

The Police Officers Journal



VOLUME 26, NUMBER 3 • SUMMER 2016

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Targets off public employees backs

— By Richard Weiler, Director



As of this writing, the Michigan legislature is still working on budget items as well as a school aid package for Detroit Public Schools. That coupled with the Flint water issue has held up most everything going through the legislature prior to their summer break.

Issues of interest to our members are likewise caught up in this session. One thing we can say, as long as they work on the school aid package as well as water matters, public employees don't have targets on our backs — at least for now!

Numerous members have called asking about a piece of legislation, which involves capping pensions on base pay only. A term-limited Republican House Member, Representative Patrick Somerville, introduced HB 5438. The bill has no co-sponsors and, at this point, no action has been scheduled to take place. As always we must keep a watchful eye as items like this, which are anti-public employee legislation, seem to come up at the last minute.

Since state revenues have not come out as our legislators predicted when they gave businesses tax breaks, the state will now show a shortfall. With that shortfall, the 3.9 percent increase in revenue sharing may be in jeopardy to our communities. No final decision has been made on this issue, so stay tuned.

Other bills, which are all stalled right now, include: SB 679, which extends Public Act 312 to County Corrections Officers; SB 218, which provides health care to surviving spouses and children of those public safety officers killed in the line of duty; SB 382, which gives health care to public safety officers permanently and totally disabled in the line of duty and; SB 368, which affects all public pensions by granting a deduction for the taxing of pensions for those born before 1952 and retired as of Jan. 1, 2013. The pension tax deduction bill would be retroactive back to 2013. However, given the current state of the state, economic retroactivity seems to be in peril. All of these measures are supported by our organization.

Finally, when you read this column, which is my last for this organization, I will have retired from full-time employment. It has been my honor and pleasure to have served with you these past 32 years. No other statewide organization comes close to the Police Officers Labor Council and Governmental Employees Labor Council. You are the best of the best! As I look back on how this organization has grown and the many things we have accomplished together, I look forward to watching the POLC and GELC continue to shape future labor relations in Lansing and at the negotiating table in the years to come. Thank you and God speed! ♥

Weiler bids farewell



POLC/GELC Director Richard Weiler (right) is retiring. Rob Figurski (left) assumes the Director's position in August. See Article on pg. 12.

Otsego Deputy honored for saving life

— By Jennifer Foley, with excerpts from NLEOMF, media reports and social media

Otsego County Sheriff's Deputy Justin Holzschu was one of three law enforcement officers recently honored by the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial Fund (NLEOMF) for saving the life of a two-year-old boy.

Holzschu, a POLC member, and Michigan State Police Troopers Jim Leonard and Rick Carlson were the recipients of NLEOMF's Officer of the Month Award for March 2016. The trio worked together to rescue a boy from a flame-engulfed home before firefighters arrived on the scene.

"We're humbled by their bravery, by their response and for risking their lives," said Lt. Derrick Carroll, Assistant Post Commander of the Michigan State Police Gaylord Post. "They saved that baby."

Just before 12:30 a.m. Jan. 29, 2015, a babysitter near Gaylord, MI, awoke to find the house in which she was watching two children on fire. The babysitter was able to get seven-year-old Krista Tackett out of the house, but the flames kept her from reaching two-year-old Kingston, who was sleeping in a bedroom in the back of the home. She ran to a neighbor's house to call 911.

"The pack and play was in the back side of the house," Holzschu said. "The smoke and flames started in the middle of house and she couldn't get to him. Both parents were at work."

Troopers Leonard and Carlson received the call from dispatch and were on the scene within five minutes, followed closely by Deputy Holzschu. "We were having our inter-departmental meeting at a coffee house," Holzschu said. "We were probably five to six miles away. If we had been in Vanderbilt or Lewiston, the outcome would've been totally different . . . we're talking another 15 to 20 miles. The fire department in our county is all volunteer, so it takes a while for them to get out of bed, get to the station and get to the fire.

"There was one trooper car that night and me for the whole county. We only have six road deputies," Holzschu said.

The troopers and deputy arrived before firefighters and tried to make their way into the house, but the fire and smoke made it impossible. "The middle of the house was fully engulfed," Holzschu said. "(The fire) had something to do with a wood stove in the center of the house."

Upon learning a child was in the back of the house, the officers broke through glass patio doors to the bedroom where the child was sleeping, but were unsuccessful in making it more than a few feet before being overcome by smoke. "All three of us linked up, holding each other's belts to try to get in the house," Holzschu said. "The smoke basically was (filling) the entire room. After a couple attempts of doing that, we couldn't find him."

Deputy Holzschu then broke windows on the side of the house. "The reason we went around to the side is because of the babysitter's description of the room. We thought maybe you could grab



*Photo courtesy of Otsego County Sheriff's Department
Otsego County Deputy Justin Holzschu was one of three officers honored for working together to save the life of a 2-year-old boy trapped in a house fire.*

him out of the window based on where she said the pack and play was," he said.

Troopers Leonard and Carlson entered the house and rescued the unresponsive child. "When we broke those windows, it shifted the smoke where Trooper Leonard could see and he went in and grabbed the pack and play and dragged it out." Carlson held onto Leonard's ankles and followed behind as they crawled across the floor to reach the pack and play without inhaling too much smoke.

Immediately after exiting the house, the troopers began performing CPR on the boy and were able to restore breathing and a pulse. "He wasn't alive when we got to him," Holzschu said. The fire department arrived while the troopers were performing CPR. Paramedics stabilized the children and took them to the hospital.

"If they didn't get there and do what they did, the child may have died," said Otsego County Undersheriff Matt Muladore.

Kingston has recovered, but his sister continues her journey to recovery. According to the GoFundMe.com page raising money to help pay for her medical care, Krista had 30 percent of her body burned during the fire and has had at least eight surgeries, including skin grafts, with more to come.

None of the officers required medical attention. They will be honored during National Police Week at a special awards ceremony in Washington, DC, in May 2017.

"The actions of these three heroes saved the life of a small child," Memorial Fund Chairman and CEO Craig W. Floyd said. "They never gave up, repeatedly putting their lives in danger. I am deeply proud these troopers and this deputy are receiving our March 2016 Officers of the Month Award."

Kingston & Krista's parents agreed, writing this comment on the Prayers for Kingston & Krista Facebook page, "These three men will forever have a place in my heart for saving my son that awful night. Couldn't imagine how my life would be if it wasn't for them. They deserve every award given at the least. There is no way to ever repay them for saving a life, my son's life. He would not be here today if it was not for their heroic actions they took this night. God was definitely looking out for my children that night and still does to this day. Stay blessed and never take life for granted!" ♥

Citizens' Police Academy strengthens relationship between police, residents

— By Jennifer Foley with excerpts from *The Voice*

The Chesterfield Township Police Department is inviting residents and business owners to take a look into the inner workings of the department as a method of enhancing community relations.

