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September/October 2024





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Peter Caso
516-937-5253

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NEXT MEETING

NEXT MEETING
Thursday September 12th
Noon
@ The Coral House

UPCOMING EVENTS

Monday September 2nd
Labor Day

Thursday October 3rd
Rosh Hashanah

Monday October 14th
Columbus Day

Thursday October 31st
Meeting @ The Coral House – Noon

Tuesday October 31st
Halloween

Sunday November 3rd
Daylight Saving Time End

Tuesday November 5th
Election Day

Monday November 11th
Veteran's Day

Thursday November 28th
Thanksgiving

Thursday December 12th
Meeting @ The Coral House – Noon

Monday December 25th
Christmas

Thursday December 26th
Hanukkah (1st Day)

THE SHIELDS OF LONG ISLAND ON THE WEB:
LongIslandShields.com

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

September 11, 2001. Hard to believe that it was twenty-three years ago. Everyone's lives and our way of living changed that day, and sadly, it will never go back to what it was. We lost so many that day and we continue losing lives to this day. We use the term pre 9/11 as much as we now use the term pre Covid. Two catastrophes orchestrated by pure evil. Let us please keep all those who perished as a result of both events in our prayers as well as those still struggling and dying from the effects of both events.

On behalf of the LI Shield's I would like to express our condolences to retired 2nd grade detective Charles Sorger on the passing of his wife Linda this past July 3rd. Charles and Linda were going on 60 years of marriage. May she rest in eternal peace. Godspeed.

At our last meeting, in June, before the summer break it was a pleasure to award our member's children and grandchildren college scholarships. Once again our scholarship chairman, Luke Johnson did a great job. This year we were able to present six scholarships, but make no mistake this was all do the generosity of our membership and the Nassau County Police Reserves. Thank you all for your very generous donations.

Happy 3rd anniversary to Marianne Pizzitola and the NYC Organization of Public Service Retirees. It seems surreal that its three years since Marianne put this organization together for our Medicare and healthcare issues. It's been three years of making phone calls, emailing, writhing letters and showing up in mass numbers to get our voices heard. Thankfully, it's been working, but we must continue to fight the fight. Unfortunately, it's not over yet. I think my numbers are correct, as I am in constant with Dan Murray, in that we have gone to court nine times and have won every time. The appealed decisions have come

back with unanimous victories, and although some of the litigation is still ongoing and to the highest court in NYS, we are confident that we will continue to win. It's also three years of making donations to keep this organization going. We must continue to keep donating. We are going to raffle off another one hundred dollars in lottery tickets raffle board. The last one we raffled off raised \$700. Let's be as generous as our means allow. Let's try and double the last amount. We will sell raffles at the September and October meetings and have the drawing at the December meeting.

I'm sure everyone is aware that Judge Lyle Frank had to lift the temporary restraining order he had put on the co-pays two years ago. When he put the TRO on it was because the language in the contract between the City and Emblem didn't call for an additional co-pay. The City and Emblem have since corrected their agreement and the TRO had to be lifted. Please be aware that it DOES NOT go into effect until January 1st, 2025. DO NOT let your doctor's offices charge you a co-pay now.

It's nice to see Michael Mulgrew, UFT president, running with his tail between his legs. We all read how he did an about face and is no longer supporting Medicare Advantage after his retirees, who can still vote for their union president have been educated on his plan to switch to Medicare Advantage, defeated the actives. With an election coming up, Mulgrew does not want to lose his power and is running scared. Love it. Stay tuned.

Our upcoming meeting is Thursday September 12th, at noon @ the Coral House in Baldwin.

I hope to see everyone there,

Mike Villa, President



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maurorussell@gmail.com www.mauro-law.com

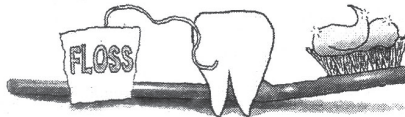
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CHAPLAIN'S REPORT

"WATCH YOUR MOUTH!"

