GRIEF-STRICKEN DEPARTMENT, COMMUNITY MOURNS
DEATH OF P.O. BOHANNON

"He was fearless. He didn’t mind jumping in the mud first. He didn’t mind opening that door first. He was always stepping-up to the plate...Always giving to others love, sympathy, empathy no matter who they were...he was deep-rooted in faith...He believed in God and family, inspired to be the best father that he could."

~Alfred Bohannon, Bo's Pop

"I chose to become a police officer so that I can make a difference in the community that me and my family live in."

~Tamarris "Bo" Bohannon (from police application)

"I love you very much daddy, I miss you. I wish you were still here. I miss your funny jokes and when you scared us a lot."

~Tamara Bohannon

"I miss my dad. I don’t know why you had to go away. You are my hero."

~Ayden Bohannon

"I think of you every second and including I see you in my dreams. I miss you a lot, I love you so much and I care about you. You are the best dad."

~Tylor Bohannon

Cont. on Pg. 11
“In memory of the Saint Louis Police Officers who have made the Ultimate Sacrifice”

DURING THE MONTH OF AUGUST

MICHAEI CANNON 1894
WILLIAM HOAGLAND 1903
ZENO FULTS 1908

CORNELIUS O’KEEFE 1911
MARTIN KILROY 1913
LEO KRAEGER 1915

LOUIS NIEDERSCHULTE 1919
MICHAEL HAGGERT 1923
CHARLES VORACEK 1952

ROBERT STANZE 2000
MICHAEL BARWICK 2002
NORVELLE BROWN 2007

WATCH YOUR 6!

GENERAL MEMBERSHIP
September 30
October No Meeting
7 p.m.

E-BOARD MEETING
September 30
October 28
4:30 p.m.

VETERAN’S MEETING
September 9
October 14
11:30 p.m.

POLICE WIVES MEETING
September 9
October 14
7 p.m.

GENDARME
Printed Monthly—August Issue Delayed Due to Funeral of PO Bohannon

3710 Hampton Avenue, St. Louis, Missouri 63109
314-353-3200

Guidelines for Letters to the Editor: All letters to the editor must be signed and verifiable by phone or personal contact. Freedom of expression is guaranteed within the bounds of good taste and the limits of available space. Upon request the author’s name may be withheld from publication and confidentiality assured. The Gendarme takes no responsibility for the content of the letters in this section.

The Gendarme newspaper is the official publication of the St. Louis Police Officers’ Association and is published in St. Louis. However, opinions expressed in this publication are not necessarily those of the SLPOA or the St. Louis Police Department.

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Columnist
Jeff Roorda
Obituary Page Editor
Timothy Tumbrink
Advertising Manager
Jill McDonough
Publisher
Ron Clark

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District 13
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St. Louis Police Officers’ Memorial Fund
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Craig Robertson, Stephen J. Schroeder, Benjamin Lacy, Michael Biggs

“Watch Your 6!”

GENDEME
August 2020

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314-353-3200

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“Watch Your 6!”
MESSAGE FROM THE BUSINESS MANAGER

August 2020

Let's face it folks.

For the last six years, we've taken a real ass kicking.

In August of 2014, a police officer in Ferguson decided he was going to go home to his family that night and after trying desperately to avoid using deadly force against his violent attacker, he exercised the only option he had left: kill or be killed.

Ever since then, cops here in St. Louis – the murder capital of the United States in each of the succeeding years – have had to face non-stop mayhem. From anti-police hate speech to prosecutorial amnesty for violent criminals to frequent armed attacks on police to deadly riots to cowardly ambushes, lawlessness and pandemonium have relentlessly gripped this city for six long years.

As I look around this town – and around its police department – only one word comes to mind. Unsustainable.

That's not a knock against St. Louisans or St. Louis's finest. You officers have proven yourselves to be a resilient bunch and the people of St. Louis are a feisty, perseverant lot.

But nobody can be expected to weather an unabating storm for this long.

Nobody.

