Seven Years Of Service

Our election process is finally over, and having heard from many of you – you’re glad it is. In this year’s election, about 1/3 of the total PLEA membership determined for all of us that our union needs a complete overhaul. A total about-face, a 180 degree turn and a new direction. A direction based on confrontation, not mutual cooperation. A direction that we evolved away from some twenty-plus years ago.

It’s been just over seven years since the office of PLEA President suddenly became vacant and the entire Board of Trustees asked me to leave SAU and step in. The transition was not easy. I knew many of the command staff I would need to deal with because we had ‘grown-up’ together on the department. We had taken different career paths, but we had known each other for more than twenty years. All I had was my credibility and integrity to open the doors that needed to be opened.

I received a tremendous amount of advice and counsel from former PLEA Presidents Mike Petchel and Terry Sills. They instilled in me the undeniable benefit of productive working relationships. But it was up to me to build the trust and credibility base with the decision makers at City Hall and 620 W.

United Phoenix Firefighters President, Billy Shields, and past president Pat Cantelme helped tremendously as I began to wade into the political arena at the State Capitol and also meet the most influential civic and business leaders in Phoenix. Over the years these contacts and relationships have been very beneficial to all members, and I owe the four past Presidents of these two powerful unions a great deal of thanks.

But they’re not the only ones. Former PLEA Board members Dale Norris, Sam Wooldridge and Brian Livingston, have always been there for me. They were the tip of the spear as we drafted legislation to take to the Capitol. I will always consider them friends and I can’t thank them enough for their guidance and vision.

I have also had the honor of working with PLEA Attorney Mike Napier. Without question Mike is the finest Labor attorney in the Southwest, if not the entire country. His wisdom, counsel, and friendship will always mean a great deal to me.

From City Hall, I could not have asked for – nor found – more willing partners than those on the Council. Skip Rimza was Mayor when I took office. We met frequently to discuss everything from Bond issues to department staffing. The same is true of former Councilman Tom Milton. I’ve worked closely with all the council over the past seven years and have established not only the productive working relations but true friendships. I consider Phil Gordon my friend first and our Mayor second. Not a week goes by that we don’t meet or speak on issues that affect our city or our members.

City Councilman Dave Siebert chairs the Public Safety subcommittee of the City Council. He pulls the strings on all the tools and equipment we use as police officers. From TASERS to Tahoes, to the added safety equipment on the Crown Vics, and the new fleet of helicopters, he and Council members Greg Stanton, Peggy Bilsten, Michael Johnson, and Claude Mattox vote to ensure we are properly funded and equipped. They believe in us and support us.

These relations are not free. They are earned through actions and deeds, not hysterics and pettiness, and they have proved very beneficial to all of us.

Nationally, it was again Mike Petchel who introduced me to the leaders of Police Unions from around the country. I accompanied Mike to my first National Association of Police Organizations (NAPO) conference in January of 2001. After that first conference I was on my own to establish my credibility, integrity, and worth to this powerful national group. Since that first conference I was elected as the Area 1 Vice President in ’02 and ’04, and then elected to NAPO’s National Officers Board in ’06.

Mike taught me that it was the responsibility of the PLEA President to be PLEA’s representative and spokesman at the national level. He taught me that Congressional leaders and the leaders of other police unions need to meet and interact with the Union President, not a designee. It was a respect and credibility issue that I was not to delegate. He was absolutely right.

The benefit of these national relationships has proven very beneficial to PLEA members. This is when the credibility, trust and integrity open the doors to congressional offices where potential votes on important law enforcement legislation reside. For example, Senator Jon Kyl was there for PLEA during the past year in the form of adding money to an existing bill to help us combat fraudulent ID’s and documents in Arizona. Representative Jeff Flake and Raul Gallegos became co-sponsors of HR-218, the “National Right to Carry” bill, after a meeting with them in Washington DC. The bill passed and is now law.

