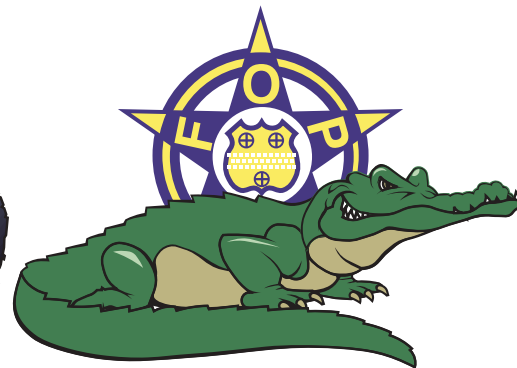


Florida On Patrol



Spring/ Summer 2003

From the President



*Florida State Lodge Leadership
meets with
United States Secretary of Labor
Elaine L. Chao
During her visit to South Florida*

In this issue:

President's
Message

One of Ours
Fritz Meyne
receives award

FOP Lodge 46
interview with
Lt. Col. Aaron J.
Dyess

Gator 67
Highrise
Christmas

FOP Labor
information

Secretaries
Report

FOP Dist. 5
Holiday Project

Lodge 5-30's
Comm. System

Dates To
Remember



Florida State Lodge leaders were honored to have the opportunity to meet with United States Secretary of Labor, Elaine L. Chao, on her visit to South Florida. This meeting with the FOP was at the request of Secretary Chao. During the meeting we were allowed to ask questions of the secretary and she also gave us information reference to several Federal Programs that affect law enforcement. Secretary Chao advised us of the high level of respect that the FOP holds in the Bush Administration.

President's Message

Florida On Patrol
Spring/Summer 2003

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I hope this Spring/Summer issue of the F. O. P. Newsletter finds all of our members and their families well and in good health.

The February Elected Board and Trustee's Meeting in Clearwater was very productive and informative. The major topic of business was the upcoming Legislative session and Collective Bargaining for Deputy Sheriffs. I'm overwhelmed by the enthusiasm expressed during the meeting.

I reported my activity to the Elected Board and the Trustees. Much of my effort Statewide over the past several months has been dedicated to Installing Lodges, Expansion, Labor Lodge recruitment, hiring the long overdue help in Tallahassee and talking with our consulting firm David Erick's and Lisa Henning regarding the upcoming Session. Further, I have been in contact with the Governors Office regarding various appointments to statewide committees such as C.J.S. & T., the restructuring of the members hoping to provide more people of the rank of Sergeant or below on the commission. We need more of a voice concerning officer discipline as well as training.

I have been in continual contact with National President Chuck Canterbury concerning expansion and recruiting in Florida. The National has agreed to assist us in the arduous task of on site recruiting. Additionally, I will be addressing the State President's at the Annual President's Meeting as well as the National Elected Board meeting.

The expansion issue regarding Deputy Sheriffs has raised several important issues. First of all, "Who does it?" Well, the State Lodge is here to assist in the effort but the major thrust of our expansion is you, the local member. Getting authorization cards signed, talking up the F.O.P. telling the brothers and sisters in your agency the benefits and multifaceted function of the F.O.P. is your job. We can and will assist you in anyway but remember the saying, "Charity begins at home," kind of defines how expansion into labor is a team effort. Get on board. The train called "labor" is coming down the tracks and you must be on board Not just because F.O.P. labor is the best, your lodges future existence may depend on who wins the labor and member representation issue, us or them. All the beer and barbecue is not enough to sway a member to select F.O.P. to represent them but meeting them in front of their work stations at coffee breaks and lunch breaks and telling the virtues of belonging to a Nationally Affiliated organization with over 300,000 members will go a long way toward our expansion effort. WE'RE HERE TO ASSIST IN ANY WAY WE CAN. Tell us what you need. TELL US WHEN YOU NEED IT.



