

## 08-19-1984 – Rochester NY – Ronald Silver - LEO PSD Boat Accident

### Ronald J. Silver

American police diver, Rochester, New York. Attempting to find the body of a man who died in a boating accident, suffered unknown problems, drowned.

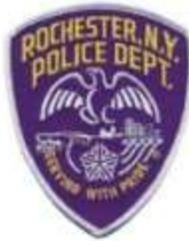
<http://www.thediversassociation.com/index.php/sheets>



## OFFICER DOWN MEMORIAL PAGE

REMEMBERING ALL OF LAW ENFORCEMENT'S HEROES

<http://www.odmp.org/officer/12301-police-officer-ronald-j-siver>



### Police Officer

### Ronald J. Siver

Rochester Police Department, New York

**End of Watch: Sunday, August 19, 1984**

Officer Ronald Siver drowned during a water recovery operation.

It was determined that Officer Siver, a member of the police scuba team, gave his life to save his partner due to an equipment failure.

## REMEMBERING OUR FALLEN HEROES

[file:///C:/Users/owner/Downloads/RPD%20News-June%202011%20\(Public\)%20new%20\(3\).pdf](file:///C:/Users/owner/Downloads/RPD%20News-June%202011%20(Public)%20new%20(3).pdf)

Thirteen officers have died in the line of duty over the 194-year-history of the Rochester Police Department. In upcoming issues of RPD News, we will honor their memory by sharing their stories with members of our department and the community. Our thanks to Capt. Johnston for researching and providing the information.



<b>OFFICER RONALD J. SIVER</b>
<b>APPOINTED – JANUARY 12, 1981</b>
<b>10/24/ 1954 - 8/19/1984</b>
<b>BADGE #300</b>

On Sunday, August 19, 1984, Officer Ronald J. Siver drowned during a water recovery in Irondequoit Bay.

The Rochester Police Department Scuba Squad had been called in to assist the Monroe County Sheriff's Department in its search for John Carlson of Irondequoit, who had been missing since a boating collision Thursday August 15, 1984 just before midnight.

Officer Siver had been in the murky waters of Irondequoit Bay only about 15 minutes when he began signaling his diving partner that he was having trouble. Divers had been using sleds equipped with lights to comb the bottom of the bay, about 70 feet below the surface.

Officer Siver and his partner were completing the hook-up of the sled to its ropes along the bottom when he began using hand signals that he was having breathing problems. Officer Siver's partner began to assist him in the ascent by attempting to "buddy breathe" by sharing his apparatus with him.

A safety team of Officers Johnathan Northrup and George Riess Jr. (Siver's brother-in-law), received a signal at the water's surface and entered the water.

Officer Siver was brought unconscious to the surface by the three divers and began receiving CPR from the moment he came up. Officer Siver was rushed to shore by relay boat and to Rochester General Hospital by Point Pleasant Ambulance. Officer Siver never regained consciousness.

Officer Siver was awarded the Rochester Police Department Medal of Valor and it was presented to his wife, Elizabeth. He was buried at White Haven Memorial Park Cemetery, Pittsford, on August 23, 1984. Officer Siver's name appears on Panel 59-E-7 on the National Law Enforcement Memorial located in Washington, D.C.

**Off. Ronald J. Siver**  
**Rochester Police Dept.**  
**Rochester, NY**

<http://www.wateroperations.com/wateroperations/lawfatalities.htm>

**Off. Siver drowned on August 19, 1984 during a scuba dive. The victim officer and other members of the police department scuba squad were assisting local sheriff's officers in an attempt to locate the body of a man who drowned as a result of a boating accident. The victim officer suffered unknown problems while at 75' and drowned.**

<http://nyshistoricnewspapers.org/lccn/sn88074101/1984-08-23/ed-1/seq-7.pdf>

# 600 cops expected for funeral

ROCHESTER, N.Y. (UPI) — More than 600 police officers from across the state were expected to attend a ceremonial funeral Thursday for a police scuba diver who drowned in Irondequoit Bay this week.

Officer Ronald Stiver, 30, and his diving partner were searching the murky bay bottom Sun-

day for the body of a boat accident victim when Stiver signaled that he was having problems breathing.

Divers found the officer's unconscious body floating near the bottom of the bay. Stiver, an eight-year police veteran and scuba squad member, was pronounced dead about one hour

later.

At least 600 officers from across New York state are expected to attend Thursday's ceremonial funeral service at St. Ann's Church, said Lt. Brian Page.

"It's a show of solidarity among 30 different police departments around the state," Page said.

## Diver Dies While Helping Search For Missing Man

ROCHESTER, N.Y. (AP) — A police scuba diver has died while helping a search team in their effort to find a 25-year-old man missing since a boat crash on Irondequoit Bay last week.

Lt. Brian Page of the Rochester police department said Police Officer Ronald Stiver, 29, was about 70 feet under water when he was stricken about noon Sunday.

"Evidently he had a problem while he was down there with his partner," Page said. "We don't know yet what the cause of death was."

Page said Stiver was taken ashore and efforts were made to revive him, but he was pronounced dead at Rochester General Hospital.

Page and another Rochester policeman, Thomas Fantigrossi, were searching under water for John Carlson, of Irondequoit, who was a passenger in a boat that col-

lided with another boat at midnight Thursday.

