

MemorialNews

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2004 FALLEN HEROES REPORT:

154 Officers Made Ultimate Sacrifice

NLEOMF Urges Steps to Enhance Officer Safety and Invites Tributes to the Fallen

Last year, 154 officers died in the line of duty according to preliminary figures compiled by the NLEOMF. Shootings, (57) and automobile accidents (51) were the leading causes of death. This is the third year in a row that the total number of law enforcement fatalities has been below the decade-long average of 164 annual law enforcement deaths.

The states leading the nation in officer fatalities were: California (15), Texas (14), Florida (12), New York (11) and Alabama (9). The report shows a sharp

increase in the number of federal law enforcement officers killed in the line of duty (eight in 2004 versus one in 2003), and a growing trend of more deaths resulting from traffic-related accidents (72) than from shootings (57). In addition to the 51 officers killed in automobile accidents, 12 were struck and killed by vehicles during traffic stops and while assisting at accident scenes, and nine were killed in motorcycle accidents.

In addition to traffic-related accidents and shootings, other causes of deaths were: job-related illnesses (11), aircraft accidents (3), drownings (3), bomb-related incidents (3), falls (2), and beatings (1). One officer was electrocuted and one was struck by a falling object. Of the 154 officers who died last year, 8 were females.

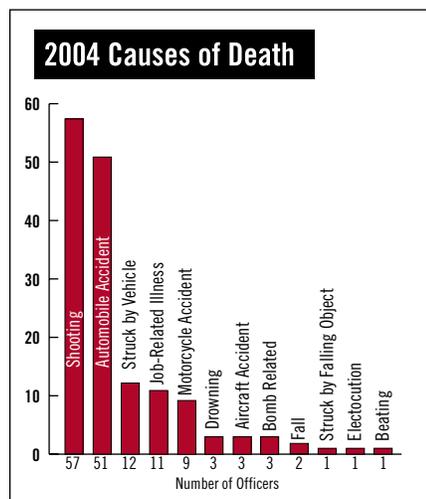
Released jointly by the NLEOMF and the Concerns of Police Survivors (COPS), the Fallen Heroes Report lists the name of every federal, state and local law enforcement officer killed in the line of duty during that year. While the NLEOMF continues to honor the

service and sacrifice of all our nation's law enforcement officers—past, present, and future—our greatest wish is that the number of law enforcement fatalities will continue to decline.

Better Driving Training and Safer Automobiles Could Decrease Officer Fatalities

“Honoring officers who die in the line of duty goes hand-in-hand with our commitment to doing everything possible to protect the safety of those who serve,” said NLEOMF Chairman Craig W. Floyd. “Better driver training,

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Become a Law Enforcement Founding Partner

A MATTER OF
HONOR



THE CAMPAIGN FOR THE
NATIONAL LAW ENFORCEMENT MUSEUM

The following associations have become Founding Partners of the Museum:

**Detectives' Endowment
Association of New York City**

**Fraternal Order of Police –
New York State**

Los Angeles Police Protective League

**Peace Officers Research
Association of California**

**Phoenix Law Enforcement Association
Police Unity Tour**

The deadline to become a Law Enforcement Founding Partner, (\$100,000+ commitment over 5 years) is March 31, 2005. For more information, contact Stacey Horton at 202-737-3400.

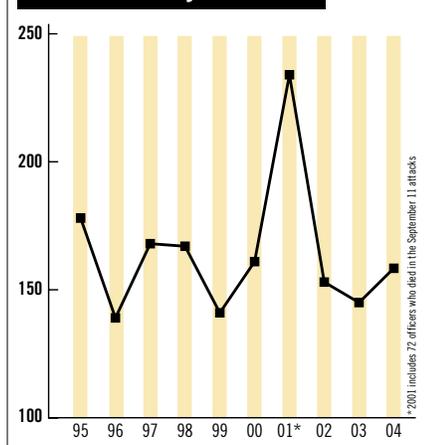
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safer automobiles, and the increased use of bullet-resistant vests and less-lethal weapons are a few steps we can take to help prevent our officers from being killed while preserving public safety.”

At first glance, the number of officers shot to death (57) seems to be the most troubling statistic, since shootings were the leading cause of death. In relative terms, this number actually reflects a very favorable trend in law enforcement safety: The number of officers killed by firearms has dropped by 36 percent over the past three decades. (See chart at right.)

Several reasons contribute to this dramatic dip in officers killed by firearms, including better training and equipment; especially the increased use of bullet resistant vests, and less-lethal weapons—like Taser stun guns—to help subdue criminal suspects resisting arrest. Tougher criminal justice has also helped because repeat violent offenders stay behind bars for longer periods of time.

