



THE GRIEVANCE

UNITED STATES CAPITOL POLICE
LABOR COMMITTEE
December 3, 2010

Retirement Update

In early September at the recommendation of Congressman Capuano and Congressman Brady the Union submitted several proposals to enhance our current retirement benefit. This proposal was given to the Government Accountability Office (GAO) to conduct a financial actuary to determine the cost to the officer, the agency and ultimately the taxpayers. While this will be a slow process, it will determine what we ultimately ask for. We have asked for a cost study on the following:

1. Increase current employee percentages from 1.7% for the first 20 years and 1.0% for every year after of covered service to 2% for every year of covered service.
Ex: 25 years = 50%
30 years = 60%
2. Keep percentages at 1.7% for the first 20 years of covered service and all years after 20 would be 2.0% for each year of additional service.
Ex: 20 years = 34%
25 years = 44%
30 years = 54%
3. Keep all percentages the same through years of covered service but offer a "true high 3" to include overtime and differentials.
4. Keep percentages the same but have the department cover costs for continued health care and/or survivors benefits upon retirement with no contributions from the employee.
5. Have the department compress the current pay scale so an officer reaches the maximum base pay at year 20 of covered service instead of 26 (Deputy Chiefs currently max out at year 15)
6. Have the Capitol Police Board exercise their authority to allow officers to remain (voluntarily) to age 60. This would also allow the department to hire career military veterans at age 40 and allow them to reach 20 years of covered service.

There is a concern about our current standing under FERS and how any changes will affect other agencies under the retirement system. While the economy is in bad shape and with anticipated changes in Congress there are no guarantees but we will continue to move this forward.

We appreciate all the suggestions that were submitted by our membership for this cause and the continued support of Chief Morse, Congressman Capuano, and Congressman Brady on our efforts.

Chairman's Column

Accountability

Brothers and Sisters

Everyone, at some time will be held accountable for their actions, deeds or obligations. While situations may differ to some extent, rest assured you will be held accountable. If you have a reasonable explanation, you may be able to justify your decisions whether right, wrong or indifferent. When someone in the position of authority is allowed to make poor decisions with no repercussions, this will ultimately have an adverse effect on their subordinates. This conduct not only leads to an abuse of their position and rank but builds a distrust of ALL management whether warranted or not. Trust and respect must be earned it is not automatic because of your position. I have had officials say "It's not their job to make the officers happy" well when did their function become to make officers miserable? There has been a growing trend with some officials who have taken not caring to a new level. Every officer knows of a supervisor who at best is insensitive and at worse really does not care about you or your problems. This is not a broad reflection of everyone in management because there are many who really do care about their officers. The accountability I ask for is for those of you who have:

- Charged an officer with AWOL because he had to care for a sick spouse, even after his request for leave was denied.
- Threatened an officer with AWOL if he left work because a tree fell on his house during a storm.
- Threatened an officer with AWOL if they left work to care for a sick child.
- Issued an officer a CP534 for missing assigned overtime because of a sick parent that soon passed away.

- Requested a probation extension on an officer for excessive leave usage, this request was agreed on by the Sergeant, Lieutenant, Captain and Inspector. Unfortunately not one (1) of the four (4) took the time to "counsel" this officer or they would have known about his mother's illness that would eventually claim her life. Did any of them take the time after to admit their mistake to him? Of course not! How does a Division's entire Chain of Command allow this to happen? What repercussions did they face, if any?

There is a common theme in these scenarios, "Threats and Discipline". How is supervising by fear of discipline beneficial to anyone?

As officers, the goal is to find a balance between family obligations and work. It is not easy when you are threatened into making the choice that work wins every time. This is a decision, you as individuals will have to make and I hope you make the right choice. While there are a lot of unanswered questions in my article they are left to be answered by the officials who see themselves in these incidents and for their supervisors to hold them accountable.

As an FYI, all the scenarios above are true but they were all resolved satisfactorily when brought to the attention of Chief Morse. Some officials will say that the Chief is "pro-union" for getting involved, I guess if showing compassion and using common sense is "pro-union" they may be right. And for that during this holiday season, I am thankful!

