

# THE 10-4

## A NEWSLETTER OF THE CRANSTON POLICE DEPARTMENT RETIREE ASSOCIATION

FOUNDER and HONORARY PRESIDENT – RICO MACCARONE



February, 2026

### MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

#### SUPPORTING OUR CPD RETIREE

On Monday, October 21, 20025, a golf tournament was held to assist retired CPD member Detective Sergeant Michael Gates with his ALS (Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis) medical expenses.

to fight this terrible disease with perseverance and a smile on his face.

Mike, keep the faith and know your brothers and sisters are with you.

#### CPD MEMORIAL EXPANSION COMPLETE

For those that do not know it, the expansion to our Police Memorial has been completed. Below is a photo of the rear of our memorial for your

#### CPD K-9s REMEMBERED AND HONORED

For years, specialized dogs have been used in the military and in law enforcement for various tasks. Like many other city departments, Cranston PD is no different.

Recently added to our Police Memorial is a statue of a Police K-9 and a stone to remember and honor those CPD K-9s who are no longer with us.



TOGETHER WE SERVED



TOGETHER WE REMEMBER



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Despite the weather, over 100 golfers participated in a shotgun round of 18 holes at the Valley Country Club in West Warwick, RI. This does not include the number of civilians and the active and retired police officers who attended the lunch and dinner.

Just like the dedication and hard work Mike put forward in his 30 years of dedicated police work, he continues

review

With this expansion to our memorial, we will be able to honor our departed brothers and sisters for many years to come. Again, we thank the city for funding this project and Captain Carl Ricci for his hard work and assistance in making this happen.

Through an email with Sgt. Gregg Bruno, this monument was funded by donations coordinated by Detective Michael Iacone. Great job guys.

## WHEN THE CPD HAD AMBULANCES

**Honorary President:**

**Rico Maccarone**

**President:**

**Peter Sepe**

**Vice President:**

**James Perry**

**Secretary:**

**Gertrude Fitta**

**Treasurer:**

**Mark Sepe**

**Managing Editor, 10-4**

**James Ignasher**

**Board Members:**

**Richard Gallo**

**Gary Nottarianni**

**Vincent McAtee Sr.**

**Floyd Smith**

**Printing:**

**Staples, NK, RI**

**CPDRA Finances to Date:**

**Savings: \$1,845.75**

**Checking: \$12,723.46**

**CPDRA Expenditures**

**Since Last 10-4:**

**\* Wreath for CPD Memorial: \$171.20**

**\* 2025 Annual Report Fee for RI.: \$20.00**

**\* Annual Web Site Fee: \$100.00**

**\* Memorial Engraving: \$189.00**

**\* Copying: \$35.60**

**\* Admin supplies: \$35.60**

**\* Purchase of blank bank slips: \$97.03**



Some may be surprised to learn that there was a time when the CPD was in charge of ambulance services in the city. Furthermore, those needing medical care weren't always transported to a hospital; some were taken home, and a doctor would be summoned to treat them.

Part of the reason for this was due to the fact the Cranston's paid fire department didn't come into existence until 1920, and started with only a handful of men. Cranston's volunteer fire companies were established in the 1890s but didn't have vehicles capable to transporting sick or injured people. Therefore, the task fell to the police.

The CPD's first known "vehicle" was a simple wooden buck-board wagon primarily used for patrol duties or transport of prisoners. The wagon saw service from the late 1800s until 1911 when the police department obtained its first motorized vehicle, a Ford Model T. While there isn't any documentation to prove either of these two vehicles were used during medical emergencies, the possibility exists that they might have.

In 1915 the CPD purchased a motorized combination patrol wagon/ambulance for \$950. The vehicle was custom made using a Cadillac chassis at the Lewis L. Fales Co. in Edgewood.

This was a huge innovation for a city of less than 20,000 people, for such equipment would usually only be found in large cities like Boston and Providence at that time.

The patrol/ambulance was primitive by modern standards. It carried basic first aid supplies, but lacked emergency lights and a radio. Citizens would be alerted of its approach by a large brass bell mounted to the passenger side.

In 1925 the department received a new patrol/ambulance which was technologically superior to the 1915 model. The new vehicle was also capable to towing a trailer with a boat and other rescue equipment on it.

In 1933 the department upgraded to a newer patrol/ambulance, a used 1930 Ford half-ton wagon that featured a closed cab to shield officers from the elements as well as an electric siren and lights. It also featured a stronger engine than its predecessors giving it more speed and capabilities in snowy weather and the unpaved roads of the city's west end.

In 1941 the United States entered World War II and auto manufacturers began switching from making cars to producing war materials. Ambulances were needed for the war effort, and cities and towns across America wanted them too for home-front civil defense.

In September of 1942 Cranston received one of the last Buick ambulances manufactured by the Flexible Co. of Loudonville, Ohio. The vehicle was purchased through citizen donations and initially no fees were to be charged for Cranston residents who needed its services.

Even though the paid fire department had grown considerably since 1920, it was decided that the ambulance would be stored and operated by the police department. This was the first CPD vehicle designated solely as an ambulance.

It wasn't long before the new ambulance generated controversy. Some doctors began using it like a taxi service to transport sick patients to and from their offices. Some patients were infected with communicable diseases which put officers at risk. And on two occasions the ambulance had transported a person to Boston leaving the city without coverage during that time.

