

CHIEFLY SPEAKING

Monthly Newsletter for New York State Law Enforcement Leaders

February 2022

Our Hearts Are Broken

PBA Head Appeals for Public Support

While answering a radio call on Friday, January 21, NYPD Officers Jason Rivera and Wilbert Mora (32 Pct.) were shot by an assailant. Officer Rivera, age 22, was killed instantly. Officer Mora, age 27, was shot in the head and transported to Harlem Hospital. On January 23, Mora was transferred to NYU Langone Medical Center. He died on January 25.

On the night of the shooting, NYPD Commissioner Keechant Sewell said at a press conference at New York Harlem Hospital, "...a 22-year old son, husband, officer, and friend was killed because he did what we asked him to do." Sewell said that 3 officers answered the call, listening to a mother who needed help for her son. Rivera and Mora went to speak with the man, while the third officer remained on the street speaking with the mother. "And as the officers were compassionately trying to provide aid to a 47-year-old man, he suddenly, without warning, opened fire on them... Our department is hurting, our city is hurting, it is beyond comprehension," said Sewell who also commented that this was the fourth time in January that she had rushed to a scene where NYPD officers had been shot by illegal guns. The third officer on the scene intercepted the armed assailant, shooting the suspect twice.

At the same press briefing Mayor Eric Adams said, "This was not just an attack on 3 brave officers, this was an attack on the City of New York and it's an attack on the children and families of the city." The Mayor added, "We must save this city together. That is

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FROM THE PRESIDENT CHIEF TIMOTHY PARISI



The Law Enforcement Response to Mental Health Calls

Police Officers routinely respond to calls involving people in a mental health crisis or suffering from a chronic mental illness. While many interactions are non-violent with an uneventful transport to a facility, some interactions do involve violence with the person in crisis posing a threat to others as well as themselves. Though training for officers in this area has come a long way, the significant draw on police resources has not been addressed. We have all seen the media sensationalizing and mischaracterizing police officer's interactions with people in crisis acting out, putting themselves, officers and others in danger of injury or even death. Those in the media and others who have never experienced such an interaction from a

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police officer's perspective are more intent on villainizing the police rather than bringing substantive solutions to the table. Quite frankly, it parallels the unilateral passage of ill-conceived, so-called reform legislation that was predicated on a false narrative and which has had an effect on the safety of communities all over the state.

Some communities are working on local solutions; however, nothing has been accomplished statewide. There also needs to be an awareness that smaller and rural communities lack the availability of resources that are available in larger communities. New York is a very diverse state, one size does not fit all, but our hope is to

find some reasonable options to provide our membership relief, and to provide our recommendations to the legislature for funding and legislation where appropriate.

In a recent survey about mental health transports, we received a significant number of replies from our chiefs, and a lot of meaningful insight. In reviewing the survey results we feel your consternation from suggestions that included, "looking for options", "revolving door", "a hot topic affecting all law enforcement...", and "important topic to research."

Something that we noticed in the survey is the mode of transportation is a varied as our state's geography. Many answers indicated that ambulance was preferred; another respondent indicated that mental health

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FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR CHIEF/RET. PATRICK PHELAN



Civil Service Reform

One of our goals at NYSACOP is to address issues that are of concern to our membership. That can be more challenging than it sounds. New York is a big state with almost 600 police departments, and it can be difficult to find consensus. A couple years ago, through discussions with our Board of Governors, we determined there are universal concerns about the New York State civil service system as it pertains to hiring and promotion. In 2021, NYSACOP formed a committee to address our concerns. The Committee consists of Chief Shawn Heubusch (Batavia PD), Chief Patrick Garey (Endicott PD), Chief Michael Woods (Colonie PD), Chief Chris Bartolomei (SUNY Buffalo), and myself. The Committee's mission is to identify issues of concern shared by our members and identify specific solutions to those issues. NYSACOP will then work to effect change in the system.

One of the first steps in this process was to send a survey to our membership. These surveys are tremendously valuable to our Association and we appreciate our members taking the time to fill them out. We always try to keep them short and to the point because we know your time is valuable. This article will address the results of the Civil Service survey and next steps. We received 150 responses to this survey, that's a great response and a very good sampling of our membership.

Question 1: Who is in charge of your civil service department/hiring process?

- 68% County
- 13.33% City
- 6% Town
- 6% Village
- 6% other

Question 2: Would you support any of the following changes to the written exam (rank 1-5).

The following were #1 rankings, 1 equals most important;

- 37.31 % Pass/Fail system (10.45% ranked this #2)
- 30.66 % Expand eligible to top 10 (36.5% ranked this #2)
- 23.53% Expand eligible to top 5 (39.71% ranked this #2)
- 16.54% Like it the way it is (11.02% ranked this #2)

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transports in police vehicles are not permitted; and another indicated that most transports are completed via police car. For those transports done by ambulance, some included a police officer accompanying the patient, others did not. If the patient had an injury, medical condition, or was under the influence of drugs or alcohol, they had to first be cleared by the medical hospital before going on to the mental health facility.

Respondents were asked to provide the average distance travelled for a mental health transport (one way). The average among all responses was 13 miles. However, one respondent noted, ‘if there are no local beds, we have to transport three times farther.’

Many respondents noted the unenviable position of police doing mental health transports recognizing that the involvement of law enforcement can imply criminality, and can stigmatize a person already in crisis. For our smaller departments that may only have 1 or 2 cars working, a mental health call can take that unit out of service for hours. A few chiefs noted that the same applies to their local ambulance service when EMS transports a mental health patient, one being concerned when the rig being used is their only Advanced Life Support rig – the dilemma posed to the community whether to be without a police officer or an ambulance? One chief

– the dilemma posed to the community whether to be without a police officer or an ambulance?

mentioned that police are frequently used through the means of pickup orders in situations where a patient does not have transportation.

Apparent in all of the responses is the frustration, bureaucracy, and resource commitment involved with police transports of persons with mental illness. But there was an occasional bright spot in the responses. A couple agencies indicated that they are collaborating with outside entities to help decrease police transports of persons in crisis. One department is employing

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As much as there has been a political cry that police should not be involved with mental health issues, current systems and practices definitely promote the use of law enforcement. The absence of sufficient community resources for decades has caused mental health issues to default to first responders.

Photo: Pond5

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a tele-health option in a pilot program with their hospital to decrease transports by police. We look forward to investigating what innovations are happening to see if they can be replicated in other regions.

As much as there has been a political cry that police should not be involved with mental health issues, current systems and practices definitely promote the use of law enforcement. The absence of sufficient community resources for decades has caused mental health issues to default to first responders.

As law enforcement officers, we want to see compassionate care offered to persons in crisis. Employing a police response to these situations will certainly continue to happen, especially when a person is acting out, or exhibiting suicidal or homicidal behaviors. These are the types of calls to which police will inevitably be summoned. But mental illness is not a crime. The degree to which police are involved needs to be scrutinized. We cannot sacrifice safety for convenience; and we cannot compromise the safety of other citizens by unnecessarily tying up police resources; nor, using police as a convenient transport for a mental health pickup order without the realization that a ride in a police car might exacerbate an already-tenuous condition and further stigmatize the patient from seeking out help in the future.

