

For Immediate Release

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Clarence C. Johnson Jr.

Commissioned - February 9, 1968

End of Watch - September 8, 1968



Trooper Clarence C. Johnson Jr. was killed in a collision on Sunday evening, Sept. 8, 1968. While patrolling south of Carnation, he was struck head-on by a pickup truck that crossed the centerline in a curve. Trooper Johnson was transported to Overlake Hospital in Bellevue where he was pronounced dead a short time later. He was 26 years old.

Trooper Johnson had been with the Washington State Patrol for only 18 months having received his commission just 7 months before his passing. He was the 17th of 30 WSP personnel to die in the line of duty in the agency's first century of operations. Already impressive at 26, he was engaged to be married, a member of a proud family, a former standout collegiate athlete, a wartime veteran, and a respected public servant. He left behind a grieving fiancé, family and friends, an honored legacy of service, and a grateful state of Washington.

BIO



For Clarence C. Johnson Jr., service to country and community would become a defining part of his life's story.

One of three children, Trooper Johnson was born Jan. 24, 1942, to Clarence Johnson Sr., and Sibyl Wood. The family lived in Seattle where he attended Showalter Grade School and then graduated from Foster High School in 1961. A talented football player and track star, Clarence received an athletic scholarship and attended Western Washington University from 1961 to 1963.

After college, his drive to serve led him to join the United States Air Force where he honorably completed a four-year tour protecting his country during the lead-up to some of the most deadly years of the Vietnam War.

Wanting to do even more, he applied and was hired by the Washington State Patrol on Feb. 27, 1967. The young cadet would be assigned to Hoquiam before joining the 41st Trooper Cadet Class. Commissioned on Feb. 9, 1968 under the leadership of Chief Will Bachofner, Trooper Johnson was then assigned to North Bend.

END OF WATCH



Trooper Clarence C. Johnson Jr. was killed in a collision on Sunday, Sept. 8, 1968. Patrolling three miles south of Carnation, his patrol car was struck head-on by a pickup truck that crossed the centerline in a curve. The truck skidded 250 feet before colliding with Johnson's patrol car with a force so violent that it moved his patrol car backwards by more than 20 feet. Both vehicles were consumed by flame and tragically, all three young men in the truck died at the scene. Trooper Johnson was transported to Overlake Hospital in Bellevue and pronounced dead a short time later.

For his service and sacrifice, Trooper Johnson was posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor by the law Enforcement Medal of Honor Committee in May 2001.

Trooper Johnson's brother, Gary, also joined the Washington State Patrol and retired from the agency in 1998. Their sister, Cheryl, lives in Seattle.

The Washington State Patrol will always remember Trooper Clarence Johnson. Honored by his willingness to serve and humbled by his loss, in this, our 100th year of service to the state of Washington, we pay homage to his valor, appreciation for his devotion to our country, and praise for his accomplishments for one so young. We will continue to do our best to be worthy of his service and sacrifice in all the days to come.

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