

MIAMI BEACH POLICE

DEPARTMENT

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MBPD RETIREE NEWS

"Unity is strength for a better retirement"

October 2009 Issue

Sam's Corner - "A Collection of Disorganized Thoughts"

October 2009 is the year and month in which "Mr. Disorganized Thoughts" turns the big five-oh. Yes, 50 years old. To many of you, I'm still a baby. I don't disagree with that because I do act like a big (and I mean big!) baby on occasion, but that's only in matters that have to do with women and relationships, which apparently I'm just not good at these days. In addition, the Miami Beach Police Department, which practically raised me from the time I was just barely out of my teens, has ill prepared me for the horrors of dealing with relationships.

They showed me how to investigate crimes, shoot a handgun, write reports, search criminals and property, testify in court, and a host of other things. But they didn't counsel me on the right things to say to women at the right time. Consequently, I've always managed to put my foot in my mouth so many times, that I always keep dipping sauces in my pocket for a little flavor. Jeez, I hate complaining about the



ladies, and in the future I promise I'll stop. I don't want to sound like a "sad sack", and I'll always love women; although I'll NEVER understand them!

At Pete Bitume's retirement party Thursday night the 27th of August, Ray Chambers dragged me from the outer fringes of Finnegans on Ocean Drive, host of 488 retirement parties since 1907 and forced me to say a few words in honor of my good friend Pete. Of course, I was very shy at first, but once the words started to flow, it became easy. I spoke of how Pete over the years has counseled me on how to cope with the job, and with life in general.

Pete is one of those guys who has had no formal training as a counselor, yet he has a natural knack for giving solid advice. His advice has never been subtle. Pete is always direct and to the point, just like his approach to his job. Pete takes no crap

from anyone and "tells it like it is." He does it in such a way though that I can't help but to "crack up" every time.

The party was well attended and fun. Again, as I've said before, I am not even going to attempt to provide a list of the attendees, there were just too many of them. Suffice to say, it was a great group; lots of retirees, and lots of his former colleagues from S.I.U., who loved his managerial style. Although I never really saw Pete hurt anyone, since he is really a softy at heart, he always talked a good game. One of his roll-call declarations was that if he ever caught *anyone* doing this, or doing that, (and there were a *lot* of ways to screw up), God help them, he would "bury them." Pete used that

ing often one roll someone gave him a little beach bucket and shovel so he dig the hole himself.



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A Collection of Disorganized Thoughts.....

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Join me in wishing Lt. Pete Bitume a happy and healthy retirement. That includes the other recent retirees such as Sam Bejar, Barry Stamp, Ken Chapman, Ambrose Sims, and Kevin Graham. No need to worry, if I missed anyone, they'll be mentioned here next month. I didn't make it to Sam Bejar's retirement party and I didn't have the pleasure of working with him directly that often, but every time I saw him in the station, we always shared a kind word. We also shared a really goofy pastime. Since Sam and I have the same first name, he or I would greet each other with "Sam". One of us would then respond "Sam"; the other would say "Sam", and so on and so forth. This exchange would continue for no less than 5 minutes, until one or both disappeared in an elevator or doorway. Two grown men with guns acting like goofy little kids. You gotta love it!

Toward the end of August I had some business to attend to in Coral Gables. Later that afternoon, as I traveled back to Sunrise on the Palmetto Expressway, I saw the exit sign for 25th Street ahead. I figured it was time to turn off and head west to Lakeside Memorial Park and pay my

respects to my parents, who were buried there. It had been too long. Cemeteries are not my favorite place to visit and the traffic in Doral is always horrendous, but it had to be done.

While I prefer to keep this column light and humorous, sometimes I am moved by certain things... And sometimes I think we all need a "reality check". As I pulled into Lakeside, I quickly found the location of my parent's graves in the "Olive" section. It's the section closest to 25th Street, so it's sort of noisy. The smell of diesel smoke hung in the air from so many trucks passing by also made it somewhat uncomfortable, but I was alive, so there was no justification to complain.

After placing a rock on the headstones, a Jewish tradition that I never really took the time to investigate or understand, I sat down under a nearby concrete gazebo to sort of meditate. It was also close to 95 degrees and very humid, so I needed to get out of the sun. Since it was a weekday, the place was deserted, except for a small gravesite service taking place nearby. As I prepared to leave, it occurred to me that I was looking right at my Uncle

Nathan's headstone. I had forgotten he was buried at Lakeside. I also recalled the day I attended Don Kramer's funeral and I visited the office to find out where he was buried.



The "Degania" section of the cemetery was only about a block and a half away from where my parents and uncle were buried. It was there that I found Don Kramer's marker. Scott Rakow was close by and I stopped by his gravesite. As I walked back to my truck, I spotted Buddy Walshon's gravesite in a shady area, down from Scott Rakow. At least six people that I knew were buried at Lakeside Memorial Park, and there's no doubt that there are more. In fact, it was pointed out to me later that Laurie Wander is buried there too.