At our next Board meeting, we will form a committee to evaluate the data we received and help form some suggestions toward solutions. We would appreciate any success stories from communities that may have already found solutions on a local level.

Free Webinar:

The Consequences of a Nuclear Detonation in a Major American City

February 15th, 2022 from 1-3 PM via Zoom.

Join Chief/Ret. Stuart Cameron (Suffolk Co. PD) to learn about the impact of a low yield nuclear detonation in a major American city. Chief Cameron's presentation will include data from the most recent federal modeling done by the national laboratories and DHS. Proper response actions in the aftermath of a nuclear explosion can save tens to hundreds of thousands of lives and protect first responders from receiving harmful exposures to radiation. Cameron said that many of the proper response actions can seem counterintuitive, so knowing what to do in advance is critical.

Chief Cameron Co-Chaired the Concept of Operations Committee with the Domestic Nuclear Detection Office's New York City Region Securing the Cities Program, the largest program of its kind. He has worked with the Domestic Nuclear Detection Office, Counterterrorism Operations Support, and Louisiana State University as a subject matter expert to help develop and pilot several new homeland security courses now available to first responders nationwide. He has also been an instructor on other topics related to counterterrorism.



Chief/Ret. Stuart Cameron will be our guest presenter on the topic of the Consequences of a Nuclear Detonation in a Major American City.

[REGISTRATION LINK](#)

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what we must do.” He continued, “The unification of fighting this battle goes beyond debate and rhetoric. It is time for us to save our city and we are going to need everyone on the same page to accomplish this task. We are committed to ending this violence.”

NYPD PBA President Pat Lynch also spoke at the press conference. Lynch said that police feel like they are alone. “We’ve got to end that here today. Our hearts are broken, we’re in shock, our knees are buckling. And we’re angry. We’re angry because we’ve been here before, we saw it coming, we’re angry because we said it was going to happen, and it happened again.”

Lynch challenged the public to come forward to show their support for police. “The public needs to come, to show anyone that dares to harm a New York City police officer, not here, not now, not today, not to us.” Lynch continued his emotional plea to the public, “We’re asking, we’re humbly asking you to come out and help us.” He added, “We need help, they need help. It’s time to do it now.”

His voice cracking, Lynch said, “So now we’re going to unite, we’re gonna carry a New York City police officer out of this hospital and we’re gonna salute the best we can, and we’re going to line the church, mosque, or synagogue and do the best we can.” Lynch said that once the fallen officer has been properly honored, then it would be time for serious action: “...conversation that’s real, laws that are real, support that’s real, not press conferences.”

Thousands of police officers, officials and community members turned out for funeral services and paid a unified and solemn tribute to Detectives Rivera and Mora. Commissioner Sewell expressed her gratitude for the “sea of blue” and all who turned out to “remember these heroes.”



Thousands of police officers from across the United States lined the streets of New York to pay their respects to Det. Jason Rivera on January 28. Funeral services for Det. Wilbert Mora were held on February 2, again drawing thousands to provide a final salute.

Photo: Suffolk County PD

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Most civil service commissions are county entities with a smaller number of city entities. We can see there is clearly an appetite to move away from the “rule of 3” and a very small percentage of those surveyed “like it the way it is”. This is one of the key issues, the rule of 3 needs to be changed. There are variety of problems that arise from the rule of three including the list getting stalled and agencies being forced to hire people they don’t want to hire or promote people they don’t want to promote because they can’t get past them on the list.

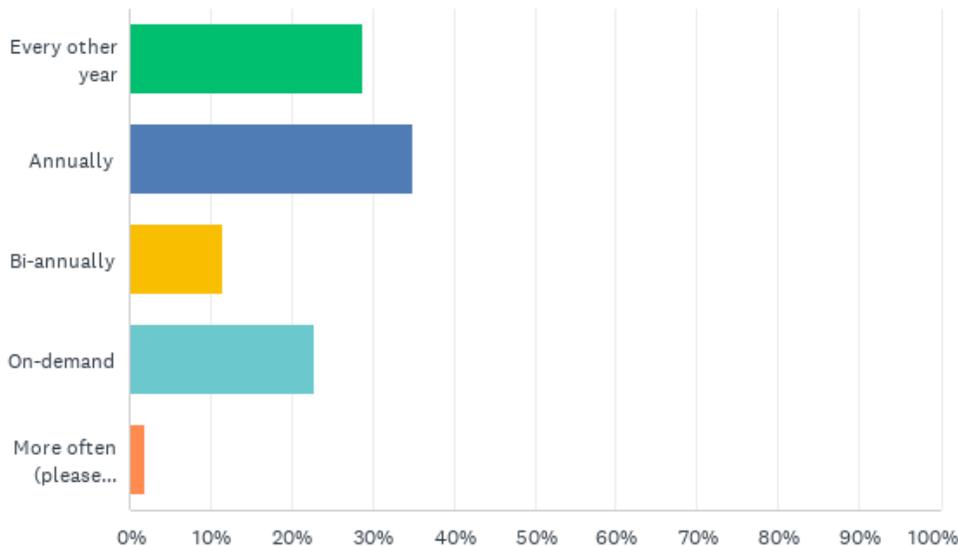
Question 3: How frequently would you like to see the police officer exam given?

- 30.41 % Annually
- 25.68% Every other year
- 21.62% Bi-annually
- 11.49% On demand
- 10.81% More often

74.33 % answered Annually, Bi-annually, on demand, or more often. Obviously this is a key issue, our members want to see the test given more often. There are many reasons for this, one main issue is that it is difficult to recruit for an exam that is more than a year away. We probably also don’t want to see the lists expire annually but there are remedies like a list that is constantly updating.

Question 4: How frequently would you like to see promotional exams given?

- 35.14 % Annually
- 28.38 % Every other year
- 22.97 % On demand
- 11.49 % Bi-annually



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Questions # 5 – 7 relate to the physical agility exam, a hot-button issue.

Question 5: Who administers your physical agility exam?

75.33% County

10.67% City

4% Town

10% Other

Question 6: What changes would you like to see to the physical agility exam?

37.86% Frequency of exam

30.71% Giving individuals leeway in the standards

15% The standard that is used

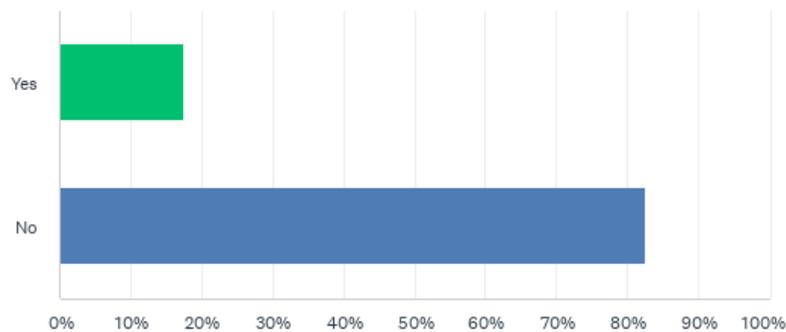
10% Who administers the exam

Question 7: Do you support relaxing the physical agility testing standards to increase the candidate pool?

