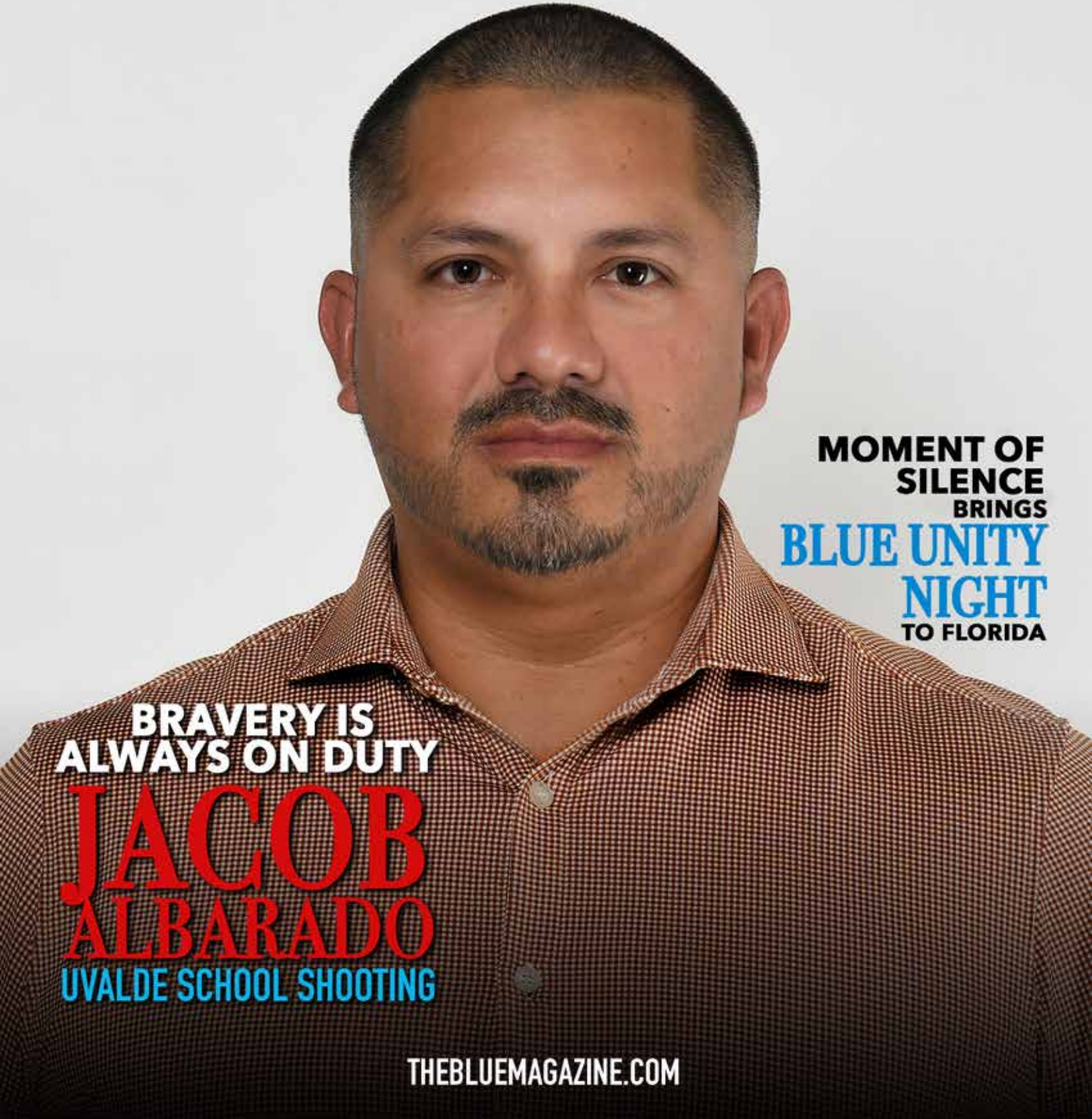


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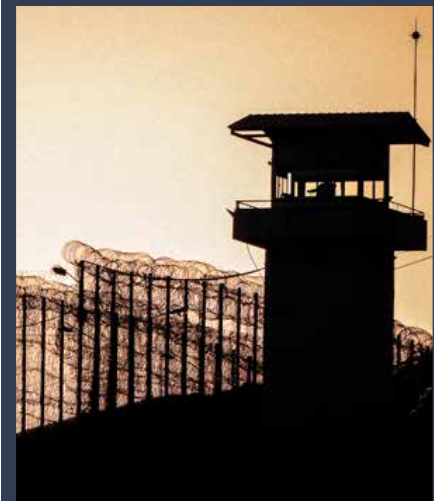
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MANAGING EDITOR'S POINT OF VIEW



It has been said that leaders think and talk about the solution; followers think and talk about the problem. When all is said and done it is results that matter and our writers here at the independent voice of law enforcement are all about leadership with actionable solutions to problems.

We persevere in our attempts to avert one crisis after another remembering that kindness in humanity still does exist. We are the living proof of that. While some politicians may exploit the emotional impacts of events of violence we present fact based and proven methods.

You have the right to be informed. Why can't we, as a society, implement solutions when so many know the truth?

At the end of 2018 we ran a cover story *Active Killer Coming Soon* exploring active shooter behaviors which often precede attacks and outlining the importance of the police and community working together to stop the killing. In the summer of 2019 I outlined the nationally acclaimed program enacted by then Huntington West Virginia Fire Chief Jan Rader *The Drug Crisis Making a Difference: One Life at a Time*. And in March 2022 we published a solutions oriented article by Chief Ron Camacho on *Training, Culture, and Discipline: The Keys to Navigating the Current Turbulent Waters of Policing*.

Check out our past issues online for these and other articles worthy of another look including a call for training in the prophetic: *Are you prepared to order your officers into a deadly encounter?* by Joseph Pangaro.

In this issue you will find Dave Willoughby asking if you will be assisting the predator as it pertains to policies, procedures and officer actions when gender issues become questioned. Leonard Sipes explores that Many Police Shootings Involve People in Mental Health Distress. Ken Dye cites references of recent cases involving police which may be an answer to whether or not the tide is turning.

As the pendulum swings from 'woke' to solutions based upon reality, the truth behind the badge is that the burdens law enforcement continues to carry, the price we pay, is in keeping with our mutual desire to keep all safe, free and the continued promotion of fact-based justice for all. Thank you to our new and established contributors alike. Reach out to us. We are here... we're truly all in this together!

Joel E. Gordon Managing Editor

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When Politics Prosecute Officers No One Is Safe

By Bernard Kerik

Recently, America has witnessed one scenario after another of police officers being attacked and brutalized, and county prosecutors then releasing their attackers back into their communities, as the result of “enlightened,” or “progressive” bail reform laws. Laws catering to violent thugs, and not keeping us safe in any way.

There’s only one thing worse than those criminals being released after brutally attacking sworn police officers, and that’s prosecutors targeting police officers for nothing more than political gain.

This is exactly what has appeared to have happened to Ben Darby, a former Huntsville, Alabama police officer.

In April of 2018, Officer Darby made a split-second decision, shooting and killing a suspect who posed a deadly threat to *him*, as well as *two other police officers*.

Ironically, Darby who was initially found to have acted in compliance with Alabama state law, state mandated police training, and his own department’s policies and procedures on the use of force, is sitting in an Alabama state prison serv-

ing a 25-year sentence for this shooting.

A deeper look into Darby’s actions and his criminal conviction that put him in prison, raises serious questions about the motives and intent of Madison County District Attorney Robert L. Broussard’s prosecution.

It also raises disturbing questions over what appears to have been a kangaroo court; a proceeding of legal calamity, one that was the farthest thing from fair, impartial, and objective justice.

To review, in April of 2018, Darby responded to a 911 call where the caller said he was about to “blow his brains out” and that “the front door was open.”

Two other officers responded to that call as well — arriving just before Darby entered the home.

They found the caller/suspect pointing a gun to his own head.

When Darby entered the house, he found the other two officers attempting to speak to the suspect... both officers had no cover, their weapons were drawn and pointed at the ground, and were directly in the line of fire.

Darby immediately ordered the man to drop his weapon several times; instead of doing so, he made a furtive movement with his gun at which time, out of fear for his life, and that of the two officers who were clearly in harm's way, Darby shot and killed the suspect.

Two weeks later, the Huntsville Police Department (HPD) in accordance with their department's policies, convened an Incident Review Board Investigation.

This board was comprised of HPD personnel, the Madison County District Attorney's Office, non-police city employees, and a few others.

Each officer gave testimony as to what happened on April 3, 2018, and why they acted the way that they did.

Each board member was allowed to ask questions if they had any, but for all three officers, *not one question was asked by the board.*

At its conclusion, the board found that Officer Darby acted within the department's policy and state law, and found his actions justified.

The board however, found that the two other officers did violate departmental policy, by placing all three officers in harm's way by failing to recognize and be prepared for the deadly threat posed by the caller.

As a result, they were required to attend remedial training for their failed threat assessment.

So, you can only imagine the shock to Darby and members of his department, including his own chief, when four months later, District Attorney Broussard attempted to secretly pressure HPD Chief Mark McMurray to fire Darby.

When McMurray refused, Broussard who is up for re-election this November, sought murder charges and an indictment against Darby.

The same prosecutor mind you, who sat on the internal review board clearing Darby of any wrongdoing.

Based on witness accounts, Darby's trial was overseen by Madison County Circuit Court Judge Donna S. Pate, who spent 29 years practicing in the areas of civil litigation and education law, before overseeing her first major criminal trial involving HPD Officer Ben Darby.

As a result, the trial was loaded with judicial *and* constitutional errors.

First, Judge Pate barred the general public from

the courtroom, including Darby's own wife, also a police officer.

They were forced to watch the trial from a secluded room where the judge controlled what they could and could not see; that was done by blacking-out their viewing monitors.

Judge Pate prevented the jury from hearing certain matters of law, as well as relevant testimony on tactical training laws and standards which, it can be argued, could have exonerated Darby.

As a result, Darby today sits in one of Alabama's worst prisons, all for doing his job the way he was trained to do, by the State of Alabama and the FBI.

What's even more frightening for every law enforcement officer in The Cotton State, is that the policies and laws by which Darby acted — actions that were found to be justified, are still in place and being taught in every police academy statewide.

This means in the eyes of District Attorney Broussard and other anti-police prosecutors like him, every officer has a bullseye on their back for doing exactly what they are being taught to do.

As long as officers like Darby can be targeted by corrupt, incompetent, or politically motivated prosecutors, and thugs are allowed to wreak havoc on our communities with impunity, no one is safe.

No one, not even the men and women who put their lives on the line to protect everyone, each and every day. 🌐

Source: NewsMax

As New York City's 40th Police Commissioner, Bernard Kerik was in command of the NYPD on September 11, 2001, and responsible for the city's response, rescue, recovery, and the investigative efforts of the most substantial terror attack in world history. His



35-year career has been recognized in more than 100 awards for meritorious and heroic service, including a presidential commendation for heroism by President Ronald Reagan, two Distinguished Service Awards from the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, The Ellis Island Medal of Honor, and an appointment as Honorary Commander of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire by Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II.

Lawlessness Abounds in California:

ANGRY *and* SCARED

By Major Wesley R. Wise (Ret.)

I've watched in horror as the social compact crumbled in the Golden State and beyond. California retailers are under siege as smash-and-grab gangs raid stores with impunity. Rachel Michelin, president of the California Retailers Association, has likened the flash robberies to "domestic terrorism." And it is exactly that.

In Oakland during Thanksgiving week 2021, two men died fighting what progressives have styled as petty crimes. Petty crime my ass. Kevin Nishita, a former cop who was working as a security guard for a news crew covering a gang robbery, was shot and killed. Within days, a man who confronted someone trying to steal his car died in the same manner. Californians are angry and scared. Gov. Gavin Newsom pretended to relate to them when he revealed his own business had been broken into three times in the last year. "I have no empathy, no sympathy for these folks who do these things, and they must be held to account," Newsom said.

You'd never guess Newsom had endorsed Proposition 47, the 2014 ballot measure that softened sentences for shoplifting and other crimes and that largely led to this epidemic. Or that he opposed a 2020 initiative to enhance the sentences for organized retail crime and firearm thefts.

Blue cities and many states are experiencing similar lawlessness as, in the name of reform, progressives reduced penalties for repeat offenders.

How to turn it around?

Spurn dangerous laws like Proposition 47, the "Safe Neighborhoods and Schools Act," which passed by nearly 60% of voters in 2014. It was the sort of deceptive reform that opened the door to this rash of smash and grabs. The Los Angeles Times endorsed the measure because it would "reduce sentences for a handful of petty crimes." And it did - to our everlasting horror.

What it did was raise the threshold for felony convictions of theft to hauls of more than \$950 — giving a green light to repeat gang grabs under \$1,000 apiece.

Hedge fund billionaire George Soros helped bankroll the measure, as well as the candidacies of soft-on-crime district attorneys like LA's George Gascon and San Francisco's Chesa Boudin. There also are similar Soros DAs in Chicago, Milwaukee, Manhattan, Philadelphia, Baltimore and Northern Virginia.

So I ask, after gangs engaged in raids on high-end stores in San Francisco's Union Square, who's going to go shopping in San Francisco?

Walgreens is closing five more SF pharmacies because of "organized retail crime." Who suffers? Consumers in neighborhoods. I've heard erstwhile complaints from the left that low-income neighborhoods in the East Bay city were a "food desert" ignored by grocery giants. Well, no wonder. Meanwhile, progressives' attacks on police have demoralized the rank and file, prompted early retirements and convinced some that if they stick out their necks, little good will come of it.

So who among you is surprised by this? 🌐

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



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UVALDE TRAGEDY: An Honest Assessment

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

One of the most difficult things to analyze in law enforcement is an after-action assessment of what went right, what went wrong and how we can learn from it after a critical incident. The first step is to be honest about what happened. Life is not perfect in anyone's world, but that is no more evident than in the imperfect world of policing. If we could script it ahead of time like on TV, then we would be perfect every episode. But we don't get to script what happens in our world. Often we are dealt a bag of crap and we are expected to make it taste good.

Police operate in a realm of uncertainty. Officers in exigent circumstances have to cobble together incomplete bits and pieces of information to decide an appropriate course of action, and do it fast. Then it gets reviewed in slow motion by people who were not there. They get time to examine every moment frame by frame in the safe space of a conference room. Let's be honest.

Their conclusions are arrived at in a second-guessing environment with all of the information handed to them, not just bits and pieces.

I am prefacing the observations I have following the horrific mass murder of 19 children and 3 teachers at a Uvalde, Texas school for a reason. It's because no matter how many times an incident like this occurs, the reaction following it turns into the same ritual. We do the same thing. We go from shock and horror at what just happened, memorials and GoFundMe pages get set up and that is understandably appropriate. The next phase involves politicians using it for face time, fundraising for their campaign, to virtue signal and maybe score some cheap political points off the backs of the dead and their survivors. The third phase of the ritual is that people start looking for someone to blame for the incident. Attempts are made usually by the media and other agenda-driven people. Somebody has to be to blame

for this other than the perpetrators themselves. And what better entity to hyper-analyze than the law enforcement response.

I am very familiar with what occurs in the early moments of critical events like this: mass confusion and pandemonium. There is little information available, and in many cases partial information. The media monitors police call scanners, so sometimes they beat police there and want something said. They'll settle for anything. New information continues to roll in as the incident unfolds. I get it. But unlike many people including current and retired law enforcement officials who blurt out comments without knowing all the facts and information that undermine law enforcement, I won't do that. I'll take a different approach.

Life is not perfect. Neither are law enforcement officers. That scene at that Uvalde school was an old-fashioned cluster-you know what. Hint, it rhymes with suck. Nothing

"Life is not perfect. Neither are law enforcement officers."

that was happening was in law enforcement's favor to aid their decision-making. It is reported that a door at the school that was supposed to be locked was propped open. A high-ranking officer at the scene is reported to have made a command decision that it was no longer an active shooter but a barricaded subject as the shooting was still going on. Those two situations, active shooter and barricaded subject, would involve a very different response. Sometimes all you have to work with ends up as a best guess. But decisions still have to be made in exigency nonetheless.

