

## **Deputy Scott Arner January 4, 2002 Jasper County, Missouri**

Deputy Scott Arner, 43, a resident of Neosho, died during an investigative dive in a mine pit northwest of Joplin, Missouri.

Jasper County Sheriff Bill Pierce said Arner and others were searching the ice-covered water for a body during an investigation into a possible homicide when the veteran deputy failed to come to the surface.



**Deputy Scott R. Arner**

He was pulled from the water by other divers and taken to a Joplin hospital, but efforts to revive him failed. An autopsy showed that Arner drowned

### **Deputy dies in diving accident Dive team member was taking part in investigation**

<http://www.joplinglobe.com/020105/regional/story1.html>

01-05-02 **By John Hacker Globe Staff Writer**

A Jasper County sheriff's deputy is dead following a scuba diving accident in rural Joplin.

Sheriff's Capt. Tony Coleman said Sgt. Scott Arner died in an accident that happened at about 6 p.m. Friday. "He was taking part in an investigation for the Jasper County Sheriff's Department," Coleman said Friday night. "He's been with the sheriff's department since 1989; he's a patrol sergeant, he's a K-9 officer, and he serves as deputy coroner." Arner also was a member of the department's dive team.

County Coroner Ron Mosbaugh said Arner was declared dead at 7:14 p.m. at St. John's Regional Medical Center in Joplin where he was taken by medical helicopter after the accident.

Mosbaugh said Arner and others had been diving near the intersection of Lone Elm Road and West Zora Street northwest of Joplin. The body of water is on property at Mattes Brothers Asphalt, he said.

Carl Junction Fire Chief Bill Dunn said the body of water was probably an old mine shaft, one of dozens that riddle the area. "They go out there sometimes hunting stolen property," Dunn said. "Our guys responded with the ambulance and helped carry him out."

Scott Skoglund, a Carl Junction firefighter who responded to the scene, said ice covered most of the water where the accident happened. "They were doing the search under the ice when we got there," Skoglund said. "When I got there, we asked the medics what they needed, and I made sure we had it on the way. I helped package him up and get him to the bird."

He said the terrain surrounding the body of water made moving Arner away from the scene difficult. "Where we were the bank was about four or five feet above the water," Skoglund said.

Coleman said no information about the nature of the investigation, the number of people involved or any other details would be released Friday.

Arner's body is to be taken today to Springfield for an autopsy. Mosbaugh and Coleman said the incident was still under investigation and no firm cause of death had been determined as of late Friday.

## **Accident claims the life of a Jasper County Sheriff's deputy**

<http://www.joplin.com/>

January 6, 2002

**JASPER COUNTY, MO** - Members of the Jasper County Sheriff's Department mourn the loss of one of their own as an accident Friday night has taken the life of Sergeant Scott Arner.

Apparently members of the Jasper County dive team were looking for evidence during an investigation when Sgt. Arner did not come up. The divers were searching for evidence in a pond. The pond was ice covered and it's still unclear exactly what went wrong during the dive.

## **Sheriff's sergeant drowns**

<http://www.springfieldnews-leader.com/news/briefs010602.html>

01-06-02

**Jasper County** - Medical examiners say Scott Arner, 43, a sergeant with the Jasper County Sheriff's Department, drowned during an investigation Friday evening.

Arner worked on the department's dive team.

David Brown, investigator for the Greene County medical examiner, said there were no signs of trauma or foul play in Arner's death. "Preliminary results are consistent with a drowning," Brown said. "It's my understanding that he had some problems with the regulator, but the investigation is still ongoing."

Carl Junction Fire Chief Bill Dunn said the officer was diving in a body of water located north of Zora Avenue near Thicket Road in rural Jasper County. "It's an old mine hole," Dunn said. "Nobody can understand why they were out there after dark."

The sheriff's department released no additional information concerning the investigation Saturday.

Arner was a 12-year veteran with the department. In addition to the dive team, he worked with the agency's canine unit and as a deputy coroner.