82.31% No

17.69% Yes

Q7 Do you support the relaxing of physical agility testing standards to increase the candidate pool?



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Pretty self-explanatory, our members do not support making the exam easier but they do support changing the exam. We received 140 comments on question #6. Obviously our members are not satisfied with the current agility exam. Some of the changes suggested:

- Provide a second chance
- Have a 5 phase test and require passing 3 of 5 phases
- Use a new standard but do not lower the standard
- Tolerance for improper technique
- Allow a re-take in 6 months if the candidate misses by 5% or less
- Give physical test prior to written test
- Timed 440 followed by push-ups, pull-ups and sit-ups to simulate foot chase
- The textbook sit-up is not always a good measure of fitness.
- Have the hiring agency administer the exam
- Standards to better reflect the physical requirements of the profession

We lose a lot of good candidates on the physical agility exam, some of them are very physically fit but somehow fail the exam, often on technicalities like not doing the sit-up properly according to the examiner. There is a lot of room for improvement in the physical agility exam and this will be something the Committee focuses on in the coming year.

Questions 8 – 11 related to the administration and payment for the psychological and medical exam, it's a fairly even split between wanting civil service to control and pay for the exams and the agency controlling and paying for the exams.

Question 12: Who completes your department's background process?

63.33% My department with specially trained officers

28% My department with officers that have not received specialized training

8% Another agency completes our background investigations

Question 13: What is the biggest hurdle to conducting a complete background investigation?

82.14% Lack of staff

16.43% Lack of training

15.71% Lack of understanding the new standards

It's not surprising but still alarming that 82.14% of those surveyed considered lack of staff a challenge to conducting a complete background check.

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So from this we take away some key ideas. Our membership is interested in some type of change away from the rule of 3; Pass/fail or expanding the eligible candidates to the top 5 or 10 are logical solutions. Our membership would like to see the entry exam given more often; we know that some commissions offer the exam every two years or even every four years. Additionally, there is a clear desire for change in the physical agility exam. Our Committee will delve into these problems and look for a path forward to address these issues with the state.

If you would like to join this Committee please contact Executive Director [Patrick Phelan](#).

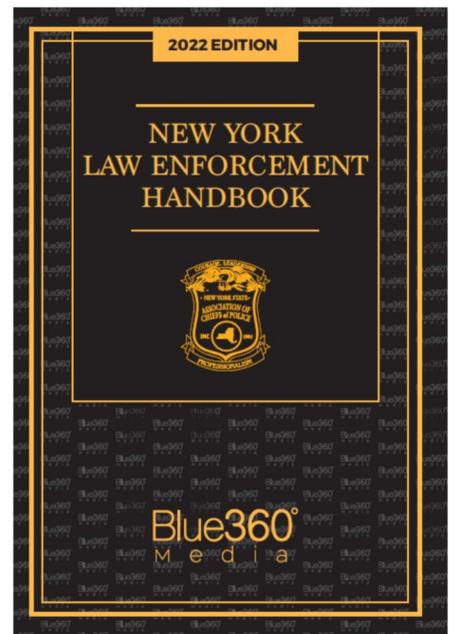
FREE WEBINAR INVITATION FROM BLUE 360° MEDIA

Blue 360 Media Invites You to Learn More about the New York State Law Enforcement Handbook

Chief Mark Spawn and Blue 360° Media Representatives would like to invite you for an exclusive webinar where he will discuss important updates to the *New York Law Enforcement Handbook, 2022 Edition* and review how to easily access the newly updated state laws via eBook, mobile app or in the traditional book formats. Chances to win a free Law Enforcement Handbook during the webinar by answering our law trivia questions!

When: Feb. 10 at 1pm EST

Secure your spot today by scanning the QR code below.



In Albany, Public Safety Must Be A Priority In 2022 from Assembly Minority Leader Will Barclay

The start of 2022 offers us many opportunities to change the way we do things. In New York, there are a number of issues that need to be addressed as we begin the New Year, and at the top of that list are the dangerous criminal justice policies that continue to put the public and the law-enforcement community at risk.

During last week's State of the State Address, Gov. Hochul again failed to acknowledge that years of misguided liberal policies have made life easier for career criminals, and more difficult for law-enforcement agencies. Most recently, the newly-sworn-in district attorney in Manhattan, Alvin Bragg, has announced his office will no longer prosecute certain crimes. Among the crimes now permissible in his jurisdiction are resisting arrest, theft of services and obstructing governmental administration.



William A. Barclay
Assembly District 120
Minority Leader

Alvin Bragg should not be allowed to hold his office. It's that simple. Police officers in New York now must carry out their jobs with the knowledge that crimes won't be fully prosecuted and laws won't be enforced. A suspect they are trying to arrest is allowed to fight back. It is unacceptable by any legal standard.

At a time when New York state is becoming less safe, we should be doing everything in our power to protect the officers who protect us. The near elimination of bail, lowering thresholds for criminal responsibility, and lackadaisical parole policies were bad enough. Now we have prosecutors refusing to prosecute crime.

"...the newly-sworn-in district attorney in Manhattan, Alvin Bragg, has announced his office will no longer prosecute certain crimes. Among the crimes now permissible in his jurisdiction are resisting arrest, theft of services and obstructing governmental administration."

Consider the rise in violent crime that has taken place since the liberal wing of the state Legislature has taken control of the criminal justice system. In Albany, for example, the number of individuals killed by gun violence between 2019 and 2021 has risen *700 percent*. In Rochester, the number of those killed by gun violence during that same time period is up 174 percent. The number of shooting victims in New York City has doubled, while gun incidents causing injury in Buffalo rose 105 percent.

Further, according to recently-released statistics, in the first year of New York's new bail policies, there

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were *thousands* of people who were arrested on criminal charges that normally would have been held with bail who were instead released and immediately rearrested on violent felony charges. Consider individuals like the person cited in a *Times Union* article who broke into a woman's home, multiple times, violated an order of protection, assaulted her, struck her with a pan and choked her and was released after each incident until finally being held on bail *nine months* later. What do you call an order of protection that doesn't protect anyone?

Record numbers of New Yorkers have left in the past year, and when the quality-of-life is compromised by issues like crime, it only accelerates the exodus. Majority decision-makers have shown a willful disregard for the importance of public safety. These laws need to be changed immediately. New Yorkers simply should not be subjected to the level of Majority lawmakers have put them in.