The inaugural Citizens' Police Academy was held this spring. Designed to provide hands-on experience in law enforcement, the Citizens' Police Academy aims to engage citizens and improve communication between the department and township residents.

"We just utilized it to bring the police into our community. It was an overwhelming success," Police Chief Brad Kersten said. "We were only planning to run it once a year. Now it's twice a year for the next three years because of the positive feedback we got from homeowners and business owners. They referred it to their neighbors and other friends in their circles and we got an overwhelming response for another section."

The eight-week program ended the first week of May. Participants met once a week for three and a half hours with a graduation ceremony the last week of the program. The next free Academy is being planned tentatively for fall and is open to Chesterfield Township residents and business owners ages 18 and older. About 20 citizens will be selected to participate.

"It was a cross photo of the community we live in. We had young kids who were criminal justice students. We had senior citizens who just wanted to learn more about the police department functions and operations," Kersten said of the initial Academy. "We selected them based on their availability to come into the station on the nights we were holding training."

Academy participants gain experience in a variety of topics, including accident investigation, crime scene preservation



Photo courtesy of Chesterfield Township Police Department

Chesterfield Township Police Chief Brad Kersten (at right) and Sgt. Tiffany Krul (left), who organized and oversaw the inaugural Citizens' Police Academy, take a moment to pose with participants.

and processing, OWI detection, mock traffic stops, handcuffing, laws of arrest, and use of force. Voluntary ride-alongs will also be offered.

"We used it as a format to inform the public about what we do and how the skills are applied in the community," Kersten said. "We told them about the job functions and some of the skills necessary for special divisions."

The program benefits home and business owners alike in deterring crimes. "For the retirees that stayed at home a lot, we made them aware of crimes that occur in the residential section and what they could do to assist us in investigations or apprehensions in the number of criminals we come across," Kersten said. "For business owners, it was to inform them how they could better protect their business — what they need to be aware of."

"The course is designed to familiarize the participants with the daily tasks of a police officer and how an incident evolves from the call for service to the closing and prosecution of a case," Lt. Kenneth Franks said in a recent memo to the chief.

In addition to focusing on the fundamen-

tals of law enforcement, the academy highlights the department's history, organizational structure and goals. "The goal of the academy is to instill an even greater sense of pride and care for our community and residents," Kersten wrote in a recent letter to township officials.

Classes, taught by officers from the department, take place at the police station, with occasional off-site classes held at the Macomb Police Academy. Special guests also instruct the academy.

"It was minimal cost to the department," he said. "The officers mainly volunteered their time. We had experts from local attorneys and prosecutors that donated their time too."

Kersten has been working to boost the department's efforts in community policing since officially becoming Chief last May. The police department invites the community to the station each spring for its annual open house and recently put School Liaison Officer Amanda DePape into the five Anchor Bay schools in the township. This position hasn't existed in

Continued on page 8

Ford Police Interceptor car doors first to stop armor-piercing bullets

— Excerpted from media reports

NAPD's Executive Director Bill Johnson is excited about the life-saving possibilities of the new Ford Police Interceptor vehicles, which can protect against armor-piercing bullets — the first vehicles of their kind made in the U.S.

Ford Motor Company is not only first to market with the life-saving technology — it's being produced at an affordable cost for police departments. Other automakers have approached the non-armor piercing market with vehicles, however, they do not meet the same safety standards as Ford's Police Interceptor nor are they cost effective.

"Police are frequently targeted when they're in their cars, so they will likely welcome the more advanced protection," Johnson said in a Fox News article. "Any kind of protection that can be added into the vehicles that officers are driving in is a great idea."

Dodge began offering non-armor piercing protection on police versions of the Charger in 2012, but Ford's doors will meet the Department of Justice's (DOJ) highest standard of body armor, against armor-piercing bullets — the equivalent of a bulky SWAT team vest. The doors are designed to stop a DOJ Level 4 armor-piercing .30-caliber bullet shot from a high-powered rifle. That's more powerful than an AK-47 and ammunition that many soldiers carry.

Other automakers, like Land Rover and Audi, make vehicles from high-strength steel that can protect against armor-piercing bullets, but the cost is prohibitive. The armored Range Rover Sentinel, which isn't sold in the U.S., starts at \$569,000. A Ford Police Interceptor SUV, which is based on an Explorer, starts around \$30,000.

Ford, provider of 60 percent of the police



Photo courtesy of Ford Motor Company

Ford's 2016 Police Interceptor features something no other automaker has produced economically — doors which protect against armor-piercing bullets.

vehicle market in 2015, has offered factory-installed ballistic panels on its police car doors since 2008. But previous versions protected against handgun fire and non-armor piercing bullets at a cost of about \$1,500 per door.

Ford Engineer Randy Freiburger said the company was getting frequent requests for better protection, particularly from police in the Middle East and Eastern Europe. So engineers started working on upgraded panels. "In some places outside the U.S., they face the armor-piercing threat on a daily basis," Freiburger said. "This is the price of entry for those markets."

The ballistic panels have two layers and cover most of the door. The outside layer is made from ballistic-grade ceramic tile. When a bullet hits the tile, it disperses the energy and starts to break the bullet into pieces. The inner layer is made from aramid fiber, the same material used for Kevlar. The fiber catches the shrapnel from the bullet.

If bullets strike the same place twice, a

rarity, the panels will still offer some protection, according to Ford.

Ford will continue offering both non-armor piercing and armor-piercing protective doors for departments with different needs. The doors aren't available to the public. In fact, they're destroyed when police cars are scrapped so they can't get into criminals' hands. Freiburger said the car windows do not have ballistic protection because it significantly increases the weight of the glass. Bulletproof glass could also make it more difficult to get injured people out of a patrol car.

SPECIAL SERVICE VEHICLES

Ford is also offering a Special Service Vehicle package for the 2016 F-150. Available for SuperCrew and SuperCab configurations, the Special Service Vehicles are tailored to meet the unique needs of government and fleet customers, including law enforcement and roadside assistance providers.