The charybdic maelstrom of anti-police hate finally came home to port this month as a crazed gunman – no doubt emboldened by the incessant cop-bashing – ambushed and killed one of our own.

It's enough to make you cry.

And we did. We all did, as we wept at the loss of our brother in arms, Police Officer Tamarris “Bo” Bohannon.

We cried out “why?!” as if the question was meant to echo unanswered in the deep chasm of our despair.

But there is an answer and we must recognize it.

When you persistently vilify those who take on the very dangerous duty of placing themselves perilously between the worst people in our society and their would-be victims, you stretch that already thin, blue line to its breaking point.

There is an undeniable consequence of the vitriolic attacks on law enforcement: hatred breeds violence.

No doubt, the haters will be haters. It’s what they do. There’s no changing that.

But the real danger is allowing their attacks to go unchecked.

Those with the moral authority to persuade people of the truth – elected leaders, the media, police administrators and, yes, even police union leaders – have a sacred duty to refute the lies and attacks of the “defund” crowd and set the record straight.

Our failings are the hatemongers’ successes. If we don’t turn the tide here and now, the anti-police hatred will grow. And grow. And grow.

And so will the violence against the badge.

As the onslaught against cops further proliferates, more among our ranks will seek work elsewhere, crime will spin further out of control, businesses will shutter their operations, tax revenues will dip, less money will be invested in policing, and ever more officers will leave, creating a self-perpetuating spiral to oblivion.

This is our current heading. Full-speed ahead toward the whirling abyss.

It is an unsustainable, collision course we have set out for ourselves.

We desperately need someone to take the helm and steer us clear of what lay inevitably before us.

Jeff Roorda
SLPOA Business Manager

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A message from Jefferson County Sheriff Dave Marshak ...

On behalf of the men and women at the Jefferson County Sheriff's Office, please accept our heartfelt condolences for the loss of Police Officer Tamarris Bohannon. Your Jefferson County law enforcement family (particularly many of the former SLMPD members that work for us now) are thinking of you during this most difficult time. Many of our officers have shared they are praying for Tamarris’ family and friends. We sincerely hope St. Louis City residents appreciate your service and sacrifice.

In Jefferson County, law enforcement officers have overwhelming support from the County Executive, the County Council, our command staff, and the community. We believe it's our collective responsibility to make sure Sheriff’s Deputies have the resources necessary to perform their job. Maybe that's why so many of your former SLMPD peers have joined us.

We are so proud of all the former SLMPD officers we have. They truly are assets that we appreciate and support. Our continued investment into our officers goes further than just a competitive compensation package, it goes into great working conditions. Our officers have new equipment that is not shared, but individually assigned...including their own rifles, shotguns, etc. Almost every one of our officers has their own take-home vehicle but most importantly, we foster a work environment of respect, dignity, inclusion, and professionalism. If you are interested in learning more, reach out to your former colleagues that now work with us.

Beyond our continued recruitment for the best officers in the region, we want to remind you we are wishing you the best, praying for your safety, and have your back.

Sincerely,

Sheriff Dave Marshak

Sheriff Dave Marshak
CLASS 19-05 (Social Distanced) GRADUATION

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"I'm travelin' down that lonesome road. Feel like I'm draggin' a heavy load. Don't try to turn my head away, I'm flirtin' with disaster every day."

The lyrics of the Molly Hatchet hit "Flirtin' with Disaster" seem to perfectly describe a recent road trip taken by two of our members, Craig Sayer and Nick Holt.

It wasn't some unexpected mishap that landed the two in Lake Charles, Louisiana after the town took a pounding from Hurricane Laura.

They were very much intentionally "flirtin' with disaster."

One of the negotiated terms of the "Association Rights" section of our Collective Bargaining Agreement provides that we can send up to two members for up to seven days when the Missouri Fraternal Order of Police ("FOP") disaster team is activated. The CBA requires the department to pay the police officers we select for the disaster team during their deployment.

Craig and Nick were quick to step forward for this dangerous assignment when we asked for volunteers. Driving into a distant, unfamiliar disaster zone is risky; roads can be impassible, communications can be sketchy, and downed powerlines and other hazards can present unexpected perils.

