



Fraternal Order of Police

CHICAGO LODGE 7

Chicago Police Magazine • April 2023



Officer Andrés Mauricio Vásquez Lasso

Chicago Police Department, Star #7649

End of Watch: March 1, 2023



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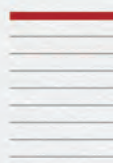
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IN THIS ISSUE OF CHICAGO LODGE 7 MAGAZINE

COVER STORY

HONORING ANDRÉS VÁSQUEZ LASSO

EOW: March 1, 2023



The loss of Brother Andrés Vásquez Lasso took one of the bright lights from the Chicago Police Department. This special tribute to his ultimate sacrifice includes recollections and praise from those who worked with him and the so many who loved Andrés and includes:

Watch words: Sisters and brothers who worked with Andrés on the third watch in the 8th District share stories about how they revered his desire to do the job and how much fun they had working with him..... **Page 37**

A walk to remember: Rob Swiderski, who is renowned for his marathon walks to honor and support Chicago Police Officers, stepped up again to create a special vigil and tribute to Andrés..... **Page 41**

A fond farewell: Family, friends and fellow officers offered emotional stories and sent up their love during an unprecedented funeral Mass..... **Page 42**

COVER DESIGN BY GINA CROTCHFELT

MESSAGES FROM LODGE 7

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On Board



A Goal and an Assist



Lodge 7 Magazine Main Number: 312-515-7523
Advertising: 201-370-4082
Editorial: 201-370-4082
Distribution: 201-880-7288
Subscriptions: subs@chicagofopmagazine.com
Email: cops@chicagofopmagazine.com
Website: www.chicagofopmagazine.com
Chicago FOP Lodge Main Number: 312-733-7776

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APRIL 2023 ■ VOLUME 9, NO. 4

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CHICAGO LODGE 7

Official Magazine
President's Report



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**JOHN
CATANZARA
JR.**

We need more like Andrés

I didn't know Andrés Vásquez Lasso. But just talking to officers that night he was shot, and to his partner, you got a sense of who he was and what was important to him. In today's world, it's pretty refreshing to see a kid of his age, of his generation, who was so grounded in family.

The stories about how he'd go out of his way on lunch to get ice cream, run it home to his wife and spend time with her and taking care of everybody tell me how Andrés was a stand-up guy, a real hero to his family and, of course, this City. He was probably what this Department could use another 2,000 of. Just a bright light extinguished well before its time.

That's something Andres shares with Ella. If not for the tragedy, we may never be having the discussion about how great they were and what positive aspects we should take from their memory. We might not have those conversations otherwise.

Let's look at a glass half full, that this is a great reminder of the type of officers who are coming on this job. It's like what happens in the storm. We forget the last time we had sunshine when a storm rolls in. It's the same thing with misdeeds. When a copper does something dumb, it gets into the news media cycle for a whole week. When a copper does something good, you might get one mention in an hour.

We will never lose sight of that smile you see on the cover of this issue. Andrés was an under-the-radar guy. Just did his job the right way every day. That will be a big part of his legacy. Let's hope the Department can get 2,000 more like Andrés.

The next four years

We officially began our new term as a Lodge 7 executive board on April 2, when all officers and trustees were sworn in at our installation luncheon. We held this event on the 33rd level of the Marriott Marquis hotel, where we had a phenomenal view overlooking the City. I think this perspective inspires a unique look at what's ahead during this second term for our team.

The installation was more upbeat, more celebratory than in 2020, when we were sworn in during the pandemic and had just lost one of our own to COVID. I am proud that we broke the curse of one-term teams by being reelected.

But we can't help but be disappointed with the voter turnout for the Lodge election. I don't know what to make of it. It just doesn't make sense to me that this election, with so much at stake, had 2,000 fewer votes than we did three years ago. I hear you about how everything that is going on with the Department and City might have been a factor. Or a detractor. But I really was expecting even more member engagement and voting than three years ago.

Make no bones about it. I take full responsibility for that failure. We really focused on the mission to get members more engaged in the Lodge when we took office three years ago. The fact that it didn't turn out the way I had envisioned means my approach was incorrect. That falls at my desk.

But we're going to try even harder in this new term to get members involved in the one thing that can best affect their jobs, compensation, working conditions and benefits for their families.

Whatever it's going to take to engage them and motivate them, we will do it. We will continue to work every day to combat what I suspect is a hopeless, helpless feeling from many members about their employment and that they can't find a way to give a damn about anything.

I do think that the votes did offer a mandate about where this Lodge needs to go, especially with the mayoral election result hitting us with another punch to the gut. Congratulations to Lodge 7 member Peter Chico for winning his runoff to be 10th Ward alderman. We hope his presence will give the City Council the wherewithal to better look out for public safety and ensure the new mayor doesn't make decisions or push ordinances that will flush the City further down the drain than the last mayor did.

When we were elected three years ago, I think everybody understood the choices available to them. We presented a totally different approach to what the FOP had ever tried taking on before, and I like to think we delivered.

And with the way the mayoral runoff turned out, there's going to be nobody else that the membership would want in this chair. I'm glad I am. I think we did the work to deserve it.

I had hoped our vote would have been more decisive. Yes, 58 percent is a pretty strong mandate, but I was looking at over 60 percent, because wherever we went during the campaign, members told

President's Report continues on Page 6

Second Story: Super Suspect

The question members are now asking after the mayoral runoff is who is going to be superintendent of the Department. We certainly are assembling a recommendation list to give to the new mayor.

I would not be surprised if the new mayor thinks about keeping on the worst first deputy superintendent we've ever had as the superintendent. If so, he'll ensure a mass departure from this Department.

We have a list of not only who we want to see at the top, but also some changes within the exempt ranks. There are bosses who have been over-promoted. But there are some people who deserve a promotion that we know have the members' best interests at heart.

Our relationship and our future are absolutely tied to the safety of the citizens of this City. As this Department goes, the security of every citizen in this City goes.

Another big question is whether the new superintendent should come from within the Department.

I attended the Major Cities Conference in Nashville a few weeks ago, where they held a panel with chiefs from Nashville, Dallas and

New York City, who's now retired. The Nashville chief is amazing. He does ride-alongs with his officers. He doesn't get a driver. He rides next to an officer on the midnight shift. He gets it, and he is absolutely a shining example of what a chief should be coming from within the department.

That's the kind of morale-boosting this Department needs. Is it going to come from within? It possibly could. The bench here is very thin, though. There is a very limited number of people who can step into those big shoes and do it effectively to the benefit of the membership.

Where we're going with it, I don't know. It's going to be up to this goofy civilian panel to make the recommendation for three finalists. We'll look at the three finalists, and we're certainly going to have input about who we think should be chosen. It's going to be simply based on one thing. What is going to be the catalyst to turn around our members' morale? Because we have been beaten up and into the ground, and it just has to be somebody who understands it and supports us.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5

us, "Thank you for speaking up for us."

We are not resting on any laurels going into this next term. We are motivated by what we accomplished to do more. As we continue to work on Phase 2 of the contract, we certainly aren't done with money components. There is more money on the table.

But I do know in this past term that we got the impossible done. We were told there's no way you'll negotiate a deal with this mayor, and we did. We got almost all the financial and benefits parts done, even in the face of an anti-police sentiment no previous administration has ever had to deal with. That's what we walked in the door with. All the winds were blowing in our face, and we still accomplished the impossible.

That's definitely one feather in the cap. A bigger one is providing a voice for members that they have never had. To me, a lot of these things are not feathers in a cap or something you should celebrate, because they're just things you should have been doing all along, and they're things we said were missing from this Lodge from Day One.

Lodge 7 Treasurer Dennis McGuire makes the point that we have been unwinding 20 years of shit and trying to correct what this Lodge should have been doing all along. The shape of the Lodge we were handed three years ago was pretty dismal. I'd like to think we've set it back on a much stronger course, and we're certainly going to strive during the next four years to really set it up for success for generations to come.



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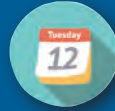
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April 29

Macomb Lodge 189 Blue Line Ball

The Dining Company
127 E. Carroll St., Macomb
5–11 p.m.
\$50 per seat, \$400 per table of 8
For more information, email nsevers@macombpolice.com
or call 309-997-069

April 29–30

Will County Lodge 94 Poker Fundraiser

Clarion Hotel & Convention Center
411 S. Larkin Ave., Joliet
April 29: 2 p.m.–2 a.m.
April 30: Noon-midnight
For more information, visit willcountyfop.org/poker or
email evascifop94@gmail.com

May 3

Golf League North

Maple Meadows
272 Addison Road, Wood Dale
6:30–9:30 a.m.
For more information, call 773-742-3131
or visit cpdnorth.golflleague.net

May 3

Troopers Lodge 41 Reunion Party

Knights Action Park
1700 Knights Recreation Drive, Springfield
5–11 p.m.
For more information, visit [https://www.ilfop.org/
event-fop/troopers-reunion-party](https://www.ilfop.org/event-fop/troopers-reunion-party)

May 4

Illinois Police Memorial 2023 Ceremony

Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception
524 East Lawrence Ave., Springfield
7 a.m. squad car line up at the Illinois State Fairgrounds,
9:30 a.m. interfaith ceremony, 11 a.m. ceremony at the
Illinois Police Officers Memorial Site
For more information, visit [https://www.ilfop.org/
event-fop/il-police-memorial-2](https://www.ilfop.org/event-fop/il-police-memorial-2)

May 5

Retirement of Chief Brendan Deenihan

Merrionette Park
3359 W. 115th St.
6–10 p.m.
For more information, call 312-745-6210

May 6

Polish American Police Association Polish Constitution Day Parade

FOP Lodge 7
1412 W. Washington Blvd., #3
9 a.m.–12 p.m.
For more information, email
polishpolicecalender@gmail.com

May 6

Spoon River Valley Lodge 427 Catfish Tournament 2023

Riverfront Park
112 N. Schrader St., Havana
6 a.m.–12 p.m.
\$80 entry fee per boat
For more information, call 309-267-9071 or visit [https://
www.ilfop.org/event-fop/cat-fish-tournament-2023/](https://www.ilfop.org/event-fop/cat-fish-tournament-2023/)

May 13

National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial Foundation 35th Annual Candlelight Vigil

National Mall, Washington, D.C.
8–9:30 p.m.
For more information, call 202-737-3400
or visit nleomf.org

May 14

Steve Young National Honor Guard Competition and Pipe Band Competition

U.S. Capitol Building Reflecting Pool
3rd Street SW, Washington, D.C.
8 a.m.–4 p.m.
For more information, visit
<https://www.policeweekhonorguard.com/>

May 15

National Peace Officers' Memorial Service

West front of the U.S. Capitol
Washington, D.C.
Noon
For more information, visit [https://www.policeweek.org/
schedule.html](https://www.policeweek.org/schedule.html)

May 19

Memorial Roll Call for Thomas Wortham IV

Gold Star Families Memorial and Park
North Harbor Drive
12 p.m.
For more information, call 312-747-6722

May 21

American Sign Language Training

Wilbur Wright College
4300 N. Narragansett Ave.
5–7 p.m.
For more information, email akashub@ccc.edu or visit
<http://tinyurl.com/WrightC>

June 3

Brothers of Justice 13th Annual Blessing of the Bikes

10th District West Lot
3315 W. Ogden Ave.
10 a.m.
For more information, call 312-747-7511

June 4

10th Annual River Grove FOP Run/Walk

River Park Moose Lodge
8601 W. Fullerton Ave., River Grove
8:30 a.m.–12 p.m.
\$30 per person, \$20 for children 12 and under
For more information, visit [https://www.runrace.net/
findarace.php?id=231551L](https://www.runrace.net/findarace.php?id=231551L)

June 4

Chris Anton Lodge 125 Car Show

Lake County Fairgrounds
889 S. Court St., Crown Point, Indiana
10 a.m.–4 p.m.
For more information, call 219-308-3288 or email
cakey552@yahoo.com

June 12

German American Police Association Annual Golf Outing

Ren Wood Golf Course
701 East Shorewood Road, Round Lake Beach
8:30 a.m. start, 3 p.m. dinner
\$110 per golfer
For more information, call 815-756-3291 or visit [https://
www.gapachicago.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/
gapa-winter-2023-web-pages-3.pdf](https://www.gapachicago.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/gapa-winter-2023-web-pages-3.pdf)

June 20

Chicago White Sox Polish Heritage Night

Guaranteed Rate Field
333 W. 25th St.
7–10 p.m.
\$41 per ticket; members who purchase tickets
can participate in a pregame parade
For more information, email sgbur@chisox.com or
visit [https://www.mlb.com/whitesox/tickets/specials/
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June 26

Emerald Society of Illinois Annual Rib Fest and Awards Night

Chicago FOP Hall Lodge 7
1412 W. Washington Blvd.
7 p.m.
For more information, visit
<https://www.emeraldsocietyofillinois.org/events/>

June 27

Wally Rolniak Lodge 6 Golf Outing

Lincoln Oaks Golf Course
395 E. Richton Road, Crete
8 a.m.–5 p.m.
\$100 per golfer
For more information, call 708-516-3079 or
email il.wrse.fop6@gmail.com

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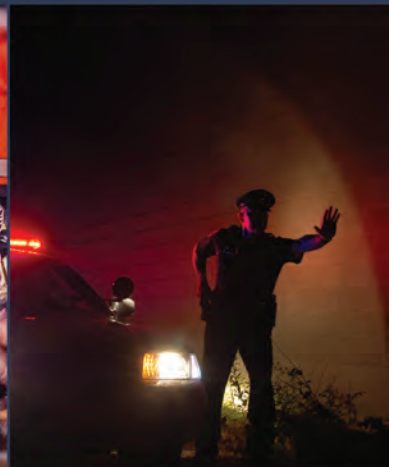
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Officer support group to start soon



MICHAEL METTE

I would like to start off by saying thank you to all of you who supported our ticket in the Lodge 7 election. Welcome to our new members of the board, as well. I can't wait to see what the next four years have in store for Lodge 7.

As I write this, we have a new mayor-elect in Brandon Johnson. I am truly hoping his bark is worse than his bite. I am going to try and stay optimistic for now.

In the meantime, Lodge 7 will host its first-ever group peer-to-peer discussion on April 22 at St. Paul's Church (basement), 2234 S. Hoyne Ave., from 9:30 to 11:30 a.m. Thank you to Lodge 7 Trustee Steve Olsen for setting up the meeting location.

This support group is for us as police officers to better understand the ups and downs of this profession. The group is available to all officers and their significant others. Officer wellness has been a passion of mine, and this is just another step to normalizing the self-care each of us should use to keep us happier and healthier.

