

The Police Officers Journal



VOLUME 26, NUMBER 2 • SPRING 2016

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Now that spring is here, hopefully the legislature will act

— By Richard Weiler, Director



There are a few issues the legislature hopefully will be taking up prior to their summer break. First the legislature must pass the Governor's Budget. The Governor has proposed a 3.9 percent increase in revenue sharing for cities and counties. So far there has not been any objection raised about the revenue sharing.

Senate Bill 218, which has passed the Senate and is awaiting action from the House side of the aisle, provides health care benefits to surviving spouses and children of those public safety officers killed in the line of duty. The health care coverage would be the same plan that retired State Police Troopers receive. There are, however, some exclusions to receiving the benefits. There is also a second health care bill waiting for action. SB 382 provides health care if a public safety officer is permanently and totally disabled as a result of injury sustained in the line of duty. This coverage is also tied to the coverage retired State Troopers receive.

In the labor field, SB 679 extends Act 312 protections to county Corrections Officers, which we support. However, no action has been taken on this bill as of this writing.

Finally SB 368, which passed the Senate last November, is now before the House. This bill makes corrections on what the legislature did in 2011 by taxing pensions under the Income Tax Act. This legislation would amend the Income Tax Act to extend to a person who was born after 1952 and retired as of Jan. 1, 2013, an increased deduction for retirement or pension benefits from governmental employment that was not covered by Social Security. The bill would be retroactive and effective for tax years beginning on and after Jan. 1, 2013. Retroactivity is one of the things holding up the bill.

Another consideration on all state money items is the Flint water issue. There looms the possibility of untold health care issues as well as litigation costs. Stay tuned for that one!

The U.S. Supreme Court in a California Teachers case, *Friedrichs v. California Teachers Association*, is expected to have a decision sometime this summer. Many of the cases involving labor issues were decided 5-4, with the majority of conservative justices voting against labor. This case revolves around the issue whether unions can collect fees from governmental workers whom have chosen not to belong to the union (Agency Fee). Millions of workers in 23 states would be affected by this outcome. With the recent death of Justice Antonin Scalia, it would appear that the case would now be a 4-4 tie and be resolved in favor of teachers as they won in the lower court. Friedrichs is attempting to overturn a 40-year-old Supreme Court case ruling.

Finally, I am pleased to report Michigan Association of Police Organizations (MAPO), which represents POLC, is gaining a new, and might I add, very large partner with the recent addition of Michigan Corrections Organization (MCO). MCO is 6,700 members strong, adding to MAPO's nearly 10,000 certified law enforcement officers. MCO will further strengthen MAPO and its efforts to advocate for Michigan's public safety professionals. ♥

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National Police Week 2016

In 1962, President John F. Kennedy proclaimed May 15th as National Peace Officers Memorial Day and the calendar week in which May 15th falls, National Police Week. Listed below are the events planned at the national level in Washington D.C. as well as Michigan's Peace Officers' Candlelight Memorial Service, honoring those who died in the line of duty. Because National Peace Officer's Memorial Day, May 15, 2016 falls on a Sunday, some events will take place before the official dates of Police Week in 2016.

May 2 — Michigan

Monday, May 2: 23rd Annual Michigan Peace Officers' Candlelight Memorial Service — 7 p.m. east steps of Lansing State Capitol, 100 North Capitol Avenue. Contact Denise Scarbrough, Michigan Concerns of Police Survivors President at (877) 464-2677 or email survivor@micops.org

May 15-21 — Washington D.C.

Tuesday, May 3: 21st Annual Blue Mass — 12:00 p.m. at St. Patrick Catholic Church, 619 Tenth Street, NW (10th & G Streets). Call (202) 347-2713 or visit www.saintpatrickdc.org/bluemass.shtml

Saturday, May 7: Corrections 25th Annual Wreath Laying Ceremony — 10 a.m.-noon at National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial. Honoring Corrections Personnel who have lost their lives in the line of duty. Ceremony followed by an Honor Guard Competition. www.mwco.org or call (202) 962-3200.

Sunday, May 8: 21st Annual Law Ride & Wreath Laying Ceremony — Line up begins at 8 a.m. with kick stands up at 10 a.m. from RFK Stadium parking lot #8, 19th and East Capitol St., NE to National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial for wreath laying and presentations 11 a.m. www.lawride.com or email JD Perkins at jdpbk1@yahoo.com

Monday, May 9: 37th Annual Washington Area Law Enforcement Memorial Service — 11 a.m. in front of the Memorial Fountain, 300 Indiana Ave., NW. Those interested in volunteering or attending the service, email Patty Sucato at psucato@dc-fop.org.

Tuesday, May 10-16: National Police Week Retail Center opens 10 a.m. Tuesday-Wednesday and 9 a.m. Thursday-Monday, 309 E Street (Corner of 4th and E Streets, NW - Fellowship Hall of First Trinity Lutheran Church), one block from the Memorial. www.nleomf.org/programs/policeweek/

Thursday, May 12: Police Unity Tour Arrival Ceremony — 2 p.m. (Location to be determined due to construction for the National Law Enforcement Museum) Email Jimmy Waldron at info@policeunitytour.com

• National Association of Police Organizations (NAPO) Legislative Seminar — 9 a.m. JW Marriott Hotel, 1331 Pennsylvania Ave.

NW. Advanced registration. Contact Elizabeth Loranger at elorange@napo.org or (703) 549-0775.

• Philly to D.C. Memorial Run — Depart 8:30 a.m. from Philadelphia Navy Yard. Arrival at noon May 14 at the center of National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial off of F Street. Run to honor fallen officers. Contact Jim Harrity at (610) 633-2685 or Tim Hoagland at (609) 929-1626.

Friday, May 13: 28th Annual Candlelight Vigil — 8 p.m. (Location to be determined due to construction for the National Law Enforcement Museum) (202) 737-3400. A reading of the newly engraved names immediately follows ceremony. Register to watch the live Vigil webcast. Check back for updates <http://www.nleomf.org/programs/policeweek/>

• National Police Challenge 50K Relay — 8:15-11:30 a.m. U.S. Secret Service Training Center, Laurel, MD. Proceeds benefits Concerns of Police Survivors (C.O.P.S.) and H.E.R.O.E.S. Contact Dierdre Henry, Race Director at Dierdre.Henry@npc50.org or visit www.npc50.org/race/

Saturday, May 14: 15th Annual Steve Young National Honor Guard Competition and Pipe Band Competition — 8 a.m.-4 p.m. Grant Statue on west side of U.S. Capitol. Email Ken Roske at policeweekhg@aol.com or visit policeweekhonorguard.com

• 10th Annual National Police Week 5k — 9-11 a.m. 400 F St. NW, 4th St. and F St. NW. www.nationalpoliceweek5k.com

• 23rd Annual NAPO TOP COPS Awards Banquet — 6:30 p.m. JW Marriott Hotel, 1331 Pennsylvania Ave., NW. Tickets must be purchased in advance. Contact Elizabeth Loranger at (703) 549-0775 or info@napo.org or visit www.napo.org

• Standing Watch for the Fallen Flag Ceremony — 3 p.m. Presentation of state and departmental flags, commencing the honor guard rotations, who will stand vigil at the center medallion of the Memorial with the ceremonial wreath until midnight when Taps will be played as the Memorial's flags are lowered to half-staff. Contact Brian Lacey, brian@nleomf.org or (202) 737-7138 or Kaitlin Gilbride, kgilbride@nleomf.org or (202) 737-8528.