Whether it’s locally or nationally we can never lose sight of the fact that every decision that affects wages, benefits, working conditions, equipment, rights, pensions, and other things, is decided by a politician or group of politicians. It is imperative that we remain vigilant and active in the political arena, and it must come from the union president. If there is not a dedicated and active presence in this forum, we will all suffer immeasurably.

By Jake Jacobsen
PLEA President

Continued on page 3.
I would like to take this opportunity to recognize Jake and commend him for his staunch dedication to the membership of the Phoenix Law Enforcement Association (PLEA) during his seven-year term as president. During his tenure, I interacted with Jake on issues of concern to both labor and management while serving as an Assistant Chief in the North Patrol and Professional Standards Divisions and in my current assignment as Police Chief/Public Safety Manager. Although Jake and I have not always been in complete agreement on how various issues should be decided, his professional manner allowed us to work through our differences and come to mutually agreeable resolutions. In all of our discussions, while it was obvious that Jake had the best interest of his membership at heart, it was also clear that he cared about making improvements that would benefit the overall Department as well.

During his term, Jake made inroads in further improving relationships between the Police Department’s management and PLEA by bringing forward a program that had been successful in the Phoenix Fire Department for more than two decades. Instituted several years ago, the Interest Based Relations (IBR) program is an effective way for police management and PLEA to work together to solve issues of mutual concern.

PLEA has been recognized as one of the most respected police labor associations in the country. Jake’s leadership in the past seven years has contributed to this reputation and has ultimately served to benefit the police officers of the Phoenix Police Department.

In public safety we come to appreciate someone who stands with us no matter what the odds may be. We appreciate someone who has integrity, guts, intelligence and compassion. And in the end if a person can laugh and tell a good story.... we come to really like them.

Jake Jacobson possesses all of the qualities. Over the years we have been through many tough situations together, and it was always good to have Jake standing with me, or in front of me. Clearly we were stronger together, and the Police and Fire unions....and all of the other city employees.... of the City of Phoenix are better off for Jake’s efforts.

I consider Jake a great leader, a very good friend, and one Hell of a man by any measure.

Billy Shields
United Phoenix Fire Fighters
Immediate Past President
Hester, Heitel & Associates
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City of Phoenix
Office Of The City Council
Greg Stanton

My heartfelt thanks to Jake Jacobsen for his years of outstanding service to Phoenix Police Officers and all Phoenix residents. I began my first term on the Phoenix City Council in 2000, the same year Jake started as President of PLEA, so we have been able to work together throughout our leadership careers.

Jake has been an outstanding leader of PLEA and has always maintained strong, professional relationships with City management and elected officials. He has never shied away from taking on tough issues, and it was his advocacy that helped Phoenix become the first city to make much needed changes to Crown Victoria vehicles to improve police officer safety. Because of Jake’s leadership, PLEA members have new and improved office space.

Jake understands the importance of working with neighborhood leaders and he demonstrated this by helping to build the Block Watch Program. He was also instrumental in helping support numerous elections that moved the city of Phoenix forward as a whole.

Finally, Jake is a great guy, strong family man, and has always been a pleasure to work with. He deserves credit for the advancements made by PLEA during his tenure, and I wish him the best in his future endeavors.

Welcome
NEW MEMBERS

Adrian Barrios  Robert Metrick
Abraham Camarillo  Jennifer Moore
Jeffrey Chang  Eric Newton
Timothy Denny  Jerad Perkins
Chase Ditwiler  Richard Raymer
Scott Ferrante  Michael Richardson
Philip Gourdine  Desiree Sanchez
Travis Hunter  Ian Sharp
Peter Jacks  Jeff Smalarz
Michael Kerley  Mark Thompson
Sheree Lee  Danitza Torres
Marc Legere  William Welch
Michael Luberda  Jael Zelman-Lopez

The 2008 Entertainment books will be available at the PLEA office in September at $25.00 each.
To Whom It May Concern:

Over the last four years, the Las Vegas Police Protective Association Metro, Inc. has had the pleasure of working very closely with the President of the Phoenix Law Enforcement Association (PLEA), Jake Jacobsen. What we have seen from Jake has not only impressed our Board, but it has truly inspired us. I have had the privilege of watching Jake work on both local and national issues facing law enforcement. Jake has had many successes on both levels, because of his dedication and tireless work ethic.

