



FBINAA Chapter Chat

Chapter Chat is a monthly communication bringing you all updates submitted by members and chapters!

Please submit each month what's happening among your fellow Chapter and Session mates such as Chapter News, Retrainers, Promotions, Retirements, Awards, and Passings.

February 2026 By Our FBINAA Members

Arizona Chapter News



Territorial Cup Tailgate hosted by the ASU Sun Devils

The end of the year was a busy one for the Arizona chapter. While the rest of the country is dealing with cold, wet snow, the Arizona chapter takes advantage of the nice weather and has some great events. We celebrated the annual Territorial Cup with ASU hosting the UofA in Tempe for the annual football game. While the UofA were the

game winners, the Arizona chapter was represented better by Sun Devil fans than the Wildcat family. Next up was our annual Christmas party hosted in beautiful Prescott. If you have not attended their tree lighting at the courthouse, you are missing out. What a great turnout for the fourth year. Members were delighted to donate packages of diapers for a local organization.



4th Annual Christmas Party in Prescott

Promotions



Gregory Westover, NA Session 286

Commander **Gregory Westover, NA Session 286**, with the Showlow Police Department was selected to serve as the Chief of Police with the Show Low Police Department starting in 2026. He has more than 24 years in law enforcement and is excited to serve with a profound commitment to his community, his residents, and the values the department holds dear.

Retirements



Mario Leon, NA Session 264

Assistant Chief **Mario Leon, NA Session 264**, began his law enforcement career with the Santa Cruz (California) Police Department in 1996. In 2006, Mario moved to Tucson and joined UAPD. Mario has attended both the FBI National Academy Session 264 and the Senior Management Institute for Police. He also holds a master's degree in public safety leadership and administration from Arizona State University.

Mario is married to his wife Claudia, and they have two adult sons who are working in Texas and California. As empty nesters, Mario and Claudia enjoy traveling, bass fishing, and visiting family. After retirement, Mario plans to spend time renovating his uncle's house in Tucson.

California Chapter News



California Historian Gina Di Napoli and Olivier Jude, NA Session 196 in Italy

California Historian, **Gina Di Napoli**, gets to meet up with NA graduates not seen in many years. In Italy, she met with the past European Board member, **Olivier Jude, NA Session 196**, who is now retired and is very successful with his underwater photography, and she later met up with a classmate from the National Academy in London, UK, who she had not seen for 19 years, **Stephen Head, NA Session 225**.



California Historian Gina Di Napoli and Stephen Head, NA Session 225 in London

Promotions



Craig Valenzuela, NA Session 266



Derrick Lew, NA Session 286

Congratulations go out to **Craig Valenzuela, NA Session 266**, who was appointed as the Chief of Police for the UCLA Police Department.

Congratulations to **Derrick Lew, NA Session 286**, who has been named as the new Police Chief of the San Francisco Police Department.

Congratulations to **James Beere, NA Session 295**, who has been appointed as Oakland PD's Interim Chief following the departure of Chief Floyd Mitchell.

Congratulations to **Casey Johnson, NA Session 287**, who has been appointed as Oakland PD's Interim Assistant Chief.



James Beere, NA Session 295



Casey Johnson, NA Session 287

Passings



Danny Fox, NA Session 187

Retired Escalon Police Department Lieutenant, **Danny Fox, NA Session 187**, passed away in November 2025. Danny was a city council member and the Mayor of Escalon for eight years after retirement. His leadership and experience as a law enforcement professional made him an asset to the community of Escalon, California. He will surely be missed.

Connecticut Chapter News

The Connecticut Chapter is excited to announce our Fourth Annual Regional Command College, taking place from March 23 to March 25, 2026, at the Foxwoods Resort. This year’s focus will be on Command Leadership in Modern-Day Policing. Our featured speakers include Paul Butler, Paul Bailey, and Chris Maninno. For more information, please visit our website at ctfbinaa.org.

Passings

The Connecticut community is saddened to report the passing of Chief (ret.) **Daniel Coppinger, NA Session 95**. Chief Coppinger served for many decades, beginning his career as a police officer in Wethersfield. He then continued his service in Simsbury, where he served as Chief for 5 years, from 1981 to 1986. Afterward, he became the Assistant Director of the Connecticut Municipal Police Academy (now known as POSTC). In 1995, he took on the role of Chief of the Plainville, CT Police Department. In addition to his law enforcement career, Chief Coppinger served in the Connecticut Army National Guard and taught criminal justice at Northwestern CT Community College for 20 years. The CT Chapter sends our condolences to his family and friends.

Eastern Missouri Chapter News



Chief Mike Werges, incoming President, congratulates, Lt. Paul Lauer, outgoing President

The Eastern Missouri Chapter held its monthly meeting on January 15, 2026, at Bartolino's on the Hill. The meeting was attended by more than 100 chapter members and guests.

Outgoing President Lt. **Paul Lauer, NA Session 270**, welcomed everyone and addressed those in attendance. Following his remarks, incoming Chief **Mike Werges, NA Session 283**, officially assumed his duties after being sworn in by Judge Jeff Medler, Associate Circuit Judge, Division 37.

The evening also included the presentation of the chapter's annual scholarships to the 2026 recipients. These scholarships are made possible through proceeds from the chapter's annual golf tournament. In addition, the chapter announced its annual charitable donations to the organizations selected for 2026.

