



Ohio FOP Focus

December, 2009

Check inside for:

- **Statehouse Report**
- **FOP Fights Layoffs**
- **Member Benefit Spotlight**
- **Upcoming Events**



Hello Brothers and Sisters,

This is an exciting experiment that the Ohio State Lodge has undertaken. This insert into the FOP Journal is the first of its kind and may be a model for other states to utilize as well. We hope to continue to use this insert to communicate with all 26,000 members of the Ohio FOP be-

President's Message

cause you as members deserve to have the most up to date information possible.

We will continue to use the Ohio FOP E-Focus in the odd numbered months to communicate with you. (If you are not getting regular emails, including the E-Focus, from the Ohio FOP, please provide your name, email address, lodge number and physical address in an email to acrawford@fopohio.org)

The Ohio Police Magazine is being discontinued for the time being because of the cost involved in producing the magazine.

Please look for our FOP Journal inserts on even numbered months in your mailbox and look to your inboxes for the E-Focus on the odd numbered months.

As always, I am committed to providing the best service to our membership. If I or any of your elected leaders or our staff can do anything for you, please do not hesitate to call upon us.

Nick DiMarco

President, Ohio FOP
ndimarco@fopohio.org

Polar Bear Plunge Approaching

The 14th Annual Law Enforcement Polar Bear Plunge will be held at Lake Geneva State Park on February 27th, 2010. You may ask, "Why would I want to jump into a frozen Lake Erie?" The answer is because this event is the largest law enforce-

ment fundraiser in Ohio for Special Olympics.

Plungers raise pledges from family and friends for Special Olympics, one of the chosen charities of the Fraternal Order of Police.

Please visit www.polarbearplunge.org for more information. We can guarantee that you will have a great time and help a very worthy cause if you participate.

Statehouse Report

In Columbus, the Ohio FOP has been working daily to protect the interests of you, our members. We focus on legislative issues that have a direct impact on labor, pension and law and order. We have a legislative committee led by Chairman Mark Drum and Legislative Agents Jay McDonald and Jason Pappas. They have a professional legislative consultant to help guide them in Mike Taylor, former Ohio and National FOP Board member and Jay Smith is your full time staff member dedicated to legislative affairs.

In the 128th General Assembly, the FOP has been working on several issues that we will outline below:

- **Pension Reform** - The Ohio Retirement Study Commission mandated all of Ohio's five public pension plans to submit a plan to achieve a 30 year funding level. This level basically means that the plans have to enough assets on hand to cover 30 years worth of expenditures. The only plan to currently meet this legislative requirement is the PERS system. Our members are primarily in the Ohio Police and Fire System (OP-F) and the Public Employees Retirement System (PERS.) The OP-F, the system submitted a plan to get them close to the 30 year level that raised the retirement age to 52 for new hires, delayed the COLA adjustment until members were 55, raised the contribution rates for members and employers, changed from a high three year calculation to a high five year calculation to set your pension, changed the DROP plan from a minimum of 3 years participation to 5 years and lowered the interest guarantee from 5% to 3% for those in DROP and other things.

In PERS, they were not required to change anything since they were already in compliance but they still choose to submit a plan that reduces benefits to members. Raising the retirement age by two years (although they recognize the need for its law enforcement members to stay consistent with OP-F, so if OP-F raises the retirement age, they will to), change COLA from 3% to whatever the consumer price index is with a maximum of 3%, change high three years to high five years to calculate the pension amount, increase amount members need to make per year for it to count as a year of service and some other changes as well.

The Ohio FOP is working to insure that the best interest of the members are the primary consideration for lawmakers when they consider these proposals in 2010, while at the same time realizing that the future viability of all of the pensions systems is everyone's top priority.