## **Autopsy shows deputy drowned Cause of accident still under investigation**

<http://www.joplinglobe.com/020106/regional/story3.html>

**January 6, 2002 By Nammi Bhagvandoss Globe Staff Writer**

An autopsy Saturday showed that a Jasper County deputy died of asphyxiation, according to Jasper County Coroner Ron Mosbaugh. Sgt. Scott Arner, 43, died after a scuba-diving accident about 6 p.m. Friday in a body of water near the intersection of Lone Elm Road and West Zora Street.

Mosbaugh said Arner was pronounced dead at 7:14 p.m. Friday at St. John's Regional Medical Center in Joplin.

An autopsy was performed Saturday in Springfield. "He died of asphyxiation, which is drowning," Mosbaugh said. "No heart attack. Why he drowned, I still don't know. They're checking on equipment failure." Mosbaugh said Arner's heart was good and there was water in his lungs.

Arner was a deputy coroner for Mosbaugh and Rob Knell Jr., the former Jasper County coroner. "He's a master diver, and he loved to dive," Mosbaugh said.

Mosbaugh, who did not go to the scene of the accident, said he believed Arner was on duty when he died. He said he will contact the Occupational Safety and Health Administration that investigates work-related fatalities. "They definitely need to be contacted," he said. "I think he was on the clock."

Mosbaugh said he heard that there was ice on the water. "When they break a hole in the ice, there shouldn't be a problem," he said. "I don't know how thick the ice was."

Jasper County Capt. Tony Coleman on Friday said Arner was taking part in an investigation for the Jasper County Sheriff's Department. Becky Haskamp, a dispatcher for the Missouri State Water Patrol in Jefferson City, said three water patrol divers were at the scene Friday, but she did not know how many Jasper County divers were involved in searching for some type of evidence. "We had been called in to assist them on this dive," Haskamp added.

James "Bear" Ballard said he often permits Jasper County Sheriff's deputies to search eight acres he owns, including half an acre on the lake, for any sort of evidence.

He said law-enforcement officers have found six or eight cars the last five years and a male body in a trunk three or four years ago. Ballard said the incident occurred on a portion of a lake that he does not own at 1649 W. Zora St., about a half mile west of Lone Elm. "It happened in a lake that's spring-fed from the mine shaft," he said. Most of the lake is 25 to 30 feet deep, but it is 160 feet near the mine and in the mine shaft, he said.

Ballard, who does not live at the site, said Arner apparently drowned in a portion of the lake owned by Joe Harper, who lives at the site. Ballard said the county has deemed the roadway to the lake a public road so the gates are open all the time. "The roadway is where the old railroad track is," Ballard said. "But a neighbor blocked it off, so the only way Joe Harper has access is through our property."

## **Sheriff: Deputy drowned while looking for body Investigation on hold as department mourns**

<http://www.joplinglobe.com/archives/2002/020108/regional/story4.html>

JANUARY 8, 2002 By John Hacker Globe Staff Writer

A possible homicide investigation apparently is on hold as deputies and other employees with the Jasper County Sheriff's Department work through their grief over the loss of a co-worker.

Investigators were searching for a body Friday when a ranking deputy drowned, but the Sheriff's Department is saying little else about what happened in a mine pit north of Joplin.

In a statement, Jasper County Sheriff Bill Pierce said the Missouri State Water Patrol Dive Team was helping Sgt. Scott Arner and other department divers search mine pits for evidence of a possible homicide. "Information had been developed on a possible homicide and a search was being conducted in several of the water-filled pits in the area for possible victims," Pierce wrote. "The searches did not pertain to stolen property or vehicles. Sgt. Arner lost his life while performing his duties and will be greatly missed by his family, friends and fellow officers."

Repeated efforts to contact Pierce for more details on the homicide investigation were unsuccessful Monday.

