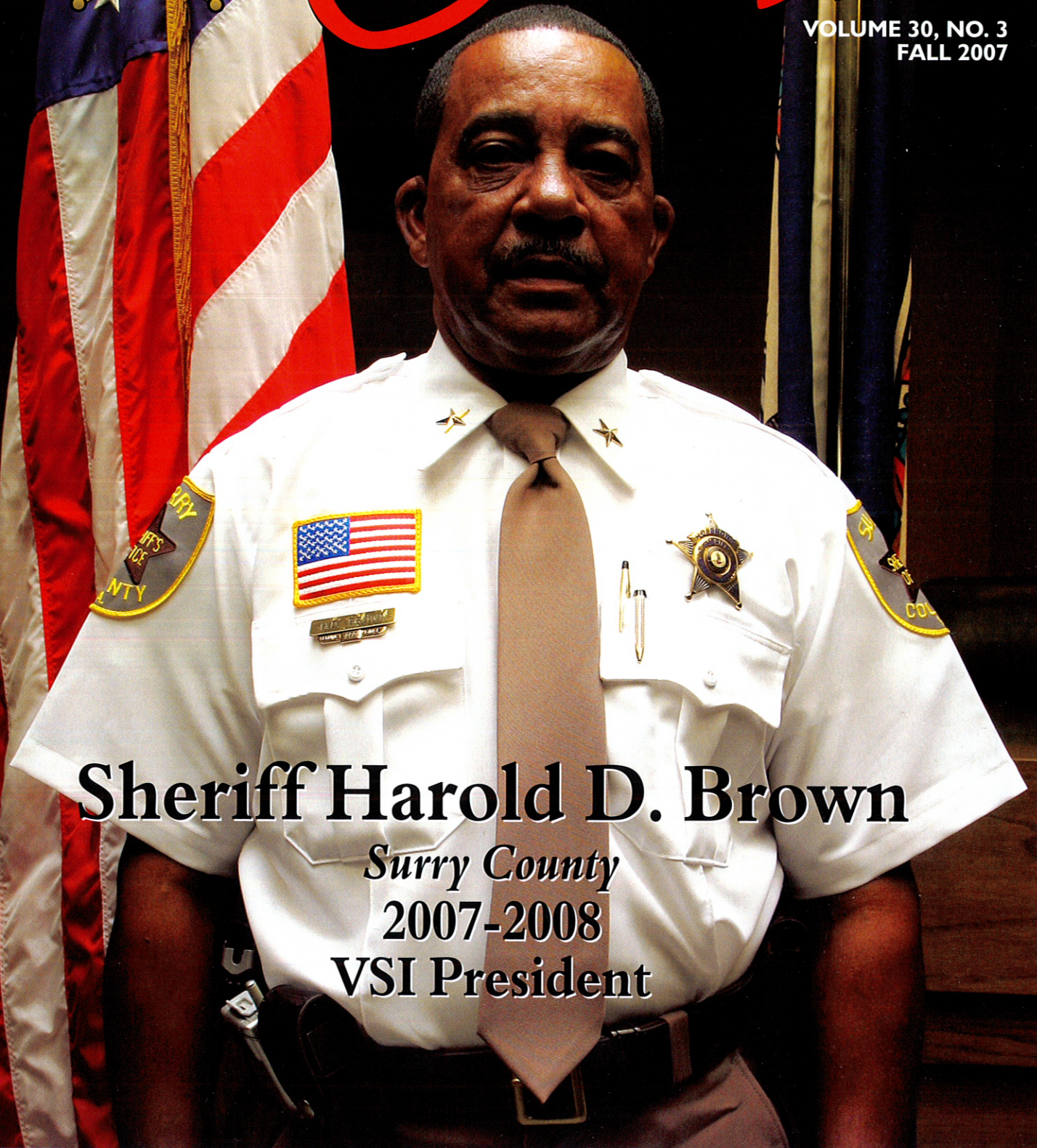


# VIRGINIA

# Sheriff



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**Sheriff Harold D. Brown**

*Surry County*

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**VSI President**

# We Ride For Those Who Died



Bicyclists crossing the Newman Bridge in Urbanna would stop for a moment of silence at the place Lieutenant Robert T. Hicks died in the line of duty in 1984. Lieutenant Hicks was with the Middlesex Sheriff's Office. His son, Bobby, is a Deputy with the Newport News Sheriff's Office and rode in his father's honor.

