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OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY POLICE BENEVOLENT ASSOCIATION

VOLUME No. 3

ISSUE No. 2

FEBRUARY PBA MEETING TOP COPS





TOP COPS

January 2025

PO Georgios Tzanakis, PO Charles Drabik, PO Jesus Tapia-Martinez, PO Justin LI, and PO Suraj Manuel arrested a subject after stabbing a victim at Grand Central Terminal. A knife was recovered on scene. Case # 25-206

February 2025

PO Mohamad Salim, PO Stephen Geniale, PO Umair Saqib, and PO Dagoberto Mederos observed a juvenile engage in drug transaction. The juvenile was arrested and a loaded firearm was recovered. Case # 25-2105

Det Sgt. Douglas Hurlbert, Det. Philip Carroll, Det. Christopher Kopsike, Det. Patrick Molloy and Det Philip Gauthier located and apprehended an adult male suspect who was wanted for menacing with a firearm at Laurelton station. Detectives apprehended the subject and recovered a loaded firearm with an extended magazine. Case # 25-782

March 2025

PO Christopher Capozzoli and PO Scott Gullick were on train patrol and applied a tourniquet to a stabbed victim. Officers also apprehended the subject and placed him under arrest. Case # 25-5678

April 2025

PO Benjamin Farber and Sgt. Joseph Casale assisted Westchester County Police Department in safely apprehending a vehicle in a high-speed vehicle pursuit on the Throgsneck Bridge. Case # 25-6872.

May 2025

PO Benjamin Farber, PO Anthony Maggiotta, PO Joseph Nicosia, and PO Eric Li witnessed Sgt. David Fehling experiencing a medical episode and took immediate life-saving measures to save his life. Case # 25-8569

June 2025

Sgt. Joseph Casale, PO Darren Pryce, PO Nicholas Macchia, PO Jesse Slavin, PO Maximus Chow, and PO Alfred Espotio recovered a stolen vehicle with stolen plates and a large sum of narcotics, cash, and loaded firearm. Case # 25-12862



TOP COPS

July 2025

PO Jonathan Zito, PO Nicholas Pasco, PO Bryan Gallucci, PO Ryan Autz, and PO Jake Saltzman took a male subject into custody who flashed a knife at two juveniles. Case# 25-15621 and 25-15624

August 2025

PO Michael Damiani, PO James Volpe, PO Christopher Stemke, and PO Michael Osmundsen were on patrol at Penn station when a female victim stated a man tried to grab her luggage and put his hands around her neck. Officers were able to successfully arrest the male for robbery and obstruction of breathing. Case # 25-17831

September 2025

Det Johnathan Ruby, Det Sgt. McHale, Det. Healy, and Det Lt. Christopher Guastamacchia were able to identify and locate a subject who discharged a firearm at the LIRR Lynbrook station. Det Sgt. Ryan McHale and Det. Johnathan Ruby flew to Atlanta take the subject into custody. Case # 25-17108

October 2025

PO Matthew Tully and PO Frank Porcelli received a call for a suicidal EDP and safely removed the woman from the tracks without incident. Case # 25- 23289

November 2025

PO Giancarlo Valdez, PO Brett Igoe, and PO Tarmanpreet Singh Officers took a suicidal male who was overlooking the edge of the Throgs Neck bridge into custody and safely removed him to the hospital. Case # 25-27340

December 2025

PO Mark Lehman and PO Ramos were on train patrol and provided the "Heimlich maneuver" on an individual that was showing signs of choking. Officers were able to dislodge the object, saving the individual's life. Case # 25-27876

COP OF THE YEAR 2025

PO Benjamin Farber, PO Anthony Maggiotta, PO Joseph Nicosia, and PO Eric Li witnessed Sgt. David Fehling experiencing a medical episode and took immediate live-saving measures to save his life. Case # 25-8569

MEMBERS FIRST

Fighting to protect our members' jobs is our top priority.

That's why we immediately jumped into action to vigorously fight for the reinstatement of Sergeant Kurkno Henry, an 18 year veteran member of the MTA Police Department, who has been battling stage 4 cancer for over a year.

As soon as we got word that Sergeant Henry would not be reinstated, even though he had been cleared for restricted duty, we advocated all the way to the very top of the MTA leadership to ensure Sergeant Henry not only got his job back, but also his dignity.