It never ceases to amaze me that Jake is always working for his members. Whether he be in the office, traveling on business for the Association, or on his own time, Jake is always available to his members and the members of fellow organizations. It is my goal that our association gleans even a small portion of what Jake has been able to accomplish. Jake is not only my friend, but a friend to all law enforcement and he will be missed.

Respectfully submitted,

Chris Collins, Detective
Executive Director

I commend and thank Jake for all of his work and sincere dedication and commitment to the Phoenix Citizens and Police Department; for his local and national involvement in issues that impact the ethics and concerns for the quality of service that our department provides to the community; and for the outstanding professionalism in representing the Phoenix Police Department throughout the country.
Jake Jacobsen -
A Man of Many “C’s”

Compassion  During his tenure, Jake had the difficult task of comforting the families of 7 officers who lost their husband, father, son, brother or friend. Many found themselves wandering into the PLEA office for solace and comfort. They found Jake with an open heart and arms.

Courage  Funding for a new building began before Jake’s presidency, but he was the one who had the courage to move forward and say “Let’s do it!” Much time and vision was required to make the building at 1102 West Adams become a reality. A 24 hour lounge is now available to PLEA members to accommodate their needs between court and other job responsibilities.

Charisma  Jake has a way of making anyone he meets feel as though they are the most important person he has met that day. A sincere interest in business or personal issues leaves those that have had the privilege of interaction with him feeling they have found a “new best friend”.

Character  Jake has led the association with a strong sense of integrity and a positive attitude. He always sees the glass “half full” rather than “half empty” - a great attribute in times of stress and difficulty.

As an office staff, we could always “count” on Jake with his compassion, courage, charisma and character to guide us as a team to continually strive to meet the needs of the members of the Phoenix Law Enforcement Association.

Thank you, Jake, for making a difference in the lives of not only PLEA members, but in ours as well.

Arlene
Leigh Ann
JoAnn
Debbie
Melissa

Dear Jake,

Now that you are moving on with your career, I wanted to applaud you on the fantastic job you have done as President of PLEA and to thank you for inspiring me to become the PPSLA President.

You may remember speaking at the labor conference in Chicago several years ago about fostering good relationships. You proudly boasted about the labor-management relationship that officers enjoy in Phoenix and the quality of our employee benefits. I was very impressed with your presentation, and as many in attendance, and it was obvious by the multitude of questions that Phoenix is way ahead of the game nationwide. I recall that many of the labor groups indicated that they can’t even speak to their city management personnel without their attorneys present, and that they spend thousands of dollars arbitrating simple issues.

Under your leadership, and that of a couple of your predecessors, i.e., Mike Petchel and Ronnie Snodgrass, PLEA has become a dynamic model for police labor organizations around the country. Most impressive to me has been your ability to work with others to achieve important goals for your membership. My partner, Sgt. Dave Wilson, likes to say “if you need a court order to get on the 4th floor, then what good are you?” You have successfully implemented this “relationship building” philosophy at the city, the state, and even at the national level, and your organization continues to reap its benefits.

I have learned a lot from you and will continue to lead PPSLA toward the many accomplishments that PLEA has achieved; successes that would not have been realized without your hard work and savvy. Furthermore, the critical work that you have done on the state level with the Arizona Police Association (APA), and on the national level with the National Association of Police Officers (NAP0), has led to even more successes and benefits for police associations and law enforcement around our state and nation. Clearly, these organizations are losing a dedicated leader who will sorely be missed.

Thanks for all of your help and inspiration.

