



Fraternal Order of Police

BlueNote

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President's Message:

National FOP Director of Education and Outreach

By Chet Effler – State President

There are moments in life and leadership that remind us just how blessed we are to serve. For me, this is one of those moments. I am humbled and honored to share with our North Carolina Fraternal Order of Police family that I have been appointed as the National Fraternal Order of Police Director of Education and Outreach. While this appointment represents a tremendous opportunity, it also carries an enormous responsibility, one that I do not take lightly.



Most importantly, I remain committed to serving as your State President and ensuring that North Carolina continues to have a strong voice at both the state and national levels. I am also excited to be seeking another term as your State President and look forward to continuing the work we have accomplished together on behalf of our members.

Since officially beginning this role on June 1, 2026, I have had the privilege of traveling with retiring National Director Keith Turney. During our first few weeks, we attended a CRI-TAC partner meeting in DC and then traveled to Nashville, Tennessee, where the National FOP participated as a CRI-TAC partner training hosted at the Tennessee Bureau of Investigation Headquarters.

What became immediately apparent during those meetings was the immense respect Keith Turney has earned throughout the law enforcement profession. Keith is one of only two remaining original members of the IACP CRI-TAC Partner Board, and his influence has helped ensure that the Fraternal Order of Police has a respected seat at the table in conversations affecting law enforcement training, policy, officer safety, wellness, leadership, and professional development.

As I watched Keith engage with leaders from national law enforcement

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The Voice of Law Enforcement

President's Message:

National FOP Director of Education and Outreach (Continued)

organizations, federal agencies, training experts, and public safety professionals, I witnessed firsthand the relationships he has spent years building on behalf of our members. Those relationships were not built overnight. They were built through trust, professionalism, hard work, and a steadfast commitment to the rank-and-file officers we represent.

Keith Turney has served our profession exceptionally well, and on behalf of the North Carolina Fraternal Order of Police, I want to extend my sincere gratitude to Keith and his wife, Carol, for their years of sacrifice and service.

While Education and Outreach may not always be the most visible department within the National FOP, its impact reaches every member. Education is how we prepare officers to meet the challenges of modern policing. Outreach is how we build partnerships, strengthen relationships, and ensure the voices of rank-and-file officers are heard in conversations that shape our profession.

Training is no longer simply about checking a box or completing mandatory requirements. Today's officers face increasingly complex challenges that require critical thinking, emotional intelligence, leadership development, wellness awareness, technological proficiency, and community engagement. The future of policing demands continuous learning, and our organization must remain committed to providing opportunities that help officers grow throughout their careers.

As I step into this role, my vision is straightforward: to expand educational opportunities, strengthen partnerships, promote officer wellness, encourage leadership development, and ensure that every member, regardless of rank, assignment, or agency size, has access to resources that help them succeed.

One of the greatest strengths of the Fraternal Order of Police is that we represent officers from every corner of the profession. We represent rural deputies and metropolitan officers. We represent detectives, school resource officers, corrections officers, dispatchers, supervisors, command staff, and retirees. While our assignments may differ, our commitment to service remains the same.

I believe we have an opportunity to create meaningful training experiences that address leadership, labor issues, legal updates, wellness, officer safety, communication, community trust, and professional growth. Through collaboration with our CRI-TAC partners and other national organizations, we can continue bringing innovative ideas and best practices to our members.

In many ways, outreach is just as important as education. The relationships we build today become the partnerships that help us solve tomorrow's challenges. Whether those partnerships are with local lodges, state associations, federal partners, training organizations, or community stakeholders, our ability to work together ultimately benefits the officers we serve.

As I reflect on this opportunity, I am reminded of why I joined the Fraternal Order of Police so many years ago. The FOP is more than an organization. It is a family. It is a voice for the rank and file. It is a place where officers stand together in support of one another, advocate for better working conditions, honor our fallen heroes, and invest in the future of our profession.

I am grateful to National President Patrick Yoes and the National FOP for their confidence in me. I am equally grateful to the members and leadership of the North Carolina Fraternal Order of Police for their unwavering support. Your trust and encouragement have made this opportunity possible.

I am also looking forward with great excitement to our State Conference, August 9–12 in Carolina Beach. It promises to be an outstanding opportunity for fellowship, education, and collaboration as we come together to celebrate our accomplishments and chart the course for the future of our organization.

Together, we have an opportunity to make a lasting impact not only on our profession, but on the communities we proudly serve. I look forward to this next chapter and to continuing our work on behalf of the men and women who put on the badge every day.

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CHAPLAIN'S CORNER

By Phil Wiggins

My FOP brothers and sisters it's hard to believe, but 32 years ago I was sworn in as the North Carolina State Chaplain for the Fraternal Order of Police. What a blessing this has been in my life's journey with you. The opportunity to share God's love, peace, and emotional and spiritual care for our FOP brothers and sisters has been wonderful. And to receive the same love and care from you as my family faced crisis over the years, God bless you. We serve an awesome God!!



I believe it all started back in 1973 when I felt Gods calling on my life as a Durham police officer to take a step of faith to going back to school, then to seminary. Stepping away from law enforcement and go in a different direction as I sought Gods will for my life definitely seemed challenging. It is amazing to me as I look back over my life how God using the things we experience and go through to shape us into what his future plan is for our lives.

I never thought I would ever return to law enforcement, but God had other plans for my life. After school and serving on church staff, I received a phone call from Durham Public Safety Chief Talmadge Lassiter, about serving as Chaplain for the Durham Public Safety Department, as full-time officer and volunteer Chaplain. WOW!! Could it be that I was being offered an opportunity of service in a profession I loved, and serving the community as well. After lots of family prayer, in 1983 I became the volunteer Chaplain for Durham Public Safety and a full-time officer.

A few years later I was sworn in as FOP Durham County Lodge 2 Chaplain and loved serving in this position. In 1994 I felt lead at a State Conference to put my name in the running for NCFOP State Chaplain. Thanks to the support and blessings of State membership, I was elected and have been honored to serve in this position for the past 32 years. I cannot express enough or find the words to tell you, my FOP brothers and sisters, what an honor it has been to serve you and to feel your love and support for me. I will be stepping down from this position, but will always be available in sharing Gods love and peace when given the opportunity.

Gods Blessings!!

Chaplain Phil Wiggins
NC State Lodge Chaplain



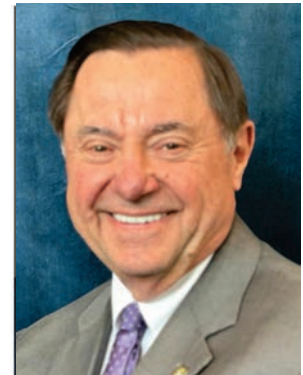
Counsel's Corner

Giglio Revisited

By George V. Laughrun, II – NC State Lodge Counsel

As many of you know, I have been practicing law for almost 46 years and represented officers since 1982 in various criminal, civil, and administrative matters. All we ask when representing officers is a level playing field.

The Giglio stance by the North Carolina Conference of District Attorneys is extremely worrisome. In North Carolina, there are 42 elected prosecutors, elected by the individuals they serve in all 100 counties of this State. The NCCDA is designed to improve the administration of justice. It coordinates prosecution efforts, assists with office administration, and provides training to over 600 prosecutors and staff to ensure fair and consistent prosecution statewide.



To revisit Giglio, there was a 1972 United States Supreme Court Case where prosecutors have a duty to inform defense counsel that witnesses had been promised leniency for testimony. Somehow, this law has been stretched into sweeping up law enforcement personnel, requiring prosecutors to tell defense attorneys that officers may have had issues in the past dealing with truthfulness and/or honesty. A Giglio letter is issued by a prosecutor to an officer who they feel have been untruthful in any matter. This could be in a civil proceeding, criminal case, administrative hearing, or any conduct on behalf of that officer that would go to their credibility and/or believability.

Many prosecutors have used this Giglio “weapon” to threaten, harass, and even intimidate officers to the point that the officer resigns in lieu of facing the consequences of a Giglio letter.

To be clear, some prosecutors do not issue “death penalty” Giglio letter, but merely caution the officer about their conduct, but still being required to inform defense attorneys of conduct detrimental to an officer's credibility and/or believability.

A “death penalty” Giglio letter is a career killer. In North Carolina, if an officer gets a “death penalty” Giglio letter, which basically means the prosecutor is not going to use them in any case, therefore, the officer cannot make any arrests and testify in court, in turn they cannot do their job as a law enforcement officer.

