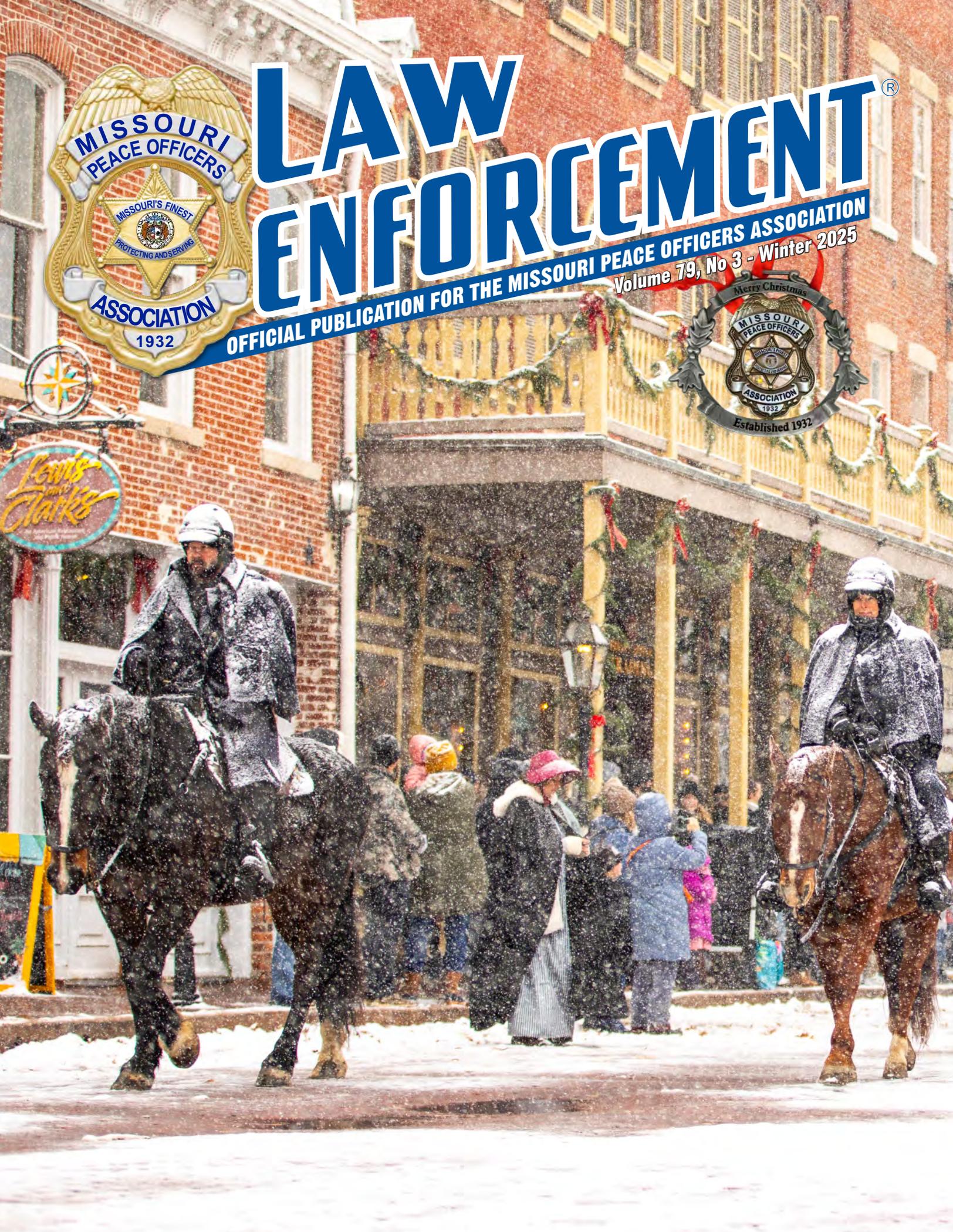
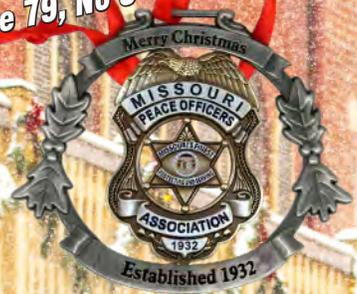




LAW ENFORCEMENT[®]

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION FOR THE MISSOURI PEACE OFFICERS ASSOCIATION
Volume 79, No 3 - Winter 2025





TOWING SERVICES

At Bolin Services, A & A Towing Services, A2B Towing & Recovery, Cardinal Towing, and Lazer Tow, our customers have always been our top priority. With experienced staff and reliable equipment, we've proudly served our communities for over five decades. Whether it's a car, bus, coach, loaded tractor-trailer, or industrial equipment, we have the capability to tow or transport your vehicle anywhere, anytime.

(314) 427-TOWS



LAW ENFORCEMENT



Official Publication for the **Missouri Peace Officers Association**
Volume 79, Number 3 Winter 2025

COLUMNS:

- 2 President's Message
- 3 From the Executive Director
- 4 Chaplain's Message, Rev. Leo J. Spezia
- 5 Chaplain's Message, Rev. James "JC" Beckner

Front Cover Photo: Mounted Patrol from St Charles City Police Department at the Christmas Traditions parade on Main Street in St Charles.

MPOA office phone numbers:
phone: 816.581.3767 fax: 816.581.3768
the.mpoa@mopoa.org

OFFICERS

PRESIDENT

Mr. Tom Kerns,
Ret. US Postal Inspector

FIRST VICE PRESIDENT

Captain Dave Billings
Raymore PD

SECOND VICE PRESIDENT

Sergeant Anthony "Nino"
Consiglio, Gladstone PD

CHAPLAIN WEST SIDE

Reverend James "JC" Beckner
Ozark

CHAPLAIN EAST SIDE

Father Leo Spezia
Eureka

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Chief Bob Ronkoski (retired)
bobronkoski@mopoa.org

ASSISTANT TO THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Carla Bruemmer
the.mpoa@mopoa.org

ARTICLES:

- 7 2026 MPOA Application for Membership
- 8 Increase in Semi-Truck Size and Weight Poses Public Safety Threat to Missourians
- 9 Remembering Missouri's Fallen Officers
- 10 New to MPOA
- 11 Presidents & Past Executive Directors
- 13 MPOA is Seeking Nominations
- 14 Facts About MPOA
- 15 Recruiting Section
- 16 Agency Spotlight: O'Fallon Police Department
- 20 21st Annual MPOA & MPOF Golf Tournament
- 21 MPOA Christmas Ornaments
- 23 I Need Your Help!
- 24 Human Trafficking in Missouri - Together We Can Make A Difference
- 26 The Silence After The Badge: A Sergeant's Blunt Truth About Retirement
- 28 Boot Slappin D-Wie
- 31 2026 Annual Business Meetings, Membership Meetings & Awards Luncheon
- 32 Chief Bob Ronkoski Retires from St. Charles Community College Police Department
- 36 Coalition Against Bigger Trucks on Capitol Hill

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Sgt. Scott Barthelmass
St. Louis County Park Ranger
Chief Graham Burnley (retired)
Nevada PD
Officer Chandra Kelly (retired)
Olathe PD
Major Rob Hays
Clay CO SO
Major Lafayette "Gene" Lacy (retired)
Missouri State Highway Patrol
Major Dale Schmidt (retired)
Missouri State Highway Patrol
SA Carl "Dutch" Schultz (retired)
FBI St. Louis
Chief Dave Starbuck (retired)
Grain Valley PD
Captain Jon Romas
Creve Coeur PD
Captain Scott White
Missouri State Highway Patrol

ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Chief Jimmy Wilson
Raymore PD
Kevin Garrison, President
Protective & Investigative Services
St. Louis
Lt. Col. Mike Hand (retired)
Kansas City Police
Chief James Huff (retired)
UCM Director of Public Safety
Chief Larry Joiner (retired)
Kansas City Police
Lt. Col. Raymond Lauer (retired)
St. Louis Metro Police
Chief John McGovern (retired)
Excelsior Springs Police
Chief Gary McMullin (retired)
Weatherby Lake PD
Col. Ron Replogle (retired)
Missouri State Highway Patrol
Chief Kris Turnbow (retired)
Raymore PD
Chief Michael Wiegand
Eureka PD (retired)

Editorial guidelines for articles in *Law Enforcement*:

Law Enforcement encourages readers to submit articles and information for publication. Articles should be submitted in a Word document and *Law Enforcement* reserves the right to edit submissions. Readers are also encouraged to submit pictures and picture captions that portray Missouri law enforcement activities. Digital images must be a high resolution (300 dpi) and saved as a jpg or tif file. When taking pictures using a digital camera, it is important that the setting on the camera be set at the finest setting. This will ensure that the images will be taken at a high resolution which is important for magazine print. Articles in Word format and digital pictures may be sent to the.mpoa@mopoa.org.



Law Enforcement magazine is published April, August and December and is the official publication of the Missouri Peace Officers Association, INC., 101 West McCarty, Suite 200, Jefferson City, MO 65101. Membership dues (including Law Enforcement magazine) \$30 per year Single copies \$4 with checks payable to "MPOA" mailed to the HQ in Jefferson City. Products and services advertised do not carry MPOA endorsement. The MPOA reserves the right to reject content of any copy. The Executive Committee, Advisory Committee, Officers and editors neither endorse or guarantee completeness or accuracy of material published that is obtained from sources considered reliable, nor accept liability resulting from the adoption or use of any methods, procedures, or statements recommended or complied. ©Copyright 2012. All rights reserved by the Missouri Peace Officers Association, Inc.

