

05-22-2007 Gallipolis OH – David Poling – LEO – Suspect Pursuit -River



## OFFICER DOWN MEMORIAL PAGE



REMEMBERING ALL OF LAW ENFORCEMENT'S HEROES



*Probation Officer*

### **David Poling**

Gallipolis Municipal Court, Ohio



#### *Bio & Incident Details*

**Age:** 32

**Tour:** Not available

**Badge #** 27-29/pd13

### **End of Watch: Tuesday, May 22, 2007**

Officer David Poling drowned in the Ohio River while chasing a suspect who had fled from a traffic stop initiated by the Gallipolis Police Department.

As officers chased the suspect, he jumped into the river and swam to Gallipolis Island.

Officer Poling went into the river after the suspect, but encountered problems approximately half way to the island. A city police officer and a state trooper attempted to rescue him but were unsuccessful.

The suspect was located on the island several hours later and taken into custody. He was convicted of involuntary manslaughter and sentenced to four years in prison.

Officer Poling had served with the Gallipolis Police Department and previously the Gallia County Sheriff's Office. He is survived by his wife and two young children.

### **Officer Chasing Suspect Dies in River**

<http://newsok.com/article/3057619>

May 23, 2007 Associated Press

GALLIPOLIS, Ohio (AP) -- A probation officer who dove into the Ohio River while chasing a suspect was found dead early Wednesday, authorities said.

The body of officer David Poling, 32, was recovered from the river around 2:30 a.m., more than nine hours after the chase began, Police Chief Clinton Patterson said.

Poling, who worked for the Gallipolis Municipal Court, had tried to stop Joseph Harris, 22, on a city street Tuesday afternoon, Patterson said. For some reason, Harris bolted to the nearby river and jumped in from a bank 10 to 15 feet above the water.

Another officer with Poling ran after him, and Poling jumped into the river, police said. According to witnesses, Poling went under and didn't surface, Patterson said. The other officers were unable to find him.

It wasn't clear why Harris fled, Patterson said. He was captured about two hours later on an island in the river and was charged with obstructing official business.

Harris was being held in the Gallia County Jail on \$200,000 bond. He did not have an attorney, a jail corrections officer said.

Patterson said the investigation in Poling's death was in the early stages.

"We really haven't been able to talk to the other officer involved yet," he said.

"We're basically giving him a chance to get his thoughts together because (the officers) were close friends."

## **Probation Officer Drowns**

<http://www.thenewscenter.tv/home/headlines/7648777.html>

May 23, 2007 By Kristen Kirby

The area's law enforcement community lost an officer Wednesday morning.

Police say the officer swam half-way to Gallipolis Island, while chasing a suspect into the Ohio River, but never resurfaced.

Gallipolis Police Chief Clinton Patterson says divers found the body of 37 year old David Poling at around 2:30 a.m. Tuesday in the Ohio River.



Poling served as a probation officer with Gallipolis Municipal Court. He had also served for both the Gallipolis Police Department and the Gallia County Sheriff's Department.

Officer Poling leaves behind a wife and two small children.

Chief Patterson says polling was assisting a Gallipolis police officer in the pursuit of Joseph Harris, of Springfield, Ohio, who police say ran from them after a traffic stop.

They say, Harris jumped into the river and the two officers dove in after him. The other officer and a state trooper tried rescue Poling before the search team got to the scene.

Chief Patterson says the suspect was able to safely swim to Gallipolis Island. He was arrested there and is now behind bars.

**His charges are not clear as of Wednesday afternoon.**

## **County versed in tragedy mourns another officer**

[http://www.dispatch.com/content/stories/local/2007/05/24/gallia.ART\\_ART\\_05-24-07\\_A1\\_MT6QBK8.html](http://www.dispatch.com/content/stories/local/2007/05/24/gallia.ART_ART_05-24-07_A1_MT6QBK8.html)

May 24, 2007 rludlow@dispatch.com

GALLIPOLIS, Ohio -- The cops of Gallia County know the sad routine all too well.

