



Fraternal Order of Police

CHICAGO LODGE 7

Official Magazine • August 2022



HELP

Another crushing wave of officers lost to suicide and suffering catastrophic injuries from shootings has intensified the desperate cry of what members need to endure



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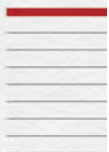
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COVER STORY



Chicago Police Officers Patsy Swank and Durand Lee and Sergeant Andrew Dobda brought so much to the Department, as well as to their brother and sisters. Especially their never-ending smiles, relentless desire to serve and ability to make the job fun for those they worked with. Losing these three paragons of policing to suicide turns up the cry for help. Certainly asking the Department and the City for more resources to address mental health and wellness. But also to their fellow officers to get the help they need, help that is now available in the new facility Chicago Lodge 7 has created.

COVER DESIGN BY GINA CROTCHFELT

Plus

Helpers: In the wake of the three suicides in July, a few brave members of the City Council have stepped up to propose the "Public Safety Package," a series of ordinances and resolutions to improve the working conditions that continue to plague the police..... **Page 36**

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MITCHELL KRUGEL

Founder and Publisher
 mitch@chicagofopmagazine.com

GINA CROTCHFELT

Art Director
 gina@chicagofopmagazine.com

ESTHER GONZALES

Staff Writer
 esther@chicagofopmagazine.com

DAN CAMPANA

Contributing Editor
 dan@dancamcom.biz

KIMBERLY FLYNN LAUREN PURCELL

Copy Editors

CHRISTINA MELENDEZ

Administrative Assistant
 christina@chicagofopmagazine.com

MAGAZINE COMMITTEE

Joseph Battaglia, William Burns, Michael Carroll,
 Carolyn Crump, David DiSanti,
 Tim Fitzpatrick, Jeremy Hipps, Jose Martinez,
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CHICAGO LODGE 7

Official Magazine
President's Report



Help Lines

With three more officers taking their own lives, here's what we have to do



JOHN
CATANZARA
JR.

Finding the words to explain how much it hurt to lose three more officers to suicide during that horrific 12-day span in July is almost too much. Even for me.

We have now lost 20 officers to suicide since 2018. And it's not that one is tougher than another. They all just seem to be hitting closer to home. And harder.

I've known Patsy Swank's parents very well from my first day on the job. Her mom, Annie, was my first dispatcher back in 1995. I've known her voice forever. I worked with Tim, Patsy's stepdad.

And when he first came on, Sergeant Andy Dobda was the partner of Jim Jakstavich, our Lodge 7 financial secretary. They became best friends. Andy came over to our trailer at the prayer service for Danny Golden and asked to see Jim. Little did we know where Andy would be 48 hours later. It just shakes you to your core.

I didn't really know Durand Lee. But I consider him part of the fraternity because he was a Police Board survivor.

The call for help in this crisis is not being heard. Or maybe they aren't listening. We all know who they are. The accountability has to start at the top of City Hall and 35th Street.

I don't know that there's a fail-safe in any way. Suicide is a part of human life. And our profession is definitely multiple times worse.

The only point of attack to try and lower that number closer to the national average for suicides comes down to time off. There's no other explanation. I've said it in my videos. I've said it in person. But I'm going to say it again here in hopes that at City Hall and 35th Street, they might also be shaken to the core and ready to listen.

Our officers experience the same trials and tribulations when it comes to relationships, family, life, money issues and all that stuff as the average citizen. I'm not saying our personal lives are more difficult. But our professional lives are extremely different, and it just adds gas to a smoldering fire.

You have to look at less time off or less time between tours due to decreased manpower because of the climate they created for law enforcement all over this country. You can't literally keep going job to job to job to job. You can't have an entity like COPA or a state's attorney who has proven she will go out of her way to try to put cops in jail.

All of that professional stress added to whatever personal stress you already have going on is just a recipe for disaster. With no time to decompress and no time to be a husband, a wife, a mother, a father, sister, a brother, a friend, it pushes people down into a dark corner that they just don't know how to get out of.

Three in 12 days and it being so sequential got me thinking again. I kind of just rewound back to my own situation in 2008 and how despondent I felt inside for almost three straight days. And what makes you take that next step?

I thank God I never had that moment of taking that next step. But I don't think our leadership understands that it is literally that millisecond of a decision. I don't know that it's 100 percent avoidable, other than alleviating things that turn a simple fire into a wildfire in our heads.

We need sleep and decompression time. You can't process the traumas without that. We've all heard that story about Patsy and the young, dead mother and her baby. If not, you can read more about it in the story beginning on page 30. It was very traumatic, and probably the most heartbreaking moment for Patsy.

Many officers have been there and know how heart-wrenching it can be. It just goes to show you how this job can really mess with your head. Another prominent story I heard from Annie that really stuck out was how Patsy felt so betrayed by the neighborhood that she loved working in and trying to help people.

She worked in the 7th District, and when she first got named for the bike unit, she loved it. Riding around in 2018 and 2019, the neighbors would give officers bottles of water. Just real community interaction, like we kind of hope it would be in a perfect world.

But in a blink of an eye, 2020, George Floyd, mob mentality, and those same people were throwing water bottles at them instead of giving it to them to drink. And it just kind of broke her heart on some

President's Report continues on Page 6

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Finally, somebody has our backs

We do have some elected officials on the City Council who stepped up to say enough is enough. You might have seen me standing with family members of those we have lost to suicide behind Aldermen Napolitano, Tabares, Lopez and O'Shea on July 20 when they announced their proposals to address the issues that are killing us.

Proposing ordinances to increase mental health and wellness support, creating a 30-day deadline to provide line-of-duty death benefits to surviving family members, capping the number of days officers can work without a day off and dumping COPA made this a memorable day. And from what I understand, according to Alderman Napolitano, there are even some other aldermen who didn't originally sign on who now want to be added as sponsors.

I think they see the writing on the wall that the topic is hot. That it can make or break their reelection campaigns. I think they also see that maybe this mayor isn't going to win reelection and they definitely don't want to carry the water for her on this one.

If they were doing the right thing this whole time and took into consideration other factors, you wouldn't have this issue even being addressed by the City Council. But the fact that she refuses to do anything about it and her lackeys at the top of the Department refuse to do anything forced the issue. They made their bed, now they can lie in it, along with the bedbugs that they keep allowing to pop up at headquarters.

I found it ironic, though, that they im-

mediately squashed one proposal calling for the superintendent's obligation to notify the city clerk when he is leaving town. I guess he doesn't have to meet the standards that our officers do when they want time off because that's exactly what they have to do. The Department, not correctly, mandated that people write it in to/from if you want to keep your regular day off or you want to use your comp time for something. They want explanations about what you're going to do with that time off. They make our officers jump through these hoops, but the superintendent is allowed to come and go back and forth to Dallas as often as he likes. Even in the midst of canceled deployments or RDOs, it doesn't matter. He's not held to that standard. He can do whatever he wants.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

level. She brought it up to her mom, how it affected her seeing these people she thought were her friends now throwing shit at her.

It might feel exhausting to keep talking about losing our sisters and brothers to suicide, but it does really help. If you save one person from making that millisecond decision, it's a success.

I'm just looking for more ways to come at it.

I think we have a good one. Dr. Carrie Steiner, a retired Chicago Police Officer turned clinical therapist, will be offering counseling

at our newly remodeled wellness facility on the second floor of the Lodge 7 office. Carrie has been through much of the same stuff we deal with every day during her 14 years on the job.

Working with First Vice President Mike Mette, Carrie and her team will provide confidential counseling to members and their family members. No need to worry whether the Department is watching you or that something you say will get back to your bosses.

Get used to seeing these professionals. This is help you need that we are proud to provide. And considering what our members are getting from the City and Department, it's long overdue.



Kiki Calumet
Executive Vice President

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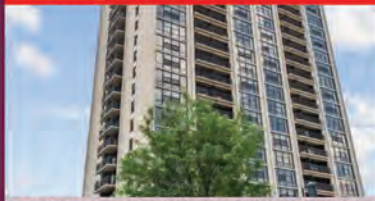
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THE 4-1-1



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Aug. 19

Abner Rodriguez Retirement Party

The Nest Bar and Eatery
6859 W. Irving Park Road
8–11:30 p.m.

For more information, visit <https://www.chicago-fop.org/news/events?view=article&id=251&catid=15>

Aug. 20

100 Club of Illinois 6th Annual Officer Tom Wood Memorial Ride

Ride begins at Target
850 W. North Ave., Melrose Park
9:30 a.m.

\$20 per rider, \$10 per passenger

For more information, email thor.punishers@gmail.com

Aug. 20

Illinois Troopers Lodge 41 Chicago Knights Baseball Club Charity Game

Impact Field
9850 Balmoral Ave., Rosemont
6:30–10:30 p.m.

For more information, visit <https://www.iltroopers41.org/news-and-events/events/>

Aug. 24

Chicago Lodge 7 Annual Golf Outing

Cog Hill Golf & Country Club
12294 Arche Ave., Lemont
7 a.m.

\$500 per foursome

For more information, call 312-733-7776 or email kathy.spiewak@chicago-fop.org

Aug. 24

The 2022 10th District Golf Outing

Silver Lake Country Club
14700 S. 82nd Ave., Orland Park
8 a.m.

For more information, call 312-747-7511

Aug. 26

100 Club of Illinois 4th Annual DPH Golf Outing

Indian Boundary Golf Course
8600 W. Forest Preserve Ave.
9:30 a.m.

\$150 per golfer

For more information, email info@dunningpour-house.com

Sept. 6

Chicago Police Memorial Foundation Candlelight Vigil

Goldstar Families Memorial and Park
1410 Special Olympics Drive
7:30 p.m.

For more information, visit <https://cpdmemorial.org/events/cpmf-candlelight-vigil/>

Sept. 10

Lake County Lodge 66 Golf Outing

Fox Lake Country Club
7220 State Park Road, Fox Lake
9 a.m.–5 p.m.

\$125 per golfer

For more information, email ilfop66president@gmail.com

Sept. 11

Chicago Police Memorial Foundation Cars and Cops Auto Show

Hagerty Garage & Social
2500 W. Bradley Place
10 a.m.–4 p.m.

For more information, visit <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/cars-cops-5th-annual-car-show-tickets-275808479587> or call 312-499-8899

Sept. 16

Romeoville FOP Lodge 15 Annual Golf Outing

Big Run Golf Club
17211 W. 135th St., Lockport
8 a.m.–5 p.m.

\$140 per golfer

For more information, visit <https://romeovillefop.org/golf-outing-2022> or email contact@romeovillefop.org

Sept. 16

2022 CPD Enforcers Charity Golf Outing

The Meadows Golf Club of Blue Island
2802 W. 123rd St., Blue Island
9 a.m.

\$125 per golfer

For more information, visit <http://www.cpdenforcers.com/2022-golf-outing.html>

Sept. 17

100 Club of Illinois Win the Band with Cadillac Groove

Brauer House
1000 N. Rohlwing Road, #13, Lombard
7:30 p.m.

\$5 per ticket

For more information, visit www.cadillacgroove.com/raffle/

Sept. 21

Calumet City Lodge 1 Annual Golf Outing

Lincoln Oaks Golf Course
395 E. Richton Road, Crete
9 a.m.–5 p.m.

\$400 per foursome

For more information, visit <https://www.calumet-citylodge1.org/golf-outing> or email calumetcitylodge1@gmail.com

Sept. 24

2nd Annual Spoon River Valley Lodge 427 Auxiliary Softball Tournament

Jacob's Park
100 N. Wilson St., Farmington
9 a.m.–5 p.m.

\$200 per returning team, \$225 per new team
For more information, call 309-338-5924

Sept. 28

Jacksonville Lodge 125 30th Annual Golf Outing

Nichols Park, Jacksonville
11 a.m.–5 p.m.

For more information, visit <https://www.ilfop.org/event-fop/jacksonville-125-30th-annual-golf-outing/>

Sept. 29

Area Four Detective Division Golf Outing

White Pines Golf Course
500 W. Jefferson St., Bensenville
8 a.m.

For more information, visit <https://www.chicago-fop.org/news/events?view=article&id=254&catid=15>

Sept. 29

100 Club of Illinois 2022

Raising Hope Awards

Ritz-Carlton
Water Tower Place
160 E. Pearson St.
6–10 p.m.

\$500 per person

For more information, visit <https://www.100club.org/event/raisinghope2022/>

Oct. 1

100 Club of Illinois First Responder Bonfire

Royal Oak Farm
15908 Hebron Road, Harvard
6–10 p.m.

For more information, visit <https://www.100club.org/event/bonfire2022/>

Oct. 5

Chicago Police Memorial Foundation Alderman Tabares and St. Daniel the Prophet Pancake Breakfast

St. Daniel the Prophet School
5337 S. Natomas Ave.
8 a.m.–11 p.m.

For more information, call 312-499-8899

Officer wellness services now available at the Lodge



**MICHAEL
METTE**

We have been talking a lot about officer wellness and mental health for quite a while now. The FOP has been taking a more upfront approach to helping our members when they need support the most. We have partnered with some great resources in the Chicagoland area as well as throughout the country.

During the past six months, I have written about the Lodge's second floor and our need for easier access to immediate support for our members. I am happy to say, starting Monday, Aug. 8, the First Responders Wellness Center will be occupying our two new offices on the second floor at the Lodge. I must thank Dr. Carrie Steiner and her wonderful staff for agreeing to step up and be here for you. I believe this will be a most beneficial partnership for everyone.

Dr. Steiner and the First Responders Wellness Center will be able to provide sessions right here at the Lodge via the regular scheduling procedures as well as be on-site during regular Lodge hours to provide immediate support for any officer who might be in crisis. This is only the beginning of what Lodge 7 is planning in support of all our members.

I am in the final planning stages of an officer wellness event

that will be held on Sept. 22 at Triton College in Melrose Park. I am just waiting on the last few pieces of the puzzle to fall into place before we put out the formal flyers. I am trying to get approval for this event to be considered a tour of duty for any active member. Once this is worked out, we will be able to start having members sign up for the event. We have a great lineup of guest speakers and presenters.

There is so much more to be done on behalf of officer wellness. This is something everyone should be talking about, not just when an officer takes their life or falls so far down the rabbit hole, but every day.

Supervisors should be trying everything in their power to make CPD a better place to work. You might not be able to change the Department overnight, but you can make your unit, your watch, the best just by showing you support the men and women who work for you. We need you to step up and become the leader you wanted to work for when you were still in a blue shirt.

As always, keep your heads up high, for you are still doing God's work! Day in and day out, you do what most people can't, and I am proud of every one of you! Remember to watch out for each other, and reach out if you need an ear!

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Reviewing arbitrators' rulings on some of our grievances



DAN
GORMAN

My reports given at the monthly general members meetings include examples of arbitrators' decisions issued at binding summary opinion (BSO) arbitration hearings as a result of accused officers filing grievances. 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 recent examples of dispositions awarded by the binding summary arbitrator. 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
Error while processing inventory (USC)	2-day suspension	2-day suspension (upheld)
Virtual encounter on social media	5-day suspension	Reduced to reprimand
Allegedly "failing to report misconduct" in that he allegedly witnessed his partner intentionally ram the squad car into another vehicle	10-day suspension	Expunged
-Profanity during foot chase of an armed subject -Subsequent profanity during the armed encounter (OIS-related)	10-day suspension	Expunged
Alleged unjustified stop and no BWC (two officers)	5-day suspension (each officer)	Reprimand (each officer)
-Failure to make arrests in an alleged home invasion/assault -Inadequate report -No ISR	2-day suspension	2-day suspension (upheld two charges, expunged the ISR allegation)

Summary of an expunged case

One of the above cases, which was expunged by the arbitrator, I feel is noteworthy for our members for a number of reasons. In my opinion, both the IPRA and the COPA severely violated the due-process rights of the accused officer, and the arbitrator arrived at the correct conclusion. Additionally, the exonerated officer requested a short summary be provided to our readers. It is also important to note that the exonerated officer's partner is currently facing a 30-day suspension for this same alleged incident and is scheduled for her own upcoming arbitration hearing.

With respect to the recently exonerated case, the arbitrator's eight-page decision includes a fair and objective analysis, including the length of time it took to complete the CR investigation.

The investigative file is literally hundreds and hundreds of pages and includes numerous court transcripts, audio statements and several video files. The COPA report alone is 71 pages in total and bears the signature of the deputy chief administrator/chief investigator, Andrea Kersten.

The original incident occurred in 2013, and a total of 13 officers/detectives/supervisors would receive multiple allegations. The CR number lingered over the heads of the officers for 6½ years before they received COPA's findings. COPA would sustain allegations on two officers, the grievant and his partner. Each

officer faced civil litigation, depositions, courtroom testimony, reliving the incident, names dragged through the dirt by the media, and then faced dozens of allegations by the IPRA/COPA. One of the officers still experiences symptoms of physical injury to this day, and let's not forget the emotional trauma each officer likely suffered.

To put the charges/allegations into perspective, usually officers are given fewer than a handful of charges for any given CR number. But in this particular case, the COPA charged the grievant with 39 original allegations but only sustained a single allegation. The COPA alleged that the grievant "failed to report misconduct" in that he allegedly witnessed his partner intentionally ram the squad car into another vehicle.

As stated earlier, the original alleged incident occurred in 2013. Two officers (one female, one male) were conducting an investigation when they came upon the offender's vehicle. The driver of the vehicle was uncooperative, and the driver's kids, "Georgia" and "Treasure," were also in the vehicle. Despite the male officer (the grievant) giving a friendly wave to the girls at the beginning of the encounter, Georgia attacked the female officer, including delivering punches to the face.

The driver (mother) then grabbed the female officer by the vest, put the vehicle in reverse and dragged the female officer approximately 50 feet. The male officer gave chase while radioing for assistance, yelling "10-1," "Officer down" and "My partner is being dragged by a car." (Listening to the OEMC recording, there is no doubt that the grievant believed his partner was dead.)

