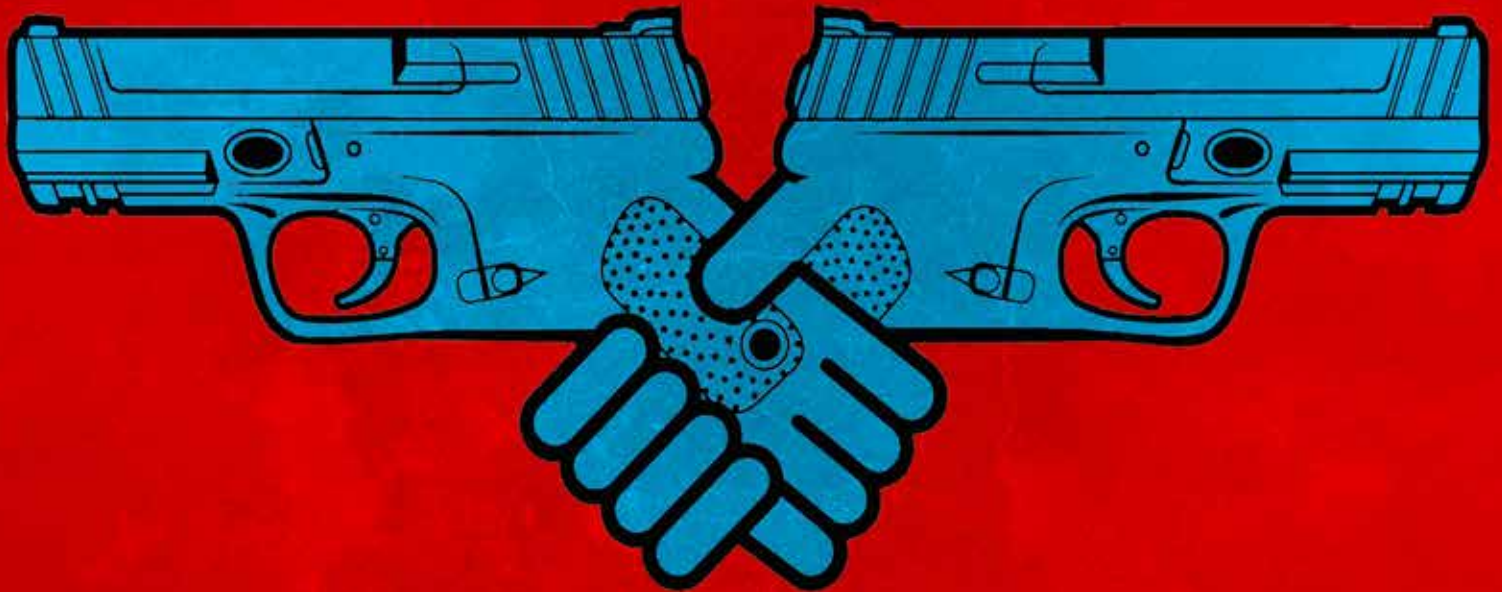


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Welcome to another excellent issue of Blue Magazine. We are proud that our last cover was featured on Fox News to seven million viewers. Yes, over seven million viewers saw our previous cover! While we are honored and pleased with this mention, we must continue to keep raising the bar of success by staying focused and staying true to our core values. We exist to be the independent national voice of active and retired officers. We exist to stand up for injustices against our profession when many others will not. We take on these risks knowing there will be pushback, haters and lunatics out there who want to silence us. But we must always speak the truth, regardless of how inconvenient the truth is.

Our cover story, written by our managing editor, Dr. Joseph Uliano, exposes a grave reality that friendly fire is, unfortunately, something we must discuss. We can no longer pretend it doesn't exist. After recent friendly fire deaths, the NYPD announced they would increase training for plain-clothes officers by subjecting them to live-fire exercises and training simulators. Although this is excellent news, we must ask why now and not before these tragedies occurred? I believe many administrations are to blame. Administrators must always make sure their men and women, who are risking their lives to protect and serve the community, are not disadvantaged. They must insist they are equipped with every training and tool needed to safely perform their duties, reduce the risks, and survive this dangerous profession. Think about it. Why hasn't every officer received firearms simunition and simulator training? We are quick to show the media these technologies as a way to demonstrate the difficultness of the nature of our work, yet there are many officers who have never had these trainings. Also, it is no secret that many agencies are operating patrols at bare minimum staffing—some with only one officer. Additionally, many agencies are not equipped with life-saving devices such as long guns, tourniquets or QuickClot. We can all agree making this training and equipment a requirement is paramount, so why wait until after a tragedy to implement? The common reasons admins use to explain these “acceptable” risks are budgetary constraints. This is unacceptable. Officers are placing their lives on the line; they should at least take these risks knowing their departments are giving them every chance for survival. Officers do not need to die for change to occur.

On Nov. 21, 2019, at the Venetian in Garfield, NJ, we will hold our annual law enforcement dinner. We are partnering with Brothers Before Others and Moment of Silence. Both of these organizations are run by respected law enforcement leaders, Michael Burke and Steven Olimpio, respectively. These organizations are doing an excellent job for our profession, and we are honored to be partnering with them for this event! So many officers are flying in from all over the United States to attend. We are looking forward to a night to unite law enforcement like no other night. We are blessed to be working together with so many passionate people, and we thank everyone for all their efforts.

Until next time!

George Beck, Ph.D.  
Editor-in-Chief

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# SHERIFF CLARKE SPEAKS OUT

## Do Black Lives Matter

### *in St. Louis?*

By Sheriff David A. Clarke Jr. (Ret.)

In the past six months, 13 black children were murdered by gun violence in St. Louis, Missouri. That's right. You read that correctly. Thirteen. The youngest was 2 years old. The most recent, a 7-year-old was killed in his backyard after being caught in a crossfire gun battle. This young boy was walking home from a friend's house with his older siblings when the gunshots rang out, and they scurried for cover inside their home. Moments later, the older siblings realized their younger brother did not make it inside, so they returned to their backyard and found him under a bush where they reportedly told their grandmother he took a deep breath and was gone. Reading of this innocent 7-year-old child dying under a bush in his backyard infuriates me.

These sad, grim, and all-to-frequent murders are reminders of underclass crime, violence, cultural rot, and dysfunction that plagues ghetto communities across our country under the watchful eyes of Democrat politicians who control public office.

St. Louis has been the murder capital of the U.S., and yet these killings receive very little news coverage. If you are first hearing of the murder of these 13 innocent black children from me, this is part of the problem. Where are Deray McKesson, Shaun King, Black Lives Matter, Al Sharpton, or Jesse Jackson? All of these so-called social justice warriors fighting for black equality hustled to the St. Louis area with fiend urgency when a police officer defended his life using deadly force on Mike Brown—a thug who was in the act of committing felonies. Remember these opportunist misfits led riots and weeks of protests that burnt down a swath of area in suburban Ferguson, Missouri. I remember. This incident spawned the war on cops. Where are carnival-barker university professors Cornel West and Ta-Nehisi Coates? They were quick to cite racism as the cause of everything that ails black people. Even low-life Colin Kaepernick has time on his hands since he's no longer playing football, yet, he is nowhere to be found. Apparently, the murders of these 13 precious black children killed by

black perpetrators in St. Louis is not urgent enough for these rabble-rousers to act. This is psychotic and pathetic.

Why has nothing worked so far to quell the violence in cities like St. Louis? Because everything these communities are working on is the wrong approach. They focus on technical fixes, cliches, and the tired old response of poverty as the root cause. They feature violence de-escalation programs with catchy sounding names like HandsUp United, social justice education, food programs, inane gun buy-back programs, demolishing abandoned buildings, and improving police-community relations as the panaceas needed. St. Louis Prosecutor Kim Gardner believes, "We have to figure out why a person is picking up a gun and shooting into a crowd." Hey Kim, since you cannot figure it out, I'll clue you in. Pathologies like ineffective parenting, fatherless homes, questionable lifestyle choices like gang involvement, drug use, and generational school failure are at the heart of it. If you want to cure the community blight, these are the adaptive changes in behavior required by the black underclass. But liberal orthodoxy won't acknowledge or demand these truisms be addressed. Instead, the liberals reach for the low hanging fruit that external forces are behind the violence. By the way, Gardner supports criminal justice reform that is soft on crime and refuses to use jails and prisons to control crime and no-bail for serious charges. This allows career criminals to roam free and prey on law-abiding adults and children.

As the conditions worsen in St. Louis, why is nobody willing to try a different approach? Instead, they cling to failed Democrat politicians like the William Lacy Clay family who have politically controlled the area since William Lacy Clay Sr, an African-American, first held a seat in Congress from 1969 to 2001. Upon retirement his son, William Lacy Clay Jr., took over and is still in Congress. For over 50 years, the Clays have lorded over the St. Louis area decline while they sat their rear ends in Congress. While Clay Sr. founded the Congressional Black Caucus that today spends

more time raising money for the Democratic Party and being their attack dog, the residents of St. Louis have watched their communities turn into hopeless wastelands of post-apocalyptic proportions. I blame the voters, however. It's blatantly apparent their political leaders are failing them. They continue to put them in office to live high on the hog, while they hopelessly burry their children from preventable violence.

Here is what would fix St. Louis and every other ghetto community in America. It's "multi-pronged" and includes a role for government (police/prosecutors) and one for society (parents). First, get rid of liberal urban policies; second, close all block grant development offices; third, hold parents accountable for their child's school attendance, school performance, and lifestyle choices; fourth, free K-12 public schools from the stranglehold of the teachers union; five, hire more police and give them the support needed to do their tough job including going back to quality of life enforcement (broken windows strategies) like stop, question and frisk; and six, keep violent repeat offenders of serious crimes locked up.

Is this going to be hard? You're damn right, but worth all the effort because black lives do matter. One dead child is too many. Thirteen dead kids in six months is an epidemic worthy of immediate action. Therefore, to all these absent so-called social justice black lives matter warriors, I say, stop trying to fix the police and fix the damn ghetto where these children are dying, as you look the other way in search of the next police shooting! 🇵🇸

*(Article courtesy of townhall.com)*

*Sheriff David Clarke Jr. is former Sheriff of Milwaukee Co, Wisconsin, President of AmericasSheriff LLC, Senior Advisor for America First, 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](http://www.americassheriff.com)*







*“ I just wanted to say thank you to our law enforcement officers for all you do and how you risk your lives everyday so that others can lead the life that they choose! For me and my family, we appreciate what you do even if there are some that do not. In the midst of great verbal assault we should stand by our Officers.”*

*Dr. Bill Aydin, M.D.*



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# WHEN IS AN INVENTORY SEARCH NOT AN INVENTORY SEARCH?



By Timothy Smith, Esq.

**P**olice officers engage in searches and seizures on a daily basis. One search that is commonly conducted is an inventory search of items in the possession of an arrestee, such as a handbag or a purse. In a recent case, entitled *State v. Hummel*, the New Jersey Supreme Court issued a warning that not all such searches will be accepted by the courts as valid just because the police claim that they were conducting a routine inventory search.

The *Hummel* case concerns the legality of a search and seizure of the contents of the handbag of a woman named Lori Hummel while she was detained at the Gloucester County Prosecutor's Office by two local police detectives. Ms. Hummel was a suspect in a stabbing death. In order to talk to her, she was picked up on two outstanding traffic bench warrants. The detectives brought her to the Gloucester County Prosecutor's Office and placed her in an interrogation room. She was seated at a table and she placed her purse on the table. She was questioned by the police and eventually invoked her right to counsel. Once she invoked her right to an attorney, her ankle was cuffed to a bar on the floor and she was told that she was in custody. A detective took her purse. This prompted her to remark that she hoped that the \$500 in cash that she had in the purse would not go missing. In response, the detectives took everything out of her purse. They found documents that, later on, linked her to the

murder victim. One detective then put all of the purse's contents back in the purse and left the room with the purse. After several hours, the police released Ms. Hummel from custody. She was arrested three days later for the murder.

The Supreme Court suppressed the documents found in Ms. Hummel's purse by the police. The court rejected the argument that the search was a legitimate inventory search justified by the officer's safety concerns and by Ms. Hummel's exclamation that she feared that the police would steal her money. As to the first claimed justification, the need to protect the police from any weapons that might be in the purse, the court pointed out that Ms. Hummel was allowed to keep her purse open and within her reach during the entire interrogation. Furthermore, she was even permitted to rummage through her purse several times in front of the detectives during the questioning. Also, the detectives never frisked Ms. Hummel. Last, the court considered it crucial that the police asked Ms. Hummel if she would rather examine the contents of her purse herself before the police searched it. Hence, the court concluded, it "was clear" that the police truly had no safety concerns with regard to the contents of Ms. Hummel's purse.

The Supreme Court also rejected the State's argument that the police reasonably searched through the purse in response to Ms. Hummel's explicit theft threat. The court did so because the search that was conducted went beyond what would have been necessary to uncover Ms. Hummel's cash. The problem was that when the police came across the incriminating documents, they read those documents. "Clearly," the Supreme Court said, "an inspection of the details of [the documents] found inside" Ms. Hummel's purse went beyond what was necessary to determine whether she actually had \$500 in cash in her purse. In

addition, the Supreme Court noted that inventory searches should be conducted according to standardized practices. Here, at the motion to suppress, the State offered no proof that the local police department involved actually had any policy or procedure in place as to how to conduct inventory searches. Last, the court ruled that the police detectives had recourse to less intrusive alternatives to protect them against false theft claims that would have simultaneously respected Ms. Hummel's constitutionally protected privacy rights. According to the court, "They could have, for example, placed [Ms. Hummel's] purse directly into a sealed evidence bag or asked [her] to make arrangements for someone to retrieve the bag from the prosecutor's office."