I would like to say thank you to the members of the Lodge 7 Mental Health Committee, as well as Theresa Kelly and Danny McGuire, for helping to get this up and running. As always, if you need help, please reach out to somebody. The Department has done an amazing job in the last year or so to help every officer in need. You are never alone, and you are loved! Stay safe and healthy!



The Chicago F.O.P. Lodge #7 recognizes that not all wounds are visible and the importance of support and Officer Wellness in police work.

The F.O.P. will focus on providing the men and women of CPD with opportunities to learn and share through personal experience by offering on-going support groups.

When: April 22, 2023, 9:30am - 11:30 am
Where: St. Paul Catholic Church (basement)
2234 S. Hoyne Ave., Chicago 60608

What: Support Group topics:
• stress
• relationships
• addiction

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Examples of how we are able to reduce disciplinary action by the Department



DAN GORMAN

My report given at the monthly General Members' Meetings includes examples of arbitrators' 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 provide only a generalization of the allegations that were sustained in the CR investigations.

| General Summary of Allegation | Original Recommended Penalty | Arbitrator's Award |
|---|--|--|
| Detective: failure to submit a report within the time frame provided by a supervisor. | 5-day suspension | 3-day suspension |
| Not conducting a thorough investigation prior to obtaining a search warrant. | 20-day suspension | 5-day suspension |
| Reminiscent of a historic neighborhood which references a race/religion/ethnicity. | 20-day suspension | Expunged |
| -Handcuffing without justification -Unjustified search vehicle -BWC (during foot pursuit) -Recovering offender's gun from pavement "without fresh latex gloves" -Improper interview techniques by asking "leading" questions "designed or of a nature to nudge the witness toward giving a statement adverse to" a person's interests | 20-day suspension | 3-day suspension in total: 1 day for vehicle search 2 days for interviewing by asking "leading" questions Expunged: handcuffing Expunged: recovery of gun |
| Various allegations of: -Entering and remaining in a congressman's office -Eating a congressman's popcorn supply and drinking his coffee -Leaving an office in "disarray" -Lounging -Sleeping -Using telephone -Searching drawer | Reprimand 5-day suspension 5-day suspension 5-day suspension 5-day suspension 5-day suspension 7-day suspension 7-day suspension 7-day suspension 7-day suspension 7-day suspension 7-day suspension 10-day suspension | Expunged 1-day suspension 1-day suspension Expunged Expunged Expunged 1-day suspension 3-day suspension Expunged 3-day suspension 3-day suspension 3-day suspension |

To add some context to the above dispositions, here are some notable quotes taken directly from the arbitrators' written awards/decisions:

Quote from a 22-page decision:

"These thirteen officers were publicly accused of abandoning their posts and hiding in a Congressman's office while other officers were in harm's way trying to quell the riots of the summer of 2020. During his statement at the hearing one of them said, 'They called each of us a coward. We are not cowards.' Some of these officers made mistakes the night of June 1, 2020, and they will be disciplined as a result. Others did nothing wrong, and they will have their records cleared. But none of them abandoned his or her post or hid in the face of danger. The record clearly established they stood with their fellow officers to protect the City."

Quotes from a 10-page decision:

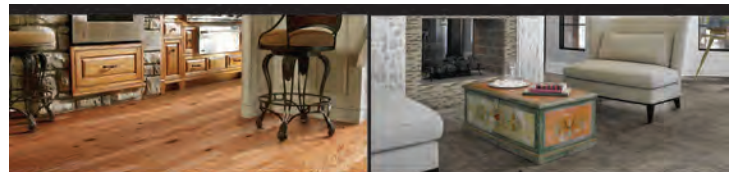
"COPA was thoroughly dissatisfied with the Grievant's performance in this incident. The arbitrator agrees there were portions of

the incident which Grievant could have and should have handled better but does not agree with COPA's sweeping condemnation of his conduct. There was no evidence the Grievant acted willfully or knowingly in violation of Departmental rules and policies; rather, in each instance of claimed misconduct, the determination the Grievant violated the rules or policies was a matter of interpretation and how the rules would be applied."

"The Grievant's conversation with the witness transcended an effort to find out if there was a second shooter or the public and the officers were otherwise at risk. COPA is correct that the questions asked were leading and designed or of a nature to nudge the witness toward giving a statement adverse to Wilson's interests. These were not the classic "which way did he go" questions officers involved in a shooting incident have the right and a duty to ask. These were more follow-up type questions, designed to nail down [the gunman's] guilt through the testimony of civilians present in the area."

With respect to this last quote, the arbitrator attributed two days of suspension time to these alleged improper interviewing techniques of a possible witness to a discharge of a firearm case. I personally have never seen any officer get a suspension for simply asking questions of possible witnesses.

Time and time again, we see where COPA asks "nudging" questions. Time and time again, we see where COPA asks questions "designed to nail down" accused officers. So I suppose the COPA investigators will be held to the same standard and will be suspended for two days for this practice as well? (No chance, who am I kidding?)



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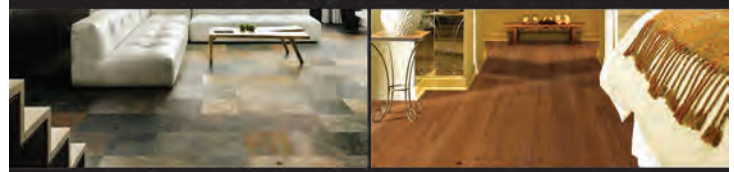
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A student-of-life mentality



MONICA ORTIZ

Over the years, I've heard many stories about women in law enforcement pushing the limits to achieve a goal or new skill. I am incredibly competitive, so I appreciate officers who push the boundaries to be great.

I'm talking about women in competitive shooting. Competitive shooting is a physically and mentally demanding sport. The competition involves moving quickly and shooting at a target while being timed.

I remember Officer Tara Poremba on the TV show "Top Shot." Seeing a female Chicago Police Officer competing on a TV show was fantastic. Today, working in the 11th District, is Officer Angela Spalla, who became interested in competitive shooting after she completed her PPO status.

Angela grew up on the Southwest Side of Chicago and was a special-education teacher before joining the Department. Angela, like many of us, went to the range before attending the academy and stuck with her training, becoming interested in the sport of competitive shooting.

Angela teaches a women's shooting course at Shore Galleries. She has often told her students and colleagues, "The dangerous thing about not knowing your value is it gives other people the power to set your price."

Angela loves teaching and says competing and teaching this



11th District Officer Angela Spalla competes in competitive shooting.



skill help her adapt and hold the student-of-life mentality. Angela has participated in several competitions and won first place in many.

Congratulations, Officer Spalla, on your success in this sport. Keep up the excellent work by encouraging more women to be interested in this sport.

Reporting an injury/illness on duty

Employee Resource E03-01-01

One common problem with IOD denials when handling medical grievances is that officers must report injuries promptly. I've listed the Department order number for IOD reports so you can review the complete order. Below, I've listed what officers should do when injured at work, directly from the order. Please check your report before your supervisor submits it. You cannot see or print a copy in your unit once the supervisor forwards the report.

Injured sworn Department members will:

- A. notify their supervisor, or if their supervisor is not available, a supervisor from the district/unit of assignment in which the injury occurred as soon as possible but no later than the end of their tours of duty when sustaining or becoming aware of an injury.
- B. notify their supervisor again if not contacted by their supervisor or another supervisor within 24 hours of the injury/illness.
- C. identify witnesses for the investigating supervisor whenever possible.
- D. be provided with a printed copy of the completed Injury on Duty Report.



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Our brother Andrés



ROB NOCEDA

Andrés Vásquez-Lasso lived a righteous life. Evil cannot take away all the good that Andrés did for his family, friends, his home country of Colombia and his adopted home, Chicago. We mourn our brother Andrés and pray for his family and those who were close to him. I had a brief encounter with Andrés when we brought the Lodge 7 food trailer to the 8th District. He was respectful, courteous and professional in listening to what we were discussing. If I'm not mistaken, he didn't want to eat, but just asked if

he could grab a bottle of water. And he had this big smile when we jokingly chided him for not grabbing something to eat. Andrés will always be remembered for his exemplary life of service to others. He was and always will be a true example for us all.

Lodge 7 thank you: The fight and the battles continue

Lodge 7 members, I want to thank you for voting to keep me as your recording secretary. I am humbled and honored once again to serve the membership. I will, as always, continue to fight hard for our contractual rights that our membership deserves. To continue being there for our members for OIS shootings, labor disputes, bids, grievances, safety, military, legal defense, medical and a plethora of off-the-wall issues the city has given our members a hard time about consistently for years. I continue to fight the good fight for you in every way possible, and we have improved and will continue to improve our position regularly.

Book donation to the VA

In a previous article, I wrote about how members donated books to the Jesse Brown VA Medical Center. One of our wonderful Lodge 7 members, Jim Mitidiero, saw the article, gave me a call and decided to donate more than 100 military history books from his personal collection.

The Lodge 7 military committee and Jesse Brown VA thank Jim for this generous donation to our nation's warriors. As a military veteran, to see others go out of their way to give and be kind to our nation's servicemembers is an awesome feeling. The VA veteran coordinators over at Jesse Brown, Don and Isabella, let us know that the books really help servicemembers while they go through their physical rehabilitation. Scripture has it right: it is better to give than to receive.

Officer-involved shootings

I have been on dozens of officer-involved shootings over the last few years. This is no fault of our officers. Criminals are emboldened and have acted maliciously and without repercussions for their lawless actions.

Let's hope this has changed with the election of a new mayor. I recently responded to a few shootings in just over a week's time. The officers are both ok, thank the Lord.

An officer-involved shooting is something that no officer wants to be a part of. But our officers act courageously when faced with these split-second decisions. I would like to mention the human side and emotions that our officers face when they have to defend themselves, another member or a member of the public.

Our officers are human beings, not robots or an artificial intelligence program. Officers I have seen in the past on shooting scenes are filled with a whole range of emotions and shock that



Lodge 7 member Jim Mitidiero donated more than 100 military history books to the Jesse Brown VA Medical Center.

come out afterward: for example, "Why did this happen?" "I almost died," "I wish he wouldn't have done that," "He gave me no other choice," "I'm lucky to be here," "I am glad he missed me," "I was scared," "I am glad we made it out ok" and "How is my partner doing?"

As cops, we get it. Our families get it, too. These examples are for those out there who don't understand it. Officers just want to do their jobs and make it back home to their loved ones. Our officers always need the support of our big Chicago community. So back them up, Chicago.

Stay safe, everyone. May God bless you, and may you be a blessing to others!

Your vote, your voice



**JIM
JAKSTAVICH**

Hello again, officers, both active and retired. I am honored and grateful to have been reelected to serve the membership.

The votes cast in our union election were less than 50 percent of our combined membership. The votes cast in our last pension board trustee representative election were slightly higher than 10 percent of the active membership. I hope these dismal numbers are not evident in the upcoming runoff election for mayor.

We have a political job, always has been, always will be! The sheer volume of our membership, if united and voting as a bloc, would allow us to infiltrate City Council with our own elected members. We had two members run for alderman, Peter Chico in the 10th Ward and Anthony Ciaravino in the 11th Ward. We would also be a force to be reckoned with in county and state-wide elections.

Our jobs and livelihoods depend on having local and state lawmakers who are either police-friendly or too scared to challenge us! I cannot for the life of me think that an officer who is forced to reside in this City cannot be bothered to vote. This was our chance to "fire Lightfoot" as our boss, and the Citywide voters spoke loud and clear. She is gone.

We, as field reps of the FOP, attempt to resolve members' issues before they become insurmountable. If we can resolve these issues with a phone call before filing a grievance, we al-

ways will try to resolve at a district or unit level first.

In 2022, I personally answered hundreds of calls from officers demanding that their day off be honored. Or saying that they were tired of the cancellations or submitting To/Froms for time due.

Fast forward to 2023, and the most recent problems rearing their ugly head are the suspensions being issued from Special Employment and officers now demanding to work overtime. The AMC messages have gone out, and the parameters have changed.

The Department has the ability to set these parameters, and I agree that they are unfair. Please read and follow these AMC messages. If you are required to submit a To/From, please submit it via email and be as detailed as possible. Do not go to the fifth floor and demand to speak with the lieutenant; you will not be granted access, as this is a restricted area.

The officers working in Unit 136 are overwhelmed with the volume, and they are understaffed, as well. They are doing as well as they possibly can under the circumstances, and they are no different than other grossly understaffed units. Please be respectful of each other. We have had communication with the Department through the labor relations division regarding these issues and are hoping that we can come to a more user-friendly and workable solution.

Thank you and stay safe.



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Making the body-worn camera second nature



FERNANDO FLORES

Ladies and gentlemen, a new program has been rolled out to make audio recorded statements in the district. The reality is that the reason we are giving statements in the district is because IAD and/or COPA have already reviewed the bodycams and the paperwork.

IAD and COPA have come to the conclusion that these CR numbers are frivolous and can be dealt with at the district level. The majority of the complaints that are being dealt with at the district level are either inappropriate paperwork, improper language toward the complainant, improper investigation and, last but not least, the ever-popular failure to activate the body-worn camera, either in a timely manner or at all, or early deactivation. The majority of the complaints can be handled or dismissed. But when it comes to violating the department's policy attached to the body-worn camera, you are going to take a hit for this infraction.

According to Special Order S03- 14, under Initiation of a Recording Section 3.2:

1. The decision to electronically record a law-enforcement-related encounter is mandatory, not discretionary, except where specifically indicated.

2. The Department member will activate the system to event mode at the beginning of an incident and will record the entire incident for all law-enforcement-related activities. If circumstances prevent activating the BWC at the beginning of an incident, the member will activate the BWC as soon as practical. Law-enforcement-related activities include but are not limited to: a. calls for service; b. investigatory stops; c. traffic stops; d. traffic control; e. foot and vehicle pursuits; f. arrests; g. use of force incidents; h. seizure of evidence; i. interrogations; j. searches, including searches of people, items, vehicles, buildings, and places; k. statements made by individuals in the course of an investigation; l. requests for consent to search; m. emergency driving situations; n. emergency vehicle responses where fleeing suspects or vehicles may be captured on video leaving the crime scene; o. high-risk situations; p. any encounter with the public that becomes adversarial after the initial contact; q. arrestee transports; r. any other instance when enforcing the law.