The evening concluded with great conversation and fellowship among members and guests.



Swearing in of the 2026 Eastern Missouri Chapter Executive Board



Eastern Missouri Chapter Executive Board (L-R: Captain Andrew Vaughn, NA Session 275(Secretary / Treasurer), Lt. Col. Gerald Lohr, NA Session 289 (2nd Vice President, Chief Mike Werges, NA Session 283 (President), Captain Curt Sullivan, NA Session 281 (1st Vice President), Major Adam Carnal, NA Session 287 (Sergeant at Arms), Judge Jeff Medler, Associated Circuit Judge, Division 37

Retirements



Paul Lauer, NA Session 270

Lt. **Paul Lauer, NA Session 270**, retired from the St. Louis Metropolitan Police Department on January 23rd after 35 years of distinguished service.

Lt. Lauer began his law enforcement career in August of 1990 as a member of Recruit Class 90-3. Following graduation, he was assigned to District 3, where he served until 1992. He then transferred to the Traffic Unit, serving there until 1998.

He was promoted to Sergeant and assigned to District 6, later returning to the Traffic Unit, where he served until 2010. In 2010, Lt. Lauer was promoted to Lieutenant and assigned to District 5. He later served in District 2 and concluded his career with the Traffic Safety Unit, where he remained until his retirement.

Throughout his career, Lt. Lauer received numerous certificates and citations in recognition of his dedication and professionalism. He is also a graduate of the FBI National Academy, Session 270, Class of 2017.

Congratulations, Lt. Lauer, on your well-earned retirement and thank you for your outstanding service and commitment to the community.

Eastern Pennsylvania Chapter News

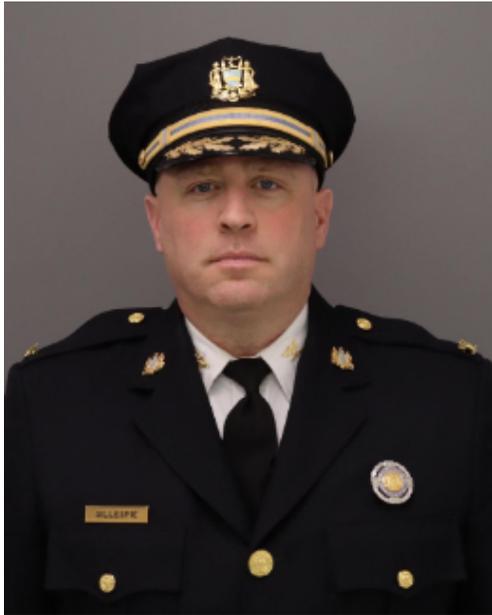


NA Session 297

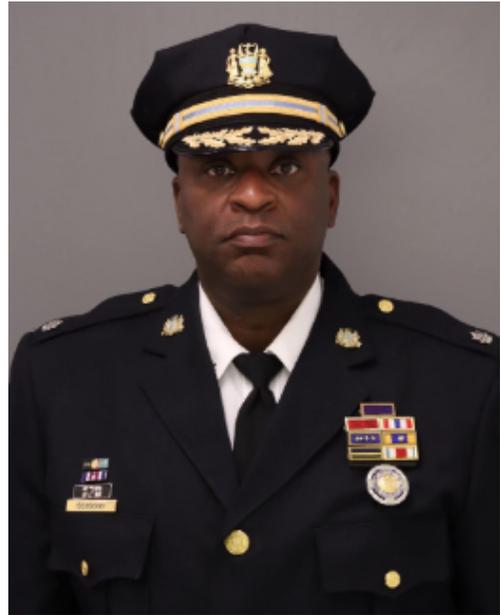
The Eastern PA Chapter of the FBI National Academy Associates will host its 2026 Annual Re-Trainer Conference from May 17-19, 2026, at the Hershey Lodge in Hershey, PA, for more information, visit <https://fbinaaeasternpa.org/>.

On January 6, 2026, the chapter had a luncheon and send off for Heather Width-Sysol, Ed Cobbs, Dave Read, Shandra Keeler, Nate Funk, and Chris Wernig, who are attending the NA Session 297.