Before the North Carolina legislature changed the law in 2021, House Bill 536, now requires an officer's agency to notify the State Law Enforcement Education Training and Standards Commission, and placed in a statewide database that is available to any agency considering hiring this Giglio impaired officer.

The intent of this statute is sound, however, the officer who is the subject of a “death penalty” Giglio letter or any Giglio sanctions has no recourse to challenge the prosecutor's unfettered decision. There is no judicial or administrative review.

Section 18 of the North Carolina Constitution states, “All courts shall be open; every person for an injury done him in his lands, goods, person, or reputation shall have remedy by due course of law; and right and justice shall be administered without favor, denial, or delay”. This statute by itself should give a Giglio impaired officer the right to challenge the Giglio conduct by an elected District Attorney. Unfortunately, that is not the law in this State.

In the private sector, many times an employee who is terminated has recourse against his employer for wrongful termination, harassment, or a toxic work environment. Unfortunately, this is not the case in the law enforcement community.

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Counsel's Corner

Giglio Revisited (Continued)

There may be some light at the end of the tunnel for North Carolina, as there is a case currently pending right now in Person County, Sean Patrick Leech v. State of North Carolina (24-1113), dealing with a Giglio letter that Officer Leech received from the District Attorney in Prosecutorial District 11.

The officer appealed his Giglio “death penalty” letter to the Superior Court Division, which denied relief. The North Carolina Court of Appeals, in October 2025, reversed that order and sent it back to the Superior Court of Person County for a trial on the merits. That matter is currently still pending with ongoing discovery being pursued by all parties. It is not clear whether Leech will prevail in this matter, however, at least it gives a law enforcement officer a right to be heard.

It is ironic that private citizens, when they are wronged by their employers, employees, neighbors, or friends, have a duty to address their wrongs in the court system. Giglio impaired officers do not have this right to address grievances before an impartial judicial body. This is a double standard and needs to be addressed by our General Assembly.

As always, stay safe.



Expression of Gratitude

Jim Hyde – Four Lakes Lodge 98 Secretary and Past President

Brothers and Sisters of the North Carolina Fraternal Order of Police,

On behalf of my family and me, I wish to let each of you know there is no way possible in which I can truly express the gratitude we feel for the assistance we received from our great Fraternity when our home and all of our belongings were destroyed in a house fire in February.

Getting back on our feet, as we became homeless and destitute, has been a dark and difficult path to travel, perhaps more dark and difficult than any we have yet pursued. However, with the support of our community, family, friends, and strangers from across the country, and especially from our great organization, we are beginning to move forward. The path to recovery is far from finished, but we know WE WILL eventually be back on our feet.

I wish to personally thank my home Lodge, Four Lakes Lodge 98, and our neighbor lodges, Old Charleston Lodge 70 and WNC Macon Jackson Lodge 81, for their assistance and calls.

Hopefully, some day, I can personally “pay it forward” to other members in like condition.

With Fraternal Love and Gratitude,

**Jim Hyde
Four Lakes Lodge 98**

National Lodge Update

By Dennis McCrary – NC National Trustee

Greetings to all FOP members across our great state. I hope you are having a good summer and are able to stay cool during this exceptional heat. The previous several months since our last BlueNote have been very busy on a local, state, and national level. The information below will cover most of the highlights from this period of time.



The National FOP Presidents and Board of Directors meeting was held in Anaheim, California April 23-26. President Effler and I, along with several other State Lodge members, attended this meeting and had an opportunity to network with other FOP leaders from across the country. The FOP continues to be leading the way for law enforcement in our country. The grants awarded to the FOP in 2026 total over 2.3 million dollars. These include grants to address officer wellness, Blue Alert, preventing targeted violence and terrorism, data collection of officers shot and killed and other critical issues. Our PAC fund is growing but we are still very much behind many organizations. We have passed the \$100,000 mark but please consider going to FOP.NET and donating to help move our legislative priorities.

All members should be aware by now that Amazon Business Prime has an incredibly special offer available for FOP members. The National FOP has received over \$130,000 so far from Amazon and that amount can continue to grow up to one million dollars. This offer for Prime is totally free to FOP members but does not include music or movies. Those that already have a Prime account must use a different email address to sign up for our version. FOP members often receive a more discounted price from regular Prime prices, and the FOP receives a small percentage. This is a savings for the member and income for your National Lodge. We only have five thousand members participating so far but stand to make big money if more will sign up. This is definitely a win-win for the FOP so please go to FOP.NET under Member Benefits to sign up. There were detailed reports presented in writing and orally on many of our legislative priorities that we are trying to get passed. Please check FOP.NET on a routine basis to monitor these bills and contact your representatives for their support.

A special thank you to those members from Lodge 9 and other lodges for their help to make the Officer Down Motorcycle Ride held on April 29 a considerable success. This event raised funds in honor of the four officers that were killed in Charlotte on April 29, 2024. The weather was extremely poor that morning, but it did clear up in time for the ride to take place. A special thank you to Rodney James and Lodge 10 for bringing our Feeding Heroes Trailer down to provide lunch for those participating in the ride.

The National Memorial Service on May 15 was another highly successful event honoring those officers who lost their lives serving their communities. North Carolina FOP continues to provide important assistance to make this event run smoothly. Greta Philbeck and her North Carolina volunteers do remarkable work to help this event flow in a professional manner. I was also honored again this year to help the FOP National E-Board present medals to surviving family members. This is a very moving experience to be able to share, hopefully, some words of comfort for those who have gone through such a difficult time.

A special congratulations to President Chet Effler for being hired as the National Director of the Fraternal Order of Police Education and Outreach Division. Chet is replacing Keith Turney who has been a great friend to North Carolina FOP and is stepping down to spend more time with his family. This is another notable example of the respect that the National FOP leadership has for North Carolina FOP.

Chet is also involved in the Gratitude Initiative program that is being implemented by the National FOP. You will be hearing much more about this in the near future, but it is a highly successful program that will help

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National Lodge Update (Continued)

children of FOP members be very successful at entering college and career selection. The kickoff for this new benefit is the designation of July as Law Enforcement Child Month. You should hear more about this from the state and local lodge by the time this newsletter is published.

Most of you should be aware that the National FOP has been struggling for several years with implementing a new membership system. Finally, we are making tremendous progress with a new system called Ortu3. This system is now being evaluated in several states and should be operational soon.

Many of you know that I serve as Chairman of the National Disaster Assistance Committee. The last several months have been a busy time for our committee as members have suffered severe damage from the winter storms and fires. We have now entered the hurricane season and are hoping that it will be a mild year. Please keep all those members in your thoughts and prayers. Any member having a covered loss can go to the FOP.NET under Foundation and find an application. Funds are also available from the NC FOP Foundation.

I certainly enjoy serving as your National Trustee and feel that I do so in a professional manner. I will be running for reelection at our State Biennial Conference in Carolina Beach in August and would greatly appreciate your vote. If I can do anything for you or your lodge, please let me know.

BlueNote Information and Submission Dates for 2026

Executive Editor – Terry Mangum

Congratulations to the Carolina Hurricanes, the 2026 Stanley Cup Champions!!!

And welcome to the July/August issue of the BlueNote. There are some very interesting and informative articles in this issue. Also, since the State Lodge will have elections during the August State Conference, there are candidates who are providing information for you to consider. And remember, after you finish reading this issue of the BlueNote, be sure to share it with non-FOP law enforcement, family, and friends.

As always, I need to receive articles and photos from more members and more Lodges. Any one reading this issue is welcome to contribute articles or photos of your lodge and activities. We all know that these contributions are what make each issue of the BlueNote possible, because without submitted articles and photographs, there would be no publication.

The submission process is simple and painless, I promise. Just e-mail your article or information to my e-mail address terrymangum@frontier.com by the due date and I will prepare your article for publication. That is all you have to do and it is so easy! You can also submit photographs without an article. But if you do, please just select a few of the best photos and include the names of the individuals in the picture and the event.

Below are the remaining Article Submission Due Dates for the 2026 issues of the BlueNote.

Only two issues remaining for 2026.

Article Submission Due Date for 2026:

September/October issue: Due by August 21, 2026

November/December issue: Due by October 16, 2026

As always, I am here to serve you and our membership. If I may be of assistance to you, or if you have any questions or concerns, please contact me.

Greetings from a Past President

By Terry Mangum

I hope all of my Fraternal Order of Police Brothers and Sisters across the great State of North Carolina are doing well.

