

Lois Higgins-Grote Heritage Award Winner

By Laura Goodman, Chair of IAWP
Board of Trustees

The Heritage Recognition is an honor bestowed upon an individual member due to substantial and significant contributions to women police and the International Association of Women Police over a period of years and especially during milestones of the organization. The honor is meant to ensure the recording, recognition, and appreciation for outstanding and dedicated service to IAWP. The IAWP's Heritage recognition is the highest tribute given by the IAWP.

Heritage Award winners represent the legacy of the IAWP. They are the historical memory of an organization that continues to grow. By virtue of participating in its history and having a resolve that the organization evolve, these leaders embrace core goals and serve as tangible evidence to the rest of us of the honor it is to serve the IAWP.

This year's recipient is Senior Deputy US Marshal (RET), Linda Cherry.

In 1976, upon being disillusioned and bored in the business world, Linda Cherry was encouraged to apply for a dispatcher position with her local police department. Two weeks later, she was working as a dispatcher and loving the action that came with every call. She likely would've made that her career had she not been challenged by officers in her department who taunted her that she could not meet the requirements to become a police officer. She met that challenge and within two years of joining the police department as a dispatcher, she became a police officer.

As a police officer at the Ankeny Police Department, Linda had many opportunities and experiences including working as a patrol officer & master (senior patrol officer) on every shift; detective as school liaison officer, sex crimes investigator for child/adult sexual and abuse cases, investigations, crime scene processing, interviewing witnesses, interrogating suspects and presenting the case to grand jury for indictments and testimony during trial. While Linda enjoyed these varied and challenging assignments, promotions eluded her as



a female on a small department, so she began looking elsewhere to advance her career.

In 1980, while attending a training conference put on by the Minnesota Association of Women Police, Linda was introduced to IAWP. There, she was encouraged to join the IAWP and to attend the upcoming IAWP conference in Albuquerque, New Mexico. She did, and became instantly involved—attending conferences on a regular basis.

Linda's involvement immediately revealed itself a year later when she co-hosted an IAWP Region 7 Training

Conference in Des Moines, Iowa. That same conference was the breeding ground that cultivated interest in forming the Iowa Association of Women Police. Linda was elected its first president. In 1982, the association began holding annual training conferences. A year later, the association became an affiliate of the IAWP.

In 1986, Linda was elected to the IAWP Board of Directors as the Region 7 Coordinator.

Four years later, Linda transitioned from a contract officer to a full time position in the U.S. Marshals Service. She was stationed in the Des Moines office

where she worked for ten years. During this time, Linda also supported other national offices on special assignment where she handled such high-profile cases as the Dixie Land Mafia trial in Mississippi and the David Koresh survivors in the Branch Davidian trial in Texas.

In her position as Deputy US Marshall, Linda promoted IAWP by reaching out to female deputies across the country to encourage their membership and attendance at international conferences. She effectively convinced the US Marshal's Service Headquarters to utilize IAWP's annual training conferences to recruit women candidates. This eventually led to the US Marshal's Service recognizing the IAWP as a legitimate international training conference where it sent a delegation of employees annually.

In 1991, Linda was appointed Membership Chair. In this role, Linda was awarded the IAWP President's Award for her work in reviewing and organizing all membership records and holding two highly successful membership drives. These drives grew

the membership from 800 to 2000. The effort was credited for generating the largest financial gain to the IAWP in years.

In 1992, Linda was elected Recording Secretary and in 1994, she was elected President of the IAWP.

As president, Linda led effective meetings, by insisting that members submit their reports in advance, using Robert's Rules of Order to keep discussions on task, and ensuring members were clear about their fiduciary responsibilities and their duty to care for the organization and its membership who elected them.

In 1999, Linda was promoted to Supervisory Deputy U.S. Marshal and transferred to the District of Arizona Tucson sub-office where she had the opportunity to work every desk in the district including Civil, Seized Assets, Administrative, Operations, Cellblock, Prisoner Operations, Fugitive Investigations and Fugitive Task Force Commander. After 34 years of service, Linda retired in January 2010.

When asked about her legacy, Linda

stated, "From day one, way back in the late 70s when it wasn't popular for women to join the law enforcement community, I extolled the virtues of male and female officers working effectively together, each gender bringing certain strengths, which resulted in male and female officers complementing each other and demonstrating strength in unity."

Throughout Linda's career, no matter which task she was assigned, it seemed there was always someone who challenged her competence and her right to be there. These challenges served to make her work harder, to be better, to do it right the first time, and to do every job she did to the best of her ability, leaving no loose ends, always by the book, and knowing the rules.

Please assist me in congratulating Linda Cherry as the 2012 Heritage Recognition recipient.

Laura Goodman is Chair of the Board of Trustees and past president of the IAWP. She currently serves as the Director of Public Safety at St. Catherine University in Saint Paul, Minnesota. She can be reached at lgoodman@stkate.edu.