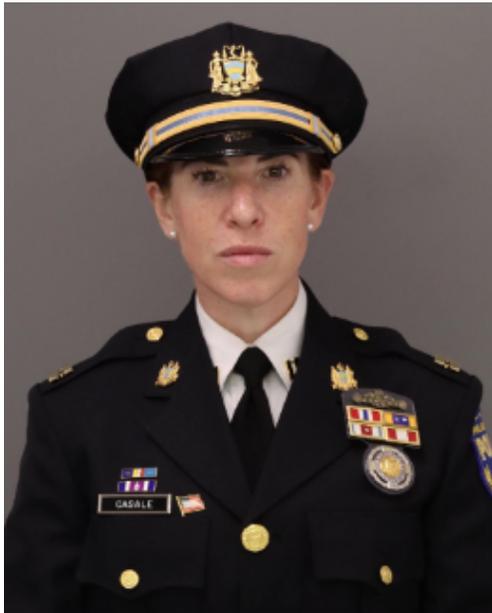
Promotions



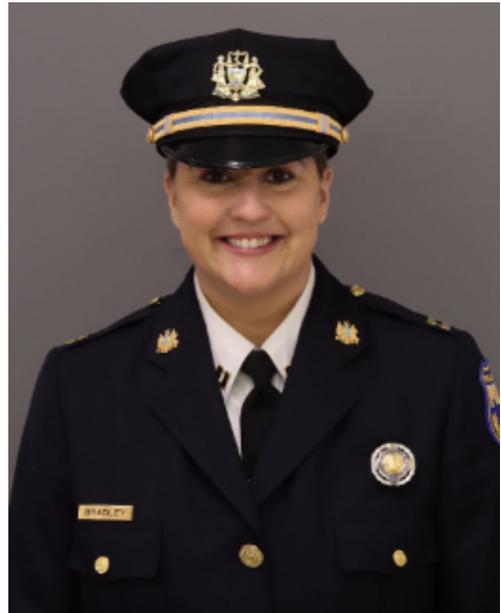
Matthew Gillespie, NA Session 286



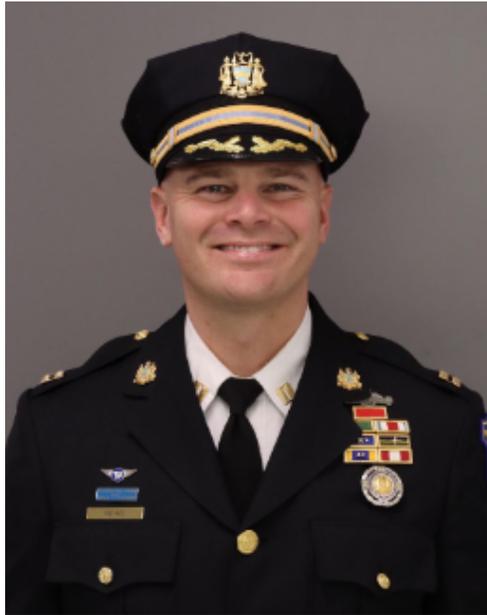
Michael Goodson, NA Session 265



Victoria Casale, NA Session 294



Dana Bradley, NA Session 296



David Read, NA Session 297

In November 2025, the Philadelphia Police Department promoted the following officers and NA graduates:

Matthew Gillespie, NA Session 286, was promoted to Chief Inspector.

Michael Goodson, NA Session 265, was promoted to Inspector.

Victoria Casale, NA Session 294, was promoted to Captain.

Dana Bradley, NA Session 296, was promoted to Captain.

David Read, NA Session 297, was promoted to Captain.



Jeremy Arnett, NA Session 293

Jeremy Arnett, NA Session 293, was recently promoted to the rank of major and will be the new Operations Commander for the Pentagon Police Dept at the Raven Rock Mountain Complex. Congrats, Jeremy!

Retirements



Chris Paris, NA Session 267

Colonel **Chris Paris, NA Session 267**, retired from the PA State Police after 26 years and joined the FBI as the Philadelphia Division Chief Security Officer. Chris was sworn in to the FBI by his sister, Supervisory Special Agent Vanessa Paris, on Monday, January 12th. Congratulations and good luck with the new position!

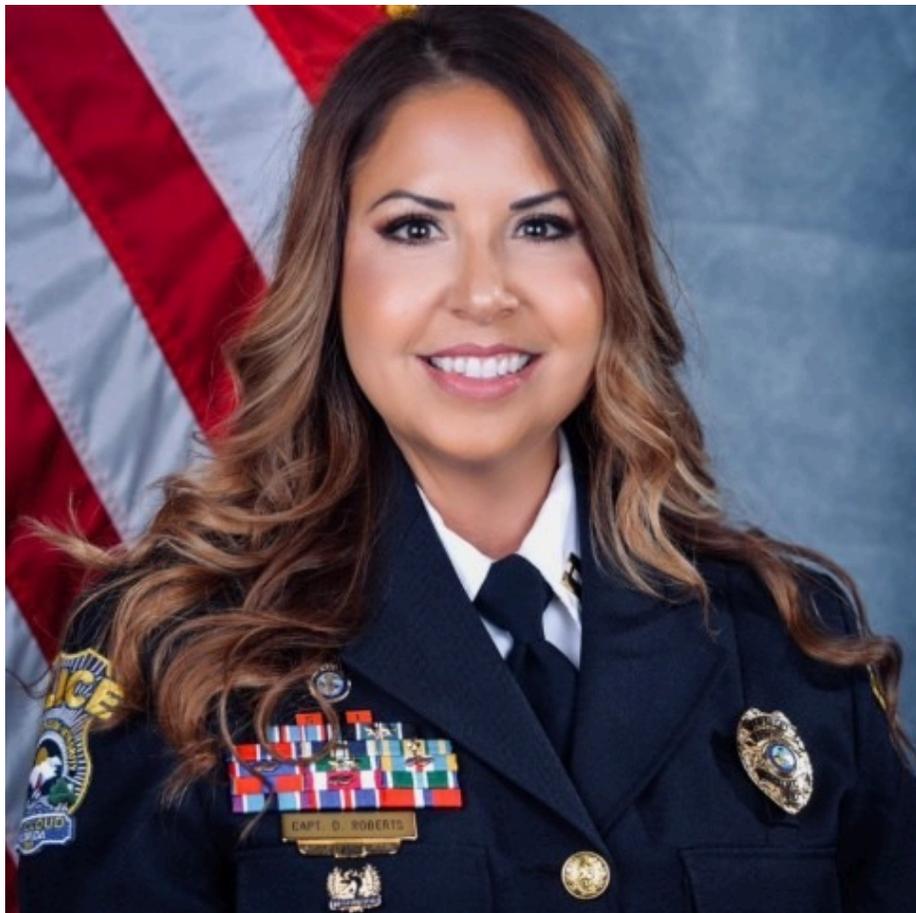
Florida Chapter News

Promotions



Wes Mullins, NA Session 276

Wes Mullins, NA Session 276, was appointed as City Manager for the City of Cocoa Beach on January 15, 2026.



