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CHICAGO LODGE 7

Official Magazine • January 2025

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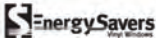
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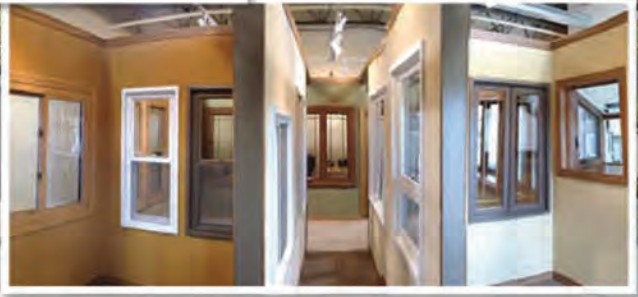
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**COVER STORY
PAGE 32**

All's Fair

Talk about Lodge 7 going the distance to fight for members! Led by President John Catanzara, nearly two dozen members endured 30 hours on a bus to participate in a rally calling for the passage of the Social Security Fairness Act. Joining with public servants from across the country on Dec. 10-11, they stood in pouring rain to make their voice heard to legislators. And it worked.



COVER DESIGN BY JENNA RAMOS

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Officer Awards



Lunch with Santa



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CHICAGO LODGE 7

Official Magazine
President's Report



Start the Bus... Because we're going places in 2025



JOHN
CATANZARA
JR.

Spending 40 hours on a bus with me over a 48-hour span, well, insert your own punch line here. (Fifty bucks to whoever submits the best one.)

Turns out, the investment was well worth it. Like 200 billion bucks.

As you hopefully know by now, the U.S. Senate voted to pass the Social Security Fairness Act by a 70-26 margin. The House had already voted by an equally lopsided margin to pass this legislation, which repeals the Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP) and the Government Pension Offset (GPO). For 40 years, these have reduced, or sometimes eliminated, Social Security benefits for federal retirees and other public servants, as well as their surviving spouses.

And I'd like to think we had a little something to do with getting the bill through Congress. Even though the House passed H.R. 82 on Nov. 12 327-75, good old Chuck Schumer was not calling for a vote in the Senate. I mean, what the Chuck?

So on Dec. 10, about 20 of us from Lodge 7 piled into a charter bus and made the road trip to participate in a rally in Washington, D.C., on Dec. 11 along with public service workers from across the country. Made it there in time to get a few winks of sleep, then join about 400 others in front of the Senate Building to send a message to Senator Schumer to call for the vote.

We thought he would respond to our presence and get the vote done that day. But even with our standing in the rain for a few hours, I guess that was asking too much. He's Chuckin' useless.

This is the time of year when you usually get my state of our union here, whetting your appetite for the State of the Union in a few weeks after common sense and making America great again return to the White House. I have several issues to get to, but first let's get back on the bus trip.

About three days before the rally in D.C., we put the trip together because the WEP and GPO provisions have been unfair to public servants since they were passed. Only about 2.4 million of us are affected, including cops, firefighters, postal workers, teachers and many others.

So I don't know how Schumer escaped calling the bill. I don't know what his political future is like, but our position always has been that politicians need to be held accountable for false promises and bad votes. And if it means voting them out of office, that just needs to be the political way forward. In other words, if you Chuck with us, we will Chuck with you.

That's all they understand. I think the united front at the rally with firefighters, postal carriers, federal employees and teachers — strange bedfellows, I know, but politics does that — was a perfect example of how we're willing to do that.

You know my feelings about leaders holding politicians accountable. That's their job for their members. I certainly have had my differences with National FOP President Pat Yoes, but I give credit where credit is due.

This rally was the toughest I've ever heard him talk politically. He helped make our voices heard about this theft of benefits that's been going on for 40 years, taking away from myself and anybody else who has put in the time, only to have that Social Security benefit watered down solely because we decided to enter a public service career.

Yoes kind of summed up the rally at the end with a simple point. The fact that they put a price tag of, like, \$192 billion over the next 10 years means that they have been stealing roughly \$20 billion a year from municipal workers, police, fire and others every single year for the past 40 years. And it's time to stop.

That's chump change for them; \$20 billion is nothing. We gave five times that amount and then some to Ukraine in one lump sum. That's the cost of a fricking right thing to do for U.S. citizens and workers.

Social Security fairness is just that — fair. Not something we are used to, but it forces the correction to be made and for the calculation to be in perpetuity going forward. It's not something that when they have a Social Security fix to stop the pending doom coming and, oh, by the way, we have to take this into consideration. No, it's already baked in at this point. Now you have a complete picture on what a Social Security fix needs to look like.

The optics of this rally certainly are not lost on me, or any of us for that matter, because the weather was not very hospitable. Strangely enough, when Chuck Schumer started talking, the skies opened up, and it just started a deluge of rain. I mean, who said there's no God?

But it was also a little bit of irony to say the least, because the weather is cause for a little shout-out to our postal carrier brothers and sisters who come through in rain, sleet or snow. Right alongside the firefighters and police officers, who work every single day. And none of us were leaving that rally without getting our point across.

A big win there, so now let's turn our focus to what's ahead in 2025.

CHICAGO JOHN DINEEN LODGE #7

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The migrant situation...

I saw, too, that Tom Homan, an old friend of the FOP when he was director of ICE, announced that his first intention as President Trump's border czar will be to begin deportations of undocumented immigrants in Chicago. Let me break it down for you.

I think the messaging, especially from Tom as the point person for the new administration, is absolutely spot on. What government official would not want criminals out of their communities?

How does any politician say that it's not a logical first step to enforce a detainer or deportation order for criminals who have received a special pass because they broke the law getting here and committed crimes while they're here? Literally round them up and get 'em out of here, because they're just bad for the community.

Now, if you want to talk about the fears of where it goes from there, that's a whole different conversation. For anybody to come out publicly against 1.2 million deportation orders issued in federal court that have gone ignored, well, you know who I am talking about. The federal courts have said people need to leave, and we are not doing anything about that. I mean, it's just a broader example of this ridiculous mindset of giving multiple second, third, fourth and fifth chances to criminals who have victimized our City and way too many of our members.

And then it gets even worse when you start talking about, God forbid, the number of terrorists who have gotten in this country that we know of. And those we don't know of who got through — on top of the gangs, which is only getting worse for all the innocent Americans affected by the crimes of these criminals who should have never been allowed in the country. I almost hope our idiot mayor decides to challenge or provide sanctuary for criminals and the federal government puts handcuffs on him.

More federal government assistance...

The mayor would be putting federal funding at risk if he didn't comply with the deportation of criminals. As a follow-up, I fully expect we will ask the incoming U.S. attorney general, when she's confirmed and sworn in, to come to Chicago and take a look at the consent decree and a bunch of other stuff and start shaking up the foundations of Chicago before it's too late.

That includes Chicago being a sanctuary city, because it's loosely tied to the migrant issue. President Trump has been very outspoken regarding eliminating sanctuary cities, which makes it more funding-based. If you look at cities that want to have that policy of not cooperating, it's the obstruction part that's going to cause the legal issues.

But we'll see. This mayor has proven to be not very intelligent, to say the least. Or politically savvy. And, unfortunately, the governor provides some cover for him, as the U.S. government did under the Biden administration. But once that protection is lifted and he has to explain and fight for his positions, we'll see how much more out of control he gets.

The Lodge 7 legislative agenda for 2025...

Obviously, getting the DROP program across the finish line is definitely a big lift. Tier 2 pensions need to absolutely be addressed once and for all for a long-term solution. Our union is probably close to 55 percent Tier 2 members.

It's coming up slowly but coming up nonetheless when Tier 2 members in the next decade will start qualifying for pensions. So what are we going to do at that point? It definitely needs to be addressed. And then also in Springfield, I spoke to Representative La Shawn Ford the other day at the prayer service for Detective Redmond and let him know that we absolutely want him to reintroduce his statute for a provision to recall the Chicago mayor. We haven't needed a recall this bad since the Chevy Corvair.

