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Representing Las Vegas Metro Police Department Officers and Deputy City and Municipal Court Marshals

VOLUME 10 | ISSUE 6

March/April 2016

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The Las Vegas Police Protective Association is affiliated with the following organizations at the state and national level:

NAPO – National Association of Police Organizations, representing over 241,000 law enforcement officer members in more than 1,000 police associations nationwide.

"BIG 50" – An informal association of the 50 largest law enforcement associations in the United States.

SNCOPS – Southern Nevada Conference of Police and Sheriffs





Executive Director's Message

POLICE OFFICER MARK CHAPARIAN, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Trust in Us: Putting Faith in Your Association Leaders

The dispatcher's voice crackles over the radio and places you and another marked unit on a "shots fired" call, and suddenly your heart starts beating at double the pace as you grab your microphone, acknowledge the call and flip a U-turn to head toward the call. You and your partner arrive, and you exit your car to take up a good spot that provides you cover and concealment. Your partner is stacked behind you as you assess the situation and determine if it's better for you to move closer to where you believe the suspect is hiding. You turn toward your partner and say, "Cover me." With those two simple words, you have turned the safety of yourself and the security of your family over to a fellow cop, and you don't think twice about it. You *know* that he will do everything in his power to make sure you are safe and taken care of.

The unit supervisor has returned from an "action" meeting and his message is crystal clear: "We need more arrests made, more search warrants served and more narcotics seized." Another detective has developed a good confidential informant who has proved to be reliable and helped develop a case for trafficking. An additional squad mate has returned to the office with a diagram of the target house and is already banging away at his computer to draft a search warrant. You don't bat an eye at the warrant or the information the C.I. has provided. As you prepare to drive to the residence

to execute the warrant, you *never* question the integrity of the case, the warrant or your fellow detectives' work.

As you're working a robbery case, you develop a lead that brings you in contact with a potential suspect. After you interview him, you have clear probable cause to arrest him for robbery with a weapon. Your partner takes him to the car as you quickly follow up with a phone call. You join your partner at the car and ask him if he has searched the suspect. He says, "Yes, nothing but a wallet and some keys." You *don't* think twice about whether or not his search was thorough or that he may have missed a gun prior to both of you driving the suspect to be booked.

The Association concludes contract negotiations, signs a "memo of understanding" or takes a stance on an issue that involves a Metro management decision. A seasoned officer who is assigned to the Association picks up the other end of the phone that you have dialed and explains to you the who, what, where and why of a situation you are involved in. *Do you think twice about what he is saying? Do you doubt that he has your best interest at heart? Do you question his loyalty?*

Most of us who are reading this are police or corrections officers. Our very existence depends on faith, trust and loyalty to and from our fellow officers. This

(continued on page 21)



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Keep an Open Mind on Candidate Endorsements

POLICE OFFICER MIKE RAMIREZ

Assistant Executive Director/Director of Governmental Affairs

While reading this article, I hope you can keep an open mind no matter what your political affiliation is. In the coming weeks, the PPA will be interviewing candidates who are vying for our sought-after political endorsement. When it comes to giving out endorsements, we do not choose a candidate because they are a Democrat or a Republican. We choose the candidate who will help fight to keep our rights and benefits that we deserve. We go through a long endorsement process that takes days, sometimes weeks. We speak to all candidates regardless of their political affiliation. The PPA's Political Action Committee (PAC) asks meaningful, vetted questions, and thoroughly interviews each candidate.

I was in Carson City during the 2015 legislative session, spending countless hours trying to convince people that our profession is important, and sometimes those conversations fell on deaf ears. I do not want what happened during the 2015 session, where we came close to losing hard-fought benefits, to happen again during the 2017 legislative session. This is why our political endorsement process is so crucial. That is why the PAC is doing all we can to help put the right people in power who will protect our rights and benefits.

I need every member to take your political party out of the equation and put your thinking caps on. What I mean by that is, regardless of your political affiliation, I need you to have an open mind when our endorsement list is released. All the candidates we endorse will be the leaders who are willing to help the Police Coalition of Nevada achieve our future goals.

You may ask who the Police Coalition of Nevada consists of. I wrote an article last year telling you about this new coalition we formed with every major law enforcement group in the state, including LVPPA, SNCOPS, PMSA, NAPSO, FOP, PORAN, WCSDA and LVPOA, to name a few. Bills like NRS 289, which details our rights as peace officers, NRS 288, which gives us the right to collective bargaining, and the PERS Bill, which is our retirement, are a few of the laws that we fight to keep every two years during the legislative session. From judicial races, city council races, county commission races, assembly races, senate races and congressional races to

the U.S. Senate race, we thoroughly talk to each candidate, and as a group decide who will be the best to help all of our members. It may seem as though we endorse a certain party line, but that is not true. We endorse the best candidate to help us, regardless of party affiliation. Republicans such as Randy Kirner consistently fight to change PERS, even though PERS is one of the best-funded and well-run retirement systems in the nation. Republicans such as Pete Goicoechea believe that public employees' benefits packages are too lucrative. Republican candidate John Moore has openly criticized law enforcement and firefighters in public testimony, as he did to Fire Captain Rusty McAlister when Rusty was giving testimony in his Government Affairs Committee.

All that I ask of you as a member is to keep an open mind, and if you have questions about the endorsement process or a particular candidate, please contact me directly. The threats against our benefits are real, and we are diligently trying to endorse candidates who have looked us in the eye and pledged to be a friend to Nevada law enforcement officers P# 9489 and do what it takes to help protect our benefits. Once the PAC interviews are done, you will receive an email with the list of the candidates we endorse.