But the two dedicated officers braved the elements and rendezvoused in the heart of the storm's path with other members of the Missouri FOP deployment as well as FOP members responding to help from all across the country.

The FOP, our parent organization, started to become very active in responding to disasters to support fellow cops when Joplin, Missouri was decimated by a tornado in 2011. After witnessing the overwhelming support provided by other FOP lodges to our members in Joplin, the Missouri FOP decided it was our turn to prepare ourselves to respond when cops in our neighboring states needed help.

Since the Joplin tornado, the Missouri FOP has obtained a disaster trailer and a military grade portable generator on wheels dubbed "Big Blue" (pictured here in Lake Charles) through public and private donations. The Missouri FOP disaster team has seen a number of deployments in the succeeding years but the Hurricane Laura response to Louisiana presented new challenges, representing the furthest our members had traveled for an emergency response.

Over a dozen Missouri FOP members - including our guys Sayer and Holt - answered the call and, ultimately, returned home safely.

We couldn't be prouder of our members for stepping forward.

But, what do you expect?

We're the FOP.

That's what we do.

"…Flirtin' with disaster every day."
Fade Outs
The following officers resigned during the month of July

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DSN</th>
<th>ASSIGNED</th>
<th>EFFECTIVE</th>
<th>APPOINTED</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1185</td>
<td>PO LaTona M. Young</td>
<td>07/18/20</td>
<td>08/20/19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11825</td>
<td>PO Zachery J. Allen</td>
<td>07/18/20</td>
<td>08/20/18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12244</td>
<td>POT Tyler S. Southland</td>
<td>07/20/20</td>
<td>07/20/20</td>
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<tr>
<td>12247</td>
<td>POT Zunah Tariq</td>
<td>07/20/20</td>
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The following officers retired during the month of July

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>01770</td>
<td>Lt. Col. Gerald J. Leyskock</td>
<td>07/19/20</td>
<td>12/02/19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>04373</td>
<td>PO Johnson S. Tyson</td>
<td>07/19/20</td>
<td>02/26/94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>04018</td>
<td>Capt. Perri A. Johnson</td>
<td>07/19/20</td>
<td>10/19/92</td>
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The following officers were dropped from rolls in July

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>11523</td>
<td>PO Patrick J. Rinder</td>
<td>07/05/20</td>
<td>09/06/16</td>
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Fade Outs
The following officers resigned during the month of August

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>11781</td>
<td>PO Joshua R. Bailey</td>
<td>08/02/20</td>
<td>08/11/18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11320</td>
<td>PO Justin C. Davis</td>
<td>08/13/20</td>
<td>04/06/15</td>
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The following officers retired during the month of August

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>03386</td>
<td>PO Christopher D. Hill</td>
<td>08/02/20</td>
<td>08/28/89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>03771</td>
<td>PO Rodger D. Gibson</td>
<td>08/02/20</td>
<td>04/17/89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>04268</td>
<td>LT Brian J. Hoise</td>
<td>08/02/20</td>
<td>01/10/94</td>
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The following officers were dismissed in August

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12191</td>
<td>POT Jason R. Morrison</td>
<td>08/05/20</td>
<td>12/08/19</td>
</tr>
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</table>

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Billy W. Powell

Birth  June 16, 1946
Death August 21, 2020 (aged 74)

Officer Billy W. Powell, DSN 8059, received his commission on 02/08/1971. Upon completion of the academy he served in the 2nd, 4th, Morality Section, 5th, and finally the 6th. During his career he was awarded 1 Chief’s Letter of Commendation for police work above the call of duty on 02/01/1975. Officer Powell resigned his commission on 02/18/1982 as a result of a non-work related disability, and subsequently sought work in the private sector. Officer Powell served a total 11.86 years of faithful and dedicated service to the Saint Louis Metropolitan Police Department.

