

FOP



JOURNAL

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JANUARY 2024

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THE FOP JOURNAL is published monthly by the National Fraternal Order of Police, 701 Marriott Drive, Nashville, TN 37214 - 1-800-451-2711. Presort Non-Profit Standard, U.S. Postage Paid in Bolingbrook, IL, Permit No 1309. FOP membership includes a subscription to THE FOP JOURNAL. Subscriptions accepted from recognized law enforcement agencies, government officials and libraries. Non-member subscriptions \$32 a year, single copies \$8.

Media information available upon request by writing or calling National Headquarters. No part of THE FOP JOURNAL may be reprinted without written permission. Publication of any product does not endorse product or service by the National FOP.

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The Future of the FOP

// **WRITE TO US!** If you have further questions, contact Patrick Yoes at (504) 234-4300, or pyoes@fop.net.

As we end another year, I find myself reflecting on the past and looking forward to the future. 2023 has been a remarkable journey, filled with both triumphs and challenges. I believe that each adversity we faced and overcame was another opportunity for growth and learning. Each challenge shapes us into a better version of ourselves. It is in this moment of reflection that I feel compelled to share with you my thoughts on the future of the FOP.

The past year has taught me valuable lessons about resilience, adaptability and the power of human connection. The police profession has faced unprecedented challenges, but we have also witnessed the strength and determination of individual members coming together to overcome adversity. It is this spirit of unity and resilience that gives me hope and fuels my excitement for the FOP and our future.

2023 saw record expansion of our organization, with total membership now exceeding 372,000. Our goal for 2024 is to continue that momentum and growth to ensure we remain the dominant voice of law enforcement and have the influence to make a meaningful difference in the lives of our members.

As we step into the new year, I am filled with anticipation for the opportunities that await us. For the first time in 40 years, we have real traction on addressing the inequities of the Windfall Elimination Provision and Government Pension Offset. Rest assured, fixing this injustice will continue to be a top priority for us in Washington, D.C.

As we end 2023, our media voice has never been more dominant. Our labor services, wellness services, legal plan coverage, educational services and member benefits

have never been stronger. I am proud of the advancements of each of these programs and services, but our work is never done. In the coming year, we will continue to be innovative, creative and forward-thinking in enhancing our programs and benefits for continued growth and maximizing our potential to make a lasting impact.

As we bid farewell to the year 2023, I want to express my gratitude for the experiences, the lessons and the people who have been a part of this incredible journey. I am proud of the advancements and the successes of the past year but am filled with anticipation for the opportunities that lie ahead in the upcoming year. Together, let us embrace the future with open hearts and minds, knowing that we have the power to shape a brighter tomorrow.

Wishing you a joyous and fulfilling year ahead. **FOP**

Support the NFOP PAC!

We need your support of the National Fraternal Order of Police Political Action Committee (NFOP PAC), which, like our grassroots activism, is an essential part of our National Legislative Program. The NFOP PAC allows us to support candidates who support our members and our profession. As the oldest and largest law enforcement labor organization in the United States, it is crucial we keep our PAC strong, so we can help the candidates who not only support our members but the entire law enforcement community. It is up to us to ensure that they get elected!

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2023: A Year of Ups and Downs

// **WRITE TO US!** If you have further questions, contact Jimmy Holderfield at (904) 813-0067, or jholderfield@fop.net.

Happy new year, my brothers and sisters! I pray that you and your family enjoyed the holidays and shared time together. 2023 was an unpredictable year with many good events and not-so-good events impacting us all. On the bad side, thefts were at an all-time high due to the relaxed and failed social justice policies enacted by many of our major city politicians. Wars in the Ukraine and in Gaza have left thousands dead or wounded, and attacks on commercial shipping have resulted in supply chain issues and higher prices.

Additionally, the southern border crisis is allowing criminals, terrorists and drugs into our country, which is causing death, destruction and economic strain on our system. On the positive side, COVID officially ended, inflation is falling (even though we haven't felt it yet) and we are closer than ever to getting Congress to pass the Social Security Windfall Elimination Act. Yes, 2023 was a mixed bag, and I am optimistic that 2024 is going to be a great year.

Last month, President Yoes arranged for the National Executive Board to meet with the Department directors for a three-day retreat. The purpose? To review our previous year's accomplishments, renew our unified commitments to our members and set aspirations for the 2025 Conference and beyond. The discussions were intense and honest. Lots of self-reflections were made, and revitalized energy emerged. It was a wonderful interaction. Everything from staff evaluations to member benefits and technology development was discussed. Ownership of projects was volunteered by the Executive Board and the various directors. It was a wonderful process, and special thanks go to our National Director of Training and Outreach Keith Turney for being our facilitator and keeping the program moving.



NFOP Executive Board, department directors and appointed staff

Lodge compliance is crucial to the proper function and maintenance of a lodge. But what is lodge compliance? Is it holding monthly meetings? Electing lodge officers when required?

Yes, 2023 was a mixed bag, and I am optimistic that 2024 is going to be a great year.

Having liability insurance on the real property owned? The answer is yes — but it is much more. Every lodge should have, at a minimum, the following documentation or information on file and readily available for inspection:

- Federal EIN number (obtained from the IRS)
- Past year federal tax form 990 filed with the IRS
- Articles of incorporation filed with the lodge's state government
- Fidelity and liability insurance listing the company name, policy number and expiration date
- Current lodge constitution and by-laws (must be updated since last National Conference or changes made at the respective state conference)
- Copy of previous year's board and general membership meeting minutes
- Copy of audit or review of previous year's financials
- Lodge officer roster with dates of election and term end dates
- Fundraising documentation, including EIN for 501(c)(3) if a foundation was created
- Copy of approvals from State or National Lodge for trademarked logo usage
- Copy of agreements with vendors

to use the trademarked logo for promotional purposes

These are just the minimums that should be reviewed and updated annually. A lodge is encouraged to keep additional records available if they have other obligations, such as mortgages, lodge vehicles, multiple properties, etc.

Lodge officers, especially newly elected officers, should be offered training on good business and sound financial practices to ensure the proper administration of their respective offices. There are legal responsibilities for members of nonprofit boards. The standards are usually described as the duty of care, the duty of loyalty and the duty of obedience.

Lodge officers must be careful in avoiding conflicts of interest in their business dealings with the lodge. They must always be mindful that they are their members' fiduciaries, since it's their members' money and property, not theirs personally, that they are managing. Every member, not just elected lodge officers, has the responsibility to ask about their lodge's compliance and require their lodge officers to make any updates. My office stands ready to assist any lodge with

compliance issues or board duties and responsibilities.

Since it's a new year, I am sharing my resolutions with each of you and encourage you to make your own. For

**Though I have
been involved with
the FOP in various
capacities for over
40 years, I learn
something new
every day.**

2024, I resolve to be better for my family. Not that I am bad to them, but I can be more wholesome — little things like spending more quality time and listening more intently. Life is too short, and I

want to enjoy being with the ones who I love, who love me unconditionally.

I resolve to get fit, both physically and mentally. I am going to drop some pounds, build strength and keep my mind clear and focused. It's easy to make excuses about my bad knees or hectic schedule as reasons why I can't exercise or eat properly. But at the end of the day, it's up to me to make the necessary life changes to be healthier. If you see me slipping, remind me of my resolve. I further resolve to be a better FOP member, officer and friend.

Though I have been involved with the FOP in various capacities for over 40 years, I learn something new every day. My responsibility is to share my knowledge with others and to help them and our great Order succeed and prosper. I promise to do a better job at mentoring. I promise not to stand in the way of progress. I will not be that person who opposes change and fights to keep things the way they were 40 years ago. Our profession and the dynamics continue to change, and we must stay in front of that change accordingly.

As always, my staff is here to help you in any way we can. Happy new year, and I look forward to talking to you soon. **FOP**



BLUE  **VIEW**

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Greeting a New Year of Challenges and Opportunities



// **WRITE TO US!** If you have further questions, contact John Hoyt at (267) 251-5575, or jhoymt@fop5.org.

As we stand at the threshold of a new year, I am filled with a sense of gratitude and optimism for the opportunities that lie ahead. It is with immense pleasure that I reach out to you, my brothers and sisters, to express my heartfelt appreciation for your continued trust and support.

The past year has been unique for me. I spent most of it as member of a local Executive Board, supporting our National leadership in any way I could, and now I find myself on the National Board thanks to you. I look forward to the future and our journey of challenges and triumphs, and through it all, our support of each other will be the bedrock of our shared successes. Together, we will weather storms, celebrate victories and work tirelessly to address the pressing issues facing law enforcement in 2024.