Jim Konczos
Chairman

First Vice-Chairman

Accomplishments and Goals

Greetings to all. I hope everyone had a great summer. As this E-Board completes its 1st fiscal year together, I wanted to briefly review our past year's accomplishments and talk about goals for our upcoming fiscal year. I wanted to begin by thanking the rest of the E-Board, all Chief Shop

Stewards and Shop Stewards and our Attorney Kelly Burchell for all their hard work and dedication to strengthen our Union. Financially we entered our fiscal year last year without an operating budget and about \$45,000 in savings. There was virtually no transition from one E-Board to the next. We had to quickly put together an operating budget of \$400,000 (\$66,000 less than the last E-Board's final budget), which was voted on by the membership and ratified. We were able to cut expenses and we finished with a budget of \$352,000 (a savings of \$48,000 from our operating budget). We have increased our savings from approximately \$45,000 to approximately \$225,000. We have increased our membership from 811 to roughly 970 members. Great job to all who made this happen. We've hosted the Veterans Luncheon for the last two years which has been a huge success and we are planning on hosting the event again next year. Our contract negotiating committee headed by Officer Keith McFaden worked hard to put together a new contract. After all these years we now have a new contract (CBA) that was agreed to by Management, and voted/ratified by the Union Membership. Great Job to all involved, especially our Contract Committee team. Last Christmas we bought boxed lunches for our Union Members and bought Pizza during the Snowstorms. The Union hosted the Scott Pierce Fundraiser, which was a success. Once again, thanks to all involved.

Retirement? Everyone is always asking what is the Union doing to improve our retirement? When our E-Board took over in September 2009, the Lobbyist the previous E-Board had hired, immediately stepped down from helping our Union (hmm, I wonder why?). The last two Lobbyists this Union hired for our retirement pursuit did nothing for this Union but collect thousands of dollars. So, what we decided as an E-Board was to take the hands on approach. We appointed Officer Darryl Scott as Retirement Committee Chairman. Darryl has had several meetings with members of Congress and staff. Chairman Konczos and I, along with the rest of the E-Board have met with members of Congress, the Director of OPM and their staff, to discuss our retirement. We also met with Chief Morse who is behind us on our retirement efforts. A few months ago there were a few articles in the local Capitol Hill newspapers that wrote about our

current retirement. The Unions intent on the articles was to get the message out there that our retirement needs to be improved, and I think we got the message across. Immediately following those articles, our retirement was addressed by members of Congress at a Congressional hearing. Currently, we are working on having an actuary study done at the request of several members of Congress, to show what we are seeking and what the cost will be to improve USCP's retirement. We are also working on a retirement proposal that is in its draft stages. This E-Board's top priority for this next fiscal year is the retirement pursuit. We will continue to work hard on this. I'm not going to sugar coat the retirement, I think we have a lot of work to do. It may take an act of Congress to get it done, but we will work hard to get results. We just entered our 2nd fiscal year, we proposed a similar budget of approximately \$400,000 as last years proposed budget. The budget was voted on and ratified at our last membership meeting. At the request of the membership we will continue to have our membership meetings throughout the Hill, and at various times and locations, as we did this past year in order to accommodate all shifts. I encourage all union members to attend the membership meetings.

This E-Board is dedicated to this Union and to the membership. We will continue to work hard and hopefully make a difference. In one year I think we've proven what we can do financially to improve our Union. We are ready to take it up a notch. If anyone has any suggestions that can improve what we are doing or anything that you want from this Union, let us know. God bless you all and be safe!

Gus "Papa" Papatransiou
First Vice-Chairman

Second Vice-Chairman ***Protect Yourself***

First, let me began my doing a follow up on my last article. The on the clock and off the clock issue has been resolved. Management has agreed with the Labor Committee this was a poor idea on their part and both parties agreed that this practice will stop. If any officer should encounter this issue please contact myself or any steward to address this

immediately.

Secondly, I would like to address an issue that has occurred on two different occasions. Assaults on officers: Whether it's verbal or unwanted touching please remember there are policies and procedures in place to prevent these incidents from occurring. Officers should not be placed in fear of losing his/her job or fear any type of retaliation by coming forward. Another issue that keeps re surfing is untruthful statements not only from officers but management as well. Please remember to keep good notes with dates and time and witness so if the need should arise you have the necessary information to move forward with your complaint.

