



DENVER POLICE MUSEUM

The Denver Police Museum Board

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DPM NEWSLETTER

Winter 2023

Message from the Board

The Museum is fortunate to have many volunteers who offer their time and talent in service to the Museum. This year, we are excited to welcome several new volunteers who will be supporting the Museum's marketing efforts. Please join us in welcoming our newest volunteers: Tim Burgess, Nancy Gapter, Linda Hobbs, Rachel Logie, Mary Morahan, and Olivia Nielson.

Our growing team of dedicated volunteers have helped the Museum in every aspect of its operations, including events, artifact management, tours, youth programs, and fundraising efforts. The Museum's volunteers include retired officers, active officers, retired civilian employees, and relatives of the police family as well as those community members who are not personally connected to the police department but who share a passion for the Museum's mission. We are inspired by your enthusiasm, your dedication, and your continued support of the Museum—thank you!

We would also like to thank the many active officers, career employees, retirees, widows, officer families, and members of the community who support our mission through your membership and donations. As a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, the Denver Police Museum relies on the generous support of donors like you to fund and sustain our programs, preserve our collection, honor the legacy of the fallen, and build bridges between citizens and the law enforcement of Denver. We are so grateful to those who believe that this project is not only possible, but essential. Thank you for your generous contributions that make everything we do possible.

Be sure to sign up for our e-newsletter at
denverpolitemuseum.org/become-a-museum-insider
to get all the latest on Museum news and events!

Sincerely, The Denver Police Museum Board •

Three Denver Police Officers Formally Added to National Memorial



In 1961, President John F. Kennedy signed an executive order declaring the week of March 15 as National Peace Officers Memorial Week in the United States. In Denver, former Denver Police Chief Jim Collier began the tradition of an annual memorial in May of 1992. In recent years, the Museum, the Denver Police Officers Foundation, and the Denver Police Foundation have partnered to make the week a historical tribute to our fallen, retired, and deceased officers. We want to thank the Denver Office of Special Events for lighting Denver's City and County Building Blue for Police Week 2023 in recognition of our 77 fallen officers and our nearly 9,000 individuals who have taken the oath to service and protect our

community since 1859. The Denver Police Museum Board would also like to take this opportunity to thank the many volunteers who helped with the planning and implementation of the special activities associated with Denver Police Week 2023—we could not have done it without you!



We are happy to report that we had the largest turnout for the 2023 memorial since the beginning of the pandemic. Special thanks to Linda Remley for coordinating the fallen officer family reception hosted by Chief Ron Thomas prior to the formal ceremony. Over 30 family members attended both the reception and the memorial this year.

We were privileged to have the family of fallen Denver Police Officer Forrest Sawyer, who was killed in 1937, join us for this year's memorial. Sawyer's granddaughter, Ginny Chilcote, and her son, Fruita Police Officer Dillion Chilcote, joined our fallen-officer families for a special reception hosted

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NATIONAL MEMORIAL

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by Denver Police Chief Ron Thomas following the ceremony. Seventeen different fallen officer families were represented at this year's memorial. Officer Sawyer's great grandson Officer Dillion Chilcote, accepted a flag flown over the United States Capitol by the Denver Police Museum in honor of his great grandfather's sacrifice.



After the memorial ceremony, the Museum recognized the work of CBS Channel 4 Reporter Karen Morfitt. Karen has worked on several outstanding stories highlighting many of our retired and historic officers. We are grateful to Ms. Morfitt for helping the Denver Police Museum to fulfill our mission of preserving Denver law enforcement history.



This year, at the National Police Week Memorial Ceremony in Washington, D.C., three Denver Police Officers were formally added to the memorial wall. Thanks to the efforts of retired Denver Police Sgt. Dean Christopherson, fallen officers Robert Sandoval, Frank Potestio, and Peter Walsh were recognized for their sacrifice.

The Denver Police Department sent members of the Denver Police Honor

Museum Introduces Legacy Project

In 2023, the Denver Police Museum introduced its latest recognition initiative, the Legacy Project. Focused on honoring the many families with multi-generational service to the Denver Police Department, the Legacy Project serves to recognize the lasting impact of these families.

During Police Week 2023, the Museum honored its first Legacy Project honoree, the O'Neill family, for their combined total of over 150 years of service to the Citizens of the City and County of Denver. Former Denver Fox anchor and current Public Information Director for Douglas County Sheriff, Deborah Takahara, served as master



of ceremonies for the program. Deb is also a member of the O'Neill family and shared her own family insights.

Additionally, the Denver Gazette ran a special editorial highlighting the individual service of past and current O'Neill family members. ●



Guard to attend the ceremony and assist family members, including Harry and Janice Queen (Frank Potestio), Robert Grauberger (Peter Walsh), and Antoinette Cuccia (Robert Sandoval). A special thank you to Denver Police Officer Danny Veith for his continued efforts to acknowledge

and honor our many fallen officers not only from Denver, but throughout Colorado. In addition, PPA President Sgt Tyson Worrell and retired Lt. Kenneth Chavez attended the National Memorial Ceremony representing the Officers of the Denver Police Department. ●

Recognizing the Passing of Two Denver Police Department Giants



The Museum recognized two retired Denver Police Officers who passed in 2023. JC Tyus and Jacques Bensard were memorialized and remembered for their outstanding contributions as both active and retired officers.

