

**Leo Borders, Deputy Sheriff**  
**Washtenaw County Sheriff's Office**  
**1964 to 1966**

Born on September 26<sup>th</sup> 1937 in Ashland, Kentucky, Leo Borders was hired as a Deputy Sheriff with the Washtenaw County Sheriff's Office in 1964. Leo's strong sense of right and wrong lead him to a career in Law Enforcement. He was proud of his position as a Deputy Sheriff, as well as the uniform he wore. His boots were always polished and his pants creased. He enjoyed his position as a Deputy because he believed it made a difference in his community. He lived by the philosophy of treating others as you would like to be treated yourself.

The Ann Arbor Police Department had a shooting range near the corner of Maple Road and Huron River Drive. Sheriff's Deputies and Ann Arbor Police Officers would gather at the range for shooting competitions. It was easy to find Leo in the crowd of Law Enforcement Officers. He was the one with his infant daughter Sara sitting atop his shoulders. Sara went everywhere with her father, usually seated upon his shoulders, and at least once she accompanied him to court. When Leo and his partner would stop for coffee at the Border's home, he would speak to his daughter over the patrol car public address system to make her laugh.

If you wanted to find Leo Borders when he was off duty, you only had to look in three places. He was either with his family, at his church, or under the hood of a car. Leo enjoyed working on cars and was excited when he and Erma bought a house on Elm Street in Chelsea, Michigan, because it had a garage and he could work on cars inside instead of outside in the elements.

Leo had to talk his wife Erma (Borders) O'Connor into their first date. It turned out to be a moment she never regretted. She was impressed with the tall red head and his kindness. She sensed he was a special person. Although an established fact that "cops like doughnuts", in Leo's case it was Erma's chocolate chip cookies. He assured that they would disappear as fast as she could bake them.

Leo had a concern for others. He made people feel protected and cared for whether it was his partner, his family, or his friends. Once at a drive in root beer stand with his wife, a young driver began squealing the tires of his vehicle. Leo went over to him and "explained" that driving was a privilege and vehicle safety was important to everyone, and then returned to his family outing.

Fun to be with and never heard to say a cross word, Leo had a good time, but not in a loud or boisterous way. He was content to be in the company of his family, whether it was going on picnics, doing yard work together, or just enjoying each other's company. Always excited to learn something new, when his house needed remodeling he performed the carpentry work with his brother-in-law and was proud of what he had learned and accomplished.

Leo Borders lost his life in the line-of-duty during a high speed chase on the evening of August 3rd 1966, on Dexter Pinckney Road. The suspect fled the scene on foot. Over one hundred law enforcement officers responded to the area of Stinchfield Woods in Dexter Township and succeeded in capturing the suspects. Leo Borders left behind his wife Erma, his three year old daughter, Sara, and his daughter Dawn, who was born one month after he died. Deputies helped the family by cashing in their vacation time and giving the money to Leo's family as well as the family of his seriously injured partner, Stanley McFadden. Those who knew him will not forget his smile, the pride he took in his work and his commitment to his community, family, and church.