As we step into this new chapter, I want to reaffirm my commitment to serving you with diligence, transparency and an unwavering dedication to the values that bind us together. Our shared vision for a stronger, more respected and valued law enforcement community remains at the forefront of my priorities.

In the coming months, the National Executive Board and I are going to continue to fight for you and everything you have earned through your continued professionalism and sacrifice. We are also eager to embark on new initiatives and projects that will enhance the quality of life for every one of our members. We will focus on the repeal of the Social Security Windfall Act, hold rogue and incompetent politicians accountable, and continue to help our brothers and sisters in their mental and physical wellness journeys, making meaningful strides that positively impact the lives of each and every one of you.

Communication is key to our success, and I want to encourage an open dialogue between us. Your insights, concerns and ideas are invaluable, and I am committed to actively



listening and engaging with you to ensure that your voices are heard. I will always take your calls and read your emails.

I invite you to stay informed about what we are doing through our website, social media channels and newsletters. Your participation is crucial in shaping the future of law enforcement, and I look forward to collaborating with you to achieve our shared goals.

In closing, let us approach the challenges and opportunities of the upcoming



year with resilience, unity and a shared determination to make the lives of law enforcement officers not only something they can be proud of, but something that rewards them in a way they deserve.

Thank you once again for your trust and support. Here's to a year filled with progress, collaboration and shared success. **FOP**

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Dangers in Corrections

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Everyone who works inside a correctional facility has the potential to be seriously injured or killed. Those are the facts. Whether it is a minimum- or maximum-security facility, male or female, the threat is still there.

Oftentimes, we as officers become too relaxed or complacent in our job and its surroundings. We get comfortable in the silence of no major incidents. But those of us who are experienced know that silence is only a matter of time for the devil to rear its head.

That complacency while doing transfers, writs or hospital duty should not be one of those times, nor any other, such as cell and body searches, mass movement lines, yard and increasingly just opening the mail!

Whenever you interact with criminal offenders, there is always a danger of assault, attempted escape, suicide and the necessity to control an offender by (justified) force. When you add in the mental health component, those dangers become more and more amplified.

Unlike the movies, where they dig tunnels for their attempted escape to freedom, security experts say offenders tend to wait until they are outside the prison walls to make a run for it. Offenders inflict self-harm just to get a read of procedures, and to see how lax the officers are during their transport to and from the outside hospital.

Situational awareness and following protocol is crucial for the safety of both staff and offenders, regardless of how little or how much time you have on the job. Officers need to be most vigilant during the transporting of the offenders to ensure they are properly searched and secured. There have been instances where offenders have freely jumped out of the vehicles while in transport, both while stopped in traffic and moving in transit.

Years ago, an offender went on the run during an outside hospital transport. The vehicle was stopped in traffic and the officers were so occupied by the loud radio they did not see or hear the offender unbuckle the seat belt and open the rear door. (Mind you, this vehicle was supposed to be pulled from the writ fleet due to the door opening on the inside, but somehow or another it was used for this transport.) The officers ended up finding out that the offender was on the run when the vehicle behind them alerted them of his breakout, thus putting us in the position to apprehend on the street.

You may also have the opposite kind of offender, the one who is looking to end their life. There have been instances where the offenders start the task inside the facility and continue trying this tactic during transport to the hospital, or during the travel after hospital treatment. It's times like these that you hope your departmental training comes into play: searching and securing your offender properly, and following the procedure of an officer riding in the back with the offender in during your transport. Remembering and following proper procedures is vital in either of these instances.

Even though you may have been through your facility's familiar (sometimes boring, especially after decades) yearly required trainings, always remember to pay close attention to all they have to teach. Engage in discussions that may be a good reminder. Maybe it will lead to hearing about scenarios or incidents that have occurred that you only find out about by word of mouth, through networking with other facilities, and then can learn from.

The sharing of information across facilities, let alone the state, regarding what should be reportable/critical incidents does not always happen. Opportunities are often missed or simply denied. Those

are opportunities for effective communication, accurate sharing of information from one facility to the next and important learning tools that can be utilized for prevention methods, policy updates and most of all safety measures.

Sometimes it's the little things that get you through a crisis and may help everyone in that environment stay safe moving forward. The lack of communication is literally a detriment and quite frankly could be seen as a lack of regard for officers and employees in this environment by administration.

It's always good to fall back on the three Ls: **look, listen and learn**. These are simple, yet sometimes never thought of or acted upon. They can very well save a life or prevent an escape.

Remember, offenders are like the main character of the 1980s hit TV series *MacGyver* — they can utilize any ordinary item or circumstance and use it for multiple purposes in their favor.

Remember, brothers and sisters, there is nobody more ingenious than an inmate with a motive.

Stay safe inside those walls, and keep communicating and sharing information with this FOP corrections network, where we have a chance to amplify our profession nationwide and share information regarding trends both positive and negative! And remember, you are appreciated for **all** that you do, each day, for being one officer among many.

If you have information regarding issues you have encountered and would like to share them with your brothers and sisters nationwide, please submit them to us for distribution or as part of an article for publication in future issues. For information regarding getting connected in a nationwide corrections communication network, send your information to ILCorrectionsfop263@gmail.com. **FOP**

OHIO

Tuscora Lodge #4 Makes Christmas Brighter for Kids in Need

JIMMY HOLDERFIELD / NATIONAL FOP SECRETARY

Tuscora Lodge #4 held its 14th annual Christmas With a Cop event last month, making Christmas bright for children in need in the community. President Bob Everett is proud of his 160-member lodge and what they do to help the children and build great community relations. He explained that his members solicit donations from individuals and businesses during the year. The chair of the committee contacts the schools in the county and asks school officials to identify children who need a brighter Christmas.



Lori Feeney, Bargain Hunter

President Bob "Santa" Everett and Chief Tessa Pohovey of the New Philadelphia, Ohio, Police Department



Bob Everett

Caravan of FOP members delivering gifts



Andrew Dolph, Times Reporter

"Santa Bob" walking to his patrol car



Andrew Dolph, Times Reporter

"Santa Bob" leading the caravan

The committee contacts the parents of the children and learns what the child and any other children in the household need or want. Members of the lodge, along with their spouses and friends, meet at a local Walmart and shop for the children. Later, they meet and wrap the gifts. On the Saturday before Christmas, the lodge assembles a caravan of police cruisers, of course with lights on, and delivers the presents to the children at their

homes. A gift card from a local grocery store is given to the parents to provide Christmas dinner.

What a great way to demonstrate the positive image of law enforcement, the FOP and Tuscora Lodge #4 members.

Note: Bob Everett was president of Tuscora Lodge #4 from 1989–2006. He moved to Mesquite, Nevada. He returned to Ohio in 2012 and was asked to be the lodge president again. He accepted, and we are proud that he did. FOP



Hiring for Basic Police Officer Trainee, Lateral Officer & Lateral School Resource Officer

- Must be at least 21 years old
- No maximum age restriction

Benefits

- Education incentive pay: 3% increase for Associate's Degree; 6% increase for Bachelor's Degree
- 20 vacation days, 3 personal days, 12 holidays per year
- Earn 1 sick day per month (accumulate up to 120 days)
- 20 paid Military leave days
- Up to 30 days paid family sick leave
- \$800 state-supplemented in-service pay per year
- Endless overtime opportunities
- Longevity pay
- 100% Metro-funded pension
- 457 MetroMax Deferred Compensation plan
- Vested for service pension after 10 years
- Vested for medical pension after 10 years
- Use of Montgomery GI bills and Post 9/11 GI bills in first year of training
- Domestic partner benefits
- \$1000 uniform allowance per year

Insurance

- BlueCross BlueShield or Cigna health insurance (75% premium paid by Metro)
- Life Insurance
- Dental Insurance
- Vision Insurance

Basic Police Officer Trainee

- Police Academy pay (18 weeks) \$54,900 salary
- Pay during Field Training Phase \$60,501- \$64,131
- Pay upon completion of training \$66,185- \$70,156

Qualifications

- Must have high school diploma or GED and 60 credit hours with a 2.0 GPA from an accredited education institution; or
- Must have a high school diploma or GED and 3 years of responsible, full-time work; or
- Must have a high school diploma or GED, 2 years of active service with an Honorable Discharge from any branch of the United States Armed Forces

Lateral Officer & Lateral SRO Officer

- Starting Lateral pay \$70,215- \$74,428 (Must have 2 years of POST (or state equivalent) certified law enforcement experience)

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PREVIEW: *2024 FOP Officer Wellness Summit and Wellness Professionals' Forum*



SHERRI MARTIN / DIRECTOR OF WELLNESS

Happy new year! The 2024 Wellness Summit is coming soon! February will mark the fifth annual FOP Wellness Summit, scheduled to take place February 19–20 in Nashville, with the Wellness Professionals' Forum the day prior on February 18. These events bring agendas full of internationally known presenters sharing the most current information on officer wellness. The National Officer Wellness Committee convenes each year to plan the agendas, choosing the most current topics for presentations and then hand-selecting experts from the field to appear as presenters. We are more excited than ever about this year's events!

