

# STAR & SHIELD



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MAY/JUNE 2026



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## Navigating Our Wellness

**A**s your president, I want you to know how deeply grateful I am for the trust you have placed in me over these past two years. Representing you, fighting for your rights, protecting your interests and standing beside you during some of the most difficult moments of your career is not just a responsibility. It is a privilege I carry with pride every single day. The work is not always easy, but it is always worth it, especially when we are able to secure positive outcomes for you in wages, administrative investigations, legal matters, health care, work schedules and more.

But beyond these areas, there is something even more important: *you* — your health, your well-being and your future.

Our profession demands a lot. Physically, mentally and emotionally, the toll can be significant. That's why our Star & Shield Foundation exists, to ensure that when our members are in need, they are never alone. I'm proud to say that across all three of our departments, we are seeing a meaningful shift toward embracing wellness — not just as a concept, but as a priority.

Last month, PPOA was honored to support and participate in the LASD Suicide Awareness and Prevention 5K Run/Walk. With hundreds in attendance, it was a powerful reminder that



**Steve Johnson**  
PPOA President  
Lieutenant, LASD  
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we are part of a larger community that cares deeply about one another. Many of you stopped by our booth, shared a few words and connected. That matters more than you may realize.

For too long, mental health has been treated as a taboo subject in law enforcement. I've seen the culture slowly begin to change over the course of my career. The stress, the pressure, the repeated exposure to trauma — these are real, and they deserve to be acknowledged. Through my work with the California State Fraternal Order of Police, I've had the opportunity to speak with officers across the country. One thing is clear: officer wellness is no longer optional; it is essential.

Here in Los Angeles County, we are making real progress. PPOA has made it a priority to bring in leading experts to speak directly to our members. One of those individuals, Dr. Medina Baumgart, has been instrumental in helping us better understand the cumulative effects of a career in public safety. Through her candid and honest approach, she has helped break down barriers and reduce the stigma around seeking help. Her message is simple but powerful: at some point in life, every one of us may benefit from professional support for our mental health. And that's OK.

Physical health is equally critical. In recent years, I've observed a troubling trend — an apparent increase in cancer diagnoses within our profession, even among younger members. This concern was reinforced through my conversations with Vickie Speed of Blue Cancer Connect. Her organization provides invaluable support, from treatment guidance and second opinions to peer-to-peer connections with fellow officers who understand the fight.

Vickie recently joined me for a PPOA podcast episode (available to view at [PPOA.com](http://PPOA.com)), where she shared her deeply personal story about her husband, Lancaster Station Detective Mitch Speed, who lost his life to cancer. Her insight was eye-opening and highlighted not only the emotional toll but the overwhelming financial burden that can accompany a diagnosis, even with solid health coverage. I strongly encourage



Vickie Speed with President Johnson



you to listen to that conversation and stay tuned for more discussions with wellness experts in the future.

At the end of the day, my role as your president goes beyond representation. It's about making sure you feel supported, valued and cared for, like a family should.

So, take care of yourselves. Look out for one another. And never hesitate to reach out, no matter the reason. We are here for you, always. Until next time, stay safe and make your wellness a priority. 🍷



Dr. Medina Baumgart

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## PPOA's Star & Shield Foundation Needs Your Assistance

**A**s you read this message, the 2026 peace officer memorials honoring the women and men who made the ultimate sacrifice in the line of duty the preceding year will have solemnly occurred during the month of May. Equally important, we recognize the sacrifice made by the officers' loved ones left behind. The Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department tragically had to add the names of three Detectives to the memorial monuments in Los Angeles County, California and Washington, D.C. Detectives Joshua Kelley-Eklund, Victor Lemus and William Osborn lost their lives in the line of duty on July 18, 2025, when an explosion occurred at Biscailuz Regional Training Facility. This incident represents the largest loss of life for the LASD since 1857.

PPOA's Star & Shield Foundation (SSF) was established in 1999 by law enforcement employees who wanted to "help those in need." As members of the same public safety union (the L.A. County Professional Peace Officers Association), they all witnessed numerous instances where effective support could change lives. The PPOA members formed this charitable foundation and immediately began reaching out to those in need of support, including the surviving family members of peace officers killed in the line of duty.

Every year, PPOA's Star & Shield Foundation reaffirms its mission to provide support to families dealing with the unimaginable loss of an officer killed in the line of duty. From direct donations to assisting family members with the coordination of traveling to local, state and national memorial ceremonies, the Foundation is a prime example of PPOA's commitment to honoring the legacies of our fallen sisters and brothers. PPOA extends its sincere condolences to the loved ones of the 12 California peace officers who made the ultimate sacrifice in 2025. I am extremely pleased that the Star & Shield Foundation continued its honorable tradition of providing financial support for the loved ones of all 12 fallen officers.

The worthy recipients and causes also supported by PPOA and the Foundation in 2025 include the following: assistance



**Wayne Quint Jr.**  
PPOA Executive Director  
[wquint@ppoa.com](mailto:wquint@ppoa.com)

to multiple PPOA members who lost homes in the wildfires, Special Olympics, ALADS CARES Foundation, Fueled by the Fallen, Devil Pups Youth Program, Police Unity Tour, CRDF fundraiser for member in need, Widows and Orphans Funds for fellow public safety associations, LADA Honor Guard Fund, Crime Survivors Resource Center, Children's Advocacy Center, youth programs and the Custody Assistant Anthony Thompson Scholarship Foundation.

