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# CODE THREE

Official Publication of the Palm Beach County PBA

SPRING 2023

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15TH ANNUAL  
POLICE OFFICER'S  
BALL





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Tonya A. Oliver

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## COVER STORY



## Ball the Best

The 15th Annual Palm Beach County PBA Police Officer's Ball presented the honors that have made it great by recognizing the 2022 officers of the year. And it also presented a few surprises that made it one of the best Balls ever. This special report on the Police Officer's Ball includes spotlights the PBA members who were the best of the best, as well as documenting an important announcement that will have a profound impact on law enforcement throughout Palm Beach County.

**Special Report begins on page 18**

## INSIDE STORIES



**A Night at the Greek**

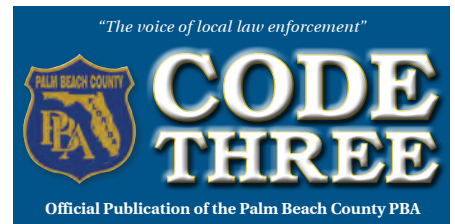


**SWAT Stuff**

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Disclaimer: \$12 of your dues per year is used for Political Committee/Committee of Continuous Existence Funds. The PBA opened a Justice PAC and active, individually billed members will contribute \$15 out of their dues to this PAC. IF YOU CHOOSE NOT TO GIVE THIS AMOUNT, PLEASE NOTIFY THE PBA IN WRITING.



# THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

## We had a Ball and oh, what a night it was



**JOHN  
KAZANJIAN  
PBCPBA  
PRESIDENT**

For 15 years, we've had this night to recognize our PBC PBA Officers of the Year and the way our members go above and beyond the call of duty. But the annual Police Officer's Ball has become a night to honor and celebrate so much of what goes into our law enforcement profession and what our union has accomplished.

The 15th Annual Police Officer's Ball, which we held on April 22 at Trump National in Jupiter, turned out to be a special and memorable night for so many reasons. When I had a chance to speak to the 400-plus people who attended, I had to start by recognizing how our fundraising efforts are off the charts.

We announced that our Kaitlin A. Kazanjian Memorial Golf Tournament in February raised \$160,000 this year for our charity and scholarship funds. This meant so much to Joanne, me and the rest of our family, because the 15th Annual Ball was held on what would have been Kaitlin's 36th birthday.

Listen, I have to admit, I too was overwhelmed by how much money we raised at the golf tournament. A big reason for this is the help and support from Palm Beach County Sheriff Ric Bradshaw.

You can see on the cover of this issue that at the Ball, we presented Sheriff Bradshaw with an extraordinary award of appreciation. I know he was touched by the gun inscribed with his badge numbers from when he served at West Palm Beach and with PBSO we gifted to him.

Sheriff Bradshaw helped us raise that money with the admin days he allowed for our members to participate in the golf tournament. And you know what? I take my hat off to him, because he knows it only helps the children of the men and women from all our different agencies to the further their education. And not just college. The Palm Beach County PBA Charity Fund and Kaitlin's Charity also provides scholarship to anybody who wants to go to a vocational school and learn a trade.

And on a night to recognize the best of the best in the PBA, we made sure to take a moment to shout out to the spouses, the partners, the girlfriends and the boyfriends of our members. I'm telling you, with seeing what my wife has gone through in my nearly 40 years in this job, we need to recognize them more often.

We do a great job of celebrating the people who have saved somebody out of a canal, performed CPR on somebody or gone into any type of hardship situation. But our spouses and our partners are right there with us in those situations.

You should have heard the applause when we asked them all to stand up at the Ball. And I'm pledging right now that during this entire upcoming year, we are going to recognize our support at home.

Nobody had better support at home than I did. My wife, Joanne, is the reason our entire family is working in law enforcement. Her strength during those days when she didn't hear from me for the entire eight- or 10-hour shift, I don't even know the right words to describe it. She is going through a fight of her own right now with cancer, and I have her back now.

When we officers were on the road back in the day, we didn't have cell phones to let our spouses know we were OK. We didn't stop at payphones to call home. That's the strength I am talking about that I hope every member gets from his or her better half.

By now, you also might have heard that at the Ball I talked about LifeScan, which is a diagnostic that can be done as part of a yearly physical. It's done with ultrasound and can detect coronary issues, like the one I had last summer. It also scans for cancer.

Palm Beach Gardens members negotiated covering the cost of the annual physical with LifeScan into their new contract. I think this will save a lot of lives, and we're going to be asking the sheriffs and the administrators to buy into that and help us get it into the contracts for all our units.

I started the campaign for this at the Ball by asking Sheriff Bradshaw to put LifeScan in for PBSO employees. As I told him right there with everybody watching, it's not a whole lot of money. And it's really, really important, because members might think that nothing is going to happen to you. I'm going to tell you right now, especially in our job, that's not thinking right. I learned that the hard way. So if we can have everybody get a LifeScan, we can head off many of these health issues and head them off early. And we will all be better off.

It was that kind of night at the Police Officer's Ball. And none of it would have been possible without the dedication of our Ball committee, led by Rick McAfee, our recently retired vice president, and the PBCPBA staff. And, of course, our members who go above and beyond every day. You make these nights of going above and beyond for you that much more memorable.

As always, stay safe. And don't forget to thank your spouses and partners for going above and beyond for you every day.

*Kaz*



# PALM BEACH COUNTY PBA

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Effective Jan. 1, 2023 to Dec. 31, 2026

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Several of our members have incorrect information on file with the PBA office. Please check with your fellow officers to see if they receive the magazine and if not, please email [angela@pbcdba.org](mailto:angela@pbcdba.org) to update your information.

**Visit our website at  
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James Harding, Appt'd.  
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Grant Henderson, Appt'd.  
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Charles Bahruth, Appt'd.  
Michael Sasson, Appt'd.  
Matthew DeJoy, Appt'd.  
Jackie Garrett, Appt'd.  
Deneisha Leggett, Appt'd.  
Jeff Taschner, Appt'd.  
Humberto Mejia Jr., Appt'd.  
Jonathan Berger, Appt'd.  
Aaron Silver, Appt'd.  
James Benedict, Appt'd.  
Steven Lipinski, Appt'd.  
Joseph DeRogatis, Appt'd.  
George Baldino, Appt'd.  
Jason Johnson, Appt'd.

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Mike Santoro

Robert Tozzi  
Berthony Lorflis  
Gwendolyn Wattlely  
Marvin Marty, Alt.  
Antonio Osborne, Alt.  
Brandon Wilson, Appt'd.  
Mark Putnam, Appt'd.  
Helga Santana Young, Appt'd.

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Sallyann Josef  
Ray Griffith  
Mariam Glisson  
Kristen Kazanjian Lassinger  
Tequesta McKinney-James  
Heriberto "Eddie" Aviles, Alt.  
Sharon King, Alt.  
Tanya Fresneda, Appt'd.  
Nicole Pure, Appt'd.  
Stephanie King Appt'd.  
Nichol Fields, Appt'd.  
Marty Hopper, Appt'd.  
Kayai Graham, Appt'd.

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Nir Mordechay  
Michael Brown  
Brian Jackson, Alt.  
Javares Harvey, Alt.  
Justin Borum, Appt'd

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Jodi Anne Novella  
Alphonso Brat  
Joseph LaPaugh  
Michael Lynch  
Khashayar Khatami, Alt.  
Chad Aubrey, Alt.

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### TEQUESTA

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John Rebholz, Alt.



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# Impact and mid-term bargaining on topics not covered by collective bargaining agreement



KATIE  
MENDOZA

As many of you know, as the certified collective bargaining agent for many different bargaining units and groups of public employees, the Palm Beach County PBA and its affiliated entities negotiate a number of contracts every year with municipalities, sheriff's offices and even school districts to provide our members with greater protections and benefits. Occasionally, we are asked whether the public employer must discuss issues and/or changes with the PBA when the contract already is finalized and is not set to expire for some time.

If the public employer wishes to make any change that even affects a mandatory subject of bargaining, which includes wages, work and terms and conditions of employment (which encompass many different issues, such as discipline), then the public employer is required to give the PBA notice of the proposed change and an opportunity to bargain that change (i.e., "impact bargaining"). Failure to do so would be an unfair labor practice, or an offense under Ch. 447, Florida Statutes, that negatively impacts the rights of public employees to bargain. Sometimes, public employers will argue about what constitutes a mandatory subject of bargaining or a change that impacts such subjects of bargaining. Many mandatory subjects of bargaining are explicitly set forth in case law. Also, because many different changes in the public sector can affect how, when and

why an employee may be disciplined, those changes arguably require at least impact bargaining. During the period of negotiation, the status quo should be maintained.

As courts have recognized, it is impossible to include every topic and issue in a single contract. Florida law recognizes public employees' right to have a say in their terms of employment through their union. Similarly, in a recent case heard by the Oregon Court of Appeals, the court noted public employees' rights to organize and bargain collectively on mandatory issues of bargaining, even if those topics were not discussed during the usual contract negotiations, and the public employer had not attempted to make any unilateral change. The court found that employers have a duty to discuss mandatory topics not expressly embodied in a contract, and requests to bargain on new issues or topics should be recognized, even outside of the usual period of negotiation. *Multnomah County v. Multnomah County Corrections Deputy Association*, 317 Or. App. 89 (Or. App. 2022).