George W. Strebler

Birth April 25, 1935
Death August 14, 2020 (aged 85)

Saint Louis Police Officer George W. Strebler, DSN 3590, received his commission on 06/29/1955. Officer Strebler was assigned to the following districts and divisions throughout his career. They were the Central District, 4th, 1st, Bureau of Investigation, and finally the 1st District. Officer Strebler retired on a medical non-work related disability on 09/28/1975. Officer Strebler served a total of 16.25 years of faithful and dedicated service to the St. Louis Metropolitan Police Department.

Kenneth George “Ken” McConnell Jr.

Birth May 17, 1948
Death August 17, 2020 (aged 72)

Detective Kenneth McConnell, DSN 7428, received his commission on 08/11/1969 and entered the academy. Detective McConnell served in the 4th, 3rd, 1st, 3rd, Criminal Investigation Division (C.I.D.), 3rd, Bureau of Investigation-3rd District Bureau, 3rd District Bureau, South Patrol Area I Detective Bureau, Crimes Against Persons, and finally the South Patrol Area I Detective Bureau. During his career he was awarded 5 Department Award's of Excellence on 05/01/1981, 02/18/1983, 04/13/1984, 06/26/1991, and 11/27/1991 for police work above the call of duty. Detective McConnell retired on 12/23/1996 and served 27.37 years of faith and dedicated service to the Saint Louis Metropolitan Police Department.
Detective McConnell was a veteran of the United States Navy and served from 10/26/1967 to 08/08/1969. He achieved the rank of E-3. Son of Mr. & Mrs. Kenneth G. and Billie McConnell.

Ken McConnell Monday, August 17, 2020. Loving husband of Kaye McConnell for 45 years; beloved Dad of Frank and Kenny McConnell; dearest Pawpaw of Kit, Xaver, Tess, Madsyen and Max; dear brother of Dan (Vicki) Reynolds, Rick (Charlene) Brandenburg, Dorothy (John) DiGregorio and Ricky (Becky) McConnell; dear uncle, cousin, and friend to many.

Ken was a veteran of the United States Navy. He was a St. Louis Metropolitan Police Officer for 27 years. He then moved on to the casino environment as a security manager for 17 years. Ken was a member of Festus Elks Lodge #1721.

Jean Lorraine “Jeannie” Crocker Finn

Birth June 29, 1950
Death July 29, 2020 (aged 70)

Officer Jean L. (nee Crocker) Finn, DSN R8048, was a reservist with the Saint Louis Metropolitan Police Department.

Former wife of Officer James Finn, DSN 7605, SLMPD, retired.

Jean Lorraine Crocker, 70 years of age, passed away peacefully on Wednesday, July 29, 2020 at Mercy Hospital South from complications due to the Covid-19 virus.

Jean was born in St. Louis to the late Paul Kinsey and Nellie Mildred Crocker (nee Barger) and was the youngest of six children.

Jean worked as an administrative professional at St. Louis University for twenty years. After her retirement, she enjoyed her passion of tracing her family ancestry and sharing all the interesting facts with her family.

Jean will be dearly missed by her brother and wife Joseph Paul and Kathy Marie Crocker (nee Green), brother and wife Raymond Edward and Diana Sue Crocker (nee Hemme), grandson Matthew Paul Becker and great-grandsons Dylan Matthew and Jacoby Joseff Becker.

Jean will also be lovingly remembered by her aunts, uncles, numerous nieces and nephews, extended family, and dear friends.

Jean was preceded in death by her sister Mildred Juanita Allen (née Crocker), brother Stephen Crocker and brother John Roy Crocker. Jean has been reunited with her only child, Paul Thomas Becker, in God’s heavenly kingdom where she may once again hold him in her arms.

