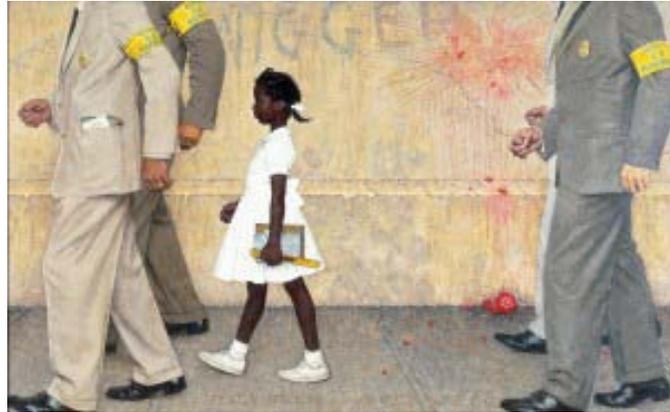


## Jesse Grider Knew About “The Problem We All Live With”

Barren County native Jesse Grider, a Korean War veteran and former U.S. marshal, is a historical figure you know, but would never recognize. From 1958 to 1973, Grider worked as a U.S. deputy marshal, a period of time in the nation’s history rife with protests over civil rights. Grider was often assigned a role for civil rights events, including guarding Martin Luther King, Jr. in Montgomery, Ala. in 1961 and the integration of the New Orleans elementary school system in 1960.



During his assignment guarding Ruby Bridges, the first grader who desegregated New Orleans, Grider and three other U.S. marshals assigned to Bridges shielded the 6-year-old from a mob throwing rotten food, racial slurs and spit. The event was famously portrayed by Norman Rockwell in his 1964 painting, “The Problem We All Live With,” which included Grider from the neck down.

In 1973, Grider moved back to Kentucky, serving as chief deputy marshal and U.S. marshal for the Western District of Kentucky, as well as 17 years as clerk for the U.S. District Court Western District of Kentucky.

Oral history interviews with Jesse Grider and about the civil rights movement can be found at <http://passtheword.ky.gov>. (Photo courtesy of Norman Rockwell Museum)

Pass the Word” is a discovery tool for oral histories throughout the state of Kentucky. To learn more about this topic, visit <http://passtheword.ky.gov>.