



LVPPA VEGAS BEAT

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

VOLUME 16 | ISSUE 3

September/October 2021

REMEMBERING FALLEN HEROES



Officer Jason Swanger

LAS VEGAS METROPOLITAN
POLICE DEPARTMENT

EOW: June 24, 2021



Trooper Micah May

NEVADA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC
SAFETY — HIGHWAY PATROL DIVISION

EOW: July 29, 2021



Officer Phil Closi

LAS VEGAS METROPOLITAN
POLICE DEPARTMENT

EOW: August 11, 2021

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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.

UCOPS – The United Coalition of Public Safety





President's Message

DETECTIVE STEVE GRAMMAS, PRESIDENT

The Free College Basics

I wanted to focus this article on the application process for the free college benefit program that the LVPPA has secured through a partnership with Washington National. Many of our officers have taken advantage of the program, and hopefully many more will do the same.

To start, our officers need to go to the LVPPA website at LVPPA.com (via a desktop computer, not a phone) and select Members > Free College Benefit. From there, you will be prompted to click on the "Learn More" button, which takes you to the LVPPA Benefits Supersite (mybensite.com/lvppa). This is where the process starts. This page provides a lot of information on the program. It has two links, one for the associate degree program and one for the bachelor's degree program. For the associate program, you will be directed to Eastern Gateway Community College, where I currently attend. (Go Edugators!) The bachelor's program will run through the same Eastern Gateway Community College page, but you will instead select Bachelor's Degree on the top of the home page.

To apply to the associate program or the bachelor's program, you will be required to first complete some registration information. The next step is filling out the FAFSA form at FAFSA.ed.gov. This is federal financial aid, which odds are no LVPPA member will qualify for due to our income. However, if by some chance you do, the aid money would go to the school. This is the trade-off for free college education through the schools.

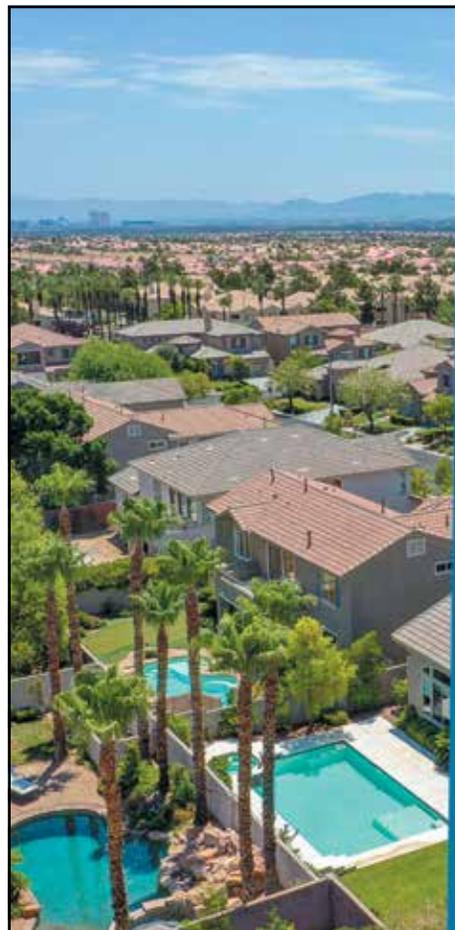
Now that the FAFSA form is done and submitted, you will eventually get an email from the school informing you that you can enroll in classes. First, if you want an associate degree that credits your Academy time and/or your instructor development class, contact LVMPD training to get an email copy of your Academy courses as well as your instructor development certificate. These two documents could give you between 30 to 33 credits toward your associate degree in criminal justice. The associate in criminal justice with police academy credit is the only degree program where Academy time can be applied. You may still get an associate degree in anything that the school offers, but you won't get all of the free Academy credits. You will then email the school your high school transcript or GED. You may also send over other college credits to have them applied.

Once this is done, you can start picking out your classes for the coming semester. You have the choice, through the school's website, to control what and how many classes you want to take. You must maintain a C average to get your degree.

As I am currently doing the associate program myself, I can say it is time consuming. Some classes are easier than others. Since each semester is accelerated, the school packs 16 weeks' worth of classes into eight weeks. There is no live instruction; instead, each week/module has reading material, videos and examples. During the week, you will typically need to participate in one or two discussion topics and respond to one or two classmates' posts. This is how "attendance" is taken. There will also usually be a quiz, test or written assignment due every week. If you take statistics, let me warn you, it *sucks!* I am kidding. The class was very tough and took up most of my free time during the week, but a lot of good information was obtained.

Hopefully, some of this information has been useful. This does not cover every aspect of the process or experience; rather, it should give you some good guidance on how to maneuver in the online college space. I am entering my third semester. So far, I am very glad I have gone back to school. It is rewarding to me personally, and it is rewarding to my kids, who see me, their dad, at my age, with my busy job and family, still attending college.