Through our Foundation's charitable support, PPOA is also able to provide help to others at critical times and support worthy causes that PPOA members bring to our attention.

The Star & Shield Foundation is a separate 501(c)(3) charitable organization. All donations to the Foundation are tax-deductible to the extent of the law (Tax ID #95-4752410). Your Foundation has its own separate Board members, as well as a Board of Governors. The Board members meet monthly to conduct the amazing mission of the Foundation, which remains "helping those in need."

On Monday, June 1, PPOA will be hosting our 18th annual Peace Officer Memorial Golf Tournament. This tournament is the highlight each year for PPOA's Star & Shield Foundation. Since our inaugural tournament in 2006, it has generated much-needed funds for the families of officers killed in the line of duty. However, there

remains a real need for additional funding for our Foundation's ability to continue to provide help to others at critical times and to support worthy causes.

Active members, would you please consider making a monthly tax-deductible payroll donation of \$20 to the Star & Shield Foundation? Please scan the QR code on this page and PPOA will process your generous donation. For additional funding opportunities, please visit the Foundation's website at [StarandShieldFoundation.org](http://StarandShieldFoundation.org). Whichever way you would like to contribute, please assist us in continuing to help others in their time of need. ♥

### Donate to the Star & Shield Foundation



## Nevertheless, She Persisted

**M**y fellow Custody Assistants: And just like that, it has been one year since I was sworn in. I wish I could say time flies when you are having fun, but this has truly been the longest year of my life. I have been tried and tested in ways I couldn't have imagined, yet I find myself still standing, learning and fighting for the fair treatment of Custody Assistants. I have stayed true to myself and why I am here, and I refuse to be quiet or make myself smaller for anyone's comfort. Some of us were not meant to be the "ghost recruit." I am a firm believer that all things happen for a reason. Although there couldn't be a worse time to be in my shoes, given the current environment, I haven't let any of the negative deter me from showing up and being heard. And I intend to continue doing so as the recently selected PPOA second vice president.



**Melissa Rodriguez**  
PPOA Second Vice President  
Custody Assistant, LASD  
[mrodriguez@ppoa.com](mailto:mrodriguez@ppoa.com)

On March 25, I and other PPOA executives met with LASD command staff for a one-year follow-up on the status of Custody Assistants (C/As) holding the position of Custody Training Officer (CTO). For those unaware, PPOA fought some years ago for C/As who held the position of CTO to be compensated the same as our Deputy counterparts, who were receiving a 5.5% pay increase for the duration of time in which they were assigned a trainee. PPOA was successful in their efforts, making C/As eligible for the 5.5% CTO pay. However, in March 2025, it was discovered that there was only one C/A in the entire county to hold the position. It was extremely disheartening to find C/As were not being utilized for training incoming C/A trainees, especially after PPOA came through with a huge win. After the original discussion with LASD command staff last year, PPOA was assured there would be at least one C/A in the position of CTO at every custody facility by May 2025. Today, I am glad to report, as of March 2026, there are currently 13 C/As countywide holding the title of CTO, taking on the responsibility of training the next generation of C/As. Although that is a great improvement, the goal is for all C/As coming out of the Academy to be trained by a C/A. With that said, I want to hear from those of you who have gone through the application process for CTO at your respective facilities and were denied the position. I want to have a better understanding of why there aren't more C/As in this position. There are multiple facilities that have just one C/A as a CTO but have had 15-plus C/A trainees

in the last year. There is money on the table — why not take it? Are C/As simply not applying, or are there other factors in play?

On March 26, PPOA's Star & Shield Foundation sponsored a barbecue fundraiser (see page 12) in support of the family of our recently departed partner, C/A Diego Zamora. It was a group effort, with PMB Operations, CTU staff and PPOA grillmaster Rico Escalante holding down the fort, serving 250 hungry patrons and selling out within two hours, while DJ Canas provided good vibes and a slideshow of remembrance. It was no easy feat, and I am so grateful to all my partners who pitched in to make this event a success. In my last article, I spoke of the

importance of C/As showing up for C/As, and boy, did we *show up*. The afternoon was filled with many LASD personnel, retired and present, coming out to take a trip down memory lane with their partners. It was a sight to see and such a beautiful tribute to a longtime partner, mentor and friend.

**I HAVE BEEN TRIED AND TESTED, YET I FIND MYSELF STILL STANDING, LEARNING AND FIGHTING FOR THE FAIR TREATMENT OF CUSTODY ASSISTANTS.**

By the time this article is published, Bargaining Unit 621 will have met with the County of Los Angeles for the first time on April 15, beginning our much-delayed contract negotiations. Unfortunately, at this point, I cannot brief anyone on a meeting that has yet to occur. However, I am confident in our preparation. I look forward to bringing forth important issues that are long overdue to be addressed and bringing significant change for the betterment of all of Bargaining Unit 621. ♥

# Contract Negotiations Officially Begin for Unit 621

**I**t is with great pride and a deep sense of responsibility that I share this important moment for our Sheriff Security Officers, Unit 621. After years of dedication, perseverance and unwavering commitment from our members, we are finally at the negotiation table with the County. This milestone represents more than just the beginning of discussions; it reflects the collective voice, resilience and professionalism of every SSO who has stood firm in advocating for fair recognition and equitable treatment.