Ford said the language is there. I said, "Well, I hope you're planning on presenting it with the new General Assembly come February, because we're certainly going to do everything we can to get the votes to make that statute rock solid." And this isn't necessarily just about Brandon Johnson. This is literally about having the ability, like every other city really does, to recall a politician. But he is absolutely devastating to our community, and to be able to have carte blanche to do that for four years with no provision to stop it from happening is ridiculous.

If we had a recall provision, he'd be sweating bullets and probably have another panic attack or two just waiting to see what the outcome of the vote would be in Springfield. I know he would be lobbying hard to stop it, but again, if you have the kingdom of transparency, why would you

want to stop it? If you think you're doing such a great job and you think you have the support of the people, which surveys show he does not, you shouldn't get in the way.

And we're going to want it for 2027. I've heard whispers of people who are already starting to line up their soldiers for the 2027 mayoral election. But it's a lot of the same old same olds, and that's troubling to me because same old same olds haven't done anything for this City.

Expectations from the Department in 2025...

Did you get everything you wanted for Christmas? Kind of how we feel.

As well as the Department has been run in large part by Larry Snelling, there's definitely a stubbornness about the administration not involving union recommendations. Apparently, the Department is the only one that can come up with great ideas that are best for our members, so that's probably the biggest knock I actually have.

I know he's proven to be a little bit... "delicate" is about the best word I can use. He doesn't like to be told that something is wrong, whether it's at his desk or not. Ultimately, everything ends up on his desk. There are probably unknown factors going on behind the scenes. I find it increasingly odd that almost four years removed from the beginning of COVID, we're still having debates about people being charged all over the place with fraud on PPP loans. But there hasn't been a single boss in a white shirt charged with PPP fraud. As if it didn't occur.

How does that not call into question your honesty and integrity? Everything they touched now becomes tainted. Are officers who were disciplined by these bosses now going to be afforded the same — basically no harm, no foul?

An internal priority...

We're going to take a wholesale look at the bylaws. We will sit down with the bylaws committee and go through recommendations from our attorneys, as well as issues the committee actually sees. Then we will turn that over to the executive board and put it up for a vote.

Generally, the Lodge has done these piecemeal, with votes in September for each change. I think as far as updating and merging all the changes, it will probably be a wholesale up or down vote. Not basically adding a new provision, just kind of bringing it into 2025.

Politically speaking...

Especially late in 2025, we will be preparing for the 2026 primaries. It's going to be a whole lot of Game of Thrones. Shuffling is to be expected on the state level. I think coming up in 2026 we're going to be as big a player in state politics as we have been to this point.

There could be a really sizeable void to fill. The expectation is that the governor may not run for reelection and will start focusing on his 2028 campaign for president, which would then cause a whole shuffleboard. It's expected that Senator Durbin will not be seeking reelection in 2026, so that's also going to throw the whole thing up for grabs. Never too early to get ready for that.

Once Durbin announces he's out, we know there are a few people lurking, especially Democrats who ran advertisements in this election cycle who had no reason to waste money on advertisements other than looking at some other prize. Like Durbin walking away and you want his seat.

A final thought...

Even with the Social Security Fairness Act passing, I think the right thing to do now is to push for legislation in D.C. to make police and fire pensions federally tax free.

It's a simple idea, really — literally a thank-you for risking your life. I've already talked to State Lodge President Chris Southwood about this. This was my idea from the get-go. I've explained at least what I think our strategy should be. It's not something I think I necessarily need the national FOP to handle at first. Of course, at some point they're going to have to get on board.

But we don't need the national FOP to try and take credit for our idea and getting it off the ground. We're going to target both sides of the aisle in both houses and find chief co-sponsors for the language to be drafted and presented in this next Congress. Because with the Republican control, they say they support first responders. Well, here's your opportunity to prove it.

That should give us something to do. A lot going on, and I hope all our members will get on the bus. Because to get it done for our benefit, this Lodge needs you on board.

Reflection and Renewal Around the New Year



MICHAEL
METTE

As we stand at the threshold of a new year, it is an opportune moment for reflection, renewal, and recommitment to our mission as police officers. The past year has undoubtedly brought its share of challenges, triumphs, and lessons learned. Now, as we turn the page, we are presented with a renewed opportunity to focus on one of the most critical aspects of our profession: officer wellness.

As a fellow officer, I am deeply aware of the sacrifices and dedication each of you – both active and retired officers – brings to this profession. Policing is not just a job. It is a calling that demands unwavering commitment. Every day, active officers step into a world where unpredictability is the norm, and their dedication to public safety inspires pride and admiration. Meanwhile, retired officers have paved the way with their invaluable contributions and sacrifices, serving as the foundation for the progress we continue to build upon. Yet, none of this is possible without ensuring the well-being of every officer, both on and off duty.

This year, let us make wellness our top priority. Policing is inherently stressful, and the mental and physical health of officers is critical to our effectiveness and safety. A commitment to wellness means recognizing that it is not a sign of weakness to seek support but a testament to our strength and resilience. Let us resolve to take advantage of available resources, participate in peer support initiatives, and encourage one another to prioritize self-care. Whether it's regular exercise, mindfulness practices, counseling, or simply taking time to rest, every step toward wellness contributes to our overall strength as a team.

As your first vice president, I am committed to advocating for the resources and support systems you need to thrive. This includes ensuring access to mental health services, developing wellness programs, and creating a culture where open discussions about stress and trauma are normalized. By fostering an environment where officers feel supported and valued, we can reduce burnout, improve morale, and enhance our collective ability to serve effectively.

Wellness is not just about individual efforts but also about building strong relationships within our ranks and our communities. By fostering open communication and understanding, we can bridge divides and work together to address the issues that matter most. When we take care of ourselves, we are better equipped to connect with those we serve and to make a positive impact.

In addition, the evolving nature of our profession demands that we remain adaptable and committed to continuous learning. As a union, we will continue to push for access to the best training and professional development opportunities, ensuring that every officer has the tools needed to succeed. Together, we can stay ahead of the curve and be better equipped to meet the challenges of modern policing.

As we look ahead, it is also essential to celebrate the successes and

milestones that lie before us. Every positive interaction, every life saved, and every crime prevented is a testament to your hard work and dedication. Active officers can take pride in their ongoing contributions, while retired officers can take solace in the enduring legacy they have left behind. These achievements, past and present, serve as motivation to strive for even greater accomplishments in the months ahead.

The new year represents a fresh start, a chance to set new goals and renew our dedication to our mission. Let us enter this year with optimism and determination, ready to face the challenges and opportunities that come our way. By standing together as a united force, committed to our wellness and the safety of our communities, we can make 2024 a year of progress, resilience, and hope.

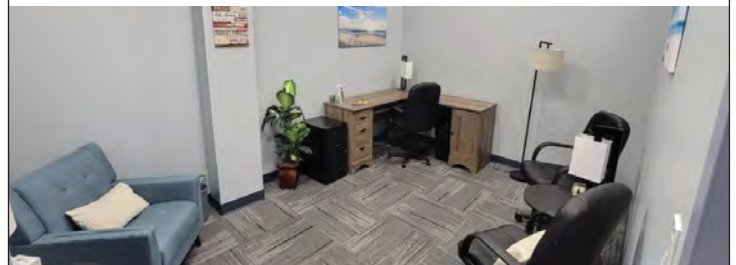
To all my fellow officers, both active and retired, thank you for your unwavering commitment and service. It is my honor to represent you and to advocate for your needs. May this new year bring you strength, safety, and fulfillment in all that you do. Together, let's make it a year to remember. As always, stay safe and healthy!



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Discipline Briefs



DAN GORMAN

Part of my report given at the monthly general members' meetings includes examples of arbitrator's decisions issued at binding summary opinion (BSO) arbitration hearings. Every investigation has its own individual circumstances, and in most cases, there are multiple allegations and redundant alleged "rule violations" (usually piled on by the investigators). However, below are examples of relatively simpler CR investigations and recent dispositions that have been awarded by the binding summary arbitrators. The following discipline briefs only provide a generalization of the allegations that were sustained in the CR investigation.