Chief Bob Ronkoski (retired)
Executive Director/Editor

Carla Bruemmer
Editorial Assistant

Mike Haynes
Director/Advertising

Susan McMichael
Graphic Design

WINTER 2025 / 1



President's Message

Thomas G. Kerns
U.S. Postal Inspector (Ret)



It is hard to believe that another year, 2025, has come and about to leave. As I reflect on the past year and the strides that we have made as an organization, it has been nothing but amazing. We are eager to continue the fine tradition into 2026. We will be saying goodbye to Carla Bruemmer who will be retiring and we owe her a great thank you for all that she has done over the years with MPOA. We welcome Christina Chapple as she will be taking over Carla's role. Carla is training Christina and I appreciate both of them serving the MPOA and making this transition smooth.

I also want to thank Bob Ronkoski for his dedication and commitment to the MPOA. He ensures that the organization is meeting its obligations for the betterment of

law enforcement in the state of Missouri.

We are about to enter 2026 excited about the future of the MPOA. We are growing so please spread the word about the organization and pass the magazine around so others can read about the happenings and articles published.

I want to thank all the law enforcement officers for what they do every single day. They play a vital role serving our communities and making them safe for all of us. Their job is dangerous and very difficult. I believe in "Blessed are the peacemakers for they shall be called the children of God." During this holiday season, embrace your family and tell them how much you care for and love them. You make sacrifices all year long and they support us every day so we can

make our communities safe. Stay healthy, vigilant, and most importantly stay safe. Have a wonderful Christmas, Holidays, and New Year.

God Bless you all.



Shop with a First Responder with St Charles Police Department, St Charles Fire Department, St Charles Parks & Recreation Department, St Charles Animal Control, Reach St Charles, Kiwanis and St Charles Lions Club.



From the Executive Director

Chief Bob Ronkoski (retired)

Another holiday season is upon us and 2025 is coming to an end. Our cover this magazine shows a few holiday scenes and activities from the east side of the state. Each year at this time I ask members to send me holiday pictures that I can use in future issues. You can also send me pictures and stories from your community all year and I will work them into our magazines throughout the year. E-mail them to me at bobronkoski@mopoa.org.

We hope to continue to highlight a Missouri police agency in every issue however, we need your assistance to do that. Please contact the MPOA office if you would like to share your department's history in one of our future magazines. With most agencies continuing to struggle with recruitment and retention, we are continuing to offer the recruitment section in our *Law Enforcement* magazine. There is special pricing available to Missouri police agencies. Contact me for more information at bobronkoski@mopoa.org. The MPOA *Law Enforcement* magazine is distributed to over 1,000 MPOA members and associate members, as well as all police agencies, sheriffs' agencies, and police academies across the state of Missouri.

The 21st annual MPOF Golf Tournament will be held on Friday, May 8, 2026. The cost remains \$100 per player, \$400 for a foursome. That covers greens fees, golf cart & lunch. The tournament will be held in our normal location at the Mules National Golf Club in Warrensburg, MO. Please register for the tournament and help us to add hole sponsors. We are always

looking for donations for the raffles and bag stuffers for the goodie bags for the golfers. If you can't make it, please consider making a cash donation to help support the event. Donations will help the Foundation with our college scholarships and eighth grade essay contest awards as well as line of duty death benefits. You will find the registration form in this magazine. If you are on the east side of the state, please consider putting a team together and taking a road trip to the west side of the state for the tournament.

There will be a lot of changes at the MPOA in 2026. Carla Bruemmer will be retiring, and we will have a new person learning all the things that Carla does for our organization. We welcomed Christina Chapple to our team this past fall and she will take the helm when Carla retires. We thank Carla for her many years of service at the MPOA/MPOF.

During 2024 and 2025 we finished several projects including a new webpage design, a new membership records management program along with new office computers that could run on the new windows operating system. Expenses are constantly going up, and we needed to increase our membership dues to cover the increasing costs for operating the organization. There is a slight increase from \$35 to \$40 dollars for 2026. Please consider a donation to the MPOF or MPOA in 2026 so we can continue to offer the scholarships and other needed assistance throughout the year. Any amount is appreciated.

The growth of our membership, increasing our training, enhancing



our scholarships, increasing donations, and expanding our law enforcement recruitment efforts will continue to be our priority for 2026. I am always open to ideas from our members for additional priorities and projects. Please contact me with your suggestions.

As I always say to all our active and retired first responders, take care of yourself and your mental health. Watch your fellow first responders, currently working and retired, for signs of stress and mental health issues. It's our responsibility to ensure that they receive the mental health care they need. Have a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. Help us make 2026 a productive year for the MPOA & MPOF.

MPOA Executive Director Bob Ronkoski recently retired from his position as Assistant Vice-President for Public Safety and Chief of Police for the St. Charles Community College and is the prior Mayor of the City of Cottleville, Missouri. Bob previously retired at the rank of Lieutenant from the St. Ann Police Department. Chief Ronkoski has a bachelor's degree from Columbia College of Missouri and a master's degree from Lindenwood University in criminal justice administration. If you have ideas you would like to share with Bob about the MPOA & MPOF, please e-mail him at bobronkoski@mopoa.org.



Chaplain's Message East Side

Father Leo J. Spezia



Most Sacred Heart Church
Eureka, MO



A brick slammed into a man's car door. He slammed on the brakes and jumped out of his car to check what happened. He was angry and saw a boy near his car and yelled at him: "What have you done to my car? Why did you do that?"

The boy said "I am sorry, sir, but I didn't know what else to do. I have been throwing bricks because no one would stop to help me." With tears, the boy pointed to a parked car nearby and said "This is my brother. He fell out of his wheelchair and is in pain, and I cannot lift him. Please, could you help me get him back in his wheelchair?"

The man helped the boy get his brother back into his wheelchair and checked to see how he was. He did have a few cuts and bruises, but said he was okay to get going.

When the man left to go back to his car, he heard the young boy say, "Thank you, sir, and God bless you." The man was shocked, but when he got back to his car looked at the bulging door. The damage from the brick was noticeable, and he had almost forgotten about it. But then he thought, "I am not going to repair this." He heard a voice say to him, "Don't go through life so fast that someone has to throw a brick at you to get your attention."

Life is like that. Something or someone talks to our hearts or speaks gently to our souls. Sometimes when we don't listen, a brick gets thrown our way. It is our choice to hear the whisper or wait for the brick.

Rev. Leo J. Spezia
MPOA Chaplain – East Side

Father Leo was born on "The Hill" in St. Louis, Missouri in 1950 and ordained from Kenrick Seminary in May 1976. He resides in Eureka and has the honor of being chaplain for law enforcement agencies on the federal, state, and local levels in Missouri and the chaplain of the St. Louis County & Municipal Fire Academy. He enjoyed being the Director of Family Ministry / Family Life for the Archdiocese of St. Louis from 1979-1992, and is presently the Spiritual Director for the Permanent Diaconate for the Archdiocese. Father Leo is also a member of several national groups and organizations dealing with family services, Critical Incident Stress Management training, and support for law enforcement / fire/emergency service personnel – as well as specializing in PTSD. He is also a founding member of the Missouri Law Enforcement Funeral Team and the Missouri Fire Funeral Team (dealing with the line-of-duty death in Missouri for both fire and police.)



Chaplain's Message West Side

Reverend James "JC" Beckner

READING BETWEEN THE LINES



At some point in your life, you have probably heard at least one of these idioms.

The bottom line is, toe the line, you're out of line, what you see is what you get, and there are many more that people use as code. They say one thing but mean something else. At times it's a guessing game to figure out what a person is really trying to say.

As a law enforcement officer, you are called upon to enforce the law and there are many times you must "READ BETWEEN THE LINES."

The one word for this phrase is "Inference." "It is the process of reaching a logical conclusion based on available facts or evidence. So the process is drawing a conclusion using external knowledge or established rules of logic.

If you see a person with clean teeth, we could infer that they must own a toothbrush, but another possibility might be they just went to the dentist. Personally, I hope they own a toothbrush and use it myself included.

When you make a traffic stop and the driver says, no I have not been drinking, you can easily "read between the lines." You can smell it, hear it in slurred speech, and witness the loss of physical ability to walk a straight line.

Now think about the word Discernment. That is the ability to judge well, get insight into the situation or person especially if the truth is not obvious.

Both words, Inference and Discernment have a different meaning and yet can be very helpful

responding to the public.

My prayer for you is that you will continue to sharpen your ability through "Inference" and that God will give you the ability to judge well and give you right insight into each situation or person as you serve your community.

Yes, **discernment is different from inference**, though both involve a mental process of understanding information.

Inference

- **Definition:** An inference is the process of reaching a logical conclusion based on available facts or evidence. It involves a reasoning process, which can be deductive (conclusion must be true if premises are true) or inductive (conclusion is probable given the evidence).
- **Process:** Inference is an act of drawing a conclusion, often using external knowledge or established rules of logic, where the conclusion is a logical consequence of the premises.
- **Example:** If you see a person with clean teeth, you might infer they own a toothbrush, but it is not a certainty as other possibilities exist (e.g., they just went to the dentist).



Discernment

- **Definition:** Discernment is the ability to perceive differences, judge well, and gain a keen insight into the true nature of a situation, person, or an idea, especially when the truth is not immediately obvious. It is a skill that combines observation, experience, intuition, and understanding.
- **Process:** Discernment is often described as a more holistic process involving analysis and gathering information, which leads to a well-informed judgment or choice. It is less about a strict logical sequence (like inference) and more about a refined ability to make sound, often subtle, distinctions.
- **Example:** A person with discernment would be able to distinguish between genuine kindness and manipulative intent in someone's actions, a judgment that goes beyond simple facts and involves a deeper understanding of human behavior.