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City Attorney

SAM M. MCCALL
City Auditor

February 20, 2003

Mr. Philip Cameron
P.O. Box 1349
Tallahassee, FL 32302

Dear Mr. Cameron:

On February 28 I will pass the gavel to a new mayor of Tallahassee. As I reflect upon my 10 years in local government, I am most thankful for the wonderful people who have supported me and made our successes possible. The last 10 years have brought lower airfares, a nationally recognized race relations program, significant economic development and the "All-America City" designation to Tallahassee. It also fills me with pride that our community came together during my term as mayor to build one of the first municipal skateboard parks in the state and to worship together at the first-ever Tallahassee Mayor's Prayer Breakfast.

I cannot thank you enough for the support you have given Sha and me. Your assistance has made my public service possible and I greatly appreciate your support and friendship. If there is anything I can do for you in the future, please do not hesitate to call. Our home phone number is (850) 386-5384.

Thank you again and I hope to see you soon.

Respectfully,

Scott Maddox
Mayor

An All-America City

ONE OF OURS
BY MILLER NORTON, VP
ATLANTIC-NEPTUNE # 107

His name is Frederick A. Meyne, but he's known as "Fritz" around these parts.



Over the years he answered to "32", "902", and "1402" on the radio, with one standing rule for the dispatchers: "Don't ever '10-9' me ". Fritz never really warmed up to the radio, but if he had something to say - he expected you to listen up! (Right HQ?)

Those of us kids now turned adults who lived around the "North Beaches" of Duval County remember the days when policemen were highly regarded and duly respected by the communities they served. Fritz was no exception. He had that "all business" look about him. We had seen him for years in the neighborhoods, a large strapping intimidating man with a slick head and one curl of hair on top that would be his trademark...

Prior to pinning on the badge, Fritz began a career with the U.S. Navy in January of 1942, serving for 20 years and 13 days - not that he was counting. Soon after his return to Atlantic Beach in 1962, (word got around fast in those days) it wasn't long before the police came a knockin'. Seems they needed" a few good men ", or in this case just one. Negotiations began and continued for well over 2 hours (time went by fast in those days) and soon after, F.A. Meyne began work as an Atlantic Beach Police Officer. Fritz held a devotion not only to his Department, but to the Fraternal Order of Police as well. In 1962, there was ONE lodge - Northeast Lodge # 17 in Jacksonville Beach. Brother Meyne

joined in late 1962, and quickly involved himself in the Order. In 1964 and 1965, he served with honor as President.

In 1977, Atlantic - Neptune Lodge # 107 was formed, serving the needs of Mayport, Atlantic, and Neptune Beaches. Brother Meyne was quickly elected to the office of President in 1978 and again in 1999 and 2000.

During his years serving in Atlantic Beach, Fritz worked his way through the Department, rising to the rank of Lieutenant. Highly respected by his peers and the citizens he served, Fritz was named Officer Of The Year in 1981 and received many accolades throughout this second career which spanned 20 years. (Plus about 13 days)

Fritz held the distinction of being the FIRST Police Officer in Atlantic Beach history to make retirement, checking out on February 1st, 1982.

Since then and today, Fritz remains very active with Lodge 107, and seldom (if ever) misses a meeting, driving 140 + miles roundtrip from his home in Putnam County to the lodge. Without exception, no other member of Lodge 107 has so consistently and steadfastly continued to serve the Order with such dedication and devotion as Brother F. A. Meyne. But just call him Fritz.

Some excerpts from former officers under his command:

About the time I was beginning what would be a 28-year career in law enforcement in 1973, Lt. Fritz Meyne was about to retire from his second career. To a 17 year old Dispatcher/Jailer, this no non-sense second in command at the Atlantic Beach Police Department seemed a world apart from the younger patrol officers and barely tolerant of some of us "kids" starting out, but as time passed, tolerance evolved into a good working relationship and eventually, into a long lasting personal friendship that is now nearly 30 years old.

Fritz has been an inspiration to me all throughout my career, both personally and professionally. He personifies public service and is a model of growing old gracefully and living life to it's fullest.

He always has been active in the community in which he lives and instrumental in the various

civic, social and fraternal organizations of which he was a member. Among the many others, his active participation in the Fraternal Order of Police is something that he has been highly devoted to not only during his active career, but these thirty or so years after his retirement, as well. Having retired from law enforcement only about two years ago myself, each time I think back about my long lasting friendship with Fritz, I have only admiration for his dedication to his family, his country, his community and his seemingly endless activeness. I can only hope to live as full and enjoyable life as he has lived and have as many friends as he has gained over his lifetime.

