

SOUTH FLORIDA



FOR MEMBERS ONLY

THE PBA

THE VOICE OF LAW ENFORCEMENT

Representing those brave enough, strong enough, and proud enough to wear the badge

SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 2021



THANK YOU

A vote of confidence from your newly elected Executive Board





INTRODUCING THE

LIFE INSURANCE PLAN

EXCLUSIVELY FOR THE South Florida PBA

AVAILABLE TO ALL ACTIVE PBA MEMBERS, SPOUSES & CHILDREN

NO MEDICAL EXAM REQUIRED UP TO \$2,000,000

- 20 YEAR AND 30 YEAR TERM
- WHOLE LIFE
- CAN KEEP IN RETIREMENT

NEW – LIVING BENEFITS INCLUDED ARE:

- TERMINAL, CHRONIC, CRITICAL ILLNESS AND INJURY
- COVERS HEART ATTACK, STROKE, AND INVASIVE CANCER

****NEW – AUTO AND HOME INSURANCE – FREE QUOTES**

FOR MORE INFORMATION CALL OR EMAIL

(973) 808 -2626

flspbalife@capitalbenefitsinc.com

*The South Florida PBA works to obtain benefits on a variety of products and services, like this life insurance plan, for PBA members. Members should fully evaluate each product or service to determine its suitability for the member's particular need. This Life Insurance plan is not a benefit of the South Florida PBA makes no representations, warranties, endorsements or recommendations concerning this benefit.



PERFECT CHECKING

with Dolfan Rewards!

Save It! - Automatic Debit Card Savings

- Automatic transfers to your DCFCU Savings account from debit purchases.

ATM Fee Reversal

- Receive up to \$10 per month in reversed ATM Fees.

I.D. Safe Choice

- Identity Theft Recovery Service.

Free Debit Card Replacement

- Replace one (1) lost or stolen DCFCU Debit Card per year.

Free Miami Dolphins Branded Debit Card

- DCFCU Miami Dolphins debit card design at no extra charge.



Official Credit Union of the Miami Dolphins

dcfcu.org/pba • 305-471-5080



Must enroll in e-Statements, maintain a minimum daily available balance of \$25.00, conduct 15 Visa debit card or Point-of-Sale transactions per month, and receive at least \$500.00 direct deposit per month to qualify for the benefits of Perfect Checking. A \$2.00 fee will apply for any month which qualifications are not met. If qualifications are not met for three consecutive qualification cycles, the account will be un-enrolled from "Perfect Checking" and will convert to a "Secured Checking Account". All "Perfect Checking" accounts receive I.D. Safe Choice at a monthly cost of \$1.99.



COVER STORY



Election Direction

Pictured on the cover, your South Florida PBA Executive Board – President Steadman Stahl, Executive Vice President David Greenwell, Vice President Nizam “Ish” Ishmael, Secretary Jennifer Valdes, Treasurer Jermaine Lawson, Sergeant-at-Arms Alex Munoz and Chaplain Robin Pinkard – has guided the union to many successes in its first term. With elections approaching and the next term looming, the executive board is poised to work even harder to make a difference.

Plus: A look at the candidates...Page 15

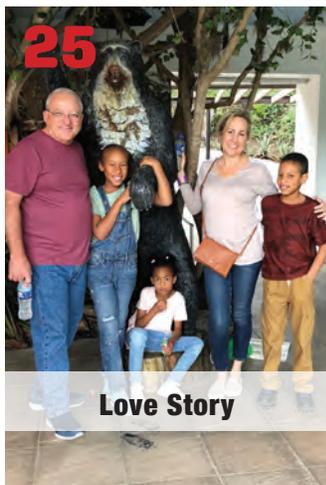
MESSAGES FROM THE PBA

The Pres Says.....	Page 5	RPOC News	Page 12
Message from the Executive VP ..	Page 8	POAT News.....	Page 14
The Dish from Ish.....	Page 9	Members Only Section	Page 33
Corrections Corner.....	Page 10	Thank-You Notes to the PBA.....	Page 46

INSIDE STORIES



Award-winning support at Surfside



Love Story



Reflections
New series spotlighting longtime PBA leaders



Main Number: 561-757-0464
Advertising: 201-880-7288
Editorial: 201-370-4082
Distribution: 201-880-7288
Email: cops@PBAHeatMagazine.com

MITCHELL KRUGEL

Publisher/Editor

mitch@PBAHeatMagazine.com

GINA CROTCHFELT

Art Director

gina@PBAHeatMagazine.com

ROSEMARY AN

Staff Writer

rosemary@PBAHeatMagazine.com

KYLE FURMAN

Staff Writer

kyle@PBAHeatMagazine.com

AMY SAVAGE

Administrative Assistant

amy@PBAHeatMagazine.com

KIMBERLY FLYNN

LAUREN PURCELL

Copy Editors

NIZAM “ISH” ISHMAEL

PBA Editor

ish@sflpba.org

VOLUME 39, NO. 5

The Heat is a bimonthly publication dedicated to law enforcement and criminal justice professionals operating in Miami-Dade County, Monroe County and throughout the State of Florida. ©2021 KRURAPP COMMUNICATIONS, INC. Reproduction of any part of this magazine without express written permission is prohibited. Address subscription inquiries and address changes to subs@PBAHeatMagazine.com. Reader comments and editorial submissions are welcome, but neither the Publisher (Krupapp Communications, Inc.) nor the South Florida Police Benevolent Association assumes any responsibility for the return of unsolicited material. The Publisher manages and controls all advertisement relationships and ultimately retains the right to accept or reject any advertisement. The acceptance of advertisements by the South Florida Police Benevolent Association does not constitute an endorsement of the products or services advertised. The Publisher and the South Florida Police Benevolent Association, nor any of their officers and/or employees, make any warranty, express or implied, including the warranties of merchantability and fitness for a particular purpose, or assume any legal liability or responsibility for the accuracy, completeness or usefulness of any information, apparatus, product or process included in any written or submitted content or in any advertisement. The views and opinions of any advertiser or third-party article contributor do not necessarily state or reflect those of either the Publisher (Krupapp Communications, Inc.) or the South Florida Police Benevolent Association and are not used for advertising or product endorsement purposes. The Publisher and/or the South Florida Police Benevolent Association assume no financial responsibility for errors in advertisements.

A vote of confidence for PBA leadership



STEADMAN STAHL

With the election for South Florida PBA executive board members and board of directors taking place in October, we thought gathering our current administration for the cover photo of this issue would mean a lot to our members. Many election terms could be used to describe this group, but the best one I can think of is “bloc.”

This bloc has formed an administration I have been fortunate to lead the past four years. The greatest affirmation of the team’s success has come with the reckoning that we are all running unopposed for reelection.

We take great pride in accomplishing, really, everything that we wanted to change with the PBA. Four years ago, we ran on a platform that the PBA was always a great organization, but our compass had become fogged. So when this new board ran, it did so to right the ship and clear the compass. And I think we have.

First and foremost, our ability to work with our elected leaders and establish a relationship that we didn’t have four years ago has allowed our union to move in the right direction. This has enabled us to navigate and negotiate two contracts with Miami-Dade County.

And, of course, we have charted a new course for more than just Miami-Dade County. We’ve successfully negotiated successor contract agreements with all the cities we represent, capped off by two contracts in four years here in Miami-Dade County.

We have moved this union from the scorched-earth approach to dealing with people that was the MO for so long before this administration took over. We have now become known for our propensity to say, “Let’s sit down and work though our differences.”

We have also changed who is eligible to run for board positions prior to our last election, something that hadn’t been changed in 25 years. We’ve increased our membership to the largest numbers ever. We picked up representing Monroe County, and we’ve been able to reinstitute a step plan that the members had been wanting for a long time.

And, most importantly, we have achieved the unity that is so powerful for a labor union. I think we’ve put the trust back in the members of the organization.

If you go back a little more than four years ago, the membership was declining at a steady rate. Units were leaving. There was a disenchantment with the leadership. But now as we move forward, it’s just the opposite.

When I threw my hat into the ring to run for president four years ago, it was an extremely contentious fight. It divided some friendships. And I didn’t know what the outcome would be. But I knew we could make it better. Our motto was, “Let’s make a difference.” And I think we can now look back four years later and see that we have made a difference.

This very publication we’re now reading, with its new format, is just one of many, many changes we’ve made in the best interest of the members. We have tried to make a difference to improve the working conditions and lives of our heroes who, day in and day out, risk everything.

As a president, there are a lot of things I was anticipating changing. But while making these changes, never for once did I ever think that we’d be going into a pandemic. And trying to navigate some of those strenuous circumstances. Add to that the George Floyd incident, and we had a couple of game-changers that I didn’t see coming.

But I think establishing those relationships right out of the gate after getting elected proved to be invaluable in steering the PBA through these tumultuous times. Maintaining relationships with the elected officials, being involved in many community events and engaging with community leaders have proven to be tremendous assets.

I think that was one of the failures of the past leadership. I can’t say “administration” because I was part of it, along with many of our board members. Under past leadership, one of the failures was not knowing what the officers go through day in and day out.

That has become a priority for this administration. The members are first – first and foremost.

With the current executive board and board of directors, the membership has grown because we put the members first.

We have built a great leadership team. From our board of directors to our executive board,



SOUTH FLORIDA PBA

EXECUTIVE BOARD

STEADMAN STAHL

President

DAVID GREENWELL

Executive Vice President

NIZAM “ISH” ISHMAEL

Vice President

JENNIFER VALDES

Secretary

JERMAINE LAWSON

Treasurer

ALEX MUNOZ

Sergeant-at-Arms

ROBIN PINKARD

Chaplain

DIRECTORS

Victor Abbondandolo

Nubia Azrak

Mike Clifton

Marcos De Rosa

James Dixon

Alejandro Dominguez

Marjorie Eloj

Deborah Fleites

Eduardo Gaitan

Christopher Hodges

Jorge Interian

Al Lopez

Anthony Rodriguez

John Saavedra

Alberto Seda

Maryann Stahl

Brett Underhill

Joel Valdes

Jody Wright

REPRESENTATIVES

Mitzie Brown

Angela Carter

Alkibiades Dodge

Ronald Feria

Sean Gordon

Darryl Hall

Ronnie Hufnagel

Sean McVay

Lisa Nesbitt-Bell

Frank Pajon

Bert Perez

Angel Posada

Julio “JP” Priede

Chris Rodriguez

Richard “Smitty” Smith



The South Florida PBA Executive Board.

STAHL CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5

they are very engaged with the members. They stay in contact with the members, something that had not been done by the past leadership.

It takes a great team to achieve as much as we have. And that's why I wanted to stand with Executive Vice President David Greenwell, Vice President Nizam "Ish" Ishmael, Secretary Jennifer Valdes, Treasurer Jermaine Lawson, Sergeant-at-Arms Alex Munoz and Chaplain Robin Pinkard for this cover photo. They are the heart and soul of this bloc that has done so much for the members.

As we head into the next term, I think we're going to have more members getting involved. I've seen young members who are just coming off probation to seasoned members who have been around for 10, 15 or 20 years wanting to get involved. And I think that is only going to make the organization greater than what it is now.

And I think we are all striving to leave the place better than we found it. Certainly, I can say that we've done that during the past four years. And with the new people who are getting involved and putting their name in to run, it's even more refreshing.

Speaking of recognition for the work of our members – our heroes – do every day, we just received one of the highest honors. We were awarded a resolution sponsored by Florida Chief Financial Officer Jimmy Patronis. With Governor DeSantis and his cabinet present, we were recognized for all the hard work that all our first responders did at the Surfside building collapse.

Regardless of what the patch said on their shirts or their badges, we were all in this together. And the South Florida PBA couldn't have been prouder to be part of it. Our board members were out there every day, led by David Greenwell. And everybody did their part to take a horrific situation and make sure that the best of the best were being taken care of.

Our officers responded within minutes, and it was chaos. The working conditions went from blistering hot days to within minutes you could have torrential thunderstorms with lightning. It was a very difficult situation, but I do believe that our response to this situation will become one of our finest, defining moments.

Everybody coming together certainly gave me hope for mankind. Sometimes we find ourselves, through the media or social media, living in a very negative, toxic environment. And then when you step back to see everybody coming together, working together, it gives us hope. I think that it just reaffirms what I think everybody needs.



One of our accomplishments during the past four years is becoming the representative for the Monroe County Sheriff's Department.

It confirms that their hard work does not go unnoticed. So to all our members, as we accept this resolution, we thank you and we see you. And it's not just us seeing you; it's others seeing you and thanking you. Whether you were at Surfside or were part of it in another way because we pulled officers out of districts and other areas of the county to respond to Surfside, your hard work paid off.

So as we head into this election, please take the time to research the candidates who are running. I think there's a lot of good people who want to do a lot of good things. And like I said four years ago, let's make a difference and let's continue making a difference for the better.

I believe we have become a great team. When we all first started, we were all kind of trying to figure it out. But everybody has found their niche.

