



Bars & Stripes

Vol. 45 No. 1 Official Publication of the Detroit Police Lieutenants and Sergeants Association



January 2010

Leadership and excellence awards...



CONGRATULATIONS to the first winners of the Detroit Police Lieutenants Association Leadership and Excellence Awards. The award winners include (third from left, then l-r) Lt. Dale Greenleaf, Sgt. Shelley Hold-erbaum, Lt. Charles Flanagan, Sgt. Marvin Jones, Sgt. Kenneth Germain, Lt. Lynda Hicks, and Sgt. Tyrone Kemp. Not pictured are Sgt. Steven Ford and Sgt. Diaz Graves. The award winners are flanked on the left side by DPLSA Treasurer Brian Harris and Sgt.-at-Arms John F. Kennedy and on the right by DPLSA Vice President Mark Young and President Junetta Wynn. For more on the awards, please see DPLSA Vice President Mark Young's article on Page 4.

U.S. violent crime down; Detroit murders up

In its Preliminary Semiannual Uniform Crime Report released Dec. 21, the FBI indicated that the volume of violent crime in the nation decreased 4.4 percent and the volume of property crime declined 6.1 percent.

The numbers reflect the period of January to June in 2008 compared to 2009. More than 11,700 law enforcement agencies contributed to this report.

Meanwhile, figures show that murders in Detroit increased slightly in all of 2009 vs. 2008, according to preliminary figures released in early January by the Detroit Police Department. However, the numbers show that homicides took a significant drop in the second half of 2009.

There were 379 homicides in Detroit last year, up four from 2008. But from July to December 2009, there were 179 murders, a 20 percent decline from the same period in 2008.

Detroit's 2009 overall murder rate is in contrast to the national trend, which saw rates fall in most big cities. The national trend saw rates fall in most large American cities despite predictions that high unemployment and shrinking police forces would prompt a spike in violent crime.

For example, New York, which has about 10 times as many people as Detroit, saw 466 murders, the lowest in the city's history.

Detroit Police Chief Warren Evans, who took over as chief on July 7, told the Detroit News, "We've

done a lot more in a short time than I thought we'd be able to do. Obviously one homicide is one too many, and we know we're not going to stop them all. But I think we've jumped over the hurdle that we (the Detroit Police) aren't smart enough, or that we aren't competent."

The FBI said overall, all four of the offenses that make up violent crime (murder, forcible rape, robbery, and aggravated assault) decreased nationwide. Murder declined 10.0 percent, robbery fell 6.5 percent, forcible rape decreased 3.3 percent, and aggravated assault declined 3.2 percent.

□ A review of the data by population group showed that violent crime decreased 7.0 percent in cities with

(Continued on Page 9)



MSP cruiser bubbletops get makeover

Since the 1950s, Michigan State Police (MSP) patrol cars have been adorned with a unique rotating red light on the roof. As the only state police department in the country to use this design, the single overhead red light is unmistakably identifiable to both Michigan residents and other law enforcement agencies. Many people often inquire about the "bubble" or "gumball" light and usually assume it is used today solely as tradition.

While the department is accustomed to this look, the benefits go beyond tradition. The single overhead light has been proven to enhance acceleration and performance.

The nationally recognized Police Vehicle Evaluation,



Brighter, better lights are due for MSP cruisers.

conducted by the MSP Precision Driving Unit, has found that vehicles with a full overhead light bar accelerate slower than vehicles with a single overhead light.

Additionally, the reduced forward-facing surface area of the single light provides greater fuel savings when compared to the larger surface area of a light bar.

Just recently, the MSP "bubble" light underwent a makeover to improve its energy efficiency. Working with Whelen Engineering, a Brighton, Mich.-based firm, a prototype using Light Emitting Diodes (LEDs) was developed. After nearly four years of research, development and testing, Whelen Engineering and the Precision Driving Unit produced a light kit that fits in the existing overhead light shell.

The new LED overhead light produces an intense, wide-angle red light in all directions that only requires three amps to operate. Each kit uses 12 light heads, nine LED bulbs per head, for a total of 108 lights in each car; far more than most standard light bars. The LED bulbs have a 100,000-hours-of-use rating and a five-year warranty from date of service.