Reaching this point did not happen overnight. It is the result of consistent effort, unity and the belief that our role within the County deserves to be properly valued. Our Sheriff Security Officers perform critical duties every day, ensuring the safety and security of County facilities, staff and the public. Being at the table now signifies that our work, our concerns and our future are being taken seriously.

I am proud to stand alongside a strong and dedicated team as we move forward in this process. SSOs Orozco and Jimenez have demonstrated exceptional commitment, professionalism and a relentless work ethic throughout this journey. Their ability to represent the interests of our members with clarity and determination strengthens our position and ensures that our voices are heard with purpose and integrity. I would also like to extend a special thank-you to Jim Cunningham, our chief negotiator, for leading the negotiations and for his tireless efforts, expertise and dedication in helping guide us to this pivotal moment.



**Vardan Kasabyan**  
PPOA Board Member  
Sheriff Security Officer, LASD  
[vkasabyan@ppoa.com](mailto:vkasabyan@ppoa.com)

I am also deeply honored to have been appointed as the Unit 621 chair for negotiations. This is not a responsibility I take lightly. It is a role that carries the trust of our members and the weight of representing an entire unit of hardworking professionals. I am committed to approaching these negotiations with transparency, diligence and a focus on achieving results that reflect the value and contributions of our Sheriff Security Officers.

As I step into this position, I do so with respect for those who came before me, particularly our past chair, Joe Walker. His leadership, dedication and efforts helped lay the groundwork that has brought us to this pivotal moment. I hope to carry forward his legacy and fill his shoes with the same level of integrity, strength and

commitment that he demonstrated.

While this is a significant step forward, we recognize that the work is just beginning. Negotiations require patience, strategy and unity. It is essential that we continue to stand together and speak with one voice, supporting one another throughout this process. Our strength has always been in our solidarity, and that will continue to guide us as we work toward securing a stronger future for Unit 621.

This moment is not just about where we are; it is about where we are going. Together, we will continue to push forward, advocate with purpose and strive for the recognition and respect that our Sheriff Security Officers have earned. ♥

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**We need your personal (non-Department) email address! If you have not received an email blast from PPOA in the last 30 days (we send at least one per week), that means:**

- 1** Your email address is not on file with PPOA, or
- 2** We have only your County email address (PPOA sends membership-wide email blasts to personal addresses only).

Either way, we need your personal (non-Department) email address so that we can disseminate important news to you as quickly as possible. Please email your address to [info@PPOA.com](mailto:info@PPOA.com) and reference "email updates" in the subject line.

# Retirement: The Proverbial Light at the End of a Convoluted Tunnel

**T**his year's LASD Retiree Roundup was great. Kudos once again to Moon Mullen and the team for setting it up. The PPOA Cigar Night had a little hiccup with the high wind warning, so we were forced inside to what turned out to be a pretty cool nightclub area. The private barstool and a candle area for the late Don Laughlin was roped off, and that was really interesting to note. Thanks to all who attended the PPOA Cigar Night. It was a bit smokier for sure, so those of you trying to hide cigar smoke on your clothes from your significant other likely lost out on that attempt.

In other news, we got our COLA from LACERA and we are officially doing better than the numbers the County has given the active employees. It is truly sad that our Department sits by and watches other agencies get double-digit raises over the past couple of years. There is very little understanding these days by the Board of Supervisors as to how important law enforcement is, how tough it is to fill the jobs, the competition between agencies and how *hard* the job is. I have been in the union game for decades, and I will say I have never seen the County act like this. It is a shame and they should be embarrassed. If I had a relative with less than a year or so on, I would be screaming, "Lateral out!" If I had a relative or friend with more than 25 years on who is over 50, I would be screaming, "Get out!" (And I do, and they are.)

For the past couple of years, PPOA has been coordinating retirement planning workshops for those getting close to retiring. I host these events every quarter and we fill the room with those within five to seven years of retirement. We bring in Horizons, LACERA, workers' comp attorneys, Fraternal Order of Police (for the post-retirement CCW insurance concerns), estate planners and mental health experts to give guidance on how to navigate the life-changing event that is retirement. It is very well received, and once people understand what our plan is all about, we usually shave some time off how long they *think* they need to stay. If you have friends who are PPOA members and are not yet retired, make sure they know about this free resource.

I want to remind you all that online voting for PPOA is the new reality. At this point, we only have about 15% of our retired members registered online. Please go to *PPOA.com* today and click on "Elections/Benefits" and then register. We will need retired members to vote (it's a matter of when, not if), so please register as soon as possible. There are thousands of years of experience out there we can tap into when retired members vote.

Another thing I want to hit on this month is health care in different states. Just a reminder that LACERA covers medical



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PPOA Retiree Representative  
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costs (i.e., Blue Cross) in the different states. However, if the law in your state does not require a service to be covered by medical insurance plans, you may not be covered and can be required to pay out of pocket for the expense. Most times, I hear this come up with routine preventative care procedures. In California, most everything is covered. In states like Idaho, Florida and some others, they may not be. So when you have a procedure denied by the health care, it is not their fault and not LACERA's fault — it is the laws of the state you live in that need to be changed. And I will say I have noted red states cover fewer things. I hope this clears up some misconceptions.