Getting an education is something no one can take away from you. I told one officer that while the journey may seem long, time is going to go by regardless of how you feel. In that time, what we put into it is what is important. If it takes six years to get a degree at whatever pace you are working at, six years is going to pass anyway. What you put into those six years is what will count. Give college a try. Maybe it will work for you, or maybe it won't. However, there are many benefits to getting that college degree, especially as it relates to promoting on our agency. **VB**



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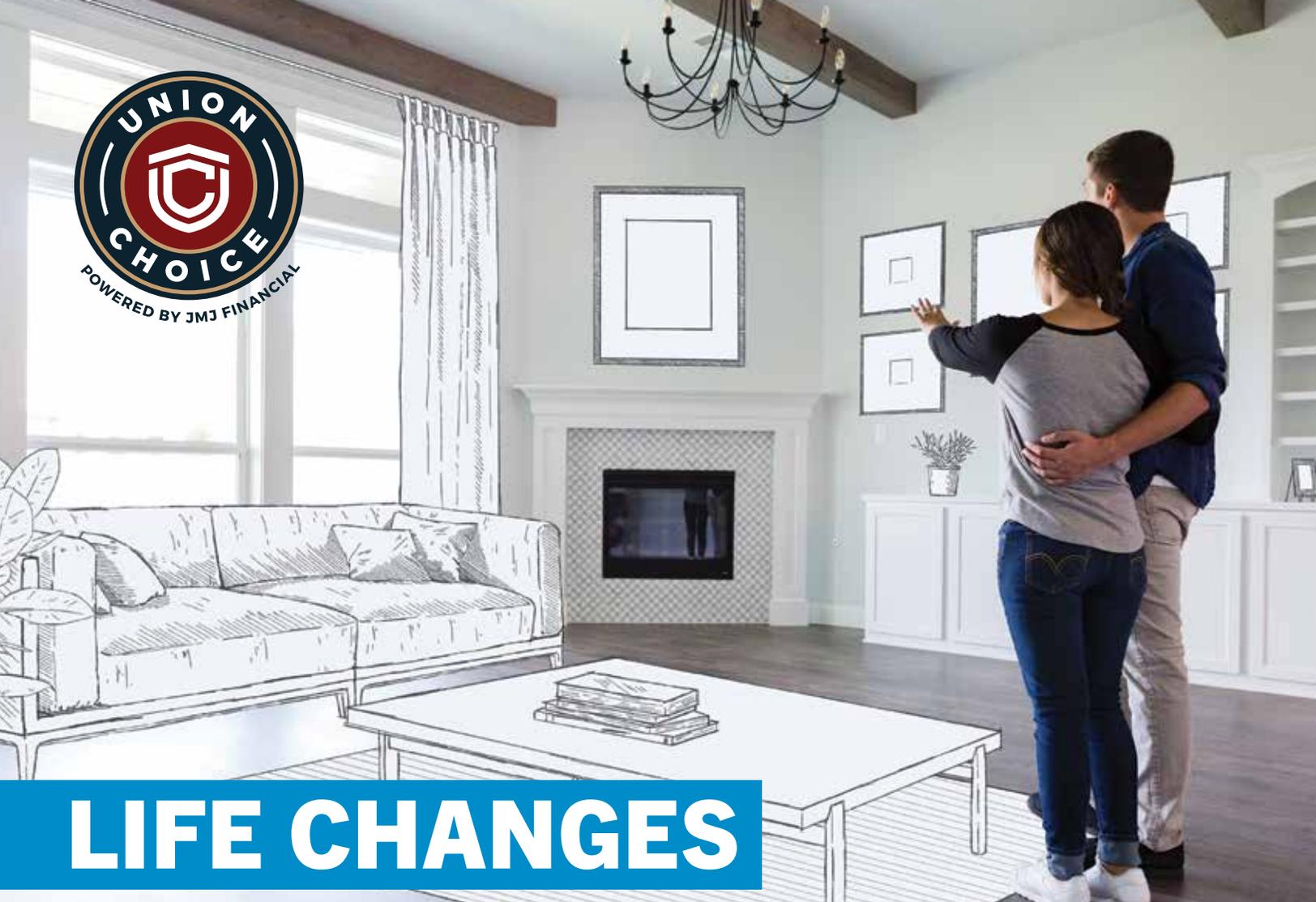


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The Choice Is Yours

CORRECTIONS OFFICER SCOTT NICHOLAS

Vice President

As we approach another election for Clark County sheriff, I wanted to share some of the history of our sheriff's races with those of you who were not around for the past elections, along with LVPPA's endorsements in those races.

I'll take you all back to the beginning of my career, when then-Sheriff Jerry Keller was an easy choice for the membership to support. Fast forward to when Bill Young was running for sheriff in 2002; it was a little bit closer, with Young beating Randy Oaks by 30,000 votes.

In 2006, Young was given a letter of endorsement from the LVPPA and its membership, but when he decided not to run for re-election, the membership was given a choice to support Doug Gillespie or Bill Conger.

Per the LVPPA Bylaws, the vote of the membership would only be considered if at least 50% of the membership took part in voting. The ballots that were returned did not reach the required number of membership votes, so the Board of Directors met and decided that it would endorse Gillespie over Conger. Needless to say, a lot of the members were pissed off that their vote didn't count.

Gillespie went on to beat Jerry Airola in the 2006 election, and then won his re-election in 2010 against Laurie Bisch.

In 2014, Larry Burns announced his plan to run for sheriff against Joe Lombardo. The LVPPA notified the members that if at least 50% of them did not vote, then the Board of Directors would make the decision on who to endorse.

This endorsement vote P# 18426 returned just over 65% of the ballots from the membership to endorse Burns for sheriff.

Lombardo went on to beat Burns in the general election and became Clark County sheriff.

In 2018, Lombardo was endorsed by the LVPPA and the Public Safety Alliance of Nevada (PSAN) and was re-elected to the office of sheriff.

The LVPPA decided that every vote should count even if the percentage didn't reach the 50% that the Bylaws required, so the Board requested a Bylaw change. So now, no matter how many officers vote, the majority who take part in voting will decide who we endorse.

