

# ICOPs

# POLICE BULLETIN

Official Union Publication

September 2010

## College police wear the badge, do the job

College police are much like cops in small and medium-size towns. But although they're certified police officers, they had to fight for the right to be armed on campus. Last August, they won that right in Illinois; other states like Pennsylvania are still "beating around the bush."

Illinois college boards and legislators woke up to the fact that no place is a safe haven. If they didn't know before, they learned April 16, 2007, when the largest-ever massacre on a U.S. college campus occurred at Virginia Tech.

Police Officer Tom Koch is president of the ICOPs chapter at Harper College, which services the northwest suburbs. College police work well with other police departments in the area, Koch says.

"Our department," he adds, "has a traffic safety program that contributes to the saving of lives and where people drive cautiously and courteously on campus. We provide people a safe environment to be educated and feel secure."

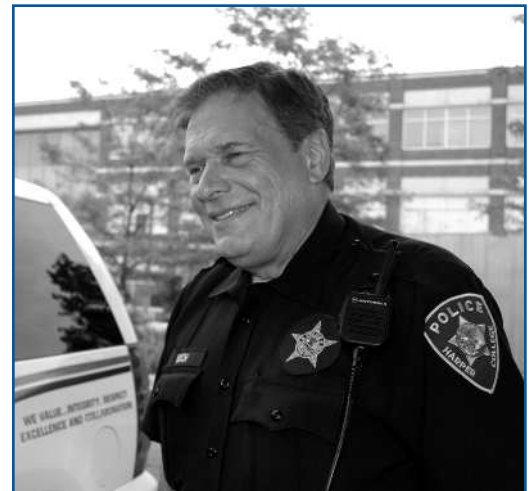
On August 11, the Illinois Association of Chiefs of Police recognized the Harper Police Department when it presented Koch and ICOPs vice-president Diane Talsma with its annual Traffic Safety Challenge Award (a first place award in the category of colleges and universities).

Harper has more than 41,000 full- and part-time students and is growing by 3% per year. In this tough economy, a growing number of people are seeking education at community colleges.

Today, ICOPs represents police officers, public safety officers and telecommunicators at Southwestern Illinois College in Belleville and Granite City; police officers, community service officers and telecommunicators at Harper College in Palatine; and police officers and sergeants at Triton College in River Grove.

According to Koch, "We're well represented by ICOPs who helped us get a contract extension until 2012... it's a fair contract and a good working environment."

College police deal with Illinois laws as well as college rules. At Harper that means a student code of conduct and a campus judicial officer who works to protect student rights and ensure the student code is followed.



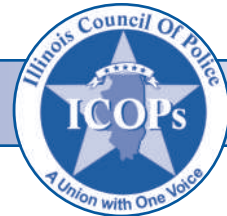
Police Officer Tom Koch

Harper Police Officer Joe Hernandez was injured October 15, 2009 attempting to make an arrest in a campus disturbance. After six days in intensive care at Northwest Community Hospital, Joe was transferred to the Rehab Institute of Chicago for five weeks. From there, he had follow-up treatment in Wheeling five days a week from November 20 to May 1, while living at home with 24-hour-a-day nursing assistance. Joe and his wife have five children. His family sustained him during this trying period. Joe was happy to return to work at Harper College May 3, but recently had to be taken to the hospital for treatment for injuries related to the October 2009 incident. We wish Joe a speedy recovery and will update you as we know more. Issues regarding Joe's benefits while on disability leave are still to be worked out.



Police Officer Joe Hernandez

# ICOPs Contract and Membership Update



**Deerfield** — Negotiations for police officers are moving along.

**Elburn** — A first-ever contract for sergeants and police officers has been ratified and approved.

**Island Lake** — Negotiations are continuing for successor agreements covering sergeants, police officers and telecommunicators.

**Lake Bluff** — Negotiations over a first-ever contract for sergeants have begun.

**Lexington** — ICOPs is in negotiations for part-time officers. Meanwhile in late May the union filed an Unfair Labor Practice for replacing full-time officers with part-time officers. The ULP is currently pending before the Illinois Labor Relations Board.