I cannot help but to think that his being there in the beginning of my career to help shape me has helped me to excel in my chosen profession, attaining the rank of Captain in a state law enforcement agency by age 30 and going on to retire at age 45. And I am certain that he has inspired me to know that life only begins at 45 and gets better and better as we grow older, especially with the love of a good woman. Thanks for everything, "Thirty-Two"! I am looking forward to the next thirty years, too. - Donny Stratmann

Wow, what a no nonsense police lieutenant Fritz would handle anything often single-handed, and resolve what ever the issue the community knew him well as a fair, even tempered yet stern , representative of the law but make no mistake, never ever cross the man and challenge his integrity to apply the letter of the law. - Rick Wood

An Exceptional police officer. Not just because he's one of ours, but because so many people tell us so.

Jacksonville Lodge 5-30's Communication Systems

David Kilcrease

Over the past few years, 5-30 Lodge President David Stevens and Executive Board made a commitment to dramatically improve the communication system of the lodge. These improved communication systems consisted of Flash Reports, a cable access television show, and an improved website with an interactive member's only section.

Flash Reports were created out of a need to provide important and time sensitive information to the members that could not wait until the regular monthly meeting. These reports are faxed to every work location to be read at each muster and to also be placed in the FOP Bulletin Board at each work/roll call site. Flash Reports provide vital up to date information to the members at virtually no cost to the lodge.

The "5-30 News" is a weekly cable access television show that is produced by the lodge. The show allows for Lodge 5-30's message and/or issues (i.e. political endorsements) to be showcased. The "5-30 News" has helped to improve communications to lodge membership, as well as the "voting" public. The airtime and production costs are donated, so there is no cost to the membership of the lodge.

The biggest improvement in communications was the improved public web site and its members' only section. The public website allows everyone access to copies of Jacksonville 5-30's labor contracts, the 5-30 Journal, legislative issues, political endorsements, and much more. The member's only section is a message board that is accessed by the member's FOP number and the password they selected. All members of the lodge are allowed to view and post messages/information on the board. Even though professional debate and accountability is allowed, the web master/mistress has the ability to remove a posting or deny access if there were ever serious unprofessional behavior. Topics that are regularly posted and responded to include: contract issues, pension issues, elections/campaigns, notices/upcoming events, officer safety, rumor control, and sick/distressed. This board has been up and running for the past few years, but will soon be discontinued for a new message board with added security and more enhanced features. The current message board was provided free of charge to the lodge and the new board will also be free.

Through the hard work and dedication of the leadership of the lodge and participation of the membership, the communication system of Jacksonville Lodge 5-30 is now one of the best.



F.O.P. Lodge # 46

by: Lynn Dombrowsky

Lt. Col. Aaron Joe Dyess and the Florida State flag that flew over Afghanistan.



The following is an interview with Joe Dyess by Lynn Dombrowsky, Secretary, Fraternal Order of Police Polk County Lodge #46 Florida September 2002.

Joe Dyess began working, as a patrol officer, at the Lakeland Police Department, Lakeland, Fl. in August 1988 and joined FOP Polk County Lodge #46 in December, 1988. Joe, like many other officers, had a military background and chose to stay in the Reserves. His military occupational specialty was Intelligence and Security Police.

Soon after he joined the police department, Desert Storm came quickly into focus. Most businesses supported our citizen soldiers and allowed them to get back into our nation's military uniforms. Joe was no exception.

After Desert Shield/Storm and with another short deployment to Somalia and Kenya, Joe came back to the police department.

Finally, after reaching retirement age, Joe placed his paperwork with the City of Lakeland and retired. After retirement, he decided to go after a second career. He applied for and was accepted as an assistant attaché with the Department of Defense. His first assignment was an intelligence analyst for the ambassador's counter drug program. His background in intelligence and law enforcement were instrumental in getting him this fabulous job.

On September 11, 2001, Joe's life as well as the rest of the nation, was changed forever. On that fateful day, he arrived

at work and spent many hours in front of the TV screen, with most of the other embassy staff. He knew this tragedy was not an accident. This had become evident when the third plane hit the Pentagon. He knew he would soon be putting on his Air Force blues again for active duty.