In this upcoming election, we already know that former Undersheriff Kevin McMahill is running for sheriff and that former Assistant Sheriff Tom Roberts is his competition, so when the voting starts, please cast your vote for whoever you think should lead our Department.

Please be safe, and thank you for your membership. **VB**



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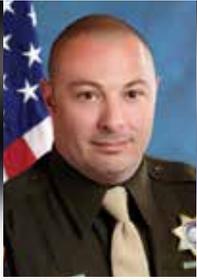
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Patrol Briefing Topics

POLICE OFFICER BRYAN YANT

Sergeant-at-Arms

In case you missed us at your area command patrol briefings, we have some very important information to keep you informed. We are always trying to keep you updated on various topics through a variety of means. Please, if you are not receiving emails from the PPA, contact our office and we can check to ensure your information is accurate in the system. We also ask our Board of Directors from every area to report back to the members after Board meetings on important topics. If you are unsure of who your area representative is, they are listed on page 3. We also produce videos and a podcast to ensure important topics are discussed and you are kept informed. Most importantly, we are always available 24/7 for any calls or texts to answer questions.

I will summarize most of the topics we have been discussing in our patrol briefings.

Contract Negotiations

The final two years of our current four-year contract have been finalized. As you are aware, there was an increase in your contribution to PERS of .75. We negotiated with LVMPD, City of Las Vegas and Clark County and agreed

on a high and low COLA cap based on CPI (simply put, the average costs of goods, products and services that are calculated in a regional area). The floor for COLAs will be 2%, again based on CPI, and the ceiling will be 3%, again based on CPI. This year's COLA will be 3%, and the final year's COLA will be determined at the end of the year based on CPI. Clothing allowance and Health and Welfare contributions will remain the same. You will also receive a one-time nonpensionable payment of \$750. If you have questions on contract negotiations or would like to take part in them in the future, please contact Scott Nicholas or Dan Coyne.

Body-Worn Cameras

As always, the topic of body-worn cameras is always important. They are a very valuable tool not only to record evidence, but for transparency and showing exactly what you do on a daily basis to protect and serve the community. Please keep your camera activated and recording the entire event. Policy allows several exemptions as to when your body-worn camera may be deactivated during a call. Again, we cannot stress it enough, the camera helps clear and exonerate you and provides empirical evidence to what exactly occurred. Keep your body-worn camera on and activated; let it be your witness. If the battery dies, immediately notify your supervisor, document it and get a replacement camera.

Howdy! We all have to do our part so... mask up, stay safe, play safe.

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David Roger, the former three-time elected Clark County district attorney, is a valuable asset to our membership. His mission is to provide the membership with the best legal advice and opinions. Roger continues to film videos providing his legal opinion on various topics. Again, if you are not receiving his videos, please contact our office. All of his videos are on his website at davidroger.us and also on the LVPPA's YouTube page. Also on the website is a digital copy of the criminal offense handbook and traffic citation guide. If you have any legal questions or scenarios you would like to get Roger's opinion on, please call him or email him at droger@lvppa.com.

Slowing the Momentum

Hot topic words and phrases such as "slowing the momentum on calls," "de-escalation," "assembling resources" and "depolicing," what do they mean to you? Let's be clear, in the last legislative session, the Nevada Legislature passed laws designed to create depolicing and limit police powers — handcuffing what officers may do. Jaywalking has been decriminalized, and instantly everywhere we are seeing the impacts of not being able to enforce a law that saved lives. The politicians believed jaywalking was a means for officers to harass citizens and did nothing more than create police encounters. The lives that will be lost due to lack of jaywalking enforcement and education are on the hands of these very politicians. How many lives need to be lost? When we talk about slowing the momentum and de-escalation, again, we have to police within policy and law. This P# 16390 has always happened throughout policing, and with any law or policy change we have always pivoted and adjusted our tactics and training and worked within policy and law. We are encouraging you to have squad-level discussions on these topics and preplan squad-level responses. While you are en route to calls, preplan, gather resources, establish roles and responsibilities, engage your supervisors and follow the excellent training you have received.

Politics

In several months, the membership will be receiving two very important emails. One will be regarding the endorsement for the office of governor of Nevada. You will be asked who you would like the PPA to endorse for governor. The vote email will come with a link that will take you to a page where you select the name of the person you would like to endorse. It will literally take 30 seconds to complete. Once the votes are tallied, we will take the total to our coalition. The PPA belongs to a coalition of law enforcement associations in Nevada, and we have the largest membership in the group. We will present our recommendation and together deliberate on the endorsement for governor. The second email will be regarding the LVMPD sheriff's race. Again, you will receive an email link with the same vote link. The membership will completely control the endorsement. Whichever candidate has the most votes from the membership will receive the endorsement from the PPA.

