



POAT Newsletter

Sergeant Chuck Duncan, Miami Dade Police Department
December 2009

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Miami-Dade Police
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Calling for volunteers to work the POAT “Holiday Gifts for Surviving Children” collection tables!

The Holiday Gifts for Surviving Children is in full swing. There are 60 surviving children in the program this year. We are requesting volunteers to work the POAT collection tables, which will be set-up at Aventura Mall, Dadeland Mall, The Falls Shopping Center, Southland Mall, and the Village of Merrick Park. Collections will be during the evening hours. Aventura Mall is coordinated by Lt. Dwight Snyder, Sunny Isles Beach ~ (305-792-1893), Dadeland Mall is coordinated by Officer Chris Hodges, Miami-Dade ~ (305-970-0769), The Falls is coordinated by Sgt. David Greenwell ~ Miami-Dade (305-471-2506 or 305-970-7214), Southland Mall Officer John McLaughlin (786-367-6491), and the Village of Merrick Park is coordinated by Sgt Vinnie Peterson, Coral Gables ~ (305-283-8905); or you can call the POAT office at 305-594-6662. Volunteers will handout POAT brochures explaining the program and will be collecting donations. If everyone reading this volunteers for just one night, we will be able to have the tables up and running every evening. We always fill the weekend days first, as they are the most productive for

generating donations. Let's all work together to make this a success and help bring a smile to the children's faces during this holiday season. Thank you in advance for your assistance.

The next POAT Motorcycle Ride will be held on Saturday, December 5, 2009, 9:00 a.m., starting at Tropical Park (in the front). Registration is \$20 with proceeds going to the Holiday Gifts for Surviving Children. POAT provides holiday gifts for the surviving minor children of officers and officers that have died of natural/accidental means. You can register by going to www.POAT.org, or by calling Lieutenant *Rudy Gonzalez* at 305-471-2312.

On Friday, December 11, 2009, a Scramble Golf Tournament will be held at Keys Gate Golf and Country Club with all proceeds benefiting POAT. Entry fee

is \$125. per golfer, which includes green fees, cart fee, lunch, goodie bag, and beverages on course. For further information, please contact Richard Mestre at (305) 786-299-2188.

Operation Support our Wounded Warriors would like officers to assist in opening employment doors for some of the returning disabled veterans to South Florida, as was the case with Jason Recio, who is deemed 100% disabled by the U.S. Army and is now working as a police officer with Coral Gables Police Department. We have also worked with the M-1 for Vets organization to coordinate selected returning veterans to receive a refurbished M-1 Granad, which carries historic military symbolism for the sacrifice they have made for our country. Another soldier, Ramiro Mayorga, was involved in the same firefight as Jason Recio in Iraq in 2003.

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Ramiro, who was responsible for saving Jason's life, is now a Miami-Dade Firefighter/Paramedic. Jason, Ramiro and the Platoon Commander Ben Baar have received their M-1's throughout the past couple of years. The last soldier of the "Band of Brothers" to receive his M-1 Garand is Steven Lora. It was presented at the half time of the University of Miami vs Virginia football game on November 7, 2009.

Below is an account of what happened that day in Iraq involving the Band of Brothers written by retired 1st LT. Ben Baar:

Rios, Ariel

EOW: Dec 2, 1982
Bureau of Alcohol,
Tobacco, Firearms
and Explosives

Daniel, Luther

EOW: Dec 5, 1941
Florida Highway
Patrol

Calderon, Roberto

EOW: Dec 8, 1999
Miami-Dade

Curl, Shaun

Edmond
EOW: Dec 12, 1997
Drug Enforcement
Administration

Stathers, Walter

EOW: Dec 19, 1967
City of Coral Gables

DeLeon, Jose

Raimundo
EOW: Dec 21, 1984
Miami

Dickson, John E

EOW: Dec 24, 1933
Miami

Guest, Francis Cyril

EOW: Dec 25, 1928
City of Coral Gables

Zore, Robert

EOW: Dec 25, 1983
Miami-Dade

Mitchell, Johnny

Edward
EOW: Dec 31, 1971
Miami-Dade

On 5 July 2003 while conducting combat operations in Ramadi Iraq... At roughly midnight **SGT Jason Recio, SGT Ramiro Mayorga, SGT Steven Lora**, along with **1LT Ben Baar** and the rest of their platoon, were engaged in a fire fight, initiated by an RPG strike hitting their vehicle as they provided security. Having been sent to the same place at the same time four nights in a row the entire platoon knew this fight was coming; that the insurgents would be waiting.