JC served many years as the Executive Director for the Denver Police Officer's Foundation. Jacques was a board member for the Police Officer's

Foundation and also had his own foundation that provided educational opportunities to the Denver Police Department family. Both will be greatly missed.

In October, Museum was notified that late Denver Police Detective Jacques Bensard left a generous gift to the Museum of \$75,000. His bequest will support the Museum's building fund. ●



Students Learn About Traffic Stops, Violations From Denver Police Officers

The Museum would like to thank the E-470 Public Highway Authority Transportation Safety Foundation for their generous grant to support the Museum's Teen Traffic Safety Program. With this funding, the Museum will be able to expand our very successful program to reach more students. We



would also like to recognize the Denver Police Traffic Division and retired Denver Police Officer Barb Cisneros for their support in developing and implementing this important program.

The goal of the Teen Traffic Safety Program is to prevent deaths and serious injuries on Denver's roadways by educating young drivers about traffic safety and traffic laws, including the risks of distracted and impaired driving, what to do if you are pulled over by a police officer, and how to report an accident. The program is also an opportunity to build trust between law enforcement and the communities they serve—especially youth.

The Denver Police Museum and Denver Police Department have teamed up to educate students on what they should do if they are pulled over. During the program, students have a chance to try on impairment goggles which simulate being an impaired driver, learn what to do during a traffic stop, and get a behind the scenes look at how a police officer conducts a traffic stop.

Kimberly Espinoza, a sophomore at CEC Early College says this program helps students like her understand the process of a traffic stop. "It just gives me an insight into what could happen in the future and what is expected

Due to the hard-work and perseverance of DPM Board members April Overman and Rosie Siemer, the Museum's youth programs continue to spark curiosity in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM). We continue to expand our programs with Denver Public Schools. The Museum was fortunate to receive renewed grants from both the E-470 Public Highway Authority Transportation Safety Foundation and the Anschutz Foundation for the coming school year!

of me," said Espinoza. Denver Police Officer Kurt Barnes says a program like this helps build on community, "The most important thing is that we are establishing a strong rapport with our young drivers." ●

Special thanks to CBS Colorado for their coverage of this story.



Denver Police Museum Honors Latino Division Chief

Author: Byron Reed • Originally Published: 6:22 PM MDT October 10, 2023 on 9news.com

The Denver Police Museum honored retired division chief Juan Maldonado as part of their Hispanic Heritage Month celebration.

Maldonado was named one of the department's first Latino division chiefs in 2000. He oversaw District 2 in northeast Denver. He joined the department in 1971

after serving in Vietnam.

"I came home to Denver, and we had two kids," Maldonado said. "I drove by the old police station that used to be at 12th and Champa, there was a sign on the wall that said, 'Denver is hiring police and firefighters.'"

He joined the police academy on July 17, 1971, and was one of three Latinos in his class. He went on to become a patrol officer, and Maldonado said other officers made it abundantly clear that they were not especially welcome.

"We had nights where people wouldn't talk to us," he said. "One guy in the other car says, 'Who we working with?' This guy says, 'I don't know, I haven't even asked him his name, some Mexican guy.' First of all, I'm not Mexican. My family came from Spain."

He said he'll never forget some of those hurtful comments during his career.

"I remember specifically being told that I would never be more than a detective, unless it was in narcotics," Maldonado said. "This one particular individual said, 'That's only because it takes one to catch one.' That's how brazen some people were. Most were not."

He served as a patrolman, sergeant, and lieutenant in departments like Internal



Juan Maldonado and his family being recognized by the Denver Police Museum and National Latino police Officers Association

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Elvis Presley's Pearl Handled Colt .45

It's estimated that Elvis Presley performed in more than 1,600 concerts in his lifetime. Four of those performances were held in Denver, the last at McNichols Sports Arena on April 23, 1976. By the time Elvis arrived in Denver for what was to be his last Denver concert appearance, he had become close friends with a number of Denver area law enforcement professionals.



(Above Left) Standing in front of a DPD Museum Car (1964 Ford Galaxie) left to right: Tom O'Neill, Bryan O'Neill, Mike Hesse, Michael O'Neill, Sr. and Michael O'Neill, Jr. (holding the Presley gun), and retired Denver Police Chief, Jim Collier. (Above Right) Closeup of the Presley gun. (Far Left) Elvis Presley in his Denver Police Captain's uniform with Police Chief Art Dill.



Elvis had a fascination with law enforcement. He was an avid collector of firearms and police badges and, over the years, collected badges from nearly every city he visited.

And he was generous. Elvis grew up very poor and there are many stories of him giving free cars and other items to less fortunate people, many who were absolute strangers.

In 1974, Elvis gifted a pearl handled Colt .45 to Chief Art Dill. After Chief Dill's passing, his widow, Marie, donated some of Art's police artifacts to the Denver Police Museum. In addition to Chief Dill's badges and several other weapons was the pearl handled Colt .45.