Carlson was riding with David Battaglia, 24, who died Friday at Rochester General Hospital of head injuries suffered in the crash. Shortly after Battaglia died, his heart was removed and rushed to Buffalo where it was given to Robert Quandt, 35, of Silver Creek, in a heart transplant operation at Buffalo General Hospital.

Page said Stiver had been on the Rochester police force about 3½ years and had been on the scuba-diving detail about 3 years. Before joining the police, he had been a Monroe County sheriff's deputy.

Page said that although the site of the boat crash was outside Rochester, city police were helping the sheriff's department with the search under a mutual assistance policy.

[http://nyshistoricnewspapers.org/lccn/sn84031170/1984-08-20/ed-1/seq-2/#date1=08%2F20%2F1984&city=&date2=08%2F21%2F1984&searchType=advanced&SearchType=all&sequence=0&lccn=&index=0&words=diver+Diver+Police+police&proxdistance=&county=&to\\_year=1984&rows=20&ortext=&from\\_year=1984&proxtext=&phrasertext=&andtext=police+diver&dateFilterType=range&page=1](http://nyshistoricnewspapers.org/lccn/sn84031170/1984-08-20/ed-1/seq-2/#date1=08%2F20%2F1984&city=&date2=08%2F21%2F1984&searchType=advanced&SearchType=all&sequence=0&lccn=&index=0&words=diver+Diver+Police+police&proxdistance=&county=&to_year=1984&rows=20&ortext=&from_year=1984&proxtext=&phrasertext=&andtext=police+diver&dateFilterType=range&page=1)

## **AUGUST, 1984 NEW YORK**

The police dive team was called to assist the local sheriff's office in the recovery mode search for two drowning victims. The dive plan was to utilize tow sleds in the large search area. The depth of the search area was 75 ft. with an estimated 3-4 foot visibility and bottom water temperature of approximately 40 degrees. Safety divers were stationed on a second boat. Team #1 searched for just under 20 minutes when one diver indicated that he was low on air and signaled to his buddy to surface. After sticking their sleds into the bottom the divers began their ascent.

During the ascent, the other diver, who was not utilizing a pressure gauge, signaled for his buddy to activate his J-valve. When the J-valve was pushed down, the diver found his air supply completely shut off and the two divers attempted to buddy breathe to the surface. The out-of-air diver took on water when he placed the shared regulator into his mouth upside down and made a rapid ascent. Upon surfacing he did not display any symptoms, but was taken to a local hospital for evaluation. It was later determined that the J-valve mechanism had been installed backwards, a condition that was not noticed during the filling of the tanks. After the first dive, the tow boat changed location which caused the two sleds to become tangled together.

When team #2 entered the water, their first task was to untangle the lines and give a line signal to start the search. Approximately two minutes after the signal to begin the search and approximately 13 minutes into the dive, one of the divers indicated that he was having air problems and indicated to his buddy to activate his J-valve. As the divers moved about the bottom, the visibility dropped to near zero. The buddy was not sure that he actually activated the J-valve and the divers began to buddy breathe. The buddy offered his regulator three times but was not sure if the diver was able to utilize it and obtain air. He believes his buddy may have tried to utilize his own regulator between passes.

The divers started to ascend and then settled back on the bottom and lost contact.

The buddy realized that he was low on air and surfaced.

Safety divers from the second boat entered the water to locate the missing diver. One safety team diver had problems equalizing and stopped at 40 feet. The remaining safety diver continued to the bottom and located the victim next to his sled. He attempted to bring him to the surface, but could not handle his weight and proceeded to tie the tow line to the diver's tank valve and then surfaced. The diver was pulled to the surface and rescue efforts failed. Equipment tests showed that his tank still had 500 psi remaining, but his regulator was performing poorly and below recommended specifications.

During the response of the safety divers to the site, the first safety diver experienced a regulator free-flow and had to change regulators, and the second safety diver broke a fin strap and had to borrow a fin.

Note: Since this tragedy, this team has become one of the better trained and equipped team in the country.

### **Democrat and Chronicle from Rochester, New York - Page 4**

<https://www.newspapers.com/newspage/137133269/>

Aug 22, 1984 - WEDNESDAY AUGUST 22, **1984 ROCHESTER** NEW YORK o  
SECTION .... said Lt. Warren Dyer, commander of the **police scuba diving** team.

### **Democrat and Chronicle from Rochester, New York - Page 2**

<https://www.newspapers.com/newspage/137220618/>

Mar 22, 1986 - **ROCHESTER**. N.Y.. SATURDAY. MARCH 22. 1986 City agrees to  
pay **police diver's**widow more than \$1 million for **1984** death scious and ...

### **Democrat and Chronicle from Rochester, New York - Page 84**

<https://www.newspapers.com/newspage/137220870/>

[https://www.google.com/search?q=1984+NY+Policd+Diver&oq=1984+NY+Policd+Diver&aqs=chrome..69i57.5279j0j4&sourceid=chrome&es\\_sm=93&ie=UTF-8#q=1984+Rochester+police+diver](https://www.google.com/search?q=1984+NY+Policd+Diver&oq=1984+NY+Policd+Diver&aqs=chrome..69i57.5279j0j4&sourceid=chrome&es_sm=93&ie=UTF-8#q=1984+Rochester+police+diver)

Mar 22, 1986 - 2A DEMOCRAT AND CHRONICLE, **ROCHESTER**. NY.. SATURDAY.  
MARCH 22. 1986**police diver's** widow more than \$1 million for **1984**