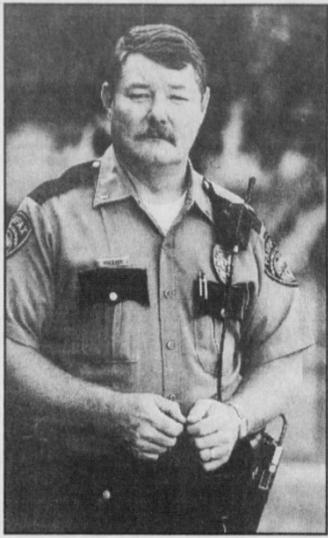


# Lieutenant John David Benner (1947-2025)



John was born May 11, 1947 in Cincinnati, the second of two sons born to David Hill and Rhoda A. (Lange) Benner, Jr. He attended Woodward High School where he played football and graduated in 1965.

John enlisted in the United States Army in 1966 and served as a Military Policeman, including in Vietnam. He also taught marksmanship and self-defense to other military policemen and was honorably discharged in 1969.

In 1971, John joined the Fairfax Police Department as a Police Officer, embarking on an extraordinary career. The Ohio Valley Lodge of the Fraternal Order of Police was established in February 1973 and in his second year as a cop, Patrolman Benner was elected as one of its first three Trustees. Very quickly he became renowned as a firearms and self-defense instructor. During his career, he taught officers in Los Angeles, New York, and Scotland Yards. He co-developed a *Close-Quarters Personal Control (CQPC)* self-defense program that became part of the core of the Ohio Peace Officers Training Academy self-defense training curriculum and is used in training Navy Seals, Army Special Operations groups, and SWAT teams nationwide. He also developed, with Cincinnati Police Special Weapons and Tactics (SWAT) pioneers, the Hamilton County Police Association's (HCPA) SWAT Team, the first multi-jurisdiction SWAT Team in the country. He served as its Field Commander for the next 20 years. His brother, Gary, served as the HCPA SWAT Coordinator. He was also a street cop. On February 28, 1977, sometime after an armed robbery involving three men in a "blue" Duster, he pulled over a *green* Duster and arrested the three robbers with a .45 semiautomatic pistol, masks, and stolen cash. On October 24, 1978, the Ohio Civil Service Employee Association gave him a Patrolman of the Year Award for his work with the HCPA SWAT. On May 15, 1982, Patrolman Benner received a Greater Cincinnati Chamber of Commerce Distinguished Leadership Award at the annual Police Week Police Appreciation Awards Banquet. He was promoted to Lieutenant on September 25, 1988. Lieutenant Benner continued with the HCPA SWAT but stepped down as its Field Commander on December 31, 1993. On January 13, 1994, the HCPA gave him their Officer of the Year Award. Lieutenant Benner retired in April 1995.

On April 10, 1995, Lieutenant Benner took over the regional Drug Abuse Reduction Task Force (DART). He continued in that capacity until March 3, 2000. By then the eight-year-old task force, five years of which he commanded, removed \$19 million in drugs from 16 Hamilton County communities.

And he still was not finished. In 1986 he and other Hamilton County officers built a Tactical Training Center in Adams County catering to average citizens who own firearms. He founded the Tactical Defense Institute (TDI) and served as its Chief Executive Officer. For all intents and purposes, he continued to serve the rest of his life. It was and is one of the most respected training organizations in the nation. After the Sandyhook Elementary tragedy, Lieutenant Brenner spearheaded the training of armed school staff which led to the development of the *FASTER Saves Lives* program, a nationally recognized non-profit organization. TDI continues as an exemplary training organization.

Lieutenant Benner was diagnosed with cancer and fought it for a considerable time. When told that extraordinary measures could be taken to extend his life but not save it, he chose quality of life over quantity and died peacefully on July 22, 2025 at the age of 78.

Lieutenant Benner is survived by his wife of 37 years, Kathleen M. "Kathy" (Fox) Benner; stepchildren, Mickel (Larry) Lobb, Katie Anning, Julie (Michelle) Zicka, and Patrick (Lisa) Zicka; ten grandchildren; and brother, Amberly Police Chief Gary Hill (Sharon) Benner (retired).

Lieutenant Benner will be cremated. A celebration of his life will be held at a time and place to be named later.