



## Retired Seattle Police Officers Association

# THE CALL BOX

Summer 2012

## The Year So Far, a Review

By Jerry Taylor, President RSPOA

**T**he last year and a half have been a busy time for RSPOA. First and foremost has been the ongoing battle to stop the effort to merge the LEOFF 1 and LEOFF 2 pension systems. So far, we seem to be winning that fight. Just the chance of the legislature again attempting to raid your pension is more than enough reason to keep your membership current and aid in the fight.

So, once again I would urge all members to be certain to provide us with your current email address, or if you don't have email the email address of a child, relative or friend who can print out a copy and get it to you quickly. When the legislature goes back in session things can happen very quickly and the faster we are at mobilizing a response the better our chance of success.

We have made a number of other changes recently. The venue for our monthly meeting (second Wednesday of every month except September) has changed to the Nile Country Club. It is just off I-5 at 205<sup>th</sup>, has plenty of easy parking and a great meeting room. It has been a good move but we do recognize it has inconvenienced a few folks from the south end. The board is always open to other suggestions, but so far we have not found a better facility.

We are pushing hard to get a variety of interesting speakers for the monthly meeting. Our last three meetings have had presentations from SPD members who have brought us up to speed on current issues as viewed by the officers to information about terrorism and elder abuse. We have more interesting speakers coming and urge you to attend.

If you missed the August meeting you missed an important and very informative presentation by Detectives Nadia Fiorini and Diane Stone (SPD Retired) who both work in the Domestic Violence Unit. I was impressed by their knowledge and dedication and the subject matter, Elder Abuse. Most of the abuse seems to be financial abuse and neglect and could impact all of us who might someday face

the risk or have to deal with and look out for elderly parents or relatives.

Coming up we hope to have a speaker who can tell you how folks are sneaking into your computer and raising havoc and what you can do to protect yourself. We are looking for the right speaker, so keep your eyes and ears tuned for an announcement soon.



Jerry Taylor

SPD has been under attack recently with the press and politicians jumping on us at every opportunity. It has caused discussions about the quality of the department and speculation of officers becoming crime reporters instead of crime fighters. You would think that with all of the attacks and scrutiny that everyone would just give up and hunker down. That may be true for some, but from my observation it is certainly not true for most.

I am constantly meeting officers that are dedicated to their work and continue to provide the highest level of police service. The department, while under severe criticism for leadership failures in some areas, has still put together a pantheon of functions and programs that provide real service to the citizens. More importantly, the officers assigned to these tasks are dedicated and enthused even if they are frustrated from time to time. The bottom line is that regardless of all of the complaints and attacks, the Seattle Police Department remains one of the finest in the country. I am proud to have served there and refuse to allow the political attacks to denigrate that pride.

Finally, there are lots of things going on and around the police department. RAP is a good place to visit any Thursday. They just had their annual picnic and their Christmas lunch is coming up. The annual "Stand With Those Who Serve" event was last month. Everyone who attended reports it was a great event. And, did you know that SPD now has a pipe band. Watch out for these events. If you attend you will have fun and probably run into some old friends – or make some new ones.

# THE CALL BOX

The Official Publication of the  
Retired Seattle Police Officers  
Association

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Open  
(LEOFF 2)  
LEOFF 2 Position)

# Merger Redux

By Jerry Taylor

In the last issue of the *Call Box* we were in a battle at the legislature fighting two bills, HB2390 and SB6563. Those bills would have merged the LEOFF 1 and LEOFF 2 pension plans with dire consequences for LEOFF 1 and, we believe, LEOFF 2 as well.

We won that battle and managed to see both of those bills die. The question now is, will we see the merger resurface again? While we have some good indicators that the concept may not come up in the next legislative session, we still sense there is a great danger that someone will put this forward. This leaves us with little choice but to prepare to fight back the concept.

A great deal of damage was done in this battle. The bills and a precursor bill in the previous legislative session were drafted without our knowledge and without any opportunity for LEOFF 1 input. This action was seen as a betrayal on the part of the LEOFF 2 organizations that supported the legislation. An aura of distrust between LEOFF 1 and LEOFF 2 has developed.

