

Lieutenant Stephen John Wilger L-18 (1951-2022)

Steve was born February 8, 1951 in Cincinnati to Harry Paul, Sr. and Martha Ellen (Rogers) Wilger.

He attended Purcell High School where he participated in intramurals and varsity football, graduating in 1969. He attended the University of Cincinnati until 1972, earning an associate degree in Police Science.



Steve joined the Cincinnati Police Division on July 20, 1969, as a Police Cadet. Cadet Wilger served in Detention Section (City Hall) and Information Section (222 East Central Parkway). On July 30, 1972, he was promoted to Police Recruit, and on December 17, 1972, he was promoted to Patrolman, issued Badge 815, and assigned to District 1 (310 Lincoln Park Drive). Officer Wilger transferred to District 2 (3295 Erie Avenue) in 1977.

On November 3, 1981, he was promoted to Sergeant, issued Badge S-16, and assigned to District 4 (4150 Reading Road). Sergeant Wilger also served in District 2.

On June 7, 1987, he was promoted to Lieutenant, issued Badge L-18, and assigned to the Police Academy. Lieutenant Wilger served in District 5 (1012 Ludlow Avenue), Police Communications Section, Patrol Administration Bureau, Street Corner Unit, District 1, and served as Commander of the District 1 Investigative Unit.

Lieutenant Wilger retired on January 3, 2004, with 35 years of service and 67 letters of appreciation and commendation.

Lieutenant Wilger, for decades, was highly active in the Fraternal Order of Police, including attending more state and national conferences than one could count, very often taking a leadership role.

Retirement brought an encore career for Lieutenant Wilger. "SW" as he was affectionately known, was the driving force behind the successful monthly East Side police luncheon. Maintaining relationships with his retired law enforcement brothers and sisters was extremely important. What began as a small gathering of about 15 men grew to a monthly event involving 100 plus retired brothers and sisters. Each month, this multi-agency band of sworn and civilian law enforcement personnel recognizes superior achievement and sacrifice.

Lieutenant Wilger revered the police honor guard, tap buglers, motorcycle motorcades, and bagpipers.

His retirement service further included his role as the Editor of FOP Queen City Lodge #69's monthly newsletter, the *TWO-SIX*, in which he successfully improved the layout, personality, and interest.

He was named FOP member of the year in 2018 and was a proud member of the CISM (Critical Incident and Stress Management) team for active and retired police officers.

Lieutenant Wilger, by a vote of his peers, was inducted as a member of the 1132 Living Legends and served on various benevolent and charitable committees.

Suddenly, in May 2021, after a period of unexplained pain and fatigue, the Lieutenant was diagnosed with Stage 4 Cholangiocarcinoma, a rare bile duct cancer. It is a highly complex cancer to treat, and considering that, in his case, it was systemic, he began treatment with less than a 2% chance of surviving five years. SW never backed down in his fight to beat this horrible disease.

Lieutenant Wilger died just before midnight on April 14, 2022 at the age of 71.

If Lieutenant Wilger were here today, this would be his message. "One day, you will wake up, and there won't be any more time to do the things you've always wanted to do. Do it Now."

He was predeceased by his brother, Harry P. Wilger, Jr (1968). His wife of 46 years survives him, Marianne (Schulte) Wilger, daughter Becky and son-in-law, Garth Stapleton, Jean Dillinger (sister), dearest cousins Ronnie and Sue Wilger, and many nieces and nephews and his favorite Grand Dog, Gus, Chair Dog for "Wags for Wilger."

Visitation will be held 9:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. on Thursday, April 21, 2022 at the T.P. White and Sons Funeral Home at 2050 Beechmont Avenue in Cincinnati. FOP and funeral services will be held at noon. A reception, luncheon will follow at the Fraternal Order of Police Lodge Hall at 1900 Central Parkway.

Memorials may be sent to [Greater Cincinnati Police Museum](#), 308 Reading Road, Suite 201, Cincinnati, OH 45202.