He became the deputy chief and everything, and he would not go near a K-9 Unit car. [laughs] Ever since then.

You know, Reggie kind of had a way about him and everything that scared the hell out of people, primarily because of the way he looked, his coloring and stuff like that. And of course, being at night it was more intimidating, because when he curled his lip, all you could see was them pearly whites, and it was like, oh, *The Hound of the Baskervilles*. Amongst the K-9 guys and everything, of course, we practiced on each other, taking hits from each other's dogs and stuff. A lot of the guys hated to take hits from him because he was known as the bone crusher. He used to just sit there and just squeeze and just keep—and then he'd start to rock his jaw a little bit and squeeze down and it—very painful, even through the sleeve. That was just the way he liked to do things.

KC: So you started developing training. Did you send more K-9 officers to Minneapolis for training or did you start developing your own?

GK: The next three after Jim and I, Don Bulver, Don Martin, and Larry Nevin, went to Minneapolis for their training. The next five—I'm trying to remember whether we had by that time started our own unit and started doing our own training. I

think we did. I can't remember now exactly when, because I remember they did the construction on the building. A lot of us would get out there.

In fact, I did a lot of the sod work and stuff like that out there on the original construction, primarily because that's what my dad used to do years ago, and I used to work for him when I was a kid. So I knew how to lay sod [chuckles] very quickly.

KC: And keeping the cost down?

GK: And keeping the cost down. And of course, we wanted the place to look nice. Anyway, Cocchiarella started doing the training himself. The unit just kept expanding from then on.

KC: When were one of those early times that Reggie or the dogs proved that the K-9 Unit was critical?

GK: Oh, there was numerous things that come up. I mean, they'd call for us, particularly at a warehouse and stuff like that, because these dogs would just fly through a warehouse. And of course, Reggie, he had a warped sense of humor. I know he did. I always think of that cartoon dog³⁹ that had that real funny laugh whenever he'd do something and everything.

He used to take off in the dark—because I used to like to search in the dark because I figured it was safer for me. You know, you'd hold the flashlight in different spots so that you didn't illuminate yourself



Lt. Mumbly from
The Mumbly Cartoon Show

³⁹ **The Mumbly Cartoon Show** aired on ABC from 1976–1977, with a cartoon dog character famous for his wheezy laugh.

and everything, so if somebody wanted to take a shot at you from the dark, they didn't know where your body was. Reggie would take off into the dark. Well, he's a black dog; you can't see him.

Well, he'd sneak up behind me and goose me or something. He'd scare the hell out of you. There was one time we went in and he'd searched the whole place, there was nobody in there, and I don't know where he's at. I'm calling for him and everything, and all the sudden one of the guys on the radio says, "You looking for your dog? He's out here in the car." He turned around, searched the whole place, didn't find anything, so he went out jumped in the squad. [laughs] In the meantime, I'm wandering around this building going, "Where the hell is my dog?" But he used to do stuff like that and everything. I swear he had a sense of humor. There was a number of times where we caught burglars. In fact, Reggie had the unique thing. I think he caught the two youngest burglars in the history. They were four and six years old.

KC: Tell me the story.

GK: Maybe the one kid was eight. Yeah, I think the one kid was eight and the other one was five. I think it was five. Anyway, they were young. We get a call down at the Wilder Nursery, down off of West Seventh Street, down there at Seventh and Leech. So we get there and one of the coppers that got there first says, "Well, we got an open window." Okay, so I send Reggie. I tell him to find them and he takes off, and then all of the sudden he takes off like a heat seeking missile. BOOM! He's running up the stairs, and I thought, "Oh, he's got a hot one." So I take off and I'm running up to him and he runs up to this door, and I look out and it's a balcony and there's chain-link around this balcony, about five, six feet tall. I thought, the guy went out that door? So I open the door to check it, and he

shoots past me and goes out there, and I thought holy crap. And I go out there and he's gone! I went, "Where'd my dog go?" And I turn around and here the roof came right down to the floor. He ran up the roof and I see him running up the roof. Now we're three stories up. Well, with the roof, it's four stories off the ground, and he runs up and he goes over to the peak and I thought, "Oh, God, my dog's dead. He just fell off the roof." So I go climbing up this roof, which was a fairly steep roof. You know, it's one of those old style buildings. You know those old mansions along Summit and everything. Well, this was similar to that.