If you have any questions or comments on this or any other state issue, or if you would like to be added to my mailing list or receive my newsletter, please contact my office. My office can be reached by mail at 19 Canalview Mall, Fulton, NY 13069 and by email at barclayw@nyassembly.gov.

Assembly Will Barclay website; January 7, 2022

“At a time when New York state is becoming less safe, we should be doing everything in our power to protect the officers who protect us. The near elimination of bail, lowering thresholds for criminal responsibility, and lackadaisical parole policies were bad enough. Now we have prosecutors refusing to prosecute crime.”

Retiring Soon?

You are still a valued member! Check your NYSACOP Profile to ensure that your email and address preferences are updated so that you continue to receive our notifications and publications.

Go to the Members tab at nychiefs.org

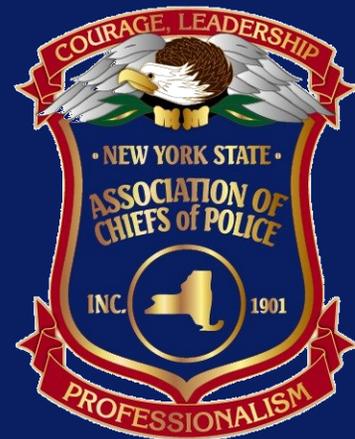
Plan Now for your St. Patrick's Day Campaign

Thursday, March 17



Facts sheets, sample news releases, social media graphics with sample messages, and a variety of images (live and static) to help promote your local efforts. Click [here](#).

Don't forget to renew
your membership
and update your profile



Law Enforcement Deaths Up 55%

According to preliminary data compiled by the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial Fund (NLEOMF), as of December 31, 2021, 458 federal, state, tribal and local law enforcement officers died in the line-of-duty in 2021. This is an increase of 55% from the 295 officers killed during the same period last year, and is the highest total line-of-duty officer deaths since 1930 when there were 312 fatalities.

This year's statistics demonstrate that America's front-line law enforcement officers continue to battle the deadly effects of the Covid-19 pandemic nationwide. Preliminary data shows that some 301 officer fatalities have been identified as caused by COVID this year, and this number appears to increase almost daily. Covid-19 related fatalities continue to be the single highest cause of law enforcement deaths occurring in 2021.

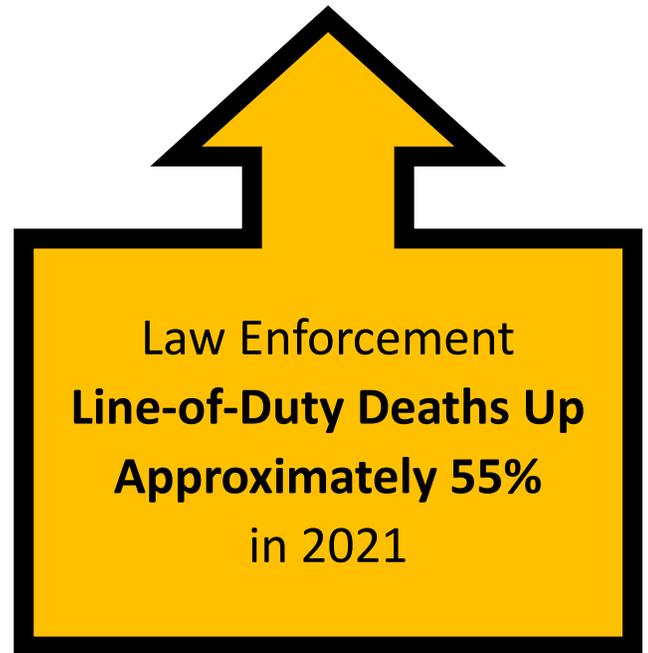
The dramatic increase in traffic-related fatalities in 2021 is also cause for concern for law enforcement agencies nationwide. In 2021, 58 officers died due to traffic-related causes, such as single-vehicle crashes, vehicle collisions, motorcycle crashes and "struck-by" incidents, while working along our nation's roadways. These 58 traffic-related fatalities are an increase of 38% compared to the 42 deaths during the same period last year. Tragically, struck-by fatalities have increased by an extraordinary 93% over last year.

In 2021, 84 officers died from felonious assaults including 61 officers who were killed by firearms, 11 officers killed in struck-by traffic incidents, and 3 killed in auto crashes where the subject was either fleeing the police or an intoxicated driver was involved. In addition, 4 officers were beaten to death, 2 died from 9/11-related illnesses, and 3 officers were stabbed. The 61 officers killed feloniously by firearms represents a 36% increase over the 45 officers killed feloniously by firearms in 2020.

The leading circumstance of firearms fatalities were officers killed in ambush-style attacks. A total of 19 officers were killed in ambush attacks in 2021, a significant increase over only 6 such attacks in 2020.

Click the [link](#) for the complete report.

National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial Fund; 2021 End-Of- Year Preliminary Law Enforcement Officers Fatalities report; <https://nleomf.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/2021-EOY-Fatality-Report-Final-web.pdf>; Accessed Jan. 20, 2022



Baltimore City State’s Attorney Marilyn Mosby Facing Perjury and False Mortgage Application Charges Related to Her Purchase of Two Vacation Properties

Allegedly Claimed to Have Experienced Financial Hardship Resulting from Coronavirus to Obtain Distributions from the City of Baltimore’s Deferred Compensation Plan, Which She Used Toward Down Payments for Vacation Homes in Florida

Baltimore, Maryland – A federal grand jury today returned an indictment charging Marilyn J. Mosby, age 41, of Baltimore, Maryland, on federal charges of perjury and making false mortgage applications, relating to the purchases of two vacation homes in Florida.

The defendant will have an initial appearance in U.S. District Court in Baltimore, but the hearing has not yet been scheduled.

The indictment was announced by United States Attorney for the District of Maryland Erek L. Barron; Special Agent in Charge Thomas J. Sobocinski of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, Baltimore Field Office; and Special Agent in Charge Darrell J. Waldon of the Internal Revenue Service - Criminal Investigation, Washington, D.C. Field Office.

According to the four-count indictment, on May 26, 2020 and December 29, 2020, Mosby submitted “457(b) Coronavirus-Related Distribution Requests” for one-time withdrawals of \$40,000 and \$50,000, respectively, from City of Baltimore’s Deferred Compensation Plans. In each request, the indictment alleges that Mosby falsely certified that she met at least one of the qualifications for a distribution as defined under the CARES Act, specifically, that she experienced adverse financial consequences from the Coronavirus as a result of being quarantined, furloughed, or laid off; having reduced work hours; being unable to work due to lack of childcare; or the closing or reduction of hours of a business she owned or operated. In signing the forms, Mosby “affirm[ed] under penalties for perjury the statements and acknowledgments made in this request.” The indictment alleges that Mosby did not experience any such financial hardships and in fact, Mosby received her full gross salary of \$247,955.58 from January 1, 2020 through December 29, 2020, in bi-weekly gross pay direct deposits of \$9,183.54.

