



Fraternal Order of Police

BlueNote

Official Publication of the North Carolina State Lodge

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www.ncfop.org

March - April 2021

President's Message

By Randy Hagler – State President

Welcome to March/April 2021 issue of the official publication of North Carolina Fraternal Order of Police, The BlueNote. If you receive this publication via email or download it from the ncfop.org website please share it with all your law enforcement friends, family, and supporters. It contains important information concerning our organization and law enforcement across the State.

As you may recall the 2020 Peace Officers' Memorial Day Ceremony had to be canceled due to the COVID-19 pandemic and we were unable to recognize the North Carolina officers who paid the ultimate sacrifice in 2019. Plans are underway for the 2021 Ceremony which will be held on Thursday, May 6, 2021 at the Pinedale Christian Church in Winston-Salem to honor our fallen officers from both 2019 and 2020. Unfortunately, due the Statewide restrictions on crowd size, this year's service will look a little different. The only attendees allowed will be the families of the fallen officers and an escort officer from the agency the officer worked for. The service will be hosted by the NC Attorney General's Office along with other law enforcement dignitaries from across the State. The North Carolina Justice Academy is planning to stream the service live on their YouTube channel. Please check the NC Justice Academy's website for more information and we will also have the information available on how to tune in on our web site at ncfop.org.



2019 Honor Roll

K9 Officer Jordan H. Sheldon
EOW May 4, 2019
Mooresville Police Dept.

Deputy Sheriff Makeem R. Brooks
EOW November 14, 2019
Northampton County Sheriff's Office

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The Voice of Law Enforcement

North Carolina
Fraternal Order of Police
1500 Walnut Street
Cary, NC 27511

(O) 800-628-8062
(F) 919-461-4958

Email
NCFOP@nc.rr.com

Web Site
www.ncfop.org

President
Randy Hagler
rlhncfop@bellsouth.net

Immediate Past President
Terry Mangum
terrymangum@frontier.com

Vice President
Robert Gaddy
rgaddyjr@yahoo.com

Secretary
Lynn Wilson
smartsquid@aol.com

Treasurer
Chet Effler
cheteffler@gmail.com

2nd Vice President
James Shores
jshores@yahoo.com

Sergeant-At-Arms
Greg Brown
Brown_bg@earthlink.net

Chaplain
Phil Wiggins
Prwiggins48@yahoo.com

National Trustee
Dennis McCrary
dmccraryfop@aol.com

Chairman of Trustees
John Byrd
jrbsenior@charter.net

Chaplain's Corner

By Phil Wiggins

Recently I attended the 2021 Officer Wellness Summit, which was sponsored by the National FOP, in Nashville, Tennessee. It was my honor to open the Summit meetings with some personal comments and prayer.

As part of the introduction to the Summit, they mentioned that the FOP is "committed to improving the lives and wellness of our members." This Wellness Summit offered several breakout sessions on ways to help through peer support, yoga/mindfulness, choosing a professional mental health practitioner, and first responder marriage.

With all that is happening in our world today, it is easy to get depressed. We want the pandemic to end, hatred and violence toward police to stop, and have some normality back in our lives. I told the group that I felt and believed that God had a plan, and pointed out to them that I believe we are part of his plan. We came to the Wellness Summit to find answers and resources that will help our men and women in law enforcement. It would do us no good to attend the Wellness Summit and gain this knowledge of information and then not share it with our local and state lodge members. It is my prayer that God will use us as his peacemakers to carry a positive message from this Wellness Summit to our members and fellow law enforcement brothers and sisters across the country.

Some things that we face are uncontrollable in our lives and they tend to get us down. When we see our brothers and sisters hurting, depressed and in need of help, we need to step up, offer good sound advice, sit with them to listen or just be a friend.

The word of God tells us to call on Him in our time of need, 1 Peter 5:7 *"Cast all your anxiety on God because he cares for you."* Proverbs 3:5 *"Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways submit to him and he will make your paths straight. Do not be wise in your own eyes; This will bring health to your body and nourishment to your bones."*

God's Blessing,

Chaplain Phil Wiggins
NC State Lodge Chaplain
Cell: 919-451-2801



BlueNote

2020 Honor Roll

Trooper Nolan J. Sanders
EOW March 27, 2020
North Carolina State Highway Patrol

Deputy Sypraseuth “Bud” Phouangphrachanh
EOW March 31, 2020
Montgomery County Sheriff's Office

Senior Detention Officer Alexander R. Pettaway
EOW April 24, 2020
Durham County Sheriff's Office

Deputy Ryan P. Hendrix
EOW September 10, 2020
Henderson County Sheriff's Office

Deputy LaKiya L. Rouse
EOW October 21, 2020
Guilford County Sheriff's Office

Lt. Terry Sampson
EOW November 14, 2020
Durham County Sheriff's Office

Deputy Jared M. Allison
EOW December 1, 2020
Nash County Sheriff's Office

Officer Tyler A. Herndon
EOW December 11, 2020
Mount Holly Police Dept.