Mark R. Hafley
PPSLA President

During the time Jake served as the President of the Phoenix Law Enforcement Association, I had a number of opportunities to work with him. We discussed many organizational and personnel issues over the years and worked together on the Department’s Labor Management Committee. Whether in a formal meeting or during informal discussions at the PLEA office, Jake was always a professional. Even though, on occasion, our views differed and sometimes we agreed to disagree, I left each contact knowing that Jake was dedicated to representing the interests and concerns of the membership of the Association. Even though I’ve been retired from the Phoenix Police Department for 3 years, I wanted to take this opportunity to express my appreciation to Jake for his efforts during his tenure and wish him good luck in his future endeavors.

Sherry Kiyler
Phoenix PD Retired
When Nobody Else Would

By Dale F. Norris
Arizona Police Association

The Summer of 2000 was a difficult time for PLEA. Its president was under fire from within and without. He had resigned only 10 months into his term, and members angry over his actions were in an uproar. When nobody wanted the job as PLEA president, Jake Jacobsen stood up and took the reins.

What followed were some of PLEA’s most tumultuous years, but Jake led PLEA through and managed to advance the members’ interest in many ways. PLEA continues to set the standard for police associations in this country.

Under Jake’s leadership, PLEA established a permanent home and now owns its own building close to the Main Police Building and the State Capitol. The full time Association personnel, providing services to members, have expanded two-fold. PLEA is well respected by community and political leaders for its activities that promote the city of Phoenix, the community and the image of Phoenix police officers.

Jake will leave PLEA better than he found it, PLEA members better served than ever before, and the community better educated about the sacrifices made to keep them safe.

I’m not sure what would have happened in the Summer of 2000 if Jake had said, “No thanks,” but I know we all owe Jake a huge debt because he did not.

Thank you, friend. You did well.

When I was asked to write a best wishes type article for the RECAP about our Phoenix Law Enforcement Association President Jake Jacobsen, I decided to write about what I had experienced during the last several months with him. By writing about my first-hand, behind the scene experiences, I hope to relate to you the strength of character and integrity that Jake personifies. I also want to provide encouragement for this union for the next couple of years during this time of change.

I think we can all safely agree that over the last several months, this union has endured enough turmoil to last another 35 years. I don’t know if you are aware of this, but while our elections were in progress, the PPSLA also held their own election process. The candidates each graciously acknowledged their opponent’s qualifications, but simply stated why their own positions (or philosophies) were better. How great would that have been for us. What an example of solidarity would that have shown to not only you, our membership, but the fourth floor. You see, I truly believe in the concept of unity. I believe in the old Latin term “E Pluribus Unum” or “Out of many...one”. I truly believe in our union of officers, however I also believe that a house divided amongst itself will fall.

Jake as president with a strong vision for the future of this union. Jake saw the big picture clearly. As a result, our union has been recognized on a national front. As our spokesman, Jake was forced to work in a political arena. It was simply the nature of the beast. Jake’s long experience as a negotiator for SAU came into good use time and time again as he sought for better benefits for you and me. Jake knew that the world of politics in which he worked so well in, was a world where relationships of mutual cooperation and respect were paramount. Jake’s work with NAPO (National Association of Police Organizations) and APA were just the tip of the iceberg. The relationships that Jake has cultivated and maintained within our department’s leadership as well as the City, the State and Federal government are invaluable and have strengthened the status of our union and benefits.

I also want to take the opportunity to write about Jake’s Vice-President Michelle Monaco. Michelle shares the same values about relationships as Jake and his worked hard over the years while serving this union. After 14 years of service to this member ship, Michelle, who has cultivated and maintained countless valuable relationships throughout the department, is also leaving. Like Jake, Michelle’s dignity and integrity won the day. While on this topic, Bobby Palma is one of those who has just amazed me with the number of awesome relationships that have so well served the members of this union over the years. In fact after a recent DRB hearing, one of the PSB investigators, a Sergeant, openly declared that he would want Bobby representing him if he were in trouble. Thank God that Bobby is staying on as a voice of reason as one of our Trustees.