In sum, a claim that a search was conducted as an inventory search will not fly where the surrounding circumstances show that the police were actually engaged in a search for evidence—rather than a "traditional" inventory search conducted for administrative reasons according to standard practices of the department. In short, calling a search an inventory search doesn't necessarily make it so. 🌐

*Timothy R. Smith, a certified criminal trial attorney (less than 1% of New Jersey lawyers have satisfied the rigorous requirements necessary to achieve such a designation), devotes much of his practice to criminal and disciplinary defense. Smith was formerly employed as a police officer, detective, police union president and member of a prosecutor's office legal staff prior to transitioning into private legal practice. Smith has served as an adjunct professor of graduate studies at Seton Hall University. He has also served as a private consultant to the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey instructing police recruits in the area of search and seizure.*



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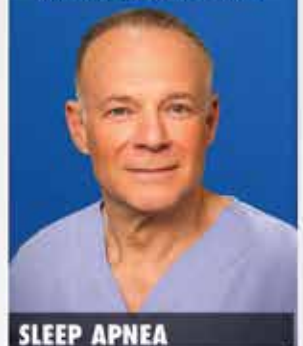
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# A Lot Of What's Wrong In Society

## FROM FIVE MINUTES IN SKID ROW

By Officer Deon Joseph

So I was in Skid Row walking a foot beat. I was anxious to get out there due to working special events and meetings. I missed being around the people. I grabbed some fliers with a list of programs for the homeless and headed out.

I had just exited the station onto Sixth Street. I didn't even get to the corner when I saw an officer in foot pursuit of a suspect.

Instinctively I ran flank to the suspect and called to him to stop. He looked and recognized me. He stopped immediately and lay on the ground. He was taken into custody without incident (community policing works, folks).

I gathered my fliers and started to head east toward San Julian. As I walked past a blue tent I heard a woman yelling for help.

I threw down my fliers and responded to the tent. I removed the tarp that was blocking the screen and saw a naked woman crouched upright in fetal position inside with a man who covered himself with a blanket.

I had the woman come out. I then ordered the man out and detained him without incident. Once he was secured I tried to talk to the woman, who was so severely mentally ill that she could not even tell me what happened. As she babbled incoherently, I tried everything I could, even getting a female officer to try to calm

her down so I could help her.

As the female officer was trying to help, an idiot who probably spends too much time on Shaun King's page kept taunting me because he felt I was racist for handcuffing a black man because the woman who was in the tent with him was white (she wasn't, and it didn't matter), he even accused me of setting him up because he was black.

I confronted him about his bullshit. He continued to rant that the woman was crazy and is always naked. Based on that, he thought it was all her fault and that she could not be a victim.

I have grown so tired of people who believe that because a woman is mentally ill or on drugs, that somehow she is less of a victim. It infuriates me when I hear that because I know that they make the perfect victim.

I caught myself and went back to the woman who refused to put her clothes on and was now throwing herself into a roll-up door.

Sadly, because she was so out of her mind, we were not able to determine what happened to her. I had to release the man.

As I walk over to unhandcuff him, he said "Why y'all got a black man like me handcuffed and humiliated. How you just gonna harass me for no reason?"

Before he could say another stupid

thing I interrupted him. "Bro. Ain't nobody harassing you. Put yourself in my shoes for a sec. You are a cop; you walked past a tent and hear a woman screaming for help. What would you do?" He looked at me humbled and said "Ummm. I guess I would have done the same thing." I had no choice

but to release him. My focus now was getting the woman some help. We took her to the station to have her evaluated. It wasn't her first time. She is known by officers and residents alike to walk around nude in one of the most dangerous places in the nation. But as it was initially explained to me, she did not meet the requirements for help. If it wasn't for her throwing herself against the door and trying to bang her head, I would have had to release her.

I took her to the hospital. There I was told (for the millionth time over 20 years) that she would be given a shot and released back into the street in a few hours.

So much failure in such a short amount of time.

What the system and ignorant people showed me once again, is the following:

- The system won't protect the most vulnerable no matter how hard we try.
- Chauvinistic mindsets are evil.
- Social justice rhetoric is poisoning the minds of black people.
- People believe that mentally ill people and drug addicts are not worthy of justice.
- Skid Row in its current state is a health and safety issue for women, men and the mentally ill. Because if I can't see them getting hurt in a tent, I cannot save them in most cases.

I'm sick of it all.

But I'm not going to stop caring. I'm not going to stop fighting. I'm not going to stop speaking out. One day, someone will hear me. 🌍

Deon Joseph is a 23 year veteran of law enforcement in Southern California - 21 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](http://www.deonjoseph.org).



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# Is police work just a job, or a calling?

By Kirk Lawless

**W**hy would anyone want to be a cop? It's a job. It's an adventure. It's a calling. All are true.

First, let's get the racism stuff out of the way. Are there racist cops on the job? Absolutely! You're going to see it firsthand and need to be prepared to deal with it. You're going to be on the receiving end of it as well, so be prepared to deal with that. People will hate you because of the color of your skin. People will hate you because you wear the uniform. Hell, they'll try to kick your ass just for wearing it, or they might just try to kill you.

On the job, you'll find out that a person's worst enemy, the one who will kill them, will in all probability look just like his victim. Gun violence in St. Louis, on the streets where I cut my teeth as a police officer, has seemingly reached a high-water mark in ferocity, but I wouldn't bet on it.

Black-on-black crime has killed nearly a dozen kids under 15 years old here within two weeks. Bullets do not discriminate. Old people get it, too. These folks don't give a shit about their victims or themselves. You put on that uniform, they're certainly not going to give a flying fuck about you. Remember that!

Missouri has usually been in the top three positions in methamphetamine production. The violence associated with clandestine meth business and culture is usually white-on-white, and again you will become the enemy.

In more diverse areas, the victims and perpetrators can be found in any flavor. You'd be rolling the bones if you tried to predict the race of either victim or offender. And again, you will ultimately be the enemy.

It takes a special person to be a good cop. I say that because lots of people are cops, it doesn't automatically mean they are good at it. Some just fill a bag and draw a paycheck, avoiding the work and danger. There will be lots of danger to go around.

I became a cop a long time ago, when Tasers were made of wood. I learned from some of the best how to be a good cop, a tough cop, and how to be fair. I nearly always let my first point of contact decide how things were going to go between us.

Do you need to be tough? You bet! But, being fair and showing a little compassion for your fellow man goes a long way on the job. You increase your survival if you build your career on the foundation of following my golden rule, "Don't be a dick!" Unfortunately, not everyone follows my rule. Most of the people you encounter on the job don't.

Learn as you go. Watch the "good" cops and follow their examples. Watch the "not so good" cops and don't do as they do.

Be careful whom you confide in. Folks need to earn your trust, and it's a two-way street.

I often find myself in one of the large police academies in a roomful of police recruits. It's a no-bullshit discussion. I don't lie to them. I don't represent anybody. I don't get paid. I don't volunteer. I field all questions. I'm hoping it gives me the opportunity to save lives by telling them things they way they need to be heard, with no sugar coating.

They need to know they are going to be second-guessed about lots of things by lots of people. They need to know they'll be second-guessed by people who don't know a damned thing about being a street cop, much less a good one, even more a dangerous one.

A dangerous one? Absolutely! Remember there are people who would like to see you dead. And there are some out there willing to make you that way. That's fact.

As you spend more time on the street, you'll get a reputation. Some might wish you dead because of the uniform, but some will eventually want you dead because of your name. A dangerous reputation, for the right reasons, is a good thing!

"If you done it, it ain't braggin"~Walt Whitman

I give the recruits a copy of my resume not to brag, just to show them what can be done in a great career (even one cut short). Their main goal should not be fame, and it's certainly not going to be fortune. The only goal they should strive for is to become what we refer to as "The Real Deal" and that needs no explanation.

I tell them things I wasn't taught in the police academy: the hard stuff, the bullshit, the politics, the incompetent supervisors, the wonder ponies (cops who bullshit their way to promotions or who kiss enough ass to circumvent the "natural flow" of things).

They need to know about the violence. They will carry a gun (or two...maybe three) and the new officers should be prepared to use them. I explain all of the tools I can think of, the mind being the most important.

I tell them it's OK to be scared yet remain fearless. It's a process, and it takes time, but they will eventually get it. My personal experiences made me both fearless and dangerous. One of my favorite quotes hangs above my desk;

"If you find yourself in a gunfight, don't let yourself feel rushed. Take your time, fast!"~ Captain John R. Hughes, Texas Ranger

I tell them what it's like to take a life, how to deal with it, and how I still deal with it. It takes no particular skill set to stand out in the open and soak up rounds without returning fire! Send some rounds downrange (screw that guy), "You try to kill us, we'll kill you right back!"

I emphasize to stay away from a cop who brags "I've never pulled my gun on anyone" or "I've never had a complaint or a resisting during my entire career." I've found that cops who make statements like that probably haven't done much police work in their career.

*(Continued on page 19)*



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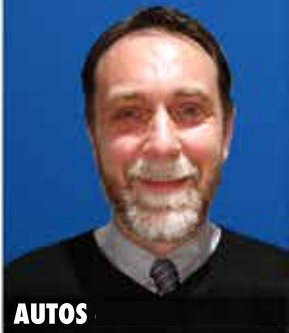
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## IS POLICE WORK JUST A JOB, OR A CALLING? (Continued from page 16)

So someday you'll be going on a "gun job" (and I would race you to a call like that) and you might see another car ahead of you at quite a distance and say you see that car turn off and not go to the call because it was "too hot" for the cop who could have beat you to the call. Avoid that guy or gal.

Also to be avoided (as much as possible) the supervisor who shows up after the proverbial or literal smoke has cleared and takes command of a scene that has already been handled. Similarly, you'll have the "tough guy" who shows up after the bad guy is in handcuffs or is otherwise incapacitated and runs his mouth because he's the boss and he's real tough. Try to avoid that one as well. That boss probably hadn't done much in his career, either.

I also tell them to pretend that when they're inside the station, there could be a rat within arm's reach, listening. It might be true. But knowing where you can talk and when you should or shouldn't is important to know.

I can tell them about post-shooting protocol and the nightmare if it's mishandled. I can tell you what it's like to be on a

call and find yourself in a working meth lab. I can also tell you what it's like to willfully enter a working meth lab whether by search warrant or under exigent circumstances. I've heard that risking getting poisoned, burned or blown up in a meth lab is good for a career.

I field any and all questions asked of me. I tell on myself. I tell them how dangerous it is (and sometimes foolish) to disarm someone armed with a knife or handgun, but I've done it several times. I can also tell them when I wouldn't do it!

Learning from other mistakes is a great tool, and if I can drive home a point by telling recruits about mistakes I've made, I'll tell it.

I'm a firm believer that police work is a calling. I'm a Christian, and regardless if you like hearing that or not, I would never deny it. So, if you're called to be a police officer and you want to learn about the job, find some no bullshit instructors who can back up their talk with the walk. Find the ones who won't lie to you or sugarcoat things. You might have hard time finding someone willing to open up heart and soul,

who will tell you some of the darkest stuff you'll ever hear, but you need to hear it. Chances are, you'll see lots of good things, miracles, and angels. You'll see the hand of God in action, without a doubt.

There is a lifetime of the most vile things you can imagine seeing waiting for you if you're called to this honorable profession. And smells, too! Don't forget about the smells!

P.S. The most important reason why I give the recruits my resume is it contains my contact info, [kirklawless@yahoo.com](mailto:kirklawless@yahoo.com) cell number (314) 302-0511. If I didn't care, I wouldn't give it out. Anyone need help from me, reach out! 📞

*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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# PATH BUILDING

By Anthony Mikatarian

**W**e each communicate, feel, live, aspire, dream, experience, spiritualize and think differently from others. However, everyone goes through tough learning curves and obstacles to fully awaken and embrace your unique God-given individuality and authenticity.

My own learned advice is to relish in walking your own path. When you do this without interference, such as peer pressure, guilt and insecurities, the weight on your shoulders will lighten. Don't let outside forces or your own negative internal voices pull you away from walking your own path. This means that you designate your own path in a mindful manner.

When you start to walk your own true path you may find yourself being shunned by others. You can be thought and spoken of in a disparaging manner. Based on my own experiences, by walking and believing in your own path, the probability is great that you will find people displeased with you not following their beliefs and path. This may initially sting, but you will learn to realize those people were only holding you down.

Walking your own path requires your complete accountability to yourself. You are the all-inclusive founder, architect, CEO, laborer and walker of your exclusive path. You will no longer be accustomed to living in a figurative cage and bust free from it. For a good portion of people, the rooted mistrust they have in themselves inhibits their ability to act, which ultimately leaves them with only the dream of making their own path.

In creating your new path, you can find yourself perplexed on how to start. Going against the grain can be frightening. You may also receive resistance from your previous social conditioning on clouding your

judgment on what your true path is. There are many who believe the righteous path to follow is the one of titles, degrees and stature. There are also path builders who believe their way of thinking is the only proper path to follow. These can come in forms such as good intentions, misguided intentions, obnoxious, pompous intentions and, unfortunately, those unscrupulous self-serving path builders. Obviously, the unscrupulous types are the most dangerous. They utilize purposeful tactics to have you blindly follow their herd through intimidation, manipulation and discrediting bullying along with deceptively clever phoniness.

As a fact of life, people will find themselves at a crossroads, where some or all these mentioned paths will be offered. Many will find themselves (intentionally or unintentionally) taking the bait by choosing one of these paths thinking it's the right one. It's OK, though, because I feel it is a temporary necessity to experience them for ourselves in order to grow and become the man or woman you were destined to be. You will gain valuable life experiences and lessons from every path, even when it is to benefit others at your own expense. You will gain the knowledge of what you want to aspire to be and what you never want to aspire to.

By braving your own path, you will eventually be rewarded with many freedoms, as well as gaining physical and emotional well-being. Some are as follows: walking and creating at your own pace; excitement of walking the unknown; emotional, spiritual and psychological well-being. New doors will open for you; you will gravitate toward people who truly back you and encourage you; and you will find the strength to back and encourage others

while gaining your own independence.

To walk your own path, you must have a warrior mentality. You will have to break through all the negative obstacles to reach your fulfillment. You will get beat up. You will sustain injuries and failures along the way. You will be ultimately tested, sometimes to the brink of being knocked out. However, with your warrior mentality, you must keep moving forward. Remember: If you are still breathing, you are not out of the fight!