Until next month, have a great spring, get your colonoscopies and skin cancer checks, watch the sugary drinks, get out and exercise, and enjoy every day of retirement. ♥

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# PPOA Board Selects New Second Vice President

**D**uring the PPOA Board of Directors meeting in April, Custody Assistant Melissa Rodriguez was selected by the Board to be sworn in as second vice president (Unit 621), as that seat was vacated by the recent retirement of Crime Analyst Joe Walker. ♥



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Congratulations to the following PPOA members for winning the “Find the Hidden Word” contest in *Star & Shield*. If your name is listed, that means your entry was drawn as one of the winners for that month’s issue. Please call Greg Torres at (323) 261-3010 to claim your \$100 check.

**CONTEST WINNERS**

**\$100 PRIZE WINNERS**  
(April 2026 issue — the hidden word appeared on page 8)

**Michael Doo**, Sheriff Security Officer  
**Mary Leef**, retired member  
**David Silversparre**, retired member

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# Support for PPOA Member Battling Cancer

**P**POA was proud to support a fundraiser at Lancaster Station in March for Custody Assistant David Ament in his ongoing battle with cancer. The 17-year LASD veteran is assigned to PDC North Facility. ❤️





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# Support for the Family of Fallen PPOA Member

**P**POA was honored to set up the union barbecue trailer at Twin Towers to help raise funds for the family of Custody Assistant Diego Zamora, who died in an off-duty accident on March 5, 2026. The 22-year LASD veteran was assigned to Population Management Bureau at the time of his passing. ❤️



## Honored to Continue Partnership With LASD Homicide and ALADS for Baker to Vegas Barbecue

**P**POA members were among thousands of peace officers running 120 miles through the Mojave Desert in March. The Baker to Vegas Challenge Cup Relay brought together teams from agencies across the nation and a few from around the globe. We congratulate all of the athletes and their invaluable support teams. We're also grateful to everyone who joined us after the race for the barbecue co-hosted by LASD Homicide Bureau, PPOA and ALADS. ♡



## Support for a Very Worthy Cause

**P**POA was proud to support the LASD Suicide Awareness and Prevention 5K Run/Walk in April. The event at Biscailuz Center brought law enforcement personnel together with friends and family to raise awareness about the support and resources available to those experiencing mental health issues. ♡



# PPOA Podcast Episode Eight: Discussing the State of the Department With Sheriff Luna

**P**resident Steve Johnson sat down with Sheriff Robert Luna in April to discuss recruitment, retention, staffing issues and the state of the Department. This video and the interview with Vickie Speed (see page 4) can be viewed at *PPOA.com*.

These podcasts are designed to provide an in-depth look at issues impacting the careers of PPOA members. 🇺🇸



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# PPOA 26th Annual Fishing Trip

**FRIDAY, JULY 10, 5:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.**

**Location:** Pierpoint Landing, Long Beach

**Destination:** Catalina and/or local waters

**Boat:** 85-ft. Enterprise (capacity limited to 45 people)

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- Rod and reel rental can be reserved with Pierpoint Landing: (562) 983-9300
- Boat leaves promptly at 6 a.m.

**Contact: Shannon at (323) 261-3010 or [sschreck@ppoa.com](mailto:sschreck@ppoa.com)**

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<sup>1</sup> POPA FCU members must be in good standing, submit a loan application from 05/01/2026 through 06/30/2026, and loans must fund by 06/30/2026 to receive the Refi Roundup offer of 1.00% discount from their approved rate. Loan application and collateral are subject to approval. The following loans are not eligible for this discount: Shield loans, POPA FCU Credit Cards, Real Estate Loans, Off-Road Vehicles, All Terrain Vehicles (ATV), and it cannot be used to refinance existing POPA FCU loans. Floor rate is 3.49% for Auto, Motorcycle, Boat, and RV (Recreational Vehicle) loans, and 11.99% for Signature loan. You must submit proof of current rate by providing billing statement or coupon book.

Relationship Benefit Discount may not be applied with this offer. Please contact the Credit Union for details. Other restrictions may apply. Promotional rate promo code is "Refi Roundup 2026". This offer expires 06/30/2026.

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*Built to honor those who serve.*

By Greg Torres, PPOA Public Relations Coordinator

# A Tale of Two L.A. County Legacies and 30 Train Trips to San Quentin

In 1937, John Davis Jr. parked his tricycle on an East L.A. sidewalk and stood proudly next to his dad for a photo in front of the Davis family home. The young man sported denim overalls and a wry smile. His dad, John Davis Sr., was clad in a crisp Sheriff's Department uniform, and there's a decent chance his thoughts would soon turn to an upcoming train trip to San Quentin State Prison. According to a *Los Angeles Times* article<sup>1</sup> dated April 17, 1949, Deputy Davis "made 30 trips to 'Q.' Ten prisoners go each trip. That's 300 he's taken over this unhappy road."

Transporting inmates on the rails was a common occurrence in those days and, for the purposes of the 1949 article, the *L.A. Times* reporter traveled alongside the 10 inmates bound for San Quentin and the man in charge of their safe delivery, Deputy Davis. "With him as guards are young deputies and policemen. They get a trip through the prison. They see the receiving end of the police business. Old cops sometimes go along to see the job through."

Deputy Davis logged plenty of miles with inmates headed in different directions. "I haul insane people to state asylums on

one trip. Then I take these boys to San Quentin," he stated to the reporter. "I don't know which is the best or worst. They're a relief from one another."