Names and faces flood my thoughts. Friends, family, and co-workers laid to rest in cemeteries in Dade and Broward counties and beyond. John Koppin in south Dade, who, had he lived probably would have been Chief of Police. He was one sharp guy. Steve Groves in Hollywood. Steven Bauer in North Miami. Steve Bauer (Mike Bauer's brother) and I went to the same DUI Breathalyzer school together. I recall what a jokester he was, and how he kept everyone "in stitches" throughout the entire forty hour school. My memories of Steve were too short, but were very powerful. When I put my mind to it, I can remember many, many more people who left this world way too soon. In fact, way too many over the years.

If there's a point to all this, I guess it would be that perhaps we all need to evaluate ourselves once in a while and appreciate what we have. Of course, I'm better at giving advice than taking it. After my visit to Lakeside however, I think it will be a bit

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In The News...

Vinny's Breakfast



There was no breakfast in September, Vinny took a break.

However, there will be a breakfast on **October 16th, 2009 at the 84 Diner.**



Meeting time is 9:30 A.M. As usual, all are welcome!

Jack and Amy Tighe

Congratulations to Jack and Amy Tighe, who celebrated their fifty-fifth (55) wedding anniversary at C.B. Smith Park in Pembroke Pines. Jack and Amy renewed their vows in front of all their children, grandchildren, great grandchildren & friends.



Funeral Service for Wallace Neumann, Sr.

Wally Neumann's dad, Wally Noriega, Sgt. Alex Bello Sr. passed away in September. His funeral was held on the 17th of September. The list of attendee's is as follows: Don DeLucca, Chief Chuck Press (Key Biscayne), Billy O'Neil, Pat Ryan, Cathy and John Tighe, Bernie Winer, James Mazer, Michael Auch, Chief Carlos Noriega, Sgt. Alex Bello (FOP President), Attorney Bob Switkes, Eileen Zeifman (for Howard).

We would like to thank the attendees for showing to pay their respects. In addition, we would like to thank the Members of the Miami Beach P.D. Motor Squad who participated in running the escort. Our thoughts and prayers go out to Wally and his family.



OCTOBER BIRTHDAYS!

Gene Addis
Doug Bales
Joe Basler
Jeff Bernstein
Andy Caputo
Richard Caracaus
Mario Cappelletti
John Clements

Kenny Chapman
Tom Davis
Norvel(Ray) Duncan
Robert Frame
Samuel Gam
Dennis Godbold
Shelly Goldstein
Mike Grant

LeeAnn Gutierrez
James Harris
Robert Hundevadt
Jack Mackie
John Moore
Romilio Perez
Tony Pizzo
Dick Procyk

John Quiros
Ellen Roelofs
Tony Sammarco
Andy Soto
Loretta Wein
Tom Wilson
Ed Young

A Collection of Disorganized Thoughts.....

Continued from pg 2

easier to do that self-evaluation. Looking down and seeing all those headstones was sort of the eye-opener I needed.

I've been working part-time as a North Bay Village Officer for a couple of months now. They are short staffed, so I'm actually getting quite a few hours. The mix of days, afternoons, and midnights keeps things interesting. As in any police department, I work with some interesting characters; and for the most part, I am treated very well by most of them. I say "most" because, as in every police department, there are some strange folks who are quite wary and suspicious of newcomers. I would suspect that a couple actually think I was planted there by the City Manager to watch their comings and goings. Not so! Just trying to stay busy while making a few bucks. Nothing wrong with that!

As I get older, I take comfort in poking fun at myself. The last thing I want to do is take myself too seriously. As a rookie on the Beach, then for years afterwards, I always enjoyed running a "3". Driving somewhere with lights and siren is one of those things that cops publicly refuse to admit gives

them an almost childlike rush. I make no apologies for this. My readers know exactly what I'm talking about, although they probably wouldn't admit it themselves. Toward the end of my "Beach" career, even as a Lieutenant, I found myself doing this way too often. The mid-night shift was busy, and after finishing my paperwork, I would often go out and help the guys (and girls) by answering a few calls. Driving with lights and siren sort of became mundane. I wasn't getting the rush out of it that I once did. It was sort of sad, but I saw it as a sign that I was finally "maturing".