Denise Roberts, NA Session 286

Denise Roberts, NA Session 286, was appointed as Deputy Chief for the St. Cloud Police Department in January 2026.

Hawaii Missouri Chapter News



The event was well attended to include, seated (l-r): Wade Maeda, Immediate Past President, NA Session 272; Thomas Shopay, Chapter President, NA Session 257; Captain Levon "Pomaikai" Stevens, Hawaii Police Department; FBI SAC Honolulu Office David Porter; Joy Medeiros, 3rd Vice President, NA Session 291; and Bobby Cravalho, Chapter Secretary/Treasurer and former Chapter President, NA Session 224.

On December 19th, 2025, the Hawaii Chapter of the FBINAA held a Meet and Greet luncheon to celebrate the two candidates selected to attend the 297th session of the FBI National Academy. The two candidates are Captain Levon "Pomaikai" Stevens, of the Hawaii Police Department, and Captain Talialetato Alesana Seloti, American Samoa Department of Public Safety. Captain Seloti participated via video conference.

Promotions



Brandon Nakasato, NA Session 280



Jerome Pacarro, NA Session 283

On December 21st, 2025, two Honolulu Police Department administrators were promoted.

Congratulations to **Brandon Nakasato, NA Session 280**, on his promotion to the rank of Metropolitan Police Assistant Chief. He was assigned to the Investigative Bureau.

As an Assistant Chief of Police, he is responsible for the administrative and functional operations of the Investigative Bureau, which include the Criminal Investigation Division, Narcotics/Vice Division, Traffic Division, Scientific Investigation Section, and the many subordinate echelons within these elements.

Congratulations to **Jerome Pacarro, NA Session 283**, on his promotion to the rank of Metropolitan Police Major. He was assigned to the Narcotics/Vice Division.

The Narcotics/Vice Division enforces laws related to illegal drug distribution, investigates and curbs illegal gambling operations, and combats human trafficking. This involves collaborating with multiple agencies across local, state, and federal jurisdictions. The division's partnerships and efforts play an impactful role in protecting the public from these types of crimes.



Nicholas Angell, NA Session 293

On January 16, 2026, **Nicholas Angell, NA Session 293**, of the Maui Police Department, was promoted to the rank of Metropolitan Police Captain.

Captain Nicholas Angell joined the Maui Police Department in 1997, beginning his career as a Police Officer I in the Lahaina Patrol District. He later transferred to the Wailuku Patrol District and completed a one-year assignment in the Molokai Patrol District. Captain Angell then returned to Lahaina for a two-year tour of duty before transferring back to the Wailuku Patrol District.

In 2011, he served as the Hana School Resource Officer in the Hana Patrol District. He was promoted to Sergeant in 2013 and assigned to the Lanai Patrol District. In 2017, Captain Angell was assigned to the Vice Narcotics Division, where he served as the K9 Supervisor for three years. He was later assigned to the Kihei Criminal Investigation Division, where he served as Acting Lieutenant beginning in June 2022.

Following his promotion to Lieutenant in November 2022, Captain Angell was transferred to the Wailuku Criminal Investigation Division, where he oversaw the Property Crimes Unit and assisted with Person Crimes investigations as needed.

In January 2025, he attended the 293rd session of the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) National Academy, completing a ten-week intensive academic and physical training program alongside law enforcement officers from across the United States and around the world. Captain Angell graduated from the FBI National Academy in early March 2025.

Illinois Chapter News

The Illinois State FBI National Academy Associates Conference will be held November 4–6, 2026, at Eagle Ridge Resort in Galena, Illinois. Join fellow members for professional development, networking, and collaboration in a premier setting. For additional details and conference information, please contact the Illinois State FBINAA Board.



IL State FBINAA Board



IL Northern FBINAA Board



IL Railsplitter FBINAA Board

On January 13, 2026, the Illinois FBI National Academy Associates marked an important milestone as the State Board, Northern Board, and Railsplitters Board members were officially sworn in. Each member proudly took their oath of office, signaling the start of a new year of service and leadership.

Following the swearing-in, the boards convened for their first official meeting of 2026, led by Illinois FBINAA State President Steve Petrelli. The meeting set the tone for the year ahead, highlighting collaboration, professionalism, and a shared commitment to advancing the mission of the FBI National Academy Associates across Illinois.

We look forward to President Petrelli’s leadership and vision in 2026 and to the impactful work these boards will accomplish together in the year ahead.