In these events, information rapidly evolves. I know from experience that often the first so-called facts coming through are those most subject to change. The military refers to it as the fog of war. That phrase is defined as the uncertainty in situational awareness experienced by participants in military operations. You simply don't know. Look, I still don't know what to believe with all the reported events in the media, two weeks after the Uvalde shooting happened. Some reports said officers delayed entry for an hour while waiting for equipment. Other reports had officers going in immediately. I don't know, but at this point that is irrelevant. What is relevant is what does law enforcement do going forward. In more specific terms, the question this profession has to ask themselves is what can it do better in the future to influence a different outcome, a better outcome that instills confidence in the public that we can do this and that we can be counted on. Let's face it, this was not our finest hour as a profession. We need to publicly admit it. The public doesn't expect perfection from us. They do and should demand a level of excellence from us if we want to be considered a profession. That is what professionals do. They expect more of themselves. It's a behavior issue.

From a technical issue, there is this. As sheriff of one of the 50 largest sheriff's offices in the country and a state of Wisconsin certified law enforcement training center, I always had this complaint about our training. Too much of it occurs in controlled, static and sterile environments. I don't know how to create real life chaos and pandemonium, but those two elements change things. Tabletop exercises are done in a controlled environment. Additionally, we too often fall into the trap of preparing for the last event. School buildings have not changed much. One of the most notables that set the stage for active shooter incidents in the last half-century occurred at Columbine High School in Colorado in 1997. Police were criticized for a slow response to that active shooter. They were staging and waiting for equipment as

the shooting was going on. That was nearly 25 years ago, and here we are again. The questionable police response issue reared its ugly head again during the Parkland, Florida High School shooting a few years ago and here we are dealing with the same criticism about the school shooting in Uvalde. We are better than this, and it's time we show it at these incidents.

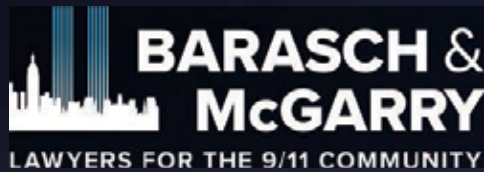
In critical incidents, time is not always on your side. If the shooting is still underway, it's go time. You don't always have time for the static response of setting up a command post, implementing the incident command system (ICS) and waiting for more resources to arrive. A rapid response is required. Look at how first responders of the NYPD and NYFD performed during the attacks on the World Trade Center on Sept 11, 2001. They rushed into a burning building. They instinctively put themselves in harm's way to evacuate people out of those towers. They didn't have time to neatly set everything up first or think about their own safety. Then the buildings collapsed, trapping them inside and killing hundreds of first responders. They epitomized selflessness.

In these active school shooter incidents, we are expected to immediately rush in, locate and confront the shooter whether we have all the equipment and personnel we need or not. The objective is to have the shooter turn from shooting teachers and children and turn his sights on shooting at law enforcement officers instead. They are at least armed and have a better chance at surviving than unarmed kids and teachers. Is that gut-wrenching? Hell yes, it is. One's fear cannot override their duty to perform. I am not suggesting it's easy, but it is what we signed up for. How often is that conversation had at training sessions?

Yes, this is hard stuff, but this conversation must be had internally. We have to do some soul-searching here. Otherwise, we will be dealing with another black eye on this profession like the one the Uvalde tragedy gave us. 🌐

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





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POLICING: SAME BUT DIFFERENT FROM LARGE TO SMALLER JURISDICTIONS

By Joel E. Gordon

Law enforcement (i.e. regulating human behavior) whether in a small town or big city is similar in nature because people are people and our basic human needs remain the same, being the need for affection, belonging and recognition as the father of modern-day psychology, Abraham Maslow, so correctly identified.

Having served as a Baltimore inner-city street cop, an officer in a tax district comprising a population of roughly 10,000 individuals, and ultimately a chief of police for a county seat city of 3,000 in North Central West Virginia, I have a strong sense of what's different and what's the same.

As an inner-city officer, I found limited time for proactive community engagement and preventive patrols running on as many as (25) 911 calls for service and officer backup in a single tour of duty. That's not to say I wasn't able to do business checks, engage in conversation or interact in a positive way especially with community children. In my primary area of patrol responsibility I would routinely take my marked pa-

trol car down a long alley when area men were shooting craps. Seeing me coming, the men would scatter and disappear, leaving behind the dice and small bills in their haste to flee. I would confiscate the dice and leave the scattered money as abandoned property for the area children. This was our daily summertime ritual. In fact, the kids would call in the craps games so that I could make sure that they would have money for the Good Humor ice cream truck. The kids loved this and I found that I had a great rapport with most area children. They would come up to me and talk to me at different times and locations during a little down time away from calls for service. It was always amazing how much you could learn from the kids.

In smaller community policing there is much more time to map out what activity, vehicles and scheduling routines are normal in the community and what is out of the ordinary worthy of further inquiry. By cutting people breaks and building a positive reputation, the general population becomes most comfortable with your presence. Doing lots of

community engagement with more time and learning your community was key. Once I knew my community, I could identify new vehicles, out-of-town persons and vehicles, and coupling that with behavioral indicators it became like shooting fish in a barrel.

When youngsters engaged in foolish minor activity like squealing car tires and the like, I often knew who they were and could make them a deal with a warning and a promise: If I caught them again I had a year and a day to charge them and two violation citations may be coming their way. Pretty effective compliance and safety strategy as it turned out in most cases.

In smaller areas, this is what I learned:

1 Your reputation precedes you. Everything you do will be talked about, and people will know who you are even before you have any idea who they are.

2 Use discretion when you can. Cutting people a break on small stuff helps you get more information that will help on future investigations.

"Cutting people a break on small stuff helps you get more information that will help on future investigations."



3 Be understanding with your department as far as development and innovation. You aren't in a big department with big budgets anymore. There may be some things that were normal for you before that will be brand new for your new department.

4 In spite of budgetary limitations, training opportunities are aplenty with little competition for enhanced areas of expertise, which is how I became a D.A.R.E. instructor, Maryland certified Crime Prevention Specialist and received training in grant writing.

Working in a small community is really the same but different than working in a big city. The same because we all

share common experiences and difficulties no matter our ethnic or socio-economic background or where we live. Different because the calls for service are typically few and far between so your state of readiness is not as great for "hot" calls so keeping your necessary state of awareness and power of observation against danger can sometimes be a greater challenge.

Those are just a few thoughts from someone who went from a big department to smaller ones over the course of a career in policing. To my active duty brothers and sisters, stay safe out on patrol and make the most of your time in the community. The memories will last a lifetime, you'll have lots of cherished memories and plenty

of "war stories" to tell, and maybe even write your own memoir someday! 🌐

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





Malkin: Why Some of Us Can't Dine in Peace

By Michelle Malkin

Fifteen years ago, when I still lived in the D.C. swamp, I took my elementary school-daughter and toddler son out for one of our regular weekend breakfasts at IHOP. But we couldn't be left alone to enjoy our meal. As my kids dug into their funny-face pancakes, a fuming-faced liberal marched to our booth and started ranting about my anti-open-borders commentaries on Fox News. The incident occurred not long after Geraldo Rivera told a Boston Globe reporter that I was the "most vile, hateful commentator I've ever met in my life" and that, "It's good she's in D.C. and I'm in New York" because "I'd spit on her if I saw her."

Fifteen years later, I'm blacklisted by the "fair and balanced" network, while fork-tongued cable news reptile Geraldo Rivera remains a heavily promoted Fox News contributor who regularly attacks everyone else (including his former friend Donald Trump) for inciting violence. File under

"chutzpah."

Fifteen years later, organized mobs in the nation's capital are targeting Supreme Court justices in their homes.

Fifteen years later, the goons of ShutDownDC, leading instigators of "direct action" (translation: domestic terrorism) against the far left's political enemies, have now offered bounties of up to \$200 on Twitter to stalk and harass Justices Brett Kavanaugh, Samuel Alito, Clarence Thomas, Neil Gorsuch, Amy Coney Barrett and John Roberts. In a Twitter post that brazenly violates the social media giant's own rules against targeted harassment and incitements to violence, ShutDownDC called on D.C.-area service industry workers to expose the whereabouts of the conservative justices who overturned *Roe v. Wade*. The call to arms came after Kavanaugh was hounded out of Morton's steakhouse in D.C.

Geraldo Rivera told a Boston Globe reporter that I was the "most vile, hateful commentator I've ever met in my life".

In a rare display of business defiance of the mob, Morton's responded in a statement that Kavanaugh and other patrons "were unduly harassed by unruly protesters" and that politics "should not trample... the right to congregate and eat dinner."

Or to eat an IHOP breakfast with children!

One outlet characterized the latest intimidation campaign against the SCOTUS judges as a "troubling escalation." But I know from both professional and up-close-and-personal experience that all this ugliness is a continuation of years and years of abuse of, and violence against, conservative public figures in both public and private spaces. See, for example, my 2006 encyclopedia of left-wing loons, "Unhinged: Exposing Liberals Gone Wild."

Naturally, militant abortion zealots cheered the Morton's ambush and mocked the justices who are under siege — even as Kavanaugh's would-be assassin faces attempted murder charges after flying from California to the judge's home in the D.C. area to kill him. On cue, the Biden administration defended and encouraged more such protest for abortion on demand. But ShutDownDC's summer of staged rage isn't about any sincerely held despair over the right to murder unborn babies, just as the attacks on Trump officials at their homes and in restaurants in 2018 weren't really, in the end, merely about Trump or America First populism or borders. Remember: ShutDownDC is a full-time, deep-pocketed front group for

wealthy woke heiresses like Aileen Getty and Rory Kennedy who hop from "progressive" cause celebre to cause celebre. As I've reported previously, their compadres in the invasive Sunrise Movement are a parallel disruption outfit backed by the Sierra Club that agitated for the Green New Deal, Black Lives Matter and the Defund the Police movement before mobilizing to attack the private homes of Senate Republicans who confirmed Trump's judges. Even more alarming: the presence of ShutDownDC subversives embedded in federal government agencies including Takoma Park Mobilization, Alt U.S. National Park Service, Alt Ed, Alt FDA, Alt NOAA, Alt U.S. Forest Service, Alt EPA, and BadHombreLands National Park Service.

Reminder: The Sierra Club (annual budget: \$100 million; top donors: Michael Bloomberg, George Soros) provided five-figure initial seed grants to Sunrise's educational arm, as well as Beltway office space. Other original funders of Sunrise: The Rockefeller Foundation and Wallace Global Fund (which also contributed to the George Soros-subsidized Tides Center, Color of Change cancel culture guerilla warriors, and far-left legal policy groups Alliance for Justice and the Brennan Center for Justice). The Sunrise Movement's co-founder, Evan Weber, is a former Occupy Wall Street organizer. Two others, Sara Blazevec and Varshini Prakash, are Green New Deal zealots and Sen. Bernie Sanders activists. Prakash serves as an advisory board member of Climate Power 2020 along with

Soros-funded Center for American Progress head John Podesta, former Obama administration environmental czar Carol Browner, former Obama administration science czar John Holdren, former Obama administration Secretary of State John Kerry, former Obama administration EPA head Gina McCarthy, and former Obama administration U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations Samantha Power. Some of us can't dine in peace because our simple existence is a threat to the "liberal world order." If you can't be controlled, you must be de-personed. "Tolerance" is only for the intolerant. The rules of civility don't apply to the self-righteous monsters sporting "empathy" bumper stickers on their cars and "love is love" banners in the windows of their homes and businesses that will always be safe from pot-bangers, Molotov cocktail-hurlers and billionaire-funded dissent-crushers.

Bon appetit, end-stage America. 🌐

Michelle Malkin is an American conservative blogger, political commentator, author, and businesswoman.



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

THOSE WHO POINT THE FINGER ARE OFTEN MOST GUILTY



By Peter Marina, Ph.D.

All human beings engage in projection to varying degrees of frequency and hostility. How we deal with our own projection and othering, as well as how we deal with people who project and other us, determines if we become bullies or protectors of human rights.

The concept of projection and othering occurred to me when a police officer in my Human Rights Policing Certificate of Completion Program, which I developed with my father Lieutenant Pedro Marina (retired), inquired about how to feel and respond to people who direct their anger and frustration onto cops.

Carl Jung's concept of projection explains how we cast our insecurities and the most repugnant aspect of ourselves onto others. Put differently, we cast our ugly

shadows onto the faces of other people and then blame them for our own flaws. When people, especially privileged members of the public, call all police racists, they are often projecting their own repressed racism onto them. When privileged people say all cops engage in white supremacy, they are merely expressing their own insecure white guilt onto their faces and then hating police for reflecting their own personal insecurities and flaws. Humans are biologically and culturally determined to project.

People who "fat shame" others are often projecting their own unhealthy lifestyles and eating habits onto people they perceive as bigger. When people use slurs against members of the LGBTQ + community, they are often projecting their own sexual and gen-

dered insecurities on their fellow brothers and sisters with different preferences. Labeling easily scapegoated people as lazy often reveals the shame people feel about their own indolence. When privileged academics call certain people racists, they are often projecting their own repressed racism onto other people. Parrotting the phrase "diversity is our strength," liberals, for example, often project their intolerance onto others who refuse to virtue signal empty words. Projection relates to othering. In the early 20th century, as a friend reminded me, the great sociologist W.E.B. Du Bois wrote about how black people experienced a sense of otherness and exclusion in the United States. It's a problem that perhaps all people experience in a highly divided, hierarchal society. Du Bois said:

*"We cast our ugly shadows
onto the faces of other people
and then blame them for our own flaws."*

It is a peculiar sensation, this double consciousness, this sense of always looking at oneself through the eyes of the other, of measuring one's soul by the tape of a world that looks in amused contempt and pity. One ever feels his two-ness, an American, a Negro; two souls, two thoughts, two unreconciled strivings; two warring ideals in one dark body, whose dogged strength alone keeps it from being torn asunder...

While Du Bois was describing the feelings of being both an American and a black person, many people experience these feelings of two-ness. People often make other people feel like outsiders, inferiors, and the "other," because of their social class, immigration status, sexual orientation, racial and ethnic identity, or some other category. Many immigrants experience this sense of two-ness today with feelings of being both a member of their original culture and an American. My family has experienced this being Cuban-Americans.

In today's political climate, perhaps police officers also sense this feeling of two-ness, for example, being a stereotyped cop and a community member or being a police officer and a woman or black/brown person.

We all project and "other" people; police officers too. So do professors. I've seen many privileged professors engage in projection and othering towards their colleagues making them feel like outsiders, inferior, and the "other."

Those who point the finger the most are often most guilty. Most important, we must also ask ourselves the following:

How often do you tell stories that turn others into your inferior? How often do you make people feel like outsiders?

How often do you "other" other people based on some category?

Asking such questions, I realized how I've "othered" rural people while living for the first time in a small-town rural setting. I work hard to avoid repeating this process.

If police officers realize how they are constantly

subject to projection and othering, it becomes easier to recognize how they also do it. I believe police officers can become better than the vast majority of people who constantly project their shadows and "other" people. Police officers can rise above the proverbial muck and mire to become great examples of people who protect human rights, even during highly difficult times when the public has intensified their projection and othering.

To police officers: you are members of the working-and-middle classes who also police fellow members of the working-and-middle classes. People will constantly project their shadow onto you and make you feel like outsiders and "others." While we all have a tendency to defend ourselves from such projection and othering, especially when attacked, I believe the better approach is to understand why people cast their ugly shadows onto to you and develop a sense of empathy. Simply put, the reason people project is because it's difficult for people to accept their own flaws and insecurities, so they instinctually misplace them onto other people, onto you. Reach out to the people who project their ugly shadow onto you, for they are really only hating themselves. Reach out to those who make you outsiders, for they too are outsiders. If you understand this process, you can develop a sense of pity, and hopefully, a sense of empathy too.

Allow them to enjoy their human rights even when they project their insecurities and flaws onto you. This is an essential task of human rights policing. It is achievable and can improve the professional and personal lives of those who practice it. 🌍

Dr. Peter Marina is a sociologist and criminologist at the University of Wisconsin – La Crosse. Along with his father, (retired) Lieutenant Pedro Marina, he teaches human rights policing to law enforcement professionals throughout the United States.

He is author of the upcoming book Human Rights Policing: Reimagining Law Enforcement in the 21st Century with Routledge Press.



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The last trial of my career

By Dale Gabriel

Score one for the good guys. My faith is restored!!! Well friends, I just completed a very difficult four-day jury trial for a DUI! Not a murder, but a DUI... yes, believe it or not, FOUR DAYS. The defense attorney was beating me up terribly, slinging mud, accusing my partner and me of all kinds of heinous things... lying about the case so we could get promoted, making things up to support the charge... out and out calling us liars during his closing argument. liars! It was extremely hard keeping my composure being on the stand for a full day and a half, with the personal attacks. But I did my best to stay calm, smile at the jury, and tell the truth! It was tough watching him slam the breath test reliability, even though it was the defendant who screwed it up (although we were not allowed to say that).