I get up over to the top of the roof and here he's standing on the downside where it came together in a V and there's two kids down there and he's standing there staring at them. I thought, "Holy crap, he's got two kids!" Well, he didn't bite them. I mean, he's around kids all day long, you know, my kids, so he wasn't about to bite these little kids. So I get ahold of him so he doesn't fall off the roof when I get to hold the kids—you know, I'm trying to hold onto the dog and these two kids. Anyway, I get them back on the balcony, and I tell them I got two kids. Anyway, we get them down there and we get their ages and stuff like that. We get them down and, "How old are you?" "Five." "How old are you?" "Eight." And they're brothers. And they broke in there looking for whatever, you know cash in this teacher's desk or something. I don't know. I thought, "What the heck are these kids doing out at nine o'clock at night?" Or ten o'clock at night, whatever it was.

So that was one of the unique things, but the really unique thing is my second dog Rex caught the same two guys. First two burglars he ever caught were the same two guys. [laughs]

KC: How old were they now?

GK: One was an adult and the other one was close to being an adult.

KC: They didn't learn.

GK: They didn't learn. They didn't learn.

KC: What happened to Reggie?

GK: He was about ten years old and technically he was retired, because I had Rex and I was in the process of finishing up training with him. Reggie all of the sudden one day was walking down the hallway in the house and everything and he got to near the top of the stairs. At the time, the house I lived in was a split-entry, so you had the stairway coming upstairs and the one going downstairs and then the front door in the middle. Anyway, he got to the top, and all of the sudden he looked like he got dizzy and he fell down the stairs. I thought, "Oh, what happened him?" So I scoop him up, put him in the squad, run him to the vet— which the vet that we were using luckily was only about five blocks from my house. Ran him in there and they started checking him out. When they peeled back his gums, they were like dead fish white, which usually indicates some major, major problems, and he says, "He's had a massive blood loss. Has he been injured lately? I says, "No. All of the sudden he got dizzy and fell down the steps it looked like." Anyway, they couldn't find anything physically wrong with him directly and everything, and they pumped him up, vitamin B complexes and stuff, and all of the sudden, then he seemed to be fine. A couple hours later, he seemed to be fine. So then maybe a month or so later, it happened again, only luckily he didn't fall down the stairs and everything. So when I took him to the vet, they finally found out he had a tumor on his spleen. The vet called it a splenic and what would happen is it would break open, and because the spleen contains so much blood, he would have a massive internal blood loss, which

would cause the dizziness. And then it would seal itself back up, the body would reabsorb all of the blood, and he'd be fine. Well, when they did the blood tests on him and stuff like that, they found out that his liver and everything else was affected, all of the numbers were off and everything, so we just ordered him put down.

KC: What's that like? Not only your pet, but your partner?

GK: Well, it was really difficult. I mean really, really difficult. It was almost like putting down one of your children, because this dog bailed my butt out of the fire more times than I care to remember.

I remember one time I was going through a school that he was searching, and he was going one way and I was going another way and I wasn't paying attention and it was my own fault, and I didn't see a guy hiding there. And I almost walked in and the dog came out of nowhere and stopped the guy, because he was going to hit me from behind. All of the sudden, Reggie come out of nowhere and took him out.