From 4x4 or 4x2 drivetrain to 5.0-liter V8

Continued on page 8

2016 Annual POLC/GELC Meeting & Labor Seminar

**Thursday – Friday,
Aug. 25-26, 2016**



615 E. Front St., Traverse City, MI 49686

Attendance limited to registered delegates and invited guests only

**RESERVE ROOMS by July 25, 2016 to receive POLC/GELC discount:
Call 800-888-8020 or Direct: 231-947-3700**

Questions? Call the POLC/GELC Office: 248-524-3200



Seminar Sessions

- Featured Speaker Will Aitchison discusses negotiations, critical incidents, legislative updates and more
- Health Care
- Economic News & Views

POLC Business Meeting

- LEEP Outstanding Service Award
- LEEP Dream Scholarship awards
- POLC Business Agenda
- POLC Board and Officers elections



LIBATION TOUR



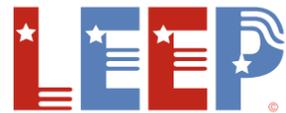
For those interested in an alternative to the golf outing, a Libation Tour will be available from 3-7:00 p.m. Thursday, Aug. 25 with stops at Hop Lot Brewing Co., Shady Lane Cellars and Northern Latitudes Distillery. Call Nancy Ciccone at (248) 524-3200 by Aug. 12, 2016 to reserve your spot so ample free transportation can be provided by the POLC/GELC. Members are responsible for the cost of drinks.

Come join us for a Beach Reception Meet & Greet prior to the seminar from 8:30-11:30 p.m. Wednesday, Aug. 24 featuring cocktails and conversation on beautiful West Grand Traverse Bay.

2016 Delegate Registration: Annual POLC/GELC Meeting & Labor Seminar

**Thursday, August 25, 2016:
7:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.**

**Friday, August 26, 2016:
8:00 a.m. – Conclusion**



ARTICLE V (By-laws) DELEGATES TO ANNUAL MEETING

SECTION 1. Each participating bargaining unit in the Labor Council shall be entitled to one (1) delegate to the Annual Meeting for each ten (10) members or major portion thereof in their unit, provided however, that each participating unit shall have at least one (1) delegate.

SECTION 7. Any delegate from a bargaining unit that is delinquent in payment of dues shall not be admitted or seated at the Annual Meeting.

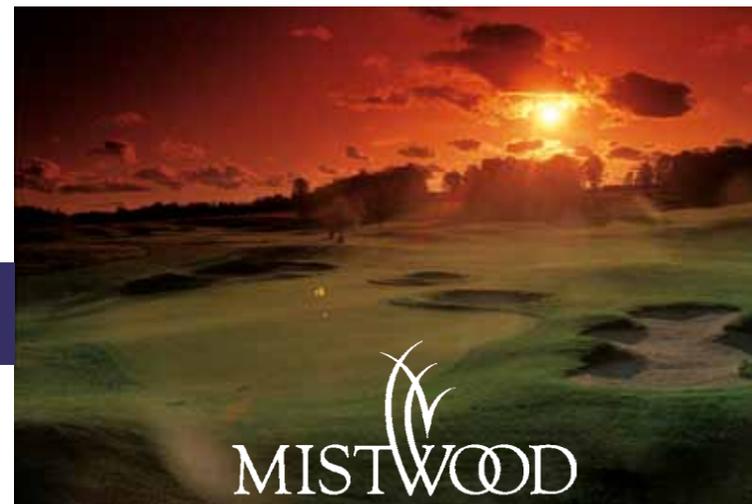
There is no fee to register this year. Please fill out and return this registration form.

Name of your unit and its current enrollment.

Number of delegates allowed

List names of all unit delegates here: (Please type or print neatly)

This registration must be returned before Tuesday, August 16, 2016 to:
Police Officers Labor Council • 667 E. Big Beaver Rd, Ste. 205 • Troy, MI 48083-1413



The scenic Mistwood Golf Course in Lake Ann provides a scheduled diversion for attendees of the Police Officers Labor Council annual Business meetings in Traverse City, Aug. 25-26, 2016. Reserve your spot now.

19th Annual POLC/GELC Golf Outing

Four-person Scramble (Limited to first 100 golfers)

**Mistwood Golf Course
Lake Ann, Michigan**

**Thursday, August 25, 2016
Tee-off time: 2:30 p.m. (Shotgun Start)**

Cost: \$35 per person

Includes 18 holes with cart (non-refundable)
Reservations guaranteed only when golf is paid in full.

Mistwood Golf Course - Golf attire is required by the course; all golfers must be in a collared shirt, walking shorts or long pants. Denim jeans or denim shorts are NOT permitted. NO tank tops, NO tee shirts, NO spikes.

RETURN REGISTRATION FORM: Make checks payable to POLC/Golf

Golfer's Names

Phone # and Department Name

This registration must be returned before Friday, August 12, 2016 to:
POLC/GELC Golf Outing • Police Officers Labor Council • 667 E. Big Beaver Rd., Ste. 205 • Troy, MI 48083-1413

Citizens' Police Academy *(continued from page 4)*

nearly a decade.

"We just reinitiated it this year. It's a key component with our resources that we can draw from," Kersten said. "You can influence attitudes with the children and the parents and it reflects the police department and police officer in a positive light. It also helps us mitigate some juvenile contacts."

They just brought back bicycle patrols this summer with a focus on parks, housing complexes and high volume call areas. "We've half-staffed it this summer with plans to expand it next summer," Kersten said. "It's just another avenue of enforcement and positive community contacts."

Thanks to the community's help, Kersten said the department was recently able to make arrests in a handful of high-profile crimes after posting photos of suspects on its Facebook page. "The robbery at the Meijer gas station – within two hours, (the suspect) was identified by Facebook posting," he said. "That community involvement is what's going to make us successful."

The idea for the Citizens' Police Academy partially stems from a report on the township's police operations released in March 2014 by the International City/County Management Association, officials said. The report included several recom-

mendations for efficiently providing police services to citizens. Kersten said they also looked at similar programs in Troy and Port Huron when planning the program. Applications for the Citizens' Police Academy can be picked up at the police station or online at chesterfieldpolice.org. Participants cannot have any felony or misdemeanor convictions within the past four years, and all applicants will be subject to a background investigation and asked to sign a liability waiver. ♥

Chesterfield Township Police Department is located at 46525 Continental Drive, off of 21 Mile Road near Interstate 94. For more information, contact Sgt. Tiffany Krul at (586) 949-4722 or tkrul@chesterfieldpolice.org

Ford Police Car *(continued from page 5)*

or high-torque 3.5-liter EcoBoost® engine, F-150 Special Service Vehicle gives fleets a selection of configurations so customers can pick what best suits their needs to ensure there is never a lack of power. Law enforcement and fleet work can get messy, so trucks equipped with the package replace carpeting with easy-to-clean vinyl flooring. The rear seat is swapped out for a vinyl bench for quick cleanup. A high-output 240-amp alternator replaces the

stock unit to accommodate for extended idle times. Standard 40/20/40 seats are replaced with 40/blank/40 seats, with the center section deleted to create more space for customization.