While at his residence, preparing his reinstatement paperwork, Sergeant Henry expressed his gratitude for the PBA's efforts and is relieved that he can finally put this behind him and get back to work.



Executive Vice President Michael LoVerdi and President Joseph Pugliese with Sergeant Henry.

THE PBA EXECUTIVE BOARD WOULD LIKE TO CONGRATULATE THE BELOW LISTED MEMBERS FOR THESE SPECIAL MILESTONES

BIRTHS

PO Charles Reid	PO Frank Bruscella	PO Ralph Angieri	PO Danielle Cardoza
Det Sgt Vladimir Dieudonne	PO Michael Ciullo	PO Jonathon Luppens	Sgt Jack Amodeo
PO Linara Yelubayeva	Sgt Jassen Cabrera	PO Christian Gourgue	PO Logan Santos
PO Robert Batista-Campusano	Sgt. Matthew Keppel	PO James Fee	PO Laura Bruscella

RETIREMENTS

Sgt Joseph Devito
PO Jason Ruland
PO Thomas Hughes
PO Jason Wharton

PROMOTIONS

Detective
Rori Brewster

Sergeant
Amanda Moore
Tyler Bottoni
Steven Allen
Justin Li
Syed Mehdi
Suraj Manuel
Zachary Peterson

Detective Sergeant
Connor Kelly
Kevin Maher
Mohamad Salim

Lieutenants
Gregg Cella
John King
Kevin Maddine
Rahim Bradshaw

Detective Lieutenant
Christopher Guastamacchia
Kevin Blondel
Michael Crana



LONG ISLAND

'Amazing' support for officer

Community rallies for sergeant who lost home in fire

ONLY IN NEWSDAY

BY MAUREEN MULLARKEY
maureen.mullarkey@newsday.com

On the afternoon of March 12, MTA Police Sgt. Omar Johnson and his wife, Alana Johnson, sat in the silence of their parked car in a lot off Hempstead Turnpike, unsure of what to do.

Just hours earlier, Johnson, 43, had returned to his Elmont apartment to learn the couple's home had been deemed uninhabitable after a fire in the first-floor apartment.

Although no one was injured, most belongings, from clothes to irreplaceable items like military certificates and his wedding tuxedo, were gone.

"I sat in that parking lot for about two hours," Johnson said. "I didn't say anything to anyone . . . just pretty much like brainstorming, trying to figure out and contemplate on what my next move is going to be."

When the veteran officer "came to his senses," he called those he trusted could help — his commanding officer and an MTA Police Benevolent Association representative.

In less than one week, Johnson said, he and his wife received an outpouring of support, from calls to donations to words of comfort, from the police community.

"I'm able to navigate this crisis with my head high," Johnson said. "I can't imagine another family going through this, not getting support that we're getting."

Johnson said on the night of the fire he and Alana, 33, stayed at a relative's home in Uniondale, where they will continue to reside until they find permanent housing.

That evening and the next day Johnson said he received nonstop calls and text messages from what seemed like "every single member of the PBA."

The Metropolitan Transportation Authority PBA has about 1,300 members, spokesman Michael Skelly said.

"The losses that Sergeant



Omar Johnson stands in front of his former apartment in Elmont that was destroyed by a fire.

WHAT NEWSDAY FOUND

- **Veteran and MTA Police Sgt. Omar Johnson** and his wife, Alana Johnson, have received an outpouring of support from the police community after their Elmont home was damaged in a March 12 fire.
- **In one week, more than \$61,000** has been donated to the couple through an online fundraising campaign.
- **The couple lost most of their belongings** and sentimental items like a wedding dress, tuxedo and military and police uniforms.

Omar Johnson and his wife sustained from this catastrophic fire were unimaginable," MTA PBA president Joseph Pugliese said in a statement. "But in times of personal crisis, like this one, our members come together and rally behind one another. As soon as we learned of this tragedy, we were determined to help Omar get back on his feet as soon as possible."

Donations pour in

One of the calls came from Det. Sgt. Ryan McHale, who previously worked alongside Johnson.

McHale told Newsday that upon hearing about the fire, he wanted to jump in to help and got Johnson's consent to start a GoFundMe fundraiser.

In one week, the effort has raised more than \$61,000.

McHale said he was "blown away" by the outpouring of support, which is a testament to his colleague's character and the police community's fraternity.