Due to COVID 19, we will be postponing the memorial service for a later date.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the Wounded Warrior Project at https://www.woundedwarriorproject.org/donate

LT Ralph Homer Atkins

Birth October 31, 1939
Death August 3, 2020 (aged 80)

Lieutenant Ralph H. Atkins, DSN 4727, received his commission on 04/22/1963. Upon completion of the academy he served in the 4th, and the 1st. While he was in the 1st he was promoted to the rank of Sergeant on 08/13/1974. That same year he attended and graduated from the F.B.I. National Academy. He went on to hold assignments in the Tactical Anti-Crime Team (T.A.C.T.), and the 2nd district. He was promoted again to the rank of Lieutenant on 07/02/1978 as a Watch Commander in the 4th, 2nd, Fleet Services Division, 1st, Office of the Chief of Police, Bureau of Administration, Human Resources Division, Bureau of Administration, Medical Benefits Section, Internal Affairs Division (I.A.D.), 1st, and finally as the Area 1 Station Executive. During his career he was awarded 8 Department Awards of Excellence on 07/11/1964, 06/01/1966, 02/01/1968, 05/01/1973, 05/25/1973, 12/15/1973, 11/22/1978, and 04/22/1983. He was also awarded with 3 Chief’s Letters of Accommodation on 08/25/1975, 06/07/1976, and 06/17/1977. All of the aforementioned awards were for exceptional police work above the call of duty.

Lieutenant Atkins retired on 08/16/1993 having served 30.32 years of faithful and dedicated service to the Saint Louis Metropolitan Police Department.

Lieutenant Atkins was predeceased by his brother Officer Alvie L. Atkins, DSN 5194, who also served with the Saint Louis Metropolitan Police Department.

Lieutenant Atkins was a veteran of the United States Army and served from 05/01/1959 to 08/01/1961 and achieved the rank of Specialist 5th Class.

Dearest son of the late Mr. & Mrs. Homer and Mary (nee Skimhorn) Atkins.

Beloved husband of the late Wanda Atkins (Cagle) Dearest father of Lisa (Brady) Aten, Kenneth (Karen) Atkins, and Michael (Robin) Atkins. Best grandfather to Todd Aten, Brad (Samantha) Aten, Tyler Atkins, and Kaycie Atkins. Great grandfather to Alex Aten and Brady Aten. Beloved brother to Dan Atkins and the late Alvie Atkins, Bill Atkins, and Terry Atkins. Very much-loved uncle, great uncle, cousin, and friend to many.

Ralph served in the United States Army and was a police officer for the St. Louis Police Metropolitan Department for over 30 years, retiring with the rank of lieutenant. He loved his job as a police officer, but most of all he treasured the time he got to spend with his family. He will be greatly missed by his family and all that knew and loved him.
Sgt. Ann Dorn, wife of murdered retired city police Captain David Dorn, was presented with a Resolution adopted by the Missouri House of Representatives at the St. Louis Police Veterans Association meeting on August 12.

The Resolution was sponsored by State Rep. Shane Roden (R-Cedar Hill), who also serves as a Reserve Sheriff’s Deputy in Camden County. The seven current State Representatives who formerly worked as law enforcement officers - Reps. Wilson, Kidd, Green, Hill, Hovis, McDaniel and Roberts - all joined together in co-sponsoring the Resolution, which honors Captain Dorn for his selfless service to the City of St. Louis and the State of Missouri.

Rep. Roden was unable to attend the retirees luncheon so he asked former State Rep. and current SLPOA Business Manager Jeff Roorda to present the Resolution on his behalf.

Sgt. Dorn was at the retirees luncheon promoting the Peace Walk she organized in Captain Dorn’s memory that was held on August 29 in Downtown St. Louis.
BOHANNON
(Cont. from front page)

A Tribute To
Officer Tamarris Bohannon

As read by Chief John Hayden

Officer Tamarris Bohannon,
Affectionately known as “Bo.”
He touched the lives of many a folk;
Oh how we loved him so.

He married his high school sweetheart,
Certainly the love of his life;
And from this union came 3 offspring
For this loving husband and wife.

He joined the St. Louis Police Department,
A great officer he came to be;
Known for his kind heart and laughter,
As well as his bravery.

Darkness fell on “Bo’s” sweet life,
One Saturday afternoon;
A day that we shall never forget,
Because it brought us so much gloom.

But as we ponder the joy he brought
To so many he came to know;
we cannot stay in this sullen place,
because “Bo” would not have it so.