3. A Department member may utilize discretion to activate the BWC for non-law-enforcement-related activities in the following circumstances: a. in situations that the member, through training and experience, believes will serve a proper police purpose, for example, recording the processing of an uncooperative arrestee; b. in situations that may help document, enhance, and support the following: written reports, evidence collection, investigations, and court testimony; and c. when the member is engaged in community caretaking functions, unless the member has reason to believe that the person on whose behalf the member is performing a community caretaking function has committed or is in the process of committing a crime.

4. Upon initiation of a recording, Department members will announce to the person(s) they intend to record that their BWC has been activated to record. Note: Sworn members will not unreasonably endanger themselves or another person to conform to the provisions of this directive.

Police officers need to make it second nature to activate the BWC the minute they get their next work assignment. Officers should treat the BWC as a "video in which they are directing a movie in which they are the star of the movie." Narrate your video, give a play by play. If a subject is being aggressive or combative, make note of that in your video. You usually don't get in trouble for what you do; you get in trouble for what you don't do. Turn your BWC on!

As always, be safe and stay healthy.



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Honoring Retired Members

May 2022

| Name | Rank | Unit/District | Years |
|-----------------------------|---------|---------------|-------|
| Vickie M. Minnifield-Greene | Officer | 620 | 31 |

November 2022

| Name | Rank | Unit/District | Years |
|--------------------|-----------|---------------|-------|
| Christina M. Casey | Detective | 196 | 18 |
| Julie A. Johnson | Officer | 016 | 24 |

January 2023

| Name | Rank | Unit/District | Years |
|------------------|---------|---------------|-------|
| Gladys Garza | Officer | 008 | 21 |
| Anthony D. Hall | Officer | 003 | 25 |
| Gary S. Kirkilas | Officer | 022 | 28 |

February 2023

| Name | Rank | Unit/District | Years |
|-------------------------|-----------|---------------|-------|
| Demosthene V. Balodimas | Detective | 640 | 31 |
| Joseph E. Cistaro | Officer | 051 | 31 |

| Name | Rank | Unit/District | Years |
|--------------------|-----------|---------------|-------|
| Jason L. Jankowski | Officer | 002 | 28 |
| Juan A. Martinez | Officer | 017 | 25 |
| Maryann Miotk | Officer | 022 | 32 |
| Luis A. Molina | Officer | 353 | 30 |
| Richard J. Moritz | Officer | 020 | 27 |
| Mark E. Mueller | Officer | 018 | 22 |
| Nicole Price | Detective | 610 | 28 |
| Eddie E. Reed | Officer | 050 | 32 |
| Robert J. Romero | Officer | 014 | 27 |
| Timothy P. Saldana | Officer | 001 | 30 |
| Regina K. Stewart | Officer | 051 | 30 |
| Jeffrey J. Wojcik | Officer | 051 | 32 |
| Richard A. Zawada | Officer | 050 | 31 |

Retiree Meetings

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

North

First Monday of month
@ 9 a.m.
Kappy's American Grill
7200 Dempster St., Morton Grove
Ken Hauser, 312-485-8388

The Northsiders' Luncheon

Third Wednesday of January, April, July,
October @ noon
Suparossa, Chicago
Paul Vitaioli, 312-402-1040

South

Second Wednesday of month
@ 10 a.m.
Jedi's Garden, Oak Lawn

8-Ball Luncheon

Last Wednesday of month
@ noon
Les Brothers, Oak Lawn
Dorothy Piscitelli, 773-972-0139

Bomb and Arson

Second Monday of month

@ 9 a.m.
Fiesta Tapatia Restaurant
Chicago
Ross Horne, 312-613-9182

12th District Retirees and Alumni

First Thursday of month
@ 10 a.m.
Southern Belles Restaurant
Bridgeview
12retirees@comcast.net

Crime Lab, ETs, Forensic Services and Mobile Unit

First Tuesday of month @ noon
Flap-Jacks Restaurant, Oak Lawn
Bob Baikie, 773-284-1935

Orland Park Law Enforcement Organization

Third Thursday of month
@ 7:30 p.m.
Orland Park Civic Center
Orland Park
Don Ade, 708-408-9308

Survivors Lunch

Second Saturday of month
@ 11 a.m.
Beverly Woods Restaurant
Chicago

Public Housing Unit (North, South and Administration)

First Wednesday of month
@ 10 a.m.
George's Restaurant, Chicago
Maurice Brown, 773-577-0154

Arizona Retirees

Third Wednesday 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

Arkansas Retirees

Third Friday of month
@ noon

Elks Lodge
Mountain Home, Arkansas
Bob Zdora, 870-405-5407

Florida Retirees

First Wednesday of month
@ 1 p.m.
Cop Shop, Cape Coral, Florida
Tom Faragoi, 239-770-7896

Michigan Retirees

First Thursday of month
@ 8 a.m.
Macks on Main
101 W. Cedar Ave.
Gladwin, Michigan

Northern Illinois/Southern Wisconsin Retirees

Second Thursday of month
Herner's Hideaway
N202 Williams Road
Genoa City, Wisconsin

Remembering Sisters and Brothers who have passed

| Name | Status | Age | Date of Passing |
|-----------------------|----------|-----|-----------------|
| John J. Sheehan | Retired | 84 | May 6, 2022 |
| Timothy W. O'Connor | Retired | 86 | July 27, 2022 |
| Michael C. Hourihane | Retired | 81 | Dec. 1, 2022 |
| Donald F. Wojcik | Retired | 85 | Jan. 7, 2023 |
| Gwendel Bracey | Retired | 81 | Feb. 1, 2023 |
| Richard J. Spielman | Retired | 83 | Feb. 13, 2023 |
| Kenneth Brandt | Retired | 91 | Feb. 21, 2023 |
| Patrick M. Pemberton | Retired | 83 | Feb. 24, 2023 |
| Robert A. Ladtkow | Retired | 96 | Feb. 25, 2023 |
| Andres Vasquez-Lasso | Unit 008 | 32 | March 1, 2023 |
| Charles R. Weyer Sr. | Retired | 77 | March 1, 2023 |
| Ronald Hage | Retired | 75 | March 8, 2023 |
| Anthony Geraghty | Unit 020 | 43 | March 11, 2023 |
| Walter J. Brendal Jr. | Retired | 78 | March 17, 2023 |
| Allen Jaglowski | Retired | 71 | March 23, 2023 |
| Alan Adamski | Retired | 76 | March 24, 2023 |
| Thomas E. Kussman | Retired | 91 | March 25, 2023 |
| James Conlisk | Retired | 76 | April 1, 2023 |

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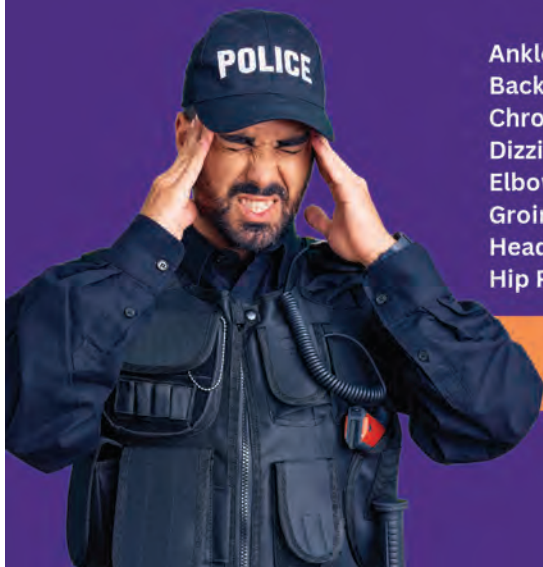
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The more we learn about COPA



PAT
FIORETTO

The old saying “The more I learn, the less I know” means that the process of gaining knowledge also comes with having more questions, especially about the thing of which you just gained knowledge. The more we learn about COPA and its investigations, the more this adage holds true. In this case, however, the more the Lodge deals with COPA, the more disturbing conduct is discovered.

I have often written about COPA in prior articles. This time, I would like to focus on COPA’s role in grievance arbitrations.

In its mission statement, COPA proudly boasts:

The mission of the Civilian Office of Police Accountability is to conduct investigations within its jurisdiction with integrity, transparency, independence, and timeliness. The goal of every COPA investigation is to determine whether allegations of misconduct are well-founded, applying a preponderance of the evidence standard; to identify and address patterns of police misconduct; and, based on information obtained through such investigations, to make policy recommendations to improve the Chicago Police Department and thereby reduce incidents of police misconduct.

COPA strives to conduct investigations with the highest level of integrity and independence in order to make

findings based on a thorough review of the evidence and accurate legal analysis, without regard for political influence.

The consent decree (which continues to be in effect) further requires those investigations to be conducted “fairly” — a concept which is lost on COPA. From the Lodge’s perspective, conducting fair investigations requires the facts to lead the outcome. Instead, COPA investigators seem to have their minds made up before the investigation even begins and then manipulate the facts to support their inevitable conclusion of officer wrongdoing.

Once an investigation is completed, the COPA investigator prepares and files a final summary report. If the allegations are sustained (as most are), the report also makes disciplinary recommendations to the superintendent. The former superintendent typically agreed with the discipline. In those instances where the then-superintendent did not agree, the disputes went to one member of the Police Board for resolution. Inevitably, the Police Board member almost always rubber-stamped COPA’s inflated discipline recommendations.

Once the superintendent serves an officer with the discipline notification, the officer files a grievance and the matter proceeds to final and binding arbitration. Over the past two years, the number of discipline grievances that the Lodge has taken to arbitration increased from two or three a month to eight or

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nine each month. Although some of those matters are resolved prior to hearing, many proceed to a formal hearing.

In discipline arbitration cases, the burden of proof always rests on the Department. The City must establish that the superintendent had just or proper cause to impose the discipline. Typically, the Department calls witnesses who have firsthand knowledge of the underlying facts, as well as a representative from the Department's BIA Advocate Section and the COPA investigator or COPA supervisor. When the Lodge had an opportunity to cross-examine or question the COPA investigator, here is what we learned:

First, despite the best practice of not asking leading questions, the Final Summary Reports contain numerous citations to statements taken by investigators that were replete with leading questions. In other words, the investigators steered the interview in a way that elicited responses to fit the narrative.

Next, and perhaps the most troubling discovery, is the lack of due process and transparency that exists in the investigatory process. COPA has published several investigatory manuals, which investigators are provided and presumably trained to follow. Under the current manual, as well as pursuant to the ordinance that created COPA, COPA is required to arrive at an investigative resolution (which includes findings and recommendations) within 180 days of the initiation of an investigation. If investigations are not concluded within 180 days, COPA must file a written request asking for more time and provide an explanation for the delay. Moreover, COPA is required to inform the involved Department member (officer) of any such delays. COPA rarely completes its investigations within 180 days. Rarely, if ever, does COPA inform the officer of any delays. In-

deed, COPA investigations can take several years to complete. Accused officers might not be interviewed during the investigation for months or even years from the date of the alleged incident.

Equally bothersome, at several arbitration hearings, various COPA representatives acknowledged that investigators do not even follow the manual (last updated in 2018). Despite the manual being posted on various websites, COPA's deputy chief administrator indicated that it is not required or binding on investigators and is not even used or applicable.

Finally, pursuant to COPA's own rules and regulations, "all investigative activities will be documented in the appropriate investigative case file in a timely, accurate, and complete manner consistent with COPA policies and procedures." We have encountered many examples where such information is lacking.

In conclusion, all these deficiencies are noted by arbitrators when awards are issued. The longer it takes COPA to finish an investigation, the more likely an arbitrator will either order the discipline to be removed completely or reduce the amount of discipline. Due process, in part, requires a timely investigation. If discipline is appropriate, it is to serve not as a punishment but rather as a way to correct unacceptable behavior. Any excessive delay in concluding investigations (or imposing significant suspensions) is counter to this concept.

Although COPA employees are "expected to conduct their work objectively and without bias," the Lodge's experience shows otherwise. COPA is anything but objective, fair or impartial. The Lodge will continue to take COPA (and the City) to task.




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The dreaded prenu



TIM
GRACE

So you think it's time to get married. You have found the one, and you want to spend the rest of your life with that special person, in spite of the fact that 50 percent of marriages end in divorce and that number is even higher for law enforcement. For the younger readers, just move on. We can't help you and wish you the best of luck. Sincerely, we hope you spend the rest of your waking days with that perfect person. But what about those of us who have already gone down that path without success or are older in life and think it's about time? Well, as much as you think it

will last forever, this time, you need to think about protecting yourself. It's time for that uncomfortable conversation about the prenu. Should make for a fun evening.

In all seriousness, for those on second marriages or who have accumulated some assets, you need to think about how to ensure you protect your assets. Premarital agreements (also referred to as prenuptial agreements) are contractual agreements that are negotiated and entered into by two people prior to their marriage, and they must strictly comply with the Illinois Uniform Premarital Agreement Act, 750 ILCS 10/1 *est. seq.*, in order to be valid and enforceable in Illinois. Illinois is a

community property state, meaning that any and all property acquired by either party during the marriage is presumed to be part of the marital estate, regardless of who pays for or otherwise provides for the property, and each party has a claim in interest in half of the marital estate.

For example, a couple gets married, and one partner takes \$100,000 of his or her premarital money and uses it for a down payment on the newlywed couple's first home. If the parties later decide to dissolve the marriage, the \$100,000 used for the down payment is presumed to be marital property, subject to equitable division between the parties, and can only be rebutted by clear and convincing evidence.

For another example, suppose that one of the parties had substantial retirement accounts that accrued prior to the marriage. The accounts themselves are considered personal property of the individual and are not included in the marital estate, but any increase in value due to market gains could be argued to be part of the marital estate. Next, suppose that the party rolls his or her premarital retirement funds into another account established during the marriage. The premarital funds would then be transmuted with the marital funds, and all would be presumed to be part of the marital estate, to be rebutted only by clear and convincing evidence that the funds



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were not intended to be a gift to the marital estate. One sure-fire way to demonstrate by clear and convincing evidence that certain property is excluded from the marital estate is the premarital agreement. Yes, it is better to have that uncomfortable conversation over dinner than learn about it in your attorney's office.


Premarital agreements are contractual agreements that do not require consideration as long as they are not so one-sided as to be considered unconscionable. In order for a premarital agreement to pass a challenge, there must be full and complete disclosure by both parties of all of their respective assets and liabilities, and the agreement must be entered into voluntarily. So if you want to keep that rare 1920 Babe Ruth card Grampa gave you, you better put it on the disclosure list as an asset, or your spouse will own half of it.