As the battle raged names were called and we were characterized as evil and ill informed. Even the SPOG Guardian ran a COMPAS article that was inaccurate, incomplete and misleading. We were disappointed that the Guardian ran the article without asking the RSPOA for input or comment. Many RSPOA members have expressed a great deal of anger and concern about the inaccurate nature of the article. Responses from RSPOA members and other LEOFF 1 members were published on [www.leoff1.net](http://www.leoff1.net).

All of this rhetoric was simply a symptom of the rift that was created when the Washington Council of Fire Fighters decided to push the issue. Kelly Fox, the president of that organization, now admits that proposing that bill in absence of input and consensus from LEOFF 1 is the proximate cause of the rift. He claims that healing the rift is a major goal.

## The Interim

So, the bill is dead but may be resurrected. What are we doing about it?

Our first goal is to stop the merger concept in its track. We have started a series of meetings in an effort to find some way to heal the rift and to insure that the merger concept is off the table for this and the next biennium. Time is needed for the two sides to rebuild trust to the point that they can discuss the concept absent the pressure of pending legislation.

We have asked the LEOFF 2 groups to publically and unequivocally oppose any merger. That would be first step in healing the rift and would discourage any legislator from independently proposing such a bill. So far no LEOFF 2 group has been willing to take that position. Quite the contrary they are even asking candidates to pledge support for a merger.

That means we must proceed as if a new bill is planned.

To that end, we are also meeting with the various LEOFF 1 groups that marshaled the effort to stop the bill in the last session and are continuing to meet with key legislators to encourage their continued opposition to the concept. Our lobbyist, Al O'Brien, is working the issue on a regular basis.

I urge you to visit our website at [www.rspoa.org](http://www.rspoa.org) for new information. Also, sign up for our email notifications. The playing field is fluid and things happen quickly. We need to have everybody well informed and we need to be able to reach out to our members in a fast and cost effective manner.

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# The SPD Call Box

## A Definitive History

By Mike Brasfield, SPD Retired

**W**ithin a year of the invention of the telephone, the first 5 police telephones were installed in Albany, New York in 1877. The Gamewell Company was one of the early manufacturers of police call boxes. The adopting this system of communication. Boston chose the Municipal Police Signal System in 1888. Atlanta had their first call box system in 1891. The Seattle Fire Department installed their first fire alarm box in 1886.

In 1891 the Gamewell Police Telegraph System was installed in Seattle. It consisted of a series of heavy cast iron call boxes that utilized telegraphy and for the first time allowed for communication between officers walking their beats and police headquarters.

The Gamewell Telegraph System was considered the greatest modern improvement in police service delivery at the time. The system had an "exchange" operator 24 hours a day at headquarters. The operator could take complaints and information over the telephone and then relay this information to patrolmen when they checked in. Patrolmen assigned to their walking beat were required to do so every hour. Some of the call boxes were outfitted with a blue light that could be activated by headquarters to alert beat officers that they were needed and to contact headquarters.

There were approximately 120 call boxes installed in Seattle. The boxes were numbered with no apparent pattern, ranging from #9 at the old Colman Dock to #444 at Broadway and John. They were eventually equipped with both a handheld earpiece for the internal telephone and a 6 point telegraph selector switch numbered from 1 through 5. The 6<sup>th</sup> point was labeled "Wagon". The telegraph was wired directly to police headquarters where the signal was punched into a continuous paper tape.

The selector switch on the box allowed the officer to send an alert or "ring", or to send an alert for the "wagon". The "ring" alert allowed the officer to send a location alert. Such as, "I'm at box #129 and OK at 6<sup>th</sup> and Jackson". The wagon option meant that the beat officer had an arrest and needed to transport the suspect back to the station. Many times officers assigned to walk a beat were required to make a "ring" on the quarter or half hour at different locations. This meant that the sergeant in the station could



assume that his beat officer was walking in his assigned area from end to end. It also gave rise to "Last Ring". In 1896 Dayton, Ohio purchased and placed into operation the same Gamewell Telegraph System of police telegraph. To give you some idea of the cost, their \$25,000 system consisted of 64 patrol boxes. The telegraph feature remained the primary identifying function. When the "hook" was pulled, a telegraph signal would transmit the call box number (i.e. box location) to the central "exchange" where it would imprint the number on a paper ticker tape.