Further, the indictment alleges that on July 28, 2020 and September 2, 2020, as well as on January 14, 2021 and February 19, 2021, Mosby made false statements in applications for a \$490,500 mortgage to purchase a home in Kissimmee, Florida and for a \$428,400 mortgage to purchase a condominium in Long Boat Key, Florida. As part of both applications, Mosby was required to disclose her liabilities. Mosby did not disclose

on either application that she had unpaid federal taxes from a number of previous years and that on March 3, 2020, the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) had placed a lien against all property and rights to property belonging to Mosby and her husband in the amount of \$45,022, the amount of unpaid taxes Mosby and her husband owed the IRS as of that date. In each application, Mosby also responded “no” in response to the question, “Are you presently delinquent or in default on any Federal debt or any other loan, mortgage, financial obligation, bond, or loan guarantee,” even though she was delinquent in paying federal taxes to the IRS.

Finally, according to the indictment, one week prior to closing on the Kissimmee vacation home, on or about August 25, 2020, Mosby executed an agreement with a vacation home management company giving the management company control over the rental of the property she ultimately purchased in Kissimmee. On September 2, 2020, Mosby signed a “second home rider” which provided, among other things, that the borrower occupy and use the property as their second home; that the borrower maintain exclusive control over the ownership of the property, including short-term rentals, and not subject the property to any... agreement that requires the borrower either to rent the property or give a management firm or any other person or entity any control over the occupancy or use of the property; and that the borrower keep the property available primarily as a residence for their personal use and enjoyment for at least one year, unless the lender otherwise agrees in writing. The indictment alleges that by falsely executing the “second home rider” Mosby could obtain a lower interest rate on the mortgage for the property than she would have received without it.

If convicted, Mosby faces a maximum sentence of five years in federal prison for each of two counts of perjury and a maximum of 30 years in federal prison for each of two counts of making false mortgage applications. Actual sentences for federal crimes are typically less than the maximum penalties. A federal district court judge will determine any sentence after considering the U.S. Sentencing Guidelines and other statutory factors.

An indictment is not a finding of guilt. An individual charged by indictment is presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty at some later criminal proceedings.

United States Attorney Erik L. Barron commended the FBI and IRS-CI for their work in the investigation. Mr. Barron thanked Assistant U.S. Attorneys Leo J. Wise, Sean R. Delaney, and Aaron S.J. Zelinsky, who are prosecuting the federal case.

For more information on the Maryland U.S. Attorney’s Office, its priorities, and resources available to help the community, please visit www.justice.gov/usao-md and <https://www.justice.gov/usao-md/community-outreach>.

Source: U.S. Attorney’s Office News, Maryland; Jan. 13, 2022

Rep. Katko Introduces Legislation to Renew Federal Funding for Central New York Police Departments

WASHINGTON – U.S. Rep. John Katko (R, NY-24) today introduced the COPS on the Beat Grant Program Reauthorization and Parity Act. This bipartisan legislation reauthorizes and updates the Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) program to ensure local police departments have the necessary resources to keep Central New Yorkers safe. Rep. Katko introduced this bill alongside U.S. Reps. Tom Rice (R, SC-7) and Abigail Spanberger (D, VA-7).

The COPS program, which is administered by the U.S. Department of Justice, provides law enforcement agencies with financial assistance to hire law enforcement officers, provide training, and advance community policing efforts. The COPS on the Beat Grant Program Reauthorization and Parity Act reauthorizes the COPS program through 2031, ensuring this important funding stream continues to be available to law enforcement agencies in Central New York. Additionally, the bill updates the COPS program to better meet the needs of agencies in rural and low-income communities. The bill allows COPS hiring grant funding to be used by rural departments to increase law enforcement wages, while also reducing barriers that have historically prevented smaller departments from accessing these funds, such as excessive cost sharing burdens or limitations on the availability of resources.

“Today, I introduced the COPS on the Beat Grant Program Reauthorization and Parity Act. This bill reauthorizes and updates the COPS program to ensure federal funding remains available to police departments of all sizes in Central New York,” said Rep. Katko. “Since the COPS program was launched, local police departments have received funding to bolster training, purchase lifesaving protective equipment, and expand community policing initiatives. As a former organized crime prosecutor, I worked alongside police officers and saw firsthand the good the COPS program does. It is vital to keeping our police officers and the communities they serve safe. As far-left lawmakers continue their push to defund the police, I’m fighting back and continuing to lead on initiatives that provide law enforcement with the resources they need to safely serve and protect.”

"The COPS program has benefited the Syracuse Police Department and the Syracuse community for years," said Syracuse Police Chief Kenton Buckner. "Whether it was hiring more Officers, providing funds for training, the COPS Office has been instrumental in providing support to the Syracuse Police Department and enhancing the services provided to the community. We support the adequate funding for the COPS Office and appreciate Congressman John Katko's continued support of law enforcement across the region."

"I wholeheartedly support Congressman Katko's bill to reauthorize the COPS program," said Onondaga County Sheriff Eugene Conway. "As someone who has worked at the Village, Town, and County level of policing in this community the COPS program has been the most beneficial program at the Federal level that supports law enforcement. Less funding for police departments is not the answer at this time, as we are

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Police Chief and School Administrators Take It on the Chin

Students Vie for Chance to Launch Pies at Officials

At a time when some school districts are reluctant to have police officers in the schools, Ossining officials are nurturing that relationship. Police Chief Kevin Sylvester (Ossining PD, NYSACOP First VP), School Superintendent Dr. Ray Sanchez, and Assistant Principal Craig Dreves (Ossining Unified Free School District) recently participated in a special event with students in which the reward was... a pie in the face! Akin to the novelty of a dunking booth, the good-natured fun allowed these young citizens to see that their own role models are human, too. As part of Claremont Elementary School's programs, third and fourth graders accumulate points for demonstrating positive behavior. Points can be traded in for rewards. Dreves told *Chiefly Speaking* that students are able to purchase opportunities to eat lunch with their teachers or principals, play basketball with him or other teachers, and buy other prizes. Dreves said, "These sorts of events solidify the culture of care and community that we have at Claremont. They bring our staff and students together with important community members to celebrate our successes."

Chief Sylvester told *Chiefly Speaking* that, earlier in the school year, Assistant Principal Dreves volunteered to take a pie in the face from a student as a reward. Said Chief Sylvester, "It had a larger than expected response and so it became a raffle where students with the required accumulation of points could use those to purchase a raffle ticket to pie the principal."

Dreves suggested that Chief Sylvester should also volunteer to be hit with a pie – and the Chief stepped up, as did the Superintendent of Schools Dr. Ray Sanchez.

Excitement in the school was building as students rallied their reward points to see who would get the chance to throw a pie at any of the three high-profile targets. Dr. Sanchez said that events like this show students and staff that they care deeply and want to celebrate their accomplishments.