Unbeknownst to the male officer, the female officer was able to get to her feet and drive the squad car in the direction of the fleeing offender's vehicle. Ultimately, the police vehicle made contact with the offender's vehicle. The male officer was not aware which squad car had appeared or who was driving it. (It is important to note that the male officer did not know which beat car arrived and did not know who was driving it until later in the investigation.) The offender was taken into custody (and later convicted of the charges).

The allegations were originally investigated by the IPRA and then closed by the IPRA after five months. But 2½ years later, the IPRA would reopen the case. The IPRA then was renamed COPA, with the same actors, same players, same game, just a different name.

On the timeliness issues, the arbitrator noted that the COPA acknowledged its own delays, but that the COPA kept the case open regardless. The arbitrator ultimately dismissed the single charge due to the nine years that had passed since the original incident. I note that in most cases, timeliness alone is not enough to dismiss a case in its entirety. However, the arbitrator in this case did review the merits and found that the grievant did not know that the police vehicle was being operated by his partner; therefore, there was no misconduct to report on his partner. The arbitrator stated, "If her actions did not constitute misconduct, or Grievant did not know it was misconduct, there was no misconduct to report."

The arbitrator closed his award by stating, "The grievance is sustained. The ten-day suspension imposed on the Grievant is hereby rescinded and to the extent permitted by law and the parties' contract, any record of the same should be expunged."

On par to reach 800

With the aid of the publicly accessible geographic information system (gis.chicagopolice.org) and the website heyjackass.com.

com, over 2,000 people have been reported shot this year. (Note: Inconsistencies are found between the two websites. The City's website indicates lower crime stats and a misrepresentation of stats by the limited categories made available, especially regarding the total number of shootings. Based on personal observations throughout history, heyjackass.com has been the most up to date and the most accurate.)

As of this writing, 368 people have been killed by way of shootings, and in total, 399 people have been killed in the City so far this calendar year. By the time I finish composing this article, we will have clipped the 400 milestone. That's 400 with five months to go until the end of the year.

You won't hear grand totals in the media on a regular basis. Nor will you hear about the other daily violence in this City, the pistol whippings, blunt force beatings, knife attacks, group attacks, etc. A huge segment in society has grown numb to the violence, while those who never cared about crime are just waking up. There are also those who have always felt "As long as it doesn't happen here," who are now having to hose down their bloody sidewalks on any given morning after the crime-scene tape has been taken down. It's only when it reaches their doorsteps when they "demand justice."

At the rate we are going, the City is on par to reach 800 homicides for the year. You also won't hear the media give credit to you, the men and women of the police department, who have had countless days off canceled and gone even more days with inadequate rest or recovery. Instead, you can only guess who the media will be giving credit to.

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Remembering a fallen friend



JIM
JAKSTOVICH

It's been a rough last couple of weeks, and we have suffered the loss of another member of our police family. To the families and friends of Officers Durand Lee and Patsy Swank, I can honestly say I know what you are feeling. My former partner and dear friend Sergeant Andrew Dobda has taken his life, becoming the third member of the CPD family to commit suicide in just over a two-week period.

We were partners in the old 9th District for a little over a year but became lifetime friends. I remember working with "Dubs" and the fun that we had. It seems like all we did was laugh while we worked. The eight-hour shift felt more like eight minutes, and I couldn't wait to come back to work the next day or continue the laughs at the Redwood Lounge after work.

Andy always had a huge smile on his face, his one-liners were always impeccably timed, and his infectious laugh forced you to smile and laugh along with him. Even though we spent only a year together in a beat car, like so many friendships and relationships on this job, we became friends outside of work. I remember the day we were sitting in Beat 921, reading the daily bulletin. The "hot sheet" was on the back with the license plates of recently stolen cars, and of course the front contained useful information and job opportunities.

The Deployment Operations Center (DOC) was created under then-Superintendent Phil Cline, and the DOC had a NOJO for a cartographer. Andy was a cartographer before he answered the call to the CPD. Initially he was apprehensive, because he didn't want to work inside so early in his career, but this job was literally made for him. I told him, "Don't miss this chance," and he wound up interviewing. Shortly after the interview, he was detailed to the DOC.

While at headquarters, he became known to Sergeant Eleanor Reardon as the "Pope of Hegewisch," making friends everywhere he went. I remember coming to visit Andy and check out his office. I asked his fellow officers where Andy's office was, and they responded, "That's the Pope's office" as they pointed to a closed gray door. I found Andy inside his office eating a can of dollar-store sardines! I seriously laughed until it hurt. The door was closed because his sardine lunch stunk up the whole DOC.

While at the DOC, Andy, always having a big heart, became proudly involved with Operation Santa, delivering greetings and gifts to the families of officers lost or catastrophically injured in the line of duty. And of course, Andy was wearing his usual smile and a goofy elf hat to spread cheer. This truly epitomizes the type of person he was.

Andy took his first promotional test and was promoted to the rank of sergeant in the first class. He was sent to the 003rd District as a new sergeant. I joked with him, telling him that he needed to grow his "outside claws" after being a house cat for almost 10 years. Andy took it in stride; he even became the CR sergeant, killing frivolous beefs left and right. This didn't last long, and Andy's knowledge and skills were sought after again, and he was detailed to headquarters as a sergeant. He worked there until his chief retired, sending Andy back to his home in 003.

While working in 003 in early 2020, Andy contracted COVID.

His case was severe, his sense of smell was gone, and he suffered from terrible rashes on his scalp. He went to so many specialists but couldn't get relief. Andy came back to work limited-duty and was assigned to the call-back unit 376 as a sergeant. We spoke a few times a week, laughing or sharing stories. Sometimes Andy would ask me to help someone or ask for advice on how he could help someone he supervised. Andy always showed concern for others.

Andy was most recently detailed to the court section. He was there only a short time, but he let me know that he greeted officers with a smile, thanking them for their hard work and telling them to stay safe as they left the building. He knew what a difference a smile and a kind word meant to people.

The Lodge 7 food trailer was at St. Rita for the Mass for Officer Dan Golden recently. Andy stopped by to say hello. He had brought his father to the Mass with him, to show support. Andy was also a board member of the sergeants union and wanted to show solidarity. He knew the importance of sticking together.

That Thursday would be the last time I saw my friend as I knew him, smiling and happy. Andy called me the next day, Friday. We spoke for about a half-hour; Andy had just left the car dealership after looking for a new car. There was no indication anything was wrong — he seemed so happy, especially with being assigned to Branch 35, 10 minutes from Hegewisch.

I wish I could turn back the clock to that Thursday and give my friend a hug. And then to Friday, and tell him how much he meant to me as a friend, not knowing that our final goodbye of our usual "stay up" would be the last thing I said to him. That Saturday, my phone was exploding. It was my friends, calling and texting, offering condolences, knowing that Andy and I were always associated with each other. I rushed to Christ Hospital. I was in shock. I made it to the waiting room and hugged Andy's dad and wife. Andy was still alive, but after seeing him, I prayed to God for him to just pass in peace.

His friends and family poured into the hospital over the next two days. We shared our stories, trying to be supportive of his wife, Carla, and his father, Andy Sr., who was a rock — he was the one really supporting all of us! I want to especially thank everyone who came to the hospital to share a kind word and show support to Andy's loved ones.

The hospital staff was so good to us while we were there. The officers and sergeant from Special Activities were amazing, thank you for what you do! The chaplains, Deacon Bob Montelongo and Father Dan Brandt, words cannot express what comfort you bring to a tragedy. To the supervisors on scene who helped and organized the procession to the morgue, and the officers who participated, thank you, Andy would be proud. To all those who came out to the wake and funeral, your kind words and gestures went a long way in our time of grief.

I am left with so many unanswered questions. The void and emptiness of the loss of one friend is unexplainable. I will never take anyone in my life for granted. Tell those important to you that you love them. If you are in any way feeling down, contemplating ending it all so that the pain and hurt will go away, don't do it! Please be there for each other. In remembrance of Andy, just smile and know that you are making a difference in someone's life.

Stay safe, everyone.

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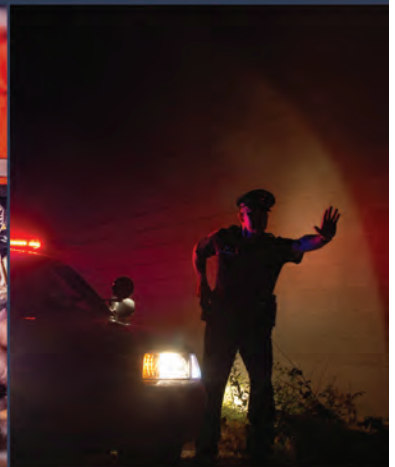
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Community praises police for forceful arrest



ROB
NOCEDA

Oak Lawn police officers had to use lethal and effective force on an armed offender recently. This was the village's response to the incident:

The Oak Lawn Board of Trustees issued a statement over the weekend saying they strongly supported the police department and commended the "officers' decision to use less-than-lethal force to detain the armed offender."

What a statement supporting the police in their community. Even the police chief backed up his officers with support. Unfortunately, here in Chicago, we do not have that backing. We do have people who support us and help us. But in Chicago, the majority of people in power stay silent or act as if police are the problem. That's just reality. We are fighting to change that.

These Oak Lawn officers, mind you, have not been suspended, stripped or placed on administrative duties. We here at CPD know the knee-jerk reaction from 35th Street, officers stripped of their police powers, off to callback city. This incident is caught on multiple squad car dashcams. The officers did their job.

Let's quickly go over Police Work 101.

Why do people run from the police during a lawful stop?

A) They have an arrest warrant, B) They possess a gun illegally, C) They have illegal drugs, D) They have illegal gun(s) and illegal drugs, E) They have committed or are in the act of committing a crime.

These officers pursued the offender and got him to the

ground. The offender is not letting go of the bag. Instead of giving up and giving his hands to the officers, the offender keeps holding on to the bag. That bag does in fact have a gun in it. That gun can kill those officers. The officers reasonably believed that this man was armed.

This whole incident could have been averted by the offender if he had just complied and gone to jail. The offender fled, refusing to give up, and the officers used the force necessary to effect an arrest of a man with a gun. Most importantly, they kept themselves safe in doing so.

All this young man had to do was give up. That's the thing, though: Criminals don't just say "Hey, you got me, take me to jail." Criminals resist, they fight and they flee. That's why they are criminals.

I am glad the Oak Lawn officers are OK and went home safe to their families. It is nice to hear that a department, village, town, police chief and residents supported their officers. Especially during a life-or-death encounter.

Here in Chicago, we have a foot chase policy. As well as every other policy under the sun. These policies continue to hinder officers from doing good police work. But that's what the powers that be want. These policies only put citizens in more danger. Please remember your training, it will keep you alive each shift. Don't second guess yourself — it is called a split-second decision for a reason. As always, we are here to assist you in your endeavors.

May the good Lord be with you.




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Making a duty-related COVID claim stick



**MONICA
ORTIZ**

Our members have worked many hours without a day off for most of the summer. Long shifts without needed rest do not help us maintain healthy immune systems. Soon winter will be here, along with cold and flu season and more COVID.

The Lodge receives phone calls from members who have tested positive for COVID. Members have contracted COVID while at work and have gone on medical leave after testing positive. Our members have received denial letters from Gallagher Bassett for injury on duty (IOD) requests after contracting COVID while working. I want to review the paperwork and steps officers should take if they become exposed to COVID at work.

Start by notifying a supervisor about your exposure, and make sure that the supervisor completes an exposure report. This report should list the circumstances under which the exposure incident occurred, the name of the source individual and other sufficient information to assist in identifying the source individual.

The supervisor will complete an IOD report for Department members if an injury occurred along with the exposure incident or if a member obtained medical care for the exposure. An IOD report must include whether the member received medical treatment due to the incident. Members' reports should list how they came into direct contact with someone coughing or sneezing or with the respiratory secretions of an individual potentially infected with COVID.

Lodge 7 members are completing the injury on duty/exposure

reports, and Gallagher Bassett denies claims. Officers who called Gallagher Bassett inquiring as to why an IOD was rejected were told there was insufficient information on the report.

I know this sounds unreasonable, but the City insists we must identify the contact source. We have had many members test positive for COVID during in-service classes, and this is not easy to document when you have been exposed and have symptoms three days later.

How do you provide the source of your illness? You can request the roster of officers who attended the in-service class if you are assigned to working the desk doing reports. Or if you are on a street assignment and people are coughing, sneezing or showing symptoms, document the incident. You can write event numbers, names, dates and times.

Use your event number on the exposure report if contact occurred at a festival. Take photos if you are being transported with multiple officers by bus or van to a post. Officers and witnesses for an officer can write a TO/FROM to document the source of the exposure.

If you get a denial for an IOD for COVID-19, you can contact the Lodge, and we can discuss filing a grievance. You have 10 days to file the grievance from the time you are made aware in writing by Gallagher Bassett that your IOD claim is denied.

You can also request free COVID test kits at no cost through CVS using your Caremark health insurance card.

I hope this is helpful. Stay healthy and stay safe.

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Fraternal Order of Police Chicago Lodge#7

Petition of proposal for By-Law Change

Proposed By-Law Changes (By-Law proposal is in red italics)

ARTICLE VII

NOMINATION AND ELECTION OF OFFICERS AND TRUSTEES

OF CHICAGO LODGE #7

The elected Officers of the Lodge shall consist of a President, 1st, 2nd and 3rd Vice Presidents, Recording Secretary, Financial Secretary, Treasurer, three (3) Sergeants-at-Arms and seventeen (17) Trustees. The term of office for elected officers of Lodge #7 shall be *four (4) years. This will be effective after the results of the next election in 2023.* The duly elected officers of the Lodge and elected/appointed unit by virtue of their office shall be delegates to the State and National Conference.

Current By-Law

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BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Remembering Sisters and Brothers who have passed

Name	Status	Age	Date of Passing
Raymond Jazdyk	Retired	88	May 14, 2022
Thomas E. Farrell	Retired	74	June 12, 2022
Richard Chernikovich	Retired	70	June 19, 2022
William Foley	Retired	86	June 27, 2022
William M. O'Malley	Retired	78	June 28, 2022
Frederick J. Nickle	Retired	78	June 29, 2022
Loretta Benjamin	Retired	68	June 30, 2022
William D. DeFrance	Retired	73	July 2, 2022
Frank M. Folinazzo	Retired	75	July 10, 2022
Durand Lee	Unit 005	42	July 15, 2022
Darryl Flenoy Sr.	Retired	80	July 19, 2022
Lester McCaffery	Retired	93	July 19, 2022
Manuel A. Mendoza	Retired	60	July 20, 2022
Joseph F. Chevalier	Retired	80	July 26, 2022
Louise A. Cole	Retired	72	July 28, 2022
Joseph Imburgia	Retired	95	Not Available

Honoring Retired Members

Name	Rank	Unit/District	Years	Retired Date
Richard Vilchis	Officer	018	20	January 2022
Steven K. Honda	Officer	016	21	March 2022
Brian S. Kavanaugh	Officer	192	27	March 2022
Miguel Gonzalez	Sergeant	604	29	May 2022
Rena Hopkins	Officer	001	25	May 2022
Robert M. Houlihan	Officer	012	27	May 2022
James N. Calace	Officer	010	30	June 2022

Retiree Meetings

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

North

First Monday of month
@ 8 a.m.
Blossom Cafe
8349 W. Lawrence Ave., Norridge
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.
Tavern Grille

8880 E. Via Linda, Suite 106
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

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Finally, some relief in sight for Labor Day RDOs



PAT
FIORETTO

We will take any small victory we can get. The Lodge managed to negotiate a successful settlement on July 22 with the assistance of the arbitrator, in lieu of proceeding to a hearing.

In an unprecedented move, the City committed to allowing officers to maintain at least one of their two RDOs for the upcoming Labor Day holiday weekend. Moreover, the City agreed to identify all those officers with canceled RDOs who worked more than 10 consecutive days over the Father's Day and July 4th holiday weekends and to provide each with an additional eight hours of special "comp time day" for each day worked beyond 10 consecutive days.

Such special comp time days can be used by officers to take a well-deserved break and spend time with their families. Requests by officers who wish to utilize one or more of these comp time days will take priority over other officers who may request elective time. The City also agreed that if officers have any RDOs canceled over the 2022 Labor Day holiday, they will be assured to have a minimum of nine hours before the next tour of duty.

What happened? As many of you know, on June 29, the Lodge filed another complaint with the arbitrator over the City's continued violations of the 2022 Summer Pilot Program by canceling RDOs. The City previously had agreed to not require officers to work more than 10 consecutive days during the major 2022 summer holidays unless, "in good faith," the Department "rea-

sonably concluded" that it required officers to work longer than 10 consecutive days. Not surprisingly, the City failed to comply.

Good faith is generally described as "honest dealing." Merriam-Webster defines good faith as "in an honest and proper way." The Lodge had been prepared to submit to the arbitrator that when the superintendent of police repeatedly states in public that he plans to cancel both RDOs for all four summer holidays before the holidays even arise, he is not honestly evaluating whether or not it is necessary to cancel RDOs Department-wide. At his July 1 Public Safety Press Conference, Superintendent Brown admitted:

...Yes, we cancel days off four times a year for the holidays. That's Memorial Day, that's Father's Day weekend as well as this weekend for Fourth of July, then again on Labor Day weekend, so that's eight canceled days off...

...Again, it's compressed between Memorial Day and Labor Day and that's been obviously the challenge with managing compressed times where officers have to work due to the obviously large planned events that we have to make sure that they're safe...

Not satisfied, Superintendent Brown reiterated his position at another press conference on July 18, at which he boasted:

...We cancel days off because of the need to make sure officers are safe on the street, particularly between Memorial Day and Labor Day. There's four weekends that

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are associated with the holidays, Memorial Day weekend, there's Father's Day weekend, then there's Fourth of July weekend and then Labor Day weekend, are historically the most violent weekends of the year in the City...