Stay safe out there. As always, if you have any questions or concerns, feel free to contact me anytime at mr Ramirez@lvppa.com. **VB**

RETIREMENTS

01/15/16	Shelby Darden, P# 7888	POII	12 years
01/20/16	Matthew Buchanan, P# 5790	POII	17 years
02/01/16	James Easterling, P# 7923	POII	13 years
02/02/16	John Taitano, P# 8598	COII	11 years
02/12/16	Chris Norton, P# 2650	COII	32 years
02/26/16	Robert Kegley, P# 4981	COII	20 years
02/29/16	Brian S. Hoffman, P# 5199	COII	19 years

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Proposed IRS Normal Retirement Age Regulations



CORRECTIONS OFFICER THOMAS REID

Director of Operations

Background

In 2006, Congress passed the Pension Protection Act (PPA). It established new funding requirements for defined-benefit pensions, like NVPERS, and includes reforms that will affect cash-balance pension plans, defined-contribution plans and deferred-compensation plans for executives and highly compensated employees.

In 2007, the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) announced final guidance to multi-employer and private pension plans. The issue was how to define the normal retirement age (NRA) with respect to public-sector plans, most notably public safety retirement plans. The 2007 IRS regulations, in attempting to put all retirement plans into a one-size-fits-all approach, failed to recognize that virtually all public employee plans use a two-pronged formula — years of service and age — to determine an unreduced retirement benefit. The IRS attempted to establish a new regulation that requires a pension plan's normal retirement age to be the age that is representative of the typical retirement age for the people in the industry that the plan covers. As you can imagine, virtually all local, state and national organizations that represent public employees stood up and took notice of this IRS regulation.

In 2012, the National Association of Police Organizations (NAPO), a

national police employee organization lobbying group that we belong to, asked if we could attend a hearing on the NRA issue along with some of the NAPO lobbyists. We jumped at the chance to hear from the national legislators, the U.S. Treasury, the IRS and many other public employee pension plan leaders. After several hours of testimony and debate, the end result was that the IRS proposed a two-year deferral of the NRA implementation to public employee retirement plans, like Nevada PERS. This delay was extended multiple times so that the IRS could get broad input from other local and state plans on how this legislation could affect and potentially harm public employees.

What Are the New Proposed Rules?

On January 27, 2016, the Internal Revenue Service published NRA rules for public and nonpublic retirement plans. Of course, any federal government regulation is filled with volumes of legalese and technical mumbo-jumbo. The good news is that our retirement plan is really unchanged. The IRS has carved out special rules for qualified public safety employees like us.

There are three definitions, or safe harbor exceptions, under this proposal specific to law enforcement.

- Age 50 safe harbor for qualified public safety employees:** A normal retirement age under a governmental plan that is age 50 or later is deemed to be not earlier than the earliest age that is reasonably representative of the typical retirement age for the industry in which the covered workforce is employed if the participants are qualified public safety employees.
- Sum of 70 safe harbor for qualified public safety employees:** A normal retirement age under a governmental plan that is the participant's age at which the sum of the participant's age plus the number of years of service that have been credited to the participant under the plan equals 70 years or more is deemed to be not earlier than the earliest age that is reasonably representative of the typical retirement age for the industry in which the covered workforce is employed if the participants are qualified public safety employees.
- Service-based safe harbor for qualified public safety employees:** A normal retirement age under a governmental plan that is the age at which the participant has been credited with at least 20 years of service under the plan is deemed to be not earlier than the earliest age that is reasonably representative of the typical retirement age for the industry in which the covered workforce is employed if the participants are qualified public safety employees.

As you can see from the rules, our Nevada PERS has retirement rules that fall within these regulations, which is a good thing. If there is no opposition to these regulations, the effective date of the final rules will be January 1, 2017.

If you have any questions about the more technical aspects of the NRA, call me at (702) 384-8692. **VB**

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Are You Prepared?

POLICE OFFICER BRYAN YANT

Director of Technology

Are you properly prepared for what your tour of duty holds in store for you and your family? Let's face it, law enforcement today is much more dangerous than before. Policing is a very physically and mentally demanding profession. You need to be prepared for everything that is thrown your way. LVMPD can prepare you through annual training and supply you with the basic equipment needed to perform the job, but is this enough?

All too often after a critical incident, we hear about officers not protecting their families' interests. Having a will or living trust set up will help mitigate tough decisions should something critical happen to you. You should remove your house from the assessor's website to conceal your residence from public view. You should have a life insurance policy in place to help offset future debts or loss of income should you pass away.

Do you train with your tools more than the required quarterly qualifications? If not, why? Do you exercise and stay active? If you aren't doing these things, it's safe to bet the bad guys are. While you are on and off duty, do you mentally rehearse what-if scenarios? If you aren't doing these things, it's safe to bet the bad guys are. Do you carry a firearm off duty? We surely know that criminals

are never off and are always armed.

Do you know your rights under NRS 289? Do you know your contract and the discipline matrix? Don't wait to understand these very important items until it's too late. Don't be a subject officer or have your rights violated.

