



## THE BLUE FAMILY TREE

Newsletter article November, 2021

The worst year in history for America's law enforcement was within our lifetimes. It was even within most of our careers. As a matter of fact, it ended ten months ago. 2020 took a devastating 382 law enforcement lives with it; a number virtually untouched in the historical archives of line of duty death... Sadly thin thing that ended ten months ago was the calendar year.

October 13th, 2021, a day we lost four law enforcement officers, is the day we matched the entire calendar year of 2020. Leaving October, we were at 398 line of duty deaths on the year with, of course, two months to go. This is a 33% increase, so far. "COVID" you say... We are currently at a 21% increase in gunfire, and a 23% increase in automobile related crashes, so I would suggest that possibly we have a much greater problem at the moment than COVID.

We still can't quite compare apples to apples where COVID is concerned because the first COVID death in 2020 was near the end of March, and 2021 is not yet over, but that does in fact put the two years relatively close to each other in terms of the number of months of COVID exposure. Here's the tally: In 2020 we suffered 252 COVID deaths compared to 261 so far this year. This means that 2020 had 130 non-COVID LODDs compared to 2021's 137 at the end of October.

We have got to re-focus America's law enforcement. It is an ever increasingly dangerous environment for us and every contact during every moment of the day in cities, and in rural America carries with it a very real threat. I suspect our law enforcement professionals are so overwhelmed by the news and the violence occurring in our country right

now, that we have become numb to the point of not scanning our surroundings for violent people, because everyone we see and hear on the news is violent.

Our number one goal should always remain to go home at the end of our shift. I am confident that most officers out there would trade their own life for their partners if the opportunity presented itself on the street. If you see a car charging towards your shift mate, you'd be willing to shove them out of the way risking your own life for theirs.

Here is my challenge to you. Share what you know with others. Be a mentor. Be a teacher, Be a peer. Be present in the lives of your shift mates, and share your experiences and lessons learned with each other. We need more than mandatory training to keep us alive. We need constant reminders of the job at hand and where we are placing ourselves at risk. We need the threat to be present in our minds; not to be paralyzed by fear, but to be aware of risk, reduce the risk, and mitigate factors that lead to line of duty death. Talk daily with you co-workers. Share our newsletter article. Contact The Blue Family Tree and share a story you think could save a cop's life. Even join us on a podcast episode and share your story with cops around the country.

The alternative is to say nothing, read about an officer passing in your social media feed and on Officer Down Memorial Page, and wonder if you could have shared something that would have seen them home at the end of that shift.

We are all teachers and we must remind each other daily of the threats in our world today so we can best serve our citizens while keeping the promise to our families to come home.

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