General Summary of Allegation	Original Recommended Penalty	Arbitrator's Award
Leave unprofessional voicemail	5-day suspension	Reprimand
Alleged "toss" an uncooperative subject's wallet	5-day suspension	2-day suspension
Improper custodial search after a controlled narcotics buy	30-day suspension	5-day suspension
Direct profanity to arrestee Fail to safeguard arrestee	5-day suspension 10-day suspension (2x's)	2-day suspension 5-day suspension (2x's)
RWOC without documenting	5-day suspension	Expunged
Unintentional discharge during scenario	5-day suspension	2-day suspension

QUOTE BOARD:

To add context to some of the above listed dispositions, below are just a few notable quotes taken directly from the arbitrator's written awards/decisions.

Quote from the 6-page arbitration decision re: Leave unprofessional voicemail

"Officer ██████ is accused of threatening [the complainant] because he was having an intimate relationship with [the officer's wife]."

"There can be no dispute that Officer ██████ engaged in wrongdoing when he made inappropriate comments on the voicemail of [the complainant]. While Officer ██████ may not have realized that he was leaving [the complainant] a message at the time of the comments, he nonetheless did so."

"I agree with the Union that the unexplained almost 5-year delay from the date of the incident, November 21, 2018, until he was served with the discipline in November 2023, is excessive and a significant mitigating factor. However, the delay, standing alone, does not warrant the entire dismissal of the allegation."

Quote from the 7-page arbitration decision re: "Toss" uncooperative subject's wallet back to him

"It is clear that Officer ██████ did toss [the complainant's] wallet at him. Officer ██████ admitted that he "tossed" it in order to avoid [the complainant's] flailing arms, although he did not acknowledge that he "threw" the wallet. However, tossing the wallet was nevertheless inappropriate."

"An Officer must always attempt to remain calm and professional, even under adverse circumstances. I note that Officer ██████ should not have tossed or thrown the wallet at [the complainant]. While I understand that the situation was difficult, Officer ██████ should have been more careful in the manner in which he dealt with [the complainant]."

Quote from the 9-page arbitration decision re: Improper custodial search

"It is clear that Officers are required to comply with the Rules and Regulations of the Chicago Police Department. In the instant case, Officer ██████ did not comply with the relevant Department Rules and Policies when she engaged in an improper strip search. While Officer ██████ indicated that she did not realize at the time that her actions constituted an improper strip search, that does not release her from responsibility."

Quotes from the 16-page arbitration decision re: Profanity towards arrestee; fail to safeguard arrestee

"As to Officer ██████ I find that the City has proven that Officer ██████ engaged in the relevant violations. It is clear that Officer ██████ told [the arrestee] to "Go **** yourself." Officer ██████ admitted and was contrite about his error. Therefore, I find that the City has proven that Officer ██████ violated the relevant Rules."

"As to the charge that Officers ██████ and ██████ failed to safeguard [the arrestee], again, I agree with the Superintendent. Officers ██████ and ██████ were not the arresting Officers and thus, technically, [the arrestee] was not under their charge. However, they were nonetheless present in the TAC Office adjacent to the holding cell. While it was not primarily their responsibility to safeguard [the arrestee], as sworn Officers, they had an obligation to safeguard ██████."

Quote from the 8-page arbitration decision re: RWOC without documenting

"After careful review of the voluminous record, which includes over 300 attachments and many Officers, I find that the City has

not met its burden to prove that Officer ██████ violated the relevant Rules. I make this determination based on a number of reasons.”

“I find that Officer ██████ did nothing improper during the incident.”

Quote from the 6-page arbitration decision re: Unintentional weapons discharge (twice)

“On reviewing the record of this incident, COPA noted it as a serious violation, and recommended a two day suspension. The commanders in Command Channel Review agreed that two days was the appropriate measure of discipline. At the Superintendent’s level, then Superintendent Eddie Johnson decided that a five day

suspension was more in conformity with similar cases. “

“For a Superintendent to increase a penalty beyond that recommended by COPA, and beyond the recommendations in CCR, is something of a black swan event. It can happen, but it is quite rare. When it does happen, experience suggests that there are specific factors in play. Here, there is simply a sentence saying that he believes five days is more consistent with the penalties in similar cases. There is no explanation of what cases are being compared, or why COPA is not aware of this harsher standard.”

“Where there is this big a variation between the Superintendent’s penalty, and that agreed upon by both COPA and the commanders, the Department has some obligation to explain that variation, so as to negate any suggestion of arbitrariness.”

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Injury On Duty Recurrence Claims



MONICA
ORTIZ

When an officer has a certified-approved injury on duty and later needs treatment for the injury, the Appendix N process with the Medical Service Section is crucial. This process, outlined in the contract, is the standard procedure for handling such cases. Recently, we've had officers encounter issues with this process, prompting me to bring this to your attention. The medical service section does not always explain the recurrence process.

Suppose you need treatment for an injury or illness you believe is related to an IOD. The medical section will have you complete a TO: FROM: to the medical director, asking for the year and date of the claim and what pain or discomfort you are experiencing related to your injury on duty. The medical section physician will evaluate the claim. The medical section physician can concur and give you a referral or send you for a relatedness examination. In that case, you can select a physician from the list of available physicians and schedule an appointment with a doctor for a relatedness examination. Officer, you choose the doctor you want to see from a list of available doctors. Do not let the medical section select a doctor for you. The doctor conducting the relatedness exam will submit a report to the medical service section with a conclusion of his exam. The parties may accept the referral physician's findings, which shall be final and binding for the officer and his employer. If the officer or employer does not agree with the conclusion from the referral in the above step, they both have the option to seek an Independent Medical Exam (IME). The officer will be given a list of IME doctors to choose from and must have at least two doctors to select for the IME exam. The list of IME doctors should be for

the appropriate medical specialty.

The IME physician shall consider all documents and medical records. Officers, when you go to these exams, please take copies of medical records if this applies to a treating physician supporting that the recurring injury you claim is related. These records may include any test X-rays, MRI, or diagnostic tests and letters from doctors' evaluations supporting the relatedness. Refrain from relying on the medical section to send documents that may paint a complete picture of how this injury is related. I don't think the medical service section, as part of the police department, is concerned about your care. The medical service section appears more interested in aggressively protecting the city against more IOD claims. I'm bringing this up because I have concerns about how the city handles this process and the transparency of the Appendix N process. We have asked that the city add more doctors to the list of IME exam doctors. It's the same list of doctors performing the IME and not returning in favor of our IOD members. I understand there will be instances where an injury is unrelated and is clear from all the accurate documents. My concern has been from some grievances I've handled in which it was clear an officer's injury is related to the Officer's original injury on duty. The IME returned with a conclusion that did not favor those officers. If you are an officer who needs to go to the medical service section because of a recurring IOD, please feel free to call me, and we can discuss the process.

Another thing I've seen occur and should not is an officer going in for a recurrence and not being sent for a relatedness exam. That step is skipped and is sent directly for an IME exam. If that occurs, please call me.

Please stay safe, and God bless you.

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Care Package Mission Accomplished



ROB NOCEDA

Happy New Year to you and your families.

To wrap up the holidays, our care packages were sent out. Our members are already receiving their packages all across the world. The CPD Heroes Care Package Drive would not be possible without the following people: The Lodge 7 Military Committee, Will and Arlene Andino, Dave DiSanti, Matt Beesley, Maria Flores, Karissa Dedaro. Additional thanks goes to the following individuals and organizations who donated and contributed to this cause: Brotherhood for the Fallen, Rick Cabarello, Cara Costello, Robert Rutherford, St. Francis Borgia School, Alderman Silvana Tabares, Alderman Gardiner, Alderman Lopez, Alderman O'Shea, Alderman Napolitano, Deputy Chief Migdalia Bulnes, Lt. Thomas Hanrahan, Lt. Patrick M. McGarry, Det. Tracy Wright, PO Kelly Vo, Sgt. Alma Price, Margaret Domanus at XOX Hair Studios, Ponni Arunkumar, M.D, Chief Medical Examiner. Eve Gambla and Kerry Rost with Care kits foundation, Shelly Frizelis, Mrs. C. Hansen, Mr. Goodman (Emerald Society) The Chicago Police Chaplains unit, Dan Brandt, President Annie Ryan with Chamberlain University, Ina Zimmerman and Alicia Martin.

We thank you for all your help and donations.