Premarital agreements are adaptable, and they can be tailored to provide for the disbursement of property, to specify, limit or exclude spousal maintenance, to preserve family-owned business assets and to list the terms should the parties separate in order to avoid costly litigation. Therefore, in the first example, the party putting the \$100,000 as a down payment for the marital home may include language that the down payment was not a gift to the marriage and that the party providing the down payment shall be reimbursed from the sale of the residence prior to dividing any profits from the sale. Similarly, in the second example, the party with the substantial retirement interests can include language that any increase or gains from the retirement interest shall remain as

personal property of the individual and not be part of the marital estate. This can also hold true for an individual's interest in their pension and deferred compensation accounts, so it is possible to prenegotiate that the pension and deferred compensation accounts are the individual's personal property and not part of the marital estate subject to division. Premarital agreements can also be used for the parties to limit or waive spousal maintenance and to protect assets from a premarital business. Essentially, you can contract to do what both parties agree to as long as the agreement is not overly one-sided.

People late in life should absolutely consider such an agreement. You may be surprised — the new love of your life may want to do likewise. Many times, both parties have accumulated assets and wish to pass those assets on to their children. Many times, both of the parties are financially secure, and it just makes sense to plan for the worst. There is the ability to agree to what is called a postnuptial agreement, which, as the name suggests, is an agreement after the marriage. These are highly scrutinized by the courts and are not advisable. While the conversation will be somewhat difficult to have, as it presumes the marriage will fail or one party has doubts, it should be looked at merely as both parties protecting themselves. You should talk with an attorney, as each party should be represented independently. It is something to think about and remember: Someone once said it is better to have loved and lost than never to have loved at all. But I guarantee that person who prophesied this has never lost half of their pension.

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New mayor will impact the spring session



DAVE SULLIVAN

The Illinois Legislature continues its spring session. While legislators will be back in their districts for the first two weeks of April, they will then return to Springfield to finish their work. Their scheduled adjournment is May 19. It will be an interesting end of session, as Chicago will have a new mayor as of May 15.

We continue to see bipartisan support for police grow. Our lead sponsors of our pension bill are Chicago Democrats Senator Rob Martwick and Representative Justin Slaughter. The work to stop less-than-good ideas in Springfield is going well as we work with our police partners with other organizations, including the sheriffs and police chiefs associations. We have seen our efforts be successful as we work with Republicans and Democrats on key issues.

In other news, Illinois received another credit rating upgrade as the state's finances continue a path to greater stability. In addition, Illinois now has over \$1 billion in its "rainy day fund," which is dramatically higher than it was a couple of years ago.

As of this writing, we are still waiting to hear how the Illinois Supreme Court will rule on the SAFE-T Act case before it. If it is overturned, we do anticipate that there will be continued discussions on it as the session continues. When this is published, we will know who the next mayor of Chicago is, but this is being written before Election Day. Whoever wins, the new mayor will have an impact on the legislative session. It will be interesting.


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Portraits by Peter Bucks

Tributes to officers from the CPD Officer, Lodge 7 member and renowned artist

‘There’s an angel up there looking out for me’

BY ESTHER GONZALES

Chicago Police Officer Reynaldo Malave and the members of his TAC team located a man who was on the run after murdering his girlfriend. He had barricaded himself in the front entryway of someone’s home.

Malave led three members of his team through the back door. After clearing the rooms, Malave slowly opened the door, with only enough room to see the suspect’s feet.

“Listen, there’s a lot of police officers out here,” Malave recalled saying as he attempted to negotiate with the armed suspect. “Toss me your gun, please. I don’t want you to get hurt.”

Suddenly, the officers were ordered to vacate the house. A SWAT unit would be taking over.

Just then, during the standoff, Malave heard a gunshot. The suspect had shot himself. The one thing Malave didn’t know was that the suspect had another weapon. He had intended to surrender one firearm to Malave and use the other against him.

After the incident, Malave spoke with his father-in-law, who is a deacon and a retired Chicago Police Officer.

“He told me, ‘Rey, there was a reason why you were supposed to be out [of the house],’” Malave recalled. “‘The man upstairs looking out after you. If it wasn’t for that sergeant getting you out, you would’ve been dead.’”

This was one of many moments when Malave escaped a near-death experience on the job he always dreamed of doing. He knows an angel is looking out for him.

Born and raised in Humboldt Park, Malave remembers being surrounded by rampant gang violence. He lived in the heart of the territory belonging to the notorious gang the Latin Kings. When Malave and his brother were in their early teens, they decided that one day they would both make a difference there.

“I felt my calling,” Malave revealed. “I wanted to do something to change the community and do something positive. So that’s what made me strive to become a police officer.”

After graduating from Northern Illinois University, Malave became a social worker for a few years, then worked as a probation officer before coming on the job with the Chicago Police Department in the 2nd District.

Only three years into his law enforcement career, he felt that an-

gel protecting him.

Malave and his partner had just received a call of a suspect with a gun. Several Chicago Police Officers already had responded, chasing the armed suspect. Malave switched on his lights and sirens as he sped toward the scene.

But as Malave was driving through an intersection, he swerved to avoid colliding with another car. Malave lost control of his vehicle and smashed into a utility pole.

Two firefighters lifted Malave out of the vehicle. He told them he was fine and that he could walk. But when the adrenaline wore off, Malave realized he was injured. He felt his weight begin to collapse. Both his legs were broken.

He asked the men to carry him to the ambulance. Once inside, Malave remembers his arms began to go numb.

“I can’t feel my left arm,” Malave said he told the paramedics. They looked at him and turned away. The realization sank in that this could be his last day on the job.

“I decided to make a pact with God,” Malave related. “I told Him, ‘Please, these are my early years of being on the Department. I don’t want to go on disability. This is not what I want.’ So, I got through. It was just nerve damage and just two broken legs. I got very lucky. I think there’s an angel up there looking out for me.”

During a yearlong recovery, Malave wrestled with doubts — that he would never be able to run again, or he would have a limp for the rest of his life. He wondered if he would get back to the job he

loved.

When Malave recovered, he had the opportunity to transfer to the 14th District, where he had grown up. This was finally the chance he had always dreamed of to make a difference in his community.

Malave is often asked to take younger officers under his wing to guide them with his knowledge of the job, and other times, officers ask Malave for his expert advice on tracking suspects.

Then, last May, Malave’s love for the job was tested when his brother passed away. He related that he fell into a deep depression. He was isolated, and it was like he lost himself.

But he remembered something his brother always said: to continue what he does and keep going forward.

“I was going through a lot of pain after my brother’s death, and I finally got back on my feet,” Malave admitted. “I said to myself, ‘Rey, you have to go back on the streets. You have a gift. You have to go out there and serve the community. You have to move forward.’”



REYNALDO MALAVE
Star #14614
14th District

Making today that special occasion



RABBI MOSHE
WOLF

As this goes to print, we are mindful of two great tragedies. First, the CPD mourns the loss of one of our own, Police Officer Andrés Mauricio Vásquez Lasso, who was murdered in the line of duty. He is gone but never forgotten. Second, our deepest sympathy and condolences to our brother in the Chicago Fire Department, Firefighter Walter Stewart, who tragically lost his wife and three children in a fire at their home.

Thanks to each and every one of you for all your prayers, love, support and friendship to these families in this most difficult time. Please keep them in your prayers. Moments like this bring to mind a famous quote sent to me by one of our members: "When we honestly ask ourselves which person in our lives means the most to us, we often find that it is those who, instead of giving advice, solutions or cures, have chosen rather to share our pain and touch our wounds with a warm and tender hand. The friend who can be silent with us in a moment of despair or confusion, who can stay with us in an hour of grief and bereavement, who can tolerate not knowing, not curing, not healing and face with us the reality of our powerlessness — that is the definition of a true friend who cares."

It is moments as these that should make us stop and reflect, to make every day special. Let me share a short story with you:

I was at the home of a close friend who had just lost his beloved wife. He was going through her closet, and he handed me a dress still wrapped, new from the store — an exquisite, handmade dress with beautiful trim. The price tag with an astronomical figure on it was still attached.

He said, "My wife bought this the first time we went on vacation, at least 10 years ago. She never wore it. She was saving it for a special occasion. Well, I guess this is the occasion." He took the dress from me and put it on the bed with the other clothes we were taking to the funeral home. His hands lingered on the soft material for a moment, then he slammed the closet shut and turned to me and said, "Don't ever save anything for a special occasion. Every day you're alive is a special occasion."

I remembered those words throughout the funeral and the days that followed, when I helped him and his family attend to all the sad chores that follow an unexpected death. I thought about them on the plane returning home from the East Coast, where my friend and his family reside. I thought about all the things that his wife hadn't seen, heard or done; she was so young. I thought about the things that she had done, without her ever realizing that they were special.

I'm still thinking about his words and how they should change our lives. Read more and worry less. Take the time to sit on your porch or front lawn and admire the view without fussing about the weeds in the garden. Spend more time with our families and friends today and less time worrying about tomorrow and all those things that never happen.

Let's try to recognize the "special occasion," the special moments, now and cherish them.

Try not "saving" anything for too long. Use your good china and crystal for every special event — or create a "special event" such as a goal reached, a child's birthday, or that occasion that makes you just feel good. Wear your nice blazer or dress on your night out, if you feel like it. Don't

save your good perfume or cologne for special parties; clerks in hardware stores and tellers in banks have noses that function just as well as your party-going friends.

"Someday" and "one of these days" should lose their grip on your vocabulary. If it's worth seeing, hearing or doing, and you want to do it, don't wait — do it now. I'm not sure what my friend's wife would have done had she known that she wouldn't be here for the tomorrow we all take for granted. I think she would have called family members and a few close friends. She might have called a few former friends to apologize and mend fences for past squabbles.

I'd like to think she would have gone out for a special dinner, to eat her favorite food. I'm guessing — I'll never know. It's those little things left undone that should make us ponder and make us think about what would we do if we knew that our hours were limited. Make us ponder whether we put off seeing good friends whom we were going to get in touch with "someday." Make us angry and sorry that we didn't tell our spouses, children and loved ones often enough how much we truly love them. Let's try a bit harder not to put off, hold back or save anything that would add laughter and luster to our lives and those around us.

If we are too busy today to make a positive difference in the lives of our loved ones, do we really think that tomorrow will be any different? Every morning when we open our eyes, let's tell ourselves today is that "special day."

Every day, every minute, every breath truly is a gift from G-d. Don't forget to enjoy your present.

A little humor from the "Moshe files" to keep you smiling:

Jim is at home one night sleeping in bed, and he hears a knock on the door. He rolls over and looks at his clock, and it's 3 a.m.

"I'm not getting out of bed at this time," he thinks, and rolls over.

Then, a louder knock follows.

"Aren't you going to answer that?" asks his wife.

So, he drags himself out of bed and goes downstairs. He opens the door, and there is man standing at the door. It doesn't take the homeowner long to realize that the man was drunk.

"Hi there," slurs the stranger, "can you give me a push?"

"No, get lost. It's 3 a.m., and I was in bed," says Jim and slams the door.

He goes back up to bed and tells his wife what happened, and she says, "Jim, that wasn't very nice of you. Remember that night we broke down in the pouring rain on the way to pick the kids up from the babysitter, and you had to knock on that man's house to get us started again? What would have happened if he'd told us to get lost?"

"But the guy was drunk," says Jim.

"It doesn't matter," says his wife. "He needs our help, and it would be the religious thing to help him."

So, Jim gets out of bed again, gets dressed and goes downstairs. He opens the door, and not being able to see the stranger anywhere, he shouts, "Hey, do you still want a push?" and hears a voice cry out, "Yeah, please."

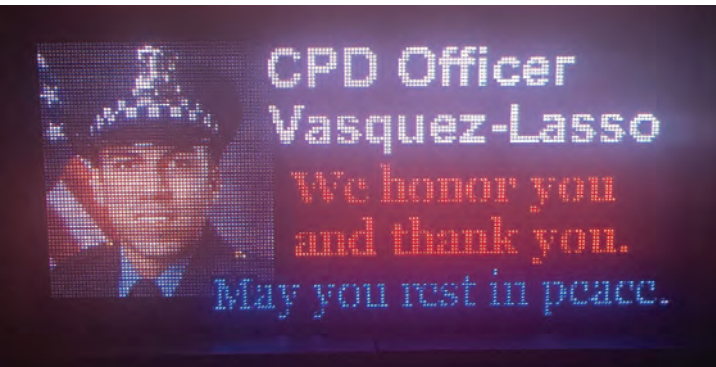
CONTINUED ON PAGE 27

Thanking God for the life lent to us



FATHER DAN BRANDT

In March, we again had the unfortunate task of honoring a fallen officer. I took comfort in seeing the sign below outside a Catholic church in Oak Lawn. We have seen countless similar messages throughout the city and suburbs this past month or so. While we pray for Andrés's family, friends and coworkers, we also thank God for the life lent to us, and for his noble and selfless service to the people of Chicago. As the sign reads, may Andrés rest in peace.



On Saturday, March 4 — a 35-degree day — the 20th District hosted a Polar Plunge event benefitting Special Olympics. Here you'll see plungers led by none other than the district's Commander, Brendan McCrudden, in full uniform. Kudos to the 20th District



for supporting such a worthy cause.

A Blue Mass will be celebrated on Saturday, April 22 at 5 p.m. at St. Francis Xavier Church in Avondale/Logan Square (3043 N. Francisco).

Another Blue Mass will be offered on Sunday, April 30 at 10:30 a.m. at Immaculate Conception Parish (just off the Kennedy at Talcott and Harlem, in Norwood Park). As always, all are welcome to pray with and for our officers at the Blue Masses.

Finally, a word of thanks to St. Cajetan Parish, the organizers of the South Side Irish Parade and the tens of thousands in attendance.

I am deeply grateful for having been named grand marshal of the parade, along with CFD Chaplain Father Bill McFarlane. What an amazing honor for my fellow chaplains present (Hysni Selenica, Rabbi Moshe Wolf and Reverend Kimberly Lewis-Davis). Bosses with names like Brian McDermott, John Spellman and Bryan Spreyne also showed their support by walking the entire parade route shoulder to shoulder with us. I was so proud to be in their company.

I must include a shout-out to McNally's for including my name on their marquee. Thank you for making this North Sider feel right at home as usual on the South Side.

May God bless you and keep you safe and healthy! Thank you for doing God's work.

Call or text Father Dan Brandt, directing CPD chaplain, at 773-550-2369 or email him at dan.brandt@chicagopolice.org.



WOLFE CONTINUED FROM PAGE 26

Still being unable to see the stranger, he shouts, "Where are you?"

And the stranger replies: "I'm over here, on your swings."