Prepare yourself for your day. Protect your job, family, friends and everything you work hard to earn and enjoy. Be ready. You can never pick the day when you will be confronted by conflict. **VB**



CALENDAR

- March 4 Employee Appreciation Day
- March 13 Daylight Saving Time begins (spring forward!)
- March 27 Easter Sunday
- April 18 Tax Day



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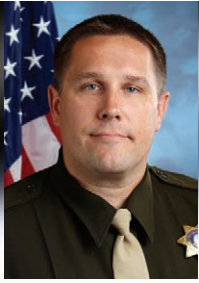


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Membership Participation

DETECTIVE STEVE GRAMMAS

Secretary

As in any organization or association, membership participation is a crucial aspect of what we do at the LVPPA. The Executive Board has been trying to do several different things to increase member participation. We attend briefings to get input from the members, blast out emails and videos, provide the *Vegas Beat* magazine, and update our website and Facebook page. We also host our general membership meetings on the first Thursday of the last month of each quarter. We provide food and beverages for a more relaxed feel, and we invite everyone to attend and actually enjoy the meetings. They are your chance to voice some concerns in the general forum.

In the past, we used to host the general membership meeting and then kick the members out so we could conduct our regular Board of Directors meeting. I thought it was counterproductive to invite people in only to throw them out after 45 minutes to have our other meeting. We have since canceled our regular Board of Directors meeting so we can truly dedicate all the time to the general membership meeting without asking people to leave. Starting with this March's general membership meeting, we have decided to hold a drawing for a trip for one to Police Week this May in Washington, D.C. The PPA will be paying for

the member's airfare, hotel room and a dinner out with the Executive Board members who are at Police Week. The only way to be a part of this and future drawings is to attend the general membership meetings. Each time you attend a general membership meeting, you will receive a ticket for the drawing for the next trip, which will be held during the first general membership meeting of each year. We have also been fortunate to receive donated dinners from local businesses that we are able to give away at the general membership meetings.

Anytime we get things donated to the PPA, we do our best to pass them on to the members. If a UFC event falls in line with us having a general membership meeting, you can be sure that we will be giving the first crack at the tickets to the members in attendance. We know there are people who just can't make it to the meetings by no fault of their own, but we really are trying to increase the level of participation P# 14031 of the membership, and the giveaways seem to be a good avenue that we are going to continue with.

These are some of the efforts that the Executive Board has made in an attempt to increase participation at the meetings. These meetings are truly for and about *you*, the membership. So please, if you can attend, your presence will be appreciated as well as beneficial. Let your voice be heard, whether for good or bad. Either way, feedback is always welcomed by the Executive Board. As usual, if you need anything or have any questions, please call or email me. **VB**

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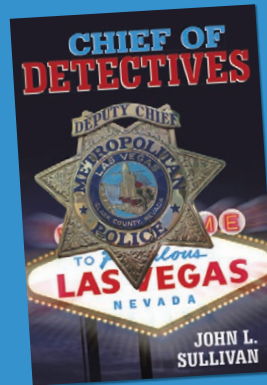
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DAVID ROGER
General Counsel

An Apology

As a newly elected district attorney, I granted a favor to a friend that has resulted in profound consequences for the men and women of this Department. I sincerely apologize for being shortsighted and promise to work every day to right this wrong.

In 2003, my friend Sheriff-Elect Bill Young asked me to approve hiring in-house counsel for the Department. He made this request because NRS Chapter 252 stipulates that the district attorney must represent and defend elected officials and County entities. Because my predecessor granted the same privilege to Sheriff Jerry Keller, I agreed to Sheriff Young's request.

By doing so, I eliminated the checks and balances that the Legislature put in place by making the district attorney the public prosecutor. As envisioned by lawmakers, the district attorney should be responsible for determining whether a client's decisions are legally sound and fiscally prudent before filing or defending lawsuits.

Today, the Sheriff employs his own internal law firm composed of four attorneys. Additionally, the legal department has a significant budget to retain outside counsel for matters that the general counsel chooses to send to external law firms. I am told the legal department's budget is roughly \$10 million.

To be clear, the Department determines which course of action is most beneficial; the attorneys must pursue the Department's directive. I am not suggesting that the Department's lawyers are at fault; the legal department must comply with its client's demands. However, had I not given up my authority, the Department would have to obtain the district attorney's approval before litigating matters.

Today, many people believe the Department has adopted an "our way or the highway" approach to labor relations. It has been reported that the Sheriff is fond of the saying "Press your court clothes." This is taken to mean "If you don't like the Department's position, file a lawsuit." This heavy-handed approach would not happen if I had not relinquished authority to the Department.

The following are just a few examples of the Department's litigious attitude.

Administrative Transfers

Our collective bargaining agreement provides that employees may grieve disciplinary transfers, but have little recourse when they are administratively transferred. The Department, for years, used administrative transfers to discipline officers.

PMSA filed a lawsuit against the Department and won. Instead of accepting the adverse ruling, the Department appealed the case all the way to the Nevada Supreme Court. Once again, the Department lost in front of the appellate

court. The prolonged litigation cost employees thousands of dollars in legal fees.

Refusal to Accept Grievances

Our contract requires the Department to accept a grievance unless, in its opinion, the matter does not meet the definition of a grievance. Our only recourse is to litigate the matter before an arbitrator, the cost of which is about \$5,000. If the Association convinces the arbitrator that the issue meets the grievance requirements, the Association must spend more money to convince another arbitrator that its position is correct.

In a recent case involving decentralization, the Association filed a grievance concerning whether a specific contract provision applied to the decentralization of the Narcotics Unit. If the contract article applied to the transfers, the Department would have to recognize seniority when transferring detectives.

Article 12.1(B)(5) defines a grievance as "a dispute regarding the application or interpretation of any and all provisions of the Collective Bargaining Agreement between the Department and the PPA." The Association contended that the transfer article applied to decentralization, and the Department stated that the article was not applicable. Thus, the arbitrator concluded, after several hours of testimony and thousands of dollars in arbitration costs and legal fees, that the parties were disputing the application of an article in the CBA, the very definition of a grievance. From our perspective, it was a ridiculous waste of time and money.