Chicago Police Marines Host Army/Navy Game and Spartan Sword Ceremony

Go Marines, I mean Navy. Navy dominated this year's game. But it was the hard work and dedication of the Chicago Police Marines and Commandant Paul Zogg that put on a spectacular event. The hall was filled with camaraderie and much esprits de corps. Part of the ceremony at the end was the Spartan Sword ceremony. The sword ceremony was brought by Steve Losos, a veteran himself. The attached excerpt is from spartansword.org

"The Spartan Sword was created in Sept, 2016 by taking donated steel from the 9/11 wreckage of World Trade Center's 1 and 2, and forging them into a replica of the warfighter's sword that was carried in battle by the ancient Spartans. The Spartan Sword serves as the physical embodiment of the Spartan Pledge, an oath authored by Iraq War veteran, Boone Cutler, as a means to mitigate the excessive suicide rate found in the military veteran community. Since

2016, the Spartan Sword has been traveling around the country in an effort to raise awareness and combat the suicide epidemic in the veteran community."

The Spartan Sword ceremony was a very touching moment for me. In November, I lost a longtime friend from high school to suicide. We went into the Marines together. He was awarded the Purple Heart and was a combat veteran. We had a friendship that lasted 25 years. His legacy leaves behind his wife, an adult son and 3 small kids. I am glad he got his rightful military honors funeral. Efen Chavez, Vaya con Dios.

God bless you, Lodge 7. We are here for you.





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An Update on the Sergeant's List



JIM
JAKSTAVICH

Hello again, officers, both active and retired. I would like to start out by saying congratulations to all of you that took the most recent sergeant's promotional exam. The scores were emailed out on Dec. 18, at around 3 p.m. Although scores were emailed directly to the participants, many still called the lodge and were unclear as to what their rank order number was due to the multiple boxes and numbers. Well, your final rank order score is the number listed in the box labeled final assessment composite score, the last box in the second column. It was a pleasure reading so many familiar names in the top 10 percent of the rank order list. I know you will be phenomenal supervisors one day and it gives me hope that we are going to continue to be the best police department in the nation.

The top 10 percent of the rank order list contained many officers who still do not have enough time for the job to be promoted. The requirements to be promoted to the rank of sergeant, you must have five years of continuous service along with your 18-month probationary period. That means you need a total of six-and-a-half years to enter promotional training. Once a sergeant promotional class is announced, those candidates who do not have the six-and-a-half years of service will be deferred until they have the time on the job. They will remain eligible and be at the top of the list for the next

promotional class. Hopefully they will accrue their service time before the promotional list is taken down. As far as how long the sergeants promotional list will remain, if they follow this most recent announcement, it appears that it will only stand for three years.

I personally know so many outstanding working police officers that were in the next 50 or so waiting to be promoted on the old list. Once the announcement was made in the president's Friday update video that the old list was now "dead," many called me in disbelief. I know how hard they studied, juggling work and family, only to find out that their chance of promotion was over. That surely seems to be the duality of this career, that list was taken down and many officers became deflated and discouraged, while days later, others celebrated with receiving their rank order scores. Please continue to work at your dreams of a promotion on this job, we need you, and this department needs solid working officers with experience. For those of you that were successful and are in the top 300 on this rank order list, know that your chances are extremely high of getting promoted. Please ensure that you have your educational requirement (60 credit hours) on file with the human resources department, so you do not get passed over for a promotion. If you need the college credits, sign up immediately for tuition reimbursement and get your butt back in school! Congratulations to all. I'm sure this was a much needed and early Christmas present for so many. Happy New Year to all and stay safe.

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Introducing Your Newest Lodge Field Rep



MICHAEL COLLINS

Hello to all my fellow brothers and sisters. My name is Michael "Mick" Collins, and I am your newest Chicago John Dineen Lodge No. 7 Field Representative. I am a Southsider who resides in the Mt. Greenwood neighborhood and come from a family of Chicago police officers. I proudly joined the department in 2008, and have spent my career working in 005, 006, 022, Bureau of Organized Crime, and the Bureau of Counterterrorism working mostly as a Gang/Tact, and Intelligence Officer.

I first became involved with FOP business in 2018 as a district tactical representative, and later became the 022nd District unit representative. In 2023, I was elected FOP Chicago Lodge #7 sergeant-at-arms, and proudly serve on the Board of Directors. In addition, I am also assigned to the legal defense, grievance, and

negotiations committees, where I assist officers with the grievance process and serve as counsel for officers giving audio disciplinary statements.

Going forward I will be taking over legal defense for the membership, replacing the legendary Fernando Flores who just retired after a long and dedicated career with FOP. I will be working hand in hand with our team of FOP attorneys to make sure all our members get the best representation in their time of need. I will also co-chair the legal defense committee with First Vice President Mike Mette.

I have always been known as a copper's cop, who is willing to fight for the best interests of both active and retired members and will continue to do so as your field representative. My phone is always on, and my door will always be open. I look forward to working for all of you. Stay safe!

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A Message to Our Officers



KENYATTA GAINES

I was optimistic about having updated resolutions for the CIT, Bike, and LEMART stipends. Regrettably, I have not received any concrete information to disseminate. I have been in constant communication with the city regarding the stipends. However, the necessary approvals have not been agreed upon at the department level. I did stress that during contract negotiations, a standard and expectations were set that should be honored. As the city continues to move at a snail's pace. We will stay on top of this!

On a lighter note, the recent sergeant's promotional exam has undoubtedly brought a mix of emotions to many of our officers. For those who achieved high scores and are moving forward in their careers, we offer our sincere congratulations. However, for those who may have fallen short of their goals this time, we want to offer a message of unwavering support and encouragement.

It's crucial to remember that one exam does not define your

value as an officer, nor your potential for growth within the Chicago Police Department. You are the backbone of this department, the individuals who tirelessly serve our neighborhoods every day. Your willingness, courage, and commitment to upholding the law are qualities that cannot be measured by a single test score.

Disappointment is natural after an exam like this. Therefore, I urge you to channel that energy into professional development and seek out continued opportunities for growth.

Utilize available training programs, and online resources to enhance your skills and knowledge.

Remember, your knowledge and experience are invaluable assets. Even if you don't achieve a supervisory role today, you can still significantly impact the community and the officers around you. Don't let this setback deter you from pursuing your career goals. Continue to strive for excellence and never stop learning and growing. We believe in you, and we support you in your journey. Stay safe.



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Honoring Sisters and Brothers who have passed

Name	Status	Age	Date of Passing
Marvin Zerwekh	Retired	79	March 20, 2023
Robert F. Anderson	Retired	82	December 31, 2023
James W. Laska	Retired	93	September 5, 2024
Michael T. Callahan	Retired	79	November 1, 2024
Albert M. Krueger	Retired	80	November 30, 2024
John J. Weller	Retired	81	November 30, 2024
Harley M. Schinker	Retired	77	December 6, 2024
Jimmy Roberts	Retired	98	December 6, 2024
Stephen Strzepek	Retired	73	December 11, 2024
Tyrone Tate	Retired	68	December 16, 2024
Robert Dvorak	Retired	89	December 21, 2024
Bridget Czubernat	Unit 008	54	December 22, 2024
Dominic Squillaci	Retired	93	December 23, 2024
Roman Bokowski	Retired	91	December 25, 2024

Retiree Meetings

Check the contact info listed with each location to confirm meetings are being held