Master Corporal Norman Daye Jr.
EOW December 12, 2020
Guilford County Sheriff's Office

Officer Jason N. Shuping
EOW December 16, 2020
Concord Police Dept.

The events surrounding the FOP National Memorial Service are still being planned. Right now, it is not clear what will be allowed on the grounds of the United States Capitol this year. National President Pat Yoes and the National FOP Memorial Committee are meeting and we will soon know what will be allowed. We will try and keep our web site updated on those events so travel plans can be made.

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President's Message By Randy Hagler – State President, Continued From Page 3

The 2021-2022 Legislative Session has begun, and we are closely watching to see what changes we can expect for law enforcement. It is early in the session, but it has been a busy one for Legislators. A couple bills of interest for NCFOP are listed below:

- **SB 100** - the Police Protection Funding Act – this bill was introduced by Sen. Chuck Edwards, Sen. Norman Sanderson, and Sen. Danny Britt as primary sponsors. This bill is designed to ensure funding for police departments and Sheriff's Offices are not reduced by more than one percent. It would also allow the NC Criminal Justice Education and Training Standards Commission and NC Sheriff's Education Training Standards Commission to be able to submit recommendations to the Joint Oversight Committee on Justice and Public Safety on Law Enforcement Equipment Inventory Standards, Equipment Maintenance Standards, and Equipment Replacement Standards.
- **HB 115** – Add Member to NC CJ Education and Training Standards Commission – This bill was introduced Rep. Larry Potts and will, when passed, add a member of the North Carolina Fraternal Order of Police to CJ Education and Training Standards Commission. NCFOP has attempted to obtain a seat on the CJ Commission for many years and have come up a little short each time. This year we are conducting a grassroots effort to assist in getting this legislation passed and have asked members from around the State to participate in calls to Representatives to talk about the importance of this legislation. I am sure we will be calling on others as well. It is always helpful when a Representative can hear from the folks in their district on how important a piece of legislation is, and I appreciate those that have participated with us and those that will in the future.

There are several other bills that we have been approached about supporting that we will discuss in more detail at our upcoming Board of Directors Meeting in April.

Until next time, stay safe and back each other up.

BlueNote Information and Submission Dates for 2021

By Terry Mangum – Executive Editor

I certainly hope all of you have been doing well and staying safe since our last publication.

Please **read** and then **share** the BlueNote with your fellow law enforcement officers, both members and non-members. The BlueNote is your publication so help the NCFOP by contributing articles, photographs, and suggestions for improvement. We need you and I encourage everyone to submit articles and photos of your Lodge's activities. And there is an added bonus. Articles about your lodge activities can generate interest in the FOP from any non-FOP law enforcement officers in your area and can generate new members.

Any FOP member can submit an article for the BlueNote. You do not have to be a Local Lodge or State Lodge officer. And I promise you, this is an extremely simple and easy process. All you have to do is write a short article, e-mail your article to my e-mail address terrymangum@frontier.com and we will do the rest. If it needs a little dressing up, I will take care of making your article worthy for publication. Now what could be easier?

You can also send a photograph to accompany your article. When submitting photographs, please select one or two of your best and include the names of the individuals in the picture. You can even send just a photograph without an article. All you need to do is let me know who is in the photo, what was the occasion, and when and where did it take place. I will generate a caption to go with the photo.

Below are the Article Submission Due Dates for the 2021 issues of the BlueNote. Clip these dates out and post them on your computer, refrigerator, etc., where they will be visible as a reminder.

Article Submission Due Dates for 2021:

May/June issue: Due by April 16, 2021

July/August issue: Due by June 18, 2021

September/October issue: Due by August 20, 2021

November/December issue: Due by October 22, 2021

As always, I am here to serve you and our membership. If I may be of assistance to you, or if you have any questions or concerns, please contact me.