Chief Deputy Jerry Neal said more information probably would be released in a couple of days, but for now the department was focused on Arner's death and his funeral, scheduled for 2 p.m. today at Rocketdyne Road Church of Christ at Neosho. "We've got a lot of young people on our department, and Sergeant Arner was their friend," Neal said. "There is so much trauma in what happened and how it happened that we're trying to keep everything focused on that until after the funeral."

Neal said Pierce would be unavailable for comment on the homicide investigation until after today's funeral. Neal said Arner's scuba gear was given to the Missouri State Water Patrol for testing at an independent lab. "That's the protocol," Neal said. "It's routine that we give them the gear to test. Any time you have the death of a diver, the equipment is sent to an independent lab to find out what went wrong."

Neal said Arner was wearing a dry suit, designed to keep the body dry in cold water. That was sent with the tanks, regulators and other gear for testing.

Neal also said the team had searched one other pit before diving in the pit where Arner lost his life. The water in the pit was mostly ice-covered, and divers had to cut a hole to enter the water.

Arner had been with the department for about 15 years. He was a K-9 officer, a deputy coroner and a master diver for the department. He was born and raised in Carthage, and lived at Neosho.

His wife, Miranda Arner, and a daughter, Shannah Arner, survive.

## **Lawmen honor comrade**

### **1,200 pay last respects to deputy who drowned**

<http://www.joplinglobe.com/archives/2002/020109/headline/story2.html>

**January 9, 2002 By John Hacker Globe Staff Writer**

**NEOSHO, Mo.** — Approximately 1,200 people made their ways Tuesday from across Missouri, Kansas and Oklahoma to a church in Neosho to say goodbye to a Jasper County sheriff's deputy who died last week while scuba diving as part of an investigation.

The parking lot of the Church of Christ on Rocketdyne Road was packed with patrol vehicles from departments as far away as St. Louis, Kansas City and Tulsa, Okla., as people gathered to pay their last respects to Sgt. Scott Arner.

Arner, 43, a resident of Neosho, died Friday during an investigative dive in a mine pit northwest of Joplin. Jasper County Sheriff Bill Pierce said Arner and others were searching the ice-covered water for a body during an investigation into a possible homicide when the veteran deputy failed to come to the surface.

He was pulled from the water by other divers and taken to a Joplin hospital, but efforts to revive him failed. In addition to police and sheriff's vehicles, a ladder truck from the Neosho Fire Department was parked next to the church. A large American flag was draped over the ladder.

The hundreds of mourners entered the doors of the church between two lines of police officers from Joplin and Tulsa in dress uniforms forming an honor guard.

In the church, Arner's body lay in a flag-draped coffin, an 8-by-10-inch photo of him and his police dog, Magnum, displayed on an easel to the left of the coffin. Arner's uniform hat hung from the top of the easel.

The church sanctuary and lobby were filled 10 minutes before the service was to begin. Before the service, about 50 members of Arner's family filed into the sanctuary led by Arner's wife, Miranda, and daughter, Shannah.

Arner was a police dog handler, and Magnum sat on the floor near the family during the service.

Arner was eulogized by his brother-in-law, Stephen Garman, as a man always willing to help and always smiling while helping. Garman described first meeting Arner in the 1970s when he ran out of gas on an area highway. "A young man stopped his Jeep and, smiling, offered a helping hand," Garman said. "Little did I know that this same man would start to date my sister, and I became familiar with Scott's blue Jeep parked in front of my house almost every day."

Garman described how Arner worked in different jobs before becoming a sheriff's deputy. "Scott seemed like a fish out of water, but then he joined the Sheriff's Department," Garman said. "He seemed to enjoy everything about that job. He once told me, 'I always wanted to be a sergeant with a K-9 unit in a sheriff's department, and that's what I am.'"

Garman read a letter from Arner's sister, Connie Leek of Jasper. "Those of you who might have met my brother might remember the twinkle in his eye, the bounce in his step, the smile on his lips and the kindness in his heart," Leek's letter said. "Scott always took care of me and never let anyone or anything hurt me. There wasn't anything in the world that he couldn't figure out a way to get accomplished."