So let us reflect upon the times
We shared with this man who lifted our souls;
And remember not the moment he left,
But the life spent achieving his goals.

Tamarris Leon Bohannon
Birth February 7, 1991 - Death August 30, 2020 (aged 29)

Saint Louis Metropolitan Police Officer Tamarris Leon Bohannon, DSN 11458, started his career with the police department as a civilian recruit in training on 06/13/2016. Officer Bohannon received his commission on 01/05/2017, and graduated from the academy. Officer Bohannon's uniformed assignment was in the 2nd District on 01/09/2017. During his short career Officer Bohannon received an Award of Excellence on 02/22/2018 for police work above the call of duty. Officer Bohannon served a total of 3.65 years of faithful and dedicated service to the Saint Louis Metropolitan Police Department.

Officer Tamarris Leon Bohannon, DSN 11458, was shot in front of 3731 Hartford Avenue after responding to a call for a shooting on 08/29/2020. Officer Bohannon and another uniformed officer were both shot during this ambush. Both officers were rushed to area hospitals, with Officer Bohannon going to Saint Louis University Hospital. Officer Bohannon died of his wounds on 08/30/2020. Officer Bohannon was assigned to the 2nd District.
WATCH PARTY
Wednesday
November 25th
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Time TBD

Attention All Golfers!
There is still time to register for the 5th Annual Mike Venker Golf Tournament!

We need your continued support to help the St. Louis Police Officers Memorial Fund, this year’s chosen charity.

You can still register for this year’s tournament, but spots are filling up fast. Cash, Check and Charge* are all accepted forms of payment.

(A service charge will be applied to registrations via credit card).

To ensure proper registration and t-shirt size please register by Friday September 18, 2020.

Due to Covid-19 Restrictions the tournament has been moved to Sugar Creek Golf Club in High Ridge, MO.

Help us honor Mike and support the SLPOA!

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4 MAN SCRAMBLE BENEFITING ST. LOUIS POLICE MEMORIAL FUND SATURDAY, OCTOBER 10th, 2020 SUGAR CREEK GOLF COURSE 5224 COUNTRY CLUB DR. HIGH RIDGE, MO 63049 10:00 A.M. SHOTGUN START $400 PER TEAM/$100 PER MAN ENTRY FEE INCLUDES GOLF, BBQ, BEVERAGES BAG OF GOODIES, ATTENDANCE PRIZES CLOSEST TO THE PIN AND LONG DRIVE CONTEST Make Checks Payable To: L.O.A.D. Payment must be made by September 15, 2020 Send Remittance to: MIKE BETZ 1713 Blakefield Terrace, Manchester, MO 63021 ONLY THE FIRST 36 PAID FOURټES WILL BE ACCEPTED TEAM OFF AND SEND WITH $400 FEE

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The bi-annual conference of the Missouri Fraternal Order of Police was held in Branson on August 20 through 22 and was attended by twenty-one of our members serving as delegates as well as our business manager and our two lobbyists.

In addition to political endorsements of candidates for statewide offices and other state lodge business, delegates elected officers to the Missouri FOP Executive Board, including SLPOA president Jay Schroeder who was elected Executive Vice-President, the number two spot on the state executive board.

SLPOA member Kevin Ahlbrand, the immediate past-president of the State FOP, was also elected to serve as Missouri’s member on the National FOP Board of Trustees.

National FOP President, Patrick Yoes, flew-in from Louisiana to attend the conference and swore-in the newly elected state officers when they took their oaths of office.

Over the course of the conference, the attendees were also addressed by four of the six statewide office holders, Missouri Governor Mike Parson, Lt. Governor Mike Kehoe, Auditor Nicole Galloway, and Attorney General Eric Schmitt, all of whom were seeking the endorsement of the state FOP in the coming general election.

SLPOA delegates - which included seventeen SLMPD police officers, three Lambert Air Port police officers, and one retiree - described the conference as an outstanding opportunity to network with fellow law enforcement officers from across the state and to interact with influential state elected officials.