For our Nation's Birthday year, there is an added treat to celebrate. For North Carolina hockey fans, it all climaxed on June 14, with a 3-0 victory. Congratulations to the Carolina Hurricanes, the 2026 Stanley Cup Champions!!!

I would like to wish all of you a happy and safe Fourth of July. This year, America will celebrate the most important milestone in our country's history, 250 years of American Independence. This 250th anniversary commemorates the signing of the Declaration of Independence in 1776 and our independence from Britain. The Continental Congress voted in favor of independence on July 2, 1776, and two days later the delegates from the 13 colonies adopted the Declaration of Independence.

The 250th birthday of the United States is both a historical commemoration and a national celebration. This will be an opportunity for Americans to honor their heritage, engage in community activities, and reflect on the ongoing journey of our great Nation. I am just extremely happy to be present and able to celebrate America's birthday.

For me, Independence Day is our most important national holiday and symbolizes patriotism and freedom. And the American flag and our National Anthem "The Star-Spangled Banner" are two of the most prevalent symbols of our Independence Day celebrations. I hope you are able to celebrate and enjoy this 250th anniversary with family and friends. Please take the time to slow down and reflect on the reasons for our celebration. May God Bless America!!!

After our 250th America Birthday celebrating, there are two important upcoming events that some of the North Carolina State Lodge members will be participating in. First, the 2026 Fall Board of Directors meeting and the State Conference will be August 9 – 13, at Carolina Beach at the Courtyard by Marriott Carolina Beach Oceanfront. This is a Sunday thru Thursday. Sunday is a travel day. Later that day, the Executive Board will have a meeting followed by the State Trustees meeting. Monday will be the Fall Board of Directors meeting. Tuesday and Wednesday will be the State Conference, And Thursday will be a travel day home. Hopefully, all delegates have completed their room reservations and events registrations on-line for the State Conference.

The second event will be the Fall National State Presidents Meeting and National Fall Board of Directors Meeting. These meeting will be held on November 4-8 in Chicago, Illinois. It had originally been scheduled for September 16-20, but due to heavy demand on Chicago area venues, the meetings were rescheduled.

Stay safe, enjoy our 250th anniversary celebration, and I hope to see you at the State Conference in Carolina Beach. If I may be of assistance to you, or if you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me. As always, I am here to serve you and our membership.



Legal Aid - A Problem That Will Not Go Away

By: Randy Hagler – State Legal Aid Chairman

We are already almost halfway through the year, and believe it or not, it is time to be thinking about next year's NCFOP dues. It can be a life-changing problem for a member, not to mention a costly one, if they allow their FOP dues to lapse and, during that time, have a need for legal aid assistance.



We have a number of Lodges across the State that have developed ways of collecting dues, which does not require a member to write a check sometime between August and September, for the next year's dues. They do this by payroll deduction, monthly payments, and other methods that work for the members and the local lodge. If your Lodge does this, be sure to thank them for making it available, and if they do not, ask them why not?

Everyone should be aware that our legal plan comes in two parts: Criminal and Civil, which is provided by the National FOP Legal Defense Plan, and Administrative, which is covered by the NCFOP State Legal Aid Plan. When a claim is filed under either plan, the first thing we do is look at the member's membership status. The National FOP database must indicate that you are "active/current." This indicates that you are a member in good standing and eligible for all benefits provided by the National and State Lodges, including legal defense. This becomes a problem as we move toward the end of the year, when local lodges must collect dues for the following year. Those dues payments are then made available to the State Lodge, which in turn makes funds available to the National Lodge (per diem) and the National Legal Defense Plan (criminal and civil). All of this must be done prior to November so that dues assessments for the following year can be processed, and there is no lapse in coverage for the members.

If your FOP dues are "active/current" for a particular year, you have all the benefits for that full year, until December 31. However, at midnight on January 1st, your membership expires and all of your FOP benefits are placed on "hold," including legal defense for all three areas: criminal, civil, and administrative. This is a position no one should be in. Beginning January 1st, your membership status will be marked "suspended," and all benefits will be on hold. You can be returned to "active" status anytime during the month of January by simply paying your dues to your local lodge. When you get your dues caught up (during January), all benefits are restored as if you had not had a lapse in coverage. If you allow your dues to go past January 31st you will need to again pay your dues to your local lodge and will be brought back in the NCFOP as a "New Member." Anything that may happen during the time your dues were expired will not be covered by the Legal Defense Plan.

Allow me to give you an example. Recently, a member submitted an application requesting legal aid for a case scheduled to be heard before the NC Sheriff's Standards Division for a probable cause hearing. He had been a member "active/current" in 2025 but had not paid his 2026 dues. The member received a notification from the NC Sheriff's Standards Division on March 30, 2026, that this case would be heard. His dues were received on April 8, 2026, and his status was marked "active/current." From January 1 until April 8, this member was not an NCFOP member and was therefore not entitled to NCFOP benefits. Once his membership status returned to "active/current," he would be eligible for anything that occurred after April 8. This is the reason it is imperative not to allow your NCFOP dues to expire.

For comparison, ask yourself what your car insurance company would do if you allowed your insurance to expire and then had a crash and later made a payment to them. Then ask them to cover the cost of the crash while your insurance was expired. We all know exactly what would happen. It is necessary to have these rules in place to protect our organization's integrity.

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Legal Aid - A Problem That Will Not Go Away (Continued)

NCFOP offers the very best legal plan available to law enforcement officers today. You are covered for criminal, civil, and administrative matters by some of the very best attorneys in North Carolina. Since criminal and civil matters are covered under the FOP National Legal Defense Plan, we do not have exact figures on how many times our membership has utilized their services. I am sure it would be counted in the 100's since we went to that plan in January 2018. I can tell you the number of complaints the State Lodge has received about the National Legal Defense Plan is zero! Our Administrative legal aid plan has had similar numbers, indicating that our members are being represented by great attorneys across the State. If you have an attorney in your area who is not part of our legal team and you would like them to be, contact your local lodge with the information, and we will do our best to get them on board.

We appreciate the hard and sometimes dangerous work each of you do every day. Our goal, as the Fraternal Order of Police, is to stand beside you and be the support you deserve. Help ensure we can do this by paying your FOP dues on time to your local FOP lodge, so there is never a doubt in your mind that if an incident occurs, we can provide all the support you need.

Stay Safe.

A Message from Your Chairman of Trustees

By John R. Byrd Sr.

Brothers and Sisters,

I hope this message finds everyone safe and healthy. I want to start off by dispelling a rumor that was brought to my attention the other day. I got a call from a Brother who said that he heard that I changed my mind and had decided to run again after all. I want to DISPEL that right here. I hope that if you have learned nothing else about me over the years, it is that I am a man of my word. I have endorsed Trey Warner to succeed me and I stand behind that endorsement. If elected, I hope you will give Trey the same level of support you have given me over these past eight years. I expect to see good things out of Trey under his leadership.

Lastly, I want to reiterate once again, it has been one of my highest honors to serve as your Chairman over these past eight years. Thank you again for your support and friendship. It will never be forgotten. I encourage anyone thinking about running for an office to step up and do it. Competition can only make our organization better.

Here are some of the activities I have been involved in since my last message:

- Attended the Spring Board meeting in Carolina Beach on April 10-12.
- Attended Lodge 74's bi-monthly meeting in Creedmoor, NC on Tuesday night, April 28.
- Picked up the Lodge 74 raffle tickets from the Masonic Home for Children, Graphic Arts School on Friday, June 5.
- Submitted my Blue Note article to Brother Mangum on Friday June 19.
- Corresponded with other E-Board members and other State Lodge members over several different issues since our last newsletter.

As always, I will be here to serve you and your lodge; you can call me anytime at 336-504-8173 or email me at person7454@yahoo.com. Thank you again for allowing me to experience this great honor. Take care and stay safe.

Why the HALO Act Matters for North Carolina's Law Enforcement Officers

By Wayne King – State Lodge Legislative Agent

Every legislative session presents opportunities to strengthen public safety and better protect the men and women who serve our communities. This year, one of the North Carolina Fraternal Order of Police's top legislative priorities is the passage of the HALO Act, a key provision contained within House Bill 308.

For many citizens, interactions with law enforcement begin and end with what they see in a news story or a social media video. For our members, however, the reality of modern policing is far different. Every day, officers across North Carolina respond to volatile situations involving violent offenders, domestic disputes, traffic crashes, mental health crises, and other emergencies where emotions are high and conditions can change in an instant.