Some of the call box (as in other cities) exterior doors were custom cast with "Seattle" imprinted on them. However, most of them were generic (and cheaper) and just read "Police Telegraph".

Police officers were issued a large brass key to open the outer door to access the telegraph and telephone. Maintenance personnel had a smaller key that would allow access to the inner door for repairs.

Although fixed 2 way radios were later installed in patrol cars, the call boxes continued to be used by both walking beat officers and by patrol car officers needing to communicate directly with headquarters. "Radio, give me a call on box 129", or "132 find a call box and call radio".

The call boxes were mentioned in connection with the allegation of police corruption in the mid to late 1960's. Police reporters found that some beat officers failed to make any of the hourly calls from call boxes, which went unnoticed at headquarters. Within days of the articles, five officers were suspended for misconduct.

The SPD call boxes were eventually phased out in the early 1970's. They ended up in the Charles Street shops area and were offered to officers on a "first come, first served" basis. Some being purchased for as little as \$5 - Completely intact and operational refurbished units in "like new" condition are listed for sale on the internet for as much as \$4,000 when they can be found.



As the editor recalls

**Call Box locations:** In conjunction with Mike Brasfield's excellent article, a list of former SPD call box locations is linked at <http://rsopa.org>. Mike was unable to research other locations such as West Seattle, Ballard, Lake City. Any information on those boxes would be appreciated.

# Ringing In

By Nick Bulpin, Secretary Treasurer, RSPOA

## We were left out!

I *wanna* know why I was left out of all the *neat stuff* available to the officers on the street today.

Recently I attended a family event called “Stand With Those Who Serve” in Parkland, WA. I took a couple of my grandkids to the LeMay Family Collection/Marymount Event Center. This was a free event sponsored by The Seattle Police Foundation, Behind the Badge Foundation, Washington Council of Police and Sheriffs, Seattle Police Guild, Spokane Police Guild, King County Corrections Guild, International Footprint Association and our own RSPOA. There were countless other sponsors that provide goods and services to law enforcement and the military. Too many to list, however they are listed on the “Stand With Those Who Serve” website. This was the second annual event geared to the enjoyment of military and law enforcement families that indeed stand with those who serve. There were rides, displays, live music, food and refreshments all free. Oh, did I mention the 3500 vintage cars, trucks, etc. that were on display.

Now back to the *neat stuff*: there were government vehicles of every description designed to assist in combatting any situation. I won't go into weaponry, armament, etc. that is way too sophisticated for me. The electronics available for use were state of the art and the insides of the patrol vehicles were so crammed with these devices it left little room for my lunch pail. A lot of this equipment was made possible by Homeland Security through grants that would provide not only the equipment but the education needed. The safety of those who may be called into harms way at any time was obviously the objective. The day was true enjoyment for me and my family and I would recommend everyone attend the third annual event.

Now **my** *neat stuff* was a six-shooter, nightstick, handcuffs and a car that wouldn't get out of its own way. The really new *neat thing* was a portable two-way radio that weighed more than my six-shooter.

## We were left out!

Now, I go back to when LEOFF 2 was first adopted in 1977 to replace LEOFF 1 for new-hires. Those fortunate enough to have the plan 1 benefits taunted the new-hires and eventually “LEFT-OUT” became the mantra for officers doing the same job, however not provided with equal pension benefits.

I retired in 1991 and I was fortunate to have had the opportunity to participate in the City's Deferred Compensation Program for nearly three years. I contributed the maximum amount possible for that short period of time and was

# Merger Redux

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## Our Position

Try as we might, we can find no reason that any LEOFF 1 should support a merger. Even the LEOFF 2 leaders cannot provide any logical explanation as to how LEOFF 1 would benefit from a merger. We will continue to try to work with the supporters of the merger in hope that we can find some way where both sides can find some agreement. But for now and until such time as we can develop some mutual trust, we must oppose the merger concept in any form.

LEOFF 2 members are now retiring and joining our association. They are in a particularly lonely situation on this issue. Typically benefit enhancements to retired LEOFF 2 members do not apply to those already retired yet a merger could actually threaten the fiscal soundness of the LEOFF 2 pension. The retired LEOFF 2 member no longer has a Guild and they have no local pension board. Our organization has a responsibility to look after their pension rights as well. We are working to incorporate our LEOFF 2 members into the process.