Such comments do not go unnoticed. In a previous telephone conversation with the parties conducted before the scheduled hearing, the arbitrator questioned whether the Settlement Agreement (which sets forth the Pilot Program) "is even worth the paper it is written on." The Department never had any intention of complying with the main terms of the Settlement Agreement — namely, affording the officers time to decompress and having enough rest periods. In a previously issued June 28 opinion and award, even the arbitrator noted "the parties' agreed aim [in the Pilot Program] was to not have officers working more than 10 consecutive days."

Additionally, the City recently has been under a great deal of public scrutiny. Sadly, with the increase in the number of recent officer suicides, the City's former mental health adviser, Alexa James, publicly stated that the City is not doing enough to help overworked officers. Using one of the phrases that the Lodge has used repeatedly, James, now the chief executive of the National Alliance on Mental Illness Chicago, opined that the City's practice of canceling days off is "inhumane" and encouraged the City to address the growing need of officer wellness. In a recent *Chicago Sun-Times* article, James is quoted as follows:

I think what's happening is inhumane and I'm certainly not linking [regular day off] cancellations to increase of suicide, but we do know that this is the pattern...They really see these horrific, triggering events all the time that

they've compounded and when you've compounded levels of trauma, and with no opportunity to kind of debrief unless you're forced to, it can become increasingly likely that you develop stress disorders, depression [and] anxiety.

During the same interview, James encouraged the Department to allow officers "to have a break" and indicated that being overworked "hugely" impacts an officer's mental health. She went on to share that losing sleep impacts the decision-making process and when the Department limits officers' personal time, it increases stress levels and reduces the opportunity to address those traumatic moments that officers experience on a daily basis.

In response, instead of heeding James's warning, Mayor Lightfoot deflected the underlying issue and offered this flippant comment: "Look at the incredible amount of furlough days, personal days and other things that officers have by contract." Such callous comments undermine the Department's public statements that "officer well-being and overall mental health is our top priority." The problem, which the mayor conveniently ignores, is the excessive number of continuous days that the Department requires officers to work by canceling RDOs.

Although the City might not care about officer well-being, the Lodge does. Hopefully, this small reprieve over the Labor Day holiday helps. Granted, it is not enough, but the Lodge will keep on fighting. The Lodge currently awaits another arbitration decision, which has broader implications on whether the City can regularly cancel RDOs throughout the year under the current language in the contract.



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Reviewing the Chicago Police Board



**TIM
GRACE**

Recently we have seen a number of interesting decisions coming from the Chicago Police Board that have caused many to take notice, no matter the side one roots for. A lot of the explanations go to the process and the rules that have been developed over the years. While many times the Police Board will bend to hurt rather than help an officer, it is best to understand the process first and then to attack the wisdom of the decision.

The Chicago Police Board was established under the Chicago Municipal Code in section 2-84-020. The section lays out the powers and obligations of the nine-member board and while they have many statutory mandates, the most important power is found in their ability to discipline officers. Any officer who receives a suspension of more than 30 days has the right to have his or her case heard before the Police Board, or the officer can file a grievance challenging the recommendation of discipline. Almost all officers seek to file a grievance on these less-than-discharge cases, as history has shown that the arbitrators chosen have proven to be relatively fair, as opposed to the politically motivated Police Board. However, the Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) states that when the superintendent is seeking separation, the matter must go to the Police Board. So when the discipline sought is

separation, we find ourselves fighting for our jobs at the Chicago Police Board.

However, the question that comes up most is the role COPA plays in this process. COPA also has been given great powers through the Chicago Municipal Code and has proven its ability to abuse those powers daily. COPA will prepare a report and then submit it to the superintendent for concurrence. If the superintendent concurs or agrees with COPA's findings, then the officer must make a decision to file a grievance or request review by the Police Board if the recommendation is less than discharge. In cases where the superintendent agrees with COPA's recommendation to discharge, the matter is docketed at the Police Board for a hearing. Many times, especially in termination cases, COPA and the superintendent will disagree on the amount of discipline, be it the length of the suspension or termination. That is when it gets tricky.

Under the municipal code and the rules and regulations of the Police Board, the superintendent and COPA are required to first meet and see if they can find common ground. If after meeting they are unable to agree, the Police Board then becomes involved. Section 2-78-130 of the Chicago Municipal Code clearly mandates a specific procedure to be followed when the chief administrator of COPA and the superintendent are at odds as to the discipline of a Chicago Police Officer. The municipal code



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mandates that when there is a difference of opinion and the parties are at an impasse, the Chicago Police Board is directed to exercise its authority to resolve the disagreement. Section 2-78-130 (iii) of the municipal code states that one member, randomly chosen, shall review both COPA's recommendation and the superintendent's recommendation and all pertinent materials involved in the case. This would include any statements, reports, video evidence or any other piece of evidence that is germane to the case.

The selected member could ask for more information or clarification. This reviewing member essentially acts as a preliminary hearing judge and determines if the superintendent has met his burden to overcome COPA's recommendation. If, in the opinion of the member, the superintendent does not meet his burden of overcoming the chief administrator's recommendation for discipline, the recommendation is deemed accepted by the superintendent. Hence, if the one member of the Police Board agrees with COPA, then COPA's recommendation is implemented, be it a suspension or a hearing before the full Police Board for termination. While the Police Board is somewhat fairer on suspension cases, in most termination cases it has proven to be wildly on the side of COPA. However, there have been some interesting developments recently.

In one case where an officer was required to discharge his weapon at an offender who had oriented a gun in his direction, COPA had put forth a typical bias report that was incorrect in both the facts and the law. In that case, the superintendent found that the use of deadly force was justified based upon the totality of the circumstances. It was a case in which the officer's

discharge resulted in the death of the offender and was quite public. The one member of the Police Board composed a very scholarly, considered opinion, amazingly attacked COPA's investigations and conclusions, ruled that the use of deadly force was justified and agreed with the superintendent. This is a landmark decision in the world of the Police Board. I would imagine that this member is not very popular around the watercooler at the Police Board meetings. It is too early to tell if this is a true watershed moment that will promote true change in the disciplinary arena or if this is just a 100-year event like the Cubs bringing home a World Series title.

The takeaway is that the powers that be are at least starting to look at COPA. This is an organization that truly believes in monsters under the bed and unicorns in closets. COPA believes that every action by a police officer is done not for a legitimate reason but for some nefarious grand plan to violate civil rights. It must be tough to live your life believing that every time something unfortunate happens, it is due to malintent. Lightning strikes and paper cuts sometimes are just what you think they are — lightning strikes and paper cuts. They are not a grand plan by negative and positive static electricity and cheap wire to conspire to do harm.

Most of the time, when a violent felon who has been given every opportunity and command to drop the weapon points a gun at a uniformed officer, a lawful discharge will result. Here's hoping the Police Board has finally come to that conclusion.

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Portraits by Peter Bucks

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

'The most rewarding arrest'

■ BY ESTHER GONZALES

When Detective Art Mitchell received an anonymous call about the location of one of America's most wanted criminals, who was on the run, he thought it must be a joke. The suspect had escaped from a prison in Indiana and was in the Chicago area. And the caller relayed pertinent information that the fugitive was at an apartment with her bags packed.

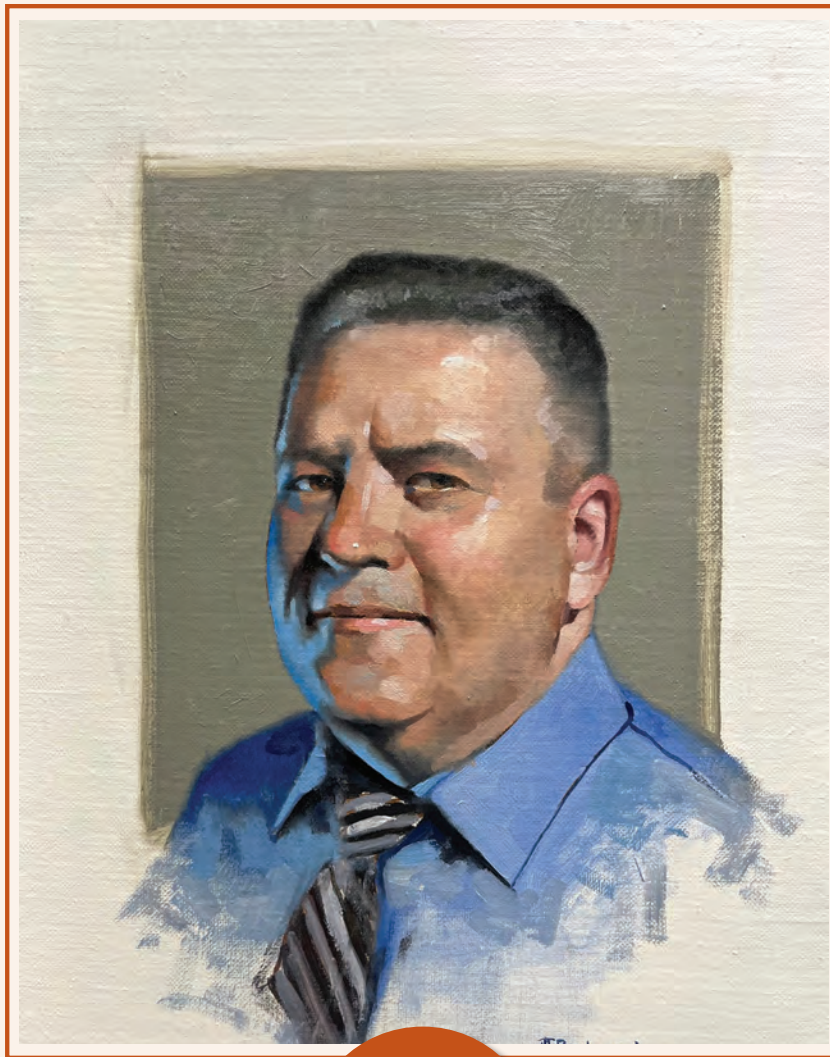
Mitchell and his partner at the time, Mike Grzyb, knocked on the door of the apartment where the fugitive was supposedly staying. To their surprise, a woman opened the door, took one look at their uniforms and declared, "You got me."

"She had been on the run for nine months," Mitchell related. "She was serving time for her involvement in a murder. And we don't know, to this day, who the anonymous caller was."

Arresting the number one most wanted female in the country in 2009 was one of Mitchell's greatest highlights of his 18 years on the job. And he still remembers how unreal it felt when he realized the call was legitimate.

"It felt very satisfying, because most local law enforcement officers are not ever going to make a top 10 arrest," Mitchell attested. "First, it was shock. We didn't lead on to that. We just had to go along with she knew that we got her, even though, had she said it wasn't her, I'm not sure what those next steps would've been."

Mitchell recalled another proud arrest he made only a year later. And it involved a suspect who was a kidnapper, sexual predator and auto thief. Mitchell and his partner, Eric Fager,



ART MITCHELL
Star #21300
Detective Division
Unit 650

received a call that the suspect had crashed a car into another vehicle and fled the scene. When they arrived, they began searching the area. They came to an alley where a resident told them, "I don't know who you're looking for, but my husband saw some guy run through here a few minutes ago."

The partners decided to split up. Mitchell scoped out a backyard where a broken chair lay against a fence, and he realized the suspect was close. Fager reached for a garage door and opened it. Suddenly, the suspect appeared and began running.

They immediately pursued him and, after a struggle, arrested him.

But while the man was in the transport vehicle, he escaped out of the hatch on the roof.

A motorcycle driver saw the incident unfold, pulled over the vehicle and related, "Your prisoner just jumped off the top of your vehicle."

Over the next four

hours, there was a citywide manhunt.

"There were over 100 officers from different agencies," Mitchell explained. "They had the Chicago Police Department helicopter, the Chicago Fire Department helicopter circling and the U.S. Marshals were out there. Every big boss in our department was there.

But eventually, he was caught, went to trial and was convicted."

And knowing he had a role in bringing that suspect to justice reminded Mitchell of just why he serves and protects others.

"That's definitely probably the most rewarding arrest that I had ever made, because of just the pure evil that this guy did and what he represented," Mitchell added. "Knowing that you actually have the power, authority and the ability to help people when they're in their greatest need is really satisfying for me."

Setting the stage for campaign season



DAVE
SULLIVAN

The Illinois Legislature is not in session currently. There is some talk about the General Assembly returning to address the Roe decision on abortion as well as gun issues — especially since the tragedy in Highland Park, among other events.

No date is set yet, and it is not clear if the legislation will be able to garner enough support currently for passage. If they do not return early, they will next be in session right after the election.

Politics is the main focus this summer. The Democratic Party of Illinois voted for a new state chairperson. Congresswoman Robin Kelly dropped her bid to keep the position, and State Representative Lisa Hernandez has now been chosen to lead the Democratic party. She was the preferred candidate of Governor JB Pritzker.

In addition, candidates have been added to several state legislative races for the November election. A few will most likely have their candidacies challenged, but we will know soon who will be challenged and who will not be.

It will be interesting to see how the GOP can raise the needed funds to effectively compete in the November election now that billionaire Ken Griffin has moved out of Illinois. He joins the last big Republican funder, former Governor Rauner, in a move to Florida.

It seems likely that the Democrats will have more than enough financial resources for the fall campaign. The question remains: Will there be a red wave for the GOP, and if so, will it make it into the Chicago suburbs or be primarily limited to downstate? There are so many social and fiscal issues in play currently that it is difficult to assess how this cycle will turn out.

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A day in the park



RABBI
MOSHE
WOLF

Have you ever tried to figure out why people will pay \$50 to get in to an amusement park so that they can go on rides that scare them silly and raise their stress level to the max? Yet, the amusement parks would go out of business if they didn't have rides that sent your stress level off the chart. We pay, and pay big, to be beat half to death in a little cart dropping off a hill and flipping us upside down two or three times, stopping just in time for most people to catch their stomach.

On the other hand, let some outside stress come into life, something we didn't pay for, and suddenly the world is coming to an end. Since people say we can't have stress, or at least not the kind we don't pay for, when we get stressed, we must have a fix.

"Doctor, help me with my stress, my burden. Order for me a vacation, some place to escape, please. Can't do that? Well ... maybe a pill? A medicine?"

Why is it that we can be so brave and tough on the roller coaster and be so whimsy and whinny when the boss wants the job done by the end of the day? Actually, I've done a little research on this matter. I think I have come up with four simple reasons why "unpaid-for" stress gets us down so quickly.

First, life's stress events get us down so easily because we are not expecting them. On the roller coaster, you knew when you got to the top of the hill that stress was shortly coming and you were going to drop. No one can predict exactly when a stressful event in life will come, but we do know they will. A life that is "prayed up" and in touch with G-d is prepared when those stress-related moments come. G-d's safety straps of love help you to hold on and hold you in His care. The closer you are to Him, the easier it is to hold on.

Next, we doubt or forget the security and safety of the Lord. When your youngster talks you into riding one of those silly rides, you do so only because you believe that they are somewhat safe. You would never get anyone with any sense to ride one of those things if they thought they might really die. When life sends us through the loop, it is reassuring to know G-d is with us all the way. We get stressed out when we forget that we can depend on the security and protection of the Lord.

Another reason that the amusement ride is fun, but normal, everyday stress events drain us, is because we lose sight of the end. No matter how high the hill, no matter how fast the ride, no matter how many loops, the roller coaster ride has the glorious end when you can stop and get out. The knowledge that there is an end has helped us through many a tough ride in life. Focus on the simple truth that every event has an end.

Lastly, but perhaps the single greatest reason we get stressed in everyday life but survive and enjoy the stress of riding "The Wild Thing," is our mindset. We go to an amusement park with the full intention of riding the rides for the thrill of it. We make it fun, enjoying the park, the company we are with and all the enjoyment that comes with a day at the park. When we view life with the mindset that this is going to be fun, suddenly stressful events aren't any more than a roller coaster ride.

Hang on tight to the hand of our loving Lord and enjoy the ride! Remember that the day does end, get your money's worth and make the most of your "day at the park" — or try to, anyway.

Some reflections on life and relationships

Maybe G-d wants us to meet a few wrong people before meeting the right one so that when we finally meet the right person, we will know how to be grateful for that gift.

When the door of happiness closes, another opens, but oftentimes we look so long at the closed door that we don't see the one that has been opened for us.

The best kind of friend is the kind you can sit on a porch and swing with, never say a word and then walk away feeling like it was the best conversation you've ever had.

It's true that we don't know what we've got until we lose it, but it's also true that we don't know what we've been missing until it arrives.

Giving someone all your love is never an assurance that they'll love you back! Don't expect love in return; just wait for it to grow in their heart, but if it doesn't, be content it grew in yours.

It takes only a minute to get a crush on someone, an hour to like someone and a day to love someone, but it takes a lifetime to forget someone.

Don't go for looks; they can deceive. Don't go for wealth; even that fades away. Go for someone who makes you smile, because it takes only a smile to make a dark day seem bright.

Find the one that makes your heart smile. There are moments in life when you miss someone so much that you just want to pick them from your dreams and hug them for real!

Dream what you want to dream; go where you want to go; be what you want to be, because you have only one life and one chance to do all the things you want to do.

May you have enough happiness to make you sweet, enough trials to make you strong, enough sorrow to keep you human, enough hope to make you happy.

Always put yourself in others' shoes. If you feel that it hurts you, it probably hurts the other person, too.

The happiest of people don't necessarily have the best of everything; they just make the most of everything that comes along their way.

Happiness lies for those who cry, those who hurt, those who have searched and those who have tried, for only they can appreciate the importance of people who have touched their lives.

Love begins with a smile, grows with a kiss and ends with a tear.

The brightest future will always be based on a forgotten past. You can't go on well in life until you let go of your past failures and heartaches.

When you were born, you were crying and everyone around you was smiling. Live your life so that when you die, you're the one who is smiling and everyone around you is crying.

Some closing humor to keep you smiling

A biology teacher wished to demonstrate to his students the harmful effects of alcohol on living organisms. For his experiment, he showed them a beaker with pond water in which there was a thriving civilization of worms. When he added some alcohol into the beaker, the worms doubled up and died.

"Now," he said, "what do you learn from this?"