<p>North First Tuesday of the month @ 9 a.m. D'Agostino's Pizza and Pub 7530 W. Oakton St., Niles Steve Marchfield 773-771-0877</p> <p>The Northsiders' Luncheon Third Wednesday of January, April, July, October @ noon Suparossa, Chicago Paul Vitaioli, 312-402-1040</p> <p>South Second Wednesday of month @ 10 a.m. Jedi's Garden, Oak Lawn</p> <p>8-Ball Luncheon Last Wednesday of month @ noon Les Brothers, Oak Lawn Dorothy Piscitelli, 773-972-0139</p>	<p>Bomb and Arson Second Monday of month @ 9 a.m. Fiesta Tapatia Restaurant Chicago Ross Horne, 312-613-9182</p> <p>Crime Lab, ETs, Forensic Services and Mobile Unit First Tuesday of month @ noon Flap-Jacks Restaurant, Oak Lawn</p> <p>Orland Park Law Enforcement Organization Third Thursday of month @ 7:30 p.m. Orland Park Civic Center Orland Park</p> <p>Survivors Lunch Second Saturday of month @ 11 a.m. Beverly Woods Restaurant Chicago</p>	<p>Public Housing Unit (North, South and Administration) First Wednesday of month @ 10 a.m. George's Restaurant, Chicago Maurice Brown, 773-577-0154</p> <p>Arizona Retirees Third Thursday of month @ 11 a.m. Eagle Buffet at Casino Arizona 524 N. 92nd St. Scottsdale, Arizona Brian DuFour, 623-521-6146 or bdu4@aol.com</p> <p>Arkansas Retirees Third Friday of month @ noon Elks Lodge Mountain Home, Arkansas Bob Zdora, 870-405-5407</p>	<p>Florida Retirees First Wednesday of month @ 1 p.m. Cop Shop, Cape Coral, Florida Tom Faragoi, 239-770-7896</p> <p>Michigan Retirees First Thursday of month @ 8 a.m. Macks on Main 101 W. Cedar Ave. Gladwin, Michigan John Nielson 989-324-0877 jnnielson@gmail.com</p> <p>Northern Illinois/Southern Wisconsin Retirees Second Thursday of month Herner's Hideaway N202 Williams Road Genoa City, Wisconsin</p>	<p>Hellenic American Police Association Northsiders Retiree Breakfast First Monday of month @ 10:00 a.m. Burgundy Restaurant 5959 W. Irving Park Rd., Chicago</p> <p>Hellenic American Police Association Southsiders Retiree Breakfast Second Monday of month @ 10:00 a.m. Valois Cafeteria 1518 E. 53rd St., Chicago</p> <p>25th District Retirees 1st Wednesday of the Month Tavern on the Point 6724 N. Northwest Hwy 7 P.M.</p>
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Bi-Lingual Compensation



**PAT
FIORETTO**

It should come as no surprise to the many police officers who work in the streets of Chicago that English is not the only language being spoken by the citizens who are served. Interestingly, over 30 percent of Chicago residents speak a language other than English at home. In fact, in Chicago alone, more than 40 different languages are spoken throughout the city, in addition to English. The most common languages spoken in Chicago include Spanish, Chinese, Polish, Tagalog, and Arabic (just to name a few).

Although speaking a second language is not a requirement to join the Chicago Police Department, it is often helpful. Indeed, the department actually rewards officers who do speak a second language while at work with extra pay, under certain circumstances. However, very specific requirements and conditions must be met both to become eligible for and receive such pay.

Several officers have asked the Lodge recently how they may become eligible to receive “Bi-Lingual Compensation” while working. A quick review is helpful. We first start by looking at the language found in the contract. Specifically, Article 26, captioned, “Wages,” contains the following:

Section 26.2 — Bi-lingual Compensation

All Officers covered by the terms of this Agreement who are capable of reading, writing and translating a language other than English into the English language and English into a language other than English who are directed to perform such services by a supervisor outside of his or her unit shall be entitled to compensation for the time spent performing such services at the rate of time and one-half.

Officers who are directed to report to duty or remain on duty to perform such services at a time other than their regularly-assigned duty hours or perform such services during their regularly-scheduled duty hours will receive a minimum of two hours of compensation and such compensation will be at the rate of time and one-half.

In order to be eligible for the benefits of this section, an Officer must be certified by the Department and placed on an eligibility list. The Department may promulgate rules to determine who is capable to perform such services. Subject to the above criteria and the ability to perform the assigned task, opportunities to provide such services will be rotated on the basis of the Officer’s seniority.

What does this mean? If I believe I am capable of reading, writing and translating a language other than English into the English language and vice versa, do I automatically receive more pay during my tour of duty? Not necessarily.

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Update To The Update Of Search Based Upon Smell Of Cannabis



TIM
GRACE

The Illinois Supreme Court is once again back at it with the smell of cannabis in the vehicle being enough to validate a search. For the few people who pay attention to this writer's submission in the FOP magazine, you will take note that this has been a favorite topic of discussion. However, in all fairness, it also appears to be a favorite discussion for the Illinois Supreme Court. The Court has now given law enforcement guidance twice in the last three months on the smell of cannabis in a vehicle and the right to conduct a warrantless search.

On Sept. 19, 2024, the Illinois Supreme issued an opinion in *People v. Redmond*, 2024 Lexis 464, that held the smell of alone was not enough to search a vehicle. Then On Dec. 5, 2024, our Supreme Court stated the smell may be enough to search. In *People v. Molina*, 2024 Lexis 832, the court made a distinction with burnt cannabis versus fresh cannabis. The smell of fresh cannabis would not be a violation of the Fourth Amendment while the smell of burnt cannabis alone would be. Very interesting turn of events.

Let's start with Redmond. In Redmond, the officer pulled over a vehicle for speeding on Interstate 80 in Henry County. The officer approached and smelled a very strong odor of burnt cannabis. Mr. Redmond was asked to exit the vehicle where it was learned he had a valid license and proof of insurance. The officer honestly testified that there was nothing else suspicious or concerning about the stop and there were no signs of impairment. When asked about the smell, Redmond denied ingesting nor admitted to the possession of cannabis. A search was conducted, and a loaded firearm was recovered. The Supreme Court stated that, "In short, Officer Combs's detection of the strong odor of burnt cannabis coming from the vehicle certainly established reasonable suspicion to investigate further. [Officer] Combs reasonably investigated whether Redmond had violated the Vehicle Code and whether Redmond was driving impaired. When his further investigation did not yield any inculpatory facts, the quantity of evidence never advanced on the continuum from reasonable suspicion to probable cause to search. Therefore, the search was unreasonable and unlawful,

and the circuit court properly granted Redmond's motion to suppress the evidence in this case." Hence, the smell, with nothing more, would not be a basis to search the car. However, in Redmond the court was looking to the smell of "burnt" cannabis not "fresh cannabis." You have to hand it to those Supreme Court justices - they certainly know how to dissect a case and rightfully so.

In Molina, the Supreme Court was confronted with a very similar situation, however it was the smell of fresh cannabis. This time the Illinois State Police pulled over a vehicle for speeding in Whiteside County on Interstate 88. One lesson to be learned is to stay off the interstate no matter the odor and certainly drive the speed limit. In Molina, the trooper eventually testified that he could detect the smell of fresh cannabis or raw cannabis coming from inside the car. A search was conducted and the passenger of the vehicle, Mr. Molina, was found to have several "joints" of cannabis and he was subsequently charged with class A misdemeanor amounts of cannabis by an automobile passenger. 625 ILCS 5/11-502.15(c). Do you notice something about that citation? It comes from the vehicle code not the Cannabis Regulation and Tax Act and Medical Act which is the statute that legalized the possession of cannabis for personal use. So now we must take a deeper dive into the minds of our great justices to figure out exactly where they are going on this distinction.

The vehicle code is clear in that it mandates that if cannabis is to be transported inside a vehicle it must be in a sealed, odor-proof, child-resistant cannabis container. However, Illinois has clearly legalized the possession of cannabis. If your reasonable articulable suspicion is the smell and yet the source of that smell is legal, how can you claim the person is breaking the law? The Supreme Court recognized the apparent contradiction and correctly stated that both concepts, even though they appear to be in opposition can actually exist in harmony. Essentially the Supreme Court stated that when an officer smells "fresh" or "raw" cannabis, there is probable cause to believe that a crime is being committed because if you transport your fresh cannabis around it must be in an odor-proof container. However, if you smell burnt cannabis, that odor may be legally coming from your clothing or person and

will not provide the probable cause to search. The court summed it all up by stating that “the odor of raw cannabis coming from a vehicle strongly indicates the current presence of cannabis. . . [and] it is almost certain that the cannabis is being possessed in violation of the vehicle code’s odor-proof container requirement.” Makes sense. The end result is, the odor of burnt cannabis alone, is not enough to search, however the odor of “fresh” or “raw” cannabis alone would be enough for a warrantless search. Thank you to the Illinois Supreme Court. A great new year to all.