• National Police Survivors' Conference (Day 1 of 2) — 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Hilton Alexandria Mark Center in Alexandria, VA. Advanced registration required. Email cops@nationalcops.org or call (573) 346-4911. www.nationalcops.org

• C.O.P.S. Kids/Teens (Day 1 of 2) — 8:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m. Hilton Alexandria Mark Center in Alexandria, VA. Advanced registration required. Email cops@nationalcops.org or call (573) 346-4911. www.nationalcops.org

• 22nd Annual Emerald Society & Pipeband March and Service — 5 p.m. assemble at New Jersey Avenue and F Street, NW.

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POLC a major donor for Ottawa County police memorial

— By Jennifer Foley, POJ Editor

Generous donations from organizations like the Police Officers Labor Council (POLC) helped make the new Ottawa County Sheriff's Office Police Memorial a reality last year and this May 15 and every year thereafter a Police Week Honor Guard Memorial Service will be held there in honor of fallen officers.

The Protector Monument, located at the Ottawa County Administrative Building in West Olive, was officially dedicated May 15, 2015 during a ceremony remembering the lives of three area police officers killed in the line of duty. Ottawa County Sheriff's Office Captain Valerie Weiss was the driving force behind the monument featuring life-size bronze statues of a police officer, boy and girl surrounded by brick pavers and two markers to honor fallen officers and thank major donors.

The POLC, which represents Grand Haven Department of Public Safety, Holland Department of Public Safety, and Ottawa County Sheriff's Office Deputies and Sergeants, were among the sponsors featured on the major donor plaque. Ottawa County donated the land for the memorial.

Weiss began fundraising for the monument in 2012 while she was taking a Police Staff and Command training course. Classmates donated money throughout the 10-month course for the hosting agency. "I asked the class if we could donate whatever was left in our account to use as seed money for this," Weiss said.

Weiss combined those funds with money raised from two successful fundraisers in 2013: a Sweet Justice fundraiser featuring a police band, dinner and auction; and a 5k Fun Run at Pigeon Creek Park, which Gazelle Sports of Holland helped organize.

"They had the trails lit up at night and then we had Catch a Cop and get a prize," Weiss said. "We actually held Deputy Tyler Kempema back and he still flew through it. He's a marathon runner."



Photo by POLC Labor Rep. Will Keizer

The Protector Monument in Ottawa County was completed in 2015.

About \$80,000 was needed to complete the memorial. "It took us almost two years to get enough donations for it," Weiss said. "For the statue itself, it took Brodin Studios eight months to manufacture it. That was the longest part of the entire project and once it was here, we had in-kind donations for installing the bricks and landscaping to make sure we dedicated it on May 15, which was Police Memorial Day."

Weiss couldn't have been more pleased with the outcome. "Some of the details on these statues are truly amazing. It was better than I could have even imagined it would be," Weiss said referring to the Ottawa County Sheriff's Office patch and badge on the bronze officer. "When I went to Sheriff Gary Rosema and asked if we could do this, I never realized what a big undertaking we were taking on. Now that it is here, we see families looking at it and taking pictures with the statues."

Belden Brick and Supply (of Grand Rapids) donated the bricks, which were installed by Landscape Design Inc. and concrete was donated by VanLaan Construction Supply. Ottawa County Sheriff's Office Reserve Deputy Randy Price, who

owns several McDonalds locations in West Michigan, "was very instrumental in facilitating several of the in-kind donations and overseeing the project. He was a huge asset," Weiss said. "If it wasn't for the in-kind donations and Randy's help, it would have taken at least another year."

"Ottawa County has grown tremendously. We have had the opportunity to partner with several cities in the county to provide law enforcement services over the past 20 years," Price said. "I've always felt bad that we didn't have (a police memorial) and we have a great spot for it. We have a beautiful facility. It's a reminder of the people that served them and what they sacrificed."

As a member of the community, operating 19 southwest Michigan McDonald's with over 1,000 employees, Price remembers hearing about the three officers' deaths. "People don't realize on a daily basis what that job is. Until you put the uniform on and strap into the car, your mindset has to change, you're on edge all the time. My day to day is so much different as a businessman," he said.

Busy on local boards serving the com-

Ottawa County Protector Monument End of Watch

- Scott Flahive, 28, Grand Haven Department of Public Safety Officer, was shot and killed by an escaped criminal as he approached a vehicle containing two escaped convicts. EOW: Dec. 13, 1994.
- Arlyn Gort, 52, Ottawa County Sheriff's Reserve Officer, was struck by a vehicle and killed while directing traffic at an accident scene. EOW: Aug. 22, 1989.
- Trevor Slot, 41, Walker Police Department Officer, was struck by a vehicle containing bank robbers fleeing from the scene as he attempted to deploy stop sticks. EOW: Oct. 13, 2011.

munity, Price said it was important to him to serve in a physical way. "I didn't serve in the military and it was an opportunity for me to do something," Price said of becoming a Reserve Deputy. "It's a way to give back differently rather than sitting behind a desk or going to another meeting."

Weiss spoke during the inaugural Police Week ceremony, which included families of fallen Walker Police Officer Trevor Slot, Grand Haven

Department of Public Safety Officer Scott Flahive and Ottawa County Sheriff's Office Reserve Deputy Arlyn Gort. "It was a lot harder to get through than I thought it would be," Weiss said. "I was friends with Scott Flahive."

Flahive's mom, Linn Emmert, who is leading the effort to build a statewide police memorial in Lansing, was presented with flowers. Family members of all the officers were recognized during the ceremony. Gort's widow and daughters attended as well as Walker Police Chief Greg Long. Slot's two young daughters, who were unable to attend, not only lost their father, but also lost their mother to cancer in 2015. "When I did the presentation, I had all of the officers in attendance stand up and spouses and family because of how much this profession affects not just the officers but their whole entire family," Weiss said. "We hope we never have to add another name to it."