"He always treats everybody with respect . . . always cordial, and he's always willing to help," McHale said. "It wasn't just cops that donated" but their friends, family members and neighbors that don't even know Johnson.

Air Force veteran

Around 3:20 p.m. on Thursday last week, fire officials received an alarm for a fire at the two-story, multi-apartment dwelling on Sewanee Avenue.

Johnson, who had taken the day off from work, was out and didn't know about the fire until he returned home after it had been extinguished around 4 p.m., he said. His wife was not home at the time.

No one was injured, Nassau County Fire Marshal Michael Uttaro said.

Johnson served in the U.S. Air Force for five years before he was honorably discharged

and joined the MTA Police in 2014. He was promoted to detective in 2020 and then to sergeant in 2025.

"I've always had a strong sense of protecting the vulnerable . . . defending those that can't defend themselves," Johnson said.

In July 2025, Omar and Alana married; they moved into the Elmont apartment the following month.

In addition to new furniture that they're still paying off, the couple lost sentimental items such as his wife's wedding dress, his military and police graduation photos, uniforms and certificates and gifts from his grandmother.

Johnson credited support from the MTA Commanding Officers Association and Project Thank a Cop, which helped to soften the blow.

In addition, the Metropolitan Transit Police Guardians Association gave the couple a \$750 gift card to buy clothes.

But Johnson said the most impactful thing he and his wife had received was community's support, knowing they could mentally overcome this by leaning on others.

"I thought I would have to go through this alone, but the support has been overwhelmingly amazing," Johnson said. "I'll be forever grateful."

Newsday reported on this important story and helped us spread the word to support our PBA member, Sergeant Omar Johnson, as he and his wife, rebuild their lives, following a catastrophic fire in their apartment.

MEMBERS TAKING CARE OF MEMBERS



**MTA PBA DELIVERS SUPPORT TO
MTA POLICE SGT JOHNSON
AFTER DEVASTATING HOUSE FIRE**

FIX TIER 5 & 6 RALLY





PBA Executive VP Michael LoVerdi, PCNY President Michael O'Meara, PBA President Joseph Pugliese and PBA East Area VP Carlos Couto joined law enforcement leaders from across the State of New York at the newly formed NY State Public Safety Alliance's first general meeting.



Police Conference of New York 1st VP Jeffrey S. Gross, Port Authority PBA Recording Secretary Shaun Kehoe, NYS Senator Monica Martinez, Nassau SOA 2nd VP Carlo Maltempi, MTA PBA President Joseph Pugliese and Suffolk SOA Trustee Kevin Maiale in Albany.



Members of the Executive Board met with PBA Members in District 1 for open discussion, answering questions and hearing concerns directly from the membership.

MTA WOMEN OF THE SHIELD



PBA Board Members attended the inaugural MTA Women of the Shield Ceremony at 2 Broadway to celebrate the remarkable achievements and contributions of our female members.



PBA CANTEEN SUPPORTS NASSAU COUNTY PBA



The PBA brought our canteen to support the Nassau County PBA at the funeral of Officer Patricia Espinosa, who was killed in a tragic DWI crash.

LONG ISLAND PIZZA STRONG



PBA Members eat pizza for a good cause. A whopping 307 pizzerias across Nassau and Suffolk counties signed up for a fundraiser organized by LI Pizza Strong, that benefited the family of Nassau PO Patricia Espinosa. Espinosa was struck and killed by an alleged drunk driver in St. James while on her way to work.





OFFICER SPOTLIGHT

**DETECTIVE
HUSSEY**

**DETECTIVE
MCAULIFFE**

Detectives Hussey and McAuliffe leveraged advanced DNA analysis and multi-agency coordination to identify a burglary suspect. Following a targeted investigation, the MTAPD Warrant Squad apprehended the individual. The detectives subsequently secured a full confession, ensuring a successful remand for the repeat offender.

HONORING EXCELLENCE



MTA PBA RECOGNIZES MTA POLICE OFFICERS WHO RESCUED TRAPPED DRIVER DURING RECENT BLIZZARD

During a recent blizzard, MTA Police Officers Kyle Schneyer and Mike Krukowski of District 1 were on patrol in Suffolk County when they encountered an overturned snowplow on Sunrise Highway in Bay Shore. With the driver trapped inside and fuel leaking from the vehicle, the officers acted quickly. Alongside an off-duty paramedic, they safely extricated the driver and moved him to safety despite hazardous conditions.

