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American Police Bulletin

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1317 N. San Fernando Blvd., #319
Burbank, CA 91504-4272
1-800-395-7376 www.rdpoa.org

Changes Coming to RDPOA

As we get close to 30 years of service to our members, the RDPOA will be making some changes on the way we operate. Some of those changes include the manner in which the American Police Bulletin (APB) will be delivered to our members, new requirements for applying for membership, eligibility requirements for our death benefit, and retention of membership. All of the changes will take effect on 01/01/2019.

The American Police Bulletin (APB) will no longer be mailed to our members. It will be available in the Members Only section of our website. You can gain access by entering your first name, last name, and complete member number as they appear on your membership card. We have had to fight through a bug or two but things should be in order by next year. This will be the last APB you will receive by mail. Additionally, we have received requests to enlarge our font. So, we're kicking it up a notch.

We have been advised by legal counsel that all future requests for membership must be accompanied by documented proof of retirement and/or disability in order to qualify for membership approved. There will be no exceptions.

In order to be eligible for our death benefit members must be current in their dues and must have been paying dues for at least three consecutive years. Life members are automatically eligible. A beneficiary card must be on file at our office listing a beneficiary. In the event no beneficiary card has been submitted, the benefit will be made payable to the estate of the member.

Lastly, in regard to retention of membership, any member who has been delinquent in due for two consecutive years will be automatically removed from the membership roles. A \$50 fee and payment of all back dues will be required for reinstatement.

History of the NYPD Emerald Society

The NYPD Emerald Society was started on March 16, 1953. The idea to establish an organization of Irish-American police began with a small group of policewomen. Doris Burke, Lillian Reilly, Mary Paterson and Eileen Romancheck were the women who set things in motion. Their grassroots efforts would eventually lead the NYPD to have the first Emerald Society in America. The women sought out and recruited potential members from various police gatherings across the city. They received the solid support and assistance from men like Jerry Sullivan, Charlie Crowley, Bob Bowden, Bill McGowan and Tom Meaney. All of these men would later serve as presidents in the early years of the organization. Many others would also join in the campaign. As interest gained momentum, early meetings grew in attendance and goals were set. Eventually a charter was established, and by-laws enacted, thus creating a formal structure. Forty charter members were present when the voting took place officially forming the organization. The first president was a detective named Henry Fitzgerald. He would later be appointed "Life President," honoring his distinctive service.

There were to be some bumps in the road early on. In the NYPD during the 1950's, as in the decades before, a substantial amount of the force was of Irish descent. There were worries in some quarters that the newly formed Emeralds would have too much influence within the police force. There actually were some efforts to undermine the Society and seek its early demise. But with the strong leadership of Henry Fitzgerald, who was aided from the beginning by Patrolman Barney Devine and others the opposition was eventually overcome. As time went on, the Emerald Society became firmly entrenched as an important part of the NYPD.

Social events became a large part of the Emerald calendar. Members looked forward to dinner dances, vacation trips, boat rides and of course marching in the St. Patrick's Day Parade. Each one was proud to be associated with the prestige that came with the title of "the New York Irish Cop."

In the 1960's the NYPD Emerald Society Pipe & Drum Band was formed. Over time the Band established themselves by their dedicated work ethic and professionalism. Their leader, the late Finbar Devine, became legendary as he proudly set the cadence amidst the pomp and circumstance of each parade. In his role as the Drum Major, on those days when all New Yorkers were said to be Irish, he was indeed the heart and soul of the "NYPD Irish Brigade". At one point in time he was probably the most famous cop in New York. The Pipes and Drums have also appeared on television, from the old Ed Sullivan Show to The Today Show. They have entertained audiences across America, as well as in Ireland and Germany. The Pipe Band has inspired other societies to start their own bagpipe contingents.

In the early 1970's, the Emerald Society Medal for Valor was renamed the Patrick J. O'Connor Medal. It is awarded annually to a member of the department who performs his duty heroically in a life-threatening situation. The medal is named after a member who was killed in the line of duty. Patrolman O'Connor of Emergency Service Squad 1 was a Board Officer as well a member of the Pipe Band when he passed away.