Seagram Distillers Corporation scored a hit during the Second World War, sponsoring a message that was displayed in places where their products were enjoyed – how careless talk might be overheard by enemy spies and could undermine the war effort. The slogan coined by the War Advertising Council was published in 1941 and is still known by many to this day: "Loose Lips Sink Ships." The warning was clear: openly speaking about sensitive matters could have disastrous consequences.

This phrase could be extended to include the speaking of corrosive and hateful descriptions of others by and to people who hold a different point of view. The power of words to inflict shame and/or degradation is sadly and simply awesome. The warning is so appropriate – such nastiness can have disastrous consequences. People in law enforcement - more often than not - are thrown into situations where they see first hand some of the terrible things that follow the verbal abuse of others where the result is physical injuries... or worse. A good example is road rage, is it not? Sound advice tells us to watch those inappropriate displays of fingers!

Our recent loss of Fr. Joe D'angelo has taken from us a voice that was never raised in inconsiderate or hateful expressions. He and I shared many pleasant visits to local restaurants, Chaplain meetings at NCPD headquarters, various memorial services, FOP meetings, and several to parishes where he was serving. We often reflected together upon instances where a kind word or an attentive ear would run so counter to the many things we witnessed in written or verbal exchanges in various situations. It still warms my heart to remember how the things he said were so often terms of friendship and respect. Because he spoke from a heart of goodness, he never had to worry about watching his mouth. He will be much missed.

Yours in the fellowship,
J G Anderson, chaplain

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Steve Brienza, Manager
Phone: (631) 327 - 0261
Email: steve@soundsgoodtosteve.com

LEGENDARY HOMICIDE DETECTIVE RANDY JURGESEN TO RECEIVE NYPD'S HIGHEST HONORS

Jurgensen set to join an exclusive club of recipients of the Police Combat Cross

[NEW YORK, NY, AUGUST 8, 2024-] Since its inception in 1934, an estimated 200 NYPD officers have received the distinguished Police Combat Cross. Now in its 90th year, this prestigious honor will be bestowed upon Ret. homicide detective and co-author of Circle of Six, Randy Jurgensen in a private ceremony on August 22nd at One Police Plaza.

"Randy and I have known each other our entire lives and he's not one for awards, but this is a tremendous honor and he deserves it," said Ret. FBI Special Agent Joe Pistone, better known as Donnie Brasco, portrayed by Johnny Depp in the movie of the same name. "The fact is Jurgensen is the genuine article. He stands among the best detectives in the NYPD."

The Police Combat Cross is the second highest medal of the NYPD, awarded for extraordinary acts of heroism while engaging an armed adversary under circumstances of imminent personal hazard.

Fifty six years ago, Jurgensen's actions exemplified the definition of this award, as he brought justice to the two men who murdered Patrolman John E. Varecha.

Jurgensen was off duty October 7, 1968 at Arthur's Club on East 53rd St between Lexington and 3rd, with his sister Betty and her husband Patrolman Joseph Corcoran when chaos ensued. From inside the club, people began screaming as Patrol Varecha was being assaulted outside.

Jurgensen didn't hesitate- he sprinted outside, gun drawn, and into a dark alley along the club's facade. A gunshot briefly illuminated the alley, allowing Jurgensen to see Varecha staggering towards him. To add to the mayhem, a second shot shattered a bank window across the street, setting off the alarm.

Jurgensen's first priority was to his fellow officer, holding him as a lay bleeding to death in his arms. When Jurgensen spotted two armed men, his sister Betty took over, cradling and comforting Varecha in his final moments.

In plainclothes, without backup, and facing his own possible death, Jurgensen began the chase.

He ran between parked cars when another shot rang out, knocking him to the ground and causing permanent hearing loss in his right ear. The ensuing fight was fierce as Jurgensen used his off duty gun to strike the suspect, causing the gun to jam and leaving it inoperable. Despite that, he subdued the suspect just as backup arrived. Jurgensen provided the description of the fleeing suspect who was apprehended a few blocks away.