An eager student gave his answer: "Well, the answer is obvious," he said. "If you drink alcohol, you'll never have worms." LOL!

CONTINUED ON PAGE 27

Greetings, gatherings and a reminder to seek support



FATHER
DAN
BRANDT

Recently I bumped into canine handler Bob Gil-leran keeping folks safe on the northwest side. Judging by the size of the smile on his face, he's in the autumn of his career! God bless you and your good work, Bob.

That goes for all of you still out there doing God's work. God bless you and your service, and please, God keep you safe!

As you well know, we as a blue family have had a horrible couple of months. At wakes/funerals last month, I begged officers to take advantage of the resources available. In the past few years, our Employee Assistance Program (EAP) has tripled, then quadrupled, and now *quintupled* the number of clinicians available to our members.

Please trust me when I tell you that EAP is completely confidential (as are my fellow chaplains). All of our 24/7 numbers are in your department directory.



On July 21, Pizano's Pizza hosted our Upper Room Club. Around 30 participants had the opportunity to discuss current events both within and outside the police department, relating them to our faith. It was a wonderful evening of food and faith-sharing. Check our website for information on the next gathering.



On July 22, we dedicated the corner of Everell and Harlem to Detective Geoff Woitel. Thank you to CPD-supportive Alderman Anthony Napolitano for making this happen! Hundreds of folks showed up to support Geoff's family. May he rest in peace!

Thank you also to St. Catherine of Alexandria Parish in Oak Lawn and St. Jerome Parish in Bridgeport for hosting Blue Masses this month.

Another Blue Mass will be hosted on Sunday, Sept. 25, at noon at St. Francis of Assisi Parish in Orland Park. (Please note there will be no usual police Mass at Mercy Home that day.)

And on Sunday, Oct. 2, at 10:30 a.m., Holy Name Cathedral will host a Blue Mass. As always, all are welcome.

Remember, our regular twice-monthly police Masses are offered at Mercy Home (other than on Sept. 25). In order to allow for social distancing, these Masses are celebrated in the indoor soccer field at Adams and Aberdeen. Mass is held the second and fourth Sundays of each month at 11 a.m., and for the sake of on-duty worshippers, it is kept to under 30 minutes.

Finally, on Saturday, Sept. 24, the Brotherhood for the Fallen will host their annual Blue Tie Gala in Rosemont. Details can be found on their website.

Please stay safe and healthy!

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

RABBI MOSHE CONTINUED FROM PAGE 26

On behalf of all the chaplains, may G-d bless you, keep you safe, and may G-d always let you find something daily to make you smile. Amen! We are available 24/7. If we can be of assis-

tance, or if you have any humor to share, please do not hesitate to call.

Contact Rabbi Moshe Wolf at 773-463-4780 or moshewolf@hotmail.com.

Joint tenancy, taxes and worse



**TOM
TUOHY**

Joint tenancy is the most common property title with more than one owner. It is a legal title with the right of survivorship, meaning when one joint tenant dies, the surviving title holders assume ownership.

It sounds convenient. However, in every form of joint tenancy, there are many risks.

It is effortless to add someone's name to a title, whether it be real estate by quitclaim deed or adding someone to your bank or another financial account.

Adding a child to joint tenancy title

Most people understand that a jointly held title passes to the surviving title holder(s), as stated above. It is the most common way to hold title to marital real estate. However, as covered below, it is far from the best way to hold a title when married.

However, since it is common, parents often choose to add their children to the title. They figure that when they both die, the title will pass directly to the child named on the title. Here is a list of what can and often does go wrong with that approach:

- If your child did not contribute capital in return for being added to the title, then, if it is one child, you gave that child a gift of one-third the value of your property. If the child survives both parents, they will own 50 percent upon the death of the first parent and 100 percent upon the surviving parent's death.
- While the above appeared to work, the surviving child is subject to capital gains tax of 15 to 20 percent of the entire property appreciation from your original purchase price. Your child did not inherit your homestead exemption.

erty appreciation from your original purchase price. Your child did not inherit your homestead exemption.

- If you had more than one child and intended for your title-holding child to share the property equally with all your children, it might not happen. Your child could die before doing so, have pending litigation, or the child's spouse might have a different idea. In addition, there are potential gift taxes of 18 to 40 percent on any gifted amount over \$16,000 in a calendar year.
- When you added your child to the title, you subjected your property to that child's lawsuits and creditor claims.
- If you add two or more children to the title, you own less than your children when your spouse dies, and they might decide it's in your best interest to sell your house.

Avoiding probate with joint tenancy

Married couples often believe that joint tenancy avoids probate. It doesn't. It delays probate until the death of the survivor.

Probate exists primarily because no one has the right to sign your name. If you become incapacitated, or when you die, property held solely in your name must go through the long (one to two years) and expensive probate process. As a result, probate must occur even if you have a will. A will is your written wishes that must be approved by a probate court judge, who appoints an executor to oversee the distribution of your property.

To avoid probate, potential taxes and other costly unintended consequences, you should hold title to all your property in a living trust instead of in your name.

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Tom Tuohy is the founder of Tuohy Law Offices and the FOP Benefits Plan. He has been a police lawyer for over three decades. His father was a CPD detective, and his grandfather was CPD Chief of Major Investigations. You can reach Tom at 312-559-8400 or visit his office in Oakbrook Terrace.

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Get Some HELP

In honoring three of their own who took their own lives, Chicago Police Officers must realize that taking care of their mental health is not an option. It's a necessity. And Lodge 7 has the place to start.

■ BY MITCHELL KRUGEL

Un-freakin-believable what happened with that baby in 007. Woman called asking to check on her daughter and grandson baby. She had been trying to reach her for two days. Officer responded and found the mother DOA. Baby had been crawling around for like two days.

Patsy Swank heard the call for another car to come to the scene and beelined to the house. "I'm flying over there," Patsy later told her mom, Ann Clancy, a long-time dispatcher at OEMC and beloved voice among Chicago Police Officers.

How did that baby survive? When they went in, they found him covered in feces. Ann described how Patsy scooped up that baby, cleaned him up, gave him a bath and cared for him just like he was her 5-year-old son, Scottie. Her sergeant even asked, "Swank, how did you do that so fast?"

An CFD ambulance arrived to take the baby to the hospital. Patsy could have followed in her car. No freakin' way she was doing that.

"She would not put that baby down," Ann related. "She was showing me pictures and said, 'Mom, the baby was just clinging to me with his little fingers.'"

After making sure the baby was cared for, Patsy left the hospital and went back to work. Even though her supervisor told

her she had gone so above and beyond that she could end her tour early.

But Fourth of July weekend was coming. Patsy knew how busy it would be. So she stayed.

On July 2, Patsy Swank took her own life.

* * *

Durand Lee had a knack for making everybody else in the 5th District feel better about the way things were going. He always had that listening ear, as Maurice Daniel, the unit rep in 005, recognized.

"Hey, if he knew you, he was going to open up, and it was going to be a good time," Daniel revealed.

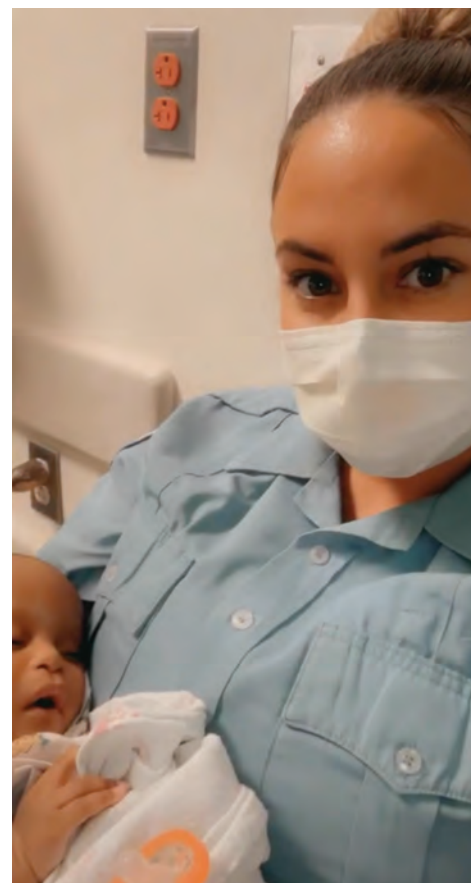
Durand came to 005 after enduring two years in no-pay status. He was into his job working in the district's Strategic Demand Support Center (SDSC). He would provide updates about shootings and other important info at roll call. He performed as a consummate professional.

"You would think he had been doing it his whole career," Daniel added. "That's how good he was at it."

On July 15, Duran was found dead in his home, having taken his own life.

* * *

Lodge 7 Financial Secretary Jim Jakstavich had just talked to his old partner in 009, Sergeant Andrew Dobda. He told Jimmy that was looking at a new car and



Patsy Swank holds the baby she saved when responding to a call where his mother was found DOA.



Patsy Swank loved working bikes in the 7th District and taking every opportunity possible to interact with kids in the community.

shared how he was happy to be going to work in the court unit at Branch 35.

After contracting COVID on the job in March 2020, Andy had been dealing with some long-haul symptoms. When he came back, he was assigned to the call-back 376 at headquarters, where officers who have been stripped and/or on limited duty spend their tours.

"I told him, 'You're going to be a great person down there because you are so positive,'" Jakstavich related.

When he was there, Andy would call Jakstavich maybe four times a week. Jimmy observed how Andy was so good here because he knew how a kind word could go a long way for the officers there who had been screwed by the Department.

On July 14, Dobda attended the prayer vigil for Officer Danny Golden at St. Rita of Cascia with his father. The Lodge 7 trailer was there providing refreshments and support for the hundreds of officers who attended. Dobda wanted to say hi to his old partner.

A day later, he shot himself and died from the self-inflicted wound on July 17.

* * *

Three Chicago Police Officers pursuing their mission of helping citizens, the community and their sisters and brothers are no longer with us. Three more have taken their own lives, making it 20 since 2018. Why could we not help them? Did we not hear a cry for help? Did they ask for help? Is help on the way? What the help is going on here?

Certainly, Chicago Police Officers feel like not enough help is coming from the City and the Department. How else can they feel when having to endure the long tours, the extended runs with no days off, the uncontrolled escalation in the amount of trauma they are exposed to and the out-of-control violence in the city?

"When you put all of those things together, it's a recipe for poor mental health," reasoned Dr. Carrie Steiner, a



mental health therapist specializing in treating law enforcement who worked as a Chicago Police Officer for 14 years. "And when you have poor mental health, that means suicide is on the table."

If help is on the way, it's coming from Steiner and her team at the First Responders Wellness Center. They have set up offices on the second floor of Lodge 7, where members can come address their mental health in complete confidence, knowing that the Department and City are not watching. Days, nights, weekends, in person or through telehealth, members will find expert help for what Dr. Steiner describes as impossible, even inhumane, work conditions.

"If a person just ran a marathon, they can't run another marathon," Dr. Steiner expounded. "What Chicago Police Officers are doing is running marathon after marathon. So you have more hypervigilance than usual. You have an exaggerated startle response. You have difficulty sleeping and calming down. You're more irritable. You take things very seriously. You're not light about things."

A little self-help advice comes from Alexa James, chief executive officer for the National Alliance of Mental Illness (NAMI) Chicago, who spent a year consulting as the Department's senior advisor of wellness. She is intimate with why mental illness is festering among Chicago Police Officers to the point of continuous tragedies.

From the multiple pages of a report she provided to the Department after her year about what needs to be done to address officers' mental health and wellness, she urges to consider whether this is you:

"Stress without any type of release or re-energizing time, then compounded with lack of sleep creates this energy of despair," James submitted. "And despair is scary because we eat our feelings with despair, and we cheat when we feel despair. And we think about not being on this earth when we feel despair."



Patsy Swank with her son, Scottie.



Patsy Swank, left, with her mother, Ann Clancy, center, and brother Ryan Clancy.

Light of the watch

Ann tried to talk Patsy into becoming a dispatcher rather than a Chicago Police Officer. But Patsy wanted to be Erin Lindsay on "Chicago PD."

"She just idolized Sophia Bush," Ann quipped.

With those hazel eyes you couldn't help but be mesmerized by, red lipstick on her smile worthy of a Revlon ad and long, eye-catching hair, Patsy was as beautiful inside as she was out. In 007, where she spent all of her six years on, they called her the "light of the watch."

CONTINUED ON PAGE 32

Ann shared that Patsy was never a girly-girl, more of a tomboy, really. She played basketball at Mother McAuley High School and went on to play lacrosse at Elmhurst College. Ann has a video she loves, of Patsy shooting hoops with kids in Ogden Park one day while on patrol.

Patsy loved being on a bike in 007 because it brought her close to the residents. Ann recalled how Patsy would tell her stories when they would talk about the job every day.

"She would tell me, 'Mom, there are so many good people in Englewood. We ride by and they give us bottles of water and they talk to us.'"

Another story Ann loved was about a day when Patsy had to go 99 when working days. She knew a couple of neighborhood guys who hung out on the corner, smoking their blunts. One day, a guy came at Patsy. The two guys on the corner helped her out.

"She goes, 'If it wasn't for those two, I don't know what would have happened to me,'" Ann added.

At Patsy's funeral, her brother, Ryan Clancy, spoke about how she was tough when she had to be, the kind of officer who didn't take nothing from nobody. He added that she always wanted the biggest challenge, which is another reason Patsy rushed into the house to take of that baby.

"She did see the good in people and she definitely wanted to help," Ryan continued. "It seemed like she had everyone else's back, and I'm not quite sure the City had her back."

Indeed, after the civil unrest hit the city, the people who used to give Patsy water bottles were now throwing them at her. She didn't like being on the street without a partner, and she worried about how the city was headed for the lawlessness many officers would confirm is now the current state.

Ann said Patsy reached out to EAP for help around Christmas 2020. But one appointment was canceled. Another didn't come off as she had hoped.

Ann had dinner with Patsy the night before she took her own life. She told her mom she hoped she wouldn't have to stay late at work the next night so they could meet for dinner again.

And Patsy absolutely lived for Scottie. Ryan explained how Scottie is such a bundle of infectious energy, just like his mom.

When Patsy was lost, Ann had to tell Scottie. After a minute or so, he asked if he could go in the pool.

"So we take him out in the pool, and he finds this little ping pong ball with the letter M on it," Ann reported. "He was so excited, and he goes, 'M stands for mommy."



From the time he came on the job, Andrew Dobda always had a smile on his face, whether working the street or serving as a sergeant.

She's already sending me signs."

Not to take it so seriously

Nobody saw any signs of despair from Durand Lee. He loved working narcotics, where he spent seven years. He did a lot of buy-bust and worked the wire.

Then, he got into a jam and wound up suspended for a couple of years. When he came back, Durand was assigned to 005.

He was so good in the SDSC, quickly learning the nuances of ShotSpotter and how all the cameras worked. Many of those who worked in the 5th District commented how it seemed like Durand had been doing it his whole career.

"He was a strong guy," Daniel asserted. "He never let the Department get to him. He kind of made jokes about it. So that's why it was surprising."

Durand was also the caregiver for his wife, who is disabled. And although that had to be stressful, nobody in 005 saw the signs.

No district might know the signs of an officer needing help better than 005, where they have lost a couple of officers to suicide since 2019. Maybe Durand knew it, too.

"He knew what not to take so seriously," Daniel commented. "Even to his last day, I remember people talking about just how much fun he was having and how much laughing he was doing."

Always laughing

Andy Dobda also had that good nature about him, which is probably why he was always smiling. Jakstavich recalled how they were always talking when he came into their car on Beat 921.

"We were always laughing," Jakstavich added. "And it makes the world of difference when you have a good partner to pass the time."

Jakstavich shared the story of Andy taking the cartographer assignment in the Deployment Operations Center at headquarters in his remembrance on page 12 of this issue. But reading between the



lines reveals what made Andy such a valued member of the Department.

"It was his sense of intelligence," Jakstavich noted. "No one would think Andy was as smart as he was. He was extremely intelligent."

When Andy went to the 003 after being promoted, they made him the CR sergeant. He had such an affinity for statistics, and he would fashion reports that did what CompStat could do before CompStat was prevalent in the Department.

Off the job, his greatest passion was the Blackhawks. This past St. Patrick's Day, Jakstavich scored a couple of tickets and took Andy to a game. Jakstavich is friends with the guy who runs the penalty box, and he showed Dobda where they kept all the pucks for the game. Dobda loved seeing how the pucks have a chip in them for tracking.

He was just the kind of guy who went all-in on everything. He came to the Danny Golden vigil with his father, a city worker, because he was on the board of the sergeant's union and he wanted to represent.

Perhaps his only flaw was his driving.

"When he was driving, it seemed like every time we turned, he'd hit a curb," Jakstavich described. "I used to tell him, 'What are you driving, your father's streetsweeper?' I would tell him, 'Forward motion only. No U-turns. If we have to, we'll come around the block.'"

Jakstavich's favorite story about Andy, though, is the day they wanted to put an event together at Lindy's, where they would often have lunch. They decided on a chili eat-off against firefighters. Jakstavich was the player-coach, and he pulled some heavy hitters from 009, including Andy.

"I was useless because I ate only four bowls," he stated. "There was a huge chunk of gristle in one of mine. I said, 'I'm not eating that.' He goes, 'We need that bowl.' He grabs it and powers it down."

That was Andy. At his funeral service,



Andrew Dobda, left, was a huge Hawks fan. He had the opportunity to attend a sportsman's club event with Hawks legend Bobby Hull, center, his old partner, Lodge 7 Financial Secretary Jim Jakstavich, right, and Jim Boreczky, back.

Father Dan asked Jakstavich to share what he remembered most about his old partner.

"Always happy, always smiling," he said.

How can they help

So how do we keep losing officers like these? In her post-consult report, James prescribed seven major systemic changes to help Chicago Police Officers tend to their mental health and wellness. One was to have the superintendent make an anti-stigma pledge, which he did.

But there appears to be no confirmation of a transparent fitness-for-duty pol-



icy. And there is no reliable information that the Department has made accessible for officers to seek treatment. In fact, Dr. Steiner reports that she has had several officers cancel appointments with her because of RDOs being scrubbed.

