

Police Specialist Gerald Ramon “Jerry” Gramke PS-9 (1933-2026)

Jerry was born July 27, 1933 in Cincinnati, the third of six children born to Cincinnati Patrolman Joseph B. and Hilda M. Gramke. Jerry’s grandfather, Cincinnati Patrolman Benjamin Gramke had already retired from the Police Department, and his uncle Francis Gramke was serving as a Cincinnati Firefighter. When Jerry was four years old, his father was promoted to Sergeant. In 1948, Jerry attended Holmes High School in Covington. That year, his oldest brother, Joseph H. Gramke, joined the Police Division as a Patrolman, as did his cousin, Franklin E. Gramke, in 1949, and his other brother, Ralph “Buck” Gramke in 1951. Jerry graduated in 1952.

Jerry joined the United States Air Force on September 1, 1951, during the Korean War. After basic training, he was sent to Army Medical Field School. He was then stationed in the combat zone of Korea as a Surgical Technician, in an environment similar to a M.A.S.H. unit, then as Ward Master. In the fall of 1954, he returned to the States and was put in charge of an obstetrical ward at McChord Air Force Base in Tacoma, Washington. Airman 1st Class Gramke was honorably discharged on September 16, 1955 with a Good Conduct Medal, Korean Service Medal, and United States Service Medal.

After military service, Jerry attended the Kentucky School of Embalming in Louisville and earned certification on September 20, 1956. He began work as an assistant mortician but found the salary unsustainable.



On January 10, 1957, the Cincinnati Civil Service Commission announced that only 30 men passed the stringent examination for Police Recruit and that Jerry had finished second. On February 4, 1957, he joined the Division’s 33rd Recruit Class. He was promoted to Patrolman on May 19, 1957, issued Badge 824, and assigned to District 5 at 1024 York Street. Four months later, probably only a month or two after being released from his Patrolman Coach for solo patrol, he captured two men in the act of burglarizing a meat packing company on Bank Street. In December, District 5 moved into the new facility at 1012 Ludlow Avenue. On April 22, 1958 he was commended by Judge Clarence Denning for his deportment during an arrest for disorderly conduct. On August 10, 1958, he was rotated to District 1 (310 Lincoln Park Drive). He was rotated again to District 2 (314 Broadway) on October 4, 1959. In 1963, he was among the five-man District 2 team that won the annual intra-division revolver match.

On February 27, 1966, he and his brother Buck were among the first group of men promoted to the new position of Police Specialist. He was issued Badge PS-9 and assigned to the Crime Bureau (City Hall). Six months later, he transferred back to District 2 as an investigator. While off duty on February 13, 1969 he found two men carrying boxes on Main Street. As he tried to talk to them, they dropped the boxes which contained 14 rifles and shotguns taken in a burglary at Hirschman’s at 825 Main Street. On February 7, 1971, Specialist Gramke transferred to the Robbery Squad, Criminal Investigation Section (222 East Central Parkway).

Also in 1971, Gerry joined the Board of Directors of the Cincinnati Ohio Police Federal Credit Union. He would eventually ascend to Chairman for total of 38 years, then Chairman Emeritus until his death.

He transferred to District 3 (3201 Warsaw Avenue) on September 14, 1975. Specialist Gramke transferred back to the Robbery Squad on July 4, 1976. On January 30, 1977, with a reorganization of Criminal Investigation Section, Specialist Gramke transferred to the Homicide Squad. His performance evaluations consistently spoke of his investigation and interrogation skills and compassion for people. Specialist Gramke retired on May 6, 1983 with 30 years of service to his country and community and 23 letters of appreciation and/or commendation, including multiple Chief’s commendations and one each from the Safety Director, Hamilton County Sheriff, and Judge Simon Leis.

He then took a position at Provident Bank, serving as its Security Director for decades. On September 16, 1986, he was promoted to Assistant Vice President.

In July 1998, he became a charter member of the Greater Cincinnati Police Historical Society.

Specialist Gramke died in the morning on April 28, 2026 at the age of 92. He was the second oldest retired Police Specialist and the last living 33rd Recruit Class graduate.

He is predeceased by his son, Joseph Edward Gramke. He is survived by his wife of almost 68 years, Elizabeth Ann “Betty” (Niemann) Gramke; children, retired Cincinnati Captain James Francis (Teresa Marie) Gramke, retired Cincinnati Sergeant Jeffrey Gerald (Jane) Gramke, Julie Hilda (Thomas) Busken, and retired Hamilton County Chief Deputy Jay Gregory Gramke; daughter-in-law, Kathleen Gramke; grandchildren, Sarah Gramke, Ellen Gramke, Kelly Shafer, Lauren Gramke, Kristin (AJ) Frasz, Jack Gramke, Drew (Kortney) Gramke, Nick (Brittany) Gramke, Ben (Megan) Gramke, Emily (Alex) Wendling, Maria (Austin Roll) Busken, Claire Busken, Jen Busken, Will Busken, Sam Adams, and Mia Gramke; great-grandchildren, Katie, Lilly, Jim, Finley, Vivian, Holden, Jordan, Valerie, Marshall, Joel, Eli, and #12 arriving in June; and siblings, Mary Carol Ernst and Wayne (Gerry) Gramke.

Visitation will be held on Thursday, May 7, 2026, from 5 to 7 p.m. at Radel Funeral Home at 650 Neeb Road. FOP Services will be held at 6:45 p.m. A funeral Mass will be offered on Friday May 8, 2026 at 10:30 a.m. at St. Simon the Apostle Church at 825 Pontius Road. A luncheon will be held in Plagge Hall, next to St. Simon, following the Mass.