

Sample articles from Winter 2000 issue of the Kansas Trooper Magazine

What does Change represent?

I have often been told that the combination of Chinese symbols that stand for Change, when viewed separately, are Danger and Opportunity. Which you focus on when Change is on the horizon is up to each of us individually. As an Association we have collectively chosen to always seek the Opportunity in Change, while the cop in us insists we be cognizant of the Danger but not incapacitated by it. This next legislative session presents Change not seen or experienced in the recent past.

I am writing this article before the November 7, 2000 General Election. At this time it is likely that the turnover of seats in both the House and Senate will exceed 30% in each chamber. The turnover resulting from the convergence of both chambers having all seats up for grabs every four years has been exacerbated by an unprecedented number of retirements, particularly from the Senate.

Virtually all of the Senate Republican leadership, including the Senate President Dick Bond, Senate Majority Leader Tim Emert, Senate Vice President Alicia Salisbury and Assistant Majority Leader Ben Vidricksen, are retiring from the Senate, leaving a void in leadership that requires another layer of leadership elections following election to office. The House finds itself in a similar position with Speaker of the House Robin Jennison retiring, creating a domino effect in the House leadership offices.

Once leadership is elected in December, then the President and Speaker name the Committee chairs and Vice-chairs of their chambers respectively, followed by the determination by leadership regarding the rest of the Committees' composition. In other words, while I could prognosticate about who I believe will fill those roles and what it will all look like in the aftermath, the point of all of this is that it represents the most Change in the legislature in the last twelve years or so with the retirement of the longstanding decision and king makers.

When the legislature convenes on January 8, 2001, the landscape will have changed dramatically from the past decade and we must be poised to assist the new leaders and members of the legislature with background on who we are and what we stand for as an organization.

The pay issue and its many collateral effects in recruitment and retention must be kept at a high profile. As an individual member or supporter of the Kansas State Troopers, you must take the initiative to contact your legislator to be certain that he or she knows the facts about the dire situation the Troopers of Kansas find themselves in on the road without adequate backup, and the risk to their public that exists as already sparse coverage is complicated by the difficulties in getting and keeping Troopers.

Remind them that:

22 counties in Kansas have no assigned Trooper at all as of February 2000.

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Of the ten largest law enforcement agencies in the surrounding states, including their State Patrol Agencies, our Troopers salaries are the lowest.

Applicants for the Kansas Highway Patrol have decreased from an average of 1400 in the 1980's for entrance to one class per year, to a total of 552 for two potential classes in 2000.

An Independence company was offering \$13 an hour last week for garbage truck drivers while the hourly pay for beginning Kansas Highway Patrol troopers is \$12.51.

It's hard recruiting qualified people when they can make \$5,000 a year more with the Missouri Highway Patrol, or \$7,000 more at the Lenexa Police Department.

Only 16 road troopers have been added since 1998, when a legislative audit concluded that the authorized strength should be increased by 93 for the agency to meet minimum goals.

Jack Galvin

In Remembrance....

Just a quick, sad message to note the passing of Wichita Police Lieutenant Jack Galvin. Lt. Galvin died after sustaining critical burns in an Oct. 20 bomb squad exercise that went awry. The explosion injured another officer and a city employee; those two men were less severely burned and both have been released from the hospital.

Some of us remember Jack Galvin played a major role in the 1981 capture of the suspect who shot and killed Kansas Highway Patrol Trooper Ferdinand F. "Bud" Pribbenow on the Kansas Turnpike. For his actions in that July 11, 1981 shootout, Lt. Galvin was awarded the Silver Wreath of Valor from the Wichita Police Department and the Kansas Association of Chiefs of Police Gold Award. He had 20 years on the force, joined the bomb squad in 1993 and was promoted to sergeant in 1995. Jack's promotion to Lieutenant took place at the hospital, with more than 70 friends and family present. He had taken his written and oral exams before the accident and was at the top of the people qualified for promotion.

KSTA has expressed its deepest sympathies to Lt. Galvin's family, especially his wife, Mary, and a contribution has been made. Please keep Jack, his family and his fellow officers in your thoughts and prayers.

Wisdom of the Ages

On October 7 your Vice President Keith Dreiling, the assistant editor of this magazine Jamie Lane and I visited the Kansas Highway Patrol retirees annual meeting in Wichita. Keith and I were able to address the group regarding their participation in the Kansas State Troopers Association. In listening the discussions and the reminiscences I was reminded of the old quote:

"Life can only be understood backward, but it must be lived forward."

The re-engagement of the wisdom of the retirees will continue to be a goal of the Association on your behalf. The knowledge and wisdom they possess about the Patrol specifically and life generally is a fount of information we should not fail to avail ourselves of.

You will have the opportunity in this issue to read the handwritten letter of one of the members of the first recruit class of the Kansas Highway Patrol. Walt Dunn was in the class of 1937 and has chronicled how the logo of the Kansas Highway Patrol was developed by troopers working the road in the fifties.

Anytime you have the chance to engage those that have retired from the ranks of the Patrol and encourage their participation in this Association as retiree members please do so. They more active they are, and the more we can benefit from their wisdom, the less likely those of us yet to retire will have to live out the other old saying:

"It is not true that life is one damn thing after another. It is the same damn thing over and over."

Or my personal favorite:

"Life is something that happens when you can't get to sleep."