To reduce installation costs, current MSP patrol cars will be fitted with the new LED overhead light kits when there is a light failure. Since the LED lights are maintenance free and eliminate the need for heavy-duty wiring and special switches, the MSP estimates this will ultimately result in a cost-savings.



**Run with the cops...
not from them!**



Charity Event!

**BELLE ISLE,
Saturday, APRIL 24**

**9:30 AM: 1 Mile Fun Walk/Run
10:00 AM: 5K Walk/ Run-Timed**

Kids under 12-\$20 Adults-\$25

Participants receive a t-shirt and water/snacks after the race!

Queen for a Day/Heroes provides quality of life services to children with cancer in the metro Detroit area. Last year they provided parties for over 400 children! All proceeds will be used to help these pediatric oncology patients feel like kids.

Pre-Registration: www.signmeup.com/68285

Or Mail this form with your check payable to "QFAD"
24816 Star Valley St Clair Shores, MI 48080. Attn Carol Almeranti

Day of Registration \$25.00, kids under 12, \$30.00 for Adults

Shirt size XS __, S __, M __, L __, XL __

Registrars:
Sgt. Carol Almeranti (313) 596-2435
Sgt. Jeremy James (313) 596-2459

Queen for a Day® Heroes
Celebrating the courage of children with cancer



EXECUTIVE OFFICERS

President
Junetta Wynn

Vice President
Mark Young

Secretary-Treasurer
Brian Harris

Sergeant-at-Arms
John F. Kennedy

Editor
Carol Almeranti

LSA Office
28 W. Adams
Suite 700
Detroit, MI 48226
(313) 961-5699
Fax (313) 961-0923

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

By Junetta Wynn

Members let's welcome in the New Year.

Well, the numeric year has changed but not the direction of the department. The new marching orders from management is to reorganize the districts and return to the precinct environment. Here's a news flash everyone – been there and done that.

Well let's face it – the Association members have vacation selection on March 20th and shift draw/re-bidding within the next few weeks. (Wednesday nearest to March 15) both covered under Article 22 and Article 38) – rearranging the department can only happen successfully after proper planning, and equipment, manpower and facilities are all acquired.

Moving members from point A to point B does not give you more manpower. Management should try opening up a forum and ask the women and men on the front lines for their recommendations and needs for accomplishing the department's goals. Oh, what goals – there has not been a department policy and procedure manual updated and distributed in years. How can one hold individuals accountable when the target is moving and lacks direction? Management: where's the plan?

We have leaders but there's no direct plan in the eyes of the troops. No, management, everyone doesn't have the opportunity to work in the front offices and overhear the plan for the day. First of all – the task required in the work locations are overwhelming due to employee shortages, not the lack of efforts. In 2010 it is sad to report that there's a paper shortage in the department for reporting, copying or faxing, even if you can locate a working fax or copy machine.

There are more scout cars in the shop or in the precinct grave yard than are available to answer runs. The work locations often fail to have a professional cleaning crew for building maintenance which leads to the unsanitary conditions for employees and citizens. Over the

last month several of the district's climate controls existed at either 95 degrees or 40 degrees. And when a member calls out sick, management just doesn't get it.

I could go on and on but management seems not to listen. Well this it, the members are so dedicated to their jobs that they set these short comings aside – along with being shot at, written up and disrespected – in order to serve the citizens of Detroit.

Management, let's stop the write ups-and dictatorship attitudes toward members and let members transfer to the patrol areas and IOU areas they're requesting, and put some positive paperwork, merit awards and ribbons in their personnel files. Take members out of these unsafe and contaminated buildings regardless of who the lease holders are.

By the way – any other landlord would be cited and shut down for some of the conditions the city houses their employees in. Let's stop putting a band aid on top of a deep wound and get some help. This city is under siege and it's not okay to sidestep the issues with a monitor, advisors, and or outside consultants. Give the members the much-needed equipment, additional supervisors, and positive reinforcement in order to succeed in returning this City as a place to live – not just exist.

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VICE PRESIDENT'S REPORT

By Mark Young

First and Foremost "Happy New Year"! May you and your families have a safe and prosperous "New Year"! During 2009 we faced many challenges and 2010 won't be any different but as I have said previously we will face them together openly and honestly.