In recent years, officers have increasingly encountered individuals who intentionally interfere with law enforcement operations. While every citizen has the constitutional right to observe and record police activity, some individuals move beyond observation and actively attempt to distract, provoke, intimidate, or interfere with officers performing their duties.

The HALO Act addresses this growing concern.

The legislation would establish a 25-foot safety zone around first responders who are actively engaged in their official duties after a person has been warned to remain at a safe distance. The bill applies only when an individual knowingly approaches with the intent to interfere, threaten, or harass a first responder. Importantly, the legislation explicitly protects the public's right to photograph and record law enforcement officers and other first responders.

This is not a new or untested concept. In 2024, Florida enacted similar legislation creating a 25-foot buffer zone around law enforcement officers, firefighters, and emergency medical personnel who are actively engaged in their duties. Florida lawmakers recognized that first responders need sufficient space to safely perform their responsibilities without interference from individuals whose actions create unnecessary risks at emergency scenes. North Carolina's HALO Act follows a similar framework by balancing public transparency with officer and first responder safety.

The Fraternal Order of Police has long supported professional policing, public accountability, and community trust. The HALO Act does not prevent citizens from documenting public officials in the performance of their duties. Instead, it creates a reasonable safeguard to ensure first responders can safely perform their responsibilities without unnecessary interference.

The same principle applies to firefighters, EMTs, paramedics, detention officers, and other emergency personnel covered under the legislation. When seconds matter and lives are on the line, first responders deserve the space necessary to focus on the task at hand.

Our members understand better than anyone the dangers that come with wearing the badge. They also understand that public safety and constitutional rights are not mutually exclusive. The HALO Act strikes an appropriate balance between protecting individual liberties and ensuring that first responders can carry out their duties safely and effectively.

House Bill 308 contains numerous criminal justice reforms, but the HALO Act stands out because it addresses a challenge that officers increasingly face in the field. It is a practical, commonsense measure that promotes safety while preserving the public's right to observe and record government activity.

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Why the HALO Act Matters for North Carolina's Law Enforcement Officers (Continued)

The North Carolina Fraternal Order of Police has made passage of the HALO Act a legislative priority because protecting those who protect our communities is fundamental to our mission. This legislation provides an additional layer of protection for law enforcement officers and first responders while maintaining the transparency and accountability that citizens rightfully expect.

As this edition of the newsletter goes to print, House Bill 308 awaits a vote on the floor of the North Carolina House of Representatives before heading to Governor Josh Stein's desk for consideration. The bill has already received overwhelming bipartisan support in the North Carolina Senate, passing by a vote of 47-2.

The strong Senate vote demonstrates broad recognition that first responders deserve reasonable protections while carrying out their duties. We encourage our members to remain engaged, communicate with their legislators, and continue advocating for this important public safety measure.

Protecting those who protect our communities should never be a partisan issue. The HALO Act is a reasonable step forward for North Carolina, just as similar protections have been adopted in Florida. The North Carolina Fraternal Order of Police is proud to support House Bill 308 and will continue working to ensure its passage into law.

Retirees – Did You Know?

By Martin “Marty” Wilson – Retirement Committee Chair

Retirees, I just have a few words for this Blue Note. The NCFOP Foundation just held our annual golf tournament at Reems Creek Golf Club on June 19th in Weaverville, North Carolina. This year was by far the biggest tournament we have had to date. The reason is all the Retirees we had helping with the tournament. Not only the Retirees playing in the tournament but also those helping line up teams and assisting with handling the business end where they were needed. A Retiree is always needed because they can advise and mentor. This is a Retiree's superpower.

Martin Wilson

Retirement Committee Chair

volfan2596@aol.com

Take care and stay safe.



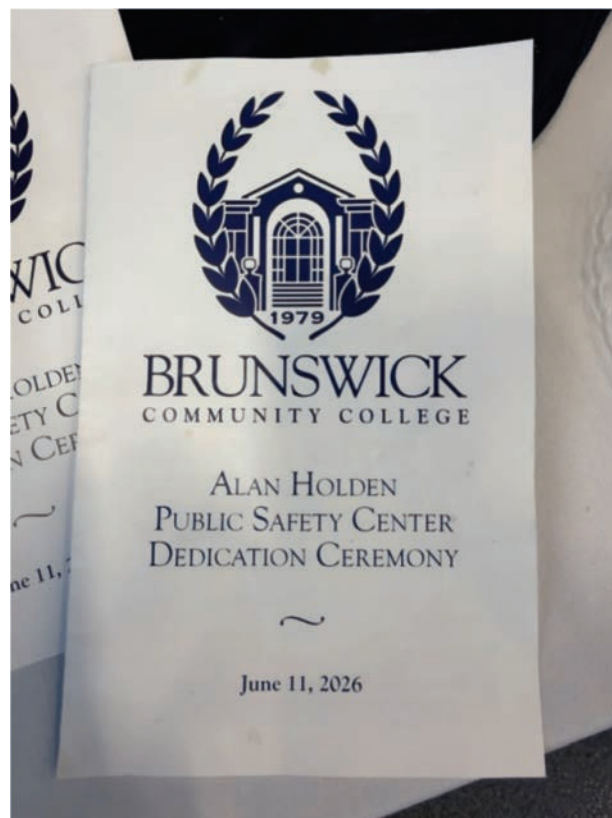
Brunswick Community College Public Safety Center Dedication Ceremony

By Paul Thordsen – President Brunswick County Lodge 53

On June 11, 2026, Brunswick County Lodge 53 President Paul Thordsen, Vice President Carl Dudick, State Trustee Zelma Biddle, and members Bill Femia, John Comperetto and Les Goldstein attended the ribbon cutting for the Brunswick Community College Public Safety Center Dedication Ceremony. The ceremony was also attended by local law enforcement in Brunswick County. The Public Safety Center will teach BLET to all students enrolled, along with Fire, EMT and Emergency Management for the County.



Lodge 53 President Paul Thordsen and members John Comperetto and Les Goldstein.



Public Safety Center Dedication Ceremony Program

Protecting Those Who Protected Us: A New Partnership for Your Future

By Kevin Hornaday – Chairman Constitution and By-laws Committee

As law enforcement professionals, we spend our careers planning for the unexpected and ensuring the safety of our communities. However, one of the most significant challenges many of us will face isn't on the beat—it's at home. As our loved ones (or we!) age, the question of high-quality, reliable senior care becomes a top priority.

In the last few years, I have personally had to make difficult decisions for two family members, including one who stayed at one of our newest FOP partners.

The **Fraternal Order of Police (FOP)** has formed a partnership with **Brookdale Senior Living**, the nation's leading operator of senior living communities. This benefit is designed to provide FOP members and their extended families with peace of mind and significant financial savings when navigating the complexities of senior care



The Growing Need for Senior Care

The "SilverTsunami" is no longer a distant projection; it is here. Recent data underscores why having a plan in place is more critical than ever. Experts say that there are more than 61 million Americans aged 65 and older, accounting for 18% of the total population. In addition, research shows that nearly 70% of Americans aged 65 and older will require some form of long-term care services during their lifetime.

With senior housing occupancy at record highs and new construction at a decade-long low, securing a spot in a premier community requires proactive planning.

Exclusive FOP Benefits at Brookdale

We know that the "FOP Family" extends beyond the badge. That is why this benefit is available not just to you, but to your **spouse, parents, siblings, in-laws, and even grandparents**. Through this partnership, FOP members can access:

- **7.5% Off Monthly Fees:** Save on the basic service rate for Independent Living, Assisted Living, and Memory Care.
- **10% Off In-Home Services:** For those who prefer to age in place, discounts are available for Brookdale's personal assistance services.
- **Discounted Respite Care:** Special rates are available for short-term stays, providing a safe environment for your loved ones when you need a temporary care solution.

Why did the FOP choose Brookdale?

Brookdale's communities offer restaurant-style dining, housekeeping, and social engagement activities tailored to keep seniors active and connected. For those facing cognitive challenges, their award-winning **Clare Bridge** memory care program provides a secure, supportive environment. Having experienced Brookdale's facilities myself, I was impressed with the care they provided.

Proactive Planning

Don't wait until a crisis forces a quick decision. Your service has earned you the right to the best resources available. To learn more about these exclusive discounts or to find a Brookdale community near you, visit Brookdale.com/FOP and use the partner code **HEROES**.

Why Your Lodge Needs a Digital Presence

By Thomas Navarre – Chairman NC FOP Technology Committee

In today's world, communication happens online. Whether someone is looking for information about your lodge, considering joining the Fraternal Order of Police, or simply wanting to stay informed about upcoming events, their first stop is often the internet.

