In 2009, PLEA and others on the department sounded the alarm regarding questionable kidnapping statistics after the department had repeatedly reported that there were 358 kidnappings in the City of Phoenix in 2008. That number was subsequently used to secure Federal Grant monies.

This same number was trumpeted by then Phoenix Public Safety Manager Jack Harris and then Mayor Phil Gordon when testifying before Congressional committees. As a result of the controversy that ensued, The Department of Justice Office of the Inspector General conducted a formal audit and investigation of the PPD’s reported kidnap statistics.

On March 7, 2012, the OIG released their official findings re: the PPD’s kidnapping statistics. In one segment of the OIG report they found that of the 368 incidents [their number] reported only 195 or 54% should have been classified as kidnappings for crime reporting purposes.

In the real world, 54% equates to a letter grade of an “F”.

The PPD then brought a Lieutenant in to PSB for the express purpose of looking under the rugs and checking all of the departments broom closets to see how many more kidnap reports could be shaken loose.

The department managed to scrape up an additional 175 reports that they believed could be classified as kidnappings. Of those reports the OIG determined that 150 or 86% of the additional cases had the elements of kidnapping in them. The OIG then went on to state that many of those cases would not qualify as kidnapping under federal crime reporting guidelines.

The grant monies received by the PPD were given to fund Operation Home Defense ($1.7M) and Operation Eagle Eye ($7M). The purpose of the grants was to combat border related crime, specifically home invasions and kidnappings.

There is no doubt that Phoenix was suffering from a serious home invasion and kidnapping problem during this time period. However, in all reality only about 50 of the kidnappings reported during this time period could have been reasonably tied to border related criminal activity.

PLEA has followed and reported on this issue since 2008. To see all of the related stories on the PLEA website, type the keyword kidnapping into the search box of the website.
Sometimes when we reflect on our law enforcement careers, one thing we think about is who the most influential person in our career was. For people who may be in a multigenerational law enforcement family, it could be a grandfather, father, or cousin. Some may look at a neighbor or family friend, while others may look at the neighborhood beat cop who made it a point to stop and chat or throw a ball while they were making their rounds. There are even some of us who look to training academy staff, supervisors or department administrators. I think that for many of us, it would be our Field Training Officer (FTO), because they were our first partner and we rode together every day for the first ten or so weeks of our career, depending on when we came on the department. It’s often been said that we are a reflection of our FTO and those of us who were FTOs made it a point to ensure we turned out a good officer.

My FTO, who is still on the Department, took training seriously, but had a lighter side. One thing I remember was that even if I screwed up, the issue was addressed, I was treated like an adult, and we moved on, unlike a couple of other FTOs on the squad who were wound tighter than a spring, including one who would yell at trainees like a fifteen year old who wrecked the family car. My FTO Sergeant also seemed to get spun up fairly easily over what I recall were minor things in the overall big picture. However, despite his lighter side, my FTO wasn’t one to hold back when it came to speaking his mind to the Sergeant.

I recall our Sergeant coming into briefing one afternoon with a flustered look on his face, appearing very anxious after getting buttonholed by the Lieutenant. His words to us were something to the effect of, “We’ve got to hit the street immediately! There are calls holding!” While I don’t recall his exact response, my FTO said something like “Relax, Sarge. Calls have been holding since before we came on the Department and they will be holding long after we’re gone.” Our Sergeant looked at him and said, “You’re probably right, but the Lieutenant said we have to get out there and take care of them.” Being a new Officer In Training, (OIT) I promptly got us signed on and ready to take care of banging out those calls. My FTO said he liked the fact that I showed initiative, which got me a good rating in that category for the day, but he also told me, “Frank, we can only take one call at a time.”

Eventually I went solo, moved on to my first permanent squad, and became an FTO myself. Back in 1995-1998, it was the norm to come out of a second shift briefing and find a page and a half of calls holding. Being the hard chargers that we were, my squad mates and I would start clearing Radio for calls. Most of us rode solo because a particular supervisor wouldn’t let us ride two-man. Many times we, myself included, got into the bad habit of saying “I’ll advise,” meaning “don’t send me a backup.” This became standard operating procedure for many of us, to the point where dispatchers would ask “Do you want to advise?” after sending us the call. Even though it had been preached to us over and over while we were in training and hammered into our heads in briefing by our Sergeants, the trend continued because in our minds, we just had to knock down that list of calls. What we didn’t realize, was that it also showed that we could do more work with less people. To even out the workload, precinct boundaries were redrawn and precincts lost personnel in manpower reallocations.

