

The Challenge of the New Police Officer in Shaping Our Future

Frank Leonbruno

Recently I attended the graduation of a local police academy. I find it to be an exciting day when such young, enthusiastic, and physically able men and women join the field of law enforcement. It is the spark to an exciting future.

But not all in law enforcement are as enthused about their appearance. Many are apprehensive about the future of law enforcement in their hands. You see they use those i-phones, i-pads, i-pods, post on Facebook, text incessantly, download videos, and they use hash tags. What the heck is a hash tag anyway?

I remember when I began my career there was no such thing as the public internet, i-phone, lap-top, Facebook or digital camera. But we did have these new amazing inventions called pagers, and were watching with wonder the new desk top computers being introduced with a huge 100mb of memory.

Veterans who remember law enforcement before the appearance of such technology fear that we are losing the personal interaction skills necessary to interact with the public, gain confessions, and perform our duties through personal contact. Some wonder how they will ever get a confession without texting the perpetrator from across the interview room.

Such fears are not new. We heard similar cries in 1966 when Miranda was first codified. "We might as well give up policing now because it is over. How will we ever catch the bad guys and get a confession when we have to tell them they have the right to remain silent?" Well I think we have caught a few criminals since 1966, obtained a few confessions along the way, and Miranda is now part of our law enforcement lexicon. In short, we will survive the new generation and the technology they bring. We will not only survive, we will advance and rise to a new age of law enforcement.

Hopefully this new generation will not permit the naysayers to dampen their enthusiasm, nor their drive to bring us into a new age. But just as much as I hope they will not be disheartened, I equally hope they do not turn off the veterans who have "adjusted" to the introduction of such modern marvels. In such individuals the new recruits will find great wisdom, fashioned over years of experiences, failures and successes. If they listen they

continued on page 21

CHAPTERCHAT

continued from page 13

■ **Andy McLachlan**, 224th Session had a scare just before Thanksgiving. He had an aneurysm in his brain and was lifted by helicopter to Denver for treatment. We are happy to say that Andy came through the event with no issues and is doing very well. He was at the February luncheon and is back to work.

SOUTH CAROLINA

■ The Beaufort County Sheriff's Office is proud to announce its own Lieutenant Colonel **William Neill**, 168th Session, as the recipient of the 2014 South Carolina Law Enforcement Association's Lifetime Achievement Award. Lt. Col. Neill was recognized for this achievement during the March 26th luncheon held at the Charleston Maritime Center. This award recognizes the long term accomplishments and contributions of an individual who has earned the respect of the law enforcement community in South Carolina. The award was developed to honor those who have served the law enforcement and public safety professions generously and unselfishly for at least 25 continuous years. It is to commemorate exemplary talents and contributions as demonstrated by the nominee's dedication, loyalty, ability and integrity.

UTAH

■ Utah has experienced a lot of changes in department leadership over the past few months. **Dale Brophy**, 220th Session, and current Utah Chapter President, left the West Valley Police Department and was appointed as Deputy Chief at the University of Utah Police Department effective October 15, 2013.

■ **Chris Snyder**, 239th Session 239, retired as Chief of the South Salt Lake Police Department and his Deputy Chief, **Jack Carruth**, 252nd Session, was appointed as the new Chief effective February 1, 2014.

■ Captain **John Eining**, 230th Session, left the Sandy City Police Department to take a position as Deputy Chief of the Draper City Police Department effective February 24, 2014.

■ **Craig Burnette**, 195th Session, was appointed as the new chief of the Murray City Police Department effective April 1, 2014.

■ **Steve Chapman**, 154th Session, retired, (after 43 years in law enforcement), as Chief of Police from the Sandy City Police Department and Assistant Chief **Kevin Thacker**, 223rd Session, was appointed as the new Chief effective May 1, 2014.

We thank all of these men for their service and wish them well in their new endeavors.

VIRGINIA

■ It is with great sadness that we report the passing of Chief **Charles D. Grant** on March 14th. Chief Grant, who was Police Chief for the Norfolk, Virginia Police Department, and attended the 53rd Session of the FBINA and was a Past President.

WISCONSIN



Brad Keil

■ Middleton Police Chief **Brad Keil**, 213th Session, retired 3/28/14.

■ Captain **Chuck Foulke**, 228th Session 228, was promoted to Chief on 3/29/14.



Chuck Foulke

The Challenge of the New Police Office in Shaping Our Future

continued from page 14

will hear oodles of knowledge when arriving on crime scenes of subtle hints to a crime they would never have thought about. They will see at accident scenes the pieces of evidence few tend to notice that will be major factors in identifying the cause. From veterans they will learn that it is the crossing of a leg, blinking at a certain point in an interview, the subtle change in voice inflection that brings the necessary information to reach a confession.

With this in mind it is important for veterans to take a proactive role in shaping the police officers of tomorrow. We can no longer wait until the "rookies" earn our respect, earn the privilege of our time and energy. We must reach out, shape their training, and take a proactive approach in the development of tomorrow's law enforcement officer. It means breaking old habits, being open to change, yet steadfast on the core principles of honesty, integrity, and commitment to public service.

Today technology is both a blessing and a curse to young and old alike. Digital imaging, digital fingerprints, retina scans, DNA collection, in-car video and voice analysis are critical advances that are bringing this field into the future, making law enforcement smarter, and more difficult for criminals to succeed.

Yet we must equally understand that technology is extremely expensive, and taxing on the shrinking funds available to fund our law enforcement efforts. Large departments spend millions annually on technology, hardware, software, IT support, upgrades ... the list is endless. As these costs advance we begin to lose our ability to afford personnel. Think about the fact that for every \$100,000 invested on technology we lose one officer on the street for a large department, or three part-time officers in a small department. That means fewer cars on the street, less officers for back-up, less proactive patrolling in the community, and an ever building load of cases to solve "when we get the time".

I have never seen a lap-top run-down a suspect, never witnessed an i-phone get a confession, nor watched a satisfied citizen talk over their frustrations with a person on a television screen. Citizens want to see a person, not a vehicle running down the street with the windows up and an officer typing on an MDT. Not to show my age here, but they want Andy Griffith 5th generation. They want the officer they know and easily recognize, the one who knows their name and knows the community that they live in. This is the personal Andy of Mayberry, who can also use technology when necessary to solve the particular crime that has affected their life.

That is the challenge of the new police officers appearing at our doors. They must successfully merge the old with the new, balancing personal contact with the rising cost of technology, in a seamless transition. It seems overwhelming. But I believe that they/we will not only survive, we will leap into a new age of law enforcement that will bring great things beyond our imagination.

About the Author: **Frank Leonbruno** is the Chief Deputy of the Lake County Sheriff's Office in Painesville, Ohio. A graduate of the 237th class of FBINA, he is also a graduate of Borromeo College of Ohio, CLEE (Certified Law Enforcement Executives Program), PELC (Police Executive Leadership College), National Institute of Corrections, as well as attaining recognition as CJM (Certified Jail Manager) through the American Jail Association. Chief Leonbruno teaches Criminal Law and Criminology at Lakeland Community College.

Besides service as a Deputy Sheriff, he has served as a Corrections Officer, Jail Administrator and on SWAT. Frank has been married to his wife Heidi for the past 30 years, and has two daughters, two sons who are both police officers, and two grand-daughters.