The town of Lexington is circumventing the union in several ways while spending tens of thousands of “newly-found” additional dollars for legal fees to fight collective bargaining and claiming it can’t afford any full-time officers. ICOPs believes the town’s actions are tied to the officers joining a union.

***Illinois state law prohibits the hiring of part-time officers to replace full-time officers. This is a trend we all need to watch, and be acutely aware of.***

August 07, 2010

Letter to Norm Frese, ICOPs President

Norm,



On August 2, 2010, I was advised by Police Chief James Montalbano that I was being suspended and that he was seeking my termination. Needless to say the first phone call I made was to Union Representative Rich Bruno. I advised him of the Chief’s reasons for seeking my dismissal. He told me that he would give the Union Attorney a call and have him call me.

A short time later, I received a phone call from Attorney Richard Blass. I filled him in on the situation and he told me that the Chief’s charges were baseless and without merit.

At the termination hearing on August 4, 2010, Mr. Blass put on my defense to the charges, and the Village board ruled against the Chief in this matter.

I want to let you know that your staff did a fantastic job, and they were there every step of the way for me. I can’t express the gratitude of me and my family enough, and I’m proud to be associated with a Union that actually cares and is willing to stand up for its members.

Sincerely Yours, Officer Jerry Nordan

**\*Nokomis** — ICOPs and the village are in federal mediation over wages for the village’s police officers who are seeking their first-ever contract.

**Round Lake Heights** — Negotiations are completed for part-time police officers, with substantial wage increases and retro pay. Sergeants and police officers won contracts earlier in the year.

**Sleepy Hollow** — Police officers are operating under a new first-ever contract while working out kinks with the village in implementing the contract so everyone is on the same page. Bargaining for part-time police officers will begin soon.

**\*South Beloit** — The union and city are in the final stages of negotiating a first-ever contract for sergeants while in federal mediation over wages.

**Southwestern Illinois College** — Police and public safety officers have won a new agreement including wage and benefit increases, and additional compensation for officers in charge.

**\*Stone Park** — The union and village are in federal mediation over police officer wages and insurance.

**Willow Springs** — Negotiations between ICOPs and the village are moving along for a successor agreement covering police officers.

**Winthrop Harbor** — Negotiations for part-time officers are underway following contract settlements for sergeants and full-time police officers. Bargaining for telecommunicators and community service officers come next.

**\*In Nokomis, South Beloit and Stone Park, ICOPs requested federal mediators to serve as an independent third party to move stalled negotiations ahead.**



**In Cicero...** Jay Van Kampen is president of the ICOPs chapter of part-time police officers; Rob Baker is vice-president. Part-time officers have a first-ever contract. Cicero detention officers recently won a first-ever contract as well.

## Scapegoating police pensions, pure and simple

### Dear ICOPs Member:

In the June ICOPs Bulletin, we noted a few of the ways local governments are “extracting” money to meet their budget shortfalls, like towing unmarked cruisers in NY or upping fees to \$800 for seatbelt violations in California — much to the chagrin of police and residents alike.

But there’s nothing more infuriating to me than towns and villages cutting back on patrols or not paying police pension contributions — all in the name of meeting budget deficits.

In recent years, concerted efforts by some politicians and local governmental units have whipped up anger at public employees and their pensions. Perhaps the attacks on public employees are supposed to make voters angry, and if so it may work in some quarters. Hostility toward public employees, including police officers, seems to be rising.

**Hard times should be an incentive for local governments to clean up their act rather than to target police pensions**

But let’s call it what it is. The attacks on police and other public employees and their pensions are nothing more than scapegoating.

Here are a few facts. The average retired public employee receives a \$22,000 per year pension (2007). The average public employee is far more likely to have a college or advanced degree than in the private sector. Adjusting for education and experience, public employees are paid slightly less on average than their private sector counterparts while lower pay is partially offset by better benefits.