Unfortunately, many local lodges still have little or no digital presence. Some rely solely on word-of-mouth communication, while others struggle to keep members informed about meetings, events, charitable activities, legislative efforts, and member accomplishments. Over time, this communication gap can contribute to declining engagement, stagnant membership numbers, and difficulty attracting new members.



A strong digital footprint helps solve these challenges.

Having a website, landing page, social media presence, or combination of all three provides lodges with a platform to communicate consistently with both current and prospective members. It allows lodges to highlight member achievements, share community service projects, recognize award recipients, promote fundraising efforts, and showcase the positive work being done by law enforcement officers across North Carolina.

A digital presence also makes it easier for potential members to learn about your lodge and become involved. If someone cannot easily find information about meetings, membership benefits, or leadership contacts, there is a good chance they will move on without ever reaching out. By making information readily available online, lodges create a welcoming and professional first impression.

For lodges that do not currently maintain a website, the NC FOP offers an affordable landing page option through the state website. These pages can provide online membership applications, dues collection options, contact information, and other important resources for members. They serve as an excellent starting point for lodges looking to establish a professional online presence without the expense and complexity of building a standalone website.

The reality is simple: if your lodge is experiencing membership stagnation, declining participation, or communication challenges, improving your digital presence may be one of the most effective steps you can take. Modern communication tools help members stay connected, informed, and engaged while creating opportunities to reach the next generation of FOP members.

The NC FOP Technology Committee is committed to helping local lodges strengthen their digital footprint and better serve their membership. Lodges interested in establishing a landing page on the NC FOP website are encouraged to contact the Technology Committee for current pricing, available features, and setup information. We encourage every lodge to evaluate its current online presence and consider how digital communication can help support future growth.

Strong communication builds strong lodges. Strong lodges build a stronger Fraternal Order of Police.

Charlotte Mecklenburg Lodge 9 Fundraisers (Golf)

By Mark Michalec – State Trustee Lodge 9

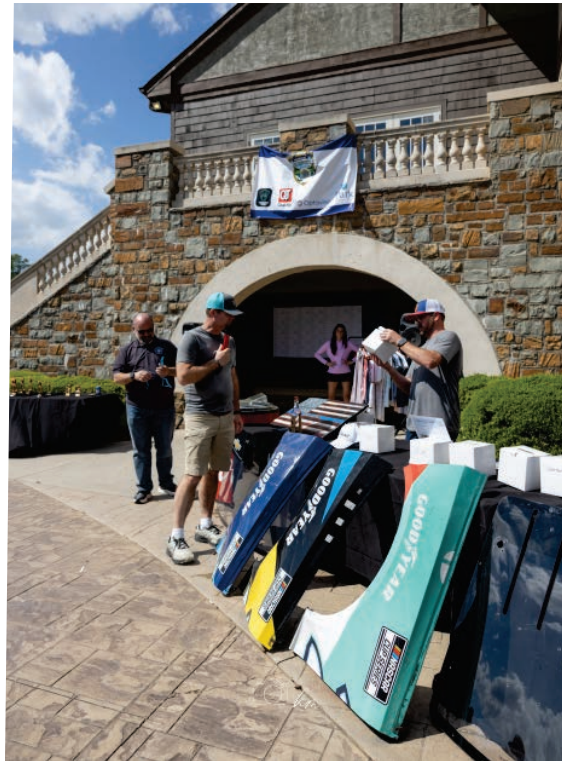
Charlotte Mecklenburg Lodge 9 held two major fundraisers in April and May to honor the fallen and remember heroes Joshua Eyer, Samuel Poloche, Thomas Weeks, and William Elliott.

On April 20th, the Charlotte Mecklenburg Lodge 9 held its First Annual Memorial Golf Tournament at The Palisades Country Club. Two of our Board members, Patrick Diekhous and Adam Ross, chaired the tournament. Because of their leadership, the tournament was a huge success. Team registration sold out in a couple of days after opening and several sponsors and donors provided services and donations to enhance our event. Our volunteers accomplished a tremendous amount of work to ensure the best experience for our golfers. The tournament was developed to raise funds for our Foundation, supporting the families of fallen officers and those injured in the line of duty. Proceeds will also help establish four scholarships in honor of our brothers: Joshua Eyer, Thomas Weeks, Samuel Poloche, and William Elliott, whom we lost on April 29, 2024. We were honored to have Ashley Eyer and Kelly Weeks, the wives of two of our fallen heroes, join us at the tournament. Their attendance meant so much to all of us there. Lodge 9 plans for this tournament to continue for years to come.



(Continued on next page)

Charlotte Mecklenburg Lodge 9 Fundraisers (Golf Continued)



Charlotte Mecklenburg Lodge 9 Fundraisers (Officer Down Ride)

On May 30th, Lodge 9 and the Blue Knights NC III held the first annual Officer Down Ride to honor the four officers murdered in Charlotte on April 29th, 2024. The ride began at the Hendrick Center on Independence Boulevard and traveled approximately fifty miles. The ride concluded back at Hendrick Center where everyone gathered for fellowship and shared lunch. All funds raised will go directly to the Charlotte Mecklenburg FOP Foundation to support the families of the four officers and other law enforcement families who may be in similar circumstances.



Rocky Mount Lodge 46 Immediate Past President Ricky Parks Sworn In as N.C. Supreme Court Marshal

By Greg Brown - Lodge 46 State Trustee

Rocky Mount Lodge 46 Immediate Past President Ricky Parks was sworn in as the NC Supreme Court Marshal on Monday, June 01. Ricky has been a devoted member of the NC Fraternal Order of Police for 36 years.

In 2004, Ricky was elected President of Lodge 46 and got to work rebuilding our Lodge and laying the foundation you see today, for our future leaders to build upon. Ricky is a very humble person and family first man. I have learned a lot from him over the years and I am very thankful for our friendship and everything he has done for me and my family, especially after my line of duty incident in 2005. No other organization was there for me and my family except him and the FOP and this is why I do what I do now for this organization. I am truly blessed and honored and to have him as a friend, knowing I can call on him whenever I need advice or someone to talk to about an issue concerning something political or just to have a conversation.



On June 1, Ricky was sworn in as the N.C. Supreme Court's top security official. Ricky, along with his wife Rebecca who was holding the Bible, was administered the oath by N.C. Chief Justice Paul Newby. It had been over 20 years since there has been a change in the Supreme Court's Marshal and Ricky was elevated from Chief Deputy Marshal to Marshal. Afterwards, Ricky said he was overwhelmed by the outpouring of support. "I would have never imagined this many people to fill an overflow room and beyond. So, I just feel very blessed and thank God for this opportunity I've been given by the Supreme Court."

U.S. Attorney for the Eastern District of North Carolina W. Ellis Boyle said, "I just stand in awe at all he's done and know that he will do a great job in this role. I always kid Ricky that he's the mayor of Cop Town and he's the most popular guy in the school. And it shows because he's such a personable, genuine person who cares about all the people that he knows and he protects."

Rufus Edmisten, former N.C. Secretary of State and former Attorney General, said, "The Supreme Court made a wonderful choice and I know that Ricky will make them proud. He's a kind, gentle individual who has always thought of others before he does himself and I like that about Ricky."

Nash County Sheriff Keith Stone spoke about having served as a State Trooper when Ricky was a Nash County Sheriff's Deputy. He said, "It was two 23-year-olds taking care of Nash County all night long. Two cars out on third shift. It is a blessing to see a man who started in that third shift role as a Nash County Sheriff's Deputy advance all the way up to the N.C. Supreme Court Marshal post."

Pitt County Sheriff Paula Dance said after the ceremony, "I think his integrity speaks for itself as evidenced by the people that are here in this room today and I'm glad to be invited to be among them. I consider him a friend."

(Continued on next page)

Rocky Mount Lodge 46 Immediate Past President Ricky Parks Sworn In as N.C. Supreme Court Marshal (Continued)

N.C. Superior Court Judge Lamont Wiggins, who was an attorney in Rocky Mount and a city councilman before then-Gov. Roy Cooper appointed him to the bench, noted that he and Ricky went through high school together and recalled when Ricky served as a Rocky Mount Police Officer. He said, “It’s just great to see somebody of his caliber and character be elevated to this position. We have actually grown up in the court and in the judicial system together. It’s just good to be in this position where we can kind of enjoy it together as contemporaries.”