KEY DIFFERENCES

Feature	Discernment	Inference
Primary Function	To perceive differences and judge the true nature of something.	To draw a conclusion from evidence or premises.
Reliance on	Often relies on intuition, experience, and deep understanding in addition to facts.	Primarily relies on facts, evidence, and rules of logic.
Nature of Conclusion	Involves a qualitative judgment or a well-founded assessment.	Involves a logical consequence or a probabilistic conclusion.
Scope	Often applied to complex, abstract areas like character, motives, and spiritual matters.	Applied widely in logical reasoning, science, and everyday problem-solving.

In summary, inference is a step in logical reasoning, while discernment is a broader skill involving astute judgment and perception that helps in making sound decisions or understanding subtle truths.

Phrases with "line" include **"bottom line"** (the final result), **"draw a line"** (to set a boundary), and **"toe the line"** (to conform to rules). Other examples are **"in line"** (in a queue), **"out of line"** (behaving inappropriately), **"down the line"** (in the future), and **"read between the lines"** (to find a hidden meaning).

Phrases about behavior and rules

- **Toe the line:** To conform to rules or authority.
- **Draw the line:** To set a limit on what one is willing to do.
- **In line:** To be in a queue or to be in agreement.
- **Out of line:** Behaving in a way that is inappropriate or disrespectful.

- **Walk the line:** To behave in an accepted manner or to maintain a careful balance.

Phrases about communication and information

- **Drop a line:** To write a short, informal letter or email.
- **Read between the lines:** To understand something that is not directly stated.
- **The bottom line:** The most important facts or the final result.
- **Feed someone a line:** To tell someone a lie or an untruth.
- **Hot line:** A direct telephone or other communication link, often for emergencies.

Phrases about time and position

- **Down the line:** At a later time.
- **End of the line:** The final point or the end of something.
- **Somewhere along the line:** At some point in time or in some way.
- **In line with:** In agreement with or similar to.

Chaplain Beckner was born in Marshfield, Missouri and raised on a dairy farm. After graduating from Marshfield High School in 1971, he attended Southwest Baptist College in Bolivar, Missouri and graduated with a bachelor's in art and a Minor in Christianity. He married Diane Hockett in 1975 and moved to Raytown Missouri. In 1978, they moved to Fort Worth, Texas where he began his Masters work at Southwestern Seminary. He then graduated in 1980 with a master's in religious education and served churches in Texas and Missouri. In 2002, they moved to Raymore, Missouri, and Pastored First Baptist of Raymore. Chaplain Beckner then received training in Police Chaplaincy through the International Conference of Police Chaplains. He served as a chaplain with the Raymore Police Department until moving to Ozark Missouri in 2019.



Missouri Peace Officers Association 2026 APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP

New or Renewal

**I wish to become a member of the Missouri Peace Officers Association,
Entitled to all the services, benefits, and privileges extended to members thereof.**

Dues \$40 for 2026 (January 1 – December 31)

Round up my payment to support MPOA with a \$10 ___ \$20 ___ Other \$ ___ donation

Name: _____

Title: _____

Agency: _____

Preferred Mailing Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Email: _____

(To receive updates, training, events, items of interest, invoice when paying by credit card, etc.)

Cell: _____ Office: _____

Renewal: _____ New Member: _____ Associate Member: _____

Sponsored by: _____, MPOA Member

Title: _____

Agency: _____

Please make check payable to: MPOA

Mail to: Missouri Peace Officers Association
101 West McCarty Street – Suite 200
Jefferson City, MO 65101

Questions: (816) 581-3767 Email: the.mpoa@mopoa.org



To pay by credit card #: _____ Exp: _____

Increases in Semi-Truck Size and Weight Poses Public Safety Threat to Missourians

Op Ed Submitted by Bob Ronkoski, Executive Director for MPOA



As the oldest and largest association of law enforcement personnel in Missouri, the organization I represent strives to ensure the public safety of our officers and the communities we serve. These efforts include advocacy against legislation that we deem a threat to Missourians. And right now, Congress is considering enacting laws that would allow much larger, and much more dangerous, tractor trailers on the nation's highways.

As first responders, many of our members have witnessed the tragic outcome of large semi-truck crashes. Key factors that determine the severity of a crash are vehicle velocity and mass. The potential severity of a truck crash increases as their weight increases, thereby boosting the likelihood that injuries will be more serious or result in fatalities.

With the benefit of decades of safety research and numerous studies, the science is crystal clear -- a heavier truck is not a safer truck.

The 2016 U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT) Comprehensive Truck Size and Weight Limits Study Report

outlined serious safety concerns with heavier trucks. Trucks that are 91,000 pounds and greater have a 47% to 400% higher crash rate than 80,000-pound trucks in limited state testing.

In addition, trucks over 80,000 pounds have an 18% increase in brake violations. According to a 2016 study by the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety, large trucks with out-of-service violations such as brake violations are 362% more likely to be involved in a crash.

The most recently available data from the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) and the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) paints a grim picture. In 2023, there were 5,086 large-truck crashes in Missouri (FMCSA) resulting in 120 fatalities (NHTSA) and 2,108 injuries (FMCSA). Over the 10-year period between 2013 and 2023, truck crash fatalities rose by 41% in Missouri. Considering this dangerous trend, we shouldn't even be considering putting more dangerous trucks on the road.

No truck trip begins or ends on the interstate system. In fact,

according to the Bureau of Transportation Statistics, 44% of truck traffic operates off the interstates today. Heavier trucks will start and continue onto local and state roads to make deliveries or accomplish their "first/last mile of travel." In Missouri, our local roads are often narrow two-lane roads, often without a shoulder, that were not built for this size of a vehicle. Trucks traveling on these roads as well as those that end up in residential areas would put public safety in jeopardy.

A priority of this Congress is passing the next surface transportation reauthorization before the September 2026 expiration. This new infrastructure bill will be used to fund roads and bridges across the country. Unfortunately, those in favor of bigger and heavier trucks are gearing up to add language raising truck size and weight limits.

The law enforcement members of my organization join law enforcement groups across the country in voicing our concerns and opposition to this legislation due to the public safety consequences associated with bigger and heavier trucks. One additional fatality is one too many. Legislation should never gamble with the lives of law enforcement, emergency responders and motorists. Protecting the public should always be the priority.

We strongly encourage that our Missouri congressional delegation joins our efforts to save lives

Remembering Missouri's Fallen Officers - Officers Who Have Given Their Lives for the Citizens of the State of Missouri

In this continuing series we look to remember the service and sacrifices of Missouri's fallen law enforcement officers. With each edition of this magazine, five officers who have given their lives in the line of duty are featured. Officers are selected at random, from various agencies throughout the state.

Let us never forget those who have come before us.

Patrolman Albert Demortiers

Cape Girardeau Police Department, Missouri

End of Watch: Sat., Oct. 27, 1917

Age: 35 / Tour: 6 months

Cause: Gunfire

Weapon: Handgun; .32 caliber

Offender: Died in prison

Patrolman Demortiers was shot and killed by a suspect he had removed from the street earlier in the night for being drunk. The suspect was sentenced to 18 years in prison but died after serving 7 years.

Patrolman Demortiers had served with the Cape Girardeau Police Department for 6 months. He was survived by his wife.

Sheriff Roy E. Patterson

Barton County Sheriff's Office, Missouri

End of Watch: Thurs., Aug. 17, 1944

Age: 48 / Tour: 4 years

Badge: Not available / Cause: Gunfire

Weapon: Handgun; .32 caliber

Offender: Sentenced to life

Sheriff Roy Patterson and his 18-year-old son were shot and killed by three robbery suspects on US 160 west of Lamar.

The sheriff had been called at home at 4:00 am and notified that a gas station had just been robbed. The sheriff and his son immediately got dressed and responded to the area. The two parked their vehicle along the roadway and waited for the suspect vehicle to pass.

When they saw the vehicle, they immediately overtook it and waved it over. After speaking with the three occupants, the sheriff took one of the men's wallets and told them to turn around and drive back towards town as he followed. The suspect vehicle drove a short distance before pulling over. Two of the occupants approached the sheriff's car, pulled out their .32 caliber pistols, and told the sheriff to give them his gun.

The sheriff immediately drew his weapon and fired a shot. The two men then returned fire, fatally shooting the sheriff. One of the suspects then shot the sheriff's son in the head, killing him.

All three suspects fled the scene and remained at large for almost one year. They were eventually apprehended, confessed to the murders, and sentenced to life in prison. Two of the men escaped prison in 1948 but were apprehended.

Sheriff Patterson was a United States Army WWI veteran and had served as Sheriff of the Barton County Sheriff's Office for four years. He was survived by his wife and seven children, including his son, who was murdered along with him.

Night Marshal Ray Richardson

Cardwell Police Department, Missouri

End of Watch: Wed., Sept. 10, 1952

Age: 53 / Cause: Assault

Incident Date: Tue., September 9, 1952

Weapon: Blunt object

Offender: Died in prison

Night Marshal Ray Richardson was beaten to death with a cue stick while attempting to arrest the owner of a pool hall at 8:30 pm.

He was taken to a local hospital where he died shortly after midnight.

The 44-year-old suspect was sent to prison where he died in 1960.

Marshal Richardson was survived by his wife and two sons.

Field Deputy Christopher Lee Castetter

Barry County Sheriff's Office, Missouri

End of Watch: Thurs., Nov. 28, 1996

Age: 29 / Tour: 2 years / Badge: 52

Cause: Gunfire

NEW TO MPOA

The following members have joined the Association since the last edition was published.