Calling on all you computer geeks. Your Labor Committee is looking for members with computer knowledge to start a web page. Any suggestions or ideas as to what you would like to see posted please contact any E-Board member. Once the web page is up and running we'll be on the lookout for someone to post items and update changes.

Please remember to review the changes in the new contract and educate yourself as to how these changes apply to your situation. In closing please remember to be careful and to give thanks.

Chris Ferguson
Second Vice-Chairman

Chief Executive Shop Steward EAP

First I want to thank all OUR DUES PAYING MEMBERS for your support and helping make this year a very successful year for OUR UNION! I also want to say thanks to all our past and present shop stewards for your dedication and hard work.

Roll Calls and Employee Assistance Program;

As most of you know and have seen, we (E-board members) have been addressing roll calls along with Margot (Margo) Hawkins-Green from Employee Assistance Program. We will continue to address roll calls as often as we can. Soon members of the E-board and Margo will be addressing 3 to 11 and midnight roll calls. If you have any questions

for Margo (EAP), she is more than happy to stand by after roll call. I am working with Margo and the Employee Assistance Program to come up with a way for us to talk to them and have full confidence in them and that the meetings are confidential. We have already come up with some other ways and places to meet with them. If you don't want to meet with EAP at the Ford House Office Building, please advise them of this when you call them so that other arrangements can be made. You can contact EAP by calling 202-225-2400, additionally Margo's E-mail address is margot.hawkins-green@mail.house.gov If you have any questions, comments or suggestions that will help us come up with a better program for USCP Officers please E-mail either myself at tmbarker@vzw.blackberry.net or Margo.

General Membership Meetings;

As you know, we have moved the general membership meetings from Lodge 1 back to the Hill and have rotated the days and starting times so that every dues paying member will have a better opportunity to attend the general membership meetings. We are always looking for better ways to serve our members. If you have any suggestions that would make the general membership meetings more accessible, please E-mail me.

Shop Steward Training;

We have cut out how the FOP was first established and have included training from Human Resources and more in depth training to help our shop stewards better serve our members. Your shop steward should now be able to help with HR questions and to guide you in the right direction.

Getting information out to our members;

We are still in the process of setting up a web page that all dues paying members can access. We do apologize that it is taking so long. We just want to make sure when we set this page up, it will provide only our dues paying members access to the information you want and need. We are also in the process of a new News Letter called the GRIEVANCE to come out monthly. We strongly encourage each shop steward to provide an article

for this newsletter. Additionally we send out information to all shop stewards to announce at their respected roll calls and to post in the Union Bulletin Board. If your still not getting any information, please E-mail me and/or your shop steward as to why you not and with your suggestions as to how to improve communications.

Meetings with Deputy Chief Rogers;

I meet with D.C. Rogers every three (3) weeks to discuss issues concerning our union.

My next scheduled meeting is on December 8th.

If you have any issues that you have tried to address through your shop steward and chain of command but have met with negative results, please have your shop steward notify me ASAP with all the details to include who you have met with.

In closing, I would like to wish each and every one happy holidays!

Tim Barker
Executive Chief Shop Steward

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Treasurer ***State of Our Finances***

I am very pleased to announce that our Union is doing very well. When you look at our progress over last year you will notice that we have made some very essential changes that will allow our organization to last long into the future. I will discuss the financial changes we have made and discuss where we are now as well as where we are headed.

If you look at the 2009, 2010, and our newest 2011 budget you will notice some very obvious changes.

First, you'll probably notice that we were budgeted for approximately \$434,000 in 2009, \$400,000 in 2010, and \$405,000 this year in 2011. Here's how we got to \$405,000:

Telephones were budgeted at \$50,400 in 2009. Today, we're budgeted for \$4000. This was accomplished by switching the provider for the Office, dropping 3 of our 5 lines, and removing our blackberry program.

Consulting was removed entirely as the Union dropped our retirement "Lobbyist" after this E-Board discovered a lack of effort and results by the previous "lobbyist", a savings of \$54,700 over the last year. This year, we have consolidated the "consultant" line item into our "retirement campaign". Our Union is working very diligently on improving our retirement as soon as possible and has made significantly more head-way in the last twelve months than the "consultant" ever had. We're now saving \$62,000 annually on a 2009 line item "payroll" which was greatly reduced in 2010 and not renewed in 2011.