## LIEUTENANT KATHLEEN CAREY, PIO

It takes equal parts muscle and heart to pedal 240 miles. This year, the Newport News Sheriff's Office fielded three bicyclists for the Police Unity Tour—Deputies William Churchill, Steve Sheridan and Robert "Bobby" Hicks.

The Police Unity Tour is an annual tribute to those Brothers and Sisters who died in the line of duty. On May 10, hundreds of bicyclists left Portsmouth for Washington, DC. They rode under the motto, "We Ride for Those Who Died." The three-day pilgrimage ended at the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial.

Engraved in the blue-gray marble walls of the memorial are the names of almost 18,000 officers who have paid the ultimate price. One of those names is Lieutenant Robert T. Hicks, father of Newport News Sheriff's Deputy Bobby Hicks.

For Deputy Hicks, the Unity Tour couldn't be more personal. The "Brother" he rode for was his father. Lieutenant Hicks was with the Middlesex Sheriff's Office when he died on May 20, 1984, responding to a motorist in distress call. His patrol car careened off

the Newman Bridge in Urbanna and landed upside down in the deep waters of the creek below. Bobby Hicks was only six years old at the time.

The tragedy helped shaped him. Law enforcement is a noble career, and his father embraced it with courage—as did other members of his family, "That's what the men in my family do. We're Deputies somewhere," Hicks said.

In addition to his dad serving the Middlesex Sheriff's Office, an uncle retired from the York Sheriff's Office, and a grandfather was a Deputy with the Gloucester Sheriff's Office.

On day one of this year's ride, a moment of silence was held on the bridge in honor of the late Lieutenant Hicks. In addition, the Hicks family and the Middlesex Sheriff's Office were presented with plaques honoring his service and memory.

Every bicyclist was assigned the name of a fallen officer for whom to ride. Each wore a bracelet engraved with a name, agency and EOW (End Of Watch). The bracelets provided motivation and inspiration.

The Police Unity Tour was founded in 1997 by the Florham Park, NJ, Police Department. Virginia established Chapter IV in 2000. The Newport News Sheriff's Office participated for the first time in 2007.

The Unity Tour is the single largest private/corporate sponsor of the Memorial Fund. This year, Virginia Chapter IV raised \$345,000. There are plans to construct a National Law Enforcement Officers Museum.

Amateur police and Deputy cyclists were treated like Olympic athletes as they rode through DC. City block after city block was lined with cheering supporters.

Cheers were exchanged for tears at the sight of the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial. Flowers, photographs, personal effects of all kinds lined the base of the memorial wall.

Finally, there it was. On the East Wall, Section 60, Line 10, the name Robert T. Hicks. Deputy Bobby Hicks found the name of his father. He gently placed a black and white photograph of his dad near the name.

Bobby couldn't bring himself to speak his emotions, "Those are my thoughts and my feelings and no one else's," he said quietly. He chose instead to open his heart with a poem—a poem that he laid next to his father's picture.

To learn more about the Police Unity Tour, the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial Fund and the Officer Down Memorial Page, go to [www.policeunitytour.org](http://www.policeunitytour.org), [www.nleomf.org](http://www.nleomf.org) and [www.odmp.org](http://www.odmp.org).

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*For more information, contact Lieutenant Kathleen Carey at (757) 926-8747, or cell (757) 813-6139.*



Cyclists conquer an incline in Stafford County.



Deputies William Churchill, Steve Sheridan and Bobby Hicks at the conclusion of the Police Unity Tour.



On day one, riders stop for a breather along the York River in Yorktown before tackling the Coleman Bridge seen in the distance. The bridge links York and Gloucester counties.



Riders assemble at the start of day two.