Many of us, including Commanders and Admin Sergeants were stunned and collectively asked “How could they take 10 people out of our precinct and send them to such and such precinct? We’re getting slammed every weekend with drive by shootings and they don’t take half the armed robberies we do or have nearly as many burglaries!” Some of us answered “That’s because every time they do something, they have radio make up a call, even if it’s a piece of cardboard in the roadway.” As ridiculous as it sounds, there is some truth to that and the simple answer is that when the numbers were crunched by the people in Planning & Research, they found that we were able to manage our calls and response times better, but it was by advising and not waiting for backups. Fast forward to 1999 and the Phoenix Police Department was rocked by Marc Atkinson’s murder in Maryvale. The Department’s response was mandatory two-man cars and detectives were brought out of specialty details to ride stints in Patrol. This only lasted for a few weeks and it was back to business as usual, including advising on calls.

With time and experience, we all develop a better sense in regards to what we can handle on our own. With the exception of a paper call, most single officer cars can probably take care of the vast majority of calls we receive, but it doesn’t mean we are immune from things going sideways. When I was an FTO and didn’t have an OIT, like my counterparts, I picked up the normal slack associated with FTO Squads by taking calls without backup because the training units were tied up. By the time I had ten years on, I had developed that sense, but when my gut talked to me or the hairs (now stubble) on the back of my neck stood up, I knew enough to ask for another unit, or wait until my backup arrived before I proceeded.

Remember the tightly wound FTOs I mentioned earlier? One of them,(who didn’t treat his trainees like 15 year olds) is now retired, but in the last few years prior to him pulling the pin, we worked together on a third shift Patrol squad. Since he wasn’t training he was more relaxed, but wouldn’t hesitate to call BS on someone who wasn’t doing their job, shortcutting, or violating policy. He
was famous for asking for a call that “second shift had been dodging all afternoon” or telling the dispatcher to send the call in a particular beat to the beat officer who was “faking their status to avoid the call.” One night, after a single officer unit on the squad offered to advise on a priority two call, he promptly got on the radio and said he’d make his backup. The primary unit told him to disregard and he once again offered to make the backup. Once more, the primary unit told him to disregard and this time his response was “I’ll Roll In Anyway In Case That Big Red “S” Falls Off His Chest.” I know the whole precinct and dispatcher got a good laugh over that one and I’m sure he got some colorful MDT messages, but he had a point...The salty dog who was nearing retirement knew better than to advise on a call like that.

Here we are in 2012 with the Department reaching a critical tipping point in terms of manpower, specifically in Patrol. When you combine Department attrition with specialty transfers outside of patrol and no hiring expected until at least 2015, we are once again, forced to do more with less. Some precincts are down to 5 man squads, while calls for service are on the rise. In some precincts, this has forced multiple in-house manpower reallocations within the past year and a half since the Rebid and the threat of more to come. I hate to be the bearer of bad news, but it’s only going to get worse.

As I enter my seventeenth year as a sworn officer, I look back on the words of my FTO and realize more than ever that those of us who are working the street need to pause, take a breath and remember what I heard as a new OIT: “Calls have been holding since before we came on the Department and they will be holding long after we’re gone.” Also, “we can only take one call at a time.”

STAY SAFE and wait for your backup. There’s no call out there worth getting injured or losing your life over.

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**BENEFITS TO MEMBERS**

Aflac Rep, Debby Tornberg, is available to meet with members at a place and time convenient to them. *She can be reached at 602.214.4686.*

**Nationwide Retirement Solutions Representative**

Jared Williams will be at the PLEA Office on the 4th Thursday of every month from 9:00 AM until 3:00 PM to assist members with their accounts. Jared can also be reached at 602-266-2733, extension 1168.