Police and firefighters tend to have the best public employee benefits and pensions, but “where’s the beef?” Do those who risk the most day in and day out deserve any less? Furthermore, the notion that police pensions are the root of budget shortfalls is simply and patently false!

The economy and governmental budgets are not in shambles because of public employee benefits. Villages and towns aren’t broke because of police pensions. If town officials want to be angry at someone, they should take a look in the mirror.



Over the years, many local governments have faced deficits. So, what did they do? They manipulated their budget and pension fund figures to indicate balanced budgets instead of deficits. Now, when it’s all catching up with them, they claim they can’t afford police pensions.

But just how many mayors or councils do you see slashing bloated management, corruption, favoritism or high-paid union-busting attorneys?

How many do you see cutting unnecessary services so they can maintain police service and pensions? The recession should be an incentive for all local governments to clean up their act rather than turning around and using hard times to target police pensions.

ICOPs will fight with you every step of the way against any local governmental unit that tries to pin their deficit on the backs of police officers.

*In Solidarity,*

*Norm*

# In Illinois, medical marijuana is legal but it's unavailable to patients: Should it be?

**I**llinois could join 14 other states from Alaska to Vermont in making cannabis, a.k.a. marijuana, available for medicinal purposes. Good idea or horrible, here's some food for thought.

In 1978, the Illinois legislature enacted the Cannabis Control Act. The Act recognized that marijuana was widely used despite the known physical, psychological and sociological damage it may cause. Legislators decided to veer a new course focused on catching large-scale traffickers rather than the "small fry."

The Act permitted the IL Department of Human Services (IDHS) to authorize licensed physicians to use cannabis to treat debilitating medical conditions such as glaucoma and cancer. But IDHS was not mandated to give doctors the authority and approval of the Illinois State Police was required. The departments needed to create new policies before medical marijuana could be prescribed, and they didn't do it. Its use is unlikely without further legislative action.

**What is the status of Illinois legislation?** Last year, the Senate by a 30-28 vote passed the Compassionate Use of Medical Cannabis Pilot Program Act, allowing cannabis use with a physician's written permission. As amended, it narrowly defines "debilitating condition," tightens controls, includes high penalties for misuse, restricts the number of marijuana plants, and expires three years after taking effect unless renewed by the legislature.

The companion bill in the House, HB2541, could come up for a vote in early January when the legislature wraps up unfinished business before the new legislature is sworn in.

**What are some arguments for and against?** Law enforcement groups such as the Illinois Sheriffs' Association and Illinois Association of Chiefs of Police argue against permitting medical marijuana, claiming it would be too hard to enforce and too easy to abuse.

Some opponents point to California to illustrate how such a law can go wrong. Californians can buy medical marijuana at one of many dispensaries that have cropped up since 1996, when the state's program began. Illinois sponsors have worked to distance their bill from the California model with cautionary provisions. Have other states reported problems? It depends on where you live and whom you ask. Some say there are few problems; others say there is widespread abuse.

Lining up support is Law Enforcement Against Prohibition (LEAP), a group of former veterans in the drug war — police

officers, prosecutors, DEA agents. LEAP is among the outspoken groups who are for legalizing medical marijuana but who are also critical of how the overall war on drugs is handled (is it working, are sentences out of whack, etc.).

Former Cook County prosecutor James Gierach and others raise the question of whether or not law enforcement groups are opposed to medical marijuana laws because they could result in reduced enforcement revenue. Assets seized in drug raids go to local law enforcement or are divided with the feds.

Many health professionals are for medical marijuana use including the American Academy of Physicians and Illinois Nurses Association. The American Medical Association (AMA) has urged the federal government to remove cannabis from its Schedule I list of controlled substances like heroin. The AMA wants government research to be done on marijuana and for physicians to be able to prescribe it.

Some advocates argue our medicine and liquor cabinets are filled with substances which lead to death and abuse. But how many die from a marijuana overdose, they ask?