John Davis Sr. was hired as a Deputy Constable in 1929, three years prior to a man named Eugene Biscailuz being appointed to lead the Sheriff's Department. Deputy Davis dedicated himself to public safety for the next three decades, with assignments including Hollywood Vice Detail and patrol at East L.A., Firestone, Lennox and San Dimas. His boss, Sheriff Biscailuz, went on to run unopposed for six terms. Both men launched dedicated careers with the Sheriff's Department in a tumultuous era defined by the Great Depression and World War II.

And the boy in the overalls? He would also go on to a lengthy career in uniform. In 1958, after two years in the U.S. Army, John Davis Jr. joined the Los Angeles County Marshal's Office. Public safety was in the family bloodline. His dad had just retired from the Sheriff's Department. His uncle was LAPD.

## REFERENCE

1 Bill Dredge, "'Ugliest Door' End of Road to Prison," *Los Angeles Times*, April 17, 1949.



John Davis Jr. and LASD Deputy John Davis Sr.



John Davis Jr., assigned to Communications Center at the L.A. County Marshal's Office

His brother would go on to a career with ATF.

John Jr. grew up in a Sheriff's Department household but doesn't recall encountering a Deputy Marshal until he saw one in uniform at a local courthouse shortly after his service with the Army. "Those cross draw holsters and bandoliers looked really good," he explained. He applied and never looked back. John Jr. retired as a Lieutenant with the Marshal's Office in 1992 and is now enjoying his 34th year of retirement at the age of 93. He has maintained his PPOA membership for 68 years and counting.

All of us at PPOA are grateful to John for his dedication, his service and his willingness to share the story of his dad's legacy. If you'd like to reach out to John, please send your email to [info@ppoa.com](mailto:info@ppoa.com) and we'll gladly forward the message to him. ♥



L.A. County inmates and their guards preparing to board the train for transport to San Quentin (August 13, 1934)



## PPOA Committees and Staff

### 2026 STANDING COMMITTEES

#### Associations

› Chairman Johnson

#### Awards

› Chairman Ramos

#### Bylaws

› Chairman Weber

#### Communications

› Chairman Kasabyan

#### Delegates

› Chairman Weber

#### Election Update

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#### Finance Committee

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#### Insurance

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#### Membership

› Chairman Ramos

#### Retiree Liaison

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› Chairman Johnson

#### Unit 614 Contract Negotiations

› Chairman Lee

#### Unit 621 Contract Negotiations

› Chairman Kasabyan

#### Unit 631/632 Contract Negotiations

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#### Kevin F. Thompson

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#### Greg Torres

Public Relations Coordinator

#### Maricela Villegas

Executive Administrative Assistant

### LEGISLATIVE REPRESENTATIVES

#### Lang, Hansen, Giroux & Kidane

Visit [PPOA.com](http://PPOA.com) to read about PPOA's position on legislative bills proposed in the current session.



# PPOA Members Spotted on the Socials

**W**e are proud to see PPOA members and their partners being acknowledged for their professionalism and dedication. *Images courtesy of social media.* ❤️



**lasd\_lhs** Meet Dispatcher Allen one of the voices behind the headset, showing up every day with dedication, focus, and heart to keep our community safe.

Calm voices. Critical decisions. Lifesaving impact. Special thanks to LHS dispatchers, your work doesn't always get seen, but it's felt in every call.

❤️ Happy Dispatcher Appreciation Week 🙌



**lasdtransit** To close out National Public Safety Telecommunicators Week, Transit Services Bureau hosted a special Coffee with the Captain in Dispatch—taking time to personally thank the voices behind the radio.

Our dispatchers and Law Enforcement Technicians are the critical link between the public and our deputies in the field. Their professionalism, calm under pressure, and unwavering dedication keep our operations running safely and efficiently every day.


Thank you for your service, your commitment, and the vital role you play in public safety.



# Hundreds of Friends Reunite at LASD Retiree Roundup

**F**our days flew by swiftly for more than 700 friends who reunited in Laughlin for the annual LASD Retiree Roundup. As always, PPOA representatives were honored to support and attend the Roundup. We are grateful to Moon and Robyn Mullen and their dedicated team for hosting another impressive event.

The highlight of the Roundup for PPOA was hosting the annual Cigar Night, and we are thankful to the approximately 150 retirees who joined us for a memorable evening.

The full photo album from the Roundup can be viewed on the LAPPOA Facebook page. 





Military veterans gathered for a photo at the Roundup.



# CALENDAR OF EVENTS

These events and more can be found on PPOA's online calendar at [PPOA.com](http://PPOA.com). Do you know of a Department-related event we can help promote? Email details to [info@PPOA.com](mailto:info@PPOA.com).

## May 6

### PPOA Board of Directors Meeting

(Originally scheduled for May 13)

9 a.m. – 4 p.m.

San Dimas

Members are invited to attend with  
RSVP: (323) 261-3010

## May 15

### 45th Annual National Peace Officers' Memorial Service

U.S. Capitol, West Front,  
Washington, D.C.

## May 20

### Los Angeles County Peace Officers' Memorial Ceremony

Biscailuz Center Training Academy

## May 25

### Memorial Day

The PPOA office will be closed in  
honor of the County holiday.

