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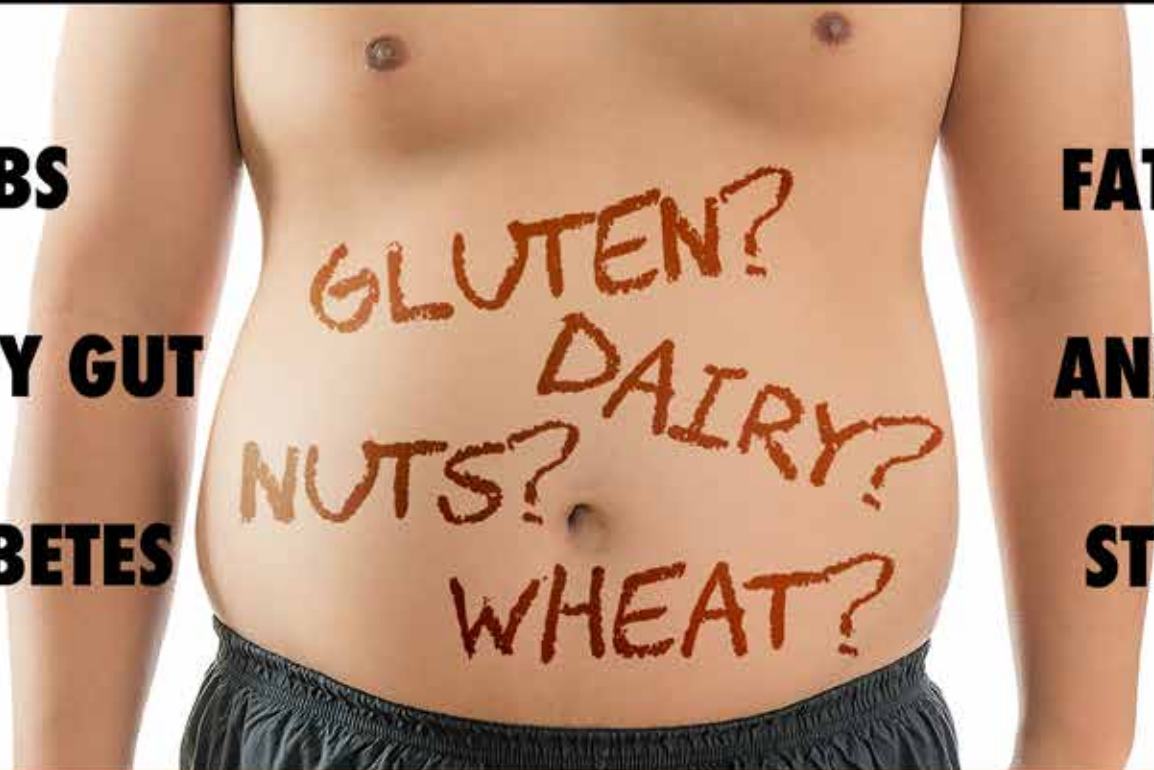
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Another issue of great importance is here!

As America fights back the progressive movement, along with all of its detrimental effect, it is finally waning! The real pandemic has been those not being able to admit they have largely been wrong. Implementation of bail reforms, not prosecuting “low-level” crimes which have historically allowed police to debrief offenders leading to higher clearance rates of major offenses, believing in an artificial level of the effectiveness of lockdowns, social distancing, masks and vaccinations all while ignoring real the real “science” on these and other topics.

The “science” and wrongheaded thinking appears to be beginning to be replaced by the “political science” as progressives’ poll numbers tank and our America is awakened to reality.

Our cover story by America’s Sheriff David Clarke (Ret.) *Memo to the Political Class: Do Something, Dammit* is a call to action and a blueprint to correct course, restore respect for law enforcement, and make our streets safe again.

Leonard Sipes asks the question *Can Proactive Policing Save American Cities?* Noting that the only effort that indicates reductions in crime are proactive police strategies. While recognizing that police proactivity faces major challenges in the current political climate, he makes the case for the importance of a return to greater assertiveness in policing.

Blue magazine continues to be the fiercest national law enforcement publication with cutting-edge commentary on the daily issues and challenges we face. Each and every article in this issue is worthy of your time as our writers continue to lead from the front.

Stay tuned as we continue to speak out against the unacceptable violence and murders of our colleagues and friends. May our many wounded warriors, deceased heroes and their families find the peace and justice they deserve. Don’t miss the article on Randy Sutton and his organization *The Wounded Blue*. Our prayers for all who are ill or injured. And may our active duty first responders remain safe and continue to watch each others’ six at all times.

Blue magazine continues to grow in both leadership and readership. I am very impressed with how much growth we have seen, especially most recently in the State of Florida. To our readers and supporters in Florida and everywhere, we are truly thankful, humble and amazed by the level of support.

As the independent voice of law enforcement, Blue magazine is honored to continue to join forces with you in our pursuit of truth, justice and the American way. Encourage others to make a stand and not tolerate harassment, bullying and violations of liberty which must cease and desist now. We are here for you... reach out when you need us the most.

Together we are strongest!



Joel E. Gordon
Managing Editor

The BLUE Magazine Writer’s Spotlight:

Deon Joseph & Kirk Lawless



Deon Joseph is a 26 year veteran of law enforcement in Southern California - 23 of those years working in the homeless community to create an environment conducive to change for those in recovery, as a Lead Officer. He’s been recognized for his work locally and nationally, and news stories and documentaries surrounding his work in crime fighting and community relations, featured him. www.deonjoseph.org.



Kirk Lawless is a 28 year, decorated, veteran police officer from the St Louis area. He’s a former SWAT operator, narcotics agent, homicide investigator, detective and Medal of Valor recipient. Off the job due to an up close and personal gunfight, he now concentrates on writing. He’s a patriotic warrior, artist, poet, actor, musician, and man of peace.

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EDDIE GALLAGHER

and the
Pipe Hitter Foundation

Eddie Gallagher talks to Blue Magazine about his career with the Navy SEALs, eliminating ISIS and fighting for his freedom; which led to the Pipe Hitter Foundation.

By Eddie Molina

Eddie Gallagher, retired Navy SEAL, spent years on the battlefield fighting for American freedom. His journey began with a desire to serve his country- but his decision to pursue a career as an elite warfighter was fueled by 9/11.

“9/11 was the reason we all stayed in. We kept fighting for the past 20 years.” Eddie tells the Blue Magazine in an exclusive interview.

Gallagher's Navy SEAL career, full of accolades and heroism, nearly ended abruptly but not by an enemy sniper rifle or a roadside bomb.

It nearly ended with him behind bars for the rest of his life.

Fighting ISIS

In 2017, Eddie and his platoon were tasked with eliminating the ISIS stronghold in Mosul, Iraq. It was a role best suited for a world-class fighting unit -- Navy SEALs. What made this particular unit so effective was their Master Chief, Eddie Gallagher.

Eddie brought with him the years of direct combat experience that was needed to overcome the ruthless, barbaric enemy known to the world as ISIS. Eddie's unit retook the city and helped set the stage for bringing back peace to the volatile region.

But his biggest fight came while he was home in San Diego. Bitter members of his unit who still held a grudge against Eddie because he was “too tough on

them” accused him of illegally killing an ISIS fighter. He was subsequently arrested and imprisoned until his trial. The case was so nationally recognized and highly publicized that Donald Trump stepped in and released him from custody until the conclusion of the case.

After all was done, Eddie was found not guilty on all but one minor charge of taking a picture with an enemy corpse.

“Obviously, looking back, I wouldn't have taken that picture with a dead body. Even though that's been done a million times before like that's business as usual over there.” Eddie tells Blue.

The Pipe Hitter Foundation

Eddie Gallagher's case was embroiled in a media firestorm that nearly cost him everything. When a case is as highly publicized as his was, prosecutors



with political aspirations start watering at the mouth hoping to get a conviction. In fact, the lead prosecutor was repeatedly relieved of duty during the case over email spying.

Having lived through this ordeal has lit a fire in Eddie and his wife Andrea's spirit to help keep others from becoming unfairly victimized by prosecutors with agendas but not for military personnel. Instead, the group is for first responders, especially law enforcement officers, called the Pipe Hitter Foundation.

"We support active-duty law enforcement and first responders if they are put in a situation where they're being unjustly accused, or unjustly treated by whatever system they're going through. We will advocate for them. Through our process [and] what we went through, we made a lot of good connections with some of the media out there, and some really good congressmen." Eddie tells Blue.

The last two years have put the profession of law enforcement on the ropes and the mainstream media keeps throwing punches. Eddie and Andrea are on a mission to change that.

"We also put out the facts. As you know, the media distorts the truth. They take out context, as in the Dages case. (The Dages story is covered in a separate article in this issue). I mean, they smeared the officer within 48 hours, taking out of context what was really in the video. So we will use our social media platform and also the media to actually put out the facts of the case like, Hey, this is what's really going on." Eddie continued, "That way people can get the facts and then critically think for themselves instead of being told what to think by certain media outlets."

Although Eddie was in the military and not in law enforcement, he understands the current plight LEOs are dealing with.



“I think officers have it 1000 times worse than we do. Because you guys are operating within the United States that are doing the job on a daily basis. Especially in today's environment, you can see they are turning the villains into heroes, and the heroes into villains. And you watch it on the media all the time. It's absurd.” Eddie said.

After all he has gone through, he still has a delicate level of optimism when it comes to the future of law enforcement.

“They (the general public) need to go and get back to respecting that (law enforcement) job. Respecting what these men and women do for us on the streets every day.” Eddie continued, “But I'm hoping. It doesn't seem like it's getting any better. Right now, it seems like it's at this plateau. People don't know whether or not to hate the cops or love the cops. And I'll tell you what, we've seen it in cities across the country, the ones that are like defund the police, those cities turn to shit. It's because they don't have law enforcement. They're patrolling the streets protecting the people. You need that. So I'm hoping we do a shift here at some point in the future.”

Helping Out

Eddie tells Blue Magazine about how you can contribute to the Pipe Hitter Foundation and help any LEOs who are scapegoats of political agendas.

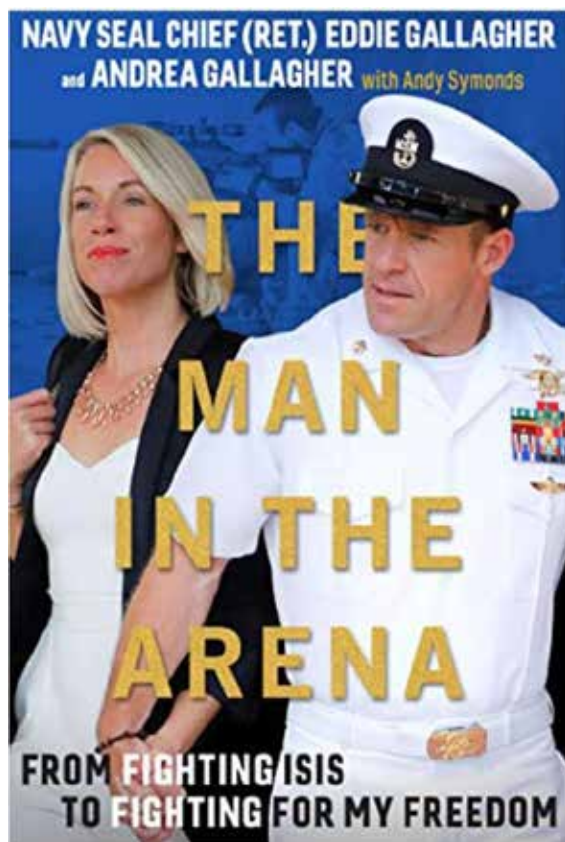
“If you go to www.PipeHitterFoundation.org, we have a portal set up for donations, but we also have portals set up for each of the individuals that we're helping. You can donate to a specific individual, or you can just donate to the organization itself.”

There's also a portal to apply for assistance if you believe you are caught up in unfounded charges related to an incident.

“I definitely don't think the injustices are going to stop anytime soon. So, I know, there are a lot of people that are going to need our help. And for the people out there, the money that's donated is going right to somebody [LEO] that needs it.” Eddie told Blue.

You can read about his incredible story and even purchase a signed copy of his best-selling book, “Man in the Arena” by going to www.EddieGallagherbook.com

For more information on the Pipe Hitter Foundation, visit www.pipehitterfoundation.org



Eddie Molina is the author of A Beginner's Guide to Leadership available on Amazon. He covers all things related to military, first responder and the LEO community.



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WHY AIRBNB BANNED ME

(And My Hubby, Too!)

By Michelle Malkin

So here is the grim reality of life in Woke America 2022. In November, I spoke at a peaceful conference held by an organization that is deemed a “hate group” by the Southern Poverty Law Center and Anti-Defamation League. The title of my talk was “Race, Immigration, and Con. Inc: How I Came to See the Light.” It was a wide-ranging discussion of my three decades of reporting on the nation’s demographic and cultural deterioration—which I’ve chronicled firsthand on college campuses, at our borders, and in every crime-ridden, riot-prone, and mass migration-transformed metropolis from Los Angeles to Seattle and Portland, to Baltimore, Washington, D.C, New York, and Denver.

As I’ve done throughout my career, I lambasted both Swamp Democrats and establishment Republicans for selling us out. The speech delved into the K-20 metastasis of anti-white curriculum, the corporate media’s whitewashing of black-

on-Asian attacks, and the long campaign to censor nationalist dissidents who put America first. A week after my talk, San Francisco-based Airbnb notified me that I was banned from using its services ever again and imperiously deleted my account. Poof!

“My name’s Cedar, and I’m with Airbnb’s Trust team,” the Nov. 24, 2021 e-mail began. “It has come to our attention that you were a keynote speaker for the 2021 American Renaissance Conference earlier this month in Tennessee. Airbnb’s community policies prohibit people who are members of or actively associate with known hate groups. Due to your promotion and participation in a known white nationalist and white supremacist conference, we have determined that we will remove your account from Airbnb. This is consistent with action we’ve taken to ban people associated with this conference in past years.”

Airbnb’s ideological witch hunts have claimed an unknown number of

victims since 2016 as part of a woke company initiative to root out “bias” and expel anyone deemed an “extremist” with a “dangerous organization affiliation.” Press coverage of previous purges strongly suggests that the aforementioned character assassins of the SPLC are involved through use of their far left, anti-white, anti-Right “Hatewatch” list. Ever since I wrote my first book, *Invasion*, in 2002, the SPLC and ADL goons have sought to stifle my voice.

