

# FDLE Agents Association

## The Voice

THE OFFICIAL QUARTERLY PUBLICATION OF THE FDLE AGENTS ASSOCIATION CHAPTER OF THE FLORIDA PBA

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## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

### Telly Sands

As I attempt to search for words to convey my sorrow and sympathy for our brothers and sisters in Florida's law enforcement who paid the ultimate price this past year, I ask you to continue to pray for the families and loved ones of our fallen heroes. To our brothers and sisters at the Florida Highway Patrol (FHP), the Fish and Wildlife Commission (FWC), the Broward County S.O. (BSO), the Miami-Dade P.D. (MDPD), the Gainesville P.D. (GPD), the Longwood P.D. (LPD), the Jackson County S.O. (JCSO), the Jacksonville P.D. (JSO), the Holmes County S.O. (HSO), the Orlando P.D. (OPD) and the Hillsborough County S.O. (HCSO), the FDLEAA joins you in saluting;

- Sergeant Nicholas Sottile-FHP
- Lieutenant Delmar Teagan-FWC
- Officer Michelle A. Lawless-FWC
- Officer Alfred Gordon, Sr.-OPD
- Sergeant Chris Reyka-BSO
- Deputy Paul Rein-BSO
- Sergeant Ron Harrison-HCSO
- Officer Jose Somohano-MDPD
- Deputy Harold Michael Altman-JCSO
- Officer Scott Eric Bell-JSO
- Lieutenant Corey Dahlem-GPD
- Sergeant Karl Strohsal-LPD
- Reserve Deputy Joe Bill Galloway-HSO

We will continue to pray for their families along with the injured MDPD Officers: Jody Wright, Christopher Carlin, Tomas Tundidor and BSO Sergeant Maury Hernandez and their families. Rest assured, God will have no mercy on the souls of those who have murdered and/or injured them.

I don't wish to categorize our honored above with statistics\*, but we need to open

eyes. Our legislators need to ensure that the men and women protecting Florida have the resources to effectively protect themselves and the citizens of Florida. I have come to the conclusion that politics is the root of all evil and the downfall of traditional law enforcement. Yes, we are fortunate to live in the U.S., have freedom of speech and be represented by those we entrust, but enough is enough! We have friends in the legislature no doubt, however, the leaders making the final call must be reminded that law and order does not come cheap and our Florida legislature must review its priority list and put cops at the top!!

In looking at recent statistics, in 2007, throughout the nation, 157 Police Officers were killed in the line of duty, 59 by gunfire. Florida, with 13 (7 by Gunfire), is the second ranking state in the nation, having the highest number of police officer fatalities in 2007. Texas ranks number one with 21. In between is the U.S. Government with 16. The average age was 38, and the average years on the job were 10 years, 7 months. Unfortunately, while writing this article, the national line of duty deaths increased by 23 and Florida's number went up by 4. THIS IS UNBELIEVABLE!!!

The leaders in government, whether local, state or federal, must be reminded of their ultimate sacrifice and put safety first! As for state law enforcement, I often hear and echo, we obviously did not choose a

\*<http://www.odmp.org/year.php>



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career in state law enforcement to become rich, but we sure didn't expect to be treated as second class citizens fighting to keep benefits that are enjoyed and secured by the majority of law enforcement throughout Florida. Year after year, we beg for the scraps left over when all is said and done. I don't think the citizens of the State of Florida support this and I sure don't

believe our founding fathers would. What do we do? We open eyes and keep on fighting. It is imperative that we support our PBA lobbyists, realizing that this is not an easy battle, especially in this day and time. Too many lives have been lost, **we need to fight harder!!** 🍀

## **SHELTER FROM THE STORM**

**By Rick Caplano, Immediate Past-President**



**I**n light of our earth shattering pay raise this year, I'm sure you can imagine the multitude of questions and concerns coming from the field on the issue itself, as well as the role of the PBA.

The primary concerns raised with me were whether or not the PBA saw this coming and, if so, why didn't it make efforts to head it off. The answer

is quite simple. The PBA did observe indications that storm clouds were brewing in salary issues during the session when repeated actions concerning local government kept surfacing in relation to tax cuts. The home insurance issue just added warmer water to already turbulent conditions.

The PBA has an incredible political machine that was not only able to forecast the potential for trouble, but immediately initiated efforts to exclude State Law Enforcement from its wrath as it hit landfall, all the time still maintaining simultaneous efforts to increase State Police pay... not just keep it in check. In the end, politicians lacked the fortitude to give the State Police Officers and Special Agents any more or less than any other state employee.

