

The BLUE



LINE

We Serve and Protect

VOLUME 1, No. 6

www.buffalopba.com

JULY 2025

From the President

John Davidson



We thank Mayor Scanlon for his support of us for the last six months and look forward to his continued support while Mayor for the remainder of the year. However, Sean Ryan has won the Democratic Primary for the Mayor of Buffalo. It is unknown what is going to transpire politically between now and the general election but I can assure you that the sky is not falling. While there is a lot that is unknown, what is known is our strength. The PBA is an 800 member strong Union, before factoring in our valued retirees. The PBA has, and will, always work with any and all City stakeholders, as this is what is best for our members-and what's best for our members is what is best for the City of Buffalo!

New York Attorney General Letitia James has released a new report outlining why she thinks police pursuits should mostly be banned. She goes on to suggest that police officers are to blame for the undesired outcomes that are almost always dictated by the actions of criminals.

Let me say this in response: No one cares more about the safety of the law abiding citizens in New York than the police officers in New York, and to suggest or imply otherwise is a dan-

*What Is Known
Is Our Strength*

gerous and subversive maneuver for such a public figure to do.

To suggest another policy that protects criminals from good orderly rules of society is a mistake. It is fair to argue that all fleeing criminals are an imminent threat to the public, however without The Attorney General of New York providing a crystal ball along with her proposed policy, there will be no way to know until it's far too late and a citizen or visitor has been victimized. A blanket policy such as this should terrify the law abiding citizens of New York.

And finally, summer is here and violence in the City is on the rise. This is not something unexpected but it is something that changes work place conditions. Buffalo is a four season City and that pertains to crime as well. As we all know Buffalo has winter crime and Buffalo has summer crime, please remember this when getting ready for work each day, so that you return home to your loved ones at the end of each shift. God Bless.

~ John Davidson, Buffalo PBA President

FINDING YOUR NICHE

By ... Andrew Moffett

As a new recruit, one is always wondering where they are going to end up after Field Training. Although you may not have a say in where you end up, one of the most important things you can do to begin your career is finding a partner that works similar to you. It is nearly impossible to always see eye-to-eye with someone 100% of the time, but having that individual who will always have your back is a validating aspect to this job. This person will be the cornerstone to your success, your livelihood and your sanity. Besides your significant other and family, you grow to trust this person with everything, including your life.

Next, is finding the right district, stationhouse, wheel, or unit that has the best leadership. Find someone to oversee you that understands what is important and what is not, does not play favorites, does not alter opinions based on who is in the room that they are in, and will always back their officers. Morale is always at its highest when officers/detectives/lieutenants feel supported during their duties. You will forever be pounding salt if you are always at odds with your superior and will grow to hate the job each day.

Lastly, find and/or develop a station, wheel, or unit that works well and supports one another. When you establish a positive working environment and comradery, it makes coming to work easier and more enjoyable. You commend one another when a job is done well instead of hearing how pointless it is to put in any work. You always back one another because you appreciate the work they put forward and know that they would do the same for you. Being in a situation where you are asking for backup over the air and hearing crickets is an unenviable position.

Throughout your career you will meet every kind of cop there is, but separating yourself from unnecessary drama, poor attitudes, and those who will give you little to no support will improve your production, motivation and most importantly a better mindset. Even as the days grow longer and the resentment creeps in, it's important to remember you are not doing anyone any good showing up to work miserable day in and day out.



In Memoriam

P.O. Donald McSwain

DOB 03/02/1935 Appointed 12/28/1961
Retired 06/29/1995 Deceased 06/24/2025

Det. Joseph Biehunik

DOB 04/04/1938 Appointed 02/19/1967
Retired 06/30/2007 Deceased 06/25/2025

Retirements

Congratulations to our most recent retirees,
and thank you for all that you have done for the City of Buffalo.

P.O. PAMELA WESTBROOK 05/31/2025
P.O. ANGELO THREATS 06/10/2025
P.O. DERRICK FLOYD 06/17/2025
P.O. DESMOND BROWN 06/26/2025
P.O. JOHN EVANS 06/27/2025

“YOU MUST KNOW EVERYTHING and NOT TELL”

A Reflection on the “Weight of the Badge”

By ... Brian Nagy

“Weight of the Badge” can be viewed on YouTube and is widely shown at Police Academies and Trainings.