## A Name In Stone By Deputy Robert T. Hicks II

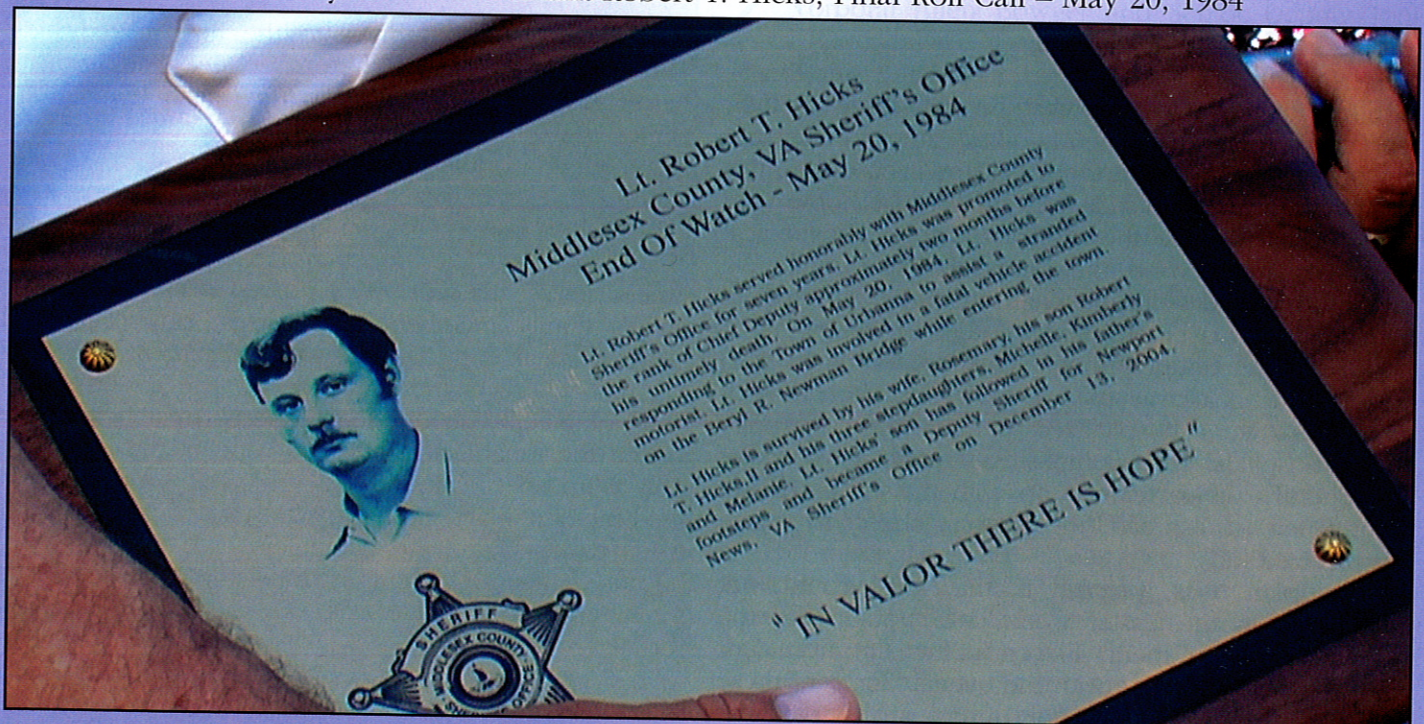
A name in stone is all that is left  
Of a man that once stood tall.  
A man who served, and lived and breathed.  
A man who then gave all.

A man who lived, and loved and cared;  
For those whom could not.  
This wall that now bears his name,  
Is my father's resting spot.

For now, he stands a different watch.  
Now he guards the gate.  
To be the light for all to see,  
When life was not their fate.

He now stands proud and now stands true,  
Whenever he hears the call.  
That one more of the Thin Blue Line,  
Did serve and then did fall.

To my father: Lieutenant Robert T. Hicks, Final Roll Call – May 20, 1984



A plaque honoring the service of Lieutenant Robert T. Hicks is presented to the Middlesex Sheriff's Office.