



# OHIO FOP E-FOCUS

NOVEMBER 1, 2007

## FOP Supports Dave Hughes for OP&F Pension Seat

After the resignation of Tony Gorsek from the Ohio Police and Fire Pension Board, the Board of Trustees have endorsed Dave Hughes from Capital City Lodge #9 to fill the unexpired term. Dave is the Secretary of Ohio's largest Lodge.

Dave screened before the committee to fill the term of Larry Deck, whose untimely death

left an opening on the Pension Board that was filled by Kathy Harrell, of Lodge 69. Dave impressed the members of the committee and the Board Members at that screening and he was recommended to fill this vacancy.

The OP&F Pension Board stated they wanted to fill this seat at their November meeting, leaving no time to

pull the committee together and re-interview candidates because they control their own process.

However, the FOP is very lucky to have a very capable candidate like Dave Hughes available and willing to take on the huge issues at the OP&F Pension Board.

Good luck to Dave and the rest of the Pension Boards.

## FOP pushes for FOP Members on the OPOTC Board

Going back to the days of Steve Young, the FOP has wanted to have a seat on the Ohio Peace Officers Training Commission. The current Board is made up of 2 chiefs, 2 sheriffs, 1 OSP, 1 BCI, 1 FBI, the department of education and one member of the public.

SB 222 asks for a seat on the same commission for Campus Law Enforcement Association, due to a recommendation by a task force formed in the wake of the Virginia Tech tragedy.

The FOP has asked for an amendment to Senate Bill 222 (Sen. Cates) to accomplish our goal of adding rank and file officers to the Commission and the bill is currently in the Criminal Justice Committee

Governor Strickland, Attorney General Dann and Senators Steve Stivers from Columbus and Gary Cates from West Chester have helped with this and we are very thankful for their support.

# Trustee Watkins proposes Emergency Relief Fund

Sixth District Trustee Watkins put out a proposal at the Fall Board meeting to start an Officer Assistance Fund for Ohio FOP members.

This fund would assist officers who have suffered severe damage to their homes due to fire or natural disaster or if the officers who suffer serious injury or illness.

The idea for this fund came after the flooding in Northwest Ohio left at least seven members of the Fulton County Sheriff's Office homeless and Cory Winfield, of Lodge 24, was seriously injured in a motorcycle accident.

On the next page, the complete proposal will be outlined. It will take a Constitution and By-law change to set this fund up. The purpose of this article is to get members talking about the proposal and make suggestions to Mike or Jay McDonald to make this the best benefit to our members as possible. If this is something you and your lodge can support as it is, please let us know that as well. Mike can be reached at [mwatkins@fopohio.org](mailto:mwatkins@fopohio.org) and Jay can be contacted at [jmcdonald@fopohio.org](mailto:jmcdonald@fopohio.org)

## Enforcement Expo is moving to Columbus in 2008

After three years at the I-X Center in Cleveland, Enforcement Expo will move to Central Ohio on August 12 and 13, 2008.

Enforcement Expo will move into the Columbus Convention Center after much deliberation by the leadership of Cygnus Media and the FOP.

Cleveland was a great host for Enforcement Expo and Cleveland PD, other agencies and lodges and other groups were outstanding in their support for the event. However, while Enforcement Expo has gotten bigger each year, the expected growth did not materialize.

The hope is that a move to Columbus and the center part of the state will enable officers from the entire state to participate in what is really a jewel for the Ohio FOP.

The marketing of the event will begin in the near future but we wanted to let all of you know to start making your plans now for a great event in August.

# Proposed FOP Emergency Relief Fund

**Purpose:** Provide a method by which the Fraternal Order of Police of Ohio can provide monetary assistance to a member or the family of a member in the event of:

- Extensive damage to or loss of a member's primary residence due to natural disaster
- Extensive damage to or loss of a member's primary residence due to fire
- Serious injury or illness of a member or member of his/her immediate family.

## **Administration:**

- Five (5) member Governing Board made up of the President, Vice President, Treasurer, and two (2) Trustees (to be selected by the Trustees).
- The funds for this project shall be kept in an account separate from the general fund and shall not be co-mingled under any circumstance.
- The members of the governing board shall receive no compensation for their services.
- Funds could only be dispersed if at least 3 of the 5 Governing Board members approve of a request.
- The Governing Board has the sole authority to determine the amount dispersed, but that amount cannot exceed \$2500 per incident.