Then there was another incident where I was on a traffic stop and I'm talking to the driver. Pretty soon, the passenger gets out. The cars were set up in such at that time that we had a normal prisoner cage in there, but the center of it had a trap door in it that we could open or close and most of the time we left it open. The dog is in the back seat of course, but he could get through this opening, and then we'd leave the driver's window down, and he'd jump into the front seat and out the driver's window in case I got into trouble and he could come and help me. Well, I'm on this traffic stop, and I'm talking to the driver of the vehicle and the passenger gets out of the vehicle on the other side and I turn—I see him get out and I says, "Why don't you get back in?" And just as I

turn my head, I see this black streak coming and he's heading for this guy like a heat seeking missile. And I whistle and Reggie stops and he stands there staring at this guy, and I told him, I said, "Don't move. Do not move at all." So I take the driver around there and I know something's wrong. Something keyed Reggie. The one thing that we learned in K-9 is trust your dog. That was the cardinal rule. Trust your dog. So I go in and I shake these guys down. Well, the passenger had a gun. How the dog knew, I don't know, I have no idea, but there was no doubt in my mind that his intent was to shoot me. The dog somehow knew it, and he came to my assistance without any hesitation. There's time after time when I can think about it, you know. The people get out of the car and they're going to give me a hard time and they glance back and they see him staring at them through the window, and it's like, "Hmm, maybe not." Because he had that very intimidating look on him. Like I say, his coloring scheme was that of a Doberman or a Rottweiler type dog.

KC: So he's ten years old. How did you make the decision that "Reggie needs to retire. I need to train another dog?"

GK: Well, he was slowing down. Ten years is a long time for a K-9, particularly back then. The life expectancy of a German Shepard generally was about ten, maybe—you know, twelve-year-old German Shepard at the time was an old dog.

KC: Has that changed?

GK: Yeah, they're getting more and more—in fact all breeds seem to be getting older and older, and it's primarily because of the foods and medical stuff and supplements and stuff like that are now available that were not available back then, that have improved the dog's health, his longevity. It's the same as people. I mean, let's face it, a hundred years ago, life expectancy was what, forty? Now

it's what, eighty-seven? And the dogs are the same way. I mean, it used to be the bigger the dog, the shorter the lifespan. Well, I know somebody who has Great Danes and their life expectancy was like six to eight. She's had five Great Danes all live to be almost thirteen. I had a Rottweiler. Rottweilers were noted to—you know, average lifespan was like eight or nine. He was thirteen when he died.

Well, Reggie was ten years old, he was slowing down, he was beginning to show a little arthritis in his hips, so he couldn't jump as well as he used to and everything, so we thought no sense breaking the dog down and everything. They had an opportunity to get another dog, so they got Rex, my second dog, *big*—when they picked him up. I'm not exaggerating, they took him to the vet, he weighed a 122 pounds. But he was way overweight. So I slimmed him down, I got him down some place between 100 and 110. He was just a big stocky dog, a short back, but just massive chest, massive head. [chuckles] Everybody in the K-9 Unit nicknamed him Marmaduke, because his head was so big and because of his lips and everything. He had a head on him like a bear. He looked more like a bear than he did a German Shepherd.



KC: How did Reggie like Rex coming into the home?

GK: He didn't pay much attention. Rex primarily was very barrier aggressive when I got him. The guy that donated him at the time was a salesman, so he was in and out of town, and his wife had a new baby and everything, so he got the dog and he taught the dog to be very aggressive to anybody that came to the door. So for whatever reason, he ended up having to get rid of the dog. I think primarily it's

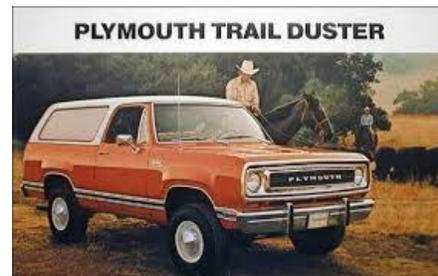
probably because he was afraid of the dog, and he couldn't control a dog that big, so he donated the dog and we ended up with it, and then eventually I ended up with it. So I couldn't let him around, because if there was any kind of barrier he was very aggressive and everything. So he stayed in a kennel outside, which the city provided and everything, which Reggie never used. Even though I had one, he never used it. But Rex was a different dog. I couldn't quite—I didn't know quite how to work with him and everything. Well, of course after Reggie died and as luck would have it, Rex injured a leg and so he was in a cast, so he couldn't stay outside because it was wintertime, because he had trouble getting in and out of the doghouse, so he came inside and eventually became a house dog. And he adapted pretty good, but again, I had to be a little careful about the barrier aggression.