Sixty five students cashed in their rewards, and three were selected by raffle to be the actual pie-tossers, with the remaining students allowed a front row seat to watch their distinguished guests 'take one for the



Chief Sylvester after receiving a pie-in-the-face from a student at Claremont Elementary School.

Photo: Megan Mastrogiacomo
Ossining Union Free School District

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team'. The Assistant Principal wore a novelty tuxedo t-shirt, and the Superintendent wore a hospital gown over his clothes. But Chief Sylvester took his medicine in full uniform! Sylvester said this is all about a community partnership where administrators, teachers, and law enforcement professionals are working together to promote positive behavior and create relationships with their neighbors at an early age. Dr. Sanchez said, "There are many community programs we offer in collaboration with our police and I am thankful for their partnership." Chief Sylvester added, "We're using moments like these to give kids a better educational experience and establish bonds so we can be trusted to guide them to success throughout their developmental years." Assistant Principal Dreves lauded Chief Sylvester and Superintendent Sanchez as being great sports. "The event was so much fun and enjoyed by everyone," said Dreves adding, "the incredible partnership that the schools enjoy with our local police department make incredible opportunities like this possible."



A student poses with
Asst. Principal Craig Dreves
after being 'pied'.

Megan Mastrogiacomo
Ossining Union Free School District

(Continued from page 17)

being called upon to service calls well beyond normal expectations. The need for COPS funding is critical now and going forward."

Since coming to Congress, Rep. Katko has been a staunch advocate for the COPS program. Rep. Katko has voted for legislation that increases the program's funding and helped deliver grants to local police departments like [the City of Syracuse](#). Rep. Katko has also focused on reining in Albany's bail reform laws in an effort to enhance public safety. Recently, [he introduced the SERVE Our Communities Act](#), a bill that would incentivize New York State to enact a 'dangerousness standard' that allows judges to thoroughly consider public safety when making bail or pretrial release decisions.

The COPS on the Beat Grant Program Reauthorization and Parity Act is supported by the Fraternal Order of Police, International Association of Chiefs of Police, Major Cities Chiefs Association, Major County Sheriffs Association, National Organization of Police Officers, National Sheriffs Association, and Sergeants Benevolent Association.

Congressman Katko Press Release

Westchester County Police Announce Gun Seizure

More than 100 weapons were seized and 11 persons were arrested in January following a six-month multi-agency investigation into “ghost guns” and other illegal firearms in Westchester and Putnam Counties.

Search warrants were executed Tuesday at eight locations in Westchester and Putnam by investigators from County, local and federal law enforcement agencies. Rifles, handguns, “ghost guns” and high-capacity drum magazines were seized. Some of the weapons lacked a serial number – making them so-called ghost guns – and other weapons had defaced serial numbers.

Several silencers, ballistic vests, counterfeit police shields and quantities of ammunition were also seized in the probe, dubbed Operation Casper by investigators. The high-capacity drum magazines that were seized are of a similar type to the one used in the murders of two New York City police officers last week.

The investigation was launched in June 2021 when police departments in Westchester, along with the Westchester County District Attorney’s Office and the Federal Bureau of Investigation, created a task force to

address an influx of ghost guns and other illegal firearms into the Westchester County region. Detectives in the multi-agency Real Time Crime Center (RTC) were tasked with finding innovative ways to reduce gun crimes and prevent violence.

These detectives were assisted by the FBI Safe Streets Task Force, New York City Police Department, Putnam County

Sheriff’s Office and the Rockland County DA’s office. Prosecutors from Westchester County District Attorney’s Office and the Southern District of New York provided guidance and case support as specific targets and locations were identified.

Arrests were made by the North Castle, New Rochelle, Harrison and Westchester County police departments and by the Putnam County Sheriff’s Department and the FBI Safe Streets Task Force.



Chief Inspector Hodges takes questions from the media at press conference. Photo: Westchester County PD



WEBINAR**Why Command Staff Needs to Prioritize Officer Safety and Wellness**
[REGISTER](#)

Wed, Mar 30, 2022 1:00 PM - 2:00 PM EDT

Whether you are a Chief, a Superintendent, or whatever high-ranking title you may have, the bottom line is that your officers continue to do their jobs day in and day out. Despite the negativity on the street and from the media, these brave men and women continue to put on the uniform and serve their communities. Beyond what is expected of you in your job description, what are you doing to ensure the health and wellness of all of your people? Is your department simply checking boxes or are you really delving into officer wellness? Ignoring your officers' needs won't make the need for health and wellness promotion go away. As a leader, your people feed off your leadership and it trickles down from the top to the rank and file. Taking care of your people means more than simply having the right equipment and physical and tactical training. In this presentation, we'll discuss and break down the stigma that is endemic across departments. We'll explore the need to create a culture of acceptance, promote wellness initiatives, focus on prevention and proactive measures rather than reactive ones, and embrace resiliency and recovery to stop the cycle of throwing good officers away. Finally, we'll discuss how you can create and model the positive wellness behaviors that should be a cornerstone of every department. Instructor Nicholas Greco IV, M.S., B.C.E.T.S., C.A.T.S.M., F.A.A.E.T.S., President and Founder of C3 Education and Research, Inc. Certificate of Completion All attendees will receive a certificate of completion. Webinar Recording: This webinar is sponsored by T-Mobile. All registrants will have access to the webinar recording.

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School Bus Driver Arrested for DWI

State Police arrested David E. Wines, age 48 from West Monroe, NY for Aggravated Driving While Intoxicated (E-felony), DWI – while operating a School Bus (E-felony), and Endangering the Welfare of a Child (A-misdemeanor).

On January 18, 2022, State Police were contacted by the Superintendent of the Central Square School District regarding a bus driver who had submitted to random drug/alcohol screening as part of their union contract with the district. Following the test, it was determined that Mr. Wines had a BAC of .09%. State Police were then immediately contacted by the district administration. Mr. Wines was then tested By State Police where it was determined his BAC level to be .04%.

Mr. Wines is charged with transporting 55 school-age children while intoxicated, 47 of them were 15 years and younger. He was processed and transported to the Oswego County Public Safety Building for Centralized Arraignment Court.

State Police would like to recognize Central Square School Superintendent Thomas J. Colabufo and the Central Square School District administration for their cooperation and assistance with this investigation.