Membership events were budgeted for less than \$4000 in 2009. In 2010, the E-Board made it a vote-as-needed category, which was a mistake. Through a membership vote in May, we appropriated \$14,000 to cover the costs of the winter dinner, and both snow storms, where the Union provided much needed relief for stranded (voluntarily or not) officers. In 2011, we see a significant increase in the Membership events category up to \$15,000.

This increase is to allow for food at all general membership meetings and votes. It has provided for the Veteran's Luncheon this month and it affords us the necessary resources to ensure Officers are taken care of should this winter prove as challenging as before.

Such a drastic increase is still maliciously dwarfed by the Promotions category. Promotions was a low \$12,000 in 2009, it was increased 50% to \$18,000 in 2010 to provide for better Holiday presents and a sandwich event which netted us close to 50 additional members. In 2011 we see another substantial increase in promotions up to \$40,000. For those of you saying "what the heck?" or worse, let me explain. In 2009, this Union had \$40,000 in the bank. We had significantly fewer members in 2009 compared to the ~970 members we thankfully have now. More members mean more dues. More dues mean more savings, but only when combined with fiscal responsibility. We have over \$225,000 in the bank currently. I want to be very perfectly clear; 13 months ago we had approximately \$40,000, now we have over \$200,000, that's a 5 fold increase in 1 fiscal year. We as Union Executives believe you all deserve decent Holiday gifts and some decent events throughout the year as well as in-service incentives to stay in or join. We have decided to give back more of what you have put in.

Back on topic, our 2011 budget is \$405,000 and change. If you're thinking, "wow, 405K!", be advised, last year this E-Board, while we were budgeted to spend \$400,000, actually put \$160,000 into checking and savings (totaling 200,000 dollars at the end of the fiscal year).

On the fiscal responsibility topic, I would like to convey a couple key points. First off, if you were not aware of the budget vote, I would like a quick email so we can make sure you and your section(s) are getting all the Union information necessary to be heard and thrive. Secondly, I would like to say that, although most of you cannot remember the last time you voted on a budget, for those of you working or that couldn't make it to the vote, the chairman of our Finance committee, agreed to the proposal in its current form, as did 99% of voting members. Additionally, we have implemented multiple levels of responsibility within our own E-Board to better account for the wary dollars and

cents. The Chairman now has a contributions fund for the \$250 he's afforded per the by-laws; we now have invoices from our attorney on file. We use cover sheets for all expenditures and expenses. We have streamlined our efforts to better meet last year's Auditor's notes. In short, we have put most-everything we do on paper, so it can be filed for future E-Boards to have all the necessary past-documents on hand when they take over.

I know some of you have heard that we no longer employ an Administrator at "G" Street. It has been a hard transition to a non-assistant based system. But I am, and we are as an Executive Board, "reinventing the wheel" to keep the services flowing and keep "G" Street operational and the lights on. I would like to thank all of you for not running against me last month. I will close by saying that I look forward to better developing the finances of this organization and forcing the necessary changes to create a truly positive 21st Century and beyond USCP FOP LC.

With my sincere thanks,

Bill Scofield
Treasurer

FRU-1 Shop Steward Union Membership

When deciding what to write for this issue's column, I thought about the feedback I have received from officers, since becoming shop steward a couple of months ago. Of all the comments, questions and suggestions I have fielded, one common and disturbing theme has been officers feeling the union is weak or generally not doing its job. Since this type of commentary is often popular to say but more difficult to back up, I always ask people to elaborate on their feelings. While some individuals can speak specifically about an incident that they or a close friend went through, the overwhelming majority of people who bash the union do so based on generalities and unrealistic expectations. I don't mention this to say that constructive criticism is a bad thing. I think the best possible thing members and non-members can do is give the union their input, but it's important

to understand what a union's job truly is and what its limitations are. While I myself don't feel that the union has always done the right thing, I also know what challenges a law enforcement union faces, and additionally, what roadblocks its members can present without realizing it.