But this latest salvo crosses the line. It’s not enough that I — a “woman of color” (the Left’s own descriptive label, not mine) and mother of two multiracial children — was pronounced guilty of “hate” crimes and “promotion” of “white supremacist” ideas for delivering a speech whose full content Airbnb didn’t even bother to obtain from me. The Airbnb bullies also banned my equally non-violent, non-hateful husband — who did not attend the conference and who is not a public figure or activist.

"A week after my talk, San Francisco-based Airbnb notified me that I was banned from using its services ever again and imperiously deleted my account. Poof!"

Welcome to Guilt By Secondary Association.

"As we can see that your Airbnb travels are typically reserved via your husband's account," Airbnb's "Trust team" member "Cedar" told both my husband and me, "we will also proceed in removing his account." Neither of us had ever had a negative review, complaint, or policy violation of any kind. Are my kids next? Are yours? (Surprise: No response from Airbnb to my media inquiries on how many other family members of banned conservative and nationalist Airbnb customers have been swept into their thought police dragnet.)

"Cedar" closed his/her e-mail by informing me that the only way to appeal Airbnb's decision is "[i]f our understanding that you participated in the 2021 American Renaissance Conference is incorrect."

Take note: You're damned right I spoke peacefully and lawfully to the peaceful and lawful 2021 American Renaissance conference and was honored to receive a warm welcome.

I resoundingly reject the notion that condemning Black Lives Matter and Antifa terrorists constitutes "hate." I defy the Airbnb thought police who consider my husband and me "untrustworthy" and "dangerous" threats to community safety on par with convicted felons and sex traffickers. God willing, and with my readers' and viewers' help, I will fight these speech-stifling bigots who think they can get away with retaliating against me and my family for my journalism and activism.

I've received feedback from astute lawyers who note that public accommodation businesses in California, where Airbnb is based, are subject to the Unruh Civil Rights Act—which forbids the very kind of anti-free-speech, anti-free-association, and anti-equal housing discrimination Airbnb has visited upon me and my family. Much more is

at stake, of course, and there are other sound legal grounds for seeking relief.

As AmRen founder Jared Taylor told me this week: "Once again, in what used to be known as the 'land of the free and the home of the brave,' Big Tech is punishing people for what they say. After it gets finished with vaccine freethinkers, election skeptics, and people who think all lives matter, who's going to be left? Democrat toadies?"

America First Foundation president and American First Political Action Conference founder Nick Fuentes, targeted by the feds, investigated by Dems, and deplatformed by a multitude of woke businesses for his peaceful political advocacy, added: "Every day the list of digital services engaged in discrimination against Patriotic Americans grows longer. Deplatforming on Airbnb marks a chilling escalation in tactics used by Big Tech to silence American conservatives."

Cancel culture has reached a new escalation and I don't plan on rolling over. Never have. Never will. I've raised hundreds of thousands of dollars for other patriots and heroes over the past thirty years. Now, I'm asking readers and viewers for help to fight my own battle – which, of course, is yours as well. Visit fundly.com/michellefightsaairbnb to join the cause. It's a time for choosing:

Defiance over compliance. 🇺🇸

Source: www.creators.com

Michelle Malkin is an American conservative blogger, political commentator, author, and businesswoman. Her weekly syndicated column appears in a number of newspapers and websites. She was a Fox News contributor and has been a guest on MSNBC, C-SPAN, and national radio programs. Malkin has written several books. She founded the conservative websites Twitchy and Hot Air. E-mail: Michelle.MalkinInvestigates@protonmail.com





THE WOUNDED BLUE: NEVER FORGOTTEN - NEVER ALONE

By Joel E. Gordon

"Together we can make a difference." - Randy Sutton

It would be hard to believe that anyone reading this would not be familiar with Randy Sutton. Lt. Randy Sutton (Ret.) was born and raised in Princeton, New Jersey. After graduating high school, he joined the Princeton Borough Police Department, becoming one of the youngest police officers in the state. He served the town for 10 years before joining the Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department, where he served for almost 24 years, retiring at the rank of lieutenant. During his service, he distinguished himself as one of the highest decorated officers in department history, having earned multiple Lifesaving awards, Exemplary Service awards, Community Service awards and a Medal for Valor. He was also awarded a Presidential Point of Light Award by President George Bush for his creation of a reading program for inner-city children.

Randy Sutton is the host on Blue Lives Radio, The Voice of American Law Enforcement on the America Outloud Network. As one of the most featured officers on the popular television series "COPS," he is well-known, with appearances leading to featured acting roles. A prolific writer and law enforcement advocate, he has authored four books. He has also been a contributor to numerous law enforcement publications including The Blue Magazine.

Recognizing that approximately 50,000 American law enforcement officers are assaulted every year in the

United States with even more injured in traffic accidents, training accidents and other assorted misfortunes while on duty, it was clear that help was needed. Additionally, many more are affected by PTSI (Post-Traumatic Stress Injury). The term PTSI as opposed to PTSD (Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder) is used because the condition is often treatable to the point of it NOT becoming a "disorder," but in many cases it, too, becomes an incapacitating injury. Most Americans seem to assume that in the event of sustaining on-duty injuries, law

enforcement agencies and the local, county and state governments which employ them would be responsible for taking care of them, financially, medically and psychologically, as these injuries are incurred while serving the people they swore to protect. Unfortunately, the reality is often quite different. Officers who are hurt often lose a major portion of their salaries during their healing process (if the injuries are only temporarily disabling) and also often lose the ability to earn enough to feed their families.



All of this has led to Randy Sutton's involvement in The Wounded Blue. The Wounded Blue Mission: To improve the lives of injured and disabled law enforcement officers through support, education, assistance and legislation. The Wounded Blue was founded to help injured law enforcement build and administer an Emergency Financial Aid Fund, create a system of effective and caring peer support, be a resource for competent and effective legal counsel and advocate for stronger laws and protection for the American law enforcement officer, all while remaining an advocate for the positive public perception of law enforcement.

The only thing worse than being traumatically injured in the line of duty is feeling alone and abandoned, helpless and forgotten. That is why The Wounded Blue was created: to stand with those who have sacrificed so much for the communities they serve and to do everything in their power to help negotiate the road ahead. The Wounded Blue believes that most Americans support their law enforcement and want to be a catalyst to channel that support into creating better lives for those who have been injured or disabled. Their motto sums it up best "Never forgotten – Never Alone."


Getting injured in the line of duty is difficult enough just dealing with the pain of the injury. When you add financial stress, family issues, dealing with the unending bureaucracy of insurance and workers comp, it can be overwhelming. Having someone to talk to who's "been there" is more than comforting, it's essential to getting through the ordeal. That's why The Wounded Blue has a group of professionally trained volunteers who have experienced similar traumas and can provide insight, encouragement and advice or sometimes just be a sounding board, not just for the officers who have been injured but also for their families. Every communication with The Wounded Blue is confidential, and if they can't help, they will try to find someone who can. Everyone's situation is unique, but Peer Support Officers have real-world experience, resources and most importantly, the desire to help.

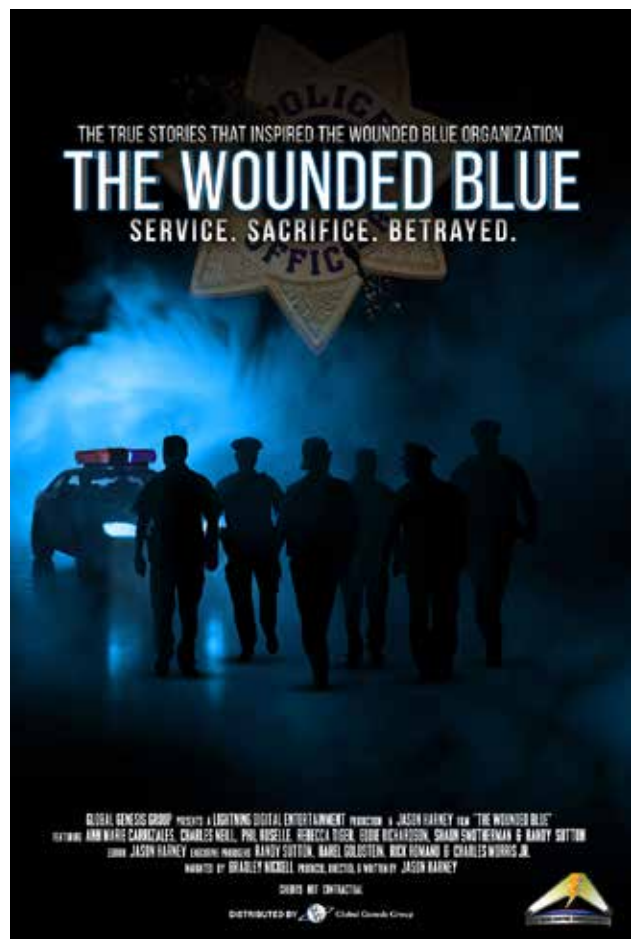
There are approximately 18,000 law enforcement agencies in the United States employing around 900,000 federal, state, county and municipal law enforcement officers. Eighty percent of these agencies employ less than 20 officers. They have different pension systems, employment contracts, some have collective bargaining and unions and some do not. Some are protected by strong Workers Compensation laws and some are not. In short, a police officer who is shot or injured and disabled in New York City will be treated entirely differently than in Bismarck, North Dakota. The harsh reality is that doing the same dangerous job will not afford the same protections should an injury occur. This is what makes the work of The

Wounded Blue of such critical importance.

The feature documentary "The Wounded Blue," a film which tells the powerful stories of six police officers who inspired the creation of Lt. Randy Sutton's The Wounded Blue Foundation, is available for purchase or for rent on Amazon.com.

The Wounded Blue is sponsoring a golf tournament on June 3, 2022 at the Bear Creek Golf Course located in Wentzville, MO. For more information or registration go to <https://www.thewoundedblue.org/golf-tournament>

Donations to The Wounded Blue can be made @ <https://thewoundedblue.org/donations> 



Joel E. Gordon is a former Baltimore City Police Officer and was Chief of Police for the city of Kingwood, West Virginia. He has served as vice-chair of a regional narcotics task force and is a candidate for Preston County West Virginia Sheriff. An award winning journalist, he is author of the book *Still Seeking Justice: One Officer's Story* and founded the Facebook group *Police Authors Seeking Justice*. stillseekingjustice.com





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MICHIGAN SCHOOL SHOOTING

What Went Wrong?

By Lt. Joseph Pangaro

The title of this article asks a question, but it could have also been titled a little differently; “Michigan School Shooting, What Didn’t Go Wrong?”

In many cases such as this terrible mass murder event, when we look back in the investigation phase, we see a cascading series of events that led to tragedy. In this case, like the Parkland High School shooting, we see that just about everything that could have gone wrong, did go wrong.

The parents have been charged criminally, the prosecutors have asserted that they had a responsibility in the events that led to the deaths of four students and the serious injuries of many others. And now we see the prosecutor is considering charging some of the school officials for their actions or inactions in the series of events that led to the deaths and injuries in the Oakland High School.

As a person who teaches police officers and trains school personnel on safety and security issues, I find this lack of proper response on all parts is not uncommon. The difference is simply that these places have not had an active shooter rage through their hallways. If they had they would suffer similar or worse consequences.

My point here is not to point fingers or place blame, my goal is to sound the alarm, again, that we

must all plan and prepare seriously to respond to violence because the next horrific school shooting is only weeks, days or moments away.

What I often hear from school official is what I have called the most dangerous thing we can ever say, that being: “It will never happen here.”

While the statistics are clear, most schools will never be victimized by an active shooter. There are between 10 and 20 active shooter events in the United States each year, 2021 has been an exception in that we have had a higher number of these incidents than in previous years. When we see that there are about 100,000 schools in the USA and 10 to 20 shooting events, the chance of being involved in any individual school is extremely low. But....

A question I ask at every event where I teach Active Shooter Response is this, “When and where will the next school shooting take place?”

I have been teaching this topic for 15 years and not one time has anyone raised their hand to tell me when and where the next shooting would erupt. They cannot because no one knows where that will happen. With that caveat, then the real odds of being involved in a school shooter are revealed as such: “It either happens at your school or it doesn’t. It’s really a 50-50 chance.” That changes the equation and should focus our attention on our preparation.

"What I often hear from school official is what I have called the most dangerous thing we can ever say, that being: "It will never happen here."

In a recent article, I wrote about the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on young people and adults as well. I pointed out that we are all experiencing a form of PTSD from the lockdowns and the concerns about getting sick and potentially dying as well as the concerns some people have about the vaccines and their effects. All of this has had a grinding affect on us mentally, our kids included. My concern, and the reason for the article, was to sound an alarm that as we come out of the pandemic there will be a potential for violence from people who might not have been a threat before the pandemic. The increased number of shootings in schools in 2021, reported to be about 48 incidents so far, clearly points to that reality and backs up my concern. The active shooter event in Michigan has put a fine point on the warning and will hopefully act as an eye opener. The time to prepare is NOW.

So, it is great to sound a warning and call attention to a problem, but what exactly can schools, parents and the police do to prevent the next attack?

The simple answer is - there is a lot we can do. The problem is that too many police agencies, schools and parents fall back on the most dangerous thing we can ever say- "It will never happen here." Unfortunately, the truth is: "It might happen here, and we have to be ready," that is a responsibility we all have as a society.

Here are some things we need to do to prevent the next attack.

1 Understand the status of your school's safety and security and ability to respond to an active shooter attack. You do that by getting a thorough "All Hazard Threat, Vulnerability, and Risk Assessment." This is the first step in your security process. You can get one of these from a private company or from your local police. A consideration is the quality of the assessment. As a police officer, I conducted these, and I did as good a job as I could based on my training and the time I had allotted to it. I did not always have the amount of time to dedicate to the school as would be best so consider a private company. There is a cost, but it is well worth the money spent.

2 Run drills of value. If all you do is run pre-planned drills and check off boxes that indicate you practiced, you are not prepared. Drills have to be realistic to have value. Planning a drill of value can be difficult the first time, but once you do one the next ones are easy. Use role players to play the part of an assailant, invite the police, first aid teams and other responders to participate. I have a whole prepared list of activities to help you. Reach out to me if you are interested.