Laborers' Local 42 – Law Enforcement Division

Division Director David Reagan



Creve Coeur Police Department

Police Officer Sean Burkett



Please support the advertisers who help make this publication possible.



Special thanks to our advertisers!

Continued from page 9.

Incident Date: Wed., Nov. 27, 1996

Weapon: Handgun

Offender: Executed in 2015

Field Deputy Christopher Castetter was shot and killed after responding to a suspicious vehicle call.

The operator of the vehicle had just assaulted his girlfriend and was waiting for her to return home. As Deputy Castetter pulled up the subject opened the door to his patrol car and shot him in the head.

The subject was convicted of murder and sentenced to death in June 1999. He was executed by lethal injection on March 17th, 2015.

Deputy Castetter had served with the Barry County Sheriff's Office for two years. He is survived by his wife and three children.

Corporal David P. Jones

Benton County Sheriff's Office, Missouri

End of Watch: Thurs., April 28, 2022

Age: 65 / Tour: 45 years

Cause: Heart attack

Corporal David Jones died from a heart attack after responding to multiple domestic and assault calls.

Corporal Jones had performed first aid on a victim who had been set on fire, suffering from significant burns. The next day he reported for work and stated that he was not feeling well. Throughout the day, he responded to a few traffic accidents and another domestic assault call involving a minor child. At 8 pm, he was found unresponsive in his vehicle and attempts to revive him were unsuccessful.

Corporal Jones had served with the Benton County Sheriff's Office for almost five years and previously served with the Warsaw Police Department for 40 years, retiring as the Chief of Police. He is survived by his wife, two daughters, three bonus children, 17 grandchildren, one great-grandchild, mother, and sister.

Data source: The Officer Down Memorial Page, Inc. (www.odmp.org), used with permission.

Compiled by Scott Barthelmass, Sgt. (Retired) Overland Police Department, Ranger St. Louis County Park Rangers, Founder Missouri Law Enforcement Funeral Assistance Team, and Board Member Missouri Peace Officers Association.

Presidents & Past Executive Directors

Recently at one of our board meetings, the board was discussing MPOA's history of past presidents and executive directors. We feel these lists are complete and accurate as possible and we wanted to share with our members. We hope you find this history interesting.

MPOA Secretary/Treasurers - Executive Directors

1940 – 1975: Hank Johnson Title was Secretary/Treasurer
1975 – 1989: Peter Nenno Title was Secretary/Treasurer
1989 – 2001: Clarence Hoffman Title was Secretary/Treasurer

1994 Secretary/Treasurer Title Changed to Executive Director

2001 – 2003: Michael Hand, Executive Director
2003 – 2012: James Huff, Executive Director
2012 – 08-01-2014: Kristofer Turnbow, Executive Director
08-01-2014 – 12-31-2021: Dale Schmidt, Executive Director
01-01-22 – Present: Robert Ronkoski, Executive Director

MPOA Presidents Since 1925

1925-28	Andrew McDonnell, Chief, Webster Groves	1952-53	Leslie K. Hunt, Sheriff, Vernon County
1928-29	Joseph Gerck, Chief, St. Louis	1953-54	Fred O. Lain, Chief, Brentwood
1929-30	Hugh Raphael, Chief, St. Louis	1954-55	Jack Barnes, Sheriff, Dunklin County
1930-31	Grant Ward, Chief Special Agent, Wabash	1955-56	Charles J. Tacke, Chief, Clayton
1931-32	E.M. Matthews, Chief, St. Joseph	1956-57	Brown Hairgrove, Chief, Overland
1932-33	A.Y. Slate, Chief, Columbia	1957-58	C. Warren Norman, Chief, Springfield
1933-34	Jefferson Smedley, Sheriff, Jackson County	1958-59	John Dennis, Sheriff, Benton County
1934-35	W.L. Marlin, Chief, Sedalia	1959-	John Murphy, Chief Special Agent, Wabash (2 months)
1935-36	B.R. Williams, Sheriff, Macon County	1959-61	Raymond Hensley, Colonel, St. Louis County
1936-37	Thomas O'Meara, Chief, Glendale	1961-62	John Crites, Sheriff, Cape Girardeau County
1937-38	Clay Groom, Sheriff, Cooper County	1962-63	Curtis Brostron, Chief, St. Louis
1938-39	O.P. Higgins, Director, Kansas City PD	1963-64	Hugh Waggoner, Colonel, MSHP
1939-40	Harry Rodgers, Sheriff, Jasper County	1964-65	C.M. Kelley, Chief, Kansas City
1940-41	James E. Kelley, Chief, St. Joseph	1965-66	Steve Rimmer, Sheriff, Saline County
1941-42	Ruel N. Womack, Sheriff, Greene County	1966-67	O.J. Brueggeman, Chief, Richmond Heights
1942-43	Chas J. Tacke, Chief, Clayton	1967-68	C.R. Johnson, Chief Special Agent, MO Pacific RR
1943-44	Arnold Willman, Sheriff, St. Louis County	1968-69	Marion Beeler, Chief, Raytown
1944-45	Melvin Swepston, Chief, St. Joseph	1969-70	Maurice H. McCue, Chief, St. Ann
1945-46	J.A. Purdome, Sheriff, Jackson County	1970-71	E.I. Hockaday, Colonel, MSHP
1946-47	Hugh Waggoner, Colonel, MSHP	1971-73	Michael M. Broser, Chief, Clayton
1947-48	George Walker, Chief, Springfield	1973-74	Ray Dugan, Special Agent, Rock Island RR
1948-49	Arthur Mosely, Sheriff, St. Louis County	1974-75	James P. Damos, Chief, University City
1949-50	Roy Isgrigg, Chief, Joplin	1975-76	Gordon Loveland, Chief, Springfield
1950-51	David Harrison, Colonel, MSHP		
1951-52	J. Croy Keller, Chief, St. Joseph		

Presidents & Past Executive Directors cont.

- 1976-77 Samuel S. Smith, Chief Special Agent, MO Union Pacific
- 1977-78 Eston Randolph, Chief, Ferguson
- 1978-79 Clarence H. Hoffman, Chief, North Kansas City
- 1979-80 Daniel B. Linza, Chief, Kirkwood
- 1980-81 Herman L. Smith, Chief Special Agent, Mo-Pacific RR
- 1981-82 Ralph R. Anderson, Chief, Richmond Heights
- 1982-83 John T. Pierpont, Sheriff, Greene County
- 1983-84 Lee R. Coleman, Chief, Raymore
- 1984-85 Louis C. Brown, Chief, Valley Park
- 1985-86 Howard J. Hoffman, Colonel, MSHP
- 1986-87 Robert Rennau, Sheriff, Jackson County
- 1987-88 Ronald E. Mason, Chief, University of Missouri-Columbia
- 1988-89 Larry J. Joiner, Chief of Police, Kansas City Police Dept.
- 1989-90 Larry H. Shelby, Chief, Terminal Railroad Police
- 1990-91 James W. Elder, Executive Director, MOCIC
- 1991-92 Jerome H. Wareham, Sheriff, Henry County
- 1992-93 Jack R. Gaskill, Chief Special Agent, Burlington Northern Santa Fe Police
- 1993-94 Robert R. Novy, Chief of Police, Edmundson Police Department
- 1994-95 Kristofer Turnbow, Chief, Raytown Police Department
- 1995-96 Elmer Meyer, Chief of Police, Camdenton Police Department
- 1996-97 John M. McGovern, Chief of Police, Excelsior Springs Police Dept.
- 1997-98 Colonel Fred Mills, Superintendent, Missouri State Highway Patrol
- 1998-99 Paul C. Vescovo, III, Chief of Police, Smithville Police Department
- 1999-00 Paul Cross, Chief Special Agent, Burlington Northern Santa Fe Police
- 2000-01 Ray D. Clark, Chief of Police, Warrenton Police Department
- 2001-02 James A. Huff, Director, Department of Public Safety, CMSU, Warrensburg
- 2002-03 Raymond Lauer, Lt. Colonel, St. Louis Metro Police Department
- 2003-04 Gary McMullin, Chief of Police, Weatherby Lake Police Department
- 2004-05 Keith Wood, Chief of Police, Maryville Department of Public Safety
- 2005-06 Kevin Garrison, President, The Garrison Organization, St. Louis
- 2006-07 Bob Ahring, Director, Department Public Safety, CMSU, Warrensburg
- 2007-08 Charles Matthews, Chief Special Agent, Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railway Police
- 2008-09 John DeGonia, Chief, Sedalia Police Department
- 2009-10 Sheriff J. Kent Oberkrom, Henry County Sheriff's Department
- 2010-11 Chief Jeff Rogers, Lake Lotawana Police Department
- 2011-12 Major Von Abbot, Truman State University
- 2012-13 Captain Joe White, BNSF Railway Police
- 2013-14 Chief Bob Ronkoski, St. Charles Community College Police Department
- 2014-15 Chief Tim Fitch (ret), St. Louis County Police Department
- 2015-16 Chief Graham Burnley, Nevada Police Department
- 2016-17 Chief Michael Wiegand, Eureka Police Department
- 2017-18 Chief Scott Rhoad, UCM Department of Public Safety
- 2018-19 Captain Jim Green, Lee's Summit Police Department
- 2019-21 Chief Todd Davis, Osage Beach Police Department
- 2021-22 Captain Jimmy Wilson, Raymore Police Department
- 2022-23 Captain Jon Romas, Creve Coeur Police Department
- 2023-24 Major Rob Hays, Clay County Sheriff's Office
- Beginning July 2025, the term of President was changed to 2 years*
- 2024-26 Tom Kerns, Enterprise Bank / Retired Postal Inspector



***MPOA IS SEEKING NOMINATIONS FOR THE:
HANK JOHNSON OFFICER OF THE YEAR AWARD,
CITIZEN OF THE YEAR AWARD, and
NON-SWORN LAW ENFORCEMENT CIVILIAN OF THE YEAR AWARD***

Nominations for the Missouri Peace Officers Association annual awards are now being accepted. These nominations are for actions taken during 2025.

