

05-12-1992 Waterbury VA - Gary Gaboury - LEO PSD Recovery Trapped



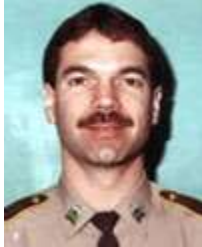
OFFICER DOWN MEMORIAL PAGE



REMEMBERING ALL OF LAW ENFORCEMENT'S HEROES

Sergeant Gary Allen Gaboury

<http://www.odmp.org/officer/336-sergeant-gary-allen-gaboury>



Bio & Incident Details

Age: 35

Tour: Not available

Badge # 410

Cause: Drowned

Gary Allen Gaboury
Vermont State Police, Vermont

End of Watch: Tuesday, May 12, 1992

Sergeant Gaboury drowned while attempting to recover the body of a college student who had drowned while swimming in Huntington Gorge in Huntington, Vermont.

Sergeant Gaboury is survived by his wife and three children.



DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY

Vermont State Police

SERGEANT GARY A. GABOURY

[HTTP://VSP.VERMONT.GOV/MEMORIAL/GABOURY](http://vsp.vermont.gov/memorial/gaboury)



May 12th, 1992

Sergeant Gary A. Gaboury, a Patrol Commander at the Shaftsbury barracks, and a member of the State Police Dive Team, was killed on May 12th, 1992. Sergeant Gaboury was killed while attempting to recover the body of a swimmer that had drowned in the notorious Huntington Gorge in Richmond.

"I don't know if you know it or not, but you have one damn fine police officer."

- from a Letter of Commendation about Sgt Gaboury from Mrs. P. McCrae

Eulogy Delivered by Sergeant Paul Barci

Thank you Father DeMasi for presiding over this Mass and helping us deal with this tragedy. This ceremony has been a celebration of Gary's life, not a mourning of his death. I am honored to have been asked to speak about Gary and how we all feel about him. I want to extend the condolences of hundreds of people to Gary's Gramma Beaulieu, his mother Solange, his aunts Anita and Rene, his uncle Ollie, his sister Roxanne, his brother Keith, his wife Karen, his former wife Peg, his children; Gary, Scott and Stephanie, and all other family members.

There are 3 rules to public speaking, they are:

Rule #1, tell them what you're going to tell them. I'm going to tell you that Gary Gaboury was a damn fine son, brother, husband, father, police officer, and friend.
Rule # 2, tell them. And Rule # 3, Tell them what you told them.

There are some common clichés often espoused at young men's funerals, especially for police officers, and they are: #1 Someone's got to take the point, and #2: The good die young.

We have become a society of superlatives. Descriptions given of people and their actions are commonly elevated beyond their true significance. Athletes are "superstars", performers are "megastars". We as a society have taken to expound on one aspect of a person's life. We elevate average and common actions to a higher plane of "superness".





All who knew Gary knew that he lived his life in a truly superlative manner. To call him an exemplary police officer would be accepted by all who knew him in that role in his life. This, however, was but a part of his life-being. However significant his police career was, it was only a part of the definition of Gary's existence.

To describe Gary and the impact he had on people he touched, I have chosen a small portion of a letter of commendation received by Trooper Gary Gaboury. This statement was extracted from a letter from a Mrs. P. McCrae. I do not know Mrs. McCrae or what service Gary provided her.

Knowing Gary, it could have as equally been giving her directions to Kmart as pulling her from a burning car after a crash. The impact of Gary's contact with her caused her to write, "I don't know if you know it or not, but you have one damn fine police officer." Yes, Mrs. McCrae, we know.

When Gary's father was ill we talked about his immediate family and how the illness factored into that portion of his life. He told me about his concern for his mother and how she had to deal with the situation daily and difficulties she was now bearing. He traveled to New Jersey as often as he could, taking his children with him whenever possible so they could maintain a relationship with Grandpa Ray. He told me about the pain he felt, and when his dad did pass away how he wanted his mother to continue living her life to the fullest and have her be involved with his family and his life in Vermont. The day he heard of his father's passing, he himself was living life to the fullest. I know this because we were playing volleyball together in a tournament.

I have had conversations in the last two days with Solange in which she confessed to me that she has not heeded the advice given to her by Gary. Solange, I implore you to follow in the sound advice Gary gave you. Also, let these words guide you in the days to come Karen.