"Part of this is a tribute to those who have served, are serving, and will serve in the future. We want to remember everyone that does this job everyday as well. They continue to go on," despite losing comrades, she said. "They keep serving their communities." ♥



Photos courtesy of Ottawa County Sheriff's Department

For more information on the upcoming May 15, 2016 Honor Guard ceremony or a complete list major of donors, visit www.miottawa.org

Police Week (continued from page 3)

- Begin March to National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial at 6 p.m. Contact Joseph J. Keenan at (732) 754-7051. www.nclees.org
- Philly to D.C. Memorial Run — Depart 8:30 a.m. May 12 from Philadelphia Navy Yard with arrival at noon May 14 at the center of National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial off of F Street. Run to honor fallen officers. Contact Jim Harrity at (610) 633-2685 or Tim Hoagland at (609) 929-1626.
- **Sunday, May 15:** 35th Annual National Peace Officers' Memorial Services — 11 a.m. West Front, U.S. Capitol. www.police-week.org or contact Andy Maybo at amaybo@dc-fop.org or Linda Hennie at 1shennie@aol.com
- FOP/FOPA Wreath Laying Ceremony — Immediately following Memorial Service at the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial, F Street, NW between Fourth and Fifth Streets. www.policeweek.org or contact Andy Maybo at amaybo@dc-fop.org

fop.org or Linda Hennie at 1shennie@aol.com

- Shomrim Society Memorial Service — 9 a.m. National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial. Contact Chief Jay Gruber (202) 500-8647.

Monday, May 16: National Police Survivors' Conference (Day 2) — 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Hilton Alexandria Mark Center in Alexandria, VA. Advanced registration required. Email cops@nationalcops.org or call (573) 346-4911. www.nationalcops.org

• C.O.P.S. Kids/Teens (Day 2) — 8:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m. Hilton Alexandria Mark Center in Alexandria, VA. Advanced registration required. Email cops@nationalcops.org or call (573) 346-4911. www.nationalcops.org

Tuesday, May 17: NCIS/HQMC Wreath Laying Ceremony — 10-11 a.m. National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial, enter via F Street NW. Contact Cheryl Seesman at cheryl.seesman@ncis.navy.mil or (571) 305-9065. ♥

Junior Public Safety Academy provides interactive safety lessons for children

—By Jennifer Foley, POJ Editor

Introducing young kids to public safety officers on an up close personal level is one of the missions of a new Junior Public Safety Academy program being held at local Grand Haven elementary schools.

Through interactive lessons in police and firefighter work, children at Mary A. White Elementary School in Grand Haven have a better understanding how police officers and firefighters protect the public. Grand Haven Department of Public Safety Officers conducted the five-day academy interacting with students for an hour each day the week of Feb. 15.

“As a Department, we wanted to reach out to the younger students within the City of Grand Haven and elected to hold the Junior Public Safety Academy for all third graders,” said Grand Haven Det. Lt. Joe Boyle. “It’s great to interact with these kids at a young age and teach them a multitude of lessons on safety, which they can use for a lifetime.”

Several lesson plans from the Teaching, Educating and Mentoring (T.E.A.M.) program, designed by Michigan State Police, will be taught by a certified officer

to kids in all public and private schools in the City. “These messages will reach six different third grade schools within Grand Haven city,” Boyle said of some 210 students. “We developed our own coloring/activity book, provided interactive lessons and videos, and designed t-shirts for all of our graduates.”

“We’re also using the assistance of Law Enforcement Education Program (LEEP),” Boyle said of the LEEP Kids Fingerprinting program, which provides a CD Rom to parents with their child’s digital fingerprints, photographs and description in case they ever go missing. “We think that’s a good thing.”

Boyle said the T.E.A.M. program will be taught in the city to all sixth and eighth grade students. The Junior Public Safety Academy provides T.E.A.M. lessons for third graders to expand upon as they get older.

“The T.E.A.M. Program was developed by Michigan State Police with input from public and private school curriculum experts,” Boyle said. “The lesson plans are based on the Michigan Model for Health, which is implemented throughout the cur-

riculum. In 2010, T.E.A.M. received the Most Outstanding Program Award from the National Criminal Justice Association.”

T.E.A.M. instruction sessions are typically 45 minutes to one hour and cover a variety of topics from Internet safety to fire safety. “One of the things we like about the T.E.A.M. Program is its flexibility to virtually all classroom settings,” Boyle said. “There are several different lesson plans available so you can choose which lesson to teach students. We have a great school system here in Grand Haven and they’re excited about the program. They want us teaching every lesson plan.”

“We’ve never had anything like that with so many police officers here and a course taught for an hour a day,” said Mary A. White Elementary Principal Valerie Livingston. “We’ve done different spot things here and there, but this is the first time we had a comprehensive program with lesson plans and everything taught at the same time.”

The third graders learned about: 911 safety rules, stranger danger, seatbelt safety, gun awareness, drug awareness, traffic and bicycle safety, Internet safety,



fire safety, senior citizen patrol and more. The children met K9s Max, who does police work, and Lady, a therapy dog. Interactive role-playing helped them learn by being involved.

“They had some hands on things. They set up a bicycle course in the gym to practice bicycle safety,” Livingston said. “Every day the kids said the Pledge of Allegiance, then they reviewed what was done the day before and the officers introduced something new. It helped cement things for the kids.”

On the final day, the kids celebrated with a graduation pizza party where they received a Certificate of Completion, a Grand Haven Junior Public Safety Academy t-shirt, and their LEEP Kids Fingerprinting CDs.

“We had police officers and firefighters in uniform and the intent is to show the kids that behind the uniform we’re just like their mom and dad,” Boyle said. “We are normal people who care about their safety



Photos Courtesy of Grand Haven Department of Public Safety
Grand Haven Department of Public Safety officers got Mary A. White third graders in shape during their first Junior Public Safety Academy.

and the well being of the community. We have a reserve senior citizen patrol (RSVP) program and they were there. The kids will see young and old officers in uniform, black and white, male and female. (Public safety work) is just not geared toward one person, one gender, one race. We talk about the role police and fire play in the community.”

“The police were in uniform everyday

and one day Officer (Eric) Berends dressed in street clothes so the kids could see he’s just a regular guy,” Livingston said. “I’m looking forward to having this again next year. The children went home and talked about it every night. One mother said her son didn’t change his shirt the entire week because he didn’t want to lose his (badge) sticker.” ❤️

Police Week events work around museum construction

—By Jennifer Foley, POJ Editor with excerpts from NLEOMF

Construction of the long-awaited National Law Enforcement Museum began in March and will be in full swing in May when thousands gather to celebrate National Police Week.

A majority of Police Week events will still be held at the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial site, but will be adjusted with vehicular access moved to F Street while E Street is closed during construction. Pedestrian access will remain open on the north sidewalk of E Street. *A complete list of events and locations are on Page 2. For updated event information, visit www.LawMemorial.org/PoliceWeek.*

The museum construction, which was earlier planned for July 2014, was delayed until full funding was secured.

“The Department of the Interior had stipulated that construction could not begin until sufficient funds to complete the project were in place. It took somewhat longer than anticipated to secure the

full funding,” said Steve Groeninger, National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial Fund (NLEOMF) spokesman.