There have been so many times that I’ve brought my questions, concerns about investigations or situations involving the members that I have represented to either Jake, Michelle or Bobby. During those times, they would simply make a call to a member of our department’s administrative staff. We were then able to meet in a comfortable, friendly and cooperative atmosphere with individuals who were interested in focusing on the rights of the member balanced with the good of the department, not just the department’s unilateral interests. This is not to say that we would get charges dropped or reduced, (which we did) but we were able to assure that the member’s rights were prioritized and even some formal investigations averted. All of this would forgo the long and stressful grievance process for the member leaving a positive light on what otherwise could have been an ugly and unnecessary path. This was all possible because of good proactive relationships!

I know that the membership of this union is strong. I know that I look forward to continuing to serve you all as a Representative, because with me, it really is about the members. I also know that the outgoing President and Vice-President will be sorely missed. We will also miss Bobby Palma’s full-time attention on our union. Jake and Michelle, I want to thank you for a job well done!

Humbly Yours,
Dan Dougherty
PLEA Representative
The last election held by PLEA was one I watched with keen interest as not at any time in recent memory has such a diverse field of candidates vied for office. As the ballots were cast and the results tabulated I could not but reflect on the accomplishments of the current association President, Jake Jacobsen.

During my tenure as APA (Arizona Police Association) Executive Director, some very significant advances were made to protect the lives and welfare of police officers throughout the state. These advances would not have been possible without Jake's direct involvement in the political process. These advances need to be remembered and recognized by all police officers for the vision it took to see the future positive effects they would have on the association's membership.

As many of you know during Jake's tenure as PLEA President he also served as the APA's treasurer. With his direct assistance, the APA was able to steer several bills through the legislative process. Some of the major bills passed by the APA during this time include Accidental Disability, Catastrophic Disability, Safety Product and Illegal Aliens with Weapons. Additionally other major strides were made to protect the lives and rights of police officers throughout this state and nation.

We should also remember the work he did on the Crown Victoria issue. Having the drive and fortitude to strike out against a major automobile manufacturer took courage but placing himself as the public spokesperson for this issue took leadership to a new level. Then moving the city to expend such a large amount of money to correct these vehicle's deficiencies just added to his legacy of accomplishment on the issue.

What you may have not known is Jake's direct involvement in another major issue. Developed and delivered by the APA to Attorney General Terry Goddard during this period, was information regarding the potential unreliability of ballistic vests worn at that time by police officers. In attendance at the meeting and pushing for corrective measures on this issue, on behalf of the PLEA membership, was Jake Jacobsen. As many of you know, this issue later became a national issue that I am sure resulted in the quality of ballistic vests improving.

To portray Jake's involvement on any of the mentioned issues as minimal would be contrary to the truth. Jake was a driving force in getting these items on the APA agenda. He should also be credited with pushing city and departmental leaders to adopt the needed changes associated with these issues in an expeditious manner. Without his insistence and perseverance, I have to doubt whether city officials would have so readily adopted any of these measures.

Therefore, as PLEA looks forward to the new administration taking control, I ask each of you to remember what Jake and his administration accomplished. To Jake I say, "Well done good sir and thank you for your extraordinary efforts to improve, protect and defend the lives of police officers across this state and nation."

Brian L. Livingston, Assistant Director
Director of Communications/Legislative and
Intergovernmental Affairs
Registrar of Contractors

City of Phoenix
Office Of The City Council
Claude Mattax

I have had the pleasure of working with Jake Jacobsen as the President of PLEA since I took office in 2000. It has been a great experience working with a professional who strongly advocated for the men and women he represents, who daily put their lives on the line to protect and serve the residents of District 5 and our City of Phoenix. Jake kept me updated on police issues and listened to me and shared insight on ideas I had to improve police recruiting, manpower and service to our community, such as the residency issue and placing cadets into the academy before retirements occurred to limit vacancies.

I consider Jake a friend and will miss working with him as President of PLEA. But, I am secure in knowing he remains loyal to our citizens and city by continuing to actively serve as a Phoenix Police Officer.

Thank you, Jake, for your commitment to our fellow police officers and to our city.