It was tough watching as he questioned the blood draw, the submission of evidence, the transportation of evidence to the lab, the testing of the sample, the criminal complaint, the traffic stop, the field sobriety, the actions of me and my partner, the report, making everything look improper! everything!

I had to sit through three wit-

nesses (two of whom were RN's who know these things) testify that in no way, shape or form was the defendant under the influence of any alcohol, despite a blood test more than twice the legal limit. It must be a mistake, or fabricated by me and my partner! I had to listen to the defendant's mother testify with lie after lie after lie, even telling the jury that she does not care if her daughter was found guilty or not, because she always taught her children that there was consequences for their action, but that she was not guilty.

I had to listen to the defendant tell straight out lies about things that occurred during the time in custody, total lies, crying to the jury how she was mistreated!!!! To be honest, for the first time in my career, I was really worried that I might lose a trial.

For the first time in my career, I really just felt totally defeated. Totally unappreciated! It was a long and tough four days and I was wiped out!!!

Then, the ADA had a phenomenal closing argument and the jury saw through all the crap. They saw through all the grandstanding, the dog and pony show, the lies, and the

false accusations. They came back with a guilty verdict of not one, but both DUI sections. I am ecstatic... actually giddy.

I have never really showed much emotion on my cases throughout my career. But because of the way I was treated during this trial, I wanted this one badly. When the verdict was read, I smiled at the jury, acknowledging their hard work... their common sense, their verdict! I felt like a retiring member of the Super Bowl winner going out of my career on top! Maybe I should go to Disney. One small step for man, one giant leap for Truth, Justice, and the American Way! 🇺🇸

Dale Gabriel is a retired patrol and community services officer with the Pennsylvania State Police.



After 25+ years of service, in retirement, he has been working on a book of his many PSP memories. He also coaches a baseball team in a Miracle League for those with special needs. He holds a communication degree with English minor from Saint Vincent College in Western Pennsylvania.



Post 'Woke' Era: Is The Tide Turning For Cops?

By Ken Dye

Writing in my blog, “copserspective.com,” I had the pleasure to write three consecutive stories about police officers who have been accused of excessive use of force. Fortunately, these officers were subsequently found to have been within the department’s guidelines and the law. The officers were fired, suspended or sued by a resisting/deceased suspect or their families.

Officers fired/suspended for doing their jobs by spineless city leaders had to endure months, even years before the issue was resolved.

Let’s take a look at the three cases I referred to:

1 Wauwatosa, WI: Officer was involved in three fatal shootings. The last one in 2016. After being investigated by local, state and federal authorities no charges were filed. A state judge reinstated the case and it was investigated by former prosecutors. In June of this year, he was finally given a clean bill. He

is currently serving honorably, as a deputy sheriff in Waukesha County, Wis.

2 Six Atlanta officers were fired by the mayor and police chief after they took two curfew violators into custody during the George Floyd unrest. Their bargaining unit’s attorneys got them reinstated. Once again, this June all the officers were not charged after a final investigation. The officers’ actions were within department guidelines and laws. The actions by city leaders, however, leave them open to costly and time-consuming civil suits.

3 In Topeka, Kansas, an officer was sued by a resisting suspect. After hearing the evidence in federal court, the wrongly accused officer was found not guilty and the plaintiff was ordered to pay the officer’s cost of counsel.

Earlier this year, Oklahoma officers had their case dismissed by a judge who questioned why the case was filed in the first

place. Once again it involved an overzealous prosecutor.

There seems to be a movement afoot in the country to once again look at these, and other cases involving cops a bit more seriously. We have all seen the newsreaders look at the camera and bemoan police brutality. Oh please!

Our nation’s cops deserve the right to be heard and judged appropriately. No one will stand for abuse of power by cops... or by chiefs and mayors. 🌐

Ken Dye is the author of five books about crime, cops and bad guys in the St. Louis area. He blogs under “Cops



Perspective” and has over 20,000 followers. Ken served with the St. Louis County Police Department for 13 years and finished his LE career with the Illinois Criminal Justice Authority as the administrator for the statewide MEG’s and Narcotics Task Forces.



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Gender Dysphoria: Assisting the Predator?

By Dave Willoughby

*“Woe to those who call evil good and good evil,
who put darkness for light and light for darkness,
who put bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter!”*

Isaiah 5:20

It's happening all over the U.S. and it's becoming more and more common. Unsuspecting women and little girls are walking into traps which have been set by corporate bigwigs, gutless politicians, and citizens who choose to say nothing. The areas once considered sanctuaries for women and girls are now being infiltrated by XY chromosome predators, with demented XX envy. Biological men have been given a free pass to enter women's locker rooms, changing areas and rest rooms. The so-called welcoming environment of “inclusivity” and “tolerance” will inevitably lead to tragic endings for some. Women and little girls will be hurt... badly. For law enforcement officers, the blurry shades of gray regarding this issue may lead to claims of discrimination, which will inevitably lead to lawsuits. Law enforcement... get ready. This craziness is coming to your municipality soon!

So, is your department ready? Are your policies and procedures crystal clear? Let's see how you would respond to this scenario:

Officers get dispatched to a public swimming pool, located within their municipality, for a complaint of “A man inside the women's locker room.”

Upon arrival, a woman approaches the officers and says, “My 8-year-old daughter was changing for swim practice in the women's locker room. As she was walking through the showers, to get to the pool, she saw a

naked man showering, who said “hi” to her. This scared her, so she quickly ran out and told me. That's when I called 911. He's still in there”.

As the officers approach the door to the women's locker room, the door opens, and out walks a man. The officers ask what he is doing in the women's locker room. The man looks at them and says, “What? I have every right to be in there... I identify as a woman.”

Questions to ask:

- What are the policies and procedures of the department regarding gender dysphoria?
- Are there current privacy laws regarding men's and women's facilities in your municipality?
- How will officers know with certainty that this male is gender confused and not exploiting this insanity in order to gain access to women's facilities and peep/abuse with impunity?
- What if he's a pedophile?
- What if he's a sexual predator?
- Will he be arrested? If so, for what?
- Will the officers issue citations? If so, for what?
- What do the officers tell the concerned mom and scared little girl?

We are living in clown world. This shouldn't be an issue at all. Anyone with XY chromosomes should not be in women's/girl's locker rooms... period. We have created

areas for predators to thrive and to feed on innocent women and children. It's demented, sick and pure evil.

The scenario described should be sent out to every chief and sheriff. Actually, all people sitting in leadership positions should be put on record, especially legislators. Will they protect the innocent, or will they side with the sick and perverted?

As a deputy, I for one, will side with the concerned parent and scared 8-year-old, regardless of department policies, or local laws. He will be arrested and cited for lewd and lascivious behavior, public nudity, sexual harassment and indecent exposure involving a child. I'll take him to jail and let the courts decide what to do.

Do I risk suspension and possibly termination? Maybe, but it's the right thing to do. I refuse to side with those who call evil good and good evil.

What will you do? 🌐

Dave Willoughby is a Marine Veteran, former Firefighter/EMT and is currently a Milwaukee County Deputy after serving as a Juvenile Corrections Officer. He has earned degrees in Developmental Coaching and Communications as well as Fire Science and Emergency Medicine. He is married and is the proud dad to five daughters, six sponsor children, and two dogs.





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FRAMED...

I Never Stood a Chance: Drugs, Conspiracy, and a Corrupt Justice System

By Joseph Occhipinti

Joe Occhipinti, is a retired federal immigration agent. Finally, after 30 years in the making, Joseph Occhipinti has finished his long-awaited memoir on drugs, conspiracy and a corrupt justice system entitled, “**FRAMED**”.

The book profiles his life as a highly decorated agent who investigated a murder of an NYPD police officer in 1988 which led to an investigation of a politically powerful drug cartel in New York City. In retribution, the cartel framed him on fabricated federal civil rights charges where there were no acts of police brutality, racial bias or corruption. This was a landmark prosecution in American history that outraged the American public, as well as two American presidents. In January of 1993, after serving eight months of a 37-month prison sentence, President George H.W. Bush commuted the remaining prison sentence given for the former federal immigration agent for allegedly conducting illegal searches and filing false reports against Hispanic store owners. On December 23, 2020, President Donald J. Trump granted him a “Full and Unconditional Pardon” with a personal apology for enduring injustice.

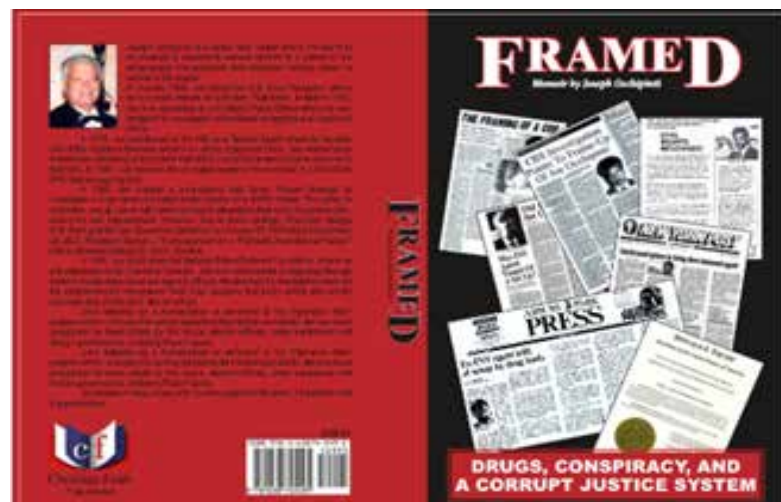
This is the genesis for establishing the National Police Defense Foundation in 1995 to protect and support the efforts of law enforcement officials nationwide. The National Police Defense Foundation (NPDF) is a nationally renowned and congressionally recognized IRS approved 501(c)(3) that provides free medical and legal support services to the law enforcement community, as well as funds a variety of public safety and law enforcement initiatives.

The basic mission statement of the National Police Defense Foundation is to “Protect & Support” the efforts of law enforcement. This is being accomplished through the important medical and legal support services provided the national law enforcement community, as well as several NPDF law

enforcement programs involving public safety and child safety programs.

Too often, dedicated law enforcement officials are victimized by criminal elements that fabricate allegations of misconduct. When the NPDF suspects that an officer is being unjustly prosecuted or has been falsely convicted, it will support the efforts of the officer for complete vindication. The NPDF will also consider establishing a legal defense fund wherein 100% of the tax-deductible donations can go to the officer’s defense. The NPDF has been credited for exposing many of these injustices on national news programs, such as “60 Minutes,” “NBC Dateline,” Fox News and CNN, among others.

The National Police Defense Foundation, to better address the individual needs of a specific law enforcement group, established independent NPDF coalitions. At present, there are the Police Chiefs Coalition, Firefighters and EMS Coalition, NPDF Italian Coalition and Federal Officers Coalition. These coalitions fund individual NPDF program service initiatives and have an appointed administrator.





It was Joe's foresight that he established the congressionally recognized "Safe Cop" program. Entered into the "Congressional Record" in 1995, the NPDF trademarked "Safe Cop" program is nationally renowned for posting up to a \$10,000 reward for public information that results in the arrest and conviction of anyone who shoots a member of law enforcement, anywhere in the United States. The posting of the Safe Cop reward has been instrumental in bringing to justice several cop killers nationwide.

The "Safe Cop" program was also expanded to provide critical medical care and counseling to disabled law enforcement personnel worldwide. The NPDF will periodically establish a medical fund for the disabled officer or an immediate family member when they are financially unable to pay for medical treatment or have outstanding medical debt.

It should be noted that "Safe Cop" was credited for providing free grief counseling, emergency financial assistance, meals, lodging and supplies for many of the police and first responder victims of the September 11th terrorist attack. In the memory of the police officers killed on September 11th, the NPDF commissioned a world-renowned sculptor to create the September 11th Police Memorial which is in Orange County, New York.

Joe also established the internationally renowned "Operation Kids" program which has;

- distributed over 250,000 free fingerprint/DNA kits to parents
- posted rewards for missing children
- established "Project Pedophile"
- funded many youth athletic events and other related charitable endeavors for children
- granted over 50 scholarships to college-bound students
- arranged life-saving operations and medical treatment to critically and severely handicapped children.

The published memoir *FRAMED, I Never Stood a Chance* is available via Amazon, Barnes & Noble and Walmart. 🌐

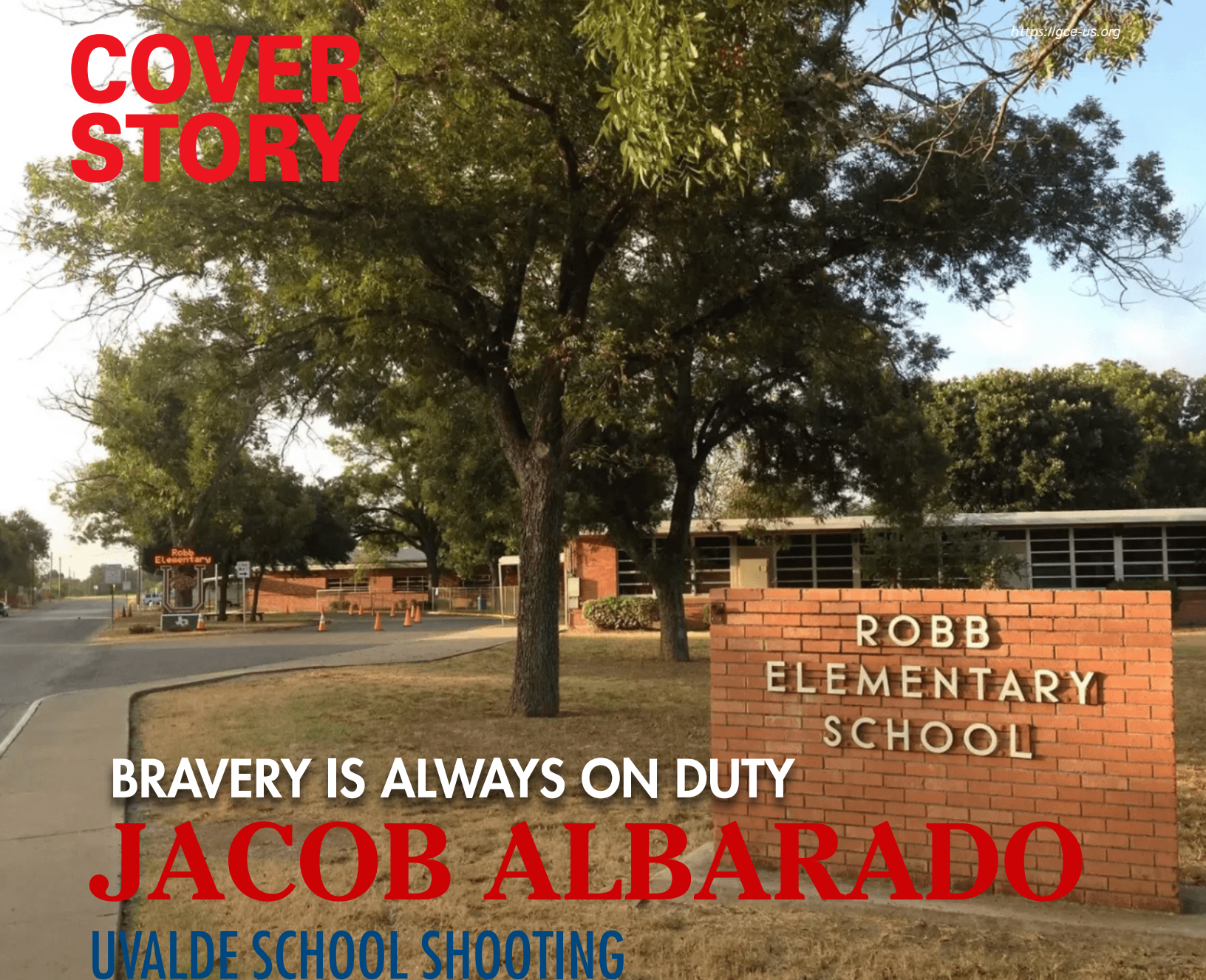
Joseph Occhipinti is a native New Yorker who resides in New Jersey with his wife of 41 years, Angela, and three daughters. He founded and volunteers as the Executive Director for the National Police Defense Foundation whose membership exceeds over 210,000 members and supporters worldwide. More information can be found at: www.npdf.org



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COVER STORY



BRAVERY IS ALWAYS ON DUTY

JACOB ALBARADO

UVALDE SCHOOL SHOOTING

By Marco Catania & Daniel Del Valle for Blue Magazine and Moment of Silence



What would you do?