## Reminder:

# The Banquet

69th

Seattle Police Retired Officers  
Banquet

Wednesday, September 12

SPRA Pavilion

Invitations have been sent

Don't Forget to RSVP

amazed how much I accumulated in retirement funds. Now, just think if I had that opportunity for my entire thirty years how much money I would have to enjoy in retirement. I won't go into the additional spousal benefits, etc. we could have had. So, once again.....

## We were left out!



# 1979: SPD's Decoy Squad



From left to right: 1st row, Riley Brice, Barry Schlect; 2nd row, Bob Ballantyne, Lee Libby, 3rd Row, Jon Olson, Dick LeMoine, Terry Augerson, Dave Ritter, Gordy Barnett, Al Lorette

## From the *FBI Law Enforcement Bulletin* February 1979

Seattle's skid road section is a high-crime area where robbery and beating of the aged and infirm often occurs. To combat these attacks, a small squad was formed in the early 1960's as a part of the patrol division. As of February, 1978, there are 14 officers, 3 sergeants, and 1 lieutenant in the unit. The group operates primarily between 7 p.m. and 3 a.m. it may serve as a backup unit for other divisions within the department or as a stakeout unit. Firearms training is emphasized, as well as physical conditioning. Although the crimes specific section has become proficient in utilizing both uniformed and plainclothes patrol, the safety of the officers is paramount, and decoys must wear bulletproof vests. The decoy squad also specializes in crowd control, unusual operations procedures, intelligence activities, very important person protection, and high-crime area saturation. The squad is extremely flexible in its work and abilities. Effective disguises are often vital to the success of its operations. The squad's commander maintains a makeup case with various swatches of hair for beards and gauze bandages and iodine to fake injuries. Crutches are sometimes used by the officers to give an appearance of helplessness in order to put potential jackrollers off guard. (JSP)

*Ed. Note: Thanks, once again, to Riley Brice for providing this article.*

## City Long Term Care Explanation

You probably received a letter from the City of Seattle Personnel Department dealing with Group Long-Term Care insurance. It has caused a great deal of confusion. So, here is what happened.

- The letter was sent to all retirees even though it does not apply to LEOFF 1 active or retired.
- It explains that the City is changing carriers and that the new carrier is accepting applications for the coverage beginning August 17<sup>th</sup>.
- A person qualified for coverage can purchase the coverage even if her/she has not had the coverage before.
- So, a dependent of a LEOFF 1 member could be covered. However the premium is based on age and health. Once purchased the coverage is guaranteed renewable.

Bottom line: This **does not apply to LEOFF 1 members**. Their long-term care is covered by the pension. However it could offer coverage to a spouse. So, if you are interested, you should watch for the packet from Prudential and follow up at that time. Otherwise, if you are LEOFF 1, you can disregard.



# My Turn Redux

By Dick Rovig, Vice President, RSPOA

“The State Council of Police Officers was born from the Police Legislative Committee formed in the early 1950’s when police officer leaders of first class cities got together in a series of meetings to discuss deplorable pension benefits, and particularly the lack of survivor benefits. For instance, the only form of survivor benefit was for an officer to be killed in the line of duty during an act of violence. Also, maximum service retirement allowance was \$125 a month through the highest rank. Accordingly, many were retiring at unbelievable low figures ranging from \$70 to \$90 a month. In a consensus that something had to be done to improve conditions, the Police Legislative Committee was created, and officers elected to prepare legislation for the 1959 session.”

Thus, does Charles Marsh, Tacoma PD, begin a *Digest of Legislative Sessions, 1959-91*, a remarkable history of police/fire legislation during that time. The Seattle Police Officers Guild was a charter member of that Police Legislative Committee along with police interest groups from the other ten first class Wahington cities , Aberdeen, Bellingham, Bremerton, Everett, Richland, Spokane, Tacoma, Vancouver and Yakima . Charlie was named secretary of the law enforcement group that became the Washington State Council of Police Officers (WSCPO) and eventually the Washington Council of Police and Sheriffs (WACOPS) SPOG has since left the group. Charlie later became state council President and, upon retirement , its Executive Director. In those capacities he was the organization’s main lobbyist and as we shall see, a damned effective one at that.