In order to pave your own path, you must first love and rely solely on yourself. You will need to know what is really important to "you" and who "you" really are. You need to be laser focused and must question everything presented to you. You will have to discern between what is positive or negative for you. You will have to discern between who is good-intentioned and who is a predator. Most importantly, understand you WILL receive repercussions and backlash, especially from the predators. Stay the course! You will eventually start realizing that you are unique, confident and beautiful in your own way. The genuine personal relationships you had already established and the new ones you will form as you transform will be the ones who will truly satisfy you in your continued growth. God Bless and stay safe! 🌍

*Anthony Mikatarian has been a police officer for 19 years of service. He is currently assigned to patrol in a northern NJ municipality. He earned a Bachelor's degree from Johnson & Wales University, Providence, R.I., and another degree in Mortuary Science from the American Academy McAlister Institute in New York City.*





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## How can **WE ALL** help prevent police officer suicides?

By Sgt. Dave Kryger, Retired HTPD, NYPD and SWAT Crisis Negotiator

**W**e know of nine suicides in the NYPD so far this year. One suicide is one too many. This is not just an NYPD problem; this is a police officer problem nationwide. In the last three years, over 400 police officers have committed suicide nationwide. There are many variables that play into these officers who take their own lives, and I will discuss some of them later on in the article. Some of the issues, just to name a few, are job-related, personal, health, financial, marital and the overall stress of trying to fix everyone else's problems while ignoring their own. Police officers have always been taught that you need to be tough, you need to be strong and while that is true in some circumstances, what we're NOT taught enough is that it is OK to NOT be tough, to NOT be strong, when THEY need help. It is human to have moments of weakness, to be sad, to be in despair, however, how police officers deal with those moments of weakness, sadness and despair is one of the keys to preventing suicide.

While it is true that suicides occur in many different professions, why is it more prevalent in law enforcement? In part, it is due to the nature of the job, the things that we see, the things that we sometimes have to deal with, the reality of dead bodies, domestic violence, serious and/or fatal auto accidents, physical disputes, dead kids (especially when having kids of their own) etc. These are things that most people only see on TV, and after having dealt with all of these issues for 25 years myself, I can personally say that if you are fortunate enough to only witness these types of incidents on television, then you are indeed fortunate.

At the beginning of every police offi-

cer's tour, they attend a briefing or roll call in which they are given their assignments for the day. Police officers are then tasked with handling all of these jobs, but then at the end of the day, other than locker room talk, there is no debrief to discuss what they saw, no outlet to the tragedies, the dead kid, the marital discord that they tried to resolve, everyone else's problems that they fixed on their tour that day. Additionally, it is not socially acceptable to say to another cop, "Wow, that dead kid really screwed me up today." The norm is that the officer just internalizes those feelings, goes about the rest of his/her day and comes back for another tour, only to deal with some of these same jobs, day after day. Now, consider the impact on any human being who deals with these types of incidents for a period of 20-30 years. Police officers are expected to be superheroes, priests, sounding boards, marriage counselors, parents and so much more, including preventing other people from committing suicide.

So now that you know the types of jobs that police officers must handle, you may ask, why would one want to take this job and put themselves at risk for depression or suicide? The answer is a multitude of reasons. Some of it is tradition, as some of their family members have been police officers for generations and they wanted to be a part of that pride. Some took the job for the cliché of just wanting to help others. Looking back, some of it is also the influential media. Twenty or thirty years ago, the media & Hollywood glorified police officers when society loved the police. Police officers were heroes on shows like NYPD Blue, Third Watch and Law and Order. I will even go so far back as Hill Street

Blues. These shows glorified cops and showed police officers mostly saving lives, solving cases and conducting heroic acts. Some of these shows did show some of the stress and the occasional officer in despair, but not enough. After all, would that have made for good television?

The reality is, that was just a snippet of what police officers do, what they see and how they feel. They never really show the true drudgery of the job and the after affects, the emotional and physical toll that it takes on a police officer. They didn't show the police officer missing most of his or her family events or their kid's sports or school events. They don't show the missed major holidays at home with the family, or the police officer eating dinner on Christmas at noon so he/she can get to work by 4 p.m. and miss the rest of the day with family. They don't show the police officer who worked a shift and had to stay over at work to help another person's family get through the death of a loved one or an arrest for a violent domestic assault and as a result that officer not getting home in time for their own kid's birthday party. They don't show the police officer working the mandatory 60 to 70 hours a week to cover the staffing shortages because a specific group wants to protest and the officer is ordered to be present to maintain order. To be clear, not every officer is forced to work those long hours, and some do work for the overtime, but it all plays into an officer's mental health and well-being. They don't show you that a police officer's pay in United States of America on average is nominal and while there are exceptions where certain police officers will do well financially, they are the anomaly.



Compound the aforementioned with today's media and society quickly scrutinizing a police officer's every move and only playing part of a video that shows one side of a police-involved incident. Add in a supervisor who berates a subordinate, politics, and throw in some overzealous prosecutors/attorneys who are looking to advance their careers on the backs of prosecuting a police officer (such as seen in Baltimore). They all swing on a pendulum, sometimes the pendulum is on your side and sometimes it is not. Today the pendulum has swung to the opposite side. While I believe this is only temporary, it does not bode well for the officer on the street who is just trying to do his or her job. When everyone with a cellphone camera is trying to taunt police officers, while they are harassing police officers while they are trying to make police officers the next YouTube sensation in order that they may cash in on a frivolous lawsuit, combined with the anti-police rhetoric that has been drummed up over the past 10 years in this country, it is no wonder that police officers are caving in

to the stress. This just adds to what police officers must endure.

Years ago, you were expected to be tough and deal with it and internalize it all and then at the end of your tour you would go have a couple of beers with the boys and girls and that should make it all better. Those days are long gone, and that is not the answer.

While most departments do offer mental health services for officers who are struggling, the stigma is if you report to those services, for fear of potential litigation by placing an officer back on the street, that officer is at risk to being sidelined. At that point the officer is now labeled and may never see any sort of police street-related duties. The job will now perceive you as a risk and you could potentially lose your detail or even your job.

So knowing all of this, what can be done to help to prevent suicides by police officers? I don't profess to have the final answer, but in part, I can tell you that it starts in the police academy. From day one, police officers need to be taught at least once

a week until they graduate that while they are going to deal with these incidents, it is important that they do not internalize them and that they need a safe, healthy outlet with someone they can speak to about these issues so that they can work past them. These mental health services need to be conspicuously posted, strenuously encouraged, yet discreetly handled. Police officers need to know that there is somewhere they can go that is NOT job-related and that they can speak to someone without fear of reprisal or losing their gun, their detail or their job.

There are close to 800,000 police officers in the United States. It is more than likely that if you are reading this article, then you know someone who is a police officer and it is your responsibility to look out for police officers, too. If you are a civilian and you have a police officer friend or family member and you see a change in that police officer's behavior, dress, demeanor, a negative pattern of behavior, the giving away of personal belongings, anything that may indicate that something is wrong, it is YOUR responsibility to try to get them help. We need to do this together and pull in all resources. Keep in mind that not everyone who is contemplating suicide will outwardly display these changes in behavior patterns, however, when they are exhibited, it is important to take proactive steps to help get these officers the assistance that they need, discreetly and imminently. For years it has been perceived that asking for help is a sign of weakness, but the reality is just the opposite. It takes more strength to ask for help than it does to take an easy way out of a difficult situation. The fear of being stigmatized prevents many officers from asking for help.

When officer suicides occur, many look for someone to blame. While there may be some blame in some instances, let's put that aside right now and focus on PREVENTION. If we are serious about trying to prevent these suicides from occurring, WE need to start by doing two things,

1. We all need to look out for each other - friends, family, coworkers, etc. When you see a police officer in despair it is all of our responsibility to reach out.

2. We need to eliminate the "ASKING FOR HELP MAKES YOU WEAK" stigma. This stigma needs to end NOW. Police officers need to know that they have REALISTIC approval from the job and their peers to seek assistance, otherwise, they never will.

On a final note, I personally know people who have committed suicide and some who have attempted suicide. What I can say of those who attempted, they are still here with us, however, this was due to either intervention by someone who cared or the suicidal person reaching out themselves. Either way lives were saved. Do not let another police officer go it alone. 🙏

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## **BLUE-ON-BLUE:**

# **THE NOT SO FRIENDLY, FRIENDLY FIRE**

*By Joseph R. Uliano, Ed.D.*

**A**n acceptable loss is in most cases an undefined number of deaths inflicted by enemy combatants, as a military formation advances to meet a specific objective while tolerating the loss, with the anticipation of a successful mission.

However, beneath the overtness of an acceptable loss is the reality that lives will also be lost at the hands of their own. Accidental loss, inadvertent loss, or the most commonly referred “Friendly Fire,” are coined phrases utilized to make these unthinkable acts sound more acceptable. In an eerie coincidence that can be related to law enforcement friendly fire, the military boots on the ground refer to friendly fire as “Blue-On-Blue.” Historically, blue represents friendly forces on the battlefield, whereas red is used to identify enemy forces. A phrase that has a greater significance to law enforcement, because when holding the “Blue Line,” often under the most extreme conditions, the notion of “Blue-On-Blue” is unfathomable. Unlike a military campaign, an acceptable loss does not exist in law enforcement and if were to exist in the minds of some, friendly fire would not

be included.

Every leader under fire is aware of the reality associated with friendly fire, but they do their best to suppress it, as to not breach the morale of their troops as they advance into harm’s way.

When applying the words “accidental” or “inadvertent,” the implication is that mistakes have been made. Mistakes that can be blamed on modern technological warfare or even human error. As unpleasant as it is, blaming friendly fire on flawed technology, such as a failed GPS when deploying an airstrike behind what was believed to be enemy lines comes up a mile or so short killing “friendly” forces, is an acceptable risk, because we know technology is never fool-proof. However, blaming human error on friendly fire in most cases is an unfair statement to make when resulting from a hostile and combative situation. Don’t misconstrue the sentiments here, because accidents do happen during training exercises within the military and law enforcement communities, and unfortunately, negligence is often proven as many of these deaths are deemed preventable. The point being made here and a separating variable between military

and civilian law enforcement friendly fire is the placement of blame.

In times of war, friendly fire is not as identifiable as it is in the civilian world and when it is identified it is truly viewed as an “acceptable loss” often lacking media attention and political insight that prolongs the pain and suffering from not only the families of the fallen, but also the pain and suffering of the individual(s) that actually pulled the trigger or dropped the bomb.

Out on the streets, the media jumps all over stories involving law enforcement and friendly fire, almost as if they are seeking to prove what they perceive as a level of incompetency, shifting blame away from the assailant and onto the responding law enforcement officers. Make no mistake about it, when an officer is killed in the line of duty resulting from a combative situation the blame should always be placed on the assailant, even when friendly fire is proven. A concept that sometimes lacks emphasis when a politician stands in front of a podium and announces the unthinkable, perhaps for a political agenda that creates the illusion that our streets are safer than they appear, because “human error” took

the life of a police officer and not a member of the criminal element.

Moving forward, it would be an injustice to interject any further politics into this, as most readers understand the agenda mentioned here. What needs to be focused on is how we care for the families of the fallen, the officer(s) that pulled the trigger, and how we can work to prevent future acts of friendly fire. I believe every member of service gets brought to their knees for a few moments when the announcement comes that a brother or sister was killed by friendly fire. For a moment time seems to freeze, as we first feel sorrow the fallen officer and their family, and what often follows is the sorrow for the involved officer(s), as we place ourselves in their boots knowing that it could have been anyone of us pulling that trigger or even on the receiving end for that matter.

Today, law enforcement is plagued by post-traumatic stress disorder, leaving many of our brothers and sisters struggling with the sights, sounds, and smells of an unthinkable act, an act that the human mind was not meant to observe or be part of. I previously mentioned placing yourself in the boots of an officer who acted in good faith responding to volatile incident. One that is responding with one goal in mind; rescuing a brother or sister who is in the fight of their life, as the words "Send Me, I Will Go" are played over and over until they arrive at the footsteps of hell, a fire fight if you will. Then in the blink of an eye, seconds, a trigger is pulled in good faith and the intended target is missed. Quickly, the unfathomable becomes a reality and our responding heroes realize that they unfortunately took the life of one of their own.

In law enforcement the term co-worker is replaced with "brother or sister," and it's not a job, it's a family. Taking the life of an officer, a family member, when you believed you were there to give life back, is irreparable and I don't know how anyone could ever live with that. This requires an explanation from someone with a higher pay grade than my own, so I won't even begin to try and explain it, perhaps only God knows this answer, but what I do know is that we are our brothers keepers and when the unfathomable occurs we must embrace not only the family of the fallen but also the involved officer(s) who were acting in good

faith as they will need us too; forever.

In the New York City Police Department, friendly fire can be traced as far back to 1905, a year that took the life of Officer Ira B. Kinne at the hands of Officer John Clare during a training exercise at the Ninth Regiment Armory. As previously mentioned, we know that these unfortunate deaths sometimes do occur during training, and as grim as they are, we later use them as learning experiences for the betterment and safety of law enforcement. In the case of Clare, the investigation suggested that he was intoxicated at the time of the incident and violated departmental rules by entering the training area with a loaded revolver, thus taking the life of Kinne, during a preventable and negligent act. That was 1905 and today we don't hear of officers showing up to training exercises while impaired, handling firearms and negligently injuring their own. However, what can be related to the 1905 incident is that officers, more so recruits, are sometimes observed entering a training exercise with a loaded weapon when advised not to, but are quickly corrected without incident, which brings us to training and how there is a need to work to prevent friendly fire within the law enforcement profession.

The New York City Police Department is the largest law enforcement agency in the United States, the size of a small army. Their officers courageously work in some of the most violent and toughest areas known to law enforcement, putting them at a greater risk of injury and unfortunately death, but law enforcement friendly fire is still not and should not be considered an acceptable loss as seen in the military. However, law enforcement cannot elude the substantial risk of "Blue-On-Blue" incidents, specifically because we live volatile society, and in some cases our law enforcement officers are patrolling areas that can be likened to warzones, in fact some of these areas have taken more lives of law enforcement officers than soldiers on foreign lands.

Tragically, 2019 has claimed the lives of Detective Brian Simonsen and Officer Brian Mulken both of the NYPD just seven months apart from each other as a result of friendly fire, while they heroically fought to make their communities safer by taking on the evil that lurks among the good. In a

response to Officer's Mulken's untimely and tragic death, the NYPD announced that they would increase the training for plain clothes officers by subjecting them to live fire exercises and training simulators.

