**THE BUCK STOPS WHERE?**

“Your safety, your job security, and the well-being of your family will be profoundly affected by what happens in Washington in the coming years. The actions that you take now can help shape the future—and if you do not take them, you’ll have no one to blame but yourself for what the future brings.” —Late FOP National President Steve Young

This declaration, made in the January 2003 issue of The Journal, remains as significant and important as it was then. President Young was explaining just how critical it is for FOP members to take a stand and contribute to the Political Action Committee (NATL FOP PAC). Unfortunately, Steve’s call to action was not heeded as wholeheartedly as he would have expected.

Simply stated, the PAC needs YOUR help NOW! The Executive Board has stepped up to the plate, each member making a donation of $100 or more to the PAC. Now it is your turn.

A political action committee exists in the political arena to reward friends and aid in the defeat of foes. It does this by providing much-needed campaign funds to electoral candidates who support the PAC’s philosophy, ideals and legislative goals. But a PAC’s influence is only as great as the amount of funds it can leverage. The FOP is known in Washington as the preeminent voice for law enforcement advocacy. Unfortunately, the status and influence of our PAC does not reflect the superior presence of our National Legislative Office, our grassroots activism or our brave and honorable members.

**Only you can change that!**

It is time for all of us to put our money where our mouths are. If we want national concealed carry, we must contribute. If we want to ensure that all men and women in law enforcement have collective bargaining rights, we must contribute. If we want each law enforcement officer and spouse to receive his or her rightfully earned Social Security benefits, we must contribute.

President Harry S. Truman was famous for having a sign on his desk reading, “The buck stops here!” He believed that accountability and responsibility are paramount, and it is dishonorable to “pass the buck” to others. In law enforcement, we adhere to this philosophy each and every day, and it is time to apply this principle to our duties as FOP members. The leadership of the FOP has committed to doing everything within our power to achieve the chosen priorities of our membership, and now you must make that same commitment.

We have all agreed on the issues that are critical to our lives—but now we must move beyond talking about them, and take action. It's time to stop bemoaning what's needed and time to start being a part of the fight to get it done. The buck stops here—it's time to take charge of what is important to you. It's easy to pass the buck and think “someone else will contribute,” or “my small donation won't be missed,” but make no mistake—this kind of thinking is not worthy of the job we all do, it is not worthy of the FOP and it is not worthy of you. **It's time to take a stand.**

In spite of its name, the PAC is not about “politics”—it's about advocacy and access. You can rest assured that the ONLY Members of Congress who will receive PAC funds are those who have championed the causes of law enforcement officers, and commit to continuing their support. The recipients might be Democrats, or they may be Republicans. The only factor used to determine whether or not the PAC will support their election will be the strength of their commitment to law enforcement officers. By helping to ensure that the Congress is filled with men and women who believe in the aims of the FOP, we are one step closer to seeing all of our legislative objectives fulfilled.

As you know, the Fraternal Order of Police represents over 310,000 men and women in law enforcement. Each of us has a responsibility—a duty—to one another. This is why the FOP was founded: so that all of us could join together and create a voice a thousand times stronger than one of us alone. If each of us would contribute just $10, the FOP PAC would wield the influence of over $3 million—quite a lot of money in terms of a political campaign.

Don't ignore this call. Stand up and act now, so the PAC can act for you. You can send PAC donations to 309 Massachusetts Avenue NE, Washington, D.C. 20002. Per federal election law, please include your name, address, occupation, and employer information with your contribution. Remember, contributions or gifts to the National Fraternal Order of Police PAC are not tax deductible as charitable contributions. A $10 donation is suggested, but please contribute more if you are able, and a lesser amount if you are not.

**SCHOLARSHIPS FOR DISABLED/RETIRED POLICE OFFICERS**

The Disabled and Retired Police Officers Educational Fund (DRPOEF) is a 501(c)(3) charitable organization that was founded in 1998. The mission of the DRPOEF is to provide scholarship money to officers, disabled and optionally retired to attend Community Colleges, Universities, and/or accredited Trade Schools. To learn more about the organization and to submit an online application, go to www.drpoef.com.