## May 30

### Clay Shooting Fundraiser

Hosted by the Sheriff's  
Youth Foundation

10 a.m. – 1 p.m.

L.A. Clay Shooting Sports  
Park, South El Monte

Open to civilians, sworn  
and community

Info: <https://tinyurl.com/2xj979f2>

## June 1

### 18th Annual Peace Officer Memorial Golf Tournament

Friendly Hills Country Club,  
Whittier

Visit [PPOA.com](http://PPOA.com) for details

## June 10

### PPOA Board of Directors Meeting

9 a.m. – 4 p.m.

San Dimas

Members are invited to attend  
with RSVP: (323) 261-3010

## June 13–20

### U.S. Police and Fire Championships

San Diego

Info: [USPFC.org](http://USPFC.org)

## June 19

### Juneteenth

The PPOA office will be closed in  
honor of the County holiday.

## July 8

### PPOA Board of Directors Meeting

9 a.m. – 4 p.m.

San Dimas

Members are invited to attend  
with RSVP: (323) 261-3010

## July 10

### 26th Annual PPOA Fishing Trip

Pierpoint Landing, Long Beach

See page 15



## RETIREE EVENTS



### Phoenix-Area LASD Retiree Luncheon

May 14 at 11 a.m.

Bubba's 33, Peoria, AZ

Info: Joe Van Damme,  
[vandammzz@gmail.com](mailto:vandammzz@gmail.com)

### HR-218 Qualification

May 16 and May 23 from 8 a.m.  
to 12 p.m.

PDC (Wayside) Range

Info: Deputy Phil Abner,  
[pabner54@gmail.com](mailto:pabner54@gmail.com)

### Southern Idaho LASD Taco Luncheon

June 13 at 11:30 a.m.

Thatcher residence  
47 River Ranch Road,  
Garden Valley, Idaho

RSVP: [methatch@icloud.com](mailto:methatch@icloud.com)

### Norwalk Station Alumni Luncheon

June 26 at 12 p.m.

Yard House, Brea

Info: Al Maldonado,  
[amaldo42a@aol.com](mailto:amaldo42a@aol.com)

### Law Enforcement

#### Serra Retreat

September 25–27

Serra Retreat House, Malibu

Info: Patty Norris,  
(818) 381-7698

### Desert Heat Retirees Luncheon

First Wednesday of  
each month at 11 a.m.

Elks Lodge, Lake Havasu

Info: [Lnx1993@yahoo.com](mailto:Lnx1993@yahoo.com)

### Rogue Valley Retiree Lunch

Last Wednesday of each  
month at 11 a.m.

Grants Pass Golf Club  
Grants Pass, OR

Info: [michaelbuschke@charter.net](mailto:michaelbuschke@charter.net)

### Temple Station Monthly Alumni Luncheon

Last Thursday of each month  
(except Nov./Dec.) at 11:30 a.m.

Peppertree Café, Glendora

Info: [ricksommers@verizon.net](mailto:ricksommers@verizon.net)

# IN THEIR HONOR

## PPOA

### 18TH ANNUAL

# Peace Officer Memorial Golf Tournament

### Monday, June 1

FRIENDLY HILLS COUNTRY CLUB, WHITTIER

Join us in honoring the legacy  
of our fallen heroes and  
supporting their families.

BENEFITING



Visit [PPOA.com](https://PPOA.com) for details and registration.

By Bob Giroux

Lang, Hansen, Giroux &amp; Kidane, PPOA Legislative Representatives

## State Advocacy Update: Key Legislative and Budget Developments

**A**s the Legislature moves further into the second year of the 2025–26 session, activity in Sacramento is accelerating, and with it, the number of proposals that could impact public safety professionals across California.

Following the February bill introduction deadline, lawmakers have shifted into the policy committee phase, where bills are now being heard and refined. Many measures that began as placeholder “spot bills” have been amended into substantive policy proposals, increasing both the volume and complexity of legislation under consideration. Over the coming weeks, this pace is expected to intensify.

The PPOA Legislative Committee is actively reviewing newly amended measures and will begin formal position-taking as bills advance through policy committees and into fiscal review. Key deadlines are quickly approaching: all bills must

clear fiscal committees by mid-May and pass out of their house of origin by the end of May before moving to the second house for further consideration.

At the same time, the state budget process for Fiscal Year 2026–27 is well underway. The governor’s January proposal has been characterized as a “workload budget,” largely maintaining existing commitments with limited new spending while projecting ongoing structural deficits in future years. Early legislative hearings have raised concerns about the administration’s decision to defer more significant fiscal solutions to the May Revision. This approach compresses the timeline for legislative review ahead of the constitutional June 15 budget deadline.


The May Revision is expected to include more substantial proposals to address the state’s fiscal challenges. These could involve program reductions and policy changes that directly affect public safety personnel, including workforce-related benefits. PPOA is closely monitoring budget subcommittee activity and engaging with policymakers to ensure that member priorities are protected throughout the process.

One of the most significant issues currently under consideration is the administration’s proposed changes to the Subsequent Injuries Benefits Trust Fund (SIBTF), advanced through a budget trailer bill. PPOA recently submitted a letter expressing strong concerns with this proposal.

The administration’s plan would fundamentally alter the SIBTF by narrowing eligibility standards, imposing new evidentiary and procedural hurdles, and applying these changes to pending claims — raising serious fairness concerns. Collectively, these changes would make it more difficult for injured workers, including peace officers, to access benefits and would undermine the program’s core purpose: supporting workers with pre-existing disabilities who suffer subsequent injuries.