Increased training is a step in the right direction and should always be available to law enforcement officers, but it needs to encompass one's frame of mind and not be exclusive to physical and practical training as seen in well-orchestrated and "safe" live fire exercises or in front of a simulator. One frame of mind that is in question during friendly fire incidents is how one reacts to the sight of a gun or the sound of gunshots during a violent encounter. I have spoken to SWAT team members and military special operators over the years and many of them agree that nobody knows how they will react under fire until they are confronted by it. They of course also agree that training is key when developing the warrior mindset, but then again, these highly trained operators, have a greater opportunity to receive the proper training than those assigned to patrol or in a plain clothes unit, specifically because training is part of their routine duties.



In the academy, recruits are taught to be hypervigilant to the words “Gun, Gun, Gun” when on motor vehicle stops or dealing with a street encounter, but then a few years later, they are faced with reacting to the silent killer; complacency, narrowing their hypervigilance and reducing it to a reaction without thought, relying on muscle memory, point and shoot. For those of us out there instructing firearms, we teach the recruits to scan for threats and they do a fine job completing this critical task. Yet, when it’s time to requalify some of the veterans, instructors are heard yelling “scan, scan, scan” before holstering. How about coming up on target and aiming for center mass before pulling trigger? The recruits do a fine job completing this task as well by the time they are ready to qualify, but with some of the veterans, we see point and shoot, thankfully in those cases it’s a “Q” target and not a friendly.

Taking a more preventable approach to reducing friendly fire is in fact training, I think we can all agree on that, but are we training enough to rid our minds of complacency? Are we doing enough to assist in developing the warrior mindset during shoot don’t shoot scenarios? Some believe the warrior mindset cannot be taught, citing, “Either you have it, or you don’t.” With twenty years of service, I won’t completely disagree with that notion, as I have witnessed the difference between “flight or fight,” and sometimes its surprising to see who rises to the occasion and who does not. What I won’t agree with is that we should

accept “Either you have it, or you don’t,” as unprepared, perhaps even untrained officers hold the responsibility to recognize areas that need improvement, specifically the handling of firearms, as the majority of officers, as seen in New Jersey only shoot 100 rounds bi-annually in order to carry their service weapon. Where are the tactics? How can the warrior mindset be developed through firing 100 rounds at a stationary target? I think anyone qualifying under these conditions knows the answers. They are non-existent. So, I ask, who will step up to the plate and train to prevent further acts of friendly fire? I don’t necessarily mean departmental training either. I think many of you reading this know how unavailable training of this nature is to all of you. I’m talking about training on your own if it’s not provided to you or if you continuously walk away from training lacking confidence; the kind of confidence that you know will keep you in the fight, while making sound decisions. If your agency is not providing it, look for it, there are plenty of courses being offered. Now, this might cost you a few bucks out of your pocket, but how can you place a value on the life of your partner or even yourself?

When tragedies of this nature strike everyone pays a price. The deceased is gone, and their family is forever without the in-person and up-close love and support of their dearly departed. The officer(s) who fired the fatal shot(s) must live with the trauma and aftermath of knowing that a life was taken of a fellow brother or sister by

their own hands. These are happenings of consequence which impact lives forever, so we must work harder to prevent them. We must find ways through constant assessment and training to limit, if not eliminate, “friendly fire.”

In the meantime, when all is said and done and critical incident reviews have been completed, in our hearts, we should find forgiveness and healing through togetherness. Afterall, we are all in this life or death battle together. No life greater than the other.

Let us not forget the sacrifices that Detective Brian Simonsen and Officer Brian Mulken made for their communities while out on their beat and may they teach the warrior mindset from up above, as they forever look down upon their brothers and sisters in BLUE... 🌐

*Joseph Uliano has served as a police officer for nearly two decades and is assigned to the patrol division where he works as a field training officer and departmental instructor. He holds a Doctorate in Education (Ed.D.) from Seton Hall University where he also earned an Educational Specialist Degree (Ed.S.) in Educational Leadership, Policy, and Management. Prior to earning these advanced degrees, he also earned a Master’s Degree in Human Resources, Training, and Development and a Bachelor’s Degree in Criminal Justice.*



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# Tell a lie long enough, *and...*

By Lt. Patrick J. Ciser (Ret.)

“It becomes the truth.” One such lie is that our kids today have it harder than we did. Think about it; does anyone believe that, except for the kids? I’m a Baby Boomer. Anyone born after WWII from 1945-1965 are “Boomers.” Millions who served in the military, and those who worked extremely hard here at home in support of the war effort, felt incredible relief and exhilaration that peace had finally been achieved in Europe, and later in the Pacific over Japan in 1945. The celebrations and optimism for a wonderful life were at an all-time high! Try, just for a moment, to envision their lives throughout the Great Depression and World War II. Many remained taciturn over the years while keeping some of the horrors that they witnessed and experienced deep inside. Today, we have movies like “Saving Private Ryan” and the series, “Band of Brothers” to get a glimpse into events that were sometimes hard to understand and fully appreciate by those who never lived it. So as a result of America’s economy doing so much better after the war, with The New Deal, and the housing boom, Americans finally had hope for a better future, got married and started a family. The suburbs were born and quickly expanded. But think about what they all had to endure to get here.

When I was young, and many from my generation can relate to this, I started work-

ing at anything I could at age 13. I would walk the neighborhood raking neighbors leaves for a couple of bucks in the fall and shoveling out driveways in the winter. At 14 I got a paper route and delivered newspapers for the Herald News in addition to my seasonal work. NOBODY I knew had a landscaper, or even a snow plow; only rich people did. Most parents back then didn’t have two incomes, as our mothers were usually housewives who took care of the home and children. With six kids in my family, my father worked seven days a week and also a couple of evenings. We were poor by today’s standards, but we didn’t really know it. I never in my life had a new bicycle, for instance. At age 16, I got a job at the local Foodtown. This was great for me as I wanted to start saving money for a car one day. We all worked hard, went to school, put up with all the bullshit peer pressure like today, and had an occasional fist fight behind the school building. Many of us were also accustomed to getting a beating from our fathers when we did something wrong. Millennials by contrast got “time outs” when they screwed up. Teenagers today get cyber bullied, which is certainly a problem, but don’t have to worry as much as my generation did about “actual” bullying, and getting jumped after school.

Think of all of the inventions developed over the years since 1945 that made

our lives so much easier. I remember my mother hanging our clothes on the backyard line to dry and then of course, she’d then have to iron most of them later. A dishwasher? What’s that? We had homework AND chores to do all week long. More and more women entered the work force in the ‘60s and ‘70s, giving many families two incomes. Baby Boomers would say, generally, my kids are not going to do without, like I had to. The demand for toys was so high that stores like “Toys R Us” started to pop up. Our kids would get brand new bicycles and anything else we could afford. People began taking their kids on wonderful vacations, including Disneyworld. I never flew on a plane until I had enough money to do so. Today in the suburbs it’s fairly common that parents buy, whether new or used, their kids’ first car for them. I could go on and on about how much we spoiled entire generations ... and yes, we even lied to them in an effort to show empathy for their, according to them, extremely tough lives. But at what cost? Don’t coddle your kids; you’re not doing them any favors. Push them to try, fail, and then try harder rather than feel sorry for themselves.

Note: This article reflects my observations of mostly middle-class America today of all races. Poor people don’t have it as good as our middle class, but still have more today than poor people had in the 1960s. TEACH STRENGTH and personal responsibility, you’ll be glad you did! 🌐

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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.





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# THE ALLURE OF GANGS

By Joel E. Gordon

*“You prevent kids from joining gangs by offering after-school programs, sports, mentoring, and positive engagement with adults. You intervene with gang members by offering alternatives and employment to help redirect their lives. You deal with areas of high gang crime activity with real community policing. We know what works.”*

~Father Greg Boyle, founder of Homeboy Industries - the largest gang-intervention, rehabilitation, and re-entry program in the world.

“You got to understand that every block is controlled by a gang. If you try to set up a tent, they’re gonna come to you and say, ‘Hey if you want to be here, guess what, you got to put in the work.’ Many of these individuals owe drug debts. So they’re more than willing to cooperate with the gang members, either out of fear or to work off their drug debt and support their habit and that’s why things are getting worse and worse and worse.” – Officer Deon Joseph on gangs and skid row.

For each and every one of us a need for love, affection and belonging results from the fact that human beings are sociable and need relationships with others. People deprived of these interactions due to dysfunctional cultural or family factors seem bored and joyless, even when doing well at their chosen tasks and frequently experience feelings of loneliness, pain, sadness, separation and unworthiness. Psychologist Abraham Maslow states: “The person will hunger for affectionate relationships with people in general for a place in the group if not family, religion, town or class.” Hence a gang will often fill this void in a young person through gang affiliation.

Many youth are introduced to the gang culture at a very young age. Membership and loyalty to the neighborhood gang becomes a matter of family and honor.

Risk factors leading to gang involvement:

- Unstable/broken home
- Economic instability

- Low education attainment and expectations
- Family members in a gang
- Neglect by one or both parents
- Violence in the home or in the community, directed at the child
- Alcoholism and or drug abuse by one or both of the parents

The Los Angeles California Police Department offers this explanation as to why young people join gangs on its official LAPD website:

Gang members join a gang by either committing a crime or undergoing an initiation procedure wherein they are beaten by fellow gang members to test their courage and fighting ability. Their motivations for joining the gang are varied, but usually fall within one of the following:

- **Identity or Recognition** - Being part of a gang allows the gang member to achieve a level of status he/she feels impossible outside the gang culture.
- **Protection** - many members join because they live in the gang area and are, therefore, subject to violence by rival gangs. Joining guarantees support in case of attack and retaliation for transgressions.
- **Fellowship and Brotherhood** - To the majority of gang members, the gang functions as an extension of the family and may provide companionship lacking in the gang member’s home environment. Many older brothers and relatives belong, or have belonged to the gang.
- **Intimidation** - Some members are forced to join if their membership will contribute to the gang’s criminal activity. Some join to intimidate others in the community not involved in gang activity.
- **Criminal Activity** - Some join a gang to engage in narcotics activity and benefit from the group’s profits and protection.

Unfortunately, few youths realize the hazards associated with gang involvement. In many cases, parents are unaware of their children’s gang activity and are unable to intervene until it’s too late.

As life gets more complex in our modern world even more risk factors emerge. Interestingly, in the 1940s the Department of Education asked teachers to list the discipline problems in public schools:

- Chewing gum
- Getting out of the line
- Improper clothing
- Making noise
- Not putting paper in the waste basket
- Running in the halls
- Talking

The same survey taken in the 1990s:

- Abortion
- Absenteeism
- Aids/HIV
- Assault
- Bombing
- Drug / alcohol abuse
- Extortion
- Gang violence
- Murder
- Rape
- Robbery
- School shootings
- Suicide
- Teen pregnancy
- Vandalism

While much work remains to be done on many fronts, as time moves on the more mentoring that we can do while providing alternative support and programs to our youth the better chance we will have in combating the allure of gang life for future generations to come. 🌐

*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](http://stillseekingjustice.com)*





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# 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

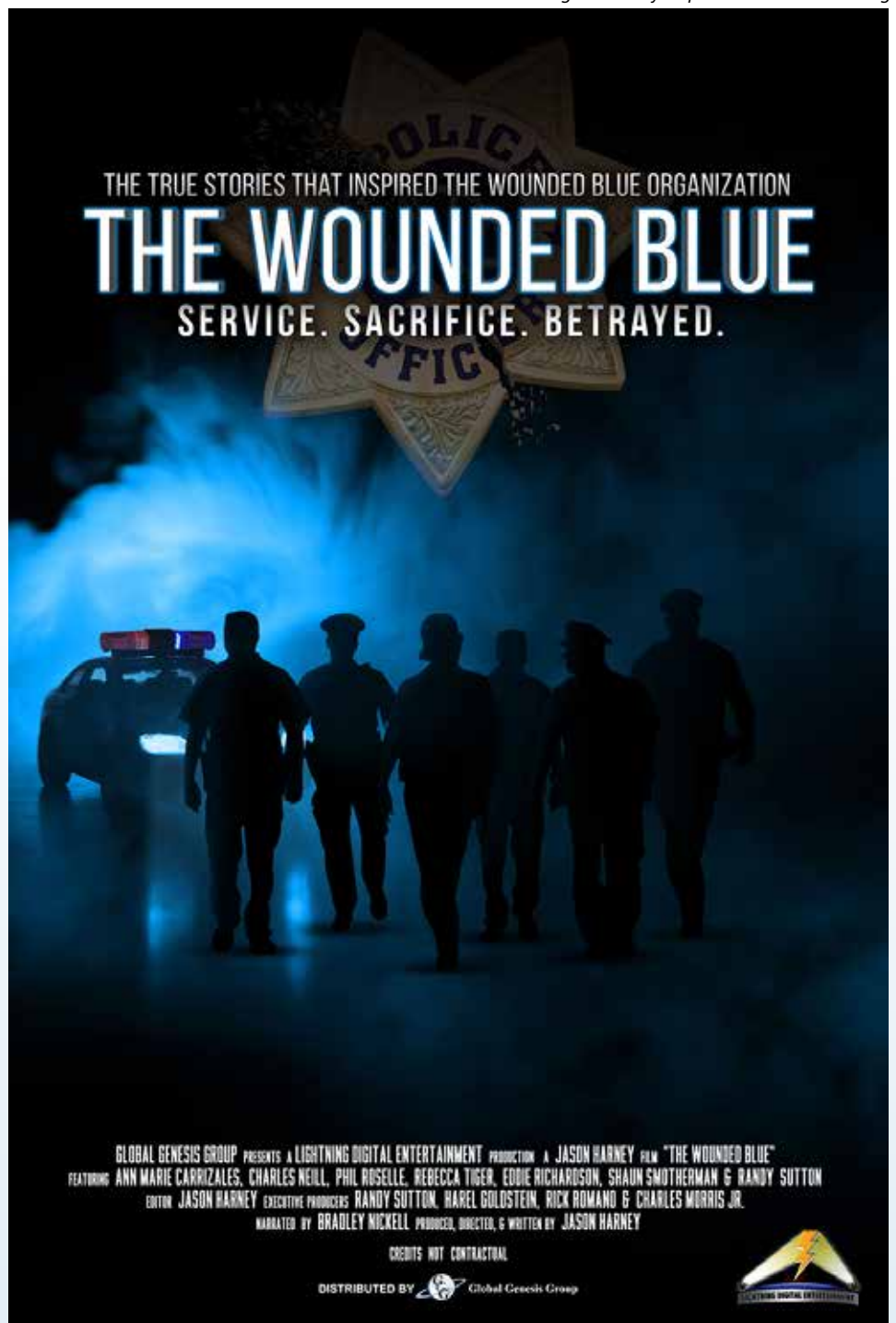


stronger laws and protection for the American law enforcement officer, all while remaining an advocate for the positive public perception of law enforcement.