To wear the badge is to know everything and not tell. To walk where the sin is and not partake. A police officer is a paradox — part saint, part sinner, and always a headline. Exceptional, yet endlessly scrutinized. Fewer than one-half of one percent dishonor the badge, yet it is the shadow of that small fraction that often darkens the reputation of the many.

They are the most needed, the most wanted, and, at times, the most hated — called “sir” to their face, and “pig” behind their back. In a single shift, an officer must wear many hats: minister, social worker, diplomat, tough enforcer, and gentle soul. And through it all, they are somehow expected to be a genius.

Sound familiar? In 1970, Paul Harvey said this — a strikingly shortened version of a longer truth — on national radio. Now, fifty-four years later, we have to ask: what, if anything, has changed?

Last time I checked, I’m not a robot — though society often forgets to see us as anything but. So, what am I? I’m a responder to patrol calls, medical emergencies, violent crimes, and traffic accidents. I’m a report writer, a witness in court, a negotiator, a protector, and, at times, someone’s lifeline. The list doesn’t stop there — and if you work in BPD, you already know the grind of our daily shift.

And after all that, we’re expected to go home, be present with family, maintain relationships, and somehow hold onto a sense of self.

Just know this — you are heard.

We are asked to know everything and say nothing, to walk among the darkest parts of humanity without letting it stain our spirit. But the weight we carry has consequences — some of which we don’t talk about nearly enough.

THE HIDDEN TOLL

Physical Health & Burnout

The data is sobering. This job takes a real toll on our bodies — and the numbers prove it. Studies have found that 76% of officers have high cholesterol, 26% have elevated triglycerides, and 60% have high body fat composition (Johnson et al., 2020; Violanti et al., 2006). This isn’t just about poor eating or missing the gym — it’s about the nonstop grind, the stress, the shifts, and the trauma we carry from call to call.

We’re expected to be jacks of all trades — but there’s a cost. Switching roles constantly — protector, medic, counselor, warrior — takes a mental and physical toll. Over time, that kind of demand leads to burnout, and research shows that burnout doesn’t just feel overwhelming — it can start to look like PTSD. The two often overlap or even evolve into one another (McCanlies et al., 2014; Grupe et al., 2019; Lee et al., 2019; Ogi?skz-Bulik & Juczy?ski, 2021; Chopko, 2010).

Sleep Deprivation

Lack of sleep isn’t just part of the job — it’s a health crisis. Lack of sleep doesn’t just make us tired — it chips away at our physical and mental health. Chronic fatigue in law enforcement has been linked to cardiovascular disease, musculoskeletal pain, gastrointestinal issues, anxiety, burnout, high blood pressure, poor reaction time, and more (Grupe et al., 2019; Lee et al., 2019; Marchand et al., 2015; Galovski et al., 2009; Marmar et al., 2006; Neylan et al., 2002).



And it’s not just feeling tired — officers frequently report chest pain, dizziness, headaches, and muscle soreness while still expected to make life-or-death decisions with split-second precision (Lee et al., 2019; Grupe et al., 2019).

Shift Work & Seeking Treatment

Your shift doesn’t just affect your schedule — it affects your brain and body. Night shifts, in particular, are known to cause slower reaction times, more mistakes, and worsened sleep quality. And when we’re this exhausted, we’re less likely to seek treatment, even when we need it (Violanti et al., 2021; Haugen et al., 2012; Marmar et al., 2006).

Over 40% of officers are linked to a diagnosable sleep disorder, and 30% report excessive daytime fatigue — both are strongly tied to increased PTSD symptoms (Violanti et al., 2021; Lee et al., 2019; Grupe et al., 2019).

This isn’t weakness — it’s the reality of the job. But we need to stop accepting it as normal. The more tired we get, the harder it is to stay safe, stay healthy, or reach out for help.

Life Satisfaction & Social Support

Life satisfaction isn’t just about being happy — it’s about resilience. Officers with lower satisfaction in life are more likely to experience depression, anxiety, suicide ideation, obesity, and worse PTSD symptoms (Ogi?skz-Bulik & Juczy?ski, 2021; Johnson et al., 2020). On the flip side, those who focus on gratitude and a positive worldview report better coping skills and lower levels of trauma.

But one of the strongest buffers? Social support.