Those are just a few gaps. James, who is a licensed certified social worker (LCSW), also recommended the Department create a Wellness Office with a chief wellness officer. That might be in the works, or it might be hung up on funding.

In the meantime, there are some simple ways the Department can make an impact.

"How are we actually thinking about the way we talk at a podium?" James asked. "How are officers hearing that and how does it make them feel supported?"

Her findings also indicated that it has to start at the top and it has to be embedded in the Department's culture. That can lead to more education, including bringing in families as early as when recruits are in the academy to build the connections and intimacy so officers can have somebody to talk to at home. And know what not to talk to their loved ones about.

James shares a story about how this can manifest. She knew a firefighter who loved to help around the house. All of a sudden, he stopped doing the laundry. Shortly thereafter, he took his own life.

"Maybe his wife thought he was just being an asshole," James said. "But it's that type of change in behavior you need to assess as, hey, this could be a sign."

Following the loss of Durand Lee, James was doing a training when she did see a sign that officers want help.

"I was in front of the class, and I said, 'I'm sorry they don't see you or hear you,' she described. "And then an officer with 20 years on started to weep and said, 'What are we going to do so they can see and feel us?'"

CONTINUED ON PAGE 34



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"Chicago Police Officers need to learn how to manage their stress because they're exposed to so much trauma. Everyone needs to take care of this. It is a necessity. It is not really an option."

Dr. Carrie Steiner
Retired Chicago Police Officer
Owner, First Responders Wellness Center



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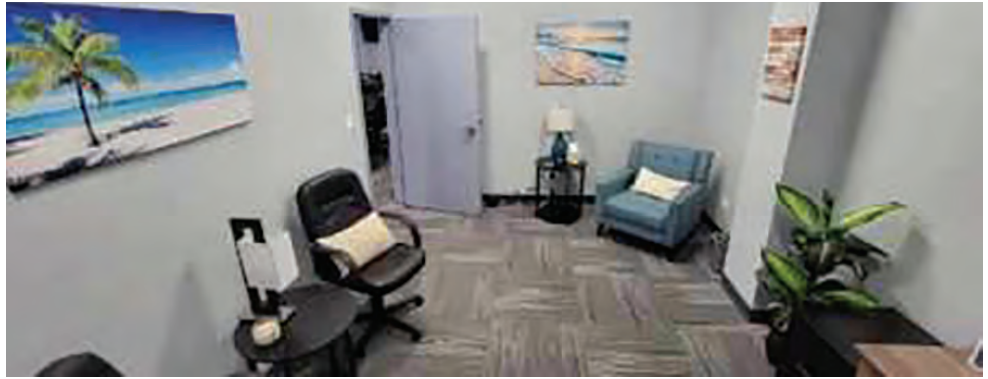
Steiner concurs that there needs to be more understanding of the police culture from the Department's mental health and wellness providers. Perhaps that's why many have come to the First Responders Wellness Center for help.

She has been through trauma of the highest order on the job. One call included responding to a scene where a family had been run over and killed. There was a 5-year-old boy who Steiner said looked just like her nephew.

As a result, she has made a science of understanding just what happens in the police culture to cause spiraling into despair. When you are exposed to trauma, your limbic system is activated. That's your fight, flight or freeze response. The limbic system drains a lot of energy, but it keeps you alive.

Now, imagine what happens to your limbic system when you have no time to decompress.

"We're talking about the brain here, so you can't be using that all the time without having time to reset the system," Dr. Steiner articulated. "When your limbic system is in overdrive like that, you are more at risk of turning to alcohol and drugs. And high-sugar foods, gambling,



A look at where Lodge 7 has created offices for members to get help with the mental health and wellness from the First Responders Wellness Center.

pornography and anything that is going to stimulate happy feelings because being in the fight, flight or freeze is not a good place to be."

She further explains that with the marathon of marathons Chicago Police Officers have had to endure, they have lost their ability to relax. But relaxation is a premium therapy the First Responders team will be providing when seeing members at the FOP.

There is actually a treatment using virtual reality goggles to simulate relaxation, like that feeling of sitting on a beach with no cares in the world. Steiner and her team can also measure your heart rate and breathing to better understand where it's at when you reach the relaxed state.

At some appointments, officers might not want to talk, so they can just take advantage of this neurofeedback to help them understand what they need to feel on their RDOs. And if there is a learning event from what happened during the first two weeks of July, it's that the treatment available at the Lodge is not an option. It's a necessity.

"When you're in the fight, flight or freeze state, that's when you need more recovery time," Dr. Steiner urged. "What we're trying to do is make the thin line thicker by giving you evidence-based treatment that will really help you be able to manage the stressors."



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On suicide



MICHAEL
MATTSON

My father came on the job in 1964 and worked in District 001. He handled a lot of suicides, and most of them were “jumpers.” He once mentioned to me that he respected jumpers the most. “Why?” I asked.

“Because once you decide and you step off that ledge, there is no going back,” he said.

There is something masculine about that sentiment. You get to a point where you feel hopeless, helpless and worthless, and you decide you’ve had enough. You’re not alone. Some famous people

have ended their own lives: Chef Anthony Bourdain, Kate Spade, Hemingway.

In the end, it is the same — you’re gone, and your loved ones are left without you. “Why?” is the question on everyone’s minds.

I attended a memorial service for a retired police officer who took his own life. Dozens of photos of him with his wife and children adorned the hall. Pictures from vacations, weddings and celebrations covered two banquet tables. I remember him being a happy person and devoted to his wife. People stood up and shared stories of him. The stories were heartwarming and a welcome distraction.

Standing there, I realized that I didn’t care one bit *why* he did it. The amount of sadness and loss was palpable. His wife was left without a husband, his children were left without a dad, friends were now left with just memories. Saying suicide is a tragedy is an understatement.

Chicago Police Officers are killing themselves at an alarming rate. From 2020 to 2022, seven Chicago officers have died by their own hand, including three of them doing it in a police facility. Across the U.S., law enforcement personnel are 54 percent more likely to die by suicide compared to the general population. The 2020 LEO Suicide Report to Congress says the number of reported suicides among law enforcement may actually be higher than reported.

The importance of living

In the 1950s, British philosopher and prolific writer Colin Wilson was 19 and miserable. He was, in fact, so miserable that he fully intended on killing himself while working at a laboratory in London. On the morning in question, he took a bottle of hydrochloric acid off the shelf, uncorked it and was about to drink it down.

But with beaker in hand, he suddenly had a vision. He saw that there were two Colin Wilsons. One was a depressed teenager, but the other one was someone who would do great things that would contribute to society in profound and unique ways.

What he realized in that moment was that if he drank the concoction, he would be killing the depressed teenage Colin, but unfortunately he’d be taking the other Colin with him. No one would miss the teenage Colin, but taking the other one would be a travesty beyond words.

What you need to know

According to Robert Sobo at the Chicago Police Department’s Employee Assistance Program (EAP), the majority of police suicides involve three factors: financial troubles, legal issues or relationship struggles. He also says many of the suicide or attempted suicide cases he’s dealt with have also involved drug or alcohol addiction.

“The alcohol is insidious,” Sobo says, “because it’s a depressant. So officers come home feeling stressed and drink to relieve the stress, but what it does instead is give you a false and fleeting sense of euphoria. It depresses you further, interferes with your sleep patterns, and you feel more tense and stressed because you’re tired. You drink more to feel relief, but it can begin a very dangerous pattern of alcohol or drug abuse. It is a significant problem.”

Serve and protect yourself first

If you aren’t fit mentally, physically and spiritually, then you are doing yourself a significant disservice. To serve and protect you, follow these guidelines:

- **Get off social media!** Netflix’s documentary “The Social Dilemma” highlights the dark side of the social media phenomenon. The social media companies create complex algorithms whose only job is to grab your attention and keep you hooked. The feelings we get from social media are illusory and rarely positive. Understand that social media is only there for one thing: money. Begin to find positive things in your life to spend your time with.
- **Curb the drinking.** It’s a temporary relaxant, but it is a depressant. It causes lapses in judgment, disrupts sleep and will keep you sick and tired if overindulged.
- **Get physical.** Spend time exercising and eating right.
- **Lead a balanced life.** The Greek philosopher Aristotle said 2,500 years ago that to be happy and healthy you should find balance in everything. Do whatever you want, but do it in moderation.
- **Get help.** If you’re feeling helpless, hopeless and worthless, you’re not alone. We all have low points in our lives. Before it gets too bad, call a friend, call the EAP. The Employee Assistance Hotline is 312-743-0378.

Carl Jung once counseled a woman who was contemplating suicide. “You ought to realize that suicide is murder, since after suicide there remains a corpse — exactly as with any ordinary murder,” he said. “Only it is yourself that has been killed.”

If you’re struggling, don’t do it alone. As a Chicago Police Officer, you have touched the lives of thousands of people throughout your career, from co-workers to citizens to even criminals. You’ve been a force for good, though maybe you don’t realize it. Realize it now and honor your God-given life by doing what you can to protect and preserve it.

Mike Mattson is a 20-year veteran of the Chicago Police Department.



Package Deal

How a group of aldermen stepped up to create much-needed legislation to help public safety

■ BY MITCHELL KRUGEL

One by one, members of the City Council's valiant, ad hoc public safety caucus stepped up to the podium outside the Thompson Center on July 20. Flanked by family members of Chicago Police Officers crushed by the Department's evil, aldermen Anthony Napolitano, Silvana Tabares, Matt O'Shea and Ray Lopez turned this into a historic day by presenting ordinances and a resolution that made up what they called the "Public Safety Package."

Stepping up to the podium like this elevated stepping up for the police like the City has rarely, if ever, seen from elected officials during the past three-plus years. This fab four of aldermen continued their relentless dedication to stir support in the council and do what the mayor and her minions will not to ensure the health and wellness of the City's public safety and protect citizens against the latest pandemic: violence and crime skyrocketing off the charts.

The Public Safety Package headlined with a resolution on CPD mental health, calling for public hearings about what the stress is doing to officers. To see how sensational this package is, anybody at this press conference only had to look to one side where Ann Clancy and Ryan Clancy stood mourning their daughter and sister, Officer Patsy Swank, who took her own life a few weeks earlier. Or to the other side, where Julie Troglia stood in honor of her husband, Jeff, an officer who took his own life in 2021.

Other press-stopping ordinances addressed how to make sure CPOs get their RDOs and have control about when they want to give them up, and ensuring surviving family members

of officers lost in the line of duty get their benefits in a timely manner. There was also an earth-shattering ordinance proposal to scrap COPA.

"You have a group of aldermen who are standing up for public safety," declared Tabares, the 23rd Ward alderman whose husband is a PPO currently working midnights in the 10th District. "We're not going to sit on the sidelines and just let this happen. Filing legislation is one of the powers of an alderman, and we're going to use it."

This new, or renewed, endeavor to advocate and legislate on behalf of the police injects hope because it compounds the ongoing work from 41st Ward Alderman Napolitano and 19th Ward Alderman O'Shea. They represent two areas of the City where so many public safety families live.

Napolitano, as everybody knows, is a brother, having served as both a Chicago Police Officer and a firefighter. Nobody in the City Council has taken up for Chicago Police Officers like Napolitano, and he hopes his contributions to the Public Safety Package will remind the mayor and her minions about the most formidable bond among the City's workers.

"My hope is that the ordinances we introduced will give them working rights," Napolitano explained. "Listen, we're all union folks. This is supposed to be a union city. Working rights of women and men are supposed to be paramount. We're going to get them the rights to decline the overwork. They're not going to get their days canceled just because it's a Tuesday and we can't figure out a better way to cut back crime."

O'Shea did not mind those who attended the Public Safety Package announcement witnessing his frustration and agita-

tion over the way public safety has been treated. He is putting the fire and brimstone in this effort with a warning to the City about what will continue to happen if these ordinances are not passed.

"Where we're headed, in my opinion, is more down cars, more officers alone in a car without a partner, which is more cars that aren't going down alleys and more officers that aren't getting out of cars," O'Shea articulated directly to the City. "I'm not interested in dog and pony. I'm interested in best practices."

O'Shea confirmed that the Public Safety Package was not designed for aldermen to support as a means to a photo op, a sound bite and a higher profile with the election coming next spring. The caucus also confirmed that even though as many as 38 of the 50 council members have signed on to some of these ordinances, this is not pandering to the voters, as the mayor charged in her news conference shortly after the Public Safety Package was announced.

The days-off ordinance actually runs much deeper. O'Shea noted that State Senator Bill Cunningham and State Rep Fran Hurley, who represent the same Mount Greenwood/Beverly area, have also proposed legislation to ensure officers have at least one of their regular days off.

"I've heard from wives. I've heard from husbands. I've been in the living rooms of many officers who have died by suicide in the last year and a half," O'Shea added. "I've had wives, mothers, brothers tell me they believe the level of exhaustion and the lack of time off was a contributing factor."

It would be an understatement to report that these aldermen know these issues intimately. How much of an understatement? Check this out:

Tabares' husband, Chicago Police Officer Sean Murray, was pulled from 010 and had his days off canceled to work Lollapalooza July 29-31. Along with how many other officers? Hundreds? Thousands?

So Madame Mayor and your minions, listen up.

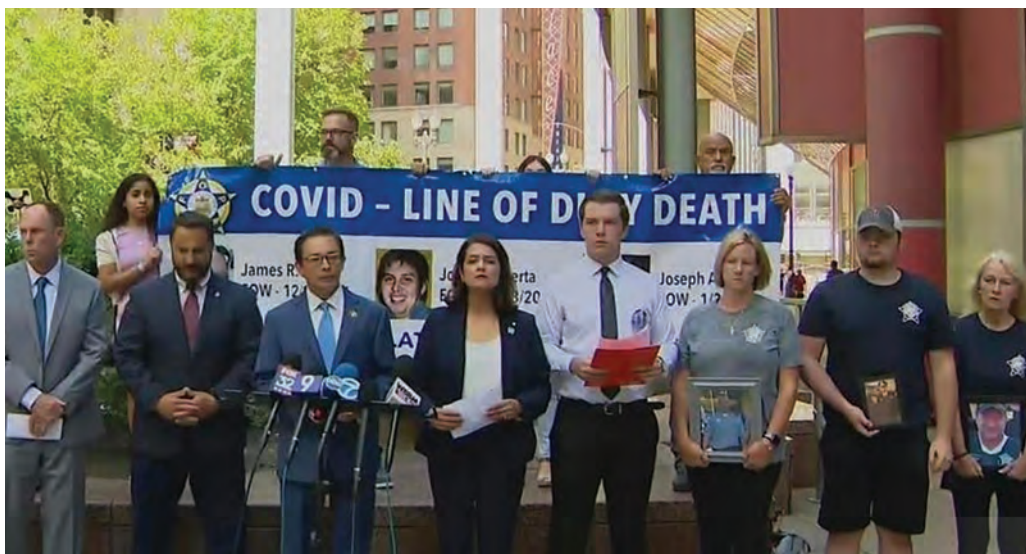
"Not only is this very personal for me because I am a wife of a Chicago Police Officer, but my neighbors and people who live in my ward call my office. They don't call City Hall," Tabares related. "That's how this all came about. We're not pandering. This is public safety. Crime is the No. 1 issue in the entire City, and we need to address it. And this Public Safety Package is one way."

Napolitano submitted that he wanted the Chicago Police Mental Health Preservation Ordinance included in the Public Safety Package to make first responders feel confident in getting the help they need. He confided that he went through some of those moments as a copper and a firefighter that only his wife knows about.

"And it haunts me to this day," he shared.

The ordinance will enable officers to testify about how the job is hitting their mental health. The caucus also wants to call the superintendent and EAP, among others, to testify and work with Lodge 7 to come up with questions to ask at the hearings.

"I think it could bring a good point to how traumatic it is by bringing in some of my fellow officers and firefighters to explain how this affects them," Napolitano added. "Everyone thinks they know what these coppers do. They've done one ride-along and they think they can justify what goes on in a squad car."



From left, Aldermen Matt O'Shea, Anthony Napolitano, Ray Lopez and Silvana Tabares with family members of Chicago Police Officers who died by suicide at a news conference on July 20 to announce the Public Safety Package.

For the record, the Public Safety Package also includes ordinances for:

- Absences: Requiring the superintendent of police to notify City Council when leaving Chicago for personal or official business.
- Use of Force: Requiring public official use-of-force training.
- Days Off: Requiring at least one day off for Chicago Police Department employees and compensating them if they choose to forgo their days off.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 38

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- **COPA Transition:** Dissolving the Civilian Office of Police Accountability and transferring rights and powers to the Community Commission for Public Safety and Accountability.
- **Survivor Benefits:** Putting a 45-day time limit on salary benefit decisions for survivor spouses and dependents of Chicago Police Officers lost in the line of duty.
- **Retention Training:** Allowing officers from other agencies to transfer into the Chicago Police Department under a modified training program.

Though the mayor might have tried to intimate that the Public Safety Package is a dog-and-pony show, there is considerable optimism that some or all will get fair and reasonable consideration. Many proposals for ordinances to advocate for law enforcement have been banished in the past to the City Council's rules committee, a purgatory of sorts where proposals are left to die.

Many of the ordinances have moved into position to be scheduled for discussion in committee. O'Shea has hopes that these can go the way of the ordinance he wrote in May to get families of officers who were lost to suicide death benefits. All 50 aldermen signed on to that one.

All totaled, the Public Safety Package finally can be the impetus to put the minds and bodies of Chicago Police Officers at rest. And what will be the result of that?



At the news conference to announce the Public Safety Package, Julie Troglia holds a picture of her husband, Jeff, who was lost to suicide.

"They're going to rest, rejuvenate and recharge," Napolitano assured. "They're going to kiss their families and be with their kids. Then, when they're rejuvenated, they're going to come back and say, 'I'll jump on some of that overtime and combat the crime.' We're putting it in the hands of the people who know what they can and cannot do. They're the only ones who know."