Our 2024 Wellness Summit will kick off every day with the option to join other attendees in getting physically active by participating in meditation, yoga, or a group walk or run. When the main agenda begins each day, we

will hear from National FOP leaders as well as corporate sponsors who have supported the work of the Officer Wellness Committee in making this event possible.

We are excited to welcome the Nashville Metropolitan Police Department for our keynote presentation. When their agency faced an active shooter at the Covenant School, the agency came together, including the department Wellness Unit. Their story is one of supporting wellness in the aftermath of a major incident that affected officers, the department and the whole community.

As more funding and resources have become available to police agencies for wellness program development, and as our culture shifts to focus more on officer health, it becomes ever more important to learn about best practices. The 2024 Wellness Summit will feature a panel of wellness-minded agency heads who will discuss wellness program development from the administrator's perspective. With this

panel, we will explore best practices for establishing a strong agency wellness program, the role of leaders in the organization for advancing wellness, encouraging shifts in culture, gaining buy-in and more.

Each day of the Summit, attendees will have more than 15 options of seminars to choose from on topics ranging from sleep and nutrition to financial wellness and many others. Our National FOP Auxiliary will be joining us at the Summit this year to share information with attendees about programs for bolstering family wellness that have become a priority for their organization. A panel of K-9 handlers will discuss various models for wellness companion programs, and our partners at Concerns of Police Survivors and Survivors of Blue Suicide will discuss recent changes to the Public Safety Officer Benefits (PSOB) legislation, which now includes the provision of benefits for qualifying losses of officers who die by suicide. As we hear firsthand from experts on each topic, there is sure to be something for everyone!

We have heard from past Wellness Summit attendees that they have learned a great deal at the Summit by hearing about the experiences of others. At the 2024 Wellness Summit, we are bringing back the Wellness Program Showcase. Each day of the Summit, we will highlight one agency wellness program, providing them with an opportunity to share with attendees how their program was instituted, developed and advanced. With agency wellness programs becoming more and more common and increased funding becoming available for their development, these sessions serve to inform both small and large departments and every size in between.

Some of the best ideas for the Wellness Summit come from members of our Officer Wellness Committee! Recognizing from his peer support work that families appreciate time to connect with other law enforcement families, one of our committee members suggested that we implement a place to make that happen at this event. At the 2024 Summit, we will again host the Blue

Family room, assisted by our National FOP Auxiliary, which will provide not only information on the work of the Auxiliary, but also a chance for police family members from all across the country to come together in fellowship. If you are bringing your family along to Nashville, this is a great opportunity to connect with other law enforcement families!


Finally, we are excited to present a special event at the 2024 Summit. Our own National Chaplain Rick Snyder, joined by Dr. Chris Holland, will record an in-studio episode of their popular podcast, *Remnant Revealed*. This is an opportunity not to be missed, as their message is real-world, inspirational and uplifting.

We look forward to seeing you at the Wellness Summit! We encourage those members who know and work with mental health professionals to let

them know about the FOP Wellness Professionals' Forum. This one-day seminar takes place on the day before the Wellness Summit begins and provides an opportunity for clinicians to come together and learn from other mental health professionals working in the field through a series of seminars, group discussions and networking. Attendees at the Wellness Professionals' Forum receive a discounted rate to attend the Summit, which we encourage as a way to learn more about officer wellness and the FOP, and to build bridges and break down barriers and stigma.

Your National Officer Wellness Committee is excited to be kicking off a new year with a focus on wellness, and many exciting developments lie ahead. We look forward to seeing you soon! **FOP**

LET YOUR VOICE BE HEARD!



The FOP constantly endeavors to hear about the experiences of our members, so that we can understand how best to serve you.

The FOP was selected to partner with the Department of Justice to build standardized training in law enforcement peer support. Share your thoughts with us on how this training can best help our profession at surveymonkey.com/r/PowerInPeers.



University of San Diego

Whether you're preparing for promotion or a current leader looking to improve your effectiveness, the M.S. in Law Enforcement and Public Safety Leadership (MS-LEPSL) can help you reach your goals. Offered completely online by the prestigious University of San Diego, the MS-LEPSL program has served more than 1,100 law enforcement professionals since 2015, and for the last five years it has been ranked by *U.S. News & World Report* as one of the best criminal justice graduate degrees in the country.

The MS-LEPSL program was developed by law enforcement, for law enforcement. Our impressive faculty, all of whom are current or recently retired law enforcement and military leaders, ensure that our coursework is relevant and reflects the challenges you and your agency are currently facing. The program emphasizes tangible skill-building in core leadership competencies such as communication, technology, data analysis, community relations and more.

Captain Lance Vitter of the St. Tammany Parish Sheriff's Office in Louisiana, an alumnus of the MS-LEPSL program, explains: "LEPSL equipped me with the tools needed to advance, not only in my career but also in my personal life. The program critically addresses the challenges facing law enforcement in modern times. It is highly recommended for all law enforcement leaders, both current and aspiring ones, who care about the profession and are committed to the improvements needed as we face today's challenges."

Enrollment in the MS-LEPSL program is strictly limited to experienced law enforcement professionals, which is different from typical criminal justice degree programs. This, combined with the professional experience of the program faculty, allows students from diverse agencies and departments to collaborate, share experiences



Continued on page 24 > Members of the MS-LEPSL class of 2022

The National Fraternal Order of Police University (NFOPU) has successfully paved the way for hundreds of FOP members to pursue higher or continued education. For more information on the NFOPU Consortium, go to fopconnect.com/education-connect/about-the-consortium.



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Fayette, IA



Romeoville, IL



Rosemont, PA



Adelphi, MD



Minneapolis, MN

NFOPU SPOTLIGHT

Continued from page 22 >

and collectively tackle some of today's most urgent law enforcement challenges.

Detective Chris James from the Oceanside Police Department in California underscored the value of the LEPSL network from his time in the program: "The course material was adapted as current events centering on civil unrest and policing during a pandemic evolved. Throughout the program, active discussions concerning civil unrest and policing during a pandemic allowed professionals from law enforcement and public safety professions across the country to discuss their unique perspectives and share their challenges, equipping one another with alternative methods to address unique conflicts head-on."

The contemporary and leadership-focused curriculum is designed to ensure that all students, regardless of rank, can develop the skills needed to lead a team — and a department — effectively. Chief Cristyn Zett of Ross Township, Pennsylvania, said she

chose the program because "it was the most relevant and applicable to my job as a patrol commander in Pittsburgh." She added, "I recently took a job as Chief of a small agency and I use lessons from LEPSL every day to handle challenges from personnel management to budgeting. My capstone website turned out so well that I used it in my Chief selection process and was told it gave them a better sense of who I am than my resume alone."

The LEPSL program's "family-first" approach to student support provides students the flexibility they need to succeed in the program while prioritizing their professional and personal commitments. Investigator Kenneth Ehrman, a program graduate and vice president of California FOP Lodge #77, said, "During the course of my studies, I traveled across the United States on multiple occasions without having a single issue completing work or submitting assignments. The flexibility built into LEPSL makes it possible to succeed regardless of your schedule. I couldn't be prouder of being an alumnus of the University of San Diego's LEPSL program."

MS-LEPSL Program Highlights

- **Flexible, 100% online format:** Fit your coursework around your work and family commitments.
- **Transfer credit for professional training:** Get 6–12 units of transfer credit from FBI National Academy, FBI-LEEDA's Trilogy, SMIP and Sherman Block Supervisory Leadership Institute.
- **Earn a degree you'll be proud of from a top-rated university:** USD is a mission-driven private university founded in 1949. Our beautiful San Diego campus is regularly named among America's most beautiful.
- **Affordable tuition:** LEPSL students commonly express surprise at being able to earn a top-tier private university degree at a police-friendly tuition.

