



David G. Hoffmann

January 1, 1944 - June 13, 2024

DAVID GAGE HOFFMAN

01-01-1944 ~ 06-13-2024

THE MAN THE MYTH THE LEGEND

David Gage Hoffman was born on January 1, 1944 in Washington, D.C. to Elizabeth and Joseph Hoffmann. At the time David's father was serving in the Merchant Marines supplying the other branches of service with supplies during World War II.

Later his parents brought him and his 18-month older brother, Joseph, to Indiana. Both boys were raised Catholic and David attended Christ the King and the original Cathedral High School in downtown Indianapolis. David then attended Purdue University and got bitten by the Boilermaker bug. David was true to his school to the very end. He would have loved that Zach went 9th but more importantly, that he stayed home in West Lafayette to watch the Draft with his teammates. David's granddaughter, Gabriella is attending Purdue University and David was so excited and proud.

During the draft for the Vietnam War, David signed up for the Army so that he could choose how he would serve. Always attracted to anything mechanical, David chose to fly helicopters in Vietnam. David trained at Fort Wolters in Texas then shipped off to Vietnam. David spent 11 straight months 'in country' with one 24 hour R and R during the entire time. The demand for the services of the helicopter pilots was so great they slept on the tarmac near their 'birds'

instead of the barracks that were provided for them.

While serving David received several awards including 15 Oak Leaf Clusters, one for valor. Like too many Vietnam veterans, David never talked about his experiences because of the backlash the soldiers got when they returned home. During his time with Roberta, she pushed him to become involved with other helicopter veterans to start the healing process. David belonged to the Ohio River LZ Chapter of the Vietnam Helicopter Pilots Association. In 2008, David attended his first and only conference in San Francisco. After that, he began to finally answer questions and talk some about his experience.

Upon leaving the service David remained in California for a time and even attempted to join the Los Angeles Police Department. Thankfully he was not chosen and eventually came back to Indiana. David joined the Indianapolis Police Department in 1972 and served the citizens of Indianapolis for 34 years. Initially a patrol officer, David became a helicopter pilot with the force for many years then returned to the streets to be closer to the public he chose to serve. David took and passed the Sergeant's exam but again opted to remain on the street having direct contact with the people.

On November 30, 1996, while on patrol, David was confronted by two men burglarizing an eastside tobacco store. When the driver of the getaway car drove straight at Hoffmann he had no choice but to shoot at him, which resulted in the driver's death.

In another incident during his long and honorable career, David was shot while trying to calm a mentally compromised man at an apartment complex. Both long bones in David's right legs were shattered resulting in his being off work for a period of time recovering. The assailant was housed in a mental health facility until he became able to comprehend and assist his counsel at his trial for the shooting. Some years later, David was notified by the prosecutor assigned to the case that the defendant was now competent for trial and that they needed to meet with David to review the evidence for trial. Two days later David was notified that the man had committed suicide. David was shaken for days afterwards.

Later in his career, David responded to a call of a possible suicide. When he arrived he saw the subject on the floor in the front room. David broke a glass window and went in to save the man's life. He performed CPR with mouth-to-mouth resuscitation. It was only later that David became aware the man was HIV active. Luckily David never developed HIV. David received a medal but more importantly to him, he worked to save a life. In the past few years David was asked and agreed to become a Field Training Officer. David originally doubted he should be one. Once convinced he took to the job seriously and some of the officers he trained came to his retirement party to remark how much of an impact he had had on them.

When David was set to retire he indicated he didn't want any special party or other acknowledgement of the retirement. As a result, his superiors and his wife, Roberta, decided they needed to make it a special occasion. David's superiors contacted Roberta and together they set up a party. A large party was planned at the East District Headquarters. He received a top gun award for his shooting skills at his last qualifying day as a police officer. He received a commendation from Chief Spears. He received a commendation from the Mayor. He had a terrific turnout of officers who were sad to see him go. An Indianapolis Star reporter that Roberta had contacted made arrangements to ride with David and wrote a wonderful article about him, including his interest in Hard Rock and how he was as an officer. The photograph in the newspaper showed a laughing out loud David at his photograph on the retirement cake. David had two natural born sons, Michael and Matthew. He loved them fiercely. He was proud of how they grew up and how they were raising their children. When either of them got together with him he would greet them loudly and there were hugs at the meeting and departure. The boys have great respect and affection for their father and they have struggled with their loss. When David and Roberta got together, he had the joy of gaining two more daughters. He 'adopted' them into his family as well. David attended every grandchild event of which he became aware. It was a joy for him to see

those young ones growing and learning. There were several grandparent days he was at on school or another participating in the activities.

David was fortunate to find a second woman to love him and who he loved dearly. His wife, Judy, provided David with four more children to love and care about. The three oldest ones, Michael, Mark, and Tonya, were already “out of the house” when David married Judy , but hey became his too. The youngest, Cathy, lived with David and her mother and she became his daughter as if born to him. These four children provided him with more grandchildren to love. More grandchild events to enjoy.