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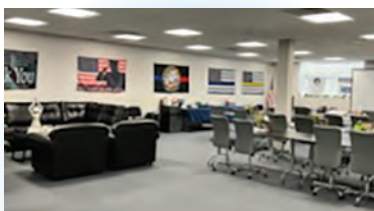
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Healing power for a true Superman

■ BY ESTHER GONZALES

Balloons and decorations electrified Jaime Avila's hospital room on July 3. A juicy steak dinner sizzled on the bedside table. And icing on a strawberry cake announced why the special decorations abounded: "Happy Anniversary Edith & Jaime."

The melody of Whitney Houston's "I Will Always Love You" rang out from Chicago Police Officer Kenyatta Gaines, who sang the special tribute to Jaime and Edith for their 23rd wedding anniversary.

A handful of Jaime's sisters and brothers from the 12th District and members from the Special Activities Unit gathered around the couple to provide a dose of healing power. Just the medicine Jaime needed to help put behind him that shooting that almost caused him to bleed out.

"To me, it was something that emotionally we needed," Edith reflected. "And I know they felt in their hearts that this is something they should do for us to show, 'Hey, everything's going to be OK.' And to me, that was one of the most memorable experiences. We're never going to forget what they did for us."

Only a few days earlier, Jaime, a U.S. Army veteran, father of four and Chicago Police Officer of 15 years, was responding to a domestic when he was ambushed and shot. He was severely injured and lost 6 pints of blood.

The outpouring of support that followed, including the anniversary party, accentuated just how good Chicago Police Officers are at helping their own overcome the pain.

"Us visiting, it's nothing compared to what he has to go through," remarked 12th District Officer Lisa Barraco. "The very least we could do is try to put a smile on his face and remember his milestones, such as his anniversary."

While responding to a call on July 1 at the Taylor Street Apartments, Jaime sustained multiple gunshot wounds while he was exiting an elevator. His left arm suffered nerve damage, two of his ribs were broken and his left lung collapsed. Reacting quickly, his partner, Bryan Schaeffer, applied a tourniquet.

Jaime wrapped his arms around the shoulders of his partner and UIC Officer Cesar Canizales, who responded to the scene when he heard the call come over his radio. They rushed him to a car to be transported to Stroger Hospital, which they reached just in time.

Jaime was within minutes of losing his life.

"He doesn't know how he did it, but he managed to muster all that strength because he knew he needed to get to that hospital, otherwise he wasn't going to make it," Edith explained. "Hearing the stories of those that were at the scene of the incident really put into perspective just how blessed we truly are to have Jaime with us today. So many were involved at the exact moment that they were needed. His guardian angel was with him."

During the next eight days in the hospital, support from fellow officers and members of the community never ended. One by one, officers entered the room to offer support and introduce themselves to Edith. Some brought food to the Avilas' four children and others offered Edith rides to and from the hospital.

"To me, it shows how tight-knit the CPD community is," Edith reflected. "It really is a brotherhood. When one of them is injured, something happens to one, everyone comes together as



From left, CPD Officers Jerry Madrigal, Craig Burton, Vanderlei Inacio, Bryan Schaeffer and Jaime Avila, Deputy Chief Gabi Shemash, Officer Angelica Haro, Commander Beth Giltmier and Avila's brother, Adolfo Avila.



Many officers visited Jaime Avila while he was in the hospital and continued to offer their support when he was released.

STORIES OF COURAGE



CPD officers gathered at Stroger Hospital to salute Officer Jaime Avila when he was released from the hospital after eight days.

a team, as a unit. And I felt that, he felt that, my whole family felt it. Everyone that I saw at the hospital was just so kind and thoughtful and very supportive. And you just feel that love, that connection, with everybody.”

While in the hospital, Jaime gained the nickname “Superman.” His strength and fighting spirit seemed to inspire everyone around him, including his brother-in-law, 3rd District Officer Fred Lopez.

“One thing I noticed was his resilience in terms of how he talked about God and how his life is in God’s hands,” Lopez reflected. “It had to happen this way, and he accepted this. And the one thing about Jaime was his calmness. He’s very calm, despite the tragic trauma his body endured.”

Throughout the week, many officers visited Jaime to offer a listening ear. Even officers who did not know Jaime personally showed up for him. And at one point, the nurses told Lopez that Jaime had the new record for the most visitors.

That’s when Lopez realized just how strong the brotherhood truly is.

“We stand together, but after this experience, it really shows the tight brotherhood that police officers have,” Lopez remarked. “Sometimes, we may feel like no one is supporting us, but we look to our right and to our left, to our brothers and our sisters who work for this job every single day. That blue line really came through after Jaime was shot. And I know definitely Jaime is so grateful for all that support.”

Hundreds of members of the community also displayed an immense amount of support for Jaime when Lopez created a GoFundMe page.

At first, Lopez was nervous, because he didn’t know what to expect and he wasn’t sure if the page would gain enough traction. But after he created it, support flooded in right away.

“Donations started coming in every single day,” Lopez explained. “When I saw what people were writing, both police officers and civilians alike, I was very thankful. It’s amazing what people do out of the kindness of their heart.”

On July 9, Jaime stood at the doors of Stroger Hospital to be led home on his road to recovery. CPD officers lined both sides of the sidewalk and stood at attention. As bagpipes played and the melody drifted through the air, Jaime put his hand on his heart and members saluted him.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 42



Special Activities Section Officer Kenya Gaines presents Jaime Avila with a Superman T-shirt. Avila received the nickname Superman while recovering from his injuries.



Officers from the 12th District created a special display for Jaime and Edith Avila, who celebrated their 23rd anniversary.

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STORIES OF COURAGE



CPD Officers Fred Lopez, left, and Michael Lopez celebrated Jaime Avila, center, being released from the hospital.

HEALING CONTINUED FROM PAGE 41

When he reached his vehicle, members applauded.

"The CPD came together and showed us how wonderful their support system is, and for that we are grateful," Edith added. "CPD is a special kind of family bond, and I'm proud to be a CPD officer's wife. It amazes me to see and feel all the love, support, thoughts and prayers from all. It makes a huge difference to the officer and their family to know that they are not left to manage on their own."

When Jaime arrived home, Gaines presented him with a Su-



From left, Officer Kenyatta Gaines, Elena Avila, Emily Avila, Officer Jaime Avila, Edith Avila, Joshua Avila and Jovanni Avila.

perman T-shirt as a reflection of his strength and determination. Officers have continued to lend a hand whenever needed, whether by cutting the grass, bringing food for Jaime's family, picking up medication or offering transportation.

"We'll forever be grateful for every officer that came and supported Jaime, even the ones who can't come and see him, the ones who have prayed," Lopez added. "That energy is there. And it's given Jaime that space to express himself and acknowledge that he is hurt and that he needs our support and that they're coming to work with him. He is very grateful and we're very grateful, because it just shows that we're not alone."

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How to fight like a Golden

■ BY ESTHER GONZALES

ATTENTION TO ALL WHO ENTER HERE...

If you are coming to this room with sorrow or to feel sorrow for my wounds, go elsewhere.

The large neon orange sign posted on the doorway outside of 4th District Officer Danny Golden's hospital room commanded attention from visitors. The words written on it were taken from a family friend, a Navy Seal, who has had a profound impact on Danny's life.

And now, they were his words too.

The wounds I received I got in a job I love, doing it for people I love, supporting the freedom of a country I deeply love. I am immensely tough and will make a full recovery.

"That's how Danny is, he's a tough kid," Officer Jeff Budz attested. "He doesn't want people feeling sad or sorry for him. He wants people just to stand next to him, and he's going to lead his own way. His passion for this job is unbelievable. He loves his job, and if it was up to him, he'd be back to work right now."

After Danny broke up a bar fight on July 9, one of the hooligans shot him. The gunshot left him paralyzed. Since then, his CPD family, the City and even the country have rallied to inspire him to keep fighting. But really, it's been Danny showing that omnipresent toughness, inspiring everybody by personifying the sentiment on that orange sign.

What is full?

That is the absolute utmost physically that my body has the ability to recover. Then I will push that about 20 percent further through sheer mental tenacity.

This room you are about to enter is a room of fun, optimism and intense, rapid regrowth.

If you are not prepared for that, go elsewhere.

For anyone who knows Danny Golden, it was no surprise that when a fight broke out at a bar in Beverly on July 9, he immediately stepped in to break it up. But the fight quickly became violent when it spilled out into the street. In an attempt to stop it, Danny called out that he was an officer.

Suddenly, bullets began flying. Danny was struck in the spine.

His father, retired Detective Patrick Golden, arrived at Advocate Christ Medical Center minutes after Danny was transported there.

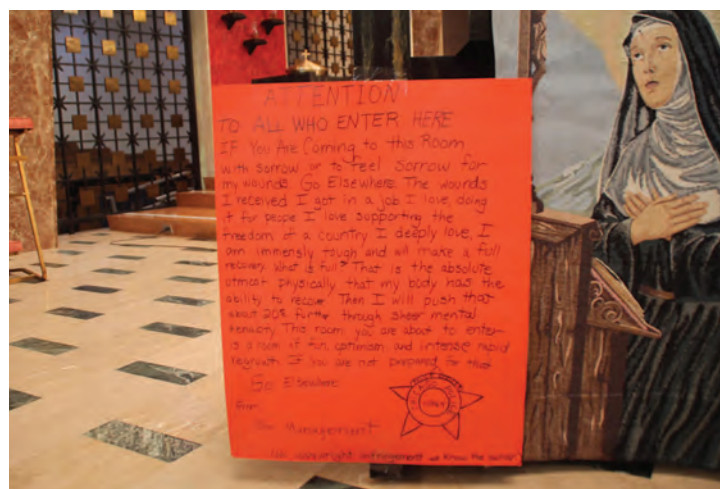
He grabbed Danny's shoulders.

"Don't die," Patrick declared. "Don't die. Stay strong."

Nobody knew better than Patrick about the willpower and mental and physical toughness that Danny exhibited during the next six days in the hospital. Danny is a third-generation Chicago officer who turned down the opportunity to join the Chicago Fire Department three times because his passion was law enforcement. He enlisted in the U.S. Army so his brother wouldn't have to serve alone. All that after an illustrious wrestling career at St. Rita High School.

Danny Golden has always been the definition of tough.

It's that toughness flowing through his veins that made him



Throughout his time in the hospital, Danny Golden personified the words, taken from a family friend, written on this orange sign.



Hundreds of Chicago Police Officers saluted Danny Golden as he was released from the hospital.

STORIES OF COURAGE



Officers, friends and members of the community attend a prayer vigil for Danny Golden at St. Rita of Cascia on July 14.

a great copper. And he learned it growing up in one of the all-time-greatest Chicago police families.

"I'm not going to die," Danny told his father. "I'm not going to die."

A sea of Chicago Police Officers, Chicago firefighters, residents of the community, family members and friends gathered at Danny's alma mater, St. Rita High School, on July 14 for a prayer vigil. That neon orange sign was posted at the front of the doors where Patrick stood shaking hands with each person entering.

He had two words he wanted to say to everybody: "Thank you."

Every pew was filled with people who had grown up with Danny or worked with him in the 4th District. As Danny watched a livestream of the vigil from his hospital room on an iPad his friends bought him, everyone waved to him. Several family members stood to say a few words for him and thanked the community for their immense support.

Then Father Tom McCarthy, who organized the vigil and has known the Golden family for several years, added a few telling words.

"He said that he knew that Danny would live," Patrick reflected. "That he would make it through this because of his willpower to live and just being a strong individual. He knew that Danny would make it and get out of the hospital OK."

In the audience, Budz, who has been a friend of Danny's since kindergarten, realized that the family and community will "Fight Like a Golden," the hashtag that has spawned from Danny's toughness.

"It's just how our community is. We're raised to take care of each other," Budz commented. "So when bad things happen like this, everyone rallies together, and we do what we have to do to comfort each other and make things as best as possible."

And there has been no limit to that support.

On July 11, Danny's 32nd birthday, residents of the Orland Park community near where he grew up in Chicago presented him with a card filled with encouragement and well-wishes. And over the next few days, soldiers who had served with Danny flew across the country to visit him. Countless officers and firefighters offered support.

"Danny and I expressed how we wish we could grab every single one of you and give you the tightest hug ever," Casey Szflarski, Danny's fiancée, wrote on Facebook. "It has gotten to a



Officer Carlos Yanez Jr. visits Deja Brew Bar & Grille in Oak Lawn, which features a Back the Blue Burger. Deja Brew donated sales of the burger to support Danny Golden.



Hundreds of family members, friends and officers were with Danny Golden as he was released from the hospital on July 15.

point where I don't have enough hours in the day to respond to all of your loving messages. Danny had a lot of angels that night. And I'm convinced that nowhere in this world has the support like we do! Because of you guys he keeps fighting!"

While Danny was in the hospital, Budz didn't leave his side for five days. He tried to provide an uplifting voice that Danny would make it through.

"I reassured him the whole time that if there's one person in this world that would get through this whole thing, it'd be him," Budz attested. "I told him he was in the right place at the right time for his brothers. Because if he weren't there, more people probably would've gotten shot that night or his brothers could have been killed."

Support for Danny has extended far beyond the thin blue line.

Local businesses and residents from Mount Greenwood, Beverly and Bridgeport showed their unwavering support in numerous ways. With help from social media, #FightLikeAGolden began trending, and the message has been printed on T-shirts for the hometown hero.

Multiple towns like Orland Park hosted lemonade stands. On July 13, one of them raised more than \$13,000 for Danny.

From July 21 to 28, Deja Brew Bar & Grille in Oak Lawn donated proceeds to Danny from sales of their signature Back the Blue Burger, which is topped with crispy bacon, cheddar cheese and onion rings and drenched in bourbon BBQ sauce.

Even celebrities posted videos on social media to encourage Danny, including NFL legend Tom Brady, who reminded Danny just how tough he truly is. Brady had heard about Danny from Tampa Bay Buccaneers defensive end Pat O'Connor, who played football at St. Rita.

"What's up, Danny," Brady started on the video. "I'm so

CONTINUED ON PAGE 46

STORIES OF COURAGE

GOLDEN CONTINUED FROM PAGE 45

sorry to hear about what you're going through. And just know, I'm thinking about you. I appreciate all your hard work and your commitment to service. And I know you'll get through it. It's going to make you tougher. It's going to make you stronger. And we're all pulling for you."

It was overwhelming, indescribable support.

"I've never seen an outpour of support like this for anybody that I have known in the 25 years that I served," Patrick explained. "I don't know why they're doing it, but all I can say is two words to them: Thank you."

On July 15, hundreds of law enforcement officers arrived at Advocate Christ Medical Center when Danny was moved to the Shirley Ryan Ability Lab to continue his recovery. They lined the sidewalk on both sides of the doors to see Danny wheeled out. He held his hand over his heart. And his brothers and sisters saluted him.

"He was just completely shell-shocked at the amount of people that were there," Budz related. "He was in awe, just looking around. And that probably made him feel a lot better. You could tell by the ear-to-ear smile he had."

Danny had survived and was on the road to recovery. And with an army of support behind him, he seemed determined to keep fighting. Fighting like a Golden with that never-ending toughness.

"When God let him live, I think he let him live for a purpose," Patrick confirmed. "And we're going to find out what that purpose is."



Local children hosted lemonade stands in honor of Danny Golden, one of which raised more than \$13,000.

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With Joshua Blas, left, standing beside her, Elizabeth French places the star of her daughter Ella into the case at headquarters among other officers who were also lost in the line of duty.

When it rains, it pours for Ella

A year after the tragic loss of Ella Grace French, her star is retired as part of an emotionally-charged celebration of her love and life

■ BY MITCHELL KRUGEL

■ PHOTOS BY JAMES PINTO AND ERIC P. DAVIS

Rain greeted the masses who converged on Gold Star Families Memorial Park on Aug. 7 to honor the one-year anniversary of losing Ella. Not a heavy rain. Not a cold Chicago rain. A warm, refreshing rain that let up only when the nearly hour-long ceremony concluded.

The showers could have been ordained. One year ago, the Department, the City and many even say the country lost a piece of its heart when Ella French was killed while making a traffic stop. So maybe the rain came to wash away the past and start a new era of fulfilling Ella's legacy.

But maybe the rain came from Ella.

Maybe she was messing with everybody, having a laugh on her sisters and brothers like she loved so much.

Or maybe only in the midst of the rain were those brothers and sisters who love her so much, her partners – Josh and Carlos – who have never let a day go by without honoring her, the dignitaries who praised her so eloquently, the friends who cherish her and her mother, Elizabeth, who provides an indescribable strength for everybody, able to bask in the ray of sunshine and faith that will forever be Ella Grace French.

This was the day to finally retire her star – 15013 – and place it in the case on the wall of honor at Chicago Police Department headquarters. This was the day



The rain could not dampen spirits at the Gold Star Families Memorial Park during the second part of the day honoring Ella French.



Elizabeth French places a blue rose by the picture of Ella at the Beyond the Call of Duty End of Watch Ride memorial.

to offer words of remembrance, honor and acclaim as everybody from the governor to the superintendent to partner and friend Josh Blas to Elizabeth did so movingly at back-to-back ceremonies at headquarters and Gold Star Park.

Those who worked with her and think of her often submitted that while it was a sad day, it was also a day to celebrate. And thought it might have seemed like a day to feel the grief of Ella no longer being with us, it was truly a day to recognize that she has never left us.

"Let's turn this into positivity and compassion," declared Melinda Linas, commander of the community safety team (CST) Ella was assigned to when she made that traffic stop. As she stood in the rain at Gold Star Park, Linas issued the order of the day that would appropriately honor Ella.

"So everybody has to go out there today, do some random act of kindness and make someone else smile," Linas continued. "And if we do that every day, Ella's light will continue to shine, and this world will be a little bit happier."

How fitting that the pictures of Ella welcoming those attending the ceremony at headquarters and posted next to the podium at Gold Star Park radiated her smile, her beauty, her light. Especially the one at Gold Star with Ella holding her beloved pup, Bella.