The work began this year after the successful sale of tax-exempt municipal bond financing through the District of Columbia. The NLEOMF received \$103,130,000 of Series 2016 Revenue Bonds (National Center for Law Enforcement Issue) in January.

The Museum was authorized by the U.S. Congress and will be built in historic Judiciary Square in Washington, DC (444 E Street, NW), adjacent to the existing National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial. It is expected to open in mid-2018. The infrastructure for the mostly underground museum was put in place in 2011.

The bonds are not secured by a mortgage since the Museum is being built on Federal land. They are backed by a pledge of multiple revenue sources from the operations of NLEOMF, including the revenue generated by the future Museum.

“Securing the financing will allow us to now complete construction of the museum and share the powerful story of law enforcement with hundreds of thousands of visitors each year,” stated NLEOMF Chairman and CEO Craig W. Floyd. “We could not have gotten to this milestone moment without the valued assistance of the District of Columbia Government, the determined effort of our bond underwriting firm, HJ Sims and, of course, the generous support of our Museum donors.”

The NLEOMF has set a goal of raising an additional \$25 million over the next several years to help sustain the Museum’s operating and maintenance costs, and to help retire some of the tax-exempt bonds that have been sold to construct the Museum.

For more information, visit www.SupportTheLine.com or contact Steve Groeninger at 202-737-7135. To make a donation, visit <http://www.nleomf.org/museum/support/>



Weiler spends over three decades representing, strengthening POLC

— By Jennifer Foley, POJ Editor

A favorite phrase of POLC Director Richard Weiler's seems to say it all when speaking of his noteworthy career at the helm of the Union — Weiler "grabbed the bull by the horns."

When Weiler assumed the Director's position at Police Officers Labor Council in 1984, it looked a lot different than it does today. The POLC had 1,200 members. It was just beginning a relationship with an outside lawfirm. There were only six labor representatives. The organization's finances needed help, and the union was soliciting donations to make ends meet.

Fast forward 30 years later — as Weiler looks back on his career as POLC Director, he has a lot to be proud of. Under his leadership, membership nearly tripled; there are nearly twice as many labor representatives; legal counsel is on staff; membership services have expanded; and finances are handled by an outside accounting firm. He took the reigns and helped establish the non-profit public safety program known as Law Enforcement Education Program (LEEP) and a sister union, Government Employees Labor Council (GELC), which represents non-Act 312 employees. Finally, Weiler brings membership concerns to the masses through an effective legislative lobbying firm, Karoub Associates, and via his participation on several law enforcement boards.

Weiler got his start in labor relations as a Detroit Police Department (DPD) Patrolman when he served in numerous union positions including his last as Secretary/Treasurer of the Detroit Police Officers Association (DPOA), a full-time union elected position. He knew the first and former Labor Council Director Joe Clark pretty well and heard he was going to give up his directorship and move up to northern Michigan.

"He was President of Detroit Police Lieutenants and Sergeants," Weiler said. "I had contacts with the Labor Council because I was heavily involved in labor so I was asked if I would interview for this position."

Weiler retired from DPD, accepted the position and the transformation began. Now the POLC has more than doubled its membership and the GELC has grown to 900 members since its inception and continues to grow. Weiler is responsible for POLC's day-to-day operations, as well as execution of any and all actions approved by the POLC Executive Committee.

"We only had a handful of reps at that time. Because we expanded I had to hire reps," Weiler said of the Union's current 11 representatives. "All the reps we currently have I've hired."

"One of the problems I had when I first came here is getting all the finances on track. We had a different book keeping system. The first thing I did was hire a CPA because we had to file a tax return. They never filed a tax return," Weiler said. "(Attorney) John

Lyons was just hired by the Labor Council when I got there. We came on board basically the same time. Our membership grew really because a lot of his clients he turned over to us. When he first started, it was John Lyons PC and later we integrated his staff over here."

Over the years he has watched as labor issues came in cycles. "Early issues were pay raises, improving pensions, all economics, and then in the 90s the problems started to come up with health care," Weiler said. "Employers started taking more of a look at what the health care costs were and started attempting to charge employees health care premiums, which was kind of unheard of in public safety at that time."

The cost of public pensions came under attack next in the 2000s. "Employers wanted to go from a DB plan to a DC plan. There are major differences," he said. "You know your benefits in DB and DC money is given to you and you have to go invest it yourself. DB plans have a duty disability provision and with that normally comes health care. With a DC plan, it doesn't come like that at all. Those are still major issues of today."

"Between all this stuff you have the mean-spirited Republicans, who for the past 10 years have passed all these laws against public employees and made it harder for you to survive," he said. "They don't want public employees to be vocal about who to elect and who not to elect. They want to diminish gains made through collective bargaining."

When this article was being written, the POLC Executive Committee was interviewing candidates for Weiler's position. Weiler says his replacement has his work cut out for him. "With all the anti-labor laws passed by Michigan legislature, it's a tougher job today and it's going to be tougher tomorrow," Weiler said. "They're going to keep hammering away to erode what labor has. It definitely has a major drastic change in your benefit levels. You have to resist and you've got to fight and that's all legislative issues, it's all politics."

"It matters who's in office because cops generally want to vote Republican, but you get favorable economic legislation out of Democrats," Weiler said. "It changed quite frankly after Ronald Reagan. He started the change with the air traffic controllers." Weiler was referring to Reagan's threat to fire striking air traffic controllers who did not return to work within 48 hours. "Little by little Congress and everybody was after labor issues. The Supreme Court is trying to make us all Right to Work. It matters who's in office and who's in the courts."

To further the POLC's influence on law enforcement legislation, Weiler contacted some of the other union leaders he knew. The POLC joined forces with several other Michigan unions as the

founding members of Michigan Association of Police Organizations (MAPO) in 1991. Other founding members were: DPOA, headed up by Tom Schneider; Michigan Association of Police, headed up by Fred Timpner; Detroit Police Lieutenant and Sergeants Association (DPLSA) led by John Storm; Michigan State Police Trooper Association (MSPTA) led by Scott Reinacher; and Michigan State Police Command Officers Association (MSPCOA) led by Stephen DeBoer. POLC also joined the National Association of Police Organizations (NAPO) through Weiler's association with NAPO Executive Secretary Bob Scully of the DPOA.

"What we needed was a legislative voice in Congress to help us with police issues that impact everybody throughout the country," Weiler said.

Weiler represents the POLC as Chairman of MAPO's Executive Board; was appointed by the governor to serve on Michigan Commission on Law Enforcement Standards (MCOLES) Executive Board; is Chairman of Sterling Heights GERS Pension Board; member of COPS Trust Board of Trustees; and serves as NAPO's Executive Board's Area Vice President, Parliamentarian, By-Law Chairman and sits on their Finance Committee.