If you look in any dictionary, the word "union" is often defined as, "a confederation of independent individuals (as nations or persons) for some common purpose." Additionally, a "labor union" is defined as, "an organization of workers formed for the purpose of advancing its members' interests in respect to wages, benefits, and working conditions." When I took the union position, it's these simple definitions that I echoed to officers on my shift. I'm not here to back an untruthful story, argue points that improve working conditions for one member and have a negative impact on the other officers on the shift, or instantly correct issues for an officer who has never stood up for themselves. I am especially not here to use this position to better my own standing on the shift or department overall. This point of view may be looked at as inappropriate by my peers, but if so, it is what it is. As far as I am concerned, I am in a position whose job it is to ensure that there are open communication lines between officers and supervisors, ensure fair, safe and equitable working conditions, see to it that the CBA is followed, and make sure that if we are doing what we are supposed to - officials are holding up their end of the bargain as well. Additionally, I feel that I owe it to my officers to be honest with them regarding what battles are unrealistic based on rules and legalities in place, and to address them personally and privately when they have strayed from proper conduct to ensure they don't create problems for themselves.

Simply put ladies and gentlemen, as members of a union that cannot legally strike, it is our ability to stand unified that gives us whatever strength we have. Many members refer to "the union" as if it's some separate, outside organization that is paid to help officers. In truth, it is a group of officers that have volunteered to take an unfavorable position to often battle with management and/or members on issues affecting every aspect of our working

environment. For this reason, a shop steward needs to strictly adhere to the principles above and do what they can in their position to prioritize issues and work on them accordingly. Every one's concerns need to be addressed and given value, but your shop steward also needs to be open and honest with you about what can be done and/or how quickly it can be done. Lastly, and it bears repeating, your shop steward should never use their position to unfairly gain benefits for themselves in any fashion. So, if your complaints or comments have to do with the union falling short in these areas or the areas listed above, I would love to hear them.

Conversely, each member of the union must also acknowledge their responsibility as a member and realize the consequences of not doing their part. If management gives a group of officers the ability to voice their concerns - ALL of the members need to speak up, not just the union rep. If you are being treated in a way you believe is unfair, you need to address the issue directly with your supervisor. If you want a union rep there for the first conversation, that's great, but if you tell the supervisor that all is well, and then expect your union rep to go in and say things are not OK, then you aren't holding up your end of the deal as a member. If the entire shift is telling their union rep, "you need to get that supervisor off the shift," but no one will sign a memo to upper management, the union cannot make up for that lack of solidarity. If you are knowingly and willingly violating department policies, and then complaining to the union about getting caught, other than ensuring a fair punishment that adheres to policy, the union has no responsibility to weave an elaborate untruthful statement on your behalf. If I as a rep consistently bring virtually meaningless issues to supervisors for no other purpose but to complain, that practice has a severe negative effect (especially if the facts are incorrect) on the union's ability to help someone who is truly being treated unfairly. Everyone must understand these issues as their responsibilities in addition to understanding the union rep's responsibilities above.

I sincerely look forward to working with all of the members that require assistance and advice with issues they encounter in the workplace. The best

benefits I have seen from this position have been the ability to meet more people within the department, assist members and non-members as needed, and work with supervisory staff to adjust our way of doing things to benefit everyone involved. I look forward to discussions, complaints and debates, and I realize that we all won't agree all the time. When we do disagree, we just need to do so as two officers in a union, not a union rep and an officer.

Chris Desrosiers
FRU-1 Shop Steward

Chief Shop Stewards

| | |
|-------------------|--|
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House Division PSU “Why Not?”

I join the department in September 2006 with ROC 151. At my first opportunity, I became a member of the FOP Union. At the time, I was skeptic of some of the dealings taking place. However, I decided it's a good idea to have a lawyer on retainer and to all the other benefits the Union provides. Plus, you simply couldn't beat the price. I was approached in June 2009 to consider being a shop steward, when I was on H3. I was hesitant and decided that I didn't want to pursue such an avenue at that particular time. A new Executive Board was elected and I felt immediate excitement floating around my division. So, in June 2010 when the position for H3 Powershift became available, I thought, “Why not?” That may have been the best decision I've made since joining the department. I have actually enjoyed interacting with management on behalf of officers. Given my verbose, extroverted nature, I fit quite easily into my position. I now have a firm

grasp of the CBA, SOPs, General Orders, and other pertinent information that's necessary to my position. Working with Keith McFaden, Tim Barker, Chris Ferguson, Gus Papathanasiou (I think I spelled it properly), Jim Konczos, among others, has really been beneficial to my progression through the Union. Let me not forget, I wouldn't even been in this position if it wasn't for my squared away guys on House Powershift, after all, they elected me. I'm appreciative of their trust and belief in me and my abilities to make this job a little bit better for everyone. I try to look at things from management's point of view (inside joke), however my first priority as a steward is to my section. So far, enrollment in the Union is up and costs are down so progress is being made. With all these achievements, there is still plenty to be done, therefore, I look forward to the future under the current E-Board. I will continue to toil tirelessly in an effort to do my part in ensuring the Executive Board's goals are met.