"Many officers need the extra space F-150 Special Service Vehicle offers," said Stephen Tyler, Ford police marketing manager. "They can load the cargo box with equipment and still fit five people inside. Its utility is unmatched."

Law enforcement makes up a large portion of Special Service Vehicle purchases, so Ford added F-150 to satisfy a complete range of police needs. "We offer a whole family of police vehicles," said Arie Groeneveld, Ford chief program engineer for police vehicles. "Our lineup aims to fulfill the unique needs of law enforcement officers, and our F-150 Special Service Vehicle is an extension of that offering. This vehicle definitely lives up to its Built Ford Tough reputation." ♥

The following Ford vehicles are available for law enforcement use:

- F-150 Special Service Vehicle
- Expedition Special Service Vehicle
- Special Service Police Sedan
- Transit Prisoner Transport Vehicle
- Police Interceptor Sedan
- Police Interceptor Utility



*Photo courtesy of Ford Motor Company
The Interceptor F-150 offers special features for law enforcement including this second row area, with seats removed.*

Watts returns to POLC to provide high quality service to members

— By Jennifer Foley, POJ Editor

There wasn't a question in Christopher Watts mind when he was asked if he'd like to return to the POLC/GELC as a Labor Representative. Watts loved representing fellow POLC members when he worked as a Mt. Morris Township Police Officer.

A career-long member of the POLC, Watts retired from Mt. Morris Township in 2014 after serving 20 years, the last six of which he served as Steward and President. Prior to that, he was a Flushing Township Patrol Officer for two years and served as a part-time New Lothrop Patrol Officer for 11 years while working for Mt. Morris Township. He also served in the U.S. Air Force, honorably discharged as a Staff Sergeant.

"My career was great. It was filled with a lot of different exciting things, but one of the things I truly enjoyed was being a part of the union," Watts said. "I loved negotiations and enjoyed dissecting every part of the budget. It was a no brainer when I was called and asked if I'd be interested in joining the union."

"Mt. Morris Township fielded upwards of 50,000 calls with a department average of 25 to 30 officers. Mt. Morris Township was a very high demand department and extremely underfunded," he said. "We heavily relied on the state revenue sharing and our millages. With the downturn (in the economy), we lost a lot. It was unique trying to maintain a high level of services with less resources and funds."

After retiring, Watts made a seamless transition to Chief Business Development Officer for STAT EMS, a medical transportation service he's worked at for seven years. He was already working for STAT EMS on a part-time basis while serving as a Mt. Morris Township Officer.

"Like most cops, I had several different jobs at the same time," Watts said. "I helped negotiate contracts and mediated employee-employer issues," Watts wrote in his application letter to the Executive Committee. "This role (as Steward, and later President) helped prepare me for later responsibilities (at STAT EMS). I played a key role in developing and maintaining service contracts within communities and facilities alike."

STAT EMS provides emergency ambulance service and non-emergency wheelchair accessible van transport and medical cab transport for medical appointments. "Insurance companies will not cover transportation by ambulance (for non-emergencies). Before wheelchair service, people would not go to their appointments, find family to take them, or ultimately have to pay a \$300 or \$400 ambulance bill," Watts said.

Watts helped negotiate contracts with skilled nursing facilities to provide transportation services for a fraction of the cost instead

of hundreds of dollars by ambulance. "We assisted facilities in reducing their high cost ambulance transports to a very manageable cost for transporting eligible patients to and from their appointments," Watts said. "It helps in many different ways — from compliance all the way to redistributing money for the care of those patients. The last contract I secured for STAT freed up several thousand dollars for one facility. Prior to my introduction of STAT, they had few other options."

Watts was hired May 2 as a POLC/GELC Labor Representative, but is still assisting with programs at STAT EMS. "Officially I'm done, but I'm finishing up some existing contracts and a couple programs, such as Rescue 911 for the kids," Watts said. "I will stay involved (with the programs) until the new director is comfortable."

Watts is in good company. While he is helping with the Development Officers' job transition at STAT EMS, Watts is being helped with his transition to Labor Rep. by Rob Figurski. Figurski, a Labor Rep., was hired to replace longtime POLC Director Richard Weiler, who plans to retire this summer. Weiler, in turn, is helping Figurski transition to the POLC/GELC Director's position.

Watts received several Mt. Morris Township Police citations for apprehensions as a K9 Officer; multiple letters of commendation; and meritorious service awards. Watts is founding member of Mid-Michigan Police Canine Association and started the Rescue 911 program in Genesee County while working for STAT EMS. Watts was named Mt. Morris Township Officer of the Year in 1996 and received a Community Advocacy Award through STAT EMS in 2014 for programs he oversaw within the community.

Watts was also a MCOLES training officer, school resource officer, firearms instructor and armorer, and a field training officer. During his career, he was trained to respond to high risk incidents as a member of Containment Team. In the U.S. Air Force, he performed combat arms training and maintenance for Michigan and Ohio Air National Guard. He was also assigned to the Air Weather Service while on active duty.

"My core values are accountability, reliability, integrity and honesty. Those are what I've built my foundation on," Watts said. "Availability is another top priority. Getting the answer needed in a timely fashion is imperative in the role I've taken on. I am looking forward to the challenges of my new position and I am excited to serve the POLC/GELC and its members." ♥



Nash retires after nearly 35 years serving Union members

— By Jennifer Foley, POJ Editor

POLC/GELC Labor Rep. Ken Nash has been waiting to retire for a while now, but he wanted to wrap up contracts he had in the works and help one department transition from police to public safety.

"I'm 71 and I think it's time to retire. I've been working since I was 18," Nash said. "I planned on being retired by now, but Kalkaska switched to a public safety department. They wanted me to stick around to do their (contract) and I'm doing a wage reopener in Gladstone."

Nash, who finally retired in June, said his replacement will have a lot of driving to do. "It takes me 10 hours sometimes to get down to my units," he said of departments that stretch from Midland and Dickerson County to Ontonagon. Nash started out with eight units and more than doubled the number of units through his own recruiting efforts.

Nash joined the Hazel Park Police Officers Association (POA) when he was hired as a Hazel Park Police Officer in 1967 and they joined the POLC in 1981. After graduating high school, he enlisted in the U.S. Air Force. He was hired by Hazel Park PD after serving four years in the service. "I went through the police academy after I was already in the department," Nash said, adding he started the day after getting discharged from military service.