Joe was soon called to active duty, sent back to the United States, and assigned to his parent unit, Special Operations Command Central. He learned his command would be the lead element involved in all special operations activity in Afghanistan.

In November 2001, Joe was sent to a forward deployed location and was soon involved in setting up the Special Operations Headquarters. He was shoulder to shoulder with hundreds of other service members, reservists, active, male, female, Marines, Army, Navy, Air Force, FBI, CIA, contractors and their new coalition friends. After two months, Joe had been on or lived in four different continents.

Unlike any time in our past, except Pearl Harbor, all of these people were focused on one common goal and mission. Find those responsible and take revenge for our innocent fallen citizens. In September, Present Bush addressed the nation and said, "Whether we bring the enemy to justice or justice to the enemy, justice will be done!" With God's help, that is what these folks were going to do.

Joe said, "All the terrorists did was put the word "United" back in our country's name. This terrible act moved our people closer than ever. Race, age, sex or religion was immaterial. We were now one."

Joe was specially trained and his primary job was to review and read all essential elements of information and sanitize it so it could be given to our Coalition partners. His secondary responsibility was to manage the Joint Intelligence Center nightshift. He, like so many others, easily worked 12-14 hour days for six months, no days off, through the holiday season.

Through the modern age of communications Joe while forward stayed in contact with friends. He was able to get updates and family photos at the click of a mouse button.

It was at this time Joe asked his sister, Nona, to send him a Florida flag. (Nona is currently a detective with the Lakeland Police Department.) His unit had a friendly rivalry about displaying their country or state flags.

A few months later, Joe met a pilot who was flying missions. He asked the pilot if he would fly his flag over Afghanistan, which he did. Joe immediately drew badges and unit patches

from his command and collected signatures, on the flag, from the aircrew.

It was at this point he decided to dedicate the flag to the fallen police officers at the World Trade Center and the military members killed in the Pentagon.

After six months, at his forward deployed headquarters, he was selected to go into Afghanistan to conduct a fact-finding mission. While in country, he visited Bagram and Qandahar and while on this mission, he made contact with many coalition members. At every opportunity, Joe collected signatures on his flag.

He noted that moral was very high with all the coalition forces, especially within the U.S. Forces. He said even the young troops were focused and still outraged at the unprovoked attack against the United States. Joe said the service members were very inspiring and America should be very proud of their young warriors.

Joe came to our local lodge Labor Day meeting September 2, 2002 and asked if he could donate, to us, the Florida flag that flew over Afghanistan. In addition, he gave us a framed piece that contained photographs of the areas the flag had flown, Afghani money, his unit patch, and commemorative coins showing the world trade center.

Inside the frame Joe wrote the following: "Brothers and Sisters of Polk FOP Lodge #46, on behalf of the Special Operations Command Central, I am honored to present this Florida flag that was flown in Afghanistan to the FOP. During my tour, I was able to go to both Bagram and Qandahar. While there I was able to collect signatures on the flag from both US and Coalition forces. Now, after my return I am donating this flag to my friends at the lodge. This symbol is to honor and remember New York's finest who died at the World Trade Center and the military men and women at the Pentagon. As a retired Lakeland Police Officer, I was among the few that were given the opportunity to serve my country and take the fight to the terrorists. This flag is for all of them, the heroic Americans who sacrificed their lives for freedom".

Sincerely,

Aaron J. Dyess, #165 Retired

We at Polk County Lodge #46, Polk County, Florida wish to thank Joe for his dedication and want to share his story with other brothers and sisters around the state and nation. We will proudly display this flag and the items he gave to us. God Bless America! We will never forget!

Gator Lodge 67's annual 'High-rise' Christmas

by: Michael Neely, Secretary

On December 21st, the Brothers and Sisters of Gainesville's Gator Lodge 67 visited and served Christmas dinner to the residents of the NE High-rise. This year's event was coordinated by Lodge Chaplain Jamie Stubbs and the workforce consisted of State Chaplain Donna Suereth, Lodge President Jeff McAdams, Leslie White, Don Tonya Smith, Don Suereth, Marc Trahan (as SANTA), Lodge Secretary Michael Neely and his two 'Santa Helpers' (Ashley Neely and Caitlin Brown). Once we served dinner to the 80 elderly residents, Santa passed out gifts to all.





