

07-28-2011 – Converse Co WY – Bryan Phillip Gross – LEO Attempted River Rescue



# OFFICER DOWN MEMORIAL PAGE

REMEMBERING ALL OF LAW ENFORCEMENT'S HEROES

<http://www.odmp.org/officer/20914-deputy-sheriff-bryan-phillip-gross>



<b>Bio &amp; Incident Details</b>
<b>Age:</b> 29
<b>Tour:</b> Not available
<b>Badge #</b> Not available
<b>Cause:</b> Drowned

## Deputy Sheriff Bryan Phillip Gross

Converse County Sheriff's Office, Wyoming

### End of Watch: Thursday, July 28, 2011

Deputy Sheriff Bryan Gross drowned in the North Platte River while attempting to save a teenage girl who had jumped into the river after fighting with her boyfriend.

Deputy Gross had responded to the scene and entered the water, which was swollen due to heavy snowmelt. The girl was pulled from the water by bystanders but Deputy Gross was swept away. His body was found four days later, approximately 1/2 mile from where he entered the river.

### DIVE TEAMS AND BLACK HAWK AID IN SEARCH FOR CONVERSE COUNTY DEPUTY BRYAN GROSS [PHOTOS]

<http://k2radio.com/dive-teams-and-black-hawk-aide-in-search-for-deputy/>  
July 28, 2011 KAREN SNYDER

Albany County Swift Water Rescue team were on site this morning as crews continued looking for Converse County Deputy Sheriff Bryan Gross.

The deputy failed to return from the water after assisting in an Thursday evening rescue of a juvenile female. The girl was reportedly floundering in the

waters under the Yellowstone Bridge in the North Platte in Douglas around 5pm the evening of July 27th.

Search and rescue operations looking for the missing deputy on Friday include members of all Converse County Emergency Services, Platte County, the Wyoming Game and Fish Department, the Albany County dive team, state park employees, many volunteers and members of a National Guard Black Hawk helicopter crew. Searchers were focusing on the area between the Yellowstone bridge and the Richard street bridge.

The helicopter crew made flights south of there over the river.

The Converse County Sheriffs office says they'll give an update on the search this evening.

## **Body Of Wyoming Deputy Found In North Platte River**

<http://denver.cbslocal.com/2011/07/31/body-of-wyoming-deputy-found-in-north-platte-river/>  
July 31, 2011

**DOUGLAS, Wyo. (AP)** – The body of a Converse County sheriff's deputy who jumped in the North Platte River near Douglas to assist a struggling girl was discovered Sunday.

It was the fourth day of searching for 29-year-old Bryan P. Gross. Gross went in the river Thursday evening after a teenage girl who appeared to be struggling. The girl survived, but Gross was swept away in the river swollen by heavy snowmelt.

County Sheriff Clinton Becker said Gross' body was found late Sunday morning about a mile and a half from where Gross entered the river.

Searchers from several law enforcement agencies and civilian volunteers checked the banks of the river. Divers, dogs and a helicopter helped in the search. The sheriff did not describe how Gross was located.

## **BODY OF CONVERSE COUNTY DEPUTY BRYAN GROSS RECOVERED**

<http://k2radio.com/body-of-converse-county-deputy-bryan-gross-recovered/>  
July 31, 2011 BRIAN SCOTT

Following an intense four-day search for Deputy Bryan Gross of the Converse County Sheriff's Department, we are now hearing reports that Deputy Gross' body has been recovered from the North Platte River.

Search and recovery efforts ended Sunday morning at approx 11:20 am when the body of Deputy Bryan Gross was recovered from the waters of the North Platte River in Douglas. Deputy Gross was located between the I-25 Bridge site and



**Bryan P. Gross (credit: Converse County Sheriff's Department)**

Anderson Dairy Bridge, appx 1.5 miles downstream from where he entered the river.

Deputy Gross entered the water on Thursday afternoon July 28th in an attempt to rescue a juvenile female who was reported to be struggling in the river. The girl was rescued and

removed from the river. Immediately upon her rescue from the water, and while accounting for all personnel involved in the rescue, it was discovered that Deputy Gross was missing. Search efforts for the Converse County Deputy began immediately thereafter. His vehicle was located on Pearson Street, and his vest, boots, shirt and duty belt were located a short distance away near the river.

