

Tribute to:

John William Rixham, Jr.

"CopPadre"

Today, I pay tribute and remember a fallen hero, our CopPadre.

What is a hero?

Webster, defines a hero in several ways, I chose the following to best describe our CopPadre, John Rixham.

"In mythology and legend, a man, often of divine ancestry, who is endowed with great courage, or strength, celebrated for his bold exploits and favored by the gods." Look carefully at that definition, it fits the Padre, very well.

"Divine ancestry," no question about it he was a child of god.

"Great courage and strength," without question, John shared his strength with everyone that came his way. For many years, the Padre faced the harsh and cruel side of law enforcement every day. Over the years, John was both shot and stabbed in the "Line of Duty." He enforced the law and did not condemn or pass judgment.

"Favored by God," of this, I am also certain. Look, for yourself, when you arrive, before the throne of god. You will certainly find CopPadre, in the front row.

John Rixham, had a dream, his dream was for a safe and crime free world. The remaining Officers, from around the world can help make John's dream come true. The loss of our Padre has already brought the Law Enforcement community closer together. The men and women of TopCops have rallied together to mourn the loss of our Padre. The unity, of all Law Enforcement Officers, was another one of John's dreams the members of TopCops share that dream as well. Together, we can make John's dream come true.

There is one thing, they never teach in the academy, or in any other part of your training. Once you carry a shield and work the streets, you can never again be completely out, it's in your blood and you can't shake it. Yes, you are in for life. You never loose the knot in your stomach when a "Fellow Officer" is in danger

or hurt. You can't avoid, the ache in your heart, when a life is lost. It's a feeling that makes even, the old and seasoned, road tough professional, feel, just a little bit helpless. Yes, you are in for life.

Law Enforcement, regardless of the Department or Agency, represents what is known as "The Thin Blue Line." We stand hand in hand, shoulder to shoulder, we stand, as one.

"The Thin Blue Line" is the line Law Enforcement forms between safety and danger, good and evil, tranquillity and anarchy, crime and justice. When the line is broken, because of, our nature and our training, the remaining Officers close ranks, we try to fill the void. Each Officer, across this country, suffers and grieves in his or her own way. As members of the LEO family, we suffer, when a life is lost or a member of the Law Enforcement family is gone.

I have many things in my life that cause me to be grateful. Only a few things, I regret. I will always be grateful for the friendship I shared with the Padre. Of the few things I regret, is, I never took the time to explain in detail, how deeply he had touched my life and the great value I placed on our friendship. Thankfully, when this life is over, I will see my beloved Padre again.

In the days since John's death, I have talked to many people in the Law Enforcement family. I have never found a single person that did not respect and love John Rixham. That fact alone, is a great tribute to John, the man and the officer.

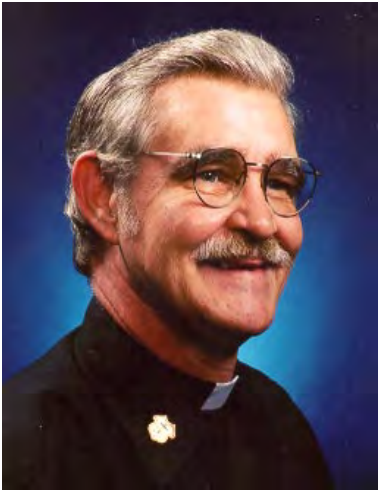
I would like to pledge, to each and every Officer I know, "As long as I live, like my beloved CopPadre, you will not be forgotten." It is my constant wish and prayer, that God be with you, each and every day and keep you safe from harm.

John, was my friend and I miss him.

Lt. Bill Wilson
Tribute Officer
CSO3534@aol.com

***"Through the hearts and
lives we touch each day,
our Fellow Fallen Officers
live on."***





John William Rixham, Jr was born 02-01-44 in Randallstown, MD. At the time of his death John and Kathy were living in Reisterstown, MD.

On March 2, 1999, after an exhausting battle with ARDS, John slipped quietly away, to be with the Lord he served so willingly. He is lovingly remembered by his wife Kathy, son J.

Robert, daughter-in-law Lora Sue, niece Angela Nicole, brother Edward G. Rixham and step-mother Mary Virginia Rixham. Plus his hundreds of friends at TopCops.

