

## Celebrating Women of History Month: Resident Spotlight Continued

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From Golden Harbor

### *City's First Woman Police Officer Retires*

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Sheboygan's first woman police officer was honored Thursday at a retirement party at the Knights of Columbus Hall.

Mildred Johnson is hanging up her gun.

But should that statement put smiles on any unknowing faces, this retiree's immediate supervisor and emcee for the evening, Inspector Clarence Kolb set the record straight.

When Millie Johnson first became an official police woman — a title change from previous secretarial position — she was issued a department pistol and, said Kolb, "she became very proficient with its use and was able to compete with anyone."

"Because of her accuracy with the pistol, she became a member of



Mildred Johnson

the Sheboygan Police Department Pistol Team and was the first woman to participate in the Fox Valley and the State Pistol meet in 1969," Kolb related.

That's one side of Millie Johnson who was greeted by more than 100 friends, relatives and work associates her retirement banquet, among them many city officials.

In attendance were Police Chief Victor O. Keitel, Mayor Richard Schneider, Attorney Sylvia Wasserman representing the Police and Fire Commission, and Officer Mark Kuczka for the Sheboygan Professional Police Officers Association.

Many praised Johnson for her "dedicated and successful career as the first woman Sheboygan Police officer."

Johnson was initially hired as a secretary for the department on

June 30, 1958. Along with secretarial duties, her job then required working the communication desk and operating the police radio and teletype machine.

On Nov. 18, 1964, her title was changed to police secretary and she became involved in more police work including duties in the juvenile bureau, serving as a matron for women prisoners and chaperone for school safety patrol trips.

Her last nine years on the department were spent in the Criminal Investigation Division to which she was assigned after her promotion on April 26, 1977, to the official rank of police officer.

As a detective, Johnson, Kolb related, investigated a variety of crimes.

"The last few years in this division, she coordinated most of the worthless check complaints brought into this department and during this period of time, she was also responsible for collecting thousands of dollars which were returned to local merchants."

Having a somewhat unique role as a "woman cop," Johnson was

often called upon to give talks at Lakeshore Technical Institute or to civic groups on self defense and sexual assaults.

"Many Sheboygan women are able to protect themselves because of the information provided to them by Miss Johnson," said Kolb.

Chief Keitel said Johnson has always been a very willing worker and did her job in a pleasant and efficient manner.

Kolb said the Criminal Investigation Division won't be the same without Johnson, but wished her a long, happy and healthy retirement.

The SVA (Sheboygan Visual Artists) is a network of artists and patrons with a mission to enrich the community through the visual arts. Most recently, they have coordinated rock painting parties for the Sheboygan Rocks initiative - a group of nearly 9,000 members who paint rocks and hide them all for the simple purpose of bringing smiles to the finders (please visit "Sheboygan Rocks!" on Facebook for more details). We think the SVA and Sheboygan Rocks has a lot of heART, so our Golden Harbor family hosted our own rock painting party! Brandy, who's involved with the SVA, lead the group with the help of her sister, Pat, and their fellow neighbors. Our pictures prove that painting the rocks produces just as many smiles as finding them does!