If you have any questions on these topics or anything else at all, please call anyone of us at any time. Thank you for your membership. Please continue doing the excellent job that you have been doing and be safe! **VB**

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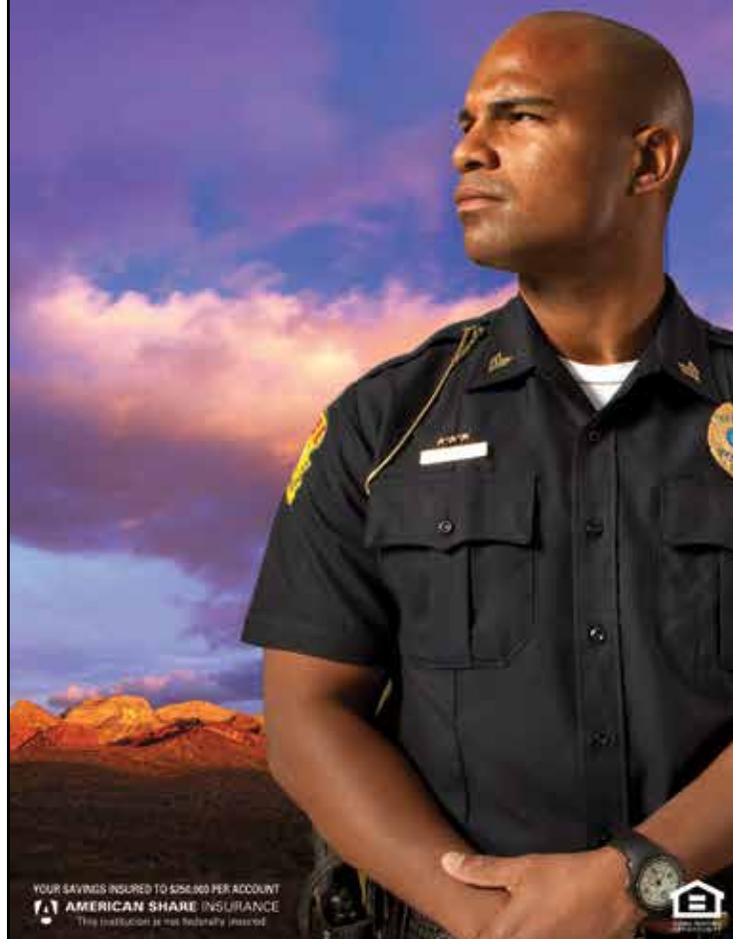
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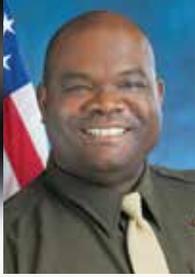


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Where Do You Turn?

CORRECTIONS OFFICER MYRON HAMM

Director of Corrections

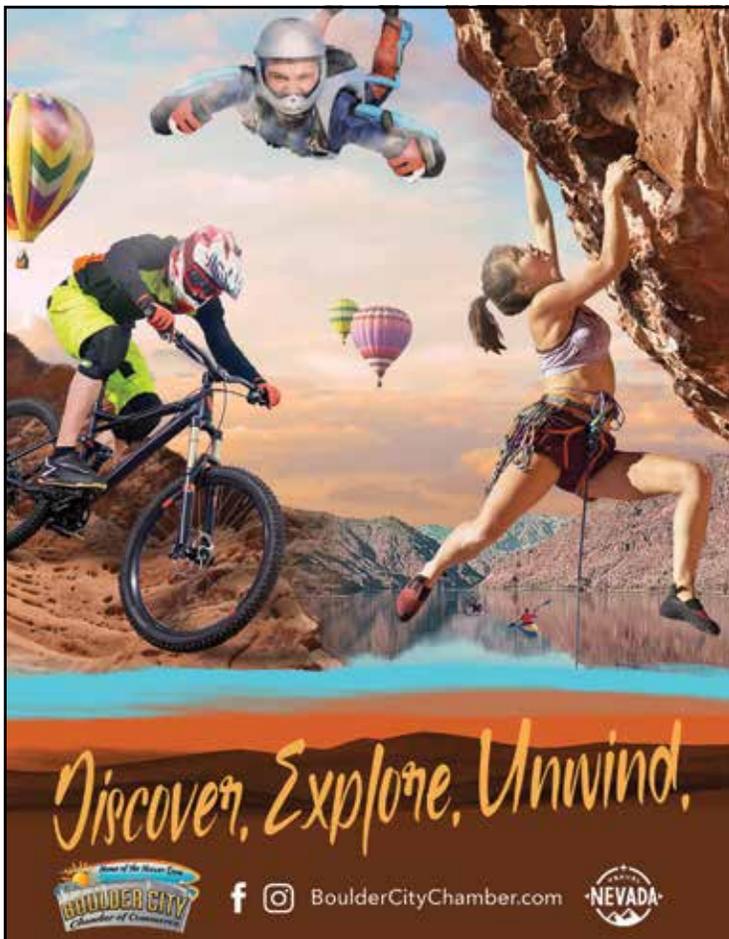
I now have a teenage son, and from day one I have always drilled it into him that he can turn to his mom and dad whenever he has a problem. I am overjoyed when he comes to me looking for advice on a problem and we solve it together. He is not always correct in his way of thinking, but I am happy to say that he trusts me enough to ask for my help. When members of the LVPPA come to me for guidance or help, I am all too P# 9805 eager to find an answer or assist in any way I can.