While there are numerous commendable organizations that provide scholarships to the surviving spouse or dependents of police officers, there are few that offer scholarships that provide financial assistance directly for the benefit of the police officer, who now has retired due to an injury sustained in the line of duty, or, having completed the required number of years of service, (continued on page 8)
Late National President Steve Young Inducted into Labor Hall of Fame
First Law Enforcement Leader to Be So Honored

On October 1, Steve Young, the late National President of the Fraternal Order of Police, was honored with induction into the Labor Hall of Fame, a museum inside the Department of Labor which honors posthumously those Americans whose distinctive contributions to the field of labor have enhanced the quality of life for millions. Previous inductees into the Hall of Fame include Samuel Gompers, John L. Lewis, and Lane Kirkland. Steve Young is the only leader of a police labor organization to be so honored.

U.S. Secretary of Labor Elaine L. Chao presided over the 15th annual induction ceremony, and described Young as a "true community leader" on law enforcement labor issues. Secretary Chao, who announced that Young would be honored with induction at the FOP's 56th Biennial National Conference in Providence, Rhode Island, said, "The Labor Hall of Fame is a monument to the honor of those who worked industriously for the benefit of the American worker." "They have made lasting contributions to the quality of life, not only to American workers but for the world, as well."

Chuck Canterbury, who succeeded Steve Young as National President and was unanimously elected to that post in August, presented the individual award. "Steve Young was the finest of our nation's finest and he spent his career fighting for the rank-and-file member," he said. "In his eleven years as President of the Ohio State Lodge, four years as National Vice President and his all-too brief term as National President, Steve woke up each morning and went to work for the citizens of Marion City and the rank-and-file officers in every region of the country. He was as dedicated a man, an officer, and a friend as I have ever known."

Young was chosen for induction into the Labor Hall of Fame because of his tireless service to his community and country, his commitment to his fellow officers and the civil rights of citizens. He was the first police labor leader to reach out to the Justice Department's Civil Rights division and work cooperatively with them to bring equitable closure to civil rights investigations and ensure that communities received the committed support and service they deserved. As a member of President Bush's Homeland Security Advisory Council, Young played a vital role in helping America meet its heightened security needs in the post-9/11 world in a manner that respected both the civil rights of citizens and the needs of law enforcement. He was also a strong and effective advocate for the rights of workers being transferred to the new Homeland Security Department, working closely with the Administration and the Congress to ensure that the needs of the nation were met and the rights of its workers were heard.

"Leadership is a difficult quality to define," Canterbury said, "but you know a leader when you see one. Likewise, friendship is difficult to define, but everyone knows what a friend is. Steve was both, to me and to the more than 310,000 members of this proud organization that he loved so deeply and served so well. I believe that if Steve were with us here today, he would be very humbled, and would probably smile and say that he was just doing his job. But I strongly believe that each one of us who wears the badge and walks a beat will be forever in his debt."

The induction ceremony was attended by Steve's widow, Denise, his son Steve and his wife Karen, as well as National Vice President Ken Rocks, National Second Vice President R. Michael Taylor, National Trustee Chet DeLong, National Legal Counsel Larry James, Executive Director Jim Pasco and other FOP members and employees of the National Legislative Office who had the privilege of knowing and working with Steve Young.
In the last edition of the Journal I wrote about the Windfall Elimination Provision of Social Security. I received many phone calls from our members with questions concerning the spouse’s benefit. The Government Pension Offset (GPO) comes into play here. The GPO is a law that affects a spouse’s or widow(er)’s Social Security benefits to which he or she is entitled as a family member.

Some or all of the Social Security benefits for which you are eligible based on your spouse’s or widow(er)’s earned benefit may be offset if you receive a pension from a job where you did not pay Social Security taxes. This offset will reduce the amount of your family (spousal) benefit by two-thirds (2/3) of the amount of your government pension.

