

Chicago officer who 'lived his dream' has star retired

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ABSTRACT

Police did not publicize Nauden's death at the time because the undercover operation was ongoing, Michael Shields, president of the Fraternal Order of Police, said at Wednesday's ceremony at police headquarters.

FULL TEXT

Norvell Nauden fondly remembered Wednesday how his brother, Paul, always chose to play the cop rather than the robber when the two were kids.

"He lived his dream and died doing what he wanted to do," the brother told a reporter after Chicago police officials retired the star of Nauden, a 21-year police veteran who died in May after suffering a heart attack at 46.

Nauden was about to make an undercover drug purchase on a Southeast Side street as part of an investigation of the Black P Stones street gang when he suddenly felt ill, according to department spokeswoman Melissa Stratton. Without compromising the sensitive operation, he left the scene and flagged down a passing ambulance that took him to a hospital, she said. He died the next day.

"It was a high-pressure situation," Stratton said of the planned drug buy.

Police did not publicize Nauden's death at the time because the undercover operation was ongoing, Michael Shields, president of the Fraternal Order of Police, said at Wednesday's ceremony at police headquarters. Even the usual black-and-purple bunting that is draped over entrances of police stations to denote an officer's death wasn't put up in Nauden's case, for the same reason.

"We lost a great warrior," Shields said at the somber gathering attended by Mayor Rahm Emanuel, police Superintendent Garry McCarthy and dozens of police officers.

Nauden's widow, April, and daughters Alana, 3, and Avril, 5, looked on as Nauden's star, No. 10803, was added to the superintendent's honored star case. He was the 482nd Chicago police officer to be so honored in the department's long history.

McCarthy decided Nauden's death was in the line of duty, qualifying his family for financial assistance and educational benefits.

The nine-month undercover narcotics investigation, which focused on an area called "Terror Town," ended a month after Nauden's death with more than 30 arrests.

Family and friends described Nauden as a loving father and a dedicated officer who loved McDonald's and a good argument.

"Officers knew when Paul had his eyeball on them, they were in good hands," said James O'Grady, commander of the narcotics unit, where Nauden served the last decade.

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Credit: By Alexandra Chachkevitch, Tribune reporter

Illustration

Caption: Photo: April Nauden kisses her hand Wednesday before touching the badge of her late husband, Paul. He was the 482nd Chicago police officer to have his badge added to the case. ALEX GARCIA/TRIBUNE PHOTO Photo: Paul Nauden

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