In short, if you notice a change or impact that you think may alter your terms of employment, please do not hesitate to give us a call. Additionally, if some new benefit or issue comes to mind that was unknown during negotiations, please reach out. We can discuss the circumstances surrounding the situation and counsel you on the best way to proceed.

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If you are under investigation, remember, as a law enforcement officer, you have rights.

They include:

THE RIGHT to have a PBA representative present during an interview

THE RIGHT to know who's in charge of the investigation

THE RIGHT to know what the charges are and the name of the person bringing the charges

THE RIGHT to have the interview at a reasonable time and for a reasonable length of time

THE RIGHT to have any interview tape-recorded from start to finish

THE RIGHT not to be threatened or bribed or to have to listen to offensive language

THE RIGHT not to be forced to resign

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DO NOT TALK to anyone until you have consulted with a PBA ATTORNEY.

### PROTECT YOUR RIGHTS

The following statement should be written as the first sentences on any statement, report or memorandum an officer is ordered to write when the officer knows or has a reasonable belief that discipline may result:

It is my understanding that this report is made for administrative, internal police department purposes only. This report is made by me after being ordered to do so by lawful supervisory officers. I have not been permitted a reasonable amount of time to confer with a PBA representative or attorney. It is my understanding that by refusing to obey an order to write this immediately, I can be disciplined for insubordination and that the punishment for insubordination can be up to, and including, termination of employment. This report is made only pursuant to such orders and the potential punishment/discipline that can result for failure to obey that order.

### REMINDER

The legal defense policies of the Florida and Palm Beach County PBA have an important provision regarding representation. If a member elects to secure representation by anyone other than the PBA (a private attorney, for example), that member is considered to have waived representation by the PBA. Once this happens, it is the PBA's option whether or not to continue to represent the member in that matter. Please call the PBA office if you have any questions regarding this policy.

[Download PBC PBA Legal Defense Policy](#)

[Download Florida PBA Legal Defense Policy](#)

[Download PBA Bylaws](#)

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<https://www.pbcpba.org/membership/legal/>



# Board of Directors Meeting Attendance - Thursday, March 16, 2023

## EXECUTIVE BOARD

John Kazanjian.....X  
Ernest W. George.....X  
Greg Allen.....X  
Mike Kennedy.....X  
Meer Deen.....X  
Ken Youngblood.....X  
Larry Fagan.....X  
Brennan Keeler.....X  
Katie Mendoza.....X

## Boynton Beach

Cory Herny.....X  
Brian McDevitt.....Excused  
Jason Llopis.....X  
Aramis Grigorian.....X  
Jose Rivera, Alt.....X  
Brad Leitner, Alt.....Excused

## Delray Beach

Meer Deen.....X  
Edwin Hernandez.....X  
Brian Cambell.....Excused  
Vinnie Gray.....X  
Edward McCabe, Alt.....Excused  
Charles Reed, Alt.....X

## FAU

Rickey Robinson Jr.....Excused  
Miguel Cardona, Alt.....Excused

## Gulf Stream

Randall Wilson.....X

## Highland Beach

Paul Shersty.....X  
Jeff Kaplan, Alt.....X

## Juno Beach

John Kenny.....Excused

## Jupiter

Sal Mattino.....Excused  
Brandon Rhodes.....X  
Ryan Kolenich.....X  
Branden Zesut, Alt.....X  
Cameron Cook, Alt.....X

## Jupiter Island

Robert Brown.....Absent  
Matthew Potsko, Alt.....Absent

## Lake Clarke Shores

Rogel Dominguez.....X  
William Howell, Alt.....Excused

## Lantana

Shawn Johnson.....X  
Troy Schaaf, Appt. Alt.....X  
Linda Mikkelsen, Appt.....Excused

## Manalapan

## MCSO - Law Enforcement

Daniel Foote.....X  
Kenneth "Tater" Youngblood.....X  
Andrew Porcelli.....X  
William Jaques.....Excused

James Holloran.....Excused  
Ryan Pearlman, Alt.....X  
Matt Fritchie, Alt.....Excused  
Willie Weiss, Appt'd.....X

## MCSO - Corrections

Samuel Haidy.....Excused  
Edward Burke.....X  
Stephen Piekara.....X  
Tiffany Robertson.....X

## North Palm Beach

Edward Ciezak.....X  
Louis Pearson, Alt.....X

## Ocean Ridge

Mario Galluscio.....X

## PBSO - Law Enforcement

Michael Kennedy.....X  
Chris Caris.....X

## Palm Beach Gardens

Brandon West.....X  
Walter Robinson.....Excused  
Ryan Mugridge.....X  
Cory Gray, Alt.....X  
Kevin Marks, Alt.....X  
Carlos Ugalde, Alt.....X  
Nathaniel Krause, Appt'd.....X  
Cesar Tejada, Appt'd.....X  
William Gale, Appt'd.....X  
Billy Gray, Appt'd.....X  
John Kazanjian, II, Appt'd.....Excused  
Jeremy Campbell, Appt'd.....X  
Austin Parent, Appt'd.....X  
Brennen Lewis, Appt'd.....X  
Tamika Payne, Appt'd.....X  
Christopher Padgett, Appt'd.....X  
James Harding, Appt'd.....X  
Richard Anderson, Appt'd.....X  
Gary Chan, Appt'd.....X  
Grant Henderson, Appt'd.....X  
Luciano "Angelo" Labate, Appt'd.....X  
Charles Bahruth, Appt'd.....X  
Michael Sasson, Appt'd.....X  
Matthew DeJoy, Appt'd.....X  
Jackie Garrett, Appt'd.....Excused  
Deneisha Leggett, Appt'd.....X  
Jeff Taschner, Appt'd.....X  
Humberto Mejia, Jr., Appt'd.....X  
Jonathan Berger, Appt'd.....Excused  
Aaron Silver, Appt'd.....X  
James Benedict, Appt'd.....X  
Steven Lipinski, Appt'd.....Excused  
Joseph DeRogatis, Appt'd.....Excused  
George Baldino, Appt'd.....Excused  
Jason Johnson, Appt'd.....X

## PBSO - Corrections

Thomas Jordan.....X  
Mike Santoro.....X  
Robert Tozzi.....X  
Berthony Lorfils.....X  
Gwendolyn Wattlely.....Excused  
Marvin Marty, Alt.....Excused

Antonio Osborne, Alt.....X  
Brandon Wilson, Appt'd.....X  
Mark Putnam, Appt'd.....X  
Helga Santana Young, Appt'd.....Excused

## PBSO - Civilians

Sallyann Josef.....X  
Ray Griffith.....X  
Mariam Glisson.....X  
Kristen Kazanjian Lassinger.....X  
Tequesta McKinney-James.....Excused  
Heriberto "Eddie" Aviles, Alt.....Excused  
Sharon King, Alt.....X  
Tanya Fresneda, Appt'd.....X  
Nicole Pure, Appt'd.....X  
Stephanie King Appt'd.....X  
Nichol Fields, Appt'd.....X  
Marty Hopper, Appt'd.....X  
Kayai Graham, Appt'd.....X

## Palm Beach Gardens

Tatsuaki Hayashi.....X  
Robert Boschen.....X  
Brian Tiyaloglu.....Excused  
Mathew Komara.....X  
Peter Reynolds, Alt.....X  
Adam McHone, Alt.....X  
Cameron Carver, Alt.....X

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Ralph Fequiere.....X  
John Gee, Alt.....Excused

## Riviera Beach

Jeremy Summers.....Excused  
Nir Mordechay.....X  
Michael Brown.....X  
Brian Jackson, Alt.....X  
Javares Harvey, Alt.....X  
Justin Borum, Alt.....X

## School Police (Palm Beach County)

Carol Session.....X  
Jodi Anne Novella.....Excused  
Alphonso Brat.....X  
Joseph LaPaugh.....X  
Michael Lynch.....X  
Khashayar Khatami, Alt.....X  
Chad Aubrey, Alt.....X

## Sewall's Point

## Stuart

David Duran.....Absent

## Tequesta

Raymond Korkowski.....X  
Matt Muniz, Alt.....X

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Christopher Nebbeling.....X  
Dennis Hardiman.....X  
James Louis.....Absent  
Michael Ferrera.....X  
Charles Branch.....Excused  
Ryan Patterson, Alt.....X  
John Rebholz, Alt.....X



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– John Kazanjian

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# Palm Beach County PBA Officer of the Month Honorees

**JANUARY 2023**

**Agent Mathew Mattino**  
**Palm Beach County Sheriff's Office**

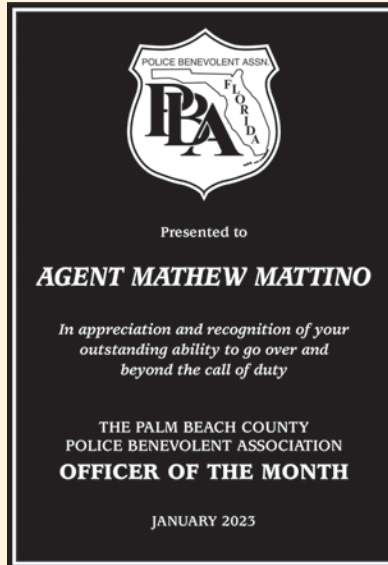
Nominated by Sergeant Timothy McCann

In February 2022, multiple suspects engaged in an armed home robbery, holding the victims at gunpoint and removing a safe with hundreds of thousands of dollars. Initial attempts to identify the suspects' white GMC Yukon were unsuccessful.