Jacob Albarado, a Uvalde Texas resident, Federal Border Patrol agent and a dedicated husband and father to his children ages 19, 13 and 8, could have never anticipated what was about to happen in the early afternoon hours on May 24, 2022.

Jacob Albarado was in his barber's chair when both men got text messages about the shooting unfolding at Robb Elementary School in Uvalde, Texas. "There's an active shooter. Help. Love you," Albarado's wife Trisha said in three messages at 11:41 a.m. She's a fourth-grade teacher at the school where their daughter is a student.

Here is his story...

**The BLUE Magazine:
What was it like
growing up in Uvalde?**

Jacob Albarado: It's a small town. Everyone knows everyone. If you don't know who they are, you'll find out within minutes. So, I like being in the small town where I know everyone.

**What motivated you
to get involved in law
enforcement?**

Well, I'll tell you the truth. I didn't want to at one point in time, because I didn't want to stop people from coming over here trying to make a living for themselves. But then one of my buddies was an agent, and he told me that I could be one of the guys making sure that they're getting treated right in the process. So that's kind of what pushed me to be that guy, helping them, helping them out as they were coming through, making sure they were treated right.

**So tell me about May
24th. There was an
active shooter incident
at the Robb Elementary
School. Let's go to
that day. Tell me
what happened that
morning. You woke up
and what happened?**

There was an award ceremony for my daughter. So, I woke up and got the kids ready for school, got myself ready because I knew that I had to go to the award ceremony. I was there by 8:30, I believe. I was there from 8:30 to 9:00 for the award ceremony. My daughter got all A's for the year and then I was off in town running errands, washing my car and taking my mom for breakfast. And then I was on my way to get a haircut.

OK. So you went to get

a haircut, right. And, you know, according to some of the timelines that are available, it was approximately 11:28 when the shooter arrived at Robb Elementary School and apparently, shot at three witnesses who were at the funeral home across the street from Robb Elementary School. You mentioned that you and the barber heard gunshots. These may have been the gunshots that you may have heard.

As I was arriving at the barber shop, my barber was walking across the parking lot. He was coming from getting lunch. And we entered the barber shop and he said, did you hear that? And I said, I think I heard some shots. And then we just carried on. I sat down in the barber seat and then I got a text and then he got a text. And then my wife was texting me that there was an active shooter. "Help me. I love you," she said.

You heard the gunshots and now you get a text to validate it and are you thinking?

Oh, I didn't think it would ever happen. I felt naked because I didn't have my pistol on me. I normally had a pistol on me. So I knew my barber had a history of being armed. So, I asked him if he had a gun on him. He said yes. So, we took off as fast as we could and got to the school.

When you decided to run to the school with your friend, the barber, what was it like at that scene? What did you see? What did you

Albarado Facebook



Albarado Facebook





hear? Was law enforcement already there?

There was some law enforcement there. The scene wasn't kicked off yet. There was, I guess, the locals that live in the area and they were coming to the school trying to see what was going on. They're filming; everyone's a part of the media now with their phones. They were trying to record the incident as well. And I was just trying to get in there as fast as I could, trying to find out where my wife was at, trying to find out where my daughter was and trying to help whoever I could at the time.

What happened when you arrived at the door? Did you immediately go in or did you assess the situation?

I assessed the situation. I was off duty. I didn't have my ballistics. I didn't have a long arm. I knew he had a high-powered rifle. He had fired multiple shots. There were officers there with their vests.

And were you communicating with your wife or anybody?

I was trying to communicate with her. When stuff is chaotic like this, all the phone lines were tied up. I can't remember if she texted me or called me that she was already across the street at the funeral home. So I felt some relief at that point in time. Now, I'm looking for my daughter.

You're making this decision to put yourself in a real peril, obviously, to save your daughter and anyone else that you could. What went through your mind when you entered the school? Did you feel that you were going to die?

I didn't know if I was going to. I was willing to get shot. I was willing to do what I had to do to help my daughter get out of there alive. I wasn't going to go home without her and my wife.

So, when you entered the school...

Well, just to clarify that I didn't imme-

diately enter the school. I was fixing to go into the school. The school is kind of situated where you got one new building. When you go into the school in the classes you enter into like a little hallway. And that's where the shooter was at. After I did go in there, I went across and ran into the other wing where my daughter was at, and then I started clearing out the classrooms over there.

Did you know where the shooter was?

I didn't know exactly where he was at. He was in that hallway. He was in the class. But this is all stuff that we learned. And I know I didn't know exactly where he was at the time. I was in my dress clothes with the shotgun. It's not very, very accurate. I had a vest on. A guy came in, he said, hey, that's my vest. I said, OK, here's your vest, here's your vest. And that was it. And then from there, I ran behind the vehicle. I talked to Ruben Ruiz, his wife was shot and bleeding inside, talked to him. He was losing it. I went to school with him, played baseball with him.

At that point, were you panicking knowing that your daughter was in the school by

herself?

She was at school by herself. It's right around lunchtime. So that's when they start moving all around. So, I didn't know exactly. She could have been at lunch. She could have been at PE. She could have been in a classroom. I didn't know where she was at the time.

At some point, you made your way to a different part of the school because you realized that perhaps your daughter may have been on that side of the school?

My wife finally texted me back saying that my daughter was in the restroom. I didn't know what restroom she was in, so I was still trying to find out where she was. And I didn't know that there were restrooms inside the classrooms. So she was inside the restroom, inside her classroom.

As a father, your mind must be going 100 miles an hour. I can't imagine what that felt like. So, as you're going to the other part of the school, who was Ruben Ruiz?

He's a school police officer there in town. I went to school with him, played



Albarado Facebook

"I like taking charge of the situation. I wanted to make sure my daughter was safe out of any harm's way. So, I started clearing out all the classes."

baseball with him. And as I was leaving that part of the building, he was there by one of the police vehicles. I spoke with him to see how he's doing or see what he knew because I had no communication with any other law enforcement just to see where the shooter was at.

You went to the different part of the school. Is that where you entered the school?

Well, on that part of the school, the doors exit to the outside, to the older part of the school. There was two officers there and I was asking them where the kids were in the school. And he said they were all in the classroom. And at that point, I told them that we needed to get the kids out of the classroom to get them to safety.

So at that point, your law enforcement training, your instincts, just to help and save people kicked in, would you say that?

Yes. I like taking charge of the situation. I wanted to make sure my daughter was safe out of any harm's way. So, I started clearing out all the classes.

When you entered the school and you saw two other officers there, what went through your mind?

I didn't know where the shooter was. I didn't know if he was stationed there. I didn't know if he was going to be moving around shooting, so I just tried to get all the kids to safety.

So you actually asked the officers to cover you basically or cover the hallway?

I made a little makeshift team. I got two officers, with me downrange to where they thought the

shooter was at. I had another two officers opening the doors and sending the kids my way. And then I had another officer on the sidewalk toward the parking lot.

So, as you're clearing naturally one of your primary motivations is to find your daughter in addition to saving all these other children as well. How did you find your daughter?

I cleared out the wing where she goes to school. Her classroom started off with the first room, cleared them out. Second classroom. Got all the kids out. Third classroom, my daughter's classroom. I cleared that room out. I see her come out happy as can be. She knows I'm there for her.

Wow. So... when she saw you.

I gave her a hug. I told her to be brave and to keep on moving. Go to safety and that I'll take care of this.

You let her run out with the rest of the children and you continued.

Yes. I continued to get the next two classrooms out. Then I went to the next wing, started doing the same thing.

Now, you also mentioned that some kids went out the windows as well. Were you just like using any means necessary to get the kids out?

Well, other officers were there. They were breaking the windows and having the kids come out. And I was just guiding the kids.

How many kids do you think that you managed to evacuate from the school, you and the other officers



on the team that you assembled?

It's hard to say. I would have to guess there are normally about 20 kids per classroom. That day was award ceremony, so I'd say about half the kids had left. So, if you do the math on that, it's about 10 classrooms at about 10 to 15 kids per classroom. So, 100, 150 kids, maybe more.

How long would you say that you stayed on the scene?

Really until they took out the shooter and I found out that he was no longer a threat.

There's been a lot a lot of

things said, especially on the national spotlight in terms of the police response and how they handled it. You were on the scene. You're a law enforcement officer. Many have said that there was a systematic failure. How do you feel about this?

I can't speak on what they were thinking. I just know that I was there trying to do the best that I could. And it's hard when shots are being fired. Shots are being fired at you. Your life is at stake. Everyone talks about training. But when you're training, people are not trying to kill you, so it kind of

changes when you're actually in a scenario like that.

We train, right, repetition and practice. And, we hope that that repetition of practice when adrenaline kicks in, in an active shooter situation that we resort back to that. How much of your training do you think helped you?

I think it helped. But it's either in you or it's not. I like to believe whether I was law enforcement or not, I still would have done the same thing regardless. And I believe I probably would have, and people that really know me, they

know my family knows I would have done the same thing regardless.

How do you feel this has impacted you?

It's like I told my wife and my kids, they're not going back to school until there's changes and 'til I know that they're safe.

So you have safety concerns.

Oh yes, I know this happened and a lot of changes are going to be made. But it sucks that this had to happen for changes to be made.

What about for yourself in terms of changes? You weren't carrying your weapon that day. Did that change your perception and now carry all the time?

Yes, yes, yes.

You have to deal with a lot of the grief and the trauma. How are you handling that with your daughter and your wife? And I'm sure they both have losses.

Yes. My wife is having the hardest time. She lost two of her best friends, so she's having a real tough time.

And your daughter as well?

She's eight years old. I don't know if she understands everything that happened. She's actually doing well.

What do you feel when you hear the name of the active shooter of the incident?

Oh, why lie and say I don't feel any anger because I do. I wish he was just taking his own life or I wish he would gotten help somewhere along the line. Something in his life happened to make him do this. What it is, I have no idea. Why take all these innocent lives?

So being that Uvalde is a small community and people know each other, did you know of him or his parents or his family?

Well, just from what I found out, I don't know if it's true. I found out that he was, that his mother was on drugs and his grandma he was living with. He shot her in the face or had shot her right before all this happened. And my mom knew his grandmother. So, I mean, just within minutes of finding out who he was I found out a little more

about him.

After you found out who he was and the dynamics of his family, you know? Did you think like that he was, like, emotionally disturbed or he fit the profile of someone that could do something like this?

Yes.

Did he have that kind of a background?

On social media, there should have been some red flags. There were some red flags there.

So between May 16th and May 18th, less than a week before this incident, this kid is 18 years old. And he went out and purchased a Daniel Defense AR-15 rifle. The next day he goes and buys a Smith and Wesson style AR-15 rifle. He bought over 2,000 rounds of ammunition. I mean, this kid spent \$4,896 on two guns and ammo. How does that make you feel?

I don't believe it's a gun. I believe it's his intent. He could have done this with anything. He could have stolen the rifle from his neighbor, so I don't actually believe it's the AR-15. I don't believe its ammunition. I believe it's his intent. He wanted to go out and hurt people. So he could have done that any way that he wanted to.

So many times in law enforcement, we have the tendency to put the job before family. What would you tell an officer having gone through what you went through?

Give 100% at work, but your family comes first. It took me a while to find that switch. I used to put my work before my family. And then I found that I realized that my family comes first. I'm not going to get those memories back.

Here at The Blue Magazine, and Moment of Silence we have a law enforcement following. If there happens to be, let's just say, a law enforcement officer out there that's thinking about suicide. What would you say to that person?

Find a purpose in life. Find a purpose. Find a reason to be here. Reach out to someone. Speak to someone. Speak to a friend or family member. 🌍



Abortion:

Is it a necessary evil?

By Lt. Patrick J. Ciser (Ret.)

From America's inception, abortion was illegal in all states, as a result of British common law. In 1821 Connecticut, the first U.S. law was written "officially" banning the practice. Each state would follow, confirming until 1973 that abortion was outlawed across the land. As time moved forward through women's "suffrage," (1848-1920) and later women's "lib" (liberation) throughout the '60s and beyond, opinions changed. What was looked at for centuries that a baby was an individual with all of the rights of any human being, became today, part of a woman's body; as "my body, my choice" became the mantra. In 1967, some sanity was injected into the abortion argument when the American Medical Association voted to change the body's long-standing opposition to abortion, giving both sides some middle ground. With a new resolution, the AMA now condoned abortion for the life or health of the mother, for a baby's 'incapacitating' physical deformity or mental deficiency, or for cases of rape or incest. Sounds prudent to me.

By 1970, New York, California, Washington State, and Hawaii, passed laws making abortion "ON-DEMAND"

legal, at any stage! And it was that my friends that catapulted the "Pro-Choice" "Pro-Life" wars. In 1972, the Pro-Lifers were gaining steam, until Roe v. Wade in 1973 changed



Fetus ultrasound (iStock)

According to the [U.S. National Library of Medicine](#), an unborn baby's toes can be seen and its lungs, ears, eyes, arms and legs start to form before the end of the first trimester. Between nine and 12 weeks after conception, a baby's face becomes well-formed, genitals appear, and nails appear on the fingers and toes.

everything! The liberal-leaning U.S. Supreme Court wrongfully, in my opinion, decided abortion was a federal matter while misinterpreting the 14th Amendment and thereby forced conservative Pro-Life states to accept abortion regardless of that particular state's views or religious beliefs. The problem is, and always was, however, that the U.S. Constitution does not address abortion specifically, leaving the decision up to the states. You see, the current court did not make abortion illegal, they simply sent it back to the states where it always belonged. Look up "Federalism" for more about states' rights.

Note; Jane Roe was an alias in court documents for complainant, Norma McCorvey, and Henry Wade was Texas attorney general at the time.

So, enough with the history lesson and on to this humble writer's opinion. I believe that the biggest problem related to abortion are the two groups' extremes. In a poll, 70% of the American people today think that abortion should be legal with certain restrictions, including banning late-term abortions. BAM! There you have it! So, can't we simply meet somewhere in the middle? "Some" Pro-Choice folks believe that a woman should be able to get an abortion right up until her due date, while "some" Pro-Lifers believe that there should be no provision in

cases of rape or incest! Why would anyone with an ounce of compassion, consider either one of these extreme positions? Before I go on, I am conceding that a baby is either dead or alive, leaving no room for middle ground; but let's get real. It is estimated that since Roe v. Wade was adopted in 1973, that approximately 63,459,781 abortions have been performed in America. According to the CDC, the percentage performed with chemical abortifacients, like mifepristone, rose from 9.6% in 2004, to 43.7% in 2019, and continue to rise.