I agree with many that it was an insult for the Legislature to bestow this \$1,000 "Bonus" on us, but I disagree with those who feel that it was the fault of the PBA. I think this organization has had so many successes over the last decade or so with issues that, when unsuccessful, it tends to over magnify in the minds of many. This, when coupled with the sensitive subject of money in our own pockets, culminates into a natural desire to blame a specific cause. I'm here to tell you there were literally thousands of little wheels turning in this series of events that created this current "budget crisis" and any attempt to pinpoint blame for its development or resulting disappointments could never be accurate. It was simply POLITICS. It has happened before. It happened now and it will

happen again in the future.

I'm also here to tell you that the immediate future lacks the optimism of the past relative to money issues. These budgetary issues that will affect even local law enforcement appear to have attached themselves to the state coffers for a yet undetermined, but probable, short term period. It is times like these when the FDLE Agents Association will refocus attempts for legislative gains to enhancing existing benefits that don't present an immediate output of funding.

The other role will be the preservation of existing benefits from any cuts which are always a favorite tactic of lawmakers in their political effort to show the citizens how serious they are. The importance of the political skills of the PBA cannot be overemphasized on this point. Although it's not as sexy and visible as financial gains...it is EQUALLY as important and one that only the Florida PBA has the political expertise and manpower in this state to effectively address.

Now a quick note to those who have expressed dissatisfaction with the PBA and the FDLE Agents Association over the latest inability to secure a substantial pay raise. Don't be a fair weather friend! There will always be fluctuating financial trends when you have the current system of beg

and steal on an annual basis that Florida is structured in. Look at your union as your house. When the resources are there they will always be adding to the value of your home with increased monies and benefits. When it's not there...they will be providing you the needed shelter to keep the storm from tearing away at the gains you have already made.

Be patient and be supportive and let them do their job, a job that could be greatly enhanced with not only your support, but your individual involvement as well. If you still think leaving the PBA will solve an emotional response to the issue, try standing out in the storm at landfall without that roof and watch how the results can have an incredibly negative effect on your comfort and security. 🍀

*"The importance of the political skills of the PBA cannot be overemphasized on this point."*

# FDLEAA, BEHIND THE SCENES

By Telly Sands, President

Your FDLEAA executive board and I are committed to working with **Commissioner Jerry Bailey**, **Assistant Commissioner Ken Tucker**, and FDLE management and legal team. If you are not aware, **First Vice President Al Mones**, **Second Vice President Jim Futch**, and I review all FDLE policies new and/or revised, prior to release. As you are aware, we have been inundated with policy changes in the past ten months since Commissioner Bailey took over FDLE. The push has been to review and condense, ensuring the policies are updated and applicable. The new and/or revised policies are discussed with the assistance of legal counsel from the PBA and FDLE. This is a very important task in that our policies govern our requirements. As a result, we have had positive communication and, in several instances, worked together to ensure the policy language was accurate and acceptable by all parties.

I would like to personally thank **Assistant Commissioner Tucker**, **PBA General Counsel Hal Johnson** and **FDLE Legal Counsel Mike Ramage** for their patience and guidance in the many revisions, e-mails and phone calls made during the policy review process. In addition to the policy reviews, your FDLEAA board is continuously bombarded with rumors and or a "heads up" relating to anticipated changes to come from Headquarters. We are fortunate to have an open line of communication with the Commissioner's Office, which is a tremendous help in determining fact from fiction. On many occasions, Assistant Commissioner Tucker has taken the time to explain decisions and/or discuss potential ones in the making. This is a two-way street in that I have been contacted to give input as well.

In addition to the policy issues, I field calls that could potentially be grievances if not properly dealt with. I have agreed to attempt to resolve issues at the regional level prior to alerting the Commissioner's Office of a potential grievance. This agreement was made with Commissioner Bailey in an attempt to work together and resolve issues that can be



*FDLE Commissioner Gerald Bailey (2nd from right) with (L-R) FDLE Agents Association's First Vice President Al Mones, President Telly Sands, and Second Vice President James Futch.*

resolved. The majority of the issues we have brought have been resolved at the regional level to the members' satisfaction. I am not at liberty to discuss the circumstances, but will comment that often the issues are related to miscommunication. Communication is the key!! Commissioner Bailey told me early on something to the effect, "we may not always agree, but we can agree to disagree." He went on to say, "I will respect that we each may need to do what we need to do, but it never needs to be personal."

I encourage you to get your regional PBA representative involved in potential issues early on. I suggest you don't wait until personalities take over and communication becomes ineffective. (Been there, done that!) Let us try to help. Your FDLEAA board will continue to work for you behind the scenes. We will be respectful and professional in an attempt to resolve issues with the understanding, if we need to grieve, we will, with all we have. 🍀

## CHANGE OF ADDRESS

Have you moved recently, or are in the process of moving? If so, we need your new address! Please notify the PBA office of your change of address so that you won't miss any important mailings.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail address: \_\_\_\_\_

New Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone Number: (Home) \_\_\_\_\_ (Work) \_\_\_\_\_ SSN:\* \_\_\_\_\_

\*(Your social security number helps us identify you correctly in case of similar names.)