In 1959 the Ten First Class Cities gained 50 percent disability and retirement benefits, widows benefits and in retrospect, the most important gain, medical benefits. In 1961 the escalator clause was added, an important addendum, as we shall see. Coincidentally, words “importing masculine gender shall extend to females” was another clause added to the act at that time.

In 1970 came the LEOFF act. For eight years, the WSCPO opposed pension reform preferring its own First Class Cities Pension. Reform proponents, most notably, city and county employers, wanted all firefighters, police officers and deputies in the state covered by a state-funded pension system rather than local pension programs. When adoption of the legislation appeared inevitable the Council and Firefighter groups negotiated certain sections of the bill until an “acceptable” measure was passed in 1970. Thus, the Washington State Law Enforcement and Firefighters pension system was born. The state would fund the system, city/county employers would continue provide medical coverage includ-

ing retirement and retain the individual boards that administered that coverage, as the first class cities had done in the past.

Following passage of LEOFF, the WSCPO, composed only of first class cities groups, opened its doors to all law enforcement groups, no matter what size, throughout the state. Finally, following a disastrous recession (double digit inflation), media “horror stories” (i.e. a one legged sheriff, previously uncovered by disability protection, immediately retired under LEOFF when he was defeated for reelection), the pension system came under attack. Once again, pension reform was the order of the day .

Despite the efforts of the WSCPO and other public employee groups opposing the legislation, LEOFF 2 came into being in 1977. Original LEOFF members were “grandfathered” into the old bill. LEOFF 1 and 2 would be separately funded.

LEOFF 2 has been improved through the years, but, still LEOFF 2 retirees, must provide post- retirement medical benefits. In their efforts to further improve their lot, LEOFF 2 organizations lobbied for bill that among other things, would combine the two plans as one, including eliminating local pension boards. Of course, those in the original plans, especially those who worked for first class cities, oppose any attempt to do away with that coverage.

All we want with our system is to leave it alone. We don’t expect or want “a pot of gold” payment of remaining LEOFF 1 funds. Nor do we want “MORE money out of the LEOFF 1 system.” These quotes appeared in a March Guardian article bylined “COMPAS Staff.” Admittedly, those thoughts were considered 12 years ago when the LEOFF system was riding high financially. Considered, then quickly forgotten as the harsh reality of economics demonstrated what goes up, comes down.

I think I can say we are satisfied with our plan, don’t want more, don’t expect more. All we want is to be left alone. LEOFF 2 will be the beneficiary of remaining LEOFF funds when we are gone. That is, if there isn’t a LEOFF 3 or 4 by that time (see the history of California government pensions). We will do all we can to help them gain additional benefits any we can, but not at the peril of our system.

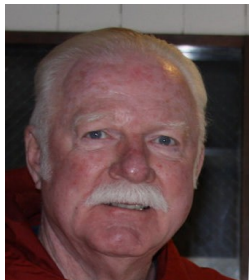




# OL' BLUE CLAN REUNION A SMASHING SUCCESS!!

By John Patrick Sullivan

On a beautiful spring day and with all the splendor of St. Patrick's grace bestowed upon us, the date of March 17<sup>th</sup>, 2012 played host to the 20<sup>th</sup> Annual Ol' Blue Clan Reunion. This great get together was held on the rooftop venue of Carefree Station in the whimsical town of Carefree, Arizona which is about 30 miles north of Phoenix.



Sully

Our hosts for this year were Jennifer and Mike **Deacy**. Here's the list of attendees at this year's luncheon: Duane **Lewis**, Sonny & Nola **Hancock**, Don & Kathy **Vert**, John & Marsha **Camp**, John P. **Sullivan**, Karl & Susan **Bergstrom**, Virginia **Johnson**, Colleen **Boyer**, Sid & Barbara **Zielke**, Dave **Ritter**, Jim & Marilyn **Tagart**, Glenn & Patty **Gilbert**, Dan **Melton**, Pat & Joanie **Munter**, Mel & Melanie **Rasmussen**, Steve **Pellegrini**, Ken **Baggen**, Jerry & Carol **Trettevik**, Mike **Hori**, Eddie & Rosemary **Rivera**, Ray Gonty, Mike Crist, Bruce Wind, Jerry & Karen **Jorve**, Don & Jo **Berg**, Jerry **Germeau**, Gary & Joan **Greene**, Bob **Waite**, Carl **O'Leary**, Glen **Rouse**, Frank & Judy **Butcher**, Marty & Rita **Spotanske**, Dan **Stokke**, Ken **Jakobsen**, Tommy **Knight**, Doug & Patsy **Kitts** [now with Puyallup P.D.].