Grand Lodge Update

By Dennis McCrary – NC National Trustee

I hope all North Carolina FOP members are having a good start to 2021, considering all that has been happening so far this year. There have been many challenges across our country for officers and all citizens during these trying times.

The National Board of Directors held its most recent online meeting on February 15 and I want to let you know the major points that were discussed during that time. The membership of the FOP is now over 357,000 and we continue to grow in many states. Our National Legal Plan has over 106,000 members and over 24 million dollars in assets. We still are the largest and best law enforcement organization representing officers across our great country. An examination of the 11 top national law enforcement organizations media hits from May 1, 2020 to February 1, 2021 still demonstrates that the FOP continues to be the most quoted and mentioned by far. We have had over 37,482 hits and the next closest group is the Police Executive Research Forum at 6,488.

Covid-19 continues to be a real threat to law enforcement officers as well as all citizens in our nation. Law enforcement officers have suffered over 419 deaths from this terrible virus. Texas leads the nation with over 99 deaths, but North Carolina has also had at least 11. Officers are reminded that officers dying from COVID-19 are eligible for the national Public Safety Officers Benefit but the departments must complete the appropriate paperwork and file for the money.

The COVID-19 virus has played havoc with many of our FOP meetings and events during the past year. The Grand Lodge, however, was able to hold both the Officer Wellness Summit and Leadership Matters in February. Leadership Matters had 200 participants from 34 states that attended. These events were well attended but the numbers had to be limited to address COVID-19 concerns. The feedback has been great on both events and many attendees should be able to take some great information back to their lodges.

Our other upcoming events are still scheduled but they may look different from other years. We hope to have the Police Officers' Memorial Service in DC in May but plans are still not finalized. It appears our first choice is to have the families of the deceased heroes to be on the Capital grounds at our usual location. We may not get permission to do this and, if we do, it will just be the families at that location. The plan is to try to get permission for officers to be in the National Mall area and view the ceremony on monitors. All of this activity is subject to the approval by the appropriate Washington authorities which is not a given. More information will be released on this event in the future. Day on the Hill was scheduled as a virtual event and should have kicked off on February 23. This BlueNote issue will not be released until after that date so I hope the event was a success.

The National Board of Directors and State Presidents meetings are still scheduled for April 15-17 in Kansas City. Our National Conference is still on schedule for August 16-20 in Indianapolis but both of these events are subject to any government restrictions that could be put into place. There is no reason to believe, at this time, that either event would be cancelled. NC FOP does have rooms reserved for the National Conference but the details of what hotel we will be assigned has not been released.

Our legislative office and National President Yoes have been very active in DC with the change in administration. They have had numerous contacts with members of the Biden management team and are

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Grand Lodge Update By Dennis McCrary Continued from Page 5

having some input into appointments. We are supporting some nominees but opposing others. So far the relationship has been good, and we hope to continue to work with them to get our views known and understood. We certainly will not agree on all issues but so far we have a seat at the table and appear to be the most involved law enforcement organization in the process.

A reminder that the NFOP Journal is now a monthly online publication. The Grand Lodge needs your email address to ensure you don't miss an issue. Members should make certain their email address is registered at FOPConnect.com and that will qualify them for a chance to win \$1000.

Henry American Rifles is donating ten rifles that will be used as PAC donation incentives. The plan is to give one away each month to a member that is donating to the PAC. Henry is also designing a FOP collectable rifle that will be used to raise funds for the FOP Foundation. More information will be released concerning these drawings in the near future.

FOP members are reminded that each week FOP-TV makes programs available that can help keep you up to date on issues that are very important to law enforcement officers. Please watch closely on fop.net for topics that can help you in your career.

Finally, the new and improved FOP.net website should be operational at the beginning of March. This should be a very user-friendly website and help members stay up to date on the topics that affect their lives. I would again like to thank you for allowing me to serve as your National Trustee. Please let me know if I can be of any help to you or your lodge.

Positive Revenue Forecast Could Support COLA

By Jeff Gray – State Legislative Agent

Every two years as the legislature convenes for its biennial session a budget forecast is agreed upon by the Governor's budget staff and the legislative budget staff. The consensus revenue forecast for the 2021-2023 biennium was made public on February 11th. The consensus forecasts typically come out every quarter, but rarely do they get much attention so most people have not noticed there has not been a forecast since May 2020 due to the pandemic. This forecast right before a legislative session is important since the General Assembly and the Governor develop their budgets from these revenue estimates. And there is good news! The consensus forecast projects revenues from 2020-2021 to be \$27.6 billion which is more than \$ 4 billion above their forecast in May. For the second year of the biennium revenues (2021-2022) drop slightly to \$27.3 billion.