About a week ago, I (now Officer Gam once again) was driving around in my marked North Bay Village

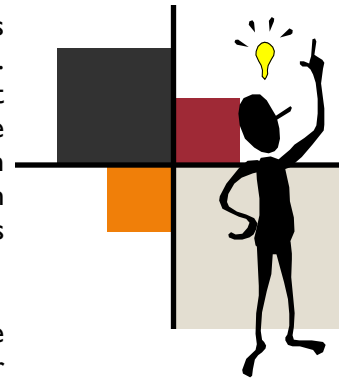


police car when I received a "3" call. Feeling that old rush again, I turned on the overhead blue lights. Then I reached down to click on the siren. The little knob spun around in

my fingers over and over again. The switch was broken. I was devastated. I really wanted to get some siren time in before arriving on the call, which was going to be very soon since North Bay Village is not very big.

So, I figured if I can't use the siren, I'll toot the "air horn" feature on the steering wheel, and at least get some satisfaction. When I pushed the steering wheel, the siren activated. I was delighted. Unfortunately, it got stuck. I couldn't turn the siren off. I pulled over and started banging frantically on the steering wheel going from wail, to yelp, to hi-lo and then back to wail, and so on. Motorists must have thought I was suffering some sort of break down, because they slowed down and started giving me some very strange looks. I finally got the thing to shut off. I arrived on my emergency call with sweat pouring off my face, looking a bit rattled. So much for my attempts to relive my childhood!

Later on, I sat at the Hess Gas Station to relax with a cup of coffee when I was approached by an older gentleman. "So officer, when do you plan on retiring?" – He asked.



"Actually, I am retired" – I replied. The gentleman chuckled and said- "yeah, sure!" As he walked away, I muttered under my breath- "but I am, really!"

Finally, as I write this column, the weather is finally beginning to cool off a bit. The humidity is going down along with the temperature, and the sky is clearing up. Fall is on the way! Hopefully, those days of daily thunderstorms, 95 degree days, and oppressive humidity are behind us here in South Florida. My friends in the north seem to already be enjoying a touch of *real* fall. Best of health and happiness to all, see you next month!

By: Sam Gam

The Santa Fe "Incident"! NEWSLETTER EXCLUSIVE!

My wife Patricia and I just returned from our fourth trip to New Mexico. We just love the area, and had planned to purchase a home in either Santa Fe or Albuquerque. Our trip plan was to fly into Albuquerque on Sunday, September 20th, rent a car and drive to Santa Fe via the Turquoise trail. After a three night stay at Hotel La Fonda, located on the Santa Fe Plaza; we planned to return to Albuquerque and spend three nights in a B & B (La Casa De Sueños), located one block from Old Town. Our return flight was booked for Saturday, September 26th.

The first three days of the trip were fantastic. Santa Fe, which has a law requiring all construction to be in the abode style, is the second largest art center (outside of NYC) in the country, and has dozens of fine dining establishments. We walked miles, took a 'historic buildings' tram ride, bought tons of 'art' and ate until we gained 10 pounds!

The "incident" occurred when we were leaving Santa Fe en route to Albuquerque, on Wednesday, September 23rd. We had spent the morning in a French Bakery, visiting the local churches, and buying still more 'art' (aka refrigerator magnets). We were

driving southbound on Santa Fe's six lane Cerillos Street, which connects to I-25 and Albuquerque, when we realized it was noon. We knew that unless we ate soon, the French bakery calories would begin to wear out and we might lose weight! Frantically we looked through the guide books and discovered that a Cerillos Street fast food joint (Baja Taco) was recommended.

Baja Taco, which serves great green chile hamburgers and a variety of Mexican stuff, has no indoor seating. We ordered and sat at the outdoor picnic tables. We were the only patrons. Patricia sat facing the Baja. I sat facing the street. It was a beautiful day. The sky was blue. The temperature was in the mid 60's. I was half way through one of the great green Chile hamburgers whensuddenly a very long knife and a head appeared behind Patricia. The head (which was Hispanic looking with a shaved skull and thin mustache) said in a mean voice "Give me your f----in wallet".

Being a trained law enforcement person, my first

thought was "what"?! Luckily my wife is also a trained law enforcement person, and she took immediate action. She screamed and ran behind me into the Baja Taco. The scream and sudden movement were combined into one fluid athletic event, which must have surprised the "head" as much as it did me, because neither the head nor the knife moved. At that moment, in mid-green chile hamburger bite, I realized it was just me and the bad guy and the very long knife. Thank God for all my years of training! I screamed "Hey", and subconsciously realizing that was not enough to subdue the felon, I threw my hamburger at him. It was a good shot too. Hit him just below his left eye!

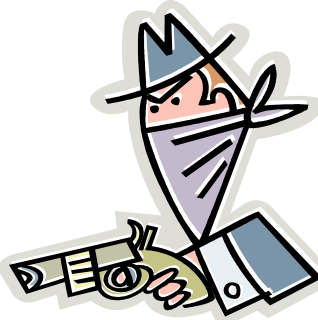
Following up on my burger attack, I leaped to my feet. Sort of...The picnic table, where I was seated, had the chairs bolted to the table. My leap sent me flying backwards instead of upward. As I picked myself

up, I saw that the bad guy had decided to call it a day. He ran to a nearby

car and fled the area. Patricia, who was inside the Baja Taco Restaurant on the phone with the Santa Fe Police Department was very impressed with my innovative law enforcement techniques. Indeed, for several days she continued to ask if my back or head still hurt. She would then laugh, to cheer me up. She is a wonderful help-mate.