Examples abound of the price some pay for banning medical marijuana. One is Jonathan Magbie, who lived in Washington, D.C., and was paralyzed from the neck down at the age of four. In 2004, at 27, he was convicted of marijuana possession. After telling the judge he used it to treat the symptoms of quadriplegia, he was sentenced lightly to ten days in jail. But miscommunication between hospital, court and jail left him without the ventilator he needed. Four days into his sentence, Magbie died.

Such incidents have encouraged friends, families and advocates to speak out more forcefully for legalizing medical marijuana, which is perhaps why the issue is on the table in Springfield and around the country.

Yet, skeptics share a genuine concern that legalizing medical marijuana will lay the groundwork for legalizing all marijuana. It could. Indeed, as Illinois lawmakers consider their cautionary bill, proposals to fully legalize marijuana are gathering steam in many state capitols.

Yes, while we consider whether aching patients should be able to get prescriptions for marijuana, broader questions are at stake. Should we tax and regulate marijuana? Or should we tighten the screws? It's a lot to think about, in the short term and long term.



# Sleaze in the Land of Lincoln socks it to us!

**I**llinois corruption is known all over the world. On August 18, the BBC (Britain) asked: “If Rod Blagojevich serves jail time, he will be the fourth Illinois governor since 1960 to be sent to prison on corruption charges. Why are officials from Illinois...so often shady?” Good question and, if so, what does it mean for union police officers in towns and villages throughout the state?

Some historians date Illinois corruption back to 1869, when three county commissioners were convicted of fraudulently awarding a contract to paint Chicago City Hall with expensive long-lasting paint. The contractor used whitewash, split the handsome price difference with the three commissioners, and then it rained. Suddenly the gleaming Hall didn't look so spiffy. Judging by recent corruption trials, not much has changed in a century, wrote the BBC.

Most other states and cities cleaned up their act long ago. But not Illinois, which has some of the most lax campaign regulations in the nation.

The state has long bred an army of good government crusaders, but Illinois' reformers too rarely come out on top. The NY Times (Dec. 14, 2008) pointed out in an article titled “In Illinois, a Virtual Expectation of Corruption,” as much as Illinois politicians have a tradition of corruption, “the voters have had a tradition of accepting it — even expecting it — long before Rod was accused of trying to put a Senate seat up to the highest bidder.”

In truth, five of the last eight elected governors have been convicted of a crime. Since 1970, more than 1,500 convictions on public corruption charges have hit the Tollway Authority, Forest Preserves, Secretary of State's Office, and other state and local governmental units.

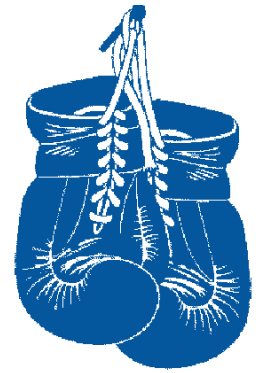
Political shenanigans in Illinois may be a gift to the nation's comics, but the money and human costs aren't funny. The price tag for corruption comes in many forms:

- Hiring people who are not qualified for their jobs.
- Putting people on public payroll who work somewhere else.
- Awarding contracts and getting poor or no service.
- Giving contracts in exchange for campaign contributions.
- Diverting property taxes into hard-to-track private sector work with no public oversight or accountability.
- Recurring misconduct leading to legal judgments and attorneys' fees to defend corrupt public officials.
- Old-fashioned theft, making off with cash or property.

The Better Government Association calculates that fully 10% of state government spending in Illinois is lost to fraud,

corruption and waste. Ten percent of Illinois' budget is \$2.5 billion. That doesn't include local governments.

While corruption continues, problems grow more complicated and harder to solve. The sleaze undermines democracy, public service and justice.



**Final Point:** Corruption hurts the taxpayers, the residents who are supposed to receive services, and the many qualified, hard-working public employees. But especially where ICOPs is concerned, it stifles the local law enforcement community, which is dangerously understaffed and whose pensions are severely underfunded.

## Do you wish for the GOOD OLD DAYS?

Many of us view the past with fondness — things aren't like they used to be. True, but if you take a brief look at the history books, you may think again. Below are tidbits of “ancient” U.S. history that may make you think twice about what you wish for.