Why the increase in revenue? Personal income taxes and sales tax income have exceeded expectation. While small store-front businesses have suffered greatly in the pandemic, as well as restaurants and hotels, online sales have increased bringing in a growth of 8.1% in sales tax revenue. Also, last year's delayed income tax filing deadline of July 15th boosted revenues by \$1.1 billion for this fiscal year.

Interestingly, the North Carolina economy has actually seen modest growth in the last year. Last year's federal stimulus brought in \$18 billion to NC households and \$12.5 billion to NC businesses providing a much larger impact to the State's economy than projected.

This is good news for the retired members of the FOP since it helps maintain the value of retirees' pension income, and it could promote expansion of the Bailey Act, retiree tax credit, and possibly even a COLA.

The North Carolina Retired Governmental Employees Association is working to identify sponsors to introduce a COLA bill in both the House and Senate. The FOP would enthusiastically support these bills, as it has in the past, and advocate for these bills to include both local and State retirees.

Holding the Line

By Bobby Gaddy – State Vice President

Greetings Brothers and Sisters,

As I have said on many occasions, it is my pleasure to continue to serve as your elected NC State Vice President and be a part of such a great organization. I want to personally thank each of you for your commitment and dedication to the Order, clearly making us the best Law Enforcement support organization! ***Your willingness to work in the profession and be a change maker doesn't come easy and is appreciated and does not go without recognition from the State Executive Board.***

Over the past year, being a Law Enforcement Professional has not been easy. At times, upholding the line has been difficult. Facing our persecutors is difficult. Coming to grips with some of our own people participating as perpetrators of some of these heinous crimes is heartbreaking. When we say or mention the "***Thin blue line***," it is usually a term that typically refers to the police's concept as the ***line*** that keeps society from descending into violent chaos. Unfortunately, communities are at odds and primarily placing us as the blame for most of its problems while seemingly making this task more difficult to perform. While Law Enforcement is not perfect, and we have condemned those actors who have played a role in the demise of our credibility, we are still proud and happy to do a job daily that most will not. That is why we must continue to hold the line, and seek out those who seem to continue to tarnish the badge, bring to justice those who break the laws and at the same time protect those who seem to be our worst enemies and seek to defund us.

The line bearers have become thin. The applicants and interests have weakened. But we (the FOP) must stay resilient and continue to fight for what we know is right. This is why those two Pennsylvania Police Officers created the Fraternal Order of Police. The FOP was made to fight in times when all seems to be lost. The FOP was made to provide guidance when some of us seem to have lost our way. It was created to stand-up to those who consider themselves larger than life itself. The FOP was made to represent those who otherwise would fall victim to a system that doesn't afford them the same rights as those whom they arrest in their daily service. It was created to represent our membership on the highest levels of Government.

I urge each of you to please keep recruiting in your agencies and bring those who are not members to become members. I encourage each of the local lodges to become or stay active in their local politics. Lastly, I urge each of you to continue to hold (US) the NC FOP State Executive Board accountable and make sure that we represent each of you in a manner that best represents you. As we are in a pivotal moment in time as a profession, we must remain at the forefront and help steer and change history and guide its direction. In Order for us to be at the front of this, I challenge each of you to become an agent of change by taking ownership of those things that we can change professionally and those things that we can improve as an organization.

"WE MUST HOLD THE LINE!"



A Message From Your Chairman of Trustees

By John R. Byrd Sr.

Brothers & Sisters,

I hope this issue of the Blue Note continues to find you staying safe and well as we continue to deal with this COVID-19 situation.

I usually don't mention things I have sent out in my Trustee Update emails in this article, but I think there are a couple that need reiterating. If you haven't been getting those emails, please get up with me and make sure I have your accurate email.

1. Be sure and address the issue about American Income Life Insurance and the free \$4000.00 AD&D policy they have been providing us. Also make your members aware of the additional benefits they are eligible for that Vivian Dwyer told us about at the Trustees meeting at our state conference. I sent a copy of those to all Trustees in one of my Trustee Update emails, please share those with your membership. Let us be known for professionalism and courtesy when their agents interact with us.
2. Don't forget we will be having presentations at our Spring Board meeting from the Firms wishing to replace Jeff Gray and the Board of Directors will vote on who to move forward with after this. This is very important for the future of our state lodge so make every effort to make sure your lodge is represented at this meeting.