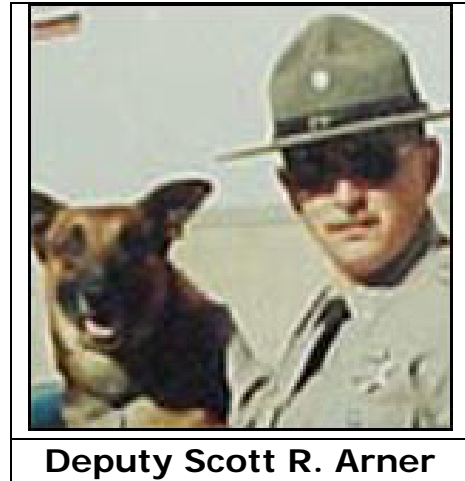


Globe/T. Rob Brown Police dogs and their handlers from three states form an honor guard Tuesday as a tearful mourner is escorted from the funeral service for Jasper County Deputy Scott Arner at a Neosho church. Arner, a veteran sheriff's deputy and police dog handler, drowned Friday while participating in a scuba dive as part of an investigation of a possible homicide.

The service ended with a slide show of pictures of Arner as a child and an adult.

As Arner's coffin was carried to the hearse in front of the church, more than 30 police dogs and their handlers from departments across Missouri, Kansas and Oklahoma lined the sidewalk on each side of the entrance.

Pierce said Arner helped train many of the dogs and handlers who were at the funeral. "We had a training seminar in Carthage last year that Scott put together," Pierce said. "Probably 30 or 40 dogs, many of the same ones that were here today, attended that seminar." procession of police and civilian vehicles left the church and escorted the hearse and family to IOOF Cemetery east of Neosho. The procession was so long that traffic was halted for more than 20 minutes at the intersection of U.S. Highway 60 and Business Route 71, one of Neosho's busiest.



'An autopsy showed that Arner drowned. Authorities are investigating in an attempt to determine the cause of drowning. Arner was said to be a master diver.

**Dedicated to Preserving the Memory of Our  
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[http://www.napwda.com/valor/dep\\_srarnner.phtml](http://www.napwda.com/valor/dep_srarnner.phtml)  
**13 year veteran Jasper County, Missouri, Sheriff's Office  
Deputy Scott R. Arner, age 43**

*Final Tour of Duty: Friday, January 4, 2002, 6:00 p.m.*

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County Coroner Mosbaugh said Arner and others had been diving near the intersection of Lone Elm Road and West Zora Street northwest of Joplin. The body of water is on property at Mattes Brothers Asphalt he said. Carl Junction Fire Chief Bill Dunn said the body of water was probably an old mine shaft, one of dozens that riddle the area. "They go out there sometimes hunting stolen property," Dunn said. "Our guys responded with the ambulance and helped carry him out." Scott Skoglund, a Carl Junction firefighter who responded to the scene, said ice covered most of the water where the accident happened.

Deputy Scott Arner was a NAPWDA accredited Trainer and also a Jasper County Sheriff's Office police dog handler with his K9 partner, Magnum, who sat on the floor near the family during the service.

## **Divers: Dangers lurk in mine shafts Experts: Diving in water-filled holes takes specialized training, caution**

1/13/05 John Hacker (MO) Globe Staff Writer

Sandy Casada doesn't watch the news about the search for two missing teenage girls from Craig County, Okla., but if information from an accused serial killer in Alabama is correct, Casada has a unique insight into what the families may be about to go through.

Investigators and experts spent much of the 1990s searching dozens of mine shafts in Kansas and Oklahoma for any sign of Casada's daughter, Karol Sullens, 19, after she disappeared Aug. 31, 1991, from the parking lot of a Galena, Kan., strip club where she worked.