Remember, find something to laugh about every day, even if you have to look in the mirror.

On behalf of all your chaplains, may G-d bless you and keep

you safe and always keep you in His loving care. Best wishes to you and your loved ones for a happy Passover, a happy Easter and a happy Ramadan. 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. Amen.

Compliments of your Police Chaplain Rabbi Moshe Wolf. Contact Rabbi Wolf at 773-463-4780 or moshewolf@hotmail.com.

The importance of your financial agent



TOM TUOHY

The Illinois Power of Attorney Act provides, in part, that every individual has the right to appoint an agent to make property, financial, personal and health care decisions for that individual.

However, this right cannot be fully effective unless the principal empowers the agent to act throughout the principal's lifetime, including during periods of disability, with confidence that third parties will always honor the agent's authority.

There are two legal power of attorney (POA) documents, one for health care decisions and the other for financial decision-making. Each has its importance, and everyone over 18 should have both of these documents. For another person to be able to sign your name and handle your financial affairs legally, you need to sign a power of attorney for property and name an agent.

A financial agent's power

Considering the authority you are granting an individual to sign your name and handle your financial transactions, careful consideration should be made in choosing the right person. Periodic review is essential to ensure that the person is still appropriate and, of course, is still available.

Your agent will have a legal responsibility that provides checks and balances, called a fiduciary responsibility. However, your bank accounts can be emptied and your finances in shambles before you can enforce that fiduciary conduct. So choose wisely, and update when necessary.

The scope of a financial agent's power

When. For the duration, you have a choice: your agent's power

begins immediately or only upon your disability as determined by a physician. Most couples choose to have each spouse's power start immediately for the convenience of use in the document if one spouse is unavailable or chooses not to handle the household finances. Or maybe one spouse can't make the closing of a real estate transaction. The agent can use the POA at any time and could not do so if it was only activated on disability.

How. The agent can use the POA for such financial transactions as:

- paying bills, borrowing transactions and business operations
- banking, investing, insurance and annuities, and real estate transactions, as a digital fiduciary to access and manage on-line accounts
- dealing with the IRS, Medicare, Medicaid, credit card companies, Social Security, VA, employment and military benefits
- supplemental needs trusts and caregiver agreements
- hiring agents, accountants, lawyers and financial advisors

Why. You can only appoint an agent and sign the POA while you have your mental capacity, and it is too late to do so if you are severely injured or if an illness limits your capacity. Now you are subject to a full court proceeding to have a legal guardian appointed. Even if you are married, having your spouse appointed guardian and operating under the court's control for the property and investments you own together is required. You do not want that to happen.

As you can see, there is no reason not to have a valid POA, and there are numerous reasons why not having one can lead to fi-

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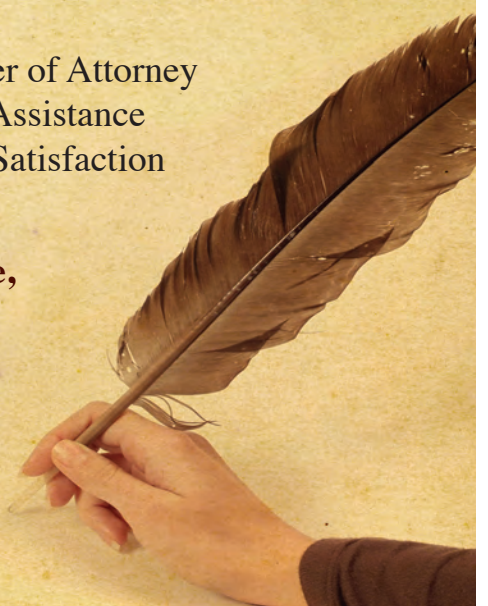


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- A living trust contains a no-contest provision and beneficiary asset protection clauses.

Tom Tuohy founded Tuohy Law Offices and the FOP Benefits Plan. He has been a police lawyer for more than three decades. His father was a CPD detective, and his grandfather was the CPD chief of major investigations. You can reach Tom at 312-559-8400 or tom@tuohylawoffices.com or visit his office in Oakbrook Terrace.

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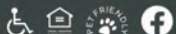
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Chicago Lodge 7 Officer Awards



On Aug. 11, 2019, at the location of 251 W. 63rd St., the responding officers approached a subject who matched the description of a wanted person. As the uniformed officers approached, the offender produced a handgun and began firing at them.

The officers, undeterred by the gunfire, returned fire and struck the offender, who then fled into a dark-colored SUV. The officers gave chase, but the offender made his escape. Approximately 10 minutes later, the offender was dropped off at Mercy Hospital by the driver of the dark-colored SUV, seeking medical attention for a gunshot wound to his upper torso.

The offender, a convicted felon, was placed into custody and charged with two counts of attempted murder and issuance of warrant. The responding units located two semi-automatic handguns at 64th and Yale, which were inventoried and sent to the crime lab. Nice shot, officers.

Officer Henson is the son of retired Chicago Police Officer Charles Henson, who did 32 years on the job. He proudly wears his father's old star. He is also the brother of Sergeant Kevin Spisak, assigned to unit 124.

It is with great appreciation that FOP Chicago Lodge 7 presents these officers with the Award of Valor.



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Chicago Lodge 7 Officer Awards



On Sept. 26, 2019, at the location of 7030 S. Perry, the officers responded to a call of shots fired. Shot Spotter alerted to approximately six gunshots, and responding units located two victims with gunshot wounds inside a vehicle.

The front-seat passenger was slumped toward the center of the vehicle and the officers, who had just completed LEMART training, sprang into action. They applied a tourniquet to the victim's upper right arm and compression bandages to his right wrist.

The driver of the Lincoln Navigator was not as lucky. Suf-

fering multiple gunshot wounds to his chest and upper torso, he was eventually pronounced on scene. The officers did all they could for the victims, frantically applying direct pressure and bandages.

EMS arrived on scene and transported the surviving victim to the University of Chicago Hospital, where he was treated by doctors who attributed the victim's survival to the officers' lifesaving techniques.

It is with great appreciation that FOP Chicago Lodge 7 presents these officers with the Lifesaving Award.

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Chicago Lodge 7 Officer Awards

Appreciation Award

Chicago Chop House



The FOP Appreciation Award is presented to the Chicago Chop House, located at 60 W. Ontario St.

The Chicago Chop House first opened its doors in 1986 in a landmark brownstone. The restaurant was purchased in 2017 by Chop Hospitality group and completely remodeled with an updated menu, but it still carried that unpretentious steakhouse atmosphere. The walls inside are lined with hundreds of photos of sports fig-

ures, entertainers and politicians, including every mayor of Chicago.

The Chicago Chop House offered law enforcement appreciation to members of the Chicago Police Department, both active and retired. Officers have texted the FOP many pictures of dry- and wet-aged steaks, sides and even a flaming baked Alaska. Someone described their dining experience as "going to a meat Disneyland."

It is our opportunity to say thank you to a business that went out of its way to make our membership feel special and appreciated. Please remember to support those who support us!

It is with gratitude that FOP Chicago Lodge 7 presents the Chicago Chop House with the FOP Appreciation Award.



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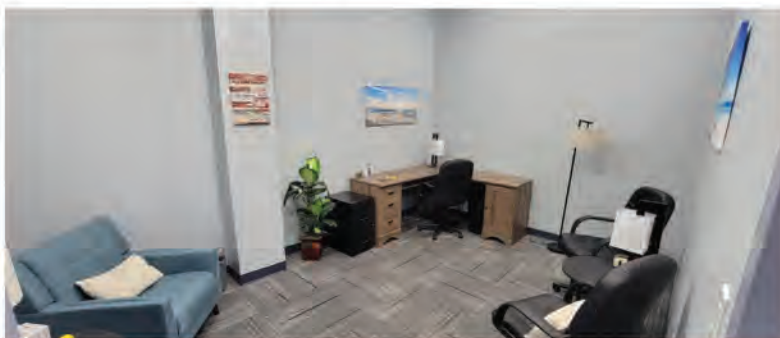


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Chicago Lodge 7 Officer Awards

Appreciation Award

Barraco's Ristorante,
Pizzeria & Catering



This FOP Appreciation Award is presented to Barraco's Ristorante, Pizzeria & Catering owner Nie Barraco and his family. Barraco's wife, Lisa, is a third-generation police officer.

Barraco's has seven locations, and the Mount Greenwood and Evergreen Park locations proudly fly the thin blue line flag. We've all been to one of these locations for a promotion party or retirement party, or just to grab a bite to eat.

These establishments are welcoming to the police and offer affordable prices. The Mount Greenwood location has a memorial wall dedicated to the men and women of the Chicago Police Department, with photos and plaques displayed in its honor.

Barraco's did not hesitate to assist families of fallen officers or those catastrophically injured in the line of duty, either by sending food or selling

T-shirts to raise money. Those families felt the support in many ways, especially by the acknowledgement of their loved ones' memories. Please remember to support those who support us!

It is with great appreciation that FOP Chicago Lodge 7 presents the Appreciation Award to Barraco's Ristorante, Pizzeria & Catering.

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The Chicago Police Memorial Foundation would like to thank each and every one of you for your support. Because of your payroll deductions, CPMF merchandise purchases and participation in CPMF events, we were able to provide immediate assistance in the amount of \$80,000 to the family of Officer Andres Mauricio Vasquez Lasso.

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During the month of March 2023, the CPMF provided over **\$265,000** in assistance, including:

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Gracias, Parcerero



Words of praise from those who worked alongside him show that Andrés Vásquez Lasso was the 'perfect police officer'

BY MITCHELL KRUGEL

Beat 825 has been known to kick the asses of many Chicago Police Officers. Where 63rd Street runs east from South Artesian Avenue toward Western in the 8th District presents challenges of endurance and perseverance like the Spider Climb or the Salmon Ladder on "American Ninja Warrior."

Officers who have worked 825 speak of it with reverence, commenting that "You actually have to work that beat." Many of them don't like to. Many of them are there for a couple of months and don't want to work it anymore.

Andrés Vásquez Lasso embraced, even aspired to, Beat 825. Even amid the anguish so many Chicago Police Officers feel, Andrés, in his soft-spoken, under-the-radar way, exuded an ability, an appreciation, a motivation that cut a presence.

"He definitely walked with a purpose," described Erica Villanueva, who worked alongside Andrés on third watch in 008. "Even in the district right after roll call, he always seemed like he was just ready to do something."

Saul Cantería knew as much about his *parcerero* – the Colombian word for pal, buddy, or in police parlance, partner – when he first became best buds with Andrés in the academy five years ago. Cantería recently just bid to 008 to be an FTO and sought out his *parcerero* when he first got there.

By his own admission, Cantería showed some wear and tear of the five years on. But he immediately noticed that Andrés was still



in great shape, even more buff than Saul remembered. He noticed that Andrés' uniform didn't look like it had absorbed one wrinkle in five years.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 38



GRACIAS CONTINUED FROM PAGE 37

“He’s just almost like a poster child,” Canteria declared. “I want to describe him almost as somebody that’s getting ready to perform, like an artist. And that just translated into all his jobs. He could handle any call that comes his way.”

Hanging out in 008 a few weeks after Andrés Vázquez Lasso was lost in the line of duty on March 1, officers on third watch had moved through the steps of grief that enabled them to revel in Andrés. They marveled at how funny he was, how much he loved being the police and how much he loved the Department. They admired how he came to Chicago from Colombia at 18, went to college and went into the academy at 27 to find a better life for his family.

Officer Julian Morgan worked one day with Andrés when he first came to the watch, but he confirmed how that led to establishing a brotherhood with him. And with 18 years on, Morgan admitted that the influence of Andrés was so refreshing that it brought him back to the enthusiasm and optimism he had when he was just five years on.

Nobody on the watch, or in 008 or maybe even in the entire Department had ever met somebody like Andrés. Even the bosses couldn’t help but see the remarkability in Andrés.

“He was the perfect police officer,” 8th District Third Watch Lieutenant Karlene Gurtowski praised. “It strikes me as almost a bit remarkable that he comes to this country at 18, doesn’t speak the language and goes into the academy at 27. He just knew what to do.”

Andrés es muy trabajador

The 8th District was not just all business for Andrés. About a year ago, he moved into a house there with his beloved Milena. The domestic violence call Andrés responded to around 4:30 p.m. on March 1 came from 2 1/2 miles from that home.

When Andrés responded, Steven Montano fled on foot from a house toward the playground adjacent to Sawyer Elementary School. There were still children there.

According to reports, Montano suddenly turned around and pointed a gun at Andrés, who had been authorized to pursue. The two exchanged gunfire, with Montano hitting Andrés in the head, arm and leg. He fired twice and hit Montano in the face.

Officer Avidel Ambriz had just finished an overtime shift and was heading home when he drove past Andrés in his beat car. When Ambriz arrived at home, his phone started blowing up.

He wondered who had been shot. Back at 008, they were all asking the same question. When they heard it was somebody who responded near the school and came to the aid of a young woman, who else could it have been?

“I think that happened to him because he was a worker,” submitted Rodrigo Lopez, who has been on 20 years and works third watch in 008. “An officer who does nothing, we call them the dogs. That would never be him.”

Andrés had impressed his colleagues in the district by coming from another country, learning the language, learning the streets and starting the academy at a bit of an advanced age. Morgan noted how that motivated Andrés. In Morgan’s praise of his fellow officer, he extolled how there should be a picture of Andrés in Webster’s under the words “appreciation” and “respect.”

“I think he gave his ultimate sacrifice, not only for the young lady he went to go serve, but for all Chicagoans,” Morgan submitted. “What he accomplished goes to show you, if you want something and put your mind to it, you can do it.”

Apreciamos tu trabajo

The entire watch, it seemed, described Andrés as a quiet guy whose first impression came off as serious. They also complimented his ability to be chill everywhere from the roll call room to the lunchroom to the street.

But getting to know him led to these types of lines of distinction: “Man, when I was working with him, he was a completely different guy,” Ambriz revealed. “We talked about anything. We’d laugh and tell jokes. Working with him, he made the day go by faster.”

Or this reflection:

“He was really good with always willing to learn,” 8th District Officer Jason Venegas observed. “He always just put himself out there and stuff like that, and he wasn’t afraid to put in extra work when needed.”

Or this:

“He was definitely a gentleman,” Villanueva added. “I remember him always speaking to me about his wife.”