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.

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](http://stillseekingjustice.com)*





## Everybody hates cops. But, do they really? **DON'T BELIEVE IT!**

By Kirk Lawless

**T**he “mainstream” media wants folks to believe that everybody hates cops. It’s great for ratings. Anti-cop headlines pull readers in. Violence, when police are part of it, ignites small fires usually. Occasionally, it’s a big fire and that keeps the media busy and they jump on the stories like hyenas on dead meat.

The liberal left wants cops gone. They encourage the media to give face-time to educators who spew their bile about wanting cops dead and talk about how easy it would be to do it. Obviously they wouldn’t dare do it themselves, but they would certainly like to bend the mind of an easily influenced follower to carry out their wishes. There are some in this country who want complete anarchy. Be careful what you wish for!

Then you have the race-baiters. Every police action, according to them, is based on race and these folks can smell a microphone or a television camera from a mile away for a chance to beat that dead horse.

“Hands up don’t shoot!” is bullshit and based on a lie. It was spawned in my part of the country. “Black Lives Matter” similarly is based on its own racist roots tied to the Black Liberation Army and the Black Panther Party (the original or the new one, take your pick).

I find it laughable (although it’s not funny) when they interview one of these clowns and they appear on camera wearing a T-shirt bearing the likeness of Wesley Cook (Mumia Abu-Jamal) noted as a political activist and journalist, when he is nothing more than a racist cop murderer, the killer of Officer Danny Faulkner.

I’ve seen celebrities wearing shirts plastered with the picture of Joanne Chesimard (Assata Shakur) another BLA member and convicted cop murderer, who took part in the murder of Trooper Werner Foerster. Convicted and sentenced to life, she escaped and fled to Cuba and was granted asylum. When former President, Barrack Obama went to Cuba, the first thing he should have demanded was the immediate surrender of Chesimard to the United States, but I believe he falls into the category

of cop hater (or at the very least, he uses us as political pawns as it fit his agenda), so that didn’t happen.

It wasn’t accidental that the photograph of Obama printed in the papers was taken in front of a building bearing the image of Che Guevara (whose face can be seen on T-shirts worn by students of every flavor on liberal campuses across the country... and most have no idea about him and his history).

Mayor De Blasio recently appeared during a photo-op shaking hands with some nameless man sporting garb with one of the aforementioned shit-birds on it, again not accidental. These folks aren’t stupid. Such a simple act can be a deliberate slap in the face to law enforcement.

Political candidates talk about police reform and demonize the job, and portray us as the enemy, as wanton killers, and throw us under the bus at every opportunity. Elizabeth Warren tweeted that Michael Brown was murdered by Officer Darren Wilson.

The very notion that we (the police) are dropping bodies with the frequency they suggest, if true, would have the streets of The United States of America lined with bodies, stacked like cordwood. A lot of folks ignore the statistics.

I’ll lay it down in simple numbers about the “killer-cops” out there, and I invite you to do your own research and you’ll find that what I’m saying completely destroys the left and their anti-cop agenda.

There are roughly 327 million people in the United States. In 2018, there were approximately 865,000 law enforcement officers in the United States (for matters of simplicity let’s round that number up to 1 million people). The average number of people killed by the police each year usually hovers around the 1,000 mark. Keeping those figures in mind, .001 percent of the police officers have taken a life in the line of duty (the real percentage is closer to .0008).

So my question to the folks who purport that the police are willy-nilly murdering folks every damned day is, “Where are all the bodies?”

This is the agenda the anti-police entities are pounding into the “empty” heads. They want the people to hate us. The police-hating media needs the people to hate us. The police-hating politicians need the people to hate us. The police haters need future generations of police haters to join their ranks. They want their lies perpetuated. It fits their agenda.

Here’s the deal: There are some people who hate the police. There always will be. The criminals hate the police. We are a necessary evil.

Are we living in a communist nation where the media spoon-feeds us only the information they want to us to have, hoping a majority of folks might buy into that thinking?

Guess what? The majority of folks don’t hate us. Some people don’t even have an opinion of us (until they need us). Get out there on the pro-police pages and Twitter feeds and check them out. The majority of folks actually love us! Right now, there is plenty of negativity about us in the mainstream media. That’s not our concern.

Look at the outpouring of support when one of us taken away by the angels. Cop-hating agitators do not attend the large police funerals (they know better). The citizens are not faking their love for us while watching the funeral cortege while teary-eyed and waving the American flag! You can watch CNN and listen to some brainwashed morons and then switch to FOX News and see the polar opposite.

Nearly every day, on the hundreds of pro-police Facebook pages I subscribe to, there are stories (and videos) of citizens risking their personal safety by coming to the aid of local police officers. Look at the lines of civilians who stand in front of police lines as a buffer between agitators. The men standing between mayhem and police know the police are limited in what they can do because the “eyes of the world” are on them. The men holding the line do not have rules of engagement to follow, and notice how few times the agitators try to break that line to get to the police. It doesn’t

*(Continued on bottom of page 41)*

***"NEVER NEVER NEVER GIVE UP."***



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# BRING BACK THE FEAR

By Lt. Randy Sutton (Ret)

When did the police become America's punching bags. I mean that literally as well as figuratively. Was there a defining moment? Or did our country gradually morph into a society where the authority of law enforcement officers has eroded to the point where even grade school children no longer fear consequences from confrontations with the police.

Now I know that simply using the word "fear" in a conversation about law enforcement is in and of itself politically incorrect. I mean after all, if one was to listen to all of the political rhetoric coming from senators, congressmen, governors, mayors and all assorted others who consider themselves experts in law enforcement and community relationships, the police should work tirelessly and relentlessly to reform themselves into a kinder and gentler culture. Every discussion concerning violence and law enforcement always and inevitably will center around fault. Whose fault? I will give you just one guess: the police.

Let's take a short walk down memory lane. Remember just a few years ago when everyone from the media to the President of the United States Barack Obama were crying out for body-worn cameras to be issued to every police officer in the United States? Why? To protect the public from those mean old bullies, the police. The word "reform" was the rallying cry for politicians, the media and social justice warriors. So, quite literally millions and millions of dollars have been spent on equipping law enforcement officers across the United States with body-worn cameras. But I wonder if you have noticed this, when was the last time that you heard these demands for body-worn cameras? The answer is you probably haven't. Why? The answer is also simple. The reality is that the use of body-worn cameras has revealed

that law enforcement officers are acting appropriately, not using force unnecessarily and have shown that it is actually the police who need to be protected from the public. And once again I mean this both physically in terms of assaults against them and in the thousands of frivolous and concocted complaints filed against them for everything from excessive force to sexual assault. Yes, the evidence is quite clear. The vast majority of law enforcement officers in this country do their jobs as they are expected to.

Yet the war against cops continues not only unabated, but is accelerating. Every single day a law enforcement officer puts on his uniform and goes out on patrol they are quite literally putting their lives on the line. The murder rate against officers continues, shootings of officers take place almost daily in this country and physical assaults have become commonplace. The important question here is why? I am going to relate my theory and I am going to relate my solution. I am pretty sure that the International Association of Chiefs of Police won't be adopting it. As to my theory of why? Because all of the "reforms" the law enforcement has been called upon to make have been all too successful. All of the mandatory training in de-escalation techniques, Sensitivity Training, Implicit Bias, and Community Relations combined with law enforcement administration's heavy-handed disciplinary processes relating to use of force incidents have sufficiently intimidated working cops into becoming minimally aggressive in order to survive the political environment. Some refer to this as de-policing, and that is an accurate characterization. It is simply a matter of survival. Not necessarily physical survival but political survival.

What does this look like? It means less proactive police work. It means fewer car stops looking for criminals. It means fewer

pedestrian stops looking for guns, drugs and fugitives. It means fewer physical encounters, it means getting out of the patrol car less, it means taking fewer risks as in, "You'll never get in trouble for the car stop you don't make." In other words, it means the bad guys are winning. When the police are afraid to do their job, not because of the physical dangers but because of the political dangers, society as a whole becomes a much more hazardous place to be.

I told you before that I also had a solution. Everything that I just talked about concerning the factors of de-policing empowers criminality, civil unrest, violence and injustice. Why? Because when people figure out that there are no consequences for their actions, the reality is that the ugliness of human nature is unleashed. Robbers find it easier to rob, thieves find it easier to steal, drug dealers deal their poison with impunity and our very society becomes threatened. I believe it is time to "bring back the fear." Fear of consequences first and foremost, and that includes the fear of the police. Does that sound harsh? Well I believe that a little fear is healthy. I think the fear is a deterrent to criminality. I think that someone should be fearful of putting their hands on a law enforcement officer. I think that someone should be fearful of pulling a gun on a cop. I think that someone should be fearful of becoming argumentative and disrespectful to a police officer and resisting arrest.

I served as a police officer for 34 years, and I will tell you this as sure as I'm sitting here, I lived this rule: If you try to hurt me I'm going to hurt you back. If you try to kill me, I'm going to kill you first. Simple. Those are the rules of the road. It is time for police leadership to stop surrendering to political whims and fantasies. Law enforcement is often messy, law enforcement is often ugly,



and law enforcement is always dangerous. It is the responsibility of political leaders and it is the responsibility of law enforcement leaders to make the playing field as safe as possible for the men and women who serve in our nation's law enforcement agencies. That means understanding that law enforcement officers will need to use force, including deadly force, to accomplish their mission and safeguard their own lives. And no amount of political correctness should stand in the way of allowing our country's cops to do with they are paid to do: Serve and protect... and that includes protecting themselves. 🇺🇸

Randy Sutton is a 34-year law enforcement veteran and nationally known media commentator on law enforcement issues. Randy is the Founder of "THE WOUNDED BLUE," The National Assistance and Support Organization for Injured and Disabled Law Enforcement Officers. He served 10 years in the Princeton, New Jersey, Police Department and 24 years with the Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department retiring at the rank of lieutenant. He is recognized as one of the most highly decorated officers in the LVMPD history, having awards for Valor, Community Service, Exemplary Service and multiple Life-



saving awards. He has trained thousands of law enforcement officers in the United States on the subject of "POLICING WITH HONOR." He is the author of "TRUE BLUE Police Stories by Those Who Have Lived Them", "A COP'S LIFE", "TRUE BLUE TO PROTECT AND SERVE", and has been recognized by the President of the United States while receiving the "POINTS OF LIGHT" Award and is also the author of the Amazon #1 Bestselling book, "THE POWER OF LEGACY, Personal Heroes of America's Most Inspiring People" He is the Host of the popular Podcast and LiveTalk Radio show BLUE LIVES RADIO, THE VOICE OF AMERICAN LAW ENFORCEMENT. His web site is [www.randysuttonspeaks.com](http://www.randysuttonspeaks.com)



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**EVERYBODY HATES COPS. BUT, DO THEY REALLY? DON'T BELIEVE IT!** (Continued from page 38)

happen, because the everyday working class law-abiding citizens are sick and tired of the bullshit and they will go into harm's way to protect cops and they will commit harm if necessary to protect us and the anti-police agitators know it (and P.S. the good citizens aren't wearing body cameras)

So when you gear up to hit the streets

for your next shift, you need to know that there are many people who support you, love you, and some who will protect you if you are under attack. Bet on it! 🇺🇸

Kirk Lawless is a 28 year, decorated, veteran police officer from the St Louis area. He's a former SWAT operator, narcotics agent, ho-

micide 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.





# I Am My Brothers Keeper! ARE YOU?

By Michael Boll

A few years ago, I was approached by a friend and co-worker of mine who expressed how extremely depressed he was and that he wanted to take his own life. Initially, I was completely shocked because this guy seemed to be upbeat and happy all the time. Immediately, I asked him to come with me to a private office so we could talk about his awful situation. This was the first time in my life that I had a friend talk to me about suicide, and I knew I had to really do my best to help him get through this horrible ordeal. We spoke for a few hours and I listened closely to everything he said. I was able to convince him to immediately get some help and we went to the hospital. I stayed with him at the hospital and met with him when he was released. I did everything to show my friend that I had his back, and because of this he is alive today. This awful situation inspired me to do whatever I possibly can to help others in need, and shortly after we created our mobile outreach program.

In today's day and age, most of you have known a veteran or first responder who has taken their own life. We lose nearly 22 veterans and approximately 300 first responders every year to suicide. Even with all the awareness and new anti-suicide programs available, this number has not changed, and in some cases has increased.

The VA hospitals with PTSD and mental health programs are packed with patients and unfortunately, they continue to grow. More of our first responders are also seeking help and utilizing some of the state programs being offered. So many people want to help and put an end to this crisis, but sadly there isn't a foolproof program available that will stop this ever-growing crisis from destroying our uniformed heroes and their family's lives.

For the last two years, our team has been working tirelessly with other charities to come up with a better solution to help prevent this epidemic from continuing. Personally, we believe our "Mobile Outreach Team" is really making a difference and everyday it helps our uniformed heroes live a better way of life.

The first thing we learned is to lose your ego and seek out other groups and organizations that are looking to save lives. Then we find the right volunteers who are committed and dedicated to being a mentor to a person in crisis. Volunteers are extremely valuable because they want to be there, and they usually care more than the people who get paid for their services.

To date, we have been able to change and save countless lives because of the incredible commitment from the volunteers and other supporting groups.

Our approach is to aggressively seek out and contact a veteran or first responder in crisis. Our goal is to immediately work on building trust by being completely honest with the person in crisis. Using our network is wonderful, but it's more important to show the person in need that we are there for them and won't give up. Usually, we go out and meet with those in crisis and spend whatever time is needed to help them get in a better frame of mind. Bottom line "Human Contact" and "Friendship" is the key to saving a life.