I know and understand that many members of the Detroit Police Lieutenants and Sergeants Association have many questions and concerns due to the state of the city and changes in the department. Please know that we are monitoring the situation and addressing your concerns and we will continue to keep you abreast of all the pertinent issues and information.

Congratulations to all the members of DPD Classes of 1985, the year of 2010 many of you will qualify for full service retirement. There are some important things that you should know and consider during this process.

First, if possible an individual should give themselves at least a three- to- six-month window when considering or preparing to retire. If possible consult with a financial advisor for numerous reasons including strategic planning for lump sum pay-outs for investment and tax purposes.

Second, a member should strategically plan their retirement date for tax purposes. For example, retiring at the end of the year will place you in a higher tax bracket due to receiving a full year's wages and any lump sum pay-outs such as compensatory time and sick time. For this reason a member might want to consider retiring at the beginning or mid-year.

Members should also know that from July 1st through October 1st, Payroll Audit Unit will not process any lump sum pay-outs. The unit's function during this (90) days or so is solely to do its yearly audit.

Lastly, member may want to talk to their "Time Keeper" to make sure that all their years of service and time cards (DPD 590) are accounted for, because in order for a member to receive their lump sum pay out all their time must be accounted for and that includes an accurate furlough count.

Over the next few months I will provide you with more information to help assist you with this process. If you have any questions that I can assist you with please feel free to call me or you can call the City of Detroit Retirement System (313) 224-3362.

DPLSA LEADERSHIP AND EXCELLENCE AWARDS.

Once again congratulations to the following recipients of the 2009 Detroit Police Lieutenants and Sergeants Association Leadership and Excellence Awards. The awards were presented at the Lieutenants and Sergeants Association General Membership Meeting, Wednesday, December 16, 2009. The following members were recognized for the Leadership Award: Sergeant Shelley Holderbaum, Sergeant Marvin C. Jones, Sergeant Kenneth Germain, Sergeant Diaz Graves, Sergeant Tyrone Kemp, Lieutenant

Lynda J. Hicks and Lieutenant Dale Greenleaf.

The Excellence Award; Sergeant Steven Ford and Lieutenant Charles M. Flanagan.

The DPLSA is committed to continue this yearly tradition. Any members may submit a request for consideration for themselves or on the behalf of another DPLSA Member for the "2010" awards. Requests for consideration will be accepted until Monday, November 15, 2010 at 4 p.m. The requests for consideration will be reviewed by the Detroit Fire Fighters Association who will make the selections. This initiative is to recognize and honor the hard work of the members of the Detroit Police Lieutenants and Sergeants Association.

"We represent heroes past, present and future" and I am extremely proud to be one of "Detroit's Finest"! Please take care of each other and as always if you have any ideas, questions, concerns or suggestions please forward them to us @ youngm604@detroitmi.gov.

"We must not only continue to measure who we are and what we have become but we also must continue to evaluate the direction that were heading."

~ Unknown Author



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The Michigan Neurosurgical Institute, P.C. is an institution dedicated to personal, individualized care of patients with spine and brain conditions. We treat all spine disorders, no matter how simple or complex. We always emphasize nonsurgical treatment as the first option. We also put emphasis on patient education and participation in a care delivery model. Dr. Avery M. Jackson III, Director of the Michigan Neurosurgical Institute P.C., completed a Neurosurgical Complex Spine Fellowship at the Medical College of Wisconsin. Dr. Jackson has extensive training in complex spinal cases, brain and spine tumors, head and spine trauma, vertebroplasty, kyphoplasty and minimally invasive surgery.



TREASURER'S NET

By Brian Harris

Hello Everyone,

Before I begin, I would like to take a moment to express my heartfelt gratitude to all who acknowledged the death of my mother, Mrs. Gloria Harris. Knowing that we are in so many of your thoughts and prayers has brought great comfort to my family during what has truly been a very difficult time. No words can describe how deeply appreciative we are of your sympathy and kindness in our time of sorrow. On behalf of the Harris family, I offer our most sincere thanks and may God continue to bless each and every one of you.

Let's get down to business! Well, a New Year is upon us. And just as I did in the past year, I will continue to work diligently at keeping you abreast of matters which concern you. So, let me begin with a brief discussion of what I consider to be important aspects of our health care plan(s).