Weiler worked with The Dale Corporation in Madison Heights to establish the non-profit 501(c)(3) public safety program LEEP in 1997. Weiler got to know Dale Jablonski, former owner of Dale Corp., through his father, Norbert Jablonski, a former Hamtramck Police Officer and member/officer of another State police organization. "Norbert was very involved in police matters and solicitations for benefits of police and fire in the state of Michigan," Weiler said.

The POLC had supplemented their income with solicitations, but Dale said donors wanted tax write-offs for their contributions and establishing the non-profit gave them that ability while the POLC was able to deliver free public safety programs with a strong focus on children. See www.leepusa.com for more information.

Weiler's departure from the POLC is already being recognized as an historic event. "I enjoyed 12 years on the POLC Board working with you and it was a pleasure. As far as I was and am concerned, you, sir, are the POLC," wrote David VanHouten, former Vice Chair of the Executive Committee, in an email to Weiler following the announcement. "When I retired in 2010, it was harder to leave the POLC Executive Board than it was my regular job I held for 30 years. So many good people, so many good times."

"I am both happy and sad to hear about your upcoming retirement. You deserve it and I am happy for you. I am sad that the voice and face of the POLC will no longer be there," wrote VanHouten, Dispatch Manager at Calvin College Campus Safety.

Weiler will have a hard time saying goodbye to the people he's come to know through the POLC. "I've enjoyed all the people that

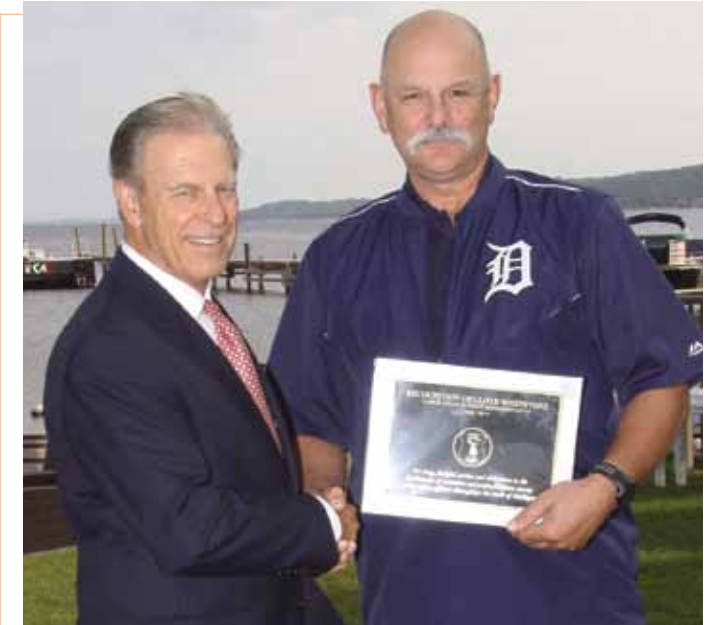


Photo courtesy of Ignite Media

POLC Director Richard Weiler (left) has made many positive changes to the Union in the 32 years he has overseen it. One of the more recent changes was adding Membership Services representative Lloyd Whetstone (right).

I've met, all the police and the majority of the Executive board people and all the employees," he said. "I hired everybody and I get along with everybody and it's a good crew."

"What I'm not going to miss is the most stressful time for me — budget time," Weiler said.

While he sees some good news on the horizon with recent raises for employees, increasing health care costs continue to be a concern. "The last three to five years we're starting to get some small pay raises, 1.5 percent and lucky to get 3 percent, but it doesn't make up for some of the things that arbitrators and employers have taken away from you," Weiler said. "When the cost of health care goes up, it leaves it up the parties what their benefits levels are with the 80/20."

Everyone who knows Weiler knows how much he enjoys golfing and traveling and that will continue in his retirement, but golfing causes him knee pain so he will limit his time on the course.

"I'll probably do a little more traveling to see grandkids, but they're getting older and they have schedules," Weiler said. "I'm still probably going to keep all my options open because I've been doing this so long, it's still in my blood. I told the Executive board that any assistance no matter when, I'll be there to help them anytime. I'm a phone call away."

"This is a foreign thing to me," Weiler said of retiring after nearly 50 years in law enforcement. "I've worked my entire life." ♥

Klik dives into retirement after 23 years representing officers

— By Jennifer Foley, POJ Editor

POLC Labor Rep. Frank Klik has spent the past 23 years representing law enforcement personnel. Now he plans to dive into retirement with his wife by his side.

“I’ll miss seeing some of the folks that I work with and I represented. They’re some good people,” Klik said. “I think the POLC is the best police organization out there.”

While he doesn’t plan to move out of state, Klik, 64, and his wife, Wendy, are planning their next adventure – traveling and scuba diving throughout the world. The Klik family is both retired from Warren Police Department where they met. “I was one of her training officers and she’s been trying to train me every since,” Klik joked.

Wendy, a Detective with Warren PD, retired seven years ago. Frank was Warren

Police Officers Association Union President for over eight years before retiring and hiring in as POLC Labor Representative nearly 15 years ago on Aug. 1, 2001.

“I ran Warren’s Association. I met (POLC Executive Director) Rich (Weiler) by attending functions and being involved with the legislative coalition. POLC and Michigan Association of Police (MAP) are part of the coalition,” Klik said. “That was much like MAPO today. We got to know each other and so when I was retiring from Warren, there happened to be an opening in this organization and he hired me.”

Klik is retiring from the POLC Feb. 25, 2016. “I’ve been basically doing the same job either with Warren or the POLC for it’s going on 23 years, it’s just time (to retire),” he said. “My wife and I are very active —

we like to travel and scuba dive. I just want to do some traveling and see where the next chapter takes us.”

Klik’s position will be filled by Scott Blackwell, who trained with him. His advice for the new Representative ... “Always be accessible to the people you represent,” and, Klik said, “You have got to be honest with your people.”

That honesty can be the hardest part about being a Rep, Klik said. “Sometimes it takes somebody from the outside to say you might be making a mistake on this issue,” Klik said. “You don’t have the emotional baggage attached. You’re looking at strictly the facts.”

It’s a tricky slope to maneuver as the job is to represent the employees in the way they want to be represented, know-

ing through experience that the issue they wish to prevail on may be difficult to accomplish.

“There are times when you have to try to make the folks realize they are hurting themselves if they continue on the way they are when they dig in their heels on an issue,” Klik said. “Some issues are worth digging your heels in on and others are not. Sometimes you’ve got to continue on with their fight for them even though it might be a bad idea. If you try to explain it’s a bad idea and they’re not buying your explanation, then you continue on with the fight and hope the mediator sheds some light on it.”

Klik stressed the importance of providing that much needed insight while still allowing the units to make the final deci-

sion. “My belief is that I work for the bargaining unit. I’ll give you my advice, but I work for you guys. If I’m doing my job correctly, I should be able to get through to them with what I think is the best course of action.”

“We’ve seen that happen before where in other organizations the Rep will resolve a contract without even getting it ratified by the union they’re representing,” he said.