However, Agent Mathew Mattino researched the fixed license plate readers and surveillance cameras in the area to establish the suspect vehicle's direction of travel. He also recreated the drive's escape route to narrow the search.

On the 154th vehicle tag searched, Agent Mattino found a car matching the SUV's description, and he learned that a male driving that same vehicle was arrested for burglary in 2021. After surveillance, detectives eventually obtained search warrants and an arrest warrant for the suspect, who confessed and provided information regarding his accomplices.

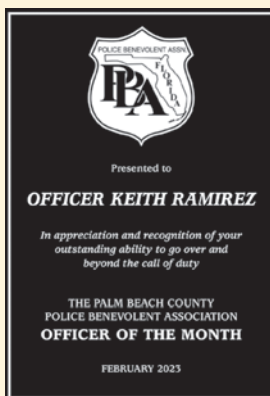
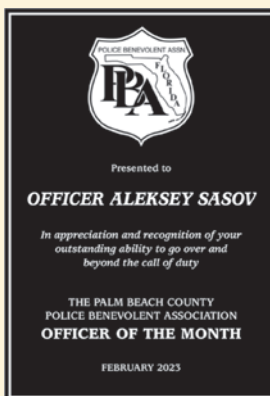
Agent Mattino's tenacity ensured the apprehension of a dangerous, repeat thief.



**FEBRUARY 2023**

**Officers Aleksey Sasov and Keith Ramirez**  
**Ocean Ridge Police Department**

Nominated by Officer Mario Galluscio



In July 2022, Officers Sasov and Ramirez noticed a vehicle entering the Town of Ocean Ridge, but the white car's license plate was registered to a red vehicle. Law enforcement have recently noticed this local crime trend, in which suspects use a stolen license plate to conceal their vehicle's identification.

The officers pulled over the vehicle, but when they attempted to make contact with the driver, the driver fled. That driver began driving erratically and into oncoming traffic.

Officer Ramirez successfully initiated the PIT maneuver, forcing the

vehicle to a stop. The driver and occupant suspects fled on foot in opposite directions, and Officer Ramirez secured the scene and evidence.

Officer Sasov followed the armed driver on foot. While Officer Sasov could not safely continue the foot pursuit, he helped Boynton Beach K-9 retrace the driver's route, and they discovered a handgun that was connected to a homicide investigation by PBSO.

The quick thinking by Officers Ramirez and Sasov helped prevent possible future crimes and preserve valuable evidence.



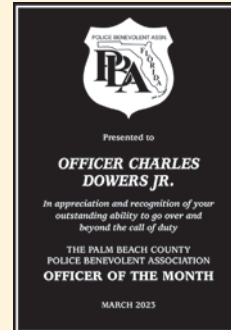
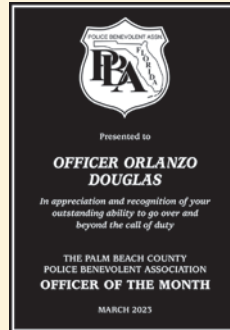
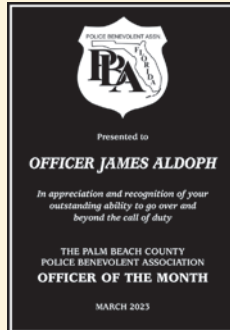
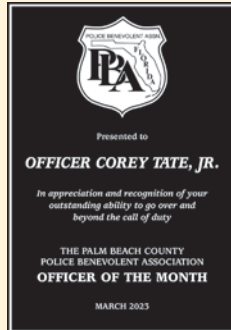
# Palm Beach County PBA Officer of the Month Honorees

**MARCH 2023**

**Officer Corey Tate Jr.  
Officer Orlanzo Douglas**

**Officer James Aldolph  
Officer Charles Dowers Jr.**

**Riviera Beach Police Department**



During an early morning in August 2022, officers responded to shots fired at a local residential complex. They discovered a shooting victim and searched for the suspects.

During this activity, Officer Douglas attempted to jump over a spiked iron fence, which was wet, and his left leg was impaled. While hanging upside down, Officer Douglas radioed for assistance.

Officers Tate and Aldolph quickly responded, safely detached Officer Douglas's injured leg from the fence and applied a tourniquet. Officers Tate and Aldolph assisted Officer Douglas to the nearest patrol car, which was many yards away through rough terrain. Officer Dowers drove his fellow patrolmen to the hospital.

These officers responded to a dangerous situation, and they kept their cool when faced with adversity.



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# News from your reps

Reports from Palm Beach County and Martin County units

## Stuart Police Department celebrates promotions

Submitted by David Duran, Stuart PBA Rep

Please join us in congratulating the Stuart Police Department's newest members of leadership.

Tyler Bovee was promoted from officer to sergeant, and Flamur Zenelovic was sworn in as the department's newest captain. Captain Zenelovic is a returning officer. He worked at the Stuart Police Department 20 years ago.

Congratulations, Sergeant Bovee and Captain Zenelovic (and welcome home, Captain).

### Tequesta

Submitted by Raymond Korkowski, PBA Rep

The Tequesta Police Department has been working diligently to expand its fleet to include a motorcycle unit. This purchase will cost taxpayers zero dollars, as the bike was acquired through our special law enforcement fund.

This account takes the profit out of crime and provides our local agency with resources to further our law enforcement goals. This fund has increased dramatically due to the hard work of Detective Loney and K-9 Erik, who are assigned to the Drug Enforcement Agency as task force officers.



The motorcycle unit will be handling accidents and traffic enforcement throughout the village. Additionally, with the upcoming bridge closure, the motorcycle will provide quicker response times through traffic and construction sites.

The addition of the motorcycle unit is once again an example of your police department listening to our community and finding the best solutions to better serve our stakeholders.

Also, Corporal Timothy Baldwin, an FTO with our marine patrol, reports that during the past year, the Tequesta Police Department has been working on creating a dive team. Through a partnership with Jupiter Dive Center owner Gerry Carroll and instructors James Weber and Craig Davis from Police Fire Dive Instruction, officers will learn the necessary skills to undertake




underwater search operations, evidence recovery, search and rescue and much more.

Through training, officers can anticipate and manage unexpected problems that could arise while diving. A diving officer plays an essential role in Tequesta, as our area is surrounded by water that locals and visitors from all around come to enjoy.

To show our appreciation, Corporal Baldwin designed and handcrafted custom plaques. In addition, Chief Media would like to give a special thanks to Carroll, who provided the equipment for the officers to train with; Weber, who shared his vast knowledge of public safety diving; and Davis, who organized training and provided instruction. Their assistance helped make this possible.







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## 15TH ANNUAL PALM BEACH COUNTY PBA POLICE OFFICER'S BALL



### *Ball Time High*

## Police Officer's Ball serves up a night to highlight the excellence of local law enforcement

■ BY MITCHELL KRUGEL

Any preconceived plan for the 15th Annual Police Officer's Ball evaporated shortly after the salad was served. Emcee Allan Ortman requested that the 300-plus attending the event on April 22 at Trump National in Jupiter hold off digging into that first course so he could get the program rolling.

Nobody really knew if Ortman was serious about such a demand because how much noise could salad actually make? Even this one full of lettuce wedge and pecans. It didn't matter, though, because when Ortman called Palm Beach County PBA President John Kazanjian to the podium to deliver his patented opening remarks, Kaz had a more tantalizing type of appetizer in mind.

Cutting right to a big announcement, Kaz reported – as he usually does on this night – how the PBCPBA's fundraising continues to elevate its PBA Charity Fund and Kaitlin A. Kazanjian Scholarship Fund. This time, he pulled out a showstopper by revealing that recent fundraising activities had generated an unprecedented amount of donations for both funds.

As Kaz continued to extol the virtue of giving, he pointed the finger at the person he held accountable for such success. Palm Beach County Sheriff Ric Bradshaw had gone above and beyond to give his officers time and opportunities to engage in fundraising activities, and now Kaz wanted the man he calls "Boss" to come onstage for a show of appreciation.

And with that, the PBA presented Sheriff Bradshaw with a custom-made, nickel-plated Colt revolver inscribed with Brad-



The Palm Beach County PBA presented Sheriff Ric Bradshaw with a custom-made Colt revolver in appreciation for his efforts to support the PBA's charity and scholarship funds.





## 15TH ANNUAL PALM BEACH COUNTY PBA POLICE OFFICER'S BALL

with Bradshaw's PBSO badge number on one side and his badge number from his time working for the West Palm Beach Police Department on the other side. Again, this was only the appetizer.

Before letting the boss get back to his salad, Kaz had a question.

"I'd be remiss if I didn't ask you this, because I know there've been a lot of rumors," he started. "Are you going to run for sheriff again or what?"

Bradshaw thrust his right fist into the air and answered, "Absolutely."

And a refrain of "Hell, yeah" bounced back from the crowd.

From that point on, the event became a Ball of surprises, right up to the special treat that came with dessert. The main course, of course, was the revealing of the 2022 Officer of the Year, three runners-up and one dramatic honorable mention.

If the Ball had just presented accounts of law enforcement accentuating how officers in Palm Beach and Martin counties continue to show how they are the best of the best, then the 15th annual would have been an overwhelming success. But Bradshaw served up a side of how the prowess of local law enforcement has motivated him to seek a sixth term.

"I still got a lot of gas in my tank," the sheriff reassured after coming down from the presentation of the Colt, announcing his candidacy and being honored in front of a faithful constituency. Before the Ball moved on to the main course, Bradshaw nodded when hearing that more than 85 percent of the current PBSO employees have worked for only one sheriff.