Students can apply to the M.S. in Law Enforcement and Public Safety Leadership program year-round, with new classes starting in May, September and January. The full program length is 20 months. **FOP**

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FOP.net/officer-wellness/crisis-hotlines

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First Session of 118th Congress Comes to a Close



The first session of the 118th Congress ended last month, and, at least in the U.S. House of Representatives, it made history. For the first time, a sitting speaker was ousted, which left the chamber unable to function for more than three weeks as the majority struggled to unite behind a candidate.

In addition, for only the sixth time in history, the House expelled a sitting elected representative.

This session of Congress is being described as “historically unproductive,” owing in part to the narrowness of the majority in each chamber and increased partisanship.

Congress left before finalizing legislation on the FY2024 appropriations, border security and a supplemental spending package to support Ukraine and Israel. With the presidential election on the horizon, things may not improve very much on Capitol Hill in 2024.

Accountability Database Goes Live for Law Enforcement at Justice Department

In May 2022, President Biden issued Executive Order 14074 on Advancing Effective, Accountable Policing and Criminal Justice Practices to Enhance Public Trust and Public Safety (see tinyurl.com/5aa3zxaj). Section 5 of the order directs the U.S. Attorney General to establish a National Law Enforcement Accountability Database (NLEAD) to provide a centralized and searchable “pointer” system for any sustained misconduct as well as awards and commendations (see tinyurl.com/6623792x). The NLEADS, which is designed to promote better practices in the hiring, promotion and retention of law enforcement officers, was activated for all law enforcement officers employed by the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ). Other executive branch federal law enforcement

Just the Facts:

» The first session of the 118th Congress is being described as “historically unproductive,” with many appropriations still unresolved. With a presidential election on the horizon, 2024 may not be much better. Nonetheless, the FOP has been able to continue to make progress on building support for the Social Security Fairness Act, the Protect and Serve Act and other priority legislation. Members are urged to contact their senators and representatives to ask them to support these bills (or thank them for their support, if they are already a co-sponsor).

agencies will be providing their data in the coming months.

The FOP and the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP) were in regular consultations with policymakers in the DOJ as the database was developed and implemented. As a result, the database will only store information about misconduct if the officer was afforded full due process. In addition, officers will be able to examine their own information and, if warranted, challenge its accuracy. The database is not accessible to the public and can only be accessed by authorized users vetted by the DOJ that are engaged in background checks or hiring and promotion decisions.

The FOP and IACP continue to remain engaged with the DOJ on this issue.

Appropriations and Continuing Resolutions

In October, the president signed into law a “laddered” continuing resolution. The U.S. Departments of Agriculture, Transportation, Housing and Urban Development and Veterans Affairs are funded until January 19, and the remaining components of the federal government through February 2.

The House has been unable to pass most of its FY2024 appropriations bills due to the narrowness of the majority — even a few defections could lead to the bill’s rejection in the Rules Committee or on the floor.

Just before the Thanksgiving recess, the House rejected H. Res. 869, the rule providing for the consideration of H.R. 5893, which would make appropriations for the U.S. Departments of Commerce, Justice and Science, on a 198–225 vote, preventing the consideration of the bill on the House floor. The most recent public draft of the legislation contains modest increases for the Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) and state and local law enforcement assistance programs (+1.2% and 2.9%, respectively), but it reduces the funding at the U.S. Department of Justice to \$23.8 billion below the FY2023 level and drastically reduces funding to the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF). If the legislation is enacted with such cuts, state and local law enforcement will be severely impacted, as these agencies often partner with state and local agencies to combat the opioid epidemic, gang violence and other criminal actors that cross jurisdictional boundaries.

With two new vacancies on the Republican side, the House will have an even narrower majority, so it is unclear what a path forward on spending bills will be — especially going into a presidential election year.

The FOP will continue to monitor appropriations efforts; check the FOP website for the latest news!

Legislative Update: H.R. 82/S. 597, the Social Security Fairness Act

The House Committee on Ways and Means Subcommittee on Social Security held a field hearing in November in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, on the Social Security Fairness Act, which was fittingly named “Social Security’s Disservice to Public Servants: How the Windfall Elimination Provision and Government Pension Offset Mistreat Government Workers.”

The Ways and Means Committee has not yet filed its report on the hearing; however, we are proud to report that over 300 FOP members submitted statements and letters to the committee for inclusion in that record. There may be other responses that did not copy the National Legislative Office, but this was an excellent and robust response. **Thank you to all who responded to the committee!**

With 301 co-sponsors in the House and a committee that **appears** to be inclined to act on H.R. 82 or similar legislation, staff in the D.C. office are now pivoting our advocacy campaign to the Senate to build support for S. 597, the Senate companion bill, which currently has 49 co-sponsors. **We are urging all FOP members to contact their senators and ask them to cosponsor**

S. 597 or thank them for doing so! Go to tinyurl.com/3jrr2e3u to see if your senators are co-sponsors. These offices must hear from their constituents on this issue if we’re to successfully get these provisions repealed!

Write and call your senators and ask them to cosponsor this bill. If they are already supporters of the bill, thank them and let them know how important this is to you.

Legislative Update: H.R. 743, the Protect and Serve Act

As of the beginning of December, there had been 108 ambush-style attacks on law enforcement, in which 130 officers were shot and 19 of those were killed. The D.C. legislative staff has focused on building support for the legislation among Republicans on the Committee on the Judiciary, several of whom blocked the bill’s scheduled consideration in May.

These efforts, which began during the August recess, have been successful — we added two Democrats and 11 Republicans as co-sponsors of the bill, including six Republican members of the Judiciary Committee: Representatives Scott L. Fitzgerald (R-Wisc.), Thomas P. Tiffany

(R-Wisc.), Nathaniel Q. Moran (R-Texas), Lance C. Gooden (R-Texas), Wesley P. Hunt (R-Texas) and Russell W. Fry (R-S.C.).

We urge all of our members to contact their representative and ask them to support H.R. 743!

Legislative Update: Committee-Passed FISA Reauthorization Bill Contains a Dangerous Provision

Last month, the House Committee on the Judiciary considered, amended and passed H.R. 6570, the Protect Liberty and End Warrantless Surveillance Act, on a 35–2 vote. The bill, which reforms and reauthorizes certain authorities under the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act (FISA), contains a dangerous provision that received little, if any, debate: H.R. 4639, the Fourth Amendment Is Not For Sale Act. The provision would prohibit law enforcement officers from accessing certain publicly available information when investigating crimes like murder, kidnapping, terrorism and other serious offenses. You can read the FOP’s letter of opposition at tinyurl.com/3za9u7p6.

Continued on page 28 >



WANT A PRINTED COPY OF AN ARTICLE THAT APPEARED IN FOP JOURNAL?

Perhaps you or your lodge were featured in the magazine and you’d like a keepsake to share or display?

Contact 911MEDIA for more information on ordering a reprint: production@911MEDIA.com.

Top Priorities in Brief

H.R. 82/S. 597, the Social Security Fairness Act

House: 301 co-sponsors (100 R, 201 D)

Senate: 49 co-sponsors (39 D, 7 R, 3 I)

Urge Congress to pass it: tinyurl.com/ycxk6pay

H.R. 1322/S. 1658, the Law Enforcement Officers' Equity Act

House: 71 co-sponsors (19 R, 52 D)

Senate: 1 co-sponsor (1 R)

Urge Congress to pass it: tinyurl.com/37afz34h

H.R. 3539, the Public Safety Employer-Employee Cooperation Act

House: 43 co-sponsors (10 R, 33 D)

Senate: Not yet introduced

Urge Congress to pass it: tinyurl.com/5h6mtvt

H.R. 354/S. 1462, the LEOSA Reform Act

House: 35 co-sponsors (35 R)

Senate: 3 co-sponsors (3 R)

Urge Congress to pass it: tinyurl.com/3w4br4sj

H.R. 743, the Protect and Serve Act

House: 90 co-sponsors (78 R, 12 D)

Senate: Not yet introduced

Urge Congress to pass it: tinyurl.com/3uzdafpk

H.R. 3170/S. 1514, the Homes for Every Local Protector, Educator, and Responder (HELPER) Act

House: 105 co-sponsors (33 R, 72 D)

Senate: 15 co-sponsors (3 R, 12 D)

Urge Congress to pass it: tinyurl.com/48vxkdp4

To see a full list of legislation supported by the FOP, please visit tinyurl.com/ycy5k5rv. Members should continue to monitor the FOP's social media platforms and our website for the latest legislative news! To send a message to your members of Congress asking them to support FOP priority legislation, visit the FOP Action Center at votervoice.net/FOP/home.