3 Get your staff trained to identify potentially dangerous students so they can intervene before violence erupts in your school. This training includes understanding what threats are; they include drawings, writings, kill lists, social media comments or posts and the staff needs to know how to respond

to these threats.

4 Learn how to conduct proper in-school investigations. Use a "Uniformity of investigation" process so all of your school investigators conduct their investigations in a similar manner, use the same forms, and are trained equally.

5 Work with your local police and develop a relationship where the school and the police understand how to proceed when threats are identified, or an attack begins.

All of these things are a good start and will help you make your school safer, but the key is the All-Hazards Threat Assessment, this is the place to begin so you understand your strengths and weaknesses so you can create a road map for change which can include, policy, procedures, protocols, as well as budgeting for equipment and training. ●

Lt. Joseph Pangaro retired after serving 27 years at a police department in Monmouth County, NJ, having served as the Lead Training Officer. Pangaro is a graduate of Fairleigh Dickenson University's Certified Public Managers Program (CPM). He's a newspaper columnist who writes about the rigors and joys in law enforcement. Joseph Pangaro is the CEO and President of Pangaro Training and Management, and Pangaro Global Training, an online training company. E-mail at: JPangaro@TrueSecurityDesign.com, www.TrueSecurityDesign.com



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A close-up photograph of a person's hands holding a black handgun. The person is wearing a blue shirt. The background is a blurred classroom with desks and a green chalkboard.

THE EMPTY CHAIRS

WHY AMERICA FAILED OUR STUDENTS

By Eric Caron

As 2021 came to an end, parents and their children prepared for a glorious Christmas feast, and joyfully planned for a new academic school year. For some parents, dreams turned into nightmares. This past Christmas day, empty seats were at some tables and parents sadly reminisced and anguished over their children's funeral services. Christmas present, and the future will be filled with pain that didn't have to be. Sadly, most if not all school attacks could have been prevented or mitigated, if schools had implemented and focused on a holistic security program called "left of boom".

According to the National

Center for Education Statistics, in 2019 - 2020, within the U.S. there were a total of 75 school shootings with 120 casualties (32 deaths and 88 injuries). There were an additional 37 reported school shootings with no casualties during this same time frame. The majority of these shootings occurred at high schools.

School districts have focused on deterring, and responding to school shootings as exemplified by new security measures in place at most schools. Normally a place of friendships and academic freedom, U.S. schools now appear and feel more like prisons. In addition, hundreds of millions of dollars have been spent on "hardening" our

schools by way of metal detectors, bullet-proof glass, doors, cameras and other security devices as well as more armed police and teachers who regularly practice active shooter drills. But why haven't these measures worked?

America has become a nation obsessed with crime and violence. We no longer share common values. We lack tolerance, social controls, and respect for authority and our criminal justice system. Our Godless and fatherless society has certainly contributed to violence in America. The American family has been dismantled, and those effects have directly been felt throughout our society to include schools.

State and federal resources are badly needed for several “left of boom” programs in all our schools focusing on holistic wellness for each student.

Rather than having to respond to school shootings, we need to prevent them, such as implementing mentoring programs. Mentoring has many benefits, which can have far-reaching implications for students and their overall academic performance. Mentors become someone their mentees can turn to when they are struggling with classes, or when they are unsure about something in life. They are trusted advisors.

In addition, students must be taught necessary life skills such as hygiene, finance, volunteering, wellness, effective communication skills, how to keep safe, basic etiquette, morals and values required for healthy, confident and stable kids.



EVERY child, starting in elementary school through high school, should be evaluated and graded three (3) times per year or as needed for mental health issues and threats of violence to self or others by a behavior assessment team (a sub-component of the school's threat assessment team) comprised of a multidisciplinary staff to include; school leadership, faculty, law enforcement, an attorney and a mental health professional. The threat assessment team will also establish assessment and mitigation procedures for overall threats to the building, students and staff. The Department of Homeland Security has

outlined procedures for developing and implementing a threat assessment team. The proposed behavior assessment team will provide intelligence to the threat assessment team to mitigate direct or indirect threats.

Training for ALL school staff, parents and students must be implemented to build a culture of safety, respect, trust and vigilance. We must break down the “codes of silence” and any stovepipes that prevent the behavior assessment team or threat assessment team from receiving information relating to concerning behavior. Connecting all the dots is essential when evaluating behavior of concern, and appropriate action must be taken once evaluated by the threat assessment team. Funding for these “left of boom” initiatives should come from the president's Build Back Better bill. What better investment than the safety of our children.

We all must be “Switched On” to identify sudden changes of behavior in ALL children and be prepared to take action at a moment's notice to prevent or thwart school attacks. These new holistic, student wellness safety standards need to be implemented now, and end the current school safety facade throughout America. All too often, the hallmark signs of a planned attack are missed, causing unbelievable heartbreak. As a nation, we have focused on responding to school shootings, but it's all too little too late. We must focus on student's mental health and create and promote a safe school climate.

I pray for all parents who found themselves sitting at Christmas tables with empty chairs, whose loved ones should not have died, and the parents of the shooters who should have been identified and stopped. We can... we must do better for the lives of all children. 🌍

Eric Caron is a Special Agent (Ret) with 25 years of service. He is the author of "Switched On - The Heart & Mind of a Special Agent." His website is: Switchedonlife.com





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Memo To The Political Class: Do Something, Dammit

By David A. Clarke Jr., Sheriff (Ret.) Milwaukee County

Calendar year 2022 begins much like it ended in 2020 and 2021. Police officers continue to be ambushed and gunned down in areas all across the nation and violent crime continues to surge not only in large urban cities but in suburban areas as well, and still elected officials continue to wring their hands as to what is causing it and how to mitigate it.

In New York City in one week, two officers were killed in the line of duty while another two were shot and are expected to survive. In Houston, Texas, three officers were wounded in a shootout, with one dying. In Milwaukee, Wisconsin, my hometown, a sheriff's deputy and a city of Milwaukee police officer were shot and are expected to survive. According to the National Gun Violence Archive, in the first 24 days of 2022, gunmen opened fire on cops 22 times, killing three. Another four officers have been ambushed in vehicle attacks. Even two police K-9s have died in the

line of duty. According to the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial Fund, 2021 was the deadliest year on record for law enforcement officer deaths.

There is no doubt that there is a correlation between the animus coming from Democrat elected officials, Black Lives Matter and Antifa and the assaults against police. These groups have turned police into villains. That steady drum beat of hate with little counter narrative from people other than myself on a national level has eroded the respect and trust for police. This vilification has manifested itself in the violence against police that we are seeing.

I have two remedies that could go a long way in restoring respect for police. Keep in mind that this hate for police didn't start overnight and it won't turn back in the other direction overnight, but if we enact public policies today, we can start the arduous path back toward a return on a focus toward officer

safety. The first is for Joe Biden to stop with his inane idea of police reform and call for making it a capital federal offense for murdering a police officer with the death sentence handed out upon conviction. Also, there should be no more than a two-year window for the defendant to exercise appeals. This would ensure consistency nationwide, since some states currently do not have the death penalty.

The second remedy is for people in Congress and every state legislature to pass a resolution condemning any more hateful rhetoric toward police. Then we would have all of these two-bit politicians on record as to their position of support or non-support of police.

Next, I want to turn toward the continued escalation of violent crime across America. It is predicted that the upward trend in street violence that we have seen in both 2020 and 2021 will continue. For a snapshot, five people were shot, killing one, in Washington D.C.; three people were gunned down in Chicago including an 8-year-old girl, and six people were found shot execution-style in a Milwaukee residence known for drug activity. In Philadelphia so far this year, there have been 90 carjackings after 750 carjackings in 2021. Milwaukee saw a record year in car thefts with over 10,000 incidents. In New York, subway crimes of homicides and rapes doubled in 2021. Just because the calendar year turned from 2021 to 2022 does not mean that cities get to start at zero in reporting as if all the crime that happened the previous year and all of the victims it claimed didn't happen. As I said earlier here, these are trends that will continue if not abated.

The most startling thing to me is that there has not been one

law enforcement executive who has put forth a comprehensive plan or strategy to combat this street violence. All I hear from the feckless city officials and police executives are platitudes. They express concern, condolence and calls for the violence to stop as if on that command alone the perpetrators will change their behavior and turn over a new leaf. They talk about looking for root causes and reinvesting in cities, which is code language for spending million more in taxpayer dollars that will lead to nothing. Police executives continue to embark on the fool's errand of community policing. They erroneously believe that regaining and rebuilding trust with minority communities will lead to lower rates of crime. This whole community policing craze was first spawned in early 1980. We have spent billions trying to rebuild trust to no avail. This is foolhardy. Besides, the law-abiding people already trust and respect you. Get a clue.

Nothing will build trust in minority communities faster than showing them that you can keep them safe from the criminal element. Nothing will build community trust faster than to show business owners that you will protect their property from thefts and burglaries. That means suppressing crime. Business owners watching their businesses looted and then set on fire during a riot doesn't instill community trust especially after front-line cops were given stand down orders. Neither does a mother finding out that her child was killed after being struck by an errant bullet in a drive-by shooting.

Restoring trust starts with going after and harassing known criminals. Leave everybody else alone. If an officer does not know who the perpetrators of disorder are, and who the

"Now that you have informed everybody of what is coming down, execute the plan."

career criminals are on his or her beat, then they aren't worth a damn as a cop. Notice that earlier here I mentioned that 6 people were found shot execution-style in a "known" drug house. My first thought was, if the people living in that neighborhood knew it was a drug house, then why didn't police? And if police did know, what were they doing to shut it down? It has always been an important element of successful policing to know your beat, up and down, inside and out. In fairness to front-line officers today, they do not have the resources nor the time since the defund police movement to effectively dedicate themselves to routine patrols and surveillance ops, and even if they do make an arrest, George Soros-funded prosecutors are not prosecuting criminals.

Here the plan for any police executive who wants to become the next Bill Bratton of law enforcement executives. Here is the plan for any city mayor who wants to become known as America's Mayor a la Rudy Giuliani.

Reinstate broken windows policing. All police activities will have one objective: crime reduction. Focus on order maintenance activi-

ties. If you do not know what that is then get a copy of Bratton's book titled, TURN-AROUND: How Americas Top Cop Reversed the Crime Epidemic. Read it, study it. Copy what he did. Come up with a written comprehensive crime reduction strategy. Come up with a plan to succeed. The plan has to have measurables so you can track how well you are doing or not doing. The stuff that is yielding results, do more of. The stuff that isn't, do less of. Have a solid information-sharing process. Information needs to move up, down and across the entire agency. Your resources are finite. Let the mayor know what you are doing. If he doesn't approve, then go rogue and do it anyway. Dare him to fire you for trying to restore law and order in all the chaos. Let the local media know what you are doing ahead of time. Notify community stakeholders. You'll need their support. Let the city council know and tell them you'll need more resources. Tell them to reverse no-bail policies so you can keep repeat offenders locked away. Team up with state probation and parole offices for a full-court press against the scumbag criminals with home and vehicle searches. Notify the

local United States Attorney that you'll need grant money to lighten the load on property and business taxpayers and that you are sending career violent offenders to be prosecuted at the federal level for more certainty in prosecutions and longer sentences.

Now that you have informed everybody of what is coming down, execute the plan. Hold commanders accountable for results. Check on their progress frequently. Forget that community policing initiative BS. Am I clear? 🌐



Sheriff David A. Clarke Jr. is former Sheriff of Milwaukee Co, Wisconsin, President of Americas Sheriff LLC, President of Rise Up Wisconsin INC, Board member of the Crime Research Center, author of the book Cop Under Fire: Beyond Hashtags of Race Crime and Politics for a Better America. To learn more visit www.americassheriff.com



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Can Proactive Policing Save American Cities?

By Leonard Adam Sipes, Jr.

There is nothing more important to cities than crime control. Nothing prospers when fear rules. Economic development disappears. Stores close or cut hours. Communities become food deserts. Education suffers. Residents and children are emotionally and physically hurt.

There is endless debate as to what controls violent crime. Suggestions range from violence interrupters to social workers responding to mental health calls to economic investments in high-crime communities. None have a research base indicating that they lower rates of violent or property crime.

The only effort that indicates reductions in crime are proactive police strategies via the US Department of Justice and the National Academies of Sciences. Proactivity means that officers will take their own initiative to approach someone when they have the legal right to question or search. Proactive policing embraces a variety of tactics. But proactivity has major challenges.

Riots and demonstrations costing well over \$2 billion in insurance claims set off a chain reaction of dramatically increased violent crime and fear of crime, an explosion in firearm and security sales, and people fleeing cities. Businesses are closing or reducing their hours. Economic development in troubled areas is

dead. Most of the protests focused on events germane to proactive police tactics or the use of force.

Police officers in urban areas heard the voices of residents that proactive police efforts were unwelcome. Cops understood the message; how could they not? Officers responded by pulling back, virtually eliminating proactivity.

They gave citizens what they demanded.

I will forever remember a photograph and media account in Baltimore where approximately 30 people surrounded police officers making a felony arrest, taunting cops and recording the event. Every conceivable profanity was employed in the most threatening manner. This was immediately after the riots.

I knew from that event that police proactivity was dead.

Crime in Baltimore and a wide variety of cities became ungovernable, resulting in a big increase in the criminal victimization of urban households in 2021; 30 percent compared to 22 percent in 2020. Local fear of crime is at a 25-year high. A recent article in the Baltimore Sun by a liberal columnist stated that Baltimore needs to control its crime or lose businesses and residents. Similar stories are being published throughout the nation.

Now activists and mayors are condemning

cops for inaction leading to exploding violence, fear and business loss.

Per ProPublica, in Atlanta, the police union has responded to the pressure for accountability and reform by blaming its critics. “Officers are fed up. They’ve been treated like crap both by their fellow citizens and their own legislators,” said Vince Champion, the southeast regional director for the International Brotherhood of Police Officers, which represents most Atlanta officers.

The police profession suffered through an onslaught of brutally negative media coverage. While some of it was justified based on illegal acts by a small number of officers, the message was clear: all cops are the problem.

Police officers stopped being proactive. They returned to traditional policing practices of responding to calls and patrolling communities. Violence skyrocketed. Per the Department of Labor Statistics, an increasing number of officers are leaving the job. Response times for 911 calls are increasing, if they are responded to at all.