Exemptions under the Social Security law for the GPO are as follows:

- Any state, local, or military employee whose government pension is based on a job where he or she was paying social security taxes on the last day of employment.
- Anyone whose government pension is not based on his or her own earnings.
- Anyone who received or was eligible to receive a government pension before December 1982 AND who meets all the requirements for social security family benefits in effect in January 1977.
- Anyone who received or was eligible to receive a federal, state, or local government pension before July 1983, and was receiving one-half support from his/her spouse.

As an example, Janet is a police officer. She receives a monthly pension from her municipality of $900. Janet’s spouse’s social security benefit based on his earnings is $860. Janet’s family social security benefit based on his husband’s earnings is $430. The GPO equals two-thirds of Janet’s municipal pension of $900, or $600. $600 is greater than $430 so there will be no family benefit under social security. Janet will receive her monthly pension of $900.

Let’s change Janet’s numbers around: Monthly pension = $600, Spouse’s social security benefit = $860. Janet’s family social security benefit based on her husband’s earnings = $430. The GPO equals two-thirds of her monthly pension of $600, or $400. $430 is greater than $400. Janet will receive a $30-per-month family benefit from social security.

How do you calculate family benefits? The benefits eligible family members may receive are based on the earned benefit of the social security “worker.” This is the primary insurance amount (PIA).

- Spouse (full retirement age) 50%
- Spouse (age 62) 37.5%
- Spouse (any age) caring for eligible child under 16 50%
- Eligible child 50% • Unmarried under age 18 or under 19, if still in high school • Any age if disabled before age 22

I hope this provides a better understanding of the GPO under social security. We are working hard to get Congress to repeal these unfair laws. If you have any questions, please call me at 215-629-2433.
TOPIC: California False Complaint Statute

Issue: Whether the California False Complaint Statute violates the First Amendment and is, therefore, unconstitutional.

Facts: In 1982, the California legislature enacted Civil Code Section 47.5 which created an exception to code section 47(b) where-in citizens who complained about police misconduct were protected from liability for their statements. This section allows police officers to sue for defamation against those who file complaints against them for “misconduct, criminal conduct, or incompetence” with their employer if the complaint is knowingly false and made with spite, hatred, or ill will.

The San Diego Police Department was assigned to the “Problem Oriented Policy” (POP) project which focused in part on designing solutions to alleviate problems within a community. James Kinder operated a car rental business and other businesses from a location on India Street in San Diego. In August of 1998, after a confrontation with Kinder, Officer Loshonkohl obtained approval for a POP project to deal with problems near Kinder’s business. The problems consisted of abandoned vehicles, parking, creating a neighborhood eye sore, and other code violations. Kinder’s business, as well as six others, were targeted. Officers towed 41 vehicles, of which 16 belonged to Kinder. Kinder aggressively confronted Officer Loshonkohl on numerous occasions. Kinder filed 20 complaints against Officer Loshonkohl with the San Diego Police Department. The San Diego Police Department reviewed and/or investigated the complaints resulting in a favorable disposition in all cases for Officer Loshonkohl.

In September 1998, Loshonkohl filed suit against Kinder on five separate causes of action for defamation under Code Section 47.5. The trial court concluded that Kinder had damaged Loshonkohl’s reputation within the police department and caused her “grave and serious emotional injury.”

Held: Judgment in favor of Officer Loshonkohl in the amount of $350,000.

Appeal: Kinder filed an appeal in a California Court of Appeals asking for a finding that Section 47.5 was unconstitutional on its face, as a violation of the right to free speech.

Held: Judgment Affirmed—with a finding that the law was constitutional.

FROM THE COURTS

TOPIC: ADA and Seniority

Issue: Whether a proposed accommodation that would normally be reasonable is rendered unreasonable because the assignment would violate a seniority system’s rules.

Facts: Barnett injured his back while handling cargo for US Airways. He transferred to a less physical job in the mailroom. Later, the job opened for bid under a seniority system. US Airways refused to accommodate Barnett by allowing him to hold his mailroom job and he lost it during the seniority bidding. He then filed suit under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) which prohibits an employer from discriminating against “an individual with a disability” who with “reasonable accommodation” can perform a job’s essential functions unless an employer can demonstrate that the accommodation would impose an undue hardship on the operation of the business. The District Court found that altering the seniority system would be an “undue hardship” and granted summary judgment for the employer. The Ninth Circuit reversed on the basis that seniority was merely a factor in determining undue hardship and that a fact-intensive analysis was required. US Airways appealed to the U.S. Supreme Court.