WASHINGTON REPORT

Continued from page 27 >

The legislation was scheduled to be considered on the House floor with another, similar bill, but both were pulled from consideration prior to the House recessing for the year. The FOP is working to make sure the provision is not given a floor vote.

Legislative Update: Overtime Pay for Protective Services Act

The Senate considered and passed S. 3427, the Overtime Pay for Protective Services Act, by unanimous consent. The bill, which the FOP supports, would reauthorize overtime pay exemption for U.S. Secret Service providing protective services through 2028. The bill now goes to the House for further action.

Other Legislative Activity

Since the last issue of the *Journal*, the FOP has supported the following legislation:

- **H.R. 3325**, the Recruit and Retain Act, which would expand the scope of the hiring program administered by the Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) to allow these funds to be used to reduce application fees and other similar costs for job applicants. Additionally, the bill would establish the Pipeline Partnership Program, which provides grants to law enforcement agencies that partner with colleges and universities.
- **H.R. 6688**, the Cold Case Modernization Act, which will extend DOJ grant funding for forensic genetic genealogy (FGG) testing to cover the identification process of all unidentified human remains, without regard to the manner of their death
- **S. 1034**, the Truck Parking Safety Improvements Act, which authorizes \$755 million over three years to fund a competitive grant program to expand commercial truck parking capacity across the U.S. and improve existing facilities.

Are You Reading the Weekly Update to Get the Latest News?

Each week, the *Weekly Update* is sent straight from Capitol Hill to your inbox. It helps to keep you and your members up to date with the latest news from Washington, D.C. If you aren't getting

this important information, go to tinyurl.com/bdhfu29d to sign up.

We ask all members to visit all of our social media platforms, as the daily posts are the best way to keep up with the National FOP's daily activity. Follow the National FOP on:

- Facebook (@GLFOP)
- X (@GLFOP)
- Instagram (@FOPnational)

Do your part! Please **share, comment** and **like** our content.

Check out the FOP's YouTube Channel and the Blue View Podcast!

The FOP's YouTube channel (youtube.com/GLFOP) hosts every episode of the FOP's podcast, entitled *The Blue View*, as well as news clips, interviews and our FOP Facts videos on Social Security fairness and qualified immunity.

National President Patrick Yoes hosts *The Blue View*, which has featured guests from Capitol Hill and within the FOP, as well as law enforcement experts and leaders from around the country, to gain better insight into the issues and current events in the law enforcement community.

On one of the recent episodes of *The Blue View*, President Yoes is joined by Representatives Garrett N. Graves (R-La.) and Abigail D. Spanberger (D-Va.) about the Social Security Fairness Act. You can watch that episode at tinyurl.com/2p4fnr6c.

The Blue View podcast can also be found on **Apple Podcasts, Spotify, Amazon Music** and **YouTube**.

Election 2024 Will Be Here Before You Know It!

We need your help! The next election is less than a year away!

The National Fraternal Order of Police Political Action Committee (NFOP PAC) needs more of our members to contribute to ensure that our PAC has the resources to support candidates who will fight for our officers and the issues that are important to them. **We are asking all FOP members to find a way to contribute to the National FOP PAC. Our profession depends on having well-informed lawmakers who listen and understand the challenges facing law enforcement today.**

We are urging members (and lodges) to sign up for recurring,

monthly contributions using their credit card. This is the most effective and reliable way to contribute and to strengthen our PAC.

These contributions need not be for hundreds or thousands of dollars (though these are also very much appreciated), but every dollar helps! If every FOP member gave just \$1, we could raise \$373,000! If 10% of our members gave just \$5 this year, we would raise \$183,500. We can and need to do better raising funds for our PAC!

To donate online, please go to nfop-pac.firstresponderprocessing.com. If you would like to donate via check, please make it out to the National Fraternal Order of Police Political Action Committee and mail it to 328 Massachusetts Ave. NE, Washington, D.C., 20002. For inquiries about our effortless payroll deduction program or to sign up for our recurring monthly credit card donations, please contact the Steve Young Law Enforcement Legislative Advocacy Center at (202) 547-8189 or David Taboh at dtaboh@fop.net.

Thank you to all of you who have supported and continue to support our PAC with regular contributions! **FOP**



Upcoming National FOP Training



Law Enforcement Labor Summit:

January 30-31, 2024 | Las Vegas, NV | For more information, [click here](#).



Legal Counselors Seminar:

February 1-2, 2024 | Las Vegas, NV | For more information, [click here](#).



Officer Wellness Summit:

February 19-20, 2024 | Nashville, TN | For more information, [click here](#).



Leadership Matters:

February 22-24, 2024 | Nashville, TN | For more information, [click here](#).

For more information email: ssimpson@fop.net

WELLNESS PROVIDERS

Chateau Recovery Midway, UT

chateaurecovery.com/programs/first-responders

FHE Health: Shatterproof Program Deerfield Beach, FL

therehab.com/services/first-responders

First Responder Wellness by Simple Recovery Costa Mesa, CA

firstresponder-wellness.com

Harbor of Grace First Responder Program Havre de Grace, MD

harborofgracerecovery.com/first-responders

Transformations Treatment Center: Help for Our Heroes Program Delray Beach, FL

helpforourheroes.com

Warrior's Heart Bandera, TX

warriorsheart.com

Find more vetted and approved wellness providers and programs at fop.net/officer-wellness/providers.

Evolving Certification and Decertification Standards

In recent years, there has been a significant shift in law enforcement practices toward accountability and transparency, primarily because police officer misconduct continues to be at the forefront of public attention. Specifically, since 2020, the heightened media scrutiny of officer encounters has led to renewed calls for states to implement more stringent certification requirements and to broaden the scope of the decertification process for officers who engage in misconduct.

To start, the certification requirements for police officers vary widely from state to state. Because there are no nationally mandated standards, states rely on Peace Officer Standards and Training (POST) boards or similar agencies to establish the guidelines for certification. Typical criteria outlined in these statutes include the required age, physical and mental aptitude, and training and educational qualifications. Moreover, numerous states require that a police officer be of “good moral character” and prohibit the certification of individuals with felony convictions. However, the public has now become a driving force behind the evolving nature of these standards — calling for a reassessment of customary criteria. Thus, while traditional indicators of competency and training remain essential, officers find themselves navigating a more intricate set of standards, including community engagement, cultural sensitivity and continuing education courses.

For example, in 2020, Massachusetts enacted S. 2963, which established a new POST Commission tasked with creating a mandatory certification process for police officers. Before this legislation, no statewide system for

Just the Facts:

>> As police officer misconduct continues to be at the forefront of public attention, legislators are implementing more stringent certification and decertification processes for officers. There are no federally mandated standards, and requirements vary widely from state to state. In addition to traditional indicators of competency and training, certification standards regarding community engagement, cultural sensitivity and continuing education courses are increasingly common. There has also been a national surge in legislation to establish precise criteria for when an officer's license may be revoked, including in cases of certain felony or misdemeanor charges, use of excessive force, discriminatory conduct or failure to intervene. For a more thorough examination of these changes, don't miss the 2024 NFOP Legal Counselor Seminar February 1-2 in Las Vegas.

certification existed. In 2021, Florida passed H. 705, which mandates that officers disclose “any pending investigation by a local, state, or federal agency or entity for criminal, civil, or administrative wrongdoing and whether the applicant separated or resigned from previous criminal justice employment while he or she was under investigation.”

Additionally, several states enacted more defined training requirements for certification. Louisiana enacted H.B. 277, which demands that officers are required to complete 400 hours of core curriculum developed by POST and a minimum of 20 hours of in-service training on an annual basis to maintain their POST certification. The curriculum focuses on de-escalation, bias policing recognition, sudden in-custody death and crisis intervention training. In addition, many states, like Arkansas, now mandate training on the duty to intervene.

Lastly, numerous states, including the District of Columbia, mandate continuing education requirements for police officers to maintain their licenses.

The District of Columbia § 5-107.02 requires the department to implement a program of continuing education for its sworn members, consisting of a minimum of 32 hours of training each year. Similarly, in Kansas, K.S.A. 74-5607a requires that beginning in the second year after certification, “every full-time police officer or law enforcement officer shall complete annually 40 hours of Continuing law enforcement education or training in subjects relating directly to law enforcement.”