I think what helps us, what makes us successful, is that everyone has a place. From our retired members to the ones who are active, everybody has a voice in this union. I've never seen so much camaraderie and fellowship, and they've brought our union back together.

Maybe you had a chance to attend the car show we hosted on Sept. 25. Or you attended our cigar social a few months ago. We're talking about a mix of members from many municipalities and the counties, retirees and elected officials. Everybody just felt comfortable, and that was the one common theme that I've heard during the past four years. We make everybody feel welcome back here at the PBA.

That was the first time we have ever done a car show. I was approached by two of our board members, Tony Rodriguez and Joel Valdes, about putting it together. I said, "Sure." We gave them the tools and resources that they needed, and they took off with it. I couldn't have been prouder.

We have board members who are stepping up and saying, "Let's do some different events. Let's do more to bring the members together." As our board members come up with more suggestions for cigar socials, car shows or other events, we will move forward. It's putting the PBA back in the hands of members. And that's how you make a difference.

As always, stay safe, my friends.

Steadman Stahl, President
steadman@sflpba.org



Steadman Stahl PBA President

A VOICE FOR ALL

**THANK YOU
TOGETHER WE CONTINUE
TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE!**

Our duty to remember



DAVID GREENWELL
EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT

This year, with the help of some great volunteers, we once again set up the Fallen Officer Tribute on the first floor of the Government Center. In 2010, the Miami-Dade County Commission passed a resolution declaring the month of September “Fallen Officer Tribute Month” in Miami-Dade County to honor officers who died in service to this community.

The tribute has been built and displayed throughout the month of September every year since then, except for last year due to the COVID shutdown.

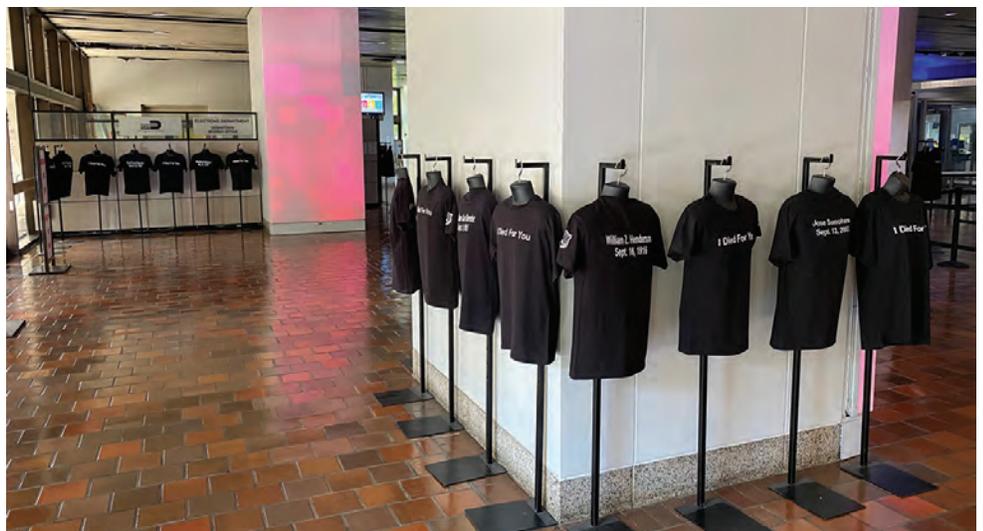
The South Florida PBA commissioned the Fallen Officer Tribute to serve as a visual reminder of the sacrifices made by law enforcement officers, members of our community, who gave their lives so that we could live in peace.

Each mannequin is wearing a shirt inscribed with the fallen officer’s name and date of death. Our fallen officers represent departments from across the county. The names of their departments were left off symbolically to represent unity. It doesn’t matter what agency an officer works for, because they all share the same calling. It takes a special person to walk down a dark alley uncertain as to what waits at the end, or to advance in a gunfight when common sense and self-preservation tell you otherwise. It is our officers, these special people, who are the ones running into danger when everyone else is trying to escape it.

These brave men and women were husbands, wives, parents, sons, daughters, coaches, volunteers, relatives, friends and neighbors. Representing every race and every gender, they entered law enforcement because they wanted to give back. They wanted to serve their community and make it a better, safer place for us all.

It was their duty to serve. It is our duty to remember.

As always, stay safe. If you have questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me at 305-593-0044 or greenwell@sflpba.org.



South Florida PBA members set up the Fallen Officer Tribute.



Members who helped set up include, from left, Louis Vazquez Jermaine Lawson, Joel Valdes, Jorge Baluja, Ernest Fussell, Lily Diaz, David Greenwell, Tre Neil and Dukens Pierre.

Social media misconduct



CAPTAIN
NIZAM "ISH"
ISHMAEL
VICE
PRESIDENT

In 1892, Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes of the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court said, "A person may have a constitutional right to talk politics, but he has no constitutional right to be a policeman."

Law enforcement professionals across America have been exposed for posting racist and violent things on social media. Even the media monitors what many of us post. Everyone is watching what you put on social media.

In 2016, Philadelphia lawyer Emily Baker-White learned that many law enforcement officers were posting content on social media that appeared to endorse violence, racism and bigotry. This inspired the Plain View Project (PVP), a research project that searched through and identified thousands of social media posts and comments by current and former law enforcement officers. The PVP examined the social media accounts of about 2,900 officers (of all ranks) from eight departments across the country (Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; Dallas, Texas; St. Louis, Missouri; Phoenix, Arizona; York, Pennsylvania; Twin Falls, Idaho; Denison, Texas; Lake County, Florida) and an additional 600 retired officers from those same departments.

They verified the identifies of officers by cross-checking against publicly available information. They compiled posts in a database filled with tasteless jokes, bigoted and racist imagery and memes, and long, vicious exchanges involving multiple officers. When you query the database of social media posts you can search by city, officer name, officer rank, active duty, former employee, badge number, keywords and even salary range.

All the agencies that employ us have a social media policy. The policy must be lawful, reasonable and all they must do is have you acknowledge there is a policy. Some may be thinking, why should we care? If you were a law enforcement officer in those cities that the PVP looked at, would you care? Would you be fine with a fellow colleague who looks down on you because of your skin color, your religion, your sexual orientation?

More than 100 officers in those cities were disciplined for allegedly racist, sexist or inappropriate posts:

- 13 were up for termination
- 7 of those 13 resigned
- 4 received a 30-day suspension
- 50-plus were in the reprimand range of a 5-day suspension
- 3 received no discipline.

According to the PVP website, "We present these posts and comments because we believe that they could undermine public trust and confidence in our police. In our view, people who are subject to decisions made by law enforcement may fairly question whether these online statements about race, religion, ethnicity and the acceptability of violent policing — among other topics — inform officers' on-the-job behaviors and choices. To be clear, our concern is not whether these posts and comments are protected by the First Amendment. Rather, we believe that because fairness, equal treatment, and integrity are essential to the legitimacy of policing, these posts and comments should be part of a national dialogue about police."

I recently had a conversation with Anil Karia, an attorney for the Public Safety Labor Group. Mr. Karia specializes in repre-



senting law enforcement associations and guilds in Oregon, Washington and Alaska in all aspects of their labor relations, including day-to-day counsel, negotiations, arbitrations, unfair labor practice proceedings, civil litigations and critical incident response. He wanted me to share these social media tips with our PBA members:

Top 10 Social Media Tips for Public Safety Employees

1. Nothing you post online is truly private. Check your privacy settings. But remember: nothing you post is truly private.
2. Before posting, ask yourself: if my boss receives a complaint about what I'm going to post, how would he/she react? If the answer is "not so well" or "he'll start a disciplinary investigation," is the post really worth it?
3. Be careful who you "friend."
4. Don't gripe or complain about your job or boss for the world to see.
5. Don't post confidential work-related information.
6. Don't post material that would violate discrimination, harassment or retaliation workplace rules.
7. Your First Amendment rights are very limited.
8. Speak as a private citizen, not in your official status as a public safety employee.
9. Your credibility can be called into question by what you've posted online.
10. Posting personal information can jeopardize your and your family's safety.

The PVP is just one of several groups that are watching. I totally understand the cynicism that we develop as years go by in our profession. Many of us might find it funny, but the public does not have the same cynicism that we have developed over the years. It takes a special breed of people to do what we do every day. There are many groups out there that do not like what we stand for, are opposed to our salaries or benefits, and think that none of us should ever receive a pension. Be careful what you put out there, because you never know how it can come back to haunt you.

I will end with this quote from Dwight D. Eisenhower: "Always take your job seriously, never yourself."

Please feel free to contact me at ish@sflpba.org or 305-593-0044.

COVID-19 – What rights do employees really have?



LIEUTENANT
JERMAINE
LAWSON
TREASURER

With coronavirus cases rising once again, we can likely expect law enforcement agencies to attempt to require employees to be vaccinated, which can be done without violating any federal guidelines or statutes. While Governor DeSantis recently advised that he would fine any agency mandating vaccines, that is sure to be met with legal challenges. The dilemma for the PBA is in balancing the rights of our members, who carry wildly differing views on the subject, with our obligation to sit with employers and negotiate in good faith, all while understanding that this is a worldwide pandemic that is now the leading cause of death among law enforcement officers nationwide.

Many officers are hesitant to get vaccinated despite the increase in hospitalizations and deaths brought on by the Delta variant of COVID-19. The messaging emanating from the healthcare community is that the spread of COVID-19 is largely driven by unvaccinated people; however, according to a voluntary survey, the numbers reported on vaccination rates in law enforcement are roughly the same as the population in general. Around 60 percent of the adult population in Florida has been vaccinated. According to our county mayor, the county will start requiring nonunion members to be tested every week unless they are vaccinated. This is a very sensitive issue within departments.

In my opinion, I believe people would be more open to the idea of getting vaccinated if it would prevent them from ever becoming infected again, but that is clearly not the reality of the vaccine, which will require booster shots and potentially annual shots, like the flu. Additionally, even though the Food and Drug Administration has formally approved Pfizer's COVID-19 vaccine, many people are still fearful due to how fast this vaccine was developed. While most vaccines are developed over several years, with COVID-19, it took approximately one year. Many people are concerned about whether a vaccine developed in such a short time frame can truly be safe, and without years of trials, how scientists are able to predict long-term effects.

There may be logical and scientifically compelling answers to these concerns, but that information is not being provided in a readily available format that is deemed trustworthy among the masses. That is simply a hurdle that the government must overcome if there is to be mass buy-in among the community at large, and law enforcement officers are no different.

On Aug. 3, President Biden announced that federal employees must be vaccinated against COVID-19 or meet other conditions, including wearing masks and undergoing periodic testing for COVID-19 infection. This begs the questions:

Can your employer require you to take the COVID-19 vaccine?

The simple answer is yes. Private companies and government agencies can require their employees to get vaccinated as a condition of working there. However, for any vaccine mandate,



MDCR Officer Johnny Jones received the Officer of the Month award for September 2021. Pictured, from left, are Lieutenant Samuel Maynard, Lieutenant Regina Shaw, Officer Johnny Jones, Captain Anthony Yeber and Lieutenant Marlon Wilson.

key standards apply under federal law. Employers are required to consider religious accommodation requests under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and medical accommodation requests under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of being job-related and consistent with business necessity. This involves deciding about the threat to safety posed by unvaccinated employees. In addition, the determination must consider the most current medical knowledge about COVID-19, such as the level of community spread of the virus, which comes from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. This aligns with the ways in which departments may similarly mandate tetanus; hepatitis; measles, mumps and rubella (MMR); and/or flu vaccines, or may issue medical requirements for health and fitness. Importantly, these potential requirements are also affected by the need to collectively bargain when it comes to unionized employees like our members.

Can employees refuse to be vaccinated?

Individuals retain the right to refuse, but they have no right to legal protection if they do, unless certain exemptions apply, as indicated above. Employees can refuse to be vaccinated if they have a valid medical or religious objection to the vaccination. An employee seeking medical exemption or accommodation must establish a qualifying disability under the ADA or state/local regulations that prevents them from taking the vaccine. If an employee chooses to use the religious exemption clause or accommodation under Title VII, they must establish that the vaccine would violate a sincerely held religious belief, practice or observance. Moral, ethical or personal objections, including anti-vaccination positions, are legally insufficient to obtain an exemption or require an accommodation. Absent further guid-

ance from the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), prior to considering a mandatory COVID-19 vaccination program, agencies with collective bargaining agreements must collectively bargain those mandates. The PBA believes they are the mandatory subjects of bargaining, as opposed to only permissive subjects of bargaining, which would only require providing notice and an opportunity to request bargaining to negotiate only the impacts of the proposed mandates before implementing a new rule.