PROMOTIONS



Congratulations to all our members who received promotions. We look forward to your continued leadership and know the MTA PBA has your back EVERY step of the way.

BOARD MEMBERS WELCOME NEW HIRES



PBA President Joe Pugliese, Executive VP Mike Loverdi, and VP Carlos Couto addressed the newest class of MTA Police Officers. The PBA welcomes them to the department, while highlighting the mission and strengths of the PBA, as well as making it clear that we firmly support them from the very beginning of their employment to the end.



MTA PBA HONORS MTA POLICE DETECTIVE SERGEANT B. BEHAN AT 17TH ANNUAL IRISH ECHO LAW & ORDER AWARDS

The PBA proudly congratulates Police Detective Sergeant Behan on being honored at the 17th Annual Irish Echo Law & Order Awards. Assigned to the Investigations Unit across the LIRR, Penn Station, and the Grand Central Madison stations, Sgt. Behan's professionalism and dedication to public safety reflect the highest standards of the MTA Police Department. We salute you on receiving this prestigious award and for your commitment to excellence.

PBA SUPPORTING MTA PD HOCKEY



Strong showing on the ice as the MTA PD Hockey Team took on Boldest Hockey (NYC Corrections) in Central Park and came away with a 6–1 victory.



MTA POLICE DETECTIVE SERGEANT
FRANK LORE
— END OF WATCH 2/23/25 —

It has been one year since we lost our brother, Frank Lore. Detective Sergeant Lore was family. Not just a colleague, but someone who showed up, carried the weight, and wore the shield with pride and integrity every single day.

New Benefit To Members

Dear Fellow Members,

In response to recent tragic events within our department, the PBA Board has taken proactive steps to enhance the life insurance coverage available to our members. I am pleased to announce that we have partnered with Acrisure to provide a guaranteed issue basic life plan. The plan will be underwritten by Amalgamated Life, and the PBA will assume all costs. The highlights of the plan are as follows:

\$50,000 of Basic Life guaranteed issue – no underwriting or medical screenings for active members.

\$15,000 Basic Life for retirees who retired on or after June 1, 2025.

Critical Illness coverage for active members – the member can receive up to 50% (\$25,000) of the face value of the plan. Critical illnesses include cancer, heart attack, stroke, end-stage renal disease, major organ transplant, or paralysis.

The PBA Board felt it was essential to provide an even greater benefit for you, our members. This plan will help both the beneficiaries in the event of a member's death, or a member who is diagnosed with one of the qualifying critical illnesses. The Board recognizes our duty not only to support our members, but also to support their families in their most trying times. We feel this benefit helps provide that. Unfortunately, no insurance company would insure members who retired before June 1, 2025.

We will be sending out more information in the future. Please update your beneficiary information on our website. Any questions, please contact us at support@mtapba.org.

NCPD CREDIT UNION FOR PBA MEMBERS

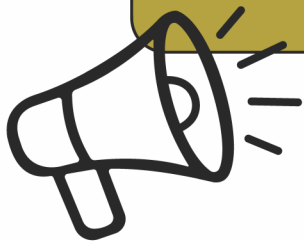


The PBA Board is excited to announce that the NCPD (Nassau County Police Department) Federal Credit Union has expanded its services to all members of the PBA. This credit union offers support to law enforcement officers and provides a range of services and benefits, including receiving \$50.00 when opening an account, auto loans, and mortgage rates as low as 5.25%. Visit www.ncpdfcu.org to join or for more information.





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NEW WEBSITE
MTAPBA.ORG**



Access important member resources anytime.

- ✓ **Union News & Updates**
- ✓ **Forms, Contracts & Documents**
- ✓ **Important Member Resources**

**STAY
INFORMED.
STAY
CONNECTED.**





MTAPD PEER RESOURCES



FORGE HEALTH



GUARDIAN REVIVAL



CALM SEAS



NYLEAP



COPLINE



CTS THERAPY



METTLEWORKS



**SOUTH SHORE
COUNSELING**



HEALTHGRADES



988

**Suicide Prevention &
Mental Health Crisis Lifeline**
Free, confidential and available 24/7/365

CALL or TEXT

**NATIONAL
HELPLINE**

SAMHSA 1-800-662-HELP (4357)