In fact, when I lost my mom recently, Gary and I had a conversation about how our generation had come of its own. Like most of our day-to-day talks it was a combination of police story, thirty-something, and the Three Stooges, with a little mid-life crisis thrown in. They usually ended with us laughing about the impossibility of it all.

His immediate family was of great importance to him. Solange has told me of the love and respect he had for his Gramma Beaulieu and his aunts and uncles. I have met his sister and brother in person only briefly, but having heard Gary talk about them I know of his concern and love for both Roxanne and Keith.

Gary loved spending time with his wife and children. His first marriage was blessed with two fine young sons, Gary and Scott. His later marriage to Karen was similarly blessed with the birth of their daughter, Stephanie. The first time I saw Stephanie

was with Karen and Gary at a volleyball game. She was about the size of a keeper largemouth bass and Gary was the "proud papa".

I had the pleasure of being with Gary and the boys on several occasions, usually on fishing expeditions. He always interacted with his sons in such a way as to mold them into respectable, responsible, honest, decent people, a mold in which his own life was cast and from which he never wavered.

Perhaps the most fitting example of Gary's love for Karen and the children is an example he provided himself. In April of this year, he and his family went on a vacation to California. He sent a postcard to the barracks; most Troopers do when they're far away from work. The written note on the back of the card spoke only of the fun and pleasure he was having with his family. He wrote, "Having a great time at San Diego Zoo, Sea World, Tijuana, Mexico, etc. Today is Stephanie's birthday, so we are going to Disneyland." He wrote as everyone does about the beautiful California weather and hectic traffic. He closed with the following: "Steph, the boys, and Karen are enjoying themselves as well." Gary never let them away from his thoughts. It wasn't HIS vacation, it was THEIR vacation.



The portion of Gary's life that has resulted in this terrible accident was his role as a police officer. This role was also carried out in a truly exemplary manner. His devotion to fellow officers of all departments, but especially the Shaftsbury Troopers he oversaw as a Patrol Commander was known well beyond the confines of the Shaftsbury station. The men and women of the barracks provided me with their thoughts about Gary and his police officer role.

The primary theme was the safety of other people, especially his Trooper, his police family. His energy, drive and motivation, combined with his job knowledge, ability to learn and ability to lead and teach was to the benefit of any officer who came in contact with him. His organizational skills and meticulous manner were so pronounced as to drive others to distraction. His caring, compassion, and kindness went well beyond his dealings with other officers; it extended into the community.

It was well known that the primary function of the Vermont State Police Dive Team was to recover victims of water related tragedies. His religious beliefs enabled him to accept that fact and dictated the necessity of recovering victims for proper burial. He took on that challenge as he had others and excelled. He and other team members were as close as many families.

A true example of Gary's impact in the community is the outpouring of love and sympathy from the local community and throughout the state and region. In the past few days I have spoken to people who have never met Gary and yet knew of his professional excellence from other citizens who had dealt with Gary professionally.

The brotherhood that brings us here today, particularly the police personnel, is exactly what Gary Gaboury's role as a police officer exemplified. After 11-plus years with the Vermont State Police, he still had the ideals, integrity, and undying desire to want to serve with the people of this state. His daily attitude, even after his years in service was the same attitude that every cop took with them to their respective police academies at the start of their own careers. However, so many of us in law enforcement, after years of seeing life's tragedies time and time again, have that attitude either changed eroded away, changed or destroyed. Gary did not and would not allow that. Because of that spirit, everyone here, whether they knew Gary or are here to pay their respects, have lost deeply in his passing because of what he represented.



Lastly, Gary's finest role for me personally, and for many others here, was as a friend. Gary and I had many common interests, including hunting, volleyball and especially, fishing. His numerous other interests included biking, softball, motor sports, and both downhill and water skiing. In speaking with others who participated in those activities with Gary, he was equally driven by these passions. Gary took exceptional pride in his downhill skiing and was the captain of

the State Police Ski Team, a typically successful endeavor for him. In his office, proudly displayed with other significant awards, are two trophies proving his skiing proficiency.

His friendship included helping others with their projects. Our barracks has a way of pulling together into a work crew when necessary, usually to help with some building project. His help to the Truex family is but one of the many examples of willingness to be a friend. They needed assistance in constructing a log home and were encountering seasonal weather changes that threatened completion. Gary gave a great deal of time to Tom and Barb to get the exterior of the home finished.