According to an article by the Associated Press dated July 27, 2021, federal legal guidance suggests the law is on the side of employers. Vaccination can be considered a condition of employment, akin to a job qualification. As a COVID-19 vaccine is approved by the FDA and is available for use, employers should continue to monitor guidance and regulations pertaining to vaccinations in the workplace from the EEOC, the CDC and other federal, state and local authorities. Even though many in the public health field see the vaccination requirement as a way of ensuring that first responders will be better able to protect the people they encounter and fellow co-workers, I personally still believe that the choice to get the vaccine should rest solely with the individual employee. In my opinion, no one should be forced. As law enforcement officers, we have been living and working with a high degree of uncertainty for a long time now. Therefore, it is of utmost importance that department heads do all they can to help our members manage their stress and anxiety. Rather than implementing mandates that could lead to difficult decisions, our department should focus on steps it can take to encourage and incentivize employees to get vaccinated. For example, management may want to:

- Provide vaccination education campaigns
- Make obtaining the vaccine as easy as possible for employees
- Cover any cost that might be associated with getting the vaccine
- Provide better incentives to employees who get vaccinated
- Provide paid time off for employees to recover in the event the employee suffers from any potential side effects
- Communicate clearly and often with employees and help them understand how vaccinations will make for a safer working environment.

The PBA is in full support of all our members and will make decisions that are in the best interests of our members. We believe that the decision to submit to a vaccination should rest solely with each individual member, and they should not be forced to take a vaccine they are not comfortable with. That said, we believe the proper educational components will lead to a greater understanding of the vaccine, such as how it was developed as quickly as it was.

I want to stress to our members the need to keep up to date with new COVID-19 protocols that come from the director's office and the safety advisory tips that come from the safety coordinator via email on a regular basis. These tips and recommendations describe mandatory safety and health standards and are intended to assist employees in maintaining a safe and healthful workplace. Please feel free to contact me at lawson@sflpba.org or 305-593-0044.

2021 Pending Grievances

This list represents the pending grievances filed at the various departments represented by the South Florida Police Benevolent Association as of **Aug. 31, 2021**. The PBA legal staff receives numerous other complaints that are resolved by other means.

DEPARTMENT/DISTRICT

HIALEAH	1
HOMESTEAD CORRECTIONS	1
HOMESTEAD PD	1
M-D CORRECTIONS	
ASSOCIATION	1
TRANSPORTATION	1
TGK(MHTC)	1
TOTAL	3
M-D POLICE	3
MIAMI GARDENS	4
MCSO (DEP SHERIFF)	1
NORTH BAY VILLAGE	2
NORTH MIAMI	1
OPA LOCKA	2
SWEETWATER	1
TOTAL GRIEVANCES	20



Promotional Training Programs

Customized for your Agency Examination Process



Preparation for
All Ranks

Courses Include:

Video Instruction
On-Line Study Guides
On-Line Flashcards
Practice Exams
In-Basket/Assessment Training
In-Person or Zoom Virtual Lessons
& more...

Your advancement is our number one priority.

CALL TODAY! (732) 684-1644

WWW.JHARRISTRAINING.COM

LOCATIONS
BASED IN NEW JERSEY
SERVICES AVAILABLE
NATIONWIDE

*Take Your Career to the Next Level and
Get the Promotion You Deserve!*

Our latest updates and an important save-the-date



DENNIS BAMBACH
RPOC
PRESIDENT

Just when we thought it was getting better, we hit another bump with COVID-19. I hope you and your family stayed safe through the summer. Unfortunately, my family was hit with it, but they have all recovered. A return to normalcy seems to be taking longer than we had all hoped for, but I am optimistic that we will once again be able to gather in groups big and small to enjoy getting together with old friends. To that point, please remember to start planning for next year's reunion, which will return to the Marriott Lake Mary April 21–25.

We have been lucky so far not to have been affected in South and Central Florida by the hurricanes and floods that have hit so much of the country, but we should stay aware of how fickle the weather is and be prepared. Our thoughts are with any members who were in the areas impacted by these storms. Please stay safe!

With that, let's proceed to the individual reports:

John Fraley, Vice President/Scholarship Chairman: We, the RPOC board, are proud to announce that we have updated the scholarship award process to cover four years of undergraduate studies. The new award system will not be retroactive and will go into effect in January 2022. Upon submission of an updated application that should include grades and an essay that reinforces the student's goals and achievements in college:

Year 1 will continue to be a \$1000 scholarship.

Year 2 will also be a \$1000 scholarship based on grades and the essay.

Years 3 and 4 will be \$500 scholarships, also based on grades and the essay.

The scholarship program has been very successful, and the board is looking for dedicated students with initiative and goals.

Reba Miller, Chaplain: "May the Lord grant you always: A sunbeam to warm you, a moonbeam to charm you, a sheltering Angel so nothing can harm you. Laughter to cheer you, faithful friends near you and whenever you pray, Heaven to hear you." —an Irish blessing

It is with heartfelt regret and remembrance that we honor the passing of our following members:

Robert C. (Redman) Duncan, August 2021

Bailey C. Green, August 2021

Robert "Bob" James, September 2021

We also share special wishes and condolences for RPOC member Patti Garrison Marriott and her family on the loss of their best friend and sister, Maureen S. McDowell.

Get-well wishes are extended to members Ron Sorenson (heart surgery), Keith DeGenova (injuries resulting from a fall)

and John Striegel (stroke).

Special congratulations to our very long-time friend and colleague, RPOC member Donald Rhindress. He is the recipient of the AMVET of the Year Silver Helmet Award 2020–2022.

We would like to give special thanks to our armed services members, current and past, throughout the world, who stand for our freedoms and sacrifices daily.

We send special prayers to our Jewish friends and family during this time of Rosh Hashanah. We wish you a happy L'Shana Tovah. May your year be filled with health, happiness and peace. Blessings to all.

Jerry Rudoff, Sergeant-at-Arms/Information Officer: We are happy to report that we are currently achieving about 60 percent readership of our e-newsletter, which is considerably above the average of groups similar to ours. We realize that our members are spread out around the U.S. and, as we've mentioned before, we would be pleased to receive pictures and news items that you'd like to see published in your eNews. Also, on any number of occasions, we receive information well after the fact on our fellow members who are ill or who have passed, and if you know of anyone who fits either category, we'd very much appreciate a contact so we can reach out to them and their family. To do this easily, you can call, email us directly or go to our website at www.rocpba.org or www.rpocpba.org, where you can click on the Contact Us tab and send the information, or on Join Email, where you can update your profile information.

Lastly, we continue to make adjustments to our website in order to make it as user-friendly as possible. You will now notice that on our Newsletter tab, we list the links to all our past e-newsletters so you can catch up on any information you might have missed. You can also read the latest news by our president, Dennis, via these links.

Relative to our Facebook page, you all are to be congratulated, as we have not received any negative notices from the highly controlled Facebook organization regarding posts that do not comply with their community standards. The reason is that we realize our members have a wide variety of political and social views, and we and you primarily stick to information that concerns us all rather than any one group. We thank you all very much for that, as it minimized our communication directly with Facebook management. Stay well and in charge!

We would like to welcome new member Luis Valdes, FDLE. On behalf of myself and all the board, we thank you for your support.

Congrats to retired members

The South Florida PBA is proud to honor retired members who have put in long hours and outstanding service for their departments and communities. Join us in honoring these great members and exceptional public servants as they celebrate their retirement.



Angela Kemp
Miami-Dade Corrections & Rehabilitation



Jorge Carreno
Miami-Dade Police Department



Jose Campa
Miami-Dade Police Department



Kurt Stutz
Miami-Dade Police Department



Luis Rodriguez
Miami-Dade Corrections & Rehabilitation



Mario Knapp
Miami-Dade Police Department



Michael Miller
Miami-Dade Police Department



Pat Hanlon
Miami-Dade Police Department

Your mission: Talk up the Trust



SERGEANT
KENNETH
HORGAN
POAT
ASSISTANCE
COMMITTEE
CHAIRPERSON

So this article will be a request. I am calling on all veteran officers, from every law enforcement agency in Miami-Dade County. I am calling on every last one of you. For those of you who truly know what the Police Officer Assistance Trust (POAT) does, we must pass on your knowledge to the next generation of law enforcement officers.

The POAT quietly goes about the business of assisting officers every day. POAT does not publish that assistance. That information is confidential and kept between the POAT and the officer. Unless the officer chooses to share this information, no one will know.

That being the case, many believe that since we don't see it, it must not exist. If it is not on social media, it must not be something worth being involved in. I can assure you that the POAT is an organization that you want to last for generations to come.

To all of the young officers out there, your predecessors have left you a gift. They have donated their time and money to POAT for you so that it would always be there. Make sure you do the same, so POAT will be there for the next generation that follows you.

The annual Remembering Our Fallen Heroes Memorial

Golf Outing will be held at the exclusive Indian Creek Country Club on Monday, Oct. 18, 2021. Golfers throughout South Florida will be teeing up for a chance to assist the families of Miami-Dade County's fallen officers. The entrance fee is \$400 per golfer. This fee includes breakfast and a buffet luncheon at the clubhouse following play. Come help support your law enforcement community as you enjoy an extraordinary day of golf at this exceptional and restricted venue. Please contact Annette McCully at 305-970-2776 for further information.

The Cops Ride for Kids motorcycle ride to benefit POAT's Holiday Gifts for Surviving Children will be held on Saturday, Dec. 4, 2021, at 9 a.m. The ride will begin at the Miami-Dade Police Department Headquarters, 9105 NW 25th St. Registration for the event is \$20 per bike. Online registration will be available at www.poa.org starting Oct. 8, 2021. Please contact Rudy Gonzalez at poatoffice@msn.com for details.

The eighth annual Homerun for Heroes Kickball Tournament will be held at Kendall Indian Hammocks Park Jan. 14-15, 2022. The park is located at 11395 SW 79th St. If you're interested in forming a team, contact Major Thamy Gonzalez at 305-216-6605. The team registration fee is \$350, and team T-shirts are included. The deadline for team registration is Dec. 3, 2021.

Thanks for your support and stay safe.

THIS JUST IN...

A gift for St. Michael

The Feast Day Celebration of St. Michael, the patron saint of law enforcement, scheduled for Sept. 17 at Our Lady of Guadalupe Catholic Church, had to be cancelled. To honor the tradition, the South Florida PBA made a donation to the parish.

Pictured from left, PBA Chaplain Robin Pinkard, Deacon Billy Bertot and PBA Secretary Jennifer Valdes.



Congrats to a scholar

The South Florida PBA would like to thank the Robert Parker Foundation for awarding a scholarship to Patrick Johnson, the son of Miami-Dade PD Lieutenant Pamillia Johnson.





RE-ELECT
DAVID GREENWELL
For PBA EXECUTIVE
VICE-PRESIDENT

Allow me to continue protecting your rights, wages and benefits while never forgetting our fallen officers and their families.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★
Thank you for your continued support!

I look forward to continuing my service and will do my very best to represent you.

Nizam "Ish" Ishmael



FOR PBA VICE PRESIDENT

I am honored and humbled that you have placed your trust in me.



JENNIFER VALDES
For PBA SECRETARY

In a rapidly changing climate and with the challenges we face as police officers, you need experience on your side. I have constantly been your voice and I humbly ask for your vote.

VOTE



JERMAINE LAWSON

For **PBA** Treasurer

THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONFIDENCE AND SUPPORT



Re-Elect

ALEX MUÑOZ

For PBA SERGEANT-AT-ARMS
As your Sergeant-At-Arms I will work hard to keep us united while ensuring the best interest of our members

Thank you for your continued support
ROBIN PINKARD



For PBA Chaplain



Re-Elect
VICTOR ABBONDANDOLO
for South Florida PBA Board of Directors

YOUR "VOICE"
AT THE
COURTHOUSE

**VOTE
VOTE
VOTE**

NUBIA M. AZRAK
for Board of Directors

**VOTE
VOTE
VOTE**



Mitzie Brown
for Board of Directors

"Let Me Be Your VOICE"

VOTE FOR
Angela Carter

FOR
SOUTH FLORIDA PBA
BOARD OF DIRECTORS



**Re-Elect
Eddie Gaitan**
To Board of Directors

"Let's continue to have
our voices heard."

VOTE

**KATRINA
GREGORISCH**
BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Allow Your Voice To Be Heard

**Re-Elect
Christopher Hodges**
To Board of Directors

**RE-ELECT
JORGE INTERIAN**
FOR PBA BOARD OF DIRECTORS

**VOTE FOR
Joseph
"Joe"
Kelly**

FOR
SOUTH FLORIDA PBA
BOARD OF DIRECTORS

**VOTE
AL LOPEZ**

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

For **PBA**
Board of Directors

VOTE VOTE VOTE

**Christine
Marte**

FOR
PBA
BOARD OF DIRECTORS

**VOTE
Romelio
Martinez**

PBA
Board of Directors

AID IN FULL

South Florida PBA hubs effort to provide support to first responders working Surfside rescue and recovery efforts

■ BY MITCHELL KRUGEL

July's heat and humidity left Miami-Dade homicide detectives, crime scene investigators and a host of other first responders and essential workers searching through the mountain of rubble – the “Mountain” – where the Surfside condo building collapsed, dripping with sweat, soot and the most unimaginable emotions. And that was, of course, after the remnants of Hurricane/Tropical Storm Elsa ripped through the site.