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An Update from Springfield



DAVE SULLIVAN

In early November, the General Assembly met briefly in the two weeks prior to Thanksgiving. As anticipated, the schedule was light. Both chambers published their lame duck and spring schedules. The General Assembly will reconvene from Jan. 4 to Jan. 7, for lame duck session, just before the inauguration of the 104th General Assembly on Jan. 8.

In addition, the four caucuses selected their leaders, who are inevitably elected at inauguration. Senate Democrats chose President Don Harmon to serve another term. The Senate Republicans voted to retain Minority Leader John Curran, and the House Republicans voted to retain Minority Leader Tony McCombie. The House Democrats chose returning Speaker Emanuel “Chris” Welch to serve a third term.

On Jan. 8, the 104th General Assembly will be sworn in with only a few new members, mainly those appointed during the 103rd General Assembly. They include:

REPRESENTATIVES

5th House District: Representative Kimberly Du Buclet (D)

9th House District Representative Yolonda Morris (D)

31st House District: Representative-Elect Michael Crawford (D)

36th House District: Representative-Elect Rick Ryan (D)

37th House District: Representative Patrick Sheehan (R)

45th House District: Representative-Elect Martha Deuter (D)

53rd House District: Representative Nicolle Grasse (D)

57th House District: Representative Tracy Katz Muhl (D)

76th House District: Representative-Elect Amy Murri Briel (D)

82th House District: Representative Nicole La Ha (R)

104th House District: Representative Brandun Schweizer (R)

SENATORS

20th Senate District: Senator-Elect Graciela Guzmán (D)

37th Senate District: Senator-Elect Li Arellano Jr. (R)

53rd Senate District: Senator-Elect Chris Balkema (R)

COGFA updated its analysis of employment trends. The analysis examined changes in the composition of local economies. Non-farm jobs in Illinois grew over the past year by 0.6 percent, compared to the national growth rate of 1.3 percent.

For the third year in a row, Illinois has seen growth in the number of corporate relocation and expansion projects. In FY24, there were 440 projects, or a 15 percent increase over the prior FY. The FY24 projects are estimated to create nearly 13,000 jobs. The biggest project announced last year was Gotion’s \$2 billion battery-assembly plant planned for Manteno, Illinois.

The Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) announced up to an additional \$24 million is available funds through the Illinois National Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (NEVI) Program. The eligible projects must be designed to have at least four fast-charging ports that can charge an EV in less than 30 minutes. The goal of the program is to have charging stations spread out across the state so that there is always a charging station within 50 miles.

The State Board of Elections certified the results of this year’s General Election. Voter turnout was nearly 70 percent, or 5.7 million ballots cast out of more than 8 million registered voters. This represents the fourth lowest turnout in nearly 50 years. More with more than 53 percent of votes cast by mail/early voting.

Gov. Pritzker and Colorado’s governor formed a new non-partisan colation to be privately funded with the goal of providing governors with toolkits to support democratic institutions.

The governor also appointed Gia Biagi to replace retiring Secretary Omer Osman at the Illinois Department of Transportation. And, after Mariyana Spyropoulos successfully won her race for the Clerk of the Circuit Court of Cook County, the governor appointed Beth McElroy Kirkwood to Spyropoulos’ vacancy on the Board of the MWRD.

In November, a federal judge struck down Illinois’ assault weapons ban, the Protect Illinois Communities Act. The judge reasoned that the ban violated the Second Amendment on the grounds that it deprived citizens of weapons that are commonly owned and used. In December, the 7th Circuit overturned the ruling, allowing for enforcement of the assault weapon ban. The 7th Circuit’s decision will likely be appealed to the U.S. Supreme Court.

We hope you had an exciting and fruitful 2024 and are ready to ring in the new year.

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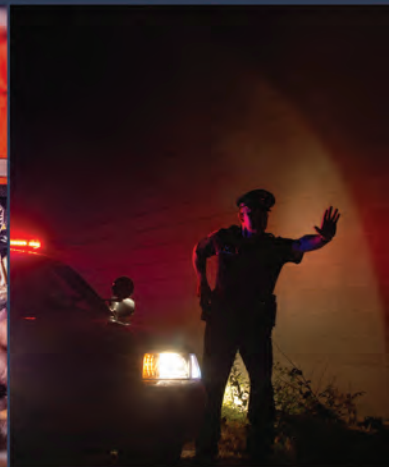
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A Memo from The “Boss”



RABBI
MOSHE WOLF

As we enter a new year with new hopes, we pause, to thank G-d for the year gone by. There were many trials, tribulations, challenges, and tears, as well as many blessings, good times and laughs, the bottom line is, here we are we made it. So, we pray that the coming year brings with it, best of blessings to all of us, for a healthy and prosperous new year. We also pray for a bit of extra strength and faith during those trying times. It brings to mind a memo that helps keep things in perspective.

“A Memo from The Boss.”

To my dear child, today I will be handling all of your problems. Please remember that I do not need your help.

If life happens to deliver a situation to you that you cannot handle, do not attempt to resolve it,

kindly put it in the “SFGTD” (something for G-d to do) box. It will be addressed in My time, not yours. Once the matter is placed into the box, do not hold on to it.

If you find yourself struck in traffic, don’t despair. There are people in this world for whom driving is an unheard-of privilege.

Should you have a bad day at work, think of the man who has been out of work for years.

Should you despair over a relationship gone bad, think of the person who has never known what it’s like to love and be loved in return.

Should you grieve the passing of another weekend, think of the person in dire straits, working 12 hours a day, seven days a week to feed their children.

Should your car break down, leaving you miles away from assistance, think of the paraplegic person who would love the opportunity to take that walk.

Should you notice new gray hair in the mirror, think of the cancer patient in chemo who wishes she had hair to examine.

Should you find yourself at a loss and pondering what life is all about, asking what is my purpose? Be thankful. There are those who didn’t live long enough to get the opportunity.

Should you find yourself the victim of other people’s bitterness, ignorance, smallness or insecurities, remember, things could be worse. You could be them! As the saying goes on the street, “when life gives you lemons, make lemonade.” One of my favorite lines, “find something to laugh about every day, even if you have to look in the mirror.”

One more beautiful short story to help keep life in the proper perspective.

“Adjust To Life.”

A man and his girlfriend were married. It was a large celebration. All of their friends and family came to see the lovely ceremony and to partake of the festivities and celebrations. A wonderful time was had by all. The bride was gorgeous in her white wedding gown and the groom was very dashing in his black tuxedo. Everyone could

tell that the love they had for each other was true. A few months later, the wife comes to the husband with a proposal. “I read in a magazine, a while ago, about how we can strengthen our marriage,” she offered. “Each of us will write a list of the things that we find a bit annoying with the other person. Then, we can talk about how we can fix them together and make our lives happier together.”

The husband agreed. So, each of them went to a separate room in the house and thought of the things that annoyed them about the other. They thought about this question for the rest of the day and wrote down what they came up with. The next morning, at the breakfast table, they decided that they would go over their lists. “I’ll start,” offered the wife.

She took out her list. It had many items on it. Enough to fill three pages, in fact. As she started reading the list of the little annoyances, she noticed that tears were starting to appear in her husband’s eyes.

“What’s wrong?” she asked. “Nothing,” the husband replied, “keep reading your list.”

The wife continued to read until she had read all three pages to her husband. She neatly placed her list on the table and folded her hands over it.

“Now, you read your list, and then we’ll talk about the things on both of our lists,” she said happily.

Quietly the husband stated, “I don’t have anything on my list. I think that you are perfect the way that you are. I don’t want you to change anything for me. You are lovely and wonderful, and I wouldn’t want to try and change anything about you.”

The wife, touched by his honesty and the depth of his love for her and his acceptance of her, turned her head and wept. Let us remember, in life, there are enough times when we are disappointed, depressed and annoyed. We don’t really have to go looking for them. We have a wonderful world that is full of beauty, light and promise.

Why waste time in this world looking for the bad, disappointing or annoying when we can look around us and see the wondrous things before us?

I believe that we are happiest we see and praise the good and try our best to forget the bad. Nobody’s perfect, but we can find perfectness in them and change the way we see them.

Before we close a bit of humor from the “Moshe Files” to keep you smiling.