Now, while over 63 million dead babies are shocking to many, let us be a little pragmatic for a moment. To many, the birth of a child is a blessing, but to others, it could be a curse. So, should the states allow abortion in the first trimester? I say yes! Ideally, I'd like to see the termination of the embryo, before it becomes a fetus; usually at 11 weeks. The 13-week "first trimester" idea might be better practicality-wise as some women don't even know that they are pregnant until they're into their fourth month when the baby first moves. From my point of view, if you miss two periods, and are sexually active, you might want to take a pregnancy test. However, I'm still looking for common ground and compromise. So, what would have happened to over 63 million babies that were aborted, where in most

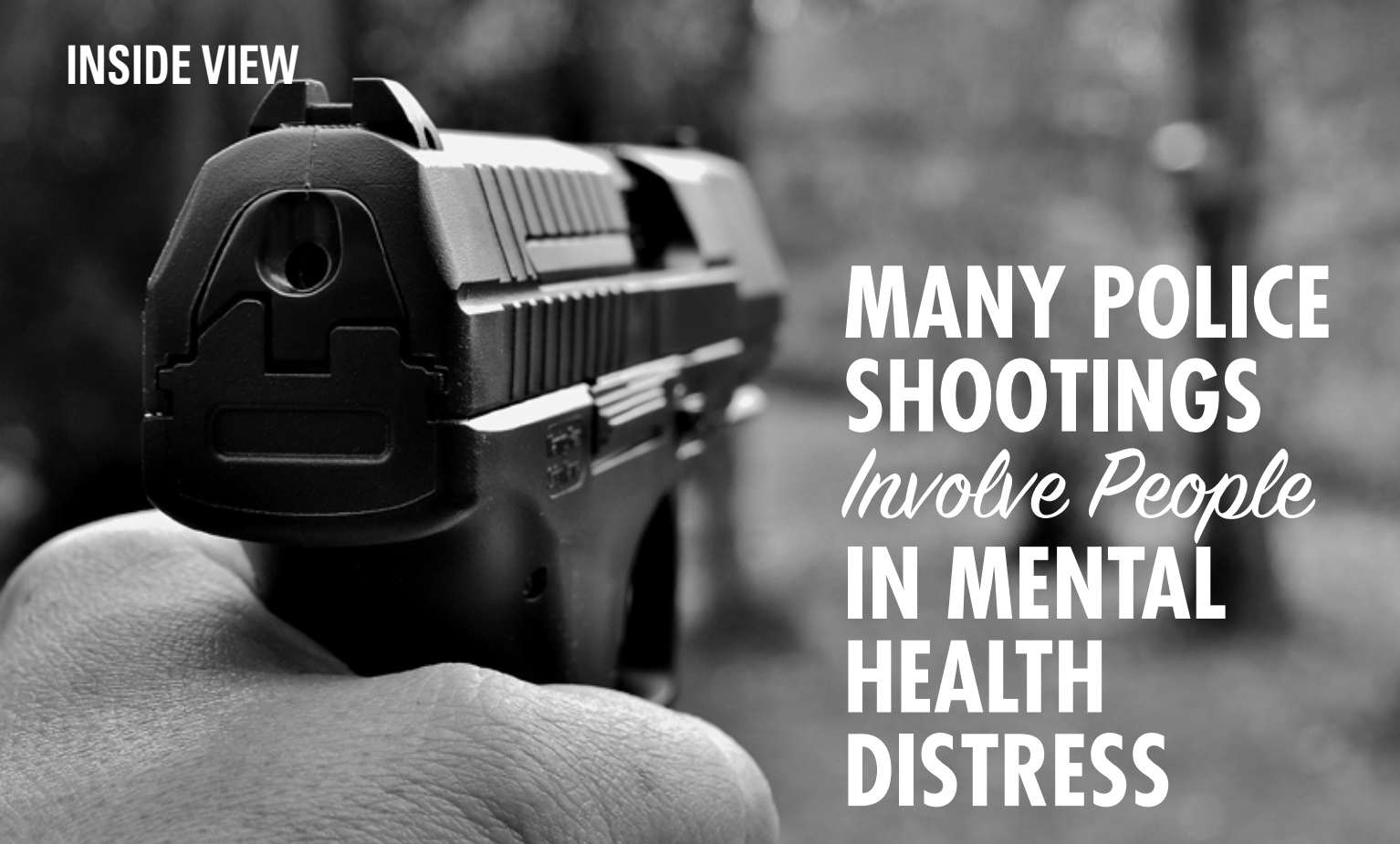
cases, no one would want them? Would they grow up feeling loved? Would they be left outside a hospital or police station? Would our orphanages explode across the country? Would they be "dragged up" by alcoholic, or drug-addicted parents? How many would be on government assistance, or turn to a life of crime? Considering their offspring, would the population of the United States be over 500 million today, rather than 330? If your young teenage daughter accidentally got pregnant, how would an untimely birth affect her, and the rest of the family? Should your daughter be tied to some asshole loser/drug addict or other, for the rest of her life? Absolutely NOT! Can the family even afford a baby with the projected costs?

"It is time to heed the constitution and return the issue of abortion to the people's representatives."

~Justice Samuel Alito, 2022 🇺🇸

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*.





MANY POLICE SHOOTINGS *Involve People* IN MENTAL HEALTH DISTRESS

By Leonard Adam Sipes, Jr.

While this article indicates that 42 percent of police shootings involve people in mental health crises, I believe this is an undercount. If one looks at the data, most offenders have mental health issues, and most are under the influence of drugs or alcohol during arrests.

It's all in the definition of mental health. There are a ton of people not formally diagnosed who cannot handle confrontations without verbal or physical aggression, especially if coupled with substance abuse.

This becomes the heart and soul of interactions with law enforcement that go bad. As a cop, I was amazed that the simplest of interactions had a way of getting complicated very quickly. From family disputes to traffic stops to investigating crimes, many people became instantly combative regardless of my demeanor.

I often had to suggest that their vocal abuse was a sign that they could be guilty of a crime and their actions might lead to their arrest just to get them to reassess how they were interacting with me. It worked in the majority of cases.

We blame cops for shootings or use of force when it's the offenders in the vast majority of cases who are acting irrationally and, in many cases, dangerously. Anyone interacting with an obviously distressed person would be on high alert as to defensive actions.

I had a person blocking a small public dirt road from their neighbor because of a dispute. The person doing the blocking acted emotionally; he wasn't moving his vehicle. It was obvious that he was under the influence. It was obvious that he wasn't rationally assessing the situation. Calls were backing up and the aggrieved party wanted him arrested.

So I went to his nearby house and got his wife, who talked her husband out of the situation. She said that he drinks too much and that he "could" be abusive to others. When pressed further, she stated that he had emotional problems. He kept a baseball bat in his car. In the presence of his wife, he promised not to block his neighbor again.

Thus I avoided a difficult arrest that could (probably would) have led to some form of physical interaction with a drunk, emotionally disturbed man. I suggested to his wife that he needed counseling before he got into real trouble. Yes, I asked her if she was being abused.

I came from that situation understanding that the event and many other interactions could easily get out of hand and might eventually lead to violence or, God forbid, a shooting.

BUT USE OF FORCE IS RARE-TWO TO THREE PERCENT INVOLVE FORCE "OR" THREAT OF FORCE

An estimated 40 million U.S. residents age 16 or older, or about 17 percent of the population, had a face-to-face contact with a police officer in one year. Among people who had face-to-face contacts, about nine out of 10 residents felt the police were respectful or acted properly - Bureau of Justice Statistics.

Having said this, it's inevitable that out of 40-60 million yearly encounters, some will go bad. It's a statistical reality. Per the Bureau of Justice Statistics study, police used or threatened to use force in less than two percent of contacts.

POLICE-CITIZEN CONTACTS

Some media commentators suggest that police use of force is growing/common/frequent during stops. Less than 3% of U.S. residents experienced a threat "or" use of force during their most recent police-initiated contact.

LAW ENFORCEMENT-ONE OF THE MOST RESPECTED INSTITUTIONS

Study after study, poll after poll state that the vast majority of Americans give police very high marks. While there are differences based on race or income or age or political affiliation, the vast majority of Americans, regardless of demographics, rate cops highly and want law enforcement in their communities.

42 PERCENT OF UTAH POLICE SHOOTINGS INVOLVE PEOPLE IN MENTAL HEALTH CRISIS

A first-of-its-kind data analysis of Utah law enforcement records, news reports and family interviews surrounding 226 police shootings that occurred between 2010 and 2020 has found that at least 95 people (42 percent) were suffering a mental health crisis, had a mental disability or expressed a desire to end their own lives - PBS.

More than half of the 95 encounters ended with the subject dying, most often by police gunfire. Of the 95 people in crisis, 79 percent of them were suicidal.

While the number of shootings during the period examined fluctuated from year to year, going as low as 16 percent some years and as high as 60 percent others, there wasn't a year when police didn't shoot at someone in crisis.

ADDITIONAL DATA ON MENTAL HEALTH AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE

Substance Abuse: States routinely provide an estimate that 80 percent of their prisoners have either substance abuse problems or major addictions.

Under The Influence At Arrest: Anywhere from 56 percent (Charlotte) to 82 percent (Chicago) of arrestees tested positive for the presence of some substance at the time of an arrest. In 9 out of the 10 sites, 60 percent or more of arrestees tested positive per the Arrestee Drug Abuse Monitoring (ADAM II-since

discontinued) - National Institute Of Justice.

MENTAL HEALTH HISTORIES

Per Bureau of Justice Statistics research, more than half of all prison and jail inmates had mental health problems. These estimates represented 56% of state prisoners, 45% of federal prisoners, and 64% of jail inmates - Mental Health and Crime.

Add substance abuse and histories of violence (most state inmates are violent per the Bureau of Justice Statistics) and data stating that most offenders come from very troubled backgrounds and we begin to understand the dangers and difficulties of making stops and arrests.

"I know there's a saying that 'Hurt people, hurt people,'" Winfield said. "But where I come from, hurt people kill people - CBS News Covering Baltimore. Cops deal with a lot of "hurt people" daily.

Per the Bureau of Justice Statistics, many prisoners have severe medical issues which complicate interactions after release.

It's also common for weapons and firearms to be present during police interactions.

After tens of millions of police interactions, the vast majority of the public rate officers highly, stating that they acted appropriately. Use "or" the threat of violence occurs in less than three percent of police interactions.

Considering the data, this seems almost impossible and indicates that the vast majority of cops go above and beyond to do the right thing.

Yes, I understand that data on inmates and mental health don't represent all police contacts, but it does account for many and it may involve most for serious interactions (i.e., warrants, crimes in progress, and calls from citizens).

But however you slice and dice the data; it's possible that most police shootings and use of force incidents involve people with mental health or emotional issues coupled with being under the influence at the time of arrests.

The collective data indicate that the vast majority of police officers are using enormous restraint. 📌

Leonard Adam Sipes, Jr. is a retired federal senior spokesperson. A former Adjunct Associate Professor of Criminology and Public Affairs - University of Maryland. Former advisor to the "McGruff-Take a Bite Out of Crime" national media campaign. Past police officer. Aspiring drummer. Operator of CrimeinAmerica.net. His book based on thirty-five years of criminal justice public relations," Success with the Media: Everything You Need to Survive Reporters and Your Organization" is available at Amazon and additional booksellers. He can also be found @leonardsipes.com



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HIGH CALIBER "CAREER TRANSITIONS: THE HIDDEN JOB MARKET

By Steven W. Siegel

You've just completed a successful, 25-year career in law enforcement, and now whether you get your next job may come down to six seconds. That's the amount of time, on average, a recruiter spends looking at your resume before deciding to continue reading it or throw it in the garbage. Coincidentally, it's the same amount of time an interviewer takes to draw an initial perception of a candidate. Fortunately, if the perception is bad, and you have good interview skills, you can change it. That's not going to be the case with your resume.

With today's unfortunate mass exodus from our chosen profession, it is more important than ever that you properly plan your transition to your next career. For many of us, that is likely to be a position in the private sector. Understand that you will be going from a "Mission-oriented" agency to a "Metrics-oriented entity." There are challenges and obstacles, none being insurmountable, with the proper knowledge.

Speaking to people in law enforcement, I invariably hear that they do not believe they have skills that are

transferrable into the private sector. That's simply not true. You have many of them. It's just a matter of identifying and translating them into the language of business. Take salesmanship as an example. Consider the times when you responded to the scene of a crime and got a reluctant victim or witness to tell you what happened? Or when you convinced an armed subject to surrender and go to jail. And of course, those times when you were obtained a confession from a suspect. All are examples of very powerful salesmanship, exhibited under conditions of high stress far greater than in any customer-salesman interaction.

How do you intend to sell yourself to a prospective employer if you don't believe you have good sales skills? You are a product to be sold, no different than a can of Coke, a flatscreen TV or a car. You must develop your personal brand and what we call your "Value Proposition". Those traits and characteristics deemed desirable by hiring managers. You need a marketing strategy in writing, through your resume and cover letter, over the internet, through your social media presence,

and verbally, through the interview process.

There are many myths surrounding the job hiring process. One is that the only resume an employer will consider is the one you send them. However, the other "Resume" they may review is your internet presence. How many of you know people who in every other photo, they have a drink, beer or shot glass in their hand or they are espousing hateful messages? That doesn't bode very well for your personal brand.

Another myth is that you can't apply for a job unless there is a posted job opening. Not true! There are many non-conventional methods you can use, including use of your network to be considered by hiring managers without a posted job opening. This is a great situation to be in where the company may look for a suitable position for you and best of all, you may not have any competition.

Another myth is that it is all about what you have done. You need to convey that in your resume, cover letter and throughout the interview process. Again, not true! Like people who sell financial products say, past

"Employers don't necessarily care about what you did in the past, but they certainly care about what you can do for them, in the future."

performance is not indicative of future results. Employers don't necessarily care about what you did in the past, but they certainly care about what you can do for them, in the future, if they hire you. Now we don't ignore the past, but we must take what you have done and translate it to what you can do for them in the future.

The last myth I'll mention is the myth that the most efficient and effective way to get hired is through responding to posted job openings. That is completely false. Actually, it is the least effective way to spend your valuable time. Only about 20% of all jobs are filled through that manner. The majority are filled through the "Hidden Job Market." This includes networking, cold-calling, referrals, and recommendations. Using these non-conventional methods, you can avoid having to constantly push yourself towards jobs and instead have jobs pulled to you.

I'll conclude with the story of a man who retired after a successful 25-year career conducting and

supervising criminal investigations with a Prosecutor's office in New Jersey. He retired during a fairly good job market applying for about 60-70 posted jobs well within his wheelhouse, over several months without landing a single interview. That person was me! It wasn't until I started using the "Hidden Job Market" that I began to have success.

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Steven Siegel founded High Caliber Career Transitions in 2020 to help law enforcement and military veterans successfully transition into their next career. He enjoyed a 25-year career conducting criminal investigations for the Union County Prosecutor's Office in New Jersey retiring as a Detective Captain. He has over 18 years' experience in the corporate world as a fraud investigator.



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19 JULY 2009 - 19 JULY 2022 (13th Year Anniversary of My Fatal OIS)

By Kirk Lawless

First of all, I'm not looking for a pity party where I sit at the head of the table. I don't need "are you okays?"

I don't need anybody to feel sorry for me. I *really* don't need any unlearned jackasses to tell me to get over it, or move past it and get on with my life (so far, for me, not possible).

I'll use this as a teachable moment. For cops, young and old, because you are all one "New York" trigger pull (12 lbs.) away from dealing with the same shit.

Thirteen years is a long time to carry heavy shit. It's on a continuous loop. I replay the killing of a bad guy every blessed day. I relive it multiple times a day. There are too many triggers to avoid (4th of July, the week prior and week after, where the pyromaniacs continued to blow shit up near my house were a particular hoot).

From the time of the call to the time I called out shots fired is about 2 minutes 22 seconds. From the time I go 23 (on scene) to broadcasting "shots fired" is a little shy of 10

seconds.

That's not much time to get ready, get there, have someone actively try to kill you, outdraw them and you kill them first (technically, it took him a few minutes to bleed out enough to silence his screams and curses) get him handcuffed, call an ambulance and keep watch over an active home invasion robbery, interrupting an attempted assassination of two occupants of a mistaken drug house while not knowing there were additional armed bandits in the house who abandoned their blanket-covered would-be victims and not executing them (because the cops showed up).

I still hear the bad guy's spirit leaving his body. I could do nothing for him but pray that he passed quickly and had a chance to make peace with his maker.

I can still smell the gunpowder, still see the muzzle flashes. I can remember everything about that night, the darkness, the heat and humidity. And yes, I can still smell his blood (we were that close).

"I am still alive. I have purpose. I have value."

Sounds haunting? I wouldn't do one thing different except have a camera crew with me because it would have been a great training aid. None of that haunts me really (although I think about it a lot ... maybe it does haunt me), but the tidal wave of bullshit that would soon wash over me, with every boss and white shirt that showed up on the scene.

The armchair quarterbacking was laughable (from guys who had done nothing extraordinary in their careers). The preliminary "It appears to be a legitimate shoot," said a white shirt on the phone to a turd of a politician, too lazy to get his ass out of bed to see for himself. Does that haunt me? Yes! Daily!

The violation of my civil rights and the rights of two other officers, by bosses whom I would label as idiots.

Word to the wise: keep your mouth shut. As soon as they start questioning one thing you had to do to stay alive... stop! Hire a lawyer. A good one. Every major city has a lawyer who is "That guy," so yes, hire "That guy!" Do not enlist the help of an FOP attorney (change my mind). Here in the Midwest I found them to be no more than toothless dogs. If you do, and the pendulum swings in the direction of you being a bad guy, you might find yourself on the inside of a prison cell (especially in the current anti-police climate).

"Keep your mouth shut!"

It took nearly 10 years to face off in court to argue my department "separating" from me citing "inability to do the job."

All because I had a boss taking jabs and me and he was allowed to do so untethered.