## **Funding:**

- This project shall be funded by assessing each "working" member \$5.00 per year. Retired members may participate on a voluntary basis by also contributing the \$5.00 per year. Only those contributing to the "fund" will be eligible to receive compensation from the fund.
- If the fund balance exceeds \$250,000.00 the Governing Board may suspend contributions for one (1) year. In the event the contributions are suspended, all of those members who contributed in the previous year would remain covered. Any new members would be required to contribute in order to enter the program.
- The contributions shall be payable from January 15 thru January 31 of each year. Any new members may contribute to the fund within 30 days of joining their local Lodge. Their contribution will cover them through January 31 of the next calendar year.
- Each local Lodge shall provide the State Lodge with a roster indicating those who have made the contribution and whether they are a "working" member or are a retired member. This roster and the check for the contributions must be in the State Office no later than February 3 of a each year.
- No contributions are refundable.



## Pennsylvania Legislature wants more cops

HARRISBURG, Pa. — Two Pittsburgh-area legislators are pushing a bill that would add 10,000 municipal police officers around the state at a cost of \$56 million.

"The primary function of government is to protect people," said Rep. Randy Vulakovich, R-Shaler, who was a Shaler police officer for 27 years before winning election to the state Legislature last year.

He and another freshman, Rep. Jim Marshall, R-Big Beaver, plus some local law enforcement officers, will hold a news conference today at the Shaler Police Department to urge public support for House Bill 1189, which would add the 10,000 officers in towns around the state over a four-year period.

The funding formula may prove to be a problem for some legislators. It calls for taking \$11.5 million from the administrative accounts of each of the four caucuses — House and Senate Republicans and Democrats — and adding another \$10 million from the state's general fund, said Mr. Vulakovich. He said that adding police is more important than personnel and administrative functions of the four caucuses.

The bill to hire additional municipal police was first introduced in the previous term by then-House Speaker John Perzel, R-Philadelphia. It was passed by the House but stalled in the Senate.

There was concern by some legislators that it might be tilted toward helping Philadelphia hire police to fight its growing murder rate.

The new bill sets several priorities for police hiring. The state attorney general would make the decisions, and towns with fewer than 20 police officers would get the first chance to apply for more.

Second consideration would go to communities with 20 to 100 officers, Mr. Vulakovich said. Other factors that would be used in deciding which towns get more officers are the per-capita crime rate of a community and the overall population of a community.

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# National FOP launches Discussion Forum on fop.net

The National Fraternal Order of Police is proud to announce the unveiling of the Discussion Forum on this web site. Members can access the Forum by logging in to the Members area of the web site.

Please note the following rules when posting to the Discussion Forum.

**FOP.NET Forum Rules**

- The forum will always be moderated.
- Posts made anonymously will be deleted.
- All posts will have signatures.
- Topics or posts containing offensive language, derogatory, sexual, racist, slanderous or inappropriate comments will be deleted or modified by the moderator.

- There will be no use of the forum for commercial gain. Topics or posts made for commercial gain will be deleted or modified by the moderator.

Users cannot access their profiles or change signatures and individual settings.



## FOP of Ohio travel service can save you BIG money



On October 22, I checked flights from Columbus to Fort Lauderdale for January 11 and returning on January 13. These are the dates and location for the Eastern States Regional Labor

Coalition meeting. Our travel service, located at, [www.fopohio.org](http://www.fopohio.org), had a non-stop flight on Delta for \$326. On Orbitz.com, the very same flight was \$456.

Please check out the travel service from the FOP. It could save you a lot and make a little for the FOP of Ohio.

Thanks and happy traveling!!!

## Brother from Lodge #37 needs your help

Dear Lodges,

Greene County Deputy Ryan Curtis is now going out on disability due to his brain tumors. This is creating a large financial burden for his family. We ask any lodge that is able to make a donation to the Ryan Curtis Fund. Checks can be made out to Greene County FOP Lodge # 37 care of the Ryan Curtis Fund. "ALL PROCEEDS" will go directly to the Ryan Curtis Family. Please mail checks to: Greene County FOP Lodge # 37, PO Box 563, Xenia, OH 45385.

Fraternally Yours,  
 Secretary Jeff Pickett  
 Greene County Lodge # 37

# NEED A LAWYER?-YOU GOT ONE!

It has always been the philosophy of the Fraternal of Police (and the Ohio Labor Council) that Law Enforcement Personnel have unique needs, wants and desires which are best expressed by those who deal on a day to day basis with law enforcement issues, particularly when it comes to designing a collective bargaining agreement to suit the needs of the employees it covers.

The Ohio Labor Council also believes that there are many circumstances which require different skills to represent its members. Being able to make distinctions as to what skills are required for each situation is what makes the Ohio Labor Council an efficient, and therefore successful, Labor organization.