Casada said she appreciated the huge risks divers took as they plunged into the sometimes-murky depths. "The guys went in the mines, and you could see each rock layer as the divers swam by, and sometimes you could see the walls get kind of wavy and pieces of rock fall off," Casada said. "Sometimes they would have to come back, and no matter how much I wanted them to finish the job, I didn't want anyone to lose their life. I love my daughter more than anything, but she's already gone and I'm not willing to lose another life searching for her."

Craig County officials have said suspected serial killer Jeremy Jones, 31, has given them information that leads them to believe he may have dumped the bodies of Ashley Freeman and Lauria Bible in a mine shaft somewhere in the former Tri-State Mining District.

Reports from the Craig County district attorney's office indicate that investigators believe Jones may have taken the girls to Kansas - possibly the Galena area - after allegedly shooting Freeman's parents on Dec. 30, 1999, and setting fire to their home, then shot the girls after one of them tried to escape.

A mine-shaft search in the Galena area could take place later this week, authorities in county law enforcement said. "There are literally hundreds of open shafts in Treece, Baxter Springs, Crestline, Waco, Badger and Lawton," said Mark Doolan, who formerly managed the cleanup of abandoned mining sites in Cherokee County for the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. He now is in charge of mine cleanups in Jasper and Newton counties in Southwest Missouri.

The searchers will have fewer shafts to choose from in the Galena area than they did a decade ago. In the early 1990s, the EPA reclaimed more than 840 acres of mined land in the Galena area. "Really, there are none around Galena. We pretty much filled them all up," Doolan said. "There are a few in the area. There are some north and east of the city, and there are a couple down south closer to Shoal Creek that were left open."

### **'A dirty job'**

Until 1998, when the voters elected a new sheriff, Earney Donaldson, of Riverton, Kan., was the chief investigator for the Cherokee County Sheriff's Department. One of the cases he took to heart was the case of a 19-year-old exotic dancer who seemingly disappeared without a trace from a club known as the Valley of the Dolls on the western edge of Galena.

Witnesses said Sullens was last seen standing in the parking lot of the club talking to two men near a pickup truck.

Donaldson said information he developed through tips and witnesses told him that Sullens died that night of unknown causes, and that the people she was with dumped her body in a mine shaft.

In the seven years that ensued, Donaldson would call together divers from Missouri, Kansas and Oklahoma. Based on different tips, they would start searching some of the hundreds of water-filled mine shafts that dot the region. "It was a dirty job, and sometimes I was criticized for looking in every hole in Cherokee County, but you have to follow every lead," Donaldson said. "You never know if one of those tips is the one that will lead you to Karol."

Donaldson said that when he decided he had gathered enough information to justify a search, he would either contact divers or arrange for underwater cameras to be taken to a site and lowered into a mine shaft.

If he needed divers, Donaldson would contact Sgt. Scott Arner of the Jasper County Sheriff's Department. Arner died Jan. 4, 2002, while searching an ice-covered pond off of Lone Elm Road, north of Joplin, while investigating a report of a possible dead body.

"Scott Arner was one of our best assets, and when we called, he was always there with two or three of his buddies from the Jasper County dive team," Donaldson said. "They would usually take a camera in with them, and you could see pretty clearly as long as they didn't upset the bottom or have something drift down on top of them."

Jason Weisacosky, coordinator of the South Central Drug Task Force in West Plains, Mo., is a former Jasper County sheriff's deputy and friend of Arner's.

In his free time, he is an avid cave diver. In his time in Jasper County, he sometimes dived in the mine shafts in Cherokee County. He also volunteers as director of the Ozark Cave Diving Alliance, a group of divers formed in 1998. The group explores and maps the miles of natural underwater caverns in the Ozarks.

"I started with the Jasper County Sheriff's Department as a deputy in 1988, and in 1991, Scott Arner and I started the dive team in Jasper

County," Weisacosky said in a telephone interview this week. "We did a lot of search and recovery stuff, and that led us to a lot of the mines around Webb City, Oronogo and in Cherokee County. I was one of the first guys to dive in the Black Jack mine on West Seventh Street near Galena."