Return to: FDLE Agents Association Chapter of the Florida PBA, Attn: Marcia Eggers, 300 E. Brevard St., Tallahassee, FL 32301

# FLORIDA PBA RETURNS TO NEGOTIATIONS WITH STATE

By Hal Johnson, Florida PBA General Counsel



In late October, 2007, the Florida PBA and the state began negotiations over a new collective bargaining agreement. Even though both parties expect this to be a “lean” financial year for the state, the emphasis of the FDLE Agents Association bargaining team was sharply focused on money and, especially, a strong, competitive pay adjustment for FDLE’s special agents.

The bargaining proposal for the special agents “wage” proposal has three components, all of which are proposed to be effective July 1, 2008. It includes: (1) a 5% competitive pay adjustment; (2) a salary compression pay adjustment of \$500 for each year of FDLE law enforcement service up to a maximum of \$5,000 for 10 years of service, and (3) special pay additives for RACINO and field training officer duties equal to 5% of the individual agent’s base rate of pay.

In addition to the wage proposal outlined above, the PBA’s bargaining proposal includes an increase in the agent’s clothing allowance and maintenance of the employee health

insurance contribution at current levels. Finally, the PBA’s bargaining proposal calls for several significant adjustments in the award of special compensatory leave. This proposal includes a provision that all time worked on a holiday will be compensated with an equal amount of special compensatory time (currently you can only receive an award of time equal to the hours in your normal work shift). Also, it includes a proposal that agents working in a county “closed” due to a natural disaster or emergency will receive special compensatory time for all hours worked in the “closed” county (currently you must reside in the “closed” county to receive this award of time).

The Florida PBA anticipates returning to the bargaining table in mid-December in order to receive the state response to these proposals. Its legislative staff is already busy informing legislators about the bargaining proposal and enlisting their support for what can reasonably be anticipated as an uphill battle for a well-deserved wage increase.

We will keep you posted on developments both at the table and before the legislature. ●

## PAST LEGISLATIVE SESSION

By Jim Futch, Second Vice President



Greetings to all. I’m certain the majority (if not all) of you were stunned and disappointed to learn our governmental leaders neglected us (and every other one of the 114,000 state employees) during the recent legislative session. The opinions and reasons for this “neglect” are numerous and no single one provides any semblance of relief or justification. The bottom line is our legislative leaders felt and believed there were other pressing issues and problems throughout the state which needed the available tax dollars more than the employees of the State of Florida.

In lieu of this “defeat,” I must point out some bright spots which I observed during the session. Even though we were not successful in obtaining the pay raises, COLA’s, and the “Compression Plan” we fought so very hard to acquire, some new beginnings were observed. First and foremost, I must commend and thank **Commissioner Bailey** and his staff for their support, involvement, and participation in the legislative process.

The Commissioner and his staff met with your FDLEAA Board prior to the session to establish a united plan and to pro-

vide his support in assisting us in accomplishing our goals. The Commissioner and his staff assisted your FDLEAA in acquiring data and statistics which enabled us to make an educated and informed decision concerning which of the available pay options benefited the largest number of our members. The Commissioner then structured his budget request to the Governor based on our request. The Commissioner even amended his budget (while out of town) and contacted the Governor’s Office to inform **Governor Crist** of the proposed changes. The Commissioner accompanied your FDLEAA to meetings with influential members of the Senate and the House to implore these legislative members to support the pay plans and the members of FDLE. His efforts were relentless, and noteworthy. At one point during the legislative session, Commissioner Bailey informed the **Florida PBA Executive Director David Murrell**, “If there is anything else I can do or anything else you need from me or my office, you have my cell phone number—give me a call.” We could not have asked the Commissioner to be more supportive and we thank him immensely for all of his time, dedication, effort and assistance.

I would also like to recognize and thank **President Telly Sands** for her time, dedication, and efforts. She was in

*Continued on next page*

Tallahassee walking the halls of the Capitol every week of the legislative session. Although several of us met and lobbied with legislators during several weeks of the session, Telly was there each and every week. In conjunction with Telly, the State PBA and its staff were at the Capitol each and every day lobbying and fighting for law enforcement. With all these resources, all these people fighting on our behalf, all the meetings attended, all the hands which were shook, and the presentations that were made, we were left out of the dollars and cents arena.