Held: An employer’s showing that a requested accommodation conflicts with seniority rules is ordinarily sufficient to show, as a matter of law, that an “accommodation” is not “reasonable.” Vacated and Remanded.

The decision was based in part on the following: A typical seniority system is an important employee benefit. Nothing in the statute suggests that Congress intended to undermine seniority systems. The plaintiff has the burden of showing special circumstances and must explain why, in the particular case, an exception to the seniority system can constitute a reasonable accommodation even though in the ordinary case it cannot. Neither US Airways’ position that no accommodation violating a seniority system’s rules is reasonable nor Barnett’s position that reasonable accommodation authorizes a court to consider only the requested accommodation’s ability to meet an individual’s disability-related needs is a proper interpretation of the Act.
“SPECIAL INTEREST GROUP?”

Political activity, campaign contributions, endorsements and lobbying…Does this all sound familiar? Of course it does—these are all activities of groups, unions and organizations that have been labeled as “special interest groups.” Having been tagged as a “special interest group” is often looked upon in an unfavorable manner—that somehow being part of a special interest group is not right, not normal and maybe even un-American.

I suspect we may have members of our organization that have thought that themselves. I couldn’t disagree more. The Fraternal Order of Police is absolutely a special interest group and we not only should be—we must be. Being a member of the FOP, you join over 310,000 members worldwide. As one voice we all strive to improve our profession. We strive for better working conditions, wages and benefits.

The Grand Lodge, along with many of our state and local lodges, is involved every day in the political process, a process that results in many new and/or changed laws that impact greatly on both our working and private lives. We hear and read a lot about these special interest groups, rarely in a good light, but I cannot think of anyone who is not a member of some special interest group. Everybody I can think of has some sort of representation in the political process. Certainly our bosses do: chiefs and sheriffs associations, municipal leagues, county commissioner associations and township trustee groups, to name a few.

As law enforcement professionals we do have special interests. We have needs, requirements and interests that are unique to our profession. So do doctors, lawyers, firefighters, airline pilots, dock workers, truck drivers etc., etc., etc. The unemployed have special interests, the homeless have special interests, and I can assure you that those special interests are being represented in the political process. There are organizations that represent the special interests of cats, dogs, owls and doves. Even when we have reached our final resting place there will be those representing the special interests of those who have passed.

The next time you hear or see the anti-“special interest” propaganda in the media, remember that we are all members of a special interest group, even the ones reporting about the dark side of such groups. I am proud to be a member of the law enforcement special interest community, and I am glad that the FOP is looking out for and representing my “special interests.”

Happy Holidays!

NOW IS THE TIME—
SUPPORT YOUR LOCAL AND NATIONAL CHARITIES

The holiday season is upon us, and I want to extend holiday wishes to you and your families. This is a time of year when many of us and our lodges throughout the country conduct various functions to support some very important charities in our communities. Nationally, we are continually supporting Easter Seals and the Law Enforcement Torch Run, both of which are incredible organizations. On the local fronts, lodges around the country are involved with those same programs, along with many others of their own. I want to commend those lodges and their members for going the extra mile to give to their communities in such a generous way.

I want to encourage everyone to take the time and get involved with those very generous and worthwhile efforts. Not all of those programs require a financial commitment—some of them only require a little of your time and energy. I know we all have very busy lives and it is sometimes hard to give the needed support, but it is amazingly important to the public relations of our lodges that we get involved and be part of these efforts. Often, it is those same efforts that are remembered by our communities when it comes time for them to support some of our needs and efforts. It is not always easy to gain that most important support, but by supporting them we increase our chances of receiving theirs in return. Some of these programs are just so worthy and important. We should be supportive based on the merit of the programs alone, regardless of the potential return to ourselves. Point being, support our local and national charities, help them meet their goals, and everyone comes out better for it. Have a wonderful holiday and New Year, and stay safe.