These awards will be presented at our annual conference luncheon on July 10, 2026.

The **Hank Johnson Officer of the Year Award** is given to a full-time or part-time law enforcement officer for exceptional performance. It may involve extraordinary valor, outstanding investigative work, or community relations. Nominees for the Hank Johnson Award need not be MPOA members for consideration.

The **Citizen of the Year Award** will recognize a citizen who has made a significant contribution to advance the cause of law enforcement in their community or throughout the state.

The **Non-Sworn Law Enforcement Civilian of the Year Award** will recognize a law enforcement civilian who has provided exceptional service through volunteer efforts or personal initiatives increasing the effectiveness of their agency.

All nominations should include documentation of the nominee's accomplishments.

Nominations should be in Microsoft Word format and emailed to the MPOA office at the.mpoa@mopoa.org by May 27, 2026.

FACTS

about MPOA



The Missouri Peace Officers Association is one of the oldest and largest associations of peace officers in the state of Missouri. Membership in the MPOA is open to all branches and ranks of law enforcement: chiefs and patrol officers; sheriffs and deputies; prosecuting attorneys; coroners; FBI, Secret Service, DEA, ASIS and ATF agents, railroad police; U.S. Marshals; private security; Missouri State Highway Patrol; Missouri Department of Conservation agents; and postal inspectors. Anyone who is actively employed in the field of law enforcement is encouraged to become a member.

An annual conference sponsored by the Missouri Peace Officers Association provides training sessions in current issues of law enforcement to keep members of the profession informed on new procedures. The conferences enable

members to exchange ideas and encourages cooperation among all groups of law enforcement. Additionally, the association sponsors training around the state aimed at improving officers' skill and knowledge in law enforcement topics of their interest.

A standing Legislative Committee comprised of a cross section of MPOA members encourages and supports the passage of stronger criminal laws.

A free exchange of ideas and experiences is encouraged to help members in solving local problems within each community.

The official publication of the Missouri Peace Officers Association, *LAW ENFORCEMENT*, has been in continuous publication since 1938.

This magazine provides a means of communication for MPOA membership and is

continually reminding citizens we serve of the work their law enforcement officers are doing in the protection of life and property. Each issue carries educational and instructive articles and reports on the activities of various member agencies. Advertising revenue covers all costs related to the publication.

Through united membership in the Missouri Peace Officers Association, these services help to raise the standards of law enforcement and to better conditions for officers in service to their communities.



EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

This is a new section of *Law Enforcement* magazine for job openings. If you would like more information about advertising your employment openings in this section, contact Carla at the.mpoa@mopoa.org or at 816-581-3767.

NOW HIRING POLICE OFFICERS

Serve with a Premier Law Enforcement Agency



Join a department committed to professionalism, innovation, and community engagement. The O'Fallon Police Department offers exceptional benefits, world-class facilities, and unmatched training opportunities—all designed to help you build a long, successful career in law enforcement.

Compensation & Benefits:

- Salary \$71,344-\$91,000
- Take-home vehicle program
- Three weeks of vacation
- 12 paid holidays
- Health, vision, & dental insurance
- L-6 Lagers pension plan
- All equipment provided
- \$480 per year uniform allowance

Training & Facilities:

- State-of-the-art facility
- Access to advanced training at the Center for Advanced Skills Training in Law Enforcement (CASTLE)
- On-site indoor gun range & training rooms
- On-site fitness center
- Continuous professional development and specialized training opportunities
- Real-time information center

Special Units

- D.A.R.E.
- School Resource Officers
- Special Ops
- SWAT
- K9 Unit
- Drone Team

WHY O'FALLON? O'Fallon is one of the safest and fastest-growing communities in the region, offering strong support for law enforcement and a high quality of life. Become part of a team where your work matters—and where you have the resources to succeed.

APPLY TODAY



WE ARE HIRING

- Full-Time Police Officer
- Part-Time Police Officer
- Part-Time Police Dispatcher



For more information call 636-922-8545 or visit stchas.edu/jobs

4601 Mid Rivers Mall Dr, Cottleville, MO 63376

O'Fallon Police Department

A Legacy of Service and Regional Leadership

When residents and visitors think of O'Fallon today, they see a thriving city that blends suburban comfort with small-town pride. But behind this progress stands a legacy of service and safety that began long before the city's expansion – a story shaped by innovation and strengthened by a deep commitment to community.



Foundations: From Frontier Settlement to Growing City

The roots of O'Fallon trace back to the late 18th century, when pioneer Jacob Zumwalt accepted a Spanish land grant in 1796 and built what became known as Zumwalt's Fort. Constructed around 1798, the fort served as a haven for local families during the War of 1812. It was one of more than 35 "settler forts" across Missouri – and today, a reconstructed Zumwalt's Fort stands proudly in Fort Zumwalt Park as the only rebuilt War of 1812 site in the state open to the public.

For much of the 19th and early 20th centuries, O'Fallon remained a quiet railroad and farming town. That changed dramatically in the 1990s and early 2000s, when population and development surged, growing O'Fallon into the seventh largest city in Missouri, and the largest suburb in the St. Louis Metro region and St. Charles County. As the community expanded, so did the need for professional, full-time police services capable of keeping pace with growth while maintaining the close community relationships that define O'Fallon's character.

Early Policing and the Birth of the O'Fallon Police Department

In 1959, the O'Fallon Police Department was officially founded under the leadership of its first Chief, John E. Tiley. What began as a small, community-based police force quickly became a cornerstone of public service for the growing city. Chief Tiley and his early officers laid a strong foundation rooted in integrity, accountability, and dedication to the people they served.

From its modest beginnings – a handful of officers with limited equipment – the O'Fallon Police Department grew alongside the city it protected, embracing professional standards and modern practices. Over the decades, the department's mission evolved from simple patrol operations to a nationally recognized agency known for innovation, professionalism, and community partnership.



Meeting Growth Head-On: Today's Department

Today, the O'Fallon Police Department proudly serves a population of more than 95,000 residents. Its 126 sworn officers, supported by professional civilian staff, provide 24-hour coverage through divisions that include Patrol, Investigations, School Resource Officers, Communications, Animal Control, and several specialized units.

As O'Fallon grew into one of Missouri's largest cities, the O'Fallon Police Department adapted through proactive and responsive policing strategies. Specialized units such as the Regional SWAT Team, Special Operations, Emergency Management, and the highly regarded K-9 Program ensure that OPD remains ready to meet diverse challenges – from daily calls for service to complex regional operations.

The most recent indicator of the O'Fallon Police Department's commitment to progressive and professional policing is achieving international accreditation through the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies (CALEA). The CALEA accreditation process is rigorous, requiring agencies to meet hundreds of standards related to policies, operations, accountability, and community engagement. Achieving this distinction reflects years of dedication from O'Fallon's officers, leadership, and support staff, who continually strive to uphold the highest standards of law enforcement service. With this accreditation, the O'Fallon Police Department joins an elite group of agencies nationwide recognized for their integrity, transparency, and dedication to continuous improvement in serving their community.



Regional Leadership and Innovation in Policing

O'Fallon's role in regional policing extends beyond its borders. The department has emerged as a leader in collaboration, training, and technology – offering resources and expertise that benefit agencies across eastern Missouri.

Real Time Information Center (RTIC): A first of its kind in St. Charles County, this is a data-driven nerve center providing officers with live intelligence and situational awareness in the field.

Defensive Tactics Training Room: A state-of-the-art space where officers train in deescalation, defensive tactics, and hands-on scenario-based exercises designed to enhance safety and readiness.

Drone Unit: Supporting search and rescue operations, crash reconstruction, crime scene mapping, and tactical deployments.

Regional Partnerships: Through task forces and cooperative agreements, the O'Fallon Police Department regularly joins forces with neighboring departments and federal partners, enhancing public safety across jurisdictions.





CASTLE Training Facility: Building the Future of Policing

A cornerstone of the O'Fallon Police Department's forward-thinking approach is the Center for Advanced Skills Training in Law Enforcement (CASTLE), a project set to redefine police training standards across Missouri. In cooperation with the St. Charles City Police Department, this will be a state of the art, and first of its kind, police training facility, unlike anything else in the region.

Phase One includes a new, modern firing range designed for tactical and scenario-based training. Phase Two will add an Emergency Vehicle Operations Course (EVOC), simulation house, K-9 obstacle course, SWAT and drone training grounds, and a full training center with classrooms.

Once complete, CASTLE will also host the Eastern Missouri Police Academy, transforming O'Fallon into a regional hub for advanced law enforcement education.

This investment not only benefits O'Fallon's officers but also strengthens regional readiness and interagency cooperation.



Leadership at Work

The O'Fallon Police Department's success is driven by its people – officers who bring specialized skills, passion, and leadership to every assignment:

Sergeant Keith Lewis – Sgt. Lewis has been a Field Training Officer, Police K9 Trainer, and previously served as the department's Training Sergeant. He is now assigned as a full-time instructor at the Eastern Missouri Police Academy, shaping the next generation of law enforcement professionals.

Sergeant Montana Stephenson – A longtime member, sniper, and team leader on the St. Charles County Regional SWAT Team, Sgt. Stephenson is now assigned full-time as the Assistant Team Commander, providing tactical expertise and leadership during high-risk incidents. He is the first ever commander of this team outside of the County Police Department.

