

**05-01-1983 Lee Summit MO – Charles David Hartman – LEO PSD  
Attempted Rescue**



**OFFICER DOWN MEMORIAL PAGE**

REMEMBERING ALL OF LAW ENFORCEMENT'S HEROES

<http://www.odmp.org/officer/6174-police-officer-charles-david-hartman>



<b>Bio &amp; Incident Details</b>
<b>Age:</b> 30
<b>Tour:</b> 7 years
<b>Badge #</b> 8001
<b>Cause:</b> Drowned

**Police Officer  
Charles David Hartman  
Lee's Summit Police Department, Missouri**

**End of Watch: Sunday, May 1, 1983**

Officer Charles Hartman drowned while attempting to rescue a man from the Little Blue River in Kansas City, Missouri. During the rescue attempt Officer Hartman, who was in scuba gear, was struck by a log and he was knocked unconscious. Other members of the rescue team immediately attempted to rescue him. He was eventually pulled from the river and flown to a local hospital where he was pronounced dead.

Officer Hartman was a member of the Jackson County Underwater Rescue Team, which was composed of officers from several different agencies.

Officer Hartman had served with the agency for 7 years was survived by his wife and daughter.

**MAY, 1983 - MISSOURI**

A 30 yoa police officer drowned in a river attempt rescue a male trapped in a tree after his canoe had overturned. Utilizing a line gun, a line was established across the river. The diver/team leader wearing full scuba, placed a PFD (to take to the victim) over his BC and attached himself (via chest harness) to the upstream side of the line and attempted to work his way across the river on the surface.

Approximately half way across the river the diver stopped to clear his mask twice and began to tire. Approximately 8 minutes later, a second diver entered the water to retrieve the team leader. The second diver attempted to inflate the BC of the now unresponsive team leader and was unable to pull him back to shore. The

decision was made to cut the rope. The team leader was recovered on the surface 200 yds. downstream. Rescue efforts to revive him failed. A helicopter was utilized to transport rescuers to the far side and the original rescue of the make canoeist trapped in the tree was made.



<https://cityofls.net/Police/Police-Home-Page/Police-Memorial>

### **Police Memorial**

### **Officer Charles David Hartman - May 1st, 1983. "He Who Gave His Life For His Fellow Man"**



On May 1st 1983, Officer Hartman responded to the Little Blue River in Northern Lee's Summit. Heavy rains had caused flash flooding in the area and canoers were trapped in the swollen Little Blue River. Officer Hartman did not hesitate to respond as he was also a member of the Lee's Summit Underwater Rescue/Recovery Unit. Upon preparing himself and his gear Officer Hartman entered the river to rescue the stranded citizens. As he was swimming out to the citizens Officer Hartman was struck by a log moving down the heavy river current at approximately 30 mph. Officer Hartman lost consciousness and went under water. Other rescue divers pulled Officer Hartman from the river and transported him to the hospital. Unfortunately Officer Hartman did not survive the incident.

David's sacrifice and dedication to duty and to the citizens of Lee's Summit will not be forgotten. He is remembered every year during the memorial service and every day in our hearts. Dave's picture is emblazoned on a monument that rests at the entrance to the Lee's Summit Police Department. On the monument is a most fitting tribute to Dave, or any hero. It reads: "Who gave his life for his fellow man."

Additionally, Officer Hartman's name is engraved on a permanent display set up in the lower atrium of the police department which recognizes local officers who have lost their lives in the line of duty.

### **Park name honors hero who died in attempted rescue**

[HTTP://WWW.LSJOURNAL.COM/2014/05/29/116608/PARK-NAME-HONORS-HERO-WHO-DIED.HTML](http://www.lsjournal.com/2014/05/29/116608/PARK-NAME-HONORS-HERO-WHO-DIED.HTML)

May 29, 2014 **BY RUSS PULLEY**

It was in May, more than three decades ago, that the Lee's Summit Police Department suffered its only loss of an officer on duty.

That officer was honored by naming a newly planned park on Pryor Road after him. Charles David Hartman drowned May 1, 1983 while he was attempting to rescue a stranded canoeist who was clinging to a tree surrounded by a raging Blue River near 143rd and Holmes Road.

Charles David Hartman Memorial Park was dedicated in May 1990. Hartman was a member of the Lee's Summit Underwater Rescue and Recovery unit.

The *Journal* account from that day said Hartman and others had responded to help two Belton men who had been canoeing in a flooded Blue River and capsized. One man made it to shore, the other was clinging to a tree surrounded by the raging river near 143rd and Holmes Road.

Logs and other debris sped down the swollen river, the water going about 20 miles per hour.

Divers used a "line gun" to shoot a rope to the man who tied it to the tree. Hartman attached a safety harness to that lifeline and began to maneuver himself to the tree. He was wearing diving gear and a tank.

A second officer also entered the river, also using a safety line, and drag from the water on that line pulled him under. The officer investigating the accident said he believed Hartman was attempting to assist that officer when he also was dragged under the water and was hit by an object, maybe a log, which may have dislodged his mouthpiece.

The second officer surfaced and was pulled from the water, while Hartman remained submerged. A third diver, a Kansas City officer, reached Hartman and inflated his life vest. The line was cut, Hartman floated to the surface and downstream, followed by the officer who pulled Hartman and to shore and performed mouth-to-mouth resuscitation. Hartman was taken to a hospital by air ambulance where he was pronounced dead.

About 1,000 people attended his funeral.

Posthumously he received the Law Enforcement Award for Distinguished Service from the Lee's Summit Optimist Club, which had scheduled giving him the award before the accident.

For the dedication, between 1,000 and 2,000 people attended that ceremony that included a ribbon cutting and flyover by a police helicopter.

A *Kansas City Star* article at that time quoted the officer's wife, who had since remarried and moved to another state at that time.

She told the reporter that Hartman loved children and knowing children would be using the park would have made him happy.

"It's heartwarming to see it finished," she said.

The Lee's Summit Powder Puff Softball Association initially used the park. Today it is the adult sports complex, with youth sports gathered together at fields in Legacy Park.

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## **LEE'S SUMMIT POLICE DEPARTMENT**



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[https://www.supportingheroes.org/memorial/agency.php?agency\\_id=1006](https://www.supportingheroes.org/memorial/agency.php?agency_id=1006)

## **FALLEN HEROES**

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The Lee's Summit Police Department had 1 hero fall in the line of duty in 1983.