He has served the POLC/GELC in several capacities. He was local union President when he was a Patrolman. He was first elected to the POLC/GELC Executive Committee when he was a Patrolman and served as Chair and Vice Chair of the Committee and chaired the Grievance Review Committee for nine years. Nash served as President of AFSCME local and pension trustee for City of Hazel Park Retirement System, representing the Police and later

the retirees. He retired as a Sergeant from the Hazel Park PD after 27-1/2 years in January 1995, and by December of that year, began his second career as a POLC/GELC Labor Representative.

"I negotiated the first contract with Dale (Corporation)," Nash said of his nearly 50 years with the labor organizations. "I started with the Labor Council in 1981 ... before (POLC/GELC Director) Richard (Weiler) was there. My signature is on the original (POLC) article of incorporation with the state."

His career began during turbulent times. The Detroit Riots broke out when he was a 22-year-old rookie. "We border Detroit and Warren. We kept our borders closed and stopped anybody coming out of Detroit," he said.

Nash experienced major changes in law enforcement bargaining when Act 312 was enacted in 1969. "I like telling everybody

the first 312 I did Richard Nixon was President, and put a wage freeze on for anybody who didn't have a contract signed," Nash said. "312 helped us out when that finally came out. It gave us bargaining rights rather than collective begging. I negotiated my first contract in 1969 with Hazel Park."

During his career, Nash was active in community service, being elected to the Hazel Park School board, where he served as President in the district his six children attended. He left the board 12 years later when he retired from Hazel Park and moved out of the district in 1995. "All of my kids that graduated from Hazel Park, I personally handed them their diplomas. My name is on their diplomas," Nash said.

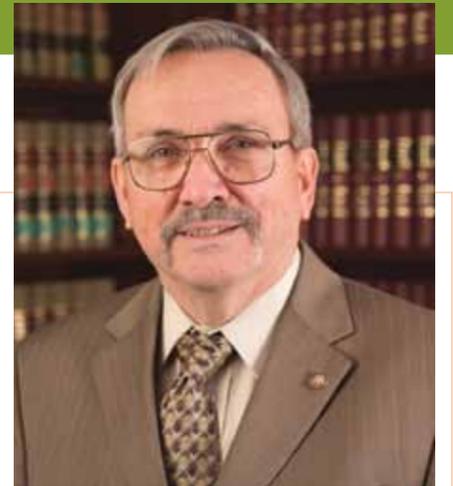
He was President of the Hazel Park Lions, Hazel Park Metropolitan Club, Chairman of the Youth Assistance Committee, President of the State Lodge FOP and

"I like telling everybody the first 312 I did Richard Nixon was President, and put a wage freeze on for anybody who didn't have a contract signed."

South Oakland County Lodge 130, and Cubmaster and Scoutmaster for Boy Scouts of America.

Nash plans to remain in Lake Leelanau, where he's resided since 1995, and will continue Tae Kwon Do lessons. "I started when I was 65 and made my black belt on my 70th birthday," Nash said. "I've held the titles of Michigan State Champion and Mid-America District Champ (which covers six states) for four years."

He will miss the people he's built relationships with over the years. "I enjoy the guys out there," Nash said of his units. However, he said, "Law enforcement itself



has changed over the years. You don't really have the camaraderie like you used to. I started out at \$3.15 an hour as a cop. The hardest thing is getting police officers right now. You don't have the benefits you used to have."

Retirement benefits have been greatly reduced and new standards require higher education. "It messes it up for the guys," he said. "They want them to have college now, but they don't want to pay them for it." ♥

POLC/GELC steward training a top priority for new Executive Committee member

— By Jennifer Foley, POJ Editor

Newly appointed POLC/GELC Executive Committee member Kyle Culbertson wants to make sure union stewards have the knowledge necessary to help members in a pinch.

"Something that is important to me is getting more training for local union stewards so we can adequately represent our members," Culbertson said. "Our steward training that we had last year ended up being a little bit of a condensed version of the (POLC/GELC) conference. I was expecting it to be a workshop where we broke down into groups, run some mocks, some scenarios, have people prepared."

Culbertson, who serves as the local POLC President of Berrien County Sheriff's

Department Deputies and Sergeants Association, said many of the training speakers talked about topics unrelated to representation, such as retirement planning and medical insurance.

"I want our members to receive adequate training so people are prepared for disciplinary matters because we have labor reps at the POLC/GELC, but they can't be everywhere all at once, not at every step. We have to educate our own members so they're prepared," Culbertson said.

Culbertson has put that practice into play in his own department by ensuring Berrien County Sheriff's local union representatives serve on designated committees including a bargaining commit-

tee, grievance committee, and stewards committee. Stewards are trained to serve as local union representatives for disciplinary interviews.

"That's a new thing I've formed in our department. In the past, if you were on our board, they'd call one of you to be a union rep for someone," Culbertson said of departmental disciplinary matters. "So I formed a steward committee — people that are trained to execute that position. We lean on the POLC/GELC Rep if we have questions. If it's something serious, like an officer involved shooting, I call (Labor Rep.) Will Keizer."

Culbertson, who has been a POLC member since 2011, served as local union Vice

President from 2014 to 2016. He worked as a Corrections Officer with Indiana State Prison in Michigan City, Indiana from 2007-11. "I was actually going to (Lake Michigan) College for Criminal Justice when I was hired," Culbertson said. "I had a friend who worked at Indiana State Prison who said they were hiring. Then I had all kinds of training through them." Culbertson went to corrections academy in Indiana and attended Kalamazoo Valley Community College Corrections Academy during his first year at Berrien County.

Culbertson was appointed in March by the Executive Committee and is anxious to get started, but first he had one small detail to take care of — his wedding day. Culbertson got married in April and

planned to go on his honeymoon before attending his first meeting in May.

"We've got 115 members right now. I just wanted to become more involved," he said of his appointment to the Executive Committee. "Since the mid-90s, we've always had someone (on the Executive Committee), and I just wanted Berrien County to have a voice and be represented."

"I want to see how we're spending our money," he added.

He will finish out the remainder of former Executive Committee Chair Paul Combs term, which expires in August 2016. When Combs retired in March, Rick Bleich was voted in by fellow Executive Committee members as Chair and Steve McInchak as Vice Chair.