Detective Holly Garza – Det. Garza has been a longtime member of the St. Charles County Regional Crisis Negotiation Team, guiding delicate operations where communication and empathy are vital, and currently serves as the team's Commander.

Captain Jeff Lange – Serves as the Commander of the St. Charles County Regional Drug Task Force. This unit combines officers from all agencies within St. Charles County, building partnerships that combat regional drug trafficking.

Chief Frank Mininni – A graduate of the FBI national Academy, class #241, Chief Mininni serves as the President of the Eastern Missouri Police Academy.

Major Derek Myers – A graduate of the FBI National Academy, class #292, Maj. Myers serves as the head of the FBINA's Eastern District of Missouri Welcoming Committee.

These dedicated professionals exemplify the O'Fallon Police Department's values of service, innovation, and collaboration.

Community Partnerships:

Building Trust

At its core, the O'Fallon Police Department's mission extends beyond enforcement – it's about connection. Through outreach and education, officers work daily to build bridges with residents of all ages.

Community programs include:

Teen Driving School: Teaching safe driving habits and decision-making skills to young drivers.

Women's Self-Defense Classes: Empowering women through practical safety training.

Stop the Bleed Training: Providing lifesaving first-aid skills to community members.

Community Emergency Response Team (CERT): A program that teaches community volunteers how to prepare for and respond to emergencies in their community, such as natural disasters and light search and rescue operations.

Citizens Police Academy, Neighborhood Watch, Safety Town, Explorers, and Volunteer Programs: Creating opportunities for residents to learn, engage, and partner with their police department.

These efforts reflect the guiding principles of the O.P.D. – *Observant • Professional • Dedicated* – and reaffirm the department's commitment to service through trust, transparency, and teamwork.



Looking Ahead

As O'Fallon continues to evolve, the Police Department remains committed in its mission: to protect and serve with professionalism, innovation, and integrity. With each new initiative – from regional partnerships to advanced technology – the O'Fallon Police Department continues to balance tradition with progress, honoring its past while shaping the future of policing in Missouri.

By Sgt. Bryan Harr & Lt. Scott Weeke
Community Services Section
O'Fallon Police Department

MPOA CHRISTMAS ORNAMENTS

AVAILABLE WHILE SUPPLIES LAST

\$20 FOR OFFICE PICK UP ONLY

CALL WITH QUESTIONS OR TO SET
PICK UP TIME: 816-581-3767

PLEASE MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE
TO: MPOA

MISSOURI PEACE OFFICERS
ASSOCIATION,
101 WEST McCARTY STREET,
SUITE 200, JEFFERSON CITY, MO
65101



SIG SAUER LAW ENFORCEMENT SALES



Arms Mart Inc.

SINCE 1990 • BUY • SELL • TRADE

*GUNS, MODERN BLACK POWDER AMMO, RELOADING SUPPLIES
SIGARMS • OLYMPIC • KIMBER • BENELLI*

Tue - Fri: 10am-8pm
Sat & Mon: 10am-5pm
www.armsmart.com

21200 E. Truman Rd.
Independence, MO 64056
Phone: 816-796-5800

**Did you know that the
Missouri Department of
Transportation's Highway Safety
Office has grant funding available
for behavior-related highway safety
initiatives?**

**This is a call for Grant Applications for
FY27 (October 1, 2026 through September 30, 2027)**

**The Grants Management System (GMS) application process will open January 5, 2026
to accept applications for behavior-related highway safety projects.**

The deadline to submit grant applications is **March 1, 2026**.

Application workshops are scheduled across the state:

January 5, 2026 in Springfield

January 6, 2026 in Lee's Summit

January 7, 2026 in Chesterfield

January 8, 2026 in Cape Girardeau

January 9, 2026 in Jefferson City

*If you are interested in applying for grant funding but are not sure if your agency is already in GMS, please contact our office at (800) 800-BELT to verify your agency has access to GMS.



I need your help!!!!

I have decided to take on a lifesaving project. The State of Texas launched a campaign in 2015, "End the Streak". This was initiated when it became evident that since November 7, 2000, at least one person has been killed on Texas highways. Well, here we are, almost 10 years after the campaign launch and the problem still exists almost 25 years later. We are no closer to ending the streak than we were in the last 24 years and counting. During this time an estimated 90,000 people have perished in Texas alone. We see news reports of the fatal car wrecks that involve, celebrities, professional athletes and those with a death toll of three or more, but for the most part, being killed on our nation's highways is an anonymous and acceptable way to die.

I contemplated why this campaign has not been successful. What does the slogan mean? End the streak, but when? There has never been a target date. I can speak for my own nature. If I do not have a deadline, the task gets pushed to the back of the to-do list. When I have a deadline, my focus is on successfully completing the task.

I have created a three-minute video called "Accept the Challenge, End the Streak, November 6, 2025." (<https://youtu.be/sgKY2KwqZBA>) The video is a challenge for every driver using the roadways to focus on safe driving for one day. This challenge is not limited to just drivers from Texas. What if every

driver in the United States, November 6, 2025, before putting your vehicle in "R" for race, focus on the task at hand, the operation of the most effective killing machine known to man, the Automobile.

You don't just decide to take on a task without spending time preparing. That is one of the reasons I chose November 6th, the other, so Texas will not hit the 25-year mark. This will allow the information to be distributed and each driver to begin perfecting their skill. This prep time will allow families, friends and colleagues to discuss and prepare for a historic day on our nation's highways.

The challenge comes in three phases.

1. Watch the video
2. Accept the challenge and begin to prepare
3. Pass this post and the video link to everyone in your contact list.

Please consider following me for the next couple of months. I plan to provide reminders with short videos to assist in improving your driving skills. **I cannot do this alone.**

There may be some of you who are wondering, why has an individual taken on this task. If not me, Who? If not now, When? Please watch the video and consider accepting the challenge. Let's work together and end the streak in Texas and

have a death free day on our nation's highways!

Until next time, keep your head on a swivel and the dirty side down.

Garry Parker:



Garry Parker has over forty years of law enforcement experience in Texas, retiring from the Department of Public Safety in 2009 and later from the Texas Municipal Police Association in 2020. He is commissioned as a Special Ranger and certified as a speaker, trainer, and coach through several organizations including the Maxwell Leadership Team. Garry is nationally recognized for expertise in traffic safety, crash prevention, law enforcement, emergency vehicle operation, communication, and leadership. He has delivered keynote speeches at conferences nationwide and received awards for program development and presentation from both state and national bodies. **Contact: www.garryparkerandassociates.com**

Human Trafficking in Missouri – Together, We Can Make A Difference!



**Written By: Heather Luebbert, Commercial Motor Vehicle Program Manager
Missouri Department of Transportation, Office of Highway Safety**

Human trafficking is a real issue happening across the country. This is not someone else's problem or something just occurring in other countries and along our borders. Trafficking is occurring in all 50 states, including Missouri. It's in urban, rural, and suburban areas. Victims consist of both minors and adults – female and male, with most human trafficking victims in the U.S. being U.S. citizens.

Although it's a difficult topic to discuss, it's crucial that we do so.

January is National Human Trafficking Prevention Month so it's a perfect time to talk about the subject, raise awareness, and join the fight against trafficking. But we can't just talk about it in January – we must talk about it year-round.

Human trafficking is a crime often occurring in plain sight, as fear of traffickers often keeps individuals subjected to human trafficking from seeking help, but the crime is invisible to the untrained eye. It's not just chains and cages in a basement or being snatched by a white van while out for a jog. Most trafficking

victims know their traffickers, prior to their exploitation. They can be family members, love interests, friends, bosses, co-workers, and respected adults in the community. While kidnapping can occur, it is not as common. Statistics indicate that approximately 43% of victims are trafficked by an employer, 26% of victims are trafficked by a family member, and 22% of victims are trafficked by an intimate partner.¹

The National Human Trafficking Hotline reports it received 32,309 calls, texts, and online tips related to trafficking in the United States in 2024, of which 24.8% (8,024) were from victims and survivors themselves. As a result of these calls, texts, and tips, the Hotline identified 11,999 cases involving 21,865 victims.² (And these are just the tips submitted to the Hotline; this data doesn't include the tips submitted directly to state hotlines or local police – or worse, never gets reported.)

In Missouri specifically, the National Human Trafficking Hotline reports there were 696 calls, texts, and online tips submitted in 2024, of which 24.0% (167) were from

victims/survivors themselves. As a result, the Hotline identified 272 cases of human trafficking involving 539 victims.³ That means Missouri represented 2.3% of the cases and 2.5% of the victims, which may sound like a relatively small percentage, but it ranks Missouri 12th in the country (behind California, Texas, Florida, New York, Illinois, Georgia, Michigan, Ohio, North Carolina, Arizona, and Pennsylvania).