## Wyoming Deputy, Bryan P. Gross, Hailed as Hero

<https://swiftwaterrescuenews.wordpress.com/2011/08/03/wyoming-deputy-bryan-p-gross-hailed-as-hero/>

August 3, 2011 by Nancy J. Rigg

It is with great sadness that we must report a second line of duty death, within one month's time, involving swift water.

Converse County Sheriff's Deputy Bryan Gross, 29, lost his life on Thursday, July 28th, during a river rescue incident on the North Platte River in Wyoming. Gross died just one month after Search and Rescue volunteer, Sheilah Sweatman, 29, lost her life during a swiftwater rescue mission in the Goat River, in British Columbia, on June 29, 2011.

Deputy Gross and other rescuers attempted to save the life of a distressed 14 year old teenage girl who entered the river and was swept away. The girl was rescued about a mile downstream. Despite intensive search efforts, Gross's body was not recovered until four days later on July 31st.



**Deputy Bryan Gross**



**Bryan served with the Converse County Search and Rescue and was a K-9 handler.**

Because of heavy snow melt, the North Platte River has been running higher than usual, with very cold water, making it extremely dangerous. There have been numerous drowning deaths in Wyoming this year, including a family of four from Colorado who were killed when the highway beneath them was suddenly washed out during a heavy rainstorm.

Converse County Sheriff Clinton Becker hailed Deputy Gross as a hero, noting that his actions went beyond the call of duty. Becker was

quoted in the Washington Post: "He (Deputy Gross) made a decision to do what he did, and he did it to the best of his ability."

As a result of this tragedy, Sheriff Becker told news reporters that the department will consider issuing PFDs (personal flotation devices, or life jackets) to deputies to carry in their patrol vehicles. "We don't do a whole lot of our work by the river —

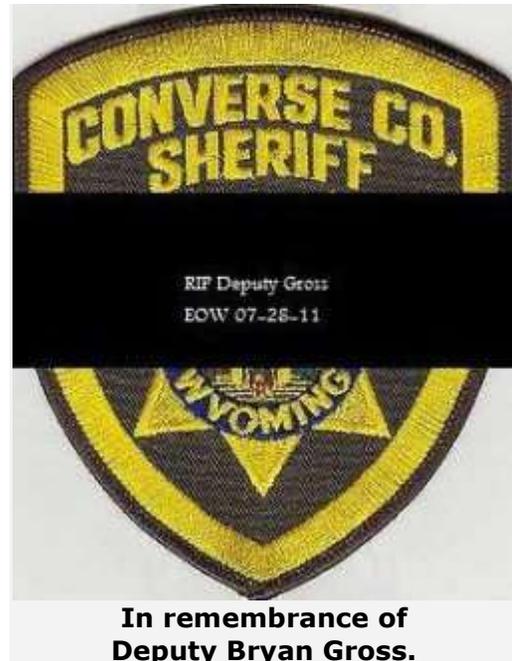
95 percent of our work is out on the prairie," Becker reportedly said. "But on occasion such as this incident, you just never know."

Bryan Gross was recently married, leaving behind a young widow. In addition to his patrol duties, Gross was a K-9 handler and served with the Converse County Search and Rescue Team. His police dog, Gus, helped search for Gross's remains.

Funeral services were held on Saturday, August 6, 2011.

The Gorman Funeral Homes – Converse Chapel of Douglas – has been in charge of handling the arrangements.

Condolences may be sent to the family at [gormanfh.com](http://gormanfh.com).



Photos courtesy of PRAYERS FOR BRYAN GROSS:

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Prayers-for-Bryan-Gross/197163253675043>

Those wishing to donate to the funeral services are encouraged to visit Converse County Bank or send check by mail to:  
Amy Gross c/o, CCSO, 107 N. 5th St. Douglas, WY 82633.