Number of officers killed in the last 10 years



The disturbing trend in these numbers is the indisputable fact that many more officers are dying in car accidents. During the same period that shooting deaths declined by 36 percent, the number of officers killed in automobile accidents rose by 40 percent. Between 1975 and 1984, there were 339 officers killed in auto accidents, compared to 476 who died behind the wheel in the most recent 10-year period (1995-2004).

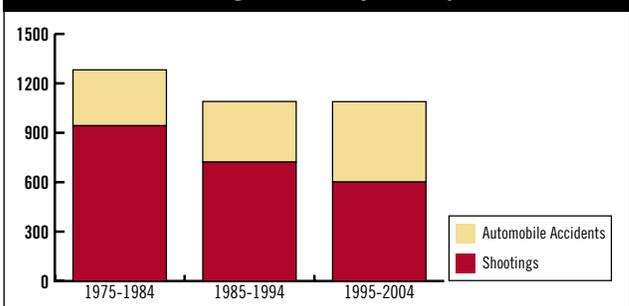
Better driver training for law enforcement personnel is an essential component to stemming this dangerous trend. A federal study prepared for the National Institute of Justice several years ago, “Police Pursuit: Policies and Training (05/97),” showed that some law enforcement agencies provide no high speed driver training for their officers, while others provide only a bare minimum. Policies governing high speed pursuits have received careful scrutiny in recent years; further reflection is necessary to determine when it is appropriate for officers to chase after fleeing automobiles, and what less dangerous options might exist.

Safer automobiles will also make a difference. To reduce the risk of fires caused by a crash, fire suppression equipment in law enforcement vehicles must be available. Improved safety restraint systems that are both practical and effective should also be considered so that officers have maximum protec-

tion in the event of an accident.

In the meantime, we must do all that we can to honor and remember the officers who made the ultimate sacrifice and their families. “When law

Comparison of officer deaths resulting from automobile accidents & shootings over the past 10 years



enforcement officers die in the line of duty, their families need strong support. Concerns of Police Survivors will be there for the 154 families who lost their officer in 2004, encouraging them to find that support through the other law enforcement survivors and COPS’ programs,” said COPS National President Shirley Gibson. Ms. Gibson represents more than 14,000 surviving families of America’s fallen law enforcement officers.

The names of the officers killed in 2004 will be formally added to the Memorial at the Candlelight Vigil on May 13, 2005.

To leave a special tribute to the 154 law enforcement officers who died last year, or a message of condolence to their families, please visit www.nleomf.com.

★ ★ Hollywood Shines ★ ★ for Future Museum

A gala reception was hosted on November 12, 2004, by American Police Beat, the Los Angeles Police Department, and the Los Angeles Police Protective League, in support of the future National Law Enforcement Museum (to open in 2009). Among the honored guests were NYPD Blue's Dennis Franz and cast members, as well as track legend Carl Lewis. To join the fundraising campaign for the Museum visit www.nleomf.com or call 202-737-3400.



Co-hosts of Celebrate LA; Dr. Ted Hunt, Secretary, LAPPL and LAPD Chief Bill Bratton with his wife Rikki Klieman, and Arthur Kassel



Dennis Franz, Gordon Clapp, Jacqueline Obradors, and Bonnie Somerville give an NYPD Blue welcome to gala attendees



Cynthia Brown, Publisher, American Police Beat and hostess of Celebrate LA, with the writer Joseph Wambaugh, best selling novelist and author of The Onion Field and most recently The Fire Lover



Chief Edwin Compass (New Orleans P.D.), Olympian Carl Lewis, and NLEOMF Chairman Craig W. Floyd share a light moment



Stephen Bochco, producer of Hill Street Blues, LA Law, and NYPD Blue, addresses the crowd

THANK YOU

We thank all donors for their support of the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial Fund and the National Law Enforcement Museum Campaign. The donors whose names are listed below have given \$1,000 or more between November 1, 2004, and January 1, 2005.

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Fraternal Order of Police -
DC Lodge #1
Fraternal Order of Police -
New York State
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Reason to Celebrate: The Virginia Commemorative License Plate Becomes Reality



We are thrilled to announce that we received the 350 pre-paid applications necessary to issue the Virginia Commemorative License Plate honoring the state's fallen law enforcement officers. The applications are being forwarded to the DMV, which will produce and issue the plate within 2-4 months. The license plates will visibly thank all of Virginia's law enforcement officers, and respect, honor, and remember the 329 Virginia officers who have died in the line of duty.

Thank you to all of the Virginia residents and law enforcement officers who purchased a plate. If you have not yet submitted an application, you can do so by visiting www.virginiasheriffs.org or calling 202-737-3400.

Congratulations to Our Newest Officers of the Month!

To read their award profiles, visit www.nleomf.com.



October 2004
*Deputy Susan Bader,
Kewaunee County (WI)
Sheriff's Department*



November 2004
*Officer Gabriel Keithley,
St. Louis (MO) Metro-
politan Police Department*

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