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John Rivera

A Message From Your President

Greetings and Happy New Year

This year is shaping up to be an incredible moment in our country's history. And while some may choose to wallow in despair, or worse, criticize others for what they view as a miserable set of circumstances, I feel honored to be part of it. I guess it is easier for some to feel self pity and think they got dealt a bad hand. Well, if that's what you want out of your life so be it, but to me there's no better time than right now. This is when we prove our mettle. We stiffen our spines and face the challenges ahead. We all have a role to play in getting our cities, our counties, our state and our country back on track. So you can sit back and wait for better days, or you can join with us to make them better. It's your choice.

Leadership

Speaking of choices and leadership, here's a quick lesson about how to treat those brave enough and proud enough to wear the badge. It's important that I write about this, because we need to recognize good behavior.

Governor Charlie Crist has started what I like to call a "Mentoring Program" for other elected officials out there on just how to treat the worker bees in law enforcement. Most of you have probably heard that 118 additional correctional probation officers were going to be laid off, because of reductions to the state budget. It is still unbelievable to me that the working guys and gals out in the street doing the job were the ones who were going to lose their jobs. Baffling, but that was how it was going down. Now here's a sign of a strong leader willing to play his role when called upon. The Governor could have taken the easier way out and allowed the cuts to go through. He didn't. Instead, our Governor demonstrated what any elected official who believes in strong law enforcement should do—he restored the money and saved the officers. In times like these, we need leaders like the Governor up there mentoring other leaders and fighting for law enforcement officers. Thank you, Governor.

Legislative Session

Session is fast approaching (March 3rd) and once again we'll be in Tallahassee lobbying for our members. We have some really wonderful proposals this year, so please take the time to read through our agenda on page 12.

This is a particularly important year for us, because we are unveiling our Officer Down Memorial on Monday, March 9th at 10:00 a.m. in the Capitol Courtyard. Please join us in honoring the men and women proud enough and brave enough to wear the badge.

As always, we will oppose any legislation that hurts law enforcement and support any legislation that helps our profession. Stay informed and in tune with the PBA. The

Florida PBA website, www.flpba.org, will post all the legislative updates and we will notify you of any assistance we may need from your part.

Thank You

I've said it many times before but I cannot say it enough: thank you to each and every single one of you for your sacrifices and the risks you take. Your hard work and dedication make every community in this state a tolerable place for others. You are the unsung heroes that each community cannot survive without. If it were not for you, chaos would triumph and evil win. Maybe I'm getting old, but with age comes wisdom. There is an honor and distinction that comes with wearing a badge. Don't let anyone or anything let you believe otherwise. Those who criticize and do nothing but complain are miserable people, and they want you to be miserable as well because, as we all know, misery loves company. Don't let yourself be dragged into that black hole of despair. Spend your energy on positive things and focus on the good you do. We tend to remember the negative and forget all the positive we have done or experienced. You just don't know how many people you have touched and helped along the way. It's why you do what you do. Be proud of who you are and your chosen profession—not everyone can do it and only a select few reach the honor of protecting a community. You are what a hero is supposed to be.

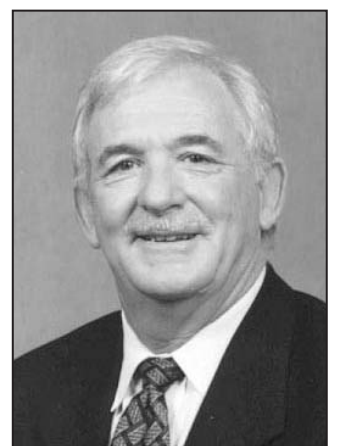
Please be safe out there, look out for one another, and may God watch over each of you.

"...our Governor demonstrated what any elected official who believes in law enforcement should do..."

On a personal note...

Florida PBA Senior Vice President Dick Brickman has officially retired as President of Broward County PBA. I have had the honor and pleasure of serving with Dick on the Executive Board of the Florida PBA for many years. He has been a strong ally and a dear friend. I wish Dick and his beautiful family all the best retired life has to offer.

Although he is retired from Broward, Dick will continue to serve on the Florida PBA Executive Board as the Senior Vice President. 🍀



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