Police officers traditionally respond to calls from citizens and patrol communities; there is nothing in the history of policing that mandates proactive policing. It’s a relatively new concept.

As a new cop, I was warned both in the academy and by more experienced officers that proactive criminal stops were dangerous for everyone involved. It’s too easy for crap to hit the fan, some said. You had better be able to justify what you did and what brought you to take action.

The lesson? Don’t take chances unless absolutely necessary, and you’d better be on sound legal grounds or the system would grind you into pulp.

Then crime went up considerably in the 1980s and 1990s and cops were urged to proactively respond. Communities condemned cops for not taking harsh action. I attended community meetings where law enforcement was damned for not being aggressive enough. Some suggested racism or said that we simply didn’t care. “I don’t care how you do it,” said one community leader. “Just get them off my block.”

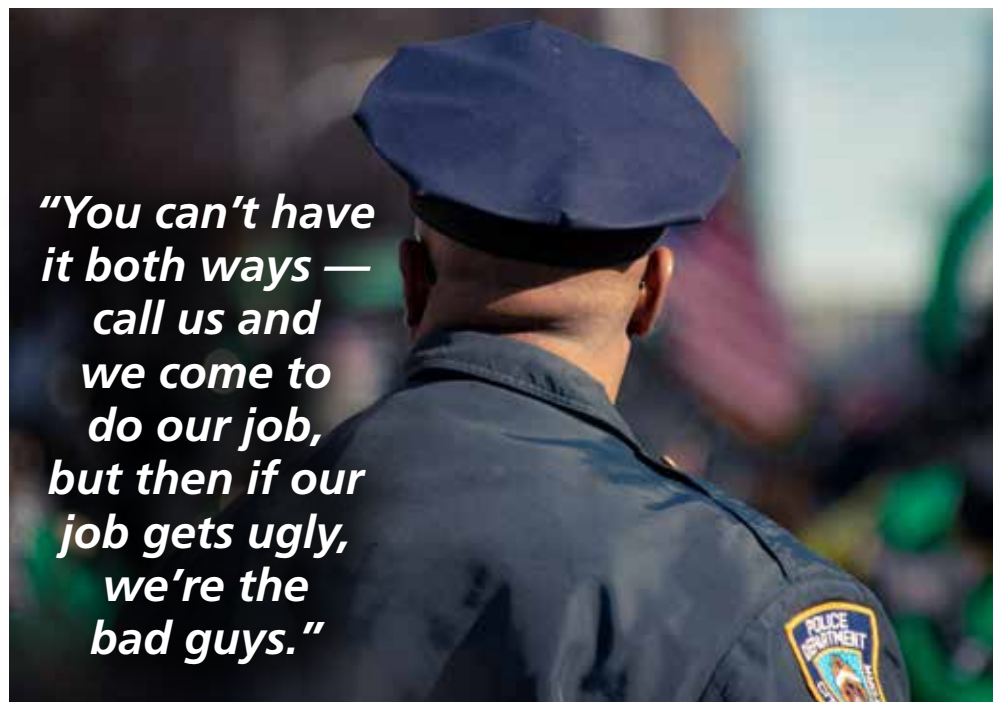
Mothers Against Drunk Driving demanded arrests where in the past, we called cabs for people on the edge of intoxication. Advocates insisted that arrests be made for domestic violence resulting in the apprehension of both parties when they accused each other of violence. In the past, it was mostly males arrested based on physical evidence (i.e., a badly beaten woman). Everyone became arrest-happy. Society decided that arrests solved problems.

New York City implemented the “miracle” of aggressive-proactive policing tactics that dramati-

cally reduced crime. No American city has matched New York’s achievement, with overall crime dropping at over twice the national rate — and sustained over a 20-year period. The so-called New York “miracle” has triggered a cottage industry of criminological research into its roots and reasons. The concept was exported to many additional cities. Media and civic leaders throughout the country applauded the results and asked why it wasn’t happening in their communities.

Cops, on the other hand, were worried. Aggressive proactivity was filled with endless risks and pitfalls. The concerns of police unions and individual officers were dismissed. Cities needed crime control if their residents were to prosper.

Now, we are going through the proactive policing cycle all over again. Mayors understand that proactivity is necessary. Critics are pushing back. A Black Lives Matter leader has threatened “riots” and “bloodshed” in the streets of New York City



“You can’t have it both ways — call us and we come to do our job, but then if our job gets ugly, we’re the bad guys.”



"Cops need to be supported for doing what others won't."

if Mayor-elect Eric Adams reinstates the NYPD's anti-crime units – a vow Adams later doubled down on the following day.

There isn't a more important issue for American cities than proactive policing. Violence is destroying communities; it touches every aspect of urban life. It literally destroys the soul of urban residents. A report from the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering and Medicine provides an extensive literature review of research as it pertains to proactive policing. It may be one of the most significant studies of law enforcement tactics in America. It was financed by the U.S. Justice Department's National Institute of Justice and the Laura and John Arnold Foundation. The bottom line? Proactive policing reduces crime. Now, mayors and critics throughout the country want a return to proactivity. They want cops to "do their job."

What constitutes proactivity? What are the ground rules? How much proactivity? Is the focus on violence or all crime? Is the community supportive? Should communities have a say or veto power in the kind of policing that occurs in their neighborhoods? These are all questions that the US Department of Justice and the criminological community should have answered decades ago. There isn't a more important issue for cities. There has to be a consensus.

But no, we are about to throw cops to the wolves

once again. They will be told to get out there and be proactive. There won't be guidance. There won't be a universal agreement. The crap will hit the fan again when something goes wrong, cops will pull back and we will begin the cycle of violence all over again.

Mayors and council people and community leaders and the media and critics are cowards. No one is willing to state firmly what cops could or should do. They will be the first in line to condemn police actions or mistakes when cops do their bidding.

Somehow, someone in power (i.e., President Biden) needs to stand up and begin the process of examining police proactivity. Mayors need to have the backbone to work with communities and spell out in detail what citizens want. I would love to witness these discussions. Whatever communities decide, they will have to live with their decisions without complaint.

Don't want traffic stops? Then don't complain when a nine-year-old crossing the street is hit by someone speeding. Don't want drug use prosecuted? Then remain silent when people loudly use it on the corner at 1:00 a.m. We all have to agree on tactics. Cops need to be supported for doing what others won't.

There is nothing mandating that cops stay on the job. Per the Bureau of Labor Statistics, we are losing a ton of police officers. If they are placed in impossible positions of demanded proactivity once again without consensus and without backing for legal and ethical stops, cities will die.

Per the New York Post, "Then it will be a matter of whether New York has the intelligence, courage and self-respect needed to avoid the abyss."

You could say the same for many American cities. 🌐

Leonard Adam Sipes, Jr. is a retired federal senior spokesperson. A former Adjunct Associate Professor of Criminology and Public Affairs - University of Maryland. Former advisor to the "McGruff-Take a Bite Out of Crime"



national media campaign. Past police officer. Aspiring drummer. Operator of CrimeinAmerica.net. His book based on thirty-five years of criminal justice public relations, "Success with the Media: Everything You Need to Survive Reporters and Your Organization" is available at Amazon and additional booksellers. He can also be found @leonardsipes.com

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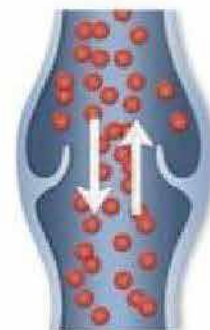
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Illustration by Caanan White

JOURNEYING from PAIN to PURPOSE

By Julia Torres

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“Everybody always says it’s not about getting to the goal, it’s about the journey and the journey is what teaches you, the journey is what you need to appreciate, all the little moments that are going to get us to that victory.” ~ Johnathan Naranjo

I had the opportunity to discuss with Johnathan Naranjo his story of loss evolving to hope; it led to this interview. We at BLUE have a special place in our hearts for those who die from suicide; it saddens and angers us; we still miss each individual. There is always a way out. Please reach out.

The BLUE Magazine: Tell us how your journey began.

Johnathan Naranjo: In 2014, there were two climactic events in my life where we lost Rosangela Crespo, my son’s mother, somebody special, and on the business side of things, everything went downhill. It was kind of like, what happened? Once Rosie passed, she was so young, it really made me think, we never know when we’re going to go, so this feeling came over me, like I was awakened to choose the path I was meant to be on.

Any regrets that you should’ve known or could’ve stopped it?

Death by suicide was a huge shock to all of us, although we knew she wasn’t feeling well, we never thought she had any intentions of taking her own life. Personally, I was in shock, I even had a friend fly in to stay with me. I truly experienced the five stages of grief. We all always have that feeling of what if when we lose someone and that teaches us to be more present with our loved ones. Life gets busy, but in our chaos, don’t forget the people

who matter most in your life. Call, hug, kiss them, ask if they are okay, if they need anything.

What was that path you mentioned earlier?

It was always a dream of mine to create something from the stories I developed in my formative years, and after Rosie passed, the company I worked for also went under. So I put my adult life on hold, spent time with my kids and started a plan to create my company, Flamewrite Entertainment.

How did the name Flamewrite originate?

In Flamewrite, the fiery hand on my company logo, represents the Creator’s hand, creation, the ability to create. As a kid, I always loved those old biblical and swords and sorcery movies, and in “The Ten Commandments”, my favorite part was when God’s fiery hand wrote the Ten Commandments for Moses, it was very impactful for me. Another fiery hand appeared at King Belshazzar’s feast and the king called Daniel for an interpretation. Daniel, inspired by God, told him what was going to happen to him for not obeying God (www.flamewrite.com).



What is the premise of the 30-page comic book you are about to complete?

Led by Colonel Chasin, a team of Special Ops soldiers are ordered to seize control of an underground city of ruins from a band of savage terrorists, a city said to hide long-lost powers derived from ancient Sumeria. But when the two forces unleash the long-buried

secrets, they discover that divine power has a will of its own and wielding it is not a blessing but an eternal curse. However, to not give too much away, the story is also about brotherhood, love and loyalty. The main character, Colonel Chasin, goes through some PTSD when dealing with what happens in his journey.

Tell us what you learned in this journey.

I learned to not take things for granted and to not let fear get in the way of doing anything you want to, because one day, you won't be as strong to do them. You don't want to have regrets.



How did Rosie influence this?

When Rosie passed, our son was twelve, at an age where he understands the severity of what happened. To help his grieving process, we did a lot of traveling and spent time with

family, to get his mind off of things. I also took him to comic book conventions and introduced him to that world I loved so much growing up. There, I became very nostalgic and inspired to accomplish my dream. I wanted to use my military action story to shine a light on mental health. So many of our veterans are committing suicide, and it's so sad to me, I hope the little I'm able to do can make a difference in at least one life.

It sounds as you experienced loss, God was giving you something to hope for.

Yes, definitely. This project is very special to our family, due to what happened to Rosie, who lost her battle against PTSD while serving in the US Army. In my crowdfunding campaign, I plan on raising money and donating a portion of the proceeds for Mental Health Awareness to support our men and women in uniform and their families who are struggling from Mental Health.

What encouragement can you give those who have experienced a loved one's death caused by PTSD?

There is no problem worth taking your life over. Reach out to someone, anyone, even a stranger, you can call suicide prevention numbers where there are people ready to help you. We all go through things and sometimes we just can't do it alone. We need to really learn how to self-love and not be so hard on ourselves. Whatever the problem or feeling you're having, with time it will pass. Life is a winding road with ups and downs and sometimes we need help to just get through it. The pain doesn't really ever completely go away, it takes time. What helped me was my kids' love, my family's love and support, keeping myself and my kids busy, happy and being physically active. Life is short, hard, but we can still enjoy it. 🌍

Photo credits: Johnathan Naranjo



Johnathan Naranjo



Julia Torres earned a Master of Science in Homeland Security with a certification in Terrorism Studies from Fairleigh Dickinson University; a Jersey City State College, K-12 Teacher Certification; and a Bachelor of Arts Visual Arts from Rutgers University, where she enlisted in the Army Reserves. Upon graduating Rutgers, she began a career in law enforcement, and later volunteered for the Gulf War. Once home, she worked undercover until retiring in 2001 due to a Gulf War illness. Since then, she has done volunteer work, acted, and written two non-fiction books.



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LA MESA POLICE OFFICER DAGES AND FAMILY STILL FIGHTING TO SAVE HIS JOB OVER POLITICALLY MOTIVATED CHARGES

By Theodore Tank

Here's an all-too-common law enforcement scenario: Officer uses reasonable force, the media swarms the story to sell papers, the public demands answers, and politicians buckle under pressure and go after the officer.

What a shame the last few years have become.

What happens next is an atrocity to American values and what this great country was founded on - law and order. Unfortunately, it has taken a back seat to political pressure.

Officers around the country are losing their jobs because they are facing unnecessary, sometimes outright baseless administrative and criminal charges. Too many officers are giving up their careers because they are trapped in a political tug of war, and many more are leaving the once-noble profession to avoid this twilight zone-like dynamic.

The philosophy of "is it worth the aggravation" is prevailing and could lead to

a country without the rule of law. Isn't that a scary thought? But there's light at the end of this warped tunnel that could set the tone for things to come; fighting back!

Officer Dages' wife, Christina, has decided to pull out all the stops and do everything in her power to fight back. She's refusing to stand idly by while her husband, still suspended, awaits criminal charges of filing a false police report.

THE INCIDENT

Two days after the George Floyd incident, Officer Dages was filmed by a bystander as well as department cameras arresting a suspect.

As I watched the entire 18-minute video, (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oAtRejCACmQ>) I became baffled. I thought to myself *this is it?* There wasn't an ounce of controversy. In fact, I was bored with the video.

The civilian who captured the incident on video then released it on social media. The video's viral path rode the coattails of the Floyd incident

and was published as an outcry of yet another excessive use of force and wrongful arrest of an innocent civilian.

Without all the facts available, people resorted to looting and rioting, leaving many parts of the City of La Mesa in ruins.

As the political pressure mounted, DA Summer Stephan released the suspect and sought charges against the officer; a gross display of buckling under public pressure.

Well over a year later, Officer Dages' freedom hangs in the balance of a politically motivated case. This case is headed to trial.