Mike Burnett
Trustees Chairman

Patrick Yoes
Sergeant At Arms
pyoes@cox.net

Mike Taylor
2nd Vice President

Some suggest the Fraternal Order of Police is at a crossroads nationally. The big question seems to be, are we a labor or fraternal organization? I have to ask, if a lodge provides and promotes the stability of law enforcement, defends the rights of its members, builds public support, and lobbies for legislation that promotes job security . . . does the lack of a collective bargaining contract make it less of a Fraternal Order of Police Lodge than one that does have a contract?

I submit to you that we are in fact a “labor organization” . . . all 310,000 of us. Some enjoying the benefits of bargaining, others working towards that end, but all of us improving the quality of law enforcement and the protection of our members in our own way.

There is a logical reason we are the largest professional police organization in this nation. Clearly, our strength is in our structure and we must never forget this. We are a “bottom-up” organization where local lodges set their own priorities, determine their own agendas, and chart their own courses.

It is the state and national lodge’s responsibility to protect the integrity of the Fraternal Order of Police name, use the collective influence of all members legislatively, offer direction for the Fraternal Order of Police as a whole, and perhaps most importantly to provide a comprehensive support structure that will motivate and empower each lodge with the tools needed to achieve its goals.

With that in mind, the Grand Lodge has created a series of seminars designed to help each and every lodge to achieve their goals. One such training opportunity will be an expansion of an already effective seminar utilized for years. The annual Administrative and Financial Officers Training Seminar held in Nashville will be expanded to not only continue providing lodge secretaries and treasurers with the tools they need to perform their jobs more efficiently, but it will also include a third track of training for lodge presidents and future lodge leaders.

Designed to empower lodge leaders with the tools needed to succeed, this training is a must for lodge leaders both present and future as well as lodge secretaries and treasurers. It will take place in Nashville, TN, on February 20-21, 2004, and will feature leadership and motivational components as well as highlight the extensive list of resources available to local and state lodges. For additional information on this training, contact Kim Scott at 800-451-2711.

LEADERSHIP MATTERS
At this writing, the 108th Congress is in the final weeks of its first session. There is still the potential for activity on several pieces of legislation, including S. 253, so be sure to visit the Grand Lodge website for the most up-to-date information.

**Increased Possibility of Vote on the “Law Enforcement Officers’ Safety Act”** The National Legislative Office has received numerous inquiries by telephone and e-mail with a single question: What is the status of H.R. 218/S. 253?

The difficulty in providing a status report on H.R. 218/S. 253 beyond the continued addition of new cosponsors is that we have reached a level where the next step in the process is a vote on the Senate floor. Obviously, this decision is in the hands of Congressional leadership and their very top staff, all of whom are focused right now on the must-pass end-of-the-year appropriations measures. Once you have reached this level in the legislative process, only very rarely do you have a floor vote scheduled with any more than a day or even a few hours notice.

With several weeks left to go, the National Legislative Office continues to believe that a vote on S. 253 is very possible before the end of the session. However, if it is considered it is likely to be voted on as an amendment to another legislative vehicle or included in a conference report. In the unlikely event that the bill is considered as a stand alone measure on the Senate floor, we will again have very little notice as the bill would be brought to the floor by the Majority Leader when there is a break in floor activity—in between negotiations on the various appropriations measures. In both cases, we are confident of success. When this issue is voted on, be it as S. 253 or an amendment, we will have the votes to pass it.

The National Legislative Office is aggressively lobbying Congressional leadership and their top aides in both chambers on the bill. We are in regular contact with the Senate and House Majority Leader’s top staff and with our key Senate allies on this issue. When it moves, we will be the first to know. We expect that there will be a floor vote on this issue—the question is no longer “if,” but “when.”

The other question that the National Legislative Office often fields from our members is about H.R. 218 and the efforts of Representative F. James Sensenbrenner, J.r. (R-WI), Chairman of the Judiciary Committee, to kill the legislation. We should be clear on this point: H.R. 218 will not be considered by the Judiciary Committee or any of its Subcommittees while Rep. Sensenbrenner holds the gavel. He has the authority to prevent this bill from moving and clearly intends to exercise it.