Our members are told from day one that if they have a problem, to report it and always trust in your chain to have your back. Imagine going to work and being singled out and made to feel like you don't belong or are part of the problem. Imagine not fitting the image of what some antiquated, narrow-minded supervisor thinks you should look like. Imagine being ridiculed, picked on and chastised for simply being different. This treatment causes stress and hinders your ability to perform your job in a safe and prudent manner. You are told from day one in the Academy that this type of treatment will not be tolerated by Metro. You are also told that you have rights and that there are systems in place that will protect those rights. Believing this to be true, you speak to your representative and we utilize the systems that are in place. In the past, we would give our member their options,

such as filing a diversity complaint. Diversity will investigate and attempt to ensure our member's rights are being adhered to — unless your complaint happens to be against a supervisor or against the actions of a supervisor. Funny how a supervisor can violate policy, such as taking a picture of an employee from behind while they are sitting in a module. This would clearly be a violation if it were performed by a line officer. A supervisor can carry their phone within the confines of CCDC for duty-related purposes, not to share vacation photos or take pictures of unsuspecting officers. But it happened, and we were told it was handled. If you were to file a complaint, you would still get an interview and be told that your complaint will be thoroughly investigated. Then all of a sudden it seems like the person filing the complaint becomes a target. So what is the outcome of this complaint? In my opinion, nothing. It is a rare occasion when a supervisor is held accountable for their actions. I have seen instances where an officer is investigated, sustained and receives discipline. On the other end, a supervisor commits the same or similar infraction and it is handled differently.

So what do you do when you firmly believe that the system you are following and adhering to has failed you? None of us are willing to give up or give in, so our only option is to push back. It is instilled in us from day one that if you trust the process and the system, you will be fine. Our members have a belief that our hard work, dedication and willingness to serve will see us through the darkest of times. But it is difficult to have faith in a system controlled by someone who wants to discipline you just so "I want to get his attention" (a true quote from a captain). Scare tactics and bullying are not the way to get an employee to become better at their job. Communication, respect and commitment can do the job better than threats. I firmly believe that our management does not get the most out of their employees because they think there is a separation; they have an elitist attitude toward their subordinates. How many times have you heard the term "open-door policy"? Ask yourself this question, why are the entrance doors to the captain's office locked on the 12th floor?

A former president once said, "The greatest leader is not necessarily the one who does the greatest things. He is the one that gets the people to do the greatest things." What have our leaders done to inspire us and make us want to be a part of their vision? I guess you have to have a vision in order to get someone to look for one. **VB**



EDITORIAL POLICY

1. Opinions expressed in *LVPPA Vegas Beat* are not necessarily those of the Las Vegas Police Protective Association.
2. No responsibility is assumed for unsolicited material.
3. Letters or articles submitted shall be limited to 500 words and must be accompanied by writer's name but may be reprinted without name or address at writer's request.
4. Freedom of expression is recognized within the bounds of good taste and limits of available space.
5. The Board of Directors reserves the right to edit submissions and/or include Editor's Notes to any submitted material.
6. The deadline for submissions to *LVPPA Vegas Beat* is approximately 30 days prior to the issue date.



Better Than I Found It

DETECTIVE BRIAN GRAMMAS

Director

I always tell my kids, when you make a mess, clean it up. I am a firm believer in returning something in better condition than when you borrowed it. Have you ever loaned something to someone only to receive it back in horrible condition? As I enter the end of my career with LVMPD, I truly hope that my time with this agency has left a positive mark on someone.

When I joined the LVPPA Executive Board, I had a single goal in my mind: to impact the lives of our members by making this Association the best it has ever been. Whatever the job was — representing our members in internal investigations, showing up on the scene of an OIS or putting together fun events such as our Halloween haunted house — I worked toward that goal.

I am proud of the direction that we are heading in. From day one, our focus has been our members and creating an environment of trust and dedication. Policing has changed and will continue to evolve, and I hope that the people in charge begin to realize that we have a commodity that is necessary and irreplaceable. It is easy to sit up on a perch and bark out orders and attempt to believe that you are working for the greater good.

Everything that is done today should be an effort to protect the men and women who put on a uniform, push a black and white, enter a module with 100 inmates or work through pain and injury. At the end of the day, people want to feel they are appreciated and to be treated like adults.

The one thing I will really miss is watching and conversing with new officers who are eager to perform and protect this community. I will miss guiding and advising them as their careers flourish and they ascend into positions of leadership. So hopefully I have left the LVPPA in better condition, and whoever is next up will enjoy and strive to ensure that our organization reaches new and better heights. **VB**

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Contract and CPI

CORRECTIONS OFFICER DANIEL COYNE

Treasurer

During this year's contract negotiations, CPI language was added to the contract on how we will calculate our COLAs in the future. The numbers that we will use to determine our CPI will come from the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) West Region Class B/C-sized cities (a city with a population of fewer than 2.5 million people). Once our population exceeds 2.5 million, we will use data from Class A-sized cities to determine the COLA.

We will use the prior years' numbers to calculate our COLA with a floor of 2% and a ceiling of 3%. As an example, if CPI were at 1.7% the prior year, then we would get a 2% COLA, or if it were at 3.9%, then we would get a 3% COLA. The BLS publishes a monthly report on its website documenting the prior month's CPI numbers. Since these reports are monthly, we will be able to determine by the end of January what COLA we will be receiving in July.

I have been asked what, exactly, CPI is. Well, CPI is short for the Consumer Price Index, which is a measure that examines the weighted average of prices of a basket of consumer goods and services. It is calculated by taking the price changes for each item in the predetermined basket of goods and averaging them. Changes in the CPI are used to assess price changes P# 1716

associated with the cost of living. In short, it's a measurement for inflation.

There are eight major groups that are used and weighted to determine CPI. These groups are housing, apparel, transportation, education and communication, food and beverages, medical care, recreation, and other goods and services. The BLS uses these groups and data from about 80,000 other items to determine the CPI.

Before we considered adopting this language into our contract, we compared the past CPI numbers using this exact model with the same 2% floor and 3% ceiling, and we calculated what we would have received with this model and compared it to what we received in COLA increases. If you calculate just the last 10 years before this contract, you will find that we received 16.75%. If we had used the CPI model, we would have received 22.70%.