When our health care changed I, like many of you, switched over to the Community Blue PPO plan. Some remained with the Blue Cross Comprehensive Master Medical (CMM) plan and others with Blue Traditional. In either case, the following information is

applicable under all three plans and I think it would behoove everyone to know, as questions have been raised concerning these particular facets of the plan(s).

First, all three plans provide coverage for what is considered Emergency Care – Medical and Accidental Injury. Under this coverage, when seeking treatment via a hospital emergency room a \$75 co-pay is applied to each visit. However, what many are not aware of is that if you are admitted or treatment is for an accidental injury, the \$75 co-pay is waived. (Note: You must meet medical emergency guidelines for waiver to apply).

So, should you or a covered family member incur the aforementioned co-pay for a visit you believe meets the medical emergency guidelines or you would simply like to know what those guidelines are, you can contact the plan provider and they will assist you with your inquiries. Contact numbers are listed in the back of the City of Detroit Employee Health Care Plan Options Booklet you received at the onset of health care changes. Also, you may contact the Association's Administrative office and I will be more

(Continued on Page 10)



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HOLDER OF THE MACE

By John Kennedy
Sergeant at Arms

Happy New Year LSA Members,

Well, say "Hello" to 2010! I hope that everyone's holiday was peaceful and happy. The Association closed out the year with a total of (55) grievances filed, (20) 2008 grievances and (21) 2007 grievances recorded from the 2008 grievance report. With the assistance of the Grievance Committee and Labor Relations, we were able to resolve (20) of the 2007, (16) of the 2008. (31) 2009 grievances resolved, (4) lost at arbitration, (2) waiting on arbitration decisions, (5) waiting on arbitration dates and (12) opened.

Also we have been able to close a number of old grievances dating back to 1995. We had a 60% resolution rate for 2009, for my first full year. Thanks committee team (Paul, A.R., Pride).

Below and at right you will see what your Delegates and Alternates attendance for the year was for the monthly board meetings. I know that a lot of them were hard-pressed to be at the monthly meetings due to manpower constraints at the district/precinct, but I am sure that each one will plan on trying to work harder for you this year.

The Association's "Fallen Heroes." On Oct. 28, 1922,

Sergeant Charles McKenna was shot and killed by another officer in a case of mistaken identity. Sergeant McKenna and other officers were in a police vehicle with the curtains drawn. Another officer, who was unaware the vehicle was a police car, attempted to stop it. The officer saw a man inside with a gun and opened fire with a shotgun, killing Sergeant McKenna. All officers involved in the shooting were cleared. Sergeant McKenna had four years on the job.

On January 4, 1923, Sergeant Daniel Coughlin was shot and killed after he and several other officers responded to a man with a gun call at a downtown hotel. When they arrived on the scene Sergeant Coughlin was shot as he questioned three men in a vehicle. He fell into the vehicle after being shot. One of the officers fired at the vehicle as the men fled, wounding one of the suspects. Sergeant Coughlin's body was found in the vehicle a short distance away. Sergeant Coughlin had served with the Detroit Police Department for 18 years

Bless you all, Respect Each Other as we Respect Ourselves and "Let's Be Careful Out There."

DPLSA BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2009 ATTENDANCE REPORT

D-Delegate A-Alt.

Central Events

Sgt. M. Hain
Sgt. J. Johnson

	# of mtg	P	A	E	F	% of attend.
D	12	10		2		83.33%
A	10	9		1		90.00%

Palms Bldg.