**Before the auto** became our chief mode of transportation, there was the horse, wagon and streetcar — a sheer paradise for pickpockets. A century ago, Rochester, NY had 15,000 horses, producing enough manure to cover an acre of ground with a layer 175 feet high, along with swarms of flies and stench. Urbana, IL boasted more hogs than people and a half million pigs swarmed the streets of Cincinnati yearly. Traffic, you bet.

**Americans have long been a hard-drinking bunch.** So in the 1800s a movement arose to dry out the U.S.A. which eventually passed the 18th Amendment to the Constitution. Prohibition was ratified in 1919 and repealed in 1933, teaching us that if booze was bad, banning it was even worse. It made criminals out of casual drinkers and turned clergymen into cheats. It was doomed from the start. Our borders were too big, entrepreneurs too creative, and thirst too great. In one sense, it worked: Liquor consumption decreased. But as a means to a better society, it was a bust. Perhaps its longest-lasting legacy is one for which we're still paying: Prohibition ushered in the era of lobbyists, gangsters and money in politics.

# Police learn to handle people with autism

**T**he number of children diagnosed with autism has been steadily increasing, leading some experts to predict the prevalence of autism to be at near epidemic levels. Is the increase due to better detection and reporting? a broader definition of autism? a real increase in the number? or all of these? We'll leave that up to the experts to conclude.

Here's what we know: Autism affects 1% of children; individuals with autism are more likely to encounter police; and those encounters can be devastating for everyone involved.

In the June 1, 2010 edition of Lakeland Times, Investigative Reporter Richard Moore wrote: "... An autistic teen or young adult, who thinks he or she is doing absolutely nothing wrong, suddenly finds himself or herself in a 'situation' with police." Moore goes on to say it happened May 21 in Georgia. Reportedly, a police officer observed Clifford Grevemberg, a local 18-year-old with autism and a heart condition,

staggering back and forth outside a restaurant. Grevemberg ignored the officer's requests for identification or to stop moving away or resisting. They scuffled, and the officer's partner approached and tasered Grevemberg, who was then arrested for disorderly conduct.

Police and witness reports varied, but after learning of Grevemberg's autism, the P.D. issued a "careful apology."

The case is not an isolated incident, and some incidents have led to a serious injury or fatality.

An individual with developmental disabilities encounters the police on less than ideal terms. He or she may appear intoxicated or like a shoplifter when simply rearranging items on a shelf. An untrained officer might assume the person to be uncooperative and belligerent.

According to Moore, many police officers and department officials see the need for training, and scores of departments coast-to-coast have set up autism programs and officer training protocols.

A variety of methods help police and emergency personnel deal with autistic individuals. Some agencies have established voluntary registries for autistic residents, with parents and caregivers giving police names, addresses, descriptions and behavioral characteristics to be aware of in case of an encounter. Police could be notified in advance that an autistic individual is involved in an incident.

Other agencies have used precautionary response cards in the field. Still others have worked with local schools, taking part in drills to prepare for potential encounters at accident scenes or in other emergency conditions. These efforts help individuals with autism know what to expect, and give police officers and rescue workers a heads-up on what kind of reactions they might encounter.

The point is that many police agencies are "getting it" and moving quickly to become prepared.

**AUTISM**, Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), is one of a group of serious developmental problems affecting a child's ability to communicate and interact with others. Some common symptoms include:

- **Social skills** — Fails to respond to his/her name; has poor eye contact; appears not to hear you at times; retreats into "own world"
- **Language** — Loses previously acquired ability to say words or sentences; speaks with an abnormal tone or rhythm; can't start a conversation or keep one going; may repeat words or phrases verbatim but doesn't understand them
- **Behavior** — Performs repetitive movements, such as rocking or hand-flapping; becomes disturbed at the slightest change in routines or rituals; may be highly sensitive to light, sound and touch and yet oblivious to pain

Autism affects children of all races and nationalities, but boys are far more likely to develop it than girls.