Some of the things I have done since my last message are:

- We had our Lodge #74 Raffle Drawing on December 30th. Thanks again to all of you that supported us.
- Sent out a Trustees Update email on February 5th.
- Attended a virtual state e-board meeting on February 16th.
- Submitted this "Blue Note" article on February 18th.

As always, I am here to serve you and your lodge. You can call me anytime at 336-504-8173 or email me at person7454@yahoo.com. I hope you are finding my periodic email updates to be a useful tool to keep your membership informed on the ongoing workings of your state e-board. It is an Honor to serve as your Chairman of Trustees.

North Carolina Fraternal Order of Police Foundation, Inc. Scholarships and DART

By Greg Brown – NCFOP Foundation Vice President

The primary purpose of the North Carolina Fraternal Order of Police, Inc., is to exist as a benevolent foundation for the purpose of assisting children of North Carolina Fraternal Order of Police Active Members in Good Standing, who have been killed or permanently disabled while in the line of duty, with the expense of higher education.

The awarding of scholarships is determined by the North Carolina Fraternal Order of Police Foundation, Inc., Board of Directors.

Besides benefiting the children with scholarships, there is also a benefit to the contributor. The North Carolina Fraternal Order of Police Foundation, Inc. is a 501C3 charitable corporation and all donations are tax deductible. We do not use professional telemarketing services, therefore, all funds donated come directly to the Foundation and your financial donations are perpetual. This means that your donation remains in the Foundation forever and only the earnings from your original donation are used to fund the scholarships.

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North Carolina Fraternal Order of Police Foundation, Inc.

Scholarships and DART By Greg Brown Continued From Page 8

The Foundation Board had discussions on how we can assist the children of our fellow NC Fraternal Order of Police Active members who have not been killed or disabled in the line of duty with scholarships. We have opened a new Section C to the scholarship program and will be awarding four \$500.00 scholarships to children of Active NC Fraternal Order of Police Active members in Good Standing.

If you are applying under Section C, please read over the scholarship application carefully and make sure everything is complete. This section will also include a short essay from your child on how or why this scholarship will assist them in their endeavor to complete their higher education. There is a May 1st deadline for all scholarship applications to be turned in to the Foundation, Inc.

All forms and applications, that you will need to download and complete, are at the bottom of the Foundation section on the State FOP website www.ncfop.org including the NC Disaster Assistance Relief form and the National Disaster Assistance Relief form should you have any damage from a natural disaster.

The Board Members of the North Carolina Fraternal Order of Police Foundation, Inc. are all FOP members who volunteer their time and efforts to this worthwhile organization. We are active and or retired law enforcement officers who currently serve or have served communities throughout North Carolina.

North Carolina Fraternal Order of Police Disaster Relief Application

Any member that suffers a loss from a natural disaster and qualifies for assistance should submit the application to their local lodge. The local lodge will then approve and forward the application to Jimmy Wingo, President of the Foundation, for his approval. Please make certain the member has to be displaced from their home and suffer a substantial loss to qualify for assistance. The application then comes to the Disaster Assistance Committee for approval. Funds are limited so all assistance grants are for \$500.00.

National Fraternal Order of Police Disaster Assistance Response Team (DART)

The National Fraternal Order of Police Foundation is here to assist officers who have been displaced by a disaster. During a disaster, officers often need help with food, housing and other necessities. In the past, we have assisted with flooding disasters throughout the United States, fires throughout the West, numerous hurricanes on the East and Gulf Coasts, tornadoes all across the country and many other disasters.

North Carolina Fraternal Order of Police Foundation, Inc. Board of Directors

President: Jimmy Wingo Lodge 01
Vice President: Greg Brown Lodge 46
2nd Vice President: Brian Roland Lodge 05
Treasurer: Marty Wilson Lodge 01
Secretary: Gunnar Matthews Lodge 68

Your personal contributions enable the Foundation to provide scholarships to eligible recipients. Please consider sending your financial donation today or the next time you consider financially contributing to your community or charitable organization. Your tax deductible contributions of any amount can be mailed to:

NCFOP Foundation, Inc.
74 Parker Cove Road
Weaverville, NC 28787

Upcoming Events

By Terry Mangum – Immediate Past President

I hope all of my Fraternal Order of Police Brothers and Sisters across the great State of North Carolina are doing well.