Those wishing to attend but could not, were: Shaun and Eleanor **O'Kinsella** [health problems at the last minute], Phil and Linda **Halverson** [also medical], Vern **Mackie** [health issue at the last minute], Neil and Connie **Hinton**, Lucille **Hughlitt**, Jim and Roz **Philbrick**. 61 paid to attend and 56 showed up at the "Carefree Station" in Carefree, AZ for a rousing good time at "Bev Heaven" the rooftop venue.

Golf occurred on a dark and stormy day at "The Legend at Arrowhead" Golf Club in Glendale, AZ. Twenty four golfers braved the elements and attended a brief awards ceremony afterward at "The Fox and Hounds Bar and Grill" in Peoria, AZ. "The Fox and Hounds Bar and Grill" is a sports bar located across the street from the Seattle Mariners sports complex. Also playing in the golf scramble were Marty **White** and Don **Henderson** who couldn't attend the reunion day but will be there for 2013.

Mike and Jennifer did a great job of hosting this event and meeting some retired SPD they hadn't met before. They will be entertaining the idea of someone taking over the planning for 2013 and this event. It is usually planned for mid-March. The new hosts will have much of the planning and location ideas already in place so this is your chance to step up and have fun staying in touch with a great group. Please check with Mike and Jennifer and you'll be glad you got involved. Their home number is: 425-745-6363; and their cell number is: 206-919-5558, email [mfdeacy@yahoo.com](mailto:mfdeacy@yahoo.com).

## Contribution Requests

By Jerry Taylor

The LEOFF I Coalition is again asking for contributions. We believe that before any group or organization solicits contributions from the public or from a group of employees or retirees they should make available the names of their officers, by-laws, and a current financial statement. We believe that the Coalition should only request donations from firefighters and law enforcement officers who are not members of a recognized firefighter or law enforcement retiree organization. When we withdrew from the Coalition we specifically withdrew the right for them to use our mailing list or any product occasioned by that mailing list, yet, they continue to contact our members and request donations.

Please, do not give the Coalition any money. The RSPOA has a LEOFF defense fund and currently is not seeking donations as our finances are adequate.

When or if there is a need for additional funding we will notify our members after making full disclosure and explaining the rationale for the request.

Finally, I would be remiss if I did not point out that the Coalition did join in the battle to stop the merger and did provide funding for a legal opinion and lobbying activity. All LEOFF 1 groups were on the same page during the last session. Don Daniels is now president of the Coalition and we are working with them in an effort to coordinate our continuing effort to block any merger.

### Some of the Ol'Blue Group



Left to right: Ken Jakobsen, Mike Deacy, Eddie Rivera, Sully, Mike Crist, and Steve Pellegrini in the background peeking over the top.

See You at

**The Banquet**

## **MARK YOUR CALENDAR**

Retired Officers Banquet  
Wednesday  
September 12  
SPRA Pavilion

RSPOA Luncheon Meetings  
Every Second Wednesday  
October through August  
11:30 AM  
Nile temple

RAP (Retired and Active Police)  
Every Thursday  
Lake City Elks

SPROA  
C/O Nick Bulpin  
16215 38th Ave. NE.  
Shoreline WA 98155



Time Value Material

## **South King North Pierce County Residents**

If you are retired and live in Auburn, Enumclaw, Tacoma, Bonney Lake or the surrounding area and have weekly coffee meetings with other retired SPD guys, please let me know when and where.

If you are interested in getting a group(s) together, give me a call and see what we can do.

I miss going to coffee like we used to do and I am sure a lot of you do too. We were all in a profession that not everyone could do and I still want to hear the stories and have the get-togethers".

CALL OR E-MAIL: BOB ENGLEHART #3353  
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