When we finally presented our case to another arbitrator and the Labor-Management Board, spending more money and legal resources, we prevailed on the issue.

Refusal to Adopt a Commonsense Approach to Association Leave Time

During the last legislative session, SB 241 became law. The bill provides that if a collective bargaining agreement allows public employees to work on Association issues during business hours, the Association must reimburse the employer for the time spent away from the workplace. The law allows associations to either make financial concessions or pay cash to reimburse the employer.

While the Association offered to make concessions, the Department demanded cash. Consequently, we ended up in court to challenge the Department's heavy-handed and unreasonable mandates. Today, our civil rights lawsuit against the Department is pending in federal court before the Honorable Lloyd George. Once again, the Department has decided to spend tax dollars to fight its employees over a ridiculous issue.

Ignoring the Peace Officers' Bill of Rights

NRS Chapter 289 provides procedural safeguards for officers who are subjects or witnesses in Department investigations. The Department is required to provide 48 hours' notice, an explanation of the allegations and the right to representation.

Over the past year, the Department has violated this law during cases of officer-involved shootings. On one occasion, a CIRT supervisor interrogated a SWAT sniper at the scene of a shooting concerning the officer's use of stop strips. When the member's attorney approached, the startled supervisor claimed that she needed answers to her questions. Apparently, the Department feels its need to know trumps Nevada law — it does not.

On another occasion, a FIT detective barged into the UMC Trauma Center to take a tape-recorded statement from an officer who was shot during an OIS. The officer's PPA representative was detained in the lobby and was not allowed into the officer's room. The detective interviewed the officer, in violation of NRS 289, while the officer was heavily medicated. The detective finally concluded the interview when the sedated officer asked for an ice chip to quench his thirst.

When the PPA demanded to know why the detective did not afford the injured officer representation, the detective claimed he had a right to interview the officer and would "take the hit" if he was wrong. Subsequently, the Department acknowledged that the detective overstepped his authority. We are waiting to hear what "hit" the detective took for his egregious violation of the injured officer's rights.

Threat to Prohibit PPA Representatives From Speaking With Members Before FIT Interviews

For years, PPA representatives and their attorneys have responded

to critical incidents to provide counsel for subject and witness officers. Recently, a non-PPA member who is a FIT detective complained that the PPA attorney was meeting with subject and witness officers before he could interview them.

The Department took the side of the whining detective and proclaimed that detectives are entitled to "the first crack at interviewing officers" without PPA representation. The supervisors also intimated that the PPA may be banned from entering crime scenes until investigators are finished interviewing officers. Another lawsuit is ready to be filed against the Department.

Conclusion

These are just a few recent examples of the Department taking an unreasonable, hard-line stance against you, the very people who are expected to put their lives on the line to protect our community. We will continue to fight every day to ensure that you are treated fairly. When the Department crosses the line, we will be there with you to hold it accountable. **VB**

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— Vince Lombardi, cited in *Great Quotes From Great Leaders*

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The Zebra Unit shows students how to rescue hostages from several types of common vehicles, including buses.

LAS VEGAS METRO'S ZEBRA FORCE

MEET THE 40-MAN ZEBRA UNIT WHOSE STRIPES GET EARNED AND TESTED TO THE EXTREME — 24/7

BY JAKE SWANSON

SW.A.T. These letters set the mind churning, conjuring images of black-clad supermen bristling with weapons and equipment leaping through windows and blowing doors off hinges, then performing a delicate yet violent ballet as they overwhelm their objective with the goal of saving the innocent and punishing the guilty. Not too long ago, I spent a week in an intermediate SWAT course with the Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department (LVMPD), and I can tell you firsthand that, with the exception of the black uniforms, when you imagine SWAT, these are the guys you see in your mind's eye.

The LVMPD covers all of the unincorporated areas of Clark County, and as such it is responsible for a lot more than just that glittering island in a sea of desert. Las Vegas itself is a mere 140 square miles, a tiny piece of Clark County's sprawling 8,091 square miles. Clark County has a normal population of two million, but in 2011 over 36.5 million people visited Las Vegas alone. With every kind of landscape and terrain — from mountaintops to rivers, deserts, cities, the Hoover Dam and countless other environments — the 40 men of the LVMPD's Zebra Unit, or simply "Z," are indeed those supermen, and once a year they invite tactical officers from around the country to come learn how they do it. In 2013, I was lucky enough to be able to attend and see Zebra Unit in action.

TEAM TACTICS

This article is not just a chance to sum up the five days of exceptional training that Zebra provided, but some of the topics covered by the over 250 years of SWAT experience that the instructors share: high-risk search-warrant service, active-shooter responses, hostage rescues, vehicle assaults (both cars and buses), downed-officer rescues, containment, explosive breaching, and slow and methodical team tactics. This is a lot of information to get down-range in five days, but the caliber of Zebra's instructing officers allowed us to drink heartily from this firehose of knowledge. Oh, and let's not forget that we had the requisite shoot-off for our class's Top Gun spot.

As I said, this was not a basic SWAT course. Everyone who attended serves as a tactical officer, and as such, we were expected to arrive with the required skills. Zebra's mission during the week was to tell, show, teach and assist us in learning how they do it, because they do it right, and anything we could take back to our home agencies would only help us do our jobs better and safer.