Kansas/Western Missouri Chapter News

Promotions



Eric Schmitz, NA Session 292

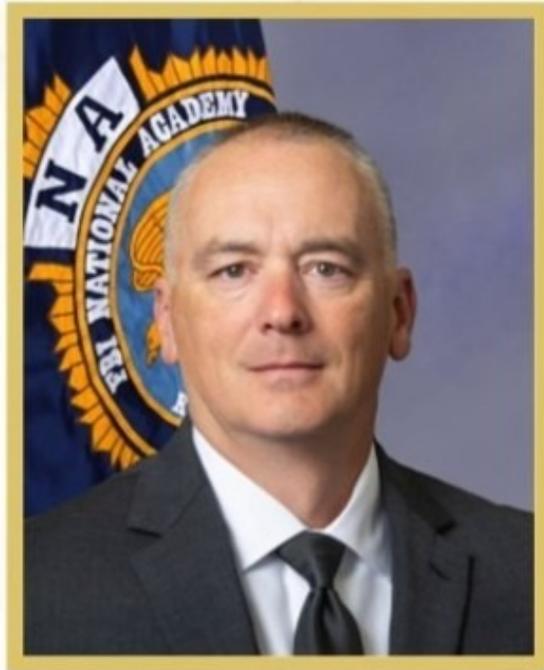
The Lenexa, Kansas Police Department selected **Eric Schmitz, NA Session 292**, as its newest Chief of Police. His education also includes applied science in law enforcement from Range Technical College and criminal justice administration from Columbia Southern University. He is a member of the International Association of Chiefs of Police, the Kansas Police Officers Association, the Metro Chiefs and Sheriffs Association, and the FBI National Academy Associates.



Ryan Miller, NA Session 280

On Dec 29, 2025, **Ryan Miller, NA Session 280**, took over as the Deputy Chief of Police for the Overland Park Police Department. He has proven command experience in Patrol Operations, Emergency Services, and Professional Standards, complemented by a strong record of enhancing organizational reputation through public and inter-agency relations. Current chairman of the IACP Police Administration Committee. Holds a Master of Public Safety degree from the University of Virginia, a Bachelor’s Degree in Crime and Delinquency from the University of Kansas, and is a graduate of the FBI National Academy Session 280. Expertise includes leadership and supervision training from the IACP and Northwestern University, as well as extensive operational training in areas such as crime reduction strategies, Special Operations, Emergency Services, Internal Affairs, and training.

Nebraska Chapter News



Royal (Dean) Kottwitz, NA Session 296



Matthew Core, NA Session 296

Congratulations to Lt. **Royal (Dean) Kottwitz**, Grand Island Police Department, and Captain **Matthew Core**, Sarpy County Sheriff's Office, on their successful completion and graduation from the FBI National Academy Session 296; December, 2025.

Lt. Kottwitz started his career with the Grand Island Police Department in 1998 and served as a Police Officer until 2004. In 2004, Kottwitz was assigned to the Criminal Investigations Division as an Investigator. In 2016, he was promoted to Sergeant and assigned to the Patrol Division night shift. Kottwitz was promoted to Lieutenant in 2019, staying in the Patrol Division. Kottwitz currently serves as a Lieutenant with the Special Operations Division. Other roles held during his 27-year career include being part of the Tactical Response Team, a Field Training Officer, Defensive Tactics Instructor, and Firearms Instructor. Kottwitz is a Nebraska native, graduating from high school in Giltner, NE, and attending Central Community College in Grand Island. Kottwitz said of his time in Quantico, "There were many highlights and takeaways from the FBI National Academy, but the quality of people exceeded my high expectations. It was humbling to be associated with such high-level law enforcement professionals from around the world."

Capt. Core began his career with the Sarpy County Sheriff's Office in 2008. During his time at the Sheriff's Office, Matt has worked as a Jail Deputy, Road Patrol Deputy, and in the Investigations Division. Core worked as a sergeant on the Road Patrol and in the Administration Division as the Training Sergeant. As a Lieutenant, Core served as a Night Watch Commander on the Road Patrol and as the Assistant Administrative Commander in the Administration Division. Matt currently oversees the Administration Division of the Sheriff's Office. Matt grew up in Omaha and has a B.S. from Iowa State University. He lives in Papillion and is married to his wife Katy. Katy and Matt have four children. Matt's favorite part about attending the FBINA Session 296 was learning from all the instructors at the FBI National Academy as well as from all his classmates.

Congratulations and welcome to the Nebraska Chapter.

Promotions



Jason Scott, NA Session 277

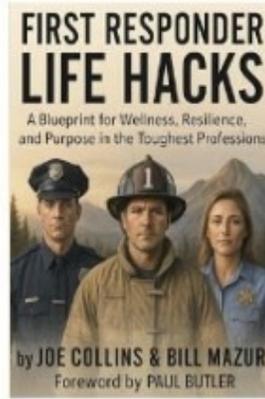
Colonel Bryan Waugh, NA Session 263, Superintendent of the Nebraska State Patrol (NSP), announced a modernization of the NSP command structure, the first change to the command structure since 1969. Under the new structure, the agency will be divided into two parts: Operations and Services. Each of those areas will be under the command of an assistant superintendent. Col. Waugh promoted **Jason Scott, NA Session 277**, to the rank of Lieutenant Colonel, Assistant Superintendent of Services.

“Lt. Colonel Scott has been an outstanding leader for our troopers and investigators for many years,” said Colonel Waugh. “His wealth of knowledge, attitude of service, and professional integrity have equipped him for this new role, and we are excited for him to share his leadership with a larger part of our NSP team.”