Fraternal Order of Police

FLORIDA STATE LODGE



FOP TRACK RECORD

The Florida State Fraternal Order of Police currently represents approximately 22,000 members in many areas statewide.

Here is a list of just a few of the locally negotiated contracts **FOP** independent units have secured for its Police Officers.

Jacksonville Consolidated/Police-Corrections 2,400 Members
Boca Raton Police 200+ Members
Ft. Lauderdale Police 525 Members
Plantation Police 200+ Members
Coral Springs Police 200+ Members
Coral Gables Police 200+ Members
Miami Police 1,300+ Members
Orlando Police 700 Members

Additionally, the **Florida State Fraternal Order of Police** Labor Council represents 69 municipalities. The cities and jurisdictions listed are a fraction of what the **FOP** is doing statewide regarding Collective Bargaining. The members represented in all of our statewide Labor Council alone is over 4,000 Law Enforcement Officers; from Legal Defense to Collective Bargaining, plus, over 700 Civilian Employees in the City of Ft. Lauderdale and 200 Civilian Employees in Sunrise.

Please inform yourself of the facts. Today Jacksonville, Miami, Orlando, Ft. Lauderdale, Coral Springs and Clearwater, just to name a few, can currently boast some of the best Collective Bargaining agreements in Florida and nationwide.

I encourage you to check, don't listen to anyone or me without confirming "Whose Doing It" for Law Enforcement in the State of Florida. Don't be swayed by childish cartoons and negative remarks put out by the competition. Let facts sway your decision.

CHECK FOR YOURSELF!

Philip D. Cameron
President
Florida State Fraternal Order of Police

Jeff McAdams
Labor Council Chairman
Florida State Fraternal Order of Police

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President Philip Cameron with Mary Booth at the District 4 meeting



Manatee Lodge president Kent Dodd with State President Cameron, Gene Leonard and State Chaplain Donna Suereth at Florida Sheriff's Law Enforcement Memorial dedication



Lodge #93 2003 Installation pictured are 1st VP, Ron Bartholome, Lodge 93 President Dick Bosa and State President Philip Cameron



Dan Hinez, Tampa Lodge President and President Cameron at the Tampa Lodge Installation



President Cameron, Clearwater Lodge 10 President T.J. Donnelly, National Trustee Peter Fire at Lodge 10's Installation





Fraternal Order of Police

FLORIDA STATE LODGE



ATTENTION: ALL DEPUTY SHERIFFS

The day has come that we have all been waiting for: Deputy Sheriffs have finally been defined as *employees*, not appointees. With this new definition comes the right to bargain collectively with your employer.

The **Florida State Fraternal Order of Police** was established in 1950. It is directly affiliated with the **National Fraternal Order of Police**. Our parent organization boasts over 300,000 members nationally, 22,000 in Florida.

We have been negotiating Collective Bargaining Contracts and defending member rights for nearly 100 years nationally, 52 years in many locations in Florida alone. See attached current list of agencies doing **F.O.P. Labor**.

What you as a Deputy Sheriff have to ask yourself is, "Do I want a true Law Enforcement organization representing and defending me, or an organization whose expertise is in a quagmire of other non-law enforcement job descriptions?"

We represent Law Enforcement Officers! We maintain a full-time staff consisting of Field Representatives, Officer Support Staff, and 65 approved Staff Attorneys. **We want to represent you!**

Representatives of the **Fraternal Order of Police** will be contacting many of you adjacent to your job site, or at local **F.O.P.** meetings where an **F.O.P. Lodge** currently exists. We are ready, willing, and able to assist you regarding these very important endeavors concerning your future in Law Enforcement.

For further information, contact Jeff McAdams, Labor Committee Chairman, at 888-485-0351.