How fitting that Chicago Police Department Pipes and Drums, with a few players from the CFD Pipes and Drums, accompanied the beginning of the Gold Star Park ceremony with "America the Beautiful." Or, if you will for this occasion, "Ella the Beautiful."

The day started with the wishes upon the star retirement. The emotions of the day seemed to flow through Josh, who spoke amid tears as he always does when talking about Ella. As so many do when talking about Ella.

He extolled the unique closeness of partners in the Department and how they move on but always come back to each other for advice and, of course, a few laughs. He noted how he thought that would be him and Ella.

From the way Josh spoke on this morning, though, it still is him and Ella.

"I know I wish I had her on days like today. I wish she was here to bug me," Josh confided. "Truth is, it's nice to see the love. I don't think anybody's forgetting her. She's a hard person to forget."

Superintendent David Brown had some news to deliver at the star ceremony. He recognized how Illinois Senators Dick Durbin and Tammy Duckworth introduced the Ella Grace French Task



The banner showing Ella's omnipresent smile that greeted those who came to Chicago Police Department headquarters for the ceremony to retire her star.



Chicago Police Officers present arms as Joshua Blas, left, and a member of the CPD Honor Guard escort Elizabeth French into the ceremony at headquarters.

Force Support Act. The legislation will authorize the use of federal funding for multi-jurisdictional task forces that investigate and disrupt illicit straw purchasing and firearms trafficking activity.

"Still, Ella is making a difference in the legacy she carries on so deep," Brown commended. "Let's all hold onto that. Lets hold

CONTINUED ON PAGE 50



After Elizabeth French speaks at the star retirement ceremony, she receives a comforting hug with Joshua Blas.



Lodge 7 First Vice President Mike Mette shares a remembrance of Ella French during the ceremony at Gold Star Families Memorial Park.

ELLA CONTINUED FROM PAGE 49

on tight. One year ago, we lost Ella to senseless gun violence, but right here and now we take this day back. We celebrate the impact she made. And there is one word I want to add: hero.”

In his remarks, Governor Pritzker confirmed, “Officer French was the best of us.”

Brian Spreyne, the 8th District commander who supervised Ella with the CST, shared how he will always remember Ella coming into work wearing her Gucci sunglasses and flip-flops, talking about her latest trip. He reminded how much Ella loved her daily coffee run to Dunkin’ Donuts and recalled how impressed he was that Ella always made study guides for the members of her academy class.

“It was her on-the-job determination that stood out to me,” Spreyne continued. “She had a strong personality, and she was as competitive as she was compassionate.”

Elizabeth took her turn at the podium just before Ella’s star took its place in the case. She reflected how much it meant over the past year to hear her daughter described as brave, intelligent, loud, fun, committed and badass.

And then, with Josh at her side and his arm on her shoulder, she explained what made Ella a star to her mother.

“I worked as a cashier at a grocery store. Police officers would come in during their shifts to pick up some breakfast, some lunch, some dinner,” Elizabeth expressed. “I’d look at their faces, their names, their badges, and I would think in my head, ‘My daughter is one of you.’ I was so proud.”

Josh hugged Elizabeth tight. Then, he and Carlos Yanez Jr. accompanied Elizabeth to the case where the stars of Chicago Police Officers lost in the line of duty rest. The salute from the hundreds of officers filling the headquarters lobby offered a sentiment of, “Rest easy, sister. We will stand watch in your



Members of the End of Watch Ride and Lodge 7 President John Catanzara gather with Elizabeth French for a prayer huddle in front of the Beyond the Call of Duty memorial.



place.”

Nobody might have been prouder to stand for that present arms than Yanez. Holding his son, CJ, he realized how close he came to having his star placed in that case. A year later, Carlos explained how much of an impact Ella continues to make on him.

“Everything I accomplish, it’s a little bit of her,” he revealed. “Her smile, her jokes, always making people laugh. I carry that with me to make me enjoy all the moments I have with my son, my wife, my family. Thank you so much, Ella.”

Ella would be giddy about how there were only smiles and so much laughter on this day. Officers who knew her related how they think about her when they need a laugh. Or if they see a stray dog or cat on the street, they take it to animal services because that’s what Ella would have done.

Elyse Rodriguez, who worked with Ella on the CST, had just been getting to know her when she was lost. Ella had wanted Elyse to come out dancing. But Rodriguez said she didn’t dance like that. So Ella suggested they go get their nails done.

For the past year, Rodriguez has tried to honor Ella by adopting her YOLO philosophy of life.

“You do only live once,” she stated. “So I’ve been getting my nails done on a regular basis. I’ve been traveling more. To me, I was like, ‘Man, she’s brave.’”

It could have gone on and on. And it did. But there was one more tribute to offer. And from the governor to the superintendent to the commanders, they each praised Elizabeth for showing the strength and compassion that have comforted an entire Department and City the past year.

Lodge 7 President John Catanzara planned an unexpected gift for Elizabeth to culminate the day. For the week prior to Aug. 7, Catanzara joined the Beyond The Call of Duty End of Watch Motorcycle Ride that crisscrosses the country during the summer, making stops to honor officers lost in the line of duty.

The Ride came down Lake Shore Drive late Sunday morning



and parked its memorial across the street from Gold Star Park. The memorial is a trailer that features pictures of all officers lost in the line of duty from the previous year.

Catanzara walked Elizabeth to the memorial, where she placed a blue rose by Ella's picture. End of Watch Ride founder Jagrut Shah then gathered Elizabeth, Josh, Carlos, Catanzara and other riders in a huddle and held an impromptu prayer service for Ella.

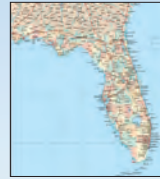
The day finally crescendoed with Shah taking Elizabeth for a motorcycle run, a fitting way to note that heroes come from hero moms. It nearly left Elizabeth speechless, but she did have some final words.

"There are days when I miss her so much and it hurts, but I have all of you, the blue that have wrapped their arms around me, to sustain me," Elizabeth proclaimed. "I need you all to know there are no words for my gratitude. Gratitude for your presence in my life. Gratitude for the comfort of your words and hugs. Gratitude for the many, many things you have done to honor Ella. These are the gifts, gifts I will treasure for the rest of my life."



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Fighting the Department's Canceling Culture

Lodge 7's relentless labor representation wins a battle in the effort to limit cancellation of RDOs

■ BY MITCHELL KRUGEL

Walking into Lodge 7 headquarters at 8, 9, even 10 p.m. on any given weeknight can find Second Vice President Dan Gorman entrenched in, well, battle. Charged with creating and/or organizing grievances filed on behalf of members challenging disciplinary actions, misinterpretation of Department orders by the bosses or violations of the collective bargaining agreement positions Gorman in his office, back to the door and the outside world and sometimes working two computer screens.

At the end of July, Lodge 7 members reaped the fruits of this labor representation in a way that has rarely, if ever, occurred. Within the hundreds of pages posted under "arbitration awards" on the Lodge 7 website is a document detailing "RDO Cancel Package."

Members who have perused the FOP Labor Report from esteemed attorney Pat Fioretto on pages 20-21 of this issue know that the Lodge scored a significant victory regarding the Department's ability to cancel those increasingly vital Regular Days Off, the sacrosanct RDOs. According to a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), the Department cannot cancel RDOs during the holiday weekends of Memorial Day, Father's Day, Fourth of July and Labor Day for officers who have worked more than 10 consecutive days.

There's more to it, and Gorman will review the runs, hits and errors if you continue reading. But the big news here comes

between the lines of the MOU.

"This is something more than what we have in the contract," Gorman explained. "In the contract, the employer has the ability to cancel days off. There's no limit on it as long as they pay time and a half. So this settlement puts a limit on how many days off the Department can cancel during a holiday weekend like the upcoming Labor Day weekend."

As Fioretto detailed, on Oct. 4, 2021, the Department entered into an agreement in lieu of arbitration that it would not cancel RDOs for officers who worked more than 10 consecutive days, specifically on these summer weekends when crime tends to spike. Lodge 7 began filing grievances in this matter in 2021, hammering away at the Department's lack of understanding about what canceling RDOs was doing to officers, including sergeants and even lieutenants.

But when Memorial Day weekend 2022 came, the Department canceled RDOs without consideration to officers who worked more than 10 consecutive days. The Lodge filed another grievance that went to arbitration.

Arbitrator George Roummell Jr. ruled in favor of the Department and the City. But Gorman noted that he left the door open to file additional grievances if the Department repeated its violation of that 2021 settlement agreement on the Father's Day and Fourth of July weekends.

The Department did, citing the need to control the anti-



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pated crime and violence. So the Lodge hit back with another grievance. And in the process made a big statement with more than the favorable ruling from Roummell.

"We dug in and won," Gorman noted. "It's a small win because the Department still has the ability to cancel RDOs. But now they know they're going to get pushback."

Gorman has been through these grievance wars perhaps more than nearly any member. He knows the context and impact of pushing back and winning.

"I've been a part of other administrations, and other administrations would have said, 'Oh, the Department can do it. They can cancel days off,'" he continued. "But this got to a point where officers' well-being was affected. So we had to do something. We had to fight. And we found a way to hold the Department accountable."

In a July 22 Zoom call, the Department agreed to comply with the following:

"If the Department seeks to cancel any RDOs over the 2022 Labor Day holiday, it will do so in compliance with the original terms of the settlement."

That means the Department commits to canceling only one of two RDOs for any member who has worked more than 10 consecutive days. Another concession in the original settlement that is not in the contract dictates that there must be minimum rest time of nine hours between shifts for any officers who have their RDOs canceled.

In other words, because canceling RDOs has not been specific to shifts, officers could finish one tour at 3 a.m. and have to be back at work at 7 a.m. Not anymore.

And, retroactive to Memorial Day, Father's Day and Fourth of July weekends, as well as the upcoming Labor Day, any officer who does have RDOs canceled and works more than 10

consecutive days will receive a special eight-hour comp time day for each day resulting in working more than 10 consecutive days.

The July 22 agreement also stipulates that the Department must, in a reasonable amount of time, provide a list of officers who had RDOs canceled during the previous 2022 summer holiday weekends and had to work more than 10 consecutive days. And that the Department needs to create a special timekeeping provision to keep track of officers who have their RDOs canceled on those holiday weekends and have to work more than 10 consecutive days.

"If we followed the contract, the Department would continue canceling days off," Gorman reiterated. "So we approached this from an abusive management perspective. We approached it from an officer wellness perspective."

Maybe it's not that small of a win. If the Department violates the settlement agreement again on Labor Day weekend, a grievance can be expedited to arbitration. So no waiting and fighting for three or four years as has been past practice in some cases.

And the Lodge led the way in having this matter rise to the top of the Department. Not the very top, if you heard the superintendent's comments that Fioretto recapped in his FOP Labor Report. But close.

"There's command staff out there that realized what canceling RDOs was doing," Gorman confirmed. "When you have supervisors – sergeants, lieutenants and captains unions – all on board with filing grievances, that speaks for itself."

And of course it's a great statement to all Lodge members from this administration. When it comes to fighting for your labor rights, they will always leave the lights on for you.





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2022 ILLINOIS FOP BIENNIAL CONFERENCE

Lodge 7 President John Catanzara speaks at the press conference announcing the Illinois FOP endorsement of Darren Bailey for governor.

Standing with Law Enforcement

Illinois FOP Conference celebrates worthy candidates and outstanding dedication to the union

■ PHOTOS BY BOB BAIKIE

Sometimes, a show of support for law enforcement from a politician can be nothing more than a photo op, especially if said politician is in the midst of a campaign.

But the Illinois FOP has let it be known to politicians looking for an endorsement that what happens behind the scenes counts most.

When it came time to stack up endorsements for the 2022 general election, the state FOP decided on backing a slate of state legislators who have stood behind them through thick and thin. No time was thinner than when the legislature passed HB3653, that deplorable criminal justice reform bill, during the 2021 session.

So at the Illinois FOP biennial conference July 27-28 in O'Fallon, the union announced it was endorsing all members of the Senate and House running who voted against HB3653.

But taking a stand against the reformers didn't stop there.

Every law enforcement officer knows the Democratic governor who signed that bill. The FOP is determined to make sure the bucking stops there.

Republican gubernatorial candidate Darren Bailey showed up in O'Fallon to be one of the keynote speakers on the first day of the conference. The next day, State Lodge President Chris Southwood and Chicago Lodge 7 President John Catanzara led a press conference announcing the FOP endorsement of Bailey.

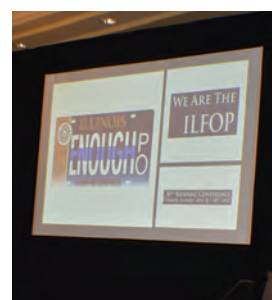
"Bailey even put it in writing that he will do everything he can to protect our pensions," noted Mike Cosentino, the Lodge 7 political director, who also was a delegate to the conference. "He stated that our pensions will be protected at all costs."

Additionally, Republican candidate for secretary of state Don Brady came to speak at the conference. And he, too, garnered an FOP endorsement.

Following Chicago Police Officer Kenyatta Gaines opening the conference with her patented rendition of "The Star-Spangled Banner," the two days were filled with a show of strength, camaraderie and honor that has become the hallmark of the



Republican candidate for governor Darren Bailey speaks at the Illinois FOP conference.



Lodge 7 founder John Dineen was presented a lifetime achievement award and Lodge 7 President John Catanzara received the President's Award.

Conference Call

Some of the highlights from the 2022 Illinois FOP Biennial Conference



State Lodge. Those who attended saw a sign up on a screen displayed throughout the conference of a license plate members can get with "ENOUGH" on it next to the State Lodge logo and the letters "PO."

The honor crescendoed with the ceremony on the first day presenting a flower for every Illinois officer lost in the line of duty. Lodge 7 State Trustee Tom Lonergan participated in the ceremony.

National Secretary Jimmy Holderfield represented the Grand Lodge and also served as a first-day speaker.

A memorable moment of every biennial conference comes when awards are presented. Lodge 7 was well represented with award winners.

Chicago FOP founder, longtime Lodge 7 president and former National FOP President John Dineen was presented the Bill Mehrten's Lifetime Achievement Award for consistently demonstrating leadership, fraternalism, professionalism and dedication to the ILFOP and its members. Catanzara was recognized with a President's Award presented by the State Lodge president to an individual who demonstrates true commitment and service to ILFOP.

And former Lodge 7 Second Vice President Frank DiMaria was given a special award praising his ongoing contributions and dedication to keeping those who murder police officers in prison. In fact, Cosentino reported that the Illinois FOP is convening a committee on police murderers to keep track of when they are coming up for parole.

This year's conference also included elections for all State Lodge offices. Southwood was reelected as president and Lodge 7 retired member Pat Duckworth was reelected as first vice president. At the end of the conference, all officers and trustees were sworn in for their terms by Holderfield.

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Members Only Section

Celebrating Lodge 7 members and the way they serve every day

An eternal bond in the 16th District

SROs make life-changing connection with student

■ BY ESTHER GONZALES

For many Chicago Police officers, the story of Omarion James might sound all too familiar. He grew up without his parents in his life, had no support system and faced unspeakable tragedy when he lost a brother and sister in separate acts of gun violence over the last two years.

But James' life hasn't followed the sad script of many other kids from the West Side, thanks to his own will and determination and the help of Student Resource Officers John Bauer and Katherina Nowakowski. Working at Foreman College and Career Academy, the pair were drawn to James as he navigated a high school career that included a teachers' strike, the COVID-19 pandemic and immense personal challenges.

Nowakowski, a 17-year department veteran who has been an SRO for three years, recalled first noticing James when he took advantage of Foreman being a place for students to go during the 2019 strike.

"He was one kid who came to school every day," she recalled, noting that James would play basketball and encourage others to come to Foreman to do things. "He didn't want to stay home. He didn't want to run the streets. That really stood out to me."

Although James never asked for anything, Bauer and Nowakowski stood at the ready to do whatever they could for him. As often as possible, they'd attend Foreman football and basketball games — two sports in which James excelled — while also doing what they could to be a presence in his life.

"We bonded early on. We're fortunate that we've had a front-row seat to see all of this ... because, even through all Omarion went through, he still remained focused on not only his grades, but his sports," Bauer explained.

The officers even went the extra mile for James to help keep him going on the right track. While James looked at local college opportunities, Bauer did some research on Jacksonville State University, where a friend of his once worked as a professor. That led Bauer to cold-call the university and its out-of-state recruiter to share James' story. Ultimately, James was accepted and even received an in-state tuition rate. A subsequent GoFundMe campaign started by a 16th District lieutenant has raised nearly \$25,000 to assist James in paying for school.

In mid-July, Bauer drove James to orientation at Jacksonville State as James prepares to be the first member of his family to attend college.

"I'm so glad that I was able to meet John and Kathy. I tell everyone that they're not officers, they're like family. They care for me, and I'm not their kid. It just shows me a lot. I love them for that," James said as he and Bauer made the trip back from Alabama. "It's been the best journey for my life."

That journey recently included an ABC7 Chicago interview featuring James and the two officers, during which the close bond shared by the three was on full display as they shared smiles and laughs.

Bauer is thrilled others have taken an interest in James, whom



Omarion James invited Student Resource Officers John Bauer and Katherina Nowakowski to his high school senior night.



Chicago Police Student Resource Officer John Bauer (left) attended Omarion James' college orientation at Jacksonville State University in Alabama. he called a leader at Foreman. Nowakowski said this story also helps show exactly what student resource officers aim to do every day: make a difference, in small and big ways, for students.

Doing so can be a challenge because of the many misconceptions held by some students, especially high school freshman, based on their age and where they live.

"We try to break down these barriers every day. By the middle of the school year, they see us totally different," Nowakowski said. "We really do care. We try to help every kid."