For this reason, our legislative strategy is based on passing the Senate bill first. We are in regular contact with the House leadership on this specific issue and they are aware of the importance of this bill to the FOP. As such, we are confident that a Senate-passed bill will be considered by the House. Obviously, this is easier if our bill is part of a larger piece of legislation.

Because of the tremendous success of the FOP’s National Legislative Office and the Grassroots Action Network, it may seem to some that we have hit a “ceiling” with respect to the number of cosponsors. If we already have a filibuster-proof majority in the Senate, which includes every member of the Senate leadership from both sides of the aisle, and more than two hundred and fifty (250) cosponsors in the House, many of our members ask if there is any value in continuing to seek additional cosponsors.

The answer is an unqualified yes, for two main reasons. First, by continuing to lobby this issue, we will keep it on the Capitol Hill radar screen and maintain our momentum to passage. And, secondly, the more cosponsors we have, the greater the chances that the bill can be considered swiftly without a long and drawn out debate. When floor time is scarce as it always is near the end of a session, bills which have the greatest unanimity have a better chance of being considered—especially in the Senate.

To this end, the National Legislative Office launched an end-of-the-session push to round up additional cosponsors in both the House and the Senate. All members of the Grassroots Action Network received State-specific target lists of Members of Congress who have not yet signed on to H.R. 218/S. 253. These FOP members have been asked to call, write, and e-mail their Senators and Representatives and ask that they demonstrate their support for law enforcement by cosponsoring H.R. 218/S. 253.

If you have not received this e-mail and want to be part of the FOP’s Grassroots Action Network, send an e-mail to grassroots@grandlodgefop.org.

**Collective Bargaining Legislation: S. 606 Passes Committee!!!** The Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions (HELP) had scheduled a mark-up of S. 606 in late September, but was forced to postpone action on the bill. Rather than reschedule the mark-up, the bill’s sponsor and Chairman of the HELP Committee, Senator Judd Gregg (R-NH), elected to have an informal mark-up of the bill “off the Senate floor.”

Chairman Gregg succeeded, and the Committee approved the bill by voice vote. The bill, which has twenty-five (25) cosponsors, can now be considered by the full Senate. In the House, the bill currently has one hundred and twenty-four (124) cosponsors.

**Social Security Legislation: National Vice President Rocks Testifies before Senate Committee** National President Ken Rocks appeared before the Senate Committee on Governmental Affairs on September 24 to offer testimony in support of S. 349, the “Social Security Fairness Act.” The bill now has twenty-five (25) cosponsors. This is the second time this year that the Fraternal Order of Police has testified before Congress on this issue—National President Canterbury testified before the House Subcommittee on Social Security in May. No other law enforcement organization has testified on this issue in this Congress.

Subsequent to the testimony offered by National President Canterbury in May, we have added seventy-eight (78) new cosponsors, for a total of two hundred and seventy (270) cosponsors—more than a House majority.

**Legislation Protecting Due Process Rights for LEOs: S. 1277/H.R. 2967** just before the August recess, Representative Jim Ramstad (R-MN) introduced H.R. 2967, the “State and Local Law Enforcement Discipline, Accountability, and Due Process Act,” the House companion bill of S. 1277.

This legislation is often referred to as a “bill of rights” for law enforcement officers, who are, in a number of jurisdictions, denied their due process rights by police administrators and management in noncriminal proceedings. There is a need for the minimum level of procedural protections for law enforcement officers accused of administrative wrongdoing provided in this bill, because of the gravity of potential harm to officers created by this lack of uniform safeguards.

Senators Joseph R. Biden, J.r. (D-DE), Jim Bunning (R-KY), Lindsay O. Graham (R-SC) and Assistant Majority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-KY) are the original cosponsors of the Senate bill, and it is our understanding that Senators Graham and Biden, the Chairman and Ranking Member of the Judiciary Committee’s Subcommittee on Crime, Corrections and Victims’ Rights, will hold hearings on the measure next year. The FOP will be working with both offices on this effort.