The fatigued and beleaguered rescue and recovery workers must have been parched. How could they not be? How much would a cold drink help now?

“We need more Gatorade.”

The call blasted from the tents the South Florida PBA had set up near the Mountain to provide food, drinks, a break from the pall of what was going on and shoulders to cry on. This oasis not only served those on the Mountain, but the officers working 12-hour shifts on their feet all day directing traffic and providing security, as well as those from departments across the county, the state, the country and the world who had come to help.

And when the call went out to bolster this hydration station, well, the response was overwhelming and a definition of how the union, police departments and the community can come together in times of greatest need.

“They were doing some of the terrible work trying to recover, and this one guy told me, ‘We need more Gatorade,’” explained South Florida PBA Executive Vice President David Greenwell, who was on site the day of the tragedy and for the next month or more after the collapse leading the support efforts. “A phone call or two later, there was a lady who brought a tractor trailer with 20 pallets of Gatorade.”

For more than a month, the PBA combined with the Miami-Dade PD Community Affairs Bureau and local businesses of all sizes to create a 24-7 rest stop where the union's food truck hubbed a smorgasbord of support. Just a few days into the search and rescue, a lane had to be blocked off to accommodate the traffic of people who wanted to contribute anything and everything to the cause.

The convergence of this service prompted Florida State CFO Jimmy Patronis to recommend that the state honor the way everybody stepped up. And on Sept. 21, Greenwell and South Florida PBA President Steadman Stahl represented all

the entities that came together in Tallahassee, where Governor Ron DeSantis and his administration presented them with a resolution to thank all the first responders who worked on the Surfside tragedy.



Governor Ron DeSantis presents a resolution to South Florida PBA President Steadman Stahl and other PBA representatives honoring their work at the Surfside building collapse site.

In part, the resolution recognized the law enforcement officers who “poured their hearts and souls into this mission” and further declared, the state “owes all departments and agencies that responded a deep debt of gratitude.” The departments honored included: Miami-Dade, Surfside, Miami Gardens, Bal Harbour, South Miami, FWC Fish and Wildlife, Miami Beach, Florida Highway Patrol, Homestead, the City of Miami and FIU.

“It’s all about the first responders, the first responders in a rescue mission,” Greenwell praised

moments after leaving the governor and his cabinet to join in accepting the award. “They recognized that they had a 12-story building collapse, more than 150 people were missing and it was such a big job to rescue and dig people out.”

Like so many officers in these departments, Greenwell had been involved in many recovery operations, but most of them following hurricanes. Surfside was unlike anything he had ever experienced.

The images of first responders coming down the Mountain carrying garbage bags with body parts in them are indelible. The reports he heard from crime scene investigators about finding a 2-year-old in a diaper crushed or a family that was huddled together in a bathroom and did not get out define the horror of the tragedy.

But it was hard not to admire the workers who braved the tropical storm and the blazing sun for 12 hours and came into the PBA's breakroom soaking wet and covered in the residue of the collapse. Serving these responders and the others who worked the many details around the site was an honor of the highest order.

“They were doing some terrible work, and we just want to help get them out and get them off their feet for a few minutes,” Greenwell confirmed. “If we could get them some water and get them something to eat, that’s what mattered most after working a very long day. We know these guys needed some help. And to be able to be a little bit of help was cool.”

CONTINUED ON PAGE 22



Miami-Dade PD officers take a break from their tour at the site to enjoy a meal at the venue the PBA set up to support all first responders and essential workers.

AID CONTINUED FROM PAGE 21

There was a reward for all the support that exhibited the greatness that came out of all of this.

"I'll tell you, the best part about it was everybody was on the same page," Greenwell added. "Everybody's pulling in the same direction. And it was really great to see the way the community came together for first responders."

From the first day following the collapse, the community was relentless with its support. And with the number of essential workers on site, from those working the crime scene to the waste management detail removing the debris, it was like serving an army.

On the first day following the collapse, Miami-Dade PD assigned the Community Affairs Bureau to coordinate the food, beverages and other supplies that came in by the pallet.



Organizations, businesses and individuals all stepped up to donate food, beverages and supplies by the pallet to assist with the PBA's support efforts.

"From the first day, it was chaotic," recalled Major Carmen Castro, who supervises the Community Affairs Bureau. "We never experienced anything like this. We are always so well prepared for hurricanes and other types of natural disasters, police-related matters, demonstrations and things of that nature. But we had never dealt with anything like this before, so everybody had to figure their way and organize the plan as we went along."

It didn't take long to organize. Within a day or two, the Community Affairs Bureau working in conjunction with the PBA out of its hub had a schedule going to accommodate the businesses, community-based organizations, religious organizations and individuals that wanted to buy food, cook food, bake sweets or just offer general sponsorship and support.

At the end of the day — at the end of every day — there was

PBA'S ASSOCIATE PERSONAL INJURY COUNSEL

Martin, Lister & Alvarez, PLC



Specializing in serious personal injury matters, product liability, medical malpractice & wrongful death

1655 N. Commerce Parkway, Suite 102, Weston, FL 33326

PHONE 954.659.9322

FAX 954.659.9909 www.lawmla.com

*Admitted: New York

For a complete listing of our firm's credentials, please visit us at www.lawmla.com

The hiring of a lawyer is an important decision that should not be based solely on advertisements. Before you decide, ask us to send you free written information about our qualifications and experience.



The facility the PBA set up provided a place for all workers to take a break.

enough food to feed people from all religious backgrounds. And there was more than enough to take care of perhaps the No. 1 priority group – families who were there looking for their loved ones.

There was even a group of officers who came from Israel to assist with rescue and recovery, and they found a respite with the PBA as well.

Castro noted how it wasn't just about the food and refreshments. Being able to come to the break area and take a proverbial load off seemed to mean so much.

"You could see it in their eyes. They are used to dealing with death, but it was overwhelming and draining," she detailed. "They needed to get some relief because they just needed a mental break."

There were so many unsung efforts that contributed to perhaps the greatest rescue and recovery in the country since 9/11.

Miami-Dade Corrections and Rehabilitation, for example, provided refrigerated trucks to keep the food fresh and cold. And without the many agencies who mobilized support, there would have been no way to sustain the effort until July 31, when it was no longer needed.

And amid the horror and the tragedy, this effort provided a reinforcement of the nobility of the profession.

"The men and women of this profession, when the time comes, everybody steps up to the plate and knows how to work together and get it done," Castro reiterated. "It shows the that the community we have here in Dade County is like no other. The support and the love we received from people of different backgrounds, different religions, different ethnicities and different faith groups was just overwhelming. And it made it all worthwhile."



10631 North Kendall Dr., Suite 210
Miami, FL. 33176
305.223.2533

www.iSureBrokers.com

Mention you're a PBA member when contacting our office to unlock potential savings



AID IN THE SHADE

Some of the scenes in and around the support the South Florida PBA provided at the site of the Surfside collapse



Sharing the Love

Miami-Dade Lieutenant Rick Rodriguez and his wife have followed a mission that has changed the lives of three children from Ecuador...and their own

■ BY ROSEMARY AN

Miami-Dade Police Department Lieutenant Rick Rodriguez and his wife, Gloria, didn't know the length and strength that their love could reach.

The couple, who have been married for 15 years, have six biological children between them, ages 24 to 34. In 2019, they added three new children to their family, Alex, Lucy and Nicol, via adoption from Quito, Ecuador.

"We're like a Brady Bunch for sure," Gloria mentioned. "It's been two years since we've adopted them, and it's been a journey ever since."

Growing the family was a natural progression of a calling they've experienced in a partnership that overflows with love. It's grown out of the fulfillment that has come from 25 years on the job for Rick.

The children, formerly known as Martin Alejandro, Lucyana and Rafael Nicol, were adopted at ages 11, 9 and 7, respectively. The Afro-Ecuadorian children have the same biological mother but not the same father. Their mother lived on the streets, with all the vices that go with that. The children barely knew of a life outside of an orphanage.

"Their backgrounds are pretty sad," Gloria relayed. "One of them always said in the orphanage that they would never be adopted, because they were [already] 3 years old."

Growing up in an orphanage with 25 kids was difficult, to say the least. When it came to discipline, children would be put in a timeout. It was not the typical timeout that you'd imagine. The kids were put in a room locked from the outside. Alone.

"They could be locked up for hours or even until the next day," Gloria expressed. "There was no bathroom in the bedroom. A tremendous abandonment."

Rick and Gloria were able to change that. As opposed to a timeout, even in the typical sense, they opted to implement a "time in" order.

"We learned very quickly that it's not a timeout away from mommy and daddy," Gloria explained. "You're going to be closer to us, you're going to stay right next to us. We love you, but you're on discipline.



From left, Miami-Dade PD Lieutenant Rick Rodriguez, daughters Lucy and Nicol, wife Gloria and son Alex in Quito, Ecuador.

So the timeout approach was more 'time in.'"

The couple adopted these children just two years ago, but they've been helping orphans for more than a decade. Rick, 58, and Gloria, 52, are faith-based individuals and started going on mission trips to Casa de Fe, an orphanage in Ecuador, in 2009. While assisting the orphanage, they learned that what the children really

needed was a parent's love.

"It opened up our hearts for these kids," Rick recalled. "They had food and medical care, but ultimately the people that take care of them don't have the time to spend with them, especially the smaller ones."

Wanting to fill that need, the couple went back to the orphanage several times

CONTINUED ON PAGE 26

and fell in love with one of the boys. Rick, who has been on the job since 1996, knew he could take his mission of making the world a better place to another level by bringing one of these kids into his home.

The couple tried to adopt the boy but were unsuccessful. So they reached out to another orphanage in Quito, *Fundación Albergue La Dolorosa*, saying they were open to adoption.

When they received a photo of Martin Alejandro, Lucyana and Rafael Nicol, every fiber in their beings screamed “yes.”

“There was an absolute feeling in our heart that these were the three children,” Gloria remarked. “Don’t ask why. The Lord put them in our hearts.”

The couple began the adoption process through the Hague Convention, an international agreement to safeguard inter-country adoptions. It took a home study and a mountain of paperwork, time and money, all before the couple were even able to meet the children.

“They don’t even know about you until a week before you get there,” Gloria described. “Because there’s a possibility that the adoption can fall apart.”

About three years ago, the children, who were not raised as siblings in the or-

phanage, were suddenly given time alone. They suspected there was something going on but weren’t sure.

The week before Rick and Gloria were set to meet them in person, the children received an introductory video from the couple. It showed their sitting room, which had family photos plastered on the wall, including pictures of their biological children. And right in the middle was a photo of the soon-to-be-adopted children.

“They realized that we had already given them entrance,” Gloria offered. “That was the way we introduced ourselves: ‘My name is mami, and this is papi.’”

When the couple finally arrived at *Fundación Albergue La Dolorosa* to meet their children, Rick was speechless at the sight of the three-story building. There were bars on all the windows, and it almost looked like a jail.

Through a window on the third floor, the couple saw who they later learned was Martin.

“We saw him through the bars on the window,” Rick said, fighting back tears. “When he sees us coming through the gate, we see him jumping up and down. It still hits me hard.”

Martin’s sisters followed suit, jumping with joy that they were about to have a

new home and parents. But as thrilling as it was, the first encounter was somewhat awkward.

“It was a lot of giggles,” Gloria remembered. “A little bit uncomfortable, because you’re meeting these strangers. And I’m blonde, [Rick] is all white-haired. We’re very white, and the children are Afro-Ecuadorian, so it’s a different look.”