Sadly, Elvis died on August 16, 1977 at the age of 42. ●

Special thanks to 9News Denver for their coverage of this story.

Affairs and the Intelligence Bureau. In 2000, he was promoted to Division Chief, where he oversaw District 2 in northeast Denver and eventually retired in 2004. Now, his son and his grandson are both following in his footsteps.

“I saw the change as time went on to where it became more diverse,” he said. “It became a more equal playing field, and I’m proud to have been a Denver police officer.”

The police museum honored Maldonado with an award that recognizes Hispanic officers who were one of the first to achieve a milestone in their careers. It’s Maldonado’s legacy of helping others that touched many in the department.

“As a young Hispanic officer on the job, you always look for Hispanic officers and leaders within the department to emulate,” said Joe Montoya, Deputy Police Chief for DPD. “And [Juan’s] definitely one of those.”

It’s a milestone that has Maldonado proud of his career and now proud of his department.



Retired Division Chief Maldonado receiving proclamation at Denver City Council Chambers on October 2. Left to right: DPD Division Chief Sanchez, Deputy Chief Joe Montoya,

“I take pride in that I’m an American, I’m a Hispanic American of Spanish descent, but I’m also very proud of the fact that I am blue,” Maldonado said. “I believe

that all police officers are blue. Some of us are different shades of blue, but we’re all blue.” ●

Announcing the 2023 Denver Police Museum’s Holiday Ornament

We’re excited to announce that the Denver Police Museum is offering its second in the series of collectible holiday ornaments honoring the rich history of the Denver Police Badge.

The 2023 ornament highlights the 1881 Star badge. The ornament is our gift to you with a minimum donation of \$30. It’s sure to be an ideal stocking stuffer or a cherished addition to your own collection.



This one-of-a-kind Denver Police Museum ornament will make the perfect gift for yourself and everyone on your list this year—especially that hard-to-shop for law enforcement supporter.

Simply complete the included donation form (on the last page of this newsletter) and mail your donation form and personal check to the address provided. Ornaments are also available on the Museum’s website at denverpolicemuseum.org ●

Do You Recognize This Officer?

Be the first to identify the officer in this historic photo and receive a free gift from the Museum! Email your answer to info@denverpolicemuseum.org



Museum Hosts Volunteer Appreciation and Recruiting Event

On August 29, the Museum hosted a cocktail reception at the Applewood Golf Course in Golden to recognize the outstanding work of our many volunteers. In addition, the event provided an opportunity to invite friends, family, and community members to learn more about the Museum and share opportunities for volunteering. The event

was an overwhelming success in large part due to the planning and organizational efforts of the Museum's Secretary, Linda Remley. More than 60 people attended the event and several new volunteers have joined the ranks!

The Museum would like to give special

thanks to Leo Branstetter for his generous donation in support of our volunteer recognition program, and we express our sincerest gratitude to the Rocky Mountain Law Enforcement Federal Credit Union for sponsoring this event. ●





The Denver's Police Widows Association announced that it is disbanding and divided its treasury between the Denver Orphans Fund and Denver Police Museum.

Above is a photo from the Association's last meeting posing with the 1930 Ford A owned by the Denver Police and preserved by the Denver Police Museum.

While the Museum greatly appreciates this generous gift, we are saddened that this 50-year-old support organization has chosen to disband. ●

Pre-Order Your Collector's Series Holiday Ornament Today

For a suggested donation of \$30, this one-of-a-kind collector's ornament ships free to you!

Order online today at denverpolicemuseum.org or use the order form below and mail your check to:
Denver Police Museum, P.O. Box 9140, Denver, CO 80209-0140

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Home Phone: _____ Cell Phone: _____

Email: _____

YES! I want to make a contribution to the Denver Police Museum. Enclosed is my gift of:

- ☐ \$30 — with your gift of **\$30**, you will receive **one** holiday ornament as our gift to you.
- ☐ \$60 — with your gift of **\$60**, you will receive **two** holiday ornaments as our gift to you.
- ☐ \$90 — with your gift of **\$90**, you will receive **three** holiday ornaments as our gift to you.
- ☐ \$120 — with your gift of **\$120**, you will receive **four** holiday ornaments as our gift to you.
- ☐ Other _____

Thank you! The Denver Police Museum is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization and contributions to the Museum are fully tax-deductible. Your support directly supports the Museum's educational programs, community outreach, memorial services, and the preservation of our collection.

You Can Support the Denver Police Museum

Your financial support, stories, donations, and gift of time serve as a living legacy, creating opportunities for community understanding and engagement, strengthening the city's relationship with the community, and inspiring the next generation of law enforcement professionals. Gifts to the Museum support our extensive collection of artifacts, engaging events, and educational initiatives. Your donation will ensure that the story of Denver's law enforcement history will be preserved, explored, and celebrated for generations to come. ●

Learn more or contribute online at
denverpolicemuseum.org/support



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The Denver Police Law Enforcement Museum, Inc.
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