In the meantime, the National Legislative Office is hard at work gathering cosponsors for both bills.
Imagine that you are the President of your Fraternal Order of Police lodge. The Mayor and the City Manager call and ask to meet with you at 2:00 p.m. today. You have no idea what the meeting is about. You arrive at the meeting and are informed that this morning the city administration was notified that the city will not be receiving millions of dollars they anticipated receiving in this and in the next fiscal year. This reduced funding equals approximately twenty percent of the city’s annual budget. They are meeting with you because the Police Department equals sixty percent of the city’s budget and in the next fiscal year, your contract requires a four percent across the board increase in wages. You know that of this sixty percent, eighty percent is spent for personnel costs. The mayor and the city manager remind you that this year’s budget did not contain any increase in revenue over the previous year’s budget. Further, they inform you that they have also been notified that the health care carrier is projecting a fifteen percent increase in the cost of healthcare for next year. They want you to work with them to make sure the city does not go bankrupt. They inform you that if you do not come up with a proposal they will have to lay off twenty-five percent of the city’s police force at the end of next week. Further, they inform you that any delay past the end of next week will require another officer to be laid off for each week of delay.

What do you do?

Unfortunately, similar situations are occurring across the country. The question “what do you do” is one with which some of our leaders have had to struggle. Governments all across our country are dealing with little or no income growth or reduced income. A number of these political subdivisions have already spent the rainy day fund, if they had one to begin with.

In the first place, you should never allow yourself to get into this situation. We know it is easy to say but not so easy in practice. Wrong. Your lodge needs to be politically active, appropriately screening candidates, have a well thought out dynamic political action fund, and actively work to elect the candidates you endorse. In addition, you must maintain a daily relationship with your elected officials and police officials. At the same time, you must have an active outreach program with the community and community groups. Do not just talk to the community or politicians when you have a problem. Your lodge must make these relationships part of your daily routine. The Fraternal Order of Police must be viewed as part of the community. When difficult times occur, these relationships will help the community understand the negative impact of potential layoffs or other reductions in the police department.

There are lodges that have such a relationship with their mayor. The mayor does not appear in public without a representative of the Fraternal Order of Police present. With these kinds of relationships you may have been able to avoid this situation. You certainly would have had time to devise a plan of action that may have eliminated the need for layoffs. You would have had the opportunity to meet and discuss with your board of directors what actions your lodge could potentially take.

Secondly, these short-term financial problems will improve with time. You always need to think long and hard about trading a long term benefit such as a wage increase to solve a short-term problem. Once layoffs are publicly threatened your membership will start looking at the issues from a very personal viewpoint. If you are one of the officers who is looking at being laid off, you do not care very much what happens to the rest of the lodge members once you are gone. Consider short-term solutions to short-term problems. Short-term solutions are things like setting up a voluntary layoff fund where members donate a portion of their pay to supplement the income of the laid off officers, getting the city to continue the laid off officers’ healthcare or even having officers take a day off without pay so that others can stay on the payroll. These types of short-term solutions do not allow the city to force you to renegotiate benefits for which you have already bargained. Do not agree to a wage freeze or to give up an already negotiated increase in wages.

Third, when you elect the leadership of the lodge, these new leaders need to make a conscious effort to change from being reactive to being proactive. Law enforcement officers are trained to be reactive. When you move into a leadership role, if not before, you must prepare yourself for the requirements of this new position. Too often members run for Fraternal Order of Police office, get elected and try to lead by reaction. They do not have a clear understanding of what they must do as leaders of a labor organization. They do not recognize that they are now responsible to run the lodge as a business. Nor do they have a game plan that will get the lodge where the members want it to go. These leaders generally end up frustrated and not highly effective. Instead, our leaders need to be proactive. Our leaders need to be trained. They need to meet with their membership to determine what the members want out of their Fraternal Order of Police. In addition, they need to make sure that all committees and Board members are on the same page and are working for the same goals. The Fraternal Order of Police cannot continue to react to the agenda set by others. The Fraternal Order of Police must set the agenda and leave the reacting to others.

