Burnum Family Lawyer
Gallagher Is Tough As Nails

The family of a Wendover Police detective who com-
mitted suicide this July has retained a noted personal
injury attorney Barbara Gal-
lagher to represent them in a
matter, “wrote Burnum’s
sister Lyssa Thompson in
a prepared statement to the
Advocate. “As a member of
the community I feel that af-
ter such notification there is a
duty to protect the officer in-
volved, the police depart-
ment and the community seeing as a officer carries a
firearm and has been report-
ed unstable. We would like to
see a protocol put in place
so that if faced with the situa-
tion, action would be taken
to get the officer help, to take
steps to assure safety and to
possibly save a life.

Officer, detective, fire-
lighter, ambulance medic etc.
Respond in to experience
things that others cant even
think of, because they have not
lived our lives they are ex-
periencing things that most
man can not imagine. Murder,
tamper, molestation, suicide,
defence and so much more.
The effects this can have on
that person can be life alter-
ing to say the least.

Donald loved serving his
community, helping people,
protection and seek-
ing out protected for people.
Serving for over 20 years on
West Wendover police de-
partment I think he deserved
the same.

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According to both Thomp-
son
continued page 2


American Institute of
Personal Injury Attorneys

“Our family is aware that
calls were made within days
before Donald’s death to
WWPD. The chief as well as
continued page 2
son and to brother Kurt Burnum, Donald not only told fellow police officers that he was despondent but may have related that he was feeling suicidal. “He told me he was feeling suicidal,” Kurt Burnum said in a telephone interview with the High Desert Advocate. “But when I called the police department all I could speak to was a secretary and no one called me back. When I called back the chief wouldn’t take my call.”

During the interview Kurt Burnum admitted that he was on mental illness medication and had been diagnosed as a schizophrenic. Kurt Burnum also said that his brother was diagnosed with depression. Kurt Burnum also confirmed that Donald Burnum was on medication for depression.

Both siblings agree that their brother’s medication had been recently changed within a month of his suicide and both must they have been overwhelmed by the city administration. “Other than being notified of his death nobody from the PD has contacted the family unless returning the calls about this situation,” Lyssa Thompson added in another email.

According to mental health professionals contacted by the High Desert Advocate it is not at all rare that police, military or others in high stressed jobs to complain to their cohorts but not to their superiors.

“We do have a duty to detain someone whether a police officer or not if we believe that he or she poses a threat to himself or to others,” said West Wendover Police Lt. Donald Lanning. “But that bar is very high. This was a tragic situation. I don’t know what could have been done to prevent it.”

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