THE FACTS

- ✓ The suspect was proven to be trespassing.
- ✓ The suspect assaulted Officer Dages on camera.
- ✓ Officer Dages was cleared of Use of Force.
- ✓ Officer Dages passed a voluntary polygraph showing he does not have underlying racist ideology.

It went as far as the La Mesa Police Department's insistence that if Officer Dages simply resigns, the charges will disappear, and he walks away. Many officers would've taken the deal just to move on from the nightmare, but not the Dages family.

Not only are they fighting these absurd charges, but they are also making as much noise as they can. Christina Dages, who speaks on behalf of her husband who cannot speak for himself yet, has appeared on countless podcasts, news interviews and articles throughout the country.

Her mission is twofold.

1. To help her husband clear his name and get back on duty.
2. Create the blueprint for what future officers need to do to overcome baseless, politically motivated charges.

So far, the Dages campaign has made a profound impact on social media. They even garnered the support of numerous high-profile social media entities including Eddie and Andrea Gallagher and the Pipe Hitter

Foundation.

Eddie Gallagher himself was a victim of baseless charges while serving with the elite Navy Seals in a high-profile case. Once Eddie eventually cleared his name, he and Andrea recognized the need to create an organization whose mission is *dedicated to supporting these brave men and women, helping them find justice, and reforming a system that too often second guesses our heroes.*

The Dages family is still pursuing justice. Officer Dages' trial is set for December of this year and the Dages are fully committed to fighting this to the end.

They are setting the stage to prove to other law enforcement officers that you don't have to give in, and you CAN fight back.

(Editor's Note: On 10 December 2021 Matthew Dages was acquitted of a felony count of falsifying a police report in connection with this arrest).

Follow the Dages' IG account @clearofficerdages 





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DEMOCRAT TYRANNY;

Let the Lawsuits Begin

By Lt. Patrick J Ciser (Ret.)

One definition of tyranny is this; dominance through threat of punishment. We are now witnessing tyranny from the likes of Joe Biden, OSHA and most Democratic leaders across the country with their draconian vaccination mandates. How the hell did, “stop the spread” turn into an “Iron Fist” government mandate, from just one administration to the next? How the hell did first responders we called our COVID heroes become zeros in such a short period of time? Last year, NYC had erected “heroes work here” signs at all of their major hospitals. I’d like to say that politicians were appreciative to all “First Responders” but cops, unfortunately, never really felt the love. Between the defund the police movement, allowing rioters

to pillage at will, and painting BLACK LIVES MATTER (a Marxist group) on 5Th Avenue in NYC, Democrat politicians never really saw us as heroes. Bill, “don’t let the door hit you in the ass on the way out” deBlasio, had only disdain for the men and women in Blue. Hasta la vista, baby.

Due to the insanity that we witnessed during the George Floyd riots, including tying our hands, and the politicians making light of someone throwing a Molotov cocktail at a police car, etc. we saw many retirements, and even resignations. So, what’s better for the city and its rising crime rate than threatening to fire as many as 30% of the rank and file due to vax mandates? Understand that although I have no desire to get the “jab,” I’m not against it for others, I’m simply a firm believer that we should all be free to decide either way, without any threats from our government.

Throughout history, did brave men and women die protecting our freedoms here in America, just to have an overbearing government step in and rip those freedoms away? Could you imagine if Donald Trump tried pulling this shit? The liberal media would be comparing him to Adolf Hitler!

Why also is it that millions across America who had COVID-19, also known as SARS-CoV2, and are now 7 times more protected with natural antibodies than anyone who got the jab, still being threatened into getting inoculated? The Democrats practically yelled "FIRE" in a movie theater over omicron, while most experts, including Dr. Ben Carson, repeated that it was a mild variant similar to a common cold and that there was no need to panic. Yet Biden continues to follow the great and powerful, Dr. Anthony Fauci. Yes, the same Dr. Fauci who supported "gain of function" research and covered up for the Wuhan Lab. We're constantly told to follow the science, but that's exactly what Democrat politicians aren't doing! Don't these bureaucrats read the same studies that we do? Just read the recent John Hopkins study and you'll realize that the government went about this all wrong. Sweden didn't shut down schools or make the kids wear masks, and faired about the same as the lockdown countries. MASKS DON'T WORK!

It's time to fight back, people, just like the 27 red states and counting, that filed lawsuits against the Biden Administration over mandates! **NO ONE should be losing their jobs over this!** Not health care workers, cops, military, or even truckers. Also, studies have shown that inoculated people are carriers just like the rest of us, so don't believe the BS that only we, the uninoculated, are spreading the virus!

Agents with U.S. Customs and Border Protection, our largest law enforcement agency, are particularly upset with Joe Biden's executive order mandating all federal agencies get inoculated, because "no show Joe" does nothing to stop the roughly 200,000 unvaccinated immigrants per month from coming over the border. But he's ready, willing, and able to fire these patriotic Americans

who serve our country every day. With the administration's open border policy, that they'll of course deny, perhaps they don't mind having a manpower shortage, and even want illegal immigration. Turning Texas and Florida into California is the Democrats' goal; this way you'll never see another Republican president. As of this writing, over 70 flights of illegals have arrived in Florida, over Gov. Ron DeSantis' objections.



Truckers last year were some of our unsung heroes as well as they delivered food and other needed goods across our country. Today, Joe Biden wants to force truckers into getting vaxxed or lose their jobs, like up in Canada. Everyone agrees that we don't have enough truckers across the country to deliver goods now, imagine if he fires thousands? FIGHT BACK AMERICA, this is OUR country! WE THE PEOPLE! And thanks to The U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit; America! 🇺🇸

Pat Ciser is a retired lieutenant from the Clifton Police Department, and a 7th Degree Black Belt. He was a member of 5 U.S. Karate Teams, winning gold medals in South America and Europe. He is the Author of BUDO and the BADGE; Exploits of a Jersey Cop (BN.com/Amazon), and is a guest writer for Official Karate Magazine.





One Thing in Common: Standing in the Gap



By Donna V. Stone

Several years ago, I took the NaNoWriMo challenge. November is National Novel Writing Month. Thirty days, 50,000 words. Long story short, I accomplished the task only because of writing what I knew. What did I know?

For 40 years, I've been surrounded by blue uniforms, OK, sometimes black. Some with stripes, some without. Some have helmets, some don't. But all have one thing in common. They willingly give of themselves 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Leave the family gatherings on holidays. Snow, ice, temperatures either too hot or too cold. They protect, rescue, and often pick up the pieces of someone's life.

It was early in the 1980s when I began my First Responder life as a professional and volunteer Emergency Medical Technician. One of my strongest memories is responding to a call in my coverage area. My partner and I were the only all-female crew at the time. The tones went off, and so did we. A short while later, a simple unconscious male became a potentially violent situation. The man woke, and people from all the housing around us came out and egged him on in striking out at us. My partner got rolled by him, but I was able to radio for help. Let me tell you, I was never so happy to see red lights and blue

uniforms.

First responders from EMTs to firefighters and law enforcement have a special bond. When things go south, as they often do, we count on each other to protect, minister to each other, and save each other from tricky situations.

One of my long-term positions was as an EMT in an NJ State Prison. In 1994, I married a correction officer and volunteer firefighter. Now we're both retired.

My first book, "Rock House Grill," was the 50,000-word novel I alluded to above. It's considered romantic suspense and has, you guessed it, EMTs, paramedics and police. The second book, now under contract, is titled "Jazz House." Police Officer Michael Machau is the main character.

Michael is a composite of so many officers in my life. He's honorable, compassionate and kind. He loves friends and family. He goes above and beyond to help his community. In today's climate, so many believe the opposite. One evening, in a chat with other authors, another writer stated she was researching in a county jail. She said she was more afraid of the cops than the inmates. I called her out on it. But if we don't as a society hold people accountable for their reckless vernacular, they can influence others.

You know, not every cop is great. Neither is any EMT, firefighter, or citizen. The fractions of a percent who aren't, unfortunately, are the ones we

hear about. That's what makes the news, news. Because the other ninety-nine percent are a Michael Machau. Honorable, compassionate, and kind.

Shh, I'm going to tell a secret. I know you. Most of you anyway. You love, care, and run to danger every day despite the ugliness of the world. You make a difference even when others don't or refuse to see it. Through my writing, sorry but I'm going to out you, tell the world you all are big teddy bears. Many are grizzlies on the outside, but inside, where it counts? Koala bears. Though I no longer respond to calls (I gave it up quite a few years ago), the blue uniform continues to be a constant in my life. My son is now a correction officer as well. Many of our friends still suit up every day. Hubby is a Life Member of the fire department and, until last year, still taught fire prevention in the local schools. Me? I tell stories about superheroes. Ones who don't wear capes but uniforms. Who don't leap tall buildings but rush into those buildings. Who

when others are running from danger, run to it. Thank you for standing in the gap. Protecting, serving, consoling, and keeping the rest of us from harm.

This book is dedicated to First Responder in all forms. The people who give up their time and often their well-being to protect and serve. And especially to Lieutenant M. Monaco of the Newton NJ Police Department. I hope I did justice to you all with my character Officer Michael Machau of the fictional Slate Quarry Police Department. To my friend Getty. Each day when leaving work, we would all get a Getty hug and be admonished to "make good choices." You are an inspiration. To El Felder, my editor, breathing coach, and cheerleader. To my beta readers, Paula L., Noemi D., and Amber Daulton, I couldn't have done this without you. To Pete, my dearly beloved and biggest supporter, TWF. And finally, to my Lord and Savior, whose blessings are new every morning. 🙏

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Training, Culture, and Discipline: The Keys to Navigating the Current Turbulent Waters of Policing

By Ron Camacho, BS, MS

A couple of months ago, I was meeting with two prominent community leaders in my office. One of them said, "Chief, how do you keep your department out of the newspapers?" The answer came to me rather quickly as I replied, "Training, Culture, and Discipline." Three simple, powerful words whose meaning helped me develop a successful philosophy that guided my organization through the most turbulent times of my policing career. For experienced law enforcement leaders who need to course-correct their departments, or the new ones looking for a successful path to follow, the three concepts of training, culture,

and discipline served as my North Star as I led my current department over the last five years. These are the stable, reliable and fixed points upon which I fix my sextant as I navigate my department through all of the usual, and increasingly the unprecedented, challenges to law enforcement command in America today.

Training - Never in the history of policing have the demands for service and knowledge been as great as they are today. In one shift, a typical police officer could respond to a vehicle accident, de-escalate a neighborhood dispute, revive an overdose victim using Narcan, assist a person in a mental health crisis, break up a brawl

between "vaxxers" and "anti-vaxxers," mediate a school board meeting dispute and investigate a computer scam. All of these incidents require specific types of training. There is a saying that police training adds "tools to the officer's toolbox." The more tools in the toolbox, the better prepared an officer is to handle the variety of calls and incidents. Training costs money, but what is the cost to your agency when an officer mishandles a call he or she should have been trained on? A well-trained department is confident, full of genuine self-esteem, ready to handle every call thrown at it. Those agencies that lack training are easily recognizable; false bravado, ego, oppressive behavior

and ignorance guide their decisions. If unchecked, under-trained departments will follow a recipe for disaster that can be mitigated by implementing a vetted and regularly evaluated training program.

To those law enforcement executives who must justify your department's training requirements, I offer this piece of advice: cajole, finesse, or beg your local politicians and stakeholders (those who control or influence your budgets) to attend your trainings. Make every effort possible to include them in situational-based exercises and put them in the officers' shoes so they can experience a little bit of the stress your people feel every day they hit the streets. Explain, in the most passionate manner, why training is so necessary. Describe to them the long-term liability implications associated with failure to adequately train your officers. Many of my municipality's council members ride along with my officers, and we have found great value in that program. I have no fear of my officers doing or saying anything "wrong" during those ride alongs; the professional culture of the organization allays all concerns.

Culture - To some, police culture connotes the "us vs. them" mentality, which reflects an overwhelmingly dark view of the profession. While some of that does exist, those departments with professional and service-based cultures are not only weathering the current anti-police storm - they are thriving in it. Law enforcement agencies need to develop inter-

nal philosophies that promote critical thinking, positivity and teamwork. Creating successful environments where officers hold each other accountable for their productivity, service and behavior should be the rule, not the exception. All commanders should want a department full of runners, not one filled with those who want to jog in place. Through mentorship, coaching and leadership, the runners will help those officers who are stagnant or falling behind. Positive peer pressure is a powerful force that will produce constructive changes within the department. The setting, enforcing and eventual raising of standards are essential factors in building a culture of excellence. Although law enforcement officers do a great job with "protect," building an appropriate departmental culture with the right emphasis will get them to the same level with the "serve" aspect. You cannot create a positive, profes-

sional culture of service without accountability and discipline instilled in your agency.

Discipline - Discipline, the "art" of self-control or orderly conduct, is a vital and necessary element to effective policing. Leading by example, meeting the standards and equal enforcement of an organization's rules and regulations are proven, well-used methods to build a disciplined department. When enforcing the agency's rules, empathy and fairness should be at the heart of the process. Draconian and unequal enforcement will harm the organization's morale and internal trust. When we mess up, we must all accept responsibility for the mistake and learn from it, including me. Officers should not fear reporting their missteps if they know the punishment fits the crime and that honest mistakes are recognized for being just that.

Accountability is another

"Law enforcement agencies need to develop internal philosophies that promote critical thinking, positivity and teamwork."



*"Patrol officers
have an
incredible
amount of
freedom to
protect and serve
as they see fit."*



effective tool used to create self-discipline within an organization. Assigning tasks with the appropriate complexity and time for completion is another excellent way to instill discipline. A technique I have used with great success is to assign an officer the task of preparing a twenty-minute lecture to present in front of peers, command staff, or civilians (depending on the topic). They are given a month to create the lecture, often including a PowerPoint, and a supervisor reviews the project before it is presented. The officers are only assigned subjects they have prior knowledge of or have been trained in. For example, recruiters lecture on recruitment, firearms instructors on marksmanship, the Community Policing coordinators on community policing. None of the officers have ever failed to make the due date, and all the presentations were well received. A positive side effect of these lectures is the officers' increased confidence after successfully building and presenting their projects. The rousing applause accompanying the end of the lectures, especially from civilian audiences, gives the officers a tremendous sense of accomplishment and support. They are then ready for the next assignment, usually more extensive and complex.