The four- and five-man active-shooter response tactics I saw during the training are the best I have seen, period. Patrol officers are taught and updated so that they can either form their own cells as the first responders, or they can be folded in with SWAT members as they arrive, in a cohesive and effective tool to mitigate the horror that is today's active-shooter



Instructors demonstrate how to explosively breach a window.

scenario. Search warrants (Vegas style) opened my eyes to the world of entry-team officers working in pairs. No more “You go left, and I’ll go right” in my world. Now I understand how to flow into and through a space with my partner, addressing all threats with a speed and level of mutually supporting cover that was previously lacking in my tactical toolbox.

Explosive breaching really goes hand in hand with hostage rescues. When it comes to high explosives, there is a very small margin for error, and I can tell you I have not even heard about anyone who breaches better than Vegas. With over 250 operational explosive breaches under their belts, these guys are surgeons. Their backup plans have backup plans, and when a hostage is in imminent danger, Zebra gets inside like greased lightning, and their ability to dominate spaces, mitigate threats and remove hostages from harm’s way is awe-inspiring.

When called upon to rescue a downed officer — either a patrol officer or a team member who goes down during an operation — things tend to get rushed and thrown together. Not so in Clark County. The rescue drills are methodically analyzed, tested, modified, retested and practiced to a level of competence that makes me think that if I ever get shot and cannot self-evacuate, I hope these guys are coming to get my bacon out of the fire. If I can get just one thing that I bring back from this course implemented at my agency, I hope it is the downed-officer rescue training I learned while there.

Containment may not seem very sexy, but it really is the most important aspect of tactical operations after a successful P# 13647 entry. It turns out that there is a whole lot more science and procedure to it than I used to think. It is a vital component and needs to be carried out by highly competent SWAT officers, not passed off to patrol as an additional duty.

Vegas Metro SWAT has pretty much done it all, but they are happy to say that they have never had to do a bus takedown. They train like hell for it, though, and have come up with a definitive plan for every type of bus in their jurisdiction. But I can tell you that if someone is ever dumb enough to take hostages on one in Zebra’s neck of the woods, I am sure it will be a much worse day for the bad guys than it will be for the hostages. Their standard passenger vehicle takedowns are a sight to see. From the approaches to breaking windows and apprehending suspects, the tactics we learned did not miss a beat.

All that and more was crammed into five days of classroom, range and field training. If not for the unbelievable competence and professionalism of our instructors, there is no way any of us would have been able to retain the sheer volume of data to which we were exposed. Day five was exercise day, which saw us broken up into operational teams and given the brief on our next obstacle. Then it was up to us to devise the plan and execute. The exercises involved schools, vehicles, hostages and search warrants — all with more role players than expected — not to mention flashbangs, K-9 units and a sense of urgency that you don’t usually find in training scenarios. We spent our last day thinking, planning, attempting, readjusting and learning. Our cadre of teachers was there every step of the way to observe so that in the after-action reports we actually got the “take homes” as far as lessons learned, ensuring that we implement these tactics, techniques and procedures (TTPs) in the real world.



The Zebra Unit is highly trained when it comes to stopping active shooters, whether working alone or with a larger element.

TIER ONE SWAT

People from all over the world come to Vegas to play, to act in ways they never would at home and to explore the world of excess. There is another contingent that comes here — those who put their lives on the line so that others may live. Vegas is a mecca of tactics and thought-provoking innovation in this constantly evolving world. Operators from every organization come to share thoughts, ideas and capabilities with Vegas Metro SWAT, and there is good reason. In the community of nonfederal law enforcement, the LVMPD’s Zebra Unit is, without a doubt, Tier One. Their absolute com-

mitment to excellence is unparalleled; men train and wait years for a coveted spot on the team. Some of the instructors have been with Zebra for more than 20 years operationally.

The 40 men of Zebra average over 350 high-risk warrants and 50 hostage rescues a year. I’m not sure about yours, but that is a pretty serious operational tempo in my world. One thing that was repeated over and over to us was that they were there to teach us how they do it; our job was to take from this course a new set of tools that we could incorporate into our departments as needed and where applicable. These lessons we were taught were not based on ego, but instead on real-world application and testing. The men of Zebra were not trying to make us clones of them, either. As true professionals, they trusted us with their hard-earned knowledge so that we could better ourselves. I can tell you that every attendee of the 2013 course left a better, more capable officer than when he arrived.

To close out this brief view of our experience in Vegas, there are a few more things you might want to know. Our instructors were not sent to teach; they remained operational the entire time we were there. Warrants were served and rescues were made while we were trying to get some sleep at night. The sacrifices made by the teaching cadre were huge. They weren’t just burning the candle at both ends — they tossed it into an incinerator.

The Top Gun of our class went to a lieutenant whom I personally would only want to get into a fight with if he was on my side. We had another interesting classmate, the new commanding officer of Zebra itself, who was there to make sure he knew his men’s capabilities. No special consideration was given; he attended as an operator just like the rest of us. In some casual conversations with him, I found out that he was with us after just completing the breaching course and the negotiator program, and there was no rest in sight for him, with sniper school next on his agenda. It is rare to have a commanding officer with such commitment to not only be aware of how his men operate, but to earn the qualifications to jump into a stack

and have his men trust him without reservation because he has put “boot to ass” and earned the right to bear the Zebra name. Zebra has been doing it a long time, and I can tell you that Vegas is in good hands.

We live in a world where we can never know enough. And while there is no “one-stop shopping experience” for a SWAT officer, the LVMPD’s Zebra Unit is as close to a megastore as you will find.

This article originally appeared in Tactical Weapons May/June 2015 and is reprinted here by permission of Harris Publications. For ordering information, please visit harristacticalstore.com. VB



Zebra Unit operators are masters of clearing various structures, flowing seamlessly between rooms.