Charles Nelson
HD PSU Shop Steward

Financial Sense

Financial Resource

My father, Timothy Toureau, was a police officer in Falls Church City for 27 years, retiring as Captain. My parents worked hard to provide well for their 2 boys. They did what it took to take great care of us. They lived paycheck to paycheck, mortgaging the house and not doing anything to save for retirement, like many families. Since college, I have stayed at the forefront on financial education, as my goal is to improve my client's lives in the area of financial fluency.

I have helped many Police Officers and their families with their mortgage financing. I take great pride in making sure I put together the best loan financing options for my clients. I also have partnered with other financial professionals to make sure my clients receive top advice concerning insurance, wills, and financial planning. I am willing to answer any questions, help solve problems, and also use my relationships to help the Union.

I am currently working with and have worked with officers in the Union with refinancing and purchasing homes. With mortgage rates being the lowest in history, I have the opportunity to help families save money. I love it when families save hundreds of dollars a month and put this money in their pockets instead of making the banks more money.

My name is Troy Toureau and I am available to be a resource for any questions Officers have regarding Home Loans and/or any Financial Questions. If I don't know the answer, we will work together to find the answer. I've been a loan officer for over 17 years and am a Northern Virginia Native. I look forward to working with you!

Troy Toureau
Branch Manager
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Appreciation for our Retiring FOP Members

I thought that the FOP Labor Committee should start taking the time to show our appreciation to our retiring Union Members. Recently, I presented an idea to the E-Board to come up with some sort of token to show our gratitude to our retiring Brothers and Sisters for being dedicated members of the USCP- FOP Labor Committee.

The E-Board unanimously approved my idea. To honor those Officers, starting January 2010, the FOP Labor Committee will present each retiring member of the Union that have paid their dues for 7 years or more, with a watch, engraved with a special thank you for your support and dedication to the FOP. Two types of watches have been selected, styles for men and women.

Members that have paid their dues 7 to 12 years will receive the first style selected by the E-Board. Members that have paid their dues for 13 years or more will receive the second style that was selected by the E-Board.

I would like to thank the following members for their dedication and service to the FOP Labor Committee, congratulations on your retirement:

Officer Charlie Boswell – 7 Years of dedication since 2003

Officer Everett Bass- 13 Years of dedication since 1997

Officer Arthur Ethridge – 13 Years of dedication since 1997

Officer Howard Joyner- 14 Years of dedication since 1996

Officer Larry Bennett- 13 Years of dedication since 1997

Officer Robert Reuss- 13 Years of dedication since 1997

Officer Regina Bolden-Whitaker- 13 Years of dedication since 1997

Officer Tony Gillus- 13 Years of dedication since 1997

Officer Mike Marion- 13 Years of dedication since 1997

Officer Reggie Wilson- 13 Years of dedication since 1997

Thank you for your service and membership and on behalf of the Union I wish you well in your retirement.

Vinnie Summers
CD-2 Shop Steward

Survival Skills: Find Your True North

The word Insurmountable, we don't often speak this way but we use a variation of it every day. The text book definition means incapable of being overcome. The mountain that's impossible to climb, the task that's too difficult to do, the problem

that's too complicated to fix. We've all been there, when it seems like everything we do is going wrong and were trapped in a sandpit with nothing but a spoon to dig out with. We might not use "insurmountable" but we use words like "can't", "won't", "never", or the world famous "impossible". Life is difficult enough as it is. In our profession, some think that when you seek help for a problem, it's a sign of weakness. Nothing can be further from the truth. Were of no benefit to our family, to our loved ones, or to our job if we are swamped with issues, if were lost without any direction, if were constantly in the eye of the storm with no map, no GPS, no compass.