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In the 1980's, an excellent location was discovered as a site for the monthly meetings. For over twenty years now, the St. Andrew R.C. Church Hall has been the venue for most of those meetings. The church is located in Cardinal Hayes Plaza and is adjacent to 1 Police Plaza, in lower Manhattan's civic center. The parish has been a good friend and the Emeralds are grateful for that. In the late 80's, the college scholarship program was created. Mr. Lawrence J. Bennett, a retired Police Officer, left a generous legacy when he passed away. As part of his wishes, Mr. Bennett willed a substantial amount of money to the Emerald Society. This gave the Society an opportunity to provide members with a first class scholarship program for higher education. This program, the "NYPD Emerald Society Margaret A. and Lawrence J. Bennett College Scholarship Fund" along with a separate high school scholarship continues today in helping many of our young students.

In the 1990's, the NYPD grew in size and so did the Emerald Society. When the long discussed merges of both the Transit and Housing Police became reality, there was a rollover of each department's respective Emerald Society body into one. New members were welcomed and all benefited from this union.

The year 2000 arrived with great fanfare and endless possibilities. September 10, 2001 was the Monday after Labor Day and that night there was a General Meeting. It was to signal the end of an era in America and especially in New York City. Along came the dreadful day of September 11th, bringing with it the evil world of terrorism, with a magnitude that our country had never before seen in its history. The site of the World Trade Center was located just a few city blocks away from St. Andrew's. Among the thousands who perished were 23 courageous NYPD officers of various ranks. The months that followed were full of sorrow. The Pipes & Drums played at each police funeral and memorial service, where thousands of mourners would gather. The Band's solemn and reverent regimen has long been a tradition as we pay our last respects to our fallen comrades. No words can ever describe what we lost, and the suffering inflicted upon so many, on that darkest of days. We will never, ever forget the gallant officers we lost.

The goal of the organization, from its infancy, was to help foster Irish heritage and tradition within the department, and also to promote and preserve the accomplishments that the Irish have made to law enforcement. In 2003, the Emerald Society celebrated its 50th anniversary. It was marked with a special reception for charter members. It was a special way to recognize and thank them for the distinguished place they hold in our legacy. Our charter members, as well as those who attended the 2003 Dinner Dance, received a special commemorative 50th Anniversary Pin.

Now as this new century continues, the Emerald Society moves onward. In May 2004, a new website was introduced. The goal for the site was to provide timely and pertinent information to our members. It is a place to find "Everything Emerald." Members can keep up with past as well as future events by visiting the website at nypdemeralds.com. There is a photo section with pictures of many different events that the Society holds throughout the year. There are also recaps of general meetings and gatherings.

[more >](#)

End of Watch



Joseph S. Bartolotta	NY Transit Police	08/23/2018
Ralph D. Bell	Maricopa County (AZ) SO	06/30/2018
Ralph P. Buckles II	Long Beach (CA) PD	06/20/2018
Thomas A. Cornelissen	NJ State Police	07/14/2018
Kenneth D. DeDore	Chicago (IL) PD	08/29/2018
John J. Duignan	Chicago (IL) PD	09/08/2018
Jack M. Haddon	Merchantville (NJ) PD	07/04/2018
Gerald E. Martin	Beacon (NY) PD	10/25/2018
Donald E. Pinckert	South Bend (IN) PD	07/29/2018



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Today its members remain loyal, patriotic Americans who continue to honor their Irish heritage. It has left an indelible mark of honor in the fabric that police work is made from. As time moves on, the Emerald Society remains as constant as the green fields of Ireland. From young rookie cops lining up to join for the first time to old-timers talking of the good-old days, the Emerald Society continues to play an important role in fostering and promoting Irish heritage while being a proud member of the NYPD.



**RDPOA wishes all of you a joyous Holiday Season
and a happy and healthy New Year.**



RDPOA Membership Coordinators

Region 1	Pacific Alaska Region (AK-ID-OR-WA)	Phil Colcord
Region 2	Pacific Region (AZ-CA-HI-NV)	Jerry Morrow
Region 3	Rocky Mountain Region (CO-MT-NM-ND-SD-UT-WY)	Mike Rossi
Region 4	Southwest Region (AR-LA-OK-TX)	Sam Fields - Roy Miles
Region 5	Central Plains Region (IA-KS-MO-NE)	Vacant
Region 6	Southeast Region (AL-FL-GA-KY-MS-NC-SC-TN)	Tom Allyn - Ron Conklin Ted Tittmann
Region 7	Great Lakes Region (IL-IN-MI-MN-OH-WI)	Charles Sweetman - Vic Rini
Region 8	Mid Atlantic Region (DE-MD-NJ-PA-VA-WV)	Tony Covello
Region 9	Northeast Region (CT-MA-ME-NH-NY-RI-VT)	Don Stickney - Tom Walczak

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Publishing Director: Sgt Al Angele, Burbank (CA) PD (Retired)