- **Issue 3 - Ohio's Casino Initiative.** With the passage of Issue 3, enabling legislation will need to be implemented. This legislation will deal with how best to set up the Gaming Commission, how to utilize the funds for law enforcement training that were part of this issue and other issues important to the Ohio FOP. We will continue to play a role in this important issue that was endorsed by our members in July of 2009.
- **DNA legislation** - The Ohio FOP supports parts of Senate Bill 77 and hopes to improve other parts of the legislation. The provisions we support include the taking of a DNA sample from every felony arrestee, allowing convicted felons the opportunity to obtain DNA testing to prove their innocence even while on parole or probation. We are working to improve the provisions in the bill regarding the way line-ups and photo line-ups are done, the requirements for biological evidence retention and destruction and mandated electronic recording of interrogations in basically all rape and murder cases.

If you have questions regarding these, or any legislative issue, please contact Jay Smith at 614-224-5700 or jsmith@fopohio.org

FOP Fights Layoffs

FOP Lodges and FOP / Ohio Labor Council units are fighting attempts by employers across the state to use the current economic crisis to attack their collective bargaining agreements. Employers are trying to obtain concessions by threatening layoffs of law enforcement officers. Whether or not to take concessions is not something that the State Lodge is going to tell you to do. Those decisions are best made locally. Only you know if there are steps employers can take to minimize the budget shortfalls. Only you know what the long term consequences of concessions are to you and your brothers and sisters.

Those that have been successful in fighting concessions and layoffs have done so because of political might. Publicly support those who support you and challenge those who are being political cowards by applying any budget shortfalls to every department equally, instead of prioritizing any budget cuts. Challenge politicians by asking who will watch sex offenders in your jurisdictions when deputies are cut, who will take drunk drivers off the streets if cops are cut. Stress the fact that politicians are cutting public safety and that affects every member of the community. Be politically active, it is your best bet to keeping everyone employed.

FOP fights for H1N1 Vaccinations for members

The Fraternal Order of Police of Ohio asked Governor Strickland why law enforcement officers were not on the priority list for those who receive the H1N1 vaccination during a meeting at his office in November.

The Governor responded that the rules were made at the CDC in Washington but that he understood

our concerns.

It was explained that they expect a large shipment of the vaccine in early December and anyone who wants a vaccine should be able to receive it soon.

FOP Lodge 9 in Columbus asked its US Rep. Pat Tiberi to check with the CDC to see if law en-

forcement can be added to the list of priority recipients for the vaccine.

We will keep you up to date on this topic. Stay Safe!

Benefits of Ohio FOP Membership

One of the many benefits of Ohio FOP membership is that you can purchase Ohio Fraternal Order of Police license plates. The process for obtaining them is very simple.

First, you contact the Ohio FOP at 1-800-FOP-OLCI and the staff will get the needed information to verify your

membership and they will fill out and mail you the form you need to give to your local BMV. Or, you can go to www.fopohio.org and under the member programs button, you can find the form there, fill it out and email it to the State FOP office. You then take the form to the BMV and you can get your

plates. They can be personalized or the standard plates.

These plates show your pride in your profession and your membership in the greatest law enforcement organization in the world.





VS.



The Fraternal Order of Police have purchased group tickets to the Columbus Blue Jackets vs. the Detroit Red Wings on December 28 at Nationwide Arena in Columbus. The tickets are \$26 each (a \$10 savings per ticket) and are in section 223. There is a very limited supply, so if you want watch a good hockey game in a beautiful arena, contact Jay Smith at jsmith@fopohio.org. The tickets will be doled out on a first come, first have basis.

Do not forget the FOP of Ohio Board Meeting on January 23 at Capital City Lodge 9 in Columbus. The address is 6800 Shrock Hill Court, Columbus, Ohio.

The meeting will begin at 1:00 p.m. and all members are welcome to attend!

FOP OF OHIO CALENDAR OF EVENTS

FOP of Ohio Winter Board Meeting	January 23	Columbus
Climb for a Cure (Cystic Fibrosis Fundraiser)	February 27	Columbus
Polar Bear Plunge (Special Olympics)	February 27	Geneva Lake
2nd Annual FOP friends and family cruise	April 18—26	Western Caribbean
National Peace Officer Memorial Day	May 15	Everywhere
Greater Cleveland 25th Annual Peace Officers Memorial Service	May 20-23	Cleveland
FOP of Ohio 76th Annual Conference	July 17-20	Independence