N.C. Rep. Allen Chesser, said, “This is a beautiful ceremony for a wonderful man. I don’t think they could have made a better choice. I think the full-house here speaks of the man’s character.”

Nashville Police Chief Caleb Shockley spoke about the honor of a Nash County resident being appointed to the N.C. Supreme Court Marshal post and the large number of people who had gathered to celebrate Ricky.

Rocky Mount businessman Tom Betts, said “I have known Ricky for more than 40 years and he is the most dedicated officer I have ever seen. He takes his duties seriously, and he carries himself very professionally.”

Chief Justice Newby, in remarks as part of the ceremony, stated that he believes Ricky Parks is a man of integrity, honor, humility, service and deep faith. “He has taken to heart the principle of loving God and loving and serving others. He treats others the way he would like to be treated. Perhaps you've noticed he's never met a stranger. And he sees this new responsibility as the culmination of his career and a true calling in his life.”

Former Associate Justice Mike Morgan said that he was happy for Ricky and that the N.C. Supreme Court is in good hands with him. “He's earned it. He has served the court well. He has served law enforcement well.”

Associate Justice Anita Earls said that it was wonderful to see all the people who came to the courtroom to honor Ricky Parks. “What I will say is people don't realize what a hard job it is and he has helped my chambers in ways that, for security reasons, I'm not going to detail, but it is not an easy job. And he has already shown his professionalism, his incredible skills and talents. There's a lot behind this really nice guy that keeps us safe. So, I feel grateful to him.”

In February 2020, Ricky received the Rocky Mount Area Chamber of Commerce's Distinguished Citizen of the Year honor. Ricky had served as the Chief Deputy Marshal for the N.C. Supreme Court since April 2016 and he replaces Tom Bowman, who retired after having served as the Marshal.

The N.C. Supreme Court has the authority to choose who serves as the Marshal. North Carolina law also makes clear that the Marshal has the criminal and civil powers of a Sheriff and any additional powers needed to execute the orders of the N.C. Supreme Court and the N.C. Court of Appeals.



Catawba County Lodge 26 Memorial Service

By Carl Pope – Lodge 26 President

On Friday, May 15th, Catawba County FOP Lodge 26 held their annual Peace Officers Memorial Service. Their annual service was conducted at their Catawba County Peace Officers Memorial which is located at the Catawba Memorial Park Cemetery in Hickory. This service, which is open to the public, takes place each year during National Police Week to honor officers killed in the line of duty.



Catawba County Honor Guard



Lodge 26 Chaplain Helen Bledsoe



Guest Speaker Mr. Larsen, District Director for US Congressman Pat Harrigan

(Continued on next page)

Catawba County Lodge 26 Memorial Service (Continued)



TRIVIA

We Have A WINNER!!!

We have a **Returning Repeat WINNER** of the 2026 May/June issue of our Trivia contest. Champion TRIVIA player **Byron Highland**, State Trustee of Pitt-Greenville Lodge 69, is once again the **Grand Prize Winner** of the BlueNote TRIVIA contest. **Byron** was the first to correctly identify from left to right, Terry Mangum, James Shores, Kelli Jones, and Greg Brown as the four (4) individuals in the Trivia photograph. There were a few other correct answers received but **Byron, a past TRIVIA Winner**, was a speedster and the quickest to respond. The Editor is glad to see that Byron is continuing to recover and getting back in TRIVIA shape!

If you have not won a TRIVIA contest, do not give up. Give it a try!!! To play, just submit your answers and maybe you too can be a BlueNote TRIVIA Grand Prize Winner like **Byron Highland**.

Remember, you should send in your responses as quickly as possible, since the TRIVIA guesses usually come in with lightning speed. I hope to see your name listed as the BlueNote TRIVIA Grand Prize Winner in the next issue.

**LET'S PLAY TRIVIA AND LET THE FUN TIME BEGIN!!!
DRUMROLL!!! TRUMPET FANFARE!!!**



Now for some fun!!! You have now reached the part of this BlueNote that you have been searching for. For many readers, this is the most entertaining and exciting feature of the BlueNote. So, let's play TRIVIA.

This is your opportunity to join in and **Play TRIVIA**. So, for everyone reading this, **get busy and send in your guess for the TRIVIA photo!!!**

Now, put on your thinking caps. Think hard! You can do it!!! Can you identify the **three (3)** illustrious individuals in this photograph?

If you can identify these individuals, just send an email to terrymangum@frontier.com with **your answer** along with **your name** and **your Lodge number**.

Remember to send me your answer as quickly as you can.

The correct TRIVIA answer will be posted in the **September/October 2026** issue of the BlueNote, along with the name of the **first** individual submitting the correct answer. Good Luck!!!

ELECT Greta Philbeck North Carolina State Lodge Sergeant-at-Arms

Brothers and Sisters,

As I write this article for the July/August 2026 issue of the BlueNote, we are less than two months away from the 28th NCFOP Biennial Conference and State Board of Directors Meeting. After careful consideration, I have decided to run for the position of Sergeant-At-Arms and I humbly ask for your support and vote. I would first like to thank our current Sergeant-At-Arms, Greg Brown, for the many years he has held the position and for the great job he has done. If elected, I will do my very best to continue the work he has done for so many years. This was not an easy decision, but one I have been thinking about for some time. When I learned Greg would be seeking another office in our great Order, I felt like this was the opportunity I had been waiting for. I am writing today to share what I have done to prepare for this position. My hope is that after reading this article, you will agree that I would make the best candidate for Sergeant-At-Arms



My career started in Law Enforcement in 1994 with the Rutherford County Sheriff's Office. I concluded my career there in 2015. Those years taught me service, accountability, and professionalism that shaped my career and continue to guide me today.

In 1998, I joined Rutherford County Lodge 36. I have served as the President of Lodge 36. I am currently the State Trustee for Cleveland County 18. I have been fortunate to serve on several committees, including the Labor Committee, Credentialing Committee, and Awards Committee where I currently serve as Chair. In 2015, I received the prestigious Mark Tucker Award.

On the National FOP level, I have served on the National Memorial Committee for 25 years. I currently chair the Credentialing Subcommittee and this committee has been among the most meaningful of my career. The work centers around honoring our fallen officers and supporting their families. It has reinforced the importance of structure, integrity, and attention to detail, which are essential to the role I am seeking with the North Carolina State Lodge as Sergeant-At-Arms.

I have attended every State Conference and National Conference since 1998. These experiences have given me the opportunity to deepen my understanding of our organization and the responsibilities we carry out as leaders.

If given the opportunity to serve as your Sergeant-At-Arms, I will approach the role with the commitment to maintaining order, fairness, and respect within our meetings. I will hopefully have the opportunity to speak with many of you who will be attending our State Conference and would welcome the chance to answer any questions you have about my candidacy for Sergeant-At-Arms.

Thank you in advance for your consideration and your support.

Respectfully,

Greta Philbeck

RE-ELECT Christopher “Chris” Schenk

North Carolina State Lodge 2nd Vice President

Brothers and Sisters of the North Carolina Fraternal Order of Police,

I am writing to ask for your support and your vote in the upcoming North Carolina State Lodge elections at our State Biennial Conference in August. During our 2026 Spring Board of Directors meeting in Carolina Beach, I announced that I would be seeking re-election for the office of 2nd Vice President of the North Carolina State Lodge.

I was elected to the office of 2nd Vice President during the State Biennial Conference in 2024 in Cherokee. I continue to have the support of my wife, Jennifer, and FOP friends, members and leaders because I value their opinion and their honesty. I am pleased to say that they are still very supportive of my decision to seek re-election for this position. I feel that I have worked hard to uphold the integrity of this Office. I have worked to be a voice of reason when difficult decisions have had to be made for this Order. I continue to maintain this position with honesty, integrity, and accountability. I feel that I have earned the trust of the members of this Order.



In 1990, I began my law enforcement career with the East Spencer Police Department. On November 1st, 2020, I retired from full time service with the Salisbury Police Department with 30 years of credited service. I continued as a retired reserve officer for two additional years.

I began my membership with the Fraternal Order of Police with the now closed Orange County Lodge for several years in the early 1990s. I have been a chartered member of the Fraternal Order of Police, Salisbury-Rowan Lodge 87, since 2006. I have been an Executive Board member since 2006, serving terms as President, State Trustee, Lodge Trustee, and currently I am both the President and State Trustee.