Our Mobile Outreach Team is unique because it consists of mentors from all over the state who are willing to do whatever it takes to save and change a life.

If you are interested in joining our team please contact me at 973-332-1556 or email: [mdbollio@optonline.net](mailto:mdbollio@optonline.net)

*Michael D. Boll is a retired police sergeant in NJ. He previously served as a United States Marine, and is a Gulf War veteran. He is the founder of Operation Rebound Racing Team, a nonprofit organization that helps wounded veterans and first responders enjoy a better quality of life.*



# Age Discrimination Effects Us All

By Robine Riffle

**I**n 1967, a U.S. Labor law was signed into existence by President Lyndon Johnson stating, "The law forbids employment discrimination against anyone at least 40 years of age in the United States." Under the Age Discrimination Employment Act (ADEA) it became unlawful for employers to discriminate against a person because of his or her age with respect to any term, condition or privilege of employment, including hiring, firing, promotion, layoff, compensation, benefits, job assignments and training. So why at the age of 43 years and 8 months was I notified that I was denied employment with the Federal Bureau of Prisons as a correctional officer?

In the summer of 2015, while attending my high school reunion, I read about a job fair in a local newspaper for the federal prison located in Hazelton, West Virginia. The fair was to be held the following month. At that time, I resided in Georgia and I knew I couldn't make another trip back to West Virginia. I inquired with friends about the job fair and to gain some knowledge about the prison, as I had moved to Georgia before the prison was built. I thought to myself this would be a perfect opportunity to move back home, and since I was qualified this would be great. I completed the application to include a cover letter that stated I saw the job fair post and was qualified as a candidate.

Later in the fall I was selected as "best qualified" and was set to interview in a matter of weeks. The day of the interview I tested and passed the entrance exam and was given a provisional hire date. They advised

me the year was closing out and there were no clearance approvals to hire and send to training until the following year. Then two months into the new year I received an email that stated, "According to 5 USC 3307, a max entry age of 36 has been established for initial appointment to a position." This United States Government Code states, in part, "The head of any agency may determine and fix the minimum and maximum limits of age within which an original appointment may be made to a position as a law enforcement officer or firefighter."

Let me tell you a little about myself. I am a veteran soldier having served for nine years in the US Army Reserve. Plus, I am a certified deputy sheriff with active certification in the State of Georgia with over 1300 hours of continuous education in law enforcement. I hold an associate degree in business-specializing as a medical assistant. I have earned over 150 semester credits from three additional colleges. I am well trained and certified to work as a correctional officer.

My point would be I am already a trained and experienced law enforcement professional. The bureau would only have to send me to the academy to test my knowledge, training and skills. I conceivably could be more of an asset to enter the field earlier even as a new hire. Why do federal, state and local governments require an age limit? Can a person over the age of 40 argue that this law is discriminatory?

They sure should be able to. If that person can test, demonstrate and cite his/her knowledge, training and skills to perform

the duties then they are a best candidate for the job. I think in this current day there are many qualified law enforcement applicants including myself over the age of 40. With agencies all over the country experiencing a short supply of suitable recruits, it is foolish to require age limits when there is a group of individuals well qualified to interview and hire. My previous agency in Georgia would welcome an already trained and certified individual at any age. In fact, I worked very closely with a retired Texas Ranger who was 57 years of age when he was hired as a deputy sheriff. I learned so much from him and his experiences. The agency really gains more by not discriminating on age.

Age discrimination is apparent every day in this country. Maybe we, as citizens, who feel we meet all requirements, should not be discriminated against because of a number. We have so much to offer.

All ages matter. 🌍

*Robine Riffle is now a 47-year-old single mother with two grown children. She resides in Kingwood, West Virginia and is taking care of her ailing parents. She also works full-time as a bus driver for Preston County Schools and serves tables at a local restaurant. An active member of Grace Baptist Church, she also owns a retail ceramic studio. She is a US Army Reserve veteran. As a former deputy first class with 10 years at the Forsyth County Georgia Sheriff's Office, she has been certified in numerous capacities within law enforcement.*



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# STAND DOWN?

By Joel E. Gordon

Another ordered stand down...

An on-duty Baltimore police officer was on routine patrol around 0119 hours on August 17th when he noticed a silver SUV sitting in an intersection. The vehicle, reportedly bearing no license plate, matched the description of a suspect vehicle that just three minutes earlier tried to strike another officer conducting a traffic stop of another vehicle.

The western district officer went up to the vehicle as the SUV was stopped. The driver of the SUV got out of the car and began shooting a 9mm handgun at the officer and his police cruiser.

The officer backed away and was not struck by the bullets. The suspect then fled the area, taking police on a chase through the city. As the chase was deemed to have become more dangerous due to speeds reaching an estimated 95 miles per hour, the high-speed chase was called off when it reached southbound I-295 approaching the Baltimore-Washington Parkway.

The police commander ordering the chase to be terminated was reported to be Major Mark Howe the midnight Commander known as Unit 41. Initially checking to see why officers were pursuing, he acknowledges and says 10-4, In the mean-

time, recorded radio traffic reveals that officers requested air support but were told that the request would need to be made on a different radio channel by the police dispatcher. Keep in mind that the officers were involved in high speed driving and were likely unable to safely switch frequencies on their radios. It is shortly thereafter that the termination of the pursuit was ordered with the requested air support likely never achieved.

In a subsequent press conference, Baltimore Police Commissioner Michael Harrison called the incidents against officers "very brazen." "It just got to be high speed. It was through neighborhoods. As we encounter a danger factor with following the car, the pursuit was called off because of the danger factor to citizens and officers,"

"Whether or not they have any regard for law enforcement or law at all or any regard to consequences — whether real or perceived — we want to make sure we're doing our part to find the people who are doing this and holding them accountable," Harrison said.

Sergeant Mike Mancuso, Baltimore City Fraternal Order of Police President, had harsh words for department leaders Tuesday evening, saying on Twitter, "The brave men and women of the Baltimore Police Department were told to stand down during the riots. Now we are being told to stand down on an attempted murder of a police officer. #CityinCrisis"

Baltimore is indeed a city in crisis. In the recent past, at least seven people connected to law enforcement have been attacked in Baltimore, including Sgt. Isaac Carrington, a 22-year veteran who is recovering after being shot multiple times during a robbery attempt outside his home. Also robbed were civilian police employees, a deputy police commissioner, an off-duty corrections officer along with a school police officer

Determined to get the dangerous suspect attacking police, on August 18th Baltimore police encountered a vehicle and subject that they believed to be the same as the

one involved in the August 17th incident. Another armed encounter ensued where the suspect was shot and killed. An officer was also shot suffering non-life threatening injuries during this encounter.

The question remains: How many of us old-timers would have backed off during the initial pursuit? Being a cop first and a soldier second, I am reminded when the Baltimore County Police Department chased a vehicle, carjacked at knifepoint, into the city and the Western District back during my time there. A young rookie, city officer, joined the pursuit, taking the lead and the suspect vehicle crashed into a retaining wall in a turn into an alley. Of course, the police car the rookie officer was operating then rear ended the suspect vehicle (I was directly behind him, but was able to stop in time). After successfully taking care of the matter at hand, I handled the accident investigation. Despite a no-pursuit policy I was able to justify the pursuit while also getting the accident deemed non-preventable. After all, what were we supposed to do? Let an outside agency, lost in West Baltimore, be on their own?

Many believe that some of the best lessons and improvements in policing can come from critical incident reviews, particularly when such reviews are completed with independence. If there was ever a case requiring a critical incident review this latest incident ordering another "stand down" and then the subsequent deadly encounter the following day is certainly on the top of my list. 🇺🇸

*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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# SHORT, SHARP INTERVIEW

## A Man on a Mission:

# SPECIAL POLICE CAPTAIN GARTH BROWN (RET.)

By George Beck, Ph.D.



Blue Magazine recently spoke with Special Police Capt. Garth Brown (Ret.), whose career spanned over three decades at the Ridgefield Police Department. In this interview, Brown offers his perspective on the special police program—he highlights the valuable services they provide, including their involvement in community outreach efforts, such as the New Jersey Special Olympics.

The most visible forms of policing in the United States are the local police departments, which provide the majority of policing services for the country's 327 million people. Local police departments employ approximately 600,000 full-time sworn officers and about 55,000 people on a part-time basis. These part-time supplemental forces greatly help overburdened police departments deliver quality services to the residents, and they help increase the overall safety of the community. Special police officers are an invaluable addition to the police force.

Many special police officers are passionate law enforcement professionals who work tirelessly for the betterment of the profession and the community. Since Brown was hired as a special police officer, he immediately demonstrated a love of service to others. It fitted that he later became involved with the New Jersey Special Olympics. Brown's work with the Special Olympics is commendable. He is a significant part of the program and currently serves as the Bergen County (Area 12) director. In 2017, they collectively raised nearly \$9.5 million—%3.9 million directly from the Law Enforcement Torch Run. Brown has been active with the Torch Run since the early days of his career and continues today with the same level of passion and dedication.

### The BLUE Magazine: Why are special police officers necessary?

**Garth Brown:** Special Police Officers give a level of community policing that might not be available, depending on the size of the regular force. In Ridgefield, we provide

security at municipal recreation areas, borough buildings, and events throughout the borough. This is accomplished by foot, bicycle, Segway and motor patrol. These officers are helping the patrol officers keep the community safe and secure for the residents and the many visitors who travel through the community every day.

### Many aspiring police officers begin as special police officers; tell us how valuable this experience is.



Extremely valuable. Positive interaction with the public is one of the keys to successful policing. Getting to know the residents makes the job so much easier when dealing with stressful situations. Being a special also provides learning for aspiring officers—learning like how to react to certain stressful situations early on, like a graphic car accident or another tragedy they are called to assist at. This exposure makes it easier for them when they later add responsibilities that come with being a regular police officer. They also learn things that they will take with them during their career—tasks like directing traffic, report writing, observing the entire scene to avoid tunnel vision. I was always a stickler for 'no hands in your pockets' when you're at a scene. It looks sloppy and lazy and is not a tactical way to perform your duties.

### What is the most memorable part of your work on the job?

After 30 years, it's hard to pick the most memorable moments, but I think as a whole, as we say all the time, I had the best seats to the greatest show on Earth. I got to see people at their worst and their best. There were so many memorable experiences throughout my career. I really enjoyed the interaction with the residents and doing what I could to help. Hopefully,

I made a difference in their lives and the community I served.

### What are your goals this year with the Special Olympics?

I'd like to see younger officers getting involved. We need officers to carry on over 35 years of raising awareness and funds for people with intellectual disabilities. We have such a worthy cause. Yeah, I'd love to see more of the younger officers get involved and see how powerful the brotherhood can be when we are united around a common cause—to help those who need us and make an impact on the world around us.

### The Torch Run is very successful. What is the secret to success?

I have always said that once you touch it, you're hooked. I am blessed to have three healthy children and two healthy grandsons. I was raised to give back to the community, and that's the way I raised my kids—all three volunteers with the Special Olympics. My son is presently a Marine assigned to Washington, D.C., but when he finds the time to come back and visit, he volunteers at events. The key to a successful Torch run is really because of the people who are involved. So many great officers and supporters give so much of their time and effort to make it a success each year. I am proud to be a part of this endeavor, and I know they are two. It's all about working together, and rally behind the right cause.

### What are your plans for the future now that you are retired?

I retired from my full-time job with Bergen County Communications back in September of 2016. Since then, I have been teaching and consulting for 9-1-1 Centers and Communications Centers. I am also starting to get involved in Suicide Awareness and Prevention for emergency service workers. It's an important issue that needs to be dealt with. Every day I go on social media and see how we lose a brother or sister to suicide. I always think in some way I can help. Even it's just one life, I know I can

*(Continued on bottom of page 47)*

# ELITIST MINDSET: WHITE-COLLAR CRIME

By Christopher Scilingo

Crimes are committed on a daily basis all around us and have been since early ancient laws were first imposed on humans. Crimes, whether they are violent in nature, involve property or public order, in most cases involve a wrongdoer and a victim. In the most simplistic approach, a wrongdoer is identified and brought to justice for the crimes they may have committed. What happens when right and wrong are not clearly identified and when wrongdoing is difficult to prove? What happens when crimes that are committed are nonviolent in that the wrongdoer doesn't directly cause bodily harm to anyone but the results of his actions may be injurious? The type of crimes I am referring to is called white-collar crime, and there are a few reasons that make combating it difficult.

Some people could suggest and argue that white-collar crime was a great contributing factor to the recession in 2008. From embezzlement and fraud to insider trading, all had serious negative effects on the economy and more significantly people were financially crippled as a result. Why have we not seen in the media about the arrests and prosecutions of these offenders? Is it because white-collar crime is not viewed to be as stimulating and eye-catching as other violent crimes are? That is one of the first reasons why white-collar crime is difficult to combat.

White-collar crime typically does not draw the same attention as other crimes do. Because media and

other groups in society do not place adequate emphasis on many white-collar crimes, especially when it is considered nonviolent, white-collar crime is perceived as more of a bad judgment than a criminal offense. When these acts are viewed as mistakes where victims and offenders used poor judgment, the acts tend to be treated as such. Compared to the murderers, rapists and gangs that get the headlines, white-collar criminals just don't scare the public very much.

Many white-collar crimes are difficult to prove. When it comes to financial- and information-type white-collar crimes like insider trading, the burden of proof falls to the accusers. The accusers are typically regulatory and federal agencies that must prove that those involved received some tangible benefit from giving or receiving private information. This can be hard to prove, and many cases have been dismissed because of lack of proof. Also, these federal cases will be argued in a federal court, which can be very time-consuming.

More time equates to more of a defense a wrongdoer can gather. One method to combat lengthy cases is to bring them before an administrative hearing, which moves much quicker and offers less time to gather evidence or strengthen a defense. Wealthy people are among the biggest offenders of white-collar crime and can often afford the best legal defenses should they become the subject of a criminal investigation.

Unlike those who commit street crimes, white-collar offenders are much more likely to be elitist members of higher societal classes, and possibly even among the economic elite. They have the resources to present a compassionate picture of their life while claiming that violations of the law were just aberrations from an exemplary life. They may also argue that the corrupt culture and atmosphere of their work environment led them astray to make poor decisions but had no true intentions of wrongdoing. For the right price; a legal defense can transform someone who may be seen as a greedy and fraudulent into a remorseful human being who, for various reasons, made a big mistake.