Sgt. J. Jones
Sgt. E. Murphy

	# of mtg	P	A	E	F	% of attend.
D	12	11		1		91.67%
A	12	11		1		91.67%

Dexter Facility

Sgt. M. Treadwell
Sgt. M. Henning

	# of mtg	P	A	E	F	% of attend.
D	12	10	1	1		83.33%
A	12	4	2	6		33.33%

Training

Sgt. F. Valenti
Sgt. J. Pletcher

	# of mtg	P	A	E	F	% of attend.
D	12	12				100.00%
A	12	11				91.67%

Western Misc. Units

Sgt. H. Ellis
Sgt. A. Marshall

	# of mtg	P	A	E	F	% of attend.
D	12	12				100.00%
A	12	8	1	3		66.67%

ARU/Sex Crimes

Sgt. M. Jones
Sgt. U. Allen

	# of mtg	P	A	E	F	% of attend.
D	12	10		2		83.33%
A	12	11		1		91.67%

Tactical Services

Sgt. T. Kemp
Sgt. C. Edwards

	# of mtg	P	A	E	F	% of attend.
D	12	12				100.00%
A	12	11		1		91.67%

Stephen Foster

Sgt. D. Reed
Sgt. B. Muhammad

	# of mtg	P	A	E	F	% of attend.
D	12	6	2	4		50.00%
A	12	10	2			83.33%

Court Services

Sgt. S. Nelson
Sgt. D. Dixon

	# of mtg	P	A	E	F	% of attend.
D	12	8	2	2		66.67%
A	12	8	1	3		66.67%

Gaming

Sgt. C. Galloway
Lt. R. Sizemore

	# of mtg	P	A	E	F	% of attend.
D	12	11		1		91.67%
A	12	3	4	5		25.00%

Domestic Violence

Inv. A. Smith
Sgt. R. Knox

	# of mtg	P	A	E	F	% of attend.
D	12	10	1	1		83.33%
A	12	6	6			50.00%

Mt. Elliot Facility

Sgt. D. Patterson
Sgt. O. Craighead

	# of mtg	P	A	E	F	% of attend.
D	12	10	1	1		83.33%
A	12	5	4	3		41.67%

P= Present A= Absent E= Excused X= Position open F=Furlough

DPLSA
BOARD OF DIRECTORS
2009 ATTENDANCE
REPORT

D-Delegate A-Alt.

Central District

Sgt. E. Thomas

Sgt. P. Henry

Sgt. T. Broughton

Sgt. L. Turner

Central District IOD

Inv. M. Jackson

Sgt. J. Whitley

Sgt. R. Yee

Inv. R. Fresh

10th Precinct

Sgt. C. Clark

Sgt. D. Cannon

12th Precinct

Lt. S. Gargalino

Sgt. W. Smith

12th Precinct IOU

Inv. S. Granger

Inv. W. Pierrier

Inv. B. Sanders

Northwestern District

Sgt. M. Marshall 3/08

Lt. R. Serra

Sgt. O. Moss

Northwestern District IOD

Inv. A. Smith

Inv. D. Haynes

Inv. L. Moses

Inv. M. Almaza

Eastern District

Lt. C. Quarello

Sgt. Campau

Sgt. M. Fulks

Eastern District IOD

Inv. D. Parker

Inv. W. Galen

Inv. L. Dyer

Inv. L. Stephens

Northeastern District

Lt. S. Sylvester

Lt. S. Cronin

Sgt. B. Carey-Powers

Sgt. L. Cunningham 10/08

Northeastern District IOD

Inv. G. Fisher

Inv. A. Thomas

Sgt. A. Taylor

Inv. C. Howard

of
mtg

% of
attend.

		P	A	E	F	
D	12	8	2	2		66.67%
D	12	8	2	2		66.67%
A	10	4	4	2		40.00%
A	12	10		2		83.33%
D	12	12				100.00%
D	12	11		1		91.67%
A	12	11	1			91.67%
A	12	10	1	1		83.33%
D	12	10	1	1		83.33%
A	12	2	7	3		16.67%
D	12	5	6	1		41.67%
A	1	1				100.00%
D	12	10	1	1		83.33%
D	12	12				100.00%
A	12	12				100.00%
D	12	12				100.00%
D	12	9		3		75.00%
A	12	10		2		83.33%
A						
D	12	9	2	1		75.00%
D	12	12				100.00%
A	12	11		1		91.67%
A	12	10		2		83.33%
D	7	6		1		85.71%
D	12	8		4		66.67%
	11	2	2	6	1	18.18%
A						
D	12	11	1			91.67%
	12	10		2		83.33%
A	12	5	5	2		41.67%
A	11	7	2	2		63.64%
D	12	8	2	1	1	66.67%
D	12	10	2			83.33%
A	12	7	2	3		58.33%
A	12	10	1	1		83.33%
D	12	8		4		66.67%
D	12	7		4	1	58.33%
A	12	8	1	3		66.67%
A	12	7	3	2		58.33%