Fraternally,

Fraternally,

Philip Cameron, President

Jeff McAdams, Labor Committee Chairman

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SECRETARIES REPORT

Kenny Mack, Secretary Florida State Lodge

I hope this report finds all of our members in good health. I have just finished the minutes of the February Board of Directors meeting held in Clearwater. You will find them on the Florida State Lodge web page.

Speaking of minutes and web pages, let me report to you that beginning with the minutes of the February Board of Directors Meeting, the Florida State Lodge will not be mailing minutes out to local lodges. Instead they will be posted on the web page. This is being done for a couple of reasons. First, the minutes of these meetings are a record of the business of the Florida State Lodge and every member deserves to have access to these records. Previously these records were being mailed to the lodge presidents, secretaries, and state trustees. If any of those lodge officers wanted to let the membership review these records it was up to them and many of the members were not seeing what took place on their behalf. Second, the mailing of the minutes was a time consuming process for the Florida State Lodge Staff. It would take them three to five days to prepare the minutes to be mailed out. Third, the cost of mailing continues to go up. As you can see this decision was not a difficult one to make, it just makes plain good sense.

While I am on the subject of the web page, let me advise you that the Florida State Lodge has spent your dues monies to develop a first of its kind membership program for the local lodges in the Florida. To my knowledge there is no other state lodge that has such a program. This program will make keeping up with your lodge membership as easy as a frog falling off a lily pad. This program is open for the local lodge president and secretary to be able to update, delete or other wise make changes in the lodge membership while on line with a computer. For those of you who have not had to do this you will not know how much easier this makes running a lodge. Another benefit in addition to being able to print mailing labels out of your lodge membership, is that the local lodge secretary does not have to fill out any paper or send any forms to the State or National Lodge to update the membership, it's done by the computer

program. The only thing that still needs to be sent in is your lodges per capita tax checks (two) and a lodge office update form. As you can see we are going **PAPERLESS**. I have instructed the Staff at the Florida State Lodge to send back all forms with the exception of the lodge officer's report, back to the local lodge and a request to use the new program. To aid the local lodge officers and members starting at the February Board Meeting there were high speed internet connections and computers available along with assistance on how to sign on and how to use the new lodge membership program. We will have available at the June Conference in Ft. Lauderdale this same set up with additional computers to aid any member or lodge officer on how to log on and what the system has to offer. Director Dean who is hosting the Conference is also the Communications Committee Chairman and will make this available through out the Conference.

At the direction of the President, Sister Klee and I completed an audit of the local lodge files at the State Lodge Office in Tallahassee. We determine how many local lodges complied with the State and National By-laws requiring local lodges to have updated by-laws and surety bonds on file in with the State Lodge. In addition we were trying to determine how many local lodges were currently incorporated with the State of Florida. I was amazed to find that out of one hundred and five (105) lodge files audited we only found seven (7) lodges that met the standards of the audit and were in compliance with the State and National Lodge by-laws. This is less than one half of one percent. I sent out a letter to those lodges who do not comply and I am glad to report that I have received numerous responses to this letter and many lodges are supplying the documentation required.

Let me close in wishing each and every one of you a safe and happy summer, and if you need assistance form me or the State Lodge Office please do not hesitate to contact either.

*54th Annual
F.O.P. Florida State Lodge Conference
Fort Lauderdale Marina Marriott
June 25th to 30th 2003
is just around the corner*

*You may make your reservations
by calling the hotel at
954-463-4000*

*All who purchase a complete conference
registration by the registration deadline,
JUNE 10th, will be included in a drawing
for the limited production sculpture
PROTECTED BY AN ANGEL*

*Value of this sculpture
is over
\$80.00*



*This sculpture is
number 5 of 753 and
stands almost 12
inches tall*

agenda and registration forms will be mailed to all local lodges

F.O.P. District 5

Holidays for the needy Project

For the eighth year the district has been involved with the South Florida President's Council of Clubs and Organizations annual Toys in the Sun Motorcycle Toy Run. Each year the district receives all of the toys that are donated at the run. In order to ride, each motorcycle must bring one toy to be donated. They must also pay a fee of \$5.00. All of the money that is collected is donated to local children's hospitals and organizations; this year around \$400,000.00 was donated. The credit for this event goes to Bob and David Armchir of the President's Council who work all year long to bring joy to children who otherwise would have nothing during the holiday season. Bob and Dave "our hats are off to you". I might add that both Bob and Dave are FOP Members.