My nephew was over one day and Rex was out on the deck and the screen door was open, and I told him, I says, "Stay away from the dog. Just don't—leave the dog alone. Don't go near him." And his mother wasn't paying attention. Anyway he walked over and he went like this on the screen, and of course the dog snapped at him, scared the hell out of him. I told him, I says, "I told you, stay away from the dog. When I tell you to do something, do it." But he was a good dog. Had a warped sense of humor though. He loved to sneak up on people and scare them.

KC: Tell me a Rex story.

GK: We were on a call up on Selby Avenue, right off of Dale, and I was actually parked on the wrong side of the street. I was parked in the Southwest corner of Dale and Selby and there used to be a drug store there. And then there was an after-hours joint that kind of took over that corner a little bit on that spot.

Anyway, we were looking for a robbery suspect. Somebody spotted a car. Anyway, squad pulled up behind the guy who was east bound and I was west bound, and I shot over in front of him, so my car was on the wrong side of the street. So we get out, and anyway, some guy walks by that I know, and I'm talking to him a little bit and everything and my back is to my squad. At that time, we had Plymouth Trail Dusters. You know, some of the front runners of the SUV era. These were two-wheel drives and they were set up that they were basically two-door vehicles. The dog would ride right behind where the driver sat, but then we had bucket seats and everything, so we had a big wide web thing that would go across so that the dog wouldn't fall into the front seat if I hit the brakes hard or something. So he was—and then there was a cage behind him and then in the very back of it, the garage, body shop, had set it up so that instead of a tailgate folding down, they made a door, so that we had a separate prisoner compartment in the back. So the dog was between me and the prisoner, because before we'd never had any way of transporting prisoners. We always had to call another squad, so they thought this was a good idea, rather than having to tie up two squads. Anyway, Rex is in there, and of course, the side windows are all covered with this reflective material—I think 3M made it or something—for sun. He could see out, but you couldn't see in. He used to sit back there behind the windows then.



Anyway, I'm talking to this guy I know, all of the sudden he says, "What is your dog doing?" And I turn around and look, and he's sitting next to the window, and he's doing this and he's watching people walk by. He's just doing this and he's watching, and then he'd watch somebody else go by. Then all of the

sudden—I couldn't figure out, all of the sudden he keyed onto this one person and I thought, "Why that person?" Five, six people walked by, and he didn't pay any attention to them basically, but this one—I realized they were closer to the squad. So what he was doing is he was looking for a target. He was waiting for someone to come close enough to the squad. Anyway, the guy walked by the squad just as—and you can see the dog, muscles tense and he's all ready to go. The window on the driver's side was down about oh, maybe six, eight inches, just enough so he could just barely get his head through. Anyway, the guy come by, and just as he got up to the window, Rex stuck his nose through there and went, "[growls and barks]." Just like that. Scared the hell out of the guy. The guy took a left turn and ran into the wall of the building right there. And I am positive that that dog stood there and laughed. I am absolutely positive. All I can think of is that cartoon dog that would laugh. Oh, God. He had a warped sense of humor. He was a funny dog.

KC: What made you decide to leave K-9?

GK: The chief. [laughs] Wasn't my idea, trust me on that one. I was already on my second dog, Rex was my second dog, and the chief, who by that time was Bill McCutcheon, decided that—he was a big one on transferring people around so that everybody could find out what everybody else's job was. Particularly when it came to detectives and the upper echelon, he'd rotate his deputy chiefs about every two years so that they had experience in every job. He'd do the same thing with the detectives, so that you'd work Homicide for two years and then you'd work Theft Division and then you'd work Burglary and then you'd work Fraud and Forgery and so on. So he'd move everybody around periodically. He'd come up with the idea that one dog and you were out. Well, I was already on my second dog, so when Rex got injured and he was technically no longer

serviceable—he was chasing a burglar and he went off a loading dock and tackled the guy. and when he did, he landed and he tore a cruciate ligament in his rear leg. So he was laid up for about three months, four months, something like that. They didn't consider him serviceable, so they retired him, and at that point, I was transferred out of the unit.

