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300 East Brevard St.
Tallahassee, FL 32301
1-800-733-3722

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Editor In Charge
David Murrell

Publications Specialist
Bob Peterson

Proofreader
Marcia Eggers

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A Message From Your President

John Rivera

Please note: President Rivera's article was written prior to the tragedy in Miami on September 13th.

BSO hit hard

August was a particularly difficult month for our Broward Sheriff's Office brothers and sisters with the tragic shooting of **Deputy Maury Hernandez** who was shot in the head (see related article on page 12) and the loss of **Sergeant Chris Reyka** as he was murdered by cowardly pieces of excrements. As of my writing, Maury is still lying in a hospital bed fighting for his life. The scumbag responsible for that shooting is behind bars.

As the search continues for the trash who shot Sergeant Reyka, let us offer our support and prayers to the entire Reyka family, as well to our BSO family.

The memorial service was a tribute fitting for the hero Sergeant Reyka was. His family was a well bonded and strong group of fine people whose lives have been torn apart by this senseless killing. As I sat and heard the emotional cries throughout the arena, I couldn't help but think that there should be a law that would require State Attorneys, their assistants and all judges to attend each law enforcement officer's funeral. This way they can see what their decisions, or lack thereof, does to the lives of people. While the perpetrators have not yet been caught, I'll bet anything they have had priors with nolle prose or super lenient pleas, compliments of the very system that was created to protect us all.

To that end let me share with you a poem read at Sgt. Reyka's memorial service. The poem was a tribute to how Sgt. Reyka lived life and I certainly know that you have experienced much of the same, as have I.

*People are often unreasonable, illogical, and self-centered;
Forgive them anyway.*

*If you are kind, people may accuse you of selfish ulterior motives;
Be kind anyway.*

*If you are successful, you will win some false friends and some true enemies;
Succeed anyway.*

*If you are honest and frank, people may cheat you;
Be honest and frank anyway.*

*What you spend years building, someone could destroy overnight.
Build anyway.*

*If you find serenity and happiness, they may be jealous;
Be happy anyway.*

*The good you do today, people will often forget tomorrow;
Do good anyway.*

*Give the world the best you have, and it may never be enough;
Give the best you've got anyway.*

*You see, in the final analysis it is between you and God;
it was never between you and them anyway.*

This poem is engraved on the wall of **Mother Teresa's** home for children in Calcutta

I also offer my prayers to the family of **Sgt. Ron Harrison** of the Hillsborough County Sheriff's Office and to all those who have lost their lives in the line of duty.

As an aside on a related subject, I have asked the Florida Parole Commission to notify PBA whenever a cop or corrections killer is up for parole. We intend to be there at every hearing to contest the parole and keep them where they belong—rotting in prison (for those lucky enough to escape the more deserved death penalty). Accordingly, we (PBA) were there on August 29, 2007, to contest the parole of one **Lester Enriquez** who murdered **FHP Trooper Alvin Kohler** in 1978. I joined the family, **PBA Highway Patrol Chapter President Bill Smith**, and FHP brass in testifying against the parole. Our many thanks to **Commissioners Pate, Dunphy** (retired Miami-Dade Police Department), and **Wolson** for listening to our pleas and denying the parole. (See accompanying information on page 3.)

Tax Reforms Stance

It started with one brave soul, and then was followed by a small few, and lately others have tagged along and taken the bold stance against cuts to employees and specifically

public safety. Some local politicians have finally taken a stance and to that end we commend them. Bottom line is that law enforcement and corrections are not only the citizens' thin blue line between anarchy and order, good and bad, but it's the last line of defense from the scum that preys on our family, friends and citizenry.

Politicians unwilling to acknowledge or accept that fact need not be in office any longer. Politicians who know it need to embrace this idea soon and insure that the very body of people who keep others safe better be the very last item to be touched as cuts are sought to be in compliance with the tax reforms.

For the politicians who have no idea what I'm referring to, let me put it another way. When you took office for your respective position, you swore to uphold the Constitution of the United States of America and the laws of the government, including those of your particular institution. In the Constitution's preamble it reads: "We the People of the United States, in Order to form a more perfect Union, establish Justice, insure domestic Tranquility, provide for the common defense, promote the general Welfare, and secure the Blessings of Liberty to ourselves and our Posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America." Focus for a moment on the words underlined "insure domestic Tranquility."

Our Constitution insures our society's safety and if you truly believe in the oath you swore to, then you protect and defend the Constitution of the United States (Florida is included) and its people by insuring that public safety is adequate to do the very job it is intended to do. Cutting law enforcement budgets goes against the very core of our nation's mission.

Still confused? Find other places to make your cuts!

A Hero's job

The public, politicians, and the media in particular, undervalue what our brave members do day in and day out. It has become so popular to criticize what we do, how we do it, what we say and how much we make (Ha!), but they'll never understand the job until they put on the uniform and actually do the job. Of course, the one question that no one can ever answer to us is that of when an officer lays down his/her life, how much is too much in compensation? At the time of death the best answer they can muster is "it's never enough." My question is why that answer isn't uttered for the living and during contract negotiations?

Sadly, and yet thankfully, when tragedy strikes us, the public rekindles its support, at least until the next criticism comes about.

God bless you all. Be safe out there and always be on the alert, there are more scumbags out there and they know all too well that the system does more to protect them than to keep them off our streets.

Until next time... ●

On September 13th, 2007, four officers from the Miami-Dade Police Department were ambushed by an assailant armed with an AK-47. **Officer Jose Somohano** was killed and **Officers Jody Wright, Christopher Carlin** and **Tomas Tundidor** were wounded during the attack. This marks the tenth officer death in our state this year.



Words can never fill the void left in the Somohano family, nor ease the shock to the families of three officers wounded from this senseless attack. The violence has broken the heart of every person employed with Miami-Dade Police Department along with the entire law enforcement community of Florida. Yes, the bad guy met his fate, but the wounds he inflicted on us all are long lasting.

We ask that all of you keep the officers and their families in your prayers.

[Editor's Note: This tragic attack occurred while Roll Call was in the process of being printed.]