Crimes in general can prove to be difficult to combat, and white-collar crimes face specific challenges. Some of the challenges to combat white-collar crime include overcoming their perception, prosecuting them in court and prosecuting wealthy offenders. Crime is crime no matter who commits it. 🗣️

*Chris Scilingo is a police officer in NJ since 2011. He's a Marine veteran who served in Iraq and Afghanistan. He is near completing his bachelor's degree at Fairleigh Dickson University; where he also plans to pursue a master's degree. Chris aspires to teach higher education after transitioning from law enforcement.*



(Continued from page 46)



help. So I've been putting my energies there. Suicide is a significant problem in our Country. We all need to do our part to help. Also, retirement has afforded me more

time to devote to the Special Olympics. I am genuinely enjoying myself and the initiatives I get involved in. Isn't this what retirement is supposed to be about?

**When all is said and done, what do you want to be remembered for?**

As I said before, I hope I made a positive difference in the lives of the people I had worked with and the public that I served. I hope they would know that I always cared

about them, the law enforcement profession, and the residents we served. I'd like to think that they'd say, 'Garth, yea, he's OK!' 🗣️

*Blue Magazine thanks Special Police Capt. Garth Brown (Ret.) and wishes him the best in retirement and with all his future endeavors. For more information on how to get involved with the New Jersey Special Olympics, check out <https://www.sonj.org>.*



## PROGRESSIVE DISCIPLINE

### *an Oxymoron*

By Lori Mambelli

The word progressive has a positive connotation, conveying an advancement or improvement. Discipline is negative, meaning control gained by enforcing obedience and punishment.

Let's face it, when it comes to progressive discipline, it is a process that is never the same because it's unique to the specifics of each situation and unique to the rules of the agency, sometimes subjected to the biases of the disciplinarian. Disciplinary recommendations and decisions are often made unfairly or objectively because disciplinary decisions are subjective. They are subject to the biases of supervisors, administrators, investigators and the current climate of civilian expectations or the so-called court of public opinion. Someone's favorable or unfavorable opinion of those under "discipline" will often influence the outcome as well as the politics associated with the work environment.

These influences apply even more so in the environment of law enforcement. How many times have you heard "It's not personal?" What the hell does that mean? It's always personal to those on the receiving end of discipline. In my case it meant, "It's politics." So, how does one deal with the politics of discipline? There are agency rules, Civil Service Rules, laws against discrimination, and employee union representation, which are all viewed through the "political" lens.

Agency rules are there to protect the agency. Civil Service agencies are guided by Civil Service rules, known as the New Jersey Administrative Code. This code includes an outline of progressive discipline which should be followed when it comes to employee discipline. But agencies do not necessarily follow these rules.

It often begins with a minor discipline such as a verbal or written reprimand which may be made to sound like it's nothing to worry about, but then before you know it, you find yourself in the middle of major discipline.

Make no mistake about it, minor dis-

cipline is the first step in the progression to major discipline and possible termination; you should pay attention to what is really going on. Did your infraction warrant the level of discipline or did you step on someone's toes by something you said or did? A word of caution; there is no freedom of speech or action when it comes to the workplace, especially in law enforcement. All your words and actions are a reflection on your employer and have their consequences, even when made outside the workplace.

After six years of basically an unblemished work history, my first warning that I had stepped on someone's toes was when my annual work evaluation was changed to mediocre ratings and some areas classified as needing improvement, which was immediately followed by a discipline for a misspelled word on a report that I had filed. Not the content or sequence of events, but an obvious misspelled word. And instead of being asked to correct the misspelling, I was sent to four hours of retraining by my chief. Why? We'll get to that.

First, I must say I was ignorant to the significance of what was beginning to happen. Has anyone ever successfully changed the ratings on an evaluation? Agency standards do not entitle an employee to a hearing for minor reprimands and union representation was not there. In fact, I was told in six months, I could have the minor discipline removed, which never happened. As in my case, most employees are made to believe they can't or shouldn't fight against discipline because it will only get worse.

They are convinced that it's just not worth the time, effort, or cost to orchestrate a defense against an unwarranted discipline, especially a minor one. This is compounded by the facts that the appointing authority knows they have the upper hand. The courts and administrative system give the appointing authority wide latitude when it comes to discipline, and decisions are usually made in favor of the appointing

authority. Most employees are not aware of the rules without the assistance of legal counsel and most employees do not have the financial resources to hire an attorney. Employees don't know where to turn and who to trust for guidance. And then there is the fear of financial and emotional consequences that it may have on their lives, family, and work environment. Will they be made an example of by change of assignment, change of shift hours, being ostracized or suspended?

Minor discipline is the first rung in the descending ladder of progressive discipline. For me, the next several rungs were pulled out of the ladder as high-ranking members of my agency tried to have me trip over the illusion that progressive discipline was used and I would lose the fight against the major discipline that followed. I didn't. So what was my initial transgression? I ranked number one on the sergeant's promotional exam and refused to sign off. I got in the way of their plans. "It's Politics!"

Read the Attorney General Guidelines, and make yourselves familiar with progressive discipline, and most importantly, know your rights. 🌐

*Retired Captain from Passaic County Sheriff's Department, former Adjunct Professor FDU School of Criminal Justice, former President New Jersey Women in Law Enforcement.*



*Masters Degree Administrative Science, Certified NJ Public Manager, Academy Instructor, EMT. Commander of Bureau of Criminal Identification, Evidence, Patrol, Court Security, and Communications. Domestic Violence Liaison, Emergency Response Team, background investigations, media requests, Sheriff's representative County Law and Public Safety Committee, Grant Administrator, Internships. Dept of State Award for Excellence, commendations for police work and leadership, meritorious awards for Exceptional Service.*





## EAST COAST GANG INVESTIGATOR'S ASSOCIATION Holds 20th Anniversary Conference in Atlantic City

By Eddie Molina

"We don't have a gang problem here." Says every local and state level politician throughout the New York/New Jersey metro area. Even chiefs and directors, who must balance politics with crime fighting, are heard echoing that same message. At least that's the running joke in this part of the country.

But if you're a street cop, correctional officer or investigator, you know gangs are real and they pose a serious threat to our communities.



That's why the East Coast Gang Investigator's Association, or ECGIA, exists. Eddie Perez, president of the organization, told Blue Magazine, "We host conferences as a way for law enforcement personnel to network, discuss the gang climate, and compare notes that goes beyond the formal departmental route."

Without trying hard, I was able to connect Eddie Perez to a local police department official familiar with gang activity in central New Jersey. From there, they plan on maintaining contact to help each other. That is the main objective of the conference: building relationships. Additionally, that is the most effective way to combat crime and criminal activity, by law enforcement working together across multiple platforms and from different directions.

Here's an example. A patrol officer conducts a routine traffic stop and, subsequently, searches the vehicle under prob-

able cause. During the search, he comes across handwritten literature that appears gang-related but nothing concrete or criminal. The officer jots down some of the key names and terms. He then reaches out to his buddy in the county correctional facility and asks if he knows anything about the names and terms and the correctional officer says, "Oh yeah, that's the nickname of a high-ranking gang leader that's been here awhile."

That's just one example of a countless number of ways knowing people within the law enforcement community can help.

Another important aspect to the gang lifestyle is their ability to organize and communicate. Social media has made it easier than ever to communicate across the country, even over borders internationally, which is why conferences like these are so important. It allows its members that range across the country to build relationships.



"The best form of communication is community engagement, that's what the ECGIA is all about," according to Tony "Pac-man" Moreno, former head of LAPD's gang unit ([www.gangcop.com](http://www.gangcop.com)).

I was fortunate enough to attend this year and check out the conference on behalf of my department. The itinerary was packed with speakers from around the country who offered unique perspectives on crime and criminal activity. The speakers stretched from as far as Vancouver, Canada, to the southern border states (Mexican cartels) to Florida and all the way up to the East Coast, reaching our backyards.

The topics covered were wide-ranging, as well. As a correctional professional, I never made the connection between credit card fraud and gang members, but I assure you, it's a real issue. I also plan on giving a second look to the jackets of the next group of motorcycle riders I see going down the highway.



Gangs are not just a local issue, they're a worldwide societal issue. Conferences like these can play an integral role in finding out what type of criminal activity is going on in the country from the very mouths of law enforcement professionals who deal with it day in and day out.

If I have a question regarding Mexican cartels that was triggered from a prison search, I can whip out that business card and email Frank Cortez, the senior investigator from the Department of Justice, and pick his brain.

If you want to expand your reach within the local, regional and national law enforcement community, getting involved in the ECGIA is an excellent start.

"We are always looking for new members. The more members we recruit, the bigger reach we have and the more help we can provide each other, says Perez. "Our goal is to prevent crime, which we do even though the public never hears about it."

That seems to strengthen their resolve. Helping each other, the community and empowering law enforcement officials.

If you're interested in learning more about the East Coast Gang Investigators Association, go to their website at [www.ecgia.org](http://www.ecgia.org)

Learn more, get involved and make a difference! 🌐

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## NYPD Officer Matos: Helping Bronx Youth to Succeed

By Robert Foreman

NEW YORK – As a parent, NYPD Officer Victor Matos understands how important it is to groom the future leaders of our nation in a safe environment. However, where other people will only talk about doing something to put young people first, Matos is actually following through with real action. He helped to co-found *Matters of Sports Athletic League (MOS)*, which is a sports league in the Bronx that was created with the objective of mentoring young people in a positive manner.

“The league was founded in the summer of 2018, but we’ve been doing this work since October of 2017. I want to stress that this is not paid for by the NYPD since a lot of people think that it is. We are completely self-funded. The officers, and other volunteers, are all doing this in their off time and are not getting paid for it. They’re doing it because they believe in it, which I feel makes it more pure,” said Rosaly Santana, co-founder of MOS.

“Victor has worked as a liaison with the Police Athletic League, and other sports organizations, and I volunteer with community work and helping out with the schools and children. I wanted to do something more after I went to an NYPD event and one of the parents told me that they would not have brought their child there if it wasn’t a cop event. This was because they felt it was too dangerous to let their child play in the park.”

*Matters of Sports Athletic League* was created with two primary objectives; fill the void left by the absence of certain sports in the community and help to cement a positive relationship between the community, and members of law enforcement and other members of service. The founders of MOS understand that the strength of any community relies on the unity of the people who occupy that community and that young people are an

essential part of the equation.

The league includes registrations for 180 boys and girls, ages 14-19, and is a 10-week program that offers a variety of sports during each period. Additionally, motivational speakers, scholarships, academic assistance and other resources are made readily available to the young people who participate. Each game offers an empowering message for young people to take with them long after the activities are over. In fact, MOS lives by the motto of “One family, One team.” Essentially, each player has an understanding that despite the fact that they play on different teams that they are all connected as one.

MOS measures the success of the program by both attendance and the eagerness of the players to come back. The league wants to inspire young people to believe in themselves, and their goals, and to show them that they are always “good enough” through positive reinforcement. The athletic league firmly believes it has have a responsibility to help young people grow both physically and emotionally in a healthy and safe manner. Since sports is universal, MOS, and its members, believe that such activities can be used to help foster stronger community relationships.

One of the driving forces behind the success of MOS is the strength of its volunteers, which includes off-duty NYPD officers, FDNY firefighters, EMS workers, teachers, students, and various other professionals. MOS not only allows them to provide a safe space for young people, but gives these volunteers the opportunity to better understand each other’s professions. MOS is not just an acronym for “Matters of Sports,” but it also gives meaning to “Members of Service,” as the volunteers all come from professions that serve and contribute to their communities. This season, MOS partnered with John Sanchez

and Community Board 6 to continue the mission of developing and empowering young people in a safe environment.

“It’s amazing when you see kids who didn’t want to go to school, or play sports, now wanting to go to college and play sports. The parents love knowing that their kids have a safe place to be for 8 hours on a Saturday because they’re with off-duty NYPD officers, EMS workers, FDNY firefighters and so on. They couldn’t be in a safer place,” said Santana. “We love having this free program in the Bronx because a lot of parents can’t afford to pay to have their kids join other programs. Not only do we want to keep these kids safe, but we want them to have access to sports like tennis and squash that they otherwise wouldn’t be exposed to.” 🌍

Anyone wishing to find out further information about *Matters of Sports Athletic League (MOS)* can contact Rosaly Santana at (917) 569-7034. You can visit their website at: <https://www.mattersofsports.org/> or follow them on Instagram at *Matters Of Sports (@matters\_of\_sports)* • Instagram photos and videos

Robert Foreman has nearly 20 years of journalism experience and he has worked for a variety of publications, including *The Herald News*, *The Daily Record* and *The Passaic County Pulse*. He obtained a B.A. in Communications from William Paterson College, now University, in 1995. He has taken his life-long passion for writing and parlayed it into writing news articles, features, press releases, marketing materials, ad copy, plays and screenplays. Never one to rest on his laurels, the former journalist is always seeking to challenge himself as a writer. Born and raised in Paterson, N.J., he currently resides in North Carolina.





1<sup>ST</sup> ANNUAL  
*Run for the Badge 5K*  
 NATIONAL LAW ENFORCEMENT MUSEUM, WASHINGTON, DC  
 OCTOBER 2019

Photography courtesy of Michael Garcia



## BEST TIMES

### Female Runners

1. Emily Riehl / Falls Church/bib#889/age 25/F/ time 23:15
2. Savannah Waters/Wash DC/bib#953/age 23/F/ time 23:20
3. Susan Larson/Wash DC/bib#1077/age 27/F/ time 23:46

### Male Runners

1. Michael Kiselycznyk/Arlington VA/bib 1019/ age 38/M/ time 17:01
2. Charles Immanuel/Wash DC/bib 1059/age 17/M/ time 19:39
3. John Zamora/Loveland CO/bib# 969/age 27/M/ time 19:39

# Tunnel 2 Towers

OCTOBER 2019

*Photography courtesy of Vincent D'Amico*







# Columbus Day Parade

SEASIDE, NJ  
OCTOBER 2019

*Photography courtesy of Vincent D'Amico*





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#### **Monmouth County (Tinton Falls, NJ)**

Mon., Oct. 28, 2019 (5 p.m. to 9:30 p.m.)  
Wed., Oct. 30, 2019 (5 p.m. to 9:30 p.m.)  
Mon., Nov. 4, 2019 (5 p.m. to 9:30 p.m.)