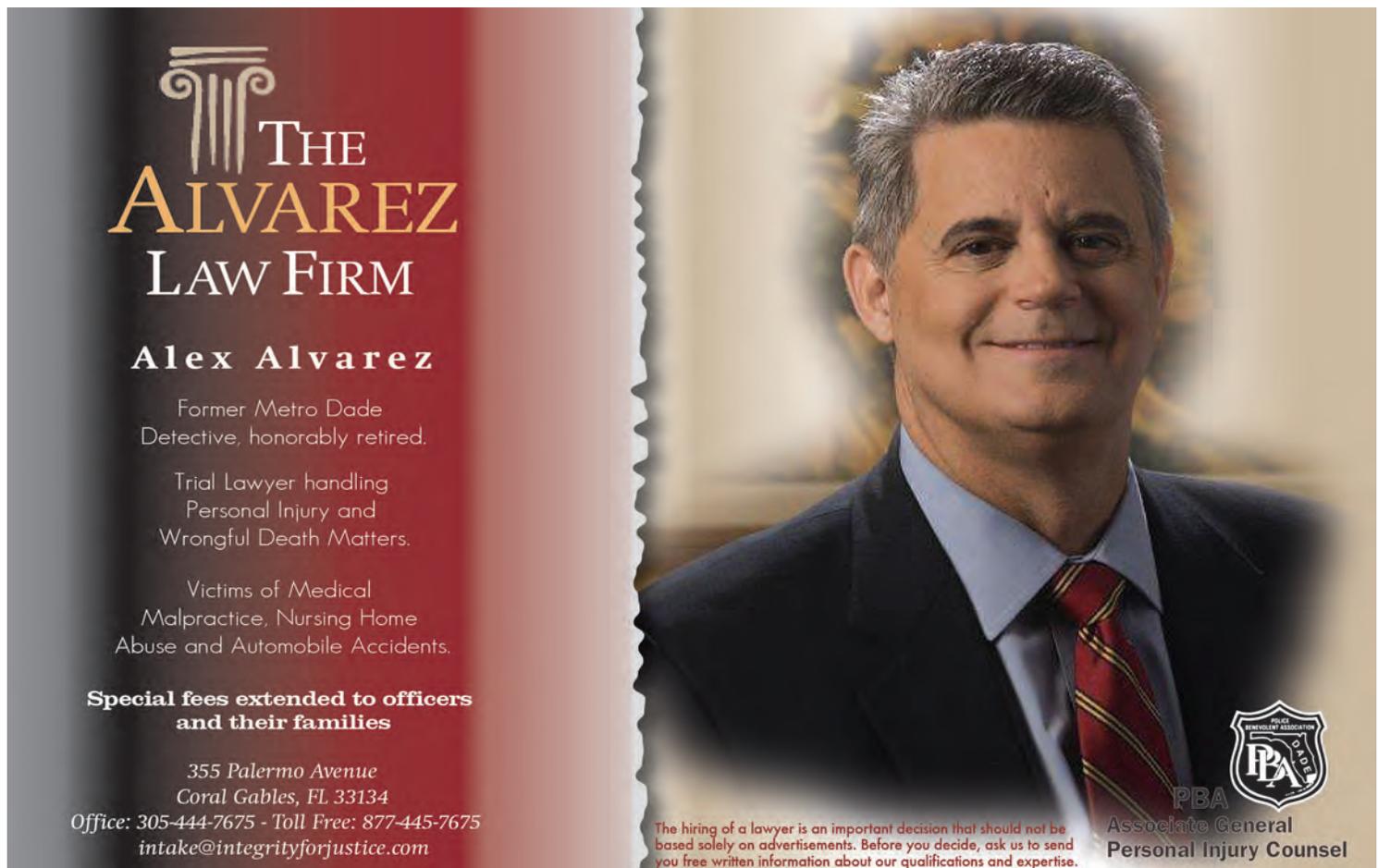
The couple had questioned whether it would be beneficial to the children to be in a tricultural household, but their concerns proved unnecessary. It only took a week for the new family of five to be comfortable with one another.

“You’ve already forgotten about the color of one another’s skin,” Gloria added. “You’re just all one. It’s beautiful.”

The couple stayed in Quito for two months before bringing the children to Florida, only returning to the orphanage for a goodbye party for the kids. With the children’s new identities as Alex, Lucy and Nicol Rodriguez, it was time to assimilate into American culture.

The children experienced Disney World. They went skiing for the first time. They go on vacations. They go to church. They love pizza, burgers and pretty much any other American food you can think of.

“They eat us out of house and home,” Rick described. “They ate rice and beans



THE ALVAREZ LAW FIRM

Alex Alvarez

Former Metro Dade Detective, honorably retired.

Trial Lawyer handling Personal Injury and Wrongful Death Matters.

Victims of Medical Malpractice, Nursing Home Abuse and Automobile Accidents.

Special fees extended to officers and their families

355 Palermo Avenue
Coral Gables, FL 33134
Office: 305-444-7675 - Toll Free: 877-445-7675
intake@integrityforjustice.com

The hiring of a lawyer is an important decision that should not be based solely on advertisements. Before you decide, ask us to send you free written information about our qualifications and expertise.

PBA
Associate General
Personal Injury Counsel

[at the orphanage]. So they eat everything. Whatever you put in front of them.”

The couple also had to get used to being the parents of young children again. They put extra care into providing a sense of security for the children, who tested the parameters of what it means to have parents.

“We’re definitely mami and papi all the way around,” Gloria declared. “We’re going to be mami and papi for the good and the bad, for the difficult and the fun.”

The last two years have not been without hurdles, but the parents have proven that the children would always have someone who was going to take care of them. And they did more than that. They gave these children a better life.

“The kids have changed a thousand percent,” Rick revealed. “It’s amazing.”

And while this miracle has changed their retirement plans, the couple know that this is their mission. This is the plan God graced them with. They say the blessings are endless.

“I know that it’s costly,” Rick attested. “But the blessing from the kids is so much. Even the hard days, it’s nothing compared to the blessing and the love that you get from these kids.”



From left, Lucy, Nicol and Alex have lived in Miami for two years and are currently attending Westwood Christian School.

LET US SELL YOUR HOME

Top Real Estate team in South Florida dedicated to serving law enforcement.



LUIS FONSECA

REAL ESTATE PROFESSIONAL
20+ YEARS EXPERIENCE
305.451.5300

RICHARD FONSECA

REAL ESTATE PROFESSIONAL
HONORABLY RETIRED FROM MDPD
305.972.9522



Fonseca Homes

NO EXCUSES. JUST RESULTS.

FOLLOW US:

 @fonsecahomes

 @fonsecahomes

MEET OUR PARTNER:



ROY MURO
Branch Manager
rmuro@primeres.com
305.812.7360

©

814 PONCE DE LEON BOULEVARD, 503, CORAL GABLES, FL 33134. 305.392.1497

Car Squad

Classic car owners show the love at an unprecedented PBA fundraiser

■ BY KYLE FURMAN

To raise money for The Love Fund, an initiative designed to help the families of officers killed in the line of duty, the South Florida PBA hosted its first-ever “Custom, Classic, Street Rod, Muscle Car Show” on Sept. 25.

Participants brought classics more than 50 years old, a vast array of Corvettes, even an old police car that filled the parking lot outside PBA headquarters and then some. More than 50 cars were on display, including a '69 Camaro Restomod and a 1951 International pickup truck.

The way the South Florida community came together for the event was an uplifting surprise to PBA board member Tony Rodriguez, who helped organize the exhibition.

“At first we didn’t think that many cars were going to show up. We held the event in the parking lot at the PBA Hall and thought that would be good enough,” Rodriguez said. “But soon we ran out of parking spaces, and we ran out of them quickly.

The whole event was crazy. We’re really proud of how successful it was.”

Within hours, additional spectators heard about the event and flocked to the showing, trying to get a glimpse of the exhibition’s main attractions: the “rat rods.”

“They look like a Frankenstein type of car,” explained Rodriguez. “They’re cars made up from different cars’ parts, and the end result is really something cool and unique to see, a beautiful work of art.”

Rodriguez has confidence that this year’s fundraising success will be the catalyst for future South Florida PBA car show events.

“I hope this can be the start of a tradition. Other than the charitable kindness behind the event, it gives the purpose of keeping the old cars still alive,” Rodriguez said. “This event has inspired us. We’re already planning our next fundraising event, maybe for next spring. We would like to see a lot more people, so we’ll probably need to reserve a bigger venue.”



REFLECTIONS

Catching up with a renowned South Florida PBA Member

A PBA Sage

Frank Triglia's decades of service made a profound impact on the department and the union

■ BY ROSEMARY AN

Frank Triglia was a Miami-Dade Police Department powerhouse. He has 45 years in law enforcement, including 34 years with Miami-Dade County, which he joined in 1983. He was heavily involved with the PBA, serving on the board of directors, starting collective bargaining teams, serving as editor of the union paper and even working as the staff photographer.

"I wasn't just a member," Triglia noted. "I was involved in more committees than you can imagine."

So where is he now?

Following his retirement in October 2016, Triglia, 69, has spent the last five years in a perpetual state of relaxation.

"I have six Saturdays and one Sunday," Triglia quipped. "In fact, sometimes I even lose the day of the week."

Every morning, Triglia's routine consists of checking the news and social media. Several days a week, he goes out to lunch with his wife, Leonor, and heads to the park. Or he drives his white Fiat 124 Spider Abarth with a black top, a convertible he bought on the spur of the moment as a retirement gift to himself.

But he never forgets the culmination of 45 years in law enforcement that brought him to this moment, starting with how it all began in the 1950s.

"This was something that I've always wanted, since I was 5 years old," Triglia expressed. "I had a tricycle that had little police stuff all over it. Cap, pistol, the whole enchilada."

Triglia remembers being on the job before take-home cars, where it would take 30 minutes to move equipment between cars, which led to more time spent with colleagues. He says the camaraderie was his favorite memory.

"Every week, we would have what they call 'choir practice,'" Triglia recalled. "Which you only see in movies now. We would get together somewhere to unwind. One guy would bring pretzels. One guy would bring [beverages]. I brought ice."

He recalled the early 1980s, before law enforcement officers unified to become a labor union and establish a voice in how they did their jobs. Specifically, he was working on a collective bargaining agreement at the time to improve working conditions for the officers.

"It was really an eye-opener," Triglia revealed. "Back in the day, we had to fight to change the shoes, because the shoes were dangerous. We had to fight to change the bullets that we shot out of our weapons, because the bullets would actually bounce off windshields."

Only a promotion to sergeant changed his long relationship with the PBA, which dated back to September 1973, having served as both a municipal and county representative to the board. He also used to write a monthly feature for the PBA newspaper titled "Officer Metro." Members would submit anonymous complaints, and Officer Metro would respond. He was a popular character with officers who couldn't express their thoughts openly.

"I was a member of the PBA for 45 years, a lifetime," he emphasized. "During those years, I served on numerous boards and committees and would gladly do it again."

Triglia also remembers the other powerhouses who helped him during his early career. Members like Nelson Perry, Charlie Maddox



Miami-Dade PD Lieutenant Michael Triglia, left, with his father, Frank, now a retired sergeant, on Frank's last day in uniform on Oct. 18, 2016.

Frank Triglia's Record

- Served 34 years with Miami-Dade PD
- Retired as a sergeant in October 2016
- 45-year member of the PBA, starting in 1973
- PBA municipal and county representative
- PBA board member

and Bob Rossman and retired officer Harry Wright, who were influential in the PBA. And he thanks officers Steve Bertucelli, Eduardo Gonzalez, Irv Heller and Sam Williams for being the best supervisors he could imagine.

And then there's Administrative Officer III James "Jim" Bryant, who was like a father to Triglia. Bryant wanted to keep the department's tradition of legacy badges and wrote a letter to the chain of command in 2002 to pass his badge number 5 on to Triglia, who was originally badge number 3808.

"I was totally shocked," Triglia recalled. "He was very, very instrumental in my career. We spent many hours sitting together just talking."

Triglia's last day in uniform was Oct. 18, 2016. He dressed and walked out the door to find another police car in the driveway. It was his son, Michael, a lieutenant who joined the department in 2003.

"I go, 'What are you doing here?'" Triglia described. "He goes, 'Dad, it's your last day in uniform, so I wanted to take a picture together.'"

Triglia may have retired, but he never really left the job. Michael calls him every day and forwards him emails that he might be interested in. And his son is not the only one who gets Triglia involved.

"People are always calling me," Triglia relayed. "Asking about this and that. Because my knowledge goes further back than any of theirs."

To Your Healthcare

Stephanie Butka brings a long career and the experience of being in a police family to help PBA members maximize healthcare benefits

■ BY MITCHELL KRUGEL

The influences and experience of being a cop's wife – and mother – confirmed the mission Stephanie Butka knew she had to fulfill. So she moved on from a lucrative job consulting for healthcare systems at the highest level to help, well, cops.

Butka has been married to Miami-Dade Sergeant Ranfys Butka for 29 years. He has been on for 26 of those. Her son Jaiden has been on with Miami-Dade for four and a half years. She knows the intense, committed and rewarding side of this life up close and personal.

Butka has a unique motivation and dedication to bring her expertise to procure the most beneficial and timely healthcare coverage to PBA members approaching the age when they are eligible for the all-important Medicare. As a medical benefits consultant for AvMed, one of Florida's oldest and largest not-for-profit health plans, she recently conducted a presentation at the South Florida PBA where active and retired members learned everything from A to Z about Medicare.

"There is a big gap in knowledge and information that led people down the wrong path because there was no guidance," Butka acknowledged. "So I was like, 'Guys, you're not getting what you deserve. You're not getting everything that's out there.'"

Guys, here is somebody who understands the urgency of your



Stephanie Butka with her son, Miami-Dade Officer Jaiden Butka, left, and husband, Miami-Dade Sergeant Ranfys Butka.

life. In 2016, Ranfys was working as a motors sergeant when he got hit by a car. It was bad. "When I went to the hospital, it was with the expectation of him not having made it," she revealed.

Ranfys endured more than nine months of rehab. It emphasized the scary side of law enforcement, but as a longtime clinician working in hospitals, Butka has lived that delicate balance of seeing the suffering and even death that cops know.

That experience and understanding have fortified the empathy that has helped Butka be the empowering confidant and partner every officer needs. It also helped her face the emotion of Jaiden coming to her at 19 years old with the decision he wanted to join his father on the job.



Turning 65?

Take control of your health & healthcare costs with an AvMed Medicare Advantage plan.