Lt. Colonel Scott is a 27-year veteran of the Nebraska State Patrol. He most recently served as a statewide commander for Investigative Services. Throughout his career, he has served in Carrier Enforcement, Patrol, Investigative Services, and Special Operations. Lt. Colonel Scott is also a proud veteran of the United States Marine Corps and is a graduate of the FBI National Academy, Session 277.

On behalf of the Nebraska Chapter, congratulations to Jason Scott on his promotion to Lieutenant Colonel.

New Jersey Chapter News



"First Responder Life Hacks: A Blueprint for Wellness, Resilience, and Purpose in the Toughest Professions," written by NAA NJ Chapter member Bill Mazur

Bill Mazur, one of our NJ Chapter members, published a new book with Joe Collins, who is also an NA graduate. Paul Butler wrote the foreword in the book; he is also an NA graduate and has been a favorite speaker at the NJ yearly Conference. The book is titled "First Responder Life Hacks: A Blueprint for Wellness, Resilience, and Purpose in the Toughest Professions" and is available for purchase on Amazon.

Promotions



Chris Petonak, NA Session 295



Casey Long, NA Session 291



Brian Hoiberg, NA Session 270

On November 17, 2025, **Chris Petonak, NA Session 295**, was promoted to Chief of the Town of Boonton Police Department. Chief Petonak was sworn in by Morris County Sheriff James Gannon, NA Session 169.

On December 4, 2025, **Casey Long, NA Session 291**, was promoted to Chief of Detectives of the Ocean County Prosecutor's Office.

Brian Hoiberg, NA Session 270, North Brunswick, NJ PD, was recently promoted to the rank of Deputy Chief (the highest ranking position within the Department) on December 1st, 2025.

Walter Laurencio, NA Session 295, Union City PD, will be promoted to Chief on January 29th.

Northwest Chapter News

Passings

Beverly Joy Hall, NA Session 173, passed away peacefully at home on July 13, 2025. Preceded in death by her parents, Ken and Harriet Hall. Survived by her husband of 44 years, Charles Neuman, brothers Norman Hall (Sue Popkin) and Dale Hall; beloved nephew & niece, Zachary Popkin-Hall and Rachel Popkin-Hall.

Beverly started her career with the St Paul Police Department in 1979, working her way up through the ranks from a patrol officer on the midnight shift in the East Side to a position of Commander. Along the way, she was actively involved in and served as president of the Minnesota Association of Women Police and as a Regional Director in the International Association of Women Police. In 1993, she attended the FBI National Academy in Quantico, Va. During her time there, she developed an incredibly deep bond of friendship over food, cards, and vacation adventures with many of her classmates, which has lasted over 30 years.

Oregon Chapter News



Captain Lee, Captain Edwins, Captain Burley

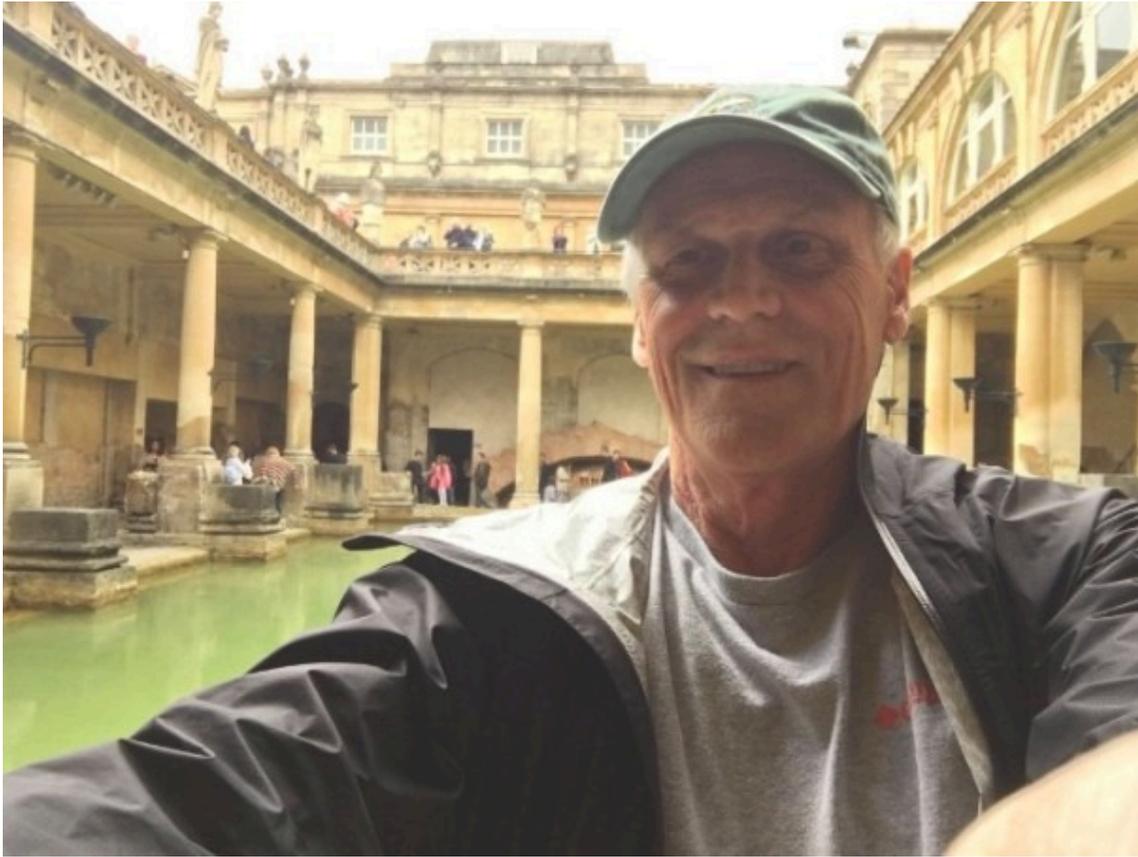
Grants Pass Captain **Tyler Lee**, Oregon City Captain **Dave Edwins**, and Portland Police Bureau Captain **Chris Burley** are representing Oregon at NA Session 297.