FOP members from District 5 collect toys on the day of the run and take them to a donated store front where they are sorted by sex and age. This year over 16,000 toys were collected and distributed.



Linda and Heather Agnew in front of the mounds of toys collected

The toy room is open every day until all of the toys find a home. This year we had several outstanding volunteers who need to receive some praise for their dedication. Linda and Eddie Agnew, both are FOP members and members of the FOP District 5, Police Pipe & Drum Corps of Florida, took time off from their jobs to come in almost every day and put toys together, straighten toys and assist groups who came in to receive toys. The most outstanding volunteer was Heather Agnew, Eddie and Linda's daughter. Heather is a high school student who over the course of one week donated over 40 hours of her time to make sure that kids, less fortunate than her, had a happy holiday. Thank you Heather you did an outstanding job. Hope to see you next year.

Each year we are able to assist FOP lodges and non profit groups from Miami-Dade and Broward Counties. This year we were honored by the City of Hialeah with a proclamation proclaiming January 14, 2003

as "FOP District 5 Day" in that city for making the holiday season a happy occasion for the less fortunate.



Director Dean receiving proclamation from the Hialeah City Commission

We were also honored by the Miami-Dade County Commissioners for our work on behalf of needy children in Miami-Dade County.



Brother Dean receives award presented by Miami-Dade County Commission

A Benefit of Membership

All FOP and FOPA members throughout most of Florida are entitled to a 10% discount on Nextel service plans. Additionally, equipment discounts of 27% are available on select Nextel phones at time of activation.

AT&T Wireless is also offering a low monthly rate of \$16.99 which includes 60 anytime minutes and Voice Mail. And for a limited time 250 night and week minutes, nationwide long distance and FREE activation will be included. Other AT&T plans receive a 10% discount and 15% more airtime each month when activating new service. Plans of \$39.99 and higher receive the first month FREE. Select phones are FREE after mail-in rebate.

These membership rates are available through Kathy Donohue of Almac Communications at 1-888-98ALMAC. Your membership card will be required

FLORIDA SUPREME COURT: IT'S ABOUT TIME!

By Michael E. Coviello, Esq.

Finally! On January 30, 2003, the Florida Supreme Court released its opinion in the case of *Coastal Florida Police Benevolent Association, Inc., vs. Williams* (“*Williams*”). As anticipated, the Court has receded from its 1978 opinion in *Murphy vs. Mack* (“*Murphy*”) regarding the status of deputy sheriffs. In short, the Court has ruled that deputy sheriffs are employees and have the right to collective bargaining as guaranteed by the Florida State Constitution.

The significance of the Court’s opinion in *Williams* is greater than anticipated. When the case was presented to the Court, it was based upon a certified question from the 5th DCA. The lower court requested guidance from the Court by asking “Are deputy sheriff’s categorically excluded from having collective bargaining rights under chapter 447?” In an unprecedented move, the Court rephrased the question to read, “Are deputy sheriff’s categorically excluded from having collective bargaining rights under *the Florida Constitution*?”

The rephrasing of the question and the Court’s answer have guaranteed deputy sheriffs the right to collective bargaining and removed the possibility of the legislature overriding the Court’s decision by rewriting Chapter 447 of the Florida Statutes. The Court ruled that Article I, Section 6 of the Florida Constitution guarantees the right of collective bargaining in the plain meaning of that section which states, in relevant part, “The right of employees, by and through a labor organization, to bargain collectively shall not be denied or abridged.” Only an amendment to the Florida Constitution or a future ruling of the Court can change this decision, but neither is likely to happen.

When the Court decided the *Murphy* case, the constitutional issue was not addressed. In *Murphy*, the Court simply ruled that Sheriffs are public employers but deputies are not employees under the statute. The reasoning was that deputies were considered the “alter ego” or “second-in-command” of the sheriff who, due their appointment, could take charge in the absence of the sheriff. The *Williams* Court rejected this notion as merely historical or traditional and not realistic given the broad range of duties and the increased number of deputies working today.