Badges swathed with black cloth stripes. Cruiser antennas adorned with black ribbons. American flags fluttering at half-staff.

For the third time in eight months, the Gallia County law-enforcement community is mourning a fallen fellow officer.

Probation officer David Poling drowned Tuesday evening while swimming after a suspect who jumped into the Ohio River.

"Now this ... we don't understand it at all," said Gallia County Sheriff David Martin. "Four since September ..."

State Highway Patrol Sgt. Dale Holcomb, 45, and Trooper Joshua Risner, 29, were first. They died Sept. 28 when their skidding cruiser hit a pickup truck, killing its driver.

Then, it was Brian Porter. The 38-year-old auxiliary deputy sheriff was killed in an off-duty vehicle collision April 17.

Now this. Now Dave Poling. The cycle of mourning begins anew with the death of the former deputy sheriff and Gallipolis officer.

Gallipolis Patrolman Michael Fulks has 27 years on the job. He had never lost an officer he knew. Suddenly, four are gone.

He watched the divers recover Poling's body. He caught a few hours sleep and returned to gaze at the river, fighting to stop the wetness in his eyes from trickling down his cheeks.

"Disbelief ... shock," Fulks said. "A super, nice guy ... always had a smile. Family meant the world to him."

At 6-foot-2 and a muscled 230 pounds, Poling, 32, didn't lose too many tussles and foot pursuits. His friends can't understand how the athletic ex-Marine drowned in a placid river.

"He always got his man, that's what he was going after," Martin said. He was Poling's boss until Poling left in February to become Gallipolis Municipal Court probation officer.

Gallipolis Sgt. Matt Champlin and Poling, for reasons still being explored, stopped a man walking along 1st Street at 5:17 p.m. Tuesday, said Police Chief Clinton Patterson.

The man took off running and jumped into the Ohio River, soon followed by Poling. Halfway to an island 50 yards from the riverbank, Poling began struggling.

Champlin went into the water in an attempt to save Poling. Responding to the report of trouble, Trooper Nick Lunsford soon arrived and also jumped in. The officers couldn't find their colleague. Divers using sonar found Poling's body at 2:29 a.m. yesterday.

The suspect, Joseph Harris, 22, of Springfield, was arrested on the island by officers using boats. He was jailed on a charge of obstructing official business.

Chief Patterson ended his official comments and got personal. "We're reeling right now. This has hit us all very hard. It's a run of bad luck."

Poling, then a deputy, was at the scene when Holcomb and Risner died in the fiery wreck on Jackson Pike. He lent a helping hand and slung an arm around the shoulders of grieving troopers.

Patrol Sgt. George Harlow recalled Poling's kindness. He intends to pay it forward with other troopers by rallying to the aid of Poling's wife and two girls.

"It's horrible ... It just keeps on coming, for some reason," Harlow said. "He helped us with our loss, now we'll deal with his."

Sadly for Gallia County officers, tending to the families of the dead has become an all-too-frequent fact of life.

## **Man Charged in Officer's Drowning Released from Prison**

<http://www.wsaz.com/news/headlines/97468849.html>

Jun 30, 2010 *By WSAZ News Staff*



ALLIPOLIS, Ohio (WSAZ) -- The man charged in the drowning of Gallipolis Municipal Court Probation Officer, David Polling has been released from prison.

In July 2007, Joseph Harris pleaded guilty to involuntary manslaughter and sentenced to four years behind bars. Harris was released from prison on Monday following a judicial release hearing in Gallia County Common Pleas Court, according to a Gallipolis newspaper.

In May 2007, Polling and a Gallipolis Police officer pulled Harris over on a traffic stop.

Harris took off running and jumped into the Ohio River.

Police say Polling and the officer followed him into the river. Polling started swimming to catch Harris, but went under water halfway to the island and never resurfaced.

Harris was caught a short time later.

The newspaper reports Harris apologized to Polling's family in a written statement, which was part of Monday's hearing.