Anyway, the Santa Fe PD caught the bad guy within 15 minutes. Very impressive! And he was still rubbing his eye!! (I told you it was a good shot). Within two hours of the "incident" we were on our way again. We arrived in Albuquerque without further incident. We spent the remainder of our vacation at a wonderful B & B in Albuquerque, found several great restaurants and managed to eat enough to ensure we would not be required to purchase smaller clothes for our return trip. I have no idea if we will be required to return to New Mexico for the criminal proceedings. However, if NM is anything like FL, the "head" will be suing me for green chile in the eye damages in the near future.

By: Casey Conwell



Tour de Force Memorial Bike Ride

The Miami Beach Police Bicycle Team consisting of **Sergio Campos, Rick Gullage, Charlie London, Rick Lonergan, Oldy Ochoa, Bill Riley, Al Rivera, Bernie Ruder, Manny Valdes**, and **Mayte Valdes** joined more than 150 other Police Officers from around the country in the Annual Tour de Force Memorial Bike Ride. The Tour de Force Memorial Bike Ride is a 501c3 charity which raises funds for families of Police Officers killed in the line of duty nationwide. This is the second year our Officers participated.

This annual 4 day ride started off this year in Boston on September 11th and traveled through Massachusetts, Connecticut, Long Island, ending at "Ground Zero" in New York City. The event raised close to \$250,000.00 which will go to the families of law enforcement officers killed in the line of duty.

Congratulations to the participants of Tour de Force for their positive contributions!

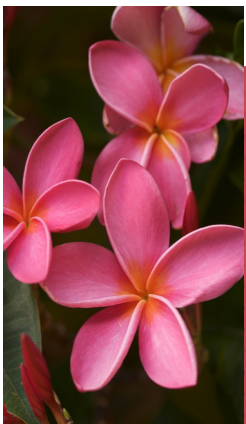
Miami Beach Team - Tour de Force Memorial Bike Ride



Bill Riley, Charlie London, Bernie Ruder, Rick Lonergan, Rick Gullage, Sergio Campos, Oldy Ochoa, Al Rivera, Manny Valdez & Maite Valdez.

General Membership Meeting

On October 22nd, 2009 at 12 Noon, a General Membership Meeting will be held at La Brochette Bistro located in the Embassy Lakes Plaza. The address is 2635 N. Hiatus Rd., Cooper City (On Hiatus Rd, between Stirling Road and Sheridan Street). The cost is \$15.00 per person. The restaurant will be closed to the public, it will be "all ours". Hope to see you there!



Our
Condolences to
Phil Klefeker on
the death of his
wife, Patricia
and also
Bastien (Ozzie)
Kruidenier on
the death of his
wife, Barbara.

MBPD RETIREE'S ASSOCIATION ANNUAL HOLIDAY PARTY

The news you've all been waiting for!

The annual holiday party will be held on December 5th, 2009 in Pembroke Pines at the WEST BROWARD HALL, 927 NW 178TH Ave. The hours will be from 6:00 P.M. to 10:00 P.M. Cocktail Hours will be from 6:00 P.M. to 7:00 P.M. The Price is a very reasonable; \$30 per person.

The Menu

<u>Entrees</u>	<u>Side Dishes</u>	<u>All meals include:</u>
CHICKEN MARSALA	GARLIC MASHED POTATOES	GARDEN SALAD
PRIME RIB	SAUTEED VEGETABLES	HOMEMADE DINNER ROLLS & BUTTER
PASTA PRIMAVERA with SHRIMP		SODA, BEER & WINE
		CAKE
		COFFEE

Entertainment:

Music will be provided by DJ Chris Mitchell, active patrol officer with the Miami Beach Police Department.

R.S.V.P. by NOVEMBER 21ST, 2009 & send your checks made out to the Miami Beach Police Retirees Association to Charlie Seraydar, 5701 SW 134th Avenue, Southwest Ranches, Florida, 33330.

Come and Join Your Friends and Celebrate the Holidays!

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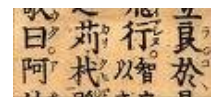
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"I'm Moving Back to Mars"

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When rookie South Beach
Police Officer Katie Maguire
agreed to work undercover, the
exceptionally tall and attrac-
tive woman had no idea what
was in store for her. Follow
the adventures of our uniquely
gifted heroine as she journeys
along her destiny's path.



A Necessary End:
A Katie Maguire novel

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