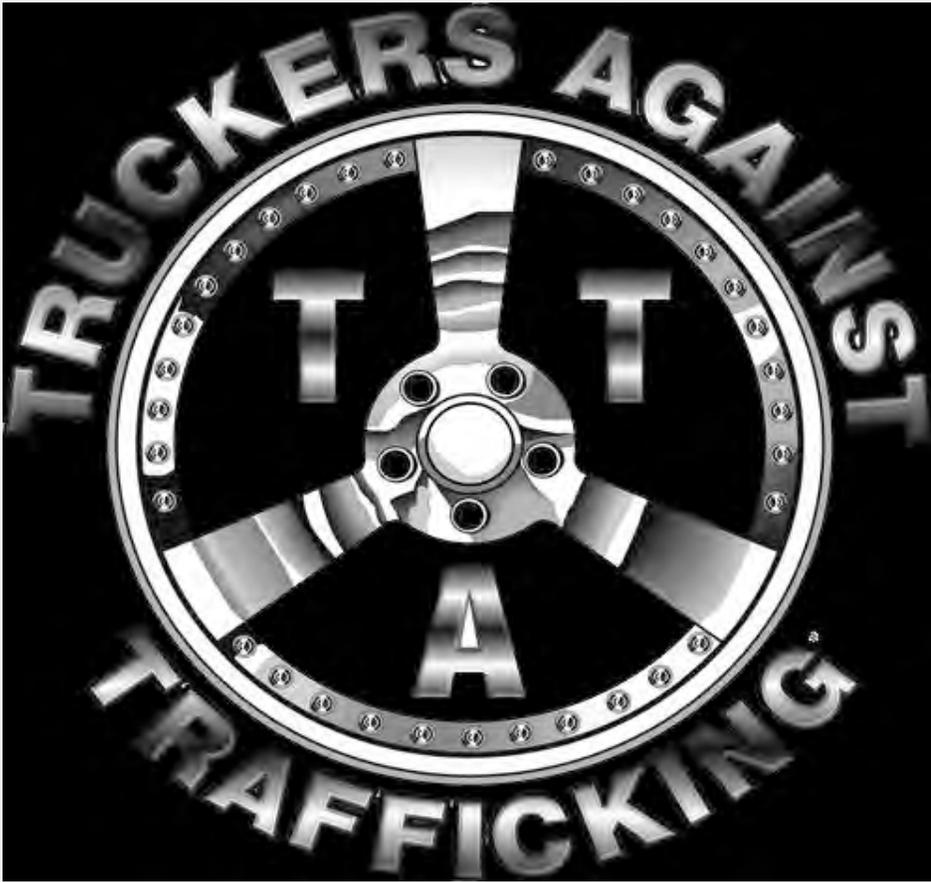
Behind each statistic is a person – a victim seeking support or a concerned individual trying to help.

Law enforcement plays a key role in the fight against human trafficking and should do their part to combat this horrific crime. But if you feel you or your agency could benefit from more education on how best to do your part, you are not alone! (*cont. next page*)

¹<https://www.transportation.gov/top-human-trafficking/human-trafficking-101>

²<https://humantraffickinghotline.org/en/statistics>

³<https://humantraffickinghotline.org/en/statistics/missouri>



You are in luck though - there are good resources available!

TAT (formerly known as Truckers Against Trafficking) established in 2009 with a simple yet powerful belief: that every truck driver can be a crucial ally in the fight against human trafficking. Since then, TAT has grown to encompass a greater portion of the transportation industry, forming alliances to maximize efforts through programs that include training, partnerships with law enforcement, and advocacy efforts.

TAT has developed free, on-demand law enforcement online modules that provide in-depth instruction on the crime of human trafficking from law enforcement leaders, human trafficking survivors, victims advocates, and TAT staff. The modules include:

- Prioritizing Counter-Trafficking Initiatives Within Your Agency

- Module 1 – Human Trafficking 101
- Module 2 – Engaging Trafficking Victims: Best Practices
- Module 3 – Human Trafficking Indicators and Law Enforcement Case Studies
- Module 4 – Unlikely Allies - The Importance of the Commercial Vehicle Industry in Combating Human Trafficking
- Module 5 – Addressing Demand – No Buyer = No Victim

The training modules can aid law enforcement in understanding the nuances of this crime, including the tactics traffickers use and the populations most vulnerable to be victimized, as well as becoming fluent in human trafficking indicators and employing a victim-centered approach. Command staff can assign all modules or allow officers to complete individual modules that comply with agency requirements.

For more information about TAT's law enforcement program and the training modules, visit the QR code.



Again, human trafficking is a real issue happening in Missouri and near you. We all have a critical role to play to combat the crime, and together, we can make a difference. I hope you take the time in January to talk about the subject, raise awareness, and take action!



HUMAN TRAFFICKING



THE SILENCE AFTER THE BADGE: A sergeant's blunt truth about retirement

What really happens when the radio goes quiet and the job moves on without you.

By Sergeant Sean Fuerstenberg

I'm in my 28th year on the job, 17 of those as a sergeant. I'm staring down retirement, and I'm not expecting a parade. I'll likely get the popular cake and coffee send-off, and then it's done. And that's OK. Cake and coffee are how it should be, because not every department or municipality can give extravagant goodbyes due to ever-tightening budgets. What I am expecting, because I've seen it over and over again, is to be forgotten. Quickly.

I've watched it happen to good people, respected people, officers who gave everything, who bled

for their agency, who mentored generations of cops. Not one of them got the long memory they expected. Six months out, their names rarely come up. A year later, it's like they were never there. That's the truth no one tells you when you're gearing up to walk away. The silence is real, and no one is immune to it.

There's a common saying that gets passed around: "Forty-five minutes out the door and you don't matter anymore." I don't know who created that quote, but whoever it was really nailed it.

Your rank doesn't matter, neither do your awards

Let's get this part out of the way. I've been decorated. Commendations, letters, plaques, you name it. I've led big operations, handled ugly calls, backed my trusted teammates through the worst shifts of their careers. But that doesn't buy you anything when you leave. No special place in the memory of the department. No eternal gratitude I've seen chiefs fade into complete obscurity. I've seen

lieutenants, K9 handlers and SWAT team leaders, men and women who were cornerstones of their departments, go utterly silent after their last shift. The job keeps moving. It doesn't look back. If you're thinking your rank or reputation makes you different, hear this now. It doesn't. No one is the exception.

The fade comes quicker than you think

One week, you're the go-to person for your squad. You've got every radio channel running through your ears. Your phone is lighting up with calls. You're briefing, coaching, leading. The next week, you're out. And the quiet hits like a punch. The text threads you were part of continue without you. Your name stops being mentioned at shift change. The guys and gals you trained are busy training someone else. You swing by the station six months later, and someone is drinking out of your old coffee cup and parking in your spot. And no one is doing anything wrong. It's just the reality of the job. The show must go on, and it does.

I've watched good cops spiral

This part no one warns you about. You think you'll just enjoy life, maybe sleep in, fish more, and take care of the house. But then you realize this. You're no longer relevant in the way you once were. That realization has wrecked more than a few retirees I knew. Guys who had plans. Guys who had it all figured out. But when the calls stopped and the structure disappeared, so did their sense of relevance. Some spiraled into depression. Others numbed it with alcohol. Some couldn't take the silence and

begged for part-time gigs just to feel useful again.

These weren't weak people. These were strong, capable, respected cops. But they weren't ready for what happens when the job no longer has a place for them.

I'm not waiting around to be remembered

Here's the hardest pill to swallow. That heartfelt thank you that you think is coming, the one that says, "You made a difference," might not show up the way you expect. And if it does, it'll likely be a quick handshake at a meeting and a certificate that ends up in a drawer. But that's OK. I'm not measuring the worth of my career by who circles back months later to check in. I'm not waiting for closure to come from anyone else.

The truth is, the job keeps going. The world I walked away from is still turning, and the people still in it are focused on surviving their own grind. I've made peace with that. I'm not bitter. I'm realistic. I'm choosing to accept it now on my own terms rather than be caught off guard later. Because I didn't do this job for applause. I did it because it mattered. And that's enough.

So here's what I'm doing instead

I'm preparing. Not just with my pension and benefits but emotionally. I'm reconnecting with people who never cared about my badge, just me. I'm finding purpose outside of patrol cars, radios and court subpoenas. I'm getting used to being just a man again, not "Sergeant So-and-So." I'm not angry. I'm not bitter. I just don't want to be caught off guard like so many I've watched before me.

Final word to the next one out the door

If you're nearing retirement and thinking, "They'll remember me," pause. Really pause. Because the truth is, they probably won't. That doesn't mean your career didn't matter. It just means the job doesn't work that way. It never has. I've seen it more and more. People walk away convinced they'll be remembered forever. But the truth hits fast. The machine keeps moving. The job goes on. It always does.

While you're in it, give it everything you've got. Show up. Serve with heart. Mentor those coming up behind you. Lead well, even when no one is watching. But when it's time to leave, do it with pride and let go of the idea that the job will follow you. It won't. That's not failure. It's just how the profession works. The world keeps turning. The calls keep coming. Someone else will answer the radio.

So when the time comes, take a deep breath. Close that locker one last time. Walk out knowing this. You gave what you had. And that's enough. Let the job go. It's already letting go of you.

Reprinted with permission.

I'm reconnecting with people who never cared about my badge, just me. I'm finding purpose outside of patrol cars, radios and court subpoenas. I'm getting used to being just a man again ...

Boot Slappin D-Wie



As the summer sun heats up and the lakes fill with laughter, there's an ever-present shadow cast by the dangers of impaired driving. Far too many joyous outings end in tragedy because someone chose to drive under the influence. Our law enforcement community feels this impact acutely—each injury and loss among our ranks is a sobering reminder of the risks we face and the responsibilities we carry.

Picture the scene: a routine patrol on a golden evening, when vigilance becomes the thin line between safety and disaster. I've seen firsthand how a single decision, a timely stop, can change the course of lives. Yet, the reality is that many impaired drivers slip through the cracks, making it home unscathed and unchallenged, reinforcing a dangerous sense of invincibility. The process of apprehending and charging an impaired driver is never easy—it's time-consuming, fraught with paperwork, and often met with skepticism in courtrooms. Some may ask if it's worth putting ourselves through the scrutiny, the paperwork, and the endless court battles. But every excuse fades when measured against the oath we took to protect our communities.