P= Present A= Absent E= Excused X= Position open F=Furlough

Southwest District

Sgt. V. Wyatt

Sgt. R. Washington

Sgt. A. Mitchell

Sgt. D. Coleman

Southwest District IOD

Inv. R. Lee

Sgt. P. Gambrell-Day

Inv. F. Cordle-Mills

Inv. M. Murry

2nd/4th Floor

Sgt. J. Shoate

Sgt. M. Carter

3rd Floor

Sgt. S. Berger

Sgt. S. Stanley

Fifth Floor

Inv. A. Wimmer

Sgt. Mendoza

Homicide

Inv. F. Adams

Inv. M. Love

IOD East

Sgt. Newson

Sgt. J. Blanks

IOD West

Inv. W. Champoin

Sgt. J. Parnell

Lyndon Facility

Sgt. J. Lightfoot

Sgt. P. Highgate

Narcotics

Sgt. L. Meinke

Sgt. D. Jones

Sgt. K. Clark

of
mtg

% of
attend.

		P	A	E	F	
D	12	10	1	1		83.33%
D	11	11				100.00%
A	12	10	1	1		83.33%
A	11	10		1		90.91%
D	12	11		1		91.67%
D	12	10		2		83.33%
A	12	11		1		91.67%
A	12	3	6	3		25.00%
D	12	11		1		91.67%
A	12	9	2	1		75.00%
D	12	9		3		75.00%
A	12	9	1	2		75.00%
D	12	7		3	2	58.33%
A	12	11		1		91.67%
D	12	10		2		83.33%
A	12	11		1		91.67%
D	11	8	1	2		72.73%
A	12	6	5	1		50.00%
D	12	8		4		66.67%
A	12	9	1	2		75.00%
D	12	11		1		91.67%
A	12	10		2		83.33%
D	12	6	6			50.00%
A	12	9	3			75.00%
A	12	4	7	1		33.33%

Four cops killed remind us all to be more careful

By Carol Almeranti
Editor

This information was taken from the Tacoma Police Department's investigative reports. It lists the details of the shooting involving the four slain officers. Please remember to always be careful out there and never let your guard down.



The coffee shop was owned by a retired Tacoma police officer. It was considered a "safe" hangout for cops waiting to go on duty, or to stop by for a break.

The Lakewood Police Department was a new department recently formed. The officers that were killed were officers hired from the Peirce County Sheriffs Department. The officers were

hired from the jail.

The four officers were drinking coffee before their shift and working on their laptops with their heads down. The table was approximately 15 feet from counter/check-out register.

The shooter came in smiled and acknowledged the two officers facing the door way/entrance. They return the greeting. The shooter went up to the counter like he was going to order.

After stepping up to counter, he pulled a semi-automatic pistol from under his coat. The shooter took a couple of steps toward the table, where the officers were seated. The distance is now approximately 12 feet.

He shot the first officer, who is facing him across the

table. He is shot in the head. He is killed instantly.

The shooter then shot the nearest officer that is seated away from him, in the back of the head. She is killed instantly. He then shot across the table at the officer who was facing him, but missed. A fourth shot is fired and it struck the third officer in the face, killing him instantly.

The last officer stands up, while drawing his weapon, and charged the shooter. The officer grabbed the shooter by the coat and shots are exchanged. The officer's first round struck the shooter in the mid-section and went through and through. The second round fired, struck the shooter in his front pocket hitting his keys, but penetrated about 1.5 inches into the shooter's thigh.

The shooter raised his gun and shot the officer in his face. The officer fell to the ground and the shooter kneeled over the officer and fired into the officers' right eye. The shooter then shot into the officers other eye.

The shooter took the officers wallet, stole his credit cards and the officer's duty weapon. He did not rob the store or hurt or threaten any of the witnesses.

The entire incident lasted less than thirty seconds.

An accomplice was waiting outside in a vehicle and they left the area.

The accomplice was a former cellmate he did time with in an Arkansas prison.

The Federal agents track the shooter by cell phone "pinging" to locate phone/area. Five more additional accomplices helped the shooter with medical issues, food, money etc... The Feds found the driver and got the name of the shooter.

All the accomplices were arrested in the general area and the location of where the shooter was headed was discovered.

On Tuesday at approximately 3:00 a.m., the shooter turned off his cell phone and took the battery out, so that the Feds can no longer track his phone.