2026 Spring Trainer Date - TBD

2026 Annual Pig Out Picnic, August 6, 2026, at Memorial Park

The 2026 Fall Retraimer will be held again at the Running Y Ranch in Klamath Falls, Oregon, September 8-11, 2026. One feature presentation is the 2022 Case Study of the University of Idaho Murders, presented by the Idaho State Police!

Please visit the Oregon Chapter [website](#) for up-to-date information on our chapter!



Les Youngbar, NA Session 161

Where are they now.....This month's feature is on retired Lake Oswego Police Chief **Les Youngbar, NA Session 161** in June 1990.

Chief Youngbar was born in Oregon City, Oregon, and grew up in Lake Oswego. He attended Lake Oswego, graduating in 1964. Chief Youngbar joined the Oregon National Guard out of high school and served until 1971. He also attended night school at Portland State University and graduated in 1971 with a Bachelor of Science Degree in Sociology. While attending Portland State, he went to work for UPS on their night shift and was eventually a night supervisor. After graduating from college, he stayed with UPS and worked in their Loss Prevention Department between Portland and Boise, Idaho. He said that he learned significant management skills at UPS that he was able to use in his position as police chief. He left UPS and took a position in Seattle, Washington, at a Sales Outlet. After about a year and a half, he and his family moved back to Lake Oswego.

On June 16, 1978, Chief Youngbar was hired by the Lake Oswego Police Department. He served as a patrol officer and was then promoted to a patrol sergeant. He was moved into an acting Lieutenant position overseeing administrative duties. The Chief at the time left the Lake Oswego Police Department, and Chief Youngbar was appointed as interim chief. He said it was a unique situation as he was technically a sergeant at the time. He said the city went through a process, and he applied to be the Chief. In 1986, he was hired as the Lake Oswego Police Chief, a position he held until his retirement in 2001. During his tenure as police chief, he served as the president of the Oregon Association Chiefs of Police (OACP) in 1999-2000. He was very active in OACP before being president, serving on several committees. He served as the district representative for retirees for several years and just recently resigned from the position.

Chief Youngbar attended the FBI National Academy Session # 161 and has been an active member in the Oregon Chapter ever since. He still attempts to attend our annual events when he can.

After retiring from the Lake Oswego Police Department, he was hired by Northwest Natural Gas, overseeing the security department. He worked at Northwest Natural Gas for 8 years before retiring from there as well. He went

into consulting for a few years and will still do some consulting if asked.

Chief Youngbar has been married to Sara for 48 years, and they still reside in Lake Oswego, Oregon. They have 2 sons and 1 daughter. They all went into the private sector, though his daughter recently became a stay-at-home mom. They have 5 grandchildren.

Chief Youngbar stays active by lifting weights. He also works with Mason bees and enjoys painting. He says he does a crossword every morning.

Chief Youngbar wanted to let everyone know to stay active and do things, whatever that may be! We are very happy to hear Chief Youngbar and his wife are doing well in his retirement.

Promotions



Jason Van Meter, NA Session 296

We are happy to announce Sunriver Police Department Corporal **Jason Van Meter, NA Session 296**, was promoted to Lieutenant January 1, 2026! Congratulations Lieutenant Van Meter!

Rocky Mountain Chapter News

Retirements



Robert Stef, NA Session 261

After an incredible 45-year career in law enforcement, we say goodbye to Bureau Chief **Bob Stef, NA Session 261**, who is officially retiring from the Arapahoe County Sheriff's Office. Bob retired from Aurora Police Department in 2018, shifting his focus to his accounting practice and work with the Aurora Police Foundation. But retirement didn't last long. In 2019, newly elected Sheriff Tyler Brown reached out and asked Bob to return—this time as a Bureau Chief. So, in January 2019, Bob returned to the Arapahoe County Sheriff's Office. Fast forward to 2026, and Chief Stef was finally ready to retire—for good.

Passings



Joseph McGuire, NA Session 126

We are saddened to announce the passing of **Joe McGuire, NA Session 126**. Joe attended NA Session 126 (09/11/1981) and was an active member of the Rocky Mountain Chapter right up to his passing. Joe served in Colorado law enforcement for over fifty years. Joe retired as Undersheriff with the Chaffee County Sheriff's Office and leaves behind a legacy that will forever be imprinted in history. Joe was a critical component in the growth and development of so many professional deputies and officers across the state that still has an impact today

South Carolina Chapter News



Charlotte McKee, NA Session 283

Congratulations to Captain **Charlotte McKee, NA Session 283**, of the SC Department of Natural Resources on her election as the 2nd Vice President and Major **Jones Gamble, NA Session 215**, of the SC Highway Patrol on his re-election to Secretary/Treasurer of the South Carolina FBINAA. We look forward to working with you both and are excited for all that your leadership will bring.