In his free time, Culbertson, the married father of one, enjoys riding his motorcycle, golfing and playing guitar. ♥

Figurski juggles transition to POLC Director

— By Jennifer Foley, POJ Editor

As POLC/GELC Labor Rep. Rob Figurski transitions into the Union Director's position, he doesn't want to take the focus off his predecessor's accomplishments, which strengthened and expanded the organization.

"I want to thank Richard (Weiler) for all his dedication to the Labor Council and wish him the best in his retirement," Figurski said.

Figurski, who was appointed Director by the POLC/GELC Executive Committee, has spent recent months training with Weiler. Weiler will officially retire after 32 years on the job in August. Meanwhile Figurski is completing contract negotiations to finalize agreements while training his Labor Representative replacement, Chris Watts.

"I'm still servicing my groups. I'm trying to get (Watts) to as many units as I can to introduce him," Figurski said. "On top of it, we have contracts we're negotiating. It's been difficult to try to do both things and soak up as much of Richard's knowledge as I can."

To say Figurski, 67, has been busy this year is a vast understatement and a validation that the Executive Committee chose a candidate who is well-prepared to take the reigns of two unions and lead its members into the future. While Figurski will continue to work with some select units, for the most part, he is hoping to wrap up his Labor Rep. duties in August when Weiler retires.

Figurski's 20-plus years of union experience began when he was a Detroit Police Officer. He served 12 years with the Warren Police Department and was elected and served as steward and board member of the Warren Police Officer's Association (WPOA) for several years and WPOA's President for five years handling union negotiations, grievances and arbitrations. Figurski retired as a Patrolman, spending the last five years of his career with Warren working solely for the WPOA as Union President.

"I handled a lot of different situations in Warren, handling the finances and negotiating their contracts," Figurski said of the 200-plus member unit. "I was also on the union board prior to becoming President. I handled a number of grievances dealing with the Chief and city officials. I was involved in a lot of grievance procedures and civil litigation and dealing with the police administration. (The POLC/GELC) is a larger organization, but same concepts."

Not missing a beat, he retired from Warren PD in late 2009 and accepted the POLC/GELC Labor Representative position in early 2010. "We had a relationship through MAPO with POLC and Chester (Kuleza) talked to me about coming over here and I talked to Richard and one thing led to another," Figurski said. "John Viviano, who was the Rep., was retiring, so I accepted the position."

Some of the issues Figurski will focus on initially include retaining and obtaining more membership, which is something the POLC and GELC have been working on lately. "At the same time we're

growing, we will be continuing to provide excellent service to our members," he said. "I will be working with the board and our Reps and doing the best for the Labor Council overall."

He wants to update technology to improve communication with members. Figurski said he'd like to see contracts more easily accessible through computer software, where bargaining agreements could be downloaded. He also wants to address more issues on the Labor Council website and via email to the members.

"My goal is getting more and more members and updating technology as much as we can in different areas ... being able to respond better and communicate better with the membership throughout the state," Figurski said, adding he plans to put a face with the name of the new Director. "I'm planning on keeping up with our Reps and all their units, traveling throughout the state and following up with our Reps, making sure we provide the best service for everybody."

He will continue Weiler's legislative efforts as an active Michigan Association of Police Organization (MAPO) board member and attending other police agency meetings in support of law enforcement statewide and nationwide. "I'm sure that in the beginning I'm not going to be on all those committees," Figurski said. "That's for them to decide." Either way, Figurski plans to stay up-to-date on the issues and support the priorities of POLC members in Lansing.

Figurski's words of wisdom for Watts: "Service, service, service," he said. "Members call and if you're tied up with something, get back to them immediately. If you don't know the answer, find out."

He said as far as contracts go, always put yourself in their shoes to negotiate the best contract for them. "Sometimes you might say to them, 'there's a better way.' But they're the ones that have to work with and live with situations in their department. Suggest to them what you think is best, and then after that, let them decide what's best and go from there," Figurski said.

The married father of four grown children and nine grandchildren, wants members to know his level of commitment to the organization. "I'll always work for the best interest of everybody at the Labor Council and try to provide the best service I can for everyone," Figurski said. ♥



Director Craft helps select LEEP Award winner before retiring

— By Jennifer Foley, POJ Editor

Former Macomb Police Academy Director Charles Craft recently said his goodbyes to staff and students, but not before he selected the most recent LEEP Award winner.

"It's been a great job," Craft said, adding that he would continue to visit colleagues at the academy. "Obviously those people have become my really good friends."

And he had nothing but accolades for Spring 2016 Law Enforcement Education Program (LEEP) Award winner, Joshua Baker.

"Not only did staff elect him for outstanding performance in the LEEP scholarship, his fellow cadets voted him (Michigan Commission on Law Enforcement Standards) MCOLES Outstanding Performance Award winner," Craft said. "He did a great job, had the respect of his classmates and the staff and the instructors. He's a very worthy recipient."

Baker, 21, graduated with an Associate's degree from St. Clair Community College in General Education, and followed in his father, Port Huron Police Captain Jeff Baker's, footsteps pursuing a career in law enforcement.

"Joshua was an overwhelming favorite amongst his cadet peers and by the academy administrative staff," said Academy Director Ray Macksoud, who also serves as Criminal Justice Training Director. "The (MCOLES) award provides recognition to the basic training participants who exhibit high standards of performance measured by their mental, physical and moral fitness while in the training environment. It's pretty prestigious. They give out one in each academy."

"He got the most votes from the cadets and the staff selected him as well based on his total demeanor for the academy and his leadership skills," Macksoud said of the MCOLES award. "He was just an outstanding cadet. He demonstrated very mature qualities — the things we look for in a police officer."

The LEEP Award is given twice yearly to graduates with the highest overall achievement who have not been sponsored by any police agency. To qualify, the cadets had to pass the MCOLES certification test and meet MCOLES employment standards to become certifiable as law enforcement officers in Michigan.

"It's really based on the totality of their performance. He was in the top group of academics performance, but he was also in the top group of our physical fitness training and all the skills assessments. He was consistency high in everything," Craft said. "He was very well-rounded."

Craft, who has met Captain Baker a few times, was impressed with his son from day one. "It was just apparent right from the first day of class that he was going to be an outstanding cadet," Craft said. "He has great interpersonal skills, he knows how to focus.



Photo courtesy of Macomb Police Academy

POLC Executive Committee member and Macomb Community College Police Captain Tom Wilk (left) presents a LEEP Award to Joshua Baker during his graduation from Macomb Police Academy.

He wasn't Number 1 in any particular area, but he was in the top group in everything."