And how he views them and all the residents of the county as his "boss." That is what compels him to continue to serve.

"The best part for me is that I can affect people's lives in a very positive direction whenever I need to use the resources available to me," he detailed. "The things we do, we don't do for recognition. We do it because it's the right thing to do. Our employees like to get involved. So if we can give them a comp day or something, hopefully that motivates them to get more involved."

Benevolence seemed to hit a Ball-time high on this night, es-



Eric Trump fired up the crowd with an impromptu speech praising the efforts of local law enforcement.

pecially with Kaz taking a timeout during his remarks to recognize the wives, husbands, girlfriends, boyfriends and partners for their service. And he expressed the PBA's commitment to promote annual health screenings for all members, inspired by how Palm Beach Gardens put such measures, which the department is picking up the tab for, into its new contract.

Bradshaw, for one, followed that up by confirming how much impact the PBA has been able to make to forge positive relationships with all agencies.

"I tell people all the time that in order to make an organization go forward, you have to have cooperation from the PBA," he stated. "We both want the same thing: a good department that treats the employees well."

The cherry on top of the evening came in an unexpected way. In fact, the presence of a member of the ownership family of Trump National served to accentuate how much officers in Palm Beach and Martin counties go above and beyond the call of duty.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 20





## Ball the Best

A look at some of the sights from the 2023 PBCPBA Police Officer's Ball



**BALL** CONTINUED FROM PAGE 19

Word had been circulating during the day of the Ball that the head of the ownership family might stop by to address the PBA as he did two years ago. Turned out, his son had no problem picking up the Ball.

When Eric Trump responded to the call to speak, he was greeted onstage by a shoutout from the crowd about being disappointed by what has been happening in the White House the past two years. It included an explicit modifier following the name of the president.

"How good is that introduction? I don't even need to say anything more," Eric declared.

But he did. And he sent up a message that PBA members and their families can never hear enough.

"This is political, because I'm telling you law enforcement is the thing we care about as a family most in the world," Eric began. "And through all this about let's defund the cops – how well did that work out in Minnesota and Portland, in Chicago and all these other places by the way – we had the exact opposite approach here in Palm Beach. Which is exactly why my beautiful wife and I moved here. We have an incredibly safe community run by an incredible department, led by a man that we've

known for so many years, Sheriff Bradshaw."

His words seemed to be even sweeter than the chocolate cake dessert attendees enjoyed as Eric spoke. And then he put his own cherry on top of that with a parting shot of gratitude.

"We need a lot more of that tough leadership," Eric continued. "That's what my father did. We fought every single day to keep this country safe. So on behalf of our family, on behalf of a grateful nation and on behalf of all of us, thank you for all you do."

It was all over but the shouting, which came in the form of cheers as the awards for those members honored as officers of the year were announced. As Ortman read descriptions of the responses from the officers who were honored at the Ball, he told of efforts that combined to save more lives than anybody could count.

From ending the threat of a man with a gun that could have become one of those mass-shooting tragedies happening way too much in the U.S. these days to saving a mother being held at knifepoint – by her son – to a pursuit that ended with apprehending a suspect who had murdered three people to reviving a toddler who had fallen into a pool, accounts of law enforcing excellence were worthy of never-ending flame emojis. 🔥🔥🔥

It was unquestionably a Ball of fire.



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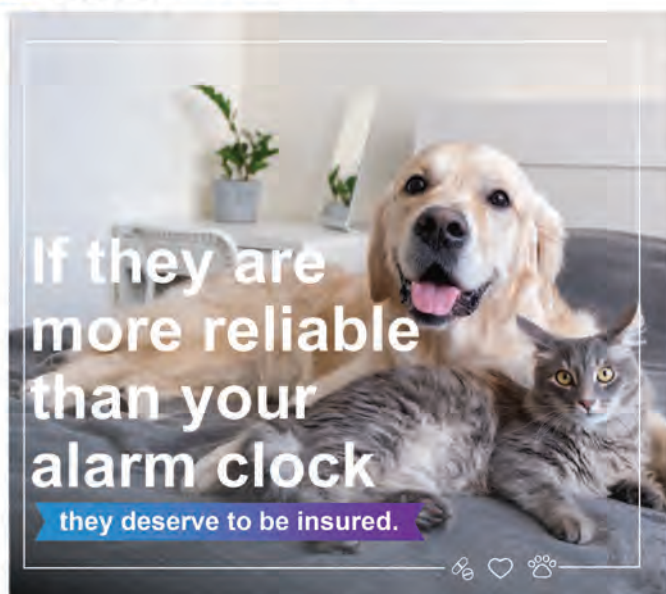
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# Trouble Shooting

PBSO captain leads response to defuse situation that could have become a mass tragedy

BY MITCHELL KRUGEL

Squatting in the Greenacres shopping center parking lot outside Publix, a man pointed a 9-millimeter pistol. Unmarked PBSO vehicles worked verbal de-escalation tactics, but the man responded by firing three rounds into the air. Now, he was making a move to enter the Publix carrying what officers confirmed was a high-capacity magazine.

Could this Publix in Greenacres be on the verge of becoming the scene of a tragedy like the Old National Bank in Louisville? Or the Lunar New Year dance in Monterey Park, California? Or Robb Elementary School in Uvalde, Texas? Or the Publix in Royal Palm Beach in June 2021, when a shooter killed a grandmother and her grandson?

Not if PBSO Captain Alex Perez could do anything about it.

Captain Perez was in one of those unmarked vehicles. As the command duty officer leading the PBSO road patrol night shift, he positioned himself on the front line of this situation. And as soon as the man made that move toward the Publix, Perez led by example.

"I was thinking mass shooting, and what happened in Royal Palm rolled through my head," recalled Perez, filled with a different kind of emotion nearly seven months after that Sept. 26, 2022 escape.

Following the awards ceremony at the Palm Beach County PBA Police Officer's Ball, where he had just been honored as the 2022 Officer of the Year, Perez stood outside the Trump National ballroom, seemingly waiting to exhale. He let out the response he was ready for outside that Publix.

"I said to myself, 'He's going to have to kill me before he gets to anyone else,'" Perez added. "I pulled back, and we were setting up a game plan to deal with him. But when he was heading toward the store, something inside me told me I wasn't going to allow him to do that."

Before picking up with the details about how Perez stopped that threat, it's revealing to understand why he wanted



## OFFICER OF THE YEAR

Captain Alex Perez  
Palm Beach County  
Sheriff's Officer

ed to be on the front line that evening. And about how his excellence is emblematic of the caliber of law enforcing in Palm Beach and Martin counties and the dedication of this 36-year veteran and every other PBA member.

Standing outside the Trump National ballroom in Jupiter, it seemed like each of the 400-plus people who attended the 15th annual Police Officer's Ball wanted to congratulate Perez. It only seemed like Perez knew each and every one of them because he is that magnificent and magnanimous.

Like somebody who had just won the Oscar for best actor, Perez first and foremost recognized the other members honored with Officer of the Year runner-up and honorable mention recognition. He knew well of the efforts from PBSO Sergeant Michael Bryant that earned first runner-up honors and how



PBSO K-9 Sergeant William Nogueras liberated a woman had been subjected to repeated sexual abuse and had a knife held to her head.

"William has been one of the guys I have always looked up to. And what he did saving a lady's life, he could have been Officer of the Year. And so could Michael Bryant," Perez commented. "I think it all speaks to the caliber of law enforcement that takes place in this part of the country."

In the wake of being honored as the best of the best, Perez wanted to extol the prowess of the entire profession. He praised how well all officers are responding to the increase in the number of high-risk calls that come in on a daily basis.



## 15TH ANNUAL PALM BEACH COUNTY PBA POLICE OFFICER'S BALL

Perez also expressed how this response made him feel like he had set an example for the younger officers. He knows what's up for the next generation of law enforcement and he takes it personal.

"I feel like I'm almost a father figure to a lot of these deputies and sergeants. And as they come up the ranks, I look at them like they are my family," Perez shared. "I try to give young deputies advice because I've been there. Maybe like a parent giving advice to a son or daughter."

Which is a bit ironic because his son, Alex Jr., has been a PBSO deputy for 11 years and is an FTO in District 16. Perez actually is part of a law enforcement family. His brother Willie retired as an assistant chief for West Palm, then did an additional 10-years-plus with PBSO.

Perez hopes to extend the family legacy by working up to another three years with PBSO.

"I want to leave my mark as someone who is committed to the agency and committed to the people who work for me," he added.

Hunkered down in one of the unmarked vehicles outside Publix in Gre-

enacres, Perez readied with everything he had trained for the past 36 years. That includes nine years on the job with the Riviera Beach PD and time with the PBSO SWAT team.

When the man began waving his gun in the air and pointing the weapon at himself and other people, the call escalated to an active-shooter situation. As officers on site worked the response, they also could not rule out the man's possible entrance into Publix and the risk of him creating a hostage situation.

Perez was able to cut off the man's move toward the Publix front doors and reassert negotiation and de-escalation efforts. He was there with four other officers trying everything possible to ensure that Monterrey Park or Uvalde would not come to Greenacres.

"He was starting to get more and more agitated where I thought for sure he was going to fire," Perez described. "And then when he pointed the weapon at another deputy, by instinct..."

Just one round.

Perez fired one round to end the conflict and save who knows how many lives,

including those of officers in his command. It was a definitive example of how officers are sometimes put in a position where options are very limited. And the first instinct – the most important one as Perez noted – is to act to save other people.