Policing was, is, and will continue to be an autonomous profession. When not answering calls, conducting directed foot patrols, or assigned to traffic enforcement

details, patrol officers have an incredible amount of freedom to protect and serve as they see fit. Unfortunately, it is in this freedom, or latitude, that officers often get into trouble. Micro-management is not the answer, however, building trust is. Developing trained, disciplined officers will shield them and the department from the many "landmines" they will encounter every time they hit the streets. A departmental culture of excellence will reinforce the values, training, and discipline your officers need to successfully police in these troubling times. Sun Tzu said, "In the midst of chaos, there is also opportunity." Look at the current chaos permeating our profession as an opportunity to demonstrate that good law enforcement organizations still exist, and by following the tenets of training, culture, and discipline, they can become more valuable to the communities they serve. 🌐

Chief Ron Camacho is an accomplished law enforcement executive who spent time as an advisor in Afghanistan and Mexico. He is a graduate of the FBI National Academy, has a master's in criminal justice from Liberty University, and is the chief of the Chambersburg Pennsylvania Police Department. He is the owner of Camacho Consulting LLC, a leadership and management training company





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MY FIRST DAY

By Major Wesley R. Wise (Ret.)



The Northeast District station house is a “U” shaped red brick, two-story building with a large parking lot behind it. I had trouble finding the station on my first day and was almost late. When I entered the back of the building, I reported to the first person I encountered, a grumpy desk sergeant. I’d been given no instructions, so I saluted the desk sergeant and said, rather lamely, “I’m Officer Wise and I’m reporting for duty.” He looked disinterested and seemed not to know exactly what to do with me, so he sent me in search of the “Roll Call Room.” I had field trained in the Northern District, a building with a totally different floorplan, so I didn’t know where the Roll Call Room was in this district station house, so I asked where it was and he said, with some irritation, “It’s in the back,” pointing with his thumb over his right shoulder and returning to whatever desk work it was that he had been tending to.

There was a door where he

pointed, so I went through it and was confronted by a large, fancy, high-ceilinged anteroom void of furniture or occupants, with several doors on my right and two unlabeled hallways on my left. But nothing labeled “Roll Call Room.” There were two sets of double doors on the right with signs that read, “Court Room.” That obviously wasn’t what I was looking for, so I took the first unlabeled hallway to the left and passed a couple of closed doors with no signs and finally came to a closed door blocking further progress. On it was a sign that read, “Police Only,” so I figured I was on the right track. After all, I was officially a “Police” now.

I went through the door and walked past another hallway on my left and finally found a sign on a door to my left which had the magic words on it, so I went in and found another large room, not nearly as fancy as the anteroom had been but much larger. There was a podium and a rostrum on the far end of the huge space and small doorless stalls

in the back. I had no idea which, if any of them, was where I belonged. Several uniformed officers were milling about, but no one seemed to notice me and I was too shy to just walk up to any of them and introduce myself and ask where I should go or be. But at least I had found the famed Roll Call Room. One hurdle down.

A few idle and embarrassing minutes later, a stern-looking lieutenant strode in, ascended to the rostrum, and yelled to everyone that it was time for roll call. I noted that it was 3:30 p.m. right on time, I thought.

Facing the rostrum were four rows of seats with little desk-like appendages affixed to them, so I waited for everyone else to sit down and then took an empty seat in the rear. The lieutenant starting reading a synopsis of all the crimes that had occurred in the district overnight and during that day. I took out some paper and furiously began taking notes. After a bit, I observed that

I was the only one in the room taking notes. As the lieutenant barked out a few orders after he was finished with the crime reports, he noticed me in the back and asked me who I was and why I was there.

I stood up and told him I was a newly minted police officer just out of the police academy and freshly assigned to the district. He pointed to one of the sergeants, got his attention, and told him that I was all his. He then shouted, “All told, hit the street!” The other officers stood up and began to file out through the door to our left. A few of the officers said “hi” as they walked past me and then out to the parking lot, but most ignored me, and none introduced themselves. Friendly bunch.

I followed the sergeant out to the parking lot and was surprised to find fifteen or so marked police cars that hadn't been there when I had parked earlier. Each had an impatient-looking officer standing nearby, some with briefcases in hand, and the officers I was behind began migrating toward them. I realized I was witnessing my first shift change. Each officer seemed to know which car he was headed to, but I knew nothing but the face of my sergeant, whom I approached and to whom I introduced myself once outside. He said something vaguely welcoming and pointed me to the oldest, dirtiest car in the bunch and told me that was mine for the night and that I was to be 443 car. I asked where my partner was and got a surprised look. “Who told you that you'd have a partner? We don't have partners here. We have all one-man cars, and we're short an officer tonight, so you're 443 car.”

He asked me if I knew the district well, and I sheepishly told him I didn't know it at all and that I had gotten lost just trying to find the station. He unsympathetically handed me a piece of paper from the clipboard that he was carrying which had outlines of the various sector four posts on it, including my 443 post, but with only the border streets on it shown and named, without any interior streets shown at all. I wondered aloud what I was supposed to do with that completely unhelpful “map.”

He told me to go to a nearby Esso (now Exxon-Mobile) station and get one of their free street maps, and to then transfer the boundaries from the paper he had given me to the map so I could find my post and understand its boundaries. Gee, now

all I had to do was find an Esso station. Apparently out of pity, he told me how to find the closest Esso, told me to listen to the police radio, to answer it whenever I heard 443's number called, and that I was now on my own for the next eight hours. Here was the autonomy I had once sought – perhaps a little too much autonomy.

By the time this was all done, the other officers in my squad had disappeared and were already on the way to their posts, so I never even had time to introduce myself to the other members of my brand new squad. I doubted I would even recognize any of them when I saw them again, which I sincerely hoped I would soon. It was suddenly very lonely in the parking lot.

The blue and white marked vehicle the sergeant had assigned to me was a four-year-old, 1967 Chevrolet Impala with, I discovered, well over 100,000 miles on it—hard miles. It had no power steering or power brakes or power anything. At least it had an automatic transmission. Although I didn't know it at the time, 1967 was the first model year Baltimore Police cars were so equipped. The previous models, 1966 Fords, had manual column shifters and were painted black. This 1967 Chevy was also the first year for the new blue and white paint scheme. Still, it was five years old and ragged; I was not impressed.

The car had a single rotating blue light mounted on the roof, and that was it as far as emergency equipment went. No siren, no lights behind the grill, no dash-mounted lights. A nice shiny new Maryland State Police car it was not. With some trepidation, I tried to start the car and was frankly surprised when it started. Then I went off in search of that elusive Esso station. 📍

A thirty-six-year veteran of the Baltimore Police Department, Wes retired in 2006 as the Commander of the city's 911 System. While recovering from a stroke in 2014, he wrote two books about his experiences as a Baltimore cop. Wes has also self-published fourteen books for other writers. Need publishing help? Contact Wes at weswise78@gmail.com. A father of two and grandfather of ten, he and his wife of 49 years live near Baltimore, Maryland.





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Monmouth County Sheriff Shaun Golden welcomes law enforcement professionals to the unveiling of the Apex Officer System at the Situational and Awareness Response Simulator Facility (STARS) in Freehold, NJ

MONMOUTH COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE *introduces* HIGH-TECH VIRTUAL REALITY TRAINING FOR RECRUIT AND VETERAN OFFICERS

By Cynthia Scott, Public Information Officer
and Ted Freeman, Executive Undersheriff Monmouth County (NJ) Sheriff's Office

On Nov. 10, 2021, Monmouth County Sheriff Shaun Golden made the following announcement during a news conference at the Situational Training And Response Simulator facility (STARS) in Freehold, New Jersey: "The Monmouth County Sheriff's Office is in the forefront when it comes to cutting edge technology, and, it is our priority that members of law enforcement receive the highest level of training possible, which is why we are implementing this new virtual reality training equipment that enables recruits and veteran officers to develop skills and

de-escalation techniques, in a controlled environment, when split second decisions need to be made."

The virtual reality training system that has been installed at the STARS facility is known as Apex Officer, a 360-degree fully immersive virtual reality simulator that enables both basic recruits and veteran officers to train for difficult real-world scenarios including active shooters, use of force situations, terrorist attacks, de-escalation techniques, crisis intervention and other critical law enforcement responsibilities.



A view of what the officer sees when using the Apex Officer System

Through the Apex Officer training platform, officers are fully immersed in a virtual reality situation with headgear, backpack and other accessories. As soon as officers don the Apex Officer equipment, they forget that they are in a training room. Instead, they are virtually placed inside the crisis situation to which they are responding. Another officer creates the scenarios, with characters, and can change the narrative at any moment. The variety of scenarios are endless, ranging from traffic stops to domestic violence calls to active shooter situations. A debriefing is held at the end of each scenario.

Beginning in 2022, all Monmouth County Police Academy recruits will be trained with the Apex Officer virtual reality equipment at the Situational Training and Response Simulator Facility, along with veteran officers throughout Monmouth County and beyond. The Monmouth County Sheriff's Office is the only agency in New Jersey to have a dedicated building for virtual reality and hands-on training. The two complete Apex Officer training units were purchased through the law enforcement officer trust fund, a grant provided by the State of New Jersey.

The need for virtual reality training was brought home on Nov. 5, 2021, just five days before the unveiling of the Apex Officer at the STARS Building, when a detective from the

Monmouth County Prosecutor's Office was shot in the leg while attempting to serve a search warrant in a Monmouth County community. The detective was transported to a local hospital where he was treated and released. Meanwhile, the suspect of the shooting created a stand-off by barricading himself in his residence, requiring the MOCERT (Monmouth and Ocean County Emergency Response Team) to be deployed. The suspect was eventually taken into custody without the use of firearms by law enforcement.

Other virtual reality training available at the STARS Building include the L-3 Driving Simulator and the Virtra Simulator – both offering virtual interaction and positive learning experiences.



Freehold Police Officer tries out the Apex Officer System at the STARS Facility

Undersheriff Philip Meehan at the controls of the Apex Officer virtual reality training system



The Virtra Simulator offers interactive training involving active shooter scenarios, domestic violence situations, dealing with suicidal subjects, suspect interaction, traffic stops and hostage situations. In these situations, de-escalation skills to use of force levels are discussed and simulated during the scenarios.

The L-3 Driving Simulator provides basic driving skills and identification of surroundings, various law enforcement and EMS vehicle operation and driving, routine patrol awareness driving and emergency response vehicle driving.

In addition, the STARS Facility has rooms in which domestic violence situations can be simulated, a mock courtroom, actual classrooms and hallways for active shooter training, a cell extraction area for correctional police officer training, a section for breaching and force entry of doors, a defensive tactics gymnasium and a K-9 training yard and obstacle trails. The STARS Facility is available to all Monmouth County law enforcement agencies for in-

service training needs as well as the Monmouth County Police Academy for Basic Recruit Training.

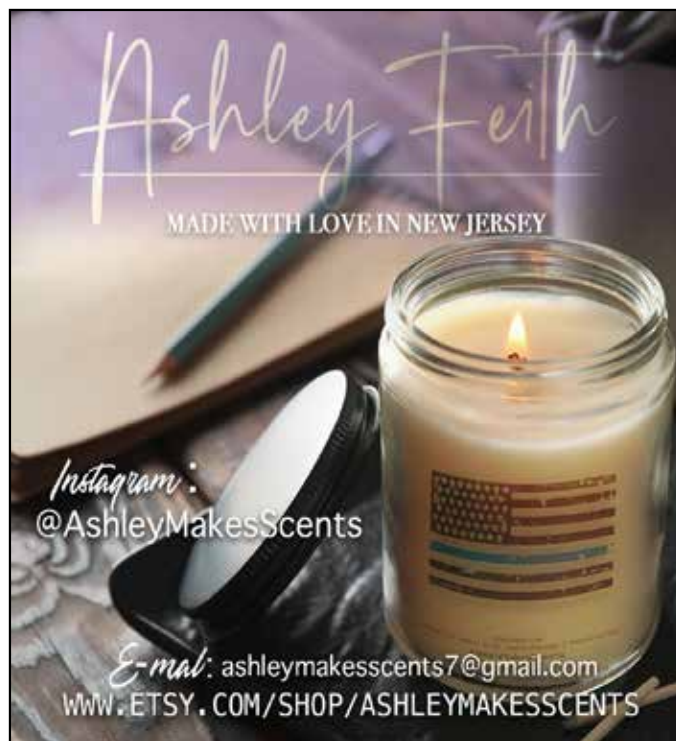
The Situational Training And Response Simulator Facility of the Monmouth County Sheriff's Office offers a plethora of possibilities for simulated training, both with role playing and virtual reality training. Acting Monmouth

County Prosecutor said, "The more accurately we can simulate scenarios officers may actually encounter in the line of duty, the better they'll be able to face them." Monmouth County Sheriff Shaun Golden said, "We are proud to be the first to deploy this new virtual reality innovative training in New Jersey which is now added to the existing framework of our STARS Facility to ensure officers are performing at their very best. 🌐"

For information about the STARS Facility or Apex Officer, please contact Training Officer Wesley Mayo, Jr. at 732-431-6400 extension 1715.

Cynthia Scott is a former Emmy Award Winning journalist and the Public Information Officer for the Monmouth County Sheriff's Office.

Ted Freeman is the Executive Undersheriff of the Monmouth County Sheriff's Office.



It's Okay to be YOU as a Cop

By Officer Deon Joseph



Sometimes when you are on vacation, you stop feeling like a servant and start feeling like yourself.

What I have learned how to do over the years is infuse the two. The private and professional me are not much different. I have to be me in uniform and out.

I feel it helps me relate to people better. People have to know there is a heart beating behind the badge and not a robot quoting penal codes.

I believe in the end, the people we serve in marginalized communities do not want a perfectly polished supersoldier devoid of emotion with shiny boots.

I think they want to know we have faith, love sports, like a good joke from time to time and that we love our families. I think they want a heart-to-heart connection with the one protecting them. They want to know that we feel.

I think as law enforcement officers we shoot ourselves in the foot often when we present ourselves as perfect or flawless.

I am flawed, I get emotional, I have fears, and I care and have opinions.

In the past; those things were considered weaknesses in my profession. Yet this is how each of them work for me.

In recognizing I am flawed, I am more careful not to fall victim to my flaws. I am constantly aware of my humanity. As well as the consequences for those I care about, for officers and citizens if I succumb to it. I'm in year 26... So far so good.