The \$1,000 LEEP grant was much appreciated by Baker. "It's going to help me pay off part of my student loan, so I can focus on filling out job applications, going on interviews and moving forward in my career," Baker said. "I wanted to thank everybody who provided the LEEP Scholarship Award," Baker said. "It's going to be a very big help to me. I look forward to serving the community in the future."

Baker also wanted to thank Craft, Macksoud and Instructor Gregory Scott for all the help they provided him and Class 99.

Macksoud said the academy staff appreciates the fact that LEEP provides one award to each Macomb Academy graduating class. "Most of them can really use them," Macksoud said. "We selected (Baker) as a staff, based on leadership abilities and the demeanor we look for that police officers display daily. The students select the top cadet in the class, who's consistently on top of things."

Craft said Baker, who graduated among a class of 43, is interviewing with several departments. "As a pre-service cadet, he's just outstanding," Macksoud said. "We would be fast to recommend him to people."

"I believe he will quickly find employment," Craft said. "He's going to be an asset to whoever gets him."

Baker, who grew up in Port Huron and lives in Marysville now, said he wants to work in an agency in Macomb County or Oakland County.

"I've seen the life that (law enforcement) provides and that intrigued me," Baker said of his father. "I've seen the camaraderie with his coworkers and the rewarding experience he has with his community and that inspired me to be a police officer." ♥

POLC settles wage reopener for Utica Patrol

— By Jennifer Foley, POJ Editor

Utica Patrol & Dispatch were not pleased when the POAM failed to negotiate their wage reopener from 2015. It was one of a number of problems they had with their former union, which led them to leave and become members of the POLC in April.

“They should have been handling the wage reopener and that just shows what type of representation they had with POAM,” said POLC Labor Rep. Scott Blackwell. “They weren’t doing their job going into the 312 wage reopener. That’s nine months worth of not doing what they should have been doing . . . and that’s why they voted to decertify them. We had to pick up the pieces and avoided arbitration.”

Michael Roberts, President of Utica Patrol & Dispatch, said his group was concerned the POAM may bail during the union transition since the arbitration hearing was set during the timeframe they had to switch unions, but POLC representatives promised they would and legally could handle the wage reopener. Michigan Employment Relations Commission (MERC) rules allow a unit to decertify and recertify with another representative during a 90 to 120 day window prior to expiration of the contract.

“I think POAM didn’t want to go to arbitration on it and neither did the City,” Roberts said. “They were hoping that POLC would take over. I spoke with (POLC Membership Services Rep.) Lloyd (Whetstone) about that. That happened to be the timeframe the arb was scheduled . . . 90-120 days. Lloyd guaranteed (POLC) would step up to the plate and they did.”

“(Union representatives) are not allowed to talk with the group until you’re certified to represent them. The day I was certified, at the end of April, I met with Utica Patrol and ended up working out their wage reopener July 1, 2015 to June 30, 2016,” Blackwell said. “They had this wage reopener going to 312 arbitration. POAM dropped them.”

The POLC handled the matter without arbitration, successfully negotiating a 3.5 percent raise for both Patrol & Dispatch for the past year. Blackwell said two percent of the raise is retroactive back to July 2015 because the group agreed to give up their daily 15 minutes of extra pay for show up time, shift prep time, or comp time retroactive to July 1.

“They actually got a 3.5 percent pay raise for this year and 2 percent of that is retroactive back to July 1, 2015,” Blackwell said. “They’ve already been paid that money.”

Roberts recounted problems with the POAM that led them to make the switch away from a union that represented them over a decade. “Really I wasn’t happy with the rep,” Roberts said. “Overall we just didn’t think we were getting the service we were paying for. We had two or three people terminated that went through arbitration and POAM didn’t get their jobs back. We just

didn’t feel like we were getting our money’s worth so basically it was time to change.”

POLC now represents 10 full-time Utica Road Patrol, two Sergeants and up to three part-time Officers, four full-time Utica Dispatchers and one part-time Dispatcher.

“POAM allowed part-time dispatchers into our Dispatch department. That happened about seven years ago. It was kind of done without everyone’s knowledge,” Roberts said. “The dispatchers knew about it, but Patrol really wasn’t up to date with what was happening with that. That was one strike with POAM.”

Strike two came when POAM convinced Patrol that having part-time Officers was the way to go to settle their last contract.

“The last contract we allowed three part-time Officers to come to the department. The mediator said the city would get it,” Roberts said. “We have zero hired within the city right now. We told the city it would be a revolving door when part timers come in and that’s exactly what happened. According to the Chief, they can’t fill (the positions). No one is interested.”

Utica’s contract with POAM expires June 30, so now Blackwell can get started negotiating a new contract for them through the POLC.

“That’s an issue we are going to work on during this next negotiation. Obviously if you’re not going to hire the part timers to help fill those shifts, it just creates a lot of work for everybody else,” Roberts said. “We’re probably down about four full-timers from around 2009. In our case, we’re small and when you promote from Road Patrol, now they’re in administration. The bodies are there, but they’re not on the road anymore. It just keeps pulling from Road Patrol. Road Patrol is what suffers most.”

Roberts said Patrol used to be much larger in the late 1990s, but after years of attrition under the POAM’s watch the past 14 years, those numbers have dwindled. “I just didn’t think POAM would help us with that, so we decided to jump ship,” Roberts said.

Roberts said one of the part-time Officers positions has been vacant a year, another six months and another for two months. That’s due to the low pay and lack of benefits those officers receive, Roberts said, adding they make less than \$20 per hour.

“Starting wage is \$18 or \$19 an hour, but that doesn’t get you a good quality person and they won’t stay,” Roberts said, adding that full-timers in some communities make nearly \$40 an hour by the time they factor in holidays and overtime. “By the time you outfit them, buy the gear, and do the training, how long does it take you to recoup those dollars? I don’t think the City sees the savings because they don’t stay long enough. Until they miss Christmas or their kid’s birthday party, I don’t think (part-timers) really realize what they signed up for.” ♥



Contract Settlements

— As reported by POLC/GELC Labor Representatives

DeWitt Township Supervisors

• **New three-year agreement** expires Dec. 31, 2018.

• **Wages:**

Sergeants: 12% differential over top Patrol Officer’s rate.

Lieutenants: 5% differential over the Sergeant’s rate.

• **Fringe Benefits:** Employees can take Comp Time in lieu of any Overtime earned. Unused Comp Time paid off annually for all hours over 30. The remaining 30 can be carried over for the next 12 months.

• **Manning & Safety:** \$100 per year for equipment purchase and can carry over any unused portion of that amount up to \$500.

• **Health Care:** Employees will pay a percentage over the state insurance cap amounts rather than full amount, but no more than board approves for other employees: 15% in 2016; 25% in 2017; and 35% in 2018.

