

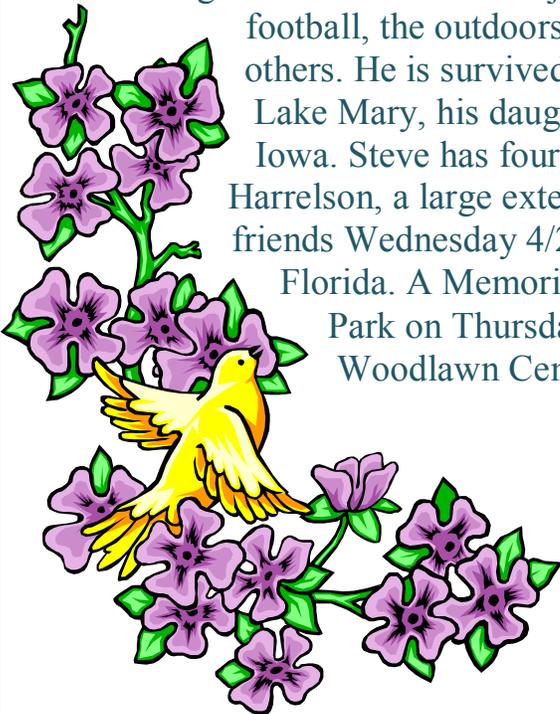


Steve Harrelson

*Went to be in God's hands
on April 18, 2009*

HARRELSON, OTTIE STEVE Ottie Steve Harrelson of Longwood went to be with the Lord on April 18, 2009. He was born in Moultrie, Georgia. His father was in the United States Air Force so he lived in various locations before settling in Orlando. He graduated in 1963 from Colonial High School where he was a star football player. He enlisted with the United States Air Force where he served for four years. He did a tour of duty in Vietnam and was awarded a purple heart. He graduated in December 1972 from the University of Central Florida with a Bachelor of Arts in Law Enforcement. Steve served for 20 years with the Orlando Police Department retiring as a lieutenant in 1991. He taught criminology and criminal justice at Seminole Community College while also serving with the Seminole County Sheriff's department for 13 years retiring in March 2006. He enjoyed being a granddaddy, fishing, coaching Pop Warner

football, the outdoors, attending several Bible study groups and doing for others. He is survived by his loving wife of 42 years, Jackie, his son Corey of Lake Mary, his daughter Melissa Tillotson who now lives in Cedar Rapids, Iowa. Steve has four grandchildren and two brothers, Donnie and Tonnie Harrelson, a large extended family and many friends. The family will receive friends Wednesday 4/22 from 5 to 8 at the Woodlawn Funeral home in Gotha, Florida. A Memorial Service will be held at Calvary Assembly in Winter Park on Thursday 4/23 at 3:00 with a graveside service to follow at Woodlawn Cemetery at 400 Woodlawn Cemetery Road, Gotha, Florida



OPD retiree Ottie 'Steve' Harrelson, 65, mentored troubled kids

Jeff Kunerth | Sentinel Staff Writer

April 20, 2009

The way it ended — on a fishing trip, trying to save a child — says volumes about Ottie "Steve" Harrelson.

Harrelson, a 65-year-old retired police officer, died Saturday after jumping into the Indian River near Titusville to rescue a boy with disabilities who had fallen out of his john boat.

"My father instinctively just jumped off the boat. Didn't think, just did," said his son Corey Harrelson, 36, of Lake Mary.

Steve Harrelson was with several other police officers who took a group of teens with disabilities and their parents on a fishing outing Friday. The boy who fell out of Harrelson's boat made it back. Harrelson didn't.

Pulled unconscious from the water, he was taken to Parrish Medical Center in Titusville. His family removed him from life support Saturday morning.

Harrelson spent 20 years with the Orlando Police Department and also worked for the Seminole County Sheriff's Office. In his last years with OPD, Harrelson worked on crimes against children. The abuse and suffering he saw, but could not prevent, took a toll on him, his son said.

"It was very frustrating to him not to be able to take that poor child and get them out of that situation. He took it so personally, it was emotionally taxing on him," his son said. "He always had a special place in his heart for children, for sure."

So he turned to mentoring boys he could save, providing them with moral and ethic guidance, offering support and advice. Often his wisdom came from the end of a fishing pole. Being outdoors, on the water, under the stars, by a campfire, is when the stern and strict exterior of Steve Harrelson gave way to the compassionate heart inside.

"Some of the most influential conversations I had with my father were sitting under the stars by a fire. The conversations that made me want to be a better person, we shared on those occasions — fishing, hunting or camping."

Always an athletic and physically fit person, Harrelson had gained weight in recent years and developed health problems — high blood pressure, diabetes — that could have contributed to his death, his son said.

"He was a terrible patient. He wouldn't eat the right things. He would miss taking his medications," the younger Harrelson said.

And though the retired officer was a good swimmer, he was lousy at floating — sinking straight to the bottom of any body of water, his son said.

"My theory is he tried so hard to keep his head above water he just plum wore himself out," Corey Harrelson said. "He's my dad. I love him dearly, and I will miss him."