I asked for reasonable accommodations as I needed some time to decompress and needed some help to deal with the weight I was carrying. I was told that light duty did not exist. And that was that. The trial was a three-ring circus loaded with rats (including my own attorney). I'm sure the judge was a rat, too, (or just too stupid to ride the bench). The city found out that I had an implanted cardiac defibrillator/pacemaker in my chest and instead of being glad at the way I performed my job with it on board, they acted as though it was a hindrance and/or a liability (it was neither).

I was eviscerated in front of my family and a few friends. The only cops from my department in the courtroom were there under subpoena (had they made an appearance, there would have been hell to pay! The lies they told haunt me like a rotten ghost! And I mean every night!

The jury was bamboozled and lied to. Scenarios surrounding the end of my career visit me every night and I can't do shit about it! Meds don't turn it off! So, I cope. I deal with it.

I don't drink. I don't do illegal drugs. I don't over medicate!

I wake up and it's, "Well, I'm still alive, better get up and get after it!"

So I take what happened to me and share it with recruits (or anybody who cares to listen).

The point is, I am still alive.

I have purpose. I have value. I have honor and integrity and those are qualities and blessings that cannot be taken from me. I am fearless. I am still deadly if need be. And I'm not afraid of death.

If I can stay alive, so can you. If I can stop one more cop from serving himself or herself a last meal of a gun barrel sautéed in Hoppe's No. 9, I'll keep doing it. I ain't gonna kill myself!

Right now, I have Band-Aids on eight of my ten fingers. The PTS has me tearing at the skin around my fingers and hands. Oddly, the pain reminds me that I'm alive.

And as 19 July draws closer, I really feel alive.

You will have haters if you do your job and do it well. If you've done your job, "Screw 'em".

If you're struggling, reach out to someone. I'm easy to find. Call me at 314-302-0511. I'm just a guy, but I'll help you if I can.

Stay safe! 🌐

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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Training for your **RED LINE**

By *Monica Eaton*

Are you training for the fight of your life?

If not, what do you expect to happen when that day comes? It's not if, it's when. At some point in your life, a youth sports coach pushed you to the point of dry heaving, maybe even throwing up. I remember those days as a competitive gymnast growing up. I dreaded cardio, because I sucked at it. But it made me better. Enduring long cardio sessions in the gym successfully prepared me for competition. When I saluted the judge and began my routine, I was confident in my abilities to perform as I had practiced.

Practicing for competitive sports seems like a no-brainer. Everyone knows it is hard to be successful in athletics without putting in the hard work.

As adults, we somehow lose the mentality of, "practice makes perfect," and we begin to do the bare minimum. We groan at the thought of the next in-service training day and grudge through death by PowerPoint with caffeine in hand.

How sad is it that most cops hate training days? We neglect to train for a job that can kill us on any given day. It becomes harder to train for life, rather than a competitive sport. The two don't seem to compare when put into that perspective.

Just like competitive sports, you have to push your limits in training, to know what they are. You need to know what your shooting accuracy is in a perfect setting to know that under stress, accuracy will diminish. You need to know how long you can last in a ground fight in training, before you can successfully win a fight on the street.

This is training for your "red line." Your red line is your

ultimate limit of your physical and mental capacity.

When going for a run, you get to the point where your brain says, "Stop, I need a break." That is your red line. Being able to find that place and continue to keep going is how you train to win the fight. It is just as much mental as it is physical. When the time comes to fight for your life, you will recognize what the red line feels like, and you will be able to assess whether you can keep going or need to reach for lethal force.

If you grew up training 20 hours a week for competitive sports, you can devote an hour a day toward training for the profession that could kill you. Get in a daily workout, go roll or spar in a martial arts gym, hit the gun range once a month, prioritize sleep and a healthy diet.

Taking one hour each day to better yourself isn't much. Small habits add up over time. You deserve to invest in yourself. To ensure you go home at the end of each shift. Don't wait. Start now. 🇺🇸

Monica Eaton is the owner/CEO of Five-0 Fierce and Fit which creates online nutrition and fitness programs designed to help female first responders lose fat, gain strength and take back their confidence in 90 days because "your family depends on you to be fit for duty." Using her six-year Oklahoma law enforcement experience along with her 15-year background in fitness and nutrition she helps female first responders reach their full potential in life and career. Look her up on Instagram @five0.fierce.and.fit.



Asking for Help Is Not Easy: YOU ARE NOT ALONE

By Nicholas Ricciotti

For three years, I pushed the limits and boundaries of what I could and couldn't get away with. My actions were fueled by alcohol, which occasionally involved the use of painkillers. Having a valid prescription washed away the worry of ever being subjected to a random urine test from my department. And if I didn't have anything from my prescription, I was able to get them from someone close to me. For short periods of time, I would binge drink, party, stay out late, go home, sleep, go to work and do it all again. Then I would stop. My girlfriend would get sick of the antics and ask me to stop. Or I'd have an off-duty incident involving alcohol, but I was always able to avoid any charge or arrest.

We all know drinking and driving is number one illegal, and two incredibly irresponsible. Anyone who is a first responder has heard the awful story of a drunk driver crashing into another car. While they walk away unscathed, the damage that they caused to other innocent people is sometimes deadly. I knew this could possibly be my fate, but I pushed those thoughts aside. Instead, I got my rush from doing something wrong, knowing there was a good chance I could get away with it. The best way to describe my relationship with alcohol and pills is like a bad ex-girlfriend. You know she's toxic and bad for you, so you cut her off, but every time she comes around you let her in. Then the cycle of insanity continues.

The pill use was hidden from almost everyone, except the people I was doing them with. But the excessive drinking was no secret. It became a joke to the people I worked with. So, what did I do? I

played into the joke and downplayed the drinking. Every off-duty incident I got myself into was never kept secret, even from those in administrative positions. Instead of asking if I needed help, I was belittled and scolded. At the time I didn't think anything of it. I have thick skin, so it didn't really bother me. Looking back, I'm amazed they didn't mandate I get help.

For the longest time I didn't think my drinking and pill use was an issue. I never became dependent on any substance. I wasn't addicted to the substance, but I was addicted to the adrenaline rush of doing something wrong.

At the end of 2019 and beginning of 2020 I realized I needed help to break the cycle, but I didn't know where to turn. The only help I knew was available to me through my department was to go to Florida and check myself into an inpatient rehab. At that time, I was ready for help, but not ready to tell all my loved ones I had a problem. I also didn't want to be the topic of gossip in my department, so I let the cycle continue.

In July of 2020 my worst nightmare had come true. Through an investigation done by the Prosecutor's Office I was caught via text messages negotiating a purchase for pills. My career was soon to be gone, and my life was turned upside down. While I was left in limbo, waiting to see what would happen with my career I took the initiative and got help on my own. I found a therapist who specializes in addiction and trauma in first responders. Finally, I had found exactly what I needed. As I started seeing her, she was able to direct me to different resources for first responders. Bottles

and Badges, and Reps for Responders to name a couple. My eyes were open that I wasn't alone in my struggles, and there were more resources out there than just Florida.

I had stopped the pill use shortly after I was caught, and had my last drink on October 9, 2020. This was two days after I pleaded guilty to conspiracy to possess CDS and agreed to never work in public employment again.

Asking for help is not easy, especially as a police officer. I used to think that asking for help made you soft and weak. I quickly realized how wrong I was. What I learned through all of this is before you help others, you need to help yourself. You are not alone in your struggles. There's way more people out there, first responders, who are going through similar struggles. Know it's OK to ask for help, and it's OK to struggle. In order to be the best cop, firefighter, EMT, husband, wife, son, daughter, you need to be the best you. 🌍

Nicholas Ricciotti is a former Law Enforcement Officer in the state of NJ. Through professional and personal experiences, he is a strong advocate for physical and mental health.



Nick is part of the Reps for Responders team, who help first responders live a healthy life through physical fitness and mental health awareness. He holds a bachelor's degree in Criminal Justice, and is a former Division 2 athlete. Nick is most recently enjoying fatherhood as he and his wife welcomed their first child in February 2021.

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NEWSFLASH: CRIME FIGHTERS DON'T NEED TRAINING WHEELS



By Darci Werner

From the moment we bring our children home, they are a ball of movement focused on exploring life and making every moment their own. Some start out with the walkers that help build their legs to get ready to run then a scooter-style toy that relies on pure leg power for its operation. Once the shoes are scraped and torn from dragging behind the scooter, it is time for an upgrade to a small bike or Big Wheel. Nothing spells freedom to the young mind more than a three-wheeled movable machine.

Our son was no different. We enjoyed watching him through those first years as he developed with each outdoor item that lifted his level of independence and creativity. Each day was an adventure as the local crime fighter. The Cop on patrol, the New Sheriff in town, the one that bad guys fear!

Big wheels are great for fighting crime. You can pedal fast down the sidewalk and then lock up the pedals, do a quick spin and apprehend the enemy trying to get away. When your knees start hitting the handlebars and skidding to a stop tips over the patrol car, it is time for an upgrade to a faster vehicle of apprehension.

Then came the “Big Boy Bike.” This can be a scary transition going from three wheels down to two! It’s a proud moment for everyone involved and just as daunting for Mom and Dad. As parents, we opted for training wheels to reduce the anxiety. It creates a level of trust in two small wheels that perform a big job of protecting your child.

Once outfitted with the new dual equipment options, our crime fighter was back in business. His confidence grew daily with his new partners. He was assured that the two small wheels contained magic keeping him from tipping over. His patrol gear would be strapped on with homemade belts and holsters, a hat and some days even a mask. Not just any mask, but a Lone Ranger mask.

As true civil servants, days can be filled with varieties of adventures. Not every call is to chase down a bad guy. He informed us that our streets tend to be home to wandering cows. One day would catch him lassoing imaginary cattle that got away and riding them over to the nearby tree. These were special cows that climbed trees. So once back to the barn-tree, the cows would

climb up for safety and off he would ride (like the wind) to rustle up more cows that got away. That day, he stopped long enough to ask for a snack. Rescuing cows is hard work. Every crime fighter needs a break to regain strength with a peanut butter sandwich, which he gladly shared up in the tree with the imaginary cows.

Many miles were put on those poor little wheels. They were his patrol partners, used for guiding his mobile security unit in pursuit of bad guys. It didn't take long before this first pair of training wheels were soon worn thin and bent beyond repair. One would be higher than the other, allowing the bike to teeter back and forth on the single back wheel. We tried to remove the wheels for good and retire their service. But he would have nothing of the sort so another pair of trainers was hired as new patrol partners. There was no

convincing this crime fighter that he no longer needed them as backup and could do law enforcement without them. Each time he would refuse to acknowledge his patrol unit any other way.

As suspected, the second set of trainers showed their state of abuse. We would continually ask him if he was ready to take them off. But he always said "no, I need them." It became a daily ritual of tightening the nuts and bolts to keep them functioning to the best of their ability.

One afternoon as he was on duty, hat on, hero mask adorning his face. He was racing up and down the sidewalk across from the house as fast as his legs could pedal. There was no stopping him as he sped down the sidewalk to do a quick jump off the bike, turn around and patrol back in the opposite direction. There was no super hero cape flapping in the

wind, just the set of training wheels. The pair of backup supporters was sticking straight out into the air as if standing at attention. He had ridden all afternoon that way with these crime fighting partners just waiting for a moment to be relieved of duty and retire.

The time had come and there was no going back. Our son realized something very important that day. Crime fighters don't need training wheels. 🚲

Darci Werner is a police wife residing in Province, Iowa. She thanks Blue Magazine for providing alternative topics for all who support law enforcement and is honored to share police family life stories.



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THE REALITY OF MANHOOD AND STRESS: PUT DOWN YOUR PRIDE

By Deon Joseph

I'm an old-school man, one who once believed that people who claimed to be stressed were somehow weak. I saw a guy at the gym who looked like he had a lot on his mind. I asked him to spot me on the bench press. He did. When I was done I asked him "Are you good?" He put his hands on his hips and said "Not really."

We started talking a bit and he told me some issues he was having with his son and wife.

His stressors were affecting him at work and he felt horrible that he was asked to take some time off to get himself together. He was clearly embarrassed and ashamed.

With no real solutions for him, because he did not go into detail about his problems, I drew from personal experience to reach him.

I told him the story of when my mother-in-law passed away. How I had just bought a house at the time. How broken my wife was and how I was now taking care of two families on a single income as my wife stopped going to work.

I was one of the most competent officers on the police force prior to that. I ended up at a new division called Newton. It was a run and gun division. I reveled in the challenge, until tragedy struck.

Between worries about my wife taking her own life and making ends

meet, I began breaking down from the weight of it all, but my pride would not allow me to acknowledge it.

In the streets I did some downright stupid and sometimes dangerous things that I would never have done prior to the tragedy.

I could not broadcast or remember where I was on during investigative stops. I would get lost responding to calls for service. I even got lost one night going home. I'd misplace documents. Write the same reports twice, forgetting my partner had already written it.

Yet my pride would not allow me to quit. It was foolish. It got so bad that one day my supervisor brought me in to the station and told me "Joseph. I have to take you out of the field. Clearly you have to get your personal life in order. It's nothing to be ashamed of."

I was offended, but as I tried to plead my case the thoughts of my wife crumpled on the floor in tears, the memories of overdue car payments and barely making the mortgage. The coming home one day to a man trying to turn off my electricity. Worries about my wife's family as well all came bubbling up, and in the middle of my rant, tears began falling from my face uncontrollably because I was supposed to be "the rock." I paused, hung my head and admitted he was right.

I was assigned a desk job for a couple of months. This once-capable officer was now pushing papers. It was during that

time I was able to slowly get my house in order, and once again became the cop I knew I was.

But I had to take the time.

To all men, please hear me and ladies as well. At some point, when your stressors are getting the best of you, you must put down your pride and listen to those who see it.

Then if you can, take that time to get yourself right. Yes I'm an alpha male, but I am one who is strong enough to tell you that being stressed is real and nothing to be ashamed of.

The shame comes when you are so prideful that it destroys you and your loved ones. Remember, pride always comes before the fall. To those who see someone struggling at work, or in your personal life, don't judge them. Reach out.

God bless. 🙏

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





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7 Smart Ways to Deal with Autism and Sexuality

By Joseph Pangaro, BA, CPM, CSO

When dealing with other people, we have to be aware of the other person's feelings – their perceptions and interpretations of what we do and say – and we have to accurately interpret what they do and say. This is hard enough for all of us as we grow up, but it can be even more difficult if we misinterpret those same feelings and actions. To help our kids with autism, we spend countless hours teaching them to understand the nuances of conversation and body language.

Life is filled with challenges for all of us, and for kids on the spectrum, the challenges can be even more difficult. As anyone who has experience with the spectrum knows, we often concern ourselves with education and social interaction as main goals for helping our kids. After all, life is made up of one social interaction after another, and learning to navigate these contacts properly can have a role in your quality of life.

Research tell us that in reality, body language is about 80% of conversational interaction, which makes it crucial for everyone to get it right so we can react correctly to others and enjoy a positive conversation. This type of teaching never stops. The consequences of a less-than-positive interaction with others can be isolation – the inability to make friends and maintain relationships with people. That's why there's a push to help our kids learn and use the right techniques to get along with their peers.

What I want to discuss is another type of human interaction that we all experience: the sexual relationship. For people who are not on the spectrum, the world of sexuality can be fraught with problems, hardship, disappointment and confusion. For people who are on the spectrum, growing sexual feelings and physical changes can create situations that are not only confusing, but can lead them to engage in inappropriate, unwarranted behaviors that could cause legal issues. To be clear: I am not equating autism and all of its various presentations with sexual deviance or criminal behavior. I am saying that in the modern age, this life experience can bring our kids



to places they are not prepared for, and in their genuine attempt to deal with these feelings, they can interact with others in ways that are contrary to the law.

These issues can be first seen when puberty begins. As human beings, our senses are heightened when our sexual hormones begin to increase, and we take notice of people of the same or opposite sex that we find attractive. We can also be influenced by curiosity about our own bodies and the bodies of those we come into contact with. These are all normal, natural and healthy aspects of growing up. For most of us, we learn to control these feelings and curiosities and seek out acceptable opportunities to explore our feelings.

Having served as a career law enforcement officer, I have seen this period of time pass by without incident for the large majority of young people. For others, however, there were more difficult incidents, ranging from inappropriate comments meant to elicit sexual conversation or flirting, to touching incidents that can be viewed as sexual crimes, even if the person wasn't trying to hurt anyone. The reality is that touching someone in a sexual way is wrong if it is not consensual.