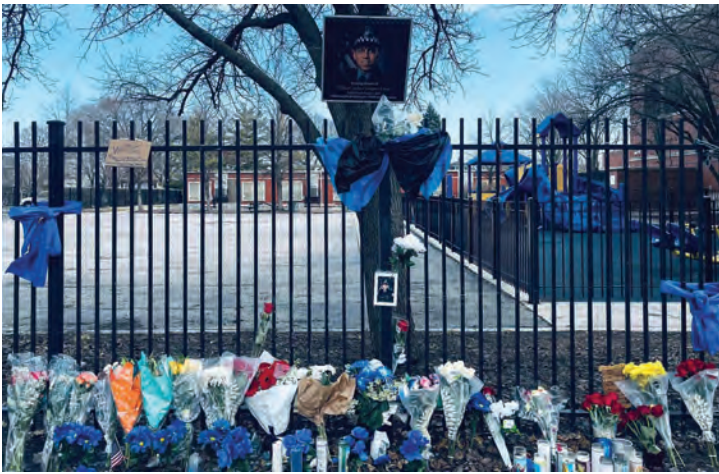
Omar Lezanama, who also worked third watch in 008, shared a beat car with Andrés. He witnessed how Andrés was motivated by the opportunity to make a difference.

“It wasn’t just changing the world but changing someone else’s world whenever he was on the job,” Lezanama remarked.

At the funeral, 8th District Commander Bryan Speyne eulogized that Andrés once wrote that he might not change the world, but he knew he could change the world of every person through his actions. Speyne confirmed Andrés would have made good on his dream of becoming a detective or a K-9 officer.

In less than five years on the job, Andrés earned four Department honorable mentions, three physical fitness awards, an attendance recognition award and a crime reduction award. Clearly, he had distinguished himself to Speyne.

“It is his unmatched work ethic and truly positive outlook, his penchant for people and passion for service, that made him such an incredible officer,” the commander commented. “People who knew him best say he may have seemed timid and serious, but once you got to know him, he was a fast friend and confidant.”



Hombre de familia

A couple of weeks had passed since Andrés was lost, and a request came in roll call for officers in 008 to share memories of their brother. When Lezanama heard the call, he answered with what would have been an eloquent post.

“It was a pleasure sharing a car with you, brother,” he said, reading remarks he had punched out on his phone during roll call. “You were a good partner and a better man. I respected the times that you’d use your 30 minutes of lunch to drop off ice cream to your wife. 008 misses you, man.”

Ah yes, that ice cream run for Milena, whom he met in a restaurant in April 2019. They quickly became inseparable. Rarely a day passed without him making that run. She was as happy to see him as Nalah, their dog, who made the family a bit of a fairy tale.

Ambriz related how they would come out of roll call and have a few minutes before starting rounds on the beat. Andrés would ask if they could make a quick Dunkin’ stop to grab a coffee to bring to



Milena, if not ice cream.

“He would get something from Dunkin’ and then start driving in a different direction. I’m like, ‘Where are you going?’ He’s like, ‘Oh, I got to take this to my wife real quick,’” Ambriz detailed. “He basically worshipped the ground she walked on.”

Milena Estapa de Vásquez and Andrés had become one of the all-time great love stories, an enchantment that touched everybody they knew. Her friends would tease Milena about how much of a gentleman Andrés was.

And of all the words of tribute and remembrance, the ones that matter most came in this message Milena posted on Facebook shortly after her beloved was lost.

THIS is heartbreak.
THIS is humanity.
THIS is our family.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 40



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Gran oficial de policía

Consensus from the third watch revealed that Andrés was a great asset, a great partner and a great cop because he was always ready to work. And he went at it with high intensity from the time he left roll call until the end of the tour.

Even if his shift was coming to an end and he was tired, Andrés was known to do a bunch of traffic stops. He was also known to go above and beyond, like he did the second day Vargas was working with him.

“We had a house burning. It was engulfed in flames,” Vargas began. “I was like, ‘I hope he doesn’t run in.’ He just runs, and he kicks the door in, and fire comes out. But that was the type of person he was.”

Considering the 2023 state of being a Chicago Police Officer, a shift rarely passes without somebody falling victim to the low morale and commenting about it. Commenting is the euphemism for another word beginning with “b.”

But even all the way up to the lieutenant, nobody in 008 remembers Andrés complaining about it. Canteria witnessed Andrés’ resiliency by the way he responded to the critiques he heard in the academy.

By then, Canteria knew Andrés would be a great cop. And his prowess seemed to grow every day.

“He always doubted himself just a little bit because of the way he spoke Spanish. He’s like, ‘Oh man, they’re going to put me in the worst neighborhoods,’” Canteria continued. “He knew what hard

CONTINUED ON PAGE 40

GRACIAS CONTINUED FROM PAGE 39

“It will never be a goodbye, it will be a see you soon to my favorite person, my best friend, my travel and adventure partner who will always be in my heart. To the best human being God could have given me. Your chivalry until the last day, your infinite love, nobility, joy, will always be in my memories. I’m grateful for every minute that God allowed me to share with you. I would have wished to hug you tighter that Wednesday morning before I took off, to give you more goodbye kisses, if only I had imagined that it was the last time I would see you alive. You dedicated your life doing what you loved most. Every day you went to work with a smile from ear to ear. Thank you for being the best husband, dog dad, son, brother, uncle, cousin, friend. You leave a hopeless void in our hearts.

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A Walk for Andrés

Robert Swiderski leads a 24-hour walk and prayer vigil to honor a fallen hero

BY ESTHER GONZALES

Flower bouquets, blue ribbons, red roses and candles lined the sidewalk against the black fence near where Chicago Police Officer Andrés Vásquez Lasso made the ultimate sacrifice on March 1. His portrait hung over the scene with the words “In loving memory.”

On March 6, Robert Swiderski, director of Running for Blue Lives, stood before a crowd of Chicago Police Officers, aldermen and supporters who had followed him through the 8th District during a 24-hour walk and prayer vigil in honor of Vásquez Lasso.

As Swiderski offered a prayer, he fulfilled his mission to surround officers and the community mourning this deep loss with comfort and hope.

“After hearing about the tragic loss, I just felt compelled to do what I can to make a difference for the members of the Department, for the family of Officer Vásquez Lasso and also in the community where he lived,” explained Swiderski, who is renowned for his annual walk to every police district to raise support for Chicago Police Officers. “I believe prayer, love and hope will make a difference in people's lives.”

After a candlelight vigil on March 5 at Hale Park, where hundreds of officers and Chicago residents stood shoulder to shoulder sharing support, Swiderski began the 24-hour walk and prayer vigil along 63rd Street. Members of Running for Blue Lives joined the effort, carrying



Robert Swiderski, director of Running for Blue Lives, led a 24-hour walk and prayer vigil around the 8th District in honor of fallen Chicago Police Officer Andrés Vásquez Lasso.

a blue line flag and a poster with Vásquez Lasso's photo.

Walking throughout the community, it became clear to Swiderski just how loved Vásquez Lasso was and how much of an impact he made.

“The community was feeling a sense of love and hope as we were walking, and they were very supportive,” Swiderski remarked. “Officer Vásquez Lasso really made a difference in the community. He was an officer that really cared about people, and he was well loved and appreciated.”

During the walk, Donna Marquez, a Gold Star family member, shared with Swiderski the experience of one seventh-grader who was at the scene on March 1.

“He heard the gunshots,” related Swiderski, as tears choked his voice. “And he



Robert Swiderski was joined by residents of the local community, Chicago Police Officers and community leaders.



To end the walk, Robert Swiderski stopped at the scene where Chicago Police Officer Andrés Vásquez Lasso lost his life and offered a prayer of support.

also heard the screaming from the very young children who were there. He stated that he recognized that had it not been for Officer Vásquez Lasso, that some of these children, including himself, might have been shot by this criminal. He recognized the courageousness and bravery that Officer Andrés Vásquez Lasso had that day, and that he gave his life for everyone else.”

GRACIAS CONTINUED FROM PAGE 40

work was. He knew that it was his mission. He was like, ‘Whatever happens, we're here. This is my job. This is my calling.’ That was his mentality.”

Eres grande

Coming to this country when he was 18. Learning the language. Going into the academy at 27. Working to make a better life for his family. Loving Milena. Man, this is a hero who radiated inspiration.

Third watch in 008 reverberated with inspiration when asked to define Andrés' legacy. Officer Juan Arana put it plain and simple, starting with how Andrés was always somebody you could count on.

“I'll say that any other officer should probably follow his steps,” Arana added.

Venegas echoed a sentiment that thinking about Andrés keeps him going. He was a testament to how strong the bond is among those who serve and protect their communities.

In this respect, Andrés might have changed the world. He did it one life at a time, including those of his sisters and brothers on the job.

“I thank God for getting to know him that way, and for him bringing me back to when I was excited about doing the job,” Morgan affirmed. “Actually, it should be a spark to something new as far as, we need to be respected and also appreciate what men and women are doing on the job.”

In his funeral remarks, Canteria used the Spanish words *eres grande* to cast a lasting image about Andrés. The literal translation is “you are big.” The intended translation is that he is immortalized.

Nothing more really needs to be said. The third watch, the 8th District and the City will truly miss their *parcero*.

'You had it in you from the start'

Chicago Police Officers bid solemn farewell to their dedicated, selfless brother, Andrés Vásquez Lasso

■ BY DAN CAMPANA

One by one, they stepped to the lectern, their raw emotions exposed for the crowded chapel to see and share.

Some turned pages filled with well-constructed memories and emphatic statements of love and admiration. Others glanced at their phones to remain on track as they took deep breaths and released trembling sighs between stories that recalled simple moments of honest connections with a man taken from them way too soon.

Of all the words eulogizing Chicago Police Officer Andrés Mauricio Vásquez Lasso during the March 9 funeral at St. Rita of Cascia Shrine Chapel, perhaps none illustrated his true spirit and character more profoundly than his own, captured in an Instagram post recited by his friend and fellow Chicago Police Officer Saul Canteria.

"Behind this uniform, there's another human being just like you. This uniform doesn't make me a robot. This uniform is not a symbol of hate. This is not a symbol of us versus them," Canteria read from his phone, his service hat sitting low enough that no one could see the emotion in his eyes. "I hate injustice and lawlessness as well, that's why I became a cop.

"Even though my actions won't change the world, I can change the





world of every person I get in contact with,” Canteria shared from Vásquez Lasso’s post before adding, “And that’s definitely what he did. I keep thinking about how you always wanted to be the police. You had it in you from the start.”

The final goodbyes to 32-year-old Vásquez Lasso during a riveting bilingual ceremony were filled with praise for him as an exemplary officer, but an even better human being. In their dress blues, with mourning bands on their badges and Vásquez Lasso pins on their coats, hundreds of Chicago Police Officers were joined by other first responders to fill nearly every pew in the chapel. Vásquez Lasso’s family, including his wife, Milena, and mother, Rocio, sat in a front row near the casket positioned in front of the altar.

Outside, scores more of Chicago’s finest and law enforcement from around the state and country saluted Vásquez Lasso as the casket, adorned with a Chicago flag, was carried into and, later, out of the church. A miles-long procession along City streets and expressways drew crowds to honor his final journey.

Chicago Police Chaplain Dan Brandt and family pastor Andres Beltran led the funeral mass, their homilies speaking to the tragedy of Vásquez Lasso’s death while highlighting the lasting impressions he left on so many. Beltran’s voice rose with passion at times, alternating with a calm reassuring tone, such as when he brought Vásquez Lasso’s family to the casket for them to speak directly to their lost loved one.

Vásquez Lasso was nearing his fifth anniversary on the job, which saw him working in the 8th District. Commander Bryan Spreyne said Vásquez Lasso “made us all better” as he “exemplified the best of this profession.” Spreyne talked of the instant void felt in the district, which paled in comparison to the Vásquez Lasso family’s pain.

“CPD lost one of its finest. But you lost so much more. You lost someone irreplaceable in Andrés,” Spreyne offered. “Believe me when I say, the heartache of your loss is felt across the City.”

Canteria met Vásquez Lasso on their first day in the academy under less-than-ideal circumstances. Canteria explained that Vásquez, as he called him, arrived late for a tough instructor’s class. That meant bad news for everyone, and Vásquez Lasso knew he had messed up.

“Man, I don’t want to ever be the reason you guys get smoked again,” Canteria recalled Vásquez Lasso saying.

The pair became fast friends. They went to different districts after graduating from the academy, but when Canteria was transferred to the 8th District, they picked up right where

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YOU HAD IT CONTINUED FROM PAGE 43

they had left off. They didn't talk as much as Canteria wished after being reunited, which makes their last conversation about "shades" on a sunny day stand out as much as the fact that they were 15 days away from marking their fifth year on the job when Lasso died.

"You've taught me to value life. You've taught me to always laugh. You taught me to smile, even if it's an awkward smile, because life is short," Canteria continued during his time at the lectern. "You've taught me to be passionate about chasing my dreams and turning them into a reality. I'm always going to remember you, each and every day."

Vásquez Lasso arrived from Colombia with his family at 18 years old. He learned English, went to college and joined the Department at the age of 27. He aspired to be a K-9 officer or a detective as he carried on the family tradition of working in public service as a first responder.

One of those relatives, Chicago Police Officer Jhon Vásquez, gave an emotional speech about the man he called his "beloved cousin," who was eager to help support his mother and sister when he joined the Department.

"He loved his job and took great pride in being part of the Chicago Police Department," Jhon shared. "He was one of the bravest and most selfless people I have ever known. He was always willing to put himself in harm's way to help others, and he did so without hesitation."

Jhon said his cousin's death is a "tragic reminder" of the ever-present danger faced by every police officer. He called on the



City to come together to support and respect the police, while ensuring officers have what is needed to do their jobs safely and effectively.

His emotions swelled one final time as he concluded, "To my cousin, my little brother, my fellow officer, we say farewell, but we will never forget you."

Then, he stopped at the casket to salute Andrés as the chapel applauded. As the funeral continued, giving way to the mile-long procession to the cemetery, there was a universal recognition that even with just five years as a Chicago Police Officer, Andrés Mauricio Vásquez Lasso did indeed change the world.

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Higher Calling



Members of the newly elected Chicago Lodge 7 Executive Board take the oath of office from National FOP Secretary Jimmy Holderfield.

Newly elected Chicago Lodge 7 Executive Board has the vision to raise the voice of members and continue to improve benefits and working conditions

■ BY MITCHELL KRUGEL

From a Titanic view of the City on level 33 of the Marriott Marquis Chicago, members of the newly elected Chicago Executive Board 7 took their oath of office for the new four-year term on April 2. Looking out through a mammoth picture window, they saw a horizon presenting the fine line between smooth sailing and turbulence in navigating for 12,000-plus members who are depending on their leadership and hoping to reach new heights.