For the newer FOP members, allow me to provide you with information on my service to the North Carolina State Lodge. I have served the State Lodge as the Lodge 87 State Trustee since 2010. Currently, I am the State 2nd Vice President. I am a member of the Legal Aid Committee for the State Lodge and have served on this committee since 2018. I also serve as a Co-Chair on the Political Endorsement Committee. I have had the honor to be a member of the new Feeding Heroes food truck committee. This has been an amazing honor to be a part of this from the ground up. Additionally, on the National FOP level, I serve on the National Disaster Area Response Team Committee (Food Preparation). On this committee, I have responded to call out requests in Lafourche Parish, Louisiana (September 2021), Fort Myers, Florida (October 2022), Marion, North Carolina and Aiken, South Carolina (September and October 2024), and Kerrville, Texas (July 2025).

I have also been honored to assist the North Carolina State Lodge with the State Memorial Service and the National Law Enforcement Officer Memorial in Washington, DC.

I have my dedication to our fine organization to offer you and the North Carolina State Lodge as your 2nd Vice President. And I have proven experience, on the Local, State, and National levels, working for our membership and our organization.

As I mentioned, I am retired. Time has always been an issue for those serving on the State Executive Board. Retirement provides me with the time needed to perform the duties of the office fully. Some may argue that a person not currently working in law enforcement will be out of touch with the concerns and issues affecting our working members. I strongly disagree. A retiree who remains actively involved in the FOP stays current on the

RE-ELECT Christopher “Chris” Schenk (Continued)

issues with the working members. As a retiree, I also stay current by being a State Certified Instructor in the local Basic Law Enforcement Training program. Many of our National and State Executive Board members, past and present, are retired. I consider retirement to be a plus for a dedicated and committed State Lodge officer and not a deficiency.

I am a dedicated member of the Fraternal Order of Police, and I truly desire to continue to serve the North Carolina State Lodge as your 2nd Vice President. However, to accomplish this I need your help. So, I am sincerely asking for your support and your vote at our State Biennial Conference in August.

Fraternally yours,
Christopher Schenk
Salisbury-Rowan Lodge 87

ELECT Dean Vernon

North Carolina State Lodge Chaplain

Brothers and Sisters,

I am honored to formally announce that I am running for the position of State Chaplain of the North Carolina Fraternal Order of Police.

My name is Dean Vernon and I have been a member of FOP Cabarrus County Lodge #64 since 2012. I have served as Chaplain since 2012 and currently hold this position. I also currently serve as the Vice President and have held this position since 2015. I had the opportunity to attend the National FOP Pathways to Excellence Education and Empowerment Summit and completed the Excellency in Chaplaincy seminar, March 31-April 1, 2026, held in Las Vegas, Nevada. This seminar really impacted my decision to consider being a candidate for Chaplain and follow my journey with Christ and serve the FOP members in the State of North Carolina if I am elected.

I began my law enforcement career with Cabarrus County Sheriff’s Office in August 1994. I retired as a Sergeant in the Youth & Development School Resource Officer Division in August of 2021. During my career I was assigned to the Communications Division, Patrol Division, Criminal Investigations, SRO Division, Honor Guard and the Special Response Team (SRT).



I served as a board member of the North Carolina Association of School Resource Officers (NCASRO), as the Chaplain from 2015-2020.

I am committed to serving the North Carolina Fraternal Order of Police with integrity, reliability and accountability as I have during my entire Law Enforcement career. I would consider it an honor and blessing to serve as your Chaplain.

I would greatly appreciate your support in my bid for the position of Chaplain for the State Lodge of the North Carolina Fraternal Order of Police.

Fraternally and prayerfully,
Dean Vernon
Cabarrus County Lodge 64
Vice President and Chaplain

RE-ELECT Dennis McCrary North Carolina National Trustee



- Graduated UNCC Police Administration
- Graduated University of Louisville Admin Officer Course
- Retired Charlotte Mecklenburg Police Department
- Served as Lodge 9 Trustee, Treasurer and Vice President
- Served as NC State FOP Treasurer
- Served as NC State Vice President
- Excellent working relationship with FOP National Presidents
- Excellent working relationship with National E Board
- Appointed to Chair Committees by last two National Presidents
- Serving as Chairman of National Disaster Relief Committee
- Responding member of National Disaster Assistance Relief Team
- Represented you in a professional manner whether speaking to 150 members at a National Board Meeting or 3500 at a National Conference
- I am asking for your vote of support at our State Biennial Conference in August at Carolina Beach.

Scott C. Gerson

North Carolina State Lodge

Candidate for Secretary

Brothers and Sisters,

I am honored to announce my candidacy for the Office of Secretary of the North Carolina State Lodge, Fraternal Order of Police. For those who may not know me, I would like to take a moment to introduce myself.

My name is **Scott C. Gerson**, and I have proudly served as a member of Charlotte-Mecklenburg Lodge 9 since 1996, when I began my career with the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police Department 30 years ago. I retired from CMPD in February 2025. Since 2007, I have served as the **Financial Secretary of Lodge 9**, responsible for managing all membership matters within our lodge.

During the 2023 Fall Board of Directors meeting in Greensboro, I was deeply humbled to receive what I consider the highest honor a FOP member can earn: the **Mark R. Tucker Memorial Award**. This award recognizes members who demonstrate exceptional dedication and tenacity in advancing the ideals and values of the Fraternal Order of Police. It remains one of the proudest moments of my career.



I currently serve on several committees at the National, State, and Local levels:

- **National Disaster Relief Area Response Team** – Committee Member for 6 years; newly appointed Subcommittee Chair for Maintenance, Inventory, and Supplies
- **North Carolina National Liaison to the National Wellness Committee** – 6 years
- **State Awards Committee** – 4 years
- **Lodge 9 Legal Aid Committee** – Member and administrator of the Lodge's legal aid plan
- **Lodge 9 Wellness Committee** – Chair for the past 7 years

In addition to these roles, I volunteer each year with the **National Memorial Committee** at the National Police Memorial Service in Washington, D.C. I have also participated in **Day on the Hill**, advocating for our members and educating national representatives on issues critical to law enforcement across our State and Local Lodges.

My commitment to you is simple: **I will work as hard for you at the State Lodge level as I have throughout my years of service.** “Making it happen” has always been my motto, and I intend to bring that same drive, reliability, and dedication to the Office of Secretary.

Thank you in advance for your consideration. I respectfully ask for your support and your vote at our State Conference in Carolina Beach this August.

Fraternally,

Scott C. Gerson

Jason Gardner Candidate for 2nd Vice President of NCFOP

Brothers and Sisters,

I am writing to officially announce my candidacy for **2nd Vice President of the North Carolina Fraternal Order of Police** and to respectfully ask for your support.

My name is **Jason Gardner**, and I currently serve as **President and State Trustee of Lodge #70, Vice President of the NC FOP Foundation, and Chairman of the Travel and Accommodations Committee**. I have also had the opportunity to serve on the **Membership and Recruitment Committee**. Since joining the Fraternal Order of Police in **2008**, I have remained committed to serving this organization and the members who make it strong.

I was recruited and mentored into the FOP by **Brother Tom Lance**, now of **Lodge 16** and my immediate past president. Through his leadership and the relationships I have built across this Order, I have come to deeply appreciate the importance of strong, steady, and servant-minded leadership.

In my law enforcement career, I retired as **Chief Deputy of the Swain County Sheriff's Office** on **April 1 of last year**, and I now serve as a **Sergeant Detective with the Cherokee Indian Police Department**. That continued service reflects the same commitment I bring to the FOP: to work hard, stay engaged, and always move forward.

My campaign for 2nd Vice President is built on one clear priority: **growth**.

I believe the future of the North Carolina FOP depends on our ability to **grow our membership, strengthen our lodges, and expand our voice across this state**. A stronger Order means stronger representation, stronger support for our members and families, and a stronger future for law enforcement professionals throughout North Carolina.

Growth also means investing in the future leadership of this Order. I believe in **mentoring the next generation of FOP leaders** and building a strong culture of **succession** within our lodges and at the state level. Just as I was recruited and mentored, we must be intentional about identifying, encouraging, and preparing those who will carry this organization forward. If we want this Order to continue growing, we must not only bring in new members, but also develop future leaders who are ready to serve.

If elected, I will work to support local lodges, improve communication, encourage recruitment and retention, and help ensure our organization continues to grow in every region of this state. I will also support mentoring and leadership development so we can build a stronger bench for the future of the FOP. I believe leadership should be visible, accessible, and committed to the work. I am ready to serve in that way.



Jason Gardner
Candidate for 2nd Vice President of NCFOP
(Continued)

My message is simple:

If you want this Order to grow, you need a Gardner.

