

National Police Week 2011 May 15-21st

On average, one law enforcement officer is killed in the line of duty somewhere in the United States every 53 hours. Since the first known line-of-duty death in 1791, more than 19,000 U.S. law enforcement officers have made the ultimate sacrifice. This year alone there seems to be an attack on law enforcement officers. As of May 4, 2011 there have been 67 police officers killed in the line of duty. That is an 18% change from last year at this time. Also, out of those 67 fatalities, 33 of those officers killed have been by gunfire, which is a 65% increase from last year.

In 1982, President John F. Kennedy designated May 15 as National Police Officers Memorial Day. Police Officer Memorial Day is a special day dedicated to those who have paid the ultimate sacrifice in the line of duty. This day is also dedicated to the 900,000 plus sworn law enforcement officers now serving in the United States.

Being a police officer is a calling. You will not get rich or make a lot of money being a police officer. It is not about money. It is about making your community a safe place, caring for the children, and doing whatever it takes to stop someone from hurting another. Officer's every day put on their lives on the line to protect every citizen in the United States. By putting their lives on the line, police officers take the chance of being assaulted, injured, and even killed in the line of duty. On the average, more than 58,000 police officers are assaulted each year, resulting in over 16,000 injuries. Also there is an average of 167 police officers killed every year. Over the past 10 years, over 1,800 law enforcement officers have paid the ultimate sacrifice and were killed. In 2010, 162 police officers were killed, which was a 40% spike from the 117 killed in 2009. Illinois ranked 3rd in the United States with the most police officer deaths with Texas being first with 19 and California 2nd with 11 fatalities. So, with this special day, we need to think about those officers who have gave their lives protecting each and every one of you from those dangers in society.

Another special consideration that should be thought of during the National Police memorial Week and Police Officer Memorial Day is one of our own that paid the ultimate sacrifice in the line of duty, Chief Jack Fancil. Chief Fancil paid the ultimate sacrifice June 1, 1970. Chief Fancil was shot and killed by subjects burglarizing a business in Oblong. Chief Fancil's name appears on the National Law Enforcement Memorial Wall in Washington D.C. and on the Police Memorial Wall in Springfield. Chief Fancil left behind a wife and two children whom all remain in Oblong today. Even though I never had the pleasure of meeting Chief Fancil, he still and always will hold a special place in my heart for the service and sacrifice that he gave to Oblong. Chief Fancil paid the Ultimate Sacrifice doing what he loved to do.

As a police officer for 16 years now, I have found out the job is more than just a job or paycheck. It takes a special person to put on a gun and badge everyday and fight what people fear. Every day as a police officer, I take a chance of never returning home and seeing my

family again. There are over 900,000 police officers that take this chance every day. 900,000 sounds like a lot, but if you compare that to the population, there is not enough that take that chance. Law Enforcement is a small family. I am a very dedicated police officer and will continue taking the risks every day until the day I retire.

So, I ask that one May 15, 2011 you please take a moment of silence and remember all of the police officers who have died in the line of duty and the police officers out in the streets every day risking their lives for you. Also, fly your flags at half staff. On September 13, 1994, President Bill Clinton signed into law Public Law 103-322 requiring the American Flag to be lowered to half-staff each year on May 15. REMEMBER THOSE WHO HAVE PAID THE ULTIMATE SACRIFICE FIGHTING WHAT YOU FEAR.

By: Chief Chad Pusey
Oblong Police Department

"I am the Officer"

*I have been where you fear to be,
I have seen what you fear to see,
I have done what you fear to do -
All these things I have done for you.*

*I am the person you lean upon,
The one you cast your scorn upon,
The one you bring your troubles to -
All these people I've been for you.*

*The one you ask to stand apart,
The one you feel should have no heart,
The one you call "The Officer in Blue,"
But I'm just a person, just like you.*

*And through the years I've come to see,
That I am not always what you ask of me;
So, take this badge ... take this gun ...
Will you take it ... will anyone?*

*And when you watch a person die
And hear a battered baby cry,
Then do you think that you can be
All these things you ask of me?*

(Author unknown)