Having the Lodge 7 executive board installation event in the Marriott Marquis' scenic space created a positive perspective to look ahead. The viewpoint is 180 degrees different from what the Vision Team led by President John Catanzara faced three years ago. It is an appropriate vantage point for the upgraded Vision and Voice team, which was reelected on March 3 to elevate member benefits, working conditions and officer health and wellness, among other objectives, during the next four years.

"The venue was amazing. It was something nice after the very somber 2020 installation lunch, where there was not a lot of celebration," commented Catanzara. "It was even better than if we were at the Signature Room at the Hancock. Here, we were just high enough to enjoy the view and still get a perspective out of it all."

From here, the Lodge 7 executive board is braced to further fight the battles ahead regarding Department manpower, political presence and influence, accountability and oversight, RDOs

and Phase 2 of the contract, among other needs and challenges. But the team – which also includes the three sergeants-at-arms and 17 trustees – is poised and positioned to continue the uncompromised customer service it initiated three years ago that has been a 180-degree turnaround from administrations past.

What the current administration has accomplished during the past three years not only confirms that turnaround but asks members to see what Third Vice President Monica Ortiz sees as she embarks on her second term on the board.

"I know what the old FOP looked like," Ortiz submitted. "I think this is a new look."

And what the new-look Lodge leadership wants to continue to provide.

"We have a full-stop shop," confirmed Rob Noceda as he begins his second term as recording secretary. "We can give you counsel on pretty much just about anything. So that's why we're the FOP. It stands for fraternal order of police, but I like to call it the family order of police."

Higher resolution

Of the seven officers reelected – Catanzara, First Vice President Mike Mette, Second Vice President Dan Gorman, Ortiz, Noceda, Financial Secretary Jim Jakstavich and Treasurer Dennis McGuire – four garnered more than 57 percent of the vote. The closest race was still won by more than 300 votes.

Gorman, who was the top vote-getter of all candidates, has

CONTINUED ON PAGE 48



The newly elected Chicago Lodge 7 Executive Board poses with past president and union founder John Dineen and National FOP Secretary Jimmy Holderfield during the installation event on the 33rd floor of the Marriott Marquis Chicago.

HIGHER CONTINUED FROM PAGE 47

been through five of these elections. His analysis offers an insightful perspective about the statement members made with their voting.

“I think for the most part more than 50 percent of the members realize that this administration has faced many more serious issues than any other past administration,” Gorman explained. “The percentage is high for union elections. So that says a lot.”

Noceda analogized that members have been suffering through cold nights the past three years, courtesy of the mayor. And that the team was reelected for keeping the coals burning and keeping the members warm during those nights.

That has been done by fervently grieving and fighting a multitude of disciplinary actions against members. The grievance committee, led by Gorman and Jakstavich, has had a lot of the discipline the Department has handed out reduced by half or more.

As with three years ago, members have plugged into the fact that their elected leaders are street cops like them who know what it means to grind it out every day. They have never forgotten what it's like to be in a beat car or what it's like to be hit with inexplicable reprimands and discipline.

“I think it means that we're on the right track,” Mette surmised about reelection. “John's strategy and our strategy from the get-go was to make sure we really kicked the crap out of the customer service aspect of what the Lodge should have been for all these years. And I think that's why the majority of us won pretty handily.”

The vote also seems to confirm that, as Mette also notes, Catanzara was the right guy at the right time to lead Lodge 7. And that the Lodge has, according to Gorman, made more attempts to get members involved with day-to-day activities, take input from members and express the members' input to the Department and command staff.

“I think they recognize what we've done here, what we've accomplished, the work product we're turning out,” Jakstavich added. “The most rewarded I felt in my entire career is serving police officers. We're grateful as well, to be serving citizens. But it's different with coppers because you want to try to help them even more.”

Higher profile

The first term was filled with addressing so much related to



From left, Lodge 7 President John Catanzara, newly elected trustee Carlos Yanez Jr., past President John Dineen, FOP National Trustee Rocky Nowaczyk and National FOP Secretary Jimmy Holderfield.

the pandemic, including having members lost to COVID designated as line-of-duty deaths and getting their families the benefits due to them. And battling the portal created over getting vaccinated and members not wanting to do so.

Amid all that, the Lodge negotiated Phase 1 of a new contract that netted members a 22 percent salary increase over the lifetime of the agreement. Additionally, Lodge 7 launched a political action initiative that is increasing its presence in important political arenas.

Special attention to the health and wellness of officers has been elevated, including providing resources for addressing mental health and addiction, which have increased with the added stress of deteriorating working conditions. The Lodge's field reps charged with working with the Department's medical section have also procured more timely treatment for disabled officers.

“I think those little things and little victories are what keep us moving,” Jakstavich declared.

Of course, the day-to-day goal of the next term will be making working conditions, salary and benefits better for officers. It's personal for the Lodge 7 executive board members because it's enhancing their benefits, too.

An addition to the new term's agenda also has come in the form of the new superintendent. Certainly, the Lodge wants to have input on the candidates and the ultimate selection. More importantly:

“We hope that we have a relationship where the superintendent sits down with us, listens to us and understands we're the voice of the members,” Gorman noted.

Healthcare will be an ongoing priority on a couple of fronts. The Lodge plans on continuing the clinical services it has created at its offices to provide mental health and wellness resources that the Department doesn't see fit to offer. And there is great hope that the health screening services that will become available for members during the next few months will be the first steps in creating a resource and facility to provide free healthcare for active and retired members.

When all that is said and done, this administration also hopes to move into a new lodge. The facility will eliminate many of the challenges members face in coming to the Lodge and pave the way for another aspect essential to growing benefits, resources and presence to better serve the membership.

“In order to do that, you have to make sure you expand to better educate our members,” Noceda emphasized. “Having a big-

ger lodge is all about educating our members and the younger generation of officers about what it means to do union business. That will also help us figure out where we can allocate our time and resources to better address members' hot-button issues."

Higher quality

This term starts with a brighter outlook than the last term. A few days after the last term began, George Floyd was killed, and riots started in several cities. Lodge 7 met with the mayor right about then, and she reportedly told Catanzara that would not happen in her city.

All members know how that one went. Hopefully, those types of blunders won't happen with a new mayor and City administration. Perhaps Lodge 7 can even broach reform for the Civilian Office of Police Accountability (COPA), whose actions have led the union to repeatedly filing unfair labor practice charges.

In the meantime, Lodge 7 will not waver on some of its most productive ongoing initiatives. Outreach to support members, including bringing out the FOP food trailer to cook for them when they are working holidays, weekends and events will continue, with what Jakstavich quips might be some menu surprises. There will also be continued focus on growing participation of female members through the Lodge 7 women's committee, started in the first term, which Ortiz co-chairs.

Most importantly, the customer service that compels Lodge leaders to respond whenever a member calls will likely be elevated.

"We never, ever go without reflecting on the hard work and dedication members have, so we make sure to dig deep and work hard for them," Noceda proclaimed. "It's only fitting that we do what they ask us to do, and that's why I believe we all got elected to continue to serve the membership."



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The CPD Women's Soccer Team traveled to Colombia to play in a humanitarian soccer tournament against Colombian police officers.

Reaching a Goooooooooooooooooal!!!!!!

Chicago Police Women's Soccer Team makes big assist with humanitarian trip to Colombia

BY ESTHER GONZALES

All hesitation to travel to Colombia for eight days seemed to wash away the moment the 12 members of the Chicago Police Women's Soccer Team stepped foot in the country on March 8. A group of Colombian police officers welcomed the team and escorted the members from city to city as they played in the South Fork United law enforcement humanitarian soccer tournament.

The founder of South Fork United, a nonprofit organization that offers resources to impoverished communities through soccer, is a retired NYPD officer who works closely with the Chicago Police Men's Soccer Club. But this was the first time a women's team had been offered the opportunity to travel to Colombia and participate in the organization's humanitarian work.

By the end of only their second day there, the officers had already planned to return in 2024 with more donations. They were inspired by witnessing the impact their presence had for the countless impoverished Colombian children who gathered to watch them play.

"It was a great experience to be able to give back to the kids," Chicago Police Officer and Women's Soccer Team President Jasmin Carrera expressed. "It was a kind of eye-opener with just how much poorer these countries are than us. Just giving them a shirt and a soccer ball or something to play with changed their mood. Meeting us, I think for them, was a big experience. They were able to see that soccer can move you forward in life."

At first, the team had debated whether they should



Colombian children surround the Chicago Police Women's Soccer Team after a game.



The CPD Women's Soccer Team poses with some children after winning its second soccer game.



Members of the CPD Women's Soccer Team participated in the humanitarian soccer tournament and handed out food, T-shirts and shoes to children in need.

accept the invitation to play in the tournament because tragedy had just struck. With Andres Vasquez-Lasso being lost in the line of duty the day before they departed, members didn't feel it was right to travel when they knew their brothers and sisters were mourning.

But Colombia was Vasquez-Lasso's native country. So the team chose to honor his legacy with the game they all knew and loved.

"We were playing for him. These games were for him, and we won them all for him," Officer Reyna Ramos expressed. "It felt teary. We lost someone, and it hurt. It hit home. And at the end of the day, we were doing all this because overall, we are sisters, and we're here for each other, not just to play soccer, but if anyone is ever going through anything, we're here to support one another."

As the Chicago Police Officers stepped onto the field to play against Colombian officers on the national team, a priest stood beside them to offer a prayer and pay respects to Vasquez-Lasso. Then they each took a moment of silence for their fallen brother. Ramos said it was like she could feel his presence.

That's how they started each of the four games in the tournament.

"It was very impactful," Carrera added. "You could really see how, yes, it starts with soccer, but also it doesn't matter where we're from or what we do, we're all police officers. I saw how we have brothers and sisters in blue in other countries as well."

Carrera grew up learning about life with a soccer ball, so when a fellow CPD officer approached her in 2018 about starting a team, she didn't hesitate. Carrera started playing when she was 6 years old and since then has been involved in soccer in almost every aspect imaginable, including coaching, serving as a referee and even lining soccer fields.

This trip seemed to offer the opportunity the members had been waiting a lifetime for. And they played with great inspiration.

Chicago was losing at the beginning of the second game. Suddenly, Carrera scored off a penalty kick, and the team's momentum changed right away, she said. That seemed to set the tone for the rest of the game, which they won.

But it wasn't about winning for the Chicago Police Officers. It was about giving back.

Carrera and Ramos noted how those were the most memorable moments. After each game, a crowd of 30 or more children immediately surrounded the players, who offered food, clothes, shoes and shin guards to the children. Their faces lit up when they received the gifts.

Ramos had dreamed of becoming an officer since she was 2



years old. And witnessing the joy on the children's faces reinforced her love for the job.

"It just kind of gave me all this nostalgia of, like, how beautiful it is and how grateful I am to have everything I have and to be a part of this community," Ramos remarked. "The kids were very grateful. You could tell that they were so happy."

The children asked to take photos with the officers and embraced them with hugs. Then one little boy took Ramos by the hand and began dancing with her.

Suddenly, Ramos said, he looked up and asked, "Oh my God, are you going to remember me? Are you going to come see me next year?"

As the team was leaving, they handed their soccer cleats to the Colombian officers they had played against. Ramos was surprised to see they didn't have a lot of funds, so this was her small way of helping. Next year, the team plans to host fundraisers in advance to bring shoes and clothes.

Working side by side with the Colombian police officers, the CPD soccer team visited several police headquarters in the country. They learned of a program, similar to CPD's community policing, that the Colombians are initiating with the schools to build relationships with the community.

"Overall, it was a great experience," Carrera commented. "Sometimes you have more, and instead of just taking for yourself, giving it is more rewarding in life."

On the day the Chicago team left Colombia, one player's phone lit up with a voicemail notification.

It was from one of the children.

"He was crying," Ramos described. "He was like, 'I miss you guys. I love you guys so much. I can't wait for you guys to come back. I'll be waiting for you. I'll be counting the days.' It was the sweetest thing. It's a wonderful thing that we can play soccer, and that's how we connect. But at the end of the day, we have built some bonds that are unbreakable."



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Serving those who served

25th District CAPS officers host event to raise awareness for veterans' benefits

■ BY ESTHER GONZALES

In partnership with the American Legion Post Billy Caldwell and the Jesse Brown VA Medical Center, 25th District CAPS officers hosted a veterans community outreach event on March 26. Surrounded by more than 30 veterans, 25th District Youth Liaison Officer Jesus Magallon said the laughter and camaraderie reminded him of being in a fraternity.

Although 025 usually hosts events catered to younger children in the community, Magallon related that he welcomed this opportunity to serve those who gave so much for their country.

With help from VA staff members, the officers proceeded to help these vets determine their VA enrollment eligibility and offered light refreshments.

"We have a lot of veterans in the community, and we make sure that we're taking care of them," Magallon explained. "We're happy to help connect them with various resources and make sure that they know their benefits and any other resource that they might be entitled to."

The event seemed to generate a lot of success, according to Magallon, who said this was just another example of the kind of community policing the 25th District does.

"It speaks to the nature of the work we do here in the 25th District CAPS office," Magallon commented. "We really try to engage with our community, people of all walks of life and especially our veterans, who are very important to us."

And partnering with other organizations in the community with the same vision is vital for 25th District CAPS officers to host events like this.



"The significance of hosting these types of events is just to give back to those that gave so much to us," Magallon commented. "It really starts with reaching out to the community and community members that are interested in working with us and realizing the importance that our veterans have in our society and in our community."

Magallon commended the incredible leadership in the 25th District, which makes serving veterans a top priority and helped make this outreach a success.

"These are real leaders here that take this stuff seriously," Magallon added. "Reaching out to the community is a priority for them as it is for us. We live and breathe the work we do."

Youthful Enthusiasm

4th District officer embraces leading the Youth Explorer Program

■ BY ESTHER GONZALES

Chicago Police Officer Alexander Calatayud quips he has been working with youth his entire 28 years on the job. And although he has only worked with the 4th District Youth Explorer program for one year, he has seen the impact it has on the youth in the community.

“We have several kids that have autism, and within their schools, they’re the kids that are quiet, off to the side, and usually the kids that are being bullied,” Calatayud explained. “When they come through our Explorer program, they’re able to voice their voice and communicate with all the kids as equals. There is no one picking on them. So when they go back to their communities, they go back with a sense of confidence that they can lift their heads up a little bit more.”

Calatayud helped organize a Youth Explorer spring break program in April. This initiative focuses on helping kids stay safe and off the streets, which Calatayud said he knows all about, because he has been through circumstances similar to those many of these children face.