In order to have a good friend, you first have to be a good friend. I received this advice from my father when I was just a small boy. Jake Jacobsen has been a good friend to Phoenix police officers for the past seven years, and in return, he has many good friends. I have had the good fortune of knowing Jake for approximately 30 years. Jake has been a squad mate, roommate, fellow PLEA board member, and most importantly, a good friend to me during this time.

I am disappointed Jake will not be continuing as our President, because I know there is more he wanted to accomplish. But on the same token, I am also excited for him. He will use his work ethic, knowledge, and desire to be productive in the next chapter of his police career. I know Jake will be successful in his next assignment and his fellow officers will be glad to have him on board with them.

Jake, you are a good person and good friend. I wish you luck and happiness as your career continues. Thank you for all you have done for us. You are the best.

Bruce R Stallman
Retired
Jake,

Although I have been gone from the City of Phoenix for almost three years now, upon reflection of my interactions with Jake, it is still clear in my mind that he was a calm, cool and collected straight-shooter. Even though we did not always agree on how to solve a difficult issue, he always let you know why he disagreed and did not let any disagreement ruin the labor/management relationship. You could trust what he said and he kept his commitments. Jake understood we had our respective jobs to do, but that a partner could accomplish more than an adversary. Good luck, Jake.

Greg Fretz
Former City of Phoenix Labor Relations Administrator

About Jake,

Jake is a true professional. He has worked tirelessly for police labor these past years. He has raised the bar for officers’ coverage and working conditions not only in Phoenix, but throughout the United States. But Jake goes much deeper that that. He is also my friend and mentor. I will miss the "father-son" talks and working with him side-by-side in the political corridors of our state and nation. Jake, I wish you all the best and always remember, you will always be my friend.

Mesa Lieutenant Joe Shelley
Good Bye and Thank You

By Michelle Monaco, Editor

When I decided to put together this special issue honoring Jake Jacobsen, I thought I would send out requests for some notes or comments to a few people who had worked with Jake. I never expected to receive such a huge response. This is a testament to Jake's relationships with these professionals. Most of the people who responded consider Jake a friend as well as a co-worker or professional contact.

During my 14 years on the PLEA Board, I have worked with all but one of the PLEA Presidents. Was Jake the best at grievance handling? Probably not. Was Jake the best at negotiations? Who knows. Was he the best at lobbying for our officers in various political arenas? I don't know. Was Jake the best at community goodwill? I haven't a clue. Was Jake one of the best presidents PLEA has had? YES!

Jake deserves the distinction of being one of the best presidents because he was very good at a lot of different things and very proficient in many areas. Jake became President seven years ago because the current Vice-President didn't want to take on the job. Since his appointment, Jake has worked tirelessly to build relationships with the community, the department, and the members of PLEA. Jake had to work for all of the respect and relationships he has now.

Jake is one of the most hardworking, ethical, and caring Presidents I have worked with. When an officer was injured, Jake was the one at the hospital. When an officer had a financial hardship, Jake was, many times, there with money out of his own pocket to help. When the department needed help with something legislative, Jake was there to testify. Jake was also there when PLEA determined that we should be a big part of the APA and NAPO. Jake has taken many issues to the City Council, Frank Fairbanks, or Jack Harris because the issue was good for the members. When PLEA's interests required Jake to testify locally or nationally, Jake was there. Jake was there monthly with the Block Watch members, in the PLEA office, after hours. When Jake would go out of town for a PLEA-related matter, it usually required weekend meetings. When he returned, it was back to work on Monday, business as usual. When his Sgt. asked him what his N-days were for these trips, Jake told him, I don't have many N-days on this job. He was tireless in representing the members' interests locally, statewide, and nationally.

Jake knew coming into this position that he would be sacrificing a lot: personal life, money, a "high-three", his SAU job. But, he stood up and took the job when no one else wanted it. Jake has given his all to this position and all he has done has made our lives better as Phoenix police officers.

I want to thank Jake for being there to take the role as President and for all he's done for the officers. I also want to thank him for all the help he gave me to make my job easier. Good luck, my friend.