David and Judy had a wonderful life together but he lost her to an infectious disease. Alone again, David became reacquainted with Roberta, whom he had met 16 years earlier when she met him through a friend of his. She was concerned that he was alone and asked him to care for her recently deceased mother’s cat. Thus his childhood love of cats rekindled. From 2001 on, David never was without a cat or two, or three...

Roberta and David began their life together in May of 2001 and remained together until his death. They laughed every day and traveled to several places together including trips overseas on more than one occasion. They enjoyed each other’s company and were devoted to each other. They never missed an opportunity to cuddle.

Anyone who knew David well knew his love of all things mechanical. He could fix everything given enough time to ponder. Bot most did not know he was also a skilled woodworker, glass blower, and enamel jewelry maker.

When David was 15 years old, he bought his first car with his paper route money. He became the proud owner of a 1949 black Chevrolet with the gear shift on the steering wheel column. Not old enough to drive legally yet, he worked on that vehicle taking it apart, cleaning and inspecting everything so it would be ready to drive. One night, when he was still 15, David took three friends and drove the car downtown in Indianapolis. At 16th and Meridian, the car stalled and quit. The boys were concerned they would be caught out at night with an underage unlicensed driver, but David got out, opened up the

hood, and 10-15 minutes later they were on their way again. David's laugh was infectious, and he laughed easily and often. Roberta remarks that they laughed every day of their time together. He had a great sense of humor. David's ability to care for others was boundless. He was the kind of person who when he talked you really listened and wanted to hear other people's opinion. And if you were blessed to be called his friend, you had a friend for life. David and Roberta shared 23 years together and every day they knew God had blessed them with a special deep love.

David will be missed by all, and if you wish to donate to one of his charities, please donate to: Friends of Indianapolis Animal Care Services Foundation, 7399 North Shadeland Avenue, #117, Indianapolis, IN 46250 and/or Best Friends Animal Sanctuary, 5001 Angel Canyon Road, Kanab, UT 84741, or any other animal rescue organization you choose.

Previous Events

Memorial Visitation

JUN **29**. 9:00 AM - 11:00 AM (ET)

Shirley Brothers Washington Memorial Chapel
9606 E. Washington Street
Indianapolis, IN 46229
(317) 897-9606
<https://shirleybrothers.com/>

Memorial Service

JUN **29**. 11:00 AM (ET)

Shirley Brothers Washington Memorial Chapel
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Indianapolis, IN 46229
(317) 897-9606
<https://shirleybrothers.com/>

Tribute Wall

MH

“ Dave was an excellent and wise veteran cop. Enjoy this following story:

All of us who worked the east end would often have our breakfast or lunch at Harold's Steer-Inn, 10th and Emerson which was Dave's beat.

One morning Dave, I, and 2 other officers were eating breakfast at Harold's with our Sergeant, shooting the bull, listening to our radios and swapping stories. I was the "rookie" at the table with 10 years in, early 2000's.

Suddenly the atmosphere was ((shattered)) with a CRASH!! and we saw glass flying into the restaurant and then the nose of an SUV peek through the window frame.

So what had occurred was that a vehicle had-had an accident. Which involved at the very least an accident report.

Like a flock of quail, Dave and the other 2 officers flew out of Harold's, quickly paying their bills and vanishing into the ether.

The Sgt looked at me and said "you're doing the accident report, right"? I looked around, saw that I was the only silver badge and snorted " I guess I am"! Which entailed a DUI investigation and arrest and a tow slip in addition to the dreaded accident report.

A couple hours later, having concluded all of that, I drove to Ellenberger Park and saw Dave parked by the pool. I drove up and after him asking if I'd handled the investigation and my snapping back "Someone had to, yeah!" he threw us head back and laughed, finally got a hold of himself and said 'Michael, When you hear or see a train coming, you need to get away from the tracks! You'll learn!"

I couldn't help but get over my snit on having had all of that dumped on me, and ended up laughing too! 😊

Michael Hegg - June 29, 2024 at 01:52 PM

JM

“ I worked with Dave many years on East District. One of the finest Officers I ever knew. John Morgan

John Morgan - June 26, 2024 at 08:24 AM

SS

“ I met Dave as a young rookie cop. Dave, with his steady, easy demeanor taught me more than any Academy or Field Training Officer could do. He taught me patience and understanding that we are all cut from a different cloth. “Put yourself in their shoes” he would often say. “Talk to them, not at them, or above them.” Wow! Great advice that carried me to 32 years of service with IPD. Thanks again Dave for your quiet service, unsung heroism and valued mentorship.

Steve Staletovich - June 26, 2024 at 12:39 AM



“ Full Of Love Bouquet was purchased for the family of David G. Hoffmann.



June 25, 2024 at 09:17 PM

JH

“ Joe Joan Mark and Heather Hoffmann purchased the *Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum* for the family of David G. Hoffmann.



Joe Joan Mark and Heather Hoffmann - June 25, 2024 at 08:51 AM

MD

“ Mike, Michael Jr. and Levi Dorn. purchased the *Beautiful in Blue* for the family of David G. Hoffmann.



Mike, Michael Jr. and Levi Dorn. - June 24, 2024 at 05:50 PM

MD

“ Mike, Michael Jr. and Levi Dorn. planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of David G. Hoffmann.