Immediately after the RPG strike, small arms fire erupted from every direction. SGT Jason Recio the platoon heavy machine gunner and SGT Ramiro Mayorga the platoon medic were both severely wounded in the RPG attack. They both fought on past being wounded and stayed in the fight as long as they could. SGT Steven Lora quickly moved to treat the wounds of his fellow soldiers as their platoon leader called for support and directed the counter attack. Working with his platoon medic SGT Lora's ability to keep his cool that night saved lives.

Bravery has been defined as the ability to hold fear and complete horror at bay for just one moment longer. Steven Lora would display this characteristic time and time again over the next year while deployed to one of the most hostile areas of Iraq.

After continued fire fights, IED strikes and insurgent attacks throughout the next several months, on 19 November of 2003 while conducting Check Point operations Sgt Lora and his men were ordered back to base upon completion of their mission. Deciding to stay in the area to cover other units that were moving thru friendly lines SGT Lora's vehicle was the last to come back in that day when they were hit by a soviet anti tank rocket. The rocket hit the vehicle and exploded, blasting SGT Lora thru the air. Hit with shrapnel and bleeding in the dirt, SGT Lora's men and fellow soldiers worked to secure the immediate area and moved to secure him. SGT Lora directed his men to find and take out the attackers. His fellow soldiers moved quickly and killed the enemy insurgents. SGT Lora and those who stand next to him today were awarded the Purple Heart for their wounds.

Steven Lora is a soldier. He, like many fine American men and women have stepped forward into harm's way knowingly and freely giving of themselves for a greater purpose. Today he stands alongside three of his fellow soldiers who have formed a small band of brothers, each more than willing and able to return the field of battle in defense of this nation if only asked to do so.

Ben J. Baar
Office of Emergency Management
Miami Veteran Affairs
US Army Retired
"De Oppresso Liber"

Don't forget to sign-up for the Holiday Gifts for Surviving Children!

[Click here for more information for Paul Janosky Art Scholarship](#)

[Download application here](#)

[Click here for more information for Mike Byrd Crime Scene Scholarship](#)

[Download application here](#)

Service Legacy Brick

The Service Legacy Bricks for retired officers would make a great Christmas gift for that special retired officer in the family. The Service Legacy Brick is placed in the walkway at the new Law Enforcement Memorial in Tropical Park. You can get a brick in the walkway by completing the application that is on our website at POAT.org and making a \$50 donation to POAT. The funds raised from the brick donations goes towards maintaining the Law Enforcement Memorial and funding the annual Law Enforcement Officers Memorial Ceremony.

POAT Scholarships

The POAT has two scholarships that we offer to students getting ready to attend a university, college, or vocational school and are the children of a sworn officer, federal, state, county, or municipal, serving within the boundaries of Miami-Dade County. The deadline for both scholarships has been extended to May 1, 2010. **The Paul Janosky Art Scholarship** is offered to students majoring in visual, graphic or computer arts. **The Mike Byrd Crime Scene Scholarship** is offered to students majoring in Biology, Chemistry, Forensics, Pathology, or any major affiliated to Crime Scene Investigation. Applications for these scholarships can be obtained by downloading them from the POAT web-site at <http://www.POAT.org> or calling the POAT office at (305)594-6662.

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Thanks for your support and stay safe!

Make a tax deductible donation:

Mail to: Police Officer Assistance Trust

1030 NW 111 Avenue

Miami, Florida 33172

POAT offers assistance to all sworn officers in Miami-Dade County from federal, state, county, and municipal agencies. **Your contributions make these efforts possible!** Checks should be made payable to the Police Officer Assistance Trust or POAT. If you wish to make a donation to a specific area of assistance (educational, general, holiday gifts, police memorial, Paul Janosky Art Scholarship, Mike Byrd Scholarship), please notate the information in the memo area of your check.

The Police Officer Assistance Trust is a 501(c) (3) non-profit organization operating within Miami-Dade County, Florida. POAT provides assistance to law enforcement officers and their families in times of crisis or critical need