Fit for Duty

POLICE OFFICER II DAVID TILLEY

Member

David Tilley writes regularly for Vegas Beat to highlight the importance of fitness and to share some of our members' fitness routines and secrets. If you would like to be profiled, feel free to reach out to him at D14202T@lvmpd.com.

Highlighted Member

Cory Church, P# 9689

Height: 6'1"

Weight: 225

Years on the Department: Nine

I'm going to start this interview with a question you probably get a lot: Do you compete as a bodybuilder? If you don't, would you like to someday?

I don't actually compete. It's something I've contemplated many times and have had mixed feelings about over the years. Recently, in the last year, I was actually prepping to do my first show and made the final decision not to go through with it. I had a lot on my plate and my area of focus during that time, so I turned my attention toward testing for sergeant.



I understand you played football and baseball before you became a police officer. How do those experiences help you in the gym?

It is true, I was an athlete my entire life, until that quickly derailed due to a lot of severe injuries that I just couldn't come back from. What I learned most from those years being so competitive was not so much about actually working out, but rather just being consistent. I learned through recovering from major injuries that it becomes hugely psychological. You have to actually learn to train your *mind*, and

not always your body, before you can get your body to where you'd like it to be. Once I was able to learn the mindset of staying fit, as opposed to just going to a

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gym and tossing weights around, my workouts, routines and knowledge exploded, and I was able to break so many barriers I battled with while playing on those teams.

What motivated you to start weight training?

I think there's no secret that growing up, I always idolized the big names in sports and movies ... Jordan, Payton, Jackson, Griffey, Schwarzenegger, Stallone, etc. Those were a guy's guys — tough, strong, superhero status. So like most little boys, I aspired to be a superhero in some capacity. I'd sit for hours watching, emulating every word, move or play I saw just for one moment to replicate that in my own life. I believed that I could hit a last-second jumper, or score that 80-yard rushing touchdown to win the game, or jump from a helicopter and save thousands of people by taking out a whole army led by a mischievous dictator. Seeing all those people somehow *always* winning and saving the day by defeating the bad guy? Yep! I was all in, so I started lifting weights around the age of 11 or 12, just like Arnold and Sly did, in hopes that one day I'd have my opportunity to be someone's hero just like they were.



Do you have any tips for my readers on how to keep that motivation going?

I'm frequently asked this question by numerous people at work and in the gym. The key goes back to what I mentioned earlier, and that is find the right mindset. Keeping motivated has less to do with the actual act of working out and more about finding the real reasons you want to get healthy to begin with. I read a lot, I study a lot and what I come across most often is this negative dialogue that you have to be selfish, self-centered and egotistical to always be in the gym. That's the furthest thing from the truth. The key here is to stay motivated, and you need positive people in your life who aspire just as much as you do

and genuinely want to see your success just as much. When people become unmotivated, it's because they don't see results, get injured from bad training advice or get a crash course on terrible diet plans, all of which have never worked and never will. It's simple things each day I look for to keep me positive and motivated to go to the same gym day in and day out. That's

(continued on page 16)



John P. Aldrich, Esq.

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FIT FOR DUTY

(continued from page 15)

the best starting point I can offer. Be thankful you are afforded the opportunity to wake up, go work out and make an impact on someone, whether directly or indirectly.

That being said, what is your current workout routine?

Right now, since my wife competes, I'm at the gym seven days a week. Yes, that seems fanatical and not feasible for most people, and I get that. I've made many decisions in my life, one being that physical fitness will always be on my top priority list because it's what keeps me stress-free and happy. Each day I go in with one goal: just train one new body part. I don't overdo it. I simply do four or five major exercises for that muscle group, finish off with light cardio and abs and head home. I complete all my workouts in roughly one hour. Yes, it's very possible if you preplan and take time to organize what's important in your life.

What is your current diet?

Currently, I eat approximately eight times a day, roughly every two to three hours to be exact, and without fail. Anyone who knows me knows that I'm constantly eating. Portion-wise, I hit about 6 ounces of protein combined with 4 ounces of carbs and 4 ounces of vegetables. I have zero sugar or salt in my food and I stay away from any sports drinks. I stick with water and coffee.

Keeping the fit lifestyle in mind, where do you see yourself this time next year?

Well, hopefully, still doing this great job and continuing to educate my co-workers and the public on how to get fit and stay fit, using LVMPD as a major avenue to get my voice heard.

If you were the Sheriff, how would you incorporate fitness into the Department?

This is a bit of a tricky question to answer. In private, when I've answered this question, it was met with lots of backlash and uproar. The biggest issue was finding some way to have a standardization that was fitting for males and females. As we all know, we had to meet a "minimum fitness standard" upon employment and were tested for that accordingly. The problem with that basic program is that it's outdated and not necessarily suitable for everyone who wants to become an officer. I truly believe that you need to be fit to be able to do this job day in and day out, but my idea would be to somehow implement a tier system that allows you time to reach pinnacles, and upon reaching those pinnacles, you gain points. As you gain P# 8780 points, you're placed into categories or brackets, if you will, that help you stay motivated to keep on top of your fitness once you've graduated from the Police Academy. I see it all too often that upon graduation, officers fall back into their old daily routines and let everything they spent the past six months working so hard to gain go to waste. Why not keep up all that hard work and continue to thrive from it? After all, we have inherently one of the most stressful and dangerous jobs on this earth. Exercise combats so many of the negative effects created by this career, it would be nice to see everyone unified through fitness and rewarded for it. **VB**



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Thaddius "Toby" Yurek joins GGRM after 20 years of service with the Henderson Police Department, retiring as a lieutenant in 2015. He received his law degree and was admitted to the State Bar of Nevada in 2008. Toby knows first-hand the challenges faced by law enforcement workers and their families. As an attorney, his unique background and experience enables him to serve and protect the needs of those putting their lives on the line every day. **Greenman, Goldberg, Raby, Martinez Law Firm has helped injured people in Nevada for over 45 years. This is our community.**

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Retired LVMPD and President, Metropolitan Police Museum and Historical Society

Celebrities are nothing unusual for our community, but when one dies here, that is unusual.