For the day-to-day interaction between employers and our members, who can deal with law enforcement issues better than personnel trained in labor relations issues- wages, hours, term and conditions of employment- and how they effect our particular occupations? The FOP/OLC model utilizes labor relations specialists to bargain with employers and deal with membership issues. The education background of the Labor Council's staff representatives varies, including one with a law degree, but the skill desired is dealing with and articulating working people's concerns. Improving the quality of life for law enforcement people is as much a passion as a logistical problem. Most of the interaction between the organization and employers is one of

fixing problems, not trying to one-up the other. Sometimes confrontation is necessary, but if it's not necessary, it's counterproductive. Generally, the people on the other side have similar training and speak the same language.

There are times, however, when different skills are required to represent our members. Anytime a member is given a Miranda warning, anytime a member is involved in a shooting, any time a member is named in a lawsuit, anytime a member has a grievance arbitration hearing, or anytime a member has a legal question, the member needs to speak with and/or be represented by an attorney. Legal matters need to be handled by lawyers; it's as simple as that. Non-legal matters do not need to be handled by lawyers and in some cases a lawyer can make a situation worse. Our membership is now sophisticated enough to recognize the distinction between what jobs need to be done by what personnel. They also recognize the interaction between staff representatives and staff attorneys to best represent the members' interests.

When a member needs a lawyer, have him or her call the office and ask to speak to an attorney. The staff attorney will utilize the best resource to handle the problem, which may not involve the attorney himself/herself. But the member will get the best service available anywhere.

1-800-FOPOLCI

# Skill Games Outlawed in Ohio

Slot-like gambling machines that have been proliferating throughout the state as a result of a loophole in gambling law are now illegal.

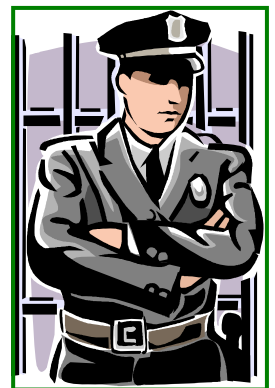
Gov. Ted Strickland on Thursday signed into law a bill that strengthens the definition of the "skill-based" machines that are legal and limits to \$10 cash payouts and prizes from such games \_ such as those at Chuck E. Cheese's.

The bill contained an emergency clause that made the law effective as soon as the governor signed it.

The measure was passed swiftly in both the Senate and House in recent weeks over objections that lawmakers rushed it through without any chance for public comment.

Games based on chance are illegal in Ohio. The new law is intended to shut down machines like Tic Tac Fruit that depend on chance but require a certain level of skill. Lawmakers said the update was needed because machines took advantage of a law that banned machines based largely or wholly on chance.

The new law will not apply to darts, billiards and bowling, but lawmakers disagreed over what kind of impact overall the law would have on the gaming industry



# Over 100 members enrolled in FOP University

Over 100 members are currently enrolled in one of the ten universities that offer discounts to FOP members, including Ohio's own Tiffin University and American Military Institute. You can find infor-

mation about which universities are participating, how to enroll and what the benefits are by checking [www.fop.net](http://www.fop.net) and looking under the "PROGRAMS" button at the top of the screen and finding

the "Education Services button" under that.

This is but one more benefit of membership that the FOP provides its members





Photo's of the Cincinnati skyline



# National FOP Conference in Ohio?

The National FOP Biennial Conference could be coming to Ohio in 2013.

Members of the Queen City Lodge #69 made a proposal to the Board of Trustees of the Ohio State Lodge at the Fall Board meeting regarding hosting the conference in 2013. The Board of Trustees have unanimously agreed to support the efforts of brothers and sisters from Cincinnati.

A presentation was made regarding the price of hotel rooms and the facilities available. It was mentioned that Cincinnati also has the attractions that delegates often look for when choosing a convention site, such as nearby casinos, the Cincinnati Reds and many museums and activities.

This will be put to a vote in 2009 at the Long Beach, California convention but the groundwork must be laid now.

Members of Lodge #69 and the State Lodge will have to start working on this proposal like a FOP political campaign, because that is what it is. State meetings, regional coalition meetings and various other gatherings of FOP members must be targeted by us to try to convince them to vote for Ohio in 2013.

Most of all, we need our own members to support this and we know you will.

## VantagePoint Public Memorial Scholarship Fund

The VantagePoint Public Memorial Scholarship Fund is a Section 501(c)(3) public charity founded in 2001 by ICMA-RC to honor the sacrifice of public sector employees who gave so much to their communities and who paid the ultimate price for their service. The Fund provides the children and spouses of public sector employees who died in the line of duty with greater security through educational scholarships that help them pursue college and vocational school education.