For kids on the spectrum, this period of time can be very difficult, especially if they don't understand personal boundaries or have a good sense of what is appropriate. Even if the kids are purposefully experimenting with each other, they can run into trouble if the age differences are too great. I have investigated incidents where a 16-year-old boy with the mental capacity of an 11-year-old was engaging in "show me yours, I'll show you mine" type behaviors with a 10-year-old boy. There was no indication that the interaction was indicative of sexual orientation; rather, it was sexual arousal and curiosity mixed with opportunity and another person with the same curiosities. Even still, they were separated by six years, which in the eyes of the law can be the deciding factor in pursuing criminal charges regardless of the older boy's mental capacity.

Even though we might all have insight into the

mindset of the kids involved, there are not many, if any, state statutes that make exceptions for kids on the spectrum with low IQ or capabilities. The result is often arrest and court action, and most parents and guardians are not prepared for these realities. I have seen other incidents involving kids sharing photographs of their nude bodies, accompanied by comments of a sexual nature. In some of the incidents, the ages of the kids involved have been more than six or seven years apart; this is potentially criminal and can be devastating for the kids and the families.

For people who are on the spectrum, growing sexual feelings and physical changes can create situations that are not only confusing, but can lead them to engage in inappropriate, unwarranted behaviors that could cause legal issues; prepare yourself for these changes in your child. They are stressful enough for children and parents in all families.

Sharing nude photos of themselves and the bodies of other kids can be viewed legally as creating and distributing child pornography. When I interviewed the families involved, the majority of them expressed shock and surprise that their child was having these feelings, let alone acting on them. Access to the internet is one of the things to consider. Playing online video games or having access to smartphones might be considered the norm today, but we have to evaluate each child based on his/her level of responsibility and maturity.

For kids who attend specialized schools with other kids with special needs, the parents and the school must be prepared for these types of interactions before they begin. As an investigator, I learned to understand some of the realities of life for the kids and families on the spectrum. I saw the effort it took to stay on top of the issues and anticipate the future, while at the same time dealing with the everyday needs of their children and life. The onset of sexuality brings with it its own set of challenges, and for our kids with special needs, we must be aware of changes as they begin to appear and react accordingly.

For many parents and guardians, this aspect of their child's life catches them by surprise emotionally and intellectually, which can place them in jeopardy as it pertains to the law. Here are a few things to consider:

I Have a talk with your child's doctor well before puberty begins and learn what signs to look for when the changes start.

2 Talk to a counselor with specific training with kids on the spectrum and sexuality issues so the topic can be handled with as little stress as possible and you are prepared before anything happens.

3 Talk to your school officials and find out how they handle student interaction when it comes to sexual matters and how they monitor these issues.

4 Learn the law of your state as it relates to sexual interactions between children under age 18 and over age 18, so you will know what to expect if something happens.

5 Pay attention to internet access and smartphone access. If a phone is deemed necessary, make sure you activate the parental controls to limit access to web sites and contacts, or consider an old-fashioned flip phone that allows phone calls but not internet access.

6 Consider "Key Stroke" software so you can check where your child is going on the internet and what they are looking at, as well as who they are contacting. Many pedophiles seek out kids with disabilities, hoping they are easier to manipulate.

7 These realities are stressful enough for children and parents in all families; get yourself information to help with the needs, thoughts and feelings of your special needs child.

Human nature is what it is, children run the gamut of intellectual abilities, and sexuality is a built-in drive for all of us. Because it is a drive, it is something that must be recognized, understood and controlled. Helping our special needs kids through this time in their lives can be challenging, but preparing before it begins can make the transition from childhood to adulthood easier for you and your child in order to help avoid any unanticipated problems this part of life can bring. 🌐



Joseph Pangaro is a 27-year veteran of law enforcement. He retired in 2013 at the rank of Lieutenant and currently serves as the Director of School Safety and Security for a large school district in NJ. He is also the owner of Pangaro Training and Management, a company that provides training to the public and private sector on a host of topics. Email: JPangaro@Yahoo.com



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Transport vehicle for the cremains of the veterans

MONMOUTH COUNTY SHERIFF SHAUN GOLDEN, THROUGH HIS VETERANS SERVICE COUNCIL, ENSURED UNCLAIMED VETERANS ASHES RECEIVE FULL MILITARY HONORS FOR THEIR SERVICE

By Michael Ferraro, Coordinator, Veterans Service Council, Cynthia Scott, Public Information Officer and Ted Freeman, Executive Undersheriff Monmouth County Sheriff's Office

On June 23, 2021, with leadership and coordination by Monmouth County Sheriff Shaun Golden, Veteran's Service Council Coordinator Michael Ferraro, the Sheriff's Office Veterans Service Council, and in partnership with the Vietnam Veterans NJ Shore Area Chapter 12 of the Vietnam Veterans of America, the cremains of 23 United States military veterans and two spouses began a long-overdue journey to their final resting place at Brigadier General William C. Doyle Memorial Cemetery in New Hanover, New Jersey. The cremains of these American military veterans had been sitting on shelves in funeral parlors, forgotten for years or decades, in tin cans or cardboard boxes, unclaimed by family members. These veterans served in the United States Army, United States Navy,

United States Army Air Corps, and the United States Merchant Marine. Nine served in World War I, eleven in World War II, one in Korea, and one in Vietnam.

At a quarterly meeting of the Monmouth County Veterans Service Council, Golden and Ferraro first learned of the plight of these long-forgotten veterans when representatives of the VVA Chapter 12 explained the Veterans Cremains Program and how across the nation veterans' remains are stored unclaimed and without the honor of a proper funeral. Following the presentation by VVA Chapter 12, and the video that showcased the Cremains Program in detail, Golden committed the entire Monmouth County Sheriff's Office to spearheading the Veterans Cremains Program. Golden im-

mediately commenced weekly meetings with Monmouth County law enforcement agencies, first responders and local support resources to ensure a proper public response to honor these veterans. At a meeting in May 2021, the burial date of June 23, 2021, was designated for the motorcade and burial of these cremains, at which point the motorcade to the cemetery and proper route were fully developed.

Organizations taking a lead role in putting this concept together included: Monmouth County Sheriff's Office, the Vietnam Veterans NJ Shore Area Chapter 12, the Monmouth County Sheriff's Veteran's Service Council including American Legion Posts, Veterans of Foreign Wars Chapters, Jewish War Veterans of Deal, the Freehold and Manasquan

Elks Lodges, CentraState Healthcare System and the amazing support of law enforcement agencies and first responders throughout Monmouth County and beyond.

The Manalapan Township Police Department served as the storage locations of the cremains and served as the starting point for the motorcade to the cemetery. A dignified service was held at Manalapan Township Police Headquarters at which first responders, in pairs, one holding the cremains, the other a folded American flag, carried each veteran and flag to the transport vehicle. Manalapan Mayor Jack McNaboe offered remarks followed by Police Chaplain Julius Cooper, of St. James AME Church in Manalapan Township. During the service at Manalapan Township Police Headquarters, Dave Drummond, an active member of Chapter 12 of the Vietnam Veterans of America, and a POW during the Vietnam War with the late U.S. Sen. John McCain, read the name of each veteran as each of the veterans' cremains were individually escorted to the Sheriff's Office transport van. Bagpipers from Manalapan Township Police Department and the Friendly Sons of Shillelagh - Belmar, participated at the Manalapan Police Department and cemetery locations.

Once the cremains were properly secured in the vehicle, the mile-long motorcade left Manalapan Township Police Headquarters enroute to the cemetery with a brief stop at the Monmouth County Hall of Records in Freehold Borough. The motorcade had approximately sixty law enforcement vehicles, twelve EMS vehicles, six sheriff's vehicles, approximately one hundred motorcycles and a flyover by the New Jersey State Police helicopter plus a 21-gun salute. Over 40 law enforcement agencies from three counties were involved in the motorcade including the sheriff's offices of Monmouth, Ocean and Burlington counties.

Arriving at the Brigadier General William C. Doyle Memorial Cemetery, the motorcade was escorted to the committal service shelter on the cemetery grounds with approximately 250 law enforcement, first responders, and various veterans' organizations in attendance.

During the service at the cemetery, Richard Gough, Chairman of the Cremains Project of VVA Chapter 12, read the names of the veterans as they were moved from the host vehicle to the committed service shelter where they were



Sheriff's Officers place flower next to each veteran's urn



Family members who received the flag of one of the veterans



Drone photo of motorcade passing the Monmouth County Hall of Records in Freehold, New Jersey



Monmouth County Clerk Christine Giordano Hanlon, Sheriff Shaun Golden and Executive Administrative Assistant Selma Morris escort urn with the remains of one of the veterans being honored to his final resting place

25 motorcyclists. Continuing the mission started by the Vietnam Veterans of America Chapter 12, assisted by the Monmouth County Sheriff's Office, a brief but moving ceremony was held at the committal service center as these brave souls completed their long-awaited arrival at their final resting place, now resting in peace with their brethren.

For information about the Veteran's Service Council of the Monmouth County Sheriff's Office, or the Veterans Cremains Project, please contact Veteran's Service Council Coordinator Michael Ferraro at 732-431-6400 extension 1806. 🌐

Michael Ferraro, Command Chief Master Sergeant, U.S. Air Force (Ret.) Coordinator of the Monmouth County Sheriff's Office Veterans Service Council, Cynthia Scott, former Emmy Award Winning Journalist, Public Information Officer, Ted Freeman, Executive Undersheriff.

placed on a covered table, each with an American flag. Once set, a rose was placed next to the cremains of each veteran and a hand salute rendered to each deceased veteran. Just prior to the conclusion of the funeral service, the mournful sounds of Echo Taps permeated the air.

Ernie DiOrio, Vice President, Vietnam Veterans of America Chapter 12 said, "When I heard about veterans being abandoned on shelves at funeral homes, I couldn't believe it and I knew I had to do something, so it became my mission."

"It is truly an honor and privilege to be part of the Veteran Cremains Program for me," said Ferraro. "As a retired Air Force Veteran, I feel the public needs to know there are hundreds of veterans who have been cremated and are resting in basements of funeral homes unclaimed after serving our country."

"The debt that we owe our military veterans is one that can never be repaid, nor can we truly appreciate the sacrifices that each of them endured," said Golden. "That is why it is our solemn duty that the remains of these veterans are provided with the dignity and honor of a proper burial. The entire Monmouth County Sheriff's Office is proud to be a part of this event."

Golden thanks Chapter 12 of

the Vietnam Veterans of America for their commitment and tireless work to ensure that these forgotten veterans receive full military honors, as well as the outpouring of support from our law enforcement and first responder partners, in making these Veteran Cremains Projects observances memorable events.

On October 27, 2021, seven additional cremains of military veterans were transported to the committal service center at Brigadier General William C. Doyle Memorial Cemetery by the Monmouth County Sheriff's Office accompanied by VVA Chapter 12 and about



Combined Honor Guard of the Manalapan Township Police Department and the Monmouth County Sheriff's Office



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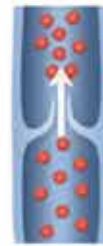


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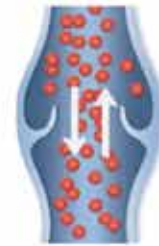
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LEADERSHIP DOESN'T REQUIRE A CERTAIN RANK: IT REQUIRES MORAL COURAGE

By Sgt. William Woods

Early in my law enforcement career, I'm not even sure I acknowledged what being a leader was, is, or was meant to be. It wasn't until years into my career as a police officer, when I was thrust into a supervisory role with leadership responsibilities. I was promoted to the rank of sergeant and almost right away was assigned temporarily to the position of patrol commander which is normally held for the rank of captain. I had to learn very quickly how to become a leader to a large number of officers including supervisors with a higher rank than myself. I must admit, it was not the easiest position to be in. However, I took on the challenge with the right mindset and took that step forward.

I recently attended a command-level leadership training and one topic of discussion really stood out to me. The attendees were asked to describe the qualities of a good leader, and the one trait that struck me was courage. The courage to accept a role or position and having a fearless mindset, in my opinion, is one of

the most important aspects of leadership. The courage to lead can be both physical and moral. Almost all officers have the ability to exhibit physical courage and that will to act when danger is present, but what is more arduous is having the moral courage to make the right decision whether or not your subordinates or supervisors feel the same way.

As a patrolman and detective, there were numerous occasions where I displayed physical courage and approached danger without hesitation. As a supervisor, I found it more difficult and strenuous to use my moral courage and make a decision that I knew was right but not popular to my subordinates than displaying actual physical courage. Decision making is a huge component of leadership and having that courage or resolution to make a decision will help you grow as a future leader of your agency and establish credibility. I cannot express how important courage is to leadership and how it has helped me institute myself as a leader.

"A great leader knows his own personality, values, habits, needs, emotions and how they affect the actions of others and their own actions."

As I continue my leadership role, I'm required to be the expert, lead by example and develop that working trust that is so coveted with your subordinates and supervisors. Without the trust, there can be no loyalty, and without loyalty there can be no growth. A primary role or goal of a leader is to develop and mentor the future leaders of your agency. You are responsible for leaving your agency with high-quality, knowledgeable and loyal officers. To accomplish this, you need to develop that trust between yourself and your subordinates and other members of the staff. It is extremely important and wise to have a mentor in this profession. A mentor provides guidance, motivation, emotional support and role modeling. Early in my career, I always looked to those proactive officers and supervisors as my mentors who helped me excel at my niches, which included mainly narcotics work. I also have had the luxury of working under many exceptional supervisors over the years and have acquired small pieces of insight which I have carried with me through the years. To this day, I have mentors who guide me and are helping me grow as a person and a future leader of my agency. I cannot stress the importance of having a mentor.

Leadership requires a great deal of self-reflection and honesty about yourself. A great leader knows his own personality, values, habits, needs, emotions and how they affect the actions of others and their own actions. Having that self-awareness will assist you in making better decisions and inevitably leading others to do the same. The most successful leaders know where their inclinations are and use that knowledge to either increase them or compensate for them. Being open to criticism is a key component to leadership. The feedback, whether good or bad, leads to having empathy and helps you understand the impact of your actions on others.

As I move forward in my career, I can stand here

today and state without a doubt, leadership does not require any certain rank. In our hallway in police headquarters, we have a sign which hangs outside the door which reads "Being a leader doesn't require a title. Having a title doesn't make you a leader." This cannot be truer, as I have personally learned. This message should ring true to the ears of the young officers who do not have that rank but can still provide their leadership skills which will ultimately guide them through their careers



and influence other young officers and even veterans. As British-American author and inspirational speaker Simon Sinek says "Leadership is not a rank or a position to be attained. Leadership is a service to be given." 🌐

William Woods has been in the law enforcement profession for 15 years currently with the rank of sergeant assigned as the patrol commander of the Elmwood Park, New Jersey, Police Department and a part of their Office of Professional Standards.