Officers with strong, reliable support systems — especially from romantic partners — report fewer PTSD symptoms. When those support systems are lacking, psychological distress increases, coping ability diminishes, and both life satisfaction and gratitude decline (Chopko et al., 2018).

You weren’t meant to do this alone.

But too many have tried — and that’s when they start to break.

We carry the weight of others’ worst days, all while acting like we’re fine. But silence doesn’t make you strong — it just makes you suffer in the dark

Conclusion

We stand at a critical juncture, armed with the data and insight to reform our policies, practices, and priorities. If we are to protect those who protect us, we must listen, act, and care.



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The Blue Line is the official newspaper of the Buffalo Police Benevolent Association and is published for the interest of Buffalo’s law enforcement community. Send all correspondence to:

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POLICE VS FIRE SOFTBALL GAMES FROM THE SPORTS DESK

On June, 27 both the Buffalo Police Men and Women’s softball teams suited up for charity games against Buffalo Fire in the First Responders Softball Classic. The games were played at Ironworker’s Local 6 Hall diamond and were friendly, yet competitive. Buffalo women’s softball was victorious! Sadly, the men’s team lost to the fire squad. It was a family friendly event and The Candelario Family was honored to throw out the first pitch. Over \$4,000 was raised and donated to the family of Officer Daniel Candelario, a true Hero who passed away far too soon.



CHALLENGES

By ... MATTHEW CROSS

In this field and life in general, we constantly face new challenges. Many of these challenges bring on stress and a sense of fear that you may not be able to overcome these challenges. Whether its administrative changes, new policy and procedures, difficult calls or home life, the choice can be made to either avoid them as much as possible or face them head on and deal with them.

I read somewhere recently a quote that stated, “It’s important to remember you have more than this requires.” If you take a minute to think about that, you’ll understand quickly how true that is. Think of all the things that you have faced and overcome in your career and personal life. While we can all think back to something that has taken a lot out of us to beat, we did beat it and we are still here. Without training yourself to handle these challenges, it’s subconsciously something that you are ready to handle. Resilience is built through experience. Every time you have been faced with something difficult that you’ve had to overcome, you’ve become stronger and more capable of handling the next thing.

A helpful reminder when dealing with adversity is to remember that you don’t have to face everything alone. You have a ton of support waiting for you in this department and at home. It’s literally just a matter of asking for help. Worrying about tomorrow won’t stop tomorrow from coming. Live for today and know that when tomorrow’s challenges arrive, you already have what it takes to beat them. Please take care of yourselves, take care of each other, and reach out if you need anything at all.

ANARCHY or THE REALITY

of REAL POLITICS?

By ... BOBBY GRANDE

Anarchy is defined as a state of disorder to absence or non-recognition of authority or other controlling systems. That is where we are at in life as police officers. After the most recent election we might be good, but we could be out of luck. It is my belief that we are currently out of luck.

Whatever your political beliefs, it appears that policing in the City is in a bind. Everyone reading this is in the same situation that I am in. I know everyone has been enjoying better days, but those days may be coming to an end and I don’t think some want to see it that way because they’re too turtled into their “sense” of policing. However, others who love this job and are still active officers who uphold the law feel like they are being forced to go on a halt.

I would love not to be political, but it is an unfortunate reality when working for a major City police force. Politics were the catalyst to the defund the police movement. Politics routinely take aim at policing and mess with you and your livelihood. Since Mayor Scanlon took over as Mayor things have been looking up, in fact they have not looked this good since I started in 2016. If you live in the City of Buffalo and are an employee of the City of Buffalo then you have some say in who your boss(the Mayor) is, but to execute that say you must vote. I hope we have learned this lesson in time for the next election, because I believe we are going to face some backsliding in work conditions after seeing the results of this most recent primary election.

I would prefer not to frame this as a political article but instead I’d like you to take a look back and recall when you started this job. For me politicians still liked police and the public looked happy, often waving to me. That should be the realty of this profession. The real question is, why did you take this job? Do you want to sit around and be ridiculed for honorably doing your job, or do you want to be acknowledged as a cop who makes a difference in someone’s life?

I’m asking for the real Police officers (you know who you are) to take look at yourselves in the mirror and ask why you signed up and took the oath to be a police officer. You may find that you need to get more involved politically to save this profession.





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