Next, in terms of the decertification process, there has also been a nationwide surge in enacting or amending state legislation. Decertification refers to revoking an officer's eligibility to serve in the police force. Again, this process differs vastly from state to state, and in some instances, states lack a process altogether. However, post-2020, numerous states undertook amendments to their police decertification laws, aiming to establish precise criteria that outline when an officer's license may be revoked.

Notably, in 2021, Illinois passed H.B. 3653, which drastically changed the state's police officer decertification requirements. The Legislature empowered the Illinois Law Enforcement Training Standards Board to issue an emergency order of suspension if an officer is arrested or indicted on a felony charge. Under the new law, any convictions or guilty pleas to a felony or certain misdemeanors — including sexual crimes, domestic violence and harassment — lead to the automatic decertification of an officer. The law also clearly defined law enforcement officer misconduct and made it a Class 3 felony. Illinois also broadened the scope of criteria the board may use for the discretionary decertification of an officer to include, among others, excessive use of force, failure to intervene, tampering with or concealing body camera evidence and committing perjury or knowingly giving false statements.

In a broader context, many states added specific measures regarding training and education that would warrant decertification. For example, some states now permit decertification based on the use of excessive force. In Massachusetts,

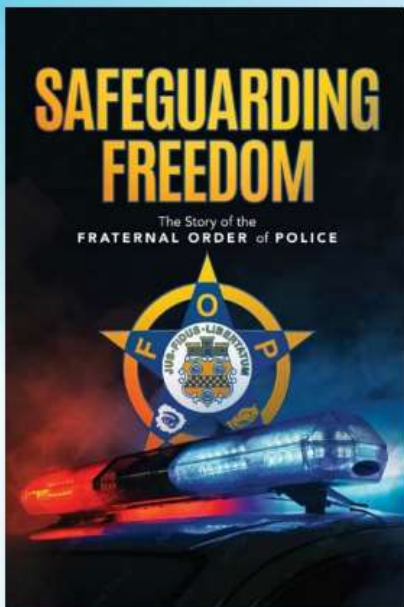
an officer may be decertified if they used excessive force resulting in death or serious bodily injury, or if the officer used a chokehold in violation of a previous section. In Oregon, an officer may be decertified if they used force “that was determined to be excessive or without justification.” Some states added that bias or discriminatory conduct may justify decertification. In Kansas, an officer may be decertified if they have used “racial or other biased-based policing,” and in Louisiana, an officer may be decertified for “disciplinary reasons involving civil rights violations.” Lastly, states also enacted laws that permit decertification based on an officer's failure to intervene. These states include Colorado, where an officer may be decertified for failure to intervene to prevent another officer's unlawful use of force, and Washington, where an officer may be decertified if they failed to report the use of excessive force in accordance with agency policy or law.

Overall, the past three years have seen a spectrum of revisions to states' frameworks on certification and decertification processes. A more thorough examination of these changes will occur at the 2024 NFOP Legal

Counselor Seminar on February 1–2 at Planet Hollywood in Las Vegas. Specifically, Chris Green and Marissa Borschke from the Office of the General Counsel will present an overview of recent nationwide trends and explore the impact of these changes. Additionally, Tamara Cummings will provide a case study specifically on Illinois' certification and decertification processes. For more information on how to register, please visit fop.net/event/2024-legal-counselors-seminar or contact Toni Dixon (tdixon@fop.net). **FOP**

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SAFEGUARDING FREEDOM: The Story of the Fraternal Order of Police

The National Fraternal Order of Police History Committee and the National Board of Trustees are excited to present you with a new book, *Safeguarding Freedom: The Story of the Fraternal Order of Police*. This literary work is the result of reviewing historical documents, combing through thousands of photographs and conducting interviews to give the reader a comprehensive history of how the Fraternal Order of Police has impacted policing in America. Author Max DiLallo, co-author with James Patterson on numerous books, along with the direction of National History Committee Chair David Stevens, has worked tirelessly over the past year to reveal the journey of the FOP.

This fantastic book is available from the National Office for \$25 plus tax, and the proceeds benefit our National FOP Foundation. Call (800) 451-2711 or email Lori at lharris@fop.net.



The Imperative of Continued Growth in Diversity and Equity in 2024

The year 2024 marks a pivotal moment for the Fraternal Order of Police as it navigates the evolving landscape of law enforcement. Acknowledging the strides made in recent years toward fostering diversity and equity, this article emphasizes the ongoing importance of sustained growth in these areas within the FOP. By championing diversity and equity, the organization can fortify its commitment to justice, enhance community relations and ensure a more inclusive and representative future for law enforcement.

The Continual Evolution of Diversity

- 1. Expanding representation:** While strides have been made in increasing diversity within law enforcement, the FOP must remain dedicated to expanding representation across all ranks and leadership positions. Diverse perspectives at every level contribute to a more comprehensive and nuanced understanding of the complex

issues facing modern policing.

- 2. Intersectionality matters:** Recognizing and addressing intersectionality is crucial for a holistic approach to diversity. By understanding the unique challenges faced by individuals who may belong to multiple marginalized groups, the FOP can tailor its policies and initiatives to be more inclusive and equitable.
- 3. Community engagement:** The FOP's commitment to diversity extends beyond its internal structure; it must actively engage with the communities it serves. Establishing open lines of communication and collaboration fosters trust and ensures that law enforcement is responsive to the diverse needs and concerns of the public.

The Persistent Pursuit of Equity

- 1. Review and refine policies:**

Continuous assessment of existing policies is vital to ensure they align with evolving standards of equity. Regularly reviewing and refining policies related to hiring, promotions and disciplinary actions will contribute to a fair and just organizational culture.

- 2. Investment in training and development:** The landscape of law enforcement is dynamic, requiring officers to possess a diverse skill set. Training and development programs emphasizing cultural competence, de-escalation techniques and community-oriented policing contribute to an equitable and effective police force.
- 3. Measurable accountability:** Establishing clear metrics and benchmarks for diversity and equity goals provides a framework for accountability. Regularly measuring progress, identifying areas for improvement and publicly sharing this information demonstrates the FOP's commitment to transparency and continuous growth.

SHARE YOUR STORY!

So many of us learn from the experiences of others, especially others with whom we share things in common. Do you have a story to tell of overcoming adversity in your own life? The National Officer Wellness Committee would like to hear it!

Whether you would just like to share your story privately with peers on the Committee or are willing to share with readers so that all can learn from it and celebrate with you, we want to hear from you! Contact us confidentially at officerwellness@fop.net.



Conclusion

In 2024, the Fraternal Order of Police stands at the forefront of change, recognizing the importance of continued growth in diversity and equity. By embracing this imperative, the FOP not only upholds the values of justice and fairness but also positions itself as a forward-thinking and responsive organization. Through sustained efforts, the FOP can contribute to a more inclusive, representative and effective law enforcement system, fostering trust and collaboration with the communities it serves. As we move forward, let the commitment to diversity and equity serve as the bedrock for a more just and united future in law enforcement. **FOP**



The National Police Softball Tournament — Dayton, Ohio, 1974–2012

The history of the National Police Softball Tournament you are about to read was written by Stephen Grismer, a 47-year member of Dayton FOP Captain John C. Post Lodge #44, trustee of Dayton Police History Foundation Inc. and author of *The Dean, Dillinger, and Dayton, Ohio* (2020), *The Christmas Killings* (2017) and *Drenched Uniforms and Battered Badges* (2013). Aside from a few additions from my own personal experience at this incredible tournament, the words and story are his as he recounts the rich history of the city of Dayton and the tournament.

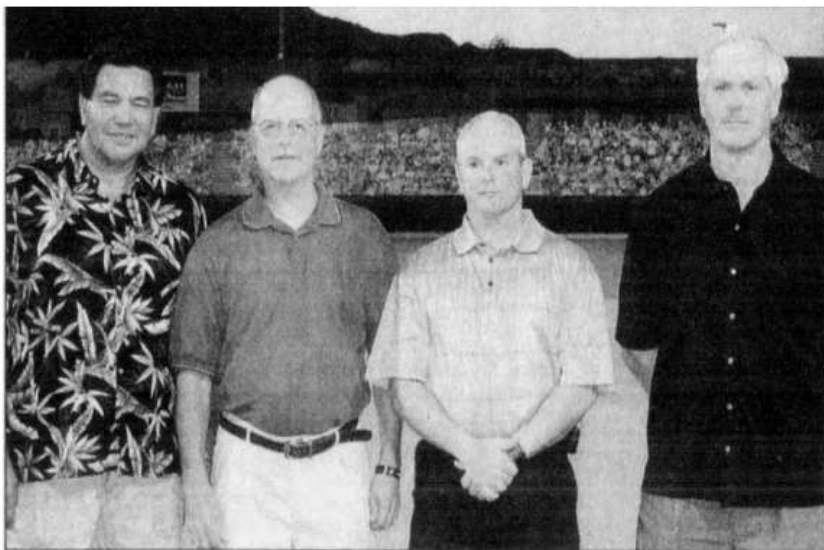
Dayton, Ohio — an offspring of Cincinnati, it was settled in 1796, in the last year of George Washington's presidency. Dayton is an innovative town ... it is the home of the Wright brothers, two men who famously conquered the skies with powered, manned flight.