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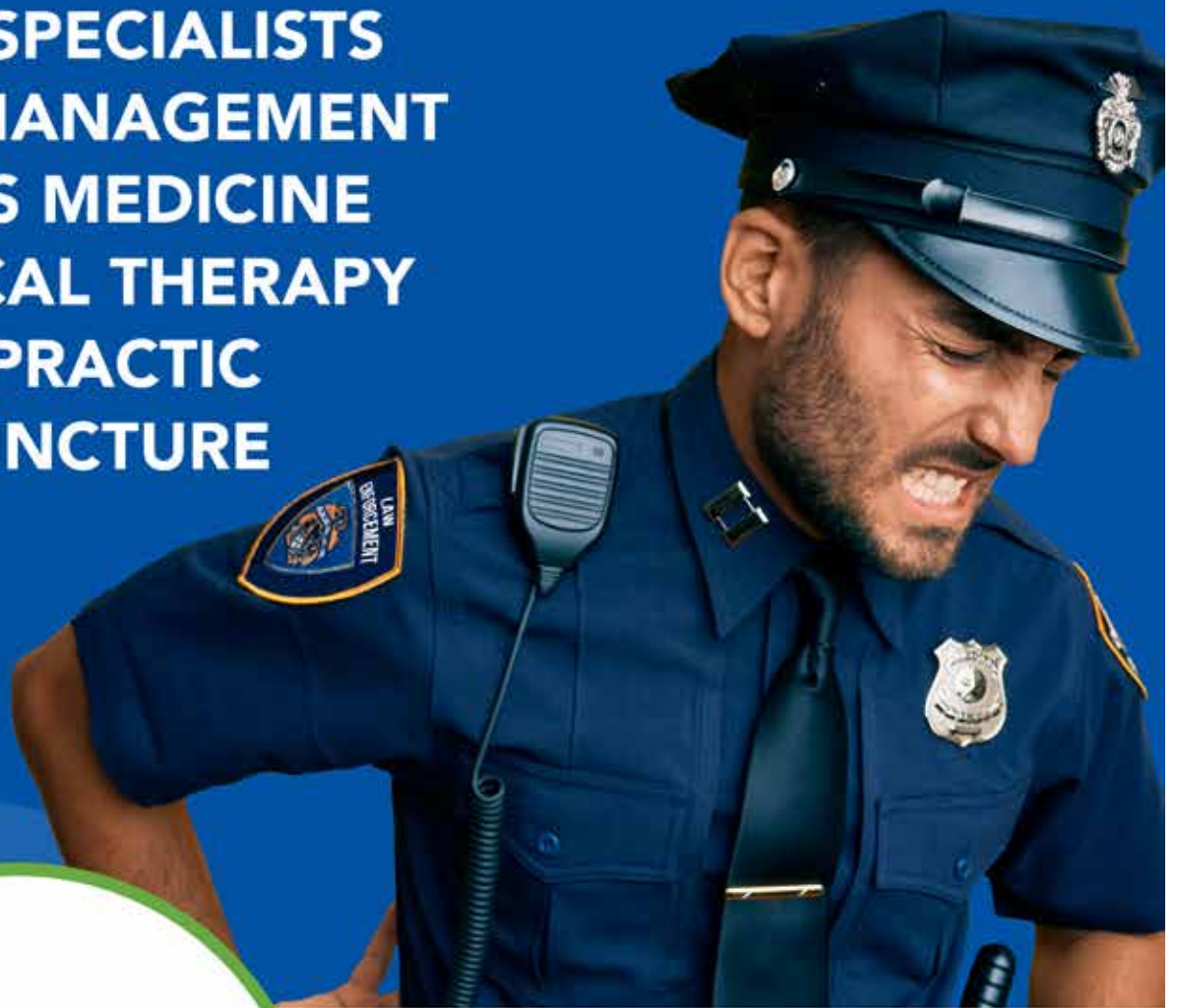


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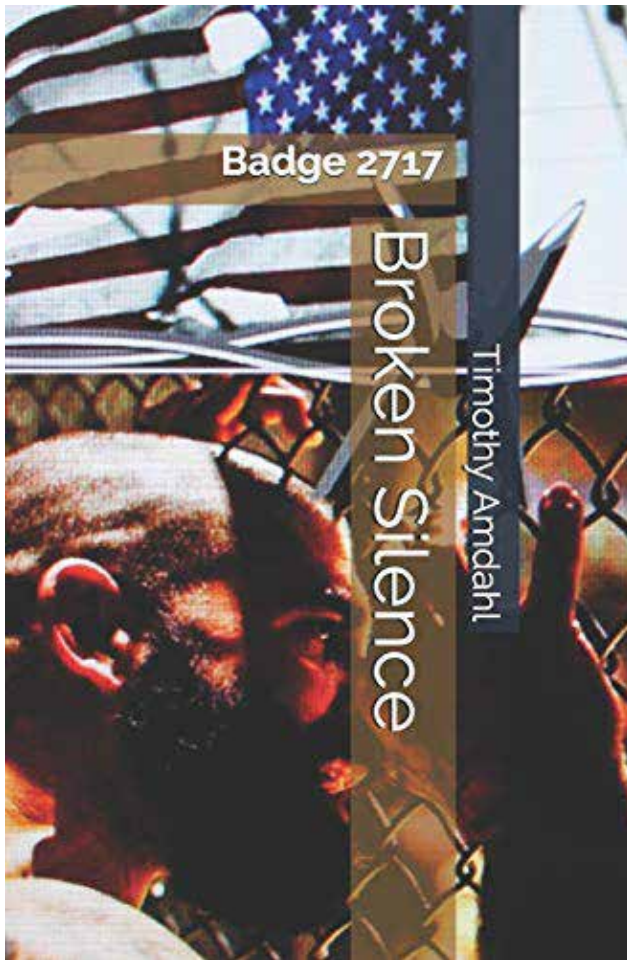
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Wear your badge with integrity... and even the wicked will follow

By Timothy J. Amdahl



For those who want to know what a correctional officer is, there is no black and white answer. The answer is written in gray, for there are so many answers to this. To some who do not know us, we are seen as glorified babysitters who are paid way too much. Others will see us as wannabe cops, police or law enforcement. They think of us as hall monitors who were once bullied in school. To those that have served time, we are seen just as gray. There are those who think we are power-hungry bullies, and love control, while others who have served will see us as heroes who are outnumbered, or peace keepers in a land of chaos. To other staff such as nurses and teachers, they see us as their personal secretaries.

I can only tell you who we are through my own experience. First, we are your neighbors who live in your community. We work long days with weird hours, often our weekends never match those of the normal societies. Our day starts off with us getting patted down and directed through a metal detector daily. We are then given permission to enter the steel gates of hell, as though it is a privilege. We then cannot leave without their permission. We walk in daily not knowing if we are going to be assaulted, spit on, or just verbally attacked. Yes, these are the benefits that go with the title of correctional officer.

You must become the sword that was forged in fire, while the wardens, majors, lieutenants and sergeants become the knights who wheel you around continuously. I know this does not sound that great, but I will tell you that it is the sword that gains respect among the inmates. If you are forged with honor, courage and truth, you will become the true knight. You must be firm, fair and consistent. These are not just words, but the key to success. You want to lead with respect and not fear. I know this to be true as I walked in a rookie and out a legend. I know that sounds very arrogant, but it is not I who saw me this way, but the inmates. I was the first officer they asked about when they got to our facility. Inmates communicate throughout the state. They tell one another about which officers to avoid and which ones to take advantage of.

As you become that professional officer, you will see you are not just an officer who directs inmates, but you will be their counselor as you guide them in the right direction, their teacher as you teach them about accountability, their caregiver as you look out for their wellbeing. This is just a little of who we are. Remember, to become one of the chosen, you must believe you are worthy, and then be willing to stand alone at times outnumbered. Wear your badge with integrity and even the wicked will follow. 🇺🇸

Timothy J. Amdahl retired from the Illinois Department of Corrections with a reputation of being firm, fair, and consistent. He was the model officer when it came to integrity. He had written just under 5,000 tickets throughout his career. He fought for those that had no voice. He is the author of Broken Silence Badge 2717, which covers his entire career from the day he walked in to the day he stood his last roll-call.



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UVALDE TRAGEDY: WHEN COPS MONDAY MORNING QUARTERBACK



By Chris Amos

By now I suspect everyone has seen the disturbing video of police officers in Uvalde, Texas. A dozen or more are shown standing in a hallway, doing nothing. Meanwhile, on the other side of what would later be discovered to be an unlocked door, teachers and students had been indiscriminately shot and killed by a psychotic and/or demonically possessed killer. To make matters worse, it has been reported an officer had the gunman in his crosshairs, but rather than taking the shot he chose to ask a supervisor for permission first. Allegedly, the supervisor never responded. Another disturbing detail that came to light was that of a second officer who had a shot, but for fear of hitting a child, did not take it.

I, like many of my law enforcement peers across the country were quick to condemn the actions or lack thereof of these officers. We piled on

these men and women, one of whose wife, a teacher, died in that classroom. We did the very thing we are so quick to condemn others of doing, playing the role of Monday morning quarterback. You know what I mean - a combination of what they should have done, with what we would have done... Woulda, coulda, shoulda.

As time passed, I began to look at things a little differently. In the political realm there is an often-used phrase, "Elections have consequences." Could it be that demonizing, defunding, with the goal of dismantling law enforcement for two+ years has consequences?

About 160 miles from Uvalde, Texas is the states' capital, Austin. In this law and order state, resides a district attorney by the name of Jose Garza, a George Soros-supported district attorney. Garza made a name for himself, among the progressive crowd. How? By indicting 21 Austin

police officers for their actions during riots in 2020. The "crime" committed was the use of expired bean bags in department issued bean bag guns assigned to officers working the riots. I doubt anyone took the time to see if the rocks and bottles they were being pelted with were expired. Like planes waiting to take off at JFK airport, these officers have retained both criminal and civil attorneys as several are suing their employer, among others.

The message sent to law enforcement is loud and clear. "Beware, even while doing your job to the best of your ability, if you make an honest mistake, either by commission or omission, you may very well face possible prosecution." This is a message not just being heard in Austin, but in law enforcement agencies across the country. We've seen video of officers using kid gloves and kind words to try to subdue uncooperative violent

criminals. The most recent video involved NYPD officers with a violent teenage suspect. Incredulously, after his arrest, this suspect was seeking to file charges against the very officers he chose to fight rather than comply with their commands.

Law enforcement officers for decades were given the benefit of the doubt. Were there bad cops then? Certainly, but that was the exception, not the norm. Now, in many cities, that benefit of the doubt has been replaced by a warning – do not make a mistake. The effort to hold LEOs to such a high level of accountability is to invite if not encourage inaction. Or at the very least, the seeking of permission up the chain of command before taking action. This creates in the minds of officers, who are already at a disadvantage, as most must react to suspects' actions, just enough hesitation to get him or her let alone members of the general public, seriously injured or killed.

When facing a very real and present risk of arrest, prosecution and incarceration for just doing the best you could with the information you have, can we really blame an officer for hesitating or choosing to take an abundance of caution. LEOs are not robots. They are men and women, fathers and mothers, sons and daughters. They have mortgages to pay, families to feed and care for. They have many people for whom they are responsible. They have lives beyond the badges they wear. Lives that can be taken from them in the blink of an eye, simply for reacting to the threatening actions of another, only to realize it was a phone not a gun, or a flashlight not a knife.

Do the officers in that hallway bear blame for their inaction? Yes, and I suspect they will be haunted by their role that day for the rest of their lives, but so too does their leadership bear the blame. And perhaps even more so the progressive activists and their Soros-backed district and commonwealth attorneys who place an untenable burden on LEOs to perfection, to be 100% right, 100% of the time, a burden only Jesus could meet.

This is a Chaplain's Corner, so let me leave you with these words from the Apostle Paul in Romans 13:1-4:

“Let every soul be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and the authorities that exist are appointed by God. Whoever resists the authority resists the ordinance of God, and those who resist will bring judgment on themselves. Rulers are not a terror to good works, but to evil. Do you want to be unafraid of the authority? Do what is good, and you will have praise from the same. He is God's minister to you for good. But if you do evil, be afraid; for he does not bear the sword in vain; for he is God's minister, an avenger to execute wrath on him who practices evil.” Friends, you are called of God to do what you do. Do not ever forget that. He knew before you were even conceived that you would be putting on your uniform, gun and badge. He knew what family you would be born into, who you would marry, where you would live and what agency you would work for. God knows everything about you and He loves you just the same. He sent His Son, Jesus Christ, to die for your sins, the breaking of God's laws not man's. Friends, we are all guilty as charged and the sentence of guilt carries with it eternity in a literal hell. Accept what Jesus has done for you. Repent or turn from your sin and invite Him to be your Savior and Lord and you will also retain the greatest advocate and dare I say, defense attorney, that has ever, or will ever live. May God bless each and every one of you as you answer his call on your life. 🌍

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



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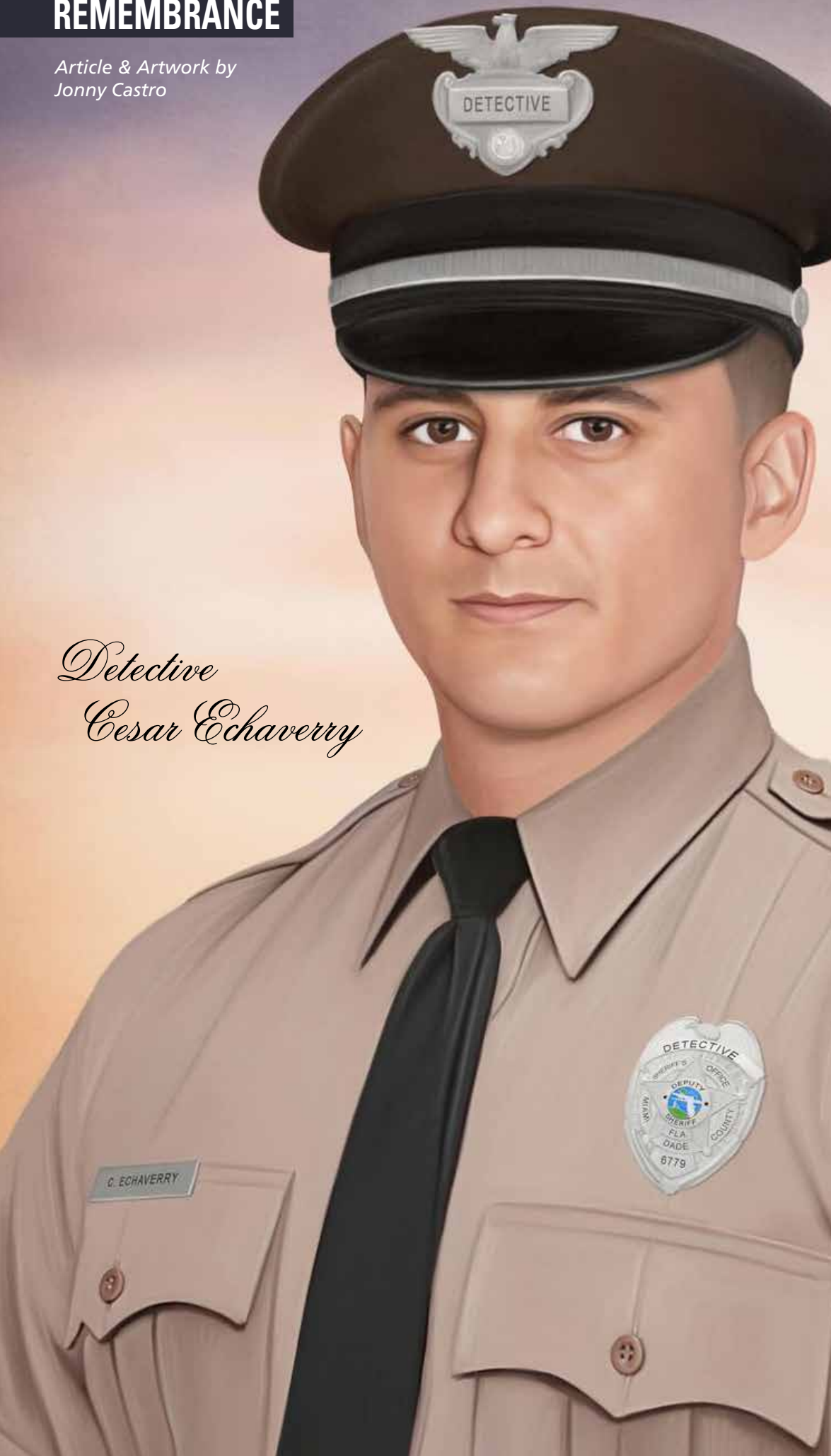
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REMEMBRANCE

Article & Artwork by
Jonny Castro

*Detective
Cesar Echaverry*



On August 15, detectives from the Miami-Dade Police Department spotted a vehicle which was involved in an armed robbery that occurred earlier in the day. The driver refused to exit the vehicle for the detectives and eventually took off, striking their patrol car and another civilian vehicle as it fled the scene. The suspect bailed out from the car after crashing into a light pole and engaged the officers in a running gun battle. During the exchange of over two dozen gunshots, Detective Cesar Echaverry was struck in the head and the gunman was killed. The Detective was rushed to the hospital where, after two days of fighting, he was removed from life support. Detective Cesar Echaverry was a 5-year veteran of the Miami-Dade Police Department and was assigned to the Robbery Bureau, where he worked in the elite Robbery Intervention Detail, often responsible for tracking down fugitives or those wanted for major crimes in some of the county's most crime-ridden neighborhoods. He had a lifelong love for baseball and the Florida Marlins. Detective Echaverry Played the game with a high level of skill and even came back to his high school to help condition and offer guidance to the young athletes. He leaves behind a fiancé who he was currently planning a wedding with, both parents and a sister. Detective Echaverry was 29-years old. 🌎





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with Officer Abbood
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Sheriff's Department*



*"Elsa" (front), "Anna" (middle),
"Kristoph" (rear) S
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*"April" and Noah
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