Photos Courtesy of Jane Dueker
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Chaplains Corner

Officer Down
by Chaplain John Fava

I t is with sadness that I write this article. Another police officer has died in the line of duty, and all of you officers are hurting because one of your brothers has made the ultimate sacrifice. Unfortunately, this is nothing new. You all know that approximately 145 law enforcement officers die in the line of duty every year. However, the civil unrest, rioting, and looting have increased the number of violent and lethal encounters with criminals and terrorists across our country. Almost every other day, we read or hear about an officer being shot or a line of duty death somewhere in our country. In the first eight months of this year 80 officers have died while protecting and serving the citizens where they live and work. Added to that number, are the 93 officers who have died of illnesses related to Covid-19. In all of these instances, the officers disregarded their own safety in order to help others.

Now, however, a death has hit really close to home. An officer whose career in law enforcement was still in its early stages, a classmate in the Police Academy, a colleague, a man that you spoke with at roll call, assisted with on calls on the streets, laughed with, had lunch with, spent time with socially, etc. has now died. Police Officer Tamarris Bohannon was ambushed and senselessly shot and killed by a coward. There are a few other descriptive adjectives that I would like to use for the killer, but I will keep it civil.

Your outrage and anger are understandable. This tragedy should never have happened, but being a police officer has its risks. No call for service is routine. The potential for danger is always lurking in the shadows. You take the necessary precautions and follow the proper procedures, but the unknown or the unforeseen happen. Being a police officer means that there are times when your life is in jeopardy. For the most part your training, your response to an incident, and the way you handle yourself on the call will keep you safe. Sadly, this is not always true, and some of these confrontations have resulted in officers being killed.

So what happens now? You need a time of mourning, a time when you can express your grief. There will be a visitation at the funeral home where you can give your condolences to Officer Bohannon's family members, friends, and other officers. There will be a funeral service where you can pray for Officer Bohannon and listen to the well-deserved tributes. The funeral procession after the church service is sad but very heartwarming because you will witness the outpouring of support that the citizens of St. Louis have for Officer Bohannon and for all of you as you pass them on the streets on the way to the cemetery. Then the burial at the cemetery concludes with a "21 Gun Salute" and the blowing of "Taps." Before and during this period of mourning, you will gather at the Association Hall, your favorite "watering hole," or a "lot party" and share experiences or stories of Officer Bohannon or other officers who have died in the line of duty. You will toast Officer Bohannon with a few shots of liquor, a few beers, or a few glasses of wine, and this can help with the healing process as long as it is not excessive. You have an extra candy bar or two and treat yourself to an extra donut or a second piece of your favorite pastry. You may be overdoing it a little, but it is an acceptable stress reliever for a short period of time. While this mourning period is going on, most of you will still be going to work: answering calls or doing investigations. But it is important that you grieve.

What happens after the funeral is over? Some of you will go back to work and resume your normal schedule which includes: no excessive consumption of alcohol, your reduction of the amount of candy and pastry that you had been eating the previous week, your regular workout routine, and you spend quality time relaxing with your family and friends. Ending the mourning period is also essential part of healing. However, some of you will still be hurting and feel the need to express your grief a little more. That is normal, and there is nothing unusual about needing more time as long as it is not excessive and does interfere with your life and your job.

If you find yourself having problems and cannot get past this traumatic event, then it is time to seek help. THERE IS NO SHAME IN ASKING FOR ASSISTANCE. There are several peer support officers who have been trained to assist fellow officers and give them the help that they need to move forward after a stressful situation like this. Police chaplains are also trained for this kind of guidance. If need be, your personal physician can recommend a psychologist for you to see. The important thing is that you express your feelings, do not hold them in, and admit to yourself that you are hurting. A prayer or two is also beneficial. God always hears your prayers.

Let us pray.
May God give Officer Bohannon eternal rest and peace. May God send his loving consolation to Officer Bohannon's wife, children, and family members. May God also console the officers of the SLMPD, their families, loved ones, and friends.

Please know that all of you are in my daily prayers. May God bless you always. Be safe and stay healthy.

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