“Doing the Math”

A math teacher asked her student, “Billy, if both of your parents were born in 1967, how old are they now?”

After a few moments, Billy answered, “It depends.”

“It depends on what?” the teacher asked.

“It depends on whether you ask my father or my mother.”

One more short one:

Mr. Jones is driving past the state mental hospital when his left rear tire suffers a flat. While he is changing the tire, another car goes by, running over the hub cap in which he was keeping the lug nuts. The nuts are all knocked into a nearby storm drain.

He is at a loss for what to do and is about to go call a cab when he hears a shout from behind the hospital fence, where one of the inmates has been watching the whole thing.

“Hey, pal! Why don’t you just take one lug nut off each of the other three wheels and use them to replace the missing ones? That’ll hold your tires on until you can get to a garage or something.”

Mr. Jones is startled by the patient’s seeming rationality, but realizes the plan will work, and installs the spare tire without incident. Before he leaves, he calls back to the patient. “You know, that

was pretty sharp thinking. Why do they have you in there?”

The patient smiles and says, “I’m in here because I’m crazy, not because I’m stupid.” It’s called thinking out of the box!

Season’s greetings, and a very happy new year to you and your loved ones. MAY 2025 BE ONE OF OUR BEST ONES YET!

On behalf of ALL the Chaplains May G-d bless you, keep you safe and always keep you in his loving care. Amen.

Should you need an ear to listen, a shoulder to lean on, or perhaps have some good humor to share, don’t hesitate to give us a call.

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FATHER DAN BRANDT

As you know, an Oak Park Police detective was killed in the line of duty on Nov. 29. While they have a chaplain program that is staffed by local volunteer clergy, we received a mutual aid call for peer support. I have never been more proud of our peer support members who rose to the occasion. Kudos! May Oak Park Police Detective Allan Reddins rest in peace!

On Dec. 5, we hosted our Gold Star Families for a tree-lighting ceremony at Gold Star Families Memorial and Park, followed by Police Chaplains Ministry's annual pre-holiday dinner at Soldier Field's club level. As you'll see, we were joined by Superintendent Larry Snelling, retired Superintendent Phil Cline, and even Santa Claus!



On Dec. 15, the CPD Enforcers football team hosted a toy drive, where they collected over 1,000 gifts to be donated to a local transitional home for abused women and children. Here you'll see some CPD members and supporters gathered along with their donated goods. The Enforcers also very generously and regularly raise funds for Police Chaplains Ministry and our outreach to the beloved Gold Star Families. Right there at the bar, we had the chance to pray together as we enter this most magical time of the year, reminding all present that this NO wrong way or place to give thanks to God.



Also on Dec. 15, a little later on, a group of volunteers gathered for a few hours to assemble 300 care packages that I personally deliver to officers “blessed” (or is it “stuck working on”) Christmas night and New Year’s Eve. Each care package contains candy, beef jerky, gum, a note pad and St. Michael card.



Save the date! Your department chaplains are hosting a day-long marriage retreat on Friday, June 27, 2025, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the Lake Katherine Nature Center and Botanical Gardens in Palos Heights. We are excited to invite all active and retired Chicago Police Officers and their spouses to participate in this program intended to strengthen relationships, improve communication and achieve better work-life balance. This retreat will provide a safe and supportive environment for couples to connect, share experiences and learn valuable relationship-building skills tailored to the unique challenges of law enforcement life. Childcare is included. Please contact Chaplain Kimberly Lewis-Davis for more information at kimberly.lewisdavis@chicagopolice.org or 312-771-6638.

Fr. Dan Brandt, Directing CPD Chaplain
773/550-2369 (cell/text)
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Chicago Lodge 7 Awards



The Chicago John Dineen Lodge No. 7 presents the Appreciation Award to Blake-Lamb Funeral Home/Dignity Memorial. We at the FOP cannot express enough gratitude for the funeral services provided by Blake-Lamb. Your compassion, honor and respect shown to our departed brothers and sisters, as well as your ability to bring peace and comfort to their grieving families has been indispensable in their time of need. You have made the unbearable loss of our



brothers and sisters enduring by carrying out the arrangements with the highest level of respect, and honoring their families' wishes.

On behalf of Chicago John Dineen Lodge No. 7 and the officers of the Chicago Police Department, please accept the Appreciation Award. Thank you.

Chicago Lodge 7 Awards



On No. 18, 2024, after laying our Brother Enrique Martinez to rest, members of his family, his coworkers (Blue Family), and the FOP gathered at Bourbon Street for the funeral luncheon. While seated, the owner of Bourbon Street, Nick DiNovo, came to our table and stated that the Mayor of Merrionette Park had made a generous donation towards the luncheon bill. The officers in attendance were moved by the display of generosity. I reached out and emailed the Mayor Jose Nevarez and informed him that we at the FOP would like to present him with the Appreciation Award. His email response was simple and to the point: "It was my honor and our Village's honor to



support the luncheon. I can say our Village is pro law enforcement and I could not be prouder. I am also a police officer and wanted to show support to our profession."

Jose is currently a master sergeant with Illinois State Police and was elected mayor of Merrionette in 2021.

It is with our gratitude and respect that Chicago John Dineen Lodge No. 7 presents the Appreciation Award to Mayor Jose Nevarez.

Chicago Lodge 7 Awards



On July 4, 2021, while travelling northbound on the Dan Ryan Expressway, the officers from Unit 442 observed a huge plume of smoke and dust about a half mile ahead of them. Upon approach, the officers observed a rollover traffic crash. The officers immediately notified OEMC to get a CFD ambulance in route. The officers exited their squad car and approached the overturned vehicle. A crowd began to gather, and the officers learned that two people were still inside the vehicle. The officers, fearing that the vehicle would ignite, formulated a plan to extricate the elderly couple from the vehicle as it teetered on its side. The officers utilized a crowbar and remove the fragmented

windshield which allowed them to safely remove the elderly man and woman from the vehicle. The officers learned from the motorists that their vehicle was struck by an erratic driver which caused them to lose control. The offending vehicle had fled the scene upon impact. The motorists were transported to U of C Hospital for treatment.

It is with great appreciation that Chicago John Dineen Lodge No. 7 presents these officers with the Lifesaving Award.

FAIR AND SQUARE



Lodge 7 members take 30-hour bus ride to Washington, D.C. to compel U.S. Senate to finally pass Social Security Act that will be windfall for all public servants

■ BY MITCHELL KRUGEL

The Lodge 7-driven, 30-hour charter bus pilgrimage to Washington, D.C. on Dec. 10-11 to be part of the public workers rain-soaked rally demanding a call for a vote on the Social Security Fairness Act reverberated through the FOP and the profession with one text message. Lodge 7 Trustee Keith Carter, who joined President John Catanzara and nearly two dozen other active and retired members on the bus, sent out a selfie showing the poncho he donned for cover, the U.S. Capitol in the background and holding one of the signs the FOP made reading, “Call the BILL!!!”

Carter related how within seconds his phone blew up with nearly 400 responses of “Yeah, man,” “Glad you are out there,” “Let us know what happens” and the like. So Carter continued making the call alongside Lodge 7 members, FOP members from across the county, firefighters, teachers, postal workers and even veterans all rallying to get the U.S. Senate to vote to approve the Fairness Act that will get them all their social security benefits due and long overdue.

Lodge 7 member Tom Curran, who received a call about the bus trip the night before and quickly got on board, observed how the rain created precious irony. Perhaps following the lead of their postal worker sisters and brothers on hand, not rain nor sleet nor, well you know, was going to deter this group speaking out for fairness.

“Everybody’s legs were soaked or people that didn’t have a coat on were soaked head to toe,” Curran detailed. “But the one impressive thing is that nobody left. Not a single person walked off just because of the rain.”

Curran also described how surreptitious the rain proved to be when Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer, the man responsible for answering the call for the vote, came out to speak to the crowd. And 30 seconds later, drizzle turned into torrential downpour.

Eerily, a chant of “stop the steal” began echoing through the rally near the same spot as another rally in front of the Capitol. That’s how significant the action was bursting through this rally.

“Hey, we’re just asking for what we put in. And there was a chant of “stop the steal” because we felt like they’re keeping our money,” Curran added.

