

Police Officer Kenneth Lee “Kenny” McDowell (1940-2024)



Kenny was born September 6, 1940 in Cincinnati to Walter J. and Gladys Mae (Terrel) McDowell. He graduated from William Henry Harrison High School in 1959 and attended Xavier University.

Immediately out of high school, Kenny worked as a Porter for the Fernald Feed Materials Production Center near Fernald in Crosby Township.

About 1964, Kenny joined the Cheviot Police Department as a parttime Patrolman. By 1968, he had a new wife, Carol Sue, and son, Kevin Lee, and was appointed as a fulltime Patrolman on the 1st of November. By 1970, he was already heading the Department’s Safety Program. Officer McDowell resigned on February 8, 2002, with about 23 years of service.

By then he had already been a member of the Cheviot School Parents and Teachers Association and the Fraternal Order of Police. He was President of the Cheviot Dad’s Club. He ran for City Council in the 2nd Ward against the incumbent but lost by only 32 votes.

Officer McDowell owned a body shop for several years and later worked as the human resource director for Mike Albert Leasing, retiring after 20 years. He was a member of the International Police Association.



About 2011, Officer McDowell joined the police museum and immediately began taking on the tasks of docent, gift shop, and cleaning displays, display cases, and floors, and anything he could get his hands on. To that end, he donated a \$1000+ Kirby vacuum cleaner which he used exclusively until we lost all of our carpeting due to a flood. He donated his uniform, which still stands in our display window. Soon he took over management of our cars, including his 1990 Chevrolet Caprice patrol car. He would take various vehicles or combinations of vehicles to parades, car shows, and events and won numerous awards with our Harley Police Special three-wheeled motorcycle, his '90 Chevrolet patrol car, and our 1982 intelligence van.



Officer McDowell was working on outfitting our 1964 Ford Montgomery Police car when he became too physically disabled to work on it. But he still took our other vehicles out to parades and events. Eventually, at the age of 82, he could no longer drive – and it broke his heart (and ours).

Officer McDowell suffered from dementia, eventually landing in an adult daycare center, and then became bedridden. He died on December 8, 2024 at the age of 84.

He was predeceased by his son, Brian Patrick McDowell (2022) and brother, Walter J. McDowell, Jr. Officer McDowell is survived by his wife of 56 years, Carol Sue (Wright) McDowell; son, Kevin Lee (Heidi) McDowell; daughter-in-law, Lisa McDowell; six grandchildren, Cameron Lee, Aidan Kenneth, Patrick Elwyn, Willem Patrick, Quinn Edward, and Katelyn Ann; and mother-in-law, Mae Adams.

A Celebration of Life was held on Sunday, January 19, 2025. The Greater Cincinnati Police Museum brought their car which he created and maintained for years, freshly adorned with a permanent memorial to him on the left front fender.

Memorials may be made to the [Greater Cincinnati Police Museum](#), 308 Reading Road, Suite 201, Cincinnati, OH 45202 or [Animal Adoption Foundation](#), 2480 Ross Millville Road, Hamilton, OH 45013