Donations can also be made to Search and Rescue at Converse County Bank 322 Walnut St., Douglas, WY 82633

## DEPUTY FUNERAL

### Douglas bids farewell to deputy who died trying to rescue girl

[http://billingsgazette.com/news/state-and-regional/wyoming/douglas-bids-farewell-to-deputy-who-died-trying-to-rescue/article\\_986e1098-2576-5c14-9609-4d2f96e808d2.html](http://billingsgazette.com/news/state-and-regional/wyoming/douglas-bids-farewell-to-deputy-who-died-trying-to-rescue/article_986e1098-2576-5c14-9609-4d2f96e808d2.html)

Aug 6, 2011 By JOE O'SULLIVAN Casper Star-Tribune

DOUGLAS, Wyo. — With a procession of uniformed officers and flashing lights, residents of Douglas bid farewell Saturday to a second man lost in the line of duty over the past three months.

Converse County Deputy Bryan P. Gross died July 28 after entering the North Platte River to help a teenage girl who appeared to be struggling. The girl was helped from the river by other law enforcement personnel, who discovered Gross was missing after the rescue.

His body was recovered after an intensive three-day search that involved law enforcement, aerial patrols, and Gus, Gross' K-9 partner.

"As you look down on us today, know that there are not enough words to express how much I will miss you," Tony Walters, a friend from Michigan and fellow law enforcement officer, told several hundred at a service for Gross in the Douglas High School gymnasium.

Gross, a Michigan native, had been with the Converse County Sheriff's Office for approximately three months. Prior to joining the sheriff's office, he had been a member of the Douglas Police Department.

Before that, Gross had caused his share of mischief with Walters. Growing up together, they skipped school to ride horses and had their own minor run-ins with law enforcement.

Thus, the irony was not lost on Walters when Gross decided to pursue a life in law enforcement. And he was remembered well for it.

"He succeeded at everything he tried, except golf," said Jake Mann, who had worked with Gross in Wyoming and counted him as a best friend.

Mann added that Gross planned to fake a heart attack to get out of an upcoming golf tournament.

Police officers and sheriff's deputies traveled from as far away as Billings; Chadron, Neb.; and Colorado to attend Gross's funeral and procession afterward.

Dozens of law enforcement vehicles paraded silently through downtown, lights flashing, accompanied by the roar of the 40 motorcycles in the procession.



As she did in June for O'Connor's service, Lindsey Renstrom brought her girls out to watch the procession.

"To have a cop go down to help someone and tragically die, it's a lot for our community to go through," Renstrom said. "I feel sorry for his wife."

Gross was the second man mourned by Douglas after being lost in the line of duty in the past three months.

In late June, the town buried Marine Lance Cpl. Sean M. O'Connor, a Douglas High School graduate who died June 12 while conducting combat operations in Helmand province, Afghanistan.

Ken Walters, Tony's older brother, told those at the service about a chartered fishing trip he and Gross took on Lake Michigan.



Ken said that on the way home he had complained to Gross about how they hadn't caught enough fish. But Gross didn't see it that way, instead pointing out all the fun and laughs they had along the way.

It reminded him of this moment.

Said Ken: "It's not about the fish we lost, but it's much more so about the fun we had doing it together."



## **Bryan Phillip Gross**

<http://www.ourmidland.com/news/article/Bryan-Phillip-Gross-6952336.php>

**August 21, 2011** By the Midland Daily News

A funeral service for Bryan Phillip Gross, 29, was held at 11 a.m., Saturday, Aug. 6, 2011, at the Douglas High School Gymnasium in Douglas, Wyo. with The Rev. Dr. Robert D. Firebaugh officiating, and full law enforcement honors were accorded. A service for family and close friends was held at 6 p.m., Friday, Aug. 5, 2011, at the Esterbrook Community Church in Esterbrook, Wyo., with Kirby Kudlak officiating.

Bryan Phillip Gross was born Aug. 1, 1981, in Midland, and died on Thursday, July 28, 2011, in Douglas. Bryan was the son of Phillip Paul Gross and Cindy Sue Allen.

He was married to his "Love," Amy Spruiell Gross, on July 1, 2011 in Esterbrook, Wyoming.

