

Police department pays tribute to John Steffens

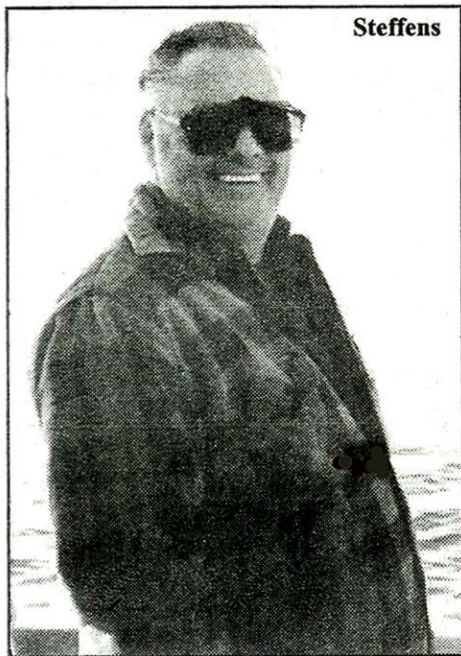
By Colin Baumgartner
Review Editor

The Lake Orion Police Department said goodbye to one of their own over the holidays – 32 year officer John Steffens.

Steffens, who grew up in Lake Orion, passed away on Dec. 24 at the age of 67.

He started as a reserve officer in 1969, became part-time in 1974 and served 25 years as a full-time officer, beginning in 1976.

“John Steffens was one of a kind, both as an officer and as an individual,” said LOPD Chief Jerry Narsh. “He dedicated 32 years of service to the Lake Orion Police Department.”



Prior to his work with the LOPD, Steffens did four tours of duty in Vietnam, three of which were as a volunteer.

“Knowing that helped to explain the intensity which he applied in his everyday life,” Narsh said. “Needless to say, John also had some tremendous stories.”

For Narsh, and many other members of the department, Steffens often served as a role model.

Among other things, he was a firearms instructor for over 20 years.

“He had the ability to teach anyone anything,” Narsh noted. “He just had that knack. He could make any topic so interesting.”

“I learned just about everything I know about firearms from John Steffens,” he added.

Steffens had an Associates Degree in Law Enforcement and Criminalistics, both from Oakland Community College, and also attended the Institute of Applied Science in Chicago where he finished courses in Crime Detection.

Narsh said some of Steffens specialties within the department included crime scene search/analysis and fraud investigation.

“His absolute attention to detail helped close a lot of cases in Lake Orion,” he said.

Narsh recalled one case that spanned five or six different counties and involved a series of armed robberies.

Steffens helped to create a task force, which eventually led to a gas station attendant in Orion Township recognizing the thief. When the suspect ran off hastily and left his wallet behind, the police had their man.

“He followed the evidence and wherever the evidence led, he went,” Narsh said.

“I was proud to serve alongside him. He was a good friend,” he added. “Our community is safer and better because of



him.”

Steffens is survived by his wife of 35 years, Carol, and daughters Denise Marie Rupp and Annette Lucille “Annie” (John II) Gorney.

Also survived by brother James (Edyie) and sister Sharon (Terry) Lang.

Grandfather of Melissa, Jessica, Joshua, Jarred and Jennifer.

A funeral service was held on Dec. 29 at St. Joseph Catholic Church and included a full police salute (below).

In lieu of flowers, the family wishes memorial contributions be made to Brian’s House, 151 S Cal Drive, Davison, MI 48423.