My own friendship was growing increasingly stronger each year. The highlight of the fishing season for both of us was the annual Real Man Lake Champlain Fishing Derby. The Real Man Derby started several years ago with a group of Shaftsbury Troopers going to Lake Champlain opening weekend of bass season. The trip coincided with an actual fishing derby on the lake. It came to represent three days and two nights of true male bonding – a boat, bass, a beer and body odor.

Karen and Gary were married June 18th, 1988, which happened to be the Real Man Derby weekend that year. There was no end to the harassment he received from the other Real Men about choosing that date, or more appropriately, letting Karen choose that date. Because of the respect for Gary and Karen, no Real Men went that year, opting without reservation to share in their special day. My own anniversary is June 19th and those dates were a constant topic of conversation as we drove to the derby the last three years. Two of the last three years we were the

only Real Men around and we spent three days together. These are the most precious times I have to remember Gary by.

In fact, the only thing I know of that Gary never learned well was how to catch a largemouth bass. I always caught more fish and he always cleaned them. He was so particular and meticulous about not wasting any meat it would make him crazy to watch me try to clean them to his satisfaction.

Our conversations during these days covered the various roles in our respective lives – police work, family, friendships. These talks represent the lion's share of this eulogy. To quote Mrs. McCrae "I don't know if you know it or not but you have one damn fine police officer" and I want to add family member, husband, father, and friend. Yes, Mrs. McCrae... we know.

The clichés I opened with are valid and true. Someone DOES have to take the point and the good DO die young. Gary, unfortunately, fulfilled both clichés on May 12th, 1992, in Richmond, Vermont.

If I have learned something from this tragedy, it is a renewed sense of completeness about my belief in God and the hereafter. There is now no doubt in my mind as to the existence of heaven. For no good and just God could call Gary away to any place else.

In conclusion, like public speaking rule #3 says, "I'm going to tell you what I told you". Gary Gaboury was one of the most decent, pleasant, and devoted family members, husbands, fathers, police officers, and friends I have ever known. Goodbye, God Bless and Godspeed Gary.

Ceremony remembers trooper who died in the line of duty

<http://www.benningtonbanner.com/stories/ceremony-remembers-trooper-who-died-in-the-line-of-duty,77159>

May 12, 2010 **KEITH WHITCOMB JR.**

SHAFTSBURY -- Troopers both retired and current, along with family and friends, stood outside the Vermont State Police Barracks in chilly, gray weather to honor a deceased sergeant who died in the line of duty.

Eighteen years ago, Sgt. Gary Gaboury, a member of the Vermont State Police Dive Team, lost his life at the Huntington Gorge in Huntington while attempting to recover the body of a drowned college student.

"May 12, 1992. That is a date many of us will never forget. Eighteen years ago, on that date we lost a friend, a son, a husband, a father, and a brother trooper," said Sgt. Michael Marvin at the ceremony. Marvin is the only current trooper at the barracks to have worked with Gaboury.

Led by example

In a prior interview, he said Gaboury was a "very quiet, even-keeled person." Marvin said Gaboury, 35, was a patrol commander and led by example, taking the lead on difficult cases and helping young troopers see what he called "the bigger picture."

Marvin spoke about his feelings toward the media coverage Gaboury's death received. The Burlington Free Press, the Bennington Banner and other papers ran a photo on May 13, 1992, depicting Gaboury descending into the water of the gorge where river flows past and underneath treacherous rocks.

"As the years have gone by, I have come to realize that maybe the published photo of Gary was an omen," Marvin said. "Most people don't remember the names of the two dozen or so people who have died at the Huntington Gorge, but people remember the name of Gary Gaboury. Instead of being remembered as a number, Gary is remembered as a husband, father and public servant, someone who made the ultimate sacrifice for others."

Marvin said Gaboury died not trying to save someone, but to help bring closure to a family that had suffered a loss. "This was the way Gary was; he wanted to give the family some closure," he said.

Gaboury left behind his wife, Karen, a daughter, Stephanie, who is now attending Boston College, and two sons, Gary and Scott who live and work in Florida. Gaboury's daughter and his mother, Solange Feldman, attended the service in Shaftsbury, while his sons, Marvin said, paid their respects at the Florida State Law Enforcement Memorial in Tallahassee, Fla.

Marvin said Gaboury was with the Vermont State Police for 12 years, his first assignment at the St. Albans Barracks after he graduated from the Vermont State Police Academy. He was transferred to Shaftsbury in 1984, and by the end of the year was assigned to the Special Investigation Unit. His work with the unit had him serve undercover on large drug cases, said Marvin. He rose to the rank of sergeant quickly, and was transferred to the Rockingham Barracks, but he returned to Shaftsbury for the last three years of his life.