As National FOP President Patrick Yoes stepped up to the podium amid U.S. Senators and Reps and leaders from the AFL-CIO, International Association of Firefighters, American Federation of Government Employees, American Federation of Teachers and the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees voicing their support, he articulated why the crowd of 400-plus gathered in front of the Senate building would come here.

“Not a single person here is looking for a handout,” Yoes declared “We want what every working American is entitled to, and that is the same benefit that we paid for and paid into a system.”

Fair play

Political action for Lodge 7 can ignite in a split second, especially if there’s a great benefit at stake for members as was the case here. (FYI, the passage of the act now allows coppers to get the full amount of Social Security they paid in pre-law enforce-



ment employment, working side jobs, working in retirement and basically any other non-LEO work. As opposed to the 40 percent they were getting before Fairness.)

CPD Sergeant's Association President Jim Calvino was at the top of Catanzara's invite list for the bus ride. Calvino received a call on Sunday about being available to leave on Tuesday. And even though the sergeants are part of the Police Benevolent and Protective Association (PBPA), Catanzara noted that with both sides of the aisle supporting the Act, it was important to have a bipartisan representation from the police unions.

Calvino responded to Catanzara's text, "I'll be there," and he brought some of his active and retired sergeants along. They did not hesitate to brave the 30-hour round trip ride that one participant quipped seemed as daunting as a root canal.

When he returned from the trip, Carter actually had to have an emergency root canal. He said that's why the face he had in the selfie looked in such anguish.

But he would not have missed this. Moving things around in his schedule became no problem when recalling how much of a sore spot not getting Social Security had been for the people he knew on the job when retiring in 2017 after 30 years.

"I remember there's one guy, he was still calling Dan Rostenkowski, all kinds of MFs and SOBs and stuff," shared Carter, referring to the former U.S. Rep from Illinois who spearheaded the legislation that prevented public service workers from collecting full Social Security benefits 40 years ago. "I thought that would be something if we could get 100 percent of our benefits. So I changed some things around in my schedule to go out there. I thought that it was worth it."

Carter added that there was a palpable anticipation on the ride to D.C. He sensed that members were anxious to see if they could do something to further along the Fairness Act and get it passed.

When he received the call with a bus ticket, Lodge 7 retired member Milan Sipic happened to be in the City planning to attend a Christmas party at his old unit. But he changed plans for what he figured was a calling. And the camaraderie he antici-

pated at the party was present on the bus, reminding him how much he missed being around coppers.

Curran revealed that when he arrived at the FOP Hall at 9 a.m. on Dec. 10, members seemed pretty excited. No big speeches were made prior to departure. And there was no trepidation about the 14-plus hours ahead.

"We were unsure whether it was going to actually even come up for a vote, let alone pass. So we were obviously hoping that something like this would help push it," Curran continued. "The people I was sitting next to, we were definitely talking about that on the ride and just hoping that we get back the money that we put in."

Fair points

The Social Security Fairness Act repealed the Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP) and Government Pension Offset (GPO) that were added to the Social Security Act in 1983. According to a nonpartisan 2024 report, the WEP denied earned benefits to more than 1.7 million Americans, and the GPO hurt more than 420,000 Social Security beneficiaries. Additionally, more than 320,000 American retirees were impacted by both the WEP and the GPO.

Looking at it on a more personal level, a member like Sipic who had been paying into Social Security starting at 15 years old, and then when he was in the military and the reserve, as well as when working side jobs, took a substantial hit. He didn't want to share exact numbers, but submitted that a public servant – and he accentuates "servant" – who would have received \$1,000 per month as a private sector worker might get just \$250 per month. Over 20 years, that would amount to \$180,000.

He also referenced his mother-in-law and sister-in-law, who both worked as public servants, passed away before being able to collect any Social Security because the WEP and GPO prevented beneficiaries from getting the windfall.

"I do think it's sort of a scam of a system," Sipic vented.

Still, the reason to make the 30-hour round trip came down to



CONTINUED ON PAGE 34

one basic point.

“We’re not asking for a penny more than what we put in,” Curran reiterated. “We’re just asking to qualify for the same thing that everybody else does.”

Fair shake

Legislators, and Senators in particular, did not need any extra pomp and circumstance to take note of the rally. But it was not just thrown together.

A stage was set up to define the gathering space. Music played. Members of Congress who spoke were mainly Democrats, but there was also a bipartisan presence to an issue that was largely non-partisan.

“I don’t remember all their names, but they said were going to bring it to the floor to get this done for people that were in the public sector,” Carter reported.

Speakers from both sides of the aisle were explaining some cases that even their parents didn’t get their full Social Security. And many sounded like this:

“Fair is fair, and we’re going to get this done,” Democratic Senator Elizabeth Warren pledged, adding that activists have stood up for one another over the years to ensure workers get the benefits they deserve, and that it’s time for Congress to stand up for them.

Schumer coming out into the rain more or less surprised the attendees. And it was an even more pleasant surprise when he said, “I am here to tell you, we are going to call the vote. I’ve got my Democrats lined up to support it. We need 15 Republicans — let’s get them — and we’re going to have the vote. What’s hap-



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pening to you is unfair, un-American and I will fight it all the way.”

Calvino confirmed that a genuine cheer erupted after that. With Schumer’s promise, there seemed to be no way to rain on this parade.

“So we were like, ‘Ok, this is our best chance of getting it,’” Calvino continued. “And especially since the current administration is going out, I think, at least, I felt that this was one way for the Democrats to say, ‘We got you.’”

The rally culminated with a bit of a scorecard for Lodge 7 members to determine just who is on their side.

“Basically, with that all said, maybe the second important thing would be that we’re going to know who stands with labor and who doesn’t,” Curran commented with that keen insight he often shows when stepping up to the mic at general membership meeting as often as he does.

Fair deal

Upon reboarding the bus, Calvino characterized the feeling of attendees as “optimistic happiness.” And not just because he was prepared enough to bring spare shoes, socks and pants to change into on the ride home.

“Everything from my knees down were soaked because the umbrella doesn’t help that,” he added. “But it was worth it. We had to show, I don’t want to say force, but show them that this affected people from every walk of life. If I was soaked head to toe, I’d have been sitting on that bus happy.”

Carter disclosed that everybody on the bus was upbeat even though they were wet. And no members indicated when leaving that they thought the Fairness Act wouldn’t pass.

Sipic called the trip worthwhile because it brought attention to an injustice and riding 30 hours was worth it to be able to say your piece, so to speak, and make a statement.

“John cracked a joke as we were almost back that we’re going to turn a bus around in case they call it for a vote tomorrow morning,” Curran said. “And it’s funny, not one person said, ‘no.’ I’m like, ‘Let’s go.’”

Shortly after midnight on Dec. 21, 2024, the Senate voted 76-20 to pass the Social Security Fairness Act and send it to President Biden to sign into law. Once signed into law, the legislation’s effective date involves Social Security payments for months after December 2023, according to the text of the bill.

And when seeing that, Rep. Garret Graves of Louisiana and Rep. Abigail Spanberger of Virginia, who co-sponsored the bill in the recently concluded 118th Congress, made a joint statement with the last word on the Fairness Act.

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*Exclusions and limitations apply.

¹ <https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/health-topics/hospitalization.htm>

² Economic Well-Being of U.S. Households in 2022, May 2023

See the Certificates of Insurance for complete details. Hospital Indemnity insurance is underwritten by ACE Property & Casualty Insurance Company. Combined Insurance is a subsidiary of Chubb Ltd. This is a supplement to health insurance and is not a substitute for Major Medical or other minimal essential coverage. Hospital indemnity coverage provides a benefit for covered loss; neither the product name nor benefits payable are intended to provide reimbursement for medical expenses incurred by a covered person or to result in any payment in excess of loss.



THE FOOD PROVIDED WAS GREAT!

Thank You TO ALL!

**THANKS FOR SHOWING SOME LOVE TO THE ONES THAT SERVE & SACRIFICE TO KEEP US SAFE...
OUR HEROES,
OUR FIRST RESPONDERS!**



THANKS TO OUR CHRISTMAS CAROLERS!



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