Jones Gamble, NA Session 215

Texas Chapter News



*Harris County Chief Prosecutor Whitney Rasberry and
FBINA (Texas) Executive Board Member Craig Cummings, NA Session 275*

At the January member luncheon in the Houston region, the Houston Chapter of the FBI National Academy Associates of Texas (FBINAA) was honored to welcome Whitney Rasberry, Division Chief Prosecutor over the Harris County District Attorney's Office Vehicular Crimes Division, as the keynote speaker. A former United States Marine Corps Military Police officer, Ms. Rasberry, brought a unique perspective that resonated strongly with an audience of FBINA graduates and other mid-level and executive-level law enforcement leaders from across the greater Houston area.

Her remarks were professional, insightful, and practical, reflecting both deep knowledge of her field and a strong understanding of the mission-driven culture shared by prosecutors and law enforcement. She connected exceptionally well with those in attendance and generated meaningful discussion among those present. Feedback from her presentation was overwhelmingly positive - not only regarding the value of her content, but also the credibility and professionalism she brought to the platform.

The Houston Chapter extends sincere thanks to Ms. Rasberry for her willingness to share her expertise and support its mission. Her participation exemplifies the kind of partnership and leadership that strengthens relationships between prosecutors and law enforcement agencies throughout Harris County and beyond.

Virginia Chapter News

Promotions



Robert Spano, NA Session 287

The Leesburg Police Department is proud to announce the promotion of Lieutenant **Robert Spano, NA Session 287**, to Captain of the Investigations & Operational Support Bureau, effective today. In this role, Captain Spano will lead a diverse and critical set of operational units, including the Criminal Investigations & School Resource Division, the Emergency Communications Center, and the Special Operations Division. These components play an essential role in ensuring community safety, investigative excellence, and coordinated emergency response throughout the Town of Leesburg.

Retirements



Vanessa Grigsby, NA Session 253

The Leesburg Police Department announces the retirement of Deputy Chief **Vanessa Grigsby, NA Session 253**, the department's longest-serving member and a pioneering leader in Leesburg's law enforcement history. Deputy Chief Grigsby will officially retire on January 2, 2026, concluding nearly three decades of dedicated service to the Town of Leesburg.

She twice served as Interim Chief of Police and helped establish many of the department's foundational programs, including the Junior Police Academy, the domestic violence response protocol, and the false alarm reduction initiative. Her leadership extended well beyond internal operations—Deputy Chief Grigsby was deeply committed to community engagement, mentorship, and building lasting relationships with residents, businesses, and partner agencies. In 2023, she was inducted into the Loudoun County Women's Hall of Fame in the category of Leadership.

"Deputy Chief Grigsby's legacy is one of vision, compassion, and trailblazing leadership," said Chief Thea Pirnat. "She leaves behind a department and a community that are stronger because of her service. Her impact on this organization and on Leesburg will be felt for generations."

Deputy Chief Grigsby's retirement marks the conclusion of an extraordinary career defined by service, professionalism, and a genuine dedication to the people of Leesburg. Her influence will continue to be felt in the programs she helped build, the officers she mentored, and the strong community partnerships she championed throughout her career.

The Leesburg Police Department extends its sincere gratitude to Deputy Chief Grigsby for her exceptional service, steadfast leadership, and lifelong commitment to the Town of Leesburg. We thank her for the example she set, the legacy she leaves behind, and the lasting impact she has made on this department and the community it proudly serves. We wish her the very best in her well-earned retirement.

Washington Chapter News



WA/MT/ID Chapters Section I Conference Flyer

The Washington Chapter in partnership with the Montana/Idaho Chapter is pleased to announce the fall Leadership Conference and Section I meeting, September 27-30, 2026 at the Northern Quest Conference Center, Airway Heights, WA.



FBINAA Session 296: L to R: Jake Jensen (Spokane PD), Cory Stanton (Des Moines PD), Krista Greydanus (Washington State Patrol), not pictured Shelby Parker (Olympia PD)

Congratulations to Session 296!



FBINAA YLP Graduate Ella Harden and Chapter President and National YLP Advisor Tim Gately

Congratulations to YLP Session 26 graduate Ella Harden of Lake Stevens, daughter of Chief of Lake Forest Park PD Mike Harden, Session 273. Ella made an outstanding presentation at the holiday luncheon and leadership training event on December 3, 2025, in University Place.

Passings



Cherie Baker, NA Session 229

The Chapter is saddened to learn of the passing of **Cherie Baker**, Bellevue Police Department, **NA Session 229**. Cherie was hired by Bellevue PD in 1978 and was a trailblazer for women in law enforcement. Cherie served with dedication and distinction in many units and divisions, including Patrol, the Eastside Narcotics Task Force, and Investigations. She supervised K-9 units, Community Services, Community Policing, and other sections and units. Cherie was promoted to Deputy Chief of Administrative Services in 2010 and served on multiple boards and committees, including the Board of Trustees for Youth Eastside Services. She established many departments and community programs, including the Family Services Unit, Domestic Violence Unit, Drug Dog program, School Resource Officer program, and the Bellevue PD Benevolent Association.

Cherie retired in 2013 after 35 years of dedicated service to the City of Bellevue, the Bellevue Police Department, and the community members they serve.

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