That slogan is more than a phrase. It is my commitment to helping grow this organization and to serving the membership with integrity, energy, and purpose.

I would be honored to earn your trust, your support, and your vote for **2nd Vice President of the North Carolina Fraternal Order of Police.**

Thank you for your leadership, your service, and your dedication to this great Order.

Fraternally,

Jason Gardner

Candidate for 2nd Vice President

North Carolina Fraternal Order of Police

Dear Brothers and Sisters of the North Carolina Fraternal Order of Police,

As I seek your support for re-election as State Vice President of the North Carolina Fraternal Order of Police. I want to take this opportunity to share my vision for the future of our organization and the specific initiatives I believe will strengthen our voice, grow our membership, and better serve law enforcement officers across North Carolina.

The North Carolina Fraternal Order of Police has a proud history of standing as the largest and most influential law enforcement organization in our state. We have been respected advocates for officers, retirees, and their families, consistently working to protect the rights, benefits, and safety of those who serve. However, the challenges facing law enforcement continue to evolve. Recruitment and retention remain major concerns for agencies across North Carolina and the nation. Legislative issues impacting our profession require constant attention. Public perception of law enforcement continues to shift, requiring us to remain engaged, visible, and united.



To meet these challenges, I believe we must continue to modernize and strengthen our organization.

Strengthening Our Committees

One of my priorities is improving the effectiveness and accountability of our state committees. Committees exist to drive initiatives, develop solutions, and provide recommendations that benefit our members and

(Continued on next page)

Candidate James Shores (Continued)

lodges. Too often, organizations allow committees to become inactive or disconnected from their mission.

I propose implementing a policy that requires every state committee to meet at least quarterly and to provide regular reports to the Executive Board. By working closely with the State President, we can ensure every committee has clearly defined goals, measurable objectives, and a meaningful role in advancing the mission of the NCFOP.

These committees should not exist simply on paper; they should be actively working to:

- Develop membership growth strategies.
- Support legislative initiatives.
- Enhance officer wellness programs.
- Strengthen community outreach efforts.
- Improve communication between the state lodge and local lodges.

An engaged committee structure will create greater participation from our members and develop future leaders within our organization.

Building a Stronger Legislative Presence

The legislative process directly affects every law enforcement officer in North Carolina. Whether it involves retirement benefits, officer safety initiatives, recruitment incentives, workers' compensation protections, survivor benefits, or criminal justice reforms, the decisions made in Raleigh have a direct impact on our profession.

I believe the NCFOP should continue to expand its influence and effectiveness in the political process while remaining focused on issues that support law enforcement officers and public safety.

To accomplish this, I would like to explore the creation of a properly structured political action organization that would allow the NCFOP to play a larger role in supporting candidates who demonstrate a genuine commitment to public safety and the law enforcement profession. Such an effort would provide additional resources to educate voters, support qualified candidates, and ensure that the concerns of law enforcement officers remain at the forefront of policy discussions.

Any such effort would be conducted in full compliance with applicable state and federal laws governing political organizations and campaign activity.

Our members deserve to know that when endorsements are made, they are based on thorough evaluation, accountability, and a candidate's demonstrated commitment to supporting law enforcement and the communities we serve.

Developing the Next Generation of NCFOP Members

Perhaps the greatest challenge facing our organization is ensuring that we remain relevant and attractive to younger law enforcement officers.

Many new officers enter the profession with little understanding of the Fraternal Order of Police and the benefits we provide. If we are going to continue growing, we must actively engage the next generation of officers.

I propose establishing a highly aggressive and comprehensive recruitment initiative focused on reaching young officers early in their careers. This effort should include a dedicated recruiting committee composed of members who understand today's workforce, social media, modern communication platforms, and the unique challenges facing younger officers.

(Continued on next page)

Candidate James Shores (Continued)

- Create modern recruiting materials.
- Utilize social media and digital outreach.
- Identify emerging trends within the profession.
- Provide regular recommendations to the Executive Board.

Membership growth is not simply about increasing numbers. It is about building influence. Every new member strengthens our legislative voice, increases our ability to support officers in need, and ensures the long-term stability of our organization.

The future of the NCFOP depends on our ability to recruit, mentor, and retain the next generation of law enforcement professionals.

Enhancing the Feeding Heroes Program

One of the most visible and impactful programs within our organization is Feeding Heroes. Time and again, our members have stepped forward to support officers, first responders, and communities during times of crisis.

I believe we can strengthen this program by creating a more structured statewide operational plan.

My goal is to establish:

- Clear guidelines for program activation.
- Regional response teams.
- A statewide schedule of volunteers.
- Defined communication channels.
- Coordinated resource management.
- Partnerships that allow rapid deployment when assistance is needed.

Whether responding to a natural disaster, supporting officers affected by tragedy, or assisting neighboring states during emergencies, we should have a system in place that allows us to mobilize quickly and efficiently.

The willingness of our members to serve has never been in question. What we need is a clear and consistent framework that maximizes our ability to help others when they need us most.

Moving Forward Together

The North Carolina Fraternal Order of Police has accomplished a great deal, but our best days are still ahead. By improving committee effectiveness, strengthening our legislative influence, aggressively recruiting the next generation of members, and enhancing programs like Feeding Heroes, we can build an organization that is stronger, more responsive, and better prepared for the future.

I have spent my career serving others, and I remain committed to serving the members of the North Carolina Fraternal Order of Police with integrity, transparency, and dedication.

I respectfully ask for your support and your vote for re-election as State Vice President. Together, we can continue building an organization that not only protects the interests of law enforcement officers today but also secures a strong future for those who will wear the badge tomorrow.

Thank you for your trust, your service, and your continued commitment to the Fraternal Order of Police.

Fraternally,

James Shores
State Vice President
North Carolina Fraternal Order of Police
Candidate for Re-Election

North Carolina Fraternal Order of Police

18 Piney Park, Road

Asheville, NC 28816

919-461-4949

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Brothers and Sisters,

This is the last Blue Note before our Biennial State Conference. I look forward to seeing all of you in Carolina Beach. I want to take a moment to thank each of you for all of the work you have done since our last state conference. Together we have made many improvements to our organization and I look forward to what our future holds.

It has been my distinct honor to serve as your State Sergeant at Arms for the last twelve years. I humbly ask for your support and vote as I seek election to the position of Vice President. Together, we can continue to build upon the progress we have made together.

Experience Grounded in Leadership

Twelve years on the State Executive Board has taught me what true leadership requires: making tough, fair, and transparent decisions. Since joining the Fraternal Order of Police in 2005, I have remained deeply rooted in our mission across multiple vital roles

:

Local Leadership Lodge 46: State Trustee (2006-2008, 2010–Present), President (2008–2010), and Interim Secretary.

Community Impact Lodge 46: Chair of our annual Law Enforcement Peace Officers Memorial Service, Cops and Kids program, and Golf Tournament.

A Proven Track Record on the State Level

I have worked tirelessly to strengthen the foundation of the NC Fraternal Order of Police through diverse state level roles:

NC Fraternal Order of Police Foundation Inc.: Current President. previously serving as Vice President, 2nd Vice President, and Secretary.

DART: Director, North Eastern Coordinator, and member.

Membership and Recruitment Committee: Chairman and member.

Service Beyond the Badge

Our responsibility to an officer's family is absolute, especially in their darkest hours. My wife and I have personally traveled to hospitals across the state to provide care packages and comfort to injured officers and their loved ones. I know firsthand the support our families need.

Honors and Representation

Representing you has been the highlight of my career. I was privileged to represent all disabled officers in the United States at the National Police Officers Memorial (2008, 2019) and was honored as the first representative for North Carolina's disabled officers at our State Memorial in 2023. I am also the proud recipient of the 2012 Mark Tucker Award.

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Greg Brown Letter (Continued)

My Commitment to You

Since you first elected me to the State Executive Board in 2014, I have approached every task with diligence, integrity, and fiscal responsibility. I maintain an excellent working relationship with the current Executive Board and Board of Directors, ensuring your member funds are managed with the utmost respect and frugality. “

I am a success today because I had a friend who believed in me and I didn't have the heart to let him down." – Abraham Lincoln

Again, I ask for your vote so that I may continue to be that dedicated friend and advocate for you as your Vice President. Please feel free to reach out to me anytime. I am, as always, at your service.

Respectfully and Fraternally,
Greg Brown
NC Fraternal Order of Police
(252) 813-8898
brownbg1945@gmail.com