His career:

John enlisted in the US Army and served his country there for 2 years. For a brief time he was stationed in Korea.

On leaving the military John spent 12+ years in the US Army Reserve. When John retired with disability, he was a "Staff Sgt."

Following the 2 Years in the US Army, John, went to work for the: GSA Federal Protective Service (FPS) Police Baltimore, MD, Field Office John worked for them approximately 12 years and was forced to retire with "Total Disability." While working for the FPS John was assigned to the VA Hospital in Baltimore for the most part.

(Story By: Second Chance Body Armor)

"While working as a Patrolman for the Federal Protective Service Police, John Rixham was saved "THE FIRST TIME" by his Second Chance Body Armor. This was Second Chance save # 257. While approaching a car with two people seated inside, John was about to ask them to leave the area. One assailant got out of the car and began a fight. In the melee, the attacker grabbed Rixham's service gun and shot him. The second assailant drew his 9mm and shot Rixham again, in the side. Rixham's, Second chance Body Armor, a gift that was only nine days old. The body armor, caught and held the .38 slug from his service revolver. The 9mm was through and through."

It was the 9mm that caused the damage, forcing John into early retirement.

Following John's retirement, in 1976, he became the "National Chaplain for the American Law Enforcement Officers Association."

(Second Chance Save #524)

"After taking the post as Chaplain, for the ALEOA, John was serving as a volunteer at the VA Hospital in Baltimore, MD. John, one Officer and another Chaplain, were stabbed and slashed while trying to restrain a mental patient in a psychiatric ward."

Even after being shot twice, slashed and stabbed on another occasion, John W. Rixham, Jr. still served as a volunteer Chaplain, and worked at the hospital until his death.

John, stayed active with the FOP, PBA, and American Law Enforcement Officers Association. One of John's loves was his participation in TopCops. John, told me on one occasion, "I would like to be able to meet as many of the members of TopCops as possible." "It, (TopCops) takes on a whole new meaning after you can put a face with a screen name." "Following my trip to Nashville, TN and meeting Denney Corsey, John Byers and Col. Bill-e-Bob, I knew I wanted to meet all the others." "My trip to New York and meeting Gary, Bob, PACONSTABL, Deb and all the others was a real treat." "I can't wait to see how many I will meet in May, in Washington, DC, for Police Memorial Day."

John, loved to travel and collected small reproductions of "Light Houses." He had collected one from each light house he visited. He had an extensive collection of coffee mugs, most from Law Enforcement Agencies. In addition to the light houses and coffee mugs, John also collected baseball caps from Law Enforcement. John and Kathy's health and finances, did not allow them to travel as much as they would have liked.

John spent most of his free time "On Line" at his computer. John was dedicated to TopCops, he felt the membership on the list were "Truly, TopCops." John was also a member of Badges, OffDuty, StreetForensics and Code-3.

Quote from the Padre:

"A society that makes
War against its Police
had better learn to make friends
with its criminals!"

"There is no problem
that can't be handled by a pound of C-4."

John and Kathy met at MPT, the Public Television Station where they were both avid volunteers. They fell in love, and were married during their August Pledge Drive on August 20, 1994.

Yes they actually got married on air, during the drive, and the wedding guests manned the telephones during the reception. John and Kathy were married in western gear -- cowboy hats and all.

A very cynical old man was watching a young boy on the beach. He watched the young boy for several minutes, walk down the beach, finding starfish that had washed up in the surf and placing them back in the water.

Finally, the old man walked up to the boy and said, "You know, you can't save them all. It doesn't matter."

The young boy looked at the old man, then down the long stretch of beach, then at the starfish in his hand. He placed the starfish back in the water and turned to the old man and said, "It matters to this one."

Our lives can be much like the young boy. We can't save the world, but we can make a difference... to at least one person.

John Rixham has touched more than his share of lives in this world. And for this we owe him a debt of gratitude that cannot be repaid. Those of us left to carry on will sorely miss John, but he is in his place of Honor, at the right hand of God.

God Bless you John for your life has touched many lives and will continue to do so for many years to come. You have left a legacy that people will remember and there is no greater feat in this world than to continue to affect people after you have left.