Despite his retirement plans, Frank will not completely disappear in deep waters. He plans to maintain his connection to law enforcement by educating others. “I still teach some firearms classes and CPL (Concealed Pistol License) classes.”

“We’ve been diving for over 20 years now and we really enjoy it,” Klik said. Warm water diving along the Turks and



Caicos islands east of the Bahamas has drawn the couple away from Michigan and Ohio diving. “It’s warm water with 100 feet of visibility — it was just gorgeous down there,” Klik said, adding they’ve dived in Fiji too. “We’ve been doing one or two dive trips a year for several years. It’s been a lot of fun. It’s just a great group of people we go with.” ♥

New POLC Rep looks forward to long awaited opportunity

— By Jennifer Foley, POJ Editor

Chesterfield Township Police Det. Scott Blackwell was weighing his career options as he planned his retirement from police work. That decision became crystal clear when POLC Labor Rep. Frank Klik announced his retirement in February.

“I was planning to retire this spring no matter what and once I heard about this, one thing lead to another. It was kind of the perfect storm,” Blackwell said. “It’s something that was always in the back of my mind and the opportunity came up. I had a few other opportunities with some corporate things that started coming together. But this job to me — I love talking and I love debating things with people — so it’s kind of the perfect job.”

Blackwell, who turned 50 in January, served nearly 27 years with Chesterfield Township from September 1989 to Febru-

ary 2016. He was hired as an officer in 1989 and retired as a Detective. As a Detective, he was assigned to special units including: Michigan State Police (MSP)/FBI Joint Computer Crimes Task Force; Macomb Area Computer Enforcement Unit M.A.C.E./Internet Crimes Against Children I.C.A.C. as a computer forensic examiner; MSP Multi-jurisdictional Narcotics Team; and County of Macomb Enforcement Team (C.O.M.E.T.)

“I’m retiring, but I’m not going very far away,” Blackwell said. “I know a lot of the departments that the POLC represents. I’m real familiar with a lot of the cops there. I know a lot of the union reps. I’ve known (POLC Executive Director) Rich (Weiler) since he negotiated the first contract that I was involved in.”

Blackwell, who graduated with honors from University of Detroit with a Bachelor’s

degree in Criminal Justice, has been a member of the POLC since 1989. He served as Union Steward from 1992-2004 for the Chesterfield Police Officers Association (CPOA), which includes Detectives, Patrol Officers and Dispatchers, and served as President of the CPOA 2004-2014.

Blackwell feels his communication skills, being a people person, and being educated on the issues will be very helpful during negotiations. “Being able to communicate and more importantly listen, compromise, and certainly knowledge of the issues that the unit is facing are key. And just being able to work well with others,” Blackwell said. “It shouldn’t necessarily be an adversarial process. I’m hoping it is collaboration (with management) instead of a negotiation.”

Blackwell sees healthcare, benefits, and Right to Work as critical issues of concern

for future contracts.

“I think health care is going to be a real major issue that we’ll have to be dealing with for the foreseeable future,” he said. “I do see positive things happening to southeast Michigan. There is some good energy.”

Bringing benefits back from losses that occurred in the last five to eight years is a goal of his. “In my department, we haven’t had a pay raise since 2008. We’re nowhere near where we should be,” Blackwell said. However, a wage reopener this contract helped, increasing pay 3.5 percent this year and next year.

“Right to work — it’s a huge problem there’s no doubt,” Blackwell added. “It’s like the giant elephant in the room that nobody wants to talk about.” However, he said, “It seems like (legislators) realize through Act 312 we have to maintain our collective voice.” ♥



Contract Settlements

— As reported by POLC/GELC Labor Representatives



Charter Township of Bridgeport Police Officers

*** This contract was incorrectly listed as being settled by Ken Nash in the Winter 2016 POJ.**

• **New five-year agreement** expires Dec. 31, 2020.

• **Wages:**

2% effective Jan. 1, 2016.

Wage reopener effective Jan. 1, 2017.

Wage reopener effective Jan. 1, 2018.

Wage reopener effective Jan. 1, 2019.

Wage reopener effective Jan. 1, 2020.

* Increase Sergeants’ wages to 10% above top paid Patrolman.

• **Manning & Safety:** Equipment allowance increased from \$75 to \$100 yearly.

• **Fringe Benefits:** Increase Vacation Time carryover from 80 hours to 150 hours yearly. Increase Vacation Time hours by restructuring accrual schedule to gain 16 hours to 176 hours maximum at 20 years.

• **Bargaining Team:** Pat Ezel and Officer Brent Green aided by POLC Labor Rep. John Stidham. ♥

Member News

Chairman retires from career with POLC

— By Jennifer Foley, POJ Editor

POLC Executive Committee Chair Paul Combs has spent his entire police career serving the Union and its members, so his retirement from Berkley Public Safety Department will be felt by many.

Combs served on the Executive Committee for 16 years, elected first in February 2000. For the past three years, he has led the Committee as Chairman. He also served on the Public Relations/Publications Committee for Law Enforcement Education Program (LEEP).

"I can say that there's nothing that needed doing that I ever looked at as a chore," Combs said of his responsibilities as Chair. "There really is nothing about what I was able to do for the Labor Council that I won't miss."

He served as local Union President of Berkley Public Safety Officers Association for nearly six years before being promoted to Sergeant in 2003 and eventually serving as local Union Command President.

After 23 years with the department, Combs is ready to pursue a second public safety career. "I'm not sure what the future holds but I expect I'll be working in law enforcement," Combs said. "I thought I'd continue my career somewhere else. I'm too young to not do anything."

The 48-year-old Shift Sergeant, who conducted his last Executive Committee meeting March 10 and retired March 20, 2016, hopes to continue working for POLC members he's represented for over 20 years. "I'd like to continue with the union ... it depends on how things fall out," he said. "What people do in public safety is really an honorable thing. I'm going to miss serving the members, taking care of our people."

Combs will also miss his co-workers in Berkley and he said, "I'll definitely miss serving the public. That's what drew me to this career in the first place — making a difference and having a positive impact on people in the community."

In the wake of Combs departure, the Executive Committee elected Rick Bleich as the new Chair and Steve McInchak as Vice Chair and appointed Kyle Culbertson of Berrien County Sheriff's Department to fill the remainder of Combs term on the Committee. An article on Culbertson's appointment will be featured in the Summer Journal.

Combs advice for the new Chair — always keep it in the forefront of your mind that you are working for the membership as a whole. "I would say just remain focused on the cause — keep in mind what



the Labor Council does," Combs said. "Being a part of the Labor Council has been a real honor. That's much bigger than any one person. Working for the Labor Council has made me a better person. I'm very grateful for that."

While Combs has set his sights on continuing a public safety career, he does plan to rest at least for a short time. "I'm going to take a little bit of time off but not too much," he said, adding he would have more time to spend with his wife, Shannon. "The plan is I'm going to pick up my career and move on as soon as that's able to pan out for me."