Every summer brings with it stories of heartbreak—families shattered because someone believed, “It won't happen to me.” But the painful truth is that it can happen to anyone, and the consequences are irreversible. We are the last defense against this recurring tragedy, and if we falter, more innocent lives will be lost.

While patrolling a rural area in Texas on a two-lane state roadway with improved shoulders, I observed an approaching vehicle that crossed the yellow center

stripe into my lane. I began to brake as the vehicle returned to its proper lane. The vehicle was identified as a newer model, high-end sports car. I initiated a traffic stop by turning around, activating my emergency lights, and following the vehicle for several miles during which it continued to weave within its traffic lane. The driver eventually noticed my patrol unit and he pulled over abruptly.

Upon approaching the driver's side, I made contact with the operator, who appeared to be a middle-aged, well-dressed businessman. I obtained his license and registration information and requested that he exit the vehicle. As he did so, I observed that he relied on the vehicle for balance. During our roadside interaction, the driver admitted to consuming alcohol and explained that he had been excited about learning to two-step at a dance hall, noting it was his first time dancing. He remained cooperative and conversational throughout the encounter, frequently discussing his dancing experience.

I then began an impaired driver investigation, and the driver agreed to participate in standardized field sobriety tasks, including the Horizontal Gaze Nystagmus (HGN), one leg stand, and walk-and-turn tests. Indicators of impairment were evident during these assessments. While providing instructions for the walk-and-turn, the driver began humming Boot Scootin Boogie. I asked if he understood the task and he stated yes. As he began the task, the driver (still humming boot scootin boogie), started as per instructions. He placed his left foot in front of his right, placed his arm around his midsection and took the first step. He performed a heel slap, a two-step like movement, a turn and ended with an additional heel slap. He looked back at me with a look of complete accomplishment. He was obviously found to be intoxicated and was subsequently taken into custody and transported to jail. You just can't make that up!

I know many police officers have similar stories of encounters with impaired drivers.



Let's consider what happens if obvious impaired drivers aren't stopped—many make it home without consequence, and that's why impaired driving remains common. Excuses like paperwork or potential minor court penalties don't justify ignoring our duty as officers; we are the only real line of defense. Some officers avoid these stops, but that's not acceptable—we must do better.

Once, a man confronted me in a convenience store, blaming me for his impaired driving conviction after I arrested him.

Everything except his record was restored. Despite this, I saw him buying beer again and taking it to his vehicle. Some people simply refuse to change.

Until next time, keep your head on a swivel and the dirty side down.

Garry Parker



Garry Parker has over forty years of law enforcement experience in Texas, retiring from the Department of Public Safety in 2009 and later from the Texas Municipal Police Association in 2020. He is commissioned as a Special Ranger and certified as a speaker, trainer, and coach through several organizations including the Maxwell Leadership Team. Garry is nationally recognized for expertise in traffic safety, crash prevention, law enforcement, emergency vehicle operation, communication, and leadership. He has delivered keynote speeches at conferences nationwide and received awards for program development and presentation from both state and national bodies.

Contact: www.garryparkerandassociates.com

LAW ENFORCEMENT[®]
 Magazine wants
 your NEWS!

If you have moved, received a new email, changed jobs, recently been promoted, received an award or retired, we want to know. Send your news to [the.mpoa@mopoa.org!](mailto:the.mpoa@mopoa.org)



Moving?

For fastest service, attach old mailing label in this space. If mailing label is not available, print your old address in the above box along with zip code.

Print your NEW address below:

NAME

ADDRESS 1

ADDRESS 2

CITY STATE ZIP

Mail this form to: Missouri Peace Officers Association, 101 West McCarty, Suite 200, Jefferson City, MO 65101



What: *Annual Business Meetings, Membership Meeting, & Awards Luncheon*

Membership Meeting @ 11:00 a.m.

Luncheon @ 11:45 a.m.

When: *Friday, July 10, 2026*

Where: *Jefferson Bank – Westhues Hall
700-A Southwest Boulevard
(corner of SW Blvd and MO Blvd)
Jefferson City, MO*

Guest Speaker: *TBD*

Awards presented during the luncheon:

Hank Johnson Officer of the Year

Citizen of the Year

Non-Sworn Law Enforcement Civilian of the Year

RSVP by July 1 at the.mpoa@mopoa.org

Board Members will be accounted for separately.

All other MPOA members attending need to RSVP.



SCC's New Chief Scott Binggeli & Chief Ronkoski

Chief Bob Ronkoski Retires from St. Charles Community College Police Department

On July 1st of this year our MPOA/MPOF Executive Director Bob Ronkoski, retired from the St. Charles Community College Campus Police Department after nearly 18 years. Bob became the first Police Chief of the SCC Campus Police and started the department from scratch.

During his tenure with the college, the district expanded from the main campus in Cottleville and added the Dardenne Creek Campus, Technical Campus Wentzville, Commercial Driving School, and the Regional Workforce Innovation Center. Bob led the team that built the first SCC

Campus Police Station at the Cottleville location. This is his second retirement; his first retirement was from the St. Ann Police Department where he served as a Patrolman, Corporal, Sergeant and retired after 20 years at the rank of Lieutenant. He was a patrolman for the Ferguson

Police Department and a few other police agencies before St Ann PD. Bob started his career as a 911, police, fire and EMS dispatcher for the first three years after high school. All together he has completed 45 years of service.

During his years working full-time in law enforcement, Bob has volunteered in many ways. He was on the Board and served as the Chairman of the Law Enforcement Traffic Safety Advisory Council, the St. Louis Regional Traffic Safety Council, Missouri Association of Campus Law Enforcement Administrators, just to name a few. During his time as a government elected official, Bob served as an Alderman for the City of Cottleville for eight years and as the Mayor of Cottleville for four years.

Bob served on the Executive Board for the MPOA for many years and during COVID he stepped up to lead the organization when the previous Executive Director retired. He plans to continue to serve as MPOA Executive Director and as MPOF President as long as the organization needs him. After retirement, Bob was elected to the Executive Board of the St. Charles County Regional Crime Stoppers. He also recently returned to St. Charles Community College part-time as a Senior Project Advisor. There is no doubt that there will be another chapter to his career. No one sees him stopping anytime soon.



SCC President Dr. Barbara Kavalier, Chief Ronkoski & SCC Vice-President Amy Koehler



Bob & his wife Pam Ronkoski



SCC President Dr. Barbara Kavalier & Chief Ronkoski



SCC Senior Vice-President Todd Galbierz & Chief Ronkoski



St. Charles County Executive Steve Ehlmann & Chief Ronkoski



City of St. Charles Mayor Dan Borgmeyer & Chief Ronkoski



The Coalition Against Bigger Trucks (CABT) spent time on Capitol Hill, with Officer Chandra Kelly, retired Olathe Police Department. They met with Missouri delegation offices to voice opposition to proposed truck size and weight increase in congress. Thank you, Officer Kelly, for your leadership in representing MPOA.



Officer Chandra Kelly, Johnson County, MO, Law Enforcement and Crime Scene Investigation Instructor outside the office of Senator Eric Schmitt (MO).

Article submitted by Regional Director Christy Auld, Coalition Against Bigger Trucks (CABT)

With the help of several of CABT's esteemed national partner organizations including the American Public Works Association, Truckload Carriers Association, Owner-Operator Independent Drivers Association (OOIDA), National Railroad Construction and Maintenance Association, Inc. (NRC), and the Railway Supply Institute, our coalition held our biggest Capitol Hill fly-in of the year with meetings in over 85 offices despite the government shutdown.

We welcomed leaders from 13 states representing state and local law enforcement, government officials, and the trucking industry to emphasize our opposition to federal truck size and weight increases in any shape or form. Volunteers included representation from the Byram, MS - Police Department, Connecticut State Police Union, Ohio Association of Chiefs of Police, Inc., Carbon County Sheriff PA, Rhode Island Police Chiefs Association, Crosslin Trucking, Johnson County, KS Government, Michigan State Police, Virginia Association of Counties, and members of the CABT Law Enforcement Board.

As discussions around Surface Transportation Reauthorization are heating up, our coalition is advocating to leaders in Congress to recognize the data that proves safety risks to all motorists, and damage to local infrastructure from longer and heavier trucks.

CABT

Coalition Against Bigger Trucks



PROMOS PRONTO

CELEBRATING 20 YEARS

www.promospronto.com

Promo Products | Decorated Apparel | Online Stores



MISSOURI LAGERS

A Secure Retirement for All

**YOUR SECURE FINANCIAL FUTURE
STARTS WITH MISSOURI LAGERS**

Retirement Benefits
Survivor Benefits
Disability Benefits



MOLAGERS.ORG



Funeral Homes

North
Terrace Park



South
Longview



Park Lawn Funeral Homes



Park Lawn Funeral Homes



MUEHLEBACH
FUNERAL CARE



Cemeteries

North
Terrace Park
Glen Ridge

South
Memorial Park
Longview

10% Savings on Prepaid Services for Active Duty, Retirees, and their Spouses.

- **Funeral Services • Caskets • Vaults • Cremations**
- **Cemetery Property • Markers**

**Special Financing Available*

Contact us today for your free planning guide and consultation.

Pre-paid services are fully refundable in the event that a public servant loses their life in the line of duty.

101 West McCarty St.
Suite 200
Jefferson City, MO 65101

MIDWEST GATEWAY
RV DEALERS ASSOCIATION

Connect with St. Louis' Most
TRUSTED

Family-Owned Dealers



Colman's
Country Campers



M.B. THOMAS
RV SALES, INC.



STLRV.com