While PPOA recognizes the importance of ensuring the long-term sustainability of the fund, the proposed approach is overly restrictive and inappropriate for inclusion in the budget process. Instead, PPOA is urging the Legislature to reject the trailer bill proposal and pursue any reforms through the standard legislative process, allowing for full transparency and stakeholder engagement.

PPOA is actively communicating these concerns to key legislative offices and budget committee staff and is working in coordination with allied stakeholders to highlight the real-world impacts on public safety personnel.

As the legislative and budget processes continue to unfold, PPOA remains fully engaged in advocating for policies that protect its members and ensure fair treatment for those who serve. 

MEMBERS CAN WIN!



IT PAYS TO READ

# STAR & SHIELD

## THREE \$100 PRIZES

Every issue of *Star & Shield* will feature a different hidden word. The word will be used only once in the entire magazine — your challenge is to find it!

Members who find the hidden word and register through our website ([PPOA.com](http://PPOA.com)) by the end of this month will be entered into a drawing for one of three \$100 prizes. Contest ends June 30, 2026, at 11:59 p.m. PT.

This month’s hidden word is:

### Cumulative

*Increasing by one addition after another, and including all the amounts that have been added before*

**Online registration only. Please do not call the PPOA office to register for contest.**

## PPOA extends our sincere condolences to the families of the following members who passed away in February:

Retired Deputy  
**Frederick Gruener**  
EOW: February 3, 2026  
LASD 1969-2000  
Academy Class #130  
Last assignment: Pasadena  
Courthouse  
U.S. Army veteran

Retired Chief  
**David Fender**  
EOW: February 6, 2026  
LASD 1974-2017  
Academy Class #173  
Last assignment: Custody  
Services Division  
U.S. Army veteran

Retired Deputy  
**Harry Pollok III**  
EOW: February 14, 2026  
LASD 1967-1981  
Academy Class #120  
Last assignment: Norwalk Station  
U.S. Marine Corps veteran

Retired Lieutenant  
**Wilfred "Mike" Jones**  
EOW: February 16, 2026  
Originally with Monrovia P.D.  
LASD 1973-2005  
Former PPOA delegate  
Last assignment: Civil Litigation Unit

Retired Lieutenant  
**Stephen Huss**  
EOW: February 20, 2026  
LASD 1968-1992  
Academy Class #133  
Last assignment: Lomita Station  
U.S. Navy veteran  
Condolences may be emailed to the  
family: [monica42@earthlink.net](mailto:monica42@earthlink.net)

Retired Lieutenant  
**Glenn Sauls**  
EOW: February 22, 2026  
Originally with Lynwood P.D.  
LASD 1977-1986  
Last assignment: Inspectional  
Services Bureau  
Condolences may be emailed to the  
family: [coachmikesauls11@gmail.com](mailto:coachmikesauls11@gmail.com)

Retired Deputy  
**Gary Cooper**  
February 24, 2026  
LASD 1974-2003  
Academy Class #168  
Last assignment: Men's Central Jail  
U.S. Air Force veteran

Retired Deputy  
**Robert Wingate**  
February 26, 2026  
LASD 1969-1992  
Academy Class #139  
Last assignment: Court  
Services East Bureau  
U.S. Army veteran

Retired Sergeant  
**Steve Brennan**  
EOW: February 28, 2026  
LASD 1970-2000  
Academy Class #144



Retired Deputy  
Frederick Gruener  
(EOW: 2/3/26)



Retired Chief  
David Fender  
(EOW: 2/6/26)



Retired Lieutenant  
Wilfred "Mike" Jones  
(EOW: 2/16/26)



Retired Lieutenant  
Stephen Huss  
(EOW: 2/20/26)



Retired Lieutenant  
Glenn Sauls  
(EOW: 2/22/26)



Retired Deputy  
Gary Cooper  
(EOW: 2/24/26)



Retired Deputy  
Robert Wingate  
(EOW: 2/26/26)

# Financial Check-In: Turning Financial Literacy Into Action

**A**pril may be recognized as Financial Literacy Month, but the real value comes from applying what you have learned long after the month ends. May is the perfect time to shift from awareness to action, taking small, practical steps that improve your financial well-being year-round.

Financial literacy is more than understanding money — it is about using that knowledge to make informed decisions about spending, saving, borrowing and protecting your finances.

## WHY FINANCIAL LITERACY STILL MATTERS

Credit unions are built on the principle of improving members' financial well-being. According to the National Credit Union Administration, financial education helps individuals:

- Make smarter financial decisions
- Build savings and long-term stability
- Avoid fraud and financial pitfalls
- Access affordable financial services

That means the habits you build now directly impact your future financial security.