A short time later, a Peirce County officer checked 10-46 abandoned cars. He observed a car running with the lights on and driver's door open.

As the officer was walking back toward his squad car he saw movement from behind his vehicle. Once he passed by his headlights, which were blinding him, he sees the shooter and recognizes him. The shooter is crouching behind the squad car. The officer orders him to ground.

The shooter attempted to draw his weapon and started to run. The officer fired five rounds. Three struck the shooter. He falls to the ground. The officer called for back up and once back up arrived on the scene, the shooter is cuffed. He is dead at this point.


The Officers find the slain officer's duty weapon on the shooter. The round recovered from the shooters body is traced to the slain officer's weapon, confirming the officer shot the shooter.

These are chilling excerpts that should remind all of us that there are people out there that want to kill us for reasons we will never know....

Be safe my brothers and sisters.

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By Nancy Schmidt

Well I'm back but I wasn't quite ready for Prime Time yet so I missed the January meeting and I'm being supplied with info from my better half.

First and foremost I'd like to thank you all for the cards, phone calls, visits and flowers, but most of all for the prayers.

I truly believe in "Divine Intervention."

The meeting was January 3rd with doors opening at 11:30 for coffee, donuts and fellowship. Thanks goes out to all the guys who helped set up the hall. Bill said it was good having our Snowbirds back.

The meeting was called to order at 12:30 with the Pledge and opening prayer by Rev. Ron Goosen. Harry Ramsay read the Final Roll Call list. Fran Maione read the minutes of the December Meeting and Dolores Larsen gave the treasury report.

Bill Larsen spoke about the March 7, Annual Dinner, to be held at the Clearwater Country Club this year. The cost is \$18.00 Per person. Contact Dolores or Bill Larsen for tickets. Their address is 399 Walnut Ct. Palm Harbor, Florida, 34683. Phone # 1-727-786-3429. We are hoping for a good crowd. Ya'll come.

Birthdays were celebrated by Marv Kammer and Dan Zemaitis and Bill and Dolores Larsen observed their 56th wedding Anniversary. Congratulations to you all.



By Dan Zemaitis

Greetings: I hope everyone has received their new hospitalization cards by now? I am still waiting – as is Jack Devoy RDPFFA Insurance trustee – as of January 8th, 2010 and I sent my change in November 8th, 2009. I hope the city gets things straightened out soon.

Get-well wishes to Nancy Schmidt, Moe Gekiere, Jey Zemaitis and Dominic Cantazarro. We are happy to have two new Snowbird members, they are Ed and Marion Krajewski who live in Skidway Lake, Michigan but are wintering in Sarasota, Florida. Welcome, welcome.

January Birthdays Dan Zemaitis. January Anniversaries Dan and Jey Zemaitis The Snowbird Christmas Party was fun for all, Good food, good gifts and great camaraderie. Thanks to JoAnn Cherry and Ginny Rogers who ran it this year.

We really miss not being there with you all.

Just a thought: people who have the most birthdays live the longest. God Bless and stay healthy.

The 50/50 was won by Marv Kammer and Ed Krajewski.

A discussion in regards to the RDPFFA, voting to only print issues of Unity from six to four times a year, being Jan. Apr. July and Oct. Publishing when necessary, an off- schedule one page alert and news letter. Hospitalization and Open enrollment was also discussed. The Rev. Ron Goosen closed the meeting with a prayer.

Now that I'm back in the saddle again, keep me up on all the news so I can pass it along. As always my phone # is 1-352-683-7924 and you can catch me by e-mail at, njschmidt@gate.net. It's great to be home.

Violent crime down; Detroit murders up

(Continued from Page 1)

populations of 1 million or more – the largest decrease from January to June 2009 when compared with crime data from the same months in 2008 – but cities with populations of 10,000 to 24,999 reported an increase (1.7%).

Violent crime declined 3.8 percent in the nation's nonmetropolitan counties and 2.1 percent in metropolitan counties.

By region, violent crime in the South declined 6.1 percent, violent crime in the Midwest decreased 3.4 percent, violent crime in the West declined 3.3 percent, and violent crime in the Northeast decreased 3.2 percent. In addition, law enforcement agencies in all four regions showed declines in the number of murders, forcible rapes, robberies, and aggravated assaults.