For the 2006/2007 school year, 32 recipients received scholarships worth \$90,000. Since inception, the Fund has provided 119 students with scholarships worth over \$430,000. Children and spouses of police, fire and other public sector employees who have died in the line of duty are encouraged to apply. Applications accepted January 1 through March 31.

More information can be found at [www.vantagescholar.org](http://www.vantagescholar.org).

# FOP Response to negative articles regarding SB 6

If Senate Bill 6, as unanimously passed by the Ohio Senate, is approved by the Ohio House of Representatives, and signed by the Governor, it will restrict **internet** access to such personal information as social security numbers for all persons and the addresses of law enforcement and other public safety and criminal justice servants. The likelihood of criminals using the internet to victimize the general public as well as safety forces will be decreased. In addition, it will clarify public records changes that occurred last December as a result of the news media requesting additional access to certain law enforcement records. The change removed the restriction that law enforcement address and familial information was only protected in their personnel files.

With this change that occurred in the last General Assembly, all public records that contain this information are arguably protected from public disclosure. Senate Bill 6 would modify this restriction to specifically those documents that are on a public office holder's website. All other non-employment records held by the public office would be available to the public without redaction.

In the Columbus Dispatch editorial on 10-23-07, there are a number of misleading statements. The editor would like you to believe that the legislature made a mistake in the mid 1990's when changes were made in the public records law to shield police officer address and familial information. These changes were made as a result of a federal court decision and the Ohio Supreme Court's recognition of the law enforcement officer's fundamental liberty interest "specifically their interest in preserving their lives and the lives of their family members as well as preserving their personal security and bodily integrity." The news media representatives were very instrumental in this "mistake" and actually drafted much of the language that was adopted into law. It is also important to note that these records are open to the news media and will remain so even after the passage of Senate Bill 6.

In the editorial it stated "Most government employees are allowed very little privacy regarding personal information such as home addresses." Yet, during previous testimony before a committee, Mr. Deaner, the Newspaper Association's lobbyist noted that the Ohio Supreme Court had declared home addresses of state employees to not be public records and can be shielded from public records disclosure. Mr. Michael Curtin, the associate publisher from the *Columbus Dispatch*, stated that he believes anyone has a right to any personal identifier information available from public records. This would include your bank account, social security number and similar personal information. Law enforcement professionals disagree with Mr. Curtin's statement and SB6 will protect this type of personal information.

In the editorial there is criticism that the FOP lobbyist only cited two examples of when officers were put at risk by the release of such information. We were not asked if there were more examples. There are many, including Columbus narcotics officers who were provided additional security for them and their family after the arrests of violent gang members, or the recent threats to a Columbus Police Officer by an arrestee who threatened to use a public office website to find his address. Interestingly, the editorial only cited one occasion when *The Dispatch* used "such records" in 1989. Since we are only talking about the restriction on the internet, the inference is that *The Dispatch* obtained those records via the internet. However, it is important to note that the Franklin County Auditor's website did not go on line until September of 1998, nine years later.

The Newspaper Association acknowledges that under current law every government office that maintains public records has the discretion or the option of making public records available by posting them to websites. In fact, the majority of county recorders in the state do not have websites. Although about 50 of the 88 county auditors have websites, there are those that exercise this discretionary option and currently do not include information that discloses a peace officer, prosecutor or criminal justice professional's address information on their websites.

Under current law, there are several methods for citizens to block their identity as owners of property on the County Recorder and Auditor records and websites. Senate Bill 6 permits safety forces, and those members who need the additional protections, a similar mechanism without the need to utilize an attorney or incur substantial expense in protecting their loved ones. It will also help clarify and protect the public access to the actual records maintained at the public offices.

Mark Drum, Fraternal Order of Police Legislative Chairman



## FOP of Ohio Calendar

November 4	Bluegrass benefit for Ryan Curtis of Lodge 37	Xenia
November 12	Hockey Night with the FOP Columbus vs. Nashville	Columbus
January 11-12	FOP of Ohio Winter Board Meeting	Cherry Valley Lodge
February 23	Polar Bear Plunge for Special Olympics	Geneva on the Lake
March 16	Hockey Night with the FOP Columbus vs. Detroit	Columbus
April 12	FOP of Ohio Spring Board Meeting	Geneva on the Lake
May 6	FOP, Ohio Labor Council, Inc. - 23rd Annual Conference	Columbus
July 12-15	FOP of Ohio 74th Annual Conference	Boardman

Please email Aaron Crawford at [acrawford@fopohio.org](mailto:acrawford@fopohio.org) to have your event listed here and on the [www.fopohio.org](http://www.fopohio.org) web site