In addition to his son, Steve Harrelson is survived by his wife, Jacqueline Harrelson, of Longwood; daughter, Melissa Tillotson, Cedar Rapids, Iowa; two brothers, Donnie Harrelson and Tony Harrelson; and four grandchildren.

Woodlawn Carey Hand Funeral Home, Gotha, is handling funeral arrangements.

Jeff Kunerth can be reached at jkunerth@orlandosentinel.com or 407-420-5392.

THE ADDRESS FOR THE HARRELSON'S

His wife is:

Jacqueline Harrelson
595 Chelsea Rd
Longwood, FL 32750
(407) 332-6875

Tributes:

From: Mike Wenger - mwenger8948@hotmail.com

Sorry to report Steve Harrelson passed away

Diane Dion - ddion2@cfl.rr.com

I worked for Lieutenant Steve Harrelson in the '80's while assigned to the Youth Section. Many of us learned more about the English language and many other lessons in life as a result of having had the pleasure of working with him. As our section commander, Lt. Harrelson was always actively involved with various boards and committees with our youths' best interest at heart. What a good and kindhearted man he was.

R. D. King - rd.king@att.net

Steve was a trainee went I first met him. We had some great times. My prayers are with his family. Rest in peace my friend.

From: Tommy Hurlburt -

Steve Harrelson was as good as they come. He was a tremendous individual, who possessed all of those qualities which many of us strive to attain but never do. Steve was not shy about letting you know where he stood on any issue. Truly he was a man's man. Steve broke my ankle during football practice while we were playing for the O.P.D. Football Team. I would suffer that again to have him back.
Tom Hurlburt

From: Neil McDonald - mcdonald3dotson@embarqmail.com

Ottie Steve Harrelsonel's lifetime examples and final sacrificial act exemplify that he followed Christ's commandments to "*love thy neighbor as thyself*". I am proud to have known and served with such a talented career law enforcement officer and will pray for his family's acceptance of this personal loss. Sincerely, Neil McDonald (OPD Ret/1996)

From: Janet Denning - dixbell@hotmail.com

I met Steve 37 years ago. He worked at O.P.D. with my husband at that time. He had a wonderful gift as a people person. My prayers are with his family and friends.....Janet Denning

From: Frank Chisari - fbchisari@yahoo.com

The world will be a lonelier place without Steve. I worked with Steve and Ray Schidig before being transferred to the original TAC unit. Steve will always be in my heart and prays. Thank you for being part of my life Steve. Steve not only loved the outdoors, but loved his family dearly. May the Lord bring them peace and strength. I WILL see you again Steve.

Frankie

From: Danny Wilson - dannywilson@bellsouth.net

http://www.myfoxorlando.com/dpp/news/041709child_falls_off_boat

wanted to pass this on to you. Steve was not only a great police officer he was also a Christian. He devoted his life to serving others and was tragically taken while saving another's life. Dan

(2nd message - After I sent the above messages to all the retirees) Steve was actually a retired OPD Lieutenant before he went to work for Seminole County. One of the articles was inaccurate in their portrayal of Steve's service. Dan

From: Earle Sanborn - earlesanborn@webtv.net

<http://www.orlandosentinel.com/news/local/breakingnews/orl-bk-retired-lawman-drowns-saving-boy-041809,0,1865874.story>

You might want to get this out right away. A lot of us treasure Steve Harrelson.

Earle Sanborn

From: John Peschau - Peeeeeshaw@cfl.rr.com

FYI - GREAT GUY and a very good COP

<http://www.orlandosentinel.com/news/local/breakingnews/orl-bk-retired-lawman-drowns-saving-boy-041809,0,1865874.story>

From: Mary Ann Salazar - mas@embarqmail.com

In today's Orlando Sentinel Sunday edition on B 3, there is an article about one of our retirees. Retired Lt. Otis Steve Harrelson, 65, drowned after jumping into the Indian River near Titusville to save a boy with disabilities who fell out of his boat on a fishing trip. Lt. Harrelson was among several police officers and others who took a group of Orlando-area teens with disabilities on the outing Friday. He also worked with Seminole County Sheriff's Office. The boy swam back to the boat after Harrelson dived in to help him. But then, Harrelson had difficulties and the boy's mother jumped in with a flotation cushion to get Harrelson back to the boat. Harrelson could not be revived and was taken off life support Saturday morning.

Our prayers go out to his family and friends.

Mary Ann Salazar

From: Judy Gillett - kittykatt@cfl.rr.com

". . . Saving just one pet won't change the world
. . . but, surely, the world will change for that one pet . . . "

Retired Orlando cop, Seminole deputy saves boy, drowns

OrlandoSentinel.com Staff

10:00 PM EDT, April 18, 2009

MERRITT ISLAND - A retired Orlando police officer and Seminole County deputy died Saturday after struggling in the water to save a boy who had fallen from a boat Friday, a Web site is reporting.

Ottie Steve Harrelson, 65, went into the water at the Merritt Island National Wildlife Sanctuary in Brevard County to save a boy scout with special needs who fell off a boat, MyFoxOrlando.com reports.