It is the participation in and the memory of these events which will drive and motivate me even more next year. We'll need to work harder, lobby more legislators, and urge more of our members to get off the sideline and get into the game. The more members we have "playing the game," the better our chances for success. It's up to each and every member of the agency to assist in some way to ensure success. It's easy to sit back and rely on the participation and actions of others to accomplish certain goals; however, if you want to increase the odds of succeeding, you need to participate as well!

The PBA in MROC held a members meeting which was attended by approximately 25 agents and supervisors. The meeting offered members the opportunity to ask questions, speak their minds, and to have questions answered and rumors

dismissed. There were plenty of inquiries, "venting" and a great opportunity to openly discuss issues away from the office. Special thanks to President Telly Sands for driving over from Tampa for the sole purpose of attending our meeting. She made herself available to answer questions and to provide explanations from the president's perspective. Thanks again, Telly! We'll be holding additional meetings approximately every three to four months as long as there remains an interest. For those who attended and participated, thank you.

One final note, I'd like to recognize and thank **SAC Rojas** for his continued support and assistance. I have contacted him on more occasions than I can count to ask various questions pertaining to PBA, management, personnel, and budgetary issues. He has fielded each and every one of my calls, provided me with the requested information, and provided an explanation pertaining to a decision or a policy. He provided the FDLEAA a time frame to present PBA related issues during MROC's quarterly training.

He has been accessible, he has listened, and he has provided an answer to each and every one of my questions. I look forward to a continued working relationship with SAC Rojas and hopefully, with his assistance, we can make MROC and FDLE a better place for each and every member to work. Take care and be safe! ●

## PBA "SUPPORT LAW ENFORCEMENT" TAG SELLING FAST!

You can get your very own Florida PBA "Support Law Enforcement" Tag at your main county tag office. You may purchase the plate with random numbers and letters or create a personalized tag for your vehicle(s). Over 29,000 have been purchased so far!

The proceeds of this tag will be deposited into a charitable fund—Florida PBA Heart Fund—for the Association's members (see below). The great thing about the contributions made to the Heart Fund, they are tax-deductible! ●



## PBA HEART FUND DEATH AND DISABILITY PLAN



In an effort to help the families of law enforcement officers who are killed or disabled in the line of duty, Florida Police Benevolent Association (PBA) has established a charitable arm which is called the PBA Heart Fund. Because the PBA Heart Fund is a 501(c)(3) organization, contributions are tax deductible. Monies donated to the Heart Fund are used to provide death benefits to the families of officers killed in the line of duty and disability benefits to officers who are permanently disabled because of an in-line-of-duty disability.

Aside from individuals who may want to donate with the tax deduction in mind\*, political campaigns may dispose of surplus funds (after the campaign is over) by donating some or all of the surplus to the PBA Heart Fund [s. 106.141 (4) (a) 2., Florida Statutes]. And, of course, other entities (e.g. not-for-profit corporations) may also donate to this cause. The address is:

Florida PBA Heart Fund, 300 East Brevard Street, Tallahassee, FL 32301

More information about the Heart Fund may be obtained by calling Florida PBA at 1-800-733-3722.

\*Receipt for donations will be provided upon request. ●

# BON VOYAGE TO RAC JOHN COFFEY

By Jim Futch, Second Vice President

**J**ohn Coffey was recently reassigned to the FDLE Miami Regional Operations Center (MROC). John, a member of FDLE command, has been a PBA/FDLEAA member for a long time. We appreciate John's support and wish him well. The Broward Field Office (BFO) had a nice lunch and provided John with a plaque thanking him for his dedication, leadership, guidance and friendship. We thanked him for making the BFO the "Best in the State." 🍀



# ANTONIO "TONY" PINEDA RETIRES

By Jim Futch, Second Vice President

**O**n Friday, August 24th, 2007, Antonio "Tony" Pineda and many of his family, friends, law enforcement cohorts, and past and present FDLE members celebrated his thirty (30) years of dedicated service to the citizens of the State of Florida. A retirement party was held at Gatsby's Grill and Pub in Davie to commemorate the accomplishments of a well respected, and well liked professional.

Many of the people, whose lives were touched by Tony either personally or professionally, took the time to honor

Tony and his accomplishments. Tony's retirement was celebrated with the receipt of gifts, a plaque from FDLE MROC, a plaque from your FDLEAA PBA, and a gift certificate which was for Tony, but apparently his wife, **Rose**, had other ideas!

A great time was had by all and fortunately, Tony is retiring with his health and a wonderful family to spend his free time with. Congratulations, Tony! Many of us are either envious, jealous, or both! 🍀

# HONORING SA ROGER MARTINDILL

By SA Grant Johnson



President Telly Sands presents SA Roger Martindill his retirement plaque.