“Nowadays, the streets are a little tougher, a little harder, and what we came up with for this year with their spring break is a collaboration with the park districts,” Calatayud remarked. “Every day at a different park, there is an event to provide something positive for them and allow them to interact with kids from other communities.”

On March 28, Calatayud visited Powell Elementary School to invite students to the Youth Explorer spring break program. While there, Calatayud shared his story with the students, as he does whenever he has the chance. He said he is often drawn to those who need encouragement the most and are the least fortunate, because that was him as a child.

“As an officer, I try to let them know that ‘I’m one of you all,’” Calatayud related. “I came from the same neighborhood. I came from a broken home. I was part of DCFS. And when I tell the kids my story growing up, and tell them how I had a learning disability, and let them know that I went through the same



Chicago Police Officer Alexander Calatayud visited elementary school students to invite them to an upcoming Youth Explorer spring break program.



Chicago Police Officer Alexander Calatayud invited kids from the 4th District Youth Explorer program to a bowling outing.

things they are currently going through, we relate at a whole different level. It tends to chip away at some of the walls that they’ve put up.”

At the end of February, Calatayud invited Youth Explorers to the Skyway Bowling Alley for an outing. Seeing the joy on their faces reinforced why he loves working with youth.

“When I see these kids smile and see them enjoying what they’re doing with the people that they’re with, that’s good enough for me, because the kids are happy, their families are happy,” Calatayud added. “We have plenty of parents that participate, as well. And for them to see a smile, that their kid is having a good time, that’s enough for me.”

17th District CAPS hosts child safety event

A group of preschoolers from Bateman Elementary School gathered around the colorful carpet in their classroom to listen to 17th District Officer Maryjane Parks read a book. The short story, filled with pictures of K-9s and mounted unit horses, depicted what life is like on the job and the different aspects of being a Chicago Police Officer.

"They were excited about kind of understanding that we don't just work in the patrol car, there's other things that police officers do, too," Parks explained. "So they were asking questions about that, so that was kind of cool."

As part of her initiative for Child Abuse Prevention Month, Parks included a show-and-tell with the child safety event. Parks showcased the various pieces of equipment that officers use, like helmets, gas masks and their protective vests.

After the show-and-tell, Parks handed each of the children take-home bags that included positive parenting tips and resources for parents, like the location of free childcare centers.

Parks, who also serves as the domestic



violence liaison, noted that she has received calls before from teachers whose students are in a violent situation. And when the kids see officers taking their parents away, they may not fully understand what is happening.

"You never know a situation where one



of the children had a domestic violence situation," Parks added. "Seeing a police officer in a different aspect gives them that balance, being so young, like, 'Oh, this police officer is friendly.' So they can remember two different circumstances."



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11th District officers honored during Women's History Month

In honor of Women's History Month, members from the We Care 2 Agency visited the 11th District to honor several female officers for their contributions to the community.

Chicago Police Officers Shalanda Sweezer and Theresa McBeth were presented with the Prestige of Achievement Award for their work with senior citizens. And Chicago Police Officers Yesenia Rodriguez and LaTonya Capers were presented with the Community Servant Recipient 2023 Award.

"I was very elated, surprised and thankful that they would take the time to do that," Capers related. "I am very grateful to have a relationship and serve with them in the community."

Capers noted that the We Care 2 Agency has partnered with officers in the 11th District for community policing events. Many of their members are women who have survived cancer and domestic violence, and that has motivated their mission to serve the community.

"Knowing that we have people or organizations that have the same concern



From left, Chicago Police Officers LaTonya Capers and Yesenia Rodriguez were presented with Community Servant Recipient Awards from the We Care 2 Agency.

is so significant, because it takes everyone together to serve the community, to help prevent violence," Capers commented. "So when there's individuals or organizations that are willing to partner with us and work with us, we as a department are just thankful for that."

There have been many moments in Capers' five years on the job that stand out when she thinks about serving the community. Moments like that remind



From left, Chicago Police Officers Shalanda Sweezer and Theresa McBeth were presented with the Prestige of Achievement Award by the We Care 2 Agency for their work with senior citizens.

Caper that the work she is doing is so worth it.

And to receive this award, even more so.

"It just encouraged me to know that the love and the service is not in vain," Capers added. "It does make a difference, and just to continue and just have faith. In every assignment and everything that God gives us to do, that is a purpose in it."



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22nd District officer honored for work with students

Officer Kurrin Beamon believes the children are our future. The 22nd District officer recently received an award from Esmond Elementary School for her commitment and hard work when it comes to the students.

Beamon started with the Department in 2017, and since then, she's been building a relationship with the students at Esmond Elementary. Not only did she make the effort with students, but she also aimed to build relationships with their parents.

"On report card pickup days, I would have several community-based organizations: one for jobs, one for getting your GED, one for paying the bills. So I would have all the tables set up so the parents could actually have access to these resources," Beamon explained.

But Beamon's favorite part of her visits to Esmond is getting to hang out with the kids, even getting to join them for lunch sometimes.

She refers to her time there as "hanging out," but in the long run, the "hanging out" is what these children need.



"They need this attention. A lot of them don't receive it at home," she added.

Beamon explains that laying the groundwork now is important for continued positive relationships between kids and law enforcement.

"They'll see us, and it will outweigh what others may say about us if we just prove it to them," she noted.



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Officers support youth on their big night to shine

The Chicago Police Department is always doing its part to lift up the community's kids. That includes being there when they're celebrated for their good work.

On March 2, officers from the 10th and 12th districts attended the Boys and Girls Club Youth of the Year Awards event celebrating local kids. The awards recognize leadership, service and academic standing.

Both districts said they felt very honored to be in attendance.



10th District



12th District



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Diving in: Members take on the Polar Plunge for Special Olympics

If there's one thing Chicago is known for, it's the weather. March is no joke when it comes to the cold, so to jump into the cold waters off North Avenue Beach, or even a miniature pool of ice water, is asking a lot. But when it comes to the Special Olympics, it's never too big of an ask for Chicago Police Officers. Here are some districts that decided to take the plunge.



18th District

Members of the 18th District came out to North Avenue Beach on March 5 for the iconic winter tradition that normally draws in 4,000 participants.



20th District

The 20th District took the plunge into their own hands. Area 3 CST officers and Commander McCrudden jumped into a large ice bath. Even "The King" made an appearance.



22nd District

The 22nd District waited until the third weekend of March to take the plunge. It was a family affair for the department, with officers and some of their children plunging for the Special Olympics.

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Cops and the Community

The March weather didn't quite deliver on spring warmth around the City, but Chicago Police Officers and residents did their collective parts to keep things bright. Officers actively supported the Department and their communities in ways big and small while seeing their hard work appreciated through heartfelt gestures that truly resonate.

St. Patrick's Day



When Chicago turns green in March, officers across the city do their part to keep the festivities fun and safe from the North Side to the South Side — and along the lakefront — as thousands gather for parades aplenty celebrating St. Patrick's Day.

A police station can be an intimidating place for kids, but one youngster in the 10th District walked away knowing better. As his mother gathered domestic violence resource information, the child encountered a friendly officer with a few toys for the boy, who showed his appreciation with a thoughtful hug.



10th District

16th District



In the 16th District, officers enjoyed the sweet taste of appreciation after a local resident donated 250 candy bars with a simple, yet meaningful, message of support on the wrapper: "Thank You for Your Service."



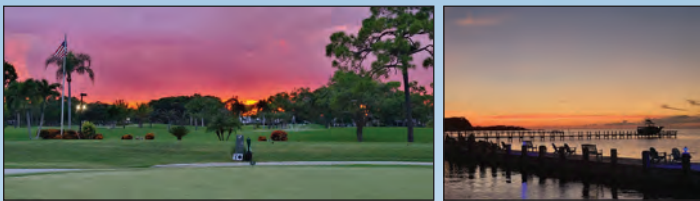
14th District

It was a special day in the 14th District when officers helped members of a visiting Girl Scout troop earn their "Respect Authority" badges by taking a tour of the district and trying out some gear.



CPD Enforcers

The CPD Enforcers traveled to Las Vegas for their 2023 season opener against the Los Angeles Police Department. The Enforcers rolled to a 48-14 win in the desert and now set their sights on a May 20 showdown in Nashville against the NYPD Finest.



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Help for headaches and neck pain



LEO TALAGANIS,
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With many police officers dealing with long hours on the job and mounting stress, it is inevitable that tension can manifest itself in many ways. Often, headaches and jaw pain, known as temporomandibular joint dysfunction (TMJD), are the main culprits. The discomfort caused by tension headaches and TMJD is usually temporary and can be relieved with self-managed and conservative treatments that include physical therapy.

Symptoms such as jaw tightness, clicking and uneven bites cause tension that can travel upward toward our temples and into our neck. Neck stiffness, in particular — suboccipital muscle restriction — can travel downward, causing jaw pain as well. There is an important link between the jaw and neck that can lend itself to overall pain. This is why physical therapy treatment is tailored to both the upper spine and the jaw joint. Methods that may be used in rehabilitation to relieve headaches and TMJD include an ultrasound to warm tight muscles, manual trigger point release, dry needling and traction applied to the neck area.

A major component in restoring the balance of the upper neck and jaw muscle tightness is posture! Faulty posture from sitting at a desk or behind the wheel of a police car all day can make symptoms worsen over time as joints are not properly aligned, causing shearing and resultant pain referral. Here are a few tips to remember to help maintain proper posture:

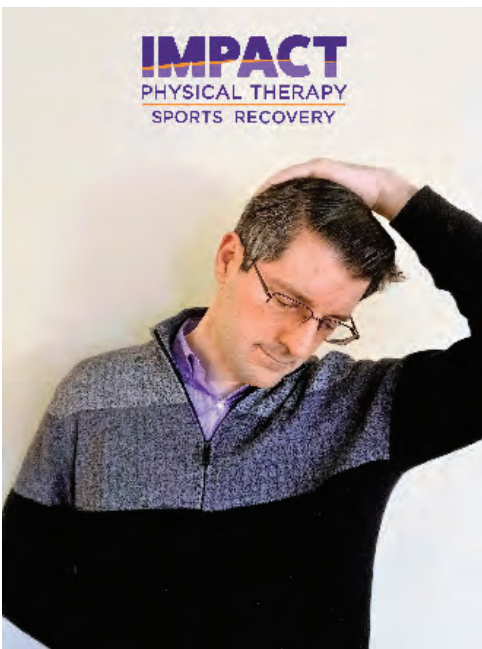
- When sitting, keep your pelvis neutral and position your back against the chair and feet on the floor.

- Make sure your knees are not higher than your hips to reduce stress on the spine.
- Check that your head is not protruding forward when you're looking at your computer screen.
- Take a short break every hour to change your position.

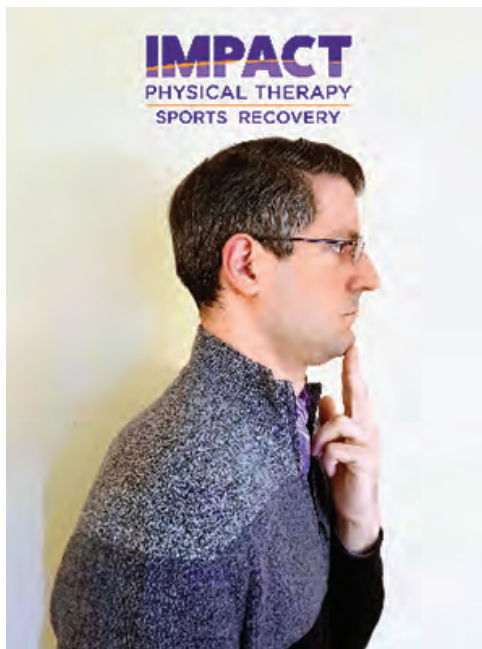
Physical therapists also have a unique ability to evaluate for the presence of trigger points and muscle tone. This applies to assessing muscles that cause headaches and jaw pain. The upper trapezius and a muscle called the sternocleidomastoid play a large role in supporting and moving our head. These muscles become strained and develop trigger points, causing pain. Active trigger points in the head, shoulder and neck muscles are associated with widespread pressure sensitivity and pain in people suffering from headaches and migraines. Dry needling and soft tissue therapy, followed by home exercises that includes careful stretches, are crucial in reducing and eventually eliminating discomfort.

Below are some useful stretches to reduce headaches and jaw pain. For a more comprehensive and tailored program to fit your needs, make an appointment with a skilled and knowledgeable physical therapist at IMPACT Physical Therapy & Sports Recovery. We specialize in treating headaches and TMJD.

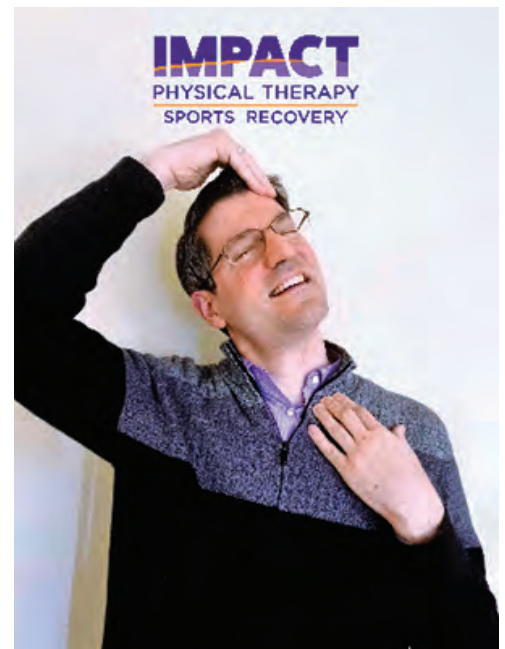
Want more information? Contact IMPACT Physical Therapy & Sports Recovery at 833-299-4672 or visit www.ImpactPhysicalTherapy.com to schedule an evaluation or consultation with a physical therapist to improve your mobility and decrease pain! Questions? Email Leo at ltalaganis@impactphysicaltherapy.com.



Levator stretch: Sit upright with good posture and place your hand on the top of your head. Gently draw your head to your side and down toward your knee, opposite the side you have pain. Perform 3 x 30 seconds.



Chin tuck: Sit or stand upright with good posture. Carefully draw your face and chin back creating a double chin effect. Hold this position for 5 seconds and repeat 10 times. One should feel relieving tension in the back of the neck.



Sternocleidomastoid stretch: Sit upright with good posture and place your hand on the top of your head. Gently draw your head to your side and look up. Perform 3 x 30 seconds.



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