



*John Park*

# *A Message From the President of the* **Central Florida Chapter**

## **Bitter or Better?**

I hope everyone had a safe and prosperous 2006 with an even better 2007 on the horizon! Please let me share some insight your Central Florida PBA leaders and I have learned in the past several years while leading the PBA and the agencies we represent in new and improved directions.

Initially, many of us were very disenchanted by numerous promises made by our employers ... only to be broken promises later. **Our "bitter" attitudes and their broken promises did nothing to "better" the situation.**

Therefore, **instead of staying bitter, the Central Florida PBA leaders strived to make things better** by using these broken promises as the catalyst for PBA unionization in some agencies and more effective use of established unions in other agencies. At times, it was frightening and overwhelming to realize that we needed to pick up the broken pieces and try to fix the problems, while trying to keep our own careers intact! I am thankful that Florida PBA always had our back!

I could share thousands of war stories but that isn't important because PBA is not solely about me or the PBA

leaders ... **it is all about YOU!**

Throughout various PBA publications, you will witness how the PBA's size, strength, influence and respected reputation has helped win many battles for you and your families. Sometimes, these incredible victories were done with minimal participation from others. **Imagine what we can do if we all become "united" and do whatever is best for our respective law enforcement/corrections agencies, local communities and, most of all, for our families.**

**We hope that you will join us by making the right choice and getting involved with the PBA.**

As you set your 2007 new year's resolutions, challenge yourself with this simple question.

Will you choose to be bitter and do nothing or will you choose to be better and do everything possible to improve your quality of life, at home and at work.

**Bitter or better, you decide.**

If you want to help us help you, please contact the PBA and we will work together to make things better! ●



*Cecil Pendergrass*

# *A Message From the President of the* **Gulf Coast Chapter**

## **Keeping Busy For Our Members**

It has been a busy six months for PBA, the Gulf Coast Chapter included. We were very successful with our local and state political endorsements and the political activity continues. I am preparing to attend the Legislative Sessions in Tallahassee, where I will meet with some of the PBA endorsed political officials to lobby for the 2007 Legislative Agenda.

During the past year, I have been involved with obtaining the majority vote from law enforcement personnel at the Hendry County Sheriff's Office along with Florida PBA representatives **Jerry Childers, David Ham and Jim Wiggins**. Previous attempts to gain the majority vote had been unsuccessful in this County, since the Sheriff was always opposed to the PBA. After an intense year of meeting and

rallying with the deputies, we were finally successful!

We welcome all Hendry County Deputies members and look forward to working with the agency by negotiating a competitive compensation and benefits package as well as protecting our new members by ensuring management's compliance with the Officers' Bill of Rights. Although the current Sheriff and staff have clearly expressed opposition, the deputies have spoken and the PBA is here to stay.

Also, to boost our political clout, the Gulf Coast Chapter has established its own political PAC. Our PAC joins the already existing 22 other PBA PACs around the state.

Please feel free to contact me for more information on the agenda or any other matters of interest to you. ●

## **More Cops Are Dying In Traffic Accidents**



A report released last month by the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial Fund (NLEOMF) Memorial Fund and Concerns of Police Survivors (COPS) shows that traffic fatalities claimed the lives of more law enforcement officers than any other cause, even gunshot wounds.

Traffic-related incidents killed 73 of the 151 officers killed in 2006. In 2005, 63 died as a result of traffic accidents.

The rise is attributed to the fact that many police officers fail to use their seat belts either because they get tangled in their gun belts or they feel they will need to exit the vehicle quickly.

According to **Craig Floyd**, chairman of NLEOMF, inappropriate safety equipment and a lack of defensive driver training have contributed to the rise in traffic deaths. Both NLEOMF and COPS say that specially-designed seat belts, fire suppression equipment and front and side air bags should be standard in patrol cars.

Also contributing to the rise in fatalities is the fact that there are more officers on the road now than ever before.

Source: Associated Press ●