Back at the scene, Jurgensen – refusing medical aid, deaf in one ear, bleeding, and covered in Patrolman Varecha's blood – secured a key witness. Both felons were convicted in 1971 for a capital crime. It was the longest and most expensive trial at the time. However, the federal government struck down the use of the electric chair. This case became the bedrock for all future killings of police officers.

Patrolman John E. Varecha paid the ultimate sacrifice in 1968. Detective Randy Jurgensen's actions that followed were heroic, selfless, courageous – and deemed worthy of the esteemed NYPD Police Combat Cross.

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For more information, contact Manager Steve R. Brienza (631) 327 - 0261, steve@soundsgoodtosteve.com

Scholarship Recipients for Long Island Sheilds 2024

I'd like to acknowledge and thank the Nassau County Police Reserve for their generous gift and support to our Scholarship.

I'd also like to thank Kevin Matthews for his generous gift to the scholarship Fund.

Honor of Nassau Police Reserve: Victoria Cammarata, granddaughter of Domminick Cammarata will be attending Penn State University.

Matthew Annunziato, son of Rich Annunziato, will be attending Alabama University.

Honor of Phil Cardillo: Trey Jurgenson, grandson of Randy Jurgenson, will be attending S U N Y Geneseo.

Honor of Tim Motto: Christopher Forman, grandson of Anthony Norcia, will be attending Adelphi University.

Honor of Ray & Matty Matthews: Connor Matwiow, grandson of Stuart Sarserviro, will be attending Tufts University.

Honor of Detective Steve McDonald: Oliva DiGioia, granddaughter of John DiGioia, will be attending St. Johns University.



Christopher Forman Receives Scholarship in Honor of Timmy Motto



Mike Digioia Accepts Scholarship on behalf of his Daughter Olivia



Joe Cerillo accepts the PTL Cardillo scholarship for Trey Jurgenson



Connor Matwiow Receives scholarship
in honor of Ray & Matty Matthews.



Victoria Commarata Receives
Nassau Police Reserves Scholarship

(No photo) Matthew Annunziato (Unable to Attend) received
scholarship from Nassau County Police Reserves.

PO of the Month



Good Evening,
The Long Island Shields are proud to name Detectives Michael Echavarria, Thomas Daly, Ryan Price and James Higgins as our Police Officers of the Month, June 2024. These detectives perform their assignments to a very high level of professionalism and success every tour and the incident for which they are being recognized unfolded like this:

On April 1, 2024, third squad detective Thomas Daly was contacted by third precinct patrol officers for a possible elder scam incident which was presently occurring on Wellington Road in Mineola. Earlier in the day a sixty seven year old female victim was contacted by a person claiming to be a Microsoft employee. The so called employee was notifying the victim of a \$30,000 gambling charge which was showing on her Microsoft account. A short time later the victim received a second call from an individual claiming to be from the Chase Bank fraud department. This call was to inform the victim that Chase was monitoring this Microsoft scam and was seeking to assist the victim. The alleged Chase employee provided the victim with instructions to remove the \$30,000 from her Chase bank account and then a Chase representative would respond to her Mineola home in order to safely secure this money to prevent the fraudsters from obtaining the funds. The

victim followed these instructions and removed this money from her account. The victim had her reservations and realized that she was being scammed just prior to turning the money over to the supposed Chase agent.

The victim contacted the third precinct to report this incident. Upon receiving this information, third squad detectives Thomas Daly, Michael Echavarria, James Higgins and Ryan Price immediately responded to this residence. The detectives determined that the subject was enroute to the victim's house and that time was limited if they wanted to capture the subject in the act. They set up a perimeter on the street utilizing several unmarked police vehicles and placed two detectives inside of the residence with the victim. These four detectives were in constant contact with the victim. They maintained communication with the observation posts on the perimeter. They were soon alerted by the detectives on the perimeter that the subject's vehicle had turned onto the block and was driving towards the victim's home. After the subject parked his vehicle and responded to the victim's door, he was intercepted by detective Daly and the third squad detectives. The subject was placed under arrest and transported to the third squad for processing. During the arrest processing the subject was interviewed utilizing a police officer



Neil Delargy presents Cop of the Month award

who speaks Mandarin, Chinese, and a complete and signed statement of admission was obtained. The subject admitted to working with a Brooklyn based crime crew who has previously participated in multiple similar scams. Detailed information about this was forwarded to the Nassau County Police Department's Fraud and Forgery Unit for a follow up investigation. The defendant was charged with Grand Larceny, Scheme to Defraud and Conspiracy. This case is presently ongoing in the Nassau County District Attorney's Office.