**A**fter more than 30 years of dedicated service to FDLE, SA Roger Martindill retired. It is a sad day for FDLE to lose such a dedicated and professional member. Roger spent many years supporting FDLE as an Agent, with the last 14 years as the TBROC helicopter and airplane pilot. He is a very accomplished and professional pilot who has assisted agents within the State in Marijuana Eradication, surveillance, and disaster assistance. He has accumulated

so many hours in both the helicopter and airplane that he no longer has to record the time. Most notably, he has spent time training the new TBROC pilot to continue excellent service.

Since Roger has retired, he has allowed himself time with his wife **Nancy**, and daughter **Samantha**. He is also a proud grandfather of a 4-month-old boy. He is waiting to receive his Special Agent reserve status so that he can come back and continue his support to FDLE.

We are all very lucky to have Roger as a member of FDLE. His skill and friendship has made a lasting impact on anyone who has been fortunate to have met and worked with him.

(See related article on next page.) 🍀

# FAREWELL TO SA VINCE "VINNIE" DELLACCIO

By Telly Sands, President

On August 19th, SA Claudia Law and members of the Sarasota Field Office honored Vinnie with an awesome retirement send off held at the Fraternal Order of Police Lodge in Sarasota. The afternoon was full of great live music by the Blues Pigs, food, beverages and lots of treasured memories and presentations. On behalf of the FDLEAA, I presented Vinnie with an appreciation clock/plaque as a small token of our appreciation for his outstanding service and dedication to the FDLEAA and the citizens of the State of Florida. Co-workers and brass from local law enforcement agencies were present to say kind words praising Vinnie for his invaluable contributions to the law enforcement community throughout his 31 year career. Vinnie is now experiencing life after FDLE in the glamorous city of Las Vegas, Nevada. Vinnie accepted a position with the Gaming Commission and upon last contact, was enjoying his new found life. Vinnie's wife, Nancy, stayed behind to tie up loose ends, but is looking forward to joining Vinnie in the very near future. I personally would like to say thank you to Vinnie for all his support, dedication and service as the FDLEAA Sarasota Representative for the past several terms. His insight, advice and friendship is and has been very much appreciated. From all your friends at the FDLEAA, all the best brother, you will truly be missed and never forgotten. 🍀

## SPECIAL AGENT OF THE QUARTER

By Telly Sands, President

### Special Agent Roger Martindill

Special Agent (SA) Roger Martindill has been a valued asset to FDLE Tampa Bay Regional Operations Center (TBROC). Roger has provided air support during many surveillances I coordinated throughout the years while I have been assigned to Squad "B", Economic Crimes Squad. Roger has always done an exceptional job with little acknowledgement or credit. Roger's expertise goes beyond being an awesome pilot; he is a trained investigative eye in the sky which has been crucial during ground surveillances. Roger is a team player, with a "let's get the job done" attitude. He is always willing to assist in any way he can. If he was prohibited from flying due to inclement weather, he offered to join surveillance units on the ground. His professionalism and expertise has been the talk of our LE counterparts. He is valued and well respected by many in the LE community. We are fortunate to have had Roger on our side. He has strengthened FDLE/TBROC's relationship with local LE by helping to obtain valuable evidence crucial to their investigations. As he sets his sights on retirement, we wish him well and look forward to his intended return as a Reserve Agent. Thank you for all you have done for so many of us. 🍀



SA Roger Martindill

### Get Your PBA Wearables at: [www.BuyPBA.com](http://www.BuyPBA.com)

You can purchase PBA merchandise such as golf shirts, t-shirts, caps, etc. at [www.BuyPBA.com](http://www.BuyPBA.com), the official site for all your PBA wearables and merchandise. The website is constantly adding new items, so return often!  
You can also order by calling Toll Free at 1-888-FL COPS 5 (888-352-6775) 🍀

## Legal Advisory!

**POLICE SHOOTINGS,  
IN-CUSTODY  
DEATHS OR  
SERIOUS TRAFFIC  
ACCIDENTS  
~ WHAT TO DO ~**

**STAY CALM**

*Call the PBA  
1-800-733-3722*

**ASK TO SPEAK TO A  
PBA ATTORNEY**

*Do not talk to anyone until  
you have consulted with a  
PBA ATTORNEY*

☆☆☆

**GARRITY RIGHTS**

The following statement should be written as the first sentence 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. It is my understanding that by refusing to obey an order to write this, that 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.*

# WHY JOIN THE FDLEAA/PBA?

By Telly Sands, President

Many have asked why join the FDLEAA of the Florida PBA? There are several reasons ranging from financial support for lobbying to death benefits to the main attraction—legal representation. Why join? It's **cheap insurance!** Since I took office as President, nine months ago, I have had several occasions when I had to turn down Special Agents' requests for legal representation during administrative/disciplinary proceedings because they were not FDLEAA/PBA members. I am puzzled as to the decision to opt out. I hear the famous quote, "I am not going to do anything wrong; therefore, I won't need the PBA's legal services." Hopefully, you won't need legal help, however, those of us who have been around awhile will tell you if you were the case agents or agent acting with others, you can be sued.