This is my last issue as the Recap Editor after 13 years. I'd like to thank all the people who helped make my job easier. Dale Norris who handed over the reins of this publication; I hope I've lived up to your expectations. Thank you to Mike Napier, for his legal advice, Arlene Venturini, Jake Jacobsen, and Melissa Solimeno, my awesome proofreaders. And, finally, our last three printers, Scott Bagger, Chad Amos, and Bill Steele, I couldn't have done it without you. We have created the best association newsletter out there. Thanks!

“Big Jake”

My 8 year old son, Jake, calls him “Big Jake”. But then again, so do I. Our community will benefit for decades to come as a result of his amazing career and unwavering dedication to public safety. Jake and PLEA have made it possible for Phoenix to have the best police department in the nation – and have created an atmosphere of professionalism that allows bold initiatives like Proposition 1, to hire 500 new police personnel, to win voter approval. He is my friend and my mentor – and even though he is officially retiring, Big Jake will maintain his prime position on my speed dial – just behind Christa and just ahead of Starbucks.
I was at the Academy the other day. I was "instructing" a post academy class on crime scene management. I started the class by putting up a slide with my name and assignment. The slide also had my serial number. I then directed the class to meet me in the parking lot. As I was walking out one of the class asked me how many years?

Well, it has been better than 34 years since I started at PPD. I noticed that I am now 15th on the department seniority list. I think I will make the top 10 before I leave. I have seen a lot of changes since I got here. When I joined the department, you could not live with your girl/boy friend and be a member of the department; you couldn't announce the birth of your child without being married. You couldn't file a grievance, there were no forms. If you got fired for any reason, good or bad, you didn't get your job back.

You left the academy and became a member of the FOP; I think it was $2.00 a month. You could swim in the pool or drink at the bar, the clubhouse was on Dobbins. You couldn't join PLEA, because there wasn't one. PLEA came later. PLEA was an idea brought in from one of those East coast cities; New York and Milwaukee played a big part in creating PLEA. But some of the best ideas came from officers who came from right here. The glue that held PLEA together was some very good leaders, Gordon Lange was the first. PLEA was his brainchild; the rest of us just went along for the ride.

Over the years PLEA has been fortunate because of its leaders. Many of you don't know Don or Ron, Terry or Mike, but I know them all. You didn't deal with 10 years of a really bad police manager, but Ron and Terry did. Mike held the Union together during the worst attack that PLEA has ever faced and we came out stronger. He developed a program with the new Chief which made headlines, management and labor working together to make things better.

About seven years ago, PLEA looked for a new leader. We found him in Jake Jacobsen. Jake was not the person you would have expected. He has a police background that came from SAU rather than patrol. SAU/SWAT, same thing different name, but you know them; cowboys, shoot them up, take them down, more macho than regular cops, who can be pretty macho. If you never really look at SWAT teams, you really miss the big picture. It isn't the shoot first group that everyone thinks it is. The key to SWAT/SAU is the TEAM.

Jake believes in the TEAM. He lives the TEAM concept, working together to get the job done. Jake always had his eye on the prize; the long term goal of making Phoenix Police the best there is. He worked towards that goal every day since he joined the PD. He has worked harder every day since he became the Union President. He wasn't political when he took the job; he became political as he learned the job.

I was looking back at a letter from Mike Petehel to the future President of PLEA. Mike spoke about the ego needed to be the President. But he warned about ego getting in the way of being effective and compassionate. He spoke about perception and how in politics perception can become reality. He warned that you could never expect to be thanked for the job you had taken. He also told the as yet unnamed President to take care of his budget, since it isn't anyone but the member's money.

Lastly, he asked, no demanded, that the new President leave the organization stronger than he found it.

Well, I can only guess that Jake either read that letter every day and night or he already lived those teachings, because he has done all of that.

Jake will be leaving the office of President in September. He has guarded the budget like it was his money. Because of that we have a building that we own.

We have friends at City Hall and at the Capitol, friends because Jake made them our friends. He made it his job each and everyday to make this a better department, because he was here.