There he helped "mold some young troopers who are now some of the leaders of the state police," Marvin said.

Thomas Fields, a retired trooper and former commander of the Shaftsbury Barracks, said he rarely thinks about Gaboury as he was the day he died, but instead recalls him standing at traffic stops, working with affidavits at his desk and giving feedback to young troopers about their strengths and weaknesses.

Gaboury is one of two troopers assigned to the Shaftsbury barracks to die while on duty; the other was Sgt. William Chenard, who collapsed and died in June 1987 while leading an effort to recover the body of a 49-year-old hiker who had died of a heart attack on the Long Trail. A service will be held for Chenard on June 14, the day of his death nearly 23 years ago.

"We work very hard and have made a commitment to never forget our fallen troopers," said Lt. Reginald Trayah, the current commander of the Shaftsbury barracks.

Vt. trooper's sacrifice remembered after 20 years

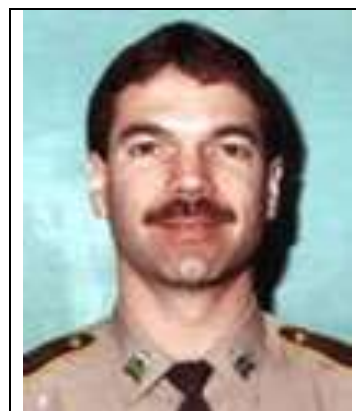
<http://www.wcax.com/story/18310402/vt-troopers-sacrifice-remembered-after-20-years>

May 11, 2012 Updated: May 16, 2012

SHAFTSBURY, Vt. (AP) - A Vermont state trooper who drowned 20 years ago while trying to recover the body of a swimmer from the Huntington Gorge in Richmond is being remembered with a sign near the site. Police said the sign mentioning Sgt. Gary Gaboury will help warn people of the danger the gorge holds and perhaps save lives. Powerful current and rocks have killed more than 15 people who attempted to swim there.

Gaboury was part of the state police dive team. On May 12, 1992, he died while trying to retrieve the body of a drowned college student from the gorge.

The Bennington Banner reports his son, 29-year-old Scott Gaboury, has been officer for seven years, first with the Bennington County Sheriff's Department, then with the Edgewater, Fla., Police Department.



**Sgt. Gary
Gaboury/Vt. State
Police**



Trooper's sacrifice remembered

<http://www.benningtonbanner.com/stories/troopers-sacrifice-remembered,185167>

May 11, 2012 **KEITH WHITCOMB JR.** Staff Writer

SHAFTSBURY -- Twenty years after he lost his life while trying to recover the body of a drowned swimmer at Huntington Gorge, a sign there will bear the name of Sgt. Gary A. Gaboury, who served on the Vermont State Police Dive Team and was stationed at the Shaftsbury barracks.

The sign warns swimmers that deceptively powerful currents and rocks have killed more than 15 people who attempted to swim there. It will replace the existing sign and is expected to last the next 50 years.

The marker was unveiled Thursday at the Shaftsbury barracks before members of Gaboury's family, state and local police who gathered to honor his memory. The VSP Dive Team as well as former troopers were also present.

"I grew up in that town, and everyone knows the danger of that place," said Lt. Reginald Trayah, commander of the Shaftsbury barracks. "A lot of visitors don't."

He said that with the sign, Gaboury will help warn people of the danger the gorge holds and perhaps save lives. "That is the reach that Gary and his sacrifice has had outside this community," said Trayah.

As part of the dive team, Gaboury was one of a handful of troopers who could be dispatched to different parts of the state to perform water rescues and searches. On May 12, 1992, Gaboury died while attempting to recover the body of a drowned college student from the gorge. He left behind a wife and three children.

His son, Scott Gaboury, 29, has been an officer for the past seven years, getting his start with the Bennington County Sheriff's Department. For the past year he has been a patrol officer with the Edgewater (Fla.) Police Department.

"I wanted to follow in his footsteps," Gaboury said. "Being able to work with the sheriff's department here was really nice; I was able to work the same streets he did here in Shaftsbury, pretty much literally following in his footsteps."

Gaboury said he cannot always make it to the Vermont ceremony, but he and his brother Gary, who also lives in Florida, will make a trip around this time of year to the American Police Hall of Fame in Titusville, where their father's name is engraved on a wall.