The CPI numbers for the first half of this year are available, and it is at 3.6% in our region with a month-over-month upward trajectory. If this trend continues, or as long as the second half of this year stays slightly higher than 2.4%, then we can expect to see another 3% COLA in July 2022.

If you have any questions about CPI or the contract, please feel free to contact me. **VB**



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Using Civil Service Rules to Discipline

OFFICER JOHN ABEL
Secretary

If you've been following my articles in *Vegas Beat*, you know that I often focus on LVMPD disciplinary trends and practices. It appears that some LVMPD captains are using Civil Service rules as a form of discipline for probationary police officers as well as tenured police officers.

Civil Service rules allow LVMPD the ability to extend probation for a probationary police officer for six months without a formal reason, and it is not an issue that the LVPPA can help an officer file a formal grievance for. Civil Service rules also allow LVMPD the ability to withhold an officer's yearly merit increase, which is another issue that the LVPPA cannot help an officer file a grievance for. These two Civil Service rules are not grievance issues covered under the collective bargaining agreement. The only option the LVPPA has is to take complaints to the Civil Service Board, but LVMPD has lobbied the County Commission to assign board positions to those who are favorable to LVMPD causes, which stacks the deck in the Department's favor.

Extending an officer's probation or withholding a merit increase are supposed to be used in extenuating circumstances, such as an officer not meeting standards on a yearly evaluation or an officer who is on administrative leave for a disciplinary

issue. Lately, however, it appears that captains are using these two Civil Service rules for lesser issues, such as an active open SOC or two minor Vehicle Collision Board sustainments. There are no set standards for a captain to extend probation or withhold a merit increase, which begs the question: would a captain take these actions for personal reasons due to the subjectiveness of the decisions? I will let you answer that question yourself. I do not like a captain — who makes double or triple the pay of what a new officer makes — using some arbitrary reason to withhold money from a new officer, especially when gasoline is currently at \$4.11 a gallon and the cost of other everyday items are going up as well.

The decisions that captains are given the autonomy to make can have long-lasting effects on new officers who may be planning their family's future, or who may be depending on pay raises to help afford a home or having children. Not to mention, it appears as if captains are using Civil Service rules to further discipline officers.

I am currently looking at ways to help fight these issues at the command staff level so that LVMPD relays to its captains that extending an officer's probation or withholding a merit increase should P# 469 be the exception and not the rule. If you have or know any other officer who has a grievance issue that you or they are on the fence about filing, please contact me by phone at (702) 468-0766 or by email at jabel@lvppa.com. **VB**



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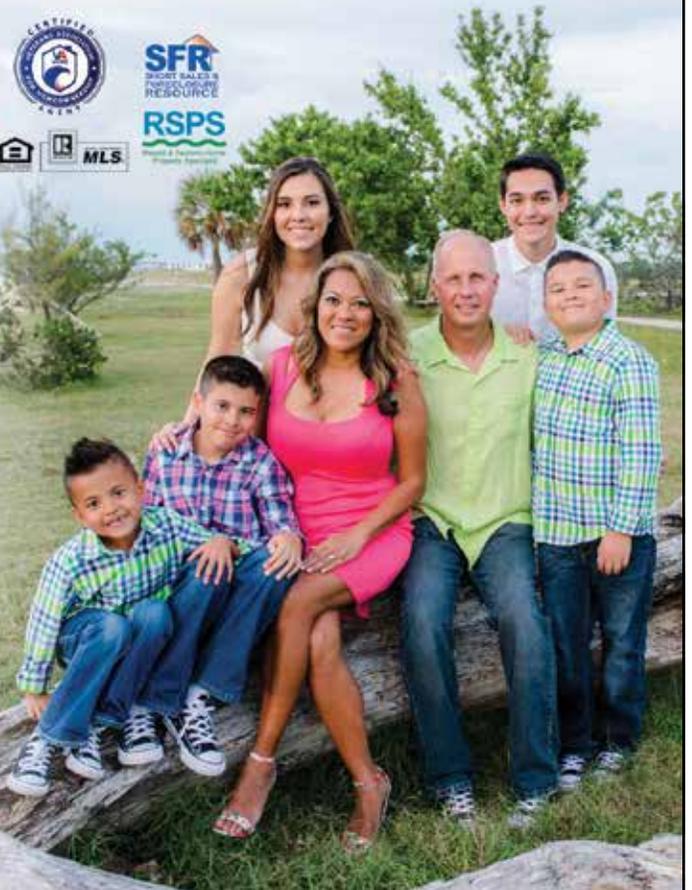
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Giveaway #1: One **\$250** prize

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 Friday, October 8, 2021, 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 the Retirement section of Vegas Beat

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DAVID ROGER
General Counsel

“We Have Always Done It This Way”

Claiming that “we have always done it this way” just isn’t going to cut it when you face a grand jury looking to indict you. “Everybody does it” isn’t going to convince a judge to grant you qualified immunity. Now more than ever, you must know the law and work within the confines of what lawmakers and courts have established.

Recently, an officer was taken to task when he questioned a supervisor’s decision to order officers to conduct a protective sweep of a residence after arresting a suspect. According to the officer, both the suspect and another resident told police they were the only people in the house. Additionally, officers stated they did not believe anybody was in the residence. None of the officers, including the supervisor, could point to facts that would establish a reasonable belief that others were still inside the home. Nevertheless, the officers complied with the supervisor’s order because they always clear residences after arresting an occupant.