It would have been easily understandable and even appropriate for Perez to enjoy the hero worship that came with being named PBCPBA 2022 Officer of the Year. But he would have none of that on this night.

Perez emphasized that heroic responses result from how much serving and protecting the people matters to so many PBCPBA members because they were born in raised in the county. So he gave credit where credit was due from his perspective and revealed what it really means to be on the front lines, to be commanding so many dedicated deputies.

"The deputies I work with every day are the heroes. And the PBA, too, because they've had our backs for years," Perez confided. "And to be part of it, I am so proud to wear that star every day."

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# Quick Work

PBSO sergeant notes how training and teamwork enable him to act quickly for a safe response

■ BY DAN CAMPANA

It happened so fast for Palm Beach County Sheriff's Sergeant Michael Bryant.

Responding to a call of a man threatening his family, Bryant and other PBSO deputies didn't spend much time at the home before heading in to confront whatever unknown danger awaited them.

Once inside, Bryant and four officers found the man holding a knife to his mother's throat. The man ignored multiple commands to drop the weapon, resisted other de-escalation tactics and continued to fend off the woman's attempts to escape his control.

Bryant fired a single shot, striking the man in his upper right side. It was enough to create separation that allowed the officers to secure the scene. Bryant tended to the woman's injuries before she and her son were transported to the hospital.

"No less than a minute, minute and a half," said Bryant, a 15-year PBSO veteran. "That's just an approximation off the top of my head. Once we went into the residence, it was very quick."

Some calls are like that. All calls, of course, come with the inherent understanding that you need to make quick decisions and act even more quickly. And so it was for Bryant on this day.

"This call was unique. There was an air about it that something was amiss," he continued. "We do what we were trained to do ... and it's a morale boost for the guys."

Training, experience and teamwork made all the difference when quick actions were needed, according to Bryant, who was recognized as first runner-up for 2022 Officer of the Year at the Palm Beach County PBA Police Officers' Ball on April 22.

Bryant originally planned to start his career by going into the military, but he chose law enforcement instead. After 15 years, he still loves the opportunity to help people and recognizes the value of successful outcomes in even the toughest situations — such as the December 2022 call that earned him his award recognition.

"Everybody made it. Maybe a little worse for wear, but at the end of the day, everybody made it, so it's a win-win," Bryant explained. "Obviously, we're concerned about the safety of all parties involved. It's very rapid, but slow at the same time. It seems like it's going forever, so you're just trying to make the best decision."

Among other things he's seen, Bryant's background working in Belle Glade has exposed him to difficult situations — even incidents similar to this one — that combine with training preparation to give him the confidence needed to navigate crucial moments.

"Belle Glade can be a violent area. I was a homicide detective for a little bit, so I've been in some interesting areas and interesting cases," Bryant said. "Our training — firearms and de-escalation, things like that — and just having had previous



**OFFICER OF THE YEAR  
FIRST RUNNER-UP**  
Sergeant Michael Bryant  
Palm Beach County Sheriff's Officer

equivalent incidents under my belt ... it helped. When it's not new, it's not as stressful."

Bryant, who also spends time as a road patrol supervisor and in property crimes as a detective sergeant, mentioned how this incident proved to be a valuable learning experience for newer officers who were involved.

"It's an eye-opener [for] brand-new deputies [with a] couple months on the job that this is not a game," he said.

The PBSO culture that makes it one of the best sheriff's departments in the country has also been important in creating successful outcomes. This was another example of how officers train for nearly every imaginable situation, and how they are ready for anything.

"There's the teamwork, the effort that's put into training and oversight from the agency — all around, they just try to give us the best whenever they can," Bryant detailed. "Of course, we always go back to see if there's something we could do better and try to improve."

Sharing the big night with his Sheriff's Office peers and colleagues was important to Bryant, even knowing he'd be the target of some good-natured ribbing at some point during the festivities.

"It's a great time seeing everybody, a great presentation," Bryant added. "It's an honor and just a good feeling all around."



# Dogged Determination

Boynton Beach officers recount how their relentless pursuit resulted in catching a murder suspect

■ BY ESTHER GONZALES

Early on the morning of Sept. 5, 2022, members of the Boynton Beach Bravo 12 shift heard a BOLO call. Boynton Beach Officer Cynthia Rivera listened intently for more details.

There was a shooting, with at least one victim sustaining life-threatening injuries. The West Palm Beach Police Department requested assistance, and time was of the essence. The suspect was armed and on the run.

Rivera quickly turned on her tag reader, only to realize that the vehicle in question was close by, on Gateway Boulevard in Boynton Beach. She joined the pursuit, thinking how this suspect might use his weapon on them or might turn it on innocent civilians.

"They were armed at the time. We didn't know the extent of the shooting," Rivera remarked. "It's about safety, because this guy is out and about."

While Rivera was in pursuit, Boynton Beach Sergeant Christopher Schalk and officers from other agencies arrived at the area where the suspect was first thought to be. Schalk threw down stop sticks after hearing on the radio that a vehicle matching the description of the shooter's was heading east on Gateway toward I-95.

The pursuit led officers through Delray Beach and to the side streets of Boca Raton. Eventually, the pursuit led into Broward County.

Schalk, who is also a K-9 officer, arrived at the scene where the vehicle had stopped and the suspects were headed to a getaway car that was waiting for them. One of the suspects reached the getaway car before it fled. The other suspect ran in the opposite direction, away from officers.

Immediately, Schalk and his partner, K-9 Argo, began a manhunt. Schalk was determined, just as Rivera was, to find this man who had taken innocent lives. He didn't give a second thought to pur-



**OFFICER OF THE YEAR  
SECOND RUNNERS-UP**  
Officer Cynthia Rivera  
Sergeant Christopher Schalk  
K-9 Argo  
Boynton Beach Police Department

suing a highly dangerous and armed suspect.

"We're not going to let him get away and be in the public to possibly car-jack somebody to get away," Schalk explained. "It's not just us. It's more about the public's safety that is at risk."

After a thorough search of the area and overcoming the radio not working, Argo found the suspect hiding under a car. He was later charged with three counts of first-degree murder.

Through determination and perseverance, the Boynton Beach officers had achieved the best possible outcome. It's the type of determination the Palm Beach County PBA honored when recognizing Rivera, Schalk and Argo as second runners-up for the 2022 Officer of the Year.

"It's in our blood. It's just in our DNA. It's what drives us," Schalk expressed. "We come to work to actually do real police work, to get out there and catch the real bad guys, like real evil. And that's just a feeling you can't explain."

Rivera and Schalk admitted they had been in situations like this before. They attributed the successful outcome to their training and to the communication they have built through two years of working together.

"We can literally just look at each other, and we know what the next step is going to be," Rivera commented. "And there was definitely a lot of determination. We were just determined to get the guy."

When Rivera arrived at the abandoned vehicle, she recovered a gun that had been used in the shootings. She stayed at the scene to continue directing the search.

Overhead, a PBSO helicopter scanned the area to help Schalk and Argo locate the suspect.

From communicating with PBSO, Schalk learned the suspect might have been hiding in a house. They searched it again. And again.

"I pretty much searched the whole complex," Schalk related. "But sometimes, it takes an extra step to just stop for a second. Your adrenaline is pumping at that moment. So if you stop, take a breather, usually you have a good outcome. And that's exactly what happened."

Suddenly, Argo picked up on a scent. He led Schalk to a parking lot adjacent to the complex they were searching. And there, underneath a car, Argo located the suspect, who stuck his hands out in surrender.

That fierce determination had paid off.

"I usually don't ever give up unless I'm forced to, and it turned out to be a good outcome," Schalk added. "Not giving up is what I'm most proud of."

# Consummate Courage

## MCSO deputy's off-duty response saves a child

When he heard the screams, Martin County Sheriff's Office Deputy Gregg Newton did what he has always done. Even off duty, he responded instantaneously and instinctively.

The scream was a shriek of panic coming from his neighbor's backyard. When he bolted to the scene, he found that the family next door had just pulled a toddler from their pool. The child was not breathing.

Newton quickly administered CPR, while his wife called 911. In just a matter of moments, the child began choking and breathing, revived by a 25-year veteran corrections officer who has never hesitated to put the wellbeing of others before his own.

There may be no law enforcement officer more selfless in the state of Florida than Newton. In July 2021, he went to the doctor to have a swollen gland in his neck checked. Allergies, he thought.

But Newton was diagnosed with stage 4 renal cell carcinoma, which had already metastasized throughout his body, including to his lungs, chest, skull and lymph nodes.



### OFFICER OF THE YEAR THIRD RUNNER-UP

Deputy Sheriff Gregg Newton  
Martin County Sheriff's Office

The cancer is not curable. There is no hope of remission. Chemotherapy and other treatments attempt to check the cancer from getting any worse. He has attempted twice to go back to work but has been unable to maintain due to his disease and side effects.

Newton would be the first one to tell you that the best treatment came when the neighbor's child made a full recovery. And he certainly shared as much when receiving the March 2022 Officer of the Month award at the Palm Beach County PBA Hall.

He was not able to attend the Police Officer's Ball on April 22 to receive the award as Officer of the Year third runner-up. After the audience heard his story, though, and his name was called to receive the award, a thundering ovation erupted in the ballroom at Trump National in Jupiter.

Hopefully, Newton heard that applause. It was a response intended for an officer with his unparalleled courage and bravery.