KC: When he's no longer serviceable and he's not able to be a K-9, then who pays the rest of the vet bills? He was hurt in the line of duty.

GK: Well, they basically took care of him for a certain period of time. And of course, he lived at my house and stuff like that. He became basically a house pet. And then a couple years after he retired, he got the bloat and I rushed him into the vet and anyway, it turned out there wasn't much they could do for him, and anyway, he died. They had to put him to sleep.

KC: Does the department have a department vet? A vet that's used to working with these dogs?

GK: Well, at that time they did. His name was Doctor Sprau and he was there on Ruth and Suburban. He had a vet office right near there. He was the vet and then they changed to a different vet after I was off the unit, and then they were going to the University of Minnesota. I think now they primarily use a specific vet for minor stuff and everything and then the major stuff they go to the U. Over at the U, they have plaques in their patio of all the dogs killed in the line of duty from the Saint Paul Police Department.

KC: Oh! How many dogs have been killed in the police department?

GK: Last time I saw it, they had four there. Every dog killed in the line of duty, they put a plaque, you know, the dates of the dog. The name of the dog and the dates and stuff like that.

KC: Now I know Laser was killed in the line of duty. What other K-9 partners have we lost in the line of duty?

GK: Uh, well let's see, there was:

1. Mark Klinge's⁴⁰ dog, Radar. He fell off a roof on May 20, 1982.
2. Gene Burke's⁴¹ dog Wojo was hit by a car on August 12, 1986
3. Tim Jones' dog Laser was shot August 26, 1994.
4. Tim Lynaugh's⁴² dog Callahan was shot May 26, 1998
5. David Longbehn's⁴³ dog Kody was stabbed February 12, 2013.

KC: Any last thoughts on K-9?

GK: It was a good experience. Watching them on television now, with this series that they're doing, they did a really nice job. The outfit that did the filming and everything did a really, really good job and I've got it set on TiVo, so I watch it whenever it comes on. Watching some of these young people and their dogs and stuff like that, and of course having one of the largest dog training facilities in the

⁴⁰ **Mark John Klinge** was appointed patrolman January 16, 1967, and retired January 16, 1987.

⁴¹ **Eugene Michael Burke** was appointed police officer September 18, 1975; promoted to sergeant May 22, 1994; lieutenant December 4, 1994; title changed to commander January 1, 2000; and retired June 29, 2002.

⁴² **Timothy Phillip Lynaugh** was appointed police officer March 3, 1989; promoted to sergeant October 4, 2008; and retired August 30, 2012.

⁴³ **David J. Longbehn** was appointed police officer July 22, 1984.

Midwest—you know, my wife goes, “They’re doing that wrong. They’re doing that wrong. They should—” you know. [laughs]

KC: And you’re referring to you and your wife have Total Recall in Hugo.

GK: Yeah, yeah, yeah, my wife and I. And she was—the one female that they have on the K-9 Unit, she has a big dog and she was having a little trouble in the—you know, it was the way they were showing it and everything. It looked like she was having trouble hanging on to the dog. And of course, my wife commented on it and everything. And of course, it depends on the angle you’re looking at some of that stuff, so you know, did she have control or not? I can’t say. I’m assuming she did, but when you see it on the television or my wife says, “She’s got to do something. She hasn’t got complete control of that dog.” You know and of course being a dog trainer, she sees everything. Mark Ficcadenti,⁴⁴ the head trainer for Saint Paul, every once in a while he get stumped on something and he calls my wife Sue.

KC: What did being a K-9 officer do in your development as a police officer?