## FIVE SMART FINANCIAL MOVES TO MAKE THIS MAY

1. **Revisit your budget.** A budget is not static; it should evolve with your life. Reviewing your income and expenses helps you stay aligned with your goals and avoid overspending. Budgeting remains the foundation of financial success and supports both short- and long-term planning. *Quick tip:* Try a simple 50/30/20 approach (needs/wants/savings) if you do not already have a system.
2. **Build or strengthen your emergency fund.** Unexpected expenses happen, like car repairs, medical bills or job changes. Experts consistently recommend having savings set aside to manage these situations without relying on credit. *Goal:* Start with \$500 to \$1,000, then work toward three to six months of expenses.
3. **Check your credit health.** Understanding your credit is key to qualifying for loans, credit cards and even housing. Resources from *MyCreditUnion.gov* emphasize that building and maintaining credit is a core financial skill. *Steps:* Review your credit report, pay down high-interest debt and make all payments on time.
4. **Watch for fraud and scams:** Fraud attempts continue to rise, especially through text, email and phone scams. The National Credit Union Administration highlights consumer awareness as a key defense against financial loss. *Red flags to remember:* urgent requests for money, requests for personal or account information and “too good to be true” offers.
5. **Set a mid-year financial goal:** With the halfway mark of the year approaching, now is a strategic time to reassess your



financial goals, such as saving for a vacation, paying down debt, preparing for back-to-school expenses or planning for a home purchase. Even small, consistent contributions can make a meaningful impact over time.

## HOW POPA CAN HELP

Credit unions are not just places to bank. We are partners in your financial journey. At POPA, we offer:

- Free financial services through LPL Financial
- Budgeting and savings calculators and tools
- Educational resources
- Low-cost loan options

These services align with the credit union mission: *We protect and serve your financial needs as you protect and serve us. We are all part of a family. We work together to improve your financial quality of life.* Our goal is ensuring members have access to the tools they need to succeed.

Financial literacy is not a one-time event; it is an ongoing process. By taking a few intentional steps this May, you can build momentum that carries through the rest of the year.

For questions, please contact your nearest branch at (562) 229-9181, Monday through Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Remember, small actions today lead to stronger financial confidence tomorrow! 🍀



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S&W: CA model w/ Kydex holster and 4 mags: \$450. Sig: CA model w/ Kydex holster and 3 mags: \$850. (323) 597-6059. (0724)

**ROSE HILLS PLOT  
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Rose Hills (Whittier) cemetery plot located in the Garden of Prayers near the main entrance. \$15,000 or OBO. Call (909) 243-3002 or email [rjramirez0618@gmail.com](mailto:rjramirez0618@gmail.com). (0824)

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Convertible, replica. 2-door, black with tan interior and tan top. 4-speed manual transmission, 1600cc, build of a Volkswagen Karmann Ghia chassis. Asking price \$25,000. Contact (626) 484-8301 or [mianico5@gmail.com](mailto:mianico5@gmail.com). (0924)

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**RIVERFRONT  
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Stunning riverfront views from a Parker Strip, Arizona, 4-bedroom 2-bath home, featuring a full kitchen, ice maker, washer-dryer, boat ramp, private boat and jet ski dock, and much more. First responder and military discount. Call Robert at (858) 688-3670 or Chuck at (323) 470-9827, or email [rmos@mosmag.com](mailto:rmos@mosmag.com). (0125)

**1999 PORSCHE  
"911" CARRERA**

2-door convertible, black/black, 6 cylinder, manual transmission. Asking price \$18,000 OBO. Contact [tiffanyjoiner26@gmail.com](mailto:tiffanyjoiner26@gmail.com). (0725)

**BULLHEAD CITY  
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**TIRES/RIMS FOR SALE**

Four BF Goodrich (white letter) radial tires mounted on American Racing mag rims. Two 215-60-15 and two 255-60-15 tires - 3 years old with only 1,000 miles. \$850 or best offer. Call Richard at (562) 858-8936 and leave message. (1024)

**ATTENTION  
WOODWORKERS**

Shapeoko XXL carbide 3D router. It cuts wood, plastic, aluminum and more. Asking \$1,500. Leave a message at (626) 392-8507. (0425)

**RIFLE SCOPES  
FOR SALE**

Gently used: 1. Burris, 3x9 - 40mm Fullfield II. 2. Eagle Eye optics red dot tubular. Both scopes come with mounts. \$125 for both, I pay for shipping. Also have considerable amount of reloading stuff: dies, scales, blocks, etc. Call for list. Diagnosis of low vision forces me to give up hobby. Contact: Ron at (661) 317-7671 or [nybakken.john@gmail.com](mailto:nybakken.john@gmail.com). (0725)

**RV CAMP HOST  
WANTED**

June Lake RV Park, California. 3 days a week. Hours: 12-5. Monthly or summer. Walk to lake and stores. Must have RV. Call (818) 700-9262. May-Oct: (760) 648-7967. (0426)

**FREE POLICE HATS**

I have approximately 12 police hats from various countries. If interested, please contact John at [jb009090@yahoo.com](mailto:jb009090@yahoo.com). (0126)



PPOA classified ads are free and available only to PPOA members (one per month, 25 words max). Private party only, no business ads allowed. Send your ad to: *Star & Shield* Editor, 188 E. Arrow Highway, San Dimas, CA 91773 or email to [gtorres@PPOA.com](mailto:gtorres@PPOA.com).

New submissions are added on a first-come, first-served basis each issue. Please send within first week of each month to ensure timely inclusion. Sellers are encouraged to list price of each item listed. No work numbers or County email addresses may be used in ads. Submissions must be made in writing, not over the phone. Ads run for three months.

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Making a false or fraudulent workers' compensation claim is a felony subject to up to five years in prison or a fine up to \$50,000.00 or double the value of the fraud, whichever is greater, or both imprisonment and fine.