Whatever law enforcement position he takes, Combs extensive experience serving the POLC will benefit him. ♥

POLC, LEEP recognized for support of cancer patients

— By Jennifer Foley, POJ Editor

The Police Officers Labor Council has provided strong support for Gilda's Club Grand Rapids for the past 15 years and the efforts have not gone unnoticed. "Police Officers Labor Council has been an integral part of our success on an annual basis as our organization is 100 percent dependant on charitable gifts," said Daryl Vogel, Gilda's Club Grand Rapids Vice President of Development. "Any time we have individuals or groups choosing to create their own event, it's very important to us."

Gilda's Run, a motorcycle poker run for charity started by 20 police officers and Dilleywackers, will host their 16th annual ride July 9th. Sponsored by the POLC and Law Enforcement Education Program (LEEP), the event raised \$20,000 last year, \$5,000 of which was donated by LEEP. LEEP will again kick off the campaign this year with another \$5,000 donation.

"Of those original 20 guys, about half still ride every year," said POLC Rep. Will Keizer, event organizer. "But we have added support from the Axemen M/C Chapter 2 (firefighters) and the Warhogs of Gun Lake (Police/emergency services personnel) and this event has grown to consistently over 100 riders and lots of new friends."

In all the event has raised almost \$180,000 for Gilda's Club, a non-profit providing free emotional and social support to men, women and children with cancer and their families and friends.

"Will Keizer has done an absolutely marvelous job of spearheading that whole event," Vogel said. "It means the world to the members because free services are expensive! Offering free programming has been the mission and vision for Gilda's Club since it started — to be a beacon of support to people on a cancer or grief journey. The POLC motorcycle run has been a huge part of that."

Gilda's Run will begin at 9 a.m. Saturday, July 9, 2016 with a

PREREGISTER, SPONSOR GILDA'S RUN

Riders who pre-register by June 20, 2016 will receive a free "16th Anniversary Gilda's Run" long- or short-sleeve shirt. Send checks made payable to: "Gilda's Club Grand Rapids", Attention: Will Keizer, 1293 Oakwood Dr., Jenison, MI 49428. Please include shirt type and size(s). The deadline to become a sponsor is also June 20. Forward a file copy of your logo for the shirt printing and direct any questions to: Will Keizer at klink132@comcast.net or (616) 648-3551. Gilda's Club is a non-profit 501(c)(3) corporation.

continental breakfast and end around 5 p.m. with a barbeque pig roast. In between, bikers and cagers will enjoy a scenic drive through Ottawa and Kent counties that starts and ends at Kosciuszko Hall, 935 Park SW in Grand Rapids.

The cost is \$30 per person or \$55 per couple, including the barbeque. It's \$10 per person for dinner only.

Vogel said it's really something special to see all those public safety officers come together to support the charity. Gilda's volunteers assist annually with the event to show their support.

"There's such a brotherhood of police, retired police officers, firefighters and public safety officers," Vogel said. "They shut off their bikes long enough for us to say thank you and let them know how much we deeply appreciate their efforts. It buoys the spirits of the staff to see the community rally around what we do on a daily basis."

Sponsors can have their business or organization name printed on "16th Anniversary Gilda's Run" shirts for a donation of \$250, either monetary or in donated items. Donations are tax deductible with 100 percent going to Gilda's Club. ♥

Holly part-time Officers to receive same representation as full-time counterparts

— By Jennifer Foley, POJ Editor

Holly part-time Police Officers will now have the same representation as their full-time counterparts who have been with the Police Officers Labor Council (POLC) for well over a decade. The part-time group joined the POLC in February to have a say in what they earn and seek some benefits.

"We've represented the full-time people there for years," said Lloyd Whetstone, POLC Membership Services. "It's just that the part-timers were all non-union. We were successful in getting the part-timers unionized. They will be in same contract as patrol."

POLC Labor Rep. Hal Telling said the part-time staff doesn't have

any benefits. "They were interested in someone representing them for their hourly wage and their personal time off because a lot of them do work 32 hours per week," Telling said.

With six full-time employees and four part-timers, most of whom work 32 hours a week, (and another part-timer expected to be hired soon), Holly Patrol Officer and local Union Steward William Hoffmann said it was time to unite all Officers in negotiations. "Everybody will then be covered and nobody will feel like they're left out dangling by themselves and it will hopefully make it a more lucrative place to look at for employment," Hoffmann said.

"Right now it's in the contract that part-time employees can work

128 hours in a calendar month (per employee)," Hoffmann said. "They have not been replacing our full-time Officers as they retired or left, so they're pretty much at their maximum right now because part-time can't exceed full-time per the contract. They've consistently kept the part-time staff almost to full-time levels for quite a few years now. Just within the last year we've lost three full-time people and they've only replaced one."

The part-timers are paid a lot less an hour than the full-time employees. "Right now their pay is only a fraction of what a full-time person makes and that coupled with no benefits — it's just not fair to them," Hoffmann said. "They have no sick, no medical, no personal, absolutely nothing. They get their straight

wages and that's it."

"We have a scale for wages. (Part-time Officers) do not," Hoffmann said. "It's a flat rate — that's pretty much where it stays at unless the Village administration authorizes some sort of wage increase. Back when I started in 2000, the starting wage for them was \$9 an hour and it's gone up significantly to around \$15. Even despite that, they still don't make what a Tier 1 (full-time) employee would make for their first probationary year."

The POLC contract for full-time Officers expires June 30, 2016.

Continued on page 14



Mundy Township joins POLC, forms authority

— By Jennifer Foley, POJ Editor

Swartz Creek and Mundy Township Police wanted to join forces to save money while providing better coverage, but the problem was deciding which of their unions would represent them? Swartz Creek Police were represented by the Police Officers Labor Council (POLC) and Mundy Township Police Patrol and Command Officers were represented by Michigan Association of Police (MAP). Swartz Creek Officers touted the benefits of being POLC members to the Mundy Township Officers.

“We had been with MAP from the inception of unionizing in the early 90s and it was just an issue of POLC representatives being more local and they had a good reputation — they knew the situation,” said Mundy Township Sgt. Joel Grahn. “I talked to Lloyd Whetstone (POLC Membership Services) a bunch of times because he did represent the Command at Grand Blanc City and I had friends over there. Even though we wanted to stay loyal we wanted to make a change as well.”

“They liked the fact that we have attorneys on staff that are available to them and their union rep is local and they know me,” said POLC Labor Rep. Hal Telling.

After taking a vote of their memberships, Mundy Township Patrol joined the POLC Dec. 29, 2015 and Mundy Command followed suit on Feb. 4, 2016. Meanwhile, Swartz Creek City Council and Mundy Township Board voted to form the Regional Police Authority of Genesee County. The Authority will be represented by the POLC.

