

Lieutenant Peggy Kay Harrison-Smith 218KHS (1957-2025)



Kay was born February 21, 1957 in Richmond, Kentucky to Ernest Alvin Harrison and Doris E. (Ingels) Harrison. She attended Mason High School and graduated in 1975. She then earned a Bachelor of Science in Parks and Recreation Administration from Eastern Kentucky University in 1979. She continued her education at Western Kentucky University, earning a Master of Science in Parks and Recreation Administration in 1988.

While in college, she taught swimming and lifesaving, and worked with numerous summer camps, including 4-H and YMCA. Kay saved a man's life at the Lebanon YMCA, performing CPR after rescuing him from the pool.

Kay joined the Hamilton County Park District Ranger Department in 1983 as a Dispatcher. Kay was appointed Park Ranger and completed the Ohio Peace Officer's Basic Training Academy at Scarlet Oaks on March 14, 1985. She was promoted to Sergeant in July 2002, after which she was entrusted with reviving the Winton Woods Riding Center and was awarded the Park District's prestigious Trillium Award. She was a founding member of the Hamilton County Park Rangers Mounted Patrol Unit, serving for 12 years and leading the unit to numerous awards and commendations. The unit provided patrols, community outreach, educational programs, and participated annually in the Lexington Mounted Police Colloquium at Kentucky Horse Park. Sergeant Harrison-Smith then served in the East District, headquartered at Sharon Woods Park. She was then promoted to Lieutenant on February 25, 2003, the first female of that rank in the department, and assigned to Administration. She was also a law enforcement instructor at Scarlet Oaks, University of Cincinnati Clermont, and Butler Tech. On July 19, 1997, she and fellow officers waded into the treacherous waters of the Little Miami River in a desperate attempt to rescue Patricia Hess. For her valor, the City of Milford honored her with a Meritorious Service. Lieutenant Harrison-Smith retired in 2010 with 27 years of service and many commendations.

She also worked as a Police Officer on the Middletown Campus of Cincinnati State Technical and Community College from 2007 until 2018 working as a patrol officer and investigator.

Lieutenant Harrison-Smith was also a Fraternal Order of Police Lodge #74 Secretary from 2018 to 2019, then Trustee until her death.

Lieutenant Harrison-Smith died after a prolonged illness on June 2, 2025 at the age of 68.

Lieutenant Harrison-Smith is survived by her husband of 35 years, Hamilton County Parks Lieutenant Gregory Thomas Smith (retired); children Danielle Purcell and Benjamin (Angel) Smith; stepchildren, Kathleen Stevenson, Geoff (Kelly) Smith, Dana (Mike) McManus, and Corinne Smith; and grandchildren, Wyatt, Reese, Quentin, Steel, and Michael.

A visitation will be held from 10:00 to 10:45 a.m. on Saturday, June 21, 2025, at St. Aloysius Church at 3350 Chapel Road in Shandon. An FOP service will be held at 10:45 a.m. A Memorial Mass will be celebrated held at 11 a.m. A celebration of life will be held from 1 to 6 p.m. at the Woodlawn Event Center, North Hall, at 9684 Cilley Road.

Memorials may be made to Hospice of Cincinnati, P.O. Box 633597, Cincinnati, OH 45263-3597 or Alzheimer's Association, 720 E. Pete Rose Way, Suite 330, Cincinnati, OH 45202.