Finally, because the Court declared deputies’ right to collective bargaining a fundamental right guaranteed by the Florida Constitution, any denial of that right requires a compelling state interest. Of course, no such compelling interest exists since other law enforcement officers have been collectively bargaining with police chiefs and city governments without detriment.

In closing, the Court’s opinion has enabled the FOP to dramatically increase membership and to expand its labor services, two characteristics that will further the FOP’s status as the premier law enforcement labor union.

Michael E. Coviello, Esq. has been practicing law in Florida as a criminal and civil litigator since 1993. He is a *magna cum laude* graduate of Nova University Law Center and holds a bachelor’s degree in criminal justice from the State University of New York at Albany. Mr. Coviello invites comments, criticism, questions or discussion and can be reached at (941) 809-0992 and mcoviello@msn.com.



Fraternal Order of Police

FLORIDA STATE LODGE



You are probably aware by now that the Florida Supreme Court ruled that deputy sheriffs are indeed public employees under FS 447 and may collectively bargain for their wages, salaries, terms and conditions of employment. We had been waiting since January of 2001 for the Court to rule on this matter and the only thing that really caught us by surprise was the time the court took to review the question.

We are in the process of collecting PERC AUTHORIZATION cards and once the FOP has collected enough of these cards from each Sheriff, the cards will then be filed with the Public Employees Relations Commission in Tallahassee and we will be pressing forth for an election to represent all Sheriffs Deputies, Sergeant's and Lieutenants. The Fraternal Order of Police offers the most professional choice, the only choice to properly and effectively see to it that your wages are addressed, that your benefits are first rate, and your representation before management is one of respect.

In addressing the local issue of FOP or other Labor Organizations, one need only look at the present happenings in the State of Florida as to the outstanding reputation the FOP has and this will help you to understand that the FOP is the leader in securing collective bargaining rights for our members. During the past few years, many units have left other Labor Organizations for the FOP and many more are expected to choose FOP in several upcoming elections.

Bargaining units such as the St. Petersburg Police Department Sergeants and Lieutenants bargaining unit, the Sergeants from the Pinellas Park Police Department, Indian Shores Police Department, Kenneth City Police Department, Volusia County Sheriffs Office, Orlando Police Department and the Satellite Beach Police Department have made the switch to the FOP and we have delivered on our promise to provide first rate representation to their members.

The truth of the matter is that our current attorney's (the FOP has 65 approved statewide) as well as five (5) Staff Representatives and one (1) Senior Staff Representative who are employed full time to assist you the member with any non criminal matter or question that you might have. That's what you get with the FOP, full time qualified representatives, including shift stewards to represent you when your job is on the line.

The Fraternal Order of Police has the best Legal Defense Plan. The Plan covers you for *unlimited* criminal, administrative and civil matters for all duty related incidents. The only requirement to be eligible for services under the plan is that you have to be a FOP member. ②

With everything that has been discussed in this letter the choice should be easy for you to become a member of the FOP and thus have your future guaranteed by being represented by the best labor organization in the State of Florida.

The Fraternal Order of Police wants to be your representative. So please call 1-888-485-0351, so that our State Office located in Tallahassee, can assist you.

Philip D. Cameron
President
Florida State Fraternal Order of Police

Jeff McAdams
Labor Council Chairman
Florida State Fraternal Order of Police

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Quick notes

New Domain Names Reserverd

**Your FOP website
can now be found at**

**www.floridastatefop.com
www.floridastatefop.net**

as well as

www.floridastatefop.org.

We have added these additional domains due to the overall success of the website.

Be sure and check out the site regularly as we update the site to accommodate our members

National Conference Hotel Alert

The pick up for rooms in Providence, RI has been extremely slow. Please make your reservations ASAP. If I don't see a significant change in the reservations I am going to recommend that we drop at least fifty rooms. I do not want our organization to pay for unused rooms. Any questions please feel free to contact **[Dave Scott at 407-832-2100](mailto:dave.scott@fop.org)**

DATES TO REMEMBER

**54th Annual FOP State Conference
Marina Marriott Hotel
Fort Lauderdale, Florida
June 25th to 30, 2003
Hotel Phone No. 954-463-4000**