The date was January 16, 1942, and World War II was underway, with the attack on Pearl Harbor only six weeks past. Across the United States, the government was engaged in a critical and massive war bond effort to help fund the enormous military machine needed to defeat Nazi Germany and Imperial Japan. Many Hollywood stars offered their names and time to the effort. Carole Lombard, an accomplished actress, was one of those stars. She was married to Hollywood's most sought-after leading man, Clark Gable.

Lombard had traveled with her mother, Bess Peters, and Gable's press secretary, Otto Winkler, to Indiana for a war bond rally and was to head back to Los Angeles by rail. Lombard decided she wanted to fly. The other two were afraid to fly and did not want change plans. After some debate, they agreed to gamble the decision with a flip of a coin. Lombard won the flip and a flight was booked. Early P# 761 the next morning, TWA Flight 3 departed Indiana for Los Angeles with a planned fuel stop in Las Vegas.

At 1907 hours on January 16, Flight 3 departed Las Vegas on its final leg to Los Angeles. Shortly after takeoff, the aircraft failed to clear the Mount Potosi peak and crashed 32 miles southwest of Las Vegas. All aboard died on impact.

Although there was yet to be a formal search and rescue unit, a search and rescue party composed of Clark County Sheriff's Deputy Jack Moore,

George Bondley, Robert Griffith, Jack Hart and Otto Swartz left at first light on January 17 and climbed the mountain to find the crash scene. Two of the searchers were left behind to secure the scene while the others returned to organize a recovery team. Military personnel, additional Clark County deputies, and Las Vegas Police, fire personnel and ambulances responded, but the rough terrain and significant snow made recovery difficult.

Clark Gable arrived in Las Vegas that afternoon, as did several media organizations from Southern California, New York City, Chicago and other areas. The nation had lost a true star of the silver screen and several members of the United States Army Air Corps, the future Air Force.

The following are the names of the passengers who perished in that crash: Corporal M.B. Affrine, Army Air Corps; Second Lieutenant James C. Burham, Army Air Corps; Sergeant A.M. Belejekak, Army Air Corps; Second Lieutenant Hal E. Browne Jr., Army Air Corps; Sergeant Frederick P. Cook, Army Air Corps; First Lieutenant Robert E. Croch, Army Air Corps; Frederick J. Dittman, Army Air Corps; Second Lieutenant K.T. Donahue, Army Air Corps; Lois Hamilton, Detroit, Mich.; Carole Lombard, Hollywood, Calif.; First Lieutenant Robert F. Negren, Army Air Corps; Sergeant Edgar A. Negren, Army Air Corps; Second Lieutenant Charles D. Nelson, Army Air Corps; Mrs. Elizabeth K. Peters (Lombard's mother), Hollywood, Calif.; Second Lieutenant Stuart L. Swenson, Army Air Corps; Private Martin W. Tellrank, Army Air Corps; Sergeant David C. Tilgman, Army Air Corps; Private Nicholas Varsamine, Army Air Corps; and Otto Winkler, movie press agent, Hollywood, Calif. The crew members were pilot Wayne C. Williams, co-pilot Morgan A. Gillette and flight attendant Alice F. Getz. **VB**

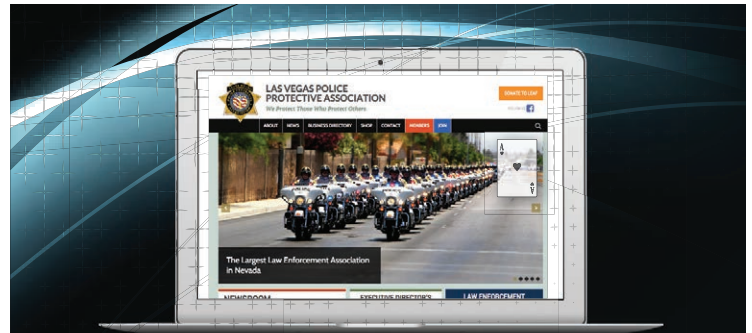
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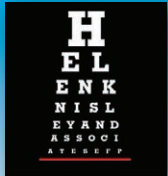
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EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

(continued from page 4)

does *not* stop at hostile calls, serving search warrants or dealing with potentially armed suspects. Each one of us assigned to the Association is either a police or corrections officer just like you are. We all have the very same interests and concerns for a safe, productive, non-hostile, lucrative career as you do. We are not "untouchable" in our assignments, nor have any of us ever forgotten where our loyalty lies.

The vast majority of the members I speak with on a daily basis understand this and know this to be true. From time to time however, I run into some members who may question our loyalty, our desire to serve fellow officers and our will to fight the fights we know are right and even doubt our wisdom and experience when we suggest to negotiate instead of fight a case we are clearly going to lose. I have always found it ironic that the Department will trust its officers to guard the President of the United States while carrying multiple firearms and never bat an eye, and yet will make policy that those same officers shall not enter the station key room unsupervised. If that sounds as ridiculous to you as it does to me, think about how ridiculous it sounds that you would certainly trust me with your *life* while in the field and yet may doubt my ability as it relates to our contract, a Metro management decision or the ability to know what politician to endorse because they support what we fight for each day.