Dayton is a sports town. In 1920, the Dayton Marcos were a chartered member of

Continued on page 34 >



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Kettering Assistant Police Chief Dave Woolf (from left), retired Kettering police officer Jim Roepken and Dayton police officers Frank Navarre and Steve Crews were inducted into the National Police Softball Hall of Fame.



The Minnesota Lawmen softball team celebrates on the infield after taking the championship game over New York Metro 23-17 in the National Police Softball Tournament at Vic Lyons Field.

FOP HISTORY

Continued from page 33 >

the Negro National Baseball League. That same year, the Dayton Triangles were the home football team in what is recognized by the National Football League as the **first** NFL game. Against the Columbus team, they scored the **first** touchdown, winning the **first** professional football game (but lost to the Green Bay Packers, Chicago Bears and New York Giants at the Polo Grounds before being bought in 1929 by a Brooklyn bootlegger).

Dayton is a law-and-order town. The bandit John Dillinger robbed his **first** bank in a neighboring county, but in 1933, Dayton police officers were the **first** in the nation to capture the notorious fugitive (a deed matched only by the Tucson P.D.). Dayton law officers did to the infamous mobster George "Bugs" Moran what Capone could not do in a gang massacre on St. Valentine's Day: remove him forever from society. His **last** crime was committed in Dayton. Sentenced for robbery by a Dayton criminal court, he died while imprisoned.

By 1940, the "Gem City" was the 40th largest metropolis in the nation and thriving with a population that would exceed a quarter-million people in the 1960s. Innovation



Dave House of the Dayton Choirboys throws on the run to second base in the National Police Softball Tournament at Vic Lyons Field.

and industry were at a peak in those years. Dayton purportedly was the world's second largest General Motors town, with 11 GM manufacturing plants. Then, in the 1970s, Dayton placed itself on the national stage once

again — this time combining innovation, sports and law enforcement by way of the **National Police Softball Tournament**.

The National Police Softball Tournament (NPST) in the Gem City was a premier



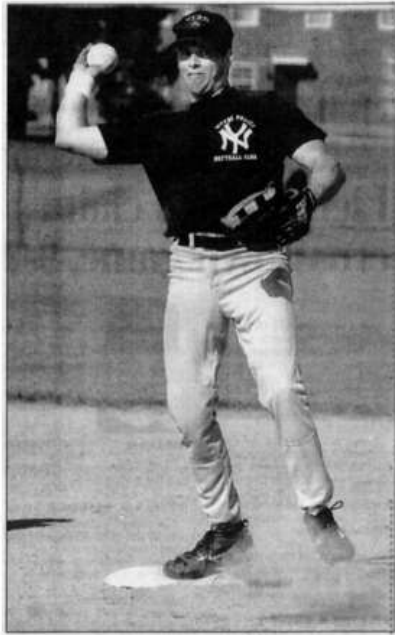
SGT. FRANK NAVARRE (left) and Det. Terry Ables, directors of the National Police Softball Tournament being hosted in Dayton, get ready to hang a banner welcoming participants. The tournament, which begins today, will host 33 teams from as far away as California and Texas.

Cops aim for 'the Hill' in softball tournament



DAYTON POLICE DETECTIVE Terry Ables and Sgt. Frank Navarre show off the National Police Softball flag beneath the new scoreboard at Vic Lyons Field on Deeds Park Drive in Dayton.

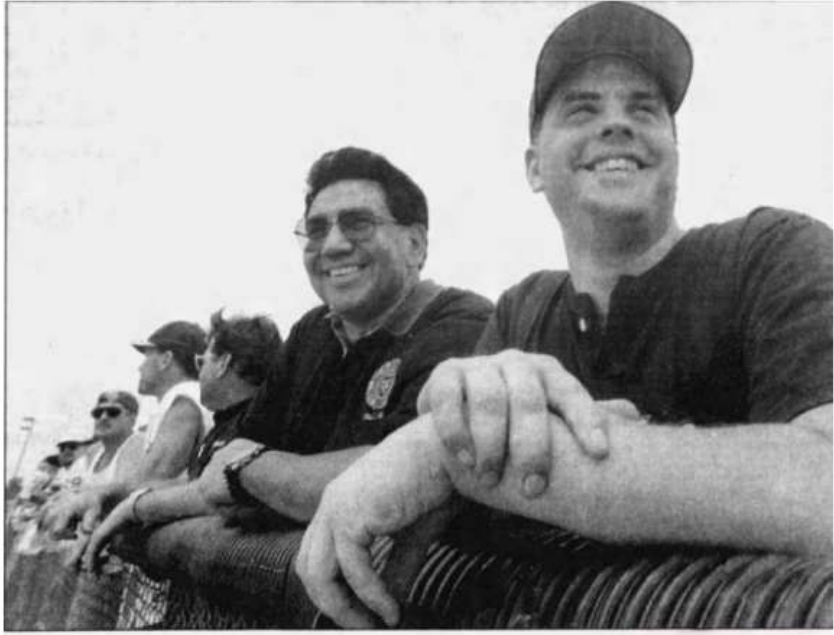
Dayton draws top police softball talent



NEW YORK METRO'S Richie Malek goes for a double play during a police softball tournament game on Friday at Kettering Field.

competitive police sporting event, hosted by members of the Dayton Police Department. This tournament proved that "America's pastime" was **the** police pastime. The NPST began in Cleveland, Ohio, in 1971, continuing in 1972 but not in 1973. At that time, Dayton had its own annual police tournament in 1973 — one that had formed in 1972 — drawing teams from Ohio, Indiana, Michigan and Pennsylvania.

When Cleveland opened the door for a move to another host city, Dayton was chosen by participants for the 1974 games. The third year of the annual NPST opened in Dayton, but rain delayed the finish of the tournament.



Matt Woolf (right) grew up with softball, going with his father, Dave, to tournaments. Matt plays on the Dayton Metro team his father played for, and Dave is on the Police Tournament Silver Anniversary team.

It was completed later in the summer in South Bend, Indiana. The 1974 move to the Gem City was consequential because the tournament would be played every year in

Dayton by vote of the participating teams for nearly 40 years, through 2012.

Continued on page 36 >



Kaniesha Phifer, 15, checks out the T-shirt she received from Steve Showers (in yellow) of the Warren, Mich., Police Department. Showers was among police representatives from all over the country who are in the Miami Valley for the 35th annual national police softball championship tournament. Players stopped by the Children's Medical Center on Friday to bring cheer and presents to the young patients. Kaniesha is being treated for sickle cell anemia. 18

FOP HISTORY

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The chief architects for the NPST were Dayton Sergeant Larry Kincaid (career 1959–1989) and Dayton Motorcycle Officer Dick Osborn (career 1968–1990). Dick was the director of the tournament, and, according to Dick, one of the major early financial sponsors was Larry Flynt of *Hustler* fame. Flynt lived in Dayton and owned a number of local nightclubs and strip clubs. Flynt opened his checkbook and bought uniforms and equipment. The Dayton police chief at the time, Grover O'Connor, although supportive of the NPST, was reportedly not pleased.

The tournament started as the National FOP and/or Police Softball Tournament. The “and/or” was replaced with a hyphen in year four, but by year eight the official tournament name was established as the National Police Softball Tournament. Officer Osborn and the Dayton team, with the support of command staff, worked tirelessly to ensure that the tournament was fully sponsored and provided a weekend of entertainment for teams traveling to Dayton to participate.

Hospitality nights were held on the Thursday before the tournament and after the conclusion of the games on Sunday. In the first few years of the tournament, the dances, refreshments and free dinner for players and families were held at the Dayton FOP Lodge Hall. The Ivy Lounge provided the food. When tournament entries became far greater, the dates and activities were moved to the Dayton Convention Center, and eventually a nominal fee of \$5 was charged. There had to be some marginal financial support, given the 50 or more kegs of beer that had to be ordered!