Due to the swift actions of these four detectives this subject was

apprehended, but more importantly the victim did not lose any of her funds during the incident. These detectives seized the initiative for a case with severe time restraints and put together a successful operation which brought this individual to justice.

Detectives Thomas Daly, Michael Echavarria, Ryan Price and James Higgins represent the best of the Detective Division and the Nassau County Police Department.

The Long Island Shields are proud to name Detectives Daly, Echavarria, Price and Higgins of the Third Squad as our Police Officers of the Month.



Detectives Daly , Higgins, Price & Echuarria (Not Present)
Receive P.O. of the Month for June

GOOD TO KNOW

Peter J. Caso, Esq.

In 2006, Congress enacted the HELPS Retirees Act, which provided a modest tax benefit to help retired public safety officers (PSO) (law enforcement officers, firefighters, chaplains, or members of a rescue squad or ambulance crew who are retired because of disability or because they reached normal retirement age), afford health insurance by allowing the use, on a pre-tax basis, of up to \$3,000 annually from their pension funds to pay for premiums on health care and long-term care insurance.

As part of SECURE ACT 2.0 of December 2022, Congress passed legislation to enhance the HELPS Retirees Act that removed the requirement that premiums be paid directly by the governmental retirement plan. This change allows retirees to make these distributions directly to their insurance provider, no longer having to rely on retirement plan administrators to make the distribution. Now, all eligible public safety retirees can elect to exclude up to \$3,000 from their taxable income from an eligible governmental retirement plan to pay qualified health or long-term care insurance premiums.

Any premium paid for health or long-term care now qualifies for the credit. Married couples filing jointly who are both retired PSOs can reduce their taxable income by up to \$6,000 for these premiums.

There are, however, certain restrictions regarding this deduction. A PSO retiree may not use this credit for income that is already excluded from taxation. Another is where the retiree receives medical coverage from a new employer or through their spouse's employer plan, that premium deduction is likely excluded from income, so it is not eligible for HELPS reduction. Where a PSO retiree is

self-employed and takes a Schedule C or similar deduction for medical coverage, the HELPS credit cannot be used. Another exclusion is that this credit is not available to the surviving spouse of a retired or active PSO.

PSO retirees who wish to make premiums payments on health care and long-term care insurance themselves should claim their reduction on their personal 1040 tax form on Line 5b. Instructions on claiming the deduction are included on page 6 in the 2023 version of IRS Publication 575 Pension and Annuity Income. Check the 2024 version, when published, for further updated information regarding the HELPS Act.

For those who still have their retirement administrator make distributions directly, the IRS requires retirees to report total distributions on Form 1040 or Form 1040-SR, line 5a. The taxable amount should be reported on Form 1040 or 1040-SR, line 5b. Also, retirees should write "PSO" (for public safety officer) next to the appropriate line where the taxable amount is reported.

As always, it is recommended that you consult with your accountant or professional tax preparer to discuss these current changes and how they apply to your tax situation.

Disclaimer:

This article is for education and information purposes only, and is not intended to provide legal advice. No attorney-client relationship exists or is created by the use of this article or the information provided herein. This article should not be used as a substitute for competent legal advice from a professional attorney in your state.

**STUART A. FORMAN
ATTORNEY AT LAW**

450 7TH AVENUE, STE 1304
NEW YORK, NY 10123

YANA POLISSKY-RINCON
PARALEGAL

(212) 244-0110
FAX: (212) 244-3686
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