March and April are usually busy months for the State Lodge but this year will be a little easier. The FOP Southern States Association meeting, which is normally held in April, has been canceled again this year due to travel and meeting restrictions. Hopefully, the Southern States Association will be able to meet in 2022.

Our State Board of Directors meeting will be held in Durham during the month of April. The dates and hotel information will be forthcoming in the very near future.

The National State Presidents meeting and National Board of Directors meeting will be held in Kansas City, Missouri on April 14 thru 18. This meeting will be held at the Double Tree by Hilton Hotel. Randy Hagler will be reporting during the State Presidents meeting. During the National Board of Directors meeting Bobby Gaddy will be reporting as the Chairman of the Diversity Committee, Dennis McCrary will be reporting as Chairman of the Disaster Relief Committee, and I will be reporting as Chairman of the Constitution and By-laws Committee.

The State Lodge has conducted several virtual meetings since our last publication. During these meetings, among other topics, we have taken legislative action to get a seat on the NC Criminal Justice Education and Training Standards Commission, held discussions with three companies on a new approach to raise funds for the State Lodge, and have held discussions with another company that wants to assist with membership and recruiting.

This year in May, the State Peace Officers Memorial Service is restricting the attendance so President Randy Hagler and Chaplain Phil Wiggins will be the only representative from the State Lodge. They will still be able to present the Memorials to the survivors during the service. Also, the State Lodge normally sponsors the luncheon after the service each year, but due to the restrictions there will be no luncheon.

If I may be of assistance to you, or if you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me. As always, I am here to serve you and our membership.

Legislature Convenes for 2021-2022 Session

By Jeff Gray – State Legislative Agent

Following a one-day organizational session in January, the 2021-2022 Session of the North Carolina General Assembly convened on Wednesday, January 13, 2021. The 2021 Session is the first year of a two-year session and is commonly referred to as the "long session;" it is likely to end sometime during mid-Summer.

Leadership at the General Assembly this Session remained basically the same with Senator Phil Berger being elected to again serve as President Pro Tempore to continue leading the Senate and Senator Ralph Hise being re-elected to continue to serve as Deputy President Pro Tempore. Senator Kathy Harrington was elected unanimously by her party to serve as the Republican Majority Leader and in doing so will become the first woman to hold the position of Majority Leader of either caucus since the inception of the North Carolina Senate. (There was a woman Minority Leader of the Republican Party in the 1990s, Representative Betsy Cochrane.) Senator Dan Blue will serve his fourth term as the Democratic Minority Leader and newly-elected Lieutenant Governor Mark Robinson will serve as the President of the Senate

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Legislature Convened for 2021-2022 Session Continued From Page 10

In an interesting historical note, newly elected Supreme Court Justice Phillip Berger, Jr. swore in his father, the President Pro Tem of the Senate, in the Senate chamber on opening day.

Similarly, in the House, Representative Tim Moore was re-elected to continue his service as the Speaker of the House and Representative Sarah Stevens was re-elected as Speaker Pro Tempore. The parties in the House will be led by Republican Majority Leader Representative John Bell and, with the resignation of Representative Darren Jackson last Fall, the Democratic Minority Leader is now Representative Robert Reives.

One of the early priorities has been consideration of a bill regarding distribution of federal CARES Act funds allocated to the State last year. The bill, (SB 36; S.L. 2001-1) passed the Senate on February 3rd and the House on the 4th and was ratified on February 10th. In addition to an allocation of funds included extending many deadlines which had been extended late last Spring during the start of the COVID-19 crisis which expired December 31, 2020. Currently, the General Assembly and Governor are negotiating a school opening bill.

As with every long session, a biennial State Budget is always of major focus. As you will recall a Budget was passed by the General Assembly during the 2019 Session but vetoed by Governor Roy Cooper. The budget process – with the Governor preparing and presenting his, and the legislature doing the same with its – will last throughout the Spring and early Summer. Only time will tell if both can find consensus so as to ratify a State Budget.

Another major topic will be redistribution of legislative seats following the 2020 census, a process referring to as “redistricting.”

A new group, the “Law Enforcement Caucus,” has been created by retired Brunswick County Chief Deputy, Representative Charlie Miller, and retired Pender County Sheriff, Representative Carson Smith. This new caucus will focus on law enforcement issues and needs. Hopefully, this group will be a new, strong voice.