- \$0 monthly plan premium*
- Variety of plans including AvMed Medicare Access HMO-POS plan with no referrals required for specialists!
- Prescription drug coverage, including a new tool to help find the lowest price for your prescription drugs.



Stephanie Butka, Benefits Consultant
1-888-835-6137 | Stephanie.Butka@AvMed.org



*You must continue to pay your Part B premium. Premiums and benefits may vary by county. AvMed Medicare is an HMO plan with a Medicare contract. Enrollment in AvMed Medicare depends on contract renewal with CMS. The provider network may change at any time. You will receive notice when necessary. AvMed complies with applicable Federal civil rights laws and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, or sex. ATENCIÓN: si habla español, tiene a su disposición servicios gratuitos de asistencia lingüística. Llame al 1-877-791-9355 (TTY 711). ATANSYON: Si w pale Kreyòl Ayisyen, gen sèvis èd pou lang ki disponib gratis pou ou. Rele 1-877-791-9355 (TTY 711) H1016_AD1116_082021_M

“My husband is in a wheelchair and I’m having PTSD, so I told [Jaiden], ‘You give me a reason and a plan, and I will support you,’” Butka recalled. “He said, ‘I saw the brotherhood that existed when this happened to Dad. I don’t think I could see this any other place or be part of this in a regular job.’ How am I going to argue with that?”

Butka began working in healthcare more than 25 years ago. She has a background in cardiovascular disease and did direct patient care for Baptist Health System. After 18 years in that realm, she stepped out of the clinical setting to put her BA in healthcare administration and MBA to work.

She began consulting in a territory that cut across the southern U.S. But after spending so much time working with hospital CEOs on the business side, Butka realized she wanted to be working more with the population that should drive the healthcare decisions rather than the decision-makers

“So I resigned and said, ‘OK, I’m going to go make a difference,’” she confirmed. “That day I quit was the first time in a year and a half that I had a full night’s sleep.”

Representing AvMed offered the opportunity to work for a local company that has been in business for 52 years and connect with members of the community again. It facilitated opportunities that Butka has pursued as a member of the Consortium for a Healthier Miami-Dade as part of an ongoing mission to serve.

“A lot of it has to do with just being in the business of helping people, taking care of the sick and looking for opportunities to improve their lives,” noted Butka, who added that AvMed has done renowned work as the healthcare provider for Miami-Dade Police Department and Miami-Dade County employees.

The opportunity now to advise PBA members about how Medicare can be a contribution to the life planning they must devote more attention to as every day passes. Butka’s presentation could be part of a life planning workshop, considering the two sessions she



‘A lot of it has to do with just being in the business of helping people and looking for opportunities to improve their lives.’

Stephanie Butka

conducted at the PBA attracted retired members as well as those who were still active and attending to get information for themselves or perhaps their parents, siblings or other family members.

Butka breaks down Medicare coverage to the greatest detail, explaining what it covers and doesn’t cover. She explains eligibility, enrollment, resources, how-to’s and that Medicare is not a one-size-fits-all program.

Whether it’s in a seminar or sitting across the kitchen table, members will learn from Butka that Medicare is personalized. And without education, it’s impossible to take advantage of this benefit and make it work best for you.

This is a benefit that members are due. They deserve it, and Butka’s proactive approach to advising members will help avoid that last-minute feeling of “Was I supposed to enroll.?” It’s not a benefit you automatically get at age 65. You have to know how to take advantage of it.

“What we don’t want is for them to wait, and they have to go for a month or two without healthcare coverage,” Butka emphasized. “We’re going to go ahead and make sure you get every benefit and every resource that is due to you.”



12 Months. Online. Innovative. Flexible.
Discount rates for Military and Law Enforcement Personnel

MASTER OF LAW IN CYBERSECURITY LAW & POLICY

- 100% online – providing convenience and flexibility.
- Start in Fall or Spring.
- Enhance your career: law firms, government, private sector, or military.

The course curriculum includes the following courses:

- Introduction to Cybersecurity
- Cyber Ethics
- Cyber Privacy Law
- Cybercrime Law
- Cybersecurity Corporate Practices
- Cybersecurity Law & Policy
- International Cybersecurity Law
- Risk Management, Business Continuity, and Crisis Management

WWW.STU.EDU/LAW/CYBERSECURITY-LAW | ADMITME@STU.EDU | (305) 623-2310



In a Heartbeat,
We could save your life™

WOULD YOU LIKE TO DECREASE YOUR CHANCES OF A HEART ATTACK OR STROKE?

We provide state-of-the art on-site cardiovascular testing, detection, prevention and solutions.



OUR MISSION

We focus on the prevention of significant debilitating events, ultimately saving lives.

We have designed a strategically targeted methodology to identify individuals that are most at risk for a cardiac event.

ON-SITE CARDIAC TESTING

On-site cardiac testing means not having to wait in an office. We conveniently bring our cutting edge technology and team to your workplace or health event.

We diagnose, screen and prevent serious cardiac events. Our mission is to keep individuals healthy and live a longer life.

REDUCING HEALTHCARE COSTS

Establishing a wellness program in your workplace not only keeps your employees healthier, it also means substantial savings for your company.

SIMPLE TESTS THAT COULD SAVE YOUR LIFE

- ♥ Echocardiogram
- ♥ Stress Echocardiogram
- ♥ Carotid Doppler
- ♥ Abdominal Aortic Ultrasound
- ♥ Femoral Doppler
- ♥ Transcranial Doppler
- ♥ Pulmonary Function Tests



Advanced Cardiovascular Diagnostics In a heartbeat, we could save your life.

☎ (516) 488-5050

✉ info@cardiovasculartesting.com

🌐 Cardiovasculartesting.com



Members Only Section

Celebrating South Florida PBA members and the way they serve every day

Sweetwater PD officers recognized for saving a choking 1-year-old

Sweetwater PD Sergeant Domingo Benito was at the station on Aug. 24 when a call came in about a 1-year-old who was choking.

Benito, who has been on the job for 14 years, was less than a minute away from the residence, but he never made it inside. The family, who were in hysterics because the boy was turning blue and couldn't breathe, had already bolted outside to meet him.

"They ran up to my car," Benito recalled. "The infant wasn't responding. I couldn't do the Heimlich [maneuver] because he's too small."

The 1-year-old had choked on a mamoncillo seed, found in Spanish limes, and his mother couldn't get it out. The first thing on Benito's mind was how he'd feel if this was his own child at home.

"I have three boys," Benito noted. "So that crosses your mind. It's like holding your own child. It's a crazy situation."

Benito turned the infant over into the palm of his hand and started to pat him on the back, hoping the baby would spit out the seed. Just 30 seconds later, Officer Samuel Dorcely arrived on scene.

"I must have been patting him on the back for 45 seconds to a minute," Benito relayed. "That wasn't working. That's when Officer Dorcely had no option but to stick his finger in his throat."

Working together, Benito continued to pat the 1-year-old's back while Dorcely used his finger to dislodge the seed from his throat.

"It's OK, buddy," Benito was heard saying to the baby in the bodycam footage. "It's OK. Open, papi, open."

After another minute, the seed came out. The family, who had been crying, finally started to calm down once they saw the baby was breathing again. The officers stayed to help them regain composure after the potentially fatal incident.

When the rescue squad arrived, the



baby was cleared, so no further treatment was required. The officers had saved the 1-year-old in under three minutes. Benito believes that the timing was impeccable.

"I was at the station, when usually nobody's there at that time," Benito expressed. "We're usually somewhere on the road, taking calls. The timing was extremely important."

Benito also noted that although the incident went by in a blur, he was able to successfully respond to the call because his instincts kicked in. And those instincts wouldn't be in place if it weren't for the rigorous training from Sweetwater PD.

"We have a lot of CPR training," Benito

explained. "Every three to five months. Thank God we have that."

On Aug. 30, Benito and Dorcely were honored with a Life Saving Award by Sweetwater Mayor Orlando Lopez and Chief of Police Placido Diaz. The boy and his grandmother, Olga Rodriguez, attended the ceremony and smiled for photos with the officers.

Rodriguez also took a moment to thank the officers for their unwavering dedication, which ensured the boy's life was saved.

"Thanks to their quick actions and abilities, the baby is with us today," Rodriguez told reporters. "Our family is very grateful to the two officers."

MDPD complaint officer answers the call

Heroic actions earn Vanessa Balaguer Dispatcher of the Year award

At 1:27 a.m. on May 30, 2002, Miami-Dade Police Complaint Officer Vanessa Balaguer received a 911 emergency call and heard a woman screaming.

“Why did you bring me here? Take me home! Why are you taking me away from the house?”

Balaguer responded quickly with actions that helped save the woman's life. Her quick thinking and even quicker response were recognized by the Major County Sheriffs Association, which honored Balaguer as its Dispatcher of the Year.

The Dispatcher of the Year award is given to a select few who have become the voice of strength for callers during their darkest hours. Balaguer, who has been on the job for 19 years, was described as the perfect recipient of the award for exemplifying the Miami-Dade Police Department's core values of respect, integrity and service.

Officer Balaguer, recalling the events that transpired that day, said she became suspicious when the caller did not immediately answer Balaguer's greeting. Nor was the caller able to identify herself.

At this moment, Officer Balaguer started to pinpoint the location of the caller using her RapidSOS application and created a priority call for police service. Based on the GPS tracking data, she was able to determine that the dispute was occurring inside a moving vehicle.

Balaguer stayed on the line to monitor the conversation and made numerous attempts to speak to the caller to obtain additional information. As the situation escalated, Balaguer began to hear the female scream.

Balaguer realized that the caller was trying to communicate with her without the driver's knowledge. Believing that the driver was returning the caller to her home, Balaguer requested a cellular telephone trace for the caller's address.

At one point during the argument, the caller begged the driver to slow down as he continued southbound on the Florida Turnpike, to which the driver angrily responded by stopping his vehicle and yelling at the caller to “Get out!”

Balaguer continued to provide GPS tracking information to the police dispatcher through the Computer Aided Dispatch system. Because there was no available vehicle description to provide to the law enforcement officers in the field, Balaguer utilized her personal knowledge of the area to provide the dispatcher with landmarks whenever possible.

The situation concluded peacefully at approximately 1:38 a.m., when a Florida City law enforcement officer spotted the male driver and the caller in a white pickup truck and proceeded to stop the vehicle, resulting in the caller being removed from danger.

Aventura PD makes wishes come true

Aventura law enforcement officers joined City Commissioner Linda Marks in surprising Alyssa Villa, a 13-year-old cancer survivor, with an all-expenses-paid shopping spree and VIP makeup session at the Aventura Mall on Aug. 15.

The gesture was made as a coordinated effort with the Make-A-Wish Foundation to celebrate Villa's one year of cancer remission.

Marks presented the gifts and gave a speech on behalf of Aventura Mayor Enid Weisman.

“This brave and fearless young woman has overcome so much,” Marks said. “On this special occasion, with her many more years of celebration, it is an honor as I, Enid Weisman, mayor of Aventura, Florida, and on behalf of the Aventura City Commission, do hereby proclaim Aug. 15, 2021, as Alyssa Villa Day.”



Aventura Officer Teresa Williams said Villa's family was particularly moved by the gesture.

“The family was so elated. Today was just about celebrating Villa's bravery,” she described. “I myself was really happy for her. She's a little girl. No one that young should ever have to go through what she went through. Those younger years should be your innocent years. I think that's why everyone was so emotional. You just hope she never has to experience this again.”



Junior police officer completes chemotherapy

North Miami law enforcement officers honored Jeremiah as a junior police officer as a celebration for completing his last chemotherapy treatment on July 24. Jeremiah rang the hospital bell in commemoration of the moment and made a television appearance on WSVN-TV news.



Opa-Locka PD rallies with community

Opa-Locka law enforcement officers participated in the Youth Awareness March on July 17 at Sherbondy Park. The event rallied attention to gun violence within the city and country.

The march featured a peace walk, live music and entertainment, food, bounce houses and numerous other activities the whole community was able to partake in.

Opa-Locka Commissioner Chris Davis, who organized and hosted the march along with local restaurant Crabman 305, was particularly pleased with the event's turnout.

"The Youth Awareness March and rally was a day full of interaction and fun among community members and their public safety officers," stated Davis. "On top of the amazing attendance and the goal of stopping gun violence, we wanted to encourage community fellowship with law enforcement. With greater interaction, we can help curb crime."





Miami Gardens officers show appreciation for seniors

Miami Gardens law enforcement officers attended their local senior appreciation luncheon on July 2. The event was attended by Miami Gardens Vice Mayor Reggie Leon. Officers joined the volunteers in the afternoon activities by providing food and capping off the event with a dance competition.



Hialeah Gardens PD holds active assailant training at elementary school

Hialeah Gardens PD officers headed to Mater Academy Elementary for an active assailant training course to create a safer learning environment in case of emergency.

On Aug. 18, officers gave a training on active shooter response, barricaded subjects, room clearing, Mutualink functions, the Rave Panic Button response, tourniquet application and first aid. On Day 2 of the training, officers focused on swift response, threat elimination, recovery and rendering aid.