Overall in the nation, there were decreases in each type of property crime, which includes the offenses of burglary, larceny-theft, and motor vehicle theft. Motor vehicle theft dropped 18.7 percent, larceny-theft decreased 5.3 percent, and burglary declined 2.5 percent for the two six-month periods. 2008.

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Secretary-Treasurer Brian Harris

(Continued from Page 1)

than happy to provide you with those telephone numbers.

Second, the City of Detroit offers what is called the "Opt-Out Program." Basically, the Opt-Out Program is designed for City Employees who are covered under a medical care plan of an employer other than the City of Detroit (e.g., through a spouse). What it does is allow you to decline participation in the City's medical care program, and instead receive a cash amount from the City.

Several members have inquired about this option and with good reason. If you believe you qualify and would like to opt-out you must wait until the medical open enrollment period begins, as this is the only time you can exercise that option. For more detailed information concerning the opt-out program you may contact the City of Detroit – Benefits Administration Office 1300 Rosa Parks Boulevard, Detroit, MI 48216, telephone: (313) 224-2742. (Note: If you and your spouse are both employed by the City, neither of you are eligible to participate in the program).

Lastly, the retiree contributions for all medical and dental plans went into effect on January 1, 2010. If you would like more information about those contributions, the various health care plans or the settlement agreement in *Weiler, et al v. City of Detroit*, Wayne County Circuit Court case no. 06-19737CK, which discusses the health care benefits provided by the City as part of the settlement, you can go to www.dpfretiree.com.

"Should Michigan look into Taxing Pensions?" I came across this question while perusing the Michigan Policy Network website. Michigan Policy Network is a student-led public education and research program to report and organize news and information about the political process surrounding Michigan State policy issues.

It is run out of the Department of Political Science at Michigan State University, with participation by students from the College of Social Science, the College of Communication, and James Madison College.

The article I read was titled, "Should Michigan look into Taxing Pensions?" and according to the author, Lindsay Catherine, a tax policy fellow and correspondent for the Michigan Policy Network, the Michigan legislature is looking for revenue to make up for the large deficit it now faces.

Lindsay cites reports that have suggested that Michigan should question its retiree pension tax exemptions. The article references the Michigan Department of Treasury, whom they claim believes that, "taxing all retirement income could generate between \$600-\$700 million."

The aforementioned suggestion is supported by a study conducted by the Pew Center on the States. According to the Pew Center, Michigan's Tax Base is, "Out of Sync." Moreover, they have concluded that, "The state's ranks of adults 65 and over have grown 7% since 2000... [and it is expected to increase], retirees benefit from the state's generous income tax exemptions from pensions and other retirement income."

So, basically what they are saying is Michigan's 65 and older population is growing, which means there are less taxes coming in due to all of the exemptions they receive.

Is taxing retirement income the answer? I don't think it is. I understand that Michigan's tax code exempts some of the most prosperous segments of the economy. And I also believe that a tax structure should

be progressive; however, the mere idea of balancing the State's budget on the backs of retirees, many of whom struggle to make ends meet with what little they receive monthly, in my opinion is absurdly ridiculous.

Should we be alarmed by the suggestion of taxing retirement income? When your livelihood is at stake concern is an understandable feeling. But, I think implementing such a tax will be a battle not easily fought and won, because as it stands now, Michigan's Constitution prevents the state from reducing pension benefits of public retirees and public employees.

Article IX, Section § 24 Public pension plans and retirement systems, obligation, reads as follows, "The accrued financial benefits of each pension plan and retirement system of the state and its political subdivisions shall be a contractual obligation thereof which shall not be diminished or impaired thereby."

I have read this provision several times, and in my opinion, I think taxing pension benefits would constitute a violation of the proviso. This is a very important issue and I would love to hear what you all think of this suggested approach to tax reform.

So, please feel free to send your comments to HarrisB134@yahoo.com.

In closing, I would like to suggest that as we make our way through 2010, we take advantage of each day and each opportunity afforded us. For if you accept that the letter 'O' is the beginning of 'Opportunity', you'll note it is absent in 'yesterday' but present in 'tOday' and most profound in 'tOmOrrOw'.

Tomorrow begins a new day and each new day provides a greater 'Opportunity' for us to accept that with God all things are POSSIBLE.

Thank you!

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