GK: Well, it taught you to pay attention to a lot of stuff, because you worked alone, basically. Sure, the dog was there and he was your backup, and to me he was probably the best backup, because you could always depend on him. A dog has no preconceptions. It’s absolute with a dog. He’s your dog, he’s your dog. And he will die protecting you, which is quite apparent with a lot of dogs. Don Bulver’s dog, for instance, Baron, was shot. Bullet bounced off his head, so consequently he ended up with the nickname Old Brick Brains. The guy was

⁴⁴ **Mark Robert Ficcadenti** was appointed police officer December 10, 1984; promoted to sergeant September 15, 2012.

going to shoot at some police officers, and Don sent his dog and the guy fired, and without hesitation, the dog could care less. Even though the bullet hit him and knocked him down, he got back up and went after the guy again and took him out. So they don't stop, you know. They're absolutely on, everything they do. And it just taught me that you can really depend on them, but you have to pay attention on your own. And working alone, you tend to look more, you tend to see more, you're not dependent on—you know, when you're working with a partner, you watch one side of the car and he watches the other side of the car and you kind of communicate back and forth and you're kind of dependent on that working relationship. The longer you work together, the more you can feel, but when you're alone, you got to pay attention to everything, so you kind of almost develop eyes in the back of your head. It's one of the things that I learned. Of course the absolute loyalty of the canine was beyond description.

KC: What made you decide to retire?

GK: [chuckles] I came into work one day and there was some bulletin on the thing and I considered it some left-wing wacko, liberal whatever, and I thought, "That's it. I don't need this crap." And I called the pension board and I says, "How much? And when and why and how?" And they told me and I said, "Close enough. Mark me retired." And that was it. I picked a date and that was it. June 30th was the date, but I actually left in May.

KC: You had that much vacation?

GK: I had vacation and holidays and overtime and a bunch of other stuff built up and everything, so then I took them, which was fine, because at the time I was training for the World Games in Calgary.

KC: World—

GK: The Police and Fire World Games.⁴⁵

KC: What is that?

GK: It's the largest sporting event in the world.

KC: You have to educate me. I've never heard of this.

GK: Every two years. It's like the Olympics. Some people refer to it as the Police Olympics. It's called the Police and Fire World Games. You must be either a police officer or a retired police officer or a firefighter or retired firefighter. That particular year, it was held in Calgary, Canada, and there were 8,800 athletes from forty-six countries there. Many of them were professional. There was professional football players, professional bodybuilders. I competed in bodybuilding and weightlifting, and I won a gold medal in bodybuilding, and the next day I won a bronze medal in weight lifting. They had a lot of the standard events, just like they do at the Olympics, only some of them were modified a little bit to allow for police or fire. For instance, the biathlon, which is generally a winter Olympic, you ski a certain distance and then you shoot a target with a rifle. Well, in this one you had to run. It was like a cross country, but you wore a pistol belt and you had to shoot a pistol through this thing. And in fact one of the guys from Saint Paul won a silver medal.

KC: Who was that?

⁴⁵ In 1985, the World Police & Fire Games Federation, a non-profit organization, run by the Californian Police Athletics Federation, established the **World Police & Fire Games**. They are held biennially, and have become The World Police & Fire Games is a spectacular international sporting event, offering police officers, firefighters, customs and correction officers from around the world an opportunity to showcase their athletic excellence in over sixty-five sporting events.

GK: That was Bob Winger.⁴⁶ He's actually run in the Iron Man. He was training for Iron Man. In fact I knew several guys that run in the Iron Man in Hawaii. That is grueling. Police Olympics or the World Games is just—unless you've seen one, you cannot believe what it was. When my wife and I drove into Calgary, as we come into town there's huge signs that says "Welcome to Calgary." And underneath it, it says, "Welcome Police and Fire De—" They changed every sign coming into town to say "Welcome Police and Fire." They did the opening ceremony. Just like the Olympics, everybody comes in with their individual police department and you march around. Of course, they got the huge thirty-foot screen, you know, and you see yourself on this thirty-foot screen and it's really something.

KC: How many from Saint Paul were there that year?

GK: Uh, if I remember right, there was about fifteen or twenty of us, for various different things, racquetball, golf. The Canadian Air Force did a flyover, their new precision theme. And then they bring out this trailer, which was a replica of the Olympic tower in Calgary, from the Olympics when they had them there. Of course, at the top is this huge torch that lights. Well, they brought out a replica of this thing on a trailer, and the runner comes in in the ceremonies, and he comes up and he touches the fire trailer, goes up to the top of it and lights the top. And the announcer says, "Look at the monitor!" And they got the camera trained on the one downtown, and at the same time that one lights downtown. I mean, it was really cool. This was unbelievable. Calgary spent, at the time—this was in 1997, I heard three-and-a-half million dollars setting this up.