**Hester, Heitel & Associates Exclusive** offers all forms of insurance to PLEA Members, including Homeowners, Auto, Motorcycle, Life, Health and Business. *Please call Mark or Pat at 602.230.7726*

**Membership meetings are the last Tuesday of each month at 7:30, 12:30, and 5:30.**

**Board meeting is held the 3rd Tuesday each month and members can attend at 8:30 am.**

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**2011 PLEA Dues Breakdown**

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Police work and police union business are two fields where just when you think you’ve seen everything, something comes along that makes you say, “You’ve got to be kidding me...Really?”

At a recent PLEA Board meeting we heard another story from the “you can’t make this stuff up” department. One of our board members informed us that a certain sergeant in their precinct had announced to their squad that they can no longer use the radio chargers in the station.

The reasoning: If you come to work and have to put your radio in the charger, you obviously didn’t come prepared for your shift. Bravo comrade! Let’s put you in line for the Joseph Stalin leadership award. Note to any officers in the precinct that might get an NOI from the radio charger Kommissar for committing this type of transgression: Call me and I will personally handle your representation.

I guess we pay hundreds of dollars for equipment like this so it can sit around unused. I guess we don’t have situations where an officer’s home charging unit might be defective and of course we never have situations where there are problems with defective batteries that don’t hold a charge, or discharge more rapidly than normal. Officers never get busy with family life and occasionally forget to charge their radio.

This is right up there with a motor sergeant many years ago who didn’t feel he should have to sign court overtime slips for his officers if they lost a court case. Now where’s the wisdom in that? I would like to know who the rock head sergeant is that came up with this gem of a management idea.

If this is what passes for management and supervision in our precincts then this sergeant needs to be the next nominee for the Village Idiot Award. This title, by the way is currently held by a south zone commander.

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Dear PLEA,

On behalf of the Phoenix Police Department’s Central City Precinct, we wish to express our sincere appreciation to everyone who generously donated time, money, and prizes to the fundraising effort on behalf of Officer Tony Daley. As a direct result of your willingness to help another in need, the fundraiser was a huge success, raising over $18,000.

This money will assist Officer Daley and his family with expenses associated with his injury, providing some peace of mind to enable Officer Daley to focus on his healing process.

Thank you again for your generosity and selflessness in assisting this brave officer. We can only offer our heartfelt appreciation for your effort.

Sincerely,

Sergeant Brian Bachorski
Sergeant Jared Lowe
Central City Precinct
Phoenix Police Department
Saying Farewell to a PLEA Icon

Franklin R. Marino
PLEA Secretary

On Thursday March 29, 2012 after 35 years of dedicated service, PLEA Office Manager, Arlene Venturini called it a day for the last time and rode off into the sunset for a well-deserved retirement. A farewell open house was held at the PLEA office to honor Arlene’s many years of service to the organization. In addition to the PLEA Board and office staff, those that came to say farewell included former PLEA Presidents, Gordy Lange, Terry Sills, Jake Jacobsen, and Mark Spencer. Former PLEA President Mike Petchel was unable to be there, but he sent a touching tribute via email to Leigh Ann Bennett, which she read to everyone. Also in attendance were retired PLEA Board members, Brian Miller, Jim Kliwer, Levi Bolton, PLEA Attorney, Mike Napier, current Assistant Chief, Kevin Robinson and retired Assistant Chief Dave Brewster, as well as numerous active and retired PLEA Members, family members and friends of Arlene.

A common thread among those who had such nice things to say about Arlene was their reference to the makeup of PLEA. While its leadership has continuously changed over the past 37 years, the one element which has remained consistent is the Office Staff, including Arlene, who was the first full-time PLEA employee. Arlene left a legacy that will be missed by everyone and tough to match.

While it is safe to say that everyone who knows Arlene shares similar thoughts, it was these statements from Mike Petchel’s e-mail that sum up who Arlene was, what she stood for, and the important role she played in the organization:

Arlene was “a woman who gave all she had to being a wife, a mother of two talented and beautiful children, and friend to thousands of Arizona police officers and their families.”

Mike also goes on to say, “She skillfully screened calls and visits from cops in trouble, cops in need, and cops who didn’t know who to talk to for help. For each one, she guided them with limitless compassion and professionalism.” And “Arlene knows more secrets than the walls of a precinct locker room. Yet, she respected everyone’s personal privacy and never broke the trust that cops placed in her.”