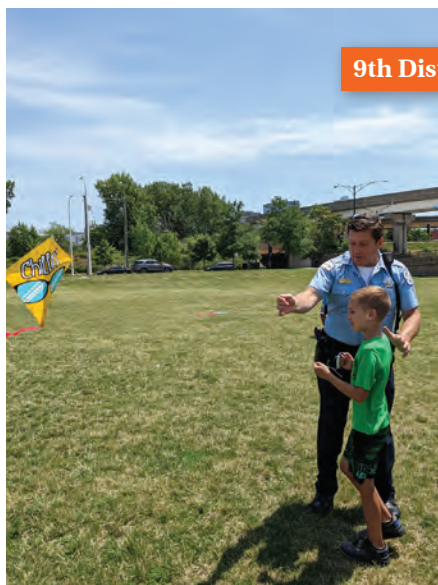
Fun time, summer in the City

From the lakefront to neighborhoods across Chicago, summertime is a time to savor in the City. Block parties, parades, sports and any excuse to get outside help fend off thoughts of snow, cold and the winter months that never feel quite far enough away.

Summer hit full stride in July for the City's residents and Chicago Police Officers, who take community engagement to

its highest point when the weather reaches its warmest. Officers visited corner lemonade stands, supported youth baseball players and brought smiles of support from citizens just for being part of the festivities at many events last month.

Here's a look at just a few of the positive summer-in-the-City moments.



9th District



Officers in the 9th District had the wind at their backs all day at Ping Tim Park as they helped kids fly kites for the very first time to produce soaring results.



14th District

It was all fun and games for the 14th District over the Fourth of July weekend. On July 1, officers joined the BUILD community organization for basketball and hot dogs on the grill in the Humboldt Park neighborhood.



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12th District

In the 12th District, officers mixed fun and learning during a visit to the Skinner Park day camp. Things started with a friendly dodgeball game, followed by an important safety presentation for the kids.



17th District



It was a community affair for the 17th District when officers took the day to visit various neighborhoods in the area in an effort to build relationships with residents. They handed out informational resources and coloring books for the kids.



8th District



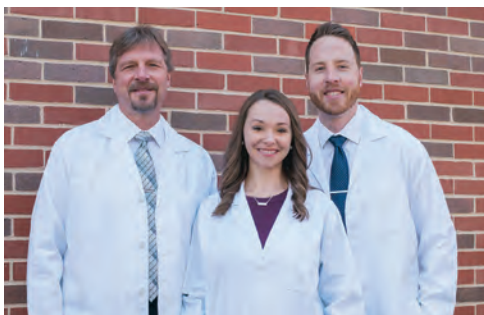
The Fourth of July holiday weekend was a busy one in the 8th District, where officers, the bike patrol and mounted units all helped Garfield Ridge residents have a good time during the inaugural Garfield Ridge Stars and Stripes 5K, which honored Commander Paul Bauer, and the annual Patriots Day parade.



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10th District garden growing for Ella

Nearly a year after Officer Ella French's death, a garden dedicated in her honor is quickly growing into an inspired place to keep her memory alive.

In early July, 10th District officers, Officer Carlos Yanez Jr. and Ella's mother, Elizabeth French, spent the day planting new flowers and trees. The garden also features a stand-up heater and fire pit to create a warm place to reflect on French's life and contributions, not just as a police officer, but as a person.



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Woitel Way

16th District officers dedicate a street to one of their own

Applause and cheers echoed through the crowd that had gathered on July 22 on the corner of Harlem Avenue and West Everell Avenue for a street dedication ceremony for 16th District Chicago Police Officer Geoff Woitel, who passed away last year.

More than 200 residents of the community, family members and CPD officers attended the ceremony and unveiling of the brown street sign that read "Honorary Geoffrey L. Woitel Way."

It was a visible symbol that Woitel's memory will live on.

"To see that brown dedication sign with the officer's name on it really spreads the message for people to say, 'Oh wow, OK, this officer actually was cared about,'" 16th District CPD Officer Brock Merck related. "And it increases the awareness that there are actually people that care about the memory of that officer."

Looking around at the crowd, Merck was inspired to see the lives that Woitel affected. Even though he did not work with him closely, Merck experienced a glimpse of how Woitel was loved by so many.

"It's interesting to see the lives that he touched upon," Merck



reflected. "There were officers from the 15th District that had an older memory. Then there were detectives that have a more recent memory. It was nice to see the commonality of both of those groups and how they knew someone at different phases of their life. And how he was loved his entire career."

And for Merck, the street sign was not only a symbol of his fellow officer's memory, but it was also a representation of how the community came together.

"Ultimately, this is a person that gave honorable service, and because of that, he is someone that we should remember," Merck added. "It's nice to see a street dedicated to a police officer, and it basically shows a wholesomeness to the community."

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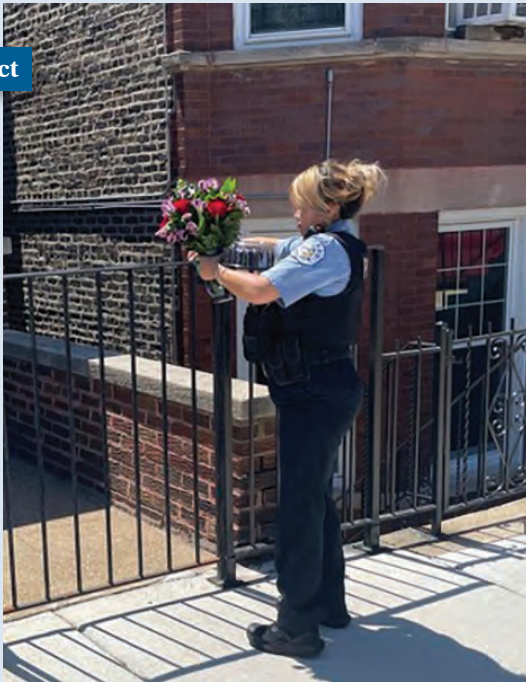
Cops and the Community

Each day presents an opportunity for Chicago Police Officers to meet someone. The best of those interactions happen in the community to help someone, show them appreciation or to brighten their day — because those moments and those people brighten an officer's day in return.

10th District



Everyone deserves a little attention on their birthday, and that's exactly what happened in the 10th District when officers surprised Madeline with flowers as she turned 94 years old in July.



12th District



It might not have been Taco Tuesday, but 12th District CAPS officers still enjoyed the chance to meet residents during the first-ever "Taco with a Cop" event at Velvet Taco on West Randolph.

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16th District



The 16th District's Officer Friendly made an appearance at the Gladstone Park day camp to meet youngsters, share safety tips and give everyone a chance to check out a real police squad car.



18th District

Officers in the 18th got a boost during a visit by the Lutheran Church Charities therapy dogs, who brought smiles and comfort to the district headquarters.



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ACTIVE CPD

4th District provides blankets of comfort for homeless

Colorful, handmade blankets that residents from the community handcrafted filled a beat car in the 4th District. On July 1, officers arrived at a nearby spot where homeless individuals had gathered. And as the officers passed out the blankets and mats, residents expressed their gratitude for receiving these donations from the community.



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An officer's story of witnessing tragedy and how EAP helped



DR. RON
RUFO

This story happened to me over 25 years ago, yet it seems like yesterday because I can recall every detail and how it changed me emotionally.

One beautiful, hot Sunday afternoon in August, I was working with my regular partner. We were working Beat 924 and received a call of a person shot in a home at South Wood Street. We went lights and sirens, and we were the first to arrive on the scene. Walking through the door of the home, we met utter chaos. Twenty people in the tiny home were wailing and crying. As I looked around, I saw a little 4-year-old girl on the ground, bleeding profusely from a gunshot wound to her left eye.

I got on the radio and told the dispatcher, "Squad, get me an ambulance here now, it's a 4-year-old girl shot in the eye, and she is still alive." I wanted to pick her up and bring her to the hospital myself, but I didn't want to cause her additional harm. The 30 seconds felt like 30 hours as we waited for the ambulance to arrive.

As we waited, we learned that a week before, the same house had been burglarized. The father told us he'd decided the family needed a gun for protection. He was able to buy a gun illegally from a co-worker. His wife had told him emphatically to get rid of the gun, but he did not listen. He hid the gun in the dropped ceiling in their bedroom, but he never told his two children about the weapon. For whatever reason, he took the gun down from its hiding spot and left it on his dresser. His son,

about 10 years old, did not realize the gun was real and loaded, so he pulled the trigger and accidentally shot his sister, Maria, in the eye.

Officers from Beat 922 escorted the ambulance, and my partner and I followed behind with Maria's stepmom as it raced to Cook County Hospital's emergency room. I still remember seeing little Maria with her head bandaged up and blood staining the bandages over her left eye.

In the ER, the doctor showed my partner and me her X-ray, pointing out how the bullet had wreaked havoc in its path before stopping at the base of Maria's neck. They were not able to save Maria. I felt helpless, and I could only think of my own three little girls at home.

I had already seen many critical incidents and deaths in my short time on the job, but seeing Maria, this helpless little 4-year-old girl, dying genuinely affected me to my core. I couldn't talk about it, because I had been constantly told to never show weakness. "Suck it up, this is what we do" was the unspoken message first responders internalize.

I kept the demons inside, not telling anyone. Over the months that followed, there was more death, more nightmares! My nights were restless, and I hardly slept. I was irritable most of the time because I wasn't well-rested. I had always been a happy-go-lucky guy, but now I wondered what was happening to me. I had rarely had a CR number, but I was now consistently getting CR numbers for verbal abuse. I became reckless and uncaring. I hated the person I had become. All I wanted to do was be alone. I needed help, but I didn't want to admit it. I needed to speak to someone before my malicious behavior consumed me.

But would my fellow officers see me as weak if I went to EAP? I asked myself, "What am I doing?" and finally decided.

The first time I went to EAP, I parked a few blocks away and wore a baseball cap on with a hoodie covering it; I didn't want anyone seeing me. It took a while, but I finally got comfortable communicating my feelings to my therapist at EAP. What a difference talking about issues that are bothering you can make. I was able to cope with and handle the issues that were bothering me, including my reactions to little Maria's death.

I was fortunate to later become a peer support member and peer support team leader, and I soon realized that many of my fellow officers were also suffering in silence.

We need to stop the stigma of seeking help. If you break an arm, you get treated. The same goes for emotional wellness: We need to seek help from the many resources that are available to us, with no consequences for seeking help.

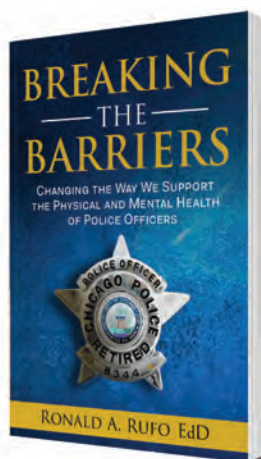
God bless, and stay emotionally well,

Dr. Ron Rufo is a highly decorated Chicago Police Officer with over 22 years of service. He began his career in the 9th District, was assigned to the prestigious Ambassador Program and was eventually assigned to the Preventive Programs Unit, where he served as a crime prevention speaker for over 13 years. For most of his career, Dr. Rufo was a peer support team leader for the CPD Employee Assistance Program (EAP) of the Chicago Police Department. He has had specialized training in police suicide prevention and is a member of the Critical Incident Team. He retired from the Chicago Police Department in July 2015. He is the author of Police Suicide: Is Police Culture Killing Our Officers? and Breaking the Barriers: Changing the Way We Support the Physical and Mental Health of Police Officers.

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Illinois Fraternal Order of Police State Lodge 2022 Scholarship Application

DUE September 1, 2022

Each year, the Illinois Fraternal Order of Police awards \$9,000 in scholarships to college students whose parents are members in good standing. Chosen at random, one applicant from each of the 18 representative FOP districts in Illinois will receive \$500 towards college expenses. The random drawing will be held during the September 8, 2022 ILFOP Board of Trustees meeting. Winners will be notified within one week after the drawing via e-mail. **Incomplete applications will not be included in the drawing.**

Additional scholarships to be awarded:

ISPFUCU - Your Law Enforcement Credit Union will again sponsor a 19th \$500 winner.

Eligibility Requirements

ALL criteria must be true and checked.

- ☐ Applicant is a full-time, undergraduate student (12 or more credit hours per semester) at an accredited junior college or four-year institution.
- ☐ Parent/guardian is a current member in good standing with the Illinois Fraternal Order of Police.
- ☐ Applicant has provided, along with the application, proof of registration for the upcoming fall semester (see acceptable forms of proof under "Submission Information" below.)

Applicant Information

Student's Full Name:

College/University:

Parent/Guardian: Lodge Number: State FOP District: [Click here to identify district.](#)

Street Address:

City: State: Zip Code:

E-mail address: Phone Number:

Additional Information or Comments?

Submission Information

- Applicant must send completed application, along with proof of registration for the upcoming fall semester, which must include one of the following (1) notice from registrar, (2) class schedule, or (3) tuition payment receipt.
- Incomplete applications and those submitted without the required accompanying materials will not be entered.
- Applications due no later than September 1, 2022.
- Submit by printing and returning to the State Lodge or by e-mail using the link below with attached required information.

[E-Mail Form](#)

Please call the State Lodge at (217) 726-8880 with questions or for more information.

Print and send completed application and additional materials to:
Illinois Fraternal Order of Police
4341 Acer Grove, Suite B
Springfield, IL 62711
Fax: (217) 726-8881
Email: nwooden@ifop.org

How to get the best mortgage interest rate



LISA SANDERS

Learning how to get the best mortgage rate is an important part of getting a home loan. Over the course of a 30-year loan, the difference between a 4 percent interest rate and a 3.75 percent interest rate is more than \$5,000 for every \$100,000 you borrow. With larger loan amounts and larger interest rate differences, you'll notice the impact on your monthly payment, too. Here's what you should know to get the best mortgage interest rate.

Check your credit scores and reports

Any effort to secure the best interest rate for your mortgage should begin with checking your credit scores and reports with Equifax, Experian and TransUnion, the three major credit bureaus. Here's an example of how to do this and what to look for.

At Experian.com, you can sign up for a free account that will provide your FICO Score 8 and broad insights on what aspects of your credit need improvement.

For \$4.95, you can access your FICO Score 2, which Experian says is the credit score most mortgage lenders use.

Experian also offers a tool called Experian Boost that can improve your credit score slightly by including your utility and mobile phone bill payment history.

Review your credit reports and check for inaccuracies on any item that's dragging down your score. You can open a dispute

online, by phone or by mail if you see any problems.

AnnualCreditReport.com lets you get free copies of your reports (but not your scores) from all three credit bureaus..

Work on your credit score

If your score is below 760, it's worth the effort to improve your credit score by taking steps to pay down your balances and make all your payments on time. Having excellent credit will make you eligible for the lowest mortgage interest rates. The Loan Savings Calculator from myFICO is a great tool for estimating how much you could save on your mortgage by improving your credit score.

If you're putting down less than 20 percent on a conventional loan, excellent credit will also make you eligible for the lowest mortgage insurance rates. But even if you have bad credit, you might be surprised by your loan options.

Save up for a bigger down payment

When you make a small down payment on a home, the lender considers you a higher-risk borrower than someone who makes a larger down payment.

One place where you'll see lenders account for this risk is with private mortgage insurance (PMI). If you put down less than 20 percent on a conventional loan, you'll usually have to pay PMI premiums. Until you have enough equity to cancel it, PMI will affect you the same way a higher interest rate would: by increasing your monthly payment and your total borrowing costs.

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My late husband, John G. Adinamis was always so proud to support our men and women in blue. I am honored to continue his legacy. *Vanessa Adinamis*



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The more of your own money you're willing to invest in the property, the less risky you'll be for the lender, and they may be able to offer you a lower interest rate. Having trouble saving up? Check Down Payment Resource to see if you're eligible for any down payment assistance programs in your area.

What if you're refinancing? This strategy still works. You can bring cash to closing to increase your equity.

Consider a shorter loan term

When you take out a 15-year fixed-rate mortgage instead of a 30-year fixed-rate mortgage, the interest rate will normally be lower. In mid-September 2020, for example, the 30-year rate was 2.87 percent and the 15-year rate was 2.35 percent.

You also could consider an adjustable-rate mortgage (ARM). Its introductory rate may be lower than what you could get on a fixed-rate mortgage. It depends on the market, though: In mid-September 2021, a 5/1 ARM had an interest rate of 2.96 percent.

Even if you can get a lower rate on an ARM, you're taking a risk. It might be cheaper in the short term, but it could be more expensive in the long term.

Decrease your debt

Decreasing your debt instead of — or in addition to — increasing your income can improve your debt-to-income (DTI) ratio. And while earning extra income to throw at your debt is one way to pay it down, cutting your expenses might be another way to do it. About 41 percent of home buyers cut back on spending, canceled vacation plans or reduced monthly payments on other bills, according to the 2020 National Association of Realtors Home Buyer and Seller Generational Trends report.

Lowering your DTI ratio isn't the only way having less debt can help you get the best mortgage rate. Carrying less debt also can improve your credit score. (Income, however, is not a factor in credit scoring.) According to Experian, the ideal credit usage is below 6 percent. This means that if you have \$10,000 of available credit through your credit cards, you should try to keep your balance across all cards below \$600. Here's a great rule to go by: Your credit card balance should not exceed 30 percent of your credit card limit.

Make it a priority to watch mortgage rates

Mortgage rates fluctuate constantly. The short-term changes tend to be small, but you want to lock your rate when it's at a level you can afford. If you can lock your rate when rates are trending down, even better.

- Prepare to take advantage of a possible rate drop by knowing what rates have been doing lately.
- When rates move in your favor, ask your lender to lock your rate.

For example, someone shopping for a 30-year fixed-rate mortgage in September 2021 would want to be aware that over the last year, average rates have ranged from a high of 3.78 percent in October 2019 to a low of 2.86 percent in mid-September 2021, according to Freddie Mac's Primary Mortgage Market Survey. The strongest borrowers at the time would have wanted to lock their rate close to 2.86 percent if they were paying 0.8 in fees and points.

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Kim Poulos is a Registered Investment Advisor with over 25 years experience in the financial industry and from a police family (CPD). She also conducted Financial Wellness Classes for CPD.



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