Mike, Michael Jr. and Levi Dorn. - June 24, 2024 at 05:50 PM



“ *Peaceful White Lilies Basket* was purchased for the family of David G. Hoffmann.



June 24, 2024 at 05:15 PM



“ *Your Friends at Solo Small Firm C'tee planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of David G. Hoffmann.*

Your Friends at Solo Small Firm C'tee - June 24, 2024 at 05:15 PM

“ DAVID GAGE HOFFMANN:

My late father-in-law was a remarkable man who lived a full and meaningful life. He had a passion for fixing cars, love for his cats, and was an enthusiast of metal and hard rock music. He met Roberta at a time when he needed care, understanding, compassion, and most of all, love. She was his damsel, a great source of strength, and most of all, she was his "Joan of Arc". They were bound with love and laughter, a kind of love that most people long for and admire.

He was a great dad, influencing his sons, Matt and Michael, with humility and a love for life. He advocated for education and hard work. He was proud of them - never wavered and always stood by their side. As a grandfather, he was an inspiration. The love he had for them all is unmatched - insurmountable.

His colleagues, friends, comrades, and fellow patriots had the utmost respect and admiration for him. A quiet man, yet full of wisdom, he had a great sense of humor and could make anyone laugh with his witty jokes and stories. He was a mentor, a role model, and a hero for me and many others.

He was a remarkable man—brave, fiercely patriotic, and dedicated to serving our country. His commendable service to the military included his role as a pilot during the Vietnam War and his 34 years in the police force. He was also a man of faith, who lived by his values and principles. He had a positive outlook on life and faced challenges and difficulties with courage and resilience.

I wrote this poetry to pay tribute to my late father-in-law, and to express my gratitude, admiration, and affection for him. I also wrote it to cope with my grief, and to find some comfort and healing in words. Each line and stanza depict a vivid and emotional portrait of him.

I want to convey how much I respected and loved him, and how much I miss him. I also want to convey how much he loved Michael, my husband, Matt, Abby, Alex, Ava, Allister, Martha, Gaby, and Dexter. I want to acknowledge the pain and sorrow of losing him, but also the hope and joy of remembering him. I want to celebrate his life and honor his spirit. I want to say goodbye, but also thank you. I want to let him know that he will always be in our hearts and minds.

Wings of Valor and a Hero's Legacy

*In the quiet passage from life to beyond,
Where stars gather to witness a soul's bond,
There stands a man, a sentinel of honor,
A tapestry woven with threads of valor.*

*He wore the badge, a shield against the night,
Thirty-four years of duty, unwavering might.
Through city streets and alleys, he strode,
A guardian of safety, where shadows abode.*

*But before the badge, before the uniform blue,
He soared on wings of courage,
skies wide and true.
A pilot in Vietnam's tempest, fierce and wild,
His heartbeat with the rhythm of freedom's child.*

*His eyes held memories, etched deep within
Of comrades lost, and battles fought to win
Yet, in his gaze, a kindness softly gleamed
A love for family, a life richly esteemed.*

*And love—oh, how fiercely it blazed within!
His wife, his anchor, their journey akin.
Twenty-six years of shared laughter and tears,
A love story etched in constellations, spanning years.*

*His sons—the legacy he carved in time,
Their dreams nurtured, their paths sublime.
He taught them honor,
resilience, and grace,
Guiding their flight through life's
intricate space.*

*As a grandfather, he reveled in delight,
Tales of adventure spun on cozy nights.
Little hands in his, eyes wide with wonder
He wove magic and memories
hearts torn asunder.*

*And beyond the uniform,
another tale unfurls,
A softer side, where love for cat gently swirls,
In quiet moments, whiskers brushed his skin,
Their purrs are a soothing balm, a love redeemed.*

*Now, as the sun sets on this earthly stage,
His spirit ascends, turning a final page.
The stars whisper secrets of duty well done,
A hero's legacy forever spun.*

Farewell, Dad and Grandpa. Farewell, David Gage Hoffmann.

Bernie Hoffmann

Hoffmann, Bernadette Parel - June 22, 2024 at 03:21 PM

KM

Bernie, that is beautiful. A wonderful way to memorialize a terrific father, grandfather, husband. I went to grade school with David. I saw him within the last few years at the St. Agnes and Cathedral reunion. I enjoyed visiting with him and doing some grade school reminiscing. May he rest in peace!💔

Karen Connor Matters - June 24, 2024 at 11:40 PM

DJ

He will never be forgotten ❤️ my friend

David Jones - June 26, 2024 at 08:28 PM

JN

“ Jennifer N. planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of David G. Hoffmann.

Jennifer N. - June 21, 2024 at 01:50 PM

S(

“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



S I Drake, Lt/IPD | IMPD (Ret) - June 21, 2024 at 10:45 AM

S(

A final salute to one who has made our world a brighter, better place. David, you are free to fly again with the Angels,,, SALUTE!

S I Drake, Lt/IPD | IMPD (Ret) - June 21, 2024 at 10:55 AM