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# Honorable recognition for a PBSO sergeant

The Palm Beach County PBA does not present an honorable mention at the Officer's Ball every year. So when emcee Allan Ortman started on the description of the honorable mention this year, a bit of rush came over the crowd.

K-9 Sergeant William Nogueras recently decided to move on from his career in law enforcement. So in addition to recognizing the response that earned Nogueras Officer of the Month for August 2022, his sisters and brothers wanted to come forth with a gesture to thank him for his service.

### OFFICER OF THE YEAR HONORABLE MENTION

K-9 Sergeant William Nogueras  
Palm Beach County Sheriff's Office

For that honor in August 2022, Nogueras responded to a hostage situation rising from reports of a woman screaming for help from a residence. When Nogueras

and other PBSO deputies arrived, they saw that the home's windows and doors were covered. They were forced to breach the house to make contact.

Later, they would learn that the suspect had duct-taped the victim and sexually assaulted her for hours. Deputies found the man restraining the woman with a large knife to her throat.

Despite numerous commands for the suspect to drop the knife, the man did not comply. Nogueras was forced to fire his weapon at the defendant to stop the threat, striking him once in the head.



Both the man and the victim were transported for medical treatment and survived. The man was charged with multiple criminal offenses, including sexual battery and attempted murder. Sergeant Nogueras had saved this woman from imminent threat of harm and a living nightmare.



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# Award-Winning Support

## Good Greek's presentation to PBCPBA is true backing of the blue

This recognition award from the business community meant something special for the Palm Beach County PBA.

At its annual employee recognition awards dinner on Feb. 4 at the Wyndham Grand Jupiter at Harbourside Place, Good Greek Moving & Storage presented PBCPBA President John Kazanjian with an award for what the association has done for its members. Good Greek founder and CEO Spero Georgedakis knows how much that means.

For Georgedakis, it was an opportunity to show appreciation for his sisters and brothers. Before starting Good Greek, he served for nearly a decade with the North Miami Police Department, including time with the SWAT team.

"Spero is a true, very excellent businessman. But you can tell at heart he's still a cop," noted recently retired PBCPBA Vice President Rick McAfee, who joined Kaz and PBSO rep Ray Griffith to represent the union at the dinner. "Because of that, I think he tries to give back to law enforcement, and he also likes to give back to charities throughout South Florida."

The award certainly had a takes-one-to-know-one feel. McAfee added that Georgedakis has the same business philosophy as the PBA, in which the priority is to take care of the members. Or in Good Greek's case, take care of employees, which is why the award was presented at the employee recognition awards dinner.

It turned out to be a night filled with appreciation for the PBA.

"Throughout the evening, I'd have people come up to me who work for Spero in different capacities from all around the state and say, 'Oh, you're one of the police officers. Thank you so much for what you do,'" Mac added. "For this event to be hosted by a former law enforcement guy to recognize us for what we do, and then to have people who I don't even know come up and say, 'Thank you for what you do,' yeah, it means a lot."

As the PBA's relationship with Good Greek has grown – and the company has served many PBA members – the union has seen how much charity work Georgedakis has done throughout South Florida. Mac explained that Good Greek having many retired and former law enforcement officers as employees is a big reason for that.

"Spero's relationship with us has only been for a short window, but you could tell his support of law enforcement has been unwavering, no matter what the public sentiment is or anything like that," McAfee continued. "To have a guy like that, it's tremendous. I mean, we have a few business partners within the PBA that we can count on. We know if we need help with something, if we need to raise money for a specific issue, we can always count on them without a doubt."



Dave Murphy of Good Greek Moving & Storage, left, and Good Greek CEO Spero Georgedakis, right, present PBCPBA President John Kazanjian with an award to recognize the PBA's support of its members.



From left, Dave Murphy of Good Greek Moving & Storage, PBSO PBA rep Ray Griffith, Kim Wilson, Good Greek CEO Spero Georgedakis, Joanne Kazanjian, PBA President John Kazanjian, Helene McAfee and Rick McAfee.

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# 'Somebody who could be counted on'

■ BY MITCHELL KRUGEL

When Daniel Picciolo became a lieutenant with PBSO, command staff assigned him to Belle Glade. The sheriff's office had recently merged with some cities in that part of the county, so expectations were high.

Crime was even higher. And the demand from the elected officials and the citizens was, well, you can imagine.

Lieutenant Picciolo rose to the occasion, working six, sometimes seven days a week to get everything where it needed to be. At the same time, he served as the executive officer of the district, and he also commanded the Pahokee station as one of his secondary duties.

"He was one of these fellows that would never tell anybody, 'There's nothing we can do,'" commented PBSO Colonel Tony Araujo, who was Picciolo's sergeant when he transferred from the Fort Lauderdale Police Department to PBSO in 1994. "He could be a cheerleader, and he could also coach you up when you needed it. And he did all these things well."

After serving 28 years with PBSO, Lieutenant Picciolo passed away on April 14, leaving behind his beloved wife, Jennifer, and a wonderful family. He achieved a legacy described as living and breathing PBSO, and it's no surprise that the posting of his passing on the department's Facebook page received hundreds of comments, including many from residents in the West Boca District 7, where he served as the executive officer.

Picciolo represented everything that makes PBSO and law enforcement in Palm Beach County so successful. He even left the Glades because he wanted to come back to patrol and supervise and work with officers on the department's front lines. That was probably a trait he first developed while serving in the Marine Corps.

His capabilities and performance history rippled through the department. District 7 called with a need, to be the executive officer there, the No. 2 person in command. And that's where Picciolo served for the rest of his career.

"Everything he did, he did very well," Colonel Araujo added. "He was almost a little anal and a perfectionist. He had loy-



alty to the extreme. It's just a tragic loss."

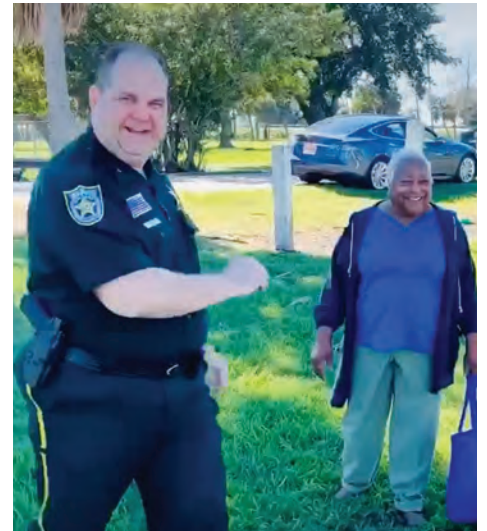
Araujo formed a bond with Picciolo because he knew his brother Vince, who made it to captain with PBSO. And because Araujo and Picciolo both served in the Corps.

Araujo noted how that bond led to holding Picciolo to a higher standard, one that he reached always and often exceeded. He was impressed with the way Picciolo wrote very thorough reports and conducted very successful investigations.

"I saw very quickly, being his first line supervisor, that he knew his craft," Araujo explained. "He knew how to be a street cop, he knew how to do it well and he was always a contributor. He always gave more than he took, always, to his last day at the sheriff's office."

Picciolo worked his way up to detective and then to become a line supervisor. With each move up, he impressed PBSO leadership by demonstrating he was ready for more responsibility.

Araujo also noticed how Picciolo applied leadership traits he learned in the Marine Corps, including not making things more difficult than they have to be. And training officers by giving them the confidence to make reasonable mistakes.



"He practiced that, and he also knew that to be a leader, you need to be one with them, but you can't be one of them," Araujo described. "And he always made his bosses look good."

One of the most significant recognitions of Picciolo's ability and dedication came when the District 7 captain asked him to be his executive officer and serve in an operational mode in the field doing real-time police work. He excelled at the type of community policing required in that position, doing the usual bang-up job he had become known for throughout PBSO.

He was also a very effective leader because of his good sense of humor and quick wit. Picciolo became known for being fun to be around but having a serious side that enabled him to kick it up a notch when it was game on.

Those who reported to Picciolo liked working for him because he was very approachable. And he also wasn't beyond connecting the community with that sense of humor. A TikTok video even shows him doing a little impromptu dance for residents in District 7.

"He didn't overreact. He was loyal, with that ethical loyalty that made him somebody who could be counted on," Araujo praised. "Some bosses will start a forest fire, put it out and pull on your pant leg and say, 'Look what I did.' Dan was the type of guy that would prevent forest fires."

# SWATted

PBSO Deputy Lashawonna Edwards has broken barriers to pave the way for females in local law enforcement

■ BY ESTHER GONZALES

Doubts and thoughts of failure loomed over Palm Beach County Sheriff's Office Deputy Lashawonna Edwards as she approached an eight-foot wall that she needed to jump over. It seemed like an obstacle she wouldn't be able to surmount.

Edwards seemed like a guppy compared to everyone else, who could only be described as sharks. And she wasn't prepared for something like this so early in her career. At least, that's what she was told when she vocalized her goal of becoming the first female to join the PBSO SWAT team.

Edwards fought an internal battle, too. No one on the team looked like her, so it just didn't seem possible. These thoughts became another hurdle that Edwards needed to find a way to overcome.

Her determination pushed her forward through those fears.

In a swoop, Edwards made it over the wall. And when she landed on the other side, looks of astonishment covered the faces of those watching her.