• **Retirement:** A one-time pension contribution of \$500 per active Employee.

• **Bargaining Team:** Steve Smith aided by POLC Labor Rep. Mike Woronko.

Elk Rapids Police Officers

• **New two-year agreement** expires Feb. 29, 2018.

• **Wages:**

2% increase effective March 1, 2016.

2% increase effective March 1, 2017.

• **Fringe Benefits:** There was an added step for Longevity. Employees with 10 years or more of service will receive 50 cents per hour above Senior Officer base pay. Employees already receive \$1 increase above Senior Officer pay at 15 years of service. Funeral Leave will include “significant other residing in the same residence” as part of the immediate family definition.

• **Bargaining Team:** Jamie Peterson aided by POLC Labor Rep. Ken Nash.

Essexville City Department of Public Safety

• **New three-year agreement** expires June 30, 2019.

• **Wages:**

1% increase effective July 1, 2016.

1% increase effective July 1, 2017.

1% increase effective July 1, 2018.

• **Manning & Safety:** Equipment allowance increases from \$100 to \$200 annually.

• **Fringe Benefits:** Employees can now choose between pay or Comp Time for working Holidays. Increase Personal Days from four to five.

• **Bargaining Team:** Drew Gokey and Kyle Glocksine aided by POLC Labor Rep. John Stidham.

Evart Police Department

• **New three-year agreement** expires June 30, 2019.

• **Wages:**

2.5% increase effective July 1, 2016.

2.25% increase effective July 1, 2017.

2% increase effective July 1, 2018.

• **Fringe Benefits:** Holiday pay for the first year of employment is pro-rated.

Increase in Longevity pay:

\$50 increase after 5 years of service.

\$50 increase after 7 years of service.

\$100 increase after 10 years of service.

\$200 increase after 15 years of service.

• **Health Care:** Coverage language change deleting the term “family” and replacing that with “dependents”.

• **Retirement:** New hires will have the MERS Hybrid Plan with 1.5% multiplier and 1% gross wage contribution.

• **Bargaining Team:** Patrick McClure and Cheyenne Kalman Alt aided by POLC Labor Rep. Mike Woronko.

Gladstone Public Safety Officers

• **Wage reopener:**

3% increase effective April 1, 2016.

• **Bargaining Team:** Todd Crow and John Hall aided by POLC Labor Rep. Ken Nash.

Gladwin County Corrections

• **New two-year agreement** expires Dec. 31, 2017.

• **Wages:**

2% increase effective Jan. 1, 2016.

2% increase effective July 1, 2017.

* Raise Part-Time Corrections Officer wage to step one level of full-time employees.

* Each bargaining unit member will receive two \$350 bonuses - one in the first year of the contract and one in the second year.

• **Fringe Benefits:** Shift premium increase from 15 cents to 20 cents for afternoon shift and 40 cents for night shift per hour. Restore President’s Day as a Holiday. Eliminate an associated Affordable Health Care Act per person tax on each employee. Establish up to 40 hours of Personal Time off for Part-Time Employees.

• **Retirement:** Establish a Deferred Compensation program, which can be taken without penalty upon termination. This program is in addition to the Defined Benefit Pension program already in place.

• **Bargaining Team:** Vic Kraus, Matt McGourty and Minda McCartney aided by GELC Labor Rep. Hal Telling.

Charter Township of Hampton Police Officers

• **Wage reopener** for two-year agreement which expires May 30, 2017: 62 cents per hour increase effective June 1, 2016.

• **Bargaining Team:** Brian Dansereau aided by POLC Labor Rep. John Stidham.

Charter Township of Hampton Police Command Unit

• **Wage reopener** for two-year agreement which expires May 30, 2017: 62 cents per hour increase effective June 1, 2016.

• **Bargaining Team:** Mike Wedding aided by POLC Labor Rep. John Stidham.

Houghton City Police Patrol

• **New three-year agreement** expires June 30, 2018.

• **Wages:**

3.5% effective July 1, 2015.

3% effective July 1, 2016.

Wage reopener effective July 1, 2017.

* 49 cents per hour increase effective at contract signing to cover 4 hours Overtime under the old 80-hour work period when working 12-hour shifts and the old shift differential of 25 cents per hour.

• **Fringe Benefits:** Call Out was increased from 2 hours to 3 hours minimum at time and one-half. Employees allowed to use up to 100 hours of Comp Time per year, an increase from 50 hours.

• **Health Care:** The \$200 a month paid by the City to the Employee for healthcare on retirement is dropped for anyone hired after July 1, 2015.

• **Bargaining Team:** Jeremy Hill, Nathan Kinnunen and Alan Narhi aided by POLC Labor Rep. Ken Nash.

Village of Laurium Police Department

• **New two-year agreement** expires Dec. 31, 2017.

• **Wages:**

6% increase effective Jan. 1, 2016.

0% increase effective Jan. 1, 2017.

• **Health Care:** Changed from Consumers Mutual Insurance back to Blue Cross/Blue Shield Simply Blue HRA PPO Gold.

• **Retirement:** Changed from MERS B-3 with a bridge to B-2 with termination final average compensation. Effective Mar. 1, 2016, Employees contribute 6% towards cost of pension.

• **Bargaining Team:** Kurt Erkkila aided by POLC Labor Rep. Ken Nash. ♥



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Montreal cancels 2017 World Police & Fire Games after unions pledge boycott

— Excerpted from Canadian news sources

The City of Montreal has cancelled the 2017 World Police and Fire Games after several unions said they would boycott the event following labor disputes with city.

Slated to coincide with Montreal's 375th birthday celebrations, the games were expected to draw 10,000 athletes plus their families and bring in estimated revenues of \$100 million to the city.

Montreal Mayor Denis Coderre's office confirmed the decision to CBC News.

Police and firefighter unions worldwide supported Montreal Public Safety Officers in their boycott of the games in response to provincial legislation, spearheaded in large part by Coderre, to reduce pension payments, and over the suspensions and firings of firefighters who participated in protests.

Police unions internationally said they too would boycott the games, which threatened attendance figures and risked a multi-million dollar loss for the city.

Some 60,000 members of the Canadian Police Association voted to join the boycott in March. In February, thousands of Aus-

tralian firefighters also pledged to boycott the games.

Coderre said he has been in talks with Toronto's mayor to take over the games in 2017, and has pledged to provide support, according to La Presse. Montreal beat out the cities of Toronto and Chengdu, China in 2011 for the rights to host the games.

The games could be cancelled if Toronto does not host them. ❤️