This isn't what God intended for our lives. The Bible tells us that the following: (John 10:10) "The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full. Jesus wants us to have a full life in every aspect of it." The thief, or the Devil, has come to destroy our lives. What you believe is a personal choice and that's between you and God, but the change in my life, proves to me that God exists. Many shy away from any kind of religion because of this that or the other excuse, but Jesus didn't come to preach religion, He came to teach us how to have a relationship with God. I agree, many focus more on man-made rules and regulations than on what God really wants from us. Jesus tells us the following also: (Matthew 6:33) "But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well." Words of wisdom with a promise, seek God and His things, and you will have what you need (within God's will) to survive in this world.

There's has to be a true north in our lives so we can calibrate ourselves and keep going no matter what life throws at you. He preached a relationship with Him and God, nothing else. Have you ever found yourself lost? Have you been in a situation you felt like you couldn't get out of? Do you feel lost? Do you feel helpless? Reach out; grab Jesus' hand He's here to help, God is interested in your well-being, in you being whole, in you being complete. He is my true north and He can be yours as well. Paul leaves us with these instructions: (Romans 10:9-10) "That if you confess with your mouth,

"Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved." All it takes is believe in your heart, confess with your mouth and you'll find the True North, Jesus. God bless you all.

George Torres Jr.
USCP FOP Chaplain

SECRETARY

Why am I so Bitter?

Some time ago a fellow officer stated that I was very bitter. I thought about what she had said and I started to wonder if she was right. Why over the past twenty-two years have I become so disappointed with so many of the managers I work for and with? It is a question that I will attempt to answer today with this article. I ask for your patience and understanding because this is personal, but I think I will reflect many of the feelings you, my fellow officers, have on a daily basis.

Having come out of the Marine Corps and having had some training in leadership I knew that the best way to accomplish a mission was to make sure that the Marines in my squad were taken care of. It was my responsibility to insure that their needs were met so that they could perform whatever mission we were given. It was my job to know everything I could about my mission or assignment, work conditions, equipment, and Marines. I think that many of our managers need to go through the Marine Corps leadership course and if they've already been through it they need to go again because they've forgotten what they learned.

Having said that I want to express why I feel so bitter. Some of the things that I will say are personal but I will speak of them anyways because I feel so strongly about this right now.

Fourteen years ago my father passed away and I will never forget it. He called me the night his heart attack. He was up watching a basketball game and we spoke for about twenty minutes, early that morning I received a phone call that he had a heart

attack and was in a coma. My family and I were on the next flight home. I won't go into any more detail but I stood at his bedside when he peacefully passed away. I reported back to duty about two weeks later and it was too much. I talked to my Sergeant and I took a couple more days off. When I did come back I saw my Lieutenant, who I hadn't spoken to, and he said, I'll never forget it "Greg, I'm sorry to hear about your Dad, but we need to talk about your use of unscheduled leave." I had used about 100 hours.

When I had been on the department about two years I was on the GW Parkway going home from a 3-11 shift when I came upon a single car accident. While I was assisting the driver of the car, another car plowed into her car and I was the one who was sent to the emergency room. I used fourteen (14) days of unscheduled leave. My yearly evaluation reflected this and my Sergeant counseled me to work on improving my unscheduled leave situation.

I don't know why I'm so bitter. I don't think I am, I just feel that I work for a bunch of uncaring officials who don't get it. They wonder why sick leave usage is through the roof. I want to say to the Official please don't hurt yourselves wondering why officers call in sick, because we know you don't really care anyways.

I work for a small section. Every officer whose normal day it is to work will be here for all three major holidays this season. It's been this way for years. I can guarantee you that we will have only one Sergeant here though; I guess they must be non-essential. I mean the department grants up to 15% of the officer leave, but I guess we only need 15% of the officials here. It doesn't matter though on the Capitol Division you usually don't know if they're here or not any way. The division doors are locked, you can't see into the office because the cubicles are so high but the officers do have a drive up window that you can go to if you need help. Or you can go to the back fire doors and bang on them if think someone will finally get up and answer the door. Oh but make sure you tell the clerk at the drive up window first so they can warn them that you'll be knocking. You don't want to interrupt anyone working hard on those PEC's evaluation.

Why am I so bitter? Maybe it's because when I need to take an emergency upfront to take care of a family issue it's documented in my jacket as an unscheduled leave occurrence. I wonder if it's documented in my official's jacket every time they have leave early, say to take care of a sick family member.