In being emotional, the people who I help see that I am real, and am truly concerned about them. They are not just numbers to me.

Having fears keeps me and the people I serve alive. I am a powerful man of incredible physical strength. But I also know that even the strongest of men can fall when they believe they are invincible. I fear for the safety of others, which causes me and countless others to push beyond our fears to help save others.

Caring does not make you weak. Yes, many will take it as weakness, especially the criminal element, but at the same time that is what many criminals fear about me. They know if they hurt what society calls "the least of these." 280 pounds of care is coming for them no matter how broken our system is right now. I truly care about the people I serve no matter their faults or flaws.

Having opinions can be risky as a cop. But if your heart is in the right place, then your opinions can be the catalyst for change in the lives of many. People have to know how the front line feels sometimes so they don't make up their own narratives about our feelings.

Being ME works for ME, on duty and off. I'm not changing anytime soon. 🌍

Deon Joseph is a 26 year veteran of law enforcement in Southern California - 23 of those years working in the homeless community to create an environment conducive to change for those in recovery, as a Lead Officer. He's been recognized for his work locally and nationally, and news stories and documentaries surrounding his work in crime fighting and community relations, featured him. www.deonjoseph.org.



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'He was ahead of the times':
 Legendary
 West Virginia boxer
Tommy Thomas
 remembered as
 advocate of
 "community policing"
 before it even
 had a name.

A LEGEND

Remembered

By Joel E. Gordon

CLARKSBURG, W.Va. population 16,578 has lost a legend. Tommy Thomas, who rose to be the No. 6 heavyweight fighter in the world during his boxing days before becoming a much-beloved police officer, has passed away.

Sports fans, especially in West Virginia, will remember Thomas as the local legend who battled some of the sport's biggest names during his professional career from 1977-86. Thomas fought 42 professional bouts, finishing with a record of 34-8, with 21 knockouts. His career also featured 56 amateur bouts, where he posted a 46-10 record and was a national semifinalist for heavyweight Golden Glove honors.

He famously fought in Alaska for a time and two potential opponents looked at him and declared that he didn't look that tough. It was decided he would face both opponents in separate matches on the same card. He defeated both in the third round of their respective fights.

While Thomas earned legendary status in West Virginia with his boxing, those in Clarksburg grew to know the man he was through his work in law enforcement.

Thomas had a natural ability to communicate with people of all ages, but especially children. He served as the Drug Abuse

Resistance Education (DARE) officer for Clarksburg police, going into schools to help educate children on the dangers of drugs. Thomas served in the position for about 17 years, as well as working as a regular duty officer, until his retirement.

Harrison County Sheriff Robert Matheny said Thomas was a unique individual whose love of boxing was only matched by the love of his community and police work. "He was ahead of the times," Matheny said. "He knew 'community policing' before there was a name for it.

"The way he acted and treated people is the way they teach police officers today," Matheny said. "Now that we look back on it, those of us who worked with him know what he was doing."

"Once he got involved with the DARE program, he lived it and loved it," Matheny said. "Thousands of kids remember the lessons he taught them and are better for it.

"I just came across the other day a national magazine from years ago that had a feature on him and what he was doing (with DARE).

"He loved to teach other officers what he was doing and shared the (DARE resources) with us to pass out to kids we'd encounter. He was a great man, a great friend. A great officer."

Current Clarksburg Police Chief Mark Kiddy also worked with Thomas before going on to a distinguished career with the West Virginia State Police.

"It's a huge loss for the community," Kiddy said. "He was so well known and loved. He was community-oriented, just loved people and loved kids and being around them.

"He was always there to help people," Kiddy said. "I've seen him give his watch to a guy who didn't have one. I've seen him buy food for people that were hungry and helped them any way he could.

"He was very selfless," Kiddy said. "There aren't enough words to say all the good things about him. He was just a great guy.

"He never met a stranger," Kiddy said. "He'd drive through town and would be waving at everyone. He just knew how to treat people, to make them feel special."

Thomas earned high recognition from the community he loved, being named an Exponent Telegram Citizen of the Year in 2001.

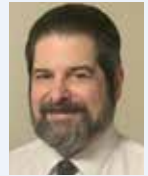
In 1999 he was named Citizen of the Month by the Shinnston News and Harrison County Journal. In 2007, he



received the Frank Loria Lifetime Dedication Award by the Clarksburg Columbian Club; Elks Citizen of the Year for the Central District 2008-2009; in 2010 he was named Honorary Irish Legend by the Harrison County Catholic Schools; and he was presented with the FBI Director's Community Leadership Award, also in 2010.

Thomas's legacy lives on through the Tommy Thomas Boxing Club at the Clarksburg Recreation Center, which remains open to males and females age 12 and older who want to learn the sport of boxing. 🏊‍♂️

Joel E. Gordon is a former Field Training Officer with the Baltimore City Police Department and is a past Chief of Police for the city of Kingwood, West Virginia. He has also served as vice-chair of a multi-jurisdictional regional narcotics task force. An award-winning journalist, he is author of the book Still Seeking Justice: One Officer's Story and founded the Facebook group Police Authors Seeking Justice. Look him up at stillseekingjustice.com



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PROTECTING THE GUARDIAN

By Jimmy Meeks

Retired Police Sergeant Mark DiBona couldn't get over the way his department had not stood with him. He had thought the "Thin Blue Line was universal," but he soon learned otherwise.

He loved being a cop, and it had been a dream since childhood. In his youth, he watched all the old police shows, such as "ADAM-12" and others.

"The cop who walked the beat in my neighborhood was an amazing person," DiBona remembers.

His day finally came when the badge was pinned on him. In 1985, Mark began his law enforcement career with the Braintree Police Department and later transferred to the Amtrak Police Department, Boston District. In 1993, Mark moved to Florida and continued his career with the Seminole County Sheriff's Office.

As the years wore on, he began to see that his fellow officers and admin might not stand with him. This heartache brought him unprecedented stress. He soon learned what many other officers had told him: "The number one cause of stress is the job itself - the administration."

He developed PTSD, anxiety, and even depression. "I was the poster child for it," DiBona said. "But I was in denial."

DiBona was eventually overcome by his anger, and "going off the handle," often toward his wife and fellow officers. Certain scenes he had witnessed also took a toll on him: childhood issues, a baby dying in his arms,

and being at Ground Zero three days after the buildings collapsed.

That, and a whole lot more, led him to contemplate suicide.

"I wrote the note, taped it to my rearview mirror, and put some music on. I was a sergeant, but I couldn't tell you what was going on," he stated. "I was zoned in to take my life."

Sitting in his patrol car at about 10:00 one night, DiBona took his gun and placed it in his mouth. As he was about to pull the trigger, a fellow officer drove up beside him and struck up a conversation. As they talked, DiBona kept his gun in his lap, intending to finish the task when they were done talking.

Finally, DiBona told the officer that he was there to end his life. The other officer, whom DiBona described as an "amazing person," talked him out of it.

But the delay was only temporary.

When DiBona got home, he grabbed a bottle of booze and sat out beside his pool, determined to finish the job. But the thought that his wife would find his lifeless body, and then experience the trauma associated with such a tragedy, was more than he could take. There and then, he committed to finding help.

"I decided to get help, to accept therapy."

DiBona was angry that his department had not stood with him in a certain matter, and was even on suspension, but is quick to add that he accepts "full responsibility" for his actions.

DiBona also visited a priest, hoping to find some answers, but came away frustrated. At home one night, he Googled phrases like "Christian" and "Born-Again."

"I saw John 3:16, which I thought was absolutely amazing."


A short time later, his wife came home from work and he told her: "I want to be born-again." She wholeheartedly agreed.

"We were born-again that night," DiBona said, with a huge smile on his face.

DiBona credits his faith with helping him through his suspension, as well as all the other trials that came with police work.

"The three biggest things in my life are God, Jesus, my wife. Whatever comes down my path, I know they have my back."

DiBona now serves with Protecting the Guardian, an organization committed to the "health and wellness of law enforcement officers" after retiring as a patrol sergeant, after 33 years of law enforcement experience.

Watch the video of DiBona sharing his story with The Cornelius Project. <https://vimeo.com/638886439> 

Jimmy Meeks is a 35-year retired police officer, having served in Oklahoma and Texas. He has over 4,600 hours of training. He is the founder of The Cornelius Project (www.bluelifesupport.com). He is also the founder of Sheepdog Seminars. Jimmy and Lt. Colonel Dave Grossman have hosted over 100 such seminars.



PTSD-Putting The Serpent Down[©] **WHAT HAS WORKED FOR ME (SO FAR)**

By Kirk Lawless

PTSD, PTSI, or simply PTS, no matter the acronym you use to label it, is brutal. It's a bitch. It's a heavy burden to carry, but by no means has to be a death sentence. It's real. It's an injury and it does something unique to everyone afflicted with it. Sometimes it manifests itself in physical pain. Nothing to be taken lightly or bantered about in casual settings. If I had a dollar for every time I've heard someone say, (usually during a casual conversation) "Oh, I have PTSD!" as though it was something to be proud and excited about. There is nothing exciting or glorious about something that haunts most like a fucking ghost!

Most folks suffering/dealing with it, generally don't talk about it or show recognizable signs that they have it. I'll give you my limited take on it.

Personally, I rarely open up about it, but my mission in life is to help save a life or two by sharing my experiences, but I'll share some things I've learned along the way. It has been a long mind-wearying road. I was officially diagnosed in 2011, following an up-close and personal gunfight that happened on 19 July 2009. The killing of a gunman was the catalyst for the downward spiral and end of my 28-year career as a cop. The killing was they say, "Is what it is."

Search my name (if you care to) and you'll find the story. What my department did to me, did to my family, and did "not" do for us after the shooting was the real driving force behind things that plague me to this day.

Prior to the shooting, I had accumulated plenty of baggage from doing "The Job." Intimacy with death and violence and close calls that brought me precariously close to my own physical death, intensified my symptoms, already in abundance and piling up at break neck speed. I won't rehash the symptoms (both mental and physical), but I can rattle them off with a great level of monotony.

Rule number one: Keep your mouth shut! After you do a little research and you find yourself ticking the boxes on the PTSD symptom checklist and you think you're

dealing with some "heavy shit" that you can't handle on your own, do not tell your department (unless they have a proven track record of helping cops who need it and are brave enough to ask for it) Yes, it takes courage to ask for help, but sadly (as in my world) help was offered, the rug was pulled from beneath me and my department went on the attack (with zero help, and lies in abundance) to usher me out the door. So again, tell no one!

If you do tell and the department sends you to see the "shrink," remember that once they send you, you are no longer the client. You are the patient. The department/city is the client, and they are privy to whatever goes on between you and the shrink. My advice in this scenario is a matter of self-preservation. Lie to them. Tell them what they want to hear. If you don't, you'll probably find yourself unemployed.

Of the PTSD checklist, I ticked nearly every box except for one. That box was about suicidal thoughts and tendencies.

Those who know me well will tell you that I will race you to a "gun job," armed robbery, home invasions, burglaries. I am, admittedly an "adrenaline junkie," The more danger I potentially faced, the more I reveled in it! You can't operate like that if you're afraid of the dark (and there are some cops who are).

I will caution you that if something is eatin' at you and you seek out help, there are many folks chomping at the bit to help you and give you advice, but they come with strings attached (money and lots of it) and lots of them have zero idea about helping someone dealing with PTSD.

Personally, if they haven't "seen the elephant" or "walked through the fire" I don't trust them.

I'm not a therapist, psychiatrist, psychologist, or health care professional. I'm an old school cop, so from me you'll get what you get straight from the horse's mouth, with zero bullshit.

"Suicide just transfers your pain and grief onto someone that you've left behind."

Fleeting thoughts about suicide or merely just wanting to die, I imagine are fairly common occurrences when depressed or feeling ultra-backed into a corner. If you start to spend quality time practicing your knot tying or formulating a plan as to how, when, where you'd do it ... that is serious business and you should call one of the numerous hotlines out there and talk to somebody. I recommend Safe Call Now 206-459-3020 (They specialize in helping cops and first responders at zero cost. They have vast resources and can get you help in your area, and they are staffed by lots of first responders)

You can call me if you have nobody else to talk to (314-302-0511) and I'll help you in any way I can. On that I cannot be more serious. Who publishes their number like that? I do!

How serious can it get? I spent nearly six hours on the phone with a cop in distress. He was driving to his "secret" spot where he was going to shoot himself. He had a body bag with him and knew that he'd in all probability, fall into it after he shot himself. He had postponed it by a week because the body bag he ordered was too small and he had to send it back and wait for a replacement that fit him (this time he had crawled inside and zipped it up to make sure it was a good fit) he knew that whichever cop found him would be someone he knew and he wanted to make it as easy as he could for whichever poor

bastard found him. So yeah, this is serious. A caveat: I kept talking to him, offered to drive 200 miles to pick him up and drive him to a hospital where we could admit him as a "John Doe" so his department wouldn't find out. He refused my offer, ran the gauntlet of cops and troopers I had looking for him (since he was determined to do it or make another cop kill him) and made it home. After a brief standoff, he agreed to go to the hospital and is still alive. We are still friends, but oh how he spat curses at me after forcing my hand. I told him he could hate me all he wanted, but he was still alive to hate me and I was good with my decision.

Suicide just transfers your pain and grief onto someone that you've left behind.

When I, like Ernest Hemingway, am suffering from a case of the "Black ass" my son, who knows me all too well, simply asks me, "Dad, are you thinking about hurting yourself, or killing yourself?" He rarely leaves me alone. I think he lives with that fear, as does my wife, and I know it wears on them. Were I to kill myself, I can only imagine the devastation it would cause my family, our kids, my father, our grandchildren. I'm blessed with lots of solid friends. I've shed the baggage of fake friends and surround myself with positive people. If I refer to you as "brother" or "sister," you've become family whether you want in or not.

Things to do (or try), to

keep the 'Black Ass' at bay that have helped me so far: Remember, "Fear is a liar!" Like Satan "The Great Deceiver," any inner voice telling you things like "The world, your family, everyone will be better off without you," turn your back on it, it's a lie. It's the grandest deception. I'm still standing, and if you're reading this, so are you, and that's a good start (and I'm not asking for \$19.95).