Key West PD officers honored at awards ceremony

Multiple Key West PD officers were recipients at an awards ceremony at the Grand Key Resort. Chief Sean Brandenburg recognized officers for their unwavering dedication as well as their actions in saving lives and being exemplary service members.

Officers Michael Shouldice and Nick Revoredo received awards for serving the department for 15 years, while Officers Raymond Roscoe and Andrew Hudson received the Life Saving Award. Detective Marcus del Valle was given the Officer of the First Half Award and Denise Richardson was named the Civilian Employee of the First Half.



MDCR's heroes are never forgotten

The Miami-Dade Corrections and Rehabilitation Department unveiled a Fallen Heroes vehicle on July 26 that includes the names and photos of officers in the department who have lost their lives. It was a testament to the sacrifices of the officers during the pandemic, including three who passed due to COVID.





Sweetwater PD lieutenant earns FBI-LEEDA Trilogy Award

Sweetwater PD Lieutenant Humberto Herrera received the FBI Law Enforcement Executive Development Association (FBI-LEEDA) Trilogy Award on Aug. 5. Herrera, who has served the department as a lieutenant for nearly 16 years, also received a uniform ribbon and Trilogy pin with the award.

The award is for any individual who has successfully completed FBI-LEEDA's Supervisor Leadership Institute, Command Leadership Institute and Executive Leadership Institute.

MCSO teams up with Habitat for Humanity

Monroe County Sheriff's Officers partnered with the Habitat for Humanity initiative on Aug. 23 to clean up a Stock Island housing unit. The volunteers and law enforcement officers built a new fence around the housing unit and disposed of garbage that was on the Miriam Street property.



Miami Gardens officers drink a cup with the community

Miami Gardens law enforcement officers hosted their Coffee With a Cop event on Aug. 26 at a local Starbucks. Officers passed out beverages and bags filled with gifts to bond with neighborhood residents and promote relationships with the community.



CERTIFIED FINANCIAL PLANNER™ PROFESSIONALS

SPECIALIZING IN THE RETIREMENT NEEDS OF WORKING PEOPLE

Because we know how important it is for you to feel secure in your financial future.



House Calls

We meet clients where you feel most comfortable: at your home, at our office, over the phone or video call.



No Account Minimum

The emphasis is not on how much money you have, but rather on making the best use of it, whatever the amount.



Experience

Our team of professionals have over 60 years of combined experience. We are ready to serve as your trusted advisors.



2398 S Dixie Hwy, Miami, FL 33133 www.tonkinsonfinancial.com
305-858-1628

Securities and advisory services offered through Commonwealth Financial Network®, Member FINRA/SIPC, a Registered Investment Adviser. Fixed insurance products and services offered through CES Insurance Agency.

Florida officers support first responders after Surfside building collapse

When the Champlain Towers South residential building in Surfside collapsed on June 24, law enforcement officers from all over Florida bolted to the scene to rescue victims and search for those who were lost in the rubble.

Since then, officers have spent all summer conducting search

and recovery efforts for victims and distributing supplies to rescue teams on the front line. On July 7, rescue teams held a moment of silence and prayer near the collapse in a tribute to the 98 lives lost.

Here is a look at officers assisting at the tragic collapse:

Miami-Dade



Miami-Dade PD officers visited the Surfside building on July 8 to speak with first responders and the families affected by the collapse before transitioning to a search and recovery mission. They also attended a memorial to attach flowers and cards to a fence filled with mementos and notes for the victims who lost their lives.



MDCR

Miami-Dade Corrections and Rehabilitation Department officers delivered a refrigerator truck with pallets full of snacks and beverages, including water and soda, to first responders working at the Surfside building collapse scene in July.

Bal Harbour



Bal Harbour PD Officer Jeffery Hatcher coordinated hot meals for more than 75 officers in July with the help of local families and volunteers who stopped by to provide cold beverages, food and ice. The meals were courtesy of Makoto, Carpaccio, Mission Barbeque, Sushi Republic and the Finker-Frenkel Family Foundation.

A National Night Out to remember

South Florida law enforcement agencies, the Monroe County Sheriff's Office, North Miami PD and Miami-Dade PD held their National Night Out events in August. The

events allowed community members to connect and bond with neighborhood officers in a relaxing and entertaining environment.

North Miami

North Miami PD had a special theme for this year's National Night Out event. Parents and children were encouraged to attend the event dressed up as their favorite DC or Marvel superhero. The North Miami agency also held surprise gift card, superhero apparel and school-supply giveaways at the event.



Members help kids go back to school

Many South Florida law enforcement agencies recently hosted back-to-school events to provide school supplies to students. Agencies that participated included Sunny Isles, Bal Har-

bour and Homestead. Children attending these events received clothing, backpacks, notebooks, pens and pencils, folders and many other items.

Bal Harbour



The Bal Harbour Police Legacy Foundation provided school uniforms to hundreds of Miami-Dade County School students on Aug. 18. Bal Harbour government employees and volunteers also contributed their time to help make the event possible.

Homestead



The Homestead PD Community Policing Unit partnered with The Strong Survivor Inc. and Homestead's Walmart for a backpack giveaway on Aug. 17. More than 200 backpacks filled with school supplies provided by Walmart were donated.

Sunny Isles



Sunny Isles PD hosted its Back-to-School Bash on Aug. 20, where law enforcement officers passed out school safety information and set up outdoor activities for the attending children. Sunny Isles PD law enforcement officers also watched over the students on their first day back to school. Officers ensured that traffic and pedestrian safety rules were followed in order to make sure everyone had a safe and successful start to the new school year.



Monroe County Sheriff's Office

The Monroe County Sheriff's Office National Night Out event saw officers pass out gun safety information and allowed those in attendance to observe law enforcement vehicles, such as the department's helicopters and boats.



Miami-Dade PD

Miami-Dade County Mayor Daniella Cava made a guest appearance at the Miami-Dade PD's National Night Out event. Cava and the Miami-Dade law enforcement officers were seen posing for pictures and conversing with the community's citizens throughout the event.



SALUTING YOUR SERVICE

*by helping you create
your dream home.*

With a **VA Renovation Home Loan**, you can achieve your homeownership goals and make repairs or improvements to the property.

**You've served our country.
Now it's time to serve you.**

Let's connect today!

*Concessions may exceed 4% depending on property type.
**Capped at 25% of the value after renovations and will include your contingency reserve, permit fees, inspection fees, title updates and supplemental origination fee.

INCREDIBLE BENEFITS:

- ▶ No down payment required
- ▶ No mortgage insurance required
- ▶ Seller can contribute up to 4% of the sale price toward closing costs*
- ▶ Includes up to an additional \$35,000* in funds for renovations

RENOVATION OPTIONS:

- ▶ Remodel a bathroom or kitchen
- ▶ Replace flooring or siding
- ▶ Refresh interior or exterior paint
- ▶ Plus many more options!

CONTACT US FOR THE FULL LIST.

CALL **833.724.8700** OR EMAIL
FIRSTRESPONDER@MYCCMORTGAGE.COM

www.crosscountrymortgage.com
41 Pinelawn Road, Suite GL-2
Melville, NY 11747



Equal Housing Opportunity. All loans subject to underwriting approval. Certain restrictions apply. Call for details. CrossCountry Mortgage, LLC NMLS3029 (www.nmlsconsumeraccess.org). Licensed by the New Jersey Department of Banking and Insurance. Licensed Mortgage Banker - New York State Banking Department. This office is licensed and examined by the Office of the Consumer Credit Commissioner of the State of Texas. Branch NMLS: 1681501 TEO0129 Certificate of Eligibility required for VA loans.



THE
Florida House
EXPERIENCE

Same Great Program, New Look



FHEHealth



*Substance Abuse, Addiction,
Gambling, Mental Health
and PTSD Care*



Sometimes the Helpers Need Help

**Have Drugs, Alcohol or Gambling
Become Your Solution?**

Since 2001, FHE Health has provided the highest quality of care to our First Responders. From medical detox through clinical outpatient support, we provide the opportunity for a better life.

888.353.6152

CALL 24/7

100% CONFIDENTIAL

FHEHealth.com





WILL YOUR INCOME LAST?

Many baby boomers can reasonably expect to live to 80 or 85, perhaps longer. Can you sustain your income and lifestyle for the next 20 or 30 years? For help in determining if you can, contact me today for a no-cost, no-obligation appointment.



Richard D. Gerundo
ChFC, CLU, CRPC, LUTCF
Lead Financial Advisor
California Ins. Lic # 4047058
786.845.3183 • Rich.Gerundo@dofcu.org
The MEMBERS Financial Services Program
Located at:
DADE COUNTY FEDERAL CU
1500 NW 107 Ave, Miami, FL 33172

**We can help
with your DROP or
457 Plan Rollovers**

The science of feeling better

Follow Ziven Healthcare Medical Director Dr. Fan Xi on the path to good health

■ BY MITCHELL KRUGEL

Nobody knows the fallout of Low-T like Dr. Fan Xi. Like the growing number of law enforcement officers the south Jersey-based specialist treats and helps feel better, Fan, too, had that day of reckoning.

He would wake up at 5 a.m., hit the gym for an hour, work 10 hours a day and repeat for six, sometimes seven days week. But after 15 years of such a routine, Dr. Fan's body showed the wear and tear. He was getting injured from the workouts. He was battling pounding headaches. His nurse took his blood pressure, and it was through the roof.

"And then a female friend came to visit, and I didn't feel anything," Fan confided. "This was a really pretty girl. I was like, 'Wow, something is wrong.' So I talked to one of my friends who was also a doctor in Florida, and he said, 'Fan, you need to get your blood work done.'"

The test showed the level of one of his stress hormones – cortisol – was also through the roof. His vitamin D level measured like somebody who had not been out in sunlight in years.

"And my testosterone was the level of a 70-year-old," added Fan, who was in his 30s at the time.

Fan went to a clinic in Miami, where he was prescribed testosterone. His blood pressure normalized. The headaches went away. Injuries decreased. Musculature increased. His sex drive and libido returned.

"I was like, 'This is insane,'" recalled Fan, who has served as a medical director in clinics located in Wilmington, North Carolina, Lancaster, Pennsylvania and Lafayette, Indiana. "I was never taught any of this in medical school."

Nobody knows the science of Low-T like Dr. Fan Xi, a nationally renowned physiatrist and practitioner of physi-



"Combine adequate testosterone with a healthy diet and healthy exercise because you need that perfect triangle or pyramid. When you're able to do that, you're able to sustain a lot of different health benefits."

Dr. Fan Xi

cal medicine who is becoming equally renowned in the subspecialty of integrative medicine. Integrative medicine is practicing in a way that selectively incorporates elements of complementary and alternative medicine into comprehensive treatment plans alongside solidly orthodox methods of diagnosis and treatment. Integrative medicine can help people with cancer, persistent pain, chronic fatigue, fibromyalgia and many other conditions better manage their symptoms and improve their quality of life by reducing fatigue, pain and anxiety.

Studying through the American Academy of Anti-Aging Medicine, Dr. Fan has developed considerable expertise about how to use testosterone therapy to help people reeling from excess wear and tear on their bodies – like law enforcement officers – feel better. He notes how an average testosterone level as measured through blood testing is approximately 1,100, and that problems set in when the number dips below 1,000.

To illustrate this effect, Fan references images drawn from his love of pro football.

"Have you ever watched the NFL Combine?" he asks. "These kids com-

ing out of school are chiseled like a Greek statue. But then even three or four years later, you watch them post-game in the locker room and they should be pumped because they just played a game. But they are not nearly as chiseled as they used to be. And that's simply because testosterone peaks when you are 20 or 21. From that point on, unfortunately for us guys, it's an inexorable downhill ride."

To stem the ride that can be accelerated by a demanding career in law enforcement, officers might want to enlist help from Dr. Fan through the telemedicine portal the company, Ziven Health, offers. This organization, for whom Dr. Fan serves as the medical director, uses a wide range of technology to make information and consultation available to patients. Ziven has cultivated a vast and growing library of videos to educate about the benefit of testosterone therapy to alleviate the pains and wanes of everyday life on the job.

"If you want to do something, testosterone is the easiest way to get started because it will give you fairly immediate benefits," Dr. Fan em-

CONTINUED ON PAGE 44

phasizes. “Within one or two months, you’re going to see improvement in your musculature. And you’re not going to get to a level on par with some of those baseball players in the ‘90s, where the level was just insane – 5,000, 6,000.”

Dr. Fan emphasizes two very important points about using testosterone. First, it is not an anabolic steroid like the ones used in baseball in the ‘90s. And any medical doctor is legally allowed to prescribe only so much of it. So if you are looking for a source to pump you up, this is not the doctor or the company.

But if you want to achieve improved health, follow the pathway of integrative medicine and start with getting your bloodwork. Fan advises that this will check your vitamin D and blood sugar and determine if testosterone levels are at the point where some treatment can protect you from heart disease, Alzheimer’s and osteoporosis, among many other health challenges.