⁴⁶ **Robert B. Winger Jr.** was appointed patrolman November 13, 1967; promoted sergeant April 1, 1978; and retired October 29, 1999.

KC: Wow.

GK: When they say Calgary is a friendly town, they ain't lying. That's the friendliest town I've ever been in in my life. I asked so many directions—they said, "Get in the car. We'll take you."

KC: What are some of the highlights in your career as a Saint Paul Police Officer?

GK: Oh, well, I suppose one of the highlights was is that I was number one on the sergeant's exam. And I was promoted exactly fifteen years after I started the job, which was a whole another story, because I actually asked Bill McCutcheon to delay my promotion for three weeks, and he said, "Why?" And I says, "Because then I'll be fifteen years on the job, and I won't have to take such a big cut in pay." The way the thing is laid on the pay scale, you only—technically I would have been at the ten year patrolman level, which means I would have dropped all the way to the three year sergeant's level, and it would have taken me three years to get back up to top pay. By waiting three weeks, I would have had fifteen years. I only would have dropped to the ten year level, and then it only took one year to get back to top pay. He looked at me and he says, "You know you're the only guy ever figured that out." And of course, now everybody knows that. So he granted me that, but promoted number two first, because he didn't want to delay the list. And he told me was going to do that and I said, "Fine." Well, the guy that was number two used to play racquetball with the chief all the time, and of course, as soon as the promotion thing came out and I had been skipped, everybody went—you know they were calling up left and right, wanting to know what the hell was going on, da da da da da da. And of course, they would

call and talk to Carole Harren,⁴⁷ the chief's secretary, and she said, "Well, he requested to be skipped." And they went, "What?" And then people would look for me and finally, "You requested to be skipped?" And I'd tell them why and they'd go, "Really?" Well, then everybody knew about this little quirk in the pay scale I took advantage of, gladly. You know, money's money.

KC: What other benchmarks?

GK: Well, of course, the day I retired, when I walked out the door—well, it wasn't the official day I retired, it was the day I left, and as I walked out the door, I picked up the phone and I dialed the intercom and I had both buildings at the time and I said, "Kothe has left the building. You can all kiss my ass." I heard that one of the deputy chiefs wanted to suspend, and they says, "How can you suspend him? He's retired." [both laugh] And of course, the day I came out of the job, the day I went on K-9, that was one of the benchmarks.

And then when I got appointed to be the investigative coordinator, which means I worked directly for a deputy chief, which really caught me by surprise. That one I hadn't expected, but I worked for John Nord. He let me do pretty much what I wanted, and I kind of developed some systems that nobody had thought of or maybe they just didn't want to do. And of course, we were just at the beginning stages of getting into the computer systems. I developed a little pocket manual on how to operate the computers, because most of the guys were computer illiterate. I got the idea from Northwest Airlines, because at the time

⁴⁷ Carole J. Harren Yoswa (4-12-1945) was hired as a clerk typist November 22, 1971 in the mayor's office; transferred to the Bureau of Police June 4, 1973; promoted to clerk steno 1974; secretary-stenographer 1986; coordinator of administration support; title change to executive assistant I July 2006; and retired March 30, 2007.

they had merged with the old Republic Airlines, and my wife and I were going on a flight someplace. The guy was checking us in, and all of the sudden he stopped and he had been an old Republic employee, so he was learning the Northwest system, so he reached in his pocket and he pulled out this thing and he paged through this little notebook and he went and typed it in and then he put it back in his pocket. I saw that and I thought excellent idea, so when I got back, I developed a manual that says, "If you want this, do XYZ ABC and this is what you get." And I had them printed up and distributed to everybody, and everybody thought that was a good idea.