Officer Dick Osborn was the NPST director until 1985, when he was succeeded by Detective Steve “Woody” Crews (career 1974–2011), followed in 2001 by Sergeant Frank Navarre (career 1977–2011).

Throughout its history, the National Police Softball Tournament drew hundreds of teams and thousands of law enforcement officers to Dayton from across the United States and Canada. Teams participated from as far east as New York and Boston, as far west as Los Angeles and Oakland, as far north as Toronto and Minneapolis, and as far south as Houston and Miami. The NPST weekend brought many law enforcement officers to the Dayton area ... and with them, greater local security. New



The Delaware Lawmen triumphed over Chicago Metro to win the 1985 NPST Championship.

York officers are credited with saving a man's life in a car accident on State Route 35, while Nashville officers are credited with stopping a strong-arm robbery downtown.

The NPST in Dayton drew over 48 police teams from around the nation per year for 25 consecutive years, with a high of 76 teams in 1985. Some of the NPST multi-championship-winning teams include Nassau County (N.Y.), Macomb County (Mich.), New York Metro (N.Y.), Jacksonville Police Softball Club (Fla.), Minnesota Lawmen (Minn.), Detroit Police (Mich.) and NYPD Blues (N.Y.). Other

champions include Pittsburgh, St. Louis, Delaware Lawmen and Maryland State Police, among others. In 1996 the NPST celebrated its 25th anniversary. That year, New York Metro won the tournament and Oakland (Calif.) traveled the farthest to the tournament. Team participation was truly coast-to-coast.

In its heyday in the 1980s and '90s, the weekend tournament drew great crowds to all of the many ball diamonds at Kettering Field to watch the action. The tournament finals would take place at Vic Lyons Field and, year in and year out, *The Journal*

Herald and the *Dayton Daily News* would report the attendance for the championship game at over 2,000 fans.

Vic Lyons Field was named "The Hill" by the players, because you had to walk uphill from the lower-level playing fields to get to the championship series. The entire theme of the weekend was for teams to make it to "The Hill," where the "Home of the National Police Championship" scoreboard was prominently displayed behind center field. Banners naming past champions (and years) festooned the perimeter. Any team playing "on The Hill" on Sunday had an exceptional tournament, with the year's national police championship a merited possibility.

The 21st century has thrown the NPST some curveballs. The 2008 economic recession reduced the manpower of police forces throughout the country, limiting travel and play availability. The culture and popularity of softball also waned. More recently, the COVID-19 pandemic and "Defund the Police" crusades have taken a toll. Yet, fond memories of the 40-year thriving softball tournament remain a hit for thousands of officers appointed from the 1960s to today, and certainly a home run in the Gem City.

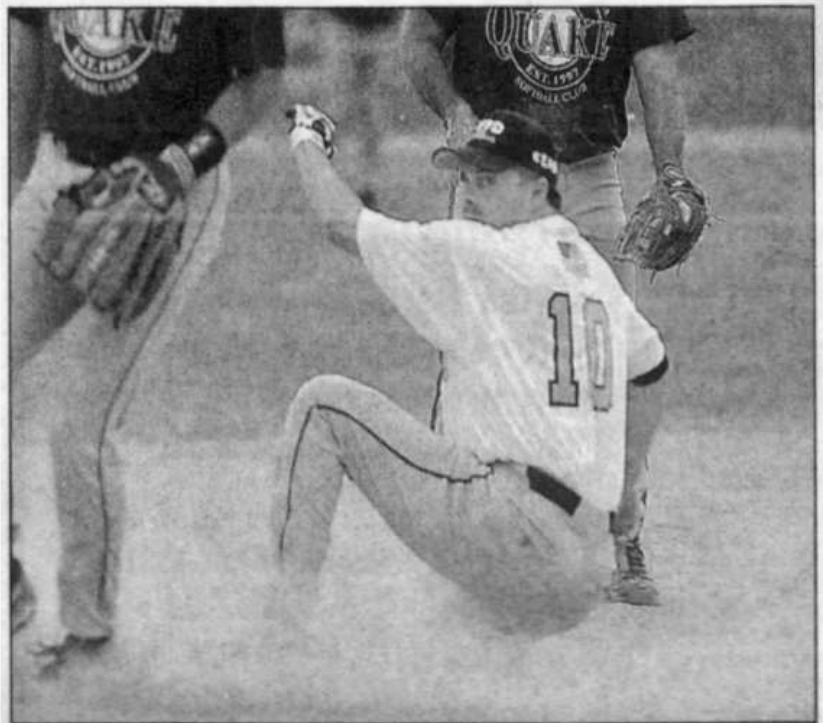
The NPST began with two tourneys in Cleveland and continued to be held in the state of Ohio. Beginning in 2013, it moved to Cincinnati, but in between ... the National Police Softball Tournament in Dayton was one hell of a ride for decades!

As a member of the Jacksonville Police Softball Club, I participated in the NPST for almost 20 years, and my fondest memories of competing in police softball were in Dayton. When I posted on my Facebook page that I would be submitting this article, the response was tremendous, sharing stories of memorable games, friendships made and hot spots like Gambits, Sharkey's and Froggy's where brain cells were destroyed. None of this would have been possible without Dick Osborn, Steve "Woody" Crews and Frank Navarre. As someone who ran a national police softball tournament in Jacksonville for many years, I know the amount of work that goes into putting these tournaments on ... thank you, guys!

The National FOP History Committee members are David L. Stevens (chair, Fla.), James Flores (N.M.), Dewey Stokes (Ohio), Ben Roberts (Texas), Bruce Evarrt (Md.) and Adolph South (Ala.) FOP



Dayton FOP No. 44 catcher Tim Kinneley couldn't tag out Cincinnati Metro's Mike Neville at home plate as umpire John O'Brien makes the call; Dayton won 19-1



LENNY BALESTRIERI slides into third and pops right up against the Quakes in a game at the National Police Softball Tournament on Sunday.



Be Prepared

As 2024 begins, many have made resolutions for better health, fitness and finances. According to *Forbes*, most people abandon their New Year's resolutions in less than four months. One reason may be a lack of preparation. What seems like a great idea in the moment becomes something very different when the application or the effort that is required becomes apparent. People are just not prepared for what is required to reach the goal.

One way to achieve greater success is to prepare **before** making the resolution. What will reaching the goal take? How much time will it take? What resources are available? What are the tools that are needed? In other words, research.

All too often, we hear of bargaining units heading into contract negotiations with proposals for pay raises without having done any research to determine whether it is even financially possible for the employer to agree to the

Just the Facts:

>> Preparation is not only key to keeping your New Year's resolutions, but it's also a crucial asset at the bargaining table. 2024 is sure to bring a lot of uncertainty, so whether or not your contract is up, get ready by doing your research and attending training that can prepare you for whatever challenges lie ahead.

proposal — or, having established that the employer does have the ability to pay, whether the proposal is otherwise justified. Either way, the lack of preparation and research to support the proposal sets the bargaining unit up to lose. Oftentimes, such proposals are met with a flat rejection without counterproposals.

Lack of preparation and research to support the proposal sets the bargaining unit up to lose.

Unions scored big in 2023. Railroad workers, UPS drivers and autoworkers all won big pay raises in their contract negotiations with employers. While it is true that those unions have the ability to strike and first responders do not, what is readily apparent is that the unions knew before going to the bargaining table that they could be successful based on their preparation.

Law enforcement negotiations look different. However, whether there is a fact-finding, arbitration or a legislative

hearing process, going to the table prepared with the evidence that would be used to argue for the proposal to a neutral party who would decide the contract is a great way to draft proposals and negotiate. Not only will you be more prepared at the table to counter any adverse arguments, but you will also know the strength of the proposal itself. This creates great confidence at the table and sets you up to win.

Regardless of whether your contract is up for negotiation this year, prepare for the time when it will be. 2024 is sure to bring a lot of uncertainty. With economic forecasts that are wildly different, the upcoming election, and war in Europe and Israel driving the availability and cost of goods, it pays to be prepared. If you make resolutions, resolve to be as prepared as possible for what comes next.

At the Labor Services Division, we are here support you with your labor needs. We also offer a variety of training to prepare you for challenges you may face. Whether it's a critical incident, bargaining a contract or forming a union, we are here to help. Come see us in Las Vegas for the Labor Summit and Legal Counselors' Seminars and get prepared. For more information, go to fop.net/event/2024-law-enforcement-labor-summit and fop.net/event/2024-legal-counselors-seminar. **FOP**



Scan the QR code for more information about NFOP Labor Services.



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