Officer Scott White
Portsmouth, VA Police

I was not sure whether or not you wanted any input from the funeral and all that went on. I just wanted to say that I never met CopPadre in person. I only knew him by his posts on the list. I did, however, attend his funeral because it was something I felt I had to do and also because topcops has been my home for three years and I to attend in CopPadre's honor.

I am not sure whether or not you will be printing anything about the funeral but I would like to say that Lt. Bill gave so much of himself for a dear friend in need. He worked so hard to comfort Kathy at a very difficult time. I never met Lt. Bill before. I sat back in amazement at how he did things and made sure that everything went well. I truly never met such a person. I just wanted everyone to know that Lt. Bill gave so much to CopPadre and his family. He did it out of the goodness of his heart and wanted nothing in return other than to see that CopPadre had an honorable funeral which he surely did.

I wish you could have been there. Lt. Bill made such an impression on me that I have the memories in my mind as if it were just yesterday. I just wanted to make sure that what Lt. Bill did would not go unrecognized. It is truly an honor to know Lt. Bill. He is blessed with so many wonderful qualities.

CopPadre was so proud because he was watching from his beat up above. Thanks.

Corporal Sal Torelli
Fauquier County Sheriff's Office
Warrenton, Virginia 20186

When I first joined TopCops CopPadre was in the hospital gravely ill. I did not know him, nor had I ever had the pleasure of reading his messages.

What I was able to share in was the very touching updates that Kathy was posting to the list. I also had the chance to learn something about some of the others on the list as they poured out their hearts to CopPadre and Kathy. It was obvious that this was a very special man and I deeply regret that he was not a part of my life.

Capt. Gary Lenon
Mecosta County Sheriff Department
Big Rapids, Michigan

About 20 hours before Kahu Rixham was to go under the knife, I emailed him, asking that he give a special prayer for the daughter of of good friend of mine.

She was undergoing basic training for the Hawaii National Guard and was stricken with some kind of virus similar to Haunta. Both lungs collapsed, etc, and she was near death.

Kahu, without hesitation, told me he would give his best prayer for her, even in the face of his anxiousness about his own health. My friend's daughter hovered at death's door for some time, and then began making startling improvement. I have no way to actually guage the time frame, but I seem to remember her improvement started the day Kahu died.

Coincidence, I think not.

aloha
Sean
seanross@lava.net

I have never met him face to face but have come to know him as a friend. His wit and humour were to be reckoned with and enjoyed by all.

I have a special attachment to John. He sent a certificate appointing me a National Chaplin's Aid for the work I do with the Condolence Cards. I was quite touched when I received this honor he bestowed on me. If I could , I would do the same for him for the tireless work he did for our Brothers at Arms, both during and after his active duty. I can only hope that I can measure up this this great man's shadow.

He will be missed by all.

Constable/Gendarme Randall PERRY
Royal Canadian Mounted Police/
Gendarmerie royale du Canada
pauran@monisys.ca

Go Rest High On That Mountain

*I know your life
On earth was troubled
And only you could know the pain
You weren't afraid to face the devil
You were no stranger to the rain*

*Go rest high on that mountain
Son, your work on earth is done
Go to heaven a shoutin'
Love for the Father and the Son*

*Oh how we cried the day you left us
We gathered round your grave to grieve
I wish I could see the angels faces
When they hear your sweet voice sing*

*Go rest high on that mountain
Son, your work on earth is done
Go to heaven a shoutin'
Love for the Father and the Son*

*1994 Benefit Music
Vince Gill*

Vince Gill has one of the strongest and most tender voices in Country Western music today. His rendition of ballads and gospel music is second to none. His performance of ***Go Rest High On That Mountain*** is my personal favorite and I thought the lyrics were very appropriate.

***THE TRUE MEASURE OF A MAN'S WEALTH
IS IN THE NUMBER OF THOSE
THAT CALL HIM FRIEND!***

JOHN WAS INDEED A RICH MAN

TopCops-L
Restricted LEO Discussion List

Join our Restricted LEO email discussion group, TopCops-L listserv@home.ease.lsoft.com
& Join the IPA (InterNational Police Association) IPA HomePage: <http://www.ipa-usa.org>