We wish you good luck in dealing with the economic issues in your community. We strongly encourage you to make sure that your lodge leaders are well-trained and knowledgeable in order to represent your interests. The Grand Lodge has significantly increased the number and types of training seminars available to our members so that they can be prepared.

Additionally, remember that the Grand Lodge is available to provide guidance and assistance. From across the country we are receiving an increasing number of requests for labor services. Lodges that have not pursued labor representation are now seeing introduced State Constitutional changes, state laws, local charter changes and local ordinances to gain the right to collectively bargain. Lodges that have been somewhat involved in representation are now looking to become the bargaining agent for their membership. In response to the increased demand for labor services, the Grand Lodge Board of Directors has chosen to expand the staff of the labor services. If you have any questions or comments please contact the Labor Services office, Rick Weisman, Director, at 614-224-1856 or fopds@aol.com.

ATTENTION
Lodge Secretaries

Per capita was due to the Grand Lodge on November 1, 2003.
Late fees were assessed on December 1, 2003.
If per capita has been paid, be looking for your 2004 membership cards.
UPCOMING EVENTS

Eastern States Coalition Meeting
January 10, 2004
Key Largo, FL. Key Largo Bay Marriott Hotel and Beach Resort. For more information, contact Michael Lutz, Eastern States Coalition Chairman, at 215-629-3622.

Annual Labor Council Forum
February 3-5, 2004
Las Vegas, NV. Stardust Hotel and Casino. For details or to register, contact the Grand Lodge, Fraternal Order of Police at 800-451-2711.

Annual Legal Counselors Seminar
February 5-7, 2004
Las Vegas, NV. Stardust Hotel and Casino. For details or to register, contact the Grand Lodge, Fraternal Order of Police at 800-451-2711.

Leadership Matters
February 20-21, 2004
Nashville, TN. Nashville Marriott Hotel. Annual Administrative and Financial Officers Training Conference. New this year—Executive Lodge Officer Training. For reservations, call 800-770-0555. Room rate is $89 per night. Registration fee for this two-day conference is $150. Contact the Grand Lodge, Fraternal Order of Police at 800-451-2711 for more information or to register.

Spring National Board Meeting
March 19-20, 2004

Western States Coalition Meeting
April 2-3, 2004
Albuquerque, NM. Contact Dave Heshley, New Mexico State Lodge Executive Director, for more information at 505-344-1349.

Blueprint to Success
April 4-7, 2004
Baltimore, MD. Sheraton Inner Harbor. Leadership and Labor Training Conference. Contact the Grand Lodge, Fraternal Order of Police at 800-451-2711 to register or for more information.

State Presidents Meeting
April 23-25, 2004
Louisville, KY. The Galt House. Hosted by the Kentucky State Lodge. Call 502-964-7009 for more information.

National Police Week
May 9-15, 2004
Washington, D.C. Memorial Service to be held on May 15, 2004. More details to come.

All events are listed online at www.grandlodgefop.org. Please visit the Grand Lodge web site to find more details on these events.

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 opted for regular retirement. Many times disabled and/or optionally retired law enforcement officers want to start a new career following their retirement, but realize they need additional academic or technical training to become more competitive in the civilian workplace. Many times this goal is difficult to achieve due to lack of funding. To help overcome this hurdle, the DRPOEF was formed. It provides scholarships of up to $1,000 annually, based on available funding, to retired disabled and optionally retired police officers anywhere in the country. Scholarships can be renewable based on proof of successful completion of prior semester work. The scholarships can be used for tuition, books, room and board, specialized learning equipment, and other needs that are connected to enabling the officer to attend the selected academic or trade school.

In the past nine months, the DRPOEF has awarded scholarships to disabled/retired officers from Illinois, Maryland, Michigan, North Carolina, New Jersey, New York, Ohio and Virginia. For more information, call 850-729-0190 or 301-599-0190. You may also visit their web site at www.drpoef.com.

SCHOLARSHIPS

Happy Holidays from the Grand Lodge Staff