**Now more than ever, you must
know the law and work within
the confines of what lawmakers
and courts have established.**

The Nevada Supreme Court struck down this practice in 1990 (*Hayes v. State*, 106 Nev. 543, 797 P.2d 962 [1990]). In *Hayes*, officers arrested a suspect and conducted a protective search of the residence. While inside the home, officers observed drugs in plain view. The court concluded the officers did not have reason to believe others were in the house and reversed the conviction. Addressing the officers’ testimony that they always conduct such searches, the court wrote:

“We are further troubled by the fact that there is some indication that such protective sweep searches of homes incident to



arrests are standard procedure, or at least a common practice, of CCSD. On the one hand, Officer Martino testified that there is no written sweep policy. However, when asked why it would not have been safer simply to withdraw from the residence, Detective Kugler responded by explaining that sweep searches of residences incident to execution of arrest warrants were ‘a standard operating procedure.’”

Before conducting a protective sweep without a warrant, officers must have a factual basis to believe other individuals are inside the building. In *Maryland v. Buie*, 494 U.S. 325, 110 S.Ct. 1093 (1990), the court made clear, “We conclude that the Fourth Amendment would permit the protective sweep undertaken here if the searching officer possessed a reasonable belief based on specific and articulable facts which, taken together with the rational inferences from those facts, reasonably warranted the officer in believing that the area swept harbored an individual posing a danger to the officer or others.”

Thus, you may not clear a house without a factual basis that others may be in the residence. If you do not have the necessary predicate to conduct a sweep, consider asking the suspect or others with apparent authority for consent to conduct the sweep. Remember, “we have always done it this way” is not going to save you from being sued or indicted. **VB**

IN MEMORIAM



Officer Jason Swanger

LAS VEGAS METROPOLITAN POLICE DEPARTMENT

EOW: June 24, 2021

Officer Jason Swanger, a seven-year veteran of the LVMPD, died of complications of COVID-19. His death is considered to have occurred in the line of duty.

Swanger, 41, began his career with the Department in 2013. During his tenure, he worked in the South Central and Enterprise area commands and served as a field training officer. He was also a dedicated Explorers advisor. Prior to joining the Department, Swanger served in the U.S. Navy and Nevada Army National Guard.

According to his obituary, Swanger believed in neighborhood policing and community outreach. He played Santa Claus for Christmas for his area command, read to students at Schorr Elementary School and much more.

“He was known as a devoted father and husband who went the extra mile for people in need and dedicated himself to policing to make a difference in other people’s lives,” Department officials said in a statement.

Swanger is survived by his wife and two children.

IN MEMORIAM



Trooper Micah May

NEVADA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY — HIGHWAY PATROL DIVISION

EOW: July 29, 2021

Trooper Micah May, a 13-year veteran of the Nevada Department of Public Safety — Highway Patrol Division, succumbed to his injuries two days after he was struck by a vehicle during a high-speed chase on I-15 with an armed carjacking suspect. He is the 12th member of NHP to die in the line of duty.

May, 46, joined DPS in 2008, serving with the Highway Patrol since graduating from the Academy. Throughout his years of service, he was recognized with several commendations, including a Medal of Valor for a vehicle pursuit. May received posthumous commendations — a Medal of Valor and a Purple Heart — for his bravery in the line of duty.

During a candlelight vigil, May's wife, Joanna, said that her husband loved being a state trooper: "He found great joy in taking bad people off the road and helping others in need." She also described May as an "amazing father" to their children, sharing that he would read to them every night and would chirp the siren and flash the lights of his cruiser every time he left for work, reports the *Las Vegas Sun*.

May is survived by his wife and two children.

IN MEMORIAM



Officer Phil Closi

LAS VEGAS METROPOLITAN POLICE DEPARTMENT

EOW: August 11, 2021

Patrol Officer Phil Closi, a 21-year veteran of the LVMPD, died of complications of COVID-19. He is the third officer in Southern Nevada to succumb to the virus.

Over the course of his career, Closi, 48, worked at Northeast Area Command, Convention Center Area Command, DARE and Youth Education Section, wrote violence awareness programs and served as a radKIDS instructor. He was also an area representative for the LVPPA for several years while working out of CCAC.

“Phil was an incredibly involved family man,” his family shared, adding that he was a volunteer coach for both of his children’s hockey teams at City National Arena. “Phil approached every situation in life with an amazing sense of humor and had a strong desire to help others. He made friends wherever he went.”

Closi is survived by his wife and two children. Behind the Blue has established a fundraiser to help the Closi family during this difficult time. Please visit tinyurl.com/zs95f8v5 for more information.

THE OBSTACLE IS THE WAY



CHAD LYMAN
LVPPA Director

There's a lot of crazy going on nowadays. The amount of anti-law-enforcement legislation has never been higher. Society, kids and people in general have never seemed worse. For sure, police-targeted violence and ambushes on police officers are up right now. It feels dark and heavy, even crushing at times. This can feel like an impossible situation and the end of all hope. It can seem like such a heavy burden that will never end. Let's put a little perspective on this situation.

Life, this job, good times, bad times ... all of it has an expiration. Nothing is promised to us, good or bad. Life can also have "seasons," much like a calendar year. Your policing career will have this as well. Right now, we are certainly in a bitter winter. It is vital to remember that even while you are in the hold of a bitter winter, spring will always follow. A few things to make this season a little more manageable.