Whetstone said the Authority will save administrative, building and equipment costs. Mundy Township Police Chief Dan Atkinson will be the Authority Chief and, once the transition is complete, Mundy Township Deputy Chief Rick Clolinger (retired Swartz Creek Police Chief) will no longer be employed.

“Instead of two chiefs, we’ll be down to one chief. The Deputy Chief is only there to facilitate the merger. Instead of supervisors in each, now we only need one supervisor,” Grahn said, adding a Mundy Township Police Supervisor recently retired as well as two Mundy Officers. “There’s not going to be any cuts because everybody’s kind of gone down through attrition over the past year,” Grahn said. There will also be less clerical staff.

“They got the right guys in place. Our chief was second in command for State Police when he retired. They hired him to get a

guy who could bring people together,” Grahn said.

While the Regional Police Authority has been formed, there’s no collective bargaining agreement yet. They’re in negotiations right now with the POLC. The Authority Board is made up of three Swartz Creek officials, three Mundy Township officials and a citizen at large. Telling is negotiating with the labor attorney the board hired and the chiefs of police.

“We’re representing Swartz Creek and Mundy Township and both individual contracts exclude the part-time officers,” Telling said. “I’m negotiating the contract for the authority only at this point. When they become the authority, the part-timers will be included. All together they will be 28 police officers in the authority if you include part-timers.”

“They have 180 days after they form the authority and a board for it under the State of Michigan to get everything in place. They’re trying to mesh the contracts because Swartz Creek and Mundy Township are real similar,” Grahn said. “Then all members of the regional police department will work in one building.”

Swartz Creek Patrol contract, which was settled by the POLC, expires June 2016 and the Mundy Township Patrol and Command contracts, settled by MAP, expire March 31, 2017. “Generally you wait for the end of contract, but . . . technically it’s a new employer with the Regional Authority. That’s why we had to decide who the labor rep would be,” Grahn said. “They honor the contracts that are in place. POLC is handling it . . . and anything that comes up that pertains to the contract they will fight for it.”

The authority will also improve emergency response. “When they’re at a critical scene or fatal accident or homicide they can move resources and flood that area and accomplish more,” Grahn said. “Mundy Township is two times bigger than Creek. We put out two cars, they do one. When one gets tied up on scene, we have an extra officer who can respond. They have one command officer, we have three. They have one secretary, we have three.”

Other departments will be invited to join the authority once details are finalized. “Our Chief and Deputy Chief have talked to quite a few township boards,” Grahn said. “Others have expressed an interest in joining.”

disciplinary action and acquiring some sick, personal and vacation time. “Some of these guys are scheduled to work a permanent shift. For them to call in right now or take a day off, they just don’t get paid anything,” Hoffmann said. “Being at-will employees, as we all know, there really doesn’t have to be much rhyme or reason for them to be let go. Considering what they do, the efforts they put forth, I don’t think it’s fair to them.”



TERMINATED OFFICER REINSTATED

— By Jennifer Foley, POJ Editor with excerpts from mlive.com

Bullying will not be tolerated. That’s the message the POLC sent and a terminated Wyoming Officer’s employers heard loud and clear after two arbitrations and a lawsuit.

Wyoming Officer Eric Grunewald was reinstated to his patrol job at the end of 2015 following months of legal moves, which ended in a settlement with the POLC and the City making an undisclosed cash payout to the Officer.

In addition to two arbitrations filed by the POLC, Grunewald filed suit in September 2015 in U.S. District Court in Grand Rapids against the City and Police Chief James Carmody, alleging violations of the Family and Medical Leave Act. Grunewald claimed he was fired for using too much sick and vacation time to care for his mother, wife and two sons when they were suffering from serious health problems. In the suit, he claimed the Chief said officers who use sick and vacation time are disloyal to the department. Grunewald and his wife, Amanda, sought \$3 million in damages.

Carmody denied the allegation and the City said Grunewald was fired based on performance.

“This is stereotypical bullying mentality where employees are threatened and abused,” said POLC Labor Rep. Will Keizer. “I have spent my entire adult life fighting bullies typified by this behavior and this is exactly why police unions are so important. It’s important POLC members in these situations know they’re not alone — they have a union to support them.”

The case got its roots from a perpetual last chance agreement (LCA) Grunewald signed with the Employer without the POLC’s input in May 2007. The LCA required the Officer to obtain “authorization” whenever he left work prior to the end of his shift.

“After that he never got in trouble for anything,” said POLC Labor Attorney Brendan Canfield. “Fast forward to April 2014 and he was working on a desk that he was building for his son and he got some epoxy in his eye.”

Grunewald called off sick for training the next day, obtaining authorization from his lieutenant to use the sick day, however, he

decided to attend the training anyway when his condition improved. During training, his condition worsened and he called off sick sending a text and leaving a voicemail message for the lieutenant, who did not respond. He also told a fellow officer to notify the lieutenant in person, which the fellow officer did.

As a punishment for not obtaining a second authorization to leave, the City later issued additional restrictions on leave time including: requiring a sick slip be submitted; limiting vacation hours to 10-hour blocks; requiring vacation time to be approved prior to posting the schedule; and reporting any absences directly to the on-duty supervisor, which is contrary to the parties’ practice.

“They did a last chance agreement without the union’s knowledge and consent,” Keizer said. “We didn’t even know it existed until the initial discipline came out. And they were relying on this last chance agreement to impose this additional discipline.”

The POLC filed a grievance contesting the restrictions as discipline. The Employer argued it was not discipline, but an Arbitrator ruled the actions were discipline and the Employer lacked just cause to impose them.

This ruling was critical for Grunewald because the Employer terminated him in June 2014 for taking a vacation day to care for his sick wife after the vacation schedule had been posted. Since the Arbitrator ruled the Employer lacked just cause to impose that rule, the POLC sent a letter to the Employer stating they should return the Officer to work with back pay and full benefits. When the Employer refused, the POLC pressed forward with the second arbitration for discharge without just cause.

“We settled the lawsuit and arbitration that morning (Nov. 23, 2015) and I’m confident we would’ve won the arbitration because the rule that they used to fire him no longer existed because it was reversed in the prior arbitration,” Canfield said. “He was given a cash settlement as part of the lawsuit and in exchange he agreed to withdrawn his grievance and the lawsuit.”

As far as the LCA goes, Canfield said, “Those (subsequent restrictions) were eliminated through our first grievance so they’re gone. Our contention would be that (the LCA) is unenforceable so it doesn’t matter if it exists on paper.”

Holly part-time Officers

Continued from page 13

Hoffmann said he expects negotiations for a new contract will start by the end of March. “We’ll probably sit down and negotiate wages and benefits for part-timers at the same time,” Telling said. “They will all be included in the same contract.”

Part-time employees are concerned about protections during



POSING WITH A PRESIDENTIAL HOPEFUL

POLC Executive Committee member Tom Wilk, Macomb College Police Department Captain, posed with Republican Presidential Candidate Donald Trump during a rally at the college in March 2016.

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