## What happens during your case or under your direction, good or bad, is on YOU!

Trust me, it happened to me. I was not even present when the incident occurred, but was sued and taken to trial. Lucky for me and the FDLE, it worked out because we didn't do anything wrong. Nonetheless, it was a personal intrusion of my privacy and tremendous stress that I don't wish on any of you. I wouldn't want to go through that without legal counsel. The other reason to not join is due to financial restrictions. Believe me, I understand having to budget and watch the pennies, but what happens financially when you need an attorney and you can't afford one? All the more reason to pay dues. Would you feel comfortable driving your car without insurance coverage? Despite the rationale, you may never use it, would you want it when you need it?

Finally, let's talk administratively or disciplinary. **Anyone can file a complaint against you!** Internally or externally will likely warrant an internal/executive investigation. Granted, recent statute requirements call for sanctions when complaints are trumped up or a police officer's bill of rights have been violated. Regardless of the validity of a complaint, it is comforting to know you can pick up the phone and get advice from a trained professional who is familiar with the process. The PBA attorneys and their representatives handling your case are well known, well respected, and very familiar with the law enforcement agency proceedings. They will ensure your rights are protected. This in no way indicates that FDLE inspectors will intentionally violate the Law Enforcement Officers' Bill of Rights. On the contrary, from what I have experienced and observed, FDLE Executive Investigations leadership has been very supportive of FDLEAA member requests for legal representation which, to my knowledge, has not been denied or discouraged. After all,

the purpose of the proceedings should be to get to the truth and, if the allegations are sustained, the punishment, if any, fits the violation. The bottom line, **Know your rights!**

When under investigation, you have the following rights:

- To have a PBA representative with you during an interview.
- To know who is in charge of the investigation, what the charges are, and who brought the charges.
- To hold the interview at a reasonable hour for a reasonable length of time and to have the interview tape-recorded from start to finish.
- Not to be threatened, bribed, or subjected to offensive language.
- To refuse a polygraph; you cannot be forced to resign.

If you are a member, when first contacted that you are a subject of an investigation, call your FDLEAA Representative in your region or contact me immediately.

If you are a PBA member in good standing and were a member at the time an act or incident which arises out of and within the scope of your duties as a law enforcement officer, PBA will furnish you a legal panel

attorney and will pay court costs of members for representation of the following:

- State or federal civil or criminal charges
- Scenes of shootings or serious injury

The benefits above are in addition to the coverage provided for disciplinary investigations.

If you have further questions regarding FDLEAA/PBA benefits you can call the Florida PBA at 1-800-733-3722 (FPBA). ●

*"I was not even present when the incident occurred, but was sued and taken to trial."*

## E-PBA Get Online with PBA!



NOT AN E-PBA MEMBER YET? Become one! Be the first to know about breaking news... direct to your inbox. Don't wait, sign up for E-PBA at [www.flpba.org](http://www.flpba.org). Be sure to add [pbamail@flpba.org](mailto:pbamail@flpba.org) to your approved sender list after signing up.

Knowledge about PBA issues is the strength of our Association. PBA will be e-mailing members timely news about what's up at the Florida PBA, helpful information regarding legislative issues, quick tips, and best practices for members.

Your e-mail address will not be given to any other group or organization and you will receive no advertising from outside sources. E-PBA is available to PBA members only.

# PBA DEATH AND DISABILITY PLAN

By Glenda Gail Kelly, Florida PBA Executive Assistant

As you may already know, PBA's Death and Disability Plan was instituted effective April 1, 2005.

This program, free to members of chapters and participating charters, provides certain death or disability benefits to the member, spouse or dependent children when the member is killed or suffers a catastrophic injury in the line of duty.

On December 1, 2005, the death benefit payment increased to a maximum of \$30,000 and effective November 14, 2007, the catastrophic injury benefit increased to a maximum of \$20,000.