"Not a day goes by we don't think about Gary," said Solonge Gaboury, Gary Gaboury's mother. "He was our hero; he was everybody's hero and we don't want anybody to forget him."

She said the family may live in different parts of the country now, but they come together when they can and remember one they lost.

"Gary is with us all the time," Solonge Gaboury said. "We don't go to a grave or anything, because he's with us all the time. We can talk to him anytime, it doesn't make any difference. We have family gatherings and we miss him."

Stephanie Gaboury, Gary Gaboury's daughter, said she was two years old when her father died and does not remember him. She said she relies on photographs and stories. She lives in Boston now and is pursuing a degree in psychology. She said she has seen many pictures of her father enjoying desserts, which he was known to particularly enjoy. "Just seeing him like that, it's nice to know how he was," she said.

"It gets a little bit easier, but it brings back all the memories," said Karen Gaboury, Gary Gaboury's widow. "Just like it was last week."

"We've spent a number of years going to events hosted by Concerns of Police Survivors (COPS)," Karen Gaboury said. The organization, among other things, hosts retreats for family members of police who have died, both for children and spouses. She said that at the spouse retreat she has enjoyed both being supported and providing it for others.

Tom Fields, who was the station commander during Gaboury's time, said his loss helped teach police to support one another more, and it prompted the state to alter some of their policies regarding rescues to make it safer for rescue personnel. The last trooper at the Shaftsbury barracks to serve with Gaboury retired this year.

Sgt. Mike Marvin said in 2010 that Gaboury was good at inspiring and teaching young troopers, and died trying to bring a family closure. He also attended Thursday's ceremony.

One other trooper stationed at the Shaftsbury barracks has lost his life while on duty. In 1987 Sgt. William Chenard collapsed on the Long Trail while looking for the body of a hiker who'd died of a heart attack.



<http://www.theinsufficientskeptic.com/things-state-police-divers-do.html>

Things State Police Divers Do Grace Under Water



"Today State Police divers recovered the body of...." So begins many a news account of a tragic accidental drowning. It's been a bad year for drownings in this state. Vermont State Police (VSP) divers cannot recall a year in which there were more. Few of us think too much about what risks divers may have to face to recover a victim. Usually our thoughts drift toward who the victim was, who may have loved this person and how on earth they will find a way to deal with the tragedy.

Some drownings were almost certainly due to a swimmer's impaired judgement or youthful disregard of unsafe conditions. In other words, avoidable mishaps. And that adds a measure of wretchedness to the loss for

the victim's mourners. But by recovering a victim's body, the divers begin the emotional rescue of the living.

This is an under-recognized act of grace. It's also an extra job that VSP officers take on and train carefully for, in addition to the stresses of their other regular police work.

(Remainder of this reprint under construction)

GARY GABOURY: A SACRIFICE REMEMBERED

The article at left originally appeared in *Vermont News & Views*, Nov. 1986. [The version that appears here is edited somewhat from the original.] Horrifically, on May 12, 1992, Trooper Gary Gaboury lost his own life retrieving the body of a drowning victim at the infamous Huntington Gorge, an ever-popular but deadly swimming hole where, despite strongly worded signage, treacherous currents and rock



formations have claimed some two dozen lives. Two dozen years forward from this tragedy, by strange coincidence, I came upon some stored negatives of shots I took of Gary and fellow officers for the VNV story that were never printed. I thought the discovery was a cosmic call to re-print the article and honor Gary's sacrifice.



See Additional Commentary
(in development)

Sgt. Gary Gaboury
35 years old
VT D.P.S.
Waterbury, VT

Sgt. Gaboury drowned on May 12, 1992 while attempting to recover the body of a college student who died after he went swimming the previous Friday.

MAY, 1992
VERMONT

A 35 yoa State Trooper and experienced diver drowned during the recovery mode search for a drowning victim in a local gorge. The tethered diver was working upstream from a flume that was filled with logs and other debris. A dynamic line traveled from his seat harness to an anchor point above the gorge. The diver was facing downstream and as his fins rose in the current, he flipped over onto his back and slipped into the flume as the dynamic line stretched. The current washed the regulator from his mouth and the mask from his face. The assistant team leader stood on the rocks and could almost touch the diver, but was unable to reach him. As the safety line was slackened the diver slipped out of sight. The diver was recovered the next day