If you find yourself to be one of those people, ask yourself why. If you observe others acting in such a manner, ask them why. In the meantime, get involved with your Association, get to know your area representatives, attend general membership meetings and participate in Association functions. If America trusts me to stand next to the president while I carry a firearm, won't you trust me to negotiate a contract, fight for you at IA and advise you as issues arise with Metro management?

I offer my sincere thanks to all who continually support the Association and its commitment to excellence to its members. Only together can we build a strong future for ourselves. **VB**

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This issue contains TWO ways to win your share of **\$500 CASH**



Giveaway #1: One **\$250** prize

Members who find the hidden  in this issue of *Vegas Beat* and register through www.LVPPA.com will be entered into a drawing for \$250. You must enter by Thursday, April 7, 2016, to be considered eligible. Telephone entries will not be accepted. Visit our website for more details.

Giveaway #2: Five **\$50** prizes

We've hidden **five personnel numbers** within this issue of *Vegas Beat*. If your number is among them and you call (702) 384-8692 to let us know that you found it, you'll win **\$50**. If you didn't find your number this time, try again in the next issue where we'll hide five more!

Excludes P#s listed in Retirement and End of Watch sections of *Vegas Beat*

Cash is great, but our giveaways aren't the only reasons to read *Vegas Beat*.

Each issue gives you the latest information on

- Contract negotiations
- Retirement considerations
- Association news
- Benefit changes
- Hot topics on the job
- Upcoming events

For so many reasons, it pays to read *Vegas Beat*.

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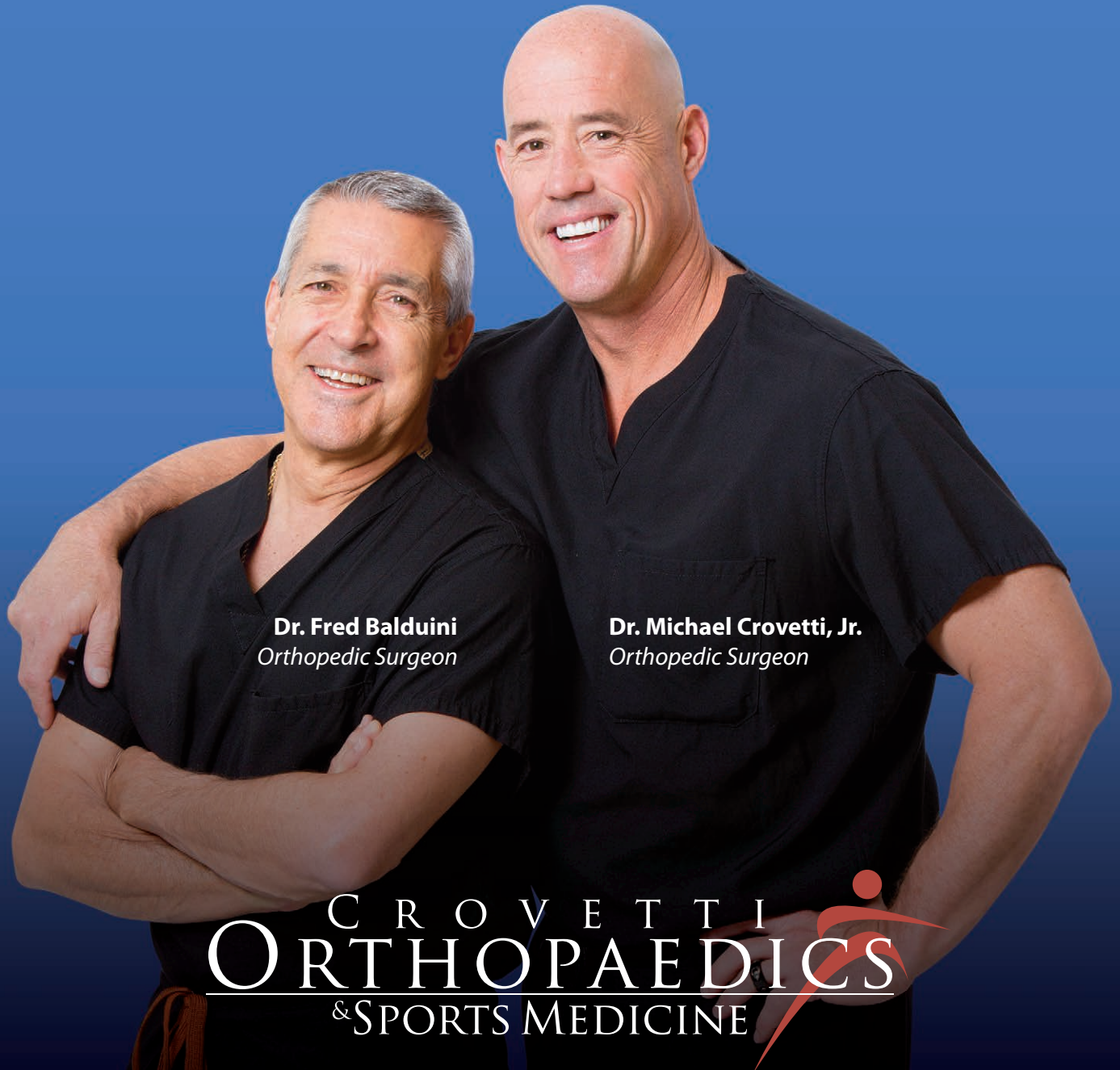


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