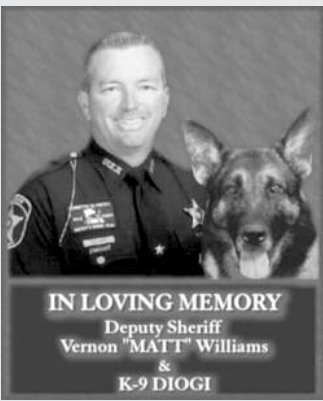
## Basic Eligibility Requirements:

- the officer who was killed or suffered catastrophic injury must have been a member from a participating charter or chapter of the Florida Police Benevolent Association, Inc., at the time of the accident or injury which gave rise

to the death or disability and continuing through the time of application and payment of benefit; and

- the officer must have been killed or suffered a catastrophic injury while on-duty and as a direct result of the actual and lawful performance of official law enforcement or correctional responsibilities required by his or her agency and as the direct result of an unlawful and intentional act. In case of catastrophic injury, the officer must also be considered by the review board to be permanently unable to render useful and efficient service as an officer by virtue of the injury.

Please contact the PBA at 1-800-733-3722, extension 426 (Glenda Gail Kelly) for more information. ●



## GARDEN OF THE COMPANION PET CEMETERY

During the tragic loss of Polk County Deputy Sheriff Vernon "Matt" Williams and K-9 "Diogi" on September 28, 2006, Lakeland Funeral Home and Memorial Gardens saw a need to create a pet cemetery in Polk County. As a result, Garden of the Companion Pet Cemetery will be opening on November 18th, dedicated in Matt and Diogi's memory. ●

# *Proud, Professional and PBA!*



## RETIRED?

If you have retired, please remember that your payroll deduction to the PBA has been stopped. We urge you to remain a member to support your organization. Remember... your Association has successfully addressed many issues relative to retiree's pensions. Retirement dues are \$25.00 annually. Please contact FDLE Agents Association Membership Secretary Marcia Eggers with your request to be transferred to Retired Status at 1-800-733-3722, ext. 411. ●

# SUPPORT OF SERGEANT RON COLSON, FDLE CAPITOL POLICE

By Telly Sands, FDLEAA President

## Police Unity Tour

The FDLEAA Chapter has provided financial support to **Sgt. Colson** and wish him a safe trip. I would like to thank **Director Dennis Bustle**, FDLE Capitol Police, for bringing this to our attention as this is a worthwhile cause. Additionally, I would like to thank the Florida PBA and the following PBA Charters and Chapters for their financial support: Broward County PBA, Central Florida Chapter of the Florida PBA, FDLE Agents Association Chapter of the Florida PBA, and the Pinellas County PBA. The following was submitted by Director Bustle.

### Members,

*Florida Capitol Police Sergeant Ron Colson is going to be representing FDLE in the 2008 Police Unity Tour next year and he needs your help. The Police Unity Tour, which began in 1997, is a three day, 250-mile bicycle trip which culminates with a candlelight vigil at the National Law Enforcement Officers' Memorial in Washington, D.C. The purpose of the tour is to raise funds for the Memorial and to raise awareness for the many law enforcement officers killed in the line of duty each year. The ride is limited to active or retired law enforcement officers and to surviving family members of slain officers.*

*Each rider is required to raise at least \$1,800 and participate in fundraising events prior to the May event. Sgt. Colson is counting on us to exceed the minimum amount. You may contribute to this cause with cash, check, or by visiting Sgt. Colson's website at: [www.firstgiving.com/roncolson](http://www.firstgiving.com/roncolson)*

*Anything you can contribute will be greatly appreciated.*

*Dennis M. Bustle, Director  
Florida Department of Law Enforcement  
Capitol Police  
400 S. Monroe Street, Suite 213 Capitol  
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-3300  
(850) 487-2700 / Fax (850) 922-3030  
[dennisbustle@fdle.state.fl.us](mailto:dennisbustle@fdle.state.fl.us)*

Chief Investigator Alex Suarez

Page Creator: Ronald Colson  
Event: Police Unity Tour 2008  
Event Starts: May 10th 2008  
Team Name: Tallahassee

Fundraising target: \$5,000  
So far I have raised: \$1,920.00

SPONSOR ME NOW →

Fundraising progress  
20% 50% 75% 100%

Bookmark this page  
Promote this page  
I want a page like this

My personal message:  
Thank you for visiting my fundraising page!

This will be my first year as a rider for the Police Unity Tour and hopefully not my last. Turning 55, I will concede with my first year as a senior citizen. I've elected to ride for Boston, Georgia Police Department's Chief Investigator Alex Suarez. Al was accidentally shot and killed by another officer as the officer finished clearing for gun during a shift change at the police station. Having a weekend home a few miles north of Boston, I have had occasion to speak with Al a number of times. Al is survived by his wife, four sons, and two brothers. We don't bring Al back to them, but we can ensure that Al, and every other law enforcement officer who has made the supreme sacrifice, is remembered and honored for decades to come.