Although bill introductions have been slow in light of the early focus on further COVID-19 relief measures, there have been a number of bills introduced of interest to members of the FOP:

HB 7: Protect City Employees from Retaliation. This bill would require a city council that does not already have a binding procedure for protecting employees from retaliation to adopt rules or ordinances that encourage all city employees to report the following: 1) violations of federal, State, or city laws, rules, or regulations, 2) fraud, 3) misappropriation of State or city government resources, 4) any activity that poses a substantial or specific danger to public health and safety, and 5) gross mismanagement, including the gross waste of public monies or the gross abuse of authority.

The bill would also prohibit any city employee, including a supervisor, from taking any action against an employee that reports any of the activities described above, including disciplining or terminating the employee.

Referred to the House Committee on Local Government.

HB 21: Add Member to NC Training Standards Commission. This bill would increase the number of members of the North Carolina Criminal Justice Education and Training Standards Commission from 34 to 35 members and allow the North Carolina Police Benevolent Association to appoint one full-time sworn law enforcement officer to the Commission.

Referred to the Senate Committee on State Government.

SB 10: Add Member to NC Training Standards Commission. This bill is identical to House Bill 21.

Referred to the Committee on Rules and Operations of the Senate.

HB 46: SHRA/Stronger Whistleblower Protection This bill would modify State whistleblower protections for State (but not local) government employees to include immunity from civil liability for any employee that in “good faith” reports to their department head evidence of what they reasonably believe to be: 1) a violation of State or federal law, rule or regulation; 2) fraud; 3) misappropriation of State resources; 4) a substantial and specific danger to public health and safety; or 5) gross mismanagement, a gross waste of funds, or the gross abuse of authority. The bill defines “good faith” as honesty in fact with the goal of complying with the duties to report.

The bill would also clarify that a reporting employee may report this information directly to the North Carolina State Auditor. In addition, the bill would specify that the identity of a reporting employee would not be public record and would remain confidential until the matter is resolved or the employee consents to the report being made public.

Finally, the bill would enact a new chapter in our General Statutes addressing substantiated allegations. It would mandate that each substantiated allegation of improper State governmental activities involving fraud, mismanagement, or waste of State resources be immediately referred to and reviewed by the Office of State Budget and Management (OSBM). The OSBM would then be required to determine the amount of any savings to the State generated by substantiated allegations within 90 days of the date of referral. A State employee who makes a substantiated allegation under this new law that results in a savings to the State would be entitled to receive a monetary reward equal to twenty percent (20%) of the amount of the savings generated as determined by the OSBM.

Referred to the House Committee on State Personnel.

HB 47: Concealed Carry in the General Assembly. This bill would allow any Legislator with a concealed handgun permit to carry a concealed “firearm” while in or on the premises of the State legislative buildings and grounds if the person is in the performance of his or her duties as a member of the General Assembly. However, the bill would prohibit the carrying of a concealed “firearm” if the member is consuming alcohol or any unlawful controlled substance, or while alcohol or any unlawful controlled substance remains in the member’s body. (Note: Current law allows a concealed handgun permit holder to carry a concealed handgun, and not the broader category of “firearm” and already prohibits the carrying of a concealed handgun while consuming alcohol or any unlawful controlled substance, or while alcohol or any unlawful controlled substance remains in the person’s body.)

The bill would also prohibit the Legislative Services Commission from adopting any rule that would prohibit the following persons from carrying a concealed handgun in or on the premises of the State legislative buildings and grounds:

1. Officers and enlisted personnel of the Armed Forces of the United States who are discharging their official duties.
2. Civil and law enforcement officers of the United States.
3. Officers and soldiers of the National Guard who are discharging their official duties.
4. Officers of the State, or of any county (such as a deputy sheriff), city, or town who are charged with the execution of the laws of this State and who are discharging their official duties.
5. Certain qualified retired law enforcement officers that meet the requirements to carry a concealed handgun under our State law.
6. Off-duty sworn law enforcement officers.

Referred to the House Committee on Judiciary 3.

HB 48: Concealed Carry/Emergency Medical Personnel. This bill would allow emergency medical services personnel to carry a concealed handgun while on duty if they are being deployed to provide tactical medical support for law enforcement during an emergency situation, such as a SWAT operation.

The bill would require the emergency medical personnel to first obtain specialized training before carrying a concealed handgun in this scenario, which would include training on firearms safety, use of firearms systems and use of deadly force.