"The look on their faces as I came over that wall, that was a moment for me," Edwards described about what took place on the first day of tryouts in 2016. "It was so surreal. It was like I entered a whole new dimension. I knew that obstacle had stopped someone else before. And to know that I jumped the hurdle and could say, 'I just got over the wall,' that was such a huge accomplishment. Because from there on out, it was possible."

With fierce determination and perseverance, Edwards not only made it over the wall, but broke barriers and paved the way for other women in law enforcement. In 2016, she became the first female officer to earn a position with the PBSO SWAT team.

Edwards remembers when she first saw the SWAT team, seven years ago. They entered the department for a briefing and seemed to command the room with their powerful presence.

"Oh my God, the freaking SWAT team," Edwards explained she was thinking. "They were just there for a briefing, but it was the essence of the SWAT team being there. I was thinking to myself, 'I want something greater than road patrol.'"

A spark ignited in Edwards that day, and she shared with fellow officers that she wanted to join the team.

"Some of my really good friends said, 'If you have this desire, don't you think it's destined for you to be on the SWAT team?'" Edwards related. "But I kind of blew that off for a while because of the doubts."

Overshadowed by the hurdle of doubts, Edwards looked at herself in the mirror. She replayed positive affirmations over in her mind. And she found her inspiration again.

"As a woman in a male-dominated field, you have to be able to tell yourself that you're able to do it," Edwards explained. "There are people who probably want to do it but don't have that representation. And for me, representation matters. And thinking of it being greater than myself motivated me."

Six months before Edwards completed the tryouts for the SWAT team, she began seeking help from different mentors in the gym. Off duty, Edwards hired trainers to help her enhance her upper-body strength. She continued building strength with swimming. And she attended open shoots to enhance her firearm skills. She wanted to be the woman who got over the wall.



Lashawonna Edwards was the first female to join the PBSO SWAT team.



PBSO SWAT team member Lashawonna Edwards completes an obstacle course on her first day of training seven years ago.



And she was.

After the physical portion of the tryouts, Edwards went through an interview process. She passed, and it finally seemed like this dream of hers was within reach.

Then her phone rang.

"It was the best thing in my life," Edwards recalled, through tears, of that moment she made the team. "I was working and everything just stopped, because it's not only about what I did, but also the fact that history was made, and it started with me. That within itself was a huge accomplishment, because I knew from then on, I opened the door for myself and potentially other women to walk through."



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# Members Only Section

Celebrating PBCPBA members and the way they serve every day

## The Highest Honor

MSCO members attend ceremony recognizing a WWII veteran who helped liberate France from Nazi occupation

■ BY ESTHER GONZALES

Richard Lewis was one of 19 young men drafted during WWII after graduating from Leominster High School in Massachusetts. His service with the U.S. Army in the 168th Engineer Combat Battalion led him to serve as a combat medic in France and Belgium and at the Battle of the Bulge. It was there that he was captured.

While surviving four months in a German POW camp, Lewis overcame countless forced marches, starvation, malnutrition and the bitter cold until he was liberated on April 6, 1945.

And his battalion played a vital role in liberating Nazi concentration camps in France.

On March 9, the 98-year-old Martin County resident was honored with the highest and most prestigious award by the country of France, the insignia of Knight in the Legion of Honor.

Martin County Sheriff's Office Honor Guard member Lieutenant Alex James, Community Policing Unit Sergeant Joe Angelico and Community Policing Unit Deputy Jacob Blaszyk had the privilege of attending the award ceremony in Jensen Beach.

James, who served in the U.S. Marine Corps for four years and the Army National Guard for five years, described the moment as surreal.

"He's a real superhero," James said. "We had a legit enemy at that time that was doing unspeakable and horrible things in the world. And here's a man who fought that enemy, lived through it and has affected his family, his friends and another country so much that another country would come here to thank him. That's unbelievable to me."

One by one, family members and friends stood to tell a memory of Lewis and describe the ways he has impacted their lives. James listened in awe.

"Whenever I get to meet a World War II vet, I'm in awe, I'm humbled, I'm thankful and I'm grateful," James said. "Hearing what he experienced and did, it's almost unreal. It's like I'm listening and watching a documentary."

Meeting Lewis resonated with James and the other MCSO members with him, who are also veterans. And it reminded James of the kind of legacy he carries as a veteran.

"It's like you see your lineage as a veteran, you see where you came from and what you're representing and the legacy that you're carrying on, one that he started and I continued with," James explained. "So when I meet younger veterans, I can share his experience with them, and they can keep that legacy going."

As Lewis was awarded his medal, the group of MCSO members felt proud to be there to support him.

"He probably was just thinking, 'I'm doing my job,'" James commented. "A lot of times when we're serving, we're thinking, 'I'm doing what I'm supposed to do, I'm protecting my battle buddy.' And just talking with him afterwards, it made me proud



Martin County Sheriff's Office members attended an award ceremony for a 98-year-old WWII veteran who helped liberate France from Nazi occupation.



to be a veteran and proud to be an American."

This experience reinforced for James just how significant it is to highlight the accomplishments of residents in the community.

"We need to celebrate each other a lot more and our accomplishments," James added. "People should know about the hero that lives down the block, the guy that laid his life down or sacrificed and did this. We focus so much on our differences, and I think we do need to celebrate each other more."



# PBSO superstars

The Palm Beach County Sheriff's Office has a lot to be proud of — namely, its officers who have gone above and beyond in service to their community.

On March 31, one of PBSO's finest, Corporal Eric Peters, was named by the American Jail Association as the Corrections Officer of the Year.

"Your dedication, professionalism and commitment to excellence have not gone unnoticed," the department said of Peters on Facebook. "Keep up the fantastic work!"

During the Community Commissioners' meeting, the PBSO District 3 Community Policing Unit was recognized for its outstanding service, for its dedication to keeping the community safe and for fostering strong community relationships.

And on April 14, PBSO deputies were honored at the 26th Annual Safety



Palm Beach County Sheriff's Office Corporal Eric Peters was named Correctional Officer of the Year by the American Jail Association.

Awards Luncheon. Deputies were given a Heroism Award for the creation of the STEP Program, the Well-Being Program and the Workers Compensation Program.



The Palm Beach County Sheriff's Office District 3 Community Policing Unit was awarded for its outstanding service in the community during the Community Commissioners' meeting.



Palm Beach County Sheriff's Office deputies were given the Heroism Award at the 26th Annual Safety Awards Luncheon.

## Jupiter officers awarded for honorable service

The Admirals Cove in Jupiter buzzed with excitement on March 30 as several Jupiter Police Department officers were presented with awards for their honorable service in 2022. City officials stood to honor Jupiter Sergeant Jason Alexandre as Supervisor of the Year, a very prestigious annual award.

"I felt honored and respected by my coworkers, supervisors and subordinates," Alexandre said. "I felt really accomplished just to be nominated and considered for the award. And very humbled when I received it."

Reflecting on the past year, Alexandre remarked that the people he works with make the job so special. And that enables him to put them in the right places for them to succeed.

"The officers on my shift, they do a great job day in and day out," Alexandre said. "They make my job really easy, and they

really make me look good. They're very accomplished, and I just feel like they do their job."

Alexandre also commended fellow award recipients for their hard work throughout the year, including Agent Jessica Baird (Investigator of the Year), PFC Marciel Quiros (Police Officer First Class of the Year), Jupiter PD Community Service Officer James Rothgeb (Civilian of the Year) and PFC Ian Fries (Edward K. Humphrey Officer of the Year).

"Officer Fries did a great job working with the Narcotics and Street Crimes Unit, doing a big-time investigation that involved a lot of work and had a positive result," Alexandre added. "And PFC Quiros did a great job with being a field training officer, which is really one of the most important roles in a police department. The people I work with are very special."



From left, Police Officer First Class of the Year (PFC) award recipient PFC Marciel Quiros, Edward K. Humphrey Officer of the Year recipient PFC Ian Fries and Supervisor of the Year Award recipient Sergeant Jason Alexandre.



Civilian of the Year Award recipient Community Service Officer James Rothgeb.



# Delray Beach members pull off a miracle

Delray Beach police officers kicked off the Miracle League of Palm Beach County baseball season at Miller Park on April 4. Dozens of children, who are part of the Miracle League, ran through the tunnel of officers cheering and applauding for them.

Delray Beach Police Chief Russ Mager found his way to the center of the diamond to throw out the first pitches of the season. And officers cheered and applauded for all the home runs on and off the field.



## Cooking with Stuart officers

What's better than baking chocolate chip banana bread? Baking it with Stuart officers.

On March 30, members of the Stuart PD Community Relations Unit hosted a Cooking with Cops event for fourth graders at a civic center.

As their bread baked, the group also made fruit smoothies. And students enjoyed their tasty treats with the officers.

## Heroes make sandwiches in Boynton Beach

To welcome Wawa to Boynton Beach on March 23, officers and deputies from Boynton Beach PD and the Palm Beach County Sheriff's Office went head to head in a hoagie-making competition.

With only three minutes on the clock, the goal was to make as many hoagies as possible. With a total of 21-17, BBPD came out on top.

Wawa rewarded the winning team with a \$1,000 donation to the BBPD Police Athletic League Program.



## Operation Copsicle in Riviera Beach

Riviera Beach officers presented "Operation Copsicle," and it was a delicious success.

Music blasted around the Riviera Beach PD truck as students from West Riviera Elementary School danced happily. Riviera Beach officers served popsicles and answered students' questions about their job.





# PBSO deputies celebrate their children's academic success

In continuous support of education and the community's youth, the Palm Beach County Sheriff's Foundation presented scholarships at the National Polo Center to PBSO members' children on March 5.