I know I'm not unique in my experiences. Officers have to jump through hoops to take care of a sick spouse or child. I know of a Lieutenant who actually told an officer to bring him a wedding invitation to prove he was getting married so he wouldn't be drafted for overtime! Why am I so bitter? Why are officials so uncaring, unfeeling and so unaccountable for poor decisions?

I remember an officer on CD-3 who had a chronically ill baby. His officials wrote him up constantly and harassed him to the point of a Shop Steward having to get involved and assisting the officer in getting a transfer. Unfortunately his child passed away, he left for the Air Marshalls but thanks goodness we have an accurate accounting of his unscheduled leave usage, because that's what's was important. One midnight officer who was taking his daughter to college for the first time needed a short. He was told by his Lieutenant to bring back a brochure from the college so he could show it to the Lieutenant and justify the use of scheduled leave because we had a WDO working.

When was the last time anybody received a positive CP-550? I'll buy the Chief a steak dinner at the Outback Steakhouse if for the month of September 2010 he can show me 10 positive CP-550s from each of the five (5) divisions for a total of fifty(50) that have been issued to and signed by the officers. I know he can't. I can guarantee you that he can show you a hundred (100) or more "informative" CP-550s on the use of unscheduled leave. Doesn't this speak volumes? We work for the United States Congress, we have a thousand (1000) plus officers and we're all just average (meets expectations) and don't do anything noteworthy.

Why am I so bitter? I don't know. All I know is that several of our officers have reached out to lower and mid management for help and all they've received are "informative" CP-550s. Oh the

managers will finally care when it gets to the Chief's level and start rolling back down. I will say this, I do believe the Chief cares and I say that only because I know that from personal experience and I thank him for that. The real question is why did it ever have to get to his level? What's wrong with mid and lower level managers? Isn't it sad to know that your sergeant, lieutenant, captain, and inspector have been ordered to care about their officers? It's actually pathetic.

What happens to the person who you use to stand post with, talk to, share personal experiences with when they become promoted? I realize that there are unfeeling and uncaring people in all walks of life, what I can't understand are how so many of them pass the sergeant's test. Why is it that so many of our managers just don't get it?

When I was the Capitol Division Chief Shop Steward we had a tour of the unfinished CVC. At the end of the tour I found myself walking around with one of the Captains I express my deep concern for the amount of overtime that was be pushed upon many of the officers and the impact it was having. We talked for about a half hour. When I came into work that night my Lieutenant ordered me to remove the "Revolver Expert" pin that I had earned and was wearing. He stated that the Captain had noticed it while I was talking to him. He never did get back to me on my concerns about too much overtime, but thank goodness he took care of the real problem, my "Revolver Expert" pin. I see the Captain on occasion and I still wonder if he knows my name because all he ever calls me is "Big Guy", Ha-ha, I feel like a third grader passing my Vice Principal in the hallway. By the way Captain that "Serving Since" pin that you wear under your name badge isn't authorized either. But I'm just not petty enough to file a formal IAD complaint against you for being out of uniform. So keep it on.

Why does an officer have to bring in a wedding invitation to prove he's getting married? Why does an officer have to fight with managers to get off in order to move from their apartment? Why do officers prefer to call in sick rather than explain that there having family problems at home? Why do officers feel that there is such a double standard when it comes to discipline? A cell phone policy?

A leave policy? (When was the last time your official received an informational CP-550 for unscheduled leave? Oh my mistake, all of their leave is scheduled.)

I know that I'm not making any friends by writing this, but then again my concern isn't in making managers my friends. My concern is you my fellow officers. Take care of your family and personal life. If you do that first you won't regret it. If you need assistance seek it.

Why am I so bitter? I really do know and it makes me angry that I am.

Greg Baird
Secretary

Lodge Membership Renewal

Soon you may be receiving information from DC Lodge #1 concerning your Lodge membership renewal. This renewal is paid for by the Labor Committee from the dues that you pay. Every year many of our members are confused as to why this form comes to their house. Do not send this form back to the lodge! Update any address or contact information and give it to your Shop Steward and we will take care of it for you. If you move, change phone numbers, get married, or change any contact information please notify your Shop Steward.