Lastly, he says, “Most cops may never know how she laughed, cried, and cared for them throughout their careers. She wears her pride for cops like a medal. You could not ask for a better individual to dedicate her work life to the guardians of the streets.

PLEA would like to wish Arlene all the best for a happy and healthy retirement.
The following thank you note was received at the PLEA Office from the family of Retired Phoenix Police Officer Dave Logan. On March 12, 2012, PLEA President Joe Clure attended a Parole Hearing for Arizona Department of Corrections inmate Jaime Bernal, who is currently serving a twenty eight year sentence for attempted murder after shooting Officer Logan on July 30, 1992.

Dear Joe,

Dave and I want to thank PLEA and specifically, you, for attending and adding your support at the parole hearing; it meant a lot!

Sincerely,

Dave and Sheila Logan
JAMES P. ABDO was born in Omaha, Nebraska. He earned his undergraduate degree from the University of Rochester in 1984 and his Juris Doctorate from the College of Law at Arizona State University in 1991. Mr. Abdo served as an Assistant Attorney General for Arizona before entering private practice as a partner at two major Phoenix law firms, where his practice focused on commercial litigation of all types. He has extensive experience both representing government bodies appearing before numerous state, county and city agencies in numerous licensing, procurement and labor/employment matters. His practice also includes the formation, counseling and representation of business entities, the drafting of a wide variety of real estate and other contract documents in addition to litigating disputes arising out of contracts.

In addition to the full services provided to PLEA members to protect their careers, the Law Offices of Michael Napier P.C. provide the following:

- Personal injury recovery (on or off duty); experienced representation at a reduced fee;
- Reduced fees for matters not covered by the PLEA legal plan;
- Free probate of officer’s estate for line-of-duty death;
- Free consultations to members on any matter, and Referrals to attorneys or specialists for matters not handled by the firm.

2525 E. Arizona Biltmore Circle • Suite 130
Phoenix, AZ 85016
(602) 248-9107 • www.napierlawfirm.com

Michael Napier has been representing Phoenix officers for over 36 years. Mr. Napier is one of the most experienced labor and personal injury attorneys in Arizona. Mr. Napier has represented hundreds of officers before administrative bodies throughout Arizona, and has assisted critically injured officers and the survivors of the officers in obtaining compensation for their injuries and losses.

Anthony Coury has focused his 9 years of practice primarily on personal injury and wrongful death lawsuits in which he has served as plaintiffs’ counsel. He has experience in cases dealing with dram shop liability, negligence, government claims and products liability including service as counsel on the litigation team for Phoenix Police Officer Jason Schechterle.

Kathryn Bailie was born and reared in Phoenix, Arizona, completing her undergraduate degree at Arizona State University. She served as a J.A. for the Third Circuit Court and then worked as a Public Defender in the Commonwealth of Kentucky before joining the Law Office of Michael Napier, P.C. She has worked with Michael Napier on personal injury and wrongful death cases, dram shop liability, negligence, administrative, disciplinary, and other employment matters.

Fallen Heroes
Phoenix Police Officer

Phoenix Police Officer
Arthur Del Gaudio, Jr.
April 22, 1976

Phoenix Police Officer
Rusty Hawkins
April 24, 1984

Phoenix Police K-9
Hunter
April 17, 1996

Phoenix Police Officer
Tim Landers
April 20, 1997

LAW OFFICES OF MICHAEL NAPIER, P.C.

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If You Have A Grievance

FIRST: Attempt to resolve the matter informally with your supervisor.

SECOND: If you cannot resolve this with your supervisor, contact one of the representatives above.

REMEMBER: There are time limits to initiate a written grievance.

RECORD: All interviews once you have been given an NOI.

COPY: All memos or paperwork related to the investigation.

TRUTHFULLY: Answer all questions related to the investigation.

If you are called by Professional Standards Bureau or any police supervisor regarding an investigatory interview or interrogation, you may have PLEA representation during that interview. Call for representation as soon as possible. For your convenience, a PLEA board member and representative are available 24/7.