The obstacle is the way. It always has been and always will be. The solution is not the way, easy is not the way — the obstacle is the way. We certainly have a lot of obstacles right now. Navigating and dealing with these obstacles is the way to have personal growth. In other words, the fact that you do your job the best you can, find happiness in important things (family, faith, etc.) and move forth in action and faith in spite of the obstacle is the key to being happy in the midst of challenging obstacles. To maintain determination and commitment long after emotion or motivation have faded is key to thriving in a long winter and embracing the concept that the obstacle is the way. Everyone talks about doing hard things until it is time to do hard things. Understand, without obstacles, all that tough talk is just talk and theory. The obstacles and adversity we face enable us to put into practice the stuff we say we can do and the stuff we claim we would do.

One of the obstacles we as police officers are facing is the political and legal environment in today's climate. One way to make the obstacle the way in this situation is to take the time to learn legislative and policy changes and then follow them. *Do not* assume that lawmakers and the community really want you to continue operating as you did prior to the legislation. An example of this here in the state of Nevada is our lawmakers deciding that officers are not to stop individuals for

jaywalking. Some of you, or worse yet, your chain of command, will say, "Hey, just use PED in the roadway as a workaround." Surely the Legislature didn't mean to just let folks jaywalk and do nothing. That is *exactly* why they passed the law and exactly what is expected legally. Jaywalking is no longer illegal in Nevada and you *shouldn't* stop anyone for that charge. Even though both charges always existed before they did away with jaywalking, they are different charges with different expectations. If you perform a stop that is clearly a jaywalk and you "workaround" by claiming PED in the roadway and then that person complains, you could be held responsible with discipline. *Do not* expect the upper chain to tolerate you "working around" current law, and they will not care that some supervisor said it was OK. The Department expects you to obey law and training. In a more severe example, if your "jaywalk not jaywalk" goes wrong and you have to use significant force or the suspect dies, you are going to get indicted and charged. Make no mistake ... the Sheriff and the upper chain expect you to obey *all* legislation, new and old.

Want to weather the obstacle and storm of new legislation, even if it is stupid in your opinion and restricts you? Follow it. Obey the new laws and any training you are given. We adjust over time. When *Miranda* was first introduced to our profession, you know that officers thought the job was over. Surely no one will ever be convicted again. Old-time coppers must have been disgusted that the lawmakers were catering to these criminals. What was our reaction as a profession? We obeyed the law, we honored these lawful rights and we still made cases on bad guys.

Another key to making the obstacle the way is to focus on what we can control when we face obstacles. What exactly can I control? I cannot always control the obstacle or challenge. I cannot always "win," and life isn't always correct or fair. What I can control is my reaction to challenge and adversity. By reaction, I don't mean my mood or my motivation. I mean my determination and commitment to accept that obstacles will come to *everyone*, so the existence of obstacles is not an indication that I am doing something wrong. Persist and commit to continue to embrace the idea that the obstacle is the way *is* the way. *You* control your approach, your commitment and your reaction to challenge. Stay at it and hold the line.

A final strategy that can help when you are facing the obstacle is to consider that no one knows the future or what will come. We all have to make up our future. My dear friend Robert Follis once said, "If you are going to make up your future, why not make it a great one?" Then do the work to stay at it and make your future a great one. Be safe, and go train a little a lot. **VB**



CALENDAR

September 6 Labor Day

September 11 Patriot Day

October 29 Nevada Day

October 31 Halloween

CONGRATULATIONS

to the contest winners from the last issue!

July/August

Hidden Symbol Contest (\$250)

Angela Suarez, P# 13126

P# Contest (\$50)

Luke Doty, P# 9368
Samuel Hanson, P# M1328
Jonathan Houghton, P# 9789
Cindy Roberts, P# 16295
Richard S. Tennant, P# 6763

RETIREMENTS

6/11/21	Luis G. Payan	P# 7148	PO II	20 years
6/12/21	Albert A. Beas Jr.	P# 5208	PO II	24 years
6/24/21	Patrick C. Burke	P# 7035	PO II	20 years
6/24/21	Troy Cummings	P# 4437	PO II	28 years
6/26/21	Rebecca A. Kelly	P# 5555	CO II	23 years
7/9/21	Dominic P. Gallo	P# 7688	CO II	19 years
7/10/21	Isaac A. Beasley Jr.	P# 7458	PO II	19 years
7/10/21	Tobbi L. Barlow	P# 9243	CO II	15 years
7/12/21	Robert R. Perry	P# 6795	PO II	21 years
7/22/21	Thomas L. Clevenger	P# 7948	PO II	18 years
7/22/21	Cheri R. Smith	P# 5394	CO II	24 years
7/22/21	Margarita Storey	P# 6904	CO II	20 years
7/22/21	Brooke A. Lavin	P# 7049	PO II	20 years
7/22/21	Dean A. Hennesy	P# 6736	PO II	21 years
7/23/21	Eric D. Toms	P# 5793	PO II	23 years
7/23/21	Rolando T. Pro	P# 6095	PO II	22 years
7/24/21	Marc P. Washington	P# 4725	PO II	27 years
7/29/21	Jeffrey B. Swan	P# 7303	PO II	20 years
7/29/21	Gary A. Chaney	P# 9299	PO II	15 years
7/29/21	Jason W. Hardwick	P# 6056	PO II	23 years
7/31/21	La Tanya Joynes	P# 5740	CO II	23 years

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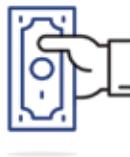
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