

Patrolman Craig Vincent Ruppert (1925-2019)

Craig was born in Hamilton, Ohio on July 24, 1925 to Norman Ruppert and Helen M. (Erbs) Ruppert. When he was 3½, his father joined the Cincinnati Police Department as a Patrolman. On October 1, 1941, Patrolman Norman Ruppert was transferred to a plainclothes assignment in Crime Bureau and remained as such until the end of his career.

Probably during 1942 or 1943, Craig joined the United States Navy during World War II. He was stationed on the aircraft carrier U.S.S. Yorktown (CV-10) out of Pearl Harbor which participated in many battles against the Japanese. By 1945 he had been promoted to Yeoman 3rd Class and reassigned to a minesweeper, the U.S.S. Chandler (AG-108). We believe he was honorably discharged during 1946 and married Thelma “Sis” Bowling, another member of the Navy.



Four years later, Craig joined the Hamilton Police Department as a Patrolman on April 27, 1950. On June 8, 1965, after all others had given up trying, Patrolman Ruppert saved 24-year-old Benny Ray Hensley, who was trapped beneath a blazing auto. During September 1970, Patrolman Ruppert was transferred to a plainclothes assignment in the Intelligence and Morals (vice) Squad and remained as such until the end of his career. The squad was new and immediately made an impact on the burgeoning narcotics trade and related crime in Hamilton. They made dozens of newspaper-worthy arrests in just the first two years. He also participated in educating school and church groups about narcotics. During February 1971 he was honored with other officers by the by the Hamilton Exchange Club. Patrolman Ruppert retired January 12, 1979 with almost thirty years of service to his country and community.

Patrolman Ruppert was appointed a Kentucky Colonel and was a member of the American Legion, Post 104 in Sevierville, Tennessee. He was also a member of FOP Hamilton Lodge 38, and for a time, served as one of its officers.

Fifty years after risking his life to save Benny Hensley, Hamilton Police Chief Craig Bucheit discovered that he had never been recognized for his heroism. Chief Bucheit organized an event and on August 19, 2015 and officially issued to Patrolman Ruppert a Department Citation Proclamation. It was believed at the time that he was the oldest living Hamilton Police Department employee extant.

Patrolman Ruppert passed away almost four years later, at home, on Saturday, June 22, 2019. He was 93. Acting Hamilton Police Chief, Captain Trent Chenoweth, ordered a seven-day period of mourning June 25 to July 1, 2019.



He was predeceased by his wife of 65 years, Thelma “Sis” (Bowling) Ruppert (2011). Patrolman Ruppert is survived by his sons, Don (Rebecca) Ruppert and Ronald C. Ruppert; grandchildren, Tracy (Ruppert) Simmons, Michal Scott Ruppert, and Jason Ruppert; five great-grandchildren; and very special friend, Geri Meyers.

Visitation will be held 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. on Thursday, June 27, 2019 at Brown Dawson Flick Funeral Home at 330 Pershing Avenue in Hamilton. A FOP service will be held at the close of visitation. A funeral service will be held at 1 p.m.

Memorials can be made to Hospice of Cincinnati and/or the Hamilton Police Retirement Fund.