It can also help reduce deep visceral fat – not the kind that is around your waist but the kind that surrounds the organs.

“Combine adequate testosterone with a healthy diet and healthy exercise because you need that perfect triangle or pyramid,” Fan challenges. “When you’re able to do that, you’re able to sustain a lot of different health benefits.”

During the past few months, Fan has had the opportunity to apply the science of Low-T to the law enforcement profession. The way police have become the public scapegoat and are dealing with defunding has made every single call a stressful situation.

And as officers feel more stress, it causes an increase in cortisol and less testosterone.

“And now you’re less confident and that lowers your alertness level, which, of course, is something you cannot afford when every encounter can potentially be a life-and-death situation,” Dr. Fan reasons. “You will also start to gain weight, start to feel more depressed

and anxious. All of these things can have a huge impact over a five-to-10-year period, which is not what we want to see as a physician, as a citizen and somebody who actually cares about law enforcement officers.”

As you can surmise, Fan is a proponent of integrative medicine and treating Low-T. He would prefer members give Ziven a try. With its telemedicine component, patients can get a discount because the company is not passing on the cost of expensive overhead.

But he also advises that this path entails a commitment if it’s going to lead to better health and feeling better.

“People tend to equate anti-aging as treatment with a magical pill,” Dr. Fan acknowledges. “It’s a whole bunch of different things. It’s making sure that you improve your lifestyle. That could include exercising correctly, nutrition aspects and taking supplements. It’s tailored to your blood results because each of us are genetically different. And it’s a way to feel better.”



TESTOSTERONE WITHOUT THE HASSLE

Save time and money

No office visit—it’s all online

Confidential and secure

Made in the USA

Enter **FLHERO2021** for **25% discount**
Visit zivenhealth.com

You know what it does...

GET IT BACK

GET IT NOW

zivenhealth.com



THE ORIGINAL NO LENDER FEE LOAN

SOUTH FLORIDA POLICE BENEVOLENT ASSOCIATION



PREFERRED HOME LOAN PROGRAM

- ▶ No Application fee
- ▶ No Processing Fee
- ▶ No Commitment fee
- ▶ No Document Prep Fees
- ▶ No Underwriting Fee
- ▶ Additional lender credit available

- ▶ National direct lender licensed in all 50 states
- ▶ Purchase/Refinance/Cash Out/Home Improvement
- ▶ Second Home/Vacation Home/Investment Property
- ▶ FHA/VA/USDA/Conventional/Jumbo Financing

SERVING ACTIVE, RETIRED AND FAMILY MEMBERS

EXCLUSIVE SAVINGS OFFERED BY CONTACTING THE DEPARTMENT BELOW

833.724.8700
union@myccmortgage.com



CROSSCOUNTRY
MORTGAGE, LLC™

41 Pinelawn Road, Suite GL-2 | Melville, NY 11747 | NMLS3029 NMLS1681501

All loans subject to underwriting approval. Certain restrictions apply. Call for details. CrossCountry Mortgage, LLC, NMLS3029 (www.nmlsconsumeraccess.org) CrossCountry Mortgage, LLC is an FHA Approved Lending Institution and is not acting on behalf of or at the direction of HUD/FHA or the Federal government. Subject property and borrower income and credit must qualify to USDA guidelines. Certificate of Eligibility required for VA loans. Licensed Mortgage Banker – New York State Banking Department. Terms and conditions: This is not a commitment to lend. All loans subject to program guidelines and underwriting approval. Loan program terms and conditions are subject to change without notice. Available for first lien mortgage purchase money loans or refinance loans only, subject to certain minimum loan amounts. Discounts will be applied at closing as a lender credit up to a maximum of \$2,198, limitations may apply. Borrower cannot receive cash at closing. Only one offer per loan transaction will be accepted. No cash value. Available only on loans originated by CrossCountry Mortgage, LLC. Borrower must mention the program at the time of application. CrossCountry Mortgage, LLC has the right to accept, decline, or limit the use of any discount or offer. Copyright© 2020 CrossCountry Mortgage, LLC.



Thank-You Notes TO THE PBA



**MIAMI-DADE COUNTY
ASSOCIATION OF CHIEFS OF POLICE**

September 15, 2021

President Steadman Stahl
South Florida Police Benevolent Association
10680 NW 25 Street
Doral, FL 33172

CHIEF RENE G. LANDA
PRESIDENT
CHIEF DELMA K. NOEL PRATT
VICE PRESIDENT
DEPUTY CHIEF SAMUEL BEJAR
SECRETARY
RET. CHIEF IRVING HELLER
MEMBER OF HONOR
MAYOR DAVID DE LA ESPINOSA
PAST PRESIDENT
LT. JAMES SOMOHANO
HONORARY CHAIRMAN

Dear Steadman:

I am writing to thank you on behalf of the Miami-Dade County Association of Chiefs of Police (MDCACP) and most importantly the men and women of law enforcement who will benefit from our collaboration. A major platform of my presidency at the MDCACP was to create and implement an Officer Wellness program focusing on the taboo subject of mental health through concentrating on two strategic areas to minimize the adverse impact of professional and personal stress and trauma in our profession.

Since the onset of this project you have shared the same passion I have, that the health and wellbeing of our officers is always first and foremost in our mind. I know that in the months to come we can put together a program that will benefit all of our officers no matter what department they are from.

The MDCACP has collaborated with the Boulder Crest Foundation to implement our program through Regional Training and Education and additionally to create a Regional Peer Support Unit. The use of your facility is a huge assist in our efforts to improve the wellbeing of our officers.

We really appreciate your support.

Sincerely,


René G. Landa
Chief of Police
South Miami Police Department
President, Miami-Dade County Association of Chiefs of Police

AFFILIATES
U.S. DHS - ATF
U.S. DHS - ICE MARSHALS
U.S. DHS - BORDER PATROL
U.S. DHS - COAST GUARD
U.S. DHS - CUSTOMS OFFICE
U.S. DHS - DEA
U.S. DHS - DDP
U.S. DHS - FBI
U.S. DHS - ICE
U.S. DHS - MARSHALS SERVICE
U.S. DHS - POSTAL INSPECTION
U.S. DHS - SECRET SERVICE
ALABAMA POLICE
ALASKA POLICE
ARIZONA POLICE
ARKANSAS POLICE
CALIFORNIA POLICE
CONNECTICUT POLICE
DELAWARE POLICE
FLORIDA CITY POLICE
FLORIDA STATE POLICE
GEORGIA POLICE
HAWAII POLICE
ILLINOIS POLICE
INDIANA POLICE
IOWA POLICE
KANSAS POLICE
KENTUCKY POLICE
LOUISIANA POLICE
MAINE POLICE
MARYLAND POLICE
MASSACHUSETTS POLICE
MICHIGAN POLICE
MINNESOTA POLICE
MISSISSIPPI POLICE
MISSOURI POLICE
MONTANA POLICE
NEBRASKA POLICE
NEVADA POLICE
NEW HAMPSHIRE POLICE
NEW JERSEY POLICE
NEW YORK POLICE
NEW YORK STATE POLICE
NORTH CAROLINA POLICE
NORTH DAKOTA POLICE
OHIO POLICE
OKLAHOMA POLICE
OREGON POLICE
PENNSYLVANIA POLICE
RHODE ISLAND POLICE
SOUTH CAROLINA POLICE
SOUTH DAKOTA POLICE
Tennessee Police
Texas Police
Utah Police
Vermont Police
Virginia Police
Washington State Police
West Virginia Police
Wisconsin Police
Wyoming Police



CONCERNS OF POLICE SURVIVORS

July 16, 2021

Steadman Stahl, President
South Florida PBA, Inc.
10680 NW 25th St
Doral, FL 33172-2199

Dear Mr. Stahl,

Thank you for your recent donations of \$1,000.00, \$250.00 and \$250.00 (total donation: \$1,500.00). Each donation you make is a commitment to helping families who have lost a loved one in the line of duty and provides many opportunities to help rebuild their shattered lives. As a token of our sincere appreciation, we have added South Florida PBA, Inc. to our *Partners in Law Enforcement* membership. Your organization can be proud to be part of a distinguished group of law enforcement organizations who support C.O.P.S. mission year after year. South Florida PBA, Inc. will be recognized as a *Partner in Law Enforcement* in a C.O.P.S. newsletter and at National Police Week.

Since 1984, C.O.P.S. has been the organization that continues to reach out to survivors in the months and years following the death of their officer. Your continuing support helps insure that C.O.P.S. can continue providing healing, love, and life renewed to America's surviving law enforcement families. Your support will be given special recognition on the Partners in Law Enforcement banner during National Police Week 2021 activities so that attending survivors will know that you support C.O.P.S. programs.

Again, on behalf of over 54,000 surviving family members and co-workers affected by line-of-duty deaths nationwide, we thank you for your support.

Sincerely yours,

Dianne Bernhardt
Executive Director

Thank you so much for your continuous support.
-Dianne

PO Box 3199 - 846 Old South 5 - CAMDENTON, MO 65020
OFFICE: 573-346-4911 - FAX: 573-346-1414 - WWW.CONCERNSOFPOLICESURVIVORS.ORG



With great appreciation and humble hearts, your friends at Miami-Dade Corrections and Rehabilitation Department, would like to say thank you.

STEADMAN,

I JUST WANTED TO SEND YOU A QUICK THANK YOU FOR TAKING THE TIME TO MEET WITH ME. YOU MADE EVERY EFFORT TO MAKE ME FEEL COMFORTABLE AND WELCOMED I TRULY APPRECIATED IT.

RESPECTFULLY,


With gratitude and appreciation

Thank you for the gifts and all of your support. You and the PBA have really gone above and beyond in support of our family. Bringing out the old metro Dade car made the party extra special.

Stadman,

Thank you so much for thinking of me! I really appreciate all of your support!

Love,
Jacob,
Kevin & Helen



NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF POLICE ORGANIZATIONS, INC.
Representing America's Finest

317 South Patrick Street - Alexandria, Virginia - 22314-3501
(703) 549-0775 - (800) 322-NAPO - Fax: (703) 684-0515
www.napo.org - Email: info@napo.org

EXECUTIVE OFFICERS

MICHAEL MCMALE
President
Florida Police Benevolent Association

JOHN A. FLYNN
Vice President
Parsons's Benevolent Association of New York City

TODD HARRISON
Recording Secretary
Combined Law Enforcement Associations of Texas

SCOTT HOVSEPIAN
Treasurer
Massachusetts Coalition of Police

MARK KOVAR
Sergeant-at-Arms
New Jersey State Policeman's Benevolent Association

CRAIG D. LALLY
Executive Secretary
Los Angeles Police Protective League

MARK YOUNG
Vice President
Associate Members
Detroit Police Lieutenants and Sergeants Association

JAMES PALMER
Parliamentarian
Wisconsin Professional Police Association

WILLIAM J. JOHNSON, CAE
Executive Director
and General Counsel

7/13/2021

Mr. Steadman Stahl
President
South Florida Police Benevolent Association
10680 NW 25th Street
Miami, Florida 33172

Dear Steadman:-

On behalf of the National Association of Police Organizations (NAPO), I want to thank you for your support of the 43rd Annual Convention. The support of the South Florida Police Benevolent Association/ Dade County Police Benevolent Association helps make the convention possible.

Look forward to seeing you in Florida!

Sincerely,

William J. Johnson
Executive Director

Thank you very much!

MIAMI-DADE CORRECTIONS AND REHABILITATION DEPARTMENT
CERTIFICATE OF APPRECIATION
PRESENTED TO



Police Benevolent Association

In appreciation for your organization's generous donation,
in support of the 2021 National Correctional Officers and
Employees Week.

June 11, 2021
Date

Director

"We Serve To Make A Difference!"



RETIREMENT AND FINANCIAL ONLINE WORKSHOP FOR SOUTH FLORIDA PBA MEMBERS

Thursdays, 12:00 Noon - 1:00 pm

October 7th or 21st, November 4th or 18th

*“Database Financial has been Proudly Serving
South Florida PBA Members Since 1995”*

DFS Retirement & Financial Strategies are for all Public Employees, from those Starting Their Career to those about to Enter DROP, Retire, or Finishing DROP.

WHAT SURVIVOR BENEFITS ARE AVAILABLE PRIOR TO MY RETIREMENT?

WHAT PART WILL DEFERRED COMPENSATION PLAY IN MY RETIREMENT INCOME?

HOW WILL THE RETIREMENT OPTION I CHOOSE IMPACT MY RETIREMENT INCOME!

HOW CAN I CREATE A SECOND DEFINED BENEFIT PLAN FOR MY FAMILY?

LEGACY PLANNING - THE ROLE OF WILLS, FAMILY TRUSTS, AND LIFE INSURANCE.

Call 1-800-210-0263

to make Your Reservation or
email: cs@mydfsfl.com or just use
Your Phone to make a reservation >>>



DATABASE FINANCIAL SOLUTIONS INC.

HOME OFFICES: 3301 BONITA BEACH RD, SUITE 202, BONITA SPRINGS, FL 34134