Bryan went to high school in Gladwin, and received his associate's degree in mechanics from Kirtland College in St. Helen. Bryan was a jack of all trades and worked at many different companies until he found his love in law enforcement. He worked for McNamara Ford as a master mechanic, he was a farrier at Cedar Farms, and a trucker for Gordan Foods Service before moving to Wyoming.



While in Wyoming, Bryan started his own seamless gutter company called Grossy's Gutters and worked at the North Antelope Rochelle Mine (NARM) until he joined the law enforcement academy in Douglas. After graduating from the academy, Bryan worked for the Douglas Police Department as their K-9 officer. Bryan ended his watch as the K-9 deputy sheriff for the Converse County Sheriff's Office, where he and his canine partner, Gus, enjoyed working as a team every day.

Aside from his love of his job, Bryan also loved to hunt, fish, and take drives in the mountains. He loved to tinker in the garage on projects and loved to work with his hands. He loved kids and was a wonderful uncle to his nieces and nephews and all of his friends' children.

Bryan is survived by his wife, Amy Gross of Douglas, Wyo.; father, Phillip Gross of Kalamazoo; mother, Cindy Allen of Glenrock, Wyo.; sister and brother-in-law, Brina and Nathan Loya and their children, Emma and Wyatt, of Glenrock, Wyo.; grandparents, Paul and Alta Gross of Coleman, and Patricia Allen of Glenrock, Wyo.; and many aunts, uncles, cousins, nieces and nephews. He was preceded in death by his grandfather, Lester Allen.

Pallbearers for the funeral services were Jake Mann with K-9 Gus, Tony Walters, Nick Walters, Ken Walters, Jeremiah Owens, Ben Peech, Stefan Maciech, and Luke Metz.

A memorial to the K-9 and Converse County Search and Rescue in care of the Converse County Bank, P.O. 689, Douglas, Wyoming 82633 would be appreciated by the family.

The Gorman Funeral Homes - Converse Chapel of Douglas is in charge of the arrangements. Condolences may be sent to the family at [gormanfh.com](http://gormanfh.com).

## Two Albany County Sheriff's Office Deputies Awarded For Recovery Assistance

<http://kowb1290.com/two-albany-county-sheriffs-office-deputies-awarded-for-recovery-assistance/>

September 6, 2011 By Garrett Adams

Two Albany County Sheriff's deputies will be honored today for their recovery assistance in the July 28th drowning of Converse County Sheriff's deputy Bryan P. Gross.

Deputy Gross [entered the North Platte River](#) to rescue a struggling teenage girl. Gross was carried away by the current and the girl was recovered approximately a mile downstream by other emergency responders. Gross had been missing for three days and was found 1.5 miles away from where he entered the river. Numerous law enforcement agencies and civilian volunteers as well as divers, dogs and even a helicopter aided in the rescue and recovery.

During the Albany County Board of Commissioners meeting taking place Tuesday, September 6th, two Albany County Sheriff's deputies will be awarded for their assistance in the July 28th incident. The two deputies are Sgt. Ben Fritzen and Becky Spisak. They will receive a recognition award from Douglas Mayor Bruce Jones.

## WYO. SHERIFF'S DEPUTY POSTHUMOUSLY HONORED

<http://k2radio.com/wyo-sheriffs-deputy-posthumously-honored/>

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**Photo: Deputy Bryan Gross and Gus, Converse County Sheriff's Department**

CHEYENNE, Wyo. (AP) — A deputy who died trying to rescue a teenage girl from the North Platte River in 2011 will be honored with the Congressional Badge of Bravery.

The family of Converse County Deputy Bryan Gross will accept the award at a ceremony Feb. 19 at the Wyoming Capitol.

Gross was one of several rescuers who jumped into the swollen river to save the girl. Other rescuers used a canoe to steer the girl to the bank.

He was 29 and lived in Douglas. He was also named a Carnegie hero for his actions.

Rep. Cynthia Lummis said Tuesday that she would attend the ceremony along with Gov. Matt Mead, Sens. Mike Enzi and John Barrasso and U.S. District Attorney Kip Crofts. It will be open to the public.