NYSP Press Release, Jan. 18, 2022

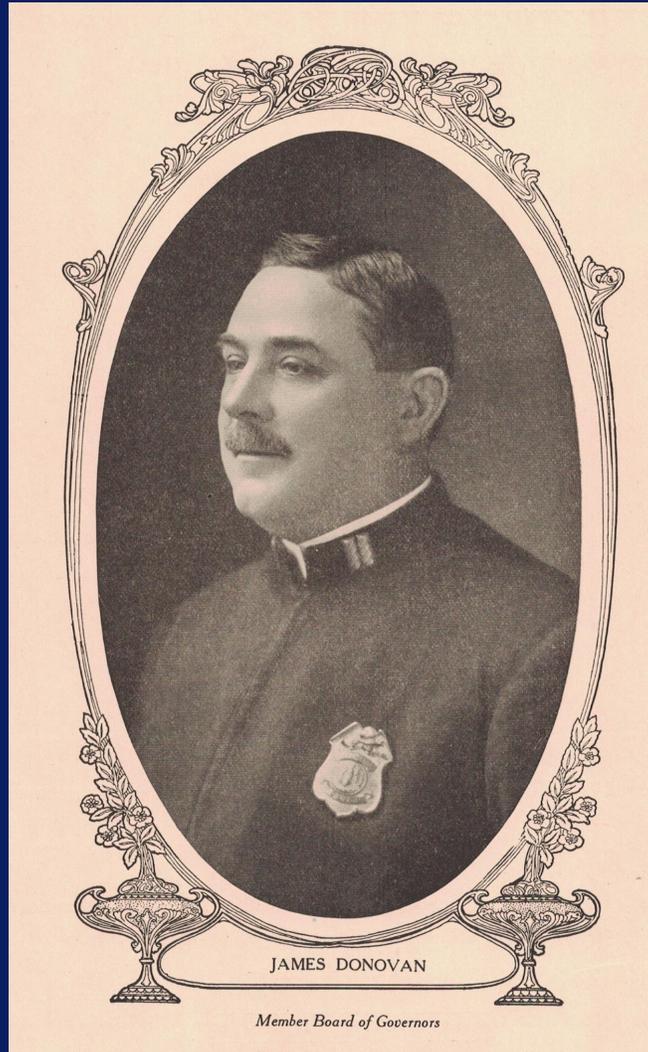
Search Warrant at Funeral Home Leads to Criminal Charges

When the Johnstown Police Department (JPD) received a complaint from a resident who had contracted with a local funeral home for cremation services was unable to reach anyone. Police also made calls to the funeral director which initially went unanswered. In their investigation, police learned that Brian M. Barnett's funeral director's license had been suspended since late November 2021 and that his business, Ehle-Barnett Funeral Home, was also unlicensed.

Barnett finally called police and the transfer of the remains at issue was facilitated to another funeral home. But as the investigation continued, Johnstown PD Detectives learned of another deceased person whose body had been allegedly retrieved by Barnett. Death records indicated that the remains were to be cremated, but the crematorium had no record of such a cremation. Detectives obtained a search warrant and found human remains within the funeral home. A press release from JPD said, "The remains were not stored in a temperature controlled location and were not cared for in any manner." Police said that there was excess furniture and household items stored around the remains, and they noted signs of advanced decomposition due to the improper handling and storage of the body. When police searched a rear garage at the funeral home property, they observed a significant amount of garbage and furniture. Upon searching eth garage, two additional human remains were found, both in advanced states of decomposition. The remains were moved to another funeral home under the direction of the coroner. Police also located over a dozen containers of cremated remains, some without identification. Chief Dave Gilbo told *Chiefly Speaking* that a warrant had been issued for Barnett charging him with one count of Concealment of a Human Corpse. Johnstown Police said that if families have used the services of Ehle-Barnet Funeral Home and have not received the remains of their loved ones to contact JPD or the Fulton County Coroner's Office.



Looking Back...



*Chief James Donovan of the Portchester Police Department
Served on the Board of Governors of our Association in 1915.*

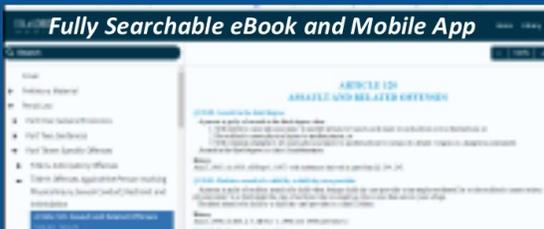
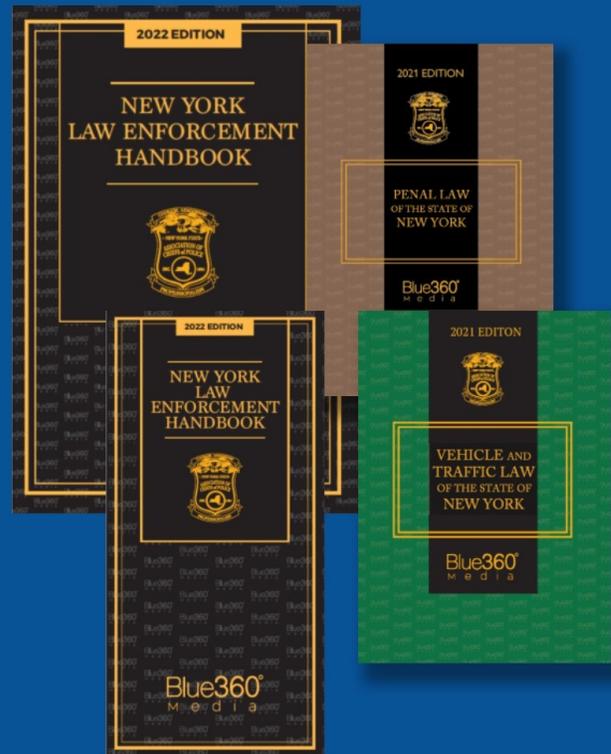


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◀ Podcast describes content and changes to 2022 Law Enforcement Handbook—[Click Here](#)

Did you miss our webinar about the NYS Law Enforcement Handbook—click [here](#)—use passcode: 8ys1MA*T

Last month's winner of a free New York State Law Enforcement Handbook was Det. Sgt. Pasquale DeBenedictis (North Castle PD) for correctly answering our monthly trivia question. Congratulations Sgt. Benedictis! —your free New York State Law Enforcement Handbook is on the way from Blue 360° Media!

Monthly Winner!



COP TALES

ASST. CHIEF/RET. BRIAN SMITH,
CALIFORNIA HIGHWAY PATROL

Is This How I am Going to Die?

I was a Commander of a highway Patrol office and we had to respond to road closures and evacuations when fires burned out of control. In one such case, I was assisting with evacuations when I could see the fire was gaining progress behind me. I drove up a back road to make sure no one was stranded, and I came across a man and woman at their ranch. They were trying to catch their dog who kept running away from them. The fire was gaining on us. I told them to hurry up and get in my car so I could take them to safety. They told me they would not leave without their dog. I was getting really worried about the fire catching up to us and the smoke was making it difficult to see.

Knowing there was no way they were going to leave their dog, I jumped out and started trying to catch the dog as well. As I looked up, I could see the flames reached far into the sky and were burning the trees and everything around us. I remember thinking to myself, “I have been in shootings, fights, foot pursuits, etc., and yet I am going to die in a fire?” I really thought we were going to die. I knew I couldn’t leave them behind, and they couldn’t leave their dog behind.