As children with autism mature, some eventually lead normal or near-normal lives. Others continue to lack language or social skills, and the adolescent years can mean worse behavioral problems.

Most children with autism have signs of lower than normal intelligence. Others have normal to high intelligence. A small number have exceptional skills in a specific area, such as math or music.

Though autism has no single, known cause, many genetic and environmental factors contribute to its development. There is no way to prevent it and no cure exists, but certain medications can help control symptoms and improve language and social skills.

For more information, visit  
[www.MayoClinic.com/health/autism](http://www.MayoClinic.com/health/autism).

## Got stories or photos to share?

We'd like to write more in the *ICOPs Police Bulletins* and on the website about you, our members.

Is there a member of your chapter whom we should write about, someone whom you think other members should know? Do you have photos of chapter members to share with us? Is there a topic you think we should write about?



We welcome your ideas and feedback. E-mail us at [icops@sbcglobal.net](mailto:icops@sbcglobal.net) or call our editor, Kathy Devine, at 773.583.6661 or 630.832.6772.

## ICOPs Police Bulletin

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## Does the public's right to know include employee performance evaluations?

On April 29, the Illinois legislature passed House Bill 5154 amending the Personnel Record Review Act to prohibit the disclosure of public employee performance evaluations under the Illinois Freedom of Information Act. We wholeheartedly agree!

On July 26, Governor Pat Quinn vetoed changes in the bill to exempt only state and local law enforcement from disclosing performance evaluations. Surely, it is legitimate for public safety officers to have their evaluations kept from public view. They could, as Quinn wrote, "be used by criminal suspects or defendants to undermine a police investigation..."

While we're glad the Governor exempted law enforcement officers in his veto, we wonder why performance evaluations of all public employees shouldn't be exempt, as was the intent of the legislature.

Quinn's veto does not take effect until and unless it is approved by a majority of the members of the General Assembly in November. Or, the General Assembly could override the Governor's veto with a three-fifths vote of both houses.

Whether Quinn's veto stays or goes, the state will not be required to make public the performance evaluations of police officers. And that's as it should be.

## ICOPs Legal Plan Application

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You'll find more news @  
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## On the road again...

**A**uto accidents remain the Number One threat to the safety of law enforcement officers. Many factors can contribute to your risk of injury. Your eyes are a key to safe driving.

Ted Williams was a decorated Navy pilot as well as baseball great. Those two feats require excellent vision and attention. So does driving a police vehicle.

Hitting a baseball is widely considered one of the hardest things to do in sports. Stand 60 feet, six inches away from a pitcher who throws a ball at nearly 100 mph. You get 0.35 seconds to react. Ball players get plenty of training.

Airline pilots have one of the lowest vehicle collision rates. They train multiple times a year, and much of their training focuses on the visual attention required to overcome a multitude of emergency situations.

Athletes and pilots use techniques and training to improve their vision skills. Law enforcement professionals can too. Here are two training exercises for police officers:

### The Snapshot

Like a quarterback eyeballing a defense before snapping the

## Eyes are a key to safe driving

ball, a driver can take valuable snapshots of the road ahead. Concentrating on an intersection for a few brief seconds can enable you to see something you would not have normally seen. As a passenger, look down the road for two seconds then close your eyes. Wait several seconds and then tell the driver everything that you observed. Do this again and you will likely be able to report even more information. Practice enough as a passenger that you can report the same amount of information in a second or less. This technique can enable you to take in more information while driving down the road.

### Distractions

Distractions are part of our job, but they take our eyes and mind off the road. Try one- to two-second glances instead of completely taking your eyes off of the road for several seconds. When you reach down to change the radio station, stop and look up after one to two seconds. If you have to read a computer terminal while driving, read just a few words and look back up at your surroundings, then read a few more words and repeat the process. It will take you longer to complete some tasks, but your eyes will be on the roadway.

**Source:** *Keys to safe driving* by Captain Travis Yates; read the full article at [PoliceOfficer.com](http://PoliceOfficer.com).