I went to systems, because we used to have to do double entry on a lot of information, and I figured out a way to just have to enter the information once and have a program divide the information the way you wanted it, instead of entering the information twice in two separate programs. And of course, now you can buy a program off the shelf that does that. [laughs] Back then, they had to have those programmers do all those writing and everything. So there was a number of benchmarks throughout my career.

When I was on K-9, I used to have the nickname as The Ghost, because I was only seen if I wanted to be. I would show up at a scene—you know, guys would be standing there and then all of the sudden the next thing you know, I'd be standing there and scare the hell out of somebody. But I was K-9 and we didn't get calls. We were back up most of the time. And so certain calls would come out, and I'd be the backup guy and I'd show up and I'd come out of nowhere. There'd be a brawl starting, and all of the sudden I'd be standing there in the middle of it and nobody could figure out where the hell I came from. If there was a chase in town, I was in it. I don't care where it was, I was in it.

And then there was one incident that I still—it has blank spots in it and I have no idea why, but there was a chase and I had a rookie with me, Andy Gohl,⁴⁸ first night on the street. A chase started and we took off after the chase and I was maybe a mile behind the chase car. Anyway, the bad guy car hit a pickup truck that was towing a boat, and the pickup truck lost control and went down the embankment out at 35-E and 694, the old intersection. Obviously, it all changed now, but it was the old split that they used to have there, where 694 went east and west, and 35-E came in. Anyway, the boat and the motor and everything landed in the middle of the highway and stuff like that. Squads were dodging this stuff, and they were crashing into bridge abutments trying to avoid hitting stuff. The original chase car went into the ditch and ran down to help the people in the pickup truck, and it was just total mass confusion. Well, I can hear the screaming on the radio, but I can't understand what they're saying. Well, anyway, I'm coming in at about ninety plus miles an hour, and all the sudden I look up and there is no place to go on the road. The road is totally blocked. I can't see, you know I—so I look at Andy and I said, "Hang on. This is gonna be bad." [chuckles] And I put both feet on the brakes and I put my hand on the steering wheel to brace myself. And I must have closed my eyes, I don't know, because I do not remember anything from that point until the squad came to a stop, and when it stopped, we hit nothing. And I turned around, and there was nothing in front of me, and I thought, "What the hell just happened?" And I turned around and looked over my shoulder, and everything was behind us. And to this day, I have no idea how that happened, how I missed everything. I don't know.

⁴⁸ Andrew Gohl, II was appointed police officer January 23, 1971; promoted to sergeant January 18, 1983; and retired December 31, 1999.

KC: What is your spirituality?

GK: I don't know. I don't know what happened. I figure, you know, was it some sort of dematerialization? Was it, you know, a Houdini thing? I don't know what happened. I have no idea. I'm thankful. You can't believe how thankful. But how it happened, I have absolutely no recollection of what happened.

KC: Now Joe Corcoran⁴⁹ would have an answer for you.

GK: He probably would. Joe and I used to have a lot of long talks about stuff, of course, and I was one of the of the peer counselors on the job for a while. I went through that training and stuff like that, so I'm not only a good talker, I'm a good listener.

KC: Joe talks in his oral history about—he rode with us, meaning that God rode with us, God is there with police officers, and God makes some of these miracles happen.

GK: Well, call it God, call it Allah, call it Jesus Christ, call it whatever you want. I wouldn't say that I'm a very religious person. I don't go to church or anything like that, but I do believe that there is some power out there that cannot be explained, that whatever that is is there. You call it what you want to call it, whatever your personal feelings are and everything, but it's there and it watches over us. You call it luck, call it destiny, call it whatever, but I feel that I've had something watching over me, because there's been times that there's no way in hell I should be alive. But I'm here, and I've had a good life.

KC: Thank you.

⁴⁹ Joseph Kane Corcoran was appointed patrolman March 2, 1964; promoted to sergeant October 3, 1970; lieutenant March 24, 1990; and retired March 27, 1998.

Saint Paul Police Oral History Project

© HAND in HAND Productions

2015



Published by

HAND in HAND Productions

Kate Cavett, Oral Historian

Saint Paul, MN 55121

phone: 651-227-5987

email: handinhand@oralhistorian.org

web page: www.oralhistorian.org