#### **Ocean County (Toms River, NJ)**

Thurs., Nov. 7, 2019 (5 p.m. to 9:30 p.m.)  
Tues., Nov. 12, 2019 (5 p.m. to 9:30 p.m.)  
Thurs., Nov. 14, 2019 (5 p.m. to 9:30 p.m.)

#### **Essex/Passaic County (Montclair, NJ)**

Sat., Nov. 9, 2019 (8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.)  
Sun., Nov. 10, 2019 (8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.)

#### **Bergen County (Mahwah, NJ)**

Sat., Nov. 16, 2019 (8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.)  
Sun., Nov. 17, 2019 (8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.)

#### **Middlesex County (Sayreville, NJ)**

Sat., Nov. 23, 2019 (8 a.m. to 4 p.m.)  
Sun., Nov. 24, 2019 (8 a.m. to 4 p.m.)

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# When Art *Twists* Life

By Chris Amos



The other day my wife and I went to a movie. As expected, there were the typical 30 minutes of movie trailers. I usually can't remember most of the trailers I saw by the time the movie is over. However, on this particular occasion that would not be the case. Two of the movie trailers had law enforcement themes. Both were eerily similar. Does anyone want to guess the lens through which the police officers were viewed? Let me give you a quick rundown as portrayed in the two minute trailers.

The first, *Black and Blue*, is set in Detroit. Apparently the star, a black female rookie cop, witnesses a group of crooked cops, white and black, murder an informant. One of the cops then turns his gun on the rookie cop and shoots her. She falls about 20 feet before finding a soft landing. The remainder of the movie will be a race to see who gets her first, the gangs or the cops. You see, thanks to her body cam, the initial murder was caught on tape as was her own shooting. In their desperation to catch her and conceal their crime the crooked cops join forces with Detroit's finest gang bangers, drug dealers and all-around thugs to insure she is captured, preferably killed, before she can expose the corruption.

The second, *21 Bridges*, is a much more subtle approach that comes to the same conclusion. In *21 Bridges*, the trailer begins by vividly portraying the murder of eight uniformed cops who respond to a robbery call at a business. The police department, shaken by the deaths, sets out to catch the suspects. At some point during the trailer, it becomes obvious that high-ranking police officials are behind the initial robbery that left eight of their fellow officers dead, all in their pursuit of the almighty dollar.

Now, both are just Hollywood movies and Hollywood movies depicting crooked cops are as old as Hollywood. But, what is different about these offerings seems to be the portrayal of not simply a cop or two or three, but of entire departments or many if not most of the officers therein. Are these

movies intended to entertain or fan the flames of the existing false narrative that cops are crooked, corrupt, racist, thugs deserving of any violence that comes their way?

Might I share an observation I have made in recent years? Before sharing I offer this warning: It's political. Looking back at Vietnam, and having worked with several Vietnam veterans who went on to become police officers, it is undeniable that many felt a tremendous backlash on their return to America. I know men who were spit on and men who were called murderers, rapists, baby killers, etc. Did these men do anything wrong? No, their only "crime" was in answering their nation's call and not fleeing to Canada. Why the backlash? I suspect it had much more to do with a hatred of President Nixon than it did *Private Jones*. Unfortunately for *Private Jones*, he was a little more accessible to an enraged public than was President Nixon. What does that have to do with anything?

Friends, we are living in a country that is as polarized now as it was during the Vietnam War, if not more so. I believe there is a hatred for President Trump that exceeds that of Nixon. Some have gone so far as to label it *Trump Derangement Syndrome*. Now I'm no doctor, but there is something in the water that has literally made Thanksgiving and Christmas nearly untenable for many families. Trump, like Nixon, is well insulated from the average citizen. But guess who isn't? Exactly, it's the men and women of law enforcement. Trump prides himself on being a law and order president and has repeatedly thrown his support behind police officers and deputy sheriffs, never passing on a good photo op. The Trump haters need someone to attack and Trump is well beyond their reach. Unfortunately, like *Private Jones*, Corporal Smith in his marked police car sporting that shiny badge and gun is within reach, except at a number of businesses where Corporal Smith and his fellow officers are not welcome. Think about it, who is the most visible, accessible

reminder of a despised law and order president? It's law enforcement officers... enter Hollywood.

Apart from academia, there is not a demographic that despises Trump more than Hollywood, with the rare exception of a Jon Voight or Chuck Norris. Apparently, as we head into the 2020 election year, Hollywood has decided that cops, PLURAL, are fair game. Why attack a corrupt officer or two, such low-hanging fruit, when you can take out a whole platoon, precinct, division, or department and all it will cost is the price of a few more extras on set?

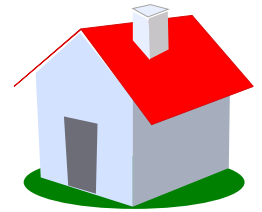
Now I confess I could be overly sensitive. After all I've only seen the trailers and admit I have no intention of rewarding these hit pieces with my hard-earned cash. From what I've seen and read, I am offended! Are cops allowed to be offended? I'm offended when entire police agencies are portrayed in such a disparaging light, especially when life seems to be very much interested in imitating art.

As for *Black and Blue* and its depiction of a police department out of control, too bad they did not end the movie with the names and pictures of Officers Glenn Anthony Doss Jr. EOW 1/28/18, Darren Maurice Williams EOW 2/13/18, and Fadi Mukhlis Shukur EOW 8/14/18. These are just the most recent three officers of 237 who have given their lives in the service of Detroit, Michigan... And we wonder why nationally, law enforcement applications are down over 50% compared to years past. 🌐

*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 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.*



# Navigating a Hot Seller's Market in Real Estate



By Fasil Khan

**N**orth New Jersey is a hot seller's real estate market. With prices increasing as demand for property rises, both buyers and sellers need to know how to navigate through the market for the best results. With a bit of planning, you can be on the winning side of an offer in the complex world of real estate.

Home buyers dealing with a hot seller's market have the challenge of greater competition to face. When a house has multiple offers, not only do you need to get yours noticed, you need to show the seller you mean business and you're ready to buy. This goes beyond getting in the highest bid.

As a home buyer, have your funding to

purchase property in hand before you start looking at listings. If you can't guarantee that you have the loan or cash in hand when you make an offer, you'll quickly move from hot to not in a seller's eyes.

Within a hot seller's market, it can also pay to have a higher than standard earnest deposit to offer the seller. The more out-of-pocket cash you're willing to risk, the more you'll be counted as a serious buyer.

This can potentially even help you win with a lower offer. Suppose you find a house listed for \$300,000 and you're competing with another buyer who's offered \$325,000 in the hope of getting the property.

Then there's you, with a max of \$315,000 for a mortgage, yet you have \$5,000 available to give in an earnest deposit, while the competition only has \$2,000. There is a good likelihood the seller could choose your offer due to the higher deposit you're putting on the line.

The key for home buyers in a hot seller's market is to be ready and organized with your financials and be willing to be flexible. Keep buyer contingencies to the minimum; a less demanding buyer can make a better impression upon a seller.

On the other side of the equation, if you're planning to sell your home, getting in on a hot market is ideal. You may worry

about being lost in the midst of all the other sellers on the market, but this need not be so.

If the overall inventory of comparable homes is on the lower side (often a key factor in establishing a hot seller's market), listing now means more buyers are in competition to find the home that's just right for them. Ensuring your home is in top condition will help attract a greater pool of potential buyers and generate active interest.

Consider listing your property at a price lower than the market average. If homes are selling in your area for \$400,000 for example, listing your home at \$375,000 could generate interest from more buyers, which could lead to multiple offers as buyers compete to get a great deal. More competition could lead to higher offers.

Utilize the power of positive marketing with an open house. Holding an open house is an excellent way for a home seller to create a buzz of excitement about their property. When buyers see a lot of other showing interest in a home they want, waiting could result in losing out, this sense of competition can lead to multiple offers being given in short order.

There are ways both buyers and sellers can take advantage of a hot seller's real estate market. Just plan ahead and be prepared. It could pay off in the end with a result you can be proud of and enjoy.

*Fasil Khan is a Paterson Police Officer and a Real Estate Agent at Keller Williams Village Square. Fasil enjoys helping fellow law enforcement officers with the purchase of investment properties, as well as general selling, purchasing needs and if you are looking to become an agent. Have questions? Connect with Fasil by calling 201-739-7397 or email at [fkhan@khanrealestateteam.com](mailto:fkhan@khanrealestateteam.com)*



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# THE EMOTIONAL COST OF *Social Media Nonsense*

By Meredith Atwood

Why are we even *doing* social media? For me, I love seeing the kittens and babies and sports antics. But that's about it.

Social media, as we all know by now, has an exceptionally dark side. It ranges from hate to sheer cowardice and vitriol. Invisible people will spew words from their phones and computers but not from their mouths.

Their'd never say this stuff to your face.

I have a series of questions (that I ask myself) when it comes to deciding whether to engage, comment or post on social media. This is not for my audience. This is for me.

My current engagement on social media is 100 percent purposeful. I try to put out content or updates, but I rarely post comments or "status updates." I will say positive things ("Happy birthday" and, "Your baby is the cutest thing ever"), but you will not find me fighting people on social media anymore, or posting things for mere reactions. I simply won't do it. Of course, there are always a few exceptions. Sometimes the fights are not nonsense. Sometimes you should fight. But learning to find the line is important.

I no longer post anything when the goal is to try to make someone else look stupid. I have learned my lessons several times over the recent years. I hold my posts, my typing fingers, and my comments to a new standard, and the greatest gift? It has made me so much happier. If you don't do it for anyone else, do it for your own sanity. That is the takeaway.

I ask these questions now before post-

ing or commenting on social media:

- Is this post helpful to someone?
- Am I making someone else feel better with it (or just myself)?
- Is it, at a minimum, entertaining in some way?
- Even if entertaining, who might this hurt?
- Am I being respectful, even if I disagree?
- What are the repercussions of this post, comment or statement?
- Is this "share" actually true or from a credible source?
- If I post this, will I waste an ungodly amount of time responding to comments about it?

The last one is my guiding light. Even if I feel something with everything I have, if dealing with my opinion being out there will waste my time, I don't post. Time is valuable, and I am not in the business of wasting mine.

Even if something is true, maybe (just maybe) we don't need to speak it on social media. If we will lose true friends or loyal followers (who mean something to us), then we should think twice.

Now, I don't believe every post should be some massive value-added proposition. Nothing is more annoying than people trying to post something "huge" and "valuable" and "vulnerable" each time. Vulnerable and honest is awesome—but we can go crazy with that, also. It's important to remember that social media can be funny, silly, and whimsical as well as valuable. Finding that line, however, is tough—and sometimes we just don't know where we fall. We do, however, learn as we go.

Under some circumstances, we can't ask these questions because the stakes are too high. Maybe someone caused a ruckus about one of our children. Maybe it's about a cause that matters. That's when we find the need to stand up for ourselves—because our reputation, the truth, or something

bigger might be on the line. Many people (especially on the topic of politics) use this "pen is mightier than the sword" tactic in everything they touch online. In reality, your presence on social media should aim to reflect some sort of mental stability and sanity—and heck, maybe even some manners. If we are one of those people constantly flying off the handle, we're only making our own lives especially difficult, and everyone around us likely thinks we are in need of a psych evaluation.

Unless the fire is blazing out of control and your entire life is being destroyed, take a few minutes and consider the response before you post it. I often write a response in the "notes" app on my phone. I think about it. I ask the questions above.

And if I feel good about it, then I post.

Finally, I learned to turn off my notifications—unless they pertain to a program I am running, my clients, or something of a more urgent nature. You will be beaten with notifications if you don't turn a filter on these. Choose carefully what hits you. Make sure you are the ruler of your social media time—that you choose when and how you see things.

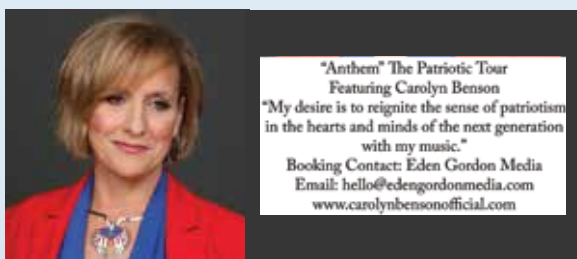
By asking a few simple questions before our fingers start flying, we can save ourselves a lot of trouble.

So what is nonsense on social media? That's up to you.

But I am certain that spending hours in a given day defending, responding, and reading responses to something you wrote—that perhaps should have been left off social media to begin with—is a giant waste of time. Wasting time is nonsense. This is the #YearOfNoNonsense.

Translation: We've got better things to do. 🌐

*Meredith Atwood is a best selling author, recovering attorney, and podcaster.*



# REMEMBRANCE

Article & Artwork by Jonny Castro

*Deputy  
Sandeep  
Dhaliwal*

It began as a simple traffic violation on Friday afternoon. The patrol car's dashboard camera captured the entire encounter from start to finish. Deputy Sandeep Dhaliwal approached the vehicle and began speaking with the driver. As he walked back to his patrol car to check the male's information, the driver (who was wanted on a parole violation) immediately got out and gunned down the deputy. Sandeep had his back turned and was never given the opportunity to defend himself. He suffered numerous gunshot wounds to the head. Deputy Dhaliwal was airlifted to the hospital, where he was unable to be revived. His killer was apprehended at a nearby store after he was spotted by an alert citizen.

Deputy Dhaliwal was a 10-year veteran of the Harris County Sheriff's Office. After completing his training, he was deputized and officially became the agency's first Sikh deputy. Deputy Dhaliwal was a walking lesson in tolerance and understanding; a beacon for his community. He was a quiet but confident leader.

Deputy Dhaliwal leaves behind a wife and three young children. He was 42 years old. 🌍

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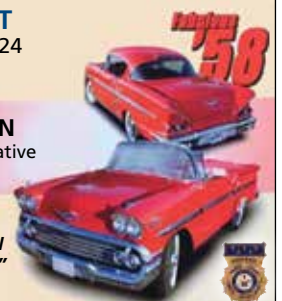
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