Remember; don't tell anyone that you're dealing with something so heavy that you cannot bear the weight of it by yourself, unless you trust him or her with your life. I've learned a lot about trust during my journey. Do not give the department a reason to "Baker Act" or "Red Flag" you (or whatever law they use to take away your gun and credentials). It makes zero sense. They take your duty gun, your badge; that does nothing to protect you. You might have a hundred guns in your house, knives, rope, shoestrings, pills and booze. Those actions aren't about protecting you; they're about giving those in power tools to get rid of you. Remember, it's cheaper to host a fancy police funeral than to spend money on fixing us.

1 If you're a person of faith, embrace it! I'm a Christian, but admittedly I cuss a lot and trust me, I know all the words. I carried a Bible in my patrol bag or briefcase while I was a detective and it wasn't a good luck talisman. It's not a coincidence that "Be not afraid"

or “Do not fear” is mentioned in the Bible 365 times. Let that soak in for a minute, and remember what I said about fear being a liar.

2 Get lost in something. I’m a voracious reader, writer (if I’m not reading, I’m writing) I’m an artist, poet, and painter. I’m a half-assed guitar player, so I can get lost in that. Try it. Try anything.

3 As far as PTSD and loss of senses. I love music. The louder the better, noise-cancelling headphones are my favorite, but to enjoy them I have to be in a position that I can see my surroundings, especially if I can’t hear something sneaking up on me. I have discovered a device that allows me to listen to music without blocking outside sound, even while cutting grass on my lawn tractor. If the sound thing bothers you, may I suggest a product Z-Bones™ the brainchild of a friend, Andy Limbaugh. They use bone conduction technology, and instead of burying a device inside your ear, they wrap around your ear on the outside and the speakers and microphone allow the sound to flow through the bone just forward of your ear (reminiscent of the old SWAT days, when we used ear and throat microphones for hands-free communications). I’ve been using them for a few months, and they work. They’re lightweight, rechargeable and are wireless compatible with most cellphone platforms. (These things are the real deal and really have helped me dial down my “hyper-vigilance) when I’m out and about.

4 Weighted blanket (self-explanatory) the weight of the blanket helps allow my body to sleep (although my mind never does) I don’t seem to toss and turn as much as prior to using one.

5 Medications. Use them as directed. Do not over medicate. I take lots of meds, but they don’t make me high, or numb. My body is dependent on them, as is my mind, and there’s nothing I cannot do because I take them. Most

are ingredients for the so-called “suicide cocktail,” but don’t believe that is what it is. But, don’t be a dumbass and booze it up hard while on them. You’re just borrowing trouble and that can be lethal. A caveat, you can be weaned off most of them, but it takes a long time. I tried to do it myself and with disastrous results. Remember the only two drug withdrawals that can kill you is alcohol and barbiturates.

6 I reiterate, “Don’t mix booze and medications!”

7 Street drugs. You’re “the cops” for crying out loud. Don’t add that baggage to your résumé!

8 Nature. Get out in it. It’s everywhere. Find what you like: mountains, the beach, and the woods. Personally, I get lost by stalking trout in the middle of a stream (mostly catch and release now). I was an avid hunter before my OIS. I still go, but usually pass on shooting (except for birds... and hogs. I hate those hogs. A lot)

9 Try to avoid “triggers.” That’s a hard one. I don’t care for fireworks, backfires, or New Year’s Eve celebratory shooting (in St. Louis that tradition is strong). Surprise parties are out! Peek-a-boo with a baby is OK. An adult would get punched in the neck for it. A toilet lid slamming is near the top of my list. For me there are too many triggers to list.

10 I suggest avoiding certain movies that I refer to as “spirit” damaging. I’m good with classics: Frankenstein, Dracula, Wolfman, I’m not down with movies about demonic possession, supernatural themes. I still enjoy westerns, police movies, high-energy military movies, violence and bloodshed movies don’t bother me one bit, because of “the job” I suppose (everybody is different).

11 Animals are a great help. I’ve had dogs. I lost my Irish wolfhound, Maddie and our golden retriever, Stella Blue last year. They always knew when I was having a particularly tough time. I miss them. I had a horse, Corrina, a magnificent animal, but I gave

her away to a little boy who needed his own horse. His three sisters each had their own. I actually casually interviewed him and knew he was the one. That moment was bittersweet. My doctors were afraid I’d damage some of my onboard electronics should I get thrown (I did a few times) but eventually conceded and gifted her, which was a healing moment for me. If there is an equine program near you for PTSD folks, take advantage of it. Caveat: service dogs are a tremendous tools and great healers, but they take a lot of time and commitment, but after being off the job nine years, I’m going to take leap of faith and send in the paperwork because I think I’m ready. If you’re considering it, don’t jump in too quickly.

12 Hate. Try to let go of it. I’ve been working on it, but there is so much of it and for good reason (I don’t hate the man who tried his best to kill me) there are way too many wicked folks deserving of my hate. Some are dead, and the ones living are dead to me.

I hope this helps somebody out there, even if just one. My mission is to save lives and I’d like to think there are some people around because of me and what I do and what I write and how I write it. I’m living in my third act, so that gives me about 31 years to “get busy” (If God allows it).

You have my contact info. Please use it if you need it!

*PTSD-Putting The Serpent Down is an upcoming soon-to-be-released book. 🌐

Kirk Lawless is a 28 year, decorated, veteran police officer from the St Louis area. He’s a former SWAT operator, narcotics agent, homicide investigator, detective and Medal of Valor recipient. Off the job due to an up close and personal gunfight, he now concentrates on writing. He’s a patriotic warrior, artist, poet, actor, musician, and man of peace.



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ARE DEPARTMENTS OVERLOOKING *The Most Important Element*

By Ken Dye

Police departments get new and updated equipment all the time. Budget line items for new cars, body cams, light bars... the list continues.

From time to time, these pieces of equipment need to be maintained. They need work on the brakes, tires and other activities to keep the car in service, and the same with the other items cops have been loaded with in the last several years. These are all pieces of equipment necessary to keep the officers as safe as possible and having the ability to respond to 911 calls and other non-emergency incidents.

Now... what does any department do to keep the most important and essential part of the department moving? Most do nothing.

Officers keep getting the brunt of the loudest voices and they all seem to be critical. Why couldn't they do this? Why couldn't they do that? How many times have so-called experts and "eggheads" opined on what the officer should have done? After the investigation these so-called experts are often wrong.

Does the constant barrage of negative coverage of an event weigh on the cops who answer the call? How can it not?

America seems to neglect the most vital part of the operation. That's right: the cops. Do the cops need periodic "maintenance?"

After "shagging" radio calls for an extended period of time, let's take a look at the impact on the individual officer. You know, the person who pulls together all the equipment provided. The cars, the body cams and all the other "stuff" that makes for a police unit on the street.

Departments must take the time and effort to insure the officers are properly reviewed for their physical and mental well-being.

A sharp first-line supervisor should be able to identify a cop who's experiencing a mental/physical issue. First-line counseling may accomplish the mission. Perhaps a referral to a professional would be in order.

The conclusion being that the most important and necessary element to make the police unit whole, the officer, may need "maintenance"... It's up to the command staff to make sure that happens. 🌐

Ken Dye is the author of five books about crime, cops and bad guys in the St. Louis area. He blogs under "Cops Perspective" and has over 20,000 followers. Ken served with the St. Louis County Police Department for 13 years and finished his LE career with the Illinois Criminal Justice Authority as the administrator for the statewide MEG's and Narcotics Task Forces.



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WE ARE AT WAR

By Chris Amos

Ladies and gentlemen, we are at war. Let me say that again, “We are at war!” I am not talking about the kind of war presidents and Congress can courageously lead us into... from the rear. I’m not talking about the ongoing war on opioids. I’m not even talking about the war on cops that is, in large part the direct result of activist, soft-on-crime, get rid of bail politicians, district and commonwealth attorneys. I’m not saying the above “wars” are not happening; they are. In parts of the country, the battles are far more heated than in other parts. By way of encouragement, I travel the country occasionally, speaking at law enforcement conferences. Friends, let me remind you, there are significant portions of this country who love, support and defend the Thin Blue Line.

If not the wars mentioned above, then what war are you talking about, Amos? I’m glad you asked. The war of which I speak that every law enforcement officer in the country is engaged in, regardless of the level of support received on the home front, is the spiritual war for your very soul. The enemy in this war seeks to destroy you, your marriage, your family,

your department, your city... well you get the idea. This war is the most insidious of any war you will ever face because the enemy is the most insidious of enemies. He can lie, deceive, cheat, steal, betray. Nothing, absolutely nothing is off the table when it comes to this foe. He is liberal, conservative, white, black, rich, poor, young, old.... He is Satan!

You have many, many times come face to face with the men and women he so easily manipulates to do his bidding. In fact, many of his accomplices, knowingly or not, even wear a badge and a gun.

This enemy answers to no one... yet. Like the notorious Trojan horse of old, he seeks to gain entry into our lives and then attacks from within. He uses fear, rage, hatred, false assumptions and motives, lies and whatever else works to fan the flames, inciting a wildfire that decimates everything and everyone in its path. He gains entry through the eye gate, the ear gate

and most effectively by means of the thousands of thoughts we entertain on any given day. He will not rest until he has seen us turn on one another, to include our very own family, both blood and blue. And even after watching with glee as another



wikipedia

police officer is murdered or takes his own life, he craves even more. Like a shark sensing blood in the water, this enemy is never satisfied, nor can he be. Satan is involved in a spiritual war for your very soul, and this is a war that recognizes no treaties, truces or even gentlemen's agreements. His greatest enemy is our greatest ally, Jesus Christ. And Jesus does not bargain with Satan and his minions. No, Jesus crushes the enemy, in fact immediately after that first sin committed by Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden, thousands of years ago, God spoke of one who would crush the serpent Satan's head under His foot [Genesis 3:15].

Friends, we are at war but we must understand, in Jesus Christ we have a Commander in Chief who will not disappoint, lie, betray, or perhaps most importantly, turn a blind eye during our greatest hour of need. It is important that we realize that the Jesus Christ, often portrayed as the meek, mild-mannered, compassionate shepherd cradling a baby lamb in His arms in children's story books, no longer exists. He does not exist in the sense that Jesus, upon His resurrection from the dead and ascension into Heaven, reclaimed His throne and His role as the King of kings, Lord of lords, and dare I say Warrior of warriors. Do yourself a favor and read Revelation 19:11-16. This is the Warrior King to whom we will one day answer. The world does

not realize this, for Satan has deceived the world, a critical part of the war he wages on you, me and everyone around us.

I am reminded of the song I learned as a kid in Vacation Bible School, "I may never march in the infantry, ride in the cavalry, shoot the artillery. I may never zoom over the enemy, but I'm in the Lord's Army. Yes Sir! Yes Sir!" Friends, the spiritual war is being waged for your soul, as well as the soul of America and the world is one we are all in. There are no exceptions. The sooner we believe that, the sooner we can better equip ourselves in, by, and through Jesus Christ to be "more than conquerors" [Romans 8:37] and "overcomers" [1 John 5:5]. While we watch the news and see the levels of corruption and hypocrisy ascending to heights unimaginable even a few short years ago, let me assure you, Jesus wins! Oh battles may and will be lost, but even those are all according to God's divine chronological timeline.

In '96 I was shot twice while attempting to make an arrest. I returned fire, killing my attacker. If nothing else during those eight seconds that would forever change my life, I learned God is in control and our enemy, Satan is on a leash... that God holds. The day will come, perhaps sooner than we think, when every believer in and follower of Jesus Christ will be raptured or called home to be with The Lord. God will let go of the leash and Satan, through the anti-Christ [2

Thessalonians 2:1-12], will have seven years to wreak havoc, with little to no resistance, upon this world before the King of kings, Lord of lords, and Warrior of warriors returns and this enemy of the world is crushed under Jesus' foot.

Friends, the takeaway is twofold. First, we are at war spiritually whether we realize it or not. Secondly, if you haven't joined The Lord's Army, now is the time to do it. How? Read the Gospel of John to learn more about Jesus, the ultimate Commander in Chief. Read Ephesians 6 to see the weapons of the warfare supplied to us by God to be effectively used in this war with devastating consequences. Read Psalm 91 to see just how powerful, mighty, and in control God is even in, especially in, the midst of the war that is raging. I pray God will continue to protect, keep, bless and provide for you today, and in all the days to come.

Be safe. 🌍

Chris Amos is a retired officer and former spokesperson for the Norfolk Virginia Police Department. He is currently the pastor at Chr1st Fellowship Church in Norfolk. He is married for over 30 years and is the proud father of three children, two of whom are police officers. He serves as the volunteer Chaplain for Norfolk Police Dept. and Norfolk Sheriff's Office.



REMEMBRANCE

Article & Artwork
by Jonny Castro

*Police Officer
Keona Holley*

On December 16th, Baltimore City Police Officer Keona Holley was working an overtime shift in the Curtis Bay area of South Baltimore when two suspects approached her patrol vehicle from behind and ambushed her. She was shot multiple times in the cowardly attack. The officer was rushed to the hospital in grave condition. One week later, Officer Holley's family made the difficult decision to remove her from life support just two days before Christmas. Two suspects have since been taken into custody. After shooting Officer Holley, the suspects were alleged to have gone on to murder another individual 90 minutes later.

Police Officer Keona Holley was a 2-year veteran of the Baltimore Police Department and leaves behind four children. She had left her job as a nursing assistant to join the Baltimore Police Department because she wanted to help make a difference in her city. She was quoted as saying "the community needs Baltimore City police officers that are not just here for a paycheck. They're here because they care." That's exactly the kind of person that she was. They gave her the nickname "The Mom from the West Side". She was just 39-years old. 🌍



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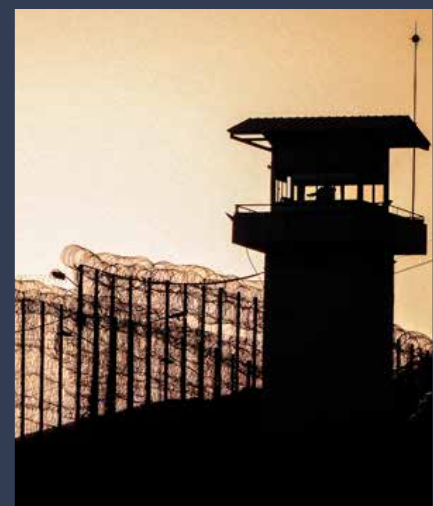
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