Harrelson, a chaperon, jumped into the water and was able to get the child to safety. But he went under and was pulled onto another boat, where CPR was administered as he was rushed to the Parrish Park boat ramp.

http://www.myfoxorlando.com/dpp/news/041709child_falls_off_boat

John Cabrera

Programmer / Analyst

Ph: 407-414-0741 (Cell)

Email: john@jocaweb.com

From: Bob Castlen - rlcastlen@hotmail.com

A friend told me she heard from friends that Steve Harralson died from injuries during a fishing outing over in the Titusville area. He's ex OPD. According to Roy Kelsey's ex-wife Steve's death was announced at her church this a.m. NOI.

Liz Oliver - Lizywizzy@aol.com

Former Lt. Ottie (Steve) Harrelson, 65, drowned after jumping into the Indian River near Titusville to save a boy with disabilities who fell out of his boat on a fishing tripgr Friday. He was among several police officers and others who took a group of Orlando-area teens with disabilities on the outing. According to sources, the boy swam back to the boat after Harrelson dived in to help him. Harrelson had difficulties, and the boy's mother jumped in with a flotation cushion to get Harrelson back to the boat. He could not be revived and was taken off life support Saturday morning.

This is according to an article in Sunday's paper.

From: Jay Staub - James.Staub.Ctr@losangeles.af.mil

Everyone has to meet his end somehow. Steve went out a hero.
God bless him.

From: Bruce Parker - bparker4444@gmail.com

Gloria and I wish to offer our very sincere condolences to the Harrelson family. Steve was a great person that everyone loved to work with. He was a fun, outgoing person, and a cop's cop. And even as he went with the Lord, he was giving his time and ultimately his life for those less fortunate. He made this world a better place. Thank you, Steve. Bruce

Bill Mustian - jonlaw241@earthlink.net

Lt. Harrelson was my first Lieutenant when I went to the Detective Bureau back in the 80's. I briefly worked for him before he transferred to another area in CID. I knew he had been in the Bureau for awhile & would always have an answer for any question I asked him about. He will be missed by all of us. Bill Mustian, retired '99

From: Paul Rumbley - chiefpr@earthlink.net

Ottie Steve was one of my closest friends at OPD, watch cop commanders same shift, R and D, fishing buddies and mentor. Praise the Lord for his life, and I look forward to seeing Ottie on that final shore - Paul Rumbley

From: Rick Overman - roverman1@cfl.rr.com

The news of Steve Harrelson's untimely death has left me with a sadness not only for his beautiful wife Jackie and his children but for all of us who knew him and called him friend. He was a great police officer and a great human being. I considered him a great Christian brother and friend and thank God for the times that I spent with him not only on duty but off duty. He loved to fish and he was a sport...he loved the Indian River and the beach and it is no surprise that he would be the first to put his life at risk to save another. I know that he is with his Lord and Savior Jesus Christ and our prayers go up for his family. God Bless You Ottie.....Rick Overman OPD 91'

From: Larry Lomanaco - TRIDENT6@aol.com

Steve was one of my training officers and ultimately became a close friend to both my brother, Sal (who named his son after Steve) and I. Steve taught me surf fishing and many other things, but most importantly, he taught me about courage, compassion and how to "do the right thing!!"

The fact Steve gave his life for a child doesn't surprise me that was Steve..

Rosary and I send our most sincere condolences to Steve's wife, Jackie and his son and extended family. He will be missed!

(2nd e-mail)

Steve and I were on the same SW squad in my early police career. He was a great compassionate and religious man who became close friends to both my brother, Sal (who named his son after him) and I. Larry and Rosary Lomanaco

From: Mary Lynch - CID - Mary.Lynch@CityOfOrlando.net

I didn't know him but what a hero!!! what a shame!!! my thoughts and prayers are with his family.

From: Johnny Redgrave - jnredgrave08@windstream.net

Steve was a great cop and well liked. I was also a fraternity brother with him in college. He had many funny stories, not only about the fraternity, but fishing stories that bordered on the whopper side! Nisia, also worked for Steve. We will miss him. We extend our prayers to the Harrelson family. John

From: Teresa Shipley - teresa.shipley@ocps.net

Thanks Guy Ann. Steve was a great guy and a rescuer of children most of his life. Children always came first with him and he set the groundwork for many local law enforcement youth services departments. *He will be missed.* TDS

Teresa Douglas Shipley
Manager, Grant Services
Orange County Public Schools

From: John Chisari - Nitcop1@aol.com

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

I am shocked to hear about Oattie's death. He died as he lived " A caring and wonderful man" He is and always will be remembered to all of us as a Hero. Please let me know when he will be buried, I will try to make plans on attending. If I cannot My Brother Frank is back home and he will attend for both of us.

John J. Chisari
Retired OPD ' 96

Bill Castlen – billcastlen@bellsouth.net

Steve Harrelson was my Section Commander in Youth Section for several years and he was tops. Steve was always very polite with the public and very professional in his demeanor. He will be a hero in my heart forever. Deputy William Castlen, Orange County Sheriff's Office.