Does he have an ego? I am sure he does, but it never got in the way of doing what was right for the Department and the Union. He put his personal life second to the needs of the Citizens, the Department and our Union.

Jake, Mike told you not to expect any thanks for what you did. I know you don't expect thanks, but you earned my thanks and I would be remiss if I didn't publically thank you. You did make this a better place because you were here. It's not perfect, just better. That is all we can hope or expect one to do.

Thanks for being the President of PLEA, thanks for all you have sacrificed for the members, thanks for being my friend.

Joe Petrosino
Seven Years In Review

Inside the walls of the PLEA office you will find the real reason PLEA is successful. It’s the five women we call our “pro-fessional office staff”. Collectively these professionals run PLEA. Leigh Ann assures that every penny of our $1.4 million annual budget is accounted for. She is a true friend, a tremendous advisor and one of the most dedicated and hard working people I have ever met. She deals with the budget, PAC funds and reports, the AZ Secretary of State’s office and she comes to work every day with a smile. Arlene assists with grievances, tracking, timelines and correspondence. Most of the time these two know more about the President’s schedule and meetings than the President and I couldn’t have done it without them.

JoAnn, Debbie, and Melissa handle all the member benefits. Phone and pager sales/service is just a part of all they do. There are plenty of benefits and plenty of members. They all work hard to make sure your address and beneficiary info is up to date and your correct phone number and current work assignment are on file. From these things to the sale of tickets to the many vacation and entertainment destinations, and all the member benefits you’ve come to expect, they make our union run.

Over the past seven years I’ve had tremendous support. Our outgoing Vice President, Michelle Monaco, is a great friend, confidant, and advisor. She could tell me when I was right and when she thought I was wrong. Her advice, vision and wisdom have always been positive and constructive and there was never a hidden agenda. I am truly blessed to have worked so closely with her for the benefit of the membership.

“There is not enough space to thank them all.”

But there are other independent thinkers that have shaped our successes during my time in office. Bobby Palma has a success rate for members second to none. His ability to think outside the box and offer meaningful alternatives to discipline has earned him the respect of members and the department officials he deals with. Past Board members Bruce Stallman, Brian Miller, and now Steve Rackley, John Buckner, and Joe Petrosino, always put the concerns of the member first and not their personal fight. Their reputation and integrity cannot be challenged.

Now our union will move in a much different direction. The majority of those who voted were convinced that we need a new approach with mostly new faces. Many of whom have “never worked without a net” before.

Many members quit in July. Some would have quit anyway, some left because of the election results, and some would have left had the results gone the other way. But PLEA is still our union and I would encourage all of you to stay members. You can’t make a difference if you’re not a member. You can’t demand accountability from your union leaders or your city leaders if you’re not a member.

I can’t adequately express what an honor it’s been to be your President these past seven years. I’m very proud of the things that have been accomplished and I would like to think that PLEA is in better shape today than when I first took office. There have been many contributors to our success, and although I have tried to thank many of them here, there is not enough space to thank them all.

As Jake leaves the office of President of the Phoenix Law Enforcement Association, there are accomplishments that deserve recognition.

At the beginning, Jake answered the call when PLEA was looking for someone to assume the position of President and provide leadership and direction for the organization. I doubt that he fully anticipated the challenges that were ahead. Soon, he was called upon to withstand difficult circumstances in the certification election against the FOP. As president of PLEA during that time, he drew fire, fielding criticism intended for PLEA and responding when appropriate. He also stood up to insults, some of which were hurled from behind a cloak of anonymity. Throughout, Jake not only maintained his composure, but continued to lead PLEA through the rough times of the election to a certification win. He listened to and accepted our pre-election labor board strategies which, I believe, proved instrumental in the outcome of the election.

Jake took the initiative and worked diligently to make Terry Sills’ dream of PLEA owning a building a reality. Today, PLEA occupies that building giving the union its own identification. Throughout his tenure as President, Jake has been sensitive to the need for good working relationships on the local, state and national level and, in these relationships, became PLEA’s ambassador. For all of this we are grateful.

Michael Napier
PLEA Legal Council