The mayor sided with police when it came to officers being exposed to contagious patients, and felt there was no reason to expose police officers to any unnecessary dangers.

Fees not to exceed five dollars were implemented, as well as a "five mile" rule to prevent further long range trips out of the city.

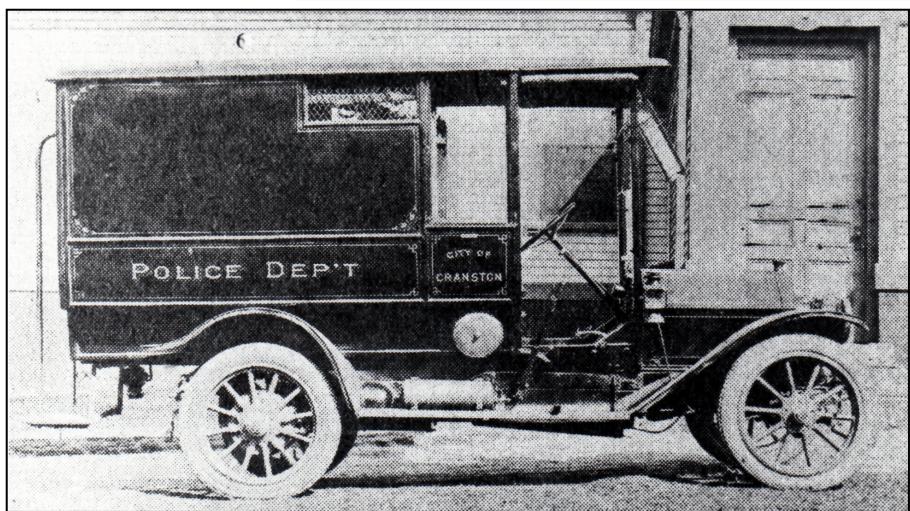
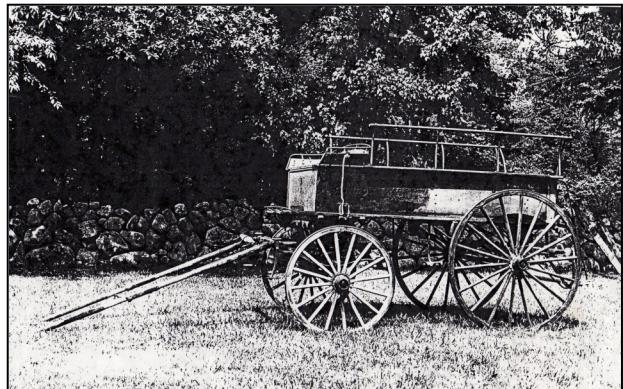
On July 10, 1944, the police ambulance responded to 1226 Cranston St.

for one of our own. Off duty police Lieutenant Raymond Caniglia, and city electrician Herman Wischnowsky, were fatally injured when a kerosene tank in the basement they were working on suddenly exploded. Rookie patrolman Paul Soscia had just left the basement with a \$2 bill Caniglia had given him to go purchase a new spigot at a nearby hardware store. Soscia carried that bill with him for years, and eventually retired as a lieutenant.

The CPD maintained the 1942 Buick ambulance well after the war. In 1950 it was reported that in the previous year the vehicle had made 265 "runs", and had logged 4,289 miles.

In July of 1955 the WWII era ambulance was retired and the city acquired a brand new Cadillac ambulance which measured 21 feet from end to end, furnished with the latest life-saving equipment of the day. It was at this time that the police department was no longer in the "ambulance business". It was decided that aspect of emergency work would now be overseen by the fire department.

Pictured at right: CPD's first known patrol wagon made by the Abbott Downing Co. of Concord, N. H. It saw service from the late 1800s to 1911. Today, it is storage at the Sprague Mansion.



Patrol/Ambulance used by the department from 1915 to 1925.



1925 Patrol/Ambulance—Sgt. John McGee in center.



1930 Ford Half-Ton Wagon

Pictured at right: Cranston's 1942 Buick ambulance purchased with citizen donations. The ambulance brought about certain controversy that had to be addressed.

George E. Farrow (Left) and Earl P. Tucker (Right) pictured in photo.



**Send us your photos and we'll publish them!**



## ***“Attention to Orders” - NEVER TO BE FORGOTTEN***



In each issue of the 10-4 Newsletter, we take the opportunity to honor those CPD members who are no longer with us, and who continually placed their lives on the line to serve and protect the citizens of Cranston, R.I.



It is with sadness that we announce that Detective Jack Hilton, Jr., (Badge 173), passed away on January 13, 2026. He was the beloved husband of Linda (DiMascio) Hilton.

Born in Central Falls, he was the son of Jack and Lorraine (Faucher) Hilton.

He was an avid outdoor sportsman whose activities included kayaking, hiking, biking, and skiing.

Jack served the citizens of Cranston for 25 years before retiring and then working for another ten years as a Federal Marshall.

Rest in peace.



We regret to announce the death of former officer Thomas J. Fitzgerald who passed away on December 13, 2025. He was the son of the late Lt. Jay Fitzgerald, Sr.

He graduated from Cranston West in 1990 and Roger Williams University in 2019.

He was a lifelong resident of Cranston who spent most of his adult life working in the restaurant industry and was the former co-owner of Fitzpatricks Pub in Cranston.

### **Photo From The Wayback Machine**



Photo of the CPD  
Baseball Team—1991

How many faces can  
you recognize?