At the annual scholarship giveaway, PBSO Sheriff Ric Bradshaw presented \$2,500 in scholarships to dozens of students who were hand-selected by deputies for their outstanding performance during the school year.

"We are proud to support these students in their educational pursuits and are grateful to the Palm Beach County Sheriff's Foundation for their generous donation," stated the PBSO Facebook page. "It was an honor to celebrate the hard work and dedication of these young scholars and we wish them all the best as they continue their academic journeys."



## Boynton Beach honors officer of the year

During the Greater Boca Raton Chamber of Commerce's Annual First Responders Luncheon, Boynton Beach K-9 Officer Patrick Roedel was recognized as the 2022 Officer of the Year. Roedel was honored for his dedication and hard work with the Boynton Beach Police Department.

### Ready to Serve Florida's First Responders



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- PBA member since 1988
- 26 years On the Job
- Retired from Palm Beach Sheriff's Office February 2014 as a Sergeant-Law Enforcement. ID#3575.

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# PBA members help carry the torch

Strap on your running shoes, light the torch and follow the lead of Palm Beach County PBA members who participated in the 2023 Law Enforcement Torch Run for Special Olympics. Members gathered to light the Flame of Hope which they carried on their leg of the run, where they passed it along to the next group of runners.

The Torch Run relay leads into the Special Olympics Summer Games, where Special Olympic athletes will compete in various competitions.

"We run to empower [athletes] to transform themselves, their communities and the world," the PBSO noted on its Facebook page. "Join us in Special Olympics mission to make a difference, one stride at a time."



Delray Beach



Joining the numerous supporters of the Special Olympics, Delray Beach police officers and recruits showed up for the Torch Run.



Boynton Beach

Members of the Boynton Beach Police Department participated in the 2023 Law Enforcement Torch Run and brought along their furry friend, K-9 Elliot.



Jupiter



Jupiter PD members were proud supporters of and participants in the Law Enforcement Torch Run.



PBSO



PBSO deputies partnered with Special Olympics for their track and field event. The PAL youth athletes joined deputies to help more than 200 Special Olympic athletes kick off their opening ceremony.



# Boynton Beach honors members and swears in new officers

On April 13, Boynton Beach Police Department honored its officers for going above and beyond the call of duty in serving the city of Boynton Beach. During the quarterly awards ceremony, many Boynton Beach members were recognized for their service.

During the ceremony, Boynton Beach PD Chief Joseph De-Giulio also swore in new officers who joined the department, as well as sergeants, captains and a major who were promoted.




## Boynton Beach members connect with kids


Boynton Beach officers connected with children in the local community during March and April with various events. On March 3, members welcomed a group of students from the School for Autism and partnered with the Boynton Beach Fire Department to give students a tour of their vehicles.

During a career day at Crosspoint Elementary School on March 11, members spoke with students and showcased their various pieces of equipment to explain what the job is all about.

The Boynton Beach PD SWAT team joined in the fun and gave students a tour of the department during spring break on March 22. They also gave a presentation to students at Freedom Shores Elementary School for their career day on April 5.



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*Someone's sitting in the shade today because someone planted a tree a long time ago.*  
- Warren Buffet

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# What to make of the latest Social Security update



STEVE  
OLSON

At the end of March, the Treasury Department released the annual report on the status of the Social Security system and the Social Security Trust Fund.

Think of the trust fund as a savings account. The “checking account” has inflows from working individuals paying into the account, and it has outflows from retirees receiving benefits. Every month, the “savings account,” aka the trust fund, has to be dipped into to cover the retirees’ benefits. For the past decade, Social Security’s trustees

have warned that the retirement trust fund would be depleted by 2035.

In the 1997 trustees report, the depletion year was as early as 2031. In certain other reports, it was projected to come much later, after 2050. Still, the current trend is worrisome, especially as the baby boomer generation is retiring in large numbers. Only 2.7 workers now support each beneficiary, and that ratio continues to decrease.

This year’s update from the Treasury Department moved the timeline of when the trust fund would be depleted up one year from last year’s report, to 2033.

There are many ways to address this problem, but the longer it takes to implement a solution, the more drastic the solution will have to be. Outlined below are scenarios that can be taken to help remedy this problem.

- Increase the retirement age for working individuals to begin receiving benefits
- Increase payroll taxes (currently 6.2 percent)
- Remove the wage base (income over the wage base does not pay into Social Security). Currently the wage base is \$160,200.
- Implement means testing, whereby individuals with pensions or substantial assets will receive reduced or no benefits
- Tap into the Social Security Disability Trust Fund. If this

is done, the Social Security program will extend its lifeline from 2033 to 2044, but then two social programs will be in need of saving.

- Finally, a combination of these items. This might be the most likely solution.

The current report shows an estimated reduction of about \$1 for every \$4 in benefits, starting in 2033. At that time, the fund’s reserves will become depleted, and recurring tax income will be sufficient to pay about 80 percent of scheduled benefits, according to the report. Another way to look at it is by examining how much of a typical retiree’s income will be paid or replaced by Social Security benefits. Pensions, personal savings and perhaps housing equity and other assets make up the rest. Lower-income individuals who are more dependent on the program could get hurt worse. On average, they currently rely on Social Security to replace about 56 percent of their preretirement income. That might fall to around 44 percent with across-the-board cuts, according to a Congressional Research Service analysis. Higher-income earners rely on Social Security to replace 35 percent of income, and that might fall to around 27 percent.

When it comes to your retirement planning, you should look at it both with and without Social Security. If the numbers aren’t sufficient without Social Security, then changes should be made before you retire to either increase savings, reduce spending or a combination of both.

As a firm that works with first responder families and is well-versed in state and local pension and investment plans, we are available to have conversations and provide unbiased recommendations. Don’t wait until it’s too late to take action and secure your retirement future.

*Steve Olson, founder and managing member of Atlantic Wealth Partners, has more than a decade of experience in focused tax planning, legal strategy interpretation, investment management and advisory services to wealthy individuals and families throughout Florida.*



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# The dangerous game of delaying your estate planning



KEVIN  
DRUMMOND

We hear all sorts of excuses for not taking advantage of Estate Planning until it's too late. Here are some of the biggest reasons and why they're not an excuse.

**I don't need estate planning documents.**

Not taking the time to create an estate plan can result in your family being left out of your intended plan (or result in your property going to family members) whom you did not intend to get anything). It can also result in additional fees and disputes. The cost of the probate process almost

always exceeds the cost of an estate plan.

**I'm too young/I'm healthy/I can do my estate planning documents later.**

Many times, people who would like to sign a will and trust have waited past the time when they can do so (due to mental incapacity, such as the onset of dementia). Others pass away before they have the chance to sign their documents. Accidents, illnesses and misfortunes can and usually will happen without warning.

**I did my own will/My lawyer-relative prepared my will.**

While almost any estate planning is better than none, many mistakes and problems occur when people try to prepare their own estate plan (including lawyers and judges who do not regularly practice in this area of law). Some people use an online system or documents, and we see them go wrong all the time.

Take advantage of your free benefit and get it done with Blue Line Law.

**I already signed a will (many years ago).**

Estate planning is a critical part of your overall financial and life planning. A wise person would not buy a stock or other investment and then completely ignore it for 20 years. You need to review your estate plan every few years, whenever there's a major change in your circumstances. (You and your attorney may review your plan and realize it is still appropriate.) We can set up a consultation for you anytime.

Blue Line Law Firm PLLC and the PBA encourage you to promptly complete and periodically review your estate planning documents with us and to take advantage of your PBA benefit. If you currently have an estate plan, please contact the PBA to fill out the paperwork to have it reviewed.

Benefits are for active PBA members only. Others may contact us by calling 888-611-9511, visiting [www.tbllf.com](http://www.tbllf.com) or texting the words LAWHELP to 31996 for a consultation. We handle most legal matters for PBA members and extended family members.

*Attorney Kevin Drummond handles life planning for the Palm Beach County PBA. He founded the Blue Line Law Firm in April 2019. Prior to that, he worked at the Florida Department of Law Enforcement, which included tenure in the Division of Capitol Police in Tallahassee from 2005 until 2007. You can reach Kevin by calling 1-888-611-9511 or texting LAWHELP to 31996.*

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# Thank-You Notes TO THE PBA

04-03-23

John Kazanjian, President  
Florida PBA Heart Fund Inc.  
300 East Brevard Street  
Dr. David Murrell Bldg.  
Tallahassee, Florida 32301

Dear President John Kazanjian... I just wanted to say thank you for everything that you did in assisting me with the Ian Relief Fund! Your generosity was truly heaven sent in our time of need Sir. I can't thank you enough! Again, thank you so much and may God Bless you and yours today and always my friend... Lionel (Frankie) Deliz (Sarasota Police Dept. - Retired)

Lionel (Frankie) Deliz

You are a  
wonderful reminder  
of how much  
**good**  
there is  
in the world.

3/28/23

President Kazanjian:  
Thank you and the PBA heart fund to  
board for your generous relief  
to help me cope with the  
damages from Hurricane Ian.

The kindness and consideration  
of my fellow officers is humbling  
From the bottom of my heart,  
I extend my appreciation,

Sandra Spraker and Maggie  
Prescott were so helpful and  
instrumental in guiding me  
through the process. Please  
extend my appreciation to them

Respectfully,  
Robert

Thank you so much.



Trooper Robert Martin  
Troop F/ FHP



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