My prayers were answered because they finally caught the dog and tossed him in my car. We all jumped in and I went to take off. However, when I looked up, we were completely surrounded by flames and thick smoke. I had no idea how to get out of there. I then remembered the direction I was pointed, and just drove right through the flames for a couple of minutes. We made it to the other side, but I can tell you I did not stop for quite a while.

The author served four years in the United States Marine Corps, and retired as an Assistant Chief with the California Highway Patrol. He resides in Bakersfield, CA. If you have a personal “Cop Tale” to share, please contact Brian at bmsmith778@gmail.com

Training Calendar

#HowDoISearchThat: Searching Social Media (DCJS Webinar)

Feb. 15 1–2:30PM [Register](#) [Questions](#)

Saving Data from Social Media Sites (DCJS Webinar) Mar. 9 1–2:30PM

[Register](#) [Questions](#)

Detecting Financial Exploitation: Identification Strategies and Resources for Law Enforcement— Webinar Recording Available [View](#) [Questions](#)

Police Executive Training—Feb 14-18 [Register](#) [Curriculum](#) [Questions](#)

Officer Wellness In-Service—(Allegany Co.) Feb. 22 [Info](#) [Register](#)

[Questions](#)

Use of Force Updates (Rockland Co.) Feb 22-23 [Register](#) [Questions](#)

Property/Evidence Room Management Course

Oneida County (Feb. 1-2); Nassau Co. (Feb 24-25); Saratoga County (Mar. 1-2) Erie Co. (Mar. 22-23)

[Announcement](#) [Registration](#) [Questions](#)

Officer Wellness In-Service Training - (Allegany Co.) Free —Feb. 22 [Info](#) [Register](#) [Program Questions](#) [Reg. Questions](#)

ICISF Assisting Individuals in Crisis (Broome Co.) —Free Training Feb. 28 - Mar. 1 [Register](#) [Questions](#)

Commercial Vehicle Enforcement Training - Westchester (Mar. 9-11, 2022) Counties [Information](#) [Register](#) [Questions](#)

Disability Awareness for LE Instructor Level Training—various virtual and in-person dates; [Information](#) [Registration](#) [Questions](#)

MPTC Defensive Tactics Instructor Course—Schenectady Co.; Jan. 10-21 [Register](#) [Questions](#)

DWI Detection and Standardized Field Sobriety Testing Instructor Course—Albany Co.; Jan. 10-13 [Register](#) [Questions](#)

Enhancing School Safety Using a Threat Assessment Model (Webinar) 1-3PM [Register](#)

Detecting Financial Exploitation: Identification Strategies and Resources for Law Enforcement (Webinar) Jan. 11 [Register](#) [Questions](#)

Criminal Debriefing (Dutchess and Saratoga Co.) - Jan. 19-21 [Register Dutchess](#) [Register Saratoga](#) [Questions](#)

Ethics and Professionalism Workshop Training—Warren – Jan. 21; Westchester – Feb. 21. [Announcement](#) [Registration](#) [Questions](#)

Principled Policing Instructors Course (Rockland Co.) - Jan. 25-28 [Register](#) [Questions](#)

DWI Detection and Standardized Field Sobriety Testing Instructor Course; Suffolk Co., Feb. 1-4 [Registration](#) [Questions](#)



(Continued on page 27)

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Post Critical Incident Seminar
(NYLEAP) - Erie Co.; Jan 24-26;
[Register](#) [Announcement](#)
[Questions](#)

Cryptocurrency Investigations
(NCTC/free) Hilbert College,
Hamburg, NY. [Register](#) or call
717-861-2070

ICISF Assisting Individuals in
Crisis (Free) - (Allegany Co.)
Mar. 7-8 [Register](#) [Questions](#)

ALERTT Active Shooter Level 1 Train the Trainer—Feb. 28 - Mar. 4
Westchester Co. [Register](#) [Questions](#)

Dark Web Investigations (NCTC/free) Mar. 8-9; Hilbert College,
Hamburg, NY/ [Register](#) or call 717-861-2070

MPTC Defensive Tactics Instructor Course—Monroe Co. – Mar. 14-25,
2022 [Register](#) [Questions](#)

NY Law Enforcement Officers and the Law – Updates, Practices and
Procedures—(Broome and Monroe Co.) March 17, 23 [Register](#)
[Questions](#)

Why Command Staff Needs to Prioritize Officer Safety and Wellness—
Free Webinar—March 30 (see page _____) [Register](#)

NYSP Crimes Against Children Seminar Mar. 28—Apr. 1 [Register](#)
[Questions](#)

Accreditation Assessor Training—Dutchess Co. Mar. 31 [Register](#)
[Information](#) [Questions](#)

Basic Juvenile Police Officer Course (SNYPJOA)—Westchester Co.—
Apr. 4-8 [Register](#) [Questions](#)

Community Resource Officer Course (SNYPJOA) —Westchester Co.—
April 4-8 [Register](#) [Questions](#)

Street Gang Investigations (NCTC/free) May 9-11; Hilbert College,
Hamburg NY. [Register](#) or call: 717-861-2070

IPTM Traffic Crash Reconstruction Course - Oneida Co.—May 9-13 and
May 16-20, 2022 [Announcement](#) [Register](#) [Questions](#)

DRE Training/Certification—Phase I & II June 6-17 (Suffolk;) Phase III
Jax, FL June 26-Jul. 3 [Application](#) [Questions](#)



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William Weishaupt
Ulster Co. District Attorney's Office

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Jeff Bean
Associate Member

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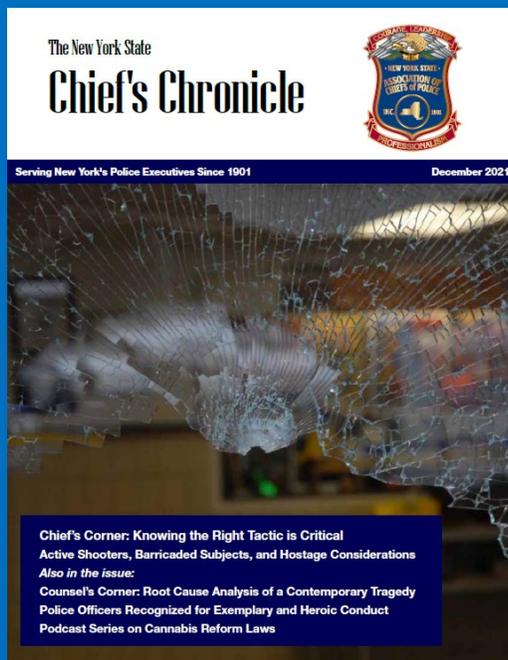
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Check out the
December edition
of our magazine,
*The Chief's
Chronicle.*

Click on
Publications
at nychiefs.org



Facebook Post of the Month

Lancaster PD

We would like to thank all the Lancaster School District students who sent us these great cards and letters after two of our officers gave the students a tour of our police station last week.

1/19/2022