Donating through this website is simple, fast and totally secure. It is also the most efficient way to support my fundraising efforts. Please take the time to contribute whatever you can to this worthy cause. I will greatly appreciate it and I know that each surviving family member of all of these fallen American heroes will be truly grateful. I want to say a special thank you to the Florida PBA, the Broward County PBA and the Central Florida PBA for their most generous offline contributions.

Many thanks for your support - and don't forget to forward this to anyone who you think might want to donate too!

Most thankfully,  
Sgt. Ron Colson

## IRS Tax Tip 2007-23: Tax Scams – The Last Thing You Need

Life is complex enough without con artists trying to separate you from your hard earned dollars. It can be very costly if you become a victim of a scam that trades on the image or the mission of the IRS. Everyone should be vigilant in protecting personal, financial and tax information.

The IRS has these tips to avoid falling prey to con artists.

Watch your personal and financial information very closely, particularly during electronic transactions. The IRS is among a growing group of government agencies and corporations whose names and Web sites are being copied by imposters posing employees conducting official business and seeking your personal information. Be aware that the IRS does not use e-mail to initiate contact with taxpayers about their accounts. Do not open links in unsolicited messages claiming to come from the IRS.

Not all scams come by way of the Internet or email. The telephone is a low-tech source of scams. Do not give away personal information to callers claiming to be from the IRS unless you have verified their caller's identity. You can confirm an IRS contact by calling 800-829-1040.

Thieves can use stolen personal data to access your financial accounts, run up charges on credit cards or apply for new loans. With a stolen identity a con-artist might try to use your Social Security Number to intercept your refund or falsify employment records leaving the IRS with the impression that you do not report all of your income.

Some con artists earn their living by preparing false, and illegal, tax returns. Make certain that all of the information on your tax return is accu-

rate since you are responsible for its content regardless of who prepares your return.

Dishonest return preparers, promising unreasonably large refunds, can cause many headaches for you. Such preparers attract new clients by promising large refunds while skimming a portion of the inflated refunds and charging high fees for preparation services. Choose carefully when you hire a tax preparer. As the saying goes, if it sounds too good to be true, it probably is.

In contrast to shady tax preparers, some con artists openly tell you that you do not have to pay taxes. Be wary of anyone who encourages you to side-step your responsibility to file an income tax return or to pay the proper amount of tax due.

Some promoters make outlandish claims that taxes are not legal, that wages are not income, that a voluntary tax system means you can choose not to file or pay and that income tax returns violate your protection against self-incrimination or the right to privacy. Often these promoters will use techniques that are strikingly similar to any other con-artist to charge a high fee to share their "secrets" with you. Such arguments are false and have been repeatedly thrown out of court. You may end up paying for this mistake twice, first when you pay for the bad advice and second when you are faced with a higher tax bill plus penalties and interest.

Don't be scammed when it comes to your taxes. For more information about these and other tax scams visit the IRS Web site at [IRS.gov](http://IRS.gov).

# CALLING ALL ANGELS - HONORING OUR HERO

## TERRY LIGMAN

By Telly Sands, President

“Calling All Angels” was a program the FDLEAA started back in January of this year. The purpose was to support our members who are deployed in Operation IRAQ by lending a hand to their families here at home. The FDLEAA was notified that **Special Agent Paul Ligman’s** son, **Terry**, was injured while deployed in Operation IRAQ. While recovering, Terry had the opportunity to come home to Brooksville and visit his family. The FDLEAA was honored to offer some financial assistance to bring Terry home for some of Mama’s good home cooking and a little R&R with his family. We wish Terry the very best recovery and we appreciate all he has done for us and our country. Please keep Terry and the Ligman family in your thoughts and prayers. The following is a note from the Ligmans.

*The Ligman Family wishes to express its most sincere Thank You for the financial assistance provided by the FDLE Agents Association that made a visit by our son and brother, Terry, to Florida from Brooke Army Medical Center (BAMC) this August. One of the pictures is of Terry shortly after his arrival at BAMC. The other is of Terry, Paul and Kaitlyn at the Florida Aquarium. Terry will be flying to Tampa for Thanksgiving! He is finally able to support weight on the foot (the injury occurred a week before Easter) and is walking with a cane. The future of the foot is still to be determined with amputation still a possibility. Once again, Thank You so much for thinking of and supporting these injured soldiers.*

Paul, Ardis and Kaitlyn Ligman 🍀



*When you are making out your Christmas card list this year, please include the following:*

**A Recovering American Soldier**  
c/o Walter Reed Army Medical Center  
6900 Georgia Avenue, NW, Washington, D.C. 20307-5001

Get your PBA wearables at [www.BuyPBA.com](http://www.BuyPBA.com)



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# FDLEAA

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*The opinions expressed are not necessarily those of this Chapter, its Board of Directors, or the Florida PBA.*