Referred to the House Committee on Judiciary 3.

SB 43: Protect Religious Meeting Places. This bill would allow anyone with a concealed handgun permit to carry a concealed handgun on the premises of a place of religious worship when the place of worship is also located on school grounds. However, the bill would allow for the carrying of a concealed handgun on the premises of the school grounds only when the premises is not being used for curricular, extracurricular or any school-sponsored activities (such as on weekends or during holidays.) Finally, this authorization would not apply to any property that is owned by a local board of education or by a county commission. (Note: Currently, a person may not carry a concealed handgun on any school property even if that property is a mixed-use property containing both a school and a place of religious worship, regardless of whether or not school activities are taking place.)

Referred to the Committee on Rules and Operations of the Senate.

SB 64: Window Tint/Inspection/Approach of LEO. This bill would remove tinted windows from the list of equipment to be inspected during motor vehicle safety inspections. (Note: Currently, the law requires safety inspection mechanics to determine if any after-factory tinting has been applied to a vehicle window and, if so, to use a light meter to determine if the window meets current State window tinting restrictions.) The bill would also place an added requirement on drivers of vehicles with tinted windows who are approached by a law enforcement officer to roll down the front window on the side of the vehicle the officer is approaching. The bill does not change any of the window tinting restrictions or exceptions included in current law.

Referred to the Committee on Rules and Operations of the Senate.

SB 72: Advanced Cert. Service Purchase Option/LEOs. This bill would allow a law enforcement officer who is a member of the Teachers' and State Employees' Retirement System (TSERS) or the Local Governmental Employees' Retirement System (LGERS) who has completed at least five years of membership service and who has been awarded the Advanced Law Enforcement Certificate issued by the North Carolina Sheriffs' Education and Training Standards Commission or the North Carolina Criminal Justice Education and Training Standards Commission to purchase up to four years of creditable service in the applicable retirement system. (Note: An identical bill was introduced last Session but was never released from the Senate Rules Commission so not heard in committee.)

Referred to the Committee on Rules and Operations of the Senate.

HB 115: Add Member to N.C. Training Standards Commission. This bill would increase the number of members of the North Carolina Criminal Justice Education and Training Standards Commission from 34 to 35 members and allow the State Lodge of Fraternal Order of Police to appoint one full-time sworn officer to the Commission.

Referred to the [pending at time of article deadline.]

DB 96: Local LEO Weapon Purchase. This bill would authorize a city or county to offer to their active duty law enforcement officers the option to purchase his or her duty weapon when the law enforcement officer's duty weapon is being replaced by the agency. (Note: Currently, this option to purchase a replaced duty weapon is authorized for active State law enforcement officers only. This bill **does not** change the same statute as it relates to the duty weapon of a deceased or retired officer.

Referred to the Committee on Rules and Operations of the Senate.

If you would like a copy of any of the legislation introduced or considered by this year's General Assembly, copies are available on the General Assembly's website: www.ncleg.net.

TRIVIA

Extra!!! Extra!!! Read All About It!!! We Have A WINNER!!!

For the first Trivia contest for 2021 we have a winner. **Byron Highland**, State Trustee of Pitt-Greenville Lodge 69, is the **grand prize winner** of the January/February BlueNote **TRIVIA** contest. Byron correctly identified the three individuals in the photograph as Don Penix, Mike Calfee, and Jesse Jernigan.

Many thanks to everyone who played **TRIVIA** and sent in a response. There were many correct answers received for this photograph.

If you have not won a **TRIVIA** contest, do not give up. Keep submitting your answers and maybe you too can be a BlueNote **TRIVIA Grand Prize Winner** like **Byron Highland**.

Remember, it is never too late to submit your guess. But lately the responses have been coming in lightning fast so you should send in your responses as quickly as possible. I hope to see your name listed as the BlueNote **TRIVIA** grand prize winner in the next issue.

DRUM ROLL AND TRUMPET FANFARE!!!

You have now reached the section of the BlueNote that you have been looking for. This is your chance to participate in another exciting round of BlueNote **TRIVIA**.

Can you identify the seven (7) individuals in this photograph.

Remember to send me your answer as quickly as you can.

If you can identify the seven (7) individuals in this photograph, send an email to terrymangum@frontier.com with your answer along with the name and number of your Lodge.

The correct Trivia answer will be posted in the May/June 2021 issue of the BlueNote along with the name of the **first** individual submitting the correct answer.