Weisacosky said diving in caves and mines is dangerous because a diver cannot just come to the surface if something goes wrong. The danger of a cave-in also accompanies divers who brave the dark shafts underground. "It actually requires very specialized training to dive in caves and in mine shafts," Weisacosky said.

He said he all too often has seen police officers or firefighters with large hearts, but not much training, suffer injuries while diving in caves or mines. "It only takes one time to get oneself turned around, to find yourself lost," he said. "Then all you've got is the gas in that bottle to keep you alive, and the deeper you are, the faster you use that up."

### **Too dangerous**

Sgt. Wayne Talburt, dive team supervisor with the Missouri State Water Patrol, said diving in caves and mine shafts is so dangerous that his team doesn't even try it.

Talburt said that if the patrol really needs to dive in a cave or mine, it calls Weisacosky and the Ozark Cave Diving Alliance, but most of the time the patrol can use its \$45,000, remote-controlled camera and grappling system to keep divers out of harm's way. "We pretty well stay away from diving in caves or mine shafts," Talburt said. "We don't even train for it. If we need to go in a cave or a mine, we've got the underwater camera that we can send down. We've got 300 feet of cable with it, and that will take us as deep as we need to go."

Talburt said the camera has a remote-operated claw that can grasp objects, then the operator can bring the object up when the camera is reeled in.

Casada said she understood that the divers who searched for her daughter were risking their lives, and she appreciated their efforts. "It's one of those things where 'thank you' isn't enough," she said. "I'll be forever grateful to Earney and these guys for everything they did. "My heart goes out to the families of these girls. It's a horrible thing to go through, and it's unreal the emotions that go rampaging through your head. I can't watch the news coverage of the search for these

girls - seeing those images again would just tear me up inside - but I am every day praying for these families, and I hope they find these girls."

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United States Mine Rescue Association  
[www.usmra.com](http://www.usmra.com)

**Missouri House of Representatives**  
SECOND REGULAR SESSION

<http://www.house.missouri.gov/content.aspx?info=/bills02/biltxt02/intro02/HB1758I.htm>

**HOUSE BILL NO. 1758**

**91ST GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

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INTRODUCED BY REPRESENTATIVES JOLLY, MONACO, HOSMER,  
BRITT AND HARDING (Co-sponsors).

Read 1<sup>st</sup> time January 31, 2002, and 1000 copies ordered printed.

TED WEDEL, Chief Clerk

4201L.02I

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**AN ACT**

To amend chapter 590, RSMo, by adding thereto one new section relating to canine certification and training.

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*Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the state of Missouri, as follows:*

Section A. Chapter 590, RSMo, is amended by adding thereto one new section, to be known as section 590.045, to read as follows:

590.045. 1. This section shall be known as "The Arner Law" in honor of Sergeant Scott Arner.

2. Any canine acquired by a law enforcement agency after July 1, 2003, shall be trained and certified along with its handler before it is used in law enforcement activities.

3. The director may establish by rule the hours and types of canine-handler training required for certification, may provide for periodic recertification of canine-handler teams and may accept training and certification provided by recognized state and national police canine associations. Applications for certification of canine-handler teams shall be made on forms prepared by the director and shall be accompanied by an application fee. The fee shall be set by rule in an amount that does not substantially exceed the cost of administration of certification. Moneys so received shall be transmitted to the director of revenue for deposit in the general revenue fund. Certification for a canine-handler team shall be valid only for that team.

4. Any canine-handler teams certified pursuant to subsection 3 of this section shall be trained in the following areas:

- (1) Aggression control;
- (2) Bomb detection; and
- (3) Narcotics detection.

5. No rule or portion of a rule promulgated pursuant to the authority of this section shall become effective unless it has been promulgated pursuant to the provisions of chapter 536, RSMo.